

# SEVERN ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP

## Joint Advisory Committee Meeting



11.30am-1.30pm, Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2011.

Chapter Arts Centre, Canton, Cardiff

### DRAFT Minutes

### ACTION

#### Attendees (32)

1. George Ashworth, Monmouthshire County Council (SEP MG Chair)
2. Rhoda Ballinger, Cardiff University
3. Chris Barrow, Bristol City Council
4. Bettina Bockelmann-Evans, Cardiff University (MAREN Project)
5. Fiona Bowles, Wessex Water
6. John Buttivant, Environment Agency
7. Hannah Dineen, Cardiff County Council
8. Richard Dunn, Sedgemoor District Council
9. Jane Gossage, Newport County Council
10. Dave Harris, Monmouthshire County Council (SECG Chair)
11. John Harrison, Environment Agency Wales
12. Sue Howard, Countryside Council for Wales
13. Sue Hughes, Glamorgan - Gwent Archaeological Trust
14. Ian Kear, Stroud District Council
15. Ellie La Trobe-Bateman, MAREN
16. John Marks, Vale of Glamorgan Council
17. Christine Marsh, Severn Estuary Partnership
18. Huw Morgans, Vale of Glamorgan Council
19. Rhys Morgan, Environment Agency Wales
20. Rob Niblett, Gloucestershire County Council
21. Gwilym Owen, Severn Estuary Partnership
22. Stella Owen, National Farmers Union
23. Mary Page, South Gloucestershire Council
24. Paul Parker, Severn Estuary Partnership
25. Tim Robbins, Devon & Severn IFCA
26. Susan Russell, Environment Agency
27. Rebecca Seaman, Somerset County Council
28. Ceri Seaton, Countryside Council for Wales
29. Alan Storer, Welsh Assembly Government
30. Dick Sage, Bristol City Council
31. Don Sutherland, RYA & BCYA
32. Peter Tyzack, Severn Estuary Partnership Chair

#### 1 Welcome

PT

Peter Tyzack welcomed delegates to the Joint Advisory Committee meeting.

**Apologies for Absence**

Cllr John Cordwell, Gloucestershire County Council  
Cllr Bill Kelloway, Cardiff City Council  
Alan Lovell, North Devon and Somerset Coastal Group  
John Major, Monmouthshire County Council  
Don Metcalf, BCFSA  
Cllr Martin Quaile, Forest of Dean  
Peter Williams, Caldicot and Wentlooge IDB

**Minutes of the Last Meeting (11<sup>th</sup> May 2010) & Matters Arising**

- 1.1 Minutes of the last JAC meeting were approved as a true and accurate record. There were no matters arising.

**2 Estuary Groups – Common Platform****2.1 Association of Severn Estuary Relevant Authorities (ASERA) progress report FB**

*Fiona Bowles (Chair of ASERA MG)*

Over the past year ASERA has been progressing the revised scheme of management for the European Marine Site. This has coincided with a year of change, both in the management of ASERA by SEP and in National Legislation.

Following the enactment of the Marine and Coastal Access Act in 2009, new organisations have been formed in England in 2010:

- The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) which will champion sustainable development in the seas around England, bringing together key marine decision-making powers and delivery mechanisms to provide an integrated system of planning, regulating and licensing activity in the marine area, and;
- The Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCA), which will manage the exploitation of sea fishery resources and ensure the conservation objectives of the Marine Conservation Zones.

The duties of these two organisations are covered by the Welsh Assembly Government<sup>1</sup> in Wales.

ASERA are pleased that Tim Robbins Chief Fisheries Officer from the Severn and Devon IFCA, has joined the ASERA management group.

Other activities include the redevelopment of the ASERA website which is hosted by SEP. A members' area with access to documents has been improved to facilitate consultation on the Management Scheme.

In addition to this activity, the development of a revised scheme of management covering both the SPA/Ramsar and SAC has progressed. Each member RA has completed its matrix of activities and NE and CCW have reviewed the effect on the European Site.

Christine Marsh, The Implementation Officer provided a first draft for comment and

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<sup>1</sup> As of Friday 13<sup>th</sup> of May 2011 the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) became the Welsh Government (WG)

input by ASERA's management group this Spring. The Working Group is now reviewing the penultimate draft with the individual RA action plans. It is expected that the approach to finalising the consultation draft will be agreed in the Working Group meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2011. They will also propose an ongoing monitoring programme and guidance that is necessary for the future, to be considered and agreed by the Management Group.

The proposed consultation period with JAC members has, therefore, been delayed. It is now envisaged that the document will be issued for wider consultation in June to allow completion of the revised scheme by the end of July. The management scheme document is short and concise and will be interactive via the website. It is aimed towards the Relevant Authority ASERA representatives and colleagues, responsible for managing their activities in the Severn Estuary European Marine Site. However, it should also inform others as to how the designated interests of the Severn Estuary are protected in the management of day to day activities.

It is intended that the action plans will be reviewed annually and updated by all Relevant Authorities in time for the ASERA AGM and publication in the Annual Report.

Finally ASERA has been representing many of its member bodies on the stakeholder group of Finding Sanctuary which is establishing marine conservation zones (MCZs) through the SW coastal areas. Whilst the Severn Estuary is already protected by European Site designation, ASERA has been active in discussions on the need for further protected areas. The outcome of this process has been that no MCZs have been proposed along the Somerset Coast of the Severn Estuary.

## 2.2 Severn Estuary Coastal Group (SECG) progress report

DH

*David Harris (Chairman of the SECG)*

The Severn Shoreline Management Plan 2 is progressing well with most Local Authorities having formally adopted the plan. The SMP2 is currently waiting for IROPI (Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest) sign off from both the WAG and DEFRA. Some issues relating to the Flood Risk Management Strategy, centred around areas of realignment at the Congresbury Yeo area and Minsterworth, Elmore Back and Longney have been identified post consultation. It is, therefore, possible that some SMP2 policies may need reviewing. However it is envisaged that the FRMS should not affect the SMP2, though it could impinge on the IROPI process.

The Coastal Group also informed the JAC of an interesting presentation given by John Buttivant on Tidal Power in the Severn Estuary and its effects on flood risk and the need for data availability. A copy of this presentation will be made available through the SECG website in due course.

DH also informed the delegates of potential problems regarding the sourcing of rock armour in Wales to aid coastal engineering schemes. The Environment Agency have recently produced a lessons learnt paper on this subject that the coastal group will be able to draw upon. The Countryside Council for Wales have also produced a report on beach nourishment options in Wales and our currently undergoing stage 2 of this pilot study. The findings from stage 1 can be downloaded at: <http://www.ccw.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=daef66ff-8cfe-4f1f-a528-c2fbc929d5e1&version=-1>

The SECG are also in the process of developing a communication plan and communication leaflets for the outputs of the SMP2. It was hoped to produce a joint communication with the FRMS to minimise confusion between the two projects. However due to the delayed timescales SECG are looking into further options and hope to produce summary documents for each individual Local Authority ASAP.

DH finished by informing the JAC that he had been representing SECG on the National Coastal Chairs Group and other relevant meetings. Copies of the minutes of these meetings are available for all SECG members through the SECG Members area of the website. Any non members who would like access to these documents should contact SEP directly.

### **2.3 North Devon & Somerset Coastal Group (NDSCG) progress report**

**JB**

*John Buttivant (Environment Agency) on behalf of NDSCG Chair Alan Lovell*

The NDSCG have been experiencing many similar issues to those of the SECG in terms of IROPI sign off. The group have therefore not met for a significant time but will schedule a meeting as soon as progress can be made.

Cllr Humphrey Temperley has now retired as chair of the group and has been replaced by Alan Lovell, who is keen to drive forward the work of the group and make sure coastal related matters are dealt with as fully as possible.

Once the SMP2 is formally approved, the NDSCG will move forward with the delivery of the action plan. Further information and regular updates can be found at: <http://www.ndascag.org>

### **2.4 Royal Yachting Association South West & Bristol Channel Yachting Association**

**DS**

*Don Sutherland, Chair of BCYA and the Royal Yachting Associations representative for South West England gave an update.*

The Royal Yachting Association are now formally members of the Severn Estuary Partnership and support the work of SEP through their representative, Don Sutherland.

It has been a busy year in the Severn for the RYA with discussions about Severn Tidal Power and Marine Conservation Zones. The RYA have been heavily involved in the development of Finding Sanctuaries and Don voiced concerns between the different approaches of Finding Sanctuary and the Welsh MCZ project. The RYA suggested they would encourage a cross border approach wherever possible. The RYA would also support no additional MCZs within the Severn Estuary as they believe that the existing legislation (SPA, SAC, Ramsar and SSSIs) are working well. Concerns over misinformation that is feeding into the MCZ process was also voiced by Don.

The RYA has also been keeping a watching brief on developments of the proposed Hinkley C Nuclear Powerstation. There have been proposals to build a temporary jetty on the site which has been objected to as it is felt that this could interfere with shipping and other activities in the channel.

Don Sutherland has also been involved in the making of a short video for the WWF PISCES (Partnerships Involving Stakeholders in the Celtic Sea Eco-System) project. The video highlights SEP as a partnership of best practice, with WWF hoping other areas can learn from SEP and its successes. SEP would like to thank Don for all his time and efforts in the development of this video. A link to the video

will be circulated via SEP E-News when launched.

The Bristol Channel Yachting association have also been busy developing the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of The Bristol Channel Yachting Association Handbook. The BCYA will also be attending both the Cardiff and Watchet rallies later in the year.

## 2.5 Bristol Channel Standing Environment Group (BCSEG)

JH

*John Harrison (Environment Agency) Chair of the BCSEG*

The main function of the Standing Environment Group is to prepare for marine pollution incidents where there is likely to be a threat of sea or air pollution involving oil or hazardous substances. This preparation is to permit the activated Environment Group to provide public health and environmental advice and guidance with minimal delay to all the response groups that will be involved.

The group will steer the overall incident response with respect to minimising impacts on the environment. This includes the assessment of environmental and public health risks and potential impacts arising from an incident, as well as the implications of any clean up or salvage operations.

The BCSEG have now developed their activation plan and tested the plan as part of a simulation exercise in April 2011. The group were pleased to welcome the support of so many organisations and felt the plan worked well when tested. The activation plan allowed the Standing Environment Group to make a quick and accurate evaluation of the scenario and subsequently manage the users and habitats through a shared based response system.

The group will continue to update their work programme over the next 12 months.

## 3 SEP Management Group Update

GA

George Ashworth informed the JAC that Peter Tyzack had unfortunately not been re-elected as a Councillor for South Gloucestershire County Council. George, explained that as a result, Peter would be standing down as SEP Chair. On behalf of the SEP, George thanked Peter for his help and support in the development and running of the Partnership over the last decade and wished him all the best in the future.

George asked the JAC for any suggestions of potential Elected Members that would be interested in becoming SEP's chair. A preference for a Chair from an English local authority was noted, given that the Management Group Chair is currently from Wales. All suggestions should be forwarded to the SEP office ([Severn@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:Severn@cardiff.ac.uk)).

### A. Financial Situation and partner contributions

SEP has received funding from all partners except Bridgend CC for the financial year 2011/12. All SECG member payments have also been received. In addition to core partner funding SEP has secured additional funding from the Environment Agency. SEP are also grateful for the financial support of the INTERREG IV IMCORE, DeltaNet and Beacons projects. It is predicted that SEP will deliver on budget this financial year although the budget is very tight owing to IMCORE funding support ending in October. The heavy reliance on EC INTERREG funds for supporting SEP staff and outputs should be noted. The Partnership therefore,

need as much support as possible to carry on with the good work they deliver. If any members can offer any additional funding please contact a member of the SEP staff team or MG Chair.

### ***B. SEP Staffing Position***

George Ashworth thanked Rhoda and colleagues for the excellent work they have been doing over the past 12 months. Current contracts have been extended for all SEP staff to the end of October 2011. It is considered that there is a strong likelihood that SEP will be in a financial position to extend staff contracts to the end of the financial year however this can not be confirmed until DeltaNet funding issues have been resolved. However, recent communications with the DeltaNet lead partner suggest that the SEP budget may be increased to better reflect SEP staff input. As soon as this has been resolved, the SEP Management Group Staffing Sub-group intend to review staffing with a view to looking at more appropriate overall staffing arrangements for future SEP development.

### ***C. Membership of the Management Group and JAC***

Over the past 2 years SEP has seen a decrease in active members of both the Partnership's Management Group and JAC. SEP would therefore like to encourage all funding partners to send one representative to Management Group meetings to support the development of the partnership. Similarly, the Partnership would like to strengthen attendance of the JAC meetings and would encourage anyone with any strong views of how these meetings should be structured in the future to contact the SEP Management Group Chair. We would also like to encourage you all to formally join SEP if you have not already done so and to encourage other interested parties around you to support the Partnership in order to help us plan and manage for the Estuary in a sustainable and coherent fashion. Membership details can be found on the SEP website. [www.severnestuary.net](http://www.severnestuary.net) The SEP offers good value for money, with members being able to take full advantage of the coordination of Severn Estuary relevant developments and draw on the experience of the SEP staff team.

### ***D. Potential Future Opportunities***

The Management Group and staff team have been busy developing future work opportunities for the Partnership. Possible future projects include a new project building on the IMCORE project and the development of a Heritage Lottery Fund project in partnership with Dr. Owain Jones of the University of the West of England. A second draft of this latter proposal is currently being drawn up by Owain to be circulated for discussion. SEP are exploring the hosting implications of this project with Cardiff University.

SEP have also been in continued discussions with both the Marine Management Organisation and the Welsh Assembly Government regarding the Marine Planning Process and SEP's potential role in supporting this on the Estuary. The Partnership will continue its discussions and offer to add value, fill gaps and support both WAG and the MMO where ever possible. SEP are grateful to WAG for the recognition of the work of Partnerships around the Welsh coast and welcome further dialogue to develop this relationship further.

### ***E. SEP Strategic Business Plan***

Finally the Partnership has been busy putting together its Strategic Business Plan, which sets out aims and intentions over the next 5 years. This business plan can be viewed on the SEP website and a summary of Actions for year 1 is also available: <http://www.severnestuary.net/sep/partnership.html>

## **4 SEP Activities:**

**PP**

Paul Parker offered an update of key SEP activities over the past 12 months. A more detailed account and further updates will be available through SEP E-News.

### ***A. The State of the Severn Estuary Report:***

The State of the Severn Estuary Report is progressing well with a set of maps currently being developed by the INTERREG IVb IMCORE project and Cardiff University. The final document will be launched at the 2011 Severn Estuary Forum on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2011.

### ***B. Continued Secretariat Services:***

The Severn Estuary Partnership has been busy continuing and expanding its Secretariat Services. The Partnership now offers Secretariat to the BCSEG, as well as continuing its work with the SECG and ASERA. The Partnership has also been supporting the SMP2 process and the collation of consultation data for the Severn Estuary FRMS on behalf of the Environment Agency.

### ***C. Project Work:***

#### ***IMCORE:***

The IMCORE project has been progressing steadily with the Severn scenario workshops being written up and the details of the final exploratory scenarios are being clarified. Guidelines on climate change adaptation for the Severn will be developed as part of the IMCORE project. A workshop to consider these will be hosted and the final guidelines will be launched at the Severn Estuary Forum. Collation of existing SMP2 guidelines produced by local authorities and the Environment Agency elsewhere is underway with a view to building on best practice on the Severn. The possibilities of working with SECG to develop these guidelines is also being explored. The IMCORE project is also supporting the development and research for the State of the Severn Estuary Report.

Additional information can be found on the SEP website at the following link:

<http://www.severnestuary.net/sep/imcore/index.html>

#### ***DeltaNet:***

Through the fourth Interregional Cooperation Programme (INTERREG IVC), which is financed by the European Union's Regional Development Fund, DeltaNet seeks to help its partners, a number of EU countries to work together and share experience and best practice across a number of discrete delta and estuary related themes.

- Integrated planning and management
- Flood risk & sediment management
- Healthy Environment

- Delta awareness
- Coordinated Delta Policy

SEP has been highlighted as a case study of best practice for the Integrated Delta Approach (Theme 1), with Gwilym Owen recently attending a meeting on behalf of the Partnership to discuss the future work plan to take this forward.

Additional information can be found on the SEP website at the following link:

<http://www.severnestuary.net/sep/partnership/deltanet.html>

#### **Beacons YoCCo:**

All workshops across Wales and in the Severn area have now been hosted and outcomes are feeding into the climate change adaptation education pack, which has been drafted. Whilst the Beacons Steering Group are about to review a final version, SEP Management Group members may also request a copy as case study examples for the Severn are to be included. The education pack will be produced as a hard copy although there is also work in progress to develop further materials and links with Interreg IVB IMCORE Severn website (and SEP) website. It is hoped that these will inform teachers and students of adaptation options associated with climate change around the estuary, highlighting and simplifying outputs from the SMP2 process.

#### **D. Forum Planning:**

SEP Staff are currently planning for the 2011 Forum event, which is to be held on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> 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. An outline programme and booking form will be circulated alongside the Summer edition of Severn Tidings in June 2011.

#### **E. Membership:**

The Severn Estuary Partnership re-launched its membership scheme at the 2010 Severn Estuary Forum. If you have not yet become a formal member of the Partnership, please consider doing so. Membership offers unique benefits, including access to the members area of the SEP website and discounted places at the Forum. If you are interested in becoming a member for as little as £10, please talk to a member of the SEP staff team or visit the SEP website for further information.

<http://www.severnestuary.net/sep/partnership/join.html>

#### **F. Communication**

The Partnership prides itself on its communication and engagement mechanisms. SEP has therefore continued to develop its E-News system and website and is currently working to produce the Summer edition of Severn Tidings. If anyone has any article suggestions or information they would like included on the website, in Severn Tidings or in the monthly E-News please contact a member of the staff team.

## **G. Outside bodies**

SEP has continued to support and engage with outside bodies to ensure effective two way communication on Estuary wide matters. The groups that SEP has recently engaged with include Finding Sanctuary and MCZ Wales. The Partnership has also engaged with the WAG through WCMP and the specific Marine Planning Group. Similarly on the English side of the Estuary SEP are actively involved with the Coastal Partnership Network who are in constant communication with the MMO to help inform and support marine planning decisions.

## **5 Marine Conservation Zone Update**

**CM**

*Christine Marsh from Severn Estuary Partnership gave an update on Marine Conservation Zones.*

Finding Sanctuary has been working with stakeholders to design Marine Conservation Zones in the seas around South-West England as part of a wider network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).

Following consultation with local stakeholders earlier this year, it was agreed that the Severn Estuary was already heavily designated and its activities sufficiently managed in order to not require additional protection, and that a reference area for the South West region within the Severn Estuary would not be appropriate.

Finding Sanctuary's Joint Inshore and Offshore Working Group Report of last month (28<sup>th</sup> April) confirms that there are currently no recommendations for Marine Conservation Zones or Reference Areas with respect to the North Somerset region or Severn Estuary.

In Wales, the Marine Conservation Zones Project 'Stakeholder and Citizen Engagement Group' sits under the Wales Coastal and Maritime Partnership. Its main role is to advise the Steering Group on how to engage key stakeholders and the citizens of Wales; help raise general awareness; and act as a channel to feed views to and from key stakeholders into the project.

The group does not make recommendations on the suitability of potential sites. It does, as far as possible, ensure that the views of key stakeholders are fed into the process to inform decisions. Membership of the group spans both industry and environmental interests and the Severn Estuary Partnership have been chosen to sit on this group for its ability to cascade to wider networks.

SEP will be attending the next Stakeholder and Citizen Engagement Group meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 2011. An update from this meeting will be circulated via the next SEP E-News.

## **6 Devon and Severn Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (D&S IFCA)**

**TR**

*Tim Robbins from the D&S IFCA gave a short presentation highlighting the work and responsibilities of the D&S IFCA. A copy of Tim's presentation and background notes can be viewed at: [JAC110510D&SIFCA.pps](#); [JAC110510D&SIFCA Notes](#)*

Tim outlined that the Devon & Severn IFCA used to be the Devon Sea Fisheries District Committee but had now expanded into the Severn Estuary and taken on responsibility for conservation too. These changes have come about as a result of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 legislation. Tim explained the responsibilities of the D&S IFCA, their relationship with various organisations such

as the Environment Agency and Natural England and the need for a joint working approach to risk-based management.

## 7 IMCORE – An update

RB

*Rhoda Ballinger from Cardiff University gave an update on the IMCORE Project work which is being undertaken on the Severn Estuary. A copy of Dr Ballinger's presentation can be viewed at: [JAC110510IMCORE.pps](#)*

Dr Ballinger gave an overview of the progress of the IMCORE project. An Education pack on climate change adaptation with specific reference to the Severn Estuary has been developed in partnership with the Beacons YoCCo project. A draft copy of the education pack can be requested from the SEP office. A more detailed, online interactive, Severn specific education pack will be developed over the coming months. If anyone would like to input into the content and key themes of this resource please contact Rhoda Ballinger ([BallingerRC@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:BallingerRC@cardiff.ac.uk))

The IMCORE project has also produced a series of report cards designed to bring climate change science into a more useable format. It is hoped that these report cards can be re-packaged into a web-friendly resource. The report cards in their current form can be viewed at: <http://www.severnestuary.net/sep/imcore/index.html>

Dr Ballinger also informed the JAC that the future of the Severn Estuary Climate Change Research Advisory Group was under discussion, possibly to extend the group and widen its remit.

The Scenarios work of the IMCORE project which many SEP members have been directly involved in is also progressing well with draft scenarios being produced and circulated for comment. These are currently undergoing review and validation. A further Cardiff University based Local Authority workshop will then be hosted to identify where adaptation options should be focused. A set of guidelines will then be drafted and launched for consultation at the 2011 Severn Estuary Forum.

## 8 DeltaNet:

*Gwilym Owen from the Severn Estuary Partnership gave an update on the DeltaNet Project:*

Gwilym Owen gave a short talk on the [INTERREG IVC](#) funded [DeltaNet Project](#) which is a partnership of major deltas and estuaries around Europe seeking to help its participants work together and share experience and good practice in 5 successive 'theme' areas: 1 - Integrated Delta Approach; 2 - Flood & Sediment Management; 3 - Healthy Environment; 4 - Delta Awareness, and 5 – Coordinated Delta Policy, which seeks to collate the results of the sub themes and combine them into a sustainable policy.

The Severn Estuary Partnership is currently a junior participant in this project and has so far been involved in a number of workshops and conferences for the Integrated Delta Approach theme. It has been singled out as an example of best practice for its ability to promote a sustainable approach between often competing interests of the environment, social and economic development of the Severn Estuary, with its inclusive partnership approach.

SEP is now in the process of developing a work plan for Theme 1, where we can disseminate our knowledge and experience to the other partners that have expressed an interest in learning from us. This includes inviting these partners to present at our next forum event and allowing them the potential to network with their counterparts within the Severn Estuary.

It is likely that SEP will pick up roles in a couple of extra themes (Theme 2 – Flood & Sediment Management; and Theme 5 – Coordinated Delta Approach) which link in with areas of work which SEP and partners are already engaged in.

## **9 Policy, Planning Issues and Consultation**

### **WAG: Sustainable Development for Welsh Seas:**

**PP**

Paul Parker gave the JAC an update on SEP's involvement with the consultation for the Sustainable development of the Welsh Seas, informing delegates that an official response from the partnership had been sent to WAG for consideration.

## **10 Any Other Business**

The European Commission have launched an on-line consultation on Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and/or Maritime Spatial Planning. Through the consultation the European Commission seeks to explore options for future EU action in coastal management and maritime planning. Further information on this consultation can be found at <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/consultations/iczm.htm> with the consultation closing for comment on the 20<sup>th</sup> May 2011.

The meeting closed at 13:45 for lunch