

INFORMATION NOTE



Fylde Coastal Strategy- Update

At its meeting on 25 March 2015, Cabinet *RESOLVED*:

1. *To formally adopt the Fylde Council Coastal Strategy and associated action plan to deliver the long term Vision for the Regeneration of Fylde's Coastline from 2015 -2032.*
2. *To establish a project board to oversee the delivery of major infrastructure projects relating to the Coast, commencing with the Restoration of Fairhaven Lake and Gardens linking with the replacement sea defence project.*
3. *The production of an annual monitoring report to report the progress of the Coastal Strategy /Action Plan through the appropriate service committee.*

1. Considerable progress is being made with the delivery of the Coastal Strategy, the major key actions have been identified and summarised below -

- **Theme 1 Green Infrastructure and Landscape** Fylde Council has been approached by Natural England regarding the North West phase of the England Coast Path. The England Coast Path is a proposed long-distance National Trail which will follow the coastline of England. When complete, it will be 2,795 miles in length. The North West section of the trail will stretch from the Scottish Border to the Welsh Border, skirting the Lake District, Morecambe Bay, Fylde Coast and Liverpool. The England Coast Path has been possible because of a new law in the UK, the Right of Coastal Access, giving to people for the first time the right of access around all England's open coast. The Council will work with Natural England to progress the trail including defining routes and incorporating associated way-marking into the Coastal Signage Strategy. The project to link Lytham Green with the new open space fronting Lytham Quays (the new green) was in part funded by a Section 106 contribution from the Danbro development. The first phase is being developed to include signage and interpretation material and was implemented in 2018. The second phase will be the physical construction of a footpath link from Lytham Green around Jubilee House and onto the Lytham Quays Estate which is currently being designed and may the subject of capital bid.

- **Theme 2 Coastal Protection –**

- (ii) Coast Protection Scheme

- Fairhaven to Church Scar Coast Protection Scheme

- The Council, in partnership with the Environment Agency, are replacing the sea defences, as the existing defences are time expired and currently failing. The current defences were built in the 1890's and have been undergoing emergency repairs every year to prevent a major breach.

- The Scheme will provide new coastal protection at Fairhaven and Church Scar, including upgrading to the promenades. This will help to make sure that the area is both a great place to live and to visit.

- Additional funding of £2m has been secured from the Environment Agency to create a stepped revetment and associated promenade at Granny's Bay to bridge the gap between Fairhaven and Church Scar.

The project consists of two phases for certain noisy operations, due to a constraint in avoiding disturbing over-wintering birds. Phase 1 started early January 2018 at Church Scar, and phase 2 will follow at Fairhaven. The Scheme itself is due to be opened in 2020.

➤ **Theme 3 Water Quality**

The major action is the implementation of the new bathing water directive. The first report on water quality under the revised directive was at the end of 2015 bathing water season.

2018 Water Quality Results

St Annes Pier	Good
St Annes North	Good

Bathing water quality in 2018 at St Anne's Pier and St Anne's North has achieved a good water quality result. There have been year on year improvements in water quality. United Utilities continue to invest to improve water quality on the Fylde Coast. The £35m South Fylde drainage scheme aims to reduce the amount of rainwater which gets into the sewer reducing the risk of sewage backing up which prevents polluted water getting into the sea at times of overflow.

➤ **Theme 4 Nature Conservation and Habitat Improvement**

Fylde encompasses a number of nationally ecologically significant coastal assets including the Fylde Sand Dunes and Ribble and Alt Estuary Sites of Special Scientific Interest. To support in the protection, promotion and management of such assets, a brand new team of Rangers and a Coastal Patrol Officer was appointed in April 2018. Following a year of establishment, the new team has proved a huge success and has delivered a range of environmental projects, events and activities alongside community groups.

The key priority for the team during 2019 – 2020 will be the completion and launch of a new Fylde Schools Education Programme, targeted towards providing National Curriculum based classes and workshops to primary and secondary students, facilitating greater engagement in Fylde's natural, coastal environment.

The Ranger Service will also be encouraging people to get involved in their local environment through the development of environmental volunteer programmes including a Volunteer Ranger Service, Volunteer Beach Wardens and a Junior Rangers Club. This will enable the Parks and Coastal Service to build service capacity as well as involve a broader range of local residents in the practical care of Fylde's Environment.

Fylde Council is also successfully leading a partnership with Blackpool Council and Lancashire Wildlife Trust in the management of the Fylde Sand Dunes Project, ensuring the protection and improvement of the dune habitat in its role as soft sea defence and nationally significant conservation area. The Fylde Sand Dunes and the Ribble Estuary saltmarsh are nature's defence from the sea, providing protection from high tides and storm surges which are predicted to increase with climate change. The dunes and saltmarsh have statutory protection and serve as an important soft sea defence for Fylde, protecting the coast from flooding and coastal erosion. They also have significant European and national ecological value, supporting nationally rare plants, invertebrates and bird species.

Environment Agency grant funding to the total value of £717,000 was secured in December 2016 by the partnership to continue the project and associated staff and operational costs for a further five years. The funding is being utilised to fund the project team as well as manage and improve over 80 hectares

of dune estate. Persimmon Homes on the old Pontin's site also contributed £225,000 in Section 106 funding in March 2017 to cover the costs of an Area Conservation Ranger and transport for a 5 year period. There is a £40,000 budget included within the section 106 funding to cover environmental projects in the area, to mitigate the effects of increased usage from new residents in the area.

The Fylde Sand Dunes Project team's key priorities for 2019 – 2020 include the design and installation of new dune entrance points with associated signage to educate and guide users across the estate. A programme for dune stabilisation works opposite the Persimmon Homes development is also planned to address the collapsing dune hills opposite Clifton Drive North.

➤ **Theme 5 Visitor Economy**

The Visitor Economy makes up an important industry in Fylde, accounting for 1 in 10 jobs and attracting 3.3 million visitors generating £249 million spending in the local economy each year.

Regular networking events and direct dialogue are undertaken with Fylde based tourism businesses, plus tourism officers from Blackpool, Wyre and the county's official Destination Management Organisation (DMO) Marketing Lancashire.

The Council's Tourism Officer is working with partners to organise the major events such as the St George's Day Charity Festival, the Lytham 1940s Wartime Weekend, Lytham Festival and St Annes International Kite Festival.

The formation of the St Annes on Sea Enterprise Partnership under the Coastal Communities Initiative seeks to bring together a variety of organisations to promote and enhance the offer of the town. It has adopted a Strategy and Action Plan to promote and enhance the visitor offer and the Council is a formal partner. An important aspect of its remit is to promote and extend the visitor offer through the expansion of events.

The Council allows motorhomes to park overnight for up to three nights on St Annes Swimming Pool Car Park and North Beach Car Park. This encourages a sector of the tourism economy to explore Fylde's coastal strip and contribute to the local economy.

➤ **Theme 6 Culture, Leisure, Sport and Recreation**

The Council is working in partnership with the Arts Council and the Fylde Arts partnership to develop a strategic framework to maximise arts opportunities across the Fylde Coast and identify opportunities for investment. A specialist arts development officer is now in post.

The development of an arts project known as Coastal Explorers is underway which could see a dedicated arts related built facility trialled on the coast at Granny's Bay. This would bring in third party arts organisations on a scheduled programme. The Council has allocated funds to this project should external funding be achieved, including from the Arts Council. If successful, this trial may result in a further development in the future.

The Council is working with Sport England to develop sports facilities and programmes across the Borough. The Council is proposing to submit a bid to Sport England to provide multi-sport class room facilities and changing facilities at Fairhaven Lake.

Through the planning process a sports built facilities review is being undertaken which will inform Future Leisure provision across the Borough. This will be used as an evidence base to support the Borough Wide Local Plan. This work was completed in 2016 and continues to influence projects across the Borough.

The Council created a water play facility (Splash!) on the Promenade Gardens on the site of the former paddling pool. This project, which has included the involvement of a local Friends group, has regenerated an area of the Promenade Gardens that isn't well used and provided a facility that has attracted residents and visitors alike.

➤ **Theme 7 Heritage Assets**

The Council's Heritage Strategy has now been formally published with three immediate actions

- Formation of a Heritage Forum which is aimed at drawing together a number of organisations and individuals that can help to deliver the projects contained within the approved Action Plan, which forms the implementation element of the Strategy. This will be established in 2019.
- The compilation of the Local List of Buildings that was 'piloted' in the Fairhaven area in 2016 & 2017 has now been rolled out and is now across the Borough. Lytham and St. Annes has now been reviewed and local listing completed with some 113 buildings now on the local list. A review of conservation areas is part of the broader Borough heritage review and is commencing this calendar year. Undertaking of conservation area appraisals and management plans that are extremely valuable for development management purposes will follow on from the review.
- The Council is working with Lytham Hall Partnership in working with a strategic management plan for Lytham Hall, the Borough's only grade 1 listed building. The Council is working in partnership with the Pier Company to produce a shared plan for the future maintenance and management of the pier. The council applied for Coastal Revival Fund grant funding to assist in bringing forward structural repairs and enhancement to ensure its long term viability and economic success.

➤ **Theme 8 Place Making**

- The Council have supported a grant application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the restoration of Fairhaven Lake & Gardens since 2011 and have committed capital funding to the project as detailed in this report. Two previous unsuccessful bids were made to the HLF in 2011 and 2014.
- The Council submitted a third and final funding application to the HLF in August 2016 for a development grant to restore Fairhaven Lake & Gardens. The bid was prepared under the 'Parks for People' strand of the Heritage Lottery which is specific to the restoration of historic parks and gardens.
- In January 2017 the Council was informed that the bid had been successful and a development grant of £165,500 was awarded for the project, on the condition that match funding of £54,866 was provided by Fylde through internal or external financial contributions, providing a total capital budget of £220,366, to provide Fylde Council with the opportunity to prepare a second round capital bid to the HLF.
- Two project officers were recruited in August 2018, alongside a multi-disciplinary team of consultants to develop a capital grant (second round) application to the HLF. The second round application to the HLF was made in August 2018 for £1,476,600, on the condition that partnership funding of £960,897 was secured to make an overall total project budget of £2,437,497.
- In December 2018, the Council was successful in securing the second round capital grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund of £1,476,600 for the restoration of Fairhaven Lake & Gardens. The grant has been awarded on the condition that match funding of a further £960,897 is provided by Fylde Council, through internal and external financial contributions, providing a total capital budget of £2,437,497.

- On the award of a second round grant, the HLF specified a list of ‘approved purposes’ that must be achieved in order to deliver the key aspects of the project that were specified within the application. The approved purposes must be achieved and are conditional to claiming the grant.

The ‘approved purposes’ that must be achieved under the terms of the second round grant are:

- **Lake Works:** Improving lake condition, water quality, interest and accessibility by:
 - Removing silt, installing aeration-pumps and restoring edges and footpaths;
 - Upgrading pontoon;
 - Forming a beach;
 - Preparing island to be a forest school;
 - Creating a winter wader roost on another island; working with Fylde Bird Club and RPSB.
- **Historic Buildings:**
 - Pavilion Café: removing inappropriate extensions to expose original features, including colonnaded veranda and internal cornice details; remodeling east elevation to restore roof based on the original architect’s intentions; reconfiguring the interior, levelling the split floor and introducing accessible toilets;
 - Pagoda: exposing original timber and ironwork roof structure and removing alterations to open space as a welcome and interpretation centre
 - Boathouse (to become the Watersports Centre): reconfiguring to provide a classroom and facilities for lake users (toilets, changing facilities and storage) within a new insulated shell.
- **Landscaping:**
 - Restoring to use Mawson’s Japanese Lagoon Garden;
 - Upgrading tennis courts;
 - Installing adventure play park;
 - Providing sustainable tree/shrub displays suitable for the challenging coastal environment;
 - Creating Mawson’s Lookout over the Estuary;
 - Working with Lancashire Gardens Trust, establishing a volunteer-run plant nursery.
- **Interpretation:** Providing interpretation to include:
 - Welcome panels;
 - Pagoda exhibition;
 - Trail waymarking and information;
 - Website improvements;
 - Temporary exhibition area.
- **Activity Programme** for the general public and targeted groups, including:
 - Community archaeology dig(s) at the Japanese Garden and site of the World War II observatory;
 - Annual Events: regatta, open day, Heritage Open Days, Big Picnic;
 - Annual on-site and outreach talks and guided walks, including work-in-progress tours;

- Memories workshops and oral history collection leading to Community Theatre performances;
- Running a Heritage Hub in the Pagoda, with changing exhibitions prepared by local groups, including those not well represented in the heritage;
- Family activities: drop-in sessions, orienteering, buggy walks, Family Heritage Afternoons targeted at hard-to-reach audiences;
- Specially designed activities for users of health and wellbeing services and children and families agencies;
- An expanded programme of watersports activities including swimming, sailing, canoeing, kayaking and paddle boarding;
- Informal learning resources: quizzes, trials, self-guiding leaflets, web-based resources.

- **Formal Education:**

- Delivering activity programme for primary schools;
- Offering work experience opportunities for local college students studying tourism, media, landscape and horticulture;
- Creating and making available on-line resources.

- **Volunteering:**

- Training and developing new and existing volunteers to support the park and contribute to the Friends of Fairhaven Lake, the whole park Steering Group, a Heritage Advisory Panel and a Youth Steering Group;
- Appointing a Volunteer coordinator.

- **Staffing:**

- Employing a Project Officer (FTE) and an Activity Development Officer (0.6FTE).

- **Marketing**

- Marketing the park's offer to ensure take-up.

The current capital works will be delivered between June 2019 and March 2022, with the Activity and Events programme running concurrently for 3 years until January 2022.

The next phases of the Regeneration Programme for Lytham and St Annes will be commenced in June 2019 and will include enhancements to Wood Street, Lytham Town centre and the Square Link.

The next phase of the Regeneration Programme will include the Square Link, which will link St Annes pier with the Square (£110,000) and will be completed September 2019. The next phase for Wood Street (£400,000) is being planned for September 2019 and will be completed by March 2020.

The first phase of the Lytham Regeneration Scheme will commence September 2019, with the second and third phases being completed by March 2021 and March 2022 respectively. The budget for the Lytham Regeneration Scheme is £670,000 (phased over three years), which has been increased by £130,000 through S106 contributions.

Phase 4 of the Woodlands Road Public Realm scheme (£110,000) is almost complete. The only outstanding element is the tree planting, which will be done during the next planting season (October 2019 to April 2020).

Public Realm improvements have been carried out at St Annes pier. The improvements, which were funded via the Coastal Revival Fund at a cost of £48,000, are approximately fifty percent complete.

➤ **Theme 9 Access and Transportation**

The key actions of the Coastal Strategy in terms of transport have been fed into the Fylde Coast Highways and Transport Master Plan.

Coastal strategy action to develop a network of pedestrian and cycle links to and around the coast fed into Lancashire Cycling and Walking Strategy.

Funding for the proposed M55 link road is being confirmed to achieve accelerated construction of the scheme as soon as possible.

➤ **Theme 10 Marketing Promotion and Publicity**

The Council has developed a signage strategy for the Fylde Coastal Strip with the aim to improve navigation, information and interpretation along the coast as well as safety and security of the users of that area. A capital budget of £60k has been set aside in the 2019/20 Councils Capital Programme to enable the existing signage to be reviewed and new signage to be introduced to improve the visitor experience and create an identity to the Coast.

In 2018 the Council achieved Keep Britain Tidy's Seaside Award for St Anne's Amenity Beach. The scheme is a nationwide standard for the best beaches across the UK which guarantees visitors will find a clean, safe, attractive and well managed beach.

The Council achieved 6 Green Flag Awards and 32 In Bloom Awards in 2015.

Communications are achieved through dedicated Facebook and Twitter accounts which are tourism facing (Discover Fylde) and Fairhaven Lake accounts, plus the www.discoverfylde.co.uk website which carries events and information about the coast.

The Council is a partner along with St Annes Town Council, Blackpool Council and Wyre Council in a Fylde wide coastal project funded by £985K of Coastal Communities Funding looking at improving the coastal destination from a visitor perspective including a range of marketing opportunities (apps and web), business support and events.

The viability of a Blue Flag Award has been explored in 2019 for Fylde beaches. A full mock Blue Flag Award assessment was undertaken by the Parks and Coastal Services team against the award criteria and a decision was made to pursue an application for St Annes Amenity Beach pending 'Excellent' water quality status. A number of infrastructure and interpretation improvements has been made in anticipation of an application and to heighten visitor experience.

Fylde Council was successful in retaining a Seaside Award from 2018 - 2019 for St Annes Amenity Beach. An annual application is submitted by the Parks and Coastal Services team to Keep Britain Tidy to raise the profile of our excellent coastline. Seaside Awards are presented to the best beaches in England and celebrate the quality and diversity of our coast.

FURTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE FROM

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