



Working together at a landscape scale: The Marlborough Downs 2011-18

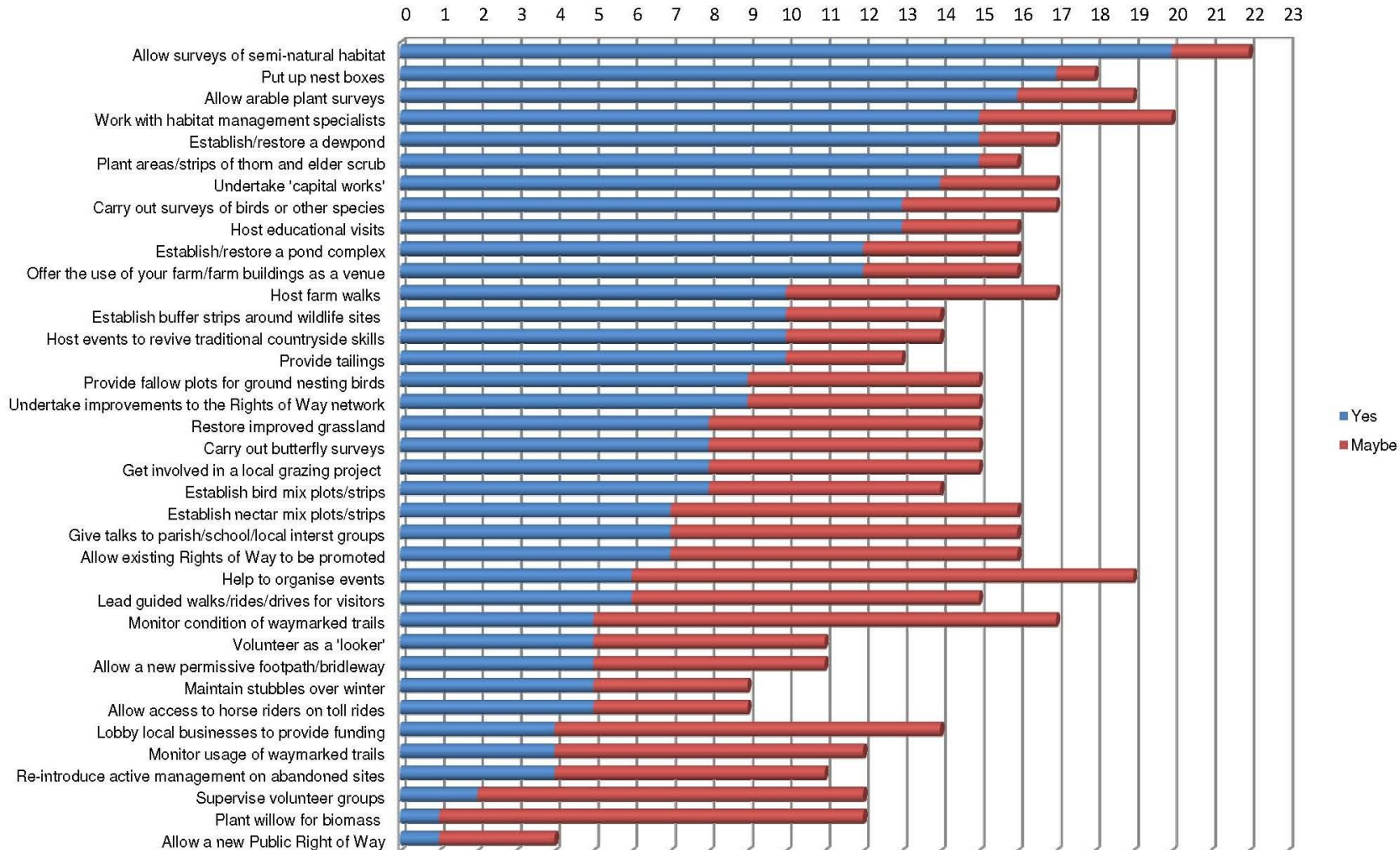
The Marlborough Downs 2011-18



- Getting started
 - Initial engagement
 - The first year
- Where are we now?
- Where do we go next?
- What's worked and what hasn't?
- What does success look like?
- What have we learnt?

Individual aspirations - bottom up

Figure 1: Farmer commitment to Marlborough Downs NIA objectives



Looking back: Year 1

CHALLENGES

- No precedent
- New organisation, charity, partnership and project
- Policies, procurement, data protection, insurance – so much paperwork
- No up-front funding
- Needed three months to set up



Looking back: Year 1

SUCSESSES

- Overwhelming enthusiasm
- Ponds, bird mixes, tree sparrow villages, farm walks, volunteers, circular ride, nest boxes, surveys, walks and talks, etc. etc. etc.
- **'STEP CHANGE' IN ATTITUDE**



Where are we now?

CHALLENGES

- New ideas, keeping it fresh and relevant
- Risk of becoming formulaic
- Loss of faith in Stewardship
- Funding restrictions
- Recording and sharing results
- Maintaining interest and engagement going forward



Where do we go next?

SUCSESSES

- New stakeholders, partnerships and projects, eg Bee Roadzz
- Thriving community engagement
- GWCT Cluster Groups and 98 Facilitated Groups
- Farmer collaboration is the new norm
- Long term commitment to the concept and practice



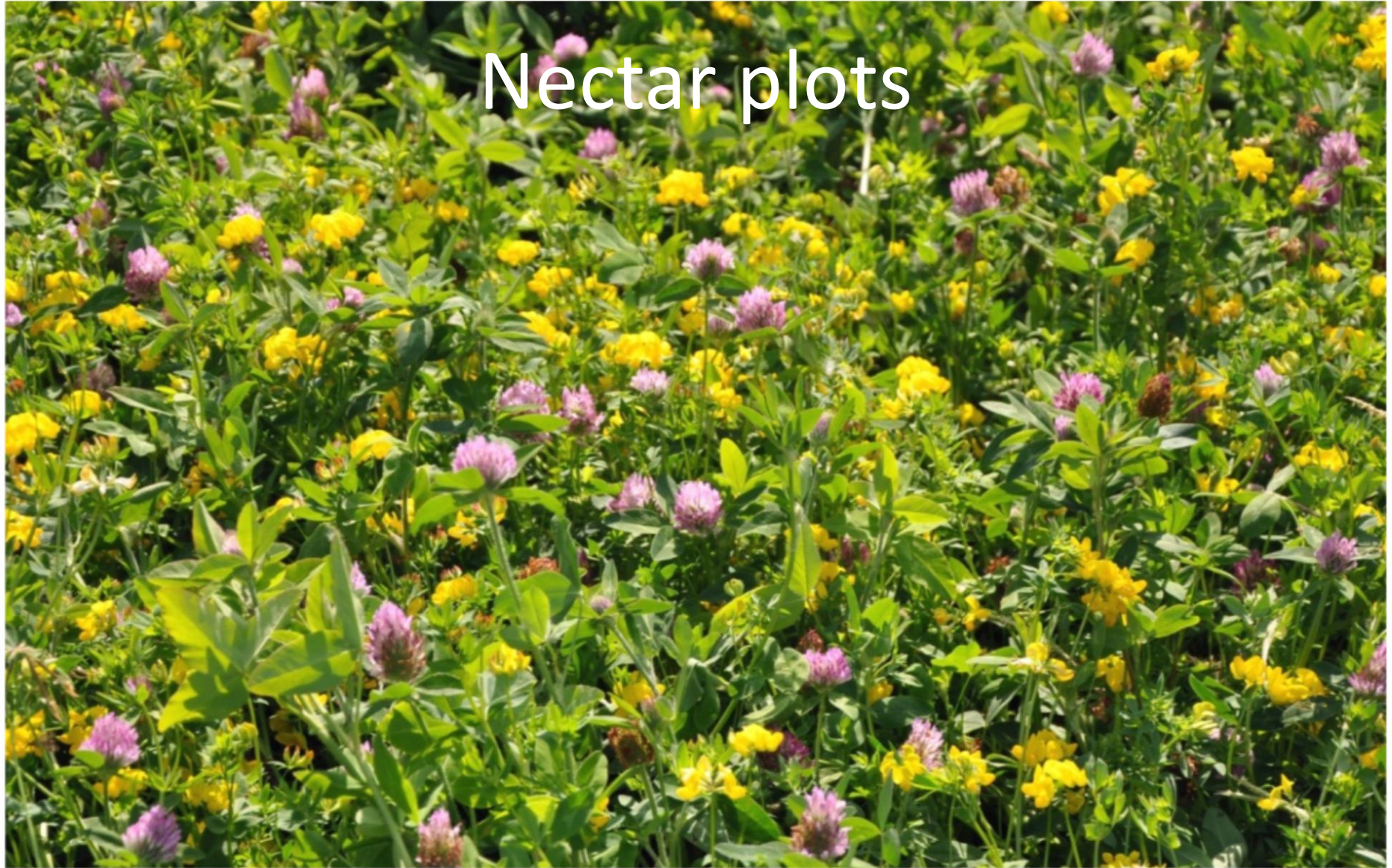


Farmland birds



Wild bird seed mixes

Nectar plots





Nest boxes



Making Space for Nature on the Marlborough Downs

Tree Sparrow Villages



Location, location, location!

Like us, tree sparrows have a wish list when looking for a new home. They obviously love the Marlborough Downs as there are lots of them living in the area, but when their families expand and the youngsters move out what kind of place do they look for?

Perhaps unsurprisingly, tree sparrows have pretty much the same criteria for a des res as we do!

- Most of us don't want to move too far from mum and dad, at least at first, so for our young tree sparrows we need to create new homes near to existing colonies.
- Everyone wants somewhere safe and secure to bring up the kids so we provide our tree sparrows with dense prickly scrub where they can tuck in and hide from predators such as sparrowhawks
- Like us, they appreciate convenience - a 'village shop' where they can pick up essentials quickly and easily. For tree sparrows this means nectar, fruit and seed bearing shrubs planted in their village that will also attract insects so they don't have to go far to find a snack
- One-stop variety is provided by nearby 'supermarkets' which for tree sparrows come in the form of specially planted mixes that are full of a wide range of seed-bearing and flowering plants that also attract lots of insects
- The village 'local' is the pub for us but for tree sparrows it's literally a watering hole so we make sure we establish our villages close to an existing water source or else provide a new pond nearby
- A good network of routes in and out of the village is also important. For us these are

Supplementary feeding











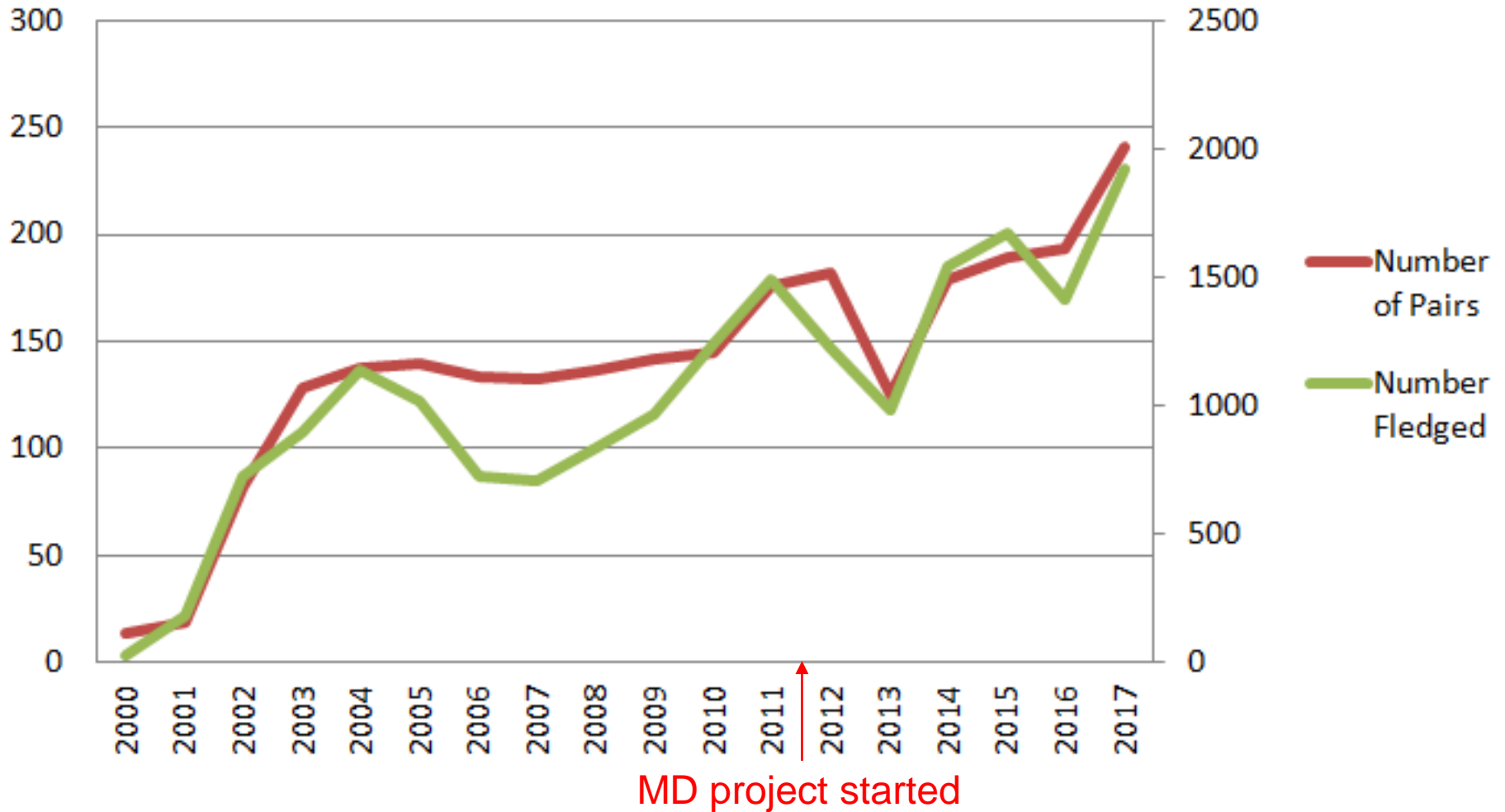


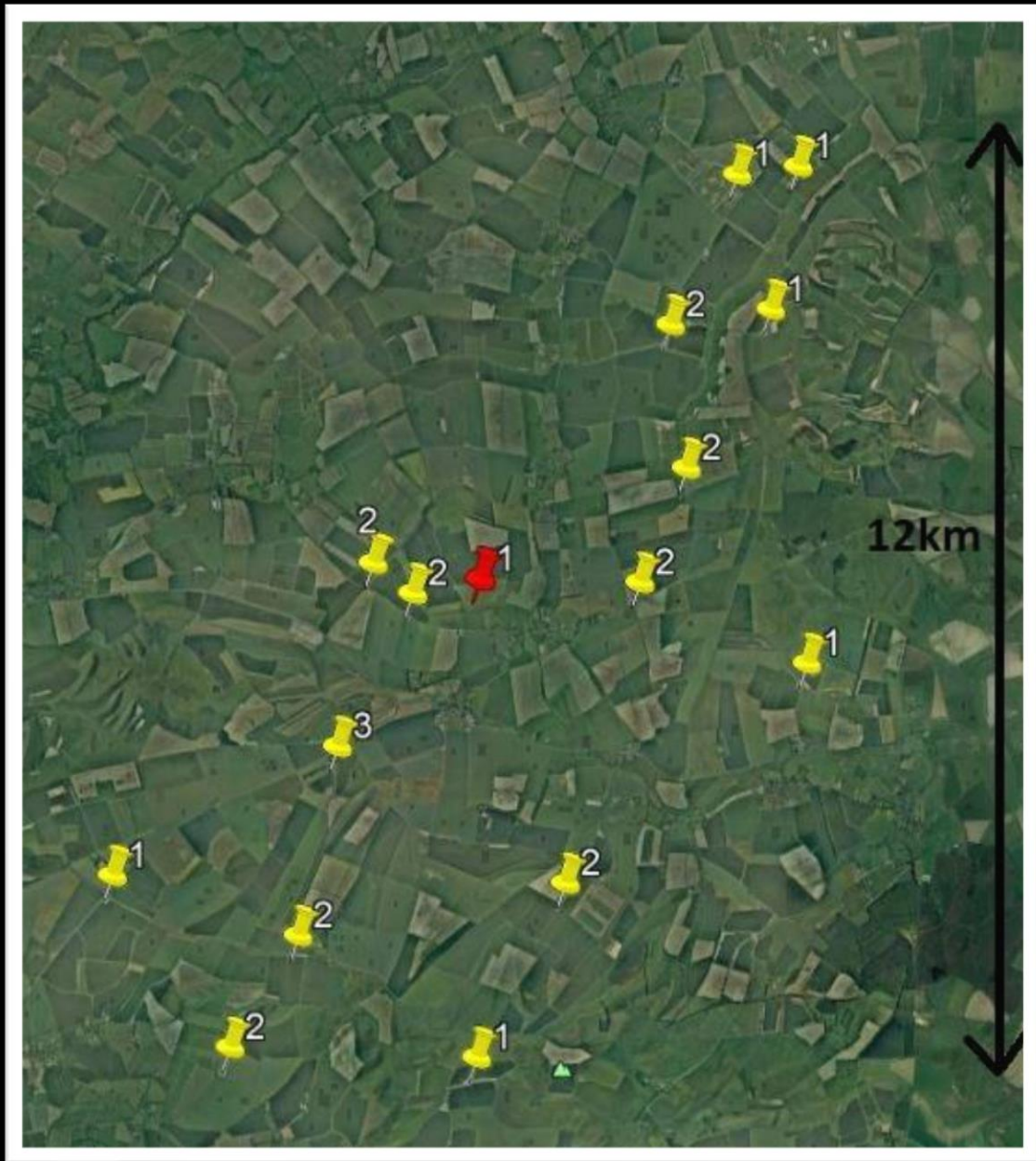




Monitoring
is crucial!

Tree Sparrow Nesting Results





What have we learnt?

- Start with something familiar
- Capture imagination
 - Lapwing envy
 - Tree sparrow villages
- Farmer-led delivery groups – planners
- Key players – drivers
- Practical application – start simple
- Encourage big ideas and competition
- Share results and achievements



Ownership





Thank you

Jemma Batten

Marlborough Downs Space for Nature
DELTA Plain Conservation



black sheep
COUNTRYSIDE MANAGEMENT