



Heritage Coast
Sunderland-Durham-Hartlepool

HERITAGE COAST PARTNERSHIP

STEERING GROUP

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 JULY 2017
VENUE – HORDEN HERITAGE CENTRE**

[Document consists of 11 pages]

I PRESENT

Councillor R Arthur	Seaham Town Council
Niall Benson	Heritage Coast Partnership
Ernie Cooper	East Durham Heritage Gp (Open Seat)
Gail Craig	Heritage Coast Partnership
Joe Davies	Natural England
Ian Graham	Sunderland City Council Coastal Ranger
Louise Harrington	Heritage Coast Partnership
Councillor P Hunt	Ryhope Community Association
Beverley Jones	Horden Regeneration Partnership
Joe Lemon	Ryhope Community Association
Ed Mason	Heritage Coast Ambassador
Coralie Niven	Heritage Coast Partnership
Fred Rowe	Steering Group Open Seat Representative
Gary Shears	Durham County Council (Ecology)
Allan Snape	Northumbrian Water Limited

2 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

With the sad passing of Ross Wares, Councillor Hunt (Sunderland City Council, Ryhope Ward) volunteered to act as the Chair for all future meetings, this was agreed by all present.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from :

Steve Bhowmick	Durham County Council (Design & Conservation)
Mark Frain	National Trust
James MacLean	Northumbrian Water Ltd
Councillor J Maitland	Durham County Council (Murton)
Chris Scaife	Hartlepool Borough Council
Nicol Trueman	Sunderland City Council

4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

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

5 MATTERS ARISING**HALLIWELL BANKS LANDFILL SITE**

No update report had been received from the Environment Agency. Niall Benson will request an update on the situation.

6 HERITAGE COAST OFFICER'S REPORT – NIALL BENSON

Niall reminded everyone about the objectives of the Heritage Coast



Preserve and enhance landscape quality



Access and Public Enjoyment



Nature Conservation



Educational Opportunities



Greater Participation



Integrated Management



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Heritage Coast Annual Forum

Very positive comments have been received from this year's event which saw the highest ever attendance figures. Next year's forum will include the opportunity for more participation from attendees in the form of Workshops. Everyone agreed that the Forum could be moved back to September next year, as March is the end of the financial year. General feedback about people's perceptions of the coast had been very positive, words used mainly included 'beautiful' and 'relaxed'.

Heritage Coast 'Reach for the Beach' Festival

This was very well received for the second year. Some different events took place which were very popular, including a sea glass safari at Easington. Family events went very well – rockpooling in particular. Guided walks were not so popular.

Heritage Coast Management Plan

Next steps are :

- Tabulate and respond to comments;
- Amend and circulate final proof; Steering Group approval is also needed;
- Local Authority process for it's adoption.

England Coast Path

- Partnership meet twice a year
- Work is focussing on path condition; counters, signage and the installation of kissing gates
- 2018 – usage will improve next year for the Tall Ships events

Ed Mason commented on protection of the pathway with coastal development e.g. a coastal caravan park proposed for Seaham would have had a high impact on the pathway.

Niall Benson said that the group met twice a year and more people can be formally invited; the condition of the path will be looked at and visitor numbers are monitored too. The path is a National Trail and has it's own website which cafes and heritage centres can advertise on for free; events can also be uploaded.

Councillor Arthur asked if there was any planned provision for usage of the path for cyclists; at this stage the path is solely a footpath. Discussion ensued about use of the path by horses and cyclists; the heritage coast key objectives concern the landscape and the environment. Some cycleways and bridleways interconnect with the England Coast Path. Unfortunately funding is not in place for any changes to the footpath to include cyclists or horses, A Business Case would have to be produced; and even the production of a feasibility study would be costly. There are private landowners on the coast and there is a need for bridleway routes to be joined up; cycling could be looked at after this.

Councillor Arthur mentioned the Coast to Coast route which finishes at Sunderland or Tynemouth; it would be good if there was an option to finish the route at Seaham and this would be a fantastic opportunity to promote the town. Niall Benson will forward the contact for the Local Access Forum to Councillor Arthur.

Seascape

The Seascape project covers the coastal area from the Tyne to the Tees, and 6 miles out to sea. Seascape is made up of 33 separate projects. Beach Care (supported by Northumbrian Water Ltd is a big part of it). A small build project at Souter Lighthouse including a classroom activity centre also forms part of the bid as well as looking at wrecks off the coastline and the stories connected with them. A bid for £3.8m was submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund at the end of May.

An appraisal meeting was held with the HLF on Monday at Souter and feedback has been positive, they have suggested to extend the timeline for the project and to reduce the number of staff employed.

Timeline : Regional Decision in September
 National Decision in October

Landscape

Finnish Transnational Exchange Visit – unfortunately Leader funding cannot be used for transnational exchange visits any more so our coastal schools will not get the opportunity to experience a visit to Finland; although they are able to visit us. Niall Benson is trying to source funding for this. The Finnish students are coming over in October/November and they will be working with Peterlee College again.

Coastal Communities Team

Department of Communities and Local Government initiative – ‘Great British Coast’ funding (£10k) – this has been used on leaflet and festival costs. £50k is being used for the Crimdon Project Officer’s post until October. There will be another bid into this funding stream.

Coast Watch

This scheme has now been launched in East Sunderland; the Durham Coast Watch leaflet has been refreshed.

Nature Conservation

Section 106 Funding - work is taking place on this. The National Nature Reserve Management Plan has now been adopted. Gary Shears is working with Easington Colliery Regeneration Partnership on improvements to the site which may be useful in terms of improving future access; improvements include interpretation boards and footpath.

Seasearch

The dive took place on 18 June this year; water is reported as being really clear. Some species only recorded on our coastline have been seen for the first time at Ryhope. Joe Lemon said this was because of a combination of cleaner seas and climate change – cleaner seabed and warmer water,

Coastal Streams Partnership

Funding has been received from the Environment Agency; work is still ongoing with the Castle Eden Dene Catchment Improvement Project and work on Wapping Burn has been completed; more bids have been submitted to keep this going as reducing the flood risk is a major factor. Topsoil project is ongoing, there will be a presentation on this next Spring as the project develops.

North East Water Science Hub

The bid for this has been successful. This is a two year project

Bathing Water Quality

The results for our three beaches are 'good, excellent and excellent', results for 2017 are in line to be the same. We are now responsible for the mandatory signage for our bathing water quality.

EU Interreg Project 'Splash'

This project focusses on plastics in rivers and seas and is in partnership with 8 countries. The total available budget is £2.1m of which the HC Partnership would receive £154k. A decision will be made in December 2017.

Plastic in the seas, especially water bottles, was discussed. Niall Benson said there was a tax in Finland on single use plastic bottles.

Balloon Ban

Currently consulting local authorities on this.

7 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. These projects are nearing completion, Louise will be working on evaluation of the projects and can give a further update at September's meeting.

Schools – 25 children have now completed their John Muir award.

St Paul's School, Ryhope have been engaged in a 3D art project for their playground 'Light Up Ryhope'. Valley Road School have taken part in a fishing activity session.

Leaflets – designed with Ryhope Heritage Group.

Coast Watch – launched in East Sunderland as part of the Reconnecting Communities and Coast project.

Hesleden War Memorial Project – there has never been a war memorial in the village, this will be unveiled in September (27th) and it is currently being built. Local school children are involved with the project.

Blackhall Library Celebrations – local school children were involved with the 60th birthday celebrations for the library. Louise has been working on a historical booklet on Blackhall and Hesleden as part of the Capturing Coastal Memories Project.

'Vigil' – Jean Spence (who lead the Jimmy Kays Project) has been involved with the production of a book 'Vigil' which is made up of memoirs from the Women Against Pit Closures movement which Jean was involved with during the Miners strike. A launch event will take place for this.

Beach Care

Marks and Spencers, Virgin Money and Seaham Beach Cleaning Crew have all been out litter picking and doing an excellent job.

St Marys School will be visiting next week with 35 children at Red Acre.

Beverley Jones highlighted educational Partnership meetings which take place regularly, it may be a good idea for Niall to attend the next one in September to further engage local schools in the Horden area

8 CORALIE NIVEN : PROJECT OFFICER'S REPORT (LITTLE TERN RECOVERY PROJECT)

Improved Beach Access – a new pathway has now replaced the old boardwalk, this is holding up well except for some slight damage in one part. This has resulted in a 'buffer zone' for the little tern colony and takes into account the sand dunes which are SSSI. New signage will be added to the site, replacing the laminated temporary signs.

There are also two new wardens on site, Ruth Smith and Liz Shaw. Their role is to monitor food supply; all their monitoring feeds into a Nationwide project

Engaging with local people is also a key element of the project. Ruth and Liz are currently monitoring the site and the birds.

The existing little tern leaflet has been revamped; this will be available at the little tern hut on site and at our summer events.

The birds have been feeding well due to plentiful food supply this year, there was one shocking incident of a deliberate intruder into the colony with dogs which saw the total of 79 adult birds fall to 29. Some of the eggs were 2-3 days away from hatching, thus the eggs were weak and easy for the dogs to eat/destroy. There have also been sightings of a fox and sparrowhawk which destroyed another two adult birds. The good news is that some of the birds have relaid and 7 chicks are now doing well. Overall not a great year for the terns. Local response has been supportive of the project overall, people are genuinely interested. A local school has been down to the site and had been shown around.

Discussion ensued about artificially incubating the birds. Coralie responded that this national project did not do this and also it was felt that it would be very difficult to do. Fred Rowe asked if round the clock surveillance could be considered, sadly we do not have the volunteer numbers to do this or funding; the two wardens (Liz and Ruth) work for Durham Wildlife Trust.

Crimdon Beach Clean – Crimdon Heritage Group had organised a beach clean which had had a good response from the public.

There have also been Beach School Events (run by Oases) over the Easter holidays. More funding has been received from the Blackhall Councillors to run some more sessions over the summer holidays – these will take place on 24 July, 14th and 28th August.

Access Issues - there have been quite a few issues relating to horse access to the beach for quite a few years which are still ongoing. Parts of the railings have been repaired.

Coralie will be leaving this post at the end of July for a new post within DCC Countryside's service. Niall thanked Coralie for doing a great job in a limited timespan.

9 HERITAGE COAST OFFICER'S REPORT – NIALL BENSON BUSINESS PLAN

An updated copy was handed out, Niall has now worked through this and produced an executive summary, he plans to use the plan to assist with performance targets.

10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Ian Graham mentioned there had been a massive fall at Ryhope Denemouth near the coastal footpath. Niall said that the route would need to be moved back.

11 CONTACT LIST

As there have been several new members to the steering group, pages 9-11 show contact details for all members.

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

Thurs 28 September 2017

Thurs 14 December 2017

Thurs 22 March 2018

HERITAGE COAST STEERING GROUP CONTACT LIST

Organisation	Contact	E-mail
City of Sunderland Council Civic Centre Burdon Road Sunderland SR2 7DN	Nicol Trueman Andrew Bewick Mark Taylor Ian Graham	nicol.trueman@sunderland.gov.uk andrew.bewick@sunderland.gov.uk mark.taylor@sunderland.gov.uk ian.graham@sunderland.gov.uk
Natural England The Quadrant Newburn Riverside Newcastle upon Tyne NE15 8NZ	Heather Brittlebank Joe Davies	Heather.Brittlebank@naturalengland.org.uk joe.davies@naturalengland.org.uk
Durham County Council County Hall Durham	Gary Shears Darryl Cox Steve Bhowmick	gary.shears@durham.gov.uk darryl.cox@durham.gov.uk steve.bhowmick@durham.gov.uk
Durham County Council	Cllr J Maitland (Murton Ward)	joyce.maitland@durham.gov.uk
Groundwork Grosvenor House 29 Market Place Bishop Auckland Co Durham DL14 7NP	Joanne Ashworth	joanne.ashworth@groundwork.org.uk
Durham Wildlife Trust Rainton Meadows Houghton-le-Spring Tyne and Wear DH4 6PU	Jim Cokill	jcokill@durhamwt.co.uk
Environment Agency Tyneside House Skinnerburn Road Newcastle Business Park Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 7AR	Vicky Pinnick	victoria.pinnick@environment-agency.gov.uk
Hartlepool Borough Council Hartlepool	Chris Scaife	Chris.Scaife@hartlepool.gov.uk

Countryside Wardens C/o The Gatehouse Hartlepool Power Station Tees Road Hartlepool TS25 2BZ		
Hartlepool Borough Council 117 Stockton Road Hartlepool TS25 1SJ	Cllr Kevin Cranney	kevin.cranney@hartlepool.gov.uk
Ambassador	Cllr Tempest Hartlepool Borough Council	
National Trust (Durham Coast)	Mark Frain	mark.frain@nationaltrust.org.uk
Northumbrian Water Abbey Road Pity Me Durham DH1 5FJ	James MacLean	james.maclean@nwl.co.uk
Horden Regeneration Partnership	Bev Jones	b.jones@cotsford-jun.durham.sch.uk
Easington Colliery Regeneration Partnership	Councillor David Boyes	David.Boyes@durham.gov.uk
Seaham Town Council	Eddie Mason AMBASSADOR and Vice Chair Cllr R Arthur Paul Fletcher Seaham Town Council Parks Department Cemetery Lodge Princess Road Seaham Co Durham SR7 7TD Tel 07718 984210	parks@seaham.gov.uk
Ryhope Community Association C/o Ryhope Community Centre Black road	Councillor P Hunt (CHAIR) Joe Lemon	

Ryhope Sunderland SR2 0RX		
Myrtle MacPherson	OPEN SEAT REP 1	No email
Fred Rowe	OPEN SEAT REP 2	
Ernie Cooper East Durham Heritage Group	OPEN SEAT REP 3	
Cllr Gaynor Crute Chair of Monk Hesleden Parish Council	Blackhalls	