

Site Improvement Plan

Dorset Heaths

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, or contact Natural England's Responsible Officer for the site via our enquiry service 0300 060 3900, or enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk

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

- UK9010101 Dorset Heathlands SPA**
- UK0030038 Dorset Heaths (Purbeck & Wareham) & Studland Dunes SAC**
- UK0019857 Dorset Heaths SAC**

Site description

The Dorset heathlands is an extensive lowland heathland area in southern England. Formerly a single tract divided only by river valleys it is now fragmented. The heathlands comprise a wide range of different habitat types related to variation in soils, hydrology, water chemistry and land use history.

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 Inappropriate scrub control	Pressure	A082(NB) Hen Harrier, A098(B) Merlin, A224(B) European nightjar, A246(B) Woodlark, A302(B) Dartford Warbler, H2110 Shifting dunes, H2120 Shifting dunes with marram, H2150 Coastal dune heathland, H2190 Humid dune slacks, H3110 Nutrient-poor shallow waters with aquatic vegetation on sandy plains, H4010 Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath, H4020 Wet heathland with Dorset heath and cross-leaved heath, H4030 European dry heaths, H6410 Purple moor-grass meadows, H7150 Depressions on peat substrates, H7210 Calcium-rich fen dominated by great fen sedge (saw sedge), H7230 Calcium-rich springwater-fed fens, H9190 Dry oak-dominated woodland, H91D0 Bog woodland, S1044 Southern damselfly, S1166 Great crested newt	Clear scrub and prevent recolonisation	Forestry Commission, Natural England, Landowner(s), Agreement holder(s)
2 Public Access/Disturbance	Pressure/Threat	A082(NB) Hen Harrier, A098(B) Merlin, A224(B) European nightjar, A246(B) Woodlark, A302(B) Dartford Warbler, H4010 Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath, H4030 European dry heaths, H7150 Depressions on peat substrates	Manage public access so as to prevent and reduce pressures	Christchurch Borough Council, Dorset County Council, Dorset Wildlife Trust, East Dorset District Council, Natural England, Purbeck District Council, West Dorset District Council, Urban Heaths Partnership

3 Undergrazing	Pressure	H4010 Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath, H4030 European dry heaths, H7150 Depressions on peat substrates, S1044 Southern damselfly	Secure appropriate levels of grazing where possible	Christchurch Borough Council, Dorset Wildlife Trust, Forestry Commission, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust (ARCT), National Trust, Natural England, Wild Purbeck NIA
4 Forestry and woodland management	Pressure	A082(NB) Hen Harrier, A098(B) Merlin, A224(B) European nightjar, A246(B) Woodlark, A302(B) Dartford Warbler, H4010 Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath, H4030 European dry heaths	Restore plantations to heathland where appropriate	Forestry Commission, Ministry of Defence (MoD), Natural England, Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO)
5 Drainage	Pressure	H4010 Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath, H7150 Depressions on peat substrates, S1044 Southern damselfly	Restore wetland and wet heath by ditch blocking	Dorset County Council, National Trust, Natural England, Research Sites Restoration Ltd (acting for NDA)
6 Water Pollution	Pressure/ Threat	H3110 Nutrient-poor shallow waters with aquatic vegetation on sandy plains, H4010 Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath, H4030 European dry heaths, H7150 Depressions on peat substrates, S1044 Southern damselfly	Reduce diffuse pollution and silt/ sand run-off	Dorset County Council, Environment Agency, National Trust, Natural England, Wessex Water Services Ltd
7 Invasive species	Pressure	A082(NB) Hen Harrier, A098(B) Merlin, A224(B) European nightjar, A246(B) Woodlark, A302(B) Dartford Warbler, H3110 Nutrient-poor shallow waters with aquatic vegetation on sandy plains, H4010 Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath, H4030 European dry heaths, H7150 Depressions on peat substrates	Control and reduce invasive species and bracken	Bournemouth Borough Council, Dorset County Council, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust (ARCT), National Trust, Natural England, Borough of Poole
8 Habitat fragmentation	Pressure/ Threat	A082(NB) Hen Harrier, A098(B) Merlin, A224(B) European nightjar, A246(B) Woodlark, A302(B) Dartford Warbler, H4010 Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath, H4030 European dry heaths, H7150 Depressions on peat substrates, S1044 Southern damselfly	Restore effective linkages between fragmented habitats	Forestry Commission, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust (ARCT), Natural England, RSPB, Habitat First, Hanson Aggregates, SITA, Holme Sand and Gravel

9	Conflicting conservation objectives	Pressure	H4010 Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath, H4030 European dry heaths, H6410 Purple moor-grass meadows, H7150 Depressions on peat substrates, H7230 Calcium-rich springwater-fed fens, H9190 Dry oak-dominated woodland, S1044 Southern damselfly, S1166 Great crested newt	Ensure open heathland management is compatible with the conservation of rare species	Natural England
10	Wildfire/ arson	Pressure	A082(NB) Hen Harrier, A098(B) Merlin, A224(B) European nightjar, A246(B) Woodlark, A302(B) Dartford Warbler, H4010 Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath, H4030 European dry heaths	Reduce harmful fires, working with partners	Dorset County Council, Dorset Police, Dorset Fire and Rescue Service , Urban Heaths Partnership
11	Air Pollution: impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition	Pressure	H4010 Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath, H4030 European dry heaths, H7150 Depressions on peat substrates	Reduce atmospheric nitrogen deposition	Natural England
12	Deer	Pressure	H4010 Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath, H4030 European dry heaths, H7150 Depressions on peat substrates, S1044 Southern damselfly	Manage and control deer numbers	Forestry Commission, Ministry of Defence (MoD), National Trust, RSPB

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 Inappropriate scrub control

Invasion of heath by trees and scrub results, in the long term, loss of heathland vegetation. The process is at different stages on different sites but scrub control is necessary on the majority of these sites. A large amount of work has already been done (e.g. through Wildlife Enhancement Scheme (WES), Tomorrow's Heathland Heritage (THH) and Higher Level Stewardship (HLS)) but the need is ongoing. Some units remain unmanaged mainly because either (i) they are very small and therefore have had a low priority in our promoting HLS or CES or (ii) owner resistance to an agreement. For (ii) regulation is likely to be necessary in some cases.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
1A	Bring 320ha of heathland into positive management by removing scrub and undertaking other habitat management e.g bracken control by entering the proportion of this area eligible for NELMS in agreement.	£500,000	2014-20	Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE): Common Agricultural Policy 2014-20 (New Environmental Land Management Scheme)	Rural Development Programme (RDPE)	Natural England	n/a
1B	For the remaining areas of the 320 ha referred to in 1A, where the uptake of agri-environment schemes cannot be negotiated, secure heathland management using regulation where necessary.	Not yet determined	2014-20	Regulation: SSSI Regulation	Natural England	Natural England	n/a

<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>
1C	Complete heathland restoration programmes requiring capital works which form part of existing HLS heathland agreements (some 60 agreements covering almost 6000 ha).	£600,000	2014-20	Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE): Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme (HLS)	Rural Development Programme (RDPE)	Natural England	Forestry Commission
<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>
1D	Control trees and scrub on NNRs.	£100,000	2014-20	National Nature Reserve (NNR) management plan	Natural England	Natural England	Forestry Commission

2 Public Access/Disturbance

Public access and disturbance affect large parts of the site mainly in the area of Poole/Bournemouth. Disturbance of breeding SPA birds, mostly by dogs, can affect their breeding success, with implications for population level effects e.g. nightjar and woodlark. Other effects include predation by domestic cats and urban foxes, habitat change from nutrients in dog faeces, and dumping of garden rubbish. On a number of sites the illicit use of heaths for motorcycle scrambling is resulting in disturbance and erosion, however motorcycle use on heathlands has generally declined relative to previous levels in response to site wardening and alternative facilities being made available.

<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>
2A	Prevent increases in damaging recreational pressures from new development (access management).	Not yet determined	2014 onwards	Existing Local Project	Developer	Local partnership	Christchurch Borough Council, Dorset County Council, East Dorset District Council, Natural England, Purbeck District Council, West Dorset District Council, Urban Heaths Partnership

<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>
2B	Prevent increases in recreational pressures from new development (Suitable Areas of Natural Greenspace SANG measures).	Not yet determined	2014 onwards	Existing Local Project	Developer	Local partnership	Christchurch Borough Council, Dorset County Council, East Dorset District Council, Natural England, Purbeck District Council, West Dorset District Council
<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>
2C	Reduce adverse recreational pressures through site access management measures.	£800,000	2014-24	Existing Local Project	EU Life, Landfill tax	Local partnership	Christchurch Borough Council, Dorset County Council, East Dorset District Council, Natural England, Purbeck District Council, West Dorset District Council, Urban Heaths Partnership
<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>
2D	Reduce adverse recreational pressures through provision of heathland support areas and SANGS building on the Great Heath Project.	Not yet determined	2014-24	Existing Local Project	Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)	Local partnership	Natural England, Dorset Wildlife Trust (under negotiation)

3 Undergrazing

Generally grazing has now been successfully introduced on most of the larger heathland sites but there remain some ungrazed areas (about 1350ha, usually where the greatest practical difficulties are present) which would benefit from the introduction of an extensive grazing regime. Actions have been split to reflect the different delivery mechanisms required for different land managers.

<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>
3A	Bring approximately 90 ha currently ungrazed into appropriate grazing management (applies to areas managed by Forestry Commission at Hyde Bog and Ramsdown, with Dorset Wildlife Trust and Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust).	Not yet determined	2014-20	Major Landowner Group land ownership activities : Undertake Specific Management Works	Rural Development Programme (RDPE), Forestry Commission	Not yet determined	Dorset Wildlife Trust, Natural England, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust (ARCT), Forestry Commission (under negotiation)
3B	Bring approximately 300 ha currently ungrazed into appropriate grazing management (applies to areas managed by voluntary conservation organisations at Town and Sopley Commons, and areas on South Haven peninsula, Studland).	£50,000	2014-20	Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE): Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme (HLS)	Rural Development Programme (RDPE)	Natural England	Christchurch Borough Council, Dorset Wildlife Trust, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust (ARCT), National Trust
3C	Bring approximately 450 ha currently ungrazed into appropriate grazing management (applies to areas managed by RSPB).	£400,000	2014-20	Existing Local Project: Nature Improvement Area	Nature Improvement Area (NIA)	Not yet determined	National Trust, Natural England, Wild Purbeck NIA, RSPB (under negotiation)

<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>
3D	Bring approximately 50 ha currently ungrazed into appropriate grazing management (applies areas managed by Natural England within National Nature Reserves).	£6,000	2014-20	National Nature Reserve (NNR) management plan	Natural England	Natural England	n/a

4 Forestry and woodland management

Several of the heathlands have conifer plantations on former heathland (most planted after notification) or mature conifers (or sometimes birch) that have invaded heathland. Favourable condition requires removal of these plantations for heathland restoration or, at least, management to increase the heath component within the woodland. Two large projects to remove the two largest of these plantation areas are underway but one of these - the Brownsea woodland management and smaller projects that are within HLS - are dependent for their completion on capital works funds being available in the later stages of the agreements. At present this money for capital works is not there. On some sites in East Dorset there have been issues in obtaining felling licences in the face of opposition from some local people but compromises have been reached in these cases and work is proceeding although not to the scale that is desirable.

<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>
4A	Complete heathland restoration programmes on Ministry of Defence land.	Not yet determined	2014-20	Major Landowner Group land ownership activities : Undertake Specific Management Works	Ministry of Defence (MoD)	Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO)	Forestry Commission, Natural England

5 Drainage

Drainage is generally the result of ditches made within the site to endeavour to drain wet heath or mire. These drains invariably result in adverse changes to wet heath and mire communities in the vicinity.

<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>
5A	Reverse past drainage and restore mires by infilling ditches and naturalising streams (NNRs at Holton Heath and Stoborough Heath).	£8,000	2014-20	National Nature Reserve (NNR) management plan	Natural England, Water Framework Directive (WFD), Grant in aid	Natural England	Dorset County Council

<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>
5B	Reverse past drainage and restore mires by infilling ditches (Holt Heath, Winfrith Heath, Town Common).	£70,000	2014-20	Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE): Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme (HLS)	Rural Development Programme (RDPE)	Not yet determined	Dorset County Council, Dorset Wildlife Trust, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust (ARCT), National Trust (under negotiation)
<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>
5C	Implement measures to remove or reduce drainage caused by urban surface drains transecting heaths (e.g. at Parley Common and at Uddens Heath).	Not yet determined	2014-22	Major Landowner Group land ownership activities : Undertake Specific Management Works	Environment Agency, Water Framework Directive (WFD)	Not yet determined	Dorset County Council, Natural England
<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>
5D	Secure agreement and implement actions to reverse past drainage and restore wetlands on sites managed by major landowners.	Not yet determined	2014-27	Existing Local Project	Local Authority, Natural England, Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO)	Not yet determined	Natural England, Research Sites Restoration Ltd (acting for NDA)

6 Water Pollution

Pollution from different sources affect a number of areas. It comprises of pollution from adjacent agricultural land (run-off causing nutrient enrichment); leaching from adjacent landfill sites (3 sites); pollution from foul drainage (septic tanks, sewage discharge); urban run-off. Poor water quality from the sources listed can also impede the ability to restore the sites' natural hydrology. Silt/sand run-off from adjacent sand/gravel workings and now capped landfill have smothered part of a mire system at Upton Heath. Successful remedial work in the above cases is difficult.

<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>
6A	Reduce pollution of heathland wetlands by implementing parts of the Diffuse Water Pollution Plan that address agricultural sources of pollution from adjacent land (links with some drainage issues under issue 5, and restoration of catchment integrity under issue 8).	Not yet determined	2014-20	Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE): Common Agricultural Policy 2014-20 (New Environmental Land Management Scheme)	Rural Development Programme (RDPE)	Natural England	n/a
<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>
6B	Reduce urban pollution of heathland wetlands: investigate/monitor sources of pollution (e.g. foul sewer misconnections) on 12 different SSSIs listed in the Diffuse Water Pollution Plan and determine the necessary remedial actions.	Not yet determined	2015-17	Diffuse Water Pollution Plan	Rural Development Programme (RDPE)	Natural England	Environment Agency
<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>
6C	Reduce urban pollution of heathland wetlands by implementing specific anti-pollution measures resulting from relevant investigations, as well as wider measures including catchment scale delivery of Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) .	Not yet determined	2015-27	Diffuse Water Pollution Plan	Natural England, Water Framework Directive (WFD)	Not yet determined	Environment Agency, Natural England, Wessex Water Services (under negotiation)

<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>
6D	Deal with legacies of previous pollution such as sand deposition, by remedial work to re-establish heathland mires.	Not yet determined	2015-27	Diffuse Water Pollution Plan	Developer, Environment Agency, Natural England, Wessex Water	Local partnership	Dorset County Council, Environment Agency, Natural England, Wessex Water Services Ltd
<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>
6E	Investigate and reduce high nutrient levels in Little Sea lake.	£22,000	2014-20	Lake Restoration Project	Not yet determined	Natural England	Environment Agency, National Trust

7 Invasive species

Various invasive species are present including rhododendron and gaultheria, and these have the potential to impact negatively on the site's features. A population of carp has recently become established in Little Sea lake (previously there were no fish) and has virtually eliminated what was previously an abundant and diverse assemblage of macrophytes. The interest of Little Sea is also affected by Australian swamp stonecrop and Canadian pondweed. Invasion of bracken on unmanaged sites is a concern although ongoing bracken management is required on most sites. Some areas remain unmanaged mainly because either (i) they are very small and therefore have had a low priority in our promoting HLS or CES or (ii) owner resistance to an agreement. For (ii) regulation is likely to be necessary in some cases.

<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>
7A	Remove/reduce the population of carp within Little Sea.	Not yet determined	2014-20	Conservation Enhancement Scheme (CES)	Natural England, Water Framework Directive (WFD)	National Trust	Environment Agency, Natural England

<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>
7B	Remove/reduce invasive <i>Gaultheria</i> sp, Rhododendron and other non-native invasive species as necessary.	£50,000	2014-20	Invasive Control Plan: Invasive Species Control Programme	Natural England	Not yet determined	Bournemouth Borough Council, Forestry Commission, Borough of Poole, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust (ARCT), Dorset County Council (under negotiation)
<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>
7C	Evaluate the results of current research at Studland and if effective methods can be found, control the <i>Crassula</i> population. Appropriate control methods need to be identified at the national level and implemented via WFD-related mechanisms.	Not yet determined	2014-20	Invasive Control Plan: Invasive Species Control Programme	Natural England, Water Framework Directive (WFD)	Natural England	Environment Agency, National Trust

8 Habitat fragmentation

Dorset's lowland heathland is a fragmented remnant of a once extensive landscape. Some 86% of Dorset's heathland has been lost since the 1800s, and the surviving area is broken into many fragments. This curtails the genetic and physical interchange of a number of species and leads to edge effects on smaller sites. Moreover, species populations that are dependent on the wider habitat network of heath and forest beyond the designated site boundaries are vulnerable to changes within that wider network.

<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>
8A	Increase heathland patch size and reduce edge effects, restore hydrological integrity of heathland catchments and allow new large grazing units.	Not yet determined	2016-21	Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE): Common Agricultural Policy 2014-20 (New Environmental Land Management Scheme)	Rural Development Programme (RDPE)	Natural England	n/a

<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>
8B	Explore the opportunities to safeguard the entire population of nightjar and woodlark on the Dorset heaths/forests and the integrity of mires and other wetlands.	Not yet determined	2014-20	Designation strategy (SSSI)	Natural England	Natural England	Forestry Commission, RSPB
<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>
8C	Ensure Forestry Commission Forest Design Plans include defragmentation measures to increase heathland linkages, increase heathland patch sizes and reduce edge effects, restore hydrological integrity and set up new large grazing units.	Not yet determined	2014-20	Habitat creation / restoration strategy: Habitat restoration	Forestry Commission	Forestry Commission	Natural England, RSPB
<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>
8D	Apply defragmentation measures in the Warmwell area to increase heathland linkages, increase heathland patch size and reduce edge effects, restore hydrological integrity and set up new large grazing units.	Not yet determined	2014-20	Habitat creation / restoration strategy: Creation of new habitat	Rural Development Programme (RDPE), Habitat First	Developer	Dorset County Council, Natural England, Habitat First
<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>
8E	Apply de-fragmentation measures in the Puddletown Road area to increase heathland linkage, increase heathland patch size and reduce edge effects, restore hydrological integrity and set up new large grazing units.	Not yet determined	2014-20	Habitat creation / restoration strategy: Creation of new habitat	LIFE, Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), Landfill tax	Dorset County Council	Natural England, Hanson Aggregates, SITA, Holme Sand and Gravel

9 Conflicting conservation objectives

Heathland management aimed at maintaining open heathland does not cater for a number of rare species that require more specific management measures.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
9A	Enhance heathland species management for targetted species or groups of species (eg requiring bare sand). The action includes an element of survey to inform management.	£50,000	2014-20	Existing Local Project	Rural Development Programme (RDPE), Landfill tax, Conservation body	Not yet determined	Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust (ARCT), RSPB (under negotiation)

10 Wildfire/ arson

Fire predominantly affects the urban heaths (about a third of the heathland area in and around Poole and Bournemouth) which are subject to arson. The result is that some heaths are burned too frequently and in spring and summer.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
10A	Take appropriate measures to reduce the number and size of arson incidents (to address gaps in existing local partnership, particularly training needs).	Not yet determined	2014-24	Existing Local Project	Developer, Local Authority, Natural England	Local partnership	Dorset County Council, Dorset Fire and Rescue Service
10B	Take appropriate measures to reduce the number and size of arson incidents (measures associated with operation heathland).	No funding required	2014-24	Existing Local Project	n/a	Local partnership	Dorset Police, Dorset Fire and Rescue Service , Urban Heaths Partnership

11 Air Pollution: impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition

Air pollution impacts on the site's vegetation diversity. As with most lowland heathlands and mires in England N deposition is close to, and in some cases exceeds critical loads (e.g. fFor Rhynchosporion

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
11A	Control, reduce and ameliorate atmospheric nitrogen impacts.	Not yet determined	2014-20	Site Nitrogen Action Plan	Not yet determined	Natural England	Not yet determined

12 Deer

High deer numbers have affected heathland and mire on Arne Heath, Holton Heath and Stokeford Heath. Deer numbers are now being reduced and the habitats are recovering.

<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>
12A	Extend deer management programme to further locations and continue planned reductions in Sika deer numbers in key areas.	Not yet determined	2014-20	Major Landowner Group land ownership activities : Undertake Specific Management Works	Landowner(s) and manager(s)	Local partnership	Forestry Commission, Ministry of Defence (MoD), National Trust, RSPB

Site details

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

Qualifying features

#UK Special responsibility

Dorset Heathlands SPA

A224(B) *Caprimulgus europaeus*: European nightjar

A246(B) *Lullula arborea*: Woodlark

A302(B) *Sylvia undata*: Dartford warbler

A082(NB) *Circus cyaneus*: Hen harrier

A098(NB) *Falco columbarius*: Merlin

Dorset Heaths (Purbeck & Wareham) & Studland Dunes SAC

H4030 European dry heaths

H2150# Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (*Calluno-Ulicetea*)

H7230 Alkaline fens

H2110 Embryonic shifting dunes

H2190 Humid dune slacks

H6410 Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*)

H4010 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*

H2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* ("white dunes")

H3110 Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (*Littorelletalia uniflorae*)

H7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the *Rhynchosporion*

H4020# Temperate Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica ciliaris* and *Erica tetralix*

H7210# Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Caricion davallianae*

H9190 Old acidophilous oak woods with *Quercus robur* on sandy plains

H91D0# Bog woodland

Dorset Heaths SAC

S1044 *Coenagrion mercuriale*: Southern damselfly

S1166 *Triturus cristatus*: Great crested newt

H4030 European dry heaths

H7230 Alkaline fens

H6410 Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinia caerulea*)

H4010 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*

H7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the *Rhynchosporion*

H7210# Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Caricion davallianae*

H9190 Old acidophilous oak woods with *Quercus robur* on sandy plains

S1044 *Coenagrion mercuriale*: Southern damselfly

S1166 *Triturus cristatus*: Great crested newt

Site location and links

Dorset Heathlands SPA

Area (ha) **8168.79** Grid reference **SY887834** [Map link](#)

Local Authorities Bournemouth; Dorset; Hampshire; Poole

Site Conservation Objectives [European Site Conservation Objectives for Dorset Heathlands SPA](#)

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

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

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

Dorset Heaths (Purbeck & Wareham) & Studland Dunes SAC

Area (ha) **2221.94** Grid reference **SZ024839** [Map link](#)

Local Authorities Dorset

Site Conservation Objectives [European Site Conservation Objectives for Dorset Heaths \(Purbeck & Wareham\) & Studland Dunes SAC](#)

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

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

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

Dorset Heaths SAC

Area (ha) **5730.73** Grid reference **SY887835** [Map link](#)

Local Authorities Bournemouth; Dorset; Hampshire; Poole

Site Conservation Objectives [European Site Conservation Objectives for Dorset Heaths SAC](#)

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.

Additional information is provided on targets for flow and some water quality parameters, in order to meet the conservation objectives for certain Natura 2000 sites. The relevant targets are identified in the revised conservation objectives document (see link to PDF below).

These targets have been revised for a number of Natura 2000 rivers and lakes, following a review by the conservation agencies of Common Standards Monitoring Guidance. For rivers, this is done through local discussions between Natural England and Environment Agency staff. For lake sites, the only parameter where alignment of standards was reviewed was phosphorus and so this work was undertaken jointly at a national level.

The linked PDF documents include the proposed target values, and also set out an 'interim progress goal', that will need to be achieved by 2021. Where sufficient information is available the document also identifies a timescale for achievement of the longer-term target. For any sites where it has not been possible to agree specific targets, usually because further technical work is required, these will be indicated in the documents by an asterisk. For further information please see Part 2 of the River Basin Plan

Dorset Heathlands SPA

River basin	South West	South West RBMP
WFD Management catchment	Dorset	
WFD Waterbody ID (Cycle 2 draft)	GB108044009570, GB108044009640, GB108044009650, GB108044009660, GB108044010050, GB108044010100, GB30846102	
Locally revised Conservation Objectives		
Additional information on locally revised Conservation Objectives	n/a	
EA/ NE agreed RBMP lake SAC targets	n/a	

River Restoration Plan

Source of information on river restoration plans for SAC rivers where these are in place or planned, with links to documentation where this is available.

Webpage link: Restoring Designated Rivers	n/a
River Restoration Plan document	n/a

Dorset Heaths (Purbeck & Wareham) & Stu

River basin	South West	South West RBMP
WFD Management catchment	Dorset	

WFD Waterbody ID (Cycle 2 draft) GB108044010050, GB30846102

Locally revised Conservation Objectives

Additional information on locally revised Conservation Objectives [n/a](#)

EA/ NE agreed RBMP lake SAC targets [Proposed total phosphorus targets for Lake Natura 2000 Protected Area Special Areas of Conservation for the updated river basin management plan consultation](#)

River Restoration Plan

Source of information on river restoration plans for SAC rivers where these are in place or planned, with links to documentation where this is available.

Webpage link: Restoring Designated Rivers [n/a](#)

River Restoration Plan document [n/a](#)

Dorset Heaths SAC

River basin South West [South West RBMP](#)

WFD Management catchment Dorset

WFD Waterbody ID (Cycle 2 draft) GB108044009570, GB108044009640, GB108044009650, GB108044009660, GB108044010020, GB108044010050

Locally revised Conservation Objectives

Additional information on locally revised Conservation Objectives [n/a](#)

EA/ NE agreed RBMP lake SAC targets [n/a](#)

River Restoration Plan

Source of information on river restoration plans for SAC rivers where these are in place or planned, with links to documentation where this is available.

Webpage link: Restoring Designated Rivers [Restoring Designated Rivers](#)

River Restoration Plan document [Frome SSSI](#)

Overlapping or adjacent protected sites

Site(s) of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Dorset Heathlands SPA

Cranborne Common SSSI
Turners Puddle Heath SSSI
Parley Common SSSI
Christchurch Harbour SSSI
Town Common SSSI
Lions Hill SSSI
Hartland Moor SSSI
Worgret Heath SSSI
Verwood Heaths SSSI
Studland & Godlingston Heaths SSSI
Rempstone Heaths SSSI
Holt & West Moors Heaths SSSI
Black Hill Heath SSSI
Avon Valley (Bickton-Christchurch) SSSI
Stokeford Heaths SSSI
Morden Bog & Hyde Heath SSSI
Holton & Sandford Heaths SSSI
St Leonards & St Ives Heaths SSSI
Hurn Common SSSI
Stoborough & Creech Heaths SSSI
Ebblake Bog SSSI
Poole Harbour SSSI
Arne SSSI
Povington & Grange Heaths SSSI
The Moors SSSI

Blue Pool & Norden Heaths SSSI
Ham Common SSSI
Warmwell Heath SSSI
Oakers Bog SSSI
Turbary & Kinson Commons SSSI
Canford Heath SSSI
Thrasher's Heath SSSI
Upton Heath SSSI
Winfrith Heath SSSI
Slop Bog & Uddens Heath SSSI
Corfe & Barrow Hills SSSI
Ferndown Common SSSI
Brenscombe Heath SSSI
Horton Common SSSI
Bourne Valley SSSI
Rempstone Heaths SSSI
Arne SSSI
The Moors SSSI
Blue Pool & Norden Heaths SSSI
Hartland Moor SSSI
Stoborough & Creech Heaths SSSI
Studland & Godlingston Heaths SSSI
Morden Bog & Hyde Heath SSSI
Holton & Sandford Heaths SSSI
Thrasher's Heath SSSI
Brenscombe Heath SSSI

**Dorset Heaths (Purbeck & Wareham) & Studland
Dunes SAC**

Dorset Heaths SAC

Black Hill Heath SSSI
Wareham Meadows SSSI
Warmwell Heath SSSI
Christchurch Harbour SSSI
Town Common SSSI
Lions Hill SSSI
Worgret Heath SSSI
Stoborough & Creech Heaths SSSI
Corfe Common SSSI
Turners Puddle Heath SSSI
Holt & West Moors Heaths SSSI
Ferndown Common SSSI
Corfe Mullen Pastures SSSI
Avon Valley (Bickton-Christchurch) SSSI
Stokeford Heaths SSSI
Morden Bog & Hyde Heath SSSI
Holton & Sandford Heaths SSSI
St Leonards & St Ives Heaths SSSI
Cranborne Common SSSI
Ebblake Bog SSSI
Hurn Common SSSI
Parley Common SSSI
Poole Harbour SSSI
Arne SSSI
Povington & Grange Heaths SSSI
Blue Pool & Norden Heaths SSSI

Ham Common SSSI
Turbary & Kinson Commons SSSI
Oakers Bog SSSI
Rempstone Heaths SSSI
Canford Heath SSSI
Upton Heath SSSI
Winfrith Heath SSSI
Slop Bog & Uddens Heath SSSI
Corfe & Barrow Hills SSSI
Horton Common SSSI
Verwood Heaths SSSI
Bourne Valley SSSI

National Nature Reserve (NNR)

Dorset Heathlands SPA

Hartland Moor NNR
Holt Heath NNR
Holton Heath NNR
Morden Bog NNR
Stoborough Heath NNR
Studland and Godlingston Heath NNR

Dorset Heaths (Purbeck & Wareham) & Studland Dunes SAC

Hartland Moor NNR
Holton Heath NNR
Morden Bog NNR
Stoborough Heath NNR
Studland and Godlingston Heath NNR

Dorset Heaths SAC

Holt Heath NNR
Holton Heath NNR

Morden Bog NNR

Ramsar

Dorset Heathlands SPA

Avon Valley

Dorset Heathlands

Poole Harbour

Dorset Heaths (Purbeck & Wareham) & Studland Dunes SAC

Dorset Heathlands

Poole Harbour

Dorset Heaths SAC

Avon Valley

Dorset Heathlands

Poole Harbour

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA)

Dorset Heathlands SPA

Dorset Heaths SAC

Dorset Heaths (Purbeck & Wareham) & Studland Dunes SAC

Dorset Heaths (Purbeck & Wareham) & Studland D

Poole Harbour SPA

Dorset Heathlands SPA

Dorset Heaths SAC

Poole Harbour SPA

Dorset Heathlands SPA

Avon Valley SPA

<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1.0	10/10/2014	

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