



# NEWSLETTER

NORTH NORFOLK  
PATHFINDER

**NNP**

## North Norfolk Pathfinder

Helping coastal communities adapt to coastal change

### What is Coastal Change?

The term Coastal Change is used to describe the effects of wave action and weather on the geology of the coastline. This process is heavily influenced by the building, failure or removal of sea defences and also by sea level rise.



Happisburgh (courtesy of Mike Page)

The adjustment of our coastline has had a detrimental effect on housing, on people's livelihoods, on the coastal environment and on the economic prospects of the whole community. These impacts are being experienced now and are likely to become worse in the future.

### What is the Pathfinder Programme?

Pathfinder is an initiative set up by the Department of Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) which provides a fund to enable Local Authorities to explore new ways of responding to the challenges faced by coastal communities. The fund is available to help affected communities adapt to the impacts of coastal change, it is not intended to be used for coast protection.

NNDC has been awarded £3 million for a wide range of pathfinder projects, which have wide support from local, regional and national organisations. The award was the largest in the country and Defra were particularly keen on the projects relating to support for local business and tourism infrastructure, the removal of dereliction and investigating coastal heritage.

A summary of North Norfolk's Pathfinder programme is given overleaf and more detail can be found on the Council's website: <http://www.northnorfolk.org/coastal/6346.asp>

Details of Defra's coastal change fund can be found on their website: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/flooding/manage/pathfinder/purpose.htm>

### How is NNDC responding to Coastal Change?

NNDC is responsible for coast defences for approximately half of the District's coastline. Wherever feasible, our programme of maintaining existing sea defences will continue; the pathfinder programme is in addition to this - not an alternative.

The extent of coastal change is predicted by Shoreline Management Plans (SMP) and such plans for our District are likely to be finalised later this year. These plans provide the policy basis for investment in coast defences; however, they have limited scope to address the consequences of coastal change. A different approach to coastal management has therefore been developed in North Norfolk and our experience of managing our dynamic coastline has put us at the forefront of coastal change issues nationally. The Coastal Concern Action Group (based in Happisburgh) has also become an influential lobby organisation.



The North Norfolk coastline from the air (courtesy of Mike Page)

### What happens next?

- On Wednesday 20 January, local coastal parishes and other interest groups are meeting to find out about the development of the Pathfinder programme.
- Local groups, including community representatives, will be set up to manage the various Pathfinder projects.
- Systems will be set up to manage the programme and staff and consultants will be appointed, where necessary, to provide specialist skills.
- Development and implementation of local projects will commence from March 2010, being delivered through to May 2011.

## What are the Pathfinder projects?

A wide variety of projects will be explored through the Pathfinder programme, including the following:

### Assisting Coastal Businesses

- providing bespoke business advice to businesses affected by coastal change
- raising the awareness of business advisors and funding institutions (extending the funding options for threatened businesses)
- assisting with the relocation of cliff top caravan parks and other businesses

### Securing facilities and infrastructure in coastal locations

Including the following:

- re-routing a section of cliff top footpath between the Runton Road car park and Cromer town centre
- relocating Trimmingham's village hall (the Pilgrim Shelter)
- relocating facilities which are lost or threatened at Happisburgh, e.g. beach access, car park, public toilets and the Coastguard facility

### Alleviating Blight

Developing options (for example 'purchase and lease-back') in order to:

- ensure that 'blighted' coastal properties can continue to be maintained
- provide the occupants of blighted properties with greater freedom of choice about their future
- make good use of such properties for the remainder of their life

### Improving the coastal and cliff top environment

For example:

- removing dereliction from the cliff top at Happisburgh and establishing suitable new cliff top land uses
- removing redundant and obsolete remnants of coastal defences

### Recording Coastal Heritage

- helping coastal communities understand, record and manage the impacts of coastal change on their heritage
- providing interpretation of the natural and built environment at Happisburgh and celebrating its future

### Learning from our experience

As well as assisting our local communities in addressing some of the impacts of coastal change, we hope to help demonstrate the importance of this approach. A specific requirement of the initiative is to evaluate the success of the Pathfinder projects in order to assist in the development of national coastal change policy. In particular we will gather feedback from those affected by the outcomes of the various projects and ensure that lessons are passed on.

## How are communities involved?

As the title suggests this Pathfinder programme is experimental and there will be varying degrees of success in the achievement of its aims. Its success will depend largely upon support from local communities and therefore we will try to ensure that:

- the projects match the expectations of local people
- those with a legitimate stake in the outcome of the projects are meaningfully involved in their implementation
- project decisions are open and accountable
- local people are kept informed

## How can you keep up to date with what's happening?

This newsletter is the first in a series intended to keep local people informed about the progress of the Pathfinder programme. These newsletters will be made available at the Council's Cromer office and at local libraries. All project information can be accessed on the internet at:

<http://www.northnorfolk.org/coastal/6346.asp>



If you would like to be sent further copies of this newsletter, or receive future editions, please send your contact details to the address below:

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