

# **STEPS 2018**

## **Severn Trent Environmental Protection Scheme**



**Applications Open 1<sup>st</sup> Jan – 16<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

## Severn Trent Agricultural Advisors

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|--|---|-----------------------------|---|
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## 1.0 Scheme overview

The 'Severn Trent Environmental Protection Scheme' – STEPS provides grants to farmers for infrastructure investments and land management items. The scheme aims to help protect the water environment, it is a voluntary scheme which is solely funded by Severn Trent (STW).

### 1.1 What are the objectives of the STEPS scheme?

The STEPS scheme objectives are to:

- Protect watercourses and the wider environment from diffuse pollution.
- Assist farm businesses to tackle diffuse pollution with low cost infrastructure investments and farm management items which go above and beyond good agricultural practice – **enhanced good agricultural practice**.

### 1.2 How do I qualify for a STEPS grant?

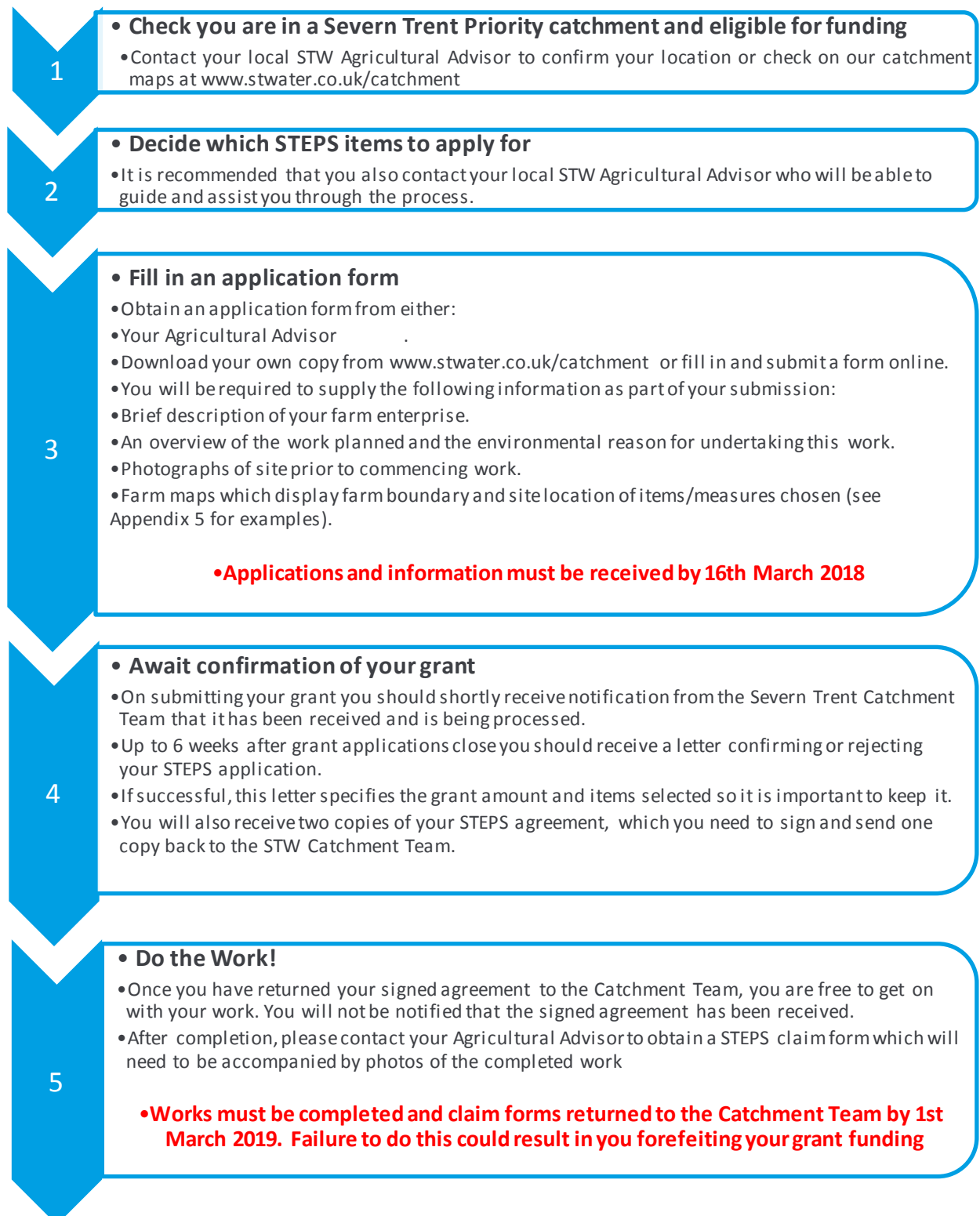
In order to qualify for the scheme you must comply with the following criteria;

- Farm within a Severn Trent Water drinking water abstraction catchment and/or one of the Severn Trent 'priority source protection zones' (SPZs) around drinking water boreholes. To check whether your land is within a qualifying zone, please contact your local Severn Trent Agricultural Advisor; email the Severn Trent Catchment Team at [farming4water@severntrent.co.uk](mailto:farming4water@severntrent.co.uk) or check on our website [www.severntrent.co.uk/catchment](http://www.severntrent.co.uk/catchment)
- Farm a minimum of 5 hectares arable or a minimum 3 ha grassland. This can be either owned or leased land ( a lease must run until end of the five year STEPS agreement)
- Undertake a minimum level of farming activity as detailed in **Appendix 2**.
- **Please note STEPS is a competitive scheme and all applications will be subject to scoring. Details of criteria can be found in Section 12.**
- **IMPORTANT:** If your Farm is also eligible for one of the Severn Trent Metaldehyde schemes (**Farmers as Producers of Clean Water or Product Substitution**), you must also agree to participate in the relevant Metaldehyde scheme in order to be considered for a STEPS grant. Please discuss this with your local Agricultural Advisor.

### 1.3 How much funding can I claim?

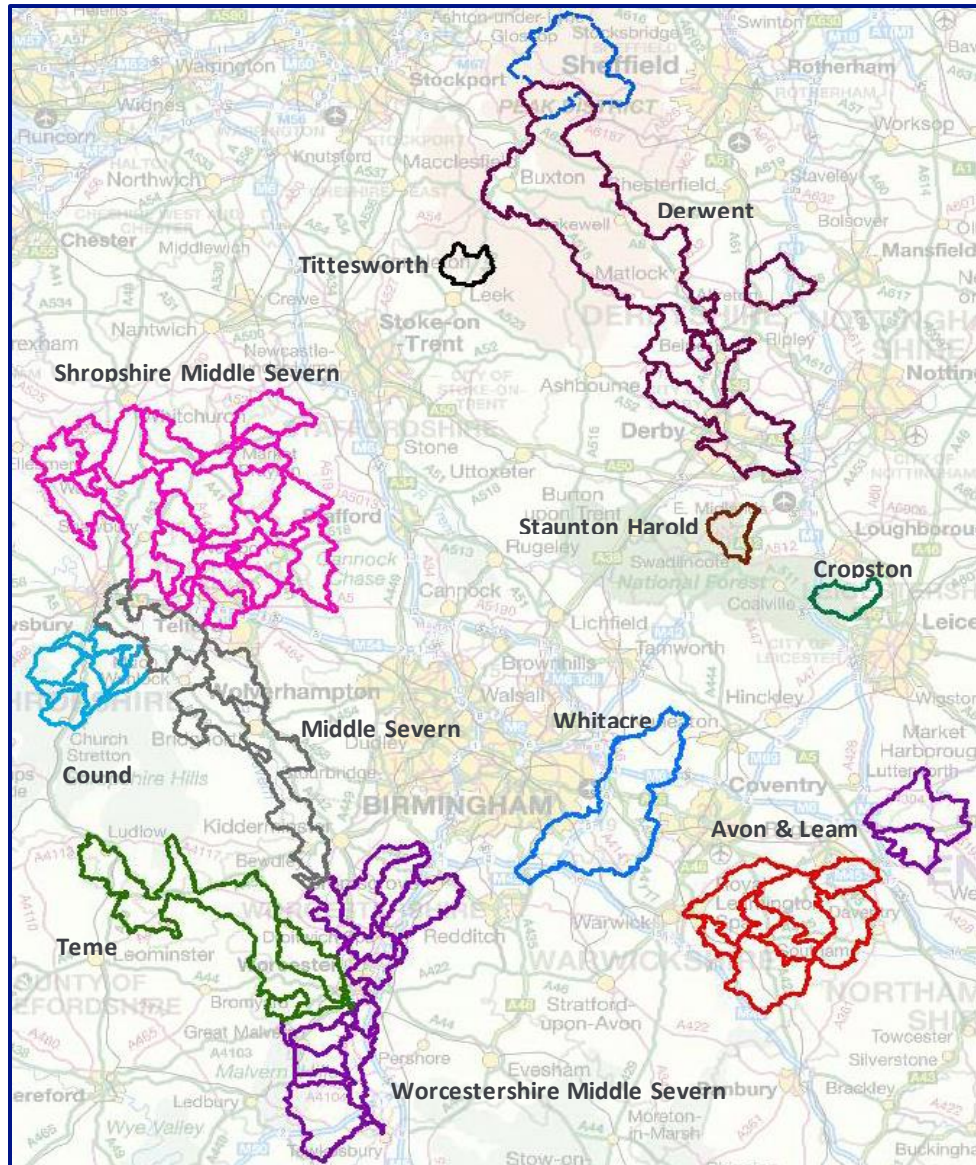
- STEPS will pay a fixed grant cost per item, as shown in this handbook, up to a maximum of £5000 per farm, per year. The fixed grant price represents an estimated 50% of the total cost of the capital item.
- Non-fixed price items claimed under the Farmer Innovation option may be up to the value of £5000. However, the claimed value must represent 50% of the cost (ex. VAT) submitted on receipts/invoices.

## 2.0 What is the STEPS application process?



### 3.0 Where are the grants available?

STEPS grants are available in selected Severn Trent Water drinking water abstraction catchments. The surface water catchments are shown on the map below and at [www.stwater.co.uk/catchment](http://www.stwater.co.uk/catchment)



Additionally STEPS grants are available in Severn Trent 'priority source protection zones' (SPZs) located around selected drinking water boreholes listed below.

- |                |                      |                 |
|----------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| ➤ Amen Corner  | ➤ Clipstone          | ➤ Stoke-on-Tern |
| ➤ Bestwood     | ➤ Clipstone Forest   | ➤ Swynnerton    |
| ➤ Boughton     | ➤ Highgate & Poolend | ➤ Wallmyres     |
| ➤ Brockhill    | ➤ Ketford            | ➤ Rodway        |
| ➤ Budby        | ➤ Oakley Farm        | ➤ Rufford       |
| ➤ Budby Forest | ➤ Ruyton             |                 |



## 4.0 What STEPS grant items are available?

Table 1 shows the grant items/measures that are available through STEPS. The Table provides fixed unit costs for each item representing approximately 50% of the average cost. There is scope for farmers to suggest alternative items/measures where there is a clear water quality benefit through item option STEPS035 – Farmer Innovation.

The technical specifications for these items are outlined in the following pages. This list is kept under review and may be subject to change over the course of the scheme. Any changes to the list of eligible items will appear on our website and in subsequent additions of this book.

*Table 1. Available grant items*

| Code             | STEPS Item/Measure   | Fixed Grant Price    | Priority Item?       |
|------------------|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| <b>STEPS001a</b> | Post & Wire Fencing  | £3 /metre            |                      |
| <b>STEPS001b</b> | Sheep Netting  | £3.90 /metre         |                      |
| <b>STEPS001c</b> | Permanent electric fencing                                     | £2.50 /metre         |                      |
| <b>STEPS001d</b> | Clipex Fencing   | £2.50 /metre         |                      |
| <b>STEPS001e</b> | Gate (Metal)   | £140/unit            |                      |
| <b>STEPS001f</b> | Gate (Wooden-SSSI only)  | £195/unit            |                      |
| <b>STEPS001g</b> | Temporary Electric Fencing                                     | £2.00 /metre         |                      |
| <b>STEPS002</b>  | Livestock Drinking Troughs                                     | £50/ 100L capacity   |                      |
| <b>STEPS003</b>  | Pasture Pumps  | £180/unit            |                      |
| <b>STEPS004</b>  | Water Supply pipe  | £2/metre             |                      |
| <b>STEPS005a</b> | Solar panel pumps  | £450/ unit           |                      |
| <b>STEPS005b</b> | Ram pumps  | £750/per unit        |                      |
| <b>STEPS006</b>  | Hard Base for livestock drinking trough/feeder/gate            | £110/ base           |                      |
| <b>STEPS007</b>  | Pesticide Sprayer Washdown/Handling Area                       | £40/m <sup>2</sup>   | <b>Surface water</b> |
| <b>STEPS008</b>  | Lined Biobeds (Either off set/Drive Over)                      | £70/m <sup>2</sup>   | <b>Surface water</b> |
| <b>STEPS009a</b> | Pesticide Biofilter (DIY)                                      | £950/unit            | <b>Surface water</b> |
| <b>STEPS009b</b> | Pesticide Biofilter (Ready Made)                               | £1200/unit           | <b>Surface water</b> |
| <b>STEPS010</b>  | Disposal of pesticide washings via evaporation                 | £2500/unit           | <b>Surface water</b> |
| <b>STEPS011</b>  | Roofing for Pesticide Sprayer Wash-down Area                   | £52/m <sup>2</sup>   | <b>Surface water</b> |
| <b>STEPS012</b>  | Installation of piped culverts in ditches                      | £160/unit            |                      |
| <b>STEPS013</b>  | Roofs for existing Slurry stores                               | £52/m <sup>2</sup>   |                      |
| <b>STEPS014</b>  | Floating covers for existing slurry stores                     | £6.50/m <sup>2</sup> |                      |
| <b>STEPS015</b>  | Roofing of existing manure storage and livestock holding areas | £52/m <sup>2</sup>   | <b>Groundwater</b>   |
| <b>STEPS016</b>  | Arable grass margin: 6+ metre buffer                           | £1250/ha (5 yrs)     | <b>Groundwater</b>   |
| <b>STEPS017</b>  | Livestock removal from high risk fields                        | £500/ha (5 yrs)      | <b>Groundwater</b>   |
| <b>STEPS018a</b> | Riverside margins – 15 metre buffer                            | £1.50 metre/year     |                      |
| <b>STEPS018b</b> | Riverside margins – 30 metre buffer                            | £2.70 metre/year     |                      |
| <b>STEPS019</b>  | Catch/cover crops  | £60/ha               | <b>Groundwater</b>   |
| <b>STEPS020a</b> | Rainwater Harvesting Underground tank                          | £350/m <sup>3</sup>  |                      |

| Code             | STEPS Item/Measure                                       | Fixed Grant Price            | Priority Item?     |
|------------------|--|------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>STEPS020b</b> | Rainwater Harvesting Aboveground Tank                    | £110/m <sup>3</sup>          |                    |
| <b>STEPS020c</b> | Rainwater Harvesting Flush rainwater diverters & filters | £125 /unit                   |                    |
| <b>STEPS020d</b> | Rainwater Harvesting Downpipes and gutters               | £12 /metre                   |                    |
| <b>STEPS021</b>  | Cultivate and drill along the slope contour              | £10 /ha                      |                    |
| <b>STEPS022</b>  | Manage overwinter tramlines                              | £10/ha                       |                    |
| <b>STEPS023</b>  | Loosen compacted soil layers                             | £10/ha or £5/ha              |                    |
| <b>STEPS024</b>  | Grass swales   | £8/m <sup>2</sup>            |                    |
| <b>STEPS025</b>  | Check Dams   | £42 per dam                  |                    |
| <b>STEPS026</b>  | Field Drainage NOT AVAILABLE IN 2018                     | NOT AVAILABLE                |                    |
| <b>STEPS027</b>  | In ditch seepage barriers                                | £150 per barrier             |                    |
| <b>STEPS028</b>  | In ditch wetlands  | £250 per wetland             |                    |
| <b>STEPS029a</b> | Sediment Ponds/Traps (earth)                             | £15/m <sup>2</sup>           |                    |
| <b>STEPS029b</b> | Sediment Ponds/Traps (Concrete with soak away)           | £750 /per unit               |                    |
| <b>STEPS030</b>  | Constructed Farm Wetlands                                | 50% ex. VAT cost up to £5000 |                    |
| <b>STEPS031</b>  | Bioreactors  | £2000 /unit                  | <b>Groundwater</b> |
| <b>STEPS032</b>  | Low Nitrogen input into Grassland (Groundwater Sources)  | £1200 /ha (5yrs)             | <b>Groundwater</b> |
| <b>STEPS033</b>  | Arable reversion into Grassland (Groundwater Sources)    | £1550 /ha (5yrs)             | <b>Groundwater</b> |
| <b>STEPS034</b>  | Filter Fencing   | £2 /metre                    |                    |
| <b>STEPS035a</b> | Farmer Innovation Precision Equipment                    | 50% ex VAT cost up to £5000  |                    |
| <b>STEPS035b</b> | Farmer Innovation Clean/Dirty Water Separation           | 50% ex. VAT cost up to £5000 |                    |
| <b>STEPS035c</b> | Farmer Innovation Other Innovation                       | 50% ex. VAT cost up to £5000 |                    |

## 4.2 Priority STEPS items

- Surface and groundwater drinking water catchments are often at risk due to specific forms of pollution from agricultural holdings.
- In particular groundwater sources are most vulnerable to nitrate pollution while surface waters are at most risk from pesticide pollution.
- STEPS items which are particularly useful in addressing these risks are highlighted in Table 1 and are considered priority items for applicants within the affected catchments.
- To reflect this, inclusion of one or more of the high priority measures within your application will increase the likelihood of the application scoring favourably in our competitive screening process.
- Your Agricultural Advisor will notify you of any other priorities in your catchment.



## 5.0 Example STEPS grant payments

Below are 4 examples of how STEPS grant payments are calculated.

**Example 1:** Farmer 'A' has been successful in applying for a STEPS watercourse fencing grant (item STEPS001). Under the grant the farmer has installed 620 metres of 'Sheep netting. He is entitled to claim £3.90 per metre as part of the watercourse fencing grant. His total grant is £2418 (£3.90 x 620m).

**Example 2:** Farmer 'B' has been successful in applying for two STEPS grants. Independently of the STEPS scheme the farmer had installed a pesticide wash down area but it required roofing (STEPS011) at the same time he also decided to install a pesticide biofilter (STEPS009). The size of the roofing is 7 x 5 metres = 35m<sup>2</sup>. The fixed grant offered for STEPS011 is £52/m<sup>2</sup>, therefore the total amount for STEPS011 is 35m x £52 = £1820. Total grant available grant for a pesticide biofilter (STEPS009a) is £950. Total amount Farmer 'B' is entitled to claim is £1820+£950 = £2770.

**Example 3:** Farmer 'C' has a high risk field surrounding a borehole. The field is used for arable production. This high risk field was confirmed by the Severn Trent Agriculture Advisor. In order to reduce soil erosion, the farmer has contacted an independent farm advisor and has agreed that catch crops are a viable option. Farmer 'C' consequently applied for the Cover Crop item (STEPS019). Using a Mustard /Oat /Phacelia mix, the farmer has sown 4.75ha of catch crops. The farmer is therefore entitled to claim £285 (4.75ha x £60).

**Example 4:** Farmer D wants to construct a brand new pesticide washdown pad (STEPS007) together with a ready-made biofilter (STEPS009) and roofing (STEPS011) and install them at the same time. The combined value of the three grants is £6760 – therefore £1760 above the £5000 funding limit. However by selecting the handling facilities project option, all the work can be done at the same time. Once completed the farmer submits a claim for the work. The initial £5000 is paid immediately on completion of the work in January. The remaining £1760 is paid in the following financial year after 5<sup>th</sup> April.

**Payments for grants are made once the work has been completed and when STW have received the following from the claimant:**

- **Photographs of the completed work to complement the photographs of the site prior to work which were submitted as part of the application process**
- All invoices and receipts for completed work.
- Section 13 gives further information and guidance on claiming the grant payment.

## 6.0 Key Conditions and information

### STEPS guidelines

- Works on capital investment items must not commence until notification of STEPS contract has been issued by Severn Trent.
- All STEPS items may only be used for function stipulated in the guidance notes and may not be adapted to fit another purpose.
- All grants must be carried out on leased or owned land and items appropriately maintained for the lifetime of the agreement.
- Applicants must ensure that the area, unit or item entered into the scheme is suitable for the action to be carried out.
  
- Invoices, receipts and photos of work carried out must be retained for the duration of contract and for five years from beginning of contract.
- Please note that STW financial support is not available to meet the cost of:
  - Regulatory cross compliance.
  - Repairing broken or damaged existing static or mobile equipment/infrastructure.
  - Investments which do not result in any additional protection or a reduction in the contamination risk of a drinking water source.
  - Capital works which are already underway or have commenced before a STEPS contract has been issued.
  
- The grant cannot be paid if financing has already been received from another source for the same work. This includes match funding from another grant e.g. Countryside Stewardship.
- **Farms who are eligible for the Farmers as Producers of Clean Water or our Metaldehyde Product Substitution scheme must agree to sign up to a relevant scheme in order to be considered for STEPS grant funding.**

### Regulatory Compliance

- All work must comply with relevant environment legislation and it is the applicant's responsibility to obtain any necessary planning or consents as well as abiding by any relevant statutory requirements (e.g. Building Regulations). It is also important to check that proposals do not break any byelaws or obstruct rights of way. All work must comply with the relevant health and safety legislation. Please visit the HSE website [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk) for further information.
  
- All work must comply with all British Standards and Codes of Agricultural Good Practice.
- Before committing to any work, you may have to seek guidance from the Environment Agency, Natural England or your local council.

## 7.0 Using the STEPS grant guidelines in this book

| STEPS007: Pesticide Sprayer Washdown/Handling Area  |                                    | £40 per m <sup>2</sup>      |
|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Specialist advisory visit required  | Environment Agency Consents needed | Combined STEPS grant option |
| <p><b>Objective:</b> A pesticide loading and washdown area provides a dedicated space where pesticides can be safely loaded into sprayers and acts as a safe washdown area. Case studies at farm level have shown that losses from pesticide handling areas can account for more than 40% of pesticide detections in a catchment. The remaining 60% comes from the field through run-off and drain flow. Improving pesticide handling areas and managing the washings and wastes that come from pesticide handling is one measure that can be taken to help keep pesticides out of water.</p> <p><b>Specifications:</b></p> <p>Pesticide handling areas should be designed to capture any washings or spills from sprayer machinery. The area must be constructed, used and maintained in accordance with the Pesticide Handling and Blobed Manual (The Voluntary Initiative, March 2013). The following specifications must also be met when designing/installing washdown/handling area. Item can be applied with in conjunction with Biobeds (STEPS008) or Biofilters (STEPS009).</p> <p><b>Washdown Area</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A suitable site must be identified; any field drains crossing the site must be diverted</li> <li>• The structure must be impermeable.</li> <li>• The washdown/handling area should not be located within 10 metres of any field drain, watercourse, or pond, or within 50 metres of a borehole, spring or well.</li> <li>• A concrete bund must be constructed around the perimeter slab at least 100 mm high and 300 mm wide.</li> <li>• The site must not be liable to flooding or influenced by high water table.</li> <li>• All concrete joints should be sealed with a proprietary sealant.</li> <li>• The area must be large enough to adequately accommodate all liquids from the sprayer and allow the operator easy access around the sprayer unit.</li> <li>• The concrete bunded area for sprayers should be the sprayer transport width plus 2 m, and sprayer length plus 1.5 m.</li> </ul> |                                    |                             |



➤ The top section of each page shows the item reference and payment rate per unit

➤ Key information about the grants are highlighted in the blue section. This can include regulations or other requirements to qualify for the grant such as advisory visits.

It is important to read all the information on each page:

➤ Design specifications, siting guidelines and building standards are given for many STEPS items.

➤ These are to ensure the item functions correctly and provides the most benefit for the environment and your business.

➤ Regulatory requirements are also highlighted and must be read carefully as your STEPS grant agreement depends on these being adhered to.

## 8.0 Grant guidelines and information

### STEPS001: Watercourse Fencing

£ See Below

|   |  |                                   |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| Check compliance with Natural England rules | Maximum total grant for fencing<br>£2500 | Must be connected to stream/river |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|

**Objective:** Livestock access to watercourses causes erosion of riverbanks, resulting in increased levels of bacteriological and nutrient contamination. The objective of this option is to prevent livestock access to watercourses and allow the establishment of a buffer strip adjacent to watercourse.

#### Fixed costs for Fencing types

| STEPS Code | Item                       | Fixed Grant |
|------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| STEPS001a  | Post & Wire Fencing        | £3/metre    |
| STEPS001b  | Sheep Netting              | £3.90/metre |
| STEPS001c  | Permanent Electric Fencing | £2.50/metre |
| STEPS001d  | Clipex Fencing             | £2.50/metre |
| STEPS001e  | Gate (Metal)               | £140/unit   |
| STEPS001f  | Gate (Wooden-SSSI only)    | £195/unit   |
| STEPS001g  | Temporary Electric Fencing | £2.00/metre |

#### Specifications:

- Fences must be a minimum of 1.5 metres from the top of the bank of the watercourse.
- Fencing should prevent animal movement upstream or downstream.
- Where fencing is to be erected along ditches, these must have a connection to a stream or river. Those with no connection to a watercourse will not be considered for funding.
- Fencing funding is limited to £2500 per farm.
- Fencing must be stock-proof, fit for purpose and erected with permanent stakes. Posts must be placed at intervals of no more than 3.5m from the post centres. For a high tensile pattern fencing the same requirements apply to the number of line wires or netting (see below), but posts may be placed at up to 12m from the post centres (6m spacing if cattle are present).
- Livestock drinking points are not recommended due to potential water contamination that may affect water quality. An alternative water supply should be sought if necessary and can



be funded through STEPs (see STEPS002, STEPS003 & STEPS005 for details on drinking troughs and options).

- The wire used must be appropriate for the livestock type. For stock fencing there must be a minimum of 6 line wires or 3 line wires and woven wire netting (unless alternatives are prescribed by Natural England guidelines).
- Clipex Fencing should only be used with sheep.
- Temporary electric fencing may be installed but only where the watercourse floods regularly.
- If located in a SSSI, you may need to install a wooden gate (option STEPS001f) in order to comply with Natural England regulations.
- All materials used must meet the relevant British Standards (BS). When erecting a fence consider installing gates to allow management activities or husbandry operations. The financing of fencing does not cover the cost of any gates.

#### **Additional Notes:**

- You may require permission from the Environment Agency, Natural England or your local council to erect fencing along a watercourse.
  - Under this option, applicants are entitled to apply for a gate (options STEPS001e or STEPS001f) to install with their fencing to comply with Basic Payment Scheme regulations. This option should be discussed with their Agricultural Advisor.
  - The fencing option covers installation and does not include cost of maintenance and normal wear and tear.
  - **Existing damaged fencing may not be replaced using the STEPS grant.**
-

## STEPS002: Livestock Drinking Troughs

£ 50 per 100 L capacity

**Objective:** To install alternative livestock drinking sources and prevent livestock access to watercourses. The troughs must be placed in a suitable location to minimise soil poaching and run-off. Any surface water generated around the trough must not directly enter a watercourse.

### Specifications:

- You are entitled to apply for 1 drinking trough per field or paddock. The field must be adjacent to or in close proximity to a watercourse which has been fenced off to prevent livestock access.
- The new water trough should be located on land not vulnerable to soil erosion, poaching or run-off.
- The new water trough cannot be located within 10m of a watercourse and not within 50m of a borehole or reservoir.
- The area around the drinking trough should be excavated to a minimum width of 2.5 m.
- The area should be excavated to a minimum depth of 150 mm or down to a naturally occurring hard surface, the depth of which will vary according to the type of ground.
- The excavated area should be overlaid with a geo-textile membrane and the hardcore well compacted by rolling to a minimum depth of 150 mm. If there is a requirement for a thicker depth of hardcore, successive layers (each 150 mm thick) should be applied and be well compacted.
- The trough should be mounted on a suitable durable base to avoid soil poaching (see STEPS006 item Hard Base for Livestock Drinking Troughs/Pasture Pumps).
- **This item cannot be used under animal housing or a roof structure.**

### Additional Notes:

- **This option is only available where livestock are also excluded from watercourses.**
- If you decide to choose a hardcore base then it is recommended you apply for STEPS004 in addition to this scheme.
- If you intend to use the public water supply, you must comply with The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999 (as amended). These regulations aim to prevent the waste, misuse, undue consumption, contamination, or erroneous measurement of drinking water and set requirements for the design, installation, and maintenance of plumbing systems and water fittings.
- If using a water source other than mains water, the supply of water to a trough may require permission from the Environment Agency depending on the source of the water. If water is taken from a borehole, well, or watercourse the landowner may require a licence depending on the quantity abstracted. Further information can be found in the following location <https://www.gov.uk/water-management-abstract-or-impound-water>. Please visit the



Defra website <https://www.gov.uk/manage-water-on-land-guidance-for-land-managers> or telephone the Environment Agency on : 03708 506 506

- After completion of work the trough should be checked on a regular basis to ensure that there is no water leakage and that it does not overflow or contribute to soil poaching or soil erosion in the field.
  - Applicants should choose an area that's a suitable size for the livestock.
-

## STEPS003: Livestock Pasture Pumps

£180 per unit

**Objective:** To install alternative livestock drinking supply to prevent livestock access to watercourses. This item can be financed when traditional watering points within a field are fenced off to exclude stock access to the watercourse. A pasture pump will provide water for approximately 20 cattle.

### Specifications:

- You are entitled to apply for 1 pasture pump per field or paddock.
- The field must be adjacent to or within proximity of a watercourse which has been fenced to prevent livestock access.
- The area chosen for a new pasture pump should not be vulnerable to soil erosion or within 50 m of borehole or reservoir.
- The excavated area around the pump should extend to a minimum width of 1m.
- The pump should be installed on a hard standing to prevent poaching and run off.
- The pump must be designed to allow the animal to use its nose to push a lever that pumps water into a small water bowl or reservoir. A metal splash pan should be positioned under the reservoir to catch spillage.
- The pump should be securely anchored to prevent movement.
- Pasture pumps can't be used to replace existing equipment in the same location.



### Additional Notes:

- The pump can be removed and stored during winter period but must be available for inspection.
- If you decide to choose a hardcore base then it is recommended you apply for STEPS006 in addition to this scheme.
- If you intend to use the public water supply you must comply with The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999 (as amended). These regulations aim to prevent the waste, misuse, undue consumption, contamination, or erroneous measurement of drinking water and set requirements for the design, installation, and maintenance of plumbing systems and water fittings.

- If using a water source, other than mains water, the supply of water to a trough may require permission from the Environment Agency depending on the source of the water. If water is taken from a borehole, well, or watercourse the landowner may require a licence depending on the quantity abstracted. Please visit the Defra website <https://www.gov.uk/manage-water-on-land-guidance-for-land-managers> or telephone the Environment Agency on : 03708 506 506
  - The pasture pump should be checked on a regular basis to ensure that there is no water leakage.
  - Applicants should choose an area that's a suitable size for the livestock.
-

## STEPS004: Water Supply Pipe

£2 per metre

Non-Return valve must be fitted where a mains supply used

**Objective:** To install a water supply pipe to provide alternative drinking sources for livestock and prevent livestock access to watercourses. Troughs must be placed in a suitable location to minimise soil poaching and run-off. Any surface water generated around the trough must not flow directly into a watercourse.

**Specifications:** This option complements livestock drinking troughs and can be selected in conjunction with STEPS002 and STEPS003 and STEPS005 – livestock drinking troughs, pasture pumps and water pumps.

- Water supply piping attached to water troughs must be placed in a suitable location to minimise soil poaching and run-off. Any surface water generated around the trough must not directly enter a watercourse.
- The water supply pipe may be of polyethylene or UPVC and must be laid underground at a minimum depth of 800mm.
- All joints on the water supply pipe must be water tight and made of brass or plastic.

### Additional Notes:

- Applicants should choose an area that's a suitable size for the livestock.
  - If a mains water supply is used, applicants must meet the [Water Supply \(Water Fittings\) Regulations 1999](#). Installation of a no return valve on pipe work is mandatory when connecting to mains water supply.
-

## STEPS005: Water Pump

£ See Options Below

Check pumps can meet stock requirements

Additional water storage is advised

**Objective:** To install alternative livestock drinking sources to prevent livestock access to watercourses. This item can be financed when traditional watering points within a field are fenced off to exclude stock access to the watercourse.

| STEPS Code | Item             | Fixed Grant |
|------------|------------------|-------------|
| STEPS005a  | Solar Panel Pump | £450/unit   |
| STEPS005b  | Ram Pump         | £750/unit   |

**Specifications:** The fencing of water courses will protect against river bank erosion and poaching thus contributing toward cleaner water. Solar powered and ram water pumps provide a simple and reliable way of providing water to livestock when watercourses are fenced off.

- Water trough and pump should be checked on a regular basis to ensure that there is no water leakage.
- Pump systems can be easily moved from trough to trough. Ram pumps require no power source to work.
- Applicants should choose an area that's a suitable size for the livestock.
- Should only be installed by water courses that are fenced from livestock.
- Avoid poaching around the water trough.



### Additional Notes:

- You are entitled to apply for one drinking trough per field or per paddock. The field must be adjacent to or in close proximity to a watercourse which has been fenced off to prevent livestock access.
- The connecting water trough should be located on land not vulnerable to soil erosion, poaching or run-off, not located within 10m of a water course and cannot be located within 50 m of a borehole or reservoir.
- The area around the drinking trough should be excavated to a minimum width of 2.5 m.
- The area should be excavated to a minimum depth of 150 mm or down to a naturally occurring hard surface, the depth of which will vary according to the type of ground.
- The excavated area should be overlaid with a geo-textile membrane and the hardcore well compacted by rolling to a minimum depth of 150 mm. If there is a requirement for a thicker

depth of hardcore, successive layers (each  $\leq 150$  mm thick) should be applied and be well compacted.

- This item cannot be used under animal housing or a roof structure.

### **Pump Capacity and Suitability**

- The pumping capacity of solar panel and ram pumps may vary on weather and stream flow conditions. It is suggested that additional water storage tanks be provided to ensure sufficient supply is maintained during peak demand.
  - Check with suppliers that pumps will be able to raise water a sufficient height to the selected watering point.
  - Where water may need to be moved over longer distances ram pumps are more suitable and work on water pressure alone.
-



## STEPS006: Hard Base for Livestock Drinking Troughs/Gateways

£110 per base

Natural England SSSI guidelines may apply

May be used to stone gateways in arable fields

**Objective:** To reduce poaching around livestock drinking troughs. Item aims to reduce poaching, soil erosion and sediment run-off by providing a hard standing around a drinking trough, pasture pump or livestock feeder.

### Specifications:

This option can be applied to livestock drinking troughs or feeders already in place and applied for in combination with STEPS002 and STEPS003 - livestock drinking troughs and pasture pumps.

-This option may also be used to improve gateways in both livestock and arable fields.

- The excavated area around the drinking trough should extend to a minimum width of 2.5 m (cattle trough) or 1 m for a pasture pump.
- The soil on site should be excavated to a minimum depth of 150 mm or down to a naturally occurring hard surface, the depth of which will vary according to the type of ground.
- The excavated area should be overlaid with a geo-textile membrane and the hardcore well compacted by rolling to a minimum depth of 150 mm.
- If there is a requirement for a thicker depth of hardcore, successive layers (each 150 mm thick) should be applied and be well compacted.
- Hard bases cannot be constructed within 10 metres of watercourse or ditch and cannot be located within 50 m of a borehole or reservoir.
- Hard bases cannot be constructed under roofs or livestock handling facilities that aren't associated with feeding or drinking.
- Applicants should choose an area that's a suitable size for the livestock.
- Bases constructed within SSSIs must adhere to Natural England guidelines.



## STEPS007: Pesticide Sprayer Washdown/Handling Area

£40 per m<sup>2</sup>

| Specialist advisory visit required | Environment Agency consents required | Washdown area project option |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|

**Objective:** A pesticide loading and washdown area provides a dedicated space where pesticides can be safely loaded into sprayers and acts as a safe sprayer washdown area. Case studies at farm level have shown that losses from pesticide handling areas can account for more than 40% of pesticide detections in a catchment. The remaining 60% comes from the field through run-off and drain flow. Improving pesticide handling areas and managing the washings and wastes that come from pesticide handling is one measure that can be taken to help keep pesticides out of water.

### Specifications:

Pesticide handling areas should be designed to capture any washings or spills from sprayer machinery. The area must be constructed, used and maintained in accordance with the Pesticide Handling and Biobed Manual (The Voluntary Initiative, 2015). The following specifications must also be met when designing/installing a washdown/handling area. This item can be applied for in conjunction with Biobeds (STEPS008), Biofilters (STEPS009), Evaporation units (STEPS010) and Roofing for Washdown area (STEPS011). **A specialist pesticide facilities advisory visit must be conducted in order to access this STEPS item.**

### Washdown Area

- A suitable site must be identified; any field drains crossing the site must be diverted.
- The structure must be impermeable.
- The washdown/handling area should not be located within 10m of any field drain, watercourse, or pond, or within 50 m of a borehole, spring, well or reservoir.
- A concrete bund must be constructed around the perimeter slab at least 100 mm high and 300 mm wide.
- The site must not be liable to flooding or influenced by a high water table.
- All concrete joints should be sealed with a proprietary sealant.
- The area must be large enough to adequately accommodate all liquids from the sprayer and allow the operator easy access around the sprayer unit.
- The concrete bund area for sprayers should be the sprayer transport width plus 2 m, and sprayer length plus 1.5 m.



- The washdown pad should not be used as a general washdown and cleaning area for other farm equipment. Oil and grease washed into the treatment apparatus may lead to damage or inefficient function.

### **Drain/Tank**

- The concrete bunded area should have a drain (with silt trap) draining to a tank/chamber from which the pesticide washings will be pumped and directed to either a biobed or biofilter or held for disposal on land (you must ensure that if disposing to land that you do not store more than 1500 litres at any time and there is no risk of liquids leaking from the sump).
- If the concreted area is uncovered then the holding tank should be sized to also account for the local rainfall for the area.
- The extra volume to consider may be calculated by multiplying the annual rainfall and the area of the uncovered washdown pad.
- If the concreted area is covered the tank should be large enough to hold the contents of the bunded concreted area.

### **Additional Notes:**

- Construction of a concrete pesticide sprayer loading or wash down area, for crop sprayers will require arrangements to be made for the disposal of washings and/or drainage water. You must contact the Environment Agency for details on permit requirements under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010 if you plan to dispose of the pesticide washings/drainage water to land.
- The work must satisfy the relevant British Standards (BS 8000-11:2011, BS 8500, BS EN 206-1:2006, BS EN 1992- 1-1:2004; BS 6213:2000 + a1:2010, BS 5502 and BS EN 752).
- All work should be in compliance with the VI guidance entitled "Pesticide Handling Area and Biobed Manual":  
[http://www.voluntaryinitiative.org.uk/media/635211/design\\_manual\\_updated\\_9\\_22015.pdf](http://www.voluntaryinitiative.org.uk/media/635211/design_manual_updated_9_22015.pdf)

### **Pesticide washdown area project**

- This grant is available to be used in conjunction with STEPS grants for Roofing of Pesticide washdown area, Biofilter/Biobeds/evaporation units to a combined grant value of up to £10,000. See page 74 for further details and requirements.

## STEPS008: Lined Biobeds (Either off set/Drive Over)

£70 per m<sup>2</sup>

| Specialist advisory visit required | Environment Agency consents needed | Washdown area project option |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|

**Objective:** To provide a simple low cost method for on-farm treatment of dilute pesticide wastes. The biomix in the biobed allows any pesticides within the waste liquid to lock onto the organic matter, particularly onto the straw. The bacteria within the soil and the biomix then slowly work to break down the pesticide residues. Biobeds are not a substitute for best practice and every effort should still be made to avoid spills or splashes of pesticide concentrates.

### Specifications:

A biobed is a mixture of peat free compost, soil and straw (biomix) covered with turf that is placed in a lined pit. Any biobed financed by Severn Trent must be constructed, used and maintained in accordance with the Pesticide Handling and Biobed Manual (The Voluntary Initiative, March 2015). The following specifications must also be met:

- Biobeds should not be located within 10m of any field drain, watercourse, pond or 50 m of any borehole, spring, well or reservoir.
- If the proposed location of the biobed falls under any of the following criteria you need to contact the Environment Agency's Customer Help Line 03708 506 506 to determine the suitability of the proposed site:
  - Located within 10 m from a watercourse.
  - Located within 50 m from a spring or well or from any boreholes not used to supply water for domestic or food production purposes.
  - Located within 250 m from any borehole used to supply water for domestic or food production purposes.
  - Located within Source Protection Zone (SPZ) 1 or Source Protection Zone 2 (see additional notes below).
- The maximum volume of sprayer washings (excluding rain water) that can be treated by a biobed is 15,000 litres per year.
- The surface area of a biobed needs to be big enough to handle all planned sprayer washings and any associated rain water - a general rule of thumb means that you should allow approximately 1m<sup>2</sup> for every 1000 litres of water.
- Concentrated pesticide must never be disposed of to a biobed.
- To maintain the biobed, fresh, pre-composted biomix should be added to maintain its depth. The biomix should remain moist, using irrigation if necessary. Care must be taken not to allow the container to overflow. The biomix should be replaced every 5 years.

- A specialist pesticide facilities advisory visit must be conducted in order to access this STEPS item.

### Environment Agency Exemptions for Biobeds/Biofilters

- The Environment Agency should be contacted regarding site specific advice and regulatory matters on their customer enquiries line: 03708 506 506.
- Biobeds/biofilters require an Environment Agency T32 waste exemption to legally treat dilute pesticide washings. These may be applied for free online <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/waste-exemption-t32-treatment-of-waste-in-a-biobed-or-biofilter>.
- A U10 exemption allows waste biomix from the biobed (when it has come to the end of its working life) to be composted for a year and then spread to land <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/waste-exemption-u10-spreading-waste-to-benefit-agricultural-land>
- It is acceptable to apply for a STEPS grant without exemptions in place but you should ensure they have been obtained prior to the work being completed.

### Additional Notes:

There must be no risks to groundwater sites. Please contact your local Severn Trent Agricultural Advisor who will provide more information. In addition the voluntary initiative guidance document provides detailed information on SPZs:

[http://www.voluntaryinitiative.org.uk/media/635211/design\\_manual\\_updated\\_922015.pdf](http://www.voluntaryinitiative.org.uk/media/635211/design_manual_updated_922015.pdf)

- See EA Guidance on using a lined biobed to dispose of agricultural waste consisting of non-hazardous pesticide solutions or washing

[http://adlib.everysite.co.uk/resources/000/244/456/EA\\_Biobed\\_guidance\\_0507.pdf](http://adlib.everysite.co.uk/resources/000/244/456/EA_Biobed_guidance_0507.pdf)

[http://www.voluntaryinitiative.org.uk/importedmedia/news/986\\_s4.pdf](http://www.voluntaryinitiative.org.uk/importedmedia/news/986_s4.pdf)

- The Voluntary initiative website provides useful information on guidance and advice for biobeds/biofilters: <http://www.voluntaryinitiative.org.uk/en/water/biobeds-and-biofilters>

### Pesticide washdown area project

- This grant is available to be used in conjunction with STEPS grants for Pesticide Washdown Area and Roofing of Pesticide washdown area to a combined grant value of up to £10,000. See page 74 for further details and requirements

## STEPS009: Pesticide Biofilter

£ See Below

| Specialist advisory visit required | Environment Agency consents Required | Washdown area project option |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|

**Specifications:** Biofilters have the same function as biobeds; they use organic material to break down pesticides. It comprises of three vertically stacked Integrated Bulk Containers (IBCs) (only new IBCs may be used). Pesticide washings are diverted to the top container and the washings are filtered through each container. **A specialist pesticide facilities advisory visit must be conducted in order to access this STEPS item.**

| STEPS Code | Item                 | Fixed Grant |
|------------|----------------------|-------------|
| STEPS009a  | DIY Biofilter        | £950/unit   |
| STEPS009b  | Ready-Made Biofilter | £1200/unit  |

- Biofilter material is made by mixing one part peat-free compost, one part topsoil and two parts straw (wheat or barley), by volume and allowing the biomix to stand for between 30 and 90 days before being added to the biobed.
- Biofilters should not be located within 10 m of any field drain, watercourse, pond or 50 m of any borehole, spring, well or reservoir.
- If the proposed location of the biofilter falls under any of the following criteria you would need to contact the Environment Agency's Customer Help Line 03708 506 506, to determine the suitability of the proposed site:
  - Located within 10 m from a watercourse.
  - Located within 50 m from a spring or well or from any boreholes not used to supply water for domestic or food production purposes.
  - Located within 250 m from any borehole used to supply water for domestic or food production purposes.
  - Located within SPZ 1 or SPZ 2.
- You will need to obtain relevant waste exemptions from the Environment Agency.
- If constructing your own biofilter, you will need to install 3 IBCs vertically stacked to use for the bio-filtration, plus an additional holding tank to collect up to 1500 L of washings.
- As per the VI guidelines it is sensible to install the biofilter itself with a bund to trap any possible leaks and avoid any risks to water.
- Only new IBCs are permitted.



Example of a Pre-made biofilter (above)



- This option can be used in combination with the installation of a pesticide sprayer or applicator loading and wash down area as described for STEPS007.
- Regular checks for leaks must be done on IBC connection plumbing.
- Install an adequate pumping system.

### **Biofilter grant options**

- There are now numerous companies specialising in biofilters, with many offering ready-made examples that simply require assembly on farm. Alternatively biofilter kits for use with IBCs are also available at a lower cost but require more time and maintenance. The difference in the cost of these options is reflected in the grant value above.
- If choosing the Ready-made biofilter, an invoice for the item must be submitted with your claim.

### **Additional Notes:**

There must be no risks to groundwater sites. Please contact your local Severn Trent Agricultural Advisor who will provide more information.

Please consult the voluntary initiative and our catchment officers for guidance and advice.

<http://www.voluntaryinitiative.org.uk/en/water/biobeds-and-biofilters>

In addition to above. Please use guidance on the EA website when constructing a pesticide biobed or filter. [http://www.voluntaryinitiative.org.uk/importedmedia/news/986\\_s4.pdf](http://www.voluntaryinitiative.org.uk/importedmedia/news/986_s4.pdf)

Please see exemption document that allows you to spread specific waste on agricultural land: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/waste-exemption-u10-spreading-waste-to-benefit-agricultural-land>

### **Pesticide washdown area project**

- This grant is available to be used in conjunction with STEPS grants for Pesticide Washdown Area and Roofing of Pesticide washdown area to a combined grant value of up to £10,000. See page 74 for further details and requirements

## STEPS010: Disposal of pesticide washings via evaporation

£2500/unit

| Specialist advisory visit required | Environment Agency consents needed | Washdown area project option |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|

**Objective:** Evaporation of water from pesticide washings to leave a residue which is collected in a removable impermeable liner and then disposed of at an appropriate waste facility.

### Specifications:

A new alternative system has been developed which increases the options for the safe management of pesticide washings available to farmers. The system promotes the evaporation of water from washings to leave a residue which is collected in a removable impermeable liner and then disposed of at an appropriate waste facility. **A specialist pesticide facilities advisory visit must be conducted in order to access this STEPS item.**



- The system must be constructed on a concrete pad and in such a way that any spills are contained.
- The system must be able to withstand a collision from vehicles by placing protective barriers around the construction.
- A replaceable impermeable liner is installed. The liner and all residues must be removed at least once every 12 months.
- Any sumps or temporary storage tanks which feed the system should have sufficient capacity to collect rainfall from filling/washdown areas.
- Roofs should be checked regularly for leaks which could cause potential rainwater ingress and overfilling.
- Waste residues must be disposed of in accordance with any requirements of the Hazardous Waste Regulations 2005.
- You would need to contact the Environment Agency's Customer Help Line 03708 506 506 to determine the suitability of the proposed site if it is:
  - Located within 10 m from a watercourse.
  - Located within 50 m from a spring or well or from any boreholes not used to supply water for domestic or food production purposes.
  - Located within 250 m from any borehole used to supply water for domestic or food production purposes.
  - Located within SPZ 1 or SPZ 2.

### **Pesticide washdown area project**

- This grant is available to be used in conjunction with STEPS grants for Pesticide Washdown Area and Roofing of Pesticide washdown area to a combined grant value of up to £10,000. See page 74 for further details and requirements.

## STEPS011: Roofing for Pesticide Sprayer Wash-down Area

£52/m<sup>2</sup>

Specialist advisory visit may be required  
(for new projects)

Washdown area project option

**Objective:** Roofing an existing or new pesticide loading/washdown area will help to reduce the volumes of water and pesticide washings by eliminating rainfall and run-off.

### Specifications:

- Pesticide handling areas must be bunded and meet current EA regulatory requirements. These EA regulatory requirements have been outlined in STEPS007: Pesticide Sprayer Washdown/Handling Area.
- The constructed roof must cover the concrete bunded area, plus a 1.5 metre overhang and on all sides. Any additional roofing required beyond this specification must be funded by the applicant.
- The work may include foundations, supporting structure, roof sheeting (must be impermeable to rainwater), guttering and the installation of clean water drains.
- Guttering and drains must direct roof water to a clean water drain. Please see STEPS020 – Rainwater Harvesting for additional options.
- Side walls and shades can also be built with your roof. This work would not be covered by the STEPS grant and would therefore be at your own expense. Any additional building must comply with any consent/permits acquired.
- Your claim will be based on the erected roofed area in (m<sup>2</sup>).

### Additional Notes:

The foundations, support structure and roof must comply with the relevant parts of BS 5502. Drainage works must comply with BS 8000; BS8500; BS EN 752; BS EN 206-1:2000; BS6213:2000+A1:2010 and BS EN 1610.

### Pesticide washdown area project

- This grant is available to be used in conjunction with STEPS grants for Pesticide Washdown Area and a pesticide treatment option to a combined grant value of up to £10,000. See page 74 for further details and requirements.

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## Pesticide handling project - Washdown Pad, Roofing and Biobeds/Biofilters/Disposal via evaporation units

Combine 2 years STEPS projects to create a complete washdown area

Must be discussed with an ST agricultural advisor

**Objective:** Construction of roofed pesticide washdown and treatment facilities simultaneously.

- When constructing a pesticide sprayer washdown area, it is often practical to install roofing at the same time. However, this may result in claimable costs for the pad, treatment facility and roofing exceeding the £5000 grant limit in a single STEPS round.



- It is now possible to combine STEPS grants for pesticide handling options from two consecutive years, but construct them at the same time in order to create a complete pesticide washdown and treatment facility.
- STEPS claims for fixed price pesticide items up to £5000 may be awarded as soon as the work is completed. However any works beyond the £5000 value will be treated as an advanced grant for the following STEPS period (up to £5000). The remaining balance will be paid after 5<sup>th</sup> April in the following financial year.

### If selecting this option, please make it clear on the application

- Only pesticide washdown areas, roofing of pesticide washdown/handling area and biobed/biofilter/disposal through evaporation may be selected using this option. All items must be constructed in year 1 of the STEPS agreement.
- Following the completion of work, farms may submit an additional STEPS application for other items (including non-pesticide) during the normal STEPS period in year 2. However the value grant already spent on the pesticide facilities will be deducted from the total amount available.

**Example:** A farmer wants to construct a brand new pesticide washdown pad together with a ready-made biofilter and roofing. The combined value of the three grants is £6760 – therefore £1760 above the funding limit. Under the handling facilities option, all the work can be done at the same time. Once completed, the farmer submits a claim for the work. The initial £5000 is paid immediately. The remaining £1760 is then paid after 5<sup>th</sup> April.

## STEPS012: Installation of piped culverts in ditches

£160/unit

| Check for sensitive habitats | Specialist advisory visit required | Internal Drainage Board Consents |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|

**Objective:** To culvert water from a ditch or drain under a machinery or livestock track. Culverts are short sections of pipe designed to carry anticipated flows in ditches to provide safe passage for livestock and machinery. **A specialist water management advisory visit must be conducted to access this STEPS item.**

### Specifications:

- The Environment Agency must be consulted prior to any installation ('Land Drainage' consent may be required).
- Culverts are short sections of pipe designed to carry anticipated flows and must be a minimum of 450mm in diameter but suited to the likely flows.
- The minimum diameter required for culverts for heavy traffic wheeled vehicles is 4 m. Consult the culvert manufacturer for further details.
- Culvert manufacturer specifications and health and safety protocols must be followed. For heavy duty vehicles, manufacturer specifications must be checked.
- The pipe gradient should be approximately equal to that of the ditch bed.
- Pipes must have a positive joint to preserve alignment.
- It may be necessary to take preventative action to reduce the risk of erosion at the downstream end of the culvert. If necessary insert stones or slabs as protection measures on either side of ditch.
- Culverts cannot be applied for if managed under another agri-environmental scheme.
- This measure cannot be implemented where a culvert could potentially drain protected and sensitive habitats such as:
  - SSSIs
  - Sites of Nature Conservation Interest



### Additional Notes:

Concrete work should be carried out in accordance with the relevant British Standards and all pipe-work should be laid in accordance with BS 8000. Any pipe work used should be manufactured and certified to the British Board of Agreement (BBA).

You may need advice from:

- Flood defence consenting authority
- Local planning authority
- Internal drainage board



## STEPS013 Roofs for existing slurry stores

£52 per m<sup>2</sup>

### Consultation with the Environment Agency required

**Objective:** To prevent rain from falling on slurry stores which can increase the volume of slurry storage required. This will decrease the need to spread slurry at inappropriate times due to storage shortages. This item will help to reduce the risk of pathogens and nutrients entering watercourses.

**Specifications:** The roofing of slurry storage facilities reduces slurry volume by diverting rainwater.

- The Water Resources (Control of Pollution) (Silage, Slurry, and Agricultural Fuel Oil) Regulations (England) 2010 and as amended 2013 (SSAFO) apply to new or substantially reconstructed or enlarged facilities for the storage of manures, slurries, silage and agricultural fuel oil.
- You **MUST** submit evidence with your application that the Environment Agency confirm your plans are acceptable under the SSAFO regulations.
- Roofs must be impermeable to rainwater and water must be directed away from site into a clean water drain.
- For health and safety reasons, the work should be carried out when the slurry storage facility is empty.
- Covering of the site may require planning permission. You should check with your local planning authority.
- It may be advisable that farmers do not attach the roof to an old existing structure as the sides may not be able to bear the new roof load. If this is the case, the newly constructed roof can act as an umbrella over the store and therefore not touch the existing store.
- You must notify your local EA officer and find out if planning is required or if it will be carried out under permitted development.
- Your claim will be based on the erected roofed area in (m<sup>2</sup>).

### Additional Notes:

The foundations, support structure and roof must comply with the relevant parts of British Standard Summaries (including BS 5502). Drainage works must comply with BS 8000; BS EN 752 and BS EN 1610. They must have a minimum design life of 20 years (with maintenance) and satisfy the relevant British Standards.

STW will not fund any roofing of a structure that is deemed illegal.

---

## STEPS014: Floating covers for existing slurry stores

£6.50 per m<sup>2</sup>

**Objective:** Floating covers will reduce the volume of slurry by diverting rainfall away into a clean water drain.

**Specifications:** A suitable flexible heavy-gauge fabric cover for slurry stores requiring specialist supply and fitting.

- Must be impermeable to prevent rainfall from entering the slurry storage.
- May require a small pump to remove surplus rainwater collected on the surface of the cover.
- Must display appropriate signs to warn of the dangers of confined spaces and fragile covers.
- Should be placed on floats, if necessary.
- Should be secured to avoid wind damage.
- An invoice is required for proof of purchase.
- Option is not available under a regulatory requirement.
- Your claim will be based on the floating covered area in (m<sup>2</sup>).



### Additional Notes:

Slurry stores should meet the SSAFO regulations. These regulations cover the design, construction and maintenance of the stores. For further information please visit the DEFRA website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/storing-silage-slurry-and-agricultural-fuel-oil>

## STEPS015: Roofing of existing manure storage and livestock holding areas

£52 per m<sup>2</sup>

**Objective:** To reduce surface runoff from farmyards and reduce the risk of pathogens and nutrients from entering watercourses

**Specifications:** The roofing of farm yard manure storage heaps reduce runoff, and reduce costs associated with storage and spreading of dirty water. Roofing livestock holding yards can benefit animal handling and welfare and reduce dirty surface run-off. Any run-off of FYM effluent is deemed as slurry and must be collected via a holding tank.

- The applicant must stipulate if option applies to either farm manure storage or livestock handling facilities.
- Structures without a concrete base are not eligible for funding.
- Temporary field heaps are not eligible for funding.
- The covering of the site may require planning permission. You should check with your local planning authority.
- Roof must be impermeable to rainwater and water must be directed away from site into a clean water drain.
- FYM store cannot also be used as to house feed, livestock or machinery during winter period. If inspection determines that your manure store is being used for feed, livestock or machinery it will be a breach of agreement.
- Livestock handling area cannot also be used as animal housing. If inspection determines that your livestock handling area is used for animal housing it will be a breach of agreement
- Your claim will be based on the erected roofed area in (m<sup>2</sup>).



### Additional Notes:

The foundations, support structure and roof must comply with the relevant parts of British Standard Summaries (including BS 5502). Drainage works must comply with BS 8000; BS EN 752 and BS EN 1610.

## STEPS016: Arable grass margin: 6+ metre buffer

£1250 per Hectare

|                  |   |                       |
|------------------|---|-----------------------|
| 5 year agreement | Can include margins from expired Environmental Stewardship agreements | Cannot be part of EFA |
|------------------|---|-----------------------|

**Objective:** To provide a habitat for flora and fauna, increase biodiversity and help prevent run off entering watercourses.

### Specifications:

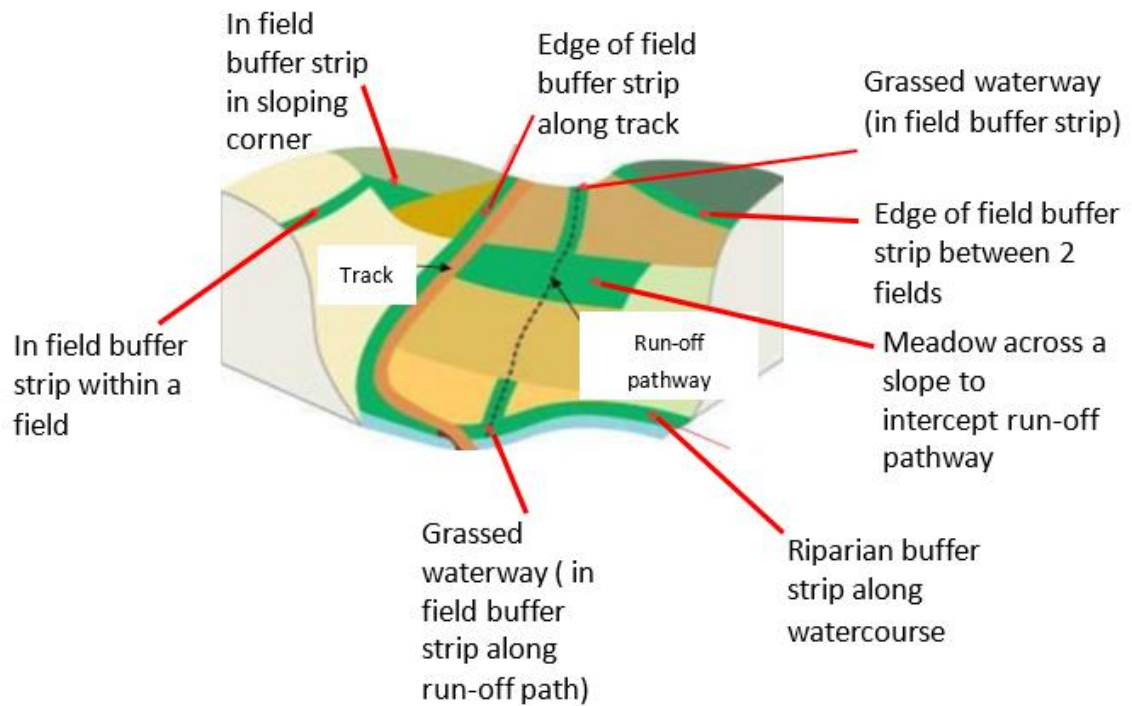
Grass margins act as a buffer zone intercepting sediment, nutrients and pesticide runoff. Applicants who apply for this option will be committing to maintaining a grass margin buffer zone for a **5-year period** from the beginning of the agreement. Upon entering into this 5 year agreement you will receive a single payment in year one of agreement. This single payment is expected to cover any maintenance for the five year period. Payments will be based on the area of land designated to the buffer zone. The picture below demonstrates areas acceptable as buffer zones.



- Establish of a minimum 6 metre grass margin along arable field boundaries.
- Existing margins established in **expired** stewardship schemes may be included.
- Grass margins can also be placed in-field depending on the topography.
- Grass seed labels and receipts should be kept for the duration of the scheme.
- Soil cultivation cannot be carried out once the margin is established.
- Pesticides, fertiliser or lime cannot be applied to the grass margin.
- Grazing is not permitted on the grass margin.
- Margins must not be used as access ways for machinery or stock.
- Fertiliser may be used for crop establishment only.
- The margin may be topped annually and should be maintained in order to preserve a healthy sward.
- Any buffer zone created for Ecological focus Area (EFA, CAP greening criteria) cannot be claimed under STEPS. EFA is a regulatory requirement which cannot be funded by STEPS. Please see Basic Payment Scheme handbook 2017 handbook greening (EFA) for more details:  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/645304/BPS\\_2017\\_scheme\\_rules.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/645304/BPS_2017_scheme_rules.pdf)
- Grass margins may be exchanged with wild flower, bird or insect seed mixes to enhance biodiversity.
- Unproductive field corners may be included in the area claimed at the discretion of your Agricultural Advisor.

### Additional Notes:

The location of grass margins must be placed in arable fields and clearly marked on the submitted maps. The grass margin cannot be relocated to another field.



## STEPS017: Livestock Removal from High Risk Fields

£500 per hectare

Borehole catchments only

Must be discussed with agricultural advisor

**Objective:** To promote grassland flora and fauna and reduce pathogen risk to waterbodies from high risk fields

**Specifications:** This is a 5 year agreement where you will receive a single payment in year one of agreement. A high risk field is determined by its topography, soil type and its proximity to a water course. Your local Agricultural Advisor will determine if this is a suitable option for your farm.

- Livestock must be part of the farming enterprise.
- Livestock must be removed from field all year round.
- Maximum chemical nitrogen usage is 40 kg N per year.
- No slurry or Farm Yard Manure (FYM) can be applied to land.
- Field must not be put into an arable crop.
- Grazing cannot take place but the making of hay, hayledge and silage is permitted.

### Additional Notes:

The location of the high-risk fields must be clearly marked on the map submitted with your STEPS application. The STW Agricultural Advisor will assist in identifying potentially high risk fields. They will be determined on a case by case basis depending on the associated risks.

## STEPS018: Riverside Margins in Grass Fields

£ See Rates Below

|                  |   |  |
|------------------|---|--|
| 1 year agreement | Per metre length of watercourse protected | Can include pre-established margins in expired stewardship schemes |
|------------------|---|--|

**Objective:** Protect watercourse from pesticides, nutrients and bacteria by creating linear buffer zones adjacent to watercourses which intercept overland flow and prevent livestock access to watercourses.

**Specifications:** Livestock grazing in the riparian (riverside) zone can lead to harmful pathogens entering the water. Riverside margins will stabilise riverbanks and reduce soil erosion. Riverside margins also intercept overland flow, reducing the risk of nutrients, pathogens and sediments entering water.

- Margin width is measured from the top of bank.
- STEPS grants are based on the length of watercourse protected by either a 15m or 30m wide buffer (see diagram in additional notes).
- Pesticides, fertiliser or lime cannot be applied to the margin.
- Livestock are not allowed to graze the margin from its date of establishment until the end of your STEPS contract.
- The margin may be mown but not between March 1<sup>st</sup> and August 16<sup>th</sup>.
- Pre-existing margins established during **expired** stewardship schemes may be included.
- The location of the riparian margin must be clearly marked on the map submitted with your STEPS application. Note in order to maintain claims on your single farm payment scheme, a gate or moveable rail should be installed.

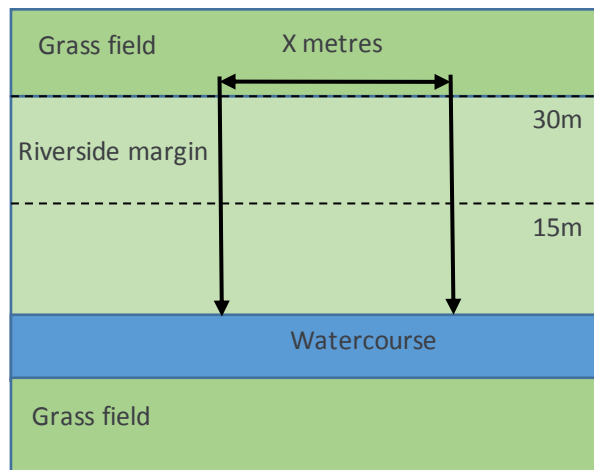
| Code      | Scheme                              | Grant                                   |
|-----------|-------------------------------------|---|
| STEPS018a | Riverside margins – 15 metre buffer | £1.50 metre length of watercourse /year |
| STEPS018b | Riverside margins – 30 metre buffer | £2.70 metre length of watercourse /year |



### Additional Notes

- Riverside margin and distance used in STEPS grant calculation (X metres)
- Example: A Farmer chooses to install 15 m buffers along a watercourse. 500 metres of watercourse are protected by the buffer. Therefore their STEPS grant is:

500 metres x £1.50 = £750 per year



## STEPS019: Cover crops

£60 per Hectare

|                  |   |                            |
|------------------|---|----------------------------|
| 1 year agreement | Cover crop area confirmation<br>window May-August | Establish by Sept.<br>15th |
|------------------|---|----------------------------|

**Objective:** Establishing a cover crop during fallow periods reduces nutrient leaching during the autumn/winter and provides soil protection from wind and rain erosion.

**Please take into account crops rotations when sowing cover crops. Cover crops can potentially lead to an increase in slug populations depending on weather and soil conditions.**

### Specifications:

- The crop must be established annually by September 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Under sowing or sowing grass crops is not permitted.
- Ryegrass is an acceptable crop to establish cover following early harvested maize.
- Selected crop must give good ground cover, maize or elephant grass is not accepted.
- Fertiliser should not be applied to the crop.
- The land chosen must be adjacent to a water body or have a known direct influence on a water body in close proximity. Note that this includes groundwater.
- Advice should be sought from the STW Agriculture Advisor to deem if field is suitable
- The crop must remain in situ from the date of sowing until at least the 31<sup>st</sup> of January.
- Grazing of cover crops in surface water catchments is permitted but not until after January 31<sup>st</sup>.
- In groundwater catchments, grazing is not permitted until after 31<sup>st</sup> March.
- Ploughing is not permitted the use of light cultivation techniques is recommended.
- It is recommended you discuss this option with an agronomist or STW Agriculture Advisor.
- Any crop sown created for Ecological focus Area (EFA, CAP greening criteria) cannot be claimed under STEPS. EFA is a regulatory requirement which cannot be funded by STEPS. Please see Basic Payment Scheme handbook 2015 handbook greening (EFA) for more details:  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/406452/BPS\\_Handbook\\_-\\_final\\_v1.0.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/406452/BPS_Handbook_-_final_v1.0.pdf)

### Additional Notes:

The location of the area selected must be clearly marked on the map submitted with your STEPS application. Below is a list of prescribed crops which will be funded through this STEPS measure

are given in the table below. **Note: this is a recommended list and is not mandatory. All crops types will be considered**

| Cover Crop Species  | Minimum rate Kg/Ha | Seed | Cover Crop Species         | Minimum rate Kg/Ha | Seed |
|---------------------|--------------------|------|----------------------------|--------------------|------|
| Mustard             | 10 - 15            |      | Radish /Phacelia /Oat mix  | 22 - 25            |      |
| Oil Radish          | 15 - 20            |      | Mustard /Oat /Phacelia mix | 20 - 23            |      |
| Winter Turnip Rape. | 10 - 15            |      | Forage Rye /Vetch mix      | 40 - 45            |      |

It is suggested that farmers sow as early as possible for good establishment and maximum nutrient capture. Direct drilling into cereal stubble is an effective method of planting.

**I would like to apply for catch crops but don't know the area just yet:**

- At the time of submitting your STEPS application, it may not be clear on the area/location of cover crops you will be planting later in the year.
- Therefore it is acceptable to state the approximate area and location you think you may plant on your application form and submit by **March 16<sup>th</sup> 2018**.
- When you know the exact area later in the year, inform your Agricultural Advisor before August 15<sup>th</sup> 2018 who will supply you with a form to mark the area and location.
- You must supply maps and photos of catch crop locations at the time of confirmation

**Note:** The total value of the STEPS grant is capped at £5000 including any crops confirmed during summer. Severn Trent will be unable to fund the value of crops above £5000.

## STEPS020: Rainwater Harvesting (RWH)

£ See list below

Planning consent may be required

**Objective:** To reduce the quantity of water entering your slurry store, running across fouled yards, or entering your dirty water tank.

| STEPS Code | Item                                | Fixed Grant         |
|------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| STEPS020a  | Underground tank                    | £350/m <sup>3</sup> |
| STEPS020b  | Aboveground Tank                    | £110/m <sup>3</sup> |
| STEPS020c  | Flush rainwater diverters & filters | £125 per unit       |
| STEPS020d  | Downpipes and gutters               | £12 per metre       |

**Specifications:** Rainwater is collected from roofed sheds which is then filtered. This filtered water is either pumped or gravity fed into a storage tank. Harvested rainwater can be used for irrigation of specified crops and the washing of farmyards and machinery. Harvested rainwater can be supplied as livestock drinking water but must be subjected to further treatment first (e.g. UV treatment). Both above ground and below ground storage tanks are available. The grant offered takes the following into account:

- Installing the tank and pump;
- Site excavation;
- Creating a reinforced base for the tank;
- Installing connecting pipe-work

### Above ground storage tanks

- You must check with the local planning authority in case planning consent is needed.
- Construction of rainwater storage tanks should follow manufacturer's instructions.
- Second-hand tanks are not eligible for funds.
- Storage tanks should be situated on hard standing concrete.
- Storage tanks cannot be used for collecting dirty water, effluents and slurries.
- All tanks with a mains water top-up supply must be fitted with non-return valves.



### **Below ground storage tanks**

- You must check with the local planning authority in case planning consent is needed and consult the Environment Agency.
- Construction of rainwater storage tanks should follow manufacturer's instructions.
- Second-hand tanks are not eligible for funds.
- Underground tanks should not be installed in ground with a high water table unless further structural work is undertaken to avoid tanks from floating. In such cases you must seek advice from the manufacturer.
- Underground storage tanks should be made up of glass-reinforced plastic and pre-cast concrete.
- The grant includes the tank, pump, site excavation, a concrete bed, backfilling with concrete to cover the tank.
- Storage tanks cannot be used for collecting dirty water, effluents and / or slurries.

### **Flush rainwater diverters & downpipe filters**

- You must check with the local planning authority in case planning consent is needed.
- Item diverts and filters potentially contaminated roof water to keep leaves, debris and other contaminants out of water storage tanks.
- Contaminated water is diverted from tanks, reducing tank maintenance and protecting pumps.
- Must send dated photographs of the existing site with your application for this item.
- Item is only available in conjunction with rainwater harvesting system.

### **Replacement of downpipes and gutters**

- Must send dated photographs of the existing sheds with your application for this item.
- Item is only available in conjunction with rainwater harvesting system or diversion into a clean water drainage system.
- Cannot be used on guttering and downpipes on proposed new buildings.
- Applicants must write a justification for using the item, explaining why it's necessary and how it meets the eligibility criteria.
- Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:
  - any consents or permissions connected with the work.
  - receipted invoices or bank statements where a receipted invoice is unavailable
  - photographs of the completed work.

## STEPS021: Cultivate and Drill Across the Slope

£10 per hectare

1 year agreement

Field drainage patterns may change

**Objective:** Cultivate and drill along the slope (contour) to reduce the risk of developing surface runoff.

**Specifications:** When land is cultivated and drilled along the contour it can reduce surface flow and reduce the risk of sediments, nutrients and pesticides reaching watercourses.

- This item is suitable for crops grown on gentle and moderate slopes with simple slope patterns, particularly for fields close to a watercourse.
- This option is not suitable for fields with complex slopes as it may not be practical to follow the contours accurately.
- Cultivation and drilling should not be carried out across very steep slopes, due to the risk of machinery overturning.
- Advice should be sought from the Severn Trent Agriculture Advisor to deem if field is suitable.
- Please be aware that contour cultivation may alter field drainage patterns.



## STEPS022 Manage Overwinter Tramlines

£10 per hectare

1 year agreement

**Objective:** The use of tines to disrupt tramlines to improve water infiltration rates can help to reduce accelerated runoff.

**Specifications:** This item is available for fields close to watercourses and can be used to help prevent surface flow and sediment movement along compacted tramlines. This will reduce the amount of soil erosion across a field and reduce the risk of sediment, nutrients and pesticides reaching the water course.

- A simple tine should be used to disrupt the tramline between October and February. This breaks up the soil compaction and encourages water to infiltrate into the soil.
  - Land must be adjacent to water course or have direct influence on a watercourse
  - Applicable to winter cereal land. Not recommended on winter oilseed rape sown land.
  - Photographic evidence must be taken.
  - Invoices must be kept if contractors are used or machinery is rented.
-



## STEPS023: Cultivate (loosen) Compacted Soil

Subsoiling £10 per hectare

Aeration £5 per hectare

|                  |  |  |
|------------------|--|--|
| 1 year agreement | Advisory soil husbandry visit required | Photos required before/during/after work |
|------------------|--|--|

**Objective:** Compaction of fields increases soil erosion and surface flows and increases the risk of soil, manure, nutrients and pesticides reaching watercourses. The cultivation of compacted tillage soils will increase aeration and water infiltration rates which will reduce soil erosion and surface run-off.

**Specifications:** This item will assist in financing to reduce soil compaction for improved grassland or cultivated fields where there is a risk of surface flow reaching a watercourse. **A specialist soil husbandry advisory visit must be conducted in order to access this STEPS item.**

- The type of machinery required depends on the soil type, texture and the depth of compaction, but is likely to include shallow spiking or sub-soiling.
  - Aeration of grass fields requires less energy and so receives a reduced grant rate.
  - Expert advice should be sought on the appropriate machinery.
  - To maximise the benefit and avoid any further soil compaction, only use machinery when the soil is dry at the depth that is to be loosened. It is possible that this process may cause initial damage to the root system for grassland fields.
  - Photographic evidence must be taken before, during and after subsoiling
  - Invoices must be kept if contractors are used or machinery is rented.
  - Severn Trent Water is not responsible for any financial loss incurred from this action.
-

## Specialist advisory visit required

**Objective:** Grassed swales are straight areas of grass which are designed to allow surface flow to collect and soak away, trapping sediment.

**Specifications:** The item consists of site preparation and excavation of the swale. Please note that in calculating the area of the swale for the application form, measurement should start at the inside edge of the created bank. A long swale allows additional time for water to soak away and for sediment to settle. **A specialist water management advisory visit must be conducted in order to access this STEPS item.**

It is not suitable for run-off classified as slurry, or for run-off from a pesticide handling or washdown area.

The following specifications should be met:

- The swale should be constructed on the contour or at a longitudinal slope of normally no greater than 2 degrees.
- The layout of the swale should be marked on the ground and excavated to a depth of 500 mm.
- Topsoil should be stockpiled separately and used in the bottom of the swale and on the graded slopes.
- Side slopes should be graded to no more than 1:3.
- The floor of the swale should be excavated for a further 150-250 mm and replaced with topsoil.
- A dense grass sward should be established on the sides and floor of the swale.
- The formation of a swale could be considered to be an engineering operation and may require planning permission. The Local Authority should be consulted before any work commences.
- This item can ideally be used in conjunction with check dams (STEPS025) to slow the flow of water. Please discuss a Water Management Plan with your local CSF officer or ST Agricultural Advisor.

For more information see 'Wildfowl and Wetlands' guide and Environment Agency link:

[http://www.wwt.org.uk/uploads/documents/1429707026\\_WWTConstructedFarmWetlands150422.pdf](http://www.wwt.org.uk/uploads/documents/1429707026_WWTConstructedFarmWetlands150422.pdf)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/291508/scho0612buwh-e-e.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/291508/scho0612buwh-e-e.pdf)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/297398/geho0112bvyf-e-e.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/297398/geho0112bvyf-e-e.pdf)

## STEPS025: Check Dams

£42 per dam

Use in conjunction with swales

**Objective:** Check dams slow down the flow of water from a swale and allow any sediment within the surface flow to be deposited. It consists of a small barrier constructed across a swale or field drain to slow flows, control erosion and trap sediment.

**Specifications:** Your local authority should be consulted before any work commences. Check dams should be located at regular intervals along the swale or field drain; the steeper the slope the shorter the distance should be between each check dam.

- Check dams should be constructed of graded broken stone.
- The height of the check dam is recommended to be 500-750mm. However, this figure should be taken in conjunction of the actual size of the field trench.
- The dam must be checked and de-silted regularly to prevent it collecting a large amount of silt which could potentially block the trench.
- Depending on size of field trench, multiple check dams may be necessary (your Agricultural Adviser will be able to advise you on this).
- Build the check dam at the down slope end of the grass swale, leave the upslope end of the trench empty.
- Side slopes of the check dam should be at a maximum gradient of 1 in 2.



For more information see 'Wildfowl and Wetlands' guide and Environmental Agency link:  
[http://www.wwt.org.uk/uploads/documents/1429707026\\_WWTConstructedFarmWetlands150422.pdf](http://www.wwt.org.uk/uploads/documents/1429707026_WWTConstructedFarmWetlands150422.pdf)  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/291508/scho0612buwh-e-e.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/291508/scho0612buwh-e-e.pdf)

### Additional Notes:

This item can ideally be used in conjunction with grass swales (STEPS024) to slow the flow of water.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/297398/geho0112bvyf-e-e.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/297398/geho0112bvyf-e-e.pdf)

## STEPS027: In Ditch Seepage Barriers

£150 per barrier

Specialist advisory visit required

Consult Environment Agency or Internal  
drainage board

**Objective:** An in ditch wetland barrier is a dam that allows the slow passage of water through it. By slowing down the flow, sediment can be deposited helping to remove nutrients and pesticides from the water.

**Specifications:** Advice and assistance from the Environment Agency may be required for this item. To find your local Environment Agency office please try the following contact information; Email: [enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk) or Telephone 03708 506 506.

**A specialist pesticide facilities advisory visit must be conducted in order to access this STEPS item.**

- In ditch wetland barriers should be located within man-made field ditches where land on either side is owned by the applicant.
- They are best placed where the ditch system carries a fast flow of water during intensive rain events.
- The number of barriers in any one ditch would depend on the gradient, with steep gradients benefiting from more structures.
- In ditch wetland barriers must not be constructed on natural watercourses, or where there is a high risk to land or property if the structure was to cause local flooding.
- The in ditch wetland barrier should be no more than 4 m wide and 1 m high.
- Wooden slats should be formed either vertically or horizontally (if less than 2 m wide) leaving 1-2 mm gap between each barrier.
- Galvanised steel girders may be used as holding posts for the slats. The slats must be of sufficient strength to resist the force of fast flowing water and be durable.

### Additional Notes

The wood must not be treated with a chemical wood preservative product as these are toxic to aquatic life. Materials other than timber may be used for construction as long as they allow water to percolate through at a suitable speed.

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## STEPS028: In Ditch Wetlands

£250 per wetland

Environment Agency consultation required

Advisory visit required

**Objective:** 'In ditch wetlands' are formed within existing ditches that have been widened and re-profiled to create areas where wetland vegetation can develop and slow the flow of water; increasing sediment deposition and reduce the quantities of nutrient and pesticides in the water.

**Specifications:** Advice and assistance from the Environment Agency will be required for this item. To find your local Environment Agency office please try the following contact information; Email: [enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk) or Telephone 03708 506 506. **A specialist water management advisory visit must be conducted in order to access this STEPS item.**

The 'in ditch wetland' area should be located within man-made field ditches where land on either side is owned by the applicant. Normally these should be created in ditches with shallow gradients which do not have continuous flow all year round. It must not be constructed on natural watercourses, due to the requirement to ensure free fish movement, or where there is a high risk to land or property if the structure was to cause local flooding. The downstream edge of the in ditch wetland area should not be located close to a field drain outlet and typically should be at least 3m away. The design will need to be tailored for specific sites, following specialist advice, but the general construction requirements are outlined below:

- Work should be carried out during a dry period to avoid any unnecessary soil damage.
- Widen an area to no more than 3m in width and at least 10m in length.
- The depth of water across the majority of the ditch is around 50cm in depth with a maximum of 75cm.
- In ditch barriers can be used as they will encourage deposition of sediments.
- Soil bund with a pipe at the lower end of the ditch to act as an outflow in order to control water flows. The bund should be made wider than the ditch.
- In the bund, locate the pipe 30cm below the top of the bank. The pipe diameter will be dependent on flow but it is recommended that one or two pipes are set inside the bund and should range between 20-28 cm in diameter. This option can also be combined with a wetland barrier where sediment load is high, to avoid an adverse impact on the vegetated area.
- Allow the area to naturally re-vegetate. Alternatively, local wetland species may be planted. For reed, rush and sedge species, plant at a density of three plants per m<sup>2</sup>.

Note that the finance available for this item is for an individual re-profiled area, although the exact dimensions of this can vary (minimum of 10m in length). For more information see 'Wildfowl and Wetlands' guide and Environmental Agency link:

[http://www.wwt.org.uk/uploads/documents/1429707026\\_WWTConstructedFarmWetlands150422.pdf](http://www.wwt.org.uk/uploads/documents/1429707026_WWTConstructedFarmWetlands150422.pdf)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/291508/scho0612buwh-e-e.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/291508/scho0612buwh-e-e.pdf)

## STEPS029: Sediment Ponds/Traps

£ See table below

| Specialist advisory visit required | Environment Agency consultation required |
|------------------------------------|--|
|------------------------------------|--|

**Objective:** Sediment ponds/traps are designed to trap run-off from fields or farmyards. Sediment ponds/traps can trap large volumes of sediment and contaminants (phosphates, pesticides, cryptosporidium) which could potentially make its way into watercourses.

| STEPS Code | Item                        | Fixed Grant          |
|------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| STEPS029a  | Earth construction          | £ 15 /m <sup>2</sup> |
| STEPS029b  | Concrete trap and soak away | £750/unit            |

**Specifications:** Sediment traps may take the form simple of dug-out ponds or concrete collection pits and soak-aways (see picture below). Applicants must discuss with the Environment Agency before applying for grant. **A specialist water management advisory visit must be conducted in order to access this STEPS item.**

- It is preferable to have a number of small ponds and traps around the farm rather than a single larger feature.
- Should only be used when other soil erosion control measures to prevent erosion and sedimentation cannot be applied.
- Does not apply to already existing ponds, areas of existing archaeological or historic value.
- Size of pond/trap depends on soil type and runoff volumes that are to be intercepted.
- Concrete collection pits should be constructed with a soak away (at least 3 times the length of the trap).
- For large scale sediment ponds, advice from soil and water or civil engineer should be sought.
- Excavated topsoil should be spread on top of embankments.
- Outflow pipe should be installed at a suitable location 750 mm below the top of the embankment to provide a freeboard.
- Regular maintenance will be required on sediment ponds/traps. Removal of sediment from ponds/traps as required. EA may need to be contacted if site is contaminated. Check for blockages regularly.
- For more information see 'wildfowl and wetlands' guide and Environmental Agency link :  
[http://www.wwt.org.uk/uploads/documents/1429707026\\_WWTConstructedFarmWetlands150422.pdf](http://www.wwt.org.uk/uploads/documents/1429707026_WWTConstructedFarmWetlands150422.pdf)  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/291508/scho0612buwh-e-e.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/291508/scho0612buwh-e-e.pdf)





## STEPS030: Constructed farm wetlands

£ 50% ex. VAT cost up to £5000

Advisory visit required

Environment Agency consultation required

**Objective:** Constructed farm wetlands are intended to receive and treat 'lightly contaminated' water from around farmyards.

**Specifications:** Constructed farm wetlands may comprise of a series of one or more constructed ponds and are used to treat runoff and diffuse pollution. Constructed farm wetlands can be effective in reducing suspended solids, phosphorus, nitrogenous compounds and some pesticides. They are not intended to treat runoff heavily contaminated with slurry, silage effluent or pesticides. **A specialist water management advisory visit must be conducted in order to access this STEPS item.**

The size and type of wetland to be constructed will depend on the flow and strength of effluent from the point source (farmyard). Constructed farm wetlands provide specific solutions for specific circumstances.

The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT), has produced a guide on how to simply and cheaply construct effective vegetated ditches, sediment ponds or more complex constructed wetlands to trap and treat pollutants.

For more information see 'Wildfowl and Wetlands' guide and Environmental Agency link:

[http://www.wwt.org.uk/uploads/documents/1429707026\\_WWTConstructedFarmWetlands150422.pdf](http://www.wwt.org.uk/uploads/documents/1429707026_WWTConstructedFarmWetlands150422.pdf)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/291508/scho0612buwh-e-e.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/291508/scho0612buwh-e-e.pdf)

**Objective:** Nitrate in surface water is an ongoing issue in the environment. Bioreactors are a new option to reduce the amount of nitrate in field drainage before it outflows into surface waters. The bioreactor can be installed on a field drain and consists of woodchips. Bioreactors provide a habitat for micro-organisms and bacteria which feed on nitrate, breaking it down into nitrogen gas. They are installed near to the outlet of a drainage system and are buried, so that no land is lost to production. Drainage water containing nitrates enters the reactor, the micro-organisms and bacteria feed on the nitrates and remove or break it down, and the water leaving the system has nitrate levels far lower than when it entered.



[http://www.ldca.org/LDCA%20Land%20Drainage%20and%20its%20role%20in%20Farming%27s%20Future%20-%20Rob%20Burtonshaw%20\(1\).pdf](http://www.ldca.org/LDCA%20Land%20Drainage%20and%20its%20role%20in%20Farming%27s%20Future%20-%20Rob%20Burtonshaw%20(1).pdf)

#### Specifications:

- Woodchips must fall into the ¼-inch to 1-inch (0.6 to 2.5 cm) size range and must not be derived from treated or preserved wood.
- Installation site approximately 3.5 metres in width and 30 metres in length.

#### Additional Notes:

- Requires very little maintenance
- Do not need to take land out of production
- Their use does not result in a decrease in drainage efficiency
-

## STEPS032: Low nitrogen input into grassland

£1200 per hectare

|                  |                          |                         |
|------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 5 year agreement | Borehole catchments only | Must be in SPZ1 or SPZ2 |
|------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|

**Objective:** This option will reduce nitrate input into grassland in highly targeted locations to help slow or reverse nutrient levels in groundwater. This option is only applicable to grassland in our groundwater catchments.

**NOTE:** This option is only available in targeted areas. The targeting is restricted to specific Severn Trent Water borehole sites that are at risk to nitrates. Your local Agricultural Advisor will determine if this is a suitable option for your farm.

**Specifications:** This is a 5 year agreement where you will receive a single payment in year one of the agreement. Applicants must submit evidence with their application that demonstrates a recommended fertiliser management system or evidence to support low intensity farming. This evidence should show the area receives more than 200kg of nitrogen per ha per year. All records of all management activity on the option area for each parcel to be kept on farm.

- Exclude all livestock from the land from 1 October to 15 March.
- Applicants must hold a monthly record of the number of livestock grazing the land and must not exceed more than 0.8 LU per hectare at any given time.
- Applicants cannot apply/store farm yard manure in field.
- Applicants cannot apply slurry to field.
- Maximum chemical nitrogen usage is 40 kg N per year.
- Any fields chosen under this item must not be ploughed, cultivated or re-seeded.
- Supplementary feeding spots are not prohibited except for mineral blocks.
- Applicant are not allowed to use pesticides or herbicides, except to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds and invasive non-native species.

### STEPS033: Arable reversion into grassland

£1550 per hectare

|                  |                          |                                   |
|------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 5 year agreement | Borehole catchments Only | Discuss with Agricultural Advisor |
|------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|

**Objective:** This option will reduce nutrient losses and help stabilise the soil. This option is designed for highly targeted locations to help slow or reverse nutrient levels in groundwater. This option is only applicable land that is currently used for arable production.

**NOTE:** This option is only available in targeted areas. The targeting is restricted to specific Severn Trent Water borehole sites that are at risk to nitrates. Your local Agricultural Advisor will determine if this is a suitable option for your farm.

**Specifications:** This is a 5 year agreement where you will receive a single payment in year one of agreement. Applicants must submit evidence with their application that demonstrates a recommended fertiliser management system or evidence to support low intensity farming. All records of all management activity on the option area for each parcel to be kept on farm.

- Applicants must establish a grass sward by October 1<sup>st</sup> of year one of the agreement.
- Applicants cannot store farm yard manure in field.
- All livestock must be excluded from the land between 1<sup>st</sup> October to 15<sup>th</sup> March each year.
- Livestock manure may be applied to supply up to 100kg of total Nitrogen per ha per year. If livestock manures are not being applied, artificial nitrogen fertiliser can be applied at a total of 50kg/ha per year.
- You must not apply manure within 50 metres of the boundary of any borehole, spring, reservoir or water course.
- Applicants cannot use pesticides (herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, etc.) with the exception of herbicides to weed wipe or spot treat invasive non-native species.
- Applicants cannot apply manure or fertiliser between August 15<sup>th</sup> and February 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Objective:** To protect our water courses and the wider environment from sediment runoff and soil erosion.

**Specifications:** Sediment filter fencing aims to reduce soil erosion from your farm by filtering and capturing sediment run-off before it reaches the watercourse. Filter fencing works by installing a geotextile mesh (technical filter fabric) into the ground in a V/U shape vertical barrier fence which will intercept and detain sediment runoff.



- This item is suitable for arable fields on moderate to steep slopes.
- Geotextile chosen must have high tensile and burst strengths and should be installed at a depth of 100mm.
- Advice should be sought from the STW Agriculture Advisor to deem if field is suitable.
- Land must be adjacent to water course or have direct influence on a watercourse.
- Photographic evidence must be taken once complete.
- Invoices must be kept if contractors are used.
- Filter fence should be inspected after heavy rainfall.

Sediment filter fencing is not a long term solution to reducing soil run-off. Under the guidance of GAEC 4 (Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (GAECs) and GAEC 5, it is important that applicants improve soil management practices to address soil erosion over the STEPS duration.

## STEPS035 Farmer innovation

50% of ex. VAT cost up to £5000

Specialist advisory visits may  
be required

Provide quotes for all work with  
application

Must be discussed with  
Agricultural Advisor

### STEPS035a Farmer Innovation – Precision Farming Equipment

### STEPS035b Farmer Innovation – Clean and Dirty Water Separation

### STEPS035c Farmer Innovation – Other Innovation Item

**Objective:** To protect our water courses and the wider environment from diffuse pollution from your farm via a method not explicitly covered in options STEPS001 – STEPS034.

**Specifications:** STW acknowledges that all farms operate differently and the list of grants offered may be unsuitable for their enterprise. The 'Farmer Innovation' item offers farmers an opportunity to suggest alternative and innovative options to improve water quality. Your application will be subject to the same scoring system, so it is advisable to contact your local Severn Trent Agricultural Advisor to discuss any potential plans for your farm prior to making an application. If Severn Trent deem this plan of benefit to the environment, we will fund up to 50% of the cost (ex. VAT) with a maximum contribution of £5000. We will not fund any infrastructure directly linked to regulatory requirements.

#### General conditions for applications to be considered:

- All Farmer Innovation applications must be accompanied with quotes or costings for the proposed works/items, maps and timings. Where this includes your own time, an estimate must be provided.
- All supporting information must be submitted at the time of application. Applications without necessary information will not be considered until this is received.
- Specific requirements for the respective categories of Farmer Innovation are detailed in the following sections.
- The water quality benefit of the work must be explained in the application form. Applications without this will not be considered.
- Should the value of completed work be less than that originally specified in the grant acceptance letter, the value will be reduced proportionately.

#### Examples of Items NOT eligible for funding:

- Clearing/re-digging of ditches
- Storage of waste effluent or liquor (regulatory requirement)
- Replacement or maintenance of items/infrastructure
- Machinery and farm activity with no direct improvement of water quality
- Pesticide storage facilities (including shipping containers)
- Applications for improvements in biosecurity
- Items otherwise covered by fixed price grants
- Payment for plant hire for use in installing fixed cost items.

## STEPS035a Farmer innovation – Precision Farming Equipment

|   |   |                 |
|---|---|-----------------|
| Specialist advisory visits<br>may be required | Pesticide/Nitrate priority<br>catchments only | 1 item per farm |
|---|---|-----------------|

**Objective:** Precision farming equipment can improve the accuracy and efficiency of nutrient and fertiliser usage beyond that possible with standard equipment. Basic best practice and responsible nutrient management should be used before this option is considered.

### Specifications:

- Key requirements for precision farming equipment for fertiliser and pesticide application are detailed below and must be met in order to be eligible for funding.
- Only one of any item may be applied for across all STEPS funding windows e.g. GPS guidance can only be fitted to a single machine per farm between 2015 and 2020.
- Sprayer boom section shutoff can be fitted to existing equipment.
- GPS software upgrades are considered as GPS items.

|  | Pesticide application equipment           |                                     |                |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| Requirements   | GPS/auto-steer<br>(pesticide application) | Auto-boom shutoff<br>/isolation kit | DRT technology |
| 1 item per farm  | ✓   | ✓                                   | ✓              |
| Pesticides are a catchment priority                                  | ✓   | ✓                                   |                |
| Fitted with Auto-shutoff/section control                             | ✓   |                                     |                |
| Must have adequate pesticide handling facilities e.g. wash-down area | ✓   | ✓                                   |                |
| Must be practicing Integrated Pest management                        | ✓   | ✓                                   |                |
| Water quality benefit must be explained                              | ✓   | ✓                                   | ✓              |



|  | Fertiliser Application Equipment         |                                |                           |                       |
|--|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Requirements   | GPS /auto-steer (fertiliser application) | Precision fertiliser spreaders | Direct drilling equipment | Crop nutrient sensors |
| 1 item per farm across any STEPS period                              | ✓  | ✓                              | ✓                         | Demo Farms only       |
| Nutrients are catchment priority<br><br>Or<br><br>Borehole catchment | ✓  | ✓                              | ✓                         | ✓                     |
| Must be fitted with auto-shutoff                                     | ✓  |                                |                           |                       |
| Must have a nutrient management advisory visit                       | ✓  | ✓                              | ✓                         | ✓                     |
| Water quality benefit must be explained                              | ✓  | ✓                              | ✓                         | ✓                     |

## STEPS035b Farmer innovation – Clean and Dirty Water Separation

|                                    |  |                                 |
|------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Specialist advisory visit required |  | Drainage plans must be provided |
|------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|

**Objective:** To prevent the mixing of clean and dirty water or improvement of livestock/yard areas/access ways.

### Specifications:

- **To access this grant item you must receive a free farm infrastructure audit which can be arranged by your Agricultural Advisor.**
- Proposals to concrete yard areas must be supplied with the area to be covered in m<sup>2</sup> and a quote from your concrete supplier. If doing the work yourself, approximate costings are permitted.
- All items under this option must be accompanied with a drainage plan indicating the separation of clean and dirty water and where this will be stored/diverted to.
- Works must address areas of a farm that are impacting on a watercourse or contributing to excessive wastewater entering a dirty water tank.
- Grants cannot be used to collect and store effluent or dirty water otherwise controlled by SSAFO regulations.

### Examples of where this grant may be used:

- Cross drains on access/livestock tracks
  - Improvement of cattle tracks which are causing pollution
  - Improvements to hard standings to enable cleaning of livestock yard areas.
-

## STEPS035c Farmer innovation – Other Innovation Item

**Objective:** If the innovative idea you have does not fit into any of the other innovation categories it may be included here.

**Specifications:**

- To access this grant item you should first discuss your plans with your local Agricultural Advisor who will be best placed to recommend a course of action.
- Ideas involving on farm water management may require specialist advice and/or consultation with the Environment Agency.
- There must be a direct water quality benefit from the work you propose.
- The benefits of your idea to water quality must be sufficiently explained in your application.
- Applications must include costings/quotes for proposed work.

**Examples of where this grant may be used:**

- Specialist cover or catch cropping
- Biodiversity and water quality enhancement.

## 9.0 STEPS Grant Case Studies

### Case Study 1: Pesticide washdown area + rainwater harvesting and biofilter

Grant value £10,000 (2 years)

|              |                    |                 |
|--------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Pesticides ✓ | Water Efficiency ✓ | Water Quality ✓ |
|--------------|--------------------|-----------------|

#### What was the issue?

- The farm's original sprayer filling area was located on a hardcore pad at the end of a shed and so there was at risk of losing pesticides into surface and groundwater during cleaning/filling.
- The sprayer was exposed to the elements, reducing operator comfort when filling or performing maintenance.
- The sprayer tank was filled from the mains water supply.

#### What was the grant used for?

- A landowner developed the handling area over two years. In the first year they applied for a STEPS grant to construct a washdown pad with a roof (see right) with a value of £5000.
- The following year he applied to install rainwater harvesting equipment which took rainwater from a pre-existing shed.
- He used a STEPS grant to install a biofilter, which he constructed himself from IBCs and located it within the roofed/ bunded area to keep out rainfall.



#### What were the Benefits?

- The farm's sprayer can now be filled and washed down in a controlled environment, with all spills and washings captured and stored safely.
- The dilute pesticide washings can now be treated in the on-site biofilter reducing the pollution risk from pesticides.
- The sprayer can be stored, prepared and maintained regardless of weather conditions.
- The farmer has improved his water efficiency by using rainwater to fill his sprayer rather than relying on a mains supply.

## Case Study 2: STEPS029 Sediment traps/ STEPS030 Constructed wetlands

Grant value: £5000

Water management ✓

Biodiversity ✓

Water Quality ✓

### What was the issue?

- A farm was having problems with water management. All guttering and drainage from their yard went into an open ditch which then fed into a nearby river.
- This was causing sediment and nutrient rich water to be washed down into the river, contributing to water quality problems.



### What was the grant used for?

- Following discussion with their Severn Trent Agricultural Advisor and the Environment Agency, the farmer decided to apply for STEPS grants to construct a sediment trap along with a constructed wetland within the ditch to try and capture the polluting runoff.
- The combined value of their STEPS items was £5000, representing approximately 50% of the total cost of materials, machinery hire and labour.

### What were the benefits?

- The sediment trap and wetland successfully captured a large proportion of the detritus and water running from the yard area down into the river.
- This may now be periodically cleaned and the sediment returned to the land.
- The runoff entering the river is now much cleaner and so will have a reduced negative impact on the water quality.
- The constructed wetland also created a valuable habitat for aquatic organisms and birds – increasing the biodiversity value of the ditch and farm.



### Case Study 3: STEPS035 Farmer innovation River Derwent - Crayfish Trapping Project

Grant value £2095

Innovation ✓

Biodiversity ✓

Water Quality ✓

#### What was the issue?

- Signal Crayfish are a non-native invasive species that now colonise many rivers in our region.
- These crayfish have a major impact on aquatic ecosystems as they prey upon native crayfish and invertebrates.
- Crayfish also burrow into stream and river banks causing their collapse and release of sediment into watercourses –impacting on aquatic ecosystems.
- The crayfish also eat vegetation that helps to strip excess nutrients from the water- causing further problems for other wildlife and water quality in the river.

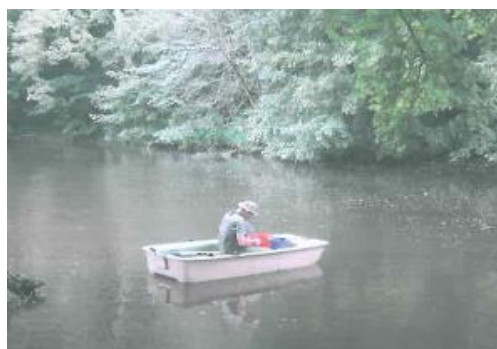


#### What was the grant used for?

- A landowner applied for a STEPS farmer innovation grant so that he could purchase a small boat and 600 crayfish traps. These were used to set up a project monitoring the population of crayfish along their stretch of the river and reduce the numbers.
- The total value of the grant was £2095, representing approximately 50% of the total cost.
- The landowner obtained a trapping licence from the Environment Agency

#### What were the Benefits?

- By using the traps and the boat to access them, the landowner was able to monitor the number of crayfish in the river and remove those which cause a problem.
- As a result the water quality and amount of sediment in the river the river has already started to improve.



## 10.0 Items requiring specialist advisory visits

- Specialist advisory visits are requirements for the STEPS grants listed below. These are also highlighted on the grant information pages.
- The purpose of these visits are to ensure that you get the most out of your STEPS grant, as well as offering expert advice and assistance on the design and construction of certain complex items.
- This will ensure that you are aware of the relevant regulatory requirements.
- If you have previously received relevant advice from another expert or authority, such as the Environment Agency, Natural England, a private consultant or from a previous Farm Advice Framework Visit arranged by Severn Trent or Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF), then this is an acceptable alternative.
- If this is the case please specify as such on your application together with the name and organisation of expert and their contact details.

| STEPS item  | Page |
|---|------|
| Pesticide Sprayer Washdown/Handling Area (STEPS007)       | 22   |
| Lined Biobeds (Either off set/Drive Over)(STEPS008)       | 24   |
| Pesticide Biofilter (STEPS009)                            | 26   |
| Disposal of pesticide washings via evaporation (STEPS010) | 28   |
| Installation of piped culverts in ditches (STEPS012)      | 32   |
| Grass Swales (STEPS024)                                   | 48   |
| In-ditch seepage barriers (STEPS027)                      | 50   |
| In-ditch wetlands (STEPS028)                              | 51   |
| Sediment Ponds/Traps (STEPS029)                           | 53   |
| Constructed Farm Wetlands (STEPS030)                      | 54   |
| Farmer Innovation (STEPS035)                              | 59   |



## 11.0 Additional STEPS compliance

- Each capital item must have a minimum design life of at least 5 years, unless it is covered by The Water Resources (Control of Pollution) (Silage, Slurry, and Agricultural Fuel Oil) (England) Regulations 2010 (as amended 2013) (SSAFO), in which case it must have a design life of at least 20 years.
- Work must comply with all relevant health and safety legislation and British Standards (BS) or equivalent.
- Work must be undertaken and installed in accordance with:
  - Protecting our Water, Soil and Air: A Code of Good Agricultural Practice for farmers, growers and land managers (CoGAP).
  - Groundwater Protection Code: Use and disposal of sheep dip compounds; and any higher standards that apply.
- Work carried out near the top of a river bank may require flood defence consent. Depending on the size of watercourse you should consult the Environment Agency (Tel: 03708506506 or email [enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk))
- Applicants must also consider the work's impact on the landscape.
- Planning permission may be required depending on the capital item chosen. Consult your local planning authority or National Park authority to seek informal advice.
- Where land is located within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, AONB officers may need to be consulted on the location of proposed capital items and the materials to be used.
- If your work affects any of the following you will need consent from Natural England or from the relevant authority:
  - Natural Environment:
  - Protected Species, such as Great Crested Newt and Bats species
  - National Nature Reserve (NNR)
  - Local Nature Reserves
  - Protected sites e.g. Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), N2K

### Historic environment:

- Listed Building
- Scheduled Monument

### Registered Battlefield

- Registered Parkland
- Registered Battlefields

Please visit these websites for more information:

<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1483>

<http://www.natura.org/>



## 12.0 Frequently asked questions

### What is the availability of a grant?

- STEPS will pay the fixed costs offered in this scheme.
- There will be a maximum payment of £5,000 per farm holding per year.
- Only one application can be made per farm per year. Late applications will not be accepted.
- You may apply for several capital grant items but they must be all submitted under one application and not exceed £5,000.
- There is no lower limit on the size of the grant.
- Grants will only be available to farmers and landowners who farm within a Severn Trent Water drinking water abstraction catchment and/or farm within one of STW 'priority source protection zones' (SPZs). Please contact your local STW Agricultural Advisor (contact info at start of handbook) or you can email the Severn Trent Catchment Team at [farming4water@severntrent.co.uk](mailto:farming4water@severntrent.co.uk).
- We will not fund any infrastructure directly linked to a regulatory requirement.
- We will not fund any infrastructure or project which is also receiving money from another grant scheme. An applicant can only apply for a STW grant in addition to another grant where they fund different infrastructure items i.e. you cannot receive multiple grants for the same work.
- We will not fund the costs of any maintenance or normal wear and tear or direct replacements of capital items.

### Are there any other factors that are taken into account when applications are being assessed?

Yes - applications will be prioritised according to the following:

- Perceived water quality benefit.
- Location of the farm within our catchment.
- Past engagement with ST Agricultural Advisors over previous years.
- Attendance at STW workshops over previous years.
- Size of farm (arable farms must be a minimum size of 5 hectares. Grassland farms must have a minimum size of 3 hectares).
- Each catchment contains priority STEPS items. Your application will be prioritised if one of these are chosen. Contact your local STW Agricultural Advisor for more details.
- **If your Farm is also eligible for one of the Severn Trent Metaldehyde schemes (Farmers as Producers of Clean Water or Product Substitution), you must also agree to participate in the relevant Metaldehyde scheme in order to be considered for a STEPS grant. Please discuss this with your local Agricultural Advisor.**

### When will I get paid?

Upon completion of the works claim forms should be submitted to STW accompanied by photographic evidence and valid receipts.

### **What do I need to supply with my application form?**

- Brief description of the farm enterprise
- An overview of the work planned and environmental reason for undertaking this work
- Timescales for completion of the project
- Photographs of site prior to commencing infrastructural work
- Farm maps which display farm boundary and site location of scheme(s) chosen.
- Dated quotes for items applied for under Farmer innovation.
- Copies of your farm map(s) that display:
  - a) The boundary of your holding.
  - b) The location of the proposed scheme on your farm map, mark an 'X' on the map along with STEPS code.
  - c) A national OS grid reference or valid postcode marked for the scheme location
- Note - if applying for a fence/track, draw the proposed line on the map.
- Photographs of the planned work location before work has commenced
- See examples of maps in *Appendix 4*.

### **Will my farm be subject to STEPS inspections?**

- Yes - inspections and checks will be carried out at farm level by STW to ensure that all funded items have been completed as per your application. All applicants can expect a farm inspection within a 5 year period from joining the STEPS scheme.

### **Will I be guaranteed entry to the STEPS following my application?**

- No - submission of an application does not guarantee approval. Applications are prioritised through our scoring system which recognises the likely benefit to water quality, location of the works and previous engagement with STW.

### **Can I apply if only part of my farm holding falls within a Severn Trent Water drinking water abstraction catchment and/or within one of STW 'priority source protection zones' (SPZs)?**

- Yes. However, this is a competitive process and your application may not score as highly as those schemes fully in a catchment where the water quality benefit may be greater.

### **When is opening/closing date for the application period?**

- The application period is opened from January 1<sup>st</sup> 2018 until March 16<sup>th</sup> 2018.

### **Where can I get a claim form?**

- You should contact your local STW Agricultural Advisor or alternatively, the central catchment team at [farming4water@severntrent.co.uk](mailto:farming4water@severntrent.co.uk).

### **When will I be informed if my application is successful?**

- Applicants will be informed up to six weeks of the application closing date. Once written confirmation has been received, applicants may commence working on their STEPS item.

### **What happens if my application is unsuccessful?**

- You will receive a formal letter outlining the reasons for your declined application. Depending on your application you may be encouraged to apply next year.

### **When does the work have to be completed by?**

- Farm Infrastructure work must be completed and claim forms/evidence received by Severn Trent by 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019.
- Farm management items must be completed in accordance specified in the handbook.

### **When will I receive funding?**

- Successful applicants are entitled to claim their funds once work is completed.
- Provided that all applicants will provide evidence of completed work by 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019. All successful applicants will receive their funding by March 31<sup>st</sup> 2019.

### **What happens if the work is not completed on time or the standard of work does not meet the required specifications?**

- Depending on the circumstances you will not receive the funded grant money.
- It will affect your application for grants in subsequent years.

### **How much can I claim?**

- STEPS will pay the fixed costs offered in this scheme, up to a maximum of £5000.
- Please note that second hand material should not be purchased under STEPS.
- VAT will not be paid if you are VAT registered. If you are not VAT registered, your VAT can be included in the total costs provided it does not exceed the £5000 threshold (Total Cost).

### **Am I entitled to apply for grants from other organizations?**

- Yes. However, grants can't be combined with other sources of funding for the same capital works in the same location. This is known as 'double funding'. This can potentially include funds from the following grant schemes:
  - Environmental Stewardship
  - Countryside Stewardship
  - Paths4Communities
  - Farming and Forestry Improvement Scheme
  - Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Aid
  - Woodland Grant schemes
  - Energy crops

Failure to acknowledge this may result in both grants being reclaimed.

### **Can the location of the STEPS capital item be changed?**

- Yes, **but only under certain conditions**. You must inform STW of the change and provide a written explanation for your actions. You will then receive a letter of approval. Depending on the item, the relevant authorities may also have to be informed (County Councils, EA, etc.)

and new planning permits may have to be submitted. If you change the location of the STEPS capital item and do not inform STW you may liable to a penalty.

**Do consents and permissions need to be given and investigated before submitting the STEPS application?**

- Yes, see your STEPS handbook for reference.
- Written consent(s) from a relevant authority may be required with your application. You must enclose a copy of it with your application or in some cases, and with permission from Severn Trent Water, advice and consent can be received up until 15 days after the application date; applicants can discuss this with their local STW Agricultural Adviser. STW won't be able to process your application until we receive these

**Can I withdraw my application after I have been successful?**

- You must contact your local STW Agricultural Advisor and seek advice.

**If my STEPS application is successful, will this affect further applications to the grant scheme in subsequent years?**

- No. STEPS is based on an annual basis. Applications are prioritised through our scoring system which recognises the likely benefit to water quality, location of the works and previous engagement with STW.

**Will I receive a notification that my application has been received?**

- Yes. All applicants will receive a letter of notification that their application is being processed.

## 13.0 Claiming for payment

### Where can I get a claim form?

- You should contact your local STW Agricultural Advisor or alternatively, the central catchment team at [farming4water@severntrent.co.uk](mailto:farming4water@severntrent.co.uk).

### When do I submit my claim form?

- Once all work is completed.
- Submit your claim form with the appropriate evidence (photographs, invoices, etc.) to Catchment Team, Level 5, Severn Trent Centre, 2 St Johns Street, Coventry, CV1 2LZ.

### How many claim forms can I submit?

- There is no restriction on the number items applied for. However, all items/measure(s) must be submitted on one claim form. In addition, all farm holdings will be subjected to the maximum of £5000.

### What do I need to supply with my claim form?

- Dated invoices and receipts associated with the capital works scheme.
- Photos of site before and after completion of work. (Please take both photos from same position).

### What will be paid?

- STEPS will pay the fixed grant price offered in this scheme, up to a maximum of £5000.
- VAT element will not be paid if you are VAT registered. If you are not VAT registered, your VAT can be included in the total costs provided it does not exceed the £5000 threshold.

### Can I get my STEPS payment paid directly into my bank account?

- Yes, payments can be made via bank transfers (BACs) and cheques.

### How long are records to be kept on farm (invoices, photograph, receipts, etc)?

- All paperwork in relation to your claim must be kept for 5 years beyond the date of your agreement.

### When will I receive funding?

- Successful applicants are entitled to claim their funds once work is completed.
- Provided that all applicants will provide evidence of completed work by March 1<sup>st</sup> 2019. All successful applicants will receive their funding by March 31<sup>st</sup> 2019.

## 14.0 Linked STEPS grants for pesticide handling/washdown area projects

- Under normal circumstances approved STEPS items to up to a total value of £5000 may be constructed in a single STEPS year.
- However, when constructing rooved pesticide handling facilities, it is often more practical to install the roof structure at the same time as the pad and treatment unit. In many cases the value of this work may exceed the £5000 funding limit by a significant margin.
- To reflect this, STEPS grants for handling pads, roofing and the selected treatment option may be constructed within in a single STEPS period to a grant value of £10,000.
- £5000 will be paid in the first STEPS period, following completion of the work. The remaining value, up to a further £5000 can then be claimed retrospectively on the commencement of the following financial year.
- To use this option the applicant must simply state that they wish to opt for the Pesticide Handling Area project and then indicate which STEPS items they will be selecting and the costings.
- Note that this arrangement is only applicable to STEPS items associated with pesticide washdown and treatment.
- Rainwater harvesting items are not included and must be applied for as standard.
- Applicants should ensure they are able to finance the work sufficiently in order to account for the delay between grant payments.

**Example:** A farmer wants to construct a brand new pesticide washdown pad together with a ready-made biofilter and roofing. The combined value of the three grants is £6760 – therefore £1760 above the funding limit. Under the handling facilities option, all the work can be done at the same time. Once completed the farmer submits a claim for the work. The initial £5000 is paid immediately on completion of the work in January. The remaining £1760 is paid after 5<sup>th</sup> April.

## 15.0 What other schemes are available from Severn Trent?

### 15.1 Farm Advice Framework specialist advisory visits

In addition to the general advice from your local Severn Trent Agricultural Advisor, we are able to offer specialist visits from industry experts through the Farm Advice Framework (FAF). These visits are entirely free and are aimed to help you get the most out of your STEPS grant. Due to the complex nature of some STEPS items a FAF visit must be arranged in order for funding to be granted. This will be highlighted at the top of the page.

- Whole farm assessment
- Nutrient Management Plan
- Soil (WQ1a/M4)/Manure Testing Training
- Machinery Testing and Calibration (Fertiliser, Manure Spreaders)
- Soil and Nutrient Management Plan
- Soil Husbandry
- Specific Sector-Based Advice (maize and potatoes)
- Pesticide Handling and Application
- Bio-bed and Pesticide Facilities Design
- On-farm review of pathways for and sources of faecal contamination of water courses
- Farm Infrastructure Audit
- Slurry/Manure Handling and Storage (including financial implications)
- Farm Infrastructure Audit Follow Up
- Water Management
- NMP review
- Implementing Ammonia measures on farm
- Water Holding Structure Design and Management Managing Land Drainage Systems To minimize DWPA
- Sustainable use of water

### 15.2 Farmers as Producers of Clean Water (FaPCW)

- A voluntary, Severn Trent Water funded scheme aimed at reducing metaldehyde concentrations in surface water
- Available to arable farmers with high risk fields in STW priority catchments
- Arable farmers could earn up to £8 per Ha of the WW and OSR arable land.
- Rewards farmer for producing cleaner run off from their land and improving water quality downstream of their farm
- Waterbodies tested for metaldehyde fortnightly from September 1st until December 31<sup>st</sup>

- Concentrations of metaldehyde at the top and bottom of each sub-catchment compared. The smaller this difference i.e. the cleaner the water is kept, the larger the reward.

**In order to be eligible for STEPS funding you must agree to participate in the FaPCW scheme or where offered our Metaldehyde Product Substitution scheme.**

### 15.3 Pesticide Amnesties

- Even the most organised pesticide store may occasionally have quantities of unwanted substances retained from previous years. These may present a serious risk to water quality if not disposed of in a responsible way.
- At Severn Trent we recognise that this may often be a job that never gets done and so are able to assist.
- At certain windows during the year we run Pesticide Amnesties, during which you are invited to dispose of unwanted chemicals through our disposal partners.
- To participate, you will be required to contact our disposal partners with:
  - Product Name
  - Active ingredient and concentration
  - Weight or volume of product
  - Collection address
  - 2 phone numbers
- Removal is on a first come first served basis and offered only during specific periods which will be advertised in your newsletter or by your local Agricultural Advisor.



## 16.0 Appendices

### 16.1 Appendix 1 – STW priority funding maps

Please contact your local STW Agricultural Advisor or you can email the Severn Trent Catchment Team at [farming4water@severntrent.co.uk](mailto:farming4water@severntrent.co.uk) or visit our website (<https://www.stwater.co.uk/catchment>)

## 16.2 Appendix 2 - Terms and conditions

Severn Trent Water has prepared this document to ensure that farmers are aware of the requirements and conditions attached to the payments concerned, and to assist in completing applications for STEPS. All applications to join the scheme accept that he/she is familiar with the Terms and Conditions outlined in this document and will comply fully with them. If applicants have any queries in relation to their application please contact [farming4water@severntrent.co.uk](mailto:farming4water@severntrent.co.uk) before submitting their application.

In the event that there are any changes to these Terms and Conditions they will be published immediately on the Severn Trent Water website and an updated version of the document available for download.

### 16.2.1 Key facts

- Grants will only be available to farmers and landowners who farm within a Severn Trent Water drinking water abstraction catchment and/or farm within one of STW 'priority source protection zones' (SPZs). Please contact your local STW Agricultural Advisor (contact info at end of handbook) or you can email the Severn Trent Catchment Team at [farming4water@severntrent.co.uk](mailto:farming4water@severntrent.co.uk).
- STEPS will pay the fixed grant price offered in this scheme, up to a maximum of £5000.
- Participation in this scheme is voluntary.
- A scoring system has been devised to ensure that funding will go to projects that demonstrate a clear water quality benefit, provide good value for money and where there has been prior engagement with the STW Agricultural Advisor. The highest scoring application will receive priority funding. Not all applications will be successful.
- All work must comply with relevant environmental legislation and have the appropriate planning permissions.
- All work must comply with the relevant health and safety legislation. Please visit the HSE website [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk) for further information.
- All work must comply with all British Standards and Codes of Agricultural Good Practice.
- Before commitment to any work, you may have to seek guidance from the Environment Agency e.g. installation of a biobed on your farm holding.
- Work on capital investment items must not commence until notification of STEPS contract has been issued.
- All actions must be delivered on leased or owned land. Where land is leased this must be for a minimum of 5 years from the date of your STEPS contract.
- Applicants must ensure that the area, unit or item entered for the scheme is suitable for the action to be carried out.
- Invoices, receipts and photos for work carried out must be retained for a minimum of 5 years from the date of your STEPS contract.

### 16.2.2 Definitions

For the purpose of this scheme

- “STW” shall mean Severn Trent
- “STEPS” shall mean Severn Trent Environmental Protection Scheme
- “SPZ” shall mean Source protection Zone
- “Specification” shall mean the detailed requirements drawn up by STW for the delivery of each particular capital item/scheme under STEPS
- “Objective” shall mean a specific action required to be completed in association with a particular scheme
- “Farm” or “Holding” shall mean all the production units that are under the control of the applicant farmer/land owner
- “Farming Activity” shall mean dairy farming; livestock production; cultivation of fodder and tillage crops, and the growing of horticultural crops
- “Eligibility” shall mean essential criteria which must be fulfilled to allow a STEPS contract to be agreed
- “Application” shall mean an application for a STEPS support scheme prepared and submitted by land owner/manager
- “Watercourse” shall mean all rivers, streams, ditches, drains, cuts, culverts, dykes, sluices, and passages through which water flows
- “EA” shall mean Environment Agency
- “SGZ” shall mean Safe Guard Zones
- “IBCs” shall mean Integrated Bunded Containers
- “FYM” shall mean Farm Yard Manure
- “NGR” shall mean National Grid Reference
- “EFA” shall mean Ecological Focus Area

### 16.2.3 Objective of scheme

- Protect our watercourses and the wider environment from pollution of agricultural origin
- Assist farm businesses to tackle diffuse pollution from agriculture with low cost infrastructure investments which are above and beyond good agricultural practice

### 16.2.4 Eligibility

- Grants will only be available to farmers and landowners who farm within a Severn Trent Water drinking water abstraction catchment and/or farm within one of ST 'priority source protection zones' (SPZs). Please contact your local STW Agricultural Advisor (contact info at end of handbook) or you can email the Severn Trent Catchment Team at [farming4water@severntrent.co.uk](mailto:farming4water@severntrent.co.uk).
- Size of farm (arable farms must be a minimum size of 5 hectares. Grassland farms must have a minimum size of 3 hectares).
- You must display a minimum level of farming activity.
- You must be aged eighteen years or over on the date you submit your application.
- **IMPORTANT: If your Farm is also eligible for one of the Severn Trent Metaldehyde schemes (Farmers as Producers of Clean Water or Product Substitution), you must also agree to participate in the relevant Metaldehyde scheme in order to be considered for a STEPS grant. Please discuss this with your local Agricultural Advisor.**

### 16.2.5 Application procedure

- All applications are made on an individual basis and will be assessed by an internal assessment ST team.

Applicants will be required to supply the following information as part of their application

- Brief description of the farm enterprise
  - An overview of the work planned and environmental reason for undertaking this work
  - Timescales for completion of the project
  - Photographs of site prior to commencing infrastructural work
  - Farm maps which display farm boundary and site location of scheme(s) chosen.
  - Dated quotes for items applied for under Farmer innovation.
- Severn Trent's Agricultural Advisors will be available to support with the application process but are not responsible for the submission of application form.
  - Applicants cannot apply for grants for an item where they are receiving funding from another source for that same item. Any evidence of "double funding" will result in the cancellation of

your agreement and withdrawal of any potential funds given. Where funding has already been released, we will take the necessary action to recoup funds.

- A scoring system has been devised to ensure that funding will go to projects that demonstrate a clear water quality benefit, provide good value for money and where there has been prior engagement with the STW Agricultural Advisor. The highest scoring application will receive priority funding. Not all applications will be successful.
- All applications will however be contacted regarding the success of their application.
- STW may reject applications if they are not likely to benefit water quality and/or biodiversity.
- The submission of a valid application does not guarantee entry to STEPS.
- Successful applicants will be notified in writing of their acceptance into the scheme and of the commencement date of their contract.
- Application forms can be submitted via post or email. Applications submitted via email will receive a confirmation email.
- Only one application can be made for each farm business. If there are multiple farm businesses, the catchment advisor will determine if they are separate businesses.
- Written consent(s) from a relevant authority may be required with your application. You must enclose a copy of it with your application or in some cases, and with permission from Severn Trent Water, advice and consent can be received up until 15 days after the application date; applicants can discuss this with their local STW Agricultural Adviser. STW won't be able to process your application until we receive these

#### 16.2.6 Responsibility of applicant

- It is the responsibility of the applicant to familiarise themselves with the STEPS Terms and Conditions, the Objectives and the Specification directly linked with a particular scheme
- Planning permission may be required depending on the Capital scheme chosen. Consult your local planning authority or National Park authority to seek informal advice.
- Any capital items you install must comply with the relevant British Standards (BS).
- Items installed under scheme must have a minimum design life of 10 years; or have a minimum design life of 20 years if they're covered by [The Water Resources \(Control of Pollution\) \(Silage, Slurry, and Agricultural Fuel Oil\) \(England\) Regulations 2010 \(as amended 2013\) \(SSAFO\)](#).
- Capital items must be installed in accordance with *Protecting our Water, Soil and Air: a Code of Good Agricultural Practice for farmers, growers and land managers* (CoGap).
- All works must comply with relevant environmental legislation associated with the scheme.
- It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that any work carried out under a STEPS agreement complies with the relevant health and safety legislation. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) may need to be notified of some construction work. In all cases you have a duty to ensure that the construction works are designed and carried out with due regard to the health and safety of all operatives.

- Entering the scheme by any fraudulent means by the applicant may render to disqualify from scheme and such persons may be liable to prosecution.
- If your work affects any of the following you will need consent from the Environment Agency or from the relevant authority;
  - National Park
  - Listed Building
  - Scheduled Monument
  - Protected Species
  - National Nature Reserve
  - Site of Special Scientific Interest
  - Registered Parkland
  - Local Nature Reserves
  - Registered Battlefields
- Any work carried out near the top of a river bank may require flood defence consent. Depending on the size of watercourse you should consult the Environment Agency (Tel:03708506506 or email [enquiries@environment.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@environment.gov.uk)). Once offered a grant, applicants can't change their capital works, or amend their agreement unless given permission by Severn Trent Water.
- Once the scheme is complete it must be kept in agricultural use e.g. not changed to an alternative use such as residential or commercial accommodation, for a minimum of 5 years from the date of your STEPS contract.

#### 16.2.7 Responsibility of STW

- Assess applications in an unbiased manner using the specified scoring system
- Provide 1-1 support through our catchment advisors
- Respond to queries within 20 working days via our catchment team inbox email – [farmin4water@severntrent.co.uk](mailto:farmin4water@severntrent.co.uk)
- Provide adequate notice of any inspection
- Keep all farm and financial information confidential. This does not however effect our duty to report any breaches in cross compliance to Environment Agency.

#### 16.2.8 Monitoring & evaluation

- On-the-spot checks may be carried out at farm level to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Scheme.
- All applications for support and payment claims will be subjected to administrative checks, and any other controls deemed necessary, before approvals or payments are made under the Scheme.
- Contracts are non-transferable except in the case of:
  - Certified serious illness of applicant

- Death of the applicant
- Long term professional incapacity of the participant
- Any breach of cross-compliance noted during an on farm inspection may reported to the Environment Agency.
- You must inform STW of any change to a selected scheme and a written reason displaying your actions. You will then receive a letter of approval. If you change the location of the STEPS capital item and not inform STW you may liable to a penalty.
- You will not be entitled to funds to meet the costs of any maintenance or normal wear and tear.
- All records must be kept for 5 years following entry into the scheme. Records include invoices, receipts, permits, maps, photos and consents.

### 16.2.9 Payment procedure

- Receipts or invoices for materials purchased for the delivery of STEPS must be retained and must be made available to STW when requested. Participants must be in a position to provide documentary evidence of payment. Receipts must be made out by the vendor to include the name and address of the beneficiary. Receipts must be dated and any materials purchased before entry to STEPS will not be accepted.
- Photographs of site must be taken and retained both before and after completion of work. (Please take both photos from same position).
- The maximum payment to any participant in STEPS shall be not exceed £5,000 in respect of a STEPS calendar year. This includes the option for constructing complete pesticide handling facilities.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that any requested supporting documentation for the release of payments is submitted.
- Applicants accept that on-the-spot inspections may be required before payment can be authorised.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to understand that if they decide to participate in, and benefit from, a number of different EU funded or National Schemes also addressing agricultural pollution, that payments are at risk if it becomes known that they represent double funding.
- Double funding is defined as grant money used to fund the same capital works at the same location. As a guide, the following schemes should be considered (this list is not exhaustive):
  - Environmental Stewardship
  - Countryside Stewardship
  - Paths4Communities
  - Farming and Forestry Improvement Scheme
  - Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Aid
- Woodland Grant schemes; or Energy crops In relation to your claim, all paperwork must be kept for 5 years after the start of your agreement.
- VAT will not be paid if you are VAT registered. If you are not VAT registered, your VAT can be included in the total costs provided it does not exceed the £5000 threshold.



### 16.2.10 Force majeure

- Where an applicant is unable to continue within STEPS commitment(s) due to reasons beyond his/her control, a case may be made under force majeure. The following categories of force majeure will be recognised:
  - Death of the participant
  - Long term professional incapacity of the participant
  - Expropriation of a large part of the holding if such expropriation could not have been anticipated before joining STEPS
  - A natural disaster affecting the holding's agricultural land
  - The accidental destruction of livestock buildings on the farm e.g. destruction of property via a fire
  - An outbreak of disease affecting all or part of the livestock on the farm
  - The disposal or vacation of land to satisfy a court order or legal settlement in cases of marital breakdown.

### 16.2.11 Breach of agreement

This may result in the non-payment or recovery of some or the entire grant payable or already paid. Note that applicants are responsible for the work carried (even if work was contracted to an external contractor).

The following are classed as breaches of agreement:

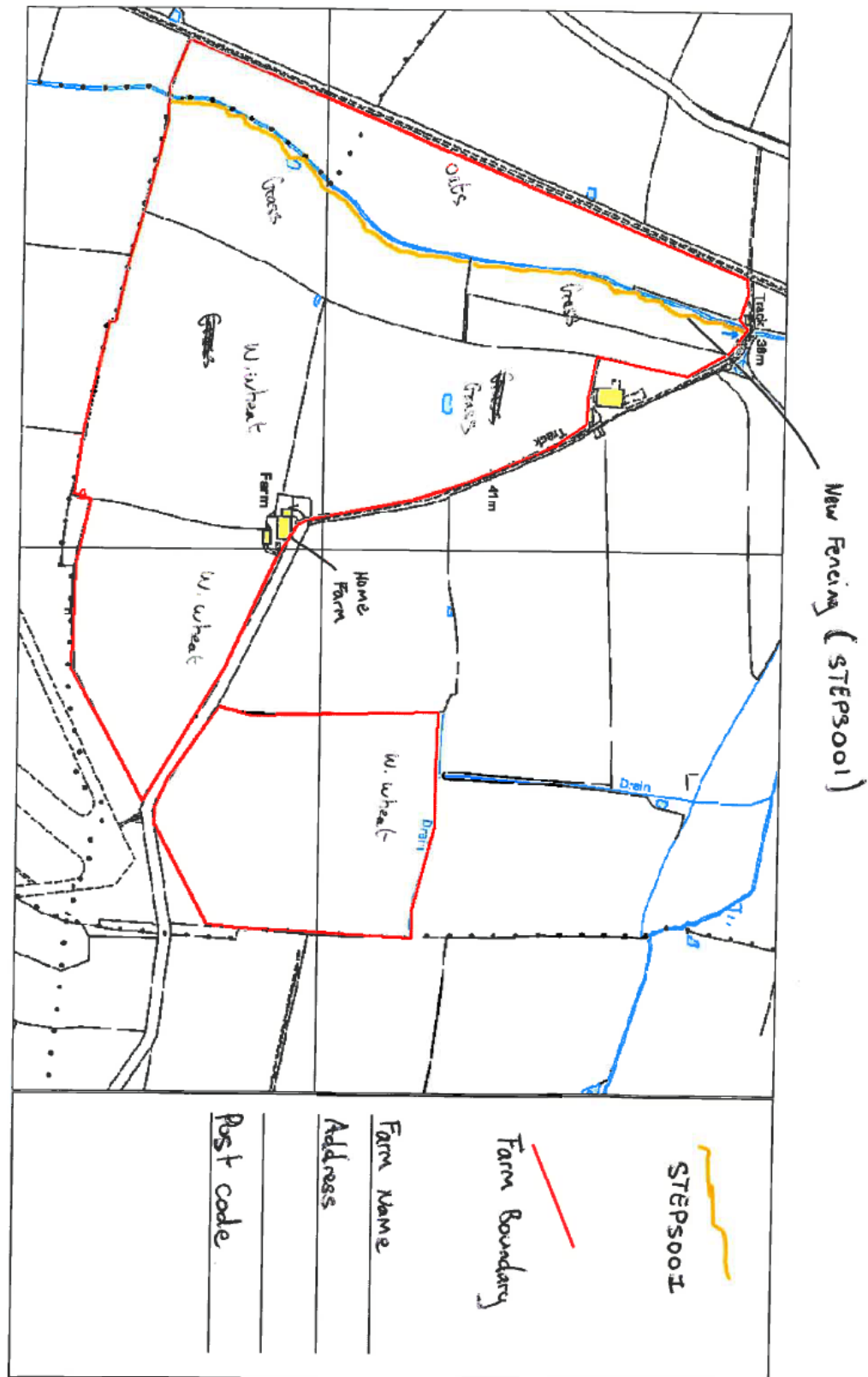
- Refusal to allow STW Agricultural Advisor access to the land for inspection on reasonable notice
- Providing false or misleading information
- Submission of a claim for capital works that are not completed or where funds have been used for an alternative purpose
- Lack of evidence of how the funds were spent or of the finished work e.g. photos
- Removal of any capital works without written consent from STW
- Change of use of a capital item, e.g. roofing over a manure storage to turn it into a grain or machinery storage (even when at the applicant's own expense)
- Failure to comply with the appropriate standards, planning rules and agricultural codes of practice.
- You are found to not meet the essential criteria around location and level of farming activity
- Missed deadlines.

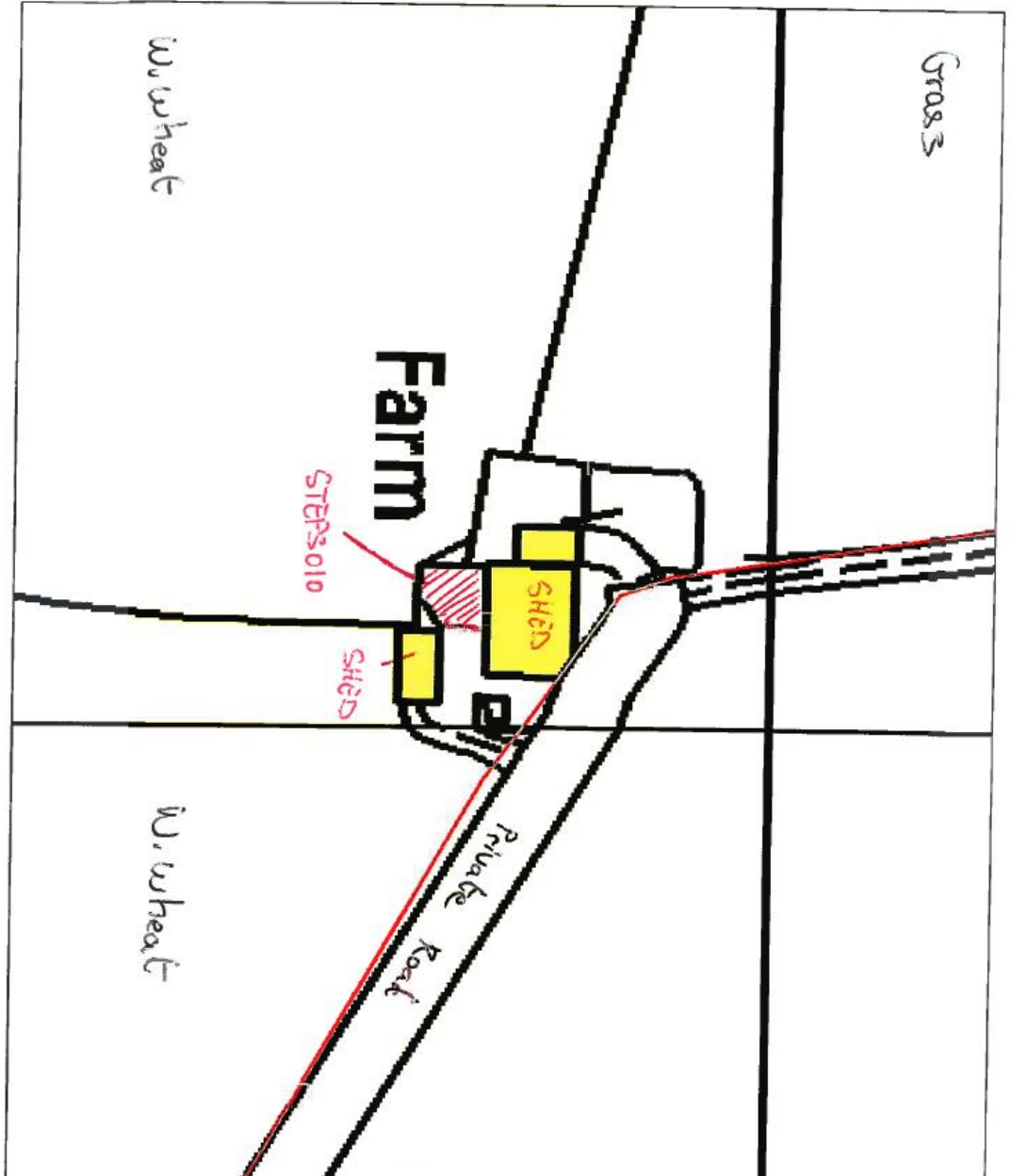

### 16.3 Appendix 3 - Application Form

Please contact your local STW Agricultural Advisor or visit the following webpage for your application form: <https://www.stwater.co.uk/catchment>

## 16.4 Appendix 4 – Maps

Examples of sketch map to be sent with application form



|   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| <p>Grass</p>  |  | <p>Home Farm</p>  |  |
|   |  | <p>Grid reference: SP 3364778654</p>  |  |
|  |  |  <b>STEPS010</b> |  |
| <p><u>Farm Name</u></p>   |  | <p><u>Address</u></p>   |  |
| <p><u>Address</u></p>   |  | <p><u>Post code</u></p>   |  |
| <p><u>Post code</u></p>   |  |   |  |

## Contact Us

Further details of the Severn Trent Environmental Protection Scheme can be found at (<https://www.stwater.co.uk/catchment>) or by emailing us at [Farming4water@severntrent.co.uk](mailto:Farming4water@severntrent.co.uk)