



Pagham Harbour Local Communities Forum, Weds 6 July 2016

On the panel:

- Chair: County Cllr Simon Oakley
- Charlotte Weller (WSCC Countryside Services Manager)
- Tim Callaway (RSPB Pagham Harbour Site Manager)
- (Minutes) Adrian Thomas (RSPB Project Manager, Minutes)

Apologies: Cllr Margaret Evans, Mrs Catherine Morrish

RSPB Pagham Harbour team members present: Jan Atkinson (Little Tern People Engagement Officer), Ivan Lang (Warden), Roy Newnham (Visitor Experience Officer)

1. **Welcome** by Adrian Thomas (RSPB) and Cllr Simon Oakley (WSCC).

SO confirmed that the meetings are to ensure that the Service Level Agreement between WSCC and RSPB is working well, and to find out what work the RSPB has been delivering in the Reserve since the last Communities Forum

2. **RSPB Update** (TC)

- The 2015-16 Annual Report that RSPB submits to WSCC was made available to attendees in paper form.
- A presentation was given by Tim Callaway. See separate PDF '*Communities forum July 2016*'
- Q: Has Pagham Lagoon recovered from the historic pollution incident?
- A: Yes, to a large degree, but the Starlet Sea-anemone (one of the key species there) has not been seen since 2001, perhaps not surprising as the lagoon is generally of low salinity for this species.
- Comment: Pagham PC is having problems with the Pagham Road Ditch. The Parish Council has been awarded Operation Watershed money from WSCC and is working with the appropriate parties to reach a solution.

Action: TC will seek a meeting of the Pagham Rife working group

- Q: What impact has the natural breach of Church Norton spit had on RSPB work?
- A: Very little, as we had worked hard to encourage the Little Terns to breed on Tern Island instead through all our vegetation clearance and electric fencing of the island

3. **Uplift Project at Visitor Centre area**

- A presentation was given by Adrian Thomas in which he explained the planned works to the infrastructure. See separate PDF '*Communities forum July 2016*'
- Q: Will there be any problem with schools and adult visitors mixing in the Discovery Area?
- A: We don't think so, but the key thing is to monitor it. Other Reserves in the Country use shared areas for education and it has proved to work well
- Q: Will the new toilets be closed at night?

- A: We haven't decided, but it is a possibility. We want to keep it open, but at the same time these will be brand new facilities that we don't want damaged.
- SO checked that the funding is in place to deliver the planned works.
- AT confirmed that with WSCC monies, Friends of Pagham Harbour support, applications in to Veolia and Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), and a sizable chunk of core RSPB cash, RSPB should be able to deliver the whole programme set out.
- SO mentioned the s106 monies held by Chichester District Council that may become available to the reserve.
- Ray Radmall (Pagham PC) alerted the meeting to the potential for s106 monies from housing at Pagham for wardening, fencing and signage. It is possible up to 3000 new houses will be built at Pagham, although the Parish Council is resisting this.
- CW encouraged people to comment on the planning application, and not to forget that positive ones are valuable.

4. Review of the byelaws

- Following the re-declaration of the reserve boundary, WSCC has committed to reviewing the byelaws. CW has spoken to Natural England (NE) (who are the authority which will need to approve the byelaws). They have confirmed that they now have a new standard format. The review will be an inclusive process and will be taken forward in 2016.

5. AOB

- Q: What is the situation regarding the Pagham Harbour to Medmerry cycle path?
- A: RSPB is awaiting final design of a key section that passes through Southern Water land. RSPB will then be able to mark the route out, but cyclepath surfacing will be dependent on funding.
- Q: What is the situation regarding the English Coastal Path?
- A: This NE led project for the whole country is seeking to deliver a national coastal footpath, in sight of the sea, by 2018. Where possible, it will follow existing footpaths, and this is likely to be the case at Pagham Harbour. At Pagham Harbour, we understand that NE is at an early stage of what is a long process of consultation.
- Q: Is there any news from the Environment Agency regarding flood defence works at Sidlesham?
- A: No, we have heard nothing recently.
- Q: Have the footpaths around Medmerry been finalised?
- A: No, we await the Environment Agency's conclusion of the final land deal.
- TC: The Inshore Fisheries Conservation Agency (IFCA) is required to draw up management plans for fisheries, and that includes for Pagham Harbour MCZ. IFCA has produced a fact sheet outlining their proposals and the consultation process (posters were available on the night – available from Sussex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority, 12a Riverside Business Centre, Brighton Road, Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex BN43 6RE. 01273 454407, www.sussex-ifca.gov.uk). We understand that they will be going out to consultation once their plans are drawn up.
- Q: Is Pagham Harbour open to navigation?

- A: There is a general right of navigation, but not to launch. It is a dangerous place to sail and there is a Code of Conduct available on the RSPB website and at Sidlesham Quay for anyone competent to try.
- Q: What is the situation with the Marine Conservation Zone?
- A: The MCZ for foraging terns out in the open sea beyond the Harbour is out for consultation, led by NE.

Ray Radmall (Pagham PC) asked for it to be put on record how grateful the Parish Council is for the help from the RSPB. The Parish Council has now pretty much ticked off everything that is required for planning consent for the artificial breach of Church Norton Spit to safeguard Pagham Beach.

Next Communities Forum: November 2016 - date TBC.