

Affiliated with Lancashire & Northumberland

Newsletter Autumn/Winter 2012



Photo: Wardstone, Black Fell Common, Simon Gorst

Looking Forward

Fellow Commoners,

As autumn draws on after what has been a truly awful summer we can only hope for better things to come. The breeding sales, on the whole, have gone well but the store and finished lamb markets remain lacklustre which is a concern.

The Federation has seen our administrator and members of the committee attending the usual round of meetings with various organisations which, in themselves, may not be all-important (indeed the relevance of some groups to commons graziers is questionable and as a result we are always considering where to target our limited

resources). However our aim is always to keep the profile and priorities of the commoners prominent on the agendas of these organisations.

The Federation is also proactive, being involved with some new initiatives notably The Hill Farm Training Scheme which seeks to provide staff from government bodies and other organisations who influence upland and commons environments with a hands-on experience of hill farming. Funded by the Prince's Countryside Fund and Fells and Dales RDPE Leader three on-farm training days have taken place. Demand is high, and more days will follow. It may not convert everyone involved into being farmer-friendly, but it should increase their level of understanding which in our view will be worthwhile.

A further initiative the Federation is involved in is a pilot to self-monitor HLS on Kinniside common. Whilst we may not wish to have any more scrutiny of our situation than we have already, I think it could well give us the evidence to counter some of the more extreme conditions attached to current schemes and achieve a more favourable balance for grazing numbers.

Finally, I would like to thank the administrator and committee for all their effort and input and call for any commoners to consider becoming involved on the committee. It is not an onerous job with only 4 or 5 meetings a year which give a wide perspective on commoning in Cumbria. Anyone with an interest would be welcome to attend a committee meeting without making a commitment.

Dave Smith (Chairman)

Profile of Black Fell Common, Caton-with-Littledale, Lancaster, Lancashire

This article has been written by Ian Gorst, Federation Committee Member from Lancashire.

Common CL123, known as Black Fell Common in the parish of Caton-with-Littledale lies 5 miles east from Lancaster City centre. Overlooking Morecambe Bay and the Lakeland Hills it lies between Clough Pike and Ward Stone, the highest point in the Bowland Area. It is on the north east side of the Abbeystead Estate that has been owned by the Grosvenor Estate since 1980. Historically records show that in 1580 slate and coal were mined on the common and in 1714-15 a lease was granted for 15 years at £3.15.0d to a yeoman from Quernmore to win slates upon Black Fell. It is a SSSI in the AONB.

A number of small rivers, Udale, Foxdale and Conder, tributaries to the River Lune, have their sources on the common. The vegetation, being predominantly heather and some bilberry, provides grazing for traditional hill breeds of hefted sheep from five surrounding farms and cover for red grouse. The level of grazing permitted by the 'Commoners registered rights' of three privately owned farms and those rights leased from the Grosvenor Estate by the two tenanted farms does not exceed the livestock unit levels allowed by the EU for the Single Payment Scheme. Previously, under IACS when payments became related to area and not numbers, a Live Register of Active Graziers was established with the guidance of staff from DEFRA at Carlisle. This resulted in all of the area being apportioned according to each grazier's rights. Under SPS rules the Live Register was not allowed and the livestock unit calculation became the deciding factor. This resulted in the unsatisfactory position of some of the area being in effect 'naked acres', loss of entitlements and income to the graziers, albeit sheep still graze the whole of the area.

The 1126 Ha common has recently been accepted into a ten year Higher Level Stewardship scheme. Black Fell Common Graziers Association has been established for HLS purposes. Agreement with Natural England has been reached – historical stocking levels during summer have been maintained but winter grazing levels for each of the holdings have been reduced.

The British record for the largest number of grouse shot in one day was 2929 birds by eight guns on the Littledale beat on 12 August 1915. Since then the numbers shot have varied considerably, heather beetle, ticks, unfavourable weather conditions and worms are still problems for the grouse. A Tick Suppression Scheme was launched by the Estate who has financed the purchase of pour-on treatments and Louping Ill vaccine. The sheep are treated with the pour-on four times annually and the hogs receive two injections of the vaccine that covers them against the virus for their lifetime. These are supplied to the graziers and over recent years this investment by the landowner and effort by farmers is showing encouraging results for both grouse and sheep. The Estate also manage the moor by a programme of heather burning and bracken control by helicopter.

In 1994 the Estate constructed a road from Littledale towards the highest point of the common at Ward Stone 561m. This has improved access for shepherds, gamekeepers, shoot days and the public. Increasing number of walkers and runners appreciate the slate road that gives a hard surface and route to follow, rather than a rough, rocky and sometimes boggy alternative. Lancashire County Council Ranger Service 'police' the area and, as agreed when the access to Black Fell Common from the Littledale side was established in 1972, install signs to close access on shooting days or during periods of very dry weather.

Contrary to the national trend, all graziers of the Common (aged 40-65 years) currently have sons who are following in the hill farming tradition, working at home on the family farms and learning the skills, in an attempt to maintain the viability of the holdings whilst working alongside the landowner, gamekeepers, environmentalists and nature to maintain the natural beauty of the area.

News from the committee

Once again we have been busy over the last six months representing and supporting the commoners of Cumbria to maintain and improve the viability of farming on common land. The vast majority of our work has involved representing commoners' views at a number of forums where DEFRA, Natural England, Lake District National Park, RSPB, United Utilities and others seek to influence the management of our commons. We provide practical, down-to-earth examples from our daily farming experience. This makes our response different from other organisations with a more general remit to support the uplands.

You can read the minutes of our committee meeting. They are posted in our website <http://www.cumbriacommoners.org.uk/meeting-minutes>. If you have suggestions for what the Federation should do in the future, please get in touch with Viv or any of the committee members - their contact details are at the back of the newsletter. Below is a selection of the activities that we have been involved with.

Proposal to de-register common land at Warcop Training Area

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) undertook a public consultation between May and July this year because they are proposing to revise two undertakings they gave in respect of Murton, Hilton and Warcop commons after the Public Enquiry in 2001. These undertakings are: a) the MOD would create new rights of common in the event military training ceased, and b) they would not to remove the land from the register of common land created under the Commons Registration Act 1965.

The MOD is now making an application to de-register the land as common land as they believe that legislation in the Commons Act 2006 may compromise military training. The Federation does not believe this to be the case and strongly opposes this proposal. We have sent a letter of objection to the MOD, met with Cumbria County Council who holds the Commons Registers to discuss this issue and written to our local MPs. We have received a letter from the Rt Hon Mark Francios MP, Minister of State for Defence acknowledging our concerns. We will keep you informed.

Cumbria Grazing Forum – why has tree and scrub creation become a requisite for new HLS schemes on commons?

This Forum is a way to get all those involved in commons round the table to talk and listen to each other's points of view and discuss what is meant by sustainable grazing on common land. It meets twice a year and brings together hill farmers, Natural England, the Lake District National Park, National Trust and other relevant organisations.

Previously the Federation has criticised agri-environment schemes for harming pastoral systems, such as hefting and leaving the fells over- and under-grazed. This time we looked at woodland and scrub creation and management on commons. In June we visited a ghyll planting scheme behind Souther Fell, Mungrisdale. We raised concerns about the the scale of tree planting being asked for before a common can enter a new HLS scheme and highlighted future problems for sheep management when the fences needed for the establishment of woodland are taken down. We wondered if HLS schemes fit for the task, as woodland establishment on the fells requires 20 – 50 years and Natural England can only offer payments for 10 years. The debate continues.

At our next meeting we will discuss the farmer self-monitoring trial of HLS on Kinniside common. Lesley Blainey from the NE Land Management Strategy Team will be informing us about the 'less management prescription more outcomes focus' trial. Minutes of the meetings are posted on our website

CAP Reform on Common Land Working Group

The Federation (represented by Julia Aglionby) is a member of this working group along with colleagues from the Foundation for Common Land, Federation of Yorkshire Commoner, Dartmoor Commons Council, NFU, Defra, RPA and others. The meetings are held at Defra's offices in London. Defra has acknowledged that the manner in which SPS has been administered on common land is burdensome, unsatisfactory and at times inequitable. The Group is looking at how to improve SPS payments on commons when the new CAP comes into effect.

At the moment it is unclear whether the current system of entitlements will be scrapped and reallocated, or rolled over to the next scheme. The Group is in the process of making recommendations to Defra on options for a SPS payment scheme that works better than the current one and is more equitable. The Group has agreed some basic principles:

- SPS should be paid on the whole area of shared grazing / common to the active farmers making claims

- Non active commoners should not be eligible and their shares divided pro rata among the active graziers
- Common land owners should be eligible if there is surplus grazing and they are an active grazier
- Definition of legal rights of usufruct should be wider than rights on the register but include all legal rights whether by register, tenancy (and via prescription if agreed by other graziers)
- Area of the common should be definable by the claimants ie where map of registered common land unit is inconsistent with the management unit then the latter can be accepted as the correct area and other areas claimed by sole occupants or unclaimed as appropriate.
- Qualification date needs to be flexible ie 15th May doesn't work for some commons

Natural England Uplands delivery review

One of Natural England's aims is to strengthen their working relationships with those who own and actively manage the uplands. As a first step they are carrying out a review of current research on the impact of land management activities upon biodiversity and ecosystem services in the uplands. The Federation submitted evidence based on farmers' practical experience of what we perceive to be environmentally sustainable stocking regimes on moorland. Our ideas may not coincide with those of the scientists, but we hope we will be heard.

Hosting visitors from Ireland and Wales

We had the pleasure of hosting visitors from Ireland and Wales this summer and on both occasions the weather was glorious! Perhaps we should organise a few visits for next summer.

Twenty three delegates from Teagasc (the Irish Agriculture and Food Development Forum) and Rural Development Companies from across Ireland came to Cumbria for three days in late May. Through a programme of farm visits and lectures they learnt about common land policy, agri-environment schemes and management of the commons. To read their visit report go to <http://www.efncp.org/projects/common-land/study-tours/scotland-england/>

In the first week of August we hosted a group of Welsh commoners who graze Abergwesyn common. They wanted to learn more about how we manage the commons in Cumbria and how agri-environment schemes work. We took them to the Howgills, Pennines and Lake District on to farms with Rough Fell, Swaledale and

Herwick sheep. There was an active exchange of experience and ideas and we had a good time.

A big thank you to the Cumbrian farmers who hosted these groups on their farms including Isaac Benson, Pauline Blair, Jim Campbell, Frank and Edmund Capstick, Ernest Coulthard, Sarah Hoggarth, Bill Kenmir, William Steele and , Carl Walters. And thanks to the other farmers who came along to meet the groups.

Commons Registers

In this section we have three articles all relating to the commons registers. First, there is a short article on Cumbria's Commons Registration Authority. Then an article about Column 5 (ownership of the land to which the rights are registered) of the register highlighting potential consequences if this is not kept up-to-date. The last article comes from the Coalition for Common Land who is seeking implementation of the Commons Act 2006.

Cumbria's Commons Registration Authority

Dr Richard Newman, Historic and Natural Environment Manager, Cumbria County Council provides an update on commons registrations

Cumbria County Council is a Commons Registration Authority and as such, under the terms of the Commons Registration Act of 1965, is responsible for maintaining the registers of common land and town or village greens for the whole of Cumbria, including the two National Parks. There are over 278,863 acres of common land in Cumbria, which is the largest total of any county in England. In all, 30% of England's common land is situated in Cumbria. Most of this land is privately owned and in character is largely open, unfenced and remote. The main economic use of the land is for grazing.

The registers consist of bound volumes detailing extents, rights and ownership in relation to areas of common land and town or village greens, as registered under the Commons Registration Act of 1965. Each area of common land is listed in the registers under a unique 'unit number'. For example, Caldbeck Common is Register Unit No. CL20. Each unit number in the registers is divided into three sections:

- A land section detailing who applied to register the land, when the land became finally registered and including a description of the unit
- A rights section which details the specific rights exercisable over a given area, the name of the right holder and identifies the nature of the right (attached or unattached to land)
- An ownership section providing details of the owner(s).

The registers are available for public inspection, free of charge. It is possible in certain circumstances to amend the registers and for this applications should be submitted to the Registration Authority on the appropriate statutory form, available from legal stationers. For a small fee, searches of the rights section can be carried out on request and copies of registered unit entries provided.

To make an appointment Contact Alyssia Ashurst Tel: 01228 21026, e-mail commons.registration@cumbria.gov.uk. Commons Registration Service, Cumbria County Council, The Courts, Carlisle CA3 8LZ.

Column 5 of the Commons Register

Tim Cartmell takes the blame and responsibility for this rather complicated article, and Viv Lewis has helped make better sense of it.

The Commons Registration Act 1965 provided for the register of common land and rights of common. As mentioned in the previous article the registers have three sections and five columns. The first two give the number and date of the entry and the application respectively. The third column gives the name, address and legal capacity of the applicant, for example, tenant or owner. The fourth column provides details on rights of common and the land over which they are exercisable. The fifth column provides details of the land to which the rights are attached; this will usually consist of a farm name, parish and Ordinance Survey field numbers or a supplemental map.

This article looks at Colum 5 in more detail. First, it highlights the difficulties of knowing who owns rights as they depend upon ownership of the land in Column 5. Second, it describes the potential consequences for rights holders if they do not update past land transactions when Part 1 of the 2006 Commons Act comes into force.

Column 5 shows the land to which the rights were appurtenant (attached) at the time of registration. In effect it is a record of the position when the registration period closed in 1970. Since then the land may have been split or sold but the register may not record subsequent transactions. This makes it difficult for anybody looking at the registers to be certain who owns what rights. This information continues to be hidden behind each Column 5 entry and unfortunately the Commons Act 2006 does not purport to rectify this situation.

Bringing Colum 5 up-to-date when the Commons Act 2006 comes into force

Sometime in the future Defra will roll out Part 1 of the Commons Act 2006 in Cumbria. There will be a transition period of up to 3 years to correct and update the registers for any transactions since 1970. The registers must be put right before the transitional period ends or a pro-rata apportionment of rights will apply no matter the intention of the seller and buyer of rights. The example below explains the situation in more detail.

Example

Mr. Fell of Backdoor Farm owns 150 acres. In 1970 he registered the rights for 600 sheep and 30 cattle on Backdoor Common which is attached to his 150 acres (dominant tenement).

Since then he has made a number of land purchases and sales:

- (a) In 1975 Mr. Fell sold a 5 acre paddock to a horsey neighbour
- (b) In 1980 Mr. Fell sold 25 acres with 5 cattle rights only
- (c) In 1980 Mr. Fell bought a block of 80 acres with 320 sheep rights from Mr. Retiring a neighbour – this was the total of Mr. Retiring's rights registered to his 100 acre farm.

Currently Mr. Fell is claiming 920 sheep rights and 25 cattle rights for SPS purposes and for his membership of the Backdoor Commons Association which pays part of its HLS money to members at £2 a sheep right.

Mr. Fell did not register any of these transactions at the Commons Registry because he did not have to, and his solicitor did not know or trouble to. Therefore no amendments were made to the registers for Backdoor Common.

The RPA have since been at Mr. Fell to prove his rights claim and his solicitor has dug out the Conveyances for the transactions and the RPA seemed happy, so he is happy. But he may not be for much longer.....

When Part 1 of the Commons Act 2006 is rolled out in Cumbria Mr. Fell must update the register by the end of the transitional period or he will find that instead of having 920 sheep and 25 cattle rights he will actually have 736 sheep rights and 24 cattle rights. Why - because pro-rata acreage apportionment will be applied to the records. The breakdown of how this is calculated is as follows:

a) If Mr. Fell did not mention the rights on the sale of the 5 acre paddock he may not be able to avoid the transfer of sheep and cattle rights to horsey neighbour as follows:

- 20 sheep rights (5 acres/ 150 acres x 600 sheep rights = 20); and
- 1 cattle right (5/150 x 30 = 1).

He should check his copy of the sale contract and Conveyance as he may be able to argue that the purchaser acquired no rights – that will be the case if his solicitor had provided that “section 62 of the Law of Property Act 1925 will not apply” as happens on many part sales [section 62 passes rights of way and common rights which go with land if it operates]

- b) On the 25 acre sale Mr. Fell could lose 100 sheep rights (25/150 x 600) alongside the 5 cattle rights he actually agreed to sell (25/150 x 30)
- c) Mr. Fell will own 256 sheep rights (80/100 x 320) from Mr. Retiring’s land and not 320 even though he bought that number.

If indeed, Mr Fell did agree to sell horsey neighbour apportioned pro-rata rights (20 sheep and 1 cattle right), she can register them in her name. There is no fee is she does it now before the transitional period starts, but she will have to pay a fee to do so in the transitional period. If she acquired more or less rights than her pro-rata apportionment or no rights at all (by agreement with Mr Fell or because of the small print in Mr Fell’s contract) that brings about a severance of some (or all) of the rights. In this case either she or Mr Fell needs to register the severance and apportionment now or before the end of the transitional period and no fee is payable. If the register is not changed then pro-rata apportionment will apply at the end of the transitional period.

If in example (b) Mr. Fell wants to retain the “severed” 100 sheep rights on his sale of the 25 acres, he should now register his ownership of those rights “in gross” or unattached to land. He can apply to reattach them to his own land when the transitional period starts, if he wants.

In (c) the 64 rights in excess of the pro-rata apportionment should also be registered “in gross” as they have been severed from Mr. Retiring’s retained 20 acres of land to which they were registered. If they are not registered they will be lost at the end of the transitional period and will belong to whoever owns those 20 acres which Mr. Retiring did not sell to Mr. Fell.

Therefore the advice to Mr. Fell, now and certainly when the Commons Act 2006 comes into force is to identify his column 5 land and make sure he still owns it all and check that registrations have been properly made where he has bought and sold land

and rights since 1970 otherwise he may have less rights than he thinks. There is nothing to stop Mr Fell getting his rights registered properly now.

How anybody undertaking research on the registers can be expected to know if someone else owns some of the land in Mr. Fell's column 5 and so is entitled to some of the rights in his name, without laboriously checking who owns the column 5 land under his entry, defeats me. The Commons Act 2006 brings no clarity or certainty to the register.

Common Land Coalition seeks implementation of Commons Act 2006

A group of 16 diverse countryside bodies, including the Federation of Cumbria Commoners, concerned about the future of English Common Land have jointly written to Minister, Richard Benyon, Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and had a letter published in The Times on October 27th 2012. The Common Land Coalition states that commons constitute some of England's finest assets. They point out that there are 7,000 commons in England, covering nearly 400,000ha. Found in all areas from remote uplands to our largest cities, no-one is ever far from a common. Not only are commons important parts of rural economies, but they provide enormous benefits to the public. A remarkable 88% of all English common land is designated because it is nationally or internationally important for wildlife, landscape, and archaeology, and virtually all is available for public access. There is no category of farmland which is so universally important for its environmental benefits.

Yet commons are suffering because there is no definitive and up-to-date record of common land and rights. This is preventing the proper management of such land to conserve its environmental qualities. The solution is simple – implementation of the Commons Act. This was passed with cross-party and cross-sectoral support in 2006, specifically to address issues such as these. Yet six years after royal assent, it has still to be implemented, and a recent announcement has deferred this further until at least 2016. As a consequence, the Common Land Coalition considers that some of England's finest countryside is failing to meet its potential for the nation.

The letters sent to Richard Benyon and the Times can be found on our website.

"Making Environmental Stewardship More Effective" (MESME) initiative from Natural England may disadvantage commoners

David Morley from H & H Land provides information and an assessment of the above initiative

Natural England has recently launched the "Making Environmental Stewardship More Effective" (MESME) initiative. Their objective is to steer farmers away from "low" priority options, such as hedgerow management and low fertiliser options, and towards "high" priority options, such as zero fertiliser options and management to benefit farmland birds. Several new options are being introduced (mostly applicable only in the lowlands) and points available for low priority options are being reduced or their prescriptions are being made more demanding.

These changes will take effect from 1st January 2013, so all ESA expiries will be affected. There are two changes in particular that could have a big impact on upland farms coming out of ESA agreements:

1. The number points being given for completing a Farm Environment Record (essentially for making an application) is reduced from 3 points per hectare to 1 point.
2. The criteria for including dry stone walls in the "Maintenance of walls" option are being tightened.

The first of these will make it much harder for both large and small upland farms and commons in particular to reach their points target. Unlike the lowlands, there are few alternative options to make up the shortfall on a hill farm or on common land. Where the land involved is also being entered into HLS, the only solution will probably be to "underpin" HLS options (i.e. locate both HLS and ELS options on the same piece of land). This means land management on the ground will be the same but the value of the agreement will be reduced by £2 per hectare across all moorland parcels.

Under the second key proposed change, walls will only be eligible for the maintenance ELS option if they are "complete" i.e. full height along the whole length and with most of the original top stones still in place. This could render a lot of walls with short "bad" sections ineligible for the scheme, removing the incentive for farmers to maintain them. There is a real concern that this may lead to the deterioration of many walls that are an integral part of the upland landscape. This risks undoing the good work done under ESA agreements for the last 20 years, surely the opposite of what Natural England are intending with MESME.

It is disappointing that Natural England have not thought through the implication of these changes for upland farmers and commoners. Instead of making Environmental Stewardship more effective, they are simply making it less attractive and more onerous.

National Centre for the Uplands has appointed its first Director

Julia Aglionby, a Federation committee member and Chairman of the Foundation for Common Land has been appointed as the first Director of the National Centre for the Uplands. Congratulations Julia. In this article Julia tells us some of her first thought for the Centre.

I am writing to introduce myself as the Director of the new National Centre for the Uplands to be based at Newton Rigg part of Askam Bryan College.

I'm really honoured to have been appointed to this position particularly when over 60% of Cumbria is designated as being in the uplands. The remit of the Centre will be national covering all the uplands in England from Bodmin in the far south west through to the north of Northumberland in the far north east. But it is fantastic to have the Centre based within Newton Rigg agricultural college here in Cumbria.

Training the next generation of farmers is the core business of Newton Rigg and we intend that Newton Rigg will be college of choice for upland farmers from across England and further afield. Supporting this core work activities at the National Centre for the Uplands will include the development of a top-quality demonstration hill farm at Low Beckside, applied research projects on hill farming alongside the delivery of other ecosystem services, training courses for farmers and students and a safe space for discussing the challenges of running viable farming businesses and contributing to the environment and wider rural development.

For many hill farmers common land is integral to their businesses and essential for its viability. I will be bringing my passion for common land to the job and integrating it into the work of the Centre. The Foundation for Common Land already has its registered offices at Newton Rigg and we hope that we will be able to build strong links between commoners and the work of the National Centre for the Uplands.

At the moment the drawing board is fairly blank, we look forward to receiving your suggestions on priorities for our programme of work. Please do get in touch. I can be contacted at Newton Rigg or on 07702 100111 or e-mail julia@foundationforcommonland.org.uk



**Saunders Lakeland
Mountain Marathon**



This year's annual event was held in the Wasdale area, we asked Brian Dearnaley, Lands Officer to tell us more

Earlier this year the organisers of the mountain marathon affiliated to the Federation of Cumbria Commoners in order to gain a better understanding of Cumbria's Commons and improve liaison between ourselves as recreational users of the fells and those who work them. To begin this process I have drafted a brief outline of the event, its history and ethos.

Event profile

The Saunders is a two-day mountain navigation event open to teams of 2 (plus a small number of élite competitors who compete as individuals) and traditionally takes place on the first weekend of July.

This year (2012) the event started at Wasdale Head with competitors fanning out to the east and west of Wast Water visiting a number of checkpoints on route to the designated mid-camp at remote Scalderskew Farm. The weather leading up to the event was terrible and the organiser's had concerns about several river crossings. However, the rain abated on the Friday, rivers levels reduced, Saturday stayed dry and the mid-camp had a very jovial atmosphere and a little sun. On the Sunday teams were required to navigate back to Wasdale via a different set of checkpoints. The clouds which shrouded the mountains early in the day provided an extra challenge to accurate navigation but everyone made it back to Wasdale and a well earned meal.

The Saunders takes place annually and, with the exception of 2001 (Foot & Mouth year), has been held in the Lake District since its inception in 1978 (i.e. 34th events). Some of you will already be aware of our proposals for the 2013 event but for most, and especially the competitors, the location remains secret.

Entries are vetted and typically come from experienced fell runners, orienteers and walkers who get great enjoyment from being out on the fells but have an appreciation of the concerns of landowners and farmers. It is forbidden for competitors to cross maintained walls except at designated gates/stiles or to enter enclosed farmland and courses are set so that competitors have no reason to do so. Dogs are not allowed on the courses.

Typically 600 teams will start the event and compete over 7 courses designed to suit different abilities. Start times are staggered in order to spread teams across a competition area of around 150 square kilometres of open fell.

The mid-camp and the assembly area camp are organised to a very high standard and chemical toilets are provided at both locations. The mid-camp is usually at a remote location, the site is out of bounds to spectators and only official vehicles are given access.

Teams are required to carry their own camping equipment and food throughout the competition and are also required to carry their rubbish off the fells. Checks are carried out to ensure that the rules regarding mandatory equipment and rubbish are complied with.

Landowners, Farmers and Commoners Associations are contacted for permission to use the land. In addition, the organisers liaise with the National Park Authority, Natural England, the Police, Mountain Rescue and Cumbria County Council and cooperate fully with their wishes. The event is registered with the Fell Runners Association and is covered by their insurance policy.

There is an economic benefit for the local area in hosting a “Saunders”.

Farmers who provide the camp site facilities are recompensed, donations are made to Commoners Associations and, where appropriate, local projects. Prizes are sourced locally, B&B/self catering accommodation is in demand around the event weekend and local pubs and shops are well patronised.

For further information, including past events and contact details, please view the web site www.simm.org.uk

Date for your Diary

The Federation’s AGM and conference: 22 February 2013

We very much hope that you will attend our AGM and conference at Newton Rigg from 1.30 – 4.30 pm. We plan to have a high level speaker from Defra and run a practical session on “effective running of HLS agreements on commons – potential pitfalls and challenges”. Julia Aglionby and Tim Cartmell will be on hand to lead the session and answer questions.

Commons agreements can be especially complex involving many different parties and land under different designations. Many of you have signed up to these schemes. Do you understand all the rules and regulations? Do you know how to deliver the expected outcomes? Do you know what to do if a fellow commoner is breaching the agreement? Come along to our AGM to find out.

A must for all Chairmen and Secretaries of Commons Associations

The Federation is looking for New Committee members

Would you like help us make sure that our voice is heard to represent, support and protect the commoners of Cumbria? We are always looking for new committee members, so please get in touch. You would be welcome to attend a committee meeting before committing yourself. To find out more ring Dave Smith, our Chairman.

Federation of Cumbria Commoners Committee 2012

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Committee

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Marianne Teasdale	Non-regional	01768 881164
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