

CaBA Agriculture Working Group Case Study

CaBA partnership name:	Ribble
Name and location of project:	Tidal Ribble
Partners involved:	United Utilities, EA, CSF, NFU and Blackpool Borough Council
Dates carried out:	2015 – present
Introduction to project:	This project sought to work with farmers within the tidal area to protect vulnerable bathing waters and shellfish waters along the Fylde coast which are being impacted upon by poor microbial water quality. This project worked with farmers to reduce faecal matter entering watercourses.
Farmer/ landowner/ land manager engagement:	The project worked with 31 farms, 21 of which delivered interventions to reduce diffuse water pollution - particularly direct faecal matter inputs into watercourses. Interventions included watercourse fencing and creating riparian buffers - as well as significant farmyard infrastructure such as roofing, handling areas, improving guttering and separating clean and dirty water.
Further project details:	The project delivered interventions on 21 farms ranging from watercourse fencing, guttering, concreting and roofing of slurry stores. The project enabled farmers to receive a contribution towards the interventions from United Utilities.
Environmental benefits of the project:	All interventions have helped to reduce direct faecal matter and inputs of other agricultural pollutants including sediment into rivers and hence Fylde coastal waters too. It also delivered improved habitat, reduced CO ₂ emissions and addressed impacts of climate change.
Social benefits of the project:	<p>The project delivered 36 community events and worked with 17 schools in the area. It promoted ways for the public to be more water friendly around the home by raising awareness of the impacts of household wastewater mismanagement and waste disposal.</p> <p>Locations where dwellings are likely to have septic tanks and other private water treatment facilities have also been identified. A targeted campaign has been created in order to help people within these communities better understand how their systems work, how they can be maintained and what the consequences can be when these systems fail.</p>

Economic benefits of the project:	The project was able to offer grants to farmers and landowners to deliver interventions that would help to reduce direct faecal input. The total project value was in excess of £1.5m - with £500,000 coming from farmer contributions.
Monitoring, evaluation & outcomes:	Maintenance visits are being undertaken to make sure all infrastructure is still in place and being maintained. Targeted case study monitoring was undertaken, this showed that there was a clear benefit from the stand-alone interventions - but was not able to ascertain the total impact on bathing waters owing to the scale and complexity of the bathing water issue.
Next steps:	We are continuing to work with farmers in the area to deliver opportunities as funding permits.
Project partner comments:	<i>This project enabled valuable learnings in grant giving and management to farms. Working towards holistic farm management change in a way that most, if not all grants, are unable to do. This ensured significant uptake and a wider range and quantity of work to be undertaken to improve the water environment.</i>
Web link for more information:	https://ribbletrust.org.uk/tidal-ribble-project/

