

Grants and Stewardships for Unproductive Fields



Funding Guidance Pack



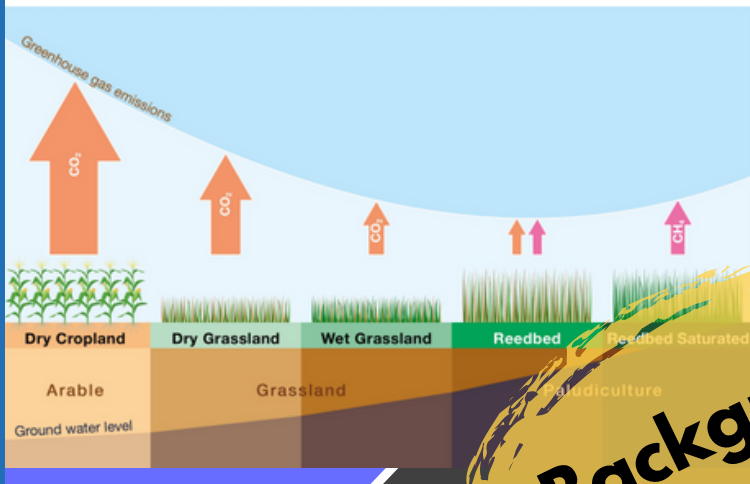
Mersey Rivers Trust
Healthy rivers for people and wildlife

Funded by :



Peat Importance and Impact of Climate Change

Peat soils are a natural store of greenhouse gases, but modern farming techniques are causing these stores to be released.



What We've done What We've Found



We've measured the peat soil depth and water level across Burscough & Scarisbrick.

The soils appear to be degraded resulting in low yields.

Background Info

SFIs

The government have tried to reduce this by offering farmers grants for alternative practices.

These grants are generally referred to as Sustainable Farming Incentives or SFIs.

A full list of the available options can be found by searching:

“find funding for land or farms”



Example unproductive field



If one of your fields looks like this over the winter months It could be economical to consider the following Sustainable Farming Incentives...

Wildflower Margins :

Payments: £798 per Ha per year (e.g. a 400m x 200m field with a **6m** buffer = £563).

Contract Length: 3 Years.



Reason for Grant: Provides habitats for pollinators, insects, and pest predators.

Benefits: Reduces Soil Erosion and income for Unproductive Fields.

Limitations: Can not apply fertilisers to the margin.

• 6-12m Watercourse Buffers : •

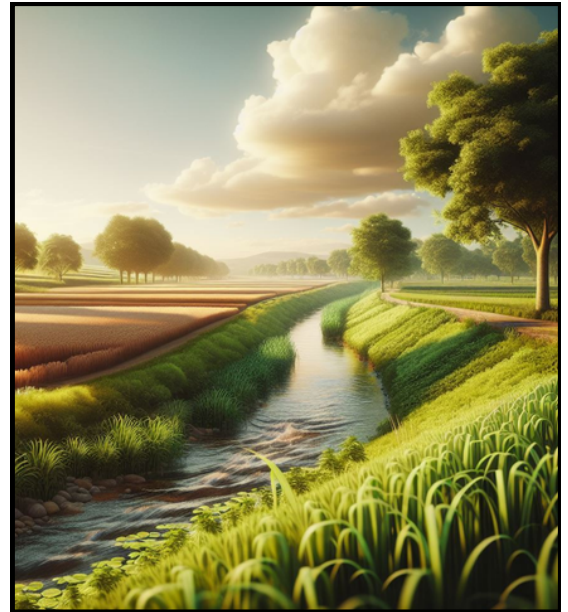
Payments: £742 per Ha of margin per year (e.g. a 400m x 200m field with a **12m** buffer = £1025).

Contract Length: 5 Years.

Reason for Grant: Provides insect habitats, forms a bridge between other habitats, and filters out fertilisers.

Benefits: Reduces soil erosion, and nutrient loss, and provides income for unproductive fields.

Limitations: Must allow shrub and scrub to regenerate naturally, longer contract length.



Grassy Field Corners :



Payments: £590 per Ha of corner per year (e.g. 40m x 40m corner = £94 per year).

Contract Length: 3 Years.

Reason for Grant: Provides habitat for pollinators.

Benefits: Money for Unproductive fields and provides habitat for pest-predating species.

Limitations: You must not use them for vehicle access, mustn't cut or apply fertilisers to the grassy corner.

No-Till Farming :

Payments: £73 per year per Ha (e.g. for an 8ha field = £584 per year)

Contract Length: 3 years.

Reason for Grant: Reduces soil compaction and erosion resulting in better soil health.



Benefits: Saved operations and ditch maintenance costs, reduced flood / drought risk.

Limitations: Reduces Yields on average by 5.1% (Pittelkow et al., 2015).

Overwinter Stubble :

Payments: £58 per Ha (e.g. for an 8ha field = £465 per year).

Contract Length: 3 years.

Reason for Grant: Provides winter food birds + reduces soil erosion.



Benefits: It's money unproductive fields, reduced flood risk, + healthier soil.

Limitations: Must not apply post-harvest herbicides.

Wild Meadow for Insects :

Payments: £739 per Ha per year (e.g. for an 8ha field = £5912 per year).

Contract Length: 3 Years.

Reason for Grant: habitat for pollinators and pest predators.



Benefits: Income for unproductive fields and allows soil health to improve.

Limitations: Early summer cuttings are required and you mustn't use farm vehicles regularly.

Keeping Groundwater High Supplement :

Payments: £181 per Ha per year (e.g. for an 8ha field = £1448 per year).

Contract Length: 10 years.



Reason for Grant: habitat for wildlife, and reduces greenhouse gas emissions from the peat.

Benefits: Must be used with another SFI, and so it can provide bonus income. Reduces flood risk in surrounding fields.

Limitations: Has a 10-year contract.

Creating a Fen :

Payments: £1605 per ha per year (e.g. for an 8ha field = £12,840 per year).

Contract Length: 10 years.

Reason for Grant: Fens are a priority habitat for DEFRA, provides habitat for species, and reduces flood risk.



Benefits: Generous payment for very wet, unproductive fields.

Limitations: Expensive set-up, up-keep, and to re-farm the land again.

Multi-species winter cover crop :

Payments: £129 per ha per year (e.g. 8 ha field = £1032 per year).

Contract Length: 3 years.

Reason for Grant: To improve soil structure and reduce the flood risk.



Benefits: Can rotate the field you want to receive the grant for each winter, receiving the grant for 3 months of work (December-February).

Wetter Farming / Paludiculture:

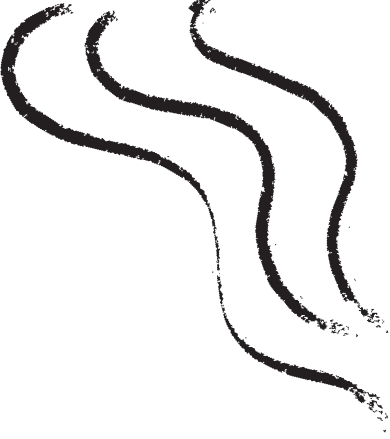


Benefits: Paludiculture crops such as Typha, are becoming increasingly valuable as the fashion industry look to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. The impact of raising the groundwater level means growing 1kg of Typha can reduce Carbon emissions by 42kg in comparison to business as usual. Typha can bring upto £1200/ha.

More Information: Wetter farming case studies and more resources on the journey required to make this a reality can be found at: “ www.paludiculture.org.uk ”

Payments: This option is not currently listed under the SFIs. However, there is likely to be a lot of new interest due to the introduction of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

BNG: Developers must legally improve land by 10%. They can do this by purchasing “off-site credits”. If you create 1 “peat lake” credit, this has a value of £650,000.



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**For future project opportunities or
more details, please reach out to us.
We'd love to hear from you**



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