

SEFTON COAST PARTNERSHIP DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2005

SUMMARY DOCUMENT

This summary is intended as a snap shot of the activities of the Sefton Coast Partnership in 2005. Click onto the Partnership website (www.seftoncoast.org.uk) to view the full annual report, plus other interesting information on the Sefton coast, and links to key coastal sites.

Who we are

The Sefton Coast Partnership (SCP) guides the management of and helps to promote access to, the open (largely undeveloped) coast in Sefton. It is an informal association of land managers, land owners, community groups, agencies and relevant Council Departments. All of the partners have an interest in the integrated management of Sefton's valuable coastal areas. The Partnership is steered by a Board comprising representatives of the various landowners and groups.

The Partnership holds an annual Forum, usually in February each year, a public meeting which provides an opportunity to discuss coastal issues with a broader audience - typically these are over prescribed.

The Board publishes 'Coastlines' twice a year which provides information about activities on the coast to local communities through a mailing list, and through schools and local libraries.

Events and developments during the year

- The final draft of 'The Sefton Coast Partnership (Integrated Coastal Zone Management) Plan 2006-2011' was completed. The document will now be available for a period of public consultation following the 2006 Annual Forum.
- ENCAMS Quality Coast Award: The ENCAMS Seaside Awards are currently under review and Sefton as member of the UK Beach Management Forum Executive continues to be involved in a working group with ENCAMS, British Resorts Association, DEFRA, NBSC, and National Trust to develop a new national award and Beach Management System – Quality Coast Award. The Sefton Coast Partnership may take part in a pilot in 2006.
- Beach Management: Ainsdale on Sea has been entered for the International Blue Flag in 2006.
- Marine Spatial Planning and EU Marine Strategy: work has progressed during the year on the Marine Spatial Planning Pilot based on the Irish Sea, promoted by DEFRA. (web ref?) . In October, the European Commission published proposals for a European Marine strategy, and a consultation on this has been circulated by DEFRA for response by March 06. Information on the strategy can be found on www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/water/marine.htm
- Mersey Waterfront Park (MWP) www.merseyside.org.uk had their initial application for the succession programme accepted by NWDA in late 2005. The final application for a programme of about £7m over three years is due to be submitted in March 2006. Projects completed in Sefton as part of the current programme include the bird pool excavation at Marshside RSPB Reserve, and habitat and access work at Freshfield Dune Heath, owned by the Lancashire Wildlife Trust. Reconnecting the Sefton Coast Footpath at Formby Point in a project sponsored by the National Trust, was eighty percent complete by the end of 2005. The Progression Project at Crosby coastal Park (see Sefton Water Centre below) was also completed.

- Coastal Gateways: Spurred on by the MWP Concept, landscape architects Gillespies, were appointed jointly by National Trust and Sefton Council in September 2005 to prepare outline designs for new visitor facilities at Ainsdale-on-Sea (the Lido), Freshfield, and Lifeboat Road. This work will be completed by May 2006.
- Access Strategy: The access strategy funded by MWP was approved and work is has commenced to develop this into a practical programme of work with partners.
- Coastal Branding – following completion of the Coastal Interpretation and Product Development (CIPD) project funded by MWP, Sefton Tourism have completed a branding exercise for the Sefton Coast which will provide the basis for further work on interpretation, linking in to the Gateways and access projects noted above.
- Ribble Estuary: RSPB continues to take the lead on the proposal. Funding has been obtained to enable the recruitment of a part time project officer.
- Extension of Marshside: Agreement was reached between RSPB and Sefton council on extending RSPB management to a much larger area of marsh to the west of the Coast Road at Marshside. This will eventually form a very large RSPB reserve.
- Nature Conservation Strategy: Sefton Council has agreed with English Nature to sponsor a nature conservation strategy for the Sefton Coast, focusing on the Sefton Coast SAC. The strategy will be prepared on behalf of the Sefton Coast Partnership, working closely with all partners and local communities. A project officer has been appointed, working within the Council's Coast and Countryside Management Service, with the aim of completion by April 2007.
- Coastal Practice Network (CoPraNet – see www.coastalpractice.net):

The 'Coastal Practice Network' and is based on integrated coastal zone management, in particular focussing on the themes of coastal erosion, sustainable tourism at the coast and beach management.

A series of international workshops are taking place as part of the CoPraNet initiative; an Interreg IIIC West-funded project running from January 2004 to December 2006. The Planning, Implementation and Monitoring of Coastal Defences was the second workshop to be held by Sefton and took place in September 2005, with study visits up and down the North West coast.

- Visit by Dune Water Company of South Holland. The Dutch managers visited Ainsdale NNR on 20th October and went on to look at Ravenmeols, Newborough Warren and Sandscale Hawes.
- 'Another Place': Anthony Gormley's sculpture, "Another Place", was installed on Waterloo Beach in June 2005, and the installation was officially launched at a ceremony at the Crosby Baths. The sculpture comprises 100 life-size cast iron figures extending over the 3km expanse of Waterloo Beach. The installation has received national publicity, and has been well-received by residents and visitors.-, proving a very significant attraction.
- Offshore renewable energy National Wind Power's proposed Gwynt Y Mor wind farm has moved a stage further with the submission of the full Environmental Impact Statement in November 2005. The proposed installation is about 15 km off the N. Welsh coast and covers some 120 km², comprising approximately 200 turbines. The EIS can be viewed at the Planning Department offices, Balliol house, Bootle.

- Sefton Water Centre and Crosby Coastal Park: The MWRP-funded 'Progression Project' has been completed at a cost of approximately £270,000. This included a risk assessment (carried out by ARUPs) of the feasibility study carried out in 2004, and site works (carried out by Sefton Leisure Services) comprising a new lakeside path and associated works. The ARUP work provided the basis for taking the project further, and the Council is developing a partnership with the Greenbank Sports Academy in Liverpool, a local centre of excellence providing sports facilities for people with disabilities. A design brief has been finalised and architects will be appointed in early 2006. Consultations with local groups are proceeding, and Mike Booth, chair of Friends of Crosby Coastal Park has agreed to sit on the project steering group.

The Council is working with Mersey waterfront, Liverpool City and Wirral Council in a joint bid to the Big Lottery fund 'Living Landmarks' programme. The initial bid was submitted at the end of 2005.

- Coastal Conference : The Geography Department at Edge hill College Ormskirk hosted its annual conference focussing on the Sefton Coast carried out by students during the year with contributions from a number of experts - see note on Research Task Group below.

TV coverage:

Natterjacks at Ainsdale NNR were filmed for BBC2's springwatch in 2005. There was further coverage of Formby Point in the BBC 'Coast' programme. The programme featured Gordon Roberts and Dr Ann Worsley talking about the prehistoric footprints on Formby Beach. Another item covered the worst disaster in the history of the RNLI when in 1886 twenty seven men lost their lives rescuing twelve aboard the Hamburg trading barque the 'Mexico' in distress off the Southport coast and led to the loss of the Southport and Lytham lifeboats.

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‘A Snap Shot’

Task Groups	Nature Conservation & Shoreline Management	Access & Interpretation	Research	Lifelong Learning	Tourism & Communication	Sefton Coast Forest Plan	Archaeology/Local History
(2005) What we achieved	Nature Conservation & Biodiversity project officer appointed	Coastal Path Enhancement Scheme at Formby 80 percent complete	Sefton Coast Research Partnership established	Audit of current educational provision on the coast commenced	Coastal events celebrating ‘Sea Britain 2005’ were launched through a co-ordinated publication	The third operational year nearing completion – achievements in nearly all aspects of the plan due to be up to date by early 2006	Asparagus Project Completed. Practical surveying fieldwork completed through Liverpool Univ.
	Shoreline management: Crosby to Formby Point study co-ordinated with the River Alt strategy Regional monitoring strategy agreed by DEFRA		Research Strategy Completed		A Sefton Coast Tourism Development Plan completed, Leading to; Completion of Coastal Branding study. Visitor site monitoring	21 owners and 410 hectares out of a total 420 hectares on the coast under management through the Forest Plan	History/Archaeology web pages are being updated. St Lukes Churchyard, analysis of environmental material completed
(2006) What we plan to do next	Nature Conservation Strategy Issues report and stakeholder workshops in 2006	Complete Coastal path enhancement at Formby	Continue to promote research meetings And identify funding for specific research projects in Sefton	Co-ordinate sharing of educational information and marketing of the coast for educational visits	Complete study for Gateway sites at Formby Point & Ainsdale	Implement the fourth year of the Forest Plan and launch review at the 2006 Forum	Funding bid for research and interpretation on asparagus cultivation progressing. Co-ordinate events for National Archaeology week 15 th -23 rd July
	Shoreline management: Complete stage 2 of the Crosby to Formby Point study	Complete proposals for physical access improvements	Continue to collaborate with regional HEIs	Complete educational audit	Continue to progress the Southport Seafront Action Plan		Complete Investigation into possible human settlement, St Lukes Churchyard, Formby
	Continued maintenance of coastal defences. Collate existing information on coastal processes into a data base and electronic format	Commence a signage strategy following completion of branding exercise			Develop marketing, coastal publications and tourism website for the Sefton Coast. And continue with visitor site monitoring		Publish Coastal Heritage Conference Proceedings