

Burton Bradstock Parish Council

Management Plan for Corncrake 2015-2020

FINAL v.4

SECTION ONE	
Site Name:	Corncrake
Owned by:	Burton Bradstock Parish Council
Management plan date production:	Final v. 4 January 2015
Contact Person:	David Dixon 01308 898620
Summary	<p>Two riverside fields with boundary hedges.</p> <p>Functional flood plain for the river Bride.</p> <p>Crossed by two Public Rights of Way from 3 gated access points.</p> <p>Management objectives derived from the Burton Bradstock Parish Plan 2014-2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain rural character of fields, esp important in providing a setting for the village/conservation Area• Maintain and improve access for informal recreation• Improve biodiversity value of site

SECTION TWO	DESCRIPTION
Area	3 Ha
Altitude	6m
Vegetation type	Improved grassland with mixed species native hedges and riverbank
General Description	<p>Improved agricultural fields with riverside boundary to the north and three hedged boundaries.</p> <p>Derelict hedge line running north to south.</p> <p>Seasonal flooding and proximity of the water table can result in extended periods of wet ground conditions.</p>
Key Features & species	<p>Seasonal flooding</p> <p>River margin</p> <p>Old hedgerow trees</p> <p>Evidence of Water Vole & Otter along river</p>
Land Use	<p>In recent years the fields have been used for grazing livestock.</p> <p>Since 2012 the Parish Council has let summer grazing on license to a local farmer.</p> <p>Roadside and eastern boundary hedges were flailed in 2012 prior to the sale of the land.</p>

SECTION THREE	MANAGEMENT AIMS & OBJECTIVES
	Maintain open rural character of fields
	Maintain and improve public access
	Conserve existing flora and fauna
	Improve or extend habitats to widen range and quantity of species
	Manage the flood alleviation potential of the fields
	Improve the educational offer of the fields, especially use by the Village Primary School

SECTION FOUR	CONSTRAINTS
	Fields functional part of river Bride floodplain. Area within 8m of river under flood management scheme operated by the Environment Agency.
	<p>Definitive line of two Public Rights of Way need to be maintained and kept clear of obstacles.</p> <p>Site heavily used by residents/ visitors for walking and dog exercising.</p> <p>Puddling/ Poaching of gateways by cattle and pedestrian use.</p>
	Roadside boundary and ditch shared with Highways Authority. Requires regular maintenance to mitigate flooding of roadways.
	Section of Bredy Lane lies below the level of Corncrake and suffers flooding incidents. Excavation of ditch and extension to join Common Lane ditch an action involving Dorset County Council as Highway Authority.
	Eastern boundary shared with Puncknowle Manor Estate and requires joint agreement
	Western boundary shared with village Playing field
	Importance of fields to village character by providing a rural setting for the historic core/ defined Conservation Area

SECTION FIVE	RESOURCES
Payments	Parish Council entitlement to Single Farm payments expires in 2015 Income from letting grass keep/ grazing license fee Budget from the Parish Council
Grants	Dorset County Council grants Lottery Funding bids Tree Planting support from Woodland Trust Wildflower support from Dorset Wildlife Trust
Giving	Fundraising with residents - ideas such as sponsoring trees
People	Parish Volunteer Group Support from Dorset Ranger Service Support from National Trust Warden

SECTION SIX	MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS
Grassland	<p>Move to traditional hay meadow management regime for main grassland area in 2015.</p> <p>Hay cut no earlier than July 15th each year. Follow on grazing to be controlled by new grazing licence.</p> <p>License for limited number of cattle (family group by preference) for a period of 8 weeks September through to end of October.</p> <p>License to cover control of ground poaching.</p> <p>Once new hay cutting regime established consider seeding the grassland with wildflower seed or planting.</p> <p>Grassland in tree planting areas will be managed by an annual mechanical cut and regular weeding around trees by the volunteer group.</p>

Access	<p>Continue to maintain lines of Public Rights of Way – With mowing if required.</p> <p>Allow open access unless this starts to cause problems for delivery of other management objectives</p> <p>Maintain all gates in good working order.</p> <p>Promptly address any issues with footpath surface (mow overgrown grass – Terram/ gravel solution for any excessive puddling/ poaching around gateways)</p>
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<p>Hedges/ Trees</p>	<p>Comply with Defra Good Practice Guidance for all hedge management</p> <p>Lay western boundary hedge – Winter 2015. Retaining selected hedgerow trees.</p> <p>Negotiate with Puncknowle Manor regarding eastern boundary hedge management. Seek to allow hedgerow to grow upward on 3 year cycle with side trimming to create “A” shaped hedgerow</p> <p>Allow roadside hedge to thicken and grow for first 3 years of this management plan – side trimming accepted if required by Highway Authority.</p> <p>Consider option of hedgelaying sections of roadside hedge in year 3-5 of this management plan.</p> <p>Tree Planting</p> <p>Enhance food supply and habitat for birds by planting some 30 native fruit trees in the area between the derelict hedgeline and the eastern boundary of the site.</p> <p>Enhance the main grassland area with the planting of 6 native standard trees.</p> <p>Allow derelict hedgerow to mature. Accept and leave deadwood to decay in situ as valuable micro habitat.</p>
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Riverside Works	<p>Continue contact with the Environment Agency about nature and frequency of riverside management for flood protection.</p> <p>Liaise with Environment Agency regarding creation of riverside buffer/ walk by moving the existing fence line into Corncrake.</p>
Ponds/ Scrapes	<p>Look to create a pond or series of shallow scrapes in the grassland to diversify habitat types present and encourage wider range of species.</p>
Improve potential for educational activities	<p>Work with Burton Bradstock Primary School to ensure that the educational opportunities of the site and of the works proposed in this plan are fully developed.</p>

SECTION SEVEN	WORK PLAN
Hedge Management	<p>Winter 2015</p> <p>Lay western boundary hedge retaining a number of standard trees specimens.</p> <p>Contact adjacent landowner to agree management practice for eastern boundary hedge.</p> <p>Winter 2017</p> <p>Assess roadside hedge with view to laying sections of the hedge.</p>

<p>Tree Planting & associated fencing work</p>	<p>Winter 2015</p> <p>Plant at 9m centres 30 native fruit trees (apple, damson, cherry) in the area between the derelict hedge line and the eastern boundary.</p> <p>Plant 6 native standard trees (Oak, Walnut, Sweet Chestnut) with associated tree guards and stock protection</p> <p>Run a new stock proof fence line (post and wire) across the field 2m west of the derelict hedge line to protect tree planting. Fence to include pedestrian/stock access gates as required.</p> <p>Grassland in tree planting areas annual mechanical cut supported by regular weeding around trees by the volunteer group.</p>
<p>Grazing license</p>	<p>Approach existing grazier regarding new grazing license to move to a traditional hay meadow management regime from 2015.</p>
<p>Hay cut</p>	<p>Hay cut no sooner than July 15 each year.</p>
<p>Grazing</p>	<p>Low intensity grazing by family group of cattle for 8 weeks September/October each year.</p>

<p>Pond and Scraps</p>	<p>2015</p> <p>Investigate ownership of area between Corncrake and Bredy Road thought to be a former pond with a view to seeking permission to clear/ excavate to create a pond/ wet area for wildlife and water storage purposes.</p> <p>Clear and create pond area.</p> <p>Winter 2017</p> <p>Re assess option of creating shallow sided scraps in the main grassed area to provide sward diversity.</p>
<p>Diversification of grassland</p>	<p>Winter 2015 Onwards</p> <p>Assess grass sward and decide if action is required to assist diversification of flowering plants through the introduction of wildflower seed or plugs (i.e yellow rattle)</p>
<p>Access</p>	<p>Work with the Environment Agency to move the riverside fence 4m into both the playing Field and corncrake to creat a riverside walk.</p> <p>As part of the above work to address drainage issues at gate entrances</p> <p>Ongoing work to maintain gates/ gate entrances</p>

SECTION EIGHT	PLAN REVIEW
Consultation on this plan	A4 summary produced Open Event December 6 th Reading Room
Adoption by Parish Council	January 2015
Annual report	December 2015
Review	September 2020