



HEN HARRIER PROJECT

Responding quickly but effectively to opportunities

Hen Harrier Project

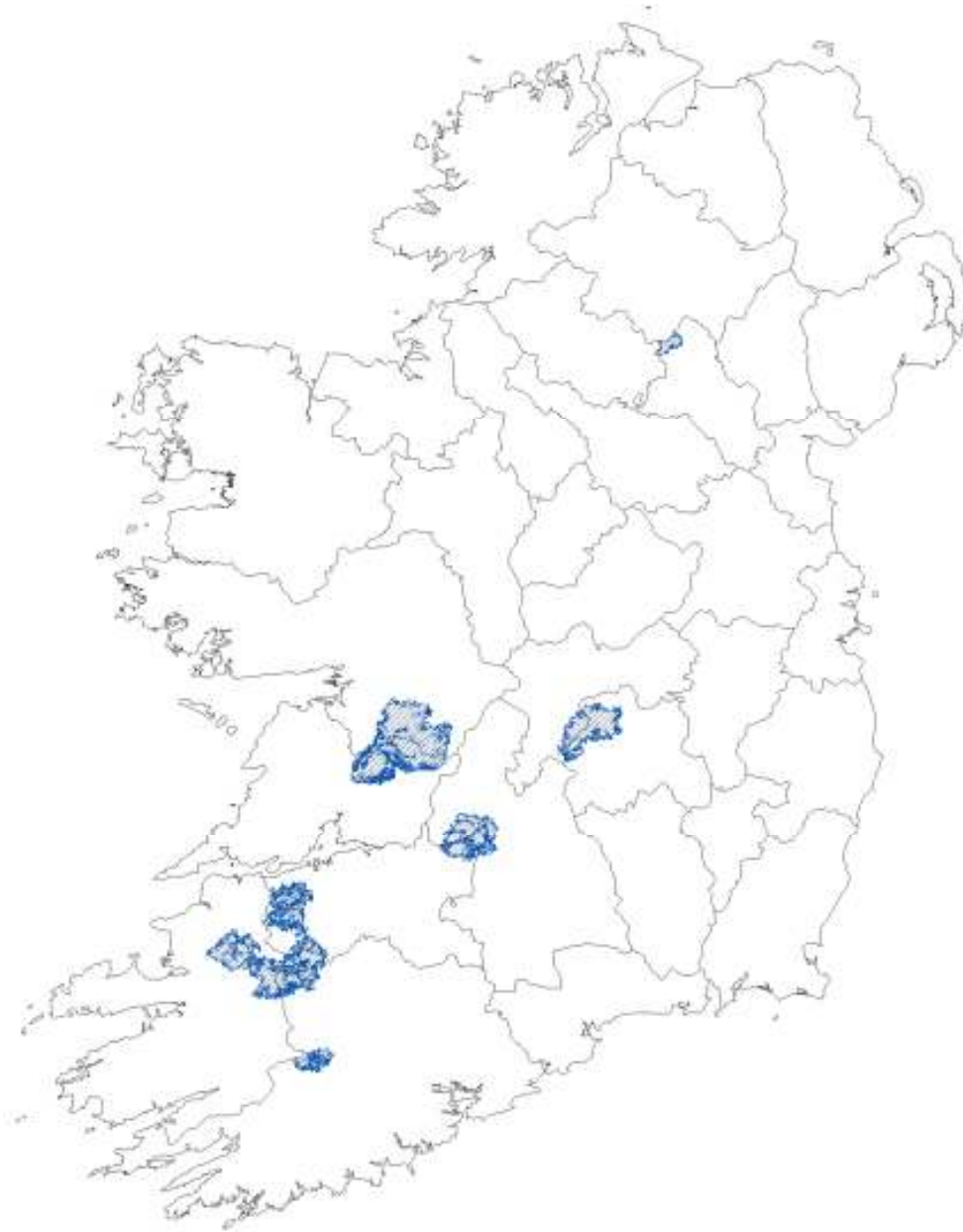


- Response to potential legal action from EU if Irish government didn't do something for the Hen Harrier
- Hen Harrier is a threatened bird species
- ~150 breeding pairs
- Breeding Hen Harrier SPAs established in 2008

Hen Harrier



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Hen Harrier



- 82 confirmed breeding pairs in the SPAs in 2005
- 50 confirmed breeding pairs in the SPAs in 2015
- 58 confirmed breeding pairs in the SPAs in 2017 (HHP)
- Loss of habitat
- 50% of the SPA land is forestry
- Habitat quality compromised

Hen Harrier Project



- Is a European Innovation Partnership (EIP)
- These EIPs aim to stimulate innovation across Europe.



Hen Harrier Project



- Hen Harrier Project is an EIP and a national pilot project
- Hen Harrier Project Team
 - Project Manager-Fergal Monaghan (Agricultural advisor)
 - Assistant Manager- Caroline Sullivan (Farmland ecologist)
 - Agriculture Specialist- Eoin McCarthy (Agriculture advisor)
 - Raptor Specialist- Ryan Wilson-Parr (Ecological consultant)
 - Project Officer-Evelyn Joyce (Environmental Scientist)
- Hen Harrier monitoring carried out by the Golden Eagle Trust
- Project Accountants–Brendan O Gorman Accountants
- Design and administer the Hen Harrier Programme

Results-based programme



- Payment contingent on the delivery of something tangible
- Ecosystems approach
- Hen Harrier is a flagship species
- If it is doing well, the ecosystems it relies on are also doing well
- A rising tide lifts all ships
- Plant communities and the habitats they comprise are key building blocks

Hen Harrier Project

- Modelled on the Burren approach
- Adapted for a very different objective
- Adapted for very different lands
- Sustainable upland farmland is a key focus



Hen Harrier Project



- Awarded contract in May 2017
- Fergal Monaghan in place
- Monitoring team immediately began work (a month later than ideal)
- C Sullivan, E McCarthy and R Wilson-Parr in place by June
- Programme launched Dec 8th 2017
- 6 months after contract awarded

Hen Harrier Project



- Knew the results-based approach was desirable
- Focused on not re-inventing the wheel
- Adapted carefully for Hen Harrier objective
- Farming needed to be central

Scorecards



- To improve the habitat quality we needed to identify the key habitats
- Peatland-bog/heath
 - Essential nesting and foraging habitat
- Wet grassland
 - Foraging habitat
- Scrub/woodland
 - Foraging and nesting

Landowner: _____
 Date/Time: _____
 Field Number: _____
 Recorder: _____

Well grassland woodland

A. Ecological integrity

A.1 What is the number of positive indicators in the field? Tick all positive fields present in the 100m x 100m area.
 Note: all positive indicators present in the field must be present in the 100m x 100m area.

Score	0	1	2	3	4
Score	0	1	2	3	4
Indicator	0	1	2	3	4
1. Field free of weeds (Common & invasive)	0	1	2	3	4
2. Field free of trees (Common & invasive)	0	1	2	3	4
3. Field free of shrubs (Common & invasive)	0	1	2	3	4
4. Field free of grass (Common & invasive)	0	1	2	3	4
5. Field free of bare ground (Common & invasive)	0	1	2	3	4
6. Field free of bare ground (Common & invasive)	0	1	2	3	4
7. Field free of bare ground (Common & invasive)	0	1	2	3	4
8. Field free of bare ground (Common & invasive)	0	1	2	3	4
9. Field free of bare ground (Common & invasive)	0	1	2	3	4
10. Field free of bare ground (Common & invasive)	0	1	2	3	4
11. Field free of bare ground (Common & invasive)	0	1	2	3	4
12. Field free of bare ground (Common & invasive)	0	1	2	3	4
13. Field free of bare ground (Common & invasive)	0	1	2	3	4
14. Field free of bare ground (Common & invasive)	0	1	2	3	4

A.2 What is the combined cover of positive indicators listed in A.1 through the field or management unit?
 Cover is the proportion of the field area covered by all positive indicators present.

Score	0	1	2	3	4
Score	0	1	2	3	4

A.3 What is the combined cover of positive indicators listed in A.1 through the field or management unit?
 Cover is the proportion of the field area covered by all positive indicators present.

Score	0	1	2	3	4
Score	0	1	2	3	4

A.4 Field boundary quality

Score	0	1	2	3	4
Score	0	1	2	3	4

A.5 Bank Cover, Diversity and Structure

Bank cover should be dealt with as a separate management unit (BHU) and scored with the bank cover.

Score	0	1	2	3	4
Score	0	1	2	3	4

A.6 Vegetation structure: What is the proportion of the field area covered by the vegetation structure? (A.6.1) (A.6.2) (A.6.3) (A.6.4) (A.6.5) (A.6.6) (A.6.7) (A.6.8) (A.6.9) (A.6.10) (A.6.11) (A.6.12) (A.6.13) (A.6.14) (A.6.15) (A.6.16) (A.6.17) (A.6.18) (A.6.19) (A.6.20)

Score	0	1	2	3	4
Score	0	1	2	3	4

A.7 Field structure

Score	0	1	2	3	4
Score	0	1	2	3	4

Score	0	1	2	3	4
Score	0	1	2	3	4

B. Threats and Natural Processes

Score	0	1	2	3	4
Score	0	1	2	3	4

B.1 What is the cover of the vegetation structure? (A.6.1) (A.6.2) (A.6.3) (A.6.4) (A.6.5) (A.6.6) (A.6.7) (A.6.8) (A.6.9) (A.6.10) (A.6.11) (A.6.12) (A.6.13) (A.6.14) (A.6.15) (A.6.16) (A.6.17) (A.6.18) (A.6.19) (A.6.20)

Score	0	1	2	3	4
Score	0	1	2	3	4

B.2 What is the cover of the vegetation structure? (A.6.1) (A.6.2) (A.6.3) (A.6.4) (A.6.5) (A.6.6) (A.6.7) (A.6.8) (A.6.9) (A.6.10) (A.6.11) (A.6.12) (A.6.13) (A.6.14) (A.6.15) (A.6.16) (A.6.17) (A.6.18) (A.6.19) (A.6.20)

Score	0	1	2	3	4
Score	0	1	2	3	4

B.3 Are there any damaging activities to vegetation, soil or water? (A.6.1) (A.6.2) (A.6.3) (A.6.4) (A.6.5) (A.6.6) (A.6.7) (A.6.8) (A.6.9) (A.6.10) (A.6.11) (A.6.12) (A.6.13) (A.6.14) (A.6.15) (A.6.16) (A.6.17) (A.6.18) (A.6.19) (A.6.20)

Score	0	1	2	3	4
Score	0	1	2	3	4

B.4 Is there damage due to supplementary feeding? (A.6.1) (A.6.2) (A.6.3) (A.6.4) (A.6.5) (A.6.6) (A.6.7) (A.6.8) (A.6.9) (A.6.10) (A.6.11) (A.6.12) (A.6.13) (A.6.14) (A.6.15) (A.6.16) (A.6.17) (A.6.18) (A.6.19) (A.6.20)

Score	0	1	2	3	4
Score	0	1	2	3	4

Comments or any recommended actions

Any issues to be brought to farmers attention for immediate action

or to rectify in short/medium term:

$$\frac{45}{100} = \text{score of } 5$$



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Payments



- Payments were calculated on the basis on costs incurred and income foregone
- Challenging for peatlands in particular
- More biodiversity-focus would allow more freedom
- Compatible with existing AE schemes
- EIP requirement that it not be area-based
- Developed a points-based system with area as an element

Hen Harrier Project



- This work was carried out in June-Sept
- Farmer input also vital
- 12 development farmers
- Across the 6 SPAs
- Nominated by the main farming organisations
- Had to have land in the area
- Represented a range of enterprises and habitats
- First point of contact between the Project and the farmer

Hen Harrier Project



- Communication of the project ideas and goals to the target audience is extremely important
- SPA designation was fiercely opposed in 2008
- Still vigorously opposed in some areas
- Want compensation for designation
- Needed to clearly communicate what this Programme was about

Hen Harrier Project

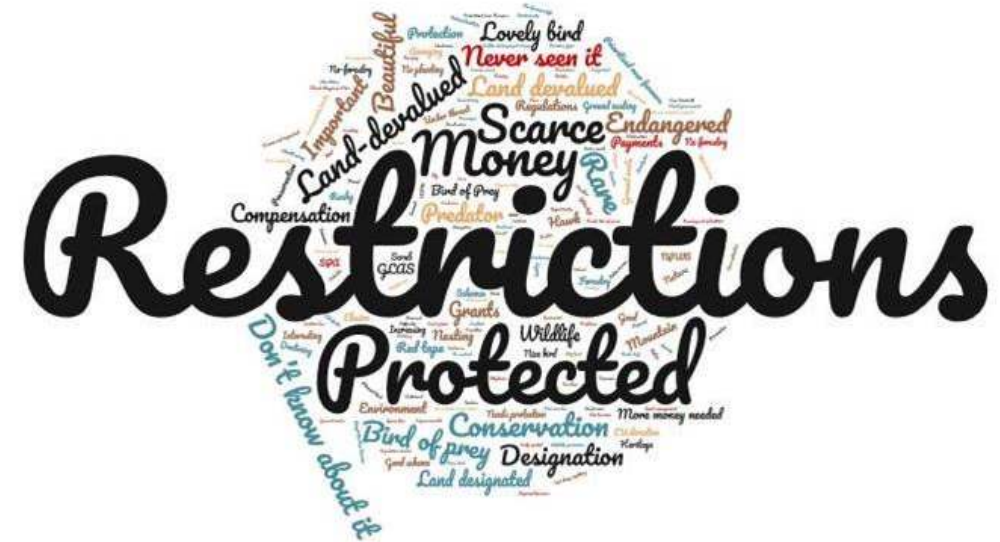


- Also carried out farmer consultations
- 31 meetings
- 500 farmers attended
- Gauged attitudes and gained Programme input

**No farming
Forestry**
Big farms only
No young farmers



Restrictions
Protected



Hen Harrier Project



- Farmers wanted something flexible
- Wanted compatibility with existing AE schemes
- Wanted meaningful payments
- Terms and conditions drawn up
- Development farmer opinions NB
- Think we delivered these to the best of our ability

Hen Harrier Project



- Hitting milestone
 - Scorecards
 - Payments
 - Launch date
 - Advisor training
 - 1300 applications since Dec 8th
 - First 160 farmers selected
- Future milestones
 - First contract signed
 - Farmer training



Hen Harrier Project



- Key elements
 - Good mix of skills
 - Clear objective
 - Good framework to build on
 - Flexibility
 - Adaptability
 - Good relationship with DAFM

Hen Harrier Project

- Things to monitor
- Media
- Farmer feedback
- Progress
- Habitat quality



Still farming Profitable Sustainable Young farmers Good grazing

Organic Productive Rural Active Viable Easier Maintained Good practices Economic Initiatives Better weather Subsidised Prosperous Uncertain future Alternative employment Working with nature Hedgerows Less regulation Rewarding Conservation Economically viable More village level Increased population Good practices No forestry Less intensive Designated Solar panels Specialised Worthwhile Less accidents Diversification Nature Larger Family Next generation Native woodland Carbon reduction Land valued Less work Balance Value Dry Less red tape Ecotourism Co operation Green Rural Active Viable Easier Modern Interest Beef Wildlife Supporting families Independence Opportunity Uncertain Efficient farming Profitable farming Expansion Payments Relaxed planning Clean water Progressive Pure breeds Utilised Less abandoned Schemes available to farmers Better ground Improved grants Existing Environmentally friendly Enhancement Full time Less paperwork Organic Productive Rural Active Viable Easier Maintained Good practices Economic Initiatives Better weather Subsidised Prosperous Uncertain future Alternative employment Working with nature Hedgerows Less regulation Rewarding Conservation Economically viable More village level Increased population Good practices No forestry Less intensive Designated Solar panels Specialised Worthwhile Less accidents Diversification Nature Larger Family Next generation Native woodland Carbon reduction Land valued Less work Balance Value Dry Less red tape Ecotourism Co operation Green Rural Active Viable Easier Modern Interest Beef Wildlife Supporting families Independence Opportunity Uncertain Efficient farming Profitable farming Expansion Payments Relaxed planning Clean water Progressive Pure breeds Utilised Less abandoned Schemes available to farmers Better ground Improved grants Existing Environmentally friendly Enhancement Full time Less paperwork

Hen Harrier Project



- A lot done, a LOT more to do
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