



# Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 Sites (IPENS)

Sam Somers - IPENS Programme Manager

# What is IPENS?

- £2.8m programme, 50% funded by EU LIFE+
- Partnership with Environment Agency
- Strategic approach to achieving favourable condition on Natura 2000 sites
- What, how, where and when 'we' can target efforts on Natura 2000 sites and surrounding areas



# What was the scope?

- Marine and terrestrial Natura 2000 sites
- 2,076,875ha (338 sites)
  - 883,077ha underpinned by SSSI
  - 1,194,199ha below MLW
- 536,000ha unfavourable recovering
- 30,000ha unfavourable no change or unfavourable declining



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# What have we achieved?

- **267 Site Improvement Plans** covering the 338 Natura 2000 sites
- **11 Theme Plans** to address issues affecting multiple sites
- **54 Evidence Projects** to help fill the gaps in our knowledge
- **Programme report** of all IPENS findings
- **Summary report**



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# What have we achieved?



## To follow:

- **Implementation (AfterLIFE) Plan** proposing the next steps including prioritisation and join up on action



# What are the benefits?



- Better understanding of issues affecting Natura 2000 sites and mechanisms to address them
- Easier access to information on Natura 2000 sites
- Provides evidence to influence funding and develop funding bids
- More efficient delivery of favourable condition on Natura 2000 sites



# Site Improvement Plans



Outline priority measures required to achieve and maintain the European species and habitats within a Natura 2000 site in favourable condition

- Provide a high level overview of the **issues** affecting the condition of the site
- Identify the priority **actions** and **mechanisms** required to tackle those issues and the potential **financing** sources available



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# Site Improvement Plans



- Highlight the delivery partners who will need to be involved
- Integrated with **River Basin Management Plans**



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# Theme Plans

large scale solutions across multiple sites

- Invasive species and disease
- Grazing
- Habitat fragmentation
- Hydrological functioning
- Diffuse water pollution
- Lake restoration
- River restoration
- Atmospheric nitrogen deposition
- Inappropriate coastal management
- Public access and disturbance
- Climate change



# IPENS – key findings



- Most Natura 2000 sites (96% of SIPs) are affected by at least one issue
- **Air pollution and invasive species and disease (including deer)** are the most frequently reported



# IPENS – key findings

- SIPs record **over 3000** actions required to address the issues such as:
  - securing appropriate habitat management;
  - reducing environmental pressures, (e.g. pollution, invasive species or disturbance);
  - adapting to a changing environment, (e.g. as a result of climate change, habitat fragmentation, or development);
  - restoration of habitats, species populations and ecosystem processes.



Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 Sites (IPENS)

Planning for the Future

## Site Improvement Plan

### Wimbledon Common

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)**

**UK0030301 Wimbledon Common SAC**

## Site description

Wimbledon Common has a large number of old trees and much fallen decaying timber. It is at the heart of the south London centre of distribution for Stag beetle and the site is recognised as being important for this species. Management of the site is focussed on maintaining appropriate habitat conditions and there are no indications that the species is under threat on a local scale but there are concerns about the conservation of stag beetle in a wider context. Wimbledon Common also supports examples of Northern Atlantic wet heaths and European dry heaths but these are not primary reasons for selection of the site as SAC.

## 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 Public Access/Disturbance                                | Pressure           | H4010 Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath, H4030 European dry heaths, S1083 Stag beetle | Implement measures to reduce visitor impact | Natural England, Wimbledon and Putney Common Conservators  |
| 2 Habitat fragmentation                                    | Threat             | S1083 Stag beetle   | Species recovery project                    | Peoples Trust for Endangered Species   |
| 3 Invasive species   | Threat             | H4010 Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath, H4030 European dry heaths, S1083 Stag beetle | Develop an invasives response plan          | Forest Services, Natural England, Royal Parks Agency, Wimbledon and Putney Common Conservators, London Invasive Species Initiative |
| 4 Air Pollution: impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition | Pressure           | H4010 Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath, H4030 European dry heaths                    | Establish a Site Nitrogen Action Plan       | Natural England  |

# New mechanisms proposed by IPENS

- **Site Nitrogen Action Plans**
- **Strategic principles to help address invasive species**
- **Strategic framework for climate change** including identification of adaptation action



# New mechanisms proposed by IPENS



- **Strategic framework for habitat fragmentation**  
to identify which Natura 2000 sites are most vulnerable and  
put in place **connectivity plans**
- Development of a programme of **local hydrological restoration plans**  
to achieve natural hydro-functioning on relevant SAC terrestrial  
wetlands



# Evidence



- Evidence gaps identified in a log
- £1m spent to fill some of these (54 projects)
- Ongoing knowledge gaps





# The cost of actions and the funding situation

- Approx. 50% of actions include a cost estimate
- Scale of the challenge
- Prioritisation needed, clarity on the investment
- Informing priorities for funding e.g. through the Prioritised Action Framework



# The cost of actions and the funding situation



- Traditional funding sources alone will not be enough
- Use existing and new resources
- Work together across the sector to approach the funders



# Next steps - a call to action

- No single organisation can deliver the biodiversity outcomes
- Collective ownership is needed, all playing a role
- Join up and further engagement (on prioritisation, implementation planning and delivery of actions)
- Seek synergies with other programmes



# Next steps - a call to action

- Join-up and clarity needed on approaches to funders
- Co-ordinated effort on filling evidence gaps
- IPENS AfterLIFE implementation plan and steering group to co-ordinate next steps



# More information

## Website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improvement-programme-for-englands-natura-2000-sites-ipens>

## Mailbox:

[IPENSLIFEProject@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:IPENSLIFEProject@naturalengland.org.uk)

