

# South Devon Estuaries Environmental Management Plan

2016 – 2024



## Estuaries Partnership

Encouraging sustainable use and enjoyment

[www.SouthDevonAONB.org.uk](http://www.SouthDevonAONB.org.uk)

## South Devon Estuaries Key facts

The AONB contains the five estuaries of the Yealm, Erme, Avon, Salcombe-Kingsbridge and Dart. The far west is bordered by Plymouth Sound. They are a defining feature of the South Devon AONB. All are ria-type estuaries, drowned river valleys, formed by the eroding action of rivers carving through the surface geology and flooding to their present geography towards the end of the last Ice Age. The Salcombe-Kingsbridge estuary is a classic dendritic-ria with its many finger-like ria-formed creeks.

All of our estuaries are unique in their own ways and range from the highly freshwater dominated Dart estuary to the highly seawater dominated Salcombe-Kingsbridge estuary – some describing it as a tidal marine inlet. Being ria-formed, they tend to be deep watered and have become important and popular ports and water-based recreation designations; they range from the small privately owned Erme estuary that does fully drain at low tide to the more cosmopolitan Dart estuary that attracts some of the world's largest cruise liners.

All of our estuaries still retain large areas of relatively unspoilt and undeveloped bed, foreshore and shoreline but with their considerable history of human use and harvesting, none can be described as being completely natural or unspoilt. However, they supply considerable 'ecosystem services' to the local natural beauty and communities and several are formally designated and protected in recognition of their rich and diverse natural history.

The estuaries also contain some of Devon's most well-known historic and archaeological assets, which contribute significantly to their character and economy, and are very popular with visitors. These include Scheduled Monuments (e.g. Dartmouth Castle, Bantham Ham, Oldaport); Designated Wrecks (e.g. Erme Mouth); and Registered Parks and Gardens (e.g. Flete). Most of the settlements, harbours/quays are in Conservation Areas (e.g. Dartmouth, Tuckenhay, Noss Mayo, Kingsbridge, etc. There are also many 'Listed Buildings' – from castles (e.g. Kingswear) to limekilns, boathouses and coastguard cottages and also many hundreds of undesignated archaeological and historical sites, from submerged prehistoric forests to Second World War defences.

Some are impacted by a history of mining and port activities but all are impacted by the runoff of agriculture, roads and urban drainage within their freshwater catchments, and seaborne issues. Their greatest threat is that of the cumulative impacts of unsympathetic development and habitat loss, nutrient, litter and other pollutant runoff, unsustainable & illegal fishing, wildlife and habitat disturbance.

Estuary	Length of coast	Area total	Intertidal area	Channel length	Shoreline length	Tidal range (spring mean)	Catchment area
Yealm	28km	214ha	154ha	7.7km	28km	4.7m	12 674ha
Erme	16km	100ha	60ha	6.0km	17km	4.7m	10 823ha
Avon	18km	170ha	130ha	7.8km	20km	4.7m	17 626ha
Salcombe-Kingsbridge	49km	674ha	446ha	8.3km	49km	4.6m	9 500ha
Dart	58km	750ha	300ha	19.8km	61km	4.3m	48 747ha

(various sources)

**Coastline & beaches** - A detailed measurement of the length of AONB shoreline in and out of coves (at a scale of 1:2,500 along the mean high water mark) measures 323kms (201mls). 154kms (96mls) of this are coastal and 169kms (105mls) estuarine, and contains 68 beaches - ranging from popular amenity beaches to isolated coves. The high water mark forms the formal seaward boundary of the AONB on the open coast but includes the estuaries to their mouths.

**Extent** - 5.5% or 1850 hectares of the AONB is made up of tidal estuary waters, the AONB covering 340 square kilometres (131 square miles) of coastline, estuaries and countryside.



## South Devon AONB Estuaries map

Illustrated Estuaries Management Plan will support a ‘zoomable’ map, containing local site names, etc.



## The purpose of the South Devon AONB Estuaries Management Plan

Publishing this South Devon Estuaries Management Plan document fulfils Policy Est/P5 of the statutory Management Plan for the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Its task is to:

- Highlight the special qualities and significance of the Estuaries.
- Present a vision for the future of the Estuaries.
- Set out objectives and policies to secure the vision.
- Identify what needs to be done, by whom, and when.
- State how the condition of the Estuaries and the effectiveness of its management will be monitored.
- Provide a framework and process for the resolution of differences and conflicts.
- Reflect the views and aspirations of a wide range of Estuarine 'stakeholders'.
- Co-ordinate the work of different partner organisations.

The Plan is not just an internal document for the AONB Estuaries Partnership and Staff Unit; the Management Plan has to ensure outcomes for the estuaries themselves and harness the respect, understanding and actions of all who live work or play on and around them, visit them or otherwise have an interest in them.

The South Devon AONB Estuaries Management Plan does not attempt to override existing statutory and non-statutory responsibilities, rather, through continued co-ordinated management and the use of existing powers and influences to secure the sustainable use, enjoyment and understanding of the estuaries resources. Taken as a whole, this Management Plan provides guidance on how to conserve and enhance the special qualities and key features of these nationally important ecosystems. A particular role for the Management Plan is to assist public organisations (defined in law as 'relevant authorities') to understand and act on their duty to 'have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the estuaries within the AONB'. The Management Plan helps to translate this duty and illustrate what it means in the context of the South Devon AONB estuaries.

Planning documents for areas with a coastal influence may wish to make reference to the MMO's licensing requirements and any relevant marine plans to ensure that necessary regulations are adhered to. For marine and coastal areas where a marine plan is not currently in place, the MMO advise local authorities to refer to the Marine Policy Statement - [www.bit.ly/24NMuxV](http://www.bit.ly/24NMuxV) for guidance on any planning activity that includes a section of coastline or [estuary]. All public authorities taking authorisation or enforcement decisions that affect or might affect the UK marine area must do so in accordance with the Marine and Coastal Access Act - [www.bit.ly/1VWhhbT](http://www.bit.ly/1VWhhbT) and the UK Marine Policy Statement unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise. Local authorities may also wish to refer to the MMO's online guidance – [www.bit.ly/1Uhfbka](http://www.bit.ly/1Uhfbka) and the Planning Advisory Service soundness self-assessment checklist – [www.bit.ly/1YnMox2](http://www.bit.ly/1YnMox2)

A similar duty requires having regard to the historic environment (E.g. Environment Act 1996, Planning & Conservation Areas 1979). National Planning Policy Framework (Para. 126-141) requires Local Planning Authorities to have a positive strategy for conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment.

The Management Plan directly applies to the estuaries within the South Devon AONB but also provides guidance for decision-making within their freshwater catchment and seawater coastal areas.

This plan formally reviews the existing individual estuary management plans of the Yealm, Erme, Avon, Salcombe-Kingsbridge and Dart estuaries. There has been no intention to reproduce any material or information from those plans unless it was in need of update or correction and for this reason, the original plans should be kept alongside this review and will remain available to view or download from the South Devon AONB website - [www.southdevonaonb.org.uk](http://www.southdevonaonb.org.uk)

## Supporters of the South Devon AONB Estuaries Management Plan

The South Devon AONB Estuaries Partnership is committed to the delivery of this Estuaries Management Plan and will work with a wide range of organisations and individuals to ensure that the outstanding natural beauty of the South Devon Estuaries is conserved and enhanced for future generations. Implementing the plan is beyond the resources or remit of any single agency and will require the continued support and involvement of many organisations and partners.

**This Management Plan was endorsed by the South Devon Estuaries Partnership at its meeting in January 2017**

Dart Harbour & Navigation Authority  
Devon County Council  
Duchy of Cornwall  
Environment Agency  
Natural England  
Salcombe Harbour Authority  
South Hams District Council



And is supported by:

5 Marine Management Organisation

It is also endorsed by\*:

Aune Conservation Association  
Devon & Severn Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority  
Devon County Council  
Natural England  
Stoke Gabriel Parish Plan Group

\* Please let the South Devon AONB Office know if your organisation would wish to be listed as endorsing this plan



## Estuaries Management Plan layout

This Management Plan covers the nine-year period 2016-24. The complex range of issues relevant to the estuaries and their settings are broken down into manageable themes within this plan. To avoid repetition, cross references are used in the text to help signpost readers to relevant links. Within the plan, policies, objectives and actions have specific roles:

**Policies** are the AONB Estuary Partnership's position and approach to particular issues, providing a framework to guide actions, projects and initiatives. [Where given the reference codes refer to the original policy within the South Devon AONB Management Plan. Some of these policies have been adapted for use within this Estuaries Management Plan and this is indicated by 'Adapted']

**Objectives** are what we want to achieve for the AONB Estuaries, supported by the prescriptive actions and projects.

**Actions** identify what needs to be done and give an indication of who will lead and be involved, the relative cost and priority in timescale.

### Responsibilities

Within the Action tables, the lead organisation is shown in **bold type** - there is no order of responsibility implied or otherwise, of the other organisations identified.

### Priority

H - High – Action required as soon as possible, within the first two years of the present management plan period.

M - Medium – Action required as soon as possible, within the present management plan period.

L - Low – Action to be taken if the opportunity occurs within the present management plan period.

O - Ongoing – A high/medium priority that requires long-term attention during the present management plan period.

A – Aspiration – A desirable action that is beyond present capacities but should be enacted if the opportunity arises.

### Cost implications

'£t' - time cost only

'£=' - financial cost likely to be absorbed within normal budgets

'£+' - financial cost likely to be met within budgets of estuary management partnership organisations

'£!' - financial cost likely to require special fund raising measures

**Local community** - 'local community' throughout this Environmental Management Plan is taken to imply the local community in its widest sense - including all those persons that live, visit, work or play within the estuary's water-catchment area or have a special or professional interest or responsibility for the estuary.

A wide range of further information in support of the Estuaries Management Plan and about the estuaries and catchments themselves can be accessed via the South Devon AONB website [www.Southdevonaonb.org.uk/coast-countryside/estuaries](http://www.Southdevonaonb.org.uk/coast-countryside/estuaries)

The information within this management plan is intended to be used widely and may be quoted, copied or reproduced in any way, provided that the extracts are not quoted out of context and that due acknowledgement is given to the South Devon AONB Estuaries Partnership. NB The photographs and underlying geographical information within the maps, however, are subject to normal copyright conditions.

## Contents

		Page
	South Devon Estuaries Key facts	2
	South Devon AONB estuaries map	3
	Purpose of the AONB Estuaries Management Plan	4
	Supporters of the South Devon AONB Estuaries Management Plan	5
	Estuaries Management Plan layout	6
	Abbreviations used	8
<b>Section 1</b>	Management Plan Vision and Objectives	9
	Links to other plans	11
	Overview of estuaries within the AONB	13
<b>Section 2</b>	The Physical Environment	
<b>2.1</b>	Natural Resources (incl. Water quality) and Climate	14
<b>2.2</b>	Nature conservation	20
<b>2.3</b>	Historic environment	23
<b>Section 3</b>	The Human Environment	
<b>3.1</b>	Access, recreation & tourism	25
<b>3.2</b>	Planning & Sustainable Development	28
<b>3.3</b>	Fisheries	32
<b>Section 4</b>	Organisation	
<b>4.1</b>	Awareness & communication	34
<b>4.2</b>	Partnership & organisation	36
<b>Section 5</b>	Research & monitoring	
<b>5.1</b>	Research & monitoring	39
<b>Appendices</b>	Further details -	
	Plans and strategies	41
	Statutory designations	43
	Regulatory Authorities	49

## **Abbreviations used**

ACA - Aune Conservation Association  
Acc – Access, Recreation and Tourism  
AEF – Avon Estuary Forum  
Amb - Ambios  
AONBu – South Devon AONB unit  
AONB – EP – South Devon AONB Estuaries Partnership  
Aware – Awareness and Communication  
BASC – British Association for Shooting and Conservation  
BCT – Bat Conservation Trust  
BE – Bantham Estate Ltd.  
BioGeo – Biodiversity & Geodiversity  
BMIF – British Marine Industries Federation  
BTO – British Trust for Ornithology  
CaBA – Catchment Based Approach  
CE – Crown Estates  
CF – Salcombe-Kingsbridge Estuary Conservation Forum  
DAS – Devon Archaeological Society  
D&SIFCA – Devon & Severn Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority  
DBG – Devon Bat Group  
DBRC – Devon Biological Records Centre  
DCC – Devon Country Council  
DEFRA – Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
DHNA – Dart Harbour & Navigation Authority  
DHES – Devon Country Council Historic Environment Service  
DoC – Duchy of Cornwall  
DWT – Devon Wildlife Trust  
EA – Environment Agency  
EEMAG – Erme Estuary Management Advisory Group  
EH-SHDC – SHDC Environmental Health  
EO – Estuaries Officer  
EPOA – East Portlemouth Foreshore Owners Association  
Est – Rivers and Estuaries  
FC – Forestry Commission  
FE – Flete Estate  
FWAGSW – Forestry & Wildlife Advisory Group – South West  
HER – Historic Environment Record (DHES)  
Hist – Historic Environment  
HS – Historical Societies  
K&DNHS – Kingsbridge & District Natural History Society  
Lan – Landscape Character  
LEA – Local Education Authority (DCC)  
Lo – landowners  
Mar – Coast & Marine Environment

MBA - Marine Biological Association  
MCS – Marine Conservation Society  
MMO – Marine Management Organisation  
NatRes – Natural Resources and Climate  
NE – Natural England  
NERT - Natural Environment & Recreation Team - SHDC  
NFU – National Farmers Union  
NT – National Trust  
PC – Parish Councils  
PDAS – Plymouth & District Archaeological Society  
Plan – Planning and Sustainable Development  
PMI – Plymouth Marine Institute  
RIGS group – Regionally Important Geological Sites group  
RNLI – Royal National Lifeboat Institution  
RSPB – Royal Society for the Protection of Birds  
RYA – Royal Yachting Association  
RYHA – River Yealm Harbour Authority  
SDEEMP – South Devon [AONB] Estuaries Environmental Management Plan  
SDCP – South Devon Catchments Partnership  
SDEF – South Devon Estuaries Forums  
SDO – South Devon Outdoors  
SHA – Salcombe Harbour Authority  
SHARG – South Hams Archaeological Research Group  
SHDC – South Hams District Council  
SHS – South Hams Society  
SKECF – Salcombe-Kingsbridge Estuary Conservation Forum  
SLNNR – Slapton Ley National Nature Reserve  
ShrpT – Sharpham Trust  
ST – Silvanus Trust  
SWDCEP – South West Devon Community Energy Partnership  
SWMAG – South West Maritime Archaeological Group  
SWW – South West Water  
TCV – The Conservation Volunteers  
TIC's – Tourist Information Centres  
TST – The Seahorse Trust  
UoP – University of Plymouth  
WFD – Water Framework Directive  
WRT – Westcountry Rivers Trust  
YEMG – Yealm Estuary Management Group



## Section 1 - Our vision for the South Devon AONB Estuaries Management Plan

Our vision for the South Devon AONB Estuaries is for our estuaries to be valued, recognised, treasured and conserved for their important natural beauty and rich historic heritage, their distinctive local character as part of the AONB, their individual uniqueness and their environmental importance to the wider natural and human community. (Adapted from the South Devon AONB Management Plan)

The key principles to this vision are that:

- 1) the conservation of the estuaries is the responsibility of all those who use and enjoy them directly or indirectly, as well as the appropriate authorities and organisations;
- 2) everything practical must be done to prevent the loss and degradation of each estuary's natural, historic and archaeological resources, conserving their natural integrity and to improve them where they are in a damaged state;
- 3) to ensure an awareness of the estuaries environment and the empowerment of the local community to make informed decisions about their use and future management;
- 4) to encourage the sustainable use and enjoyment of our estuaries with a sense of their ownership and care;
- 5) where there is irreconcilable conflict between man's use of the estuaries and the conservation of the ecological and conservation value the latter will take preference (extension of the Sandford Principle which applies to National Parks)

### Objectives of Estuary Management Plan

(no order of priority is intended or suggested)

- To conserve and enhance the natural environment of the estuaries, their surroundings, water catchment and coastal areas.
- To encourage the mindful involvement and co-ordinated actions of the wider community in the active implementation and evolutions of the plan.
- To encourage the sustainable management of their surrounding catchments to conserve and enhance the distinctive countryside character and beauty of the area, the native habitats and wildlife of the area and estuary and the commercial viability of local agricultural, fisheries and forestry interests.
- To involve all those with an interest in the estuaries in their conservation management through representation on the relevant estuary's Forum.
- To accommodate the recreational use of the estuaries at a scale that is appropriate and sustainable to the estuaries environment.

- To seek to maintain access to and around each estuary at a level that is consistent with the needs of the local community and the integrity of the estuary's natural beauty.
- To safeguard the local economy and to encourage initiatives that contribute to prosperity of the local communities and that are compatible with the overall vision.
- To seek the co-ordinated conservation management of the estuaries between all those using the estuaries, regulatory and appropriate authorities and organisations, local communities, landowners and local interest groups.
- To increase the wider community's awareness about their estuaries, their ecology, historic environment and needs, and about the Estuaries Management Plan.
- To seek to improve the quality of the water to a level which supports both a healthy estuary ecosystem and the local community's recreational, aesthetic and commercial needs.
- To promote the conservation of native fish, shellfish and bait stocks and to minimise the environmental impact of their exploitation.
- To encourage soil conservation and sustainable land management practices, minimising the environmental impact of siltation and other associated concerns to their natural equilibrium.
- To safeguard natural geomorphological processes and geological exposures within the estuary and ensure that coastal defence and other works do not damage or alter these systems or features.
- To encourage the consideration of the management plan and the conservation of the estuaries as a priority within planning decisions that may directly or indirectly affect the estuary.
- To identify, protect, actively conserve and promote public enjoyment of those archaeological and historical features that help to form the special qualities of the estuary.
- To encourage scientific research, monitoring and surveys of the highest standards and minimal environmental impact, which will be of value to the estuary's conservation management, understanding and ecological processes.
- To seek to manage the estuary in a way that is sustainable to the estuarine environment and actively involves the local communities, recreational users and commercial interests of the estuary.

## Links to other plans

The Estuaries Management Plan has been reviewed and updated to take account of a wide range of other plans and strategies ranging from European or national scale down to the local level. Some of the most significant of these include:

	<b>Date of production</b>	<b>Date of next review (if relevant)</b>	<b>Web link</b> (‘PDF’ = download link)
AONB	2014	2019	<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1Ov1JHO">www.bit.ly/1Ov1JHO</a>
Biodiversity 2020 (DEFRA, 2011)	Aug 2011		<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1Fyx9qc">www.bit.ly/1Fyx9qc</a>
Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended)	Mar 2010		<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1qWTr2P">www.bit.ly/1qWTr2P</a> PDF: <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1DaYWjr">www.bit.ly/1DaYWjr</a>
Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000	Nov 2000		<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1WUGrav">www.bit.ly/1WUGrav</a> PDF: <a href="http://www.bit.ly/21hjZbQ">www.bit.ly/21hjZbQ</a>
Devon & Severn IFCA Plans & Byelaws			<a href="http://www.devonandsevernifca.gov.uk">www.devonandsevernifca.gov.uk</a>
EU Common Agricultural Policy & Rural Development Programme for England	Common Agricultural Policy - Dec 2013	2020	<a href="http://www.bit.ly/JXSZve">www.bit.ly/JXSZve</a>
	Rural Development Programme - Feb 2015	2020	<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1VWgxmY">www.bit.ly/1VWgxmY</a>
European Landscape Convention (Council of Europe, 2000)	Oct 2000		<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1WWDgin">www.bit.ly/1WWDgin</a>
Forestry and Woodlands Policy Statement (DEFRA, 2013)	Jan 2013		<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1SRYm1x">www.bit.ly/1SRYm1x</a>
Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009	Nov 2009		<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1VWhhbT">www.bit.ly/1VWhhbT</a> PDF: <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1qWYiRp">www.bit.ly/1qWYiRp</a>
NERC (Natural Environment and Rural Communities) Act	Mar 2006		<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1YW6mgi">www.bit.ly/1YW6mgi</a>
Joint Local Plan – SHDC Planning Policy	emerging	2031	<a href="http://www.bit.ly/XDrnmy">www.bit.ly/XDrnmy</a>
Prospectus for Natural Devon (Devon Local Nature Partnership, 2014)	Jan 2014	2019	<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1Slr98H">www.bit.ly/1Slr98H</a>
SHDC Development Plan – 2006 Core Strategy	Dec 2006	Being superseded by Joint Local Plan in production	<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1Nj9jai">www.bit.ly/1Nj9jai</a> <a href="http://www.bit.ly/2qIWYWA">www.bit.ly/2qIWYWA</a>
SHDC Development Plan – 2010 Development Policies	Jul 2010	As above	<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1Z7FZnO">www.bit.ly/1Z7FZnO</a>

Shoreline Management Plan	2000		<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1Wuv60g">www.bit.ly/1Wuv60g</a>
South Devon AONB Management Plan*	2014	2019	<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1QtIHD8">www.bit.ly/1QtIHD8</a>
South Devon Catchments Action Plan*	Mar 2016		<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1ILBlyd">www.bit.ly/1ILBlyd</a>
South England Marine Plans*	In progress for 2016/17	Full review 20yrs Intermediate 5yrs	<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1HSDGS0">www.bit.ly/1HSDGS0</a>
South West Marine Plans*	Process started Apr'16 – envisaged 2019/20	Full review 20yrs Intermediate 5yrs	<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1O6wLbd">www.bit.ly/1O6wLbd</a>
South West River Basin Plan*	Dec 2009, updated Feb 2016		<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1VDZTsw">www.bit.ly/1VDZTsw</a>
The National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG, 2012)	Mar 2012		<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1gGu8KY">www.bit.ly/1gGu8KY</a>
The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature (DEFRA, 2011)	Jun 2011		<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1xONkK5">www.bit.ly/1xONkK5</a>
Water Framework Directive (EU, 2000)	Oct 2000	2019	PDF: <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1RnOM0o">www.bit.ly/1RnOM0o</a>
What Nature can do for you (DEFRA, 2010)	Apr 2013, Updated Jan 2015		<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1xRqoJC">www.bit.ly/1xRqoJC</a>
Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)	Oct 1981, Amended Apr 2016		<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1T9ZXi5">www.bit.ly/1T9ZXi5</a>

\* - see Appendix 1 'Details of plans and strategies relevant to the South Devon Estuaries' for further details

### Estuary specific plans

Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum – Yealm estuary

Diffuse Water Pollution Plan – Salcombe-Kingsbridge estuary

Dartmouth Castle Conservation Plan (English Heritage, 2016)

Harbour Plans:

River Yealm Harbour Authority – Port Waste Management Plan

Salcombe Harbour Authority – Environmental Management System, Port Waste Management Plan, Oil – contingency, Moorings Plan

Dart Harbour & Navigation Authority - Port Waste Management Plan, Oil – contingency, Moorings Plan, Harbour Plan, Harbour Act, Emergency Oil Spill Response Plan, Emergency Plan, Strategic Plan, Environmental Plan

### **South Devon estuaries within the South Devon AONB context**

Our ria-type estuaries (drowned river valleys), with their steep ‘combes’ and networks of associated watercourses, are one of the special qualities that define the unique “*natural beauty*” for which the South Devon AONB is designated as a nationally important protected landscape. (See page 71 of the South Devon AONB Management Plan for further details on the ‘distinctive characteristics’ of our ria estuaries that qualify them as a ‘special quality’.)

Other special qualities include: (See Appendix 1. of South Devon AONB Management Plan for further details)

- Fine, undeveloped, wild and rugged coastline.
- Deeply incised landscape with intimate, hidden and secretive estuaries and tidal creeks.
- A landscape (seascape incl.) with a rich time depth and a wealth of historic features and cultural associations.
- A breadth and depth of significant habitats, species and associated natural processes.

### **Landscape Character**

The South Devon Estuaries are included within seven of the Devon Character Areas. Further information on Landscape Character can be found via [www.devon.gov.uk/landscape.htm](http://www.devon.gov.uk/landscape.htm)

### **Historic Seascape Characterisation**

This Seascape Characterisation of the South West Peninsula includes the coast and estuaries of the South Devon AONB. See ‘*ArchSearch*’ via [www.archaeologydataservice.ac.uk](http://www.archaeologydataservice.ac.uk)

### **Seascape Character Assessment**

A broad scale seascape character assessment is being developed for the South Marine Plan which includes a small part of the South Devon AONB coast from the Dart eastwards. A similar assessment is planned for the remainder of the AONB coast as part of the South West Inshore and Offshore Marine Plan Areas. See [www.marinemanagement.org.uk/marineplanning/index.htm](http://www.marinemanagement.org.uk/marineplanning/index.htm)

**AONB Designation and National Policy** – for full details of the legal and policy framework of the South Devon AONB see pages 10 & 11 of the South Devon AONB Management Plan strategy downloadable as a pdf from [www.bit.ly/1Ov1JHO](http://www.bit.ly/1Ov1JHO)



## Section 2 - The Physical Environment

### 2.1 Natural Resources (including Water Quality) and Climate

**Estuaries vision** - The sustainable use and management of our primary resources - catchments, water, air and waste - are practised by residents, businesses and visitors; and our local communities are successfully adapting to the changing climate. Local communities understand the wider benefits of higher water quality and are fully engaged in conserving the quality of all the waters flowing into the estuaries.

- Clean seas and catchment waters, fresh air and undisturbed natural processes are essential to the quality of life within the estuaries; most thriving best with good water quality. Our future prosperity and wellbeing depend on managing these resources well and adapting to the challenges of climate change.
- Driven by tides and climate, estuarine waters are by their nature, an ever-changing consequence of the waters from the catchment, the sea and anthropomorphic inputs.

#### Relevant AONB Management Plan Policies

##### **NatRes/P1** Natural resources - *adapted*

The environmentally sustainable management of natural resources within the South Devon AONB estuaries will be promoted and any plans for their management will have due regard for South Devon AONB purposes and work with physical processes that are resilient to climate change.

##### **NatRes/P2** Water quality

The highest standards of water quality will be secured throughout the South Devon AONB. The effective integration of land, freshwater and estuary management will be sought at a river catchment scale, to address sustainable soil, waste and nutrient management, point source and diffuse pollution, and the abstraction, supply and use of water.

##### **NatRes/P3** Pollution

Effective contingency planning will be maintained to guide emergency responses to pollution incidents affecting land, sea and air.

##### **NatRes/P4** Climate change

Communities will be assisted to develop resilience in adapting to climate change whilst ensuring that the special qualities of the South Devon AONB are conserved and enhanced.

##### **NatRes/P5** Waste - *adapted*

Facilities and measures to reduce the input of effluent, litter and waste from vessels and vessel maintenance will be supported.

##### **NatRes/P6** Energy

Initiatives will be supported that reduce energy usage and carbon dioxide emissions, and increase energy efficiency and the use of renewable heat and power sources, where these initiatives conserve and enhance the special qualities of the South Devon AONB and promote the principal of good environmental stewardship of resources.

### NatRes/P7 Flooding & erosion

Approaches to flood risk management and erosion control which work with natural processes, conserve the natural environment and improve biodiversity will be advocated and supported.

### Est/P3 Mariculture

Sustainable mariculture enterprises will be retained and encouraged in appropriate estuary locations where they are consistent with environmental designations, both as a traditional feature of the AONB economy and as a “driver” for further improvements to water quality.

### Est/P4 Climate change

The adaptation of important habitats and species to climate change and sea level rise will be promoted through sustaining natural processes wherever practicable, while protecting settlements from flooding.

No.	Action	Estuary issue					Lead & Partners	Priority
		YE	EE	AE	SK	DE		
Est1	Model the potential impacts of climate change and sea level rise within each of our estuaries and consider the management implications against their likely risk, e.g. habitat squeeze, urban flooding, changes in tourism, etc. (Subject to securing funding).  Develop appropriate informed actions based on the modelling.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AONBu, EA, NE	A £!
Est2	Multi-agency study to assess achievable measures to reduce flood risk in Kingsbridge.				✓		DCC, EA, SWW	O £=
Est3	Raise the understanding and importance of conserving natural processes as a force of natural change to the local landscape and a driving force of adaption and evolution for wildlife and their communities.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NE, AONBu, EA, SDCP	O £=
Est4	Provide advice to applicants and regulatory authorities on the environmental impacts of any water-based renewable energy proposals, taking each case on its own merits.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AONBu, NE, SHDC, MMO	O £t
Est5	Community owned renewable energy schemes are encouraged where they; engage local people with the issues of climate change and energy supply in / by the estuaries; generate revenue to deliver further community benefit, such as energy efficiency or renewable energy projects; respect the character of the locality and are demonstrably sustainable to the receiving seascape.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AONBu, NE, SHDC, DCC, MMO	O £t
Est6	Provide UV biocide treatment to final effluent of Ivybridge WWTW (to improve bathing waters quality downstream – current projected ‘Poor’ under revised bathing water directive).		✓				SWW, EA	O £=
Est7	Provide event and duration monitoring on Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW), Combined Sewer Overflows (CSO) and Storm Tank discharges, and alarm telemetry for Emergency Overflows (EO):  Kiln Way (Quay) Pumping Station CSO/EO	✓ ✓	✓	✓		✓	SWW, EA	O £=

Bridge End Pumping Station CSO/EO	✓					
Riverside CSO	✓					
Noss Mayo Pumping Station CSO/EO	✓					
Collaton Cross Pumping Station CSO/EO	✓					
Yealmpton STW SSO	✓					
Yealmpton Pumping Station CSO/EO	✓					
Church Way CSO	✓					
Torbridge South CSO	✓					
Torbridge North Pumping Station CSO/EO	✓					
Ivybridge WWTW		✓				
Ermington WWTW		✓				
Modbury WWTW		✓				
Keaton Road CSO		✓				
Erme Road CSO		✓				
Station Road CSO		✓				
Playing Field CSO		✓				
Parsonage Cottage Hill CSO		✓				
Town Hill CSO		✓				
South Brent WWTW SSO			✓			
Loddiswell WWTW SSO			✓			
Avondale House Pumping Station EO			✓			
South Brent Mill Slumberland CSO			✓			
Heather Park Pumping Station CSO/EO			✓			
Totnes Town Pumping Station CSO/EO				✓		
Dartington CSO				✓		
Skinners Bridge CSO				✓		
Quay Close CSO				✓		
St John's Terrace CSO				✓		
Swallowfields Kevics CSO				✓		
Fore Street CSO				✓		
Steamer Quay CSO				✓		
St Peters Quay Pumping Station CSO				✓		
Northern Villages Pumping Station CSO				✓		
Ashprington WWTW SSO				✓		
Cornworthy WWTW SO				✓		
Dartington Textile Mill CSO				✓		
Lower Collapark CSO				✓		
St Katherines Way CSO				✓		

Est8	Investigate improvements and funding required to improve North Sands bathing water quality to good or excellent.				✓		<b>SWW, EA</b>	O £=
Est9	Provide 'pass forward flow' monitoring at Storm Overflows:  Southville Embankment Pumping Station North Sands Pumping Station CSO/EO  Totnes Town Pumping Station Kilbury STW (Buckfastleigh) Mayors Avenue (Dartmouth) Pumping Station EO.				✓	✓	<b>SWW, EA</b>	O £=
				✓	✓			
				✓	✓			
						✓		
						✓		
						✓		
Est10	Provide event duration monitoring from storm discharges at: (identified as high significance – other than bathing and shellfish waters)  Warren Point Pumping Station CSO  Batson Green Pumping Station CSO.			✓	✓		<b>SWW, EA</b>	O £=
				✓				
					✓			
Est11	Promote Sustainable Urban Drainage schemes within all new and existing developments to reduce the triggering of storm water overflow events within Combined Waste Water facilities.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<b>SWW, EA, SHDC, WRT, AONB</b>	O £=
Est12	The Diffuse Water Pollution Plan for the Salcombe-Kingsbridge Estuary will be produced and its actions actively supported.				✓		<b>NE, EA, AONBu, SDCP</b>	H £+
Est13	Research the causes and effects of the Kingsbridge creeks dinoflagellate blooms. Publish the findings and recommend any necessary mitigation actions.				✓		<b>MBA, AONBu, EA, NE, SHA, Universities</b>	H £+
Est14	Monitor any changes in the extent of the green algal mats over the Kingsbridge mudflats, following the commissioning of the Kingsbridge nitrate stripping system, and roll any learning out to other areas as needed and when funds allow.				✓		<b>EA, NE, SKECF</b>	O £=
Est15	Support the designation of Salcombe-Kingsbridge estuary by Defra as a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone.				✓		<b>EA, NE, AONBu</b>	H £=
Est16	Support the Catchment Based Approach through the South Devon Catchments Partnership, its Catchments Action Plan and projects.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<b>AONBu, WRT, EA, SDCP</b>	O £+

Est17	Implement the Catchment Sensitive Farming programme and similar initiatives within the estuary catchments to minimise the inputs of diffuse agricultural pollution, soil erosion, estate and garden cuttings and building development runoff	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NE, EA	O £=
Est18	Catchment Sensitive Farming Advice Programme and Capital Works – CSF Officer will continue to work with farmers within the targeted Erme, Salcombe-Kingsbridge (and Slapton) catchments to aid the improvement of water quality – where appropriate CSFO will aid and endorse applications for grant funding through the Countryside Stewardship scheme.		✓		✓		NE, EA	O £=
Est19	Continue to monitor the Sharpham Marsh 'Hole in the Wall' annually for significant change					✓	DHNA	O £t
Est20	Subject to increasing demand and securing additional funding, reinstall Yealm Harbour pump-out reception and transfer to treatment facilities. [Salcombe and Dart Harbours have functioning facilities].	✓			✓	✓	SWW, EA, RYHA	A £!
Est21	Vessels will be encouraged to fit and use holding tanks within the Harbours with reception facilities and an education campaign to highlight the adverse impacts of effluent entering the Harbour waters will be implemented.	✓			✓	✓	DHNA, SHA, RYHA, EA	M £!
Est22	Port Waste Management Plans to minimise waste issued from vessels, especially antifouling waste from hull washing and scrapings and as far as reasonably practicable prevent them from entering the estuary.	✓			✓	✓	RYHA, SHA, DHNA, EA, MMO, DoC, CE	O £+

During the period 2015-20, South West Water (SWW) will be delivering the National Environmental Programme (NEP) as agreed with the EA – an environmental improvement programme consisting of over 450 individual schemes across Devon & Cornwall valued at c. £100m. In the area covered by the South Devon Environmental Management Plan, there are over 50 schemes including;

1. The River Dart Catchment Management project – using proven Upstream Thinking Tools and Techniques.
2. Improvements at Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTWs), to increase the capacity for storm storage and install UV disinfection, in order to decrease the impact of specific discharges in carefully selected areas to the water quality in the River Erme.
3. The provision of Event Duration Monitors (EDM's) and telemetry at numerous intermittent discharges (permitted Combined Storm Overflows) to improve the quantitative information available.

**The principal water quality drivers for the majority of these schemes are to improve the Bathing Water and Shellfish Water Quality in these catchments.**

Various agencies have different responsibilities in relation to flood risk management:



- Devon County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority has a strategic and coordination role for 'local' flood risk and is the lead authority responsible for managing the flood risks from surface water and groundwater. The County Council also has consenting and enforcement powers for regulating to ordinary watercourses.
- District Councils have powers to do works on ordinary watercourses and generally manage the local risk.
- Local land owners have responsibilities to maintain their land which adjoins any watercourse. They also have a duty to accept surface water onto their land from higher land and have the right to pass it on to lower land, without causing a nuisance.
- The Environment Agency has a national strategic overview role in flood risk management and manages the risk from Main Rivers, the sea and reservoirs. Local land owner responsibilities still apply for Main Rivers as they do for ordinary watercourses.
- The water and sewerage company South West Water are responsible for managing the risk from sewer flooding.
- Devon County Council as the Highway Authority is responsible for managing surface water originating on the highway. The Highways Agency is responsible for major trunk roads in Devon.

## 2.2 Nature Conservation

**Estuaries vision - The very rich variety of habitats, species and wildlife communities flourish within and around the estuaries, and are understood, valued and appreciated by residents and visitors alike**

The main issues affecting the wildlife and habitats of the estuaries are those of a cumulative nature, where relatively minor negative occurrences may be overlooked as individually insignificant but are grossly amplified by the frequency of their occurrence; e.g. oil & fuel drips, use of phosphate rich household detergents, foreshore developments.

Hidden from view, by the water itself, by misunderstandings and by the extremes of scale, much of the natural beauty of estuaries is significantly undervalued - awareness, understanding and respect are key principals to estuarine and wider aquatic conservation – see Chapter 7, Education & Communication. This Estuaries Management Plan aspires to promote and follow a principal of ‘best science’ - where knowledge and understanding is still unclear e.g. many aspects of wildlife disturbance, following an educated precautionary principal.

### Relevant AONB Management Plan Policies

#### BioGeo/P1 Designated sites

Designated sites of international, national and local importance for biodiversity and geodiversity will be protected from damage, be managed effectively to achieve their conservation objectives, and be better linked to the wider habitat network.

#### BioGeo/P2 Priority species

Priority species (legally protected species, species of principal importance and other significant species for South Devon AONB) will be protected and conserved. Targeted action will be taken to support the recovery of priority species whose conservation is not delivered through wider habitat-based measures.

#### BioGeo/P3 Ecological networks - adapted

Opportunities will be sought to enhance well-functioning ecological watercourse corridors at a landscape scale to improve connectivity and resilience, strengthen landscape character and safeguard, for the benefit of wildlife and people, those services provided by the natural environment.

#### BioGeo/P4 Geodiversity

The conservation and enhancement of significant geological and geomorphological features throughout the area will be sought, underpinned by a presumption in favour of sustaining natural processes.

#### BioGeo/P5 Reconnecting people and wildlife

Opportunities will be sought to reconnect the AONB's residents, visitors and workforce with nature, to promote appreciation of the benefits nature provides to us and to inspire positive action.

#### BioGeo/P6 Positive cumulative impacts - adapted

Opportunities will be sought to maximise the benefits for wildlife from the positive management of all types of land including farmland, private gardens, community spaces and publicly owned land. There will be a strong presumption against any further net loss in extent or quality of foreshore or seabed area and/or habitat through development.

#### BioGeo/P7 Damage and disturbance

Increased recreational pressure will be resisted at locations where unacceptable damage or disturbance to vulnerable habitats and species is likely to arise.

#### BioGeo/P8 Invasive non-native species - adapted

A strategic approach to the control, or eradication where feasible, of invasive non-native species will be taken where they threaten to damage local habitats and species, and where action is practicable. The provision of guidance and advice to landowners and operators of water-based facilities who have or are at risk from the most damaging invasive non-native species will be central to this approach. (Due to the difficulties and expense of working within the water environment, prevention of introduction rather than eradication or control must be the priority with invasive non-native species).

No.	Action	Estuary issue					Lead & Partners	Priority
		YE	EE	AE	SK	DE		
Est23	The Community Seagrass Initiative will be supported and implemented.	✓			✓		CSI, AONB EP, SHA, YEMG, RYA, SKECF	H £t
Est24	Continue to actively promote the value and conservation of saltmarshes - subject to funding, aspire to raise a greater awareness of saltmarshes and their value to encourage their respect and conservation.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	EA, AONBu, NE, SDGP, Lo, DWT	O £+
Est25	Implement actions identified to improve compliance and support 'no deterioration' of Good Ecological Status of all waters and designated areas under the Waters Framework Directive.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NE, MMO, EA, AONBu, WRT, SDGP	O £=
Est26	Continue monitoring and condition assessment of those estuaries with designated protected areas SSSI, SAC & MCZ and work to achieve their conservation objectives (i.e favourable condition).	✓	✓		✓		NE, AONBu, EA, D&S-IFCA	O £=
Est27	Work in partnership with the relevant Harbour Authorities and responsible organisations to prepare a South Devon AONB Marine Biosecurity Plan that highlights the need for a managed and pro-active awareness of Invasive Non-Native Species, including preventing introductions and assessing the potential for managed eradication or control as relevant opportunities arise	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	EO, SHA, DHNA, EA, NE, IFCA, MMO, MBA	H £t
Est28	Continue to use the most appropriate dredging method to maintain navigation, balancing cost, efficiency and minimalising wider environmental impacts.	✓			✓	✓	YEMG, SHA, DHNA, MMO, NE, EA	O £=

Est29	a. Carry out consultation with partners in relation to the potential conservation enhancement options of encouraging the Sharpham Marsh towards a more environmentally rich and diverse classic saltmarsh.					✓	<b>ShrpT, Amb</b> , EA, AONB, DHNA	M £t
	b. Draw up a costed plan for the restoration of the river wall and conservation enhancement options.						<b>ShrpT, Amb</b>	£t
	c. Make funding applications to cover the costs of the restoration project.						<b>ShrpT, Amb</b>	£t
	d. Implement restoration.						<b>ShrpT, Amb</b>	£!

## 2.3 Historic environment

**Estuaries vision – The distinctive historic and cultural features of the estuaries are actively conserved and protected, widely understood and appreciated.**

The estuaries have been the maritime gateways and harbours to Devon and England for millennia forming the front door for movements of people, goods and ideas. The long heritage of maritime, trading, farming and military activity has left a rich and diverse legacy. This ‘historic environment’ includes shore-side buildings, historic places, terrestrial and intertidal archaeological sites, hulks, wrecks and peat deposits containing evidence of the estuarine and coastal environment that our ancestors inhabited.

### Relevant AONB Management Plan Policies

#### Hist/P1 Cultural and historic environment - adapted

The identification, protection and active conservation of the estuaries’ cultural and historic environment will be promoted and supported.

#### Hist/P3 Public access

Public access will be encouraged to those archaeological and historic sites that are well protected and managed and able to withstand visitor pressure without undue harm to their nature conservation interests and physical features.

#### Hist/P5 Community participation

Local community participation will be encouraged in the research, recording, celebration, promotion, care and conservation of cultural heritage and historic features.

#### Hist/P7 Coastal heritage

Coastal heritage sites will be incorporated into adaptation plans and realignment measures through recording, promoting, understanding and recognising their historic significance and contribution to coastal landscape character.

#### Hist/P8 Estuary management - adapted

The protection and enhancement of historic environment assets shall be integrated into other estuary management initiatives in the AONB, such as catchment sensitive farming, habitat improvement projects, river improvement projects etc.

No.	Action	Estuary issue					Lead & Partners	Priority
		YE	EE	AE	SK	DE		
Est30	Encourage and support research and responsible survey to inform conservation, management and protection of the historic environment and encourage the cross-disciplinary application of developing marine and related survey technologies. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SW Maritime Archaeology Group.</li> <li>Maritime Archaeology Trust’s Forgotten Wrecks project.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	DCC HET, AONBu, Historic England, academic establishments, Amenity Societies	O £=



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maritime archaeology and palaeoenvironmental surveys by Bournemouth, Southampton and Plymouth Universities.</li> <li>The Mount Folly Enclosures Project, Bigbury on Sea.</li> <li>The Spriddlestone Community Dig, Brixton.</li> <li>Local archaeological and historical societies.</li> </ul>							
Est31	<p>Ensure that the results of research into and survey of the historic environment are deposited with the Devon County Historic Environment Record, appropriately published, archived and made widely available for future research and public understanding and enjoyment of this shared heritage. Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hulk and wreck Surveys.</li> <li>'Hidden views' app.</li> <li>Spriddlestone</li> <li>Mount Folly.</li> <li>South Devon Coast Rapid Coastal Zone Assessment</li> <li>Devon Historic Market and Coastal Town Survey</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<b>DCC HET</b> , AONBu, Historic England, academic establishments, Amenity Societies	O £=
Est32	<p>Promote public awareness, appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of the historic environment and sustainable access to archaeological and historic sites. Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>'Hidden views' app.</li> <li>Coast Path enhancement.</li> <li>Circular walks.</li> <li>Improved website content.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<b>AONBu</b> , SWCP, DCC HET and PROW, Historic England, academic establishments, Amenity Societies	A £+
Est33	<p>Ensure future developments within the estuaries have due regard to the historic environment, conserving and better revealing the significance of the most important archaeological and historic sites and providing appropriate mitigation where required.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<b>SHDC</b> , DCC HET, Historic England, <b>MMO</b>	H £=
Est34	<p>Ensure that the historic environment is taken into account and appropriate advice is sought for land management decisions relating to soil and water management, Green Infrastructure and environmental enhancement.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<b>EA, NE</b> , AONBu, SHDC, DCC HET	H £=

## Section 3 – The Human Environment

### 3.1 Access, Recreation and Tourism

**Estuaries vision – Residents and visitors enjoy the estuaries through a wide range of leisure opportunities and active pursuits, in ways which respect estuaries special qualities, benefit personal health and contribute to quality of life.**

The estuaries provide a popular setting for traditional pursuits of sailing, rowing, angling, beach-going, snorkelling, wild swimming, bird watching, walking, hiking, as well as a growing generation of active pursuits such as kayaking and paddle boarding. These activities together make a significant contribution to the health and well-being of residents and visitors, and to the viability of services and businesses of the area.

#### Relevant AONB Management Plan Policies

##### **Acc/P1 Recreation, leisure and sports** - *adapted*

The quiet and sustainable enjoyment of the South Devon Estuaries by the public will be promoted through recreation, leisure activities and sports that respect other users and the area's natural beauty, special qualities and environment.

##### **Acc/P2 Rights of Way**

A well-connected comprehensive network of paths and strategic recreational routes including coastal, estuary and riverside trails and green lanes will be sensitively maintained and promoted. Opportunities will be sought to extend them and improve linkages where this is compatible with conserving and enhancing natural beauty.

##### **Acc/P3 Naturally healthy** - *adapted*

Opportunities to use the natural environment resource of the South Devon Estuaries to benefit the health and well-being of residents and visitors will be sought and promoted, particularly where this coincides with opportunities to enhance the area's special qualities.

##### **Acc/P4 Noisy or intrusive recreational activities** - *adapted*

In remote and tranquil estuarine areas, noisy or intrusive recreational activities will be discouraged. The conservation and enhancement of natural beauty and the protection of vulnerable wildlife will be given priority in the promotion of access and recreation.

##### **Acc/P5 Access to beaches and the coastal corridor**

A public right of access to beaches and the undeveloped coastal corridor will be sought in consultation with landowners that avoids disturbance and safeguards sensitive wildlife sites.

##### **Acc/P6 Popular sites**

High quality visitor facilities, recreational infrastructure and information will be provided at the most heavily used destinations. Management resources, promotion and marketing will be concentrated on the more popular and developed sites which are best able to accommodate and contain intensive recreational pressure.

##### **Acc/P7 Developer contributions**

Where new developments are likely to increase recreational pressures on the countryside, coast or estuaries, developers will be expected to provide suitable recreational facilities on-site as well as contributing to improving carrying capacity and facilities in the surrounding area.

### Acc/P8 Information

Co-ordinated information and interpretation about countryside, coastal, marine and estuarine recreation and access will be promoted through a range of media, to help foster greater understanding, appropriate expectations and considerate behaviour. Car parks and principal access points such as slipways will be used as locations wherever possible to minimise signage proliferation.

### Acc/P9 Tourism

A sustainable, year-round tourism industry which benefits from and contributes to the environmental quality of the area will be supported. The loss of accommodation and facilities for visitors and recreational users will be resisted. Activities and initiatives to extend the main tourism season and to assist in promoting the area to overseas visitors will be supported.

### Mar/P5 Recreational pressure

Information, education and awareness campaigns will be used as the principal tools in managing recreational pressures and conflicts at the coast. Where demonstrable problems and safety issues remain, relevant organisations will carefully consider the most appropriate steps to be taken in order to address the situation.

### Mar/P6 Protective public ownership

The acquisition of undeveloped coastline for protective public ownership will be supported. The management of newly acquired sites will be supported where this accords with the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, special qualities and key features of the South Devon AONB.

### Est/P1 Estuary character

A thriving maritime economy contained within the existing developed harbour areas will be promoted, complimented by high quality boating facilities and infrastructure. The more remote parts of the estuaries will be managed for their tranquil and unspoiled character and safeguarded from moorings spread and development.

### Est/P6 Environmental management

Harbour Authorities will be supported in maintaining effective arrangements for managing moorings, navigation, dredging and waste, underpinned with good environmental practices which ensure the conservation and enhancement of the South Devon AONB's special qualities.

No.	Action	Estuary issue					Lead & Partners	Priority
		YE	EE	AE	SK	DE		
Est35	Promote the Salcombe Harbour's Ecoport designation and the Salcombe-Kingsbridge estuary as a destination for quiet water-sports, and their sustainable management.				✓		SHA, AONBu, NE	O £+
Est36	Promote and manage tranquil and wildlife rich areas vulnerable to disturbance as 'Quiet Areas' – where wildlife and tranquillity may be enjoyed and given priority.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	RYHA, FE, BE, SHA, DHNA, AONB, NE, MMO, ACA	H £=
Est37	Support and regularly review Harbour Mooring Plans. New moorings within 'Quiet Areas' will be resisted and existing moorings consolidated to the most appropriate areas. Mooring systems will be similarly reviewed and chosen for their minimal environmental impact responsibly balanced with cost, robustness and longevity of service.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	RYHA, FE, BE, SHA, DHNA, AONB, NE, MMO, ACA	O £=

Est38	Implement the provisions of the Coastal Access Act on the South Devon coast and estuaries (when it progresses to these shores)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<b>NE</b> , AONB, Lo	M £t
Est39	Reconstruct the Dartmouth public slipway ensuring that it is managed to minimise any damaging impacts arising from its use.					✓	<b>SHDC</b> , DHNA	H £+
Est40	Develop the 'South Devon Outdoors' sector group to undertake collective marketing and promote business growth, environmental policy, sustainability and wider environmental awareness.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<b>SDO</b> , AONBu	O £t
Est41	Improve access paths and trails around the estuaries where no significant disturbance to wildlife is likely or can be prevented through planned mitigation works and management.	✓		✓	✓	✓	<b>DCC</b> *	A £?

\* [www.devon.gov.uk/communitypaths.pdf](http://www.devon.gov.uk/communitypaths.pdf)

## 3.2 Planning & Sustainable Development

**Estuaries vision – The environmental value of our estuaries is fully appreciated and new developments are well sited, designed, constructed and maintained to minimise their negative and maximise their positive potential impacts.**

Estuarine beds and foreshore have long been undervalued for their wider value with unsympathetic net piecemeal loss of each, cumulatively adding up to areas of some significance. With informed awareness and understanding, this loss may be reversed at minimal cost to the developer and significant gain to the estuarine and wider environment. Estuaries are often the downstream basin that receive and collect the silt and debris from poorly managed earth and building construction works upstream and the consequent cumulative nutrient loading and recreational pressures from the households that move in. As a community we need to be more mindful and actively responsible for the environmental footprints of our buildings and lives – the impacts are relatively predictable and most easily mitigated with forward planning.

The South Devon AONB Management Plan has a complementary relationship with the development planning process and this South Devon Estuaries Management Plan is intended to supplement the detail of the AONB Management Plan in this regard. The ethos of the EMP is to aim for a net gain in extent and health of foreshore, seabed and tidal water habitat by advising and working with the developers and relevant authorities. South Devon AONB Estuaries Partnership are not presently a formal consultee of MMO Marine Licenses but do comment and advise the MMO and statutory consultees on local detail and environmental matters.

Planning documents for areas with a coastal influence may wish to make reference to the MMO's licensing requirements and any relevant marine plans to ensure that necessary regulations are adhered to. For marine and coastal areas where a marine plan is not currently in place, the MMO advise local authorities to refer to the Marine Policy Statement - [www.bit.ly/24NMuxV](http://www.bit.ly/24NMuxV) for guidance on any planning activity that includes a section of coastline or [estuary]. All public authorities taking authorisation or enforcement decisions that affect or might affect the UK marine area must do so in accordance with the Marine and Coastal Access Act - [www.bit.ly/1VWhhbT](http://www.bit.ly/1VWhhbT) and the UK Marine Policy Statement unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise. Local authorities may also wish to refer to the MMO's online guidance – [www.bit.ly/1Uhfbka](http://www.bit.ly/1Uhfbka) and the Planning Advisory Service soundness self-assessment checklist – [www.bit.ly/1YnMox2](http://www.bit.ly/1YnMox2)

### National policies

The primary framework for the planning system is set out in national legislation and policy:

#### **Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000**

Section 85 of the *Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000* places a duty on relevant authorities *to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB* when exercising or performing any functions affecting land in an AONB.

This provides an over-riding statutory framework for all policy and decision making in the AONB by public bodies, including planning authorities and government agencies.



## The National Planning Policy Framework

Government policies for plan-making and decision-taking above the low water mark are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. The policy for AONBs states that:

*Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in ... Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in all these areas ...* (Para 115).

*Planning permission should be refused for major developments in [AONBs] except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:*

- *the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;*
- *the cost of, and scope for, developing elsewhere outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and*
- *any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.* (Para 116).

The Framework also makes special provision for Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Green Space, Heritage Coasts, designated heritage assets, locations at risk of flooding or coastal erosion, coastal change management areas and ancient woodland.

*Para 126* – Local Authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. South Hams and DCC do this in part through their role in AONB & Estuary management plans.

## The UK Marine Policy Statement

The principal policies affecting plan-making and decision-taking below the high water spring mark and affecting the South Devon AONB are contained within the UK Marine Policy Statement. [www.bit.ly/1s9mX68](http://www.bit.ly/1s9mX68) link to pdf download 1.1MB

*For any development proposed within or relatively close to nationally designated areas [this includes Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Heritage Coasts] the marine plan authority should have regard to the specific statutory purposes of the designated areas ...* (Para 2.6.5.4).

## Relevant AONB Management Plan Policies

### Plan/P1 Plan-making - adapted

Planning policies will give due weight to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty and special qualities of the South Devon AONB Estuaries; while supporting small scale development that is appropriate to its setting, is in keeping with its character, and meets the economic and social needs of local communities.

### Plan/P2 Decision-taking

Development management decisions will give great weight to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the South Devon AONB; and support development that is appropriate and proportionate to its setting within or adjacent to the South Devon AONB

### Plan/P3 Planning protocol - adapted

Local Planning Authorities will consult the South Devon AONB Estuaries Partnership on planning policy and significant planning applications following the agreed planning protocol, and use the South Devon AONB Estuaries Management Plan as guidance to inform plan-making and decision-taking.

### Plan/P4 Representations - adapted

The South Devon AONB Estuaries Partnership will provide representations to Local Planning Authorities preparing Local Plans, Neighbourhood Plans and Minerals and Waste Development Frameworks; and to the Marine Management Organisation in respect of Marine Plans; to ensure that they

- have had regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the South Devon AONB Estuaries throughout the plan preparation process;
- secure consistent and robust policies giving due weight to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty and special qualities of the South Devon AONB Estuaries.

### Plan/P5 Consultees

Natural England will continue to be the principal statutory consultee on planning and sustainable development matters affecting Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and designated estuaries. The South Devon AONB Unit will continue to provide a local perspective on the sensitivity to change in specific locations of the South Devon AONB's natural beauty and special qualities.

### Plan/P6 Providing advice - adapted

Advice on development proposals will increasingly be provided through standing advice and supporting documents including the South Devon AONB Planning Guidance document that will include a coastal, tidal waters, foreshore and seabed section.

### Est/P2 Maritime services

Boat maintenance, repair and storage facilities will be retained and encouraged within the existing developed harbour areas and the loss of essential shore-side infrastructure by conversion to other uses will be resisted.

## Additional Policy

### Cumulative loss of seabed, foreshore and habitat extent

There shall be a strong presumption against any further loss in extent or quality of foreshore, seabed or habitat unless demonstrably in the wider public interest

No.	Action	Estuary issue					Lead & Partners	Priority
		YE	EE	AE	SK	DE		
Est42	All foreshore, seabed and tidal waters developments will be challenged to conclude with a net gain in extent and health of foreshore, seabed and open-water habitat. Advising and working with developers and relevant authorities is central to achieving this action.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	SHDC, MMO, AONBu, NE, EA,	H £t
Est43	All developments within the estuary catchments to include adequate provision for sewage and waste water treatment before building completion.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	SHDC, SWW, EA	H £+

Est44	Ensure all developments within the estuary catchments have appropriate measures in place to significantly minimise potential site runoff before and during works, and a fully functioning Sustainable Drainage System in place on completion of the works.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<b>SHDC</b> , EA, DCC	H £+
Est45	Support the retention of existing marine employment activities within their present and historic sites through policies in the new Local Plan.	✓			✓	✓	<b>SHDC</b> , SHA, DHNA	O £t
Est46	Support appropriate growth of local marine industries where they complement local need and are sustainable to the receiving environment.	✓			✓	✓	<b>SHDC</b> , SHA, DHNA	O £t
Est47	Ensure that geological, palaeontological, environmental and archaeological interests and natural processes are given their appropriate level of priority within local planning decisions.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<b>SHDC</b> , NE, DHES,	O £t
Est48	Comment and give specific and best current conservation advice to regulatory authorities on shore-side, foreshore and seabed developments.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<b>AONBu</b> , NE, EA MMO, SHDC	O £t
Est49	Publish Planning Guidance for the AONB, including Coast and Estuaries sections, as a resource for developers and appropriate authorities, promoting the need for no net loss of Natural Beauty.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<b>AONBu</b> , SHDC, MMO, EA, NE	H £+

### 3.3 Fisheries

**Estuaries vision – The Estuaries support a locally viable and sustainable fishing and fishery related industry that is renowned and celebrated for its quality and value to the area.**

#### Relevant AONB Management Plan Policies

##### Est/P3 Mariculture

Sustainable mariculture enterprises will be retained and encouraged in appropriate estuary locations where they are consistent with environmental designations, both as a traditional feature of the AONB economy and as a “driver” for further improvements to water quality.

##### Est/P7 Fisheries management

The populations of resident and migratory fish in the AONB estuaries and rivers will be given effective protection from poaching and over-exploitation through more effective byelaws, information, reporting and enforcement.

No.	Action	Estuary issue					Lead & Partners	Priority
		YE	EE	AE	SK	DE		
Est50	Promote sustainable and responsible angling and angling related activities across the estuaries. * Special awareness will be promoted regarding non-native introductions, responsible and sustainable bait collection.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	D&SIFCA, EA, AONB	O £t
Est51	Support established mariculture to benefit the local economy and as a water quality driver. Novel mariculture will be considered on an individual basis based on sound science, risk management (including for non-native species) and sensitivity of local site and wildlife.	✓		✓	✓	✓	D&SIFCA, SHDC, CEFAS, NE	O £+
Est52	Promote fishery byelaws and patrols with the support of local relevant authorities. Wider concerns of poaching will be highlighted and reporting of suspicious activity encouraged.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	D&SIFCA, MMO, EA, relevant authorities	O £=
Est53	Support Commercial fishing and related activities to benefit the local economy based on sound science, environmental sustainability and sensitivity of local site and wildlife.	✓			✓	✓	D&SIFCA, MMO, EA, relevant authorities	O £?

\* Details of individual estuary fishing intricacies;

Yealm estuary – Crown Estate fundus – there is no public right to collect bait.

Erme estuary – privately owned and managed by Flete Estate - The Erme River is a ‘Free and Several Fishery’, meaning that there is no public right to fish or collect any bait from its tidal waters (including foreshore). All fishing and bait collection within the Erme estuary is controlled and policed by the Flete Estate.

Avon, Salcombe-Kingsbridge and Dart estuaries – Duchy of Cornwall owned fundus - designated as being part of the 'Water of Dartmouth', is a Several Fishery meaning that there is no public right to fish or collect any bait from its tidal waters or foreshore. At the time of writing, there is however no intention to be obstructive to fishermen involved in their pursuit for personal non-commercial leisure purposes of responsible fishing and bait collection by the Duchy of Cornwall - owners of the Several Fishery or the various lessees of the estuaries. For the Avon estuary there is a declared policy that no fish netting licences will be issued, other than for sand eel fishing.

## Section 4 – Organisation

### 4.1 Awareness & Communication

**Estuaries vision – The Estuaries’ special qualities and vulnerabilities are widely understood and appreciated, and are viewed as an asset by local communities and businesses.**

While there are many individuals and groups with in depth knowledge of the special qualities of the estuaries, there are gaps in awareness and communication between those who work the land, estuaries and seas, and those who enjoy it for recreation; between those who live in the AONB and those who live in the adjoining urban areas; and between those born in the area and those visiting or recently moved into it.

#### Relevant AONB Management Plan Policies

##### **Aware/P1 Estuary awareness** - *adapted*

Awareness and understanding of the Estuaries and their special qualities that contribute to their care will be promoted amongst residents, businesses, organisations and visitors in and around the AONB.

##### **Aware/P2 Caring for our estuaries** - *adapted*

Support, awareness, understanding and respect for the people actively contributing to the care of the features and natural resources of the estuaries will be promoted.

##### **Aware/P3 Ecosystem services**

An improved understanding of all the benefits the estuaries provide for us will be at the core of communication activity, seeking to foster informed decisions and actions that properly value our natural environment. The importance of healthy and well-functioning ecosystems will be promoted, including the whole range of provisioning, regulating, cultural and supporting services.

##### **Aware/P4 Lifelong learning** - *adapted*

People of all ages will be encouraged to investigate, record and celebrate their local places, and enjoy considerate and informed experiences of wildlife and the natural environment. These will aim to inspire meaningful and positive changes in decision making and behaviour affecting the estuaries.

##### **Aware/P5 Goods and services**

Local communities and visitors will be encouraged to make consumer choices to support local, high quality products and services that sustain the area’s special qualities, landscape and the people who manage it and make a living from it.

##### **Aware/P6 Involving everyone** - *adapted*

Organisations, groups and communities will be encouraged and supported in playing an active role in conserving and enhancing the special qualities of the estuaries.



No.	Action	Estuary issue					Lead & Partners	Priority
		YE	EE	AE	SK	DE		
Est54	Promote an annual programme of estuary events within the AONB events programme.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AONBu	O £+
Est55	Publish annual Local Harbour Guides with relevant estuary information on issues and management.	✓			✓	✓	RYHA, SHA, DHNA, AONB	O £=
Est56	Maintain AONB estuaries information and interpretation signage.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AONBu	O £=
Est57	Develop a 'Hidden Coast smart app' and subject to securing funding establishing its feasibility and development.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AONBu, UoP, HS, NE, DHES (HER)	O £+
Est58	Campaign for water quality awareness, understanding and improvements across the estuary catchments.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	SDCP	O £+
Est59	Support and strengthen the South Devon Beach Teacher network.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AONBu	O £t
Est60	Develop a series of short informative videos about the estuaries compiled from existing video footage.				✓		AONBu	A £t
Est61	Develop environmental interpretation materials for use by local ferry operators, subject to securing funding and operator agreement.	✓		✓	✓	✓	AONBu	A £+

## 4.2 Partnership & organisation

**Estuaries vision - Effective strategic leadership is delivering real benefits to the landscape, communities and economy of the estuaries.**

Management of the South Devon AONB Estuaries is overseen by the South Devon AONB Estuaries Partnership, a partnership of organisations and interests which works to provide a strategic lead in the conservation and enhancement of the area’s estuaries.

Most of the individual estuaries also support a local estuary forum that more specifically meets to discuss the management and conservation of their local estuary and relevant water catchment issues.

The wider task of ‘making the Plan happen’ involves a far greater range of organisations, agencies, local groups, landowners and individuals from the wider community.

- Organisation chart / structure\*
- South Devon AONB

Estuaries Partnership

Estuary Forums (incl. Harbours & Harbour User Groups)

South Devon Catchments Partnership

Key players / local community

\* within illustrated Plan

The South Devon AONB Estuaries Management Plan is not just for the AONB unit but for the numerous local organisations directly and indirectly involved in the estuaries’ management, use, enjoyment and conservation, and whose funding and timescales may differ widely.

Some of the management plan’s actions will occur within the present funding and working arrangements; some only if additional funding and/or working assistance is found and secured. Some aspirations are included where a sense of direction is felt to be beneficial.

In our rapidly changing climate of scientific understanding, management and funding, the management plan shall be kept updated periodically and be reported on annually.

Principle – following the principles of Integrated Coastal Management, to promote good and effective meshing between organisations active within the catchment areas of the estuaries.

## Relevant AONB Management Plan Policies

### Est/P5 Coordination and management

The effective coordination and management of the rivers and estuaries will be developed through the AONB Estuaries Partnership, community forums, and the Catchment Based Approach.

### Part/P2 Management Plan implementation - adapted

The AONB Estuaries Partnership, through its member organisations and the AONB staff unit, will seek to achieve its vision for the AONB Estuaries by implementing the Estuaries Management Plan in the following ways:

- By undertaking project work.
- By allocating grants and funding streams.
- By securing new grants and funding.
- By exercising existing statutory and regulatory functions, including planning and development control.
- By developing partnerships and co-operative programmes.
- By commissioning research and survey programmes.
- By educating, communicating, advising and informing.
- By lobbying for change at local, regional, national and international level.
- By providing leadership and co-ordination of the work of others.
- By encouraging others to put the conservation and enhancement of the AONB Estuaries at the core of their strategies, plans & actions.

### Part/P3 AONB Estuaries Partnership arrangements - adapted

The AONB local and statutory authorities will maintain effective estuaries partnership arrangements including a dedicated Estuaries Officer within a locally based South Devon AONB staff unit.

### Part/P5 Partnerships - adapted

The AONB Estuaries Partnership will foster constructive links with partnerships and strategic initiatives at local, county and regional level.

No.	Action	Estuary issue					Lead & Partners	Priority
		YE	EE	AE	SK	DE		
Est62	South Devon AONB Partnership will maintain an 'estuaries' sub-group with an overview of the estuaries and will coordinate their management and its funding and will meet biannually.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	EO, AONB, SHA, SHDC, DCC, NT, NE, EA, DoC	O £t
Est63	Local estuary community based forums / management groups will continue to meet locally to discuss local issues and their management biannually, engendering a spirit of local ownership and involvement. <sup>1</sup> Erme Estuary Management Advisory Group will be reformed as required. <sup>2</sup> Revival of an Estuary Forum in some form will be explored in partnership with Dart Harbour & Navigation Authority	✓	✓ <sup>1</sup>	✓	✓	✓ <sup>2</sup>	EO, YEMG, AEF, SKECF, SHA, DHNA	O £t
Est64	South Devon AONB Estuaries Partnership will hold an annual public event – actively linking with the South Devon Catchments Partnership and its Catchments Action Plan, the AONB and Estuaries Management Plan.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AONBu, WRT, EA, SDEF	H £+

Est65	The Estuaries Management Plan will be reported on annually and be formally reviewed and updated in 8 years – 2024; thereby falling into step with the statutory AONB management plan timetable.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<b>EO</b> , AONBu, All	O £=
Est66	The Estuaries Partnership will seek to fund the continued employment of the Estuaries Officer post.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<b>AONB</b> , SHDC, DCC, NE, SHA, DoC, NT, EA	O £=
Est67	The Salcombe Harbour Authority Environmental Management System will be supported.				✓		<b>SHA</b> , AONBu, SKECF	H £t

## Section 5 – Research & monitoring

### 5.1 Research and monitoring

**Estuaries vision – Our estuaries support and encourage high standards of sustainable scientific research, study and monitoring that they and the natural beauty that they support may be better understood and more effectively conserved and managed for all.**

By their nature, many aspects of estuaries remain hidden from view and our understanding, add to this the relative difficulty of working within them and their undervalued worth, there is still much to be learnt about them; and through their subtly different geographies and histories each of our estuaries are very different and the learning from one does not always equate to another, so that their individual management can equally need to be different. It is therefore imperative that we support and encourage high quality research and monitoring that will help our wider understanding of estuarine ecology and natural processes that we may best conserve them based on best current science.

#### Policies

##### Responsibility of researchers/surveyors

All those involved in research and monitoring surveys (including baseline) should liaise with the relevant landowners, Harbour and Estuary management authorities to ensure that local needs and restrictions may be considered, the duplication of effort minimised and any relevant learning passed on.

##### Environmental sustainability of research and scientific study

All novel research should aim to be benign and sustainable to the hosting habitats and wildlife communities / archaeological interest – where necessary, independent expertise / references will be sought.

##### Accessibility of research and survey data

Subject to data protection and intellectual property rights all data collected should be archived within the relevant repository and reports published made accessible for conservation and management purposes.

No.	Action	Estuary issue					Lead & Partners	Priority
		YE	EE	AE	SK	DE		
Est68	Ensure all survey, research data and reports are made available to the relevant repository for local conservation management purposes.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Individual researcher / surveyor, relevant records centre	0 £t
Est69	Ensure all surveys and research projects are benign and sustainable to the study area. Where necessary independent advice will be sought.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AONBu, academic establishments, relevant authorities	0 £t

Est70	Ensure all surveyors / researchers liaise in advance with the relevant landowners and site managers about their intended projects.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<b>AONBu</b> , academic establishments, relevant authorities	0 £t
-------	--	---	---	---	---	---	--	---------

## Appendices –

### 1. Details of plans and strategies relevant to the South Devon Estuaries

Name	Web-link	Geographical-scope	Theme scope
South West River Basin Plan – published by the Environment Agency	<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1QaK4XH">www.bit.ly/1QaK4XH</a>	Covers the whole of the South West ‘River Basin’ district – Devon, Cornwall, Somerset, Dorset and some adjoining areas.	The plan describes the state of the water environment in the South West when the plan was published in Dec 2009 (updated Feb 2016), what improvements are possible by 2021 and how the actions will make a difference to the local environment: the catchments, estuaries and coasts, and groundwater.
South Devon Catchments Action Plan – being prepared by South Devon Catchments Partnership	<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1ILBlyd">www.bit.ly/1ILBlyd</a>	Entire water catchments of the Yealm* to Teign estuaries and smaller freshwater outfalls between	S. Devon Catchments Partnership and local community action plan to maintain and improve water quality throughout the area. In preparation for 2016 publication. *Yealm adopted from the Tamar catchment area
South Devon AONB Estuaries Management Plan – 2016-2020		Tidal waters and immediate coastline of the Yealm to Dart estuaries Water catchment areas of the estuaries and local coast	South Devon AONB Estuaries Partnership management plan to encourage and manage the sustainable use and enjoyment of the estuaries and ‘feeding’ waters.
South Devon AONB Management Plan 2014-2019	<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1QtIHD8">www.bit.ly/1QtIHD8</a>	South Devon AONB designated area Landscape and seascape visible from the AONB, and catchments of receiving waters	Conservation of the AONB, its’ visible buffer and water shed – formal review 2019.

South England Inshore and South Offshore Marine Plan – being prepared by Marine Management Organisation – consultation draft expected 2016	<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1HSDGSo">www.bit.ly/1HSDGSo</a>	<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1m8tmvu">www.bit.ly/1m8tmvu</a> West of Dartmouth to Folkestone Inshore – MHWS to 12 nautical mile (NM) limit Offshore – 12NM limit to 200NM Economic Exclusion Zone	Marine plans guide those who use and regulate the marine area to encourage sustainable development while considering the environment, economy and society. Marine plans apply only in their area, but if a proposed activity may affect the plan area, this should be acknowledged and considered in the application and decision making.
South West Inshore and South West Offshore Marine Plan – to be prepared by MMO – date unknown	<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1O6wLbd">www.bit.ly/1O6wLbd</a>	<a href="http://www.bit.ly/1m63qkx">www.bit.ly/1m63qkx</a> West of Dartmouth around to the Bristol Channel Coastal height limits as above	As above



## 2. Details of statutory designations relevant to the South Devon Estuaries

Name	Designation	Links	Interest
Yealm Estuary	Site of Special Scientific Interest - 85ha - statutory	NE site info. - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1U27hKm">www.bit.ly/1U27hKm</a> map – <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1NUleKm">www.bit.ly/1NUleKm</a> citation - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1jNFMqU">www.bit.ly/1jNFMqU</a>	Biological - It is an example of a ria, or drowned river valley, which shows a transition to estuarine conditions in its upper reaches. The inlet is steep sided and narrow with several tributaries. A sand bar at the entrance provides some shelter from the prevailing south westerly winds. There is a diverse range of biological communities, reflecting the influence of marine conditions far up the inlet.
Plymouth Sound and Estuaries – includes parts of the Yealm Estuary	Special Area of Conservation – statutory	NE site info. - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1SNIB7D">www.bit.ly/1SNIB7D</a> Map - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1F9skAL">www.bit.ly/1F9skAL</a> Citation - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1M2y8PV">www.bit.ly/1M2y8PV</a>	Plymouth Sound and its associated tributaries comprise a complex site of marine inlets. The high diversity of reef and sedimentary habitats and salinity conditions give rise to diverse communities representative of ria systems and some unusual features, including abundant southern Mediterranean-Atlantic species rarely found in Britain.
Erme Estuary	Site of Special Scientific Interest – 431ha - statutory	NE site info. - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1ma0GIV">www.bit.ly/1ma0GIV</a> Map - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1Nb1cJ8">www.bit.ly/1Nb1cJ8</a> citation – <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1OSRz2m">www.bit.ly/1OSRz2m</a>	Biological - this small secluded estuary, located on the South Devon coast, contains fine examples of estuarine, saltmarsh, freshwater and oak-hazel woodland habitats. It supports an important breeding bird community and, additionally, provides feeding and roosting grounds for waterfowl on passage and in winter.
Salcombe to Kingsbridge estuary	Site of Special Scientific Interest - statutory	NE site info. - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1IU9Nf6">www.bit.ly/1IU9Nf6</a> Map - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1ltMkfZ">www.bit.ly/1ltMkfZ</a> Citation - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1ma0ClZ">www.bit.ly/1ma0ClZ</a>	Biological - The Salcombe-Kingsbridge Estuary possesses a very rich and diverse intertidal and sub-tidal flora and invertebrate fauna, with certain communities being outstanding examples of their type in the North-east Atlantic.

Salcombe-Kingsbridge estuary	Local Nature Reserve – SHDC – statutory	<p>Site info. - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/21OhAH0">www.bit.ly/21OhAH0</a></p> <p>Map - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1NLqlr6">www.bit.ly/1NLqlr6</a></p> <p>Byelaws - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1HUrWPe">www.bit.ly/1HUrWPe</a></p>	Biological and geological - The site is good for seeing passage and wintering birds, marine and coastal invertebrates, fish and coastal vegetation.
South Devon AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – 340km <sup>2</sup> - statutory	<p>Site info. - <a href="http://www.southdevonaonb.org.uk">www.southdevonaonb.org.uk</a></p> <p>Map - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1M2AfU5">www.bit.ly/1M2AfU5</a></p> <p>History - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1TArKP9">www.bit.ly/1TArKP9</a></p>	Landscape scale natural beauty - the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is one of Britain's finest protected landscapes - loved for its rugged cliffs, sandy coves, peaceful countryside, picturesque villages, rolling hills, colourful hedge banks, and secretive estuaries. It is an ancient countryside with strong links to the sea and generations of human activity etched into the grain of the landscape.
South Devon Heritage Coast	<p>Heritage Coast – non statutory</p> <p>- 75km of coastline</p> <p>Designation info. - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1NUOjGA">www.bit.ly/1NUOjGA</a></p>	<p>Covers the coastline between Wembury Beach and Sharkham Point. Around Yealm &amp; Erme estuaries boundary reaches &gt;5km inland, other areas boundary is 300m inland from coast, boundary extends 2km out to sea.</p> <p>Map - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1YY95aa">www.bit.ly/1YY95aa</a></p>	Heritage Coasts are the finest stretches of undeveloped coastline in England and Wales. Their natural beauty and their enjoyment by the public give them a special claim for both protection and sensitive management.
South Devon Shore Dock SAC	Special Area of Conservation	<p>Site info. - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1OhBhNM">www.bit.ly/1OhBhNM</a></p> <p>Map - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1IUhWQT">www.bit.ly/1IUhWQT</a></p>	A collection of important rocky-shore sites for shore dock <i>Rumex rupestris</i> - laying at the eastern limit of its current UK range. In 1999 a thorough survey of the site located 16 colonies and a total of at least 62 plants. The site also has some very extensive areas of additional suitable habitat.

Prawle Point & Start Point SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest	<p>Site info. - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1R9yexa">www.bit.ly/1R9yexa</a></p> <p>Map - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1TAvKpc">www.bit.ly/1TAvKpc</a></p> <p>Citation - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1OhDIFv">www.bit.ly/1OhDIFv</a></p>	Mixed interest - the stretch of coastline which includes Prawle Point and Start Point is of national importance for its geology, lichens and invertebrates, and supports a good variety of rare flowering plants and breeding birds. The intertidal area is of major biological importance.
Blackstone Point SSSI & SAC	Site of Special Scientific Interest & Special Area of Conservation 7ha	<p>Site info. <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1Qvrvfp">www.bit.ly/1Qvrvfp</a></p> <p>Map – <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1IOwxbl">www.bit.ly/1IOwxbl</a></p> <p>Citations: SSSI - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1XVI4H7">www.bit.ly/1XVI4H7</a> SAC - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1madBnG">www.bit.ly/1madBnG</a></p>	Shore dock - this site is notified because of the occurrence of the internationally rare flowering plant <i>Rumex rupestris</i> (shore dock). The species is a European coastal endemic that is threatened throughout its range with its world status recorded as vulnerable
Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest	<p>Site info. - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1PYOIbj">www.bit.ly/1PYOIbj</a></p> <p>Map <a href="http://www.bit.ly/21OxGR4">www.bit.ly/21OxGR4</a></p> <p>Citation - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1REeiSj">www.bit.ly/1REeiSj</a></p>	Biological - This site is of high botanical value due to the presence of many rare or local flowering plants and lichens and is also important for its invertebrate fauna and for breeding birds
Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone	Special Area of Conservation ('Site of Community Interest' at time of writing)	<p>Site info.;</p> <p>JNCC - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1QeJrMO">www.bit.ly/1QeJrMO</a> NE - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1YYncw2">www.bit.ly/1YYncw2</a></p> <p>Map - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1IEI7I0">www.bit.ly/1IEI7I0</a> NB site shows all local marine SAC's</p> <p>Citation - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1IEIA6F">www.bit.ly/1IEIA6F</a></p>	Marine biological – submerged reefs - The reefs support a wide variety of plant and animal communities commonly showing excellent examples of zonation, from deep circalittoral to the shallow infralittoral. The site represents some of the most biologically diverse reefs in the country and supports many locally distinct and nationally rare or scarce species. Large dense beds of the protected pink sea fan and priority species such as the sunset cup coral and the sea fan anemone have been recorded within the site.

Lyme Bay & Torbay SAC	Special Area of Conservation ('Site of Community Interest' at time of writing)	<p>Site info.;</p> <p>JNCC - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1QeJrMO">www.bit.ly/1QeJrMO</a></p> <p>NE - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1UxvrL">www.bit.ly/1UxvrL</a></p> <p>Map - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1NbgRs1">www.bit.ly/1NbgRs1</a></p> <p>Citation - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1YYqWxl">www.bit.ly/1YYqWxl</a></p>	<p>Marine biological interests;</p> <p>– submerged reefs &amp; caves - associated ecological communities with particularly high species richness and diversity. Reef habitats marked as a marine biodiversity 'hotspot' - important species include sunset cup coral (1 of 5 UK sites), nationally scarce sponge and the pink sea fan.</p> <p>- Mackerel Cove to Dartmouth sea caves, demonstrate some of the best coastal solution caves in the UK; supporting a richness of animal life. Surfaces and walls host a variety of sponges, bryozoan crusts, pink sea fingers, anemones and cup corals; overhangs, holes and recesses are home to some notable species such as the sponge <i>Geodia cydonium</i>.</p>
-----------------------	--	---	--

Skerries Bank and Surrounds MCZ	Marine Conservation Zone	<p>Site info.;</p> <p>JNCC - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1LMaVTT">www.bit.ly/1LMaVTT</a></p> <p>NE - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1NLQKoB">www.bit.ly/1NLQKoB</a></p> <p>Map - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1YYvt38">www.bit.ly/1YYvt38</a></p> <p>Citation / Designation order - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/1IUD1L0">www.bit.ly/1IUD1L0</a></p> <p>Factsheet - <a href="http://www.bit.ly/21ODFFB">www.bit.ly/21ODFFB</a></p>	<p>Marine biological interests;</p> <p>- Skerries Bank and surrounds designated for the wide range of habitats found in the area as well as to protect the pink sea fan and spiny lobster. High species diversity.</p> <p>- Skerries Bank runs along the coast from Leek Cove to Torcross, and overlaps with the Start Point Inshore Potting Agreement (IPA). The IPA is a licensed area that is permanently or seasonally closed to mobile fishing gear (trawling), so that static gear, in particular pots, can be used instead.</p> <p>- exposed rocky shores dominated by barnacles and seaweeds interspersed with spiny lobsters, sponges and sea squirts. Slightly farther out, dense kelp forest important for red algae species. Within Start Bay, offshore muddy-sand and mud characterised by molluscs, burrowing crustaceans, sea cucumbers and burrowing worm <i>Maxmuelleria lankesteri</i>. The reef areas include delicate species - yellow staghorn sponge, ross coral, pink sea fan, and sunset cup coral.</p> <p>Overall important breeding area for flat fish and other mobile species. The short-snouted seahorse also been recorded at this site.</p>
---------------------------------	--------------------------	---	--

Other designations of significance relevant to the South Devon Estuaries

Geological Conservation Review sites - [www.bit.ly/1OkVEiY](http://www.bit.ly/1OkVEiY) - The **Geological Conservation Review** (GCR) is produced by the UK's Joint Nature Conservation Committee and is designed to identify those sites of national and international importance needed to show all the key

scientific elements of the geological and geomorphological features of Britain. GCR sites scattered throughout the South Devon area display sediments, rocks, minerals, fossils, and features of the landscape that make a special contribution to an understanding and appreciation of Earth science and the geological history of Britain.

UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species and habitats - [www.bit.ly/1RD5IUW](http://www.bit.ly/1RD5IUW) - is an internationally recognized program addressing threatened species and habitats and is designed to protect and restore biological systems. Plans are more species and habitat targeted rather than geographic, with many identified within the estuaries and surrounding sea and landscape.

County Wildlife Sites – Devon link [www.bit.ly/22ndXZ4](http://www.bit.ly/22ndXZ4) - it is a UK conservation designation, which despite conferring no statutory protection onto a site, does affirm a site's importance and value for wildlife in its county context. The designation is classified by Natural England as being a 'Local Site' designation, though sites can also be of a regional and national importance. In general, local (Devon) Wildlife Trusts, local authorities and other local wildlife/environmental/conservation groups collaborate to select and designate sites. There are many County Wildlife Sites (CWS) within the area with a wide mix of ownership, level of conservation management (if any) and public access.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments - designation specifically for sites of an archaeological character; selection of nationally important archaeological sites, which would particularly benefit from close management. While some change may be possible, there is a presumption that they will be handed on to the future in much the same state that we have found them. Scheduling derives its authority from the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act of 1979 – [www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/scheduled-monuments](http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/scheduled-monuments)

Registered Parks & Gardens - 'Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of special historic interest in England', established in 1983, currently identifies over 1,600 sites assessed to be of particular significance. The emphasis of the Register is on gardens, grounds and other planned open spaces, such as town squares. The majority of sites registered are, or started life as, the grounds of private houses, but public parks and cemeteries form important categories too. The emphasis of the Register is on 'designed' landscapes, rather than on planting or botanical importance – [www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/scheduled-monuments](http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/scheduled-monuments)

Listed Buildings – listing marks and celebrates a building's special architectural and historic interest, and also brings it under the consideration of the planning system, so that it can be protected for future generations. All buildings built before 1700 which survive in anything like their original condition are listed, as are most built between 1700 and 1840. Particularly careful selection is required for buildings from the period after 1945, usually a building has to be over 30 years old to be eligible for listing – [www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/listed-buildings](http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/listed-buildings)

Protected Wreck Sites - protected areas are likely to contain the remains of a vessel, or its contents, which are of historical, artistic or archaeological importance – [www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/protected-wreck-sites](http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/protected-wreck-sites)

Conservation Areas – areas designated for their special architectural and historic interest. - [www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/local/conservation-areas](http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/local/conservation-areas)

### 3. South Devon Estuaries' Regulatory Authorities

Name	Remit	Geographical Scope	Web-link
Dart Harbour & Navigation Authority (DHNA)	DHNA are a Trust Port, with statutory responsibilities for the safe management and conservancy of the tidal waters of the River Dart. Competent Harbour Authority - expected to maintain a pilotage service and can make compulsory pilotage directions. Local Lighthouse Authority - delegated to maintain and report on navigational lights, marks and beacons, by the General Lighthouse Authority.	The estuary and tidal waters of the River Dart – from the Totnes Weir to the mouth of the river south of Dartmouth (formally shown as the 'Dart Harbour Limit' on the Dart Harbour Ordnance Chart no. 2533).	<a href="http://www.dartharbour.org">www.dartharbour.org</a>
Devon & Severn Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (D&S IFCA)	D&S IFCA is responsible for marine fisheries (commercial & recreational) and environmental management in our inshore waters and estuaries. It was established on 1 April 2011 as a result of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. The Authority has taken over the duties, responsibilities and assets of Devon Sea Fisheries Committee, together with a broader remit for the sustainable management of the inshore marine environment.	The D&S IFCA district covers all tidal waters (out to 6 nautical miles from the 1983 baselines) within Devon County Council borders in the south and from the Devon and Cornwall County Council boundary up to the Gloucestershire County Council border and Wales in the north.	<a href="http://www.devonandsevernifca.gov.uk">www.devonandsevernifca.gov.uk</a>

Environment Agency (EA)	The EA's role relates to the protection and enhancement of the environment in England. Responsibilities include (but are not limited to): flood risk management; maintaining and improving the quality of surface waters and ground-waters; managing the use & conservation of water resources; regulating freshwater and migratory fisheries (including issuing rod licences); limiting the impacts of climate change.	National. The EA's remit covers the whole of England, about 13 million hectares of land, 22,000 miles (35,000 km) of river and 3,100 miles (5,000 km) of coastline	<a href="http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency">www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency</a>
Marine Management Organisation (MMO)	Created by the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, the MMO regulates and plans marine activities in the seas around England and Wales so that they're carried out in a sustainable way. Responsibilities include (but are not limited to): managing and monitoring fishing fleet sizes and quotas for catches; ensuring compliance with fisheries regulations; planning and licensing for marine construction, deposits and dredging that may have an environmental, economic or social impact; making marine nature conservation byelaws.	National (with regional teams), covering English waters out to 12 nautical miles.	<a href="http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/marine-management-organisation/about">www.gov.uk/government/organisations/marine-management-organisation/about</a>



Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA)	The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) checks the safety standards of UK and foreign ships, provides seafarer certification services, manages the UK Ship Register, and develops and implements maritime safety regulations and standards. MCA also provides a 24 hour maritime emergency response capability through HM Coastguard, including search and rescue and counter pollution	UK coast.	<a href="http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency">www.gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency</a>
Natural England (NE)	NE are the government's adviser for the natural environment in England, and oversee the protection of the habitats and species designated under European and UK law. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 allows NE to make Byelaws to 'protect' SSSIs. NE provide statutory advice for the management of European Marine Sites, as directed in the Habitats Regulations.	National (England).	<a href="http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england/about">www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england/about</a>

Salcombe Harbour Authority (SHA)	Salcombe Harbour is a municipal harbour operated by South Hams District Council, which is the Harbour Authority. Local Lighthouse Authority - delegated to maintain and report on navigational lights, marks and beacons, by the General Lighthouse Authority.	The tidal waters of the Salcombe-Kingsbridge estuary – from the tidal limits of each creek to the 'Salcombe Harbour Limit' on the Salcombe Harbour Ordnance Chart no. 28).	<a href="http://www.salcombeharbour.eu">www.salcombeharbour.eu</a>  Chart 28 – <a href="http://www.salcombeharbour.eu/navigation-information/admiralty-chart-28-salcombe-harbour/#">www.salcombeharbour.eu/navigation-information/admiralty-chart-28-salcombe-harbour/#</a>
----------------------------------	--	--	--

\*The Local Authority and Harbour Authority for each estuary may have their own set of local byelaws.

## Designations & maps – description of maps and their details to be shown within illustrated plan

### Overall map

- entire 5x estuaries & their water catchment areas
- coastal MPA's – SAC's x2 & MCZ
- fishery limits if clear at scale?
- rough estuary designation areas – SSSI, SAC
- rough management plan areas – Catchments Action Plan, AONB, Marine Plans, etc.
- main catchment rivers network

### Individual estuary maps

	<b>Yealm</b>	<b>Erme</b>	<b>Avon</b>	<b>Salcombe-Kingsbridge</b>	<b>Dart</b>
Immediate estuary area	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Estuary designations	SSSI, SAC Detail layer on website map	SSSI		SSSI, LNR Detail layer on website map	
Coastal designations limit		✓		✓	✓
Creek & local place names	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fundus ownership/lessees	Limit only – detail layer on website map	Limit only	Limit only – detail layer on website map	Limit only	Limit only
Key habitats by icon only	Seagrass, mudflat, saltmarsh	Mudflat, saltmarsh	Mudflat, saltmarsh	Seagrass, mudflat, saltmarsh	Mudflat, saltmarsh
Key biotope map	Layer on website map	Layer on website map	Layer on website map	Layer on website map	Layer on website map
Fishery limit	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Harbour limit	✓			✓	✓
Main towns & villages	Shading & names	Shading & names	Shading & names	Shading & names	Shading & names
Main roads	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Access – detail layer on website	Footpaths, minor roads, slipways, seasonal ferry	Footpaths, minor roads, tidal crossing	Footpaths, minor roads, slipways, seasonal ferry	Footpaths, minor roads, slipways, ferry routes	Footpaths, minor roads, slipways, ferry routes
Moorings area – detail on website	✓		✓	✓	✓
Bathing beaches		✓	✓	✓	✓
Beach areas	Simple shading	Simple shading	Simple shading	Simple shading	Simple shading
Seabed topography	Detail layer on website if freely available	Detail layer on website if freely available	Detail layer on website if freely available	Detail layer on website if freely available	Detail layer on website if freely available