

CFE MONTHLY REPORT (NOVEMBER 2010)

This report provides you with a summary of CFE activity during October covering the following topics:

ELS renewals and option uptake

New look website

Online record for Campaign voluntary measures

Media coverage summary

Training event numbers

Delivery Group issues

Evidence and Monitoring Group (EMG) issues

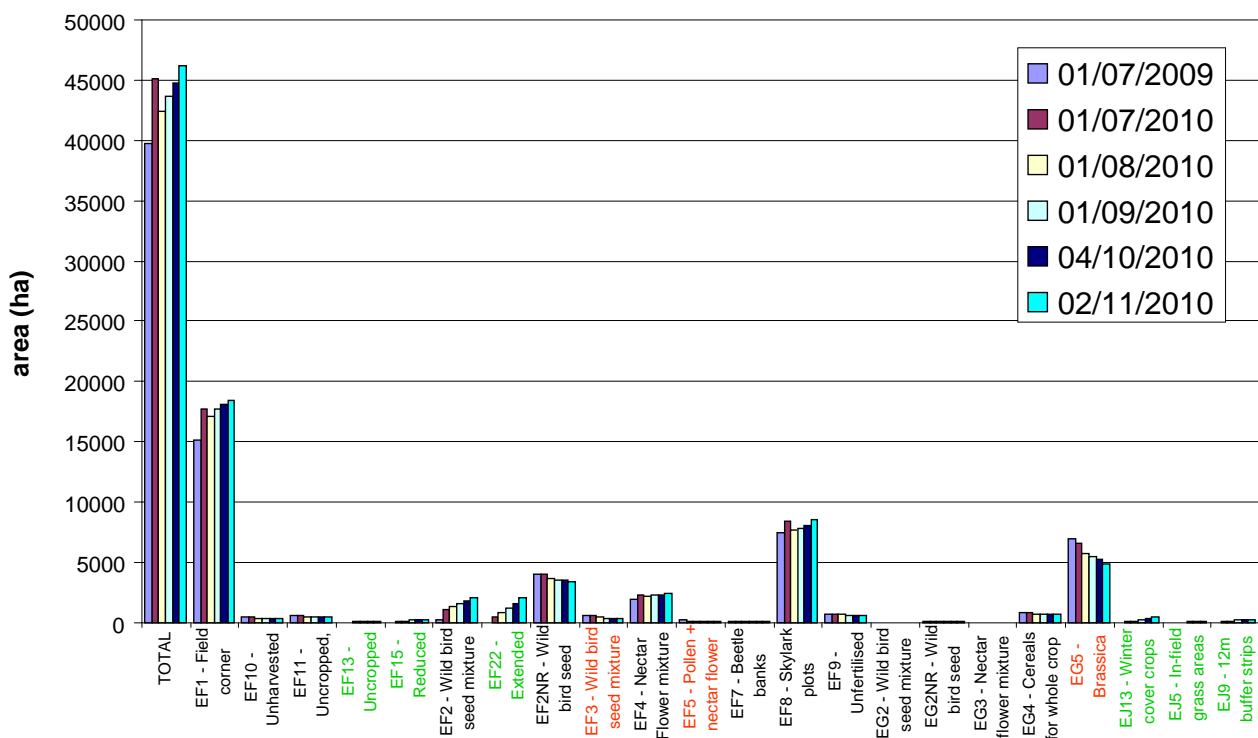
ELS renewals and option uptake

This section reports back on October's ELS renewal figures and the uptake of key target options. 85% of those ELS agreements that expired before the 30 September 2010 have now been renewed. The renewal area is now 921 608ha.

The target for UAA% coverage by 31 March 2011 is 70%. This equates to an area of 6 503 950 ha. The current UAA% figure is 70.8% which equates to 6 578 594 ha.

There has been an overall increase in the area of key target options in ELS of 16.6 % from the July 2009 (baseline). The overall uptake figure in October is 46,242 ha across 11349 agreements. Figure 1 shows the area covered by each key target option during 2009 and 2010.

Figure 1. Area (ha) covered by key target ELS options



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As shown in Figure 1 there have been significant **increases** in the following options:

- **EF1** (Field corner management) +21%
- **EF2, EF2NR, EF3, EG2, EG2NR** (Wildbird seed mixes) +17%
- **EF4, EG3, EF5** (Nectar flower mix) +19%
- **EF7** (Beetle banks) +17%
- **EF8** (Skylark plots) + 16%

There has been a **decrease** below 2009 levels in the following options:

- **EF 10** (Unharvested cereal headland within arable fields) -34%
- **EF 11** (Uncropped cultivated margins for rare arable plants) -19%
- **EF 9** (Unfertilised cereal headland) - 11%
- **EG4** (Cereals for whole crop silage followed by overwintered stubbles) - 22%
- **EG3** (Nectar flower mixture in grassland areas) -23% (now no longer in use)

Key target option uptake in the CFE target counties

The graphs below show the change in area of key target options for regions on a county basis.

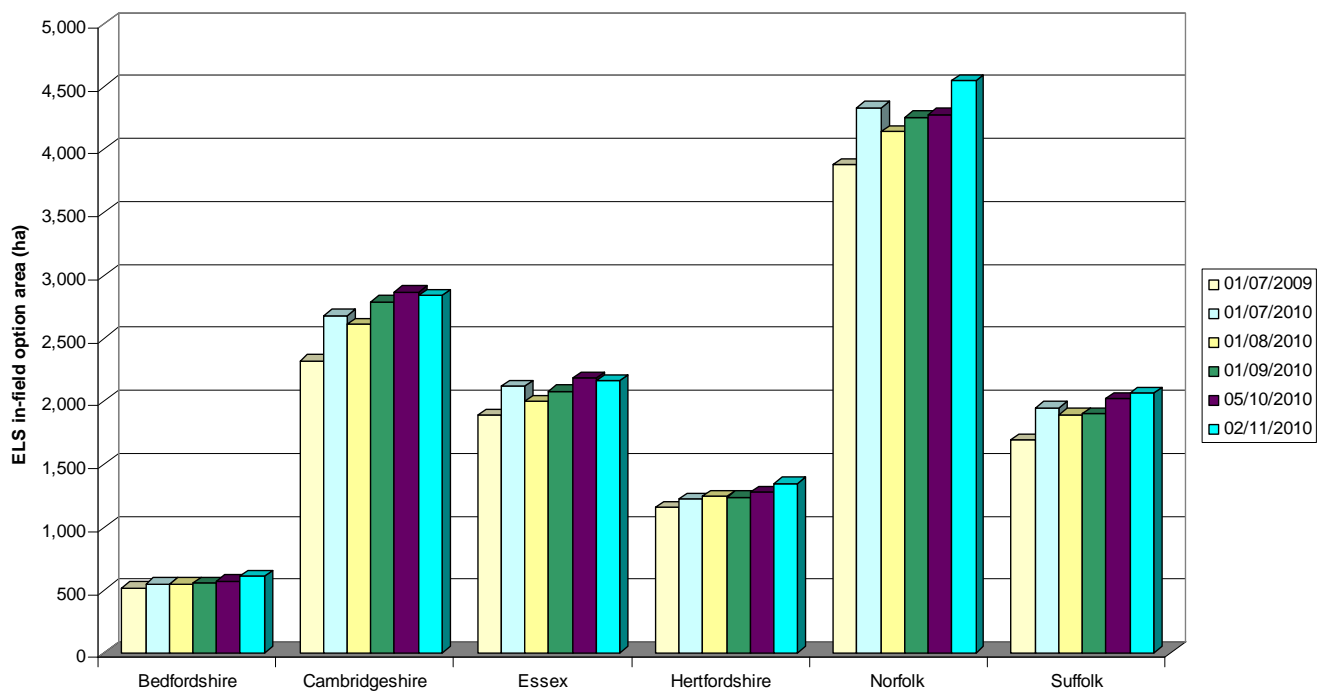


Figure 2. Change in area of key target options for Eastern region by county

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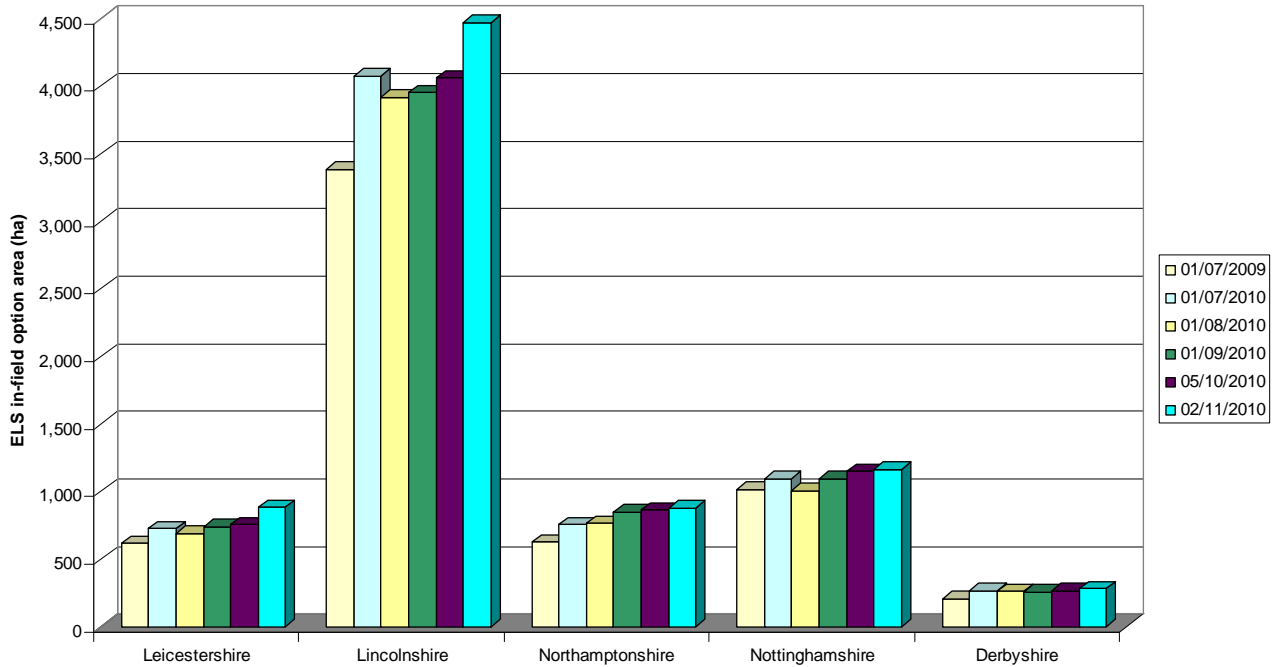


Figure 3. Change in area of key target options for East Midlands region by county

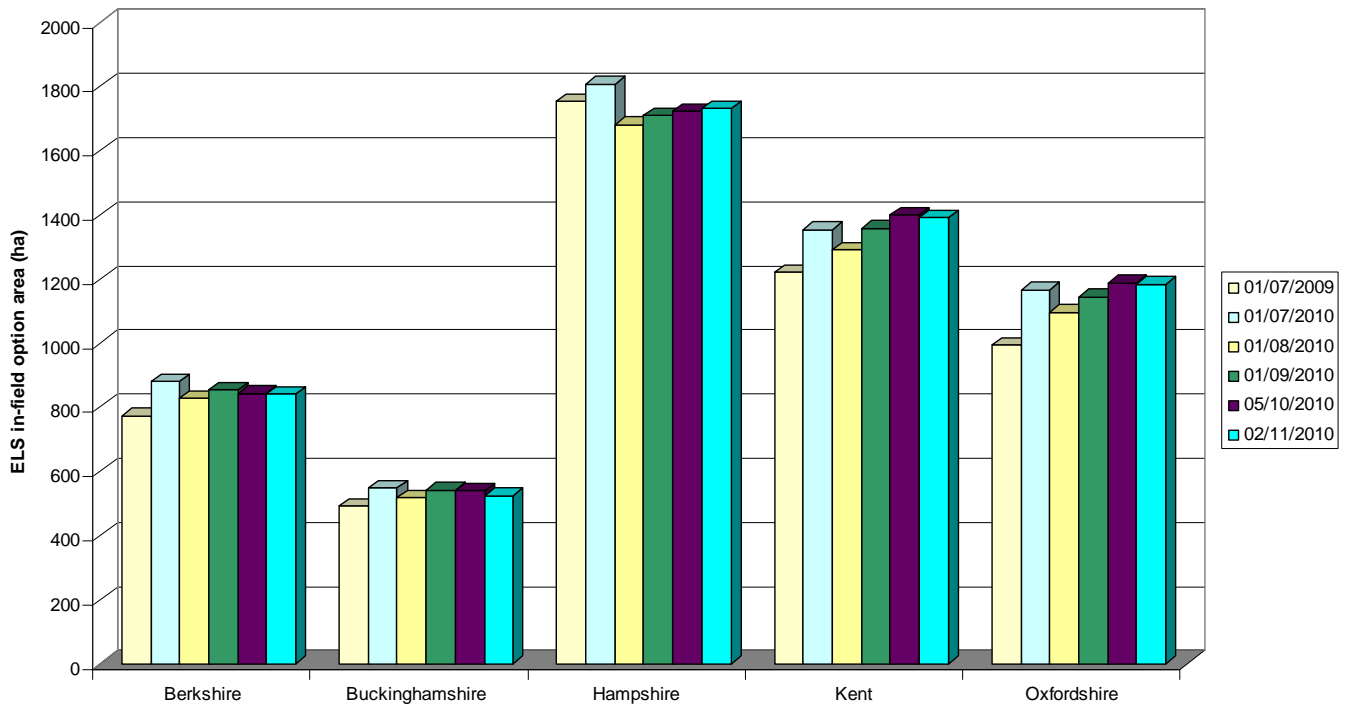


Figure 4. Change in area of key target options for South East region by county

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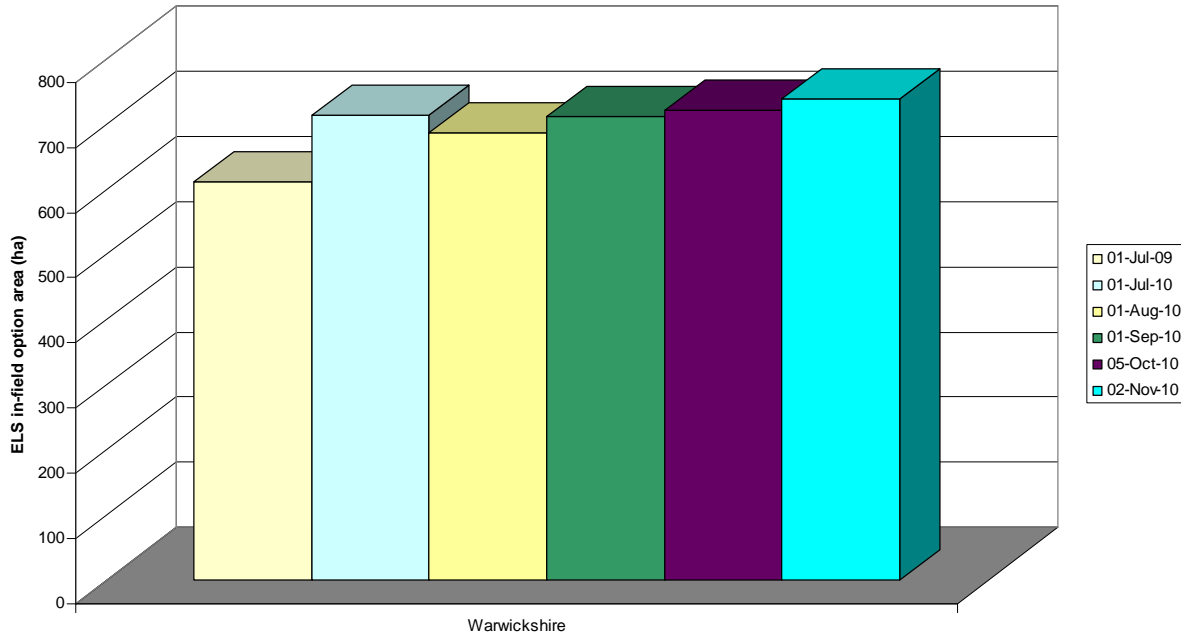


Figure 5. Change in area of key target options for West Midlands region by county

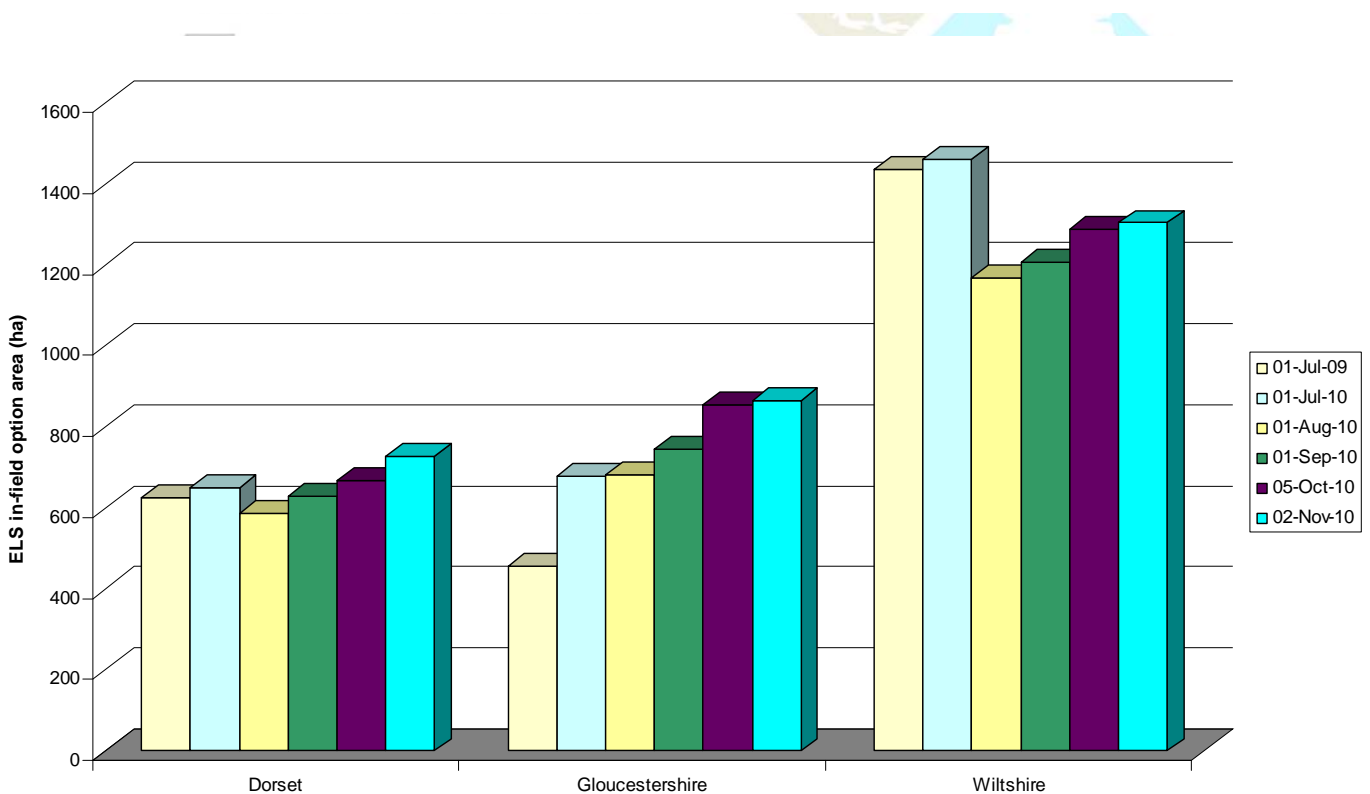


Figure 6. Change in area of key target options for South West region by county

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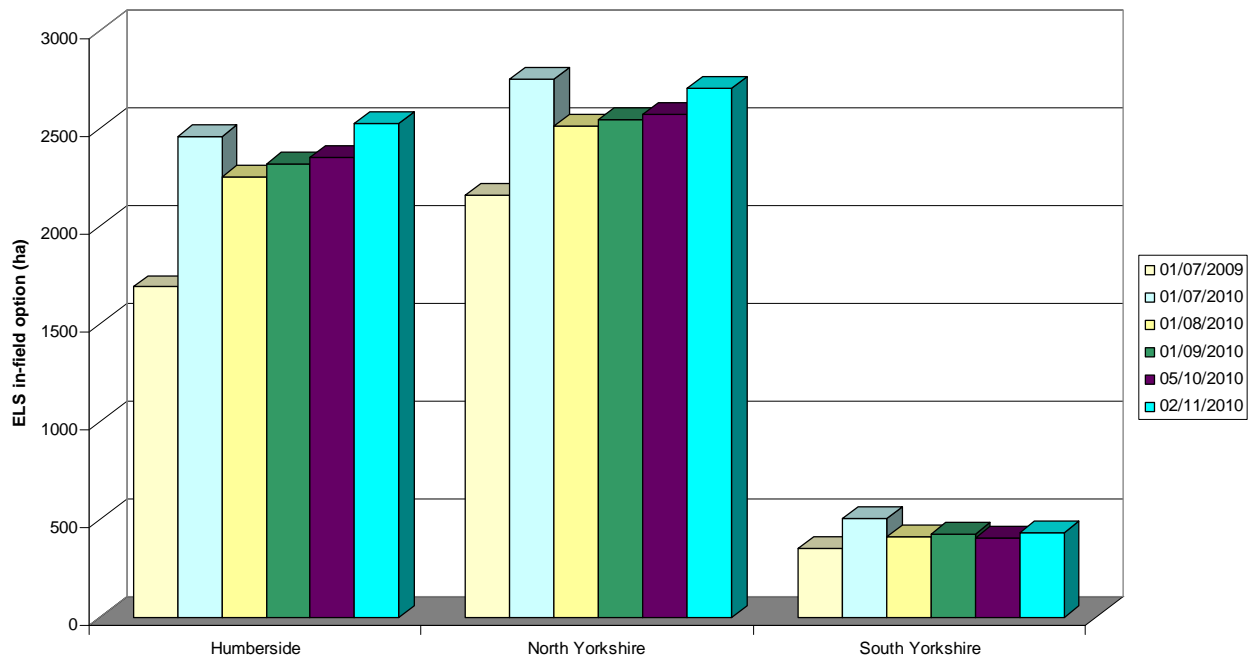


Figure 7. Change in area of key target options for Yorkshire & Humber region by county

New look website

The new look website was launched on the 14 September. We are currently averaging 1800 page impressions each week and over 500 unique visitors. There are now 39 case studies on the website. The most popular pages include the online record for voluntary measures landing page, the advice area and events page.

Online record for Campaign voluntary measures

105 farmers have completed the online record since it went live at the end of September. The top five voluntary measures adopted by respondents include C3a: reverted arable areas (34%), C7a: overwintered stubbles (32%), C1: grass buffer alongside temporary and permanent watercourses (27%), C9: wild bird seed mixture (26%) and C10: game strips (23%). The survey results for ELS are consistent with Natural England figures – 70% of those farmers completing the survey are in ELS and 54% have or intend to renew. In terms of key target options the most popular include: management of field corners, wild bird seed mixture and nectar flower mixture. The survey completion date will be extended from the 1 December to the 14 January 2011 in an effort to capture as many responses as possible but also to ensure that the online record does not distract from the Defra survey which is being sent out in February. The record will reopen in July, following the June survey, to help communications ahead of next year's planting.

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Media coverage summary

The Campaign has continued to attract significant coverage, with the anniversary being a main focus at the beginning of this month. Jim Paice provided a quote for inclusion in the anniversary press release which was picked up by Farmers Weekly (print/digital), Farmers Guardian (print/digital), Wrights Farming Register (digital), Farm Business (digital), NE Business online (digital), Farming UK (digital), Fresh Info (digital) and also regional titles. Farmers Guardian have been keen to follow up on recent CFE case studies including Stephen Northern's Farm in Bedfordshire which focuses on resource protection and Richard Bramley's farm in Yorkshire which focuses on farmland birds. On the 5 November Farmers Weekly featured an article where the Co-operative Farms successful in obtaining a more flexible ELS agreement. Four of the Co-operative farms have been rolled into a single ELS application, comprising a total of 6500ha, which includes no key target options. There was a lot of negative feedback from CFE supporters as a result of this and in response Michael Sly (LLG chair in Cambridgeshire) has written a letter which hopefully will appear in Farmers Weekly on the 19 November.

Training event numbers

Between September and December 2010 Local Campaign Coordinators have been organising training events for advisers, agronomists and land agents. Recent breakfast briefings and training events across the key target counties have reached around 200 attendees. Formal CFE training and briefing events have now reached 1000 agronomists and advisers. Looking ahead, a CFE conference in the East Midlands on the 18 November aims to attract around 70 advisers and agronomists, in addition to around 50 farmers.

Delivery Group issues

The Delivery Group met on the 9 November and the issues which were discussed to be followed up include the following:

ELS option uptake

1. Whilst there has been a 16.6% increase in the uptake of key target options in ELS, the Delivery Group are looking to establish the number of agreements that have been renewed. The chair will be in a position to report on this prior to the next Steering Group meeting on the 7 December.
2. To ensure report consistency and understanding ELS uptake reports do not include figures for ELS buffers strips or 'more of the same options' in HLS. This data will be included in the report next month.
3. The Delivery Group have made a start on investigating the reasons for low or declines in key target option uptake in the following counties: Hampshire, Wiltshire and N/S Yorkshire as there is the recognition nationally and on the ground that key target option uptake must improve.

Communications

1. Strengthened Ministerial messages - the Delivery Group agreed that this is now the time for strengthened Ministerial and industry leader messages as feed back from on the ground suggests that some farmers and advisers don't believe that the threat of regulation is real.

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2. Media opportunities to deliver these stronger messages include a presence at the OFC fringe event on the 4 January and a CFE stand and trail at Lamma 2011 (19 and 20 January). The Programme Manager has been researching the way in which EU member states have responded to the set-aside obligation – in France compulsory set-aside means that farmers have to take land of production for biodiversity at the following rates: 1% in 2010, 3% in 2011 and 5% in 2012. This will provide a good hook for media activity in early 2011.

3. Media activity over the next few months will also promote the changes to the voluntary measures. These changes will be reflected in the 'Farmer Guide to voluntary measures' which will be updated electronically.

Evidence and Monitoring Group (EMG) issues

The Evidence and Monitoring Group next meet on the 29 November, issues which they are currently working on include the following:

- **Monitoring** – the final version of the annual Defra survey is currently being trialled with 10 farmers to ensure that the language and format is easily understandable.
- **Uncropped land** – EMG members are trying to establish the reasons behind the drop in the level of uncropped land.
- **Voluntary measures** – the practical issues with the following Campaign voluntary measures have now been resolved: C7a (over wintered stubble) C3 (Reverted arable areas) C6 (Overwintered stubble followed by Spring/Summer fallow) C12 (pollen and nectar mixes) C15 (Enhanced SRC).
- **CFE cost calculator** – due to rises in commodity and input prices the CFE cost calculator requires updating for availability in early 2011