

PRO1 Watercourse Fencing and Infrastructure

Why is this good for water quality?

The aim-

This option aims to prevent livestock from entering watercourses, where their manure can introduce nutrients, pathogens like *Cryptosporidium*, and other water quality risks. Keeping livestock away from watercourses also prevents poaching, allows the natural bankside vegetation to re-develop and further reduce soil erosion.

Why is this good for my farm?

Proper watercourse fencing can help farmers meet their regulatory obligations whilst also improving grazing efficiency by guiding livestock away from sensitive areas. It reduces land erosion and protects the riparian zone, supporting natural flood management. Over time, this encourages greater biodiversity and contributes to a healthier, more resilient farm landscape.

PRO1 Watercourse Fencing and Infrastructure

Payment Rate: 50% cost up to £2500

Specification

- Areas selected must be used for grazing
- Fencing and new infrastructure must prevent livestock from accessing the watercourse, a stock proof barrier must be created.
- When erecting a fence, consider installing gates to allow management activities or husbandry operations.
- Standard good husbandry should be applied to the field to prevent surface run-off, so consider reducing stocking rates in poor conditions and avoid compaction and poaching.
- Fencing should allow for a 1-2m wide strip behind, measured from the watercourse bank top.
- Replacing old fencing is permitted where the previous fencing is no longer stock-proof (photos must be provided).
- It is the farm's responsibility to obtain permission from the Environment Agency, Natural England, or local council, if required, before erecting any fencing.
- Projects are encouraged to fence specific areas of watercourse, rather than multiple lengths.
- 5-year agreement to keep the fencing or infrastructure in good condition.

Evidence to apply

- Before photos representative of full length of option installed and ideally showing stock in the field
- Maps of where the work is proposed, including size of field being separated from watercourse and stock numbers
- Quotes for the materials or contracting work
- Risk map highlighting areas of compaction and poaching
- EAALERT tool mapping to show location of watercourses being protected
- Written plan of how stocking is reduced in poor conditions

Evidence to claim

- After photos, representative of full length of option installed
- Invoices for the materials or contracting work