

## HLF Programme Objectives

Objective	Outcomes	Main Objective (tick <b>one</b> box only)	Links to other areas
1	The heritage will be better managed		✓
2	The heritage will be in better condition	✓	
3	The heritage will be identified/recorded		
4	People will have developed skills		✓
5	People will have learnt about heritage		
6	People will have volunteered time		✓
7	Negative environmental impacts will have been reduced		
8	More people and a wider range of people will have engaged with heritage		
9	The local area/community will be a better place to live, work or visit		

## Objective 3: Improve the sustainability of high nature value traditional farming systems

### 3c: Elan Ram Scheme



#### Summary

Elan already has its own sheep breed – the Elan Valley-type Welsh Mountain, the characteristics of which have evolved through generations of shepherding and hefting on the open hill. Changes in agricultural policy and market conditions have put the unique qualities of the breed at risk. The aim with this project is to develop a co-operative sheep breeding scheme amongst Elan farmers to ensure that breeding stock with the qualities of hardiness and hefting instinct needed to thrive on Elan's open hill are maintained for the future.

#### Project Details

This project will secure the future of Elan's sheep breed by coordinating and facilitating the development of a ram lamb testing scheme for the local sheep

	<p>breed. Co-operating farmers will work together using the 'self-declared agreed principles' model to encourage and enable greater use of selected Elan Valley-type breeding stock. The ram lamb testing scheme will deliver benefit by giving farmers the confidence, information and access to increase the use of locally-bred rams within each-others flocks thereby delivering the objective of securing the genetic base of the Elan Valley breed.</p> <p>The cooperative ram lamb testing scheme will be open to all farmers in the Elan Links area. A total of 200 selected ram lambs per year will be consigned on to the scheme in the Autumn. The number consigned per farm will depend on the number of participating farmers but it is anticipated that 20 farms will consign 10 lambs each in the first year. Ownership will be retained by the consigning farm. On consignment, the lambs will be assessed visually, weighed and receive prophylactic health treatments. The selected ram lambs will then be sent away on grass tack for the winter. In the spring, the ram lambs will be returned to a central location in the Elan Links area and will again be weighed, visually assessed and muscle fat scanned. Rams showing potential for breeding will be retained by the owner or made available for sale/purchase to participating farmers in the first instance. The scheme will be administered by group members with support from the administration fund. Scheme rules will be agreed by scheme participants in Autumn 2017 and signed off by the Natural Heritage Sub-committee. An annual stakeholder day and project review will take place following the spring selection day with any recommendations arising from this taken to the Natural Heritage Sub-committee for approval.</p>
<p><b>Need and Opportunity</b></p>	<p>This project has been developed to mitigate the threats identified in chapter four of the LCAP, namely:</p> <p><a href="#">4.2.2 Changing land management practices.</a></p> <p><a href="#">4.3.1.1 Reinvigorating farming practices.</a></p> <p>The future resilience of traditional farming systems in Elan is dependent on the unique qualities of the Elan Valley sheep breed. However, these qualities have been put at risk by changes in agricultural policy and market conditions that have led to changes in sheep management practices. There is therefore the need to sustain the qualities of the breed for the future - both for maintaining our natural heritage and for local cultural distinctiveness. The opportunity is to develop a cooperative sheep breeding scheme amongst Elan Links farmers that will encourage and facilitate these farmers to share and use locally-bred sheep, thereby helping to secure the viability and character of the breed for future generations. In addition, publicity generated from the scheme will be used to promote the qualities of the breed to a farming and wider audience.</p>
<p><b>Project management</b></p>	<p>Natural Heritage Officer reporting to the natural Heritage Sub-committee and the Partnership Board.</p>
<p><b>Project Partners</b></p>	<p>Lead partner: EVT Other partners: Elan Valley Tenants Association, Cwmdauddwr Commoners Association</p>

<b>Project Development</b>	Development of this project has been supported by an Agrigop animateur (funded through the Wales RDP) who brought together interested parties – farmers/EVT/Hybu Cig Cymru (Meat Promotion Wales) and facilitated discussion. A number of well-attended meetings were held with presentations from Innovis (a sheep breeding/genetics company) to stimulate ideas and a visit to Moelgolomen - a farm in the northern Cambrian Mountains that is a longstanding member of the Welsh Mountain recorded sheep group. During discussion many different options for delivering this project were discussed. Eventually it was agreed that the co-operative ram lamb testing scheme option combines both impact and sustainability and hence is the preferred solution. Subsequent project development has been undertaken electronically and face-to-face with discussion between EVT and a number of interested farmers.	
<b>Key audiences</b> (Please see Audience Development Plan, appendix LCAP3, for more details about Elan Links audiences.)	Audiences that will be primarily targeted through this project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🌿 Land managers including landowners, tenants and commoners.</li> </ul>	Secondary audiences who will also benefit as a result of the project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🌿 Residents of Elan and Rhayader</li> <li>🌿 Special Interest Groups</li> </ul>
<b>Activities and Timescale</b>	<p>Autumn 2017. Open farmers meeting to discuss and confirm scheme rules, followed by the first Consignment Day in late autumn/early winter. Late spring 2018. Selection Day followed by annual stocktake.</p> <p>Autumns 2018 – 21. Open farmers meeting to discuss and confirm modifications to scheme, followed by the annual Consignment Day in late autumn /early winter.</p> <p>Late Springs 2019-22. Selection Day followed by annual stocktake.</p> <p>Spring 2021 or 2022. Open day for public aligned to Selection Day, press release to local and farming press.</p> <p>Volunteer days would be annual consignment and selection days, annual stocktake meeting to discuss scheme rules and modifications. Inspection rota days.</p>	
<b>Outputs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🌿 Cooperative sheep breeding scheme for Elan farmers;</li> <li>🌿 Annual records of 'location-of-origin' ram usage by participating farmers;</li> <li>🌿 20 people trained in ram breeding skills;</li> <li>🌿 10 stakeholder days (annual consignment and selection days) with 20 people attending;</li> <li>🌿 All Elan Links farmers informed about project;</li> <li>🌿 End-of-project report;</li> <li>🌿 Interpretation to a wider audience delivered through Objective 7.</li> </ul>	
<b>Output indicators and targets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🌿 At least 180 ram lambs per year to finish the testing process;</li> <li>🌿 Annual consignment and selection days, annual stocktake meeting;</li> <li>🌿 Increased use of locally-bred sheep by end of project based on location-of-origin ram usage by participating farmers.</li> </ul>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	<p>Heritage Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🌿 Natural and cultural heritage made more resilient through support for</li> </ul>	

	<p>high nature value farming systems;   Native breed safeguarded.</p> <p>People Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Farmers will have been supported by peer-to-peer cooperative working and learning;</li> <li> Farmers will have cooperated to make their businesses more sustainable;</li> <li> Links through Project 7a 'Interpreting Elan' will ensure that the current project will feed in to developing a greater awareness of Elan's natural heritage, the complex issues surrounding its effective management and the distinctive traditional farming systems of Elan.</li> </ul> <p>Community Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Links through Project 7a 'Interpreting Elan' will ensure that the current project will feed in to Elan becoming more widely known as an area with a distinctive local farming culture and this will help to build the reputation of Elan as a tourism destination;</li> <li> Economic benefits to the local market town;</li> <li> The resilience of the Elan Links area is strengthened for the future.</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Progress with project implementation will be reported to the Natural Heritage sub-committee annually;</li> <li> Stakeholder days will be used to understand the benefits of the project from the point of view of farmers and other stakeholders;</li> <li> Project completion reports with evidence.</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence</b>	Notes from the two meetings to discuss the project are provided as appendices(see PP10 and PP11).
<b>Wider Context</b>	This project is designed in the context of likely future pan-Wales RDP funding of whole-flock hill sheep recording schemes. The project complements this type of scheme not replaces it and would encourage uptake of such schemes by farmers in the Elan Links area by providing a better 'route to market' for recorded breeding stock through the ram lamb scheme.
<b>Legacy and maintenance of benefits</b>	The project has been designed in such a way that if the scheme proves successful the barriers to continue running the scheme are low and the skills will be in place to do this. For example, farmers will have ownership of the scheme by administering it from Day One on a 'self-declared agreed principles' basis; farmers will be used to paying a consignment levy paving the way to additional contributions in the future; farmers will be benefiting by better access to good breeding stock and/or better sales of breeding stock meaning that there is a financial incentive to continue with the scheme.
<b>Risks and risk mitigation</b>	<p><u>Risk 1:</u> Inability to find over-wintering grass 'tack' for the ram lambs. <u>Mitigation:</u> The budget is set at a realistic level and there will be a large pool of farmers 'contacts' to identify an appropriate source.</p> <p><u>Risk 2:</u> Under/over-subscribed. <u>Mitigation:</u> during project development there was a good level of indicative sign-up for the project suggesting the project is unlikely to be undersubscribed. There is scope to adapt the number of ram lambs consigned per farm to achieve the target figure.</p> <p><u>Risk 3:</u> The admin and vet levies will not be paid. <u>Mitigation:</u> Non-paying farmers will not be allowed to take further part in the project.</p>

	<p><u>Risk 4</u>: Ram lambs do not do well at tack. <u>Mitigation</u>: a procedure for regular checks on ram lambs by participating farmers will be put in place with a reporting procedure if animals are not doing well. Participating farmers will have the right to inspect their animals at any point and withdraw animals where there are concerns.</p>
<p><b>Links to other Elan Links project</b></p>	<p>Objective 6: Monitoring of this project is important and as noted above, photographic recording of the project will happen. This will be implemented through project 6.</p> <p>Objective 7a and 7b: Interpretation of this project will happen through objective 7a. Information about this project will appear on the app as well as on the Elan Valley website and Elan Links' social media platforms. All of the events that are organised will be promoted on all of these platforms and they will be updated regularly to show the work that is carried out through the whole Scheme. Any content that is being recorded, either through photograph or film, will be shared and place on all of the platforms to ensure that the profile of Elan is raised and that all followers that have been gathered during the development phase are kept up to date and interested in the project throughout the delivery.</p> <p>Objective 7c: Artists will take inspiration from some of the themes in these objectives. As well as inspiration, it is possible that some of the artists may wish to interpret the different themes in their own way.</p> <p>Objective 7d: Public engagement events will be held towards the end of the delivery programme. These will be arrange under project 7d.</p>
<p><b>Background information</b></p>	<p>Elan is located in the Cambrian Mountains, Mid Wales, 5 miles to the east of the Market town or Rhyader. Elan's 20,000 hectares comprises 1% of Wales and is a unique landscape combining remote hill land, isolated farmsteads, steep-sided wooded valleys and the extraordinary feat of Victorian engineering that brought clean water to Birmingham.</p> <p>The community of farmers, tenants, the town of Rhayader and the village of Elan are the backbone of this vast area, with farming and tourism activities being the most significant economic activity in the area.</p> <p>Elan Links: People, Nature &amp; Water Landscape Partnership has an ambitious vision: to generate a step-change increase in beneficial outcomes for people, communities and heritage.</p> <p>Elan Links is a £3.5 million project with a significant £1.8 million secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund Landscape Partnership Scheme.</p> <p>The Elan Links: People, Nature &amp; Water Landscape Partnership is currently made up of 17 different organisations who aim to deliver 26 projects under 12 strategic objectives over 5 years.</p>