



# Autumn 2021 newsletter

[www.floodplainmeadows.org.uk](http://www.floodplainmeadows.org.uk)



Welcome to our newsletter for Autumn 2021, and in particular do enjoy the winners of our arts and crafts competition and please do order your free calendar

## FMP Arts and Crafts Competition 2021



## FMP Arts and Crafts Competition Free Calendar - order here

### Get your free copy of our fantastic 2022 calendar - hard copy or electronically as pdf

Our 12 winners plus a couple extra are showcased in this fantastic calendar. It will make an excellent additional christmas present for friends and relatives. Order below.



Free calendar order form

We were very excited to announce the winners of our 2021 Arts and Crafts Competition in October at the end of our online conference. We had over 100 entries to the competition and some fantastic pieces of work were submitted in a whole range of different media and from as far away as Pakistan and Russia. Our 12 finalists' work is being converted into a calendar for 2022 and our two overall winners were Alice Walker (image above, called A Precious Resource), who won an [FSC voucher](#), and Claire Cornish (image to the right called 'Seasons Song') who won a floodplain meadow produce box from [Andy Rumming](#).



The 12 finalists and more about the competition can be seen here:

Art and craft competition 12 finalists

## October 2021 Online Conference

The conference was a mix of key note speakers, virtual site visits, videos, question time panels and presentations. Read our blog about it below which also includes links to the recordings from the conference. There was a strong focus on soil carbon and some excellent presentations.

We had three brilliant key note speakers, all of whom emphasised the role floodplains could play in providing effective nature based solutions to the climate crisis, if a substantial degree of floodplain landscape was restored to species rich habitats. **Trine Christiansen** (EEA) described a new EU nature restoration law that will complement their Biodiversity Strategy and set targets for restoring rivers and floodplains for their ecosystem service benefits, principally disaster reduction and carbon storage.



**Barry Gardiner** MP talked about how we need to scale up floodplain grassland restoration for multiple benefits, and suggested an integrated and holistic Floodplain Strategy could be very useful. **Tony Juniper** (NE) explored forthcoming mechanisms that will help us restore at least 70,000 ha through Local Nature Recovery Strategies, sustainable farming incentives and partnerships.

**An overwhelming majority of those who answered our polls thought floodplain management was not currently sustainable in the UK, that we need a floodplain strategy, and should aim for a 70,000 ha restoration target, with floodplains recognised as a distinct land use type in agri-environment schemes.**

[Full 2021 conference blog and recordings](#)

## Green Recovery Challenge Fund



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

The  
National Lottery  
Heritage Fund



Environment  
Agency



With partners [Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust](#) and [FWAG-SW](#), we were awarded the £1m Flourishing Floodplains Green Challenge Recovery Fund project based in the Severn Vale, this summer. The project started in September 2021 and runs until March 2023. It will include the survey of 1000 ha of grassland, collection of soil samples for carbon analysis (building on the Ecover dataset), development of a community plug planting project and a whole raft of other projects around ponds, eels, curlews, community and art.

We hope to be announcing a new member of the team shortly who will be delivering the FMP elements of the project.





Senior stakeholders from Natural England and Environment Agency talk about floodplain land use and floodplain meadows

This project has been busy delivering its first year of activity. With our partners [BBOWT](#) and the [Thames Valley Wildflower Meadow Restoration Project \(TVWMP\)](#), we have collected, processed and analysed 180 soil samples for soil carbon in species rich old meadows, restoration fields and arable fields in the floodplain. The TVWMP and landowners have started the process of restoration of 12 ha of species poor land to more species rich floodplain meadow, and undertaken monthly invertebrate surveys on 4 sites (old meadow, restoration sites and arable site). The TVWMP Care Farming group have also gathered seed to grow on for the restoration fields in year 3 of the project.

We also entertained a group of Senior Stakeholders at Long Mead (the meadow at the heart of the TVWMP) including Tony Juniper and Emma Howard-Boyd. There was universal agreement that floodplain meadows were part of the solution to sustainable floodplain management and a proposal for a floodplains strategy in England.

# Global movement on sustainable and biodiverse grasslands

Alongside our own interest in promoting the wider values of UK floodplain meadows there is a growing global movement that also reflects this. Discussions about grasslands as a sustainable land use and food system are expanding, as evidenced by the range of grassland symposia exploring these themes from across the world in 2021 and 2022.

There are a number of conferences planned for 2022 that are very relevant, including the 29th European Grassland Forum general meeting 'Grassland at the heart of circular and sustainable food systems'.



## **Floodplain Meadows Partnership at The Open University**

Walton Hall, Milton Keynes  
United Kingdom

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