

# Engaging the experts, in the field

Adella Buckland

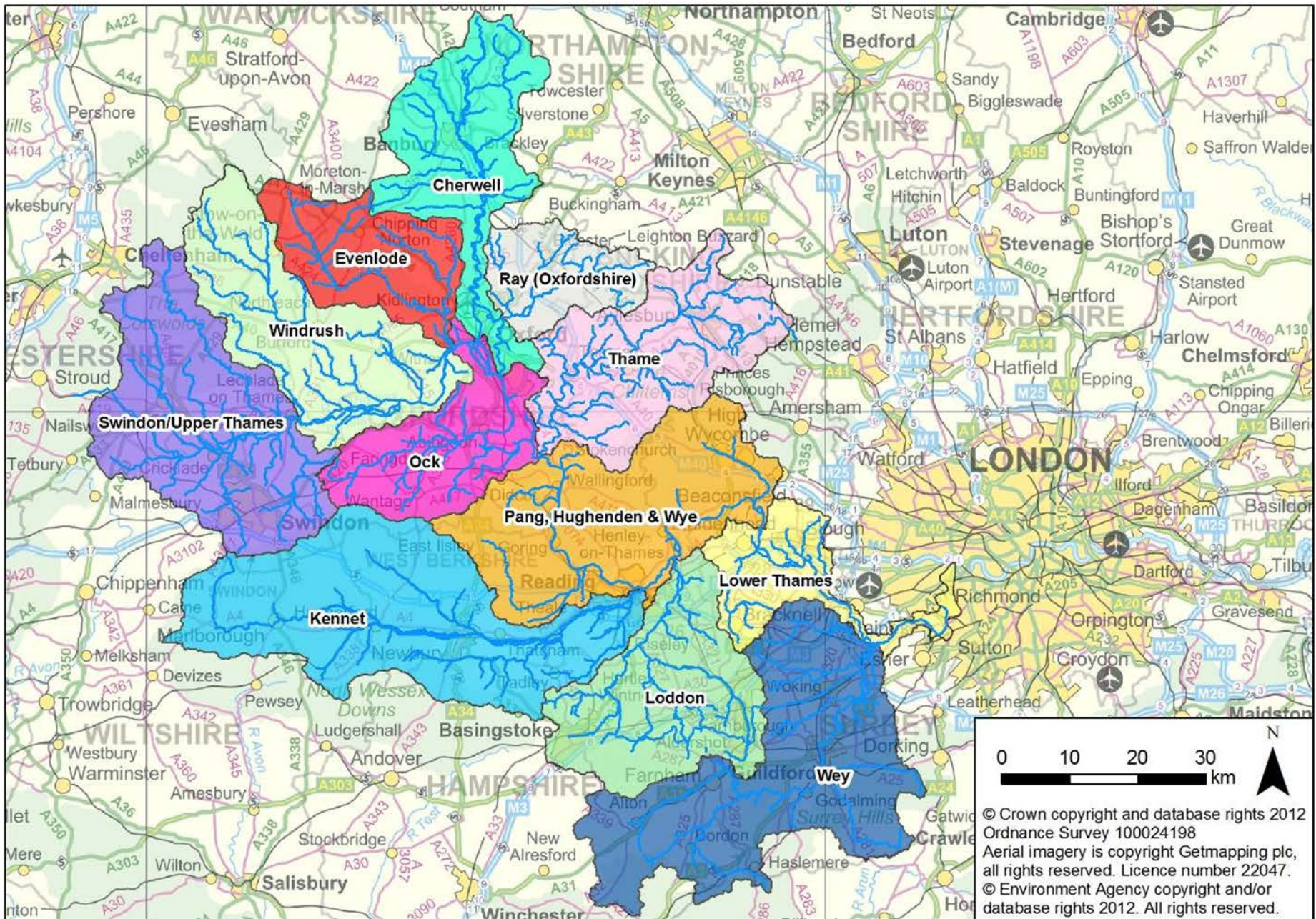
Ock Natural Flood Management Project Manager

19/02/20

# Background

- Working in Flood Risk Management at the Environment Agency.
- Aim to identify flood risk management options through Natural Flood Management as well as improve habitats in the Ock catchment.
- Abingdon Flood Storage area is not able to progress further until additional funding can be found.
- Working with Freshwater Habitats Trust who are the Ock Catchment Partnership Hosts.

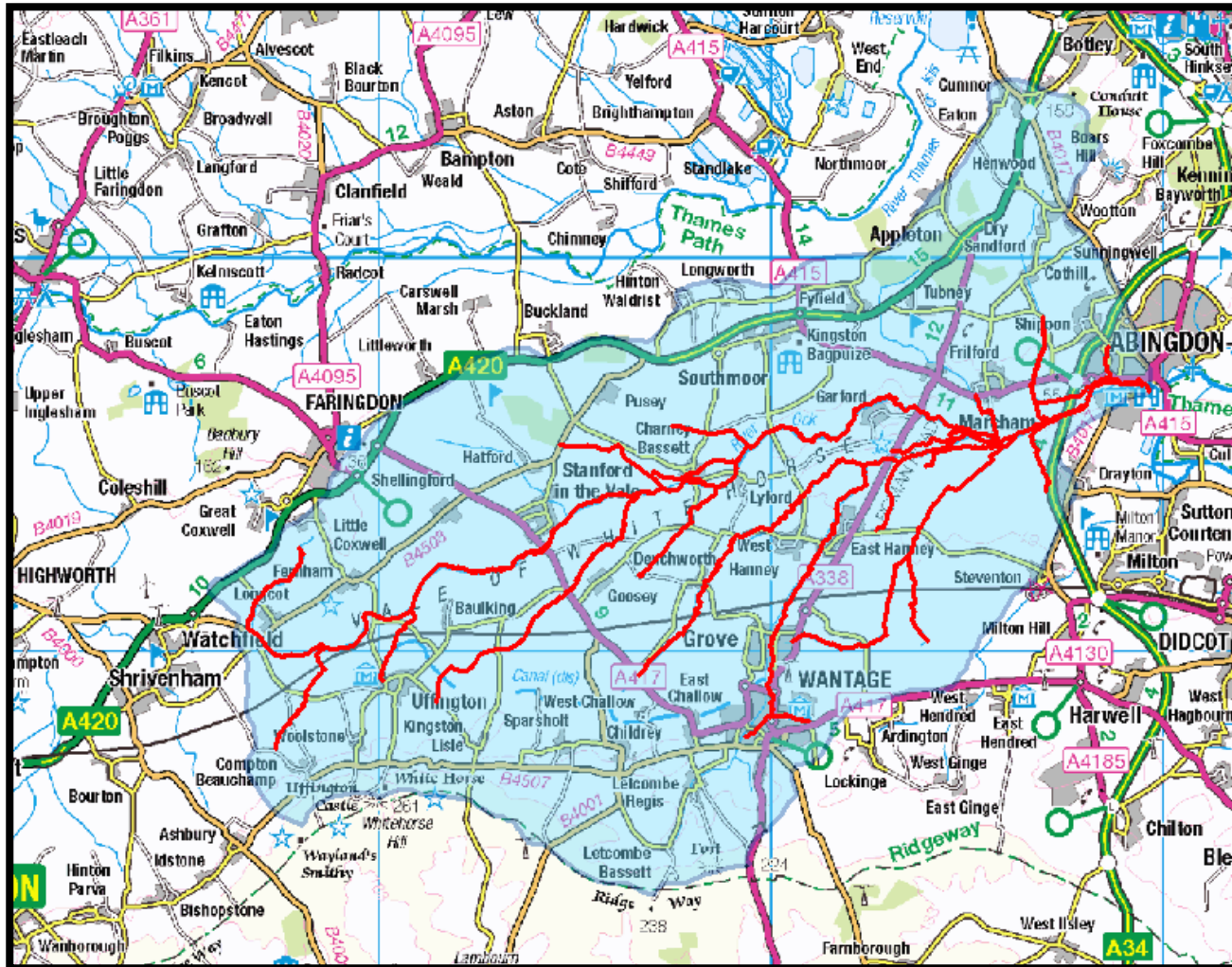




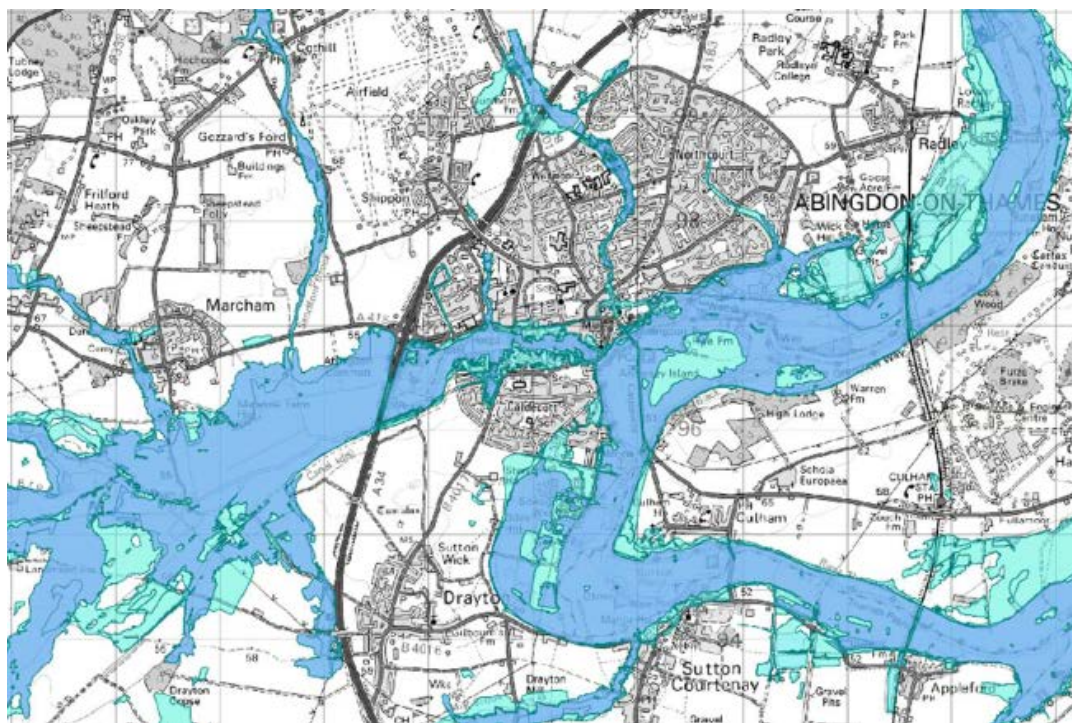
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# Ock Catchment



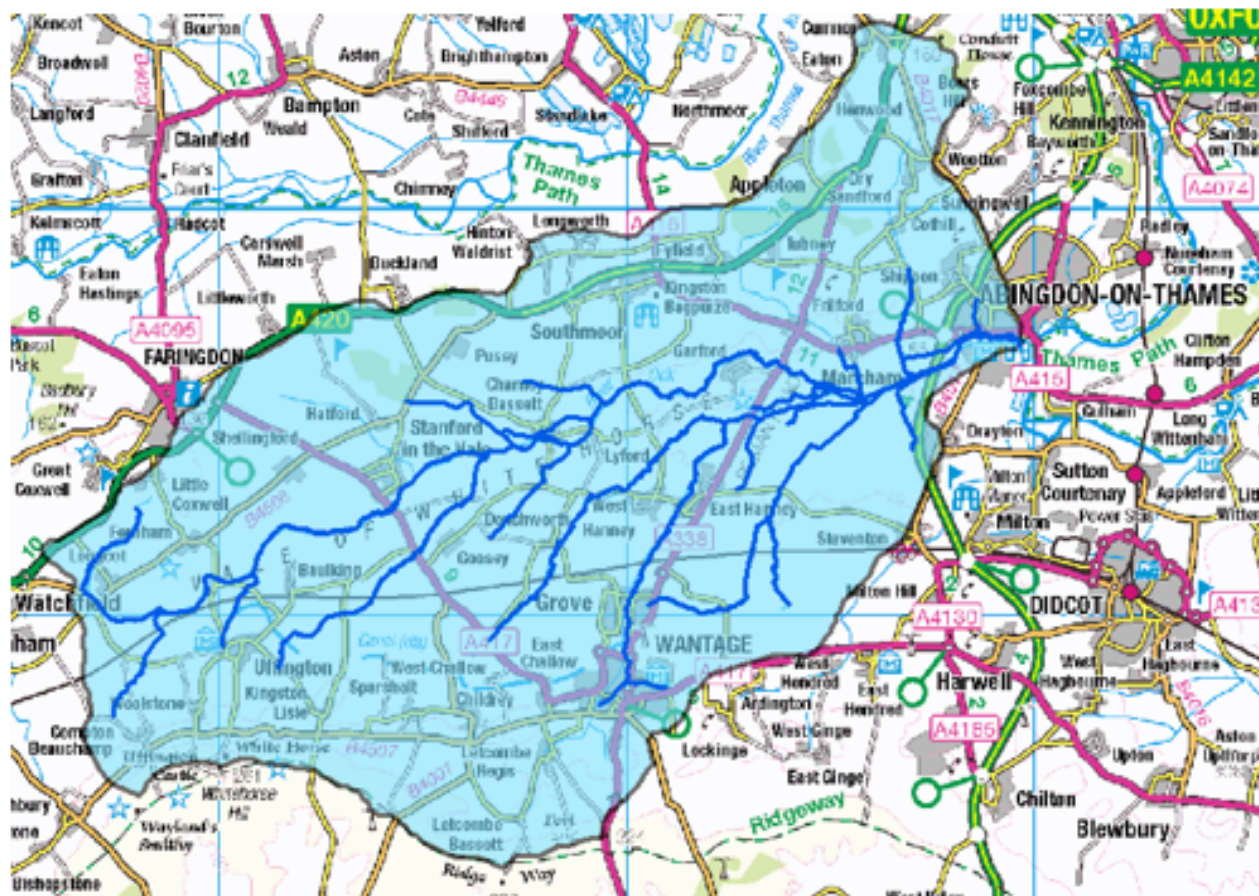
# Flooding in Abingdon





# First contact

Can you help reduce flood risk and improve water quality in your Ock Catchment?

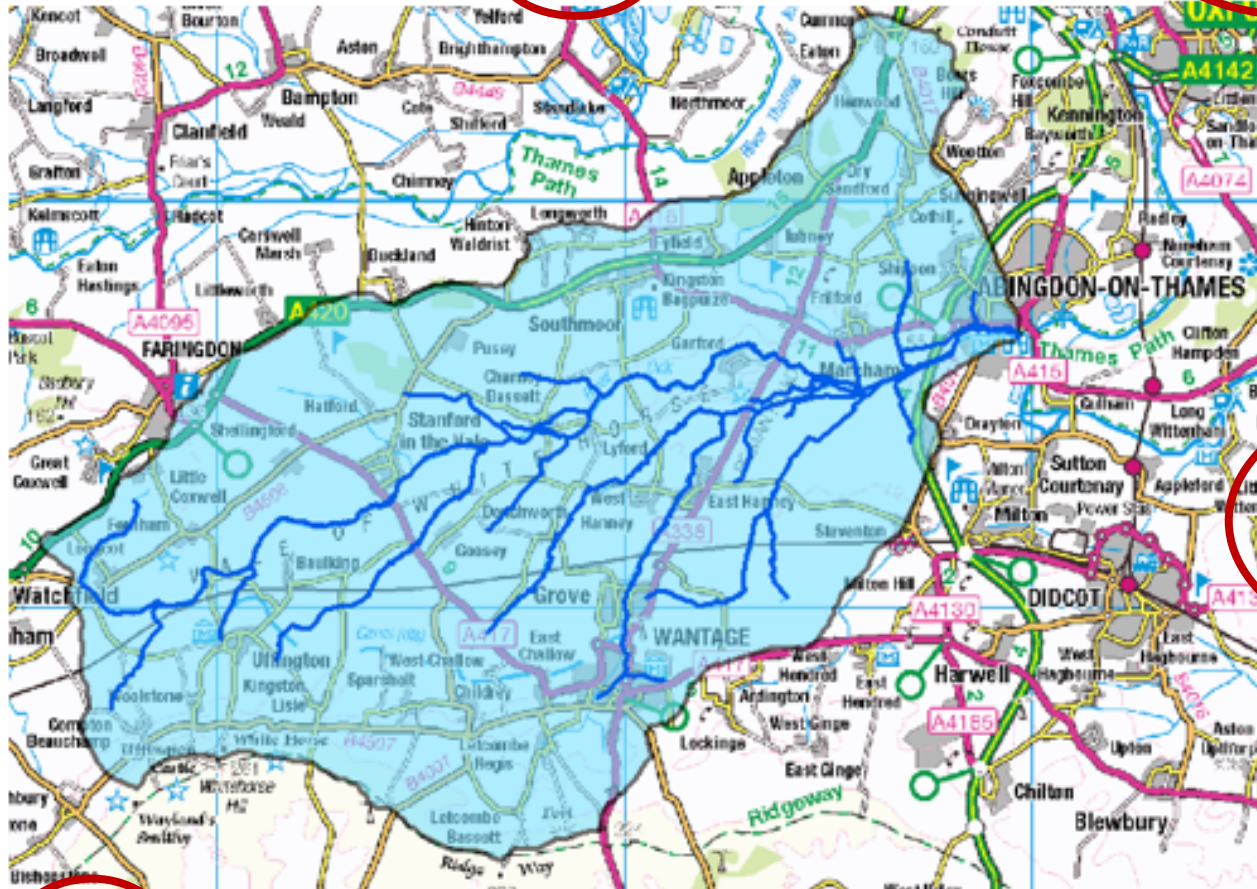


The natural solutions to manage floodwaters often require land management changes to slow and store run-off, which can have multiple benefits for water quality and habitat creation, and drive improvements in agricultural land management and reduce the impact of diffuse pollution. The Ock Catchment Partnership, hosted by the Freshwater Habitats trust, is working in partnership with the Environment Agency to develop a combined Natural Flood Management (NFM) and water quality project for the Ock catchment and the communities within it.

**Free advisory visits to help improve water quality in the River Ock and reduce flooding in Abingdon**

# First contact

Can you help reduce flood risk and improve water quality in your Ock Catchment?



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Free advisory visits to help improve water quality in the River Ock and reduce flooding in Abingdon



I am writing to ask if **you** would be interested in participating in this project **to help** landowners and managers identify ways of reducing diffuse pollution and managing flood risk in the River Ock catchment.

### **What's involved?**

We would like to come and meet with **you on your farm** to discuss any opportunities to make land management changes, which would **fit with your farm business** but also reduce field run-off. We will provide you with a **short confidential report** and will discuss our suggestions on practical approaches to reduce diffuse pollution and natural flood management.

As part of the visit and in developing your report, we can **offer you water samples** to determine nitrate and phosphate levels using simple test kits. We will discuss natural flood management measures, including retention ponds, leaky dams and management changes, including planting woodland.



We would also like **to invite you** to an [redacted] measures to improve the freshwaters in the Ock Catchment. Here we can give examples of the visits we have already done on farms in the catchment and discuss the next steps of the project. The meeting is on **Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> November at 10.30** followed by **lunch** kindly provided by [redacted]

Please let me know if you are able to attend by calling the Freshwater Habitats Trust on 01865 595505 or [redacted]

**For More information contact**

**Freshwater Habitats Trust:**



[www.Freshwaterhabitats.org.uk](http://www.Freshwaterhabitats.org.uk)

<https://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/research/water-friendly-farming>

# “You” not “we”



Dear XX,

You have been invited to a meeting looking at ways of reducing flood risk and managing diffuse pollution in the Ock Catchment. It is really important that as one of the key landowners from the catchment you attend this meeting.

The workshop is going to be run by Freshwater Habitats Trust and the Environment Agency.

This meeting is going to be looking at how we can

- Reduce diffuse pollution throughout the catchment.
- Reduce the flood risk to Abingdon.
- How changes can be potentially financed through different woodland creation grants and countryside stewardship schemes.

RVSP to let us know if you will be joining us.

Date: Thursday 8th November 2018

Time: 10:30 – 13:00 (lunch will be provided afterwards)

Venue:

RSVP: Please RSVP to  
01865 595505

Thanks in advance,

Adella Buckland



# The Ock start up meeting

- Not just EA and FHT.
- Forestry England gave a talk on financial and leisure benefits of forestry.
- Talk from a landowner who has worked with us on the Evenlode NFM project.
- Honesty about funding
- Anticipate different viewpoints around watercourse maintenance and flood risk management.



# What we are looking for

- Land prone to flooding either by surface water or river flooding.
- Lower grade farmland.
- Land with poor soil.
- Land that is awkward to manage.
- **Any other suggestions.**

# In the field



# 1. Be aware of schedules

- Farm calendar
- Lambing, calving season?
- Bad weather, rainy or dry
- Buddy up if you can




# 2. Be able to give something

### Diffuse Pollution and Natural Flood Management in the Ock Catchment

Visit

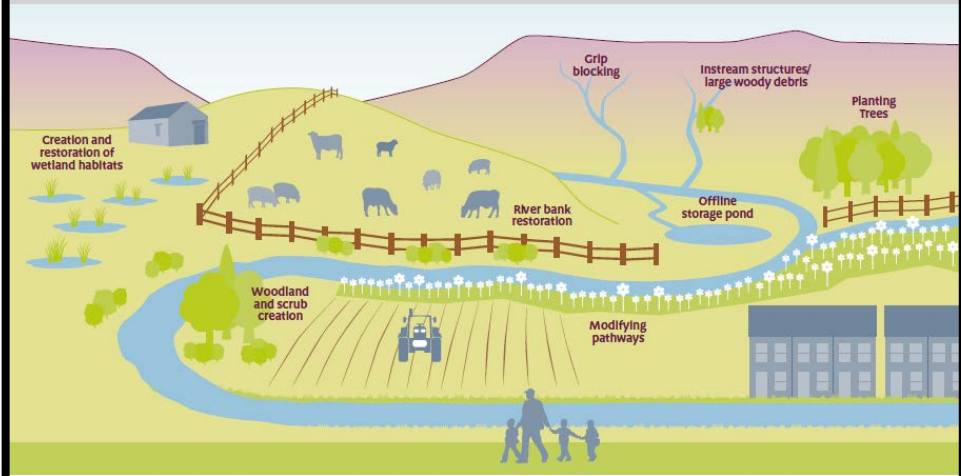
Hanna Jenkins



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Oxford  
March 2019

### Countryside Stewardship

How can it help reduce flooding?



There are a range of grants available under the Countryside Stewardship scheme to support farmers and land managers who wish to adopt a variety of natural flood management techniques and help slow the flow of water with in a catchment and to reduce the impact of flooding downstream.

For more information visit [www.gov.uk/countrysidestewardship](http://www.gov.uk/countrysidestewardship)



Even if it is just a hand out







# 3. Ask rather than tell

Do you agree with these maps?

Does your surface water look like this?

What does it look like when the river comes out of bank?

Are there any areas your are having trouble cropping?

Is there anything you wouldn't be happy with?

Do you have any areas that are hard to access?

What do you think?

## 4. Accepting hard conversations

- There will be reasons.
- Most of the time listening and understanding will help.
- Contribute ideas as part of a discussion.
- Be aware you are taking up their time.
- Even if you don't get what you want from the meeting e.g. locations for NFM. Good relationships help further down the line or help others in your partnership.
- **Be flexible**