August 2020



Thank you for contacting me about the Environment Land Management (ELM) Scheme.

ELM is intended to provide a powerful vehicle for achieving the goals of the 25 Year Environment Plan and commitment to net zero emissions by 2050, while supporting our rural economy. I know that Ministers are currently in the process of developing the approach to making payments under ELM, identifying how best to support the provision of environmental goods and what approach to payments would be most appropriate for each tier in the scheme.

The new scheme, due to be launched in England in 2024, will be trialled, tested and refined through a National Pilot which will begin in 2021, working closely with farmers and land managers. Tests and trials will help Ministers to assess how the scheme could work in a real-life environment.

Earlier this year, the Government published a policy discussion document on the Environment Land Management Scheme. This sets out the initial thinking for the scheme design, providing an update on progress and overview of high-level design options. I am pleased that Ministers are using this document as a basis for consultation. The responses received will help to inform the detailed scheme design policy for both the National Pilot and for the start of the scheme in 2024. I understand that there will also be a full consultation on the detailed scheme design with an accompanying impact assessment later.

Defra will also be running interactive online seminars for farmers, foresters and land managers in England, to discuss what the scheme proposals mean for them. I would encourage you to take part in the consultation exercise, which is now open until the 31st July, or attend a webinar.

More details of both can be found here:

<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/elm/elmpolicyconsultation/>.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me. I am pleased that Ministers are committed to co-designing the Environment Land Management Scheme with farmers and landowners to produce the best outcomes for both the environment and them.



Yours faithfully,

**CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP**

**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY**