

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS)

Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7 (1990), as amended by Resolution VIII.13 of the 8th Conference of the Contracting Parties (2002) and Resolutions IX.1 Annex B, IX.6, IX.21 and IX. 22 of the 9th Conference of the Contracting Parties (2005).

Notes for compilers:

1. The RIS should be completed in accordance with the attached *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines for completing the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands*. Compilers are strongly advised to read this guidance before filling in the RIS.
2. Further information and guidance in support of Ramsar site designations are provided in the *Strategic Framework for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance* (Ramsar Wise Use Handbook 7, 2nd edition, as amended by COP9 Resolution IX.1 Annex B). A 3rd edition of the Handbook, incorporating these amendments, is in preparation and will be available in 2006.
3. Once completed, the RIS (and accompanying map(s)) should be submitted to the Ramsar Secretariat. Compilers should provide an electronic (MS Word) copy of the RIS and, where possible, digital copies of all maps.

1. Name and address of the compiler of this form:

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

Designated: 05 March 1993

3. Country:

UK (England)

4. Name of the Ramsar site:

Gibraltar Point

5. Designation of new Ramsar site or update of existing site:

This RIS is for: Updated information on an existing Ramsar site

6. For RIS updates only, changes to the site since its designation or earlier update:

a) Site boundary and area:

** Important note: If the boundary and/or area of the designated site is being restricted/reduced, the Contracting Party should have followed the procedures established by the Conference of the Parties in the Annex to COP9 Resolution IX.6 and provided a report in line with paragraph 28 of that Annex, prior to the submission of an updated RIS.

b) Describe briefly any major changes to the ecological character of the Ramsar site, including in the application of the Criteria, since the previous RIS for the site:

7. Map of site included:

Refer to Annex III of the *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines*, for detailed guidance on provision of suitable maps, including digital maps.

a) A map of the site, with clearly delineated boundaries, is included as:

- i) **hard copy** (required for inclusion of site in the Ramsar List): *yes* ✓ -or- *no* ☐;
- ii) **an electronic format** (e.g. a JPEG or ArcView image) *Yes*
- iii) **a GIS file providing geo-referenced site boundary vectors and attribute tables** *yes* ✓ -or- *no* ☐;

b) **Describe briefly the type of boundary delineation applied:**

e.g. the boundary is the same as an existing protected area (nature reserve, national park etc.), or follows a catchment boundary, or follows a geopolitical boundary such as a local government jurisdiction, follows physical boundaries such as roads, follows the shoreline of a waterbody, etc.

The site boundary is the same as, or falls within, an existing protected area.

For precise boundary details, please refer to paper map provided at designation

8. Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitude):

53 06 00 N 00 20 16 E

9. General location:

Include in which part of the country and which large administrative region(s), and the location of the nearest large town.

Nearest town/city: Skegness

Gibraltar Point lies on the Lincolnshire coast at the northern entrance to the Wash Estuary

Administrative region: Lincolnshire

10. Elevation (average and/or max. & min.) (metres): **11. Area** (hectares): 414.09

Min.	-2
Max.	4
Mean	1

12. General overview of the site:

Provide a short paragraph giving a summary description of the principal ecological characteristics and importance of the wetland.

Gibraltar Point consists of an actively accreting sand dune system, saltmarsh and extensive intertidal flats. All stages of dune development are represented, with the older dunes extensively colonised by scrub. There are also small areas of freshwater marsh and open water. The site accommodates large numbers of overwintering birds.

13. Ramsar Criteria:

Circle or underline each Criterion applied to the designation of the Ramsar site. See Annex II of the *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines* for the Criteria and guidelines for their application (adopted by Resolution VII.11).

1, 2, 5, 6

14. Justification for the application of each Criterion listed in 13 above:

Provide justification for each Criterion in turn, clearly identifying to which Criterion the justification applies (see Annex II for guidance on acceptable forms of justification).

Ramsar criterion 1

The dune and saltmarsh habitats present on the site are representative of all the stages of colonisation and stabilisation. There is a fine example of freshwater marsh containing sedges *Carex* spp., rushes *Juncus* spp., and ferns, including adder's-tongue fern *Ophioglossum vulgatum*. Also most northerly example of nationally rare saltmarsh/dune communities containing sea heath *Frankenia laevis*, rock sea lavender *Limonium binervosum* and shrubby seablite *Suaeda vera*.

Ramsar criterion 2

Supports an assemblage of wetland invertebrate species of which eight species are listed as rare in the British Red Data Book and a further four species listed as vulnerable.

Ramsar criterion 5

Assemblages of international importance:

Species with peak counts in winter:

53072 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1998/99-2002/2003)

Ramsar criterion 6 – species/populations occurring at levels of international importance.

Qualifying Species/populations (as identified at designation):

Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:

Grey plover , <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> , E Atlantic/W Africa -wintering	2793 individuals, representing an average of 1.1% of the population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Sanderling , <i>Calidris alba</i> , Eastern Atlantic	971 individuals, representing an average of 4.7% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3 - spring peak)
Bar-tailed godwit , <i>Limosa lapponica lapponica</i> , W Palearctic	3468 individuals, representing an average of 2.8% of the population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)

Species with peak counts in winter:

Dark-bellied brent goose, <i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i> ,	682 individuals, representing an average of 0.6% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
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Species/populations identified subsequent to designation for possible future consideration under criterion 6.

Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:

Red knot , <i>Calidris canutus islandica</i> , W & Southern Africa (wintering)	33930 individuals, representing an average of 7.5% of the population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
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Contemporary data and information on waterbird trends at this site and their regional (sub-national) and national contexts can be found in the Wetland Bird Survey report, which is updated annually. See www.bto.org/survey/webs/webs-alerts-index.htm.

Details of bird species occurring at levels of National importance are given in Section 22

15. Biogeography (required when Criteria 1 and/or 3 and /or certain applications of Criterion 2 are applied to the designation):

Name the relevant biogeographic region that includes the Ramsar site, and identify the biogeographic regionalisation system that has been applied.

a) biogeographic region:

Atlantic

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):
Council Directive 92/43/EEC

16. Physical features of the site:

Describe, as appropriate, the geology, geomorphology; origins - natural or artificial; hydrology; soil type; water quality; water depth, water permanence; fluctuations in water level; tidal variations; downstream area; general climate, etc.

Soil & geology	basic, neutral, shingle, sand, mud, sedimentary
Geomorphology and landscape	lowland, coastal, intertidal sediments (including sandflat/mudflat), open coast (including bay), enclosed coast (including embayment)
Nutrient status	eutrophic
pH	circumneutral
Salinity	brackish / mixosaline, fresh, saline / euhaline
Soil	mainly mineral
Water permanence	usually permanent
Summary of main climatic features	Annual averages (Cleethorpes, 1971–2000) (www.metoffice.com/climate/uk/averages/19712000/sites/cleethorpes.html) Max. daily temperature: 13.1° C Min. daily temperature: 6.4° C Days of air frost: 29.0 Rainfall: 565.4 mm Hrs. of sunshine: 1521.9

General description of the Physical Features:

Gibraltar Point lies north of The Wash and consists of an actively accreting sand-dune system, saltmarsh and extensive intertidal flats. All stages of dune development are represented, with the older dunes extensively colonised by scrub. There are also small areas of freshwater marsh and open water.

To the south, the coastal habitats of Gibraltar Point are continuous with The Wash, with the ecology of the two sites intimately linked.

17. Physical features of the catchment area:

Describe the surface area, general geology and geomorphological features, general soil types, general land use, and climate (including climate type).

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18. Hydrological values:

Describe the functions and values of the wetland in groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilization, etc.

Shoreline stabilisation and dissipation of erosive forces

19. Wetland types:

Inland wetland, Marine/coastal wetland

Code	Name	% Area
G	Tidal flats	49.3

Other	Other	27.8
H	Salt marshes	19.4
Ts	Freshwater marshes / pools: seasonal / intermittent	2.2
Tp	Freshwater marshes / pools: permanent	1
2	Farm ponds, small tanks	0.2
Q	Saline / brackish lakes: permanent	0.1

20. General ecological features:

Provide further description, as appropriate, of the main habitats, vegetation types, plant and animal communities present in the Ramsar site, and the ecosystem services of the site and the benefits derived from them.

The sand dunes at Gibraltar Point are actively accreting and the dune and saltmarsh habitats show all the stages in the colonisation and stabilisation of sand and mud by vegetation. The dunes to seaward are colonised by *Cakile maritima*; *Salsola kali*; *Eryngium maritimum* and *Elytrigia juncea*. Further inland the dunes are more stable and are dominated by *Ammophila arenaria*; *Leymus arenarius*; *Carex arenaria* and *Festuca rubra*. Other plants of stabilised dunes include *Anacamptis pyramidalis*; *Centaurium erythraea*; *C pulchellum*; *Echium vulgare*, *Calystegia soldanella*, *Silene maritima* and *Cynoglossum officinale*. The oldest dunes are locally dominated with scrub, especially *Hippophae rhamnoides*. The muddy parts of the foreshore have become colonised with saltmarsh species, *Salicornia* spp. growing on the youngest saltmarsh which rapidly grades into extensive marshes dominated by *Puccinellia maritima*; *Atriplex portulacoides*; *Limonium vulgare* and *L binervosum*. The highest marsh is composed of *Elytrigia atherica* together with *Artemisia maritima* and *Glaux maritima*. The site is the northernmost station in Britain for *Frankenia laevis*. Freshwater marshes occur between two dune ridges and protected from the sea by a seabank constructed in the late nineteenth century. These marshes, which are maintained by grazing, support a rich sward of *Festuca rubra*, *Poa pratensis*, *P trivialis* and *Cynosurus cristatus*, various species of *Juncus* and *Carex*, *Primula veris*, *Ophioglossum vulgatum*, *Cardamine pratensis*, *Oenanthe lachenalii* and *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*. Open water pools and ditches are fringed with *Phragmites australis* and *Bolboschoenus maritimus*; notable species found here include *Althea officinalis* and *Ranunculus baudotii*.

Ecosystem services

21. Noteworthy flora:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g. which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

Nationally important species occurring on the site.

Higher Plants.

Althaea officinalis, *Festuca arenaria*, *Frankenia laevis*, *Parapholis incurva*, *Ranunculus baudotii*, *Salicornia pusilla*, *Sarcocornia perennis*, *Suaeda vera*

22. Noteworthy fauna:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g. which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc., including count data. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

Birds

Species currently occurring at levels of national importance:

Species regularly supported during the breeding season:

Little tern , *Sterna albifrons albifrons*, W Europe 32 apparently occupied nests, representing an average of 1.6% of the GB population (Seabird 2000 Census)

Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:

Eurasian oystercatcher , <i>Haematopus ostralegus ostralegus</i> , Europe & NW Africa -wintering	3406 individuals, representing an average of 1% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Dunlin , <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i> , W Siberia/W Europe	7503 individuals, representing an average of 1.3% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Common greenshank , <i>Tringa nebularia</i> , Europe/W Africa	12 individuals, representing an average of 2% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)

Species with peak counts in winter:

Red-throated diver , <i>Gavia stellata</i> , NW Europe	52 individuals, representing an average of 1% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
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Species Information

Nationally important species occurring on the site.

Amphibia.
Bufo calamita.

Invertebrates.

Salticella fasciata, *Haliphus mucronatus*, *Athetis pallustris*, *Eupithecia extensaria*, *Dexiopsis lacustris*, *Haematapota bigoti*, *Phaonia fusca*, *Pherbellia dorsata*, *Rymosia connexa*, *Spilogona biseriata*

23. Social and cultural values:

Describe if the site has any general social and/or cultural values e.g. fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological sites, social relations with the wetland, etc. Distinguish between historical/archaeological/religious significance and current socio-economic values.

Aesthetic
Environmental education/ interpretation
Livestock grazing
Non-consumptive recreation
Scientific research
Tourism

b) Is the site considered of international importance for holding, in addition to relevant ecological values, examples of significant cultural values, whether material or non-material, linked to its origin, conservation and/or ecological functioning? No

If Yes, describe this importance under one or more of the following categories:

- i) sites which provide a model of wetland wise use, demonstrating the application of traditional knowledge and methods of management and use that maintain the ecological character of the wetland:
- ii) sites which have exceptional cultural traditions or records of former civilizations that have influenced the ecological character of the wetland:
- iii) sites where the ecological character of the wetland depends on the interaction with local communities or indigenous peoples:
- iv) sites where relevant non-material values such as sacred sites are present and their existence is strongly linked with the maintenance of the ecological character of the wetland:

24. Land tenure/ownership:

Ownership category	On-site	Off-site
Non-governmental organisation (NGO)	+	+
Local authority, municipality etc.	+	+
National/Crown Estate	+	
Private		+

25. Current land (including water) use:

Activity	On-site	Off-site
Nature conservation	+	
Tourism		+
Recreation	+	+
Current scientific research	+	
Cutting of vegetation (small-scale/subsistence)	+	
Fishing: commercial		+
Fishing: recreational/sport		+
Bait collection		+
Arable agriculture (unspecified)		+
Permanent arable agriculture		+
Rough or shifting grazing	+	
Hunting: recreational/sport		+
Harbour/port	+	
Flood control	+	+
Military activities		+

26. Factors (past, present or potential) adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land (including water) use and development projects:

Explanation of reporting category:

1. Those factors that are still operating, but it is unclear if they are under control, as there is a lag in showing the management or regulatory regime to be successful.
2. Those factors that are not currently being managed, or where the regulatory regime appears to have been ineffective so far.

NA = Not Applicable because no factors have been reported.

Adverse Factor Category	Reporting Category	Description of the problem (Newly reported Factors only)	On-Site	Off-Site	Major Impact?
General disturbance from human activities	1		+		+

For category 2 factors only.

What measures have been taken / are planned / regulatory processes invoked, to mitigate the effect of these factors?

Is the site subject to adverse ecological change? NO

27. Conservation measures taken:

List national category and legal status of protected areas, including boundary relationships with the Ramsar site; management practices; whether an officially approved management plan exists and whether it is being implemented.

Conservation measure	On-site	Off-site
Site/ Area of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI/ASSI)	+	+
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	+	
Special Protection Area (SPA)	+	
Land owned by a non-governmental organisation for nature conservation	+	+
Management agreement	+	
Site management statement/plan implemented	+	
Other	+	+
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	+	

b) Describe any other current management practices:

The management of Ramsar sites in the UK is determined by either a formal management plan or through other management planning processes, and is overseen by the relevant statutory conservation agency. Details of the precise management practises are given in these documents.

28. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

e.g. management plan in preparation; official proposal as a legally protected area, etc.

No information available

29. Current scientific research and facilities:

e.g. details of current research projects, including biodiversity monitoring; existence of a field research station, etc.

Fauna.

Numbers of migratory and wintering wildfowl and waders are monitored annually as part of the national Wetland Birds Survey (WeBS) organised by the British Trust for Ornithology, Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

British Trust for Ornithology: Bird Ringing Observatory; Common Bird Census; Constant Effort Ringing Site & Hen Harrier Roost Record Scheme

Annual Bird Migration Record

ITE: Butterfly Monitoring Scheme

Shorelark colour-ringing scheme.

Environment.

Wash Study Centre established 1958 promotes education and research and survey.

Daily weather recording.

30. Current communications, education and public awareness (CEPA) activities related to or benefiting the site:

e.g. visitor centre, observation hides and nature trails, information booklets, facilities for school visits, etc.

Gibraltar Point is managed as a nature reserve and supports a field station for education and research. The Wash Study Centre is equipped with lecture room laboratories, library and living accommodation. It is staffed by one full-time officer and two seasonal assistants that give courses for schools, undergraduate and adult education. Accommodation and facilities are available for visiting

students and research workers. The internet address is: www.Lincstrust.org.uk; e-mail address is: educationatgib@aol.com

31. Current recreation and tourism:

State if the wetland is used for recreation/tourism; indicate type(s) and their frequency/intensity.

Activities, Facilities provided and Seasonality.

An Interpretative Centre and shop open every day in summer and at weekends in winter. Guided tours provided for visitors in summer. Some access suitable for disabled visitors and children in pushchairs. Events arranged for public; bird watching hides and publicity material available.

32. Jurisdiction:

Include territorial, e.g. state/region, and functional/sectoral, e.g. Dept. of Agriculture/Dept. of Environment, etc.

Head, Natura 2000 and Ramsar Team, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, European Wildlife Division, Zone 1/07, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6EB

33. Management authority:

Provide the name and address of the local office(s) of the agency(ies) or organisation(s) directly responsible for managing the wetland. Wherever possible provide also the title and/or name of the person or persons in this office with responsibility for the wetland.

Site Designations Manager, English Nature, Sites and Surveillance Team, Northminster House, Northminster Road, Peterborough, PE1 1UA, UK

34. Bibliographical references:

Scientific/technical references only. If biogeographic regionalisation scheme applied (see 15 above), list full reference citation for the scheme.

Site-relevant references

- Barne, JH, Robson, CF, Kaznowska, SS, Doody, JP & Davidson, NC (eds.) (1995) *Coasts and seas of the United Kingdom. Region 6 Eastern England: Flamborough Head to Great Yarmouth*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough. (Coastal Directories Series.)
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- Ratcliffe, DA (ed.) (1977) *A Nature Conservation Review. The selection of biological sites of national importance to nature conservation in Britain*. Cambridge University Press (for the Natural Environment Research Council and the Nature Conservancy Council), Cambridge (2 vols.)
- Shirt, DB (ed.) (1987) *British Red Data Books: 2. Insects*. Nature Conservancy Council, Peterborough
- Stroud, DA, Chambers, D, Cook, S, Buxton, N, Fraser, B, Clement, P, Lewis, P, McLean, I, Baker, H & Whitehead, S (eds.) (2001) *The UK SPA network: its scope and content*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough (3 vols.)

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