



Heritage Coast
Sunderland-Durham-Hartlepool

HERITAGE COAST PARTNERSHIP

STEERING GROUP

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 DECEMBER 2016
VENUE – SEATON HOLME, EASINGTON VILLAGE**

[Document consists of 10 pages]

I PRESENT

Niall Benson	Heritage Coast Partnership
Steve Bhowmick	Durham County Council (Design & Conservation)
Ross Carrick	Durham County Council (Countryside)
P.C. Jen Christie	Northumbria Police (Hendon and Ryhope)
Gail Craig	Heritage Coast Partnership
Darryl Cox	Durham County Council (Countryside)
Councillor G Crute	Monk Hesleden Parish Council
Emily Cunningham	Durham Wildlife Trust
Claire Dewson	Sunderland City Council
PCSO Dave Edson	Durham Constabulary (Horden)
Ian Graham	Sunderland City Council Coastal Ranger
Louise Harrington	Heritage Coast Partnership
Councillor P Hunt	Ryhope Community Association
Joe Lemon	Ryhope Community Association
Myrtle MacPherson	Easington Colliery Parish Council
James McLean	Northumbrian Water
Melissa Metcalfe	Marine Management Organisation
Coralie Niven	Heritage Coast Partnership
Ruth Oatway	Natural England
Fred Rowe	Steering Group Open Seat Representative
Chris Scaife	Hartlepool Borough Council
Councillor S Tempest	Hartlepool Borough Council

2 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Councillor Hunt, chaired the meeting, welcoming everyone.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from :

Chris Evans	Natural England
Mark Frain	National Trust
Deborah Jefferson	Hartlepool Borough Council
Councillor J Maitland	Durham County Council (Murton)
Vicky Pinnington	Environment Agency
Gary Shears	Durham County Council (Ecology)
Nicol Trueman	Sunderland City Council

4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was agreed that the minutes of the HC Steering Group Meeting held on 6th October 2016 were accepted as a true record of proceedings by all present.

5 MATTERS ARISING

HALLIWELL BANKS LANDFILL SITE

Victoria Pinnick, Environment Agency (EA) sent an update report through for the meeting which Niall circulated (attached). A more detailed update will be available in the New Year after the Environment Agency had met with Natural England to discuss the Post Determination Assessment Report. The site continues to be monitored for erosion every six weeks, two main areas have been lost recently, both 2m deep and 9m and 11m long respectively.

Joe Lemon expressed disappointment that this item had been on the Agenda for 13 years and queried the delay. He also asked if the report was in the public domain. Niall Benson will make further formal enquiries about the report.

6 SEASCAPE PROJECT UPDATE – EMILY CUNNINGHAM, SEASCAPE DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Emily is working on this HLF Landscape Partnership developing a scheme of projects to enhance the natural, built and cultural heritage of the coastal area Tyne to Tees/South Shields to Hartlepool; the area encompasses the England Coast Path.

Emerging themes which may form projects include :

- Revealing hidden heritage – re-emergence of sealife after decades of colliery spoil
- Seascape over time – geological and industrial processes
- A Coast at War – wrecks and war channels
- Accessing the sea – beach access and improving physical access
- People and communities and how they have shaped the coast

The Seascape Partnership is timely because of the North East Marine Planning process, Sunderland 2018 Tall Ships momentum, following the Limestone Landscapes Legacy and also building on the England Coast Path Partnership.

Timescales are :

Stage 1 bid	May 2017
Stage 2 bid	May 2019
Delivery	Jan 2020 – December 2022

An expression of interest has been accepted by the HLF and regular meetings are being held with them to discuss development. A Partnership has been established (but is still open to join). Budget is around £2.65m.

Next steps are developing project ideas and beginning a community consultation in the New Year; giving talks to community groups and focussing on input into newsletters and social media.

7 Heritage Coast Officer's Report – Niall Benson

A fairly dramatic year! There are currently two new staff on board, staff numbers now totalling 5. We also have Ian Graham, City of Sunderland Coastal Ranger who is working on developing a team of volunteers for litter cleaning. Everyone in the Partnership has a role to play with helping and supporting the Heritage Coast team.

Heritage Coast Management Plan

A Consultation Draft had been circulated, some comments had been received which Niall is incorporating into the Plan.

Next Steps

- Respond to comments received
- Amend and circulate the final paper to the Steering Group
- Present at the Annual Forum in April
- Local authority process for adoption

England Coast Path Partnership

The Partnership has now been established and meets twice a year. It looks at the condition of the path, counters, and the installation of kissing gates.

Counter statistics recently taken from a September survey at Nose's Point show there are 110,000 users per annum (more males, fishing); the statistics from Crimdon are 440,000 and there were more females and children using the site; this could be relating to the feeling of being safer and using more developed paths. The information is extremely useful when looking at how we manage sites in the future. Surveys also took place at South Tyneside and Sunderland.

Councillor Tempest asked how sites could be improved to make people feel safer - discussion ensued about improving safety and the provision of interpretation panels on site showing path networks. Chris Scaife said that shrubs and vegetation can be managed better and that the Partnership can look at this. Making site furniture more user friendly and attractive also helps; as well as events promoting the footpath. This is where the Management Plan can help.

Landscape

- Seascape Project – this will take around 2 years to develop and will 'join up' the limestone coast.
- Large scale EU Life Project – this is slowly resurrecting.

- Transnational visit with Finnish partners – took place in October. Leader funding has now finished, funding would have to be sought for a return visit to Finland with students from Peterlee college.

Coast Watch

- This is now being established with Northumbria Police (Sunderland) and there is also interest from Cleveland police. Northumbria Coast Watch will be launched in April. The current leaflet will be refreshed with the new communications systems etc on it ('Keep in the Know')

Coastal Partnership Network

- Durham hosted an event in November which was well attended by coastal representatives nationwide, with Defra representative attending and other local authority representation.

Nature Conservation

Habitats Regulations Assessment S106 – funding will come in from those Organisations building near the coast. Future coastal development plans in Sunderland are large. There is now a coastal ranger in post. Planning Policy personnel are working together and meeting up to discuss a common approach.

National Nature Reserve Management Plan

This is now close to completion. Easington Colliery Regeneration Partnership are using some of the HRA S106 funding for interpretation on the site.

Little Terns

This year had been more successful than the previous two years; 58 chicks had fledged with 120 breeding pairs. People and dogs continue to disturb the colony despite the presence of a regular Warden, fencing and signage.

Coralie will be working on the EU Life project which will see more education being delivered to the public and will hopefully result in less disturbance. The birds also prefer a mix of sand/shingle as their habitat (there is predominantly sand at Crimdon).

Seasearch

Data has been produced following the Government's assessment of Marine Conservation Zones. Seasearch will continue to be used for gathering data. Emily Cunningham said that the proposed Marine Conservation Zone for the Durham coast had been featured in a National magazine.

Coastal Streams Partnership

River Basin Management Plan – there is a Wear Catchment Partnership with a sub-catchment Partnership under this which is leading on the Castle Eden Dene Catchment Improvement Project which works with businesses on the adjacent Industrial Estate. The Partnership improves water quality through the engagement of businesses. There will be a further planning meeting in January for Ryhope, Hawthorn and Crimdon.

North East Water Science Hub

This includes the Environment Agency, Northumbrian Water Ltd and Durham University and is a way of gathering innovation and looking at Coal Authority geothermal interest/minewater. More news to follow next year on this topic.

EU Interreg Topsoil Project

Focuses on how water flows in the aquifer and percolates into the soil; affecting our drinking water.

Bathing Water Quality

The results from this year were really pleasing – ‘good, excellent and excellent’, our coastline is one of the best in the country, well done to Northumbrian Water for all their hard work and achievement of this result.

EU Referendum Result

The EU Life programme has been affected as well as the transnational funding element of Leader funding.

8 LOUISE HARRINGTON : PROJECT OFFICER’S REPORT

Louise has been working on the Reconnecting Communities and Coast Project, the learn2Love project, beach cleans and the HLF Coastal Memories Project.

Louise is currently working with various schools and youth groups.

Ryhope Infants and Junior Schools – the mosaic created by the children is now in situ at Ryhope Community Centre for everyone to enjoy; there was a celebratory launch event with the children for this. The children’s artist/author Liz Million will be working with the Infants School children to develop a book depicting how life in Ryhope would have been for their ancestors; this will finish with a book launch for the children. Ryhope Junior School have also completed their Anderson shelter project; sharing experiences with the children of what life would have been like during WW2. Beamish Museum have expressed an interest in the project as they will be dismantling the cinema in Ryhope and erecting it in the museum in the future.

Hudson Road Primary – 23 children had now completed and received their John Muir award. Louise showed a video showing how much the children had benefitted from completion of the award.

Valley Road Primary – all year groups are involved in a coastal art project and there will be rock pool sessions arranged for after Easter as well as John Muir award sessions.

Murton Ribbon Academy – 20 children will be undertaking the John Muir award in January.

Hendon Young People's Project – 6 had recently received their John Muir Awards.

Bluewatch Youth Group (Ryhope) – a new group will be starting in January from Portman School.

Chance – litter/environmental campaign with youth group. Louise is also leading on a coastal art project with adults.

The Learn2Love project had also won the Durham County Council Environment Awards Schools category for works with Murton Ribbon Academy.

Louise is also arranging a John Muir award training day in the Spring for teachers of all the schools she has been working with.

Beach Cleans – most recent had been the Christmas beach clean 2016 at Red Acre with lots of rubbish on the beach to be picked up by the volunteers who attended.

Coastal Memories Project – recently supported Blackhall Local History Group World War I Battle of the Somme Centenary event in conjunction with Beamish Museum.

New Economics Foundation – video shown which was prepared by Louise for their launch event in Westminster last week

Events

The Reach for the Beach festival (9 days May 27 to June 4th) will be taking place again in 2017.

Other Events we will be attending this year include Ryhope Carnival, Hartlepool Coast and Countryside Festival, Castle Eden Fun day and the National Trust's half marathon.

Future work

This will include working with the (Sunderland) Coastal Ranger, Ian Graham on access improvements, working with volunteers, survey work and continuing working with schools.

Louise will also be looking at the Coast Watch initiative being taken on board with Northumbria Police (Sunderland).

Leaflets – Louise is working on updating the Seaham walk leaflet to incorporate the Marina, as well as developing new leaflets for Ryhope and Hendon.

9 CORALIE NIVEN : PROJECT OFFICER'S REPORT

Coralie is currently working at Crimdon on the Little Tern recovery project (European Life Project); the site is 60 hectares in size.

Areas of work cover :

1. Little Tern recovery project, including public engagement.
2. Developing an Integrated Management Plan for the site.
3. Facility feasibility.
4. Development and adoption of a business plan.
5. Identifying funding opportunities to enable the facility.

Coralie is currently in post until October 2017.

Coralie will also be looking at access onto the beach and improving the board walk, working with Natural England and Durham County Council (Countryside); educating the site users will be an important part of this project.

Integrated Management Plan – a number of teams in Durham County Council currently manage the site – Countryside Service, Clean and Green Team, Assets Management, Health and Safety and this plan will draw them all together to develop a joint management plan for the site and Crimdon Dene, A meeting has been arranged next week with internal Durham County Council staff. Coralie will also be liaising with external people involved with the site – Ponyworld Equestrian Centre and neighbouring residents.

Facilities – mainly looking at siting toilets but what else can be provided? Coralie will be developing a Business Plan and looking to getting this adopted.

10 BALLOON BAN PROPOSAL : EMILY CUNNINGHAM

Steve Metcalfe raised this at the last steering group meeting, does the Partnership have a role to play in this?

Balloons can be labelled as biodegradable – but this process can take many years; the ribbons attached for balloon releases are not biodegradable.

Chinese lanterns – the wire is not degradable and can exist for many years, often seen caught up in strandlines. Lanterns are a real danger to livestock and wild animals.

Balloon releases are not classed as littering as they are not actually dropped on the ground in the way general litter is; the figures are increasing and the problem is getting worse – last year saw a rise of 53%. Balloons can travel a long way; British balloons are often found on French beaches. Marine life is suffering as a consequence; dying from digesting the latex and the ribbons are strangling seabirds.

A ban on balloon releases is supported by

- Marine Conservation Society
- RSPCA
- National Farmers Union
- Keep Britain Tidy

Some members of our Partnership, including Durham Wildlife Trust, Northumbrian Water and Natural England have already collaborated about this issue in 2009 by not allowing balloon releases/Chinese lanterns on their land. Durham County Council and Hartlepool Borough Council were not part of this; there is no ban on DCC/HBC land.

The Heritage Coast Partnership is proposing submitting a paper to Durham County Council to ask if they would like to support a ban of balloon releases and Chinese lanterns on DCC owned land.

Steve Bhowmick said that there was a draft pledge agreement on the agenda until the Unitary Authority and changes in structures occurred. Steve said this would be an ideal opportunity to revisit this pledge so a consistent agreement is in place.

Darryl asked if there had been any feedback from the previous pledge ‘signees’– Emily will investigate this. He also asked if we could offer any alternatives to this, making the outcome more positive.

Councillor Tempest, Hartlepool Borough Council, asked if any pertinent information could be forwarded to her as hopefully it will be something that Hartlepool would also support.

James MacLean, Northumbrian Water, felt that education is key with this issue, sometimes the general public are not aware of the devastating effects on wildlife/marine life. Could the fact that this is not classed as littering be looked at or changed in any way? Emily advised that the Marine Conservation Society are advocating this in schools and academies; education it is definitely something that can be looked at more.

Cllr Hunt said that an alternative was needed as balloon launches often take place as memorial events – a good alternative is needed which is more

environmentally friendly. Emily said we can learn from other good practices e.g. candle lighting vigils etc.

All the meeting were in agreement to take this forward.

9 LOUISE HARRINGTON : PROJECT OFFICER'S REPORT

Forum 2017 – this will be on 6 April 2017. Speakers will include James MacLean who will be presenting on Bathing Water Quality and the Marine Management Organisation will also be presenting.

Heritage Coast/EDAN Calendar 2017 - Produced this year and handed out.

Drones – no policy exists for Durham County Council. Can cause problems if members of the public are struck. Cllr Tempest may raise this issue with Hartlepool Borough Council

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

Thurs 6 April 2017 (Annual Forum at Shotton Hall)
Thurs 6 July 2017



Halliwell Banks update

13 December 2016

Heritage Coast meeting, 15 December 2016

Halliwell Banks Post Determination Assessment Report

The modelling which accompanied the report was provided to the Environment Agency on 4 November, and we are yet to meet with the appropriate persons to give our formal view on the report and modelling. It would therefore be inappropriate to provide any initial comments within this briefing.

Natural England were also supplied the report shortly after this date once we received written notification from Sunderland City Council that they were content for us to share the contents. They will be analysing the potential impacts on the Special Protection Area (SPA). We will be meeting with Natural England on 15 December to discuss the contents and conclusions of the report.

We will be able to provide a more detailed update in the new year, once we have finalised our view and met with all the parties.

Please note that the contact name for Sunderland CC given within the previous minutes was incorrect, it should read Lynne Bennett, Senior Solicitor.

Coastal Erosion

The Environment Agency currently monitor the cliff erosion every six weeks. This is not an arrangement that will carry on indefinitely, however it is useful to add this data into the mix of other information gathered for the site when making judgements about any future actions that may need to be taken.

The cliff was last monitored in October after the landslide reported by Joe Lemon.

Between the last two monitoring visits there have been two main areas of erosion one of which was an area 2m deep by 9m long and the other being an area 2m deep by 11m long lost.

At the narrowest point, there remains approximately 12m from the edge of the fill to the edge of the cliff. The average annual loss is approximately 0.5m per year.

There is no clear pattern of erosion. It seems to be driven by discharges lying at the base of the sand and gravel/top of the boulder clay. Erosion also occurs by tidal action at the base of the cliff but this has not yet caused a major loss at the pinch point within area b.

Victoria Pinnick
Environment Agency

www.gov.uk/environment-agency

