

# Site Improvement Plan

## Benacre to Easton Bavents

Site Improvement Plans (SIPs) have been developed for each Natura 2000 site in England as part of the Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 sites (IPENS). Natura 2000 sites is the combined term for sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protected Areas (SPA). This work has been financially supported by LIFE, a financial instrument of the European Community.

The plan provides a high level overview of the issues (both current and predicted) affecting the condition of the Natura 2000 features on the site(s) and outlines the priority measures required to improve the condition of the features. It does not cover issues where remedial actions are already in place or ongoing management activities which are required for maintenance.

The SIP consists of three parts: a Summary table, which sets out the priority Issues and Measures; a detailed Actions table, which sets out who needs to do what, when and how much it is estimated to cost; and a set of tables containing contextual information and links.

Once this current programme ends, it is anticipated that Natural England and others, working with landowners and managers, will all play a role in delivering the priority measures to improve the condition of the features on these sites.

The SIPs are based on Natural England's current evidence and knowledge. The SIPs are not legal documents, they are live documents that will be updated to reflect changes in our evidence/knowledge and as actions get underway. The information in the SIPs will be used to update England's contribution to the UK's Prioritised Action Framework (PAF).

The SIPs are not formal consultation documents, but if you have any comments about the SIP or would like more information please email us at [IPENSLIFEProject@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:IPENSLIFEProject@naturalengland.org.uk), or contact Natural England's Responsible Officer for the site via our enquiry service 0300 060 3900, or [enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk)

### **This Site Improvement Plan covers the following Natura 2000 site(s)**

**UK0013104 Benacre to Easton Bavents Lagoons SAC**

**UK9009291 Benacre to Easton Bavents SPA**

## Site description

Benacre to Easton Bavents Lagoons is a series of percolation lagoons. The lagoons (the Denes, Benacre Broad, Covehithe Broad and Easton Broad) have formed behind shingle barriers and are a feature of a geomorphologically dynamic system. Sea water enters the lagoons by percolation through the barriers, or by overtopping them during storms and high spring tides. The three southern lagoons receive freshwater inputs from the local ditch and channel networks.

Benacre to Easton Bavents SPA supports internationally important populations of Bittern, Marsh harrier and Little tern. The site includes areas of shingle, vegetated shingle, reedbed, and wetland habitats as well as geological and geomorphological features.

## Plan Summary

*This table shows the prioritised issues for the site(s), the features they affect, the proposed measures to address the issues and the delivery bodies whose involvement is required to deliver the measures. The list of delivery bodies will include those who have agreed to the actions as well as those where discussions over their role in delivering the actions is on-going.*

Priority & Issue	Pressure or Threat	Feature(s) affected	Measure	Delivery Bodies
1 Public Access/Disturbance	Pressure	A195(B) Little tern	Collate local knowledge, establish sensitivity, reduce bird disturbance	Natural England, RSPB, Waveney District Council
2 Water Pollution	Pressure	H1150 Coastal lagoons	Identify sources of pollution and remedy accordingly	Environment Agency, Natural England
3 Physical modification	Threat	A021(B) Bittern, A021(NB) Bittern, A081(B) Marsh harrier, A195(B) Little tern, H1150 Coastal lagoons	Investigate the extent of the impacts and implement measures	Environment Agency, Waveney District Council
4 Changes in species distributions	Threat	A195(B) Little tern	Understand the population dynamic and enable boundary flexibility and better, wider habitat provision	Natural England
5 Fisheries: Commercial marine and estuarine	Threat	A195(B) Little tern	The revised approach to fisheries management (Article 6 project) and the Little Tern project may go some way to establishing the problem and resolving it	Eastern Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority (IFCA), Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas)

## 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 Public Access/Disturbance

The popularity of the beaches and the Ness for walking and dog-walking means the suitability of these areas for terns is greatly reduced. An estimated 36,000 people visit the site and both they and their dogs disturb potential breeding birds on shingle features. Long term disturbance means features are not always recorded where they would be expected.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
1A	Introduce site management measures to reduce and mitigate disturbance based on the results of the investigation, such as management of public access, and habitat enhancement.	Not yet determined	2020	Advice: Education & awareness raising	Not yet determined	Natural England	RSPB, Waveney District Council

### 2 Water Pollution

Poor water quality in the saline lagoon is causing increased algal growth and a decline in the diversity of invertebrates, and thus the biotope code is being changed.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
2A	Investigate sources of water pollution, and identify mitigating measures.	£25,000	2015	Investigation / Research / Monitoring	Evidence project	Natural England	Environment Agency
2B	Establish a Diffuse Water Pollution Plan and implement measures to reduce water pollution.	Not yet determined	2020	Diffuse Water Pollution Plan	Water Framework Directive (WFD)	Not yet determined	Environment Agency

### 3 Physical modification

The barrier beaches are retreating into the saline lagoons and reedbed habitat through natural coastal processes, leading to a decrease and potential future loss of the lagoon habitat. The artificial coastal management may exacerbate this problem.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
<b>3A</b>	Identify and implement measures to mitigate the impacts of (increased) erosion in line with the agreed Shoreline Management Plan.	£20,000	2020	Investigation / Research / Monitoring	Not yet determined	Environment Agency	Waveney District Council
<b>3B</b>	Implement measures to address erosion of the lagoons.	Not yet determined	2025	Shoreline Management Plan and Strategies	Not yet determined	Environment Agency	Waveney District Council

### 4 Changes in species distributions

The Natura 2000 sites are on an actively changing coast and the shingle feature is moving north at approximately 30m per year. The current SPA no longer includes the main area used by little tern for nesting. Bare shingle is becoming vegetated rendering the current habitats unsuitable for the nesting terns, so they are moving north to take up nesting areas on newer shingle.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
<b>4A</b>	Investigate the population dynamics and explore boundary flexibility and better, wider habitat provision.	Not yet determined	2020	Designation strategy: Other	Not yet determined	Natural England	n/a

### 5 Fisheries: Commercial marine and estuarine

Commercial fishing activities categorised as 'amber or green' under Defra's revised approach to commercial fisheries in EMSs are being assessed by EIFCA to determine whether management is required. For activities categorised as 'green', these assessments should take account of any relevant in-combination effects with other fishing activities.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
<b>5A</b>	Where the assessments indicate management is required, introduce appropriate measures.	Not yet determined	2016	Regulation: Regulating Order (Public fishery)	Defra	Eastern Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority (IFCA)	Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas)

## Site details

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

### Qualifying features

#UK Special responsibility

<b>Benacre to Easton Barents Lagoons SAC</b>	H1150# Coastal lagoons
<b>Benacre to Easton Barents SPA</b>	A195(B) <i>Sterna albifrons</i> : Little tern A021(B) <i>Botaurus stellaris</i> : Great bittern A081(B) <i>Circus aeruginosus</i> : Eurasian marsh harrier

### Site location and links

#### Benacre to Easton Barents Lagoons SAC

Area (ha) **366.93**      Grid reference **TM524830**      [Map link](#)

Local Authorities      Suffolk

Site Conservation Objectives      [European Site Conservation Objectives for Benacre to Easton Barents Lagoons SAC](#)

European Marine Site conservation advice      [n/a](#)

Regulation 33/35 Package      [n/a](#)

Marine Management Organisation site plan      [n/a](#)

#### Benacre to Easton Barents SPA

Area (ha) **516.83**      Grid reference **TM524830**      [Map link](#)

Local Authorities      Suffolk

Site Conservation Objectives      [Benacre to Easton Barents SPA](#)

European Marine Site conservation advice      [Benacre to Easton Barents SPA](#)

Regulation 33/35 Package      [Regulation 33/35 package link](#)

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.

### **Benacre to Easton Barents Lagoons SAC**

River basin	<a href="#">Anglian RBMP</a>
WFD Management catchment	East Suffolk
WFD Waterbody ID (Cycle 2 draft)	GB105035046220, GB105035046251

### **Benacre to Easton Barents SPA**

River basin	<a href="#">Anglian RBMP</a>
WFD Management catchment	East Suffolk
WFD Waterbody ID (Cycle 2 draft)	GB105035046220, GB105035046251

## Overlapping or adjacent protected sites

Site(s) of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	
Benacre to Easton Barents Lagoons SAC	Pakefield to Easton Barents SSSI
Benacre to Easton Barents SPA	Pakefield to Easton Barents SSSI

  

National Nature Reserve (NNR)	
Benacre to Easton Barents Lagoons SAC	Benacre NNR
Benacre to Easton Barents SPA	Benacre NNR

  

Ramsar	
Benacre to Easton Barents Lagoons SAC	n/a
Benacre to Easton Barents SPA	n/a

  

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA)	
Benacre to Easton Barents Lagoons SAC	Benacre to Easton Barents SPA
Benacre to Easton Barents SPA	Benacre to Easton Barents Lagoons SAC

<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1.0	21/01/2015	

[www.naturalengland.org.uk/ipens2000](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ipens2000)

