

## OBJECTIVES OF THE TACTICS PROJECT

The project will have two main conservation objectives, both related directly to the threat described in the *Problem* document.

### Objective 1

**Summary:**

Protect the freshwater marsh and reedbed at Titchwell from the sea.

**Description:**

We will protect the freshwater marsh and reedbed at Titchwell from incursion of the sea for at least the next 50 years – which for the reasons outlined in the *Problem* document will result in these habitats being protected indefinitely. The area of freshwater marsh that will be protected is 12 ha and the area of freshwater reedbed that will be protected is 17 ha.

Protection of the marsh will result in Titchwell continuing to support at least as many wintering wigeon *Anas penelope* and pintail *A. acuta* as it does at present, and will also make possible the mitigation work described below. Protection of the reedbed will result in the reserve continuing to support at least as many breeding and wintering bitterns *Botaurus stellaris* and breeding marsh harriers *Circus aeruginosus* as it does at present. The Titchwell populations of the birds affected are as follows: wintering wigeon 273 mean, 1,750 peak; wintering pintail 84 mean, 380 peak; breeding bittern 1 pair (of just 50 or so pairs in the whole of the UK); wintering bittern 1–2 birds; breeding marsh harrier 4 pairs.

### Objective 2

**Summary:**

Mitigate and compensate for the inevitable loss of the brackish marsh at Titchwell.

**Description:**

As explained in the *Problem* document, we will not be able to protect the brackish marsh at Titchwell from the sea. However, we will mitigate the loss of this habitat (which covers an area of 11 ha) by re-profiling and enlarging islands in the freshwater marsh and compensate for the residual loss by creating new habitat for breeding avocets in the Lincolnshire Washes reserve, immediately adjacent to the Wash SPA.

The re-profiling and enlargement of islands at Titchwell will result in the provision of 0.87 ha of new or improved habitat. This is expected to be used by 10–15 breeding pairs of avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*, compared with the 40 or so pairs that currently use the reserve. In addition, it will allow Titchwell to continue to support as many wintering avocet, bar-tailed godwit *Limosa lapponica*, golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria*, knot *Calidris canutus* and redshank *Tringa totanus* as it does at present. Titchwell populations of these species are: wintering avocet 42 mean, 138 peak; wintering bar-tailed godwit 968 mean, 7,040 peak; wintering golden plover 1,679 mean, 5,000 peak; wintering knot 577 mean, 3,750 peak; wintering redshank 83 mean, 210 peak.

The compensatory work in the Lincolnshire Washes reserve will provide habitat for 10–15 pairs of avocet in addition to the 40 or so pairs that currently breed on this reserve. It will involve the re-profiling and creation of islands in an existing 15-ha

brackish lagoon. Additional compensatory work will be carried out before the project starts. This will entail the creation of a new 7-ha lagoon with breeding islands, and will provide habitat for a further 18–22 pairs of avocet.

### **Project actions**

The objectives described above will be achieved through the implementation of the following actions.

#### ***Concrete conservation actions:***

- Implement managed realignment scheme at Titchwell
  - Create access track
  - Extract spoil
  - Replace existing Parrinder Wall, between the brackish and freshwater marshes
  - Heighten and strengthen West Bank where it protects the freshwater marsh and reedbed
  - Breach East Bank by the brackish marsh
- Replace sluice in East Bank at Titchwell
- Re-profile and enlarge islands in freshwater marsh at Titchwell
- Create new habitat in RSPB Lincolnshire washes reserve to compensate for loss of breeding avocets at Titchwell
- Carry out mitigation work at Titchwell for water voles and common lizards

#### ***Public awareness and dissemination actions:***

- Develop and maintain project web pages
- Produce layman's report
- Design, create and erect project information signs
- Produce and distribute project newsletter
- Produce and distribute project leaflet
- Develop and deliver project information and demonstration days
- Develop and run programme of guided walks
- Undertake media work
- Produce revised trail guide for Titchwell

#### ***Project operation and monitoring actions:***

- Carry out all necessary project management actions
- Undertake essential scientific monitoring activities
- Network with other projects
- Produce after-LIFE conservation plan