



CFE LOCAL PRIORITISATION DOCUMENT

Durham

Aim

This document has been drawn together by the CFE Local Liaison Group for Durham with input from LLG members and their respective organisations. The aim is to ensure that all advisers and partners have a clear, concise and consistent message about the environmental aims of CFE in Durham that can be used by farmers and landowners to ensure their actions deliver maximum benefit to the environment. The action undertaken on each farm may differ depending on the farm type and enterprise.

Introduction to the area

Durham is very much a county of two halves with Severely Disadvantaged uplands to the west dominated by livestock farming and largely arable lowlands to the east with a strong urban influence throughout the eastern part of the county. Waterways are an important aspect of the county running west to east providing water for the urban populations and important recreation and economic resources.

A progression from upland to the coast results in a mixed range of farming systems as illustrated by the DEFRA 2010 statistics for Durham showing on the 2259 holdings there was 199,000 ha of farmed land of which 65,000ha was arable or GAEC12 land with temporary grassland accounting for 11,000ha, permanent grassland 88,000, rough grazing 28,000ha and 5,000ha of woodland.

Agriculture contributed £288 million (0.69%) to the economy of the North East in 2011 and employed 0.84 per cent of the total workforce in 2010.

DEFRA data shows the farmland bird indices for the North East region increased by 3% in period 1994-2008 (11% decline nationally) while indices for all birds increased by 15% in the same period (3% nationally)

Existing local delivery activity

National agri-environment schemes are delivered by Natural England with the new Countryside Stewardship Scheme currently in development.

The Farm Advice Service is offering advice to farmers/landowners on general cross compliance, nutrient management.

The Rivers Tees, Tyne and Wear have active Rivers Trusts delivering practical activity to improve in-river and riparian habitats. The County also has the North Pennines AONB and the Durham Heritage Coast.

Durham Wildlife Trust operates throughout the area hosting the national eco serve initiative looking at mapping ecosystem services.



DEFRA's Catchment Based Approach operates across Durham in the Tees, Wear and Tyne catchments, comprising a range of statutory bodies and Environmental Non-Government Organisations, working through catchment partnerships and also on their own account.

Other projects operate in the area such as the Heart of Teesdale landscape partnership project, Tees Rediscovered project and Limestone Landscapes Project. Buglife have recently developed a beelines priority map for the county.

Wider industry bodies such as the levy boards, partner organisations, suppliers and distributors provide farmers and landowners with advice and support that complements the work of CFE.

Regional priorities:

Durham contains important grassland habitats particularly associated with Magnesian limestone. These and other semi-natural grasslands are a priority throughout the area due to their scarcity and potential to link together habitats.

Farmland birds are a high priority down the Durham coast and the Tyne Valley for priority species such as grey partridge; corn bunting; lapwing; tree sparrow; yellow wagtail.

The vast majority of lowland Durham is a high priority for water voles, dragonflies newts and toads as identified by Natural England.

Management to tackle soil erosion and run-off issues such as on the River Leven and other priority rivers.

A groundwater priority area runs along the southern side of the north east area across Durham.

Local CFE priority	Delivery action (Inc. CFE codes if appropriate)	Delivered by & geographical area
Promoting actions to provide the big 3 for farmland birds and other species such as Barn Owls	Events focused on land management for farmland birds i.e. nectar flower mixes/ WBS mixes	CFE/Partners – High priority areas for birds
Promoting the importance of wet grasslands particularly for flood alleviation and considering the scope for more grassland/different land uses on land prone to flooding, especially creating or enhancing habitat for breeding and wintering waders	Events focused on wet grassland Exchange tour to demonstrate examples of best practice locally and nationally	CFE, Rivers trusts, NE/EA, Catchment partnerships – Areas such as on the Skerne and land suffering from ground water rebound.



<p>Improving riparian habitats for BAP species</p>	<p>Events looking at how we can achieve multiple objectives (RP, Biodiversity, economic) through riparian management</p>	<p>CFE/Rivers Trusts/ /Catchment partnerships – location linked to biodiversity priorities e.g. Salmon, insects, water voles, Otters.</p>
<p>Promote actions to protect watercourses and surface water</p>	<p>Events focusing on best practice farming techniques to maintain soil structure and organic matter (such as minimum tillage, use of green manure/cover crops, aeration, incorporation of organic matter etc</p>	<p>CFE/FAS/Rivers Trusts/ Catchment partnerships – County wide Standalone CFE events</p>
<p>Improving farm profitability to make more room for wildlife</p>	<p>Events looking at precision farming techniques and the optimum use of inputs. Linking to Green house Gas Action Plan and considering most appropriate land uses.</p>	<p>CFE/Industry partners – prioritise to areas where there is a clear environmental focus i.e. farmland bird priority areas where the objective is to deliver more farmland bird options requiring agricultural land use change</p>
<p>Action to promote the environmental value of grasslands particularly for pollinators</p> <p>Action to promote importance of pollinators and measures to enhance habitat for them</p>	<p>Events on pollinators and local publicity</p> <p>Event looking at whole farm approach for pollinators</p>	<p>CFE/Buglife/DWT Industry partners – Mag limestone</p>