

## 2021 KT Walsh Scholarship (MAIS) Project Summary

### 1. Project Title and Associated Programme

<b>KT Programme</b>	Environment (Hen Harrier EIP)
<b>Project title</b>	An examination of KT from the Hen Harrier Project relevant to Teagasc KT programmes

### 2. Project background

The Hen Harrier Project (HHP) is a European Innovation Partnership (EIP) developing an innovative pilot agri-environment programme that seeks to increase hen harrier numbers through a results-based payment approach. Over 167,000 ha in six Special Protection Areas (SPA's) designated for breeding Hen Harrier were selected for the project. This tends to be 'rough grazing' land grazed with cattle – between the uplands and the lowlands – representative of large areas of Irish grassland outside Hen Harrier areas, very valuable for ecosystem services. This land area needs sustainable farming systems to reduce abandonment and optimise food production and ecosystem services.

The HHP Team is led by Project Manager Fergal Monaghan. A Steering Group including DAFM, NPWS, Teagasc and other experts oversee the project. The Teagasc Countryside Management Specialist represents Teagasc on the PMP Steering Group.

There are currently 1500 farmers (400 Teagasc clients) participating in the project receiving €3m annually. Sixty advisors including (24) Teagasc and private advisors visit these farms each summer and score the habitats which determines the farmers payment. They advise farmers how to improve their score (and payment) and draw up Annual Works Plans where farmers wish to avail of Capital payments.

### 3. Project aims and objectives

The proposed study will examine KT aspects of the Hen Harrier Project and the objectives are:

- To profile farmers engaging in the Hen Harrier Project and to identify challenges for farmers farming this land
- To understand factors motivating farmers to farm this land and their KT needs and focus on differences (if any) needed for rough grazing compared to ryegrass systems – including time critical periods for management
- To identify KT methods used in the Hen Harrier Project relevant to Teagasc KT programmes and identify how Teagasc KT programmes can include relevant advice for areas of non-ryegrass grassland especially