

# Site Improvement Plan

## Rooksmoor

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)**

**UK0012681 Rooksmoor SAC**

## Site description

Rooksmoor lies in the Blackmore Vale and comprises a series of species rich meadows and copses on heavy neutral to acidic soils over clay. Such agricultural unimproved grassland is now extremely scarce in Dorset and rare nationally. Rooksmoor represents approximately 5% of the remaining neutral grassland in Dorset.

The grassland and adjoining woodland supports important assemblages of butterflies including probably the largest English population of the nationally scarce marsh fritillary *Eurodryas aurinia* and part of the only Dorset colony of the nationally scarce Brown hairstreak *Thecla betulae*.

## 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	H6410 Purple moor-grass meadows, S1065 Marsh fritillary butterfly	Remove excess scrub	Natural England, Butterfly Conservation
2 Undergrazing	Pressure	H6410 Purple moor-grass meadows, S1065 Marsh fritillary butterfly	Provide support required to achieve desirable grazing levels.	Natural England, Butterfly Conservation
3 Inappropriate cutting/mowing	Threat	H6410 Purple moor-grass meadows, S1065 Marsh fritillary butterfly	Review and negotiate mowing management where it is appropriate	Natural England, Butterfly Conservation
4 Air Pollution: impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition	Pressure	H6410 Purple moor-grass meadows, S1065 Marsh fritillary butterfly	Control, reduce and ameliorate atmospheric nitrogen impacts	Not yet determined

## 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

Excess levels of scrub reduces the extent of grassland habitats.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
1A	Secure agreement to allow the removal of excess scrub by undertaking a mixture of hand (chainsaw & Brushcutter) cutting and tractor cutting	Not yet determined	2014-17	Enforcement	Staff time	Natural England	Butterfly Conservation

### 2 Undergrazing

Undergrazing leads to a ranker sward which often inhibits plant diversity

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
2A	Negotiate with owner - confirm if funding for livestock fencing is required and/or support the land owner in finding a grazier	Not yet determined	2014-15	Enforcement	Staff time	Natural England	Butterfly Conservation

### 3 Inappropriate cutting/mowing

Mowing management is undertaken on parts of the site and this practice requires review

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
3A	Negotiate appropriate mowing practices with the landowner where required	Not yet determined	2014	Advice: Education & awareness raising	Staff time	Natural England	Butterfly Conservation

#### 4 Air Pollution: impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition

Nitrogen deposition exceeds site relevant critical loads

<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>4A</b>	Control, reduce and ameliorate atmospheric nitrogen impact	Not yet determined	2014-20	Site Nitrogen Action Plan	Not yet determined	Not yet determined	Not yet determined

## Site details

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

### Qualifying features

#UK Special responsibility

<b>Rooksmoor SAC</b>	H6410 Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils ( <i>Molinion caeruleae</i> ) S1065 <i>Euphydryas</i> ( <i>Eurodryas</i> , <i>Hypodryas</i> ) <i>aurinia</i> : Marsh fritillary butterfly
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### Site location and links

#### Rooksmoor SAC

Area (ha) **61.36**      Grid reference **ST740110**      [Map link](#)

Local Authorities      Dorset

Site Conservation Objectives      [European Site Conservation Objectives for Rooksmoor 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.*

### **Rooksmoor SAC**

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

## Overlapping or adjacent protected sites

Site(s) of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	
Rooksmoor SAC	Blackmore Vale Commons And Moors SSSI

National Nature Reserve (NNR)	
Rooksmoor SAC	n/a

Ramsar	
Rooksmoor SAC	n/a

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA)	
Rooksmoor SAC	n/a

<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1.0	13/11/14	

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



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