

AOCP

Alde and Ore Community Partnership Update

Since the June report, the AOCP has had the good news from the Environment Agency that as the Estuary Outline Business Case has been rewritten and updated, it has been decoupled from the legal investigations into clay stored at Iken. This means that the project is no longer held up by that investigation and it has been possible for the application for grant request and flood related approvals for the project now to go forward through the Environment Agency processes. It is hoped there will be good news soon.

The AOCP is also participating in the EA working group on refreshing the Shore Line Management Plans which includes checking that all updates are in place and noted. The AOCP has been pleased to be involved.

Alison Andrews, October 2022

BCP

Bawdsey Coastal Partnership Update

No update at present.

BEP

Blyth Estuary Partnership Update

No update at present.

Coastal Partnership East

East Suffolk Council Coastal Management Team Update

No update at present.

DEP

Deben Estuary Partnership Update

No update at present.

Eastern IFCA

Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities Update

Authority Meetings

The 48th and 49th meetings of the full Authority were respectively held on the 8th June and 14th September 2022 and public contributions were allowed at the June meeting. A further extraordinary meeting was held on 7th July 2022 to take decisions regarding this year's cockle and mussel fisheries in The Wash following concerns that the fisheries would need to remain closed to ensure the viability of future fisheries (see below for an update on this).

The next Authority meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 14th December 2022.

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

Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)

Eastern IFCA has been taking an Adaptive Risk Management Approach to managing the historic crab and lobster potting fisheries that take place within Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ to mitigate the risks of potting to the conservation objectives of the site, as advised by Natural England – the government’s statutory nature conservation advisor. This is a ‘learning by doing approach’ where management is developed and adapted alongside research. It involves close collaboration between regulators, fishermen, conservationists, research bodies and Natural England.

We have recently published a stakeholder newsletter on all the latest research and management updates relating to our work in the MCZ:

https://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/2022_9_13_SG_Newsletter.pdf

For even more information on our MCZ work, follow the (recently updated) MCZ-dedicated page on our website: <https://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/cromer-shoal-chalk-beds-mcz/>

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](https://www.facebook.com/Cromer-Shoal-Chalk-Beds-MCZ) To join the Stakeholder Group, please contact Alice Tebb, the Group’s coordinator at alice.tebb@mcsuk.org or on 07422 965 027.

Management of the Historic Bivalve Fisheries in The Wash

The Wash Fishery Order 1992 – the legal mechanism through which the historic cockle and mussel fisheries in the Wash have been managed for the past 30 years – is due to expire in January 2023. On its expiry, the Order will be replaced with the Wash Cockle and Mussel Byelaw 2021 and access to the fisheries will be determined in accordance with an Eligibility Policy.

The Eligibility Policy was agreed by the Authority at its 49th Meeting on the 14th September 2022.

This Policy has been designed to ensure a smooth and transparent transition into the new system, recognising the concerns of fishermen around the replacement of the Order which has been in place for 30 years. It has been developed through extensive and consistent dialogue with the fishing industry over the past two years and been guided by an overarching aim, previously agreed with the industry, to achieve a level of access to the fishery that is equitable, and which supports the viability of varying business models, the conservation objectives of The Wash and stock sustainability. All consultation outcomes are available through our website.

The Wash Hand-Worked Cockle Fishery and Mussel Re-Laying Fishery 2022

This year, Eastern IFCA’s annual cockle surveys in the Wash showed that the stocks in the regulated fishery would potentially be unable to support a cockle fishery this year – a mainstay for fishermen in the Wash. See our previous news items for more information: [Sustainability of Fisheries in The Wash](#); [Wash Cockle Fishery 2022 – Update 23rd June 2022](#)

In order to address the concerns raised about the impacts that this would have on the fishing industry, we convened a Wash Fishery Stakeholder Group consisting of Wash fishing representatives and Eastern IFCA officers to discuss and develop proposals to mitigate the risks to future fisheries while at the same time enabling a fishery to take place. The proposals of the group were subject to a consultation with all Wash fishermen: <https://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/consultation-launched-wash-hand-worked-cockle-fishery-and-mussel-re-laying-fishery-2022/>

The proposals of the Group and the responses to the consultation were considered at an extraordinary meeting of the Authority on 7th July 2022. It was agreed that the fishery would be opened and subject to the management measures developed by the Group. The cockle and mussel re-laying fisheries were subsequently opened on 26th July 2022.

Kristina Gurova, November 2022

EA

Environment Agency Update

No update at present.

IDB

Internal Drainage Board Update

No update at present.

MMO

Marine Management Organisation Update

MMO 2030 Strategic Plan Published

The MMO has recently published its 2030 strategic plan, setting out our vision and mission up until 2030. The strategy covers 7 key goals ranging from ecosystem recovery to modernising our services. Please find the full strategy [here](#).

Marine Planning and Strategic Renewable Unit Recruitment

The last quarter has seen the MMO increasing its capacity within its Marine Planning and Strategic Renewable Unit, reflecting the diverse activities and developments within the East Marine Plan area. The Marine Planning team are currently running implementation sessions for Local Authority planners and Harbour Authorities to increase the knowledge and usability of Marine Plans.

Offshore Wind Development and Coordination in the East (Strategic Renewable Unit)

There has been concern around the coordination of offshore wind development in the East Plan area. The challenges which have come to the fore in the last year are not directly MMO dependent and are developer facing. Although the MMO are unaware of specific discussions, BEIS and key energy developers are in discussion around funding and coordination. There are developers outside of the east who are looking seriously at sharing infrastructure but we do not expect formal announcement around coordination measures in the East before the New Year.

For future updates, please feel free to get in touch with me with regard to any areas or subjects you would appreciate to receive updates on from the MMO.

David Spray, November 2022

NE

Natural England Update

No update at present.

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

Value of Visitors to the AONBs

The visitor economy has been hit hard by the pandemic. In 2021 visitor numbers were up 40% in the Coast & Heaths AONB on 2020, but still 27% below the 2019 levels. Visitors play a key role in local economy with bespoke businesses providing employment while other businesses being viable due to visitor spend. Many of these businesses trade on being in an outstanding landscape. Despite some problems associated with a minority of visitors, such as littering, the visitor economy provides an economic stimulus to the area which can contribute to a greater understanding and conservation of the nationally designated landscapes.

News from the National Association for AONBs

Staff at the National Association for AONBs continue to engage with Government on legal purpose of AONBs following the designated landscapes report commissioned by DEFRA on behalf of the Government. Currently AONBs have a single purpose to 'conserve and enhance natural beauty' but discussions are ongoing about a secondary purpose, similar to the National Parks secondary purpose, relating to understanding and enjoyment. Further discussion relating to AONB's use of 'Green Finance' continues.

Heritage Coast Review 2022

Heritage Coasts are a landscape definition applied to the finest stretches of our most scenic and undeveloped coast. There are 32 in England covering around a fifth of the coastline, including much of Suffolk Coast. Their objectives are to conserve, protect and enhance the natural beauty of the coasts; facilitate and enhance their enjoyment, understanding and appreciation by the public. Together with AONBs and National Parks they are part of our national network of England's most valued landscapes.

More information and copies of report (and summary) at:

<https://www.coastalcommunities.co.uk/knowledge-base/category/reports/heritage-coast-review-2022>

AONB Prospectus: World class landscapes fit for the 21st century

The AONB Network's offer to the nation: beautiful world class landscapes delivering on the global challenges of the 21st century; leading the fight against climate change; feeding the nation while restoring nature; ensuring clean, plentiful drinking water; safeguarding against drought and flooding; growing a sustainable, resilient economy to protect rural communities from economic shocks; and delivering health, wellbeing and employment opportunities to all people.

See more at <https://landscapesforlife.org.uk/designation/>

AONB Landscape Enhancement Officer

The AONB's funding partners have agreed to create a new role to work with local authorities, the farming community, environmental Non-Government Organisations, and local communities. The role seeks to deliver the best possible outcome for the Dedham Vale and Coast & Heaths Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) through the delivery of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project Compensation and Mitigation funds. The new post holder will also work on other landscape enhancement projects.

Following a competitive selection process, Paula Booth, one of the AONB's current 'AONB Officers' has been offered and accepted the post. Paula is likely to start her new role in early 2023

Bid for Natural World Heritage Site along east coast

The AONB staff team was delighted to support an application by the RSPB for wetlands along the east coast of Britain to become a Natural World Heritage site. A decision on whether it will be added to the UK's Tentative List of World Heritage sites is expected early next year.

More info at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-suffolk-63314659>

Opportunity for new area for nature on banks of the Deben

The Suffolk Wildlife Trust has the opportunity to create a special place for nature, which they are calling Martlesham Wilds. Sitting within the Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and across the river from the burial site of Anglo Saxon Royalty at Sutton Hoo, this is a landscape rich in nature and brimming with history.

More info at: <https://www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/martlesham-wilds>

Sukhdarshana 'Poli' Mohan

It was with great sadness that the AONB team heard of the death of our former colleague and friend Poli Mohan. Poli was a fantastic member of the team that brought her outstanding enthusiasm for life to her work at the AONBs. She will be sorely missed by her former colleagues and our thoughts go out to her family and friends.

Want more news about the AONBs...

Sign up for visitor and residents focused newsletters at bottom of these pages from our websites:

<https://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/>

Simon Amstutz, October 2022