

# Isle of Wight Biodiversity Action Plan

## Heathland and Acid Grassland Habitat Action Plan

### 1 Introduction

This Habitat Action Plan has been prepared through consultation with a range of organisations and specialists within the Isle of Wight BAP partnership. It covers a ten-year period from 2002 - 2012 with a review in 2007.

Heathland and Acid grassland have both been identified as priority habitats in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. Because these two habitats tend to occur in often-close association and are subject to similar threats and conservation requirements, they have been combined within this single Habitat Action Plan for the Isle of Wight. The Action Plan seeks to ensure that national objectives for these two habitats are translated into effective action on the Island, taking into account local issues. The identification of Heathland and Acid Grasslands as national and local priority habitat is based on the following factors:

1. Semi-natural lowland grassland, including acid grassland has declined by 97% in England and Wales over the last 50 years. It is estimated that there is some 30,000 ha of lowland acid grassland in Britain.
2. In England, only one sixth of the Heathland present in 1800 now remains. The UK has some 58,000 ha of lowland Heathland, of which the largest proportion (58%) is found in England. The UK has an important proportion (about 20%) of the international total of this habitat.
3. On the Isle of Wight, the decline in Heathland and Acid Grassland is estimated to be in excess of 79% since 1850.
4. There is an estimated 66 ha (63 ha dry heath +3 ha wet heath) of Heathland and 92 ha of acid grassland remaining on the Isle of Wight. However, the extent of acid grassland probably needs to be re-assessed following further field survey.
5. The enormous loss of this habitat on the Isle of Wight has been accompanied by severe fragmentation, with many of the remaining areas of heathland and acid grassland being small and isolated.
6. Many of the remaining areas of Heathland and Acid Grassland on the Isle of Wight are not being managed optimally for nature conservation. A review of the condition of SSSI and SINCS containing this habitat in 2001 suggested that 40% are in favourable condition or believed to be in favourable condition, 40% are in unfavourable condition or believed to be in unfavourable condition, and the remaining 20% of sites are of unknown condition.
7. Heathland and Acid Grasslands on the Isle of Wight provide habitat for many species of national or local importance including 5 national priority BAP species, together with 9 national and 46 species of local conservation concern.

### 2 Current Status

#### 2.1 Description of Habitat

The national heathland Habitat Action Plan defines this habitat as being characterised by the presence of plants such as heather, dwarf gorse and cross-leaved heath and is generally

found below 300 metres in altitude. Acid grassland occurs in a wide variety of different types, both in the UK and on the Isle of Wight.

The heathland on the Island has not been comprehensively surveyed to assess the range of National Vegetation Classification (NVC) communities that are present. However, most of the examples of dry heathland conform to the *Ulex minor* – *Agrostis curtisii* heath (H3) community, which is the typical dry heathland community of the Hampshire Basin and the New Forest. The fragments of heathland that occur on the clay soils of Parkhurst Forest may be classified as *Ulex minor* – *Calluna vulgaris* (H2) heathland, whilst the wet heath that occurs in a few small and isolated patches may be assigned to the *Erica tetralix* – *Sphagnum compactum* community (M16).

The flora of dry heathland is typically species-poor but associated species commonly include patches of common gorse or bracken, whilst growing with the heathers and heathland grasses may be species such as the heath milkwort, heath pearlwort and tormentil together with mosses such as *Polytrichum juniperinum* and *Campylopus introflexus*. Wet heath, by contrast, can be much more diverse, especially in grazed examples. In addition to the cross-leaved heath and patches of sphagnum moss that are typical of the community, associated species include deer grass and purple moor-grass. A low growing spiny shrub known as petty whin also grows in this heathland type, but it has not been seen in recent years.

An unusual version of species-rich heathland also develops on acid clay soils in Parkhurst Forest and at Bouldnor, where heathers and dwarf gorse grow in a complex mosaic with species-rich neutral grassland. This form of heathland does not conform well to the NVC, but appears to be a southern version of heathland types found in Cornwall.

In other places, areas of heathland occur in a remarkable mosaic with chalk grassland where superficial deposits of clay or gravel cap the downs. In these relatively small areas, heathers and other acid loving plants grow with typical chalk grassland or calcicole species. This heathland type, known as chalk heath, is not described by the NVC but is well described in 'Isle of Wight Chalk Heaths' (Chatters, 1990)

Acid grassland types on the Island have also been poorly surveyed and little is known of the range of NVC communities present. Examples of both *Festuca ovina* - *Agrostis capillaris* – *Rumex acetosella* (U1) and *Festuca ovina* - *Agrostis capillaris* – *Galium saxatile* (U4) are known. Within these broad community types, there are also likely to be a number of sub-communities although these have yet to be identified. Elsewhere on the Island there are also interesting examples of bristle bent grassland, which conform to the *Agrostis curtisii* grassland community (U3). Examples of this can be found in many places on the Island such as Sandown Golf Course, Head Down near Whitwell and on Ventnor Downs.

Acid grassland also occurs in association with dense stands of bracken where it can support a number of woodland plants, most notably stands of bluebells. In terms of the NVC, this vegetation conforms to the bluebell sub-community of *Pteridium aquilinum* – *Rubus fruticosus* under scrub (W25a). However, the examples of this habitat on exposures of ferruginous sandstone that occur on the Island appear to have more in common with similar examples found on the cliffs of the south west of England and may not have been derived from woodland clearance as is commonly believed.

A number of priority species are associated with the heathland and acid grasslands of the Island. These include the Dartford warbler, stonechat, adders, mottled grasshopper, a number of uncommon bees and wasps and the moss *Hylocomium splendens*.

## 2.2 Distribution and Extent

The main concentrations of heathland on the Isle of Wight are now confined to the summit of Ventnor Downs and the outcrop of Tertiary and Pleistocene gravels known as Headon Hill in the west of the Island. Smaller fragments of the habitat occur where other deposits of gravel occur such as on Bleak Down near Rookley or St George's Down near Newport. Small patches of heathland also occur on both gravel and clay soils within Parkhurst Forest where it survives in forestry clearings and along rides. Other fragments of the habitat survive on the chalk downs within Brighstone Forest. Most of the remaining examples of heathland on the Island can be described as dry heath, and contrast with the few small examples of wet heath that can be found on Bleak Down and associated with acid peat deposits in the Medina and Eastern Yar valleys.

Acid grassland often occurs in association with dry heathland on the downs of the Island, particularly within Brighstone Forest and on Ventnor Downs. However, examples of acid grassland also occur in a number of other locations where there are sand or gravel deposits. This includes deposits of sand on the coast where acid grassland has developed on stabilised sand dunes such as those at St Helen's Duver and the former intertidal sand flats now within the reclaimed Brading Marshes. Away from the coast, acid grassland also occurs on the outcrops of ferruginous sandstone that form low hills throughout the south of the Island.

The former extent of acid grassland on the Isle of Wight is virtually impossible to assess, given the complex mosaic it forms with heathland and scrub. The former area of heathland on the Island was calculated by Clive Chatters in his report to the IWCC in 1984. He calculated that there was some 729 hectares of heathland on the Island in 1850. This figure did not however include the extensive area of heathland and acid grassland that occurred on the chalk downs, particularly in the area of what is now Brighstone Forest and the gravel cap to the Ventnor Downs. The IW Biodiversity Audit and Assessment estimates an area of 92ha of acid grassland and 66 ha of heathland making a combined area of some 158ha, representing a loss of at least 79% since 1850. In addition, there are a further 58.3 ha of bracken and bluebell stands.

### 2.3 Legislation and Site Designation

Much of the known area of heathland and acid grassland on the Isle of Wight is included within SSSI (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and SINC (Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation). Table 1 lists the main SSSI and SINC known to support heathland and acid grassland on the Isle of Wight. Further assessment is required to identify what proportion of the habitat on the Island is protected by SSSI and SINC.

The largest and most important areas of heathland are owned and managed by the National Trust. Most of the acid grassland is however in private ownership.

The Isle of Wight AONB includes several areas of heathland and acid grassland, particularly the examples associated with the chalk downs and the ridges of ferruginous sandstone found in the south of the Island.

Many small fragments of heathland and acid grassland and the greatest potential for habitat recreation and restoration exists within Parkhurst, Brighstone and Bouldnor Forests, which are managed by Forest Enterprise.

### 2.4 Summary of Important Sites

The largest areas of heathland remaining on the Isle of Wight are those within the National Trust owned Ventnor Downs SSSI and on Headon Hill within the Headon Warren and West High Downs SSSI. Both are well managed. Heathland was, however, once a common and widespread habitat on the Isle of Wight occurring extensively within Parkhurst Forest and between Cranmore and Bouldnor in the north west of the Island before conversion to forestry

plantations. Large areas of heathland also occurred in the north east of the Island between Wootton and Newport, but most of this has either been lost to agricultural improvement or forestry plantations. In the south of the Island, further extensive heathlands occurred on Blackpan Common near Sandown. Fragments of these heathlands still remain, with the largest and most intact being found within the forestry plantations managed by Forest Enterprise and on Sandown Golf Course.

Acid grassland is found over a wider number of sites with particularly good examples within Brading Marshes and within the stabilised dunes at St Helen's. Other examples are found on the ridges of ferruginous sandstone that outcrop in the south of the Island such as on Row Down at Brighstone.

**Table 1: Distribution and extent of heathland, acid grassland and bluebell/bracken stands on the Isle of Wight**

SSSI name	Area ha	Comments
Headdon Warren and West High Down	262.9	Heathland in favourable condition
Ventnor Downs	162.6	Heathland grazed and in favourable condition
Brading Marshes to St Helen's Ledges		Small area of bluebells and bracken
SINC name	Area ha	Subsidiary habitat
St George's Down	17.02	Semi natural- broadleaved woodland
Row Down	13.32	Relict heath
Dame Anthony' s Common	9.86	Scrub
Skinner's Hill	10.74	Scrub
Perreton Down	6.89	Woodland
St Catherine's Down	18.64	Calcareous grassland
Ventnor Radio Station	12.57	Chalk heath
Head Down	4.75	Scrub
Heath Hill	1.14	
Sandown Golf Course	45.84	Scrub, acid ponds
Ningwood Common	16.84	Scrub
Bleak Down	10.27	Scrub, pools
Gore Down	23.03	Unimproved neutral grassland
South Down	2.66	
Sheard's Scarp	2.32	
Hollow Lane Chillerton	4.32	

### 3 Current Factors affecting the Habitat

Many of the factors affecting the conservation of heathland and acid grassland relate to continued sustainable management through appropriate grazing and mowing systems. These are reviewed in the Isle of Wight Grazing and Biodiversity Topic and apply equally to a range of grassland habitats, which are summarised below.

#### 3.1 Further loss of habitat

Much of the remaining heathland and acid grassland on the Isle of Wight is now within SSSI or other protection, and as the agricultural economy has declined in recent years, the threat to the remaining areas of the habitat from agricultural intensification has subsided. However, the threat from lack of management is a problem on some sites, especially those that are small and fragmented, or where bracken is able to colonise remaining areas of heathland and acid grassland. Although the threat to the habitat through agricultural intensification may have receded, it has not by any means disappeared.

The decline in numbers of cattle and in particular beef cattle, that has taken place on the Island in recent years may make it difficult to graze areas of heathland and acid grassland in the future.

There is also a threat from various development pressures. This can include development for housing or mineral extraction as well as recreational use, for example, motorcycle riding.

Management of these threats and pressures remains a significant factor in conserving the remaining heathland and acid grassland resource.

### **3.2 Financial incentives**

Sufficient financial incentives are needed to encourage farmers and land managers to maintain and restore areas of heathland and acid grassland on the Isle of Wight. The Countryside Stewardship Scheme has provided valuable support for the restoration and creation of some heathland and acid grassland, but the levels of payment available through this scheme may not be sufficient, and may decline further in line with the general decline in agricultural incomes.

Countryside Stewardship payments are available for all landowners. In addition, English Nature may enter into management agreements with SSSI owners if the site is deemed to be in unfavourable condition.

In the wider countryside outside of these protected sites, there is a need to reverse the trend of habitat decline seen over the past 150 years. Whereas this should be encouraged throughout the Island, there are areas where the potential gains are likely to be greatest, and where efforts and financial incentives should be targeted.

Alternative methods of providing a financial incentive also need to be considered and evaluated. This might include niche and brand marketing schemes being considered through the proposed IW Grazing Animal Project.

The availability of a local slaughtering facility may also be critical to the success of local produce production and sale.

### **3.3 Availability of suitable stock and stock management expertise**

Restoration of habitats with low productivity, for example heathland and acid grassland is likely to need specialist breeds that can thrive on this type of vegetation. It may also be necessary to ensure areas of better quality grassland are available to livestock grazing this habitat to ensure the economic viability of the farm system. Certain farming systems are also likely to be more beneficial to biodiversity than others. For example, extensive beef rearing systems are likely to be preferable to modern dairy production.

Grazing and grassland management on low productivity habitats and the restoration of these habitats using livestock as a management tool is a specialist area of expertise. Whereas many farmers may have very valuable skills, it may be that there is a specific need for training and provision of information to assist in developing these skills in this specialist area.

### **3.4 Public access**

Much of the heathland and acid grassland on the Island has public access along footpaths and bridleways, or more generally as open access. This can create a number of problems to livestock managers. Problems arise from gates being left open and from dog worrying of livestock. The public can also be seriously concerned by the prospect of walking in places where livestock are present. This can make it difficult to restore grazing if livestock have

been absent for a number of years. These difficulties can be largely overcome with better public information and wardening but this requires considerable time and resources.

### **3.5 Weed growth and habitat stabilisation**

The restoration of heathland and acid grassland often passes through a phase in which soil fertility and disturbance is sufficient to create ideal conditions for the growth of 'weed' species with ragwort, creeping thistle and dock causing the most significant problems. As the natural grassland or grazed habitat becomes re-established the weed species naturally decline, however, it is not generally acceptable to allow these high weed infestations to persist for the period it takes for the new equilibrium to establish, this might take five years or so. In the meantime, it is necessary to control these weed species with well-targeted herbicide use, or by other means. This can be expensive and time consuming and often relies upon the use of specialised equipment such as ragwort pullers or weed wipers.

### **3.6 Habitat fragmentation and loss of ecological continuity**

Many species require a minimum area of habitat in which to maintain sustainable populations, this is particularly true for birds such as the nightjar and Dartford warbler.

Other species have poor powers of dispersal and hence cannot colonise new habitats unless they are close or contiguous with existing habitats, for example some butterflies such as the grayling or small copper.

The natural recolonisation of heathland and acid grassland is also dependent upon a nearby source of seed and plant propagules. The current state of habitat fragmentation may mean that intervention will be required to restore these habitats through the re-introduction of seed and other plant propagules from appropriate donor sites. These are likely to be the remaining SSSI and SINC that retain semi-natural vegetation, which makes their conservation even more critical for the future.

### **3.7 Forestry plantations**

Many of the remaining fragments of heathland and acid grassland remain within forestry plantations in particular Parkhurst Forest, Brighstone Forest and Bouldnor Plantation. These relict areas of habitat are difficult to manage within the context of a forestry plantation and are often too small to sustain a diverse heathland flora or fauna. However, these forestry plantations offer the greatest potential for heathland restoration on the Isle of Wight. What is more they are state owned, and hence offer significant scope for heathland restoration and management through re-instating the extensive grazing systems these areas once supported. This is now happening on Mottistone Common, where the National Trust has taken over the land from Forest Enterprise, removed the trees and are restoring the site to heathland.

## **4 Current Action**

### **4.1 Site and Species Protection**

#### **4.1.1 Site designation SSSI, cSAC**

There are currently no plans to notify new heathland or acid grassland sites as SSSI on the Isle of Wight, although Cranmore Common SSSI was notified in 2001.

SINC identification is ongoing on the Island. Further heathland or acid grassland sites may be identified by the IW Council.

#### 4.1.2 Purchase of additional reserves or properties

It is possible that further areas of heathland and acid grassland or more importantly, areas with the potential for restoration as heathland and acid grassland, will become available for purchase by nature conservation organisations. Further action to bring this land into management by nature conservation organisations needs to be planned and coordinated.

#### 4.1.3 Habitat management

Lowland heathland and acid grassland is a target habitat for the Countryside Stewardship Scheme, administered by DEFRA through the Rural Development Service (RDS). This scheme provides payments for maintaining and enhancing lowland heathland and acid grassland and arable reversion to this habitat, although there is only a limited pool of funding for which spending has to be prioritised.

Not all the examples of this habitat on the Island are in good condition. Some are being colonised by scrub and bracken, and are ungrazed or inadequately grazed. An initial assessment of the condition of heathland and acid grassland has been made by English Nature and the IWC Ecology Officer, in discussion with the Wight Wildlife Officer. These condition assessments are also provided in Table 2.

English Nature, together with Wight Wildlife and SEEDA, is funding two projects aimed at identifying the potential for promoting agricultural systems that will result in the maintenance and restoration of heathland, acid grassland and other grazed habitats on the Island. This may lead to the creation of a grazing project officer to assist in the promotion of lowland meadow management schemes and the development of a grazing forum through which information can be circulated concerning the conservation of lowland meadow management and recreation.

The most extensive areas of heathland restoration have been undertaken by the National Trust and Wight Conservation at Mottistone Common.

The People's Trust of Endangered Species owns a fragment of the former Lynn Common near Wootton. This currently supports a conifer plantation but the Trust is planning to gradually remove this to restore heathland.

Table 2: Condition of heathland and acid grassland on the Isle of Wight (from Grassland and Grazed Habitats Topic Report)

Grazing habitat type	Number of SSSI	Number of SINC	% Sites in favourable condition	% Sites in unfavourable condition	% Sites of unknown condition
Acid grassland and heathland	2	13	40	40	20

#### 4.2 Survey, research and monitoring

There is little survey research or monitoring of heathland and acid grassland on the Isle of Wight.

- English Nature is currently carrying out an assessment of the condition of all SSSI on the Isle of Wight with a target of ensuring that 95% are in favourable or recovering condition by 2010.
- Nightjar and Dartford warbler populations on the Island have been monitored as part of the BTO national survey by the IW Ornithological Group and IW Natural History and Archaeological Society.

### 4.3 Action for species

Appendix 1 gives details of species on the Isle of Wight found primarily on heathland and acid grassland. Action proposed in this Plan will be the principal means of conserving most of these species. In some cases, additional action plans and programmes will also contribute to conserving priority species: for example, UK Species Action Plans (UK SAP) and Butterfly Conservation Regional Action Plans (BC RAP).

## 5 Objectives and Targets

The overall aim of this Plan is to protect and enhance biodiversity of lowland meadows. This broad aim translates into the specific objectives set out below. Where feasible, objectives have been allocated targets against which achievement can be measured. The 'Proposed Action' table in section 6 identifies the action to be taken to meet these objectives.

	Objectives	Proposed Actions
A	Ensure no future loss or degradation of heathland and acid grassland: Maintain the extent and the quality of the existing resource and ensure no further fragmentation.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7,10,11, 13, 14
B	Increase the extent of heathland and acid grassland:Seek to extend the area of heathland and acid grassland and reduce fragmentation by both reversion of improved land, clearance of forestry plantations and restoration of areas lost to neglect. A target of 290 ha to be re-created or restored has been identified.	8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14
C	Improve the quality of heathland and acid grassland – achieve favourable management on existing sites:Seek to restore to favourable condition 80% of all heathland and acid grassland SSSI and SINC on the Isle of Wight by 2012	5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 14
D	Ensure that the needs of the Isle of Wight priority species of heathland and acid grassland are met	15, 16, 17
E	Improve knowledge of distribution, status and habitat requirements of heathland and acid grassland on the Isle of Wight through appropriate research, survey and monitoring.	16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24
F	Communication, Awareness and Promotion: Promote the importance of heathland and acid grassland, its associated species and threats to them. Communicate with and provide information to key sectors including statutory agencies, NGOs, landowners and managers, schools, community groups and members of the public	21, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29

## 6 Proposed Action

The following table lists the actions required to achieve the objectives set out in this plan. Each action has been assigned to one or more Key Partners. Key Partners are those organisations that are expected to take responsibility for the delivery of the actions assigned to them, according to the targets set in this Plan. Other organisations may also be involved in the delivery of action and they have been indicated in the Others column.

Key to symbols in Action Table:

- ◆ To be completed by the indicated year. Work can commence at any time before the due date, at the discretion of the key partner.
- ◆⇒ Design or production of a plan/strategy to be completed by this year and then followed by its implementation.
- ➡ To start by the indicated year and usually followed by ongoing work. A start arrow in year 2002 can indicate a new action or a new impetus to existing work.
- ⇒ Work that has already begun and is ongoing.

Key to Organisations in Action Table

IWC = Isle of Wight Council, EN = English Nature, DEFRA = Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, AONB = IW AONB Project Officer, WW = Wight Wildlife, HIWWT = Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, NT = National Trust, FE = Forest Enterprise, CLA = Country Landowners Association, NFU = National Farmers Union

	ACTION	DELIVERY BY		YEAR						Meets Objective	
		Lead	Others	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2012		
Habitat Protection											
1	Review the SSSI coverage of the Isle of Wight to identify all those containing existing or potential heathland and acid grassland	EN	ALL							➡	A
2	Ensure that all suitable sites containing heathland and acid grassland that meet SINC criteria are identified and designated	IWC	WW	⇒							A

	ACTION	DELIVERY BY		YEAR						Meets Objective	
		Lead	Others	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2012		
3	Ensure that heathland and acid grassland is safeguarded from development through forward planning and development control	IWC	WW/ EN/ NT	⇒							A
4	Endeavour to acquire for nature conservation existing and potential heathland and acid grassland sites, particularly those within target areas identified in the Grazing and Grassland Management Topic Report	HIWWT /NT		⇒							A
Habitat management, Incentive Schemes and Other Resources											
5	Ensure appropriate management to achieve favourable or recovering condition of 95% of heathland and acid grassland cSAC by 2005	EN	ALL	⇒							A, C
6	Ensure appropriate management to achieve favourable or recovering condition of 95% of heathland and acid grassland SSSI by 2010	EN	ALL	⇒							A, C
7	Ensure appropriate management to achieve favourable or recovering condition of 75% of heathland and acid grassland SINC by 2010	DEFRA	ALL	⇒							A, C
8	Increase the area of heathland and acid grassland on the Isle of Wight by 290ha, with emphasis on target areas identified in the Grazing and Grassland Management Topic Report	DEFRA	ALL	⇒							B

	ACTION	DELIVERY BY		YEAR						Meets Objective	
		Lead	Others	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2012		
9	Work with Forest Enterprise to develop plans for the restoration and re-creation of heathland and acid grassland by removal or reduction of forestry plantations within target areas identified in the Grazing and Grassland Management Topic Report	FE	IWC/ WW/ AONB/ EN	◆⇒							B
10	Develop and implement integrated management guidelines for heathland and acid grassland within the Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan	AONB	ALL			◆⇒					A, B, C
11	Encourage further uptake of CS Scheme to ensure favourable management of heathland and acid grassland sites	DEFRA	WW	⇒							A, B, C
12	Ensure that CCS arable reversion payments are attractive and encourage further uptake of arable reversion schemes to achieve targets for heathland and acid grassland re-creation	DEFRA	WW	⇒							B
13	Develop Grazing Project and if appropriate employ a grazing officer to promote and facilitate grazing of heathland and acid grassland for nature conservation	WW	ALL		◆⇒						A, B, C

	ACTION	DELIVERY BY		YEAR						Meets Objective	
		Lead	Others	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2012		
14	Promote marketing and branding of heathland and acid grassland produced meat and livestock products as an incentive to farmers and landowners to conserve heathland and acid grassland	Farmers Group	Island 2000/ WW/ AONB/ EN								A, B, C
<b>Species Action</b>											
15	Encourage landowners/managers and their advisors to manage their land appropriately for species on IW BAP species audit	WW	EN	⇒							D
16	Identify and promote knowledge of species that can be used to highlight specific adjustments to standard management regimes and produce appropriate guidelines	EN		⇒							D, E
17	Develop monitoring strategy for Isle of Wight priority species which occur on heathland and acid grassland	WW	◆⇒								D, E
<b>Survey, Research and Monitoring</b>											
18	Collate all existing survey information for heathland and acid grassland	IWC		⇒							E
19	Produce a survey strategy for heathland and acid grassland to complement actions within this plan	IWC	EN		➔						E
20	Undertake a comprehensive NVC survey of heathland and acid grassland to establish current extent, distribution and condition of the habitat on the IW	IWC	WW/EN			➔					E

	ACTION	DELIVERY BY		YEAR						Meets Objective
		Lead	Others	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2012	
21	Produce an inventory of all Isle of Wight heathland and acid grassland sites	EN							➡	E, F
22	Re-survey non-SSSI heathland and acid grassland	IWC	WW						➡	E
23	Design and implement a monitoring scheme to assess reversion /management schemes on heathland and acid grassland and levels of compliance and take-up by participants	DEFRA		⇒						E
Communication and Publicity										
24	Compile an index of information sources and guidance on good management practices for heathland and acid grassland and associated priority species	HIWWT		⇒						E, F
25	Promote the ecology and conservation requirements of this habitat and associated priority species, particularly amongst farmers and their advisors	WW		⇒						F
26	Raise awareness of incentive schemes and projects relevant to the management of heathland and acid grassland	WW		⇒						F

	ACTION	DELIVERY BY		YEAR						Meets Objective	
		Lead	Others	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2012		
27	Identify sites that demonstrate good management practice and establish those sites as centres to raise awareness of heathland and acid grassland.	IWC		⇒							F
28	Identify sites that demonstrate good management practice and establish those sites as centres to raise awareness of heathland and acid grassland.	NT	WW/ IWC	⇒							F
29	Promote public awareness of heathland and acid grassland including community involvement where appropriate, interpretive material, and the identification of flagship species	ALL		⇒							F

## 7 Sources of Information

1. English Nature, 1998. Isle of Wight Natural Area Profile
2. English Nature, 1998. UK BAP Targets By Natural Area - 10 Terrestrial Habitats
3. Department of the Environment, 1998, UK Biodiversity Group Tranche 2 Action Plans. Volume II – terrestrial and freshwater habitats. Peterborough: English Nature on behalf of the UK Biodiversity Group
4. Isle of Wight Biodiversity Partnership. 2002. Grassland and Grazed Habitats Topic Report. Isle of Wight Council.
5. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, 1999,.The implementation of Common Standards for Monitoring and Conservation Objectives. Peterborough.
6. Sanderson, N.A. 2000. Review of extent of conservation interest and management of lowland acid grassland. English Nature, Peterborough.

## Species associated with lowland dry acid grassland

Latin name	English name	Group	BAP status	Rarity	Other habitat
<i>Sorex araneus</i>	Common Shrew	Mammal	2		LOWLAND MEADOWS ♦
<i>Sorex minutus</i>	Pygmy Shrew	Mammal	2		LOWLAND MEADOWS ♦
<i>Vipera berus</i>	Adder	Reptile	2		LOWLAND MEADOWS ♦
<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Kestrel	Bird	2		LOWLAND MEADOWS ♦
<i>Nomada errans</i>	A nomad bee	Ants, Bees and Wasps	1	RDB1	LOWLAND MEADOWS
<i>Bombylius discolor</i>	A beefly	Flies	1		LOWLAND MEADOWS ♦
<i>Adscita statices</i>	Forester	Moths	2		LOWLAND MEADOWS ♦
<i>Argiope bruennichi</i>	Wasp Spider	Spider group	3		LOWLAND MEADOWS ♦
<i>Psammotettix</i>	A leafhopper	True bug	3		
<i>Entoloma nitidum</i>	A fungus	Fungi	3	pRDB	
<i>Cephaloziella stellulifera</i>	'Heath Threadwort'	Liverworts	3		LOWLAND CALCAREOUS GRASSLAND
<i>Cephaloziella turneri</i>	'Turner's Threadwort'	Liverworts	3	VU	LOWLAND CALCAREOUS GRASSLAND
<i>Achillea ptarmica</i>	Sneezewort	Flowering plant	3		LOWLAND MEADOWS
<i>Chamaemelum nobile</i>	Chamomile	Flowering plant	2		
<i>Erigeron acer</i>	Blue Fleabane	Flowering plant	3		LOWLAND CALCAREOUS GRASSLAND ♦
<i>Festuca filiformis</i>	Fine-leaved Sheep's Fescue	Flowering plant	3		LOWLAND HEATHLAND ♦
<i>Filago minima</i>	Small Cudweed	Flowering plant	3		LOWLAND HEATHLAND ♦
<i>Jasione montana</i>	Sheepsbit Scabious	Flowering plant	3		MARITIME CLIFFS & SLOPES ♦
<i>Lotus angustissimus</i>	Slender Birdsfoot Trefoil	Flowering plant	3		Grazing marsh ♦
<i>Moenchia erecta</i>	Upright Chickweed	Flowering plant	3		COASTAL SAND DUNES ♦
<i>Nardus stricta</i>	Mat-grass	Flowering plant	3		PURPLE MOORGRASS & RUSH PASTURE
<i>Orobanche purpurea</i>	Yarrow Broomrape	Flowering plant	3	VU	LOWLAND CALCAREOUS GRASSLAND ♦
<i>Orobanche rapum-genistae</i>	Greater Broomrape	Flowering plant	2		Boundary and linear features ♦
<i>Scleranthus annuus</i>	Annual Knawel	Flowering plant	3		Arable & horticultural
<i>Trifolium suffocatum</i>	Suffocated Clover	Flowering plant	3		COASTAL SAND DUNES ♦
<i>Viola canina</i>	Heath Dog Violet	Flowering plant	3		
<i>Viola lactea</i>	Pale Dog Violet	Flowering plant	3		LOWLAND MEADOWS

## Species associated with heathland

Latin Name	English Name	Major Group	BAP Status	Rarity	Other habitat
<i>Lacerta vivipara</i>	Common Lizard	Reptiles	3		LOWLAND MEADOWS
<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>	Nightjar	Bird	1		Broad-leaved mixed woodland ♦
<i>Saxicola torquata</i>	Stonechat	Bird	2		MARITIME CLIFFS & SLOPES
<i>Sylvia undata</i>	Dartford warbler	Bird	2		
<i>Hipparchia semele</i>	Grayling	Butterflies	3		LOWLAND CALCAREOUS GRASSLANDS ♦
<i>Pelecocera tricincta</i>	A hoverfly	Flies	3	RDB3	Broad-leaved mixed woodland ♦
<i>Terellia vectensis</i>	A picture-winged fly	Flies	3	RDB	LOWLAND CALCAREOUS GRASSLANDS
<i>Osmunda regalis</i>	Royal Fern	Fern	3		MARITIME CLIFFS & SLOPES
<i>Chlorissa viridata</i>	Small Grass Emerald	Moths	3		
<i>Cyclophora pendularia</i>	Dingy Mocha	Moths	1	RDB3	
<i>Hyphenodes humidalis</i>	Marsh Oblique-barred	Moths	3		
<i>Idaea sylvestraria</i>	Dotted Border Wave	Moths	3		
<i>Pachycnemia hippocastanaria</i>	Horse Chestnut	Moths	3		
<i>Parascotia fuliginaria</i>	Waved Black	Moths	3		Broad-leaved mixed woodland ♦
<i>Pempelia genistella</i>	Gorse Knot-horn	Moths	3		LOWLAND CALCAREOUS GRASSLANDS ♦
<i>Schrankia taenialis</i>	White-line Snout	Moths	1		Broad-leaved mixed woodland
<i>Selidosema brunnearia scandinaviaria</i>	Bordered Grey	Moths	3		
<i>Synanthedon flaviventris</i>	Sallow Clearwing	Moths	3		Broad-leaved mixed woodland ♦
<i>Aphrophora alpina</i>	A froghopper	True bug	3		Broad-leaved mixed woodland
<i>Cephaloziella hampeana</i>	'Hampe's Threadwort'	Liverworts	3		LOWLAND MEADOWS
<i>Lophozia bicrenata</i>	'Lesser Notchwort'	Liverworts	3		Built-up areas and gardens
<i>Mylia anomala</i>	'Anomalous Flapwort'	Liverworts	3		FENS ♦
<i>Scapania nemorea</i>	'Grove Earwort'	Liverworts	3		Broad-leaved mixed woodland ♦

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Habitats in CAPITALS are Priority Habitats in the UK BAP ♦ indicates the primary habitat of a species

Latin name	English name	Group	BAP status	Rarity	Other habitat
<i>Hylocomium splendens</i>	'Glittering Wood-moss'	Mosses	3		MARITIME CLIFFS & SLOPES
<i>Pleurozium schreberi</i>	'Red-stemmed Feather-moss'	Mosses	3		
<i>Anagallis minima</i>	Chaffweed	Flowering plant	3		Broad-leaved mixed woodland
<i>Eleocharis multicaulis</i>	Many-stalked Spike-rush	Flowering plant	3		
<i>Epipactis palustris</i>	Marsh Helleborine	Flowering plant	3		MARITIME CLIFFS & SLOPES
<i>Festuca filiformis</i>	Fine-leaved Sheep's Fescue	Flowering plant	3		LOWLAND DRY ACID GRASSLAND
<i>Filago minima</i>	Small Cudweed	Flowering plant	3		LOWLAND DRY ACID GRASSLAND
<i>Filago vulgaris</i>	Common Cudweed	Flowering plant	3		Arable & horticultural ♦
<i>Genista anglica</i>	Petty Whin	Flowering plant	3		FENS
<i>Juncus squarrosus</i>	Heath Rush	Flowering plant	3		Fen marsh and swamp
<i>Lythrum portula</i>	Water Purslane	Flowering plant	3		Rivers & streams
<i>Radiola linoides</i>	All-seed	Flowering plant	3		
<i>Sagina subulata</i>	Heath Pearlwort	Flowering plant	3		
<i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i>	Bilberry	Flowering plant	3		Broad-leaved mixed woodland

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