

Ruby Country Net-Zero Beef Farming Forum

INFORMATION SHEET – Forum Member

What's the Project about?

The UK government has set itself an ambitious, legally binding target of achieving net-zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050. To reach this target all sectors of the economy and society will need to play their part. Agriculture is responsible for around 10% of Greenhouse Gas emissions in the UK, about 16% in Devon, and in NW Devon, a predominantly livestock farming area, around 30%. Agriculture in general, and beef farming in particular therefore, can play a huge part in meeting both national and local GHG reduction targets.

The paths to net-zero for the sector, however, are challenging, not always clearly signposted, and need to negotiate a number of significant additional obstacles in terms of changes in agricultural policy and growing public debate around the role of meat and dairy in our diets. How can beef farming in the Ruby Country navigate this new landscape? How can beef farming, a sector so intrinsic to the Ruby Country that it gives it its name, make the move to net-zero whilst continuing to be economically viable? Put simply:

'How can Ruby Country beef farming best transition to net-zero GHG emissions by (or before) 2050?'

The primary aim of the project is to answer this question, and the people, we believe, who are best placed to answer it are Ruby Country beef farmers and beef farming stakeholders. That is why we want to establish what we are calling a Ruby Country Net-Zero Beef Farming Forum, to collectively discuss the issue, identify the challenges, and propose solutions.

Who are we looking for?

If you are a beef farmer, work in the beef farming sector/supply chain, or if you are a beef farming stakeholder and if you live and/or work in the Ruby Country or immediately adjacent areas (see map below) then we would very much like to hear from you.

How will the Net-Zero Beef Farming Forum work?

The Farming Forum process will be entirely online. There will be no requirement for any participants, to at any point, meet in person face-to-face. The process will likely use the Zoom online meeting app although other platforms such as MS Teams will be considered. There will also be no requirement for Forum members to have any prior experience of using Zoom or other platforms as training will be given in advance of the first forum session.

The Forum will meet for 6 sessions over a 6-week period beginning Tuesday 20th April 2021:

- Week/Session 1 – Tuesday 20th April
- Week/Session 2 – Tuesday 27th April
- Week/Session 3 – Tuesday 4th May

- Week/Session 4 – Tuesday 11th May
- Week/Session 5 – Tuesday 18th May
- Week/Session 6 – Tuesday 25th May

The precise date and time of the Forum sessions has yet to be determined although provisionally we are looking at a regular day/time of Tuesdays at 11.00-13.00. We fully recognise, however, that people have busy and demanding lives so we will make every effort to accommodate the availability of the Forum members and as such both weekends and evening options will be considered if necessary.

To help the Forum members discuss and answer the question they will be presented with information from our 'Expert Witnesses'. These expert witnesses include scientists working on projects associated with environmental impacts and agriculture, especially related to cattle, and others working in conservation and land management. In advance of each session Forum members will be asked to visit the project website and watch a number of short presentations on a range of relevant topics prepared by these expert witnesses. Each presentation will be no more than 15 mins long, delivered in plain English and there will be no more than 3 presentations to watch before any given session.

In terms of the online Forum sessions themselves, each will be a maximum of 2 hrs long and will include a 10-minute comfort break. The first half of the session provides a specific opportunity for Forum members to question and examine the expert witnesses whose presentations they have watched in advance, while the second half provides for a more general facilitated Forum discussion on the session theme. Each session will be facilitated and recorded by the project team.

What would taking part involve?

Taking part in this project involves becoming a member of the Ruby Country Net-zero Beef Farming Forum and actively attending and participating in the Forum process. As mentioned above, this principally involves watching expert witness presentations online, questioning and examining witnesses, discussing and debating the evidence presented, and working towards collective conclusions about how Ruby Country beef farming can best transition to net-zero GHG emissions by (or before) 2050. As part of the discussions, we will invite you to share your own experiences in farming or related work and the challenges of working towards Net-zero, including things that could help in that transition. Towards the end of the process in the final session, we will ask your views about the forum itself through a discussion and a short survey. Across the six sessions, and including pre-session presentation viewing, the total time commitment will be approximately 15 hours.

What are the benefits and risks of taking part?

Forum members will be afforded a unique opportunity to hear from and question world leading experts in the fields of agricultural science and policy about how beef farming in general and individual beef farms specifically can make the transition to net-zero GHG emissions. The recommendations made by the Forum will be inputted into a wider process being undertaken to develop a Devon Carbon Plan, led by Devon County Council. As a thank you and in compensation for your time, Forum members will receive a £300 honorarium at the end of the process. We would expect participants to take part in all 6 sessions to ensure the process is as inclusive and robust as possible. However we acknowledge that from time to time circumstances may arise which may make attendance at a session unfeasible. If there is any session you find you cannot attend, we would kindly ask you to let us know in advance.

This project has been reviewed by the University of Exeter's Research Ethics Committee and the risks of taking part are thought to be negligible. The whole Forum process will be conducted on-line and the Forum

discussions professionally facilitated and moderated. You will have opportunities to feedback your views about the process during and at the end of the process.

What will happen if I don't want to carry on with the study?

Should you choose to do so, you may withdraw from the study and the Forum at any time without having to give a reason. Any personal and demographic details held by the project will be removed from our files if you decide to withdraw. If you withdraw from the study, it may not be possible to remove comments made by you in recordings or transcripts created from the group discussions, however ID numbers rather than individual names will be used on any transcripts.

How will my information be kept confidential?

The University of Exeter processes personal data for the purposes of carrying out research in the public interest. The University will endeavour to be transparent about its processing of your personal data and this information sheet should provide a clear explanation of this. If you do have any queries about the University's processing of your personal data that cannot be resolved by the research team, further information may be obtained from the University's Data Protection Officer by emailing dataprotection@exeter.ac.uk or at www.exeter.ac.uk/dataprotection.

All participants will be allocated a pseudonym 'ID tag' which will protect their identity. All information will be password encrypted and stored on the University network drive, which provides secure, backed up network storage. Only the direct research team and will have access to this information.

The sessions held via Teams or Zoom will be recorded and transcribed, with an audio file recorded digitally as a backup. All participants' names will be removed from any research data files and written transcripts, and individuals will instead be allocated an ID number to protect their identity (e.g. forum member 1, forum member 2). A separate file containing names and email addresses will be kept for up to one year after completion of the project in order to allow the research team to maintain contact with participants for the duration of the project and to provide any feedback following the process such as a summary of the research results. Only those in the research team will be able to link these names/ email addresses with the research data. This method for the purposes of GDPR is known as 'pseudonymisation'. This file will be destroyed one year after completion of the project.

Data will not be used other than for the purposes described above and third parties (outside of the research team & professional transcriber) will not be allowed access to them (except as may be required by the law). Your data will be held in accordance with current General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) legislation. The transcriber will be bound by confidentiality and will destroy the transcriptions once these have been given to the research team and will not be given personal details (e.g. names, email addresses) of any participants. Any Zoom/ MS Teams recordings or digital audio recording will also be destroyed once transcriptions have been generated.

What will happen to the results of this study?

Following the sixth and final session, the project team, having recorded the questions, views, concerns, conclusions and recommendations of the Forum over the previous six sessions, will collate this information into a short report or 'roadmap' outlining the actions identified by the Forum necessary to support the transition to net-zero beef farming in the Ruby Country.

The Forum will be asked to review and endorse sent 'drafts' of the roadmap generated in the final session and asked to review and provide any comments on this. A final draft will then be sent which Forum

members will be asked to endorse. The final 'roadmap' document will be fully anonymised, and the identity of the Forum members will be protected as detailed above.

The Forum's recommendations will be used to feed into a wider Citizens Assembly being held in Devon in Summer 2021 which is being held to inform the Devon Carbon Plan. Additionally, the research team may produce academic publications as well as brief reports for community partners. Again, all of these written outputs will adhere to the 'ID tag' system.

Who is funding and running this study?

The project is funded through UKRI (UK Research and Innovation) as part of their 'Enhancing place-based partnerships in public engagement' theme and is a partnership between Rothamsted Research and the University of Exeter. The main project team includes Mel Wright (Rothamsted Research); Dr. Alice Moseley, D.r Sarah Hartley and Prof. Matt Lobley (University of Exeter) and Dr. Steven Guilbert (University of Exeter/Devon County Council).

The project was originally due to run from October 2019 to June 2020 but due to the impact of CV-19 is now running from September 2020 to June 2021.

What do I do if I'm interested in taking part?

If you are interested in taking part in the project as a member of the Ruby Country Net-Zero Beef Farming Forum, your next step is to fill out an Expression of an Interest Form which will aid the research team in selecting participants to provide a varied panel in terms of age, gender, occupation/type of farm. You can do this in two ways. Either fill out the Expression of Interest Form we sent you with this Information Sheet and send it by email to steven.guilbert@devon.gov.uk, or visit our project website and fill out the form online there. Following receipt of your Expression of Interest Form we will contact you to inform you of whether or not you have been selected to take part in the project. Any data procured during this process will be destroyed if you are not selected as a forum member.

How do I find out more?

If you any questions or would like further information about the project and the Ruby Country Net-Zero Beef Farming Forum you can visit our project website:

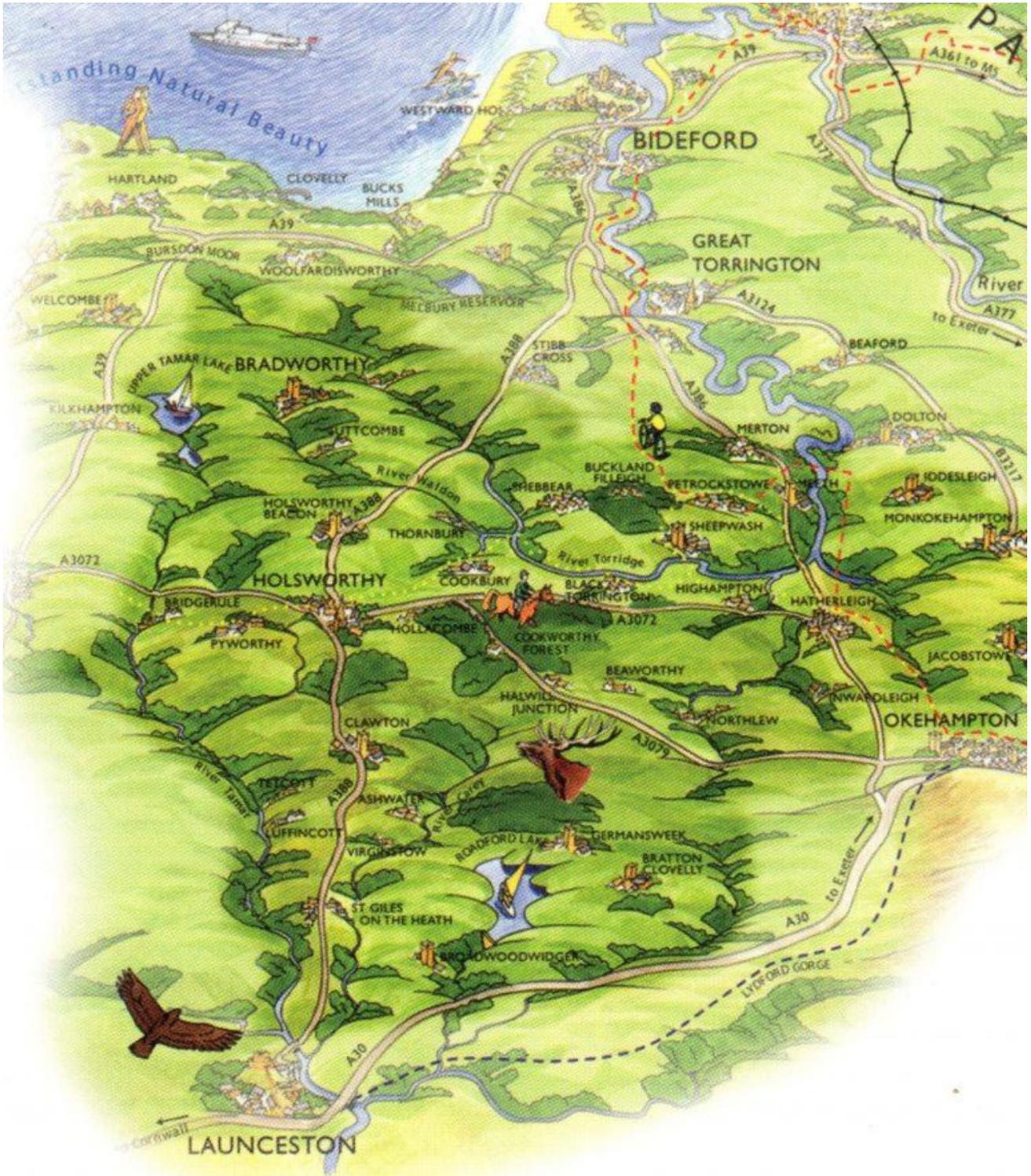
<https://sites.exeter.ac.uk/rubycountrynetzero/>

Alternatively you can contact the project team:

Dr. Steven Guilbert - steven.guilbert@devon.gov.uk

Dr. Alice Moseley - A.Moseley@exeter.ac.uk

Mel Wright - melanie.wright@rothamsted.ac.uk



The Ruby Country