

Poole Harbour Nutrient Management Scheme

Farmer bulletin: Spring 2021

Image: John Hole

Spring Trial coming soon

The Poole Harbour Nutrient Management Scheme (PHNMS) continues to develop well, with a small-scale trial to test the scheme's concept and viability being planned for mid-April to June.



Weaning December-born lambs.
Credit: Will Hyde, Wool

Key points

- Around 20 farms from across the catchment will be asked to road-test the scheme and give honest feedback on nutrient accounting, measures, and what trading will look like, so adjustments can be made where needed, and the team can tailor support for future roll-out to what farmers want and need.
- Farms taking part in the trial will represent a cross-section of farming practice across the Poole Harbour catchment, with different types and sizes of farms on different soil types.
- Farmers involved in the trial will receive full training and support and, if they prove eligible, may be able to trade credits (sell benefits) as they would in the final scheme, providing opportunity for income even at this trial stage.
- All information gathered within the scope of the trial will be anonymised and used solely for the purposes of improving and fine-tuning the scheme ready for a pilot roll-out in October 2021.

If you are interested in finding out more about the trial or would like to volunteer to take part, please contact Project Manager Tess Tidman at tess.tidman@nfu.org.uk.

Update from the Project Manager

Tess Tidman and the partnership delivery team have been busy setting up and preparing various aspects of the scheme. As well as preparing for the trial outlined above, here are some of the highlights from Tess:

- **Triodos Bank have been appointed** to provide the project with financial and business modelling advice. Triodos are leading green finance specialists, and are also working with us on raising capital for year 2 of the project.
- **Nutrient Accounting Tool analysts have also been appointed.** The team from the University of Hertfordshire's 'Agricultural and Environmental Research Unit' (AERU), led by Professor Kathy Lewis will examine a number of options in the market to determine the best option for farmers to use within the scheme.
- **Trading models are being explored;** Dan Sokell from the Cambridge Institute of Sustainability Leadership is leading the work to identify a suitable trading model that is simple to use for farmers and potential buyers of N reduction measures.
- **The Environment Agency Consent Order has been published,** setting out N reduction targets for the catchment. We have been in continued talks to ensure a positive regulatory position statement. We have just received the full copy and are working through it carefully to fully understand what it means for the catchment.
- **A new website is being prepared,** which will be a valuable one-stop-shop for information about the scheme and how farmers can get involved. More information coming soon!



Breakfast time for beef cattle in Alton Pancras.
Credit: Andy Foot

- **A PHNMS Measures group is being set up** to look in detail at the measures farmers can undertake, the value of these in terms of N reduction and the financial cost to farmers to put them in place.

For more information about the Poole Harbour Nutrient Management Scheme,
email info@pooleharbourcatchment.co.uk



Image: John Hole

Related news from the catchment and beyond



Fattening lambs waiting to move on to fresh stubble turnips, Purbeck. Credit: John Hole

Defra launches Sustainable Farming Incentive pilot

From 2022, all those who are currently paid through the Basic Payments Scheme will be able to apply for the Sustainable Farming Incentive. This aims to recognise the value of some of the natural assets that were 'ineligible features' under the CAP.

Participants in the pilot will be required to undertake land management actions set out in their pilot agreement, and participate in 'learning activities' such as surveys, workshops and interviews to help Defra learn from the pilot. Farmers will be paid for the land management actions, and for the time spent on 'learning activities'.

For more information on the pilot and payment rates click [here](#).

Managing plastic waste to prevent pollution

Using plastic is a necessary part of farming practice but, if it is managed well, farmers can be confident they are doing their bit to protect the environment and be legally compliant with waste regulations.

As part of the INTERREG (EU) funded 'Prevent Plastic Pollution' project, Westcountry Rivers Trust and the Environment Agency have produced a handy guidance sheet to support farmers in making this simple. Their flyer is attached with this bulletin, or you can download it [here](#) on the WRT website.

In Dorset, FWAG SW have joined with the project to promote their upcoming plastic recycling day:

All images in this issue have been provided by Poole Harbour Agriculture Group farmers. If you would like to showcase your farm in the next issue, send your images to us by email at info@pooleharbourcatchment.co.uk with a short description and location, and we could feature your work! All images will be credited, and will not be shared without your permission.

One last thing- a note from Poole Harbour Agriculture Group

As many of our readers know, we are a farmer-led group, formed to develop a voluntary nitrate reduction scheme to avert the threat of a Water Protection Zone in the Poole Harbour catchment. We believe that working in partnership gives us the best chance of doing that. These bulletins are produced by our partners at PH Catchment Initiative, allowing us to crack on with developing the scheme with all our partners to make sure it works for everyone, whatever and wherever you farm.

Councils offer parallel opportunity for farmers

Dorset Council and BCP Council are actively looking for sites where farmers are open to permanently changing management of land within the Poole Catchment. This will help the Councils achieve nitrate neutrality for housing and other development, as required by the relevant Local Plans.

To qualify for this funding opportunity, land use must be changed from standard agricultural management to a low nitrate input use for a minimum of 80 years. This might include land for planting trees, for natural regeneration into scrub and woodland or for wetlands. The Councils would be able to offer grant funding linked to a simple legal agreement for this change of use. Alternatively, they would also be interested in land purchase to achieve this.

This opportunity complements the PHNMS scheme and participating in one does not prevent a farm from participating in the other (as long as the same land isn't double counted).

For more information, contact Lyn Cooch, Nitrate Mitigation & Compensation Officer: lyn.cooch@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk or 01305 228955.



*Liquid fertiliser application to grass, Puddletown
Credit: Wakely Cox*

Farm plastic recycling day, 6th May 2021

For more information on how to get involved with this FWAG SW event, and to book your drop off slot, visit www.fwagsw.org.uk/Event/farm-plastics-recycling-scheme or call 01823 660684.