

## **AOCP**

### **Alde and Ore Community Partnership Update**

The estuary plans to refurbish the river walls, so that they are renewed now before they are breached and will be resilient to a large surge in the year 2050 taking account of sea level rise, are still on hold.

The estuary organisations, the Community Partnership and the Alde and Ore Estuary Trust, as well as the East Suffolk Internal Drainage Board, and the Environment Agency are seeking to disentangle an EA investigation into stored clay at Iken from the estuary project to allow a decision to be made as to the outcome of the application for flood approval and grant for the first part of the Estuary project.

The AOCP welcomes the administration grant of £2500 which EA have secured for the Partnership and other Suffolk estuary partnerships and thanks EA for the work to achieve this.

Alison Andrews, October 2021

## **BCP**

### **Bawdsey Coastal Partnership Update**

No update at present.

## **BEP**

### **Blyth Estuary Partnership Update**

Expectations were high on the River Blyth when, last March, East Suffolk Council announced the formation of a **Southwold Harbour Management Committee**, allied to a Stakeholder Advisory Group; an announcement that had been broadly welcomed by many and complimented by a newly established **Southwold and Walberswick Flood and Coast Board**.

Reality is somewhat different, even allowing for a welter of individual perceptions, and confusion over the role and operation of the Stakeholder Advisory Group, in particular, is a potential cause for concern. Perhaps communication, as ever, is key, but something tangible needs to be evidenced if hopes are not to be dashed and support for change diminished.

At this juncture, it is important to remind everyone of the grandiose aims of whatever controls are in place: ***to safeguard the harbour's future, ensuring more local involvement and engagement in the management and delivery of harbour operations.***

On a more celebratory level, after three months' work, Suffolk County Council completed repairs to the Bailey Bridge, on time, and future-proofed its use for many years to come.

By way of contrast, repairs to the north-arm of the harbour continue and are likely to over-run!

Ian Bradbury, October 2021

## **Coastal Partnership East**

### **East Suffolk Council Coastal Management Team Update**

CPE working with SCC have now delivered the Property Level Protection Measures to 121 homes in Lowestoft. 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 are also complete. Tidal walls construction for the Hamilton Road and North Quay areas began in April and is progressing well. We plan to start the second phase of tidal wall works in November this year. The project's virtual visitor centre [www.lowestoffrmp.org.uk/consultations](http://www.lowestoffrmp.org.uk/consultations) is also open. The tidal barrier is being re-designed following the delayed (due to COVID) Navigation Simulation. As a result of boat 'strikes' to the 28m proposed barrier which could damage the barrier, we have had to move to a larger 40.5m mitre gate barrier that will be built into a wider part of the port entrance east of the Bascule Bridge. CPE are in positive discussions with EA national colleagues regarding funding the new option which will lead to over 1500 homes and businesses better protected from tidal flooding 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 a period of sustained erosion at Thorpeness – emergency works have been deployed using rock to hold the frontage while we develop more adaptive solutions with the community. 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 are being 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 highly susceptible to cliff falls. CPE have also successfully delivered the first joint conference of the Norfolk and Suffolk Coast Forums and incorporating the Anglian (Eastern) Regional Flood and Coast Committee. The conference was delivered virtually with almost 300 delegates joining the event on the day and all the excellent presentations are available to watch online.

CPE have work incredibly hard on the coastal elements of EDF's SZC DCO Examination by PINS. We have shared our views with the Examiners and continue to work closely post-examination with the wider Defra Family and EDF notably through the SZC Marine Technical Forum going forwards.

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. We will be recruiting for a number of new IRF roles in Winter 2021.

Following the SMP Refresh for the Suffolk and Norfolk frontages 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 we will be developing the action plans with support from a new SMP Coordinator. 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. We are also working closely with the new round of National Coastal Erosion Risk Mapping to update our coastal risk maps which will underpin coastal conversations with communities, planners and wider infrastructure providers.

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, October 2021

## **DEP**

### **Deben Estuary Partnership Update**

Issues revolving round best use of public money and most efficient spend of the CIL grant, awarded to the DEP to cover the cost of preparatory investigations prior to confirming an appropriate scheme of work for FC1 wall have taken some months. We believe we are now able to move towards finalising an agreement with the landowners.

The time and attention that this issue has taken has brought home the challenges that community partnerships face when they aim to play an active role in coastal matters and bridge the gap between statutory bodies and the local community. Taking on board issues of liability and delivery of value for money and achieving a way forward that can be supported by a majority has not proved the easiest of tasks.

Problems with spend of the CIL grant have been countered by the positive response to the outcomes of the 'citizen science' work we have displayed in the refurbished Ferry shelter on Bawdsey Quay. This summer exhibition, supported by Professor Helen Burningham from UCL, and manned by members of the DEP and Bawdsey Beach Measuring Group, was intended as a test run to find out whether people would be interested in information about the coast and estuary. The response, from both local residents and visitors, has been much greater than expected and many people have expressed a wish to know more about the changing coastline. To this end we are discussing how we might develop the role of citizen science.

The staycation summer has highlighted the impact of increased numbers of tourists on sensitive coastal and estuarine locations. While the boost to the visitor economy has benefited rural businesses, members of the DEP are expressing the opinion that further consideration will have to be given to visitor management if we are to conserve the coastal environment.

Christine Block, October 2021

## **Eastern IFCA**

### **Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities Update**

#### **COVID-19 Update**

Whilst many Eastern IFCA officers continue to work from home, we have successfully re-opened the office to the public and it is now manned daily. We continue to prioritise the health and safety of our stakeholders and staff as we transition back to more in person meetings and engagements in line with government advice.

The 45<sup>th</sup> meeting of the full Authority was held successfully in person in September. Public viewings were accommodated at the venue and via the live stream on the Eastern IFCA YouTube channel. To find out more about how to attend or view the next Authority meeting or our office opening times please visit: [www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/contact-us/](http://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/contact-us/)

#### **Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)**

In response to Natural England's recommendation for an Adaptive Risk Management (ARM) approach to be taken to potting in the MCZ, Eastern IFCA has been working with partners and stakeholders to establish four interconnected bodies to carry the work forward.

In summary: a Project Board is responsible for the overall management and coordination of the delivery of the ARM approach; a Research and Development Task and Finish Group is responsible for the development of research to inform management decisions; a Management Task and Finish Group is developing and proposing management solutions for mitigating risks to the MCZ's protected features; and a Stakeholder Group coordinated by the Marine Conservation Society's Agents of Change is facilitating effective communication and information sharing between the Project Board and all stakeholders actively interested in the management of the MCZ, allowing the Project Board to draw on wider sources of knowledge and information where appropriate to inform decision-making.

Recently, the Research Group has been deploying a 'BlueROV2' to capture seabed imagery of the MCZ and build up our understanding of the location and extent of sensitive features. Work is also underway with several fishermen who have agreed to deploy trackers on a voluntary basis to expand on our understanding of potting activity in the MCZ. At the same time, the Management Group has been working closely with fishermen in the development of a Code of Best Practice for potting and a gentlemen's agreement for reporting, recovery and disposal of abandoned, lost and discarded fishing gear.

### **Sizewell C Nuclear Power Plant**

Eastern IFCA continue to monitor and comment on developments in connection with the new build Sizewell C Nuclear Power Plant project, and with other activities on the Sizewell site, as appropriate to our remit and legitimate concerns of our stakeholders.

Recently, this participation has included submitting comments on several aspects of the development of works in the marine environment. These have been submitted to EDF Energy themselves (the project developers) and to the Planning Inspectorate. We have also actively participated in Issue Specific Hearings convened by The Planning Inspectorate.

### **Closed Areas Byelaw 2021**

At the 45<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Authority in September 2021, the Eastern IFCA agreed to the proposals for new areas for management within the Inner Dowsing, Race Bank and North Ridge Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The areas identified within the SAC, which is situated off the Lincolnshire Coast, will be closed to bottom-towed gear (e.g. demersal trawls and dredges) to protect *Sabellaria* reef, a protected feature of the site.

The areas have been provisionally agreed by the Authority to be included in the Closed Areas Byelaw 2021, which will be submitted alongside a formal impact assessment to the Authority at the 46<sup>th</sup> meeting in December 2021 for final consideration prior to formal consultation. The Closed Areas Byelaw 2021 is the most recent iteration in the ongoing development of Byelaws to protect the Marine Protected Areas in the Eastern IFCA district.

Imogen Cessford, October 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 & Lotheringland 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. We continue to work with EA national colleagues and partners on this matter.

### **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 established. We are currently unable to implement this due to land access issues. 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**

We are carrying out some maintenance works in the estuaries prior to the arrival of winter. On the Blyth, repairs are being made to the walls at Woodsend Marsh, near the harbour. On the Alde and Ore, we are replacing and repairing the concrete blocks that protect Aldeburgh Town Marsh and on the Deben, some works are underway to maintain the defences of Felixstowe Ferry.

We continue to support the estuary partnerships in their funding bids from various sources, and to advise the DEP on their plans to build defences for Flood Cell 1 and to refresh the estuary plan.

Mark Johnson, David Kemp and Gary Watson, October 2021

## **IDB**

### **Internal Drainage Board Update**

We have been working for EDF Energy to undertake Main River maintenance on EA Main River Leiston Drain. We have de-silted approximately 1600m from Minsmere tidal sluice upstream to just north of Sizewell B complex. This is a major drainage improvement for coastal hinterland and one of our own main drains that feeds into the same system before going out into North Sea via EA Minsmere tidal sluice. Landowners are already reporting massive positive benefit to decrease in channel water levels and ability to convey more water, more effectively. Positive environmental benefits already seen in increase in Kingfishers using area for hunting. Longer term

positive outcomes are likely to increase. Further work may well happen in future on further upstream sections of the watercourse, subject to fundings and approvals.

Thorpeness Emergency Works. Delivery via PSCA with ESC on behalf of a private landowner who has majority funded the work. Design work and consenting was completed over the summer months. On to site on 04/10/2021 onwards. 132,500 tonnes of granite arrived on barge from Cornwall and was discharged with continuous working for approximately 12 hours to unload the barge and retrieve it around 00:30 on 11/10/2021. Main construction phase started on 12/10/2021. Works are likely to finish by 22/10/2021. Demobilisation planned early during w/c 25/10/2021. As of today rock structure is approximately 85% complete and may see its first test against a likely decent surge tide and northerly winds on Thursday / Friday this week.

We do of course continue to deliver the Repair & Maintenance contract for ESC.

Emma Dixon, October 2021

## **MMO**

### **Marine Management Organisation Update**

#### Marine Planning Evidence Base

The Marine Planning team has been successful with its bid for funds from the government's Project Speed initiative to further develop the planning evidence base for the East Marine Plan areas, which will be the next plan to be developed. The funds will be used to assess the spatial carrying capacity of the east inshore and offshore marine plan areas to deliver the many and varied government priorities for the marine area over the next 20 years. The outputs will be used to inform decisions on plan area-scale priorities to support the vision, objectives and policies for the east marine plan areas. The project will run until the end of March 2022 and we will provide further updates as the project progresses.

#### Upcoming Marine Plan Monitoring Work

Following the adoption of the [North East](#), [North West](#), [South East](#) and [South West](#) marine plans and the publication the first [Three-year Report for the South Marine Plan](#), work is getting underway to develop an annex of indicators to support monitoring of the four newly adopted marine plans. Monitoring indicators across a range of factors are already used to evaluate the progress that the East and South Marine Plans have made. They look at areas, such as the use of supporting tools and guidance, evidence of plan use, and policy specific effects. This work will include improvements to existing indicators and further development of new indicators where appropriate with input from stakeholders. This development work will follow the framework set out within the [North East, North West, South East and South West Marine Plans Approach to Monitoring](#).

#### New Sea Views Magazine for Stakeholders and Customer

The [Sea Views magazine](#) will be published three times a year for our customers and stakeholders to grow an understanding of what the MMO is and what we do. It will focus on big issues and gives a voice to our stakeholders and customers on topical and complex subjects that aren't covered in the same way in the news media. The first issue includes information about marine plans, a critical view at the Seaspiracy Documentary and comprises the views of four industry experts on the drive for sustainable energy.

#### 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](mailto:planning@marinemanagement.org.uk).

Corinna Dietz, October 2021

## **NE**

### **Natural England Update**

#### **Andy Millar (Senior Adviser, Nature Recovery Network)**

-NE is recruiting for several coastal adviser and specialist posts including a new coastal senior adviser around East Anglia (to essentially replace Andy's previous role). This is in progress so we will see if it's successful.  
-Andy would like to offer to come and speak with the Forum in the near future to talk about the emerging work on a nature recovery network and what that could mean on the Suffolk Coast.

#### **Sizewell C Close of Examination**

The examination for Sizewell C finished last week and now the Examining Authority will make its recommendation to the Secretary of State in January 2022.

There was significant progress of issues in the weeks leading up to the close of examination, with many longstanding concerns addressed and closed out. However, there still remains a significant amount of concern and uncertainty around several important impact pathways including water supply, coastal processes and impacts on the marine environment. Full details of our final statement of common ground with the Applicant can be found on the Planning Inspectorate website.

#### **Sam Kench (Lead Adviser, Shoreline Management Plan Lead)**

-We are continuing to provide ongoing advice to Coast Partnership East in relation to the prospective Pakefield and Thorpeness coastal defence schemes. We recently assented the urgent rock revetment works to defend properties in North Thorpeness over the forthcoming winter.  
-The Area Team is set to engage with Work Package 6 for Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) 7 and are providing ongoing advice in relation to the SMP 8 refresh, which includes the Orwell and Stour Estuaries.

Sam Kench, October 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**

#### **Farming in Protected Landscapes**

The Government announced a new Farming in Protected Landscapes programme earlier in the year. This will see an investment of around £1M across the two local AONBs over the next three years for farmer led projects. More information on the programmes at:

<https://www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/managing/farming-in-protected-landscapes/>

and

<https://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/managing/farming-in-protected-landscapes/>

#### **Beachwatch programme continues through pandemic restrictions**

The AONB team has supported 14 groups taking part in the Great British Beach Clean in September 2021. Despite restrictions due to the current pandemic, 214 fantastic volunteers took part. Each volunteer (aged over 18) was rewarded by a bottle of Kobold beer or a can of Copper House Gin and Tonic from Adnams.

See <https://www.eadt.co.uk/lifestyle/suffolk-environmental-schemes-to-get-involved-with-2021-8287836>

### **Low voltage overhead power cables removed near Orford**

Following development work by the AONB team and with the support from landowners and the local community work undertaken by UK Power Networks to underground 3 miles of cable is complete. The work, funded through an Ofgem allowance, has secured visual and wildlife benefits and support reliability of supply.

See <https://www.eadt.co.uk/news/orford-overhead-powerlines-removed-ofgem-project-8367500>

### **AONB Newspapers are back**

The AONB newspapers are back with a focus on health and wellbeing, walking guides and wildlife and nature recovery stories. Pick up a copy from shops, food outlets and visitor attractions or read online. The website versions have an improved readability function to improve the online reading experience. See:

<https://www.flipsnack.com/5B7D5F6BDC9/dedham-vale-stour-valley-news-2021/full-view.html>

<https://www.flipsnack.com/5B7D5F6BDC9/coast-heaths-summer-21/full-view.html>

### **AONB Minister addresses Landscapes for Life Conference**

The Right Honourable Lord Benyon, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Rural Affairs and Biosecurity) with responsibility for AONBs addressed the recent Landscapes for Life Conference. In his 12 minute speech he spoke about the role of AONBs in the twin problems of wildlife decline and climate change, the role the environment has in the wider economy and the exciting opportunities for AONBs to deliver the new Farming in Protected Landscapes programme. His speech can be accessed from:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CGXKtocrmBZM>

### **Seasonal Rangers join the AONB team**

The AONB team welcomed two new members to the team.. They are job sharing the role of Seasonal Ranger. They will be providing a presence at popular visitor destinations within the Babergh area of both the Dedham Vale and Coast & Heaths AONBs. Funding for the 6 month role is thanks to the Government covid recovery Welcome Back fund, secured by Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils.

Simon Amstutz, October 2021

### **Suffolk Saltmarsh Group**

#### **Suffolk Saltmarsh Group Update**

No update at present.