

# DORSET BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY

Mid Term Review Summary  
Dorset Biodiversity Partnership March 2010

DORSET



BIODIVERSITY  
PARTNERSHIP

# **Dorset Biodiversity Strategy – Mid Term Review Summary**

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## Acknowledgements

The wide-reaching consultation process, upon which this review is based, included members of the public, parish councils and all 35 members of the Dorset Biodiversity Partnership. We would like to acknowledge all those who have contributed to and supported this review, particularly the following, who gave considered and valuable responses:

Amphibian & Reptile Conservation  
Butterfly Conservation (Dorset Branch)  
Dorset AONB  
Charmouth Heritage Centre  
Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB  
Dorset Coast Forum  
Dorset County Council  
Dorset Environmental Records Centre  
Dorset FWAG  
Dorset Important Geological Sites Group  
Dorset Natural History & Archaeological Society  
Dorset Wildlife Trust  
Durlston Country Park  
East Dorset District Council  
Environment Agency  
Finding Sanctuary  
Forestry Commission  
National Trust  
Natural England  
Poole Borough Council  
Purbeck District Council  
Purbeck Heritage Committee  
RSPB  
Southampton University  
Southern Sea Fisheries District Committee  
Wessex Water  
West Dorset District Council  
Weymouth & Portland Borough Council  
Woodland Trust

Dorset Arable Group  
Dorset Biodiversity Officers Group  
Dorset Wetlands Group

Special thanks to those who also found the time to meet and discuss responses in greater depth.

## Forward

Back in 1992 when the United Nations Earth Summit in Rio set a target to halt the decline in global biodiversity by 2010, that date seemed a long way off, and possibly a little unambitious. After all, many habitats and species had suffered such losses by 1992 that much more than just halting the decline was needed. Now we are at 2010, declared the International Year of Biodiversity by the UN, and, frankly, the world has failed in its task. Both in the UK and globally many precious habitats and species are still declining. We need to do much more to ensure that we safeguard the natural world, not only for its own sake but because it provides the basis for a healthy human environment.

But we also need to acknowledge that local action can make a huge difference. The Dorset Biodiversity Partnership was set up in 1996 as a response to the Rio summit. It first focussed on 13 species and habitats where the partnership agreed urgent action was needed in Dorset. There have been some great achievements, for example for Southern Damselfly and veteran trees, as well as some where despite our best efforts the decline continued, such as Pearl-bordered Fritillary and Little Tern. The partnership also fostered a greater degree of co-operative working between organisations and individuals involved in wildlife conservation in Dorset, so that we work together rather than competing to secure support and funding for on the ground conservation. This is something which has continued over the years with many examples of successful partnership working highlighted in this review.

In 2003 the first Dorset Biodiversity Strategy was published, taking a topic-based approach to the county's major biodiversity issues. The strategy still has three years to run, but now in this International Year of Biodiversity the time is right to assess our progress and set the priorities for the next five years. Even over the timescale of this strategy, as a partnership we have become much more focussed on how biodiversity fits in with the 'bigger picture' of landscape-scale conservation, the mutual benefits between environments in which wildlife, communities and the economy can thrive and the need to be resilient in the face of climate change. Great strides have also been made, nationally and particularly in Dorset, to breach the gap between terrestrial and marine conservation with new national legislation, and in this county groundbreaking research and partnership working in the marine environment.

Imogen Davenport  
Chair of Dorset Biodiversity Partnership  
March 2010

# INTRODUCTION

## Dorset Biodiversity Strategy

The Dorset Biodiversity Partnership launched the Dorset Biodiversity Strategy in 2003, with the aim of providing a,

*‘strategic framework for the delivery of action to reverse the decline in biodiversity in the county’.*

The document sets out the actions we need to take to achieve this aim. Four themed Topic Action Plans were written (Forestry and Woodland Management, Agriculture, Freshwater Management, and Marine and Coastal Issues) and three Common Themes that run throughout our work (Raising Awareness and Involvement, Data and Monitoring and Land-use Planning). Habitat statements on Wood pasture, parkland and veteran trees and Lowland heathland, which fall outside of the themed areas, were also included.

Actions were set out in Habitat Statements related to each Topic Action Plan, however a decision was made not to develop specific species action plans, as these existed for all UKBAP Priority Species at a national level. A Dorset Biodiversity Audit was produced to accompany the Strategy, which sets out the best available information on the UKBAP Priority habitats found in Dorset and a full list of Dorset Priority Species.

## Mid Term Review

The Strategy was designed to have a ten-year lifespan. To ensure it was still relevant, up-to-date and on schedule it was decided that the Partnership should carry out a review at the mid term stage. A consultation with members of the Partnership and others took place to this end, during 2008/09. At the outset, a decision to keep the Strategy as a ‘live’ document was made, but that a ‘refresher’ document should sit along-side it to bring it up-to-date.

The key components of the review were as follows:

- An assessment of actions taken since the document launch (categorised as either not yet started, underway or completed).
- An evaluation of those actions yet to be completed to determine priorities over the next five years.
- Suggestions for new action needed over the next five years.
- Suggestions for strategic, local level and achievable action specific to climate change.

This refresher document provides just a summary of the review findings. Full details have been added to the Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS). This is a web-based tool developed to enable biodiversity practitioners and a much wider audience to see what progress is being made for biodiversity across the UK. The site address is **[www.ukbap-reporting.org.uk](http://www.ukbap-reporting.org.uk)**

# About this document

This document is primarily aimed at organisations and individuals involved in taking action for biodiversity in Dorset. It is therefore not intended as a broad publication with wide public appeal.

An indication of what progress has been made for each Topic Action Plan and Common Theme is given. A summary of how many actions are ahead, on or behind schedule, completed or not started is given for each of these. Detailed comments for each action are available on BARS. A list of achievements made specifically against actions in the strategy over the last five years is also given. The review highlights priority actions for the next five years. These actions are thought to be most important by the partnership and they are either actions already in the strategy or new ones.

As the impact on biodiversity from climate change has emerged as a major theme in the last five years, the document has set out summary principles for what we should be focused on in Dorset. There is also a box of climate change related action under each Topic Action Plan and Common Theme.

Along-side this review document a Biodiversity Audit has been carried out by Dorset Environmental Records Centre (DERC). This sets out current distribution of UKBAP Priority habitats both across the county as a whole and by each district, borough and unitary authority. A full, up-to-date list of Dorset Priority species is also included. This information is available on the web site in a sortable table, to enable people to arrive at the list of species relevant to them (i.e. by geography, species status etc). [www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/dorset\\_biodiversity\\_partnership.html](http://www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/dorset_biodiversity_partnership.html)

## Key drivers for future work – check list

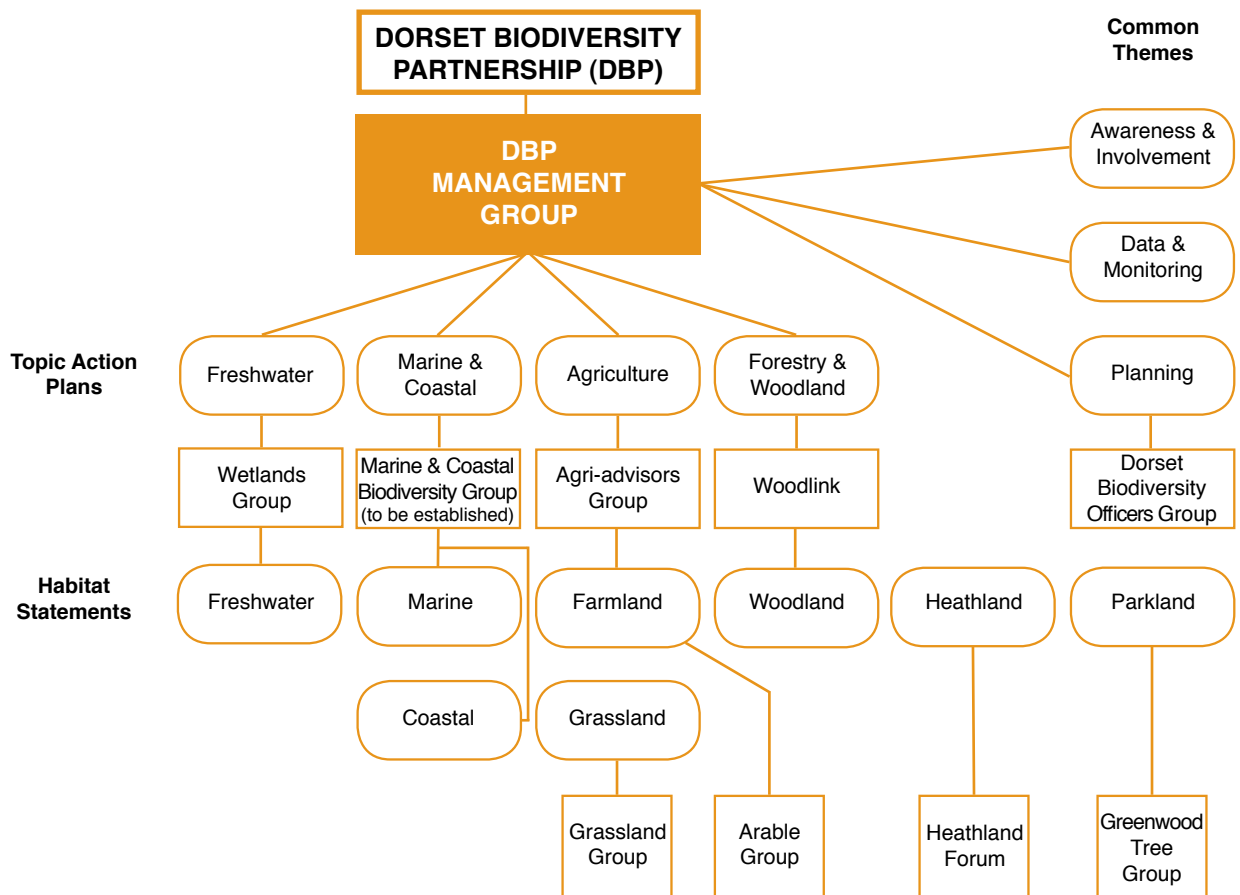
The following are key drivers that have in the last five years and/or are likely to have an impact on the work of the Biodiversity Partnership; in both a positive and negative way:

- Changes to the planning system such as the Infrastructure Planning Commission, Single Regional Strategy, Local Development Frameworks and Planning Policy Statements.
- New legislation such as the NERC Duty on Biodiversity and Marine Act.
- Planning Policy Statement 9 (PPS9).
- NI197 – Biodiversity, focussed on positive management of Local Sites (SNCIs and RIGS in Dorset), has been adopted by Dorset County Council as one of 35 targets for improvement.
- A new England Biodiversity Framework has been developed which includes among other things:
  - Natural England as the government lead on biodiversity.
  - Greater support for a network of local BAP partnerships.
  - A new national list of Priority habitats and species.
  - Biodiversity South West among the network of regional partnerships.



- South West Nature Map has been developed to outline landscape scale areas of the greatest opportunity for biodiversity restoration.
- As a result of landscape-scale focus, biodiversity is better able to integrate with other agendas, such as AONB management plans, promoting a 'green' economy and encouraging sustainable and healthy lifestyles.
- A new set of funding options under the Environmental Stewardship Scheme have been put in place to assist with wide scale improvements to biodiversity.
- New set-aside rules were introduced in 2009.
- Negotiations are on-going for changes to the Common Agricultural Policy from 2013.
- New Nitrate Vulnerable Zone legislation introduced.
- Implementation of the Water Framework Directive.
- The emergence of Climate Change as a major issue on the political agenda (see following section). This has included so far government policy focusing on renewable energy and greater self-sufficiency and local policy including Dorset's Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Strategies.

The Dorset Biodiversity Partnership was re-organised in 2003 and continues to evolve. The over-arching 'partnership' is actually made up of a number of theme based groups who meet to deliver specific actions in the Biodiversity Strategy and are relevant to the participating members. The following diagram shows how the groups relate to one another and to the sections in the strategy.



# Climate Change and Biodiversity in Dorset

Since the publication of the Dorset Biodiversity Strategy in 2003 climate change has risen up the political agenda, taking with it concerns for the environment in general. Although the issue was around at the time, more and more attention has been given to both adaptation and mitigation issues over the last five years. More information is now available and even if we can not predict specific impacts we do at least have a better idea of the general scenarios affecting biodiversity in Dorset.

## **Likely Climate Change in Dorset**

There is a great deal of uncertainty around what the climate will be like in future years in this county and the picture is continually changing. Up-to-date scenarios can be found on the UK Climate Impacts Programme website [www.ukcip.org.uk](http://www.ukcip.org.uk)

Best guesses at present indicate that in the future Dorset will experience warmer weather all year with winters likely to be wetter and windier and summers hotter and drier. The growing season will be longer, but soil moisture lower in summer and autumn. Indications are that there will be an increase in extreme weather events such as drought, heavy rain and high winds.

Species dependent on moist conditions would be particularly threatened, but changes to the growing season may also disrupt the patterns of whole ecosystems by affecting flowering times, prey abundance and management requirements. Summer drought may cause areas of habitat to die off, benefiting species more suited to disturbed ground. Winter rainfall may not percolate into the soil and may cause flooding if the natural 'sponge' capacity of catchments is not restored. Indirect impacts could include changes in agricultural cropping patterns and practices as farming adapts to changing weather patterns.

In 2009 Natural England published a document entitled 'Responding to the impacts of climate change on the natural environment: Dorset Downs and Cranborne Chase'. This was one of four study areas in the country which identified significant biodiversity, landscape, recreational and historic environment assets, assessed the potential risks climate change poses to these assets and suggested practical actions that would make them more resilient to the impacts of climate change.



## Summary of Guiding Principles

Whatever the actual change experienced here, across the UK and globally we can use the following principles, compiled by Defra, to minimise adverse impacts on biodiversity and maximise opportunities. (ref 'Conserving biodiversity in a changing climate: guidance on building capacity to adapt' p10, defra, Crown Copyright 2007.)

### 1. Conserve existing biodiversity

The richness of future biodiversity, in a changing world, will depend upon the diversity we conserve today.

#### 1a. Conserve Protected Areas and other high quality habitats

These areas will remain important because they have characteristics which will continue to favour high biodiversity: e.g. low-nutrient soils.

#### 1b. Conserve range and ecological variability of habitats and species

It is impossible to predict which localities will continue to have climatic conditions suitable for a given species or habitat. By conserving the current range and variability we will reduce the probability of all localities being lost, although some losses will be inevitable.

### 2. Reduce sources of harm not linked to climate

Climate change is one of many threats to biodiversity and by reducing other sources of harm we will help natural systems maintain their biodiversity in the face of climate change.

### 3. Develop ecologically resilient and varied landscapes

By ensuring landscapes remain varied, and allowing space for physical processes to take place, we will increase their ability to retain biodiversity.

#### 3a. Conserve and enhance local variation within sites and habitats

Maintaining diversity in the landscape in terms of features such as vegetation structure, slope, aspect and water regime will increase the chances that species whose current habitat becomes inhospitable will be able to spread locally into newly favourable habitat.

#### 3b. Make space for the natural development of rivers and coasts

Changing rainfall patterns and rising sea levels will affect our rivers and coasts. By allowing natural processes of erosion and deposition to take place we will increase the potential for wildlife to naturally adapt to these changes.

#### **4. Establish ecological networks through habitat protection, restoration and creation**

Some species will need to move some distance from their current locality if they are to survive climate change; creating new habitat, restoring degraded habitat, or reducing the intensity of management of some areas between existing habitat, will encourage this.

#### **5. Make sound decisions based on analysis**

Adopt an evidence-based approach which recognises that biodiversity is constantly changing.

##### **5a. Thoroughly analyse causes of change**

Not all change will be due to climate change and by thoroughly analysing the causes of change we will identify those situations where climate change adaptation is needed.

##### **5b. Respond to changing conservation priorities**

Regularly review conservation targets to ensure resources are directed towards genuine conservation priorities as some species increase, others decline and habitats change in character.

#### **6. Integrate adaptation and mitigation measures into conservation management, planning and practice**

When reviewing conservation management plans consider the impacts of climate change – for example more frequent summer fires and floods – and make changes as appropriate. Where they can be identified, reduce release of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

## Landscape Scale Approach

The landscape-scale approach is one of the mechanisms thought to offer the best chance of wildlife being able to survive in the face of climate change. By focusing on large areas, we can increase the resilience of the landscape to support wildlife through:

- improving the condition of existing sites of wildlife importance through appropriate management
- increasing the connectivity between existing sites of wildlife importance
- increasing the wildlife quality of the landscape outside of sites of current wildlife importance

Increasing habitat connectivity can improve the ability of the landscape to provide 'wildlife corridors'. This may help more mobile species should the sites they currently inhabit become unsuitable. However, some species are less mobile, and there is a view that species will try to stay where they are as long as possible rather than risk moving to new sites. By focusing on large areas where high quality habitat patches are in good condition through management, and are linked together, species will be able to operate within their existing sites, but have a greater range of microhabitats within proximity (for example having options of different aspects, degrees of shading or soil moisture within the same habitat mosaic).

## Short Term Action

A number of actions related to climate change have been suggested for each Topic Action Plan and Common Theme. Given the enormity of this subject the partnership were asked to keep the actions to ones that are achievable and realistic yet useful enough to help us make progress within each field.

A number of suggestions fall outside of the action plans and themed sections and are generic in nature:

- CC1** Look at producing a climate change strategy incorporating an adaptation and mitigation strategy specifically targeted at biodiversity, identifying what partners can do within their remits.
- CC2** In planning for adaptation, derive a set of criteria to guide conservation principles for dealing with species new to the UK. This should include the monitoring and assessment of the impacts of these species on native flora and fauna and a system for any action needed. Criteria should be based on thinking on a European scale, accepting that change will occur and recognising the difference between natural colonisation and past introductions of sometimes invasive species.
- CC3** Focus on large-scale initiatives based within the South-West Nature Map Strategic Nature Areas, including de-fragmentation of existing special sites. Partnership organisations, whether non-governmental, public bodies or private sector need to pool resources in these areas to enable the best chance for wildlife to survive.
- CC4** Raise awareness of how a landscape-scale approach can help with adaptation, and make biodiversity more resilient to change.

# Forestry and Woodland Management



## HABITAT STATEMENTS

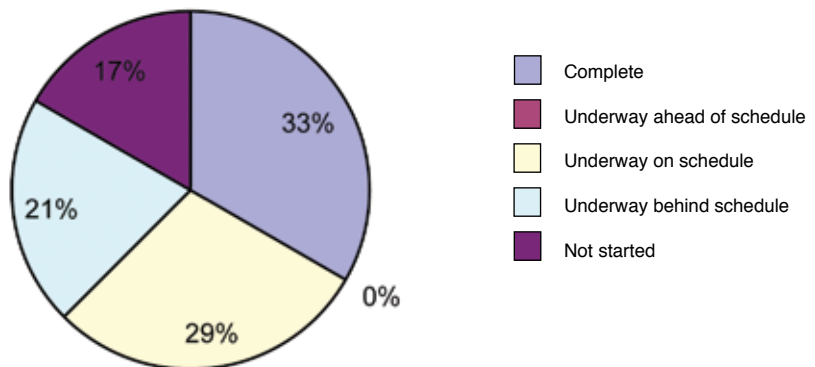
Lowland mixed deciduous woodland  
Wet woodland  
Lowland beech and yew woodland  
Traditional orchards



## KEY DELIVERY GROUP(S)

Dorset WoodLink

## ACTION STATUS SINCE 2003



The following are examples of achievements made against actions set out in the Strategy since its launch in 2003.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS (EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS UNDERWAY/ ACHIEVED)

- A Review of the Dorset Ancient Woodland Inventory has been carried out.
- Dorset Woodlink, a network of organisations and woodland managers, was developed as a forum for delivery of action on woodland, forests and trees.
- A Woodlink Officer post was created helping to carry out actions in the Biodiversity Strategy, specific achievements are listed below:
  - Trees, Woodland and Forestry Strategy written (including highlighting areas for woodland planting).
  - Demonstration events held.
  - Increased landowner liaison and co-ordination with existing liaison officers.
  - Planting and management guidance drafted.
  - A new project was established to help initiate demand for wood fuel products and identify a supply chain to meet it.
  - Bonsley wood outdoor classroom and demonstration site was established.
  - The Cranborne Chase Wood Fair, a new event specifically about woodland and trees, was launched.

## PRIORITY ACTION FOR NEXT FIVE YEARS

*Existing actions within Dorset Biodiversity Strategy are still valid until 2013. The strategy should therefore still be used as normal until this time. The following have been selected by the partnership as priority areas of work for the next five years:*

### Advice and co-ordination

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <b>FWM1</b> | Support a dedicated officer to maintain the impetus of Woodlink, to provide land owner liaison work in conjunction with other advisors across Dorset. Raise awareness of existing advisory services for landowners. |
| <b>FWM2</b> | Encourage woodland owners and managers to enter into appropriate schemes such as England Woodland Grant Scheme, Environmental Stewardship and Direct from Dorset (including facilitating management for woodfuel).  |
| <b>FWM3</b> | Initiate workshops to encourage landowners in identified areas to maintain, restore and link semi-natural woodland, targeting SNCI owners.  |

### Landscape approach

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>FWM4</b> | Using the South West Nature Map and the Dorset Trees, Woodlands and Forests Strategy identify target planting areas to link and buffer ancient woodland. Target available grants to those projects seeking connectivity. |
| <b>FWM5</b> | Adopt a landscape scale approach to address fragmentation and use the Local Development Frameworks and Green Infrastructure plans to target new opportunities.   |
| <b>FWM6</b> | Identify open BAP habitat restoration areas and determine benefits of tree removal.  |
| <b>FWM7</b> | Establish a new landscape scale project for wet woodlands. Using information available, identify and work on suitable restoration sites.   |
| <b>FWM8</b> | Develop and implement a community woodland policy, working with local authorities, planners and developers to identify suitable community woodland sites.  |
| <b>FWM9</b> | Work with developers, planners, arboriculture officers and local authorities to promote the opportunities provided by trees in new and existing developments.  |

### Sustainability

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| <b>FWM10</b> | Raise the profile of local wood products as part of the Farmers Market Initiative.   |
| <b>FWM11</b> | Expand the use of wood fuel through actively identifying and engaging with potential suppliers, heating engineers, training establishments and landowners. Work with developers and planners to create a sustainable demand, concentrating investment on generating 'clusters' of end users. |
| <b>FWM12</b> | Carry out research at a county level to assess the potential of utilising thinnings and low-grade wood for heat and energy generation.   |
| <b>FWM13</b> | Use Dorset Woodlink Officer to act as an 'honest broker' enabling a joined-up advancement of the woodfuel industry.  |



<b>FWM14</b>	Encourage new planting in strategic areas for the commercial firewood market. An increasing number of woodlands will be required to deal with demand and pressures from climate change.
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### Species damage

<b>FWM15</b>	Review the effectiveness of current activity to limit the damage caused by grey squirrel, deer and invasive plants. Through Woodlink take a strategic approach to action based on this review.
<b>FWM16</b>	Set up County-wide steering group and encourage co-ordinated management. Work with Deer Initiative and Poole Basin Deer Management Group. Promote Direct from Dorset as value adding accreditation scheme.

### Raising Awareness

<b>FWM17</b>	Establish best practice events for restoration of replanted ancient woods, continuous cover forestry, high forest management, sustainable game management, and coppice management.
<b>FWM18</b>	Raise awareness of important species groups, such as Fritillary butterflies, Lichens and Fungi that require specialist management (i.e. outside of conventional habitat management).
<b>FWM19</b>	Continue to hold woodland and woodfuel events annually and keep the profile of woodland management high through information sheets and articles for appropriate publications.

### Traditional Orchards

<b>FWM20</b>	Research and map the historic extent of orchards in Dorset.
<b>FWM21</b>	Map remaining resource of orchards in Dorset and identify sites of high biodiversity value in conjunction with the UK BAP for orchards.
<b>FWM22</b>	Raise awareness of the importance of orchards for wildlife including management of demonstration sites.
<b>FWM23</b>	Encourage the maintenance and creation of community orchards.

## CLIMATE CHANGE ACTIONS

<b>FWM24</b>	Research and deliver advice on tree species viability in Dorset.
<b>FWM25</b>	Communicate urgency of Climate Change to owners and managers.
<b>FWM26</b>	Prepare mitigation and adaptation strategies for woodland on landscape scale.
<b>FWM27</b>	Promote the importance of wood as a fuel in light of climate change.
<b>FWM28</b>	Seek opportunities to deliver action on lowland beech and yew woodland through the Dorset Downs and Cranborne Chase JAC project.
<b>FWM29</b>	Identify suitable partners to develop a Dorset Carbon Offset scheme to enable the planting of community or urban forests, providing green infrastructure, reducing habitat fragmentation and supporting the installation of biomass boilers.



# Agriculture



## HABITAT STATEMENTS

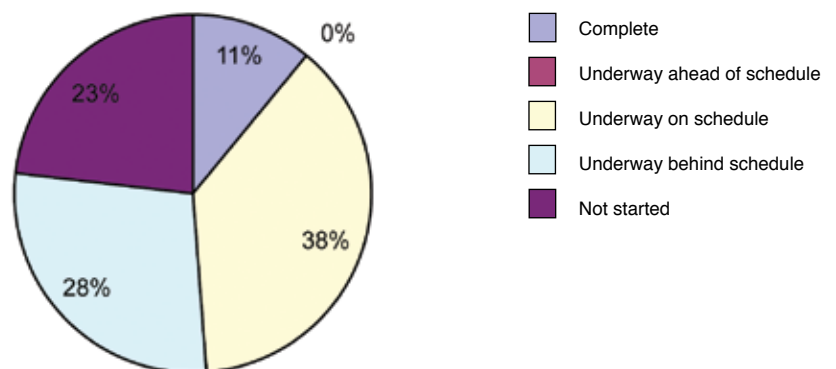
Lowland meadows  
Purple moor grass and rush pasture  
Lowland calcareous grassland  
Lowland dry acid grassland  
Hedgerows  
Arable land



## KEY DELIVERY GROUP(S)

Grasslands Group  
Dorset Arable Group  
Farmland Advisors Group

## ACTION STATUS SINCE 2003



The following are examples of achievements made against actions set out in the Strategy since its launch in 2003.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS (EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS UNDERWAY/ ACHIEVED)

- Percentage of SSSI in favourable condition in Dorset is 45% (72% of area meeting PSA target) – (ref: Natural England)
- Since the start of the Environmental Stewardship Scheme 113,481ha (55%) of agricultural land in Dorset have been entered into Entry or Organic Entry Level Stewardship and 10,234ha (5%) of land into Higher Level Stewardship (ref: Natural England).
- Dorset Biodiversity Grant was set up to help community groups and farmers with biodiversity conservation projects.
- South West Nature Map developed - identifying landscape scale areas of high potential for biodiversity restoration.
- Purbeck Keystone Project initiated – a 3 year HLF project including calcareous grassland and wetland habitat restoration.
- A Local Area Agreement (LAA) established between Dorset County Council and Government Office of South West ran for 3 years with grassland habitat restoration targets.
- This has now been followed by a second LAA, this time on Local Sites (SNCI and RIGS) (NI197).

- Pastures New – grassland habitat restoration programme was initiated by a partnership of organisations which helped with the following strategy actions:
  - Seed harvesting and green hay project set up.
  - Grazing Animals Project set up.
  - Increase in landowner advisory capacity and co-ordination.
  - Machinery ring established.
  - SNCI site monitoring increased through LAA.
  - Small capital grant made available for grassland work.
- The Isle of Portland Conservation Forum has been established to steer conservation activities on Portland including restoration of quarries, introduction of goats to address scrub encroachment issues, and establishment of an action plan for the Portland race of Silver-studded Blue.
- The Dorset Arable Project was established to stabilise populations and support the recovery of farmland birds and rare arable plants.

## PRIORITY ACTION FOR NEXT FIVE YEARS

*Existing actions within Dorset Biodiversity Strategy are still valid until 2013. The strategy should therefore still be used as normal until this time. The following have been selected by the partnership as priority areas of work for the next five years:*

### Advice

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| <b>A1</b> | Support and strengthen existing successful landowner liaison, ensure that services are well promoted to farmers and landowners and that liaison officers are well networked. Support specific landscape scale liaison initiatives such as Woodlink, Dorset Arable Project and Pastures New. Seek opportunities to fill any gaps in advice. |
| <b>A2</b> | Use demonstration events to showcase examples of good conservation management, share innovative ideas, promote discussion and identify solutions to common management issues.  |
| <b>A3</b> | Provide tailored advice to co-operatives and individual small holders.   |

### Agri-environment schemes

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| <b>A4</b> | Target HLS towards achieving landscape-scale benefits, including management and restoration of sites outside of SSSIs.  |
| <b>A5</b> | Use options under ELS and HLS to target creation of buffer zones and link areas.  |
| <b>A6</b> | Target appropriate management options in suitable locations to benefit key species, ensuring these options are favourable to landowners.                                  |
| <b>A7</b> | Engender closer working relations between NE staff involved in Environmental Stewardship and landowner liaison officers, with the aim of delivering at a landscape scale. |
| <b>A8</b> | Promote the value of whole farm HLS applications that increase habitat and food provision across the entire holding for a wide range of species.                          |
| <b>A9</b> | Feed practical examples and case studies to reviews of agri-environment schemes leading to 2013 Common Agricultural Policy reform.  |

## Sustainability

- A10** Establish example projects to link wildflower meadows and landscape tourism.
- A11** Initiate or strengthen projects which show the twin benefits of purchasing local food and supporting wildlife rich landscapes.
- A12** Continue to develop a county Grazing Animals Project.
- A13** Promote the creation of meadows as part of community-based implementation.
- A14** Investigate the potential for and carry out marketing for high quality meadow hay (for example for the pet market).

## Survey

- A15** Support existing biodiversity survey effort across the county and promote surveys in 'black hole' areas e.g. farmland birds in west Dorset.
- A16** Produce baseline hedgerow information across Dorset to identify good quality hedges, management issues and gaps in detailed survey information. Ensure data are available for planning system.
- A17** Continue to provide funding for SNCI monitoring and survey of additional areas, with a focus on key species, beyond the current Local Area Agreement.

## Other

- A18** Ensure high quality road verges are well managed by Dorset County Council and its contractors.
- A19** Using the SW Nature Map, identify new opportunities for landscape scale initiatives.
- A20** Co-ordinate actions taken for arable biodiversity through the Arable Project.
- A21** Promote the importance of allotments in improving land diversity in more urban areas. Ensure new allotments are not sited on areas of current value for wildlife.

## CLIMATE CHANGE ACTIONS

- A22** Utilise the Natural England Climate Change Pilot for Dorset Downs and Cranborne Chase JCA to identify opportunities for habitat management and creation.
- A23** Take action towards creating robust, interlinked habitats ensuring that no creation of future priority habitat is at the expense of existing interest. Expansion of chalk grasslands, for example, is just one of the ways in which agriculture can adapt to a changing climate.
- A24** Research the effects of likely climate change scenarios on key taxa.
- A25** Be aware of, and advise on, the impacts of potential changes to agriculture on biodiversity (e.g. energy crops and other new crops, earlier growing season, land-use changes etc).
- A26** Promote low carbon farming through delivery of energy audits and emission reducing measures such as anaerobic digestion to reduce carbon emissions of farms.
- A27** Promote agricultural methods which work towards achieving the required 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- A28** Deliver energy audits; promote minimal tillage systems and emission reducing measures such as anaerobic digestion to reduce carbon emissions of farms.

# Freshwater Management



## HABITAT STATEMENTS

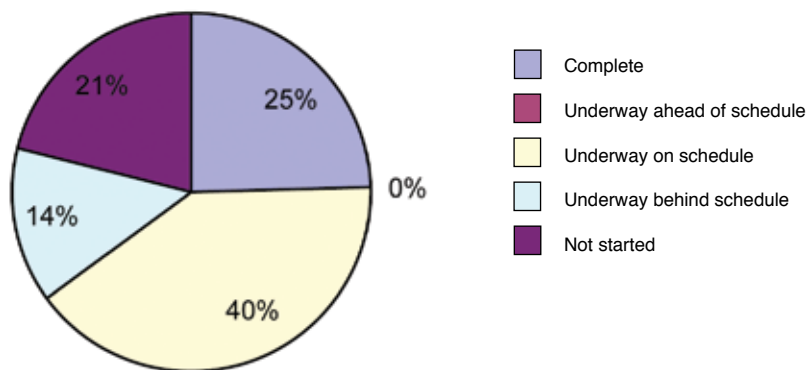
Rivers (including chalk streams)  
Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh  
Reedbeds  
Fens  
Ponds



## KEY DELIVERY GROUPS

Dorset Wetland Group  
Winterbournes Project  
Steering Group  
Southern Damselfly Group

## ACTION STATUS SINCE 2003



The following are examples of achievements made against actions set out in the Strategy since its launch in 2003.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS (EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS UNDERWAY/ ACHIEVED)

- A Catchment Sensitive Farming Scheme was established in target areas.
- Work on 200ha of managed water levels through Water Level Management Plans was targeted on the Frome by the Purbeck Keystone Project.
- A target area for coastal and floodplain grazing marsh has been identified and digitised.
- Over 2ha of water meadow has been restored at Nunnery Mead. Wetland has also been restored at Sunnyside Farm and Galton Bog.
- Approximately 6ha of new wetland has been created at Tadnoll Brook. Breeding lapwing and

curlew have already been recorded on the site for the first time. The Brook has also been successfully restocked with Salmon.

- Otters and water vole have now been recorded at Radipole Lake.
- Riverside workshops were delivered on River Allen and Upper Frome (in-river work) for chalk streams.
- Water vole data collected since 2006 suggest that Dorset's population has remained stable. In some areas such as West Dorset a range expansion has occurred, setting Dorset apart from many other areas in the UK where this species is still declining.



- All existing and historic mire sites supporting Southern damselfly were mapped and a landscape scale recovery programme initiated. Restoration work has been successful and the species has been recorded for the first time in 30 years on site.
- Dorset Otter Group has 250 volunteers; their surveys have mapped the continued recovery of otters in Dorset.
- A Winterbournes project has been launched with river corridor and invertebrate surveys, community workshops and training days, and Whole Farm Plans carried out.
- County reedbed and fen inventories have been completed.
- A new Purbeck Important Ponds Project has been launched.
- The Dorset Wetland Group has expanded to include agri-advisors, improving communications.

## PRIORITY ACTION FOR NEXT FIVE YEARS

*Existing actions within Dorset Biodiversity Strategy are still valid until 2013. The strategy should therefore still be used as normal until this time. The following have been selected by the partnership as priority areas of work for the next five years:*

### Rivers (including chalk streams)

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| <b>F1</b>  | Implement the Water Framework Directive in Dorset, targeting action to improve biological and hydrological integrity of the ecosystem.   |
| <b>F2</b>  | Implement an invasive species control programme for the river Frome and other target rivers (Bere Stream and Moors River). Establish medium term project to develop a strategy and carry out work where intervention will be most effective. |
| <b>F3</b>  | Co-ordinate best practice and share experience of controlling invasive wetland species.  |
| <b>F4</b>  | Seek to maximize benefits to wildlife from headwater quality improvement work.   |
| <b>F5</b>  | Support and strengthen existing work and expertise on Chalk Rivers and streams in the county.  |
| <b>F6</b>  | Through the Dorset Wetland Group co-ordinate activities aimed at conserving this habitat; develop an agreed strategy and give the work a higher profile.   |
| <b>F7</b>  | Implement River Restoration Strategies for 3 rivers: Avon, Frome and the Moors River.  |
| <b>F8</b>  | Make use of existing demonstration sites and establish new sites and / or demonstration days to show best practice.  |
| <b>F9</b>  | Set out clear visions of what a good stretch of chalk stream might look like.  |
| <b>F10</b> | Target advice and conservation work to enhance bank-side management.   |
| <b>F11</b> | Increase our understanding of winterbourne ecology to inform management and identify appropriate restoration techniques.   |
| <b>F12</b> | Network the Winterbournes project with a broad audience e.g. Highways Department.  |
| <b>F13</b> | Implement targeted restoration work to enhance in-stream and riparian habitat.   |

### Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh

- F14** Develop a vision for what we want to achieve for this and related habitats.
- F15** Increase the level of awareness raising and education. In particular to address the problem of common misconceptions about floodplain management and fear of flooding.
- F16** Building on good practice on the lower River Frome catchment, develop a strategic approach to delivering grazing marsh targets at a landscape scale.
- F17** Support existing officer time and where possible increase this to address strategic issues in grazing marsh target areas (e.g. rivers Allen & Frome).

### Reedbed

- F18** Improve co-ordination and take a strategic approach to steer action for reedbed across the county and ensure good management practice is shared.
- F19** Seek opportunities for reedbed creation through planning mitigation and SuDS.
- F20** Support the completion of the Radipole Restoration Scheme.
- F21** Implement a research programme to understand the movement of eels into and out of Radipole and Lodmoor and, based on the results, establish necessary measures to improve passage into and through the reserves, implement them and monitor the outcome.

### Fens

- F22** Help to restore fens through taking an integrated approach with other related habitat types (e.g. neutral grassland, purple moor grass and rush pasture and wet woodland).

### Ponds

- F23** Support the continuance of Purbeck Important Ponds project to identify UK BAP priority pond habitat and restore existing ponds and create new ones.
- F24** Use the project to help spread good management practice to pond owners in the area. Outreach this good practice to garden ponds and garden centres.
- F25** Once established, use best practice from the project to expand across other priority areas of Dorset.
- F26** Identify and deliver further priority species survey work in relation to ponds, including rare plant species.
- F27** Seek opportunities for pond creation through SuDS.



## GENERIC ACTIONS

- F28** Assess the actions needed for specific freshwater species not covered by action taken for wetland habitats.
- F29** Raise awareness of the links that exist within whole river catchments (e.g. the link between flooding in towns and villages with good land management in headwaters).
- F30** Take a long-term approach to increasing education on the aims and methods of rivers and wetland work, targeting specific schools and communities.
- F31** Support and extend provision of advice to farms in high risk areas to prevent farm pollution incidents through Catchment Sensitive Farming delivery framework.
- F32** Seek to reduce levels of phosphate and nitrogen entering rivers through expansion of Catchment Sensitive Farming to the Frome, Piddle and Stour catchments.
- F33** Link with Catchment Sensitive Farming initiatives to set up demonstration sites to train advisors and land managers in optimum management techniques to mitigate diffuse pollution.
- F34** Carry out further action on water vole recovery programme, through mink control, on the Axe and West Dorset Streams.
- F35** Continue to co-ordinate all freshwater biodiversity initiatives through the Dorset Wetlands Group.
- F36** Support the ongoing otter road casualty mitigation programme.
- F37** Review progress on beaver reintroduction schemes in the UK and assess whether there is any potential for this in Dorset.
- F38** Identify further areas to develop field-scale wetland projects (e.g. wetlands and woodland restoration in Lower Stour Valley).
- F39** Ensure that routine flood defence works do not have an adverse impact on important wet habitats.

## CLIMATE CHANGE ACTIONS

- F40** Review the potential for using 'WETMECS' and Eco-hydrological guidelines to produce generic guidance for future management of wetland habitats in Dorset. Adapt the methodology developed by Mike Acreman.
- F41** Ensure the Dorset Wetland Group takes an informed view on matters arising from future sea level rise in respect to Brownsea Island lagoon.
- F42** Ensure Saltmarsh and Mudflat habitats are covered either through this group or other fora. This relates, in particular, to the Poole Harbour Strategy Study.
- F43** Maximise opportunities for meeting biodiversity targets in Dorset through the Environment Agency's 'Regional Habitat Creation Programme' based on Flood Defence and managed re-alignment issues.
- F44** Using published climate change forecasts assess the likely impacts of changes in local freshwater temperatures, especially on fish and invertebrate populations. Identify and start implementing mitigation measures in response these findings.
- F45** Maximise opportunities for meeting biodiversity targets in Dorset through the EA's WLMP (water level management plan) team.

# Marine and Coastal Issues



## TOPIC ACTION PLANS & HABITAT STATEMENTS

### Grouped Coastal Habitat Statement

Maritime cliff and slope

Sand dunes

Coastal vegetated shingle

### **Estuarine Rocky Habitat**

*Sabellaria alveolata* reefs

*Intertidal mudflats*

Coastal saltmarsh

Sheltered muddy gravels

*Intertidal chalk*

### **Intertidal underboulder communities**

**Sheltered muddy gravels**

### Grouped Marine Habitat Statement

Saline lagoons

*Sabellaria spinulosa* reefs

### **Fragile sponge & anthozoan communities on subtidal rocky habitats**

Seagrass beds

*Subtidal sands and gravels*

Tidal rapids

Maerl beds

*Subtidal chalk*

Mud habitats in deep water

Brittlestar beds (not a UK priority habitat)

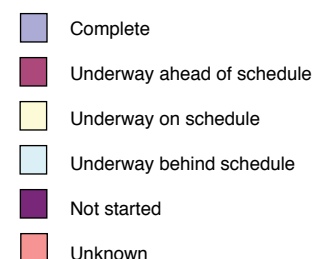
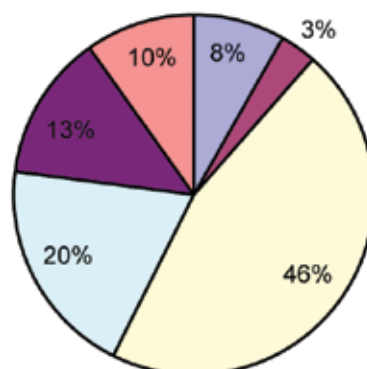
**Tide-swept channels**

**Peat and clay exposures**

## KEY DELIVERY GROUPS

Dorset Marine & Coastal Biodiversity Group  
Dorset Coast Forum  
Coastlink  
SIFCA

## ACTION STATUS SINCE 2003



The following are examples of achievements made against actions set out in the Strategy since its launch in 2003.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS (EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS UNDERWAY/ ACHIEVED)

- Catchment Sensitive Farming target areas established in the Fleet and upper Frome areas, to tackle diffuse pollution issues.
- Contingency plans for pollution spills were put into practice during Napoli incident.
- Extensive consultation took place on the Marine and Coastal Access Bill.
- Marine Management Organisation formed.
- Sea Fisheries Committees to be replaced with Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities, with new powers and wider remit.
- Marine protection sites are in place through SAC and SPA measures and fisheries by-laws and further sites have been nominated by Defra.
- Finding Sanctuary are identifying a network of Marine Conservation Zones throughout the South West region.
- Dorset Seasearch Project has continued to grow with over 800 records from 240 people.
- DORIS seabed habitat mapping project covering 800km<sup>2</sup> of seabed from Abbotsbury to Studland was initiated.
- Dorset Intertidal biotope mapping project took place from Weymouth to Swanage.
- The first county inventory of maritime cliffs and slopes was completed.
- The C-Scope project secured Interreg IIa funding to look at marine spatial planning in Dorset.
- Since the legal protection of seahorses, the impact of boat moorings on seahorses and seagrass at Studland has been raised and studies initiated.
- A Coastal Corridor Action Plan has been established.
- Efforts continue at Chesil Beach to assist recovery in the little tern colony.
- A Management Plan for Christchurch Harbour has been developed.
- A Portland Harbour zoning plan has been agreed between Natural England and Portland Harbour Authority.
- Cameras have been used at Portland to observe and monitor sea bird colonies.
- A Dolphin watch scheme has been initiated in West Bay, Durlston and Portland.
- A Buglife survey of invertebrates of soft cliffs found Dorset to hold some of the key sites for this suite of species in the country.
- DCC are working with NT on climate change actions and sea level rise. DCC have produced a scenario project 'tackling coastal challenges' which is on the website.
- Marine Litter Summit was held in Dorset.
- Sea bird monitoring at Durlston Country Park.

## PRIORITY ACTION FOR NEXT FIVE YEARS

*Existing actions within Dorset Biodiversity Strategy are still valid until 2013. The strategy should therefore still be used as normal until this time. The following have been selected by the partnership as priority areas of work for the next five years:*

### Protection & Management

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| <b>M1</b> | Establish network of Marine Protected Areas consisting of existing SSSIs, SPAs and SACs with a marine component, new marine SACs (by 2010) and Marine Conservation Zones (by 2012). |
| <b>M2</b> | Develop conservation objectives for Marine Protected Areas network to protect and restore the range of marine habitats.   |
| <b>M3</b> | Develop a pilot Marine Spatial Plan for selected areas of Dorset Coast and sea.   |

### Information

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| <b>M4</b> | Increase marine and coastal data year on year and ensure this is held in a format to maximise sharing by a number of stakeholders.   |
| <b>M5</b> | Continue to update habitat inventories for maritime (but non-marine) habitats such as Coastal salt-marsh, Maritime cliff and slopes, Vegetated shingle.  |
| <b>M6</b> | Establish long term funding to support the maintenance of the marine habitats and species database.  |
| <b>M7</b> | Seek opportunities for collaborative marine data collection to extend DORIS (Dorset Integrated Seabed Survey) to additional areas. Ensure the results are widely available and applied to appropriate decision making authorities. |
| <b>M8</b> | Investigate the impact of pollution spills and litter on offshore and inshore habitats.  |

### Understand and act on causes of damaging activity

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| <b>M9</b>  | Monitor and mitigate the impacts of recreational activities on species and habitats, with a view to identifying key threats, for example on seabirds, mammals and Seagrass habitat.                            |
| <b>M10</b> | Monitor and mitigate the impacts of fishing activities.  |
| <b>M11</b> | In consultation, identify actions relating to the sustainable use of the marine environment.   |
| <b>M12</b> | Establish a working group to look into tackling the problem of marine litter in Dorset.  |
| <b>M13</b> | Promote and publicise biodegradable parts on fishing gear and work with commercial fishermen to investigate how to minimise the amount of lost gear or to reduce the problem of ghost fishing when it is lost. |
| <b>M14</b> | Work with anglers, other recreational groups and shipping companies to reduce the amount of litter going into the marine environment.  |

### Raising awareness

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| <b>M15</b> | Produce a marine interpretation plan for Dorset to increase and co-ordinate quality public interpretation.  |
| <b>M16</b> | Seek funding for a Coastlink co-ordinator to support Coastlink centres and their role in raising awareness of marine and coastal issues to a wide audience.                             |
| <b>M17</b> | Develop biodiversity factsheets aimed at both the public and at regulators.   |
| <b>M18</b> | Increase dialogue with skippers and anglers on sustainable fishing practices.   |
| <b>M19</b> | Establish a network of trained volunteer marine wardens all along the coast to raise awareness of marine and coastal issues through events and monitor marine and coastal biodiversity. |

### Habitat action

- M20** Use data derived from DORIS and other survey work to reduce habitat fragmentation and work to promote action which will enable restoration to link habitats through habitat re-creation.
- M21** Ensure that coastal SSSIs are maintained in favourable condition, including management of grasslands and allowing natural processes such as erosion of soft cliffs.
- M22** Identify new areas for restoration along the coast on a strategic basis, focusing on de-fragmentation and allowing natural processes to occur, thus rolling back a corridor of semi-natural habitat as cliffs erode.

### Specific area based action

- M23** Take measures to tackle eutrophication of Poole Harbour.
- M24** Develop a management plan for Studland Bay based on specifically targeted research.
- M25** Assess the impact of bait collection (digging/dragging/laying tiles) in Poole Harbour and identify appropriate action if needed.

### Sustainability

- M26** Work with local commercial fishermen and producers towards sustainability accreditation for their fishery, including, where feasible, Marine Stewardship Council accreditation for Dorset inshore fisheries. Seek funding where appropriate to assist with accreditation.
- M27** Ensure that local branding schemes for fish and shellfish, such as Direct from Dorset, develop environmental standards.
- M28** Support and develop the 'Recycle fish' campaign with recreational sea anglers.
- M29** Identify, test and promote technical and practical improvements to sustainable fishing techniques.

### CLIMATE CHANGE ACTIONS

- M30** Map coastal habitats and aspects of the coast affected by climate change/sea level rise using aerial photos and ground-truthing.
- M31** Action on coastal squeeze effects on intertidal areas (links to habitat recreation).
- M32** Identify the loss of areas to sea level rise and related issues through the use of Shoreline Management Plans.
- M33** Establish baseline data from which to assess the effects of climate change.
- M34** Establish a suite of marine climate change indicator species.



# Wood Pasture, Parkland and Veteran Trees

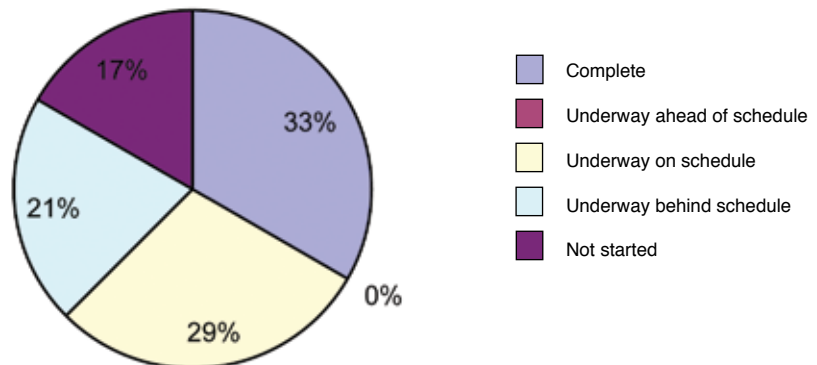


No action plan was written for the Dorset Biodiversity Strategy. Objectives were drawn up under a habitat statement and since its publication; a draft action plan was produced as part of the veteran trees inventory (DERC 2005).

## KEY DELIVERY GROUP(S)

Dorset Greenwood Tree Group  
Dorset Woodlink

## ACTION STATUS SINCE 2003



The following are examples of work taken in partnership for this habitat statement and draft action plan.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- An inventory of important veteran tree sites in Dorset was published in 2005.
- A partnership initiative called the 'Dorset Greenwood Tree Project' was established. The project, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, focussed on the county's veteran trees. This was designed to implement a number of actions. Work so far has included:
  - An increase in the awareness of the importance of veteran trees, including biodiversity, cultural and historical aspects, through publications, events, talks and presentations.
- The creation of a database and GIS layer of individual veteran trees.
- A county-wide public survey of veteran and ancient trees. This has so far yielded over 600 new records on the database and involved 40 parishes.
- Liaison with owners of important trees to give management advice and assistance with specific tree conservation issues.
- An education resource, associated with the schools curriculum, has been built up including schools packs and a 7ft Greenwood Tree educational sculpture.



- A management plan has been completed for Powerstock Common Nature Reserve.
- A book entitled 'The Great Trees of Dorset' was published, celebrating the cultural and biological significance of Dorset's best trees.
- Favourable condition monitoring has been carried for a number of SSSIs, including Melbury Park.
- Epiphytic lichen surveys have been undertaken at a number of sites.
- Invertebrate surveys have been carried out at Melbury Park and The Oaks, near Blandford.
- A fungi survey has been carried out at The Oaks, near Blandford.

## PRIORITY ACTION FOR NEXT FIVE YEARS

*Existing objectives within Dorset Biodiversity Strategy have been elaborated on and the following have been selected as priority areas of work for the next five years:*

### Policy and legislation

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| <b>WP1</b> | Continue to consider Tree Preservation Orders for trees that are thought to be under immediate threat.                     |
| <b>WP2</b> | Screen felling licence applications to ensure appropriate protection and/or management for sites supporting veteran trees. |

### Site safeguard and management

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| <b>WP3</b> | Maintain the current extent and distribution of woodland pasture, parkland and veteran trees in the county and promote their protection through the planning process.  |
| <b>WP4</b> | Ensure that the resource of veteran trees in habitats such as wood-pasture and parkland and ancient woodland are sufficiently covered by SSSI designation. Consider SNCI recognition for important sites not covered by SSSI designations. |
| <b>WP5</b> | Ensure that all habitats on SSSIs and SNCIs that support veteran trees are in favourable condition.  |
| <b>WP6</b> | Promote the establishment of management plans for parkland sites and sites with hedgerow veteran trees within agri-environment schemes.  |
| <b>WP7</b> | Promote the restoration of sites that formerly supported the habitat and seek opportunities to expand wood-pasture or parkland habitat.  |
| <b>WP8</b> | Assess the pros and cons of using non-native disease resistant elm varieties and if appropriate look to plant these species to replace lost elms.  |

### Advisory

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <b>WP9</b>  | Encourage best practice for the management of veteran trees through the Greenwood tree project and network of advisors.                         |
| <b>WP10</b> | Hold training days of best management practice for landowners and managers of sites with important veteran trees.                               |
| <b>WP11</b> | Ensure protection and good management of woodland pasture, parkland and important veteran tree sites through environmental stewardship schemes. |

### Research and monitoring

- WP12** Maintain the databases and GIS layers of individual veteran trees and sites supporting significant numbers.
- WP13** Encourage research into specific species and/or under-recorded groups associated with veteran trees e.g. bracket fungi, saproxylic invertebrates.
- WP14** Develop monitoring programmes for woodland pasture, parkland and veteran trees to include key species associated with veteran trees in Dorset.

### Communication and publicity

- WP15** Continue to increase the awareness of the importance of veteran trees, through the Greenwood Tree Project.

### CLIMATE CHANGE ACTIONS

- WP16** Use the Forestry Commission's Ecological Site Classification Decision Support System (ESC-DSS), to help give Dorset specific advice to landowners and community groups.

# Lowland Heathland



## HABITAT STATEMENTS

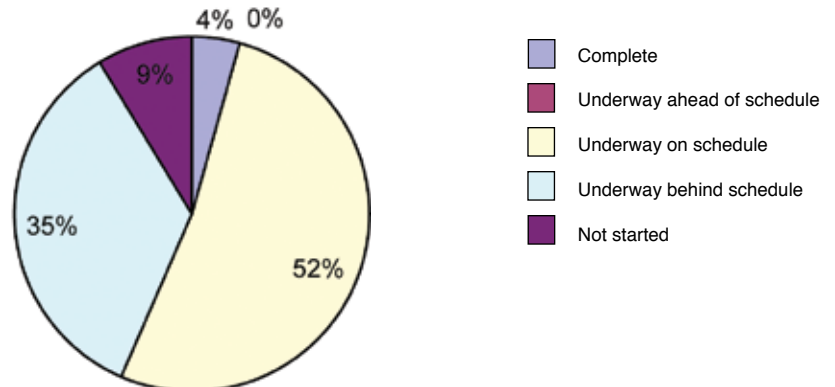
Lowland heathland



## KEY DELIVERY GROUP(S)

Dorset Heathland Forum  
Urban Heaths Partnership

## ACTION STATUS SINCE 2003



The following are examples of achievements made against actions set out in the Strategy since its launch in 2003.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS (EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS UNDERWAY/ ACHIEVED)

- Completion of the Hardy's Egdon Heath project, resulting in management of 1325 ha of heathland and restoration of 1356 ha.
- 23% of British breeding population of Dartford Warbler were recorded on Dorset Heathland SSSIs. This is the largest percentage on a Heathland area in Britain.
- Establishment of Urban Heaths Partnership to ensure good management of heaths by grazing and also engage the public, raising awareness of the value and sensitivity of the habitat.
- The EU Life project for urban heaths was completed successfully. This built the foundations for the development of an Interim Planning Framework (IPF) for heathlands in South East Dorset.
- The IPF process has been upheld by several public inquiry decisions and has funded a number of heathland mitigation projects through developer contributions. It has also produced a number of important research papers on 'urban' effects on heathlands.

- West Dorset District Council now has draft planning obligations guidelines for heathlands which complement the Dorset Heathlands Interim Planning Framework.
- The Forestry Commission have consulted on an 'Open Habitats Policy' which seeks to restore open habitats such as heathland from areas where such habitats have been lost to afforestation and secondary woodland.
- Dorset County Council and the RSPB have successfully bid for a joint post on minerals restoration.

## PRIORITY ACTION FOR NEXT FIVE YEARS

*Existing actions within Dorset Biodiversity Strategy are still valid until 2013. The strategy should therefore still be used as normal until this time. The following have been selected by the partnership as priority areas of work for the next five years:*

### Planning

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| <b>LH1</b> | Continue to advise Local Planning Authorities that any development close to lowland heaths should be resisted unless any adverse impacts can be mitigated sufficiently. Give specific advice on implementing development restrictions in heathland areas. |
| <b>LH2</b> | Support the work of planning authorities to achieve adequate mitigation for housing growth.   |
| <b>LH3</b> | Ensure that the potential for heathland re-creation and alternative greenspace provision are given due regard in the preparation of the Single Regional Strategy and Local Development Frameworks.  |
| <b>LH4</b> | Help planning authorities to achieve a Development Plan Document for heathlands in South East Dorset.   |
| <b>LH5</b> | Seek opportunities through minerals and waste plans to both reduce threats to the extant heathlands and to restore heathland through appropriate afteruse.  |
| <b>LH6</b> | Work with the minerals and waste industries to secure conservation gains and aim to improve techniques of habitat restoration. Seek remedial action where consents are damaging heathland wetlands.   |
| <b>LH7</b> | Encourage cross-border co-operation between initiatives for the Dorset and New Forest heathlands.   |

### Management

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <b>LH8</b>  | Initiate landscape scale reconnection, restoration and management schemes for heathland, guided by the SW Nature Map (e.g. 'Wild Purbeck' initiative aiming to join heathland patches between Lulworth and Studland). |
| <b>LH9</b>  | Continue progress with implementing extensive grazing schemes, including the provision of back up land for grazing and access management.   |
| <b>LH10</b> | Seek to secure long-term funding streams for heathland habitat maintenance.   |

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>LH11</b> | Hold workshops to look at specific management issues around bare ground invertebrates, wet heath/mire restoration, acid grassland, heathland restoration, rare plants and grassland fungi.       |
| <b>LH12</b> | Investigate the potential to use products from heathlands as a means of sustaining good management. Include the commercial uses for gorse and other heathland products for carbon sequestration. |
| <b>LH13</b> | Encourage continued tree removal to restore heathlands, grazing and mire restoration.  |

#### CLIMATE CHANGE ACTIONS

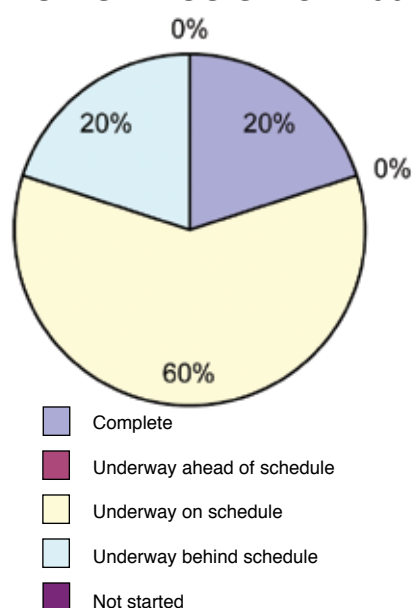
- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <b>LH14</b> | Research the effects of likely climate change scenarios on key taxa.  |
| <b>LH15</b> | Continue to work closely with Dorset Fire and Rescue Service as drier summers may increase likelihood and severity of unplanned heath fires.  |
| <b>LH16</b> | Initiate a research project on the carbon budgets of heathland. Include a cost benefit analysis of restoration work. Use the report to inform subsequent management of heaths and restoration of heathland from forestry plantations. |



# Raising Awareness and Involvement



ACTION STATUS SINCE 2003



The following are examples of achievements made against actions set out in the Strategy since its launch in 2003.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS (EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS UNDERWAY/ ACHIEVED)

There have been many examples of out-reach work aimed at raising awareness of biodiversity to a wide audience; far too many to report here. The following are just a handful:

- Wildlife on Your Doorstep, a Dorset Biodiversity Partnership project, was launched to boost people's involvement in recording the wildlife in their garden, park, school ground or other local place. Over 300 new records were generated by more than 200 participants.
- An Urban Wildlife Centre was opened at Beacon Hill and new project team set up to engage with a wide number of people in urban areas and those with disadvantaged backgrounds in particular.
- A 'Pride of Place' toolkit for communities was launched in 2006 to help integrate biodiversity (among other environmental subjects) into community planning.
- A number of visitor centres including Durlston Country Park, the Fine Foundation Marine Centre, and Lorton, Radipole and The Fleet nature reserves, have held biodiversity orientated visitor events.
- There have been literally hundreds of events, workshops and training sessions made available by partner organisations. These have been on a wide range of topics from how to carry out practical work and species identification to events celebrating the wealth of wildlife Dorset has to offer.
- Many organisations have developed volunteering programmes and work has started to co-ordinate environmental volunteering opportunities across the county.
- Dorset Biodiversity Grant, made available through the partnership, has enabled a number of local community projects to enhance biodiversity.



## PRIORITY ACTION FOR NEXT FIVE YEARS

*Existing actions within Dorset Biodiversity Strategy are still valid until 2013. The strategy should therefore still be used as normal until this time. The following have been selected by the partnership as priority areas of work for the next five years:*

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>RA1</b>  | Establish a 'Raising Awareness' working group or network to take a strategic approach to identify where joint working to raise awareness of biodiversity is required and to promote what different organisations have to offer.  |
| <b>RA2</b>  | Develop a strategy and related projects to raise awareness and increase involvement of key sectors. These should include community groups, businesses, land managers, educational and health institutions, and local government. |
| <b>RA3</b>  | Capitalise on the growing emphasis placed on use of greenspace to enhance people's physical and mental well being. Ensure the importance of quality (i.e. biodiverse) greenspace is recognised in this context.                  |
| <b>RA4</b>  | Establish a Business and Biodiversity programme of activities, building on existing good practice.   |
| <b>RA5</b>  | Provide a 'menu' of opportunities aimed at supporting parish based interest.   |
| <b>RA6</b>  | Ensure biodiversity is mentioned as an issue in Parish Plans and Community Strategies to support this work.  |
| <b>RA7</b>  | Raise awareness of the benefits to social and economic issues from wildlife conservation work.   |
| <b>RA8</b>  | Support the growing effort to engage new conservation volunteers, ensure funding is made available and the work between different organisations is co-ordinated.   |
| <b>RA9</b>  | Support activities aimed at maintaining volunteer involvement in order to establish a high retention rate.   |
| <b>RA10</b> | Enable community groups to easily access projects via a web based 'one-stop-shop' of information. This should also include examples and case studies.  |
| <b>RA11</b> | Promote the work of the Partnership and the strategy through positive feedback on project achievements. Expand and make use of the biodiversity website hosted by DWT.   |
| <b>RA12</b> | Develop and Implement the Dorset Biodiversity Partnership Communication Strategy.  |
| <b>RA13</b> | Raise awareness of the importance of urban habitats such as gardens, allotments and parks for wildlife and encourage people to take individual action.   |

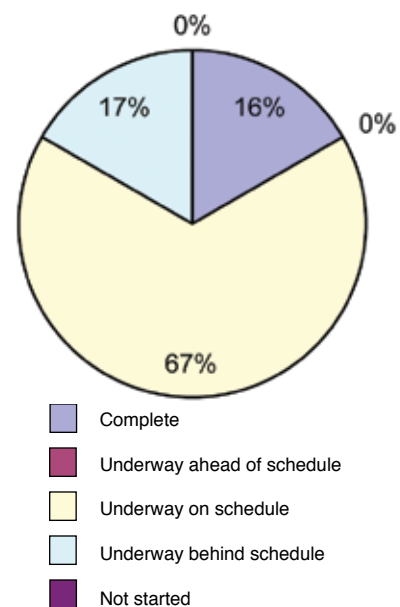
## CLIMATE CHANGE ACTIONS

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| <b>RA114</b> | Develop a community involvement phenology project to assess the changes in habits of a selection of climate sensitive species. Build on the work done through Wildlife on Your Doorstep. |
|--------------|--|

# Data and Monitoring



ACTION STATUS SINCE 2003



The following are examples of achievements made against actions set out in the Strategy since its launch in 2003.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS (EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS UNDERWAY/ ACHIEVED)

- Farmland bird data have been made available across the South West assisting in HLS targeting.
- A Dorset Mammal Atlas has been initiated.
- The five yearly whole county water vole survey was achieved. Results indicate that this species population has now stabilised.
- An NVC survey and ditch survey of the lower river Frome flood plain has been carried out, assisting in targeted water level management.
- A county fen inventory was carried out and disseminated to appropriate landowner advisors.
- An historic grasslands survey was achieved using 1940s aerial photographs. For the first time we have an accurate picture of change in extent of chalk grassland related habitats in the county.
- The number of ancient and veteran tree records has increased from 80 to over 600.
- A National Biodiversity Network pilot was carried out giving us area data for a range of UK Priority Habitats across the county.
- Indoor workshops in 7 Dorset localities were held followed up by outdoor 'hands on' field training in butterfly and day flying moth identification and recording.
- Village days were held, targeted on 13 Dorset villages with data gaps, involving recording butterflies and moths and recruiting future regular local recorders.
- There has been an annual programme of 60 transect walks supplemented in 2007 with 6 mini walks covering the Purbeck Ridge and visits to sites of priority species.

- The establishment of a Dorset Marine Biodiversity database and then the setting up of the DORIS project has moved marine recording forward.
- The annual Poole Harbour wading birds survey has been extended up the Frome Flood Plain as part of the Purbeck Keystone Project.

## PRIORITY ACTION FOR NEXT FIVE YEARS

*Existing actions within Dorset Biodiversity Strategy are still valid until 2013. The strategy should therefore still be used as normal until this time. The following have been selected by the partnership as priority areas of work for the next five years:*

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| <b>DM1</b> | Establish a baseline of biodiversity information, assessing what is present now and in previous years dating back to 1930s.   |
| <b>DM2</b> | Establish and implement a biodiversity monitoring system for the county. Support this with one off funding and then annual payments made by a broad range of end users. |
| <b>DM3</b> | Ensure biodiversity monitoring is linked with other county monitoring schemes (e.g. landscape and access).  |
| <b>DM4</b> | Build up a database of geo-referenced photos to measure change.   |
| <b>DM5</b> | Improve the networking of data and monitoring between members of the Dorset Biodiversity Partnership.   |
| <b>DM6</b> | Ensure adequate funding is secured for habitat mapping of all BAP habitats within the county.   |
| <b>DM7</b> | Develop a system to ensure members of the Biodiversity Partnership regularly add information to the national Biodiversity Action Recording System (BARS).               |

## CLIMATE CHANGE ACTIONS

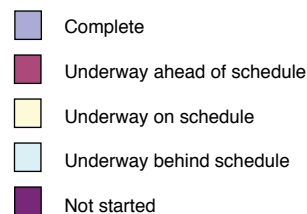
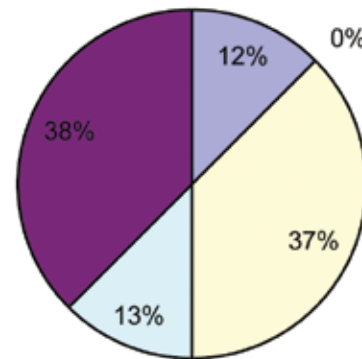
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|-------------|--|
| <b>DM8</b>  | Select a small number of sites containing different aspects (e.g. north and south facing slopes) which might be expected to reflect differing responses to 'global warming' and carry out regular invertebrate monitoring schemes. |
| <b>DM9</b>  | Using data collated for first action above assess what changes we've seen in the last 20-30 years in regard to changing climate. Include a particular focus on the colonisation of southern species in Dorset.                     |
| <b>DM10</b> | Prioritise habitats thought to be especially vulnerable to changing climate (e.g. Mire systems) and assess the likely impacts using different local climate change prediction models.  |
| <b>DM11</b> | Ensure information provision is tailored to the needs of climate change impact assessment. Ensure funding is made available for this aspect of biodiversity data provision.  |



# Land-use Planning



## ACTION STATUS SINCE 2003



## KEY DELIVERY GROUP(S)

Dorset Biodiversity Officers Group (DBOG - this is a group for local planning authorities and conservation advisors).

The following are examples of achievements made against actions set out in the Strategy since its launch in 2003.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS (EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS UNDERWAY/ ACHIEVED)

- The formation of DBOG has helped improve communication between planners, conservationists and developers.
- A biodiversity checklist for developers has been written for Dorset and is in use by ecological consultants and planners.
- Training sessions for planners, engineers and consultants on biodiversity issues have been held around the county.
- A protocol to assist planners and developers in taking appropriate action for bats has been developed and rolled out.
- Advice notes on protected species for planners and developers are available on the 'Dorsetforyou' website.
- The Dorset Biodiversity Information System has been set up by DERC to provide protected sites and species layers to all local authority planning teams with contact details for further advice and hotlinks to DCC advice notes.
- Dorset Planning and Nature Conservation Conference was held in March 2006.

## PRIORITY ACTION FOR NEXT FIVE YEARS

*Existing actions within Dorset Biodiversity Strategy are still valid until 2013. The strategy should therefore still be used as normal until this time. The following have been selected by the partnership as priority areas of work for the next five years:*

### Revised Objective:

“Ensure that the spatial planning system provides for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity to provide a resilient environment in the face of climate change.”

#### Influence planning documents

- LP1** Integrate biodiversity objectives into Local Development Framework documents.
- LP2** Maintain and enhance the level of biodiversity protection given in any future alterations to the planning system.
- LP3** Assist planners by commenting on planning documents and providing guidance on key principles for biodiversity.
- LP4** Incorporate biodiversity targets and delivery into local authority indicators, community strategies and corporate plans and agreements, including Local Area Agreements.
- LP5** Develop a system for auditing the implementation of planning conditions and decisions.

#### Green infrastructure

- LP6** Produce strategies for multi-functional green infrastructure for Dorset to create permeability for movement of wildlife and people through existing and proposed settlements, linking to the countryside beyond.

#### Information

- LP7** Ensure up to date habitat and species data is made available to inform the planning process, through supporting the maintenance and development of the Dorset Environmental Records Centre.
- LP8** Develop a standard system to monitor the effects of land-use planning policies and decisions on biodiversity with advice on how to use it.
- LP9** Establish baselines for Local Development Frameworks which are meaningful and measured; in some cases this may mean adjusting monitoring systems so that appropriate information is recorded.
- LP10** Continue to investigate the impacts of recreation disturbance in the Poole Harbour area. Seek to develop and implement a system to manage identified impacts.



## Communication and partnership

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <b>LP11</b> | Continue to engage in and develop DBOG as a mechanism for communication between planners and biodiversity specialists.  |
| <b>LP12</b> | Support Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to develop protocol for species conservation through planning process.  |
| <b>LP13</b> | Build capacity within LPAs to adequately deal with biodiversity issues, including support and information for development control officers to better deal with biodiversity in-house. |
| <b>LP14</b> | Produce project proposals for developers that could be incorporated through planning into mitigation, restoration and landscaping based on Dorset Biodiversity Strategy priorities.   |
| <b>LP15</b> | Continue to encourage adherence to Bat Protocol across LPAs.  |
| <b>LP16</b> | Use development to provide biodiversity enhancement in line with PPS9.  |
| <b>LP17</b> | Promote measures to enhance new and existing developments for swifts, targeted at settlements with existing swift records.  |

## CLIMATE CHANGE ACTIONS

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>LP18</b> | Raise awareness of the fact that special sites are as important as ever in the face of climate change.   |
| <b>LP19</b> | Ensure impacts of climate change on biodiversity are recognised. Allow species and habitats space to adapt to changing conditions, but also continue to protect sites of high biodiversity value which are likely to still offer the best habitats for wildlife in future. |
| <b>LP20</b> | Ensure that the migration of species is facilitated through connectivity of existing and newly created habitats.   |



*Photos kindly supplied by  
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[www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/the\\_dorset\\_biodiversity\\_strategy.html](http://www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/the_dorset_biodiversity_strategy.html)

DORSET



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