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# GLASTIR MONITORING & EVALUATION PROGRAMME

## FINAL REPORT – Annex 6

Farmers and Local Authorities Perceptions of Glastir:

A Qualitative Evaluation of Glastir Woodland Creation and Management Schemes  
Design and Delivery of Survey

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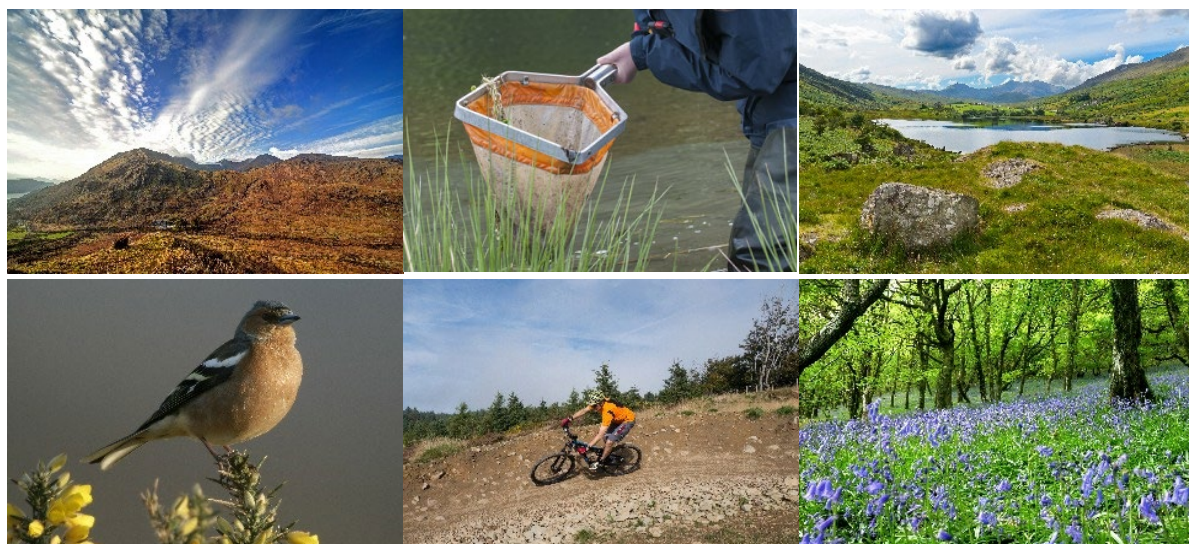


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## Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>7</b>
1.1 Aims and Objectives .....	9
<b>2. Methods.....</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1 Focus Groups.....	11
2.2 Interviews .....	14
<b>3. Results and Discussion .....</b>	<b>24</b>
3.1 The Glastir Scheme .....	24
3.2 Glastir Woodland Management and Creation .....	24
3.3 Productivity versus woodland creation .....	25
3.4 Relationship between farming culture and Glastir Woodland schemes .....	26
3.5 General attitudes towards woodland .....	28
3.6 The Glastir Process.....	30
3.7 Payment Rates.....	31
<b>4. Conclusions .....</b>	<b>33</b>
4.1 Compatibility of Glastir Woodland elements and farming culture .....	33
4.2 Streamlined Glastir Process.....	33
4.3 Payment Rates.....	33
4.4 Final Reflections.....	34
<b>5. References.....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Appendix A: Literature Review .....</b>	<b>37</b>
A1 General Attitudes Towards Forestry.....	37
A2 Socio-demographic influence on attitudes.....	37
A3 Efficiency of Grants.....	38

## Table of Figures

Figure 2.1: Map showing of the locations of the four focus groups held with members of the farming community and the 14 Welsh Local Authorities where the incumbent Coed Cymru officer was interviewed.....	11
Figure 2.2: Statements used in focus groups to facilitate discussion around farmer's perceptions of woodland.....	14
Figure 3.1: Quotes reflecting attitudes towards the Glastir Woodland schemes in comparison to previous schemes .....	24
Figure 3.2: Quotes reflecting attitudes towards the current Glastir Woodland schemes .....	25
Figure 3.3: Quotes reflecting attitudes towards the current the agricultural landscape image .....	25
Figure 3.4: Quote reflecting attitudes towards appropriate woodland location .....	26
Figure 3.5: Quotes reflecting a desire for Glastir woodland schemes to be flexible and in balance with other farming priorities. ....	26
Figure 3.6: Quotes reflecting the complexity of attitudes relating to farming and the environment ....	27
Figure 3.7: Quotes reflecting the participants' fear surrounding the auditing component of Glastir ....	28
Figure 3.8: Quotes reflecting environmental stewardship of farming and positive attitudes towards woodland creation.....	29
Figure 3.9: Quotes reflecting the financial incentives of Glastir woodland schemes. ....	29
Figure 3.10: Quotes reflecting the participants' perceptions of the Glastir process .....	30
Figure 3.11: Quotes reflecting the participants' perceptions of the Glastir administration and scheme continuity.....	31
Figure 3.12: Quote reflecting the participants' perceptions of the complexity of the Glastir .....	31
Figure 3.13: Quote reflecting the participants' perceptions of the Glastir payment rates for woodland schemes .....	32
Figure 3.14: Quotes highlighting the role of the public in agricultural profitability and the desire for acknowledgment of the environmental stewardship role most farmers undertake.....	32

## Executive Summary

This research was commissioned to investigate and better understand the farmers' and Local Authorities perceptions of the challenges and benefits of the Glastir Woodland Creation (WC) and Woodland management schemes (WM). Qualitative methods were used in this research; focus groups with member of the farming community from a range of farm types and sizes took place at four locations across Wales. Telephone interviews with Coed Cymru officers within Welsh Local Authorities were also conducted.

Uptake of the Glastir WC and WM elements has been lower than expected triggering a concern that the Welsh Government target of 100,000 ha of new woodland to be created by 2030 might not be met. Previous research indicates that there are a number of barriers for farmers (key landowners in Wales) in terms of creating woodlands including: conflict between the land required for food production and that for woodland creation; and, a perceived division between the forestry and agricultural, particularly in terms of skills and knowledge sectors and economic disincentives. Little prior research has focussed on the engagement of Local Authorities in Glastir schemes.

This research finds little evidence to support the notion of a division between agriculture and forestry; contrary to the literature farmers across Wales appear to be open to woodland creation and appreciate the numerous on and off-site benefits associated with increased tree numbers. However, significant barriers exist in the form of the Glastir scheme process. The process is perceived to undermine the scheme objectives and acts as a disincentive for potential scheme member from both the farming community and Local Authorities. It is recommended that four key elements be further investigated and adapted in order to encourage greater scheme uptake:

The complex nature of the scheme (for example operation prescriptions for size and width of woodland, and the application process) needs to be simplified.

The scheme is perceived as being inflexible (for example not allowing postponement of activities due to weather conditions) and therefore needs to be more flexible to take account of unexpected influences.

The auditing process is complex and includes penalties (for example withdrawal of Glastir payments) and therefore penalties need to be clearer and the auditing process part of the scheme needs to be less threatening.

Payment rates are obscure (for example there is confusion about what is covered and rates for contractual labour are not included) and therefore these need to be made clearer.

**Acknowledgements**

This research would not have been possible without the participation of members of the farming community and Coed Cymru officers a c r o s s Wales

## 1. Introduction

There is a significant amount of literature, both in the form of government documents and research outputs (e.g. reports and journal articles), which demonstrate the benefits of woodland creation (Nijnik and Bizikova 2008; Osmond and Upton 2012; Valatin and Saraev 2012; Wynne-Jones 2013a; The Woodland Trust. n.d.). It is accepted that trees provide habitat for wildlife, thereby increasing the biodiversity in a given area; this is of particular relevance in an agriculture setting where habitat heterogeneity is reduced (Altieri 1999). The Pont Bren project illustrates the benefits trees can have in improving upland hydrology, which has downstream implication for flood prevention and mitigation as well as on site benefits (The Woodland Trust. n.d.). Trees can provide a sustainable source of fuel and resources, which can in turn lead to economic gains, dependent on external factors such as market forces and size of plantation. More recently, tree planting has been increasingly prioritised as a way to sequester carbon and offset emission from carbon intensive activities (e.g. flying and agriculture – see Osmond and Upton 2012). With these benefits in mind, and in combination with the need to offset the emissions from the Welsh agricultural sector in order to meet the annual year-on-year carbon reduction target of 3%, in 2010 the Welsh Government accepted recommendation from the Welsh Land Use and Climate Change Group to increase the area of woodland in Wales by 100,000 ha (a 33% increase), by 2030.

In order to meet the 100,000 ha challenge, it was recommended that financial incentives should be put in place to encourage landowners to plant trees. One such financial mechanism is the Glastir Woodland Creation (WC) and Woodland Management (WM) schemes. Both WC and WM sit within the broader Glastir agri-environment scheme the aim of which is to continue and build upon the environmental and conservation focus of previous schemes within Wales, such as Tir Gofal (Wynne-Jones 2013a). Glastir WC and WM are stand-alone elements meaning that they are open to landowners in general and there is no requirement to be part of the larger Glastir scheme. For those within the wider Glastir element, woodland creation and management options are also available as part of the higher-level component of Glastir entitled Glastir Advanced. The Glastir scheme is funded through Axis 2 of the Rural Development Fund, as part of the EU Common Agricultural Policy.

The shift in focus from woodland creation on state owned land in the post Second World War period, to privately owned land means that incentive schemes such as Glastir are a primary method of achieving environmental goals, given that 80% of the land in Wales is farmed (Osmond and Upton 2012). However, physical (e.g. availability of land) and attitudinal (e.g. perceptions of woodland) barriers exist within the agricultural sector that leads to lower than expected uptake of woodland creation schemes (Lawrence et al. 2010). Previous research indicates that the attitudes of farmers play an important role in the decision to take up incentive scheme for woodland creation (Lawrence et al. 2010) as well as socio-demographic factors such as farm type, size and age of farmer (Lawrence et al. 2010). In addition, there is a paucity of research that investigates the efficacy of agri-environment schemes outside the agricultural sector. For example, Local Authorities (LAs) across Wales are responsible for woodland and have been also identified by Welsh Government as key participants for the Glastir WM and WC schemes. The interaction of LAs with Glastir WM or WC schemes to help finance woodland management and creation, which might not otherwise occur, is an important consideration when assessing the success of these schemes.

In Wales, Glastir and its predecessors Better Woodland Wales and Tir Gofal led to the creation of 1102.3 ha of new woodland between 2010 and 2012, representing just 1.1% of the overall 100,000 ha target (Wynne-Jones 2013a). Irrespective of the 100,000 ha target, the lack of uptake also had, and to continues to have, serious consequences on the provision of the range of environmental benefits expected as a result of the creation of new woodland and the appropriate management of existing woodland. Many stakeholders feel that the 100,000 ha target is unachievable in its current format (Wynne-Jones 2013a); if the target was number of trees rather than the area of woodland, it

would perhaps be more realistic, since, for example, it would be able to take into account tree in hedgerows (Osmond and Upton 2012). Overall, greater levels of support and an integrated approach have been suggested as a way to merge farming and forestry in order to encourage the farming community to help achieve the tree planting targets (Wynne-Jones 2013a). However, integration and support can only occur if the underlying barriers and attitudes of the agricultural sector and beyond are fully understood.

The established body of research indicates that attitudes towards woodland on farms are a complex, interlinked and dominated by several key factors, which have been outlined below.

#### General Attitudes towards Forestry

**Farming culture:** Farmers hold agricultural landscapes in high regard, and social status within the farming community is achieved through good farming practice (Bell, 1999, Burton and Wilson, 2000). The conversion of productive agricultural land into woodland is seen as being morally wrong; food production takes precedence and in general woodland should be planted on land that cannot be farmed (Bell, 1999).

**Timescales:** The length of time taken for woodlands to mature means that land converted to woodland is less reactive to changes in markets, in comparison to crops or livestock based agriculture (Burton and Wilson, 2000; Silcock and Manley, 2008)

#### Socio-demographic factors

**Age:** Younger farmers have been shown as more likely to plant woodland (Gasson and Hill, 1990), possibly explained by the perception that land converted to woodland is a long term land use change and the increased likelihood that a younger farmer will see a financial return from his or her investment in woodland (Watkins et al., 1996).

**Suitable Land:** A common reason for farmers not planting trees is lack of suitable land (Watkins, 1984) and smaller farms have been shown to be less likely to take up grants focussed on tree planting (Wavehill Consulting, 2009).

#### Woodland Grants

**Uses:** Participants in grant schemes for woodland creation have been shown to actively use their woodland, in comparison to those not involved in such schemes. The main reasons for woodland creation are: recreation, conservation and developing livestock shelters and field boundaries (Wavehill Consulting, 2009).

**Efficacy:** The evidence related to the efficacy of grant in encouraging woodland creation and management is not clear. It is also difficult to tell whether grants do really encourage new woodland creation or whether the landowners would have planted the trees anyway (Watkins, 1984; Sharpe et al., 2001; Church and Ravenscroft, 2008).

**Uptake:** Barriers exist to grant uptake which are distinct from attitudes towards forestry. These include perceived scheme bureaucracy, complex application process and lack of knowledge about available grants (Crabtree et al., 1998; Ward and Manley, 2002; Cunningham, 2009; Wavehill Consulting, 2009).

For a more comprehensive review of the available literature, please see the Literature Review in Appendix A.



### **1.1 Aims and Objectives**

The aim of this report is to investigate and better understand the farmers' and LAs perceptions of the challenges and benefits of the Glastir Woodland Creation and Woodland management schemes. Using qualitative methods the project has two objectives:

To investigate attitudes (positive and negative) towards both the Glastir Woodland Creation scheme and the Woodland Management scheme by Welsh farmers, and identify barriers to help explain the low rate of uptake, as well as possible opportunities to encourage uptake.

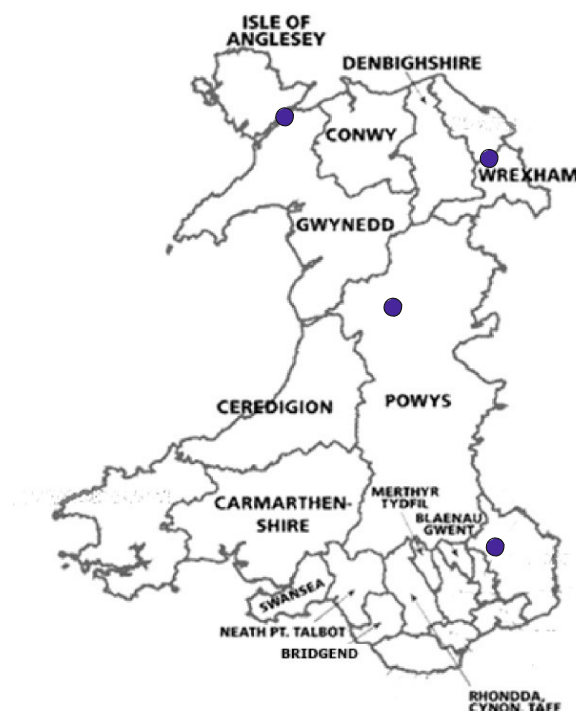
To investigate the attitudes (positive and negative) of Welsh Local Authorities to the Glastir Woodland Creation Scheme and the Woodland Management scheme, and identify barriers to uptake, as well as possible opportunities to encourage uptake.

## 2. Methods

This study incorporated two distinct methods, focus groups and interviews, to explore attitudes and opinions towards the Glastir Woodland Creation and Management Schemes within the farming community and Local Authorities across Wales. Focus groups were used to encourage reflection and discussion with members of the farming community. The aim of focus groups is not to be representative in the statistical sense, rather generalisability is possible by ensuring that range of viewpoints are captured due to the sampling techniques and criteria used to select participants, and through careful interpretations aided by research and conceptual literature. Telephone interviewing as a methodology allows a greater quantity of interviews to be carried out within the time available, given the geographic spread of interviewees. As with the focus groups, this methodology allowed a wide range of views to be captured, again allowing generalisations to be formulated. We would anticipate that the findings outlined in this report would have broad resonance with the wider farming community and Local Authorities involved in WC and WM schemes not part of this research. Prior to inviting any participants, the outline plan for the focus groups and all associated materials were approved by the Bangor University Ethics Panel. The Glastir Monitoring and Evaluation Programme Team also approved both the overarching project plan and all outgoing external communications.

### 2.1 Focus Groups

In order to sample as wide a range of the Welsh farming community as possible, focus groups were carried out across Wales. Priority areas were identified, with the assistance of Welsh Government, as being East Wales/Welsh Marches, East Powys, and the Severn Valley catchment due to forthcoming woodland creation geographical targets. This led to four focus groups being held in Bangor, Newtown, Abergavenny and Wrexham (Figure 2.1); in total, 22 individuals participated.



*Figure 2.1: Map showing of the locations of the four focus groups held with members of the farming community and the 14 Welsh Local Authorities where the incumbent Coed Cymru officer was interviewed.*

● = focus group locations: Bangor, Wrexham, Newtown and Abergavenny

‘Demographic’ criteria impacts upon peoples’ worldviews, this in turn has an impact on peoples’ attitudes. In this study, using previously published literature farm type and farm size were identified as being important criteria. Using the annual farm survey from June 2010 in combination with agri-environment scheme membership, farmers within 20-mile radius of each focus group location were targeted. Initial contact was made by letter and follow-up phone calls were made to confirm attendance, ensuring that a range of farm typologies (sizes and scheme memberships – i.e. current and historic agri-environment or woodland creation schemes) were included. The sample was broadly representative of the type and size of farms across Wales (Table 2.1).

**Focus Group**

	Bangor	Abergavenny	Newtown	Wrexham
<b>Scheme</b>				
S_NG	1	2	1	0
S_GE	2	3	1	1
S_GA	0	1	1	0
NS_NG	0	0	0	4
NS_GE	1	0	0	0
NS_GA	2	2	0	0
<b>Farm Type</b>				
1	...	...	...	...
2	...	...	...	...
3	...	...	...	...
4	...	1	...	3
5	...	1	...	1
6	5	2	2	...
7	...	1	...	1
8	...	...	1	...
9	1	3	...	...
<b>Farm Size</b>				
0	...	1	...	...
1a	1	2	1	1
1b	2	...	1	1
2	1	1	1	...
3	1	2	...	...
4	...	2	...	...
5	1	...	...	3

*Table 2.1: Demographics of focus group participants, obtained from June 2010 Horticultural Survey (DEFRA, 2010) and Glastir Scheme Membership data.*

<sup>1</sup>Scheme Membership: S\_NG: Previous agri-environment scheme, but not in Glastir; S\_GE: Previous agri-environment scheme, currently in Glastir Entry; S\_GA: Previous agri-environment scheme, currently in Glastir Advanced; NS\_NG: No previous scheme, not in Glastir; NS\_GE: No previous scheme, currently in Glastir Entry; NS\_GA: No previous scheme, currently in Glastir Advanced.

<sup>2</sup>Farm Type - 1 = Cereals; 2 = General cropping; 3 = Horticulture; 4 = Specialist Pigs; 5 = Specialist Poultry; 6 = Dairy; 7 = LFA Grazing Livestock; 8 = Lowland Grazing Livestock; 9 = Mixed; 10. Other

<sup>3</sup>Farm Size (SLR) – Standard Labour Requirement (SLR) is a measurement of farm size, taking into account difference in the labour needed across different agricultural sectors. One SLR equates to 1900 working hours per year.

<1 SLR = Very Small

>=1 and <2 SLR = Small





>=2 and <3 SLR = Medium

>=3 and <5 SLR = Large

>5 SLR = Very Large

Each focus group began with an introduction to the project and participants were asked to sign consent forms, acknowledging the fact that the focus group was being audio recorded for the purpose of later being transcribed in preparation of thematic analysis. The main part of the focus groups were comprised of three sections. The first encouraged participants to discuss attributes of good and bad farming practice. The second explored the relationship Welsh farmers have with the environment. Finally, questions surrounding Glastir and the impact this had on perceptions of the environment were discussed, both in the context of woodland and the broader sense of general agri-environment schemes.

The discussion within section one began to identify opinions about Glastir and also gave context to explain ideas and opinions that were subsequently revealed in sections two and three. The second section used four images of different landscapes to explore perceptions of forested and unforested scenes. Participants were encouraged to explain how they felt about each scene and discuss as to whether the scenes would fit in with their farming practices (Table 2.2). Using the photographs, this section probed perceptions associated with different woodland landscapes in order to identify underlying opportunities and barriers towards and uses of woodlands on agricultural land.

Agricultural Scene	Woodland Scene	Shelter Scene	Unmanaged Woodland
			

*Table 2.2: Landscape photographs used in the focus group to compare attitudes to different woodland scenes.*

Finally, the third sections used statements derived from Wynne Jones (2013a) and Osmond & Upton (2012) to explore commonly held association of farmers and forestry (Figure 2.2). Concepts such as the space and time needed to plant and manage woodlands, the potential uses and revenue sources and the increased need for food security where among the themes probed, as such section three concentrated the discussions on woodland on agricultural land.

- Planting woodland on my farm would have many benefits, for example: timber production, creating habitat for wildlife and helping to manage flooding. Most farmers have small pockets on unproductive land which could be converted into woodland.
- My choices about what to do on my land revolve around how to add value. I don't see how planting trees can really pay - the financial incentives are not large enough.
- I wish I had planted the woodland years ago, it's a lovely place to walk the dog, plus we coppice and use the wood for fuel at home. Planting woodland reduces the carbon footprint of the farm and stops us being so reliant on imported fuels.
- Farmers are farmers, not foresters - I don't feel I have the knowledge or the skills to plant and manage a woodland; I don't know who to turn to for help or advice.
- There is such an increased demand for food which will increase in the future, that taking land out of production for tree planting is not viable. I would not have the time to manage woodland either, with all the other demands on my time.
- The time period that you are tied in for with woodland creation is too long. I don't know what will happen to my farm in the future so I would prefer to be able to have more control of my land now.

*Figure 2.2: Statements used in focus groups to facilitate discussion around farmer's perceptions of woodland.*

## **2.2 Interviews**

Telephone interviews were conducted with Coed Cymru officers from a range of the Welsh Local Authorities (LA) that have responsibility for woodlands. Initial contact was made through email, with follow up calls to arrange a suitable time. At the beginning of the telephone interview, a brief introduction to the project was given, and the interviewee gave verbal consent of the conversation to be recorded for transcription. The interviews then explored attitudes and opinions of the Glastir Woodland Creation and Woodland Management schemes, from the perspective of the Local Authority. In total, nine interviews were conducted covering the following Local Authorities: Anglesey; Carmarthenshire; Ceredigionshire; Conwy; Denbighshire; Gwynedd; Neath, Port Talbot and Swansea; Wrexham; and Rhondda, Bridgend and Merthyr Tydfil (Figure 2.1).

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 The Glastir Scheme

This research set out to use qualitative methods to unpack the attitudes towards the woodland elements within Glastir, focussing on both the farming community and Local Authorities via Coed Cymru officers. Discussions with members of the farming community revealed that there was little separation of the Glastir Woodland Creation and Management schemes from that of Glastir as a whole. With this in mind, the attitudes and opinions expressed reflect both the experiences participants had with Glastir in general, and it was impossible to always isolate only those attitudes that related to the WC and WM strands. Within the Local Authorities, perhaps because some of the Coed Cymru officers interviewed have been or currently are advisors for the WM and WC schemes, there was a much clearer division between the Glastir WC and WM schemes and the farm-based Glastir Entry and Advanced scheme as a whole. Therefore the opinions expressed by the Coed Cymru officers are largely based on the WC and WM sections of Glastir.

It is interesting to note that there was a high degree of similarity between the opinions expressed by the Coed Cymru officers and those from the farming community. In general, it seems that previous experiences, both good and bad, either with the All-Wales elements of Glastir or with previous woodland schemes, colour the attitudes towards the current scheme. For example, farmers who are already involved in Glastir and have had a negative experience appeared reticent about entering another Glastir scheme. Likewise, both farmers and Local Authorities compare Glastir to previous schemes and there is an expectation that Glastir should have built on previous woodland schemes (for example Better Woodland Wales) and a disappointment as this is perceived as not having happened; this was particularly acutely felt within the Local Authorities.

“To be honest most probably we hadn’t really looked at the Glastir Woodland too significantly because the other requirements of Glastir processes have said you know I don’t want to really go for that and it’s the documentation exercise more than anything of Glastir. And we have enough paperwork as it is.” **R6, Abergavenny**

“We were in the ESA which was really good scheme and you had an individual person came out, walked around the farm with you, decided what you’d do and helped you with all the paperwork when it had to go through. And it worked brilliantly and we didn’t go into the last lot, Tir Gofal and then we’ve gone into this one but it’s nothing like as good as the ESA. Yes, I think the ESA was more, it was simpler wasn’t it?” **R6, Bangor**

“Under Woodland Improvement Grant there was a degree of flexibility like if you know you couldn’t do it this year for whatever reason you could phone them up and say look we can’t do it because it was too wet or too whatever. It was a case of alright we’ll just put it down for next year then and there just doesn’t seem to be the opportunity to do that with Glastir.” **LA1**

*Figure 3.1: Quotes reflecting attitudes towards the Glastir Woodland schemes in comparison to previous schemes*

#### 3.2 Glastir Woodland Management and Creation

Concern about the finer details of the Glastir WC and WM schemes were most often expressed by Local Authorities, for example the minimum area requirement, species mix and thinning rates, reflecting a greater scheme-specific knowledge of the Coed Cymru officers. In contrast, members of the farming community talked much more generally about Glastir, and openly admitted to being strategic in terms of what land they enrolled into the scheme and which options under Glastir they would participate in. Oftentimes this reflects works that the farmers had been planning to undertake anyway, and entry into Glastir was merely a method of achieving the end result with a smaller financial burden. In both cases, dissatisfaction and unhappiness, either with scheme-

specific details or more generally with the perceived complexity and bureaucracy associated with the scheme expressed by most participants undermines the overall objectives of Glastir WC and WM. This corroborates much previous research in which landowners perceptions of woodland grant schemes are described as complex and bureaucratic (Urquhart 2006; Church and Ravenscroft 2008; Cunningham 2009; Urquhart et al. 2009). Despite this, the Better Woodlands Wales (BWW) scheme examined by Wavehill Consulting (2009) was deemed to be straightforward, which perhaps explains the disappointment felt by LAs that Glastir Woodland schemes had not built on the success of BWW.

"I find that I looked through all the Glastir paperwork this morning and I thought my goodness! [Laughs] I, we were actually offered a contract and we'd already done all the work we'd suggested that we might have grants on and at the end of the day we didn't bother to fill it in, the contract was so demanding!" **R3, Wrexham**

"We're now in Glastir and will be in Glastir Advanced but we're being really cautious about which bits of the land we tie down . . . We're still trying to do it but we have been much more strategic about which bits we'll say we will commit to Glastir." **R5, Bangor**

"Well I mean if we take the reclamation woodlands you could put the reclamation woodland sites in for a thinning operation whereas you couldn't do that under Glastir because you just simply can't the 27 cubic metres volume out of there per hectare. Where if you went into Better Woodlands for Wales you could, you could thin any volume you wanted but you were paid on you know on how much volume." **LA2**

"Each grant scheme has got progressively more complex in its application process and I would say each grant scheme, because of that, has been more costly and less effective." **LA3**

*Figure 3.2: Quotes reflecting attitudes towards the current Glastir Woodland schemes*

### 3.3 Productivity versus woodland creation

There is a well-documented conflict between agricultural productivity and woodland creation (Watkins et al. 1996) where it has been shown that farmers have a tendency to see the creation of woodland on agriculturally valuable land as wrong and even immoral. In this research, the reaction to the arable scene in the photograph exercise did indicate an aesthetic preference for an arable landscape, a finding similar to that of Burton and Wilson (2000). However, the qualitative nature of the methodology used allowed an in-depth exploration of this, revealing nuances that do not quite align with the established consensus held in the literature. Whilst all but one farmer would not seriously consider planting woodland on productive land, the vast majority agreed that there were small pockets of land that could be given over to woodland creation. This contradicts previous studies that indicate a much stronger aversion to planting woodland on any farmland (Watkins et al. 1996; Burgess et al. 1998).

"I feel that a good farmer being brought up in the generation before me farming was always taught that we had to feed the nation or nowadays with the world being so small, feed the world and so that is where some moral dilemmas arise with the Glastir work." **R5, Abergavenny**

"Because like that's you've got your corridors, you've got your livestock, you've got your hedges for shelter and the hedges are growing they're tidy you know decent hedges." **R3, Abergavenny**

**R1:** Yeah that looks attractive, it looks well kept, it looks farmable you know practical erm... **R4:** You've got trees dotted around haven't you so yeah **R3:** And there are like wildlife corridors in the long hedges

**Wrexham**

"I think most farmers have small pockets don't we that could be converted into woodlands, I think we've all got a little bit somewhere." **R4, Wrexham**

*Figure 3.3: Quotes reflecting attitudes towards the current the agricultural landscape image*

Many participants were of the opinion that there is a range of more appropriate places for

woodland creation than productive land, for example road verges. Osmond and Upton (2012) found that in order to meet target of new woodland creation by 2030, areas of marginal land will need to be planted; however, conservation agencies often oppose planting applications because of the ecological importance of the existing habitats (Osmond and Upton 2012).

“There’s always ground at the sides of these roads and they’re paying the councils just to try and cut the grass off it and you think you know there’s a degree of ground there that could be planted.” **R5, Wrexham**

*Figure 3.4: Quote reflecting attitudes towards appropriate woodland location*

Furthermore, despite the reference to a desire for tidy farms expressed by the farmers in this research, which corroborates the findings of Silcock and Manley (2008), this preference for tidiness did not extend to the woodland; moreover, many of the farmers expressed an appreciation for untidy woodland in terms of its importance for biodiversity. Any reticence about creating woodlands strongly reflects the concerns about and perceived barriers of the Glastir scheme itself as opposed to an aversion to woodlands *per se*. Examples of this include concerns about the penalties and auditing or the inflexibility and lack of adaptability of Glastir such that it is perceived as being more hassle than it’s worth. This mode of thinking is also apparent in the interviews with Local Authorities; whilst woodland creation on Local Authority owned land could be hampered by limited suitable space, woodland management is an on-going work stream. Again, reticence about engaging with the Glastir WM is more focussed on the perceived drawbacks, particularly the increased administrative burden and lack of flexibility of the scheme, and not a lack of impetus to manage Local Authority owned woodlands.

“ . . there’s not enough flexibility for individual farmers to keep control of the situation under different weather conditions and different stock conditions and so on and that’s a major problem which is why with our Glastir we thought long and hard about what we wanted to do . . we were very careful about what we put in and what we didn’t” **R5, Bangor**

“I think that the word that sums it all up is balance because areas like that there’s nothing at all wrong with them, especially if its on the poorer ground, its being wonderful for the environment, its non---productive land, the timber doesn’t even look any good for firewood, its just a balance which life has got to be all about.” **R5, Abergavenny**

*Figure 3.5: Quotes reflecting a desire for Glastir woodland schemes to be flexible and in balance with other farming priorities.*

### **3.4 Relationship between farming culture and Glastir Woodland schemes**

It was important to first understand the perceptions behind what makes a good and bad farmer before trying to unpack how the Glastir woodland schemes fit into the farming lifestyle, in line with the need to “create a business case for woodland creation that works with farming culture” (Wynne-Jones 2013a). The attributes of both good and bad farmers discussed by our farming participants allowed contextualisation of the attitudes towards both woodland and the Glastir schemes. In brief, ‘good’ farmers were considered as those who achieved a balance between productivity and caring for the environment. Both of these were seen a key contributions that the farming communities makes to society, encompassing the responsibility for land stewardship and providing food nationally and internationally. It is important to note the productivity does not necessarily equate to profitability; whilst it was acknowledged that farming is a business and profits are needed in order move forward, the importance of farming as a way of life and that the profit margins are not expected to be large was also expressed.



"So it is getting that balance and no matter how much your heart says I want to go this way, I want to protect my hay meadow which has got wonderful flowers on it, but we also have to grow grass on it and its trying to find the balance of sunflowers and lots of grass so we can feed the sheep in the winter and not have to buy in fodder." **R5, Bangor**

"Just to roll on from that of course the best thing for the environment and for the countryside is profitable farming because if farmers are making money they will repair the walls, put up new gates, look after the countryside, if we've got no brass in our pockets we're not going to be doing that. So profitable agriculture is probably the best thing, I feel, for the environment and for the countryside in general, it is vital that agriculture makes money." **R5, Abergavenny**

"You know if you take the schemes out you know to sort of put your most productive land into sort of schemes that are not going to help you make your profit is harder and harder." **R3, Abergavenny**

"And I think for me a bad farmer is somebody who doesn't care for the environment because there's that notion of sustainability that if you take no notice of what you're throwing on the fields or you know chopping down hedges and trees and all the rest of it then ultimately you're not going to be successful. I suppose you might still be successful as commercially as a farmer but in terms of the long-term view of food production you're not, you're not going to make it. **R5, Bangor**

"Some of the trouble is what are you talking a 'profitable farmer' because we're profitable because we get Single Farm Payments, there's not many farmers who actually can make a living without the Single Farm Payment, or without subsidies." **R1, Abergavenny**

*Figure 3.6: Quotes reflecting the complexity of attitudes relating to farming and the environment*

An interesting point raised in the Abergavenny FG was that profit-making farms are more likely to have the spare capital to invest in the environment. This connects with the perception that most of the farming community expressed, about farming being a lifestyle choice and how farming relies upon a healthy environment and embodies a duty of care towards the environment. Furthermore, the need to rely on subsidies, such as the Single Farm Payment (SFP) or indeed Glastir schemes in order to show a profit at the end of the day was also explicitly mentioned, adding weight to the idea that farming is accepted as being more of a lifestyle choice than a profit making industry.

Adaptability and resilience were also important attributes of good farmers, driven by the perception that agriculture is subject to external influences which creates uncertainty, for example climatic and political drivers. The need to be able to adapt and to be resilient in the face of changing political priorities, uncertainty over product prices and little control of the weather was seen as very important to the success of anyone within the agricultural sector. In general, most participants felt that the Glastir scheme was inflexible and overly prescriptive, an opinion also voiced strongly by the Local Authorities. In tandem, strong concerns were voiced over the penalties for not adhering to the works timetable agreed (by both farmers and Local Authorities), particularly if work was not able to be carried out due to unforeseen circumstances beyond the landowners control, for example an extremely wet winter preventing access to woodlands. Moreover, the Glastir scheme was viewed as having no mechanism whereby changes to the scheduled programme of works could be adapted following such events. The Coed Cymru officers made comparisons to the Better Woodland Wales scheme, which they believed to have had more flexibility than Glastir WM or WC, due to ability to adapt the planned operation to take account of circumstance beyond their control (i.e. weather).

"Yeah I think you have to be resilient because not only is the Government changing the rules every now and then but also we have no control over the weather and so you have to be prepared to adjust and make the best of whatever is thrown at you in terms of the weather and disease" **R5,**

**Bangor**

"I personally haven't gone into Glastir, will not go into Glastir. Didn't go into Tir Gofal basically because they don't listen to you...when you tell them how a field, every field grows differently but they just...broad brush 'no you can't do that, you can't do that' and it doesn't work. **R3, Bangor**

"You get form after form that's like this thick within its booklet and it gets to the stage where you just think pfft [sic] you know its piles of them and then you're thinking if I get something wrong are they going to come down like a tonne of bricks. And half the time you don't even know if you've done something wrong until somebody comes and tells you. And you, you know, you end up thinking god I better not join this scheme in case I make a mistake and then I'm going to have all kinds of hassle and bother." **R2, Bangor**

"The only thing, the only thing that I'd be wary of with the Glastir Woodland Management is not to commit the Council to too much work under the scheme because of the way the scheme rules if you default on an operation then you will get fined." **LA4**

*Figure 3.7: Quotes reflecting the participants' fear surrounding the auditing component of Glastir*

### **3.5 General attitudes towards woodland**

Attitudes towards woodland are intertwined with the key attributes of an effective farmer; whilst the positive contributions woodland can make to land management in terms of flood management, biodiversity and shelter for livestock and crops are accepted, the idea taking productive land to plant trees on is the antithesis of the primary reason for farming i.e. to produce food. All but one farmer that participated in this research was opposed to taking productive land and converting into woodland. Moreover, there was an expectation expressed that should this happen, that farming would become more intensive in order to compensate for the loss of agricultural land. The single farmer who had converted some of his grazing pastures into woodland did so out of a belief that agriculture has become too intensive and was detrimentally impacting the environment. As such a key concern for farmers was the environmental impact of intensive farming practices. However, it was also accepted that there is a balance between profitability and caring for the environment and that farming is a business that needs to be profitable in order to survive. Concern was also expressed about whether agriculture in the Wales is economically viable if subsidies or payments for ecosystem services (i.e. Glastir) were not accounted for.

“Well if I may say I think this over-intensification of farming I mean up a level from we do. It’s dreadful factory farming, these chickens in hundreds of thousands and if you’re going back to profitability I think all we need to do is make a living.” **R3, Newtown**

“and they could have had quarter of an acre to go with it [the other land planted for woodland] but leave me farm more intensive farming in another acre somewhere else you see.” **R2 Newtown**

R7: We had, we had some very steep hillside when we went into the farm and it was completely covered in bracken and we did take out one of those schemes, it was a Forestry scheme and we planted it with trees and we found that the amount of bird life and other life that we’ve now got on the farm has tripled, quadrupled. *Kate: And is that something that you see as a positive feature now?* R7: Yes. **Abergavenny**

I have planted 14 odd hectares into woodland in a Glastir scheme and yeah the moral decision to plant on land that could produce food was quite a difficult one. **R5, Abergavenny**

“that’s the key responsibility its not only providing our yearly income is it not but to achieve that you’ve got to look after the land, you keep it in good condition and these interests which you must have in the environment you must be supportive of it.” **R1, Newtown**

*Figure 3.8: Quotes reflecting environmental stewardship of farming and positive attitudes towards woodland creation*

As previously mentioned, many participants acknowledge that there are small pockets of land on most farms that could be planted with trees, and in principle would be happy to do so, and felt confident in having the skills or knowledge to undertake such work. However, woodland creation or management would not be undertaken just for economic reasons. The length of time to maturity and the amount of work necessary during the first 10 years meant that participants believed that aside from providing wood fuel for personal use in the home, there would be little possibility for making profit from woodland; in combination there was little knowledge about whether one would be allowed to harvest wood from woodland that had been planted under the Glastir scheme. That being said, many participants expressed an affinity for woodland and several had already planted trees on their land, outside of the Glastir schemes. The delicate balance between farming the environment mentioned previously was brought up again when participants were comparing the four images of woodland; the image of a field bounded by woodland was described as being a good compromise, further highlighting the almost unanimous opinion that woodland and farming are not mutually exclusive but that farm woodlands need to be sympathetic to the food production focus of farms.

Well we got one 18 acres, it’s called the Large Wood which is mostly oak trees and they’re almost like telephone poles and they want to be thinned but the cost of thinning is going to be way more than what you know just merely the price of firewood really, we can’t a home to sell it.” **R2, Newtown**

R4: Yeah that’s what we think, best of both worlds really. You’ve got the wood and you’ve got the farmland as well.

R3: Well now then tree planting is, serious trees hardwood and so on is a long term matter. I agree the financial incentives are nowhere near large enough. I don’t think we’re planting for profit for use, we might be for our grandchildren . . .

R2: I have no children or grandchildren and we’ve planted a lot of hardwood, it is for the future, its sustainability. **Wrexham**

*Figure 3.9: Quotes reflecting the financial incentives of Glastir woodland schemes.*

### 3.6 The Glastir Process

General criticisms of the Glastir scheme itself included the relationship between the staff administering the scheme, and the administrative requirements of entry into Glastir. For those participants who had received an on-site visit, the opinions were generally positive about the member of staff who visited. However, for those that had no face-to-face contact, opinions were jaded by perceived complexity and administrative burden in place, both on Local Authorities and farmers. The need to register all woodland within the LA was seen as a burden by the LA interviewees, due to organisational set-up within the Local Authority. More than one department have responsibility for woodland in Local Authorities, and this alongside the numerous small pockets of woodland on LA land mean that it can place an unwieldy administrative burden on LA's to document and register each patch of woodland.

The planting eligibility maps were a source of frustration across both the farming community and the LAs. This has been previously highlighted by Wynne-Jones (2013a), who found that the maps were both a direct disincentive and an indirect barrier by attempting to encourage planting in lowland fertile regions and consequently increasing the conflict between food production and woodland creation. Planting maps continue to be perceived as inaccurate and a disincentive to express an interest in Glastir WM and WC, to both LA's and farmers. Additionally, inaccuracies on the individual farm maps were common; despite this, even when farmers corrected the maps and sent them back to Glastir, the corrections were not updated centrally and incorrect maps continued to be sent out.

"Erm well yeah when you've got something as complex as that then yeah it does add an additional sort of burden on the Council to start actually looking at what they've got regards woodlands because to be honest I don't think they know themselves [laughs]" **LA1**

"each time I've had my IACS maps which are sent to you each year showing your boundaries and somebody somewhere has taken these boundaries from I presume a satellite photo. There was a small error in that a pond that was part of my field was marked as belonging to my neighbour as was a hundred metres of ditch. Now it doesn't really matter but I thought I'd better write to them and say 'look this is my ditch not his ditch' and 'that's my pond not his pond' because you know probably somebody somewhere would then say 'those aren't yours because you never said anything about it'. So I wrote I think for four years running, never got a response and then I got a response this year which was the one year I hadn't bothered writing because I'd given up" **R2**

**Bangor**

"The woodland creation was done on the basis of, in principle which was a good idea, but it was to plant on land where you're not going to damage an existing habitat so it was done on the All Wales Map Scheme based on Phase 1 survey data which was really quite out of date." **LA3**

*Figure 3.10: Quotes reflecting the participants' perceptions of the Glastir process.*

There was also the perception that the Glastir scheme was constantly changing and a feeling that the scheme was rolled out too early; moreover, experiences of the Glastir administration left some participants feeling as if there were internal conflicting opinions within Welsh Government. This finding emphasises the conclusions drawn by Wynne Jones (2013a) that contrary to accepted practises, the Glastir scheme should not reduce staff numbers and face-to-face contact with farmers and that a move towards more automated approach is not appropriate in this context. Above all, a degree of continuity was needed to allow both LA's and farmers to feel confident dealing with the schemes and to develop a sense of trust in the scheme, perceived as lacking at the current time. These comments refer to Glastir in general, but such attitudes represented a significant barrier to the uptake of Glastir WM and WC and are thus important to highlight.

“There is no communication between the Glastir Woodland Management and it doesn’t come, it goes to the client and the client is who doesn’t really understand woodland management but wants to do it and while I’ve been there you know he should be liaising with myself but doesn’t do it, he just goes ahead and writes the plan. Now then the plans go away then the plans then go away and that Glastir Woodland Advisor doesn’t see that plan once it’s gone in-house into Welsh Government because it’s another team that’s building it all up. There’s another mapping team in Aberystwyth who produces the maps and invariably you’ve got no communication, information comes out wrong, the maps are wrong and they’re expected to sign you know when eventually the contracts do come through I don’t know any client yet who has had a contract on time ready to sign.” **LA5**

“Every other department has got a different agenda and they don’t work towards the same goal, or lots of them.” **R3, Bangor**

“We need a continuity of a scheme that can actually deliver you know on a, on a basis well a five review is great and it could be you know continue to be that. Because of the demise of BWW and they’re starting again with Glastir I’m hoping now that Glastir can offer this kind of continuity.” **LA3**

*Figure 3.11: Quotes reflecting the participants’ perceptions of the Glastir administration and scheme continuity*

The complexity of the Glastir WC and WM schemes begins on application, when new entrants have to choose from a long list of possible options that they might want to undertake. Often, Woodland Creation Officers are met with farmers who want to undertake works that are not suitable for their land or impractical or not allowed as a result of the tree planting maps. As a result, farmers often become frustrated and less amenable to going into Glastir WC.

“I mean if you’re talking about the Glastir from the point of view of the landowners well with the Council in mind from the point of view of me as a Woodland Advisor erm...you know there are certain issues with the scheme but there are with all the schemes [laughs]. Complexity, issues, the I mean you do get this its almost like a Christmas list when you turn up at a landowners who have seen the matrix of operations that they could be eligible for and what we tend to find is you turn up and they’ve gone through this going like we want that that that that [laughs]. You know, hang on hang on you know and you’re having to sort of reign them in a bit and say no look you’ve only got these layers on your land and then its oh oh I don’t think we’re interested now if we can’t get that you know its sort of disappointing really so from their point of view.” **LA1**

*Figure 3.12: Quote reflecting the participants’ perceptions of the complexity of the Glastir*

### **3.7 Payment Rates**

Opinions about the payment rates under Glastir WC were divided; one farmer felt that the payment they receive made is economically viable for him to convert pastureland into woodland. However, many other participants felt that the payments were not in-line with the true cost of operations. The LA interviews revealed that woodland management rates, particularly for thinning, were in some cases insufficient to overcome the perceived administrative burden of entering Glastir Woodland Management. In many cases the LAs were not looking to increase their woodland holding by creating new woodland, predominately because they did not have the space (space constraints on grant uptake were also found in (Watkins 1984) or in these time if fiscal austerity, woodland creation has to compete with other priority areas for LA finances.

They gave us loads of money for thinning the forest that's going to more or less pay for itself anyway and there's about the same amount of money for putting in the track that cost about six times that." **R6, Bangor**

"Yes I think for something like thinning or habitat restoration it's probably not actually important because we're not getting that much payment for it. For other sorts of work it really depends on the payments we're getting really I mean work like sort of fencing like access if we can get it its going to be crucial to doing the work." **LA6**

"You know when they say the 50%, there's a grant of 50% it invariably turns out to be more like 30%." **LA5**

"Because there's money going out with no you know they can maintain and upgrade footpaths etcetera at their own cost if needs be, you know where public access but where if there's no money to do the work there's no money to do the work and with regard to thinning etcetera and creating new footpaths" **LA7**

*Figure 3.13: Quote reflecting the participants' perceptions of the Glastir payment rates for woodland schemes*

A theme present across each focus group was the role of the public, both as a contributor through taxation to farming subsidies and as a driver of landscape evolution. Glastir as a novel agri-environment scheme has moved towards a payment for ecosystem services approach, with Welsh Government as the customer and the farmer as the supplier (Wynne-Jones 2013b). However it was unclear if this concept was one that the farming community engaged because Glastir and Single Farm Payments were discussed simultaneously in the discussions. The concept that woodlands would help to offset the carbon emission from agriculture was accepted as a powerful driver of woodland planting targets, but there was a concern about whether this would impact consumer choices. There was a perception that the public has a lack of understanding about the true cost, both financial and in terms of land management, of food production. There was a sense of frustration and a feeling of under appreciation for the care and management for the countryside that farmers undertake, which also manifested itself in a frustration about the fact that Glastir payments are only made on work to be done, rather than compensating work that has been already been undertaken.

"there's a great number of people who have another job and a lot of people are subsidising farming"

**R1, Abergavenny**

"our food prices are just way too low, always have been, possibly always will be and until we can relate to the consumers and say 'you think its expensive but its not' because they don't realise how much money is going out in the Single Farm Payment, its almost like there a middle man giving us money to keep the consumers quiet and once we tell the consumers that they're actually not paying, very little for their food and we actually [?] payments through the back pockets through the Single Farm Payment then we might then work out whether we are profitable or now and whether people want us to be profitable or they want us to be just farm keepers really." **R1,**

**Abergavenny**

"If you've got a nice little woodland that's well managed and well fenced in the last five years and haven't had grants on it otherwise we will pay you for that effort instead of this applying to do this and do that but lets look at people's conservation and say yes that, it would be better to reward them for what they've done." **R3, Wrexham**

*Figure 3.14: Quotes highlighting the role of the public in agricultural profitability and the desire for acknowledgment of the environmental stewardship role most farmers undertake.*

## **4. Conclusions**

This research has highlighted the complicated nature of landowners' (farmers and Local Authorities) relationships with Glastir and how this relates to attitudes towards woodland creation and management. On the one hand, there appears to be little evidence that farmers do not want woodland on their land or that Local Authorities are not actively managing their woodland holdings. Moreover, there were positive reactions to landscape images that included woodland from the farming community. Yet on the other hand, there are significant barriers to be overcome if either publically or privately owned land is to contribute towards the Welsh Government's 100,000 ha target. A balanced, straightforward and flexible scheme needs to be created that allows woodland creation and management to be carried out in keeping with the needs of both farmers and LAs.

### **4.1 Compatibility of Glastir Woodland elements and farming culture**

The provision for woodland creation and management within Glastir do not appear to be compatible with key attribute of farming culture, as identified by the farming community who participated in this research. The perceived lack of flexibility in the scheme means that several participants explicitly stated that they would plant woodland, but not under Glastir. The prescriptive nature of the Glastir scheme (In terms of size and widths) is also a barrier because it prevents many landowners from being allowed to create woodland on parts of their farms which best suit their needs, i.e. small disparate patches which are unused, irrespective of farm size. It is important to recognise that farming is a business and needs to be profitable; moreover, farming as a culture with strong values and attitudes means that that a focus on adapting Glastir to suit the farmers is going to have a greater chance of success, both in the short and long term, rather than trying to change farming values and attitudes. The prescriptive nature of Glastir also prevents Local Authorities for engaging with the scheme fully, and represents missed opportunities for funding woodland management above the minimum required from LA's.

### **4.2 Streamlined Glastir Process**

Many of the general comments about Glastir related to the process of entering the scheme; although this does not directly impact Glastir Woodland Creation or Management uptake, it is nevertheless a barrier to entering into any part of the scheme, which has an indirect consequence of reducing participant numbers in the woodland schemes. Scheme complexity was detrimental to both farmers and Local Authorities and was cited by some participants as a reason not to go in Glastir schemes. A more streamline process which still uses face-to-face consultations to help landowners decide on the most appropriate operations for their land management goals would help to alleviate frustration felt as a result of excessive paperwork and time taken to apply for the scheme. Clearly outlined simple objectives, alongside an in-built evaluation process to take the place of the current auditing element, would allow scheme entrants to feel more at ease with what they should and should not be doing, and to try to remove the fear factor when it comes to auditing and penalties. The evaluation process would also allow increased flexibility in case of situations where work has not been possible due to weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances.

### **4.3 Payment Rates**

The payment rates under Glastir were perceived to be incompatible with the true cost of the work involve in either creating or managing woodlands. The Glastir scheme seeks to pay for ecosystems services that it believes would not be created or maintained otherwise; perceptions were that payment rates were not sufficient to overcome the other barriers to entering Glasitr (for example the perceived inflexibility of the scheme) and encourage participation across the board. Creating and managing woodland take time away from other tasks, particularly in the case of farmers, and represents a financial pressure for LA's in challenging economic times. Greater scheme uptake could be encouraged if payment rates included costing for labour (aside from the landowner's

time) as many forestry operations require specialist equipment and/or personnel.

#### **4.4 Final Reflections**

Overall, these findings demonstrate that the gulf between farming and forestry appears not to be as significant in Wales as has been found elsewhere in the UK, suggesting that the 100,000 ha target is not unachievable. Indeed, Welsh farmers exhibit positive attitudes towards woodland that are not based on economics; many have planted or will be planting trees on their land and agree with the major tenets of Glastir. The major barriers to entry into the Glastir woodland scheme (both WC and WM) exist within the scheme itself, and do not reflect attitudes towards woodland. Remedial action to the design and attributes of the scheme based on these findings may yield a more customer-focused scheme and consequently higher rates of scheme uptake.



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## **Appendix A: Literature Review**

### **A1 General Attitudes Towards Forestry**

No real tradition of farm forestry exists in the UK, unlike other European countries (Burgess et al. 1998) and so there appears to be a tendency for farmers to see forestry as very distinct from agriculture. Moreover, some attitudes imply that using productive agricultural land for forestry is almost morally wrong (Watkins et al. 1996), as if because of productivity of the land it should only be used for agriculture and is a waste of such land (Bell 1999). Work by Walker-Springett (2014) shows that both farmers and those connected to rural locations, can have a utilitarian or anthropocentric attitude towards nature. Agriculture is perceived favourably because it produced a tangible output (i.e. food and money); the land is considered wasted if food production is limited as a result of a land use change where the services are less tangible such as flood alleviation or biodiversity enhancement. In a study in Scotland, concerns about food security were given as a reason for not planting trees on productive agricultural land (Secker Walker 2009).

Unlike crops or livestock, woodland creation takes a long time to mature and cannot be easily converted to other uses, unlike crop production which is much more reactive to market forces (Burton and Wilson 2000; Silcock and Manley 2008). Time scales are much longer and acceptance of grants means that the landowner is tied into the scheme for a long period of time (Burton and Wilson 2000). The need for felling licences to return the land to agricultural use at the end of the scheme further compounds the belief that conversion to woodland is an irreversible decision (Bell 1999; Cunningham 2009).

The implication for agri-environmental schemes (e.g. Glastir) of this type of attitude is that those who take up grants use the least productive land. They might not be open to planting forest on the most appropriate or beneficial sites and therefore are unlikely to see benefits such as reduced runoff and erosion, which have been demonstrated by the farmers at Pont Bren (The Woodland Trust. n.d.). If farmers are not seeing the benefits of woodland creation, then there is no incentive for them to recommend the scheme to other farmers.

Attitudes towards agriculture stem predominantly from within the farming community; there is a social status achieved through good farming and the favourable aesthetics of crop management compared with the untidy appearance of woodlands (Bell 1999; Burton and Wilson 2000). Farming is evolving into the production of goods *and* services, which might subtly change attitudes toward forestry and its uses and aesthetic value. Burton and Wilson (2000) point out that to change farmers into farmer-foresters will require a change in the perception of what a good farmer actually means. The authors include the term 'leisure provider' in their farmer-forester description; this insinuates that by creating forest, farmers would then automatically become leisure providers, leading to issues such as accessibility and privacy, which have been given as reasons for landowners not to plant woodland. Farmers themselves state that they have less of a knowledge base concerning woodland (Bell 1999) thereby reinforcing the idea that farming does not include forestry. Secker and Walker (2009) suggest that this knowledge gap is a disincentive to attempt forestry management. However, in a previous study Betts and Ellis (2000) found that three-quarters of the farmers surveyed wanted more information about woodland management, suggesting that farmers have an interest in forestry management.

### **A2 Socio-demographic influence on attitudes**

Gasson & Hill (1999) found that younger farmers were more likely to plant woodland than older farmers. A study in the 1980s revealed that some farmers believed that the conversion of agricultural land to woodland was a long-term option, which might in part explain the reticence of

older farmer to become involved in woodland creation schemes. Age is also linked to the prospective of financial returns from the woodland creation; Watkins et al. (1996) found participants felt that older farmers who planted trees were less likely to see a return on their investment. Alternatively, Silcock and Manley (2008) postulated that older farmers might prefer the less labour intensive aspect of forest management, where forestry contractors can be used. In keeping with difference in attitude as a result of age, a line of succession for the farm leads to more active management of land in general, which can include woodland planting and management (Gasson and Hill 1990). If there is a clear succession then perhaps there will be a greater tendency for woodland creation, as the 'planter' would know that whilst s/he might not see the profits, his/her children would.

Public access to privately owned woodlands is seen as a barrier to woodland creation (Bishop 1992). Despite this, a study shows that only a few farmers were reluctant to allow access to their woodland (Church et al., 2005). Whilst another study found that two thirds of respondents whose land includes public right of way have had no problems associated with the public access (Church and Ravenscroft 2008). Church and Ravenscroft (2008) also found that farmers with woodland and allowed access, were happy to increase access provision. Sime et al. (1993) found that there was a hierarchy of groups that farmers were happy (and less happy to allow access to) for example bird watcher and local people were in the 'good' group, town dwellers were tolerated and mountain bikers and campers were discouraged.

In interview study involving Welsh Farmers by Wavehill Consulting (2009) found that the majority of participants actively use their woodland. In general a higher proportion of those who receive a grant use their woodlands for recreational purposes, as well as timber production and the enhancement of habitats for wildlife, than those who were not involved in a grant scheme (Wavehill Consulting 2009). Furthermore, a high proportion of those who receive a grant actively manage their woodland (i.e. thinning), although landowner perceptions of appropriate management is often not congruent with policy makers ideas of correct woodland management (Lawrence and Dandy 2014). Woodland is also commonly planted to provide or encourage: shelter for livestock (Burgess et al. 1998; Blackstock 2000; Wavehill Consulting 2009). Moreover, wildlife/conservation, sporting/recreation and shelter/boundaries are consistently the top aims of woodland owners who had received grants.

### **A3 Efficiency of Grants**

The provision of grants for woodland creation and management does not have a clear-cut effect on the quantity of woodlands created or managed. Watkins (1984) found that just under half of owners who participated in their study would have planted woodlands irrespective of grant availability. However, Sharpe et al. (2001) found that most woodland owners stated that more grants would encourage them to bring their woodland under management. But these studies focus on woodland owners who may or may not be farmers. Conflicting attitudes from participants who were and were not involved in commercial forestry were highlighted by Church and Ravenscroft (2008) who found that the majority of private owners of woodland not involved in commercial forestry felt that the grants were not relevant to their decision to plant woodlands as the woodland was not planted for financial return. However, the same study found that 60% participants who were involved in commercial forestry did state that grant were important in their decision-making. Crabtree and Appleton (1998) found that scheme payments under-compensate for direct and indirect costs of woodland creation, but in this case woodland creation was based on the conversion of high quality arable land to woodland.

Cunningham (2009) indicates that barriers to grant uptake include bureaucracy, and overly complex application process. Dandy (2009) indicates that the grants are perceived as not dependable and

likely to decrease in the future. However, this would be partially nullified by the current practice of guaranteeing a fixed price for a period of time; but farmers recognise that this is still subject to the funding priorities of the EU. Conversely, a study in Wales found that 90% Of those in receipt of Forestry Commission grants for woodland ranked the scheme as good or very good (Wavehill Consulting 2009); the most common reason for this was the financial incentives in place. Of those that had not received a grant, lack of knowledge was a key factor in determining that they not apply for a grant (Wavehill Consulting 2009). Whilst lack of knowledge about the available grants has been shown to be a barrier to uptake (Ward and Manley 2002; Wavehill Consulting 2009), Crabtree et al. (1998) show that a lack of knowledge was strongly associated with other predictors of non-participation and concludes that is impossible to cite knowledge as the sole or main reason behind a lack of grant uptake.

Economic valuation exercises with landowners indicates that many woodland owners are not aware of the economic value of their woodland; this links with evidence from Sharpe et al. (2001) about the lack of economic incentive to manage woodlands and the perception that productive agricultural land would be wasted as forestry (Watkins et al. 1996). It is suggested that a lack of awareness of the potential revenue from woodland is a barrier to grant uptake (Lawrence et al. 2010). Revenue obtained directly through woodland (for example firewood etc.) are often not the main motivator for woodland creation (Blackstock 2000; Church and Ravenscroft 2008). Relatively few farmers use their woodland for commercial timber production (Church and Ravenscroft 2008) but this could be due to a lack of belief that woodland can offer large-scale economic returns (Burton and Wilson 2000). Conversely, Sharpe et al. (2001) found that 87% of woodland owners would be prepared to manage their woodland if this was a no cost to themselves (i.e. they broke even). In fact, woodlands are often unmanaged because it is not economically viable to do so (Sharpe et al. 2001). Secker Walker (2009) found that farmers do not perceive short rotation coppicing (SRC) (not eligible for Glastir payments) as giving a greater financial return than traditional agriculture and that the wood-fuel market is uncertain. The wood-fuel sector is seen as lacking a regional market structure, being complex, and having a lower long-term market viability (Dandy 2009). A report for Forestry Commission Scotland highlights the reliance of farmers in Scotland on unpaid family labour, which tends to artificially inflate farm profitability. Once this is factored out, forestry becomes more competitive in comparison to more traditional agriculture.

Lack of suitable land is also a barrier to grant uptake, Watkins et al. (1984) found that the most frequent reasons given for not planting trees was not having suitable land to plant; under the Glastir scheme the smallest amount of land eligible for payment is 0.25 ha. The average size of the woodland in a grant scheme was 22 hectares compared with 5 hectares on average for woodland not in a grant scheme (Wavehill Consulting 2009). This links to general attitudes towards forestry, where spare, poor quality or less useful land is converted to forestry; smaller farms are less likely to have pockets of un-used land. The focus on the minimum entry size required by Glastir further restricts entry for those farmers who only have small pockets of land (Osmond and Upton 2012).

This also links with the previously discussed attitudes towards forestry; suitable land often means land that is not good enough for crop planting or livestock grazing (Bell 1999). Additionally, an acceptance of grants is can be perceived as involving a loss of control over the land involved in the grant scheme (Sime et al. 1993; Urquhart 2006; Urquhart et al. 2009). Private woodland owners have been shown to have a strong sense of attachment to their woodland (Sime et al. 1993; Urquhart 2006) and to be against any loss of control, related to both public access and management regulations. Loss of control could be inadvertent as a consequence of environmental legislation and protection stemming from the woodland creation (Watkins et al. 1996).