

## Common Dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius*

### Background

The dormouse is a largely arboreal species, avoiding coming to ground (except to hibernate) and it requires a structured habitat with well-developed shrub layer.

Dormice are found in highly diverse deciduous woodland habitats, and also in species rich hedgerows, scrub and some conifer woodland (Planted Ancient Woodland Sites or PAWS). Hedgerows are used for dispersal, for seasonal foraging and large, well-managed hedgerows may be permanently occupied.

Dormouse populations have undergone significant declines in England and Wales due to woodland loss and fragmentation and a reduction in traditional woodland management.



### Status in Wales

Range Widespread, found in all counties except Anglesey  
 Population Populations in England and Wales have been declining over the last 100 years, although recent data suggests the decline may be slowing or levelling off.  
 (data source: National Dormouse Monitoring Programme; insufficient data for Wales only trends)

### Threats

(as identified in the 2008 BAP reporting)

- Habitat loss / degradation - agriculture: Loss of hedgerows
- Habitat loss / degradation - infrastructure development: Housing infrastructure  
Industrial infrastructure  
Transport infrastructure
- Habitat loss / degradation - management practice: Demise of traditional practices
- Habitat loss / degradation - woodlands/forestry: Decline of woodland coppicing / pollarding

### Status

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), Schedule 5  
 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, Schedule 2  
 EC Habitats & Species Directive, Annex IV

UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species  
 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, s42 Species of principal importance for the conservation of biological diversity in Wales

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UK BAP Lead Partner – The Wildlife Trusts

Wales BAP targets

Set in 2005 at UK level and adopted as Welsh target in 2009.

Targets to be reviewed in 2014

| Code | Target type     | Target   | Units                 | 2005<br>(baseline) | 2010                | 2015 | 2020 | 2025 |
|------|-----------------|--|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|------|------|------|
| MaT1 | Range           | Maintain the current range of the dormouse in Wales  | Occupied 10km squares | 62                 | 62                  | 62   | 62   | 62   |
| MaT2 | Population size | Ensure the dormouse population index is at 100% of the 1991 level by 2015 and increase to 115% of the 1991 level by 2020 | Population index      |                    | Trend 0 or positive | 100  | 115  |      |

Actions

| Code | Action Type                 | Action   | Action lead           | Ecosystem Groups           | Delivery Agents  |
|------|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| MaA1 | Habitat and Site Management | Encourage appropriate habitat management at sites where dormice are present and promote connectivity at the landscape scale  | NRW (Liz Halliwell)   | Woodland; Lowland farmland | LBAPs; NRW; WTW  |
| MaA2 | Communication - advisory    | Publish and promote good practice advice on woodland management and relevant grant schemes, including Glastir  | NRW (Chris Tucker)    | Woodland                   | NRW; LBAPS       |
| MaA3 | Survey and Monitoring       | Maintain and enhance the National Dormouse Monitoring Programme, ensuring that the data collected are representative of a range of sites and that there are sufficient data collected to produce population trends for Wales   | PTES (Nida al-Fulaij) |                            | WTW; LBAPs; PTES |
| MaA4 | Policy and Legislation      | Implement the EPS licensing system to ensure that appropriate and proportionate mitigation is in place to maintain the 'favourable conservation status' of a site. Ensure dormice are taken into account when planning large infrastructure projects, so as to avoid habitat loss or fragmentation | WG                    | Woodland                   | WG; NRW;         |

### Implementation issues

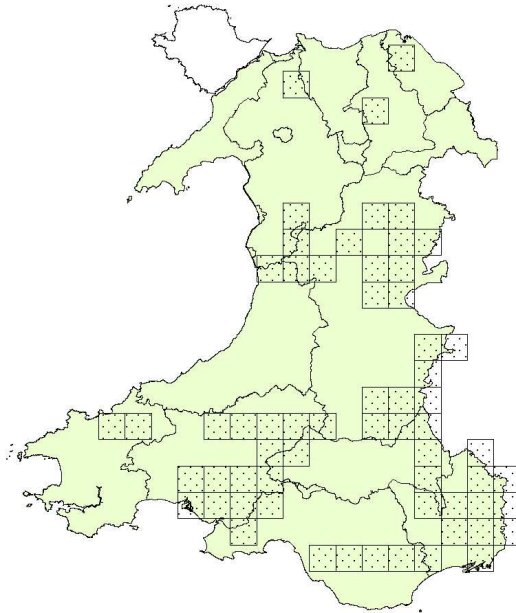
MaA1 – needs to be undertaken at local level, by LBAP officers, as special projects, or as part of wider landscape scale management, eg Glastir. Dormouse has been included in Glastir Advanced and Glastir Woodland, and in certain core areas undertaking prescriptions for dormice will be mandatory.

MaA3 – More National Dormouse Monitoring Programme sites are needed in Wales to enable Wales' level population trends.

MaA4 – EPS licensing system is currently operational. A review of the effectiveness of the licensing system may be needed, together with improved reporting of mitigation success by developers.

### **Figure 1 LBAP areas where action is required (shaded green)**

10km squares show records used to set BAP baseline in 2005



### References and further information

Habitats Directive Article 17 report:

<http://www.jncc.gov.uk/pdf/Article17/FCS2007-S1341-Final.pdf>

Dormouse Conservation Handbook:

<http://naturalengland.etraderstores.com/NaturalEnglandShop/IN29>

People's Trust for Endangered Species: <http://www.ptes.org>

The Mammal Society: <http://www.mammal.org.uk/>

National Dormouse Monitoring Programme: <http://www.ptes.org/index.php?page=186>