



Forestry Commission



Countryside Stewardship

Case study: Freizingham Farm

Name: Simon Tompsett

Region/County: 14 Kent

Address: Freizingham Farm, Rolvenden
Layne, Kent, TN17 4PU

Farm Size/Type: Mixed, 266ha

Cropping: Top Fruit

Stocking: Sheep & Beef

Land features: Grazing Marsh, 61ha

Key objectives: Management of grazing marsh, key focus capital works

A simple agreement, following on from a much larger ELS agreement. The ELS was across the whole farm and protected the grazing marsh under low input grassland and management of rush pasture options. This was useful in protecting the well managed grassland, but no capital works were undertaken. The 2016-2020 CS agreement has focused on managing the 61ha of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) grazing marsh for wintering lapwing and snipe, and includes a capital works program. For this farm it is the capital works and advisor input that will ultimately make the difference. A comprehensive ditch survey was undertaken as part of the Baseline Evaluation of Higher Tier Agreements (BEHTA) recording both ditch condition and distribution of aquatic species. This resulted in a ditch management plan specifying management actions and timings, such as areas of reed that should be retained for reed buntings and warblers, scrub management and favourable ditch profiles. This has really helped the farmer understand what outcomes Natural England are looking for under the scheme.



Ditch Management Plan with photos highlighting varying management needs.

The capital works program also includes major tree surgery for re-pollarding mature crack willow. Before works could start the farmer had to provide NE with a tree survey. This report has been received and provides the farmer a very useful guide.

Being at the top of the hydrological system, which leads into Romney Marsh and Dungeness (SSSI, Ramsar, SPA), we recommended a CSF farm infrastructure visit. This highlighted to the farmer many opportunities for improving his farm set up, (housing, storage etc.), that would ultimately reduce the risk of water contamination into the system.

The farmer may enter into a separate mid tier agreement on his remaining land, which we acknowledged as being a positive thing, and both parties were happy that this is something he can pursue independently.

Where can I find out more?

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