

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: 24 July 1981

3. Country:

UK (England)

4. Name of the Ramsar site:

Rostherne Mere

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 21 14 N 02 23 05 W

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: Warrington

Situated 16 km south-west of the centre of Manchester, close to the southern outskirts of Greater Manchester, 5 km north of Knutsford

Administrative region: Cheshire

10. Elevation (average and/or max. & min.) (metres): **11. Area** (hectares): 79.76

Min.	30
Max.	30
Mean	30

12. General overview of the site:

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

Rostherne Mere is the deepest, one of the largest and the most northerly of the meres of the Cheshire Plain. It lies in a hollow surrounded by thick deposits of glacial drift overlying triassic marls and salt-beds.

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).

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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

Rostherne Mere is one of the deepest and largest of the meres of the Shropshire-Cheshire Plain. Its shoreline is fringed with common reed *Phragmites australis*.

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	No information available
Geomorphology and landscape	lowland, floodplain
Nutrient status	eutrophic
pH	circumneutral
Salinity	no information
Soil	mainly mineral
Water permanence	usually permanent
Summary of main climatic features	Annual averages (Manchester Airport, 1971–2000) (www.metoffice.com/climate/uk/averages/19712000/sites/manchester_airport.html) Max. daily temp.: 13.2° C Min. daily temp.: 6.4° C Days of air frost: 38.3 Rainfall: 806.6 mm Hrs. of sunshine: 1394.5

General description of the Physical Features:

No information available

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).

Rostherne Mere lies at the end of a single-stream system, receiving water from the much shallower Little Mere (an artificial amenity lake formed in the 19th century) and Mere Mere. The three meres drain a small catchment of agricultural, urban and parkland.

18. Hydrological values:

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

Flood water storage / desynchronisation of flood peaks

19. Wetland types:

Inland wetland

Code	Name	% Area
O	Freshwater lakes: permanent	61.2
Other	Other	26
U	Peatlands (including peat bogs swamps, fens)	12.8

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 mere has little submerged vegetation but is fringed by a narrow band of *Phragmites* reed swamp for over half its circumference. Around the mere the catchment slopes are primarily large blocks of woodland and moderately intensively farmed grassland. Remains of a former peat bog in the north and willow beds in the south are other notable habitats.

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.*

None reported

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 with peak counts in winter:**

Great cormorant , <i>Phalacrocorax carbo carbo</i> , NW Europe	273 individuals, representing an average of 1.1% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Great bittern , <i>Botaurus stellaris stellaris</i> , W Europe, NW Africa	1 individuals, representing an average of 1% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Water rail , <i>Rallus aquaticus</i> , Europe	6 individuals, representing an average of 1.3% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)

Species Information

None reported

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

Scientific research

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
National/Crown Estate	+	
Private	+	+

25. Current land (including water) use:

Activity	On-site	Off-site
Nature conservation	+	
Current scientific research	+	
Permanent pastoral agriculture		+
Transport route		+
Non-urbanised settlements		+

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?
Eutrophication	1		+	+	+
Introduction/invasion of non-native animal species	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)	+	+
Management agreement	+	+
Site management statement/plan implemented	+	
Other	+	

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.

Environment.

Water Chemistry.

Limnology.

Fauna.

Phytoplankton.

Zooplankton.

Trophic status / Nutrient budgets.

Fish Benthic fauna.

Ornithology.

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.

The National Nature Reserve has no general public access but is widely used by universities and others for site based research projects and dissertations.

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.

No general public access but observation hide overlooks mere and provides birdwatching facilities.

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

- Banks, JW (1970) Observations on the fish population of Rostherne Mere, Cheshire *Field Studies* 3(2), 357-379
- Belcher, JA & Storey, JE (1968) The phytoplankton of Rostherne and Mere meres. *Cheshire Naturalist*, 905, 57-61.
- Carvalho, LC (1993) *Experimental limnology on four Cheshire meres*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Liverpool
- Cranswick, PA, Waters, RJ, Musgrove, AJ & Pollitt, MS (1997) *The Wetland Bird Survey 1995–96: wildfowl and wader counts*. British Trust for Ornithology, Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds & Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Slimbridge
- Krivtsov, V, Bellinger, E & Sigee, D (2002) Water and nutrient budgeting of Rostherne Mere, Cheshire, UK. *Nordic Hydrology*, 33, 391-414
- 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.)
- Reynolds, CS (1979) The limnology of the eutrophic meres of the Shropshire–Cheshire Plain. *Field Studies*, 5(1), 93-173
- Sutherland, JP (1997) The hoverflies (Diptera, Syrphidae) of Rostherne Mere, Cheshire. *Dipterists Digest*, 4(1), 35-40
- Walsh, B (1965) *An investigation of the bottom fauna of Rostherne Mere, Cheshire*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Liverpool
- Waltham, AC, Simms, MJ, Farrant, AR & Goldie, HS (1997) *Karst and caves of Great Britain*. Chapman & Hall, London, for Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough (Geological Conservation Review Series, No. 12)
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