

## PURDEY AWARDS FOR GAME AND CONSERVATION

### Agricultural Project Explanations

#### **Environmental Sensitive Area**

Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) was introduced in 1987 to offer incentives to encourage farmers to adopt agricultural practices which would safeguard and enhance parts of the country of particularly high landscape, wildlife or historic value.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas are particular parts of the countryside where the landscape, wildlife and historic interest are of national importance. Many features of our countryside - hedges, walls, ditches, field barns, hay meadows, heather moorland and river valley grasslands - have been created by traditional farming methods over hundreds of years. These features are highly valued, both for their scenic beauty and for the habitats they provide for plants and wildlife. *This scheme has now been superseded by the Environmental Stewardship.*

#### **Countryside Stewardship**

Countryside Stewardship was introduced as a pilot scheme in England in 1991 and operates outside the Environmentally Sensitive Areas. Payments are made to farmers and other land managers to enhance and conserve English landscapes, their wildlife and history and to help people to enjoy them. *The scheme has now closed to new applicants and has been superseded by the Environmental Stewardship.*

#### **Wildlife Enhancement Scheme**

The Wildlife Enhancement Scheme (WES) was introduced as a pilot scheme in 1991, and was a management agreement scheme for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), to positively maintain and enhance their special interest by combining Natural England's knowledge of wildlife management with the owner or occupier's skills and knowledge of the land.

*The scheme has now closed to new applicants, and Higher Level Stewardship is now the main scheme used to support the management of SSSIs.* The majority of the existing agreements will have expired by 2012. As part of a five-year agreement, payments were offered for annual management (such as for grazing, hay cutting or water level management) and/or for capital works to maintain or restore habitats (for example scrub clearance) or works to support particular species.

#### **Rural Development Programme for England**

The Rural Development Programme for England supports our rural areas in a number of ways which recognise the connections between agricultural and economic development, environmental stewardship and community sustainability.

The Programme looks to support farmers and foresters to deliver environmentally beneficial land management practices, which are not always supported by the market. The Programme will also assist the farming and forestry sectors to modernise and adapt to changing circumstances. Funding is also available to develop wider rural businesses and enhance opportunities in communities where deprivation exists.

#### **Environmental Stewardship**

Environmental Stewardship (ES) is an agri-environment scheme which offers payments to farmers and land managers in England for effective land management to protect and enhance the environment and wildlife. The scheme is delivered for Defra by Natural England and forms part of the Rural Development Programme for England (2007-2013). It builds on the successes of previous schemes, the Countryside Stewardship Scheme and Environmentally Sensitive Areas.

The scheme's primary objectives are to:

- Conserve wildlife (biodiversity)
- Maintain and enhance landscape quality and character
- Protect the historic environment
- Protect natural resources (water and soil)
- Promote public access and understanding of the countryside

There are also secondary objectives for genetic conservation (rare breeds), flood risk management, and an overarching objective to contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation.

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- **Entry Level Stewardship**

With nearly 60% of England's agricultural land now in Entry Level Stewardship, this is the basic underlying scheme open to all farmers and land managers in England. ELS agreements are for five years.

The scheme provides you with a straight forward approach to delivering simple and effective environmental management across your whole farm, that complements your existing farming operation, and allows you to create your own practical environmental management programme.

- **Organic Entry Level Stewardship**

Organic Entry Level Stewardship (OELS) is open to all farmers, including those in the uplands, who manage all or part of their land organically, to deliver simple yet effective environmental management. OELS agreements are for 5 years.

- **Uplands Entry Level Stewardship**

Launched in February 2010, supporting hill farmers with payments for environmental management. Uplands ELS follows on from the Hill Farm Allowance which had its final payments to farmers in 2010.

- **Higher Level Stewardship**

HLS aims to deliver significant environmental benefits in priority areas. It involves more complex environmental management requiring support and advice from our local advisers, to develop a comprehensive agreement that achieves a wide range of environmental benefits over a longer period of time. HLS agreements last for ten years.

HLS is targeting 110 areas across England. These target areas are where Natural England are seeking the most environmental benefits from HLS agreements for wildlife, landscape, the historic environment and resource protection. Outside these areas, we will consider all other applications depending upon the current national priorities and features present on the particular holding.

## SCOTLAND

### Rural Stewardship Scheme

The Rural Stewardship Scheme (RSS) is an Agri-environment Scheme designed to encourage farmers, crofters and Common Grazings Committees to adopt environmentally friendly practices and to maintain and enhance particular habitats and landscape features.

An eligible business must occupy and have control over agricultural land. Farmers, crofters or grazing clerks in this category are eligible to apply. A landlord can apply only for land that is in hand or let out on a seasonal basis. The participant will be responsible for ensuring all Scheme requirements are met for at least 5 years. If any land included in your agreement is leased out on a seasonal basis, you will be responsible for ensuring that the Scheme requirements are met on that land.

### Countryside Premium

The Countryside Premium Scheme (CPS) *closed to new applications after the year 2000 applications round* and was replaced by the Rural Stewardship Scheme (RSS).

*Both schemes are now closed to new applications*, however similar environmental options that were available under CPS and RSS are now available under the Scotland Rural Development Programme (SRDP).

The Countryside Premium Scheme provided assistance to farmers, crofters and common grazings committees who had undertaken to adopt environmentally friendly practices and agreed to maintain and enhance particular habitats and landscape features. In addition, they agreed to manage the relevant areas of land and carry out the relevant capital works in line with the rules and conditions of the Scheme.

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#### Scotland Rural Development Programme

The SRDP is a programme of economic, environmental and social measures, utilising some €680m of European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development funding plus Scottish Government match funding. The programme is designed to support rural Scotland from 2007 to 2013. Individuals and groups may seek funding to help deliver the Government's strategic objectives in rural Scotland. Further information and guidance can be found in the accompanying pages.

#### WALES

##### Tir Cymen

Tir Cymen was an environmental and preservation program in Wales to preserve representative examples of the Welsh landscape. It started in 1992 and new nominations were closed in 1998.

Countryside Council for Wales started the program in October 1992. Meirionnydd, Dinefwr and Swansea were chosen as representative examples of the wide variety of Welsh landscapes, habitats and farming systems. Four farms were examined in Dinefwr, Carmarthenshire. 17 new archaeological sites were recorded in upland portions, adding to the 5 previously known. *Tir Cymen led to a follow on program in Wales called Tir Gofal.*

##### Tir Gofal

Tir Gofal is an Agri-environment scheme launched in the year 2000. It was designed to support the farming community in protecting the rich heritage of rural Wales. Agreements apply to the whole farm and initially last for ten years with a break clause after five years.

*The scheme closed to new applicants in 2009 as a result of the announcement of Glastir.* The majority of agreements will end on 31 December 2013.

Tir Gofal:

- Rewarded farmers for caring for the environmental, historical and cultural features on their land.
- Built on the experience of previous schemes, such as Environmentally Sensitive Areas, (ESAs) and Tir Cymen.
- Reflected the Welsh Government's priorities for sustainable farming, coupled with greater opportunities for public enjoyment of the countryside (through permissive access options).

##### Glastir

Glastir is a 5 year whole farm sustainable land management scheme available to farmers and land managers across Wales. From 2012, Glastir will replace the existing agri-environment schemes within Wales, ensuring that future environmental challenges can be met.

Glastir pays for the delivery of specific environmental goods and services aimed at:

- combating climate change;
- improving water management; and,
- maintaining and enhancing biodiversity.

It is designed to deliver measurable outcomes at both a farm and landscape level in a cost effective way.

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### NORTHERN IRELAND

#### **Countryside Management Scheme**

The Countryside Management Scheme is funded under Axis 2 of the Rural Development Programme and delivered by DARD.

It provides financial support to farmers and landowners for adopting farming practices that enhance our countryside.

The key aims of the scheme are:

- To maintain and enhance biodiversity in line with the Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy and the Northern Ireland Programme for Government 2008-2011 by maintaining species diversity through the positive management of farmland habitats and to protect and enhance ASSI/Natura 2000 sites;
- To assist implementation of the Water Framework Directive; and
- To enhance landscape and heritage features by integrating their management into the everyday workings of the farm.

#### **Northern Ireland Countryside Management Scheme**

The NICMS is an [Agri-environment](#) scheme, within Northern Ireland, that opened in 2008.

It is a voluntary scheme that provides financial support to farmers and landowners for adopting farming practices that enhance our countryside.

NICMS aims to:

- improve biodiversity
- improve water quality
- help reduce the impact of climate change
- improve soil quality
- enhance the landscape

#### **Organic Farming Scheme**

The Organic Farming Scheme is an [Agri-environment scheme](#), within Northern Ireland, that opened in 2008.

It is a voluntary scheme that aims to protect and enhance the rural environment. It encourages and assists farmers to convert to organic farming to help meet consumer demand for organic produce

#### **Woodland Grant Scheme**

The Woodland Grant Scheme Grant is funded under Axis 2 of the Rural Development Programme and delivered by DARD. Woodlands and forests are major components of the landscape and provide essential habitats for much of our wildlife. They make a substantial contribution to meeting our growing demand for wood, and can be an effective means of locking up carbon from the atmosphere. They provide major opportunities for recreation and public access to the countryside, especially near towns and cities, and play an important role in the rural economy, providing jobs and support to rural communities. New forests and woodlands also offer an attractive long-term use of land as an alternative to agriculture.

The Woodland Grant Scheme aims to expand the amount of tree cover in Northern Ireland by encouraging the creation of new woodland in order to:

- Increase the production of wood;
- Improve the landscape;
- Improve woodland biodiversity and offer opportunities for recreation and sport; and
- Encourage the sustainable management of forests and woodlands.