

Case study: Fitzwilliam Wentworth Estate

Name: Chris Pearson

Region/County: Yorkshire

Address: Fitzwilliam Wentworth Estate

Farm Size/Type: 150 ha mixed

Cropping: Winter wheat, barley, rape and spring barley

Stocking: Approx. 250 cattle, young through to finish

Land features: Registered Parkland, Scheduled Monument

Key objectives:

- **Restore areas of Parkland which form part of the Wentworth Woodhouse Estate (Registered parks and gardens – Designated landscape)**
- **Bring a schedule monument (roman ridge) that is currently being eroded into appropriate management;**
- **Provide a Wild Pollinator and Farm Wildlife package aimed at the target species (lapwing, tree sparrow, grey partridge and yellow wagtail) which are known to be in this area**
- **Address existing resource protection issues on the watercourses running through the holding, into the parkland lakes and into tributaries of the River Don**

Chris Pearson is a tenant of the Fitzwilliam Wentworth estate. Two of the estate's other tenants are in ELS/HLS agreements, which has provided the opportunity to join up with existing management on adjacent land and to address common objectives across a more substantial scale.

Most of the holding falls within the boundary of the registered parkland of Wentworth Woodhouse. Although the remaining areas of actual wood pasture are more limited within Mr Pearson's holding, we have been able to bring in two adjoining parcels of wood pasture totalling about 18ha.



The Wood Pasture option requires a supporting parkland management plan. This could not be done within the Higher Tier agreement and had to be done as a separate Countryside Stewardship agreement in itself, and this would have meant delaying the Higher Tier CS and associated payments until the parkland plan was complete. The plan would also be costly, needing to be done for the whole estate within the registered parkland even though as a tenant Mr Pearson only manages a fraction of the overall area. This was a major blocker for progressing an agreement. To resolve this, we met with the land agent for the estate to discuss what existing management plans they already had. We acquired copies of existing plans and located additional documents that the estate had submitted on a previous occasion. Drawing this together enabled us to address the requirements of the Wood pasture option and allowed us get a good understanding of the Estates management objectives for the estate. From this point I was able to negotiate an agreement with Mr Pearson that fitted in with estates objectives and within the aims of CS, addressing the estates objectives notably through the scheme - such as buffering around the lakes from agricultural activity.

There were other opportunities for resource protection, reducing fertiliser input on grassland, seasonal removal of livestock, establishing grass margins and fencing off riparian buffer strips along watercourses, all of which lead into the lakes. The following are examples of the areas we are looking to address.



The land falls within known areas for target species of farmland birds, including lapwing, tree sparrow, grey partridge and yellow wagtail. As a designed landscape there are a number of large lakes which lie central to the estate, and a good network of hedges and woodland blocks. We have been able to establish a Wild Pollinators and Farm Wildlife Package including a range of different options such as flower rich margins, pollen and nectar mixes, winter bird food, fallow and stubble plots which connect with these existing features and compliment the suite of options currently being used on the estate through the other two HLS agreements.



This gives an idea of the landscape. The tower on the horizon is Keppel's Column, which is the edge of the estate and gives some idea of scale. Incidentally, we have a HLS with Rotherham council for species rich grassland Keppel's Column, which adds to the collective of agreements in the area. The column features within the Estates 'historical vistas' doc, which was key to addressing the management plan requirements of the wood pasture option. Keeping views open from this and other key monuments and features on the estate is key to the estates objective and

something that we were mindful of when agreeing agreement options with Mr Pearson.

There is a Scheduled monument (roman ridge) which runs through the estate and falls within all 3 holdings under agri-environment schemes. The length of ridge within the existing HLS agreements is being managed well, with one HLS in particular providing valuable protection through arable reversion. However, the length of ridge on Mr Pearson's holding is currently in unfavourable condition, being badly eroded by cattle. We consulted with Historic England about this, who provided advice as to what they would like to see happen.

Unfortunately, we were not able to set up a management plan in the same year as the CS starting, so investigating methods to repair the existing damage (as HE requested) would not be feasible. However, we identified that the main source of the erosion is due to the location of a large concrete trough on the ridge and I agreed with Mr Pearson that this would be removed under an 'eyesore removal' payment and a new trough and water supply would be included and located away from the ridge. Historic England agreed that this would remove the existing cause of the damage and that prior to the next renewal of the scheme we would fund a plan/study which would inform capital works required for repairs.



We now stand in a better position to bring in more priority features and habitat within the estate with future CS agreements. Further down the line, once existing WGS agreements expire we should be able to achieve an even more joined up agreement covering a lot more of the key areas.

Where can I find out more?

Please follow this [link](#) for the latest information on Countryside Stewardship.