



**MINUTES OF THE ALDE AND ORE ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP  
HELD ON THURSDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> MAY 2013 IN THE OLD DAIRY,  
RICHMOND FARM**

**PRESENT**

Edward Greenwell	<b>(Chairman, Farmer Nominee)</b>
Alison Andrews	(A&O Association Nominee)
David McGinity	(Butley Parish Council Nominee)
Philippa Stewart	(Iken Parish Council Nominee)
Brian Johnson	(Boyton and Bawdsey Parish Council Nominee)
Ben McFarland	(Ecological Representative/RSPB)
Barry Leach	(Aldeburgh and Orford Business Associations Nominee)
Hugh Pilkington	(Orford and Gedgrave Parish Council Nominee)
Jane Marson	(Landowner Nominee)
Amanda Bettinson	(Partnership Secretary)

**Advisors**

Karen Thomas	(Environment Agency)
Jane Burch	(SCC)
Trazar Astley-Reid	(Suffolk Coast & Heaths Unit)

**Consultants**

Andrew Hawes	(Hawes Associates)
Frances Barnwell	(Charity Lawyer)

**APOLOGIES**

Richard Marson	(Aldeburgh Town Council Nominee)
Angie Mason	(Householder Representative)
Bill Parker	(SCDC)
Emma Hay	(Natural England)
Guy Heald	(Finance and Business)

1. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS** **Action**  
None to declare
  
2. **PREVIOUS MINUTES**  
Minutes of 21<sup>st</sup> March 2013 were agreed.
  
3. **MATTERS ARISING**
  - i) **The Ham Creek** landowners meeting has now been arranged for 24<sup>th</sup> May.
  - ii) **HP** reported that part of the '53 Flood material was now held by Orford Museum and some of the photographic sheets may be used in the Ipswich Library Festival in October.
  - iii) **Habitat Creation visit:** **TAR** will circulate a further date for a visit for AOEP members to visit a habitat creation site, now to be OrfordNess. **TAR**
  - iv) Alison Andrews noted that the Aldeburgh Town Council meeting to discuss the community plan was well attended and she had marked the 'ideas' sheet for the coastal plan that the estuary should be considered as an essential part of the local economy.
  - v) **FC'0'** Andrew Hawes/Richard Pipe to discuss levels. **AH/RP**
  - vi) The severe and recent coastal erosion beyond Slaughden Martello Tower was discussed. KT noted that the EA were monitoring the whole of the east coast due to the erosion caused

by the prolonged easterly winds and it was hoped that the change of wind direction to north westerly would bring the shingle back. However there is a maintenance protocol in place that should the erosion reduce the width of the wall to less than that of the crest, the emergency procedures would be enforced and shingle transferred from Orford Ness. DMcG noted that the coastguard considered the access was unsafe and KT agreed to inform the EA engineers.

KT

#### 4. FC10 DESIGNS AND COSTS

Andrew Hawes discussed the technical documents showing designs and costs for the FC10 upgrade which would bring the walls up to 3.1OD. The points discussed were:-

- Chainage 60-550 (footpath from Slaughden south of Aldeburgh Town Marsh) is the most trafficked route and consequently low. It is proposed that the wall should have turfed reinforcement mesh and the footpath Amorflex (concrete slabs which allow grass to grow through it) in two rows to provide a good overtopping medium and safe access for the footpath. This would require consent from the Rights of Way team and AH agreed to discuss this along with minimum width requirements with Annette Robinson.
- AH also agreed to arrange an onsite meeting to view the Amorflex used at Felixstowe and the path on the Orford Wall trial to include Rights of Way team, Natural England, EA, Hugh Pilkington (Orford PC), Ben McFarland (RSPB).
- Wheelchair and disabled access was discussed at length as this attracted significant funding and Jane Burch noted that SCC would contribute to this upgrade work.
- Chainage 550-3084 - The areas which had recently been upgraded by the EA would need re-profiling (chamfering the landward wall edge) and turf reinforcement. The crest width varies and a standard width again needs to be agreed with Rights of Way team.
- Chainage 3360-3480 (Brick Dock) A short area which will need mesh and anchors.
- Total upgrade cost is £414,794. Full maintenance costs will be required for 20<sup>th</sup> May workshop to discuss FDGiA funding after which time a format for proceeding with the whole estuary will be assessed.
- KT noted that the EA budget process for next year's allocations starts at the beginning of June and IDB and LA need to submit their requirements to the EA.
- BMcF queried the grass seed specification on the levees and agreed to provide advice on the preferred seed for bird species.

AH

AH

AH

EG/BP

BMcF

#### 5. SALTINGS REGENERATION PROJECT

The Jackson Trustees had made a site visit to Site 4, the Brick Dock site they were funding, and were impressed with the way in which their grant was being put to use.

DMcG reported that after a further site visit, it had been decided that a much longer width of fencing and additional willow faggots were required and this would add to the cost by approx £5-7K. It was hoped that contributions would be forthcoming from the IDB landowners/ratepayers in FC10 as they were beneficiaries of this work. The Alde and Ore Association and SCC also offered funding. **Action DMcG** to establish exact shortfall and to also review further sites for inclusion in next year's budget allocations.

DMcG

Volunteers would be required for closely monitoring the rate of regeneration and it would help communicate the importance of this work if there was a community effort to help coppice hazel in the future to avoid having to buy faggots out of the area which was expensive.

#### 6. FUNDING

The Deben/Alde Ore Liaison Group had not thought it appropriate to continue Ronagh Witthames contract further at this stage but it was agreed that Jane Burch and Bill Parker would discuss the AOEP application to the RFCC and ensure that this is progressed. They would also confirm arrangements for David Savill who, it was hoped, would be able to take on some fundraising responsibilities for the AOEP. Other points raised were:-

JB/BP

- Jane Burch agreed that the SCC would be happy to fund the Environmental Impact Assessment for the Alde and Ore as they had done so for the Deben Estuary.
- A meeting of the funding group would be arranged following the 20<sup>th</sup> May meeting with the EA, when the actual costs required to be raised locally should be known.
- KT noted that the EA were contributing to the sheep grazing trial and she would prefer one project mandate to cover several projects to streamline the budgeting.
- HP raised the issue of his concern that there were a number of small individual experimental projects being considered or underway and no big estuary plan. It was agreed by the members that these projects were very useful to use as trial initiatives for an application to the EA for the whole estuary approach once the overall strategy, design and costs were determined.

## 7. ENABLING DEVELOPMENT

JM had spoken to all District Councillors regarding enabling development and soundings were very positive that this was a sound principle on which to work. The draft criteria for enabling development were almost agreed. The map showing possible areas of land that might be available would be discussed with Bob Chamberlain (to eradicate those that would not pass the criteria) prior to being discussed with the district councillors. This could be used as an indicator to parish councils which of their local landowners had offered land in the past.

Other points raised in the discussion were that it was appreciated that villages do not want cheap generic housing and that the more specialised plots that would not normally be granted planning permission should have quality architectural designs agreed. These plots may not necessarily be located in the area immediate to the estuary. Further information will be conveyed to the parishes as soon as possible.

It would be important to ensure that, should good design be promised, it was delivered.

## 8. THE COMMUNICATIONS GROUP

The Comms Group had met and explored a number of issues. The main points agreed were:-

- Develop tailored and targeted messages for each stakeholder groups with variations for those both at risk of flooding and those not at risk but benefiting from the area
- Sponsorship of a standalone AOEP website and social media tools (Twitter etc)
- Launch of the charity in Sept/Oct (if this was feasible) as the most significant event to raise awareness and possibly begin fund raising
- Develop stakeholder database using A&O Futures information as a baseline
- Develop press article post AGM in May to begin raising awareness of aspirations and signposting launch

It was suggested that a newsletter could be used to advertise the work of the AOEP (i.e. the Saltings Restoration work, design and engineering work etc) and **TAR** agreed to draft a template. Other websites should be utilised as a network and discussions with Orford Town site, Jazz at the Pavilion and Suffolk Cottages should establish whether they might be interested in promoting the work of the AOEP.

## 9. CONSTITUTION REVIEW

After a year of operating under the interim constitution, it was agreed that the constitution should be reviewed. The Partnership itself was the guardian of the AOEP Constitution, so could alter it by agreement. It was understood that the Shingle Street Settlement were keen to ensure that they were included in the remit of the AOEP and as Guiding Principles (3) states, the area concerning the AOEP was the ‘...estuary, hinterland and coastline as directly impact upon the wellbeing of the estuary’. It was felt that this ensured inclusion for Shingle Street within the AOEP boundary. It was, however, felt unnecessary for Shingle Street to have their own specific representative on the committee other than being represented, at present, by the Boyton and Bawdsey representative. The great majority of other parishes were not specifically

represented but their interests were covered by 2 additional members, at present from Butley and Iken, who give additional weight to parish concerns. As AOEP meetings are held in public, any parish council member is at liberty to attend as a member of the public should they so wish.

However, it would be necessary to agree a physical boundary for the whole of the estuary so that every parish with floodable land and abstraction points knew their exact position. It would also be necessary to ensure that all areas between the Deben and the Alde and Ore were included in one or other of the estuary plans and not left out of both areas. **It was agreed** that this would be discussed at the Deben Alde Ore Liaison Group. **BP/KT** asked to pursue a map with parish boundaries overlaid with the floodable area.

**EG/AB  
BP/KT**

**AJB**

**It was agreed** that Suffolk County Council should be formally included as an advisor.

**It was agreed** that David McGinity, Philippa Stewart and Jane Marson who had stood down after one year to enable staggered terms in the first 4 years of operating, should be re-elected for a further 4 year term. A further 3 volunteers will be required to stand down in 2014 after 2 years for re-election, and a further 3 to stand down in 2015, one year before the 4 year term ends, to stagger the terms of office. (Management Arrangements minute 4)

### **ANNUAL COMMUNITY MEETING**

The Annual meeting will be held at Thorpeness Country Club on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> May at 6pm.

**TAR** agreed to provide a screen, **AJB** agreed to provide an agenda with a list of members and badges.

**TAR/AJB**

## **10. THE ESTUARY TRUST**

**FB** reported that a draft constitution and explanatory note had just been received from Farrer & Co and circulated two options for the objects of the proposed charity.

There was some discussion about the scope of the objects and it was agreed that the charity should be able to take into consideration community and environmental issues when disposing of land for development and not market value alone. The group preferred option 2, but suggested that additional words should be added 'taking account of community and environmental wellbeing'.

**It was agreed** that **FB** would circulate updated drafts to members to allow time for more detailed consideration.

**FB**

A further issue of concern to the group was the relationship between the charity and AOEP itself. It was noted that it had been decided at its inception that AOEP should not be incorporated as a charity both to avoid administrative complication, and allow for the fact that not all of its activities would necessarily be exclusively charitable.

However, some members felt that the charity and AOEP may come into conflict given the obligation of charity trustees to act in the best interests of the charity alone. It was emphasised that all members of the community were represented on the AOEP by the members who were chosen for their skills and representation of their sphere of activity, be it parish council or association. It was this membership who would be taking the decisions on strategy, prioritization and standard of maintenance. The charity would be accountable for the funds and the charity trustees would be asked to join for their skills and standing which added gravitas to the charity which would be essential for fundraising purposes. It was noted that the charity would need to work in harmony with AOEP to achieve its objects, making it unlikely that there would be difficulties in practice. Matters of good governance would be equally of interest to AOEP and the charity.

The group gave some consideration to the responsibilities of AOEP and the charity in relation to the realisation of development gain. This was an area which would need detailed further

discussion, given potential issues in relation to the commissioning of development, project management and oversight, the avoidance of tax complications and community acceptance. However, this need not impact on the establishment of the charity provided that its objects and powers were wide enough to accommodate the range of possible roles.

The suggested trustees to date were Guy Heald, Richard Pipe, Richard Marson and Frances Barnwell, and it was anticipated that additional members would be found to provide a good spread of representation, skills and weight.

No decision was taken as to timing, but it was noted that as funding depended, at least in part, on the existence of a charity to accept and utilise funds, delay should be avoided if possible.

**11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 10th July and Thursday 26th September in Orford Town Hall at 2pm.

**AJB/6.5.13**