

Complete action plan

HAP Lowland Farmland

Vision statement

This grouped habitat action plan includes: traditional field boundaries, arable field margins, and traditional orchards.

(further information is provided in the summary statement).

Pembrokeshire Biodiversity Partnership' s vision is to see the full range of traditional linear features (field boundaries; arable field margins) capable of supporting rich and diverse wildlife maintained, and existing old orchards conserved and managed sympathetically for wildlife and new ones created to provide the orchards of the future.

Summary statement

This grouped habitat action plan includes: traditional field boundaries, arable field margins, and traditional orchards.

Field boundaries include hedgerows, earth banks and stone-faced earth banks (cloddiau) (built in the style of Pembrokeshire A banks) with or without hedges. They often support a rich and varied flora and fauna. Some of these date back to medieval times and have significant archaeological and cultural importance.

Those found in sheltered inland areas support woodland edge plants such as red campion, greater stitchwort, primrose, bluebell and mature trees such as oak, ash and hazel. In north Pembrokeshire, old earth-stone banks support species such as harebells, heather, bilberry and western gorse. Coastal facing earth-stone banks support sea-cliff grassland with sea campion, spring squill, thrift and kidney vetch. In more exposed wind swept areas you often see ancient wind-sculptured hawthorns and gorse, which are evocative of the landscape and an inspiration for artists.

Arable field margins consist of fallow ground, managed as conservation headlands, or left as unploughed grassy margins. These are important for a range of arable weeds such as cornflower, annual knawel and mosses including sausage beard moss and spreading-leaved beardless moss.

Arable fields now contain many of Britain's most endangered plants. Pembrokeshire has historically had a large proportion of the arable land in Wales.

Many arable plants show a strong fidelity to individual sites or regions and to particular soils or management regimes and can build up large and very persistent seed banks. Most species have a remarkable ability to re-colonise ' lost' sites from dormant buried seed when managed in a

sympathetic way.

Conservation efforts should strive to maintain this regional diversity by targeting appropriate management in areas where a rich seed bank is likely to be present. The use of cultivated stock of arable plants should be avoided.

Both traditional field boundaries and arable field margins provide vital links between habitats, and are also key to maintaining healthy populations for small mammals, birds, reptiles, and insects such as the brown hairstreak butterfly. Large mature hedgerows are particularly important as foraging habitat and flight lines for bats. They are essential to maintaining healthy, vibrant biodiversity in Pembrokeshire.

Traditional orchards are defined for priority habitat purposes as orchards managed in a low intensity way, in contrast with orchards managed intensively for fruit production by the input of chemicals such as pesticides and inorganic fertilisers, frequent mowing of the orchard floor rather than grazing or cutting for hay, and planting of short-lived, high-density, dwarf or bush fruit trees. For more information can be found in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan; Priority Habitat Descriptions. BRIG (ed. Ant Maddock) 2008. http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/Docs/UKBAP_BAPHabitats-56-TraditionalOrchards.doc

These old orchards support a mosaic of habitats that provide food and shelter for hundreds of species of wildlife. The presence of dead and decaying wood is particularly important for saproxylic (dead wood dependent) invertebrates, several hundred of which occur in orchard habitats. Many bird species use orchards, some feed on fruit and others on invertebrates which are attracted there by pollen, nectar and decaying wood.

Numerous species of lichen and fungi are associated with orchards. Many fungi and lichens are intolerant of the chemicals used in modern agriculture and therefore thrive in traditionally managed orchards.

Lichens occur on the trunks and branches of the orchard trees whilst fungi are associated with decaying wood or the grassland beneath the trees. These old grasslands can be herb rich and may support a variety of grassland fungi particularly when they have been traditionally managed by grazing with animals such as sheep. Old undisturbed grassland will add biodiversity interest to the orchard.

Some orchards are sheltered by old stone boundaries which can also be important for lichens, invertebrates and small mammals.

A good example of an orchard in Pembrokeshire is at St Brides, Colby woodland garden also has a very small orchard as do other old country house estates or large old farms.

Plan targets

Code	Target
Farm01ME	<p>Maintain extent of habitats included in this plan. We don't know the extent of these habitats but we aim to have no net loss indefinitely. Where figures are given these are the minimum known quantity.</p> <p>Goal: For Arable Field Margins: Maintaining extent 34 Hectares by 01/02/3011 Total achieved so far: 0 Hectares</p> <p>Goal: For Traditional Orchards: Maintaining extent 1 Site(s) by 01/02/3011 Total achieved so far: 0 Site(s)</p>

Code	Target
Farm04EX	<p>Expand or extend the area / length of habitats included in this plan. We have an aspiration to create these habitat where appropriate however they will take many years to establish the same level of biodiversity interest as a traditional field boundary or orchard.</p> <p>Goal: For Arable Field Margins: Expansion 1 Site(s) by 01/12/2011 Total achieved so far: 0 Site(s)</p>

Plan actions

Code	Action
Farm01Me01	<p>Maintain extent of field boundaries through appropriate management (e.g. cutting regimes) to ensure they are of a high quality, measured by the biodiversity that they are capable of supporting.</p> <p>Status: Unknown</p> <p>Dates: 01/01/2001 - Ongoing</p> <p>Organisation(s)</p> <p>Lead Pembrokeshire Biodiversity Partnership role:</p> <p>Location(s)</p> <p>Pembrokeshire (County)</p>

Code	Action
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Farm01Me02 Provide guidance to local authority contractors on best practice for hedgebank management. Develop and promote with partners a Code of Best Practice on management of traditional field boundaries in Pembrokeshire, incorporating current locally relevant advice leaflets. Encourage the use of the Code of Best Practice by all partners.

Status: Not started

Dates: 01/10/2011 - Ongoing

Organisation(s)

Lead Pembrokeshire County Council
role:

Location(s)

Pembrokeshire (County)

Code Action

Farm01ME02a Support training courses on maintenance and construction of traditional field boundaries. Promote professional craftsmen's skills to landowners/managers seeking to maintain, restore or recreate traditional field boundaries in Pembrokeshire. Promote courses available aimed at training professionals in traditional countryside management techniques through PBP's newsletter.

Status: Not started

Dates: 01/01/2007 - Ongoing

Organisation(s)

Lead Pembrokeshire Biodiversity Partnership
role:

Location(s)

Pembrokeshire (County)

Code Action

Farm01Me03 Maintain extent of arable field margins through appropriate management. Ensure field margins are either self seeded or sown with typical arable margin plants. Encourage farmers to consider agri-environmental schemes, to highlight to them where the significant parts of the farm are and what options would best suit the key species.

Status: Unknown

Dates: 01/10/2011 - Ongoing

Organisation(s)

Lead Pembrokeshire Biodiversity Partnership
role:

Location(s)

Pembrokeshire (County)

Code

Action

Farm01Me04 Maintain extent orchards through appropriate management and encouraging the cultivation of local and Welsh fruit varieties.

Status: Unknown

Dates: 01/10/2011 - Ongoing

Organisation(s)

Lead Pembrokeshire Biodiversity Partnership
role:

Location(s)

Pembrokeshire (County)

Code

Action

Farm02Ac01 Avoid biodiversity loss by controlling invasive species.

Status: Not started

Dates: 01/10/2011 - Ongoing

Organisation(s)

Lead Pembrokeshire Biodiversity Partnership
role:

Location(s)

Pembrokeshire (County)

Code

Action

Farm02AC02 Ensure positive management for biodiversity within farmland habitats through the provision of management agreement payments.

Status: Not started (for this period)

Dates: 02/02/2011 - Ongoing

Organisation(s)

Lead Pembrokeshire Biodiversity Partnership
role:

Location(s)

Pembrokeshire (County)

Code

Action

Farm04EX01 Identify suitable sites where the habitats listed in this plan can be

restored / re-created.

Status: Not started (for this period)

Dates: 01/01/2011 - Ongoing

Organisation(s)

Lead Pembrokehire Biodiversity Partnership
role:

Location(s)

Pembrokehire (County)

Code Action

Farm04EX02 Create new areas of the habitats listed in this plan on appropriate sites.

Status: Underway (on schedule)

Dates: 01/01/2011 - Ongoing

Organisation(s)

Lead Pembrokehire Biodiversity Partnership
role:

Support National Trust
role:

Location(s)

Pembrokehire (County)

Trefrane Farm, Southwood Estate (Local location - Cymru D / S
Wales - Pembrokehire Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP))

Goal: For Arable Field Margins in Trefrane Farm, Southwood
Estate: Expansion 1 Site(s) by 01/03/2010

Total achieved so far: 1 achieved, 0 underway, assessed
16/12/2010

**Most recent progress reports by each reporting
organisation:**

Reporting organisation: Pembrokehire Biodiversity
Partnership

Contact name: Bethan Cox (Biodiversity Implementation
Officer)

Report period: 01/01/2001 - 04/03/2010

Reporting organisation: National Trust

Contact name: Andrew Tuddenham

Report period: 25/02/2010 - 07/12/2010

Progress:

Fencing, hedge planting, cultivation and sowing at different

rates undertaken. Bird and plant surveys completed.

Code **Action**

Farm05AW01 Encourage schemes that promote the purchase of local produce and schemes that market conservation grade products from land managed for biodiversity.

Status: Not started (for this period)

Dates: 02/02/2011 - Ongoing

Organisation(s)

Lead Pembrokehire Biodiversity Partnership
role:

Location(s)

Pembrokehire (County)

Code **Action**

Farm06Mis01 Identify the extent and location of orchards in Pembrokehire. Work with Pembrokehire's woodland forum and community councils to gather information.

Status: Not started (for this period)

Dates: 02/02/2011 - Ongoing

Organisation(s)

Lead Pembrokehire Biodiversity Partnership
role:

Location(s)

Pembrokehire (County)

Code **Action**

Farm06Mis02 Complete site surveys using the standard methodology as produced by People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES). Establish baseline of traditional orchard species: e.g. lichens, fungi and birds.

Status: Unknown

Dates: 01/10/2011 - Ongoing

Organisation(s)

Lead Pembrokehire Biodiversity Partnership
role:

Location(s)

Pembrokehire (County)

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