

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru | National Assembly for Wales
Y Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd, Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig | Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee
Ymchwiliad i ddyfodol Polisiâu Amaethyddol a Datblygu Gwledig yng Nghymru | Inquiry into the Future of Agricultural and Rural Development Policies in Wales
AAB 17
Ymateb gan Anhysbys, Canolbarth Cymru
Evidence from Anonymous of Mid Wales

Qu. 1. Fundamental outcomes – for Brexit transition & after:

1.1 Ensure continued payments for 'active farmers' – and stop messing about with payments as the last three years we've been through hell of time & mapping & appeals & paperwork hassles to get to 2015-2020 payments. Don't mess this up more: protect current direct pillar 1 and environmental pillar 2 payment levels (as promised by Brexit leaders)

1.2 Ensure payments to 'active farmers' (rather than corporate landlords)

1.3 Tackle bureaucracy (as promised by Brexit leaders)

1.4 Protect environmentally sensitive & biodiverse areas

1.5 Ensure those living in and making living in rural Wales have an 'equal' voice and influence on rural policy, as corporate & other stakeholders (many who do not live or make living in rural Wales)

1.6 Address the threat to disadvantaged and upland farming from:

1.6.1 loss of EU subsidies

1.6.2 divisive or limiting UK/Wales farm policies & funding

1.6.3 impractical or narrow environmental policies

1.6.4 lack of market and marketing for native livestock (native livestock that live & do good work within challenging environments)

Qu. 2. What lessons about policies?

2.1 Simplify the payment system. Payment policy was obviously too complicated for the system because many farmers did not get paid on time, and the whole rural economy was suffering. Indeed there are no communications from Welsh Government currently about when 2016 payments will be made. These payments are not just for farmers: what comes into 'active farmers' gets fed into the local economy. The whole rural economy in rural Wales relies on these payments. If these payments are to stop, it is not just farming that would stop – the whole rural economy will stop also.

2.2 Simplify Farm Connect – current system is a ridiculous amount of bureaucracy - and a barrier to training for those living and working in rural environment.

2.3 Ground environmental policies. Environmental policies need to be practical and talk to the active farmers on the ground. For example, there is talk that to manage the environment more sheep need to go back onto the hills. There are many problems with this, including:

2.3.1 The product (i.e. native hill sheep) is not worth anything – since the Brexit vote. I have experienced many examples of good quality & gradable native hill livestock not finding a market or market price during August-November this year. Something needs doing about this because those countries in Europe who used to buy our native lamb are no longer doing so since the Brexit vote.

2.3.2 Wintering sheep away is too expensive. Without payments, we certainly will not be able to afford wintering away.

2.3.3 Keeping sheep on hills over winter require feeding - which is a cost. In addition environmental schemes can prevent feeding in 'habitat' areas – so there is also a welfare issue.

Qu. 3. Wales or UK?

3.1 It needs to be UK-wide policy, finance and administration - because now we are coming out of EU we need to be as united and streamlined and efficient as possible – now more than ever - to ensure our farming, environment, & rural economy work together, succeed, and grow in the big global market.