

# ST. JOHN'S POINT

A SPECIAL PLACE...



View of St. John's Point

SITES OF BIOLOGICAL AND EARTH SCIENCE IMPORTANCE HAVE BEEN SURVEYED BY NORTHERN IRELAND ENVIRONMENT AGENCY TO ASSESS THEIR SCIENTIFIC INTEREST. THE BEST SITES ARE NOW BEING DECLARED AS AREAS OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (ASSIs). IN DOING SO WE AIM TO SAFEGUARD THESE IMPORTANT SITES FOR THE BENEFIT OF PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.

St. John's Point has been declared an ASSI because it supports a great variety of earth science features, habitats and species.

St. John's Point ASSI is notable for its intertidal communities. It extends from Killough Bay southwards around the point to Black Rock and includes Corely Point, the bay on the south-west corner of the point, St. John's Point itself, the shore at Castle Park and the slightly narrower shore on the eastern side from St. John's Point to Portdoo and Dog's Rock.

A range of marine habitats are present. Exposed rock ridges with deep pools and crevices dominate in the upper, middle and lower shores, with boulder shores, flat rock outcrops, areas of shingle and sandy rock pools also present. Most of the shore is moderately exposed but there are some sheltered bays.

The rocks around the shoreline are used by Grey Seals and Common Seals as haul-out sites.

Channelled Wrack dominates on the upper shore. On the mid shore, the boulders and exposed ridges and crevices are dominated by Limpets and Barnacles. Red algae such as Tubular Weed and Coral Weed, normally associated with the lower shore, can also grow here within the ridges.



Rock ridges and rock pools

Algae such as False Irish Moss, Pepper Dulse, Spiral Wrack, Toothed Wrack, Sea Lettuce, Bladder Wrack, Knotted Wrack and Sea Oak form distinct zones, with Dulse, Oarweed, Sugar Kelp, encrusting Coral Weed, Tangle (Cuvie) and Forest Kelp growing on the lowest areas of the shore.

Invertebrates found on the ridges and in the crevices and rock pools include Dog Whelks, Rough Periwinkles, Common Periwinkles, Common Shore Crabs, Edible Crabs, Velvet Swimming Crabs, Common Starfish, Edible Sea Urchins, Blue Mussels, Keel Worms, China Limpets, Flat Top Shells, Thick Top Shells and Beadlet Anemones.

Small beds of Eelgrass *Zostera marina* are found here on the upper shore of the bay at Corely Point, which is notable as this species is more often found in the subtidal zone.



Eelgrass



*Saltmarsh nestled amongst the rocky outcrops*

The vegetation at St. John's Point illustrates a natural change from maritime to terrestrial communities. Saltmarsh can be found nestled amongst the mosaic of rocky outcrops and shingle. Coastal grassland occurs over the tops of rocky outcrops. Saltmarsh communities are dominated by Saltmarsh Rush, Common Saltmarsh-grass and Sea Arrowgrass, with occasional Sea Aster and Sea-milkwort. The saltmarsh shows a smooth gradation into grassland communities dominated by Silverweed.

Red Fescue dominated coastal grassland is prevalent across the whole site, becoming more species-rich on the tops of rocky outcrops on the thin soils. Species associated with this more species-rich grassland include Kidney Vetch, Crested Hair-grass, Wild Carrot, Lady's Bedstraw, Sea Plantain and Wild Thyme. The grassland is occasionally flushed with freshwater off the land, providing a variety of species more commonly associated with wet grassland such as Carnation Sedge, Sharp-flowered Rush, Black Bog-rush, Water Mint and Marsh Pennywort.



*Species-rich coastal grassland*

St. John's Point contains a number of scarce plants and invertebrates, including Rock Samphire and Yellow Horned-poppy and on one vertical rock face Sea Wormwood. The rare woodlouse *Porcellionides cingendus* occurs at St. John's Point at its only site in Northern Ireland. Other rare invertebrates recorded at St. John's Point include water beetles and snails.

The geology at St. John's Point is dominated by a series of sandstone and shale of Silurian age dating from some 420 million years ago. Of particular interest are the younger igneous rocks of Palaeogene age, some 60 million years old. The latter date from a time when the earth's crust was thinning over much of north-east Ireland and western Scotland associated with the opening up of the north Atlantic.



*Typical Silurian Sandstones*

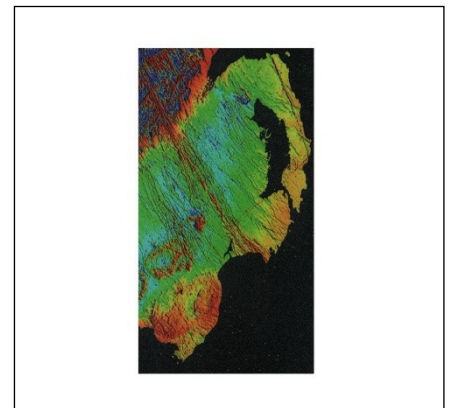
Thinning and stretching allow vertical sheets of molten rock, known as dykes, to occupy weaknesses in the earth's crust. St. John's Point hosts an important series of these dykes which are well exposed along the coast. The dykes range from a 2 - 3cms to 8m in thickness but are rarely greater than 3m and are all basaltic in composition.

The dyke swarm here contrasts with the similarly aged series associated with the Mourne Coast, the latter exhibiting a greater variety of intruded rock types. The other great dyke swarm in Northern Ireland is found in Co. Antrim where the rocks are much more uniform than those at St. John's Point.



*Basalt dyke intruding the sandstones*

Information obtained from remote sensing indicates that the St. John's Point dyke swarm continues north-west towards, and possibly beyond, Lough Neagh.



*Continuation of the St. John's dyke Swarm to the north-west as revealed by geomagnetic anomalies*

The area designated as St. John's Point ASSI supports important communities of plants and animals and has unique earth science features. It is vitally important that the best remaining areas are protected from adverse activities. Continued sensitive management will help to ensure the survival of the site's important biodiversity and geology. Northern Ireland Environment Agency is keen to work closely with landowners to maintain and enhance St. John's Point ASSI.

## DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

### DECLARATION OF AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST AT ST. JOHN'S POINT, COUNTY DOWN. ARTICLE 28 OF THE ENVIRONMENT (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 2002.

The Department of the Environment (the Department), having consulted the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside and being satisfied that the area described and delineated on the attached map (the area) is of special scientific interest by reason of the flora, fauna and geological features accordingly needs to be specially protected, hereby declares the area to be an area of special scientific interest to be known as the 'St. John's Point Area of Special Scientific Interest'.

The area is of special scientific interest because of its coastal and intertidal flora, fauna and geology. Important habitats include intertidal rock, saltmarsh and coastal grassland. The area is also important for species, including Sea Wormwood *Artemisia maritima*.

The geological importance of the area relates to the Palaeogene age dyke swarm which outcrops along the coast. Dykes represent intruded igneous magma sheets, which are usually vertical in nature. The dyke series here has been intruded into older Silurian age sandstones and shales. The dykes are principally basaltic in composition but have a number of important petrological and chemical differences from the nearby Mourne dyke swarm, and also from the Antrim series. The outcrop present in this coastal area demonstrates detail of the dyke series that extends further inland. A lower density of dyke intrusion is found to the north and west of the site. The total series is referred to as the Killough – Ardglass dyke swarm. No absolute dates have been determined for this series but are likely to be between 55 and 60 million years old.

In thickness the dykes range from a 2 - 3cms to 8m but are rarely greater than 3m in width. They are intruded into the Silurian country rock which has been folded and faulted; field evidence shows that the dyke series is clearly later than the tectonic events which affected the country rock. The majority of the swarm follows a north-west - south-east trend with a small component trending in a northeast - southwest direction. The intrusion density reaches a maximum around St. John's Point with an estimated crustal extension over the coastal section between Killard Point to the north and Dundrum Bay to the west of some 2.15%. This crustal stretching is associated with the opening up of the North Atlantic.

The dykes occur as single, multiple and composite intrusions and are all basaltic in composition. The olivine basalts and dolerites constitute the bulk of the dykes with olivine consistently present along with plagioclase feldspar, augite, iron-ore and subsidiary chlorite, apatite, analcite and calcite. A number of the composite dykes consist of aphyric and porphyritic components, with large feldspar phenocrysts, up to 2-3cms across, of oligoclase-albite composition.

The Killough-Ardglass dyke swarm is one of several such swarms of Palaeogene age that can be recognized in the eastern part of Northern Ireland. Others include the swarms found around the northern and southern margins of the Antrim Plateau and the dyke series associated with the Mourne. The geochemical evidence currently available

indicates differences between the St. John's Point series and the dykes and lavas of Antrim, the latter exhibiting a higher degree of uniformity. In addition, while evidence exists for a degree of differentiation within the Killough - Ardglass dykes, there is not the range of basic, acid and hybridised rock types found in the adjacent Mourne swarm.

Geophysical data indicates that the St. John's Point dyke swarm continues north-west towards, and possibly beyond, Lough Neagh. Exposure is however limited to the St. John's Point coastal section.

St John's Point is notable for its intertidal communities. The ASSI extends from Killough Bay southwards around the point to Black Rock and shows a range in marine habitats from sheltered bays and boulder shores, to exposed rock ridges with deep pools and crevices. The rockpools at Corely Point are notable for small Eelgrass beds of *Zostera marina*, a species that is more often found in the subtidal zone.

The bay at Corely Point is moderately exposed and comprises fractured rock ridges with medium-sized boulders. Channelled Wrack *Pelvetia canaliculata* dominates the upper shore with patello-barnacles dominating the mid shore. The mid-shore has numerous sandy rock pools located amongst boulders and within the rock ridges; expanses of Eelgrass *Zostera marina* are present within these rock pools, together with encrusting red algae, *Corallina* species, False Irish Moss *Mastocarpus stellatus*, Keel Worm *Pomatoceros triqueter* and China Limpet *Patella ulyssiponensis*.

The shore at St John's Point is a moderately exposed rocky shore dominated by fucoids. The supralittoral consists of patchy saltmarsh on bedrock leading to a patellobarnacle dominated shore comprised of fractured rock ridges and shingle with boulders. Channelled Wreck *Pelvetia canaliculata* is scattered among rock ridges with Dog Whelk *Nucella lapillus*, Rough Periwinkle *Littorina saxatilis* and Common Periwinkle *L. littorea* present on the rock surfaces and within rock pools. Rock ridges with scattered boulders dominate the mid to lower shore with numerous crevices and ridge pools. Areas between, and occasionally on the ridges are dominated by Irish Moss *Chondrus crispus*, Pepper Dulse *Osmundea pinnatifida*, Spiral Wrack *Fucus spiralis*, Toothed Wrack *F. serratus* and Sea Lettuce *Ulva lactuca*, while invertebrates such as Flat Top Shell *Gibbula umbilicalis*, Thick Top Shell *Osilinus lineatus* and Beadlet Anemone *Actinia equina* are common. Bladder Wrack *Fucus vesiculosus* and Knotted Wrack *Ascophyllum nodosum* form distinct zones, while the exposed ridges and crevices are dominated by Common Limpets *Patella vulgata*, Acorn Barnacles *Semibalanus balanoides* and red algae such as Tubular Weed *Dumontia contorta* and *Corallina* spp., which are normally associated with the lower shore. The lower littoral is dominated by Dulse *Palmaria palmata*, Oarweed *Laminaria digitata* and Sugar Kelp *Saccharina latissima* (formerly *Laminaria saccharina*) with encrusting coralline algae beneath the canopy while Forest Kelp *Laminaria hyperborea* is present in the sublittoral fringe.

The shore on the eastern side leading from St. John's Point to Portdoo and Dog's Rock is considerably narrower, and primarily consists of rock ridges with deep crevices and ridge pools and occasional sheltered bays. This site is moderately exposed with the ridges dominated by *Verrucaria maura*, *Patella vulgata*, *Semibalanus balanoides* and narrow bands of fucoids. Floral and faunal diversity is similar to that at St John's Point although much narrower in distribution. The Common Shore Crab *Carcinus maenas*, Edible Crab *Cancer pagurus*, Velvet Swimming Crab *Necora puber*, Flat Top Shell *Gibbula cineraria*, Common Starfish *Asterias rubens*, Edible Sea Urchin *Echinus*

*esculentus*, Blue Mussel *Mytilus edulis* and Sea Oak *Halidrys siliquosa* are all present in this area.

At Castle Park the shore widens slightly with the lower shore characterised by flat rock outcrops and steep ridges. Inlets and ridge pools are common and are dominated by flora typical of the lower shore such as *Laminaria* species.

Wireweed *Sargassum muticum*, an invasive brown alga from the Pacific Ocean, is present in several rock pools throughout the ASSI.

The rocks around the shoreline of the ASSI are used by Grey Seals *Halichoerus grypus* and Common Seals *Phoca vitulina* as haul-out sites.

The vegetation at St. John's Point illustrates a natural transition from maritime to terrestrial communities. Saltmarsh is developed locally, nestled amongst the mosaic of rocky outcrops and shingle. Maritime grassland occurs over the tops of rocky outcrops, with species-rich dry grassland on the thin soils. Further inland is dominated by Gorse *Ulex europeus* scrub.

Saltmarsh communities are dominated by Saltmarsh Rush *Juncus gerardii*, Common Saltmarsh-grass *Puccinellia maritima* and Sea Arrowgrass *Triglochin maritima*, with occasional Sea Aster *Aster tripolium* and Sea-milkwort *Glaux maritima*. Localised freshwater seepages through the marsh are characterised by Saltmarsh Flat-sedge *Blasmus rufus* and Long-bracted Sedge *Carex extensa*. The saltmarsh shows a smooth gradation into inundation grassland communities dominated by Red Fescue *Festuca rubra* and Silverweed *Potentilla anserina*.

Red Fescue *Festuca rubra* is also one of the dominant species in the maritime grassland which is prevalent across the whole site, becoming more species-rich on thin soils on the tops of rocky outcrops. Species associated with this more species-rich grassland include Kidney Vetch *Anthyllis vulneraria*, Crested Hair-grass *Koeleria macrantha*, Wild Carrot *Daucus carota*, Lady's Bedstraw *Galium verum*, Sea Plantain *Plantago maritima* and Wild Thyme *Thymus polytrichus*.

The grassland is occasionally flushed, providing a variety of species more commonly associated with wet grassland such as Carnation Sedge *Carex panicea*, Sharp-flowered Rush *Juncus acutiflorus*, Black Bog-rush *Schoenus nigricans*, Water Mint *Mentha aquatica*, Common Yellow-sedge *Carex demissa* and Marsh Pennywort *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*.

St. John's Point contains a number of scarce plants, including Sea Wormwood *Artemisia maritima* on one vertical rock face, Rock Samphire *Crithmum maritimum* and Yellow Horned-poppay *Glaucium flavum*.

St. John's Point also supports an important invertebrate fauna. In particular, the flushes support the only known population of rare woodlouse *Porcellionides cingendus* in Northern Ireland. This is a southerly distributed species and the population at St. John's Point represents the most northerly site for it in Ireland and probably Europe. The flushes also support a number of rare Molluscs which are listed in the Irish Red List for Non-marine Molluscs, including Beautiful Grass Snail *Vallonia pulchella*, which has an IUCN status of Vulnerable and Common Whorl Snail *Vertigo pygmaea*, which has an IUCN status of Near Threatened. Other rare invertebrates recorded at St. John's Point

include the water beetle Eared Moss Beetle *Ochthebius auriculatus*, which is associated with the saltmarsh and a false scorpion *Neobisium maritimum*, which is found in crevices in the rocks.

The wider area around St. John's Point supports a notable non-breeding population of Light-bellied Brent Geese, *Branta bernicla hrota*. At low tide birds feed mainly on inter-tidal habitats at nearby Killough Harbour and to the west of St. John's Point at Minerstown. On the rising tide these birds are displaced and will often then move to the saltmarsh within the St. John's Point site for further feeding and roosting. The presence of the Eelgrass in rock pools here may also provide feeding opportunities for the Brent Geese. While nearby Strangford Lough supports the largest population of this species in Northern Ireland, sites like St. John's Point are of particular importance once food availability within Strangford Lough begins to decline.

## SCHEDULE

**The following operations and activities appear to the Department to be likely to damage the flora, fauna and geological interest of the area:**

1. Any activity or operation which involves the damage or disturbance by any means of the surface and subsurface of the land, including ploughing, rotovating, harrowing, reclamation and extraction of minerals, including rock, sand, gravel and peat.
2. Any change in the present annual pattern and intensity of grazing, including any change in the type of livestock used or in supplementary feeding practice.
3. Any change in the established method or frequency of rolling, mowing or cutting.
4. The application of manure, slurry or artificial fertiliser.
5. The application of herbicides, fungicides or other chemicals deployed to kill any form of wild plant, other than plants listed as being noxious in the Noxious Weeds (Northern Ireland) Order 1977.
6. The storage or dumping, spreading or discharge of any material not specified under paragraph 5 above.
7. The destruction, displacement, removal or cutting of any plant, seed or plant remains, other than for:
  - (i) plants listed as noxious in the Noxious Weeds (Northern Ireland) Order 1977;
  - (ii) normal cutting or mowing regimes for which consent is not required under paragraph 3 above.
8. The release into the area of any animal (other than in connection with normal grazing practice) or plant. 'Animal' includes birds, mammals, fish, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates; 'Plant' includes seed, fruit or spore.

9. Burning.
10. Changes in tree or woodland management, including afforestation, planting, clearing, selective felling and coppicing.
11. Construction, removal or disturbance of any permanent or temporary structure including building, engineering or other operations.
12. Alteration of natural or man-made features, the clearance of boulders or large stones and grading of rock faces or infilling of depressions or hollows.
13. Operations or activities, which would affect wetlands (include marsh, fen, bog, rivers, streams and open water), e.g.
  - (i) change in the methods or frequency of routine drainage maintenance;
  - (ii) modification of the structure of any watercourse;
  - (iii) lowering of the water table, permanently or temporarily;
  - (iv) change in the management of bank-side vegetation.
14. The disturbance, killing or taking of any wild animal except where such killing or taking is treated as an exception in Articles 5, 6, 11, 17, 20, 21 and 22 of the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985.
15. The following activities undertaken in a manner likely to damage or disturb the wildlife of the area:
  - (i) Educational activities;
  - (ii) Research activities;
  - (iii) Recreational activities;
  - (iv) Exercising of animals.
16. Changes in game, waterfowl or fisheries management or fishing or hunting practices.
17. Sampling of rocks, minerals, fossils or any other material forming a part of the site, undertaken in a manner likely to damage the scientific interest.
18. Use of vehicles or craft likely to damage or disturb the wildlife of the area.

## FOOTNOTES

- (a) Please note that consent by the Department to any of the operations or activities listed in the Schedule does not constitute planning permission. Where required,

planning permission must be applied for in the usual manner to the Department under Part IV of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991.

- (b) Also note that many of the operations and activities listed in the Schedule are capable of being carried out either on a large scale or in a very small way. While it is impossible to define exactly what is large and what is small, the Department would intend to approach each case in a common sense and practical way. It is very unlikely that small scale operations would give rise for concern and if this was the case the Department would normally give consent, particularly if there is a long history of the operation being undertaken in that precise location.



## **St. John's Point**

### **Views About Management The Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 Article 28(2)**

#### **A statement of the Department's views about the management of St. John's Point Area of Special Scientific Interest ("the ASSI")**

This statement represents the views of the Department about the management of the ASSI for nature conservation. This statement sets out, in principle, our views on how the area's special conservation interest can be conserved and enhanced. The Department has a duty to notify the owners and occupiers of the ASSI of its views about the management of the land.

Not all of the management principles will be equally appropriate to all parts of the ASSI and there may be other management activities, additional to our current views, which can be beneficial to the conservation and enhancement of the features of interest. It is also very important to recognise that management may need to change with time.

The management views set out below do not constitute consent for any operation or activity. The written consent of the Department is still required before carrying out any operation or activity likely to damage the features of special interest (see the Schedule on pages 4 - 6 for a list of these operations and activities). The Department welcomes consultation with owners, occupiers and users of the ASSI to ensure that the management of this area maintains and enhances the features of interest, and to ensure that all necessary prior consents are obtained.

#### **MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES**

##### **The geological series**

Provided no damaging activities, as set out in the Schedule, are undertaken without consent, the needs of owners, occupiers and the Department can be met. Earth science features such as those at St. John's Point may require occasional management intervention in order to maintain access to, and exposure of, the geology. This could include selective removal of vegetation or debris.

Specific objectives include:

Maintain the geological series in an undamaged state.

Maintain access to the geological series.

##### **Intertidal Rock**

Rocky shores are an important habitat for wildlife. The littoral zone is composed of a variety of different habitats and communities, including rock pools, bedrock ledges and platforms, gullies, crevices and boulder fields. A diverse range of seaweeds and marine animals are associated with these habitats and most are specially adapted to periods of emersion. The Department would encourage the maintenance and enhancement of intertidal rock, through the conservation of its associated native plants and animals.

Active management of rocky shores is usually minimal as these are naturally occurring habitats dominated by tidal processes and wave exposure. It is important that good water and sediment quality are maintained. The Department would seek to maintain the coastline in as natural a state as possible.

Direct damage to rocky habitats can be caused by activities such as dredging and construction. In addition, man-made structures may have an impact by altering the wave regime and may also restrict the sediment budget within the coastal system.

Specific objectives for the Intertidal Rock include:

Encourage sympathetic use to ensure that disturbance and physical damage to the intertidal habitats and communities are minimised.

Encourage the maintenance of good water quality through the control of pollution, as this may affect reef communities, particularly due to increased turbidity (which may reduce algal communities) or siltation (which may smother animal communities).

Encourage management which favours the natural processes of sediment movement.

Minimise the removal of species through unregulated bait digging, shellfish gathering and seaweed harvesting, which can lead to damage to, or a loss of, intertidal habitats.

## **Coastal saltmarsh**

Saltmarsh is an important habitat for wildlife. Saltmarsh generally forms in the upper parts of intertidal mudflats, usually in more sheltered coastal locations. The vegetation typically shows a succession from lower marsh communities to upper marsh communities, depending upon the extent of tidal inundation. Saltmarshes provide valuable habitat for invertebrates and birds, and act as nursery sites for several fish species. The Department would encourage the maintenance and enhancement of the saltmarsh, through the conservation of all of the component vegetation communities and their associated native plants and animals.

Coastal processes are complex and the management of saltmarshes should take into account the need to maintain or restore where necessary, the natural processes of sediment movement and the dynamics of saltmarsh succession.

Many of the more sensitive saltmarsh species can be lost through intensive management treatments, such as fertiliser and herbicide application.

Where saltmarshes are managed, this is usually by grazing; it helps to provide a variety of different habitats, particularly important for wintering bird species. If grazing ceases on these sites, there may be a loss of botanical diversity as rank grasses become dominant. However, not all saltmarshes require active management to retain their conservation interest, particularly where there has not been a history of grazing.

Specific objectives include:

On sites that have traditionally been grazed, the Department would encourage the continuation of this practice. However, overgrazing should be avoided as it may result in a reduction in species diversity and cause poaching. Where there has not been a history of grazing, the saltmarsh should be able to maintain itself, as grazing-sensitive species are likely to be present.

Due to its position, coastal erosion can be particularly damaging to saltmarsh. Where possible, the Department would encourage management which favours the natural processes of sediment movement and the dynamics of saltmarsh succession.

Maintain the diversity and quality of the saltmarsh by ensuring that there is no application of fertiliser, slurry or herbicide.

### **Maritime Cliff and Slope**

Maritime cliff and slopes are important habitats for wildlife. Much of the vegetation in the ASSI consists of maritime grassland, with crevice and ledge plant communities on sheer rock faces and small areas of vegetated shingle. The Department would encourage the maintenance and enhancement of these habitats through the conservation of its associated native plants and animals, including a number of rare plants and invertebrates.

Many of the more sensitive species can be quickly lost through intensive management treatments, such as fertiliser and herbicide application. However, coastal habitats generally benefit from some management to retain their interest. Although occasional small patches of scrub can be valuable in providing additional habitat niches for birds and invertebrates, in the absence of management, coarse grasses can quickly take over and ultimately woody species may become dominant.

Grazing is the most effective way of controlling the growth of more vigorous species, helping to maintain a diverse sward structure which continues to support species-rich grassland. In the absence of grazing, cutting and removal of the vegetation to create open areas and reduce the dominance of coarse grasses is desirable.

Specific objectives include:

Low intensity grazing has contributed to the conservation and enhancement of the features of interest. The Department would encourage the continuation of this practice where feasible. Where grazing is not feasible, other management practices such as cutting may be used.

Prevent the loss of more sensitive grassland species through the control of scrub, bracken and rushes. In general, this can be achieved through the appropriate grazing regime. In some cases, other methods of control such as cutting, may be required.

Maintain the diversity and quality of the species-rich grassland by encouraging the maintenance of good water quality through the control of pollution and ensuring there is no application of fertiliser, slurry or herbicide to the site.

Where appropriate, encourage the blocking of drains to prevent the grasslands from drying out.

**Management principles applicable to all habitats throughout the site**

Ensure that disturbance to the site and its wildlife is minimised.

Discourage non-native species, especially those that tend to spread at the expense of native wildlife, such as Wireweed *Sargassum muticum*, Common Cord-grass *Spartina anglica* and Sea Buckthorn *Hippophae rhamnoides*.

Maintain the diversity and quality of associated habitats, such as shingle, scrub and boundary features such as hedgerows and walls, through sensitive management. These adjoining habitats can often be very important for wildlife, including rare and specialised species.

Sealed with the Official Seal of the  
Department of the Environment  
hereunto affixed is authenticated  
by

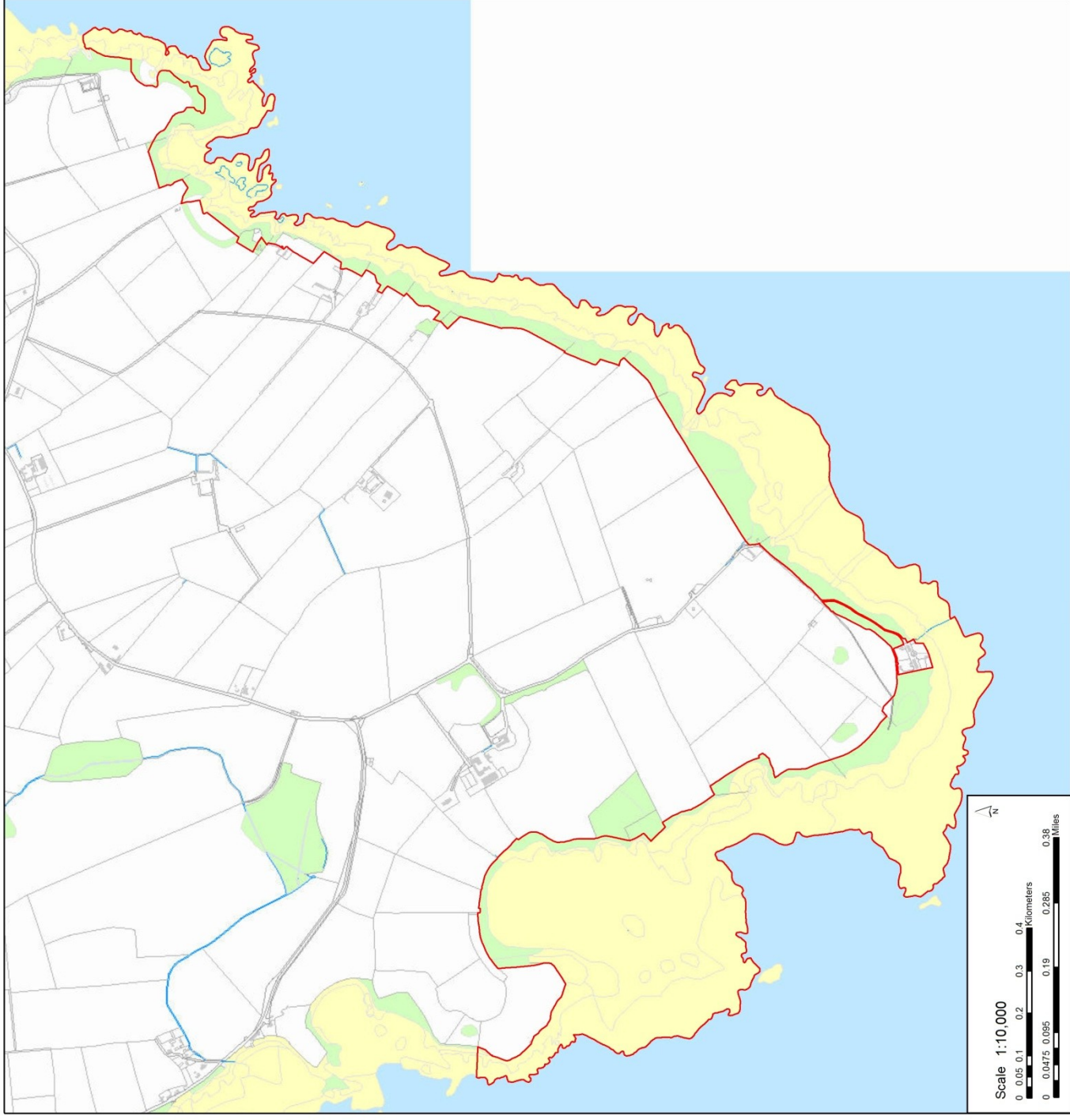
[Signed by]

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**E. DIANE STEVENSON**  
Senior Officer of the  
Department of the Environment

Dated the 6 of February 2014

# ST. JOHN'S POINT ASSI



## ST. JOHN'S POINT AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST

Map referred to in the Declaration dated:

**SITE BOUNDARY:** The Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) includes all the lands highlighted within the solid coloured lines. The banks or rivers and other water courses are liable to change naturally. Where the site border is the river-bank itself, and where this changes over time, the site boundary will vary in line with such changes.

**AREA OF SITE:** 83.62 Ha

**OS MAPS** 1:50 000: Sheet No. 21  
1:10 000: Sheet Nos. 242, 257

**IRISH GRID REFERENCE:** J52929 J33551

**COUNCIL AREA:** NEWRY & MOURNE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
**COUNTY:** DOWN

E DIANE STEVENSON  
SENIOR OFFICER OF THE  
DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

