

Farming and Nature

Knock farm, Huntly

This case study tells us how Roger has moved his farm into a more sustainable footing for the future with funding for his work to improve the environment.

Roger Polson of Knock farm, Huntly, manages the Shiel Wood Pastures SSSI on his farm with the assistance of AECS funding. He has played a key role in helping maintain this valuable designated site in good condition. The farm has entered into various Agri-Environment schemes over the years which have promoted grazing management, and the creation of hedges and water margins, and assisted with fencing. This funding has allowed the farm to continue being productive, while also being environmentally sustainable for the future.

Funding for organic conversion is another route that has been taken advantage of in the hope that there will be a price premium for the farms but also a benefit to nature. Roger attests that farming organically without the potential for regular chemical input, has been a positive move for him.



Tree planting and the forestry grants have enabled stocking to be reduced, particularly from the hill ground, thus allowing better management of the available forage. Commercial plantation occupies around 30 hectares, while over 70 hectares of native broadleaf and Scots pine provide excellent wildlife corridors and riparian buffers as well as biosecurity and stock shelter for the farm.

Diversification into horse livery has been another change, and is being taken up by the local community. Funding towards paths around the farm has been a benefit to locals, who now have an array of walks to choose from around the farm. Roger is delighted that the funding he has received has benefitted the farm business and allowed it to be managed less intensively than previously, and that there have also been great improvements for nature and local people through this funding.

If you would like to find out more, please contact us.
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Roger & Beth Polson
445 ha organic mixed farm
Beef and lamb

“For me organic farming has put the challenge back into farming, I would do it with or without funding.”

Agricultural and forestry grants have been invaluable sources of funding.

In the future feel confident that the SSSI could be well maintained with payment for outcome approach.

Paths have been a welcome benefit to the local community.

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