



31st January 2022
FY21-22 DEADLINE

Farming in Protected Landscapes Update

The Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme launched this summer and has gotten off to a great start in the Quantock Hills, with five projects now approved for funding. We're excited to be supporting a wide range of activities, including the conversion of arable land to species-rich grassland, tackling invasive species, restoring historic boundary features, planting hedges and enhancing the local rights of way network.

We're working with farmers to develop more projects and have been inspired by the work in other protected landscapes. We've heard recently about some very impactful projects where large farm clusters have undertaken soil carbon audits. This work will inform long-term strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and enable farmers to support each other by sharing their knowledge and experience. FiPL is also being used to help farmers transition into regenerative agriculture practices, for instance by purchasing machinery that reduces soil disturbance and fertiliser use.



One of the strengths of FiPL is its flexibility, meaning that we can help farmers deliver activities that cannot be funded through existing grant schemes. For example, we're currently developing a project that will restore a series of ponds and weirs, capturing large amounts of water during high rainfall events and simultaneously providing valuable habitat for wildlife.

FiPL can also facilitate collaboration between farmers, which may be crucial as we progress through the Agricultural Transition towards the upcoming Environmental Land Management scheme. For instance, we're supporting a group of farmers developing a plan to extend and enhance important grassland by funding floral and fungal surveys and specialist land management advice.



We're fortunate to live and work in a landscape with outstanding historical as well as natural heritage. We're working with multiple applicants on projects to conserve walls, mills and lime kilns, as well as make these more accessible to the public exploring the hills.

The deadline for applications in our first year is **January 31st 2022**, so it's not too late to get support for projects this winter. For more information call Landscape Project Officer Katie Read on **07977 412249** or czread@somerset.gov.uk