

Site Improvement Plan

Quants

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)

UK0030242 Quants SAC

Site description

This damp and sheltered site supports a medium-sized but strong marsh fritillary *Euphydryas aurinia* population in a neutral grassland/fen mosaic. It is strategically placed close to other smaller sub-populations, with which it forms a metapopulation, and may exchange individuals with the large population at Southey Moor (outside the SAC series).

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 Changes in species distributions | Threat | S1065 Marsh fritillary butterfly | Investigate recolonisation, and manage remaining habitat in the wider landscape | Forestry Commission, Natural England, Somerset Wildlife Trust, Butterfly Conservation, Blackdown Hills Trust |
| 2 Air Pollution: risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition | Threat | S1065 Marsh fritillary butterfly | Avoid impacts from Nitrogen deposition | 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 Changes in species distributions

Despite suitable habitat conditions Marsh fritillary butterfly is not currently present on site. The nearest known population is adjacent to Southey & Gotleigh SSSI (Middle Barton) which is 6km away .

| Action | Action description | Cost estimate | Timescale | Mechanism | Funding option | Delivery lead body | Delivery partner(s) |
|-----------|--|---------------|-----------|---|---|------------------------|--|
| 1A | Investigate whether natural recolonisation by marsh fritillary is viable (the nearest known population is 6km away at Middleton Barton and a few closer historic sites: Clayhidon Turbary and Lears Farm). If not, then consider with specialist input if it is feasible or desirable to re-introduce the species to the site. | £3,000 | 2014-15 | Investigation / Research / Monitoring | Natural England, Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), Grant in aid, Charity | Butterfly Conservation | Forestry Commission, Natural England, Somerset Wildlife Trust, Blackdown Hills Trust |
| 1B | Identify, manage and protect suitable habitat areas in the surrounding landscape (10 km) required to sustain and enhance the local marsh fritillary meta-population linked to the Quants SAC. | £150,000 | 2015-20 | Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE): Common Agricultural Policy 2014-20 (New Environmental Land Management Scheme) | Rural Development Programme (RDPE) | Natural England | Somerset Wildlife Trust, Butterfly Conservation |

2 Air Pollution: risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition

Nitrogen deposition exceeds the site-relevant critical load for ecosystem protection and hence there is a risk of harmful effects, but the sensitive features are currently considered to be in favourable condition on the site.

| <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 | Further investigate potential atmospheric nitrogen impacts on the site, based on the application of guidance from Chief Scientist Group Nitrogen Task and Finish Group. | Not yet determined | 2014-17 | Site Nitrogen Action Plan | Not yet determined | Natural England | n/a |

Site details

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

Qualifying features

#UK Special responsibility

Quants SAC S1065 *Euphydryas (Eurodryas, Hypodryas) aurinia*: Marsh fritillary butterfly

Site location and links

Quants SAC

| | | | | |
|--|-------|----------------|----------|--|
| Area (ha) | 20.29 | Grid reference | ST186178 | Map link |
| Local Authorities | | | Somerset | |
| Site Conservation Objectives | | | | European Site Conservation Objectives for Quants 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.

Quants SAC

| | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| <i>River basin</i> | South West RBMP |
| <i>WFD Management catchment</i> | South & West Somerset |
| <i>WFD Waterbody ID (Cycle 2 draft)</i> | n/a |

Overlapping or adjacent protected sites

| Site(s) of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) | |
|---|-------------|
| Quants SAC | Quants SSSI |

| National Nature Reserve (NNR) | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Quants SAC | n/a |

| Ramsar | |
|------------|-----|
| Quants SAC | n/a |

| Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) | |
|--|-----|
| Quants SAC | n/a |

| <i>Version</i> | <i>Date</i> | <i>Comment</i> |
|----------------|-------------|----------------|
| 1.0 | 26/08/2014 | |

www.naturalengland.org.uk/ipens2000

