

APPENDIX E

Cotswolds NA Draft Farm Profiles

(Number of sides - 22)

1. Springhill Farm

Type

A large cropping farm in the east of the Cotswolds.

Farm business character

This is a 200 ha holding, farmed by the same family since the 19th century. The farm has significantly increased in size over the years improving viability and economies of scale. Crops grown include winter cereals, oil-seed rape, peas and linseed, with set-aside used for growing industrial crops such as rape. Since 1975, the beef cattle enterprise has finished due to the unpredictability and low returns of the market. This has led to a fall in the grassland area, including the ending of the use of grass leys. A small grassland area was left as it was difficult to cultivate. It is currently used for hay and for grass keep. Changes to the arable enterprise have included the introduction of linseed and peas, the increase in oil-seed rape, and the ending of spring cereals due to lower yields and susceptibility to drought. As a consequence of the demise of the livestock enterprise and the increase of farm machinery, labour has fallen from 4 full time in 1975 to 2 in 1996. A contracting business has also been introduced.

Farm Ecological Character

Hedgerows are dominated by hawthorn and elder with hazel, ash and beech also present. The flora in the hedge bases is generally poor. Management is by flailing and consequently most are even-aged. Cultivation is to the hedge base. Dry-stone walls are generally in poor repair.

Woodland areas include a larch plantation with an under-storey of elder and ash; a strip of beech, ash and sycamore with an under-storey of the same species plus elder and hawthorn; a woodland block, part of which is dominated by mature sycamore, the other part by scrub woodland containing elder, hawthorn and blackthorn. A ride network has been established in the latter area and may benefit herb species growing in and beside the rides.

A steep bank is dominated by elder, hawthorn and blackthorn scrub, with some larger ash and larch. Small areas of semi-improved grassland are present, the most valuable for nature conservation being at the northern end of the Farm. A stream runs through this area and is lined with willows and rank vegetation.

Good Practice

- Woodland managed, with network of managed rides
- Pond constructed
- Reduced use of sprays

Opportunities

OPPORTUNITIES	TRIGGER OR INCENTIVE
Woodland management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives; • Increase in farm's capital value; • Healthy timber market; • Information and training; • Benefits to game birds.
Hedgerow management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives, e.g. to allow use of skilled contractors for laying; • Information and training, such as on benefits of altering timing and frequency of trimming; • Benefits to game birds.
Conservation headlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set-aside options; • Financial incentives; • Benefits to game birds.
Dry-stone wall management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives, e.g. to allow use of skilled contractors; • Information and training.
Watercourse management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives; • Information and training.
Increase grassland area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set-aside options; • Improved economic returns of livestock enterprises compared to arable cropping; • Financial incentives.
Reduced intensity of arable cropping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives; • Development of improved IPM techniques; • Development of improved sprays and spray application techniques (e.g. GPS); • Development of improved crop varieties with better disease resistance and lower fertiliser requirements; • Information and training on IPM etc.; • Entry into farm assurance schemes, to increase market value of products while lowering inputs.

Attitudes

The farmers have always expressed an interest in nature conservation and are willing to consider sympathetic management, provided there is no significant negative economic impact on the holding. They have already demonstrated their interest through the new management of the woodland and the construction of a new pond. The decline of the work force may also lead to difficulties in the implementation of conservation management.

2. Manor Farm

Type

Large cropping farm in the centre of the Cotswolds.

Farm Business Character

This is a 250 ha rented holding, which has been farmed by the same family since the 1930s. Arable crops include winter cereals and oil-seed rape. Beef and sheep enterprises have been discontinued due to lack of viability, and the farmer's greater interest in arable crops. There has been a concomitant decrease in grassland area. An outdoor pig unit has been established during the last 5 years, using grain grown on the farm to supplement feed. This has broadened the farm's enterprise base. The remaining small grassland areas are used for hay and grass-keep, and the keeping of sheep on tack. Changes to the arable enterprises have included the introduction of oil-seed rape and a movement to 100% winter cropping, due to the farm's susceptibility to drought. The farm was entered into the Cotswolds ESA in 1994.

Farm Ecological Character

There are few hedges, but those present are dominated by hawthorn, with some hazel, ash and elder. Management is by flailing, resulting in all hedges appearing even aged. Cultivation is to hedge base in most fields, although areas with conservation headlands are also present. Ivy and cleavers are the dominant base flora

Walls are mainly in good repair, although the lack of shrubs alongside them leads to a very clean, unnatural appearance.

Woodland areas include an area dominated by ash and beech with under-storey of hazel and holly and also some laurel, and a ground flora dominated by ivy. There is also a woodland enclosure, half felled and re-stocked with ash, beech, hawthorn and elder, with the remainder comprising mature ash and beech with hazel and elder under-storey. Odd larch and yew are also present and the ground flora is dominated by ivy and bramble.

A stream flows along the bottom of a valley through the farm. Wet ground alongside supports species rich vegetation.

Good Practice

- Dry stone walls renovated
- Conservation headlands implemented
- Reduced use of sprays

Opportunities

OPPORTUNITIES	TRIGGER OR INCENTIVE
Long-term farm management for conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-operation between landlord and tenant, e.g. over woodlands and game bird management.
Hedgerow management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased ESA incentives, e.g. to allow use of skilled contractors for laying; • Information and training, such as on benefits of altering timing and frequency of trimming.
More conservation headlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set-aside options; • Further ESA incentives.
Watercourse management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives; • Information and training.
Enhance interest of remaining grassland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further ESA incentives.
Reduced intensity of arable cropping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued ESA incentives; • Development of improved IPM techniques; • Development of improved sprays and spray application techniques (e.g. GPS); • Development of improved crop varieties with better disease resistance and lower fertiliser requirements; • Information and training on IPM etc.; • Entry into farm assurance/welfare schemes, to increase value of products while lowering inputs.

Attitudes

The farmer has already demonstrated his interest and willingness for nature conservation work through his entry into an ESA agreement. However, financial pressures, such as rent and the financing of new machinery, means that significantly reducing the intensity of farming may not be practical. Opportunities for nature conservation on the farm for the long-term would best be achieved by involving both the farmer and the landlord in agreeing and meeting conservation objectives.

3. Peters Farm

Type

A large mixed farm on the northern edge of the Cotswolds.

Farm Business Character

Arable cropping, much of which is up on the Cotswold plateau, includes extensive areas of salad onions, potatoes and leeks. The farm provides a living for 5 persons, three of whom are family. The farm runs an 800 ewe flock and includes an SSSI. In recent years, small areas of new woodland have been planted, a pond constructed, and dry-stone walls repaired.

Farm Ecological Character

Hedgerows are species-poor, dominated by hawthorn. Some have been managed by flailing. Base flora is limited to nettle, cleavers and broad-leaved grass species in arable areas, slightly more diverse in grassland areas. Work on restoration of dry-stone walls is ongoing.

Dominant canopy species in woodland areas are oak, beech and ash, with some sycamore. Dominant under-storey species include elder, blackthorn and sycamore. The ground flora in some areas is dominated by bracken and bramble, and in others by ivy.

There are a number of new plantings of native species, mainly ash and beech, some of which are adjacent to existing woodland areas.

A variety of grassland types exist, ranging from more or less unimproved through to new improved areas.

Some areas on the escarpment are damp and provide further habitat diversity. A pond on the plateau was apparently dug in a similar area.

Good Practice

- Dry stone walls restored
- Woodland planted
- Pond constructed
- Cover crops used

Opportunities

OPPORTUNITIES	TRIGGER OR INCENTIVE
Hedgerow management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives, e.g. to allow use of skilled contractors for laying; • Information and training, such as on benefits of altering timing and frequency of trimming; • Agreement with landlord to manage hedges.
Continued dry-stone wall management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued grant aid (e.g. FCGS)
Conservation headlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set-aside options; • Financial incentives.
Management of grassland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives; • SSSI designation and management agreement.
Woodland Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives; • Information and training; • Healthy timber market.
Construction and management of farm ponds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives; • Information and training.
Reduced intensity of arable cropping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives; • Development of improved IPM techniques; • Development of improved sprays and spray application techniques (e.g. GPS); • Development of improved crop varieties with better disease resistance and lower fertiliser requirements; • Information and training on IPM etc.; • Entry into farm assurance schemes, to increase value of products while lowering inputs.

Attitudes

The farmer has cautious enthusiasm for future management and enhancement. His family has improved productivity of this land over many years, and management which reverts these “improvements” is therefore less likely to be accepted. Visible changes, such as walls and tree planting, are embraced. However, the farmer is unlikely to work well under tight management constraints, e.g. prescriptive management.

4. Hill Farm

Type

A small cropping farm on the eastern edge of the Cotswolds.

Farm Business Character.

A 50 ha family-owned holding. Cropping includes soft fruit, vegetables and field potatoes in rotation with cereals. About one fifth of the farm is currently voluntarily in set-aside. Changed from a livestock farm during the 1970s. Vegetables, fruit and PYO enterprise are being pushed hard to provide a living for two families.

Farm Ecological Character

All hedgerows are species poor and are predominantly of hawthorn. Some oak, ash and elm is present in places. The base flora is generally poor, and gapping up is required in places. Management is by flailing, and all hedges are of a similar age. Many of the walls are in poor repair.

A strip of beech woodland is present on a small part of the farm, adjacent to a small block of scrub dominated by ash and sycamore. Some more open areas still exist within the latter area.

A small patch of rank grass and herbs is present within the adjacent village. A portion of its original area has been developed. A stream is present adjacent to this area.

Good Practice

None

Opportunities

OPPORTUNITIES	TRIGGER OR INCENTIVE
Hedgerow management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial incentives, e.g. to allow use of skilled contractors for laying;• Information and training, such as on benefits of altering timing and frequency of trimming.
Conservation headlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set-aside options;• Financial incentives;• More flexible grant schemes.
Dry-stone wall management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial incentives, e.g. to allow use of skilled contractors;• Information and training.
Watercourse Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial incentives;• Information and training.
Retention of winter stubbles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Profitability and retention of horticultural crops.

Woodland and scrub management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial incentives.• Information and training.
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Attitudes

The farmer is open to advice and training, although availability of labour and cash resources are likely to constrain further management activities which are therefore unlikely to be taken up without grant-aid.

5. Windrush Farm

Type

Small, part time cropping farm in the centre of the Cotswolds.

Farm Business Character

This is a 60 ha family owned holding. There are no livestock on the farm, and cereals are grown continuously. Since 1975, the farm has gone from being a full-time holding with sheep and pig enterprises, as well as arable cropping, through to being a part-time arable unit. Reasons for this include the division of the farm for family reasons, and poor viability of such a small farm in the Cotswolds. Although the farmer is part-time, the agricultural enterprises still provide a significant part of his total income. Introduction of the straw burning ban led to an increase in the area of spring crops, in order to spread the autumn cultivation workload.

Farm Ecological Character

Hedgerows are dominated by hawthorn with some elder, and are managed by flailing. Gapping is required in places. Cultivation is to within 1 metre of hedge base, and consequently a poor base flora (dominant species ivy, nettle and cleavers) is present.

Walls are in need of attention, although, considerable lichen and bryophyte cover is present on older walls.

Winter stubble occupies c 10% of total area.

A stream flows through the farm and appears clean. Some greater willowherb and figwort is present in places and sections have been dredged. This stream passes through a square pond which is becoming overgrown by abundant aquatic macrophyte growth. A clump of stream-side willows is also present.

A small block of planted woodland is present adjacent to the house and consists of mainly coniferous species, although some beech is also present.

Good Practice

- Management of stream vegetation
- Trees planted
- Reduced use of sprays

Opportunities

OPPORTUNITIES	TRIGGER OR INCENTIVE
Hedgerow management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives, e.g. to allow use of skilled contractors for laying; • Information and training, such as on benefits of altering timing and frequency of trimming.
Conservation headlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set-aside options; • Financial incentives; • More flexible grant schemes.
Watercourse Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives; • Information and training.
Reduce intensity of arable cropping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives; • More flexible grant schemes; • Development of improved IPM techniques; • Development of improved sprays and spray application techniques (e.g. GPS); • Development of improved crop varieties with better disease resistance and lower fertiliser requirements; • Information and training on GPS etc.; • Entry into farm assurance schemes, to increase value of products while lowering inputs; • Maintain profitability of spring crops, e.g. try malting barley; • Increase non-farm income.

Attitudes

Due to the small size of the holding and the limited labour resource on the farm, opportunities for management for nature conservation would be difficult to implement, even where the farmer was sympathetic to such objectives. Furthermore, the farmer intends to leave farming in the medium term and does not wish to be constrained in his management and long term plans for the holding by entry into long-term grant schemes,

6. Bourton Hill Farm

Type

A large cropping and dairy farm in the centre of the Cotswolds.

Farm Business Character

This is a 215 ha owned holding. Enterprises include 115 dairy cows and a small flock of pedigree sheep. Most of the farm area is used to grow cereal crops. Since 1975 considerable capital investment has been made in farm buildings, especially for the dairy enterprise. Following the introduction of milk quotas, herd size was significantly reduced, resulting in grassland loss to arable crops. The farm enterprise is intended to be increased, perhaps including purchase of a second farm in order to provide a sufficiently viable enterprise for the farmer and his young sons. Sheep from a farm outside the Natural Area were recently wintered on the holding.

Farm Ecological Character

All hedges are dominated by hawthorn, blackthorn and elder, and are managed by flailing. Hazel, elm and ash are also present in places, and some have been laced in the past. Some are also in need of gapping. Hedge base flora is generally poor, especially in arable areas, resulting from cultivation to field boundary. A number of dry-stone walls are in need of repair.

A number of woodland areas are present and include an area dominated by oak and ash, with a well developed under-storey of hawthorn, elder and hazel, and a sparse ground flora of celandine and ivy. There are two larch plantations containing an under-storey of ash in places. A considerable amount of new planting of native broad-leaved species has been carried out, mainly adjacent to existing woodland blocks outside the farm boundary. A pond has been constructed within one of these areas.

A number of grassland areas are present, ranging from semi-improved and grazed, through to a more neglected slope which has been botanically surveyed in the past and is included in the Gloucestershire Calcareous Grassland Inventory. This area is in need of management to clear invasive scrub which is becoming dominant.

Good Practice

- Woodland planted
- Woodland managed (WGS)
- Pond constructed
- Reduced use of sprays and fertilisers
- Winter stubble retained for slurry spreading

Opportunities

OPPORTUNITIES	TRIGGER OR INCENTIVE
Hedgerow management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives, e.g. to allow use of skilled contractors for laying; • Information and training, such as on benefits of altering timing and frequency of trimming.
Conservation headlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set-aside options; • Financial incentives;
Scrub management on areas of existing botanical interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives, e.g. Countryside Stewardship Scheme; • Information and training.
Continued woodland management and planting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set-aside options; • Continued financial incentives (e.g. WGS and FWPS); • Healthy timber market.
Increase in grassland area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set-aside options; • Improved economic returns of dairy enterprise compared to arable cropping; • Removal of milk quotas; • Financial incentives;
Reduce intensity of grassland management and arable cropping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives; • Development of improved IPM techniques; • Development of improved sprays and spray application techniques (e.g. GPS); • Development of improved crop/grass varieties with better disease resistance and lower fertiliser requirements; • Information and training on IPM etc.; • Entry into farm assurance/welfare schemes, to increase value of products with lower inputs.

Attitudes

The farmer has a positive attitude towards nature conservation on the farm, which has already been demonstrated through tree planting, pond creation and projected management of existing woodlands. Areas have also been specifically left as small “nature reserves”. Within the commercial constraints of a large, intensive mixed holding, he would probably consider further works to enhance nature conservation interest implemented through entry into appropriate grant schemes.

7. WARREN FARM

Farm Type

Medium sized dairy farm on the western scarp of the Cotswolds.

Farm Business Character.

This is a 56 ha holding which has been in the same family for three generations. The loss of land rented under a secured tenancy led to the taking on of 45 ha of grass kept used for hay and silage. Dairy cattle numbers have increased to 95 cows and a small pedigree suckler herd has been established. No arable crops are grown on the farm except for a small area of potato land. Since 1975, silage has been introduced to the farm to improve milk yields and lessen dependence on weather conditions. Forage maize is a significant new development, although this is currently restricted by badger damage.

Farm Ecological Character

Hedgerows are dominated by hawthorn and elder with lesser amounts of ash and blackthorn. They are managed by flailing and are in need of gapping in places. The flora at the hedge bases is dominated by nettle, cleavers and ivy. Arable fields are cultivated to the field boundary. Some walls are in need of renovation.

The area of woodland consists of ash, beech and sweet-chestnut, some of which has been coppiced in the past. An under-storey of hazel and elder is present. Some parts are made up of pure ash coppice. Much of the farm is fringed by woodland of a similar type.

The majority of the grassland on the farm is improved. Muck spreading has been carried out over much of the area, although this has been impossible on the very steep banks present on part of the farm. Some marginal areas, such as the old quarry at the eastern end of the farm exhibit remnants of a richer calcareous flora.

Good Practice

- Reduced use of sprays

Opportunities

OPPORTUNITIES	TRIGGER OR INCENTIVE
Hedgerow management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial incentives, e.g. to allow use of skilled contractors for laying;• Information and training, such as on benefits of altering timing and frequency of trimming.
Resolution of badger problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information and training;• Financial compensation for damage to pasture and forage maize.
Woodland management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial incentives;• Information and training;• Healthy timber markets.
Reduction in intensity of grassland management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased ESA incentives (current rates are not considered attractive);• Entry into farm assurance/welfare schemes, to increase market value of products while lowering inputs.

Attitudes

The farmer is aware of the nature conservation opportunities and grant schemes available for the farm. However, he would be reluctant to enter into any management which would significantly reduce stocking, where this would lead to a fall in income (such as ESA). He has expressed an interest in the positive management of the woodland areas. However, the issue of badger damage, in the farmers eyes, currently detracts from nature conservation management over the whole farm.

8. Yew Tree Farm

Type

A small dairy farm on the western edge of the Cotswolds, at the foot of the scarp.

Farm Business Character

A 35 ha tenanted, County Council smallholding in the process of changing from dairy to beef cattle. A small area of arable land is used for the production of fodder. About 40% of the farm is permanent pasture and is now run as a part-time unit, with family members seeking employment out of agriculture to supplement farming income.

Farm Ecological Character

Hedgerows are very narrow based and are dominated by hawthorn. One or two field maple, elder and blackthorn are also present. Basal flora is limited to nettle bramble and cleavers. Mature oaks are present sporadically. All hedges appear to be even-aged and managed by flailing.

A single pond is present and is in need of management to conserve and enhance its wildlife interest.

The majority of the grassland is improved.

Good Practice

None

Opportunities.

OPPORTUNITIES	TRIGGER OR INCENTIVE
Hedgerow management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial incentives, e.g. to allow use of skilled contractors for laying;• Information and training, such as on benefits of altering timing and frequency of trimming;• Agreement with landlord on management of hedges.
Long-term management for nature conservation benefits (e.g. hedges, pond management and creation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Co-operation between landlord and tenant.
Reduction in intensity of grassland management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial incentives;• Extension of ESA boundary (farm lies just outside)• Entry into farm assurance/welfare schemes, to increase market value of products while lowering inputs.

Attitudes.

The farm is now run as a part-time unit, and with less reliance on income from the farm, opportunities for sympathetic management are improved. However, landlord constraints are limiting. The farmer may take up different hedgerow management practices, given financial incentives and landlord approval.

9. Westfield Farm

Farm Type

A medium sized mixed farm in the south of the Cotswolds.

Farm Business Character

This is a 122 ha tenanted holding. Dairy cow numbers have increased significantly, from 65 to 80 cows, since 1975. Numbers were higher, but the imposition of milk quotas reduced herd size and led to a loss of grassland to arable cropping. The farm's small beef enterprise was ended due to poor viability. Arable crops are predominantly winter cereals, spring cereals having been ended due to lower yields and greater drought susceptibility. The use of grass leys has also ended and the use of hay has fallen significantly. The proportion of grass keep has increased to keep pace with demand for forage on the farm and to replace grass lost to the arable enterprise. A farm museum has also been established in recent years.

Farm Ecological Character

Hedgerows are dominated by hawthorn, with some elder and holly and a number of hedgerow trees which are predominantly oak. Some stretches of hedgerow are hazel dominated. The hedge base flora is dominated by broad-leaved grasses, cleavers, nettle and ivy. Management is by flailing. Arable fields are cultivated up to margin. The condition of dry-stone walls is variable.

The grasslands which are present are either improved or semi-improved.

There are two woodland areas dominated by sycamore, with small amounts of oak and beech, and with a ground flora almost entirely comprised of ivy. Two ponds within this area are neglected and in need of management.

Some ditches are present, although at present, their ecological interest is low.

Good Practice

- Dry stone walls repaired
- Reduced use of sprays

Opportunities

OPPORTUNITIES	TRIGGER OR INCENTIVE
Hedgerow management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives, e.g. to allow use of skilled contractors for laying; • Information and training, such as on benefits of altering timing and frequency of trimming.
Conservation headlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set-aside options; • Financial incentives.
Dry-stone wall management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives, to allow use of skilled contractors and good quality stone.
Woodland management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives; • Information and training.
Increase in grassland area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set-aside options; • Improved economic returns of dairy enterprise compared to arable cropping; • Financial incentives; • Removal of milk quotas.
Reduce intensity of grassland management and arable cropping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives; • Development of improved IPM techniques; • Development of improved sprays and spray application techniques (e.g. GPS); • Development of improved crop/grass varieties with better disease resistance and lower fertiliser requirements; • Information and training on IPM etc.; • Entry into farm assurance/welfare schemes, to increase value of products while lowering inputs.
Long-term farm management for conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-operation between landlord and tenant.

Attitudes

The farmer is very aware of the decline in wildlife in the area. However, due to the financial pressures on the farm, including rent, opportunities to reduce the intensity of farming may be limited. Nevertheless, his interest in conservation and his willingness to meet the public (reflected in his museum) suggests that he would consider management for nature conservation. Long-term management for nature conservation would best be achieved through discussion with both the landlord and tenant, to develop viable objectives.

10. BOBBLE FARM

Type

A medium sized holding in the east of the Cotswolds.

Farm Business Character

This is a family run holding of c.120 ha, with a further 100 ha taken as seasonal grass keep. The farm has grown significantly since 1975, with the gradual purchase of 70 ha of land to increase the holding's viability. Livestock enterprises include an 80 cow dairy herd and a small suckler herd for sale as store cattle. Just under half of the farm is used for growing cereal crops for use on the holding. Changes to the farm enterprise include the reintroduction of spring cropping (for economic reasons), the purchase of the additional land, the introduction of silage, the doubling of the dairy herd and the introduction of the suckler herd. The increased size and intensification of the farm enterprises has allowed the labour force to increase from 2 full time in 1975, to 3 full time in 1996.

Farm Ecological Character

The farm is divided between three sites, the two larger areas being predominantly grassland, the third smaller area being arable. Hedgerows are dominated by hawthorn with some elder, and the dominant hedgerow trees are ash. Management is by flailing. All hedges are fairly even-aged and in need of gapping. Little flora is present within the hedge bases. Arable fields are cultivated up to the field margins.

A stream possessing a natural channel and bed, and bounded by flood meadows which appear slightly more herb rich than other fields, runs through part of the farm. Rush dominated fields extending up the hillside and other fields appear semi-improved. A line of willows in need of pollarding is present along one watercourse. A wet seepage containing greater willowherb, pendulous sedge, hard rush, soft rush, water mint and greater horsetail is present adjacent to an area of woodland, which is wet in part, and is dominated by ash. An understorey containing hazel and elder and a ground flora containing greater horsetail and ferns is also present in damper areas. The southern end of the woodland consists of neglected sweet chestnut coppice. Some laurel is growing within this area.

Good Practice

- Hedge layed (county council grant)
- Reduced use of sprays and fertilisers

Opportunities

OPPORTUNITIES	TRIGGER OR INCENTIVE
Hedgerow management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives, e.g. to allow use of skilled contractors for laying.
Conservation headlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set-aside options; • Financial incentives.
Management of old water meadows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives, e.g. Countryside Stewardship Scheme.
Woodland management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives; • Information and training.
Reduce intensity of grassland management and arable cropping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives; • Development of improved IPM techniques; • Development of improved sprays and spray application techniques (e.g. GPS); • Development of improved crop/grass varieties with better disease resistance and lower fertiliser requirements; • Information and training on IPM etc.; • Entry into farm assurance/welfare schemes, to increase value of products while lowering inputs.

Attitudes

Bobble Farm is an intensive mixed holding and significant capital investment has been made in the farm since 1975, through the purchase of additional land, erection of new buildings and increases in stock numbers. It is unlikely that the farmers would be interested in schemes which would significantly reduce stocking and/or available forage area. However, they have already demonstrated their willingness to undertake sympathetic management and accept grant aid for work around the holding, which has not significantly affected income.

11. Batch Farm

Type

A small cattle and sheep farm on the north western scarp of the Cotswolds.

Farm Business Character

This is a 21 ha holding, with a small breeding sheep flock and a beef cattle enterprise. Arable cropping was ended due to the farm's exposed position, small fields and difficult access for contractors. The holding has always been farmed extensively, and it has recently entered into the Cotswold ESA, although it is too early to comment on its impact on farm management.

Farm Ecological Character

All hedgerows are flailed, although they have been layed in the past. The dominant species within most hedges is hazel, with scattered ash, hawthorn, field maple and blackthorn. A good flora is present within the base of the hedges.

A stream runs along the bottom of the valley, and the banks support a sparse vegetation which includes harts-tongue fern and lesser celandine. Ash and elder overhang the stream in places. Two down-slope flows are overhung by hazel, willow, hawthorn and ash. Mistletoe was found in hazel adjacent to one of the flows. One of the flows also passes through a pond which is now infilling and has large willow and ash adjacent to it.

Grassland areas appear to have only been subject to modest levels of improvement, and support a variety of herb species including salad-burnet.

Good Practice

- Low intensity farming
- Hedges cut every 4 - 5 years

Opportunities

OPPORTUNITIES	TRIGGER OR INCENTIVE
Continued hedgerow management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continued financial incentives, e.g. ESA.
Pond restoration and other capital projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased financial incentives (ESA's 50% grant not considered attractive).
Resolution of badger problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information and training;• Financial compensation for damage to pasture.
Continued watercourse management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continued financial incentives.
Continued extensive management of grassland	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continued ESA incentives;• Profitability of livestock enterprises at current stocking levels (e.g. by continued EU support, entry into farm assurance/welfare schemes).

Attitudes

The farmer has for many years been sympathetic to nature conservation on his holding. This has been demonstrated through his entry into ESA, including a number of higher tiers. The ESA agreement also allowed the withdrawal from arable cropping, and has helped maintain farm viability. However, involvement in capital projects is unlikely (e.g. pond restoration) given that 50% of the cost would have to be met by the farmer concerned. This would be financially difficult on such a small and extensive holding. Badger damage to pasture is also a significant issue on the farm which may detract from overall nature conservation objectives.