



A clear solution for farmers

CATCHMENT SENSITIVE FARMING

Practical Solutions Help Farmer on the Sensitive Kingsbridge Estuary

Ilton Castle Farm, Salcombe, Devon

South Devon (a) Catchment (13)

CSFO: Lizbe Pilbeam

Farm Description

Agricultural pollution has damaged the commercial oyster beds that line Kingsbridge Estuary in Devon. Ilton Castle Farm is a mixed, 176 acre holding bordering the estuary within which the designated SSSI is deemed as unfavourable, partly due to diffuse agricultural pollution. CSFO Lizbe Pilbeam advised the farmer Mrs. Wakeham on reducing pollution going into the estuary essential for the oyster populations to thrive and ultimately human health.

Pollution Issues

The farmer risked regulation because of high levels of farmyard waste and soil erosion leaching into the estuary. The pollution mix collectively infringed cross compliance within the Single Farm Payment, Entry Level Scheme conditions and Good Farming Practice.



Slipway showing supplementary feeder in the yard. The nettles along the edge are the on the stream bank. Also shows the outdoor stocking area (fenced). Note the poaching all around the area.

A small stream running under a range of traditional farm buildings and alongside the farm's concreted areas – including a slipway and an outdoor stock feeding area used all year - was washing pollution into the estuary. The stream entered the estuary via Blanksmill Creek, directly opposite the oyster beds. Animals were entering the stream causing poaching and nutrient transfer.

Pollution Solutions

1. Lizbe advised on new guttering and down pipes for the barn and suggested re-routing the underground drainage to stop it flowing directly into the stream. The farmer is waiting on funds from the capital grant scheme to finance this work.
2. She's advised re-roofing the buildings so manure and silage are undercover thereby reducing the amount of waste and thus the risk of waste flowing into the watercourse.



Muck and mud flowing unhindered straight into the stream which issues just behind the gate

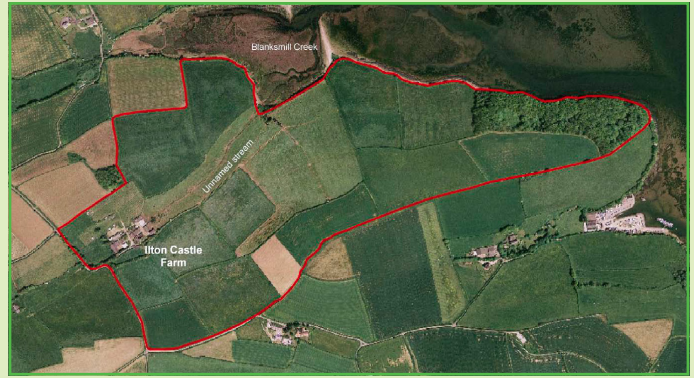
3. Lizbe also suggested building a small breezeblock wall around the slipway and outdoor stock areas to prevent waste from this area seeping into the stream. She suggested the farm use in-field supplementary feeders, if necessary – moved regularly - rather than feeding stock in the concreted feeding area. This will prevent poaching and soil erosion and reduce the need for such frequent access to the barns.

4. She suggested fencing off the stream and making two specific areas for stock and machinery to cross the stream as well as building one designated drinking bay. This would stop direct defecation into the streams and further soil mobility from damage to the stream banks. The farmer hopes to get funding for this work too from the CSF, although the combined works will exceed the grant limit.

“It’s a shame that there is a financial limit on the grant funding available because on this farm we have only touched the tip of the



Muck piled in the yard adjacent to the stream

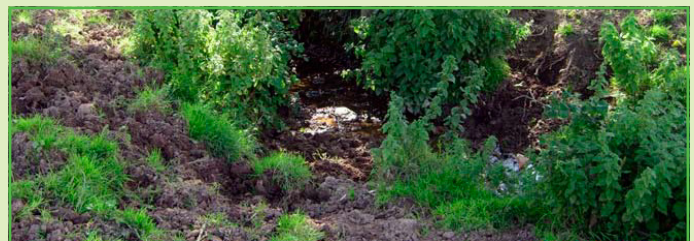


iceberg. So much more could be achieved if we had more money,” says Lizbe.

5. Lizbe discussed the case with the Environment Agency who are pleased with how she is dealing with the problem. They say they will have to readdress the situation if with Mrs. Wakeham doesn’t get grant funding, and can’t pay for the work herself.

Farmer Engagement and Motivation

Lizbe found that the tenant farmer and the owner of the farm were concerned about the pollution risk but couldn’t come up with any solutions themselves. Both say they valued Lizbe’s workshops and one to one visit and now understand solving and managing the problem is within their control.



Bankside erosion caused by cattle accessing the stream. Also point sources for defecation in the stream.

Catchment Sensitive Farming Officer (CSFO)

Lizbe Pilbeam

Natural England, Exeter

07748 105971

lizbe.pilbeam@naturalengland.org.uk

www.naturalengland.org.uk/csf

Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) is delivered in partnership by Natural England, the Environment Agency and Defra.



Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs



Environment Agency



Funding is from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas.