

**Minutes of the
Farm Woodland Forum
Annual General Meeting
8 p.m. Tuesday 10 July 2018
at Laude Abbey, Leicestershire**



Present: Matthew Axe, Harriet Bell, Deb Beaumont, Paul Burgess (Secretary), Eugene Curran, Meghan Giroux, Stewart Hendry, John Holland (Treasurer), Ian Lane, Gerry Lawson, Jim McAdam, Andrew Ormerod, Tim Pagella, David Pilbeam, Jo Smith, Chris Stoate, Mike Strachan (Chairman), Sally Westaway

Apologies: Michael Marston, Ian Short, Anil Graves, Terry Thomas

1. Minutes

The Minutes of the 2017 Annual General Meeting of 22 June 2017 at Cranfield University, England available on the [Farm Woodland Forum website](#) were approved.

2. Matters arising

There are no specific items arising from the previous minutes.

3. Chairman's report

Mike Strachan gave an update on the situation regarding agroforestry and farm woodlands in Scotland, and then invited Jo Smith, Eugene Curran, Jim McAdam, and Tim Pagella to provide updates for England, Ireland, Northern Ireland, and Wales respectively.

Mike indicated that in Scotland, due to economic uncertainty some land owners were looking to sell their land. He also explained that Forestry Commission approvals for new woodland planting were high, with approximately 50-60% of the planting comprising conifers. The 1967 Forestry Act had described the role of Forestry Commissioners in Scotland. The new Forestry and Land Management Bill (Scotland) passed on 20 March 2018 explains the separation of Forestry Commission in Scotland from that in England and Wales from 2019.

Jo Smith explained that a number of initiatives had been undertaken to increase awareness of agroforestry in England. The Farm Woodland Forum had worked with the Soil Association and the Woodland Trust to produce a seven page briefing paper entitled: "Agroforestry in England: Benefits, Barriers and Opportunities". This was launched at an [Agroecology All Party Parliamentary Group](#) on 14 June 2018. Through the AFINET project, the Organic Research Centre had organised a number of farmer events, which had been oversubscribed. The Farm Woodland Forum was also working with the Soil Association to produce a new Agroforestry Handbook. She also explained that there was interest at North Wyke on how to make best use of the original agroforestry experimental site. Ian Lane added there was increasing interest in nut products, but there were issues on how to process and market such nuts.

Eugene Curran explained that the rate of woodland planting in Ireland had declined from an annual target of 10,000 ha in the 1990s to a current annual planting rate of about 5,000 ha. Some of this was due to strict environmental constraints on where woodlands could be planted. Approximately about 70% of the new planting was Sitka spruce. The removal of ash and Japanese larch as recommended species due to *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* and *Phytophthora ramorum* respectively was a blow. In Ireland, agroforestry support occurs within the forestry programme. A mid-term review of agroforestry showed that current support levels were insufficient to make agroforestry profitable for contractors. Funding was available to support a minimum of 400 trees per hectare at inter-row spacings of 5, 6, or 7 m. This scheme had attracted about 12 owners totalling about 50 ha.

Jim McAdam explained that since 2017, the Environmental Farming Scheme (EFS) in Northern Ireland had included agroforestry. In the first year, 24 farmers had expressed an interest in the agroforestry component; apart from one arable farmer, all were beef and sheep farmers. As part of the scheme, farmers retain basic payments and the grant also includes training. The main species being planted were alder and beech. Gerry Lawson noted that the one arable farmer who had applied could include that land as part of the greening entitlement.

Tim Pagella explained that looking forward there were very ambitious targets for tree planting in Wales e.g. 100,000 ha by 2030, with 2-5% comprising urban greening, 60% as woodlands, and the rest anticipated to be agroforestry including shelterbelts. Such a plan would require a step change in farm-level advice and support. At present there was only one Farm Connect officer working on woodlands, and there were only five Coed Cymru officers for the whole of Wales. Natural Resources Wales provided no woodland advice.

Gerry Lawson explained that at a European level, the European Agroforestry Federation had organised a successful Fourth European Agroforestry Conference at Nijmegen in the Netherlands on 28-30 May 2018 with about 320 participants. There had been a change in the composition of the Management Board and Patrick Worms was the new President. He noted that the World Agroforestry Congress will be hosted at Montpellier in France from Monday 20 to Saturday 25 May 2019.

4. Secretary's report

Paul Burgess (Secretary) reported that the AGFORWARD project concluded in December 2017. A final conference was held in the European Parliament on 29 November 2017. Details of the project and the conference are available on the [AGFORWARD website](#).

On 2017, Paul made a presentation on agroforestry to a meeting of officials in DG Agriculture in Brussels on 17 October 2017. The consensus of the officials present was that farmers with agroforestry providing wider public benefits in the EU should not be penalised by a withdrawal of basic payments. In the UK, on Wednesday 1 November 2017, Paul with Mike Strachan and Stephen Briggs had a productive meeting with

George Eustice MP (Minister of State at Defra) in London to discuss the role of agroforestry following the planned exit of the UK from the EU in 2019.

Paul reported that the EURAF membership fee for 2018 remained at 10 Euros for a member of a national institution (such as the Farm Woodland Forum), with the understanding that the minimum contribution from the members of a national institution will be 100 Euros.

Paul explained that the General Data Protection Regulations (GDRP) regulations came into effect in the UK from 25 May 2018. In 20 June 2017, there were 218 contacts on the Farm Woodland Forum JISCmail list. At the Farm Woodland Forum we interpreted the regulations that it was necessary for each contact to positively opt-in to the Farm-Woodland-Forum@jiscmail.ac.uk mailing list. Paul contacted each member individually and in total 157 contacts indicated that they wanted to stay on the list (a 72% retention rate). Use of the JISCmail service (79 postings) from July 2017 to June 2018 was above the long-term average of 50. *Postscript: Paul notes that future registration details for Farm Woodland Forum conferences should include a tick box to address GDRP issues.*

Lastly Paul reported that he had submitted the 2016-2017 Farm Woodland Forum Charity Commission Return on Friday 29 September 2017.

5. Treasurer and Membership Secretary's report

5.1 EURAF Membership

John Holland (Treasurer) reported that during 2017-2018, the Farm Woodland Forum had 45 paid members, and 19 EURAF members.

5.1 Accounts

John Holland presented the Forum's accounts from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018. The balance on 1 April 2017 was £4591.15. The organisation of the Farm Woodland Forum at Cranfield University was organised through the Farm Woodland Forum accounts. The key expenditure was therefore the cost of the conference and the key income was the receipt of conference fees. The closing balance for the end of the year was £5315.45.

John explained that bursaries had been given to two farmers to attend the European Agroforestry Conference at Nijmegen. These will be reported in the accounts for next year.

John Holland noted that the Farm Woodland Forum banked with the Bank of Scotland. Harriet Bell asked with the Farm Woodland Forum had checked if the investment protocol of the Bank of Scotland were in line with the ethos of the Farm Woodland Forum. It was agreed that Harriet would investigate if this was an issue.

Action: Harriet Bell

There was a question regarding if there were ways in which Farm Woodland Forum members could pay their membership on-line or through bank transfers. It was agreed that John Holland would investigate. **Action: John Holland**

Statement of the account from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018

		Amount (£)
Opening balance (1 April 2017)		4591.15
Income	FWF membership subscriptions (43 ordinary; 2 students)	432.00
	EURAF Membership subscriptions (19 members)	190.00
	Conference fees (registration, meals, transport)	2986.94
	Sub-total	3608.94
Expenditure	Conference costs (packed lunches, coach hire, evening meal, field visit)	2414.05
	Travel and subsistence expenses	272.13
	Transfer of funds to EURAF	171.46
	Bank charges	15.00
	Refund	12.00
	Sub-total	2884.64
Closing balance (31 March 2017)		5315.45

5.3. Membership fee

It was agreed that the annual Farm Woodland Forum membership fee would remain at £10, and £1 for bone fide students.

6. Website Secretary and Communication Officer's report

David Pilbeam (Website secretary) gave a brief update on the management of the Farm Woodland Forum website (www.agroforestry.ac.uk). He explained that he had worked with Sally Westaway to design a new version of the website, and that this should go "live" in the near future. He thanked Andrew Thorburn at the James Hutton Institute for his help in hosting the website on their servers.

Meghan Giroux noted that in the USA, a map of agroforestry systems was a very useful resource: <https://www.perennialmap.org/map.pl>. *Postscript: Paul noted that a similar map is available for Europe.*

Sally Westaway (Communication Officer) explained that with AFINET (Agroforestry Innovation Networks) support, she had helped in the re-design of the Farm Woodland Forum website. She explained that there was a Farm Woodland Forum Twitter account (<https://twitter.com/farmwoodforum>) which had sent 225 tweets. Sally explained that the new Farm Woodland Forum website would have an embedded section linked to Agriecology web-resources. A Facebook page would also be set up to mirror the Twitter account.

7. Election of the Executive Committee

The Constitution of the Forum states that Executive Committee members must seek election after three years if they wish to continue. Gerry Lawson, Jim McAdam, David Pilbeam, Ian Short and Terry Thomas were elected in 2015 and each indicated that they were willing to stand again. However it was also noted that it would be good to have some new input on the Committee.

It was therefore agreed that Harriet Bell would be co-opted onto the Executive Committee and Gerry Lawson, Jim McAdam, David Pilbeam, Ian Short, and Terry Thomas were re-elected to the Executive Committee.

8. Election of representative to the European Agroforestry Federation

The Farm Woodland Forum can send a representative to the approximately monthly Skype meetings of the European Agroforestry Federation. Jo Smith has been directly elected to be Secretary. It was agreed that Gerry Lawson would be the UK representative and Paul Burgess would deputise.

It was agreed that it would be good for there to be an Irish representative for EURAF. It was agreed that Jo Smith and Eugene Curran would look at the options.

Action: Jo Smith and Eugene Curran

9. Future meetings

Mike indicated that he was happy to support an agroforestry conference either in Perth or Crianlarich in Scotland in 2019. A meeting focused on Perth would look at alternative approaches to wood pasture including a visit to Rannoch Wood Pasture.

Tim Pagella indicated that a meeting in Wales in 2020 could be possible.

10. Any other business

Andrew Ormerod highlighted some of the work of the [Orchard Network](#). *Postscript: Paul notes that on a similar website there is now also a [Wood Pasture and Parkland Network](#).* Mike thanked Chris Stoate and Jo Smith for organising the first day of the Meeting at the GWCT Allerton project. There being no further business, the meeting was concluded at 9.50 p.m.

P.Burgess@cranfield.ac.uk

2 August 2018