

Site Visit Assessment Form – Achurch 2, Northamptonshire



Site Name Achurch 2	Grid Ref TL0083	County Northamptonshire	
Catchment Nene	Ownership	Designation none	Size (ha) 4.48
Date 9 th June 2016	Meeting with FMP Steering Group	Managed by Tenant farmer	
Management and History			
Agri environment agreement			
AG00560674 Restoration through change in management. Started in 2013. Was previously heavily grazed. Unlikely to have ever arable, thought to have been pasture for 20-30 years. The 1979 phase 1 survey has them a better quality than the current SSSI.			
Current management			

Annual hay cut followed by aftermath grazing	
Restoration	
Technique used/Dates	
As for Achurch 1, changed from grazing to hay cut in 2014. Had 3 hay cuts now and is aftermath grazed.	
Hydrology	
Historical information	
Current site interest	Attach excel spreadsheet for botanical data
<p>This field is much more grassy compared to Achurch-2. The small area of slightly higher ground, which is more species rich, is located towards the weir. The relatively high cover of <i>Heracleum sphondylium</i> indicates better drainage of the soil in that area. The overall species richness ranges from 11 to 19 species per square metre. The dicot/monocot ratio is 0.94 comparing to 1.11 on Achurch-1. Small sedge <i>Carex spicata</i> was found on the meadow in small amounts, however hairy sedge <i>Carex hirta</i> reached 15% cover in places. The most dominant grasses with cover over 10% were red fescue <i>Festuca rubra</i>, Yorkshire fog <i>Holcus lanatus</i>, meadow barley <i>Hordeum secalinum</i>, perennial ryegrass <i>Lolium perenne</i> and rough meadow grass <i>Poa trivialis</i>.</p> <p>MG9, MG6a, MG9a and MG10a NVC communities all scored over 56 in the MAVIS calculation of the vegetation match to NVC types. MG9 - <i>Holcus lanatus</i>-<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i> grassland of permanently moist, gleyed and periodically inundated soils, and MG9a –the <i>Poa trivialis</i> sub-community dominate on the site. Indicator Ellenberg scores are higher on this site compared to Achurch-1. Soil moisture F=5.84 and soil fertility N=5.6 probably relate to the grass dominance in the vegetation cover. Reducing the nutrient levels in the soil should decrease the grass dominance and support the growth of more forbs. Soil reaction R=6.2 is intermediate between weakly acid and weakly alkaline.</p>	
Phosphorus levels	Not known
Soil auger photo and findings	None taken
Site manager aspirations/objectives	
More species rich grassland	
Management recommendations	
Maintain current management regime.	

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