

derelict & industrial land

Description of Habitat

Derelict land is often known as wasteland, brownfield or disused land. For the purposes of this plan it includes derelict building land, industrial sites, former colliery sites, spoil heaps, disused railways, former clay pits, landfill and aggregate extraction quarry sites. These sites begin as bare landscapes, but become colonised by natural vegetation. It is the transient nature and subsequent development of the vegetation, which makes this habitat unique and often attracts rare and uncommon plants and animals (such as orchids and lichens, solitary bees and wasps).



Stryt Las a'r Hafod

Current Status

The wide diversity of habitats, which can be found on derelict land sites reflects the history of the site and its complexity. Colonising habitats include: secondary woodland - often birch and willow, but also wet woodland and scrub; secondary grassland, which can be species rich especially if the substrate is calcium enriched; and open water can be important for amphibians and wintering wildfowl. Derelict buildings on such sites can provide roosting habitats for bats and birds.

number have been designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Local Nature Reserve (LNR) under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC) under the European Habitat Directive. Other sites with high local biodiversity value are non-statutory Wildlife Sites (WS) and a register of these sites is maintained by WCBC. Certain species e.g. great crested newts are protected by law.

Environmental assessment must be carried out before planning permission can be granted for certain types of projects that may have significant environmental effects, under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) England and Wales Regulations 1999. This procedure allows for a systematic and structured assessment of the potential effects of a development on the environment, which must then be taken into account in the decision making process.

Legislation and Site Designation

Derelict land is not protected as such, in fact development of brownfield sites is encouraged (Planning Policy Wales) and land within industrial estates is allocated for industrial development within the Unitary Development Plan. However, in recognition of the high biodiversity value of these sites a



Wrexham railway line



Key Species Associated with Derelict Land

SPECIES	STATUS
Mammals	
● Water vole	Nationally Important
● Hare	Nationally Important
● Pipistrelle bat	Nationally Important
● Lesser horseshoe bat	Nationally Important
● Badger	Locally Important
Birds	
● Grey partridge	Nationally Important
● Linnet	Nationally Important
● Song thrush	Nationally Important
● Skylark	Nationally Important
● Lapwing	Nationally Important
● Black redstart	Locally Important
● Little ringed plover	Locally Important
● Barn owl	Locally Important
● Snipe	Locally Important
● Sand martin	Locally Important
Amphibians & Reptiles	
● Great crested newt	Nationally Important
Invertebrates	
● Solitary wasps & bees	Locally Important
● Grizzled skipper butterfly	Locally Important
Plants	
● Yellow bartsia	Locally Important
● Dryer's greenweed	Locally Important
● Bee orchid	Locally Important
● Grass vetchling	Locally Important
● Spiny restharrow	Locally Important
● <i>Peltigera didactyla</i> (lichen)	Locally Important
● <i>Sarcosagium campestre</i> (lichen)	Locally Important

Current Factors Affecting Habitat

- Loss of wasteland sites due to reclamation and redevelopment.
- Landscaping.
- Contaminated land and pollution.
- Mineral Extraction.
- Natural succession. The natural process to a more closed vegetation of trees and scrub can threaten the biodiversity value and active site management may be required to maintain conditions that favour wildlife on wasteland sites.
- Public perception. The image of industrial decline and anti-social activity targeted at derelict sites creates a negative public image of these habitats. Derelict land of high biodiversity value is often managed as amenity grassland with tree planting to the detriment of biodiversity. It is therefore a major challenge to raise awareness of the value of and to promote the importance of derelict land for biodiversity as well as safe enjoyable access.
- Non-native invasive species e.g. Japanese knotweed.
- Motor bike scrambling and uncontrolled access.
- Restoration works to buildings.
- Fly tipping and vandalism.

Distribution

National Distribution

Derelict land is widespread through the UK, but it is fast disappearing as a habitat in its own right due to landscaping, greening and development pressures by landowners and Local Authorities.

Local Distribution

The current amount and distribution of derelict land in WCB is not adequately known, though concentrations can be found in the Wrexham Industrial Estate and old industrial and mining sites such

as Brymbo and Minera. The amount of derelict land constantly changes due to development and demolition.



Fly tipping



Current Action

National Action

- Environmental Management System (EMS) is an approach to identifying, planning and implementation issues relevant to a particular organisation, site or combination of sites. The process offers opportunities to integrate biodiversity principles in the auditing and management processes. The EMS can be certified to an International Standard.
- Arena Network, not for profit organisation providing advice and support to businesses on a range of environmental issues.
- A new environmental standard called "Green Dragon" has been introduced for businesses in Wales. This is a stepped environmental management



six spot burnet moth

standard recognising effective environmental management relevant to specific needs of the company. It rewards actions taken to achieve improvement. It is administered by Arena Network and Groundwork Wales.

- The Welsh Assembly Government is one of three governments in the world committed to sustainable development. In line with this the Welsh Development Agency are producing Biodiversity Guidelines providing advice for development projects and clarifying decision making process.
- The Corporate Environmental Responsibility Group was created by Earthwatch in 1990 to act as the interface between business and the issues surrounding biodiversity and sustainability. Earthwatch manages 'The Business and Biodiversity

Resource Centre' web site (www.businessandbiodiversity.org) providing links and information.

- SSSI's damaged by land contamination to such an extent that it is designated as "contaminated land", will have to be remediated under the Contaminated Land (Wales) Regulations 2001.
- Forestry Commission is currently developing a partnership to create wooded areas in urban settings.



ox-eye daisies

High Biodiversity Value Derelict Land Sites

SITE	DESIGNATION	LAND TYPE
Stryt las A'r Hafod	Country Park. SSSI & cSAC for great crested newts.	Restored Coal tip and pool. Now managed as a Country Park.
Marford Quarry	SSSI for entomological interest.	Re-colonised sand quarry. Managed as a nature reserve by NWWT.
Alyn Waters	Local Nature Reserve Wildlife Site (non statutory) Country Park.	Restored sand and gravel quarry & landfill. Managed as a Country Park.
Minera	SSSI with limestone grassland (part of Ruabon Mountain SSSI) and limestone kilns.	Limestone Quarry & associated mineral workings.
Pandy Quarries	SSSI for geological interest and Wildlife Site.	Colonised hard rock (china stone, granite and silica) quarry.
Brymbo	Wildlife Site & blast furnace.	Former Steel works undergoing restoration and development.
Ballswood Quarry	Wildlife Site (non-statutory).	Active sand quarry.
Wrexham Industrial Estate - Oaks Road	Wildlife Site (non-statutory). Grizzled skipper.	Former munitions site. Part allocated for development with conditions.



Local Action

- Wrexham Industrial Estate Environmental Forum has produced an action plan for the Wrexham Industrial Estate which has been approved by the Business forum.
- Designation of non-statutory wildlife sites.
- Through the development control process, development can be mitigated by the inclusion of planning conditions and legal obligations. Restoration of mineral workings and landfill sites are enhanced for biodiversity through habitat creation.
- Wrexham LANDMAP study has picked out the Wrexham Industrial Estate and other industrial areas in Wrexham County Borough as significant landscapes due to their biodiversity, culture, history and visual and sensory importance. LANDMAP provides management recommendations for these areas and the Wrexham Industrial Estate.
- WCBC has published an Inspection Strategy which details the procedures to be used to inspect the County Borough for contaminated land sites. With regard to ecological habitats which may be affected by land contamination, consultations will take place with appropriate bodies as investigations progress.
- Supplementary Planning Guidance on Contaminated Land.
- Supplementary Planning Guidance on Sustainable Development.
- Most of the 6 country parks in Wrexham are post industrial/mining land and represent a considerable area of semi-natural habitat under positive management by Wrexham Countryside Service.

Objectives and Targets

- 1** *Protect, manage and enhance derelict land sites of high biodiversity value.*
- 2** *Identify all areas of derelict land, tips, quarries etc and assess their biodiversity value.*
- 3** *Develop and incorporate green networks and wildlife corridors in all new developments.*
- 4** *Raise awareness of the biodiversity value of derelict land, industrial sites and quarries with planners, businesses, industry, developers and the general public.*

Links to Other Plans

- Strategy for the Inspection of Contaminated Land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act, 1990 and the Contaminated Land (Wales) Regulations (2001).
- Planning Policy Wales. March 2002 Welsh Assembly Government
- Wrexham Unitary Development Plan (to be adopted by spring 2004)
- Wrexham Countryside Strategy 2003
- Wrexham LANDMAP study (Draft 2002)
- The Wrexham Industrial Estate Environmental Action Plan 2002

Wrexham Biodiversity Action Plans

- Woodland habitat action plan 2002
- Rivers, stream and canals habitat action plan 2002
- Pond habitat action plan 2002
- Veteran tree and wood-pasture habitat action plan 2002
- Great crested newt species action plan 2003
- Farmland birds species action plan*

* to be published in 2004 as part of Wrexham BAP



Former Steelworks site, Brymbo



Proposed Action with Lead Agencies

ACTION	OBJECTIVES	PARTNERS	TARGET
Policy & Legislation			
Ensure that the Unitary Development Plan identifies derelict land of biodiversity importance (e.g. SSSI and wildlife sites).	1	WCBC	As plans are updated.
Designate sites of high biodiversity value as wildlife sites.	1	WCBC	Ongoing
Complete the designation of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), trees of high landscape or amenity value, on the Wrexham industrial Estate.	1	WCBC	2005
Produce local planning guidance which takes into consideration wildlife & environmental issues with new development.	1, 2, 3	WCBC	2005
Develop strategies to enable the use of vacant and derelict land, either temporarily or permanently as wildlife habitats.	1, 2, 3	WCBC, WDA, Business community, Groundwork	2006
Produce a green network strategy, encouraging the integration of green networks in planning and developments.	3	WCBC	2005
Implement actions within the Wrexham Industrial Estate Environmental Action Plan.	1, 2, 3, 4	WIE Environmental Forum	Length of plan.
Management & Advice			
Incorporate the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity into the design and management of derelict land, quarries and industrial sites.	1, 3	WCBC, WDA, Quarry Co.s, Groundwork	Ongoing
Encourage restoration of sites particularly quarries which favours biodiversity and includes the creation of new habitats such as ponds.	1, 3	WCBC, WDA, Quarry Co.s.	Ongoing
Encourage appropriate management of verges and grasslands as wildflower meadows on industrial estates to enhance their biodiversity value.	1, 3	Businesses, Groundwork, WCBC	Manage 500 metres of verge in WIE by 2007.
Maintain transitional habitats through positive management to prevent reversion to scrub, where this is possible e.g. on Local Authority managed land.	1	WCBC (Countryside Service), NWWT	Ongoing
Ensure management of areas is in keeping with guidelines in Wrexham LANDMAP.	1, 3	WCBC	2006
Encourage businesses to put up bat boxes and bird boxes on buildings and factories.	3	Groundwork, Wrexham Biodiversity Group	50 boxes by 2010.
Communication & Publicity			
Increase awareness of the biodiversity value of derelict land with businesses, planners, developers and the general public-through talks, leaflets and media.	4	WCBC, WDA, Arena Network	Over next 10 years.
Set up a business and biodiversity awareness programme to engage commerce and industry.	4	WBG, WCBC, WDA, Groundwork	2006
Develop a demonstration site on a local business park or industrial estate to illustrate biodiversity best practice.	4	Groundwork WCBC, Industry, Arena Network, Millennium EcoCentre	2013
Promote Green Dragon Awards which recognise Biodiversity. Encourage at least 3 companies to apply.	1, 3, 4	Arena Network	Over the next 10 years.
Encourage staff to attend training courses geared to biodiversity and business, minerals and planning.	4	Businesses, WCBC	At least 1 event.



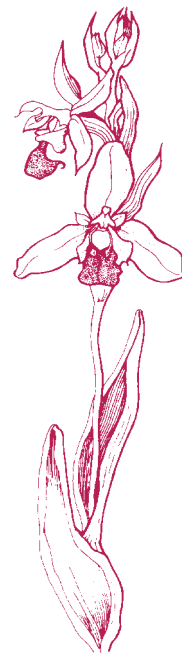
Proposed Action with Lead Agencies

ACTION	OBJECTIVES	PARTNERS	TARGET
Create links with the Business and Biodiversity Resource Centre using their website (www.businessandbiodiversity.org)	4	WBG, WIE EF, Businesses	2005
Research & Monitoring			
Identify and assess the biodiversity value of derelict land including industrial land, tips and quarries in Wrexham County Borough.	2	WCBC	2006
Carry out a survey of invertebrates especially solitary bees, wasps and butterflies at quarries and industrial sites.	2	WBG, NEWING	2010
Carry out other specific surveys as required such as badgers, water vole, great crested newt.	2	WBG	As resources permit.

Abbreviations for table NEWING - North East Wales Invertebrate Network Group; NWWT - North Wales Wildlife Trust; WBG - Wrexham Biodiversity Group; WCBC - Wrexham County Borough Council; WDA - Welsh Development Agency, WIE EF - Wrexham Industrial Estate Environmental Forum



Wilderness Tip



Bee orchid

Further information

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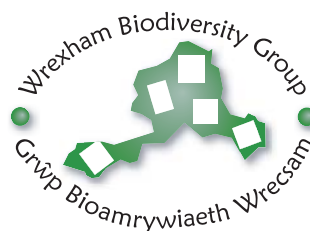
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