



## ACTION FOR BIODIVERSITY

CATEGORY: MANAGEMENT CASE STUDY YEAR: 2007

### Business Details:

**East Briscoe Farm Cottages  
Near Barnard Castle  
Teesdale**



<http://www.eastbriscoe.co.uk>

### Description:

East Briscoe Farm Cottages are set in the heart of the Durham Dales countryside; they currently hold a GTBS GOLD award for excellence in environmental management. There is a strong focus on managing the land around the cottages and improving it for wildlife. There is an ancient woodland on site, which has been, designated a site of Site of Special Scientific Interest due to the specialist mosses, lichens and other plant life which inhabits the woodland. The woodland has been fenced off in order to stop sheep and deer entering the wood. This allows natural regeneration of the woodland to occur unhindered by any grazing pressure. Some tree planting is carried out in the woodland but only on a small scale since natural regeneration is the preferred option. However there has been extensive planting adjacent to the woodland in order to expand the habitat. In addition the hedgerows are well managed, there is plan for managing a wildflower meadow. There also dry stone walls and a burn, which holds a population of the White Clawed Crayfish. Many of the species and habitats on site are subject to local biodiversity action plans.



#### Economic

Due to the biodiversity on site many of the management practices are subject grant aid, which helps to alleviate the financial burden of the management of these habitats. For example the management of the ancient woodland is subject to an English Woodland Grant Scheme from the Forestry Commission. This means purchasing and erecting the deer and sheep fencing was mostly paid for by the Forestry Commission. DEFRA also offers grant aid for the management of habitats such as hedgerows, meadows and dry stone walls.



#### Environmental

Ancient woodland only represents 1.2% of the total woodland cover of the British Isles and the vast majority of these have no official protection or formal management. 86% of the ancient woodland in Northumberland is in unfavourable and declining condition. These sites are reservoirs of interesting and rare plantlife. They can also contain rare insects that rely on the specialist habitats, which can be found in ancient woodland, such as large decaying trees. Ancient woodlands are highly fragmented and very often under threat from development. The well managed hedges provide wildlife corridors allowing wildlife to move around the countryside while hidden and unhindered.



#### Social

The social benefits of maintaining our woodlands are many and varied. For example they are places where the local population can access the countryside, they have a high educational value, and their landscape value is also high. Forest related tourism generates around 250 million pounds annually in Britain. In 2006 23% of woodland users surveyed had gathered non timber resources in woods, things like berries, cones, acorns and nuts.

#### WEB

DEFRA: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment>  
Forestry Commission: <http://www.forestry.gov.uk>  
Natural England: <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk>  
Scottish National Heritage: <http://www.snh.org.uk>