



WN3 Ditch, Dyke and Rhine restoration assessment

Assessment of existing biological interest

| Biological Interest Survey Questionnaire | YES / NO | Advice |
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| The ditch is in arable land, intensive grassland or an urban setting. It has few, if any, plants evident in the summer months (June-Sept). | | The chance that the ditch has a rich plant community or currently supports anything very special is quite low. May be suitable for restoration where adequate supply of good quality water can be secured. |
| The ditch exhibits dark murky water or water green with prolific duckweed or algal cover in the spring/summer | | Duckweed and macroalgae should not exceed a cover of 30% in summer. May be suitable for restoration where adequate supply of good quality water can be secured. |
| The ditch is heavily overgrown with emergent and bankside plants and/or woody growth. | | Normally less than 20% of the ditch length should be in heavy shade (unless the ditch is adjacent to a hedge or within established woodland). Ditch may be suitable for restoration where an adequate supply of good quality water can be secured. |
| The ditch appears dry or with little water for all or parts of the year | | Ditches should be able to support water levels no more than 45 cm below the mean field level and a minimum depth of 30 cm throughout the year. Ditches may be suitable for restoration where adequate inputs of good quality water can be secured. |
| The ditch is steep sided with limited marginal habitat | | Normally more than 25% of the ditch length should support a gently sloping profile or berms and shelves. Restoration may be appropriate where an adequate supply of good quality water can be secured. |
| The ditch is in arable land or improved grassland, and has stands of wetland plants evident in the summer months including a mix of floating and emergent plants (June-Sept)) | | The ditch is likely to have existing interest and may support some uncommon species. Restoration work will need to be approached cautiously to protect existing features. A management option rather than restoration capital item may be more appropriate. Consult your Natural England advisor. |
| The pond is located in semi-natural habitat (e.g. old woodland, heathland, unimproved grassland), or in or adjacent to long established wetland areas like river valleys, fens, grazing marsh. | | These ditches have a high probability of supporting significant interest including endangered or rare species – even if the ditch looks uninteresting! A management option rather than restoration capital item may be more appropriate. Consult your Natural England advisor. |

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|--|----------|--|
| The ditch is important for the management of the wet grassland options GS9-12, wetland options WT6-10 or management of rough grazing for birds UP2 | | Restoration and/or management options may be appropriate even if the ditches themselves are of limited biological interest. |
| Existing records are available for species of interest recorded in the ditches | | <p>Existing records may identify biological interest associated with the ditches. Records may be available from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Local Environmental Record Centres (www.alerc.org.uk/) ■ Local Internal Drainage Boards (www.ada.org.uk) ■ Local Environment Agency area teams ■ Local Wildlife Trusts (www.wildlifetrusts.org) ■ Other recent local surveys or observations <p>Species Records are also collated and available online from the National Biodiversity Network Gateway (http://www.nbn.org.uk/)</p> <p>Include information from any biological surveys completed on the ditch.</p> |
| A check for signs of water vole activity has been undertaken (e.g. burrows, latrine areas, feeding stations, footprints, runs and slipways) | | Include any observations with your assessment. |
| The ditch contains Non Native Invasive Species such as Parrot's Feather, Water Fern, Floating Pennywort etc. | | Identify the species present and submit this information with the assessment. Further information about identifying and recording non-native species can be found on the GB non-native species website. (www.nonnativespecies.org/index.cfm?sectionid=81) |