

LGA Special Interest Group Annual Report to LGA Board

SIG Name: LGA Coastal SIG

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Membership

Adur District Council

Allerdale Borough Council

Arun District Council

Blackpool Council

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council

Brighton & Hove Council

Canterbury City Council

Castle Point Borough Council

Chichester District Council

Christchurch Borough Council

Cornwall Council

Cumbria County Council

Devon County Council

Dorset Council

Dover District Council

Durham County Council

East Devon District Council

East Lindsey District Council

East Riding Of Yorkshire Council

Essex County Council

Fareham Borough Council

Great Yarmouth Borough Council

Hampshire County Council

Isle of Wight Council

Hastings Borough Council

Havant Borough Council

Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk

Lancaster City Council

Lewes District Council

Lincolnshire County Council

Maldon District Council

New Forest District Council

Norfolk County Council

North Devon Council

North East Lincolnshire Council

North Norfolk District Council

Northumberland County Council

Portsmouth City Council

Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council

Rother District Council

Scarborough Borough Council

Sedgemoor District Council

South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council (Lead Authority)

Southend-On-Sea Borough Council

East Suffolk District Council

Suffolk County Council

Sunderland City Council

Teignbridge District Council

Tendring District Council

Thanet District Council

Thurrock Council

Hartlepool Borough Council

Torridge District Council

Wealden District Council

West Sussex County Council

Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council

Worthing Borough Council

Wyre Borough Council

Aim

The LGA Coastal SIG exists 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

The LGA Coastal SIG Secretariat (South Tyneside Council) undertook a comprehensive consultation with the membership in February and March 2021 to run a health check on our current strategic priorities and work areas. This has resulted in minor changes to the wording of our 5 strategic priorities (shown below) and no changes to our work areas. Our 2021/22 Work Plan was formally adopted by the membership at [the March 2021 meeting of the LGA Coastal SIG](#) and is available in full on our website. Our [Lead Member/Chair, Cllr Ernest Gibson had an opinion piece published in LGA First](#), in which he set out the SIG's ambition for 2021.

Progress against our 5 Strategic Priorities:

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

The Chair and Lead Officer have transformed the Coastal SIG, catalysing a new culture of ownership across the membership. The appointment of Member Champions, officer leads and working groups (Adaptation, Bathing Waters, Beach & Water Safety, FCERM Funding & Policy, and Coastal Landfills) has successfully unlocked the vast expertise, skills and networks held within the SIG and significantly boosted our impact. Our working groups bring together Members, officers and external experts and act as a collaborative forum and think-tank for innovation and sharing of best practice. Our 2020 annual study tour to Dorset was postponed due to the pandemic and will be held in September 2021. We continue to attract a high calibre of topical and expert speakers to our quarterly meetings and are receiving glowing feedback from Members on their utility as a briefing and forum for discussion. We postponed the review of our subscriptions model in light of ongoing uncertainty; this decision is held under review.

2. We are the trusted, go-to voice for the coast with a powerful political influence

We were successfully appointed to the role of co-Secretariat of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Coastal Communities in February 2021 and are working with the newly elected Chair to develop the group's aims and programme for the year ahead. We maintain active relationships with relevant government departments, bodies and agencies; as well as with industry bodies and others with coastal interests. Our Chair sits on the national Coastal Concordat Steering Group. We are founding members of the national One Coast Coalition and are currently developing a significant funding application to move this and the Year of the Coast development work forwards. We continue to raise our profile through effective advocacy, communications and media work; in 2020 we set up a Twitter account [@LGACoastalSIG](#) and are currently refreshing our website.

3. We champion sustainable regeneration for the coastal communities we serve

We work closely with the Coastal Communities Alliance and others in the One Coast Coalition on this work theme and seek to work more closely with the LGA to champion issues specific to coast, including tourism. Towards our objective of ensuring safe and clean seaside leisure, we share best practice and identify gaps and needs through our Bathing Waters and Beach & Water Safety working groups. We have recently secured involvement with the National Water Safety Forum and work closely with LGA Champions and Policy Advisers on water safety. Our Lead Officer attends the regular government round-table on Beaches & Tourism and we are proactive in our support for our members relating to the lifting of lockdown. We are growing our relationships with tourism, maritime and fishing bodies and are championing the role of the blue economy in levelling up at the coast. We continue to work with the Association of IFCAs to champion the role of local government in fisheries management decisions.

4. We champion coastal resilience and adaptation in a changing climate

We continue to work to achieve national and local recognition of this issue. Our Adaptation, FCERM Funding & Policy, and Coastal Landfill working groups are doing outstanding work in this area. They have been actively involved in the action planning process for the new national flood and coastal erosion risk management strategy and are bringing in experts from across the UK to share best practice between devolved nations. We are partners on two Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme projects, one looking at nature-based solutions to coastal protection and one at coastal transition and adaptation. We sit on the national steering board for the Coastal Loss Innovative Funding and Finance project. Our Lead Officer spoke about our coastal adaptation work at the national Ocean Recovery conference (January 2021) and we ran a successful workshop on coastal adaptation at the Flood and Coast conference (June 2021).

5. We champion 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 and ran a bespoke workshop with the EA to enable our members to submit quality bids to the Resilience Innovation Programme. We continue to influence decision-makers on this issue, mainly in Treasury, Defra and MHCLG. This is a developing work area and our working groups are bringing fresh energy and perspective to this issue. We continue to offer seed funding for projects which deliver against our priorities.

Ambitions for the LGA Board to be aware of:

- Ensure LGA are engaged with the APPG on Coastal Communities
- Build relationship between our Chair and LGA Leadership
- Build relationships between our Member Champions and relevant LGA Boards/Champions
- Build our understanding of LGA work on regeneration and better understand where/how we add value
- Provide more regular updates to relevant LGA Boards