



Heritage Coast
Sunderland-Durham-Hartlepool

HERITAGE COAST PARTNERSHIP

STEERING GROUP

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 OCTOBER 2016
VENUE – NATURAL ENGLAND OFFICES, CASTLE EDEN DENE**

[Document consists of 8 pages]

I PRESENT

Wayne Appleton	National Trust
Niall Benson	Heritage Coast Partnership
Ross Carrick	Durham County Council (Countryside)
Gail Craig	Heritage Coast Partnership
Councillor G Crute	Monk Hesleden Parish Council
Emily Cunningham	Durham Wildlife Trust
Mark Frain	National Trust
Louise Harrington	Heritage Coast Partnership
Councillor P Hunt	Ryhope Community Association
Joe Lemon	Ryhope Community Association
James McLean	Northumbrian Water
Councillor J Maitland	Durham County Council (Murton Ward)
Melissa Metcalfe	Marine Management Organisation`
Steve Metcalfe	Natural England
Ruth Oatway	Natural England
Victoria Pinnick	Environment Agency
Fred Rowe	Steering Group Open Seat Representative
Gary Shears	Durham County Council (Ecology)
Florence Wilson	Horden Regeneration Partnership

2 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Councillor Hunt, chaired the meeting in the Chairman's absence, welcoming everyone to the meeting.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from :

Andrew Bewick	Sunderland City Council
Steve Bhowmick	Durham County Council
Heather Brittlebank	Natural England
Darryl Cox	Durham County Council (Countryside)
Claire Dewson	Sunderland City Council
Deborah Jefferson	Hartlepool Borough Council
Myrtle MacPherson	Easington Colliery Parish Council
Ed Mason	Ambassador
Chris Scaife	Hartlepool Borough Council
Councillor S Tempest	Hartlepool Borough Council
Ross Wares - Chair	Ryhope Community Association

4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was agreed that the minutes of the HC Steering Group Meeting held on 8th March 2016 were accepted as a true record of proceedings by all present.

5 MATTERS ARISING

HALLIWELL BANKS LANDFILL SITE

Victoria Pinnick, Environment Agency (EA), reported that the site report had been received at the end of August. It is hoped that the EA will be able to give their view on this by the end of October as there are a number of questions and issues which need addressing; Natural England will also be reviewing the report. Ruth Oatway said that Natural England had been involved with this issue in the past; the report was limited in terms of its conclusion which was very brief. Once principles and data had been agreed further explorations and remedial options will be looked at in terms of cost benefit analysis – hopefully the next steps can be agreed by Christmas.

Joe Lemon enquired as to the depth of the sampling boreholes taken, samples taken up to a depth of 10m were not deep enough and the toxins lay beneath this depth. EA said that the depths surveyed had been adequate and some of the hazardous materials had been sampled.

Joe Lemon said that there had been a recent large landslip onto the beach this week which had exposed a new hole; he will take some photographs and email them to EA.

Niall Benson said that with the technical report being available by the end of October hopefully a result will be known by the year end.

As Sunderland City Council are co-owners of the report they would need to give permission for the document to be in the public domain. The contact at the EA in relation to this report is Lynne Bennett, Senior Solicitor. Discussion ensued about submitting a Freedom of Information request.

Councillor Hunt, Sunderland City Council (Ryhope) would investigate this matter further with City of Sunderland Council

6 MARINE PLANNING IN THE NORTH EAST – MELISSA METCALFE, MARINE MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION (MMO)

Key Points :

- MMO was established in 2009 following the Marine and Coastal Access Act.
- The main responsibilities are developing marine plans, issuing marine licences, managing UK fishing fleet capacity and UK fishery quotas, responding to marine emergencies and managing marine protected areas in the U.K.
- Key benefits of marine planning are making sure the right activities take place in the right place and in the right way, placing sustainable development at the centre of all decisions.
- Publishing of marine plans by June 2020 for adoption by 2021.

- So far Marine Plans have not been affected by the U.K. leaving the EU.

Niall urged anyone to get in touch with Melissa about any questions :

melissa.metcalfe@marinemanagement.org.uk

07500 578328

www.gov.uk/MMO

@the_mmo #marineplanning

If anyone would like access to the full slide presentation please contact

gail.craig@durham.gov.uk

7 Heritage Coast Officer's Report – Niall Benson

Heritage Coast Management Plan Consultation Draft

Copies of the Draft Plan have now been circulated to everyone. Niall explained the importance of having this plan :

- Environmental;
- For our cultural history and our effect on it;
- The developing pressures on our economy.

Approval was granted for the Plan to now progress to the consultation phase. Niall asked for any comments to be submitted by 12 December 2016. The timescale for approval and adoption of the Plan is March 2017.

England Coast Path Partnership

The ethos behind this Partnership is access along our Heritage coastline. A Partnership Group has now been established which meets twice a year – anyone from the steering group is more than welcome to attend. Members include Rights of Way Officers from local authorities and Local Access Forum representatives. The Partnership is currently working on condition, counters, signage and the installation of kissing gates. Anyone interested in becoming a member of the Partnership should contact Niall who can pass on meeting dates and meeting minutes.

Landscape

- Management Plan (as above)
- Seascape – following on from the Limestone Landscapes Project HLF Scheme, Seascape will cover the Tyne to the Tees and include the magnesian limestone coast. Following an Expression to Interest to the Heritage Lottery Fund, indications are looking good, HLF appear very enthusiastic and supportive about the project . A group has been set up to work on the funding application led by Emily Cunningham, Projects Office and include Eric Wilton (National Trust), Ruth Oatway (Natural England), Environment Agency representatives etc.

- Crimdon - Funding has been received for this site from the Dept. for Communities and Local Government. 58 little terns fledged this year – making it a reasonable year. There is also funding available from the EU Life Project which has meant a Project Officer has now been appointed for Crimdon. Coralie Niven (who formerly worked on the Horden Denes Project) will be joining the Heritage Coast Partnership in November. Coralie's main roles will be to sort out the management of the site, getting Gateway facilities (café and toilets) to design and consent stage and to work on the little tern project.
- EU Life Project - this has now been shelved because of the U.K.'s exit from Europe.
- Finnish Transnational Exchange – the Heritage Coast Partnership is hosting this environmental exchange project which is taking place with East Durham College (Peterlee) at the end of October.
- Network Rail – fencing is now in place. The solution is not ideal and there are still some issues with the kissing gate. Network Rail have now changed the way they that they approach their work nationally.
- Coastal Partnerships Network – Annual Forum event in Durham later this year, 9-10 November.

Nature Conservation

- Habitat Regulations Assessment S106 – this is how the planning system works with our environment, involving Local Authorities and Natural England. This is primarily concerned with reducing the impact of development on our coastline. A winter visitor survey has been carried out on birds. Northumbrian Water also have some summer data. Statistics show that most people who visit the coast live within a 6 mile radius. More development (houses etc) = more impact on our coastline
- National Nature Reserve Management Plan – Niall now has a draft copy of this document.
- Local Nature Reserve Improvements at Easington Colliery – these works have now commenced on site, led by Gary Shears and involving Easington Colliery Regeneration Partnership. Funding of £140k has been awarded.

Coastal Streams Partnership

- This Partnership is looking at improving the water quality and the impact on our shoreline. Castle Eden Catchment Improvement Plan has been granted £60k; work has been concentrated on the Peterlee Industrial Estate area (near Wapping Burn)
- Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund application – failed, unfortunate as this would have supported the CSP work.
- North East Water Science Hub – expected to be successful.
- Topsoil Project – how water percolates through soil before it reaches the aquifer.
- Bathing Waters 2016 – forecast for this year is 'excellent' or 'good'. The official results will be available on 8 November 2016.

Partnership Structure

The meeting all agreed to the new Partnership Structure.

8 LOUISE HARRINGTON : PROJECT OFFICER'S REPORT

Reconnecting Communities and Coast & Learn 2 Love Projects

A new coastal Ranger will be starting work on 1 November in Sunderland, Louise is looking forward to working with Ian Graham on the Reconnecting Communities and Coast project

Louise is currently working with various schools and youth groups - 7 primary schools and 2 youth groups (approx 600 young people involved to date)

- Murton Ribbon Academy
- Ryhope Infant School
- Ryhope Junior School
- Grangetown Primary School
- Valley Road Junior School
- Hudson Road Primary School
- St Mary's RC Primary School
- Blue Watch Youth Centre (Ryhope)
- Hendon Young People's Project

Work with all the youngsters has included :

- Working with some groups achieving their John Muir Awards
- Science work including rockpool investigations, pond dipping, investigating sealife
- Nature/habitat work – looking at coastal birds, flowers, butterflies, nocturnal creatures
- Art and craft activities – sea sculptures, beach art, Ryhope Mosaic
- Practical work – making insect hotels, hedgehog houses, bird feeders and boxes, planting work and building an Anderson Shelter with fittings and sound effects and fishing
- Heritage research and celebration events
- Beach Litter picks and campaigns and the effects on sealife from marine litter
- Exploring the coastal dunes and trees at Castle Eden Dene
- School visits to the Donnison School (Victorian classroom), George Elmy Lifeboat Centre and the Sunderland Maritime Centre.
- Discussions on beach safety

Future work on Reconnecting our Coast will include practical works with volunteers, working with Sunderland City Council, continuing to engage with schools and youth groups, designing a walks leaflet for Ryhope and building on the events programme.

John Muir Training

John Muir training has been delivered to environmental education specialists, this will be followed up with a course for teachers in Spring 2017.

Restorative Justice

Following on from previous discussions about youngsters completing the John Muir Award (restorative justice scheme) Niall informed the meeting that out of the 5 young persons completing the award one has secured a place at Houghall College and one has enlisted into the army.

Events

Reach for the Beach festival (9 days over May/June 2016) – was very successful; with around 6000 participants taking part, this involved working with around 30 Partners and Community Organisations. A meeting will be arranged with the Green Events Group later this year to discuss events in 2017.

Other Events this year included Ryhope Carnival, Hartlepool Coast and Countryside Festival, Hendon YPP Funday, Peterlee Show, Easington Colliery Fun day and Castle Eden Fun day. Still to come –Pirates of Ryhope with Ryhope Terraces and Avenues Group.

Beach Cleans – 9 have taken place with the Seaham Beach Cleaning Crew, Virgin Money, the Heritage Coast team and Asda. There were also Beach Blitzes and a Superhero Beach Clean as part of the Reach for the Beach festival. A Christmas beach blitz is being arranged for December.

Capturing Coastal Memories Project

- Working with 3 schools in Blackhall (almost finished)
- Continuing with interviews until Christmas
- Attending Blackhall Somme Event
- Publication on Women in Mining Communities
- Sharing event to be arranged

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Annual Forum – this will be on Thurs 6 April 2017. At the last meeting Ed Mason requested a speaker on climate change and the impacts on the coastal environment and habitats. Niall said a Seascape presentation would also be included. Fred Rowe asked if the presentation topics could include marine litter. Niall said that the Marine Conservation Society are doing a lot of campaigning in this area, and had already ran a successful campaign leading to the banning of microbeads in cosmetics. Niall will ask if someone is able to come along to give a presentation on this, this could also include the impacts of balloons on wildlife.

Mark Frain asked if someone could come along and give a talk on WWI shipwrecks off our coastline. Mark is currently involved in the development of a project on

shipwrecks which includes developing an app mapping the shipwrecks etc. Mark will provide a contact name.

A presentation on the John Muir award was also discussed which could look as the 'value of place'.

Wellbeing – following a presentation by researchers on wellbeing at a previous steering group meeting, Niall will contact them to see if there is enough collated evidence for them to present at the forum.

At the last meeting, more focussed discussion was requested (Fred) and more engagement with attendees was requested by Paula; attendees would relish the opportunity to input more – fewer speakers (less issues) and more discussion.

Horden Beach - Fred Rowe enquired about plans for Horden Beach, there is still around 2m depth of spoil on the beach. Coal spoil on this beach will be left to erode naturally; it would also mean having to dispose of any spoil removed; thus causing issues with the Environment Agency. General discussion was that Hawthorn was eroding quickly and that the spoil on the Blast Beach had cleaned itself up quite rapidly over the last two years. However, it was taking longer at Horden due to the topography of the site and inshore winds etc.

Balloon Launches - Steve Metcalfe raised the issue of balloon launches from our shoreline and it's devastating effect on marine life. It was noted that this is an extremely sensitive issue as usually launches are raising awareness or funds for disabled/sick people or are memorial launches. Niall has drawn attention to this in the new Management Plan. Balloon releases have already been banned in Cornwall.

Niall suggested contacting all the Partnership Local Authorities.

Councillor G Crute said that a lot of Parish Councils produce their own newsletters and it may be worth writing an article. Steve agreed to put an article together. Niall suggested using an image from the Marine Conservation Society (if permission was granted) or Durham Wildlife Trust. Niall asked Steve to email the article to Gail. It may also be worthwhile submitting an article to Durham County News (free paper delivered to all households in County Durham).

Natural England – Ruth Oatway said Natural England were now working in more patch based teams and the Durham Coast and the magnesian limestone grassland area was a current focus area. They are also looking at areas of neglect and at Denes and habitats. Natural England are keen to work with people in these areas and this may link in well with the Heritage Coast Partnership.

Business Plan – this will be sorted by December.

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

Thurs 15 December 2016

Thurs 6 April 2017 (Annual Forum at Shotton Hall)

Thurs 6 July 2017