

LGA Special Interest Group Annual Report to LGA Board

SIG Name:	LGA Coastal SIG
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Membership

Adur District Council	Lincolnshire County Council
Allerdale Borough Council	Maldon District Council
Arun District Council	New Forest District Council
Blackpool Council	Norfolk County Council
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council	North Devon Council
Brighton (& Hove) Council	North East Lincolnshire Council
Canterbury City Council	North Norfolk District Council
Castle Point Borough Council	Northumberland County Council
Chichester District Council	Portsmouth City Council
Christchurch Borough Council	Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council
Cornwall Council	Rother District Council
Cumbria County Council	Scarborough Borough Council
Devon County Council	Sedgemoor District Council
Dorset Council	South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council
Dover District Council	Southend-On-Sea Borough Council
Durham County Council	East Suffolk District Council
East Devon District Council	Suffolk County Council
East Lindsey District Council	Sunderland City Council
East Riding Of Yorkshire Council	Swale Borough Council
Essex County Council	Teignbridge District Council
Fareham Borough Council	Tendring District Council
Great Yarmouth Borough Council	Thanet District Council
Hampshire County Council	Thurrock Council
Hartlepool Borough Council	Torridge District Council

Hastings Borough Council	Wealden District Council
Havant Borough Council	West Sussex County Council
Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk	Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council
Lancaster City Council	Worthing Borough Council
Lewes District Council	Wyre Borough Council

Aim

The LGA Coastal SIG seeks to champion and represent the collective interests of coastal, estuarine and maritime communities by increasing awareness and debate on environmental, economic and social issues at all levels in relation to the coast. It works in partnership with other organisations with complementary aims and brings pressure on the Government to secure local government's full involvement at all levels of policy formulation concerning the coast.

Key Activities / Outcomes of work undertaken

Councillor Ernest Gibson was elected Chair of the LGA Coastal SIG in September 2019, triggering a transition of host authority to South Tyneside Council. This transition presented a rare opportunity to take stock and co-create our forward work programme. Widespread member consultation took place between September and January. This input guided the development of 5 [Strategic Priorities and a new Forward Work Plan for 2020/21](#). This was formally adopted by the SIG at the March meeting.

1. We are a resilient hub for knowledge sharing and innovation

We are currently reviewing our subscriptions model in line with the level of ambition agreed in the Forward Work Plan. This is being overseen by a Member-led working group, with full recommendations to be taken to the SIG at the AGM (September). We are in the process of appointing Member Champions to lead on the key themes identified in the work plan in order to make best use of their skills and networks. To encourage best practice sharing and innovation, we have instituted themed discussions as a standing agenda item at quarterly meetings and the convening of topical working groups, e.g. on bathing waters adaptation, flood and coastal erosion risk management, regeneration, historic coastal landfills and water safety. Our annual study tour took us to Allerdale, the highlights of which included a demonstration of the ambition of coastal regeneration projects in the area, an overview of dune management issues on the Solway Coast, coastal erosion and the impact of the road closure and restoration works at Dubmill Point along with an example of erosion on a on highly dynamic un-protected site made up of saltmarsh with designations such as SSSI, MCZ, RAMSAR. The SIG supported and exhibited at the Flood and Coast Conference 2019 along with hosting a workshop on 'Leveraging the wider benefits of FCERM investment on the coast' which drew upon collective expertise to explore how we can think differently about the coast to shape the future of FCERM. We attended the Coastal Futures conference in January 2020; at both conferences we made many valuable new contacts. We welcome a wide range of topical and expert external speakers to our quarterly meetings.

2. We are a respected and sought-after voice for the coast

We build on the work of the previous Chair and Lead Officer and continue to position ourselves as the go-to voice on coastal matters, as well as raising the profile of the coast.

We are currently holding conversations about co-sponsoring the All Party Parliamentary Group on Coastal Communities. We maintain active relationships at Defra, MHCLG, the EA, the MMO and the Association of IFCAs. Our Chair sits on the national [Coastal Concordat](#) Steering Group and the MMO Stakeholder Focus Group. We met with Minister Pow in June 2020 to discuss private funding for flood and coastal protection schemes. We sit on the national Steering Group for the Year of the (English) Coast and are active advocates outwards and upwards on this initiative.

3. Regeneration of the coastal communities we serve

We are currently recruiting a Member and Officer Champion to lead on this work area and seek to work closely with the LGA to champion issues specific to coast. Our Year of the Coast work is a key part of this work stream. We work to ensure safe and clean seaside leisure through our work on Bathing Waters and water safety. We convene a Bathing Waters working group which is attended by national EA leads. Our beach and water safety work has been high profile in recent weeks and we are working closely with LGA and MHCLG to share challenges, solutions and best practice from across England. We have recently worked closely with LGA on the Freeports consultation response (ongoing).

4. Coastal adaptation and resilience in a changing climate

We continue to work to achieve national and local recognition of this issue. We are appointing an adaptation champion and convening a working group at present. We are looking into the creation of a 4-country working group on this issue to share best practice between devolved nations and are working closely with Welsh LGA on this. We co-funded the Coastal Loss Innovative Funding and Finance project and sit on the national steering board for this innovative project.

5. Sufficient and sustainable funding for our coast and communities

An ongoing and critical issue for our members. We share experience, expertise and opportunities across our membership, both through and outside of our working groups and mailing list. We seek to influence decision-makers on this issue, recently we met with Minister Pow to call for mandatory contributions to flood and coastal protection schemes from utilities companies where they benefit. We plan to submit a response to the Defra consultation on partnership funding expected this summer.

Consultation responses and written evidence

Draft National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England

EFRA Committee Inquiry into Flooding, May 2020

Environmental Audit Committee Inquiry into Offshore Wind, May 2020