



The State of Norfolk's Magical Meadows

A Norfolk Wildlife Trust Report **2008**



CWS 282, The Beck Meadow

Helen Baczkowska
Conservation Officer
Norfolk Wildlife Trust
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Contents

	Page
Brief Summary	2
1. Introduction	3
2. Methodology	
2.1 Explanation of Terms and Scoring	4
3. Results of the Study	
3.1 Breakdown of findings for site condition by number of sites and area in hectares	5
3.2 Analysis of results for scoring condition assessment	6
3.3 Breakdown of obstacles to management on sites and responses to NWT advice	7
4. Summary	9
5. Recommendations for Future Action	10
Appendix 1 – case studies	11
Appendix 2 – details of sites visited and scoring	13
Appendix 3 – copy of Norfolk Wildlife Trust condition monitoring form, 2008 version	17

A Brief Summary

The State of Norfolk's Magical Meadows is based on a sample of 60 grassland County Wildlife Sites across the county, visited between 2005 and 2008. Each was assessed for the opportunities it offers for wildlife and how it is cared for; obstacles to appropriate management, such as lack of resources or vandalism, were also noted.

The report shows the following:

- the majority of the sites assessed (69% of sites) are in poor or declining condition. Only 5% of those visited were judged to be in good or excellent condition.
- 10% were in such poor condition that they no longer met the standard to be registered as a County Wildlife Site.
- The main problems faced by species-rich grasslands were inappropriate management and total neglect (no management). The main driver for meadows not being managed appropriately was a lack of resources.

The recommendations at the end of the report include:

- Raising the profiles of meadows for wildlife and increasing awareness of the need for appropriate management;
- Improving the resources and grants available to meadow owners.

1 Introduction

The State of Norfolk's Magical Meadows contains the results of a three-year project monitoring the condition of grassland County Wildlife Sites (CWS) in Norfolk. The project set out to discover the condition of grassland CWS in and where they were in poor condition, to determine what the main obstacles to appropriate management were. It is hoped that the findings of the report will be used to develop strategies to turn around the fortunes of struggling wildlife sites, improving the opportunities for wildlife outside of nature reserves and national sites with statutory protection.

CWS are sites notified as being of value for wildlife in a county context. CWS complement sites of national value, such as National Nature Reserves and Sites of Special Scientific Interest; put together, these sites are the minimum area of habitat needed to retain the wildlife of Norfolk at its current level. Most County Wildlife Sites are in private ownership and do not have statutory protection.

The report itself also complements the assessment of the condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) carried out by English Nature in 2003. This report showed that nationally 42% of all SSSIs, by area, required improved management to maintain or restore their value for wildlife.

Meadows and pastures are one of the most vulnerable habitats in the British Isles, requiring careful annual mowing and/or grazing to keep them in the best condition for wildlife. Since the end of World War 2, an estimated 95% of Britain's lowland meadows have vanished (Countryside Commission figures, 1984). This decline can be attributed to many causes, including development, conversion to arable and agricultural improvement through the addition of artificial fertilisers. However, it is likely that many sites have simply become neglected as they no longer fulfil a function in the modern agricultural economy; in recent decades, livestock numbers have fallen dramatically in many lowland areas and where livestock are kept, they are often fed silage from improved grasslands, rather than hay from traditional meadows.

The State of Norfolk's Magical Meadows also complements a 2007 report by NWT, called *Impact of Development on County Wildlife Sites and other areas of semi-natural habitat*.

2 Methodology

The State of Norfolk's Magical Meadows covers 60 sites visited over a 3 year period; the sites were selected partly in response to requests for advice from CWS owners, partly by selecting sites that had not been visited for several years and partly by assessing the condition of sites where advice had been given in the more recent past (up to 5 years). Consequently, although the selection process was not random, it was influenced by sufficient factors to render it unlikely to be biased in any significant way.

The assessment of site condition was made using a prepared form (see Appendix 3), which provides details on the changes and condition noted on the sites. The form is adapted from that used by The Wildlife Trusts' National Grassland Monitoring Project.

2.1 *Explanation of Terms and Scoring*

The following scores were used when assessing the condition of sites and all scores shown in the following tables related to these terms:

1 – Good or excellent condition for wildlife. The site is managed appropriately with a good balance between scrub and grassland, with few signs of rank or coarse species.

2 – Reasonable condition. The site is maintained by management that is appropriate to its needs, but some improvements to management are needed to make sure that the site offers the best opportunities for wildlife. Some areas are rank, over grazed or under grazed and practices such as topping occur in some areas or during some years.

3 – Sites that are improving in condition due to management works; only applicable where a tangible improvement can be seen.

4 – Declining or poor condition; the management is inappropriate or insufficient, so that the site is declining in value for wildlife. Scrub and rank areas are frequent-abundant across the site and inappropriate management, such as topping or overgrazing, occur across the site.

5 – Neglected; there is little or no management, leading to an obvious dominance of rank species and scrub development is noticeable.

6 – Damaged; at least some of the site has been lost to development, agricultural change, secondary woodland or other factors.

7 – Lost; the site has been destroyed due to development, agricultural change, incorporation into gardens, encroachment of secondary woodland or other factors.

Sites marked with an asterisk * are under threat.

Sites marked with a D have been deleted from the Norfolk CWS register as they no longer meet the minimum standard required of a CWS.

Where a site was in multiple ownership, or where site condition varied across the site, an overall score was given. Details on all sites visited are shown in the table in Appendix 2.



NWT Conservation Officer surveying Gissing Common, CWS 38

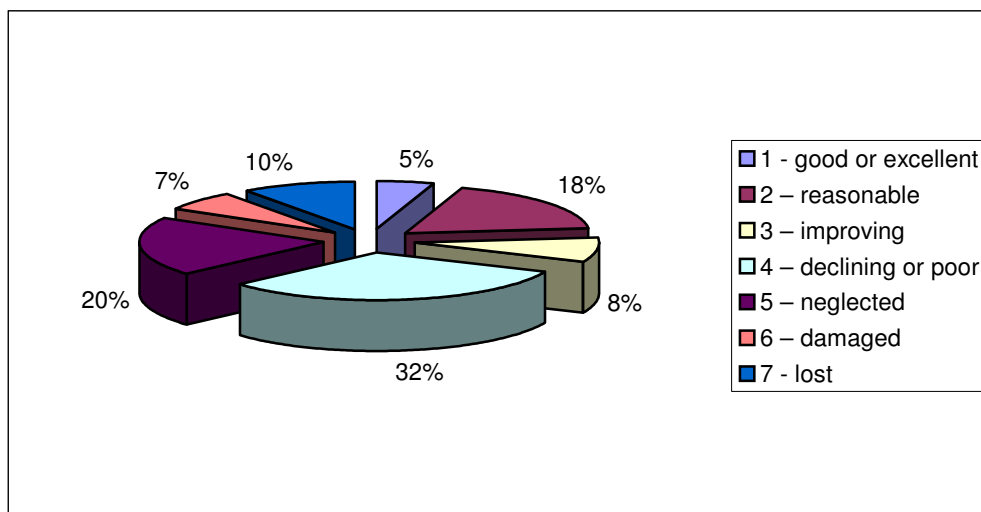
3 Results of the Study – The State of Norfolk’s Magical Meadows

3.1 Breakdown of findings for site condition by number of sites and area in hectares

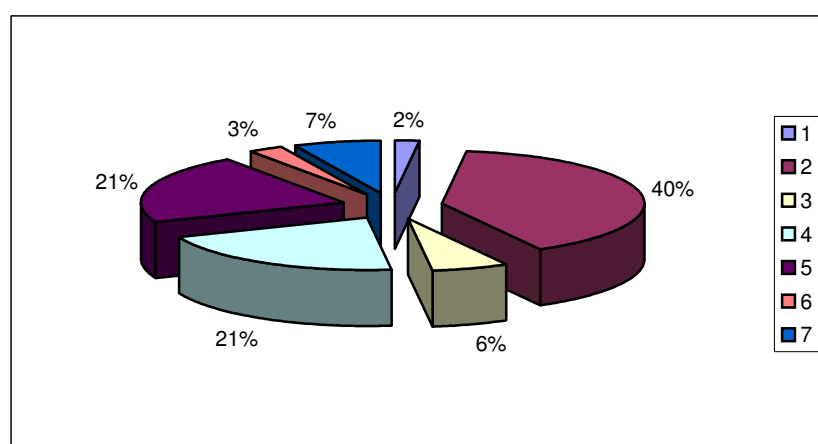
Figure 1 – summary of grassland monitoring findings 2005 – 2008

Condition Score	Number of sites	Area in ha
1 - good or excellent	3	7.77
2 – reasonable	11	168.31
3 – improving	5	26.11
4 – declining or poor	19	88.1
5 – neglected	12	90.21
6 – damaged	4	11.5
7 - lost	6	29.04
* - under threat	9	54.19
D - deleted	6	29.13
Total number of sites monitored	60	
Total area monitored		423.04

Figure 2 – pie chart of grassland monitoring findings 2005 – 2008, by numbers of sites in each score.



Figures 3 – pie chart of grassland monitoring findings 2005 – 2008, by areas in each score.



3.2 Analysis of results for scoring condition assessment

Figures 1, 2 and 3 show the findings for the condition of sites assessed by number and area; the greatest number of sites fall into score 4, for declining or poor condition (19 sites and 32%). The next greatest number of sites fall into score 5, for neglected sites (12 sites and 20%). However, this is only slightly greater than the number of sites in score 2, for sites in reasonable condition (11 sites and 18%).

Overall, figure 1 shows that of the 60 sites assessed, only 19 are in good, reasonable or improving condition; this is only 31%, less than one-third, of all sites visited. The remaining 69%, over two-thirds of the sites visited, are in poor, neglected or damaged condition and in the case of 6 sites have been lost altogether.

The findings by area present a slightly more complex picture; of the 423.04 ha visited, 168.11 ha were judged to score 2, for reasonable condition, representing 40% of the total area visited. The reason for this is probably two-fold; the area figures are slightly skewed by a small number of large sites judged to be in reasonable condition.

This may also show that large sites are often easier to manage, especially when they are fenced and extensively grazed. It should, however, be stressed that sites scoring 2 still need some additional restorative work to ensure they offer the best conditions for wildlife. These figures also show that statistics are a blunt tool for analysing the condition of sites. Both Hales Green and West Winch Common are relatively species poor sites, semi-improved in places and initially notified on the basis of being extensive sites; both are reasonably well cared for, but both are subject to over-grazing; both are commons and right holders exercise their rights to the full, with little inclination to lessen heavy grazing pressure.

The next largest scores by area are 4 (declining) and 5 (neglected), with a score of 21% each. This means that in total, 42% of the area visited fall into these sub-optimal conditions, pretty much reflecting the findings by number of sites shown in figure 2. Overall, 50% of the area are in poor, neglected or damaged condition and 7% of the area has been lost altogether.

Interestingly, whilst 5% of the sites by number (3 sites) score 1 (good or excellent), this represents only 2% of the area, presenting a picture of a few small sites that are well cared for. Similarly, the number of sites scoring 7 and consequently being deleted from the Norfolk CWS register is 6, which is 10% of the total number of sites, but only 7% of the area; this reflects the problems known to face small sites, where management is difficult. Such sites can be grazed by only a few animals, or require small machinery to cut, rendering their care labour intensive and costly.

The final analysis of these findings has to be that the majority of sites are in sub-optimal condition. However, by comparing these figures with those for scores by area, we can see that the picture is not clear cut and that the initial condition of the site at time of notification and the size of the site can have a huge influence on both how their condition is rated and how the sites are managed.

3.3 Breakdown of obstacles to management on sites and responses to NWT advice

Figure 4 – Summary of major problems on monitored sites 2005 – 2008

Problem	Number of sites where problem occurs
Vehicles – illicit	2
Overgrazing	6
Under grazing/no grazing	11
Inappropriate/insufficient mowing or cutting	22
Development, with planning permission or proposed	7
Insufficient scrub control	13
Inappropriate tree planting taken place or proposed	2
Dumping/fly tipping	0
No management	13
Inappropriate pond/scrape	1
Common land, causes problems with grazing, either due to over grazing or preventing grazing	9
Converted to arable	3
Poaching	2
Inappropriate burning	1
<i>Total number of sites monitored</i>	<i>60</i>

Figure 5 – NWT advice and obstacles to appropriate management

Advisory situation	Number of sites	Area in ha
NWT advice given	43	425.88
NWT advice followed as far as financial resources allow	25	236.2
Follow up needed to establish if NWT advice being followed	6	33.81
Sites where lack of resources is a significant barrier to owner/manager following advice in full	29	226.11
Advice given and not followed in full as owner or manager not receptive to advice	15	168.3
Sites managed according to a Countryside Stewardship or other agri-environment scheme.	13	167.41
Sites in agri-environment schemes judged to be in good condition (score 1), reasonable (score 2) or improving (score 3)	9	81.11
<i>Total number of sites monitored</i>	<i>60</i>	
<i>Total area monitored</i>		<i>432.04</i>

3.4 Analysis of results for obstacles to management and responses to advice

It should be noted that there is a great deal of overlap between the sites advised on, responses to that advice and the obstacles to management, with many sites being affected by more than one problem or obstacle to management.

Site owners frequently say their major concern are the threat of fly-tipping, vandalism or illicit vehicle access, which can include mountain bikes, motorbikes and travellers' vehicles. However, figure 4 shows that these were actually a problem on very few sites; illicit vehicles caused a significant problem on 2 sites and fly tipping was not observed on any of the sites at the time of the monitoring visit.

The major problems faced by sites were in fact inappropriate mowing (22 sites), inappropriate grazing (17 sites) or no management at all (13 sites). Insufficient scrub control affected 13 of the sites.

9 of the sites visited were registered commons, causing a significant barrier to grazing management; it is likely that this was a prime cause in the decline in value of these sites in recent years.

A further 7 sites had been affected by development.

Overall, the biggest single obstacle to appropriate management was a lack of resources, with 29 sites (72% of sites visited) not being managed appropriately for this reason. This affects just over half the area monitored, with 226.11 ha falling into this category. Where NWT advice has been given (44 sites), this is largely taken up and followed, where resources allow (25 sites). The area figures broadly follow those for numbers of sites, with 263.98 ha advised on and advice being broadly followed on 236.2 ha; 56% of the area visited.

Where advice has not been followed, the prime reason was a lack of resources. The financial obstacles to management fall into 2 broad categories; firstly, restorative works, such as scrub clearance or fencing to allow grazing are often beyond the resources of site owners and managers. Without such restorative works, it may be impossible to manage a site effectively.

Secondly the cost of cutting and removing cuttings every year or every other year can be prohibitive, especially when it is so easy and cheap to use a rotary mower or topper. These create a fine mulch that cannot be easily collected and consequently rot down in situ, leaving a dense, rotting mat on the surface; this encourages rank grasses and ultimately enriches the soil.

Of the sites visited, 15 (38%) owners or managers (including grazing rights holders on common land) were not wholly receptive to advice on conservation management. This illustrates the problems of explaining the value of high quality grassland sites to those with minimal knowledge of wildlife conservation. At least 2 of these owners see their sites as a place to plant trees, perceiving this as being of greater benefit to wildlife than the open meadow.

Conversion to arable had affected 3 of the sites, but it is likely that this was not recent and had happened before the Environmental Impact Regulations on uncultivated land.

The role of agri-environment schemes was analysed as part of the monitoring work; overall, these schemes have, to date, offered the best opportunity for bringing sites into appropriate management, carrying out restorative work and ensuring that annual management is sustained.

Of the 13 sites in agri-environment schemes, 9 are very well managed; the remaining sites each have different problems: CWS 1119, Thwaite Common has suffered from a problem with regard to the fencing of this registered common and hay cutting is not feasible on the wet grassland site. CWS 33 and CWS 308 have only just been entered into schemes and it is too early to judge whether management advice has been effective, although the signs so far are good. CWS 1167,

Swanton Abbott Low Common, has suffered as the owners have struggled to find a grazier and to maintain the site, although improvements have been made since the condition monitoring visit (personal communication with landowners).

Countryside Stewardship seems to have, on the whole, provided landowners with the means to manage sites successfully. However, the capital grants available under agri-environment schemes do not always prove to be sufficient to cover the costs of restorative works, sometimes causing a delay in the effectiveness of these schemes as owners wait for the annual management payments made under agri-environment schemes to accrue. In some cases, NWT has been able to find top-up funds to ensure landowners can afford restorative works.

Of those sites being entered into the new Environmental Stewardship Scheme (ESS), it is too early to judge how effective the schemes will be in securing appropriate management on the sites.

It must be noted that many County Wildlife Sites will fail to meet the threshold for entering the Higher level Stewardship scheme (HLS) on their own merit and some are part of holdings where an ESS application is unlikely, given the nature of the holding or where holdings lie outside of the target areas developed by Natural England in 2008. The success of management on sites in classic Countryside Stewardship schemes also raises the question of what happens when these schemes expire, as each scheme only has a lifespan of ten years and most of those visited were set up in late 1990s.

4 Summary

The first aim of *The State of Norfolk's Magical Meadows* was to discover whether grassland CWS in Norfolk were well managed or not and what the main obstacles to appropriate management were.

The statistics in section 3 show that:

- 69% of sites visited were in poor, neglected or damaged condition
- 6 sites had been lost
- Only 3 of the 60 sites visited were in good or excellent condition; this represents 5% of the sites visited and only 2% of the area visited.

The analysis of the problems shown in section 3.4 shows that the most significant issues affecting site condition are:

- Inappropriate mowing, inappropriate grazing or no management at all; 52 sites.
- 18% of sites had been adversely affected by development.
- 72% of sites visited were affected by a lack of resources available to manage the sites effectively.
- NWT support and advice is effective in bringing sites into appropriate management, where resource can be found to help with the work required.
- Agri-environment schemes, notably the classic Countryside Stewardship scheme, are effective in providing resource for site management in most cases.
- 38% of owners are not wholly receptive to advice, or had a limited perception of the value of meadows for wildlife and the management required to care for them.

5 Recommendations

The second stated aim of *The State of Norfolk's Magical Meadows* was to use the findings of the report to develop strategies to turn around the fortunes of struggling wildlife sites, improving the opportunities for wildlife outside of nature reserves and national sites with statutory protection.

Based on the results shown in the report and in the summary above, the following emerge as major issues to be addressed:

1. There is a serious need to improve the perception of meadows and to raise awareness of the need to manage them appropriately.
2. Resources and mechanisms to ensure sustainable management need to be developed.

In order to address these needs, the following recommendations are made:

1. Develop NWT's Magical Meadow initiative to improve the perception of meadows as places for wildlife; this could include publicity, events and information packs.
2. Develop mechanisms for improving the resources available for managing meadows; this could include developing NWT's Magical Meadows initiative to include finding resources for management and developing partnerships with conservation volunteer organisations to undertake work on selected sites.
3. Ensure that Environmental Stewardship meets the needs of meadow sites in Norfolk; this includes ensuring that sites in classic Countryside Stewardship schemes continue to receive support, influencing the targeting of Higher Level Stewardship and supporting proposed changes to Entry Level Stewardship at a national and local level.
4. Continuing to ensure that County Wildlife Sites are protected through the planning system by promoting their importance for wildlife, continuing to provide information on their location and continuing to advise planners and developers accordingly.
5. Continuing to make links with the Norfolk Ecological Network topic group, ensuring that meadows are seen as an important component of developing networks.
6. Carrying out future research into the condition and status of County Wildlife Sites notified in the 1980s and into the impact of any classic Countryside Stewardship schemes that expire without being renewed.



Scrub clearance, CWS 1221, Crostwright Common

Appendix 1 - Case Studies

Case Study 1: County Wildlife Site 8, Boyland Common

Description

3.9 ha of open common, mown annually for hay and managed by South Norfolk Council and a local farmer. The site supports a myriad of fine grasses and wild flowers, such as quaking grass and green winged orchids.

Site judged to be in good-excellent condition.

Management

The annual hay cutting regime has prevented scrub from encroaching on most of the site and has maintained a fine, species rich sward free of tussocks of rank areas. Tall, mature hedges border part of the site and provide additional wildlife habitat.

Occasional grazing by tethered traveller ponies had not had a negative impact at the time of visit and had helped to vary the sward.

Problems

Local concerns include the frequent traveller encampments on the site, which does cause localised compaction and possibly enrichment, as well as leading to a lack of management in these areas. Illicit vehicle use by car drivers also causes localised compaction.

The site is poorly linked to other wildlife sites and surrounded by arable fields.

Recommendations

- Improving the hedges by re-planting gaps and possibly creating new hedges to help buffer the site.
- Improving buffering and connectivity to other wildlife habitats
- It would be advisable to seek ways of minimising the negative impacts of traveller encampments and illicit vehicle use.
- Safeguard long term management of the site, as it is vulnerable to the current farmer stopping his annual hay cut.



Cuckoo flower (Cardamine pratensis), a spring flower abundant on Boyland Common, CWS 8
Photo D North

Case study 2: County Wildlife Site 1119, Thwaite Common

Description

15 ha of this common were assessed; the site includes dry, neutral grassland, formerly with a short, species-rich sward, as well as damp grassland supporting southern marsh orchids. Mature trees and scrub scattered across the site, which also contains a rare tufa mound, formed by chalk deposits where a spring surfaces.

Management

Until 1999, this part of Thwaite Common was managed by grazing with ponies and occasionally cattle. In 1999, the fences were removed and grazing ceased, causing an appreciable decline in the quality of the habitat; some areas have been topped and others occasionally cut for hay, but the site has been largely unmanaged since 1999.

Problems

The short, fine areas of neutral grassland have become rank since grazing ceased, scrub had increased across the site and the damp areas have become rank and heavily invaded by common reed.

The dry areas are too large and too expensive to cut for hay under the existing Countryside Stewardship scheme; the wet areas are simply too wet to manage by mowing. The management committee have experienced significant problems with the legalities of attempting to re-establish the fences.

Recommendations

- The re-introduction of grazing is a priority on this site
- Resources are required to tackle scrub clearance to begin restoring the site, even if grazing is re-established soon.
- Increasing awareness of the value of this site for wildlife and for the need for grazing management is essential to safeguarding the future of this site.



Species rich sward, Thwaite common, CWS 1119

Appendix 2 – breakdown of site visits

Tally	CWS no.	CWS name	Site area ha	Condition score	Details	Problems	NWT advice given & details. Site in Countryside Stewardship or similar
South Norfolk							
1.	8	Boyland Common	3.9	1	Managed for hay	Vehicles – illicit	Yes Management statement written Site well managed prior to advice
2.	27	Brewer's Green	4.3	4	Grazed, but no cutting. Rank in places	Overgrazing Inappropriate/insufficient mowing	Yes Management statement written
3.	2132	Beckhithe Meadow	2	5	Horse grazed, but no cutting and rank in places.	Undergrazing/inappropriate grazing Insufficient mowing	Yes Advisory letter sent
4.	30	Diss Cemetery	3.9	6 *	Will be lost to burials	Inappropriate mowing Development Owner's not receptive to advice.	Yes Management advice given
5.	97	Wood Green	8.8	2	ES Grazed and managed by hay cutting.	Insufficient mowing Insufficient scrub control Vehicles – illicit Dumping Tree planting	Yes Management statement prepared for HLS application; too new to be effective.
6.	213	Wymondham Abbey Meadows	4.09	4 *		Site overgrazed and rank in places	Owners and grazier not receptive.
7.	148	Land at Home Farm	4.33	7 D	Grassland part of site now managed as a garden	Development	No Site deleted from CWS register; site not visited since 1985 survey
8.	180	Well Plantation	1.4	4	Site unmanaged	Insufficient mowing No grazing	Yes Site not visited since 1985 survey
9.	62	Horsenford Meadow	1.2	1*	Threatened by new owner wanting to relax grazing and plant trees	Owner not knowledgeable	Yes Advisory letter sent
10.	25	Langmere Green	1.3	4		Inappropriate mowing	Brief advice given as part of monitoring.
11.	198	Swardeston Common	10	3	Common managed for amenity	Part of site needs grazing, but elsewhere is well managed	Yes MWT management plan.
12.	78	St Peter's Meadow	1.41	2	Managed for hay		Advice given
13.	243	South of River Tud	2.6	5	Hard standing in south-west of site	Development affects part Insufficient mowing	No advice.
14.	2102	Riches Hill	1.51	3	Site in Countryside Stewardship		Advice given and acted on
15.	87	Abbey Farm Orchard	1.5	7*	Now split into a garden and a paddock	Consider deletion. Becoming part of paddocks and gardens. Damage possibly too great to reverse.	Resurvey required

16.	211	Lizard & Wade's Pit	13.8	4	Managed as amenity space; northern section grazed & in better condition	Managed by topping – needs grazing and/or hay cut. Extension to south	Advice given
17.	55	Brock's Watering	6.8	2		Grazing sometimes inconsistent	Advice given
18.	184	Old Rectory Pond	0.1	7 D		Site ploughed and one pond filled in. All now arable. To be deleted from CWS register	
19.	49	Spring Meadow	0.8	4	Overgrazed and in need of cutting before grazing	Lack of resources and information	No advice.
20.	71	Low Street Meadow	0.4	6 D	Site dwindled to very small area	Largely part of a garden	Advice given in past, but not acted on
21.	141	Hales Green	26.7	2	SNDC manage	Slight overgrazing and some pond protection/restoration required	Advice given. CS scheme in force.
22.	84	Beck Meadow	3.3	5*		Grassland improved, re-survey required. Consider deletion.	
23.	66	Wreningham Hall Meadow	0.9	4	Unmanaged	Site appears unmanaged; re-survey required	Owners not found
24.	233a	Bray Meadow	2.5	5	Unmanaged	Site appears unmanaged; re-survey required	Owners not found Poor
25.	282	The Beck Meadow	5.2	5	Unmanaged	Owners not very receptive to advice	
26.	215	Wymondham Marshes	4.3	4	Grazing not ideal.	Owners not very receptive to advice.	Further visit required.
27.	205	Melton Road Meadow	1.1	3	Scrub cleared and grazing management in place		Management statement written for new HLS agreement; site in expired CS scheme;
28.	67	Wreningham Meadow	1.7	4	Unmanaged	Ownership uncertain	
29.	68	Adj River Waveney	1.4	5	Unmanaged	Ownership uncertain	
West Norfolk							
30.	532	Pentney Lakes	11.61	5	Site topped most years & horse grazed.	Inappropriate mowing Insufficient/inappropriate grazing Owner not receptive to advice	Yes Management plan written for planning purposes, some aspects followed for grassland areas.
31.	570	Barrow Common	33	5	Minimal management in recent years May improve as is now part of HLS agreement Unfenced registered common land	Lack of grazing Lack of scrub control Inappropriate mowing Inappropriate burning	Yes Management plan prepared for HLS, too new to be effective as yet.

32.	308	String Drain	23	5		No management	Yes Management statement prepared for HLS; too new to be effective as yet.
33.	332	Denver Mill Meadow	6.1	6 *	Wet grassland turned into a pond	Development Inappropriate mowing Pond dug on wet area	Yes Management outlined for planning
34.	344	North Downham Fields	8.2	7 D		Development	No CWS deleted
35.	2044	Whin Hill Stone Pit	2.31	5		No management No funding for management	Yes Advisory letter sent; no funding for management works
36.	391	Adj. River Nar	6	7 D	Ploughed	Converted to arable	Not applicable
37.	333	Sluice Common	8.3	4	Grazed	Grazing not ideal	
38.	390	West Winch Common	89.5	2	Grazed	Overgrazing Right holders not receptive to advice	Site in CS, but right holders can graze as they wish.
Breckland							
39.	605	East Harling Fen	24	4*	Topped & burned in part Owner unwilling to take advice	Insufficient mowing No grazing Owner not receptive to advice Inappropriate burning	Yes Management statement written and discussed with owner. Advice largely followed.
40.	780	Adjacent river Thet	6.7	2	Countryside Stewardship		Yes Management plan produced for Countryside Stewardship & largely followed by previous owner; new owner entering HLS
41.	784	Wittle Meadow	6.4	2	Countryside Stewardship & now entering HLS	Grazing needs to be resolved – site very wet and annual grazing not possible, hence scrub encroachment in places.	Yes Management plan produced for Countryside Stewardship & largely followed by previous owner
42.	873	South East of White House Farm	12.2	3	Countryside Stewardship Site is improving	Insufficient scrub control	Yes Management plan produced for Countryside Stewardship & followed. Lack of money hinders further work
43.	2064	Decoy Common	5.1	4	Managed as amenity land	Inappropriate mowing Owners not receptive to advice	Yes Management statement written, but lack of funding hinders some of the implementation.
44.	836	Caston Common	29.7	4	Largely unmanaged	Insufficient mowing Insufficient scrub control No grazing	Yes Advisory letter sent Some work carried out after initial advice
45.	888	Adj. Limekiln Cottage	2.17	1	Organic smallholding	None	Yes Advisory letter sent.

					with sheep		
46.	646	Swangey Sheltand Meadows	7.7	2	Site grazed as a small holding	Slight over grazing	Yes Advice largely followed; in ELS
47.	900	Narborough Trout Lakes	9	7	Site managed as amenity grassland and all grassland interest lost.	Inappropriate mowing	Site deleted following re-survey.
48.	598	Broomscott Common	9.9	4	Unmanaged	Common land Lack of resources	Advice given and follow up required
North Norfolk							
49.	1119	Thwaite Common	15	4	Countryside Stewardship Difficult to graze as registered common	Insufficient scrub control Insufficient mowing Insufficient grazing	Yes Management plan written for Countryside Stewardship Site decline following removal of fencing, awaiting SOS decision on fencing
50.	2094	Fairfield Lawn	0.5	1	Small lawn of great species richness	No problems	Yes Management statement written and followed
51.	1142	Fairies Lane Meadow	0.9	5*	Small meadow, owner not interested in ESS	Inappropriate mowing No scrub control Pond dug on wet area	Yes Lack of money hinders implementation
52.	2101	Happy Valley	4	4	Amenity site	Inappropriate mowing	Yes Lack of money hinders implementation
53.	1167	Swanton Abbott Low Common	15.3	4	Initial restoration not followed up	Lack of resources	On going advice; part of site in CS
54.	2076	Gravel Pit Lane, Holt	1.3	3	In need of mowing and scrub control; managers lack money.	Yes Advice given and help received from NNDC Small, informal amenity site	Advice given
55.	2141	Pond Hills Meadow	2.39	5	Unmanaged	Lack of resources Inaccessible	Advice given
Broadland							
56.	1345	Weston Meadow	5	4		Inappropriate cutting Insufficient grazing	
57.	1411	Horstead Gravel Pit	5.4	2	Gravel pit, mostly unmanaged		Advice given and acted on
58.	1410	Hautbois Common	1.1	6 D		Heavily improved by regular cutting	Owners not receptive to advice
59.	2016	Frettenham Old Lime Pit	9.2	4 *	Unmanaged	Developer seeking to develop part of site.	Advice given and to be followed up through planning process
Great Yarmouth							
60.	1436	Winterton PCC Land	9.2	2	Most of site pony grazed and rest unmanaged wood	Some overgrazing	Advisory letter sent

Appendix 3

COUNTY WILDLIFE SITE MONITORING FORM 2008

1 Site code	2 Site Name	
3 Date visited		4 Visited by
5 Which compartment/s of the site did you visit? (Indicate on a sketch map/1:10 000 map if necessary)		

6 How do you rate the quality & condition of the site? Make notes on individual compartments if required							
Compt. No.	Good or excellent Score 1	Reasonable Score 2	Recovering Score 3	Declining Score 4	Unfavourable/ neglected Score 5	Part destroyed Score 6	Destroyed Score 7
Overall condition							

7 If the condition has changed since the last visit, or if site is unfavourable or in decline, what is the status of the change/condition? Please tick appropriate box		Active (0-6mths)		Recent (6mths-2yrs)		Old (>2 years)		Not known
8 What is the proportion of the site affected by the change? (0-10%, 11-20%, 21-30%, 31-40%, 41-50% and so on)				9 What was the motive for the change or for the condition of the site? (intentional, accidental resources (lack of/subsidies/grants), side effect of other activities, unsure)				
10 If site is damaged, neglected or in decline, in your opinion is this reversible or irreversible? Reversible								
10.1 Is site under threat? Yes or No								
10.2 If yes, please specify								
11 Does the site still meet the relevant County Wildlife Site criteria? Yes/No/Unsure (please give details)								
12 Is a re-survey required? Yes/no								
13 Was a re-survey carried out as part of this monitoring exercise? Yes/no								

14 Has there been any change to other species and habitats (i.e. beyond those for which the site was selected)? Y/N (please give details)

15 What is your overall impression of the site and what management is in place? What management recommendations do you make? Please use this space to make any relevant notes about the site, including changes to maps/citations and ownership details.

16 Grazing information (for sites where grazing required only)

- Is the site grazed? Yes/No

For grazed sites:

- Please specify stock & other details (times of year etc)
- Are changes to the grazing regime recommended? Please specify

For ungrazed sites:

- Would grazing enhance this site?
- Does the site have fencing, water supply etc?
- Are there stock on the landholding/nearby that could be used? P
- Are there any obstacles to grazing the site?

COUNTY WILDLIFE SITE MONITORING

Site code/name

CHECKLIST: CAUSE OF CHANGE

(Choose one or more of the following – please add to list where appropriate, so we can develop & refine monitoring standards. Please note if the threat is internal, external or potential)

CAUSE OF CHANGE Decline/loss/improvement	TICK BOX	DETAILS/ COMMENTS
Appropriate management		
Grazing		
Mowing/cutting		
Burning		
Sporadic cultivation/ ploughing/disturbance		
Scrub control		
Rolling		
Chain Harrowing		
Ditch maintenance		
Drain maintenance		
Rabbit control		
Herbicides		
Application of farmyard manure		
Other (please specify)		
Inappropriate management		
Unmanaged		
Under grazing		
Over grazing		
Mowing/cutting		
Scrub encroachment		
Burning		
Planting		
Herbicide/pesticide/fertiliser use		
Inappropriate stock feeding		
Ploughing		

Tree/hedgerow removal		
Non-native species		
Tree/hedgerow removal		
Drainage		
Dredging		
Pond filling		
Other(please specify)		
Vandalism		
Fly tipping		
Arson		
Other (please specify)		
Access/Recreation		
Vehicle disturbance		
Human disturbance/trampling		
Animal disturbance/trampling		
Other (please specify)		
Pollution		
Diffuse		
Direct		
Development (buildings, roads etc)		
Planning permission		
Peat		
Mineral and waste		
Other (please specify)		
Service operations		
Waterways operations		
Highways operations		
Electrical works		
Gas works		
Sewage treatment works		
Flood defence works		
Other (please specify)		
Agricultural/forestry/woodland operations		
Other		
Algal growth		

[illegible]