

# Site Improvement Plan

## South Devon Shore Dock

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)**

**UK0030060    South Devon Shore Dock SAC**

## Site description

This important rocky-shore site for Shore Dock *Rumex rupestris* lies at the eastern limit of its current UK range and the intertidal area contains three major colonies. The cliffs support maritime grassland communities containing maritime species such as thrift *Armeria maritima*, sea plantain *Plantago maritima* and autumn squill *Scilla autumnalis*. The grassland merges into bare rock and coastal heath.

## 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 Undergrazing	Threat	H1230 Vegetated sea cliffs	Provide advice, guidance and support to graziers	Natural England
2 Inappropriate scrub control	Threat	H1230 Vegetated sea cliffs	Control scrub via existing agri-environment agreements	National Trust, Natural England
3 Overgrazing	Threat	H1230 Vegetated sea cliffs	Provide advice guidance and support to graziers	Natural England
4 Natural changes to site conditions	Threat	S1441 Shore dock	Monitor the shore dock population and its relationship to coastal erosion	Natural England
5 Public Access/Disturbance	Threat	S1441 Shore dock	Monitor access and recreational pressure, and mitigate if appropriate	National Trust, South Devon AONB

## 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 Undergrazing

Adequate levels of grazing are essential for the sea cliff plant communities to prevent excess rankness and to help avoid scrub encroachment. A significant proportion of the site is not currently receiving sufficient levels of grazing and if this is not addressed the species richness of the plant communities may decline. Whilst most areas are within an agri-environment scheme additional advice, guidance and support would be beneficial in helping land managers to achieve the desired grazing levels.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
1A	Provide additional advice and support to land managers as part of the agri-environment aftercare programme for this site to ensure appropriate grazing levels are achieved	Not yet determined	2014-18	Advice	Rural Development Programme (RDPE)	Natural England	n/a

### 2 Inappropriate scrub control

Appropriate scrub structure and density is a key feature of the sea cliffs. Levels of scrub cover appear to be increasing.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
2A	Remove developing scrub from land in existing HLS agreements via additional capital works.	£20,000	2014-18	Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE): Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme (HLS)	Rural Development Programme (RDPE)	Natural England	National Trust

### 3 Overgrazing

Appropriate levels of grazing are essential to maintain the site's sea cliff vegetation community and in some locations the issue is too much grazing pressure causing a short sward with a poor vegetation structure. Whilst most areas are within an agri-environment scheme additional advice, guidance and support would be beneficial in helping land managers to achieve the desired grazing levels.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
3A	Provide additional advice and support to land managers as part of the agri-environment aftercare programme for this site to ensure appropriate grazing levels are achieved	Not yet determined	2014-18	Advice	Rural Development Programme (RDPE)	Natural England	n/a

### 4 Natural changes to site conditions

Natural processes, which may be altering as a consequence of climate change (such as storm damage, landslides etc) can potentially cause heavy disturbance to the site and its features. However, these processes can be important to the sustainability of shore dock communities by creating new areas suitable for colonisation, and removing sediment and more dominant plant species. Plants being buried under a cliff-fall or lost following a winter storm might seem damaging to the plant's survival, but it is this very dynamism that helps to maintain and create new colonisation niches. Extensive damage over a prolonged period, however, could potentially lead to the permanent loss of plants. It is therefore important that the site is monitored.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
4A	Monitor the shore dock population annually and better understand the effects of coastal processes on its viability	Not yet determined	2014-19	Species Recovery Programme	Natural England, Grant in aid	Natural England	n/a

### 5 Public Access/Disturbance

Visitor pressure in sensitive locations is a risk to the scarce shore dock plants.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
5A	Monitor access/ recreational use particularly around Saw Mill Cove to ensure sensitive Shore Dock populations are not impacted	£500	2014-19	Major Landowner Group land ownership activities : Other	National Trust	Local partnership	National Trust, South Devon AONB

## Site details

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

### Qualifying features

#UK Special responsibility

**South Devon Shore Dock SAC**

H1230 Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts

S1441 *Rumex rupestris*: Shore dock

### Site location and links

**South Devon Shore Dock SAC**

Area (ha) **341.01** Grid reference **SX787362** [Map link](#)

Local Authorities

Devon

Site Conservation Objectives

[European Site Conservation Objectives for South Devon Shore Dock 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.

### South Devon Shore Dock SAC

River basin	South West	<a href="#">South West RBMP</a>
WFD Management catchment	South Devon	
WFD Waterbody ID (Cycle 2 draft)	n/a	

## Overlapping or adjacent protected sites

Site(s) of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	
South Devon Shore Dock SAC	Prawle Point & Start Point SSSI Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	
South Devon Shore Dock SAC	n/a
Ramsar	
South Devon Shore Dock SAC	n/a
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA)	
South Devon Shore Dock SAC	n/a

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*Comment*

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



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