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AOEP

Alde and Ore Estuary Partnership Update

Work on the Aldeburgh river wall is recommencing at the end of June, following an exercise to remove water voles on the relevant stretch this Spring. The total cost of Phase 1 of the Aldeburgh Wall is going to be c.£1.2m.

A hydrological model of the whole estuary is being run on a range of assumptions by Tidal Lagoon Power, a firm who plan to build tidal lagoon/s in South Wales and are seeking compensatory habitat in East Anglia. The results should be with us at the end of August. The AEOP is contributing c.£35k to this, funded by the RFCC, in order to get answers that it needs about its own Estuary Plan and Programme.

Total funding needs for the whole Estuary Plan are estimated at £12m. We expect to spend c.£2m annually for 6 years. Of this total we need to raise £10m locally. £5m has been promised by the farmers and landowners round the estuary, and they intend to raise at least that sum from donations of land for enabling development. The other £5m is to be raised by a widespread public appeal to be launched in October. In the meantime the Alde-Ore landowners have borrowed, through the IDB, a 'bridging loan' of £3m to enable work to continue while fundraising continues.

Edward Greenwell, June 2017

S&OEMG

Stour and Orwell Estuary Management Group Update

Last partnership meeting held at Suffolk Yacht Harbour, Levington in April.

- Of particular note is that MMO are developing the South East Marine Plan, which includes the Stour & Orwell. Engagement over the next 2 years, with a draft plan for consultation late 2019
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/south-east-marine-plan>

- Still no decision on the trial mussel fishery. SOEMG now includes engagement with HASA (Harwich Area Sailing Association) who have been very active on this issue. Many responses sent in and still being considered, but key issue remains the marking of the mussel beds and buoys with associated navigation and safety issues
- A new AONB-led HLF-funded Landscape Partnership Scheme totalling £2.1m, has been submitted for the Stour & Orwell Estuaries and Shotley Peninsular, 15 partners will restore the historic and farmed landscape and take some of the recreational pressure off the more sensitive areas. It will work with all the people who care about this area, including access users, to realise its wellbeing and tourism potential.
- SOEMG also held a well attended S&O Forum (c 70 attendees) at the Royal Harwich Yacht Club, with presentations including; SCC Rights of Way work, the England Coast Path, and the SE Marine Plan.
- The secretariat of the SOEMG, Matt Jones, Suffolk Estuaries Officer, whose position was part funded by the S&O Port Authorities, has now left.

Nick Collinson, July 2017

BCP

Bawdsey Coastal Partnership Update

With the welcome help of Suffolk Coastal District Council and the East Suffolk Internal Drainage Board, we have appointed consultants Dr Phil Barber and Alastair Tindle to review the engineering options for protection of our 5-mile stretch of coastline. We await the results from Phase I of their work, which is a review of all the available data, reports and other information which they will need to produce a costed design.

Nick Crick, July 2017

DEP

Deben Estuary Partnership Update

Mouth of the Estuary Significant changes continue along the frontage between Bawdsey Quay and the Knolls. A row of groynes, which have been covered by shingle for many years, are exposed, and towards the quay, eroding bays are forming and deepening..

Erosion continues behind the piles – shingle is slipping away in several places and water wells up and ebbs away with the tide.

A project exploring **drone-based data acquisition** is using the mouth of the estuary as a site to test a new procedure for the generation/mapping of elevation. The work is being undertaken by a UCL MSc student. The use of this 'structure from motion' approach to acquire digital elevation models (DEMs) is being used in regions where lidar coverage is poor or survey access is difficult - it has already been demonstrated in the UK on cliff environments and rivers. The student is particularly interested in developing a tool rather than just applying the technique - i.e. he wants to produce a series of scripts and applications that provide any user with the tools needed to generate an elevation model from drone aerial photography.

Bawdsey / Felixstowe Foot Ferry

Discussions to trial a 'dial-a-ride' ferry service which operates through the year continue. The DEP have met with the Ferry owner and understood that a weekday operation is feasible but manning a boat at weekends would give rise to additional costs. A subsidy of some £7,000 would cover the cost of a 12 month trial service. The DEP will look at funding opportunities and test the likely level of use of a winter ferry.

Tranquillity –questionnaire

Volunteers are to help with a survey to map tranquillity around the Deben Estuary. This work will help to understand the value of the landscape and the impact upon it of different activities and developments. Initially this has been a desk-based exercise, involving the collation and analysis of computer maps and datasets, producing a “heat map” of tranquillity. A ground-truthing survey is now being undertaken.

The DEP are working with the IDB and SCC on **a partnership project to develop a saltmarsh restoration pilot** on the Deben Estuary utilising waste dredgings from local marine businesses. It is intended that the scheme will explore whether there are opportunities for streamlined approaches to delivering saltmarsh restoration (including financial routes, technical solutions and consents and licencing) which can have a positive impact on the local marine economy. An application for modest SDF funds to support this work has been successful.

Christine Block July 2017

AONB

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Update

After much development work with partners, communities and professional groups the AONB team have submitted a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund’s Landscape Partnership Scheme. The proposal, for a £2.1M scheme, is for an exciting and innovative project around the Stour and Orwell, including the Shotley Peninsula, that will seek to balance the needs of landscape, wildlife, recreation, tourism, heritage and commercial activity. If successful the project will deliver some outstanding projects for the benefit of people, place and wildlife.

The AONB team is teaming up with AONBs around the country (led by Kent Downs AONB) to provide a cultural response to Ash Dieback. See <http://www.theashproject.org.uk/> As part of the project a book on Ash Trees and Ash Landscapes, in partnership with the Woodland Trust will be published.

The AONB distributed over £80,000 worth of grants through the Sustainable Development Fund, Galloper Wind Farm Fund and Community, Amenity and Accessibility Fund and Conservation Fund via panels made up of Councillors and representatives from the business, environmental, community and education sectors. Funds have been made available via the AONB and planning gain.

The AONB team is to host a Marine Pioneer. There are four Pioneer programmes nationally and they are designed to help DEFRA to identify good practice and innovative solutions to develop and implement a 25 Year Environment Plan being drafted at the department. Pete Cosgrove has accepted the post and began work on 31 May 2017. A local steering group has been set up to provide support and guidance for the role.

Matt Jones, recently appointed as Suffolk’s Estuary Officer, hosted at the AONB has resigned and left his role at the end of June 2017. Matt had got the Suffolk Saltmarsh Group up and running as well as organising the Stour and Orwell Forum 2017 and recruiting and training volunteers (with Ben Heather at Suffolk Biological Information Service) to test the Deben Estuary Tranquillity mapping.

The AONB has run a supported a wide range of Beachwatch events and is building up to the Great British Beach Clean running from 15-18 September. The AONB will have an event in Suffolk that coincides with the national Outstanding Landscapes week that runs from 16-24 September.

If you have not managed to pick up one (or both) of our fantastic newspapers, packed with information about the AONBs and their project areas, why not look at them online. See:

<http://www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/publications/dedham-vale-and-stour-valley-newspaper/>
<http://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/publications/aonb-newspaper/>

Simon Amstutz, June 2017

IDB

Internal Drainage Board Update

Alde and Ore

The ESIDB have now secured a £3M Public Works Loan to undertake works on behalf of the AOEP and landowners in the Alde and Ore Estuary. Modelling studies are underway with HR Wallingford having been awarded the modelling contract which will complete in September. The RFCC are funding the work to establish the likely effects of the AOEP plan on flood risk and the intertidal environment in the estuary. The modelling will provide the evidence base for Grant in Aid Business Cases for the various schemes outlined in the estuary plan. Aldeburgh Scheme Phase 1 works have recommenced following additional water vole mitigation and work will be completed on this phase during the summer. Phase 2 and 3 will be subject to Business cases once we have the modelling results, as will Snape Maltings and Village works.

Officers have supported the AOEP saltmarsh group in developing costs for new saltmarsh restoration projects and have offered to develop the MMO licence for these works with partners and the MMO to establish a template for such projects across Suffolk.

Benacre

Waveney, Lothingland and Lower yare IDB have progressed the modelling work with CH2MHill for the Benacre and Kessingland valley areas. The likely costs of protecting the A12, Kessingland village and agricultural and tourism interests in the area are in the order of £6-7M through a managed realignment of the current defences. Short term solutions are also being explored by landowners to sustain the frontage over the next winter (17/18) given the recent erosion over winter 16/17. The project Board will meet for the first time in August and stakeholder engagement is planned for autumn 2017.

Bawdsey

The ESIDB have been asked to support the Bawdsey Coastal Partnership in procuring independent coastal engineering advice for their frontage through Alastair Tindle and Phil Barber Assoc. BCP and local landowners are funding an initial coastal processes report to establish existing and likely future coastal trends. This frontage will need to be subject to an SMP review and the IDB are working with SMP officers and BCP on this issue.

Deben

ESIDB officers have provided outline designs and costings for the Bawdsey marsh flood defence in the estuary. This information is being used by landowners and the Dep to discuss Enabling Development opportunities in the Shottisham area as a potential source of Partnership funding for a flood defence scheme as per the Deben Estuary Plan. ESIDB will develop a business case for FDGIA when partnership funding is available.

Officers continue to support saltmarsh projects in the Deben and have worked with SCC and SCDC and DEP to put forward a proposal for SDF funding to support some further evaluation of saltmarsh habitat in the Deben. The project aims to involve specialists in 'valuing' the saltmarsh in the Deben in terms of flood defence, fisheries and tourism benefits. This work will feed into work by SCDC regarding alternative investment approaches for marsh work and the new Marine Pioneer programme.

We continue to support the development of the Deben Holistic Water Management Plan project at Felixstowe Peninsula with SCC, EA, Eswag and local landowners.

Karen Thomas, July 2017

EA

Environment Agency Update

Environment Agency Update

The following update covers the key locations from an EA coastal flood risk management perspective.

Benacre Pumping Station and the Kessingland Levels

We continue to work with Waveney, Lower Yare & Lothingland Internal Drainage Board, local businesses and other partners on a long term solution for the Kessingland Levels.

Easton Broad and Potters Bridge

We continue to liaise with NE and SCC on this site and what further options are available.

Walberswick Shingle Ridge

The January storm surge breach repairs were completed in April. We have monitored the site since and are confident that the works have provided a robust solution.

Slaughden

During the January storm surge the shingle ridge south of the Martello Tower experienced some damage behind the rock revetment. Shingle was washed out causing the concrete armourlock layer on top to slump. Whilst we appreciate that this causes inconvenience as vehicular access to Orfordness is restricted the risk to the integrity of the defence is low over the coming summer months. It is our intention to repair this damage in the early autumn.

We will shortly be applying to SCDC for ongoing permission to recycle shingle at Slaughden. We intend to modify this consent to have the option of widening the ridge landwards at its most vulnerable points. This will result in a much more robust ridge that is able to withstand winter storms.

SMP policy reviews

We continue work closely with SCDC and partners on the procurement of expert technical advice for the assessment of policy options for Slaughden and East Lane, Bawdsey.

Suffolk Estuaries

The RFCC have allocated £50K for the development of a modelling study for the proposed Alde and Ore defence improvements.

The Ipswich Flood Defence Management Strategy – Ipswich Barrier – Site progress update

Work at the Ipswich Barrier site continues to progress well. All of the main structure base pours are now completed including the challenging curved recess for the main gate. Work to pour the east and west piers is well under way and casting in of a number of the main gate seals and fixing points has begun. The main gate is currently being prepared for final painting in Holland and will be delivered to the Barrier site by Barge (forecast for October 2017)

The control building structure is also taking shape, the main reinforced concrete structure is almost complete with construction of the first floor control room to follow shortly after.

A number of key components have now been completed and have had their factory acceptance tests, namely the main Hydraulic Power Unit (HPU) and the two Emergency HPU's. The main hydraulic cylinders and all the smaller positioning and latching cylinders and the main cylinder hydraulic manifolds.

Mark Johnson, July 2017

Coastal Partnership East

Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Council Coastal Management Team Update

- Yarmouth to Lowestoft Coastal Strategy has been approved by the EA. This sets our how we are going to manage this stretch of coast and contains some exciting new approaches to managing the coast working with the private sector. The work developing the strategy and subsequent public consultation has identified the need to change the SMP policy at Corton. This has been agreed by WDC Cabinet and is being presented to the SCF for endorsement as part of the agreed SMP policy change process in Suffolk.
- Lowestoft Flood Risk Management Project passed the Strategic Outline Case (SoC) at Large Project Review Group (EA Approval Board) and can now progress to Outline Business Case (OBC). Approval to progress in particular with the Transport Works Act Order has been agreed by WDC Cabinet and agents have now been appointed. The ground works investigations have been largely completed and the detailed design work is now underway.
- Work is progressing at Brackenbury (Felixstowe) to create access around the rock revetment, this is a multi staged project and should be complete by the end of October.
- A lot of work has been progressed with regard to Adaptation. This has included workshops and meetings with Defra, attending and presenting at an excellent Climate Change Conference in Glasgow and a visit from the Defra Director to Suffolk to look at the issues first hand. More practically Kellie from team is working directly with Easton Bavents businesses to find innovative solutions to the challenges they face.
- We had a visit from Scarborough Council to look at the use of geotextile bags at Thorpeness as they are considering utilising them for a specific issue they need to address. Some of the team visited Anderby Creek in Lincolnshire to see beach recharge in action as part of the Lincshore programme. The sharing of knowledge and expertise is something that CPE works hard to promote.
- CPE has restructured to have three managers reporting to myself to provide greater resilience and a more effective use of the expertise across the team. In summary there are two coastal managers, Sharon Bleese now heads up the South team, covering Suffolk and where her expertise is appropriate Great Yarmouth as well. Rob Goodliffe heads up the North team covering the North Norfolk, Great Yarmouth and using his expertise on adaptation in particular into Waveney. The boundaries are deliberately overlap and the team will flex depending on the priorities and issues faced. External recruitment is underway for a coastal engineering manager, more information will be circulated as soon as we can on this.
- CPE is developing a 3 year Business Plan, this will be shared with SCF members as soon as an initial draft is agreed to seek your views and support for the way forward.

Bill Parker, July 2017

LGA Coastal SIG

Local Government Association Coastal Special Interest Group Update

Study Tour and AGM

Hosted by Maldon District Council the study tour and AGM provides a useful way for coastal Local Authorities to share issues and working to ensure they are working in the most efficient way possible. This years was particularly interesting and Members learned of a wide variety of issues that exist in Maldon. Of particular interest was the way a group of farmers have created their own low-cost but very effective techniques to patch up walls well in advance of a gap or weakness becoming a bigger and more costly issue.

MMO

South Tyneside Council continue to champion this relationship on behalf of the SIG and other bodies, and it is expected that the MMO will attend a future SIG meeting to meet Members and to discuss the MMO working methodology.

Funding and Maintenance

Funding of development and maintenance work on coast protection assets for the Marine Local Authorities, where the existing Rate Support Grant funding will cease in 2019. Bill Parker and Andy Smith met with the Infrastructure Projects Authority at the Treasury, and again are highlighting this issue in a variety of forums with the EA, DEFRA and the Treasury.

Coastal Adaptation

A workshop hosted by Defra, which Bill and SIG officers attended, took place in April with 50+ attendees from diverse backgrounds. An update from Committee on Climate Change was undertaken on the definition and aims of 'coastal adaptation'.

Bill Parker attended on behalf of the SIG the European Climate Change Adaptation Conference in Glasgow. The conference its self with more than 800 participants was truly international and had participants from around the world not just Europe which made discussions particularly interesting.

Coastal Asset Data Management

Work has been ongoing to provide LAs with EA funded software to collect data on coast protection assets. This can then provide the EA with some core consistent and up to date information. This is not intended to replace diversity of approach that ILAs enjoy but a way to provide a standard methodology at no cost to ensure we have up to date and national information. This core information is important esp. with regard to discussions on funding mechanisms for local authority asset maintenance.

Resourcing for Coastal Management

The officer's group has been discussing the challenges of bringing in new generations of coastal managers in to local authorities. Work includes analysis of current situation with courses provided and graduate direction, as well as discussion with EA of apprenticeship schemes.

Andy Smith, July 2017

MMO

Marine Management Organisation Update

On 4th July our South East Marine Plan Implementation Officer Tom Pavitt is presenting at Stour and Orwell Estuary forum conference at Royal Harwich Yacht Club. This will involve an introductory presentation on the SE marine plans and how to get involved.

There has been a lot of behind the scenes work occurring in marine planning in general over recent months in preparation for the development of the next phase of marine plans – options. This has involved analysing comments from iteration 1 workshops, working on problem trees (input and outputs to an ‘issue’), and considering how to use project specific marine license conditions to help inform plan policy specificity as was done in the south plan area for our herring spawning policy.

Meetings were generally put on hold due to Purdah.

Stacey Clarke 14/06/2017

IFCA

Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities Update

Update to be circulated separately.

NE

Natural England Update

Flood and Coastal Erosion Management:

- **Benacre Sluice and Kessingland Valley:** on-going engagement on Kessingland Levels study.
- **Easton Valley:** Advice provided to Environment Agency over sustainability of proposed flood management scheme in the valley and implications for freshwater SPA reedbeds.
- **Minsmere-Walberswick:** Dingle Breach repaired (3/4/17), no further issues.
- **Alde-Ore Estuary:** NE 17/18 Bids for funding towards saltmarsh transects survey and ‘Healthy Estuaries’ study both out to tender. Monitoring plan meeting planned for September.
- **Slaughden and East Lane Bawdsey** engaged in SMP client steering group policy review.
- **Deben Estuary:** NE 17/18 Bid for funding towards ‘Healthy Estuaries’ study successful and now out to tender.
- **EA Saltmarsh Project:** Emma Hay working with EA Flood & Coastal Risk Management team re prospective sites that will use DEFRA funds (£90,000) over 4 years on projects that demonstrate flood defence benefits of saltmarsh.
- **Suffolk Saltmarsh Group (SSG):** NE key member of this which will provide a strategic framework and support for those wishing to undertake saltmarsh projects in Suffolk.

Other Coastal Planning:

- **Sizewell C:** In April, we provided our initial comments (in conjunction with EA) on EDF's ecohydrological work but have had no further engagement with the project subsequently.

Marine Designations:

- **Marine Conservation Zones:** Sites going forward for consideration in Tranche 3 are the Alde Ore Estuary and Orford Inshore in Suffolk, and the additional feature of native oyster for Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ in Norfolk (designated in T2 Jan 2016). Our pre-consultation advice was delivered to Defra at the end of Feb 2017, and Defra and Ministers are currently using this advice to decide which sites will go forward for formal consultation. The consultation is scheduled for late summer 2017, however we have been informed that there may be some slippage in this date due to the government's Brexit commitments. We will keep everyone informed and will send out notification once a specific date is set for the beginning of the consultation. If anyone has any questions then please contact Jen (Jennifer.Love@naturalengland.org.uk).

England Coast Path:

See separate paper provided for July Forum meeting by Sally Fishwick.

John Jackson 3 July 2017

Suffolk Saltmarsh group

The first meeting of the Suffolk Saltmarsh Group was held on 11 May 2017. Representatives from each of the estuaries and officers from the relevant agencies set out a range of issues that can best be dealt with as a collective.

A key action arising from the meeting was to collate a register of all existing saltmarsh regeneration project, together with a list of potential projects.

Potential projects may benefit from the Environment Agency's 'Natural Flood Management' funding. Key to the future success of this funding stream is to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of any works to provide evidence to Defra that NFM is a viable alternative to traditional flood defences. The Group will collate existing data and also provide advice to local groups on existing monitoring and the need for any further monitoring of new projects.

The Suffolk Saltmarsh Project, taking place on the Deben estuary and closely linked with the Defra Marine Pioneer, seeks to establish a long-term funding mechanism to ensure the delivery of projects and links to marine businesses seeking to utilise dredged material in a positive way. A bid has been made to the AONB Sustainable Development Fund to kick start this work.

Inevitably, one of the key issues for the Group will be to facilitate further dialogue with the MMO on the licences needed to undertake saltmarsh regeneration projects. We hope that the Defra Pioneer might be a conduit for real progress on this matter – which is currently preventing projects from progressing.

To facilitate sharing of good practice and further learning about this complex and valuable ecosystem, the Group is hoping to engage a number of academics to inform and inspire us.

Notes from the SSG and other relevant papers will be filed on the SCF website,
www.greensuffolk.org/suffolkcoastforum

Jane Burch, Suffolk County Council,
20/06/2017

Suffolk Shingle Engine

Alongside the SMP review for Slaughden we continue to investigate whether a ‘shingle engine’ would be a viable option to protect this vulnerable frontage. The Alde & Ore estuary plan is based on the assumption that the frontage at Slaughden is maintained, but this is no easy or cheap option. The initial work commissioned by The Crown Estate demonstrated a ‘shingle engine’ was technically effective for 30-50 years, and deliverable, at an approximate cost of £9 million.

However, further work is needed to establish whether a shingle engine is the best and most sustainable option to prevent a breach here – other possible options being continued regular shingle recharge or more traditional rock protection.

In addition, we have commissioned an economic study into the benefits of maintaining the frontage here, to provide evidence to potential funders.

For further information on the shingle engine see www.greensuffolk.org/suffolkcoastforum

Jane Burch, Suffolk County Council,
20/06/2017