



Humber Nature Forum

10 am Wednesday 6th July 2016
Humber Room, The Ropewalk, Barton upon Humber

Minutes

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

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| Adrian Koster | Royal Geographic Society |
| Alan Jones | Humber Nature Partnership |
| Amanda Robinson | Local Resident |
| Andrew Gibson | HNF Chair/Yorkshire Wildlife Trust |
| Cliff Morrison | Humber Nature Partnership |
| Darren Clarke | Humber Nature Partnership |
| Daryl Burdon | HNF Vice-Chair/IECS, University of Hull |
| Dave Sargent | Able UK |
| Emily Ledder | Natural England |
| Gordon Kell | Humber Nature Partnership |
| Jennifer Downs | Hull City Council |
| Jennifer Kippax | East Riding of Yorkshire Council |
| Jenny Hodson | VANEL |
| Ken Arkley | H&ERWA, UHWC, HWRC |
| Lorna Fairclough | Novartis |
| Martin Gorton | BOC |
| Peter Rogers | Xceptional Designs |
| Rob Foster | UHWG |
| Sean Kent | Lincolnshire County Council |
| Simon Wellock | Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust |
| Steve Westwood | Natural England |
| Sue Manson | Environment Agency |
| Tania Davey | Humber Nature Partnership |
| Tim Page | Natural England |
| Tony Edwards | HNP Chair /Humber Environmental Managers Network |

Apologies

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| Alison Briggs | Shire's Group IDBs |
| Chris Manning | North Nottingham Water Management Board |
| Dick Shillaker | Yorkshire Branch of British Dragonfly Society |
| Fran Smith | GLNP |
| Graham Teale | West Riding Wildfowlers |
| James Teale | West Riding Wildfowlers |
| Mike Coverdale | Humber Nature Partnership |
| Paul Learoyd | Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust |
| Sally Osgerby | |
| Steven Hollings | West Riding Wildfowlers |
| Susan Wilson | Natural England |
| Tim Smith | North Eastern IFCA |

2. Minutes and matters arising

AG enquired about the Hull City Council update at the last meeting regarding the allocation of a green space area along the water frontage. This has been clarified as an area west of St Andrew's Quay retail park. The minutes from the previous meeting were approved by the Forum.

3. Presentation: England Coast Path Project, Steve Westwood and Emily Ledder, Natural England

The England Coast Path is a new national trail around England's coast. Emily and Steve will be leading on the development of the path around the Humber, which will start in autumn 2016. The development of the path is driven by the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2010. Detailed guidance on the development of the path can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/england-coast-path-improving-public-access-to-the-coast>. A detailed overview was provided on how the coast path will be developed around the Humber and how landowners and stakeholders will be engaged in the process. A copy of the presentation can be found here:

<http://www.humburnature.co.uk/admin/resources/060716coast-path-project-presentation.pdf>

Comments and questions from the Forum

MG asked who will be responsible for the open access of the path. SW described that an agreement will be made with the Highways Authority who will be funded to manage the path.

DC commented that the work of the HNP on recreational activities and their impacts will form a good basis for the environmental assessment into the impacts of the path.

LF commented that from a landowner perspective, it will be important to have discussions on the development of the path that might result in increased access, especially in industrial areas.

CM enquired as to how the path will be developed in areas such as dunes where there are currently narrow paths. SW commented that there was not an expectation to have a 4m width path mown everywhere. Funding will be available for capital works for problem sections.

KA explained that he represented wildfowling interests. Wildfowling is severely restricted because of potential disturbance to birds. For example, wildfowling is restricted on walking on the flood bank to stop disturbance to birds as part of the consent. SW commented that Natural England realise the concerns and will have to look into the issues on the ground. KA asked for the same level playing field and expects the same rigour for this process.

RF asked what evidence will be used to assess the environmental impact of the coastal path. TD commented that the Footprint Ecology recreational data which the HNP commissioned will be available for Natural England to use. SW outlined that Natural England will use existing evidence to do the analysis and will also be getting a dog expert involved. Natural England wants to be transparent and go through the process as outlined in the act.

AK asked if there will be provision to enable access in rural areas. SW commented that they are not proposing new car parks or additional routes to access the coast path. On the construction of the path, soft engineering options will be considered including more vegetation management and using existing routes. It is not expected that the route will be of a continuous style but will be made accessible.

SK commented that Lincolnshire County Council has already been involved in the development of the path elsewhere within the county. There have been other stretches with issues such as dog walking and we can use these examples to administer the path on the Humber. The message to the Forum is that it is important to engage positively in the process with Natural England.

SW raised the concern as to who is going to manage the people accessing the path e.g. signage doesn't work for a minority of people. Who is going to police the path?

TE commented that on other national trails there are inconsistencies in signage depending on the local authority area which the path goes through. SW commented that that the maintenance of signage will be part of the funding agreement with the Highways Authority.

AG asked what the definition of a mobility scooter is as small quads could be suggested as a mobility aid. If landscape changes take place and new species use the area, can the coastal path be moved?

AG thanked Steve and Emily for a very useful and thought provoking presentation.

4. Humber Management Scheme/Catchment Partnership update

TD and DC outlined that they would like to see this as a regular item on the agenda at Forum meetings as a way to involve the Forum more in the delivery of the management plan for the Humber Estuary European Marine Site and as a way to encourage more statutory organisations to attend the Forum meetings. TD outlined that Water Framework Directive are now also included in the HMS plan.

GK and TD provided the following update on the delivery of HMS project which support the management of the Humber EMS:

- **Barton Clay Pits:**
The Barton clay pits group has been re-established. A task and finish group will develop an overarching strategy to promote the protection and improvement of the natural environment in harmony with the commercial and recreations activities of the clay pits.
- **Bird tracking project:**
This is a partnership project where curlew and redshank were fitted with electronic tagging devices to record their movements. The data is now being analysed by BTO. The hope is that this pilot study can be used to develop and gain funding for a wider project. The information obtained is extremely valuable for managing the estuary and for future planning developments on the Humber.
- **Humber app:**
The app provides information on 10 sites and best practice when visiting them. It is available on Apple app store and google play store: search **Humber Nature**. Everyone is encouraged to have a look – it is free.
- **In-combination database:**
This database is in development to assist with the in-combination assessment as part of the Habitats Regulations Assessment. The HNP is currently uploading data onto the system to trial the database.
- **Humber Environmental Audit:**
The HNP undertook an environmental audit to understand the type of data collected on the Humber. The HNP is now developing a proposal with Natural England and the Environment Agency on options to develop an environmental database for the Humber
- **Humber Hounds:**
This is an awareness raising project with dog walkers on best practice when visiting the Humber. Interest has been positive recently as a result of a dog walk across the Humber Bridge in which over 200 dogs attended. There was a lot of attention from radio, TV and newspapers.
- **Recreation management:**
The HNP with the support of the recreation management group is currently working on a final draft of the recreation management plan for the Humber. The HNP is working with Natural England to outline how the coast path and the recreation plan can complement each other.

5. Volunteer coordination update

AJ outlined that the HNP with VANEL is looking across the partnership at what volunteering takes place and opportunities for a network of volunteers. The HNP would like to apply for a grant to develop this project and would like to consult with organisations who work with volunteers to get information to support the application. A link to a questionnaire to gain information on how organisations work with volunteers will be circulated.

Action 1

| Action | Who |
|--|----------|
| All Forum members who work with volunteers to complete the questionnaire | Everyone |

6. Humber updates

Environment Agency, SM

The competitive tender for the review of the Humber Strategy is now out and will be awarded by September.

Upper Humber Wildfowl Committee, KA, RF

2 volunteer wardens collect data and do management duties in the upper Humber. In the past Natural England has provided around £4k-£5k per year to support expenses to cover 23 visits (but visits are likely to be double this). The Natural England funding is likely to come to an end. The group is currently looking to find other funding to deliver this work.

Lincolnshire County Council, SK

The devolution bid is continuing and the council has circulated questionnaires to the public in the county. Funding continues to be cut and co-commissioning is being investigated. Strength in groups such as the Humber Nature Forum keeps politicians involved.

Able UK, DS

The Marine Energy Park, Logistics Park and Cherry Cobb projects are ongoing. There is an application underway for the development of wet grassland at East Halton Marshes.

Chemical spraying, PR

Witness to an area in New Holland where birds were disturbed by someone undertaking chemical spraying. Since then the birds have not returned.

Action 2:

| | |
|--|----|
| To follow incident up with Local Authority | PR |
|--|----|

Natural England, TP

There has been some reorganisation of teams and the Humber has been identified as a focus area. On Alkborough Flats, now the Project Manager has left, discussions are taking place on the future management of the site. DC asked about the proposal for Natural England and the Environment Agency to have common boundaries. TP said that Natural England would have a Yorkshire team but recognise that day to day work should continue on the Humber. SM commented that the EA splits the Humber into two areas but the Humber team for flood risk will continue and the Humber Managers remit goes beyond flood risk.

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, SW

Otters have been breeding at Far Ings. Marsh harrier breeding has been poor on the south bank this year (AG reported successful breeding on the north bank). There are increased issues with vandalism and illegal activities with no police help.

Institute of Estuarine and Coastal Studies, University of Hull, DB

IECS is involved in a number of projects including Humber invertebrate studies and post-construction monitoring of fish, shellfish and birds for the the Humber Gateway Windfarm development. Dr Rodney Forster (Director Designate) is working on HIGHROC, a satellite imaging project. It was suggested that this could be an interesting topic at a future meeting. Details of the project are included below:

The HIGHROC (HIGH spatial and temporal Resolution Ocean Colour; www.highroc.eu) project will carry out the research and development necessary for the making the most of Europe's new Sentinel satellites. HIGHROC partners will develop next-generation coastal water products from the Sentinel data, and work together with users to develop a set of prototype services. The newly-available images give an order of magnitude improvement in both temporal and spatial resolution. These improvements will both open up new application areas for remote sensing, such as the assessment/monitoring of environmental impacts from dredging and offshore construction, and will strengthening existing applications, such as the assessment and monitoring of water quality in the context of the European Union Water Framework and Marine Strategy Framework Directives. IECS are working together with two industrial partners: 1) with The Crown Estate to monitor offshore windfarms from space, 2) with the Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult to install an ocean colour sensor on a meteorological mast in the northern North Sea.

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, AG

The Outer Humber Grazing Marsh project will come to an end at the end of September 2016. The Trust is developing a Leader project to develop footpath routes on the north bank. The decision on the development of a Spurn visitor centre has been deferred.

Hull City Council, JD

The Local Plan has been published and the HRA accepted. It was highlighted that the development of a cruise terminal at The Deep would require a HRA.

Humber Environmental Award, DC

The HNP will soon be inviting applications for the Humber Environmental Award which will be announced at the conference in November.

Novartis, LF

Currently looking at innovative ways to delivery ecological potential on site and working with AJ to do this.

Lincolnshire coast, CM

Working with RSPB to look at how new habitat can be created for little terns as is no longer any successful breeding on the Lincolnshire coast. There have been signs of birds breeding (little tern, ringed plover) this year on the coast but this has not been successful due to human pressures. AG commented that the little tern colony at Spurn has crashed this year but the species are apparently doing very well in Norfolk.

HNP work with industry, AJ

The HNP continues to work on the sand martin project with British Steel. Continued work with LOR, Novartis, BP and Cemex. Working on the blow wells project with the Lincolnshire Chalk Streams.

7. AOB and date of next meeting

| Time and date | Presentation | Location |
|--|---|------------------------|
| Humber Nature Forum: Wednesday 7 th September | TBC | Time and location TBC |
| Environmental Managers Network meeting: 5 th October | ISO14001 and biowaste to resource innovations | CATCH, Stallingborough |