

SEVERN ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP

Joint Advisory Committee Meeting

1pm, 10th October 2005
Walton Park Hotel, Clevedon



Minutes

Chair: Cllr Peter Tyzack

ACTION

Attendees (44):

Jonathan Andrews, Environment Agency
George Ashworth, Monmouthshire County Council & SEP MG Chair
Rhoda Ballinger, Cardiff University
Natasha Barker, SEP Officer
Mathew Boon, Environment Agency
James Clemence, Cardiff County Council
Cllr Andy Cole, North Somerset Council
Cllr Dr Cordwell, Gloucestershire County Council
Nicholas Crane, BBC Coast
Richard Dunn, Sedgemoor District Council
Deborah Dunsford, Environment Agency
Gillian Ellis-King, South Gloucestershire Council
Edith Evans, Glamorgan Bwent Archaeological Trust
David Fletcher, North Devon & Somerset Coastal Group & GOSW
Andy George, DEFRA
Cllr Ian Galloway, Somerset County Council
Vaughan Grantham, Cardiff City Council
David Harris, Severn Estuary Coastal Group Chair
Dr Peter Jonas, Environment Agency
Mike Jones, Environment Agency
Gary Kennison, Gloucestershire County Council
Steve Knowles, ASERA Officer
Martin Langdon, Lower Severn IDB
Mathew Lewis, Monmouthshire County Council
David Llewelyn, Bridgend County Borough Council
John Marks, Vale of Glamorgan Council
Donald McDonald, Bristol Channel Counterpollution Association
Jim Mitchell, Access & Interpretation Officer, Severn Estuary Partnership (SEP)
Rhys Morgan, Environment Agency
Lia Moutselou, SEP Assistant
Sue Munns, Environment Agency
Dr Neil Murdoch, Environment Agency
Cllr Mike Meredith-Edwards, Forest of Dean District Council
Rob Niblett, Gloucestershire County Council
Bob Nightingale, Stroud District Council
Charlotte Pagenham, English Nature
Michael Reep, North Somerset Council
Claire Stuckey, Country Land & Business Association
Ken Tatem, Environment Agency
Alan Titcombe, SW England Regional Development Agency
Cllr Peter Tyzack, SEP JAC Chair & South Glos Council
Cllr Chris Woodhouse, Monmouthshire County Council
Cllr Woodhouse

1 Welcome

1.1 Apologies for Absence

Bianca Bacchi, Wales Coastal & Maritime Partnership
Mabel Cheung, RSPB
Mark Cokayne, British Association of Shooting and Conservation
Frank Coleman, Vale of Glamorgan Council
Amy Dinsdale, NFU South West
Emily Forsythe, Crown Estate
Cllr M R Harvey, Vale of Glamorgan Council
Carolyn Heeps, Crown Estate
Tim Ive, Environment Agency
Carwyn Jones AM, National Assembly for Wales
Peter Lee, Sedgemoor District Council
Guy Mason, Environment Agency
Angela Newey, Gloucestershire County Council
Dr Conor O’Gorman, British Association of Shooting & conservation
Cllr Ray Truman, Newport City Council
Andrew Peterken, Bristol Channel Counter Pollution Association
Tony Prater, RSPB
Jonathan Reeves, Environment Agency Wales
Cllr Tony Shire, Somerset County Council
Vanessa Straker, English Heritage
Helen Thompson, GOSW
Dr David Tudor, Environment Agency
Cllr N Turner, Sedgemoor District Council
Rick Turner, CADW
Emma Watkins, Confederation of British Industries
Cllr A J Williams, Vale of Glamorgan Council
Anne Valdes, Newport City Council
Chris Wooldridge, Cardiff University
Deborah Yamanaka, North Somerset Council

1.2 Minutes of the last JAC meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the last meeting held on 18th April 2005 were agreed.
Matters arising would be dealt with during the meeting, following the guest speaker.

2 Guest Speaker: Nicholas Crane, BBC Coast

Nicholas Crane spoke about his experiences filming for the BBC Coast Series last year, which was broadcast this summer on BBC2, with particular reference to his experiences filming the two programmes covering the Severn Estuary. He referred to the dynamic nature of the Severn, the significance of its natural phenomena (e.g. the Severn Bore) and its national and international significance as one of the UK’s largest estuaries. The potential impacts of climate change along our shores were highlighted. He recognised the importance of working together in partnership and therefore the value of the Severn Estuary Partnership.

3 Joint Estuary Groups – Common Platform

3.1 Association of Severn Estuary Relevant Authorities (ASERA) progress report

Steve Knowles, ASERA Officer, reported from the morning's ASERA Management Group meeting. Separate minutes are available.

3.2 Severn Estuary Coastal Group (SECG) progress report

David Harris, Chair of the SECG, reported from the morning's SECG meeting. Separate minutes are available.

3.3 North Devon & Somerset Coastal Group (NDSCG) progress report

David Fletcher, Chair of the NDSCG, reported on the progress of the group. Terms of Reference and the finances of the group were being considered. Members had attended a coastal monitoring workshop at the end of June. Until the SMP2 got underway there was a limited amount for the group to do. DEFRA and the Environment Agency were reviewing the role of Coastal Groups. Live issues in their area included an application for dredging in Culver Sands and a 300ha managed realignment project at Steart Peninsula. The next meeting of the Group would be on 20th October. Minutes from the meeting to be shared with SEP.

NB/DF

3.4 Bristol Channel Counter Pollution Association (BCCPA) progress report

Donald McDonald from the Marine & Coastguard Agency & Chair of the BCCPA, had not attended the JAC before and welcomed the opportunity to report on the work of BCCPA. They attend to individuals and pollution at sea. The boundary of their responsibilities on the shoreline is unresolved and would be the subject of a meeting in mid November. They were looking for a suitable location for a shoreline response centre.

All partners

4 Management Group Update

4.1 Partnership Agreement

Natasha Barker, SEP Officer, provided an update on behalf of the Chairman of the Management Group, George Ashworth. Since joining the Partnership in June 2005, Natasha had been progressing ongoing work and observing the role and work of the Partnership with a new perspective.

The Partnership Agreement evolved from draft Terms of Reference for the SEP. Consultation responses illustrated that it had been considered as a formal legally-binding agreement. This was not seen to be achievable (in the current climate) therefore the Agreement had been modified to remove all references to liabilities and funding commitments. It was seen as operating procedures for the Partnership which recognised ten years of working together and an acknowledgement to continue to work in partnership. Partners were encouraged to sign it as a voluntary statement

of co-operation towards the work of SEP. It may then develop into a more formal Partnership Agreement in future. A Memorandum of Understanding was being progressed between Cardiff University and the SEP. The Agreement also provided a starting point to investigating the pros and cons of SEP being established as a charity/company. Existing partners were asked to sign by the end of 2005, with new partners at any time in the future.

**All
partners**

4.2 Annual Reporting

The Severn Estuary Strategy, published in 2001, covered 95 issues, over 100 policies and over 350 areas for action. Implementation of the Strategy was not formally monitored. Suggestions were made to SEPs Steering Group in March 2002 towards annual Action Plans. It was now proposed to initiate an Annual Report & Action Plan for approval at the next JAC meeting in Spring 2006.

SEP staff were undertaking preparatory work for the Annual Report & Action Plan, including identification of the SEP's audience, results of the last JAC meeting's issue prioritisation exercise and views from the COREPOINT workshop in July. It was proposed to provide a monitoring matrix to help monitor Strategy implementation. An outline contents list was available. Consultation with individual partners would be undertaken in early 2006 to help set priorities.

Prior commitments and ideas for the Action Plan 2006-07 included project work with COASTATLANTIC and COREPOINT, ongoing provision of Secretariat services, hosting the Les Estuiales European network, a new Severn Estuary Day and Forum, as well as outreach work with a Business Plan.

**NB & Mgt
Group**

4.3 Business Plan

The purpose of a Business Plan would be to market Partnership services to existing and new partners. It would demonstrate good value to partners and enable the SEP to reach a wider audience (e.g. industry). Audiences have been identified through a Communications Strategy (3 main categories: partners, public, internal SEP) with different format outputs from the Business Plan work to serve these three audiences (detailed report, summary flyer & service/project sheets).

A Suggestions Form was circulated to gather ideas and views on the proposed Severn Estuary Day, Annual Reporting and the Business Plan.

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4.4 Communications Strategy

Jim Mitchell, SEP Access, Interpretation & Communications Officer outlined the proposed Communications Strategy. Most of SEP's work is based around communication, being the only organisation focused on the estuary as a whole. The *Severn Tidings* newsletter had been re-vamped with a new image and was double the size. The Severn Estuary website www.severnestuary.net was being re-launched on 1st November. The Who's Who guide would be updated at a later stage.

**JM & Mgt
Group**

5 Project Work Updates

5.1 COASTATLANTIC

Jim Mitchell described progress with this 3 year project which has been underway for 2 years to look at the Atlantic coast with European partners. Key outputs for the Severn included the installation of new access gates and preparations for new interpretation boards at several sites around the estuary (Lydney, S Glos, Monmouthshire, Newport). An example of a new panel was presented in the display at the meeting, extending the new design style of the newsletter and website. The Access Forum had met and held useful discussions about new rights of way legislation under the CROW Act. A new access toolkit would be available through the project.

South Gloucestershire were progressing work in this project to promote local food (there was a display during the meeting) and work on archaeology and cultural heritage with guidance notes.

Steve Knowles described progress with nature conservation guidance notes that had been developed by a small working group. The Geographical Information Systems metadata project had been progressed by a GIS Forum and was nearing conclusion, with metadata to be made available on CD soon. An MoU had been signed by partners to share GIS data and a pilot project undertaken, to apply the GIS data to nature conservation and access 'hotspots'.

A bid for Aggregates Levy Sustainability Funding had been considered to further this work, particularly to support the CHAMP work to improve salt marsh and grazing marsh habitat. It was not progressing due to the need to demonstrate the link between dredging and estuary/inter-tidal habitats.

SEP team

5.2 COREPOINT

Rhoda Ballinger, Cardiff University Project Manager for this new European COREPOINT project illustrated progress with the project over the past 6 months and key areas of work over the forthcoming 6 months. This included a launch event in July with an 'expert surgery' considering priorities for the Severn Estuary and a free two day training course for local partners in Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM). Training materials maybe made available on the web and the ARFORDIR group of local authorities may offer another opportunity to attend this training course.

Cardiff University have undertaken research to review EC policies and programmes relating to ICZM, results of which are also available on the web. A review of international approaches to ICZM was being prepared, from which the section on local government could be circulated to partners.

Severn Estuary work on a Local Information System (LIS) and establishing a Research Forum and Strategy was planned for November 2005-2007. The LIS would build on the COASTATLANTIC project GIS work, not through the provision of new software but looking at the supply of information and common methodologies. For preparation of the Research

Cardiff
University
& SEP
team

Strategy a searchable database of relevant research institutes, publications and projects would be prepared and an estuary-wide Research Forum established by November 2006.

6 Planning Issues & Consultations

The JAC provided a platform for raising awareness and discussion of consultations of wide interest. Natasha Barker (SEP Officer) suggested a format in which planning issues & consultations could be discussed at future meetings. This would give partners an opportunity to share further information and if appropriate collaborate/campaign on common concerns.

All
partners

7 Any Other Business

The role of SCOSLA was briefly considered with a suggestion that the SEP was now providing the platform to convene meetings of local authorities.

It was agreed that the Partnership Officer would write to BBC to suggest a specific programme on the Severn for any new series of BBC Coast.

NB

The possibility of appointing a Patron(s) for the Severn Estuary Partnership was suggested, considering the championing role that someone like Nicholas Crane might do. Their 'publicising' role would need to be balanced by the JAC representing all interests. It was suggested that a paper outlining the role, relationships and potential candidates for a patron(s) be presented to the next JAC meeting.

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Suggestions for enthusiastic speakers and patrons were invited.

All
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8 Dates of Future JAC Meetings

Monday 24th April 2006 with ASERA and SECG meetings