

## Working with landowners.

In terms of landscape conservation, private landowners have the potential to make a major difference and we must work in partnership with them to have significant impact. Below are some of the things we and the landowners we work with think are important.

### *Make it easy-*

- Keep the application process simple. The paperwork burden is often cited by landowners as reason for avoiding small grant schemes.
- Make the grant offer robust to safeguard HLF and BRH interests. That means landowners allow monitoring visits and a ten year management plan is used to guide future works.

### *Be approachable-*

- BRH project staff are recognised as 'honest brokers' between landowners and larger agencies. They have a reputation for being approachable, knowledgeable and independent.

### *Coordinate priorities-*

- Ensure the application delivers BRH and HLF objectives. A simple scoring system can be used to rate applications, similar to the access route assessment on page 15. Consulting partner organisations, such as RDS, Environment Agency and the Wildlife Trust, can save a lot of time and ensure there is a need for BRH support.
- Focus on geographically discrete areas to maximise officer time, improve impact on the ground and concentrate resources. To get the ball rolling, [www.Yell.com](http://www.Yell.com) can help locate farmers in the area (*linked to multimap*), it may also be worth finding out where farmers go; the local market, or machinery groups, etc., and articles in parish magazines yield better results than regional press releases.
- Use GIS to identify priority hot spots and gaps in data- historical maps can give useful information.

### *Ensure landowner commitment-*

- For example – For riparian sites an average of £900/site is available from BRH for tree management but site management costs on average £2,100. This means that site management is dependent upon landowner contributions (ave 27%). This could be either direct financial input or in-kind support.
- However even with landowner support there is a shortfall that means working closely with partners.

### *Working without grants-*

- Much of the work carried out by the officers is done without grants. This involves using their expertise to give advice that the landowner can then act on, either alone or within an agri-environment scheme. Management Plans and Habitat Surveys are commonly used without grants, as are obtaining felling licences, obtaining statutory permissions (SSSI/EA etc), managing contractors and negotiating the sale of timber.
- Exploring opportunities to add value can result in cost effective management without extra grants.
- Many landowners are willing to put their own time and money into managing vulnerable habitats without financial return.

### *Record and evaluate-*

- Keeping detailed records can help assess the impact of the project over time and allow an assessment of what else needs to be done. This can be particularly helpful when it comes to thinking about the exit strategy.
- An extract of the spreadsheet used to keep track of the Wildlife Sites in BRH is shown on the next page.

## Wildlife Site recording spreadsheet

Keeping detailed records can help tremendously when it comes to evaluation.

active sites	Zone	Site	Priority	N owners ?	O Contacts	Plans	WS Action	Botanists	N scheduled	Grant pending	£ spend	Farming	PT	NOT farmer	BOLD = done	+/- OK man't	X-cut - ST	X-grazed - ST	X-cut - LTI	X-grazed - LT	Scrub/Bracken
			Year Targets	40	20	18	FG	3	?	Of	AREAS					OK	S-term	L-term: . .			
20		SiteName = C		35		2			dun		53%					15	0	0	0	2	1
		KEY	Year Targets	40	20	18	FG	3	?	Of	AREAS					OK	S-term	L-term: . .			
		Begun	Achievements	25	13	6	MR			£7,200	5	4	4	182.5	187.1	10	4.5	30.6			
		Completed	Remaining To Do	15	7	12	JH		n=	£				All	Cont.	Plan	New	Lost	OK	All S-t	All L-t
		I hope	% left to be done	38%	35%	67%			6	£3,840	FT	PT	XF	ha	ha	ha	ha	OK	15	0	3
Sum of Popints (per event) per site:				10	40	50			5	10	50					10					
1	LO		1	1	1										8.0	8.0					1
1	LO		1	1?	1	1		FG	1						3.0	3.0	1				
1	LO		1	2	2	2									5.5	5.5	1				1
	CF		1	1	1			X	X												1
1	CF		1	1	1	NA	!						1		0.8	0.8					1
1	CF		1	1	1	1	?	FG		?		1			5.5	5.5	1				1
	CF		1	1	(1)			FG													
	CF		1	1	1			FG													
1	CF		1	1?	1	FWAG	Defra	FG		?			1		10.5	10.5	1				1
	CF		1	1	(1)			FG													
1	CF		1	?	2	?		FG		?			1		17.0	17.0					17.0
	CF		1	1	(1)			FG													
	CF		1	1	1			FG													
1	CF		1	1	'04	dun	dun	FG	1	?	?	1			2.0	2.0					
	CF		1	1				FG													
1	CF		1	1	1	1		FG	1				1		2.4	2.4					1
1	CF		1	1	1	1	1	FG		1	£410	1			13.0	13.0	1				1
1	CF		1	1	1	1	1	X	X				1		15.6	15.6	1				1

## Working with contractors

### *Contractors can make or break the project-*

- Have a clear brief with definite timelines that explain objectives and priorities to ensure they understand the requirements of both the landowner and the project.
- All work must be competitively quoted for beforehand, either on a site by site basis or by using a representative site or on man days.
- Choose carefully based on their reputation for reliability, working to budget and quality workmanship.
- Use a small number of contractors to ensure economies of scale and to build a good relationship with them.

## Working with partners

It is vital that the project fosters a strong working relationship with partner agencies. The coppicing work, for example, is only made possible by accessing funding from 6 partner organisations that generate an additional 35% of grant support.

### *Make sure it is a mutually beneficial partnership-*

- You can help make other organisations money go further, reduce duplication and get better results than either of you could achieve alone.
- The management plans have assisted agri-environment applications.
- RDS has been made aware of sites that are suitable for new schemes.
- If not already involved, there may be opportunities for landowners to explore agri-environment schemes further.
- BRH work contributes to national and EU targets e.g. diffuse pollution, BAP targets and veteran tree data. This must be recorded and fed back to the relevant organisations.

## Adding value

Conservation will only ever be truly sustainable if you can make money at it. BRH has been working with landowners and other local people to try to develop some markets.

The markets for timber products have been developed to make coppicing cost neutral- i.e. landowners get the work done for free!

- Alder can be sold as a carbon neutral fuel either as firewood @ £15-20 tonne roadside or £60 delivered, or converted to charcoal @ £4.00 per 3kg bag
- Alder for flooring has been sold for £25-£30 m3 and some coppice product has been sold for craft products.
- A Wood Fair has just been held to successfully promote some of the local producers, contractors and crafts people.

The key to developing these markets is to know who is involved in the private sector and going to talk to them, encouraging them to consider solutions to the problem. Rural businesses are versatile and generally care about the local landscape and many will help find solutions.

We have also been surprised by the level of interest in orchards and the keenness for people to get involved in community juicing schemes. These are a great way for people to use the fruit from their orchards and therefore take a fresh interest in them. We are currently working with a group that would like to make their own cider and perry.

A farmers market in Craven Arms started as a three monthly market a year ago, with the help of some funding from BRH, amongst others, and is now going to be monthly. This has been very successful and will hopefully be more so now the Shropshire Hills markets are working together to promote themselves.

## Case study: Managing alder and crayfish at Upper Duffryn Farm

### Site Details

Upper Duffryn Farm is located on the River Clun, within the Clun ESA. The river is the dominant landscape feature of the farm, being lined with continuous cover woodland throughout. Mature alder is the principal tree species with ash and under-storey species significant components of the remaining woodland cover.

Mature multi-stemmed alder stools indicate a history of coppice management. Stem diameter suggests that the site was coppiced about 40-50 years ago. Over maturity has resulted in heavy shading, which combined with grazing to banktop has resulted in a structurally simple and species poor bankside and aquatic community.



### Ecological Evaluation

In the recent past, the site was known to support white clawed crayfish but the population was thought lost. Otters, lamprey, brown trout, dippers and other sensitive aquatic species are also known. Before commencement of management works, the river was surveyed for the presence of crayfish because a population is known in a tributary nearby. Survey subsequently identified crayfish as resident at Upper Duffryn, so the site needed to be managed with crayfish in mind.

### Management Criteria

The site was considered suitable for management because of the obvious need to reinstate management, the incidence of alder *Phytophthora*, the willingness of the owner to contribute to the scheme, and the ecological potential of the site (continued degradation would compromise the future survival of crayfish on the site).

### Management Works

Access and Habitat Management were chosen as contractors, having an ecological approach to woodland management and a good track record with the project. Crayfish are shade dependant, so coppicing had to be undertaken with care so as not to introduce too much light. Management options were discussed with English Nature, confirming that retention of 50% tree cover would create optimal conditions. Fortunately, the site benefits from under-storey and other tree species, which were retained to provide modest shade and cover whilst most of the alder was coppiced.

The owner moved the felled alder, contributing significant in-kind support to management works. The site was fenced with 80% funding from Defra's ESA scheme. To ensure the site does not get overgrown it is gated to provide seasonal stock access.



### Added Value

Harvested timber at Upper Duffryn is generally old and twisted and has limited uses. The owner is selling the timber locally for firewood. This is a highly sustainable use for the timber, with a ready local market, a carbon neutral fuel, low carbon miles, and low processing cost.