



# 2008 ANNUAL COASTAL PARTNERSHIPS FORUM

Launch of DEFRA/LGA/CPWG study on the  
Benefits of Working in Partnership at the Coast

10 & 11 April  
Holiday Inn, Bristol

POST EVENT REPORT

## 2008 Annual Coastal Partnerships Forum

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2008 Annual Coastal Partnership Forum was held over two days at the Holiday Inn, Filton, Bristol and was organised for the first time by the Coastal Partnerships Working Group (CPWG) Committee. The programme provided time for Coastal Partnership Officers to share their experience of *internal* activities and how to strengthen their *external* role through a mixture of presentations and structured networking sessions.

There were 60 delegates across the two days with a total of 24 different Coastal Partnerships represented including officers, Chairs and members of Partnership Management or Steering Groups.

The aims of the Forum were to:

- Improve links between Coastal Partnership Officers & Chairs.
- Provide a direct avenue for the exchange of experience.
- Clarify Marine Bill & ICZM positions and the potential future role of Coastal Partnerships.
- Raise awareness of existing external barriers to Coastal Partnerships development.
- Discuss funding and benefits available to partners/members.
- Agree how to take forward 'The Financial Benefits to Partners of Working in Partnership at the Coast' project results.
- Seek recommendations for future research/projects.
- Identify innovative and agreed mechanisms for broadening Coastal Partnerships funding base.
- Indicate future Coastal Partnerships development in relation to key policy areas.
- Agree a strategy of action for CPWG and the future form of the network for coastal practitioners.

The field trip to the Severn Crossing at the beginning of day one was well attended with delegates considering the topical renewable energy proposals for the Severn Estuary.

The Forum comprised four separate sessions, these were: 1 – Coastal Management Update; 2 - Valuing Coastal Partnerships; 3 – Developing a Stronger Role for Coastal Partnerships; and 4 – Networks for Coastal Officers and the Way Forwards. The content of these sessions reflected themes and topics that came from a survey of Coastal Partnership Officers in late 2007. The Forum was timely given the launch of the Draft Marine Bill a week before the event and the formal launch of the findings of the 'Financial Benefits to Working in Partnership at the Coast' research study carried out by consultants Entec Ltd.

#### Session 1 – Coastal Management Update

This session allowed Defra to raise awareness of the current position with the Marine Bill & ICZM Strategies and obtain feedback through discussion with a captive audience of coastal practitioners. It also considered the role of Coastal Partnerships in the context of major legislative and management regime change. There was considerable interest in the proposals for the Marine Management Organisation, the position on coastal

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integration and the interaction between all current legislative and policy with The Marine Policy Statement due summer 2008. Discussion centred on capacity issues in particular training, given the sectors future needs, but also on the requirement for guidance and foresight.

### Session 2 – Valuing Coastal Partnerships

Consultants Entec Ltd presented the preliminary results of the 'Financial Benefits to Working in Partnership at the Coast' project funded by Defra & LGA with the support of CPWG. The results included a summary of data from Coastal Partnerships across the country and showed services considered useful to partners quantified benefits in monetary terms, where possible. Case studies were presented illustrating some of the outcomes of the study. Discussion helped to bring a wider understanding of the study. Amongst the findings are that greater business acumen was needed within the Coastal Partnership Management Groups in order to raise awareness of the true benefits of Coastal Partnership services to funding partners. Again capacity issues were raised in discussion on whether Coastal Partnerships should move more towards a service-delivery approach. Resource requirements to affect this change were also raised.

### Session 3 – Developing a Stronger Role for Coastal Partnerships

Presentations from Partnership Officers from across the UK were given alongside partner contributions. They explored current practice and interpretation of current policy changes, raised awareness of existing external issues for partnerships and explored avenues for potential future partnership growth - in particular their role in policy delivery. Discussion within this extremely useful session centred on the mismatch between Coastal Partnership benefits and partner support. Coastal Partnerships were seen to be taking the initiative in the development of appropriate coastal management indicators that will assist with mainstream integration. Capacity issues were again debated in this session.

### Session 4 – Networks for Coastal Officers – the Way Forward

Having reviewed the benefits that had accrued from the formation of the Coastal Partnerships Working Group, the Forum considered the potential way forward for networking between Coastal Partnerships. The outgoing committee for the past two years were thanked for establishing CPWG and a new committee was elected. There was agreement that CPWG was very useful and that there was a very real role for it: in raising awareness of Coastal Partnerships at the national political level; network sharing of news; policy reviews and developing skills for officers. There was support for the new committee to develop an Action Plan for the coming year.

Feedback showed clearly that the format, feel and content of the Forum was well received and generally exceeded the expectation of delegates. There was considerable praise for the quality of the content and the venue. With regard to developing the future agenda, delegates shared the view that there is still concern and a broad lack of understanding of how the operational landscape for coastal partnerships will evolve over the medium term. The current dialogue and strong communication links into central government need to continue and national and local level political links require strengthening to raise awareness of the broad benefits that Coastal Partnerships can deliver. Stronger links into the developing regional and sub

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regional agenda is also required, particularly the developing governance and planning processes along with further research required on how the various forms of partnership currently operate and how the wider potential benefit can be realised.



*Coastal Partnerships Forum, Holiday Inn Filton, Bristol, 10-11<sup>th</sup> April 2008*

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The CPWG committee are grateful for the support and input of Steve Collins & Pam Whaley (Defra).

May 2008.

## 2008 Annual Coastal Partnerships Forum

### 1 BACKGROUND

Coastal Partnership Officers were given the opportunity by Defra to prepare and deliver the Annual Coastal Partnerships Forum themselves in 2008. The Coastal Partnerships Working Group (CPWG) committee - Natasha Barker (Severn), Tracey Hewett (Solent) & Niall Benson (Durham), who are themselves Partnership Officers, led the organisation for the event.

The two-day Forum programme provided time for Coastal Partnership Officers to share their experience of *internal* activities and how to strengthen their *external* role through a mixture of presentations and structured networking sessions. Setting the scene with a field trip (optional) at the beginning of day one, delegates considered the topical renewable energy proposals for the Severn Estuary.

The formal launch of 'The Benefits of Working in Partnership at the Coast' study formed a centre piece for the Forum and was timely due to the launch of the Draft Marine Bill the week before.

Partnership officers were strongly encouraged to bring with them the Chair of the Partnership, or someone from their Steering Group or Advisory Committee, to share the Forum's outcomes and outputs.

Benefits of Participation as publicised in the programme included:

- Improved links between Coastal Partnership Officers & Chairs.
- Direct avenue for the exchange of experience.
- Clarification of Marine Bill & ICZM positions and potential future Coastal Partnerships roles.
- Raised awareness of existing external barriers to Coastal Partnerships development.
- Funding and benefits available to partners/members.
- Agreement on how to take forward 'The Benefits of Working in Partnership' project results.
- Recommendations for future research/projects.
- Innovative and agreed mechanisms for broadening Coastal Partnerships funding base.
- Indication of future Coastal Partnerships development in relation to key policy areas.
- An agreed strategy of action for CPWG and the future form of the network for coastal practitioners.

#### Costs & Sponsorship

There was no charge to attend the event. Delegates paid for their own transport, evening meal and accommodation. Defra funding covered the cost of the venue and 50 delegate places. Additional sponsorship was realised through the Environment Agency & the Countryside Council for Wales to support additional delegate places and by consultants Entec Ltd. for the wine reception.

## 2008 Annual Coastal Partnerships Forum

### The Venue

The Holiday Inn, Filton, Bristol was easily accessible by road (M32), rail (Bristol Parkway 1.5 miles) and Bristol International airport (18 miles). Preferential accommodation rates were arranged with the hotel for the night of Thursday 10th April.

### The Sponsors



## 2008 Annual Coastal Partnerships Forum

### 2 PARTICIPATION

Sponsorship from Defra was based on attendance of up to 50 delegates, with an aim of attracting the participation of more than 20 English Partnerships - a considerable rise from the previous years' number.

Soundings were taken in December 2007 amongst the Coastal Partnerships Working Group (CPWG) email group on topics for the programme, with the date announced in late December. A proposal was worked up with Defra during January 2008 and the programme announced on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2008 to initiate bookings. Joining instructions were issued in mid-March and by early April bookings were at capacity with 65. Final attendance across the two days totalled 60.

A total of 24 different Coastal Partnerships were represented (inc. 2 Welsh & 1 Scottish - see box). This included officers and chairs/members of Management/Steering Groups of those Partnerships, the Scottish Coastal Forum and Wales Coastal & Maritime Partnership.

Defra representatives involved in developing coastal integration and the Marine Bill were present across the two days. Statutory organisations involved with funding coastal partnerships attended: Environment Agency, Natural England and the Countryside Council for Wales. Several well known independents in the field of coastal management were invited and attended (CMS Ltd, info' COAST, CoastNet, Entec Ltd, Europarc Atlantic Isles). Other delegates included Entec consultants associated with the project launch, academics researching coastal partnerships and coastal/community projects. Half of the delegates (30) booked onto the field trip on the morning of day 1 and two-thirds (42) attended the dinner at the end of day 1 (actual numbers were 22 & 51 respectively).

#### **Coastal Partnerships represented at the Annual Coastal Partnerships Forum, 2008**

Colne Estuary Partnership  
Devon Maritime Forum  
Dorset Coast Forum  
Duddon Estuary Partnership  
Durham Heritage Coast  
East of England Coastal Initiative  
Exe Estuary Management Partnership  
Hamble Estuary Partnership  
Humber Management Scheme  
Isle of Wight Estuaries Project  
North West Coastal Forum  
Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum  
Scottish Coastal Forum  
Severn Estuary Partnership  
Solent Forum  
South Devon AONB Estuary Partnerships  
Suffolk Coasts and Heaths  
Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum  
Teign Estuary Partnership  
Thames Estuary Partnership  
Thanet Coast Project  
Wash Estuary Strategy Group  
Wales Coastal & Maritime Partnership  
Wirral Partnership

The high level of participation provided a good foundation for the success of the event.

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*Informal networking is a key benefit of the Forum*

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### 3 SESSION OUTPUTS

The programme was designed to provide opportunities for partnerships to consider their role alongside others in the field and in the context of the external policy environment.

#### DAY 1

##### Field Trip

The CPWG view field trips as an important part of any gathering of coastal officers. Based in Bristol for this year's annual Forum, the Severn Estuary provided an opportunity to discuss the role of the local coastal partnership in a national policy debate – renewable energy and tidal power potential. A 2 hour round-trip was taken from the Holiday Inn Filton, Bristol (the Forum venue) via Aust to Severn Beach. Delegates saw the local environment around the Severn Bridge and Second Severn Crossing on the 'English side'. Brief talks were presented by Cllr Peter Tyzack (Chairman, Severn Estuary Partnership - SEP) and Natasha Barker (SEP Officer). Walking from Severn Beach to New Passage the focus for discussion were issues surrounding coastal defence, flood risk management and the planning system. At the Severn Crossing, proposals for generating tidal power from the Severn Estuary were discussed. There was lively discussion on the neutral-brokering role of the SEP, whether CPs should have a view on development proposals and how we are involved in and facilitate consultations. A final coffee-stop at the Severn Bridges Visitor Centre encouraged informal networking and further discussion.



*Delegates in the Severn Bridges Visitor Centre on the field trip*

##### Session 1 – Coastal Management Update

The overall aim of this session was to consider the role of Coastal Partnerships in the context of national ICZM delivery and the draft Marine Bill:

- A 'warm-up session' to ensure familiarity with the current position.
- A platform for Defra to raise awareness of the current position with the Marine Bill & ICZM Strategies and obtain feedback through discussion with a captive audience of coastal practitioners.

Natasha Barker (CPWG Chair) gave a round-up of Coastal Partnerships Working Group (CPWG) activities over the past 2 years. This had included seven CPWG meetings; regular communications through a CPWG email group and web platform provided by

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CoastNET; profile raised through presentations at 5 national conferences/meetings; full involvement with the development of and the Steering Group for the 'benefits' project with Defra and Local Government Association; and improved recognition of coastal partnerships through the Marine Bill & ICZM Strategy responses.

Defra representatives Sam Haylen, Charlotte Mercer, Gillian Tuson, Pam Whaley and Stephen Collins were present to lead on the Marine Bill & ICZM Update session.

- Charlotte Mercer provided an overview of the Draft Marine Bill which was launched the previous week. There was now a consultation period until 26<sup>th</sup> June and the Scrutiny Committee would be reviewing evidence with the aim of getting the Bill into Parliament later this year.
- Gillian Tuson described what is in the draft Marine Bill, what the Marine Management Organisation will do and how it would be set up. It would be a non-departmental public body (evolving from the Marine & Fisheries Agency) with a legal identity undertaking planning, fisheries, conservation, licensing, monitoring, enforcement and other functions. The Secretary of State will pass the functions of the Marine Bill onto the MMO. Gillian also suggested that the MMO will be looking to work with coastal stakeholders, including coastal partnerships and would explore different ways of doing so including memoranda of understanding etc.
- Steve Collins presented progress with coastal integration; what is happening and where coastal partnerships could fit. He reiterated that there is no single solution to achieving integrated management, but important developments included Local Area Agreements; the Governments' Sub-National Review; the Cross Whitehall Coastal Towns Working Group; RDA Coastal Areas network; new PPS 20; CLG Guidance on Local Strategic Partnerships and Spatial Planning; EA WFD Guidance to Planning Authorities; and the EA Strategic Overview. He confirmed that coastal integration objectives will be included in the Marine Policy Statement as outlined in the Marine Bill White Paper and that *A public authority taking any decision in relation to the exercise of any function capable of affecting the whole or any part of the UK marine area must have regard to the appropriate marine policy documents.* (Draft Marine Bill, S.53(1)). A position statement is planned for summer 2008. On marine planning, the Marine Bill Policy Paper emphasised the importance of involving others in the process, *'The Planning Body will need to consider the nature of coastal communities and marine users affected in any given plan, and consider*



Steve Collins explaining coastal integration

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*what existing engagement structures, such as coastal partnerships, are in place'.* (DMB Policy Paper 3.56). Steve presented a diagram showing how land-sea integration was anticipated to take place through marine policy, the marine planning process, terrestrial planning structural changes, local area agreements, local strategic partnerships, river basin planning and shoreline management planning – which will need to utilise mechanisms to involve coastal communities and stakeholders in the decision-making process and that this represented opportunities for coastal partnerships. A wide range of website links to back up his presentation were provided and can be found in the appendices to this report.

Key points covered by Steve's presentation included:

- Local Area Agreements (LAA) – there is a legal duty to co-operate on a list of named competent bodies in local areas to agree priorities and to cooperate in fulfilling the agreed priorities; these priorities are based on the National Indicator Set and local political will as there can be purely local priorities which will be covered by the same duty.
- The Marine Policy Statement will contain objectives for Coastal Integration (ICZM) which will have more legal weight than current policy statements – as there will be a special duty for public authorities to have regard to the Marine Policy Statement and any objectives contained within.
- Engaging with coastal stakeholders will be paramount over the next few years for the marine planning process; where coastal partnerships can engage in the process it will be very beneficial – the Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP) have a key role as means of integration and coastal partnership involvement with LSP's would be useful.

Discussion covered the following points:

- The capacity in coastal partnerships (CPs) to influence is limited – in many cases it requires more resource than currently exists and the proposals illustrate a big change from where we are now. It is a question of where coastal partnerships fit in: where they can provide services to assist the MMO in the marine planning process resources to do so would follow.
- CPs could be utilised to support stakeholder engagement, but not all engage with a broad enough community. It is important for coastal integration and any involvement in the marine planning process that CPs are representative of the broad range of stakeholders in coastal areas. Guidance from government would be useful to support CPs in this direction.
- CPs don't all work with the Local Development Frameworks now but were encouraged to familiarise themselves with their specific Local Development Framework (LDF).
- Coastal Partnership officers should be given the tools to enable some of the process outlined by the presentation, particularly the Local Area Agreement process.
- CPs shouldn't be expected to attend/sit on groups, the onus should go back to the organisations/stakeholders themselves. CPs role is to encourage full representation.
- This is a massive opportunity for CPs to sell their services; the position statement proposed by Defra will illustrate this. For example, it maybe possible for the CP to

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represent the wider community on the Marine Steering Group for a Marine Spatial Planning area.

- The 'benefit' project (see below) has been a learning curve for Defra & CP representatives; aimed to support CPs to adapt to the changing environment over the next 2-3 years.
- Further consideration was needed on the timing and parameters of different parts of the planning process (e.g. SMPs) to encourage land-sea integration.
- Defra also outlined the work they were taking forward as a desk study to explore how the marine planning proposals might interact and coordinate with management/planning mechanisms particularly at the coast. This would be done through 2 workshops looking at a case study in the Thames area, and another area in SW England
- Coastal Groups may provide a useful model.
- The Defra Coastal Integration team prefer to use the term 'Coastal Integration' as opposed to 'ICZM' as they had found that 'ICZM' has been used, adapted and owned by several sectoral interests that there is now much confusion as to what it actually meant. Also, notwithstanding the confusion within the coastal management community, sectors outside of this community, being the sectors that need to be brought into the process, did not understand 'ICZM' whereas 'Coastal Integration' or 'Integration at the Coast' were terms which were readily and easily understood.

Professor Laurence Mee rounded up the session (his welcoming address was delayed due to transport difficulties). CPs are advocating the ecosystem approach; the human footprint has extended out to the sea and it was now politically important to ensure recovery and avoid catastrophic mis-management. There were plenty of reasons for integration, but ultimately it is a human/societal choice and processes such as CPs are important to the democratisation of planning. It is an enormously difficult task due to instant incompatibilities e.g. boundaries, but the coastal economy is the driver and is where people will decide what happens in the marine environment. Humans must be brought back into the ecosystem as our lives depend upon it – as advocated by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Laurence considered that it was all about democracy - that section 3.56 of the Marine Policy Paper (see below) goes some way towards this, but there is a layer of explanation missing on how to ensure democracy and the role of coastal partnerships. It would be challenging to explain to the public the relationships between statutory bodies, but people must be put in the driving seat and engage with CPs.

### **Marine Planning – Involving Others**

*Section 3.56 of the Draft Marine Bill Policy Paper, April 2008*

The planning body will be responsible for involving stakeholders and consulting on plan proposals. We intend to provide guidance on this issue, but we cannot be too prescriptive, because every part of the coast and UK waters is different, and engagement will need to be tailored accordingly. The planning body will need to consider the nature of the coastal communities and marine users affected in any given plan area, and consider what existing engagement structures, such as coastal partnerships, are in place. In the 2007 White Paper we proposed that the planning body should establish steering groups to support it in developing plans, particularly in coastal areas. It is clear from the varying stakeholder responses on this issue that different groups would be needed in different planning areas, so we will explore this issue further before providing guidance.

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Discussion covered the following key points:

- CPs don't exist everywhere. Defra can't propose one model as they feel it would be wrong for them to suggest that CP's conform to one model as CP's would then lose local specificity.
- Parallels could be drawn with the AONBs and the CROW Act for the evolution of CPs
- Could some CPs be used as pilots to look at the delivery process?
- The Local Government Association had done some work on identifying areas where CPs were most needed and to use Regional Spatial Strategies to trigger them at the local level. There is a role for Government to give leadership and a sense of direction to CPs.
- The establishment of the MMO is an opportunity for CPs to work out how to engage with marine spatial planning and ask Defra to take part in our discussions.
- Without CPs there would be a gap in implementing consultation and democratic processes.
- CPs can be seen as a gearing mechanism; small cogs that spin slowly due to limited capacity; but they could spin faster and have a bigger role.
- Scotland has 7 CPs that have got together to try and influence the Scottish Marine Bill, but capacity has been a significant issue; there is a need for more coastal planners to be trained by universities.



*Session 1 – Coastal Management Update*

### Session 2 – Valuing Coastal Partnerships

The overall aim of this session was to launch the results of the project supported by Defra, LGA & CPWG:

- Raising awareness of the outcomes of the 'The Financial Benefits to Partners of Working in Partnership at the Coast' project;
- Highlight the benefit streams available to partners to improve links between CPs and partners and promote innovative mechanisms for broadening the CP funding base;
- Agree how to take the FBA project results forward;
- Develop recommendations for future research/projects.

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Niall Benson (CPWG Vice-Chair & Durham Heritage Coast) provided background to how the project came about - through CPWG discussions with Defra over the responses to the consultation 'Promoting an integrated approach to management of the coastal zone (ICZM) in England', current issues surrounding coastal management and the funding pressures on CPs plus LGA interest in looking at the financial benefits of CPs. This had evolved into a project steering group looking at the benefits to *partners* of working together through a CP.

- Caroline Chambers of consultants Entec Ltd. presented the preliminary results of the 'Financial Benefits to Working in Partnership at the Coast' project funded by Defra & LGA with input from the CPWG committee. The project had involved phase 1 – a broad questionnaire to all CPs followed by phase 2 – selection of partner case studies for interview. The range of partner case studies and the questions posed to interviewees were illustrated. The results showed services considered useful to partners and quantified benefits (where possible) in monetary terms. Some observations were given on the good practice of CPs.
- Paul Salmon (Entec) added that CPs should review their objectives to make them more attractive to a wide range of funders – there was value in their neutrality, independence and drawing together for consensus views. Since the marine planning system will need to engage at the regional level, the Sub-National Review is important and CPs should collaborate within their regions (e.g. through the Regional Development Agency Coastal Network). Business acumen was needed in the CP Management Groups to sell CP services.

### Case study examples

- Kat Sanders presented on behalf of Humber Industry & Nature Conservation Association (INCA) and Conoco Phillips – one of the *private sector* case studies in the project. Humber INCA members included over 20 businesses, plus statutory and voluntary organisations. Conoco Phillips experience with community liaison was illustrated and how stakeholder engagement had improved through the support of Humber INCA. It was, however, still difficult to quantify tangible outcomes.
- Nick Lyness spoke on behalf of the Environment Agency with experience from the Dorset Coast Forum - one of the *public sector* case studies in the project. He suggested that there needs to be some reflection on the aims of CPs and their funding. The benefits need to be understood to justify time input and it is challenging to put a price on changing people's behaviour. He recognised that CPs are very vulnerable to political whims in relation to planning & development and private sector needs.
- Tonia Forsyth from the Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum had not provided a case study for the Entec study, but gave a brief presentation on how the Forum had increasingly gained funds from the private sector but that long term funding security should come from more Government support.

Discussion covered the following key points:

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- Local authorities play a key role in CP funding, which is non-statutory. The study had only included one local authority case study so could not provide statistically significant evidence to support local authority funding.
- Government need to providing funds for core costs to run CPs, private sector should support around the margins of their activity. CP funding can't be totally sourced from the local level. The private sector should not fund core activity as this will make it vulnerable.
- It was considered appropriate for CPs to move towards a service-delivery approach. Planners should advise developers to go through CPs for good, robust consultation services.
- CPs should be resourced to do the job and need better guidance to strengthen their balancing role – drivers from Government are currently not strong enough. There are many local authorities with targets that do not include CPs and the question was posed, how do we use the LAA system.



*Exchanging views and experiences socially*

*"Increased my awareness of the extent of issues and the fact these are shared by others".*

*"Opened my mind and thoughts outside the box".*

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### DAY 2

#### Session 3 – Developing a Stronger Role for Coastal Partnerships

The overall aim of this session was to discuss recent policy developments and the role of coastal partnerships services to support policy delivery:

- Presentations from key stakeholders on currently important policy areas to raise awareness of existing *external* issues and avenues for future CP growth.
- Strengthen relations between CP officers and key stakeholders.

#### Coastal and Marine Planning

- Rhona Fairgrieve from the Scottish Coastal Forum outlined experiences in developing the Scottish Marine Bill and the role of local coastal partnerships. Statutory arrangements for coastal and marine planning were called for but there were many unanswered questions such as how to bring CPs into the scope of a Scottish Marine Management Organisation; how they would continue as they are; or to let them wither and see what takes their place. Consultation was required on serious options and possible models – including costings. Four pilot projects were underway to explore options. There was a need for training coastal planners.
- Jim Masters from the Devon Maritime Forum gave the background to Local Area Agreements (LAA's), the process of influencing them and the benefits to CPs of engaging in the LAA process. He saw CPs doing what LAAs are aiming to achieve i.e. strengthening local democracy. It is important the CPs engage with Local Authorities to support the LAA process to get targets set for the coast/marine.
- Kath Winnard (Welsh Assembly Government) and Lia Moutselou (Wales Coastal & Maritime Partnership) described how the partnership worked with government on providing marine planning advice. WCMP have an independent advisory role with 30 invited members participating on a non-statutory basis. The partners bring resources/information to WCMP, participate in working groups, forge links within government and are currently progressing ICZM indicators.

#### Water Framework Directive

- Vicki Kidney (Environment Agency) and Jill Goddard (Thames Estuary Partnership) outlined how the Environment Agency and Thames Estuary Partnership (TEP) are working together to help deliver River Basin Planning under the Water Framework Directive. The River Basin District Liaison Panel is largely made up of co-delivery organisations but includes TEP. This has also led to TEP chairing a regional fisheries, ecology and recreation advisory committee which boosts core funding. EA are funding CPs to facilitate stakeholder engagement such as through workshops for RBD planning in the Solent and Severn. In Scotland, there are Service Level Agreements for CPs to support stakeholder engagement input to the Water Framework Directive.

#### Access

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- Bill Parker spoke about the increasing pressures on the coast for recreation and how to balance sensitive sites for habitats with increasing access. Public consultation needs to be right first time – CPs can help to provide robust evidence and help implementation of new legislation using experience of community liaison. The discussion raised awareness of the independent & natural role of CPs compared to a conservation based approach which may originate from an AONB initiative. Several good examples of working with communities over coastal access were highlighted in discussion in the Medway-Swale, Thanet coast, Dee and North-West coastal trail. CPs were considered ideally placed to raise awareness and support capacity building.

### Shoreline Management Plans

- As Stewart Rowe was not present due to coastal landslide issues in Scarborough, Robin Siddle (Scarborough Borough Council) covered this item. Discussion on SMPs identified that CPs (e.g. Wash, Severn, South Devon) are providing services to support SMP development through secretariat, consultation and community liaison. The NW Coastal Forum provide events which are supported by RTPI for professional development.

### Discussion covered the following key points:

- It was noted that there are lots of opportunities to demonstrate good practice; the CoastNET Good Practice Directory already provided a good resource that should be updated.
- CCW are undertaking a pilot project on a cross-border area to inform the way ahead with marine spatial planning across devolved areas.
- There is a mismatch between CP benefits and the fact that they are losing funding – it was suggested that this is because they are fit for purpose locally, but need to see what's required at the Government level and evolve to support it in order to be on a firmer footing. However, it is not clear to CPs at the moment what Government want.
- ICZM could have been with CLG instead of DEFRA – the LAA process is important, it brings people together at local level, within a National Framework, to agree a set of common local objectives and requires them to work together to achieve these objectives.
- Experiences of CPs working with the LAA process were illustrated from the Wash, NE Kent & Duddon. It was suggested that there is an opportunity for CPs to produce a paper collectively to get the right content/indicators in the LAAs working from a national level. Examples of where ICZM indicators were being used included the Solent, Wales and the British-Irish Council

Pilot studies (e.g. for coastal access, cross-border marine planning) should not avoid the complex areas!

### Session 4 – Networks for Coastal Officers – the Way Forward

The overall aim of this session was to consider the way forwards in relation to networking between CPs:

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- Discussion on the future role of a network for coastal practitioners in England (Wales, Scotland & Ireland).
- Recommendations for the future form and work of the CPWG and next years Forum.

### ICZM Delivery & Coastal Partnerships


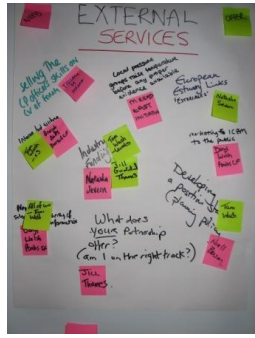
- Tim Stojanovic introduced the session with an overview of the evolution of coastal partnership initiatives.
- Alex Midlen (CoastNET) outlined what CoastNet is, does, examples of work, what the future holds and how CoastNET can do for CPs. He emphasised the importance of the regions for coastal strategy and need to consider a new partnership model in the changing policy environment. CoastNET have provided tools, guidance and good practice demonstration material for CPs and offer a new range of services.
- Niall Benson (CPWG Vice-Chair) presented a perspective of the work undertaken by CPWG over the past two years and suggested internal and external areas for further work (see box).
- Natasha Barker (CPWG Chair) oversaw election of the new CPWG committee. She stood down as Chair and nominated Niall Benson to Chair. Jill Goddard was nominated and elected as Vice-Chair. Tracey Hewett stood down as Secretary. Kat Sanders volunteered to be Secretary. Natasha summed up the final session with general remarks as provided in the conclusion to this report.

### Informal Networking & the Coastal Partnerships 'Dating Shop'

Run throughout the two-day programme, the 'dating shop' provided a mechanism to improve links between CP officers, facilitating informal networking and the exchange of experience.

Internal Services	External Services	Projects
How to make the transition from a management plan led partnership to a service-delivery based partnership. <i>Need: NWCF, SCF, Hamble</i> <i>Offers: Wash, Solent, Devon</i>	Selling the CP Officers skills on CV of Forum <i>Need: Solent</i>	Fit Partnership/Forum into new Sub-National-Review (SNR) structure <i>Need: East of England</i>
Widening Partnership membership <i>Need: Duddon</i> <i>Offer: Thames</i>	Local pressure groups raise temperature before any proper evidence available. <i>Need: East of England</i>	Water Recreation Audit <i>Need: Solent</i> <i>Offer: Pembrokeshire, NWCF, Severn</i>
Communication Strategy <i>Need: Dorset</i> <i>Offer: Severn</i>	Industry funding <i>Need: Severn</i> <i>Offer: Thames, Wash</i>	Managing coastal information for stakeholders <i>Need: Severn/Cardiff Uni</i>
Getting members to be more participative. <i>Need: Duddon, Pembrokeshire</i> <i>Offer: Thames</i>	Interreg bid writing <i>Need: Dorset</i> <i>Offer: Wash</i>	Bird disturbance study <i>Need: Exe</i>
Business Plan <i>Offer: Durham, Wales, Wash</i>	European estuary links <i>Offer: Severn</i>	Integrated policy making through sector visioning – any ideas? <i>Need: Solent</i> <i>Offer: Thames, Wash</i>
Engagement of right sections in RDA <i>Need: East of England</i>	Marketing ICZM to the public <i>Need: Pembrokeshire</i>	

## 2008 Annual Coastal Partnerships Forum

Offer: Wash	Offer: WAG 'What is ICZM guide'	
Partnership Agreement Need: Severn, Wales Offer: Thames, Wash	Developing a position statement Need: Durham Offer: NWCF, Wash	
	What does your Partnership offer (am I on the right track)? Need: Thames Offer: Suffolk	
	Newsletters – selection & gathering of information Need: Pembrokeshire Offer: NWCF, Wash, all of us!	
	Engaging young adults (teenagers etc). Need: South Devon Offer: Wash	

Feedback from the event (see appendices based on 34 completed feedback forms) indicated that the networking opportunities were probably the most important aspect of the Forum. Networking leads to information, contacts, new ideas and motivation – particularly for people new to the field and providing a sense of common purpose as many Coastal Partnership Officers work in isolation. The opportunity to meet Defra colleagues face to face was noted by several participants as very useful. The dating shop itself was seen as a useful mechanism, although time for it was limited and much informal exchange took place anyway.

*“Yes, networking was the most important part for me and I've made lots of useful contacts. Many other people have also commented that this is the most useful part too”.*

### Coastal Partnerships Working Group meeting

The CPWG held a short meeting from 2.30pm – 4pm to review its position with previous work and consolidate outcomes from the Forum for future work of the new committee. Key points taken from the meeting were:

- Draft post-event report to old & new CPWG committee and circulate presentations from the Forum and LAA briefing paper(s) to all with post-event report.
- Thank you letters to sponsors of 2008 CP Forum with this report.
- Response to Draft Marine Bill.
- Write to Hilary Benn MP with final copy of report to highlight role for CPs in relation to the Marine Bill.
- Circulate Good Practice Directory proforma for

### Coastal Partnerships Working Group – Future Direction

#### Internal

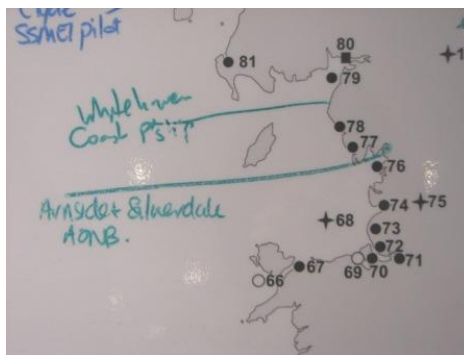
- CP Officers group for CP Officers – UK wide?
- Mutual support through network?
- Develop dialogue on delivery as well as policy?
- Open communications – bi-monthly news posting?
- Raising skills as well as profile?
- Building confidence?

#### External

- Formal representation to principal Country Agencies?
- Develop CPOs professionalism?
- Raising profile?
- Strengthen business case – evolution of service?
- Open communications – ideas and involvement welcome?
- Potential sharing in larger scale project development?
- (EU, UK research)
- Best/worst practice?
- Half yearly meetings site visit orientated – issues/skills exchange?
- Political influencing

## 2008 Annual Coastal Partnerships Forum

- collation of new examples of best practice.
- Following publication of the 'Financial Benefit' study – discuss with Defra and LGA, also WAG and Scottish Government.
- New CPWG website to be established.
- Formal representation to national agencies in England i.e. Natural England and Environment Agency relating to CP potential for policy development, delivery and directly relating to WFD.
- November CPWG meeting in Carlisle that will include skills development – Marine Spatial Planning.
- Core news service from CPWG committee to support individual officer communications activity.
- CPWG Work Plan for 2008-09.



*Map of UK Coastal Partnerships amended during the Forum*

## 4 OUTCOMES

The following summary is based on the report of the sessions above, plus feedback forms from 34 of the 60 delegates.

### Attendance

This year's Forum had double the number of partnerships represented than in 2007. Only 1/3 of delegates (11/34) had attended the event before. Of those that didn't attend last year (23/34); 9 were not in post/not relevant/not working on coastal issues; 5 didn't know about it; 4 had problems with the organisation/format of the event; 2 were due to distance; 2 had other commitments/lack of time to attend and 1 partner had made a deliberate decision to leave attendance to Coastal Partnership Officers (CPOs) themselves. Reasons for attending this year were detailed and included (in approximate order of importance): networking & information provision; a good agenda; to meet/catchup with other CPs; important timing (Marine Bill/policy developments); to hear about the results of the Entec study; exposure to what is happening in other partnerships and opportunities to share experience; an expectation that it would be or to see if it was better than last year; to learn about CPs and interest in setting up a regional forum

### Expectations

## 2008 Annual Coastal Partnerships Forum

The majority of people's expectations (24/34) were fully met or exceeded. Nearly all replied yes to the question of whether their expectations were met, but there were suggestions that more end product/clear outcome would have been good. There was some hesitation over the usefulness/application of the Entec study and more time could have been spent on improving core funding and exploring industry support.

### Usefulness of Sessions & Most Useful Outcome

Session 3 on the 'future role for coastal partnerships' was seen as by far the most useful of the formal sessions. Contact with Defra and receiving an update on the Marine Bill definitely attracted people to attend the Forum, as did hearing about the results of the Entec study. The most useful outcomes for people were diverse, with a common theme of networking. Some specific quotes give a flavour of the usefulness of the Forum, as shown below. There was no common outcome on which organisation(s) CPs feel they need to build stronger links with. Many cited other CPs to make links with, plus government agencies, local authorities and industry.

*"Speaking to others about similar issues - particularly DEFRA & people you can't really speak to otherwise".*

*"Learning from others, making face to face contact with people, space for 'free thinking' and working out solutions"*

*"Getting to hear strengths & knowing I can ring people now/email and get support/advice/ideas".*

*"Feel that not alone with frustrations".*

*"Thinking on realignment of CPs & need for neutrality of purpose".*

### Key points for next steps

The outcome of the formal sessions, informal networking and feedback leads to the following outcomes and recommended next steps:

- Explore further the nature of guidance needed from central government to CPs.
- There is an opportunity for CPs to produce a paper collectively to get the right content in LAAs working from a national level.
- Links to follow up from presentations are provided in this post-event report (see appendices).
- CPOs should follow up offers of assistance from Dating Shop (where they weren't on the day).
- Pilot studies shouldn't avoid the 'harder' areas to tease out policy complexities.
- Make stronger links between CPs and the All Party Parliamentary Group run by CoastNET and seek more political influence at the local level.
- Secure commitment from Defra for CPWG to organise and host the Forum in 2009 – plan early!

## 2008 Annual Coastal Partnerships Forum

*"A sense of common purpose and some clarity about what gaps the CPWG can fill".*

### Recommendations for Coastal Partnerships Forum 2009

The format of this year's event worked very well by hosting the field trip, formal sessions, informal network, dinner & accommodation in the same venue on a Thur-Fri. People seemed very satisfied with attending a free event and paying for their own dinner and accommodation. The evening wine reception with sponsorship was a real bonus which helped the social networking flow! The informal networking is clearly one (if not the) most beneficial part of the event. Whilst the dating shop was useful, it could be furthered with more time allocated to it and/or time allowed for a 'speed-dating' format to ensure that everyone meets everyone else – this would be a good ice-breaker on day one. The display table was much fuller this year than in previous years, probably due to reminding people to bring along publicity when sending out joining instructions. The smooth running of the 2008 Forum was at least partly due to strong team-working amongst the CPWG committee/organisers. The main weakness appears to have been lack of clarity over outcomes from the Forum; the availability of presentations after the event through the post-event report was not publicised. Ways of teasing out clear direction and next steps before the end of the event would further strengthen the impact of the annual Forum.

*"Most importantly everyone seemed to have fun, no moaning about the event format/content and lots of laughter!"*

## 2008 Annual Coastal Partnerships Forum

### 6 CONCLUSION

The Forum received very positive feedback, with over 60% of delegates considering it an excellent event and the remainder excellent/good or good – nobody considered the event fair/poor. There was an excellent atmosphere which greatly encouraged informal networking and exchange of experience which was cited as probably the most beneficial part of the Forum. Participants were mainly Coastal Partnership Officers, with partners at the local, regional and national level attending as well as independent/academic advisors. The hosting arrangements and variety of activities from the field trip, formal presentations, discussion sessions, informal networking, evening reception and dinner meant that there was a wide range of opportunities for meeting others.

The activities of the Coastal Partnerships Working Group over the past 2 years provided a sound background to the Forum and helped to prepare a good programme. Setting the scene for the Forum with Defra presenting on the Marine Bill and how Coastal Partnerships role will need to evolve provided important food for thought. Key issues which arose were how we will cross the land-sea divide and ensure there is a good level of understanding, communication and awareness about the changing planning/policy structures. Guidance from Government was recommended to ensure Coastal Partnerships services are utilised and to facilitate them being fit for purpose. The contribution of the project on the 'Financial benefits to working in partnership at the coast' was a key focus for the Forum and raised awareness of the need for CPs to become more service orientated. Whilst there was interest in CPs obtaining more involvement from industry & businesses to broaden representation, there was concern about the move towards private sector funding of core services. Local ownership and usefulness of the project was anticipated through distribution of a glossy leaflet as a key output from the project in late Spring/early Summer. There were opportunities to build on the project through new areas of research. The session on developing a stronger role for coastal partnerships was well placed following the previous day's focus on the Marine Bill and project results. Updates and examples from CPs on coastal & marine planning, the water framework directive, coastal access and shoreline management plans led to practical consideration of how CPs engage with and support policy delivery. The final session on networks for coastal officers consolidated the outcomes from the Forum and set the scene for ongoing work facilitated by the CPWG in the year ahead.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The organisers would like to thank all the event sponsors for supporting this event. The CPWG Committee would like to thank all the speakers for their time and participation.



## APPENDICES

Delegates Programme

Guide to the Dating Shop

Coastal Partnerships Working Group: Positions & Responsibilities

Delegates List

Feedback Forms (Summary)

Presentations

Links

## 2008 Annual Coastal Partnerships Forum

### Delegates Programme

#### DAY 1: THURSDAY 10 APRIL 2008

- 1030 Field Trip: Aust & Severn Bridges (optional)  
An opportunity to discuss the role of a local coastal partnership in a national policy debate.
- 

- 1230 Registration & Buffet Lunch

- 1330 Session 1 – Coastal Management Update  
Chair: Professor Laurence Mee

Welcoming address: Professor Laurence Mee, Devon Maritime Forum  
Chair

CPWG activities round-up: Natasha Barker, CPWG Chair

Marine Bill & ICZM: Gillian Tuson, Charlotte Mercer & Stephen Collins, Defra  
What's happening across Government - pre legislative process for scrutiny and consultation;

Marine Management Organisation (MMO) - planning & coastal integration;

Services CPs can offer to facilitate delivery of Marine Bill workstreams;  
Utilising stakeholder engagement mechanisms for marine planning.

Discussion

- 1500 Refreshment Break & CP 'dating shop' Part I  
Your chance to highlight or respond to particular issues, concerns or opportunities.
- 

- 1530 Session 2 - Valuing Coastal Partnerships  
Chair: Niall Benson, CPWG Vice-Chair

Financial Benefits to Working in Partnership at the Coast

Entec Consultants - Caroline Chambers & Paul Salmon

Presentation of project findings on the financial benefit assessment of CPs to partners.

Case study examples

## 2008 Annual Coastal Partnerships Forum

Private Sector: INCA, Conocco Phillips & Humber Estuary Forum - Kat Sanders

Public Sector: Environment Agency & Dorset Coast Forum - Nick Lyness

Discussion 'Profiting from Partnerships' All, facilitated by the Project Steering Group

Examples of private/public sector benefits from other CPs

Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum – Tonia Forsyth

Promoting outputs, broadening and strengthening funding for CPs

Identifying new areas for research.

1700 Evening Reception & CP 'dating shop' Part I continued  
Your chance to highlight or respond to particular issues, concerns or opportunities.

1930 Dinner

## DAY 2: FRIDAY 11 APRIL 2008

0900 Refreshments & CP 'dating shop' Part II

An opportunity to discuss with other partnerships the solution they have to your issues.

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0930 Session 3 – Developing a Stronger Role for Coastal Partnerships

Chair: Tracey Hewett, CPWG Secretary

### 1) Coastal and Marine Planning

Scottish Coastal Forum - Rhona Fairgrieve

Devon Maritime Forum - Jim Masters

Welsh Assembly Government - Kath Winnard & Wales Coastal &

Maritime Partnership - Lia Moutselou

Discussion

### 2) Water Framework Directive

Environment Agency - Vicki Kidney

Thames Estuary Partnership - Jill Goddard

Discussion

1100 Comfort Break

### 3) Shoreline Management Plans

Shoreline Management Planning, Scarborough Borough Council -

Stewart Rowe

Discussion

## 2008 Annual Coastal Partnerships Forum

### 4) Access

Suffolk Coast and Heaths – Bill Parker  
Discussion

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1210 Refreshment Break & CP 'dating shop' Part II continued: All  
Discuss solutions and opportunities with other partnership officers

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1230 Session 4 - Networks for Coastal Officers: the Way Forwards  
Chair: Natasha Barker, CPWG Chair  
ICZM Delivery & Coastal Partnerships Alex Midlen, CoastNet  
Activities of CPWG 2008-2009 Niall Benson, CPWG Vice-Chair  
Election of CPWG Committee Members

1330 Lunch & Depart

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1430-1600 Coastal Partnerships Working Group meeting (optional)  
Coastal Partnership officers are invited to stay for a working group  
meeting with the CPWG committee (incoming & outgoing) to  
review how the Forum went, discuss the  
priorities and next steps for the working group.

## 2008 Annual Coastal Partnerships Forum

### Guide to the 'Dating Shop'

The Forum will offer time for Coastal Partnership Officers to share valuable experience of *internal* activities, how we can strengthen our *external* role and *project work*.

In Part 1 of the 'Dating Shop' you will detail your issue or area of experience and leave contact 'calling cards' (e.g. a business card) on the various exchange walls. In Part II, you will have the chance to collect other people's contact cards left for you and 'buddy-up' with those who would like to share your experience and answer issues of concern you have raised.

## 2008 Annual Coastal Partnerships Forum

Some suggested areas of *internal* activities, *external* roles and projects are given as a guide.

### *1. Internal activities – running the partnership*

e.g.

Business plan, action plan, work programme methodology.

Communication strategies

Contacts database, who's who co-ordination, networking tools.

Template for published newsletter, e-news, guidance notes.

Approach to meetings/event co-ordination.

Collaboration agreements, MoU with host body, partnership statements of intent.

Website platform and functions.

### *2. External roles – supporting partners to deliver their duties, influencing policy e.g.*

Maximising core services

Services to support policy delivery (e.g. Environment Agency – Water Framework Directive, Local Authority – coastal recreation management, Natural England – Natura 2000 site management).

Workshops on current issues (e.g. coastal access, climate change, local planning).

Secretariat services to sectoral groups (e.g. shoreline management plan groups, harbour authority).

### *3. Projects in Development*

e.g. Visioning for ICZM delivery.

Public awareness campaign

### Coastal Partnerships Working Group: Positions & Responsibilities

#### Chairman

Main Role: Leading and overseeing the work of the group.

The Chairman will be responsible for setting meeting dates and overseeing follow up actions of the group with support from the Vice-Chairman and Secretary.

During each meeting, the Chairman will identify a host for the next meeting.

#### Activities of the Chairman include:

- Chairing the CPWG;
- Liaising with the Secretary to ensure that minutes of the previous meeting are produced promptly, accurately and distributed to all members;
- Ensuring actions from the previous meeting are taken forwards;
- Monitoring all CPWG email discussions; ensuring appropriate use of the email group;
- Seeking support from external agencies for the activities of the group;
- Regularly liaising with the Vice-Chairman and Secretary (e.g. monthly) to review progress.
- Representing the CPWG externally (e.g. at conferences and other meetings);
- Scrutinising all potential materials/statements presented on behalf of the group

#### Vice-Chairman

Main Role: Supporting the Chairman

The Vice-Chairman will support the Chairman in the provision of meetings, facilitating actions and information exchange in liaison with both the Chairman and Secretary.

#### Additional activities of the Vice-Chairman include:

- Ensure actions from the previous meeting are progressed promptly;
- Monitoring email discussions and liaising regularly (e.g. monthly) with the Chairman to review progress;
- Deputising for the Chairman at CPWG meetings and representing the group externally.

#### Secretary

Main Role: Recording and distributing information to and from the group.

Take minutes of CPWG meetings and circulate to CPWG members after Chairman approval. Minutes will be issued as DRAFT (read only) to be made FINAL at the next meeting when approved. The Secretary may delegate minute-

## 2008 Annual Coastal Partnerships Forum

taking to the host of any particular CPWG meeting if appropriate services are offered, with the agreement of the Chairman.

### Additional activities of the Secretary include:

- Circulating materials/statements for adoption by the Chairman/Vice-Chairman as position statements of the group;
- Maintenance of contact details and email distribution groups
- Circulating email alerts
- Deputising for the Chairman at CPWG meetings and representing the group externally.

## 2008 Annual Coastal Partnerships Forum

### Delegates List

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## 2008 Annual Coastal Partnerships Forum

### Feedback Forms

An Excel spreadsheet is available containing the comments from 34 feedback forms.

## 2008 Annual Coastal Partnerships Forum

### Presentations

The following presentations are available in .pdf format, are available (on request from the CPWG Secretary) and will be provided on the CPWG webpage as soon as it is up and running.

- Barker – CPWG Activities
- Benson – CPWG Future
- Chambers – Benefits
- Collins – Integration
- Fairgrieve – SCF
- Forsyth – PCF
- Kidney – EA WFD
- Masters – LAA
- Midlen – CoastNET
- Parker – Coastal Access
- Sanders – Humber INCA
- Tusson - MMO

### Links

Various Policy Related - provided by Steve Collins (Defra):

- Draft Marine Bill <http://www.defra.gov.uk/marine/legislation/index.htm>
- Environment Agency Coastal Strategic Overview – <http://www.defra.gov.uk/envIRON/fcd/policy/strategy/ha1a.htm>
- Prosperous Places: Taking forward the Review of Sub-National Economic Development and Regeneration <http://www.berr.gov.uk/regional/sub-national-review/page40430.html>
- LGA Briefing <http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/aio/406584>
- House of Commons Select Committee Coastal Towns Enquiry [http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary\\_committees/odpm/coastalinq.cfm](http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/odpm/coastalinq.cfm) .
- Planning Together: Local Strategic Partnerships and Spatial Planning - a practical guide. <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/planningtogether/local>
- And this RTPI link <http://www.rtpi.org.uk/item/435/23/5/3>
- The Water Framework Directive and Planning – Initial Advice to Planning Authorities in England and Wales <http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/aio/32481>
- LGA - a councillor's guide to the new local area agreements. <http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/publications/publication-display.do?id=20572>
- Defra PSA's - A more secure, fair and environmentally sustainable world. [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/pbr\\_csr/psa/pbr\\_csr07\\_psaenvironment.cfm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/pbr_csr/psa/pbr_csr07_psaenvironment.cfm)
- PSA Delivery Agreement 28: Secure a healthy natural environment for today and the future.

## 2008 Annual Coastal Partnerships Forum

- [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/1/3/pbr\\_csr07\\_psa28.pdf](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/1/3/pbr_csr07_psa28.pdf)  
The full set of National Indicators (NI's) linked to PSA's including DSO's (Delivery Service Objectives)  
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/doc/517909>

Natural England

Scheme for the delivery of coastal access within the Marine Bill - see [www.naturalengland.gov.uk/leisure/access/coastal](http://www.naturalengland.gov.uk/leisure/access/coastal)

Local Area Agreements (LAA) - provided by Jim Masters (Devon Maritime Forum):  
There are several papers available from the Devon Maritime Forum on LAA; the following briefing was prepared for the CP Forum.

Local Area Agreements (LAAs) aim to **engage citizens and to deepen local democracy, promoting stronger, more cohesive communities.**

**There are several layers to the LAA process:**

**1. Strategic Partnership**

Each local government has been tasked with establishing Strategic Partnerships that convene to begin defining what the key priorities might be for a given area. These partnerships are constituted of the key government organisations and agencies with a remit to deliver local services, such as education, health, welfare, safety, environment, economy and culture.

**2. Sustainable Community Strategy**

The Strategic Partnership then works together, through local consultation and negotiation, to develop a 'Sustainable Community Strategy'. This is a stand-alone document which acts as a 10 year vision for the area in question. This document provides the high-level strategic priorities for an area that can be referred back to during its life-time. Once agreed it is difficult to amend.

**3. Local Area Agreement**

The LAA for each area then hinges on the content of this Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). The LAA 'gives expression' to the SCS through a set of National Indicators that are negotiated with central government.

**4. Delivery Plans**

The LAA itself, once established, requires local delivery and spatial elements to ensure that each of the National Indicators is effectively implemented in their fullest sense. At this stage there is room for interpretation and further negotiation of how they might be best delivered.

**The Third Sector**

It is clearly stated that the LAA needs to engage with the 'Third Sector' (voluntary, NGO and charity sectors) and to place these organisations at the heart of the DSP. It is also stated that Local Authorities should **"pass on the stability of their three-year financial settlements to the Third Sector wherever possible. In relation to grants for the Third Sector organisations, the starting point should be three year funding in all cases."** Allied to this is the 'duty to involve' local people as well as businesses to give local people more opportunities to have their say and get involved in the issues that effect their local area.

**The Sustainable Community Strategy development takes five stages:**

**Stage 1 - Evaluation:** an evaluation of the existing Sustainable Community Strategy

**Stage 2 - Evidence Base:** an evidence base

**Stage 3 - Visioning:** a vision

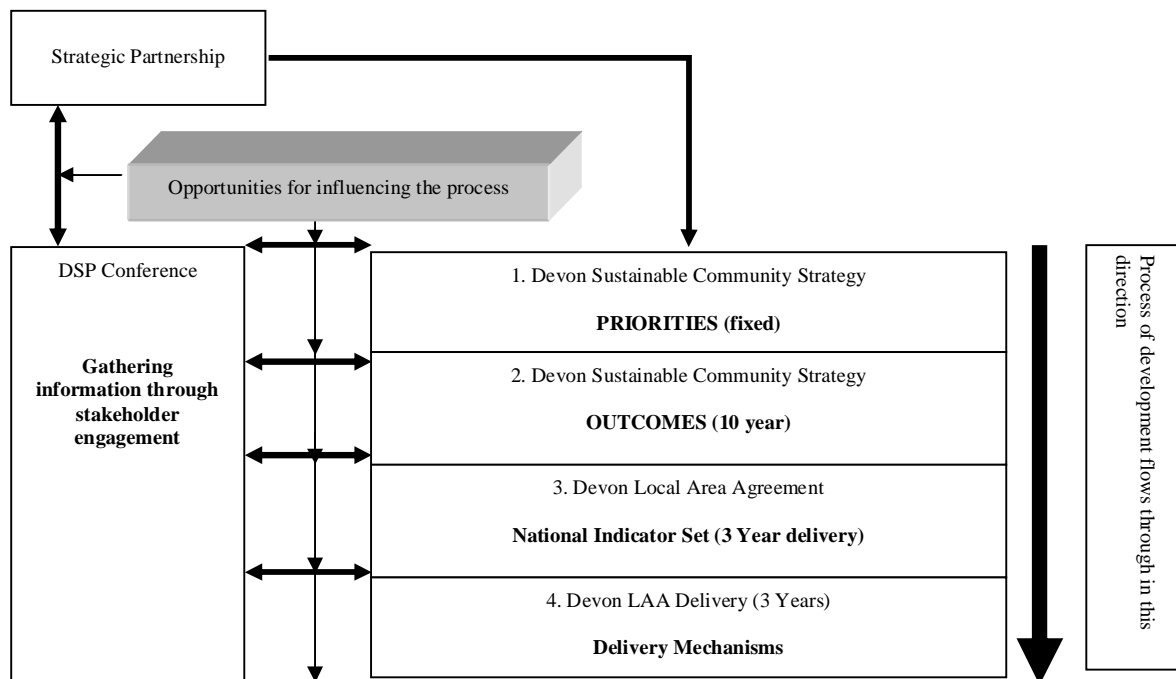
**Stage 4 - Prioritisation:** the new Sustainable Community Strategy

**Stage 5 - Outcomes and Action Planning:** the new 2008-2011 Local Area Agreement

**Diagram 1.** The different levels and relationships of the LAA process

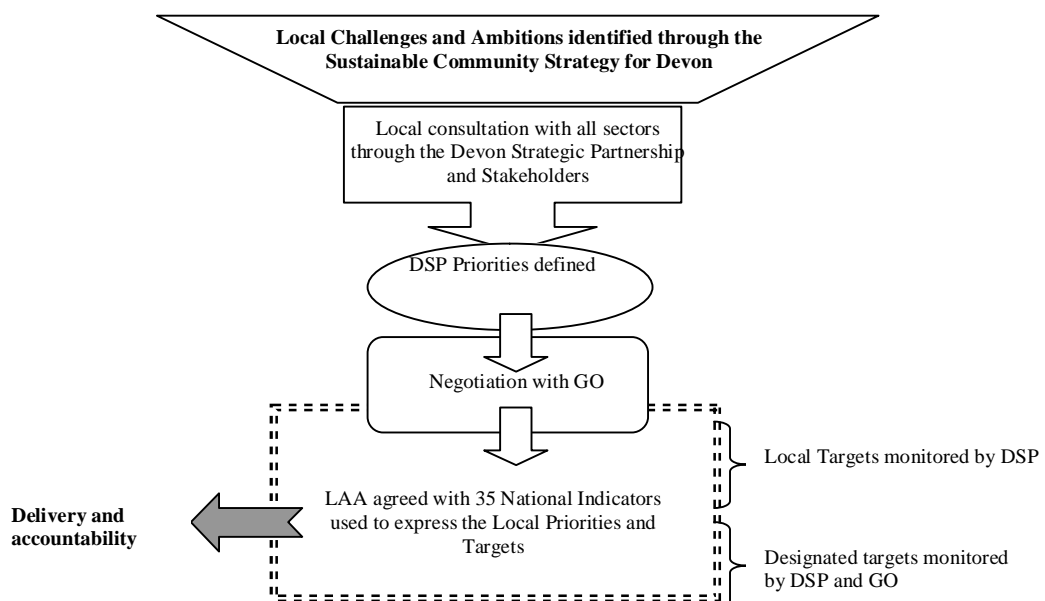
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The LAA, once agreed, has a life-span of three years during which time the agreed National Indicators are acted on. After this period the Sustainable Community Strategy is re-visited for further negotiation over a fresh set of indicators. As such, there are several opportunities for engaging with the process.




### Developing a Local Area Agreement

The development of the Local Area Agreement takes place over a series of small steps, with much negotiation and adjustment taking place at each stage. It is an iterative process, and one which requires broad consultation.



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### Engaging with the Process

There are several ways in which the whole SCS and LAA process can be influenced. Much of this is down, however, to the willingness of the Local Authority in question to entertain ideas of coastal priorities. It is also worth noting that having councillors or members of the Strategic Partnership board that have a keen interest in or good understanding of maritime issues will help greatly.

The FIRST thing to consider, if you have the opportunity, is how to influence the Sustainable Communities Strategy, as this document then informs the rest of the process. You need to identify the key personnel within the Local Authority who are orchestrating the development of the SCS in order to find out timetables and processes being used. These will vary from location to location.

#### Step 1: Influence the Strategic Partnership Board

If the process is in its infancy, then try to reach a strategic member of the Local Authority with a portfolio for coastal issues and educate them about the value of coastal partnerships. Their keen interventions can then be used to keep coastal issues as high priorities throughout the process.

#### Step 2: Gain access to the Partnership Board

Ensure you have high-level partners supportive of your partnership who are in contact with the Partnership Board in order, again, to keep coastal issues high on the agenda. Also, identify the key networks and groupings (such as Environment Devon) who are officially informing the development of the Sustainable Communities Strategy.

#### Step 3: Gain access to stakeholder engagement opportunities

There will be a clearly defined process of engagement for relevant stakeholders that will provide a regular input of information in to the development of the SCS and subsequently the LAA. Getting invited to these events ensures you have an opportunity to comment on and contribute to the official process.

#### Step 4. Lobby for the inclusion of specific 'maritime' clauses

When the priorities of the SCS have been set, these are then translated in to outcomes. Again this provides an opportunity to influence the process. It may be possible to contribute to the wording of the 'outcomes' in order for them to reflect – literally – marine concerns and issues. Having a form of words that is inclusive explicitly of maritime issues at this stage makes their inclusion in the subsequent LAA far more likely.

#### Step 5. Lobby for specific 'National Indicators'

The National Indicator set chosen by each LA will give expression to the SCS. You may be able to lobby for specific indicators that reflect the broad work of coastal partnerships. This is unlikely if you haven't been able to influence any of the previous steps.

#### Step 6. Lobby for specific Local Indicators

Based on your evidence case, lobby for the drafting of Local Indicators that capture the essence of ICZM for your local area.

#### Step 7. Defining delivery of the National Indicators

All is not lost. When the LAA has been drawn up, it still needs to be decided how it is going to be delivered, where and by whom. The NI set chosen by the Local Authority is therefore open to interpretation and this is one of the key places where coastal partnerships might engage with the process. This part of the process is as yet unclear, but it is thought that there will scope for coastal partnerships to establish their roles through careful identification of delivery procedures.

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