



**Heritage Coast**  
Sunderland-Durham-Hartlepool

# **HERITAGE COAST PARTNERSHIP**

## **STEERING GROUP**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 JULY 2018  
VENUE – SEAHAM MARINA ACTIVITY CENTRE**

**[Document consists of 16 pages]**

**I PRESENT**

Councillor R Arthur – Seaham Town Council  
Niall Benson – Heritage Coast Partnership  
Steve Bhowmick – Durham County Council (Design and Conservation)  
Gail Craig – Heritage Coast Partnership (Minutes)  
Mark Frain – National Trust  
Ian Graham – Sunderland City Council  
Deborah Hannaby – Seascapes Partnership  
Louise Harrington – Heritage Coast Partnership  
Bev Jones – Horden Regeneration Partnership  
Joe Lemon – Ryhope Community Association  
Zoe MacKay – Marine Management Organisation  
James MacLean – Northumbrian Water Ltd  
Ed Mason – Heritage Coast Ambassador  
Fred Rowe – ‘Open’ Seat Representative  
Chris Scaife – Hartlepool Borough Council  
Gary Shears – Durham County Council (Ecology)  
Nicol Trueman – Sunderland City Council  
Lloyd Tyson – Environment Agency

**2 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS – Ed Mason, Heritage Coast Ambassador.****3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Katherine Birdsall – Environment Agency  
Ross Carrick – Durham County Council  
Tom Charman – Natural England  
Ernie Cooper – ‘Open’ Seat Representative  
Darryl Cox – Durham County Council  
Joe Davies – Natural England  
Councillor Paula Hunt – Ryhope Community Association  
Councillor J Maitland – Durham County Council (Murton)  
Veronica Rudd – Seascapes Partnership  
Councillor K Cranney – Hartlepool Borough Council

**4 MINUTES AND ACTIONS OF THE LAST MEETING**

It was agreed that the minutes of the Heritage Coast Steering Group Meeting held at Sunderland City Council (Civic Centre) in March 2018 were accepted as a true record of proceedings by all present with the following clarification:

- The report referred to in the minutes is the Post Determination Report.

## **ACTIONS**

- Lloyd Tyson – pointed out that a letter to the appropriate persons had been prepared and the appropriate persons have been asked to share the report, once agreement is given the report will be issued.
- Niall Benson is arranging for the North East Waterhub personnel to present at the Annual Forum instead of attending today.

## **5 MATTERS ARISING**

### **HALLIWELL BANKS LANDFILL SITE**

Lloyd Tyson – the letter to the Appropriate Persons regarding the Post Determination Report has now been finalised by Andrew Turner and has been checked by the EA Legal Department and Natural England. Once this has been approved it will take approximately another week before it is sent to all the Appropriate Persons.

Ed Mason raised the issue of on-site monitoring. He asked whether there is any provision made for monitoring during or just after extreme inclement weather as this is the key time when erosion rates and cliff drops are significant.

Lloyd Tyson stated that EA were asking the Appropriate Persons to introduce a monitoring programme which will include this (e.g. more monitoring at times of extreme weather).

Lloyd Tyson also asked about Sunderland City Council's Emergency Action Plan in view of a cliff collapse occurring. Nobody had had sight of this plan, Nicol Trueman said that she would request a copy of this. Lloyd Tyson has also requested to have sight of a copy.

Discussion ensued about the consequences of a breach and whether things were in place should this occur. Lloyd Tyson could not comment on this as he hasn't seen the Emergency Action Plan. There may even be a crossover between EA and SCC. Again the devastating consequences of a breach was discussed for the whole coastline, even to as far as North Yorkshire.

Lloyd Tyson said the point of an Emergency Action Plan is to address the risk of this occurring and that all Stakeholders would know what roles and responsibilities they have. Ed Mason said that the funding to produce the Emergency Action Plan may have been better spent on prevention instead as something needs to be done as soon as possible.

Councillor Arthur enquired whether Sunderland City Council were aware of the contents of the landfill site. Lloyd Tyson replied that Sunderland City Council were aware as it was SCC who originally asked EA to inspect the site.

Fred Rowe asked if anything is currently physically happening on the site. Lloyd said the Emergency Action Plan would be used if the site collapses. In terms of

prevention the Appropriate Persons would remediate the site and as previously stated there will be a letter sent to AP's, followed by a meeting with them to finalise the report.

Niall asked if Lloyd Tyson could produce a short report to share with the Partnership regarding the current situation. He also asked if Durham County Council/The Partnership could be included when Sunderland City Council's Emergency Action Plan is shared.

James Maclean said that the risk of a breach needs to be mitigated and asked if EA has looked at the economic feasibility of removing waste as it will take far longer to rectify this.

Ed Mason said that the full costs associated with the removal of breached waste would be immense – thus the remediation plan is very urgent. Lloyd Tyson confirmed that this will be the responsibility of the AP's and this needs to be pushed ahead but stated the Emergency Action Plan is also equally important if it breaches.

Lloyd has spoken to Sunderland City Council about working together to update the Action Plan so everyone is aware of their own actions if there is a breach.

Nicol explained that the EAP is in place if a major incident occurs and first steps would be to get the key stakeholders round the table; with key actions for SCC staff and EA.

Chris Scaife said that once the Emergency Action Plan is located and shared it would be useful to inform Southerly Coastal Authorities so they know what to do as pollution will make its way down the coast to Hartlepool, Redcar, North Yorkshire etc.

Ian Graham's comment at the last meeting about contaminated crops was addressed – Niall Benson has asked Keith Davidson (Land Owner/Farmer) about this and he will follow this up.

Lloyd Tyson asked what the Partnership would like to see on site after remediation takes place and what their expectations were for the site. Ed Mason said it is quite difficult to say at this point in time without special expertise which may be needed in view of the contaminants, for example can the waste be moved? What would be the impact for the site if it cant?

Joe Lemon –historically cyanide was present and was extremely dangerous. There was a fire around 1960, after this the site was capped with mud and then more waste was dumped, finally a layer of green waste topped it.

Niall Benson said that the Heritage Coast Partnership would be concerned about landscape quality, the impacts on nature conservation and improving public access. The site could be used as a community and recreational asset.

## 6 HERITAGE COAST OFFICER'S REPORT – NIALL BENSON

### Landscapes/Seascapes

Protected landscapes

- assisted with Lincolnshire Heritage Coast recently opening up the prospect of future joint working
- looking at our own Heritage Coast status extension
- Liaison with Northumberland Coast AONB looking at their Coast Care Project which assists with Seascape Project Development

Plymouth National Marine Park – recent meeting with them discussing their Blue Marine Foundation; a return visit will be arranged to our Heritage Coast.

Transnational and Finnish Partners – Finnish students came over to East Durham working with Peterlee College. Niall is looking at further youth projects where both sides can assist with development.

East Durham Artists Network – this art group continue to promote the coast showcasing its improvements.

MMO Pathfinder – this is a Defra function in Devon and Suffolk, Niall has been involved and will continue to liaise with this group. They will be invited to the Annual Forum to present, the project looks at how land and sea connect and fits in with the Seascape Project.

Community Voice Opportunity – this links to the HLF Coastal Memories Project, how people use the coast (Solent coast).

### Nature Conservation

Coastal Access and Mitigation Measures- this has come about as a result of the Habitat Regulations Assessment process.

- Coast project - SI06 HRA guidance has been adopted by SCC. There are small amounts of money in Durham too. The HRA produces money, paid by Developers. Funding from this source will also help pay for a Warden from Crimdon down to North Sands.
- Local Nature Reserve Improvements –Easington Colliery is a local nature reserve which was formerly the Colliery site. Desire lines have been created so they can be used all year. The site is popular with walkers and dog walkers. Niall will arrange a site visit for the Partnership in Summer 2019 with the National Trust.

Little Terns – Louise Harrington will cover this in her presentation later.

Seasearch – water quality has been good so decent images are expected; hopefully these will be in time and can be shown at the Forum.

EU/Defra Water Environment Grant– £200,00 funding has been applied for, focussing on reducing litter etc.

New NWG – Water Improvement Fund – this is a new asset management plan, water improvement fund for £2m over 5 years. Niall Benson has been part of this process as it includes coastal waters. 7 staff have been assisting from Northumbrian Water. James MacLean commented that this was very innovative and has been driven by customer feedback.

Steve Bhowmick asked if a Marine Coastal Protection Zone (national status) would assist with the heritage coast status extension. Niall said that Defra were currently working on a 3<sup>rd</sup> Tranch, the current advice relating to MCZ's is that evidence is needed. Durham Wildlife Trust are involved as they are advocates and are leading on this.

### **Access/England Coast Path**

The English Coast Path Partnership group is now established and meets twice a year.

The Partnership is being extended to include South Tyneside and Stockton (Tyne to Tees theme which ties in with Seascapes).

Work has taken place on the path condition, counters, signage and the installation of kissing gates. Signage will be looked at under the Seascapes Project. Niall has two tickets available for the formal official opening of the England Coast Path if anyone is interested in attending. Chris Scaife added that the final elements of work are underway for the new section of England Coast Path in Hartlepool, including a new causeway. Hopefully this section of work will be complete by Autumn/early Winter. This will then mean a continued coastal footpath for the public to access from Filey to Ryhope. More funding has been applied for for further works.

Reach for the Beach – this is the third year the Heritage Coast have ran this coastal outdoor festival, receiving very positive feedback.

### **Coastal Streams Partnership**

Wear Catchment Partnership – sub-catchment delivery partnership. Coastal waters from inland to the sea, this links to beach care.

Castle Eden Catchment Improvement Project – there is now a Wapping Burn Focus Group which has resulted in more fencing being installed to prevent rubbish from the highway getting into the water course. There will be more information on this project and the Wapping Burn at the Annual Forum

North East Water Science Hub – project is ongoing.

EU Interreg Topsoil Project – water penetrating aquifer and water courses, there will be further information and a presentation at the Forum or the December Steering Group meeting.

Bathing Water Assessment 2018 – bathing water signage has now been brought up to date for all our beaches achieving ‘excellent’ status in 2017. The site information boards will all be updated next year with new skins. James MacLean added that bathing waters continued to be monitored throughout the year, 2018’s water quality has dropped to ‘good’ status, hopefully these results will come back up to ‘excellent’ next year.

Heritage Coast Management Plan – this was shared at the last steering group meeting, some additional comments had been received from Nicol Trueman, City of Sunderland. The full plan will be issued at the Annual Forum and formally presented there. The Plan references all local plans

## **7 SEASCAPES DEVELOPMENT**

Niall Benson reported that we are currently in the development phase for this HLF funded project; £250,000 funding for the next 12 months. Veronica Rudd and Deborah Hannaby are now on board working on the project. Some items will be processing through to tender stage so the project is now taking shape.

Deborah Hannaby – Deborah has been in post for 5 weeks. The Seascapes logo/branding has now been designed and adopted which has meant that some banners have been designed and manufactured to take to events etc. Seascapes took part in the recent Tall Ships event at Sunderland. The Website is also now up and running, as is Twitter, Facebook and Instagram which will update people on the project. The Tallships was a huge event over 5 days, with over 1.5m visitors. There had been lots of engagement with visitors, informing them about the project and building up an audience and also building up momentum on social media; people had also been directed to the website.

Visitors had been encouraged to complete a short questionnaire as a follow on from the workshops which took place on the coast in February. Views are sought on developing details during the development phase. Deborah thanked the Partners who came along and helped.

Simple tools were used to draw people in e.g. guess the number of pieces of seaglass in the jar and a social media selfie board worked well, as did simple origami sailing boats which contained information about the project. Some good connections have been made to follow up on.

Seascapes have also worked with Nicola Balfour from Barn Arts to run a workshop.

Paul Steele (‘The Bald Hiker’) also spent three days at the Tall Ships event; Paul has a huge social media following (Twitter) and also writes travel blogs.

## 8 COAST – IAN GRAHAM, CITY OF SUNDERLAND COASTAL RANGER

Ian is currently working on setting up social media, this is almost up and running.

Events this year had on the whole been poorly attended. A good event had been held at Ryhope Community Association with rockpooling and Animal Ark activity

Ian will be attending the Celebrating our Coast event on 31<sup>st</sup> July at Seaham Marina with other Partners.

Upcoming events include :

- Butterfly Walk – early August at Hendon with a Butterfly Conservation expert
- Big watch weekend - joining up with Louise Harrington, Heritage Coast.
- Geology Walk – looking at cliffs and magnesian limestone with Brian Young, Geologist
- Party in the Park at Ryhope (instead of Ryhope Carnival)

Ian will be leafletting within Ryhope (shops etc) for these events.

Survey Work - Ian has also been involved in visitor surveys with local people, (surveying purpose of their visit); carrying out reptile surveys; sandmartins and invasive seaweeds have also been surveyed.

Anti-Social Behaviour – Ian has also had meetings with the Police about anti-social behaviour with off road bikes, vehicles and flytipping. Flytipping is particularly bad, especially in the Denemouth area of Ryhope.

Litter Picks – Ian has been helping with litter picks with community groups. Due to the ongoing problem with flytipping, the Regeneration Partnership team came out on a litterpick, which included Councillors. Ian has a meeting planned with Sunderland's Enforcement Team with regard to flytipping; he will also endeavour to get the Probation Service involved with an area West of Ryhope Dene which is a hotspot for dumping.

## 9 DENE PROJECT, LITTLE TERNS AND REACH FOR THE BEACH – LOUISE HARRINGTON

**Little Terns at Crimdon** – last year the little tern hut was burned down and this has now been replaced with additional security on the doors. Wardens are now in place. The hut is being used as an educational facility/resource, working with children coming to the beach. Signs have now been placed around the colony informing people to keep dogs on leads etc.



The first sighting of little terns arriving was on 6<sup>th</sup> May; and a high nest count was recorded on 31<sup>st</sup> May.

Since then, crows have been extremely problematic taking eggs. The terns seem to not be as committed to the site as they have been in previous years, possibly due to lack of appropriate food (sand eels).

9<sup>th</sup> July – there were 117 birds on site, but not many were laying eggs.

Measures have taken place to deter the crows, this has been a big issue this year, and will be looked at in more detail next year.

Newcastle University are currently carrying out a survey on sand eels. Joe Lemon added that sand eels were starting to come into force now having been affected by the weather, however this may be too late for the little terns.

Louise highlighted the continued problem with dogs on site, motor bikes, horse issues which have all affected the colony. It is hoped the little terns will come back next year after they have been coming to Crimdon for 14 years.

Chris Scaife also added that there is new housing nearby resulting in more traffic (motorbikes) which may also affect the little tern colony. Furniture has been installed to stop bikes and they are decreasing in general except during holiday periods when there tends to be more people on site with dogs. With the S106 contribution from Developers, Hartlepool are looking at putting PSPO's in (new version of the dog control order). Seasonal data collection on how the birds are affected by dogs will be enough to say if a PSPO is needed. PSPO's will be specific to certain areas, including Crimdon.

Improving education and informing people about birds was discussed. Enforcement is difficult, existing funds are stretched for Enforcement Offers to be on hand.

Nicol Trueman commented that the dog control order in Sunderland stipulates that not more than 4 dogs are allowed on beaches at any one time per person; this inhibits professional dog walkers who can sometimes bring up to 14 dogs with them.

Beach Care Update – school groups, corporate groups and community groups, including Greenpeace, are continuing to come out on litter picks.

The new Marina facilities are excellent for school groups, after picking litter the classroom can be used to discuss marine litter or to do activities in the event of wet weather, and there are toilets.

Events have included :

- Big Beach Clean – for World Ocean Day
- The Big Plastic Clean Up

- Reach for the Beach Festival beach cleans were also well attended
- Joint working with the Marine Conservation Society and the Great British Beach Clean GBBC in conjunction with the National Trust (Durham Coast) and Ian Graham.
- Richmond fellowship (mental health)

There was also an article in the Sunderland Echo about Seaham High School's recent litter pick.

**DENE** – this is a HLF funded project starting in September, of which Northumbrian Water have given a £4k contribution and the HLF have awarded £36,264.

It focusses on using the coastal denes and looks at improvements which can be made with ecology. The project will involve local schools who will complete the John Muir Discovery Award (using Rockhouse Dene) and sessions will be provided by OASES and East Durham Artists Network who will be involved by holding an exhibition and hosting an art walk.

All denes on the coast will be used – Hawthorn Dene in conjunction with the National Trust, Crimdon Dene and Ryhope Dene.

The new proposed logo was shown – DENE stands for Discover, Explore, Nature and Environment.

Reach for the Beach Festival - Seaham Marina Fun Day was cancelled and has been rearranged for Tuesday 31st July. The event will include donkey rides, sandcastle building, Punch and Judy, Seascapes and other Partners will be present. The festival went well with events compressed into a smaller time delivery span.

Ed Mason queried due to the amount of litter picks happening on the coastline whether the litter is getting any less. Louise replied that unfortunately this was not the case, although there are now fewer plastic bags but people are still continuing to dump litter.

Discussion ensued about recycling waste which is collected on the beach. If waste is sorted on site from litter collections, often recycling companies collect it free of charge. The National Trust have an agreement in place with Tetra. Louise will consider this option but it may be difficult as it is a chore collecting bags then having to take them to the Council's pick up point (up steep steps) and it is better to have the bags collected as soon as possible after a litter pick as local people tend to complain if bags are left uncollected for more than one day.

Louise will be working with Ian Graham and the Marine Conservation Society and feeding their September survey results into a national database.

Niall Benson commented that behavioural changes were occurring regarding the use of plastic drinking water bottles etc.

Ed Mason queried why, if everyone was on board with recycling their plastic waste, so much was still being found on the beach. Louise said that fishing net and line has always been there and that people, when outside of their domestic environment, change their behaviours. There is also waste washed ashore from ships too. Asda play a part in collecting any trolleys which can still be used, the rest are taken away by DCC Clean and Green.

## **10 BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE 2018/19 Q1 – NIALL BENSON**

Niall distributed copies of this at the meeting for information, an electronic version will be circulated with the minutes.

## **11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Chris Scaife said that Hartlepool Borough Council were currently consulting on a Non-Release Balloon policy, he will send on a link for circulation. This will run until the end of September. So far responses have been good, however it was noted there are a lot of emotive issues around balloon releases; sometimes face to face consultations work better on issues such as this in terms of educating people on the dangers of balloons in the environment.

Steve Bhowmick said that the County Durham Plan Draft was currently out to consultation and urged members present to provide their feedback.

Beverley Jones - Cotsford Junior School have had their annual celebration awards. The Eco award went to a youngster who was so shocked by the state of the beaches that they collected lots and took it home, proving that education with young children does work.

## **12 CONTACT LIST**

Pages 13-15 show contact details for all members of the Heritage Coast Partnership.

## **10 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS**

**Thurs 27 September 2018 (Annual Forum)**  
**Thursday 13 December 2018**  
**Wednesday 20 March 2019**  
**Thursday 27 June 2019**

Page No	Name	Action
3	Nicol Trueman	Request a copy of Sunderland City Council's Emergency Action Plan
4	Niall Benson	Follow up request from K. Davidson about contaminated crops
4	Lloyd Tyson	Provide brief report on current situation at Halliwell Banks.
11	Gail Craig	Circulate electronically Business Plan Update 2018/19 Q1 with draft minutes
11	Gail Craig	Circulate link for Hartlepool BC's Consultation on the Non-release of Balloons and Sky Lanterns

**HERITAGE COAST STEERING GROUP CONTACT LIST**

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Seaham Town Council	<p>Eddie Mason AMBASSADOR and Vice Chair</p> <p>Cllr R Arthur Seaham Town Council</p> <p>Paul Fletcher Seaham Town Council Parks Department Cemetery Lodge Princess Road Seaham Co Durham SR7 7TD Tel 07718 984210</p>	<p><a href="mailto:parks@seaham.gov.uk">parks@seaham.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>Ryhope Community Association C/o Ryhope Community Centre Black road Ryhope Sunderland SR2 0RX</p>	<p>Councillor Paula Hunt (CHAIR) 5239371</p> <p>Joe Lemon</p>	
Myrtle MacPherson	OPEN SEAT REP 1	<b>NOT ON EMAIL</b>
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 132 West Avenue Blackhall Colliery Hartlepool TS27 4LD	Blackhalls	
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