

## Myth busting for income generation

We have a long list of ideas in development (which can be found on the [Sharepoint site](#)) and we would love to hear your suggestions on where we might introduce chargeable services.

stakeholder issues associated with chargeable work, securing the approvals of our Board and Defra, where needed, and working with teams in the design and implementation.

We hope our "myth buster" will allay your fears about commercialising services at Natural England and leave you happy to ride off into the new commercial future.

### 1. It's all about the money

Are we chasing money for money's sake, and forgetting our core purpose?

We have established sound principles for deciding whether or not to charge. The first is that charging has to achieve better environmental outcomes and better customer service, and secondly we will only charge where it is reasonable to do so.

But how does charging improve environmental outcomes? Firstly, all money from charging goes back into team budgets, supplementing Grant-in-Aid and allowing us to continue all our work. Beyond this, charging can allow us to reach environmental outcomes that otherwise couldn't have achieved. The Thames Valley case studies show where early engagement through the Discretionary Advice Service (DAS) led to better developments. The South-East Water partnership paid for a Catchment Sensitive Farming officer. Our Ornithological Specialist explains how charging helped get a better onshore windfarm for the Wash SPA. The examples could go on...

### 2. We'll need to become sales people

Some fear that commercial work requires a culture change, as expressed by one Commercial Hot Seat questioner "like many colleagues, I was recruited for my knowledge of environmental management and have no experience of marketing."

The back office "Area team Business Hub" was created to handle the financial and contractual side of commercial working, precisely so that front-line staff can focus on what they do best.

You can see from this [commercial skills article](#) that we are looking into what training is needed. However, many skills for commercial work are those we use every day in all our work: emotional intelligence, influencing, creativity and problem solving.

### 3. I don't have time to do chargeable work

Feedback from colleagues who have charged might allay this fear.

On the time to set up a DAS contract, **REDACTED** says "I found the process of charging surprisingly easy. Just filled in the form, and off we went. From our side, it is mainly a question of keeping up to date on case work tracker."

**REDACTED**, on the Yorkshire Coast, explained how charging for advice on a proposed pipeline saved both the company and Natural England time: "Ultimately we saved the company much more time and money. We were able to show them how to avoid pitfalls so they could put forward a coherent planning application. The company got the advice they wanted – and we were able to set out the parameters we could work in – so it really reduced the amount of time we had to put in to get a good result."

**REDACTED** from the Commercial Services Team explains: "we should only commit to taking on chargeable work where we know we are able to deliver it. This means we need to invest in the capacity to