

Habitat Regulations Executive Committee

Annual Business Plan and 5 Yr Delivery Programme.

Appendix 1: 2016 Annual Business Plan

1. Summary. Table 1 shows mitigation measures recommended for delivery in the 2016 Annual Business Plan. Costs are derived from Strategy and Delivery Officer estimates for capital purchase and ongoing revenue items.

Consideration of the revenue cost implications of the 2016 Annual Business Plan is set out elsewhere, in the Financial and 5 Yr Delivery Programme reports.

Table 1. 2016 Annual Business Plan recommendations.

Measure	Capital cost	Revenue Cost	Total
Exe revised zoning	£5,000	£0	£5,000
Voluntary Exclusion Zone	£2,000	£0	£2,000
Exe codes of conduct	£10,000	£0	£10,000
Pebblebeds codes of conduct	£1,000	£0	£1,000
Patrol boat	£22,600	£7,000	£29,600
Two wardens		£68,000	£68,000
Warden vehicle	£20,000	£2,000	£22,000
Dog project	£12,000	£13,800	£25,800
Petalwort monitoring	£1,000	£0	£1,000
Delivery Officer		£40,000	£40,000
Dog bins	£3,500	£2,870	£6,370
Pebblebeds map	£1,500	£0	£1,500
Pebblebeds monitoring		£2,000	£2,000
Total	£ 78,600	£ 135,670.00	£ 214,270

2. Revised zoning – including establishing a Voluntary Exclusion Zone in the estuary north of Dawlish Warren

2.1 Zoning partitions different types of access, determining the overall distribution of visitors on land and water, in both time and space. Zoning is positive in that it creates dedicated areas for particular activities, rather than limiting access.

2.2 Clubs can address a wide range of issues and adapt quickly to change, particularly where members communicate through forums and electronic discussion rooms. Clubs can provide a means for getting information across and help implement any zoning if they have been involved from the outset.

2.3 There are existing zones for particular activities on the Exe Estuary. There are a number of issues with the current zones:

- They are mapped differently on the web and in various leaflets.
- They are not communicated to users very well. There is little information available as to how and why the zones have been established, meaning users have relatively little understanding of why they are there or why they should abide by them.
- There appears to be relatively little enforcement of the use of particular zones, for example water-skiing frequently takes places in the upper parts of the estuary.
- There are some overlaps with different zones which creates a potential conflict between users.

2.4 Suggested zones are:

- A dedicated kitesurfing/windsurfing zone off the Duck Pond. The appropriate area of eelgrass (zostera) bed should be covered.
- The existing kite/windsurfing voluntary exclusion zone to be reviewed to explore whether it should be discontinued when the dedicated kitesurfing/windsurfing zone is created, or whether the voluntary exclusion zone should be extended to all users.
- The powerboating zone is positioned accordingly to ensure no overlap with the kite/windsurfing voluntary exclusion zone. The use of the powerboating zone should be for the period 1 April to 1 September only.
- The existing waterskiing zone positioned in approximately the same place, slightly modified to fit alongside the kite/windsurfing voluntary exclusion zone.
- Off the Exmouth Seafront a line indicating a western limit for all water sport / personal watercraft / boating activities, ensuring the areas around Dawlish Warren/Warren Point and off-shore are undisturbed.
- A dedicated zone (all year round) for personal watercraft (jet skis) remaining in the current location.

2.5 These zones can be shown clearly on a single map and can be designed so as to provide space for users while also ensuring key areas for birds are outside the zones.

Dawlish Warren

2.6 A voluntary landing zone is currently used at Warren Point to restrict visitors to Soft Sand Bay. The water users' code of practice at Dawlish Warren should be included in the review.

2.7 Voluntary Exclusion Zone in the estuary north of Dawlish Warren

2.7.1 The intertidal area to the North of Dawlish Warren is the most important high-tide roosting site in the Estuary. It is proposed that a Voluntary Exclusion Zone is established in the estuary and covers the intertidal mudflats and saltmarsh owned by the Devon Wildlife Trust.

Map: Indicative Voluntary Exclusion Zones at Dawlish Warren/Exe Estuary (shown in red).



Key

- Land
- Settlements
- Inter Tidal Zone
- Tidal Water
- EEMP boundary

- Dawlish Warren NNR
- Visitor Centre

- Sensitive Area *

* All types of recreational activities must be avoided

Dawlish Warren NNR Sensitive Area

Source: DCG 2014 and OS 2014 background mapping
EEMP 2014 data.

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2.7.2 This area is significant for a high proportion of the Estuary's Brent geese, Oystercatchers, Bar-tailed godwits, Wigeon and Teal in providing both a feeding area at low tide and is of particular importance in providing a high tide roosting area.

2.7.3 The Dawlish Warren SSSI condition assessment carried out by Natural England particularly highlights that bird declines at the Warren may be the cause of declines across the estuary, thus indicating that suitable, good quality high tide roosting sites may be critical to the ecological integrity of the SPA.

2.7.4 Identified in a report by the Exe Estuary Management Partnership, the opportunity exists as part of an overall revision of zones to create a largely undisturbed high tide roost in an area aligned to the boundary of the National Nature Reserve.

2.7.5 Careful consultation with crab tilers and bait diggers will be required. There should be no new crab tiles laid and existing tiles in the existing IFCA exclusion zone should be removed, unless the process of removal is shown to be more damaging to the intertidal area.

2.7.6 Any plan will need to take into account the existence of Eales Dock, which is a small, privately owned dock at the end of Shutterton Creek, on the landward side of the railway. Careful negotiation with the owner will be required in order to ensure that any potential disturbance by water craft launching from here is minimised.

2.7.7 It is proposed that all recreational activity within the Voluntary Exclusion Zone is restricted year-round, with the exception of allowances for water craft accessing Eales Dock (subject to a site specific code of conduct to be agreed with the owner). This will provide a refuge of significant importance for birds against increases in recreational activity.

2.7.8 At all times and as a priority, revised zones must function to serve the protection of SPA features.

2.7.9 Zones to be shown clearly on a single map and be designed so as to provide space for users, while also ensuring key areas for birds are outside the zones. The revised activity zones should be backed up by clear explanations for why they are necessary.

2.7.10 If the budget allows, this should also cover the implementation of a safe, clear, buoyage or other marking system to establish the area visually. Ongoing maintenance costs of the buoys or marking system will need to be taken into consideration in the longer term.

2.7.11 Funding includes requirement for liaison with key stakeholders and implementation of a safe, clear buoyage or other marking system to establish the area visually.

2.7.12 After the zones have been established, close monitoring will be required to see if they are working. If monitoring shows they are not effective, zones protected by statutory legislation is recommended.

Proposed spend:

Up to £5,000 for the Exe Estuary Management Partnership to revise zones for water activities on the Exe (to include officer time, definitive GIS map, buoy markers on the estuary and a written report detailing the zones and suggestions for monitoring their effectiveness).

Up to £2,000 for the Exe Estuary Management Partnership to establish a Voluntary Exclusion Zone to the north of Dawlish Warren aligned to the NNR boundary.

3. Improved codes of conduct for specific user groups

3.1 Codes of conduct set out clearly how users undertaking a particular activity should behave, and are most relevant to sporting activities, including water sports. Developing good, clear codes with user groups ensures that safety issues, consideration of other users and nature conservation issues can be accommodated.

3.2 Codes of conduct are particularly relevant where there are a wide range of users, potentially not linked to a particular club, and a range of complicated issues, or where multiple activities overlap. A code of conduct serves to set out where there are particular issues and provides the user with all the information they need to undertake their chosen activity safely, within the law and without creating conflict with others.

3.3 Codes are likely to be most effective where they are developed with stakeholders and are not overly restrictive. In reviewing the existing codes of conduct for the Exe Estuary, there is a clear opportunity to produce a new and updated set of codes.

3.4 Codes will need to be clearly set out, available through local clubs, incorporated into club websites, circulated to all relevant forums/new members of clubs, etc and set out on signs and other material (e.g. leaflets) as necessary.

3.5 Codes should cover the following activities:

Kite/windsurfing

Jet skiing/personal water craft use

Sailing

Powerboating

Waterskiing/wakeboarding

Canoeing

Crab tiling

Bait digging and cockle raking

Dog walking

3.6 A general code of conduct for all users should also accompany the above, and provide further general guidance such as avoiding putting birds to flight, avoiding activities (1 September - 1 April) around the shore/foreshore that will cause disturbance, such as kite flying, model aircraft flying and driving on the foreshore.

3.7 After the codes of conduct are developed they should be closely monitored to ensure they are working. Once the codes are completed, and alongside the monitoring data, it should be possible to review the byelaws and ensure a mechanism is in place for the codes of conduct to be enforced.

3.8 A set of codes of conduct for Dawlish Warren is currently published on the internet. It is proposed to create a single, specific code of conduct for the reserve and increase the prominence of this information with the aim of increasing visitors' awareness of the vulnerability of the site and the measures they are personally responsible for to help safeguard it. The code will:

- Highlight areas where particular activities are/are not permitted (e.g. dogs off leads)
- Highlight activities which are not permitted (e.g. barbeques)
- Explain temporally variable requests (e.g. avoiding walking the shoreline at high tide)
- Include specific requirements such as not feeding livestock and not leaving litter

3.9 Sufficient information should be included within the code for visitors to be able to understand the requirements. Written in a friendly style, and briefly explaining the reason behind each point, the code of conduct is to be included on interpretation panels, the website, in the reserve leaflet, and in the proposed Dawlish Warren newsletter as a reminder for regular users.

3.10 It will also be made available on the Explorer water taxis that run trips to Warren Point in the summer to ensure that visitors who may not reach the visitor centre are aware of it.

3.11 This measure requires close liaison with local clubs for all main activities on the Exe, Teignbridge District Council Countryside Rangers and the Devon Wildlife Trust, design work for producing leaflets (final design to be agreed with Officer Working Group), ensuring revised zones are included; a final print run of codes and incorporation on the Exe Estuary Management Partnership and proposed dog project websites.

4. Pebblebed Heaths

4.1 In line with the above a code of conduct for dog walkers, cyclists and horse riders on the Pebblebed Heaths would also be effective. For dog walkers, such a code should require dogs to be on leads or under close control between 1 March and 31 July, and require users to always pick up, and should give the reasons for this. The code will explain how loose dogs can cause disturbance or predation to wildlife. Messages should be consistent across sites and also link to the dog project.

4.2 A code for horse riders and cyclists should include a map showing the official bridleways and any permissive routes and explain the reasons for asking users to stick to the defined routes, including disturbance to wildlife and soil erosion and compaction. The wording/style should match the codes for the other two sites.

4.3 Monitoring of behaviour should take place after the codes are established and byelaws and zones should also be revised to ensure they fit together.

4.4 The Delivery Officer will work with Clinton Devon Estates, the RSPB and the Devon Wildlife Trust to initiate work on codes of conduct for the Pebblebed Heaths. To include codes for dog walkers, cyclists and horse riders, as well as a general code to include mention of specific specialist activities.

Proposed spend:

Up to £10,000 for the Exe Estuary Management Partnership to produce revised codes of conduct for the Exe Estuary and Dawlish Warren. The Exe Estuary Officer to work closely with the Delivery Officer to produce codes as outlined in this report, which together form a pack.

Up to £1,000 for the Delivery Officer to arrange initial consultation and content of codes of conduct for the Pebblebed Heaths.

5. Purchase and run a new patrol boat

5.1 Although a byelaw relating to speed restrictions is in place, it is not an easy task to enforce on the Exe Estuary. One way of enforcing the speed restrictions is through the use of the patrol boat. There is an Exeter City Council Harbour Patrol Boat which was crewed by the police. In more recent years it has been operated by volunteers (during the summer) who take on the role as Harbour Authority Officials.

5.2 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 and as such will need to be operational regularly during the winter. An up-to date, fast and well-equipped patrol boat is now required, with an appropriate level of staff resources made available. Increasing the time the patrol boat is on the water and ensuring the

boat crew have the power to enforce bylaws is an element of the strategy that can be established reasonably quickly and simply.

5.3 The patrol boat should therefore be operational through the winter, and be responsive to weather conditions (i.e. able to go out when the estuary is likely to be busy or particular activities are taking place). It should be able to patrol the entire estuary, have the power to enforce, and in particular be able to focus on:

- Ensuring all craft within the estuary remain within the speed limit
- Personal watercraft users, kitesurfers and windsurfers are following agreed codes of conduct
- Particular activities are taking place within designated zones
- Providing a clear presence that may deter particularly anti-social or unusual events that may have particular disturbance implications, such as hovercraft use, testing of model planes, etc

5.4 The mitigation strategy proposal coincides with Exeter City Council reviewing their role as the Harbour Authority and identifying the requirement for a new Patrol Boat to perform these duties.

5.5 There are clear advantages to obtaining one Patrol Boat which is able to perform a number of functions, year-round. However, very careful planning and agreement will be needed to ensure that the Boat meets both its mitigation and harbour authority functions.

5.6 In a Habitat Regulations context, the Patrol Boat is necessary to protect the features of the Exe Estuary SPA and Dawlish Warren SAC. Therefore it is proposed that the Patrol Boat will be staffed by the wardens recommended elsewhere in this report, through the autumn and winter months (Sep-Mar), with flexible, cross-over working in April, July and August.

5.7 A separate Patrol Boat team, staffed by the Harbour Authority, will be required in order to carry out HA functions from May until September. It is not considered an appropriate use of the role of mitigation wardens to carry out these functions as they will have other duties on the Pebblebed Heaths during these months. There will be certain functions, such as enforcing the speed limit byelaw, which will fulfil Harbour Authority and mitigation strategy requirements.

5.8 It has become clear through research that the estimated cost of a Patrol Boat at £22,600 as detailed in the Strategy is sufficient to fund the capital purchase costs, if additional funding is secured from other partners.

5.9 A total budget of approximately £30,000 has potentially been identified, which will enable a used boat to be purchased. This will enable the purchase of a Rigid Inflatable Boat (RIB) equipped with a cabin for weather protection, VHF radio, GPS, outboard petrol engine (and auxiliary) and "A" frame with lights.

5.10 There remains a level of uncertainty about whether the patrol boat should be part funded to include a Harbour Authority capability. Due to the need to implement mitigation in a timely manner, it is suggested that a deadline of 31st August 2016 is appropriate to maintain. This will allow sufficient time for procuring a second-hand patrol boat in due time for the Wardens to use when they are recruited.

5.11 Additional joint funding may be provided by East Devon District Council and Exeter City Council. The same Councils may also provide £5000 each towards revenue costs for Harbour Authority use of the boat.

5.12 Ownership of the Patrol Boat should be shared according to the proportion of funding provided for initial capital purchase. A legally binding agreement, signed by all authorities, relating to use of the boat in perpetuity for mitigation purposes (as outlined above) will be completed before operational use of the boat.

5.13 In order to enable mitigation to proceed in a timely fashion, the Delivery Officer will make arrangements for purchase of the boat solely from developer contributions if talks to jointly fund the boat are delayed beyond 31st August 2016.

Proposed spend:

Up to £22,600 towards purchasing a new patrol boat.

Up to £7,000 per year towards revenue costs related to use of the boat for mitigation purposes (including mooring, fuel, insurance, PPE, training for crew).

6. Two Wardens

6.1 Many sites have wardens who fulfil a range of roles, including interacting with the public and education. Such wardens can work both on-site and off-site, playing an outreach role (e.g. undertaking visits to schools and liaising with local communities).

Exe Estuary

6.2 There is scope for wardens to communicate directly with users during the autumn, winter and spring. It is recommended that the post holders are therefore mobile, moving around the estuary, talking to kitesurfers and windsurfers in suitable wind conditions and during low tide conditions meeting and talking to dog walkers, for example at the Duck Pond in Exmouth.

6.3 Such posts should have a clear, recognisable presence around the estuary – including a vehicle with clear logos and local authority branding. The post-holders would also work as a team of 2 to run the Patrol Boat when required.

Dawlish Warren

6.4 The site currently has three full time wardens, who work on a rota at weekends. Due to the geography of the site and number of visitors, much of their time is taken up redirecting visitors who have strayed into vulnerable areas, preventing barbeques, and dealing with inappropriate landing at Warren Point. This significant work load reduces the wardens' capacity to carry out proactive visitor engagement (and practical management work).

6.5 The recommended warden posts need to fit with – and compliment – the existing warden team at Dawlish Warren. This should include wardening at weekends and undertaking visitor events during the week, plus liaison with the local community.

Pebblebed Heaths

6.6 Given the size of the Pebblebed Heaths, additional wardening is a powerful way of mitigating impacts, particularly with staff having specific responsibilities for visitor management and local community liaison. Such warden roles would be particularly important during the bird breeding season and when fires were a risk, and therefore would neatly complement the requirements for on-site wardening on the Exe Estuary and at Dawlish Warren.

6.7 As with Dawlish Warren, whilst focused on the Pebblebed Heaths, the Wardens should work very closely with the local landowners, with Clinton Devon Estates having an input into the day-day work of the post-holders.

6.8 In combination with the patrol boat, Wardens will also have a policing role, so that they can respond to persistent offenders and problem individuals and enforce byelaws across the 3 European sites.

6.9 The warden posts will have a remit for public engagement and providing an onsite presence, with the post-holders predominantly based on the Pebblebed Heaths in Spring & Summer and at Dawlish Warren and the Exe Estuary during Autumn & Winter. There is a clear requirement for both posts to dovetail, ensuring there is cover at weekends and during holiday periods, as well as satisfying Health and Safety requirements regarding enforcement and operating the Patrol Boat.

6.10 To achieve maximum effectiveness across the European sites, the Wardens will require cross-warranted powers to be able to enforce byelaws regardless of Authority boundaries. It is also recommended that the Wardens undergo training under the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS) which would give them the same powers as Police constables to request a name and address.

6.11 Timetabling of Warden tasks will be agreed and finalised with key stakeholders if funding is authorised by the Executive Committee. Key stakeholders are NE, ECC, EDDC, TDC, RSPB, Clinton Devon Estates and DWT.

7. Warden Vehicle

7.1 As recommended above, the Wardens will require a vehicle to move from site to site which will have clear branding and will demonstrate the presence of staff onsite. It is recommended that the vehicle is a 4x4 so that it can be loaded with equipment for public engagement (signs, gazebos etc) and able to negotiate all terrain during wet weather.

7.2 It is also recommended that the vehicle is purchased outright rather than leased as comparative research shows that a 5 year vehicle lease is equivalent to the cost of outright purchase.

7.3 Research with workshop mechanics at Teignbridge District Council reveals that a period of 10years will be sufficient before the costs of repair (especially to the engine) begin to outweigh the benefits of maintaining the vehicles.

7.4 In relation to 7.3 (above), capital replacement of the vehicle/s should be funded every 10 years (or according to the state of repair of the vehicle) and incorporated into future plans and programmes.

Proposed spend:

Up to £68,000 annually for two mitigation Wardens, employed by East Devon District Council and hosted by the Countryside team on initial 3 year fixed term contracts, based on a Grade 5 Salary (to include salary, NI, pension, travel & other expenses, IT, HR and Payroll recharges).

Up to £20,000 for the outright purchase of a 4x4 vehicle (Ford Ranger or similar) for explicit use of the mitigation wardens – Mitsubishi L200 or similar.

Up to £2,000 per year towards warden vehicle revenue costs such as fuel, tax, insurance and servicing.

Proposed action:

That the Executive Committee instruct Legal departments of the three Councils to enable Wardens to be cross-warranted. This will enable them to enforce byelaws across the 3 European Protected Sites.

8. Dog project

8.1 Run by the Urban Heaths Partnership, there is an existing mitigation project called Dorset Dogs. This project has established a free, membership based community of dog walkers. Nationally recognised for its success in reinforcing positive messages about responsible dog behaviour in the countryside, it includes a users' website which provides useful information about dog walking and codes of conduct and also highlights places to walk, indicating which sites require dogs to be on a lead and when.

8.2 Membership is free and members gain information, free gifts (dog tags, dog bags, stickers, etc) and access to information such as directories of local vets, etc. Such an approach provides a means of establishing positive communication with local dog walkers and enables direct contact with dog walkers and offers information – for example when livestock are present on sites or there are other issues which may mean dog walkers should avoid a particular area.

8.3 Promoted sites for dog walking could include SANGs. The project would require a web presence and on-site events. On-site events will involve a gazebo or similar structure that could be set up on local sites and allow direct contact with local dog walkers.

8.4 The face-to-face contact will provide a means of engaging with local walkers, quickly building membership and interest in the project as a means of disseminating literature. The Dorset Dog project provides an excellent example of best practice and as an on-going project is continually refined to improve its effectiveness and join up.

8.5 Advice from the Urban Heaths Partnership is that a dedicated project officer is critical to the successful implementation of the scheme. Their officer currently works part time and is responsible for web updates, public engagement events (on European sites and SANGS) and administering membership.

Proposed spend:

Up to £12,000 to initiate a dog project for the wider area encompassing the Exe Estuary, Pebblebed Heaths and Dawlish Warren.

Up to £22,000 per year (pro rata) for a 3 year fixed-term, part-time (18.5hrs/wk) position hosted by East Devon District Council, to drive forwards the implementation of the dog project.

9. Petalwort translocation & monitoring at Dawlish Warren.

9.1 Petalwort is a small, pale green plant which is one of the special interest features for which Dawlish Warren Special Area of Conservation is designated. It is nationally scarce in the UK, being widely but sparsely distributed.

9.2 Proposed managed coastal realignment work at Dawlish Warren by the Environment Agency is likely to allow a dynamic dune system to redevelop. As Petalwort at Dawlish Warren is dependent on artificial materials influencing the acidity of the substrate, it is not necessarily the case that any new dune habitat that develops will be suitable for Petalwort.

9.3 If the beach rolls back, one of the current dune features where Petalwort is found may become inundated with seawater, destroying the existing population and decreasing the chance of natural regeneration through spore dispersal. Changes in the area of dune grassland available to visitors and access patterns to the beach may result in increased trampling pressure at the remaining Petalwort location.

9.4 An increase in visitor pressure due to increased housing may contribute to detrimental over-trampling at this site, particularly if changes due to coastal realignment cause changes in access patterns.

9.5 A suitable monitoring methodology is currently being investigated for Petalwort at Dawlish Warren. This needs to be finalised and implemented with some urgency, so that baseline monitoring can be put in place to monitor the perceived decline.

9.6 Rangers at the Warren have already undertaken some experimental translocations of Petalwort to areas most likely to be protected from any inundation by the sea. Therefore, this part of the project as recommended in the strategy has already been delivered, at no cost to the mitigation fund.

9.7 However, the requirement for monitoring the success or failure of the translocations still remains, in order that the conditions for ongoing survival of the plant can be more fully understood and maintained.

Proposed spend:

Up to £1,000 every 3 years to employ a specialist consultant/botanist to monitor the success or failure of translocated Petalwort at Dawlish Warren.

10. Habitat Regulations Delivery Officer

10.1 The Strategy recommends that the most cost-effective and coherent approach to achieving regular contact with local clubs is for there to be a dedicated delivery officer employed with an 'overarching' role to establish many of the projects and work threads.

10.2 The current Delivery Officer has been in post since May 2015. The post is largely office based and is overseeing a range of the recommendations set out in this report, such as the significant elements of the mitigation that are initially required. Work streams to date have included close liaison with local authority staff, administering and organising the formation of the Executive Committee, collating financial information from the three Councils, organising meetings of the Officer Working Group and prioritising mitigation projects.

10.3 The strategy recommends that the delivery officer post is required for a fixed period and then subject to review. The current contract runs until spring 2018.

10.4 The Delivery Officer will commission specialist additional input/help as required and is being hosted by East Devon District Council, as much of the workload involves close liaison with local authority staff.

10.5 The post-holder is working closely with the Exe Estuary Management Partnership, Clinton Devon Estates, RSPB, DWT, National Trust, local authorities and Natural England. Future contact with landowners and local businesses will be sought.

10.6 With the Pebblebed Heaths the Delivery Officer will also continue existing contacts with the model aircraft club and Marines. It is recommended that contact with horse riding and mountain biking groups is established in order to facilitate the exchange of relevant information and increased understanding of each party's interests.

Proposed spend:

Up to £40,000 per year towards employment costs (to include salary, NI, pension, travel & other expenses, IT, HR and Payroll recharges) for the Delivery Officer.

11. Dog bins on the Pebblebed Heaths

11.1 Dog bins as mitigation relate to impacts from dog fouling adversely changing heathland soil conditions and are particularly relevant to the SAC interest. The provision of more dog bins would provide an indication to visitors that visitors are expected to pick-up and helps to generate a sense that the site is being looked after (assuming bins are emptied regularly). It is important that the bins are well maintained and carefully sited, ideally at locations where they are passed by dog walkers.

Proposed spend:

Up to £3,500 to purchase and install 7 new dog bins for car parks on the Pebblebed Heaths.

Up to £2,870 for the annual cost of emptying of the 7 new dog bins.

12. Map highlighting sensitive areas on the Pebblebed Heaths

12.1 Visitor survey results and discussion with stakeholders and site managers indicates that some visitors do get lost and have difficulty finding their way around. Dedicated routes and way marking are also discussed in the draft Visitor Management Plan. Alongside the creation of dedicated routes and way marking, maps are necessary.

12.2 Such maps would be of a standard that allows new visitors to find their way around and locate key features. The maps would show sensitive areas to avoid (i.e. key areas of dry heath for breeding birds) and the recommended routes. The design should be such that the maps work within codes of conduct, on interpretation and on the internet, and ideally work at different scales, such that it is possible to view the Pebblebeds as a whole, and also work as maps for individual commons.

Proposed spend:

Up to £1,500 for an overview map of the Pebblebed Heaths and a series of 'sub' maps.

13. Monitoring on the Pebblebed Heaths

The (draft) visitor management plan recommends the following monitoring:

13.1 Birds: While some bird data are collected annually, there is not always coverage across all the Pebblebed Heaths and the data are not necessarily combined into a single GIS layer covering the SPA. Monitoring every three years should ensure such data are collected and systematically mapped.

13.2 Visitor numbers: Car park counts should be undertaken regularly covering all the parking locations across the Pebblebeds. Counts should encompass a range of times of day, types of day (weekend, weekdays and bank holidays) and different times of year.

13.2 Erosion and path width: Fixed point photography and measurement of path width (bare ground) at set locations would help inform where (and when) path surfacing might be required.

13.3 Warden time and effort: A log should be maintained of how much time wardens spend at which locations and it should record details of the number of people spoken to/engaged with and details of the interaction.

13.4 Visitor interviews: further visitor survey work would provide the opportunity to check on how well different measures are working. More detailed questions relating to whether the interviewee has encountered a warden, seen particular signs etc. should be included.

Proposed spend:

Up to £2,000 to fund monitoring to establish baseline information on the populations of key species and/or levels of path erosion across the Pebblebed Heaths.

**Neil Harris
Habitat Regulations Delivery Officer**

**South East Devon
Habitat Regulations
Executive Committee
June 2016**