

AOCP

Alde and Ore Community Partnership Update

The estuary organisations, that is the AOCP and Alde and Ore Estuary Trust as well as the ESIDB, are still waiting to hear from the Environment Agency as to the outcome of the application for flood approval and grant for the first part of the Estuary project. It is currently held pending an EA investigation into clay stored at Iken. Details are on the AOCP website, www.aocp.co.uk, and EA are providing the AOCP with bi-monthly Community Updates headed the 'Iken Waste Investigation'. It is hoped that a way can be found to detach the flood defence project from the Investigation to allow the work to commence later this summer.

Alison Andrews, July 2021

BCP

Bawdsey Coastal Partnership Update

No update at present.

BEP

Blyth Estuary Partnership Update

In March 2020, East Suffolk Council had described the intention to establish a **Southwold Harbour Management Committee** as, *An historic agreement*.

Now, after a seemingly long recruitment process, the composition of the HMC has been announced.

ESC Cabinet Members, Cllrs. Craig Rivett, James Mallinder, Maurice Cook, David Ritchie and Letitia Smith will be joined by independent, co-opted members, Alistair MacFarlane, David Gledhill, Richard Musgrave and Mike Pickles.

Cllr. Steve Gallant, Leader of East Suffolk Council, declared that,

This is a really exciting time for Southward Harbour and we have been working tirelessly to secure its future.

While this appears to be the culmination of years of endeavour, only time will tell if it can deliver on its stated aims ***to safeguard the harbour's future, ensuring more local involvement and engagement in the management and delivery of harbour operations.***

Ian Bradbury, July 2021

Coastal Partnership East

East Suffolk Council Coastal Management Team Update

CPE are working with SCC to deliver the Property Level Protection Measures in Lowestoft. The majority of the 121 installations have now been completed. Feedback from residents and homeowners has been very positive relating to workmanship and the communications with contractors. The Velda Close pump station and flood defence wall have been constructed and we aim to complete by late July 2021. The recent weather event in June showed that the installation successfully protected the homes from flooding despite the project not being 100% complete.

Following the £43.5M Green Recovery funding of the £67M LFRMP by Defra last June, we and our project delivery partners Balfour Beatty started the tidal walls construction in April with a ground-breaking ceremony in May which was held under Covid Restrictions and in challenging weather conditions but was a great success with good press and media coverage and excellent feedback from the invited guests. In addition, we have also launched the project's virtual visitor centre www.lowestoftfrmp.org.uk/consultations. The tidal barrier construction will follow with delivery of the full project by 2026/27 following the development and submission of a Transport Works Act Order. This project underpins the wider aspirations for the Lowestoft Masterplan, ABP Outer Harbour developments and links to the Gullwing project and aims to support wider economic growth, enhanced social opportunities and improved infrastructure for the town.

We continue to work closely with communities at erosion risk in Thorpeness and Pakefield and Corton and Gunton exploring options for short term and longer-term adaptation. Following, bad weather and storms last winter and again this year we continue to see significant beach erosion. In Southwold, we are working closely with a broad range of stakeholders to identify short, medium and long-term plans for the whole of the frontage, including the Harbour. All our urgent and routine works through our repair and maintenance programme were delivered to time and budget. We also continue to work with landowners and remind visitors to our coast about the dangers of walking on top of and at the base of the cliffs which are saturated and highly susceptible to cliff falls. We are working closely with the LGA Coastal SIG nationally to raise this issue given the high numbers of visitors to our coast as COVID restrictions ease and the challenging weather we have been having this summer making cliffs susceptible to slips. We will be spending the next few months developing the first joint conference of the Norfolk and Suffolk Coast Forums and incorporating the Anglian (Eastern) Regional Flood and Coast Committee. The conference will be delivered virtually.

CPE are working incredibly hard on the coastal elements of EDF's SZC DCO Examination by PINS. We have shared our views through the ESC Local Impact Report and Relevant Representation and are currently preparing for the coastal focussed hearing in mid-July. We are working closely with the wider Defra Family and EDF as there are a number of outstanding coastal issues that still need to be addressed.

We were successful in our bid to the £150M Innovative Resilience Fund and are now developing our Outline Business Case for circa £8.4M of IRF funding for our Norfolk and Suffolk Coastal Transition Programme. Our proposal focuses on how we can support coastal communities transition from where we are now to a climate resilient position in the future with a suite of funding, finance, engagement, planning and technical options to support the journey. We will build on previous Coastal pathfinder experience and the work we have progressed in Lowestoft to demonstrate how we can increase community, biodiversity and infrastructure resilience to coastal change at pilot locations around our coast.

The SMP Refresh for the Suffolk and Norfolk frontages have been completed and we are now poised to progress with SMP action plans in partnership with EA's Coastal Team, Anglian Coastal Monitoring team, the East Anglian

Coastal Group and wider coastal partners and communities. CPE continue to use our bespoke Collector App, and Survey 123 technology, to carry out their annual asset inspections and monthly monitoring of vulnerable frontages. CPE have now invested in SANDS, a coastal Management specific software, in order to provide project managers with contemporary analysis of geomorphological data. This software has already supported projects in Thorpeness, Southwold, Felixstowe, Pakefield, Lowestoft, Gunton & Great Yarmouth and is being considered by the EA as a tool that could be used more broadly.

The team continue to work on the national strategic, legislative and policy frameworks we need to support local delivery, notably on Adaptation, FCERM strategy and policy and Beach and Water Safety through the LGA Coastal SIG and National Coastal Group Network.

Karen Thomas, July 2021

DEP

Deben Estuary Partnership Update

Delays caused by the restrictions arising from Covid 19 are easing and progress is underway or planned on current projects.

In preparation for the review of the Deben Estuary Plan a Scoping Report has gone out to formal consultation. The consultation period ends in August with responses requested by August 14th.

After a period of limited progress, work to address the limitations of the flood defence wall for FC1 is picking up momentum. Recent discussions and a meeting with landowners, contractor and solicitors looked at the detailed process and responsibilities involved in completing stage one - undertaking the preliminary investigations and determining the design of an appropriate scheme.

As much of this preparatory work will be funded by a CIL grant, awarded by the then SCDC to the DEP for this purpose, a legal agreement between landowners and the DEP is required. The detail of this agreement and administration of the grant takes the DEP into a new area of activity where assessment of liability and delivery of provable value for money are necessary considerations.

The beach monitoring partnership with community volunteers at Bawdsey continues to develop and produce a valuable record of changing coastal conditions. Alongside the weekly measurements recording the height of the beach a series of coastal photoposts now encourage people to take fixed point photographs of stretches of the foreshore and forward them to a designated website. These pictures are already providing an interesting record where, in one instance at East Lane, it is possible to trace the conditions leading up to and following a cliff fall. The community argue that sharing this information will help residents understand the level of change occurring along this section of coast. Encouraged by interest from PGL at Bawdsey Manor and support from UCL and the AONB Unit the unused Ferry Shelter on the quay will open shortly as a modest Deben Marine Centre where information and the results of the research are exhibited and explained.

Christine Block, July 2021

Eastern IFCA

Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities Update

COVID-19 Update

In line with government practice, Eastern IFCA were able to successfully hold the 44th meeting of the full Authority in person in June 2021. To accommodate public viewings in line with government guidance on Covid-19 the meeting was also streamed live on the Eastern IFCA YouTube channel. Our priority continues to be the safety of our stakeholders and officers as we transition back to more in person meetings and engagements in line with government advice.

Fisheries Improvement Project – Southern North Sea Crab Fishery Unit

Eastern IFCA is continuing to work the fishing industry to develop a Fisheries Improvement Project for the Southern North Sea crab and lobster fisheries. This includes consideration of stock sustainability, and compatibility with habitat conservation targets. It is hoped that this work will demonstrate the industry and Eastern IFCA's shared commitment to sustainable fisheries and help improve the ratings for these fisheries in the Marine Conservation Society's "Good Fish Guide".

The project is currently in its development stage. Several quotes have now been sourced for completion of an MSC pre-assessment to inform the project and a preferred quote has been chosen. Whilst industry is prepared to put some of the funding forward, we are currently looking at other funding options to support this. We have also put the project forward as one of the Marine Stewardship Council's (MSC) Project UK Tranche 3 FIP's.

Closed Areas Byelaw 2021

As part of the ongoing development of management to protect sensitive habitats and species across the many marine protected areas (MPA) in our District, Eastern IFCA have recently completed an informal consultation with stakeholders regarding new areas that are being considered for management off the Lincolnshire Coast and within the North Norfolk Coast Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ).

Our ongoing assessment of fisheries in the Eastern IFCA district has identified the need to consider restrictions, within these areas, to some fishing activities to prevent damage to the most sensitive habitats within MPAs. Firstly Eastern IFCA has identified the need for closures to bottom-towed gear (e.g. demersal trawls and dredges) within parts of two new management focus areas off the Lincolnshire Coast, in the Inner Dowsing, Race Bank and North Ridge Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Secondly, our assessment of fishing activity in the Cromer Should Chalk Beds MCZ has led us to consider whether the site, or a specific area within the site, should be closed to netting activity (fixed nets, drift nets). The mechanism for the management of these areas would be the Closed Areas Byelaw 2021. The informal consultation to learn more about stakeholder activity in these areas closed on 28/06/2021, responses to the consultation are now being considered.

Imogen Cessford, June 2021

EA

Environment Agency Update

The Environment Agency manages river and coastal flood risk. It also has a strategic overview role on the coast. Government Grant in Aid funds are administered through the Environment Agency. We work closely with all risk management authorities to support projects and bids for government funds.

The following update covers the key locations from an Environment Agency coastal flood risk management perspective.

Coastal Erosion at Benacre Pumping Station and the Kessingland Levels

We continue to work with Waveney, Lower Yare & Lothingland Internal Drainage Board, Water Management Alliance, local businesses and other partners on a long term solution for the Kessingland Levels. The Outline Business Case for the project has been technically assured by the national Large Projects Review Group and a positive outcome has been achieved for the preferred option. This does not represent full formal approval as this can only be achieved when all funding has been agreed and secured.

Southwold North Initial Assessment

Working closely with East Suffolk Council we have funded a project to look at the options available for the ongoing protection of the northern Southwold frontage. This area is managed by both authorities. The Initial Assessment concluded that a scheme will be required in the coming years for the area and should be incorporated in to future programmes. We will continue to work with East Suffolk Council and the newly established Southwold Coastal Board to establish what funding opportunities are available for a project.

Emerging projects

We are planning works to the frontage at Felixstowe Ferry, immediately in front of Harbour Villas and repair works to the embankments near the Wolsey Bridge in the Blyth Estuary. Both these projects are currently at the options appraisal stage.

Potters Bridge, Easton Broad

Recent weather events have caused the outfall on Easton Broad to fail. Rainfall events created high water levels on the Broad and flooded the B1127 road at Potters Bridge for a prolonged period of time. An alternative short term solution has now been found and the levels are currently controlled.

The EA manages this site for the designated features of the Easton Broad valley which are dependent upon stable water levels in the spring and summer months. We are working closely with NE and others to establish the best way forward for the sustainable management of the site.

We encourage Suffolk County Highways to investigate future options for the management of the road and the bridge.

Shoreline Management Plan Refresh

We have worked closely with EA national colleagues on the refresh for the Suffolk SMP. This work is proceeding and we have recently received the initial reports. Generally the refresh team found the Suffolk SMP to be sound and fit for purpose and the recommendations are likely to be relatively minor. This is largely due to the good governance of the plan principally through the activity of the SCF and the client steering group.

Suffolk Estuaries

The business case for the Upper Alde and Ore Estuary has been submitted for approval through the EA Large Project Review Group. The process is ongoing.

The Deben Estuary Partnership's plan for the Bawdsey Marshes, in coordination with then landowners, are making good progress.

Mark Johnson, David Kemp and Gary Watson, July 2021

IDB

Internal Drainage Board Update

No update at present.

MMO

Marine Management Organisation Update

Marine plan adoption

The Government has adopted and published the [North East](#), [North West](#), [South East](#) and [South West](#) Marine Plans. The publication of these four marine plans follows the adoption of the [East Marine Plan](#) in 2014 and the [South Marine Plan](#) in 2018. This means all England's seas - an area of approximately 230,000 square kilometres – a third larger than the total land area of England - are covered by Marine Plans.

For the first time, England has a complete and integrated marine planning framework to manage how we use, develop, protect and enhance our marine environment. Marine Plans will guide developers, planning authorities and other decision-makers so that their activities happen in a sustainable and coordinated way.

Following the [decision to amend or replace](#) the [East Marine Plans](#), Defra and the MMO, along with stakeholders, are starting a process to define what the future of marine planning and the next generation of marine plans look like.

Using marine plans

Check out our new webpage, [Using Marine Plans](#), which contains hypothetical examples of using the marine plans under Sections 58(1) and 58(3) of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, and a guide on using [Explore Marine Plans](#). The [Explore Marine Plans](#) digital service provides an online, interactive resource for viewing marine planning policies, evidence, and supporting information. It allows users to consider multiple sources of information at a resolution relevant to their interest.

Wider marine planning updates

In response to a range of challenges and the need for more capacity to service the increasing and at times fast developing projects and initiatives in support of offshore wind, the MMO is establishing a new 'Strategic Renewables Unit'. The Strategic Renewables Unit will work across, and be a shared resource between, the MMO Planning and Licensing teams. It will promote join-up and facilitate links to wider planning and licensing work and engage with a range of government and other initiatives and projects.

The MMO are continuing to work with the [Offshore Transmission Network Review](#), which is working to increase the coordination of offshore wind transmission connections. This will reduce environmental and local impacts, achieve zero carbon ambitions and ensure the UK reaches its target of 40 GW of offshore wind by 2030. The Review recently published a [newsletter](#). You can [subscribe to receive regular newsletters](#) from the Review.

Contact

Please [subscribe here](#) for marine planning updates from our newsletter.

The MMO has marine planning officers available to support stakeholders in each marine plan area. To contact your local marine planner please email: planning@marinemanagement.org.uk.

Georgie Sutton, July 2021

NE

Natural England Update

England Coast Path - Update on the Suffolk stretches of the England Coast Path

Work is well underway on the England Coast Path, a new National Trail around all of England's coast. The latest information can be found on our web pages here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/england-coast-path-in-the-east-of-england>

Progress on the path has slowed as a result of:

- the impact of Covid-19
- a European court judgement in April 2018 that affected how Natural England could assess the impact of England Coast Path proposals on environmentally protected sites
- a number of the staff leaving the delivery team

Natural England continues to work towards opening as much of the England Coast Path as possible. It hopes to have all stretches approved and with establishment works underway by the end of 2021.

Progress on individual Stretches in Suffolk

Stretch	Stage of Delivery
Harwich to Shotley Gate Stour	Stage 4: Determine Natural England has commented on Objections and Representations received on their compendium of Coastal Access Reports. The Planning Inspector has undertaken site visits. We expect the uncontested Coastal Access Reports 1 and 4 to be determined by the Secretary of State this July.

Shotley Gate to Felixstowe Orwell	Stage 4 and 5: Determine & Open Coastal Access Reports 2, 4 and 5 have been approved by the Secretary of State without modification. We expect Reports 1 and 3 to be determined this July.
Felixstowe to Bawdsey Deben	Stage 4: Determine Natural England are commenting on Objections and Representations received on their compendium of Coastal Access Reports.
Bawdsey to Aldeburgh Alde and Ore	Stage 4: Determine Natural England are commenting on Objections and Representations received on their compendium of Coastal Access Reports.
Aldeburgh to Hopton on Sea	Stage 4: Determine Natural England are commenting on Objections and Representations received on their compendium of Coastal Access Reports.

All enquiries to the East Hub mailbox eastcoastalaccess@naturalengland.org.uk

Timescales

Designated sites adviser updates:

Emily Deacon (Orwell Estuary SSSI Responsible Officer) enjoyed joining Alex Moore da Luz from Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB and various nature conservation partners on site at Shotley to talk about ideas to reduce the impacts of recreational disturbance on ringed plover. Emily has been providing information/ advice/ consents/ assents on Site of Special Scientific Interest/ Special Protection Area casework on the Orwell Estuary on a variety of topics such as wildfowling, sluice maintenance, survey of benthic invertebrates, and management of Alexanders.

Natural England have issued licences for the translocation of Ospreys to the Suffolk coast. The project is being led by Suffolk Wildlife Trust and Roy Denis Foundation.

Sam Kench, June 2021

S&OEMG

Stour and Orwell Estuary Management Group Update

No update at present.

Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB

Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Update

Award of £254,177 for two projects in Coast & Heaths AONB

1. The AONB team working in Partnership with the RSPB have secured a grant of £196,767 for a project at Minsmere that will provide 440m on new easy access path, an extension to a hide, a new viewing platform and enhancing wildlife habitat from National Grid's Landscape Enhancement Initiative.
2. A project where the AONB team worked in partnership with the Suffolk Wildlife Trust, RSPB and a private landowner has seen a grant of £57,410 awarded from the same source for a project at Snape Marshes, Aldringham Walks, North Warren and Hawsells Farm to plant 700m new hedgerow and new woodland underplanting; enhance heathland viewpoints and improve wildlife habitat and stock control.

Government funded Kickstarter to work in AONB team

The AONB is delighted to secure an AONB Communications Assistant funded through the Government's Kickstarter programme, that is designed to support 16-24 year olds get back into work. Ethan will be joining us in May and will work on communications projects across both AONBs and project areas. The AONB team is still seeking a second Kickstarter to work as a technical assistant, on mapping, project development and delivery.

Expect, Respect and Enjoy AONBs

As rules relating to the pandemic lockdown ease, AONBs around the country are experiencing increasing visitor numbers and anticipate further increases as we move into the summer. The AONB team is delighted to be working with Babergh Mid Suffolk council to run a Welcome Back ranger in the district. The idea is to secure officer presence at key locations and engage with visitors to promote positive behaviours for the AONB's environment and residents. The AONB welcomes visitors but asks them to respect people and place. See

<https://www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/visiting/respect-protect-enjoy/>
<https://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/exploring/planning-your-visit/>

or follow us on social media

Good progress for low voltage undergrounding project at Orford

As part of a £635,000 scheme, funded by an Ofgem allowance just over 4,000m of 11KV of low voltage cable has been laid underground from a new substation at Raydon Hall pump towards sea wall at Orford. Substation bases are complete and plant installed ready for connections. All directional drilling associated with the project is complete. The overhead line, that detracts from the natural beauty of the area, will be removed in due course.

AONB Award winners

The first winners of the two National Landscape Awards for the Dedham Vale AONB and the Coast & Heaths AONB that celebrate and recognise the achievements of an individual, group or organisations that have made an outstanding contribution to the conservation and enhancement or raising awareness of the natural beauty or special qualities of the National Landscapes has been announced.

The judging panel were very impressed by all the nominations and noted what a difficult decision it was to choose one nomination for each award due to the extremely high standard of applications.

The winner in Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley is Geoffrey Probert who farms the Great Bevills estate in Bures. The judges wanted to recognise Geoffrey for his work in expanding and energising the Stour Valley Farmer Cluster which he took over from its founder & inspirer Major Carol Gurney.

Details at <https://www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/2021/03/08/new-aonb-award-winner-announced/#:~:text=The%20winner%20of%20the%20Robert,Great%20Bevills%20estate%20in%20Bures.>

The first winner in Coast & Heaths AONB is Tim Holt Wilson for his outstanding work towards outdoor education as part of an Art Branches project "Zoom: Geology is most definitely not boring!"

The judges noted that Tim has engaged and passed his enthusiasm onto many children and adults. Working alongside vulnerable communities, such as young carers and adults recovering from mental health issues, Tim has imparted a wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm to many. Details at:

<https://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/2021/03/08/new-aonb-award-winner-announced/>

Simon Amstutz, June 2021

Suffolk Saltmarsh Group

Suffolk Saltmarsh Group Update

Although the SSG has not met recently, there are a number of projects continuing to progress on saltmarsh locally. Our ambition to create a strategic framework of baseline data, monitoring approaches, funding streams and potential efficiencies in material supply chains to support community work are all still in place but for several reasons resources from various organisations and groups has been reduced and the past year has meant there has been limited progress strategically.

That said there is now a real shift in national policy and strategy frameworks around increasing nature-based solutions, green infrastructure and coastal resilience to climate change that could mean the time is now right to re-invigorate our strategic approach to saltmarsh work in Suffolk. As current SSG Chair I have been discussing options with Graham Underwood (University of Essex) who has recently been offered a 3 year NERC Fellowship to develop natural capital approaches for coastal habitats. He is working with Defra, EA and local authorities and groups in Suffolk and Essex. He is keen as part of his work to support and shape the Suffolk saltmarsh work and help us re-invigorate our ideas, particularly for estuary group led marsh restoration projects. Following an initial discussion in June, Graham has offered to pick up the data and information we already compiled for the SSG and undertake a review of the progress, opportunities and future needs, so we can explore our current position on salt marsh restoration and understand what funding opportunities might be available given the changing policy environment.

Over the summer we will review the SSG action plan, work with Graham on developing this review, and aim to hold an SSG meeting early autumn to set out some ideas for progressing the SSG's work and hopefully re-habilitate the group.

Karen Thomas, June 2021