

Southern Upland NEWS

Newsletter of the Southern Uplands Partnership

Fifth Edition: Spring 2001

FOOT AND MOUTH CRISIS

AS WE GO TO PRESS, the Southern Uplands are in the grip of a devastating outbreak of foot and mouth disease.

The effect of this is already having a profound impact on the lives of our people and our communities and is seriously affecting the local economy.

The current situation is bad for everyone with an interest in rural life and land-use. The SUP considered putting out a questionnaire with this newsletter (which was drafted before the disease outbreak got hold) to try to get a picture of the impacts of FMD on rural businesses in the Southern Uplands but it has become clear that there are several questionnaires already in circulation and, rather than confuse matters, we have decided to wait until the situation has calmed before determining what sort of information ought to be collated. If you have views on this we would welcome them. The next newsletter will look at the FMD crisis and what it might mean for the future.

The crisis has already highlighted how closely the farming and tourism sectors are interdependent. It also demonstrates how all aspects of rural life can be affected by a crisis in one land-use. Perhaps most importantly it has shown how important it is that the various agencies communicate effectively with each other and with the public.

In the short-term there are help line numbers you can call if you need advice or assistance.

In the Borders the number to call is 0845 6096611. In Dumfries and Galloway it is 01387 245000.

Everyone in the Partnership is fervently hoping that the crisis will be quickly contained with a return to normality as soon as possible.



Photograph 1. Frozen Loch of the Lowes.

CONVENORS COMMENT

Our determination to promote partnership-working is beginning to bear fruit and we are seeing interesting developments on many fronts.

Most recently we have completed a round of three seminars on local food issues. Through these meetings the SUP has made possible a forum for airing issues about quality, about marketing and adding value locally to commodities grown across the Southern Uplands.

The response has been positive and we have made connections between farmers and food processors. There is much happening and there are clearly benefits to be had from the exchange of information and ideas across the Region.

And it is not just the area of food where there is a need for dialogue. There are a large number of projects being worked-up for Objective 2 funding across South Scotland. Lottery, land-fill and LEADER+ funds are also being targeted by a wide range of groups. We are keen to maximise the value of all these to the Uplands. By looking for opportunities for joint working, we believe we can add value to many projects. There is always a danger that projects developed in isolation will "reinvent wheels" and not make the most of potential support. Partnership working requires a degree of openness and dialogue and we see promotion of such openness and dialogue as a key role for the SUP.

Project Update

The SSERC

SOUTH SCOTLAND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE CENTRE – A DATA REMEMBER

We are at a significant growth point in the demand for environmental information. This is driven firstly by a continuing public demand to know what is happening in the environment and secondly by legislation for local and global biodiversity, sustainable development and environmental democracy.

A number of interest groups and partner bodies have been developing the idea of an Environmental Resource Centre. Late last year this group asked the SUP to commission the production of a Development Plan to take forward the concept of two linked environmental resource centres (ERCs) serving the South of Scotland (Scottish Borders and Dumfries & Galloway). The plan was to establish a means of addressing the growing need for gathering, managing and using biological and environmental data. It is proposed that the centres will:

- *act as a regional focus for environmental information*
- *provide controlled and intelligent access to the broad range data held by individuals and organisations*
- *be a conduit for public access to this data*
- *support and enhance collection of biological records*

This piece of work is almost complete and we hope it will form the basis of a bid for funding later this year. If successful it should generate a number of jobs.

BRACKEN BASHING

“Bracken Management - a Guide to Best Practice” is also about to “hit the hills” to as a Southern Uplands Partnership Publication.

The Guide has been produced as a direct result of the bracken workshops held by the SUP last year. Contact the office if you want a copy.

Red Squirrels in South Scotland

As we move into 2001, the Red Squirrels in South Scotland project is gearing up for a busy year ahead. March should have seen the launch of Dumfries and Galloway's squirrel monitoring programme, which seeks to provide information on the distribution of red squirrels and the movement of grey squirrels within the region but this has had to be postponed until the foot and mouth situation improves. Over in the Borders, work has had to be halted as well but we hope it will soon be able to continue establishing the extent to which grey squirrels are dispersing, with particular attention on the priority forest areas still supporting red squirrels. To help cover the large geographical area covered by the project, local community groups have been established and volunteers identified to assist with monitoring work. Not only is this partnership valuable for gathering important information, but those involved can take both pride and pleasure in contributing to such a worthy cause. The key to the project's success lies in actively raising awareness with those living and working in south Scotland, whilst ensuring close links with neighbouring regions to create a united approach in conserving red squirrels. To this end, the project will shortly be releasing 'Woodlands for Red Squirrels', a practical guide outlining positive woodland management for red squirrels, aimed at landowners and forest managers. Of a less formal nature we hope there will be a range of walks and events later in the year.

More details on the project can be obtained from
SARAH OAKLEY
in the Borders on 07733 121838,
or
ROBIN FULLER
in Dumfries and Galloway on 07733 121837.



Picture 2 Volunteers in the woods

SMALL WOODS

In partnership with the Forestry Action Groups and Enterprise Companies of both Borders and D&G, a feasibility study has been commissioned to look at the potential to make better use of the large number of small woods across the Region. This has grown out of the Woodlands on the Brink event held at Torwoodlee Estate last summer and we hope it will lead to real action on the ground which will benefit both jobs and the environment. The report is due to be published later this year.

JOBS STUDY

The results of the study into the relationship between jobs and the environment of South Scotland have been summarised and are now available from the SUP Office as Occasional Paper number 2. Number 1 is also available and is the text of the Inaugural Buccleuch Countryside Lecture given by Dr John Markland last year.

*food
glorious
food*



Photograph 3 Chris Little addressing the food discussion at Barony College

Food is linked to wide range of other issues and all these were aired at the recent series of discussion evenings attended by around 100 people:

- environment
- tourism - hotels, caterers, pubs, restaurants
- health
- local economies
- biodiversity including rare breeds of livestock
- landscape
- education and training
- sustainability

It was suggested that a forum was needed to look at this subject further and perhaps there is a role for the SUP here, although there is also a clear role for producers and users to get together and agree a way forward. Read on for a summary of the main issues discussed.

FOOD DISCUSSION EVENINGS – Chewing The Fat

The Project Manager made copious notes at all three evening meetings. If there are errors in the following they are entirely his and he humbly apologises.

— The Barony Evening —

Chris Little of the Countryside Agency sees a number of challenges in relation to food:

- * credibility with consumer in light of BSE, GMOs and salmonella etc.
- * need for good co-ordination and cooperation - advice and schemes aimed at farmers can be confusing and complex
- * need for speed to adapt to changes happening now
- * improving and verifying environmental benefits
- * need both national and local links
- * are supermarkets in charge or can the consumer lead the way?
- * health planning and nutrition
- * public concern with animal welfare is a factor
- * quality of food - do we care if the price is right?
- * need for education and awareness raising

Countryside Agency approach - "Eat the View" - aims to double the number of consumers who appreciate link between food eaten and the landscape they enjoy.

Integrated approach is required and grant aid (for food festivals, farmers markets and market towns for example) is being used by the Countryside Agency to bring about changes. Dialogue is essential. Any new systems need to be self-sustaining since funds for support will not last (there will be no further structural funding from Europe after this round). Lead must come from industry and be bottom-up rather than top-down for changes to work.

Peter Pitkin of SNH.

The environment is a selling point and there is much interest in how this can be realised with a premium for the producer and the consumer given the option of supporting good environmental practices. Difficult to put an effective system in place, but further attempts are likely. Funds are likely to become available to support local biodiversity action and this may be of benefit to some farmers.

Other issues:

We need to be cleverer. We should make better use of local skills and expertise eg colleges and universities have access to useful market data.

Supermarkets are powerful but consumer is even more so. Consumer wants healthy and animal-friendly food. Eat the View is targeting supermarkets as a major key to change.

Need to add value to the raw commodities we produce, especially where the local markets are too small to absorb significant amounts.

Food processing, branding and niche marketing can all help.

Brands must not be too numerous.

Need to reduce gap between farmer and consumer through schemes such as farmers markets.

For greater sustainability we need to reduce food miles and encourage farms to diversify so as to reduce imports.

— Main Points From Lauderdale Event —

Michael and Hazel Clarke of The Ancrum Butcher – A Rare Treat. "Eat it to keep it". Rare breeds will only survive if there is a market for their products. These breeds have advantage of minimal inputs and therefore lower/positive environmental impacts.

Small producers can develop and supply niche markets if their product is of high quality and the many regulations are followed. Local outlets provide both jobs and added value to local shopping.

Prime cuts of meat find a ready market, especially to catering trade but rest requires a more creative approach, so a range of products is needed.

Food Trust for Scotland – Dr Mike Cuthbert.

There is an urgent need to raise interest in the subject of food amongst both farmers and public. Priority is for education and awareness raising.

Objectives:

- safe food
- healthy and nutritional food
- environmentally friendly food
- cultural value of food.

More interested in local niche marketing of food than bulk commodity export.

By 2015, 80% of food will come from just 200 supermarkets owned by just three corporations. Future of most food will be convenience, ready cooked product. Cooking as a skill is in danger of dying out.

Scotland does not have a speciality food marketing scheme (England has 6 - worth £6billion)

Farmers markets are a good thing, but really need to be where there are sufficient customers to make them significant ie in

Edinburgh rather than Borders. Also need to be regular (to develop loyalty in customers and steady demand). Should be open to anyone selling local produce, not just farmers.

Peter Ross of the Dumfries and Galloway Food Futures Partnership

Partners include Health Board, Local Authority, Enterprise Company, Community Health Groups, the Voluntary sector, food producers, processors and retailers and the Soil Association.

Strategic approach with links to Community Planning, LBAP, Waste minimisation and Regional marketing initiative "the Natural Place".

Aims to reduce food poverty by providing high quality local food to local people "Food for health, wealth and the environment".

Stimulating innovative food initiatives such as:

- local sourcing of food for institutions.
- Reviving orchards and developing school gardens.
- Healthy Living Centres
- Food Town development
- Farming for Biodiversity

Need to look at future support systems for farming- effects of CAP reform.

Other issues:

Tourism is a major market – tourists eat three meals a day while here so potential for local food is high. How many hotels are promoting local foods?

Small towns can attract urban populations for niche food eating/shopping experience.

Involving health boards provides access to significant funds which can be used to draw in further resources.

High quality food tends to be expensive - how to balance this with need to address poverty? May need to subsidise and this may be justified where health benefits will accrue.

The issue of what foods are grown locally depends on demand and where the market is small (eg for vegetables) there is currently

little incentive for growers. Successful farmers markets require a wide range of produce which is lacking at present. When markets only have few products, there is a reluctance amongst producers to compete with colleagues and this reduces numbers of participants. Role for education is vital.

— Summary of Castle Douglas —

Richard Williamson Buccleuch Estates

Example from Italy where a small farmer used the internet to set up an "adopt a sheep" scheme. For an annual subscription of £100, subscribers would "own" a sheep, being sent cheese and wool from the sheep and the meat at the end of its life. There was a world-wide response and what began as almost a joke became a viable business proposition. "It will be a healthy sign when Scotland produces such innovative food ideas".

Food scares and animal welfare dominate public concern at present, yet, according to the Scottish Executive, Scotland produces high quality food. Why then does the Tourist Board make no mention of local food in its marketing materials? Traditionally, the UK is not good when it comes to farmers selling direct to public nor the public buying local produce.

Buccleuch Beef - aimed at quality end of market. Established in 1996 20 jobs £3.5million a year - aim for quality product, quality process and quality environment. Marketing is through quality images and brochures. Slow to develop a niche market but now showing a profit. Buccleuch name not ideal for a food product - associated with wealthy large land-owners. Involvement of Clarissa Dickson-Wright and considerable subsidy was essential to winning market share. Such support is unlikely to be available to most new businesses. Beef comes from 170 tenanted farms and some accredited others. Value was added at the abattoir at Wishaw but rapidly outgrew capability of that plant and therefore took over the Castle Douglas unit. Buccleuch have recently announced they are going to take their brand of lamb to the quality market as well.

Abattoir provision very important for local producers. The Buccleuch plant could help local producers. Mobile abattoir not practical as it is too expensive.

Colin Warden of Castle MacLellan Foods

Castle MacLellan Foods has grown from a two-man business producing pate in 1982 which grew rapidly thanks to support from Waitrose supermarket chain and then Safeway. Starting by taking a second mortgage on their homes - ie high risk. Several ups and downs during various food scares resulting in tightening legislation. They adapted, expanded and moved to a new plant in Kirkcudbright in 1989. Now expanding at 20% per year.

In 1997 they were absorbed by Kavli, a European company best known for Primula Cheese, now looking to diversify and expand further. Colin sits on the Committee organised by Scottish Enterprise that is producing the Scottish Food Strategy. (aims and objectives).

48,000 people currently employed in food sector. Aim to raise this to 54,000 by 2010. Industry is worth £4.2 billion and aim is to raise this to £7.4 billion by 2010 and to raise added value from £1 billion to £2.4 billion. Performance indicators set.

54 TV food programmes a week but declining interest in actually cooking. "Meal solutions" is the big growth area - ie prepared food portions ready to heat or microwave. American model (no kitchens in many new buildings. Dining rooms also going as families eat separately. 82% meals can be consumed in the car "dashboard dining". Single portion meals so each can have what they want. Breakfast on a stick.....) 34p in the pound is currently spent on food outside of the home and it is estimated

this will rise to 75p. Globalisation is likely to continue with stores getting bigger and meal solutions being dominant. This will be countered to some extent by increasing environmental and animal welfare awareness.

Other issues raised:

Castle Douglas Food Town (not the Food Town - one of several) could be valuable for "townies" coming out of meal-solution dominated urban situation looking for real food, high quality. Links to tourism, landuse, heritage and biodiversity and also to other initiatives such as the book and art towns. Must be realistic. Could we grow a "cluster of quality" on the back of the food town concept.

Regional identity very important. (eg Galloway cattle good image but need 36months to finish so cannot eat so need to look at other breeds), but must not dilute the Scottish Brand image. Need to add value - not just cost. Need to avoid consumer confusion - not too many brands - excessive food labelling.

Castle MacLellan now working in partnership with small producers on new products. Can help develop these and get them to market. Strategic alliances. Trust and co-operation are essential. Innovation is the key. Investment vital. Clusters useful.

"Test-bed kitchens" for product development have been beneficial. Adding value to local food materials.

Branding. The name helps - Orkney and Shetland are already brand "names". Dumfries and Galloway (Galway??) is not a good name. "Galloway Gourmet" had been tried. Could still be useful. Needs to fit under the Scotland Brand. Buccleuch cannot be pronounced by some therefore also a poor brand name. Need to work in partnerships to make local brands work. Different companies have different ambitions and therefore needs vary - need to be flexible and cooperative. Enterprise Companies need to be better aware of issues so they can target help. Demand for organic produce is likely to increase and this may be beneficial in D&G. However, efforts to produce organic products can be limited by organic supply. Need to create a demand that can be met. Can environment be a selling point? Yes but this needs to be marketed - farm assurance schemes can help. Everyone is trying to market on their environment so need to be clever about it. Scotland has a strong landscape image which can be used. Needs to be used carefully. Quality needs to be monitored and controlled. If set too high however it can exclude new entrants. Regulation is already tight and markets already very competitive. Quality needs to go right through the chain. Labelling of food. Becoming too complex? The well promoted Red Tractor logo means English beef - not Scottish. You can get your product into a supermarket if you can pay but it is expensive and time consuming. Market research is also necessary and very expensive. Who pays? Access to capital is hard. Strategic partnerships may help. Should local producers aim their niche products at supermarkets or at small, specialist outlets? Ready meals in both will be important. Chefs are rare and increasingly food outlets will depend on prepared meals coming in from specialist suppliers. Getting at a lot of small outlets is very time consuming. Education is vital but cooking skills are no longer taught in schools. Information on cooking can be provided by suppliers, although take-up is apparently poor if it is combined with advertising.

Our thanks to all those who contributed to the evenings which were both lively and informative.

partner news



Looking To The Future

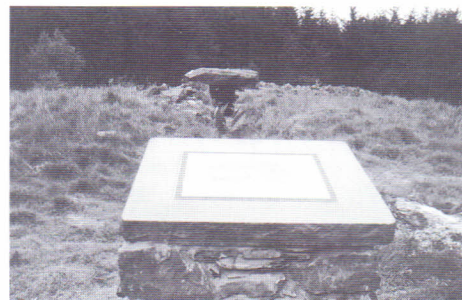
of the Partnership and its partners.

The Annual Report celebrates many successful projects across the built, natural and cultural heritage of Dumfries and Galloway. The following are of particular relevance to the aims and objectives of the Partnership:

- *Designing, securing funding, implementing and promoting new paths for public access*
- *Enabling important local buildings and artefacts to be preserved and enhanced, using grant monies, professional advice and project management*
- *Funding and advising on projects for recycling, habitat conservation and enhancement, landscape protection and enhancement, environmental protection and management of resources*
- *Facilitating the initial discussions in Dumfries and Galloway for an Environmental Resource Centre, running the inaugural seminar in Dumfries and developing the scope of the centre in partnership with other agencies*
- *Contributing to the award winning Local Biodiversity Action Plan*
- *Running the well received Environmental Audit GIS project*
- *Producing and publishing the series of 'Archaeosights' archaeological interpretation leaflets for the region, including translations into French, German and Dutch*
- *Developing and promoting local heritage trails.*

As to the future, covering ongoing running costs is a challenge for all charitable companies and Solway Heritage is no exception. The three Core Funding partners, Dumfries and Galloway Council, Scottish Natural Heritage and Scottish Enterprise Dumfries and Galloway have all been working with Solway Heritage staff to explore new ways of funding the operations of the Company. Catherine Old, the Manager of Solway Heritage, says 'the world has changed and we can no longer rely on public subsidy to support our work. We have to look afresh at the work that we do and try to cover our overheads in running projects in other ways, such as building the costs into applications for grant funding. Solway Heritage has a great deal to offer as a local agency, delivering projects for partners. We must adapt to make sure that we can continue to provide this service'.

If you would like a copy of the Annual Report or more information on the work of Solway Heritage, contact Catherine Old Tel: (01387) 247543 or e-mail crold@solwayheritage.freeserve.co.uk Your thoughts would also be welcome on the type of work that you would like to see Solway Heritage carry out in future.



Photograph 4. Interpretation works at While Cairn supported by Solway Heritage.



NATURAL HERITAGE ZONES

Planning the Wise Use of Scotland's Natural Diversity

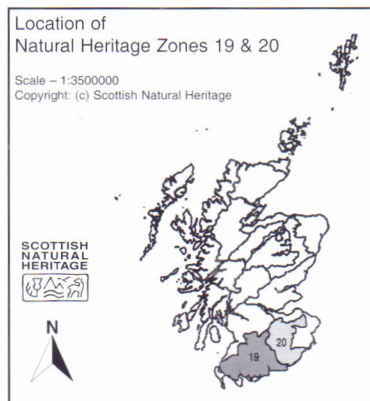
The huge variety of rocks, soils, landscapes, wildlife and land uses within what is a relatively small area makes Scotland one of the most diverse countries in the world. Much of this diversity stems from human activity over the last 5,000 years. Within this diversity it is possible to identify areas with distinctive environmental characteristics reflected in their species, habitats, landscapes and land uses. Scottish Natural Heritage has identified 21 such areas across Scotland, termed Natural Heritage Zones (NHZs). The main of undertaking this work is to develop long-term (25 year) goals for the natural heritage, for use by SNH and others, which take into consideration local social and economic aspirations. The new system proposes that future decisions about the natural heritage are taken collectively by a range of organisations which will set the vision for the future and agree how this is to be achieved.

To ensure that goals are locally relevant, SNH has prepared local prospectuses for each of the 21 NHZs. Each prospectus:

- contains a vision for the natural heritage;
- describes the special characteristics of the Zone, including the processes that have led to its current situation;
- discusses the changes taking place in the Zone and the likely impact of current activities on the natural heritage;
- presents a series of goals for the Zone which aim to close any gap between the vision and current trends over a 25 year period.

The Southern Uplands are covered by two Zones and their respective local prospectuses, namely the Western Southern Uplands and Inner Solway (Zone 19) and the Border Hills (Zone 20). These are shown in the map below.

It is hoped that the prospectuses will also inform the development of a broader land use vision and strategy for the Southern Uplands as a whole. Anyone wishing to comment on the draft prospectus for Zone 19 should contact Stuart Graham at SNH's Dumfries office. The prospectus for Zone 20 is due out for consultation this spring and the co-ordinator for the zone is Robin Payne in the SNH Galashiels office. Alternatively, visit the SNH website at www.snh.org.uk.



TWEED RIVERS HERITAGE PROJECT – *In Full Flow*

Phase I of this £4 million project has been up and running for a year and half now and much has been achieved all over the Tweed catchment. With particular reference to the uplands of the Borders, a number of organisations have been particularly busy. These include Forest Enterprise who have upgraded access routes and visitor facilities at Glentress Forest on a major scale that will expand its reputation as the top visitor attraction in the Borders. The Tweed Foundation have fenced off and planted up considerable lengths of burn in the upper Tweed, Ettrick and Whiteadder catchments to enhance the populations of salmon and trout. Borders Forest Trust who have secured and ensured the expansion of many remnants of upland native woodland in the Yarrow valley as well as encouraging community woodland activities in the upper Tweed. East of Scotland Water have also upgraded the interpretation and visitor facilities at all their reservoirs in the headwaters of the catchment. A number of estates have also carried out access works as part of the project, including Buccleuch Estates who have restored the bridge over the Yarrow at Bowhill, and Philiphaugh Trust Estate opening up riverside and woodland walks upstream of Selkirk.

As well as coordinating Phase I of the project Tweed Forum has been developing a portfolio of projects over the last six months that will make up a Phase II application to the Heritage Lottery Fund. After wide consultation, the response was extremely encouraging and we now have a wide range of projects to put forward that cover all areas of the Tweed's rich heritage including an ambitious and ground breaking access project led by the Southern Upland Partnership - Tweed Trails

TWEED TRAILS – *Tweaked*

This will create a network of multi-use access routes throughout the Tweed catchment area, linking existing routes both within and outwith the catchment. This will include restoring use of the ancient drove roads and other traditional off-road access routes in the area. The aim is to provide additional safe and enjoyable recreational opportunities for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders, by local communities and visitors to the area.

The Tweed Trails proposals accord entirely with national strategies produced by Scottish Natural Heritage and Paths for All which state that one of the main aims of future development should be to facilitate responsible access to land for all types of users. The community based projects incorporated within the Tweed Trails proposals which have been developed by North Tweeddale Local Paths Network Group exemplify the bottom-up approach and community principles which Paths for All, and indeed all other organisations with an interest in access, are keen to promote.

With change in access legislation imminent, Tweed Trails could not be more timely. The proposed local community based trails would form an important part of the core path network which legislative reform proposals suggest each local authority would be obliged to identify and maintain.

The Tweed Trails are strategically critical to development of a much larger inter-linking route network spanning the English border and with links northwards and westwards over the hills which form the natural boundary to the Tweed catchment. The proposed routes link with other routes both existing and under development, including the Southern Upland Way, the Pennine Way and potentially eventually with the E2 European Long Distance Path. Proposals are also included to link westwards with multi-use access routes which were the subject of a feasibility study commissioned by British Horse Society in 1999, the recommendations from which are currently being taken forward by Solway Heritage.

We should hear in June whether the project is likely to get HLF support in which case a bid for Objective 2 funds will be made in Autumn.



Photograph 5. Riding in the Uplands

FISH BITE BACK AGAINST OIL POLLUTION

Yellow fish symbols painted beside street drains have made headlines across Scotland recently and could be coming to a pavement near you shortly.

Yellowfish is run on behalf of the Scottish Oil Care Campaign, which has a remit to promote oil recycling and highlight the cost of oil pollution to business and the environment. We are funded by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and landfill tax funding from the three public water authorities in Scotland.

The scheme involves children painting a fish symbol beside road drains as a reminder that any waste entering these drains goes directly to the nearest stream – potentially killing fish and poisoning wildlife. Groups are closely supervised and armed with fluorescent waistcoats, cardboard stencils and cans of environmentally-friendly paint.

For more information: visit their web-site: www.scottish-oilcare-campaign.org.uk

personal view – on the soap box

Change to Agricultural Payments – likely impact on the Southern Uplands

Until March this year, the National Government has paid a subsidy to farmers on land classified as disadvantaged or severely disadvantaged, to help compensate them for the additional problems of keeping livestock in climatically or geologically disadvantaged areas. This subsidy took the form of a headage payment for sheep and cattle, and so had an approximate link to farm employment.

This aid, worth in all about £60million, was to help maintain a viable rural economy and so prevent or reduce the drift of population out of these fragile communities. This money, called Hill Livestock Compensatory Allowance (HCLA) benefited the farmers and farm workers directly, but also indirectly helped support a wide range of rural jobs from shop keepers to teachers, dykers, fencers, transport workers and plant operators.

Starting in March 2001, the subsidy will instead be paid on an area basis with one payment for moorland and a higher payment for improved pasture. A supplement will be paid for having 10% or more of the livestock as cattle, which are seen as beneficial to the uplands. A National Farmers Union survey has shown that these changes will result in the loss of a substantial proportion of the money which comes into the Southern Uplands. The Highlands are set to be substantial gainers but those who are likely to gain most support very little production and it is feared there will not be a corresponding increase in rural jobs.

In a random survey of 45 LFA farms in the Southern Uplands, forty will lose under the new scheme with an average loss of about 30% - a total loss for these farms of £250,000.

The complete picture for the Southern Uplands will not be known until March when the Rural Affairs Department has processed all the 2001 applications, but we are concerned that the Southern Uplands will lose much of its present £15million, and with this many rural jobs.

John W Davidson, SUP Director

Membership

The SUP can demonstrate widespread support for the approach it takes through the list of members - both Groups and Individuals. Membership is annual and we would appreciate it if you would renew membership for 2001 as soon as possible. If you only joined in the last quarter of 2000 - we will keep you on the register for 2001, but anyone joining earlier than that should renew as soon as possible. Membership also provides us with core funding which is vital if we are to keep going. Paying through standing order means you do not have to worry about remembering each year. Please ask if you would like to establish a standing order. A number of Community Councils have joined and we would welcome others.

If you know of people with an active interest in the Southern Uplands who are not members please tell them about it, pass this newsletter on to them or contact the office and we will send them further information.

Scottish Land Fund Opens For Business

With £10 Million Lottery Cash for Community Land Buy-Outs

From February 2001, rural communities across Scotland will have access to a new multi-million pound lottery-funded resource to help them purchase, develop or manage their local land, as the New Opportunities Fund begins roll-out of the £10 million Scottish Land Fund grant programme.

The Scottish Land Fund has been established to help Scotland's rural communities take greater control of their futures. It will award grants to local communities to buy large and small areas of land and turn them into sustainable projects with social, economic and environmental benefits for the whole community. Funding is available for post-acquisition management and development projects, and groups will also be able to access funding for feasibility studies to help inform their decision to buy land and land assets, and to test the viability of their plans for the land.

Aiming high . . .

2002 is the UN "International Year of Mountains" and we think the Southern Uplands should be involved. The University of the Highlands and Islands have established a Centre for Mountain Studies which will co-ordinate activities in Scotland and the SUP is liaising with them. If you have ideas or want to know more please contact the office.

The Southern Uplands Partnership – a partnership of all those who want to see people living and working sustainably in the Southern Uplands.

Company Number: 200827. Registered Charity Number: SC029475

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SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE



Photo Credits:

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