Budgeting for the results-based payments proposal: a trial and full roll-out

Gwyn Jones and Helen Barnes, January 2022

1. Summary of the key elements of the package

The outcomes-focussed package we propose consists of a number of interlaced complementary elements:

1. Results-based area payments comprising:
    - A scorecard (Annex 2) which links outcomes in terms of Welsh Government policy objectives to simple metrics in the field and identifies the achievement of those outcomes across a spectrum from the lowest level which goes beyond the statutory baseline, but without ruling out targeted complementary measures for the highest and most demanding of targets locally.
    - A matrix which ties the scores to payments based solely on the additional costs of management by grazing and whose lowest score we anchor to the current BPS rate, and which includes an element for the transaction costs of commons associations

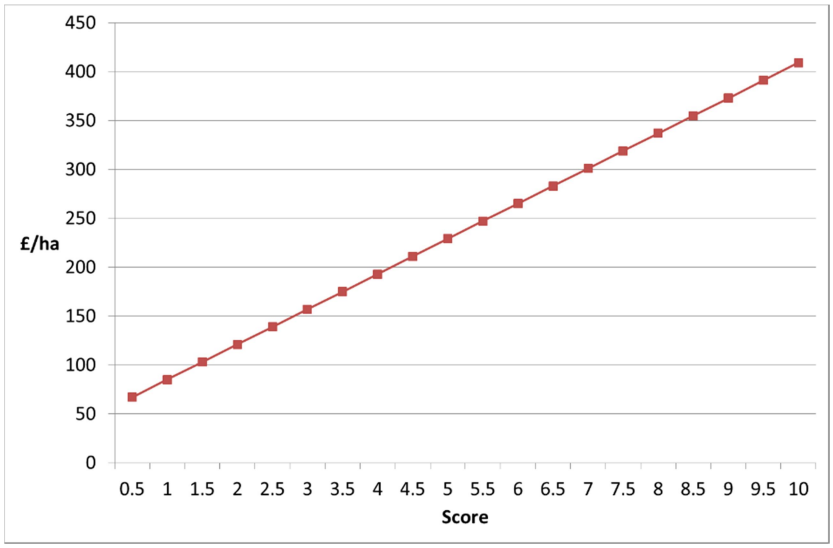

Figure 1. Proposed relationship between score and payment per hectare

2. Non-productive investments to overcome, on a time-limited basis, costs which impede efforts to increase scores and to fund cattle collars
3. Funding for the process leading to the formulation of the internal agreement between the graziers which formalises collective management responsibility and regulates the distribution of scheme monies going forward
4. Funding for specialised plans setting out actions relating to specific public goods, e.g. animal health and biosecurity; fire risk management; peatland restoration; management of archaeological features….

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Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of the funder

5. A small measure implementation team analogous to the former Commons Development Officers whose tasks would include:
    - Informing graziers of the new measure and facilitating discussions on how to proceed
    - Assisting commons without an association to form one (to be able to access the measure)
    - Providing annual training for graziers and any advisors or assistants they choose to use on how to use and respond the scorecard and how the scorecard links to the underlying policy objectives and, in the case of specialised plans, what information/issues should be covered
    - Score or oversee the baseline scoring of the participating commons in the first year
    - Assist the graziers and any advisors or assistants they choose to employ during the drawing up of specialised plans and quality-control those documents
    - Receive, process, audit and approve the scores received periodically from trained graziers (or their trained advisors or assistants) and pass them to WG for payment (and WG audit)
    - Receive, process, approve and audit applications and claims for non-productive investment payments and pass them to WG for payment (and WG audit)
    - Receive, process and approve the specialised plans and pass them on to WG for payment (and WG audit)

The nature of the tasks implies a team with multiple skills, with some members with e.g. veterinary, legal, fire risk management skills.

The package is self-contained, but can be complemented further by (e.g.) wider training programmes; experimental/innovation initiatives; large-scale action for peatland restoration.

Note on relationship between the proposed results-based payments and current payment rates

Our payment matrix has two fixed points:

- At the lowest positive score (0.5 points), we propose a payment which reflects BPS rates, which we take to be £67/ha (see Annex 1)
- While noting the Welsh Government's oft-stated aim of paying more than income forgone or additional costs, our conservative approach is limited to the amount calculated using these approaches
- We assume that a good score on a heathland common would be 5 and that that corresponds to a stocking density of roughly 0.3 LU/ha. The additional costs per hectare we calculate for that stocking density are c. £229/ha
- The points range corresponding to current rates of (BPS + Glastir) payments is 1.5-2.5

Our calculations suggest that just paying full additional costs for a well-managed heathland habitat implies an increase in payment rates compared to those currently offered (without needing to find other payment rationales).

2. Proposed costed plan for full roll-out

Scope

We assume that the measure is intended to replace not only Glastir Commons (GC) but the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS), so that the target area is roughly the area currently used to claim BPS which could also be used to claim GC. In other words, the target area is those commons and commons-like areas (see Annex 1) whose participation in Glastir would necessitate the setting up of a separate legal person – the commons association. Commons with a single rightsholder are treated for the purpose of agricultural schemes as being part of that individual's farm business and are therefore not included in the target area of this proposed measure.

Area payment

As explained in detail in Annex 1, we estimate this area to be 150,000ha and that the logic of SFS is that uptake is intended to be 100%, even if the level of outcomes above the legal baseline which are delivered in some cases might be low.

Based on the experience of the 2021 LEADER project, but needing to be tested in a full trial, we estimate that the 'best case' average score will be around 5 (with the average score currently falling below this level).

The budget estimate for the area payments is therefore 150,000ha x £229/ha = £34.35 million per annum. This equates to just over 12% of the current [BPS + Glastir] budget, with common land making up 11% of Welsh farmland.

Non-productive investments NPI

We assume that there will be a desire in government for the overall balance between area payment and NPI to indicate that the emphasis is on ongoing management, with NPI assisting in that regard (and not being an end in themselves). As such we propose an NPI budget of 20% of the area payment budget. Note that this emphatically does not imply a similar link on the ground – low scoring commons may be the ones which most need NPI assistance. Rather we propose converting the total budget into an equivalent per hectare. In practice, we propose that while applicants would need to submit justified requests for NPI assistance, there should be discretion for the project team to allow the accumulation of multiple years' NPI allowances (e.g. allow 3 'years' worth' of NPI allowance to be invested in a single year).

20% of the area payment budget is £6.87 million annually. This equates to £45/ha p.a..

Plans

Extrapolating from the uptake of GC, and again as explained in Annex 1, we estimate the number of agreements that implies to be of the order of 200. On average, we assume each applicant will have 3.5 plans (all will have an internal agreement, animal health and biosecurity, and fire management plan, and some will have additional ones, e.g. archaeology management, peatland restoration….) and that the average cost of a plan would be £1000.

In practice, there would need to be a more detailed implementation protocol. For example, there might be a minimum level of assistance of £500 and an allowance of £0.50 for each additional hectare. These protocols might well vary between types of plan.

The budget estimate is 200 x 3.5 x £1000 = £0.7 million. Unlike other elements of the programme, this is not ongoing and likely to be concentrated in the first 2 years of the measure's implementation.

Project team

The highly-regarded CDO programme had 18 staff – 3 team leaders and 15 others, all carrying out work on the ground. Their role was however quite limited, corresponding to the first two tasks listed above plus assistance with drawing up the internal agreement. The role we propose for our project team is more extensive and extends over the whole of the life of the measure.

The cost per CDO ten years ago was £55,555 p.a. We estimate a current equivalent unit cost of £60,000 p.a. for our Support Officers (SO).

If all 200 commons want to access project team support in the first year of the scheme, we estimate a requirement for 30 team members, working with graziers and training local advisers.

Role of Support Officers

The emphasis for the Support Officers would be on helping the grazier associations to become more proactive, confident and able to actively manage their common. In order to do this the SO needs to have a broad range of experience in facilitating groups, land based surveying, record keeping and dealing with paperwork generally. Specific tasks in the trial and for a full rollout would include

- Informing graziers of the new measure and facilitating discussions on how to proceed
- Assisting commons without an association to form one (to be able to access the measure)
- Providing training for graziers and any advisors or assistants they choose to use on how to use and respond the scorecard and how the scorecard links to the underlying policy objectives and, in the case of specialised plans, what information/issues should be covered
- Score or oversee the baseline scoring of the participating commons in the first year
- Assist the graziers and any advisors or assistants they choose to employ during the drawing up of specialised plans and quality-control those documents
- Receive, process, audit and approve scores and plans, and pass them to WG for payment (and WG audit)

During the trial it is expected that the facilitation of constitutions and internal agreements will be concluded within the first six months but in a full rollout it could be at any time up to the contract signing date.

Role of local advisors/assistants

There have been strong indications from graziers and commons associations that they would like the option to undertake some or all of the survey work, drawing up of management plans, monitoring and recording through a local adviser, as is the norm in many other countries. This would take some of the burden of work off the SOs, enabling them to concentrate their expertise where most needed;

it involves the land managers and associated communities more actively with management decisions and includes them in the whole process; local people with good knowledge of the common can deliver more effective management for less effort than someone who is not familiar with the area. The trial will evaluate this resource and how best to integrate their work through the following;

- There is a payment available for each element undertaken by someone other than a SO
- A template is provided for each task, with a certain amount of flexibility to include variability between commons. These can be delivered digitally for simplicity
- The local advisers receive appropriate training

Under this model, the SO responsible for the common would signs off the adviser's work.

Survey of the commons

The scorecard approach to measuring outcomes by vegetation condition has been demonstrated as a relatively simple but viable way to assess commons for delivery of public goods. There does not seem to be any advantage (except possibly for a higher tier agreement) in surveying commons in any greater detail than by broad habitat types with indicator species, being assessed for condition, so surveys can be carried out by appropriately trained local advisers or graziers, rather than professional ecologists. A baseline survey in the first year would be needed, with annual monitoring. Surveys need to be carried out at the appropriate time of year, which creates a high demand for surveyors in that four month period, which can be addressed by involving trained independent personnel.

Indicative summary budget

Item	Yr. 1	Yr. 2	Subs. yrs.	Comment
Results-based area payment	£34,350,000	£34,350,000	£34,350,000	200 commons x 150,000ha x £229 (payment for score of 5)
Complementary NPI etc.	£0	£6,870,000	£6,870,000	20% of total NPI budget annually
Internal agreement and plans	£350,000	£350,000		Conc. in Yr.1 and 2; minor thereafter. Ave. 3.5 plans/common
Project team	£1,800,000	£1,800,000	£1,800,000	30 @ £60,000 incl. T&S etc.
Total	£36,500,000	£43,370,000	£43,020,000	

Timing implications

If payments are to be made in December 2025, then the following timetable is implied:

Dec 2025:	first area payments issued
May-Sep 2025:	baseline scoring of all participating commons
May-Sep 2025:	advisor/grazier training
Jan-~Oct 2025:	drawing up internal agreements
Jan-May 2025:	forming legal person to be applicant where not in place
Oct 2024 – Mar 2025:	main awareness raising effort
Oct 2024 – Dec 2024:	project officer and advisor training
By Oct 2024:	recruit project team
Jun-Dec 2024:	put IT in place; design procedures etc.

3. Proposed costed plan for trialling the measure

Questions to be addressed

- Process
    - Confirm validity of scorecards, including on areas poorly represented in original sample (e.g. grouse moors, large blanket bogs, rocky mountains)
    - Finalise assessment protocols (baseline survey, periodic?, on request…?)
    - Produce a workable IT system for fieldwork, one compatible with WG systems
    - Produce example specialist plans; determine process for producing and quality control of same in full roll-out
    - Estimate the time needed to carry out the various aspects in order to participate effectively in the scheme
- Capacity/Advisory
    - Estimate likely mix between 'consultants' and part-time 'local assistants' in pool of people who might provide scores, the numbers of both available overall, and implications for training needs, training cycle etc. in full roll-out
    - Estimate the likely mix between externally-assisted and in-house approaches in initial awareness-raising and in annual consideration of scores and responses when it comes to full roll-out and the implications for training need, training cycle etc.
    - Refine initial estimate of number of Support Officers (SO) needed in the project team for full roll-out
    - Develop and deliver initial training programme aimed at and suitable for a) the project team of SO; b) at commons associations or their nominees; c) advisors/consultants
- Budgetary
    - Finesse estimate of likely average payments and of their likely evolution over time
    - Revisit budget estimates for NPI and plans
    - Produce revised and more detailed full roll-out budget
- Governance
    - Work through the 'offer' represented by the scores/payments and complementary discretionary support (NPI payments….) with commons association
    - On the basis of those discussions, draft example internal agreements
    - Revisit the payment assumptions relating to transaction costs

Overview of proposed methodology

The initial work was carried out on 12 commons in Mid and South Wales, selected to be representative of around 50,000ha of significant commons within that region. The sample was very diverse, but nonetheless weak in some features largely absent from the region, notably:

- Extensive blanket bogs
- Dry heaths managed for red grouse
- 'Rocky' mountains

We propose an enlarged sample of 20 commons, by the addition of a couple from NE Wales (grouse moors); some blanket bog areas (Migneint or similar); 'rocky' commons from Arfon or Meirionnydd; lowland common from Pembrokeshire.

The trial would take those commons through the whole process 'for real' (i.e. to a standard suitable for the full roll-out) and in doing so would

- Train its own core team of 6 Support Officers
- Develop the training for and deliver training to as many as possible potential future advisors and commons-specific assistants
- Produce 'real' examples (good enough for transfer into a full roll-out) of internal agreements (for all 20 commons) and specialist plans (for a sub-sample)
- Finalise the processes, protocols, technology etc. needed for a full roll-out
- Produce a more detailed and refined budget for a full roll-out
- Produce a plan of action for the various aspects of a roll-out set out above – what should happen when and what resources would need to be allocated

Activity	**Person responsible**	**O-D**	**J**	**F**	**M**	**A**	**M**	**J**	**J**	**A**	**S**	**O**	**N**	**D**
Recruit team leader, then SO	WG													
Organise training etc.	Team leader													
SO Training	WG/SO													
Facilitate constitution & internal agreements	SO/Graziers													
Recruitment & training local advisers	SO/Local adviser													
Survey of common	SO/Local adviser													
Draw up commons management plan, including identifying future NPIs	SO/Local adviser/ graziers													
Drawing up specialised plans	Local adviser/ graziers													
Reporting back/evaluating processes and costs	SO/WG/ graziers													

Note that the plan assumes a full 12 months of activity with commoners/advisors etc., which implies that the project leader is in place by the last quarter of the previous year and has time enough to organise training for the SO from the first week of the year.

Indicative budget

Item	Oct-Dec previous year	Main project year	Comment
Project staffing	£15,000	£420,000	6*£60,000, 1*1.25*£60,000 incl T&S etc.
Training budget	£0	£23,000	By external specialists 10 days @ £500 and for advisors/assistant 20 x 3 days @£300
Scoring of commons	£0	£40,000	Advisor/assistant element only
Drawing up specialist plans	£0	£60,000	External assistance element only
Total	£15,000	£543,000	Overall total £558,000

Annex 1: Common land and current Welsh farming support

Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) area

The standard estimate for the area of common land in Wales is 183,500ha[1], made up of 1615 registered Common Land (CL) units.

In addition, a number of other areas not legally common land are treated as being common land from the perspective of farming support schemes. Notable examples are the Epynt and Castlemartin military ranges with 10,222ha and 2045ha of BPS-eligible land respectively[2]. This brings the total area of 'common' land to at least 195,767ha.

Given that the total agricultural area of Wales (including woodlands on farms but excluding common land) is 1,594,887ha[3], this implies that common land makes up around 11% of agricultural land in Wales.

Unpublished Welsh Government data suggests that almost 96% of common land (187,418ha) is used to underpin BPS claims. We use this figure as our baseline for the area potentially subject to the new Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS). Note that this total is made up of around 800 CL units, and that even of those units, 124 are below 5ha in area, with another 72 with an area of between 5 and 10ha and that the total area of those classes taken together is only 773ha.

Around 5704 BPS claims on CL units were made, though some of those are made by the same claimant – data from 2007[4] records a total of 3184 claimants (out of approximately 16,940 BPS claimants in that year – 19%).

BPS budget

The total value of BPS paid out annually by the Welsh Government is c. £242 million, or roughly £136 per hectare of farmland (a higher amount on actual eligible farmland). However, a significant proportion of that will be paid on the first 54ha of the claim, which receives the 'redistributive element' of BPS (currently estimated to be worth £91.97/ha over and above the flat rate of around £67.21/ha[5]).

Glastir Commons (GC)

Commons with only one rightsholder are treated as part of the dominant holding for the purpose of agricultural scheme claims. We do not have data for the number or area of commons covered by this rule, but those commons are likely to be numerous but small in extent.

[1] Aitchison, J (1997) The common lands of Wales. Report for CCW
[2] Welsh Government BPS data from early 2010s, unpublished
[3] https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Agriculture/Agricultural-Survey/Annual-Survey-Results/type-of-agricultural-land-to-year
[4] Welsh Government data via Nick Fenwick, pers. comm.
[5] https://townsendcharteredsurveyors.co.uk/farm-quota/entitlements/welsh-bps-entitlements-user-guide/

Commons with less than 3ha of eligible area are ineligible for GC[6]. Welsh Government unpublished BPS data suggests that around 94 commons with BPS claims are affected by this rule (109ha in total). There were 706 CL units with BPS claims which have an eligible area of at least 3ha, with a total eligible area of 187,309ha (a small surface area, made up of a large number of parcels, falls in the gap between the 0.1ha BPS minimum parcel size and the 3ha GC minimum area, hence the discrepancy with the BPS figure above).

Data from 2015[7] suggests that 310 CL units, with a total area of 159,169ha, have some involvement in Glastir, with 113,138ha subject to Glastir undertakings and 46,030ha not. The total area is 85% of the total area of common land used to claim BPS.

Given that the number of GC contracts is around 187[8], this implies that around 123 CL units are included in farm Glastir contracts (i.e. not GC through an association). We are not able to identify these or estimate the total area involved. However, it is interesting to note that the 123rd CL unit in terms of ascending area is over 62ha in area, suggesting that sole use (non-GC) may extend quite some way up the size spectrum. 126,381ha of common land is implicated in the larger 187 CL units.

GC budget

The GC budget annually is just over £5.25 million[9]. Given the lack of data on rates, we undertook a sampling exercise of CAP Payment[10] data for a number of commons for which we were fairly confident of the area covered by the agreements (associations and GC agreements can cover multiple CL units, or just parts of CL units).

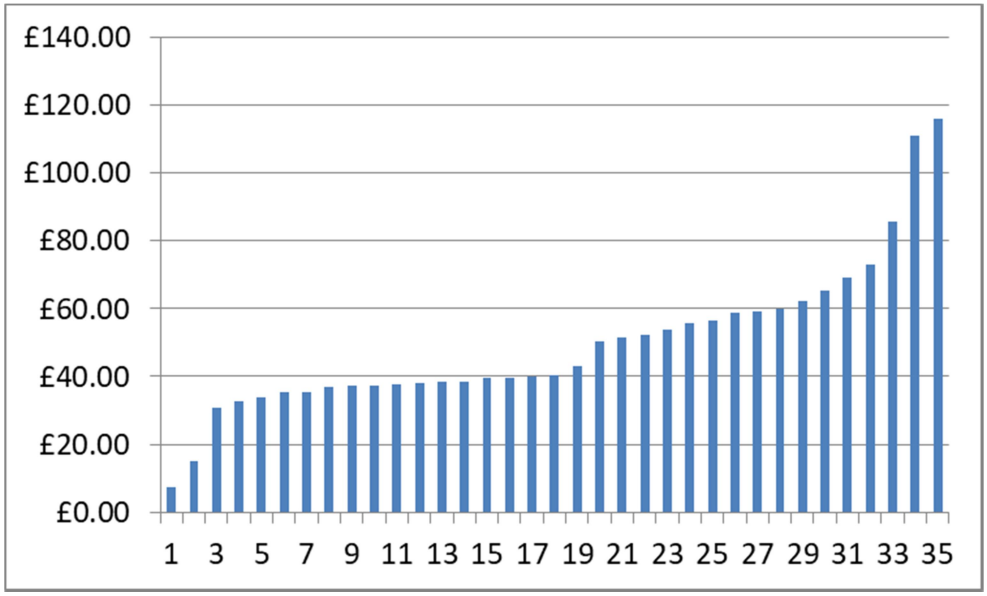

Figure 2. Apparent Glastir Commons payments per ha for a sample of 35 participating associations

[6] https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-02/glastir-commons-general-rules-booklet-2020-2021.pdf
[7] Welsh Government, unpublished
[8] Welsh Government data via Nick Fenwick pers. comm.
[9] Welsh Government data via Nick Fenwick pers. comm.
[10] https://cap-payments.defra.gov.uk/

Figure 2 shows the 2-step pattern which emerges, one which reflects the two payment levels of Glastir Entry and Advanced respectively, with most of the Glastir Advanced participants also availing themselves of non-productive investments ('capital works').

The vast majority of participants fall into the band £35-65/ha.

Cost of Commons Development Officers (CDO)

The budget for running the team of 18 CDO for 4.5 years was around £4.5 million[11] - approximately £1 million p.a. and £55,555 per CDO p.a..

Summary of estimates based on current scheme payments and claims

Taking all of this solid data and informed speculation, we suggest that the size of the 'problem' for an SFS 'common land element' is of the order of 200 commons (the 187 GC commons plus some non-participants) and some 150,000ha (126,000ha from the last paragraph plus Epynt and Castlemartin plus non-participants). The number of potential participants is much more uncertain than the total area under consideration.

The amount of money which would be spent on this 150,000 ha under 100% uptake and current rates is of the order of:

- BPS: 150,000 x £67 = £10 million
- GC minimum £5.25 million
- Total current payments budget: £15.25 million

Note that were BPS to be evenly spread over all agricultural land, the total notional budget would rise to £25.65 million.

[11] https://llyw.cymru/sites/default/files/publications/2020-02/ATISN%2013697%20-%20Doc%202.pdf €4,998,622 in the reporting pepriod 2007-15 (table 5.145) [programme actually ran from Jan 2011 – Aug 2015]

Annex 2: The scorecards

Initial filter

LEADER/NRW Welsh project scorecards

Start with this sheet

The results based area payments are based on the additional costs of grazing and are not available where there is no evidence of grazing. Other planning and management payments may be available and the scorecard remains a useful tool for measuring condition.

You must choose a scorecard based on which characteristic species are found in the area to be scored.

1) Is the area a saltmarsh (i.e. Covered at least monthly by the tide)?

If so, use the **Saltmarsh** card

2) Is the area dominated by bare sand (even if marram grass is common), or shingle, bare rock or scree? If so you are not able to get payment on this area

Sandy, rocky and scree areas with significant vegetation are scored using the general card

3) Is the area DOMINATED (more than 50% cover) by any of the following alone or in combination:

Sphagnum mosses	Cotton-grass	Deer-grass	Bare peat

If so, use the **Bog** card

4) Is the area woodland (>75% canopy of native trees)?

If so, use the **Woodland** card

5) Is there an area of at least 0.25 ha of rhododendron or Japanese knotweed or exotic conifers? Such a block must be identified on entry to the scheme and may be excluded from scoring. Its boundaries may not be changed for the duration of participation in the scheme.

In every other case, use the **General** card

Saltmarsh card

LEADER/NRW Welsh project scorecards

SALTMARSH card

Common:		***Date of scoring:***		***Surveyor:***	
Area:		***Location Number:***			

Active management

Is at least 10% of the total area of grasses and herbs in the overall block <7cm in height during the growing season?

If no, you are not able to get payment on this area in the current year, as there is insufficient evidence of active management; you may be eligible for complementary support to re-initiate active management and the parcel is eligible for scoring again next year

A. Ecological quality

A1. Structure of vegetation within 10m of the assessment point

Heavily grazed: <20% of sward >10cm	**Appropriately grazed**: >20% of sward <10 cm and >20% of sward >10 cm	**Too lightly grazed**: <20% of sward <10cm
1	*10*	*0*

B. Indicators of damage

B.4 What is the scale and impact of supplementary feeding in the block as a whole?

	High: Evidence of feed sites on the saltmarsh habitat	None: No feed sites on the saltmarsh habitat
Score	*-10 and whole common penalty*	*0*

B.5 What is the scale and impact of any other damaging activities in the block as a whole in terms of their impact on soil or water?

	High: Either soil or water being severely affected in terms of either seriousness or scale	Medium-high: Either soil or water being affected in a limited way	Medium-Low: Occasional and localised impacts	Absent or negligible impact
Score	*-10 and whole common penalty*	*-7*	*-3*	*0*

Bog card

LEADER/NRW Welsh project scorecards

BOG card

Common:		***Date of scoring:***		***Surveyor:***	
Area:		***Location Number:***			

This card it to be used on any area falling into the criteria set out in START HERE

A. Species criteria

A.1 What is the number of positive indicators within 10m of the assessment point? Circle all positive indicators present from List A.

	Low: up to 2	Medium: 3-4	High: 5-6	Very high: 7+
Score	*0*	*0.5*	*1*	*1.5*

List A - positive indicators

Moss layer:	*Dwarf shrub layer:*	*Sedge/herb layer:*
1. Mound-forming sphagnums	5. Cross-leaved heath	7. Sundews
2. Blanket-forming sphagnums	6. Ling heather	8. Common cotton-grass
3. Bog pool sphagnums		9. Deergrass
4. Non-crustose lichens		10. Hare's tail cotton-grass
		11. Cranberry

A.2. What is the cover of Sphagnum mosses away from ditches/water tracks within 10m of the assessment point?

	Low: 0-10%	Med-low: 11-20%	Med: 21-30%	High: 31-40%	Very high: >40%
Score	*0*	*0.5*	*1*	*1.5*	*2*

A.3 Are there non-native species present anywhere on the block?

Yes	No
-3	*0*

A.4 What is the combined cover of negative indicators within 10m of the assessment point? Circle all species from list B present

	High: >25%	Med: 11-25%	Med-Low: 1-10%	Low: <1%
Score	*-2*	*-1*	*-0.5*	*0*

List B - negative indicators

European gorse
Tufted hair-grass
Heath or Soft rush
Nettle

B. Vegetation Structure

B.1 How is vegetation structure within 10m of the assessment point impacted by grazing?

Heavily grazed	Moderate-high	Moderate-low	Good	Too lightly grazed
Uniformly short herb and dwarf shrub vegetation. Many other signs of excessive stock pressure e.g. hoof prints, dung and paths and of enrichment.	Uniformly short herb and dwarf shrub vegetation. Only localised other signs of excessive stock pressure e.g. hoof prints, dung, paths and of enrichment.	Herb and dwarf shrub vegetation a mix of tall and short over most of the site. Few signs of excessive stock pressure e.g. hoof prints, dung and paths and of enrichment	Herb and dwarf shrub vegetation a mix of tall and short over most of the site. No signs of excessive stock pressure e.g. hoof prints, dung and paths and of enrichment.	Herb and dwarf shrub vegetation uniformly tall; litter may be common in certain vegetation types; few or no signs of grazing
-3	*-0.5*	*0*	*0.5*	*-0.5*

C. Integrity of bog function

C.1 To what extent has modification impacted on bog hydrology within 10m of the assessment point?

	Damaged/drained bog	Modified bog with significantly altered hydrology	Modified bog with slightly altered hydrology	Near natural bog with slightly altered hydrology	Near natural bog with intact hydrology
	Free flowing drains/gullies allow rapid water flow away from most of the bog area causing significant impact on surrounding bog vegetation.	Evidence of rapid water flow from site at multiple locations e.g. extensive peat banks with seepage or drainage channels without vegetation to slow water flow.	Localised evidence of rapid water flow from site e.g. roadside ditch.	Negligible evidence of rapid water flow from site.	Minimal evidence of rapid water flow from the site.
	Areas of flat bare peat with standing water or cracked surface may be present.	Areas of flat bare peat with standing water or cracked surface may be present.	Bog surface intact across over most of the site. Water flow in ditches/ gullies slowed by the presence of vegetation but movement of water still evident. Seepage evident on peat banks but cut banks are not numerous.	Bog surface largely intact. If drains or channels present the flow of water is slowed by dense vegetation. If old peat banks are present they are localised and largely revegetated.	Intact bog surface with negligible evidence of past drainage or disturbance.
Score	*-3*	*-1.5*	*0*	*0.5*	*1.5*

C.2 What is the height of the water table within 10m of the assessment point for most of the year?

	Very poor	Poor	Moderate	Good	Excellent
	Little evidence of high water table apart from small localised wet areas.	The ground is noticeably dry across multiple damaged locations. The water table is not high throughout or low for some of the year.	The water table is high in places although some areas of dry ground where surface is damaged.	High water table mostly throughout although some small localised drier areas.	High water table with ground obviously wet throughout.
Score	*-2*	*-1*	*0*	*0.5*	*1.5*

D. Threats to site

D.1 Select from the table below the most serious category of damage anywhere within the area scored as bog, considering the indicators of damage which occur:

	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
	Areas of bare and eroding soil (>5%) e.g. large peat hagg/gully systems	Small areas of bare and eroding soil evident (1-5%) across the assessment area	Bare soil evident along more frequently used routes but (<1%) but no peat hagg/gully system present	Little or no bare soil across the entire assessment area. Some bare patches at 'pinch' points (e.g. gateways) is acceptable providing there are no signs of erosion.
	OR	OR	OR	AND
	Peat cut by machine	Small peat hagg/gully system starting to form	Few areas of bare soil although some old peat bank 'cliffs' evident.	Vehicle tracks are restricted to established tracks only.
	OR	OR	OR	
	Significant damage caused by vehicle tracks with multiple areas of bare soil from rutting and/or extensive damage to moss layer (>2%)	Active peat banks with steep bare peat "cliffs" with vegetation layer not replaced	Vehicle tracks causing limited erosion and/or damage to moss layer (<1%).	
		OR		
		Small areas of damage to soil and/or moss layer from vehicle tracks (1-2%)		
Score	*-5*	*-3*	*-1*	*0*

D.2 Is there evidence of damage to vegetation, soil or water from other activities anywhere on the common? (if yes, list them all below)

Examples can include: burning, dumping, pollution to soil/water, inappropriate herbicide use, litter, etc

	High: >10%	Med: 1-10%	Low: <1%	Absent
Score	*-5*	*-3*	*-1*	*0*

Woodland card

LEADER/NRW Welsh project scorecards

DENSE WOODLAND/SCRUB card

Common:		***Date of scoring:***		***Surveyor:***	
Area:		***Location Number:***			

This card is to be used in blocks of woodland or scrub which are >75% canopy cover and which are part of the grazed area of a common.
Woodland which does not fit the grazing criterion may be eligible for woodland management payments outwith this measure

A. Species criteria; measured at individual assessment points

A.1 What is the number of tree/shrub species within 10m of the assessment point, excluding dwarf shrubs, ivy, honeysuckle, brambles, gorse and any non-natives?

	Low: up to 2	Medium: 3-4	High: 5-6	Very high: 7+
Score	*2.5*	*3*	*3.5*	*4.5*

A.2. Is there regeneration/Is it suppressed by grazing within 10m of the assessment point?

Any regeneration present is below 15 cm tall or clear browse line	Limited number of young trees/bushes and unbrowsed saplings	Good spatial distribution of trees/bushes of all ages - equivalent to at least 10% of the wooded area is regenerating
-2	*1*	*3.5*

B. Indicators of damage within a block (not individual assessment points)

B.1 Is there Rhododendron present anywhere in the block?

Yes	No
-5	*0*

B.2 Are there non-invasive non-native species present anywhere in the block?

Yes	No
-2	*0*

B.3 What is the scale and impact of supplementary feeding anywhere on the common?

	High: Some feed sites are impacting >0.5 ha each and/or are impacting directly on watercourses in terms of poaching or disturbed vegetation	Medium-high: No feed sites are impacting directly on watercourses but some sites impacting >0.5 ha in terms of poaching or disturbed vegetation	Medium-Low: No feed site impacting >0.5 ha in terms of either poaching or disturbed vegetation	Absent or negligible: Minimal or no damage from feed sites
Score	*-5*	*-3*	*-1*	*0*

B.4 What is the scale and impact of any other damaging activities in terms of their impact on soil or water anywhere on the common?

	High: Either soil or water being severely affected in terms of either seriousness or scale	Medium-high: Either soil or water being affected in a limited way	Medium-Low: Occasional and localised impacts	Absent or negligible impact
Score	*-5*	*-3*	*-1*	*0*

General card

LEADER/NRW Welsh project scorecards

General scorecard

Common:		***Date of scoring:***		***Surveyor:***	
Area:		***Location Number:***			

A. Ecological quality; measured at individual assessment points apart from A.8

A.1 What is the number of positive indicators within 10m of the assessment point? Circle all positive indicators present from List A.

PI no.	Low: 1 to 4	Low: 5-8	Medium: 9-12	High: 13-15	Very high: >15
Score	*0*	*0.5*	*1*	*1.5*	*2*

List A - positive indicators

1	Birds-foot-trefoils (Common & Greater), Kidney vetch	**25**	Plantains
2	Bog Pimpernel, Creeping Jenny	**26**	Ragged Robin
3	Bushy lichens	**27**	Rock-roses
4	Campions	**28**	Royal fern
5	Centaury, Yellow Wort	**29**	Rushes, Woodrushes, Spike Rushes, **not** soft/cong. rush
6	Cowslip & Primrose	**30**	Scabious spp., Sheep's bit
7	Eyebrights	**31**	Sedges - all species
8	Goldenrod	**32**	Selfheal, Bugle, Betony
9	Harebell, Ivy-leaved Bellflower	**33**	Small umbels - e.g. Pignut, Yarrow, Sneezewort, Wild Carrot, Whorled Caraway
10	Knapweeds	**34**	Sorrel - Common, sheep, wood
11	Lady's bedstraw	**35**	Spring squill
12	Lady's Mantle	**36**	St John's Worts (not garden varieties)
13	Lady's Smock/Cuckooflower	**37**	Saw-wort or thistles - not creeping or spear
14	Large Umbels - e.g. Angelica, Common Hogweed	**38**	Tormentil and other yellow cinquefoils, not silverweed
15	Lesser spearwort	**39**	Thrift
16	Louseworts - Common & Marsh	**40**	Valerian
17	Marsh Cinquefoil	**41**	Vetches/vetchlings - Meadow, Bitter, Tufted etc.
18	Marsh marigold	**42**	Violets and pansies
19	Marsh Pennywort	**43**	White-flowered bedstraws (heath, marsh)
20	Meadowsweet	**44**	Wild Thyme
21	Milkworts	**45**	Wood sage
22	Mints - all species	**46**	Yellow Composites which are not dandelion
23	Orchids - all species	**47**	Yellow-rattle
24	Ox-eye Daisy (not common daisy)	**48**	Live anthills - count as 2 species (in A.1 only; don't count in A.2)

A2. Frequency of positive species and structure of vegetation within 10m of the assessment point

		Structure of the vegetation					
	This column first (Answer each question in turn from the top) All questions apply to the main body of the assessment area (i.e. Away from running water, rock outcrops and tracks) ↓	**Then this row →**	**1. Much too heavily grazed** (use criteria on the Structure Scoring table, as appropriate to the habitat)	**2. Somewhat heavily grazed** (use criteria on the Structure Scoring table, as appropriate to the habitat)	**3. Optimal** (use criteria on the Structure Scoring table, as appropriate to the habitat)	**4. Somewhat too lightly grazed** (use criteria on the Structure Scoring table, as appropriate to the habitat)	**5. Much too lightly grazed** (use criteria on the Structure Scoring table, as appropriate to the habitat)
Frequency of positive indicator species from List A	1 or more species from A.1 **present**?	If no →	0	0	0.5	0	0
	If yes, 5 or more species from List A **present**?	If no →	0	0.5	1.5	0.5	0
	If yes 5 or more species from list A **common (>10 plants of each)**?	If no →	0.5	1.5	2.5	1.5	0.5
	If yes 1-5 species from List A **abundant (>30 plants of each)**?	If no →	1	2.5	4	2.5	1
	If yes	If no →	1.5	4	6	4	1.5
	>5 species from List A are **abundant**?	If yes →	2	6	8	6	2

LEADER/NRW Welsh project scorecards

Structure Scoring Table

You must use the appropriate scoring criteria based on which characteristic species are found in the area to be scored:
In each case, look at the vegetation within 10m of assessment point

1) Is the area dominated by tall (>30cm) rushes?

Do most of them have a flower at the side of the stem?

If so, use this scoring matrix,

1. Much too heavily grazed sward between rush clumps mostly closely-grazed; rush-free areas present		**3. Optimal** varied sward between rush clumps ; rush cover not uniform - some rush-free areas present	**4. Somewhat too lightly grazed** varied sward between rush clumps ; rush cover uniform	**5. Much too lightly grazed** Tall vegetation between rush clumps, rush cover uniform

If not, use this scoring matrix

		3. Optimal Any structure you find		

2) Is the area dominated by (>50%) Molinia?

If so, use the **Molinia** scoring matrix here:

		3. Optimal Molinia 50-75%, >25% of clumps show signs of grazing	**4. Somewhat too lightly grazed** Molinia 50-75%, <25% of clumps show signs of grazing	**5. Much too lightly grazed** Molinia >75%

3) Does the area, away from streams, have one or more of the following species:

Greater bird's foot trefoil	Cross-leaved heath	Marsh marigold	Ragged robin	Bog pimpernel

If so, use the **Wet Grass/Heath Mosaics** scoring matrix here: In each case, exclude rushes, heather, gorse and Molinia from height calculations

1. Much too heavily grazed Less than 20% of the sward is over 10cm		**3. Optimal** At least 20% of the sward is >10cm; less than 70% is over 20cm tall		**5. Much too lightly grazed** Over 70% of the sward is over 20cm and/or over 50% is over 50cm and/or considerable dead litter present; few or no low-growing areas

4) Is the area next to the sea but non-tidal and does it have one or more of the following species:

Thrift	Bladder campion	Spring squill	Buck's horn plantain	Sea plantain	Wild carrot

If so, use the **Coastal Mosaics** scoring matrix here:

1. Much too heavily grazed <30% of sward >20cm		**3. Optimal:** >30% of sward is <10cm and >30% >20cm		5. Much too lightly grazed <30% of sward <10cm

5) Does the area have some or all of the following species:

Thyme	Lady's bedstraw	Lady's mantle	Kidney vetch	Carline/dwarf thistle	Cowslip

If so, use the **Calcareous Mosaics** scoring matrix here:

1. Much too heavily grazed Sward all below 5cms and no or few flowers blooming apart from agricultural species e.g. white clover/dandelion	**2. Somewhat heavily grazed:** 70% of sward 2-15cm, <30% herbs; no trees or scrub	**3. Optimal:** 70% of sward 2-15cm. 30-90% herb cover; no trees or scrub	**4. Somewhat too lightly grazed:** <50-70% of sward below 15cm, OR 70% <15cm and scrub or trees present but in small quantities and not actively invading	**5. Much too lightly grazed:** <50% of sward 2-15cm and/or considerable dead litter present and/or trees/scrub actively invading

6) Does the area have more than 50% dense bracken or dense European gorse?

		3. Optimal: All structures		

7) Otherwise:

Use the **Neutral, Acid & Dry Heath mosaics** scoring matrix here: In each case, exclude drought-prone swards from height calculations

1. Much too heavily grazed More than 80% of herbaceous sward is shorter than 10cm; if less than 5% herbaceous, see undergrazed		**3. Optimal**: At least 20% of herbaceous sward is taller than 10cm; less than 50% is over 20cm tall; if less than 5% herbaceous, see undergrazed		**5.Much too lightly grazed** **M**ore than 50% of the herbaceous sward is over 20cm and/or considerable dead litter present; few or no more grazed areas OR less than 5% herbaceous

A.3 Western gorse on species-rich habitats

Is the percentage cover of western gorse within 10m of the assessment point

<50%	>50%	
0	-3	Now go to A.7

A.4 Is there more than 20% of dwarf shrubs (heathers, crowberry, bilberry, cowberry, western gorse) present within 10m of the assessment point?

No - not present	Present but less than 20%, poor age structure	Present but less than 20%, good age structure	Yes - more than 20%
0	1	1.5	**Go to A.5**

A.5 What is the cover and age structure of the heathy vegetation?

20-70% and poor age structure	20-70% cover and good age structure	>70% and good age structure	>70% and poor age structure	>50% western gorse irrespective of age structure
1.5	*2.5*	*1.5*	*1*	-4

A.6 How diverse are the dwarf shrubs?

How many of (ling heather, bell heather, cross-leaved heath, bilberry, crowberry, cowberry, Western gorse) are present within 10m of the assessment

2 or fewer	3	4	5 or more
0	*0.5*	*1*	*1.5*

A.7 Native woodland and scrub in different habitats . Exclude ivy, honeysuckle, brambles and gorse

What is the frequency of native woodland and scrub in the block being assessed within 10m of the assessment point?

This column first: Find the appropriate habitat type indentified for structure scoring in A.2.	None	At least 1 plant taller than 1m present	2-5 plants taller than 1m present	>5 plants taller than 1m present
Terminal flowered rush dominated	*0*	*0*	*0*	*0*
Soft rush dominated	*0*	*0.5*	*1*	*1.5*
Molinia dominated	*0*	*0*	*0*	*0*
Wet Grass/Heath mosaics	*0*	*0*	*0*	*0*
Coastal mosaics	*0*	*0*	*0*	*0*
Calcareous mosaics	*0*	*0*	*-0.5*	*-1*
Neutral, Acid & Dry Heath mosaics	*0*	*0.5*	*1*	*1.5*
Dense Bracken or European Gorse	*0*	*1*	*1.5*	*2*

If woodland and scrub is present, is there any regeneration?

This column first: Find the appropriate habitat type indentified for structure scoring in A.2.	Any regeneration present is below 15 cm tall	Limited number of young trees/bushes and unbrowsed saplings	Good spatial distribution of trees/bushes of all ages
Terminal flowered rush dominated	*0*	*-0.5*	*-1*
Soft rush dominated	*0*	*0*	*0*
Molinia dominated	*0*	*-0.5*	*-1*
Wet Grass/Heath mosaics	*0*	*-0.5*	*-1*
Coastal mosaics	*0*	*-0.5*	*-1*
Calcareous mosaics	*0*	*-0.5*	*-1*
Neutral, Acid & Dry Heath mosaics	*0*	*0.5*	*1.5*
Dense bracken and European gorse	*0*	*1*	*2*

A.8 within 10m of the assessment point are any of the following potentially-dominating species spreading:
bracken, brambles, tufted hair-grass, European gorse, sea buckthorn
(Do not count areas of any of the species showing signs of mechanical control in the year of survey)

	Yes	No
Score	*-4*	*0*

B. Indicators of damage

B1. Is rhododendron or Japanese knotweed present anywhere in the scored area of the common? i.e. areas not already excluded

If found during the initial assessment, has no impact on payments; but no payments will be made in subsequent years unless the issue is addressed
If found in any other annual assessment, no area payments will be made before issue is addressed

B.2 What is the combined cover within the scored area of the common of the following negative indicators: docks, cotoneaster Crocosmia(Monbretia), nettles, spear or creeping thistles, ragwort, self-seeded non-native conifers, other exotic species?

	High: Is it common over 10% or 5 ha (whichever largest)	Medium: Is it Common over 5-9% or 0.5 to 2 ha (whichever largest)	Low: Is it common over more than up to 4% or 0.5 ha (whichever largest)	Absent or negligible: Less than 1% or 0.5 ha (whichever is the smallest)
Score	*-4*	*-2.5*	*-1.5*	*0*

B.3 What is the impact of artificial drainage on the common?

	High: Drains are delivering sediment to the natural watercourse and having clear impact on the habitats	Medium-high: Drains either significant in terms of sediment or impact on surrouding habitats	Medium-Low: Drains present but have limited or highly localised impact on habitats	Drains Absent
Score	*-5*	*-3*	*-1*	*0*

B.4 What is the scale and impact of supplementary feeding on the common?

	High: Some feed sites are impacting >0.5 ha each and/or are impacting directly on watercourses in terms of poaching or disturbed vegetation	Medium-high: No feed sites are impacting directly on watercourses but some sites impacting >0.5 ha in terms of poaching or disturbed vegetation	Medium-Low: No feed site impacting >0.5 ha in terms of either poaching or disturbed vegetation	Absent or negligible: Minimal or no damage from feed sites
Score	*-5*	*-3*	*-1*	*0*

B.5 What is the scale and impact of any other damaging activities *caused by graziers* in terms of their impact on soil or water on the common?

	High: Either soil or water being severely affected in terms of either seriousness or scale	Medium-high: Either soil or water being affected in a limited way	Medium-Low: Occasional and localised impacts	Absent or negligible impact
Score	*-5*	*-3*	*-1*	*0*