



The initiative was also supported by four days of free consultancy work from the English Food and Farming Partnership.

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|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Market research was required to evaluate market opportunities</li> </ul>                       | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Maintenance of a customer database</li> </ol>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Development of appropriate labelling and presentation for the products</li> </ul>              | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 Development of a consistent product</li> <li>3 Product promotion</li> </ol>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A structure for the group and its members to deliver the following six activities:-</li> </ul> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 Product distribution from abattoir, to processor, to customer</li> <li>5 Management of sales</li> <li>6 Adherence to meat regulations.</li> </ol> |

For simplicity, the group agreed to trade as individual businesses but to support each other in promoting the product. It was agreed that The Hayward would be paid a percentage of the dead weight per kilo for marketing the animals locally. The marketing has been successful as the beef is of premium quality and the customer base continues to grow. The scheme offers far greater returns to the farmers by selling direct to the customers.

Limestone grassland sites near you can be found by selecting 'habitat inventories' at Defra's multi-agency geographical information centre website at [www.magic.gov.uk](http://www.magic.gov.uk).

Other useful websites:	
<a href="http://www.defra.gov.uk">www.defra.gov.uk</a>	<a href="http://www.farmwildlife.info">www.farmwildlife.info</a>
<a href="http://www.english-nature.org.uk">www.english-nature.org.uk</a>	<a href="http://www.effp.com">www.effp.com</a>
<a href="http://www.grazinganimalsproject.org.uk">www.grazinganimalsproject.org.uk</a>	<a href="http://www.businesslink.gov.uk">www.businesslink.gov.uk</a>

**This fact sheet is part of a series:**

- Horses, Grassland Management and Nature Conservation
- Communities and Limestone Grassland Management
- Limestone Grassland Management for the Smallholder
- Limestone Grassland Restoration Case Studies

The Limestone Grassland Project, which is part of the Caring for the Cotswolds Project, is supported by a £1.43m grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Copies of the Cotswolds Limestone Grassland Strategy can be found at [www.cotswoldsaonb.org/publications/asp](http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org/publications/asp)

For further guidance about the AONB contact:



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**This fact sheet is produced to assist in delivering the long term sustainable management of priority grassland habitat through structured local delivery. There is an accompanying fact sheet called Communities and Limestone Grassland.**

**Case Study 1**

**The restoration and long term sustainable management of Uley Bury, Nr Dursley, Gloucestershire.**

Uley Bury is a nationally important Scheduled Monument, a geological Site of Special Scientific Interest, a priority habitat in Jurassic limestone grassland and a protected landscape feature with spectacular views. Partly farmed, partly wooded and partly public open space, the Bury was derelict and overgrown until a restoration project started in 2004.

In its unmanaged state, Uley Bury and all its features were under constant threat from regeneration of scrub and ash trees. One of the main aims of the restoration project was to reverse this process by enabling the re-introduction of grazing and the reversion of the central arable field to grassland. By achieving this goal the Project Officer was able to ensure that the archaeological settlements on the site are protected. In addition the limestone grassland ramparts can now be managed as part of a larger, more viable grassland area by the local grazier.

**THE PROCESS: FROM INCEPTION TO DELIVERY**

The Bury is being restored and its long tem sustainable management delivered through the Caring for the Cotswolds project, supported by Heritage Lottery Fund.

The Project Officer called a village meeting to:

- Offer the opportunity of a restoration project
- Make local contacts and set up an email circle
- Identify the opportunity of using local resources.

The Parish Council supported the project and the Uley Bury Management Group was formed as part of a conservation sub-committee.

This included:

- All the landowners involved
- Representatives from all relevant local government departments
- Statutory bodies and Government organisations
- Local interest groups
- Anyone with an interest in the Bury.

**The Uley Bury volunteer group was also formed as a sub-committee of the Management Group. This sustainable structure, which became part of the Parish Council, was vital to ensure delivery of the long term objectives.**

#### **THE MAIN OBJECTIVE**

**To work towards a 50 – 100 year plan to maintain ancient beech woodland on the lower ramparts of Uley Bury, well managed limestone grassland on the upper ramparts and protect the archaeological settlement.**

AIMS:

- Protect the owner's interests to sustain farming, forestry and public benefit.
- Carry out a community-led restoration project to protect the archaeology, biodiversity, geology, landscape and public enjoyment of the Bury.
- Deliver sustainable management using local resources.
- Create a viable farming opportunity through direct marketing of beef back to the village.
- Create a forum which reconnects all who have an interest in the countryside.
- Demonstrate what can be achieved by working together.

The Caring for the Cotswolds Project Officer acted as a co-ordinator in partnership with 50 different organisations and individuals to get consents and funding for fencing and water supply, with the specifications being agreed by the Management Group. The Cotswold Hills Environmentally Sensitive Area team (ESA) and Gloucestershire Archaeological Service worked particularly closely with the project. The majority of the funding came from Defra, The Heritage Lottery Fund and Gloucestershire County Council.

A total of five public / parish meetings and many hours of walks, talks and site visits were needed to deliver the project. It involved clearance of 4km of dense vegetation on steep slopes to erect new hidden fences and the removal of 3.5km of derelict fencing. This clearance work was broken down into manageable tasks shared between many different organisations and volunteer groups. The hard work and moral support of both south and central district Cotswold Voluntary Wardens was particularly appreciated.

The fencing, water supply and cattle handling facilities were built by contractors, all of which required an archaeological watching brief. Once completed, the land was let under a Farm Business Tenancy to a local farmer who sells his beef locally. This gives the opportunity for people who enjoy the Bury to buy produce that enables the sustainable management of their local historic environment.

One year after the project was completed in 2005, the Uley Parish Council carried out a village survey to find out what people thought about the results achieved by the project. The survey showed that 93% of people noted their support.

## **Case Study 2**

### **The sustainable management of Minchinhampton and Rodborough Commons**

Minchinhampton and Rodborough Commons are owned by The National Trust. Rich in heritage, the commons are important landscape and conservation sites, offering great opportunities for public enjoyment as well as being key agricultural sites.

Minchinhampton Common (200ha) is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Scheduled Ancient Monument. Rodborough Common (98ha) is an SSSI and a Special Area of Conservation.

From May to October the commons are grazed by approximately 400 cattle owned by five graziers. Because there are many inactive commoners who no longer turn out cattle there are too few cattle grazing the commons for the limestone grassland to reach favourable condition on the slopes.

The Caring for the Cotswolds Project has been working in partnership with The National Trust, Defra, English Nature and the Commons Committees to help deliver sustainable management. The project aimed to integrate the commons management into economically and environmentally sustainable livestock farming systems within the immediate local environment, in line the Cotswolds Conservation Board's Limestone Grassland Strategy.

#### **ENGAGING COMMONERS**

The project's approach was to look beyond the commons to the commoners themselves. This involved focusing on their farms and looking at ways to help their livestock businesses survive.

The Project Officer examined the historic management of the commons and the relationship between graziers, commons committees and statutory bodies. The officer worked to improve communication, offering information and awarding grants for capital works. Funding for legal fees was granted to ensure that the project qualified for maximum Single Payment Scheme entitlement. All parties agreed to work towards Defra's Higher Level Stewardship agreements on the commons.

The commoners were keen to continue to help protect the commons. They needed to know:

- Why the commons were so important
- What was being required of them
- What revenue they would receive
- A walk was arranged for the commoners to have a better understanding of their role in protecting the commons.

#### **Marketing Initiative**

The project also offered the commoners the opportunity to pilot a marketing initiative, 'Cotswolds Common Beef', through Business Link's Rural Enterprise Gateway Scheme. This enabled the commoners to sell beef from the commons back to the local community, hotels and restaurants at a premium. The initiative was led by The Hayward who has regular contact with the commoners, the livestock and potential customers. (The Hayward: A commons warden paid to look after cattle).