



MINUTES OF THE ALDE AND ORE ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP HELD ON THURSDAY 26th MARCH 2015 IN ORFORD TOWN HALL

PRESENT	Edward Greenwell (EG)	(EG)	(Chairman, Farmer Nominee)
	Guy Heald (GH)	(GH)	(Finance and Business)
	Alison Andrews (AA)	(AA)	(A&O Association Nominee)
	Richard Marson (RM)	(RM)	(Aldeburgh Town Council Nominee)
	Tim Beach (TB)	(TB)	(Snape Parish Council Nominee)
	David McGinity (DMcG)	(DMcG)	(Butley Parish Council Nominee)
	Brian Johnson (BJ)	(BJ)	(Boyton and Bawdsey Parish Council Nominee)
	Rodney West (RW)	(RW)	(Ecological Representative for RSPB, NT, SWT)
	Cllr Jane Marson (JM)	(JM)	(Landowner Nominee)
	Mike Finney (MF)	(MF)	(Rep Orford Parish Council in lieu of Peter Smith)
	Howard Nash (HN)	(HN)	(Rep Business Association in lieu of Barry Leach)
	Amanda Bettinson (AB)	(AB)	(Partnership Secretary)
ADVISORS	Karen Thomas (KT)	(KT)	(IDB)
	Gary Watson (GW)	(GW)	Environment Agency
	Emma Hay (EH)	(EH)	(Natural England)
	Haidee Stephens (HS)	(HS)	(SCHU)
IN ATTENDANCE	Frances Barnwell (FB)	(FB)	(Secretary AOET)
APOLOGIES	Barry Leach (BL)	(BL)	(Aldeburgh and Orford Business Associations Nominee)
	Bill Parker (BP)	(BP)	(SCDC)
	Peter Smith (PM)	(PM)	(Orford and Gedgrave Parish Council Nominee)
	Lizzie Hammond (LH)	(LH)	(Householder Representative)
	Jane Burch (JB)	(JB)	(SCC)
	Andrew Hawes (AH)	(AH)	(Hawes Associates- Partnership Consultant)
MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC			Angela Sydenham (Chairman of AOET) David Barnwell

1. There were no declarations of interest **ACTION**
2. **SAND/SHINGLE ENGINE** - Alison Andrews updated the partnership on the Shingle Engine conference organised by the Crown Estates. This is a new form of coastal protection which works with natural processes, a method pioneered in the Netherlands. Should this be used at Slaughden, it would involve placing a huge quantity of shingle (sourced from the centre of the North Sea) in a peninsular form off the coast. Over time the original bulk would diminish but the material would move with the natural drifts along the shoreline and add to the natural deposits. It is designed to last for some 20 years and would avoid annual recharging of defences. It also provides new land for leisure activities (e.g. kite flying) and new habitat possibilities and so could enhance the economy of an area. Although this type of scheme appears very positive there are many issues yet to be explored including high initial cost, funding, durability of shingle rather than sand, land ownership and much more. The AOEP and EA will keep in touch with developments.
3. **PREVIOUS MINUTES** – were agreed.
4. **MATTERS ARISING**
 - i) **Footpath Trial** Jane Burch had emailed an update on the footpath trial at

Martlesham. The repairs to the wall, creation of spillways and footpath surfacing will be complete in the next 2 weeks. The path runs behind the sewage works off Sandy Lane, Martlesham (TM2590447304) to Kyson Point (TM2709247426). SCC are in the process of developing appropriate signage and arranging a web based survey monkey for public feedback and face to face interviews (at least 100 people) on the surfacing. For safety reasons the RoW team will temporarily close the path when extreme tides are predicted and overtopping is likely. SCC are also arranging for an independent engineer to monitor the performance of the wall/surfaces after each overtopping event. An initial report, on the background to the trial and the technical and construction details, is being written up by Andrew Hawes and JB to be available next month. Members of the AOEP will be invited to a 'launch' event to view and assess the site in early May (post-election). Haidee Stephens suggested that AONB volunteers could be used to assist with the volunteer feedback.

ii) **Boyton – FC1** David McGinity had raised the issue of AOEP policy on allowing land to be flooded. EG explained that it would not be possible to continue to defend every length of wall and there was a legal requirement to abide by the Habitat Regulations to avoid losing intertidal habitat from sea level rise and coastal squeeze. The Strategic Approach adopted by the AOEP at their first meeting had been careful to allow this possibility. By including a cill or breach in the wall at Boyton (which ever scheme is eventually decided) the whole estuary would benefit during a surge tide as it would allow water to overtop and take the pressure off other estuary walls. Until the data assessments of the upper reaches are available on both Butley and Snape, it will not be possible to agree how much intertidal land will be required. Flood defence work and planning consents will help to achieve our aims. EG agreed to contact RSPB and Richard Pipe to enquire about plans for hydrodynamic assessments and to ensure that the AOEP were involved.

EG

iii) **Butley FC2** – wall height. Gary Watson agreed to produce the final wall height for this flood cell.

GW

iv) **Slaughden** – the EA are discussing with Natural England the possibility of extending the shingle recharge licence. The beach levels have risen and EA/MMO are in discussions about a scheme on Slaughden frontage subject to available funding. With the State of the Nation funding (made available after the 2013 surge) it is hoped to repair work to the Aldeburgh wall on FC10 and fund the Slaughden frontage scheme.

5.

ENABLING DEVELOPMENT

i) **The Landscape Partnership (TLP) quote.** It was noted that over and above TLP's quote there would be land agents, architects and engineering fees. It was felt some items on the quote looked high and it was questioned whether a further quote should be sought but EG and AJB would be discussing this with the Estuary Trust the following day. It was appreciated that potentially either the landowner, prospective buyer or the Estuary Trust could be applying for planning permission and the actual system to achieve the sale has still to be agreed in detail. It was also noted that full planning permissions would not be applied for until the Estuary Plan was through the Sustainability Appraisal and well on the way to be endorsed and adopted by the County and District Councils and the RFCC (probably towards the end of the year).

EG/AJB

ii) **Quality Control on housing.** There was a useful discussion on how to encourage the best possible design. It was recognised that there was little control on the East Lane Trust sites which had been a problem. It was made clear that it would be for the Estuary Trust to exert any influence and control when marketing the sale of the sites, assuming that they were landowner at the time and applying for planning permission. The sites still remain confidential to avoid any undue

concerns but at this stage there are no iconic sites visible from the Estuary.

Howard Nash (Architect with a local working knowledge of planning applications in Suffolk Coastal) fully endorsed the paper (Item 5ii) outlining the issues and agreed that the planning authority were not always able to legislate effectively to ensure quality design. One possible way round this was for the Estuary Trust to advertise for *expressions of interest* from developers prior to marketing the sites and then choose the developer with a proven track record to enable the best possible creative housing designs.

Frances Barnwell, speaking for the Estuary Trust, agreed that the Trust would like to see the best possible designs but their two constraints were that they needed to sell the land for the best possible value and constraints may affect the sale value and enforcing any conditions would not be financially possible. Brian Johnson (a retired architect) noted that it was important to present good designs to the Planning Authority in the first place which were tied into to the local needs in each Parish. A further dialogue with SCDC (after the election) may be required to ensure that their guidelines for Enabling Development would be enforceable as a material consideration once adopted. It was noted that SCDC would be most unlikely to allow outline planning applications for enabling development, and a detailed application would have to show indicative plans and elevations of the proposed design. Jane Marson noted that all new councillors would receive training on a number of issues including enabling development for flood defence.

The overwhelming aspiration of the Partnership was to ensure good quality design but also ensure that housing numbers could not be increased by developers once initial planning permission had been agreed and the site sold. The Partnership, being the sole Member of the Estuary Trust, hoped that the Trust would be able to ensure quality control. It was agreed that EG and AJB would discuss with the Estuary Trust and bring any decisions back to the Partnership at the next meeting.

EG/AJB

6. SNAPE UPDATE

i) Bill Parker had sourced a further £20K for the Snape wall but the land is still too wet for transporting the clay. The EA will have to apply for further flood consents again as the time of year is now different to the original consents and other wildlife will be at risk.

ii) Both the EA and Professor Pye are assessing the upper reaches data and it is hoped that the results will be available mid April.

iii) Jane Marson reported that she had discussed sites for storage of clay with the IDB, landowners and the EA and also excavation of sand which can be used immediately (whereas the clay needs to dry). Discussions are ongoing to agree exemptions to stockpile clay for emergency work as there is not enough locally for a large breach.

7. SALTINGS REPORT

DMcG noted that further faggots will be required in the autumn and volunteers will be needed to cut them locally. Trial sites were accreting well and a full report will be available for the next meeting. Local landowners will be approached for contributions towards funding the next projects. Other sources would be the County Councillors' locality budgets and Community Enabling Budget.

DMcG/HS

Haidee Stephens (AONB) discussed the Saltings conference which will be held towards the end of the year which will be an opportunity to share information and showcase the work taking place in Suffolk.

8.

FUNDING

Funding Group Jane Marson and Karen Thomas agreed to join the Funding Group which was set up some time ago. This group would be the core group to oversee statutory funding (from RFCC, County and District Councils etc), Enabling Development funding through the landowners, unlocking EU funding and charity event fund raising (exhibitions etc), and should always include representation from the Estuary Trust. This would cover capital funding for upgrading the walls and a regular revenue stream for ongoing maintenance.

LEP funding KT thought it would be useful to ask Rob Young from Waveney DC to address the Partnership and EG agreed to contact him. It was noted that the LEP tends to concentrate on urban funding and it would be important to show that jobs, growth and the local economy is just as important in rural areas.

EG

LEADER funding AJB informed the Partnership that it may be possible to apply for funding provided it is demonstrated that the project is important to the local rural economy (e.g. safeguarding jobs and tourism) details still yet to be announced. Funds of £10-40K are awarded but one of their drivers is to improve efficient use of water and enhanced flood risk management. This could possibly help in reservoir construction to save fresh water rather than just pumping it out to sea.

BIS funding the Partnership account will shortly receive £10,000 to be spent 'on developing businesses along the river to become more resilient'. It is hoped this may fund the bags of clay to be stored in the event of an emergency breach which can be helicoptered into place to immediately staunch the breach.

9.

The Partnership agreed to re-elect Richard Pipe to the Estuary Trust for a further 4 years.

10.

The next meeting has been changed from the May date (half term and Suffolk Show) to **Tuesday June 23rd and Thursday 1st October**, both at 2pm in Orford Town Hall