

Site Improvement Plan

Kennet Valley Alderwoods

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)

UK0030175 Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC

Site description

The site comprises Alluvial forests with alder *Alnus glutinosa* and ash *Fraxinus excelsior*.

These, the two largest fragments of alder-ash woodland on the Kennet floodplain, lie on alluvium overlain by a shallow layer of moderately calcareous peat. The wettest areas are dominated by alder *Alnus glutinosa* over tall herbs, sedges and reeds, but dryer patches include a base-rich woodland flora with much dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis* and also herb-Paris *Paris quadrifolia*. The occurrence of the latter is unusual, as it is more typically associated with ancient woodland, whereas the evidence suggests that these stands have largely developed over the past century.

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 water levels	Threat	H91E0 Alder woodland on floodplains	Investigate and implement water channel and structure management	Environment Agency, Natural England
2 Game management: other	Threat	H91E0 Alder woodland on floodplains	Review and issue new consents for game management practices.	Forestry Commission, Natural England

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 water levels

The wet woodlands have various river channels and carriers flowing through them. Some failed structures and breached channels have caused changes in flows through the site in recent years. These need to be managed and maintained to protect water levels to maintain the wet woodland.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
1A	Investigate water channel and structure management to identify actions required to restore appropriate water flow through the site. This will include establishing the hydrological requirements of the alder woodland.	£1,000	2014-16	Investigation / Research / Monitoring	Natural England	Natural England	Environment Agency
1B	Implement the actions identified from Action 1A	Not yet determined	2016 onwards	Mechanism not identified / develop mechanism	Not yet determined	Not yet determined	Not yet determined

2 Game management: other

There is a threat to the site from inappropriate game management practices. Management is needed to ensure that any planting, feeding or other game/duck shooting management is not impacting the woodland feature.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
2A	Work with Benham Estate and Forestry Commission to review, agree and issue new consents for appropriate game management practices.	No costs	2014-15	Regulation: Issue Appropriate Notice/Consent	No funding required	Natural England	Forestry Commission

Site details

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

Qualifying features

#UK Special responsibility

Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC

H91E0# Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*)

Site location and links

Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC

Area (ha) **56.77** Grid reference **SU398675** [Map link](#)

Local Authorities West Berkshire

Site Conservation Objectives [European Site Conservation Objectives for Kennet Valley Alderwoods 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.

Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC

River basin

[Thames RBMP](#)

WFD Management catchment

Kennet and Pang

WFD Waterbody ID (Cycle 2 draft)

GB106039023174

Overlapping or adjacent protected sites

Site(s) of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	
Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC	River Kennet SSSI Kennet Valley Alderwoods SSSI
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	
Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC	n/a
Ramsar	
Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC	n/a
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA)	
Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC	n/a

<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	04/11/2014	

www.naturalengland.org.uk/ipens2000

