

# ACRES BREIFNE Co-operation Project

## Local Action Plan 1.0

### Synthesis Report

November 2023



## Preface

The Hen Harrier Project (HHP) Ltd was awarded the contract for the management of the Co-operation Project (CP) area of ACRES Breifne (originally called North Connaught Ulster). Work began in May 2022 and since then focus has been on building the human, physical and IT infrastructure required to deliver the ACRES Co-operation project model. HHP staff worked closely with the Dept. of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the other CP project teams to develop the scorecards and scorecard guidance used for habitat assessment and the specifications for Non-Productive Investments (NPIs) and Landscape Actions (LAs) that form the basis for the results-based approach.

The HHP team drafted a Local Action Plan for the Breifne CP. This is the first stage of a process which will identify scheme objectives down to individual field level. The first stage was compiled from existing relevant datasets. The next stage of the process is to identify the pressures that potentially affect each objective at a local level. This, in turn, will be followed by an examination of the drivers behind those pressures and ultimately by a plan for what the participating farmers, the project team, and other agencies can *realistically* do to address the identified pressures. This plan will evolve constantly in response to changes in the baseline data, farmer management practices, increased threats or any other information that becomes available. While our team completed the first stage, the subsequent stages will only be accomplished with the engagement of local stakeholders. The most important of these are the participating farmers whom we depend on for local knowledge and to deliver effective responses at field, farm and local levels.

The CP teams support the scheme and its participants by providing general and bespoke support to improve field scores, assisting with targeting of actions and through the delivery of specialist training and by bridging the gap between govt departments and research bodies and the farmer who manages the land. They will take on some of the regulatory burden associated with doing actions in NATURA 2000 sites and help co-ordinate action by farmers and other land managers where this is required to achieve landscape-level goals. The role of the CP team extends beyond direct engagement with the participating farmer. To deliver the scheme's objectives, the teams will also engage the broader community in support of what farmers are working to achieve.

The teams will be public facing and it should be clear to everyone what the local objectives are and their strategy for supporting the participating farmer. The Local Action Plan provides an insight to the key natural resources in a CP zone and guides the rollout of the scheme by the CP team.

The Local Action Plan is a component of the overall ACRES approach. ACRES CP operates across eight zones within a national framework. The Terms and Conditions and Specifications for the broader ACRES Scheme, along with the specifications for Non-Productive Investments and for Landscape Actions provide this framework a national level. The design of the screening processes for actions within ACRES and the Appropriate Assessment for ACRES itself are also managed at a national level. They apply equally to all eight CP zones. Within this national framework there is considerable room for tailoring the scheme to meet local objectives. This can be done with consideration to local farming systems and an awareness of local constraints. The Local Action Plan sets out how the CP team will make use of this flexibility.

The Local Action Plan is a living document. It is intended to continually evolve throughout the operational period of the ACRES CP scheme. The evolution of the plan will be responsive to changing circumstances, baselines, and understandings about how best to address local challenges. The plan aims to help all parties to understand the objectives of ACRES CP and how the scheme's structures can support farmers as they work to achieve those objectives.

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## Overview of the ACRES CP scheme

Ireland's new agri-environment climate measure (AECM) is known as the Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme ('ACRES'). This scheme includes a co-operation approach, available to farmers in defined high priority geographical areas. High priority geographical areas were identified using a series of nature priority and high-status objective waterbody spatial layers. Co-operation Project (CP) areas were determined by grouping these high priority geographical areas (Figure 1), and CP teams have been assigned to each of these CP areas to enable the roll-out of the scheme at a local level.

Within the CP areas, all forage land is divided into fields and assigned scorecards based on the habitat type by CP teams according to three main habitats: Grassland, Peatland and Woodland/Scrubland. Each field is assigned a scorecard which is used to assess its ecological integrity depending on the objective of that field. All scorecards also score hydrological integrity and/or evidence of threats and pressures. Fields are to be scored three times throughout the duration of the five-year scheme. An annual payment is made according to the most recent score, which incentivises the maintenance or improvement of the fields being farmed. Ten scorecards are available in ACRES CP (Table 1).

**Table 1:** Full list of the ten scorecards available in ACRES CP, including their objective and their frequency of application in ACRES Breifne CP.

Scorecard	Objective	Frequency
<b>Peatland</b>	Peatland habitats, upland birds,	Common
<b>Grassland</b>	Semi-natural grassland habitats, pollinators	Common
<b>Rough Grazing</b>	Hen harrier, Barn owl, small birds and mammals	Common
<b>Scrub/Woodland</b>	Scrub/woodland habitats	Common
<b>Low Input Peat</b>	Wet grassland habitats	Occasional
<b>Coastal</b>	Coastal habitats such as dunes and saltmarshes	Occasional
<b>Breeding Wader</b>	Snipe, Curlew, Redshank and Lapwing	Occasional
<b>Chough</b>	Cliff habitats, chough	Occasional
<b>Winterage</b>	Dry calcareous grassland on winterage sites	Not applicable
<b>Corncrake</b>	Corncrake, hay meadows	Not applicable

All scorecards are designed to deliver for biodiversity, carbon sequestration, water quality, soil quality, flood resilience and fire resilience

Actions designed to improve the field score are available to farmers in each year of their contract following the baseline score assessment in 2023 (or 2024 for tranche 2 participants). These actions include a list of Non-productive Investments (NPIs)\* and Landscape Actions (LAs)\*\*. All scorecards and actions in ACRES CP aim to achieve the underlying principle of the new AECM framework of "the right measure in the right place".

\*The full suite of Non Productive Investments (NPIs) can be viewed on the DAFM website: <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/f5a48-agri-climate-rural-environment-scheme-acres/#non-productive-investments>

\*\* Landscape Actions were under development and a list was not available at the time of report publication.

## Background of the CP Team

The Hen Harrier Programme (HHP) Ltd manages the CP teams for the ACRES Breifne, ACRES Leinster and ACRES Munster/ South Connacht Co-operation Project (CP) zones. The operational structure to support the rollout of the ACRES scheme in these areas makes use of local teams supported by a shared administrative and technical support unit.

This structure allows for a locally focused delivery model for services to participants. The local teams can focus on supporting the ACRES CP programme in their area. Each team has access to a company-wide range of expertise including an Archaeologist, a Drone Data Acquisition Co-ordinator, and Data Analyst, along with external specialists contracted in as required. This enhances the range and depth of skills available to the team. The structure also allows for the sharing of resources between the teams as required.

All project staff directly involved in supporting participants in the ACRES Breifne CP area are based in Manorhamilton, Co. Leitrim (Table 2). Manorhamilton has good transport links to facilitate service provision to all parts of the CP area.

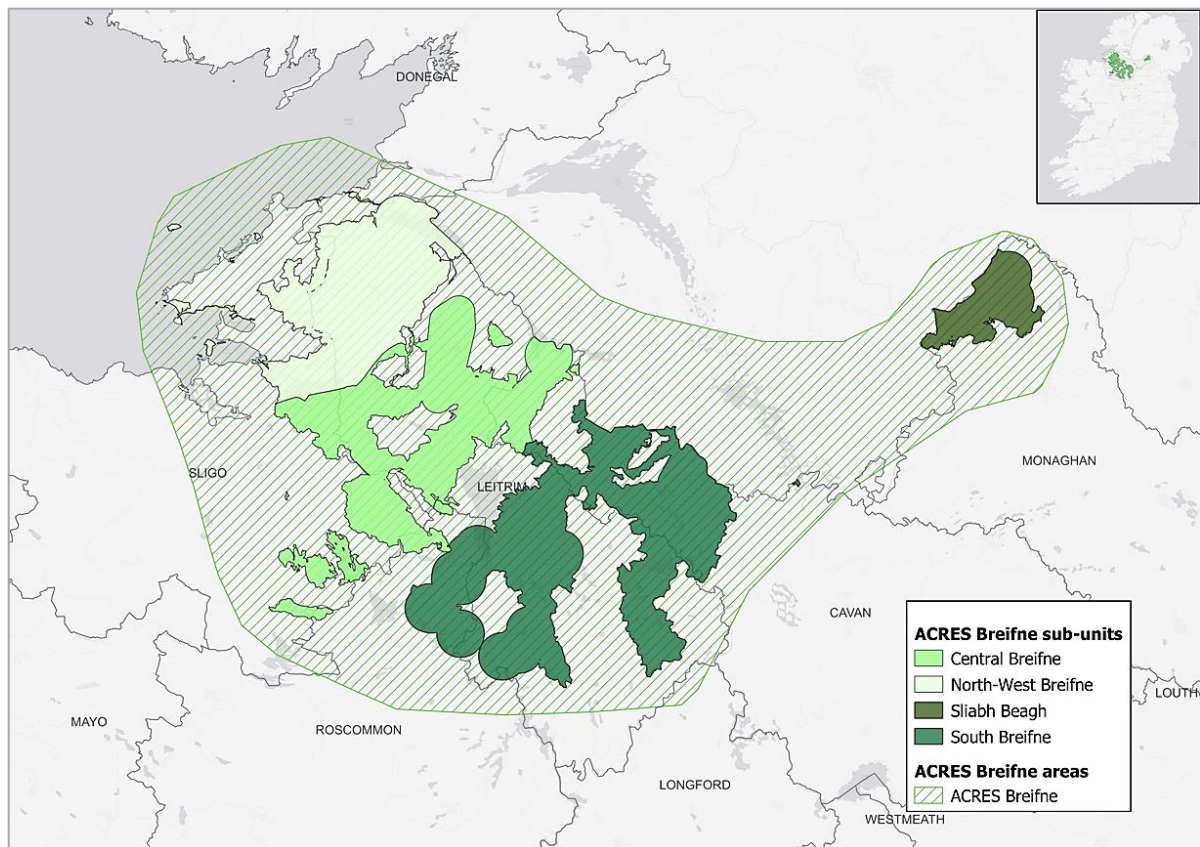
**Table 2:** Composition of the ACRES Breifne CP Team.

ACRES Breifne	Name	Breifne region
Manager	Dr Caroline Sullivan	All areas
Deputy Manager	Dr Julien Carlier	North Breifne
Project Officer	Naomi McMorrow	North Breifne
Team Lead	Dr Hagen O'Neill	Central Breifne and Sliabh Beagh
Project Officer	Noel Siberry	Central Breifne and Sliabh Beagh
Project Officer	Daniel Cahill	South Breifne
Project Officer	Clodagh Helen	South Breifne
Graduate Project Officer	Aífe Kearns	South Breifne

\*Please refer to Fig. 1 overleaf for a spatial overview of the Breifne regions.

## Location and Geographical features of the Breifne CP Zone

The ACRES Breifne CP area is situated in the provinces of Connaught and Ulster and covers an area of approximately 1,576 km<sup>2</sup>. The number of first tranche applicants in the ACRES Breifne CP is c. ~2,500, covering an area of c. 80,000 ha of farmland. The CP extends from South Co. Leitrim to the County Sligo coast in a North Westerly direction, additionally it includes some areas of West Co. Cavan, East Co. Sligo, North Co. Roscommon and Sliabh Beagh and surrounds in Co. Monaghan. Typical farm enterprises include suckler and dry stock, and sheep farming (predominantly hill farming), with some small areas of dairy. Operationally, the CP zone has been divided into four regions (see Fig. 1).

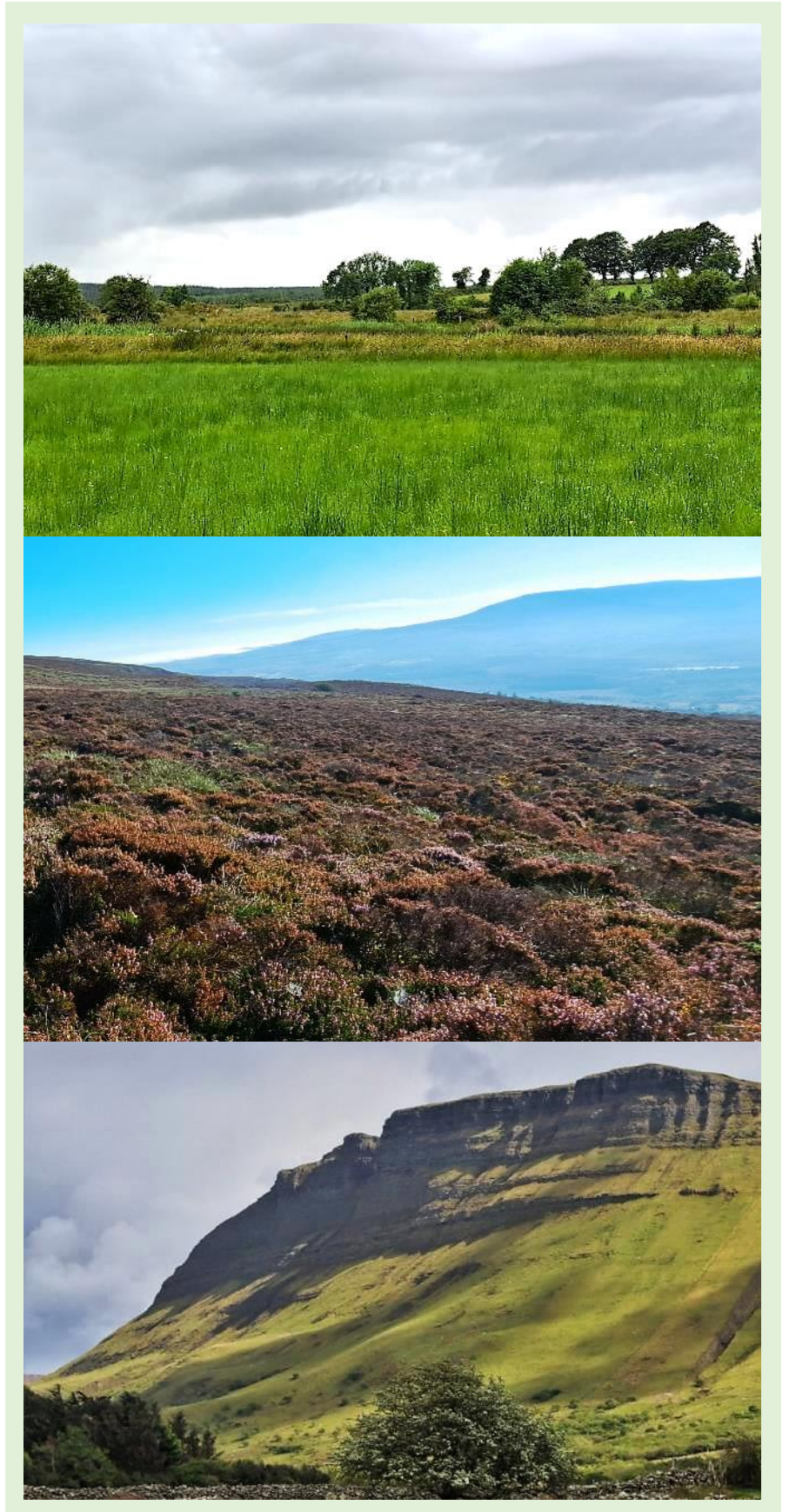


**Figure 1:** Map illustrating the geographical extent of the ACRES Breifne CP area and the operational regions.

## Habitats and Species

The CP is predominantly comprised of upland areas (mainly commonage) and extensively farmed lowlands and valleys (Fig. 2). The farmland habitats include significant areas of wet grassland, blanket bog, heath, and woodland. Notable species include Chough (a crow species) in the Darty Mountains in North Breifne, Hen Harrier (a bird of prey) in central and south Breifne, and breeding waders (for example Curlew) in South Breifne and Sliabh Beagh.

**Figure 2:** Field images of some of the typical High Nature Value farmland habitats in the Breifne CP: extensive wet grassland (top); blanket bog and heath peatland (middle); calcareous dry grasslands (bottom).



## Natura 2000

Fifteen Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) overlap the CP, of which six are upland/mountain sites, six are freshwater sites and three are coastal sites. Nine Special Protection Areas (SPA) overlap the CP also, of which seven are coastal sites, one is an upland site, and one is a freshwater site.

## Mountains and Commonage

Notable mountain ranges in the CP include Sliabh Beagh, Cuilcagh complex, Aroo, Curlew, Arigna, Boleybrack, Ox and Dartry complex. Commonage accounts for c. 22,000 of the 80,000 ha (28%) of farmland in the Breifne CP under ACRES CP contract. These are dominated by peatland habitats, with some areas of grassland and scrub habitat.

## Catchments and Rivers

The CP covers four water catchments: Lough Neagh and Lower Bann, Upper Shannon, Sligo Bay and Erne. A network of rivers and streams extends c. 4,583 km, including notable rivers such as the Shannon, Bonet, Unshin, and Drowes. The CP comprises 237 lakes covering an area of c. 12,639 ha, many of which are concentrated within the Lakelands region that border with County Fermanagh (UK). Major lakes include Lough Allen, Lough McNea (upper), Lough Melvin and Lough Gill.

## Islands

Four large offshore islands include Coney, Maguins, and Oyster in Sligo Bay and Inishmurray in Donegal Bay. Several smaller islands are located in inland waters.

## Land use

Land use in the Breifne CP comprises of a mix of extensive and intensive drumlin farmland, interspersed by many small lakes, pockets of semi-natural woodland and an extensive network of linear habitats including streams, hedgerows, treelines, earth banks and ditches. Significant areas of peatland and woodlands (coniferous and mixed) are also present. A breakdown of the land cover (using Corine Land Cover 2018) is provided in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Land cover percentage breakdown of the Breifne CP, using Corine Land Cover (2018).

Land Cover Class Description	% Cover
Land principally occupied by agriculture, with significant areas of natural vegetation	37
Peat bogs	20
Pastures	14
Coniferous forest	7
Transitional woodland-shrub*	7
Water bodies	5
Moors and heathland	4
Natural grasslands	3
Broad-leaved forest, Burnt areas, Mixed forest & Other combined	4

\*The Transitional woodland-shrub class is predominantly composed of coniferous forest within the Breifne CP.



## Regional Threats and Pressures

The Breifne CP faces a number of demographic and environmental challenges, from farm succession to water quality and other threats to habitats. Notable land use pressures include increasing afforestation, farmland abandonment, farmland intensification, and rising urbanisation and recreation pressures.

Average farmer age ranges from 56 (slightly below the national average of 57) in County Monaghan (eastern part of the CP) to 59 in County Sligo (most westerly part of the CP). This is among the highest age profile in the country and highlights the aging demographic and uncertainty of farm succession in the medium term, particularly in the western part of the CP. This can lead to farm abandonment or afforestation, resulting in the loss of High Nature Value (HNV) farmland.

River water quality is generally favorable; recent Water Framework Directive status data indicates 21% of river length within the CP has 'High' status, 51% has 'Good', 25% has 'Moderate', and just 3% has 'Poor' status. Potential threats to water quality in the Breifne CP include excess nutrients and sediments, contributing to eutrophication. These excess nutrients and sediments can originate from either point sources, such as farmyards; or from diffuse sources, such as the spreading of fertilisers and manures. Land management can also place pressure on water bodies, including the alteration of watercourses, drain maintenance and new drainage, causing changes in volume and flow of water. These can arise from the two predominant land uses in the CP; agriculture, and forestry.

Other notable threats include the fragmentation of woodlands, such as the removal of hedgerows and treelines. This is exacerbated through the extensive loss of the Ash tree as a result of Ash Dieback disease. Grazing pressure on sensitive habitats such as peatlands has resulted in reduced vegetation in places, causing exposed soil and hampering the revegetation and recovery of damaged sites. Damaged and degraded peatlands lead to the decomposition of peat and become an important source of carbon emissions. Invasive non-native species are a significant pressure affecting many areas of the CP, including dense areas of Rhododendron and self-sown conifers on peatlands and grasslands. Other common invasive species include Japanese Knotweed and Cherry Laurel.



## Conservation and Nature Objectives

### Objective setting

The geographical outline of the ACRES CP zones was developed using a series of nature priority and high-status objective waterbody datasets. Additional objective datasets were identified through consultations with stakeholders. Using this information, a preliminary list of objectives was determined for the Breifne CP.

The preliminary list was simplified and condensed. This was performed by examining each objective from the list and combining them into groups where possible. Table 4 provides a list of the 12 conservation and nature objectives relevant to the Breifne CP.

The objectives (particularly targeted habitats, e.g., Peatland, Semi-natural Grassland and Woodland) will benefit from high field assessment scores; the scorecard results will therefore incentivise or reward a higher objective delivery. Other objectives will benefit directly from certain actions, for example the 'Geese and Swans on grassland' Landscape Action will benefit the Geese and Swans objective, and the Barn Owl/ Kestrel box will benefit the Barn Owl and Kestrel objective, etc.

**Table 4.** Conservation and nature objectives for the Breifne CP including a brief description of each.

Objective	Description
<b>Water Quality</b> <i>Includes Margeritifera sensitive areas, ASSAP Priority Areas for Action, High-Status Objective Waterbodies (Blue Dots), Areas with known significant agricultural phosphorous and nitrogen pressure (Water Framework Directive Significant Pressures)</i>	Areas under this objective may be susceptible to high nutrient loads or have species that are sensitive to poor water quality. Actions promoted in these areas could contribute towards improving or maintaining water quality. Scale: WFD River Sub Basin units.
<b>Peatland</b> <i>Includes:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Peatland scorecard fields</li> <li>- Natura 2000 sites with peatland habitat qualifying interests</li> <li>- Natural Heritage Areas with peatland habitat qualifying interests</li> <li>- Mapped raised bogs</li> </ul>	Areas under this objective are peatland habitats or have peatland qualifying interest. Actions promoted in these areas could include peatland restoration, etc. Scale: 1:5,000 and field-scale.
<b>Semi-Natural Grassland</b> <i>Includes:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Grassland scorecard fields</li> <li>- Irish Semi-natural Grasslands Survey</li> <li>- Natura 2000 sites with semi-natural grassland qualifying interests</li> </ul>	Areas under this objective are grassland habitats or have semi-natural grassland qualifying interests. These areas could be prioritised for grazing management actions, etc. Scale: landscape and field-scale.
<b>Breeding Waders</b> <i>Includes:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Breeding Wader scorecard fields</li> <li>- Breeding Waders hotspot score</li> </ul>	Areas under this objective have a high likelihood of Breeding Waders. Actions promoted in these areas could include specialist wildlife supports, wader scrapes, etc. Scale: 1 km grid squares (limited to score >500) and field-scale.

<p><b>Barn Owl and Kestrel</b> Based on Birds Directive Art. 12 distribution data.</p>	<p>Areas under this objective have a high likelihood of Barn Owl and Kestrel. These areas could prioritise targeted action such as the Barn Owl/Kestrel Nest box etc. Scale: 10 km grid squares (limited to &lt;250 m elevation and excluding a 500 m buffer zone around major roads).</p>
<p><b>Red Grouse</b> Includes: - Natura 2000 sites with Red Grouse, - Birds Directive Art. 12 distribution data</p>	<p>Areas under this objective have a high likelihood of Red Grouse. The actions promoted in these areas could include specialist wildlife support, targeted grazing, etc. Scale: 10 km grid squares (limited to &gt;250 m elevation).</p>
<p><b>Raptors</b> Includes Hen Harrier, Peregrine, and Merlin. Based on Birds Directive Art. 12 distribution data.</p>	<p>Areas under this objective have a high likelihood of raptors. The actions promoted in these areas could include wild bird cover on grassland habitat or specialist wildlife support on peatland habitat, etc. Scale: 10 km grid squares.</p>
<p><b>Geese and Swans</b> Includes: - Geese and Swans, - Barnacle and Brent Geese, - Whooper Swan.</p>	<p>Areas under this objective have a high likelihood of this group of waterfowl species. Actions promoted in these areas could include Geese and Swans. Scale: 1 km grid squares + unknown (appears to be high resolution)</p>
<p><b>Chough</b> Includes: - Natura 2000 sites with Chough qualifying interests. - Chough scorecard fields</p>	<p>Areas under this objective have a high likelihood of Chough. Actions promoted in these areas could include specialist wildlife support, targeted grazing, etc. Scale: 1:5,000 and field-scale.</p>
<p><b>Archaeology</b> Includes zones of archaeological/ cultural heritage interest developed by the project archaeologist. These can include sites post 1700 that are not included in the Sites and Monuments Record.</p>	<p>Areas under this objective contain archaeological interests where archaeology actions could be prioritised. Scale: not defined, encompasses clusters of monument points.</p>
<p><b>Woodland</b> Includes woodland scorecard fields</p>	<p>Areas under this objective are woodland or scrub habitats where woodland and tree related actions could be prioritised.</p>
<p><b>Marsh Fritillary</b> Includes: - Grassland scorecard fields where A5 has received two Yes responses</p>	<p>Areas under this objective include grassland fields that are suitable for this species. Actions may be developed over the course of the scheme for these fields.</p>

## Objective mapping

To enable the CP Team to visualise the objectives, a GIS layer was compiled. Maps representing the objectives listed in Table 4 were created and capture the complexity of overlapping layers. This allows CP teams and stakeholders to determine the priority objective(s) at a broad scale and thus promote the right action in the right place. It also facilitates an understanding of where multiple management issues may need to be addressed.

## Cultural Heritage

The archaeological profile of the Breifne CP area is dominated by prehistoric sites and early medieval ringforts, though later features such as sweathouses and vernacular houses are also common. The Neolithic tombs of the Breifne CP are of national importance, with a particular concentration of Court Tombs in the area, along with two highly significant Passage Tomb complexes at Carrowmore and Carrowkeel, Co Sligo. The Burren complex in north-west Cavan is also important and, though the core area of the Burren complex is on Coillte property, its concentration of megalithic tombs and other monuments extends out into the surrounding farmland.

The ACRES CP contracted farms in the Breifne area have a total of 2,444 known archaeological sites and monuments upon them, and their associated Zones of Notification cover 3,651 ha. A total of 45 structures listed by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) are found on contracted land in Breifne, many of which are listed as Protected Structures by their respective local authorities (Table 5).

**Table 5.** Summary of cultural heritage sites and zones in the Breifne CP.

Breifne CP– cultural heritage summary			
Breifne CP Zone		Breifne CP Contracted Land (CP & non-CP*)	
Sites and Monuments	2,748	Sites and Monuments	2,444
Zones of Notification	2,282 ha	Zones of Notification	3,651 ha
NIAH Structures	574	NIAH Structures	45

\*Some ACRES CP farmers have farmland outside of the CP zone which can be eligible for archaeology related Non-Productive Investments and Landscape Actions.

There are 90 megalithic tombs of various types, 1,030 ringforts (incl. raths and cashels), 222 enclosures, 125 hut sites, 103 cairns of various types, 65 sweathouses, 78 souterrains, 61 barrows, 25 churches and 20 castles. The NIAH sites include country houses, farmhouses, gate lodges, farmyard complexes, and outbuildings.



## Local Action Plan and CAP Strategic Plan

### Contribution to environmental policy and plans

In the selection criteria and geographic definition of the Breifne CP zone, a series of nature priority and high-status objective waterbody datasets were used. Additional objective datasets were identified through consultations with stakeholders, which further increased the environmental and biodiversity ambition for the CP. Relevant ones are listed below:

**Water Framework Directive:** High status water was an important priority in defining the geographical extent of the Cooperation Projects, and in the consideration of objectives in the Breifne CP. The related actions implemented in the identified water quality objective areas are therefore expected to strongly impact on maintaining and improving the water quality of these areas. Participant and community outreach and support operations by the CP Team will help disseminate the importance of meeting the objectives of the Water Framework Directive.

**The Bird and Habitat Directives:** Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) were an important priority in defining the geographical extent of the Cooperation Projects, and in the consideration of objectives in the Breifne CP. Many of the Breifne CP objectives are therefore expected to strongly impact on maintaining, improving, and complementing the conservation status of these sites. Participant and community outreach and support operations by the CP Team will help disseminate the importance of the conservation and protection of the Natura 2000 network.

**National Biodiversity Action Plan:** Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan is currently under review, however several high-level NBAP objectives will be complemented by the Breifne CP objectives. Some examples include (but are not limited to):

- The implementation of targeted actions will build on existing conservation measures for protected areas (Objective 2: Meet Urgent Conservation and Restoration Needs).
- Targeted actions will also promote nature-based solutions as a fundamental part of action for climate and biodiversity (Objective 4: Embed biodiversity at the heart of climate action).
- Additionally, field assessment data across the CP will help strengthen long-term monitoring programmes that will underpin and strengthen future decision making (Objective 5: Enhance the Evidence Base for Action on Biodiversity).

### Monitoring

To ensure that monitoring activities are appropriate to the needs of the participating farmers and support the delivery of local objectives, a detailed monitoring plan will be implemented. The Monitoring plan will focus on:

- Design of a monitoring campaign for quality control and risk assessment to detect anomalies within the data collected from field assessments. In turn this will help to identify recurring errors and design an appropriate response- such as training and mentoring needs for advisors.
- Following the progress of the scheme to determine if landscape level objectives are being achieved over the lifespan of ACRES.

- Obtaining data required to inform the targeting and screening processes for NPIs and LAs where this cannot be obtained from other sources.
- Identifying possible improvements to the specifications for NPIs and LAs by following the short to medium-term impact of delivered actions.
- Identifying specialist training needs for participating farmers and third parties, for example Agricultural contractors, and the development of courses to meet these needs.
- Informing the design of possible responses to issues of local concern, for example Invasive species, and the need to involve third parties to deliver co-ordinated responses to these.

Monitoring is separate from the inspection process. ACRES Breifne staff have no role in the inspection process and monitoring activities will be designed to identify opportunities to improve the delivery of the ACRES scheme both at CP and individual farm level. This contrasts with inspections which are carried out by Dept. of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine staff which are a regulatory requirement designed to determine compliance with the scheme itself.



## Stakeholder involvement

Engagement with stakeholders will occur throughout the scheme. At a contract level the relationship is between the Dept. of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the CP Team. As part of this process the CP Team will engage with national level stakeholders within the structures created by DAFM.

At a regional level, structures will involve local stakeholders in the continued development of the ACRES Co-operation approach. The structures to deliver this will exist at two levels. We will have an ACRES Breifne Steering Group and a number of Local Area Partnerships.

There will be one Steering Group formed for ACRES Breifne CP which will serve as a forum for reporting on the progress within the CP and examine future proposed amendments to the Local Action Plan. It will also assist with the targeting strategy for NPIs and LAs and enable the coordination of actions with external organisations.

Multiple Local Area Partnerships will be formed with an aim to achieve a minimum of 300 farmers per partnership group. These groups will have a focus on identifying opportunities and challenges and contribute to the targeting and coordination of actions at a local level. They will also contribute towards the selection of topics and actively participate in the delivery of open days and specialist training events



## Summary

The ACRES Cooperation Project (CP) scheme was rolled out in eight geographic zones and involves a flexible adaptation at a local level through the Local Action Plan (LAP). This synthesis report provides a distillation of the complete LAP produced for the Breifne CP zone.

The Breifne CP, spanning the Connaught and Ulster provinces, faces challenges such as demographic shifts, water quality concerns, and threats to habitats. The LAP outlines the broad conservation and nature objectives and engages local stakeholders, primarily farmers, in achieving those objectives and addressing identified pressures and challenges. The Breifne CP team will provide support by offering tailored assistance, targeting actions, reducing regulatory burden and providing specialised training.

The LAP aligns with national environmental policies, its objectives will contribute to water quality, biodiversity, and climate action goals. A comprehensive monitoring plan will ensure data quality, track scheme progress, and inform improvements. The LAP also outlines how stakeholder engagement will occur at local and national levels through steering groups and area partnerships.

The full Local Action Plan document contains more detailed characterisation of the Breifne CP zone and includes detailed local objectives maps and the methodologies used in their development. It is available to view [here](#).

<https://acresireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Local-Area-Plan-Breifne-Leinster-MS-2023-June2023.pdf>