

SEFTON COAST MANAGEMENT SCHEME ANNUAL REPORT 2000



Introduction

This document is the second annual report of the *Sefton Coast Management Plan, Second Review, 1997-2006*. It covers the period from October 1999 to January 2001. The summary report highlights some of the key achievements of the past year and sets some of the targets for the coming year and beyond. The targets for 2000, as set out in the first annual report, have largely been met. Where there have been delays or changes to the programme these are shown in a table and reasons given. A detailed work programme guides the Sefton Coast Management Plan, setting out objectives, prescriptions and outputs. A draft summary report was approved by the Sefton Coast Partnership interim Steering Group at their meeting of 27 November 2000 and was presented at the meeting of the Sefton Coast Forum on 20 January 2001. Some additional comments from partners have been included in this final report.

General overview of progress and future challenges

The Second Review of the Sefton Coast Management Plan sets the scene for coastal management in Sefton over the next five years. The Plan is a non-statutory document and does not impose constraints on landowners; instead it encourages a partnership approach to sustainable coastal zone management.

The area of the Sefton Coast Management Plan covers the coastline within the Borough of Sefton, including the beaches and inland to the fringes of the marshland and dune belt.

Over the past year the principal partners have taken time to discuss ways to bring the Sefton Coast Management Scheme more up-to-date and to become more democratic. Partners met on 14 June 2000 to discuss options for the future format of the partnership and the result of discussions were reported to Sefton Council's Cabinet on 14 September 2000. The specific proposals arising from the discussions were that;

- The Sefton Coast Management Scheme should be reconstituted as the ***Sefton Coast Partnership***
- The partnership should be broadened to include adequate representation from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors,
- The partnership should be independent of the Council, though it is essential the Council be a partner,
- The partnership would establish a structure for annual meetings and working groups.

The Sefton Coast Partnership would continue to endorse the vision statement and support the aims and objectives of the Coast Management Plan. New partners would be expected to do likewise.

Our vision is for the Sefton Coast to be managed to ensure the conservation of one of the most important coastal areas in Europe for nature while being an asset to a healthy local economy and providing a much needed area for the quiet enjoyment of the countryside. Specifically, we accept the joint responsibility to ensure that the integrity and natural value of the dune system and estuaries is protected in perpetuity as one of the series of European nature areas.

The Sefton Coast Management Plan informs the statutory planning process and supports the definition of a Coastal Planning Zone and associated coastal planning policies.

Nature conservation interests are important on the Sefton Coast due to its national and international value for wildlife. Under UK law the basis for the identification of such sites is the designation *Site of Special Scientific Interest*. The suite of SSSIs underpins the designations of the Ribble and Alt Estuaries Ramsar site, Ribble and Alt Estuaries Special Protection Area (SPA) and Sefton Coast candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC). In 2000 English Nature gave notification of the amalgamation and enlargement of five of the coastal SSSIs to form a new *Sefton Coast SSSI*. In parallel with this review English Nature proposed an extension of the current Sefton Coast candidate Special Area of Conservation. In addition a new site, the *Mersey Narrows SSSI*, covering the Seaforth area in Sefton and the Egremont foreshore on the Wirral, has been proposed. Representations on these notifications were sent to English Nature in December 2000.

A Biodiversity Audit for North West England was published in 1999. Work has begun on the preparation of a *North Merseyside Biodiversity Action Plan*. The initiative has prepared Action Plans for a number of habitats and species especially important in the sub-region; many of these are coastal.

Following work on a landscape character assessment of Sefton a survey of habitats and natural features has been carried out. The 'Phase 1' habitat survey is an assessment, using broad habitat categories, of the countryside and is designed to identify areas which warrant further survey. A particular value of the survey is the identification of habitat features, such as hedgerows or ditches, which may be protected and enhanced through planning policies.

Interest in coastal archaeology has been boosted by the continued work of amateur archaeologist Gordon Roberts in recording trackways and artifacts and his work was featured in the National Trust's magazine. However, it has not been possible this year to organise the proposed seminar on archaeological issues.

The dune system holds a small rain-fed aquifer. In 1999 the Environment Agency established a network of water-table monitoring points along the main dune system. The Environment Agency now collects continuous data on the fluctuations in the groundwater levels. The data will yield essential information for determining any future applications for water abstraction from the dune area.

The *Sefton Coast Woodland and Scrub Management Strategy* was published in November 1999. The information in the report of woodland type, age and density was used to calculate the need to regenerate about 3 hectares (7-8 acres) of woodland each year but did not go as far as to identify where and when this should occur. The five main woodland owners (English Nature, National Trust, Sefton Council, Formby Golf Club and the Reserves Forces and Cadets Association) have, with the help of The Mersey Forest, submitted a successful bid to the Forestry Commission for the preparation of a *Forest Plan*. A Forest Plan is a mechanism for showing, in map form, where woodland management is scheduled to take place and the type of management. The Forestry Commission approves a 10-year funding package with the overall plan looking ahead 20 years.

Agricultural enterprises in the coastal zone are part of the overall character of the area. There is concern, however, that some of the more traditional land-uses such as asparagus farming are in decline. Asparagus farming has ceased on the National Trust property at Formby and, unfortunately, the remaining bunching sheds and outbuildings were destroyed by fire in July 2000.

Nature conservation management is increasingly recognising the value of grazing as a sustainable and cost-effective method of land management, which conserves the open character, and natural value of the dune grasslands and heaths. English Nature, The National Trust, RSPB and Sefton Council (Leisure Services) employ grazing for the management of nature reserves. In 2000 Sefton Council introduced sheep grazing to parts of the Ainsdale Sandhills.

The bid for additional funding from the European Commission's Interreg IIC programme for the development of sustainable tourism strategies was successful and a project launched in January 2000. The inter-regional study is led by the Province of North Holland and involves partners in the Netherlands, Belgium, Northern Ireland and the Isle of Wight. In Merseyside the project has involved Sefton Council, Merseytravel, Wirral Council, English Nature, the Dee Estuary Strategy and the Sefton Coast Partnership. A Project Officer and assistant are based at the Formby Council Offices. In Sefton the project has worked with tourism officers and land managers to develop ideas for better conservation and tourism partnerships on the coast, has employed consultants W. S. Atkins to carry out an assessment of current and potential visitor facilities, has organised a programme of visitor surveys and has started work on the development of an access strategy for the Sefton Coast.

Sefton Council, Leisure Services Department, has reviewed the Beach Management Strategy with the assistance of the Beach Management Consultative Group. The zoning mechanisms first introduced in 1993 have been adjusted to better protect wildlife and the environment. Car parking on the beaches has been reduced in the winter months to allow the beach to recover and reduce disturbance. Dune accretion between Ainsdale and Southport has formed significant areas of new foredune and slack habitat. A new nature trail, the 'velvet trail', has been developed in association with Birkdale Civic Society.

Sefton Council adopted the two *Shoreline Management Plans* covering the Sefton Coast in 2000. The Shoreline Management Plan for sub-cell 11a covers the coastal area from Great Orme's Head to Formby Point, and, with the overall guidance of this plan work has begun on a strategic assessment of the coastal area from Crosby to Formby Point in relation to possible coastal protection works in the Hightown area. The Shoreline Management Plan for sub-cell 11b covers the area from Formby Point to Rossall Point to the north of Fleetwood. These plans address concerns about coastline change (erosion and accretion) and include an assessment of the implications of predicted sea level rise. Information on the Shoreline Management Plan process has been disseminated through leaflets, displays and through the *Coastlines* newsletter.

In November 1999 the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food published *High Level Targets for Flood and Coastal Defence*. The targets include requirements for establishing a national flood and coastal defence database, inspections, the adoption of Shoreline Management Plans, biodiversity and policies for development in areas at risk of flooding or coastal erosion.

The Environment Agency has established a *North West Bathing Waters Forum* to allow local authorities, water companies, statutory agencies and users to work together towards solving the problems of water quality in the northwest. This comes at a time when the European Commission has begun infraction proceedings against the British Government for non-compliance with the Bathing Waters Directive. In Sefton all three designated bathing beaches passed the mandatory water quality tests in 2000.

The Sefton Coast Partnership is part of regional, national and international activity to better manage coastal zones. Liaison is an important activity particularly in the Liverpool Bay area where there are a number of inter-linked initiatives. The Sefton Coast Partnership continues to respond to Government discussion papers and regional planning studies as they affect the coastal zone.

The monitoring capacity of the Coast Management Partnership has been further enhanced through the development of Geographical Information Systems by Sefton Council's Planning Department and land managers. The Leisure Services Department, for example, is making considerable use of its GIS system for site management planning. GIS can relate different sets of data, and can generally assist the dissemination of knowledge on the coast.

Table to show progress on targets not fully met in 2000. In most cases work is in progress and the targets are rolled forward to 2001.

TARGET	PROGRESS	COMMENT
Land Use and Economic Development		
To include revised Planning Policies for UDP timetable slipped to publication the Coast in the draft UDP, first review, of draft in 2001 2000.		Work is in line with new timetable
To undertake a survey of employment in the coastal zone.	No action on this item	Progress to be made in 2001
To submit a bid to Objective 1 programme for development of visitor centres.	Background work being progressed through the Interreg IIC project.	Major piece of work in 2001
Nature Conservation, Landscape and Land Management		
To complete a National Vegetation Classification survey of the coast.	Survey did not take place over 2000 field season.	Proposed to undertake survey in 2001 with support of main landowners.
To finalise a list of Regionally Important Geological/geomorphological Sites for inclusion in the revised UDP.	List not yet finalised by Merseyside RIGS Group	To be finalised and incorporated into draft UDP in 2001
To seek greater recognition of the archaeological interest of the coast.	Not able to coordinate a seminar in 2000.	To be addressed at research seminar in 2001
Tourism, Leisure and Recreation		
To assist the inclusion of tourism potential in Sefton's Tourism Strategy.	Interreg IIC project assessed use of the coast and views of land managers on the future promotion of tourism.	Further work on Sefton's Tourism Strategy in 2001
To start work on the strategy for the regeneration of the Crosby Coastal Park.	Feasibility study for the regeneration of Crosby Coastal Park completed.	Work on detail to start in 2001
To resolve access issues at the Marshside RSPB reserve.	Not been possible to make much progress on this issue.	Will be addressed in proposed access strategy for coast.
Shoreline Management		
To develop a strategy for the maintenance of the dune system as a natural sea defence.	Data from the Environment Agency has been obtained to assist the study.	Progress in 2001
Public Health and Amenity		
Introduce a revised oil spill response for the Sefton Coast.	No progress in 2000	To be completed in 2001
To treat the sources of foul water inputs to Sands Lake, Ainsdale.	Sources identified	To be progressed in 2001
Implementation and Review		
Publish key documents and information on Internet sites.	Web-site www.seftoncoast.org.uk in preparation.	Site to be operational in 2001
Co-host a research meeting with Liverpool Hope University College	The event has been postponed to 2001 to allow for more preparation time.	Event scheduled for 15 June 2001

PROGRESS AND TARGETS: LAND-USE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Aim: To encourage and support appropriate land-use, sustainable economic development, investment and employment consistent with the natural character and conservation importance of the coast.

Since the publication of the first annual report in February 2000

- Government Office North West has commissioned and published the results of a review, *Research into Integrated Coastal Planning in the North West Region*. Available on www.planning.detr.gov.uk
- The Local Government Association's Special Interest Group on Coastal Issues published *On the edge: the coastal strategy*. Details on www.lga.gov.uk
- The North West Regional assembly published *Action for Sustainability*, the North West Region's Sustainable Development Framework. Available on www.englandsnorthwest.com/sustainability
- The Northwest Development Agency published *England's North West; a strategy towards 2020*. Available on www.nwda.co.uk
- The Merseyside Strategic Transportation and Planning Committee (MSTPC) published the Merseyside Local Transport Plan 2001/2-2005/6.
- The Partnership of Irish Sea Coastal and Estuary Strategies (PISCES) have published a leaflet outlining the issues affecting the North West Coast. Further information on www.northwestcoast.org.uk
- The Environment Agency consulted on the Alt/Crossens Local Environment Agency Plan (LEAP).

Targets for the year 2001-2002

- To complete revised draft Planning Policies for Nature Conservation and the Coast in the draft Unitary Development Plan, first review. *Responsibility: Sefton Council (Planning Department)*.
- To undertake a survey of employment in the coastal zone. *Responsibility: Sefton Council*
- To submit a bid for the coast primarily under the ERDF Objective 1 programme for the development of visitor facilities (centres and infrastructure) under the banner 'Sands of Time'. Main partners; Sefton Council (Leisure Services and Planning), National Trust, RSPB, English Nature, National Museums & Galleries on Merseyside. *Responsibility: Sefton Coast Partnership*.

PROGRESS AND TARGETS: NATURE CONSERVATION, LANDSCAPE AND LAND MANAGEMENT

Aim: To conserve, protect and enhance the natural beauty and biodiversity of the coast, including its characteristic terrestrial, littoral and marine flora and fauna, geology, geomorphology, landscape and heritage features of architectural, historical, cultural and archaeological interest.

Nature conservation, landscape and land management are identified with 'the place', the unique combination of features and wildlife, which make the Sefton Coast special. Considerable progress has been made in the past five years to better safeguard and understand the wildlife value of the coastal area. The focus has been on the dune areas, with the support of the EU Life-Nature fund in the preparation of a *Conservation Strategy for the Sefton Coast cSAC*. Coordinating all the actions of partners and interest groups is quite a challenge and reinforces the need for regular information exchange and meetings between partners.

Since the publication of the first annual report in February 2000

- The Reserve Forces and Cadets Association have received an award (Runners up in the National MOD Sanctuary Award) for their conservation work at Altcar and have completed a review of their five year management plan.
- English Nature has appointed a Conservation Officer (Sefton Coast) to support the implementation of nature conservation objectives.
- English Nature has appointed a Community Officer to develop links between the Ainsdale Sand Dunes National Nature Reserve and the local community.
- Sefton Council Leisure Services introduced Herdwick sheep to a grazing enclosure on the Ainsdale Hills.
- English Nature have completed their review of Sites of Special Scientific Interest and issued a re-notification package for the Sefton Coast SSSI.
- English Nature has commissioned and received a review of their dune restoration project at Ainsdale Sand Dunes NNR from the Centre of Marine and Coastal Studies of Liverpool University.
- English Nature staff / Sefton Council Highway Section have restored Sand Lizard habitat on the roadside embankment adjacent to Pinfold Meadow.
- English Nature have constructed a bund alongside Pinfold Meadow on Ainsdale Sand Dunes NNR to deter illegal occupation.
- RSPB have opened a second hide at Marshside and continued with their programme of habitat management.
- A first tranche of local Habitat and Species Action Plans for Merseyside has been prepared.

- The Environment Agency has continued to fund research into the characteristics of the dune aquifer.
- Woodland managers (National Trust, English Nature, Sefton Council, Formby Golf Club, Reserve Forces & Cadets Association) submitted a proposal to the Forestry Commission in October 2000 for a Plan Preparation Grant for a Forest Plan.
- A feature in the National Trust's summer magazine raised awareness of the significance of the late Holocene inter-tidal archaeology at Formby Point.
- The National Trust improved beach safety at Victoria Road through the removal of concrete and brick rubble exposed by tidal erosion and by appointing a seasonal litter warden.

Targets for the year 2001-2002

- Proposals for a *Sefton Coast Forest Plan* to be submitted to the Forestry Commission by 1 October 2001. The preparation of the Sefton Coast Forest Plan is to be coordinated by the Mersey Forest Team and is supported by the National Trust, English Nature, Sefton Council (Leisure Services), Formby Golf Club and the Reserve Forces & Cadets Association. *Responsibility: Sefton Coast Partnership and The Mersey Forest Team.*
- To complete a second tranche of Habitat and Species Action Plans and to launch the North Merseyside Biodiversity Action Plan. *Responsibility: North Merseyside Biodiversity Steering Group (lead Environmental Advisory Service/Lancashire Wildlife Trust)*
- To complete a National Vegetation Classification survey of the main coastal dune and dune heath habitats and to assess change from the 1989 survey. Survey to be coordinated by Sefton Council (Planning Department) with support from the National Trust, English Nature, RSPB and Sefton Council (Leisure Services and Technical Services). *Responsibility: Sefton Council (Planning Department).*
- English Nature/ Herpetological Conservation Trust to prepare revised Sefton Coast strategies for Sand Lizard and Natterjack Toad in consultation with land managers. *Responsibility: English Nature.*
- To review the current knowledge of the archaeological interest of the coast. The National Trust and Sefton Council (Planning Department) will encourage the National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside and Liverpool John Moores University to prepare information for the Sefton Coast Research Seminar. *Responsibility: Sefton Council (Planning).*
- Sefton Council Leisure Services to develop a new nature trail at the Sands Lake in partnership with the Ainsdale Civic Society. *Responsibility: Sefton Council (Leisure Services).*

National Trust targets

- To develop an operational base at Sandfield Farm to support the management of the National Trust's 200-hectare property at Formby.
- Subject to Forestry Commission approval, the National Trust will plant 2.75 hectares of new pine woodland on former asparagus fields.
- The National Trust will commission a feasibility study to assess the potential for reintroducing asparagus growing on former agricultural land.
- With Merseytravel and other partners, the National Trust will explore the potential for a green transport link with Freshfield Station.
- The National Trust will prepare proposals for upgrading access infrastructure and improvements to visitor facilities at Victoria Road.
- The National Trust will finalise the property management plan for Formby.

English Nature targets

- To disseminate and consult on the findings of the CMACS review of the dune restoration programme.
- To review access, community, recreation, education and interpretation aspects of the Ainsdale Sand Dunes NNR.
- To enhance communication with local communities through guided walks programme, volunteer programme, information sheets and Ainsdale Sand Dunes NNR Newsletter.
- To commission a survey for the Great Crested Newt on the NNR and nearby sites.
- To carry out the removal of stumps in selected sites within the dune restoration area for landscape improvement.
- To commission a study for improved hydrological monitoring techniques on the Ainsdale Sand Dunes NNR.

PROGRESS AND TARGETS: TOURISM, LEISURE AND RECREATION

Aim: To facilitate and enhance the enjoyment, understanding and appreciation of the coast by improving and extending opportunities for quiet recreation, education, sporting and tourist activities that draw on, and are consistent with, the natural character and conservation value of the coast

Recreation, leisure and tourism are a major land-use on the Sefton Coast. Achieving the sustainable balance between access and nature conservation is a general aim for the conservation land managers. Equally it is important that those people who visit the coast for peace and quiet are able to find relaxation. The need to accommodate a range of activities and visitor types on the coast is the basis for the proposed access strategy for the coast.

There are real opportunities over the next five years for partners to work together with transport planners, tourism interests, public transport providers and educational experts to provide a framework for the sustainable enjoyment of the coastal resource.

Since the publication of the first annual report in February 2000

- The Ainsdale Discovery Centre has been opened as a base for Sefton Council's Leisure Services coastal staff responsible for the local nature reserves, beaches and education.
- Visitor surveys have been carried out along the Sefton Coast to provide information on visitor profiles, numbers and attitudes. Surveys were coordinated by the Interreg IIC project *Quality of Coastal Towns* and Merseyside Information Service. Site surveys assisted by staff and volunteers of the National Trust, RSPB and Sefton Council Leisure Services, Southport Town Watch and Friends of Potter's Barn.
- New arrangements for the zoning of vehicular access to the Ainsdale and Southport beaches were put into operation by Sefton Council Leisure Services Department.
- Groundwork, St Helens, Knowsley and Sefton have completed a study on Crosby Coastal Park on behalf of Sefton Council Leisure Services Department.

Targets for the year 2001-2002.

- Sefton Council Leisure Services Department will commence work on a detailed masterplan for the Crosby Marine Park area. *Responsibility: Sefton Council (Leisure Services).*
- Sefton Council Leisure Services will publish the *Beach Management Strategy*. *Responsibility: Sefton Council (Leisure Services).*
- Sefton Council Leisure Services to enter for three Tidy Britain Group Seaside Awards and target 'A' scores for Ainsdale and Southport in the Tidy Britain

Group National Resort Survey. *Responsibility: Sefton Council (Leisure Services).*

- To complete the Interreg IIC project *Quality of Coastal Towns* and develop follow-on projects through the Interreg III programme with the current Dutch, Belgian and UK partners. The focus of any follow on work would be on transportation, visitor facilities and interpretation. The National Trust is keen to be involved in the development of such projects and the opportunity to be involved will be extended to other partners. *Responsibility: Sefton Council (Planning Department).*
- To prepare a draft Access Strategy for the Sefton Coast. The strategy would aim to make links between the Merseyside Local Transport Plan (2001-2006), The Mersey Forest, Merseytravel and land managers. Principal land managers are Sefton Council (Leisure Services), the National Trust, English Nature and RSPB. Preparation to be coordinated by the Strategic Transportation Planning Unit of Sefton Council. *Responsibility: Sefton Council (Technical Services and Planning Departments)*
- To coordinate the views of partners for inclusion in Sefton Council's revised Tourism Strategy. The development of coastal tourism needs the support of coastal land managers including Sefton Council, the National Trust, RSPB and English Nature. *Responsibility: Sefton Council (Economic Development and Tourism and Planning Departments).*

PROGRESS AND TARGETS: SHORELINE MANAGEMENT

Aim: To support the need to protect life, property and habitats by appropriate coast defence strategies, and to maintain the sea defence function of the beaches, sand dunes and saltmarshes, consistent with the natural character and conservation importance of the coast.

The process of developing Shoreline Management Plans around the UK coastline has been completed. Sefton Council has endorsed the Shoreline Management Plans for Sub-cells 11a and 11b. Sefton Council, as Coast Protection Authority, has taken on the requirements of MAFF in their High Level Targets document.

Of particular interest to coastal partners will be the review of the dune system as a coastal defence.

Since the publication of the first annual report in February 2000

- Sefton Council has revised its Coast Defence Strategy.
- The process for the Strategic Review of coastal defences in the Hightown area has begun.
- The second phase of the Southport Coast Defence Scheme has begun with work scheduled for completion in December 2000.
- Preliminary work has begun for Phase III of the Southport Coast Defence Scheme.
- An expert panel has advised the Council on the issues surrounding sandwinning at Southport.
- The programme of monitoring vegetation change at Southport has continued.
- Aerial photography (1999 survey) of the coastal area obtained through the Liverpool Bay Coastal Group.

Targets for the year 2001-2002

- Sefton Council will prepare its response to MAFF's High Level Targets.
Responsibility: Sefton Council (Technical Services).
- To complete Phase III of the Southport Coast Defence Scheme. The final phase of the project is the section between Weld Road and Pleasureland.
Responsibility: Sefton Council (Technical Services).
- To continue to monitor coastal change. A series of survey lines are monitored at regular intervals to record both erosion (loss) and accretion (gain).
Responsibility: Sefton Council (Technical Services).

- To continue the vegetation monitoring from Ainsdale to Marshside. Vegetation growth between Ainsdale and Marshside is monitored twice a year and habitat change recorded. *Responsibility: Sefton Council (Technical Services).*
- To develop a strategy for the maintenance of the dune system as a natural sea defence. This, in particular, involves the land managers from the River Alt to Southport (Reserve Forces and Cadets Association, English Nature, Sefton Council, the National Trust and Formby Golf Club). *Responsibility: Sefton Council (Technical Services).*
- To progress the strategic study for a coast protection scheme for the coast from Hall Road to Hightown. *Responsibility: Sefton Council (Technical Services).*

PROGRESS AND TARGETS: MARINE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Aim: To liaise with the competent agencies for the control of activities at sea to ensure that they are aware of the high amenity and conservation value of the Sefton Coast, and the impact their activities may have on terrestrial sites, and to work with others to promote the conservation and management of marine resources.

The issue of marine environmental management in the Plan reflects a national approach towards integrated coastal zone management. Generally marine environmental issues operate at the estuary, Liverpool Bay or Irish Sea level and, where appropriate, partners operate within wider coastal groupings. The establishment, in 2000, of the North West Bathing Waters Forum is one example of a coordinated approach to environmental issues.

Since the publication of the first annual report in February 2000

- The European Commission reported on the EU Integrated Coastal Zone Management demonstration project.
- The *Irish Sea Forum* has held a ten-year review of the state of the Irish Sea at an international meeting on the Isle of Man.
- The Ribble Estuary Strategy has become part of the wider *Source to Sea* initiative.

Targets for the year 2001-2002.

- The Sefton Coast Partnership will continue to work with initiatives, such as the estuary projects, and forums such as the Irish Sea Forum, the North West Bathing Waters Forum and PISCES (the Partnership of Irish Sea Coastal and Estuary Strategies). The Sefton Coast Partnership will continue to be represented on marine and coastal forums to pursue its aims and objectives and take part in debates as appropriate. The Sefton Coast Partnership will ensure, especially, that land managers are represented on marine and coastal forums. *Responsibility: Sefton Council and Sefton Coast Partnership.*

PROGRESS AND TARGETS: PUBLIC HEALTH AND AMENITY

Aim: To protect and enhance the environment by reducing pollution and promoting public health.

A healthy environment supports biodiversity, the quality of life and economic development. Environmental legislation and planning policies can go so far to protect the coastal environment but cannot adequately protect the area from accidents and diffuse sources of pollution such as the deposition of atmospheric nitrogen.

Since the publication of the first annual report in February 2000

- North West Water has agreed to fund the work necessary to resolve the Weld Road sewer overflow and investigate the potentially contaminated surface water system (which could be caused by inadvertent wrong connections of foul drainage from private properties) which discharges onto the Birkdale beach.
- All Sefton bathing beaches have passed the 2000 water quality tests.
- The sources of pollution to the Sands Lake, Ainsdale, have been identified.

Targets for the year 2001-2002.

- To introduce a revised oil spill response for the Sefton Coast. The revision of the local plan will be led by Sefton Council but should involve other interests, such as the National Trust, in the drafting of plans and procedures. *Responsibility: Sefton Council (Environment & Consumer Protection Department)*
- The National Trust is keen to be involved in a review of coast-wide emergency response procedures. *Responsibility: Sefton Council, land managers, Emergency Services.*
- To review beach cleansing operations as part of Best Value. *Responsibility: Sefton Council.*

PROGRESS AND TARGETS: IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

Aim: To adopt a systematic and open approach to the delivery and monitoring of Plan outputs.

The Sefton Coast Partnership includes Sefton Council, landowners, statutory agencies and voluntary organisations with an interest in the conservation of the Sefton Coast. The partnership wish to see this widened.

Since the publication of the first annual report in February 2000

- The members of the Sefton Coast Management Scheme have made recommendations to Sefton Council to amend the operation of the scheme and adopt a new title, the *Sefton Coast Partnership*.
- The partnership endorses the role of a Sefton Coast Forum and meetings will continue with an independent chair.
- Information, including the full text of management documents, has been published on the developing Internet sites. The partnership website www.seftoncoast.org.uk was launched in January 2001.
- The *Sefton Coast Information Centre*, currently housed at the Formby Council Offices, has continued to support the needs of partners, students, researchers and the public. Contact number 0151-934-2957.

Targets for the year 2001-2002.

- To fully establish the partners internet site www.seftoncoast.org.uk The National Trust is keen to be involved with the development of the Sefton Coast Partnership internet site. *Responsibility: Sefton Coast Partnership.*
- The Leisure Services Department Coast and Countryside service will review its service to schools, colleges, researchers and the public to make greater use of its internet site www.merseyworld.com/sefton_coast/
Responsibility: Sefton Council (Leisure Services).
- To co-host a research meeting with Liverpool Hope University College on 15 June 2001, to update knowledge of the local coastline. *Responsibility: Sefton Coast Partnership.*
- To publish the annual report. *Responsibility: Sefton Coast Partnership.*

For further information on the contents of the annual report and the Sefton Coast Partnership please contact:

The Coastal Strategy Officer, Council Offices, Freshfield Road, Formby, L37 3PG.
Tel: 0151 934 2960 Fax: 0151 934 2955 E-mail info@seftoncoast.org.uk