

Q.1 How many positive indicators are present?

<2	2-4	5-8	9-12	>12	Score:
0	5	10	15	20	

Tick if present:

- ☐ Marsh cinquefoil
- ☐ Sorrel (Common & Sheep's)
- ☐ Bird's foot trefoils
- ☐ Vetches and vetchlings
- ☐ Marsh marigold
- ☐ Cowslip & Primrose
- ☐ Ox-eye daisy
- ☐ Tormentils (Common & English)
- ☐ Yellow Composites
- ☐ Yellow rattle
- ☐ Meadowsweet
- ☐ Eyebrights

- ☐ Large Umbels - Angelica, Valerian, Hogweed
- ☐ Small Umbels - Pignut, Yarrow, Wild carrot
- ☐ Bedstraws and Stitchworts
- ☐ Marsh pennywort
- ☐ Lady's mantle
- ☐ Sedges
- ☐ Woodrushes, Spike rushes
- ☐ Lady's smock (or Cuckooflower)
- ☐ Wild thyme
- ☐ Louseworts
- ☐ Ragged robin
- ☐ Meadow thistle and Marsh thistle

- ☐ Common knapweed
- ☐ Scabious (Devil's-bit & Field)
- ☐ Selfheal and Bugle
- ☐ Orchids
- ☐ Mints
- ☐ Violets
- ☐ Forget-me-nots

High quality Positive Indicators:

- ☐ Kidney vetch
- ☐ Carline thistle
- ☐ Harebell
- ☐ Greater knapweed

Q.2 What is the combined cover of positive indicators (listed above) throughout the field?

cover:	negligible <5%	low 6-10%	medium 11-20%	high 21-40%	very high >40%	Score:
	0	10	15	20	25	

Q.3 What is the vegetation structure/litter levels?

For a meadow (hay/silage) closed off/recently mown, assume good structure

poor
-10

Poor: Can be over-grazed or under-grazed. Most of field (>75%) has either tall or very short even vegetation *or* Litter levels greater than 50%.

moderate
5

Moderate: Between 25% & 50% of the field has tall and/or short sward with occasional intermediate sward height spread patchily through the field *or* Litter levels 25-50%.

good
10

Good: Tall/medium and short vegetation throughout *and* Litter levels ≤25%.

Score:

Q.4 What is the combined cover of negative indicators throughout the field?

Tick if present:

- ☐ Ryegrass
- ☐ Docks
- ☐ Ragwort
- ☐ Nettles
- ☐ Bracken
- ☐ Thistles (Creeping & Spear)
- ☐ Other - specify:

cover:	very high >40%	high 31-40%	medium 11-30%	negligible to low <10%	Score:
	-15	-10	-5	0	

Q.5 Mark on the map all fenced field margins present and their widths (1/2/3m)

Margins have to be fenced to gain points here unless a combined score of 35 was achieved in questions 1 & 2

5 bonus points to be awarded for any field margin beside a natural watercourse (& meeting min. density 50m/per ha), or drainage ditch (subject to an overall maximum of 30 points for this question).

Q.6 Mark on the map field boundary features: all earth banks, drainage ditches, wire/post & rail fences, watercourses, hedgerows/treelines, dry stone walls and other features.

Assess each boundary length of hedgerow and/or stonewall by marking on the map condition: A, B or C. Overall maximum of 15 points for this question.

Q.7 What is the combined cover of negative indicators/invasive species throughout the field boundaries and margins?

cover:	very high >40%	high 31-40%	medium 21-30%	negligible to low <20%	Score:
	-15	-10	-5	0	

Tick if present:

- ☐ Docks
- ☐ Ragwort
- ☐ Nettles
- ☐ Bracken
- ☐ Thistles (Creeping & Spear)

Invasive alien species:

- ☐ Himalyan balsam
- ☐ Japanese knotweed
- ☐ Giant hogweed
- ☐ Giant rhubarb

☐ Other - specify:

Q.8 To what extent is the field poached?

cover:	very high >50%	med-high 26-50%	med-low 11-25%	negligible to low 0-10%	Score:
	-30	-20	-10	0	

Q.9 Is there any evidence of any damaging activities to soil/vegetation/water?

cover:	high >50%	medium 6-50%	low 1-5%	none none	Score:
	-30	-20	-10	0	

Tick if present:

- ☐ Bare soil and erosion
- ☐ Damage to watercourses
- ☐ Inappropriate use of herbicide
- ☐ Burning
- ☐ Dumping/littering
- ☐ Fertiliser application at boundary (organic or inorganic)
- ☐ Evidence that field boundaries have been removed or damaged by machinery etc.
- ☐ Extensive areas of bare or disturbed ground along field boundaries
- ☐ Other- describe:

Management advice Tick where appropriate:

Field options

- ☐ Continue extensive management of this high quality grassland.
- ☐ Control the occurrence and spread of invasive species.
- ☐ Control the spread of encroaching scrub.
- ☐ Consider reducing fertiliser inputs.
- ☐ Use stock to graze the plot more evenly.
- ☐ Reduce grazing pressure to provide a more diverse sward structure.
- ☐ Move feeders/troughs regularly and keep away from drainage ditches and WCs.
- ☐ Consider a late cut meadow in year 2 for bonus payment.

Boundary/margin management

- ☐ Repair dry stone walls.
- ☐ Allow hedgerows to grow up.
- ☐ Consider putting in a fenced margin.
- ☐ Keep farming operations 2m out from all drainage ditches/wcs.
- ☐ Control the spread of invasive species.
- ☐ Consider removing the cuttings from these margins to increase flowering species.
- ☐ Boundary tree planting
- ☐ New hedge planting
- ☐ Hedge infilling of gaps

Complementary action recommendations

mark location on map

Q.1 Identifying positive indicators:

Positive indicators may occur throughout; others are naturally found in clumps; while others may occur sparsely (e.g. orchids).

During the 'W' walk of the field, tick all positive indicators present. Use your plant identification key to help you. Not all positive indicators will be in flower at the same time so look for leaves as well as flowers.

Q.2 Estimating cover of positive indicators:

Negligible: <5% A few scattered individuals or very small patches in the plot. The entire sward appears 'grassy'.

Low: 6-10% Positive indicators occurring in small patches or very scattered over the field, not highly visible when looking down on the sward (you must search to find them) and missing from most of the field. Most of the sward looks 'grassy'.

Medium: 11-20% Positive indicators occurring scattered or in patches over the entire field, occasional occurrence when looking down or across the sward. Much of the sward looks 'grassy'. You encounter a positive indicator every couple of steps.

High: 21-40% Positive indicators visible over the entire field. Much of the sward may look 'grassy' but with frequent yellow and pink flowers present. You encounter a positive indicator with every step.

Very high: >40% Positive indicators very visible throughout the sward and provide high amount of ground cover. Good diversity of leaf shapes and flowers (look for different shapes and colours) apparent in the sward when looking down onto it. Only small patches of the field may appear 'grassy'. You encounter multiple positive indicators with every step (and in between steps!).

Q.4 Estimating cover of negative indicators in field:

Very high: >40% Occurring in dense patches or abundant throughout the field. Very visible in the sward.

High: 31-40% Occurring in medium to large patches in the field and not limited to previous feeding sites, trackways, field boundaries, water troughs and gateways. Readily visible in the sward.

Medium: 11-30% Occurring in several small to medium sized patches throughout the field, and also around trackways, field boundaries, water troughs and gateways.

Negligible to Low: <10% If present, scattered or small clumps of weeds only. Where present at gateways, water troughs, field boundaries and along well-used trackways, this cover should be less than 10% and the weeds should not extend into the main body of the field.

Note there are different thresholds for negative indicators in the field boundaries and margins question 7.

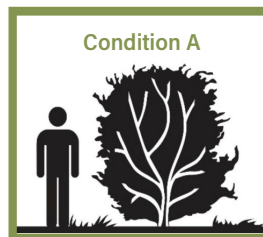
Q.5 Densities/widths of field margins per hectare:

Margin width:	Densities per hectare:		
	50-200m/ha	201-300m/ha	>300m/ha
3m	20	25	30
2m	15	20	25
1m	10	15	20

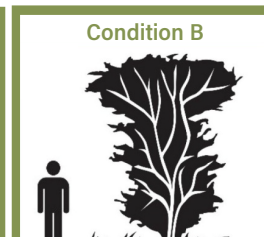
Q.6 Assessment of hedgerows/treelines and stone walls and density per hectare:

Condition / management:	Densities per hectare:		
	40-100m/ha	101-160m/ha	>160m/ha
A or B	5	10	15
C	0	0	0

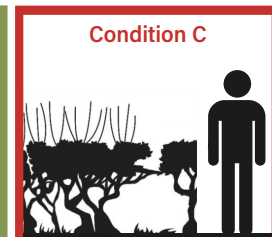
Hedgerows/treelines:



✓ GOOD
>1.5m in height



✓ GOOD



✗ POOR
<1.5m in height

Stonewalls:

Condition A



Stockproof and in excellent condition



Sound and stockproof with minor defects

Condition B



Signs of advancing or potential deterioration

Condition C



Not stockproof, and in early stages of dereliction



Derelict

Q.7 Estimating cover of negative indicators throughout field boundaries and margins:

Very High: (>40%) Occurring in dense patches, or cover extensive areas, or very abundant throughout most/all field boundaries. Very visible throughout.

High: 31-40% Occurring in medium to large patches throughout many of the field boundaries/margins, readily visible across boundaries.

Medium: 21-30% Occasional, limited to only a few field boundaries/margins, occurring in small to medium patches.

Negligible to low: <20% Not present or occurring in one small patch/field boundary.

Q.8 To what extent is the field poached?:

Very High: >50% Extensive damage from poaching across most of the field. Often extensive rutting and compaction from machinery.

Med High: 26-50% Soil disturbance around water sources extends for >3m. Extensive areas of bare ground noticeable, and not confined to regularly used routes. Can be medium extent of rutting and compaction from machinery.

Med low: 11-25% Unvegetated bare areas noticeable in wetter soils during summer. Patches of bare ground not limited to trackways/gates or thin soil. Soil disturbance around water features extending 1-3m.

Negligible to low: 0-10% Low impacts on the field. Small patches of bare ground possibly along well used trackways/gates. Very small areas of poaching away from routes and gates. Grassland as a whole is well vegetated in summer. No poaching or dunging at wet features.