Agenda for Agricultural Extension Stakeholder Consultation

**DATE & Time**: Tuesday 15th February 2022 @ 11:00

**OVERALL THEME OF DISCUSSION**:

“How can we coordinate agricultural extension in the UK and give a voice in Parliament to stakeholders involved in this space?”

—> looking towards: the creation of an APPG

and/or a Bill that would create a structure to do the above

**DURATION**: 1h15min

**FORMAT**: Notes in blue are my own (RM)

1. [*5­—10 mins*] Introduction by Baroness Bennett presenting the overall theme

Natalie Bennett (peer, Green party) intro – the vision sort of an equivalent to the Scottish Farm Advisory Service or what ADAS used to be but for England as so much change now and in the near future and farmers are thirsty for accurate information and advice.

Attendees from Soil Assoc, Savills, Landworkers Alliance, Sustain, NFU, CABI, FFCC, Uni of Bristol, GFRAS, SAC consulting, AHDB KE, Farming Connect, ADAS, TIAH, Farmers Weekly, SVS (me!)

If there is a drive to set up an APPG it is envisaged this will need half a day per week secretariat and will have a broad remit to engage with policy makers / govt and be a forum to inform on need and importance of Agri extension.

1. [~*5 mins per speaker*] Introductory speeches from key stakeholders, including:
   1. CIVIL SOCIETY: [**Scott Pepé**](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwiIhsaKs_X1AhVHXsAKHfbCAAcQFnoECAoQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fuk.linkedin.com%2Fin%2Fscott-pep%25C3%25A9-171b40a0&usg=AOvVaw0UAbvSCPrqTzUatdIpylir)—National Farmers’ Union, External Affairs Manager – for members (Eng and Wales) they provide advice mainly through county offices including call centre with team of advisors on legal, planning, employment etc. Huge demand for advice right now and need more info from Govt on future support for farmers.
   2. ACADEMIA: [**Prof. Julie Ingram**](http://www.ccri.ac.uk/ingram/)—Countryside and Community Research Institute, Professor of Innovation for Sustainable Agriculture – slides will be shared (but have yet to receive). Interesting walk through the changes that have occurred in Agri advice services from Govt to privatisation and the ‘follow the money’ direction plus effectiveness of facilitate group models.
   3. FARMING: [**Simon Best**](https://www.nffn.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/21823-NFFN-Case-Study-Leaflets_SIMON-BEST-1.pdf)—Acton House Farm – farmer in N Ireland – local short supply chains, works with LEAF, RSPB, Wildlife Trusts; diversified into oats and municipal green waste composting for own farm. Also info on what else is available in NI – CAFRE (peer to peer learning), AFBI (latter more research based).
   4. PRIVATE SECTOR: [**Emily Norton**](https://www.savills.co.uk/people/savills-margaret-street/emily-norton.aspx)—Savills, Head of Rural Research- hadn’t prepared anything specific
   5. GOVERNMENT: [**Dave Freeman**](https://www.linkedin.com/in/dave-freeman-819b3a38/?originalSubdomain=uk)—Farming Advisory Service Scotland – 800-1200 farms getting one-to-one advice; peer to peer learning and mentoring within locality
2. [~*30 mins*] Open discussion
3. [*5 mins*] Determine level of support for founding an APPG + determine “Next steps”

*Strong support will give us a mandate to further liaise directly with other Parliamentarians.*

No other vets there representing other species sectors. Points I made were that vets are trusted sources of info and there is CPD on sustainability, carbon audits etc aimed at vets. Sheep are often considered the hard to reach compared with cattle, pigs, but the sheep sector and SVS recognise the need for advisors of quality and a route for becoming an advisor (RoSA, SVS…). Also that Pathway is already considering training / signposting for vets in what vets need to know to best advise farmers on animal health and welfare that is tailored to individual farms.

Overall, I have no idea where this will go. It could take some time to get off the ground and may be hard to determine scope as it is so very broad. BVA probably need to be involved to represent vets’ role as agri advisors.

[END}