

NEWSLETTER

Cuckmere Estuary Pathfinder Project

The unique and iconic Cuckmere estuary lies on the East Sussex coast between Seaford and Eastbourne, south of the A259.

In 2008, the Environment Agency published their Flood Risk Management strategy for the estuary. This recommended that, after a notice period of two years from April 2009, they would no longer undertake routine maintenance of the flood defences in the area.

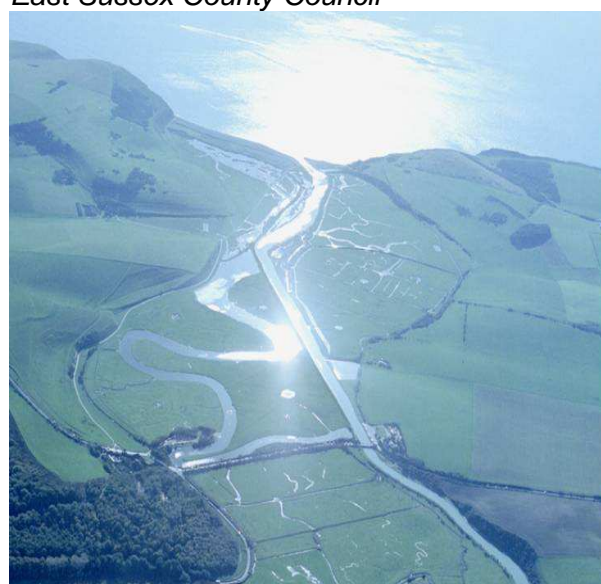
The Cuckmere Estuary Partnership (CEP), made up of local organisations with statutory and land owning interests, commissioned an independent consultant to undertake a programme of community engagement.

Completed in July 2009 this showed that the local community wanted to be more involved in deciding how the Cuckmere estuary would be managed in the future. It also identified that evidence gaps needed to be filled to fully understand the effects of coastal change.

The Pathfinder project leads on from the previous community engagement work by the CEP. It will deliver a number of focussed studies to fill evidence gaps, and work with the community to plan for coastal change at the Cuckmere estuary.

This is the first Pathfinder newsletter and I hope it will encourage those in the community with an interest in the future of the Cuckmere to get more involved in the project.

*Councillor Matthew Lock
Lead Member for Transport & Environment
East Sussex County Council*



What is coastal change?

Coastal change is the term used to describe the effects of the sea and weather on the coastline. Although a natural process it will be heavily influenced by changes such as sea level rise.

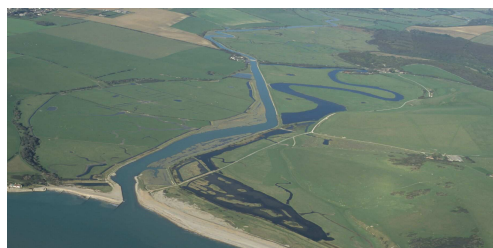
What is Pathfinder?

In 2009 the Department for Environment, Food and Rural affairs (Defra) invited local authorities to apply to a funded Coastal Change Pathfinder Programme.

Further details of Defra's coastal change fund can be found on their website:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/flooding/manage/pathfinder/purpose.htm>

East Sussex County Council was 1 of 15 successful coastal change pathfinder authorities and has received £249,997 to explore planning for, and managing, adaptation to coastal change for the Cuckmere estuary in partnership with the community.



The Pathfinder Project

The project will work with the community to decide how best to plan for change at the Cuckmere estuary, taking the following steps.

1. Gather evidence on the important features of the estuary
2. Identify possible options for future management of the Cuckmere Estuary
3. Assess the impact of the options using the evidence gathered
4. Agree a process to involve the community in deciding the preferred option

Upcoming events

Cuckmere Community Forum meeting on 23rd August at 6pm, Seaford Town Council Chambers

Open Pathfinder Project Board meeting on 1st September 14:00 at Pump Barn, Seven Sisters

How to get involved

Please visit the Pathfinder website: <http://cuckmerepathfinder.org.uk/>

Or contact Adrian Davies
Pathfinder Project Officer
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tel: 01273 335 926