

# Working Wetlands

## Abstract for GAP conference

### Working Wetlands – Creating a Living Landscape in the Culm

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Working Wetlands is a five year (2008-2013), Living Landscape project working in the Culm Natural Area of Devon. It aims to recreate a robust ecological landscape better able to withstand the pressures of a changing agricultural landscape and climate.

3 full-time advisors are working in three priority areas (65,000 hectares) supporting landowners in adopting more sensitive land management practice and land use change. Their work is supported by a grazing links and machinery ring officer.

This presentation will focus on how Working Wetlands diverges from the generic landscape scale project model. A land-use map is being developed of project priority areas that will be used to help deliver better coordinated and targeted conservation and land management advice effort in the Culm Natural Area. The project also has a substantial budget for set-up and administration of a machinery sharing ring and small grant award. The project has been benefited by the purchase of a roving herd of cattle, including a herd of White Park cattle, so we are now in a position to be able to solve many of the previous intractable problems that a fragmented BAP grassland habitat resource faces.

We are also taking a radical approach to wet grassland conservation by trialling techniques such as soil stripping, deep ploughing and coniferous deforestation at field scale. Such operations are fully monitored and results will be disseminated to a wide audience.

P. Burgess.