



A clear solution for farmers

CATCHMENT SENSITIVE FARMING

Priority Catchment Targeting Summary March 2011 - March 2014

River Basin District: Anglian Catchment: Lower Ouse Total Area: 1009 km²

Reasons for designation

To improve water quality in the Lower Ouse, which has been designated as a new catchment under phase 3 of the Catchment Sensitive Farming initiative. High pesticide and nitrate levels are present in surface waters which supply Grafham Water via the Offord river abstraction point. Grafham provides public water supplies to large areas of Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire. There are also high phosphate and sediment levels which impact important nature conservation sites at Portholme Meadows near Huntingdon, and the Ouse Washes.

Priorities

To safeguard the zone upstream of the Offord intake for Grafham Water (Water Framework Directive Drinking Water Protected Area).

To reduce the amount of phosphate and sediments from agricultural sources in surface waters at Portholme Meadows (Site of Special Scientific Interest) and the Ouse Washes (European Community Special Area of Conservation, Special Protected Area, and Ramsar site).

Objectives

- To advise farmers on reducing nitrate and phosphate levels in ground and surface waters through appropriate changes in land management in order to reduce leaching of fertilizer through nutrient management planning, etc.
- To advise farmers on reducing the amount of sediment and phosphate entering the catchment through appropriate changes in land management practices such as good soil management.

Delivery

Advice will be delivered by Catchment Sensitive Farming Advisers and contractors to raise awareness of local water quality issues relating to land management via workshops, demonstrations, and free and confidential one to one farm visits including whole farm appraisals, nutrient management planning, soil/manure and slurry sampling and calibration of farm machinery.

As the catchment has to deal with surface water issues including phosphate and pesticides, farms in this area will also be offered pesticide/biobed appraisals and other help as required. The Catchment Sensitive Farming Capital Grant Scheme will be used in target areas to address these issues. Land owners will also be offered Environmental Stewardship schemes and given support to choose relevant options.

Targeting Map

