



News and Events Update

November 2011

Dear Subscriber,

Welcome to the November edition of the North West Coastal Forum's News and Events Update. Click the links to read the full articles on our website. Please also please find attached a PDF version with full articles, if you prefer to download and read at your leisure.

Kind regards,

Alasdair, NWCF

NWCF News

SUSTAIN Project Update

November 9, 2011

SUSTAIN, an EU-funded Interreg project that Sefton Council and the North West Coastal Forum are a part of, continues a-pace. The Europe-wide project, which aims to develop a universal policy tool to measure coastal sustainability, is nearly two-thirds complete with a final launch conference due to be held in Southport in September 2012.

From a Forum perspective, the latest work has largely involved being part of a small working group tasked with refining a draft indicator set into a final, uniform set with clear language and descriptors before Christmas. This will then be ground-tested by all project partners in the first 3 months of 2012 with feedback to be given in March. The feedback will be incorporated in final revisions between March and September, when an Implementation Guide and a Guide to Improving Sustainability will be written.

News releases and podcasts are available on the [SUSTAIN website](#).

Regional News

Ribble & Dee Estuary Cockle Beds Closed Over Safety Concerns

November 16, 2011

All Cockle beds at the Ribble and Dee Estuaries were closed on 7 November over fears to fishermen's safety. The major cockle bed in the Ribble Estuary, on Foulnaze bank between Lytham and Southport, has been estimated to be worth £8million and has been attracting up to 300 cocklers a day.

The huge stock has led to cocklers arriving from all around the country, some of whom attempted to work illegally without the required NWIFCA permit. Access to the bed requires use of small boats many of which did not have safety equipment. Fishers with no experience of using small boats in the Ribble were going out in adverse weather at night resulting in more than 20 calls to the emergency services since the fishery opened on 1 September. A spot check showed 50 cocklers operating without permits and 15 boats deemed to be unsafe.

Amid fears of a serious tragedy, the North West Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NWIFCA) has passed an emergency by-law, which closed the Ribble bed from Monday 7 November, bringing forward the date from April. It is hoped that the fishery will be re-opened as soon as possible, when improved controls can be implemented.

To prevent relocation of cocklers and protect stocks, the Dee Estuary cockle bed on the Wirral has also been closed.

NW IFCA website: www.nw-ifca.gov.uk

UNESCO inspectors to visit Liverpool World Heritage Site

November 14, 2011

UNESCO staff are visiting Liverpool this week (Monday Nov. 14) on a 3-day monitoring trip to assess the impact of a skyscraper regeneration scheme in the city's docklands. Planning documents for the [Liverpool Waters](#) redevelopment scheme have been submitted, and concerns have been raised that the status of the city's waterfront World Heritage Site would be in jeopardy should planning permission be granted.

For more information, visit the [Liverpool Echo](#), or [The Independent](#)

Revocation of Regional Spatial Strategy

November 14, 2011

CLG have published an environmental report on the revocation of the North West of England Plan – the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West.

A consultation on the report runs until 20th January. For more information and to download a copy of the report – which references the role of the North West Coastal Forum going forward – see the [CLG website](#)

Burbo Bank Extension Newsletter

November 9, 2011

DONG Energy, who run the Burbo Bank offshore windfarm, have published the first newsletter about the proposed 40 square km extension. The newsletter includes important information about changes to their consultation process. It can be downloaded from their website: www.burbobankextension.com

Walking the Sefton Coast featured in The Times

November 9, 2011

The Times newspaper has featured the Sefton Coast in one of its Saturday walking features. The walk, from Waterloo to Ainsdale, can be accessed on [The Times website](#), but is subscription only. However, the writer of the article, Christopher Somerville, has posted it on his [personal website](#).

Brunel's Last Launch

November 9, 2011

A Time Team Special aired on Thursday 10th November at 9 pm features some North West maritime archaeology. The programme focuses on the problematic launch of Brunel's innovative SS Great Eastern on the Thames but part of the programme investigates the site where SS Great Eastern was scrapped and broken up between 1889 and 1891 – the mud flats at Rock Ferry on the Wirral. A familiar face will feature – Mike Stammers, maritime archaeologist and former director of the Merseyside Maritime Museum. The programme will be available to view after airing via the Channel 4 website.

For more details see the [Channel 4 website](#)

National News

Localism Bill Enacted

November 16, 2011

The Localism Bill received Royal Assent on 15th November. It introduces far-reaching changes to the planning system including abolition of regional strategies and the Infrastructure Planning Commission and the introduction of neighbourhood plans with wide community involvement. Many of the measures introduced are expected to be in place by April 2012.

For more details and a link to a plain English guide to the changes see the [CLG website](#)

Ministerial Statement on Marine Conservation Zones

November 16, 2011

Environment Minister Richard Benyon has made a Written Ministerial Statement (on Nov 15) on marine conservation zones. The statement confirms a delay to the original timetable, with Natural England and

the Joint Nature Conservancy Council (JNCC) providing their advice to Government in July 2012, six months later than planned.

The full statement can be read on the Defra website: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2011/11/15/wms-marine-conservation-zones/>

Marine Chemical Spill Response: UK Guidelines

November 16, 2011

A set of new guidelines for tackling oil or chemical spills at sea has been published. The guidelines provide the principles upon which effective post-spill monitoring and impact assessment in UK waters will be based on and are supported by the 19 UK government partners involved in post-spill issues.

Download the guidelines from the Cefas website: <http://cefas.defra.gov.uk/premium/guidelines.aspx>

Nature Check: What the Government Has Achieved

November 16, 2011

Wildlife and Countryside LINK, a coalition of 35 voluntary conservation organisations have published *Nature Check: An analysis of the Government's natural environment commitments*. The report analyses 16 separate commitments the Coalition Government has made towards the natural environment, assessing them on their progress against timescale and how well they have been delivered.

Download the report here: http://www.wcl.org.uk/docs/Link_Nature_Check_Report_October_2011.pdf

Bathing water results for 2011

November 8, 2011

Defra have published details of the 2011 bathing water results – a mixed picture for the North West with 24 beaches meeting the mandatory bathing water requirements compared to 27 in 2010, however 9 of these achieved the exacting requirements of the revised Bathing Water Directive standards (current 'guideline' status) compared to only 6 last year. However several key beaches in Lancashire failed (6 failures compared to only 3 in 2010). See the [Defra news page](#) for more details and a link to the full list and the [Environment Agency website](#) for more information on monitoring of bathing waters, bathing water profiles and the Bathing Water Directive.

National Policy Statement for Ports

November 3, 2011

The Department for Transport has published the National Policy Statement for Ports. To download the document, visit <http://www.dft.gov.uk/publications/national-policy-statement-for-ports>

Marine Nature Reserve Designated in Isle of Man

October 24, 2011

Ramsey Bay has been designated as the Isle of Man's first Marine Nature Reserve (MNR). The MNR will protect marine life, safeguard local fisheries and provide opportunities for Ramsey to develop as a centre for marine tourism, research and education.

After 3 years of community consultation, the by-laws to protect the MNR came into effect on October 1st. The by-laws protect the entire bay from aggregate dredging and the dumping of dredged material, and a zonation system offers different levels of protection for different areas of the bay.

For more information visit:

[The Wildlife Trusts;](#)
[Ramsey Town Commissioners;](#)
[Isle of Man Government, DEFA:](#)

UK SeaMap 2010

October 20, 2011

The JNCC has published 'UK SeaMap2010 – Predictive mapping of seabed habitats in UK waters'. The map provides a full coverage predictive seabed habitat for the sublittoral UK marine area, filling in the geographic gaps evident in earlier predictive mapping projects. Download the report here: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page>

MMO Publish Fisheries Statistics

October 20, 2011

The Marine Management Organisation has published the UK Sea Fisheries Statistics 2010. Download the report and data files here: <http://www.marinemanagement.org.uk/fisheries/statistics/annual.htm>

Open Consultations

Revocation of Regional Spatial Strategy

Click link above for more information - **closes 20th January 2012**

Conferences and Events

For information on upcoming relevant conferences and events, please visit the Events page on our webpage: <http://www.nwcoastalforum.org.uk/events/>