



Stakeholder Consultations Regarding Management Measures at Dawlish Warren, the Exe Estuary and the Pebblebed Heaths



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Date: 28th March 2013

Version: FINAL

Recommended Citation: Cruickshanks, K., Lake, S., Day., J. & Liley, D. (2013). Stakeholder Consultations Regarding Management Measures at Dawlish Warren, the Exe Estuary and the Pebblebed Heaths. Unpublished report. Footprint Ecology

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Acknowledgements

This report sets out the results from a consultation with stakeholders involved in the Exe Estuary, Pebblebed Heaths and Dawlish Warren. The work was commissioned jointly by East Devon District Council, Exeter City Council and Teignbridge District Council.

We are grateful to Mary Rush (Teignbridge District Council), Matt Dickins (East Devon District Council) and Fergus Pate (Exeter City Council) for their support, for comments on the questionnaire and help promoting the questionnaire. Input was also received from John Varley (Clinton Devon Estates), Midge Kelly (Exe Estuary officer) and Phil Chambers and Steve Ayres (TDC's Dawlish Warren wardens). Midge Kelly and Toby Taylor (RSPB) assisted with the circulation of the online survey link. Leaflets were circulated to Edge Watersports, local libraries and a number of public places. We are grateful to any club secretaries who circulated the survey link further via membership databases.

Many people have given their time and provided us with detailed information, comments and suggestions. We are grateful to all who have responded and contributed.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 This report sets out the results of consultations relating to the Exe Estuary, the Pebblebed Heaths and Dawlish Warren.
- 2.2 New development in East Devon District, Exeter City and Teignbridge District will mean a change in the distribution of people in the area and an increased local population around the three sites. Each site is designated within the Natura 2000 network of European Sites, and is internationally important for nature conservation. The increase in the local human population will bring pressures on the nature conservation interest, for example through increased levels of recreation and disturbance.
- 2.3 The aim of the consultation is to consider possible measures which could be implemented to reduce the impacts on the nature conservation interest. In order to ensure that any measures will be effective, practicable to implement, and will work with users/land owners/land managers it is necessary to engage with local stakeholders. This report outlines the methods and results from a two tier stakeholder consultation involving an online survey for users and direct discussion with key land owners/managers relevant to the different European sites.

3. Methods

Online survey for users and stakeholders in general

- 3.1 The online survey was designed in Survey Monkey with a link distributed via email, websites and leaflets. The survey went live on the 9th November and ran until the 9th December. The email link was circulated widely by the Exe Estuary Management Partnership to their email mailing list and by local authority staff including news pieces on council websites. In addition the link was sent directly to secretaries at sailing clubs to ensure that it was circulated to members. Other direct emails were sent to the Exe Water Users Group, the local contact for the British Horse Society and the Parish Councils around the Pebblebed Heaths. Leaflets were distributed to Dawlish Warren tourist facilities, Dawlish Warren visitor centre, Dawlish Library, Exmouth Library, Powderham Farm Shop, Edge Watersports, Double Locks Inn, Ludwell Community Centre, Woodbury Village Hall and Woodbury Golf Course.
- 3.2 The survey was designed to briefly explain the reason for the consultation and then lead through different sections for each European site. Respondents were asked whether or not they wished to comment on each site (Exe, Dawlish Warren and Pebblebeds) to avoid having to comment on locations which did not interest them. For each European site respondents were asked to state which activities they undertook, their opinions on effectiveness of the possible measures and also features that would make a new local site attractive. Comments could be made on possible measures and features of an alternative site.

Direct consultation with specific stakeholders

- 3.3 Direct contact was made with a number of stakeholders and local representatives:
- Clinton Devon Estates, Dr Sam Bridgewater
 - RSPB, Toby Taylor
 - Edge Watersports, Eric Bridge
 - Exe Estuary Officer, Midge Kelly
 - Dawlish Warren Warden, Phil Chambers & Steve Ayres
- 3.4 Face to face meetings with these individuals were arranged and the relevant mitigation measures were discussed in detail.

4. Results

Online survey for users and stakeholders in general

- 4.1 The response to the online survey was very high with 402 entries received by the 9th December 2012 (4 week consultation period). The Exe was the most popular location with 92% of respondents stating that they wished to comment on issues with the estuary compared to 51% wishing to comment on Dawlish Warren and 40% on the Pebblebeds.
- 4.2 Respondents were asked to describe themselves as either an individual or affiliated to a group or business etc. Multiple answers were collected and 82% of people stated that they were individual users. Responses from members of a group, club or society were provided by 24% of respondents and 147 respondents provided the name and/or type of group/club/society, organisation or business - these are provided in appendix 1.

Table 1: The type, number and percentage of respondents (multiple answers were given).

Type of respondent	Response (%)	Number of responses
Individual user	81.6%	328
Business / commercial	4.7%	19
Land manager / Land owner / service provider	6.5%	26
Part of a group / club / society	23.9%	96
Representing the views of a group / club / society	4.7%	19
No response	0.2%	1
<i>Total</i>		402

- 4.3 Respondents were given the option to provide their contact details so that they could be contacted regarding the survey if necessary. In total 31% of respondents skipped the question entirely. Over two thirds of respondents provided their name, 57% provided an address, 58% provided a postcode, 62% provided an email address and 48% provided a telephone number.

Responses regarding the Exe Estuary

- 4.4 Respondents were asked which activities they undertook on the estuary and the most popular activity stated by 73% of people was walking (Table 2). The second most popular activity was wildlife watching, as stated by 59% of respondents and this was closely followed by cycling (56%). Nearly half of the 362 people who answered this question stated that they spend time at the beach and nearly a third stated that they go sailing on the Exe.
- 4.5 Responses which did not fit into the categories provided were given by 9% of respondents (N=35). The other activities included wakeboarding, surfing / surf-lifesaving, using the ferry, wakeboarding, clearing litter, operate the exe patrol boat, play golf on Dawlish Warren, cafe on the river, dragon boating, stand up paddle boarding, all year round swimmer, national coast watch keeper, life saving, collecting cockles and diving.

Table 2: Activities undertaken on the Exe estuary (multiple responses were provided).

Activity	Response (%)	Number of responses
Walking	72.9%	264
Wildlife watching	59.1%	214
Cycling	56.1%	203
Spending time at the beach	49.4%	179
Sailing	32.9%	119
Dog walking	18.5%	67
Canoeing / kayaking	16.9%	61
Power boating	16%	58
Motor cruising	12.7%	46
Jogging	12.2%	44
Fishing from a boat	11.6%	42
Kite surfing	11.3%	41
Other (please specify)	9.0%	35
Water skiing	8.8%	32
Fishing from the shore	8.6%	31
Rowing	8.0%	29
Wind surfing	6.4%	23
Bait digging / crab tiling	2.8%	10
Jet skiing	1.7%	6
<i>answered question</i>		362
<i>skipped question</i>		40

4.6 Respondents were asked to look at the list of possible measures to help manage increased numbers of people, both out on the water and using the shore and then state whether or not they think these measures would help change people's behaviour to avoid future problems. The list of 18 measures for the Exe was extensive due to the range of activities that take place around the shores of the estuary. Respondents were asked to state whether they thought that the measures would work or not, or if they were unsure, or that the measure was not relevant to their activity or interest. In addition there was the option to describe additional measures not listed in the question.

4.7 In total, 319 out of 402 (79%) of respondents answered the question and 21% skipped the question. The responses are shown in Table 3 and Figure 1. The most popular response for all measures was that they would work except for two measures: 'numbered vests or tags for kite surfers and wind surfers to enable identification' and also 'Careful monitoring of levels of use by bait diggers and crab tilers'. Ninety respondents (30%) felt that the numbered vests would not work and 76 respondents (25%) felt that they would work. For the monitoring of bait collection, 39% were unsure if this would work to change people's behaviour. The top three options (where the highest proportion of respondents felt that the measures would work) were:

- working with local groups to raise profile of key areas for birds and impacts of disturbance (74%),

- the creation of new waymarked routes for walkers, dog walkers and joggers from the Estuary inland (71%) and
- the control of vehicles on the mudflats/shore (69%).

4.8 Options with lower levels of support were the enhancement of facilities for kite surfing along the coast outside the Exe (40% stated that this would work), dedicated kite surfing and wind surfing zone (August to March only)(43%) and increased warden presence (45%) (Table 3, Figure 1).

4.9 Comments on additional measures were provided by 80 respondents which include suggestions for how to manage recreation. General thoughts on the issues surrounding the Exe were submitted by 169 respondents. Details of all these comments, recorded in full, were provided to the local authorities.

Table 3: Opinions of respondents regarding the possible measures put forward for mitigation on the Exe estuary. Percentages of the total response count are shown in brackets. Bold numbers indicate the column with the highest number of responses

Possible measures	Would work	Unsure	Would not work	Not applicable to my interest	Response Count
Improved interpretation boards with information for users and codes of conduct	203 (67)	73 (24)	20 (7)	9 (3)	305
Enhancement of facilities for kite surfing along the coast outside the Exe	124 (40)	93 (30)	37 (12)	54 (18)	308
Dedicated kite surfing and wind surfing zone (August to March only)	133 (43)	83 (27)	48 (16)	42 (14)	306
Numbered vests or tags for kite surfers and wind surfers to enable identification	76 (25)	85 (28)	90 (30)	53 (17)	304
Provision of additional/improved slipway facilities to manage access to the water	170 (55)	74 (24)	22 (7)	41 (13)	307
No go areas at certain times of year near roost sites for all types of watercraft	189 (61)	73 (23)	38 (12)	11 (4)	311
Increased presence of the patrol boat	184 (60)	77 (25)	27 (9)	21 (7)	309
Increased enforcement of the 10 knot speed limit	180 (58)	66 (21)	39 (13)	23 (7)	308
Careful monitoring of levels of use by bait diggers and crab tilers	103 (34)	119 (39)	23 (8)	57 (19)	302
Improved information on reducing disturbance to birds (online, leaflets, notices)	188 (61)	90 (29)	24 (8)	5 (2)	307
Control of vehicles on the mudflats/shore	213 (69)	61 (20)	14 (5)	22 (7)	310
New waymarked routes for walkers, dog walkers and joggers from the Estuary inland	217 (71)	54 (18)	23 (8)	12 (4)	306
Working with local groups to raise profile of key areas for birds and impacts of disturbance	232 (74)	67 (21)	6 (2)	8 (3)	313
Dog control orders to prevent dogs off leads on the mudflats	172 (55)	65 (21)	51 (16)	23 (7)	311
New areas of open green space in and around the estuary designed for dog walking	153 (50)	72 (24)	42 (14)	39 (13)	306
Increased warden presence	139 (45)	101 (33)	59 (19)	10 (3)	309
Screening people from the birds on footpaths adjacent to sensitive areas	159 (51)	80 (26)	57 (18)	15 (5)	311
New areas of open green space nearby designed for walking/jogging	171 (55)	77 (25)	41 (13)	22 (7)	311

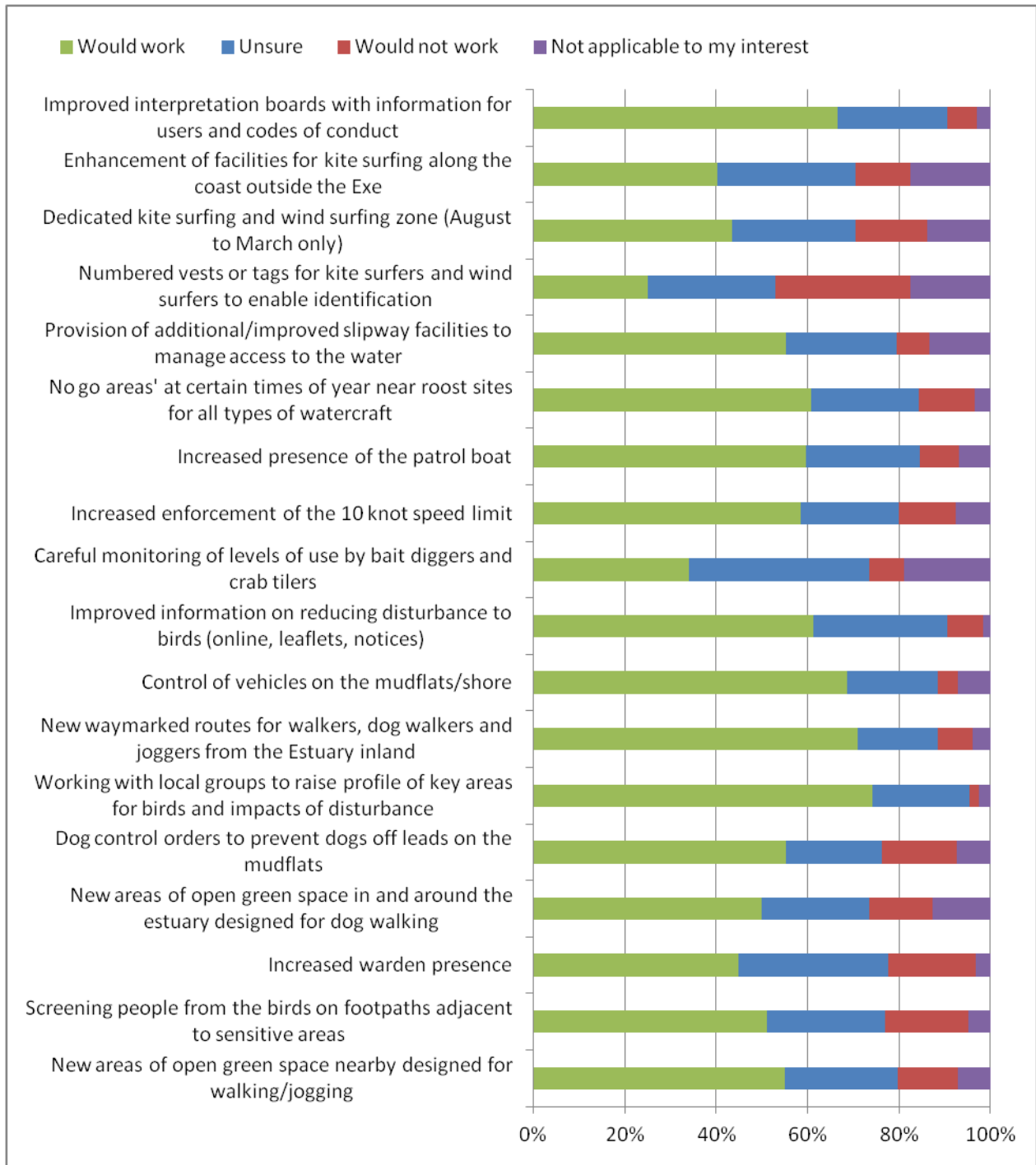


Figure 1: Potential mitigation measures and the percentage of respondents who think that the measures for the Exe estuary would work or not.

4.10 In Table 4 a sample of the different user groups' opinions are described. For each measure, the number and percentage of respondents who feel that the measure would work on the Exe is displayed per activity. Overall there is a high level of support from different user groups for estuary wide communication measures which are not particularly user specific e.g. 'working with local groups', 'improved information' and 'improved interpretation' (with the exception being jet skiers who only provided 6 responses).

- 4.11 Where a proposed measure means a new facility for a user group, then the support was generally good from that particular group e.g. 69% of dog walkers feel that additional open space for dog walkers would work and 78% would welcome new routes. Similarly all watersports users listed in Table 4 supported the provision of new/improved slipways with over 68% support. However when the measure proposes some form of restriction or control on a targeted group then a lower percentage think that the measure will work. For example 14% of kitesurfers and 17% of windsurfers think that numbered vests will work and around 14% of kite/wind surfers think that a dedicated zone August-March will work.

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Table 4: The number and percentage (in brackets) of respondents undertaking a selection of different activities who think that the possible measures will work on the Exe. The most relevant activities to each measure are highlighted in bold.

Possible measures	Sailing	Kite surfing	Wind surfing	Walking	Dog walking	Wildlife watching	Canoeing / kayaking	Water skiing	Jet skiing	Bait digging / crab tiling
New areas of open green space nearby designed for walking/jogging	52 (50)	21 (60)	13 (57)	130 (57)	33 (57)	108 (57)	29 (52)	17 (57)	3 (60)	2 (22)
Screening people from the birds on footpaths adjacent to sensitive areas	30 (29)	12 (34)	7 (30)	120 (52)	27 (46)	111 (59)	20 (36)	7 (23)	1 (20)	4 (44)
Increased warden presence	34 (33)	5 (14)	6 (26)	105 (46)	20 (35)	107 (58)	22 (40)	7 (23)	3 (60)	3 (33)
New areas of open green space in and around the estuary designed for dog walking	48 (47)	19 (56)	13 (59)	108 (48)	40 (69)	93 (50)	27 (49)	12 (40)	3 (60)	6 (67)
Dog control orders to prevent dogs off leads on the mudflats	41 (41)	7 (21)	4 (18)	123 (54)	19 (33)	122 (65)	14 (25)	7 (23)	1 (20)	5 (56)
Working with local groups to raise profile of key areas for birds and impacts of disturbance	67 (64)	25 (71)	19 (83)	175 (76)	44 (75)	153 (81)	43 (77)	21 (70)	5 (100)	5 (56)
New waymarked routes for walkers, dog walkers and joggers from the Estuary inland	64 (64)	22 (63)	16 (70)	163 (72)	46 (78)	129 (70)	37 (66)	16 (55)	3 (60)	2 (22)
Control of vehicles on the mudflats/shore	60 (59)	18 (51)	15 (65)	158 (70)	39 (66)	138 (74)	32 (58)	11 (37)	2 (40)	6 (67)
Improved information on reducing disturbance to birds (online, leaflets, notices)	48 (48)	18 (51)	12 (52)	141 (62)	32 (54)	118 (64)	28 (51)	15 (52)	1 (20)	6 (67)
Careful monitoring of levels of use by bait diggers and crab tilers	27 (27)	5 (14)	5 (22)	81 (36)	14 (24)	72 (40)	16 (29)	4 (14)	1 (20)	3 (33)
Increased enforcement of the 10 knot speed limit	61 (60)	6 (18)	6 (26)	132 (59)	29 (50)	120 (64)	27 (49)	4 (13)	1 (20)	6 (67)
Increased presence of the patrol boat	65 (64)	9 (26)	9 (39)	138 (61)	30 (52)	118 (63)	29 (53)	6 (20)	2 (40)	6 (67)
No go areas' at certain times of year near roost sites for all types of watercraft	39 (38)	16 (46)	8 (35)	145 (63)	29 (50)	131 (69)	22 (40)	8 (27)	1 (20)	2 (22)
Provision of additional/improved slipway facilities to manage access to the water	72 (72)	23 (68)	17 (74)	127 (56)	36 (62)	91 (49)	42 (76)	22 (73)	4 (80)	5 (56)
Numbered vests or tags for kite surfers and wind surfers to enable identification	22 (22)	5 (14)	4 (17)	53 (24)	16 (28)	49 (27)	13 (24)	7 (24)	1 (20)	1 (11)
Dedicated kite surfing and wind surfing zone (August to March only)	35 (35)	5 (14)	3 (13)	101 (45)	25 (44)	90 (48)	17 (32)	6 (20)	1 (20)	1 (13)
Enhancement of facilities for kite surfing along the coast outside the Exe	47 (47)	15 (43)	10 (43)	93 (41)	21 (36)	69 (37)	23 (43)	13 (43)	2 (40)	2 (25)
Improved interpretation boards with information for users and codes of conduct	64 (65)	26 (74)	16 (70)	149 (67)	39 (66)	122 (66)	31 (57)	17 (59)	1 (20)	5 (63)

- 4.12 Respondents were asked to select different features that would make an alternative site attractive (Table 5). Nearly 70% of respondents answered this question and the most important features were coastal views (76%) and attractive scenery (73%). Links to surrounding footpaths and also good parking facilities were popular with around 65% of respondents who answered the question. 30% of respondents provided additional thoughts on features or general comments about this question (83 comments provided in a supplementary document). Nearly 20% of these additional comments related to the fact that creating an alternative site to the Exe would be impossible as it is unique.

Table 5: Features of an alternative site for Exe visitors that would make it attractive to respondents.

Features of an alternative site	Response Percent	Response Count
Coastal views	75.8%	207
Attractive scenery	73.3%	200
Links to surrounding footpaths	65.2%	178
Good parking facilities	64.8%	177
Safe area away from cars/roads	54.2%	148
Variety of landscape types, features and habitats	47.6%	130
Dog waste bins	46.9%	128
Large areas of open space	45.1%	123
Unsurfaced natural paths	44%	120
Waymarked routes	43.2%	118
A site close to home	35.9%	98
Surfaced paths	29.3%	80
Ability for dog to run free off the lead	27.8%	76
Areas without too many people or other dogs	26.4%	72
Childrens' play area	23.1%	63
Areas without livestock	13.6%	37
Ability to see your dog at all times	9.9%	27
Fenced area	4.8%	13
No requirement to pick up after dogs	0.4%	1
Additional features		83
Answered the question		273
Skipped the question		129

Responses regarding Dawlish Warren

- 4.13 Respondents were asked which activities they undertook at Dawlish Warren and the most popular activity stated by 76.1% of people was walking (Table 6). The second most popular activity was wildlife watching, as stated by 59.9% of respondents and this was closely followed by spending time at the beach (51.3%). Only 12.2% of respondents stated that they undertook dog walking at the Warren. Other activities were stated by 13.2% of respondents which included landing on the Warren in the summer, wildlife photography, swimming/surfing and running.

Table 6: Activities undertaken at Dawlish Warren (multiple responses were provided).

Activity	Response (%)	Number of responses
Walking	76.1%	150
Wildlife watching	59.9%	118
Spending time at the beach	51.3%	101
Other (please specify)	13.2%	26
Dog walking	12.2%	24
Fishing from the shore	10.2%	20
Enjoying the amusements / shops / pub	9.6%	19
Playing golf	6.6%	13
Jogging	6.6%	13
<i>answered question</i>		197
<i>skipped question</i>		205

- 4.14 The measures listed for Dawlish Warren and the number and percentage of respondents stating whether or not they are likely to work are shown in Table 7 and Figure 2. Closure of some sensitive areas at certain times of year had the most support with 79% of respondents stating that they thought it would work. Improved information about the sensitivity of the area was also popular (72% thought that this would work). The cliff top park received the lowest level of support and only 44% of respondents felt that this would work and 35% were unsure. Closure of sensitive areas all year around was supported by 57% of respondents and increasing the warden presence was supported by 58%.
- 4.15 Comments on additional measures were provided by 34 respondents and specific comments on the measures listed were provided by 66 respondents (provided in a supplementary document). Two themes generally emerge from the comments: 1. the Warren should be conserved for wildlife and 2. A feeling of over-regulation and too much control already.

Table 7: Opinions of respondents regarding the possible measures put forward for on and off-site mitigation for Dawlish Warren. Percentages of the total response count are shown in brackets.

Possible measures	Would work	Unsure	Would not work	Not applicable to my interest	Response Count
Some sensitive areas closed to visitors at certain times of year	147 (79)	23 (12)	16 (9)		186
Some very sensitive areas closed to visitors all year round	104 (57)	39 (21)	39 (21)	1 (1)	183
A new cliff top park nearby designed for dog walking, children's play and other activities	79 (44)	63 (35)	20 (11)	17 (9)	179
Improved information about the sensitivity of the area	133 (72)	44 (24)	7 (4)	1 (1)	185
Increased warden presence	107 (58)	56 (30)	20 (11)	1 (1)	184
Additional measures that you think may work.					34
<i>answered question</i>					189
<i>skipped question</i>					213

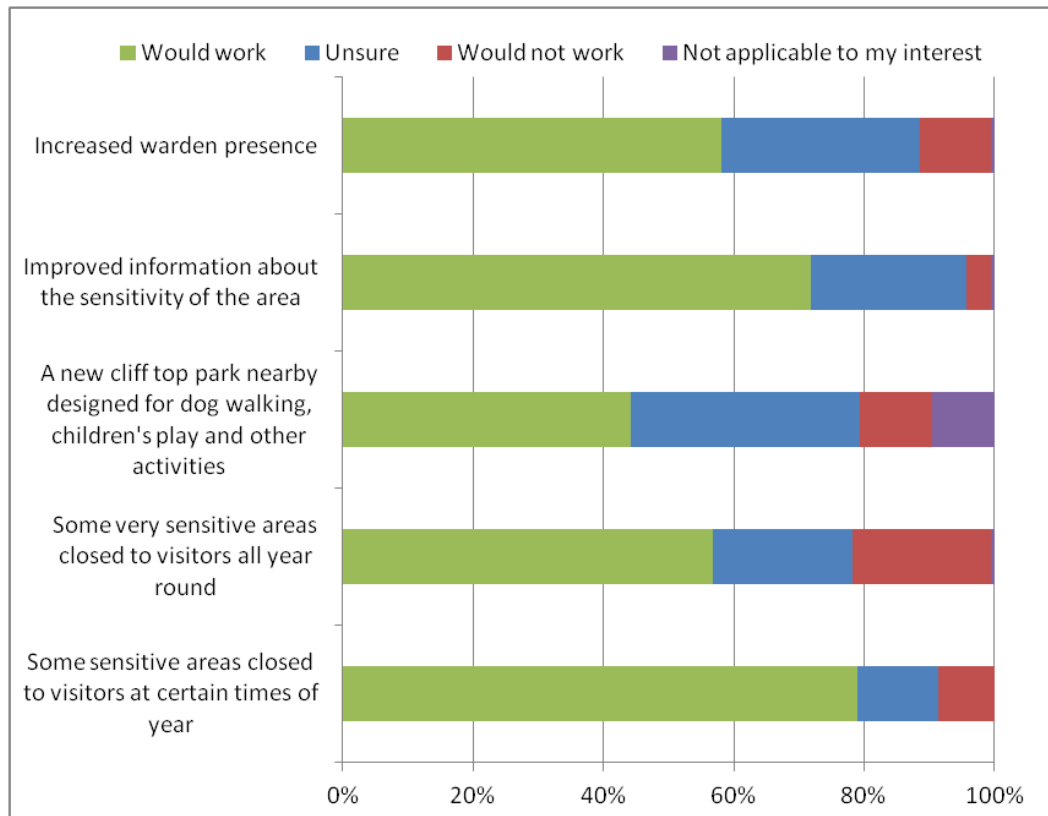


Figure 2: Potential mitigation measures and the percentage of respondents who think that the measures for Dawlish Warren would work or not.

4.16 Looking at the support for the measures from different user groups, similar patterns emerge across the different groups. Specifically, the measures which users think will work the most are common between activities e.g. improved information about the sensitivity of the area. Respondents who state fishing from the shore as an activity generally show less faith in measures which involve closure of the site. In general the least popular measure across the activities selected below was the provision of a new cliff top park (Table 8).

Table 8: The number and percentage (in brackets) of respondents undertaking a selection of different activities who think that the possible measures will work at Dawlish Warren.

Possible measures	Walking	Fishing from the shore	Dog walking	Spending time at the beach	Wildlife watching
Some sensitive areas closed to visitors at certain times of year	117 (83)	12 (60)	21 (91)	69 (73)	99 (87)
Some very sensitive areas closed to visitors all year round	80 (57)	7 (35)	13 (57)	48 (51)	72 (64)
A new cliff top park nearby designed for dog walking, children's play and other activities	58 (43)	6 (33)	12 (52)	38 (42)	54 (49)
Improved information about the sensitivity of the area	102 (72)	17 (85)	15 (65)	65 (68)	87 (78)
Increased warden presence	84 (60)	10 (50)	14 (61)	46 (48)	81 (73)

- 4.17 Respondents were asked to select different features that would make an alternative site to Dawlish Warren attractive (Table 9). The most important features were very similar to those highlighted for the Exe: 72.3% stated that the most important feature was coastal views, 71% highlighted attractive scenery, 65.8% stated good parking facilities. Closeness to home was important to respondents but only 23.9% chose this feature. Comments on features of an alternative location were provided by 38 respondents (provided in supplementary document).

Table 9: Features of an alternative site for Dawlish Warren visitors that would make it attractive to respondents.

Features of an alternative site	Response (%)	Number of responses
Coastal views	72.3%	112
Attractive scenery	71%	110
Good parking facilities	65.8%	102
Links to surrounding footpaths	60%	93
Safe area away from cars/roads	52.3%	81
Unsurfaced natural paths	51%	79
Waymarked routes	45.2%	70
Dog waste bins	44.5%	69
Large areas of open space	42.6%	66
Variety of landscape types, features and habitats	42.6%	66
Children's play area	32.3%	50
Ability for dog to run free off the lead	32.3%	50
Surfaced paths	29.%	45
Areas without too many people or other dogs	27.1%	42
Events for children/families	25.2%	39
A site close to home	23.9%	37
Areas without livestock	16.8%	26
Ability to see your dog at all times	8.4%	13
Fenced area	5.2%	8
No requirement to pick up after dogs	0.6%	1
Any additional features:		38
answered question		155
skipped question		247

Responses regarding the Pebblebed Heaths

- 4.18 The response regarding the Pebblebeds was the lowest with 39.5% of people answering questions regarding activities undertaken on the heaths. Walking was by far the most popular activity carried out by 84.9% of respondents and similarly to the Exe and Dawlish Warren, wildlife watching was also popular (62.3%) (Table 10). Interestingly nearly a third of respondents (50 people) stated that they use the heaths for cycling/mountain biking and dog walking was undertaken by 17% of respondents.

Table 10: Activities undertaken on the Pebblebed Heaths (multiple responses were provided).

Activity	Response (%)	Number of responses
Walking	84.9%	135
Wildlife watching	62.3%	99
Cycling / mountain biking	31.4%	50
Dog walking	17%	27
Jogging	11.3%	18
Other (please specify)	10.7%	17
Horse riding	3.1%	5
<i>answered question</i>		159
<i>skipped question</i>		243

- 4.19 The measures listed for the Pebblebed Heaths and the number and percentage of respondents stating whether or not they are likely to work are shown in Table 11 and Figure 3. The greatest level of support was shown for a measure to enforce picking up after dogs (supported by 78% of respondents) and this was followed by closure of certain sensitive areas to dog walkers at certain times of year (75%). A high level of support was shown for enforcement of dogs on leads during bird breeding season (74%) and also changed interpretation boards with information for users and codes of conduct (71%). The least popular measures were closure of smaller formal car parks and parking charges at some formal car parks.
- 4.20 Changes to the way the site is managed for horse riding were split with 60% supporting closure of sensitive areas but just over a third supporting a licensing system. Similarly for cyclists/mountain bikers closure of sensitive areas was supported by 64% whereas 33% stated that a licensing system would not work.
- 4.21 Comments on additional suggested measures were provided by 24 people and general comments on the measures were provided by 60 people. The theme arising from the comments was that there is a risk of attempting to control behaviour too much: people should be encouraged to use the commons and enforcement was seen as a significant discouraging factor.

Table 11: Opinions of respondents regarding the possible measures put forward for on and off-site mitigation for the Pebblebed Heaths. Percentages of the total response count are shown in brackets.

Answer Options	Would work	Unsure	Would not work	Not applicable to my interest	Response Count
Some sensitive areas closed to dog walkers at certain times of year	111 (75)	14 (9)	15 (10)	8 (5)	148
A new site nearby designed for dog walking / walking / jogging	66 (46)	45 (31)	24 (17)	10 (7)	145
Changed interpretation boards with information for users and codes of conduct	104 (71)	35 (24)	5 (3)	2 (1)	146
Smart phone apps or similar to provide real time interpretation and information	59 (42)	64 (46)	11 (8)	5 (4)	139
Increased warden presence on site to ensure the correct use of the site	91 (61)	37 (25)	18 (12)	2 (1)	148
Closure of informal parking spots (e.g. roadside verges/laybys)	62 (43)	43 (30)	37 (26)	1 (1)	143
Closure of some smaller formal car parks	22 (16)	43 (32)	69 (51)	2 (1)	136
Parking charges at some formal car parks	21 (16)	34 (25)	76 (57)	3 (2)	134
Enforcement of dogs on leads policy during the bird breeding season	110 (74)	18 (12)	16 (11)	4 (3)	148
Picking up' after dogs to be enforced	113 (78)	17 (12)	10 (7)	5 (3)	145
Sensitive areas closed to horse riders at certain times of year	86 (60)	31 (22)	14 (10)	13 (9)	144
A licensing system for horse riders using the heaths (off bridleways)	51 (36)	50 (35)	25 (17)	17 (12)	143
Sensitive areas closed to cyclists / mountain bikers at certain times of year	95 (64)	24 (16)	23 (16)	6 (4)	148
A licensing system for cyclists / mountain bikers using the heaths (off bridleways)	44 (31)	45 (32)	47 (33)	5 (4)	141
Enforcement of access restrictions for cyclists / mountain bikers to bridleways or permissive bridleways only.	74 (51)	38 (26)	29 (20)	3 (2)	144
Additional measures					25
Answered question					151
Skipped question					251

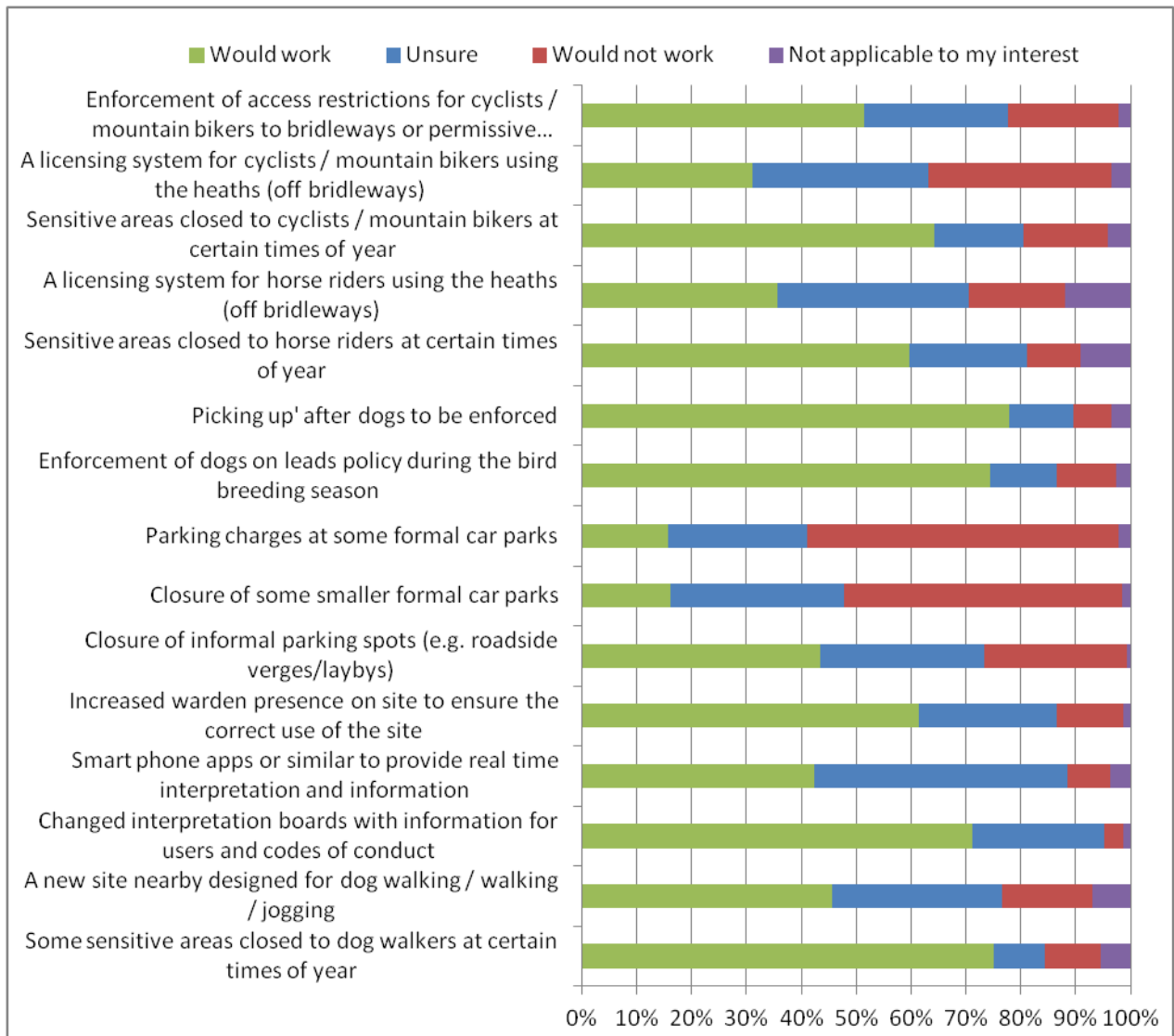


Figure 3: Potential mitigation measures and the percentage of respondents who think that the measures for the Pebblebed Heaths would work or not.

4.22 Looking at the level of support from different user groups, Table 12 shows that there is wide support for increased education measures such as interpretation boards. Likewise all user groups show low support for closure of smaller informal parking spots and also the idea of parking charges. For specific activities such as cycling and horse riding there was low support (and also for horse riding low number of respondents) for licensing although users of both of these groups supported closure of sensitive areas for the particular activities. Dog walkers showed a high level of support for measures such as enforced dogs on leads in breeding period (52%) and enforced picking up (72%).

Table 12: The number and percentage (in brackets) of respondents undertaking a selection of different activities who think that the possible measures will work on the Pebblebed Heaths. The most relevant activities to each measure are highlighted in bold.

Possible measures	Walking	Dog walking	Horse riding	Cycling / mountain biking	Wildlife watching
Some sensitive areas closed to dog walkers at certain times of year	89 (73)	16 (64)	1 (20)	27 (61)	73 (78)
A new site nearby designed for dog walking / walking / jogging	51 (43)	11 (42)	2 (40)	17 (39)	43 (48)
Changed interpretation boards with information for users and codes of conduct	84 (69)	20 (80)	4 (80)	31 (69)	69 (75)
Smart phone apps or similar to provide real time interpretation and information	48 (42)	14 (58)	2 (40)	23 (51)	38 (44)
Increased warden presence on site to ensure the correct use of the site	75 (61)	14 (54)	3 (60)	19 (42)	70 (74)
Closure of informal parking spots (e.g. roadside verges/laybys)	56 (47)	12 (50)	3 (60)	23 (51)	41 (47)
Closure of some smaller formal car parks	20 (18)	5 (22)	0 (0)	10 (23)	17 (20)
Parking charges at some formal car parks	18 (17)	5 (22)	2 (40)	8 (19)	12 (15)
Enforcement of dogs on leads policy during the bird breeding season	88 (72)	13 (52)	4 (80)	29 (64)	72 (77)
Picking up' after dogs to be enforced	92 (76)	18 (72)	4 (80)	29 (69)	70 (78)
Sensitive areas closed to horse riders at certain times of year	66 (55)	12 (50)	4 (80)	25 (58)	57 (63)
A licensing system for horse riders using the heaths (off bridleways)	38 (32)	9 (39)	2 (40)	15 (34)	35 (40)
Sensitive areas closed to cyclists / mountain bikers at certain times of year	72 (59)	11 (46)	3 (60)	25 (56)	63 (68)
A licensing system for cyclists / mountain bikers using the heaths (off bridleways)	34 (29)	8 (38)	2 (40)	8 (19)	30 (35)
Enforcement of access restrictions for cyclists / mountain bikers to bridleways or permissive bridleways only.	57 (48)	11 (48)	2 (40)	15 (35)	53 (59)

4.23 Features of an alternative site selected by users of the Pebblebeds are shown in Table 13. The most important feature was views and scenery stated by 74% of respondents. Good parking facilities were also seen as important by 66% of respondents. Comments on alternative sites were provided by 31 respondents and a common theme was that the Pebblebeds could not be replicated, but also popular was an alternative site without dogs. All comments on an alternative site are provided in a supplementary report.

Table 13: Features of an alternative site for Pebblebed Heath visitors that would make it attractive to respondents.

Features of an alternative site	Response (%)	Number of responses
Views/scenery	74.2	92
Good parking facilities	66.1	82
Links to surrounding footpaths	61.3	76
Large areas of open space	57.3	71
Variety of landscape types, features and habitats	56.5	70
Unsurfaced natural paths	54	67
Waymarked routes	50	62
Safe area away from cars/roads	49.2	61
Dog waste bins	34.7	43
A site close to home	31.5	39
Areas without too many people or other dogs	31.5	39
Ability for dog to run free off the lead	27.4	34
Surfaced paths	23.4	29
Childrens' play area	18.5	23
Areas without livestock	17.7	22
Ability to see your dog at all times	8.1	10
No requirement to pick up after dogs	4	5
Fenced area	2.4	3
Any additional features:		31
Answered the question		124
Skipped the question		278

Stakeholder responses: Face-face meetings

Clinton Devon Estates, Dr Sam Bridgewater & RSPB Toby Taylor

- 4.24 A discussion with Sam Bridgewater, Nature Conservation Manager for the Clinton Devon Estates explored reactions to a range of potential mitigation measures. Dr Bridgewater has been appointed only recently, so was not able to give definitive answers to some of the points raised, but was able to give general guidance. The estate would favourably consider the reduction of unofficial parking and some rationalisation of car parking. They were less sure of car parking charges, at least in the short term, but recognised that this could be a source of income to assist with the high costs of managing the heaths. They would consider better controls on motor bikes and licencing horse riders off bridleways, and were generally in favour of measures to persuade dog walkers to pick up after their dogs. They recognised that there was a need for path repairs and improvements, good signage and educational material and the maintenance of fire breaks, much of which is already being done on parts of the Pebblebeds, but recognised that more could be achieved if finance was available. Generally the Estate would welcome a dialogue on further measures to strengthen their management of the Pebblebed heaths based on a realistic assessment of the additional costs.

- 4.25 The RSPB lease parts of the Pebblebed heaths from the Clinton Devon Estates and part from the District Council. The future management of Lymphstone Common which is privately owned is unclear and there has been no contact with the owner as part of this consultation. The RSPB views accord closely with those of the Clinton Devon Estate.

Edge Watersports, Eric Bridge

- 4.26 A meeting with Edge Watersports provided the opportunity to discuss kite surfing and windsurfing issues. The discussion included the differences/history relating to the different codes of conduct and maps available for kite surfers on the internet; how kite surfers tend to use the different parts of the estuary; the exclusion zone at the Duck Pond and trends in kite surfing use.

Exe Estuary Officer, Midge Kelly

- 4.27 Discussion with Midge Kelly provided an update relating to the Personal Watercraft code of conduct; plans to update the Exe leaflets and website; results of crab tile monitoring; slipways and byelaws.

Dawlish Warren

- 4.28 A meeting was held with Phil Chambers and Steve Ayres, wardens at Dawlish Warren National Nature Reserve, to discuss potential on and off-site mitigation for the site. Further communication by telephone and email clarified points. Issues discussed centred around how current levels of visitor pressure are managed on site, constraints to management, and ideas for future mitigation. Infrastructure was considered, and possibilities ranging from new path routes, changes to the car park, relocating the existing hide, and building a new visitor centre were discussed. Difficulties in enforcement were raised, particularly of the dog ban in the buffer zone, and boats landing outside of the permitted landing area on Warren Point. The difficulties of boat landing are seen as being greater than just whether they land within the defined zone. They include landing outside the defined season, particularly well into the autumn, bringing dogs, BBQs, litter and spreading from the point of access through the site. Control of this kind of activity is largely unenforceable when breaching byelaws because there is no way of tracing offenders or of maintaining a chain of evidence particularly when there is more than one point of entry.
- 4.29 The benefits of increased staffing availability were discussed together with increased community liaison and engagement work. Potential work with the golf course related to the hide was considered. All of the above was reviewed in the light of potentially very significant changes to the physical structure of the site should coastal realignment work proposed by the Environment Agency and currently under consultation take place.

5. Summary

- 5.1 The response to the online survey was very high with 402 entries received, a quarter of whom were part of a group, club or business. The Exe was the most popular location with 92% of respondents stating that they wished to comment on the estuary compared to 51% wishing to comment on Dawlish Warren and 40% on the Pebblebeds. The online survey set out to determine which measures would work to change behaviour. Some respondents found this difficult to understand, but the approach was designed to try and see whether the suggested measures would change behaviour in general rather than asking specific questions to people who undertake different activities. Furthermore we were aware in advance that certain measures may be unpopular – the questions were carefully phrased to probe effectiveness rather than the relative popularity of different approaches. We assumed that people would wish to comment on the behaviour of different user groups other than their own.
- 5.2 Given the popularity of dog walking across the three sites, it is surprising to see that dog walking was recorded by only 18.5% of respondents. This however, can be explained by the fact that this survey most likely attracted people who wanted to comment on specific activities such as watersports. In fact the majority of people would not see dog walking as an activity in the same way that windsurfing or sailing is. Furthermore the survey link was primarily distributed to people who are interested in specific activities rather than just walking or dog walking for which there are fewer organised groups/clubs/societies.
- 5.3 At all three locations the most popular activities were walking followed by wildlife watching. In terms of the measures put forward, a high level of support was seen for closure of certain areas at certain times of year. For example, temporal closure of areas to dog walkers was supported by 79% on Dawlish Warren and 75% on Pebblebeds and 61% think it would work on the Exe. On the Pebblebeds support was shown for closure of specific areas at certain times of the year to horse riders and mountain bikers.
- 5.4 On the Exe the top three options were working with local groups to raise the profile of key areas for birds and impacts of disturbance, the creation of new waymarked routes for walkers, dog walkers and joggers from the Estuary inland and the control of vehicles on the mudflats/shore. Low support was shown for a numbered vest system for kite/wind surfers.
- 5.5 Across all three sites, low support was shown for enforced systems where registering for a license/vest/permit was required e.g. horse riding and mountain bike licenses on the Pebblebeds. Improved information about sensitivity and issues was popular at all three sites with many comments stating that good links should be built with local groups. Specific to the Pebblebeds was support of enforcing picking up after dogs.
- 5.6 Respondents found it difficult to comment on features of an alternative site with comments stating that it is impossible to recreate the sites. Furthermore some people felt that creation of alternative sites was a negative way to treat people and would

discourage access to the countryside in general. In all cases the most important features of alternative sites were views and scenery and also parking facilities. Interestingly the cliff top park received the lowest level of support from the list of measures at Dawlish Warren.

- 5.7 General comments were provided by 99 respondents and they are listed in a supplementary document. The comments are very varied covering support for this kind of approach to negative opinions on the survey, its design and the way it has been carried out. Overall it is clear that there are many issues with different user groups but people want to be fully consulted and they generally have the best interests of wildlife in mind, but also feel that over regulation is a problem. Furthermore there are a large proportion of respondents who feel that wildlife should be the overriding issue in all decision making.
- 5.8 Within the limited resources a small number of face to face meetings were also conducted. These provided the opportunity to discuss particular issues in detail.
- 5.9 All the information gathered within the consultations was used to help inform the Footprint Ecology team in the development of the mitigation strategy, which is set out in a separate document which should be read in parallel with this report.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Clubs, groups, businesses and societies listed by respondents

Name and type of group/club/society, organisation or business	Total responses
RSPB member/volunteer	19
Exe Kite Boarders	6
Exe Sailing Club	6
Devon Birdwatching and Preservation Society	5
Devon Wildlife Trust	5
Topsham Sailing Club	4
Exmouth Tidy Group	3
Lympstone Sailing Club	3
Starcross Yacht Club	3
Devon County Council	2
Photography Section, Dawlish RBL.	2
Ramblers Association	2
Sailing club	2
South West Water	2
Topsham Small Craft Club. Topsham River Commissioners. Topsham Mooring Owners Association.	2
Torbay and South Devon RSPB Group	2
W Trout & Son Ltd	2
Warren Golf Club	2
A.S Watersports, canoe and kayak shop.	1
An informal walking group based in Exeter	1
British Sub-Aqua Club	1
CTC Exeter - Cycling Club	1
Dawlish Town Council	1
Dawlish Warren Recording Group	1
Dawlish Warren Tourism	1
DBwps RSPB Devon Wildlife Trust	1
DCC's Exe Estuary Trail, Project Manager	1
Devon & Severn IFCA	1
Dorset and East Devon World Heritage Site	1
Eagle One	1
East Devon AONB Partnership	1
East Devon Ramblers	1
Edge Watersports Ltd	1
Edge Watersports, Exe Kiteboarders	1
Exe Estuary Partnership	1
Exeter Canoe Club	1
Exeter City Council Harbour Authority	1
Exmouth Civic Society. Exmouth Community Assn.	1
Exmouth Community Association	1
Exmouth Deep Sea Fishing Club	1
Exmouth Quay Residents Association, and Exe Sailing Club	1
Exmouth RC	1
Exmouth RC & TVPB	1
Exmouth Sea Scouts	1
Exmouth Town Council	1
Exmouth Art Group	1

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Name and type of group/club/society, organisation or business	Total responses
Exmouth town councillor & East Devon councillor	1
Exmouth Visitor Centre Trust	1
Exton Riverfront Company	1
Farmer	1
Haven Banks Outdoor Education Centre	1
Honiton Sea Angling Club and the Angling Trust Wyvern Division	1
Kitesurfing	1
Kitesurfing club. Topsham sailing club	1
Land owner bordering the Pebblebed SSSI	1
LEMA, Exmouth Sailing Club	1
Living with a Changing Coast Project	1
Local Farmers in the Clyst Estuary	1
Lympstone Parish Councillor	1
Lympstone Village Hall Avocet Line Rail Users Group	1
Member of the Devon Reptile and Amphibian Group	1
Milber Estates	1
National Coastwatch Institute	1
National Coastwatch Institution member at Exmouth. Also Deputy Mayor of Exmouth.	1
National Trust	1
Powderham Estate	1
Quay Marine Training Ltd	1
Rainbows by the Beach Dawlish Warren	1
River Exe Cafe	1
Royal National Lifeboat Institution	1
RSPB volunteer, Devon Wildlife Volunteer, BTO recorder	1
RSPB, National Trust	1
Saddles and Paddles	1
Sandays Bed & Breakfast	1
South West Road Runners	1
Starcross Ferry	1
Starcross Fishing & Cruising Club	1
Starcross Parish Council	1
Sustrans	1
The Seahorse Trust	1
Topsham Birdwatching & Naturalist Society	1
Topsham Small Craft Club	1
Topsham Society	1
Training Organisation and for pleasure	1
Volunteering for RSPB, BTO and DBWPS.	1
Woodbury News	1
Topsham Small Craft Club. Topsham River Commissioners. Topsham Mooring Owners Association.	1
member of RSPB and of Topsham Birdwatching and Naturalists Society	1
Other	6
Total	147