

### AOCP

#### Alde and Ore Community Partnership Update

There is little to add to the last report as the approval process for the estuary plans to refurbish the river walls remain on hold.

The re-submission of the business case for flood work approval and grant for the first part of the estuary project is now largely completed by the East Suffolk Internal Drainage Board. It is hoped that it can be accepted as a standalone project separate from the ongoing Environment Agency legal investigation into stored clay at Iken. The Partnership is writing again to the Agency to seek progress and is asking for a meeting to resolve the issues.

Work continues on developing and updating communications material to be used to ensure that everyone in the area can be well informed once the project is allowed to start.

Alison Andrews, June 2022

### BCP

#### Bawdsey Coastal Partnership Update

No update at present.

### BEP

#### Blyth Estuary Partnership Update

The suspension of the **Southward Harbour Management Committee** and its attendant **Stakeholders' Advisory Group**, however temporary, has diminished the air of optimism surrounding progressive development of the Blyth Estuary. As this update is compiled *noises off* suggest that a solution to the governance of the HMC, that has blighted progress, may have been found and this news is encouraging.

The BEP continues to aver that Southwold Harbour is not a stand-alone entity and the strength, stability and reliability of upper reaches of the Blyth are material to its very existence. Furthermore, that while ESC's jurisdiction does not extend to the estuary, as a whole, future investment will, more than likely, need to be supplemented by other funding sources if sustainability is to be the clarion call.

It is worth repeating the SHMC's stated aims: ***to safeguard the harbour's future, ensuring more local involvement and engagement in the management and delivery of harbour operations.***

The report on the Harbour, commissioned by ESC, is progressive news and it is to be hoped that the glitches outlined above are indeed, merely temporary.

Ian Bradbury, June 2022

## **Coastal Partnership East**

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

CPE continue to work hard on behalf of our most at risk coastal communities locally and nationally. Community-led approaches to managing and adapting to erosion risk at Pakefield, Thorpeness, Corton and Gunton continue to progress. Planned repairs and revenue works have and are being carried out in Felixstowe and Southwold. Our new Flood and Coastal Risk Innovation Programme (FCRIP) funded project Resilient Coasts will start this summer following approval from East Suffolk Council (ESC) Cabinet to be the lead authority for the £9.4M project in partnership with Great Yarmouth Borough Council and delivered through CPE. The project will support our ongoing adaptation work and provide new resources to boost the community-led approaches we are already developing. The funds will support the delivery of the SMP Refresh and find innovative ways to support those affected by erosion risk now and into the future.

We continue to progress the £100M Lowestoft Flood Risk Management Project (LFRMP) completing elements of the tidal wall works to create a flood resilient power park in the Hamilton Road area. Construction focus now moves to the Belvedere Road and south quay areas and the submission of the Outline Business Case for FDGIA for the proposed tidal barrier.

The CPE team attended the recent Flood and Coast 2022 conference where Minister for the Environment Rebecca Pow and EA Chief Exec reflected on climate change and sea level rise and increased need for coastal adaptation. Karen Thomas spoke at a plenary session for coast and highlighted how we are at the forefront of coastal change in Suffolk and Norfolk and how we need tools now to be able to support adaptation, with our FCRIP funding being key to how we will create a resilient coast. The team also led a LGA Coastal Special Interest Group workshop attended by 80 practitioners from around the coast on coastal placemaking. The team will use evidence from this session to support national discussions about what we need for our coast.

The CPE Business plan for 2022 to 2025 will be launched later this month.

Finally, Paul Mackie (who has been with CPE for over 7 years) is leaving to pursue a new role with ESC as Environment and Climate Change Lead Officer. We are all thrilled to have worked with Paul and know he will be a huge asset to ESC and our local communities in his new role. He will continue to support the LFRMP in the short-term. Good luck Paul!

Karen Thomas, June 2022

## **DEP**

### **Deben Estuary Partnership Update**

No update at present.

## **Eastern IFCA**

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

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

Our King's Lynn office is now back to normal opening hours and our officers are currently working under a flexible hybrid work model. We continue to maintain certain safeguards, such as Lateral Flow Testing for officers going out on vessel-based surveys for prolonged periods of time.

### **Authority meetings**

The 47<sup>th</sup> meeting of the full Authority was held successfully in person in March 2022. Public viewings were accommodated at the venue and via the live stream on the Eastern IFCA YouTube channel. The next full Authority meeting takes place on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

To find out more about Authority meetings and access meeting papers, please visit: [Authority Meetings - Eastern IFCA \(eastern-ifca.gov.uk\)](#)

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

Eastern IFCA ran an informal consultation on a fishing industry Code of Best Practice for Potting in Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone from November 2021 to April 2022. Following careful review of stakeholder responses, we are pleased to announce that the Code is now in effect and endorsed by North Norfolk Fishermen's Society and Norfolk Independent Fishermen's Association.

The intention of the Code is to reduce the risk that lost gear poses to the environment, fisheries' sustainability, and the viability of fisheries livelihoods by building upon and promoting existing best practice in relation to the operation of fishing gear. It is intended to minimise the risk of gear becoming lost and sets out what to do in the event of gear becoming snagged or lost by establishing a reporting system that will be used to help quantify the extent of the issue, monitor the positive effect of the Code over time and facilitate recovery.

[Eastern IFCA, Natural England, North Norfolk Fishermen's Society and Norfolk Independent Fishermen's Association have published a joint press release about the Code of Best Practice: Press release: Code of Best Practice launched to tackle lost gear in Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ - Eastern IFCA \(eastern-ifca.gov.uk\)](#)

For more information on our MCZ work, follow the dedicated page on our website: [Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone \(MCZ\) - Eastern IFCA \(eastern-ifca.gov.uk\)](#)

To get involved, become a member of the Stakeholder Group and follow the Agents of Change-run Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ Facebook page: [Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ | Facebook](#)

### **Sustainability of Fisheries in the Wash**

Eastern IFCA's annual cockle surveys in the Wash show that the stocks in the regulated fishery may be unable to support a cockle fishery this year, and further work is underway to come to a decision on this. In the absence of the annual cockle fishery, which is a mainstay for fishermen in the Wash, Eastern IFCA anticipates an understandable shift in effort to other fisheries this year, particularly the shrimp and whelk fisheries. Significant increases in effort in either of these fisheries poses a risk, and therefore Eastern IFCA is monitoring the situation and undertaking dialogue with industry on the matter.

More information is available on our website: <https://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/sustainability-of-fisheries-in-the-wash/>

### **Shrimp Permit Byelaw 2018**

The Shrimp Permit Byelaw 2018 has now been confirmed by the Secretary of State. Shrimp fishing in the district will be prohibited without a permit and will be managed using flexible permit conditions that will enable responsive management of the fishery. A separate permit will be available for shrimp fishing within the Wash and North Norfolk Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the byelaw will implement a fishing effort limitation scheme in the SAC to maintain effort at the levels observed over the last ten years. This is to ensure that fishing activity does not have an adverse effect on the Wash and North Norfolk Coast Special Area of Conservation.

### **Closed Areas Byelaw 2021**

The formal consultation on the Closed Areas Byelaw 2021 is now closed and we are reviewing the responses to this 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.

To find out more about this byelaw, please visit: <https://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/formal-consultation-closed-areas-byelaw-2021/>

Kristina Gurova, June 2022

## **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 detailed design phase of the works has begun and we are liaising closely with the WLMA's design consultants.

#### **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 may 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 Southwold Coastal Board to establish what funding opportunities are available for a project.

#### **Emerging projects**

We are at the detailed design phase of the works to the frontage at Felixstowe Ferry, immediately in front of Harbour Villas. The preferred solution is a rock bund in front of the eroding clay embankment. A public meeting was held 20 May to discuss options with residents and the sailing club.

#### **Potters Bridge, Easton Broad**

At the time of writing, we can access the Easton Broad outflow area so are able to control water levels on the Broad and the road at Potters Bridge. This does not mean that the area will not flood in the future but the duration of any events should reduce to days rather than weeks.

#### **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.

Mark Johnson and Gary Watson, June 2022

## **IDB**

### **Internal Drainage Board Update**

No update at present.

## **MMO**

### **Marine Management Organisation Update**

#### **East Plan Spatial Assessment to be Published**

In 2021 and early 2022, the Marine Planning team in partnership with external consultants have developed a Spatial Assessment of the East Marine Plan Area. The report considers the range of sectors across the East Plan Area and highlights opportunities for coexistence and spatially efficient use of the Plan Area for future sustainable development in the North Sea. The report is set to be published this summer, with the report and spatial outcomes available to any interested parties. The spatial assessment has been undertaken in preparation for a scheduled refresh of the East Marine Plans.

#### **Explore Marine Plans Annual Statistics**

Explore Marine Plans is the digital service developed to help visualise the Marine Plan policies, it is a useful tool for coastal stakeholders and licence applicants to identify relevant plan policies, and possible opportunities and conflicts for marine development. The planning team found that there was increased use of Explore Marine Plans. An increase of over 2000 users, longer session times and increased site visits indicated that not only were more people using the service, but that understanding of how to use the service and the various applications of the service were better understood by users.

#### **Enhancements made to the Marine Licence Application Process**

As part of the ongoing improvements to the Marine Licencing Application Process, changes have been made to the application to streamline consideration of marine plan policies for applicants. The project was intended to front load marine plan policy assessment when undertaking a licencing application. The changes made present benefits to:

- **The Licence Applicant** through improved understanding of plan policies
- **The Case Team** through improved ability to review and record assessment information
- **The Public** through improved viewing and consideration of relevant policies
- **The Planning Team** through increased understanding of how plan policies are used by decision makers

A full press release is available [here](#).

David Spray, June 2022

## **NE**

### **Natural England Update**

#### **Sizewell C**

The deadline for the final decision on Sizewell was originally scheduled for the 25<sup>th</sup> May, however, this has now been extended to the 8<sup>th</sup> July. This follows 4 rounds of further questions from the Secretary of State since early March. We have been in close dialogue with NNB Generation Company (EDF) on the issues that remain outstanding and have made some good progress on certain issues.

We have secured common ground on species interactions with project infrastructure after advising on an updated Terrestrial Ecology Monitoring and Mitigation Plan that includes monthly surveys that can trigger mitigation if deemed necessary by the Ecological Working Group. We have made good progress on issuing protected species licences and have issued Letter of No Impediment (LONI) for all species, except for bats at this current time. EDF have addressed our concerns surrounding the entrapment of prey species at Humber Estuary SAC and we now agree with their conclusions that there will be no adverse effect on site integrity for this European site. There remain some unresolved issues around air quality and its impacts on Minsmere SAC and Ramsar, but we expect further cooperation from EDF over the coming weeks.

### **Sam Kench (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.

-The Area Team has agreed Work Package 6 for both Shoreline Management Plans (SMP) 7 and 8, which together cover the Suffolk coast. We look forward to working with all stakeholders on the action plan at the next stage of the refresh.

### **Progress on Establishing The England Coast Path (ECP)**

Reports on all five stretches of coastal access in Suffolk have been published, on the dates stated.

Shotley Gate to Felixstowe Ferry – 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Harwich to Shotley Gate – 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2020

Aldeburgh to Hopton on Sea – 29<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Felixstowe Ferry to Bawdsey – 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Bawdsey to Aldeburgh – 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2021

The latest information from Natural England's (NE) on its progress for the ECP in Suffolk is shown on their website [here](#).

| <b>Stretch name</b>                              | <b>Progress</b>   |
|--|---|
| <a href="#">Harwich to Shotley Gate</a>          | Stage 4 and 5: Partially approved (not yet available for public use - work to establish the route in Suffolk will be undertaken by SCC) |
| <a href="#">Shotley Gate to Felixstowe Ferry</a> | Stage 5: Open (not yet available for public use - work to establish the route will be undertaken by SCC)                                |
| <a href="#">Felixstowe Ferry to Bawdsey</a>      | Stage 4: Determine  |
| <a href="#">Bawdsey to Aldeburgh</a>             | Stage 4 and 5: Partially approved (not yet available for public use - work to establish the route in Suffolk will be undertaken by SCC) |
| <a href="#">Aldeburgh to Hopton-on-Sea</a>       | Stage 4: Determine  |
| <a href="#">Hopton-on-Sea to Sea Palling</a>     | Open to the public  |

Sam Kench, June 2022

### **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**

##### **AONB award winners 2022**

Two outstanding individuals have been awarded the National Landscapes Award for outstanding contributions to the local AONBs. Adrian Silverton has won the Robert Erith award in the Dedham Vale AONB for his work in developing an app to help deliver the Hedgerow Heroes project and Steve Piotrowski won the David Wood award for his work in delivering wildlife projects in the Coast & Heaths AONB. Judges for both awards remarked on the high quality of other nominations but agreed the eventual winners were well deserved. Further details at:

<https://www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/2022/04/07/new-aonb-award-winner-announced-2/>



<https://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/2022/04/07/new-aonb-award-winner-announced-2/>

### **Beachwatch Results**

Information from the 19 litter surveys that were carried out in the Coast & Heaths AONB by individuals and families that took place mostly during the Great British Beach Clean month of September. Key facts are:

- 339 volunteers took part in Beachwatch surveys
- 7,762 items of litter were recorded
- 76.6% of litter collected was made of plastic or polystyrene
- 659 plastic food wrappers were collected
- 8 out of 10 were of plastic composition

More information at: <https://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/2022/02/10/beachwatch-2021-results/>

### **AONB Seasonal Rangers**

The AONB hosted two seasonal rangers for six months that were funded by a successful grant application to a Government Covid recovery programme by Babergh District Council. To the end of January 2022 the rangers have had 178 sessions, 40% of public interactions related to giving directions and/or what to see and do and 23% interactions were dog related. To support the work the Rangers used social media which led to 174,200 Twitter impressions and Facebook messages reached 33,286 people.

### **Farming in Protected Landscapes grant awards**

Over £90,000 has been awarded across 9 projects in the two AONBs for work to support the areas nature, reduce drivers of climate change, enhance the area for people and improve the sense of place. The *East Anglian Daily Times* newspaper reported the story at:

<https://www.eadt.co.uk/news/business/farming-in-protected-landscape-funds-suffolk-and-essex-8781332>

The AONB team were delighted to hear that the allocations from Defra for the final two years of the programme have been confirmed and a further £600,000 will be invested by the Government with most funds being delivered through farmer led projects.

### **AONB Grant awards**

The Galloper Wind Farm Fund panel met in March and awarded over £11,000 across 6 projects to support work to enhance the Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB. Work funded includes improving the environmental performance of community buildings, support for environmental educators and environmental enhancements on common and publicly accessible land. Further details will be posted at:

<https://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/managing/grants/gwff/>

The Access and Amenity Fund Panel have awarded over £15,000 across 10 projects for projects to deliver AONB purpose (towards project activity valued at £85,353.59, a less than 20% intervention rate). The unallocated funds of around £5,000 will be carried forward for the panel to distribute.

The Community and Conservation Fund Panel have awarded over £2,000 across 4 projects for projects to deliver AONB purpose (towards project activity valued at £14,997.51, a less than 15% intervention rate).

The Sustainable Development Fund panel will meet later in the year to distribute £74,000 for projects delivering projects to conserve and enhance natural beauty.

### **AONB response to Government consultation on Landscapes Review**

The two AONB Partnerships have agreed a joint response to the Government's consultation on the future of designated landscapes such as the Dedham Vale and Coast & Heaths AONBs. The Partnerships welcomed the findings of the 'Glover' report and seeks to encourage the Government to give AONBs a

revised purpose to match current challenges. The original report, Government's response and consultation and AONB Partnerships full response can be read at:

<https://www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/managing/reference-library/landscapes-review/>

### **AONB Newspapers are published-Read online**

The outstanding AONB newspapers have just been published and copies are available across the two areas. Full of stories, guides, volunteering opportunities and updates from partners delivering project activity in the AONBs can also be downloaded (in a reader friendly mode) at:

<https://www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/2022/04/11/brand-new-aonb-newspaper-for-2022-23/>

<https://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/2022/04/11/brand-new-aonb-newspaper-for-2022-23/>

Simon Amstutz, June 2022

### **Suffolk Saltmarsh Group**

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

Due to challenges of licencing community-led saltmarsh works and availability of resources from partner organisations the group have not met now for over 2 years. As such we would recommend members of the group meet to discuss whether the group should still exist and be reinvigorated in the same or different form where resources to support work could or should come from or whether there is insufficient support/resource for this group to go forward and it should be dis-banded. CPE officers, notably Thomas Yeung, continue to work with the Deben and Alde and Ore communities on saltmarsh opportunities and through our LGA Coastal SIG links we have continued to champion saltmarsh restoration nationally. We would also like to signpost the group to the following initiative which we recommend to those interested in developing saltmarsh projects going forward <https://ecsa.international/reach/restoring-meadow-marsh-and-reef-rememare>

Karen Thomas, June 2022