



Corf Scout Camp, the Newtown Harbour SSSI and the Stewardship Agreement with Natural England

Corf is situated within the Newtown Harbour SSSI. It was designated as an SSSI between the 1950s and 1980s because of the quality of its habitat. SSSI's are regulated by Natural England.

The citation under which it was designated can be viewed online at:

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/1004233.pdf>

An SSSI is a formal conservation designation for an area which is of particular interest because of its fauna, flora or geological or physiological features; in other words, these areas have extremely high conservation value.

With every SSSI there is a list of Potentially Damaging Operations (PDO's) which are seen by Natural England (N.E.) as things which could damage the environment. For instance, building works or wholesale clearance of vegetation, it would be illegal to carry out such works without approval from N.E.

The List of PDOs for Corf are listed online at:

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/PDFsForWeb/Consent/1004233.pdf>

If N.E.'s permission has not been obtained, then we could:

- get an unlimited fine if we - or we allow someone else to - carry out a listed PDO
- have to pay to repair any damage to the site

In addition to the SSSI rules there is also a Stewardship Agreement in place on the land. This is an agreement between the landowner and N.E. It pays money (around £900 per year) for us to carry out certain works to the site. These works are primarily to promote the re-colonisation of the site by rare Nightingales which need dense scrub in which to nest.

To achieve this, the agreed programme of works includes:

- Felling some larger trees to break up the dense canopy which will allow light in and encourage scrub to re-generate naturally
- Cutting back leggy thin scrub which will then naturally regenerate thicker and denser
- Using the branch ends and cut scrub to form barriers of 'dead hedges' around areas of scrub re-generation so smaller plants are not trampled accidentally and can grow up.

Historically individual Scout Groups have used and maintained certain sites at Corf BUT it is very important that everyone recognises that 'YOUR' SITE IS NOT YOUR SITE LEGALLY. All of Corf Camp site is owned by the Trustees (members) of the

County Executive Committee under the Terms of Reference approved last year, the County Executive have charged the Corf Sub-Committee with the management of Corf but it is the Trustees who are responsible and they who 'carry the can' if things occur which are not properly authorised, or which breach the Stewardship Agreement.

This means that alterations or works which may affect the SSSI or the management under the Stewardship Agreement must not be carried out by individuals or scout groups without the sanction of the Corf Committee or the warden on their behalf.

A productive meeting to which every group was invited to attend was held on the 11th of September 2018 at the Mattinson Centre where Mark Larter of Natural England explained a few things about the SSSI and the Stewardship Agreement. At the meeting it was agreed that the Corf Committee would set up a means whereby suggestions and requests from Island Scout Groups could be made to the Corf Committee. These requests can then be assessed by the Committee to see if they fit in with our own ethos of management and if approved, then taken forward for approval by Natural England as necessary. To this end we attach a form which we would like to use for any proposals that you have for your individual site or suggestions for Corf as a whole. Copies of the form (Site Works Proposal Form CCF1) will in due course be made available on the Corf Website.

Please do recognise that any requests/proposals need to satisfy the following before consent can be given:

- Firstly, the Committee need to agree that the proposal is in line with its management ethos and the objectives and priorities set out in the Terms of Reference especially having regard to any financial/cost implications to the Corf budget.
- Secondly – if the Committee are content then we may need to seek approval from Natural England if we think the request/ proposal may be a PDO or if it may affect the Stewardship Agreement.
- Thirdly, if the first two criteria have have been satisfied then the Committee or Warden need to agree who is to do the work and when.

We are discussing with Natural England timeframe for these sorts of approvals and we think that we would like to collate any initial requests by 1st May 2019. Going forward, the Committee need to decide whether to consider new requests on an ad-hoc basis as they come in, quarterly or six-monthly.

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