



## **Blakeney Channel Coastal Community Team**

Minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020 at 7p.m., Blakeney Hotel, Blakeney

### **Attendees:**

Don Glaister, John Seymour, Victoria Egan, Frenesi Ewing, Alban Donahoe, Iain Wolfe

**Apologies:** Peter Roe, James Cowan, Neil Thompson, Paul Bishop, Morris Arthur

### **Chairman's Report:**

The previous minutes were approved.

AD gave a brief Parish update, the financing of any works to the Carnser Corner remains unresolved.

### **National Trust Update:**

VE wanted to provide us with more clarity on the Trust's view of the EXO design.

She started by re-iterating that the Trust would find hard block structures inappropriate, however using brushwood structures retain relocated sediment would, potentially, be beneficial to the marsh. Particularly where the structures were also helping protect the salt marsh from further erosion – although, of course, care would have to be taken to ensure any structures do not affect flow in such a way as to negatively impact other parts of the channel.

VE went on to say that the National Trust are aware of the potentially beneficial use of dredging if it can be used to help preserve or reinstate salt marsh.

VE asked to see the Tony Faulkner plan/specification for the Carnser Corner which has been sent to BPC. The National Trust would want to know the lifespan and maintenance of any proposed structure as they are concerned about being left with an expensive maintenance liability. The issue of ensuring any new structure could cope with future rising sea levels was also broached. However, AD pointed out that the existing quay is designed to naturally overtop, and this corner would match the existing quay height and gradually tail downwards to the first slipway. DG pointed out that the height of this structure would need to allow for the floating of Juno onto the Carnser and that BHA supported the current design.

VE went on to raise the concern that the Corner could impact the flow encouraging the water to 'bounce' off the Corner and erode the salt marsh opposite, so she would need to review the design and come back with action plan. DG noted that Exo aware of this – as a consequence that brushwood could be needed opposite the Blakeney Hotel in the Greasy Pole to take account of this.

The discussion went on to discuss the modelling work the Environment Agency is doing to the Freshes, which may affect Bridge Creek. VE is waiting for an update and the National Trust are looking at how they can feed into the Shoreline



Management Plan – DG wanted to know which consultants are being used in the Glaven River/Freshes modelling, but VE suggested he contact the EA rather than the consultants.

William Coulet (EXO) had wondered if any excess of dredged material from the Channel could usefully be used to create a 'bird island' in the lower lying Freshes, which is a technique that has been done elsewhere. VE explained that because the Freshes are below sea level, should the sea defences fail or cease to be maintained, it would be helpful to build up the level of the land in the Freshes if they evolve into salt marsh.

VE confirmed that William Coulet (EXO) had contacted her about "bird island" but she was not aware in what context so further contact needed to be made.

However, the current designation of the Freshes could make any such plan difficult at the moment.

Land Ownership:

VE answered some questions the group had on land ownership. Basically, the NT own the salt marsh on both sides of the Channel. Simply put, NT own the shoreline, with the Crown Estates owning the 'bottom'. Looking at the Freshes, the field north of Blakeney's duck pond is privately owned. Likewise, while the National Trust own the narrow field that runs north, to the east of the cart track, there are further fields North and East of the entrance by the sluice gates that are privately owned. But the corner field, at the end of the cart track, that borders the coast path is owned by the NT which they rent to a grazier (Andy Gray). VE to supply a plan showing land ownership of the Freshes.

## **Project Managers Report:**

At the end of the last meeting we agreed we would use our remaining funds to revisit EXO's design, replacing hard structures with softer brushwood structures as much as was possible. We would then present the two variations (1 with hard structures and 1 with soft structures) for public comment.

We agreed we should schedule the public consultation for the Easter holidays when, it was hoped, a large number of residents and home owners would be in the village.

To support the public consultation, we had asked EXO to prepare a presentation documenting the surveys and investigation work that has gone into the channel design, which DG had circulated prior to the meeting. The presentation contains some excellent images and diagrams but would need careful explanation. JS pointed out that we can't see the revised structures on the diagrams so that needs amending.

Comments on the EXO document:

JS was concerned that it isn't possible to see the revised brushwood structures on some of the diagrams.



FE felt we would need to top and tail the presentation with more background, including why we appointed EXO and our meetings with other bodies, like The Crown Estate. Plus, what are the projected benefits and how long the benefits could be expected to last.

IW drafted a structure for our presentation, which will be forwarded to the group. It needs to include 3 different options:

1. doing nothing - just re-surveying
2. hard structure design
3. soft structure design

DG explained that while we haven't seen the full, revised design yet, William Coulet had agreed to re-work the design to remove hard structures for a fee of £2000. This leaves the group with just over £400 available.

However, during the meeting, we agreed to commit £250 of our remaining funds to taking sediment samples, as this hadn't been done during the previous surveys. VE thought the Binney report has some information on sediment composition. DG to check as not sure if this is correct, if it is forward to EXO for comparison purposes.

[We had hoped VE could confirm if the report below was the "Binney" report and she had offered to check against her paper copy....

*Kernan, M., Battarbee, R.W & Binney, H.A. (2007) Climate Change and Aquatic Ecosystems in the UK: Science Policy and Management.*

<https://www.geog.ucl.ac.uk/research/research-centres/environmental-change-research-centre/publications/ecrc-reports> ]

Funding:

The Parish Council kindly awarded us £246 from the Community Fund last year. This year we have asked for £1895, which would allow us to commission EXO to repeat the Channel survey.

DG reported that Cley Harbour Project, Blakeney Harbour Association and BCCT have submitted a joint funding bid to the Climate Action Fund. Hopefully we'll know if we meet the fund's criteria by the end of January, if so, we will need to prepare a full funding bid by March 2020.

Planning the Public Consultation:

The preferred dates would be 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> April, during the Easter holidays. DG to check if the village hall is available (confirmed as 15/4/20).

We should advertise the event locally, in the Glaven Valley Newsletter, BPC website, Holt Chronicle, on Facebook and via BHA and CHP. Possibly EDP too.

DG Suggested we hand out feedback forms asking for comments on the EXO proposal and whether they would be willing to help or contribute to a fund.



## Any other business:

## Next Steps/Actions:

All: review the draft presentation EXO have sent us (deadline 22<sup>nd</sup> January),  
DG to collate and pass feedback back to EXO.

All: Review and add to IW's BCCCT presentation outline

DG: Check if Village Hall is available for the public consultation meeting, preferred dates 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> April.

DG to send VE the plan/specification for the Carnser Corner

VE:

- a. Check if it is okay to circulate the Footprint Ecology report (see below)
- b. Review the Carnser Corner design to see what would be needed to progress it further (further design, impact analysis etc)
- c. Discuss the idea of a Bird Island with William Coulet
- d. SMP – after Easter, provide an explanation on what the SMP is
- e. Forward a plan of National Trust land ownership in the area

*Outstanding actions from previous meetings:-*

- *Investigate the financial significance of tourism in Blakeney*

*(Jan'20) No progress as yet. VE thought that a report produced by **Footprint Ecology** had looked at the economic importance of tourism in North Norfolk – she will see if she can send this report on to us. IW thought the report might be on the Norfolk Coast Partnership Site <http://www.norfolkcoastaonb.org.uk/site-map/>*

*VE confirmed the following is one of the reports by Footprint Ecology She was going to check if it was the economic report next week...*

*<http://www.norfolkbiodiversity.org/assets/Uploads/Visitor-surveys-at-European-protected-sites-across-Norfolk-during-2015-and-2016.pdf>*

- *Review the case studies of similar coastal areas provided by the National Trust. Possible visit to local sites at Brancaster and Overy Staithe?*
- *Talk to the EA about the current works and problems around Bridge Creek (Jan'20) VE has asked the EA to provide an update, but has not received it yet.*

## Next meetings:

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> Feb 2020 at the Blakeney Hotel at 7 p.m.

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> Mar 2020 at the Blakeney Hotel at 7 p.m.

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> Apr 2020 at the Blakeney Hotel at 7 p.m.