

JOINT GROUP FOR WILDFOWLING AND CONSERVATION ON TIDAL LAND



GUIDANCE FOR BASC AFFILIATED CLUBS ON PRODUCING MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR SPORTING RIGHTS LEASES OVER CROWN ESTATE FORESHORE 2009

Prepared by

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of these guidelines is to help wildfowling clubs produce a management plan for the purpose of obtaining or renewing a lease of sporting rights on foreshore owned by The Crown Estate.

The Joint Group for Wildfowling and Conservation on Tidal Land (JTG) advises The Crown Estate on issues relating to wildfowling on Crown Estate foreshore, and oversees the management of this activity.

The JTG has agreed a standard procedure for applying for a lease of sporting rights on Crown Estate tidal land and maintenance of existing leases in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. In Scotland, wildfowling is a public right.

These guidelines have been produced by The British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC) with guidance from the JTG specifically to assist BASC affiliated clubs with their management plans, but may also be helpful to other bodies who are considering sporting rights leases.

The management plan forms the basis for the grant of any lease by The Crown Estate and in turn enables the statutory conservation agencies* to advise The Crown Estate on any implications the lease and the clubs arrangements may have for the wildlife interest of the land. The plan is reviewed when the lease, or any consent, is due for renewal, or if requested by the JTG.

Where the foreshore is part of an ASSI or SSSI the plan also forms the basis of consents granted by Natural England (NE (previously English Nature)), Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) or Environment and Heritage Service, Northern Ireland (EHS) to carry out wildfowling.

The management plan is an opportunity for clubs to demonstrate how club management through a sporting rights lease contributes to the sustainable maintenance and enhancement of sites.

An assumption has been made that the club has access to email and will be making amendments electronically.

The guidelines also assume that wildfowling clubs are affiliated to BASC, and that BASC will assist with drafting or revising the management plan. All costs are covered by the club's membership of BASC. For clubs and other organisations that are not affiliated to BASC, The Crown Estate will usually provide administrative support for drafting and revising management plans for Crown Estate leases. The Crown Estate may charge for the additional administration involved with drafting or revising the plan.

Throughout these Guidelines, the term 'Estuary' is used as shorthand for estuaries, firths, sea loughs and other coastal lands, foreshore and adjacent waters.

* Statutory conservation agencies: Natural England (NE), Countryside Council for Wales (CCW), Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)

** See page 9 for an explanation of abbreviations.

SUMMARY OF PROCEDURES

For full details of the renewal procedure, clubs should refer to the JTG Wildfowling Lease Procedures, which can be found at www.thecrownestate.co.uk (search under Marine Estates, then wildfowling). Copies can also be requested from BASC.

New Leases

Once a club has confirmed with BASC and The Crown Estate that they are preparing a management proposal and wish to be considered as lessees, the JTG will advise clubs on their lease application.

Please remember that management proposals will be circulated to individuals who may have no prior knowledge of wildfowling. **Clubs should therefore ensure that information given is clear and any technical detail is clarified.**

Lease Renewals

Clubs should note the following extracted summary from the JTG procedure:

- Management plans written after 1995 should be reviewed and amended to reflect any changes to management. A consultation is not usually required if one has already taken place. The plan will be circulated to members of the JTG and relevant local statutory agency office for comment.
- Management plans written for leases agreed before 1995 will be subject to a period of consultation in accordance with the JTG procedure for new leases.
- Any plans that have not previously been gone through the consultation process will need to do so, in accordance with the JTG procedure for new leases.
- If the changes made to a management plan are significant a consultation may be required, this will be at the discretion of the JTG.
- The JTG may also exceptionally require consultations for other reasons. Clubs will be informed of this 18 months in advance of the renewal date.

Key points to consider when reviewing a management plan:

These guidance notes cover all aspects of writing a management plan. If a review of an existing plan is taking place, clubs should note that statutory conservation agencies are keen for clubs to include information on the key points listed below:

- Ideally a minimum of 5 years of wildfowling return data should be included in the appendices.
- Detail on the pattern of wildfowling.
- Information about the type of wildfowling undertaken, eg shoulder gunning, puntgunning, etc.
- Relationship of the lease area to shooting on adjacent areas.
- Pattern of bird movements on the Estuary, and specifically on the lease area.
- Data on bird usage within the lease area, and how that relates to no-shooting areas.
- Give reasons for each no-shooting area – ie. feeding area, roosting area or safety.
- If the site is a SSSI or ASSI*, relationship of activities to the list of 'notifiable operations' which may require SSSI or ASSI consent, as detailed in the SSSI or ASSI notification package.
- Management of the lease area in relation to the rest of the Estuary.
- Physical management of areas adjacent to the lease area if relevant eg. flight ponds, bird release programmes.
- Clubs should emphasize any physical conservation management of the lease area, and on other sites managed by the club – particularly where this work contributes to the integrity of the site.

* See page 9 for an explanation of abbreviations.

USING THE TEMPLATE (NEW LEASES AND RENEWALS)

The attached management plan layout template is based on BASC affiliated club management plans completed from 1999 onwards.

BASC recommends that new management plans should follow the order of contents given in the template. Clubs revising an existing plan will need to ensure that all sections included in the template are covered in the revised management plan (see below for more details), although the order of contents may differ from the template.

The notes under each heading summarise the purpose of each section, and indicate areas that the club should consider. This is sometimes followed by example text.

THE MANAGEMENT PLAN TEMPLATE

- Do not worry about the page numbering when sending or emailing the document back to BASC. This will be corrected for the final version of the plan.
- **All management plans**, whether for a new lease area or for a lease renewal, should be written in the present tense (eg “club are” rather than “club will”). (For new leases where a consultation is to take place, a covering letter will be sent with the final version explaining that this is a proposal document until any consultations have been completed.)
- The template includes standard text for the club to review and amend as appropriate.
- Notes and guidance are in grey highlighted text. Additionally, asterisks (****) indicate where the club should insert their own club or location reference into the text. Where “XXXX” or “XX” appears, a year or number as appropriate should be inserted.

THE APPENDICES

- **All management plans** should include the most recent appendices, supplied by BASC as a separate document. A guide to the Appendices is given on page 27.

MANAGEMENT PLAN LAYOUT TEMPLATE

**** insert club name in full****

**Shooting and Conservation Management
Plan for Crown Estate
Foreshore on ****insert site name******

***** Plan Start and End Date (eg September 2009 – September 2016) ******

**This document has been prepared in conjunction with
The British Association for Shooting and Conservation**

CONTACTS:

Wildfowling Club:

Contact: **** insert a club contact name****, c/o BASC.

The British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC):

Contact: Conservation & Land Management Team, Marford Mill, Rossett,
Wrexham, LL12 OHL

Telephone: (01244) 573024

Version No: XX

DATE: XXXX

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- Appendix 11 ****insert club name**** Constitution and Rules
- Appendix 12 List of Consultees
- Appendix 13 *Where relevant* ****BASC: Puntgunning: An Introduction to the sport and code of practice****

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

ASSI	Area of Special Scientific Interest - NI equivalent of SSSI
BASC	British Association for Shooting and Conservation
BTO	British Trust for Ornithology
CCW	Countryside Council for Wales
EO	Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002
NE	Natural England
NIEA	Northern Ireland Environment Agency
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
JTG	Joint Group for Wildfowling and Conservation on Tidal Land
LGA	Local General Agreement
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
WAGBI	Wildfowling Association of Great Britain and Ireland (forerunner of BASC)
WCA	The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) – applies to England and Wales only
WO	The Wildlife Order (Northern Ireland) 1985 (as amended),
WeBS	The Wetland Bird Survey
WWT	The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust

i) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This plan has been produced by ****insert club name**** (the Club) to outline management of wildfowling in the ****insert estuary****, as outlined in the maps in Appendix 1.

The Crown Estate originally issued this sporting rights lease to the Club in XXXX. The lease was granted on the basis of this management plan. A consultation took place in XXXX. Comments received during the consultation were considered by the club and The Crown Estate, and where appropriate amendments were made to the plan before the lease was granted.

In accordance with Joint Group for Wildfowling and Conservation on Tidal Land (JTG) procedures the Club has reviewed the management plan for the purposes of renewing its sporting rights lease. The JTG Terms of Reference can be found on the internet at www.thecrownestate.co.uk, (search under Marine Estates, then Wildfowling). This revised plan is being circulated to members of the JTG and the local ****insert one of NE / CCW / NIEA**** office for comment.

ii) SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT

- This plan sets out the objectives and agreed management for this club for a lease of X years.
- Access to legitimate wildfowling exists via public rights of way, and authorised routes as indicated in section 3.5 of the plan and on the maps in Appendix 1.
- Wildfowling ****can/does not**** take place on Sundays in this county.
- The club will encourage its members not to carry out wildfowling on count days when advised of dates and times by the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust WeBS Count Office.
- Wildfowling return forms and management information will be collated by the club and submitted on an annual basis to BASC for analysis and circulation to The Crown Estate and JTG. Returns for XX seasons are included in Appendix 10. ***If this is a new lease area please see the note below.***
- The club will manage its landholdings with due regard to the maintenance of its other features of biodiversity importance, in accordance with the BASC Green Shoots programme (see Section 3.3, 4.2 and 5.3)
- Positive relationships with ****NE/CCW/NIEA/local wildlife trust, council etc**** will continue to be maintained.

Note on wildfowling return data for lease areas: No wildfowling has been authorised over Crown Estate foreshore in England, Wales and Northern Ireland since the end of the local general agreement in 2000, except through sporting rights

leases. If the area has not previously been leased the JTG will assume that there is no history of wildfowling activity on the site since 2000. If shooting is proposed the club are advised to discuss the conservation designation, and any issues, directly with local government conservation office (NE, CCW or NIEA) at the early stages of the process.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Wildfowling is the pursuit of quarry species (wild duck, geese and waders) for sport with the use of a smooth bore shotgun either on foot or under certain conditions by punt over foreshore. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland the foreshore is that part of the seashore which is more often than not covered by the flux and reflux of the four ordinary tides occurring midway between spring and neaps.

The foreshore of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is presumed, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, to be vested in Her Majesty by right of her Crown so as to form part of The Crown Estate. The Crown Estate owns approximately half of the foreshore in the UK. In addition local authorities or other organisations now control other parts through leases from The Crown Estate which may or may not include the sporting rights.

Wildfowling is a traditional activity in coastal areas. The Birds Directive (1979) fully recognises the legitimacy of hunting of wild birds as a form of sustainable use. Wildfowling is an activity that provides significant social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits in the UK. Wildfowling continues as a sport valued by ****insert club name**** (The Club) and individuals. Since the Firearms Act 1968 (1997) and Firearms (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 wildfowling has been carried out over the areas covered by this lease on the basis of an agreement between BASC and The Crown Estate, whereby members of BASC would not be prosecuted for armed trespass when carrying shotguns on foreshore over which the sporting rights remain vested in The Crown Estate. This was known as the General Agreement. Whilst this agreement effectively allowed wildfowling to take place on Crown Estate foreshore, it did not permit implementation of management initiatives. The General Agreement came to an end in February 1999.

Use the following paragraph ONLY if the club has had a Local General Agreement:

Between 1999 and 2001, wildfowling was permitted on unleased areas of Crown Estate foreshore through permits from The Crown Estate. This was known as the Local General Agreement (LGA). A key feature was the requirement to submit wildfowling (bag) return records showing the species that had been taken. Without a lease agreement,

however, clubs could not carry out conservation management on the sites.

Example text continues for all plans:

Since 1994, all known available areas of Crown Estate foreshore notified as holding wildfowling interests have been subject to a procedure of the JTG, working in partnership with BASC, The Crown Estate, Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), Natural England (NE (previously English Nature)) and Countryside Council for Wales (CCW), to a set timetable to bring these areas under lease agreements.

This management plan outlines how the club organizes and administers its Crown Estate sporting and conservation lease on ******insert site name****** to enable a coordinated approach to wildfowling and conservation on the site. The extent of the lease is indicated on the maps in Appendix 1.

The Club was formed in **XXXX** and affiliated to BASC (if year is pre-1981 insert “(then WAGBI)” in **XXXX**. The club’s first Crown Estate lease was granted in **XXXX** and is now being renewed on the basis of this management plan.

The Club have a particularly close working relationship with ******NE/CCW/NIEA/local wildlife trust, council etc******.

The Club plans include conservation actions to enhance biodiversity features on the site, including ******assisting conservation wardens, mink control, predator control to protect ground nesting birds/wader breeding areas, water-vole project, barn owl nest boxes, etc****** For further detail see Section 5.3.

Maps showing the foreshore subject to this lease can be found in Appendix 1. This lease will not include any saltings or salt marsh unless covered by tides as in the definition of foreshore above.

1.2 Aims

The provision of traditional wildfowling for ******insert club name****** members consistent with the needs of nature conservation.

1.3 Objectives

- i) To maintain controlled wildfowling management on the ******insert estuary****** so as to promote the sustainable use of the wildfowl resource.
- ii) To carry out conservation measures and support monitoring for the benefit of the wildfowl population.
- iii) To provide wardening so as to discourage illegal and bad practice.

- iv) To develop wildfowling management consistent with the overall needs of the coastline of the ****insert estuary ****.

2.0 THE ****insert estuary**** AND WILDFOWLING

This section is intended to describe the whole estuary in order to set the lease area in its wider context.

2.1 Conservation Interest on the ****insert estuary ****

The club should demonstrate an awareness of wildlife interest and conservation issues that affect the estuary as a whole.

Include details of any statutory designation and importance in respect of habitat or wildlife on the estuary. It is recommended that clubs refer to specific statements in the Site Designation documentation and highlight relevant points. Clubs should also refer to Views About Management Statements for English and Northern Ireland sites, or Site Management Statements for sites in Wales where these documents are available. Clubs are encouraged to use their local library and the Internet as a source of reference for providing supporting estuary information. Where appropriate ASSI, SSSI, SPA or SAC citations will be included in Appendix 8 by BASC.

Conservation activities that take place on the estuary in the form of wildlife surveys, such as the bird counts carried out by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO WeBS counts) and Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT) can also provide important information. Some estuaries are recorded annually and BASC may have access to these reports. Otherwise details are available direct from BTO and WWT.

If the club is aware of notable trends in waterfowl numbers, or if you have been notified of bird alerts on the estuary by the statutory conservation agencies (NE, CCW or NIEA), this information should be indicated.

2.2 History and Pattern of Wildfowling on the ***insert estuary**

Provide general information about wildfowling activity on the whole estuary. Include details of main quarry species, where possible the number of clubs on the Estuary and other active organisations. Details of Wildfowling Joint Councils may also be included where relevant.

Types of shooting activity on the estuary, eg. shoulder or punt gunning, should also be listed.

Clubs should demonstrate an awareness of local strategies and other activities on the estuary, to show an understanding of the broader objectives of conservation. For example, clubs may have been involved in Estuary Strategy Groups or Management Groups; Environment Agency consultations for Catchment Management Plans; Local Environment Action Plans and Shoreline Management Plans.

Example text on puntgunning if relevant:

There is a long history of puntgunning on the ****insert estuary****. Currently puntgunning is pursued by **XX** puntgunners. Historical research has shown that the development of puntgunning in the sport that is known today probably took place in the first decade of the 19th century. Before this various methods of attaching guns to boats for the purpose of shooting wildfowl had been used for some time. It therefore appears that true puntgunning has been practiced for about two centuries, with much of the equipment still being used remaining little changed in design. Although wildfowling has altered considerably over this period, puntgunning is still an important and integral part of the sport. The BASC Puntgunner's Code of Practice is included in Appendix 13.

3.0 SITE INFORMATION

This section relates specifically to the lease area.

3.1 Site Location

In this section of the management plan, you will need to clearly identify the lease area by providing Ordnance Survey grid references, local place names, and a brief description of the relationship of site boundaries to landscape features. You should also reference the maps in Appendix 1

3.2 Description of the Lease Area

A description of the lease area should be given here, including an explanation of the type of habitat (eg saltmarsh, mud flats). To provide a full description it may be appropriate for the club to include photographs in Appendix 1 from set points along the lease area. This can be useful to show access points, slipways and/or prime wildfowling spots, as well as familiarising consultees with the location and typical habitats.

BASC can provide area calculations for the lease area.

3.3 Wildlife Interest on the Lease Area

In addition to the information provided in Section 2.1 about wildlife on the estuary, the club should demonstrate an awareness of wildlife interest specific to the lease area and

that this has been properly accounted for in the management strategy. Active collection of data such as low-tide counts that take place on the lease area (in addition to any official WeBS counts that take place on the estuary) and identification of the locations and composition of high-tide roosts would be helpful. Bird data should be represented as tables for counts, and as maps for the location and size of particular roosts.

In addition, we encourage clubs to include their own observations and local knowledge of recognised flight patterns, roosting, feeding.

3.4 Factors Limiting Wildfowling Activity

3.4.1 Legal

Please use the legal section relevant to your country only.

The standard text for ENGLAND is:

All wildfowling is carried out according to current legislation:

- i) The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (part 1) (as amended) (WCA), Protection of Birds Act 1954, covering species which may be shot, close and open seasons for wildfowling, and permitted methods of shooting.
- ii) The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (part 2) (as amended by the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000). Consent may be required for certain activities by owners or occupiers under Section 28E of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 substituted by Schedule 9 to the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. (see Site Designation in Appendix 8).
- iii) The EU Habitats Directive 1992, EC Bird Directive 1979 (amended 1991, 1994), the Habitats Regulations 1994, and Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000.
- iv) The Firearms Acts 1968 – amended 1997, which controls the use of all firearms.
- v) The Environmental Protection (Restrictions on use of lead shot) (England) Regulations 1999 (see Appendix 7).
- vi) The restriction on shooting game on Sundays under the Game Act 1831 does not apply to snipe and woodcock as they are not defined as game in the act.
- vii) Statutory cold weather bans under Section 2(6) and (7) of the WCA (see Appendix 5)

Also include as (viii) any local by-laws, if necessary expand with more detail, for example: dogs must be kept on leads when accessing the foreshore.

The standard text for WALES is:

All wildfowling is carried out according to current legislation:

- i) The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (part 1) (as amended) (WCA), Protection of Birds Act 1954, covering species which may be shot, close and open seasons for wildfowling, and permitted methods of shooting.
- ii) The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (part 2) (as amended by the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000). Consent may be required for certain activities by owners or occupiers under Section 28 (4) (b) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 substituted by Schedule 9 to the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (see site designation in Appendix 8).
- iii) The EU Habitats Directive 1992, EC Bird Directive 1979 (amended 1991, 1994), the Habitats Regulations 1994, and Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000.
- iv) The Firearms Acts 1968 – amended 1997, which controls the use of all firearms.
- v) The Environmental Protection (Restrictions on use of lead shot) (Wales) Regulations 2002 (see Appendix 7).
- vi) The restriction on shooting game on Sundays under the Game Act 1831 does not apply to snipe and woodcock as they are not defined as game in the act.
- vii) Statutory cold weather bans under Section 2(6) and (7) of the WCA (see Appendix 5)

Also include as (viii) any local by-laws, if necessary expand with more detail, for example: dogs must be kept on leads when accessing the foreshore.

The standard text for NORTHERN IRELAND is:

All wildfowling is carried out according to current legislation:

- i) The Wildlife Order (Northern Ireland) 1985 (as amended), (see Appendix 2), covering species which may be shot, close and open seasons for wildfowling, and permitted methods of shooting.
- ii) The Environment (NI) Order 2002, the Nature Conservation Regulations (NI) Order 1995, and the Conservation Regulations (NI) 1995 require owners or occupiers to consult the relevant statutory agency regarding any notifiable operations requiring consent (see site designation in Appendix 8)
- iii) The EU Habitats Directive 1992, EC Bird Directive 1979 (amended 1991, 1994) The Conservation (Nature Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995
- iv) The Firearms (Northern Ireland) Order 2004
- v) The taking of snipe and woodcock requires the purchase of a game licence under the Game Licences Act 1861.

- vi) Temporary suspension of open season during periods of severe weather under the Wildlife Order (Northern Ireland) 1985. Under the Wildlife (NI) Order 1985 Article 4 (10), EHS may declare a temporary suspension of shooting for periods not exceeding 14 days when weather has been classified as 'severe' for 7 consecutive days (see Appendix 5).
- vii) The Environmental Protection (Restriction on use of Lead Shot) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 (see Appendix 7)

Also include as (viii) any local by-laws, if necessary expand with more detail, for example: dogs must be kept on leads when accessing the foreshore.

3.4.2 Physical

Physical constraints which affect the level of shooting that clubs will be able to carry out on a regular basis should be noted here (eg tidal frequency and level, sediment types).

3.4.3 Public Access

Public access is a major issue. It is important to identify when most wildfowling takes place (eg. early morning, dusk or tide flights) in this section

Public access takes place throughout the year but is most evident during the summer months, being based on leisure and recreational activities. The ****insert estuary**** is a popular venue for water borne activities, including sailing and fishing. These activities are seasonal and are greatly reduced during the winter months. There has not been any known conflict between wildfowling activities and other public uses given that wildfowling, by its very nature, demands an area of minimal public disturbance.

3.4.4 Public Safety or Nuisance

Identify any areas which will be designated no shooting areas for safety reasons, or due to proximity to dwellings, public roads or boat moorings – or give reasons why the club has not provided such no-shooting areas.

3.5 Wildfowling Access

Access points, whether public or private, need to be clearly defined on the maps in Appendix 1 and here in the text.

To facilitate wardening, and for their own convenience, it is recommended that members use the access points marked on the maps in Appendix 1, which are designated public rights of way.

There are **XX** access points to the lease site. These are not the only public access points available, but they are the most appropriate, and are therefore recommended and used by the club at present.

It is helpful to list all the access points and give brief descriptions for each of them.

3.6 Other Uses of the Foreshore

While public access has already been mentioned, it is essential that clubs should demonstrate their awareness of any other activities on the lease area or in the vicinity.

Those clubs that have been involved in Estuary Strategies will be aware of the increasing leisure activity on coastal areas. Information should be included on yachting or boating activities, fishing, bait digging, bird watching (organised or not) that may occur within the lease area.

The Crown Estate can be consulted regarding other uses of the foreshore leased or consented by it. Main commercial shipping channels which cross the lease area should also be highlighted. Where appropriate details given of action that will be, or is currently being, undertaken by wildfowling clubs to avoid conflict with these activities.

3.7 Adjacent Land Use

Details should be included on local villages, houses and adjacent land users (including shooting activity from other local wildfowling clubs and those who may be shooting inland). The purpose is to demonstrate good working relationships with other local land users and provide a more cohesive management plan for conservation in the area.

4.0 THE **insert club name******

4.1 History and Background

The history and background of a club is very important. It provides a good basis for recognising the club's involvement in managing wildfowling under previous arrangements with The Crown Estate or other leasing agents and through land purchase.

It is necessary to describe how the club is managed, including procedures for education and discipline. A list of officer types (Chairman, Secretary, Conservation officer etc.), membership categories and any committees is helpful. Limits or restrictions on club membership should be mentioned, as well as induction procedures for new members and any specific rules for junior members. Refer to the club rules and constitution in Appendix 11 in this section.

It may be useful to highlight any club involvement in one of the BASC regional joint councils for wildfowling, contact with the BASC Wildfowling Liaison Committee, support of the Wildlife Habitat Trust (WHT) Stamp programme, and any longstanding management arrangements with other agencies, local authorities or estuary management/steering groups.

4.2 Shooting and Conservation Experience

The Crown Estate is aware that many wildfowling clubs have other sporting shooting interests. Provision of supporting information is necessary to provide a complete picture of the areas managed by the club, and to demonstrate experience of organising conservation projects. We would encourage clubs to provide information that shows commitment as a shooting and conservation manager in as much detail as possible. For new lease applications an indication of past use of the site by club members is useful.

5.0 MANAGEMENT

5.1 Background and Current Levels of Shooting

This section deals with the management of wildfowling that club members must adhere to at present, including club requirements for wildfowling returns. Information of current shooting activity in the area should be outlined here, with reference to the summary information and graphs provided for the annual report to the JTG (provided by BASC) and included in Appendix 10.

Table provided by BASC:

Figure 1: Summary of wildfowling returns for **SITE**** Crown Estate lease from 2000 to 2009**

5.2 Management of Shooting

The club will need to explain how they regulate wildfowling activity on the site here, eg registering shooting activity through the club secretary, permit schemes, whether or not the club has a bag limit in place, and whether day permit facilities are offered for non members. The maps in Appendix 1 should reflect a clear impression of the actual shooting areas.

The club should cross-reference wildfowling strategies to data on bird usage in Section 2.1 and 3.3, especially with regard to the location of roosts.

The club should indicate their insurance arrangements in this section: The vast majority of wildfowling clubs with Crown Estate leases are affiliated to BASC and each member of the club is covered by BASC insurance. Appendix 6 should give further details. If your club is not a BASC-affiliated club, The Crown Estate needs proof of adequate insurance cover and if this policy is acceptable details will be need to be inserted in Appendix 10.

English Sites

BASC NOTE: see separate update on wording for consents in England.

Sites in Wales and Northern Ireland:

The following standard was agreed by the JTG at their meeting on 21st June 2006 to address concerns from the statutory conservation agencies about predicting future wildfowling levels to comply with European designation legislation:

Section 5.1 and Appendix 10 detail wildfowling returns received for this lease area over the last *****X***** years. The Club recognises that the decision by *****CCW/NIEA***** to grant consent to continue wildfowling on this site is based on this data together with the content of this management plan. However, *****CCW/NIEA***** recognise that due to the relatively short period of time over which the wildfowling returns have been received by the Club from its members (*****X***** years), the full extent of fluctuations in activity that usually takes place requires the consideration of a longer set of data. Visit levels can fluctuate between years, depending on factors such as numbers of quarry species visiting the site, tidal/weather combinations and participation levels in that year's club membership. Club committee meetings take place every *****X***** months during the wildfowling season when bird numbers, wildfowling activity levels and wardening feedback is discussed and acted on if necessary. At the end of the season each member sends in their wildfowling return to the Club secretary/wildfowling returns officer. BASC is sent these returns and produces a summary report for the JTG.

The Club understands that the JTG undertakes an annual review of wildfowling returns for all Crown Estate leased areas. The Club understands that the consent granted on the basis of the management plan allows a degree of flexibility in the levels of wildfowling taking place, but that this can only be the case where wildfowling activity does not compromise the conservation objectives for which the site is designated (see Appendix 8). If wildfowling activity increases from the baseline data on which consent was granted and *****CCW/NIEA***** feel that this needs investigation, then an analysis of the wildfowling data will take place. This investigation will follow the form of an "appropriate assessment", taking into account the WeBS data for the lease area, in combination with other activities throughout the designated area. If it can not be shown that significant increases in wildfowling levels from the baseline data are compatible with the conservation objectives for which the site was designated, then the Club agrees to discuss with BASC and *****CCW/NIEA***** the introduction of measures to monitor and control visits to that site for the following season. A new review of wildfowling activity would then take place by *****CCW/NIEA***** based on data received at the end of that following season.

5.3 Conservation Management

This section reiterates the objective of the club in ensuring that wildfowling is managed in such a way that the conservation of quarry and non-quarry species is considered. The provision of no-shooting areas should be included here, cross-referenced to sections 2.1, 3.3 and 4.2, as appropriate.

NOTE: *Normally, there are two types of areas where shooting would not take place:*

- *No-shooting areas to reduce disturbance to key waterfowl roosting or feeding areas.*
- *No-shooting areas for the safety of the public, eg. car parks in vicinity, houses, industrial interests or due to there being no access on foot (as referred to in Section 3.4.4).*

It is important to state the reasons for nominating no-shooting areas on the site.

It should be remembered that Crown Estate leases are normally for sporting rights only and any other practical work should only be undertaken with permission of The Crown Estate. Practical management may include activities such as Spartina control, litter clearance, habitat management, or assisting adjacent landholders with labour intensive work.

Include a brief outline of any conservation work carried out, or proposed, by the club to maintain or enhance other features of biodiversity importance, in accordance with the BASC Green Shoots programme.

5.4 Wardening

One of the main elements of a Crown Estate foreshore lease is that clubs provide additional wardening to the area, particularly during the open season. Clubs should take all reasonable steps to prevent unauthorised shooting, with the assistance of appropriate local authorities. Where appropriate additional responsibilities to the area during close season could be considered. Provide examples, if available, of problems that have arisen and how they have been solved.

Club members abide by the clubs rules and BASC codes of practice, and take an active interest in wardening the area. The club takes all reasonable steps to prevent unauthorised shooting, with the assistance of appropriate local authorities.

Wardening helps to ensure that unauthorised shooting is discouraged, and use of the foreshore is monitored in terms of the number and behaviour of wildfowling present. Each member of the Club shooting within the area acts as a warden while on the

foreshore, and is empowered to approach any person shooting and request proof of Association membership. Illegal and indiscriminate shooting can be a major problem on sites that are not under wildfowling club management. This includes the shooting of protected species, out of range shooting, and excessive shooting caused by too many wildfowlingers using too small an area. Offending individuals are subject to the full penalties available to the Club within the law, in their capacity as tenants of the sporting rights.

5.5 Monitoring

It is a prerequisite of all Crown Estate lease applications that clubs should send a management report and original wildfowling return forms to BASC Head Office at the end of each season. BASC, as an agent of The Crown Estate, is responsible for collating wildfowling returns and reporting annually to The Crown Estate and JTG. BASC provides standard forms (Appendix 9) for clubs to complete their management report and for each member to complete a seasonal wildfowling return.

BASC will make a reasonable charge for administration and analysing of wildfowling returns on behalf of clubs that are not affiliated to BASC.

The Club Secretary will collate member's wildfowling returns and forward these to BASC by the date specified in advance (currently 1st April each year), for inclusion in the Annual Report to the JTG. These returns will complement the established counts undertaken by the WWT and BTO (see Section 3.3) and assist in the ongoing monitoring of wildfowling activity over the site.

A summary report on the activities of the Club with respect to the lease area accompanies the club's annual wildfowling return to BASC.

The wildfowling return forms can be found in Appendix 9. A summary of wildfowling returns for **XX** years is given in Appendix 10.

5.6 Responsible Behaviour

The club has exclusive rights to the shooting on the site. All wildfowling is carried out in accordance with the BASC Wildfowler's Code (see Appendix 3), *****Puntgunner's Code of Practice (see Appendix 13)*****, Respect for Quarry Code of Practice (Appendix 4) and the Club Rules (see Appendix 11). Problems of illegal or irresponsible shooting (as discussed in Section 5.4) have, therefore, been reduced. The Club gives high priority to educating new and existing members in proper wildfowling practice (see Appendix 11).

6.0 REVIEW OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Reviews take place at lease renewal, at a time agreed between the club and the JTG, or if required for the renewal of wildfowling consent. If major changes to the management plan or lease agreement are requested (by the club or by The Crown Estate), the JTG will be informed and wider consultation may be required.

In order to ensure that management is appropriate to the maintenance and enhancement of the nature conservation and shooting interest of the site, this management plan will be reviewed as agreed between the club and The Crown Estate, based on the term of the lease, or if required at an earlier date by *****NE / CCW/ NIEA***** for the renewal of wildfowling consent.

7.0 BUDGET

The Crown Estate has set a standard rent formula for all foreshore wildfowling leases. The Crown Estate will advise the club directly of the annual rental costs when the lease has been approved. Recognition of the responsibility to fulfil the lease arrangements should be stated here.

This plan is primarily labour intensive. The rent and all costs associated with the implementation of this management plan will be met out of Club funds. Some conservation work may be eligible for grants.

8.0 SOURCES OF REFERENCES

List any material used to produce the management plan, eg local strategies, resource documents, scientific reports and reference books.

9.0 APPENDICES

The list of standard Appendices as relevant to the club's management plan will be provided by BASC in a separate document. See guide to Appendices on next page.

GUIDE TO APPENDICES

The Appendices provide supporting information to the plan. Those that are standard are marked with an asterisk (*), and are supplied by BASC. The others require input from the club.

Appendix 1. Maps: BASC will obtain maps from The Crown Estate for the club to annotate with shooting and no-shooting zones, access points and other pertinent information. A definitive map of the lease area from The Crown Estate map will also be included.

Appendix 2. Quarry Species and Shooting Seasons *

Appendix 3. BASC Wildfowler's Code of Practice *

Appendix 4. BASC Respect for Quarry Code of Practice: This Code was produced in 2004 and covers shooting skills, (including appropriate cartridge/choke, range judging) and quarry retrieval. *

Appendix 5. BASC Waterfowl Shooting and Severe Weather *

Appendix 6. BASC Insurance Information *

Appendix 7. BASC Information Sheet: Restrictions on the use of lead shot in the UK *

Appendix 8. Site Designations: BASC can obtain site designations from statutory conservation agencies, but clubs can approach local teams if they wish. Where available, Views About Management Statements from NE or NIEA, or Site Management Statements from CCW, should also be included here. In England a "Condition of SSSI units" report from the NE website will be included. *

Appendix 9. Crown Estate Record Forms and Information *

Appendix 10. Club Constitution and Rules: Clubs should supply a copy of club rules along with any additional membership details proposed in the plan, eg, probation periods, permit schemes.

Appendix 11. List of Consultees: Clubs should provide additional names and addresses of local consultees to BASC for a new lease application. Names, but not addresses, will be listed in the management plan. For renewals, the year when the consultation took place should be given. *

Appendix 12. BASC: Puntgunning: An introduction to the sport and code of practice (if required) *

* Information supplied by BASC (for BASC affiliated clubs only)

KEY SOURCES OF INFORMATION

1. Legislation and site designation from statutory conservation bodies, usually the local NE, CCW or NIEA office responsible for the site. See also BASC Internet Guide to UK Site Designations within these guidelines.
2. Biodiversity information from the local authority, or BASC's Biodiversity Officer.
3. Details of grants from statutory conservation agencies.
4. Bird-count data from BTO, WWT and statutory conservation agencies. See also Information on Wildfowl and Wader Counts within these guidelines.
5. Coastal reports, tide tables, admiralty maps, natural and public history available from local libraries.
6. Historical use of the site from club members, local residents, etc.
7. Estuary management groups information from the Environment Agency and statutory conservation bodies.
8. The Crown Estate web site, www.thecrownestate.co.uk, for JTG terms of reference (search under Marine Estates, then Wildfowling).



A GUIDE TO UK SITE DESIGNATIONS

The UK government's approach to nature conservation, since the establishment of the Nature Conservancy in 1949, has been to identify and protect areas with local and national nature conservation interest. The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 established a policy of habitat conservation through site designation. Today, there are a multitude of site designations and these vary widely in the amount of protection they give. See www.naturenet.net/status/ for more detail.

As the UK's representative body for sporting shooting, BASC is notified of new and proposed statutory site designations for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. BASC have joint statements of intent with the devolved statutory nature conservation agencies who are Natural England, Countryside Council for Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage and Northern Ireland Environment Agency. The Joint Nature Conservation Committee co-ordinates nature conservation at a UK level, acting on behalf of the other agencies to advise the UK Government on matters relating to nature conservation nationally and internationally.

Below is a list of websites that will provide further information on the types of national and international designations involved. **If an area of land or foreshore over which you have a sporting interest is within an existing or newly designated area and you have specific queries relating to shooting please contact BASC Head Office for further advice in England, Wales and Northern Ireland or contact BASC Scotland for Scotland.**

Further information and details on individual, national and international statutory site designations available for:

England	www.naturalengland.org.uk
Wales	www.ccw.gov.uk
Scotland	www.snh.gov.uk
Northern Ireland	www.ni-environment.gov.uk
European sites in UK	www.jncc.gov.uk
Marine sites in UK	www.ukmarinesac.org.uk
Ramsar sites in UK	www.wetlands.org

‘Search by area’ internet sites for designated sites are as follow:

Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside. This site contains spatial information on NNRs, SSSIs, SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites in addition to a wide range of land management schemes searchable on an area of your choice in England.

www.magic.gov.uk/

Natural England has an interactive website with spatial information on NNRs, SSSIs, SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites in addition to BAP priority sites (upland heathland, reedbeds, saline lagoons etc.) and Geological Sites in England.

www.natureonthemap.co.uk

Northern Ireland Environment Agency. Website contains spatial information on NNRs, ASSIs, SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites in addition to other countryside data in Northern Ireland.

www.ni-environment.gov.uk/natural/designated/area_interest.shtml

Wetlands International. Website has point and click facility for Ramsar sites in UK. Individual site information available but not boundaries.

www.wetlands.org/RDB/europe/UnitedKingdom.html

INFORMATION ON WILDFOWL AND WADER COUNTS

For information on low and high tide waterfowl counts contact the British Trust for Ornithology and the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (there is a cost for this information so provide a map detailing exactly where you have an interest).

Certain sites are recorded in the annual Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS). BASC has copies of these reports and can provide information on the sites covered. Alternatively you can download the most recently published WeBS report from the WWT website.

Counts can aid the scientific data in your plan, and inform your assessment of shooting management. The BTO and WWT may also prove to be useful contacts for future liaison over monitoring information. To participate in low tide counts on the area you are leasing, contact the BTO direct. BASC can also provide BTO methodology and record forms.

Contacts:

WeBS National Organiser (Low Tide), British Trust for Ornithology, The Nunnery,
Thetford, Norfolk, IP24 2PU
Telephone: 01842 750050

Website: www.bto.org

Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, Slimbridge, Gloucester, GL2 7BT
Telephone: 01453 890333

Website: www.wwt.org.uk