ACRES Grassland SCORECARD

Farmer name:
Field number:
Business ID:

Surveyor:
Survey date:

Dominant grassland type:
Wet grassland ☐ Dry grassland ☐

Soil type:
Mineral soil ☐ Peat soil ☐

Total Score: (A+B) /100

A Ecological integrity

Total score A *(sum of A1 to A6)* /90

A1 What is the number of **positive indicators** in the field? Tick all positive indicators present below.

Note all positive indicators present as you walk a 'W' through the field.

Low: 0-4	0	High: 9-12	20
Medium: 5-8	10	Very high: 13+	25

Positive indicators: (tick those present)

- ☐ Bedstraws & Stitchworts
- ☐ Bird's-foot-trefoil
- ☐ Carline thistle
- ☐ Cowslips & Primrose
- ☐ Eyebrights
- ☐ Forget-me-nots
- ☐ Heathers
- ☐ Kidney vetch
- ☐ Knapweeds
- ☐ Lady's mantle
- ☐ Lady's smock *(Cuckooflower)*
- ☐ Lesser spearwort
- ☐ Louseworts *(Common & Marsh)*
- ☐ Marsh cinquefoil
- ☐ Marsh marigold
- ☐ Marsh pennywort
- ☐ Marsh thistle
- ☐ Meadowsweet
- ☐ Meadow thistle
- ☐ Mints *(all)*
- ☐ Orchids
- ☐ Ox-eye daisy
- ☐ Purple loosestrife
- ☐ Ragged robin
- ☐ Scabious *(Devil's-bit & field)*
- ☐ Sedges
- ☐ Self-heal & Bugle
- ☐ Sorrel *(Common & Sheep's)*
- ☐ Small rushes *(Spike, Woodrushes, Heath)*
- ☐ Sphagnum & Branched mosses
- ☐ Tormentil *(Common & English)*
- ☐ Umbels large *(and/or Common Valerian, Common hogweed)*
- ☐ Umbels small *(Pignut, Yarrow, Wild carrot)*
- ☐ Vetches & Vetchlings
- ☐ Violets *(all species)*; Harebell
- ☐ Wild Thyme
- ☐ Yellow Composites *(Cat's ear, Hawkweeds, Hawkbits & Goat's beard - not Dandelion)*
- ☐ Yellow Flag Iris
- ☐ Yellow rattle *(Hay rattle)*

A2 What is the cover of **all positive indicators** *(listed above)* throughout the entire field?

Cover is the proportion of the field taken up by all positive indicators present.

Low: None present or you can take several steps without encountering any positive indicators at all.	0
Moderate: You encounter a positive indicator with every few steps taken.	10
High: You encounter positive indicators with every step taken.	20
Very high: You encounter multiple different positive indicators with every step taken (and in between steps).	25

A3 What is the combined cover of **negative indicators/weeds** throughout the plot? *(tick if present)*

- ☐ Docks *(NOT small sorrels)*
- ☐ Thistles *(Creeping & spear)*
- ☐ Perennial Rye-grass
- ☐ Ragwort
- ☐ Nettles

High >25%: Occurring in dense patches or abundant throughout the field. Very visible in the sward.	-20
Moderate 5-25%: Occurring in medium to large patches in the field. Readily visible in the sward.	-10
Low <5%: None present or scattered or small clumps of negative indicators. Where present, overall cover should be less than 5%.	5

A4 Vegetation Structure. Note: If grassland is primarily grazed use A4(a) (including marsh fritillary suitability assessment); OR, if grassland is cut for hay or silage, use A4(b). *Refer to the guidance for sward quality details.*

A4(a) What is the **vegetation structure in grasslands** which are **PRIMARILY GRAZED?**

Over-grazed: Sward short throughout with little variation in height of vegetation. Few plants in flower.	-10
Moderate (over-grazed): Mostly short vegetation. >50% of field has short sward with occasional to frequent patches of tall vegetation.	10
Good: Field sward medium height throughout with positive indicators flowering. Areas of taller and /or shorter sward also occur.	25
Moderate (under-grazed): Mostly tall vegetation. 50-75% of field has tall sward. Litter and dead vegetation occurring.	15
Under-grazed: Rank vegetation present throughout the field.	-10

OR

A4(b) What is the **vegetation structure in grasslands** which are **CUT FOR HAY or SILAGE?**

Poor structure: No field margins present. Field topped right up to the field boundary OR short sward throughout.	-10
Moderate structure: Narrow field margins and/or headlands present (>1m) OR medium height sward throughout (20-30cm). At least 20% of grass in sward with flowering heads.	15
Good structure: Field margins and/or headlands at least 2m wide OR tall sward height throughout (>30cm). At least 50% of grass in sward with flowering heads.	25

AgriSnap photo taken: ☐

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A5 Marsh Fritillary suitability assessment in primarily grazed grassland

Numerous patches (at least quarter of the field), or majority of field with Devil's Bit Scabious? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Is the Devil's Bit Scabious present from ankle to knee height throughout? ☐ Yes ☐ No

A6 Field boundary quality.

Assess the quality of the **WORST 30m** of field boundary in the field. Refer to guidance document for details.

Poor: Wire fence only or very poor quality field boundary present.	0
Moderate: Moderate field boundary quality.	5
Good: Good field boundary quality.	10

What is the dominant field boundary in this field?

Dominant:		Also present:	
☐ Hedgerow	☐ Treeline	☐ Hedgerow	☐ Treeline
☐ Earth bank	☐ Stonewall	☐ Earth bank	☐ Stonewall
☐ Drainage ditch	☐ Wire fence	☐ Drainage ditch	☐ Wire fence

B Threats & pressures

Total score B *(sum of B1 to B6)* /10

B1 Is there any evidence of damaging activities to habitat, vegetation, or archaeology?

High: Damage occurring across a large area (≥21%) or of a serious nature if confined.	-30
Moderate: Damage occurring across a moderate area (≥6-20%) or of a moderate nature if confined.	-20
Low: Damage occurring across a small area (≤5%) or of a minor nature if confined.	-10
None: No damaging activities.	0

Damaging activities: *(tick relevant damage & describe in comments)*

☐ Damage from supplementary feeding	☐ Quarrying	☐ Boundary damage
☐ Damage to archaeological features	☐ Burning	☐ Removal of mature scrub/trees
☐ Inappropriate herbicide use	☐ Dumping	☐ Other *(please specify)*:

B2 What is the level of risk to the quality of natural water bodies within, adjacent to and downstream of the field due to pressures relating to flow, sediment, nutrients or other pollutants?

The source - pathway - receptor model should inform the assessment (see guidance).

High:	-25	**Low:**	-5
Moderate:	-15	**None:**	0

B3 What is the extent of bare soil & erosion?

High: Excessive areas of bare soil within the body of the field. Bare soil may also be extending out significantly from the main feed sites and/or water troughs, where poaching evident. Significant rutting and soil disturbance caused by vehicle/tractor access.	-20
Moderate: Bare soil mainly along regularly used stock routes or congregation areas, with minor soil loss occurring at a few points. Bare soil may extend a short distance beyond the main feed site and/or water points. Minor rutting and soil disturbance caused by occasional vehicle/tractor access may be present.	-10
Low: Bare soil more or less restricted to regular stock paths, 'pinch' points & small congregation areas. No soil loss.	10

B4 What is the cover of non-native invasive species?

High: Abundant. Some forming dense clumps, many seedlings.	-20
Moderate: Frequent. Some flowering, many seedlings present.	-10
Low: Scattered. Plants mostly small and not flowering.	-5
None: No non-native invasive species present.	0

Non-native invasive species: *(tick if present)*

☐ Rhododendron	☐ Himalayan balsam
☐ Cotoneaster	☐ Himalayan knotweed
☐ Japanese Knotweed	☐ Himalayan honeysuckle
☐ Giant Hogweed	☐ Other *(please specify)*:

B5 What is the extent of spreading immature scrub?

(This can be brambles, seedlings, scrub and trees generally lower than 1m in height and with a stem diameter of <5cm. Do not include established scrub)

High: >25% of the field has immature scrub cover, some well-established saplings may be present. Field is likely to show few signs of active management, such as signs of recent grazing or signs of livestock.	-20
Moderate: Cover of immature scrub in patches or individuals with overall cover of between 11-25% with particularly briars/brambles coming in.	-10
Low: Small patches of immature scrub or individual seedlings of immature scrub with overall cover of less than 10%. Grass growth easily seen underneath the scrub.	0

B6 What is the cover of bracken?

High: Very dense stands of bracken covering over half or more of the field, forming closed canopy.	-20
Moderate: Bracken forming dense stands covering parts of the field, mostly forming closed canopy.	-10
Low: Bracken absent or some scattered fronds and none forming closed canopy. Can include some isolated small patches or some larger patches on steep slopes.	0

Common management recommendations to pick from:

- ☐ Continue current management of this high quality grassland.
- ☐ Control the occurrence and spread of invasive species. Consult with CP team regarding solutions.
- ☐ Control the occurrence and spread of encroaching scrub, supporting actions are available.
- ☐ Control the occurrence and spread of encroaching bracken.
- ☐ Consider reducing fertiliser inputs.
- ☐ Consider using supporting actions to slow or impede the flow of drains.
- ☐ Use stock to graze field more evenly.
- ☐ Improve stock management, supporting actions e.g. Fencing / drinking facilities are available.
- ☐ Move feeders / troughs regularly and keep away from drains and rivers.
- ☐ Consider establishing a field margin.
- ☐ Field boundaries - reduce cutting.
- ☐ Field boundaries - consider planting gaps with suitable native species.
- ☐ Field boundaries - continue current management of high quality boundaries.
- ☐ No management advice.
- ☐ Other management advice.