

Upper Thames Farmers' Cluster

Vision/Aims/Objectives (Adopted December 2024)

- **vision statement** a future-oriented declaration of purpose and aspirations
- **aim** is the overall target or goal of the business
- **objectives** are the steps needed to take to meet aims

Vision

To collaboratively and proactively, drive the change towards a financially viable and sustainable rural economy in the Upper Thames, to the benefit of people and the natural world.

Aims

To adopt more sustainable farming and land management practices, for which we are fairly paid, producing good quality food and products; increasing biodiversity; and maximising the ecosystem services delivered by the landscape.

We will achieve this through:

- Regular networking and events (both social and informative)
- Exploring/taking opportunities to trial new approaches to farming and land management
- Exploring/taking new opportunities for funding our businesses on and beyond the single farm scale
- Exploring/taking opportunities for project development and delivery on and beyond the single farm scale

Objectives (defined in CSFF grant application, following meetings with farmers and landowners Jan 2023)

1. Improve water quality through maintaining and extending riparian buffer zones along water courses and ditches; reduce arable land where flooding regularly occurs;
2. Restore wetland habitats, where appropriate;
3. Increase biodiversity associated with riverine and floodplain habitats, focusing on floodplain grazing marsh and floodplain meadows with their associated breeding wader assemblages and pollinators, bats, great crested newts, water voles and brown hares;
4. Improve connectivity, focusing on field margins and corners; hedgerows (including hedgerow trees and pollards); ponds/wetland features;
5. Manage parkland and veteran trees; managing and creating native woodland;
6. Increase populations of farmland birds, focusing on tree sparrows, corn bunting, grey partridge, yellow hammer and turtle dove;
7. Maintain Chimney Meadows, Alvescot Meadows and Grafton Meadows SSSIs;
8. Adopt best practice regenerative farming methods to deliver the above and address climate change