1. Woodland Habitat Action Plan

Introduction

This Habitat Action Plan covers Semi-natural ancient woodland and Recent woodland.

Ancient woods are defined as 'having continuous woodland cover since 1600 AD' and are listed in the Inventory of Ancient Woodland (Phillips14). This continuity is essential for the survival of rich ground flora communities that take millennia to develop. The IAW does not include sites smaller than two hectares, although the Selby BAP partnership believes that this is desirable.

All ancient woodlands are a priority, because they are effectively an irreplaceable resource. They cannot be recreated simply by planting trees.

High priorities for conservation action are plantations where native broadleaves have been replaced with conifers, but the ground flora persists, such as in Bishop Wood. Such woods are referred to as Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS).

Ancient woodland is covered by four UK BAP priority habitats:

- Lowland beech & yew woodland
- Upland mixed ashwoods
- Upland oakwoods
- Wet woodlands

In addition, some Lowland broadleaf woods, such as Brayton Barff, are also ancient. The UK BAP Steering Group is preparing a new UK action plan for 2005 which has relevance to the District – ‘Lowland mixed deciduous woodland’.

Woods such as Brayton Barff will be covered by this.

Recent woodland comprises of all other woodlands not categorised as ancient. This includes woodland that has colonised naturally, referred to as secondary woodland.

Plantations of both native and non-native tree species are important for some UK BAP species, and for landscape quality.

Sub-habitats within woodland, such as glades, rides, pools, bare ground and woodland edge are desirable, especially for invertebrates.

National status

The IAW records ' 2 million ha of woodland of which 534,000 ha are estimated to be ancient. Approximately 300,000 ha of this can be described as ancient semi-natural woodland, the balance having been converted into plantations.'

Regional status

The regional audit (Selman7) attributes the region with 6.7% of the ancient and natural woodland in England and Wales. The report highlights the fact that the data is very patchy and woodland classes, particularly Wet woodland, are under recorded. The figures given in the audit for the relevant types are:

UK priority habitats

- Lowland beech & yew woodland 0 ha
- Upland mixed ashwoods 2,338 ha
- Upland oakwoods 2,946 ha
- Wet woodlands 343 ha
Local status

The IAW\(^4\) identifies the fact that very little ancient woodland survived in the flatter and more fertile areas of the region. The regional audit shows Selby District as having only Wet woodlands. The IAW lists 62 Selby woodlands covering 1,075 ha. Of this 497 ha is semi-natural ancient woodland and 578 ha is on PAWS.

The largest site in the District is Bishop Wood, managed by Forest Commission England (FCE). This is a 330 ha PAWS site. Once restored to its original Wet woodland state, it will be of key national importance.

Brockadale YWT Nature Reserve includes an area of lowland ash woodland, which is actively managed for wildlife.

Places to visit:

Bishop Wood
Grid reference SE 561332
Coniferous plantation with wet woodland.

Brayton Barff
Grid reference SE 587308
Lowland acid oak woodland.

Woodland habitat (all types). Baseline distribution map, 2003.

Legal status

- Forestry Act 1967 (as amended).
- Felling licences required from Forestry Commission (FC) under Forestry Regulations.
- The bluebell, a key woodland plant, is legally protected from up-rooting and sale under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- Environmental Impact Assessments for planning applications.

Associated species priorities

- Bluebell
- Primrose
- Spotted flycatcher
- Song thrush
- Bullfinch

The creation of new woods and the conservation management of existing woods, will benefit all of the associated priority species.

Local status of Selby priorities

The bluebell is found in many of the District’s ancient woodlands.
The spotted flycatcher is a local and decreasing breeding bird. (Cooper 20) cites two to five pairs.

Song thrush

The song thrush has seen a national 25-year decline (1974 to 1999) of 53%, but no local population figures are available.

The bullfinch has seen a 57% national decline over the same period (Gregory 19). Cooper 20 estimates 50 pairs bullfinch for the Selby District.

**Threats**

- Habitat Fragmentation
- Illegal up-rooting of bluebells for commercial sale.

**Requirements**

- No loss of ancient woodland.
- Reversion of PAWS to native broadleaved woodland.

- Conservation-minded woodland management.
- Creation of new woodland using local provenance stock.
- Retention of dead and dying timber.
- Control of invasive exotic species - Rhododendron, cherry laurel, Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam.
- Control of beech, sycamore and poplars in ancient woods.
- New planting to link existing semi-natural habitat.

**Current action**

- FCE regulates timber harvesting through felling licences.
- The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations.
- The FC has produced Forest Practice Guides for different woodland types (Forest Authority 21).
- Woodland planting and conservation is encouraged by Woodland Grant Scheme (WGS) and Woodland Improvement Grants (WIG) available from FC.
- FC National Inventory of Woodland and Trees started in 1995.
- Data collected as part of the WGS documentation.
- FC organises breeding bird surveys.
- FC financially supports surveys in their forests.
- Local businesses promote woodland planting through the uptake of grants.

**Opportunities**

- FC to restore Bishop Wood to Wet woodland.
- Woodland advisory companies to secure planting schemes using FC grant aid.
- More natural regeneration and use of direct seed scattering rather than tree planting.
- Woodland creation and planting; woodland restoration and maintenance of high value woodland will be available under the proposed Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme (Defra). Help with fence maintenance may also be included.
- FCE will seek to protect all ancient semi-natural woodland sites under the England Woodland Grant Scheme to be launched in spring 2005.

What you can do to help:

Enjoy woodland flowers without picking them.

Rather than burning it, leave fallen timber to decay, for fungi and insects to colonise.

UK BAP targets

Wet woodland
- Maintain total extent and distribution of 50,000 to 70,000 ha.
- Maintain current area (24,000 to 30,000 ha) of ancient wet woodland.
- Initiate management measures to achieve favourable condition in 100% of Wet woodlands within SSSIs and 80% of total resource by 2004 and to achieve that favourable condition for 70% within SSSIs and 50% of total resource by 2004.
- Achieve favourable condition of 50% of total resource and 70% of designated sites by 2010.
- Complete restoration to site-native species to 1,600 ha of PAW, by 2010 and a further 1,600 ha by 2015.
- Establish 3,375 ha of wet woodland on un-wooded sites or plantations by 2010, with a further 3,375 ha by 2015.

Links to Species Action Plans

Otter – see SAP 1.
Bats - see SAP 9.
Bumble bees - see SAP 10.
Clearwing moths - see SAP 11.
Argent and sable moth (UK BAP), scarce vapourer moth, triple spotted pug and white-marked moth, all recorded from Bishop Wood - see SAP 12.

Objective

To conserve and restore all ancient semi-natural woodland and to increase the number of woods under favourable management. To increase the amount of new woodland from the current 1.7% of the Selby land area to the Yorkshire average of 6.7%

Ten year targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>№</th>
<th>Biodiversity targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Restore 150 ha of coniferous plantation to native woodland, giving preference to natural regeneration wherever possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Re-create 50 ha new, native species woodland.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Maintain or increase the distribution of the six priority species.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### ACTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Nº</th>
<th>Possible co-ordinators</th>
<th>Meets target Nº.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy and legislation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Raise awareness of the Forestry Act 1967, which covers the protection</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>FCE</td>
<td>1,3</td>
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<tr>
<td>of trees in all situations, to landowners and planning authorities.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Protection and management</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restore 50% of Bishop Wood to native broadleaved Wet woodland.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>FCE</td>
<td>1,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Drainage Board to undertake necessary ditch work in Bishop</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>IDB</td>
<td>1,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood in order to raise water table.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Continue to use grant incentives, especially the England Woodland</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>FCE, RDS (Defra)</td>
<td>2,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Scheme, to encourage the planting of new woods and the</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>management and restoration of woods.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage the restoration of re-planted ancient woodland in private</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>FCE, FWAG</td>
<td>1,3</td>
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<tr>
<td>ownership.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage woodland owners to implement appropriate long-term</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>FCE</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>management plans, particularly through the England Woodland Grant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scheme.</td>
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<td>Erect open-fronted nest boxes in woodland areas, which may</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>FCE, BTCV, Groundwork</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>encourage spotted flycatchers and other species to breed.</td>
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<td>Selby</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Research and monitoring</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Undertake an annual breeding survey for spotted flycatcher, song</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Five Towns Bird Club</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thrush, tree pipit and bullfinch at recently recorded sites.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Advisory</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Advise landowners on grants for planting, management and</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>FCE</td>
<td>1,2,3</td>
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<tr>
<td>restoration, especially through the England Woodland Grant Scheme.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Communications and publicity</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2. Lowland wood pasture and parkland Habitat Action Plan

Introduction

Lowland wood pasture and parkland is a UK BAP priority habitat. Sites are products of historic land management systems and represent a vegetation structure rather than being a particular plant community. Typically this structure consists of large, open-grown or high forest trees at various densities, in a mosaic of grazed grassland, heathland or woodland ground flora. Wood-pastures and parkland are often of archaeological, historic, cultural and landscape importance.

Wood-pastures have been managed by a long-established tradition of grazing, with the survival of multiple generations of trees, characteristically with at least some ancient trees. Parklands are more formal, but many have also developed under grazing regimes.

The tree component can occur as scattered individuals, small groups, or as more or less complete canopy cover. Abundant cavities provide for bats and nesting birds, while dead timber provides for fungi and invertebrates. The key issue is the continuity of a full age range of trees.

A wide range of tree and shrub communities may occur as part of wood-pasture systems. Exotic non-native species feature in many parks.

Types of wood-pastures and parkland include:

- Remnant medieval hunting forests and deer parks.
- Wooded commons.
- Parklands with their origins in the 18th century, but with much older trees from an earlier landscape.
- Under-managed and unmanaged wood-pastures with ancient trees.
- Surviving ancient trees following conversion to other land uses such as arable or forestry.
- Ancient trees that originated as hedgerow standards.

English Heritage (EH) has sought to conserve important parkland and designed landscapes for their historic value. Parks of national importance are recorded on the register of Parks and Gardens of National Historic Interest. These are graded in terms of their importance. Many parks not included on the register are also important for their historical and ecological qualities.

This is a key habitat for dead wood invertebrates and fungi of veteran trees and pasture. However, surveys for these groups have not been undertaken in Selby and the BAP has identified this need. No target has been set for ancient trees due to the lack of a comprehensive register.

Ancient (or veteran) trees are found in a wide range of habitats and each one is valuable. These are trees that are of interest biologically, aesthetically or culturally because of their age, size or condition. Important characteristics include:

- Large girth.
- Trunk cavities or hollow trunk.
- Water pools.
- Decay holes.
- Sap runs.
- Physical damage to trunk.
- Bark loss.
- Large quantity of dead wood in the canopy.
- Fungal fruiting bodies.
- Ferns and mosses growing on the tree.

**National status**

There are no reliable statistics on the extent of the overall resource, or on historical and current rates of loss or degradation of this type of habitat. The figure of 10-20,000 ha ‘currently in a working condition’ given in the ‘habitat statement’ of the UK BAP is the current best estimate. The habitat is most common in southern Britain.

Ancient trees are of European importance.

**Regional status**

There are scattered examples, with Duncombe Park in the North York Moors National Park identified as nationally important (Selman⁷).

**Local status**

Sites in the District have not been investigated for their biodiversity interest. If arranged this would provide useful information.

Two sites are on the national register – Nun Appleton Hall, which is described as ‘well wooded’, with new planting in 1893 and Moreby Hall near Stillingfleet, which is in woodland.

Other sites include Byram Hall (belts of woodland, but very open), Carlton Towers (in woodland, with lake), Grimston Park (woodland belts, ancient limes and mature beech trees), Hazelwood Castle (ancient woodland and parkland), Monk Fryston Hall, Newton Kyme Hall (with over-mature lime trees and pasture), Queen Margaret’s School, Escrick, and Scarthingwell Park.

**Places to visit:**

Hazelwood Castle

Grid reference SE 450400

**Habitat distribution map**

This habitat has not been mapped.

**Legal status**

- Forestry Act 1967 as amended.
- Some sites protected by Deposit Draft Selby District Local Plan (1997), as amended by modifications policy.
- Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) administered by Selby DC.

**Associated species priorities**

None.

**Threats**

- Loss of trees, especially ancient ones, because of public safety fears.
- Skewed age structure leading to a break in the availability of old trees for invertebrates.
- Removal of dead wood needed by some species.

**Requirements**

- Long-term management plans.
- Appropriate grazing regimes for open ground (grassland or heath).
- Planting of specimen trees to maintain continuity of ancient trees.
- Conservation of individual ancient trees.
- Reinstating pollarding where this form of traditional management has stopped.
- Presence of varied nectar sources for invertebrates.
- Network of sites, to offset poor powers of dispersal of many specialist animals.
- Extension planting adjacent to sites.
- Research into history and ecology of sites.
- A register of ancient trees.

Current action

- The Ancient Tree Forum (hosted by the Wildlife Trusts) promotes identification and conservation of lowland wood pastures, parkland and veteran trees.
- The District Council can protect locally valued trees through Tree Preservation Orders.

Opportunities

- Identification and conservation of ancient trees within hedges.
- Conservation options under the proposed Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme (Defra), to include creation, restoration and maintenance of wood pasture.

What you can do to help:

Leave fallen timber to decay naturally, for the benefit of insects and fungi.

UK BAP targets

- Maintain the current extent and distribution of all, and the condition of all that is in favourable ecological condition.
- Initiate, in areas where there are derelict examples, a programme to restore 2,500 ha to favourable ecological condition by 2010.
- By 2002 initiate the expansion of 500 ha in appropriate areas to help reverse fragmentation and to reduce the generation gap between veteran trees.

Links to Species Action Plans

Bats - see SAP 9.

Objective

Ensure positive conservation management of all key sites. In the long term, double the area of wood pasture by reinstating the habitat on sites where it occurred historically. Retain veteran trees wherever they occur.

Five year targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nº</th>
<th>Biodiversity targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>No net loss of the current resource of Lowland wood pasture and parkland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Maintain or increase the breeding population and distribution of spotted flycatcher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# ACTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Nº.</th>
<th>Possible co-ordinators</th>
<th>Meets target Nº.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy and legislation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise awareness of the Forestry Act 1967, which covers the protection of trees in all situations, to landowners and planning authorities.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>FCE</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection and management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Continue placing TPOs on appropriate trees.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>SDC</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and monitoring</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare a register of identified ancient trees, including ones within woodland, parkland and isolated trees.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NEYEDC</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake condition surveys, subject to landowner permission.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>NEYEDC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish ownership of ancient trees and seek access permission. Arrange for tress to be surveyed either for features indicative of veteran tree interest, or by specialist ecologists for their invertebrate or fungi interest</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisory</td>
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<tr>
<td>Give advice to interested parties on management and grants.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>RDS (Defra), FWAG</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publish articles promoting this habitat and ancient trees.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage management or restoration under the proposed Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>RDS (Defra), FWAG</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications and publicity</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify owners and raise awareness of the BAP.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Set up a tree warden scheme.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Identify ancient tree champions, particularly from the business community.

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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
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</table>
3. **Ancient and/or species-rich hedgerows Habitat Action Plan**

**Introduction**

This is a UK BAP habitat. Ancient hedgerows, which tend to be those that support the greatest diversity of plants and animals, are defined as those that were in existence before the Enclosure Acts of 1720 to 1840. Some derive from early woodland clearance, which left a narrow strip of ‘wildwood’. These can retain ancient woodland indicator species like wood anemone, ramsons and primrose. Ancient hedgerows should be considered as being irreplaceable.

This HAP includes hedges failing to meet the above criteria but which have a rich basal flora of herbaceous plants, and recently planted species-rich hedges.

The straight hawthorn hedges that characterise later parliamentary enclosures and single species hedges of privet, yew, beech or non-native species are excluded.

In addition to their wildlife value, hedges have farming, landscape, cultural and archaeological importance.

Hedges form a significant wildlife habitat, being a refuge for many species and also a wildlife corridor allowing migration and dispersal. Hedge management is important, for example hawthorn only flowers on second year growth. Different species of bird require different types of hedge management.

Between 1947 and 1985 about 22%, or 300,000 km, of hedgerows were lost in England and Wales. Between 1984 and 1990 there was an estimated loss of 21% of English hedges. Prior to the 1997 Hedgerow Regulations the net loss of hedges was 1.7% through removal and 3.5% through neglect per annum (UK BAP). The 1997 Hedgerow Regulations make it an offence to remove a hedge without permission from the local planning authority. The key issue is neglect.

**National status**

In 1995 the UK total for all hedges was estimated at 450,000 km. Analysis of data from 1978 and 1990 indicates that about 42%, or 154,000 km, of British hedges are ancient and/or species-rich. These are concentrated mainly in south-west England and south Wales. About 33%, or 41,000 km, of hedges in Northern Ireland are ancient and/or species-rich, giving a combined UK total resource of 195,000 km (UK BAP).

**Regional status**

The Countryside Agency (CA) estimated in 1990, that the region had 10% of England’s hedgerows and gave the North Yorkshire stock as 18,000 km (all types).

Between 1991 and 1998 123.5 km of native species hedge was planted in North Yorkshire with aid from the Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS) (Selman7).

**Local status**

No information on the amount or quality and none on locally important plants or invertebrates.
Ancient &/or species-rich hedgerow.
Baseline distribution map, 2003.

Legal status

This habitat is protected under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. Defra is currently revising the Regulations.

Associated species priorities

None

Threats

- Lack of knowledge regarding the resource.
- Illegal removal of hedges.
- Neglect of hedge management.
- Unsympathetic hedge management.
- Agricultural spray drift killing hedge species.
- Preference for alternative methods of stock control, such as wire fencing.

Requirements

- Sympathetic management of both hedge and hedge bottom, including traditional hedge-laying.
- Protection from agricultural spray drift through creation of adjacent grass margins.
- Planted trees should be of local provenance.
- Hedges to be left uncut for two or more years. Hawthorn flowers grow on second year growth.
- A variety of hedge shapes and sizes.
- Hedge junctions uncut to create scrub cover in field corners.
- Trim after berries have been eaten but before nesting season.
- Trim hedges on rotation around farm to provide a continuous food source.
- Hedge planting to connect semi-natural habitats.

Current local action

- Selby District Council (SDC) implements the Hedgerow Regulations, which safeguard this habitat.
- Training by FWAG, LEAF and others for farmers.
- Linking Environment And Farming (LEAF) demonstration farms.
- BTCV development of local provenance tree nurseries.
- Yorkshire Hedgerow Campaign run by BTCV.
- Management of existing and neglected hedges can be funded through defra schemes.

Opportunities

- Conservation options under the proposed Defra schemes, including management under the Environmental Stewardship Entry Level Scheme and planting under the

Approved Selby Local Biodiversity Action Plan August 2004
Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme.
- Hedgerow survey and database to be organised through the BAP.

What you can do to help:
Avoid severe cutting of garden hedges during the bird-nesting season, from March to the end of July.

UK BAP targets
- Halt the net loss through neglect and removal by 2000 and all loss by 2005.
- Achieve the favourable management of 25% (47,500 km) by 2000 and of 50% (95,000 km) by 2005.

Five year targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nº.</th>
<th>Biodiversity targets</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Protect all Ancient and/or species-rich hedgerows qualifying under Hedgerow Regulations from removal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Restore 10km of neglected Ancient and/or semi-natural hedge.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Increase the number of species-rich hedgerows by 50km.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

ACTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Nº.</th>
<th>Possible co-ordinators</th>
<th>Meets target Nº.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy and legislation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Assess Hedgerow Removal Notices under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.</td>
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<td>SDC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Raise awareness of the Forestry Act 1967, which covers the protection of trees in all situations, to landowners and planning authorities.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>FCE</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protection and management</strong></td>
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</table>

Approved Selby Local Biodiversity Action Plan August 2004
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Description</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Group(s)</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plant new species-rich hedges.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>FWAG, RDS (Defra)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with landowners to manage hedges, especially neglected ones.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>FWAG, RDS (Defra)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage the planting of ash trees in hedges, to provide trees with cavities in the long term, for nesting birds and invertebrates.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>FWAG</td>
<td>-</td>
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### Research and monitoring

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### Advisory

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Description</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Group(s)</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training / advice for farmers, contractors and Local Authority staff in traditional hedge management techniques.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>FWAG, BTCV, LEAF</td>
<td>2,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sympathetic hedge management.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>FWAG, BTCV, LEAF</td>
<td>1,2,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advise landowners on grants and current research.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>RDS (Defra), FWAG</td>
<td>2,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote Environmental Stewardship schemes to landowners and land managers.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>RDS (Defra), FWAG, LEAF</td>
<td>1,2,3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Communications and publicity

- 

Approved Selby Local Biodiversity Action Plan August 2004
4. Arable Farmland Habitat Action Plan

Introduction

It has been established through long-term research that the farmed countryside is important for biodiversity. However, many species, particularly flowering arable annual plants and farmland birds, have declined and are the focus of UK BAP Species Action Plans.

The decline in biological value has largely been due to production-orientated agricultural policies and technological advances since 1945. A change in arable cropping patterns has led to a switch from spring sown to autumn sown crops. In the Selby area, the land is predominantly in intensive arable cultivation.

However, many farmers manage their land for wildlife as well as crop production to the benefit of both habitats and species. Chemical use on farmland has fallen and has become more targeted in recent years and many farmers typically farm in an environmentally friendly way.

Under the England Rural Development Plan, Defra is delivering biodiversity conservation through its agri-environment schemes and its Rural Development Service. Defra is also responsible for EN.

Under the IACS scheme the amount of set aside can be anything from 10% up to 50% of the total arable area on a farm. This provides a huge opportunity to manage a significant area of normally cultivated land for wildlife benefit.

Where specific species are already known to exist, derogation from the normal set aside management rules can be obtained to create ideal breeding/feeding conditions for these species. For example in areas where lapwing are known to breed or are frequent visitors, set aside land can be ploughed in early spring to create bare ground ideal for nesting, alongside short grassland it provides the ideal feeding ground for young chicks. The sowing of wild bird cover mixtures is also encouraged. Set aside strips of 20 m or 10 m wide, can be created to buffer other existing wildlife habitats such as woodland and watercourses.

Cereal field margins encourage wildlife on intensive arable farms and this man-made habitat has become a UK BAP priority. Defra has supported field margin creation, through the Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS). This ten-year payment scheme has a diverse range of options for the whole farm including 2m and 6m arable grass margins and beetle banks. Field margins can buffer watercourses.

From 2005, Environmental Stewardship in the farming industry will be determined by Defra in a new way, and CSS will be phased out as ten-year agreements run their course. A wide suite of Environmental Stewardship Entry Level Scheme (ESELS) and Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme (ESHLS) options will succeed CSS arable options. There will be around 17 arable options for ESELS and about 19 different options within the ESHLS.

Stubble is the remains of a cereal crop after harvest. The CSS can pay farmers...
for the retention of stubble until February through the Arable options package, with further financial incentives if this is followed by a period of fallow or low input crop. Wildlife seed mixtures and pollen and nectar mixes are also part of the arable options. Arable land is a refuge for seriously declining arable flowers, such as cornflower. However, none of the UK BAP arable weed species are known to grow in the District.

A number of key farmland birds are associated with this habitat. These are species that have undergone a severe decline in the UK over the last 50 years. Research suggests that this is due to changing farming practices, usually referred to as intensification. Birds have been adversely affected by the loss of nest sites, winter seed and summer invertebrates. The latter are essential for the chicks of some species, such as tree sparrow.

The British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) researches changes in the population of wild birds through national recording schemes.

Bats and the bumble bees group are associated with farmland and have dedicated SAPs.

The aim of this action plan is to increase cereal field margins and over-winter stubbles and it is assumed that in doing so, the target species will benefit. Additional actions, such as winter bird feeding, will be pursued. No opportunities for re-introducing ‘arable weeds’ have been identified.

National status

Cereals cover about 51% of arable land in Great Britain and 63% in England. Information on stubble has never been collected.

Regional status

The regional audit (Selman7) gives figures on lengths of arable field margins in the CSS in 1998, for North Yorkshire (excluding the National Parks). This gives 72.7 km of ‘un-cropped arable margins’ and 207 km of ‘2m grass margins and beetle banks’. These are added to give a total of 279.7 km of the UK BAP priority habitat Cereal field margins for north Yorkshire in 1998.

Local status

The Phase 1 habitat survey report (Warburton9) gives a total for arable land/urban land of 61,446ha or 85% of the total land area (NB: this figure is for the 72,486ha land area of the pre 1996 local government boundary changes). No figures are available for current areas of cereal field margin or winter stubble.

Habitat distribution map

This habitat has not been mapped.

Legal status

- Defra - good agricultural practice guidelines.

Associated species priorities

Nine species of breeding bird, one species of non-breeding bird and one mammal - brown hare.
Recent BTO and RSPB analysis (Gregory\textsuperscript{19}) gives the following national population declines for the nine birds, for the period 1974 - 1999:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bird</th>
<th>Decline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tree sparrow</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn bunting</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey partridge</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turtle dove</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starling</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House sparrow</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linnet</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skylark</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellowhammer</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Twite (passage and wintering)

### Status of Selby priorities

The tree sparrow (UK BAP) is an uncommon resident and local breeder. From a limited study, four small colonies and declining (Cooper\textsuperscript{20}). The species is still found in the parish of Escrick.

The corn bunting (UK BAP) is also an uncommon resident and local breeder, with larger winter flocks recorded than the previous species. Declining and probably about 25 pairs (Cooper\textsuperscript{20}).

Grey partridge (UK BAP) is an uncommon resident and local breeder, with about ten pairs reported by Cooper\textsuperscript{20} from a few regularly watched sites. Declining dramatically. A grey partridge re-introduction scheme has been instigated on the Escrick Estate, through the Farm Conservation Officer.

Turtle dove (UK BAP) local breeding summer visitor, declined to about 10 pairs (Cooper\textsuperscript{20}). Faces threats on migration through southern Europe. The main local issue is loss of weedy arable land.

The starling is a resident and widespread breeder and winter visitor. No assessment of local breeding population has been attempted, but the national decline is reflected by loss of large winter roosts.

The house sparrow is a resident and widespread breeder. No assessment of breeding population, but declining, particularly in rural areas.

The yellowhammer is a locally declining resident and widespread breeder and winter visitor, but no local estimate of breeding pairs is available.
Yellowhammer

The linnet (UK BAP) is a resident and widespread breeder and winter visitor, but no local data is available.

The skylark (UK BAP) is a resident and widespread breeder and winter visitor, but it is declining dramatically locally as well as nationally.

Twite is a declining breeding finch of the uplands. It has been found on passage or wintering at Beal Carrs.

The brown hare (UK BAP) has a widespread distribution, and its population is possibly stable.

Threats

- Field management is greatly influenced by European Agricultural policy through the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP). Farmers are therefore directed in how they can work their land.
- The environmental impact of Genetically Modified (GM) crop technology requires further research.

Requirements

- A wide variety of countryside features.
- Rotational cutting of cereal field margins.
- Retention of grassland with tussocks and nectar sources.
- Use of targeted pesticides.
- Planting of low input crops or summer fallow following winter stubble.
- Winter-feeding and nest box schemes benefit some birds.
- Protection of water quality.
- Good hedgerow management.

Current local action

- Many farmers have entered the ten year CSS and most of the Skipwith estate in the parish of Escrick is in a scheme.
- Training for farmers and agronomists by FWAG and others.
- Linking Environment and Farming (LEAF) demonstration farms in Ryedale and Hambleton.
- FWAG/ Yorkshire Agricultural Society Demonstration Farm at Hopewell House, Knaresborough.
- RSPB run the Volunteer Farmer Alliance, to increase breeding bird surveys on farms.
- Nest boxes and bird feeding can be funded through Defra schemes.

Opportunities

Environmental Stewardship (see above).
- Voluntary Agreements on pesticide use.
- RSPB Bird Aid Scheme, targeting winter bird feeding at sites in the region.
- Development of conservation measures for arable weeds through the BAP. Corn marigold has been reported on the Escrick Estate.
Ancient &/or species-rich hedgerows – see HAP 3.
Lakes and ponds – see HAP 10.
Rivers, streams and ditches – see HAP 12.
Bats - see SAP 9.
Bumble bees - see SAP 10.

Objective
Increase the biodiversity potential of all arable farmland by appropriate cropping practices and conservation management, thereby helping to restore recent losses of farmland wildlife.

UK BAP targets
- Maintain, improve and restore the biodiversity of 15,000 ha of cereal field margins on appropriate soil types by 2010.

Links to Species Action Plans

Five year targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>№</th>
<th>Biodiversity targets</th>
<th>Nº</th>
<th>Possible co-ordinators</th>
<th>Meets target Nº.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Increase the area of winter stubble year on year.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>BTCV, RSPB, NYCC</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Increase the area of cereal field margins year on year.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>RDS (Defra), FWAG, BTCV, RSPB</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Increase the distribution of the ten priority species.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>RDS (Defra), FWAG</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

ACTIONS

Policy and legislation

Protection and management

Set up community projects to produce tree sparrow nest boxes. | 1  | BTCV, RSPB, NYCC       | 3                |
Undertake the erection of nest boxes on local farms populated by tree sparrows (especially where few suitable trees are available). | 2  | RDS (Defra), FWAG, BTCV, RSPB | 3                |
Farmers to set up winter bird feeding stations using waste cereal (tailings). | 3  | RDS (Defra), FWAG       | 3                |
Encourage the planting of ash trees, which provide nesting cavities when mature. | 4  | FWAG                   | 3                |
Undertake grey partridge conservation measures, such as not shooting unless the population is viable.  
Promote the retention of areas of scrub, especially gorse, for nesting by linnets.

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**Research and monitoring**

Working with interested farmers, undertake breeding bird surveys as part of the RSPB Volunteer Farmer Alliance.

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Monitor success of nest box schemes.

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Establish the wintering status of twite.

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**Advisory**

Support farmers in applying for Environmental Stewardship schemes.

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Arrange training days for farmers or agronomists, on arable field margins and arable options.

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Support farmers in the setting up of winter bird feeding.

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Work with the Farm Conservation Officer of the Forbes-Adam estate on farm wildlife conservation, especially the grey partridge, and use guidance from the Game Conservancy Trust, the lead agency for the UK BAP grey partridge SAP.

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**Communications and publicity**

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Approved Selby Local Biodiversity Action Plan August 2004
5. Grazing marsh Habitat Action Plan

Introduction

This action plan covers those Neutral grasslands that have significant bird interest. These are chiefly the wetter grasslands.

Less botanically interesting grassland, with some marshy vegetation is important for declining breeding waders, including birds such as redshank, snipe and lapwing.

One UK BAP priority habitat is covered - Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh (here referred to as Grazing marsh).

Grazing marsh is pasture or meadow that occasionally floods and is dissected by ditches. The ditches are often permanently wet and can be rich in plants and invertebrates.

The RSPB, EN and EA are undertaking a Geographical Information System (GIS) feasibility study for flood plain habitat restoration. This may identify habitat opportunities for the BAP to adopt.

National status

The exact amount of Grazing marsh in the UK is not known but was estimated in 1994 to be about 300,000 ha, including 290,000 ha of marshy grassland and 10,000 ha of herb-rich. The UK has seen severe declines in the last fifty years due to conversion to arable or re-seeding and annual fertiliser input, to support intensive grazing or silage production.

Regional status

In the Yorkshire and The Humber region, the majority of Neutral grassland survives in the Derwent Valley and on the Humberhead Levels. Regional figures are not available.

Local status

The local resource has been estimated from the phase 1 habitat survey (Warburton⁹), the phase 2 habitat survey, (BioDAT¹⁰), the English Nature (EN²²) Grassland Inventory and the EN Grazing marsh inventory. Most sites are less than 2.6 ha in size.

There are 1,500 ha of Grazing marsh in Selby District.

Places to visit:

North Duffield Carrs, Derwent Ings
Grid reference SE 697367

Habitat distribution map

No map currently available.

Legal protection


Associated species priorities

Harvest mouse
Barn owl
Snipe
Lapwing
Redshank
Yellow wagtail
Status of Selby priorities

Little information is available on the status of the harvest mouse and further research is needed.

Barn owl is a local resident breeder, with probably 20 – 30 pairs and stable. The snipe is a winter visitor and localised resident breeder, with probably 10 – 20 pairs, especially in the Lower Derwent Valley and Fairburn Ings. Probably stable (Cooper\textsuperscript{20}).

The lapwing is a winter visitor in sizeable numbers. Cooper\textsuperscript{20} mentions a dramatic decline over the last ten to 15 years and estimates that at least ten pairs still breed.

Lapwing

The redshank is a passage migrant and localised resident breeder, especially in the Lower Derwent Valley and at Fairburn Ings, but with no definite breeding data. Declining.

The yellow wagtail is a passage migrant and localised breeder, with probably ten pairs. Declining dramatically, for example there were 80 pairs in the Lower Derwent Valley in 1994 (Cooper\textsuperscript{20}). Faces severe threats from hunting during migration through the Mediterranean region.

Threats

- Housing and industrial development.
- Disturbance to breeding animals by people and dogs.

Requirements

- Traditional agricultural management, including hay cutting or grazing. Use of organic herbicides and fertilisers.
- Seasonally high water table for Grazing marsh.
- Bare ground is important for many invertebrates.

Current local action

- This is a target agri-environment scheme habitat, with options for the management, restoration and recreation of wet grassland for breeding or wintering waders and wildfowl.
- The Environment Agency (EA) produce Catchment Flood Management Plans (CFMP) that provide a strategic planning framework for the integrated management of flood risks to people and the developed and natural environment in a sustainable manner.
- EN SSSI management plans.
- EN has published the Lower Derwent Valley agri-environment information pack.
- RSPB run the Volunteer Farmer Alliance, to increase breeding bird surveys on farms.
- Advice from RDS (Defra) and FWAG.

Opportunities
Creation, restoration and management options available under the proposed Defra schemes, due to start in 2005. These include the Environmental Stewardship Entry Level Scheme and the Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme.

- Identify potential land suitable for habitat re-creation in Humberhead Levels and lower Aire valley.
- Manage best road verges.

What you can do to help:
Keep dogs under control when walking in meadows and along riverbanks in the breeding season.

UK BAP targets
Floodplain grazing marsh

Five year targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nº.</th>
<th>Biodiversity targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Re-create and manage 25 ha of carefully targeted, Grazing marsh for its bird interest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Maintain current distribution of harvest mouse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Increase distribution of five target species.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Nº.</th>
<th>Possible co-ordinators</th>
<th>Meets target Nº.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy and legislation</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection and management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-create floodplain grazing marsh in the Lower Aire Valley.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>EA, RDS (Defra)</td>
<td>1,2,3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Maintain existing quality and extent of 30,000 ha.
Rehabilitate 10,000 ha that is too dry or is intensively managed by 2000.
Begin creating 2,500 ha from arable land by 2000.

Links to Species Action Plans

- Water vole - see SAP 2.
- Tansy beetle - see SAP 4.
- Bats - see SAP 9.
- Bumble bees - see SAP 10.

Objective

Maintain the extent and quality of remaining remnants of Floodplain grazing marsh. Double the existing resource, which will benefit birds in particular.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Re-create this habitat in the Selby part of the Humberhead Levels Natural Area.</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>RDS (Defra), EN</th>
<th>1,2,3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landowners to use Environmental Stewardship schemes to re-create this habitat.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>RDS (Defra), FWAG, NFU, CLA</td>
<td>1,2,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landowners to enter Environmental Stewardship schemes to manage existing habitat.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>RDS (Defra), FWAG, NFU, CLA</td>
<td>1,2,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assist hay meadow owners with clearing river-born debris prior to cutting.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>BTCV</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase the area of reed canary grass habitat, favoured by harvest mouse.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>RDS (Defra)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research and monitoring**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undertake work to identify potential areas for habitat re-creation.</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>EA, RSPB</th>
<th>1,2,3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investigate breeding bird populations, possibly through Volunteer Farmer Alliance.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>RSPB, local bird clubs</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erect barn owl nest boxes.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Advisory**

| Pro-actively advise landowners and funding opportunities. | 10 | RDS (Defra), FWAG, NFU, CLA, EN, EA | 1,2,3 |

**Communications and publicity**

-
6. Unimproved grassland
Habitat Action Plan

Introduction

Unimproved grassland can be described as acid, calcareous or neutral, depending on the underlying soil conditions, each type being characterised by specific plant species.

This action plan considers important botanical grasslands, which are unimproved or semi-improved in agricultural terms. They are generally herb-rich and low input management is the key to their conservation. Some conservation organisations own their own stock – often including rare breeds of cattle and sheep – to manage nature reserves. Nearby meadows are also needed for winter grazing.

Unimproved grassland is a fragile habitat that has declined severely in the UK.

Three UK BAP priority habitats are covered - Lowland calcareous grassland, Lowland dry acid grassland and Lowland meadows.

Lowland calcareous grassland
In Selby all of the calcareous grassland is found on shallow, lime-rich soils over Magnesian Limestone. Much has been lost to land use change, with remnants restricted to steep valleys, old quarries and on rail and road embankments.

Nationally, Magnesian Limestone grassland has a unique assemblage of plant and invertebrate species, including over 13 Nationally Scarce plants and 84 Nationally Scarce invertebrates (UK BAP).

Local indicator species include quaking grass, bird’s-foot trefoil, lady’s bedstraw, bloody cranesbill and wild carrot. Insects include common blue butterfly and yellow meadow ant.

Lowland dry acid grassland
Sites tend to be isolated, occurring on heaths and along forest rides. Plant species include wavy hair-grass, heath bedstraw, sheep's sorrel and tormentil. Animal species include small copper butterfly and birds include meadow pipit and green woodpecker.

Lowland meadows (neutral grassland)
Lowland meadows are neutral, herb-rich grasslands, such as unimproved meadows, churchyards and road verges. These support plant species such as meadow barley, sweet vernal grass, great burnet, pignut and betony. Breeding birds are represented by skylark, and non-breeding birds by invertebrate feeders such as starlings. There is a considerable invertebrate interest.

Road verges
Some of the surviving remnants of good grassland are found on road verges. North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) undertakes some verge cutting, salt storage and gritting.

National status

There is between 33,000 and 41,000 ha of Lowland calcareous grassland of all types in the UK, (some 78% is on chalk). The UK total for Magnesian Limestone is between 1,000 and 4,000 ha (UK BAP).

There are 30,000 ha of Lowland dry acid grassland in the UK (UK BAP).
The Lowland meadows resource in England and Wales is less than 12,000 ha and declined by 97% between 1930 and 1984 (UK BAP).

**Regional status**

The Yorkshire and The Humber Region has Upland calcareous grassland (on limestone) and Lowland calcareous grassland (on chalk and Magnesian limestone).

A total of 642 ha of Magnesian Limestone grassland is given for the region (Selman7).

Between 160 and 750 ha of Lowland dry acid grassland is given for the region (Selman7).

No regional figure for Lowland meadow is available.

**Local status**

The local resource has been estimated from the phase 1 habitat survey (Warburton9), BioDAT10 and the English Nature (EN) Grassland Inventory.

**Lowland calcareous (Magnesian limestone) grassland**

Just 0.05% of the Selby land area contains this habitat. This is a total of 31 ha, of which some is within Sherburn Willows SSSI, some is within Brockadale SSSI and 0.7 ha is within seven SINC sites (Warburton9 and BioDAT10).

**Lowland dry acid grassland**

Just 0.2% of the Selby land area is this habitat. This is a total of 126 ha, some of which occurs at Skipwith common SSSI and 5.2 ha within seven SINC sites. (Warburton9 and BioDAT10).

Places to visit:
Brockadale YNT Nature Reserve.
Grid reference SE 508168

Stutton disused railway track.
Public footpath at SE 478411

A63 road embankment at Selby Fork Hotel junction.
Access from lay-by at SE 470299

Places to visit:
Barlow Common LNR.
Car park at SE 638281
**Lowland meadow**

There is 127 ha of Lowland meadow, including 104ha within Sites Important for Nature Conservation (SINC) (Warburton and BioDAT).

**Legal status**

Magnesian Limestone grassland is listed on the EC Habitats Directive.

**Associated species priorities**

*Green hellebore*

**Status of Selby priorities:**

Green hellebore has occurred at a single site on the Magnesian Limestone since 1888. Although it may have come from a herb garden, it is suspected of being native. Good number of plants at this site in 2002.

**Threats**

- Loss of habitat to development, road building, farm diversification.
- Habitat degradation through inappropriate management, such as lack of grazing or over grazing.
- Inappropriate cutting regimes on road verges.

**Requirements**

- Grazing at appropriate levels and time of year.
- Mowing at sites where grazing is impractical.
- Scrub management.
- Some bare ground for insects.
- Use of appropriate conservation wildflower seed mixes (of local provenance) for re-instatement after engineering works.

**Current local action**

- Skipwith Common SSSI management plan (acid grassland).
- YWT management plan and Countryside Stewardship Scheme in place for Brockadale Nature Reserve, including scrub control (Magnesian Limestone grassland).
- North Yorkshire County Council Road verge strategy.

**Opportunities**

- Favourable management of road verges by the highways authority.
- Review of restoration schemes for active mineral sites by NYCC, should identify opportunities for restoration of Unimproved grassland.
- Creation, restoration and management options available under the proposed Defra schemes, due to start in 2005. These include the Environmental Stewardship Entry Level Scheme and the Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme.
- Parish road verge management projects.
- Conservation grazing project, links to rare breed trusts and machine rings to share stock and equipment.
- Discourage the planting of garden plant varieties, such as daffodil, outside of the urban area.
- Arable land with low fertility levels is ideal for habitat re-creation under Environmental stewardship.

**What you can do to help:**

Enjoy wild flowers, but leave them for others to enjoy.
Seek owner consent and BAP partnership advice to manage a road verge for wildlife.

UK BAP targets

Lowland calcareous grassland:
- Arrest depletion.
- Within SSSIs start rehabilitation management for significant stands in unfavourable condition by 2005, to get favourable status by 2010.
- For other sites, secure favourable condition over 30% of resource by 2005 and 100% by 2015.
- Re-establish 500 ha at targeted sites by 2010.

Lowland dry acidic grasslands:
- Arrest depletion.
- Within SSSIs start rehabilitation management for significant stands in unfavourable condition by 2005, to get favourable status by 2010.
- For other sites, secure favourable condition over 30% of resource by 2005 and 100% by 2015.

Links to Species Action Plans

Bats - see SAP 9.
Bumble bees - see SAP 10.
The forester moth - see SAP 12.

Objective

To conserve and enhance all remaining areas of species-rich, unimproved grassland. Doubling of the resource through restoration and re-creation.

Five year targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>№</th>
<th>Biodiversity targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Enhance 0.5ha of calcareous grassland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Enhance 0.5ha of acid grassland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Enhance 0.5ha of neutral grassland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Re-create 5 ha of acid grassland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Maintain the current population of green hellebore.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### ACTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Nº.</th>
<th>Possible co-ordinators</th>
<th>Meets target Nº.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy and legislation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set up maintenance schedules for roadside verges, based on favourable</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td>1,2,3,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>management for wildlife.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrate appropriate verge management practice into NYCC road verge</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td>1,2,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>policy and focus upon Special Interest Verges as a priority</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYCC in conjunction with the mineral planning authority to seek strong</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mitigation for much more strategic habitat creation, for the after use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of mineral sites. Biodiversity gains to be based on the historic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>losses of habitats from the District as shown by BAP priorities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation decisions to be based on the principle of prioritising as</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>follows: Protection and favourable management of the existing resource,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enhancement of the existing resource where it is degraded and re-creation of lost resource.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protection and management</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cut Special Interest Verges to benefit nature conservation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td>1,2,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of scrub encroachment at Brockadale YWT Reserve.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>YWT, RDS (Defra), EN</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish ownership of Magnesian Limestone grassland near Selby fork</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hotel and seek access permission. SINC Survey Steering Group to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>undertake botanical survey to identify potential for SINC designation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by North Yorkshire SINC Panel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organise the management of scrub encroachment at calcareous grassland</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>site near to the Selby Fork Hotel.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involve community groups in management work.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Selby Groundwork, BTCV</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-creation of acidic grassland as part of the restoration of working</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sand quarries.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research and monitoring</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilise local knowledge to identify and record Special</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td>1,2,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest Verges</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Advisory**

| Advise landowners on nature conservation value, management and funding opportunities. | 11 | FWAG, RDS (Defra) | 1,2,3,4 |
| Offer advice to mineral extraction companies and landowners regarding strategic habitat creation, especially species-rich grasslands. | 12 | NYCC | 1,2,3 |

**Communications and publicity**

| Discourage the planting of garden plant varieties outside of the urban envelope, through publicity material. | 13 | NYCC |  |
7. Lowland Heathland Habitat Action Plan

Introduction

Lowland Heathland is characterised by the presence of plants such as heather, cross-leaved heath and gorse. It is generally found below 300m. Good quality heathland includes a mosaic of heather ages, with scattered trees, scrub, bare ground, wet heaths, bogs and open water. Associated with these habitats is a rich and varied fauna with many characteristic species of birds, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates.

Lowland heathland is a UK priority BAP habitat. In England, only one sixth of the heathland present in 1800 now remains. This loss is reflected internationally with the British heaths now representing around 20% of the remaining habitat on a global scale.

Large areas of heathy commons were once a feature around many towns and villages in the Vale of York. It has been estimated that heathland once covered between 4,000 – 20,000 ha in the region. Only a fraction of this now remains.

Heathland losses have resulted from changes in agricultural practice, afforestation and urban development.

National Status

The UK has some 58,000 ha of this habitat, of which about 55% is found in England. The most significant concentrations of the habitat are in the southern counties of England and South Wales (UK BAP).

Regional Status

Although reduced in extent, heathland covers at least 1,100 ha in the region, with about 950 ha in the Vale of York (Selman7).

Local Status

Approximately 300 ha occur in Selby District. The most significant site is Skipwith Common SSSI. At 293 ha this site represents over 95% of the local heathland resource. Smaller fragments of heathland remain elsewhere, for example near the villages of Hambleton and Hensall (Warburton9 and BioDAT10).

Places to visit:

Skipwith Common
Park at grid reference SE 644374 or access from Skipwith Village SE 665384.

Legal status

Skipwith Common, the key site, is a candidate SAC and a SSSI.

Associated species priorities

Marsh gentian
Nightjar
Woodlark
Tree pipit
Adder

Status of Selby priorities

The breeding nightjar population had a high of 17 pairs in 1990, but there have been only two or three pairs in recent years (Cooper20). Up to six pairs of tree pipit nest (Cooper20). Although found in other habitats the adder is closely associated with heathland habitats, with Skipwith Common thought to be a stronghold for the species. Marsh Gentian is found at a single site and its status is consequently vulnerable.
One site – Skipwith Common – supports the UK BAP plant pillwort. This has a dedicated Species Action Plan.

Adder

Threats

- Small fragments of heathland may be vulnerable to changes in land use.
- Lack of management. A lack of management has resulted in remaining sites becoming dominated by scrub and woodland, decreasing the area supporting heathland.
- Fragmentation and isolation. The above factors and historical losses mean that remaining heathlands are often isolated, being surrounded by improved agricultural land or forestry. This can make management difficult and can often resulting in the diversity of individual sites decreasing.
- Recreation use. Although not a major problem at present motor cycle use at Skipwith Common does have the potential to damage the heathland present and disturb wildlife.
- Trespass and fly tipping. Both these activities can physically damage sites and result in them becoming unsightly and dangerous.

Requirements

- No loss of the remaining heathland resource.
- Appropriate management of existing sites.
- Restoration of neglected sites.
- Re-creation of heathland from forestry plantations or through arable reversion – following careful targeting to identify suitable low fertility sites.
- Site management plans to include prescriptions for priority Selby species.

Current local action

- A partnership between EN, Forestry Commission (FC), Ministry of Defence (MOD), Escrick Park Estate and Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (YWT) (on land outside the District) has been awarded a 347k Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant for the 750k Tomorrow’s Heathland Heritage project. This will manage and restore existing heathland in the Vale of York, look at opportunities for the expansion of the heathland resource and promote public appreciation and understanding of the habitat. This project will deliver many of the Heathland BAP targets.
- Skipwith Common has been designated a SSSI and receives international protection through its classification as a candidate SAC. The site is covered by an EN management agreement ensuring sympathetic management
- Land adjoining Skipwith Common is being managed for heathland recreation under the CSS.
- Reversion, restoration and management options available under the proposed Environmental
Stewardship Higher Level Scheme (Defra) due to start in 2005.

Opportunities

- Delivery by EN of substantial conservation work through the Tomorrow’s Heathland Heritage (THH) HLF award.
- Agri-environment scheme options to allow the reversion of arable, improved pasture and forestry to Lowland heath.
- Defra may fund feasibility studies.

What you can do to help:

Keep dogs under control when visiting heathland sites.
Ensure that fires are not started.

UK BAP targets

Five year targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Biodiversity targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Re-create 50 ha of heathland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Restore 100 ha of heathland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Maintain or increase distribution of five priority species.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACTIONS

Action                                      | No.  | Possible co-ordinators | Meets target No. |
---------------------------------------------------------|------|------------------------|------------------|
Policy and Legislation                         |      |                        |                  |
Pro-actively identify suitable areas and implement heathland re-creation, through the THH project. | 1    | THHH                   | All              |
Remove scrub and woodland at Skipwith Common. | 2    | THHH                   | 2,3              |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Responsible Authority</th>
<th>Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pro-actively identify sites requiring favourable grazing regimes and implement through the THH scheme.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>THH</td>
<td>2,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide appropriate habitat management for marsh gentian at Skipwith Common and other appropriate sites.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>THH</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide appropriate habitat management for nightjar at Skipwith Common and other appropriate sites.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>THH</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide appropriate habitat management for woodlark at Skipwith Common and other appropriate sites.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>THH</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide appropriate habitat management for tree pipit at Skipwith Common and other appropriate sites.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>THH</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide appropriate habitat management for adder at Skipwith Common and other appropriate sites.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>THH</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide appropriate habitat management for the bumble bee (<em>Bombus jonellus</em>) at Skipwith Common and other appropriate sites.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>THH</td>
<td>See SAP10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide appropriate habitat management for priority moths at Skipwith Common and other appropriate sites.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>THH</td>
<td>See SAP 11 &amp; SAP 12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research & Monitoring**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Responsible Authority</th>
<th>Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify suitable areas for heathland restoration schemes.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>THH</td>
<td>2,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake research, where necessary, into the habitat management requirements of priority Selby species.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>THH</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish status of adder.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>THH, NEYEDC</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Advisory**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Responsible Authority</th>
<th>Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advise land managers on potential of agri-environment schemes to re-create, restore or manage heathlands.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>THH, RDS (Defra)</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Communications and Publicity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Responsible Authority</th>
<th>Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development of visitor infrastructure at Skipwith Common and the running of heathland events for the public.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>THH</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. **Fens Habitat Action Plan**

**Introduction**

Four similar habitats are categorised by their wetness and in order of wetness these are swamp, fen, bog and marsh.

Fen is a type of mire, which receives at least part of its water and nutrients from soil, rock or groundwater, as well as rainfall. Fens contrast with bogs, which mainly receive water and nutrients from rainfall alone. Fens are commonly divided into ‘rich-fen’, which is fed by calcium-rich water, and ‘poor-fen’ which is typically acid and has low fertility.

Fen vegetation succeeds from aquatic plants through reed beds to sedge beds. Over time the build up of plant material raises the level of the ground leading to drier conditions and Wet woodland.

Fen communities, along with other floodplain wetland habitats, were historically a major landscape component in the District.

Fens support a large range of invertebrates including nationally rare beetles and flies.

The RSPB, EN and EA are undertaking a Geographical Information System (GIS) feasibility study for flood plain habitat restoration. This may identify habitat opportunities for the BAP to adopt.

**National status**

The UK once had vast tracts of fens, long since converted to rich farmland. However, the UK is still thought to hold a large proportion of the European resource. Eighty fen sites are listed in the UK BAP action plan.

**Regional status**

Fens are concentrated in the Yorkshire Dales, the North York Moors and the Humberhead Levels (Selman 7).

**Local status**

Fen communities occur at Fairburn Ings SSSI and on Skipwith Common SSSI.

There are 25 ha of swamp (defined as swamp, fen, bog and marsh) on 24 sites in the BioDAT database. The fen resource in Selby is therefore very small (Warburton 9 and BioDAT 10).

**Places to visit:**

Fairburn Ings RSPB Reserve.
Park in Fairburn Village at grid reference SE 471279 and follow the track to the south, or at the car park at grid reference SE 452278.

**Swamp/fen habitat. Baseline distribution map, 2003.**
Legal status

Fairburn Ings and Skipwith Common are SSSIs.

Associated species priorities

Aquatic beetle - *Acilius canaliculatus*
Aquatic beetle - *Agabus labiatus*
Aquatic beetle - *Helophorus strigifrons*
Aquatic beetle - *Dryops auriculatus*

Status of Selby priorities

Water beetle assemblages associated with shallow fen pools are particularly important in Selby District. Scarce or threatened species found in this habitat include *Acilius canaliculatus* (Skipwith Common), *Agabus labiatus* (Skipwith Common), *Helophorus strigifrons* (North Duffield Carrs, Skipwith Common, Camblesforth) and *Dryops auriculatus* (Skipwith Common). Many other species occur. *Agabus labiatus* is seriously declining.

Threats

- Lack of knowledge regarding the resource.
- Nutrient enrichment.
- Most fens are small and isolated and their fragmentation has led to local extinctions.

Requirements

- Maintenance of high water table.
- Regular cropping of fen plants to slow the growth of peat and delay succession.
- Creation of new areas of open water within drying fen systems.

Current local action

- Fairburn Ings is managed for its fen and other communities by the RSPB.

Opportunities

- Habitat re-creation as part of Mineral Restoration Strategies.
- Carefully targeted creation, restoration and management options available under the proposed Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme (Defra) due to start in 2005.

UK BAP targets

- Initiate restoration of priority fen sites in critical need of rehabilitation by the year 2005.
- Ensure appropriate water quality and water quantity for the continued existence of all SSSI fens by 2005.

Links to Species Action Plans

*Water vole* - see SAP 2.
A diving beetle *Agabus uliginosus* - see SAP 8.

**Objective**

To increase understanding of the extent, quality, ownership and current management of Fen habitat in the District, and to conserve and enhance all fen communities. To investigate techniques for fen creation and increase the resource by one site.

**Five year targets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>№.</th>
<th>Biodiversity targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Create 5 ha of fen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Maintain current distribution of four priority species.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ACTIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>№.</th>
<th>Possible co-ordinators</th>
<th>Meets target №.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy and legislation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protection and management</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mineral Planning Officers to seek strong mitigation for much more strategic habitat creation, including fen, for the after use of mineral sites</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide appropriate habitat management for aquatic invertebrates at Skipwith Common.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>EN</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify suitable locations, establish land ownership and advise on appropriate habitat management for aquatic invertebrates at North Duffield Carrs, Camblesforth and other sites.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NYCC, RDS (Defra)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research and monitoring</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liaise with conservation organisations and landowners to establish information about the fen resource.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>FWAG, NYCC, NEYEDC</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Approved Selby Local Biodiversity Action Plan August 2004
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advisory</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advise land managers on potential of agri-environment schemes to re-create, restore or manage fens.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>FWAG, RDS (Defra) 1,2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communications and publicity</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
9. Reedbed Habitat Action Plan

Introduction

Reedbeds are wetlands usually dominated by common reed, with water levels at or above ground level for much of the year.

Many specialist plants and animals are found in reedbeds, including nationally rare invertebrates. The Vale of York is a key area for scarce aquatic invertebrates due to the long presence of wetlands. For example, two rare whirlligig beetles favour the fringes of reed beds (see Annex B).

Birds such as the bittern, bearded tit, and marsh harrier require reedbeds and are all potential Selby colonisers. Reed warbler and reed bunting breed at a number of sites.

The RSPB, EN and EA are undertaking a Geographical Information System (GIS) feasibility study for flood plain habitat restoration. This may identify habitat opportunities for the BAP to adopt.

National status

The UK has 5,000 ha of Reedbed, not including those found along drainage ditches. Few sites over 20 ha occur.

Regional status

The Regional audit gives 400 ha of Reedbed in the Yorkshire and The Humber region, including four over 20 ha in size (Selman⁷).

Local status

The largest resource is at the eastern end of Fairburn Ings, otherwise few small reedbeds occur, mainly on the fringes of lakes, ings (such as in the Derwent Valley), rivers and ditches. Common reed is an important species because it creates linear habitat (Warburton⁹ and BioDAT¹⁰).

This is a habitat that is likely to have been much more extensive in historic times.

Places to visit:

Fairburn Ings RSPB Reserve.
Park in Fairburn Village at grid reference SE 471279 and follow the track to the south, or at the car park at grid reference SE 452278.

Habitat distribution map

No map available.

Legal status

None.

Associated species priorities

Reed bunting

Status of Selby priorities

The reed bunting is a UK BAP priority species, which is a widespread resident breeder and passage migrant. Cooper²⁰ notes at least 25 singing males.
Reed bunting

Threats

- Hydrological changes.
- Lack of a register of sites.

Requirements

- Water level management to keep habitat in a favourable condition.
- Habitat creation as part of the restoration of mineral extraction sites.

Current local action

- Reedbeds at Fairburn Ings managed by RSPB.

Opportunities

- Creation of reedbeds following mineral extraction and as part of flood defence work. Both the Environment Agency (EA) and RSPB are investigating the potential for habitat creation in the Humberhead levels and in the Lower Aire valley.
- Creation, restoration and management options available under the proposed Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme (Defra) due to start in 2005.

What you can do to help:

Visit one of the major reedbeds in the area such as Blacktoft Sands, Hornsea Mere or Fairburn Ings RSPB reserves.

UK BAP targets

- Identify and rehabilitate all priority reedbeds by 2000 and maintain condition through management.
- Create 1,200 ha of new reedbed by 2010.

Links to Species Action Plans

- Otter - see SAP 1.
- Water vole - see SAP 2.
- Bats - see SAP 9.
- Rare moths, specifically twin-spotted wainscot moth - see SAP 12.

Objective

To establish the number of reedbeds in the District and to double the resource.

Five year targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>№</th>
<th>Biodiversity targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Create 20 ha of reedbed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Increase distribution the priority species.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## ACTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Nº</th>
<th>Possible co-ordinators</th>
<th>Meets target Nº</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy and legislation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider reedbed creation as part of the Environment Agency’s Catchment Flood Management Plan.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>EA</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYCC in conjunction with the mineral planning authority to seek strong mitigation for much more strategic habitat creation, for the after use of mineral sites. Biodiversity gains to be based on the historic losses of habitats from the District, utilising areas such as those identified by the feasibility study for floodplain habitat restoration, undertaken by RSPB, English Nature and the Environment Agency in 2003.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protection and management</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify suitable sites, establish land ownership and work with landowners to investigate projects to create reedbeds on lake margins.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NYCC, FWAG</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research and monitoring</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish a register of sites.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>NEYEDC</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advisory</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advise land managers on potential of agri-environment schemes to create and manage reedbeds.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>RDS (Defra)</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communications and publicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote Sustainable Drainage Schemes (SUDS), which include provision for reedbed creation, to developers.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>EA, RSPB, NYCC</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. **Lakes and ponds Habitat Action Plan**

**Introduction**

This action plan covers open standing water habitat and its associated wildlife interest. It includes lakes and ponds that are either natural or man-made.

This plan covers both seasonal and permanent water bodies and a range of sizes.

Human activities can result in the creation of wetlands, such as those created through mining subsidence, and borrow pits created by the flooding of sites where material has been excavated, usually for the construction of road or rail embankments.

Wildlife interest depends upon the nutrient status of the water. This has been categorised as nutrient poor (oligotrophic), having a narrow range of nutrients (mesotrophic) or nutrient rich (eutrophic). A lake might switch from one type to another, or have two types at the same time. Most lakes are eutrophic.

Both mesotrophic lakes and eutrophic standing waters are UK BAP priority habitats (for large water bodies).

Water beetle assemblages associated with shallow pools are locally rich due to the historic abundance of this habitat.

Marginal habitats and bare ground are important for wildlife and this plan should be considered in conjunction with both the Reedbeds and Fens plans.

**National status**

This habitat is widespread across the UK.

**Regional status**

The regional habitat audit deals only with the two UK BAP priority habitats. It lists nine mesotrophic lakes and four eutrophic ones.

**Local status**

The Selby phase 1 habitat survey did not measure open water. However, there are numerous examples, including flooded ings, ornamental lakes, gravel pits, borrow pits and ponds. Sites include Carlton Towers, Scarthingwell Park, Fairburn Ings, Beal Carrs, Skipwith Common, and Camblesforth Common.

**Places to visit:**

Barlow Common LNR
Car park at grid reference SE 638281.

**Lakes and Ponds habitat. Baseline distribution map, 2003.**
Legal status

Defra guidelines on good agricultural practice.

Associated species priorities

| Whooper swan |
| Shoveler |

Status of Selby priorities

Small numbers of whooper swans winter regularly on wetlands such as Beal Carrs and North Duffield Carrs. The shoveler is a scarce and localised duck. It is a breeding resident and winter visitor, with probably 10 to 20 pairs (Cooper $^{20}$).

Requirements

- Stocking of coarse fish into fisheries can affect the natural predator - prey balance in the lake.
- Overgrazing of margins can reduce water vole habitat.

Threats

- Water abstraction.
- Damage and disturbance caused by recreational use.
- Radical management.
- Loss of ponds through neglect.
- Pollution.
- Nutrient enrichment from agricultural fertiliser run off.
- Introduced species of plant and animal, including, Canadian waterweed, floating pennywort, New Zealand pygmyweed, water fern, Himalayan balsam, American mink and American signal crayfish.

Current local action

- Fairburn Ings is a managed SSSI and RSPB reserve.
- Creation, restoration, management and resource protection options available under the proposed Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme (Defra) due to start in 2005.
- Lakes and ponds are considered in water-level management plans, initiated by Defra and delivered by local drainage authorities.
- Funding for pond creation work is available from Yorkshire Water.

**Opportunities**

- Creation of wildlife ponds in gardens and on farms.
- Undertake survey to identify ponds and develop a register.
- Undertake survey of established non-native species and develop a register.
- Management of wetland created by subsidence.
- Favourable wildlife management of water bodies by angling clubs.
- Pond creation on business premises.
- Creation of ponds as mitigation within development schemes and as part of Sustainable Drainage Schemes.
- Better conservation of the resource e.g. borrow pits.

**What you can do to help:**

Keep dogs under control.

Dispose of discarded fishing tackle safely.

**UK BAP targets**

Same for both Mesotrophic lakes and Eutrophic standing waters:

Maintain the condition of all important sites in favourable condition. By 2005 initiate action to restore to favourable condition other important sites damaged by human activity. Ensure that no further deterioration occurs to remaining sites.

**Links to Species Action Plans**

**Arable farmland** - see SAP 4.
**Otter** - see SAP 1.
**Water vole** - see SAP 2.
**Great crested newt** - see SAP 3.
**Pillwort** - see SAP 6.
**A diving beetle Agabus uliginosus** - see SAP 8.
**Bats** - see SAP 9.

**Objective**

Carefully target the creation of hundreds of water bodies for wildlife and bring all existing water bodies into favourable conservation management.

**Five year targets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>№</th>
<th>Biodiversity targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Create ten new water bodies, targeted for particular biodiversity gain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Enhance ten water bodies, including borrow pits, for conservation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Maintain current wintering distribution of Whooper swan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Maintain current breeding and wintering distributions of shoveler.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Approved Selby Local Biodiversity Action Plan August 2004
## ACTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Possible co-ordinators</th>
<th>Meets target No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy and legislation</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protection and management</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with developers to create wildlife wetlands as part of new developments, where appropriate, for example as part of Sustainable Drainage Schemes.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liaise with businesses to create ponds on site for wildlife, which will also improve the quality of life of employees</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>GS, NYCC</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage landowners to create wildlife ponds within agri-environment agreements.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>FWAG, DEFRA</td>
<td>1,3,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage creation of ponds in gardens or public open space.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>GS, NYCC</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish ownership of borrow pits and seek agreements on favourable management.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create temporary pools within Bishop Wood. See SAP 8.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>FE</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support efforts to manage Beal Carrs in a favourable condition for wildlife.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td>2,3,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research and monitoring</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advisory</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide advice to site owners on agri-environment schemes, grants, pond management and pond ecology.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>FWAG</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communications and publicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage angling clubs to further recognise the desirability of wildlife conservation.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td>3,4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11. Canal Habitat Action Plan

Introduction

This section of the action plan covers canals and navigable rivers. Canals are man-made waterways originally constructed for the transport of goods and people. A small amount of freight is still carried on some canals, but their primary use is recreational, attracting many users including boaters, anglers, walkers and cyclists. Navigable rivers are rivers that are accessible to boat traffic.

Canal and river corridors provide a mosaic of habitats.

Canal corridors can support a large number of key species and groups, including representatives from the following:

- aquatic plants
- ferns
- native trees
- mammals – otter, water vole, bats
- birds
- amphibians
- reptiles
- fish
- butterflies & moths
- dragonflies & damselflies
- molluscs – depressed river mussel
- crustaceae - white-clawed crayfish
- freshwater sponges

Canals can be very important for wildlife, providing a combination of terrestrial and freshwater habitats and often forming a ‘green’ corridor into urban areas.

The movement of migratory fish is important and the weir at Chappel

Haddlesey on the River Aire has been identified as a barrier. This issue is covered in the Rivers, streams and ditches HAP.

National status

The canal network, which includes navigable rivers, amounts to a total length of 3,200 km, the majority of this is owned and managed by British Waterways (BW).

Regional status

The region has a good canal network. There is 450km of canals and navigable rivers in the region.

Local status

Within the District of Selby there are four main canals and rivers. These are:

- the Selby Canal which runs for 8.5 km from West Haddlesey on the River Aire and joins the River Ouse at Selby Lock.
- the navigable River Ouse which runs through the District for approximately 39 km.
- the Aire and Calder Navigation which runs through the south of Selby District for just over 6 km.
- the River Aire Navigation which runs for 9.5 km.

Places to visit:

Selby canal
Grid reference SE 617314.

Legal status

British Waterways (BW) is the navigation authority for the canals and navigable rivers in the Selby District and has statutory obligations to maintain the canal to defined navigable standards. The British Waterways Act 1995 also obliges BW to ‘further the conservation of flora, fauna…of special interest’ in carrying out these duties and also to take into account the effect that any proposals relating to its functions have on the environment.

Associated species priorities

None.

Threats

Threats to the various habitats and species within the canal corridors include:

- Pollution from surface water run-off, storm overflows, agri-chemicals and fertilisers.
- Lack of, or inappropriate, habitat management.
- Hard engineering to maintain the canal and associated structures.
- Unsympathetic dredging and engineering works.
- The introduction and spread of invasive species such as American signal crayfish, floating pennywort, Japanese knotweed.
- Recreational pressures in sensitive areas.

Requirements

- To identify key species and habitats along the canals and navigable rivers and to take these into consideration when planning any capital works or maintenance programmes.

Current local action

All works carried out by BW are subject to an environmental appraisal. This ensures that protected sites and species are identified and appropriate consultation and mitigation is undertaken. The work can be carried out taking opportunities to improve the biodiversity of the waterway whilst minimising environmental damage.

Opportunities

- For partners to work together to remove barriers to fish migration.
- Undertake surveys to identify established non-native species and develop a register.

What you can do to help:

Keep dogs under control.
Dispose of discarded fishing tackle safely.

**Water vole** - see SAP 2.

**Bats** - see SAP 9.

**Objective**

To improve the biodiversity of the canal and navigable river corridors.

**Links to Species Action Plans**

**Otter** - see SAP 1.

**Ten-year targets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>№</th>
<th>Biodiversity target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Enhance four lengths of navigation by producing a BAP for each.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ACTIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>№</th>
<th>Possible co-ordinator</th>
<th>Meets target №</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BW</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy and legislation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>BW</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BW</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare a BAP for each of the BW navigations.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>BW</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake an environmental appraisal prior to any works and consult with the relevant authorities.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>BW</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that maintenance works on the waterways do not compromise the conservation status of key habitats and species.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>BW</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and implement opportunities to enhance populations of key species and key habitats.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>BW, EA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify invasive non-native species in the waterway corridor, draw up plans for eradication where possible and implement plans.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>BW, EA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research and monitoring</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>BW, EA, EN</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify the presence and distribution of UK and local priority species within the canal and navigable river corridors and report to the appropriate Lead Partner organisation.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>BW, EA, EN</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Approved Selby Local Biodiversity Action Plan August 2004
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify and map key habitats.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>BW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake surveys for invasive species and monitor eradication programmes.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>BW</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Following works on the waterways monitor to ensure benefits to species and habitats.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>BW</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Advisory**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advise riparian landowners on the value of buffer zones which protect the waterway from diffuse pollution and provide a valuable habitat.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>BW</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advise boaters and other users on good practice to reduce pollution, littering etc.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>BW</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Communication and publicity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop links and work with local groups to promote good management practices, e.g. traditional hedgerow management etc.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>BW</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12. Rivers, streams and ditches
Habitat Action Plan

Introduction

In their natural unmodified condition, rivers are dynamic systems that are continually creating, maintaining and eroding a complex of habitats. Such features include ox-bow lakes, banks, shores, riffles, exposed shingle bars, shoreline debris and mud banks.

This plan includes both the actual watercourse and also the riparian corridor, including banks and marginal habitat.

Such are the demands made upon rivers that they are now highly modified and managed for a range of interests, many of which are incompatible with their natural biodiversity. Indeed, certain of these interests conflict with each other.

These interests include flood alleviation, drainage, sewage disposal, water extraction, fisheries, recreation and transport.

Selby’s rivers are migration routes for a number of fish species. Fishes must pass through the District in order to reach large areas of Yorkshire. The weir at Chapel Haddlesay has been identified as a major barrier for fish migration on the River Aire. This was built to back up water for the Selby canal. The estimated cost for its alteration is £80,000.

Ditches are straightened streams or artificially created and maintained drainage channels, usually associated with local agricultural land drainage. They may be permanently wet. There is a large network of ditches in Selby. The maintenance of ditches is a statutory duty, administered by the Internal Drainage Boards (IDB).

National status

Whilst rivers in general are important habitats for a range of wildlife, only substantially unmodified examples or particular types of river are regarded as worthy of special status, such as SSSI designation.

Chalk rivers is the only type specifically recognised as a UK BAP priority, but none occur in Selby District.

Regional status

The Yorkshire Region has one of the widest range of river types in Britain. The River Derwent, is of international importance and designated as a SPA and candidate SAC. Its associated wetlands are designated for bird interest.

Local status

Being a low-lying area, all the rivers in Selby District are lowland rivers and all but the Derwent are tidal. The Derwent was tidal until the mid-1970s when the Barnby Barrage was built. The River Ouse is tidal as far as Naburn weir.

Other main rivers include sections of the Ouse, Aire and Wharfe and a number of smaller streams.

Places to visit:

Public Rights of Way along R Wharfe from Tadcaster, R Ouse from Cawood and Selby town centres and R Aire from Beal village.

Approved Selby Local Biodiversity Action Plan August 2004
Legal status

- Both the Environment Agency (EA) and the Internal Drainage Boards have relevant statutory duties, such as promoting and furthering conservation while undertaking flood defence, water management and pollution prevention duties.
- An 8m strip on either side of a watercourse has to be considered for flood defence.

Associated species priorities

| Allis shad – a fish |
| River lamprey – a fish |
| Sea lamprey – a fish |
| Atlantic salmon – a fish |
| Grayling – a fish |
| Depressed river mussel – a mollusc |

Status of Selby priorities

A specimen of allis shad (UK BAP) was recently caught in the River Wharfe, so must have migrated via the River Ouse.

The River Wharfe at Tadcaster is a regionally important site for spawning sea lamprey and a locally important site for river lamprey. The river lamprey also breeds in the River Derwent. Both species migrate along the River Ouse.

Atlantic salmon migrate through the River Ouse to spawning grounds in the River Ure. It is rare in the River Derwent.

Atlantic salmon

The grayling breeds in the River Wharfe upstream of the weir at Tadcaster.

The depressed river mussel (UK BAP) has been recorded by the EA in the section of the River Derwent from Low Hutton to Barmby Barrage.

Threats

- Pressure to implement short-term flood alleviation measures such as wholesale dredging and flood defences.
- Increased urban development resulting in increased urban run off.
- Increasing demand for water for domestic, industrial & agricultural use.
- Chemical pollution.
- Invasive non-native species.
- Pressure to increase recreational access and use.

Requirements

- Buffer zones between arable land and watercourses, especially for higher risk soils.
- Reduction of grazing adjacent to riverbanks to prevent erosion.
- Fencing to exclude stock from key banks.
- Identification of areas suitable for wetland restoration and creation, and subsequent delivery.
- Production and implementation of Catchment Flood Management Plans (EA statutory duty).
- Identification of areas suitable for flood water storage.
- Undertake sympathetic management of riparian trees and woodlands.
- Increase in the scale and scope of nature conservation after use for aggregate sites and maximising of biodiversity gain.
- Re-wetting of agricultural land using existing grants.
- Re-wetting of washlands on former quarry sites.
- Greater use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) in new developments.
- Compliance with and enforcement of Farm Waste Regulations 2004.
- Compliance with and enforcement of Nitrate Vulnerable Zones.
- Detection and remedy of point sources of pollution (EA statutory duty).
- Evaluation of river abstractions and ground water abstractions (EA statutory duty).
- Review and continue invertebrate monitoring.
- Surveying and research of riparian woodlands for invertebrates and birds.
- Identification and protection of all sand martin colonies.
- Investigate and devise control programmes for invasive species.
- Assessment of levels of fish re-stocking and impacts upon wildlife.
- Assessment of abundance of key insect and plant species associated with fish.
- Survey of all fish species and their access to required sub-habitats.
- Research and reduce impacts of pollution, flow rates, physical barriers, re-stocking, etc on priority fish species.
- Habitat improvements in areas of featureless flows.
- Research, surveys and management to benefit otter, water vole, water shrew and bats.
- Identification and conflict resolution of adverse recreational impacts.
- Promotion of EA leaflet ‘Best Farming Practice’.
- Identification of honeypot sites and collation of all projects planned in the river corridor.
- Dissemination of information and partner working.
- Accommodation of erosion in dynamic river systems.

- An integrated approach to flood defence provision taking environmental considerations and opportunities for enhancement into consideration.
- Surveys for species of conservation concern, including white-clawed crayfish (no Selby records).
- Improvements in fish passage facilities at key points.
- Survey for UK BAP plant greater water parsnip along former course of River Aire.
- Fence of key sections of riverbank and protect from adverse effects of farm animals.

**Current local action**

- Development of Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies
(CAMS) to ensure sustainable abstraction of water.
- EA Fisheries Dept. and British Waterways have identified barriers to fish migration.
- Aire and Calder Rivers Group (voluntary) set up to promote fish migration.
- Water quality improvement targets set by EA.

**Opportunities**

- Opportunities for habitat restoration may arise through Flood Defence Management Plans.
- Partnership working, to re-open fish migration passed the Chapel Haddlesay weir.
- Flood defence works to counter the effects of mining subsidence and increased flood risk.
- British Waterways enforce navigation speed limits, to prevent bank erosion and protect nesting birds.
- University of York research into tansy beetle ecology.
- Riverbank management through proposed Environmental Stewardship Scheme.

**What you can do to help:**

Avoid pouring car engine oil down the drain.
Dispose of discarded fishing tackle safely.

**UK BAP targets**
None applicable.

**Links to Species Action Plans**

- **Arable farmland** – see SAP 4.
- **Otter** - see SAP 1.
- **Water vole** - see SAP 2.
- **Tansy beetle** - see SAP 4.

**Objective**

*To ensure an integrated and sustainable approach to river management with the key aims being environmental improvements and increased biodiversity.*

**Five year targets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>№.</th>
<th><strong>Biodiversity targets</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Increase species diversity in all four major rivers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Enhance river ecology by removing one barrier to fish migration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Enhance the wildlife value of 25km of the ditch network.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Maintain current distribution of five priority species.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## ACTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Nº.</th>
<th>Possible Co-ordinator</th>
<th>Meets target Nº.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy and legislation</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement CAMS to ensure sustainable water abstraction.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>EA</td>
<td>1,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protection and management</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake work to meet EA water quality targets for appropriate rivers.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>EA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify barriers to fish migration.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>EA, BW</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake feasibility study and then bypass the Chapel Haddlesey weir to re-open fish migration.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>EA, Aire and Calder Rivers Group</td>
<td>2,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through Development Control planning functions, mitigate for ditch enhancement, as part of housing developments applications. See SAP 2.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>SDC</td>
<td>3,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage ditches to a high nature conservation standard. See SAP 1 and SAP 2.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>IDB</td>
<td>3,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish ownership of riverbank at Barlow Grange, where sand leek occurs and liaise with landowner to offer conservation advice.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research and monitoring</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor water quality.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>EA</td>
<td>1,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake surveys to record species of conservation concern.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>NEYEDC</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor the status of priority species through current monitoring initiatives.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>EA</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor species diversity.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>EA</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advisory</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Communications and publicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide a point of contact for riparian owners and river users.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13. **Towns and Villages Habitat Action Plan**

**Introduction**

Although Selby District is largely rural, it contains a substantial built up area of towns and villages. The wildlife that survives in these areas and the potential for conservation are considerable.

Urban greenspace and accessible wildlife have an important role in increasing the quality of life of residents, and this is the area where local people can directly help wildlife.

Wildlife in towns and villages is not isolated and many species move through habitat corridors and into the wider countryside. Urban features such as river and rail corridors, factory grounds, ‘wasteground’, churchyards and residential gardens provide special opportunities for some species.

In many parishes the only flower and invertebrate-rich grassland is within churchyards. Walls and gravestones can support rich lichen and fern floras. The ferns wall rue and black spleenwort occur on two or three churches. Typical churchyard maintenance does not favour wildlife, so there are opportunities to agree some wildlife friendly management, including:

- Give whole grassed area a late summer hay cut and remove cuttings.
- Avoid spraying flower-rich grass swards with herbicide.
- Hand pull undesirable weeds.
- Avoid excessive tree planting, to favour grassland.
- Encourage composting.
- Avoid spraying walls and gravestones with pesticides.
- Leave a pile of cut branches for wildlife shelter.
- A small patch of stinging nettle, and thistles provides habitat for insects.
- Avoid disturbing butterflies hibernating inside churches.
- Keep entranceway and paths tidy.

Although often referred to as ‘green deserts’, playing fields and other amenity grassland provides foraging areas for some birds of conservation concern, including song thrush, blackbird, fieldfare, redwing, starling and golden plover.

A number of locally important bird species are found in towns and villages, including song thrush, bullfinch and more rarely tree sparrow and spotted flycatcher. Bumble bees, which have been identified as a priority for Selby, are often attracted to gardens, and garden ponds are known to support newts, frogs and toads.

The swift is a common and widely distributed bird that has decreased in numbers, possibly due to the reduction in aerial insects and loss of nesting opportunities. They nest in high buildings where they can gain access to roof spaces or similar. However, swifts rarely nest in post-1944 buildings, nor in re-furbished older buildings, as they cannot gain access. The species would benefit from the provision of cavities in new buildings. This can be achieved with minimum cost through the installation of ready-made concrete Swift Bricks.

Recent work by Sheffield University has shown that gardens are very good for invertebrates, including some scarce species. Micro-habitats such as bare ground and decaying timber are desirable. Invertebrates are a key link in the food chain.
This action plan covers:

Private gardens, school and hospital grounds
Village Greens
Churchyards
Parks, open spaces
Allotments
‘Brownfield’ sites

These can be in private, municipal or institutional ownership.

**National Status**

There are around 50 million gardens in the UK.

**Regional Status**

Widespread.

**Local Status**

No comprehensive information is held on this habitat, but it is locally important, due to the cumulative total of habitat.

**Legal status**

- Allotment Act 1952.
- National Planning Policy Guidance.
- The Local Authority can issue Tree Preservation Orders to protect amenity trees.
- Restrictions under the CROW Act on the spreading of Japanese knotweed and giant hogweed.

**Associated species priorities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sand leek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swift</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Status of Selby priorities**

The sand leek is a rare species, which in Selby occurs on the riverbank near Barlow Grange and in Cawood churchyard.

The swift is declining locally. Selby town has about 18 pairs (Cooper).^20^)

**Threats**

- Change of land use.
- Intensive or inappropriate management, which suppresses wildlife.
- Use of peat, which is contrary to good environmental practice.
- Dominant stands of non-native, invasive plants, which reduce biodiversity.
- Use of environmentally damaging products such as pesticides.

**Current local action**

- Selby Countryside Management Project (SCMP) and Groundwork Selby (GS) offer advice and assistance with environmental schemes within the District.
- Management plan for sand leek in operation.
- National recording schemes such as Garden Bird Watch, butterfly reporting and phenology (timing of natural events).
- Local Agenda 21 initiatives, such as green waste collection and composting.
- Yorkshire Wildlife trust Living Churchyards Project.

**Opportunities**

- Initiatives with those responsible for the upkeep of areas, community groups and churches to create wildlife areas.
- Initiatives with garden centres.
Survey of vacant industrial land ('brownfield' sites).

**What you can do to help:**

Buy only, peat free compost.
Use alternatives to slug pellets.
Tie a bell to your pet cat.
Put up an open-fronted nest box.
Feed the birds.
Grow flowers favoured by bumble bees.
Grow a dense shrubbery for nesting birds.
Plant fruit trees, currant bushes and berry-bearing shrubs.
Leave fallen timber to decay.
Create a wildlife pond, avoiding the use of non-native aquatic plants.

**Links to Species Action Plans**

Water vole - see SAP 2.
Great crested newt - see SAP 3.
Dingy skipper - see SAP 5.
Bats - see SAP 9.
Bumble bees - see SAP 10.
Clearwing moths (specifically currant clearwing) - see SAP 11.

**Objective**

To maximise the wildlife value of Selby District’s greenspace, through education and encouraging management practices sympathetic to wildlife.

**Five year targets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>№.</th>
<th>Biodiversity targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Create five community wildlife areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Maintain or increase the distribution of the two priority species.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ACTIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>№.</th>
<th>Possible co-ordinators</th>
<th>Meets target №.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy and Legislation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek biodiversity gains when determining planning applications.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>SDC (Planning)</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection and Management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create wildlife areas.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>GS</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide practical help on creating and managing small wildlife areas.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SCMP and GS</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage with local community and follow management plan for sand leek in Cawood churchyard.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>GS</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control invasive, non-native plants and animals where applicable to conservation projects.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>EA, GS, NYCC</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage grounds maintenance committees of</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Approved Selby Local Biodiversity Action Plan August 2004
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Responsible Authority</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Continue to run and expand a green waste collection and composting scheme.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>SDC</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Recommend the installation of Swift Bricks to new and re-furbished buildings.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>SDC</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Work with church communities to manage churchyards for wildlife.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>YWT</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Research and Monitoring</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Promote participation in national surveys e.g., garden butterflies count, garden bird survey.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>SCMP</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Advisory</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Provide advisory leaflets on best practice, sources of environmentally friendly products etc.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>SCMP and GS</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Investigate local sources of environmentally friendly gardening products.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>GS</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Offer advice to institutions on landscaping and management for wildlife.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>NYCC</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Communications and Publicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Produce Towns and Villages HAP display material.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>SCMP</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Produce advisory leaflets.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>SCMP and GS</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Run media campaigns to raise awareness and promote involvement.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>SCMP and GS</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Organise a training event for Parochial Church Councils and those responsible for churchyard maintenance, on wildlife management of churchyards.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>FWAG</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>