

LAKE DISTRICT WORLD HERITAGE FARM BASELINE SURVEY 2022



Farming
THE ENGLISH
LAKE DISTRICT
WORLD HERITAGE SITE

*'No farmers, no WHS!
We made the landscape!'*

A report for the Lake District World Heritage Site Technical Advisory Group

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Executive Summary

The agro-pastoral farming system forms one of the three key themes which has led to the inscription of the Lake District as a World Heritage Site. Beyond materials prepared about the history and uniqueness of the system for submission for inscription, we know little about the detail of the current farming businesses that sustain this aspect of the OUV and on which the WHS relies for its maintenance.

Agricultural statistics from published sources are only available at Park Authority level covering ownership, farm type, land use, livestock numbers, farm sizes and the nature of the labour force. Consequently, we lack detail about the actual structures (eg walls) and processes (eg hefting) which make up the OUV on our farms. This survey was specifically designed to explore the features of OUV created and maintained by our farm businesses. We wanted to understand the changes that have taken place since inscription in 2017, and to solicit the views of the farming community with regard to the future. Finally, it is hoped that this analysis provides insight as to how to support the agro-pastoral system going forwards through a series of linked recommendations through a farm business strategy.

From the Agricultural Census, the general characteristics of Lake District farming can be summarised as follows:

- 62% of the National Park was farmed land and 28% common land
- Of the farmed land, two thirds were permanent pasture and only 4.5% wooded
- The majority of farms (64%) are LFA livestock farms
- Dairy and pig farming have declined the most over the last 14 years
- Poultry farming is on the increase.
- Half of all farms are 50 hectares or smaller (not including common land)
- With the expansion of the National Park boundary in 2021 it is difficult to provide accurate trends data as this does not match the WHS area.

Methodology

An electronic farm survey was used augmented by paper dissemination to ensure the 'hard to reach' farm businesses had the opportunity to engage. Editorial was also posted in the Federation of Cumbria Commoners and the survey shared by the Farmer Network and National Trust. The survey covered as much of the Attributes monitoring outlined in Appendix 1 that was reasonable. Having said this, the survey was still long and we are indebted to those farmers who completed the whole survey.

Secondary data were gathered from the 2022 annual Agricultural Census conducted by DEFRA for the Lake District National Park. It is essential to note that Census data represents the Park and not the World Heritage Site, as the two designations are no longer synonymous.

Survey Results

Overall, 7.8% of farms in the WHS responded. They are fair representation of the types of farm business found in the LDNPA, but it is important to note, that the WHS and LDNPA are no longer identical land areas.

With respect to traditional farmsteads and farming practices, respondents reported that field barns and hog houses are in poor condition and need consideration for support. Smaller structures are rare, and dove cotes and park railings need targeted support. There is a limited amount of co-operative gathering beyond the 'home fell'. Mustering is becoming more difficult for commoners. The tradition of wintering stock on the fell has declined substantially. There is a definite dichotomy between those farm tasks undertaken by the farmer and the use of contractors. Specialist skills with occasional need, in particular, are contracted in.

In relation to semi-natural habitats, over half of traditional types of woodland in the WHS are not in use (wood pasture and coppice). This is an underutilised farm resource and of natural capital value. Opportunity exists to bring back into use extant wood pasture and coppice. There is opportunity to increase hay meadow management across the WHS. There is evidence that farmers set land aside for nature conservation without grant support.

With respect to livestock, herdwick sheep are no longer the main breed in the Lake District by flock numbers nor individuals. The data suggest fell ponies are under threat. There is no obvious pattern to increases or decreases in stock numbers, nor any main reason.

The majority of labour is provided by the farmer and their immediate family. Very few farms now have substantive additional labour (ie beyond seasonal or casual). Most shepherding is conducted by the farmer or an immediate family member, reflecting restructuring due to cost of production. Consequently, there is little 'spare' labour to divert into other farm activities such as diversification or grant scheme work. A 'catch 22' situation.

Local agricultural organisations and events are central to many farmers and their families. The most important are agricultural shows/shepherds meets, Commoners Associations, the Farmer Network and farmer discussion groups. General parish activities are also important to many. The Westmorland Show, Cockermouth and Eskdale are the most engaged with in this sample of respondents which suggests they are the most efficient locations to have a WHS stand, when needed. Utilising the farmer discussion group network would be a useful information dissemination system to employ.

With respect to farm viability and its future, diversification is only contributing between 15 and 22% of a farm business income, much lower than previously reported, which could become problematic as BPS is reduced and farmers may opt to not engage in ELMS. There is concern over the future of hill farming, and a recognition that farming businesses will need to restructure. However, it is clear people are not sure where to get advice.

There is an overall feeling of disenfranchisement in the comments of the respondents. There is a request for more overt support by the LDNPA, particularly as it is the agro-pastoral system which underpins WHS OUV. Farmers have requested overall better support

for traditional hill and family farming and targeted support with regard to planning, diversification, managing visitor understanding and carbon footprinting.

Evidence for OUV Attribute monitoring

We recognise that this survey only reports on a small percentage of farm businesses in the World Heritage Site. It does however, provide a sample that is five times that of the annual Farm Business Survey executed by Newcastle University and the largest farm survey conducted in the WHS. The valleys of Windermere and Borrowdale & Bassenthwaite were particularly well represented, providing a good snapshot of two very different catchments.

With respect to the monitoring of OUV attributes (see Appendix 1) the survey was ***particularly effective*** in collating baseline data for:

- Farmsteads and Farmhouses.
- The surviving physical and social elements of hill farming e.g. shepherding and common gathering.
- Local techniques of landscape maintenance (stonewalling, hedging, pollarding).

Partially effective for:

- The unique practices of the agro-pastoral farming system.
- Shepherd's meets/shows and traditional sports.
- Local management and governance of Lake District farming systems, e.g. activities of breeder's associations and commons committees.
- Semi natural habitats created and sustained because of a continuing agro-pastoral system, for example hay meadows, pollards, wood pasture, and coppiced woodland. The mosaic of semi natural habitats above the fell wall within an actively grazed landscape.

Not effective for:

- Evidence, intactness, and legibility of settlements and the agro pastoral character and function of the field systems and their waterways.
- Common land and the long standing and continuing traditions of Common land management (intangible).

The Table over provides solutions to partial and not effective attributes, some of which we were previously aware before this survey was executed.

Solutions to Partial and Not Effective Attribute Monitoring

Attribute	Solution
The unique practices of the agro-pastoral farming system.	Results from the Shepherds Guide will help, but <i>the fell by fell detail is almost impossible to garner.</i> <i>Contact the fell pony associations</i>
Shepherds meets/shows and traditional sports.	Alternative survey completed on this topic.
Local management and governance of Lake District farming systems, e.g. activities of breeder's associations and commons committees.	Send letter or <i>small</i> e-survey to Commoners Associations
Semi natural habitats created and sustained because of a continuing agro-pastoral system, for example hay meadows, pollards, wood pasture, and coppiced woodland. The mosaic of semi natural habitats above the fell wall within an actively grazed landscape.	Woodland and pollard information – contact FC. <i>Extent and condition of priority habitats beyond designed sites – ongoing in need of resolution</i>
Evidence, intactness, and legibility of settlements and the agro pastoral character and function of the field systems and their waterways.	Suggest use new Wasdale CIC survey as a template for other valleys
Common land and the long standing and continuing traditions of Common land management (intangible).	This attribute monitoring is a bit of a 'curates egg' – good in places. <i>The missing elements will continue to be hard to collate on a fell by fell basis.</i>

Recommendations

The Lake District Partnership Plan (2020-2025) provides the umbrella management position for the agro-pastoral system. A policy position statement is currently in its final stages of development from WHS Steering group to make recommendations to create improved harmony between hill farming, nature recovery and deer management.

Beyond these two documents, it is recommended here that the following are taken forward either now or woven into the next Partnership plan to specifically address the support of WHS OUV and the agro-pastoral system:

- 1) Develop a **WHS farm business strategy** which focuses on diversification & local farm produce to celebrate the WHS and improve farm incomes through advice, training and financial support.
- 2) Target **wood pasture, hay meadow and coppice restoration**
- 3) Supplying **clearer information regarding planning** for change of use of farm buildings.

- 4) Improving **visitor information about farming** to ease tensions underpinned a more active Rangering Service.
- 5) Encourage **farmers to engage with FIPL** to restore field barns and other rarer structures.
- 6) Develop advice and funding to link **barn restoration to improve farm diversification**
- 7) Lobby DEFRA to **cut the Census data for the WHS** to inform strategy better.
- 8) **Repeat this survey one year before the next UNESCO periodic review**
- 9) **Address Agro-pastoral attribute monitoring weaknesses as per Table 6**

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the farmers who gave their time to complete this survey and the Tern Trust who sponsored the work supported by the Lake District Foundation.



Professor LT Mansfield

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23rd March 2023

Contents

1	Introduction	9
2	Aims & Objectives	9
3	Methodology	10
4	Results	10
4.1	Overall Agricultural Structure of the Lake District National Park	10
4.2	WHS Farm Survey Data	15
4.2.1	Distribution of Returns	15
4.2.2	Ownership patterns and farm geography	15
4.2.3	Traditional farms and their structures	17
4.2.4	Land Types	20
4.2.5	Common, Fell & Heft	22
4.2.6	Livestock	25
4.2.7	Deer Presence	28
4.2.8	Human and Social Capital on Farms in the WHS	28
4.2.9	Farm Viability	33
4.2.10	Final Qualitative Comments	36
4.3	Representativeness of Primary Farm Survey	39
5	Conclusions & Recommendations	41
5.1	Farm Survey results	41
5.2	Evidence for OUV Attribute monitoring	42
5.3	Recommendations	43
	APPENDIX ATTRIBUTES TABLE: Theme 1 Agro-pastoral system	45

LIST OF FIGURES

1	Distribution of Farm Types in the Lake District National Park 2021	11
2	Farm Sizes in the Lake District National Park 2021	12
3	Agricultural Land use in Lake District National Park 2021	12
4	Sheep & Beef Numbers in the Lake District National Park, 2009 to 2021	14
5	Ownership Patterns 2022	16
6	Farm Sizes 2022	16
7	Non-contiguous farming Land inside and outside WHS (by number of farms)	17
8	Average of Field Boundary Styles by Farm	19
9	Area of Woodland in Survey: by Type	20
10	Approximate Location of Hefts in Survey	24
11	Muster Numbers, Lake District Commons	23
12	The Location of Off Wintering	25
13	Number of Flocks by Breed	25
14	Number of Individual Sheep in Lake District Farm Survey 2022	26
15	Number of Farmers who undertake certain Farm Tasks	29
16	Farm Tasks Undertaken by Farmers by Percentage	29
17	Engaging with Agricultural Shows & Shepherds Meets	31
18	Reasons for Attending Shows or Meets	32
19	Wider Community Engagement	32
20	Family engagement with Community Activities	33
21	Lake District Agriculture: Sources of Income 2022	34
22	Perceptions on the viability of the Farm Business	34
23	The Future of Hill Farming	35

LIST OF TABLES

1	Use and condition of Structures	17
2	Field Boundaries	18
3	Land Types on Survey Farms: Management Condition	21
4	Flock Locations	27
5	Representativeness of the Survey	40
6	Solutions to Partial and Not Effective Attribute Monitoring	43

1. INTRODUCTION

The agro-pastoral farming system forms one of the three key themes which has led to the inscription of the Lake District as a World Heritage Site. Beyond materials prepared about the history and uniqueness of the system for submission for inscription, we know little about the detail of the current farming businesses that sustain this aspect of the OUV and on which the WHS relies for its maintenance.

Agricultural statistics from published sources are only available at Park Authority level covering ownership, farm type, land use, livestock numbers, farm sizes and the nature of the labour force. Consequently, we know little detail about the actual structures (eg walls) and processes (eg hefting) which make up the OUV on our farms. This survey was specifically designed to explore in more detail the features of OUV created and maintained by our farm businesses. We wanted to understand in more detail about the changes that have taken place since inscription in 2017, and to solicit the views of the farming community with regard to the future. Finally, it is hoped that this analysis provides insight as to how to support the agro-pastoral system going forwards through a series of linked recommendations through a simple strategy.

2. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) of the World Heritage Site (WHS) has identified a number of our attributes of Outstanding Universal Value (why the WHS is important) as being potentially at risk, particularly the agro pastoral system given the current changes in funding for farming following Brexit. It has also *identified weaknesses in our data and monitoring*. We need to *establish the current health of the farming sector* within the WHS and use this as a *baseline for future monitoring to establish the trends and the continued resilience of our farming system* so important to our OUV.

Specific Survey Objectives:

- Ensure farming remains authentic to our OUV at the time of inscription and the components which reflect the attribute of Agro pastoral system are sustained.
- Help fill in gaps in data for the State of the Park (SoP) monitoring of the health of the National Park (a statutory requirement)
- Map progress of new initiatives/ funding changes for a baseline on the current health of the farming system for future comparisons
- Test whether our strategies and actions in the management plan are achieving what we want given current challenges.
- Flag up any areas of concerns allowing us to respond based upon evidence and where necessary change our approach.

This work will also help other partners, through our collaborative management within the partnership, to collect data and share information.

3. METHOD

The WHS survey was conducted online in 2022 using [Jisc Online Surveys](#), a widely used and available piece of survey software designed for Universities. The e-survey was augmented by paper dissemination to ensure the 'hard to reach' farm businesses had the opportunity to engage. Editorial was also posted in the Federation of Cumbria Commoners and the survey link shared by the Farmer Network and National Trust. The survey covered as much of the Attributes monitoring outlined in Appendix 1 that was reasonable. Having said this, the survey was still long and we are indebted to those farmers who completed the whole survey.

Analysed over the next six months, these primary data were supplemented with secondary published data from the [Agricultural Census](#) (Defra, 2022) for the Lake District National Park.

There are five key points of note when considering the published data for the structure of agricultural industry in the Lake District from Defra:

- Data are for the National Park and **not** the WHS, the latter of which is now a smaller area of the two.
- Reported and published farm statistics do not include related common land. This is not recorded as part of a farm business return to Defra, but is a critical element of WHS OUV.
- Farmers return their data for the whole business, thus land or stock numbers could relate to these situated outside the WHS.
- Defra infrequently collect data of a qualitative nature, this tends to form a separate deep dive survey, such as that regarding [upland farms](#) in all national parks in 2009.
- There is substantial lack of internal detail about the structure of farming in the Lake District which only a primary survey can garner to aid in WHS/NP management.

4. RESULTS

These results focus on three main areas: first, the secondary data published for the whole national park by Defra (2022). Second, the results of the primary survey are explored. Finally, a comparison between the two to understand how representative the WHS farm survey is of the Lake District area as a whole.

4.1 Overall Agricultural Structure of the Lake District National Park

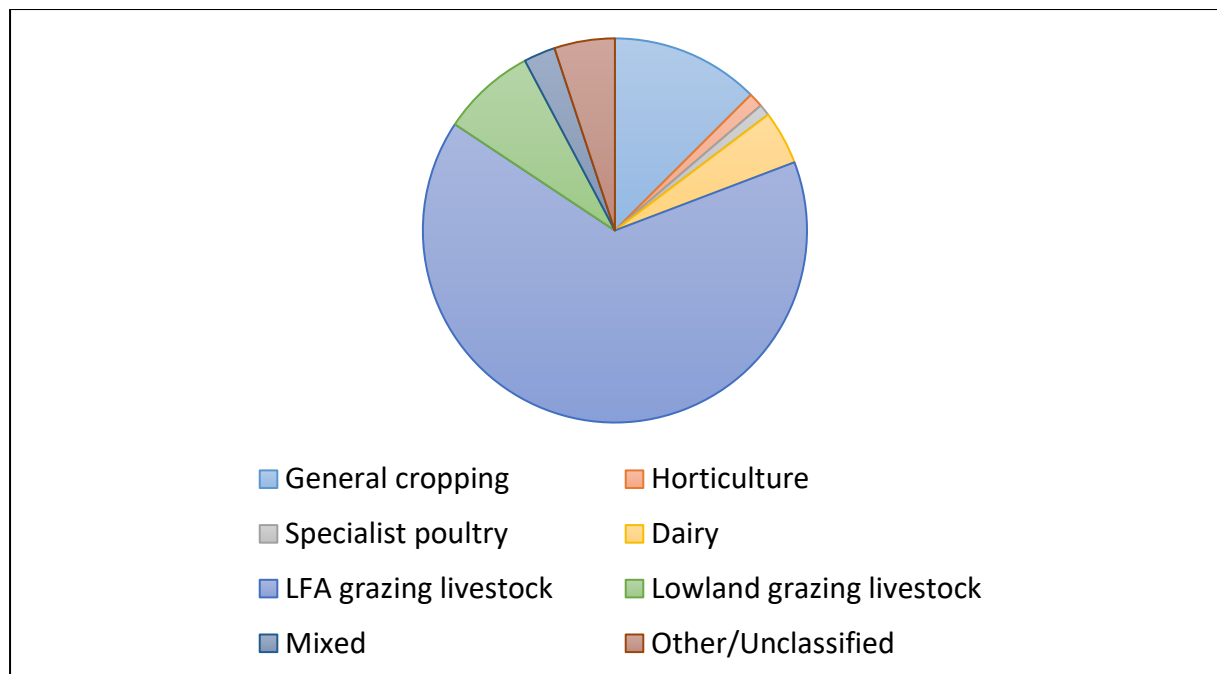
Currently, the total farmed area covers 62% of the National Park with a further 28% classified as common land¹ (Defra, 2022). Farm types vary, the main ones being Less

¹ It is important to recognise that whilst many Lake District farmers have common rights, they do not record this as part of their farm land area.

Favoured Area livestock farms (sheep, beef or sheep & beef - 62%), dairy (4.5%) or lowland beef enterprises (7.9%) (Figure 1).

Between 2009 and 2016, there has been a steady decline in the number of farms in the Lake District (loss of 42). Between 2016 and 2021 the numbers increased by 71, some of which can be accounted for by the extension of the National Park. This increase has led to an increase of 4.8% of LFA livestock farms over the same period, but again some of this can be accounted for through the extension of the National Park boundary, which is not part of the WHS (DEFRA, 2022). Dairy farming has undergone a substantial decline from 121 farms in 2007 to only 56 in 2021.

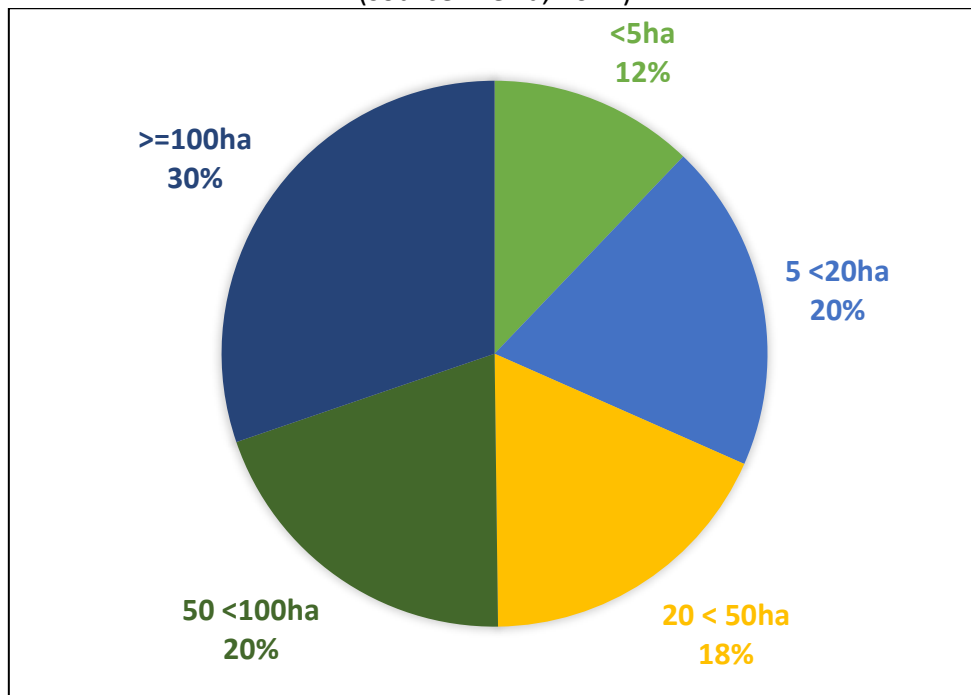
Figure 1 – Distribution of Farm Types in the Lake District National Park 2021
(Source: Defra, 2022)



Half the farms are under 50ha in size (Figure 2), with about 30% over 100ha. These data do not include common land attached to farms.

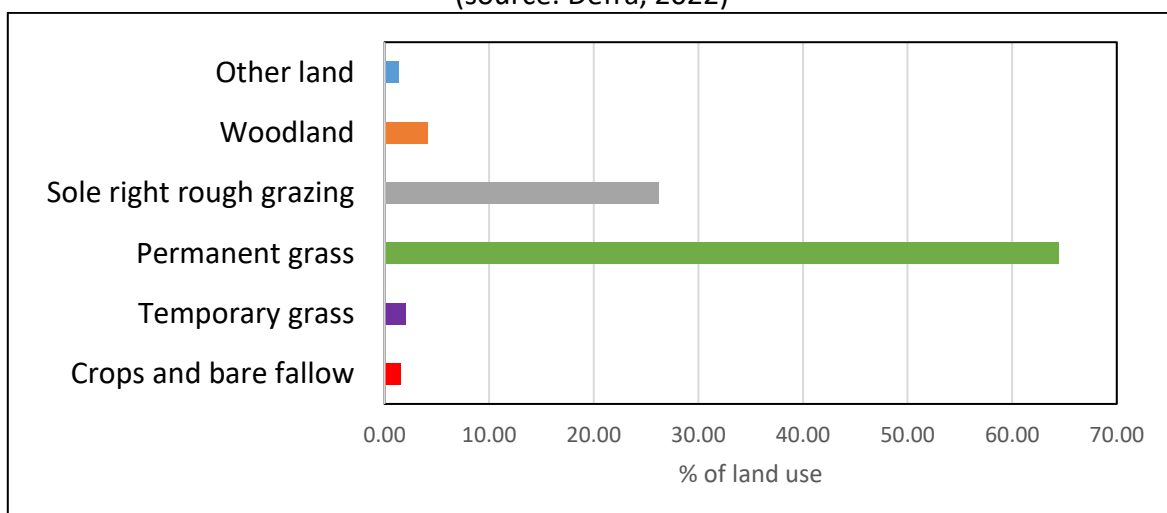
Of the total agricultural area, 44.2% is rented and 56.8% owner occupied.

Figure 2 – Farm Sizes in the Lake District National Park 2021
(source: Defra, 2022)



With respect to agricultural land use, Figure 3 shows that the majority is permanent pasture (64.5%) followed by sole rights² rough grazing representing just over a quarter of the farmland (26.2%). Notably woodland only occupies 4.5% of the agricultural land area.

Figure 3 – Agricultural Land use in Lake District National Park 2021
(source: Defra, 2022)



² Sole rights – enclosed rough grazing land where only one farmer has rights to graze (usually the landowner).

The agricultural labour force in 2021 was 2735, which is an increase from 2009 of 350, half of which appeared between 2016 and 2021 (Defra, 2022). Again, it suggests the expansion of the park boundary may have something to do with this. Part time and full time farming jobs have both increased at broadly the same proportions. There has been a slight drop in employee numbers (36).

Finally, Figure 4 shows the change in livestock numbers during the period 2009 to 2021. Whilst sheep numbers far outweigh cattle numbers ten-fold, sheep numbers have remained relatively steady over the last eleven years, with a drop of 14,000 between 2016 and 2021 even though the park boundary has expanded. Cattle numbers declined mainly between 2010 and 2016 with a small recovery to 2021. Dairy cattle numbers have reduced by 14% and Beef by 17%. Having said this, the number of dairy farms in the Lake District has halved in the last 14 years. The main reason behind this has been the loss of smaller herds most of which are uneconomic below 100 head.

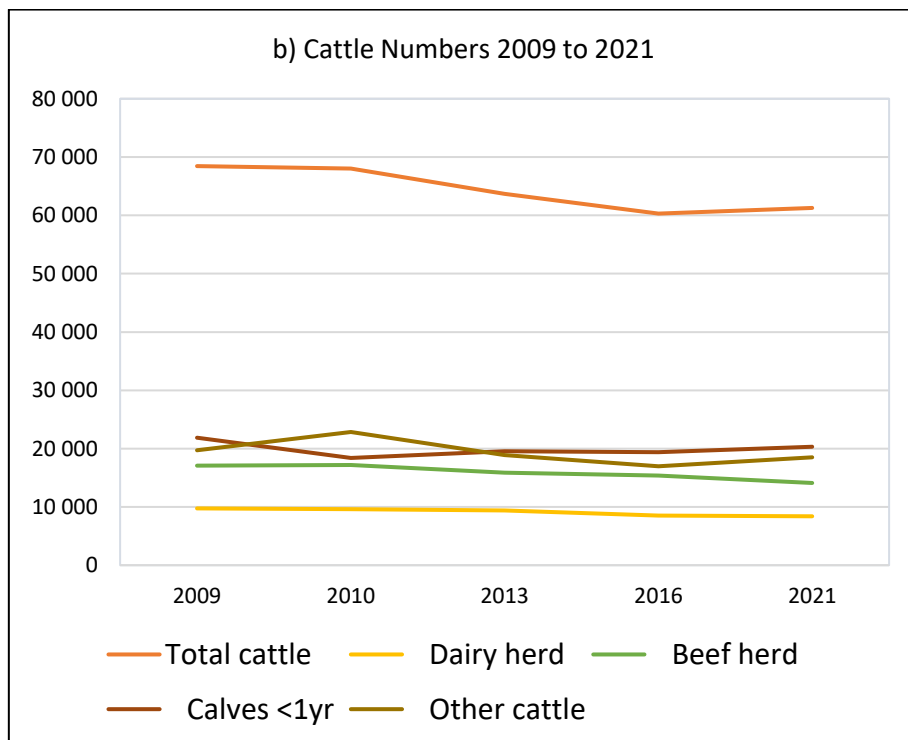
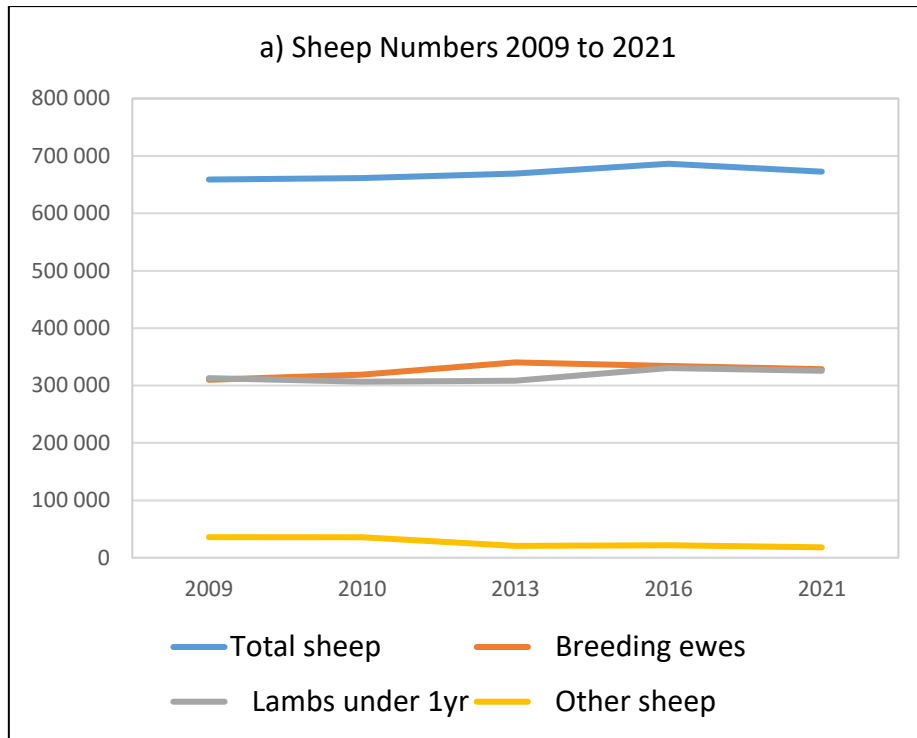
With regards to other types of agriculture, the poultry industry has almost doubled in size since 2009. There are now a quarter of million chickens in the National Park; whereas the pig industry has halved.

In summary, published agricultural statistics for the whole park show:

- In 2021 62% was farmed land and 28% common land
- Of the farmed land, two thirds were permanent pasture and only 4.5% wooded.
- The majority of farms (64%) are LFA livestock farms
- Dairy and pig farming have declined the most over the last 14 years
- Poultry farming is on the increase.
- Half of all farms are 50 hectares or smaller (not including common land)
- With the expansion of the national park boundary in 2021 it is difficult to provide accurate trends data.

Figure 4: Sheep & Beef Numbers in the Lake District National Park, 2009 to 2021

(source: Defra, 2022)



4.2 WHS Farm Survey Data

Survey data were collated and analysed in several steps:

- Geographical distribution
- Ownership patterns and farm geography
- Traditional farms and their structures – buildings and boundaries
- Land types - woodland, hay meadows, scrub and heathland
- Common, fell and heft
- Livestock – numbers, hefting and communing
- Deer
- Human and social capital – labour force, agricultural shows and community engagements
- Farm viability

4.2.1 Distribution of returns

The farm survey generated 98 responses, representing 7.9% of the active Lake District farms³. Response rates from the thirteen recognised valleys were substantially different with the greatest percentages from Borrowdale & Bassenthwaite (20.7%) and Windermere (18.4%). The fewest responses came from Buttermere where there was only one return. There were nevertheless, returns from every valley. Some returns were incomplete, thus data may not 'add up to 98' in each of the question analyses, in other places more complex multiple results can be given, such as where multiple structures exist on a single boundary line.

4.2.2 Ownership patterns and farm geography

Just under 40% of farms surveyed were owner occupied, 31% were tenanted and the rest were combinations of owned and tenanted (Figure 5).

With respect to farm size, 8.4% of farms are under 20 ha in size, with 48.3% representing farms over 100 ha (Figure 6).

³ The annual Farm Business Survey published by Newcastle University has only 12 returning farms in the Lake District.

Figure 5 Ownership patterns 2022

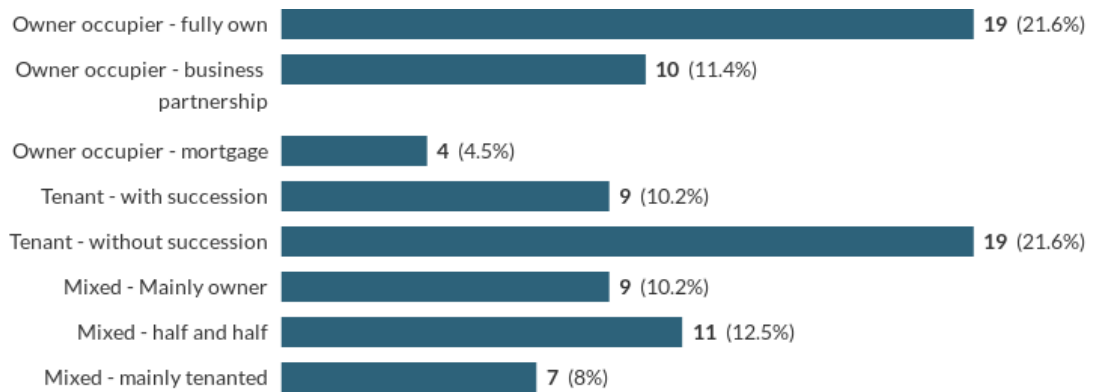
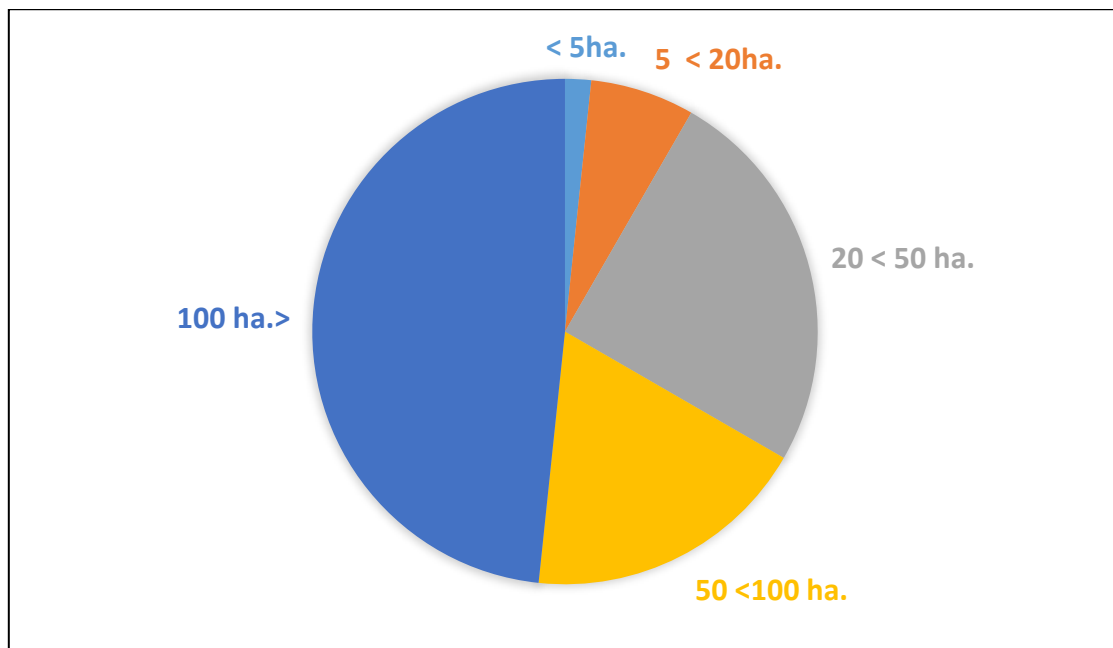
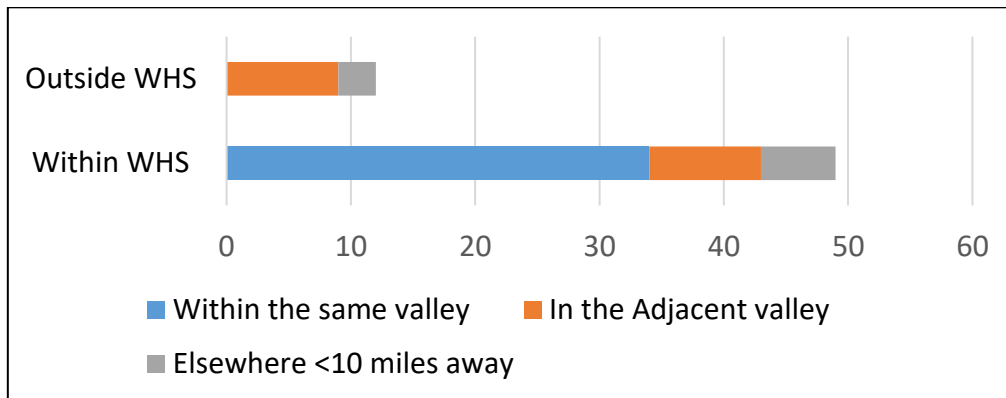


Figure 6 Farm Sizes 2022



Over 40% of farms had land in more than one block geographically. Of those, the majority had land within the WHS in the same valley or the adjacent one (Figure 7). Only twelve had land outside the WHS boundary.

Figure 7 –Non-contiguous farming Land inside and outside WHS
(by number of farms)



Eighty-nine percent of farmers were still actively farming, and 9.3% had let their land out for rent. The rest were still undecided what to do.

4.2.3 Traditional farms and their structures

The majority of respondents identified with their farm being a ‘traditional farmstead’ (92%). Within that, we asked people to comment on a range of structures in three ways (Table 1):

- Do you have this feature within your farmstead – yes or no
- What is its condition:
 - Good – requires no immediate action
 - Satisfactory – management action in medium term
 - Poor – requires short term action
- Are you using it – yes or no.

Table 1 – Use and condition of Structures

Structure	Structure present	Condition			In use
		Good	Satisfactory	Poor	
Traditional stone barn within farmstead	87.8	63.3	21.7	15	93.4
Sheepfold	53.2	48.6	37.8	13.5	84.2
Outgangs	23.9	58.3	25	16.7	45.0
Field barn	38.2	30.8	34.6	34.6	46.7
Hog house	27.8	35.3	17.8	47.1	45.5
Peat house	1.5	0	100	0	11.1
Dove cote	3.0	50.0	25.0	25.0	18.2
Bee bole	4.3	100 (1)	0	0	0

With regard to traditional farm structures, the majority reported stone barns as part of the hereditament (88%), nearly all were in use and over 85% of these were in good or satisfactory condition. Nearly 40% of farmsteads reported field barns with around half in use, but condition was not as good as barns in the hereditament where over a third were in poor condition.

Over half of farms have sheepfolds, again the majority are in use (84%), with 85% in good or satisfactory condition. Half of outgangs were in use and in good condition, but only a quarter of farms have these. Hog houses were found on over a quarter of farms, half in use (but it was unspecified what for). There is notable poorer condition of these than other farm structures in the surveyed farms.

Peat houses, dove cotes and bee boles were rare, only found on one, two and three farms respectively.



Field barns and hog houses are in poor condition and need consideration for support

Smaller structures are rare, and dove cotes may need targeted support

Field Boundaries

With regard to field boundaries we asked farmers to identify both the presence and absence of various types as well as their condition. With regard to condition we asked them to categorise them as follows:

- Good - intact
- Satisfactory – some rebuilding/reinforcing required in places
- Poor – not providing security for stock

Table 2 – Field Boundaries

	Present (%)	Aver. Per farm	Condition			Absent (%)
			Good	Satisfactory	Poor	
Drystone walls	97.7	58.9	43.2	49.4	7.4	2.3
Hedge	89.7	22.8	50	43.9	6.1	10.3
Kest/hedge bank	47.3	19.0	30.4	60.9	8.7	52.7
Shard fencing	17.8	6.6	80	20.0	0.0	82.2
Park railings	13.3	2.8	60	20	20	86.7
Other eg wire, post & rail	93.0	28.6	35.9	59.4	4.7	7.0

Table 2 shows nearly all farms in the survey reported drystone walls (98%) and of these the majority were in good or satisfactory condition, with only 7% reported as not providing

stock security. However, there was a large range within these data with some farms having as little as 5% walls to others which were completely walls and nothing else.

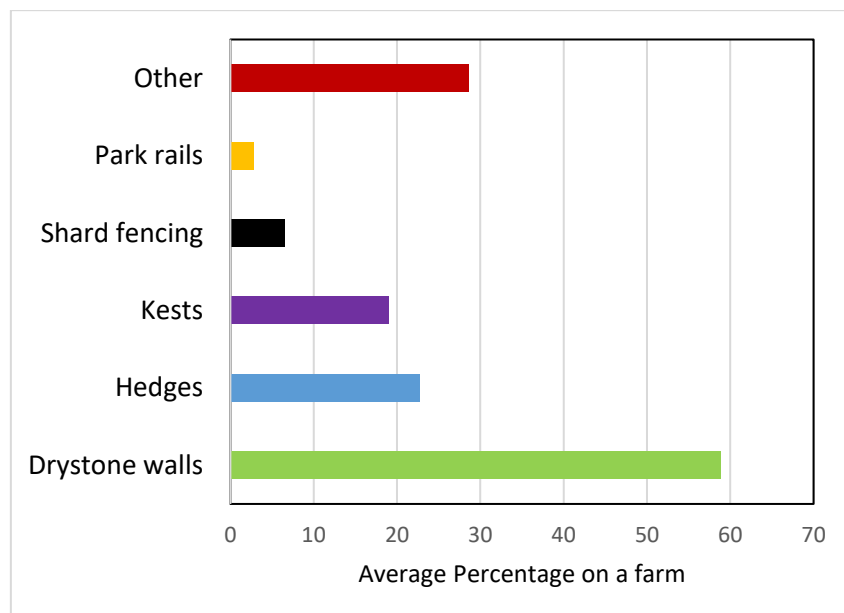
Hedges were present on nearly 90% of farms, with the majority in good or satisfactory condition. Once again there was a substantial range from farms with only nominal amounts of hedge through to two farms which were almost solely hedgerows.

Half of farms reported having kests (47.3%) the majority of which were in good or satisfactory condition. The range of data suggests that some farmers had only one kest on their land, whereas the maximum was 85%.

We also asked farmers to report on the more unusual fencing found in the Lake District, that is shard fencing and park railings. Only 6.6% of farms reported having shard fencing, the majority of which was in good or satisfactory condition. Most of the farms had only small amount, but one farm had 30% of its boundaries made up of this boundary type. Park railings were even less prevalent, with only five farms reporting these with a larger percentage in poor condition.

Most farmers reported other types of boundary mainly sheep netting, post & wire, post & rail and some deer fencing. Many their boundaries were double structured, for example both hedges and fenced as well was reported several times. As a result, we cannot report on an average field boundary 'package' for farms in the Lake District, but separately, the average field boundary style in the WHS looks like Figure 8, dominated by a combination of walls and hedges, supplemented with sheep netting and top wires.

Figure 8 Average of Field Boundary Styles by Farm



Park Railings maintenance may need support.

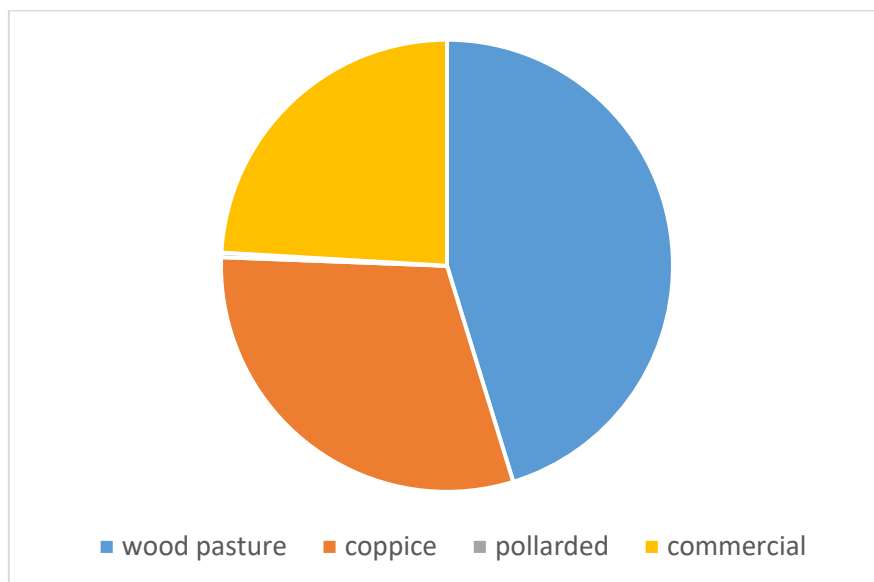
4.2.4 Land types

Farmers were asked to outline the types of land they have on their holding with respect to woodland, hay meadows, scrub and heathland. We also asked about whether it is in use and its management condition. The data are shown in Table 3.

Woodlands

In total, 1652.2 ha of woodland were reported from this survey. Figure 9 shows that the majority is wood pasture (45%), followed by coppice (30%) and then commercial plantation (24%). The remainder is classified as pollarded woodland (7ha) and is found on only two farms. The wood pasture, found on 53 farms, ranges in size from 1 to 200 ha. Coppice woodland, found on 25 farms, ranges from several farms with 1 ha blocks to two farms which recorded 100ha and 500 ha respectively, the latter classified as commercial woodland as well.

Figure 9 – Area of Woodland in Survey: by Type



Fifty seven farms reported blocks of woodland of one type or another in use out of a total of 131 (43.5%). Conversely, eight four woodland blocks were not in use; but it is important to consider if this may refer to functional use on or by the farm and not for biodiversity. Of those in use, 23 farmers reported undermanaged woodland, the majority of which was wood pasture (12), along with six coppice woods. Surprisingly, there were also two reports of woodland planted since 2017 which was undermanaged. There are few examples of woods where the management has been abandoned.

Table 3 – Land Types on Survey Farms: Management Condition

	Total	In use	Not in use	Condition			
				Managed	Under managed	Abandoned	Unknown
Wood pasture	53	35	18	24	12	2	3
Coppiced woodland	25	8	17	5	6	1	0
Pollarded woodland	16	2	14	1	1	1	1
Commercial woodland	21	4	17	3	2	1	1
Woodland planted since 2017	26	8	18	10	2	0	1
Sub Total Woodlands	131	57	84	43	23	5	6
Hay meadow – grazed by cattle	26	11	15	8	2	0	2
Hay meadow – grazed by sheep	34	28	6	19	4	0	1
Hay meadow – grazed by cattle and sheep	41	33	8	24	4	0	2
Hay meadow – grazed by other stock	12	1	11	1	1	0	0
Sub totals Hay Meadows	113	73	40	52	11	0	5
Heathland	13	7	6	4	2	0	1
Scrub	20	10	10	6	3	1	0



Over half of traditional types of woodland in the WHS are not in use (wood pasture and coppice). This is an underutilised farm resource and of natural capital value.

Opportunity exists to bring back into use extant wood pasture and coppice.

Hay meadows

There are 113 individual hay meadows reported in this survey, 64% of which are utilised. Grazing regimes vary for those in use; 15% are grazed by cattle only, 38% by sheep only, 45% by a combination of sheep and cattle, and the rest by other stock. The management condition of these is 83% managed and 17% undermanaged. There are forty hay meadows which are currently not in use.

Area data for hay meadows reported about 80ha are grazed by cattle over 13 farms, 635ha by sheep over 35 farms and 854.9ha by combination of sheep & cattle over 39 farms.



There is opportunity to increase hay meadow management across the WHS

Heathland

Thirteen farms reported heathland on their land. It is important to note at this point that most farmers with common land do not count their commonland as part of their farm. As a consequence, the results for this section will reflect private ownership and sole grazing enclosed fell. Of these 13, 53.8% used their heathland and 47.2 did not. Of the ten farms who did declare the amount of heathland they have, it totalled 2540ha, of which the four largest areas were in use and not the smaller pockets.

Scrub

Twenty farmers reported scrub on their land of which 50% was in use and the other 50% not. Of that in use, half was managed and the rest undermanaged. Scrub covers roughly 164 hectares on the 16 returning farms for this question.

Ecological Activity

Twenty-one farms reported an environmental designation on their land, and only one farm said that this land was not in use as part of the farm business. Fifteen reported the land was managed. Beyond that, twenty indicated they had specifically set other land aside for nature half of whom were using the land still and half were not.



There is evidence that farmers set land aside for nature conservation without grant support.

4.2.5 Common, fell and heft

Farmers were asked to comment on their use of commons and their hefts. Forty-two farmers identified they had commonland attached to their business, of which 36 (85.7%)

said this land was in use. Six farmers reported their common was undermanaged in their view. With respect to hefts, six were recorded as no longer in use out of 26 (ie. 23%). Of the remaining hefts, three were undermanaged from the farmer’s point of view.

With regard to common rights, pasturage was reported by 32 farmers, estover by one, and rights of the soil by 3. There was no reporting of active pannage, turbary or piscary.

Of those farmers who had common land, 17.5% gathered on their own, 36.8% with other family members and 45.6% with people outside the family.

Overall, this survey returned 39 different commons where gathering currently takes place. The distribution of these is shown on Figure 10 (over).

Farmers were further asked to describe their muster for gathering. Figure 11 shows that most musters rely on between 2 and 4 people. There was one example where eight people work together (Nether Wasdale) and two where numbers were variable up to 8 (Ullswater, and Borrowdale/ Bassenthwaite). One farmer found it almost impossible to get anyone to join him. The majority only help gather where they have common rights, but eight farmers go and help elsewhere. Two thirds worked with their neighbours, one third did not work with their neighbour to gather.



There is a limited amount of co-operative gathering beyond the ‘home fell’. Mustering is becoming more difficult for commoners.

Figure 11 – Muster Numbers, Lake District Commons

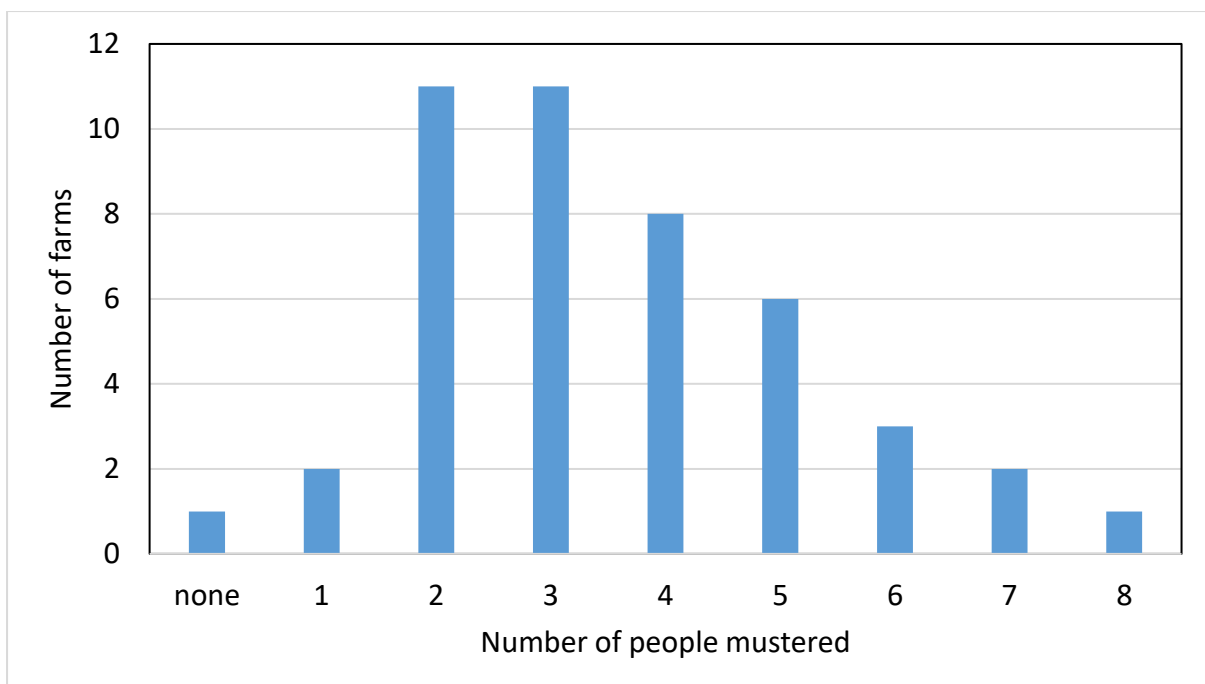
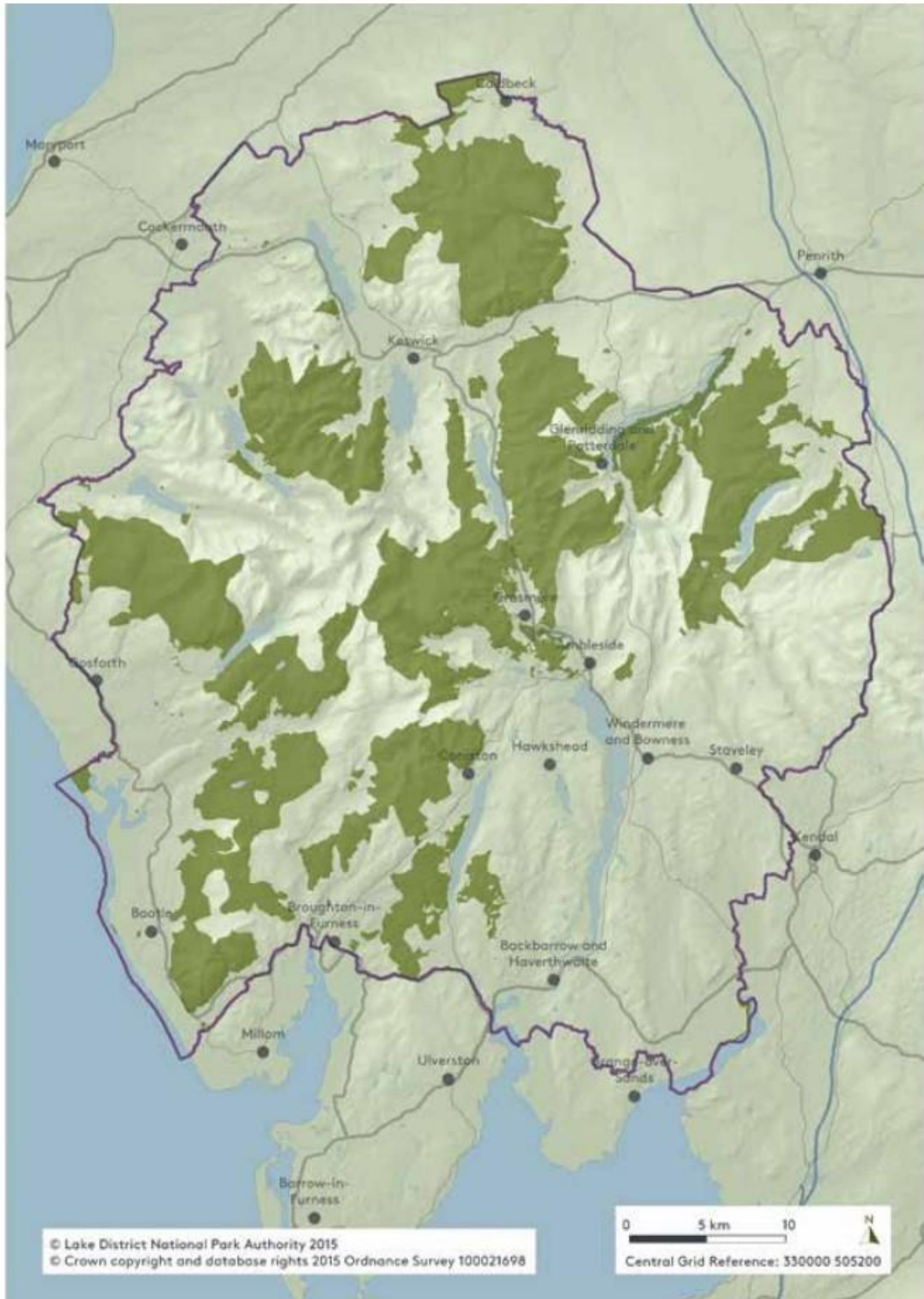


Figure 10 - Approximate location of Hefts in Survey

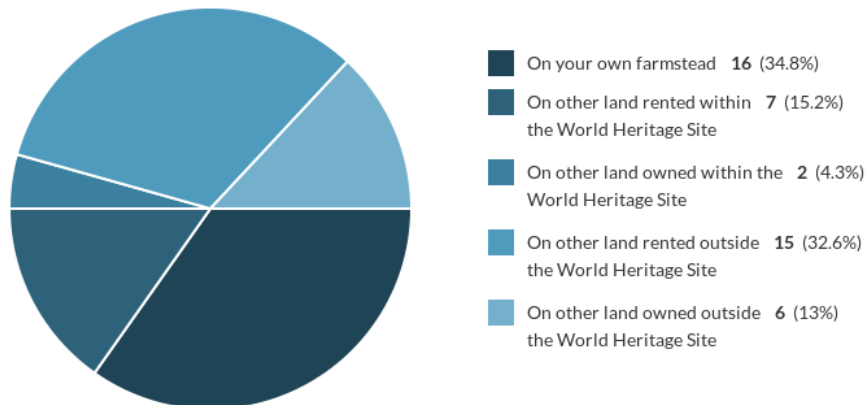


□ Nominated Property boundary ■ Registered Common Land
Registered Common Land © Natural England 2015

The survey specifically asked about changes in common rights since 2017. There were 30 responses to this question, of which two thirds said their rights had stayed the same, 23% had seen a decline and only 1 had seen an increase.

In relation to off wintering and where it takes place, the results are shown in Figure 12. About one third off wintered on their own land, and 45% on land they rented or owned outside the WHS. Only two farmers left their stock on the fell over winter.

Figure 12 The Location of Off Wintering

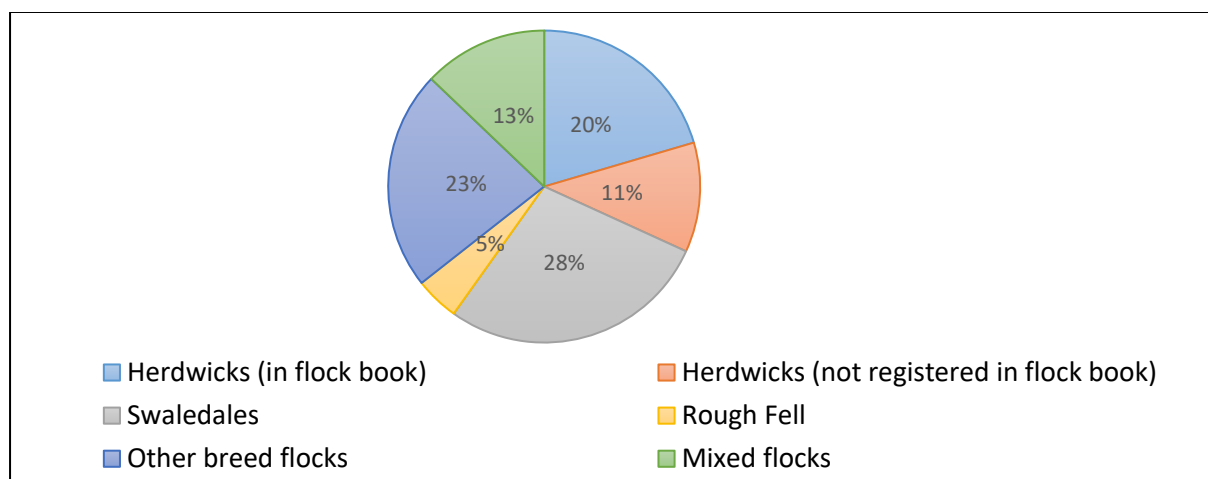


The tradition of wintering stock on the fell as declined substantially.

3.2.6 Livestock

Farmers were asked a range of questions about their livestock. The overall picture is one of a diverse livestock base operating in the WHS with an emphasis on sheep. In total Overall, 132 flocks were recorded in this survey. Of these, Herdwick flocks represented just under one third with Swaledales accounting for a quarter (37). Rough Fells were very limited in number, with just six (Figure 13).

Figure 13 – Number of Flocks by Breed

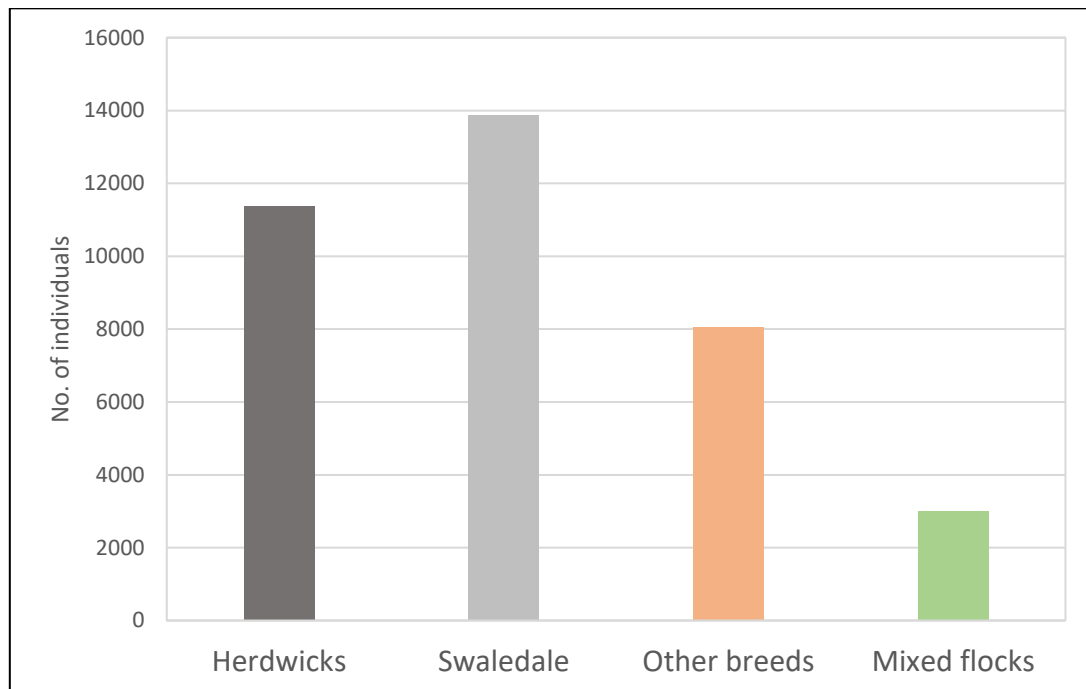


Other flocks were dominated by texels, cheviots and charlois, or cross bred. There were also small numbers of other breeds mentioned:

- UK Rare - Hebridean, Castle Milk Moorit, Teeswater, Blue Face Leicester, white woodland
- Lowland – suffolk, ryland
- Other uplands – masham, welsh mountain, N of England mules
- Contemporary – beltex, dutch spotted, eltex, easy care, zwarzbtles

With respect to numbers, Figure 14 shows that from this survey, Herdwick sheep are no longer the main breed in the Lake District. The total number of Herdwicks was 11,379, the majority of which (8554) were attributed to registered flocks. Swaledales accounted for 13,871 individuals (38%).

Figure 14 – Number of Individual Sheep in Lake District Farm Survey 2022



The distribution of flock breeds is complex, some farms have only lowland flocks and others only fell flocks. Some have both (Table 4 over).

Table 4 – Flock Locations

	Lowland grazing		Common/fell grazing	
	yes	no	yes	no
Herdwicks per flock book	14	12	24	7
Herdwicks not in the flock book	10	11	7	11
Sub Total Herdwicks	24	23	31	18
Swaledales	29	10	22	9
Rough fell	5	9	2	7
Other flocks	25	9	3	9
Mixed flocks	19	6	0	8

The survey also recorded five dairy herds and 43 suckler cow herds, the latter representing 2163 animals. Other animals recorded included 5 farms with a few goats and one goat herd, six farms with 41 pigs and two farms with four deer.

Chickens were found on 35 farms totalling 546, suggesting none of these were strictly commercial chicken farms.

There were 27 fell ponies on 11 farms, of which only four were used for breeding.

Other livestock include: ducks (4 farms), geese (2 farms), a donkey, 15 horses (5 farms), two reindeer on one farm and bees on one farm.

The survey also asked farmers to record changes in stock levels since 2017. In relation to sheep, 57% of farmers reported no change to their numbers, where as 25.2% had seen a decrease and 17.8% an increase. For cattle, 51.7% of farmers reported no change, 22.4% a decrease and 25.9% an increase. Overall, cattle numbers have risen and sheep numbers have fallen.

Farmers who made changes were asked to explain why they had done so. With regard to increasing stock the range of reasons given included:

- Taking over more land (3)
- Needing to pay farm wages, partners and bills (4)
- The need to increase commercial production to make financial return (6)
- Increased numbers to help with Agri-environment agreement (2)

With regard to reductions, the reasons were:

- Working towards retirement (3)
- Sheep don't pay and a switch to cattle (2)
- Lack of infrastructure (1)
- Lack of help from landlord (2)
- Required to reduce by agri-environment scheme (3)
- Focus on quality not quantity (1)
- Cattle better than sheep for conservation (4)

- Need to diversify activity to be profitable (1)
- Cattle decreased due to safety of the general public and more walkers (2)
- Let land out (1)



Herdwick sheep are no longer the main breed in the Lake District by flock numbers nor individuals.

The data suggest fell ponies are under threat.

There is no obvious pattern to increases or decreases in stock numbers, nor any main reason.

4.2.7 Deer presence

Farmers were asked to comment on the effects of wild deer herds on land where they have fell going sheep flocks. Six farms identified herds of more than 100 were found on their land all year round. For those where there are less than 100 deer at any one time, 21 farms noted deer in the spring with less in the summer (18). Autumn and winter, saw 20 farms record less than 100 deer on the fell land they managed. Sixteen farms recorded no deer at all.

Farmers were also asked to comment on whether the deer were taken into account as part of their agri-environment scheme. There were two that had this clause in their exiting agreement and another two who were advised it would be in any future agreement.

4.2.8 Human and Social Capital on Farms in the WHS

A third main area of the farm survey was to explore the characteristics of human and social capital found on farms in the WHS. Human capital refers to individuals in terms of their activities on farm and employment structures. The social capital element covers wider engagement with the farming community through farming associations & organisations, and agricultural shows.

Farm Tasks

Figures 15 and 16 show the range of farm tasks undertaken on farms conducted by the farmer their self or through contracting. They also identify those tasks they conduct for others as contractors themselves and finally, those tasks which do not occur at all on their farm.

Drystone walling and shearing are the only two tasks which occur on every farm. This is followed consecutively by fencing, scanning livestock, hedgelaying and drainage clearance.

Boundary management (drystone walling, hedgelaying and fencing) and ditch clearance are the most prevalent tasks undertaken by farmers themselves; although farmers rely more on contractors for support with hedgelaying and fencing. Other important tasks completed by the farmer are spreading fertilisers and shearing.

Figure 15 – Number of Farmers who undertake certain Farm Tasks

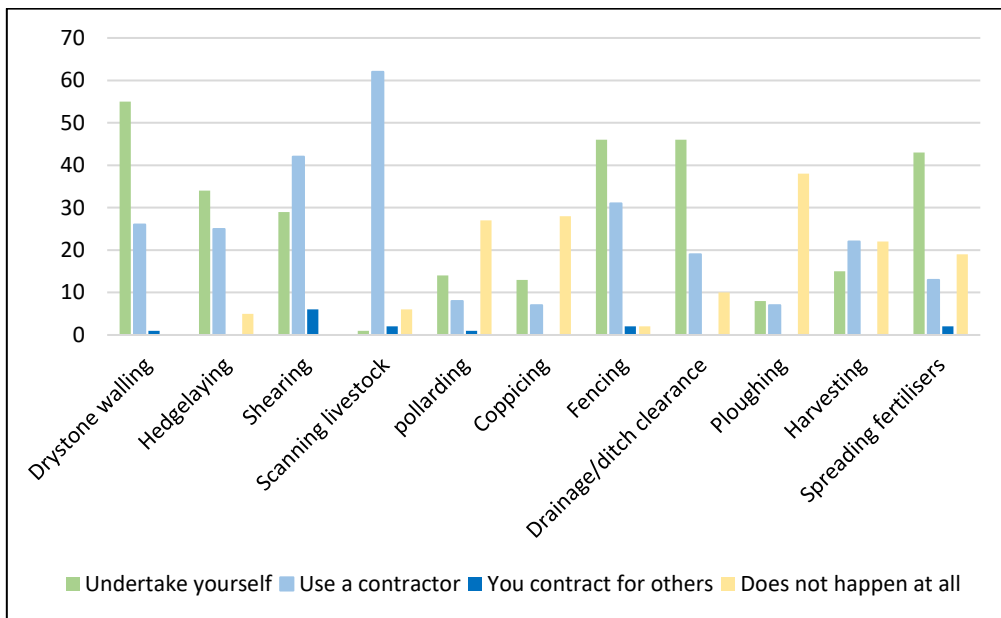
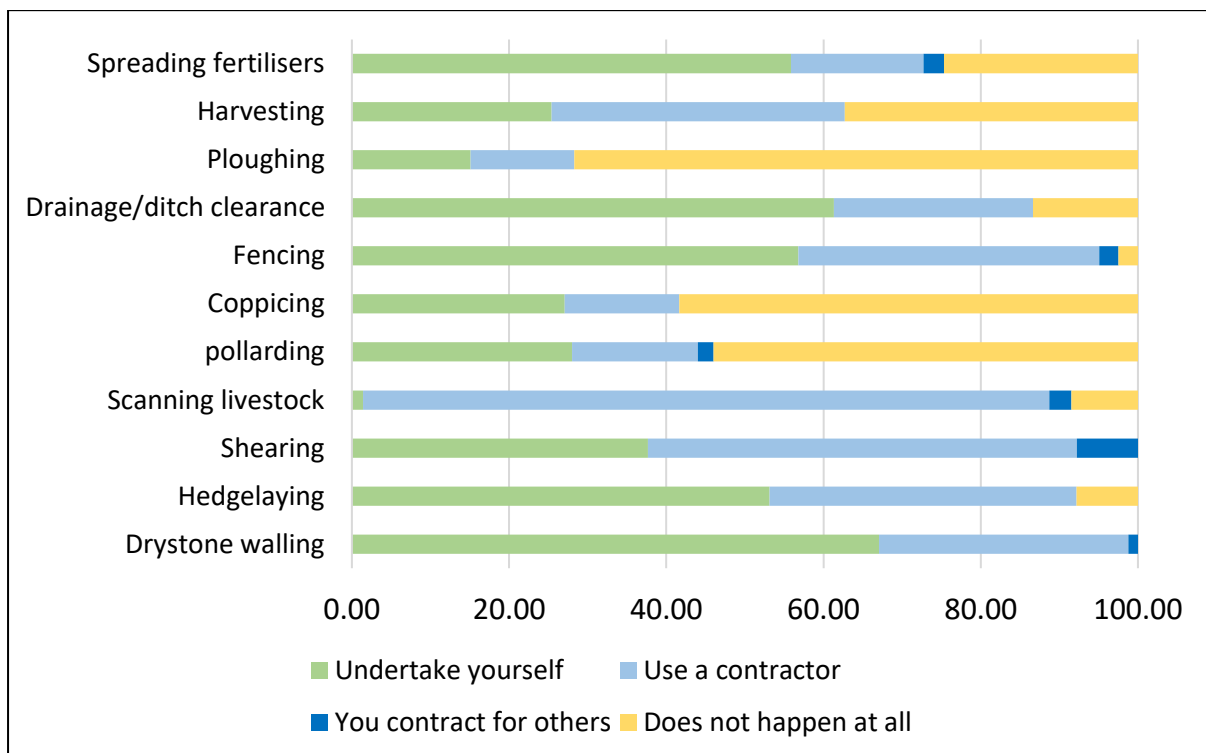


Figure 16 – Farm Tasks Undertaken by Farmers by Percentage



Farm tasks of least employed by farmers are pollarding, coppicing and ploughing; these are partially a function of type of farming in the WHS (ie pasture led) but also because few farms in this survey have trees in need in pollarding or coppicing.

Scanning livestock and shearing are the two most heavily relied upon tasks for which farmers use contractors, followed by hedgelaying and fencing. The former two require specialist equipment used infrequently across the farm year, and therefore an unnecessary capital expense. The latter two are more readily available from specialist contractors as these types of boundary are not central to farms in the WHS (see earlier) and may be tasks Lakeland farmers are less comfortable conducting themselves. In all, 40 farms used contractors, all of which were seasonal.

Farm Employment Structures

Three quarters of farmers in this survey consider themselves to be full time on the farm. Part time farmers make up 18% and occasional farmers 6.5%.

In relation to the number of people working on the farm from the family, the majority who answered this question (53) have one or two people full time, equally split. Only 12 farms reported three or four, a single farm had ten people working there. Twenty-eight farms had part time family members of which 57% had one, 39.3% two and only one farm three (3.7%).

With regards to hired labour, eighteen farms had full time staff, 8 part-time and 4 occasional staff. Ten farms employed someone full time, another four two people and two farms three. Most farms operating with part time staff only had one. One farm reported nine full time staff.

Only three farms mentioned having apprentices.

Eight hired a shepherd.



There is a definite dichotomy between those farm tasks undertaken by the farmer and the use of contractors. Specialist skills with occasional need, in particular, are contracted in.

The majority of labour is provided by the farmer and their immediate family. Very few farms now have substantive additional labour (ie beyond seasonal or casual). Most shepherding is conducted by the farmer or an immediate family member, reflecting restructuring due to cost of production. Consequently, there is little 'spare' labour to divert into other farm activities such as diversification or grant scheme work. A 'catch 22' situation.

Social Capital on Surveyed Farms

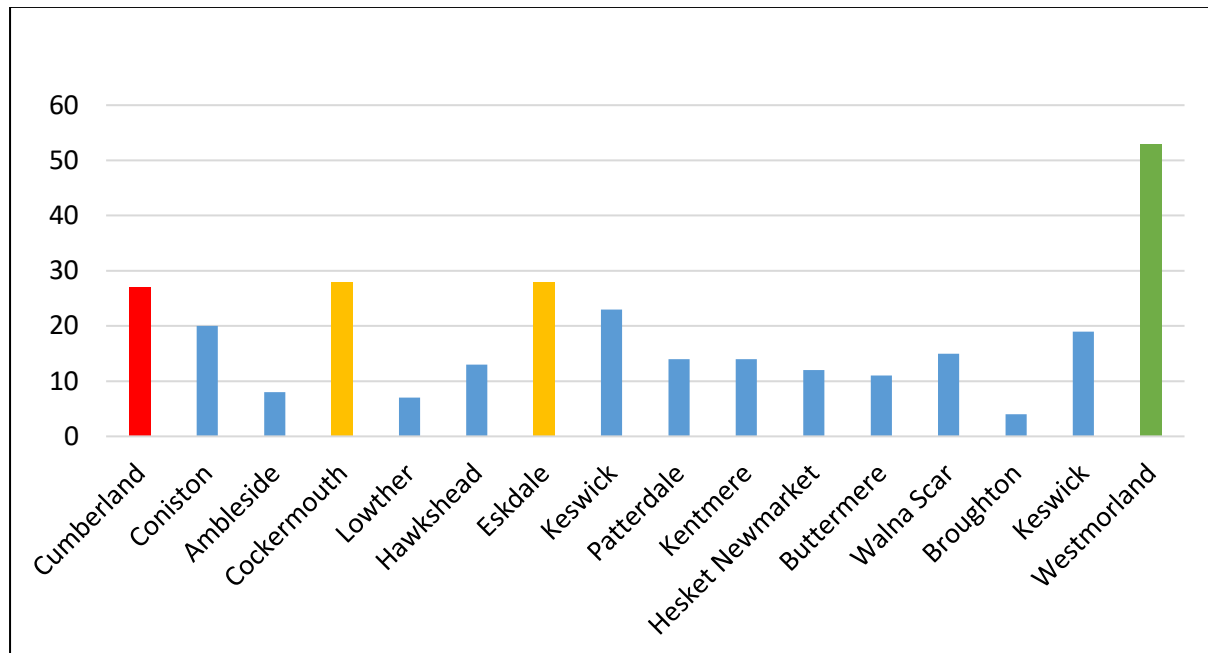
Engagement with a Commoners Association or the Farmer Network (a third of all respondents) was the most reported upon followed by Agricultural Shows and the NFU (a quarter). More farmers belonged to sheep breed associations (35) than cattle associations (15).

Roughly half (47 to 53%) of the respondents were **not** a member of: Fell Pony Assn., Young Farmers, Rare Breeds Trust, British Pig Assn., the CLA, the Pasture-Led Livestock Assn. and the Poultry Club as individual organisations.

Farmers also identified other groups they belonged to, the most of which included: various farmer discussion groups (eg Ambleside, Lyth Valley, Furness farmers club), the National Sheep Association, the Federation of Cumbria Commoners and Farming Connect. Other organisations were specific to interests such as the Soil Association, Cumbria Organic Farmers & Growers, Red Tractor, Cumbria Wildlife trust and the Princes Trust.

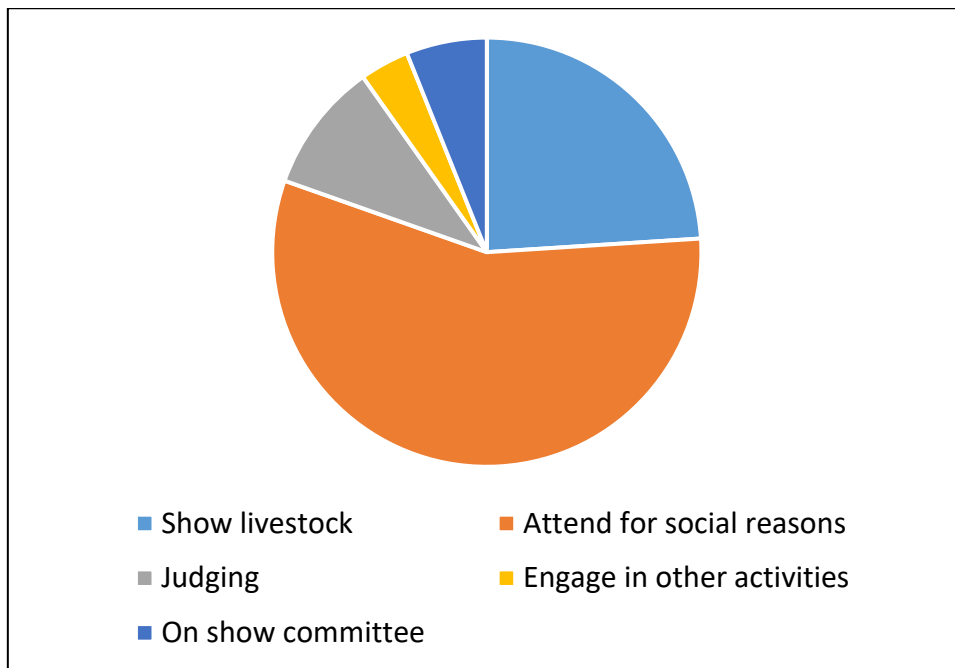
With respect to Agricultural Shows and Shepherds Meets, Figure 17 demonstrates that by far the most frequented show was the Westmorland, to the south of Kendal. Secondary important shows were the Cumberland Show, Cockermouth and Eskdale. Gosforth and Wasdale were also mentioned.

Figure 17 Engaging with Agricultural Shows & Shepherds Meets



Most people attended for social reasons (56%), but showing and judging were also important at 24% and 10% respectively (Figure 18).

Figure 18 Reasons for Attending Shows or Meets



With respect to wider community engagement, general parish activities were the most reported upon, followed by farmer discussion groups and then school events (Figure 19). ‘Young farmers’ was important to a third of the farm survey. There was a definite emphasis on farmers themselves engaging with community activities more than their spouses (Figure 20). This could be due to other work commitments and child care needs of spouses, with a third of survey respondents having children in the local schools. The older generation are now less involved than they might have been in the past, which may reflect the older demographic of the farming population as a whole (average age of farmer is 58). Fifty eight families also used the local shop in the valley.

Figure 19 Wider Community Engagement

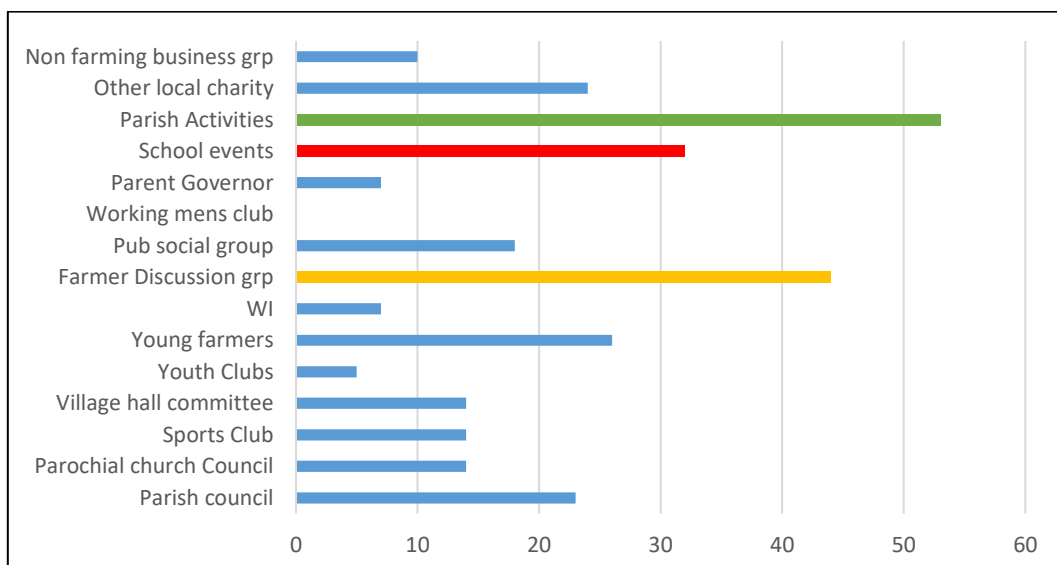
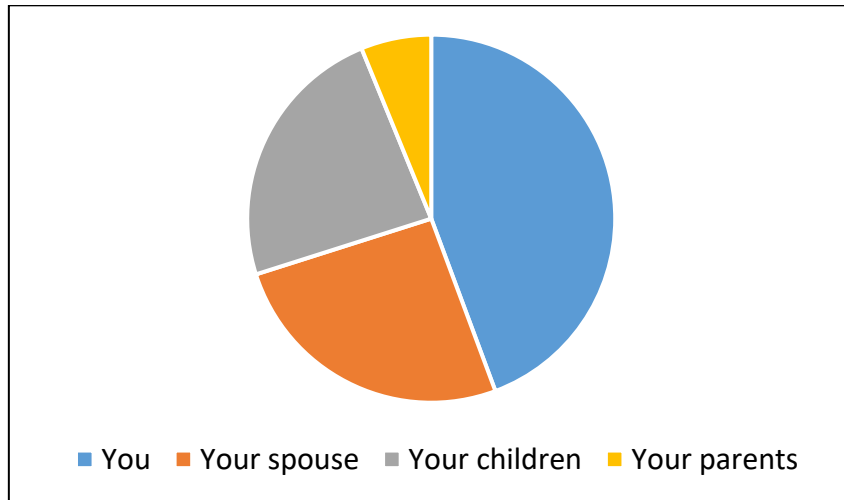


Figure 20 Family engagement with Community Activities



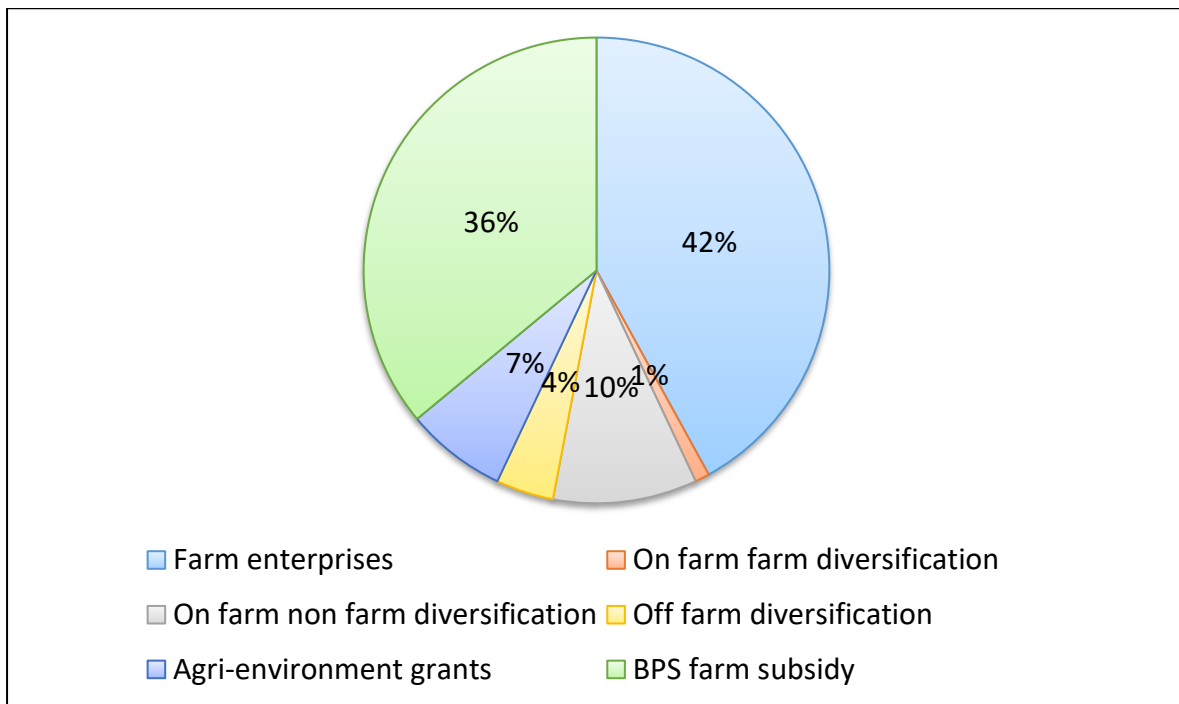
Local agricultural organisations and events are central to many farmers and their families. The most important are agricultural shows/shepherds meets, Commoners Associations, the Farmer Network and farmer discussion groups. General parish activities are also important to many.

The Westmorland show, Cockermouth and Eskdale are the most important shows for this sample of respondents and suggest are the most efficient locations to have a WHS stand when needed. Utilising the farmer discussion group network would be a useful information dissemination system to employ.

4.2.9 Farm viability

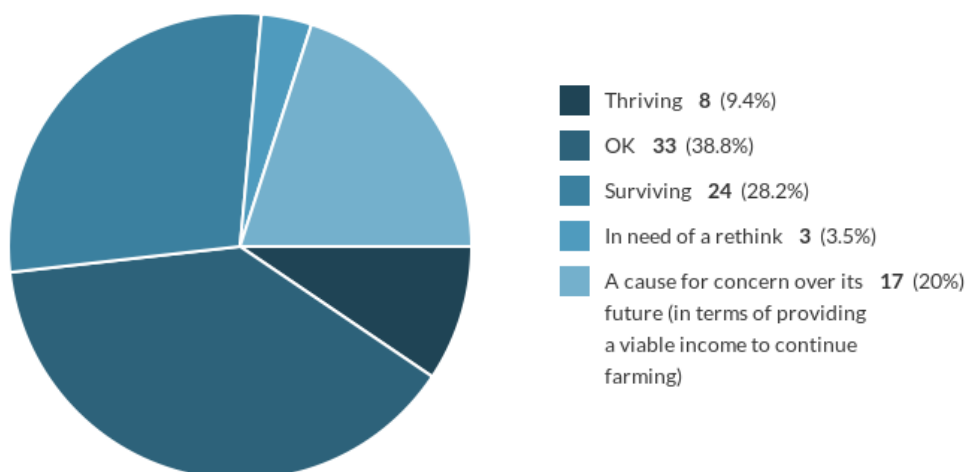
Previous surveys (eg Charles & Scott,2018) suggest that 30% of farm incomes come from diversification in the Lake District, 30% from subsidies and 40% from farming. This survey shows a different structure to our farming industry for 2022 (Figure 21). There is a greater reliance on subsidies and grants (roughly 43%), and diversification only 15%. Even if agri-environment grants are included in diversification (which they sometimes are) this still only comes to 22% of farm business income.

Figure 21 – Lake District Agriculture: Sources of Income 2022



Farmers were asked to consider the viability of their farms. Overall, only 9.4% felt their businesses were thriving, 28.2% felt they were surviving and 23.5% expressed concern. When questioned further regarding the future of hill farming, just under a third expected to continue as they currently, 11.4% wanted to increase their farm business and another quarter recognised they needed to change. The final third was expressing deeper concern (Figures 22 & 23). There was little expressed as to what might change their views, 6 farmers cited better government policy, three a better sustainable food policy, and two more information on ELMS. Only one respondent felt farmers had spent too much time in the past relying on grants and subsidies. Overall, the lack of and style answers suggested a general acceptance that this was the way it is.

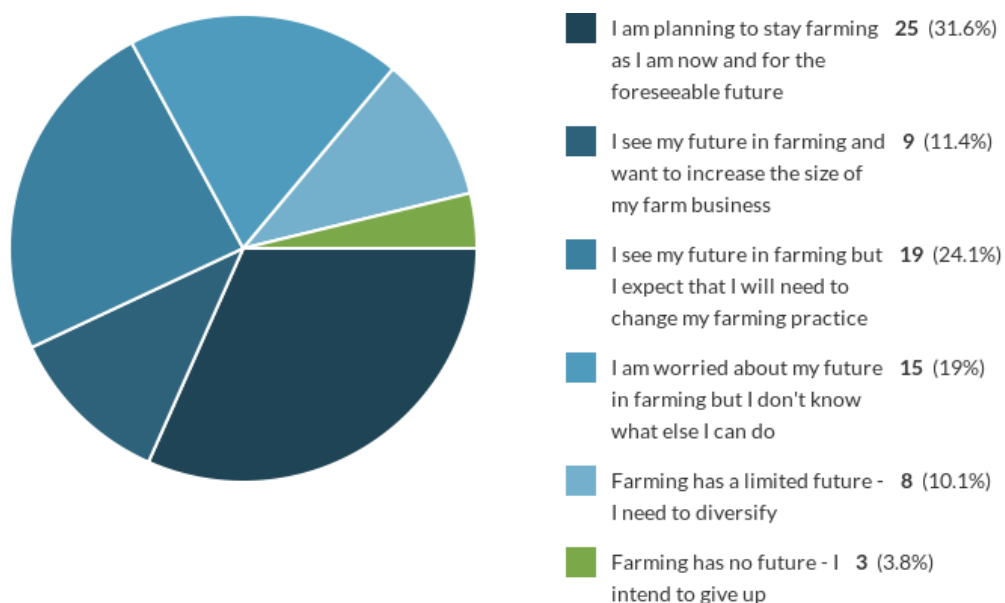
Figure 22 – Perceptions on the viability of the Farm Business



Related to this general malaise is the issue of succession. Overall, only a third had an identified successor, a third no one and a third may be. Of those with no successor in mind:

- 7 were looking to sell
- 4 have decided to rent out
- 9 had a Farm Business tenancy
- 3 no longer farmed and had retired
- 2 were considering turning the farm into a trust

Figure 23 – the Future of Hill Farming



When asked to comment about availability of appropriate advice, at this time of survey only 8 farmers had approached FIPL. Only a quarter overall knew were to get advice and some of the more negative comments included such feedback has ‘have tried and failed’, ‘no one is interested’, ‘not all farms can diversify- the landlord view’, ‘retiring soon’, ‘have no internet – most advice is on line’, ‘Its all a bit overwhelming’ and ‘only if we pay for it’.

Farmers felt that ESA was by far the best scheme they had engaged with over the years, followed by the current CSS. The lack of information about ELMS made many of them frustrated. Seven respondents specifically identified the current CSS/HLS as destroying family farming and impacting negatively on the WHS.

Some thoughts on how schemes should be developed going forwards included:

- Some detail on ELMS would be nice (8)
- Better payment rates

- Not be overly prescriptive
- One size does not fit all
- Schemes are too short, and need to be longer (3)
- View that farmers will not take up ELMS and instead increase livestock numbers
- Better supervision over compliance
- Lack of skilled tradesmen to carry out the work needed
- Schemes need to be more targeted
- ELMS is Confusing and complicated (4)
- Complicated in practice
- Payment by results
- ELMS needs to learn from previous schemes this does not seem to be happening
- ELMS is not very inspiring (2)
- Landlords vs. tenant's issues



Diversification is only contributing between 15 and 22% of a farm business income.

There is concern over the future of hill farming, and a recognition that farming businesses will need to restructure. However, it is clear people are not sure where to get advice.

4.2.10 Final Qualitative Comments

Respondents were given range of opportunities to express their feelings and thoughts about the current situation in the Lake District WHS. The richness of answers is worthy on inclusion here as it demonstrates the current depth of feeling by the farming community about the current position of farming in the Lake District.

For example;

'Natural England are becoming extremely forceful and seem to have biased tendencies towards more/all sheep being removed from hefted grazing sites and a rewilding program introduced throughout the Lake District (although this has not been specifically said, it would seem as though this would be the ultimate goal of this government funded organisation)'.

Compared to;

We are interested the landscape recovery scheme. Public payments for public good is the right approach to future funding for farming.

Compared to;

Planting trees on good land is very silly At 35 years old they stop taking carbon out of air. Branches under canopy die and rot back into air. 200 years 90% of trees will be dead rotting back into the air.

One farmer from the West Coast wrote:

'We would like for the farmers of the Lake District and Cumbria, in particular the low input hefted sheep and cattle grazing systems and their products to be recognised for the role they have in maintaining the landscape of the Lake District. The health benefits of eating the lamb/mutton and beef reared on the Lake District fell farms; the strict animal welfare and farm management procedures UK farmers are required to follow to be able to keep livestock, manage the landscape and environment and run a farm business.

How our animals manage the landscape in such a way to benefit the environment by sequestering carbon from the atmosphere and that by organisations like Natural England insisting on reducing animal grazing numbers on the fells will;

a) cause the fragile and [already damaged beyond repair] hefting system to be lost forever

b) force more foreign food imports into the UK to feed an ever growing population of products i.e. meat and grains that have not been reared/grown to the same standards of animal welfare and food production that we have in the UK.

c) the landscape to become unhealthy, unmanaged and incapable of sequestering the amounts of carbon it can currently store.

Overall be more detrimental in the long term because of all these elements and more, to the working, cultural, pastoral landscape of the Lake District and the UK as a whole.

We would like to be listened to and I mean really listened to about what we consider to be the best approaches for managing the land that we know, that we farm and working together with organisations to achieve the best outcomes; not just asked for an opinion and then these organisations disregard us and undermine our intelligence - i.e. Natural England/DEFRA/RPA/Government disregarding a farmers/commoners views and continue on down the one way path they've been on from the start of said stewardship agreements whilst also insulting the intelligence of the farmers/commoners by saying that stewardships aren't working, only picking out the areas of land in a stewardship that they consider 'aren't working' therefore none of the stewardship is working out on the land (in their opinion), the only way is to remove all the sheep.

A range of other comments were made which are worthy of inclusion in this survey, as they give an overall feel of the respondent's thoughts about the WHS and the National Park, and where improvements could be made.

Views

- Better BPS replacement

- For NPA to stand up and actively support hill farming & common land rather than see it as an irrelevance (5)
- NPA and NE to support farming more positively.
- Evidence to show our farming systems are already sustainable
- NPA to appreciate small family farms
- Cultural heritage is a public good and should be paid for
- We are not a museum nor playground for tourists (x 2)
- More support from the NPA to tackled the reduced grazing levels proposed by Natural England (x 5)
- Better recognition of lowland LD farming systems and some asked for better landscape level design allowing fell fencing to help with nature recovery.
- Better landscape level design – appropriate use of fencing on fells to help nature recovery
- No farmers, no WHS
- We made the landscape (x3)
- Hill farming is finished (x3)
- Lack of understanding by tourists of how this landscape was created by farming over many years
- Stop planting trees
- £1 in agrl subsidies generates £3 in local economy
- Less focus on tourists and more on the people of the LD who live here
- Too many visitors now stopping farmers going about their business (x2)
- Its going to get worse
- too many pressures on the hefting system mean too much change

With specific regard to the World Heritage site, one farmer wrote:

'The whole farming system that was identified in WHS is very fragile and becomes more so as NE require further reductions in hefted sheep. Whilst historic funding has helped to maintain the Lake District farming systems it has eroded productivity to levels that rely even more on financial support. This has created a vicious circle. Farmers feel disenfranchised and become increasingly disengaged with sustainable systems embracing production and nature recovery.'

Requests for more specific support to include:

- Diversification advice/grants - cash, planning, traditional farm infrastructure
- More scope to convert barns to other uses for the community, education or tourism
- Future grants to support hefting & shepherding processes
- Better internet access for those not on broadband
- Directory of young people willing to volunteer with walling, fencing, haymaking etc...
- Easing planning restrictions for renovations, affordable housing, diversification (2)
- For NPA to stand up and actively support hill farming & common land rather than see it as an irrelevance (5)
- Support skills needed to perpetuate the farming system
- the promotion of local identity of farmed products locally and nationally
- Can we have an environmental tax for visitors to re-invest

- More rangers out ranging please
- Support small farms like Norway does
- Support traditional hill farming and family farming (x 5)
- Help to measure our carbon footprints accurately
- Help for tenants with landlords
- Educate the visitors better

The general feeling therefore, seems to be one of asking the Park Authority to support the farming community more overtly, whilst at the same time suggesting hill farming is on the brink of collapse. *In contrast*, a range of ideas have been put forward which could form the basis of a WHS farm strategy.



There is an overall tone of a feeling of disenfranchisement in the comments of the respondents. There is a request for more overt support by the LDNPA, particularly as it is the agro-pastoral system which underpins WHS OUV.

Farmers have requested overall better support for traditional hill and family farming and targeted support with regard to planning, diversification, managing visitor understanding and carbon footprinting.

4.3 Representativeness of Primary Farm Survey

Table 5 provides a comparison between the Agricultural Census for the National Park and the World Heritage Site for some main farm characteristics. It is important to note that the Census includes the Park Extension, which is outside the WHS boundary. This distorts data comparison.

The WHS farm survey is generally representative of the ownership patterns in the National Park. There is an under-representation of common land and sole rights grazing. With regards to farm sizes, the survey respondents are less representative of farms under 20ha, and over representative of larger farms. The proportions of farm types are in line with the patterns in the Park area, but there were more LFA farmers responding than lowland beef enterprises. This could reflect the emphasis of WHS and this survey on the agro-pastoral system. Finally, the survey represented roughly 11% of the sheep and 15% of the cattle population.

Table 5 – Representativeness of the Survey

	Defra Agricultural Census	WHS Farm Survey
Number of farms	1243	98
Rented farms (%)	44.2	47.1
Owner occupied farms (%)	56.8	52.9
Commonland (%)	28	17.03
Farm size:		
<5ha	12	1.7
5 to 20ha.	20	6.7
20 to 50ha.	18	25.0
50 to 100ha.	20	18.3
>100 ha.	30	48.3
Farm type:		
LFA sheep, beef, sheep & beef	72.7	90.8
Dairy	4.5	5.1
Lowland beef	7.9	4.1
Livestock numbers:		
Sheep	328778	11.1%
Cattle	14106	15.0%
Full time (%)	75	n/a
Part time (%)	18	n/a

Whilst it is important to ensure a survey is representative of its population, the distortion created by the different boundaries of the LDNPA and the WHS creates uncertainty.



Lobby DEFRA to cut the Census data for the WHS to inform strategy better.

5 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

This survey has been designed to address the following objectives:

1. Ensure farming remains authentic to our OUV at the time of inscription and the components which reflect the attribute of Agro pastoral system are sustained.
2. Help fill in gaps in data for the State of the Park (SoP) monitoring of the health of the National Park (a statutory requirement)
3. Map progress of new initiatives/ funding changes for a baseline on the current health of the farming system for future comparisons
4. Test whether our strategies and actions in the management plan are achieving what we want given current challenges.
5. Flag up any areas of concerns allowing us to respond based upon evidence and where necessary change our approach.

5.1 Survey Results

Overall, 7.8% of farms in the WHS responded. They are fair representation of the types of farm business found in the LDNPA, but it is important to note, that the WHS and LDNPA are no longer identical land areas.

With respect to traditional farmsteads and farming practices, respondents reported that field barns and hog houses are in poor condition and need consideration for support. Smaller structures are rare, and dove cotes and park railings need targeted support. There is a limited amount of co-operative gathering beyond the 'home fell'. Mustering is becoming more difficult for commoners. The tradition of wintering stock on the fell as declined substantially. There is a definite dichotomy between those farm tasks undertaken by the farmer and the use of contractors. Specialist skills with occasional need, in particular, are contracted in.

In relation to semi-natural habitats, over half of traditional types of woodland in the WHS are not in use (wood pasture and coppice). This is an underutilised farm resource and of natural capital value. Opportunity exists to bring back into use extant wood pasture and coppice. There is opportunity to increase hay meadow management across the WHS. There is evidence that farmers set land aside for nature conservation without grant support.

With respect to livestock, herdwick sheep are no longer the main breed in the Lake District by flock numbers nor individuals. The data suggest fell ponies are under threat. There is no obvious pattern to increases or decreases in stock numbers, nor any main reason.

The majority of labour is provided by the farmer and their immediate family. Very few farms now have substantive additional labour (ie beyond seasonal or casual). Most shepherding is conducted by the farmer or an immediate family member, reflecting restructuring due to cost of production. Consequently, there is little 'spare' labour to divert into other farm activities such as diversification or grant scheme work. A 'catch 22' situation.

Local agricultural organisations and events are central to many farmers and their families. The most important are agricultural shows/shepherds meets, Commoners Associations, the Farmer Network and farmer discussion groups. General parish activities are also important to many. The Westmorland show, Cockermouth and Eskdale are the most important shows for this sample of respondents and suggest are the most efficient locations to have a WHS stand when needed. Utilising the farmer discussion group network would be a useful information dissemination system to employ.

With respect to farm viability and its future, diversification is only contributing between 15 and 22% of a farm business income, which is much lower than previously reported, which could become problematic as BPS is reduced and farmers may opt to not engage in ELMS. There is concern over the future of hill farming, and a recognition that farming businesses will need to restructure. However, it is clear people are not sure where to get advice.

There is an overall tone of a feeling of disenfranchisement in the comments of the respondents. There is a request for more overt support by the LDNPA, particularly as it is the agro-pastoral system which underpins WHS OUV. Farmers have requested overall better support for traditional hill and family farming and targeted support with regard to planning, diversification, managing visitor understanding and carbon footprinting.

5.2 Evidence for OUV Attribute monitoring

We recognise that this survey only reports on a small percentage of farm businesses in the World Heritage Site. It does however, provide a sample is five times that of the annual Farm Business Survey executed by Newcastle University and the largest farm survey conducted in the WHS. The valleys of Windermere and Borrowdale& Bassenthwaite were particularly well represented providing a good snapshot of two very different catchments.

With respect to the monitoring of OUV attributes (see Appendix 1) the survey was **particularly effective** in collating baseline data for:

- Farmsteads and Farmhouses.
- The surviving physical and social elements of hill farming e.g. shepherding and common gathering.
- Local techniques of landscape maintenance (stonewalling, hedging, pollarding).

Partially effective for:

- The unique practices of the agro-pastoral farming system.
- Shepherds meets/shows and traditional sports.
- Local management and governance of Lake District farming systems, e.g. activities of breeder's associations and commons committees.
- Semi natural habitats created and sustained because of a continuing agro-pastoral system, for example hay meadows, pollards, wood pasture, and coppiced woodland.

The mosaic of semi natural habitats above the fell wall within an actively grazed landscape.

Not effective for:

- Evidence, intactness, and legibility of settlements and the agro pastoral character and function of the field systems and their waterways.
- Common land and the long standing and continuing traditions of Common land management (intangible).

Table 6 provides solutions to partial and not effective attributes.

Table 6 – Solutions to Partial and Not Effective Attribute Monitoring

Attribute	Solution
The unique practices of the agro-pastoral farming system.	Results from the Shepherds Guide will help, but <i>the fell by fell detail is almost impossible to garner. Contact the fell pony associations</i>
Shepherds meets/shows and traditional sports.	Alternative survey completed on this topic.
Local management and governance of Lake District farming systems, e.g. activities of breeder’s associations and commons committees.	Send letter or <i>small</i> e-survey to Commoners Associations
Semi natural habitats created and sustained because of a continuing agro-pastoral system, for example hay meadows, pollards, wood pasture, and coppiced woodland. The mosaic of semi natural habitats above the fell wall within an actively grazed landscape.	Woodland and pollard information – contact FC. <i>Extent and condition of priority habitats beyond designed sites – ongoing in need of resolution</i>
Evidence, intactness, and legibility of settlements and the agro pastoral character and function of the field systems and their waterways.	Suggest use new Wasdale CIC survey as a template for other valleys
Common land and the long standing and continuing traditions of Common land management (intangible).	This attribute monitoring is a bit of a ‘curates egg’ – good in places. <i>The missing elements will continue to be hard to collate on a fell by fell basis.</i>

5.3 Recommendations

The Lake District Partnership Plan (2020-2025) provides the umbrella management position for the agro-pastoral system. A policy position statement is currently in its final stages of development from WHS Steering group to make recommendations to create improved harmony between hill farming, nature recovery and deer management.

Beyond these two documents, it is recommended here that the following are taken forward either now or woven into the next Partnership plan to specifically address the support of WHS OUV and the agro-pastoral system:

1. Develop a **WHS farm business strategy** which focuses on diversification & local farm produce to celebrate the WHS and improve farm incomes through advice, training and financial support.
2. Target **wood pasture, hay meadow and coppice restoration**
3. Supplying **clearer information regarding planning** for change of use of farm buildings.
4. Improving **visitor information about farming** to ease tensions underpinned a more active Ranging Service.
5. Encourage **farmers to engage with FIPL** to restore field barns and other rarer structures.
6. Develop advice and funding to link **barn restoration to improve farm diversification**
7. Lobby DEFRA to **cut the Census data for the WHS** to inform strategy better.
8. **Repeat this survey one year before the next UNESCO periodic review**
9. **Address Agro-pastoral attribute monitoring weaknesses as per Table 6**

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LT Mansfield & M Lock, March 2023

APPENDIX ATTRIBUTES TABLE: Theme 1 Agro-pastoral system

Component of attribute	Indicator	Possible source of information	Farm Survey data response		
			Good	Ok	thin
Evidence, intactness, and legibility of settlements and the agro pastoral character and function of the field systems and their waterways.	The intactness and legibility of field patterns and their waterways.	Survey, map comparison	Wasdale CIC case study		
	Change in the agro pastoral character of and within field systems.	Survey, map comparison	Wasdale CIC case study		
	Change in the function of field systems	Survey, map comparison	Wasdale CIC case study		
Farmsteads and Farmhouses.	Number of owner-occupied farms	Farm survey (FS)			
	Number of tenanted farms.	FS			
	Number of traditional farmsteads incl. farmhouses as centres of the farm businesses data.	FS			
Shepherds meets/shows and traditional sports.	Number of shepherd meets/shows.	Separate show survey	Show survey		
	The traditional, distinctive and authentic character of meets and shows including local dialect, traditions and skills.	Separate show survey	Show survey		
	Iconic shows.	Separate show survey	Show survey		
The unique practices of the agro-pastoral farming system.	Number of pure traditional Herdwick flocks.	FS	Use Shepherds guide to augment		
	Number of mixed flocks by fell and common (including Rough Fell, Swaledales and other breed.	FS	By fell is a challenge		
	Economic viability of Lake District farms accounting for different farm sizes, business models, stocking numbers, breeds, income streams etc.	FS			

	Number and geographical spread of farms with fell going flocks.	FS	Some data from this survey
	Number of breeding fell ponies.	FS	Contact Fell Pony soc.
	Number of herds of fell grazing cattle.	FS	Some data from this survey
The surviving physical and social elements of hill farming e.g. shepherding and common gathering.	Number of active farm businesses in Lake District.	FS	Agri Census
	Number of farmers (and others) actively involved in gathering stock from the fells.	FS	
	Number of communal gathers involving participants from more than one farmholding.	FS	
	Number of farmers exercising common rights and if active, which rights.	FS	
	Number of active farm businesses in Lake District with confidence in future economics and succession.	FS	
Local techniques of landscape maintenance (stonewalling, hedging, pollarding).	Continuity of traditional techniques of maintaining traditional boundary types (stonewalling, hedging).	FS	
	Continuity of traditional techniques of other management skills (pollarding).	FS	
Local management and governance of Lake District farming systems, e.g. activities of breeder's associations and commons committees.	Existence of groups and societies which play a role in local management and governance of Lake District Farming systems.	FS	
		Survey organisations	Send a simple letter
	The meaningful function and value of groups and societies which play a role in local management and governance of Lake District Farming systems.	FS	
		Survey organisations	Send a simple letter
Common land and the long standing and	Number of flocks and herds per common.(vii)	FS	See FFNC work

continuing traditions of Common land management. (intangible)			
	Number of fell rights for each common and the number actually being exercised.	FS	
	Ability and Function of the common land and high fells for agro pastoral traditions	FS	
		Commons assns..	
	Total area of common land.	SoP	
	Total area of common land under active grazing.	FS	
The actual and perceived open character of open fells (intangible)	Survey of fell conditions, changes in fencing and planting		
Semi natural habitats created and sustained because of a continuing agro-pastoral system, for example hay meadows, pollards, wood pasture, and coppiced woodland. The mosaic of semi natural habitats above the fell wall within an actively grazed landscape.	Number, extent and spread within WHS (distribution) of existing and new wood pastures, wood pastures grazed by cattle, and wood pastures grazed by sheep.	FS Woodland grants Environmental schemes	
	Number and extent of coppiced woodlands.	FS Woodland management plans	
	Number and extent of pollards and actively lopped pollards.	FS Environmental schemes	
	Number, extent and agro pastoral function of hay meadows.	FS Condition of priority habitats	
	Extent and character of the mosaic of semi natural habitats above the fell wall within an actively grazed landscape e.g. heathland, scrub, blanket bog, montane heath, flushes, within an actively grazed landscape.	Environmental scheme Condition of priority habitats	