

Coastal Adaptation



The North Norfolk coast is susceptible to coastal change, putting properties and infrastructure at risk. Coastal adaptation is the term given to the process of managing the impact of coastal change. Adaptation has been highlighted as an important action in the Kelling to Lowestoft Ness Shoreline Management Plan (SMP), and was the focus of the North Norfolk Pathfinder Project (see www.northnorfolk.org/pathfinder).

For more information, see:

Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) www.northnorfolk.org/smp6

North Norfolk Pathfinder Project www.northnorfolk.org/pathfinder

Why is coastal adaptation important?

Coastal change can impact not only an individual whose property may be at risk, but also the wider community. Adaptation is important as it provides a way forward for coastal communities and offers greater certainty for the future. Adaptation projects can prepare communities for coastal change, reduce coastal blight and alleviate loss.

North Norfolk District Council (NNDC), in line with the SMP, seeks to develop and initiate the coastal adaptation tools required to help coastal communities adapt to coastal change.



Example of a cliff failure
in Trimmingham, 2014

What can it involve?

Along the east coast there are many communities with similar coastal change issues, however, the coastal adaptation approach can be tailored to a local situation. Early planning and development can greatly assist to ensure that plans are ready at the point in time when they are needed. NNDC has started to develop approaches for adaptation which are set out below:

- **The North Norfolk Pathfinder** projects are examples of coastal adaptation. These were funded as national trials. The Pathfinder included support to coastal businesses, tackling local infrastructure challenges and assisted a whole settlement which faced significant coastal change impact. These detailed projects were only trials but made a significant difference to those communities and showcased what can be achieved. Please see below (Adaptation in Action) and www.northnorfolk.org/pathfinder/ for further information.
- **Rollback** - This key adaptation approach focuses on the removal of properties before their loss to erosion while enabling them to be replaced elsewhere. The opportunity to replace an at risk property is considered to have a financial value. Rollback can also be used for coastal businesses such as caravan parks.
- **Land Register** - The Coastal Rollback Land Register is a list of landowners who have expressed an interest in working with coastal property owners who wish to use the rollback opportunity.
- **Assistance for demolition** - In some circumstances assistance can be offered to owners of residential properties which are at imminent risk of loss. Timely

Demolition of an at risk property – the property was purchased from the owner and a replacement property received outline planning consent elsewhere as part of the trial Pathfinder scheme.

demolition is essential to prevent debris contaminating the cliff and beach.



These examples are not exhaustive and NNDC aims to work with communities in developing adaptation solutions. For more information about rollback opportunities, please visit www.northnorfolk.org/environment/18014.asp or call 01263 516248

Adaptation in Action: Happisburgh

The North Norfolk Pathfinder Project started in 2010, after funding was awarded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). The scheme aimed to explore ways of helping coastal communities plan and adapt to coastal change. In Happisburgh, a village which had experienced the effects of erosion for many years, a number of Pathfinder projects were set up. These projects included the purchase, replacement and demolition of properties most at risk, the relocation of a car park and re-provision of public toilets,

improvements to the cliff top environment, removal of beach debris, re-provision of a beach access ramp and greater understanding of the coast through a heritage project.

The Pathfinder was a trial and a great deal was learnt from the projects. NNDC continues to seek funding and a long term solution for funding similar approaches for the wider coastline.



The changing coastline at Happisburgh. Adaptation measures included the creation of a new car park, public toilets and a new beach access ramp. Additionally, at risk properties were rolled back and the cliff and beach environment was improved.



Challenges to Coastal Adaptation

One of the main problems faced by the coastal adaptation approach is identifying and securing funding. Adaptation schemes are not on an equal footing with other coastal management schemes which are funded through the government's Flood and Coastal Risk Management grants, and other funding routes can be difficult to identify.



Historically the impact of coastal change has been shouldered by those individuals and communities directly affected. NNDC and other coastal authorities are lobbying government to recognise the importance of adaptation as a coastal management approach.

There is a need for adaptation to be accepted as a mainstream option for the coast and included in the government's coastal management approach. 'Doing nothing' on the coast is not a 'no cost option'.

For more information about coastal roll back or to see case studies of previous adaptation projects please visit www.northnorfolk.org.uk/c/environment.



For more information concerning the coast, visit www.northnorfolk.org/environment. Or contact the Coastal Management Team:
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