

Environment Protection

Written Answer

Sarah Wollaston Chair, Health and Social Care Committee, Chair, Liaison Committee (Commons), Chair, Liaison Committee

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of the role of Natural England in helping farmers to improve their environment.

Therese Coffey The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

The Department regularly reviews Natural England's performance including via formal Ministerial review. Natural England is required to report progress to Defra's supervisory board and the Secretary of State.

Natural England plays an important role in delivering the 25 Year Environment Plan, providing advice to help farmers to improve their environment. Natural England advisers provide valuable advice on how to effectively manage wildlife and habitats, promoting nature conservation and protecting biodiversity. This includes advice to help landowners set up agri-environment agreements and aftercare advice during the lifetime of the agreements, as well as for other projects that such as the 'Back to the Brink' species recovery project, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and other charitable organisations.

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