The Sefton Coast is a lowland sedimentary coastline at the edge of the West Lancashire plain extending between the Mersey and Ribble Estuaries. This well-defined stretch of coast falls entirely within the Borough of Sefton, part of the County of Merseyside, but it also forms part of a complex of low-lying coasts and estuaries around Liverpool Bay in England’s North West Region.

The coast is a long wide arc of sand, a hindshore dune system, which once stretched unbroken northwards from the Mersey to the Ribble, where the sandy shore changes to the muds and salt marshes of the Ribble Estuary. All the coastal settlements – Bootle, Crosby, Hightown, Formby and Southport are built on the drier sand, avoiding the inland mosses.

Centuries of use has created a varied landscape complemented by the panorama of the Irish Sea with the far hills of Snowdonia and the Lakes visible on the horizon. This landscape falls into distinct units of which the dune coast is the largest. North of the busy dock estate at the Port of Liverpool is the urbanised coastal park at Crosby with good views of the shipping lanes. Beyond this lies the artificial shingle beach formed from ‘the erosion’ at Hall Road where building rubble was used in the 1940s to protect the coast against constant erosion by the River Alt. A vestigial dune landscape remains at Hightown, cut off from natural sand supply by the small estuary of the Alt. Just north of the Alt is ‘Wignall’s Bank’ formed by trapping sand in the eighteenth century and now part of the Altcar Rifle Range. This marks the start of the dune coast which extends north for 17 km around Formby Point to Southport.

The beaches and dunes convey a special sense of wilderness with high mobile dunes and a maze of dune ridges and hollows. The dune system itself, the largest of its kind in the UK, is rich in wildlife and is a classic example of a west coast calcareous (lime-rich) dune system notable for rare species of plants and animals. Some dune areas, formerly managed as rabbit warrens, have survived almost in their original form, whereas other areas were converted to fields (for asparagus farming, for instance) or planted with trees. The majority of this area is in public ownership with good access. There are two national nature reserves (Cabin Hill and Ainsdale Sand Dunes) owned and managed by English Nature. The National Trust property at Freshfield is well-known for its Red Squirrels. Adjacent is the Lifeboat Road Area owned by Sefton Council which also has three local nature reserves at Ainsdale, Birkdale and Ravenmeols Hills.

Dunes are ideal for links-type golf, and the courses at Formby, Southport & Ainsdale, Hillside and Royal Birkdale form an important part of the landscape.

The dunes at Formby Point are eroding, while new dunes are building at Crosby and from Ainsdale-on-Sea to Birkdale. The dunes are key sea defences. Changes in the coast are marked by the foundations of the old Lifeboat Station, once well back in the dunes, but now exposed to the action of waves on the beach. The erosion is also gradually exposing remarkable animal and human footprints in silt deposits over 4000 years old.

At Southport areas of beach have been progressively claimed over the last 150 years to create the Seabank and its Marine Lake. The Pier marks the zone of transition to estuarine marsh. To the north of the town there are broad vistas across the grassy expanse of the Ribble Estuary to Blackpool and Lytham St Anne’s. RSPB’s Marshside Reserve confirms the value of the whole coast for birds.

The value of the Sefton Coast for nature conservation is recognised by the local, national and international designations which apply to the area. It is also a locally valued area for outdoor recreation, and attracts visitors from across the region. The Sefton Coast is rich in history and wildlife; it is a very special place and deserves careful management.

Management of the coast is the direct responsibility of individual landowners, but is strengthened by a voluntary partnership, originally the Sefton Coast Management Scheme, but now known as the Sefton Coast Partnership (SCP). The Partnership covers mainly the open (undeveloped) coast, where the objective is to ensure the natural heritage is protected and enhanced to the benefit of local communities and visitors.
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The Partnerships

The Sefton Coast Partnership (SCP) guides the management of the open coast in Sefton. It is an informal association of land managers, land owners, community groups and other agencies, all of whom have an interest in the integrated management of Sefton’s valuable coastal area. The Partnership is steered by a Board comprising representatives of the various landowners and groups.

The Board works within the framework of the Sefton Coast Management Plan (2nd Review) and the Sefton Coast Partnership. The plan endorses a sustainable management of the coast. The plan encourages partnership working and is intended to guide landowners and managers. The Coast Management Plan covers the beaches and intertidal areas and inland to the fringes of the dune belt and marshland, that is, the majority of the open coastal area in Sefton.

The Partnership Board is supported by a number of Task Groups. The chairs of these groups form a Partnership Working Group which meets more frequently than the Board to deal with the coordination of specific projects. The members of the Board and Task Groups are listed on page 26. The Partnership holds an annual Forum, usually in mid-week, which provides an opportunity to discuss coastal issues with a broader audience. The 2004 Forum was attended by 130 people. A summary of the proceedings of the Forum is available on the Partnership website.

The Board publishes ‘Coastlines’ twice a year which provides information about activities on the coast to local communities via a mailing list, and through schools and local libraries. The Partnership website (www.seftoncoast.org.uk) provides detailed information on the coast, with links to other key coastal sites.

The Partnership’s vision for the coast is set out below:

“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 the 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 sites.”

(Coast Management Plan Vision Statement 1997)

Events and developments during the year

• The North West Beach Management and Bathing Water Group: was established to report to the North West Coastal Forum Board. This Group has been established to recommend the best beach-based awards and bathing water results for all North West beaches and to improve public understanding of beach processes and management. The Group will also develop an approach to the management of the use of safe beach use and beach-bathing water cleanliness, and will encourage the sharing of information and best practice between beach managers and other relevant professionals.

• ENCAMS Seaside Award and Beach Management System: The ENCAMS Seaside Awards are currently under review and Sefton as member of the UK Beach Management Forum (a Executing Authority with no members) ENCAMS, British Resorts Association and DEFRA to develop a new national award and Beach Management System. Sefton will partake in a pilot to test in 2004 to run out the new award. The existing ENCAMS Award will expire in 2005.

• Forefront Resort - Focus: Flooding: Produced by the Office of Science and Technology this project is aimed at using the best available scientific understanding to provide a vision of future flooding scenarios in the UK taking into account climate change. This project will underpin Government policy development in relation to the management of flood risk and adaptation to increasing flood risk.

• Making Space for Water: The Government issued a draft document of consultation policies for flood and coastal erosion risk management in England. This provides a comprehensive approach to these issues incorporating aspects that have previously been overlooked, such as flooding from groundwater.

• Mersey Waterfront Parks (see www.merseyside.org.uk) and go to the “Mersey Waterfront” link) MWP is becoming an important supporter of projects on the coast. The Group has supported the creation of a new birdpool at the RSPB Reserve, Marshside, and scrub clearance, access and interpretation at Freshfield Dune Heath (LWT). In principle support has been given to the Ribble Estuary, the Southport Marine Lake, the Wirral Estuary and Liverpool Waterfront, to re-connect the Sefton Coast Pathway where it has been eroded by the sea, in combination with Formby Golf Club. MWP has also supported the Sefton Marine-Life Centre at Crosby Marine Park, and is prepared to consider a joint approach from the Council and National Trust for visitor facilities at Ainsdale, Victoria Road and Lighthouse Road.

• Ribble Estuary: The proposal for another Regional Park based on the Ribble Estuary is being progressed Sefton Council and the Group have endorsed the application to reconnect the Sefton Coast Footpath where it has been eroded by the sea, in combination with Formby Golf Club. MWP has also supported the Sefton Marine-life Centre at Crosby Marine Park, and is prepared to consider a joint approach from the Council and National Trust for visitor facilities at Ainsdale, Victoria Road and Lighthouse Road.

• Coastal Practice Network (CoPNet) - see www.coastalpracticenetwork.net: Sefton hosted the second international workshop which was attended by several of the CoPNet partners. The workshop was held in October and explored the theme of ‘regional coastal parks’, and visited the Sefton Coast, Preston Docks and Lytham Discovery Centre (Ribble Estuary). In contrast, the Cuadrilla Oilfield in Blackpool is a third (Burbo Bank - 10 km off Crosby) is going to the ‘Mersey Waterfront’ link) MWP is offering further funding for a ‘Progression Project’. This will cover a risk assessment to determine the detailed financial viability of the project, together with initial environmental works in the Park to improve access, dune restoration and habitat works.

The coastline from Sefton to the River Alt has been identified as one of the pilot areas for a Regional Park initiative. If it comes to fruition, the revitalised Crosby Waterfront Park, which will hopefully include Potters Barn and Lytham and the WATER Centre described above, will act as a southern gateway to the Sefton Coast and Coastal Path.

• Coastal Heritage Conference: The very successful conference on the history and archaeology of the coast held at Formby Hall Golf Club is described under the ‘Beach Management’ heading. A summary of the programme will be published by Sefton Library Services in 2005.

• TV coverage: There has been interesting television coverage at Formby Point in Channel 4’s “The Seven Ages of Britain” (www.channel4.com) and Alun Intcram’s programme on “BBC” - “The Making of the British Isles” (www.bbc.co.uk) including a piece on Gordon Roberts making a copy of a Tomato脚print.”
The Partnership

The Sefton Coast Partnership (SCP) guides the management of the open coast in Sefton. It is an informal association of land managers, land owners, community groups and other agencies, all of whom have an interest in the integrated management of Sefton’s valuable coastal sites. The Partnership is steered by a Board comprising representatives of the various landowners and groups.

The Board works within the framework of the Sefton Coast Development Plan 2 (Rev 2) and its role is to ensure sustainable management of the coast. The plan encourages partnership working and is intended to guide landowners and managers. The Coast Management Plan covers the beaches and intertidal areas and inland to the fringes of the dune belt and marshland, that is, the majority of the open coastal area in Sefton.

The Partnership Board is supported by a number of Task Groups. The chairs of these groups form a Partnership Working Group which meets more frequently than the Board to deal with the coordination of specific projects. The members of the Board and Task Groups are listed on page 26. The Partnership holds an annual Forum, usually held in late summer or early autumn, which provides an opportunity to discuss coastal issues with a broader audience. The 2004 Forum was attended by 130 people. A summary of the proceedings of the Forum is accessible on the Partnership website.

The Partnership’s vision for the coast is set out below:

“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 the 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 sites.”

(Coast Management Plan Vision Statement 1997)

Events and developments during the year

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• ENCAMS Seaside Award and Beach Management System: The ENCAMS Seaside Awards are currently under review and Sefton as member of the UK Beach Management Forum, Executive Committee and member of ENCAMS, British Resorts, Association and DEFRA to develop a new national award and Beach Management System. Sefton will partake in a pilot to test in 2005 to run out the new award. The existing ENCAW System is reviewed in 2005.

• Fortnightly Report – Flood: Flooding: Produced by the Office of Science and Technology this project is aimed at using the best available scientific understanding to provide a vision of future flooding scenarios in the UK taking into account climate change. This project undertakes government policy development in relation to the management of flood risk and adaptation to increasing flood risk.

• Mersey Waterfront Parks (see www.merseyside.org.uk) and go to the “Mersey Waterfront” link) MWP is becoming an important supporter of projects on the coast. The goal to be supported was excavation of a new birdpool at the RSPB Reserve, Mannside, and scrub clearance, access and maintenance to Freshfield Dune Heath (LWT). In principle support has been given to the development of the Roebuck Bay to reconnect the Sefton Coast Footpath where it has been eroded by the sea, in collaboration with Formby Golf Club. MWP is also supporting the Sefton Centre at Crosby Marine Park, and is prepared to consider a joint approach from the Council and National Trust for visitor facilities at Ainsdale, Victoria Road and Little Ross.

• Ribble Estuary: The proposal for another Regional Park based on the Ribble estuary is being progressed. Sefton Council has been involved in the development of a number of coastal regeneration projects, and has endorsed the proposal and funding is being sought for an initial programme of work from the Lancashire Rural Development Programme. RSPB continue to take the lead on the proposal.

• Coastal Practice Network (CoPNet) – see www.coastalpracticenet.co.uk: Sefton hosted the second international workshop which was attended by several of the CoPNet partners. The workshop, which was held at The Lake District in October, explored the theme of regional coastal parks, and visited the Sefton Coast, Preston Docks and Lytham Discovery Centre (Ribble Estuary). In addition, in Morecambe Bay. The workshop illustrated the great variety of scenery on the North West coastline, and the EU partners greatly enjoyed the hospitality they received at each site. For local information on CoPNet see see also the North West Coastal Forum website www.northwestcoast.org.uk

• Visit by Dune Water Company of South Holland 26 – 29 August: Through a CoPNet contact the Advisory Board, The North Holland (see www.dzh.nl) requested visit to the Coast which took place on 26 August. DZH provides drinking water by using the dunes in South Holland as a natural filter and storage system. They have a special public health through the encouragement of the area they control (approximately 3000 ha of dunes). The Advisory Board comprises ecologists, zoologists, geologists and other experts and provides advice on the development of the management of the dunes. The Company offers the Board an annual excursion to look at the management of similar dune areas in Europe. Although the Sefton dune system is rather smaller than DZH’s system, the visitors were impressed not only by the nature of the dunes, but also by the total environment within which the dunes are situated. They also visited Newborough Warren (Anglesey) and Walney Island (near Barrow) while in the UK. There is a possibility of a reciprocal visit to DZH in 2005.

• Visit of Korean archaeologists: Since the late 1980s, several South Korean teams have appeared in sediments at Formby which were laid down 5000 to 7000 years ago (in 1999 a perfectly preserved set of Red Deer antlers were recovered from the site). The Formby foreshore is one of only three known sites in Europe where prehistoric footprints have been similarly discovered. Earlier this year the National Trust’s volunteer ‘footprints’ expert, Gordon Roberts, was invited to present a picture of the site’s unique heritage to an international symposium in Korea following an invitation from the Korean islands of Jeju. A ‘Korean Research Group - Jeju Island Site’ included Formby Point in its itinerary while visiting some key world sites earlier this year. Seven members of the research group headed by Prof. Jeong-Yul Kim visited Formby on 13 December. They were welcomed by National Trust staff and The Mayor of Sefton, Cllr Clifford Manley. Representatives of Sefton Council and the Formby community were present together with Liverpool Museum’s Curator for Prehistoric Archaeology, Ron Cowell, and Dr Ann Worsley of Edge Hill College. Ann is currently working on osteological and palaeo-environmental aspects that had previously been overlooked, such as flooding from groundwater.

• Three bare beaches in South Calderdale have been targeted by the National Trust for the first year of a three-year project to improve their condition and reduce the problem of littering and dog fouling. The scheme, which is being funded by a £10,000 grant from the National Lottery, aims to improve the aesthetics of the three beaches by removing dog fouling and improving access and facilities on the beaches. Sefton’s beaches are also being targeted for improvement and there is a possibility of a larger-scale project in the future.

• Coastal Heritage Conference: The very successful conference on the history and archaeology of the coast held at Formby Hall Golf Club is described under the Task Group sections. Proceedings and conference proceedings will be published by Sefton Library Services in 2005.

• TV coverage: There has been interesting television coverage at Formby Point in Channel 4’s ‘The Seven Ages of Britain’ (www.channel4.com) and Alan Titchmarsh’s programme on BBC ‘The Making of the British Isles’ (www.bbc.co.uk) including a piece on Gordon Roberts taking a cast of a ‘Footprint’.

• Beach Management: Sefton beaches and most other NW beaches have been fared as well as in 2003. Although Ainsdale did achieve the prestigious International Blue Flag due to good water quality results in 2003. Good water quality results at Little Ross. Formby during the year have indicated it may be possible to consider going for Blue Flag status in the future if improvements are made as part of the Mersey Waterfront Regional Park initiative.

• Mersey Waterfront and Crosby Coastal Park: With funding support from Mersey Waterfront the feasibility study into the provision of a centre for watersports concentrating on people with disabilities was completed by consultants from Coast Concern Consulting in July 2004. The study concluded that the facility could be successfully located on the shore of the Crosby Marine Lake, and together with extensive surrounding landscape works, would cost in the region of £12 million to construct. The Council and the Mersey Waterfront Board endorsed the project in principle, and NWPF offered further funding for a ‘Progression Project’. This will cover a risk assessment to determine the detailed financial viability of the project, together with minor environmental works in the Park to improve access, dune restoration and habitat works.

The coastline from Seaford to the River Alt has been identified for improvements, if it comes to fruition the revitalised Crosby Coastal Park, which will hopefully include Potters Barn and the WATCER Centre described above, will act as a southern gateway to the Sefton Coastal and Coastal Park.

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Task Groups

1) Access & Interpretation

Chair – Andrew Brockbank
(Countryside Property Manager, National Trust)

Remit: To review the contribution of the open coast to informal recreation, in particular through public access and interpretation, and to review the provision and management of strategic recreation routes, share best practice, and make proposals for new facilities where needed.

Activities 2004: As a consultative forum, the group has remained dormant during most of 2004 as the Access Strategy study (published as a consultative report in December 2004) has facilitated public consultation. Three public workshops were held at Formby, Ainsdale and Hightown, and feedback was incorporated into the Access Strategy by consultants Peter Scott Associates.

The Chair of the Access Task Group has maintained involvement with staff in the Environmental Regeneration and Technical Services Departments in steering the Access Strategy.

Progress was also made to secure funding for improvements to the Sefton Coastal Path with successful bids being made to the Meney Waterfront Park and the Mersey Forest Integrated Countryside and Environment Programme. The Formby Golf Club is supporting in principle, a plan to re-route the coastal footpath across the out of play lands between the north end of the NationalTrust Property and the Fishermans Path. The Task Group Chair is currently working with Sefton Council’s Rights of Way Officer and representatives of the Formby Golf Club Council to secure the legal framework for this under the terms of a Permissive Paths Agreement.

Proposals 2005: The main task for the coming year will be to implement Phases 1 and 2 of the Sefton Coastal Path Enhancement Scheme at Formby; it is intended that Phase 1 Victoria Road to Fishermans Path will be completed during the first half of 2005. Phase 2 will follow in the Autumn of 2005 to Inl-Victoria Road with Lifelboat Road Car Park and Kirkdale Road.

Another key area will be to begin to integrate the findings of the Access Strategy for the Sefton Coast into the forward plans of the partners recognising that investment in high quality physical access is fundamental to meeting visitors expectations and needs as well as making the landscape more resilient.

2) History and Archaeology

Chair – Dr Reg Yorke
(Chair, Formby Civic Society)

Remit: To gather information on and raise awareness of the history and archaeology of the coast, and to advise partners on its historical aspects and how they might influence land management.

Activities 2004: A very successful Conference on Sefton’s Coastal Heritage was held at Formby Hall Golf Club on Wednesday, 15th September attended by over 180 people. The first of its type, it was organised by the Task Group with generous financial and administrative support from Sefton Planning Department and assisted by the Formby Civic Society. We were very pleased by the great public interest and only sorry that some twenty intending participants had to be disappointed due to lack of space. The Proceedings of the Conference are now to be published by Sefton Library Services.

Preparation of a possible bid for Heritage Coast Status was discussed at a well attended Workshop organised by the Task Group at the Sefton Coastal Forum meeting last February but deferred until after the Conference held in September. Discussions on this have now been resumed with the Countryside Agency and will be taken forward in 2005.

Members of the Task Group have been investigating the land-use history of the Freshfield Dune Heath. This area farmed in the 19th Century became a Golf Club in 1908 and requisitioned for RAF Woodvale in 1940. Now accounting for 25% of all UK Dune Heath habitats, it was not officially recognised as such until the 1920’s.

In our report last year we referred to preparation of a bid to the Heritage Lottery Initiative to finance an historical study and landscape survey of coastal Asparagus cultivation. This would be associated with the creation of an interpretive trail based on the National Trust property at Freshfield. A submission has now been finalised and is being submitted to the Countryside Agency.

Proposals 2005: We will be updating the Task Group proposals to the Sefton Coast Web-site but our major task will be to prepare the Coastal Heritage Conference Proceedings for publication. We hope to make further progress on both the St Luke’s and Dune Heath sites and launch the Formby Asparagus Project in May with a special Event consisting of a ‘Celebratory Asparagus Feast’, followed by an ‘Asparagus Field Day’.

The Freshfield Golf Club in the 1930’s. This area has now reverted to heathland.

With the aid of Ann Worsley and colleagues from Edge Hill College an examination has been made of a previously unexamined peat layer, 3 metres below blown sand to the west of St Luke’s Churchyard. Preliminary findings indicate possible human settlement there probably in the Iron Age. If confirmed this is an exciting finding.

Dr A Worsley and colleagues taking a core sample from peat 3m below sand near the site of the original Formby Chapel. An Iron-Age settlement may be a possibility.

A concrete ‘pill-box’ on a dune overlooking the estuary.

The Project itself will commence with a twelve month attempt to bring together all available existing information on the asparagus tradition as a basis for further research and survey.

As was underlined by the popularity of the Conference and recent television programmes, particularly on Gordon Robert’s now famous ‘Prehistoric Footprints’, there is much interest in the history and archaeology of the coast, including the more recent past. In response to many enquiries and suggestions, consideration will be given to the launch of a ‘Sefton Coast at War’ study, possibly in association with local groups and Sefton Library Services.
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**Proposals 2005:** The Project itself will commence with a twelve month attempt to bring together all available existing information on the asparagus tradition as a basis for further research and survey.

As was underlined by the popularities of the Conference and recent television programmes, particularly on Gordon Robert’s now famous ‘Prehistoric Footprints’, there is much interest in the history and archaeology of the coast, including the more recent past. In response to many enquiries and suggestions, consideration will be given to the launch of a ‘Sefton Coast at War’ study, possibly in association with local groups and Sefton Library Services.

The Freshfield Golf Club in the 1930’s. This area has now reverted to heathland.

With the aid of Ann Worsley and colleagues from Edge Hill College and only sorry that some twenty intending participants had to be disappointed due to lack of space. The Proceedings of the Conference are now to be published by Sefton Library Services.

Dr A Worsley and colleagues taking a core sample from peat 3m below sand near the site of the original Formby Chapel. An Iron Age settlement may be a possibility.
Six of the 13 woodland owners with work scheduled for the year 01 (2001) had completed most of their activities by the end of the winter in 2004: Shorrosk Hills, Ansdalde Sand Dunes, NR, Littin Coastal Authority, Birkdale, Birkdale Golf Club, St Lukes Church, Hesketh Golf Club. The remaining 7 owners either did not have grant funding approved in time, or formally, postponed work until the autumn of 2004. The work is continuing through this winter and will be completed in the next annual report.

Grant funding to support woodland work has been applied for and is currently outside the Forest Plan. The group is also open to ownerships and issues currently outside the Forest Plan.

Activities: At the time of writing, the Sefton Coast Woodlands Forest Plan Partnership Group has been operational for 22 months and has been approved for implementation in January 2003. The Plan provides a 20 year structure within which woodland management activities are scheduled over a 10 year period.

The owners of 5 more woodland areas have associated themselves with the Plan: Lark Hill Farm, Lark Hill Farm House, Freshfield Dune Heath (Woodvale Airfield), Freshfield Dune Heath (Montague Road) and Southport and Ansdalde Golf Club. If the two owners not active are accounted for, this brings the total of participating owners to 21, representing 420.95 hectares (from 410.75 hectares, where the total area of the woodlands is 420.95 hectares).

Thinning Coupes Natural regen. Planting
Yr02 target 48.06 3.32 2.20 8.80
Yr02 achievement 6.67 3.00 0.00 6.33
Yr03 target (unadjusted) 8.52 2.42 0.00 5.04
Yr03 adjusted target 49.91 2.74 2.20 7.51

Remit: This group – the Sefton Coast Woodlands Forest Plan Partnership Group - was specifically established under the aegis of the Mersey Forest to assist the Forest Plan process. The group provides a forum for reviewing the performance and implementation of the Forest Plan. It includes all the woodland owners signed up to the Forest Plan. The group is also open to ownerships and issues currently outside the Forest Plan.

Proposals 2005: The Sefton Coast Woodlands Forest Plan has been operational for 22 months and has been approved for implementation in January 2003. The Plan provides a 20 year structure within which woodland management activities are scheduled over a 10 year period.

The owners of 5 more woodland areas have associated themselves with the Plan: Lark Hill Farm, Lark Hill Farm House, Freshfield Dune Heath (Woodvale Airfield), Freshfield Dune Heath (Montague Road) and Southport and Ansdalde Golf Club. If the two owners not active are accounted for, this brings the total of participating owners to 21, representing 420.95 hectares (from 410.75 hectares, where the total area of the woodlands is 420.95 hectares).

The targets for year 03 (2005) for the Plan are summarised in the following table and diagram, with a comparison with year 02 (2004) achievements. The targets are adjusted to accommodate short falls in the previous years:

-Yr02 target
48.06 3.32 2.20 8.80
-Yr02 achievement
6.67 3.00 0.00 6.33
-Yr03 target (unadjusted)
8.52 2.42 0.00 5.04
-Yr03 adjusted target
49.91 2.74 2.20 7.51

Remit: The group’s main role is to facilitate the monitoring and dissemination of information on nature conservation issues. It aims to coordinate activities towards achieving general conservation targets and favourable conservation status for the coastal designated sites. In addition, it aims to increase general awareness of, and participation in, conservation, including training for volunteers and staff.

Activities 2004: To look at the need to assess monitoring requirements to review the strategic approach to nature conservation planning and management.

Proposals 2005: To identify funding to establish a Biodiversity Project Officer to prepare and implement a Nature Conservation Strategy and Delivery Plan that secures biodiversity delivery for the Sefton Coast, including the European and national designated sites.

Remit: To promote awareness of opportunities for research on the coast and facilitate collaborative research activities.

Activities 2004: A research strategy is in development and a Sefton Coast Research Partnership involving members of the academic research community has been established. Two research seminars for students at Edge Hill College have focussed on the Sefton Coast.

Proposals 2005:
(a) to continue to develop research strategy;
(b) to continue to promote research meetings;
(c) to coordinate and promote research collaboration with regional HEIs;
(d) to continue to explore sources of funding for specific research projects in Sefton.

Remit: This group is currently working on the development of a Destination Development Plan.

Proposals 2005:
(a) Co-ordinate and publicise through the Sefton Coast Partnership a list of events and activities on the coast under the Sea Britain 2005 heading.
(b) Contribute to the contents of the new Sefton Coast Plan and Business Plan.
(c) Work with the Tourism Department on setting out proposals to implement aspects of the Destination Development Plan.

Remit: Education was formerly a part of the Research Task Group, this year the Partnership agreed to split research and education and establish a Lifelong Learning Task Group to develop effective partnership working across the whole spectrum of educational provision and community involvement on the Sefton Coast.
Six of the 13 woodland owners with work scheduled for the year 01 (2003) had completed most of their activities by the end of the winter in 2004: Shorrock’s Hill, Ambsale Sand Dunes NNR, Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council, Royal Birkdale Golf Club, St Luke’s Church, Hesketh Golf Club. The remaining 7 owners either did not have grant funding approved in time, or formally postponed work until the autumn of 2005. The work is continuing through this winter (until spring 2005) and will be reported in the next annual report.

Grant funding to support woodland work has been applied for on 11 properties; Ambsale Sand Dunes NNR, The National Trust Formby Point, Shorrock’s Hill, Formby Golf Club, Formby Ladies Golf Club, Royal Birkdale Golf Club, Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council, Hillside Golf Club, Lark Hill Farm House, Freshfield Dune Heath (Woodvale Airfield),

Proposals 2005: 3 woodland owners have rescheduled some or all of their work from 2003 to the spring and autumn of 2004: The National Trust Formby Point, Hillside Golf Club, Freshfield Dune Heath (Woodvale Airfield).

The targets for year 03 (2005) for the Plan are summarised in the following table and diagram, with a comparison with year 02 (2004) achievements. The targets are adjusted to accommodate short falls in the previous years:

<table>
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<th>Yr03 target</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>45.91</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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Thinning Coupes Natural regen Planting

Yr02 target 48.06 3.32 2.20 8.80
Yr02 achievement 6.67 3.00 0.00 6.33
Yr03 target (unadjusted) 8.52 2.42 0.00 5.04
Yr03 adjusted target 49.91 2.74 2.20 7.51

The Tourism Department have kept the Task Group briefed about the Communication, Interpretation and Product Development Study which was commissioned this year. This work is intended to provide a Destination Development Plan for the Sefton Coast.

The other main thrust of the Group’s work is the National ‘Sea Britain’ 2005 Project. This is a national maritime celebration depicting the ways in which the sea touches our lives. This group has links with Sefton Tourism Department involving organisations and groups through Sefton and who have a link with the sea to organise special events through the year. A special press release was issued at the end of the year and the response was encouraging.

A logo for the Partnership has been agreed and is now in use e.g. as a letterhead on SCP correspondence. Following suggestions from the group regular meetings of Task Group Chairs are now held to improve coordination of activities.

The Tourism and Communications Task Group will continue to review the role, editorial policy and content of Coastlines and SCP website and explore other communication methods.

Proposals 2005:

- Co-ordinate and publicise through the Sefton Coast Partnership a list of events and activities on the coast under the Sea Britain 2005 heading.
- Contribute to the contents of the new Sefton Coast Plan and Business Plan.
- Work with the Tourism Department on setting out proposals to implement aspects of the Destination Development Plan.

7) Lifelong Learning Task Group

Chair: Fiona Sunners (Community Ranger, Coast and Countryside Service, Sefton Leisure Services Department)

Remit: Education was formerly a part of the Research Task Group, this year the Partnership agreed to split research and education and establish a Lifelong Learning Task Group to develop effective partnership working across the whole spectrum of environmental education provision and community involvement on the Sefton Coast.
Table 1 Performance against targets set for 2004

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<tr>
<td>Ensure Partnership responds to consultations on matters to do with coast</td>
<td>SCP members on Ribble Estuary Regional Park Steering Group</td>
<td>Proposals deferred by NWDA, but alternative funding options being explored. RSPB lead.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ensure interests of SCP are represented in development of MWP especially Estuary Development &amp; Management theme</td>
<td>Bids for funding of projects submitted: RSPB Marshside (successful), WATER Centre, Sefton Coast Poth (NT), Access and CIPD Studies (Sefton)</td>
<td>Active discussion with MWP team on potential coastal projects – see Tourism section</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pursue possibility of Heritage Coast designation</td>
<td>History &amp; Archaeology Task Group assembling information</td>
<td>To be taken forward after 2004 seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish research network</td>
<td>Research Partnership developed Research strategy nearing completion Research Forum planned for early 2005 Conference/seminar for students held again in December 2004 Development of research projects</td>
<td>Planning for regional 6th Form event to celebrate Sea Britain 2005 underway</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Nature Conservation, Landscape and Land Management</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Plan: 4806 hectares thinning, 332 hectares restocking felling, 880 hectares planting</td>
<td>Achieved: 6.67 hectares thinning 3.00 hectares restocking felling 6.33 hectares planting Grants applied for management database finalised, monitoring system established</td>
<td>Undershot on thinning due to poor national timber prices. All other achievements good, with high levels of owner participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tender for National Vegetation Classification Survey of Coast</td>
<td>Brief for tender in preparation (EAS)</td>
<td>Work to start April 2003</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establish policy for funding purchase of Freshfield Dune Heath</td>
<td>LWT now owns site Funding secured for capital works to bring the SSSI into favourable condition by 2007 to restore heathland habitats on the remainder by 2010 and to provide public access by 2006</td>
<td>Public support for plans secured through consultation and Formby Area Committee</td>
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<td>Establish History and Archaeology Task Group</td>
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<td>Establish status of Regionally Important Geographical Sites (RIGS)</td>
<td>RIGS identified as Local Wildlife Sites in Sefton UDP (review now on deposit) and in draft Supplementary Planning Guidance</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>2000 m of ditch excavated including major (1 km) new ditch on Marshside</td>
<td>Provides feeding areas for breeding waders</td>
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<td>Install drainage pipe for Marshside</td>
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<td>Will enable improved control of flood levels</td>
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<td>Introduce Natterjack toad spawn in pool</td>
<td>The pools dried out too early in an exceptionally dry May – postpone to 2005</td>
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<tr>
<td>Install 0.5 ha pool</td>
<td>Shallow pool of 0.5 ha area excavated at Hesketh Road end (M1)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve on-site signage</td>
<td>Scheduled for early 2005</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft Management Plan for 2005-2010</td>
<td>First draft completed</td>
<td>Consultation and validation early 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieve LNR status for Marshside</td>
<td>No progress</td>
<td>Ongoing discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft Visitor Strategy and make funding application(s)</td>
<td>Draft completed and first phase funded through MWP (Bird pool and Platform)</td>
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### English Nature

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continue planned grazing and prepare to extend grazing programme into Long Slack area with ponies</td>
<td>Grazing from October 2004 with 50 sheep at Cabin Hill and 205 at Ainsdale</td>
<td>Sheep grazing as planned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pony grazing with Shetlands began August 2004 in the slack 13 area enclosure</td>
<td>Pony grazing suspended following targeting of marram grass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dune slack management</td>
<td>Ainsdale slacks 56 and 89 mown this year</td>
<td>This work will allow Natterjack Toads to again breed successfully in these pools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sea buckthorn scrub is to be removed from around slack 3 and the frontal area adjacent to phase II.</td>
<td>Scrub management halted in the consultation area pending outcome of the EIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dune Restoration Project – Environmental Impact Assessment</td>
<td>Completed 2004.</td>
<td>English Nature to consider findings, carry out any follow on studies, and identify appropriate way forward for Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natterjack Survey Coastal Natterjack Report</td>
<td>Completed Report coordinated and completed on behalf of Sefton Coast Partnership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Great crested newt adult and larva survey</td>
<td>Carried out in April and September 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Let thinning/replanting contracts in rear woods as per Forest Plan</td>
<td>No work undertaken for Forest plan this year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community work</td>
<td>Newsletter, guided walks and on-site interpretation. Reprint of Ainsdale site leaflet.</td>
<td>4 guided walks and monthly site news put out. Ainsdale site leaflet produced and 4 identification leaflets now available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further Sand Lizard introduction</td>
<td>A second set of juvenile lizards were introduced.</td>
<td>Will be monitored by volunteers to check on survival over the winter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mammal monitoring</td>
<td>Improved Red Squirrel monitoring system maintained in partnership with Lancashire Wildlife Trust. A bat survey was carried out.</td>
<td>An additional two transects instated and cone monitoring undertaken in frontal woodland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signage and information</td>
<td>New orientation panels to be installed at Ainsdale. New entrance signs to be installed at both Cabin Hill and Ainsdale.</td>
<td>All work complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slack management at Cabin Hill</td>
<td>New slack to be excavated in Cabin Hill frontal dunes. Slack 26 to be reprofiled.</td>
<td>Work completed</td>
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### National Trust

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<td>Remove rubble banks Sandfield Farm</td>
<td>Work completed in January 2004</td>
<td>NT attempting to secure a tenant to cultivate asparagus at Sandfield Farm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start implementation of new Woodland Management Plan as per Forest Plan</td>
<td>Implementation commenced in February 2000</td>
<td>Grant support secured from Mersey Forest in Autumn 2004 and awaiting final confirmation from Forestry Commission (Dec 2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Major thinning programmed planned for 2005: 14.90 hectares of thinning, 0.49 hectares of restocking felling is carried forward from Year 1 and a further 0.7 hectares will be undertaken. Total 1.19 hectares. 1.39 hectares of replanting to be completed during 2005</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further work to re-surface with chippings due in May 2004</td>
<td>Further work to re-surface with chippings due in May 2004</td>
<td>Re-surfacing is now re-scheduled for May 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fencing, scrub clearance and hedge planting at Larkhill Fields</td>
<td>All works completed as part of Countryside Stewardship Scheme supported by DEFRA</td>
<td>0.7 hectares of gorse scrub to be removed at Larkhill Dune Heath in 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renew footpath signage and waymarkers</td>
<td>Further improvements made in 2004</td>
<td>Work to be completed as part of Formby Enhancement Scheme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sefton Coast & Countryside Service

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Develop strategy for further development of Discovery Centre, Lido</td>
<td>Included in Mersey Waterfront Park proposals and Communications, Interpretation and Product Development Plan &amp; Gateway Study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete consultations on Ainsdale and Birkdale Sandhills LNR and Ravenmeols LNR Management Plans</td>
<td>Ongoing as part of Service Improvement Review</td>
<td>Consultation to be undertaken in 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement Yr 1 &amp; 2 of Forest Plan</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Completed March 2005</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Target</strong></td>
<td><strong>Progress</strong></td>
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| Continue planned grazing and prepare to extend grazing programme into Long Slack area with ponies | Grazing from October 2004 with 50 sheep at Cabin Hill and 205 at Ainsdale | Sheep grazing as planned  
Pony grazing suspended following targeting of marram grass |
| Dune slack management | Ainsdale slacks 56 and 89 mown this year | This work will allow Natterjack Toads to again breed successfully in these pools  
Sea buckthorn scrub is to be removed from around slack 3 and the frontal area adjacent to phase 3.  
Scrub management halted in the consultation area pending outcome of the EIA |
| Dune Restoration Project – Environmental Impact Assessment | Completed 2004 | English Nature to consider findings, carry out any follow on studies, and identify appropriate way forward for Project |
| Natterjack Survey Coastal Natterjack Report | Completed 2004 | Report coordinated and completed on behalf of Sefton Coast Partnership |
| Great crested newt adult and larva survey | Carried out in April and September 2004 | Report available from Ainsdale Sand Dunes NNR office |
| Let thinning/replanting contracts in rear woods as per Forest Plan | No work undertaken for Forest plan this year | Due to staff shortages |
| Community work | 1 newsletter, guided walks and on-site interpretation  
Reprint of Ainsdale site leaflet | 4 guided walks and monthly site news put out  
Ainsdale site leaflet, produced and 4 identification leaflets now available. |
| Further Sand Lizard introduction | A second set of juvenile lizards were introduced | Will be monitored by volunteers to check on survival over the winter |
| Mammal monitoring | Improved Red Squirrel monitoring system maintained in partnership with Lancashire Wildlife Trust  
A bat survey was carried out | An additional two transects instated and cone monitoring undertaken in front woodland |
| Signage and information | New orientation panels to be installed at Ainsdale  
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| Slack management at Cabin Hill | New slack to be excavated in Cabin Hill frontal dunes. Slack 26 to be reprofiled. | Work completed |

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Major thinning programmed planned for 2005: 14.90 hectares of thinning, 0.49 hectares of restocking felling is carried forward from Year 1 and a further 0.7 hectares will be undertaken. Total 11.19 hectares 1.39 hectares of replanting to be completed during 2005 |
| Further work to re-surface with chippings due in May 2004 | Further work to re-surface with chippings due in May 2004 | Re-surfacing is now re-scheduled for May 2005 |
| Fencing, scrub clearance and hedge planting at Larkhill Fields | All works completed as part of Countryside Stewardship Scheme supported by DEFRA | 0.7 hectares of gorse scrub to be removed at Larkhill Dune Heath in 2005 |
| Renew footpath signage and waymarkers | | Work to be completed as part of Formby Enhancement Scheme |
| **Sefton Coast & Countryside Service** | | |
| Develop strategy for further development of Discovery Centre, Lido | Included in Mersey Waterfront Park proposals and Communications, Interpretation and Product Development Plan & Gateway Study |
| Complete consultations on Ainsdale and Birkdale Sandhills LNR and Ravenmeols LNR Management Plans | Ongoing as part of Service Improvement Review | Consultation to be undertaken in 2005 |
| Implement Yr 1 & 2 of Forest Plan | Ongoing | Completed March 2005 |
Tourism Leisure & Recreation

Enter Southport & Ainsdale beaches for Seaside awards
Three Seaside Awards entered for for Southport & Ainsdale and Formby. Three Seaside Awards achieved at Lifeboat Road, Ainsdale & Southport. International Blue Flag achieved at Ainsdale

Marshside – progress perimeter plan
Traffic Management Feasibility Report received

Support MMP and develop projects for Pier Pavilion, Coast management and Crosby Marine Park
Pier Tram application approved. Feasibility study for Crosby Marine Park Water Centre approved. Brief for Access and Interpretation feasibility study developed. Discussions with MMP team on Coast Management projects to be submitted under Estuary Development & Management theme in 2004

Develop framework for action on Access & Interpretation
Being pursued by Access & Interpretation Task Group through MMP (see above). Bid to be submitted early 2004

Develop programme for permanent interpretation facility in Pier Pavilion
Being followed up by Tourism Department in context of MMP. Needs to link with outcome of feasibility study

Ensure aims of SCP are built into Seafront Action Plan
Masterplan completed, recognises role of Sefton Coast Path, Eco-Visitor Centre under construction (interpretation)

Support Ribble Estuary Regional Park proposals
Feasibility study completed. Strategy launched. To be endorsed by Council and SCP early 2004

Shoreline Management

Continue annual monitoring programme
Ongoing. Monitoring programme is being reviewed and developed, including the digitisation and collation of historic data

Crosby/Formby strategy – start stage 2
Stage 1 completed, stage 2 commenced in 2003. Delay experienced, final report not expected until 2006

Maintain links with Liverpool Bay Coastal Group, LGASIG
Continued participation in LBCG and Cell 11.

Continue coast protection works on Sefton Coast
Work continued

Improved understanding of coastal evolution – initial discussions and research to establish scope of work
Completed. Detailed work to be taken forward over the coming years

Marine Environmental Management

Ensure SCP interest represented in response to DEFRA consultation on marine management and DTI consultation on off-shore wind proposals
Responses submitted. SCP represented at further DEFRA workshops. Stocktake continues in 2004

Engage with JNCC on Irish Sea Regional Seas pilot
Reported to SCP Forum 2003. JNCC reports now completed

Public Health & Amenity

Complete beach management review
Ongoing as part of Service Improvement Review Plan. Will require scoping under SEA Regulations. Beach Management Plan to go out for consultation in early 2005

Complete beach cleansing pilot and publish beach cleansing plan
Ongoing as part of Service Improvement Review. Complete 2005

Resolve oil spill review and emergency response review responsibilities
Ongoing. Work with key agencies to review procedures.

Implementation & Review

Publish Coastlines, Annual Report and organise Forum

Keep website up to date; review design
Website being continuously updated on receipt of information from partners. Current design considered adequate for time being

Establish/review communications strategy
Under consideration by Task Group

Begin review of Coast Management Plan
Review started. First Draft due June 2005

Review indicators in CMP
Review started

Establish research network
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<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Progress</th>
<th>Comment</th>
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Progress In 2004 and Targets for 2005

This section describes progress in 2004 in more detail than Table 1 where needed, as well as issues in which the Partnership may not have a direct role but which are relevant to the Coast. The Partners’ Targets for 2005 are set out for each topic area. The topic headings and aims are those set out in the Sefton Coast Management Plan 1997 – 2006.

Land Use & 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.

The items previously under this heading are now dealt with in the introduction or in the relevant sections below.

Nature Conservation, Landscape and Land Management

Aim: to conserve, protect & enhance the natural beauty and diversity of the coast including the characteristic terrestrial, littoral and marine flora and flora, geology, geomorphology, landscape and heritage features of architectural historical cultural and archaeologica interest.

In 2004:

General

The Sefton Coast Woodlands Forest Plan has been approved for implementation in January 2003. The Plan provides a 20 year structure within which woodland management activities are scheduled over a 10 year period. The owners of 5 more woodland areas have associated themselves with the Plan: Lark Hill Farm, Lark Hill Farm House, Freshfield Dune Heath (Wooddale-Airey), Freshfield Dune Heath (Montague Road) and Southport and Ainsdale Golf Club. This brings the total of participating owners to 25, representing 413.76 hectares of forest, 98% of the forest area (up from 408.28 hectares, 97% of the total area). See Forest Plan Task Group Report.

The National Vegetation Classification Survey of the Coast, which has been managed by the Environmental Advisory Service is now complete.

The work of the History and Archaeology Task Group continues to contribute to land management and interpretation. For example, the project has incorporated a considerable amount of public work have, visitors, group of Dutch dune managers which were greatly impressed with the Dune restoration work.

Continuing contact with the community is an important element of work, with the production of newsletters and guided walks as well as meetings with local groups and visits by interested parties. Including a group of Dutch dune managers who were greatly impressed with the Dune restoration work.

Sand Lizards were reintroduced to the dune restoration project area in a joint project with the Herpetological Conservation Trust. This year, and monitoring of the re-introduction site by a dedicated volunteer will continue to confirmed survival of the lizards into their first full summer in the wild. With luck, lizards release in 2002 could breed next year.

New orientation panels and entrance signs are out on the Ainsdale reserve helping people to find their way and explore new routes through the reserve.

English Nature is in the process of identifying the best way to manage part of the seaward area at Ainsdale Sand Dunes NNR in the future. In order to determine the best option for future management of the observation area an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out. A Final Environmental Statement produced by Atkins is now available. This work was supported by an Landscape Assessment carried out by CASS Associates of Liverpool, and both the EIA and the Landscape work have incorporated a considerable amount of public consultation. English Nature is now considering the findings and shaping the appropriate way forward for Project.

National Trust

Work to clean and restore the asparagus fields at Sandfield Farm by removal of rubbish banks was completed in January 2004. The National Trust is working to re-establish asparagus cultivation through a business tenancy on part of Sandfield Farm.

The management plan has now been amended to take account of concerns raised by the public and a plan of action drawn up to improve the site’s nature conservation value, open the site up for public (pedestrian) access, and preserve its landscape and historic features.

This will involve removing scrub which threatens to swamp the heathland, bringing the woodland area into proper management, according to the prescriptions of the Sefton Coast Woodlands Forest Plan, improving habitats for Sand Lizards and invertebrates, creating footpaths and fencing the site so that it can be grazed in future and providing interpretation for the public. Much of this work will be carried out by volunteers. The Trust will continue to keep the public informed as work progresses.

Funding has been secured to do this from ICAP Countryside Stewardship and the Mersey Waterfront Regional Park, the bulk of the work will be completed by December 2006. It is hoped that the site will be opened up to public access by the summer of 2006.

RSPB (Marshside Reserve)

A further 2000 metres of ditching provides further habitat for ducks and waders. An entirely new, 1 km long ditch, runs the entire length of Marshside I and forms a permanent wet perimeter feature to the seasonally flooded zone.

An unseasonably dry May meant that the ponds dug in 2003 to receive natterjack toad spawn were not suitable in 2004. A more typical May is awaited in 2005.

A major new pool was excavated at the Hesketh Road end of Marshside I (“Farrough’s Pool”). This pool is alternately deep and shallow in sections and is designed to provide suitable feeding areas for breeding waders and their chicks whatever the weather conditions are in spring. The pool is 0.5 ha. in extent and borders an existing reed bed, on the adjacent Hesketh Golf Course, at one end. The pool will encourage the spread of reed onto the nature reserve itself.

Numbers of breeding waders were up again this year. A record 100 nests of lapwings were counted whilst avocet numbers increased to 12 pairs.

The third 5-year Management Plan was drafted and will be completed ready for implementation in the year beginning April 2005. Some progress was also made with the Marshside Integrated Visitor Access Strategy. Sefton Council’s Technical Services Department are helping to develop cost proposals to address traffic management issues. Steps include, reducing traffic speed and improved pedestrian access and parking.

Progress In 2004 and Targets for 2005

The implementation of the Woodland Management Plan commenced in February 2004. A 0.3 hectare coupe was felled at Victoria Road and cleaning work took place in Squirrel Wood and Farm Wood with thinning in Landmark Wood.

Welsh Mountain Ponies help in the conversion of dune heath at Larkhill Fields, National Trust © Andrew Brockbank National Trust

250 tonnes of rubble was removed from the beach area in May 2004. This is part of the Trust’s continuing effort to manage the negative impact of old car parks and surfaces, which were overtaxed by dune movements. The National Trust is working to secure funding to proactively remove part of the current car park which is now being overtaken by migrating dunes.
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This section describes progress in 2004 in more detail than Table 1 where needed, as well as issues in which the Partnership may not have a direct role but which are relevant to the Coast. The Partners’ Targets for 2005 are set out for each topic area. The topic headings and aims are those set out in the Sefton Coast Management Plan 1997 – 2006.

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The National Vegetation Classification Survey of the Coast, which has been managed by the Environmental Advisory Service is now complete.

The work of the History and Archaeology Task Group continues to contribute to land management and interpretation. For example, taking records and where possible preserving the valuable evidence of prehistoric footprints and features emerging on the beaches at Formby Point. The Group is also pursuing the Heritage Coast designation.

Freshfield Dune Heath
The Lancashire Wildlife Trust completed purchase of the 35ha (85 acres) of heathland at Woodvale Airfield from the Ministry of Defence in March 2004, funded through the Heritage Lottery Fund and an appeal to Trust members and the public.

Initial plans for the future management of the site have been drawn up and local residents and other interested parties were consulted on these in June 2004 with the help of Mersey Forest ICEP (Integrated Countryside and Environment Programme) funding.

The management plan has now been amended to take account of concerns raised by the public and a plan of action drawn up to improve the site’s nature conservation value, open the site up for public (pedestrian) access, and preserve its landscape and historic features.

This will involve removing scrub which threatens to swamp the heathland, bringing the woodland area into proper management, according to the prescriptions of the Sefton Coast Woodlands Forest Plan, improving habitats for Sand Lizards and invertebrates, creating footpaths and ensuring that it can be grazed in future and providing interpretation for the public. Much of this work will be carried out by volunteers. The Trust will continue to keep the public informed as work progresses.

Funding has been secured to do this from ICEP Countryside Stewardship and the Mersey Waterfront Regional Park, the bulk of the work will be completed by December 2006. It is hoped that the site will be opened up to public access by the summer of 2006.

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The third 5-year Management Plan was drafted and will be completed ready for implementation in the year beginning April 1st 2005. Some progress was also made with the Marshside Integrated Visitor Access Strategy. Sefton Council’s Technical Services Department are helping to develop costed proposals to address traffic management issues. Steps include, reducing traffic speed and improved pedestrian access and parking.

English Nature
At Ainsdale Sand Dunes National Nature Reserve the planned grazing regime with 205 Herdwick sheep from Warkdale, Cumbria continued until April and, resumed in October. This maintains a short sward with some longer areas, suitable for Natterjack Toads and a wide range of wildflowers.

Pony grazing has been introduced to the Long Slack area but has had to be terminated due to the ponies targetting marram grass.

A planned programme of scrub removal (sea buckthorn and white poplar) is being carried out and the cuttings disposed on an existing reed bed, (on the adjacent Hesketh Golf Course), at one end. The pool will encourage the spread of reed onto the nature reserve itself.

A number of surveys were carried out. Natterjack Toads were reintroduced to the dune restoration project area in a joint project with the Herpetological Conservation Trust. This year, and monitoring of the re-introduction site by a dedicated volunteer will continue to confirmed survival of the lizards into their first full summer in the wild. With luck, lizard release in 2002 could breed next year.

New orientation panels and entrance signs are out on the Ainsdale reserve helping people to find their way and explore new routes through the reserve.

English Nature is in the process of identifying the best way to manage part of the seaward area at Ainsdale Sand Dunes NNR in the future. In order to determine the best option for future management of the consultation area an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out. A final Environmental Statement produced by Atkins is now available. This work was supported by an Landscape Assessment carried out by CASS Associates of Liverpool, and both the EIA and the Landscape work have incorporated a considerable amount of public consultation. English Nature is now considering the findings and identifying the appropriate way forward for Project.

National Trust
Work to clean and restore the asparagus fields at Sandfield Farm by removal of rubbish banks was completed in January 2004. The National Trust is working to re-establish asparagus cultivation through a business tenancy on part of Sandfield Farm.

The Trust continued to work with the Formby Civic Society to prepare a Heritage Lottery Bid for a Booklet and events, which will interpret the Freshfield story. An Asparagus Trail will be developed following completion of repairs.

Fencing of Larkhill Dune Heath was completed and Welsh Mountain Ponies were kept on the heath between May and October in the interests of conservation. The small field known as Larkhill Meadow was fenced to allow aftermath grazing by sheep or ponies to enhance the floristic value.

Welsh Mountain Ponies help in the conservation of dune heath at Larkhill Fields, National Trust

© Andrew Brockbank National Trust

The implementation of the Woodland Management Plan commenced in February 2004. A 0.3 hectare coupe was felled at Victoria Road and cleaning work took place in Squirrel Wood and Farm Wood with thinning in Landmark Wood.

250 tonnes of rubble was removed from the beach area in May 2004. This is part of the Trust’s continuing effort to manage the negative impact of old car parks and surfaces, which were overtaken by dune movements.

The National Trust is working to secure funding to proactively remove part of the current car park which is now being overtaken by migrating dunes.

An excavator at working removing rubble from the dunes.

© Andrew Brockbank National Trust

The National Trust is working to redesign the car parks at Victoria Road including the removal of part of the beach car park which will disappear under mobile dunes.

© Andrew Brockbank National Trust

A traditional bunch of Formby Asparagus. The National Trust is working to promote additional asparagus cultivation at Sandfield Farm
A new Learning Officer was appointed in June and the focus in 2004 was to achieve more sustainable levels for school visits. The National Trust is about to jointly commission a Gateway Study with Sefton Council to develop options for improvement to access and visitor facilities at Victoria Road and the neighbouring gateway site at Formby, Lifeboat Road.

The National Trust is leading the Sefton Coastal Path Enhancement Scheme at Formby and final consents are currently being sought with work due to commence on Phase 1 in February 2005.

Grazing of Herdwick Sheep continues to take place on the Ainsdale and Birkdale Local Nature Reserve. New interpretative panels have been erected on the Alt Estuary, Velvet Trail and Sands Lake Nature Trail.

The Friends of Crosby Coastal Park established to take an active part in the development of the coastline. The Guided walks and events brochure was published.

The Biodiversity and Access Project Environmental ILM received grants from the South Sefton Partnership to continue its work. The Biodiversity and Access Project Young Persons Programme was established with funding from the Drug Action Team, Young Offenders Team, Children Schools and Families and Leisure Inclusion Service.

Target for 2005:

- Implementation of the third/fourth year of the Forest Plan (ALL)
- North Merseyside Biodiversity Action Plan actions are incorporated into relevant site work programmes. Carried forward from 2004. (Nature Conservation Task Group and All Partners)
- Proceed with restoration of Freshfield Dune Heath (LWT)
- Proceed with management agreement on Montagu Road Triangle section of Freshfield Dune Heath. (EN)
- Develop options for external funding of land management proposals through for example Mersey Waterfront, Integrated Countryside Environment Programme, Countryside Stewardship and other relevant regimes. (All Partners)
- Reinstate eroded section of Coast Footpath at Formby Point subject to agreement with Formby Golf Course. (NT, EN, FGC, SMBC)
- Resolve coastal RIGS status. (SMBC & EN)

RSPB Marshside targets

- Introduce spawn to Natterjack Toad pools.
- Complete improvements to on-site signage to include an iconic sculpture.
- Build a Viewing Platform to overlook Fairclough’s Pool.
- Plan and implement Japanese knotweed control.
- Hold 10-year celebratory event.

English Nature targets

- Decide the way forward for the Dune restoration Programme.
- Remove sea buckthorn & thin other scrub in slack 13 area following consultation with Forestry Commission.
- Work with National Trust to introduce winter Hebridean sheep trial.
- Let thinning/replanting contracts in rear woods as per Forest Plan to deliver key Red Squirrel targets.
- Deliver access monitoring programme by installing a visitor counter.
- Continue to produce two newsletters and produce a year long walks programme.
- Monitor Sand Lizard reintroduction programme.
- Repair the boundary track following the negative results from Petalwort survey.
- Continue slack re-profiling and mowing to maintain Natterjack breeding sites in favourable condition.
- Maintain and bring all units of the Ainsdale Sand Dunes NNR into favourable condition for their wildlife features.
- Carry out an assessment of disabled / less able access to the NNR and implement recommendations where possible.
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Sefton Coast & Countryside Service

Continued monitoring of Natterjack Toad populations within the SMBC area was carried out and results passed to EN in support of the Natterjack Toad Strategy.

The review of the Ainsdale and Birkdale Hills LNR Management Plan is ongoing as part of a Service Improvement Review and will be published for consultation in 2005.

Sefton Coast & Countryside Service

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The review of the Ainsdale and Birkdale Hills LNR Management Plan is ongoing as part of a Service Improvement Review and will be published for consultation in 2005.

The Wildlife Enhancement Scheme for the LNRs was established through agreement with English Nature and was completed in 2004.

The Woodland Plan was implemented with funding from the Forestry Commission and ICEP including a machinery grant. The second year of implementation has been completed.

The Friends of Crosby Coastal Park established to take an active part in the development of the coastline. The Guided walks and events brochure was published.

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• Continue slack re-profiling and mowing to maintain Natterjack breeding sites in favourable condition.
• Maintain and bring all units of the Ainsdale Sand Dunes NNR into favourable condition for their wildlife features.
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• Maintain and bring all units of the Ainsdale Sand Dunes NNR into favourable condition for their wildlife features.
• Carry out an assessment of disabled / less able access to the NNR and implement recommendations where possible.
National Trust targets

- Secure funding to implement Phase 1 of the Formby Enhancement Scheme which aims to provide a roadside sealed surface path to BT Countryside For All Standards and improved boardwalk access over the frontal dunes with a new dune viewing platform.

- Facilitate consultation on Phases 2 and 3 of the proposed Formby Enhancement Scheme as part of the Gateway Study to be jointly commissioned with Sefton Council.

- Implement major woodland thinning and coupe felling and replanting programme in accordance with the Sefton Coast Woodlands Forest Plan. The National Trust programme includes some 14 hectares of thinning during 2005.

- Carry out further programme of gorse scrub removal at Larkhill Dune Heath.

- Clear 0.9 hectare of scrub from fixed dunes between Blundell Path and Wicks Path and north of Freshfield Caravan Park.

- Continue efforts to secure a tenant who will re-establish asparagus farming at Sandfield Farm. Maintain the 1/4 acre demonstration plot in 2005.

- Maintain lead role with implementation of Sefton Coastal Footpath improvements at Formby Point – subject to securing all consents. (Funding is secured subject to cSAC and Planning Consents).

- Contribute to an engaging programme of events with a maritime/coastal theme to celebrate Sea Britain 2005.

- Support the Formby Civic Society with delivery of the Formby Asparagus Project and work to establish the Asparagus Trail on the ground.

Sefton Coast & Countryside targets

- Develop strategy for further development of Discovery Centre and associated facilities at Ainsdale-on-Sea as part of the Communications, Interpretation and Product Development Plan and Gateway Study.

- Complete consultation on Ainsdale & Birkdale Hills LNR Management Plans.

- Investigate further Wildlife Enhancement Scheme funding and Countryside Stewardship bid for Ainsdale & Birkdale Hills LNR.

- Implement the third/fourth year of woodland management through Forest Plan. Plan and prepare programme for next two years.

- Further expand the Biodiversity and Access Project through the South Sefton Partnership, Young Persons Programme and Mersey Waterfront.

- Continue work on Crosby Coastal Park and Formby Field Centre proposals as part of the Communications, Interpretation and Product Development Plan and Gateway Study.

- Consolidate the Kite outlet, Users Group and Club at Ainsdale Beach (Kite Buggy and Kite Surfing Permit System).

- Continue to operate a beach vehicle permit system for Fishermen.

- Establish a permit/insurance system for horse owners.

- Support the RSPB ‘Aren’t Birds Brilliant’ Project.

- Continue to support Sand Lizard and Natterjack translocation programmes.

- Continue with schools/groups/events & environmental education programme.

- Continue to include Potters Barn as a Coast and Countryside facility within the Crosby Coastal Park Masterplan.

- Continue to review work with volunteers to establish Friends of Groups.

- To identify funding to establish a Project Officer to prepare and implement a nature conservation strategy and delivery plan that secures biodiversity delivery for the Sefton Coast including the European and national designated sites.

- Establish a Lifelong Learning Task Group as part of the Sefton Coast Partnership and continue Leisure Services Commitment to the partnership.

- Work with Sefton Property Management to hand over management responsibility for the outer marsh at Marshside to the RSPB as an expansion of the Marshside Nature Reserve.
**National Trust targets**

- Secure funding to implement Phase 1 of the Formby Enhancement Scheme which aims to provide a roadside sealed surface path to BT Countryside For All Standards and improved boardwalk access over the frontal dunes with a new dune viewing platform.

![New platform being built for dune viewing](image1)

- The National Trust’s dune viewing platform was overtaken by sand blow in 2004. A new platform will be built with interpretation of the changing coastline.

- Facilitate consultation on Phases 2 and 3 of the proposed Formby Enhancement Scheme as part of the Gateway Study to be jointly commissioned with Sefton Council.

- Implement major woodland thinning and coupe felling and replanting programme in accordance with the Sefton Coast Woodlands Forest Plan. The National Trust programme includes some 14 hectares of thinning during 2005.

![A major programme of woodland thinning and restocking felling](image2)

- Carry out further programme of gorse scrub removal at Larkhill Dune Heath.
- Clear 0.9 hectare of scrub from fixed dunes between Blundell Path and Wicks Path and north of Freshfield Caravan Park.
- Continue efforts to secure a tenant who will re-establish asparagus farming at Sandfield Farm. Maintain the 1/4 acre demonstration plot in 2005.
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**Sefton Coast & Countryside targets**

- Develop strategy for further development of Discovery Centre and associated facilities at Ainsdale-on-Sea as part of the Communications, Interpretation and Product Development Plan and Gateway Study.
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- Investigate further Wildlife Enhancement Scheme funding and Countryside Stewardship bid for Ainsdale & Birkdale Hills LNR.
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- Continue to include Potters Barn as a Coast and Countryside facility within the Crosby Coastal Park Masterplan.
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- Work with Sefton Property Management to hand over management responsibility for the outer marsh at Marshside to the RSPB as an expansion of the Marshside Nature Reserve.
Tourism, Leisure & Recreation

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

In 2004:

- Sefton is involved in work to develop new national Seaside Award and Beach Management System.

Physical Access Strategy for the Sefton Coast – Sefton Council’s Department of Planning and Environmental Regeneration commissioned a Physical Access Strategy for the Sefton Coast on behalf of the Sefton Coast Partnership. The strategy is now completed in the form of a consultative report and the partners will be invited to agree to the proposals help prioritise access and a programme of delivery. It is anticipated that projects will be co-ordinated in order to bid for external funding. Ways of project delivery through existing resources and mechanisms must also be developed and agreed.

Seaford Action Plan – Work on the Eco-visitor centre on the Espalade Park and Ride was completed and a Southport Town Centre Signage Strategy has reached an advanced stage.

A number of initiatives under the Southport Seaford Action Plan continue to be developed through the Southport Partnership. These include feasibility work to improve the Marine Lake and several town centre public realm initiatives to improve Chapel Street, Lord Street Gardens and business premises on Lord Street. Improvements to the Floral Hall and Cultural Centre are also proposed in the Southport Action Plan.

**Targets for 2005:**

- Ainsdale, Southport and Lifeboat Road Beaches have been entered into the Seaside Awards for 2005. (SCCS)
- Marshside (see also Ribble Regional Park) – progress perimeter plan proposals and further development of visitor plan. (RSPB and SMBC)
- Mersey Waterfront – continue discussions with MWP team on links between MWP and SCP aims and objectives.
- Access & Interpretation – Lead on the implementation of the Sefton Coastal Footpath improvements between Fishermans Path and Lifeboat Road. Facilitate co-ordinated funding applications to support priority access projects identified in the Physical Access Strategy for the Sefton Coast. (A&ITG, and All Partners).
- Seaford Action Plan – ensure the Seaford Action Plan is featured in the SCP Plan to be produced in 2005. (SMBC)
- Ribble Estuary Strategy – support RSPB and Steering Group as required in next stages of strategy development. (All)
- Continue measures to maintain the main beach at Southport free of saltmarsh vegetation. (SCCS)
- Complete consultancy study for the development of Gateway sites at Formby Point and Ainsdale Lido. (SMBC)

Shoreline Management

**Aims:** to support the need to protect life, property and habitats by appropriate coastal defence strategies, and to maintain the sea defence functions of beaches, sand dunes and salt marshes consistent with the natural character and conservation importance of the coast.

**Natural Processes**

Objective: to continue improving the understanding of natural processes and the response of the coastline to change so that sustainable management decisions can be made.

In 2004:

The third year of the enhanced monitoring programme has been completed and a report has been compiled for the previous year’s work that will be taken to the Partnership Board and Sefton Council Environmental Committee prior to dissemination. The report will be made up of an overall summary with individual summaries for different areas, these summaries will indicate what has gone on in the past, what is happening now and what may happen in the future. Supporting information has been placed on the Sefton Coast Partnership web site and includes brief descriptions of the coastal processes that may be referred to and information on the more detailed analysis for those who wish to go into more detail. As part of this process most of the Sefton Coast database is in the process of being digitised and updated so that it can be placed on the web site.

HR Waterford had completed the first stage of the Crosby to Formby Point Strategy Study that aims to inform the coastal defence management decisions for this length of coast. The first stage has recommended several items of work to be carried out in stage two which will fill some of the gaps in information that currently exist so that the final report can be more comprehensive. These include borehole, wave modelling, an archaeological survey and sediment sampling. Unfortunately, gaining approval for grant aid for these studies has taken longer than expected because there were a number of technical queries that needed to be resolved prior to commencement. This has resulted in the programme for this scheme slipping by approximately 8 months.

Discussions have been ongoing in relation to a regional monitoring strategy for the length of coast from the Solway Firth to Great Orme’s Head and an application has been prepared to go forward to DEFRA that would provide the justification for grant aid. This regional approach would ensure comprehensive monitoring coverage of the coast and provide more complete information for the forthcoming review of Shoreline Management Plans. There have been delays with this project as a result of difficulties in gaining final agreement from all project partners to the final project proposals.

**Targets for 2005:**

- Complete Stage 2 of the Crosby to Formby Point Study and commence Stage 3, compilation of the draft final report.

Coastal Defence

**Objective:** to provide the regional level of flood defence to protect low-lying areas of the borough from flooding during high tides and storm events and to provide the required level of coastal protection to vulnerable areas of the Sefton coastline from erosion.

In 2004:

There has been a focus on general maintenance this year with the majority of the effort occurring at Crosby where the defences are older and the hand railing more vulnerable to damage. There has been some work carried out on the embankment to the coast road to the north of Marshside Road where the old revetment had cracked and voids had been created behind it.

**Targets for 2005:**

- There will be continued maintenance of coastal defences focusing mainly on those areas that are most vulnerable or aspects that present a health and safety risk.

Dune and Saltmarsh Management for Defence

**Objective:** to maintain and encourage the use of dune based sea defences in appropriate locations.

This work ties in closely with the understanding of natural processes, which informs any management decision relating to the use of dunes and saltmarsh as a coastal defence.

In 2004:

Following a proposal from Edge Hill College it was agreed to provide sponsorship for a PhD that is examining the sediment dynamics of the north Sefton coast. This study will aim to provide an understanding of the past evolution of this area with a view to being able to improve our predictions of future evolution. This study has started well with extensive data collection in the form of accretion rates and sediment samples, as well as collection of historical documentary evidence relating to the development of the saltmarsh. It has also identified a number of complementary studies to be undertaken that will contribute to the overall value of this research.

Officers have been researching and developing proposals for a review of future coastal evolution of the Sefton coast. The initial review will focus on a fifty year time horizon but will consider a one hundred year time horizon in order to identify the problems with providing a useful prediction for this timescale. This work will also consider the implications of this future coastal evolution on habitats along the coast.

**Targets for 2005:**

- As part of the research on the sediment dynamics on the north Sefton coast officers will be working with Liverpool University to examine compaction rates of the fine sediment in this area. This will be used in relation with the measurement of accretion rates on site to provide a better understanding of the long-term net accretion rates.
- A second element relating to the research on the sediment dynamics that will be carried out by officers is a review of the historical survey data in this area. This will seek to factor in the effect of sea-level rise with a view to identifying the historical rates of erosion for different areas and how these rates change depending on the number of tidal inundations that the area receives each year.
- Officers will progress the work looking at future coastal evolution of the Sefton coast.
- Work to develop a shared understanding of natural defence management and management of naturally driven threats (notably coastal squeeze and fragmentation of habitats) to the integrity of the Sefton Coast sand dune system amongst the partners.
- Work to finalise the ‘health check’ methodology to assist coastal land managers in decision making of relevance to management of visitor impacts.
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• Work to finalise the ‘Health check’ methodology to assist coastal land managers in decision making of relevance to management of visitor impacts.
Marine Environmental Management

Aim: to liaise with 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.

In 2004:
SCP responded to DEFRA’s consultation document “Seas of Change” and various workshops organised by Coastnet on behalf of DEFRA have been attended.

The Irish Sea Regional Seas pilot study on the extension of Habitats Regulations into marine areas was reported to the SCP Forum in February by Chris Lamb of the Joint Nature Conservancy Committee. This study has now been completed.

Links with key organisations and membership of Eurosite and European Union Coastal Conservation (EUCC) have been maintained. The Partnership is represented on the North West Coastal Forum (NWCF).

Targets for 2005:
- Keep track of DEFRA ICZM stocktake process
- Respond as needed to further consultations.
- Consider SCP engagement in ‘Year of the Sea’ celebrations planned for 2005
- Maintain a close watching brief on proposals for offshore aggregate extraction and sand winning off the Sefton coastline and make representations to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister as appropriate.
- Maintain a close watching brief on offshore renewable energy development proposals and make timely representations as appropriate.

Public Heath and Amenity

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

In 2004:
A review of the Beach Management Strategy was drafted by SCCS for consultation. Preparation of the Strategy was delayed to be able to include inputs from the ‘Regulation 33’ package for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA published by Eni during 2003, as well as the implications of the NMBAP. The Plan will now require scoping as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations and will be published in 2005.

The review of the oil spill response plan is largely complete, the plan should be finalised in 2005 following further discussions with partners.

Progress has been slow, but Bathing Water Quality test results are being put on the SMBC website, and ways of putting them on coastal websites are being developed.

2004 did not repeat the exceptional results of 2003 for Sefton bathing waters. All three bathing waters – Southport, Ainsdale and Formby – passed the mandatory standard of the EC Directive. For the second year running, no ‘poor’ results were recorded at any of the bathing waters. Formby again passed the strict EC ‘guideline’ standard and Southport and Ainsdale passed two out of the three guideline parameters. Discharges from overloaded sewers, at times of heavy rain, remain as the most significant factor in the poorer water quality results. The trend of improvement over recent years has now levelled off; until a number of projects in the next Asset Management Plan for United Utilities are complete, there is unlikely to be significant improvement (the plan commences in 2005).

Targets for 2005:
- Complete Beach Management Review. (SCCS)
- Complete Beach Cleansing pilot and publish Beach Cleansing Plan. (SCCS)
- Complete oil spill review and emergency response review (Carried forward). (All)
- Install small scale recycling ‘bring’ sites close to some beaches on a 6 month trial basis. (SMBC)
- Make bathing water quality data available on the Sefton website. (SMBC)
- Make data from Sefton Council’s Environmental Protection Dept’s electronic weather station (at Ainsdale) available on the Council website. (SMBC)
- Continue to represent SCP interests on NWCF with regard to bathing water issues. (SMBC)
- Continue involvement in the North West Beach Management and Bathing Water Group. (SCCS)

Implementation and Review

Aim: to adopt a systematic and open approach to the delivery and maintaining of the outputs.

Note: monitoring for land management purposes is carried out by individual land managers, with coordination provided through the task groups for Nature Conservation, The Sefton Coast Forest Plan etc. The items discussed below are to do with communications (dealt with by the Communications Task Group).

In 2004:
The SCP website (www.seftoncoast.org.uk) was kept up to date including posting of Board minutes, details of Task Groups and key documents. A review of the website was agreed by the Board, but in view of positive feedback from users it was felt this was not a priority.

The half-yearly editions of Coastlines (Summer and Winter) were produced; the Winter edition was distributed in January 2004. The number of copies has been increased to 15,000. The 2002 Annual Report was published in July 2003.

There was full attendance at the 2004 Annual Forum, held for the first time at the Formby Gild Hall.

The Research Task Group began its review of both Communications and Research Strategy. On the research side, an Irish Sea Forum seminar on Coastal Modelling organised by Andy Plater of Liverpool University raised the issue of the need for better connection between academic research and management. Ann Worsely from Edge Hill College, a SCP Board member, is working with Andy Plater to develop a research strategy for the coast. This will be taken further during 2005. Communications and Research although connected, have different agendas, and it is likely that there will be separate subgroups working on each topic.

Targets for 2005:
- Continue publishing Coastlines, the Annual Report (2004) and organising the Forum (for 2005) as part of core communications. (SMBC on behalf of Board)
- Investigate additional sources of funding.
- Ensure website is kept up to date, evaluate need for redesign, and investigate potential for contributions from Partners. (SMBC on behalf of Board)
- Continue review of research communications strategy, including sourcing of funds to support outreach work. (Board, through CTG)
- Support further development of Sefton Coast Research Partnership and develop links with relevant institutions and agencies. (Board, through CTG)
- Publish draft review of Coast Management Plan for consultation. (SMBC Planning on behalf of Board)
Marine Environmental Management

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**Board Members – Sefton Coast Partnership**

- **Mr Gordon Adam** - Forestry Commission
- **Jane Sansbury** - Environment Agency
- **Mr Andrew Brockbank** - National Trust
- **Mr Paul Green** - English Nature
- **Mr Ralph Gregson MBE** - Birkdale Civic Society
- **Major Bill Hunter** - Reserve Forces and Cadets Association
- **Mr Ted Jackson (Chair)** - Lancashire Wildlife Trust
- **Cllr Ian Moncur** - Sefton Council
- **Mr Laurence Rose** - Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
- **Cllr David Tattersall** - Sefton Council
- **Mr David Taylor** - Formby Golf Club
- **Cllr Lord Ronnie Fearn** - Sefton Council
- **Dr Ann Worsley** - Edge Hill College
- **Dr Reg Yorke** - Formby Civic Society

**Task Group Leaders**

- Nature Conservation and Shoreline Management - *(Mr Dave McAleavy)*
- Access and Interpretation - *(Mr Andrew Brockbank)*
- Research - *(Dr Ann Worsley)*
- Lifelong Learning - *(Ms Fiona Sunners)*
- Tourism and Communication - *(Mr Ralph Gregson MBE)*
- Forest Plan - *(Mr Paul Nolan)*
- History and Archaeology - *(Dr Reg Yorke)*
Board Members – Sefton Coast Partnership

Mr Gordon Adam  Forestry Commission
Jane Sansbury  Environment Agency
Mr Andrew Brockbank  National Trust
Mr Paul Green  English Nature
Mr Ralph Gregson MBE  Birkdale Civic Society
Major Bill Hunter  Reserve Forces and Cadets Association
Mr Ted Jackson  (Chair)  Lancashire Wildlife Trust
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