



Heritage Coast
Sunderland-Durham-Hartlepool

HERITAGE COAST PARTNERSHIP

STEERING GROUP

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 JUNE 2015
VENUE – BLACKHALL COMMUNITY CENTRE**

[Document consists of 8 pages]

I PRESENT

Joanne Ashworth	Groundwork
Niall Benson	Heritage Coast
Steve Bhowmick	Durham County Council (Env & Design)
Councillor D Boyes	Durham County Council (Easington)
Councillor B Burn	Mayor of Seaham Town Council
Darryl Cox	Durham County Council (Countryside)
Chris Evans	Natural England
Louise Harrington	Heritage Coast
Paula Hunt	Ryhope Community Association
Ruth Jackson	Natural England
Joe Lemon	Ryhope Community Association
James MacLean	Northumbrian Water
Myrtle MacPherson	Easington Village Parish Council
Fred Rowe	Steering Group Open Seat Representative
Gary Shears	Durham County Council (Ecology)
Ross Wares	Ryhope Community Association

2 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Ross Wares, Chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from :

Sarah Bowman	Hartlepool Borough Council
Colum Goodchild	Northumbrian Water Ltd
Deborah Jefferson	Hartlepool Borough Council
Councillor J Maitland	Durham County Council (Murton)
Sarah Stevenson	Environment Agency
Sylvia Tempest	Ambassador
Councillor S Thomas	Hartlepool Borough Council
Nicol Trueman	Sunderland City Council
Ruth Tyson	Environment Agency
Florence Wilson	Horden Regeneration Partnership

4 GEORGE PATTERSON

Sadly, our Ambassador and friend, George Patterson passed away in May, George has been on our Steering Group for many years, latterly as Ambassador and prior to this as an Easington District Councillor. George was a strong advocate of the Heritage Coast, always showing his passion, enthusiasm and humour at our meetings; he will be sadly missed. The meeting held a minute's silence in his honour.

5 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was agreed that the minutes of the HC Steering Group Meeting held on 12th March 2015 were accepted as a true record of proceedings by all present.

6 MATTERS ARISING

HALLIWELL BANKS LANDFILL SITE

Since distribution of the draft minutes by email prior to the meeting, some small changes had been made by the Environment Agency, a new set of minutes was distributed to all present. There have been no changes at Halliwell Banks since the last meeting. Outlined works are now scheduled to take place later on in the year to allow for crop constraints.

7 HERITAGE COAST OFFICER'S REPORT – NIALL BENSON

CIO

Registration has now been submitted so the formal process can now commence. Once a registration number has been granted from the Charity Commission a bank account can be opened. Trustees will need to be officially appointed, until then there will be interim trustees named; the application process for trustees will commence on registration.

Paula Hunt gave advice on what particular skills were needed to become a trustee – business skills; experience of chairing meetings; a financial and/or marketing background would be useful as well as community engagement knowledge and awareness. It would also be helpful to follow the advice of the Charity Commission. A Chair and a Secretary were also required. Paula also said opening a bank account can also be a lengthy process.

Next steps – Niall will contact everyone in due course; an interim board meeting will be held in the next 12 weeks. Niall urged everyone to contact him if they had any ideas for Trustees and/or membership.

Fires/Police/Restorative Justice

Fires on the coast this year have been really bad. Five youths have been caught and will be going through the restorative justice process. Niall will be lecturing the youths on the damaging effects of fire on wildlife and then litter picks will be carried out at Easington Colliery with the youths. Niall thinks the youths may be interested in the John Muir Award; it will challenge them although they are a little daunted by the presentation at the end.

Councillor Boyes commented that this approach was too 'soft' and picking up litter did not reflect punishment enough for the wanton destruction the youths had inflicted on the coast. He felt a stronger message needed to be given as the effects from the fire had been devastating as well as the fire service having to

give up so much valuable time. Niall said discussions were taking place encouraging closer working with the Fire Authorities and Police.

Councillor Burn mentioned a voluntary organisation in Sunderland, a youth membership scheme which is something we could develop in Durham, based also on restorative justice. Paula Hunt said the youths would be charged and following this community work would be carried out by them. Joe Lemon provided the contact : Youth Offenders Organisation 07770 477845.

Coastal Streams Partnership

Niall showed a map showing the area covered by the Partnership. The Partnership covers the management of water bodies. The Heritage Coast falls within a sub-catchment of the Wear catchment area. HCP are also acting as secretariat for the Partnership and will focus on driving improvement in the area. The main objectives are the alignment of Environment Agency and Northumbrian Water investment to gain wider environmental, social and economic benefits. This also means around £40,000 project funding for 3 years. This Partnership also has links with green infrastructure; access improvements; improved neighbourhood management; learning outside the classroom; public health initiatives; and has tourism/recreational and heritage links.

Co-terminus with Limestone Landscapes Project – delivers long term legacy foundation.

The first project, with support from Natural England, is Castle Eden Dene Improvement Project; this catchment includes industrial estates and urban housing (with sewerage network impacts) equalling diffuse pollution as litter and pollutions inland impact upon the coast. With £40k from the Environment Agency and match funding there is £60k assigned to Castle Eden Dene – this will be spent on engagement with schools, industrial estates, communities and farmers. It will be interesting to see if there is measurable improvement within a year.

England Coast Path

Paula Hunt expressed disappointment with the signage installed for the England coast path – metal poles with small metal pointers which are difficult to see. Recent Better than Basics signage was far more ‘rustic’ and sympathetic with its surrounds.

Niall said a recent audit had counted 9000 trips between Hendon and Seaham since January 2015; these are very high statistics for a brand new path, just under half (48%) were walking dogs.

Governance of Partnership

Niall referred to a governance report by Conor Gilheran, an MSc student, prepared a few years ago which had looked at and reviewed the current arrangements and structure of the Partnership.

Paula Hunt said that smaller Task and Finish Groups could take place and feed into the bigger Partnership group, but that the 'voice' of the Partnership should remain unchanged. Sub-groups like this would look in more detail at the issue in hand. This had worked well recently with Councillor Boyes and Gary Shears from the Partnership working on the formation of the local nature reserve at Easington Colliery.

Steve Bhowmick agreed that more could sometimes be achieved through the formation of smaller sub-groups and that they could work very effectively; and that the current workload undertaken by Niall, especially in terms of Projects, was very large. Chris Evans said the formation of smaller 'sub-groups' could be reliant upon approval by the Partnership. Paula Hunt said that CIO would be separate to the Partnership and this should be made clear. This would also mean the steering group meeting less frequently.

Other advantages included experience being drawn in from other areas of the Council. Niall suggested that he bring a proposal for the next steering group meeting in December regarding the governance of the steering group and that this would form an item on the agenda.

Dept for Communities and Local Government

Application had been made to a funding stream for community teams - £10k has been awarded. This will be used for redrafting the coastal footpath leaflet (extending the leaflet to include Hendon, Ryhope and Hartlepool) and to develop a coastal festival which will include guided walks etc.

Management Plan

A draft copy was handed out which needs editing. Niall asked for any structural comments on the Plan to be emailed to him so he could shape the Management Plan over the summer.

Business Plan Update Q1 2015

Projects

- Better than Basics – the signs had proved to be impressive and will assist with developing knowledge and awareness of the route. Total spend = £48k.
- Coastal Re-Connections – legacy funding; developing awareness and respect for the area and managing people. Awaiting results of bid to HLF.
- England Coast Path – providing support for the England Coast Path National Trail Partnership, acting as secretariat for the Partnership.
- EU Life+ Little Tern Recovery Project – Ongoing, poor year for little tern (insufficient food and predation); morbidity has been high in adult birds due to lack of sand eels because of weather not producing enough algae. The East coast of England had been more adversely affected than the West Coast.

- Deliver Beach Care Programme – working with local volunteer groups and corporate community days.
- Events Programme : Walk4Life, Low Tide Day and Coastal Walk have been delivered. Low Tide Day at Seaham (17th May) saw 1800 people attending the event and 170 on the shoreline for the rockpool ramble, the event will be reviewed for next year in terms of value for money; Celebrating our Coast will take place at Dalton Park (11th July), and Ryhope Carnival will be on 1st August.
- Natura 2000 (N2K) Site Monitoring Programme – developing and delivery of this project and provision of secretariat for it; provides strategic “join up” across authorities. This has been extended to Statutory Authorities (Natural England and RSPB).
- Develop Research Programme, supporting Capturing our Coast (Big Sea Survey) – this starts in September and involves the continuous monitoring of data. Steady progress is being made and the Capturing our Coast HLF funding bid has been approved which was submitted by Newcastle University. Seasearch support continues.
- Horden Denes Ph 4 – not started yet.
- Access Rationalisation Programme – look at closing paths where there is no legal access. This links into the ECP National Trail Partnership and the work of the N2K Liaison Group.
- Develop High Tide Roost Project – required to enhance protection of overwintering and breeding bird populations;
- Develop Denemouth Project – developing responsibility for the site following barrier installation. Developing improvement plans for funding bid (for hedges, planting etc).
- Big Lottery Fund application to support community involvement and Volunteer Rangers - £13m is available and we have bidded for £1m. The decision process is ongoing and results should be known by the end of July.
- Extension of Coastal Grazing Project – next extension to be included in Denemouth Improvement Project; opportunity to extend northwards to Horden.

Policy

- Ensure the coast is included in and championed in Local Plans, Community Plans and other processes – reacting to Politicians/Policy;
- Continue involvement in coastal water quality issues (Coastal Streams Partnership);
- Support the 3 Rivers Local Nature Partnership;
- Input into national and local government policy changes;
- Support the East Durham EU Leader initiative – approval of UK programme expected late July;
- Continue to advocate Integrated Coastal Management regionally

Management

- Publish Management Plan – draft given out today for comments:
- Deliver the annual business plan – distributed
- Update the Partnership’s Terms of Reference

- Valuation of the Heritage Coast
- Deliver the annual coastal forum – Thursday 8th October 2015

Communications

- Leaflet Portfolio – to be extended as resources allow. Blackhall leaflets are ongoing; Hendon, Ryhope and Hartlepool Headland to be added to the current coastal footpath booklet.
- Website refresh complete, twitter and facebook active
- Develop Partner Representative's knowledge and awareness of coastal issues.
- Fully utilise partners and other community groups' information networks

8 LOUISE HARRINGTON : PROJECT OFFICER'S REPORT

Beach Litter

Continued working with Seaham Beach Cleaning Crew and Seaham Asda.

Corporate beach cleans will also include Northumbrian Water at Seaham who are coming out in early July with a group of staff.

World Environment Day – a beach clean was organised with DCC's Civic Pride Team at Seaham including local residents, PCSO's, Neighbourhood Wardens and McDonalds from Dalton Park. As always the educational message is about all types of waste (litter, fishing waste etc) and the effects on the landscape, marine life and the environment.

Coastal Memories Project

HLF funded project (£9200) – looking at all different coastal memories, growing up on the coast; working in collieries – anyone with any interesting stories can be involved. This project will start in September and a programme will be worked out for the next 18 months. Also involves working with Donnison Murton Ribbon School, Blackhall Primary School and Durham University.

Educational (School) Visits to Coast

Assistance has been given by David Etheridge. Recently Valley Road School, Hendon and Ropery Walk Primary, Seaham have been out on school visits to the coast and children have been engaged in various activities.

Jimmy Kays Exhibition

Working together with Jean Spence and East Durham artist network, the Jimmy Kays exhibition will be on display during June and July at Horden Heritage Centre, in line with the opening of the new Vintage Tea Rooms. After this date it will move to the Centennial Centre, Horden.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Blackhall Representation on Steering Group – as Blackhall Regeneration Partnership no longer exists, it was felt representation was lacking in the Blackhall area; although this Group forms part of the Terms of Reference for the Partnership. Niall asked for permission to extend the invitation for a representative to join the Partnership from the Parish Council (for the Blackhall area only) due to this lack of representation. The meeting agreed to this.

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

Forum – 8th October 2015

Steering Group – 15th December 2015; 8th March 2016