

# Site Improvement Plan

## Holburn Lake & Moss

Site Improvement Plans (SIPs) have been developed for each Natura 2000 site in England as part of the Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 sites (IPENS). Natura 2000 sites is the combined term for sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protected Areas (SPA). This work has been financially supported by LIFE, a financial instrument of the European Community.

The plan provides a high level overview of the issues (both current and predicted) affecting the condition of the Natura 2000 features on the site(s) and outlines the priority measures required to improve the condition of the features. It does not cover issues where remedial actions are already in place or ongoing management activities which are required for maintenance.

The SIP consists of three parts: a Summary table, which sets out the priority Issues and Measures; a detailed Actions table, which sets out who needs to do what, when and how much it is estimated to cost; and a set of tables containing contextual information and links.

Once this current programme ends, it is anticipated that Natural England and others, working with landowners and managers, will all play a role in delivering the priority measures to improve the condition of the features on these sites.

The SIPs are based on Natural England's current evidence and knowledge. The SIPs are not legal documents, they are live documents that will be updated to reflect changes in our evidence/knowledge and as actions get underway. The information in the SIPs will be used to update England's contribution to the UK's Prioritised Action Framework (PAF).

The SIPs are not formal consultation documents, but if you have any comments about the SIP or would like more information please email us at [IPENSLIFEProject@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:IPENSLIFEProject@naturalengland.org.uk), or contact Natural England's Responsible Officer for the site via our enquiry service 0300 060 3900, or [enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk)

**This Site Improvement Plan covers the following Natura 2000 site(s)**

**UK9006041 Holburn Lake & Moss SPA**

## Site description

Holburn Lake and Moss SPA, which is situated inland in rural east Northumberland, is an important winter roost for Greylag geese *Anser anser*. The habitat used by the geese on the site is restricted to Holburn Lake, although the site also includes lowland raised bog and upland heath which are not used by the geese. Greylag geese also make use of open-water habitat on nearby land which is not covered by the SPA designation.

## Plan Summary

*This table shows the prioritised issues for the site(s), the features they affect, the proposed measures to address the issues and the delivery bodies whose involvement is required to deliver the measures. The list of delivery bodies will include those who have agreed to the actions as well as those where discussions over their role in delivering the actions is on-going.*

Priority & Issue	Pressure or Threat	Feature(s) affected	Measure	Delivery Bodies
1 Changes in species distributions	Pressure	A043(NB) Icelandic Greylag goose	Investigate reasons for declining numbers	Natural England, RSPB, British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), The Joicey Estate
2 Drainage	Threat	A043(NB) Icelandic Greylag goose	Monitor water levels	Natural England, The Joicey Estate
3 Natural changes to site conditions	Threat	A043(NB) Icelandic Greylag goose	Investigate habitat preferences for Greylag geese	Natural England, RSPB, British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), The Joicey Estate

## Issues and Actions

This table outlines the prioritised issues that are currently impacting or threatening the condition of the features, and the outstanding actions required to address them. It also shows, where possible, the estimated cost of the action and the delivery bodies whose involvement will be required to implement the action. Lead delivery bodies will be responsible for coordinating the implementation of the action, but not necessarily funding it. Delivery partners will need to support the lead delivery body in implementing the action. In the process of developing the SIPs Natural England has approached the delivery bodies to seek agreement on the actions and their roles in delivering them, although in some cases these discussions have not yet been concluded. Other interested parties, including landowners and managers, will be involved as the detailed actions are agreed and delivered. Funding options are indicated as potential (but not necessarily agreed or secured) sources to fund the actions.

### 1 Changes in species distributions

Use of the site by greylag geese appears to be declining. The reasons for this are thought to be linked to a northerly shift in their distribution.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
1A	Investigate the trend in use of the site by Greylag geese, and the reasons for any decline.	£40,000	2015-16	Investigation / Research / Monitoring	Natural England, Evidence project	Natural England	RSPB, British Trust for Ornithology (BTO)

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
1B	Following investigation, develop actions to address any onsite reasons for declining numbers, and/or adjust conservation objectives as appropriate.	Not yet determined	2016-20	Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE): Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme (HLS)	Rural Development Programme (RDPE)	Natural England	The Joicey Estate

### 2 Drainage

Water levels in the lake are thought to be linked with the functioning of a nearby dam. Failure of the dam could therefore affect the suitability of the lake for Greylag geese. Issues with the dam were noticed back in 2005 and were addressed by consented repairs to the structure in 2008. There have been no ongoing issues with the dam since then, although monitoring of the water levels should continue to ensure that any future problems are identified early and can be addressed quickly.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
2A	Monitor water levels on the lake and assess condition of the dam.	Not yet determined	2015 onwards	Partnership agreement: Other	Landowner/occupier	Natural England	The Joicey Estate

### 3 Natural changes to site conditions

The vegetation of the landscape surrounding the open water of Holburn Lake may be a factor in determining how attractive the site is to Greylag geese. The decrease in grazing and natural succession may be creating a more rank and scrubby habitat that may not be suitable for Greylags.

<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
<b>3A</b>	Investigate vegetation succession on the site and its surrounding area, and its impact on the geese (see action 1A).	see costs for action 1A	2015-16	Investigation / Research / Monitoring	Natural England, Evidence project	Natural England	RSPB, British Trust for Ornithology (BTO)

<i>Action</i>	<i>Action description</i>	<i>Cost estimate</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Funding option</i>	<i>Delivery lead body</i>	<i>Delivery partner(s)</i>
<b>3B</b>	Following investigation, negotiate an appropriate grazing regime and associated scrub management through existing HLS agreement.	Not yet determined	2016-20	Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE): Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme (HLS)	Rural Development Programme (RDPE)	Natural England	The Joicey Estate

## Site details

The tables in this section contain site-relevant contextual information and links

### Qualifying features

#UK Special responsibility

**Holburn Lake & Moss SPA**

A043a(NB) *Anser anser* : Greylag goose

### Site location and links

**Holburn Lake & Moss SPA**

Area (ha) **28.03**      Grid reference **NU051365**      [Map link](#)

Local Authorities      Northumberland

Site Conservation Objectives      [European Site Conservation Objectives for Holburn Lake & Moss SPA](#)

European Marine Site conservation advice      [n/a](#)

Regulation 33/35 Package      [n/a](#)

Marine Management Organisation site plan      [n/a](#)

## Water Framework Directive (WFD)

*The Water Framework Directive (WFD) provides the main framework for managing the water environment throughout Europe. Under the WFD a management plan must be developed for each river basin district. The River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) include a summary of the measures needed for water dependent Natura 2000 sites to meet their conservation objectives. For the second round of RBMPs, SIPs are being used to capture the priorities and new measures required for water dependent habitats on Natura 2000 sites. SIP actions for non-water dependent sites/habitats do not form part of the RBMPs and associated consultation.*

### **Holburn Lake & Moss SPA**

*River basin*

[Northumbria RBMP](#)

*WFD Management catchment*

Northumberland Rivers

*WFD Waterbody ID (Cycle 2 draft)*

n/a

## Overlapping or adjacent protected sites

Site(s) of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	
Holburn Lake & Moss SPA	Holburn Lake & Moss SSSI

National Nature Reserve (NNR)	
Holburn Lake & Moss SPA	n/a

Ramsar	
Holburn Lake & Moss SPA	Holburn Lake & Moss

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA)	
Holburn Lake & Moss SPA	n/a

<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1.0	01/04/2015	

[www.naturalengland.org.uk/ipens2000](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ipens2000)

