

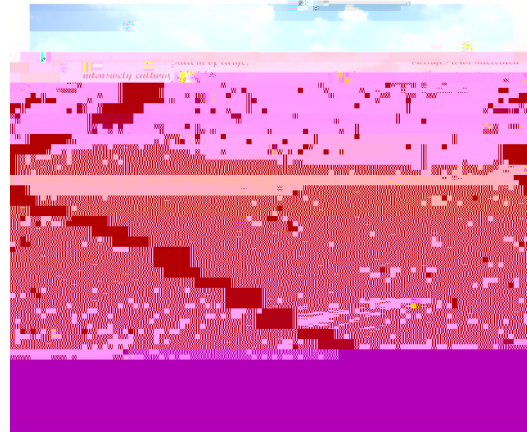
Landscapes of Worcestershire

Landscape Type Advice Sheet - *Land Management*

Village Farmlands with Orchards

Landscape Type Description

A distinctive planned low-land agricultural landscape with a notably dominant orchard land use. This is an intensively cultivated landscape characterised by a nucleated pattern of expanded villages surrounded by large cultivated fields.



Key Characteristics

Primary

- Extensive apple and plum orchards on south facing slopes

Secondary

- Nucleated settlement pattern

Tertiary

- Gently undulating topography
- Planned enclosure pattern of medium- to large-scale fields
- Cereals and field vegetables



Current Concerns

These landscapes tend to be located in areas of very slightly pronounced topography, where the south facing slopes provide ideal conditions for fruit growing. As the name suggests, orchards are a primary land use, apple, plum and gage being particularly notable, covering extensive areas of land. The characteristic traditional orchards of standard trees are disappearing in certain areas, with many old traditional fruit tree varieties being lost as a result. The economic worth of certain types of orchard - such as damson and plum - appears to be in decline and could hamper prospects of replacement once the old trees have declined. New orchard planting/restoration, notably of apple, often uses bush stock, the smaller stature of which has an impact upon the scale of the landscape.

Opportunities to improve the structure and wildlife potential of this landscape should focus on restoring good linear tree cover along watercourses and streams, encouraging new tree planting in and around villages, encouraging the establishment of wide field margins and the appropriate management of roadside verges and other non-productive land.

The aim of this information sheet is to provide *general guidelines* about the priorities for land management activities - focusing on relevant landscape features - within this Landscape Type. However, Landscape Types are generic descriptions of landscape character and any advice must be interpreted within the context of the site in question. Please also visit the Landscapes of Worcestershire mapping pages <http://gis.worcestershire.gov.uk/home/wcc-lca-maps> to click on your area and read the more specific ecological and landscape descriptions.

In the case of any habitat work, specialist advice should be sought from the County Ecologists and/or the appropriate agency (Natural England, Forestry Commission, Environment Agency, Defra) to ensure that the work is appropriate, is carried out at the right time of year, in the correct manner and in the best possible location. Surveys may need to be carried out to assess the sites