

**ROYAL BURGH OF WIGTOWN & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL
CONSULTATIONS WORKING PARTY – December 2016**

CURRENT CONSULTATIONS

- a) **Consultation on the Solway Firth potential Special Protection Area (pSPA) – Scottish Natural Heritage.** Closing date: 17 January 2017

A marine extension to the existing Upper Solway Flats and Marshes SPA is proposed for inshore non-breeding waterfowl and non-breeding gulls and for it to be renamed as the Solway Firth SPA. The pSPA covers the marine environment from Whithorn to just north of Whitehaven in England and will include Wigtown Bay (see attached map). As the pSPA is a cross-border site (Scotland/England) lying mainly within Scottish waters, SNH will act as the lead Statutory Nature Conservation Body for the proposals and the consultation, which seeks the views of all interested parties on the scientific case for the classification of the pSPA.

Documents relevant to the consultation can be viewed on the SNH website and can be accessed at: <http://www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/protected-areas/proposed-marine-spas/>. Documents include the Site Selection Document and the Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA).

Responses to the consultation on the case for classifying Solway Firth pSPA should be submitted to SNH online at <http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/SolwaypSPA?ne> .by midnight on 17 January 2017.

It was agreed at the November meeting of the Community Council that a submission in support of the proposed Solway Firth potential Special Protection Area should be made. (see Appendix A for draft response)

FORTHCOMING CONSULTATIONS

No Forthcoming Consultation

APPENDIX A - Solway Firth potential Special Protection Area (pSPA)

Q1 Do you support the classification of the proposed Special Protection Area for the Solway Firth?

Comments:

As a Community Council representing an area on the Solway Firth, we support the proposal to classify the Firth as a Special Protection Area (SPA).

Our Community Council area lies on the shore of Wigtown Bay Local Nature Reserve (LNR), the largest LNR in Britain and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The reserve is a popular venue for a range of recreational activities including bird watching, angling and wildfowling. The proposed SPA extension will encompass Wigtown Bay, which is already an important site for both its biodiversity and its use by the community and visitors.

We would hope that SPA classification will see increased activity in the marine wildlife and tourism sector which will indirectly benefit accommodation providers and other local businesses. Classification will also ensure that the area will be effectively managed as an important resource to both the local community and as an environmental asset of the region.