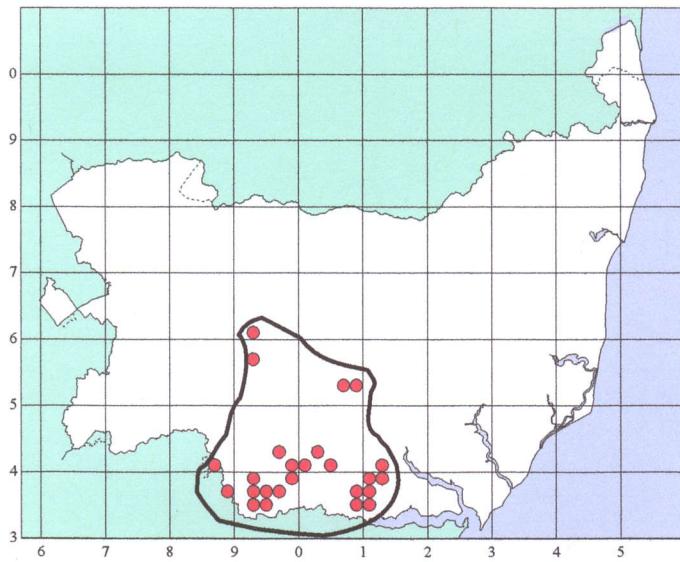


Working out your  
Environmental Stewardship Scheme  
Entry Level Scheme (ELS) &  
Higher Level Scheme (HLS):



Dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius*



Use this leaflet to choose simple options and  
help the dormouse

## Helping you choose your ELS options

To receive your ELS payment of £30/ha \* you need to select from a range of management options, each of which gives you points towards the total you need to be eligible (30 points per hectare). Some options could especially benefit dormice.

### Where do dormice occur in Suffolk?

The map overleaf shows known distribution of dormice in Suffolk. Most of the records are found in the south of the County, within the River Stour catchment and in the south-east on the Shotley peninsula. Within the known range for dormice in Suffolk it is highly likely that there are undiscovered sites.

### What habitats can support dormice?

They are typically found in woodland habitats, particularly ancient woodland which has had a history of coppice management. Planted Ancient Woodlands (PAWS), where conifers have been introduced, may still support dormice. Occasionally dormice may be found in secondary woodland and scrub, when such habitat is linked to ancient woodland.

Hedgerows can also provide good habitat for dormice, supporting permanent populations or providing food-producing dispersal corridors. Hedgerows therefore provide both habitat space and vital connections between woodland sites.

Dormice are usually found in hedgerows that are ancient and species-rich. The suitability of such hedgerows can be determined by the presence of the following features:

- Ancient woodland within 500 metres (which may also support dormice)
- Good hedgerow links to ancient woodland with few gaps
- Contains a mixture of hazel, bramble, oak, honeysuckle and dog rose (although not all may be present). Other shrub species may also be present
- Width at least 3-4 metres
- Top uncut and often at least 4 metres high

Other hedgerows and tree lines may also occasionally act as dispersal corridors for dormice, particularly if they link ancient woodland to ancient hedgerows, so the likely presence of dormice in other field boundaries should also be considered.

### What if you don't have dormice?

If you have hedgerows on your land then why not choose from these options anyway. By restoring and enhancing hedgerows you could encourage dormice, if present locally, to move in from neighbouring areas. You will also help a wide range of other wildlife in and around your farm.

### Why choose the options in this leaflet?

- save time choosing your options
- with little extra management effort add more environmental value to your cross compliance margins
- improve the quality of boundary features on your farm and their connections to other wildlife habitats
- Dormice are on the north-eastern edge of their range in Suffolk and in many areas populations are isolated or only just hanging on
- by choosing dormouse-friendly options you could make a valuable contribution to the Suffolk Biodiversity Action Plan
- by helping dormice you will be part of the nationwide campaign to maintain the viability of existing dormouse populations.

**We suggest these ELS options**

The ELS Handbook has full details of the scheme and the points (on page numbers shown). For equivalent options on organic land refer to the Organic Entry Level Scheme Stewardship Handbook.

**Entry Level Stewardship options to help dormice\***

ELS options	How the option helps dormice
EB1 Hedge management 22 points/100m p36  EB2 Half hedge management 11 points/100m p36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensitively manage hedges to improve structural diversity</li> <li>• Enhance food availability by cutting less frequently</li> </ul>
EB3 Enhanced hedge management 42 points/100m p38	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is particularly suitable where dormice may be present to retain and enhance the structure and diversity of their habitat</li> </ul>
EB8, EB9, EB10 Combined hedge and ditch management 28, 38 or 56 points/100m p40-41  Only available under ELS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve hedge and ditch structural links with other habitat areas</li> </ul>
EC4 Management of woodland edges 380 points/ha p44	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unshaded shrubs at woodland edges can provide a rich food source for dormice</li> </ul>
EE1-EE6 Buffer strips 2m/4m/6m wide on cultivated and intensive grassland 300-400 points/ha p50-54  Available under both ELS and HLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buffer hedges and ditches on field margins on cultivated land or intensive grassland to improve structural diversity</li> </ul>
EK1 Take field corners out of improved grass management 400 points/ha p73  Available under both ELS and HLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotes scrub development</li> </ul>

*\* These options will help other target species such as bats and great crested newts.*



## Higher Level Scheme

If you know you have dormice on or near your holding why not consider them in your Higher Level Scheme as this is likely to help your application be successful. Contact RDS, your Wildlife Trust or FWAG for advice before beginning your application and see the table below for options and works that benefit dormice.

### Higher Level Scheme options and capital works to help dormice\*

HLS annual payment management options	How the option helps dormice
<b>HB12 Maintenance of hedgerows of very high environmental value – £27/100 m for each side of the hedge</b>	<p>Management is tailored for each hedgerow but might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cutting infrequently (no more than every 3-4 years and leave some to grow for up to 10 years)</li> <li>• Cutting one side only and avoid cutting the hedgerow top</li> <li>• Rotation of cutting so no more than a third of hedgerows in an area are cut in any one year</li> <li>• Rotational laying or coppicing to maintain and improve hedgerow structure</li> <li>• Gapping up to improve habitat connectivity</li> </ul>
<b>HC7/HC8 Maintenance/Restoration of woodland - £100/ha</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reinstating winter coppice management in small coupes (0.5ha) will improve habitat quality and help safeguard dormice populations</li> </ul>
<b>HC10 Creation of woodland outside LFA - £315/ha</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates new habitat and may improve linkages between other woodlands</li> </ul>
<b>NC15/HC16/HC17 Maintenance/Restoration/Creation of successional areas and scrub - £100/ha</b>	<p>Helps safeguard existing populations of dormice or may create new habitat which could become colonised by dormice</p>
<b>HLS Capital payments</b>	
<b>PH Plant new hedges £5/m plus other payments such as removal of old fencelines, tree guards etc</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improves the linkages between existing woodlands and hedgerows</li> </ul>
<b>HR Hedgerow restoration including coppicing, laying and gapping up £5/m</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This helps maintain good hedgerow structure and if carried out rotationally should help to provide a diverse food source</li> </ul>
<b>STT Standard hedgerow tree and planting - £7.50 each</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planting trees such as oak in a hedgerow can improve habitat structure and diversity</li> </ul>
<b>SS/SA/SB/SC Scrub management - £76-583/ha depending on % scrub cover</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rotational scrub management may allow vigorous bramble growth (one of the food sources for dormice) but this needs to be carried out sensitively to ensure that sufficient scrub remains where dormice are present</li> </ul>
<b>PAH Professional help with management plan £400</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This might include help with a management plan specifically for dormice</li> </ul>

### **What do dormice really need?**

- ✓ Woodland which contains a diversity of shrub and tree species and may have a history of coppice management
- ✓ Tall, old, species-rich hedgerows at least 3-4 metres wide and of similar height
- ✓ Scrub where there is a diversity of woody species
- ✓ Good hedgerow connections between woodlands



### **Advice and support**

- To find out if you have dormice on your holding or if they occur nearby, and for further information and advice on how to help them using ELS/HLS please contact Suffolk Wildlife Trust office: 01473 890089 or email [info@suffolkwildlife.cix.co.uk](mailto:info@suffolkwildlife.cix.co.uk)
- Rural Development Service (RDS) administrate the Environmental Stewardship Scheme. Contact 01284 750102 for further information or [www.defra.gov.uk](http://www.defra.gov.uk) or 08456 024094 for application packs.
- The Dedham Vale and Stour Valley Countryside Project Contact 01473 583176 or [www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org](http://www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org) provides management advice to landowners within the project area.
- Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) Contact 01473 652800 or e mail [suffolk@fwag.org.uk](mailto:suffolk@fwag.org.uk). FWAG provides farmers and landowners with practical advice on enhancing farm features in order to support wildlife and other conservation issues.

*Photographs of dormice taken by Mike Ewart with Simone Bullion*