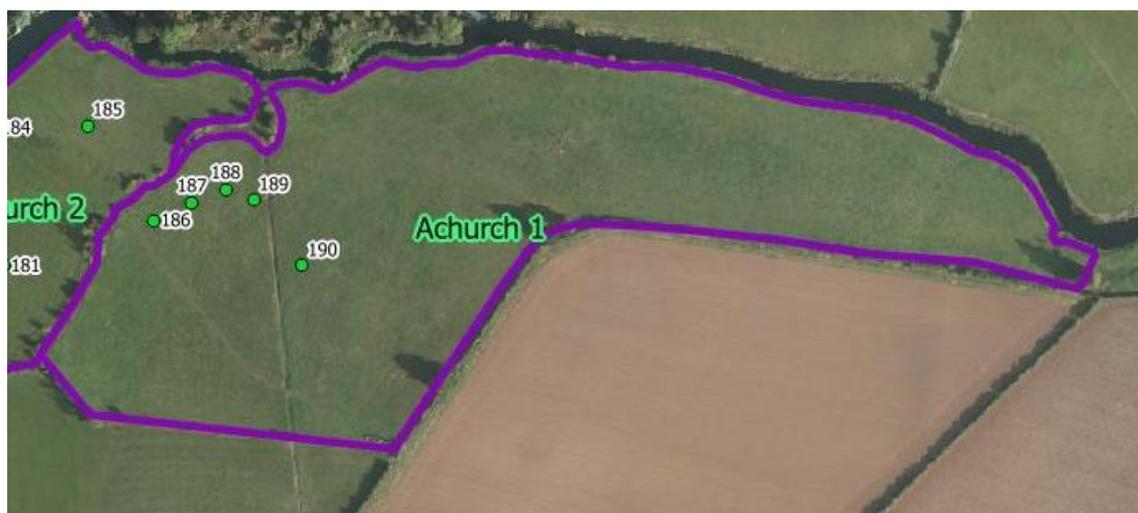


## Site Visit Assessment Form – Achurch 1



<b>Site Name</b> Achurch 1	<b>Grid Ref</b> TL0183	<b>County</b> Northamptonshire	
<b>Catchment</b> Nene	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Designation</b> None	<b>Size (ha)</b> 9.31
<b>Date</b> 9 <sup>th</sup> June 2016	<b>Meeting with</b> Steering Group	<b>Managed by</b> Tenant farmer.	
<b>Management and History</b>			
<b>Agri environment agreement</b>			
AG00560674 Restoration through change in management. First hay cut was 2014, then cut every year 2015, 2016. Managed as part of Achurch SSSI, which is adjacent and spectacular. Unlikely to have ever been arable, thought to have been pasture for 20-30 years. The 1979 phase 1 survey has them a better quality than the current SSSI.			
<b>Current management</b>			
Annual hay cut followed by aftermath grazing.			
<b>Restoration</b>			
Technique used/Dates			
Was previously spring grazed, then in 2014 first hay cut taken, so 2016 is third hay cut. Now is also aftermath grazed.			
<b>Hydrology</b>			
<b>Historical information</b>			
Was previously heavily grazed			
<b>Current site interest</b>		Attach excel spreadsheet for botanical data	
This is a very patchy field with a large spread of grassy areas. However forbs are well dispersed across the meadow. The community is close to MG6. The MG6 type <i>Lolium perenne-Cynosurus cristatus</i> grassland is a major permanent pasture type on moist			

but freely draining soils, along with two subtypes: MG6a - *Anthoxanthum odoratum* subcommunity and MG6b - *Trisetum flavescens* sub-community. The species number per square metre varies from 17 to 25, showing a high species diversity. Key MG4 species are present on the meadow including great burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis*, Autumn hawkbit *Leontodon autumnalis*, adder's tongue *Ophoglossum vulgatum* and ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*. On the higher/drier areas of the field, dropwort *Filipendula vulgaris*, salad burnet *Sanguisorba minor*, cat's ear *Hypochaeris radicate*, and field wood-rush *Luzula campestris* were found along with dominating downy oat-grass *Avenula pubescens*.

The Ellenberg indicator values are relatively low for soil fertility N=5.12 and soil moisture F=5.5. Soil reaction (R=6.06) is weakly acid, but still favourable for meadow species growth. The site has very good restoration potential if it remains under a consistent meadow management regime.

Phosphorus levels	Not known
Soil auger photo and findings	Near quadrat 186
	<p>Soil profile</p> <p><b>A-horizon</b> 0-20 cm clay-loam with some sand particles</p> <p><b>B-horizon</b> 20-50 cm clay loam At 50 cm –gravel lens 50-100 cm clay loam 100 cm mottling in the clay – gley/orange clay</p> <p><b>C-horizon</b> 120 cm – gravel, grit and water</p> <p>Loam is a mix of silt, sand and clay. Manganese nodules precipitate out in fluctuating water table so are a good indication of depth of fluctuating water zone. We did see nodules in this profile, but not recorded depth.</p>
<b>Site manager aspirations/objectives</b>	
More species rich grassland	
<b>Management recommendations</b>	

Maintain management regime, but perhaps aim for a regular late June hay cut to reduce nutrients. Long term grazing management generally results in an increase in fertility in the soil, as grazing doesn't remove nutrients, compared to taking a timely hay cut, which removes a significant amount of P.

	<b>Achurch 1</b>	<b>Achurch 2</b>
<b>Ellenberg F (moisture tolerance)</b>	5.5	5.84
<b>Ellenberg N (soil fertility)</b>	5.12	5.6
<b>Ellenberg R (pH)</b>	6.06	6.2
<b>Species/quadrat range</b>	17-25	11-19
<b>NVC (top 2 MAVIS subcommunities)</b>	MG6b MG6a	MG9 MG6a