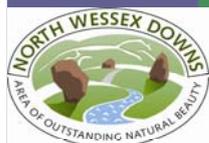


RESTORING AND MANAGING SPECIES-RICH GRASSLAND



This advisory note provides step by step guidance on the processes and costs involved in restoring species-rich pasture and meadow land.

Except where stated, the figures given are “contractor costs” and will be lower if in-house labour is used. The range of costs is intended as guidance only as much will depend upon site-specific factors such as topography, size, accessibility, soil depth, and so on. Generally though, there will be economies of scale, i.e. the more work required the cheaper it will be per unit. NB All costs include labour, machinery and materials.

Annual Higher Level Stewardship grant for maintenance or restoration of species-rich grassland = £200 per hectare per year

Infrastructure:

In many cases previously redundant pasture and meadow land will have poor if any infrastructure. Thus, prior to restoration management there may be a need for improved/new fencing, gates, cattle grids, water supply, livestock handling systems and/or field shelters.

Fencing

Fencing costs will vary according to: the type of fencing; whether galvanised or high tensile wire is used; whether it can be done by machine or has to be done by hand; ground conditions (higher costs if stakes are likely to be broken due to hard ground and if strainers have to be dug in); topography (extra strainers needed for changes in direction or ground level); accessibility (i.e. how far materials have to be carried from the nearest vehicle access point).

Cost: £2.30 to £7.00 per metre for post and wire fencing (with three strands of wire)

Cost: £2.95 to £10.00 per metre for stock-netting (C8/80/15 with two strands of wire)

Higher Level Scheme Capital Grant =

£1.20/m for post and wire fencing

£1.80/m for stock-netting

£0.60/m supplement for old fence removal

£2.50/m supplement for difficult sites

£1.25/m supplement for high tensile fencing

Access items

Costs for gates, stiles and cattle grids will vary according to: the type of gate, stile or cattle grid; accessibility (i.e. how far materials have to be carried from the nearest vehicle access point). Costs given are averages based upon a range of situations.

Cost: £300 each for 12’ wooden field gates (with gateposts & furniture)

Cost: £250 each for 4’ wooden bridle gates (with gateposts & furniture)

Cost: £285 each for wooden kissing gates (for pedestrians only)

Cost: £150 each for stiles (with dog access)

Cost: £975 each for cattle grids

Higher Level Scheme Capital Grant =

£149 each for wooden field gates

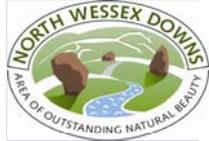
£220 each for wooden bridle gates

£245 each for wooden kissing gates

£100 each for wooden stiles

£538 each for cattle grids (+ £180 towards obtaining planning permission)





Water supply – bowsers, pipes, troughs

Costs for a permanent water supply will depend largely upon whether pipes can be laid using a mole plough or have to be trenched. Allow for an extra £1000 if a new mains connection is needed.

Cost: £1.20 to £3.10 per metre for water pipe

Cost: £100 to £315 each for water troughs

Cost: £700 to £1500 each for tow bowsers
(depending upon capacity – 275 to 1125 litres)



Higher Level Scheme Capital Grant = £2.00/m for water pipe
£85 each for water troughs
No payment for bowsers – “Special Project”?

Livestock handling and protection

Although portable handling systems consisting of a few hurdles may suffice for sheep, cattle may need a more robust structure, which might consist of a timber post & rail enclosure, metal gates and cattle crush. 1-2 m² is needed per penned animal (depending on age).

Cost: Too variable to estimate

Higher Level Scheme Capital Grant = 60% of costs

A field shelter may be needed if there is no natural shelter from trees and hedges.

Cost: From £1000 for “flat pack” shelter (from 3 m x 3 m floorspace – supply only)

Cost: £500 for “Animal Ark” (L 2.3 x W 2.3 x H 1.4 m – supply only)

Higher Level Scheme Capital Grant = No standard payment – “Special Project”?

Control of invasive species:

Scrub control

Scrub is generally controlled by cutting at the base and treating stumps with herbicide, though in certain cases scrub may be pulled out mechanically to remove the whole plant, including the roots. Bramble and young scrub can be flailed, though will be controlled more effectively if treated with herbicide first.

Cost: £250 to £300 per hectare for flailing bramble

Cost: £400 to £2500 per hectare depending upon scrub density

Higher Level Scheme Capital Grant = £228 - £583 depending upon scrub density
+ £76 base payment each year scrub is cut

Weed control

Weeds may be controlled by topping, hand pulling, spot spraying or weed wiping.

Cost: £12.50 – £28 per hour Spot spraying, hand-held weed-wiper, hand pulling:

Cost: £10 to £75 per hectare for mechanical weed control

Topping: £10 - £30 per hectare

Weed wiping: £30 - £75 per hectare

Higher Level Scheme Supplement = £60 per hectare

Sources: Quotations from contractors working within NWD AONB; Farm Management Handbook, 35th ed Sept 2004; Agricultural Budgeting and Costing Book, 60th ed, May 2005; CAAV Guide to Costings, October 2005; pers. comms. Prepared by Jemma Batten on behalf of North Wessex Downs AONB © 2005. Photographs © Jemma Batten

