

Upper Aire Habitat and Land Management Improvement Project

Otterburn Hall Farm, Skipton

Otterburn Hall Farm is a 170 hectare permanent grassland farm in Otterburn Village bordering Otterburn Beck, with 850 breeding sheep and 40 beef cattle plus followers, and with additional rented land. The farmer was contacted in early 2012 following a referral from the EA. Phil Metcalfe (pictured) has been an excellent advocate for the Project and has featured in several media reports. Mr Metcalfe said "I wish I'd had the chance to do it a lot sooner so that I could see and appreciate the benefits".



Timeline

Spring 2012

Whole Farm Appraisal prepared which identified opportunities for:

- Restoration of a section of bank slip on Otterburn Beck.
- Riparian fencing and woodland creation.
- Soil testing combined with improved nutrient management and storage.

Soil & manure sampling carried out and Nutrient Planning advice given.

Autumn 2012

Detailed project proposals prepared and amended and agreed with farmer, including woodland areas, fencing and bank regrading.

Winter 2012/13

Application for riparian "Woodland for Water" creation submitted and approved under Forestry Commission English Woodland Grant Scheme.
Bank regrading by local contractor organised and funded by the Project (£960+VAT)

Bank restoration with willow spiling/ bunding and planting setts carried out by volunteers.

1.69 hectares of new riparian woodland planted on Otterburn Beck by Forest of Bradford volunteers with support in kind from the Woodland Trust. £8112 Forestry Commission grant and £5280 support in-kind brought into the Project.

685m of riparian fencing erected with 4 river gates to protect regraded and planted bank and new woodland, using flood resistant fencing design, at cost of £6100+VAT.



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Summer 2013

Advice provided with amendments to farm Entry Level Scheme to deal with new woodland creation claim.

Project event organised on the farm Farming, Woodland & Water - Assets in the bank

Spring 2014

Press articles featuring farm in Yorkshire Post and Living Woods. Hedge planting and shelterbelt restoration with SITA funding.

Winter 2019

Hedge laying & restoration to provide cross-slope run-off interception with West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) funding.

Summer/Autumn 2020

Introduction of woody debris to kickstart instream channel processes. Laying and propagation of willow to increase hydraulic roughness and improve instream cover. Removal of tree guards.

Winter 2020/21

260m hedgerow planted by Patt Foundation group plus stock exclusion fencing installed by local contractor Chris Benson. Funded by WYCA.

Spring 2021

River bank restoration works following landslip. Bank reprofiled and terraced with wooden stake revetment, backfilled and re-seeded. Willow to be planted winter 2021. Funded through the Upper Aire Project with EA money totalling £3408.



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