

Woodland Creation case study

Yeomadon Farm

Improving the landscape for business and recreation



The newly planted site at Yeomadon Farm

Yeomadon Farm has been in Rob Moore's family since the early 1900s and has seen a range of uses, including dairy, beef farming and a successful holiday cottage business. More recently, Rob and his wife Catherine have replaced their cattle with trees. They want their land to be more compatible with their holiday cottage enterprise by reducing heavy machinery around the cottages and, in time, to provide a woodland for the guests to enjoy.

Key facts

- **Site:** Yeomadon Farm, Devon / Cornwall county border
- **Size:** 18 hectares
- **Type:** Conifer woodland with broadleaf edges
- **Species:** Sitka spruce, lodgepole pine, Norway spruce, western red cedar, hazel, silver birch, sessile oak, common alder and wild cherry
- **Date planted:** February 2022
- **Grants:** England Woodland Creation Offer (EWCO)
- **Key objective:** To improve the landscape to complement an existing holiday cottage business



Deer fencing with rabbit netting to protect the new saplings

Moving towards forestry

While Rob and Catherine didn't have any prior experience of forestry, the family didn't let this stand in their way. They chose to create woodland to complement their already thriving holiday cottage business which has a focus on nature-based activities, such as fishing and local walks. They will also be looking for the woodland to generate income for them in the future.

Financially supported woodland creation

After first hearing about the [England Woodland Creation Offer \(EWCO\)](#) in the Mole Valley newsletter, Rob and Catherine were keen to explore using their land to create woodland. They had some initial conversations with land agent Pryor & Rickett Silviculture about what this might look like, including which fields they had earmarked for planting.

Pryor & Rickett managed the woodland creation process from initial site visits, arranging involvement from a Woodland Officer and the completion of the EWCO grant application, through to sourcing and planting the saplings. For Rob and Catherine, this process was really positive, and they felt having an agent to guide them through it was invaluable. With Pryor & Rickett managing the grant application, the financial side of the process was made much more straightforward for Rob and Catherine.

The scheme was eligible for an Additional Contribution for water quality – a one-off payment available through EWCO where a woodland's location and design deliver public benefits. In this case, for promoting drainage for the site's waterlogged soils.



Rob and Catherine Moore within the planting at Yeomadon Farm

"Our initial thought was if we could turn this agricultural land into forestry without it costing us anything, then we'll be happy."

**Rob Moore, Owner,
Yeomadon Farm**

The agents, along with the local Woodland Officer, helped Rob and Catherine select which trees to plant. This decision was largely based on what would be most suitable for the ground, which tends to get water-logged, as well as ensuring a mix of species which would offer resilience against our changing climate and the threat of pests and diseases.

The centre of the woodland is made up of Sitka spruce, Norway spruce, lodgepole pine and western red cedar, with a surrounding ring of mixed native broadleaf species close to the fishing lakes. The agents arranged contractors to hand plant 33,000 trees, which took three weeks in total.



Broadleaf sapling



Conifer sapling

"We didn't need to do anything. If we had to do the whole process all by ourselves, we wouldn't have known where to start!"

**Catherine Moore, Owner,
Yeomadon Farm**



Saving costs during the establishment process

Rob and Catherine were able to make savings by doing much of the maintenance work themselves. Rob sprayed the surrounding ground around the new trees, which ensured growth wasn't hampered by the grass or weeds. The process took him eight days and saved on the expense of additional labour costs.

Similarly, they put in the fencing themselves. They used a total of 1,800 metres of deer fencing and gates, with additional rabbit netting. As the woodland grows, they will seek additional advice on how it can provide further income; for now, however, they both agree that it stacks up financially.



A lake at Yeomadon Farm



Sparrowhawk

Benefits for nature, people and the planet

Rob and Catherine have noticed some additional benefits to the wildlife and biodiversity of the area. They stated that "it may be that we're just noticing the wildlife more than we used to, or that it's flourishing now that we're disturbing the land less, but we don't remember seeing sparrowhawks before!" In addition, the woodland will, in time, be open for the guests at the holiday cottages to enjoy.

The Yeomadon Farm scheme was celebrated in the Devon Woodland Awards 'New Woodland on Farm' category, where Rob and Catherine won silver. The judges praised the scheme and the ingenuity in designing and using specialist equipment for planting and maintenance.

Top tips

- Consider using an agent. Rob and Catherine were completely new to forestry when they started on this journey and found it invaluable having an agent to navigate them through the process.
- Don't underestimate the labour required in getting the scheme up and running. Factor these costs into your planning as they could make a big difference.
- Think about planning ahead: work out how to manage the grass and what machinery you might need as these could all add up in terms of cost and overall finances.
- EWCO payments are received once all capital work has been completed and evidence is reviewed. You may need to consider your financing options in the short-term to cover the up-front costs of planting your new woodland.

To find out more about how the Forestry Commission can help you create woodland visit:

www.gov.uk/forestry/tree-planting-overview

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