



BAWDSEY COASTAL PARTNERSHIP NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2016

This newsletter aims to provide readers with up to date information about protection for homes, businesses and land on and near the changing coast between Shingle Street and the Deben mouth. It is three years since the last great tidal surge affected this area, and two since the Bawdsey Coastal Partnership (BCP) was established.

The BCP is composed of landowners, businesses, residents and the three parish councils of Hollesley, Alderton and Bawdsey, working with the local authorities and statutory agencies of Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Coastal District Council (SCDC), Suffolk Coastal Forum and the Environment Agency. Councillor Christine Block, SCDC representative for the area and Chair of the neighbouring Deben Estuary Partnership, is a close colleague.

The Partnership is guided by an Executive group, chaired for its first two years by Tim Green, resident of Shingle Street; aided by Nick Crick, soon to take over from Tim, Christopher Langley and Bill Vaudrey, all of Alderton, Andrew Rouse of Bawdsey, Gerry Matthews of Bawdsey — representing the major farmers and latterly Anne Page of Shingle Street, who originally convened the Partnership in 2014.

Early discussions took place with the Environment Agency about the most dynamic areas on the coast, aiming to plot courses of action. There was general agreement that at present there are new spits and a substantial increase of shingle at the mouth of the Ore River and at Shingle Street. It is not known whether this accrual comes entirely from the south, where beaches have eroded or also, as historically, from Orford Ness, also losing shingle at its tip.

The areas giving most cause for concern have been, and remain, East Lane Point and the Bawdsey cliffs, notably below the Manor.

East Lane Point:

The rocks, first placed in 2006, have held the Point, retained the housing and agriculture there, and protected the whole coast to the west and north from “unzipping” by the sea. However, as the waves move up and down the coast, the northerly end of the defences has become exposed. Extra rock has been placed here intermittently over the past ten years. Lagoons, bird habitat and Martello Tower Y remain at risk as, most importantly, does the main sea wall protecting the rich farmland behind.

Bawdsey Cliffs:

Noticeable erosion has taken place of the beach and defences at the base of the cliffs below Bawdsey Manor. Modest works have been undertaken in recent times, but the situation requires solution, integrated with other necessary work at the river mouth.

The potential sale of Bawdsey Manor and Estate is adding both uncertainty and opportunity to our work. We would like to thank the outgoing owners, Neils and Ann Toettcher, for their generous help in getting the Partnership started, and their ongoing support over the past two years.

Knowledge and Research

At its outset two years ago, the BCP agreed with the EA that a *Coastal Processes Study* should be undertaken by engineers Mott MacDonald. This was published in September 2015 setting out the long history of the defences undertaken at the Point, and identifying a number of possible ways forward.

A further *Bawdsey Coastal Process Assessment* was undertaken by HR Wallingford on behalf of the Crown Estate and published in August 2016. This study analyses shoreline and seabed changes since World War Two, suggesting that more frequent monitoring should take place. It notes that the Bawdsey Cliffs frontage has sustained the greatest drift rates in the area, due to rotating nearshore wave directions. The study concludes that natural processes may possibly reverse the loss of shingle from East Lane to the North. It suggests that recycling of shingle accumulating at Shingle Street could “produce considerable benefit for modest effort and cost”.

Next steps

It is time for a longer-term solution. The BCP now intends to commission consulting engineers to provide options for the long-term management of the coast in the light of all the renewed information and research findings. Options to be examined will include consideration of advancing, holding and realigning the sea defences as they stand now. Funding is being sought and all contributions from the area will be welcomed. This work, and the previous studies, will provide evidence to those officials tasked with reviewing the national Shoreline Management Plan in respect of East Lane, where the current policy is to “Hold the Line” (HTL).

Everyone will be welcome to join in the discussion of these matters at the next Open Meeting of the Partnership — to take place on **January 23 at 7 pm, in Alderton Village Hall.**

Annual General Meeting

This will take place in early spring, and again this is open to everyone. We have invited, as guest speaker, our local MP, Therese Coffey, now Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Her responsibilities, totally relevant to her constituency — our area — include:

- the natural environment, including biodiversity, the marine environment, and international wildlife trafficking
- rural life opportunities, covering rural childcare, education and skills, and health
- floods, water and waterways
- air quality
- resource and environment management.

Festive Season

The BCP Executive wishes all its members and all residents of the Wilford Peninsula, a very happy festive season, and looks forward to seeing a large crowd at the AGM — the date, place and time of which will be published early in the New Year.

For further information or to give us news, please contact Nick Crick at ncrick@integrated-skills.com and visit our website (which is being reconstructed at present) at <http://www.bawdseycoastalpartnership.org.uk>

Meeting with Chair of Regional Flood and Coastal Committee

Paul Hayden, Chair of the important RFCC, visited our stretch of coast on November 22. He oversees the Environment Agency’s investment in flood, habitat and environmental protection schemes across the East of England, advising the EA of the RFCC’s own view of the flood and coastal erosion risk management needs in this area.

Mr Hayden, accompanied by BCP Executive members on a very windy but bright winter day, walked along the sea wall at East Lane, with Mr Alex Mann, landowner. They inspected the works there and considered future needs. They also visited the beach below Bawdsey Manor, before a briefing lunch at the Boathouse Cafe.