



# Innovation workshop

## Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 Sites Event report

### Introduction

**Finding new ways of tackling some of the most challenging problems affecting Natura 2000 sites.**

The Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 Sites (IPENS) and Natural England area teams invited a range of external partners including: RSPB, Environment Agency and NFU and Natural England staff from a variety of backgrounds and roles to an innovation workshop in April 2014.

The Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 Sites (IPENS) has hosted a series of workshops with key stakeholders in order to gather views and ideas on how to resolve some of the issues affecting Natura 2000 sites. The views in this note are those of the workshop participants and do not necessarily represent those of Natural England or the Environment Agency.



## Key messages from the workshop

We identified the most problematic issues affecting Natura 2000 sites to come up with solutions, such as:

- public awareness
- water pollution
- site boundaries

The consensus was that the mechanisms to solve the problems usually already exist, but a more assertive and innovative approach is required in applying them to the most difficult situations.

A wide variety of new ideas to implement existing mechanisms were derived - from trialling [conservation covenants](#) to developing cross-sector collaboration groups - such as [Sniffer](#) and [New Networks for Nature](#).

Ideas like persuading OFWAT to align water sector investments plans with the ecosystem approach and offering incentives for creative solutions to diffuse pollution management, such as phosphate capture and the use of biodigesters were explored.

## Next steps

The IPENS project will be reviewing these ideas with a view to applying those we can straight away - at a site level or a national level - and exploring those solutions that need to be developed further for possible implementation in the future.

Image: Hare's-tail cotton grass on Hatfield Moor SAC/Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA  
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[www.naturalengland.org.uk/ipens2000](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ipens2000)

