



## **CFE REGIONAL PRIORITISATION DOCUMENT**

### **Northumberland**

#### **Aim**

This document has been drawn together by the CFE Local Liaison Group for Northumberland 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 Northumberland 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**

Northumberland is very much a county of two halves with Severely Disadvantaged uplands to the west and lowlands to the east. Waterways are an important aspect running west to east.

In 2010 in Northumberland there was 1923 holdings managing 371,000ha of farmed land. Of this approx. 90,000ha was arable or GAEC12 land with temporary grassland accounting for 18,000 ha, permanent grassland 171,000 ha, rough grazing 79,000ha and 10,000ha of woodland.

The county contained approximately 5647 breeding dairy cows, 46,000 suckler cows 564,000 breeding ewes and 387,000 poultry of all types and 18,000 pigs of all types illustrating that livestock within the county is dominated by grazing animals.

Agriculture directly employed 4824 people in Northumberland. Within the North East region agriculture contributed £288 million (0.69%) to the economy.

#### **Existing Local delivery activity**

Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) has been working in the North of Northumberland since 2006 to reduce the impacts of Diffuse Water Pollution from Agriculture (DWPA) on the watercourses of the current 'Priority Catchment', which incorporates the Rivers Tweed, Till, Aln, Coquet and the Coastal Streams feeding into Lindisfarne. Priority catchments have been targeted to help meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and improve freshwater Sites of Special Scientific Interest, where evidence suggests that pollution from farming practices impact significantly on water quality and aquatic habitats. CSF offers training, advice and grant aid to farmers through its Capital Grant Scheme. This complements the wider availability of grants and advice available from Natural England through the Environmental Stewardship Scheme and future schemes in development.

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

Rivers Trusts are very active in the area with dedicated funding from the water framework directive in certain catchments. The Rivers Tyne, and Tweed have their own dedicated trusts with the Northumberland Rivers trust covering the Aln, Blyth/Pont, Coquet



Wansbeck and North Northumberland Coastal Streams. Rivers trusts are bringing together large numbers of organisations and community groups through the Catchment Based Approach.

The National Park Authority and Northumberland Coast AONB offer advice and support to farmers.

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:**

Semi-natural grasslands are a priority throughout the area due to their scarcity and potential to link habitats. Coastal and marginal grasslands are important for rare butterfly species such as grayling, dark green fritillary and small bordered fritillary. Species rich grasslands are a priority throughout the county for bees.

Farmland birds are identified as high priority within the Coastal, Plain, Cheviot Fringe (Including the Till Valley), parts of mid Northumberland and the Tyne Valley. Priority species are grey partridge, lapwing, yellow wagtail and tree sparrow. Corn bunting is virtually extinct within the County – populations may still exist to the south west of the Berwick-upon Tweed, parts of the Coastal Plain and in the Longhorsley area.

Wading birds (lapwing, redshank, curlew and snipe) and yellow wagtail associated with wet grassland can be found throughout lowland Northumberland. Hot spots include the Coastal Plain, Till Valley and parts of south east Northumberland especially where there are wetland associated with mining subsidence. The coastal Plain is also priority for wintering geese and swans.

Soil erosion and other diffuse pollution issues are targeted in areas that include parts of the River Pont and Blyth catchment, Wansbeck, middle and lower Coquet Valley, River Aln, Till Valley and coastal streams especially those that flow into the Lindisfarne National Nature Reserve. There is a particular focus on metaldehyde around the Coquet.

South eastern part of the county has been identified by Natural England as a high priority for water voles, dragonflies, newts and toads.

The vast majority of the lowland part of the county is identified as a medium priority for bats and dormice.

<b>Local CFE priority</b>	<b>Delivery action (Inc. CFE codes if appropriate)</b>	<b>Delivered by &amp; geographical area</b>
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/	CFE/Partners – High priority areas for birds



	WBS mixes	
Improving riparian habitats for BAP species	Events looking at how we can achieve multiple objectives (RP, Biodiversity, economic) through riparian management	Rivers Trusts, CSF, NE, EA – location linked to biodiversity priorities i.e Salmon, Sea trout insects, water voles White clawed crayfish
Support the farming community to ensure good management of soils, nutrients and pesticides and enhanced carbon storage.	Events that consider the benefits of employing measures such as crop selection, minimum tillage, increased use of nitrogen-fixing legumes within well-informed crop rotations, managed organic matter levels in soils, and informed nutrient and pesticide application based on regular infield analysis	CFE/FAS/CSF/NW – County wide Standalone CFE events outside CSF target areas.  Joint working within CSF areas where value added.
Promoting the importance of woodlands and trees as part of whole farm environmental management	Including woodland elements in CFE events and as part of best practice particularly in relation to riparian management.	CFE/CSF/ Forestry Commission -Woodland for Water Initiative run jointly by EA and FC
Improving farm profitability to make more room for wildlife	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.	CFE/CSF/ Industry partners – prioritise to areas where clear environmental focus i.e. farmland bird priority areas where the objective is to deliver more farmland bird options or where opportunities exist for enhancing grasslands for wintering geese and swans.
Action to promote the environmental value of grasslands particularly for pollinators  Action to promote importance of pollinators and measures to enhance habitat for them	Events on pollinators and local publicity.  Event looking at whole farm approach for pollinators considering food sources and the potential benefits in controlling pest species	CFE/ Industry partners –

