

River Arun to Pagham Flood and Erosion Management Strategy

April 2008

The Environment Agency and Arun District Council are working together to develop a Flood and Erosion Management Strategy to decide how we should manage this area of West Sussex coast over the next 100 years. In advance of the draft strategy consultation later this year, we have written this fact sheet to update you on the work we have done over the past few years.

Why do we need a Flood and Erosion Management Strategy?

With the climate changing, sea levels rising and increased storminess, the pressure on our coastline is increasing. We need to work together to invest our resources in the best way for the local communities. The Flood and Erosion Management Strategy for the area will set out how we can manage this area over the next 100 years.

Coastal erosion and flood defences between the River Arun and Pagham protect coastal communities as well land valuable for wildlife and recreation. These defences are managed by a number of private landowners as well as Arun District Council and the Environment Agency.

Don't we have a strategy?

We developed the draft strategy for this frontage area back in 2003. Since then a number of changes have occurred including revised Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and Environment Agency guidance on strategy production and the new requirement to provide a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). In addition, the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) was reviewed in 2005 and some revised policies were recommended for the new Beachy Head to Selsey Bill SMP.

We are now undertaking a review of the strategy to bring it up to date with the latest Shoreline Management Plan and the current guidance. We are undertaking technical work to produce the draft River Arun to Pagham Flood and Erosion Management Strategy. After we complete various technical assessments later this year we will consult on the draft strategy for a period of 12 weeks.

How does this strategy relate to other areas of the coast?

This strategy joins with other adjacent strategies (i.e. Pagham to East Head and Rivers Arun to Adur) to provide an uninterrupted framework to help deliver policies set out under the SMP process.

What about funding?

There is a limit to the national funding available for coastal management schemes. Central government funds are given to those schemes that are identified as highest priority across England. Getting a share of the national funds for all of the options proposed in the River Arun to Pagham Flood and Erosion Management Strategy is unlikely. Where national funding is not available, there may be alternative local sources and we will need to work with you and the local community to explore these potential opportunities.

How can you get involved?

We have produced a Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report to identify the environmental impacts and opportunities for the strategy. You can view this report on the South Downs Coastal Group website (www.sdcg.org.uk).

We want to hear from you about what you value about your local area. Issues such as recreation, public access and nature conservation are all things this strategy can help to protect and improve. We also want to provide you with the information you need to understand the potential future issues for where you live so that you are prepared for any changes that you might face.

Please send us your comments regarding important environmental considerations for the area by writing to us by 16 May 2008 at the address below or emailing us on arun.pag@environment-agency.gov.uk.

What happens next?

We will use your comments to draft the River Arun to Pagham Flood and Erosion Management Strategy, which will be available for 12 weeks of consultation from November 2008. During this time we will host exhibitions locally to discuss with you our proposed management options. We will also continue to work closely throughout the strategy process with key stakeholders such as major landowners, Town and Parish Councils, residents associations and others.

In the meantime please continue to look at the South Downs Coastal Group website for strategy updates. In the Autumn we will issue a further newsletter to update you on progress and tell you how you can get involved in the consultation later this year.

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