

Mapping Habitat Connectivity of the

Wild Purbeck

NATURE IMPROVEMENT AREA

The Dorset AONB has undertaken habitat analysis to identify where conservation efforts should be targeted and has effectively used this data to engage with farmers. The technique could easily be duplicated elsewhere...

Why have we done it?

Professor Sir John Lawton wants conservation efforts to be:

BIGGER > BETTER > MORE > JOINED...

The Convention on Biological Diversity and Defra's Biodiversity 2020 strategy wants:

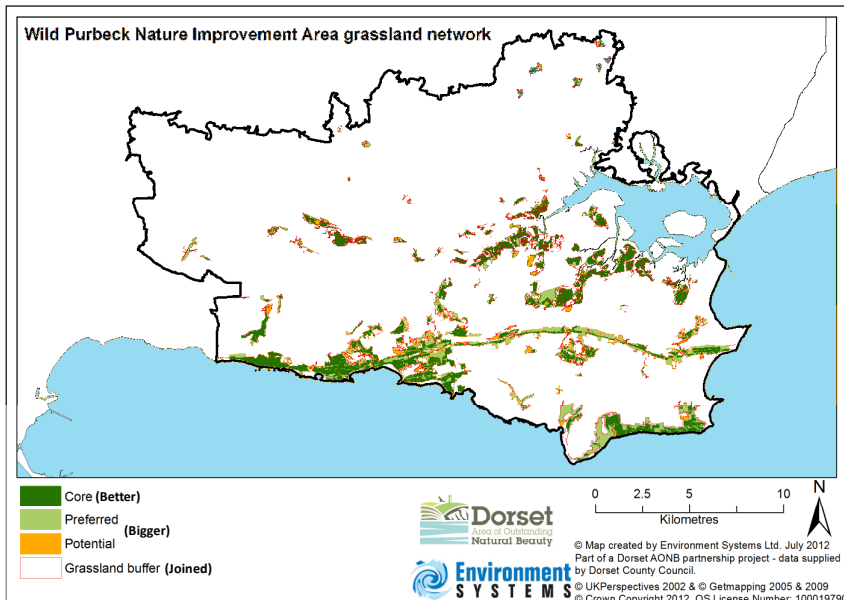
17% of land and inland water conserved by 2020...

But how do we know that our conservation efforts are helping to achieve these targets?

You need to know three things:

1. The location of habitats of conservation importance;
2. How well these habitats are connected for species movement; and
3. Where the opportunities are to strengthen this network.

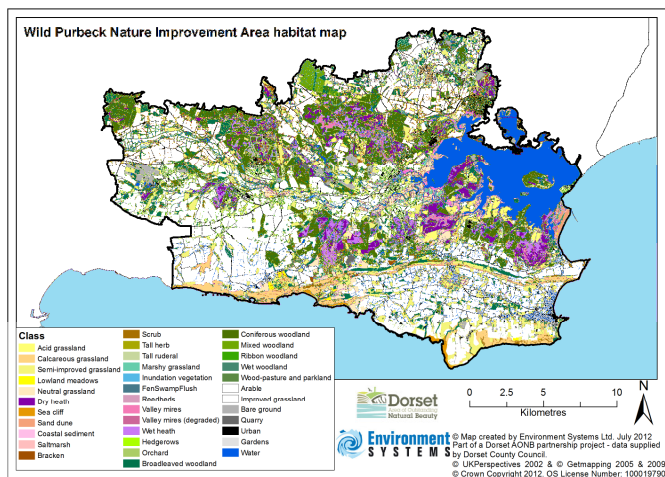
With help from Dorset Environment Records Centre, Environment Systems and Footprint Ecology, we have mapped the 'Functioning Ecological Networks' for Wild Purbeck NIA along with opportunities for habitat restoration using a variety of innovative and cost-effective techniques.



The use of innovative GIS techniques and satellite data allows significant areas of habitat to be mapped quickly and simply. It can easily be repeated to monitor delivery against targets.

How have we done it?

1. We collated all existing data on habitats into one GIS *Integrated Habitat System* layer.
2. Using aerial and satellite data, we identified and mapped the habitat for areas where no data existed, giving us *complete habitat coverage* for the NIA.
3. We identified core sites that need to be made **BETTER** for woodland, wetland, heathland and grassland habitats.
4. For each of these habitat types; we identified how well the sites are **JOINED**, using the dispersal ability of a 'Generic Focal Species'.
5. Within these **JOINED** 'Functioning Ecological Networks', we identified suitable restoration sites that would make the networks **BIGGER**.
6. Outside of these 'Functioning Ecological Networks', we have identified **MORE** sites that can create new networks.
7. We worked with landowners to help *implement* these habitat creation opportunities.



Wild Purbeck
NATURE IMPROVEMENT AREA

The Wild Purbeck Partnership comprises of Dorset AONB of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Country Land and Business Association, Dorset County Council, Dorset Wildlife Trust, Environment Agency, Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group South West, Forestry Commission, Jurassic World Heritage Park, Jurassic Museum and College, National Trust, National Trust, Birdwatcher's Club, Wessex Water and the Woodland Trust. The project has been supported by Dorset, DCCL, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission and National England.

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