

Burton Bradstock Parish Council

Management Plan for Corncrake 2015-2020

INTERIM REVIEW July 2018 DRAFTv.1

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 supported
	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	<p>Income from letting grass keep/ grazing license fee</p> <p>Parish Plan Budget from the Parish Council</p>
Grants	<p>Dorset County Council grants</p> <p>Lottery Funding bids</p> <p>Tree Planting support from Woodland Trust</p>
Giving	<p>Fundraising with residents - including sponsoring of trees</p>
People	<p>Parish Volunteer Group</p> <p>Support from Dorset Wildlife Trust</p> <p>Support from Dorset Ranger Service</p> <p>Support from National Trust Warden</p>

SECTION SIX	MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS
Grassland	<p>Since 2015 attempts have been made to move toward a traditional hay meadow management regime for the main grassland area. 3 autumn sowings of Yellow Rattle seed have been undertaken with mixed success.</p> <p>Wildflower mix sowed with Environment Agency support in 2017. Taken well and provides a possible source of Green Hay for distribution around the grassland.</p> <p>Hay cut undertaken by contractor no earlier than July 15th each year since 2015. No charge made.</p> <p>Since 2015 unable to find a grazier willing to undertake follow on grazing.</p> <p>Grazing by license for a limited number of cattle (family group by preference) for a period of 8 weeks September through to end of October remains a key component for achieving hay meadow management.</p> <p>License to cover control of ground poaching.</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. In 2017 started monthly summer mowing of circular path. In 2018 mown path used by the Primary School as part of exercise regime for pupils.</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>Allow derelict hedgerow to mature. Accept and leave deadwood to decay in situ as valuable micro habitat.</p> <p>Western boundary hedge laid by volunteers in Winter 2015. Selected hedgerow trees retained.</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. Woodland Trust free trees used in 2016 to fill gaps in roadside hedge.</p> <p>Consider option of hedgelaying sections of roadside and eastern boundary hedge in year 5 of this management plan.</p> <p>30 native fruit trees planted in 2016 between the derelict hedgeline and the eastern boundary of the site to enhance food supply and habitat for birds.</p> <p>7 standard Sessile Oak trees planted in 2017 in two fenced enclosures to add landscape structure.</p>
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Riverside Works	Continue contact with the Environment Agency about nature and frequency of riverside management for flood protection.
Ponds/ Scrapes	Consider creation of a series of shallow scrapes in the grassland to diversify habitat types present and encourage wider range of species. Investigate feasibility of restoring small pond beside Bredy Road.
Improve potential for educational activities	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.

SECTION SEVEN	WORK PLAN
Hedge Management	<p>Winter 2018-2020</p> <p>Monitor hedges and commission side trimming - Contact adjacent landowner to agree management practice for eastern boundary hedge.</p> <p>Cut back Brambles and any hedge growth into the grassland areas.</p> <p>Winter 2020</p> <p>Assess eastern boundary and roadside hedges with view to laying sections of the hedge with volunteer group.</p>

Tree Planting & associated fencing work

Winter 2018-2020

Plant 4 to 6 native fruit trees with tree protection (apple, damson, cherry) in the area between the derelict hedge line and the eastern boundary to replace dead or damaged trees and fill gaps.

Plant 2 native standard Sessile Oak trees with associated tree guards in the fenced areas to replace dead tree and fill space in enclosure.

Investigate feasibility of planting mix of native shrub whips (Hazel, Willow, Guilder Rose, Wayfaring Tree) between mown path and boundary hedge on along Common Road.

Depending on availability of suitable grazier 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 and stiles as required.

All tree planting to be maintained with regular weeding around trees by the volunteer group.

Install bat/ owl boxes in the large Willow by Common Lane. Work with the school to design and make boxes.

<p>Grazing & Grazing license</p>	<p>Low intensity grazing by family group of cattle for 8 weeks September/October each year.</p> <p>Approach potential graziers regarding establishing a new grazing license to support the move to a traditional hay meadow management regime.</p>
<p>Hay cut</p>	<p>Hay cut of main area no sooner than July 15 each year.</p> <p>In absence of securing a grazier to undertake additional hay cuts in September/Oct and again in March each year.</p>

Pond and Scrapes

2018

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.

Clear and create pond area.

Decision to go ahead with pond and scrapes linked to availability of mechanical diggers which in turn is connected to possible highways works on Bredy Road and clearing of Common Lane drain.

Winter 2018/19

Assess option of creating shallow sided scrapes in the main grassed area to provide sward diversity. Consider starting where Hemlock and Nettle growth most prolific if plant control measures are un successful.

<p>Diversification of grassland</p>	<p>Winter 2018 -2020</p> <p>Harvest Yellow Rattle seed from Area sown in 2016. Extend area of seed distribution from established area by heading north along old hedge boundary.</p> <p>Ensure ground is prepared for sowing and that grass is cut , with cuttings removed, prior to sowing and in the following March.</p> <p>Remove Docks from area sown with wildflower mix. Cut or Scythe area in late June and use as Green Hay to diversify the areas where Yellow Rattle has taken.</p> <p>Control Hemlock and Nettles by two cutting twice per year. Explore chemical treatment options if this approach fails to control plants spreading.</p>
<p>Access</p>	<p>2019</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
Interim Review	July 2018
Full Review	September 2020