



Strategic Business Plan 2011 – 2016

Foreword



The production of this Strategic Business Plan marks a new phase in the development of the Severn Estuary Partnership. Prepared and facilitated by the Partnership's staff team, with the guidance of partner organisations, the document sets out a clear direction for the organisation over the next five years. The document also restates clearly the various roles of the Partnership and how they relate to the aspirations of other organisations with an interest in the area. A separate Financial Business Plan will set out the resources necessary to deliver the aspirations of this document and the likely funding sources.

An enormous number of changes will occur in and around the Estuary during the lifetime of this Business Plan. Proposals for new nuclear power stations at Hinkley and Oldbury, plans for waste to energy plants, the possibility of harnessing the tides in the Estuary to generate electricity and a Management Scheme for the European Marine Site are all actively being considered. In addition the adoption of the new Marine and Coastal Access Act and the associated development of marine planning will have significant effects on the management of this cross-border Estuary. No matter how prepared the organisation is, or how many variables have been considered, it is therefore likely that something new and unexpected will arise, which it will have to address. I am confident, however, that should such a situation occur, the approach taken in this document will enable the Partnership to respond in a coordinated and effective way to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. In doing so it will not only enhance the effective management of the Estuary, but also guarantee that the organisation remains a viable mechanism for co-ordination and delivery.

I therefore commend this Business Plan to you and request that it is supported by your organisation as appropriate.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Tyzack'.

Cllr Peter Tyzack, Chairman, Severn Estuary Partnership

December 2010

Contents

Acronyms	4
1.0 Executive Summary.....	5
2.0 Introduction	7
3.0 Objective of the Partnership.....	7
4.0 Inputs to the Strategic Business Plan.....	8
5.0 Marketing Analysis.....	11
6.0 Organisational Status.....	14
7.0 Delivery of Key Roles.....	15
8.0 Promoting and Publicising the Estuary	19
9.0 Adding Value and Filling Gaps.....	21
10.0 Ensuring Effective Communication between Organisations and Individuals	23
11.0 Selling the Service	24
12.0 Resources	25
13.0 Action Plan	29
14.0 Timescales.....	36

Note: throughout the document the abbreviation 'SEP' has been used in place of Severn Estuary Partnership. It is used in the sense of the whole organisation, including both the partner organisations and the staff team.

All photographs, unless otherwise stated © Severn Estuary Partnership

Acronyms

ABP	Associated British Ports
ASERA	Association of Severn Estuary Relevant Authorities
BCSCG	Bristol Channel Strategic Coastal Group
BCSEG	Bristol Channel Standing Environment Group
COREPOINT	Coastal Research Policy Integration
CPN	Coastal Partnerships Network
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
GEMS	Group of European Marine Sites (Wales)
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
IDB	Internal Drainage Board
IMCORE	Innovative Management for Europe's Changing Coastal Resource
JAC	Joint Advisory Committee
MACE	Marine and Coastal Environment
MMO	Marine Management Organisation
MPA	Marine Protected Area
NDSCG	North Devon and Somerset Coastal Coastal Group
SCOSLA	Standing Conference of Severnside Local Authorities
SECG	Severn Estuary Coastal Group
SEP	Severn Estuary Partnership
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government
WCMP	Wales Coastal and Maritime Partnership
YoCCo	Young People's Climate Change Project

1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 The Severn Estuary Partnership (SEP) is an independent, estuary-wide initiative coordinated by local authorities and statutory agencies, but involving all those interested in the management of the Estuary, from planners to port authorities, fishermen to farmers. It was set up in 1995 to promote the sustainable management of the Severn Estuary and its surroundings; enhancing and protecting the area for the benefit of the community, the environment and the economy.

1.2 It has been a very active organisation over the last fifteen years, delivering, for example, the *Strategy for the Severn Estuary* in 2001; at the time a leading example of strategic estuary planning. In doing so it has played an important role in communication facilitation and been a 'neutral platform' for estuary wide debate. SEP has also been active at a European level, working with a variety of estuary and coastal managers on projects such as Les Esturiales, COASTATLANTIC, COREPOINT and the more recent IMCORE and DELTANET projects. Given the current economic climate, there is an increasing need to focus partnership activities and ensure a clear direction is established and followed.

1.3 Over the last two years there has been an opportunity to review the success of the organisation and to refresh aims and activities. This new Strategic Business Plan, setting out the aspirations of the organisation over the next five years from 2011 to 2015, is the result of that process.

1.4 During 2009 five key roles for SEP were confirmed by the Management Group and the Joint Advisory Committee, refreshing earlier aspirations. These roles, which SEP needs to deliver, in order to ensure the sustainable management of the Severn Estuary, are to:

- Facilitate effective communications across and between organisations and individuals with an interest in the Estuary
- Establish and embed a set of common principles¹ for sustainable estuary use via Partners' strategies, policies and action plans
- Act as a coordinating body to assist the effective and efficient delivery of agreed estuary-wide actions
- Promote and publicise the Estuary at a local, national and international level
- Add value and fill gaps in effective estuary management, providing extra capacity when required.

1.5 The implementation of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 changes some aspects of SEP's activity; but delivering the commitments to an ecosystem approach and integrating planning and management in cross-border areas such as the Severn Estuary will remain a challenge. It is apparent that the coordinating role of the Partnership is going to be needed more than ever. The organisation therefore has a clear responsibility to ensure it is

¹ Including the ICZM principles

adequately resourced to deliver its immediate objectives, however, it also needs to review the existing condition of the estuary, keep a watching brief on current and emerging threats and opportunities and highlight priorities for research and action.

1.6 The Strategic Business Plan needs to be a 'live' document which is updated and rolled forward on an annual basis and this is considered to be a key role for the Joint Advisory Committee meetings. *It is important to note that this document is a plan for the organisation, not a plan for the Severn Estuary, which remains the Strategy for the Severn, published in 2001.*

1.7 It must also be recognised that the Strategic Business Plan is a plan for the whole of the Partnership; that is the main funding partners, together with membership organisations and individuals. *It is not simply a plan to guide the activities of the Staff Team, though SEP staff will take a lead in some areas and deliver many actions directly.* The entire resources of the Partnership need to be engaged to deliver the aspirations.

1.8 This document was the subject of a number of consultations during the latter part of 2009, including two workshops at Joint Advisory Group meetings in Clevedon and Chepstow, before being formally adopted by the SEP Management Group. (Meeting minutes and workshop outputs available on request).

1.9 The priority actions for SEP over the next five years, as identified during the process of producing this Strategic Business Plan, are set out in the Action Plan at the end of this document. *There are 50 actions, separated under 8 headings that collectively deliver the key outcomes required by the Partnership.*



Figure 1. Plain sailing on the Waverley Paddle Steamer (© SEP)

2.0 Introduction

A Strategic Business Plan helps an organisation assess future opportunities and commit to a particular course of action. The aim of this Strategic Business Plan is, therefore, to clarify SEP's future direction; making it a robust and effective organisation capable of delivering significant outcomes on behalf of partner organisations and the wider Estuary community.



Figure 2. Signposting on the north shore (© SEP)

By committing the plan to paper, the organisation is aligned to key activities. The plan will enable milestones to be assigned to specific organisations and will ultimately help to monitor progress. Once drafted, the plan can be disseminated quickly and should prompt further questions and feedback by external bodies, thus helping to ensure the production of a collaborative document that is well integrated with the priorities of partners and members.

This document will form part of a suite of documents, namely:

- Strategic Business Plan - covering a 5 year timescale
- Financial Business Plan - examining income and debt over 5 years
- Annual Action Plan - a tactical business plan looking forward 12 months
- Working Business Update – a quarterly review of budgets and cash flows to be presented at Management Group meetings.

This plan builds on previous short-term Business Plans, the first in 1995 and the last in 2006, which covered the three years from 2006 to 2009. An Annual Report and Action Plan were also produced from 2006 through to 2009 proving an update of the progress made by SEP in implementing the *Strategy for the Severn Estuary* and the 2006-2009 business plan.

The production of this Strategic Plan has been informed by discussions with a wide range of organisations and by an initial analysis of the delivery of actions identified in the Strategy for the Severn Estuary, published in 2001.

3.0 Objective of the Partnership

The Severn Estuary Partnership (SEP) is an independent, estuary-wide initiative coordinated by local authorities and statutory agencies, but involving all those interested in the management of the Estuary, from planners to port authorities, fishermen to farmers. It was set up in 1995 to promote the sustainable management of the Severn Estuary and its surroundings. Its main area of interest to date has been the nearly 400 square kilometres of

the Estuary between Hurlstone Point, near Minehead, on the English coast, Nash Point on the Welsh Coast and the limit of tidal influence at Haw Bridge near Gloucester.

Given that the national boundary between England and Wales runs down the centre of the Estuary, SEP plays a vital role in ensuring that there is an integrated approach to the management of the area that brings together the activities of the organisations and individuals with responsibilities and interests in the area. This role is especially valid in the light of the Marine and Coastal Access Act and the proposals it contains for coastal and marine planning and management.

Since the early 1990s over 50 coastal partnerships have been set up around the UK. These partnerships have developed mainly as a response to local interests and concerns and rely on informal funding arrangements. Although essentially voluntary groups, partnerships deliver many Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) objectives.

It should be noted that SEP's remit covers all three elements of sustainable development, namely environmental, social and economic development.

It is also important to remember that SEP has consistently maintained a neutral position in relation to issues affecting the Estuary. This neutrality is a key strength and enables the organisation to concentrate on facilitating equitable debate when such issues arise. It also frees SEP to comment on processes and systems and their effectiveness.

4.0 Inputs to the Strategic Business Plan

The previous SEP Manager visited a large number of organisations with an interest in the Estuary, both members and non-members of SEP, in order to scope the background material for a new plan. Four inputs were used to set the context for the new Strategic Business Plan:

- Partnership Review (SEP Manager meetings)
- Review of *Strategy for the Severn Estuary* (2001)
- Direction from Partnership as a whole (JAC workshop)
- Professional advice from Staff Team.

4.1 Lessons from the Partnership Review

All those involved in the initial scoping one-to-one and small group discussions with the SEP Manager felt that the organisation had a useful function to play in relation to estuary management, but it was not always immediately clear what its role, functions and structure were to all stakeholders. Consequently a consistent and clear set of messages were considered necessary. These have been addressed by developing and confirming five high level objectives and by using a common set of slides to outline the services SEP provide.

One specific point was that SEP should ensure that it was not seen as a purely environmental organisation and that, in line with the principles of sustainable development, environmental, social and economic interests should be considered equally.

4.2 Review of Severn Estuary Strategy

The activities of SEP complement the work of other organisations around the Estuary and provide a focus on the Estuary as a whole. As a non-statutory organisation, SEP relies on the appropriate agencies, organisations and individuals working together in cooperation to deliver the objectives of the Strategy for the Severn Estuary. The main objectives of the *Strategy for the Severn Estuary* were to:

- Provide a detailed overview of estuarine themes
- Highlight issues and opportunities that need to be addressed to ensure the future well-being of the Estuary
- Outline policies to address the issues and opportunities, with detailed background and justification
- Outline proposals for action to act as a catalyst for the preparation of agreed action plans, to address the issues and opportunities
- Support and inform the policies and decision-making framework of existing regulatory, statutory, private and public sector organisations
- Influence organisations, such as those within the voluntary sector and commercial and industrial sectors, to use the Strategy document to inform their own policy statements and work plans
- Act as an overarching document for Local Environment Agency Plans around the Estuary (now ceased).



Figure 3. Saltmarsh on the North Shore (© Natural England)

There has been no overall review of the Strategy for the Severn Estuary since its publication in 2001, but partial reviews of the delivery of actions have been incorporated into previous SEP Business Plans, Annual Reports and Action Plans. In autumn 2009 SEP therefore undertook a wide-ranging review of the Strategy, producing a new database of the 'Proposals for Action' in each section of the Plan. Proposals were divided into various categories, namely: completed, not completed but still relevant, not completed, but no longer relevant and ongoing. Initial indications suggest that the Strategy has been largely successful with most agreed actions having been delivered. Over all the topics, 102 policies and 343 actions have been set. These have been committed to by the organisations and individuals with an interest in the Estuary.

To date organisations which have been consulted to establish the relevance and success of the document include ABP, ASERA, Bristol City Council, IDB, Dwr Cymru, Environment Agency, Gloucester City Council, Gloucestershire County Council, Newport Council, North Somerset Council, Sedgemoor District Council, Somerset County Council and South Gloucestershire Council. Of all those stakeholders who have provided feedback; 46% of their actions have been completed, 17% have not been delivered but are still relevant, 12% have not been delivered and are no longer relevant (and 25% are still unknown, pending additional information).

Those proposals for action that have not been delivered and are still relevant to the role of SEP, as an organisation, have been incorporated in this Strategic Business Plan (listed in the Action Plan, Section 13). Other outstanding proposals which do not fit with SEP roles as recently defined, or are unlikely to be delivered in the five year period covered by this document, by either the Partnership as a whole or the SEP Staff Team, have been discounted.

4.3 Direction from the Partnership

The Joint Advisory Committee meetings in 2009 and 2010 confirmed the broad direction of this Strategic Business Plan, through a number of workshop sessions. The biannual JAC meetings will also provide an opportunity to report on the delivery of this Strategic Business Plan and seek advice and guidance on the annual 'roll forward' of the document, keeping it up to date and relevant. On behalf of the wider Partnership, the Management Group will sign off the Plan each year and monitor progress, producing an Annual Report for a general audience and ensuring that this is distributed widely.

4.4 Advice from the Staff Team

The SEP Staff Team have either inherited, or developed, a number of actions in line with the objectives set out in the *Strategy for the Severn* and these have been taken into account in the preparation of this Plan. The actions for the Team are reflected in their individual Work Programmes.

5.0 Marketing Analysis

5.1 Complementary Organisations at Local Level

SEP has been in existence for over 15 years and remains the only organisation solely concerned with the sustainable and holistic management of the Severn Estuary as a whole. The importance of this role has been confirmed by its continued existence, though as noted earlier, resources available for delivery have varied substantially over the years. It is not, however, the only organisation with a remit in this area, other bodies, notably the Environment Agency, have both an English and Welsh remit and are charged with delivering many actions that are relevant to the work of the Partnership. Organisations, such as local authorities and indeed statutory organisations, such as the Countryside Council for Wales and Natural England, have more prescribed geographical and legal remits in relation to the Estuary, but still share common objectives with SEP.

There are also a number of other partnerships that are focussed on the Estuary and its surroundings, including:

- Association of Severn Estuary Relevant Authorities (ASERA) – set up to develop a single Management Scheme for the Severn Estuary European Marine Site.
- Standing Conference of Severnside Local Authorities (SCOSLA) - provides a forum in which local authority members can meet to exchange information and debate matters of common concern.
- Severn Estuary Coastal Group (SECG) - works to promote sustainable shoreline management, and to facilitate the duties and responsibilities of local authorities and other organisations managing coastal protection and flood defence issues around the Severn Estuary.
- North Devon and Somerset Coastal Advisory Group (NDSCG) – like SECG group this also works to promote sustainable shoreline management.
- Bristol Channel Strategic Coastal Group (BCSCG)- a strategic, voluntary, regional coastal group, comprising all the key partners in coastal management- principally the coastal managers from maritime Local Authorities, Port Authorities and the Environment Agency. Other interested parties such as Natural England/ Countryside Council for Wales and English Heritage/ CADW are also members. BCSCG steers the activities of the local coastal groups (SECG, NDSCG and the Swansea Carmarthen Bay Coastal Engineering Group), particularly in respect of local coastal processes and River Basin Management Plans.
- Severn Rivers Trust- is an independent environmental charity established to secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of the rivers, streams, watercourses and water bodies in the Severn catchment, and to advance the education of the public in the management of water and the wider environment.
- Bristol Channel Standing Environment Group (BCSEG)- provides environmental advice in the event of a major pollution incident.

These partnerships cover elements of SEP interests, though not all the organisations involved in these groups are also members. It should be a target to encourage all organisations involved in these groups to also join SEP as the 'umbrella' organisation for the Estuary.

5.2 Complementary Organisations at National Level

At a national level SEP is a member of the Coastal Partnerships Network (CPN). CPN exists to encourage the exchange of information and debate between Coastal Partnerships on a regular basis, linking them to the wider field offering increased opportunities for learning and influence. It therefore works at a national level and SEP needs to use this network more effectively in order to promote its activities and share best practice with other coastal partnerships. One of CPN's core roles is to provide a common platform for coastal partnerships in relation to communications with national organisations, including; Defra, Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) and the new Marine Management Organisation in England. Such discussions will become increasingly important to SEP, as a cross-border organisation, in the light of the implementation of the Marine Act.

In Wales, SEP is an active member of the Wales Coastal and Maritime Partnership (WCMP). WCMP provides advice to the Welsh Assembly Government on sustainable development issues affecting the coast and seas of Wales, as well as facilitating the exchange of information and dissemination of good practice. WCMP also host a marine planning sub-group advising WAG on the approach to marine planning in Wales, SEP actively participates in this group. SEP, through its secretariat role for ASERA, also participates in the Group of European Marine Sites (GEMS), which represents all Welsh European Marine Sites.

5.3 Consultancy and Contacts

The independent nature of SEP enables it to have a freedom of action which is more restricted in statutory organisations. Because of this SEP has often been contracted to deliver services or develop projects which require a more flexible and timely approach than could be delivered through any one partner organisation. Notable examples include the development and maintenance of websites and facilitation for the Severn Estuary Coastal Group and the Environment Agency's public consultation work on Shoreline Management Planning and Flood Risk. There are therefore numerous opportunities for the Partnership to offer services to other organisations concerned with the Estuary, in effect acting as a consultancy. This has been a marginal element of the organisation's work to date, but has brought in additional funding, which is currently supporting a significant proportion of staff costs.

It is critical however, given the relatively small resource base of the organisation, that SEP does not duplicate the work of other organisations. It is in existence to add value, not duplicate. Although there may be times when it may bid for contracts against other organisations with an interest in the area, this should not be at the expense of its core principles of facilitating equitable communication and joint working.

SEP maintains and manages a substantial database of contacts in which it invests a significant amount of staff time, ensuring that the data is up to date and relevant. This is an important resource which SEP can use to best effect and represents an asset when the organisation is bidding for communication and consultation contracts. Further investment is, however, needed to refresh the structure and additional staff time is needed to maintain and review the contacts database; ensuring that it remains a valuable tool in effective estuary management.

SEP also develops and maintains a number of websites under the Severn Estuary Gateway Portal at www.severnestuary.net. These include the SEP website itself and websites for the Association of Severn Estuary Relevant Authorities, Severn Estuary Coastal Group, the Severn Estuary Flood Risk Management Strategy and the Bristol Channel Standing Environment Group.

5.4 Membership and Involvement

Many organisations around the Estuary still remain unaware of SEP and its role. More therefore needs to be done to identify and contact these organisations and explore opportunities for working together. In particular there is a need to show how SEP can help deliver the objectives and strategies of partner organisations more clearly; this would assist with bids for additional funding.

A Membership Scheme was developed in 2008 and a number of leaflets printed to publicise the opportunity, but the approach needs further development as many of the suggested membership categories overlap and the benefits of membership itself are not clearly stated. It is, however, considered that such a scheme is essential in developing closer working between the organisations in the estuary and SEP. The scheme also brings in a small amount of funding, which can be used to develop projects and initiatives. The membership scheme was therefore revised and re-launched at the 2010 Severn Estuary Forum resulting in several individuals, private sector organisations, NGOs and Town, Parish and Community Councils recently joining SEP.

Two-way communications with Community, Parish and Town Councils are extremely important in ensuring that there are strong links between the strategic objectives for the Estuary and the aspirations of local communities. To date there have been minimal resources directed towards involving the Community, Town and Parish Councils in estuary management. A letter sent by the SEP Manager to all 300 such organisations around the Estuary in 2009 revealed potential to become involved in SEP's activities. A number have already joined and plan to attend SEP events. It should be a target therefore to encourage all such Councils to join as formal members of SEP. As some communities have very limited funds and are essentially run as voluntary organisations, a sliding scale of membership may be appropriate.

The Management Group is made up of those organisations that provide over £1,000 of funding per year. This is limited at present to local authorities and statutory agencies. To be fully comprehensive, the remaining local authorities and statutory agencies should be encouraged to join SEP and the benefits of becoming involved at this level need to be stated more clearly. In addition, it is notable that industrial, non-governmental organisations and

user groups are absent from the Management Group, something which is considered to be essential if SEP is to be fully representative of estuary interests. Efforts should be made to address this.

Summary of Actions

5/1 Encourage all organisations that are members of ASERA, SCOSLA, SECG and BCSEG to also join SEP as the coordinating body for the Estuary

5/2 Agree a joint working approach with the Severn Rivers Trust and explore the potential for complementary activities in the Estuary

5/3 Actively support the Wales Coastal and Maritime Partnership and the Group of European Marine Sites

5/4 Actively support the Coastal Partnerships Network and help shape the messages to national organisation

5/5 Develop a more focused consultancy role and establish clear protocols for this to ensure that SEP continues to add value to existing activities.

5/6 Update contacts database

5/7 Continue to publicise SEP to organisations around the Estuary and explore opportunities for joint working, while encouraging new members

5/8 Continue to encourage Community, Parish and Town Councils to join SEP

5/9 Continue to promote and publicise SEP's membership scheme

6.0 Organisational Status

The status of SEP is a critical factor in developing a Strategic Business Plan for the organisation. Currently the Partnership is a 'virtual organisation' – one where the partners allow the partnership to develop a separate identity, but do not create a distinct legal identity. Virtual organisations, like SEP, may look independent, with their own name, but one partner employs any staff and manages resources; in effect taking over the financial and legal responsibilities. There are risks with this approach in that responsibility and accountability within the partnership can be unclear. It can also be difficult to agree a formula for funding such partnerships.

In terms of the relationship with the host organisation, Cardiff University, both SEP and the University continue to benefit from the current arrangements (joint benefits paper available on request). SEP provides the School of Earth and Ocean Sciences with unique opportunities for applied research, enhances the educational experience of students through training opportunities and helps to raise the profile of the School and Cardiff University, as a national and international leader in multi-disciplinary applied coastal research, at a time when universities are being encouraged to enhance their engagement activities. In return the

School provides SEP with office space, research advice, access to University administrative assistance and employs the Staff Team. This relationship, between SEP and the University, has recently been highlighted as best practice by the Welsh Assembly Government.

Summary of Actions

6/1 Clarify relationship between SEP and Cardiff University as the host organisation, based on the EARTH School strategic plan



Figure 4. Flat Holm (© SEP)

7.0 Delivery of Key Roles

7.1 Key Principles of the Partnership

The meeting of the Management Group in March 2009 confirmed five key roles for SEP, effectively refreshing its earlier aspirations, and these were confirmed by the Joint Advisory Committee meeting in May 2009. These roles, which SEP needs to deliver in order to ensure the sustainable management of the Severn Estuary, are to:

- Facilitate effective communications across and between organisations and individuals with an interest in the Estuary
- Establish and embed a set of common principles² for sustainable estuary use via Partners' strategies, policies and action plans
- Act as a coordinating body to assist the effective and efficient delivery of agreed estuary-wide actions
- Promote and publicise the Estuary at a local, national and international level
- Add value and fill gaps in effective estuary management, providing extra capacity when required.

² Including the ICZM principles

In order to deliver these roles SEP needs to instigate a number of actions. It is, however, important to distinguish between those actions that are the responsibility of the Partnership as a whole and those actions that can be delivered by the Staff Team. Importantly it must also be recognised that the numerous organisations around the Estuary are also delivering a vast number of actions and one of the aims of SEP must be to encourage their implementation so that they contribute to the sustainable management of the Estuary and its hinterlands.

7.2 Ensuring that ‘Principles’ for the Estuary are Delivered through Individual Strategies

As a non-statutory organisation, SEP has no legal ‘weight’ and has to ensure that its aspirations are delivered through being incorporated into the activities and documentation of its partners. To this end, SEP needs to actively input to consultations promoting its principles, whilst maintaining its neutrality. It also needs to encourage the inclusion of action points from the *Strategy for the Severn Estuary* into policy and strategy preparation. Not all strategic planning documents around the Estuary, for example, recognise the Estuary as a whole and the need for its integrated management. To ensure this takes place will require a refocusing of staff time.

7.3 Marine Planning

The implementation of the Marine and Coastal Access Act provides for a new system of marine planning, intended to be a key tool in helping the UK Government deliver its vision for the marine environment. In April 2009, the UK Government, Welsh Assembly Government, Northern Ireland Executive and Scottish Government published their joint High Level Objectives for the UK Marine Area. The Objectives will guide the development of policies to achieve sustainable development in the marine area and ‘help inform and educate the public, business and voluntary sectors’. The Act also creates a new marine planning system. Marine planning will be one of the major functions of the new Marine Management Organisation (MMO), which will have responsibility for preparing Marine Plans in England in accordance with the policies and objectives set out by the Government.

Under the heading ‘Planning At UK Borders’, the Implementing Marine Planning document published by Defra notes that: *‘The Bill requires administrations planning near the borders of their marine ‘region’ to notify each other of their intention to plan and then take all reasonable steps to achieve compatibility between plans that are adjacent to each other. This is so that each administration has as much notice as possible about what is happening, can prepare for their involvement in other plans, or perhaps decide to plan at the same time. This will be most beneficial in areas that are particularly difficult to manage such as cross-border estuaries and the Irish Sea. In such areas, because of the division of planning responsibility across the UK, there will always have to be two separate plans. However, although there is no legal responsibility for administrations to plan jointly or at the same time in areas which straddle a planning boundary, the MMO will seek to encourage as much co-operation with Devolved Administrations as possible so that closely-related plans are effectively joined-up. This will have great benefit for stakeholders during the plan preparation*

process. It will also benefit users if there is clear consistency between plans in adjoining areas.'

A consultation on Marine Plan Areas was undertaken in late 2009 and the SEP Management group responded to ensure that the Marine Plan Areas covering the Severn Estuary were logical and consistent with its aspirations. One way in which the MMO/ WAG have approached stakeholder participation in the development of Marine Plans is to set up 'advisory and consultative groups'. This approach could possibly build upon existing SEP activities, therefore SEP should continue to seek recognition from the MMO and WAG as a facilitator of engagement in the Severn Estuary. SEP also currently sit upon the WCMP facilitated marine planning group to advise WAG on its preparations for Marine Planning

In relation to the Solway Firth, the Scottish Parliament has written to the UK Government to indicate that it would be pleased to work with partners to treat the Solway as an integrated planning area. The Scottish and UK Governments have agreed to work on a concordat, which will be drawn up to address arrangements for cross-border working. Similarly the WAG and the MMO are looking to establish formal working arrangements through means of a concordat as set out in 'sustainable development for Welsh seas: our approach to marine planning in Wales' consultation paper. As such, SEP should continue to encourage the WAG and MMO to work closely and plan jointly for any marine plan area covering the Severn Estuary. SEP should continue aid this process through the participation in CPN and WCMP activities, in particular through participation in the Marine Planning Group facilitated by WCMP.

The recent *Consultation on marine plan areas within the English Inshore and English Offshore Marine Regions* proposes a number of areas, including an area known as *South West Inshore* an area of approximately 2,600 square kilometers on the south side of the Severn Estuary / Bristol Channel. This is delineated by the 12 Nautical mile limit³, the national boundary between England and Wales and the boundary of the Bristol Channel Coastal Group, therefore is a combination of the Severn Estuary Coastal Group and the North Devon and Somerset Coastal Cell areas. In Wales, it is planned to have a National Marine Plan with regional marine plan options (which will be embedded within the national plan) currently being consulted on.

The MMO and WAG presented at the 2010 Severn Estuary Forum, where they emphasized the role of partnership working, particularly when engaging with the public.

SEP is also involved with *Finding Sanctuary* (<http://www.finding-sanctuary.org/>), a partnership project which aims to secure a healthy and productive future for the coasts and seas of South West England. Over four years, the project will work with stakeholders to design a network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). The Partnership also engages with the WCMP who are coordinating the Marine Conservation Zone project Wales. The goal of the MPA network is to safeguard the region's undersea habitats and marine life, and to help ensure the long-term sustainability of marine resources in the region.

³ Although this does not apply to the upper reaches of the Severn Estuary that are less than 24 miles wide

7.4 Coordinating Actions in the Estuary

7.4.1 Joint Estuary Groups Initiative

A key part of SEP's co-ordinating role is the secretariat work which it carries out for the Joint Estuary Groups Initiative which supports a number of related groups: the SEP Joint Advisory Committee, the Association of Severn Estuary Relevant Authorities (ASERA), the Bristol Channel Standing Environment Group (BCSEG) and the Severn Estuary Coastal Group (SECG). Having an overview of the work of these groups enables SEP to guide and advise their work effectively, avoiding duplication and overlap.

7.4.2 River Basin Management Planning

The Environment Agency, together with the Liaison Panel for the Severn River Basin District has produced a River Basin Management Plan for the Severn River Basin District. The plan describes what everyone has to do to improve the water environment over the next 20 years. The Management Plan covers a substantial part of the Severn Estuary, as far down as a line between Penarth and Weston Super Mare. SEP needs to input more actively into this ongoing process and ensure that the actions in the Plan are compatible both with the Severn Estuary Strategy and the actions in this Strategic Business Plan. The links between the management of the freshwater catchment and the Estuary need to be clarified and reinforced where necessary and the Water Framework Directive offers an excellent opportunity to do this.

7.4.3 Shoreline Management Plan and Flood Risk Management Strategy

The Severn Estuary Partnership has been actively involved in the development of both the Severn Shoreline Management Plan 2 and the Environment Agencies Flood Risk Management Strategy. The Partnership has added value to these plans through its continued secretariat work with the Severn Estuary Coastal Group and by aiding the collection and collation of public consultation data. Further information on the Shoreline Management Plan can be found at www.severnestuary.net/secg and further information on the Flood Risk Management Strategy can be found at www.severnestuary.net/frms

Summary of Actions

7/1 Research, develop and publish a concise State of the Severn Estuary report

7/2 Actively input to consultation drafts of relevant statutory documents

7/3 Respond to relevant consultations

7/4 Encourage the Welsh Assembly Government and UK Government to work in a cross-border manner in the Severn Estuary

7/5 Encourage the various organisations involved in the South West Inshore Marine Plan Area to support the Severn Estuary Partnership

7/6 Encourage the MMO and WAG to work together to produce any Marine Plan covering the Severn Estuary

7/7 Engage, where appropriate, with Finding Sanctuary and Marine Conservation Zone Project Wales

7/8 Meet with those bodies proposing new actions in the area to encourage the inclusion of the Strategy in the planning process

7/9 Continue to develop and strengthen the Joint Estuary Groups Initiative Secretariat

7/10 Input into Catchment Management Planning and Flood Risk Management for the Severn and encourage proposed actions to be compatible with the Strategy and SEP Strategic Business Plan

8.0 Promoting and Publicising the Estuary

The official website for Enjoy England www.enjoyengland.com has a 'destination finder' page on the Severn Estuary that focuses on the Severn Bore, with a slide show of three views across the Estuary (two of which relate to the bore) and lists attractions on the English shore. Apart from this there is no real focus on the Estuary by other tourism organisations, including Visit Wales, and certainly no promotion or publicity material that relates to the Estuary as a whole. Due to the 'edge effect', different parts of the Estuary are currently promoted separately by different organisations with a remit for the area. Neither is there any effort to ensure that the activities of existing interpretive and tourism providers complement each other, rather than duplicate, and they appear to work in isolation.



Figure 5. Information Panel on Severn Beach (© SEP)

This situation makes the continuing development of the Severn Estuary Gateway website (the only promotional tool covering the whole of the Estuary) and associated websites such as the SEP website itself, increasingly important. To date the website has concentrated primarily on organisational requirements, but there is a need to provide visitor and user information. There is also a growing demand from organisations around the Estuary to link

their website to the Gateway site, most recently from Parish, Community and Town Councils and this interest is likely to grow as smaller organisations make more use of the internet. There is therefore a need to review the role of Severn Tidings and other printed material and refocus these to encourage people to use the Severn Estuary Gateway. SEP should also consider the utilisation of social networking sites to promote and publicise the Estuary and work of the Partnership.

Despite this increasing use of the website, there is still the likelihood that proposals to promote and publicise the Estuary, by SEP and others, could be developed in isolation. In addition there is still a limited understanding of the role of SEP and how it relates to other organisations. It is therefore proposed to revise the Marketing Strategy for the Estuary. The aim being to set a context for growing tourism based on the Severn Estuary; through SEP working positively with the private sector and other partners, such as local authorities. It is also proposed to develop further the Communications Strategy for SEP itself, to ensure that its role is widely understood and appreciated.

While resources need to be directed at the internet to ensure that SEP's role and achievements are promoted, the importance of the printed word must also be recognised especially at a community level. The Partnership has therefore been continuously developing the Severn Tidings newsletter into a community focussed, public friendly publication to provide a conduit for information and to spread the message.

While these documents will help clarify the medium to long term actions necessary to raise the profile of the Estuary and indeed the role of SEP there are a number of obvious and short term actions needed in this area of work which will not conflict with any future actions identified through the strategy process. These include the production of new promotional leaflets, both for the Estuary itself and for SEP, and the design of new display materials for use at shows and events.

SEP has initiated or supported the production and installation of a number of display panels around the Estuary and this approach needs to be encouraged through the production of a design guide to encourage other organisations to join in with the approach. A coherent strategy for interpretation needs to form part of the Marketing Strategy and the Communication Strategy.

There is also a need for a photographic archive of the Estuary which can be used to develop exhibitions etc. A start has already been made on one aspect of this with the development of a Flickr Group for the Estuary www.flickr.com/photos/severnestuary and this has been used successfully to update the websites, but professional standard photographs are also needed, as well as clear definitions of copyright rules.

Summary of Actions

8/1 Continue to develop and expand Severn Estuary Gateway and SEP websites , including the provision of social networking sites

8/2 Review the Communications Strategy for SEP, identifying the key messages and themes to be promoted across the organisation's work

8/3 Develop a clear Welsh Language Policy for the organisation, to meet the requirements of Cardiff University and the Welsh Language Act

8/4 Expand SEP website to provide visitor and user information

8/5 Modify e-news section of SEP website to enable targeted delivery of information

8/6 Develop an integrated Communication, Engagement and Marketing Strategy for the Severn Estuary

8/7 Advertise local tourism events throughout the summer months

8/8 Produce a new display on SEP and its activities for use at conferences and other similar events

8/9 Continue to produce a Biannual Newsletter, Severn Tidings, with a specific community focus

8/10 Update the photographic resources available on the Gateway website

8/11 Continue to support Flickr photographic site for the Severn Estuary.

9.0 Adding Value and Filling Gaps

Both adding value and filling gaps are key roles for SEP. They underline the additional value the organisation, and particularly the Staff Team, brings to the management of the Estuary and enables actions to be delivered in a co-ordinated way. At present SEP has, for instance, a contract with the Severn Estuary Coastal Group and the Environment Agency to deliver secretariat services and websites for the Shoreline Management Plan and Flood Risk Management Strategy for the Estuary.

SEP has been working with the Association of Severn Estuary Relevant Authorities to coordinate the production of the Management Scheme for the European Marine Site. Post the publication of the Management Scheme it is hoped that ASERA will continue to support SEP staff time to enable the SEP Scientific Officer to help implement the Scheme.

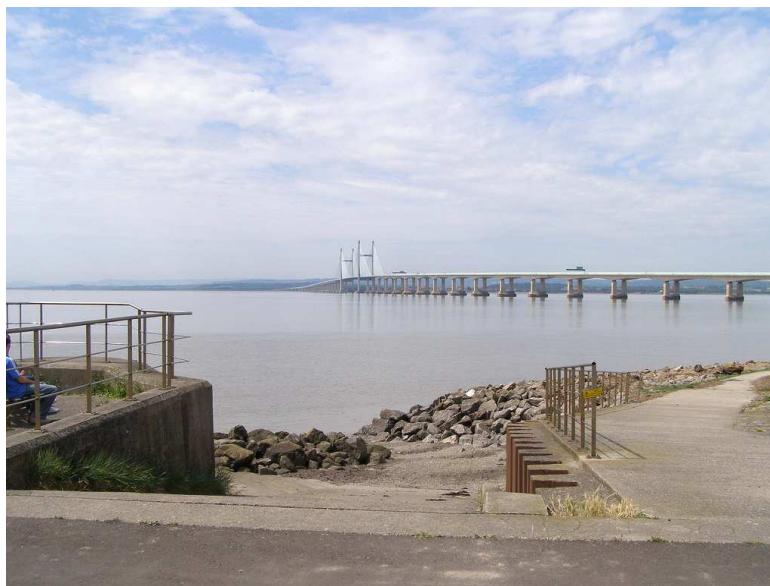


Figure 6. Sea Defences on the North Shore (© SEP)

SEP adds considerable value to Cardiff University by providing a platform for engagement with practitioners, the public and school pupils in the region. This is a symbiotic relationship in that partners of SEP are given access to examples of best practice and emerging concepts from a range of European and local projects.

There is a possibility of major alterations to the structure of the Estuary in the coming decades -to generate electricity from the power of the tides, climate change and the associated rise in sea level, as well as increased use of resources and space. It is not clear, however, what aspects of the area's rich heritage are valued by local people. The views of 'experts' and 'professionals' on what is important in the area only represent one side of the story and without knowing what the local community on both sides of the Estuary values, it will be difficult to protect it. It is proposed therefore, to develop a Severn Estuary Community Heritage Project aimed at engaging and inspiring local people of all ages, using the historic landscape, archaeology and natural environment of the Severn Estuary.

One project where SEP is already adding a considerable amount of extra capacity and knowledge is the INTERREG IVb IMCORE initiative. IMCORE stands for Innovative Management for Europe's Changing Coastal Resource. Funded under the INTERREG IVb Programme, the €6m IMCORE project is led by the Coastal and Marine Resources Centre in University College Cork until its end in late 2011. This project is developing a methodology and templates to assist coastal managers across NW Europe to develop adaptive strategies in the context of climate change (see www.severnestuary.net/sep/imcore/index.html). On the Severn, the project has helped synthesise climate change impacts through the production of report cards and has focused on the needs of spatial planners. Exploratory scenarios and adaptation guidelines for the Severn are currently under development.

SEP is also contributing towards the Beacons YoCCo project (2010-2011), which aims to change the way young people in the Severn Estuary and around Wales think about their role in a world with a changing climate. The project is jointly funded by the Beacons for Wales engagement programme and the Countryside Council for Wales. A number of schools workshops, an education pack and a young people's policy document are being produced that explore the implications of climate change and options for adaptation. For further details please see www.yocco.org

The DELTANET project (2010-2013) Interreg IVC project focuses on exploration of best practice in European Delta and Estuary Management. It aims to improve the effectiveness of regional development policies and related instruments; to foster improved environmental risk management through the development of appropriate spatial planning measures and to achieve these aims through exchange of inter-regional partner experiences and good practice. For more information, go to:
<http://www.severnestuary.net/sep/partnership/deltanet.html>

Summary of Actions

9/1 Assist delivery of the Shoreline Management Plan and Flood Risk Management Strategy outputs for Environment Agency

9/2 Continued provision of secretariat services for estuary groups

- 9/3 Continued provision links between academic projects and professional practice
- 9/4 Co-ordinate production of the Management Scheme for Severn Estuary European Marine Site
- 9/5 Explore the possibility of delivering a Community Heritage Project in partnership with Community, Parish and Town Councils
- 9/6 Facilitate delivery of workshops and input of expertise in support of the IMCORE project (funded)
- 9/7 Contribute to the Beacons YoCCo Forum & IMCORE education work by organising workshops, developing web resources and contributing to an education resource pack (funded)
- 9/8 Contribute to the DeltaNET project via attendance at workshops and organisation of final meeting (funded)
- 9/9 Continue to facilitate and improve consultation processes

10.0 Ensuring Effective Communication between Organisations and Individuals

There are a number of ways in which SEP can ensure effective communication occurs between the various organisations active in the Estuary, but probably the most important aspect is that SEP exists and by its ongoing activities, provides an underlying level of communication across sectors and areas. These ongoing activities include quarterly meetings of the SEP Management Group, biannual meetings of the Joint Advisory Committee and the annual Severn Estuary Forum meeting, which attracts a wide cross section of organisations and individuals and helps to maintain the momentum of the organisation. The Secretariat role that SEP also undertakes helps with effective communications, as SEP is well placed to see possible linkages between the work of various organisations in the area.

To date five Severn Estuary Fora have been held, the last in Bristol in October 2010. This event attracted over 100 delegates from a wide variety of organisations, together with a number of interested individuals and was judged to be very successful. Previous events were held in Gloucester in 2009, Penarth in 2008 and Clevedon in 2006 and 2007. All have been well received and considered an important part of the organisations' activities. The Forum takes a great deal of planning and consumes a substantial amount of staff time, especially during the preceding three months. In 2010 the Staff Team circulated 3,000 printed booking forms, over 1,000 targeted emails and used numerous other avenues to publicise the event. Staff are currently planning for the 2011 Forum event, which is to held on Friday 23rd September at Cardiff University. The Forum will focus on flooding in the Estuary and the energy sector. It is hoped that a presenter from the BBC's Coast TV series will be present to introduce footage of the Severn and help to lead discussions.

SEP can also effectively add capacity and provide an estuary-wide focus to neighbouring initiatives. One recent example of this is the formation of the Avonmouth and Severnside

Green Businesses Forum, the existence of which will aid SEP's engagement with the industrial sector and enable SEP to get across the messages about sustainable estuary management to a receptive audience, who are already acting as ambassadors for SEP in the sector.

Summary of Actions

10/1 Organise quarterly meetings of the SEP Management Group (two in England and two in Wales)

10/2 Organise biannual meetings of the Joint Advisory Committee (one in England and one in Wales)

10/3 Organise the annual Severn Estuary Forum, alternating between England and Wales

10/4 SEP to actively engage with and support neighbouring initiatives, as appropriate.

11.0 Selling the Service

SEP should ensure it acquires additional resources to guarantee it can deliver agreed actions. SEP also needs to be clear about what services it is offering and these should be focussed on the key roles outlined in Section 6. The concept of "adding value" must be at the core of service provision and the test by which resources are committed, since these are limited.

Having said this, there are opportunities for SEP to assist the work of partner organisations in the delivery of their objectives and this avenue needs to be further explored. A section of the website should be dedicated to outlining the role of SEP and the advantages of engaging it in the delivery of actions.

Summary of Actions

11/1 Explore how SEP can more effectively assist the work of partner organisations

11/2 Develop the website to include pages on what SEP can deliver both for individual organisations and the region.



Figure 7. Sunset at Clevedon Pier with the Severn Resources in the Background (© SEP)

12.0 Resources

It should be recognised that the Strategic Business Plan is a Plan for the whole Partnership; that is the main funding partners, together with membership organisations and individuals. It is not simply a plan to guide the activities of the Staff Team, though SEP staff will take a lead in some areas and deliver some actions directly. The whole resources of the Partnership need to be engaged to deliver the aspirations of the organisation. The debate on how to implement the agreed actions and subsequent outcomes in this Plan must include a discussion about the resources which individual partner organisations are prepared to commit.

The work of the Partnership is guided by a Joint Advisory Committee (JAC), comprising of representatives from a cross-section of organisations with an interest in the Estuary. The JAC is supported by a Management Group and a Staff Team, currently consisting of four posts; SEP Manager, Scientific Officer, Engagement Officer and a Communications Officer. In addition, student work placements regularly contribute to the work of the core staff team.

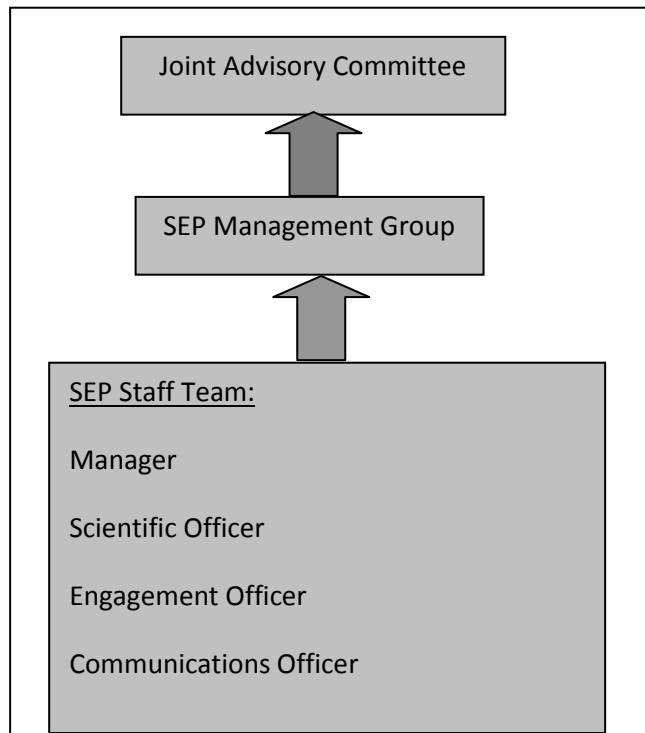


Figure 8. SEP Operational Structure

The knowledge and skills of the Staff Team include:

Knowledge:

- Understanding of physical, social and economic processes and an appreciation of the importance of an integrated approach to estuarine management
- Knowledge of legislation, policies and administration in both terrestrial and maritime environments
- Knowledge and experience of multi-agency partnership working
- Understanding of how regional and national Government operates
- Detailed working knowledge of conservation designations, in particular European Habitats and Species Directives
- Knowledge and experience of the voluntary sector

Skills:

- Proficiency in the use of IT packages, including databases
- Proficiency of web design and development
- Good written, visual and oral communications skills
- Proficiency of public engagement and event organisation
- Experience of sourcing and securing project funding, including European funds

- Project management skills and experience
- Financial management skills and experience.

The team skills are supplemented by those of staff from the School of Earth and Ocean Sciences, Cardiff University, responsible for teaching the well received degree courses in Marine Geography and Environmental Geoscience. University staff have, over the years contributed substantially to the development of SEP and taken every opportunity to promote and support the organisation's work. This has been cited as a case of good practice by the Welsh Assembly Government. In addition to assistance from the University, considerable additional knowledge and skills are available within the partner and member organisations.



Figure 9. 2010 Severn Estuary Forum in Bristol (© SEP)

The maintenance of the existing SEP databases is a critical business issue. Loss or damage of these would set the organisation's work back significantly. Accordingly a Business Continuity Plan and a Data Management Plan have been prepared to set out how data is backed up and where duplicate copies are stored in case of emergency. In the event of emergencies the intention is to provide facilities for staff to work remotely (either from home or from an alternative university or partner site), with full access to databases and phones, within a few hours of a situation arising. Such situations could include fire, theft, or prevention of access to the Main University building.

In terms of IT provision the Team currently has four desktop computers. In addition there is one laptop and one netbook available to the team. The Team is therefore well equipped in this respect. Software for emails, calendar etc, is based on IBM Lotus Notes which is the University's standard system, with access to Microsoft programmes for word processing, spreadsheets and database development.

Other office services, including financial management are provided as part of the hosting arrangement by the School and SEP pays a nominal sum per year to cover these. SEP also pays for its own photocopying and printing costs.

Summary of Actions

12/1 Encourage partner and member organisations to play a full role in the delivery of the Strategic Business Plan

12/2 Maintain the accommodation in Cardiff University, working closely with the MACE Group.

12/3 Maintain the core Staff Team

12/4 Ensure that provision of IT equipment is suitable for the agreed tasks

12/5 Maintain a comprehensive Business Continuity Plan and Data Management plan.

13.0 Action Plan

Ref	Action	Priority	Timescale	Outcome	Responsible Partner
Membership and Involvement					
5/1	Encourage all organisations that are members of ASERA, SCOSLA, SECG and BCSEG to also join SEP as the coordinating body for the Estuary	1	Year 1	Wider and more inclusive Partnership covering larger area	SEP staff
5/2	Agree a joint working approach with the Severn Rivers Trust and explore the potential for complementary activities in the Estuary	2	Year 1	Synergy with adjoining and overlapping organisation	SEP staff
5/3	Actively support the Wales Coastal & Maritime Partnership and the Welsh Group of European Marine Sites	2	Ongoing	Better coordination with Welsh initiatives	SEP staff and partners
5/4	Actively support the Coastal Partnerships Network and help shape the messages to national organisation	2	Ongoing	Better coordination with UK initiatives and policies	SEP staff
5/5	Develop a more focused consultancy role and establish clear protocols for this to ensure that SEP continues to add value to existing activities.	2	Ongoing	Maintains key funding source to support SEP staff team	SEP staff
5/6	Update contacts database	1	Year 1	Efficient and effective communication	SEP staff
5/7	Continue to publicise SEP to organisations around the Estuary and explore opportunities for joint working, while encouraging new members	2	Ongoing	Wider and more inclusive Partnership covering larger area	SEP staff

Ref	Action	Priority	Timescale	Outcome	Responsible Partner
5/8	Continue to encourage Community, Parish and Town Councils to join SEP	1	Ongoing	Wider and more inclusive Partnership	SEP staff
5/9	Continue to promote and publicise SEP's membership scheme	3	Year 3	Clearer membership structure and benefits	SEP staff
Organisational Status					
6/1	Clarify relationship between SEP and Cardiff University as the host organisation, based on the EARTH School strategic plan	3	Year 3	Stronger relationship with mutual benefits	SEP staff
Key Roles – Encouragement of delivery of estuary principles					
7/1	Research, develop and publish a concise State of the Severn Estuary report	1	Year 1	Clear understanding of estuary resource	SEP staff
7/2	Actively input to consultation drafts of relevant statutory documents	1	Ongoing	Partnership recognised as important consultee	SEP staff
7/3	Respond to relevant consultations	1	Ongoing	Fit with SEP aims	SEP staff
7/4	Encourage the Welsh Assembly Government and UK Government to work in a cross-border manner in the Severn Estuary	1	Ongoing	Coordinated approach to planning in a cross-border estuary	SEP staff
7/5	Encourage the various organisations involved in the South West Inshore Marine Plan Area to support the Severn Estuary Partnership	1	Ongoing	SEP recognised and supported by MMO as facilitation mechanism	All partners

Ref	Action	Priority	Timescale	Outcome	Responsible Partner
7/6	Encourage the MMO and WAG to work together to produce any Marine Plan covering the estuary	1	Ongoing	Coordinated approach to planning in a cross-border estuary	SEP staff
7/7	Engage, where appropriate, with Finding Sanctuary and Marine Conservation Zone Project Wales	3	Ongoing	New MCZs fit with SEP aspirations	SEP staff
7/8	Meet with those bodies proposing new actions in the area to encourage the inclusion of the Strategy in the planning process	1	Ongoing	Strategy continues to be effective	SEP staff
7/9	Continue to develop and strengthen the Joint Estuary Groups Initiative Secretariat	1	Ongoing	Effective partnership working	SEP staff
7/10	Input into Catchment Management Planning and Flood Risk Management for the Severn and encourage proposed actions to be compatible with the Strategy and SEP Strategic Business Plan	2	Ongoing	Source to sea management for the Severn	SEP staff
Key Roles – Promoting and Publicising the Estuary					
8/1	Continue to develop and expand Severn Estuary Gateway and SEP websites, including the provision of social networking sites	1	Ongoing	Improved provision of information	SEP staff
8/2	Review the Communications Strategy for SEP, identifying the key messages and themes to be promoted across the organisation's work	3	Year 3	Effective communications	SEP staff

Ref	Action	Priority	Timescale	Outcome	Responsible Partner
8/3	Develop a clear Welsh Language Policy for the organisation, to meet the requirements of Cardiff University and the Welsh Language Act	3	Year 3	Material for Welsh speakers provided on equal basis to English speakers	SEP staff
8/4	Expand SEP website to provide visitor and user information	2	Year 2	Focus on visitors and users	SEP staff
8/5	Modify e-news section of SEP website to enable targeted delivery of information	1	Year 1	More information delivered more effectively	SEP staff
8/6	Develop an integrated Communication, Engagement and Marketing Strategy for the Severn Estuary	1	Year 1	Clear and agreed approach to marketing	SEP staff
8/7	Advertise local tourism events throughout the summer months	1	Ongoing	SEP and Severn Estuary brand promoted by others	SEP staff
8/8	Produce a new display on SEP and its activities for use at conferences and other similar events	1	Year 1	Improved publicity and awareness of SEP	SEP staff
8/9	Continue to produce a Biannual Newsletter, Severn Tidings, with a specific community focus	1	Ongoing	Community issues circulated and understood	SEP staff
8/10	Update the photographic resources available on the Gateway website	2	Ongoing	Awareness of special qualities of estuary	SEP staff
8/11	Continue to support Flickr photographic site for the Severn Estuary	2	Ongoing	Comprehensive photo resource	SEP staff

Ref	Action	Priority	Timescale	Outcome	Responsible Partner
Key Roles – Adding Value and Filling Gaps					
9/1	Assist delivery of the Shoreline Management Plan and Flood Risk Management Strategy outputs for Environment Agency	1	Year 1	Management scenarios agreed and clear	SEP staff
9/2	Continued provision of secretariat services for estuary groups	1	Ongoing	Integrated working	SEP staff
9/3	Continued provision links between academic projects and professional practice	1	Ongoing	Promotion of best practice	All
9/4	Co-ordinate production of the Management Scheme for Severn Estuary European Marine Site	1	Year 1	Management issues identified and met	SEP staff
9/5	Explore the possibility of delivering a Community Heritage Project in partnership with Community, Parish and Town Councils	3	Year 3	Resource for communities to identify special qualities	SEP staff
9/6	Facilitate delivery of workshops and input of expertise in support of the IMCORE project (funded)	1	Years 1-2	Approach to climate change in coastal areas	SEP staff
9/7	Contribute to the Beacons YoCCo Forum & IMCORE education work by organising workshops, developing web resources and contributing to an education resource pack (funded)	1	Years 1-2	Improved awareness of climate change adaptation options for young people	SEP staff

Ref	Action	Priority	Timescale	Outcome	Responsible Partner
9/8	Contribute to the DeltaNET project via attendance at workshops and organisation of final meeting (funded)	1	Years 1-3	Improved delta/ estuary management experience exchange	SEP staff
9/9	Continue to facilitate and improve consultation processes	1	Ongoing	Improved consultation responses	SEP staff
Key Roles – Ensuring Effective Communications					
10/1	Organise quarterly meetings of the SEP Management Group (two in England and two in Wales)	1	Ongoing	Effective management of organisation	SEP staff
10/2	Organise biannual meetings of the Joint Advisory Committee (one in England and one in Wales)	1	Ongoing	Effective management of organisation	SEP staff
10/3	Organise the Severn Estuary Forum, alternating between England and Wales	1	Ongoing	Wider awareness of estuary and issues	SEP staff
10/4	SEP to actively engage with and support neighbouring initiatives, as appropriate	1	Ongoing	Improved industrial involvement	SEP staff
Selling the Service					
11/1	Explore how SEP can more effectively assist the work of partner organisations	2	Year 2	Synergy with partners aspirations	SEP staff

Ref	Action	Priority	Timescale	Outcome	Responsible Partner
11/2	Develop the website to include pages on what SEP can deliver both for individual organisations and the region	3	Year 3	Synergy with partners aspirations	SEP staff
Key Roles- Resources and Operations					
12/1	Encourage partner and member organisations to play a full role in the delivery of the Strategic Business Plan	1	ongoing	Support of core activities	SEP staff
12/2	Maintain the accommodation in Cardiff University, working closely with the MACE Group	1	ongoing	Support of core activities	SEP staff
12/3	Maintain the core Staff Team	1	ongoing	Support of core activities	SEP staff
12/4	Ensure that provision of IT equipment is suitable for the agreed tasks	1	ongoing	Support of core activities	SEP staff
12/5	Maintain a comprehensive Business Continuity Plan and Data Management plan.	1	ongoing	Support of core activities	SEP staff

End of prioritised actions.

14.0 Timescales

Annual Corporate Cycle

13.1 In order to maintain and keep this Strategic Business Plan up to date and relevant, as outlined elsewhere in this document a clear corporate year needs to be understood and agreed. The Management Group has already agreed a forward plan of meeting dates for the next two years and this forms the basis of the annual cycle of meetings. In relation to the review and updating of the Strategic Business Plan it is therefore recommended that the following approach is adopted.

Month	Event	Action
January	SEP Management Group	Produce Annual Action Plan for coming year
April	SEP Management Group	Start of Business Plan Year and sign off Annual Action Plan
May	Joint Advisory Committee	Explanation of targets for year and request support
July	SEP Management Group	Review of delivery - targets and support
September	Severn Estuary Forum	Launch Annual Report covering previous year (with publicity)
October	SEP Management Group	Draft roll forward of Business Plan (new year 5)
November	Joint Advisory Committee	Input to Business Plan roll forward
December	SEP Management Group	Produce Annual Action Plan for coming year

13.2 Using this approach SEP should never need to produce another Strategic Business Plan, efforts being concentrated instead on keeping it current through the 'roll forward' and on the delivery of agreed actions.



Figure 10. Surfing the Severn Bore- All Heading in the Same Direction (© SEP 2010)

End of document.