



Wye Agri-Food Partnership Delivering the Courtauld 2025 Commitment



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1. Introduction and Aims of the Project

The Courtauld 2025 Commitment is an ambitious voluntary agreement bringing together organisations across the food system to make food & drink production and consumption more sustainable. Signatories have made a commitment to identify priorities, develop solutions and implement changes to cut the carbon, water and waste associated with food & drink by at least one-fifth in 10 years.

The Rivers Trust are facilitating a “Water Stewardship Service” to deliver the “collective action” that is required to enable signatories, their producers, growers, processors, to positively influence their impact on water throughout the supply chain.

The Wye & Usk catchments are one of six pilot areas across the UK selected to deliver collective action supported through the Courtauld Commitment.

2. Wye Agri-Food Partnership

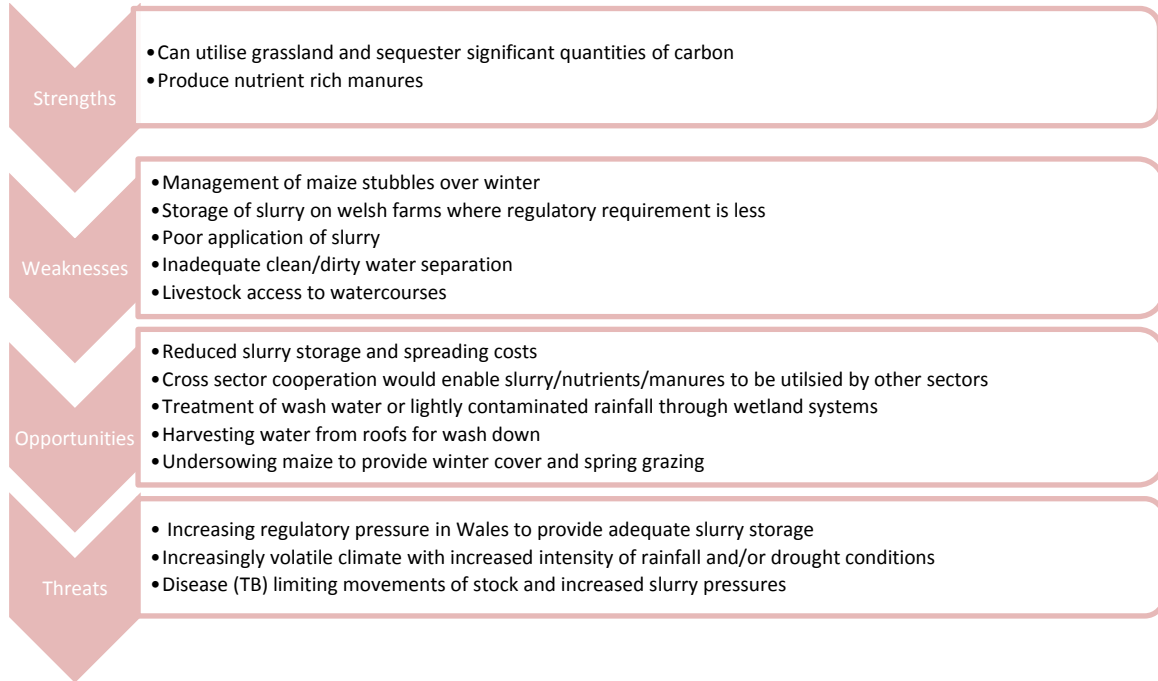
With the support of Courtauld signatories an event has been held to engage local suppliers and processors. Twenty five attendees representing eighteen businesses contributed to discussions about the challenges we still face in the catchment:

- Phosphate
- Sediment
- Pesticides and
- Water quantity (floods and drought)

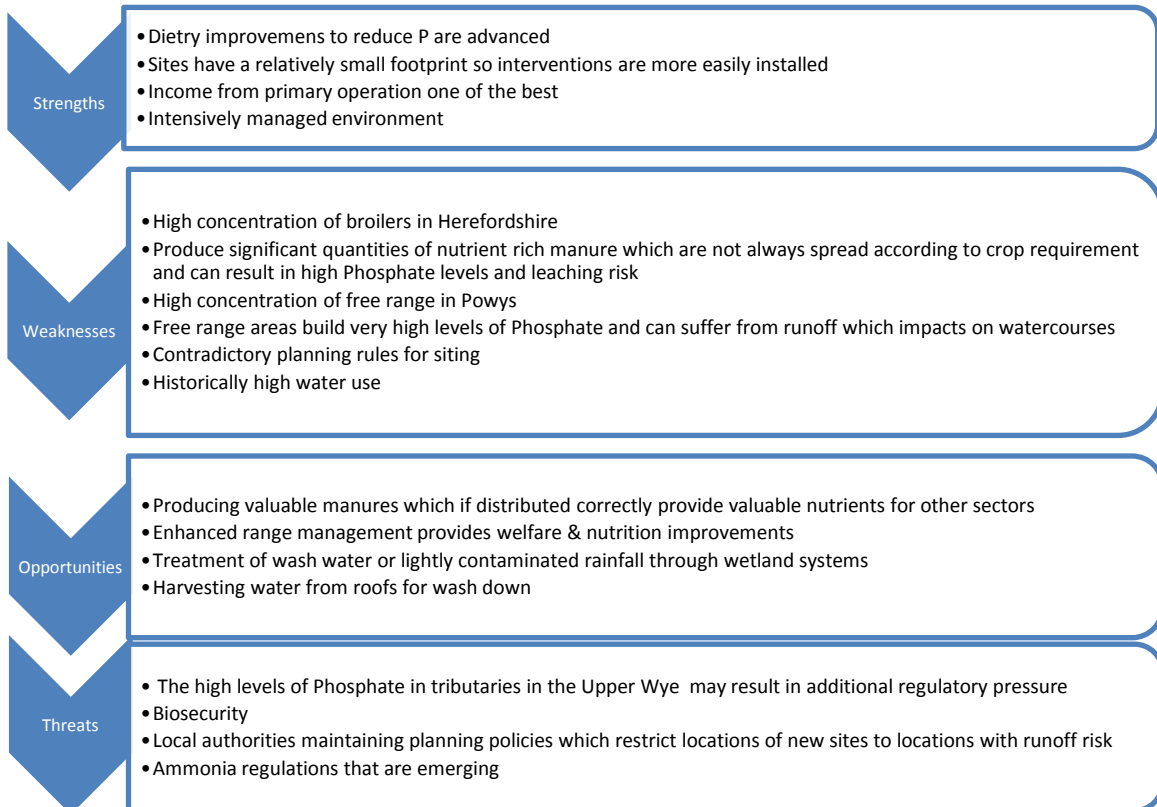


During the event attendees contributed to a water focused SWOT analysis for each major sector, these are summarised below:

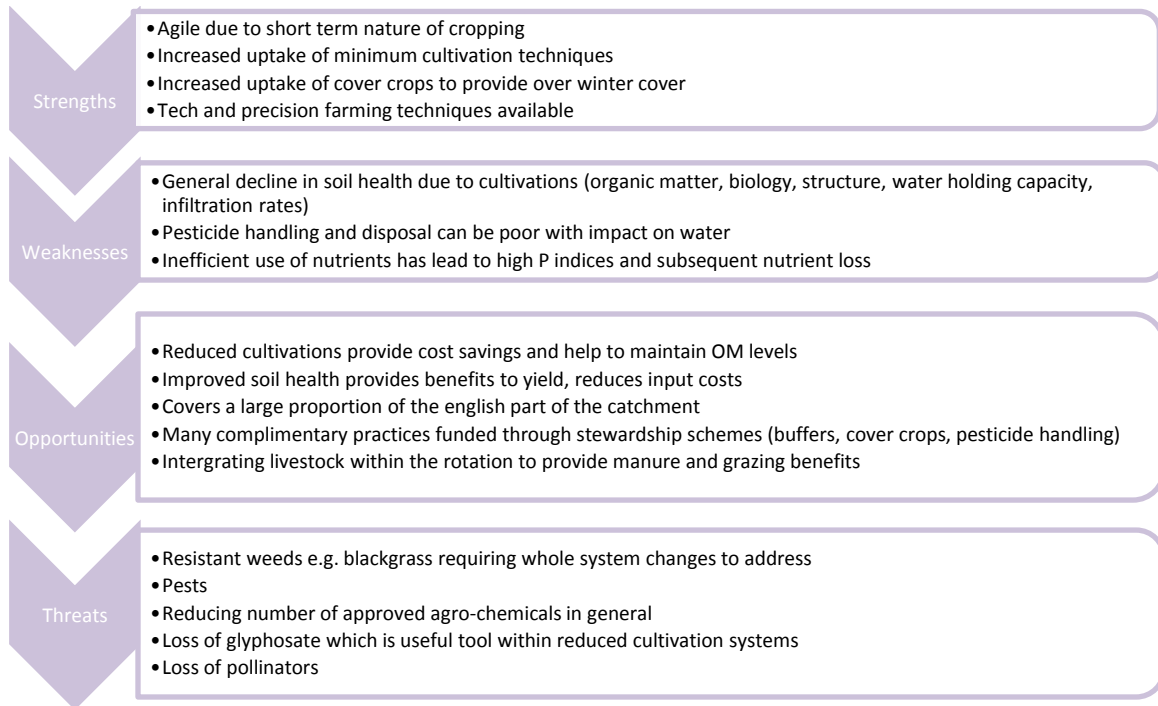
Dairy:



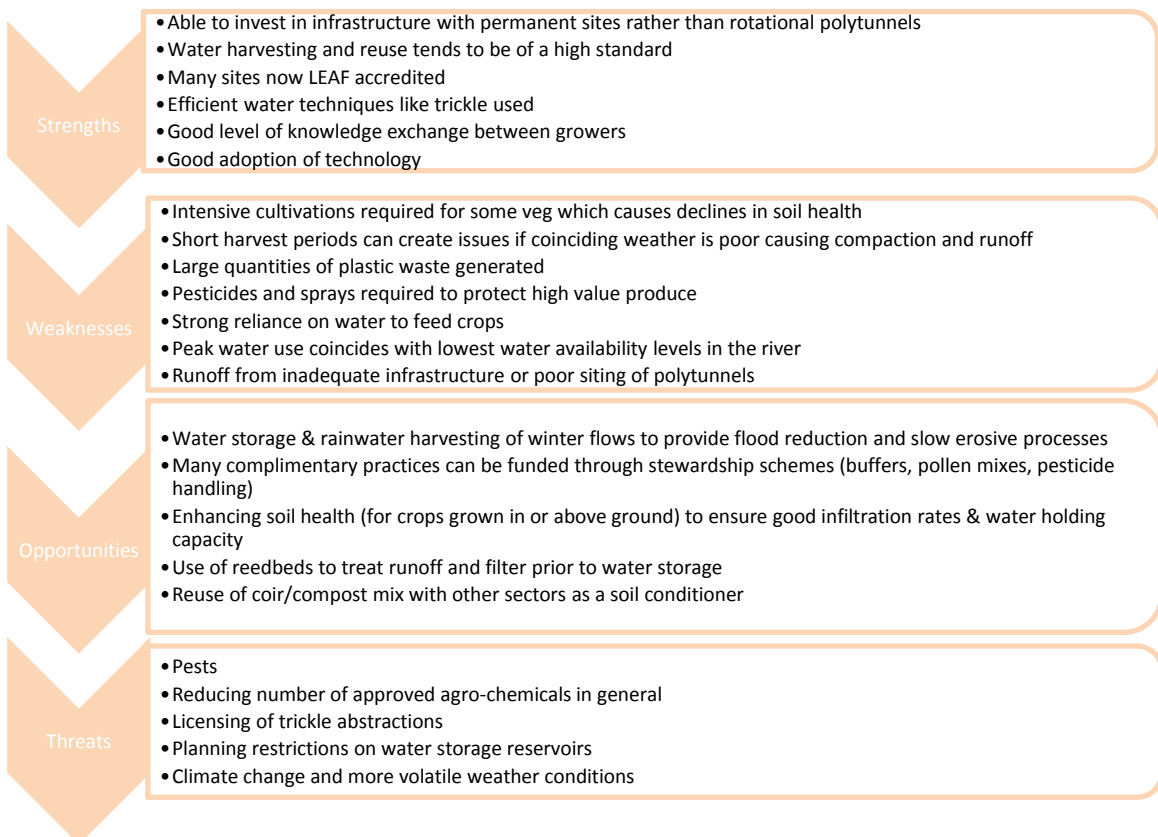
Poultry:



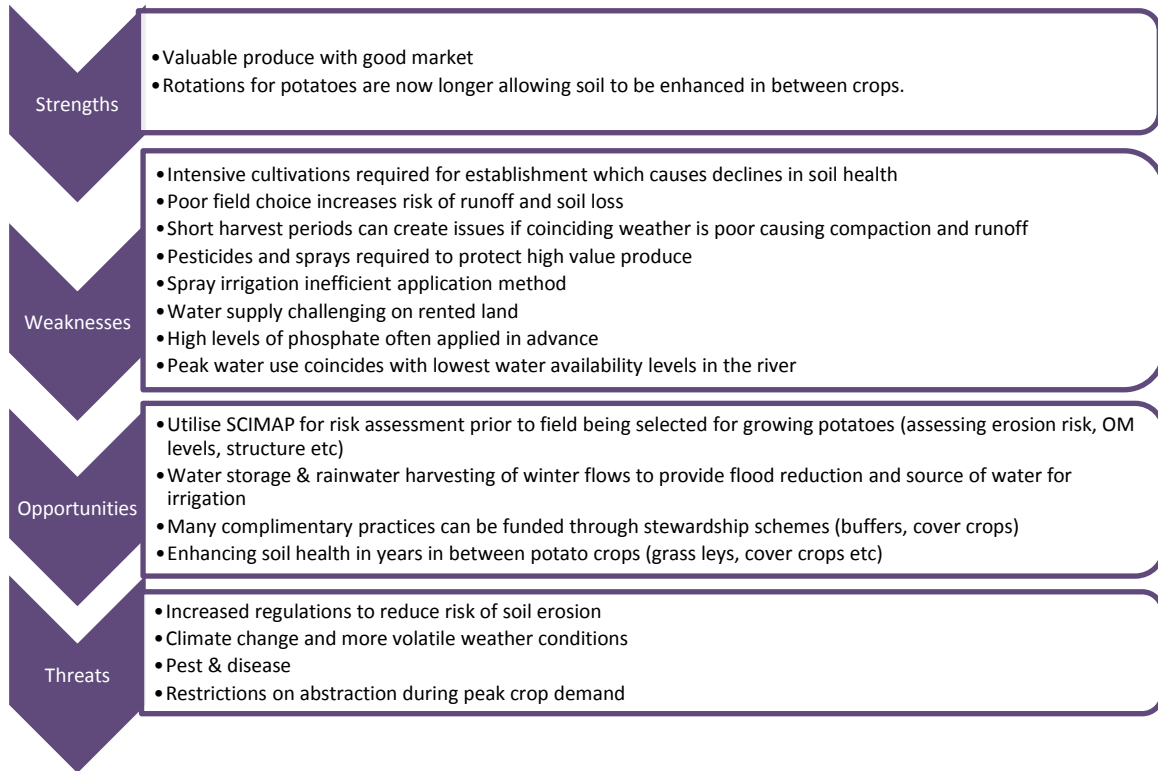
Combinables:



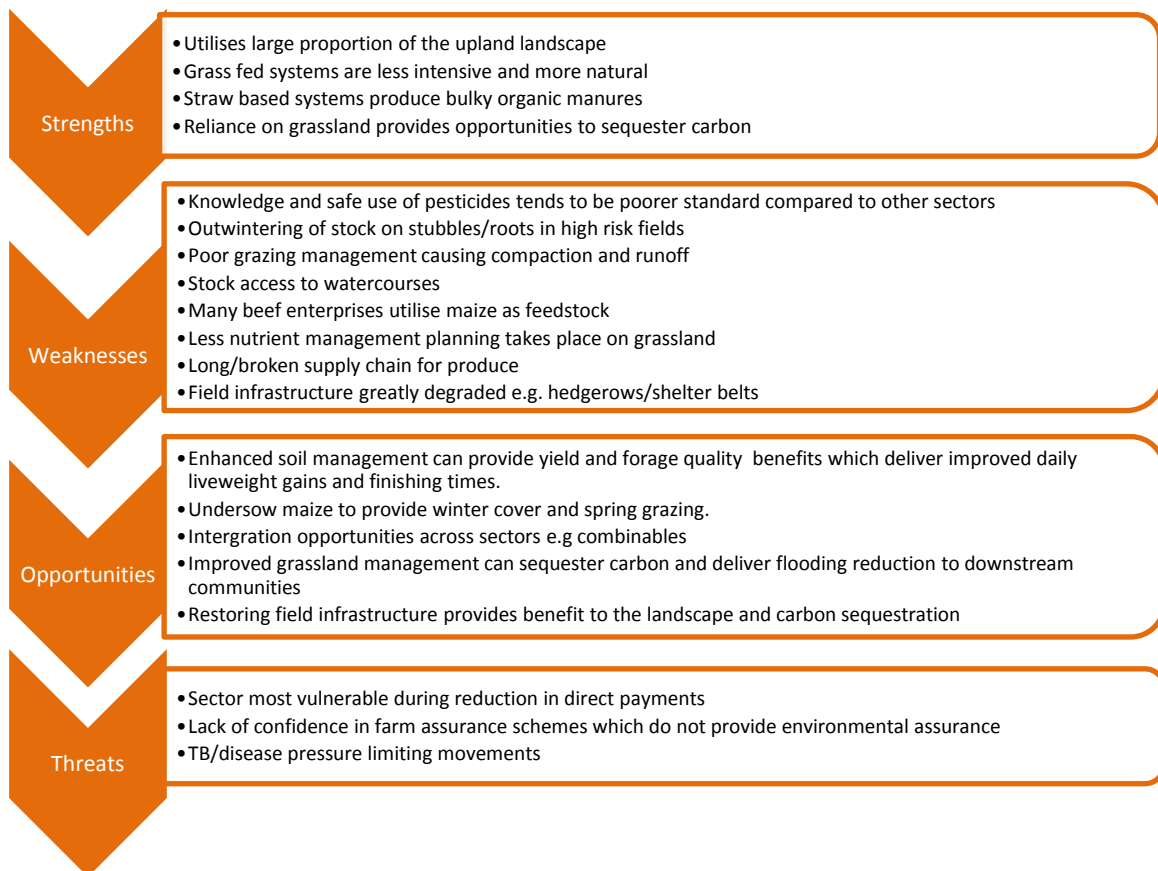
Horticulture



Potatoes

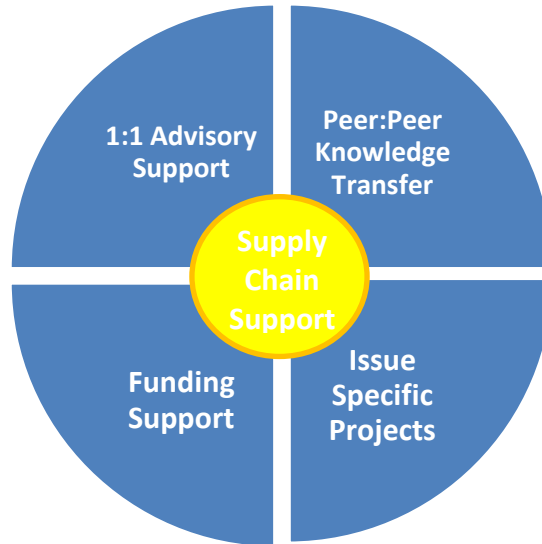


Beef & Lamb



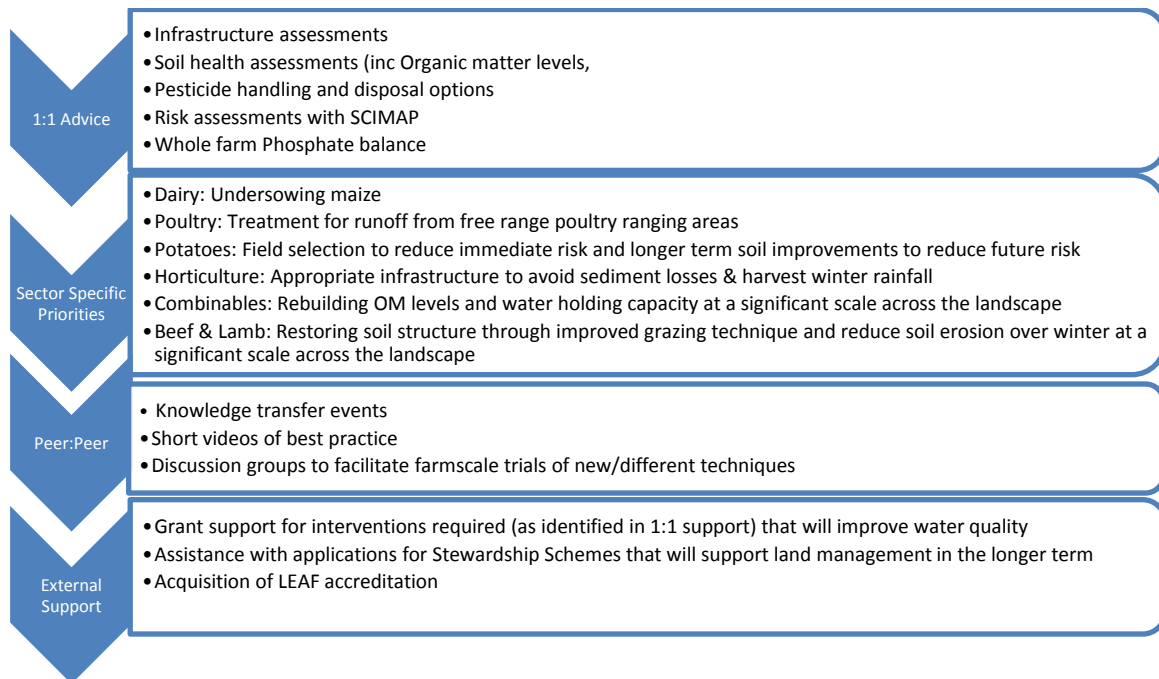
4. Delivery Approach

Attendees were supportive of the proposed advisory support proposed through the project which combines a range of mechanisms:



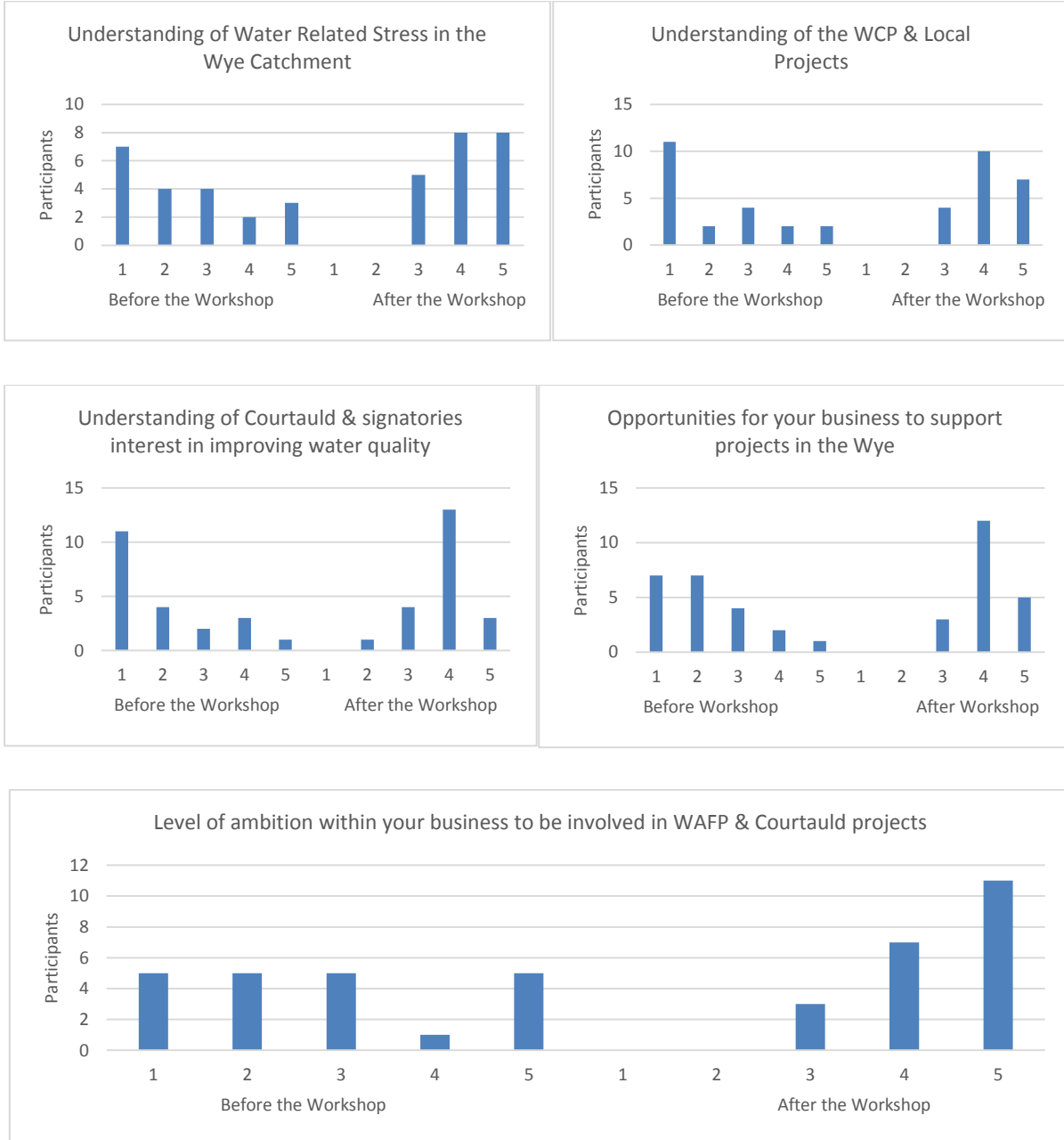
It is proposed that the weaknesses and opportunities identified for each sector within the SWOT analysis can be systematically assessed for each business subsequently engaged and support provided to enable action for any necessary changes to infrastructure, land management etc.

In order to achieve the required improvements to water throughout the supply chain support will need to be available in various forms as summarised below:



5. Evaluation

At the end of the event attendees completed a simple evaluation form to assess their level of understanding had changed as a result of the event. The results of this have been collated and are summarised below:



These findings confirm that there was a positive improvement in the level of understanding about the local challenges, and willingness to participate in future delivery as a result of the event. Attendees were supportive of the Wye Agri-Food Partnership meeting again in the future when progress had been made to deliver some of the opportunities identified during the meeting.

6. Next Steps/Targets

- 6.1 Identify key contacts in businesses that were not represented at the meeting including but not limited to Heineken, Tyrells, Wye Valley Brewery, Kraft, Ribena and those businesses which source from the free range poultry enterprises located in the Upper Wye.
- 6.2 Offer attendees of the inaugural meeting advisory visits as outlined above.
- 6.3 Secure funding to deliver on farm advice across all 6 sectors and capture outcomes in order to conclusively demonstrate effectiveness of the approach.
- 6.4 Work with specific supply chains / producers / processors to address the sector specific challenges that were identified in the water SWOT analysis.
- 6.5 Identify other key producers within the combinable crops and beef/lamb supply chains that could represent their sectors within the partnership.
- 6.6 Reconvene the partnership during the next 12 months to feedback on progress made.



7. Progress – August 2019

Since the WAFP meeting the following has been progressed against the above “Next Steps/Targets”:

- 6.2- Advisory visits have been offered to majority of the growers who attended the event. Visits will be offered to the remaining attendees at suitable time of year to avoid planting/harvest times.
- 6.3- A project has been developed with WWF and Tesco to support improvements in free range poultry, dairy and grassland management as well as re-use of coir compost from soft fruit sites.
- 6.4- Muller, Avara and Randall Parker Foods have all been approached to develop projects that would deliver improvements from their supply chain. We are awaiting feedback from these companies as to whether there is appetite to progress the proposals.