

Project Title: Sustourex (Sustainable Tourism Excellence)
Funding Body: European Regional Development Fund
Company Assisted: Patty's Farm Barn
Date: 2005

Background:

Patty's Farm Barn is a family run business offering self catering holiday accommodation in Cockerham, a rural area of Lancashire just outside the city of Lancaster. In all, it features six stone cottages, which can cater for families and groups of different sizes ranging between 2 and 8 people.

The Support Programme:

The company was already firmly committed to sustainability when Sustourex project staff approached its proprietors, Chris and Margaret Parry. However, the owners were keen to obtain further advice and recommendations, and this was made freely available through the services of an advisor working at the Lancaster Environment Centre (part of Lancaster University, which was a partner on the programme between 2004 and March 2006.)

Chris and his family had converted Patty's Farm Barn into holiday accommodation in 2000, and since then had invested a great deal of time, money and effort in developing an ideal environment for local wildlife. In addition to creating a large freshwater pond that is now home to a variety of birds, Chris has also planted well over 4,000 broad-leaved trees including oak, ash and rowan. As a result, he and his family have created a rich diversity of habitats that will improve steadily with age.

The initial report recognised the efforts that the owners had already made, and identified a number of new opportunities to reduce energy costs and to improve the sustainability of their activities.

Results:

In recognition of the company's efforts, Patty's Farm Barn was presented with a Silver award under the Green Tourism Awards scheme, which was established by the Sustourex programme. The associated publicity helped the company to raise its profile and to win new business, while acting on the recommendations provided in the report helped the family to make substantial cost reductions.

Advisor's Evaluation:

"It is clear that Chris has taken account of environmental considerations at every opportunity. Inside, the cottages have modern, energy saving appliances, effective insulation, low energy lighting and many other features that we would recommend to anyone wanting to save waste and reduce costs. Outside, the surrounding grounds are continuously managed to encourage and sustain wildlife... This is certainly an impressive result and Chris' work has evidently begun to yield great benefits for native wildlife."

Alex Southall, Lancaster Environment Centre.

