



LIFE Project Number
LIFE+08/INF/UK/214

Progress Report
Covering the project activities from 01/10/2011 to 31/12/2012

Reporting Date
31/01/2013

LIFE+ PROJECT NAME or Acronym
**Promoting the importance of the EU Birds Directive in
conservation management on farmland**

Data Project

Project location	UK
Project start date:	01/01/2010
Project end date:	30/09/2013
Total budget	€ 1,692,547
EC contribution:	€ 846,273
(%) of eligible costs	50%

Data Beneficiary

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2. List of abbreviations

AES	Agri-environment scheme
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CFE	Campaign for the Farmed Environment
CLA	Country Land and Business Association
EERO	Eastern England Regional Office
Farmer(s)	Refers to farmer(s) and crofter(s)
GIS	Geographical Information System
ha	Hectare
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MRO	Midlands Regional Office
NoFA	Nature of Farming Award
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
V&FA	Volunteer & Farmer Alliance
OFC	Oxford Farming Conference

3. Executive summary

3.1. General progress

The project objectives are:

- To engage directly with at least 3,540 farmers through on-farm bird surveys, a network of demonstration farms and a Biodiversity Award scheme, in order to raise awareness of the EU Birds Directive and promote positive land management.
- To engage at least 7,040 members of the general public directly in project delivery, through the delivery of the surveys and engagement in the award scheme.
- To create a positive profile for the EU Birds Directive among participating farmers and members of their local communities, as well as more widely among farmers and the public, through promotional activities. Specifically: (1) to engage with more than 120,000 farmers annually through promotional and media activities and media; and (2) to engage with more than 3 million members of the general public annually through targeted media work highlighting the importance of protecting both rare and widespread farmland birds in accordance with the Birds Directive.
- To create 11 Farm Wildlife Hotspots where RSPB direct advice for farmers will be focused from 2013 and volunteer monitoring will demonstrate bird population benefits from wildlife-friendly farming management
- To develop and launch a toolkit of advice and support for arable farmers in England based on market research of the best means of influencing this audience, as a pilot to development of toolkits for other farming sectors throughout the UK as part of the After LIFE plan

In 2012 - we engaged with 678 farmers through bird surveys, 420 farmers through the Biodiversity Award scheme and 929 farmers at project events held on demonstration farms. A total of 441 farmers received advice over the 12 month period since the Mid-term Report, bringing the total for the 3 years (01/01/2010-31/12/2012) of the project to 988.

In addition, we have corresponded with 2,828 farmers through the farming e-newsletter (See Annex 12) and over 6,000 farmers through the project newsletter, so now have regular communication with over 8,800 farmers.

In 2012 - 748 volunteers took part in surveys, of which 245 attended volunteer workshops.

The public interest in the Biodiversity Award scheme resulted in 17,365 votes for the four finalists. Although this was lower than the 2011 figure, we believe this may have been the result of so much national attention on the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations and the London Olympics and Paralympic Games during the summer.

Media coverage has increased for the Nature of Farming Award (NoFA) again this year, with 40 articles in newspapers and 142 on-line stories. The Telegraph, as media partner for the NoFA, published a voting form in September 2012 for its readership of 1.68

million. The project also featured on local television and radio, in the RSPB magazine (2.1 million readers), and the Shooting Times.

The key actions planned for the 15 month period since the Mid-term Report were:

- identify farmers and trained volunteers for the 2012 bird surveys and carry out these surveys (Actions B1, C1 and C5)
- promote entry into the 2012 Biodiversity Award scheme, select the finalists and promote the public vote to select the national winner (Action C8)
- improve the project website (Action F1)
- disseminate information boards (Action F2)
- media promotion of the project (Action F5)
- attend technical events to promote the project and RSPB advice (Action F7).

These actions were all completed and although the uptake of information boards is still slow, the establishment of demonstration farms is on schedule. The previous backlog of case studies have been added to the website, with additional new case studies to be added in 2013.

3.2 Assessment as to whether the project objectives and work plan are still viable

The only targets not met from the set objectives have been the number of attendees at volunteer workshops, which, as explained in the Inception Report, is a consequence of many volunteers being experienced and not needing training. The number of farmers attending workshops is also low in some regions, but the total number of farmers attending workshops exceeds the national target, with large numbers in some regions making up for low attendance in others.

The work plan has been extended to encompass two new tasks: to establish at least 11 farm wildlife hotspots across the UK and to develop a toolkit of advice and support for wildlife-friendly arable farmers in England. The farm wildlife hotspots will still entail farm advisory visits, volunteer bird surveys (to provide a baseline to monitor population changes), farmer and volunteer workshops, and we will continue to run the biodiversity award scheme.

3.3 Problems encountered

A review of the programme over the last three years highlighted that our capacity to give direct advice will always be too limited to halt the decline of farmland birds at the national level by direct RSPB advice alone. We have developed a new strategy with two strands: giving direct advice in areas with important populations of the most threatened farmland bird species, and creating a toolkit of advice and support for farmers to adopt good environmental management without receiving an advisory visit. This will allow us to eventually provide advice and support for farmers across the UK.

4. Administrative part

4.1 Description of project management

Weekly one-to-one meetings take place between the EU LIFE+ Project Manager and the Senior Agricultural Adviser to review project progress. A detailed annual appraisal also takes place.

Every 6 weeks - an Agricultural Communications Group meets. This retains a strategic overview of agricultural communications and public relations.

A LIFE+ Project Steering Group meets bi-annually - to review the project budget and progress.

The UK Steering Group also meets every 6 months involving all the project staff and those from elsewhere within the RSPB, who contribute to project delivery. The second session planned for 2012 was deferred until early 2013 to incorporate detailed plans of the 9-month extension to the project and its objectives.

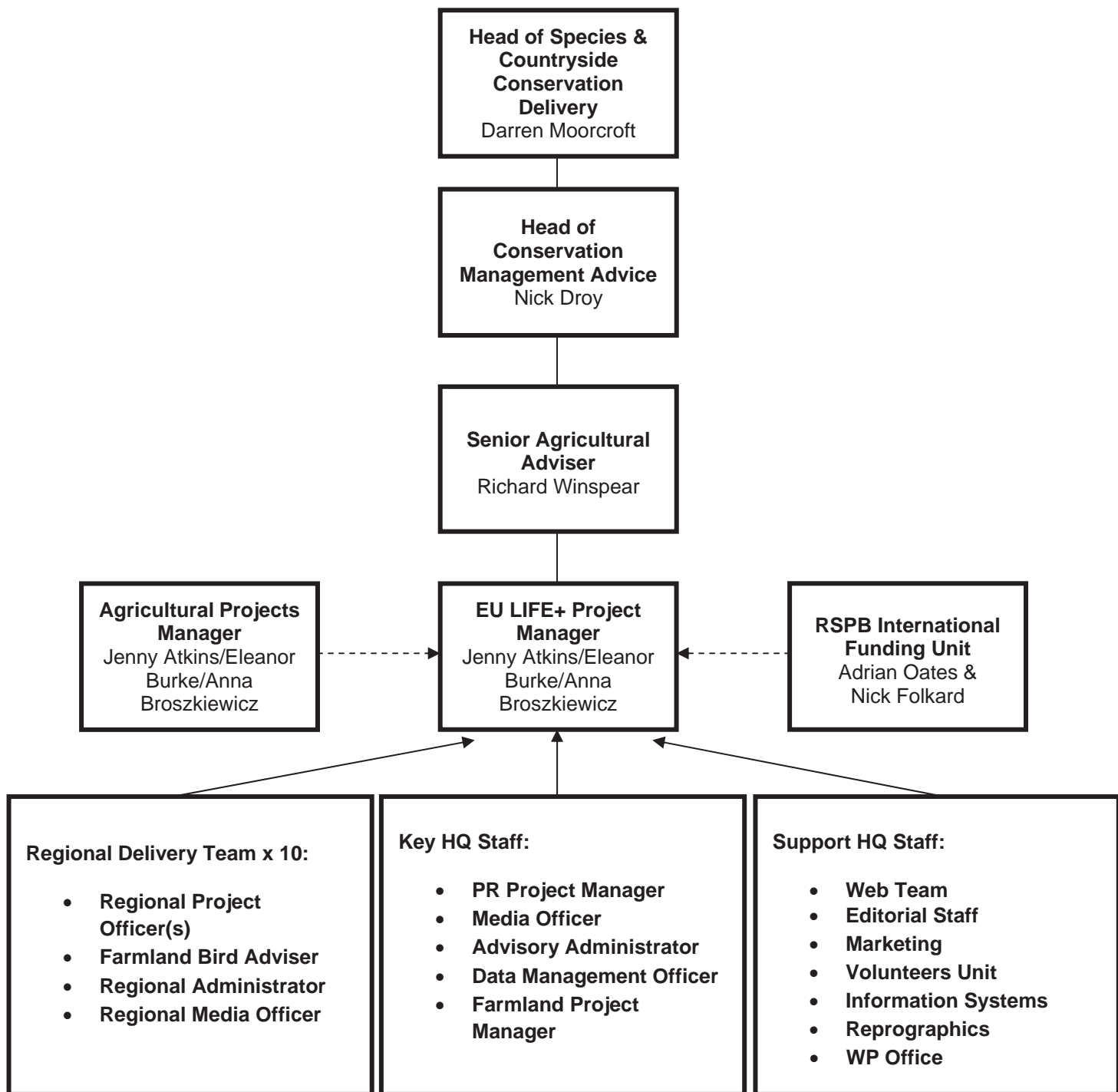
The Regional Delivery Teams regularly liaise with and report to the EU LIFE+ Project Manager and staff from the LIFE+ Project Steering Group, who meet with Regional Delivery Teams as required.

In addition to all these meetings, which have been standard since 01/01/2010, fortnightly meetings have taken place since 29/09/2010 between the EU LIFE+ Project Manager, Agricultural Projects Manager, PR Project Manager and Media Officer. These took responsibility for planning and implementing attendance at the national 'Cereals' event initially, then focussed on the NoFA and the Oxford Farming Conference (OFC).

The extension will take the project to the end of September 2013. The two new elements of the project are:

1. To identify at least 11 farm wildlife hotspots to target our advice. These will be set up in February 2013, and we will deliver a minimum of 15 farm advisory visits, 15 bird surveys, one demonstration farm event, and one published case study in each by the end of September.
2. To pilot a toolkit of advice and support for arable farmers in England to enable farmers to improve their environmental management without an advisory visit. The intention is to develop toolkits for other farming sectors in other UK countries as part of the After LIFE plan.

4.2 Organogram showing the key components of the project management structure



4.3 Partnership agreements status (incl. date of signature) and key content

These are not relevant because there are no partners in the project.

5 Technical part

5.1 Project Actions

Action A1: Manage project

The robust management framework has continued as described in the Mid-term Report.

The organogram on page 7 reflects the management structure of the project.

The EU LIFE+ Project Manager, Jenny Atkins, is based at the RSPB's Headquarters and is responsible for the delivery of the project. As before, she reports to the Senior Agricultural Adviser routinely, with weekly one to one meetings and a detailed annual appraisal formally scheduled. Since February 2013, she has been on maternity leave and the work has been undertaken by Eleanor Burke up until October 2012, and Anna Broszkiewicz from October 2012 until February 2013. Jenny Atkins will then return to resume her post.

The LIFE+ Project Steering Group continues to meet every 6 months with minutes and action points drawn up. This group includes the Head of Species & Countryside Conservation Delivery, Head of Conservation Management Advice, Senior Agricultural Adviser, EU LIFE+ Project Manager, Agricultural Projects Manager and staff from the International Funding Unit. This group meets every 6 months. See Annex 01.

The UK Steering Group continues to meet twice a year and includes the above, plus key representatives from Regional Delivery Teams and staff from other HQ departments, including Volunteer and Media Units. The minutes are made available to the whole group. See Annex 01.

An Agricultural Communications Group meets every 6 weeks. With the exception of staff from the International Funding Unit, this group includes those from the LIFE+ Project Steering Group and additionally - the Farmland Project Manager, Agricultural Policy Officer, PR Project Manager and Media Officer. Action points are distributed after each meeting. See Annex 01.

This framework has been strengthened further by fortnightly meetings since 29/09/2010 which have ensured suitable plans were established in advance of the OFC, where a ceremony to celebrate the NoFA was held. The staff at these meetings consist of the EU LIFE+ Project Manager, Agricultural Projects Manager, PR Project Manager and Media Officer with others contributing when necessary. After the OFC, the HQ Delivery Team concentrated on our attendance at Cereals - the technical event for arable farmers in the UK - and latterly ensured a successful delivery of the NoFA.

As before, in 2012 there were 11 established Regional Delivery Teams, which comprise Project Officers, Farmland Bird Advisers, Media Officers and Administrators. These teams regularly liaise with and report to the EU LIFE+ Project Manager. In addition, staff from the LIFE+ Project Steering Group, meet with Regional Delivery Teams as required.

Action A2: Monitor project progress

The progress of the project continues to be assessed using the timetable and milestones set out in the project guidelines, on a weekly basis through meetings between the EU LIFE+ Project Manager and Senior Agricultural Adviser, on a fortnightly basis by the established HQ Delivery Team, six monthly through the steering groups and annually through staff appraisals.

The EU LIFE+ Project Manager maintains an overview of project actions through frequent and detailed communications with each Regional Delivery Team. Equally, the EU LIFE+ Project Manager has routine contact with her line manager, which (as noted above) is in addition to formally scheduled meetings.

Action A3: External audit

This is planned for 2013.

Action A4: After-LIFE plan

The After-LIFE plan will be submitted with the Final Report at the end of the project.

Action B1: Identify farmers and volunteers

A range of materials, including country-specific versions of leaflets continued to be used and have been re-printed where necessary. See Mid-term Report Annex 8. These leaflets are used to promote the project to both farmers and volunteers.

A new ‘nomadic’ display was produced for use at events to promote the advice and support offered by the RSPB in a clear and concise way. A simple design was chosen, with a simple but effective message - “The RSPB supports wildlife-friendly farming.” This display was first used at the Brussels Conference, and has since been used as the backdrop for the RSPB Chief Executive’s speech at our breakfast event at OFC. The new display will continue to be used at other events throughout 2013, including Cereals. See Annex 02.

Other banners continue to be used at various events including the OFE, Cereals and the Royal Welsh Show. The design process for most of the banners was by RSPB staff and the printing was always out-sourced.

A wide range of media outlets, including local and regional newspapers and specialist agricultural media, were successful in publicising the project to farmers. This was tailored to the demand for surveys within each region. For example, publicity was halted in the East of England this year, as requests had already met our capacity to deliver. In addition we made use of the RSPB’s extensive internal mechanisms, including the network of local RSPB groups, and our website. The RSPB has a growing following on Twitter - and this was used to promote the public vote for NOFA. Other social media including Facebook and the RSPB’s blog and podcast, were also utilised to promote the finalists during the voting period.

BIRDS magazine featured the V&FA in Winter 2011 (p.57), Spring 2012 (V&FA Volunteers won the RSPB President’s Award , p.81) and Winter 2012 (p. 71-72). See Annex 03.

Having expressed an interest in having a survey undertaken, the farmers are sent a registration form and asked to return it with a map of the farm, specifically identifying which 80 ha they would like surveyed. This is the maximum area that a volunteer can effectively survey in a morning.

This map allows the appropriate Geological Information System (GIS) software to be prepared and a suitably placed volunteer to be potentially matched to the farm to undertake the survey. The RSPB supporter database is used to record the details of the farmers involved.

These computer programmes and the data entry are set up to ensure compliance with data protection legislation and efficient administration.

Alongside this process, volunteers were identified and sent a registration form. When this is returned, the information is committed to a different RSPB database designed to assist volunteer management and comply with data protection legislation.

Action C1: Carry out farm surveys

The Project Officers and Regional Delivery Teams attracted interest from 897 farmers, requesting surveys in advance of the breeding season this year.

Progress to date:

Region/country	No. requests for surveys 2010	No. surveys delivered 2010	No. requests for surveys 2011	No. surveys delivered 2011	No. Requests for surveys 2012	No. Surveys delivered 2012
South-west England	100	94	97	91	91	90
South-east England	78	54	76	55	119	92
East of England	165	92	87	114	101	91
England Midlands	143	77	127	83	97	77
North-west England	76	51	61	58	50	45
North-east England	132	80	95	90	86	79
East Scotland	47	47	53	49	47	43
South and West Scotland	65	57	58	54	60	50
North Scotland	60	28	45	42	39	36
Northern Ireland	84	67	65	60	48	40
Wales	58	36	76	42	32	35
Total	1,008	683	879	738	770	678

The figure for Welsh requests is lower than surveys, as some survey sites were carried over from 2011.

Project Officers liaised with farmers to ensure we could deliver timely surveys. Farmers are increasingly sending in farm maps to us by email; saving time and storage space, and reducing our carbon footprint. Further contact is either by telephone (thus building a closer relationship as this gives the opportunity to discuss farming matters in greater depth), or by post as a last resort.

Region/country	No. of survey volunteers 2010	No. of admin. volunteers 2010	No. of survey volunteers 2011	No. of admin. volunteers 2011	No. of survey volunteers 2012	No. of admin. volunteers 2012
South-west England	108	2	98	2	97	2
South-east England	64	1	62	1	121	2
East of England	117	6	130	5	112	4
England Midlands	103	-	109	1	99	2
North-west England	66	1	72	1	53	1
North-east England	130	-	118	-	96	-
East Scotland	52	-	50	-	46	-
South and West Scotland	60	-	64	-	55	-
North Scotland	23	-	33	1	22	-
Northern Ireland	71	2	70	2	51	1
Wales	42	-	79	-	33	-
Total	836	12	885	13	785	12

As before, it is agreed with the farmer that the survey will be undertaken providing a local volunteer can be found.

In parallel with the recruitment and registration process for farmers, 785 volunteers committed to undertaking surveys this year. This is an 11.3% decrease to those that took part in 2011. Many volunteers declined to take part in 2012 due to increased work commitments in a difficult financial climate. However several new volunteers joined as they had more spare time available to give due to losing their paid employment.

Once the Project Officers have received the necessary paperwork from each volunteer, they are invited to workshops (Action C5) to determine if they are happy to undertake the surveys, have the requisite skills to do the work, and are physically capable and conversant with the procedures involved.

Although many volunteers have the requisite bird identification skills, newer volunteers needed assessing.

In the Midlands region, workshops had an element involving a bird walk on a farm to test the newer volunteers' ID skills. Those found to be less confident were paired with an existing volunteer for the entire year. Several volunteers are happy to take on a new 'mentoring' role. Some volunteers also acted as trainers, leading some of the sessions and thus including their personal experiences of surveying. Some farmers hosting the events also took part in either leading a training session, the farm walk, or were part of the audience and happy to answer questions and explain why they were involved in the project and what they hoped to gain from it.

As before, the volunteers were matched with the farms, ensuring a close proximity between the volunteer's home and the farm. The farmer is advised of who might undertake the survey and unless the Project Officer hears anything to the contrary, the farmer's personal details are given to each volunteer and vice versa. The volunteer contacts the farmer and arranges an initial visit.

As before, it is within this letter that a component of the workshops for volunteers (Action C5) is met. If the promotion of the EU Birds Directive in conservation management on farmland was restricted to the workshops, it would only reach a small proportion of volunteers. By sending details in a letter that every volunteer undertaking a survey receives (regardless of their attendance at a workshop) we ensure a more effective promotion.

As before, a participation pack is also disseminated to each volunteer, which informs them of their ambassadorial role and gives detailed information on matters such as health and safety, survey methodology and feedback mechanisms. This pack is available both electronically and in hard copy and distributed according to the volunteer's preference. The majority of maps and recording sheets are still have to be printed and posted to the volunteer, however a few are requesting maps by email and happy to print their own. It is hoped that in the future data recording will be wholly digital with handheld mapping devices.

If a volunteer participates annually, they do not receive the entire participation pack again, just the sheets that are pertinent to participation annually and new maps. See Mid-term Report Annex 17.

If Project Officers are unable to provide some farmers with surveys or utilise some volunteers, each party is duly informed, with a view to involving them the following year, or existing bird records are examined with a view to providing a report in order to support the farmer if he is applying for an agri-environment funding scheme.

During 2012, a total of 678 surveys were undertaken across the UK against the target of 680 surveys. The preceding tables on pages 10 and 11 illustrate the distribution of surveys across regions and countries and also the number of volunteers involved in both survey and administrative work. 2012 was a poor year weather wise, with many regions experiencing increased rainfall and numerous sites were flooded either partially or completely and therefore not surveyed.

Each survey consists of an initial visit to meet the farmer and then 3 or 4 survey visits between April and June. A little way into the breeding season the Project Officers contact the volunteers involved to ensure good progress is being made with the surveys, check the quality of the surveys and that the volunteers are happy in their work. If a volunteer is unable to continue, the farmer is informed and a replacement volunteer found if possible. Many surveys continued into July in 2012 due to the inclement weather.

Not all matched surveys were completed in 2012 due to various reasons listed in table below. Some were rematched to other volunteers, but there isn't always a replacement volunteer available in the right location, or cancellations are received too late in the season to rematch. Farmers are offered advice based on farming system and species likely to be using the farm. Staff will usually match more farms than the target to allow for drop-back.

Region/Country	Number of surveys not completed:	Reasons:
South-west England	1	Volunteer didn't complete survey
South-east England	5	Survey results never returned/volunteer declined to communicate post matching/bad weather/late start/work and other commitments/fear of spreading

Region/Country	Number of surveys not completed:	Reasons:
		Schmallenberg virus
East of England	7	Work commitments/volunteer vanished
England Midlands	6	Work commitments/volunteer moved house/illness
North-west England	-	-
North-east England	2	Poor weather & volunteer unwell/farmer unwell
East Scotland	1	Volunteer declined to send in results
South and West Scotland	4	Completed surveys but maps never returned/volunteer withdrew post matching/physical difficulties
North Scotland	2	Volunteer withdrew/farmer declined access
Northern Ireland	2	No access to a car/work commitments
Wales	4	Poor weather/work commitments/no contact
Total	34	

Action C2: Deliver survey outputs to farmers

The package of results and materials were successfully produced and received by farmers by the end of the calendar year.

The survey results from this year have been arriving with Project Officers since June and have been analysed and amalgamated into detailed territory maps for species of high conservation concern. Because the participation packs explain how this analysis is done, volunteers often start it themselves. Some Project Officers also have the assistance of administrative volunteers during this and other peak periods. See table on page 11.

Administrative volunteers included students involved in the Nuffield Foundation Science Bursaries. One student, Emily Macloed-Wittwer in the Midlands Regional Office (MRO) received a Crest Gold Award (Certificate of Creativity in Science and Technology) for her project on her work for the RSPB.

Olivia Adams, another Nuffield student in the Eastern England Regional Office (EERO) also received a Crest Gold Award and is hoping to go on to study a degree in Environmental Science. A double page article about her passion for the environment and work as a young environmentalist was published in the East Anglian Daily Times (See Annex 03). Staff from regions supported by Nuffield attended award ceremonies, thus giving an opportunity for staff to talk to other delegates (e.g. the John Innes Research Station, University of East Anglia) about our work and the projects the students supported.

The detailed analysis of maps is always completed by the Project Officer in advance of data entry, using GIS software. With the analysis of the results from each farm survey undertaken, the data entry complete and the layout of the map finalised, several copies of the A3 map are required.

The Project Officers store a copy of each map electronically. A copy is printed for the EU LIFE+ Project Manager and a copy for the farmer which is laminated. If the volunteer involved has the capacity to receive an electronic version, this is preferable to printing an additional copy, which is not laminated.

The species of birds found during the survey that are not of conservation concern are not included in the data entry or represented on the map that is sent to the farmer.

However, their presence is noted on a table that lists all the species of birds found on the farm, and it is this list that forms part of the report that is sent to the farmer with the laminated map. This report includes supporting material that puts the results of the survey into context.

This package of results and materials will be produced and received by farmers by the end of this calendar year.

Action C3: Carry out follow-up advisory visits

The effort dedicated to on-farm advice was increased in many regions, in line with demand. Demand in Wales and parts of Scotland was reduced during the course of the year as agri-environment schemes were closed. The adviser in south-east England has taken on a secondment to work with dairy farmers to start to develop a livestock package, which will inform the future livestock farmer toolkit that will form part of the After Life Plan. A new adviser has been brought in to fill the post in the south-east of England in the interim.

Farm size varies geographically with smaller farms in the west, larger farms in the east and very large estates in upland areas. To date, 988 farm visits have been completed and advice has been given over 208,404ha. The Farmland Bird Advisers produce reports for the farmers they visit, covering the following aspects:

- List of birds and other notable wildlife species recorded on the farm
- The habitats required for these species
- Estimate of how much habitat is required
- Specific details of how options should be located and managed

The RSPB adviser also supports farmers who are applying for agri-environment funding to pay for the management they undertake as a result of the advice provided by this project, often drawing the application up for the farmer.

Progress to date is:

Region/country	Number of farm visits completed 01.01.10-30.09.10	Area (ha) of farmland covered	Number of farm visits completed 01.10.10-30.09.11	Area (ha) of farmland covered	Number of farm visits completed 01.10.11-31.12.12	Area (ha) of farmland covered
South-west England	10	3,997	51	9,023	65	16,800
South-east England	8	5,003	40	20,650	29	16,797
East of England	4	1,643	12	4,548	60	12,601
England Midlands	13	2,530	46	11,302	63	10,691

Region/country	Number of farm visits completed 01.01.10-30.09.10	Area (ha) of farmland covered	Number of farm visits completed 01.10.10-30.09.11	Area (ha) of farmland covered	Number of farm visits completed 01.10.11-31.12.12	Area (ha) of farmland covered
North-west England	9	2,489	22	3,867	45	8,320
North-east England	8	3,256	49	14,238	34	7,300
East Scotland	11	3,825	10	2,533	38	5,584
South and West Scotland	8	1,547	19	2,000		
North Scotland	26	10,974	37	2,077	20	837
Northern Ireland	10	601	22	1,828	22	1,148
Wales	10	286	122	10,700	35	3,864
Total	117	36,191	430	82,766	441	89,447

Action C4: Run workshops for farmers

2012 has been the most successful year for getting farmers to workshops, especially in England, where the appetite for attending environmental events has been increased by the Campaign for the Farmed Environment (CFE). The CFE is an industry initiative to encourage farmers to manage land for the environment in more effective ways. This was particularly active in the East of England and the English Midlands. The totals over the three years amount to an average of 2.8 events per region per year, attracting an average of 75 farmers per region per year, comfortably above the target of 1 event and 40 farmers. The average number of farmers per event was only 27 though, so it was necessary to run more than one event per year to get 40 farmers to attend.

As before, the workshops are held on farms where RSPB advice has been taken up to create good quality habitats to provide the full requirements for farmland birds, namely seed food through the winter, insect food through the summer and safe in-field nesting habitat. The workshops consist of an introductory talk by the Farmland Bird Adviser and the host farmer, a farm tour to look at the habitats and discuss how they are created and managed, the cost-benefits to the farm business and a summing up session to gain feedback from the visiting farmers. Demonstration farms are asked to put the appropriate information boards up on the farm to explain the value of the habitats they have created (Action F2). RSPB advisory materials are displayed for farmers to take away, including the Tractor Cab Guide (Action C10) and the advisory sheets contained within the advisory packs (Action C9).

Progress to date is:

Region/country	Number of farm workshops 01.01.10- 30.09.10	Number of farmers attending	Number of farm workshops 01.10.10- 30.09.11	Number of farmers attending	Number of farm workshops 01.10.11- 31.12.12	Number of farmers attending
South-west England	-	-	1	40	3	33
South-east England	3	75	3	70	3	56
East of England	2	100	4	71	12	360+
England Midlands	8	130	8	306	9	212
North-west England	1	10	3	56	5	32
North-east England	-	-	2	24	-	-
East Scotland	-	-	3	73	2	80
South and West Scotland	7	510	1	9	3	35
North Scotland	-	-	2	26 (+10 agents)	2	26
Northern Ireland	-	-	1	50	1	40
Wales	-	-	-	-	3	54
Total	21	825	28	725	43	929

Action C5: Run workshops for volunteer surveyors

In advance of the breeding season, 23 volunteer workshops were held across the UK attracting a total of 245 volunteers.

Progress to date is:

Region/country	No. of volunteer workshops 2010	No. at workshops 2010	No. of volunteer workshops 2011	No. at workshops 2011	No. Of volunteer workshops 2012	No. At workshops 2012
South-west England	6	40	2	4	4	25
South-east England	-	-	-	-	3	21
East of England	3	49	4	95	2	43
England Midlands	1	17	2	14	4	51
North-west England	3	16	1	5	2	3
North-east England	3	62	4	64	3	49
East Scotland	4	15	2	4	0	0
South and West Scotland	6	123	4	79	2	20

Region/country	No. of volunteer workshops 2010	No. at workshops 2010	No. of volunteer workshops 2011	No. at workshops 2011	No. Of volunteer workshops 2012	No. At workshops 2012
North Scotland	3	22	1	5	0	0
Northern Ireland	4	60	3	50	1	15
Wales	4	33	4	31	2	18
Total	37	437	27	351	23	245

Although it may be surmised that a trained volunteer has no need to attend another workshop, many do return year on year. The reasons for this are varied: for some volunteers this is the only opportunity to socialise and exchange experiences with other volunteers in the same role. Surveying can be a very lonely isolating experience and training sessions provide an exchange of skills and build further relationships between volunteers and farmers (some farmers attend as volunteers too). Some volunteers also act as trainers, passing their knowledge on to other volunteers.

The events remain invaluable not just because of their social aspect (which is not to be underestimated – it is of extreme importance to the volunteers). As before, the sessions include survey methodology, health & safety procedures and promotion of the importance of the project.

However, it should be noted that the geographical location of volunteers in certain regions means that running training sessions are not viable – the volunteers are disparate and may be adequately confident in their skills to continue without the need for a training session.

As before, the workshops were held indoors with a trip outside incorporated into the event to explain the survey methodology. See Mid-term Report Annex 20.

In the Midlands, the four workshops were held on farms hosted by the resident farmers. An invitation was sent to volunteers, emailed where possible (See Annex 05). Volunteers on signing up were sent an agenda and map, and a pre-course questionnaire. Some responses are listed in Annex 05. The events consisted of a guided walk around each farm concentrating on identifying birds aurally and visually followed by a breakfast provided by the RSPB with a heavy emphasis on the contents being local and seasonal as far as possible. The next sessions included a presentation about the project (See Annex 05), a presentation about a project local to the venue and one on Futurescapes (another EU LIFE+ funded project) where applicable. Volunteers from other local surveying projects were invited to join the V&FA projects where increased numbers were required. Ample time was given for questions and answers during the walk, breakfast, comfort break, as part of presentations and at the end. At some venues farmers openly invited volunteers to have a longer walk around the farm after training had been completed. Following the events feedback forms were sent to volunteers (See Annex 05). A selection of responses are included in Annex 05.

A CD produced in conjunction with Natural England and the South West Farmland Bird Initiative which served as a training aid, to help volunteers identify bird song. See Mid-term Report Annex 26. The RSPB had the use of 1,500 CDs and of those, 452 remain in stock. (Action F7).

The results of questionnaires (Action E1) sent to volunteers that undertook surveys in 2011 suggest that 97.7% were happy with the level of support they received from project staff (an increase of 3.7% on the previous year), 53.7% had volunteered for the RSPB before (indicating 15.3% were new volunteers from those in 2010) and 97.7% felt that the training they received was either good or excellent (an increase of 2.7% on the previous year). See Annex 08.

The results from questionnaires sent to volunteers taking part in 2012 will be included in the Final Report.

Action C7: Establish demonstration farm network

65 demonstration farms have been established across the UK and used to hold events for farmers (Action C4) and volunteers (Action C5) and to develop case studies which can be posted on the RSPB website and Farm Wildlife website (Action F1). These are farms which have undertaken management to benefit wildlife in accordance with RSPB advice and have the facilities to host farm events to demonstrate techniques to other farmers. In some regions, farm events are a very popular means of disseminating advice. This is particularly true in arable areas of England, and so there is a strong bias towards numbers of demonstration farms, farm events and numbers of farmers attending being higher in regions such as East of England and East Midlands. In contrast, the lower population densities and greater travelling distances reduce the effectiveness of demonstration farms in areas of Scotland and Wales.

Case studies of 36 farms, including these demonstration farms, have been collated for posting on the project website at <http://www.rspb.org.uk/ourwork/farming/spotlight/>.

The aim of these case studies is to showcase best practice in both compliance with EU legislation and enhancement of the conservation status of key species through habitat creation and management.

Region/country	Number of demonstration farms set up as of December 2012 (total for project)
South-west England	4
South-east England	6
East of England	18
England Midlands	7
North-west England	12
North-east England	3
East Scotland	2
South and West Scotland	3
North Scotland	2
Northern Ireland	5
Wales	3
Total	65

Action C8: Establish a Biodiversity Award scheme

The rationale behind establishing a Biodiversity Award scheme is that it gives farmers the opportunity to gain widespread recognition and praise for conservation on their farms, raises awareness and provides an excellent vehicle for more general communications. In doing so, we aim to raise the profile of wildlife-friendly farming within the industry, and encourage more farmers to aspire to be Agri-environment heroes by managing their farmland to improve the conservation status of farmland birds and other wildlife, in accordance with the EU Birds Directive.

As mentioned in the Inception and Mid-Term Reports, a breakfast event is held at the OFC, where we celebrate the NoFA winners from the previous year, and officially launch the next competition (Action F7). In 2012, we were keen to hear from farmers who had taken part in the competition. Unfortunately the 2011 winners were unable to attend, but a video featuring them and other participants was shown. Farmers Rob Law and Robert Kynaston joined us at the event and spoke about their participation in NOFA.

A PR plan for the 2012 NoFA was produced at the beginning of this year (Action F5) which ensured we made the most of opportunities to promote the NoFA. See Annex 06.

The new sign-up leaflets promoting the NoFA produced to carry The Telegraph logo were used once again, providing a bespoke leaflet for each country, with a bi-lingual version for Wales. See Mid-Term report Annex 34-37.

In conjunction with a press release, these leaflets were distributed through various routes into the farming community.

The polo shirts produced in 2011 were utilised once again in 2012, providing opportunities to promote the competition on and off-stand at agricultural shows and events throughout the year.

All farmers involved in the V&FA were sent a sign-up leaflet and encouraged to enter. This year 420 farms entered the NoFA, compared with 317 last year. As before, their details were entered onto an RSPB database. We also contacted every farmer who had previously shown an interest in the competition to encourage them to apply.

Application forms were then sent to those that entered and on their return, considered and shortlisted, using the information provided and a scoring sheet. The best from each region or country were visited and judged by regional or country staff and representatives from partner organisations (Butterfly Conservation and Plantlife) and assessed using the criteria set out in the judging form.

The winners from each region or country were chosen and in due course, presented with a cheque for £200, a certificate and a plaque. The certificate and plaque introduced because of our involvement with The Telegraph were used again in 2012, and as before they were designed by RSPB staff. See Mid-term Report Annex 42 and 44.

The highly-commended category introduced in 2011 was continued in 2012, which recognised and celebrated another 28 farmers across the UK. For the purpose of this category, additional certificates and plaques were designed by RSPB staff, and these were presented to

the farmers concerned. The certificates were designed and produced by RSPB staff, while the plaques were designed by RSPB staff but the printing was out-sourced.

Each of the regional and country winners were considered by a UK judging panel, which consisted of wildlife experts from the RSPB (Head of Species and Habitats Conservation and Director of Conservation), Butterfly Conservation (Chief Executive), Plantlife (Chief Executive) and BBC Wildlife Magazine (Editor). After an assessment of the farmer's submissions and those of the regional judges, a shortlist of four farmers was drawn up.

The four finalists were promoted from 20/07/12 until 05/09/12 through all suitable media channels, with the UK award winner voted for and chosen by the public. This gave the farmers involved widespread recognition and praise for conservation on their farms, in front of a significant audience, and helps to encourage other farmers to follow their example of conservation delivery.

We had hoped to officially open the voting at the Country Land and Business Association (CLA) Game Fair, but the 2012 event was cancelled due to bad weather. Despite this, we utilised numerous alternatives to promote the opportunity for the public to vote, including national and regional newspapers, magazines, radio, e-newsletters, websites, agricultural shows, reserves, festivals, fairs, social media and on-farm events. We also attempted to engage our face-to-face recruitment staff in the promotion process, with limited success. For those who had a local farmer to promote, this was much more likely to be taken up. Those in areas where there was no local connection to the finalists found it more challenging. This is something that we aim to address in the 2013 competition and beyond.

Most significantly the RSPB sent out three e-mails to our supporters, promoting the opportunity to vote to over 500,000 people. See Annex 07 for emails and statistics of each email once delivered.

The ability to vote was made as inclusive as possible with new voting cards printed that featured the four finalists and appropriate logos. In a change to previous years, we decided to trial two types of voting card – the first was a simple two-fold card, DL in size, and designed for use where there was someone to talk about NOFA and explain why voting is important. 14,000 of these were produced. The second was a three-fold leaflet designed for use as a stand-alone item. 13,000 of these were produced. The extra page provided additional space for explanation but had limited success in improving voting figures. Therefore the 2013 competition will revert back to the simple A4 fold card. This design process was by RSPB staff and the printing was out-sourced. See Annex 07.

More information on each farm was available on the project's website, allowing the public to make a well informed vote, on-line. A dedicated phone-line was set up to allow those without access to the voting cards or a computer from which to vote on-line, the opportunity to request voting material and also vote this year. See Annex 07.

A range of posters were also designed by RSPB staff and printed in-house, to publicise the opportunity to vote. See Annex 07.

In order to maximise public participation, an incentive to vote was factored into the competition because The Telegraph was able to donate a spa break for two at Ragdale Hall in Leicestershire. This served as a prize draw.

There was limited editorial promotion of the awards in The Telegraph. However a full colour advert was designed in-house by RSPB staff and printed in the last week of voting. The Awards were also publicised in the RSPB's magazine as well as various regional papers.

Throughout the summer a total of 17,365 members of the public voted. This is slightly down on the 22,069 in 2011 but may be due to the public focus on the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations and the London Olympics and Paralympic Games during the summer. However, this still exceeds the target of 5,000 votes.

After a very tense competition, we are pleased to announce that Henry Edmunds from Wiltshire in southern England won the 2012 Nature of Farming Award, having been a finalist in the pilot competition in 2008. Henry has been awarded a cheque for £1,000, another certificate and another plaque.

An Awards Ceremony to celebrate the 2012 winners was held at the OFC in January 2013. This ensures the project is promoted to key decision-makers and commentators in the farming community.

After recent meetings, we can confirm that The Telegraph view the partnership as a success and further meetings will finalise the details of their continued sponsorship.

Action C9: Produce advisory packs

An A4 folder designed internally was used to send each farmer in receipt of a V&FA survey a range of advisory material tailored to their farms. All 678 packs were sent to farmers in the fourth quarter of last year. Each pack, from results to finished product, takes on average 1 working day to complete.

As before, these packs ensure maximum relevance, because each farm-specific pack includes just the double-sided, full-colour A4 advisory sheets that relate to the birds of conservation concern found on the farm and an order form for additional sheets, including those on habitat management or creation.

These packs, which comprise of the map of the survey results, a report and a certificate, are critical because they provide farmers with tailored advice on how they might improve conservation management on their farms. In addition, farmers with birds of conservation concern are prioritised for follow-up advisory visits (Action C3).

The stock control of these sheets is managed by an administrator and when necessary, the sheets are reviewed by the Senior Agricultural Adviser, and editorial changes made prior to any re-print.

Action C10: Produce bird guide

In March 2010, we produced 5,000 copies of the Tractor Cab Guide to Farmland Birds. To date, 3,923 have been given to farmers who have had farm surveys, advisory visits or attended project events. We have also given them out at agricultural shows to farmers who have signed up to the project newsletter or RSPB farming e-newsletter.

Action C11: Produce 11 Farm Wildlife Hotspot case studies on the project website and a report on the pilot

The farm wildlife hotspots are being identified on the basis of distributions of the priority farmland birds. There are two types of hotspot, those targeted at birds associated with arable farmland (grey partridge, lapwing, turtle dove, yellow wagtail, tree sparrow and corn bunting) and those targeted at birds associated with grasslands (lapwing, curlew, snipe, redshank, oystercatcher and yellow wagtail). They will become operational in February 2013. This action will be completed by September 2013.

Action C12: Produce a toolkit of environmental advice and support for English arable farmers and report on the pilot

Since approval was received for the extension, we have set up a technical expert group of wildlife organisations to develop a simple package of advice for English arable farmers. This has been adopted by the farming industry as the model on which arable farmland should be managed for wildlife.

We have commissioned market research of English arable farmers to ask what advice and support they would need to implement the package, and this will form the basis of the toolkit. The initial feedback from this market research recommends that the toolkit consists of a web-based hub of information and interactive advisory services, a booklet of simple guidelines and a programme of events for knowledge transfer.

We are working with the farming industry to ensure that our toolkit complements and does not replicate or conflict with any advice that they develop. Details will be reported on in the Final Report. The toolkit is on schedule for launch in June 2013.

Action E1: Send questionnaires to farmers and volunteers

A questionnaire (see Annex 08) was sent to volunteers in December 2011. 134 responses were received. An office volunteer undertook the data entry and analysed the results. See Annex 08.

A questionnaire (see Annex 08) was sent to 229 volunteers in December 2012. The results will be detailed in the Final Report.

A questionnaire was sent to farmers in December 2011 and 159 responses were received. See Mid Term Report Annex 61 for the questionnaire.

To ensure we are able to identify their practices, attitudes and any changes in these as a result of project participation, we have sent the questionnaire to 543 farmers who benefitted from a survey in 2011, together with a freepost return envelope. Results will be detailed in the Final Report.

Action E2: Assess impact of project on farmland bird populations

2011 was another poor year for farmland bird populations, with the Farmland Bird Indicator falling by 52% since 1970. The population changes for the key species of lowland farmland

birds targeted by this project since the Breeding Bird Survey began in 1995 as reported by the British Trust for Ornithology are as follows: asterisks indicate a statistical significance.

Species	Population index change 1995-2010	Population index change 2010-2011
Grey partridge	-55*	+6
Lapwing	-32*	-18*
Turtle dove	-80*	-35*
Skylark	-20*	-7*
Tree sparrow**	+96*	+16
Linnet	-21*	+4
Yellowhammer	-15*	+5
Corn bunting	-34*	0

**This increase in tree sparrow population since 1995 is from a very low level following a very sharp decline between 1970-1995.

The ability of this project to influence national population levels was considered in an evaluation conducted in 2012. The main conclusion was that we are unable to influence land management on a scale great enough to influence national populations of widespread farmland birds, and we should target our advice at Farm Wildlife Hotspots and monitor these populations with our volunteer surveys to demonstrate that landscape managed for wildlife can reverse these declines. These will then be best practice success stories, aimed to influence the industry and policy-makers to empower other farmers to follow suit. Actions C11 and C12 are a direct result of this evaluation.

Action F1: Create and maintain project website

We have changed the location of the project website to www.rspb.org.uk/farming. By having the project on our home website, we can develop and update it in-house. The RSPB website is also already the site visitors go to for information about the key elements of the project: V&FA (Actions B1, C1, C2 and C5), NoFA (Action C8) and advice on how to help farmland birds, including contact with our regional advisers (Actions C3 and C4).

The EU LIFE+ logo and acknowledgement of the funding to support our work with farmers has been put on the homepage of www.rspb.org.uk/farming, together with a live link to the EU LIFE+ website and EU web page on the Birds Directive.

We have created a new project page which looks at the project aims and objectives, and our progress to date. This will be updated annually once new figures for the Nature of Farming Award and V&FA surveys are available. We have now brought all the project activities under the title 'Advice and Support for Farmers' which includes links to information on NoFA, V&FA and local adviser contacts. The section entitled Agri-environment heroes has been renamed 'Farmers Stepping Up for Nature' to reflect the RSPB's new 10-year campaign, but still consists of case studies of the demonstration farmers we are establishing through the course of this project. We have also populated this area with some amended case studies of farmers we have worked with in the past. Short whole-farm case studies are also being worked up to inspire visitors to improve their farms for wildlife.

There is an existing area on the Farm Wildlife website for more technical case studies to give practical information about how to manage individual habitats for the benefit of wildlife, and there will be a link to these from www.rspb.org.uk/farming as they are developed. There is a link to the Farm Wildlife website to allow visitors to ask questions, make comments and post ideas on the discussion forum and to find out about events using the events calendar. We have also established a new farming blog which we are using to promote the project and its actions as well as our wider advisory work. This is continuing to grow in popularity, with regular commenters, and has 63 subscribers.

Between 1 August 2011 and 13 December 2012 there were 5,818 visits to the project homepage, and a total of 336,374 visits to the project website in total. Other sections of the project website have had significant increases in activity, the most significant being the NoFA pages, with 85,357 views on the finalists page for the 2012 competition. Peaks of activity on the website coincide with the public vote for NoFA. A summary of web activity across the whole farming section can be seen in Annex 09.

Action F2: Information boards

The boards were produced at the end of the first year. They illustrate the wildlife benefits of ten habitats that farmers create using our advice. They have been put up on demonstration farms where the farmer hosts events for the general public or farmer groups without our direct involvement. They have currently been installed on 22 farms, and we are finalising agreement to put them up on at least another 11 farms in the Farm Wildlife Hotspots (Action C.11).

Region	Farm	Status
North-east England	Holme Lodge Farm, Yorks	Boards up
North-west England	Claremont Farm, Wirral	Boards up
	Abbots Reading Farm, Cumbria	Boards up
	Holland's Farm, Lancashire	Boards up
East of England	White House Farm, Merseyside	Boards up
	MHS Farms, Cambridgeshire	Boards up
	Essex Farm, Cambridgeshire	Boards up
	MSS Farms, Cambridgeshire	Boards up
	Lodge Farm, Cambridgeshire	Boards up
	SKG, Cambridgeshire	Boards up
	Moor Farm, Cambridgeshire	Boards up
	Halls Farm, Cambridgeshire	Boards up
	Pode Hole Farm, Cambridgeshire	Boards up
	Northolm Farm, Cambridgeshire	Boards up
	Fledgcroft Farm, Cambridgeshire	Boards up
	Oakhurst Farm, Cambridgeshire	Boards up
	Bridge Farm, Cambridgeshire	Boards up
Manor Farm, Cambridgeshire	Boards up	
Wales	Blaen-y-Nant, Gwynedd	Boards up
	Penlan Farm, Carmarthenshire	Boards up
South East England	Church Farm, Ulcombe, Kent	Boards up

Photographs of some boards in situ are in Annex 04.

Action F3: Layman's report

A draft version of the Layman's report (see Annex 10) was produced in October 2012, in time for the International Conference held in Brussels on 28 November 2012. 100 copies of this report were printed, by the RSPB Reprographics department, and distributed at the conference to all attendees including farmers, volunteers, practitioners and Members of the European Parliament (MEPs).

The Layman's report details the work carried out during the three years of the LIFE+ Birds Directive on Farmland project; including the Volunteer & Farmer Alliance project, the Nature of Farming Awards and work advising farmers across the UK. It contains, among other things, case studies on project staff, volunteers and farmers; information on how we have communicated our work to the agricultural community and the general public; how the work is contributing to farmland bird recovery and an evaluation of the RSPB's agricultural advice programme.

It is our intention to update the Layman's report with a one-page summary of the project's aims and achievements, and the developments resulting from the 9-month extension to the LIFE+ project (namely Actions C11 and C12). We will include lessons learnt and provide organisations in other Member States, who may wish to replicate the project, the most useful and up to date vision of how to deliver for farmland birds. At the end of the project, a final version will be produced - 500 copies will be printed and a pdf version made available on the RSPB's project website. The paper version of the final Layman's report will be sent to those who attended the conference in 2012, key stakeholders, agricultural ministers and MEPs across Europe.

Action F4: Conference

The conference originally entitled "Promoting the importance of the EU Birds Directive in conservation management on farmland" was delivered on 28th November 2012 with the support of Birdlife International. The title was re-worded to "RSPB's EU LIFE+ Wildlife Friendly Farming Conference" in order to appeal to a wider range of delegates. Specific attention was paid to ensure that all presentations, displays, literature, name badges and posters on the day consistently featured the EU LIFE+, RSPB and Birdlife logos.

Over 1,200 people were invited by various means. Letters were sent to mainly UK delegates (Annex 11), various email invitations were sent to European delegates (Annex 11). Contacts at Birdlife International and the EU Life+ Office in Brussels also promoted the event to their staff and contacts.

Although 85 delegates registered for the event, only 64 attended on the day. Advice given as to the "no-shows" implied that they were otherwise engaged at the EU Agriculture Councils' meeting on the same day, or had other commitments at the last minute, and this is to be expected.

The conference programme (Annex 11) was distributed to all delegates and included presentations from the RSPB, Birdlife International, project volunteers and farmers. A specially commissioned film about NoFA was shown. Two Q&A sessions discussed CAP, the Birds Directive and the views of farmers and volunteers. These sessions provided a

valuable platform for the audience to ask questions to all involved and hear first hand from farmers and volunteers involved in the project.

The foyer at the venue provided a space for delegates to meet prior to the start of the presentations, and at various intervals during the day. Presentations/displays and literary material was available from the V&FA and NoFA projects for delegates to read, and representatives from the four UK countries were on hand to speak to delegates.

The Layman's report (See Annex 10) was available for delegates to read, and a copy enclosed with all 'Goody Bags' given out on the day. Welcome music was nature themed in order to tie-in with the theme of the conference.

Lunch was provided by the venue, but refreshments were provided by an award winning English vineyard (Breaky Bottom) – a farm that took part in the V&FA project and received subsequent advisory information. A showcasing leaflet was placed in all tables for delegates. See Annex 11.

The conference aims were to demonstrate how the RSPB had taken the original application and turned that into real and meaningful conservation delivery. The passion and commitment of the volunteers and farmers who presented on the day and have delivered the habitats means that declining species have farms where life is less challenging. The event was hugely successful with many delegates sending feedback or commenting on the event in published articles or on social media (See Annex 03). In particular, an amazing article published in Farmers Weekly by Mr Matthew Naylor (See Annex 03). A blog was published on the RSPB website (See Annex 03).

The conference highlighted the fact that after three years of the project, the RSPB, supported by the LIFE+ funding, is in a better place to fight for wildlife alongside committed farmers and volunteers.

Action F5: Media work

For the V&FA, the target for one national story was met and the target for 12 regional stories exceeded. Forty press releases were sent out for the NoFA and 21 for the V&FA. Both the NoFA and V&FA received good electronic coverage.

Other coverage has included a feature on the Brussels Conference by Matthew Naylor in Farmers Weekly (web and print) and numerous tweets about the event. See Annex 03.

A record of press releases and coverage since the Mid-Term Report has been produced. See Annex 03.

The target for 12 regional stories and 1 national story for the NoFA has been exceeded in 2012, with 40 stories printed since the Mid-Term Report (3 national and 37 regional). Electronic coverage was once again popular, with 142 stories being posted online (51 national stories, 88 regional stories and 1 to specific e-mail subscribers. There was also a story posted on a USA website). Radio coverage was also secured for the NoFA in 2012, including items on BBC local radio, and the RSPB's own Nature's Voice podcast.

The 2012 NoFA was sponsored by The Telegraph, enabling increased coverage of the award in a national daily newspaper, with a readership of approximately 1.68m. A voting form was

printed in the paper towards the end of the voting period for the 2012 competition, although editorial coverage was significantly lower than in 2011. We will continue to work with the Telegraph correspondent for environment stories to secure coverage in the future.

Two banner ads were commissioned to appear on the Farmers Guardian website; one to recruit farmers during the entry window and the other to promote the public vote. These were on a rotating basis with other adverts and appeared across the website. The voting campaign was delivered on the same basis, but ran for slightly longer.

A PR plan for the 2012 NoFA was drawn up before the end of 2011 to ensure that we continue to maximise opportunities to promote the project. The 2013 NoFA will run in a similar way as previous years, with a full review scheduled in order to improve the competition for 2014. Our continuing relationship with The Telegraph as sponsors has been agreed for 2013 but will form part of this review.

For the V&FA, the target for one national story and 12 regional stories in 2011 has been exceeded. Since the Inception Report was compiled, 7 press releases have been sent out, with 4 national stories printed and 6 appearing electronically. Regional coverage included 19 electronic stories and 8 printed stories. The V&FA was also mentioned on BBC Radio 4's Farming Today programme, which has approximately 1 million listeners. As was the case last year, regions/countries with high numbers of farmers or volunteers already signed up were unable to promote the project to prevent raising expectations. However there will be further media opportunities for all the regions and countries once the results from the 2011 survey season are available.

Press releases on project activities contain a reference to the EU LIFE+ Programme, although we cannot guarantee that editors include this in their coverage. We will continue to make reference to EU support.

There is no guarantee that the press will run press releases, but we work closely with our media team to ensure they have the best possible chance of featuring in the press we target.

Articles covering the NoFA have appeared in BIRDS magazine, with a readership of approximately 2 million. See Annex 03. This includes an article promoting the vote for 2012 and announcing the Charringtons as the 2011 Champions, and an interview with Rob Kynaston, a NoFA regional finalist. Specific promotion elsewhere has included e-mails to contacts on our supporters database to encourage voting in the NoFA, and posts on our Community forum and our own farming blog about both the NoFA and V&FA.

Action F6: Produce project newsletter

The project newsletter was distributed to 8,431 individuals in 2012. 150 of these individuals received it in an email including links to the RSPB's website pages, where the newsletters from 2010 onwards can be downloaded, together with further information about the V&FA and NoFA projects. A further 400 copies were disseminated to RSPB offices for regional use during 2013.

As in 2011, instead of one version, this year we produced four bespoke newsletters. See Annex 12. As before, each version will inform our audience about project delivery, promote key messages and describe case studies and although a component of each newsletter will

relate back to the UK, at least two thirds of the newsletter will only refer to work in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.

These were distributed to all project participants and the farming community, depending on their country of residence, in a paper format or electronically.

As before, the newsletter has provided an interesting and informative read and contained key information about the outputs of the project at both regional and national levels, within the context of the UK. It used text and images to describe species protection and conservation management. It related this to EU policies and referred to the RSPB website where the project website is located.

Action F7: Project networking - attend national technical events

In 2012, the RSPB attended the Balmoral Show, Royal Highland Show, Royal Welsh Show, Cereals 2012, Sheep 2012, Beef 2012 and Livestock 2012. Winners and Highly Commended farmers for NoFA 2012 were presented with their prizes in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. At each event, the RSPB had stands promoting the NoFA, V&FA and RSPB advice. We attended all of the events listed in the project actions.

We also hosted a breakfast event at the Oxford Farming Conference in January 2012 to highlight the NoFA winners from 2011 and launch the 2012 competition. Two guest farmers who had been involved in the 2011 Awards, Robert Kynaston and Rob Law, joined RSPB Chief Executive Mike Clarke in addressing the 120 attendees. The 2011 winners were unable to attend, but a video was shown featuring their farm on Mull alongside some of the other 2011 participants.

Our breakfast event at the 2013 Conference attracted similar numbers, and Bill Jordan of Jordans Cereals joined Mike Clarke to promote the value of working in partnership as well as the benefits of wildlife-friendly farming.

All of the events were a great success, with very positive feedback from farmers, who mainly came to the RSPB stand to enquire about bird surveys (Actions C1 and C2), advice (Action C3) and to sign up for the e-newsletter / project newsletter for their free Tractor Cab Guide to Farmland Birds (Action C10) or wipe-clean wall planner.

We have also taken the opportunity to carry out market research on some of the show stands this year. As we did in 2011, some of our show stands in 2012 featured vases of coloured water and we conducted a straw poll on whether people felt money for agri-environment schemes should increase, decrease or stay the same. Visitors voted for their choice by pouring water into the relevant vase (see Annex 13). The result was a resounding win for an increase in agri-environment funding. As well as being a useful opener for discussing what farmers are currently doing, this survey attracted interest to the stand and our wider advisory work.

We were unable to establish any demonstration plots at Cereals 2012 despite approaching the Crop Protection Association. We have however been approached by a seed supplier, DLF Trifolium, who wish to establish some wildlife-friendly demonstration plots at Cereals 2013. We have since provided advice on suitable mixtures to establish at the site, and provided text for their 2013 catalogue. We are hopeful that this will provide greater opportunities for RSPB staff to talk to visitors to both the RSPB and DLF Trifolium stands, about the benefits of

growing these mixes. Other opportunities with companies including Bayer are currently being explored.

To provide visitors to our stand at Cereals with an opportunity to talk to those who are farming in a wildlife-friendly way, we invited several farmers to join us over the two days of the show. We had eight farmers who each did a one-hour slot on the stand. We hope to do this again in future years, with better promotion and perhaps a more defined 'event' such as a debate or panel discussion on our own stand. RSPB Conservation Director, Martin Harper, appeared on the debating panel at the Arable Conference at Cereals 2012, and we once again hosted a reception on the RSPB stand to celebrate wildlife-friendly farming following the debate.

5.2. Envisaged progress until next report

The Gantt chart below shows progress to date and progress envisaged over the rest of the project. It is based on the timetable shown in Part C of the project proposal plus the new actions proposed for the extension. The end of the Progress Report period is marked with a thick black line, and progress to date is shown using ticks, with areas of lack of progress shown as highlighted in yellow.

There are delays in progress in two areas:

1. Identifying farmers and volunteers for 2013 surveys and advisory visits – this is because each region has been determining locations for their Farm Wildlife Hotspots until late December 2012. This is now close to completion so we will be recruiting farmers and volunteers throughout January 2013.
2. Selection of Demonstration Farms – the project target has been met, but we have not recruited further demonstration farmers this winter as these will be located within the Farm Wildlife Hotspots, which are currently being identified.

The Gantt chart is followed by updated lists of project deliverables, project milestones and activity reports. These are based on the corresponding lists in Part C of the proposal. During the next reporting period (01/01/2013–30/09/2013), we expect to complete the following actions during the process of establishing the farm wildlife hotspots (C11) and the pilot toolkit (C12):

- identification of farmers and volunteers for 2013 surveys (Action B1)
- surveys for 2013 (Action C1)
- farmer workshops for 2013 (Action C4)
- volunteer workshops for 2013 (Action C5)
- recruitment of demonstration farms for 2013 in each region/country and production of at least 1 case study per Farm Wildlife Hotspot (Action C7)
- Biodiversity Award scheme for 2013 with national winner identified (Action C8)
- Advisory packs produced for 2013 (Action C9)
- 2012 questionnaire results collated and analysed (Action E1)
- Final Layman's report (Action F3) with 500 copies of the Layman's report produced for dissemination

- Attend at least 5 national farming technical events (Action F7)

Number/name	2010				2011				2012				2013			
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV
A1. Manage project	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Actual progress	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
A2. Monitor progress	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Actual progress	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
A3. External audit																✓
Actual progress																
A4. After-LIFE plan																✓
Actual progress																
B1. Identify farmers/vols	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓			
Actual progress	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓							
C1. Surveys		✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓	
Actual progress		✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓					
C2. Survey outputs			✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓
Actual progress			✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓				
C3. Follow-up visits			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Actual progress			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
C4. Farmer w/shops			✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Actual progress			✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓				
C5. Volunteer w/shops	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓		
Actual progress	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓						
C7. Demo. Farms			✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Actual progress			✓	✓			✓	✓								
C8. Biodiversity Award	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Actual progress	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
C9. Advisory packs	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	
Actual progress	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓					
C10. Bird guide		✓	✓													
Actual progress		✓	✓													
C11. Farm wildlife hotspots													✓	✓	✓	
Actual progress																
C12. Pilot toolkit												✓	✓	✓	✓	
Actual progress												✓				

Number/name	2010				2011				2012				2013			
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV
E1. Questionnaire			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			
Actual progress			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				
F1. Website	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Actual progress			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
F2. Info boards				✓	✓	✓										
Actual progress			✓	✓												
F3. Layman's report											✓	✓			✓	
Actual progress											✓	✓				
F4. Conference									✓	✓	✓	✓				
Actual progress									✓	✓	✓	✓				
F5. Media work	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Actual progress	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				

Shaded areas are where progress differs to the proposed plan, either ahead of schedule (with tick) or behind schedule (without tick).

Updated list of Project deliverables

Name of the Deliverable	Code of the associated action	Deadline	Notes at 31/12/2012
Promotional leaflet for farm surveys	B1	28 Feb 2010	Completed
Promotional leaflet for Biodiversity Award scheme	C8	31 Mar 2010	Completed
Participation packs for volunteer surveyors	C1	31 Mar 2011	Completed
LIFE+ information boards	F2	31 Aug 2010	Completed
Tractor Cab Guide to Farmland Birds	C10	30 Sep 2010	Completed
Project questionnaire	E1	31 Oct 2011	Completed
Advisory pack (folder and contents)	C9	Contents updated as required	Completed
Report maps – laminated for farmers, non-laminated for surveyors	C2	30 Nov 2010, 11, 12	Completed annually
Project newsletter	F6	15 Dec 2010, 11, 12	Completed Annually
Farm management reports	C3	31 Dec 2010, 11, 12	Completed annually
Media articles	F5	At least 25 between 1 Jan and 31 Dec 2012	Completed
Layman's report	F3	First version for Nov 2012, final by Sept 2013	First version completed
Audit report	A3	31 Dec 2013	Date changed due to new end of project

Name of the Deliverable	Code of the associated action	Deadline	Notes at 31/12/2012
			date (30 Sep 2013)
After-LIFE plan	A4	31 Dec 2013	Date changed due to new end of project date (30 Sep 2013)
Conference delegate pack	F4	30 Nov 2012	Completed
11 Farm Wildlife Hotspot case studies on the project website	C11	30 Sep 2013	NEW
Report on the Farm Wildlife Hotspot pilot	C11	30 Sep 2013	NEW
Toolkit of environmental advice and support for English arable farmers	C12	12 June 2013	NEW
Report on the environmental advice and support toolkit pilot	C12	30 Sep 2013	NEW

Updated list of Project milestones

Name of the milestone	Code of the associated action	Deadline	Notes at 31/12/2012
Manage project	A1	Throughout (Steering Group mtgs twice yearly)	On schedule
Monitor project	A2	Throughout	On schedule
Liaise with media	F5	Throughout	On schedule
Place project details and materials on website	F1	Amendments requested by EU LIFE+ to be made by September 2011	Completed
Recruit farmers and volunteer surveyors	B1	31 Mar annually	On schedule
Run volunteer workshops	C5	15 Apr annually	On schedule
Carry out farm surveys	C1	15 Jul annually	On schedule
Announce winner of Biodiversity Award scheme	C8	15 Oct annually	On schedule
Identify farms for follow-up advisory visits	C3	31 Oct 2011	Completed
Run farmer workshops	C4	30 Nov annually	On schedule
Deliver report maps and advisory packs to farmers (and maps to volunteers)	C2 (and C9 for advisory pack)	31 Dec annually	On schedule
Establish demonstration farms	C7	31 Dec annually	On schedule
Attend farming events	F7	At least 5 annually	On schedule
Hold international conference	F4	31 Dec 2012	Completed
Set up 11 operational Farm Wildlife Hotspots	C11	30 Sep 2013	On schedule
Launch pilot toolkit	C12	12 Jun 2013	On schedule

Updated list of Project reports

Type of report	Original deadline	Notes at 30/01/2013
Inception report	30 Sep 2010	Completed
Mid-term report with payment request	30 Sep 2011	Completed
Progress report	31 Dec 2012	Completed
Final report with payment request	31 Dec 2013	In progress

5.3 Impact

To date, this project has enabled our Farmland Bird Advisers to give direct advice to 988 farmers over 208,404 ha.

5.4 Outside LIFE

The RSPB paid for two adverts to promote the Biodiversity Award scheme on the Farmers Guardian website this year, which boosted interest in entries from farmers (Action F5). The NoFA was also promoted in Fieldfare – the RSPB agricultural newsletter for policy-makers.

The RSPB attended a number of events where the NoFA was promoted. Unfortunately the CLA Game Fair was cancelled due to bad weather, and this is where the public vote was due to be launched. However we did utilise our presence at the British Birdwatching Fair to promote it to a new (non-agricultural) audience.

The RSPB sponsored the OFC and hosted a breakfast reception to celebrate the winners of the NoFA in 2012 and 2013.

The RSPB farming blog has continued to grow in popularity since its launch in 2011, which is attracting several posts per week, largely from project staff on matters relating to the project.

At the end of the breeding season, each region/country holds a number of thank-you events for volunteers involved in the V&FA. These are very often combined with events the region/country hold for other volunteers.

The RSPB farming e-newsletter goes out to over 2,000 farmers, four times a year. Every issue features a case study of a project demonstration farm, and the NoFA was covered to promote entries and celebrate the winners.

6. Financial part

6.1 Costs incurred (summary by cost category and relevant comments).

Budget breakdown categories	Total cost in € (see note a)	Costs incurred from the start date to 30.11.2012 in €	% of total costs
1. Personnel	1,335,629	911,108	68.22%
2. Travel and subsistence	62,576	65,301	104.35%
3. External assistance	106,950	41,668	38.96%
4. Durable goods			
Infrastructure	0	0	n/a
Equipment	1,369	1,312	95.84%
Prototype	0	0	n/a
5. Land purchase / long-term lease	0	0	n/a
6. Consumables	78,507	53,130	67.68%
7. Other Costs	0	0	n/a
8. Overheads	110,727	75,076	67.80%
TOTAL	1,695,758	1,147,595	67.67%

Note a – Budget as per project modification submitted September 2012, approved November 2012

Overview

All costs have been converted from the working currency (GBP) to EUR at the applicable rate in force as per Art. 29.5 of the Common Provisions, namely 0.891 GBP/EUR (for costs paid during 2010), 0.861 GBP/EUR (for costs paid during 2011) and 0.835 GBP/EUR (for costs paid during 2012). As shown from the above table, up to 30 November 2012 (the most recent finalised financial reporting date), a total of €1,147,595 has been incurred on the project, equating to 67.7% of the total project budget. Actual costs in the above table represent expenditure for 35 out of 45 project months, taking the revised end date of 30 September 2013 into account. It would be reasonable to expect, therefore that actual project spend would be closer to 78% of total project spend at this stage. The reason why there is a c.10% variation from this marker is due to two reasons. Firstly personnel spend reported against the project during the first project year (2010) was much lower than original estimations, and we are still catching up from this very slow start. Secondly the exchange rate in force during 2010 (and to a lesser extent, during 2011 and 2012) has artificially devalued expenditure during these years. Both these factors were identified in the project Inception Report submitted in October 2010.

We are very grateful to the Commission for approving the Project Modification request for this project in November 2012. Without this agreement (which in part extended the project by a further 9 months) there would have been little, if any claim on a final LIFE+ grant payment based on eligible costs if accounts closed on 31 December 2012. With the extension, we are

now confident that the vast majority of the budget, although most likely not 100%, will be expended by the revised end date. As project expenditure is monopolised by personnel spend, the final total spend will be almost entirely dependent on the level of personnel spend observed during 2013. This is discussed in more detail below. As ever, all involved in the management and financial administration of this project are monitoring project spend on a monthly basis at the budget line level and making adjustments to spend where possible to ensure a close relationship to budget.

6.2 Personnel

Expenditure to 30 November 2012 on personnel is 68.2% of the total personnel budget. This is still lower than we would have reasonably expected to see at this stage of the project, however since our last discussion on spend in the Mid-Term report, the rate of personnel spend has increased, narrowing the gap between predicted and actual costs to date. It is very difficult to control personnel costs in the same sense that, for example, external assistance costs can be controlled. The project has limited ability to recruit additional staff for particular actions as it could, in theory, take on a subcontractor, for example. Further, the project is to a large extent reliant on the continued employment of relevant staff able who are able to contribute to the project. This is mentioned because, as we head into 2013 the RSPB is reviewing its Agricultural Policy staff resources (within which this project falls under). This will affect the level of staff resource available to the project during 2013.

6.3 Calculation of Personnel Costs

The Commission's letter of 14th January 2013 requested further details in this report on how personnel costs are calculated, and the location of the supporting financial documents for personnel cost calculation. We hereby give the following response:

Time worked on the project is recorded using timesheets in accordance with the Common Provisions of the LIFE+ grant. When timesheets are received, the name of the employee in question and their corresponding unique identifying reference from our financial system are obtained. These details are provided to the Financial Department at the RSPB along with a request for the gross annual pay, employer's national insurance (NI) and employer's pension contribution for the financial years (April – March) either side of the calendar year in which the work was undertaken. For example, if a timesheet for work in 2012 is received the payment information for financial years 2011/12 and 2012/13 is requested. This payroll information is provided in an Excel format under confidential circumstances, to be used in the calculation of personnel costs for the LIFE+ projects only.

The following description continues to use the example of work done in the calendar year 2012:

- Using the 2011/12 salary details, 9 months gross annual pay (April – December 2011) and 3 months of employer's NI and pension (January – March 2012) is calculated.
- Using the 2012/13 salary details, 9 months gross annual pay (April – December 2012) and 9 months of employer's NI and pension (April – December 2012) is calculated.

The following calculations are then used to infer the calendar year amounts quoted in the LIFE+ financial claim form:

- Gross salary = 2011/12 salary – April-December 2011 salary + April-December 2012 salary
- Employers NI contribution = January-March 2012 NI + April-December 2012 NI
- Employers Pension contribution = January-March 2012 + April-December 2012 Pension

Where a person does not work full time, their salary, NI and Pension are adjusted accordingly, as is the annual number of working time units. Where an employee has a salary increase part way through the financial year, the approximate total salary for the financial year is calculated. For example if an employee has a gross salary of £20,000 for half the year (April – September 2012) and 20,500 for half the year (October 2012 – March 2013) the annual gross salary for 2011/12 will be considered £20,250. The calculation of the April – December salary will be £15,125 and the NI and Pension will be treated in the same manner.

For the purposes of audits and other verification, payslips can be provided by the Finance Department following a legitimate request. RSPB and auditing personnel can have access to these payslips to check the actual amounts received and auditing personnel can also visit the Finance and Personnel departments to see the payslips being generated directly and the employee contracts.

6.4 Travel and subsistence

The project has already spent 104.4% of budgeted travel costs. There are minimal travel requirements during 2013 as the project focuses actions on a series of farm wildlife hot-spots, and the travel costs of the project volunteers – the highest single source of travel expenditure for the first three project years, is reduced to near-zero. It would appear that the reason why we have already slightly overshot the travel expenditure budget before the conclusion of the project is, in part at least, due to higher-than-expected travel costs for attendance at the Project Conference in Brussels in November 2012.

6.5 External Assistance

Expenditure on external assistance is currently only 40% of total spend. There are a number of external assistance costs that will be borne during the final 10 months of the project, including market research costs, tool-kit development, and the final project audit. These costs, together with other more regular payments, should increase external assistance expenditure by up to €50,000 before the end of the project.

6.6 Durable Goods

These costs relate to the purchase of computers for use by dedicated project staff at the project outset. As these costs have been transferred from Consumables post-purchase on the advice of the LIFE Unit, we have been able to accurately predict budget and actual costs when compiling the revised budget. We do not foresee any further expenditure on this category.

6.7 Consumables

With 10 month of the project remaining, there is €25,377 remaining to be spent on consumables, equating to 33.3% of the budget category. Given the inclusion of costs in this category for promotional materials for the project tool kit, and the continuing need for workshops within the project hot spots during 2013, we expect to see further consumables spend bringing final consumables expenditure close to predicted levels, however it is likely an overall underspend may be reporting in the Final Financial Report.

6.8 Overheads

This is an indirect cost and have been calculated as per the Common Provisions at 7% of direct personnel costs (not including land purchase).

To date, all observed unforeseen costs have been defined in previous project reports, and were included as part of the project amendment approved in November 2012 to ensure eligibility. For this reason, we are not aware of any further unforeseen costs that should be brought to the attention of the EU at this stage.

6.9 Expenditure per action

As requested, we have attempted to allocate actual costs to specific action codes in order to complete the table shown below. This has been performed through a combination of analysis of individual cost items, assessment from key project staff, and pro-rata apportionment for generic costs. The accuracy of allocation is debatable, especially when a cost, or a person's time, could be allocated to a number of equally relevant action codes. Figures for foreseen costs include Overheads (at 7% of direct action cost)

(“Spent so far” figures cover period 1 January 2010 to 30 November 2012)

Action number and name	Foreseen costs	Spent so far	Remaining	Projected final cost
A1 – Manage Project	109,037	76,003	24,276	100,279
A2 – Monitor Project Progress	14,929	11,195	1,587	12,782
A3 – External Audit	10,783	0	10,783	10,783
A4 – After LIFE Communication Plan	0	0	0	0
B1 – Identify Farmers and Volunteers	25,498	43,429	3,874	47,303
C1 – Farm Surveys	396,446	189,704	4,571	194,275
C2 – Survey Outputs	246,226	197,014	2,682	199,696
C3 – Advisory Visits	125,804	110,713	14,756	125,469
C4 – Farmer Workshops	49,831	63,486	12,793	76,279
C5 – Volunteer Workshops	41,370	71,823	0	71,823
C6 – Thank-You Events (REMOVED)	0	0	0	0
C7 – Demonstration Farm Network	31,822	24,469	0	24,469

Action number and name	Foreseen costs	Spent so far	Remaining	Projected final cost
C8 – Biodiversity Award Scheme	111,983	166,094	28,765	194,859
C9 – Advisory Pack	15,968	7,841	0	7,841
C10 – Bird Guide	13,530	12,204	0	12,204
C11 – Wildlife Hotspots	215,589	0	215,589	215,589
C12 – Empower Farmers	87,256	0	87,256	87,256
E1 – Attitudes Questionnaire	12,892	9,811	0	9,811
F1 – Project Website	18,468	12,411	3,497	15,908
F2 – Information Boards	16,565	9,235	0	9,235
F3 – Layman’s Report	9,212	10,954	6,125	17,079
F4 – International Conference	27,974	45,611	4,951	50,562
F5 – Media Work	18,104	18,216	5,240	23,456
F6 – Project Newsletter	32,345	26,707	3,258	29,965
F7 – Project Networking	65,495	40,675	15,873	56,548
TOTAL	1,697,127	1,147,595	445,876	1,593,471

Based on the analysis, the above table shows that we are predicting a final expenditure total of 94% of total budget. We are predicting expenditure of c.400,000 EUR during the project extension period of 1 Jan – 30 September 2013, primarily on the new project actions of C11 (wildlife hotspots) and C12 (empower farmers). The remaining 45,876 EUR shown as *to be spent* in the above table relates to December 2012 spend, as well as other historic spend still to feature on the project accounting records.

Looking at individual action categories, **A actions** are roughly in line with our original predictions. The slightly decreased expenditure on actions A1 and A2 is due to the general devaluation of expenditure due to exchange rate fluctuations (referenced in the overview above). Action A3 will commence at the end of the project. Our assessment of time spent on actions by regional project officers and other key staff suggests that the **B action** took up considerably more of the time committed by project staff than originally predicted, however some time allocated to action B1 (Identify farmers and volunteers) could feasibly be allocated to action C1 (Farm surveys), as there is some ambiguity over at what point action B1 ends and action C1 begins when the regional project officers are working with the volunteers.

C actions predict a slight underspend overall (91% of budget), with potentially only 49% of the cost of Action C1 (farm surveys) utilised. It does appear that the personnel effort for this action was originally overstated, and in actuality people spent more time than expected for other C actions such as C4 (farmer workshops), C5 (volunteer workshops) and C8 (Biodiversity award scheme). For the final 9 months of the project, work will be focussed on the new project actions C11 and C12. For now we have assumed spend on these actions will match the budgeted amounts we used for the project modification request.

Expenditure on the **E action** was slightly under budget, mainly due to exchange rate fluctuations. We predict spend on **F actions** will be slightly above original budget (108% of the F action budget). Most notably, costs for action F4 (international conference) were higher than originally estimated due in part to higher travel costs than foreseen, but mainly due to the participation of more RSPB staff than predicted during the preparation of the conference, and for the conference itself. Action F7 (project networking) will continue during 2013 to ensure the project, and its message is presented effectively at the technical events throughout the country.

7. List of annexes

Annex 01	Minutes, schedules and action points from LIFE+ Project Steering Group, UK Steering Group, Agricultural Communications Group and HQ Delivery Team
Annex 02	V&FA banner
Annex 03	V&FA media reports, press releases and blog entries
Annex 04	Photos of information boards
Annex 05	Volunteer surveyors workshop
Annex 06	PR Plan for Nature of Farming Award (NoFA) 2012
Annex 07	NoFA materials
Annex 08	Farmer and volunteer questionnaires
Annex 09	Summary of website activity
Annex 10	Draft of Layman's Report
Annex 11	RSPBs EU LIFE+ Wildlife Friendly farming Conference materials
Annex 12	Project Newsletter
Annex 13	Project networking