

AOCP

Alde and Ore Community Partnership Update

The end of January marks the start of the third year of the AOCP.

Unfortunately, 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 in hand by the East Suffolk Internal Drainage Board. Once it can be submitted, 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.

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, January 2022

BCP

Bawdsey Coastal Partnership Update

No update at present.

BEP

Blyth Estuary Partnership Update

There is an air of optimism on the eve of another Southward Harbour Management Committee (SHMC) meeting with the news that its **Stakeholders' Advisory Group** has met for the first time. This fifteen-strong group is likely to meet more regularly than was originally envisaged in order to feed its concerns directly to the SHMC; ensuring that more effective local knowledge of the river and its estuary is made readily available.

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

Historic administrative concerns will not disappear overnight, but a desire for forward thinking, positivity and action is clear, especially with a report on the harbour, commissioned by East Suffolk Council, being due for publication.

There is a cautionary note, however. The harbour is not a stand-alone entity and the strength, stability and reliability of upper reaches of the River Blyth are material to its very existence. ESC's jurisdiction does not extend this far and any necessary investment will need to be cost effective in terms of its efficacy in pursuit of the concept of sustainability.

Coastal Partnership East
East Suffolk Council Coastal Management Team Update

Verbal update at meeting.

DEP
Deben Estuary Partnership Update

No update at present.

Eastern IFCA
Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities Update

COVID-19 Update

Whilst many Eastern IFCA officers remain working from home, the office is open daily to the public with COVID-19 measures in place. We continue to prioritise the health and safety of our stakeholders and staff as we continue to monitor future engagement opportunities in line with government advice.

The 46th meeting of the full Authority was held successfully in person in December 2021. 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/

Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)

An informal consultation was launched towards the end of November 2021 on a draft Code of Best Practice for lost and stored gear which aims to: minimise the risk of gear becoming lost in the first place; implement a simple system for reporting and monitoring instances of snagged or lost gear in the MCZ; and facilitate the recovery and disposal of end-of-life/unusable gear. The informal consultation is open to all interested stakeholders and has been extended into the new year to allow for further dialogue. It is anticipated that the Code should be agreed and in place by Spring 2022.

To see a copy of the draft Code and respond to the consultation, please visit: [Management Update: Informal Consultation on a draft Code of Best Practice for lost and stored gear in Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ - Eastern IFCA \(eastern-ifca.gov.uk\)](http://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/management-update-informal-consultation-on-a-draft-code-of-best-practice-for-lost-and-stored-gear-in-cromer-shoal-chalk-beds-mcz-eastern-ifca)

To become a member of the Stakeholder Group and receive regular updates on our MCZ work, follow the Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ Facebook page: [Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/cromershchalkbedsmcz/)

Closed Areas Byelaw 2021

The Closed Areas Byelaw 2021 was made by the Authority at the 46th Meeting in December 2021. Subsequently, Eastern IFCA have been engaged in formal consultation on the byelaw with stakeholders from 20th December 2021 – 4th February 2022. 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.

This byelaw proposes additional areas to be closed to fishing activity using bottom-towed gear (and in limited areas crab-tiling and handwork) within several Marine Protected Areas: Inner Dowsing, Race Bank and North Ridge Special Area of Conservation off the Lincolnshire Coast; Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone; Haisborough, Hammond and Winterton Special Area of Conservation; The Wash and North Norfolk Coast Special Area of Conservation; and The Humber Estuary Special Area of Conservation.

To find out more about the Closed Areas Byelaw 2021, or to enquire about this consultation, please visit: <https://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/formal-consultation-closed-areas-byelaw-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 fully assured and has received full formal approval to proceed. We look forward to working with WMA and partners as we enter delivery phase.

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 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

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, January 2022

IDB

Internal Drainage Board Update

The bulk of the East Suffolk IDBs routine watercourse maintenance works has now started. Works will commence at Bawdsey, before we move on to Falkenham and Butley.

WMA Environment Officers have undertaken Water Vole Surveys on three areas at Kings Fleet following on from capital works carried out there, as required by the CL24 Water Vole Displacement Licence. This is

to report on the presence or absence of Water Voles and will be reported to Natural England. It was reported from the survey undertaken on the 4th November that Water Voles were present on two out of the three surveyed sections at Kings Fleet, displaying field signs including burrows, feeding remains and droppings. This was the first year of surveying after maintenance works and Environment Officers will have to undertake another survey next year at the section where Water Voles were absent.

STANTEC have been appointed to deliver the detailed design for the Benacre Pumping Station as the Benacre and Kessingland Flood Risk Management Project moves forward. The pumping station will be the largest of its kind in the UK. All being well construction will start in 2023 and will be completed by 2025/26.

Emma Dixon, January 2022

MMO

Marine Management Organisation Update

Annual Monitoring Surveys

The north east, north west, east, south, south east and south west annual monitoring [surveys](#) have been launched.

Our Marine Plans, a complete set of comprehensive, evidence-based marine plans that cover all of England's seas and coasts (an area almost twice the size of our land-base) were presented to the Secretary of State for the Environment and approved and will become the definitive guide and planning framework for all marine development in the future.

We are interested in how our marine plans are being used to inform the development of terrestrial local plans. We are also interested in how they are being applied in development management. The surveys are run to support our knowledge of marine plan application and effectiveness. We would encourage our stakeholders to complete this survey by the closing date of 7 March 2022.

MMO Annual Report

Those with an interest in the wider work of MMO may be interested to read our annual report, which was published in late December. This provides detail on MMO, including our purpose, key risks and achievements during a challenging period dominated by the Covid-19 pandemic and the end of the EU transition period, and how we performed during 2020/21. You can download your copy [here](#).

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

David Spray, January 2022

NE

Natural England Update

Sizewell C

We've been working hard advising on the coastal elements of SZC Co's (EDF) DCO proposals, particularly relating to impacts around Minsmere where we're currently not satisfied that no adverse effect on integrity can be concluded, which is consistent with the advice we provided the Examining Authority throughout the Examination which ended in October last year. We continue to engage with SZC Co as far as possible in the hope that we can reach common ground on this in the coming months prior to the SoS Decision (likely end May as the Reporting period has been pushed back six weeks: [EN010012-008729-SoS-extension-to-](#)

[Reporting-stage.pdf \(planninginspectorate.gov.uk\)](#)). We will also be part of the SZC Marine Technical Forum going forwards through which we'll continue to work closely with other local environmental stakeholders including Defra Group on these issues.

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 is actively engaging 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.

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 – 15th January 2020
- Harwich to Shotley Gate – 22nd January 2020
- Aldeburgh to Hopton on Sea – 29th January 2020
- Felixstowe Ferry to Bawdsey – 9th December 2020
- Bawdsey to Aldeburgh – 3rd February 2021

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

Stretch name	Progress
Harwich to Shotley Gate	Stage 4 and 5: Partially approved (not yet available for public use - work to establish the route in Suffolk will be undertaken by SCC once a project officer has been recruited)
Shotley Gate to Felixstowe Ferry	Stage 4 and 5: Partially approved (not yet available for public use – work to establish the route in Suffolk will be undertaken by SCC once a project officer has been recruited)
Felixstowe Ferry to Bawdsey	Stage 4: Determine
Bawdsey to Aldeburgh	Stage 4 and 5: Partially approved (not yet available for public use - work to establish the route in Suffolk will be undertaken by SCC once a project officer has been recruited)
Aldeburgh to Hopton-on-Sea	Stage 4: Determine
Hopton-on-Sea to Sea Palling	Open to the public

The Stretches in More Detail

Natural England, Suffolk County Council, Defra and the Planning Inspectorate continue to work together to ensure much of the England Coast Path is open as soon as possible.

Suffolk Stretches

Harwich to Shotley Gate – Sally Fishwick. Last updated 11.01.22

- Stage 4 and 5 (Determine and Open)
- The Overview, and the compendium of six separate reports (covering individual lengths of coast within the stretch) were published on 22 January 2020. The 8 week period for comment closed on 18th March 2020
- Natural England received 7 objections, to 5 of the 6 individual reports.
- Natural England have submitted their comments on the objections and representations received.
- The Appointed Person visited the stretch in June and will advise the Secretary of State on the Objections.
- Coastal Access Reports 1 and 4 have been approved by the Secretary of State. Work to establish the route can now take place on these lengths.

Shotley Gate to Felixstowe Ferry – Darren Braine. Last updated 11.01.22

- Stage 5 (Open) – but not yet available for use
- All 5 reports are approved by the secretary of state and are available for Suffolk County Council to apply for the establishment grants.

Felixstowe Ferry to Bawdsey – Araminta Adama & Sally Fishwick. Last updated 11.01.22

- Stage 4 (Determine)
- Natural England published proposals on 9th December 2020 and the 8 week period for public comment ended on 3 February 2021.
- 7 objections were received. As stretches are published as a compendium of reports, the absence of objection on 2 of the 6 reports means Natural England expects these 2 reports to progress positively to Secretary of State approval which would then allow Suffolk CC to undertake establishment works.
- Natural England are currently writing their comments on the objections and representations received.

Bawdsey to Aldeburgh –Jonathan Clarke & Darren Braine. Last updated 11.01.22

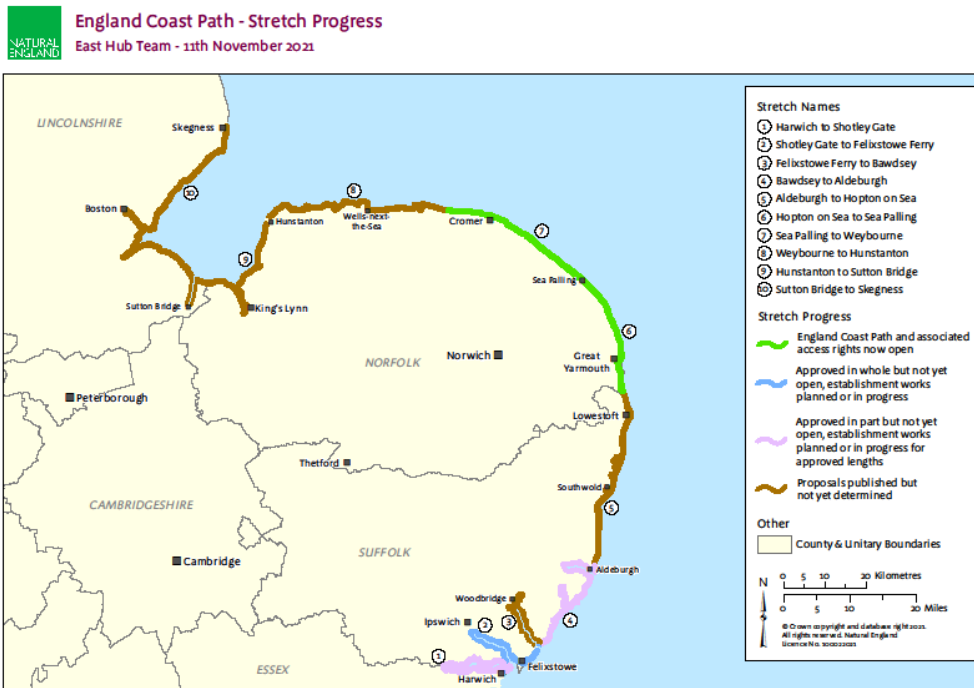
- The report was published on 3rd of February 2021 and closed for public comment at midnight on 31st March 2021.
- The Planning Inspector ruled the objections were admissible.
- Natural England will now undertake administrative processes around the objections and representations received and pass them on towards the end of 2021 to the Planning Inspectorate and Defra (respectively) for their review and consideration.
- Coastal Access Report 3 has been approved by the Secretary of State. Work to establish the route can now take place on this length.
- No schedule is yet set for the Planning Inspectors visits. (likely to be first half of 2022).

Aldeburgh to Hopton-on-Sea – Sally Fishwick. Last updated 11.01.22

- Stage 4 (Determine)
- Natural England published proposals on 29th January 2020. The 8 week period for public comment, closed on 25th March 2020.
- 23 objections were received, to 1 of the 6 individual reports. As stretches are published as a compendium of reports, the absence of objections on 5 of the 6 reports means Natural England expects these will progress positively to Secretary of State approval, which would then allow Suffolk CC to undertake establishment works.
- Natural England is currently writing their comments on the objections and representations received.

The county council has approved the recruitment of an England Coast Path project officer, which will be funded by Natural England. This post will be recruited to shortly.

England Coast Path – Progress Map for the East



Sam Kench, January 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

Celebrating the heroes of the Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Nominations have opened for the awards that recognises the amazing contributions of individuals, groups, and organisations in the Coast & Heaths Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs). The David Wood award (in the Coast & Heaths AONB) recognises the hard work and outstanding contributions that people are making to make the area an even better place for wildlife, communities, and visitors alike. The categories are:

- Landscape and farming
- Biodiversity
- Tourism
- Community engagement
- Outdoor education
- Culture or heritage
- Access to the countryside

Nominations can be made online until Monday 31 January 2022. [Further details and application process on the website](#)

Volume and Value of Tourism impacted by pandemic...but reasons for optimism?

Comparing 2020 to 2019 the value of tourism has fallen by 47% in the Coast & Heaths AONB (based on area before the AONB extension on 7 July 2020). However, observations do note that increasing numbers have been attracted to these areas and the importance of Protect, Respect and Enjoy the AONBs has never been more important. The Suffolk Coast Ltd Destination Management Organisation have produced an excellent film on this theme. See: <https://youtu.be/k8itYYcQfBM>

Farming in Protected Landscapes

The AONB team is delighted to welcome Alex Dinsdale to the team. Alex joins Lynn Eldrett who joined earlier in the year, and brings with him a wealth of experience from the agriculture sector to help deliver this important programme funded by Defra for farmers and landowners to deliver projects on the themes of climate, nature, people and place.

Application forms and full details can be found on our two AONB websites and guidance from staff in the first instance is available by emailing AONBFarmGrants@suffolk.gov.uk In the first year, £76,000 is available in the Dedham Vale and £65,000 in Coast and Heaths. The programme runs for 2 further years with £300,000 per year for Coast and Heaths and £150,000 per year for Dedham Vale available.

So far, a range of interesting proposals including rejuvenation of old orchards, creation of wet grassland areas, a community information project and purchase of new equipment to be used by farmers in partnership to support soil improvement. The FiPL team are happy to help with applications and will work with farmers and landowners/managers to make applications the best they can be.

Submarine recycling in Felixstowe...

Footage of captured World War II submarines being cut up at Felixstowe has been uploaded to YouTube, See:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NodLCzuK7x0>

AONB grants coming soon...

The AONB team will be opening the application window for its grants in early 2022. The grants are designed to support projects that delivery work relating to environmental, economic or social wellbeing. Look out on the AONB websites, social media and local outlets for more information.

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

Simon Amstutz, January 2022

Suffolk Saltmarsh Group

Suffolk Saltmarsh Group Update

No update at present.