



SOUTH EAST DEVON
HABITAT REGULATIONS
PARTNERSHIP

East Devon District Council
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Agenda for South East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee

Friday, 20 April 2018 2.00pm

Members of Committee:

Cllr Humphrey Clemens, Teignbridge District Council

Cllr Phil Twiss, East Devon District Council

Cllr Rachel Sutton, Exeter City Council

Peter Lacey, Green Infrastructure Board

Amanda Newsome, Natural England

Venue: Rennes Room, Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter

[View directions](#)

Contact: [Chris Lane](#), 01395 517544 (or group number 01395 517546)

Issued 10 April 2018

Part A

- 1 [Public speaking](#)
- 2 Minutes of the South East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee meeting held on 24 January 2018 (page 3- 5)
- 3 Apologies
- 4 [Declarations of interest](#)
- 5 [Matters of urgency](#)
- 6 Confidential/exempt items – there are no items which officers recommend should be dealt with in this way.
- 7 **Financial Report** (page 6-13)
Habitat Regulations Delivery Manager
The report seeks to update members of the Executive Committee on the overall financial position of the developer contributions received by the partner authorities as mitigation payments towards measure identified in the South East Devon European Mitigation Strategy.

8 2017-18 Annual Business Plan – (page 14-40)

Habitat Regulations Delivery Manager

The report was an update on the progress made in delivery of new mitigation measures set out in the 2017-18 Annual Business Plan and ongoing measures from the 2016-17 Plan. It was important that progress continued to be made, or this would put the delivery of the partner Authorities' Local Plans at risk due to the continued legal duties under the Habitat Regulations.

9 2018-19 Annual Business Plan (page 41-51)

Habitat Regulations Delivery Manager

The report set out the principles for the on-site projects which had been recommended as a priority by the Habitats Regulations Delivery Officer, in conjunction with the Officer Working Group.

Future Committee dates:

- 18 July 2018
- 30 October 2018
- 17 April 2018

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[Decision making and equalities](#)

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Minutes of the meeting of the South East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee held at Civic Centre, Exeter, on Wednesday 24 January 2018

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.10pm and ended at 6.45pm.

***13 Public speaking**

The Chairman, Cllr Daniel Gottschalk, welcomed everyone present to the meeting. There were no public present who wished to speak at the meeting.

***14 Declarations of interest**

There were none.

***15 Audit Report – South West Audit Partnership**

The Executive Committee considered the Habitat Regulations Delivery Manager's report which sought to update members of the Executive Committee on the adequacy of East Devon District Council's governance and financial arrangements for the Committee. The report was provided to the partner authorities to demonstrate that they may have confidence in these arrangements.

In response to a question from Cllr Phil Twiss, the Habitat Regulations Manager confirmed that the Audit Report would happen annually.

RESOLVED:

1. that it be noted that the 'Habitat Mitigation 17/18 Audit' report found that no significant issues and issued a 'reasonable' as assurance opinion;
2. that it be noted that the recommendations within the audit report have been incorporated into the reporting structure for current and future meetings of the Committee.

***17 Annual Business Plan**

The Executive Committee considered the Habitat Regulations Delivery Manager's report which advised Members of the update on progress made in delivery of the mitigation measures set out in the 2016-17 and 2017-18 Annual Business Plans. It was important that progress continued to be made or this would put the delivery of the partner Authorities' Local Plans at risk due to the continued legal duties under the Habitat Regulations.

In response to a question, the Habitat Regulations Delivery Manager reported that the purchase of a patrol boat was being actively pursued and it was expected in the next quarter in time for the new season. Suitable people were being trained for operating it on the estuary and he confirmed that Habitat Regulation Officers would operate the boat. Cllr Phil Twiss asked whether these Officers would be responsible for checking on speeding boats in the Estuary. The Delivery Manager reported, that the City of Exeter Harbour Authority was responsible for this and that it was a difficult thing to enforce.

Peter Lacey asked for a better understanding of the costs of items in the Business Plan and explanation of whether there was an over or underspend.

The Habitat Regulations Delivery Manager reported that a financial report would be made every 6 months to show expenditure against the Business Plan. If there was significant overspend then the Committee should be informed.

RESOLVED:

- 1. that the progress made towards delivering the 2016-17 and 2017-18 Annual Business plans be noted;**
- 2. that changes to the structure, type and volume of information reported, in accordance with recommendations in the 'Habitat Mitigation 17-18 Audit' review (reported separately);**
- 3. that the causes and revised completion dates for mitigation measures subject to delay be noted.**
- 4. that a section of the Business Plan should include variations to planned expenditure and that this should be included also In the Risk Register.**

***18 Risk Register Report**

The Executive Committee considered the Habitat Regulations Delivery Manager's report, which advised Members that a recent audit of the governance and financial arrangements for the South East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee recommended the presentation of a Risk Register.

In response to a question, the Delivery Manager reported that the risk of Habitats Regulations being watered down/abolished following exit from the EU was included in the Risk Register. Amanda Newsome, Natural England, reported that the Government had indicated that there was no change planned to the way Habitat Regulations was dealt with at present.

Members acknowledged the risk of a Housing market crash to the Partnership and the subsequent reduction in money coming in. This could potentially be mitigated by less housing being built and people moving to the area.

A request was made that the way the Risk Register was presented should be changed to allow an easier comparison between risk categorisation and scoring.

RESOLVED:

- 1. that the identification, categorisation and prioritisation of risks as recorded in the accompanying Risk Register, associated with delivery of the South-East Devon European Site Mitigation Strategy be noted;**
- 2. that the control measures in place to mitigate the risks identified be noted;**
- 3. that in receiving this report, the implementation of the "Habitat Mitigation 17/18 Audit" report recommendation be noted;**
- 4. that an updated Risk Register report be received in 6 months.**

***19 Any other business**

Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS) – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats – (SWOT) Analysis of Options

The Committee Chair asked what progress had been made on the appraisal for SANGS capacity.

RESOLVED:

that a report on progress towards an appraisal of future SANGS capacity and likely delivery costs as part of the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP), be made at a future meeting of the Partnership.

Attendance list

Committee Members:

Cllr Daniel Gottschalk, Exeter City Council (Chairman)

Cllr Kevin Lake, Teignbridge District Council

Cllr Phil Twiss, East Devon District Council

Officers

Henry Gordon Lennox, Strategic Lead – Governance and Licensing (EDDC)

Neil Harris, Habitat Regulations Delivery Manager – Growth Point Team

Andy Wood, East of Exeter Projects Director

Chris Lane, Democratic Services (EDDC)

Tabitha Whitcombe, Democratic Services, (EDDC)

Fergus Pate, Principal Growth Point Officer (TDC)

Peter Hearn, Strategic Infrastructure Planning (ECC)

Peter Lacey, Green Infrastructure Board

Amanda Newsome, Natural England

Naomi Harnett, Principal Projects Manager, (EDDC)

Apologies:

Cllr Humphrey Clemens, Teignbridge District Council

Simon Davey, Strategic Lead – Finance (EDDC)

Ed Freeman, Strategic Lead Planning Strategy and Development Management (EDDC)

Chairman Date.....



SOUTH EAST DEVON
HABITAT REGULATIONS
PARTNERSHIP

South East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee

Financial Report

Neil Harris, Habitat Regulations Delivery Manager
April 2018

Legal comment/advice

There are no legal implications requiring comment.

Finance comment/advice:

The financial details are contained in the report and require no further comment.

Public Document:	Yes
Exemption:	None
Review date for release	None

Recommendations

It is proposed that the Executive Committee:

- 1. Notes the update on the overall financial position including contributions received, expenditure and anticipated contributions (from signed S106).**
- 2. Receives an update on 5 year income forecasts of developer contribution receipts at the HREC meeting in October 2018.**
- 3. Notes the expenditure against budget for the 2017-18 Annual Business Plan and reasons given for any variance.**

Equalities impact: Low

Risk: Low

This is an update, repeated every 6 months, on the current financial position of developer contributions (both collected and anticipated) for Habitat Regulations mitigation across the three partner authorities.

1. Summary

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members of the Executive Committee on the overall financial position of developer contributions received by the partner authorities as mitigation payments towards measures identified in the South East Devon European Site Mitigation Strategy ("the Strategy").

1.2 The report set out details of the contributions received from inception to date and anticipated income from contributions where planning permission has been granted but the contribution has not yet been paid. Details of expenditure against the 2017-18 Annual Business Plan and total expenditure to date are also provided.

1.4 Updated housing forecasts are not currently available from all partner authorities. Therefore, to avoid inaccuracies, this report does not include a 5 year income forecast of developer contributions. This will instead be included in the next financial report, due October 2018.

1.5 Work continues with the Finance department at East Devon District Council to refine the reporting process according to the principles established as part of the Strategy rebasing exercise¹. Allocations of Joint Interim Approach contributions were put forward as part of that exercise but the financial information from the partner authorities does not yet reflect this.

¹ *Rebasing the SEDESMS – the strategic response – July 2017*

1.6 As a result, Tables 1 and 2, below, still refer to “JIA on site” funds as a separate line. From October 2018, no further reference will be made to “JIA on site” funding as (following liaison between partner authority planning and finance departments) this will be allocated to Dawlish Warren or the Exe Estuary², according to the approved recommendations from the rebasing report.

Table 1. Developer contributions received (less expenditure) to date, according to zone of origin/charging period.

Charging zone/period	Total received to date	Total expenditure to date	Balance to date
SANGS	£847,555	-£528,133	£319,423
JIA on site ³	£671,796	-£295,570	£376,226
Dawlish Warren On site	£354,699	£0	£354,699
Exe Estuary On site	£97,252	-£24,210	£73,042
Pebblebed Heaths On site	£62,405	-£8,182	£54,223
Total	£2,033,707	-£856,095	£1,177,612

Table 2. Position of all developer contributions from planning consents granted but not yet received to date.

Charging zone/period	Position to date
SANGS	£835,337
JIA on site	£557,733
Dawlish Warren on-site	£50,979
Exe Estuary on-site	£68,862
Pebblebed Heaths on-site	£87,879
Total	£1,600,790

² “It would not be considered justifiable to spend JIA contributions on measures specific to the Pebblebed Heaths as these measures did not form part of the considerations (or S106 wording)” (during the charging period). – Appendix 2, ABP and 5 Yr Delivery Programme, June 2016 (pg.2)

³ Includes £83,056 for “Cross Site Measures” from Cranbrook 587 Agreement

2. Expenditure against Annual Business Plans (ABP)

2.1 As shown in Table 3, there are a number of mitigation measures from the 2016-17 ABP which are subject to delay, as reported previously⁴. However, all of these mitigation measures are currently in progress and expected to complete by summer 2018.

2.2 Given the required specification, capability and intended lifetime of the patrol boat (20 years), finding a boat which met our requirements for the original budget of £22,600 proved extremely challenging. As such, it has been considered necessary to source a new boat, with an inflatable tender to assist patrols at Dawlish Warren. Approval to proceed with the best value quote of £27,350 was given by the members of the Executive Committee. The overspend of £4,750 is covered by unspent budget of £12,500 for the running of the boat from the 2016-17 and 2017-18 ABP.

Table 3. Measures subject to delay from 2016/17 ABP.

Site	Measure	Capital cost	Revenue budget p/a	Expenditure (Actual)	Variance +/-
Exe Estuary	Codes of conduct	£10,000	£0	£0	+£10,000 ⁵
Exe Estuary	Patrol boat	£22,600	£12,500 ⁶	£6,737	+£29,863 ⁷
Exe Estuary	Small inflatable boat and outboard motor	£1,500	£0	£0	+£1,500 ⁸
Dawlish Warren	Petalwort monitoring	£1,000	£0	£0	+£1,000 ⁹
Sub total		£35,100	£14,000	-	-
Total			£49,100	£6,737	+£42,363

⁴ Annual Business Plans – Progress Report, January 2018.

⁵ Project now completed.

⁶ Represents 2 years running costs at £7K/year, less £1,500 reserved for inflatable boat & outboard.

⁷ Deposit paid, boat expected summer 2018.

⁸ Deposit paid, boat expected summer 2018.

⁹ Project due for preliminary survey spring 2018.

2.3 The continuing “keystone” mitigation measures are shown in Table 4, below. The largest variance in expenditure (staff salary, NI, training, etc.) is accounted for due to the fact that the budget period was shorter for the 2017-18 ABP. In addition, it is likely that internal recharges for Human Resources and IT support have not been invoiced at the time of writing.

2.4 Table 4 also reflects the fact that expenditure on capital projects established in the 2016-17 ABP (Devon Loves Dogs, Dog Bins) continued during the course of 2017-18. Expenditure on these projects remains within the budget allocated, with both projects established and working successfully - so this is not considered to be a cause for concern.

Table 4. Ongoing mitigation recommended as part of the 2017-18 ABP.

Site	Measure	Capital cost	Revenue budget	Expenditure (Actual)	Variance +/-
Cross Site	Staff – salaries, NI, recharges, travel, training.	£0	£124,300	£85,054	+£39,246 ¹⁰
Cross Site	HMO vehicle, tax, insurance, fuel	£0	£2,000	£1,133	+£867 ¹¹
Cross Site	Dog project	£10,091 ¹²	£2,000	£7,185	+£4,906
Pebblebed Heaths	Maps highlighting sensitive areas	£3,950	£0	£0	+£3,950 ¹³
Pebblebed Heaths	Dog bins	£644 ¹⁴	£5,740	£57 ¹⁵	+£6,326
Sub total		£17,541	£134,040	-	-
Total			£151,581	£96,286	+£55,295

¹⁰ Most of the variance here is accounted for due to the shortening of the budget period.

¹¹ Most of the variance here is accounted for due to the shortening of the budget period.

¹² This represents the unspent capital budget for establishing the project (from 2016-17 ABP).

¹³ Project due for completion Spring 2018.

¹⁴ This represents the unspent capital budget for establishing the project (from 2016-17 ABP).

¹⁵ This appears to be the only charge for collection to date. Under investigation with EDDC.

2.5 Expenditure on new mitigation measures recommended as part of the 2017-18 ABP is shown below in Table 5. The majority of these are all in progress and on schedule for delivery within the next 6 months. Completion of the Exe Estuary codes of conduct work in March 2018 has meant that other mitigation dependent on the outcome of that work (interpretation and signage) can be delivered in summer 2018.

2.7 Wildlife Refuge monitoring and the Pebblebed Heaths Codes of conduct and boardwalk/path surfacing projects are all underway and will be invoiced according to agreed schedules. The refuges themselves will be marked with buoys prior to implementation in late summer 2018.

2.8 The removal of the dog control order will be addressed according to the outcome of TDC's recent public consultation regarding dog legislation across the district.

Table 5. New mitigation measures recommended as part of the 2017-18 ABP

Site	Measure	Capital cost	Revenue budget p/a	Expenditure (Actual)	Variance +/-
Dawlish Warren	Carry out audit of information boards	£11,500	£0	£0	+£11,500
Dawlish Warren	BBQ info at local retailers	£2,000	£0	£0	+£2,000
Dawlish Warren	Removal of Dog Control Order	£2,000	£0	£0	+£2,000
Dawlish Warren	Byelaw preventing fires and barbeques in buffer zone	£2,000	£0	£0	+£2,000
Exe Estuary	Update signs at public slipways	£40,000	£0	£0	+£40,000
Exe Estuary	Disturbance monitoring - Refuges	£0	£10,000	£0	+£10,000
Exe Estuary	New interpretation boards (five boards)	£12,500	£0	£0	+£12,500
Exe Estuary	Procurement, installation and maintenance of buoy markers.	£5,000	£0	£0	+£5,000
Pebblebed Heaths	Pebblebeds Codes of conduct	£4,000	£0	£0	+£4,000
Pebblebed Heaths	Boardwalks/Path surfacing	£10,000	£0	-£3,269	+£6,731
Sub total		£89,000	£10,000	-	-
Total			£99,000	-£3,269	+£95,731

Neil Harris
Habitat Regulations Delivery Manager

South East Devon
Habitat Regulations
Executive Committee
April 2018

Natural England comment:

We endorse the recommendations made.

We note that Table 1 indicates a current balance of £1M with up to another £1.6M pending from extant permissions shown in Table 2 and would like to request an update on whether and when funds will be invested to provide funding in 'perpetuity'.



SOUTH EAST DEVON
HABITAT REGULATIONS
PARTNERSHIP

South East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee

2017-18 Annual Business Plan – Annual Report

Neil Harris, Habitat Regulations Delivery Manager
April 2018

Legal comment/advice:

There are no legal implications requiring comment

Finance comment/advice:

There are no additional financial comments required.

Public Document:	Yes
Exemption:	None
Review date for release	None

Recommendations

It is proposed that the Executive Committee:

1. Notes the progress made in delivering the 2016-17 and 2017-18 Annual Business Plans.
2. Notes changes to the operational year as specified in the 2017-18 Annual Business Plan.
3. Notes the status of mitigation measures from each of the plans, as well as explanations given for measures subject to delay and revised completion dates.
4. Receives a further report on the deployment and implications of the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) award.
5. Receives a further report on in-perpetuity arrangements in relation to Dawlish and South West Exeter SANGS.

Equalities impact: Low

Risk: Medium.

This report is an update on the progress made in delivery of new mitigation measures set out in the 2017-18 Annual Business Plan and ongoing measures from the 2016-17 Plan. It is important that progress continues to be made, or this would put the delivery of the partner Authorities' Local Plans at risk due to the continued legal duties under the Habitat Regulations.

1. Summary/Overview.

1.1 The 2017-18 Annual Business Plan (ABP) was approved at the meeting of the Executive Committee at the Rennes Room, Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter on July 27th 2017.

1.2 The measures outlined in the plan had been scored according to agreed criteria and further debated and endorsed by the Officer Working Group. The plan outlined the delivery of ongoing measures established as part of the 2016-17 ABP as well as a range of new additional measures. In total, the plan earmarked expenditure of an estimated £237,120.

1.3 Projects included the continued funding of keystone mitigation measures such as the Delivery Manager, Habitat Mitigation Officers and Project Officer (Devon Loves Dogs). Other significant measures approved as part of the plan included signage at Dawlish Warren and along the Exe Estuary, monitoring and demarcating the Exe Wildlife Refuges and path repair on the Pebblebed Heaths.

1.4 There has been sustained progress in the successful delivery of the Dawlish Countryside Park Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS). This site continues to attract local visitors and has been the source of positive feedback from residents on social media.

1.5 On 1st February 2018, it was announced that Teignbridge District Council, on behalf of Exeter City Council, had been successful in bidding for the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) from Homes England. Up to £3.7M funding will be used for the phased delivery and maintenance of South West Exeter SANGS and the ongoing management (in perpetuity) of Dawlish Countryside Park.

1.6 Work to progress the phased delivery of the SANGS at South West Exeter (and secure management in perpetuity for both sites) is in progress and will be reported at a future meeting of the Executive.

1.7 As recommended in the 2017-18 ABP, the operational year has been shortened by a quarter, in order to align more closely with financial year reporting. As such, a number of measures identified in the plan remain in progress, due for completion within the next quarter.

1.8 Tables 1-4 report the status of mitigation measures identified in the 2017-18 ABP and those outstanding from the 2016-17 ABP.

Table 1. 2017-18 Annual Business Plan – ongoing mitigation measures.

Site	Measure	Status
Cross Site	Delivery Manager	Completed (ongoing)
Cross Site	Two Habitat Mitigation Officers	Completed (ongoing)
Cross Site	Warden vehicle	Completed (ongoing)
Cross Site	Dog project	Completed (ongoing)
Exe Estuary	Patrol boat	Initiated (ongoing) ¹
Pebblebed Heaths	Dog bins	Completed (ongoing)
	Total	

Table 2. 2017-18 Annual Business Plan – additional mitigation measures.
(completed/ongoing)

Site	Measure	Status
Exe Estuary	Disturbance monitoring	Initiated (ongoing) ²
Dawlish Warren	Changes to car parking management	Initiated (ongoing) ³
Pebblebed Heaths	Codes of conduct	Completed
Pebblebed Heaths	Boardwalks/ Path surfacing	Initiated (ongoing) ⁴

¹ Patrol Boat on order, expected summer 2018.

² Monitoring started Feb 2018, 3 year contract.

³ TDC are working to respond to the Oct 2017 recommendations.

⁴ Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust are working with a contractor to undertake 1st schedule of urgent works.

Table 3 – mitigation measures carried over from the 2016-17 ABP

Site	Measure	Status
Exe Estuary	Codes of Conduct	Complete
Dawlish Warren	Petalwort monitoring	Initiated (ongoing) ⁵
Pebblebed Heaths	Maps highlighting sensitive areas	In progress ⁶

Table 4 – mitigation measures to be carried over from the 2017-18 ABP

Site	Measure	Status
Dawlish Warren	Carry out audit of information boards	Initiated: Delivery Summer 2018
Dawlish Warren	BBQ info at local retailers	Initiated: Delivery Spring 2018
Dawlish Warren	Removal of Dog Control Order	Under investigation ⁷
Dawlish Warren	Byelaw preventing fires and barbeques in buffer zone	Under investigation ⁸
Exe Estuary	Update signs at public slipways	Initiated: Delivery Summer 2018
Exe Estuary	New interpretation boards (five boards)	Initiated: Delivery Summer 2018
Exe Estuary	Procurement, installation, maintenance of buoy markers.	Initiated: Delivery Autumn 2018

2. Progress.

2.1 Habitat Regulations Delivery Manager.

2.1.1 The Delivery Manager continues in post, working to organise and implement the approved Annual Business Plans, report progress to the Executive Committee, co-ordinate delivery of the Strategy, liaise with the Officer Working Group and undertake ongoing review of the Strategy. Significant progress is marked by assuming management of key staff (HMOs and Project Officer (Devon Loves Dogs) and implementation of key projects (zonation review, codes of conduct, signage review and patrol boat).

⁵ TDC Rangers at Dawlish Warren have received a protected species license from Natural England and are engaging a botanist to undertake a preliminary survey.

⁶ Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust are working with a graphic designer to finalise.

⁷ Pending outcomes of TDC Dog Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) consultation.

⁸ Pursuing with TDC Legal department, collection of evidence.

2.2 Habitat Mitigation Officers (HMOs).

2.2.1 Over the course of the last 9 months, the HMOs have concentrated efforts on engaging with specific user groups as part of the (now completed) Wildlife Refuge consultations and the (now completed) Exe Estuary codes of conduct work.

2.2.2 The main focus of their day to day duties remains public engagement and education across the 3 protected sites. Close working with project partners further enhances understanding and knowledge of the sites. This has included work with the Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) team, the Royal Yachting Association (RYA) Green Blue, and liaison with conservation/land management teams across the region (EDDC, TDC, RSPB, DWT, Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust (PHCT)).

2.2.3 In September 2017, the HMOs organised and hosted the first meeting of different mitigation teams from across the south of England. Hosted by the RSPB, the event was attended by over 30 staff from the Thames Basin Heaths Partnership, Bird Aware Solent, Urban Heaths Partnership (Dorset), PHCT and the Exe Estuary Officer. The event provided opportunities for sharing best practise, networking and establishing an online source for sharing relevant information, scientific surveys and research via "Knowledge Hub".

2.2.4 November 2017 was a significant milestone, with the HMOs recording interactions with over 2100 people. This reinforces the value of face to face engagement to ensure delivery of key messages to the people using these areas.

2.2.5 Future work schedules include training to prepare for use of the patrol boat and, in partnership with the Green Blue, re-engaging with clubs and groups on the Exe in advance of the implementation of the Wildlife Refuges. The HMOs will also be contacting local schools to educate younger audiences about the value of their local areas and how they can help to protect them for the future.

2.3 Dog project.

2.3.1 With the official launch of Devon Loves Dogs (DLD) at Heath Week in July 2017, there has been significant progress in connecting with local dog owners and working across the region with project partners.

2.3.2 Membership of DLD stands at 150, with more members joining each month. The website now features enhanced information about walks, events and hosts a gallery of members' dogs. Importantly, it is increasingly used as an information hub for dog owners, which provides dog owners with alternative choices for walks and knowledge about best behaviour on the protected sites. Both Twitter and Facebook social media accounts have gathered a strong following, whilst work to adapt to recent changes in these platforms continues.

2.3.3 Over 1020 people have been recorded at the 12 events and guided walks organised by DLD since July 2017. At least 300 children have participated in the “how to pick up after your dog” fun activity!

2.3.4 Key project goals such as a dog walking code, recommended walks in the area and useful information for dog owners have been completed and have been incorporated into leaflets, posters and the project website www.devonlovesdogs.co.uk.

2.3.5 Additionally, DLD has worked with key partners such as PHCT in their Pebblebed Heaths specific dog walking code of conduct, included here as Appendix A. This has helped to shape the direction of key communications messages. Recent developments also include very positive discussions with Devon Wildlife Trust, exploring areas of overlap and where DLD can benefit sites with particular management issues.

2.4 Revised zoning, Wildlife Refuges and codes of conduct for the Exe Estuary.

2.4.1 Following an extensive and extended 9 month consultation process, two areas critical to the ecological function of the Exe Estuary were approved as Wildlife Refuges at the October 23 2017 meeting of the Executive. A 3 year schedule of monitoring is now in place, with annual results due for reporting in June each year until 2021.

2.4.2 Subsequently, the Exe Estuary Management Partnership (EEMP) began further consultation with local user groups and national bodies to review and update codes of conduct for activities on the Exe. There was a 6 week period from 25th January to 7th March 2018 for users to feed back their comments and recommendations via local clubs and groups.

2.4.3 The EEMP Management Group endorsed the final codes on 21st March 2018. The codes now form a pack of 6 which cover all the main activities on the Exe and a specific code for Dawlish Warren.

2.4.4 Printed copies of the codes will be distributed to local clubs, incorporated into club websites and circulated to all relevant forums as necessary. Additionally, copies will be distributed to local libraries and will be available at Dawlish Warren Visitor Centre. The EEMP and Exe Wildlife Refuge websites will also promote and host copies of the codes, whilst the HMOs will also distribute and use them as an educational resource.

2.4.5 With the completion of the codes of conduct work, it is now possible to incorporate key messages from this work into new interpretation boards at Dawlish Warren and across the Exe Estuary. Work to understand key locations and rationalise existing signage is underway, as is preliminary design work. Expected completion is in summer 2018, which will enable key messages to be in place ahead of the formal introduction of the Wildlife Refuges in September 2018.

2.5 Purchase and run a new patrol boat.

2.5.1 Ensuring people remain within the speed limit and are following agreed codes of conduct will form a key element of any long-term strategy to reduce disturbance on the Exe Estuary. The patrol boat is a necessary element within this.

2.5.2 Given the required specification, capability and intended lifetime of the patrol boat (20 years), finding a boat which met the requirements for the original budget of £22,600 proved extremely challenging. As such, it has been considered necessary to source a new boat, with an inflatable tender to assist patrols at Dawlish Warren.

2.5.3 Approval to proceed with the best value quote of £27,350 was sought from, and approved by, members of the Executive Committee. The overspend of £4,750 is covered by unspent budget of £12,500 for the running of the boat from the 2016-17 and 2017-18 ABP. Both HMOs are scheduled to undergo Powerboat Level 2, VHF Radio and Sea Survival training well in advance of the delivery of the boat, expected summer 2018. Arrangements for storing the boat are in place.

2.6 Pebblebed Heaths Codes of Conduct

2.6.1 In liaison with local partners RSPB, DWT, EDDC and DLD, PHCT have drawn up codes of conduct for dog walking, horse riding and mountain biking. These codes have been developed in liaison with local clubs and the Friends of the Commons group.

Photo 1: Press release announcing the new dog walking code



2.7 Boardwalks / Path repair on the Pebblebed Heaths.

2.7.1 Results from the path width and erosion monitoring⁹ have informed a schedule of urgent works across Bicton, Woodbury and Colaton Raleigh commons. A summary report of these results is included here as Appendix B.

2.7.2 The protected status of the heaths means that there are strict criteria which govern the makeup, pH and type of aggregate which may be used for path material. Blackhill Quarry on the Pebblebed Heaths has traditionally provided this material but is no longer operating. As such, an amount of aggregate from Blackhill Quarry has been stockpiled in order to use for path repairs.

2.8 Mapping sensitive areas on the Pebblebed Heaths.

2.8.1 The PHCT are undertaking this work on behalf of the Executive Committee. The Committee gave approval for increased funding at their meeting on 27 July 2017, following a tendering process for the work. Graphic designers have been commissioned to carry out mapping artwork and draft styling is being worked up. This is expected to complete in spring 2018.

3. Dawlish SANGS

3.1 The 26ha Dawlish SANG was available for use by the public in summer 2017, with a (rescheduled) free public event on Monday 4th September marking the completion of enhancement works. This successful event, organised and staffed by TDC Countryside Rangers, DLD and the HMOs was attended by approximately 300 people.

Photo 2. Walkers exploring the Countryside Park



⁹ Approved as part of the 2016-17 ABP, June 2016

3.2 Due to poor weather leading to the cancellation of the first attempt, the site was officially opened by members of the Executive Committee on Sunday 7th January 2018.

Photo 3. The ribbon-cutting event



Photo 4. Planting a “Star of Devon” apple tree.



3.3 A leaflet for the park, designed by TDC, is included here as Appendix C.

Neil Harris
Habitat Regulations Delivery Manager

South East Devon
Habitat Regulations
Executive Committee
April 2018

Natural England comment:

We welcome the progress that has been made towards delivery of the mitigation measures set out in the 'SEDESMS' report and the 2017-18 Annual Business Plan.

We are particularly keen to see recommendations 4 (report on HIF) and 5 (report on SANGS 'in perpetuity' arrangements) acted upon and reports on these items brought to the next committee meeting in July 2018, however, as previously requested, we would prefer that the 'in perpetuity' paper covered funding of all measures and not just SANGS.



SOUTH EAST DEVON
HABITAT REGULATIONS
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Habitat Regulations Executive Committee

Appendix A: Pebblebed Heaths Dog Walking Code

PEBBLEBED DOG CODE

By following this code and encouraging others to do the same, you can be sure that you are enjoying the heaths in a way that respects other visitors, landowners, animals and wildlife.

- Keep your dog in sight, on the path and have recall, otherwise use a lead
- Always pick up after you dog, take waste home or put it in a bin
- Prevent your dog from disturbing wildlife and grazing animals
- Walk no more than 6 dogs, ensure you can manage them all at the same time
- Read and follow signs and report any problems
- Commercial dog walkers need a licence from the land manager



For more details or to enquire about a licence please visit pebblebedheaths.org.uk

Habitat Regulations Executive Committee

Appendix B: Pebblebed Heaths Trail Audit - Summary Results

SUMMARY REPORT FROM TRAIL AUDIT 2017

A trail audit was carried out on Bicton, Woodbury and Colaton Raleigh commons during the summer/autumn of 2017. The purpose was to assess the current condition of the trails and to inform a programme of works to ensure they are brought up to a good condition.

The survey procedure was designed to enable us to easily highlight priority sections of trails for attention by recording in a structured spreadsheet with accompanying photos. This has allowed us to create a costed programme of works. It was carried out in a way that is replicable so that the survey can be repeated in the future.

Maintaining the trails in a good condition is crucial to managing the visitor access across the site. The site is designated SPA, SAC and SSSI due to its importance. It is recognised that the site is subjected to high visitor pressure and so managing public access is key to maintaining the site appropriately in line with our obligations. It is expected that public use of the heaths will increase due to development in the surrounding area. In 2016 the Pebblebed Heaths Visitor Management Plan was created as part of the work being carried out by the Habitat Regulation Mitigation Partnership. This identified priority measures that should be taken to mitigate against the impact of increasing visitor pressure, improvements and maintenance of visitor infrastructure, including surfacing of paths and boardwalks, was one of these priorities.

Bare ground is an important feature of heathland and is used by invertebrates, reptiles & amphibians and some rare plants. Wear from feet, bicycles and horses hooves can create and maintain bare ground features, but if too heavy there is the risk of damaging any interest. Furthermore, once vegetation is lost there is the risk of substrate being washed into mires and damaging wetland habitats and interest features and the paths themselves becoming shallow trenches.

There is therefore a difficult balancing act in terms of the management of paths and bare ground. Preventing footfall or concentrating footfall to very limited areas results in a loss of bare ground habitat. Path surfacing often damages the habitat and renders it useless for many species. Providing a boardwalk or similar raised walkway in wet areas or where run-off is a particular problem may resolve issues, but needs careful assessment on the ground. With increasing access, bare ground components of the Pebblebed Heaths will need to be monitored and consideration given to creation in areas away from heavy trampling.



The survey was part funded by South East Devon Habitat Regulations Partnership.



SUMMARY TABLE



	Total distance covered	Work identified	SEDHRP works	Aggregate for SEDHRP works	Aggregate £14/ton+VAT	Reduced rate £10/ton+VAT	Boardwalks
Bicton Common	12583m	3 urgent 16 general	4 actions	40mm 10T As dug 40T	£700	£500	25m new
Woodbury Common	9312m	4 urgent 9 general	7 actions	40mm 50T As dug 100T	£2100	£1500	
Colaton Raleigh	20986m	8 urgent 23 general	8 actions	40mm 80T As dug 110T	£2660	£1900	10m new, 130m repair, new bridge and steps
Total	42881m	15 urgent 48 general	19 actions	40mm 140T As dug 250T	£5460	£3900	




Areas which need priority attention in relation to public access in order to maintain SAC/SPA features are highlighted in the following table. Funding from the SEDHRP fund will be used to deliver this work. As well as being works identified to reduce direct impact (e.g. erosion) of interest features, this work also fits into the wider mitigation strategy as most of the work will be carried out on routes which will be promoted through trails/maps/licencing of events.



PRIORITY AREAS MOST RELEVANT TO SAC/SPA FEATURES TAKEN FROM AUDIT

Common	ID	Con	Problem and recommendations		Action
Bicton	B8e	A	At GR 0391 8600 the stream has broken its banks and splits in two making an awkward and muddy crossing. Two Sleeper type footbridges required, constructed to give a deck width of 500mm minimum, protected by heavy duty netting to give non-slip surface. No handrail required as long as the height of the deck above the stream bed is no more than 750mm. Heavy duty netting to be fixed to the deck to give non-slip surface. The bridge on the western side needs to be 4 metre span, the eastern one 5 metres. Abutments suggested as 1 metre lengths of the same timber (cross-section 255 x 90mm), set into the ground with the deck timber firmly fixed.		10m boardwalk, required?
Bicton	B10b	A	At the northern end at GR 0369 8625 the sleeper walkway across the muddy stream. Replace with a similar type structure, overall length 15 metres, minimum width 500mm plus, covered with heavy duty netting for non-slip surface.		15m board walk with netting



Colaton Raleigh	CR1d	A	<p>ADVISORY: Steps at GR 0471 8707 [Photos CR1d 3&4]. The stone infill and some of the timber risers have become eroded. The steps run along the NW side of the path, are overgrown, and do not appear to be used. Query as to whether repair/rebuild is justified. The remaining steps could either be removed, or left as they are.</p> <p>WATCH: Sleeper bridge at GR 0462 8701 [Photos CR1d 6&7]. The structure is currently sound and stable, although this is not apparent in the photos. No action at present, but watch for future deterioration.</p> <p>ATTENTION: Sleeper walkway.</p> <p>GR 0461 8700 [Photo CR1d 8]. An awkward step onto the walkway at the NE end from the steep, muddy path surface. Improve access by the construction of two or three steps, timber risers infilled with stone. Materials: Timber, c 255 x 130mm section, total length 4 metres to make three steps. Approx. 1.5T stone for infill.</p> <p>GR 0456 8695 [Photo CR1d. 10] One of the surface timbers is breaking up and collapsing. Replace with treated timber, 130 x 255 x 2400mm.</p> <p>The whole 130m length of the walkway has been covered with lightweight wire netting to provide a non-slip surface. This is no longer fit for purpose, having been worn away, also presenting a potential trip hazard. Should be replaced by heavy gauge welded galvanised netting (130 x 0.50 metre width)</p>		<p>Remove old steps.</p> <p>Install 3 steps.</p> <p>Replace rotten board.</p> <p>Netting for 130m board.</p>
Colaton Raleigh	CR2a	A	<p>ATTENTION:GR 0422 8800 to 0450 8807 For the first approx. 230 metres the path is subject to flooding. Surface water collects where the track is lower than the surrounding ground and no run-off is possible [Photos 1 to 6] (alternative narrow tracks have been created by walkers on the north side of the main track).The remaining 270 metres has minor ponding at locations shown [Photos 7 to 9].The flooding can be remedied by laying stone, and compacting to form a crown which will allow the track to drain. This is estimated to require 200T+ of stone, suggested quantities for each location shown in the photo titles.</p>		<p>Reduce to 80T and address drainage.</p>




Colaton Raleigh	CR3a	A	Between GRs 0339 8746 & 0336 8757 [Photos 3 to 6] 130 metres with deep ruts, mud and standing water in wet weather. Approx 50T stone to infill ruts, laid to form a crown, and compacted.		130m 40T as dug Heath brash
Colaton Raleigh	CR3c	A	<p>ATTENTION: Sleeper walkway at GR 0341 8775 [Photos 1&2] Low point in the track. The track is prone to flooding and accumulation of mud for about 20 metres, and the existing sleeper walkway on the West side is in disrepair</p> <p>Two suggested remedies: a) Rebuild the walkway Treated timber sized 130 x 255 x 2400mm, double width, to replace existing walkway. To construct the deck, 18 such timbers required. To create footings, 6 extra required, to be cut to 800mm length to support each end of the decking sections. The whole to be covered on the upper surface with heavy gauge welded galvanised netting.</p> <p>b) Raise the level of the track. 30T stone laid to form a crown to assist drainage, and to provide 2 metre width for vehicular use.</p> <p>WATCH</p> <p>GR 0342 8778 [Photo 3]. At the junction with CR4b the track is lower on the southern side, allowing a build-up of mud. Passable for walkers at present. Could be resolved by raising track level with c5T stone.</p>		Remove old boardwalk 20T 40mm 10T as dug

Colaton Raleigh	CR6a	A	<p>ATTENTION: Muddy and flooded section GR 0375 8740 [Photos 2 to 6] Path enters left-right-left S bend. Confused section with surface water and build-up of mud. No evidence of significant water action causing wash-out, so building up the track base should restore the track. 50T stone laid and built up to create a crown profile, 3 metre width to give good vehicular and recreational access.</p> <p>WATCH: Surface water from GR 0377 8743 to 0383 8748, a 65 metre level section covered by slow-moving surface water to a maximum depth of 20 to 30 mm. Currently this is negotiable for path users, and no apparent risk of erosion.</p> <p>ATTENTION: Flooded section from GR 0384 8751 to 0369 8754 [Photos 10 to 12]. The track descends to run level to the south east a large pond. The track is covered by shallow, slow-moving water for approx. 30 metres, before reaching a water course crossing the track from the pond, with an inadequate sleeper bridge to provide a crossing point. Two suggested remedies: a) Replace the existing bridge with a longer, 9 metre, structure, sited at the SE side of the track to allow access for vehicles. Some cutting of overhanging trees and bushes will be needed to create headroom. Bridge construction: treated timber sized 130 x 255 x 2400mm, double width. 10 timbers in all, 8 for the deck, and the other two to be cut to 800mm lengths to construct the footings. All to be covered with heavy gauge welded galvanised netting. b) Alternatively it may be possible to create a route for walkers around the northern side of the pond [Photo 13]. There are no significant water courses entering the pond across this route. Clearing of undergrowth and levelling of the surface to produce a walking surface.</p> <p>WATCH GR 0393 8759 [Photos 14&15]. The track rises sharply towards the North East, the central section is badly eroded on the slope. Alternative routes on either side, the eastern option is in good condition and the preferred option for walkers and vehicles. Block eroded routes to discourage use.</p>	  	<p>Reduce width so reduce stone 20T 40mm 20T as dug 9m boardwalk Heath brash</p>
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Colaton Raleigh	CR10b	A	<p>ATTENTION: GR 0508 8688. A stream crosses the route, but in wet weather ponding spreads over a greater area (approx. 5 metres in width). A previous sleeper bridge has collapsed. Suggested remedy: Install two sleeper type bridges, [as indicated in Photo CR10b Bridge site]. At the southern end the remains of the footings for the previous bridge(s) are in place and still sound. New footings for the main bridge [shown as "1" in the bridge site photo] will be sited next to this, and the existing structure can act as a step onto the new bridge. This position will occasionally flood, therefore the suggestion is that a concrete plinth should be formed. Excavate a 900mm square hole, approx. 200mm deep, construct temporary wooden formers and fill with approx. 0.5 cu m concrete. The top surface will then be approx. 300mm above ground level. Before the concrete sets steel bolts or rods inserted to project 400mm vertically will provide anchorage points for the timber decking. Footings 2 & 3 can be constructed from 800mm lengths of treated timber, 150 x 300mm section. Bridge decking timbers to be 150 x 300mm section, laid as double width, and heavy gauge welded galvanised steel netting securely fixed to the upper surface. The spans of the two bridges will be approx. 5.0 to 5.5 metres, precise lengths to be determined once the footings are in place. This solution is not ideal, but appeared to be the best available without constructing a major 10 metre span bridge. It does depend on the stability of the spit of land projecting from the northern bank, where Footings 2 is proposed. Currently this is protected by the roots of a small tree growing from the bank. Judicious pruning of the tree to reduce top weight may help to prevent it falling and taking the bank with it. ATTENTION: GR 0508 8685. Steps leading from the footbridge site to join CR 11 [Photo 6]. Four steps in disrepair lead up to join CR11. These to be removed, and five new steps constructed, using risers 50 x 200mm section, each 2000mm length, retained by timber pegs or posts driven into the ground. 2 to 3T stone to provide infill for the step surfaces. WATCH: GR 0508 8685: Path entrance from CR11 [Photo 7] is somewhat overgrown. Cutting back of surrounding growth and widening will help to identify the path entrance for users.</p>	 	Bridge and steps
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Colaton Raleigh	CR22a		<p>ATTENTION: GR 0413 8698 [Photo CR22a 1] Flooding across the width of the track. 10T stone to restore level.</p> <p>ATTENTION: GR 0413 8700 [Photos CR22a 2 & 3] The existing 10 metre boardwalk is sound, but access at either end is affected by flooding and deep mud. Infill each end with 20T stone, or extend the boardwalk by 5 metres each end.</p> <p>ATTENTION: GR 0416 8735 to GR 0426 8750 [Photos CR22a 7 to 10] 125 metre stretch which crosses several small watercourses, and when inspected was covered with water and mud throughout, to a depth of 100mm, but with a hard base beneath. Possibly the only solution would be to construct a boardwalk along the entire 125 metre length, minimum ground clearance of 200mm to allow water to flow underneath. In winter the only suitable footwear would be wellingtons. The existence of the boardwalk and sleeper bridge are evidence of attempts in the past to make this an all-weather route, but to ensure this with the construction of a further 125 metre boardwalk may not be justifiable.</p>	 	Remove infrastructure to discourage use. Use resources on alternative nearby routes (CR1d & CR6A)
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Woodbury	W17d	A	<p>Deeply flooded and damaged section for 105 metres from the northern end [photos W17d 4 to 7] Requires 100+T stone, levelled, to infill. Continuing south, at the bottom of the hill [photo W17d 3 flooding occurs after wet weather. c10T stone to raise the level and allow water runoff.</p>		<p>Reduce to 30T 40mm 40T as dug Reprofile existing material and address drainage. Heath brash</p>
Woodbury	W18a	A	<p>1). Severe damage for approx 30m, where the route starts downhill from W9 [photos W18a 1 to 4]. The route splits with a walking option either side for the length of the erosion. Solution could be to rebuild one side (eastern), to leave the other side as it is. Repairs could consist of laying c30T stone, levelled, and held in place by a series of revetments across the route using timber such as 450 x 250 cross section, to effectively create a series of four to five steps. Vehicle access required, reform and include drainage. Heath brash spread on sides to restore edges of track.</p> <p>2). 50m further south at GR 0424 8680 [Photo B18a. 4] flooding of the route has occurred at the bottom of the hill. It will be necessary to allow water to drain across the route so the solution could be EITHER to lay 20 to 30T of <u>large</u> stone, OR to construct a 5m footbridge on the western side, using two sleeper sized timbers to give a min width of 500mm, at a height above ground of not more than 700mm, which would then not require a handrail.</p>	 	<p>20T as dug and reprofile. Heath brash</p> <p>10T 40mm</p>

Woodbury	W1c	W	Erosion starting to cause deep ruts over 20m of route [photo W1c 1]. Approx 5T stone required to infill, and then graded level.			5T as dug
Woodbury	W4e	W	Pothole and possible flooding area. 5T stone to raise level of track. Access from Uphams Wood car park [photo W4e (2)]			5T as dug
Woodbury	W7b		Approx 100m where potholes are developing, risk of flooding developing across the whole width of the route. Recommended 40T stone spread and levelled across problem areas			40T

			<p>WATCH</p> <p>GR 0413 8778 Where the track follows a 900 right-hand curve water cannot drain away on the inside of the bend, threatening flooding of the whole track. If not possible to improve drainage by cutting drainage channels, 25T stone laid and compacted would increase the track level and allow natural drainage away from the site</p>		Drain (25T tbc)
Bicton	B1a B1b		<p>Ponding over 20m. 30T stone, spread and levelled.</p> <p>Ponding in wet weather towards junction with B1c. 30T stone spread and levelled to fix.</p>		40T as dug over total section
Bicton	B1e		<p>At GR 0367 8573, at the bottom of the hill near the junction with B6d a water course crosses from the west side. After rain, water ponds across the full width of the track. It does not appear feasible to pipe the water course below the track. If a solution is required, a raised sleeper walkway on the western side of the track would provide a dry crossing. Double width sleeper size treated timbers 3400 x 255 x 90mm, covered with heavy duty mesh, minimum overall length 10 metres.</p>		10T Stone or French drain rather than boardwalk?

ONGOING MAINTENANCE


Other works identified in the audit will be carried out as part of the PHCT general site maintenance. Many of the tracks suffer from water damage, both from running down slopes and pooling at the bottom of slopes and on level sections. The conditions of the routes would be improved by addressing the water flow, treating the cause of the problem rather than the symptoms. This will involve the creation of drains across tracks to catch water reducing the impact on slopes as well as having an appropriate camber over the track to move water off to the side preventing pooling which leads to the formation of potholes. This will generally require labour and the use of a digger and roller to reform the existing material, relatively small amounts of aggregate will need to be brought in. An amount will be included in the annual budget for this work each year.



SOUTH EAST DEVON
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Appendix C: Dawlish Countryside Park leaflet



View from the Ridge Path


Labels: Haydon Common, Mannead House, Obelisk Plantation, Haldon Ridge, Dawlish, Berry Head, Warren Copse, English Channel

The three authorities are working together to provide safe areas for all users to enjoy and to care for the wildlife they support by ensuring that any increasing recreational pressures from new housing are addressed. Dawlish Countryside Park was purchased with money from developers of new housing across the three council areas and authorised by SEDHREC.

Teignbridge, in partnership with Exeter and East Devon Councils, is a member of the South East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee (SEDHREC), which was set up to help protect key conservation sites at Dawlish Warren, the Exe Estuary and East Devon's Pebblebed Heaths.

How to find Dawlish Countryside Park

Postcode Nr EX7 0PA Grid reference SX965 794



Free Car Park
Pedestrian Entrances
Bus stop

Walking – There is a pedestrian access on orchard Lane on the northern (Exeter) side of the park and two pedestrian accesses off Shutterton Lane on the southern (Dawlish) side of the park. You can walk from Sainsbury's through the estate to the park.

By Car – Free car park off the A379 Exeter Road, 680 metres to the north of Sainsbury's



By Bus – Dartline 186 Dawlish Town Service stops at Sainsbury's Monday - Saturday (Google Dartline 186 for details). Walk through the estate not Exeter Road to reach the Park via the Shutterton Lane crossing point and access.

Stagecoach No. 2 Service between Newton Abbot and Exeter stops nearby on the main Exeter Road. Ask for Port Road stop (either direction) and cross with care if on Exeter bound side. Be aware Exeter Road is a fast, busy road, visibility limited near Shutterton Lane.

Contact the Ranger greenspaces@teignbridge.gov.uk or call 01626 215751

Dawlish Countryside Park

Spacious meadows and views

green spaces

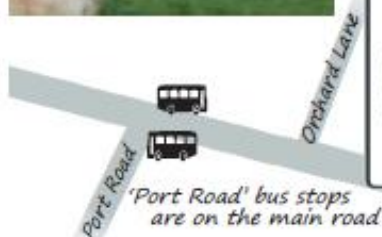
Welcome to Dawlish Countryside Park

These spacious acres, for centuries farmed to feed us, are now yours to explore and enjoy.

If you have an hour to spare why not follow the Red Route right round taking in the panoramic views from the Ridge Path, the Island Viewpoint and The Lookout.

For a shorter stroll why not follow one of the Mellow Yellow loops past the Bird Feeding Station to the Coffee Curve seat with sea views

...or make your own route around the many meadow paths - there's room to run and room to roam.



Birdsong and barley fields

Enjoy a real country walk with our classic farmland birds for company. Skylarks singing joyfully high overhead - and our real Devon celebrities, the bandit masked Cirl Bunting (pronounced sir!) making their subtle rattle. They were once called the Village Bunting because of their close ties to us.



Male Cirl Bunting

Patches will still be farmed for Barley to support these special and long standing country companions..

As their name suggests tiny Harvest Mice like fields of corn, we've added a few to the countryside furniture - see if you can spot them!



Marbled White butterfly, (it scatter bombs its eggs!).

Marvellous meadows

Grassland will be managed as hay meadows packed with colourful wildflowers and bustling with butterflies, with mown paths for exploring and shorter strips for throwing a ball.



Common Blue

Scentless Mayweed

Ladybird



No fouling

No cycling

No vehicles

No camping

No riding

WARNING Overhead power lines



SOUTH EAST DEVON
HABITAT REGULATIONS
PARTNERSHIP

South East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee

2018-19 Annual Business Plan

Neil Harris, Habitat Regulations Delivery Manager
April 2018

Legal comment/advice:

It is a requirement each year for the HREC to agree the Annual Business Plan as this underpins the 5 year Delivery Programme and helps ensure overall delivery of the Mitigation Strategy. Once approved the Delivery Manager can pursue the projects set out in the Annual Business Plan without recourse to the HREC.

Accordingly, provided the HREC is satisfied with the intended projects to be delivered through the Business Plan then approval should be given to enable the identified mitigation measures to be delivered.

In approving the Business Plan the HREC is only agreeing to the headline principles of the mitigation set out and the HREC is not giving any statutory approvals that may be required – these would need to be dealt with separately.

Similarly, some of the measures / projects proposed are likely to require more detailed legal input / consideration and this will be given to the Delivery Manager on a project by project basis.

Finance comment/advice:

The financial implications have been summarised in Appendix D and can be financed from available income.

Public Document:	Yes
Exemption:	None
Review date for release	None

Recommendations

It is proposed that the Executive Committee:

1. Approves the 2018-19 Annual Business Plan (Appendix D) and commitments and actions set out therein.
2. Notes changes to the operational year as specified in the report.
3. Receives a progress update on the delivery of the Annual Business Plan at the next meeting (quarterly basis).

Equalities impact: Low

Risk: High.

If the 2018-19 Annual Business Plan is not approved there is a high risk that the delivery of the South East Devon European Site Mitigation Strategy would be significantly compromised or delayed. This would put the delivery of the partner Authorities' Local Plans at risk due to their legal duties under the Habitat Regulations.

1. Summary

1.1 This paper sets out the principles for the on-site projects which have been recommended as a priority by the Habitat Regulations Delivery Officer, in conjunction with the Officer Working Group. These projects are contained within the attached Appendix D as the Annual Business Plan (ABP).

1.2 Mitigation measures enable a competent authority to permit development with certainty that adverse effects on the integrity of the European sites will not occur. Projects should therefore adhere to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) principals for applying planning conditions¹

1.3 Whilst some measures will seek to attract recreational pressure away from the European sites, other measures will seek to appropriately manage recreation on the sites, to minimise potential harm to European site interest features.

1.4 Using the balance of receipts and income forecast from signed planning permissions, on site measures from the South East Devon European Site Mitigation Strategy ("the Strategy") are allocated according to the available budget, scoring criteria previously agreed by the Officer Working Group, logical progression of related projects and, where still appropriate, delivery timescales as recommended in the Strategy.

¹ Paragraph 206, National Planning Policy Framework

1.5 Measures recommended in the 2018-19 ABP seek to maintain and build on the projects delivered as part of the 2016-17 and 2017-18 plans. The recommendations therefore include continued commitment to revenue costs of established, ongoing projects (such as the Delivery Manager, Habitat Mitigation Officers and Project Officer (Devon Loves Dogs)).

1.6 A number of new projects from the Strategy are also recommended. The timing of delivery of these projects is guided by the 5 Year Business Plan² and where there is logic or merit in the sequential, co-ordinated delivery of mitigation projects seeks to build on work already completed (or due for completion).

1.7 As recommended in the 2017-18 ABP, a change in the operational “year” has been enacted to align the operational and financial year. This resulted in a shortened business plan year for 2017-18 but sees 2018-19 return to a full calendar year of operation.

Natural England comment:

We support the recommendations made.

The annual BP is based on the 5 year BP. We were under the impression that this would be a rolling 5 year plan so would appreciate clarification regarding timescales for updating this.

Regarding Dawlish Warren Visitor Management Plan and associated monitoring of vegetation change and erosion (Items 2, 4 and 5 in Appendix D; total proposed budget £18,000): The current rate of change at Dawlish Warren occurring as a result of the recent coastal defence works will make it extremely difficult to identify any underlying visitor related changes to vegetation and erosion. We therefore recommend that the budget identified for these measures should be approved but not be committed until further detail of what data will be collected as part of the coastal scheme monitoring is obtained.

Funding for Habitats Regulation mitigation should only be used to monitor and mitigate the impact of visitors not the changes as a result of the coastal defence scheme. By delaying committing the funds to specific projects until it is clear what other monitoring data will be available the Delivery Officer will be able to ensure that the funds are used to provide the most appropriate, tailored monitoring data to inform management of the impacts of visitors to Dawlish Warren.

Regarding Pebble beds interpretation boards (Item 8 in Appendix D) – Text reads “*It would work well to incorporate the sensitivity map¹, highlighting preferred routes and sensitive areas*” We would strongly advise that any “*preferred routes*” should be agreed in advance and incorporated into any interpretation boards funded by this committee. Ideally these should be colour coded and supported by discrete colour coded waymarks. It may not be necessary or desirable to “*incorporate the sensitivity map*” into these boards.

² Appendix 2 – Annual Business Plan and 5Yr Delivery Programme – June 2016

Neil Harris
Habitat Regulations Delivery Manager

South East Devon
Habitat Regulations
Executive Committee
April 2018

Habitat Regulations Executive Committee

Appendix D: 2018-19 Annual Business Plan (ABP).

Summary.

1.1 Projects outstanding from the 2016-17 and 2017-18 Annual Business Plan (ABP) are reported separately.¹ **Table 1**, below, shows keystone mitigation measures implemented during the 2016-17 recommended for ongoing commitment as part of the 2018-19 ABP.

Table 1. *Ongoing mitigation recommended as part of the 2018-19 ABP.*

Site	Measure	Capital cost	Revenue Cost	Total
Cross Site	Staff – salaries, NI, recharges, travel, training, stationery.	£0	£129,300	£129,300²
Cross Site	Warden vehicle	£0	£2,000	£2,000
Cross Site	Dog project	£0	£2,000	£2,000
Exe Estuary	Patrol boat	£0	£7,000	£7,000
Pebblebed Heaths	Dog bins	£0	£2,870	£2,870
	Total	£0	£ 143,170	£ 143,170

Proposed spend: Up to £143,170 ongoing commitment towards key projects established in the 2016-17 ABP.

Table 2. *New mitigation measures recommended as part of the 2018-19 ABP.*

Site	Measure	Capital cost	Revenue Cost	Total
Dawlish Warren	Visitor Management Plan	£12,000	£0	£12,000
Dawlish Warren	Regular Warren Newsletter	£1,000	£0	£1,000
Dawlish Warren	Monitoring of vegetation change	£5,000	£0	£5,000
Dawlish Warren	Monitoring of accretion and erosion	£1,000	£0	£1,000
Exe Estuary	Updates of the Exe Estuary leaflets	£6,000	£0	£6,000
Pebblebed Heaths	Educational work with schools	£4,000	£0	£4,000
Pebblebed Heaths	Interpretation Boards	£5,000	£0	£5,000
Pebblebed Heaths	Changes to car parks (preliminary survey)	£15,000	£0	£15,000
	Total	£49,000	£0	£49,000

¹ 2017-18 Annual Business Plan – Annual Report, April 2018

² Revised costs due to changes to staff salaries.

2. Visitor Management Plan (Dawlish Warren).

2.1 Teignbridge District Council (TDC) are currently working to respond to the Executive Committee's October 2017 recommendation³ to consider changes to the management of car parking at Dawlish Warren. It is therefore recommended that a Visitor Management Plan would be best delivered in step with any future proposal by TDC to address visitor impacts at the Warren.

2.2 Now that the geography of the site will change at a faster rate due to the coastal realignment work, embryo and mobile dunes may be created through natural processes, facilitated by the beach recharging operations. These habitats will be vulnerable to trampling pressure, which will no longer have the advantage of increasing the mobility of the sand, as it will be naturally mobile.

2.3 Depending on how the Dawlish Warren Special Area of Conservation (SAC) develops following the Beach Management Scheme (BMS), it may at some point be necessary to significantly change public access to part of, or indeed the whole, site. The creation of significant areas of mobile and embryo dunes which cannot be protected through visitor management (e.g. temporary or small enclosures, path management etc.) due to their location or extent could require more robust measures to regulate visitor numbers. This may include allowing access via permit or fenced paths only, or discontinuing public access altogether in vulnerable parts of the site.

2.4 A live visitor management plan is recommended to allow staff to collate relevant information, review it on a regular basis (e.g. annually) and plan appropriate measures as required. This will require work with other organisations & agencies to ensure that there is not duplication of work, evidence gathering or monitoring data. Although (by the very nature of the site) there is a degree of overlap, mitigation funds should remain focused on mitigating the effects of increasing visitor impacts, rather than monitoring or mitigating the effects of the BMS. The information required will include:

- A measure of visitor pressure. The installation of counters in at least three locations is recommended, e.g. the gate by the visitor centre; where the dunes narrow at the Bight; and a mobile unit which could be placed depending on need at Warren Point at the outer part of the dunes.
- A review of changes in the geography and habitat composition of the site due to coastal erosion or accretion. This was relevant whether or not the managed realignment took place, but now that it has, is a considerably larger job. Regular aerial photographs (see section 5) is recommended to inform this review.
- Existing vegetation and species data in the context of visitor management, including further monitoring as required.

2.5 An overview of all factors will enable sound decisions to be made on individual issues, leading to a co-ordinated approach to changes that are likely to occur as a result of changing coastal dynamics.

Proposed spend: Up to £12,000 for counters and consultancy support, subject to verification of work/funding required.

³ Car parking at Dawlish Warren, October 2017
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3. Regular Warren Newsletter.

3.1 There are various approaches used to communicate widely with people living around important sites and with people planning visits. Websites, leaflets, and direct contact (people answering emails and other inquiries) provide detailed information for sites around the UK.

3.2 A Dawlish Warren newsletter, distributed to local residents, accommodation and tourist outlets is proposed as a means of educating potential users about the special nature of the site and codes of conduct. It will be a means of disseminating information about changes to the site and how they are being managed plus forthcoming events.

3.3 The newsletter should be short (e.g. two sides of A4) and a summer and winter edition produced. It will be a short, brief document circulated very locally around Dawlish Warren. The newsletter will aim to provide a means of communicating changes (for example relating to realignment) and engender local support and connection with the site.

Proposed spend: Up to £1,000 towards the cost of design, print and circulation of an A4 newsletter to be distributed twice annually.

4. Monitoring of vegetation change at Dawlish Warren.

4.1 It is difficult to be confident of how access patterns may change over time, for example in response to new activities, changes in climate, and changes on the site. As the tipping point at which trampling will negatively impact the plants at the Warren cannot be predicted, ongoing monitoring will provide an early warning (see also 2.4).

Proposed spend: Up to £5,000 towards the cost of specialist fixed point photography and detailed quadrat sampling.

5. Monitoring of accretion and erosion at Dawlish Warren.

5.1 The BMS at Dawlish Warren was a £12million project delivered by the Environment Agency (EA) and TDC, primarily aimed at reducing the risk of flooding to properties around the River Exe.

5.2 Work ranged from installing a new 'sandbag' defence under the dunes at the narrowest point of the Warren, removing stone basket "gabions", replacing and modifying timber wall "groynes" (used to capture and/or slow the movement of sand) and near-shore dredging operations to recharge the beach. Over 250,000 cubic metres of sand was pumped onto the beach.

5.3 The site is expected to continue to change, with the beach lowering and the dunes rolling back at some future point. It is also likely there will then be flooding behind the dunes at high tide. Further beach management works may be required at the site to manage future flood risk and to mitigate the environmental impact of the current scheme.

5.4 In order to be able to accurately inform visitor management of the site, it is very important to understand what impact the BMS has had and how the Warren is changing as a result. It will be necessary to understand what ongoing monitoring the EA is undertaking. It is recommended that sufficient funding be approved to ensure any specific monitoring requirements for visitor management as a result of an increasing population (as opposed to the BMS (see 2.4)) are met.

Proposed spend: Up to £1,000 towards the cost for the use of detailed aerial imagery. This imagery to feed directly into the proposed Visitor Management Plan (section 2 of this report).

6. Exe Estuary - Updates of the Exe Estuary leaflets.

6.1 Interpretation boards, signs and leaflets are widely used around the UK at nature reserve Sites. There are some excellent existing leaflets for the Exe Estuary, including the Exe Explorer, an Exe Activities leaflet and an Exe Wildlife leaflet, and these are widely distributed and available for download from the Exe Estuary Management Partnership Website.

6.2 The leaflets currently include a map of the estuary and information on where to go, sources of additional information and guidance. The Activities leaflet includes a (now old) map of the zones and a section on avoiding disturbance to wildlife. There is cross reference to old codes of conduct (where they existed) and information for users wanting to undertake particular activities. This leaflet works particularly well as an overview and has a good balance of promoting the estuary, providing information and guiding visitors on how to behave to minimise their impacts.

6.3 With the Wildlife Refuge and Codes of Conduct work now complete, it is recommended that updates are made to the Activities and Explorer leaflets. It will be necessary to ensure the leaflet stays 'live'. Much of the information within the leaflet could be promoted more actively within the Exe Estuary Management Partnership website and made both interactive and more accessible.

Proposed spend: Up to £6,000 for redesign and printing of the Exe Explorer and Exe Activities leaflets.

7. Pebblebed Heaths – Educational work with schools.

7.1 Educational work with schools would involve visits to local schools, site visits with groups from local schools and educational resources made available to local schools, potentially on the web. Such work would raise awareness with children as to the importance of the Pebblebeds, and how to behave on the heaths. It should aim to reach the wider community (parents and grandparents) as well as the children themselves.

7.2 There is already a countryside learning officer employed by the Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust. There is scope to complement her work and ensure long-term funding which would allow schools linked to new development (e.g. Cranbrook) to be targeted.

7.3 It is recommended that funding be made available in order to produce resources for school visits – design of school packs covering behavioural change, alongside site and ecological information. This will include time to collate and design content – potentially contracted out to a graphic designer with production of artwork for digital packs. This could be complemented in future years with kit/equipment to help with delivery, informed by the work recommended here.

Proposed spend: Up to £5,000, for design and production of school packs. Work to cover key messages relating to behavioural change, alongside site, ecological and curriculum relevant information.

8. Pebblebed Heaths – Interpretation boards.

8.1 Interpretation would inform visitors about the wildlife interest and other features of the Pebblebeds, raising awareness with visitors about the nature conservation importance. The boards would ensure visitors recognised they were visiting somewhere special, that is important for wildlife and there should be clear, justified messages as to how visitors should behave. It would work well to incorporate the sensitivity map⁴, highlighting preferred routes and sensitive areas.

8.2 Signs and interpretation need to be eye-catching, carefully sited so as to be in the right locations (e.g. perpendicular rather than parallel to pathways) and the right number so that visitors do not feel bombarded with information. Panels should not be intrusive or create too formal a feel. Ideal locations will not necessarily be inside the car-park but at points where people will naturally pause and where the interpretation can fit with a sense of place, such as when people first emerge from woodland/scrub around a car-park onto more open heath.

8.3 Interpretation should use colour, structure, illustrations and potentially flaps, sliding panels etc. to capture people's interest. Interpretation should convey consistent messages relating to the importance for wildlife and why it is a sensitive place. They should refrain from too much technical jargon about designation.

8.4 There are some existing interpretation boards, but these would benefit from an update and new design. The visitor survey results show that current interpretation had not influenced where interviewees had gone on-site. Using the visitor model in the Visitor Management Plan (e.g. Map 11) it is possible to work out where interpretation might best be positioned to maximise the number of people that would see it – based on current distributions. Locations should also be selected based on where it is intended to focus access in the longer term, where there may be sensitive features and where material will be seen.

8.5 The timescales of other work being carried out by the Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust (such as car parking and branding work with partners) means that it would not be possible (or desirable) to fully complete the Visitor Management Plan interpretation board recommendation in the 2018-19 ABP. Instead, it is recommended that up to £5,000 be approved to begin design of the boards, with future spend to finalise & produce.

Proposed spend: Up to £5,000 initial investment to initiate design of new interpretation boards.

⁴ Approved as part of the 2016-17 ABP, June 2016
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9. Pebblebed Heaths – Changes to car parks.

9.1 Improving particular car-parks is a positive step and potentially may encourage visitors to use particular car-parks. Improvements could include better surfacing, clear marking of bays, ease of access onto/from roads and signage. Improvements should be targeted at formal car-parks and in particular at a select few in order to focus access a little more.

9.2 Over time these would become the main areas used by visitors and by limiting roadside parking and allowing other car-parks to deteriorate it would be hoped that the selected car-parks would become the main entry points used by visitors.

9.3 In the long-term the risk of diffuse access (multiple locations with ample parking) growing gradually and spreading over a wide area is therefore limited. The selected car-parks should match those where interpretation, dog bins and wardening time are focused, ensuring greater engagement with a higher proportion of visitors.

9.4 Such an approach in the long-term essentially allows a shift from widespread diffuse access to access more concentrated at fewer points (less access points with similar number of parking spaces), ensuring access is easier to manage, engagement is easier and recreation impacts can be better managed.

9.5 Improvements would provide the potential to also set the number of parking places at particular locations, giving a means of setting a limit on the number of visitors that may visit at a particular time (given the high proportion of visitors that arrive by car). Changes can therefore ensure no overall net increase in the number of parking spaces at the site.

9.6 The Visitor Management Plan identified 9 car parks and recommended these as the focus for improvements. In the same way that the audit of path erosion and width⁵ identified and accurately costed priority works for the path network, it is recommended that sufficient budget be provided for similar work on the car park network.

Proposed spend: Up to £15,000 to commission a consultant to prepare a detailed strategy of costed and prioritised options for works required on the ground.

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Habitat Regulations

Executive Committee

April 2018

⁵ *Approved as part of the 2016-17 ABP, June 2016*
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