

# Site Improvement Plan

## Dixton Wood

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)**

**UK0030135     Dixton Wood SAC**

## Site description

Violet click beetle *Limoniscus violaceus* was discovered at Dixton Wood in 1998 and it has been found at the site on a single occasion subsequently. It is a small site with large number of ancient ash *Fraxinus excelsior* pollards, and supports a rich fauna of scarce invertebrate species associated with decaying timber on ancient trees.

## Plan Summary

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

Priority & Issue	Pressure or Threat	Feature(s) affected	Measure	Delivery Bodies
1 Changes in species distributions	Threat	S1079 Violet click beetle	Carry out survey and monitoring work to inform advice to landowner	Natural England
2 Forestry and woodland management	Pressure/Threat	S1079 Violet click beetle	Formulate and implement a wood mould continuity strategy for the Violet click beetle population	Natural England
3 Disease	Threat	S1079 Violet click beetle	Monitor for Chalara and take appropriate action	Natural England

## Issues and Actions

*This table outlines the prioritised issues that are currently impacting or threatening the condition of the features, and the outstanding actions required to address them. It also shows, where possible, the estimated cost of the action and the delivery bodies whose involvement will be required to implement the action. Lead delivery bodies will be responsible for coordinating the implementation of the action, but not necessarily funding it. Delivery partners will need to support the lead delivery body in implementing the action. In the process of developing the SIPs Natural England has approached the delivery bodies to seek agreement on the actions and their roles in delivering them, although in some cases these discussions have not yet been concluded. Other interested parties, including landowners and managers, will be involved as the detailed actions are agreed and delivered. Funding options are indicated as potential (but not necessarily agreed or secured) sources to fund the actions.*

### 1 Changes in species distributions

Because of its rarity and highly specialised ecology associated with decaying wood and leaf litter in tree cavities, specialist involvement is required for survey, monitoring and the provision of detailed habitat management advice. Without it, appropriate management advice is difficult to provide to the woodland owner.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
1A	To undertake a survey of Violet click beetle using emergence trapping to identify the distribution on site and understand its habitat requirements.	£5,000	2015-20	Investigation / Research / Monitoring	Not yet determined	Natural England	n/a

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
1B	Investigate new methods (i.e. Pheromone lures) to survey for Violet click beetle to properly understand its distribution over the site.	£5,000	2015-20	Investigation / Research / Monitoring	Natural England	Not yet determined	Not yet determined

### 2 Forestry and woodland management

The beetle depends on the production of humid wood mould where it lives for part of its life cycle within decaying trees; this is typically found in veteran trees where they show signs of rot. The amount of suitable and available wood mould in the SAC is unknown. The lack of succession in veteran cohorts is an issue and it make the need for extending the life of the existing veteran trees even more important. Although the woodland and the surrounding land is in HLS, it is unclear if the scheme (and indeed subsequent schemes) can adequately fund the required specialist tree climbing/surgery work which is very expensive on this challenging site.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
2A	Undertake an assessment of the veteran tree population and its replacements within Dixon Wood SAC.	£5,000	2015-19	Investigation / Research / Monitoring	Natural England	Natural England	Not yet determined

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
<b>2B</b>	Draw up a strategy to address gaps in wood mould habitat continuity.	£2,500	2017-21	Habitat creation / restoration strategy: Creation of new habitat	Natural England	Natural England	Not yet determined
Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
<b>2C</b>	Implement wood mould habitat continuity strategy.	£100,000	2015-50	Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE): Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme (HLS)	Rural Development Programme (RDPE)	Natural England	Not yet determined

### 3 Disease

Ash dieback disease *Chalara fraxinea* is a potential threat to the site. The Violet click beetle population at Dixton Wood is thought only to use ash trees. The previous management advice has been to extend the life of the ash trees by pollarding suitable trees. The current advice on the control of the spread of the disease is not to coppice or pollard ash trees as this may make them more susceptible to disease. Although there is no current evidence that the disease is present, specialist advice is required to formulate a strategy regarding how to manage the woodland for the Violet click beetle whilst also considering the threat of *Chalara* disease.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
<b>3A</b>	To monitor site for presence of <i>Chalara</i> (ash is the host tree for the Violet click beetle) and produce strategy for the management of the ash pollards with <i>Chalara</i> in mind.	£2,000	2015-20	Investigation / Research / Monitoring	Natural England	Natural England	n/a

## Site details

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

### Qualifying features

#UK Special responsibility

**Dixton Wood SAC** S1079 *Limoniscus violaceus*: Violet click beetle

### Site location and links

#### Dixton Wood SAC

Area (ha) **13.14**      Grid reference **SO979313**      [Map link](#)

Local Authorities      Gloucestershire

Site Conservation Objectives      [European Site Conservation Objectives for Dixton Wood SAC](#)

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

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

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

## Water Framework Directive (WFD)

*The Water Framework Directive (WFD) provides the main framework for managing the water environment throughout Europe. Under the WFD a management plan must be developed for each river basin district. The River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) include a summary of the measures needed for water dependent Natura 2000 sites to meet their conservation objectives. For the second round of RBMPs, SIPs are being used to capture the priorities and new measures required for water dependent habitats on Natura 2000 sites. SIP actions for non-water dependent sites/habitats do not form part of the RBMPs and associated consultation.*

### **Dixton Wood SAC**

*River basin*

[Severn RBMP](#)

*WFD Management catchment*

Warwickshire Avon

*WFD Waterbody ID (Cycle 2 draft)*

n/a

## Overlapping or adjacent protected sites

Site(s) of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	
Dixton Wood SAC	Dixton Wood SSSI

National Nature Reserve (NNR)	
Dixton Wood SAC	n/a

Ramsar	
Dixton Wood SAC	n/a

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA)	
Dixton Wood SAC	n/a

<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)

