

A presentation by

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Westcountry Rivers Trust

Registered Charity No. 1045806

WRT-Farm advice projects

- **Tamar 2000 SUPPORT Project**
- **Westcountry Rivers Project**
- **Tale River Project**
- **Cornwall Rivers Project**
- **Exe River Project (in progress)**



guiding principle

Significant steps down the road to sustainability can be made by ***helping a lot achieve a little***



Subtle management changes, when sufficiently widespread, will reach critical mass within a catchment



Application of the Ecosystem approach

Proactively go out and engage all landowners within the catchment.

Employ project officers who give advice that benefits the land manager, the environment, and the wider community. Stakeholder led, decentralized control, responsibility for management of the problem, self propagating, change driven by a sense of enlightened self interest.



Westcountry
Rivers
Trust

ADVISORS

- Come from a variety of backgrounds
 - Agricultural experience
 - Practical
- Intensive in-house training & shadowing(How to get over threshold)
- Targeted outsourced training
 - BASIS, RSPB,
- Work closely with EA, NE, FWAG etc
- Assigned to particular catchment
- Responsible for all levels of farmer liaison



Contact with Farmers

- Unsolicited Cold Calling
- Contact with those out of the loop high %age of take-up 85%+
- **CONFIDENTIALITY**
- First step (gain trust, & building of relationships)
- Importance of 1:1 advice
- Non judgemental (farmers did not enjoy being lectured at)



Problems and Issues

- Less likely to be invited on if environment is priority
- Less likely to be invited on if associated closely with DEFRA/EA
- Definite correlation between initial failure and some link to DEFRA or concentrating on the environment
- Take up of advice (site specific)



During visit

- Listen to farmers situation
- Practical advice
- Cost neutral and at best Win Win solutions
- Grants
- Produce a farm plan



Good points

- After initial contact good rolling uptake
- Continued high degree of trust and involvement
- Continue to move farmers upwards a step at a time



Future Problems and Issues

- RPA issues
- Cross Compliance implications
- Paperwork burdens
- Ageing farmer population with no exit strategy
- Workshop fatigue



Future Advice will need to be

- Confidential
- Seen to be Impartial
- Accurate
- Genuine
- Meeting regulations

