

Pagham Harbour Contract Management Committee Meeting - 1 July 2014

Present:

Cllr Bernard Smith (Chair)
Charlotte Eastley (WSCC)
Karen Rigby-Faux (RSPB)
Peter Wilderspin (RSPB)
Rob Carver (RSPB)

Apologies: None

Minutes from previous meeting

These were approved. The only action was to make the finalised Boating Code of Conduct available on the RSPB website (link from WSCC site). This has been requested by RC and would be in place shortly. The code (and map) had been on display in the Centre since the last Community Forum meeting in November.

Update on LNR agreements

- PW presented a report on the current position and provided a summary statement for the Community Forum on 2 July.
- ACTION: RSPB and WSCC to set up a meeting to discuss process for re-designation and the roles of the RSPB and WSCC.
- The re-designation process will involve an advert in the local press, followed by consultation with Natural England and a Cabinet Member Decision.
- It was highlighted that the North Wall would not be part of the LNR after the site is re-declared as it is unknown ownership.
- ACTION: RSPB to consider whether there are any management issues which would arise from the non-designation of the Pagham North Wall and inform WSCC.
- It was reiterated that re-declaration of the LNR boundary has no impact on coastal defence matters.
- ACTION: RSPB to develop a Q&A sheet which will be made available to the public.

Finance

CE confirmed that WSCC has been making the necessary quarterly payments to the RSPB along with £25,000 Capital payment.

RC outlined the projects which the Capital funding would be allocated to. These included;

- Site wide signage and information provision
- Replacement toilet block with integral disabled provision
- Upgraded nature trail and wheelchair accessible paths
- Pathway from car park over the landfill to view point across Harbour/360 panorama
- Replacement Ferry Pool hide and new Tramway shelter/lookout behind Centre
- Re-surfacing of Church Norton car park

CE asked how the RSPB was progressing re, securing £100,000 match funding.

KRF confirmed that a fundraiser has been allocated to Pagham Harbour for one day a week in order to progress this.

The above projects await internal sign off, once landfill liability insurance cover is agreed with the Environment Agency.

Annual Report

RC confirmed that the full Annual Report had been produced as per the SLA and presented the following summary/ highlights:

Land Management

- SSSI and SPA in 96% favourable condition
- Dark-bellied Brent Geese and Black-tailed Godwit populations in favourable condition (SPA/Ramsar)
- Pintail populations unfavourable due to national decline, reasons unknown
- Little Tern breeding population favourable at SPA target
- Common Tern breeding population also favourable
- Breeding wader populations (Lapwing & Redshank) unfavourable due to predation. Cameras and data loggers have now been deployed to monitor nest predation (eggs/chicks) and activity
- Grey Heron and Little Egret breeding populations exceeded target
- One pair of Turtle Dove recorded and habitat now specifically created for this rare breeding migrant under our new HLS agreement
- Water Vole populations monitored in partnership with Manhood Wildlife & Heritage Group. Winter flooding may have enabled populations to colonise new areas along with reduced mortality due to mild conditions – awaiting spring survey findings
- Grazing re-introduced to the Scheduled Ancient Monument area at Church Norton
- Pagham Lagoon impacted by sewage pollution in December due to flooding of Church Farm and failure of Southern Water pumping station. Issue being investigated by Natural England, Environment Agency and Southern Water, who are funding a flora/fauna survey of the lagoon in September 2014 by University of Brighton

Visitor Services

- Of an estimated 200,000 visits to the Reserve, 11,500 to the Visitor Centre
- 14 field teaching visits with 446 pupils
- 20 coach visits bringing 600 visitors
- 40 events hosting 567 people, including Wildlife Explorer activities
- Visitor satisfaction surveys – 95% rate their experience as good or excellent, 85% pledged their support to the RSPB after their visit.
- Visit England accreditation achieved under the Visitor Experience Quality Assurance Scheme (VAQAS) with 67% score. Report highlighted the warmth of welcome and recommended infrastructure improvements in order to increase score and accreditation to very good

ACTION: RC to request that the Annual Report is put onto the website

Community Forum

Agenda was discussed and agreed

AOB:

None

Next meeting: Date in November to be confirmed