

Professor Dieter Helm
Natural Capital Committee
New College
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15 August 2017

The Heritage Alliance

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Dear Professor Helm

DEFRA 25 Year Environment Plan

The Heritage Alliance understands that the Rt Hon Michael Gove MP has asked the Natural Capital Committee to advise on the aims of the 25 Year Environment Plan.

The Heritage Alliance is the largest coalition of heritage interests in England, uniting over one hundred independent heritage bodies in England, from English Heritage, the National Trust, the Canal & River Trust and the Historic Houses Association through to professional institutes, national amenity societies and research bodies. Our natural and historic environments are inseparable. The rural environment has been shaped by the action and interaction of natural and human forces throughout history.

In his recent letter to you Michael Gove described the main conclusion of the Natural Capital Committee's annual report as being that 'as we leave the European Union, an overarching plan is vital to secure the greatest dividend for our environment'. We could not agree more.

It is vital that CAP's replacement provides more effective protection of our historic landscapes as an integrated part of our wider environment. In the past, artificial EU boundaries have too often treated rural heritage separately from the wider environment in which it sits. This excludes rural heritage from integrated approaches to land management, and limits funding, efficiency, and effectiveness in the provision of this public good.

Despite heritage's tiny proportion of overall CAP funding so far, there is a widespread view, evidenced in Natural England's reviews of effectiveness, that this has been effective compared to other agri-environment scheme objectives. For example, RDP funding has removed 778 archaeological entries from the Heritage At Risk list since 2009, and prevented many more being added. Without that funding, that would go into reverse and the list would grow again. For much rural heritage, an improved replacement of CAP funding will be its only chance of long-term survival.

Our members are non-government, voluntary and private organisations that promote, conserve, study and involve the public in our heritage.

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I have enclosed a copy of our recent paper 'Rural heritage under threat: looking after our landscapes post Brexit' which sets out more detail on these issues.

We would be delighted to discuss this further with you or your team, in advance of the committee providing your advice to the Secretary of State in September.

Yours sincerely

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Lloyd Grossman CBE FSA
Chairman