



House of Commons

ODPM: Housing, Planning,  
Local Government and the  
Regions Committee

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# Coastal Towns

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Additional papers have been received from the following and have been reported to the House but to save printing costs they have not been printed and copies have been placed in the House of Commons Library where they may be inspected by Members. Other copies are in the Record Office, House of Lords and are available to the public for inspection. Requests for inspection should be addressed to the Record Office, House of Lords, London SW1. (Tel 020 7219 3074). Hours of inspection are from 9:30am to 5:00pm on Mondays to Fridays.

CT 04(i) - *Regenerating Morecambe – An Action Plan*, Morecambe Action Plan Partnership, Oct 2002

CT 33(i) - Kent Coastal Town Analysis, February 2006

CT 33(ii) - Report of the Kent Child Protection Committee Inquiry into the general concerns expressed by officers and politicians in the Thanet Area regarding Child and Public Protection Issues, June 2005

CT 33(iii) - *What Price Growth?*, Kent County Council, December 2005

CT 42(i) - *'The Seaside Economy – The final report of the seaside towns research project'* by Christina Beatty & Stephen Fothergill, June 2003.

CT B/P 01 – St. Anne's on Sea regeneration strategy – An Overview

CT B/P 02 – DCMS – Background note on Government Policy

CT B/P 03 – *Tomorrow's Tourism Today: A prospectus for tourism development in five key areas*, DCMS, July 2004

CT B/P 04 – *Fitness for Purpose: Quality Counts [Helping hotels, guesthouses and B&Bs to raise standards in health and safety, fire and food safety, and trading standards]*, DCMS, February 2005

CT B/P 05 – *Beacon theme Guide 2004/2005: Promoting Sustainable Tourism*, I&DEA, undated 2004

CT B/P 06 – JPC Shapter/Sybil Cardy – Documents re: development of Exmouth Docks.



# Written evidence

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## **Memorandum by Councillor Geoffrey Richards, Sutton on Sea South Ward (CT 01)**

I welcome the New Inquiry Coastal Towns and wish to make the following comments.

There are over 37,000 permanent caravans situated on various sites along the coast in the East Lindsey District. These are not rated for Council Tax but the sites are rated for Business rates which the East Lindsey District collect on behalf of the Government. The District Council only receive a low %age of the Business rate collected based upon the resident population.

There are problems associated with the residents of the permanent caravans who are allowed to reside for eleven months of the year on the sites. A large number of the residents are elderly and place great stress on the limited Health facilities provided for East Lindsey. Fire appliances and other emergency services such as Ambulances have difficulty in finding the correct caravan when called out in emergencies a fact which has led to the Ambulance trust not hitting targets set to arrive within a specified time limit. The sites receive full waste disposal and other services provided by the Council Tax payers of East Lindsey.

Over the past nine years since being elected to the District Council I have advocated that there should be a Tourist Tax of 19p per week per caravan, less than £10 a year placed upon the 37,000 vans. This would amount to £370,000 income to the District Council which would help in paying for improvements that are required within the district

Site owners are charging well over £12,000 per year rent on top of which they charge for all other services such as water electricity etc to each van I am sure that 19p a week tourist tax would NOT break the bank considering that most vans can accommodate six folk on Holiday.

The areas of depredation are well documented along with the other problems of teenagers leaving the area, and the influx of elderly retired folk from the Midlands.

The emphasis has always been placed on Tourism along the East Coast without the Planned development of light industry and full year employment for the resident Population. The only folk making money in the district are candy floss and amusement arcade owners.

If Tourism is bringing in so many Millions how do the local residents feel the benefits why are the locals paying such high Council Taxes?

I am not against tourism and am well aware that over the years it has been allowed to control the coastal zone but a new approach is required why not new museums along the coast with a cultural aspect to the attractions in the area. If the correct air conditioned building were provided the British Museum have items they cannot display due to lack of facilities in London.

There are more folk visit Museums during a year than attend football Matches.

As a local Town and District Councillor I think some of the solution to our problems is a Tax on caravans proving over £370,000 a year to help pay for much needed facilities.

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## **Memorandum by the Coastal Academy (CT 02)**

1. Coastal towns on the East Coast suffer from extreme isolation and a seasonal tourist economy. The needs of Coastal Towns are exacerbated by the mobility of the population which impinges on education achievement, low level rented accommodation, poor quality housing stock, low skill/low wage seasonal employment and heavy reliance on the benefit system.

The Coastal hinterland has isolated homesteads, frequently of very poor quality. There are few job opportunities in agriculture which has become more highly mechanised and less labour intensive.

Young people in Coastal areas suffer from low aspirations by virtue of career and job opportunities not being available in their home area. Therefore enhanced aspirations carry with them the responsibility of needing to move away from the home area. The young people are emotionally less "streetwise" than their urban cousins and find it extremely difficult to make that move out of their familiar territory. The more able young people frequently leave the area and county to enter Higher Education at age 18 and do not return. The job prospects in the Coastal area are simply not sufficiently adventurous.

There is an argument for saying that low aspirations do not encourage frustration at the lack of opportunity but this is wholly intolerable. The young people in Coastal towns should have the same opportunity as their urban compatriots.

Need: (i) Incentives to business to establish their factory/business base in coastal areas so that employment and training opportunities are more readily available.

2. Several of the schools in coastal regions are poorly equipped, have high pupil mobility, additional behaviour and emotional turbulence. Most have a high %age of their roll on the SEN register.

Need: All schools to be equipped to the highest standard for pupils who frequently have complex needs.

3. Recruitment and retention of staff particularly in the public sector is a constant challenge. With many services based in Lincoln, it is a 1.5 hour journey for a professional to attend an appointment in a coastal area and a 1.5 hour return journey. Therefore three hours of the working day is lost in travel.

Need: (i) Funding to meet the need of basing services in coastal towns.

4. The coastal areas do not have critical mass of population and therefore smaller numbers need to be acceptable and services not penalised for this.

Need: (i) Learning groups at whatever level need to be able to operate with small numbers of learners ie three or four.

(ii) School staffing ratios need to acknowledge the high %age of pupils with complex needs to allow for smaller class sizes and more pastoral care.

(iii) Adult learning tutors need to be paid travel time and travel expenses in order to get them to travel as far as coastal areas.

(iv) Continuing opportunities to learn are necessary so that learners do not lose the learning habit. The lack of tutors mitigates against this.

(v) To encourage staff into public services in the coastal regions, an incentive allowance is crucial, similar to the London Weighting.

5. With no Further Education college in East Lindsey, the provision for post-16 education is poor. A bus journey from Mablethorpe to Boston to access FE provision can take 1.5 hours each way so the drop-out rate of students is high. Only the most motivated will stay the course. Leaving home at 7.00 am and returning at 7.00 pm demands huge tenacity.

Young people who are categorised as NEET are so often failed by not being able to gain employment at the end of their course. There is no incentive for employers to employ these vulnerable young people, who will demand time and nurturing care to develop into valuable employees.

Need: (i) A Vocational Learning Centre to be built in Mablethorpe to serve Mablethorpe and its hinterland.

(ii) Small starter business units in Mablethorpe and Skegness to provide guided employment and training for the large numbers of young people who qualify as NEET (Not in Employment, Education and Training).

(iii) Student travel passes to allow students to take advantage of any form of public transport at any time, to access learning eg Dial a Ride, Connect Up, service buses.

6. Owing to the nature of the pupil cohort in coastal areas, results from the schools are often less than favourable. Yet many of these schools have poor facilities—one secondary school has no gymnasium or indoor games facility whatsoever. This is not an equitable system for pupils who often have diverse and complex needs.

Need: (i) To abolish the selective system so that all young people learn together, rather than proliferating high-performing schools and “sink” schools, with 75% of the population thinking they are failures.

(ii) To invest heavily in the school stock and bring forward by several years “Building Schools for the Future” in Lincolnshire.

7. There is a propensity of older people in the coastal areas. This encourages developers to build bungalow housing rather than family accommodation. This precludes families from seeing the area as a suitable and viable area in which to settle.

Need: (i) Developers need to be encouraged through the Deposit Draft of the area to build family accommodation. The Planning Authority needs to take a broad view of how they want to support the development of the area.

8. English coastal areas find it impossible to be a 24/7 resort. There is, however, no shortage of creative ideas of what could be done to improve this. The funding systems and bidding processes are such an obstacle! Even the more informed and astute coastal inhabitant is severely intimidated by bid forms of countless pages, requiring numerous information and calculations/targets beyond the understanding of many.

Need: (i) Streamline the funding and bidding process so that there is always a bid support partner who will come to the area, meet the group and complete the bid forms with them. (The Community Foundation Local Network Fund does this extremely well.)

9. The Combined Action Teams have been developed in Mablethorpe, Skegness and Boston to improve delivery of services to children, young people and their families through multi-agency working. These have been developed within existing resources but still require minimal funding for admin/management. They have proved their worth in getting services to where they are needed more quickly and in an integrated fashion. They touch, however, the tip of an iceberg of need.

Need: (i) There is a shortage of staff in almost all areas—education, health visitors, school nurses, speech and language, educational psychology, education welfare, Connexions, Youth Service etc.

(ii) Not all staff have access to a computer and are not able to be contacted by email.

10. Many of the coastal areas look dowdy, run down and in need of care and attention. The economic base is such that business people operate on incredibly small margins and are unable to invest in additional expenses.

Need: (i) To offer business rates or incentives that allows businesses to ensure the upkeep of their property and business premises.

11. Further investment is needed in Skegness and Louth Hospitals as these are the only hospitals that serve the coastal areas. Lincoln and Grimsby hospitals are many miles distant and many residents have neither the funding nor the transport to journey there. There is a plethora of very old vehicles travelling the Lincolnshire coastal roads!

Need: (i) To further enhance the facilities at Skegness and Louth Hospitals so that patients can receive top quality treatment.

(ii) Regular visits by consultants to take clinics at Skegness and Louth Hospitals.

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### **Memorandum by Councillor Ron Shapland MBE BSc FICFor (CT 03)**

1. I am writing from the small coastal town of Grange-over Sands which is situated on the north shore of Morecambe Bay and south of the Lake District National Park. It has a population of 4,000 of which 50% are retired.

2. The town has a mile long promenade, which is linked across a railway by three bridges to the town, one of which is closed due to neglect, as well as two parks and a disused, open air swimming pool. We are fortunate in still retaining a centre with over a 100 small businesses, mostly individually owned, which provide the majority of the requirements of the residents and visitors.

3. We have a very attractive situation, which offers a quality of life which is considered ideal for both residents and visitors who seek this type of environment which has largely disappeared from many of our coastal towns.

4. In effect we still have a basis of a sustainable community with residents providing support for one another and local businesses. Because they value the quality of life that is present many residents who are physically fit support the activities of the Town and District Councils, such as helping to maintain the gardens, clearing litter, preventing damage to toilets by opening and closing them and running local events. However there are limitations as to what local residents can achieve in this way.

5. The Problems: For many years especially since 1974 when local control moved from Grange to Kendal and due to pressure by successive Governments on local authorities, insufficient funds have been spent on the infrastructure to maintain it in good condition. Much of which was put in place 70 to 150 years ago and has only survived because of the quality of the original workmanship and materials. We have now reached a stage where at least £2 million is needed to bring the Town features back to an acceptable state of maintenance and for each year of delay the costs escalate. A Heritage Lottery Fund bid is being prepared, and even if it is successful we will still need sufficient maintenance funds thereafter to ensure the structures do not deteriorate again.

6. The Perception. Obviously Grange over Sands is not seen as a deprived area and therefore Government and Local Authorities are limiting the funds spent on maintenance of assets. The question is; do we have to wait until, the infrastructure, part of which form the sea defences, and which has been deteriorating for a number of years, has run down so that we become a deprived area? By which time major sums, far in excess of what would be needed for maintenance will be required to repair the damage.

7. The other major issues we have are brought about by the attractiveness of the Town to retired people and the consequent cost of housing and the lack of higher quality jobs in the area. The tendency has been to ignore this matter, but it must be addressed otherwise it will continue to force the young people, who form 10% of the population, to leave the town. There is therefore a need to provide low cost accommodation and create a wider range of better paid and attractive employment for those who have obtained qualifications and training in support of the Governments objectives in Education.

8. Needs:

- (a) Initial input of capital funds to renovate and replace deteriorating local authority assets and bring them up to a satisfactory condition.
- (b) Increase annual input of maintenance funds to a level which sustains the assets.
- (c) Provide low cost homes for young people.
- (d) Develop a wider range of appropriate employment opportunities for young people.

### Memorandum by Lancaster City Council (CT 04)

1. Lancaster District encompasses the coastal town of Morecambe, which has one third of the District's population but which also demonstrates some specific characteristics and challenges peculiar to coastal towns and resorts, and which are not exhibited elsewhere in the District.

2. The Council and its partners have taken a proactive approach to the tackling of the specific issues in Morecambe, and attached is the Morecambe Action Plan developed jointly with the NWRDA and which has resulted in some specific proposals for the town. A number of key schemes are currently underway, including some that have links directly to governance policy and specific funding streams. These include :

- NRF—Neighbourhood Element
- Neighbourhood Management Pilot programme
- Cleaner, Greener Safer funds
- English Partnership investment
- Regional Housing Board funds
- Townscape Heritage Initiative
- Housing Corporation Investment
- NWRDA investment

3. It is clear that the application of these funds and others alongside Council investment and private sector investment will target the multiple problems that exist in a coastal town like Morecambe.

4. It is worth listing some of the core problems suffered by coastal towns such as Morecambe which require public intervention but which are very often different in character or scale to urban areas which, more commonly, are targeted by regeneration funding:

- Significant levels of transience and instability in the population. It is not uncommon for primary schools to experience 30–40% turnover of pupils in a single year.
- High numbers of housing in multiple occupation as a result of a failing tourism market. These properties provide a business opportunity for housing vulnerable people, are expensive to convert to family accommodation as they are not always in poor structural condition and, indeed, can represent a reasonable financial return for landlords with no incentive to invest.
- A limited travel to work area, coastal towns are often, by their nature, at the end of a cul de sac and detached from the infrastructure of major population centres.
- Labour markets tend to be low skilled and low paid and are often seasonal. In Morecambe, we have direct experience of illegal working to exploit natural resources such as cockles. The existence of low rent, poor quality, unregistered accommodation further fuels this activity.
- The knock on effects on crime, anti social behaviour and poor environment are extreme but often in areas that are close to more affluent areas. This masking of the levels of deprivation often results in a lack of recognition and a lack of funding. The recent focus on super output areas has, to some extent, corrected this problem but there are still funding gaps compared to areas more conventionally defined as deprived.
- Concerted action to deal with coastal resorts and towns that, if focused on improving floor target performance can, for relatively modest funding, reap considerable benefits but the key issues of:
  - Stability.
  - Links to more robust employment opportunities.
  - Structural issues related to housing tenure.

All need to be addressed if lasting change is to be achieved. Too often, the particular characteristics of coastal towns are not recognised and, as a consequence, fail to receive the appropriate investment compared to other urban areas.

5. Lancaster's approach to dealing with Morecambe's problems has been concerted and has sought to involve all key statutory partners and, crucially, the private sector. Attached to this note is the Morecambe Action Plan produced four years ago which has laid the foundation for work we are currently undertaking.

If the committee wish to investigate the approach taken in Morecambe or if more information is required on current projects, the Council would be happy to co-ordinate a response.

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## Memorandum by Exmouth Town Council (CT 05)

### 1. GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

Exmouth is situated on the South Coast of Devon, on the eastern side of the mouth of the River Exe estuary. The River Exe is recognised as a “RAMSAR” site and designated a “Site of Special Scientific Importance” (SSSI). Exmouth’s coastal frontage is at the Western Gateway of the World Heritage Site (WHS). The land surrounding Exmouth is designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Exmouth is 14 miles from the City of Exeter.

### 2. RECENT HISTORY

Exmouth was one of England’s first seaside resorts following the arrival of the railway in the 19th Century and has been a tourist destination for over one hundred years. The growth of tourism peaked around 1960 and then fell into decline with the growth of affordable international travel. A working docks area was closed in the 1979 with the associated land developed into a marina enclosed by residential development adding little to the economic life of the town. At around this time there was an expansion of the Town’s boundaries with the rapid growth of residential areas helping to meet Structure Plan targets for the County and Central Government. Unfortunately little thought was given to the social requirements of future residents. The Town is left with large residential areas and few sites for employment and leisure.

### 3. ATTRIBUTES OF EXMOUTH

- (a) A level seafront extending two miles with the only sandy beach in the East Devon District and wonderful natural sea views.
- (b) An estuary of international importance for migrating birds.
- (c) Excellent rail and bus links and interchange with close proximity to the M5 motorway and Exeter International Airport.
- (d) New “Sustrans” Cycle route in the process of being constructed around the Exe Estuary.
- (e) Easy access to Woodbury Common—a rare example of pebble bed heath land within the East Devon AONB.
- (f) A social and residential environment attractive to those in, or approaching, retirement.
- (g) A vibrant and well managed evening and night-time economy attractive to the younger population.
- (h) A “lower than average”, and reducing crime rate relative to the surrounding area and much envied by other parts of the country.

### 4. DEFICIENCIES OF EXMOUTH

- (a) Other than housing there has been a serious lack of capital investment over many years and certainly in the last 50 years.
- (b) Investment has been painfully slow in coming forward for coastal sea defences (sea wall).
- (c) The seafront infrastructure has received no new monies since the 1950s.
- (d) The estuary has not, until recently, been recognised as a special environmental and potential economic asset.
- (e) Investment to keep the town up to date with modern requirements has largely by-passed Exmouth.
- (f) The Town Centre has not kept up to date with surrounding development resulting in large numbers of commercial businesses leaving from the town, leaving Exmouth as a dormitory of Exeter.
- (g) Road infrastructure is out of date, inadequate and very congested especially during day peak times and the summer season.
- (h) The economic base is totally inadequate for a sustainable town with a “well above average” proportion of part time, seasonal and low paying employment.
- (i) In 2008 the University of Plymouth is moving its teacher training faculty from Exmouth leaving a £5 million deficit in the local economy.

### 5. HINDRANCES TO FUTURE IMPROVEMENT OF EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Exmouth as a seaside town, at the far end of an estuary, has been placed in a “poverty trap” being:

- (a) too large to attract investment through SWRDA’s Market & Coastal Towns initiative (Only coastal towns with a population not exceeding 20,000 qualify—Exmouth’s population is 34,000);
- (b) too small to qualify for Urban Renewal funding;

- (c) outside the area selected for Objective 2 EU funding;
- (d) inside the dormitory area of Exeter—the thriving capital of the County; and
- (e) adjudged an affluent area due to its location, significant retirement population and relatively high property prices driven by the seemingly affluent retired creating an impossible situation for local people wishing to remain in the town.

Exmouth provides a prime example of a coastal town largely overlooked and neglected by successive Governments being abandoned to survive in a fiercely competitive time.

There is an urgent need to:

- (f) preserve and regenerate seafronts and esplanades which have been increasingly left to the ravages of time with no clear investment strategy;
- (g) regenerate coastal town centres suffering from seasonality creating unique issues for traders;
- (h) invest in facilities for small/medium business start up/expansion;
- (i) recognise that seaside towns need to be promoted much more as a national resource for sustainable tourism; and
- (j) provide resources for improving the attractiveness of the public realm and recognise that attractive spaces create the “sense of place” needed to bring sustainable business back to the seaside.

## 6. ISSUES SURROUNDING THE COASTAL TOWNS INQUIRY

For the reasons above:

1. there is a strong case for “special initiatives to tackle the needs of coastal towns” such as Exmouth;
2. Exmouth would be a good town to study to ascertain how a seaside town has declined and how it is fighting back;
3. there is a need to look at the social balance of seaside towns so that they do not degenerate into retirement dormitories;
4. there is a strong case for “more specific regional initiatives” targeted at coastal towns;
5. “funding for regeneration and supporting coastal towns” is urgently required for the reasons above; and
6. “the success of the RDA’s and other bodies in supporting and developing the economies of coastal towns” has been at best, patchy, with hands tied by overly prescriptive initiatives which fail to recognise the individualities and special character of each town.

Tourist Information is the lifeblood of coastal towns but local communities are left to fend for themselves in a market that has rapidly become global, with financial support for initiatives such as Tourist Information Centres still firmly entrenched in the 1950s.

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### Memorandum by Cumbria Tourist Board (CT 06)

#### 1. TO EXAMINE THE CASE FOR SPECIAL INITIATIVES TO TACKLE THE NEEDS OF COASTAL TOWNS

Grange-over-Sands, located at the southern tip of the Cartmel Peninsula in Cumbria, retains a number of period features in its distinctive architecture which provides a link to its past as an Edwardian resort. However, its outworn physical fabric, as exemplified by a derelict Lido site, the promenade, and the condition of the footbridges over the railway, reduces confidence among local traders and prospective investors as well as detracting from the overall visitor experience.

Grange-over-Sands with its pleasant surroundings and relatively mild climate has gained popularity as a place to retire. As a result, an ageing local population presents a range of challenges for the Local Authorities and other agencies; particularly in terms of accessibility.

A real need for a more integrated approach towards regeneration and sustainable development in Grange-over-Sands is evident and is attributable to the long-term decline in the traditional seaside holiday, coupled with an apparent inability of the local tourism product to adapt or diversify sufficiently to the changing domestic market.

In terms of any special initiative, Cumbria Tourist Board would welcome the inclusion of coastal economy issues in a broader strategic context.

#### 2. TO LOOK AT THE WORK ODPM IS DOING TO ADDRESS THE SOCIAL, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS COAST TOWNS FACE, AND TO EVALUATE WHETHER IT IS EFFECTIVE, WELL-FOCUSED OR ADEQUATELY FUNDED

Cumbria Tourist Board is unable to comment on these areas outside of tourism development.

3. TO ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ODPM'S LIAISON WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS, IN KEY AREAS SUCH AS EMPLOYMENT, MIGRATION, SOCIAL HOUSING, AND CO-OPERATION WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Cumbria Tourist Board is unable to comment on these areas outside of tourism development.

4. TO EXAMINE WHETHER THERE IS A CASE FOR MORE SPECIFIC REGIONAL INITIATIVES AND WHETHER ENOUGH ATTENTION IS PAID TO REGIONAL DISPARITIES

When looking at the measures undertaken in other regions of England, there would appear to be established strategies that set out a proactive agenda to deal directly with the real issues facing coastal towns, and include, for example, the Sussex Coast Sub-Regional Strategy that aims to secure sustainable economic development and reduce the social and economic disparities within that region.

It would appear that progress in Grange-over-Sands is in contrast to the renaissance in other NorthWest resorts including neighbouring Morecambe that lauds its Art Deco architecture and cites Happy Mount Park as an exemplar of its regeneration.

5. TO CONSIDER THE SECURITY OF FUTURE FUNDING FOR REGENERATING AND SUPPORTING COASTAL TOWNS

The emerging strategic funding body, Cumbria Vision, may provide some scope to address the regeneration and ongoing development requirements of Grange-over-Sands.

6. TO EVALUATE THE SUCCESS OF THE RDAs AND OTHER BODIES IN SUPPORTING AND DEVELOPING THE ECONOMIES OF COASTAL TOWNS

The introduction of RDAs has undoubtedly been regarded as a welcome and positive step towards reviewing the pace of coastal town renaissance. This is true of the NorthWest Development Agency (NWDA) and its efforts to commission A Vision for NorthWest Coastal Resorts (Locum Destination Consulting 2003) which makes particular reference to Grange-over-Sands. This report refers to Grange-over-Sands as an example of how a comparatively prosperous community is unable to secure public funds in the same manner as more deprived areas. This study established a framework within which NW Coastal Resorts could seek to turn around their fortunes. Unfortunately NWDA has not been able to support the initiative with any significant level of resources to act as the necessary catalyst for change. This has been particularly disappointing to the community in Grange-over-Sands which has developed an ambitious plan for reviving the fortunes of the resort. This is heavily dependent on an injection of capital to introduce new and iconic features and facilities along the promenade.

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**Memorandum by the Channel Corridor Partnership (CCP) (CT 07)**

CONTEXT

1. The Channel Corridor Partnership is a strategic public/private partnership dedicated to achieving economic prosperity in the local authority areas of Maidstone Borough Council, Ashford Borough Council and Shepway District Council. The core of the Partnership's vision is to ensure that our economy grows to operate at, or beyond, the South East average. Our current work areas include attracting investment for economic growth; business, enterprise and skills development primarily in the new creative and media sectors and in the traditional retail and hospitality sectors to support economic growth; and place making. These plans are supported by the South East of England Development Agency who is a core funder of our activities.

2. Our main urban centres include Maidstone, Kent's County Town, Ashford, one of the Sustainable Communities Growth Areas, and Folkestone, a coastal town and once famous sea-side resort which has been declining in recent years and which is now seeing a range of long-term developments come to fruition. These include from 2009, high speed domestic services on the Channel Tunnel Rail Link between Folkestone and London, opening the town as a commuter centre; the provision of a Higher Education facility at the new Folkestone Creative Institute, a new town centre retail development in Bouverie Square and the potential for a new Harbour development with a major Living Landmarks bid for a 21st century pier and lighthouse. Shepway District Council are shortly to develop their first Local Development Framework for Folkestone Town Centre (including the Seafront) which will provide the long term view of developments in the Town Centre and Seafront, helping to knit together aspirations and activities while providing a policy framework to contextualise this work.

3. But significant challenges remain in Folkestone. An array of statistics collected in the last ten years indicate the depth and breadth of Folkestone's problems;

- (a) On average, households in Shepway earn £80 less per week than across the rest of the South East.
- (b) In Folkestone's Central Ward 69.2% of children are classified as living in unsuitable accommodation compared with 6.2% in Kent as a whole.

- (c) According to the Housing Conditions Survey 2001, 40% of the housing stock in the Harvey Central ward was unfit for use.
- (d) The 2004 Public Health Report for the Shepway Primary Care Trust shows that life expectancy in the village of Saltwood is 85. Six miles away in central Folkestone that figure drops to 73.
- (e) A national survey in 1998 identified Folkestone as the least profitable of 285 key towns in Britain.
- (f) Participation in higher education is in the bottom 25% nationally.

*A. To examine the case for special initiatives to tackle the needs of coastal towns*

4. The Channel Corridor Partnership would welcome the creation of a special coastal towns initiative but would like any special initiatives to be open to those who are not in the 5% or 10% worst cases in relation to the Index of Multiple Deprivation or Super Output Areas. Paradoxically, Folkestone is not considered badly enough off to be a Neighbourhood Renewal Area, nor did it qualify for the Department of Trade and Industry's Local Economic Growth Initiative funding; it is in that worst of all positions—bad, but not quite bad enough. This dismisses the talents of a range of expert public sector practitioners who could make a tangible difference through new initiatives; ignores the needs, and aspirations of the local community and does not support the long-term strategic objectives of a regenerating community. The Partnership believes that the regeneration and renewal of Folkestone based as it is, on bringing new business sectors and education provision together, could be held as an example to other coastal towns.

5. However this Partnership would like to caution that any new initiative must be reflective of long-term needs, and be at least five to 10 years in scope and be supported by realistic revenue amounts to allow for their careful implementation and management.

*B. To look at the work ODPM is doing to address the social, housing and environmental problems coastal towns face, and to evaluate whether it is effective, well-focused or adequately funded*

6. The CCP is unable to comment of this area as it is not aware of any special work that the ODPM is undertaking in Folkestone, New Romney or Lydd.

7. The ODPM should also note that under PPG9, Folkestone is defined by the ODPM as a Priority Area for Economic Regeneration (PAER) so additional engagement would be welcome and supported by us. Although Folkestone has had this definition for sometime, it has not directly received additional funds from ODPM as a result.

8. The ODPM is engaged with Ashford as it is a designated Growth Area; perhaps this is an opportunity for the ODPM to consider the sub-regional context of supporting Folkestone as the nearest coastal community as improvements and regeneration there will benefit the growth agenda more broadly.

*C. To assess the effectiveness of ODPM's liaison with other departments, in key areas such as employment, migration, and social housing, and co-operation with local authorities*

9. The CCP is unable to comment on ODPM's effectiveness as it is not aware of the nature or extent of its work in this regard.

*D. To examine whether there is a case for more specific regional initiatives and whether enough attention is paid to regional disparities*

10. The CCP would like ODPM to note that in considering disparities, there should also be a consideration of opportunity for the Coastal Towns. Can the question change to identify not which ones are the worst, but which ones are likely to redevelop successfully, creating economic prosperity and a sustainable inclusive community? By considering this, ODPM may be able to make a much more timely and cost effective intervention in the medium term with coastal communities who are on the cusp of significant improvements such as Folkestone, while developing longer term strategies to assist those communities who are the worst off and who ultimately need more support from a range of agencies.

*E. To consider the security of future funding for regenerating and supporting coastal towns*

11. Revenue is required to support the mainstream agencies bring in the skilled personnel that they need to deliver this work. This not only accounts for specialist regeneration managers and project managers but for hard-pressed planning teams who require skilled staff to be able to meet the additional planning commitments that long-term regeneration and renewal programmes place on Councils and RDAs. The example of Seaspaces at Hastings shows clearly the level of expertise needed to make special initiatives work and the level of commitment to that process from a number of agencies not just the local Council's and the RDA. The simple conclusion is that long-term funding must be offered to provide for security in developing strategies and implementing them.

F. *To evaluate the success of the RDAs and other bodies in supporting and developing the economies of coastal towns*

12. The South East of England Development Agency (SEEDA) is currently consulting on its RES document looking at the next 10 years. This identifies the South East's coastal communities as requiring regeneration but also as having the potential to become a "string of pearls". This builds on SEEDA's previous work in identifying the East Kent coastal strip as a Priority Area for Economic Regeneration and acknowledges that there is still much more to be done, both directly and through delivery mechanisms such as Area Partnerships like ourselves and the East Kent Partnership. By enhancing and supporting this work the ODPM is very well placed to contribute to making that difference in the South East.

#### CONCLUSION

13. The CCP would like to reiterate its support for a special coastal towns initiative.

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### Memorandum by Caradon District Council (CT 08)

#### 1. SUMMARY

1.1 The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions Committee has set up a new inquiry into Coastal Towns and is seeking evidence from local authorities. This paper represents Caradon District Council's response to the call for evidence.

1.2 By looking at the three coastal/estuarine towns of the district of Looe, Torpoint and Saltash, a number of common themes and issues are identified that all coastal towns seem to face. Census data is used as well as views from the communities themselves.

1.3 The report then goes on to look at whether these issues have affected the way that regeneration initiatives have been implemented in the towns and also whether they might affect the ability to implement the ODPM's Regional Strategy for the South West in these Coastal Towns.

1.4 Finally the paper concludes that the Coastal Towns do face a unique combination of factors that conspire to make environmental social, economic regeneration projects more difficult and more expensive to deliver in Caradon than in their non-coastal counterparts. This stems from the peculiar environmental constraints that they face which then ripples out and affects all other matters. This phenomenon does not seem to be currently addressed by either the ODPM or by other funders, nor is it reflected in the settlement received from central government. There is a danger then that the poverty gap in Coastal Towns will widen unless the issue is addressed.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

##### *Location and Character of Caradon District*

2.1 The area of the District is 66,389 ha and in 2001 the population was 79,649<sup>1</sup>. There are five principal rural and estuarial towns Liskeard, Looe, Callington, Saltash and Torpoint, with more than 70 small to medium sized villages scattered between. Some 47% of the population live in these five main towns.

2.2 The District has a strong rural character, with the Fowey, Lynher and Tamar rivers running from Bodmin Moor, through a farmed landscape with deep wooded valleys to magnificent coastal scenery. This mix of small towns, villages and hamlets, provides the District with a rich diversity in both cultural heritage and environmental terms. It is an undeniably superb environment, which is a key factor in the area's attractiveness to tourists, migrants, and new investors. It is however, subject to constant pressures for change arising from development, agricultural change, and recreational use by visitors and residents.

##### *Population of Caradon District*

2.3 There has been a significant level of in-migration since 1961, when the Tamar Road Bridge opened, with the population increasing from 49,980 to 79,694 (+ 59.5%). However, growth between 1991 and 2001 was one of the slowest in the region at 4.09%. 17.1% of the population are aged 0-15 years; 63.7% are of working age and 19.3% are of pensionable age. Ethnic minorities comprise 0.7% of the population.

2.4 There are proportionately fewer children and young working age people living in Caradon than is experienced nationally. This reflects a shortage of higher educational opportunities and jobs for the young people seeking careers in the area. There are, however more mature working age people than typical, and more pensioners. The average age in the district is 42, compared with 38.6 nationally.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: 2001 Census.

### *The Coastal Towns of Caradon*

2.5 In the absence of any formal definition of what constitutes a “Coastal Town” from the ODPM with respect to this inquiry, Caradon District Council has defined the term as being a town which sits on the border of land near the sea.

2.6 Under this definition, Looe is clearly a coastal town, as it faces straight out onto the western end of the English Channel. However, there is some confusion over whether Saltash and Torpoint can also be considered as “Coastal Towns” as they also sit alongside saltwater, albeit on the banks of the River Tamar. However, despite the opposite bank of the River being less than a mile across the water, the two towns face many of the same issues as Looe, in terms of having just a 180° hinterland and associated catchment area and all that this implies.

2.7 Looe is the archetypical Cornish fishing port enjoying a spectacular setting at the entrance to a deeply incised and wooded valley system which has been cut into the coastal plateau. The resulting steep valley sides rise to over 100 metres above the East and West Looe rivers.

2.8 With a population of 5,280, the Caradon Local Plan recognises it as having limited development opportunities due to its sensitive coastal location and historic nature. It relies heavily on tourism for employment with an estimated half of all businesses active in this sector.

### Saltash

2.9 Saltash is located on the banks of the River Tamar at a historic crossing point, opposite the city of Plymouth. It is linked by a road bridge and the historic Brunel Royal Albert railway bridge in 1859. It is now more of a dormitory area for Plymouth and has a population of some 14,964.

### Torpoint

2.10 Torpoint sits downstream from Saltash, on the banks of the River Tamar opposite the main Plymouth dockyard area of Devonport. There is a vehicle ferry operating between Torpoint and Plymouth. With a population of 8,457 it still relies heavily on the dockyard/defence for employment although also has some light industry in the town. It serves as the market town for the Rame Peninsular with a sparse rural hinterland.

## 3. COASTAL TOWNS: ARE THEY A SPECIAL CASE?

### *Environmental Factors*

3.1 The Coastal towns of Caradon face additional environmental constraints over and above those faced by non-coastal towns which all stem from the sea resulting in their catchment areas being semi-circular in shape rather than the normal circular. This has consequential effects that ripple out resulting in social, economic and transport-related burdens on each of the coastal towns.

3.2 All three of the coastal towns in Caradon are hemmed in with the sea or estuary on one side, and landscape designations on the other, which also places additional constraints on any regeneration work that might be planned for the area. For example Saltash is surrounded by the Tamar/Tavy AONB and the land surrounding Looe is either designated as Areas of Great Landscape Value or AONB.

3.3 The topography in coastal areas, Cornwall at least, mean that what land that is available inland, is often on very steep slopes which has an affect on building costs as well as transport and access issues. Flat land is always at a premium and comes under intense pressure.

3.4 The coastal towns all have an increased risk of flooding from the sea which is additional to any risk from land runoff, and they also face pressures from climate change with the associated rising sea levels. For example, much of the medieval settlement of Looe has been built on the low-lying flat land, which floods most years.

3.5 Both Looe and Saltash contain historic settlements and conservation areas, incurring additional costs for repair and which again place additional constraints on any development. For Looe, the historic settlement is also reflected in the narrow street-pattern which limits vehicular access, which in turn means that specialist vehicles are needed for fire service and waste collections.

3.6 Some coastal towns also have historic harbours eg Looe retains its fishing industry. Here the fishing activities are still confined to the central part of the town, which in turn places additional constraints on the area.

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## *Social Factors*

### Population

3.7 The image of a coastal town as being a nice place to retire is borne out in the population figures, eg. Looe, the typical Cornish Fishing town has 32% of its population over 60 which is 12% higher than the Cornish figure, and is much higher than any of the other five major towns in the district. On the other hand the proportion of its population who are either under 16 years or who are aged 16–59 years are both much lower than the county or regional figure. (Source: 2001 Census. Neighbourhood Statistics)

### Housing

3.8 The age distribution of the local population suggests that coastal towns are seen as attractive places to retire to and this seems to be reflected in the residential house prices, for example Looe has the highest average house prices (£163,101 based on HM Land Registry figures for April–June 2003) of all the towns compared to an average for the district of £137,228 and £157,155 for the county.

3.9 House prices in Looe have consistently risen above that of the rest of the District, County and Regional Levels over the past few years. With wage levels lower, first time buyers are therefore finding it increasingly difficult to get onto the first rung of the property ladder.

3.10 The skewed population of coastal towns means that there are more older people, along with more people with mobility problems. This means that there is a higher demand for sheltered housing, housing with disabled facilities and smaller units in our coastal areas than in others.

3.11 Availability of affordable/social housing in the coastal towns is therefore lower than in the other towns, but with the supply of suitable land being such an issue, it becomes very difficult to find land to allocate to social housing projects.

3.12 A high proportion of properties is also used for tourism accommodation which puts added pressure on the housing stock.

3.13 The environmental constraints in Looe which limits the height of the buildings, makes it difficult to meet the density targets for new housing.

### Health

3.14 It is interesting to see that Looe falls in the most deprived 30% of wards in England for health deprivation, along with part of Saltash. This domain measures a range of indicators including mortality ratios for people under 65, proportion receiving health related benefits and the proportion of low birth-weights. The relatively high positioning of Looe suggest that the quality of life of a significant number of people in the area is impaired by poor health or disability.<sup>2</sup>

3.15 The higher proportion of people over 60, place added pressures on the health services. However, given the distance many of the towns are from hospitals, the availability of social transport to access these health services also becomes an issue.

## *Economic Factors*

3.16 Within the employment domain, Looe falls within the most deprived 30% of wards in England, at 26%. Looe performs badly in terms of employment compared to the other coastal towns such of Torpoint and Saltash which appear in the lower rankings of 52% and 63% respectively. Looe's relatively high positioning amongst wards nationally suggests that a large number of individuals are looking for work for at least some of the year, and potentially that there is a higher proportion of people living with conditions that make them less able to work.

3.17 Tourism in the coastal towns seems to impact on employment patterns by leading to increased number of part-time workers and also in seasonal unemployment, with proportionally more of the working population unemployed during winter than during the summer; reflecting the strong dependence on tourism. Whilst this variance has flattened during the last few years, there are still around twice as many claimants in Looe in the winter than there are in the summer.

3.18 In the coastal towns there are a higher proportion of people who are employed in the service sector, either self-employed or working in micro-businesses. Many of these are operating from residential property, where expansion is difficult.

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<sup>2</sup> Source: census data as reported in the Looe Waterfront Regeneration Project; Stage 1 Socio-Economic Baseline report, Arup consultants for Caradon District Council. September 2003.

3.19 The fishing industry of Looe and the existence of the harbour places additional constraints on any new developments. Health and safety requirements are continuously increasing, which places yet another burden on regeneration projects. Another issue is one of landownership; in the historic towns land ownership is often split amongst a large number of charitable trusts that makes all negotiations very difficult.

3.20 The lack of available land and the other constraints mentioned makes it very difficult to even identify land for industrial use let alone for the existing small businesses to expand.

3.21 Planning in a coastal area is always more complicated than planning in a non-coastal area, since the additional requirements of the Crown, DEFRA, Environment Agency and other agencies also need to become involved. This can make negotiations very difficult and protracted.

#### *Transport and Access*

3.22 Coastal towns seem by definition to be at the end of the line, with their relatively poor transport links. This means that most transport links are effectively separate branch lines that do not necessarily integrate fully with the inland networks which puts increased pressures on the viability of trains and buses in the area. The transport links tend to follow the local topography, so that in Looe they are from north-south following the Looe Valley, with poor links to the east and west.

3.23 They also effectively have just half a catchment area, which means that distances to services are further than for non-coastal towns.

3.24 There are also access issues within the town where the narrow streets mean that transport within the town is more difficult, with added costs incurred due to the absence of on-road parking; many people are having to park their vehicles at some distance from their homes. Visitor car parking is also an issue, with most of the main car park being outside of the town. However, lack of available land makes park and ride difficult. The narrow streets also mean that businesses are need to negotiate to have their deliveries outside of peak hours, which puts yet another burden on the small businesses.

#### 4. ODPM INITIATIVES

4.1 Caradon District Council has experience of a range of initiatives which have either used ODPM funding, support the ODPM's "Sustainable Communities" Strategy or come from the ODPM's "Creating Sustainable Communities in the South West" regional strategy.. Whilst the success rates of them all vary, there are certainly lessons that can be learnt from them all.

#### *Housing Initiatives*

4.2 Through the right to buy initiatives, Caradon has lost 320 houses and has yet to replace them. Delivering affordable houses in coastal towns is proving problematical due to the absence of appropriate land. It is also proving difficult to build any new developments to meet the requirements for greener more sustainable communities, again due to the pressures of land availability. A community land trust could potentially be helpful here but Caradon does not currently benefit from having such a body active in the area.

4.3 Homefinder Direct is an on-line one-stop shop that enables people on the housing list to view the properties available in the three neighbouring districts of Caradon, North Cornwall and Restormel. It is a good example of district councils working together with the housing associations to provide an improved web-based service, which is also available through kiosks in strategic locations, and brings together all the available properties into one system. It is particularly useful for Coastal Towns since the competition for properties is very high, with coastal properties receiving high rates of applications.

4.4 The proposed ODPM MoveUK website, that will bring together nationwide information about jobs and housing opportunities in one place, will be useful in making sure that people from outside of the area, looking to move to a coastal town, will be fully aware of the realities of living and working in an area before they move.

4.5 The proposed Regional Infrastructure Fund in theory should help the local area, although little is known about how this might actually work. However, there are fears that the funding will be focused on the areas key growth areas, of which are small coastal towns are not part of.

4.6 Caradon's Coastal Towns are set to gain from the increased Regional Housing Pots, which should help, although it will still be difficult to overcome some of the other problems associated with increasing the housing stock.

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### *Economic Regeneration Initiatives*

4.7 It is clear that much of the business support that is available is targeted at small to medium-sized businesses. Coastal towns such as Looe lose out here as there is certainly a higher concentration of micro-businesses in these areas.

4.8 Many of the ODPM's new initiatives are based on competitions within a tight timescale. These require significant staff resources to put together the applications and provide all the data and statistics needed. Caradon District Council is a small district council in which resources available to apply for these initiatives are severely limited. When applications are unsuccessful, members become less likely to support any future applications being made as they see their efforts come to nothing. In the long term there is the danger that small authorities become alienated from the main funding bodies resulting in a vicious circle. For example, Caradon District Council applied unsuccessfully for the Liveability Fund, and may be less likely to apply for future initiatives as a result of this. Whilst it is obviously not possible for every applicant to be successful, a two-stage application may be more helpful, that would mean that those unsuccessful applicants do not waste precious resources unnecessarily on the second stage.

4.9 Another issue is that the factors at play in coastal towns all conspire to make the cost/output ratio much higher in coastal towns than in non-coastal towns. In Looe the issues have meant that the cost for example of the proposed harbour regeneration project have been loaded by additional requirements of health and safety works, of good design in a conservation area, of the additional infrastructure that would be needed, by the high land costs and the costs of any marine developments. The resulting proposal is far more capital intensive than anything previously undertaken in Looe and is currently failing to meet the targets for funding outputs.

### Market and Coastal Towns Initiative

4.10 Saltash, Torpoint and Looe are all in the process of the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative which is supported by a partnership of agencies and is administrated in the South West Region by the Market and Coastal Towns Association. The programme enables communities, including those in the surrounding rural areas, to consult together and draw up strategic action plans for the services, jobs, training, and leisure opportunities their area needs. A key part of this initiative is a "brokering table" that draws together all the potential key funding partners and to help them to find common ground. Torpoint and Saltash are already part of this initiative, having both agreed their action plans. Looe is a little later on the scene, and has just embarked on the process of drawing up its Community Strategic Plan.

4.11 The experiences of these groups to date have been mixed. On the one hand they all see the process of working with the communities in identifying their needs as being rewarding and valuable, they are now frustrated with how difficult it is to implement their plan. Local governance is such that the original concept of the "brokering table" has proved difficult to put into practice, as the authority to make decisions rarely lies with one person. Some of the proposals put forward by the communities require considerable work in getting to the next stage, with funding usually required for first stage feasibility work. However, without the buy-in from the key agencies, getting this funding is problematic. Recent developments, including the Local Strategic Partnerships and Local Area Agreements will be much more effective, but it is still early days and there is a lot for all of us to learn. Here in Caradon, Saltash provides a good example where the local community would like to use industrial land to further develop an education/training initiative that would involve the school relocating to this new site. However, they have reached a chicken/egg situation whereby the RDA will not support it without local authority support, and vice versa. The sheer number of agencies involved, and the uncertainty of how to progress such "big new ideas" has proved a stumbling block for the local community, who are in danger of becoming disillusioned.

4.12 Engaging with the main funders for Coastal Towns is also an issue. Their location and inaccessibility means that key funders rarely visit these communities, preferring instead to focus on their key growth areas. This is exacerbated as Coastal Towns are often at the periphery of the local authority areas. With many of them on rivers, and rivers often being used to define boundaries, coastal towns have an increased number of agencies that they have to deal with. For example Saltash deals with both Truro and Plymouth offices of the RDA as well as having to deal with two counties, a unitary, a district, Queens Harbour Master and so on. It can be extremely confusing for local communities to know which agency to deal with for what. Also in order to be really successful they need committed resources within the local authorities to support them, however without the funding, this is simply not currently possible.

4.13 There has also been an issue for Saltash and Torpoint in that there was a funding gap between the development of their Community Strategic Plan and the implementation stage which resulted in significant skills lost as key staff went on to look for employment elsewhere. Lessons have been learnt and funding packages for new towns are now being put together to include both the action planning stage and the implementation stage.

4.14 There may be potential to develop community energy schemes that could provide an income to the community. There is a level of interest in Looe to develop both a micro biomass gas generator and a current/tidal water turbines

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Coastal Towns therefore face a unique combination of factors that conspire to make environmental social, economic regeneration projects more difficult and more expensive to deliver than in their non-coastal counterparts. This stems from the peculiar environmental constraints that they face which then ripples out and affects all other matters. This phenomenon does not seem to be currently addressed by either the ODPM or by other funders, nor is it reflected in the settlement received from central government. There is a danger then that the poverty gap in Coastal Towns will widen unless the issue is addressed.

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### **Memorandum by the English Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) (CT 09)**

#### INTRODUCTION

1. The key concern of the RDAs is to focus on regional priorities in support of improving the economic performance of the English regions. The Regional Economic Strategies (RES) provide the overarching strategic framework for the regions, which ensure the ability to:

- Identify and prioritise actions needed to strengthen regional economies through a robust evidence base.
- Develop solutions appropriate to regional conditions.
- Concentrate resources behind those solutions.
- Mobilise other regional partners and lever in private sector finance to support those solutions.

2. Through the priorities identified in the RESs, the RDAs ensure that everyone within the region is able to contribute to and benefit from the economic and quality of life opportunities that economic growth can offer. Each RES is developed in consultation and partnership with a range of public, private, voluntary and community sector stakeholders, which ensures a regional strategic vision shared by all partners in the region.

3. The advent of the RDAs consolidated previously separate economic development funding programmes into one single budget, the Single Pot. RDAs are keen to stress that any new funding for economic development should be incorporated into the Single Pot to ensure the alignment of spending in the regions.

4. The principle of sub-regional partnership working is now well established by the RDAs and already makes a huge contribution to the economic growth of regional economies. Sub-regional partnership working and collaboration is not solely focussed around a core (or city) area. Sub-regional working exists in all geographic areas of a region to address current and future need, economic potential and opportunity. Where city-regions exist, they have a strong interdependent relationship with adjacent rural and other areas. There are economic gains to be had from building stronger complimentary relationships between urban and non-urban areas.

5. The RES, as the shared regional economic framework, provides the overarching context for the economic development priorities for regions, sub and city regions and local areas.

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF COASTAL TOWNS

6. It is suggested that there are particular issues, which need to be taken into account when addressing the needs of coastal towns. These are:

- (a) Changes to the visitor economy that have impacted on traditional resort towns, which have faced challenges for restructuring since the 1950's.
- (b) Particular needs of industrial sectors and primary production that concentrate along the coast, (chemicals, ship building, offshore and marine engineering, power generation, fishing).
- (c) A concentration of environmental assets and associated development considerations (eg protected areas for landscape and biodiversity, coastal defence, sea level rise, managed retreat).
- (d) Arguably, particularly intense competition for land uses in the coastal zone, whether for tourism, leisure, industry, housing or conservation.

7. Coastal towns tend to face some common social and economic challenges such as:

- Social isolation due to rurality and peripherality.
- Low wage, low skill economy and seasonality of employment.
- High dependence on a single industry.
- Out-migration of young people.
- Higher than average residents aged over 65 years.
- Poor transport infrastructure.

8. Although, as outlined briefly above, there tends to be some common features shared by coastal towns, there is significant disparity among the towns falling under this classification. The coast is relatively diverse and has areas with different economic and social characteristics. There are varied areas of conurbation: small rural towns and villages, resort towns, coalfield, rural areas and sites of industrial activity, particularly, but not exclusively associated with the estuaries.

9. Distinctness between coastal resorts was a key finding of “The Seaside Economy”<sup>3</sup>. This report concluded that a “one size fits all” approach to developing coastal towns is not an appropriate way forward. Special initiatives that seek to apply a model approach to coastal resorts would not be a justifiable response.

10. Initiatives for coastal towns need, as far as possible, to be tailored to meet the specific requirements of individual towns and their inter-relationship with the wider area. There is a broad set of economic drivers to take into account when considering the range and variety of needs of coastal towns, needs which should be appreciated from a local/sub-regional level.

#### RDAs AND COASTAL TOWNS

11. Given their diversity, coastal towns are felt to face a number of challenges that are shared with other parts of their regions. RDAs may not operate a specific coastal area programme but will consider the factors outlined in a-d above in delivering wider programmes of development, which are often in coastal zones (eg market towns, rural programmes and tourism delivery). There are also sector specific interventions, which will have particular impact in the coastal zone around sectors such as fishing, chemicals etc. In addition, sub-regional strategies aim to take a strategic approach to issues at the sub-regional level.

12. For the South West RDA, the principal vehicle for identifying the needs of small to medium coastal towns is through the Market and Coastal Towns initiative (MCTi). Investment by the RDA in the Market and Coastal Towns Association (set up to administer the MCTi) will ensure that the most deprived towns in the region are able to draw up and implement a Community Strategic Plan. Larger towns are much more likely to feature in sub-regional economic strategies and their development needs addressed via a range of programmes, eg RDA Single Pot, Neighbourhood Renewal, Lottery Funding etc.

13. The approach adopted has been to support the development and competitiveness of the core economic activity, be this tourism or fishing, whilst at the same time seeking to broaden the economy to provide more sustainable jobs and prosperity. This support of economic development goes hand in hand with regeneration of the built environment, including the public realm and investment in skills.

14. Within the East Midlands, the coastal strip falls entirely within the county of Lincolnshire. It is one of the most economically disadvantaged parts of the region and displays many of the challenges common to coastal towns. The first Coastal Action Zone (CAZ) was launched in December 2004, led jointly by Lincolnshire County Council and East Lindsey District Council. East Midlands Development Agency is a member of the CAZ and is fully in support of the initiative. The Partnership will address some of the challenges common to coastal towns as outlined above. The aim is to highlight the issues, develop an agreed set of priorities and action, and draw in greater resources through a common and integrated approach.

15. Yorkshire Forward’s investment in coastal towns is based upon their Urban and Rural Renaissance of Place Programmes. These programmes have a focus on the physical and spatial aspects of towns and cities but are very closely aligned to the economic, social and environmental agendas. A key aim of these programmes is to support the growth and success of the town centres in line with the Government’s planning policy for such centres. Additional investment is also made through the environment programme, tourism, business and voluntary and community support.

16. The coastal towns within the East of England are highly varied, ranging from some of the most deprived areas in the region to some of the most affluent settlements. The East of England Development Agency (EEDA) has supported the establishment of two URCs, invested in major public infrastructure schemes and undertaken masterplanning exercises in several coastal areas. With CABE and English Heritage, the agency funded the “Shifting Sands” event/publication on changing the design and image of seaside towns. EEDA’s approach is to support the needs of each area on its own merits. The agency has streamlined its funding priorities into four core products: Investing in Communities, Regional Renaissance, Business Support and Enterprise Hubs. These funding streams are flexible enough to support the particular needs of the East’s coastal towns.

17. One NorthEast recently commissioned a Strategic Framework for the Development of the Visitor Economy of the North East Coast. The purpose is to agree a long-term vision and set out a framework to deliver the vision, supported by a robust evidence base. It is expected to give clarity to the agency, regional partners, stakeholders and other funding bodies on investment policy for tourism in the coastal zone. The role of the visitor economy is being viewed in a wider context of regeneration so that a holistic view of the coast is reached.

<sup>3</sup> *The Seaside Economy*—Christina Beatty and Stephen Fothergill (Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, Sheffield Hallam University, June 2003).

18. RDAs recognise the value of their coastal towns and the contribution such towns can make to local and regional economies. The coast is both an asset and an area of opportunity, but there are also significant challenges to be addressed and factors (a)–(d) as set out above should be considered in coastal town interventions. As RDAs, we place sustainable economic growth and development that seeks to maximise economic impact and return on investment at the forefront of our considerations. Seaside towns have a distinctive role to play in regional economies and RDAs are committed to working with partners to assist with the prioritisation and development of effective actions along the coast. Initiatives to tackle the diverse needs of coastal towns need to be developed within the regional framework. RDAs do not consider it appropriate to develop special national initiatives.

#### REGIONAL DISPARITIES

19. The report “Economic Change and the Labour Market in Britain’s Seaside Towns” states that the differences between seaside towns underlines the extent to which the strength of the local economy often cannot be divorced from the regional context. This, it states, is clearest in South East England, where relatively strong growth in employment and population owes much to the prosperity of the South East economy. Towns here are evolving into parts of the Greater South East economy that happen to be by the sea.<sup>4</sup>

20. RDAs are committed to contributing to the successful fulfilment of ODPM PSA2 and would emphasise the importance of all Government departments adopting this target. In order to raise the economic performance of all regions and reduce the gap in growth rates between them, the impact of Government policy in the regions must be considered. RDAs are keen to provide regional economic advice and input to help shape policy and ensure its effectiveness in the regions.

#### CONCLUSION

21. RDAs have and will continue to play a vital role in the support of coastal town revitalisation. The contribution of coastal towns to sub-regional and regional economies is important and is reflected in the measure and nature of support that RDAs provide to those towns. RESs may not identify coastal towns as a separate category of place but they do focus on supporting the economic growth of all settlements whether urban, rural or coastal. Within that context, support for coastal towns is integral to RDA programmes.

22. The diversity evident in coastal towns means that neither funding, nor policy come from one source or overarching strategy. The co-ordination of policy and action is critical from the Government Department level through to the local level. In addition to ODPM, policy initiatives from departments such as DTI, DCMS, Home Office, DEFRA and DWP, will all have a major influence on the coastal towns agenda. Measures which ensure effective joined-up working among the various interested parties are therefore highly important. RDAs will continue to work with Government and partners in their regions to foster and sustain a co-ordinated approach to development in these towns.

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#### **Memorandum by Essex County Council (CT 10)**

Essex County Council welcomes the opportunity to have an input to the inquiry on coastal towns.

Coastal towns, by their very nature, have unique issues and opportunities. Coastal locations reduce, sometimes significantly, the catchments that they serve; reduce general accessibility (“end of the line”) and can discourage the location of business. On the positive side, they offer the attractions of proximity to the sea, which in turn can make them desirable places in which to live. It may also encourage the growth of tourism. However, these two factors, in turn can lead to problems including a disproportionately elderly population, seasonal employment and vulnerability to changing tastes in holidays. Some coastal towns have developed primarily as ports. Whilst this has diversified their traditional employment base, changes to the needs of sea borne freight can leave them vulnerable.

Following from the above, I believe that it is vital that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister gives special consideration and support to coastal towns. Essex has a number of coastal towns including Maldon, Burnham on Crouch, Brightlingsea, Clacton, Walton and Harwich, all of which would benefit from additional support. It is noticeable that some of the county’s worst scoring SOAs, as identified by the Index of Deprivation 2004, are in coastal locations. It is also felt that small coastal towns should also be treated in the same way as Market Towns are for funding purposes.

In the north east of the county, a local initiative (Haven Gateway Partnership) has brought together local authorities and the private sector. The Haven Gateway covers the north Essex and South Suffolk coastline as well as the supporting service centres of Colchester and Ipswich. This Partnership is currently addressing

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<sup>4</sup> *Economic Change and the Labour Market in Britain’s Seaside Towns*— Christina Beatty and Stephen Fothergill (Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, Sheffield Hallam University, June 2003).

a range of issues including those associated with the decline of seaside resorts and reductions in the manning of ports, albeit with significant port expansion planned at Bathside Bay and, potentially, Felixstowe. Currently the coastal area suffers from relatively high unemployment and relatively low economic activity.

Projections of future employment indicate a continued decline in agriculture and manufacturing. Although growth is projected in the service sector these jobs tend to be located in the main towns away from the coastal areas. Redressing the economic balance and encouraging indigenous employment growth and inward investment will not take place without public sector support.

In conclusion, I believe that there is a good case for special initiatives and funding to support coastal towns. In considering the regional allocation of such support, attention should be given to the way in which need manifests itself locally rather than relying on region wide statistics.

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### **Memorandum by South Hams District Council (CT 11)**

#### **BACKGROUND**

The South Hams stretches from the boundaries of the coastal city of Plymouth in the west to the holiday beaches of Torbay in the east and inland to the hills of Dartmoor and the District Councils of West Devon and Teignbridge.

The area of some 350 square miles encompasses an abundance of rich natural beauty, small market and coastal towns, countless villages, hamlets and isolated cottages, with 60 miles of magnificent coastline recognised nationally through the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Approximately 82,000 people live in the District, with two-thirds of the population living outside the larger towns of Dartmouth, Ivybridge, Kingsbridge and Totnes. The population is expected to grow to nearly 90,000 by 2010, with particular pressure from development in the western part of the District, close to Plymouth. Our two main coastal towns are Dartmouth and Kingsbridge, however we have many coastal communities including Salcombe, Kingswear, Stoke Fleming, Strete, Slapton, Hope Cove, Thurlestone, Bigbury, Newton Ferrers, Wembury and Heybrook Bay.

#### **SOME OF THE ISSUES WE FACE**

Perceptions of the South Hams as an area of social and economic advantage can disguise problems for our communities such as lower than average wages, decline in some traditional industries (eg agriculture, fishing and tourism), above average house prices compounded by a high proportion of second home ownership, social isolation and difficulty accessing services, information and transport.

The sparsely populated nature of much of the District results in services being more costly to provide and an over-reliance on private transport. Deprivation exists within areas of affluence and many small rural and coastal villages lack facilities such as schools, shops and post offices, resulting in significant issues of rural isolation. Many employers have trouble in recruiting and retaining key and skilled workers due to the lack of affordable housing.

Every year, deaths continue to exceed births, yet the population continues to grow due entirely to inward migration particularly in the coastal towns and villages. Although there is a net gain of population, there is a loss of young adults as many leave the area for higher education or due to the lack of job opportunities and low wages. The situation means that the age structure of the South Hams is weighted heavily towards older people, a trend that is predicted to increase. This will have significant implications for health and social services.

Therefore, the challenge for service providers is to address the needs of the people living and working in the South Hams, with its rurality, within the context of sometimes very different needs to our surrounding coastal urban areas of Plymouth and Torbay. Furthermore, our problems require strong community leadership, multi-agency working, and funding in order to be tackled effectively.

#### **KEY ISSUES TO ADDRESS**

##### *Social*

- relative remoteness from main centres of population, communications and infrastructure. high house prices and lack of affordable housing provision;
- high %age of second home/holiday home ownership (Nearly 12% of homes across the District are second homes. In a number of coastal wards this increases to over 40% (eg Salcombe) and in one ward over 50%. These figures exclude commercial holiday letting accommodation which exacerbates the problem;

- very high levels of second and holiday homes undermine coastal towns' functionality as active and self-contained communities;
- demographic imbalance is particularly acute with high numbers of retired residents and low numbers of young people; and
- coastal towns harbour significant pockets of deprivation amongst marginalised sectors of the community.

#### *Economic*

- over reliance on traditional low paid and largely seasonal employment, especially tourism and other service industries and fishing—limited skills base;
- decline in traditional coastal industries (fishing, resort services, holiday accommodation, provision of holiday services);
- trends in tourism (expectation of higher standards and more short-breaks rather than annual holidays);
- overwhelming overseas competition;
- pressure on traditional holiday accommodation provision, and consequent loss of bed spaces;
- demand-led = lowest common denominator = pressure to go down-market = pressure on profitability;
- absence of investment capital;
- fragmented marketing activity/ineffective branding/failure to capitalise on major events;
- coastal towns need significant inward investment to “re-profile” themselves for a new era (marketing, information, vision, presentation) but the leadership, drive and resources are not always present to tackle this; and
- coastal towns also need significant investment in infrastructure.

#### *Environmental*

- historic built form, high landscape quality and topographical constraints limit development opportunities.

#### OPPORTUNITIES

- coastal towns potentially hugely significant as historic, environmental, economic and recreational assets;
- coastal towns potentially hugely important as “activity hubs”—centres for sport, active recreation, exploration, but often poorly connected to surrounding countryside and recreational opportunities; and
- the challenge is to develop planning, housing, and economic strategies which enable small coastal towns to respond to the opportunities. The coastal towns and villages in our area are a great place to live, but to be socially inclusive and ensure community cohesion we need to present coastal towns as a wonderful opportunity for economic regeneration, particularly for clean foot loose knowledge based enterprises.

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### **Memorandum by South Lakeland District Council (CT 12)**

#### *To examine the case for special initiatives to tackle the needs of Coastal towns*

- We base our response on our experience of work and service delivery in Grange over Sands and to a lesser extent, Arnside, situated on the northern side of Morecambe Bay.
- These settlements face issues of affordable housing, a changing economy and poor availability of local high value employment and a significant decline in the quality of the public realm due to significant under maintenance and renewal of public spaces.
- These issues are prevalent in the small towns across the District but the impact, especially the of the declining public realm, is especially felt in Grange-over-Sands where it forms a most significant part of the visitor and tourist attraction of the resort.
- Coastal processes in the Morecambe Bay have led to the loss of tide washed sands by the town's promenade and replacement by emerging salt marsh. Whilst impossible to reverse or intervene, it is a unique challenge for the town to change and adapt its tourism offer.

- In terms of development control we have sought to control the change of use of hotels in face of increasing economic pressures for redevelopment into housing. Ensuring a continuance of hotel accommodation is vital if a future as a resort is to be sustained.
- The demography of our coastal towns shows a high proportion of elderly people. The towns provide a popular location for retirement. Whilst addressing the needs of the more elderly population, it also highlights the needs for investment for young people in terms of recreation and leisure facilities.

*To look at work the ODPM is doing to address the social, housing and environmental problems coastal towns face and to evaluate whether it is effective, well focused or adequately funded*

- The agendas of rural and affordable housing for local people are highly relevant to our coastal towns. There are no particular differences in approaches required to address the issues in our coastal towns in comparison to other settlements in the District.
- In spatial planning terms, Grange forms a Key Service Centre and as such will have policy supportive of maintaining and enhancing access to services, employment and housing.

*To assess effectiveness of ODPM's liaison with other Departments, in key areas such as employment, migration and social housing and co-operation with local authorities*

- Integration is essential. Coastal towns have to be attractive and sustainable places to live, work and visit.
- Work to develop the performance, responsiveness and effectiveness of local government (Town, Parish District and County Councils) is crucial to establishing local leadership, confidence and ability to address change

*To examine whether there is a case for more specific regional initiatives and whether enough attention is paid to regional disparities*

- The North West Regional Development Agency have produced "A vision for North West Coastal Resorts" which usefully identifies the range of resorts which make up the regions coastal "offer"
- Setting and considering Grange within the regional context offers the opportunity to differentiate its offer to the visitor and to share approaches to regeneration with other similar resorts. The benefit of this still has to be realised.
- The concept of Regional Parks is a useful to develop a more strategic approach to economic, social and environmental renewal across a broader geographic area, which shares some common characteristic. The concept of a "Morecambe Bay Regional Park" is being investigated.
- Any regional initiative must focus on delivering a range of improvements to the range of coastal towns within it, not just investing in the areas of greatest need in terms of overcoming deprivation and poor opportunity but also intervening in areas where decline is happening and can be arrested.

*To consider future funding arrangements for regeneration and supporting coastal towns*

- We would like to see coordinated investment available from the lottery funds and those associated with housing and employment development.
- Investment MUST address the public realm, especially capital investment and some assisting revenue funding.
- We have had success in the District with the Market Towns approach, basing a programme of interventions around a local needs and opportunity based strategy and programme and a delegated responsibility for programme management to a local partnership. This model can readily be applied to our coastal towns. It will generate local interest, involvement and investment. Key to delivering longer-term sustainability.

*To evaluate success of the RDAs and other bodies in supporting and developing the economies of coastal towns*

- We welcomed the NWRDA's Vision for NW Coastal Resorts. Whilst raising the needs and opportunities for Grange, it has not guaranteed access to regional investment. However, with discussion with NWRDA, it has raised the debate and assisted the development of proposals for change.

- We always face a significant challenge of bringing a small towns needs forward for investment, in competition with large towns where there are very significant levels of deprivation. The small and the possible should not always be overlooked. Significant change can be achieved, often through modest levels of investment and local management.
  - Very large organisations are not the best in addressing smaller local needs. Delegation and sub regional delivery arrangements are essential.
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### **Memorandum by East of England Development Agency (EEDA) (CT 13)**

#### **ORGANISATIONAL DESCRIPTION**

EEDA is the regional development agency (RDA) for the East of England. We are a small RDA operating in a large, diverse and highly dynamic region. EEDA commands resource of around £140 million this year—equivalent to just over 0.1% of the region's gross domestic product (GDP), with staffing numbers less than 200. Given this context our principle challenge is to achieve sustainable improvement in regional economic performance with modest levels of investment.

Our approach is to go about our business in three major ways:

Firstly—setting and shaping regional strategic direction to bring partners together to ensure an ambitious and joined-up approach to achieving sustainable economic development in the East of England.

Secondly—persuading and influencing others to bring collective resources together to find innovative ways to tackle several challenging issues.

And thirdly—delivering imaginative projects that have a significant impact on economic development—and we commission others to do so.

EEDA's approach is underpinned by the Regional Economic Strategy (RES). The RES focuses on eight strategic goals for promoting economic growth in the East of England:

- A skills base that can support a world-class economy.
- Growing competitiveness, productivity and entrepreneurship.
- Global leadership in developing and realising innovation in science, technology and research.
- High quality places to live, work and visit.
- Social exclusion and broad participation in the regional economy.
- Making the most from the development of international gateways and national and regional transport corridors.
- A leading information society.
- An exemplar for the efficient use of resources.

#### **CONTEXT**

Our response to the Inquiry is framed within the consolidated response submitted by the RDA network which EEDA fully endorses. For our submission, we have chosen to highlight issues that are of particular relevance to the East of England.

#### **CHARACTERISTICS OF COASTAL TOWNS**

It is suggested that there are particular issues, which need to be taken into account when addressing the needs of coastal towns. These are:

- (a) Changes to the visitor economy that have impacted on traditional resort towns, which have faced challenges for restructuring since the 1950's.
- (b) Particular needs of industrial sectors and primary production that concentrate along the coast, (chemicals, ship building, offshore and marine engineering, power generation, fishing).
- (c) A concentration of environmental assets and associated development considerations (eg protected areas for landscape and biodiversity, coastal defence, sea level rise, managed retreat).
- (d) Arguably, particularly intense competition for land uses in the coastal zone, whether for tourism, leisure, industry, housing or conservation.

Coastal towns tend to face some common social and economic challenges such as:

- Social isolation due to rurality and peripherality.
- Low wage, low skill economy and seasonality of employment.
- High dependence on a single industry.

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- Out-migration of young people.
  - Higher than average residents aged over 65 years.
  - Poor transport infrastructure.

Although, as outlined briefly above, there tends to be some common features shared by coastal towns, there is significant disparity among the towns falling under this classification. The coast is relatively diverse and has areas with different economic and social characteristics. There are varied areas of conurbation: small rural towns and villages, resort towns, coalfield, rural areas and sites of industrial activity, particularly, but not exclusively associated with the estuaries.

Initiatives for coastal towns need, as far as possible, to be tailored to meet the specific requirements of individual towns and their inter-relationship with the wider area. There are a broad set of economic drivers to take into account when considering the range and variety of needs of coastal towns, needs which should be appreciated from a local/sub-regional level.

#### RDAs AND COASTAL TOWNS

Given their diversity, coastal towns are felt to face a number of challenges that are shared with other parts of their regions. EEDA may not operate a specific coastal area programme but will consider the factors outlined in (a)–(d) above in delivering wider programmes of development, which are often in coastal zones (eg market towns, rural programmes and tourism delivery). There are also sector specific interventions, which will have particular impact in the coastal zone around sectors such as fishing, chemicals etc. In addition, sub-regional strategies aim to take a strategic approach to issues at the sub-regional level.

The East of England Development Agency is approaching the needs of its coastal towns in a number of ways. Firstly it is supporting two major regeneration initiatives along the East of England coast namely the Urban Regeneration Companies in Great Yarmouth/Lowestoft (1st East) and Southend-on-Sea (Renaissance Southend Limited). The coastal towns within the East of England are highly varied ranging from some of the most deprived areas in the region to some of the most affluent settlements. The EEDA approach is to support the needs of each area on its own merits, for example we are supporting the development of an Offshore Renewable Energy Centre in Lowestoft, a major performing arts facility in Aldeburgh and the bid for a regional casino in Southend. EEDA have streamlined their funding priorities into four core products: Investing in Communities, Regional Renaissance, Business Support and Enterprise Hubs—each of these funding streams are flexible enough to support the particular needs of the East's coastal towns.

#### REGIONAL DISPARITIES

The wide range in economic performance of the East of England's coastal towns reflects the national picture. Evidence of this comes from the "Economic Change and Labour Market in Britain's Seaside Towns" which states that the differences between seaside towns underlines the extent to which the strength of the local economy often cannot be separated from the regional context.

In order to improve the economic performance of all regions and reduce the gap in growth rates between them, the impact of government policy in the regions must be considered. EEDA is keen to provide regional economic advice and input to help shape policy and ensure its effectiveness in the region.

#### CONCLUSION

EEDA has and will continue to play a vital role in the support of coastal town revitalization. The contribution of coastal towns to sub-regional and the regional economy is important and is reflected in the measure and nature of support that EEDA has provided to these towns. The RES may not identify coastal towns as a separate category of place but it does focus on supporting the economic growth of all settlements whether urban, rural or coastal. Within that context, support for coastal towns is integral to EEDA's strategy and activities.

The diversity evident in coastal towns means that neither funding, nor policy from one source or overarching strategy. Measures which ensure effective joined-up working among various interested parties are therefore highly important. EEDA will continue to work with partners to foster and sustain a co-ordinated approach to development in these towns.

## Memorandum by nef (the new economics foundation) (CT 14)

### ABOUT NEF

nef is an independent think and do tank founded in 1986. nef's Local and Regional Economics team focuses on research and practical solutions that enable business and enterprise to deliver tangible benefits to disadvantaged communities and individuals. nef has a strong record of work on invigorating communities and combining social, economic and environmental concerns.

### THE RELEVANCE OF NEF'S WORK TO THE COMMITTEE'S INQUIRY

nef (the new economics foundation) welcomes the Select Committee's decision to launch an enquiry into the future of coastal towns. Coastal towns began to decline in the 1950s and now face a series of interrelated social and economic problems that require strategic interventions to reverse their decline and stimulate a renaissance.

In 2005, nef completed two research projects of particular relevance to this inquiry:

- "Coasting Along: A study of business impacts and regeneration in South East Coastal Towns" for the South East Regional Development Agency (SEEDA).
- "Climbing the Ladder: a step change to a thriving Hastings economy" for Hastings Borough Council, submitted as a proposal for funding for the Government's Local Enterprise Growth Initiative.

This memorandum features the key findings from these reports and other areas of research that are directly relevant to this inquiry.

### OUTLINE OF MEMORANDUM

This memorandum addresses issues 1, 4, 5 and 6 as outlined in the terms of reference of the Inquiry. We examine the case for special initiatives to tackle the needs of coastal towns, as outlined in point 1. The memorandum goes on to discuss specific initiatives that we consider most likely to alleviate the problems identified, including business-led regeneration that encourages the start up, growth and retention of indigenous businesses.

The memorandum then examines whether there is a case for more specific regional initiatives and considers whether enough attention is paid to regional disparities as outlined in point 4. This memorandum draws on specific research to consider points 5 and 6 which address the security of funding for coastal town regeneration and evaluate the success of RDAs and others.

nef regrets that the economic challenges facing coastal towns do not feature in the terms of reference of this inquiry though social, housing and environmental issues are identified. In our view it does not make sense to consider the social and environmental challenges in isolation from the key economic issues facing many Coastal Towns.

## 1. THE CASE FOR SPECIAL INITIATIVES TO TACKLE THE NEEDS OF COASTAL TOWNS

### 1.1 *The Distinctive Nature of Coastal Town Economies*

"Seaside resorts are the least understood of Britain's problem areas. They have never received the same attention as inner cities and rural areas"—Dr Steven Fothergill.

1.1.1 Before we consider the case for special initiatives it is worth outlining the nature of coastal towns and the problems they face.

1.1.2 There are nearly 17 million people living within 10 kilometres of the coast with no settlement in the United Kingdom more than 70 miles from the coast. Coastal resorts are deeply embedded in Britain's culture, history and heritage. Britain was the first country in the world to develop a chain of coastal towns—a move closely related to its position as the earliest industrialised and urbanised economy and society. Coastal towns became popular places to live and work and by the early twentieth century provided a range of new leisure opportunities for urban citizens (by this time there were nearly 150 resorts with a permanent population of 1.5 million). Their subsequent decline is closely related to the changing role and patterns of leisure in Britain's post-industrial economy and society.

1.1.3 Coastal economies have significantly different economic ecologies and characteristics from those captured within commonly used typologies of geographical areas ie inner city, urban, suburban and rural typologies. This is not to deny that there are similarities and complementarities between these typologies, but understanding and recognising the distinctive characteristics of coastal towns is essential to developing effective policy solutions.

#### 1.1.4 Coastal economies are characterised by the following:

- The sea itself defines coastal towns' access to local markets. The sea provides some opportunities for employment through leisure, fishing, shipping and ports. However, for many coastal towns, the sea forms a physical barrier to development and is largely economically unproductive. Its main effect is as a significant competitive disadvantage compared with inland market towns because it reduces access to local markets and limits the town's hinterland to 180 degrees.
- Many coastal towns are characterised by poor transport infrastructure (both road and rail) which reinforces their peripherality and isolation, particularly off-season, from the local, regional and national economy. This hinders businesses that are dependent on efficient logistics to access local, national and international markets. Moreover, it can cause problems for efforts to promote tourism. This is illustrated by Bexhill-upon-Sea, home to the state of the art De La Warr Arts Centre. It takes longer to travel from London to Bexhill by train today than it did one hundred years ago; it is actually quicker to travel from neighbouring Hastings to Paris via the Eurostar than it is to London.
- Coastal towns often have ageing and uneven population structures as a result of their attractiveness as retirement venues and to middle aged in-migrants attracted to job opportunities, good climate, high quality of life and relatively low property prices.
- Job markets are characterised by low wages, low skills and seasonality concentrated in the service sector. They tend to have higher turnover rates and do not provide attractive long term prospects for young people. This has two key impacts: money flows into the local economy are relatively low; and the young and ambitious tend to leave to seek more diverse and better job opportunities.
- Job density represents the ratio of total jobs to working-age population and is a good proxy for the health of a local economy. National comparators underline the seriousness of the issue for some coastal towns, with Hastings' under-performing Gateshead at 0.78, Sheffield at 0.8, Wolverhampton at 0.79 and Burnley at 0.75.
- There are high rates of unemployment and economic inactivity in coast towns. Three quarters of the seaside resorts in one major study had unemployment rates higher than adjacent areas. In many coastal towns, for example, Hastings and Thanet, there are substantial concentrations of people who are economically inactive, have long-term sickness and are benefit claimants. One quarter of the working population in Hastings is economically inactive.
- Significant informal or black economies are often present in coastal economies. No significant studies exist of the size of the informal economy in coastal areas. However, economic analysts estimate that there is relatively large informal economy in the hotel, restaurant and entertainment sector with cash-in-hand and undeclared income playing a large role.
- Coastal towns have large stocks of poorly maintained private sector properties. The change in the tourist market has meant the wholesale closure of bed and breakfast outlets often clustered in streets adjacent to each other and the seafront. The properties often remain vacant or converted into unlicensed Housing in Multiple Occupation. With poor maintenance entire streets and neighbourhoods can take on the characteristics of slums, affecting property values and making the resorts less attractive to residents and visitors.
- Coastal towns have fragile small business sectors with start-up rates, as measured by VAT registration, typically well below the regional average and business density rates are low.
- Educational attainment is often particularly poor. In Hastings, the proportion of school leavers with GCSEs grades A to C in 2003–04 was 38.8%, 7.3% below the average for Neighbourhood Renewal Areas and 14.9% below the national average. In one of the Super Output Areas (SOAs) in Hollington Ward, only 12.5% achieved this standard.
- The impact of poor educational achievement is particularly acute in coastal town areas as it leaves the local population ill-equipped to compete for the best jobs against better qualified in-migrants attracted to the area by high quality of life and relatively low house prices. Instead they are "trapped" in the low skill/low wage/seasonal economy. Moreover, it serves to reinforce the low aspirations and inter-generational poverty and dependence.

## 1.2 Initiatives and approaches to tackle coastal town problems

### 1.2.1 Prioritise the support of indigenous businesses over inward investment

1.2.1.1 The traditional economic development approach has been to focus on attracting inward investment. However, in view of the distinctive characteristics of coastal economies outlined in section 1.1 of the report, specifically their peripherality and poor transport infrastructure and connectivity, focusing on large scale inward investment is not appropriate for many coastal towns and resorts.

1.2.1.2 This is underlined by the experience of Thanet which invested significant resources in an inward investment strategy in the 1990s. The strategy had to be abandoned due to lack of take-up. nef would recommend that the focus of a business-led regeneration strategy should be creating and retaining a resilient business base by incubating and growing indigenous business.

1.2.1.3 It is not proposed that all inward investment strategies should be shelved. The benefits of a number of large companies bringing investment and job opportunities to an area, and ensuring a balanced business ecology made up of small, medium and large companies, should not be discounted. However, inward investment should not be pursued at the expense of locally grown enterprise and more realistic assessments are needed of its likely success.

## 1.2.2 Ways to nurture indigenous business growth

1.2.2.1 Indigenous business growth can be achieved through two complementary strategies.

1.2.2.2 The first focuses on identifying and retaining key “anchor” businesses. This can be achieved by implementing appropriate after-care strategies to support local businesses, for example, by identifying follow-on accommodation and maximising their impacts through promoting local supply chain linkages, high local employment and high local purchasing.

1.2.2.3 The second way to nurture indigenous business growth is to focus support on the micro, small and medium-sized businesses. Research by nef conducted in four towns in the South East of England<sup>5</sup> quantifies for the first time the importance and value of key business sectors to the local economy. The research found that SMEs in the four coastal towns are contributing over £350 million per annum in direct local impacts. The impact of micro-businesses is particularly noteworthy but is not included in standard data on business as most micro-businesses have a turnover below the VAT threshold which is often the starting point for data collection. nef found that the combined impacts of all micro-businesses were over half of the total business contributions to the local economy in the four coastal towns.

1.2.2.4 Other sized firms are also important. The average economic impact on its local area of a medium sized enterprise can be up to £500,000, underlining the importance of retaining and nurturing these firms.

1.2.2.5 There are a significant range of barriers to growing businesses. Initiatives to nurture indigenous growth must focus on helping these key businesses to overcome local barriers. In its research on coastal towns, nef has identified the following barriers:

- Skills shortages and skills mismatches make recruitment particularly difficult. High value add businesses face particular difficulties as better opportunities and higher wages elsewhere lead to the out-migration of key groups, for example, graduates.
- The 180 degree hinterlands of coastal towns, proximities to “Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty” where no development is permitted (eg Worthing, Eastbourne and Hastings) and the low financial returns on developable land have led to a “market failure” in the provision of business premises, particularly starter and incubation units.
- Business trade is limited to local markets. Peripherality and poor transport force many businesses to focus on trading locally, limiting their growth and expansion prospects as they miss the opportunities available in the wider sub-regional markets.

1.2.2.6 One example of a successful indigenous growth strategy is Worthing First. The scheme is an effective business-led economic partnership with the involvement of all the main business support umbrella organisations. It is led by business and focuses on developing practical solutions to key local business priorities including workforce development and recruitment, barriers to business growth and physical infrastructure.

## 1.2.3 Integrating Physical and Social/Economic Regeneration

1.2.3.1 There has been significant and welcome investment during the last few years by English Heritage, RDAs and private sector partners to improve the physical infrastructure of coastal resorts. Improvements include seafront and retail developments, and iconic cultural and leisure institutions. However, these improvements need to be integrated into a strategic approach along with programmes that tackle social and economic regeneration.

1.2.3.2 In the absence of a clear vision and commitment to integration there is a danger that such physical regeneration will not bring opportunities to the most disadvantaged communities and may in fact “superserve” the less needy, thereby widening the gap between the “haves” and “have nots”. This is not inevitable. Avoiding such an outcome means addressing the deeply rooted problems of high rates of economic inactivity, poor educational outcomes and inadequate skills sets which are key barriers to disadvantaged local residents.

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<sup>68</sup> CLES submission to ODPM Select Committee on Coastal Towns.

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## 2. EXAMINATION OF THE CASE FOR SPECIFIC REGIONAL INITIATIVES AND CONSIDERATION OF WHETHER ENOUGH ATTENTION IS PAID TO REGIONAL DISPARITIES

### 2.1 *The case for specific regional initiatives*

2.1.1 There is a clear pattern of spatial disadvantage emerging in our regional economies as a result of the decline of coastal towns. In the South East there is an increasing gap in economic performance between the coastal strip and the rest of this fast growing economy; this contributes to unbalanced and unsustainable growth and huge regional disparities. For example, business density in Hastings is low at 21.3 businesses per 1,000 of population compared with the South East average of 40 and the national average of 30.

2.1.2 This unbalanced growth is unsustainable with overheating in some areas putting pressure on infrastructure, housing, and congestion while the coastal fringe faces low growth, few job opportunities and high levels of economic inactivity.

2.1.3 Disadvantage and deprivation is concentrated to an unprecedented extent along the South East's coastal strip. SEEDA reports that nine out of ten of the South East's most deprived wards are in coastal towns or cities. Moreover, half the population of Thanet and Hastings are living in areas of high deprivation. Particularly disturbing is evidence of deeply entrenched intergenerational poverty.

### 2.2 *The level of attention paid to regional disparities*

2.2.1 Unlike other declining areas, such as industrial steelmaking and coalmining towns, coastal towns' decline has been largely unrecognised for the best part of 40 years. However, as John Walton argues, trends of decline were identifiable by the end of the 1960s and actually began in the 1950s.<sup>6</sup> This accelerated through the 1960s and 1970s as package holidays, cheap airfares and "guaranteed sunshine" became more popular. In 1968, 75% of all holidays were taken in the United Kingdom. By 1999, the numbers had declined to 44% and the number of seaside visits had dropped to 22 million from 32 million between 1980 and 2005. However, this decline had little impact on policy priorities over this period.

2.2.2 Arguably, recent years have brought more focus to regional disparities and the existence of significant socio-economic challenges in the UK's coastal towns. However, the problems remain and the level of attention currently falls short of what is needed to redress years of neglect.

## 3. THE FUTURE SECURITY OF COASTAL TOWN FUNDING

### 3.1 *A brief history of coastal town regeneration and funding*

3.1.1 Coast town decline has been largely ignored when compared with other geographies of decline and deprivation as mentioned in section 2.2. The warning signs of economic decline and deprivation were slow to be recognised and coastal towns were overlooked as areas requiring regeneration funding.

3.1.2 Though there were isolated local initiatives, they were piecemeal, and until 1999 seaside towns were not eligible for European Union structural funding. This was a major disadvantage given such funding's availability to other areas facing similar levels of structural economic change.

3.1.3 Moreover, the British Resorts Association (BRA) argues that struggling resorts did not receive central government funding in the same way as the inner cities. This is borne out by the spending of the two major sources of government regeneration funding: the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF).

3.1.4 The BRA noted: "Regrettably access to SRB funding is severely limited. Few resorts currently qualify for assistance and where they do, tourism related issues often fail to be recognised as meeting the socio-economic criteria necessary to access funding".

3.1.5 Coastal resorts received less than 5% of funding in SRB Rounds 1 to 3 and less than 3% in Round 4. Finally, in 1998, the criteria were broadened with coastal towns specifically targeted and 44 bids were awarded to regenerate coastal towns.

3.1.6 The creation of the RDAs helped focus attention on coastal towns and some, for example SEEDA, have targeted declining coastal towns through their Regional Economic Strategy and Area Investment Frameworks. However, few resorts are included in the 88 areas that receive Neighbourhood Regeneration Funding. For example, Thanet which includes Margate, despite acute economic and social need, is not eligible.

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<sup>6</sup> *The British Seaside: Holidays and Resorts in the Twentieth Century*, JK Walton (2000).

### 3.2 *The security of future funding*

3.2.1 nef's broader work has demonstrated that regeneration funding entering disadvantaged areas often "leaks" out of an area as money goes to firms and organisations with insufficient local employment, supply chain linkages or business networks. Care should be taken to build local capacity and to ensure that money entering an area achieves maximum impact in creating and retaining wealth locally.

3.2.2 Part of successful regeneration is to encourage local enterprise in order to provide long-term benefits to the community through their local presence.

3.2.3 The time horizons for coastal town regeneration must be realistic and funding should respond to medium to long-term needs. Given the embedded nature of many of the issues outlined in 1.1.4 above, flexible funding is required with security for the long-term to encourage local partners to cooperate and act strategically.

## 4. THE SUCCESS OF RDAs AND OTHER BODIES IN SUPPORTING AND DEVELOPING THE ECONOMIES OF COASTAL TOWNS

4.1 As mentioned in 3.1.6, the creation of the RDAs helped focus attention on coastal towns and some, for example, the South East of England Development Agency, have targeted declining coastal towns through their Regional Economic Strategy and Area Investment Frameworks.

4.2 However, a key issue for RDAs is whether they have the correct skillsets and staff capacity to adopt an appropriate strategic and leadership role in this area of policy. Much of their focus has tended to be delivery oriented. The tendency has been for RDAs to expand and increase the number of programmes they deliver without the complementary support to ensure that all interventions are strategic and joined up. This is often not the choice of the RDAs themselves as they have been faced with legacy programmes and new delivery commitments.

4.3 There is also evidence of a "command and control" model from Whitehall, with any spending over £10 million needing to be approved, leading to long delays. There is also the need to seek approval of three year corporate plans and presentation according to strict DTI criteria. One RDA spent £500,000 on producing a corporate plan in DTI format, though it did not fully meet regional priorities or the needs of regional partners and a second report had to be produced for its own purposes.<sup>7</sup>

4.4 When looking at the local level, key players in coastal town regeneration should be local authorities in order to ensure that policy interventions aimed at business are joined up with other regeneration initiatives and related issues such as planning.

4.5 The record of Local Strategic Partnerships is patchy at co-ordinating and joining up regeneration. A recent government review of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal noted "Local Strategic Partnership performance is highly variable and among them there is insufficient strategy to meet the challenges of deprived areas." The report was also highly critical of LSPs' capacity to work with businesses on key issues.

4.6 Given the statutory and resource limitations of RDAs, much of the delivery of coastal town regeneration should be through sub-regional and local levels.<sup>8</sup>

4.7 Government Office has no clear role in delivering change in deprived areas. Government Office could have a clearer role in administering initiatives and managing change. Their regional role can cause confusion about who is the accountable body for creating a regional strategy and responsibilities are sometimes unclear.<sup>9</sup>

## 5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The Committee's inquiry is timely as the specific challenges facing coastal towns are becoming increasingly recognised and action is required. The Cabinet Office Strategy Unit, in its strategic audit of the UK in 2005, identified coastal towns as the only significant new areas of deprivation. There is a clear case for urgent access to tackle the causes of decline and deprivation in the UK's coastal towns.

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<sup>7</sup> House of Commons Public Account Committee, *Success in the Regions* (2004).

<sup>8</sup> DTI—Guidance to the RDAs on Regional Strategies.

<sup>9</sup> *Improving the prospects of people living in areas of multiple deprivation in England*, Cabinet Office/OPDM 2005.

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## Memorandum by Holyhead Forward (CT 15)

### 1. BACKGROUND

Holyhead Forward is a ten year regeneration strategy for the town of Holyhead in North Wales, launched in 2003. The Holyhead Forward Board is responsible for monitoring the strategy and its implementation, and for overseeing the work of its staff and project groups. The Holyhead Forward strategy was recently highlighted as an example of good practice in the Wales Audit Office review of regeneration in Wales. It is clear that Holyhead has much in common with many other port and seaside towns around the UK coast, and that there are issues affecting the regeneration of Holyhead that will be influenced by UK government policies and decisions.

### 2. HOLYHEAD IN BRIEF

2.1 Holyhead is the largest town in the county of Anglesey, and is the most important passenger ferry port on the west coast of Britain. The town has long been associated with high unemployment, social, and environmental problems. It has been subject to several special regeneration initiatives in recent decades, including the following:

#### *Holyhead Joint Venture (1992–96)*

- regeneration programme involving the secondment of five staff who were mainly involved in the delivery of a range of physical improvements.

#### *Holyhead Renewal Area (1991–2001)*

- 10-year housing improvement programme funded by Welsh Office/WAG via the local authority, resulting in major stock improvement.

#### *Holyhead Forward (2003–ongoing)*

- ten year widely-based regeneration strategy with Board, and seconded staff of two involved in co-ordination, project development, and funding bids.

#### *Communities First (2003–ongoing)*

- four wards qualifying under WAG “bottom-up” community regeneration programme—ward partnerships are in place with staff & activity funds.

2.2 The largest employers in Holyhead are: Holyhead Port, Anglesey Aluminium, Holyhead Town Centre (small retailers), Eaton (electrical assembly), and Holyhead Boatyard. The Hedstrom toy manufacturer recently closed, with operations being transferred to China. Anglesey Aluminium is one of the largest smelting works in the UK, and has a power agreement with the Wylfa Nuclear Power station. The future of both are currently subject to political debate.

2.3 Tourism and leisure are identified as major economic opportunity areas for Holyhead, capitalising on its large sheltered harbour, its currently under-utilised promenade and waterfront, and its attractive coastal surroundings. The tourism season in Holyhead is currently very short, and year-round income is needed.

### 3. HOLYHEAD PORT

3.1 Holyhead is a major gateway between the UK and Ireland, having several daily ferry services to Dublin (three ferries) and Dun-Laoghaire (one ferry). A total of some 2.3 million people-movements are recorded through the port each year. Ferry usage is very seasonal. The withdrawal of duty-free allowances resulted in a significant fall in the number of foot passengers. The growth of budget flights has also clearly impacted on foot passenger numbers. The number of Irish people shopping in Holyhead due to cheaper UK prices for various goods was once high, but this today is no longer as significant.

3.2 The current layout of the port and town means that it is not easy or convenient for ferry users to access the town centre or the town’s seafront, and various initiatives are underway or planned to change this, with a view to increasing the local economic benefits from the large flow of people through the port. This includes the construction of a landmark footbridge linking the ferry terminal with the town centre, due to open during 2006.

3.3 The port and harbour are also used for other economic activities, including commercial fishing, yachting, bulky freight, and a few cruise ship calls. A new marina is being developed, and there are now several proposals for waterfront apartments. The harbour includes many historic structures and buildings.

3.4 The port and harbour are owned by Stena Ports Ltd, a private company in Swedish ownership. Ferries are operated by both Stena and Irish Ferries. Stena are represented on the Holyhead Forward board, and they are involved as partners in several regeneration initiatives.

#### 4. AN INITIATIVE FOR PORT TOWNS?

4.1 Holyhead Forward requests that consideration and recognition is given to the situation and needs of the UK's port towns. Holyhead Forward has been involved in "Action for Market Towns", but there is no comparable body for Port Towns. Potential ideas for further consideration by the Committee could perhaps include:

- the commissioning of research into Port Towns;
  - the funding of a UK Port Towns conference; and
  - the establishment of a Port Towns network.
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### **Memorandum by the Market & Coastal Towns Association (MCTA) (CT 16)**

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This submission has been drafted in response to the call for information regarding the New Inquiry into Coastal Towns from the ODPM.

It aims:

- To describe what the Association does.
- To put the case for special initiatives to tackle the needs of Coastal Towns.
- To look at the work ODPM is doing to address the social, housing and environmental problems coastal towns face and to evaluate whether it is effective, well focussed or adequately funded.
- To assess the effectiveness of ODPM's liaison with other departments, in key areas such as employment, migration and social housing, and cooperation with Local Authorities.
- To consider the security of future funding for regeneration and supporting coastal towns.
- To evaluate the success of the RDAs and other bodies in supporting and developing the economies of coastal towns.

1.2 This response will be developed from the Association's experiences and perspective.

#### 2. THE ASSOCIATION

2.1 The Market & Coastal Towns Association is funded by the South West England Regional Development Agency and English Heritage to deliver a programme of capacity building and community planning with the aim of attracting investment and improving services in the region's Market and Coastal Towns.

2.2 The main activities that the Association promotes are:

- Provide funding, staff resources and support to the towns undertaking the Community Strategic Planning process (CSP). (N.b. It should be noted that this process is not the statutory community planning process led by Local Authorities. The Association's process is very specifically targeted at the town and its hinterland and tends to elicit town-specific issues and problems while the statutory community planning process tends to operate at a county or district level in a more generic manner. We are undertaking a great deal of work to bring these systems together as they seem entirely complementary. The Association offers genuine and ongoing community engagement and ownership, site-specific issues and solutions and a body for ongoing dialogue and implementation while the LSP offers a strategic level view and service delivery in key areas.)
- Ensure and maintain the quality of the CSP process through additional secondary activities.
- Promote the value of the town partnerships and the planning process to the statutory community planning and statutory planning agencies and bodies.
- Identify training needs for capacity building in the communities and work with partners to deliver targeted training programmes.
- Establish the Network and develop the Association.
- Attract resources for the Association and towns.

2.3 This agenda links closely to the DEFRA Modernising Rural Delivery agenda and has benefited from the support that DEFRA has devolved to the Regional Development Agencies.

2.4 The overall aim of the initiative is to develop and regenerate a significant number of Market and Coastal towns in the region so that they fulfil their role as service and employment centres.

2.5 It should be noted that we, as the Association, target our resources on those settlements that have populations of up to 25,000 people and so do not support the communities in the larger centres such as Bournemouth, Poole and Plymouth.

2.6 It should also be noted that the South West was running this regional initiative prior to the launch of the national “Market Towns Programme” by the Countryside Agency. This coming together of a national and regional programme has yielded several anecdotal lessons:

2.7 Firstly, that the inclusion of “Coastal” in the thinking of the South West Programme (Market and Coastal Towns Association) has highlighted the importance of both market and coastal towns as settlements in the south west. The approach promoted by the Association can address the “coastal” element of the town’s characteristics.

2.8 Secondly, trying to combine a national and regional programme retrospectively is extremely difficult for all concerned. It creates confusion and duplication. It is essential that any moves from a national level are passed through to regional level agencies to ensure a sensible dovetailing of effort. It is also essential that lessons from the regional and local level are taken on board prior to the creation of any national level initiative and we would advocate that, as the only regional initiative that has focussed on “coastal” towns, we would play a significant role in that process.

2.9 Thirdly, the engagement and empowerment of the community in programmes to address local issues is essential.

### 3. THE CASE FOR SPECIAL INITIATIVES TO TACKLE THE NEEDS OF COASTAL TOWNS

3.1 In the South West region, there are a significant number of both Market and Coastal towns: in fact over 200 have been identified in the class up to and including a population of 25,000.

3.2 Table 3.1 below shows the towns in the South West region that fall into the classification of “coastal” and fit within the population limits set by the initiative.

3.3 Table 3.1

<i>Town</i>	<i>Town</i>
Lydney*	Saltash*
Clevedon	Torpoint*
Portishead	Kingsbridge*
Burnham on Sea*	Dartmouth*
Highbridge*	Brixham
Minehead*	Teignmouth*
Lynton & Lynmouth*	Totnes*
Ilfracombe*	Kingsteignton
Braunton	Dawlish*
Barnstaple	Exmouth
Bude	Budleigh Salterton
Wadebridge	Sidmouth
St Blazey	Seaton
St Ives*	Bridport*
Hayle*	Lyme Regis*
Looe*	Swanage*
Penzance*	Wareham
Falmouth	
Helston*	

\* Towns supported by MCTI to date.

3.4 There are a number of issues that impact upon these settlements that are predominately related to their location in mainly rural areas; there are however also specific coastal trends and characteristics.

3.5 The obvious characteristic is that their location makes the towns far more susceptible to the effects of flooding (especially along the estuaries) and storms. This is combined with concerns over global warming and associated rises in sea level (although the Somerset Levels also share this vulnerability).

3.6 The coastal environment of the South West is also considered to be of high quality, with 60% of the UK’s Heritage Coastline being in the South West and work being undertaken to develop the “Jurassic Coast” World Heritage Site.

3.7 With regards to house prices, at least at a local authority level, there is no clear relationship between house prices and coastal location: in 2004 both the highest (£288,000 in the Isles of Scilly) and lowest (£121,000 in Plymouth) median prices were found in coastal locations (see Annexe 1). However, it is striking

that in general the highest price rises have tended to be on the coast. The highest %age increase in median price between 1996 and 2004 was Penwith, and all 17 of the highest increases were in coastal districts, especially in the west of the region. This is consistent with the attractiveness of such areas for in-migrants, particularly those close to retirement, and can only exacerbate problems of housing affordability for those on low incomes in these areas.

3.8 The South West has the most elderly age structure of any English region, and one explanation of this is the long coastline—an examination of age structure in England shows that coastal areas tend to have a higher proportion of elderly or retired people than inland. This is also evident at a settlement level.

3.9 It is generally the case that average<sup>10</sup> personal income falls from a peak in the forties and fifties to a lower but steady level in retirement. Whilst this might tend to suggest (*ceteris paribus*) lower incomes in coastal towns, it needs to be borne in mind that older people may have wealth that is not apparent in income statistics. The relationship between ageing and welfare is complex and beyond the scope of this paper. The older age structure is, of course, very consistent with the high proportions of coastal residents in the social care sector.

3.10 Excluding the Principle Urban Areas (PUAs), the pattern of employment is fairly consistent between inland and coastal towns. The area where the clearest distinctions lie is in the lower proportion of manufacturing employment in the coastal towns and the higher proportion of hotel and catering work and health and social work. In the smaller sectors the coastal towns (excluding PUAs) show a smaller proportion of financial workers, and whilst fishing is an almost exclusively coastal occupation it is a very small sector: the highest proportion is in Padstow, but even there is only 2.5%.

3.11 Social care and hotels and catering tend to have relatively low wages, and so contribute to low productivity and incomes in coastal towns. It might also be expected that coastal areas have a higher proportion of smaller businesses (bed and breakfast, catering etc), but published figures for size by number of employees suggest that is characteristic of rural areas rather than the coast. However, that is only based on those businesses registered for VAT and not only are the smallest businesses not registered but anecdotal evidence, at least, shows that some small tourist businesses may intentionally remain below the VAT threshold.

3.12 Unsurprisingly there is a degree of correspondence between the employment by industry and employment by occupation, with an under representation of “plant and machine operatives” reflecting the smaller proportion of manufacturing, and the high representation of personal and customer services reflecting the care and tourism sectors. It might be thought that coastal locations might be attractive to managers and professionals, even if they were to commute inland for work. However, it is evident that the coastal towns have smaller proportions in these occupational groups. Thus, overall, coastal settlements appear to have lower proportions in the highest income occupations, and higher in the lowest income occupations when compared to inland settlements.

3.13 Clearly much of the character of employment on the coast is affected by tourism, and this tends to be seasonal in nature. It is therefore likely that the number of jobs available will also vary seasonally. No reliable estimates of seasonal employment exist, but levels of claimant count can be used as a proxy. In this case the district/unitary authority geography used as claimant count is not readily available at settlement level. It should be noted that PUAs are not excluded in this analysis, so the coastal districts include, for instance, Gloucester and Bristol, where the impact of coastal tourism is slight.

3.14 The pattern of unemployment—falling in the late 80s, rising to a peak in 1993 and declining steadily thereafter—is the same for coastal and inland districts, but there is a striking seasonality for coastal areas, with January unemployment levels consistently higher than July. This means that indicators of need may not reflect “average” conditions on the coast, but more significantly that business and services in coastal towns face a distinct problem of seasonality. This variation is evident at a district level, but it seems likely that analysis at the settlement level would reveal an even greater disparity between summer and winter for coastal towns.

3.15 In summary a statistical analysis shows the towns on the coast do have nuances that highlight “coastal” characteristics. By their nature, they tend to be attractive both to holiday makers for visiting and to retired people for living in. This leads to a disproportionate presence of employment in the care and tourism sectors. These sectors tend to have relatively low wages and, as measured, low economic productivity. The coastal location itself may also depress productivity. The population tends to be elderly and so also tends to have low income, but, significantly, some sections of the elderly population may also be wealthy in capital terms. Housing affordability is therefore often a particular issue, and one of great significance in the south east of the region. Tourism is often seasonal, masking and exacerbating levels of deprivation.

<sup>10</sup> This is the pattern at the aggregate level: for individuals there is normally a distinct fall at retirement.

3.16 The Market and Coastal Towns Association's unique approach to empowering communities to define their own needs, opportunities and solutions allows for these specifically "coastal" nuances to be picked up and subsequently addressed. The main issues affecting the way that the initiative is delivered relate to attracting additional investment from sources other than SWRDA and EH (who have already committed substantial sums) in order to bring additional towns into the programme.

3.17 Other issues relate to ensuring that policy is designed to help address issues such as affordable housing to allow local solutions to be implemented.

#### 4. TO LOOK AT THE WORK ODPM IS DOING TO ADDRESS THE SOCIAL, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS COASTAL TOWNS FACE AND TO EVALUATE WHETHER IT IS EFFECTIVE, WELL FOCUSED OR ADEQUATELY FUNDED AND TO ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ODPM'S LIAISON WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS, IN KEY AREAS SUCH AS EMPLOYMENT, MIGRATION, AND SOCIAL HOUSING AND CO-OPERATION WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES

4.1 Among the towns that the Association is currently involved with, the main focus of activity via the ODPM is around the town of Ilfracombe. This is a Neighbourhood Management Programme that has dovetailed successfully with the Initiative in the town.

4.2 While the ODPM has an obvious and high profile role in the regeneration of many of the larger coastal towns, within the smaller towns that the Association deals with this role is less prominent, with DEFRA taking the lead on policy, and delivery coming via the RDA amongst others. The Association does however look to many ODPM activities to offer good practice in this area.

4.3 The Initiative and the Association do benefit from the support of the DTI and DEFRA via the SWRDA. There is also a growing relationship on the ground with English Heritage and the various lottery distributors from DCMS.

4.4 This Association is committed to developing strong links with other Government Agencies for the benefit of the towns whether at a national, regional or local level.

4.5 In addition this Association is also committed to working on an increasingly collaborative basis with Local Authorities and Local Strategic Partnerships to inform and work with the Statutory Community Planning process and the new Local Development Frameworks.

4.6 At a town level schemes are being developed to address the issues of (for example) housing supply and affordability, work with migrant workers (Polish) and deal with climate change; specifically some of our communities are interested in developing renewable energy projects. It is too early in these schemes' development to assess impact but they do reflect the issues that concern our towns.

#### 5. TO CONSIDER THE SECURITY OF FUTURE FUNDING FOR REGENERATING AND SUPPORTING COASTAL TOWNS AND TO EVALUATE THE SUCCESS OF THE RDAs AND OTHER BODIES IN SUPPORTING AND THE DEVELOPING THE ECONOMIES OF COASTAL TOWNS

5.1 The Association works with communities to prepare plans and projects to attract investment. Much of this comes from the public sector to regenerate the towns and establish an economic base alongside a general sustainable community agenda. This includes capacity building and local ownership.

5.2 The SWRDA supports the Association in our work directly and is a major investor in the towns' projects. Support is available for a range of projects; however there is a persistent issue around ongoing support for the community groups to drive the process forward beyond the initial planning stage.

5.3 The Association is attempting to draw together good practice on sustaining community groups; a degree of ongoing financial support, however, should it be available, would help maintain cohesion and lever in other funding for the groups.

#### 6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The presence of the Association and the support provided through DEFRA and the SWRDA present a unique opportunity to tie together a range of departmental and organisational initiatives in the South West Coastal towns to facilitate change in the context of the Sustainable Communities agenda.

6.2 As so many organisations are supporting the initiative including GOSW, SWRDA, the combined Lottery Distributors, the LGA, the Regional Assembly, South West Acre Network (Rural Community Councils), the Development Trust Association, English Heritage, Regional Chambers and the communities themselves, we would recommend that future initiatives, focussed on developing capacity and community-based programmes in towns that fit the Association's criteria, are funnelled via the Association and that other types of investment take account of the Association's work.

6.3 We would argue that affordable housing and the risks associated with the natural and built environment are important issues that need to be tackled in a full Sustainable Communities agenda.

## Memorandum by the Southport Partnership (CT 17)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Southport Partnership has been an integral part of the regeneration of the resort of Southport for over eight years. It is the conduit through which some £80 million of investment in Southport has been supported. It has had direct responsibility for both Regional Development Agency monies and for ERDF monies via its current Action Plan.

The Partnership has a small executive team managed by a 15 person Board consisting of five community representatives, five private sector stakeholders and five public sector representatives.

Because the Partnership originally was initially focused on social and economic improvements using SRB funding and is now involved with major public realm schemes using ERDF and NWDA monies it has developed a very sophisticated understanding of the inter relationships between all the various elements needed to make a coastal town more successful and to engender a long term sustainable improvement in investment and growth.

### 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ten years ago Southport was an almost typical example of a coastal town in long, slow, shabby and genteel decline. Lack of investment and maintenance had damaged private sector confidence and the town was looking tired. It had lost competitive advantage.

Over the last 10 years this situation has been turned around. Briefly, a new sea wall unlocked the investment potential of our seafront, we renovated the pier, built a new bridge, brought in business and community support schemes and are continuing to improve our town through an Action Plan which included major public realm improvements and the improvements to our conference and hotel offers.

We have maximised the opportunities given to us by Objective One and the Government Office for the North West and have matched these monies wherever possible with North West Development Agency resources and those of Sefton Council, which has led to a significant boost in private sector confidence and investment.

The key concerns now facing the coastal town of Southport are:

- Encouraging and maintaining private sector confidence and investment.
- Having a skilled work force & ensuring that educational attainment is driven to at least standard UK levels.
- Affordable housing and accommodation, ensuring that we are a sustainable community.
- Increasing the scale of cultural investment.
- Integrating matters of health and human well-being more effectively into overall strategies.
- Bringing in sufficiently high service standards to the tourism sector which has a tradition of being dominated by the small owner/manager scale of business.
- Understanding the impact of migrant workers on our economy and community relations.
- Recognise that the leisure/tourist sector has an enormous (and growing) impact on GDP and as such needs more targeted political support.

There is a huge library of strategies and studies to further the statements made in this submission but we have decided to aim for readability and to focus on the key issues rather than including tables and data.

### 3. PRIVATE SECTOR CONFIDENCE AND INVESTMENT

Coastal towns with problems are too easily characterised as resorts with ageing stocks of hotels, ageing populations and low levels of investment. They will only attract new investment when they can demonstrate to the private sector that there are good returns for any investment they make (concomitant with risk).

Coastal towns are generally denied access to major sectors of the economy—Southport has seen a significant decline in manufacturing, its lack of Motorway access removes it from the warehousing/logistics sector. Southport is by its very nature, faced with both natural barriers and opportunities. It was built as a private sector speculation to service the cities of Manchester and Liverpool and all the cotton and mining towns of Lancashire. This gives it an enormous catchment population of around 10 million within a two hour drive-time.

However if there are structural barriers to our access to the 20th century's industries there are real reasons for optimism in the 21st. Coastal towns can be very pleasant places to live and work. New IT based industries can be located anywhere, the information highway is of equal importance to the motorway.

Resort towns can also take advantage of the changing holiday market—just as they lost out to the package holiday boom they can now gain ground in the second and third holiday market (the week away or long week-end break). This market is steadily growing. Southport hotel rack rates are now at a premium on a week-end rather than during the Monday to Friday period. This reflects the lack of commercial travelling that now is drawn to Southport.

The retail sector has seen changes. Southport's second biggest trading day is now Sunday—again this is contrary to the patterns expected in more central urban areas.

Hotel stock and services are generally poor and reflect the decades of under investment. Southport is not alone in this, Blackpool being an even bigger example. Customers now expect better standards in both the physical state of their hotels and the quality of service. The opportunity is opening up for good quality 3 and 4 star hotels to be built and they will have first call on the customers. The commercial traveller type client is, in Southport's case, being replaced by the visitor and the conference delegate.

This change will lead to the demise of a significant number of the small hotels in the town over the next 20 years—bringing with it a (admittedly worst case) scenario of having a town centre with a large number of failed hotels converted into sub-standard Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's).

Coastal towns future's lie in tourism investment, workforce and management skills and their promotion as a great place to live and work (as opposed to just visit). In addition they need to attract investment from the new IT and Web based industries on the basis that the lifestyle offered by a coastal town is a viable alternative to a more urban centres such as the cities of Liverpool and Manchester.

Southport has seen, through the public sector investment programmes, a return of private sector confidence with major investments beginning to be made without public sector grants. The fragility or otherwise of this confidence is not yet understood and there is still a substantial need for ongoing funding in areas where the private sector is reluctant or unable to engage eg investment in cultural assets and in key public spaces such as Lord Street “the finest shopping boulevard in the UK”.

#### 4. A SKILLED WORKFORCE

Coastal towns are traditionally seen as visitor destinations with a plethora of jobs in the leisure/retail/caring sectors. These are immediately characterised as low paid and unchallenging with little scope for personal development and as such do not attract the best talent.

There is a failure of substantial parts of these industries to engage in the long term process of training and improvement of staff skills (again a reflection of the negative attitude many owner-managed businesses have towards training).

Southport has a strategy called the “Classic Resort”. In developing the strategy exemplars have been given. Interestingly, the most potent comparisons are not with UK coastal towns but with the classic resort towns in Europe, eg Deauville, Le Touquet, Baden Baden.

Looking at these towns and their workforces reinforces the view that they [our European cousins] take these sectors far more seriously, they see employment in the service sector as a real profession and employers see real value and returns in training staff to high standards.

There is a strong belief that to develop our workforce of the future we need to be promoting the careers and opportunities open in our local economy at an earlier stage in the education cycle. Like all such issues we cannot promote a positive attitude unless the opportunities presented are real. This then turns full circle back to the attitude of the service sector employers to training and staff development.

#### 5. MIGRANT WORKERS

In Southport over 600 new jobs have been created (with more to come) over the last eight years in the leisure/retail sectors. We (the Southport Partnership) were very concerned that, in a period of structural full employment, we would be unable to fill the vacancies. We investigated options for enabling areas like Bootle with its high levels of unemployment accessing the new jobs to little effect.

The private sector has solved the problem by the employment of migrant workers. The migrants have been successful in getting these jobs because they are perceived as being better motivated and effective employees than those available in the workless resident pool in Southport.

This means that current workless residents have been presented with an additional barrier to employment and will therefore need more training than previously to compete in the market.

Job Centre + have reported that they have seen over 400 jobs “disappear” from their books—they believe this is because employers are now directly hiring migrant workers.

We are currently engaged with Sefton MBC in carrying out a detailed study of the impact of migrant workers on Sefton and on Southport in particular. This piece of work will be completed in the first half of 2006.

## 6. HOUSING AND ACCOMMODATION

Coastal towns are often (and it is certainly the case in Southport) a mix of expensive private sector houses, often occupied by retirees, a mix of mid range private ownership properties, flats, and HMO's.

Southport is a housing "hot spot". Affordable housing for our workforce is becoming more and more limited, particularly for people engaged in our traditional sectors.

Southport has only a small stock of public sector housing which means that a lot of private sector housing is subject to market forces. The influx of migrant workers has meant that the private sector can obtain higher than previous income levels which impacts on the amount of affordable rental properties available to local residents.

In the longer term we face the combined problems of a lack of affordable housing for our workforce and a (probably shorter term) dependency on migrant labour, yet we need to sustain both economic growth and a cohesive community

The Southport Housing Strategy Forum (made up of the LA, 7 Housing Associations and other engaged bodies, including the Partnership) is carrying out detailed research and planning further submissions to the Housing Corporation targeted at bringing resources to bear on this problem.

## 7. HEALTH MATTERS

Southport has a larger proportion of people aged 45 and over than for England as a whole. The increasing numbers of older members of the community will mean a rising prevalence of long-term conditions such as heart disease and dementia and health and social services need to take this into account.

The projected decrease in people of working age is critical in terms of providing community support and the economic well-being of the area. In 2003 there are 58 dependents for every 100 people of working age. This is projected to change to 76 dependents for every 100 potentially economically active people in 2028.

Employment and the type and quality of the work has a significant impact on long term health needs. If we can shift the status and remuneration levels in the resort's jobs we will see a significant reduction in health problems.

The resort attracts seasonal and migrant workers with their own health and social needs and we need to engage with these hard-to-reach groups in order to maintain a proper balance between health needs and resources.

In coastal towns there is an additional requirement on health resources. For example, Southport has a population of circa 90,000. but has over 6 million visitors per year and can have hundreds of thousands of visitors for one-off events and festivals. There is a need to take this into account when resourcing coastal resort towns. The walk-in centres so familiar from holidays to the Med are needed in towns such as Southport.

## 8. GEOGRAPHY

Southport, like most coastal towns, are destinations at the end of the line. They rarely benefit from passing through traffic and as such can be poorly served by rail and road routes.

Infrastructure improvements are needed to make them easily reachable for the short holiday/day visitor market. A direct and efficient train link from the catchment areas to the coastal resort will re-open the market.

## 9. RETAIL

The growth of shopping malls of enormous scale and with highly convenient access are having a deleterious effect on the retail offer in Southport. We are steadily slipping down the retail league tables in terms of rental rates and in terms of the breadth of retail offer.

Southport has always prided itself on the range of quality independent retailers—we are not "any cloned high street, anywhere". One of the legacies of this is that our retail units are by and large too small to interest major chain stores. There is a real need to implement a retail strategy that changes this situation.

Southport has a fine retail Boulevard—Lord Street, with canopied shops along one side of its tree lined one mile length and fine gardens on the other. However it needs to be competitive with other retail centres to maintain its offer of both being a seaside resort destination and a quality retail centre.

There needs to be put in place a clear strategy of encouraging the investment by quality brands and chains whilst balancing this with the specialist shops that separate our offer from the norm.

## 10. HERITAGE AND CULTURE

Like most coastal towns Southport has inherited some significant (and in their day expensive and leading edge) buildings and open spaces, such as civic buildings, parks and marine lakes.

Whilst it has proved relatively straightforward to approach funding agencies for some heritage sites it can be highly problematic for others. In Southport's case we have successfully pursued Heritage Lottery and European funds for some improvements but where a key asset falls outside the targets set either by the EU or the UK government then severe problems arise. In Southport's case we are bringing about significant regeneration improvements to our seafront but they surround a 48 hectare lake (the largest man made marine lake in the UK) which is in dire need of improvement. It is silted, unkempt in many places and no longer the asset it was when our Victorian forbearers developed it for the town.

Because the outputs do not fit those required by either ERDF or the NWDA we cannot access sufficient funds to do the necessary remedial works. Marine Lakes and sea fronts with promenades, piers and sea walls are what make UK coastal towns different, to build some of these assets from new would cost astronomical sums but to bring the existing structures up to an acceptable condition is entirely feasible.

Equally, there are civic buildings which house significant cultural assets, libraries, museums, art galleries and theatres. Given the geography of coastal towns they are often isolated from regional cultural centres. In Southport's case one has to go to the cities of Preston, Manchester or Liverpool to enjoy the best cultural offers. However, cultural assets serve not only their local communities but also the visitor. All too often they are the missing piece in the offer of coastal towns—and one only has to look at the Tate at St Ives to see the impact such assets can have on a coastal town.

Southport's art gallery, theatre and library are all in desperate need of remodelling, refurbishing and development. The local Council has stoically maintained its acquisitions budget throughout the years of cut-backs, but it faces real problems over the quality, access to and content of its exhibition and performance spaces.

## 11. WHAT WORKS AND WHAT DOESN'T

### 11.1 *Take a long term view*

In Southport we have successfully addressed some of the key social issues, formalising community and voluntary sector engagement, increasing community engagement in decision making whilst substantially lacking progress in other areas, eg the quality and availability of private sector housing. It is interesting to note that in 1895 it was reported that affordable housing was a problem for the local workers—as it still is today.

### 11.2 *Building confidence*

The Objective One programme for Merseyside gave us a one-off chance to invest public monies in the pursuit of private sector investor confidence. We have always understood that sustainability was the key to maximising the benefits on offer from the ERDF and ESF up to 2008. Regeneration works most effectively when the investment is made in towns and communities where a foundation of entrepreneurial skills already exist.

The use of public monies to engender a sea-change in private sector investor confidence has been a considerable success. The very visible physical improvements have led to a significant increase in private sector investment, with new shopping parks, apartments, leisure offers and hotels all either being built or demonstrating a serious level of commitment at the time of writing.

However, it has to be noted that Southport is an entrepreneurial town—it has a clear understanding that it is betting its future largely on the visitor/tourist segment of the economy, which is sensible since this is the segment of the economy it has the most experience of

### 11.3 *Partnership Working*

Real and effective partnership working is one of the cornerstones of our success. Influential members of the community, public and private sectors—real stakeholders in the town's future—can add value to the process by bringing their skills and experiences to bear on dealing with both the opportunities and the problems that regenerating a coastal town throws up.

The Southport Partnership has been in existence for over eight years through successive regeneration programmes and this long term stability has paid dividends in enabling the Board to keep a whole range of measures and interventions on target.

The Partnership has always used other agencies to deliver its programmes—thus avoiding a bloated executive team and making transition from programme to programme easier and (critically) easier to fund.

Good partnership working engenders itself in others, Local Authority departments have readily developed a much closer liaison with each other to work at delivering projects on a team basis—often across traditional internal barriers.

## 12. WHAT DOESN'T WORK

### 12.1 *Need for transparency in funding*

Lack of clarity from Regional Development Agencies as far as their investment commitments are concerned. To change the future path of a town takes time and money. In our experience it is clear that a 10–15 year strategy is the minimum needed to bring real change. Whilst it is impossible for any RDA to make a commitment over that long a term, a clearly funded plan of investment for the first five years of the strategy would enable towns to plan effectively.

This investment commitment must be made transparently—lets have the pain up front and work with what we know we will get rather than a “jam tomorrow” approach.

## AND FINALLY

This submission to the Coastal Towns Inquiry has been made by the Southport Partnership because we believe our extensive (and successful) experience in playing our part in revitalising Southport may be of use to the ODPM in its deliberations.

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### **Memorandum by Skegness Town Council (CT 18)**

1.1 Skegness Town Council welcomes the opportunity that the Committee is taking to examine the special needs of coastal towns.

1.2 Skegness Town Council has embraced the ethos set out in the Government White Paper—“Our Countryside the Future” which whilst not aimed at Coastal Towns/Parishes gave a way for Town/Parish councils to become more active in their communities.

1.3 Skegness Town Council was the first Town Council in Lincolnshire to achieve Quality Status.

1.4 Skegness has a population of 18,910 (2001 Census) and is divided into four wards. Three of which are high on the indices of deprivation.

1.5 Added to this is the poor level of public service given by the principal authorities.

1.6 The reports published by the Audit commission on the performance of public services have been:

(a)	Lincolnshire County Council	Poor
(b)	East Lindsey District Council	Poor
(c)	Lincolnshire Police	Poor
(d)	Lincolnshire Fire & Rescue	Poor
(e)	Lincolnshire Ambulance Service	Poor

1.7 In addition East Lincolnshire Primary Care Trust is forecasting a budget deficit in excess of £20 million pounds.

1.8 The Town Council is greatly concerned about the continuing level of poor services in an area that is recognised as deprived.

1.9 The temporary closure by the Primary Care Trust of hospital wards to achieve small savings impacts most on those not able to travel or afford the cost of travel (The elderly and infirm).

## 2. SOCIAL

2.1 The coastal area has significant social problems.

2.2 The economic activity rate in the area is 54% compared to 66% in Lincolnshire reflecting the aging population.

2.3 Seasonality of employment is illustrated by the 100% increase in unemployment between August 2004 and January 2005 compared to almost no change in Great Britain.

2.4 Over 40% of employment within the coastal area is in part time jobs compared to 32% nationally.

2.5 50% of residents in the area have no qualifications compared with 29% in the region.

2.6 Only 13% of residents in the area are qualified to NVQ level 3 or above compared to 48% nationally and just 8% to NVQ 4/5 compared to 28% nationally.

2.7 Almost 30% of residents class themselves as having a limiting long term illness compared to 19% in the country.

2.8 Many of the people moving into the area also have a limiting long term illness.

2.9 The number of persons in receipt of benefits works against economic sustainability in the area.

2.10 Migration of retired and elderly people due to the flat terrain places severe demands on housing social services and health services with no commensurate increase in funding for the services under pressure.

2.11 Failure of central Government to recognise that coastal issues are different from urban or rural areas and to acknowledge the high costs of service delivery, and seasonal economic and population variances.

### 3. HOUSING

3.1 The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Policy on social housing is effective in large urban areas but cannot and does not work in small coastal towns.

3.2 Due to the Environment Agency, despite the spend of several million pounds on flood defences, classifying area as a flood risk, future large scale investment and development has been blighted.

3.3 Small and piecemeal development of under 10 houses does not address the need for social housing.

3.4 This leads to insufficient social housing, national average 25% of stock, East Lindsey District Council area 10% of stock.

3.5 Most residents due to the low wage, seasonal type of employment cannot afford to get on the housing ladder.

3.6 High dependency on the provision of private sector rented accommodation with insecurity of tenure.

3.7 Variable quality of private rented housing stock available leading to areas of localised deprivation.

3.8 No economic growth due to insufficient affordable housing.

### 4. EMPLOYMENT

4.1 On average for every two people aged 18 to 24 who move out of the area three people aged over 60 move in.

4.2 Which gives a higher population of retirement age and over and a lower population of working age.

4.3 Skegness is heavily reliant on tourism as the main employment.

4.4 Tourism is a low wage and in the main low skill employment.

4.5 Recruitment of strong candidates for any role near the coast is very difficult and particularly so in public service roles ie Teachers, Doctors, Dentists etc. The perceived remoteness of the area, social isolation for families and seasonality combine to mean that coastal positions receive only a fraction of the number of applicants for jobs compared with urban area.

4.6 Lack of employment opportunities lead to a lack of expectations in schools. High academic achievers go to higher education and leave to live where they can fulfil their potential.

4.7 There are limited sectors for people to work in and, with the exception of tourism, little succession or progression opportunities for ambitious individuals.

4.8 The seaside holiday trade in its wider concept is not recognised as a bone fide industry. This should be addressed.

### 5. REGIONAL INITIATIVES/DISPARITIES ETC

5.1 Disparity of financial distribution for regeneration is evident in the East Midlands area, with most regeneration finance being directed to city, former industrial areas and ex coal towns with very little directed at coastal towns whose indices of deprivation are, in certain areas, on par with or greater than those city and ex coal towns.

5.2 There is a need to combat the peripherality of the coastal area due to poor road and rail infrastructure leading to accessibility problems.

5.3 It is considered that there is a definitive case for specific regional initiatives for coastal areas which in the past has been disadvantaged by regeneration finance being directed elsewhere.

### 6. RDA'S AND OTHER BODIES

6.1 The efforts and success for RDA and other bodies has been less than satisfactory as most appear to concentrate on areas where they are based.

6.2 It is difficult to identify where or how the East Midlands Development Agency has in a major way supported or developed the economy of Skegness. It has however been involved in small albeit welcome developments.

6.3 Under SRB 5 Skegness and other coastal towns bid for £1.8 million we were awarded £1.5 million against the multi millions awarded for city, former industrial areas and ex coal towns.

6.4 All targets set in the bid were met and in many instances exceeded.

#### 7. GENERAL

7.1 It is considered that mechanisms to kick start the regeneration should be introduced

7.2 Within limits relaxation of certain elements of building regulations may foster new build or expansion.

7.3 The risks/reward ratio is greater when operating on a short seasonal basis.

7.4 This could be addressed with extra capital relief and consideration of re-introducing the business expansion scheme (Tax relief for investors in New risk ventures)

7.5 The introduction of development zones with reduced business rates and other financial advantages could encourage an influx of alternative types of employment.

7.6 Consideration should be given to the variance of VAT rates across tourism based seasonally dependant businesses.

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### Memorandum by Southampton City Council (CT 19)

#### INTRODUCTION

1. Southampton City Council is a unitary authority and as such has statutory and non-statutory functions in relation to the city of Southampton—a major coastal city on the central south coast of England.

#### SOUTHAMPTON WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF COASTAL TOWNS

2. The issues concerning coastal “towns” are usually thought of as being a reference to coastal resorts (eg Hastings, Margate, Eastbourne) that have lost their *raison d’etre* and as a consequence are suffering economic and social decline reflected in high unemployment, low economic activity, ageing populations, etc.

3. Other coastal towns, particularly ferry and fishing ports (like Dover or Folkestone) have experienced similar conditions.

4. Although the fortune of coastal cities like Southampton has been more strongly influenced by changes in international shipping (eg Liverpool and Glasgow) or national defence (the impact of naval cutbacks on place like Chatham, Portsmouth and Plymouth), or the collapse of a major industry like shipbuilding the impacts have been similar to those of other coastal towns—higher rates of unemployment, lower economic activity, redundant skills and below average salaries—all of which have social and health, as well as wide economic, implications.

#### SOUTHAMPTON AND ITS ECONOMIC CONDITION

5. Southampton has not been immune from these impacts despite the recovery that has taken place in the port in the last twenty years. Employment directly related to the city being a coastal location such as shipbuilding and ship repair and the manufacture of sub-sea cables have virtually disappeared from the city’s economy.

6. The 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation reveals that Southampton is 96th (1 being the worst) of 354 local authorities in the whole of the UK. It scores particularly badly in respect of the education, skills, and training. The domain with the second poorest result being in respect of living environment. Southampton has the three worst Super Output Areas in the South East in respect of income deprivation affecting older people. Whilst Southampton’s performance in terms of GVA is slightly better than that of the South East as a whole the rate of growth per annum in GVA has lagged behind that of the South East and adjoining areas.

7. Southampton has some of the characteristics of a prosperous local economy but has:

- A low level of entrepreneurial activity with the number of VAT registrations per 10,000 economically active being only 62% of the comparable figure for the South East

8. Southampton also suffers a legacy of brownfield sites as a consequence of the withdrawal of major businesses. These sites frequently suffer from contamination and a multitude of problems that distinguish them from inland sites—poor local access (as a factor of the coastal location), inadequate or expired coastal and flood defence systems, and issues of nature conservation arising from the value of inter-tidal mudflats to feeding birds. This is within the context of a highly urbanised area that suffers from a shortage of good quality employment sites.

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## SOUTHAMPTON AND THE SOUTH HAMPSHIRE CONTEXT

9. Similar characteristics are to be found in nearby urban areas such as Portsmouth and Gosport. that are two of Southampton's partners in the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire. The Partnership for Urban South Hampshire is seeking to secure between 2006 and 2026 a step change in the economy of South Hampshire—lifting the long term annual growth rate in GVA from 1.7% per annum to 3.5% per annum for the period 2021–26, generating 59,000 jobs, and transforming the economy through an increase of approximately 50% in the number of jobs in business services.

10. Changes of this magnitude will require significant investment in a range of essential underpinning infrastructure such as transport systems and utilities; education; training and skills; brownfield sites, key worker housing, and business start up and advice services. Whilst the private sector, local government and other local agencies have important contributions to make in planning and implementing measures to deliver these factors the long term economic success of the area that fulfils its potential and its contribution to the regional and national economy will not be achieved without significant funding support from central government and organisations such as SEEDA.

## PORT ISSUES

11. There are also specific port issues. The Port of Southampton makes an important contribution to the regional and national economy but this has implications in terms of freight and passenger movements and the land required for cargo assembly and storage.

12. Large amounts of freight and passenger traffic are generated with implications for access to the port and the use of large amounts of land for the storage of cargoes including containers and cars. In order for the port to operate efficiently and maintain/expand its role there needs to be:

13. High quality road and rail links from the national and local networks into the port with the emphasis on the connections with the main origins/destinations of freight. For Southampton this means upgrading rail links with the Midlands to accommodate the increased size of containers and providing for good access to the Western and Eastern Docks from the local highway network, but with the emphasis being on increasing the proportion of freight carried by rail or short sea shipping. The position is exacerbated by the peninsular position of the city.

14. Sufficient land maintained in open storage and for port development (eg the construction of berths and terminals) to accommodate growth without damaging the other economic functions of the city or its image and overcoming the potential conflict with residential amenity and nature conservation issues.

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### **Memorandum by Torbay Line Rail Users Group (CT 20)**

Torbay is one of the most deprived authorities in the country.

It has high unemployment and very low household income.

Nearly half the employment is in part-time jobs, twice the national average.

In 2005 the average income was 74% of the national average. The average adult male salary was 65% of the national average.

In order to tackle these problems Torbay must:

- firstly, boost the ailing tourism industry which accounts for a third of employment; and
- secondly, encourage inwards investment providing quality employment.

Much improved transport links, in particular rail services to the main centres of population London, Bristol and Birmingham, must be provided if these initiatives are to be successful.

## TOURISM

The one or two week UK summer holiday market is declining. In Torbay it has declined by about one third from its peak of 12 million nights in the 1960s.

The short break holiday (ie one to five nights) is increasing. It is estimated that about two thirds of holidays taken in Torbay are short break holidays.

The short break holiday maker is looking for:

- easy access to the resort from the main population centres;
- looking for train services to replace long car journeys;
- direct services to minimise luggage handling and passenger interchange;
- conveniently timed trains to fit the work patterns;
- bookable seats; and
- competitive fares.

If Torbay is to access the lucrative, and growing, short break holiday market. It must provide the rail services to meet the expectations of these holiday makers. If it doesn't they will go to resorts that do.

For example, Torbay has about the same number of overnight visitors (1.75 million) as Bournemouth/Poole. Currently Torbay has two direct trains a day to London, Bournemouth has one fast train an hour. Torbay has one direct train a day to Birmingham, Bournemouth has one train an hour.

#### INWARDS INVESTMENT

Torbay has a very poor record on inwards investment.

It is losing quality employment. Over 5,000 jobs have been lost within a few years at Nortel/Bookham alone.

The local employment opportunities are heavily weighted towards tourism which accounts for about a third of employment.

Inwards investment must generate a better balanced local economy.

In particular, there is a need for professional and high tech employment.

Other centres that have attracted quality inwards investment have generated a booming local economy.

For example, Exeter has attracted such employment as the Met Office.

Exeter has one fast train to London every hour. Torbay has one fast train to London a day. Exeter has one train an hour to Bristol and Birmingham, Torbay has one train a day.

The provision of direct train services to the main population centres, in particular, London, Bristol and Birmingham, commensurate with business demand has been crucial in the success of Exeter.

If Torbay is to achieve inwards investment train services meeting business demand must be provided.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Improved transport links are imperative for the economic future of Torbay.

Road improvements are important but are not going to happen in the short term. Many years will pass before major road schemes become operational.

Rail improvements are also vital.

These can be introduced within a matter of months.

Rail improvements must be a matter of priority.

On the basis of a detailed assessment of the market demand for journeys between Torbay and the London area it is believed that the optimum timings for a train service between Torbay and London Paddington is a mid-morning departure from Torbay, say 10.00, with an arrival time in London of, say, 13.15 and a mid-afternoon departure from London Paddington, say 15.00, with an arrival time in Torbay of, say, 18.15.

These times are the best for the short-break visitor, the largest group of travellers between Torbay and the London area.

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### **Memorandum by Dover Pride (CT 21)**

#### INTRODUCTION

1. Dover Pride is a strategic partnership including Dover District Council, Dover Harbour Board, Kent County Council, the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA), the Government Office for the South East (GOSE), The local MP, Business Link Kent, Learning and Skills Council for Kent and Medway, Dover Chamber of Commerce, Dover town Council, East Kent Partnership and the London Fancy Box Company.

2. It is committed to initiate joint action to renew pride of place in the community and secure long term regeneration of the town. Key areas of work include close liaison with dedicated local champions who will take responsibility for driving forward major themes of the strategy and particular projects.

3. The Dover Pride Regeneration Strategy (Copy attached) was published in February 2005 and comprises a long term vision, a set of strategic objectives, a programme of action for priority and other projects and a recommended approach to delivery and implementation. It addresses the problems and opportunities that are likely to be faced over the next 30 years and it seeks to promote action within an integrated approach to regeneration combining the renewal of the local economy, support for the local community, improvement to the infrastructure of the town and enhancement of the local economy.

4. Dover Pride is being lead by the Programme Manager who reports directly to the Board. The Programme Manager's position is funded by the Regional Development Agency (SEEDA) through its programme of devolved funding which is managed by the East Kent Partnership.

TO EXAMINE THE CASE FOR SPECIAL INITIATIVES TO TACKLE THE NEEDS OF THE COASTAL TOWNS

5. Dover suffers from relative disadvantage in the region and serious deprivation in several of its inner urban areas. Some wards have unemployment levels three times the national average (ONS, Dec 2005) and are ranked in the worst 20% nationally (IMD 2004). The attached spreadsheet outlines Dover's super output area status.

6. Dover has suffered decline like many similar towns on the South Coast. However, despite its successful port, the town is suffering from lack of investment which has led to the high levels of deprivation within its urban wards.

7. The Dover Pride Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan were developed following extensive consultation with the community to examine the strengths and weaknesses of Dover, identify key issues and propose a 30 year vision for the town.

8. The Dover Pride Regeneration partnership is still in its infancy however a three year Business Plan is being produced that categorises key early implementation projects with actions grouped under five overarching themes of Dover Pride these being:

- Communication.
- Education and Community.
- Business and skills.
- Urban Renaissance.
- Transport.

TO LOOK AT THE WORK ODPM IS DOING TO ADDRESS THE SOCIAL, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS COASTAL TOWNS FACE, AND TO EVALUATE WHETHER IT IS EFFECTIVE, WELL FOCUSED OR ADEQUATELY FUNDED

9. A concerted effort from Government is needed to build on the momentum of local delivery vehicles such as Dover Pride together with intervention and investment to achieve the vision. This can be achieved through better co-ordination and communication between government agencies and mainstream funding being focused and implemented through the coastal regeneration priorities as part of a subregional economic strategy.

10. There is currently not enough being done outside of the growth areas to assist with the regeneration of coastal areas, especially within East Kent. This is mirrored by the lack of investment together with high levels of deprivation that exist in these areas.

11. Dover Pride welcomes the South East England Development Agency's (SEEDA) consultation on its Regional Economic Strategy which highlights the Coastal South East as a priority. These proposed interventions will need to be funded and structured if government is to succeed in addressing the current social, housing and environmental problems.

TO ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ODPM'S LIAISON WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS, IN KEY AREAS SUCH AS EMPLOYMENTS, MIGRATION, AND SOCIAL HOUSING, AND CO-OPERATION WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES

12. Dover Pride is unable to comment on this area as it is not aware of the nature of its work in this regard.

TO EXAMINE WHETHER THERE IS A CASE FOR MORE SPECIFIC REGIONAL INITIATIVES, AND WHETHER ENOUGH ATTENTION IS PAID TO REGIONAL DISPARITIES

13. The problems of successive economic structuring, the competition from neighbouring areas and poor connections between the key elements of the town has led to a number of fundamental issues in Dover.

- The Port of Dover dominates the economy and expansion to meet forecast growth should aim to maximize regeneration benefits for the town.
- New economic activities are needed in Dover to diversify from the pre-dominant port-related and local service sectors following the recent coalfield closures.
- Low morale and negative attitudes are a major problem in Dover and a clear vision and strong leadership will be needed to reverse current expectations.
- The quality of education and training provision needs to be improved by building on the current Further Education Review and on-going improvements in school level provision.

- Dover lacks the sense of place, visitor facilities and evening economy which are essential for a visitor and tourist destination of national importance.
- A comprehensive approach to tourism development should include improvements in the range and quality of tourist accommodation within the town.
- Dover is in a relatively remote location with difficult access and so property values are relatively low and development potential is shadowed by neighbouring areas.
- Dover should raise its profile through provision for additional housing and employment as part of a major urban expansion in the forthcoming Local Development Framework.
- Economic regeneration and housing growth could help to shift, diversify and balance the character of the town and attract new investment and visitor expenditure.
- The key transport issues for Dover are to improve its external transport links and to tackle the problems of its internal transport network. In particular the A2 dualling and A20 environmental improvements.

#### TO CONSIDER THE SECURITY OF FUNDING FOR REGENERATION AND SUPPORTING COASTAL TOWNS

14. The Dover Pride Regeneration Partnership seeks to change the fortunes of the town and reposition it at the centre of East Kent—Pas de Calais sub-regional economy whilst supporting the continued success of the port. Dover Pride will be the focus for strong civic, community and business leadership to put the necessary conditions for economic growth and regeneration in place for the long term future. There are eight key objectives to achieve this:

- Transform community aspirations.
- Enhance learning, skills and enterprise.
- Realise the potential of port expansion.
- Generate and attract new business activities.
- Raise the town's profile as a visitor destination.
- Strengthen the community and reduce deprivation.
- Re-structure the town and improve the environment.
- Upgrade transport links and accessibility.

15. However, despite the intentions of Dover Pride, there is only funding for three years to enable the Partnership to be set up and deliver some small intervention based projects. SEEDA is initially funding Dover Pride via East Kent Partnership in the form of a Programme Manager and Administrative support. Greater levels of funding will be needed to sustain Dover Pride and enable it to achieve its ambitious yet needed regeneration plans.

16. Unlike its neighbours Thanet and Shepway, Dover has not had significant European and Private sector investment, nor has it had the same levels of government intervention as Hastings, which suffers from very similar issues. But Dover is an internationally known place. It has magnificent assets such as the White Cliffs and Castle. It is the major gateway to England.

#### TO EVALUATE THE SUCCESS OF THE RDA'S AND OTHER BODIES IN SUPPORTING AND DEVELOPING THE ECONOMIES OF COASTAL TOWNS

17. Dover Pride is funded primarily by the Regional Development Agency(SEEDA) via The East Kent Partnership, through its programme of devolved funding of Area Investment Frameworks (AIF's), with additional funding coming from the Local Authorities.

18. The South East of England Development Agency (SEEDA) is currently consulting on its RES document looking at the next 10 years. This identifies the South East's coastal communities as requiring regeneration but also as having the potential to become a 'string of pearls.' This builds on SEEDA's previous work in identifying the East Kent coastal strip as a Priority Area for Economic Regeneration and acknowledges that there is still much more to be done through delivery agencies such as the East Kent Partnership and Regeneration Partnerships such as Dover Pride. By enhancing and supporting this work the ODPM is very well placed to contribute to making that difference in the South East.

19. Despite the development of Dover Pride and the funding of some early win projects, progress is hard due to the lack of interventions and investment. There is a need for the government to recognise the importance of Dover and the issues that it currently faces. There is a need for the RDA to target coastal regeneration through its current review of its Regional Economic Strategy and focus funding and interventions to the pockets of deprivation that exist in these areas.

## SUMMARY

20. Dover Pride welcomes the timing of this inquiry especially as Coastal Regeneration is moving up the government's agenda. There is a need for the government to realise that coastal regeneration is equally as important as the growth area and that there are many positive efforts being put in place locally to raise aspirations and confidence.

21. The Dover Pride Regeneration Partnership fully supports the initiative for a special coastal towns approach to regeneration.

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**Memorandum by the East Kent Partnership (CT 22)**

## INTRODUCTION

1. The East Kent Partnership brings together key stakeholders from the three District authorities of Canterbury, Dover and Thanet, Kent County Council, national and regional public sector organisations, local businesses—both large and small—and the community and voluntary sector. The Partnership is an independent organisation and membership is voluntary. As such it is able to champion the issues and needs of East Kent on behalf of all its stakeholders, especially when it is demonstrably more effective to operate on a collective basis. Close working relationships exist with the neighbouring local authorities of Shepway and Swale particularly where all concerned share the challenges common to this important coastal region of the South East.

2. The circumstances of individual East Kent coastal towns and the challenges and opportunities they face are arguably unique, and each of the District authorities is submitting its own evidence to the Committee in respect of the coastal towns within its area. The aim of this response is to offer a wider overview of the strategic issues that need to be addressed to optimise investment opportunities and to secure the greatest socio-economic impact at the sub-regional level.

## A. TO EXAMINE THE CASE FOR SPECIAL INITIATIVES TO TACKLE THE NEEDS OF COASTAL TOWNS BACKGROUND

3. Located in the far south-east corner of England, rural East Kent has suffered from a long-term decline in its traditional industries and services such as agriculture, coal mining and seaside tourism. Regeneration investment has tended to focus on recognised areas of deprivation, especially the sites of the former Kent Coalfields through SRB funding, and in town centres such as Margate and Ramsgate. East Kent covers a large and diverse geographic area of 279 square miles. Its population of some 365,000 is spread across an essentially rural area containing the City of Canterbury and on the coast by a number of important urban centres including Whitstable, Dover, Sandwich, Margate and Ramsgate. It has 72 km of coastline from the White Cliffs at Dover to the beaches of Whitstable on the north Kent coast.

4. Significant features of East Kent life over the centuries have been:

- The development of Canterbury as a “resort” through centuries of pilgrimage which has evolved into modern tourism.
- The development of seaside towns such as Deal, Ramsgate and Broadstairs, through military settlement.
- The establishment of major military garrisons, navy and air force bases all contributing to the local economy.
- The “gateway” routes to and from Britain through Sandwich, Dover, Folkestone and Ramsgate.
- Victorian “genteel” holidays which attracted many to Herne Bay, Broadstairs and Margate.
- A thriving industry of fishing, oyster farming and smuggling in Whitstable.
- 20th century coalfield development bringing influences from Northern England, Wales and Scotland.

5. The recent history of East Kent has been that of the decline of traditional industries:

- The English seaside holiday, including the traditional trip to Margate, Herne Bay, Broadstairs and Sandwich.
- The fruit and hop-growing agriculture sector.
- The decimation of coal mining.
- The significant withdrawal of military bases at Deal, Sandwich and Dover and at the former RAF base at Manston.
- The Ports, particularly Ramsgate and Folkestone, predominantly as a result of the impact of the Channel Tunnel, the decline in cross-channel tourism arising from low cost air travel and the ending of duty-free tourism.

6. These problems have been compounded by:

- Years of neglect and the consequent decline in the rail infrastructure and the provision of public transport services across East Kent and importantly to and from London.
- A fragmented tourism product of average quality.
- A significant lack of investment in the development of new industries, a modern high quality tourism infrastructure, education and skills development to support local industries and grow local GDP, and an acutely poor level of quality amenities to promote civic pride and to attract inward investment.

7. The Partnership's 10 year strategy (copy enclosed) for promoting socio-economic regeneration and sustainable development highlights the importance of the coastal towns to the sub-regional economy as a whole and in support of ODPM's Growth Agenda as it relates to the Thames Gateway, Kent and Ashford. The East Kent Partnership is committed to use the unique characteristics of East Kent, to once more become one of the most vibrant economies in Western Europe.

**B. TO LOOK AT THE WORK ODPM IS DOING TO ADDRESS THE SOCIAL, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS COASTAL TOWNS FACE, AND TO EVALUATE WHETHER IT IS EFFECTIVE, WELL-FOCUSED OR ADEQUATELY FUNDED**

8. Notwithstanding East Kent's proximity to the ODPM designated Growth Areas of the Thames Gateway and Ashford, inadequate attention is being given to addressing the extremely worrying disparities within the South East and in particular to the structural weaknesses that exist in the East Kent economy. This is important to the success of the Growth Agenda as it is to neighbouring areas. Nor is there the prospect of adequate and secure funding streams (post-SRB) into the future to provide the level of confidence required to secure private sector investment in East Kent, to restore pride in the community and to raise the area's rate of GDP growth. The task is compounded by the fact that none of the coastal towns across East Kent provides the critical mass to succeed to the standards seen in the large city concentrations of Southampton, Portsmouth and Brighton. There is therefore a need for a coherent spatial approach that acknowledges a mutuality of interest and interdependence between the coastal towns of East Kent.

9. Success in restoring vibrancy to the coastal towns will depend on special initiatives that combine to support major infrastructure development in towns such as Dover, Margate and Ramsgate, that help raise the quality of the tourism offer and the public realm in the smaller but equally important towns such as Deal, Herne Bay and Broadstairs, and that most importantly raise the overall quality and attraction of the area to communities and investors through exploiting the natural synergies between the coastal towns and their immediate rural hinterlands.

**C. TO ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ODPM'S LIAISON WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS, IN KEY AREAS SUCH AS EMPLOYMENT, MIGRATION, AND SOCIAL HOUSING, AND CO-OPERATION WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

10. The East Kent Partnership is not able to comment on the strength and effectiveness of ODPM's interdepartmental relationships and liaison with Other Government Departments and Agencies. That said, and as seen from the local area perspective, there is little evidence of a concerted central government approach to helping ensure sustainable development across areas such as East Kent. The onus is often on local authorities to identify those government departments and agencies that might have a real interest in promoting and supporting (in cash and in kind) spatial strategies designed to achieve sustainable development. And whilst the continued support of the RDA (SEEDA) and the Government Office (GOSE) are very much appreciated there exists a case for a better concerted effort that is seen to have impact at the local area level.

**D. TO EXAMINE WHETHER THERE IS A CASE FOR MORE SPECIFIC REGIONAL INITIATIVES AND WHETHER ENOUGH ATTENTION IS PAID TO REGIONAL DISPARITIES**

11. The East Kent coastal area remains today one of the least prosperous areas of the South East and the UK. It is characterised by:

- Low productivity relative to the South East and, in some cases, the UK.
- Lower economic activity and employment rates.
- Relatively low skilled workforce.
- Lower business density and business start-up rates.
- More traditional industrial activities, including lower value added manufacturing and tourism.
- High dependence on public sector employment.
- A low proportion of employment in knowledge based sectors, especially in the private sector.
- Less favourable demographics: a greater proportion of people already over retirement age and projections of further ageing.

- Poor infrastructure and connectivity.
- Low land values.
- Having 21 wards in the 10% most deprived areas of England (IMOD 2004).
- Lack of suitable sites and premises in order to grow local businesses and attract inward investment.
- The need to raise aspirations and improve the quality of life.
- The need for quality place shaping.

12. Deprivation experienced in East Kent relative to the rest of the South East is clearly recognised. There is a consistency of view and high-level integration between the different levels and strands of public policy in this respect, and initiatives to attract inward investment include:

- Improving the transport infrastructure.
- Ensuring the availability of development land.
- Improving the education and skills of the workforce.
- Building new housing to support development.

#### E. TO CONSIDER THE SECURITY OF FUTURE FUNDING FOR REGENERATING AND SUPPORTING COASTAL TOWNS

13. It has long been recognised by the key agencies in East Kent, how important the coastal towns are: they are home to a number of Kent's major employers, yet they have significant regeneration needs, and represent a real opportunity in terms of location, quality of life and connections to Europe. Some of the most interesting regeneration projects are already beginning to transform the coastal area, and gain support from local, regional and national agencies: in Thanet the regeneration of Margate Old Town, and the development of an out of town shopping mall at Westwood Cross; in Dover the creation of a new driving force—"Dover Pride"—for regeneration and renewal; and in Canterbury the construction of a new Marlowe Theatre and the creation of a new vibrant retail centre, Whitefriars. The advent of CTRL Domestic Services in 2009 will, if plans come to fruition, reduce overall journey times between London and East Kent and help significantly reduce the sense of peripherality that has dogged efforts to attract awareness and inward investment.

14. However, despite such interventions progress in East Kent is hampered by the lack of sufficient capital investment by both the public and private sectors in order to achieve the step change required. There is a desire to have a coastal product for the area as a whole that is more clearly articulated, focused and with suitable financial interventions.

#### F. TO EVALUATE THE SUCCESS OF THE RDAs AND OTHER BODIES IN SUPPORTING AND DEVELOPING THE ECONOMIES OF COASTAL TOWNS

15. The work of the Partnership is funded primarily by the Regional Development Agency (SEEDA) through its programme of devolved funding of Area Investment Frameworks (AIFs), with additional funding coming from the local authorities and local businesses.

16. The South East of England Development Agency (SEEDA) is currently consulting on its RES document looking at the next 10 years. This identifies the South East's coastal communities as requiring regeneration but also as having the potential to become a "string of pearls." This builds on SEEDA's previous work in identifying the East Kent coastal strip as a Priority Area for Economic Regeneration and acknowledges that there is still much more to be done, both directly and through delivery mechanisms such as Area Partnerships like ourselves and the neighbouring Channel Corridor Partnership. By enhancing and supporting this work the ODPM is very well placed to contribute to making that difference in the South East.

17. Nor should the important role of GOSE and Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) be overlooked. Whilst the concept of Area Investment Frameworks seeks primarily to promote economic development, sustainable development also requires the active support and engagement of communities as currently represented through the vehicle of LSPs and more widely the engagement of the Government Office. Across the East Kent Partnership's area effective relationships have been established that bring together the local and spatial dimensions of sustainable development in a way that commands the support of stakeholders and strategic partners such as SEEDA and GOSE.

#### SUMMARY

18. We welcome this Inquiry which comes at a crucial point in the overall development of the Government's strategy and investment policy in respect of coastal towns. We are trying to understand what needs to be done to regenerate our coastal towns and how to secure funding that will ensure sustainable development and engage fully the communities involved.

19. We believe that through our initiatives, including lately the concept of creating an East Kent Natural Park ([www.eastkentpartnership.org.uk](http://www.eastkentpartnership.org.uk)) we can position East Kent to complement and support the Government's growth agenda and stimulate urban and rural renewal.

20. The modest improvements achieved to-date through Partnership working is a reflection of local commitment to bring about improvement to the area, but in order to maintain the momentum and continued support there needs to be much improved co-ordination and cooperation between government departments and agencies in terms of bending mainstream funding to address the needs of our coastal towns as part of a sub-regional strategy to which all subscribe.

21. The East Kent Partnership fully supports the initiative for a special coastal towns initiative.

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### **Memorandum by Thanet District Council (CT 23)**

#### INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Thanet District Council is the local authority for the nationally known Kent Coastal towns of Broadstairs, Margate and Ramsgate.

2. The Thanet District faces significant social, environmental and economic issues arising in the main from substantial job losses in the 1970s and 80s from tourism, coal mining, agriculture and shipping.

3. Since the early 1990s the District Council has led the major regeneration of its area which has resulted in headline unemployment reducing from around 20% in 1993 to around 3.6% at present. Nevertheless local unemployment is still twice the regional average and comparable with well known Northern cities such as Bradford.

4. The Index of Multiple Deprivation highlights the significant challenges still facing the area.

5. The area has benefited from a wide range of different UK and European funding programmes over the past 15 years. However it is clear to the Council that specific Government action to tackle regeneration and improve co-ordination in coastal towns is warranted.

#### THE CASE FOR SPECIAL INITIATIVES TO TACKLE THE NEEDS OF COASTAL TOWNS

6. Thanet is situated at the extreme northeast tip of Kent and comprises of three primary urban centres—Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate—together with a number of villages. Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate, in which the majority of the population resides, have more or less coalesced to form a continuous ring of development around the Isle of Thanet peninsular. The district has a population of 126,702 (Census 2001).

7. Thanet is 129km east of London and 32km from the European mainland. It is connected to the rest of Kent by three main roads, and rail routes to Ashford and Medway; and mainland Europe through the Port of Ramsgate's passenger and freight ferries. However, through the area is relatively close to London the relatively poor state of the transport links combined with the location of the Thanet at the "heel" of Britain and being surrounded on three-sides by sea has contributed to the area being relatively isolated. The travel time from London to York at two hours is the same as London to Ramsgate for a journey three times the distance.

8. The decline of the British beach holiday, and other economic shifts has resulted in Thanet being recognized as a deprived area, within a general prosperous region. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) reveals that it contains ten Super Output Areas (SOA) that are among the 10% most deprived nationally and the first and second most deprived in the South-East. Another 10 SOAs are in the 20% most deprived areas nationally. This means 20 SOAs out of a total of 84 SOAs in the District are in the 20% most deprived nationally.

9. The rise of Thanet as a popular seaside resort then its subsequent decline follows a similar pattern to other seaside resorts in the UK. The cycle of decline and associated deprivation in seaside towns was identified as different from that suffered by older industrial towns and cities by Prime Minister's Strategy Unit (January 2005)<sup>11</sup>. The case study used in the report to illustrate the problems of seaside town was Margate. The description used to identify seaside deprivation was:

"Following the collapse of English seaside tourism, Sandytown in Beachville, Thanet has seen its redundant hotels turned into hostels for the homeless, cheap bedsits or care homes. The concentration of vulnerable and transient residents, including refugees and asylum seekers, elderly people and children in care has severely strained public services and led to tensions between longstanding residents and the new population."

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<sup>11</sup> Improving the prospects of people living in areas of multiple deprivation in England, Prime Minister's Strategy Unit January 2005.

10. This report identified the main generic drivers of area-based deprivation as low levels of economic activity; poor housing; a poor local environment and unstable communities; poor public services and ineffective delivery of regeneration support. The presence of more than one of these drivers compounds their individual effects setting off a spiral of decline. The interaction and importance of these drivers varies depending on the history of the area. In Thanet's case the main driver's were identified as:

- concentration of vulnerable/transient groups;
- strain on public services;
- lack of community facilities;
- social tensions;
- low skills; and
- transport links to major conurbations.

#### THANET'S MAIN DRIVERS OF DEPRIVATION

##### *Concentration of vulnerable and transient groups*

11. Historically, the decline of local industries and its location as a seaside town has meant that it has a large dependant community. The 2001 Census, recorded a high incidence of limiting long-term illness in the population, and in people of working age, with 23% and 17%, respectively; in comparison the incidence of limiting long term illness in the South-East was 15% and 11%, respectively. The Thanet population also perceives their health to be poor, with 11% describing their health in the last year as not good (2001 Census). In the deprived area these figures are worst, with long-term illness in the population of 27%, and the working age population of 23%. The level of incapacity benefit and/or severe disability allowance is also high at 18% (Dept of Works and Pensions, August 2004).

12. Several factors have interacted to concentrate vulnerable people in Thanet District, especially in the older, most deprived parts of the towns. The housing stock, especially in the older parts of town, contain a high proportion of large properties (hotels and Victorian houses), which with the decline of the package holiday turned to catering for people requiring cheap, long term accommodation, who would accept low quality eg B&B, and small flats (bedsits and one bedroom flats). The abundance of this type of accommodation combined with the perceived delights of the seaside life attracts many people from outside the district. Many boroughs, particularly those in London actively promote relocation to Thanet to people on their housing and care lists. This has the effect of deepening the cycle of decline by increasing the concentration of vulnerable people (Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, 2005)<sup>12</sup>.

13. In Thanet, the problem is further compounded by a large care industry, which attracts significant numbers of vulnerable people in need of residential care from outside Thanet. This formal and informal care industry, caters for a range of sectors: elderly care homes, hostels for vulnerable adults, private children's homes and a multitude of independent foster carers. For example: there are 35 children's homes, three independent foster agencies, 56 residential care homes for people with learning difficulties, and a residential care sector for older people with a capacity of some 1,298 beds (based on 2004 data)<sup>13</sup>.

14. The effect of this continual "top up" of vulnerable people into the area is that interventions are not dealing with an established, stable community. The 2001 census found a population turnover in the most deprived areas of over 30%. A local primary school has reported an annual turnover of pupils of 60%. As traditional regeneration interventions are based on working with an establish community the expected impact of projects based in a transient population are different and lasting impact is much harder to achieve.

##### *Strain on public services*

15. Thanet's public services are under strain due to several factors. Thanet has a relatively high elderly population compared to the rest of the South-East, with 21.8% and 16.4%, aged 65+, respectively (2001 Census). As in most seaside towns many people retire to the area for the seaside lifestyle. These people often do not have nearby family, nor develop deep community roots, which can support them in times of need. This results in an extra burden of care for the local services particularly health and social care.

16. Though the residential care industry brings money into the area it also places considerable demands on to public services. For example:

- The residential care sector for elderly people puts a significant strain on public services. Of the 1,298 beds available nearly half are available for purchase by either other local authorities or private individuals. When individuals run out of money the burden is transferred to Thanet

<sup>12</sup> Improving the prospects of people living in areas of multiple deprivation in England, Prime Minister's Strategy Unit January 2005.

<sup>13</sup> Report on the Kent Child Protection Committee Inquiry into general concerns expressed by officers and politicians in the Thanet area regarding child and public protection issues, Kent County Council, 2004.

District Council through the payment of benefits. As an indication of the problem, between April and September 2004 33 self-funders became the responsibility of Thanet District Council. A third of the total number for East Kent<sup>14</sup>.

- Residential care home accommodating people with learning difficulties provide approximately 430 beds, with 182 contracted to Kent County Council, the rest can be purchased by other local authorities and health providers. As there is no duty to inform the receiving local authority about the placement of individuals within the area it is extremely difficult for the receiving authority to place the appropriate support mechanisms in place. This is particularly a problem when vulnerable people leave a care establishment and enter into the local community, without the knowledge of the local services<sup>14</sup>.

17. Thanet has a high level of residents experiencing mental illness. The Index of Deprivation: Health indicator, a measure of adults suffering from mood or anxiety disorders revealed a level of disorder well above that expected for the area, with particularly high levels in the most deprived areas (average score 1.4). The mentally ill are the most vulnerable to social exclusion, homelessness and unemployment. Children from families with mental health problems are more likely to enter the care system. Presently, when assessment under the Mental Health Act leads to hospitalisation the receiving Mental Health team picks up the responsibility and cost even when the argument exists that the placement is by another authority.<sup>15</sup>

18. Thanet has an exceptionally high number of “looked after” children. In April 2003, the number of known “looked after” children was 626 children—276 from Kent and 350 from other local authorities. Besides registered children homes and independent foster agencies children are placed in educational establishments. The Thanet Crime and Disorder Audit 2004 reported that a disproportionate level of resources were being used to deal with incidences involving children in care: There are two areas of concern:

- 38% (30) of assaults within the residential other premises crime reporting category occurred in children’s homes.
- Thanet has the highest incidence of recorded missing persons within Kent, 85% were juveniles, and the problem is increasing year on year. Between January and October 2004, 796 persons were recorded missing, 796 under 18 years and 127 adults with mental welfare issues. Many of the juveniles were “looked after” children from outside the district trying to return home. The huge numbers of missing persons is affecting policing as they have a higher priority than anti-social behavior crimes<sup>15</sup>.

### *Social tensions*

19. In the most deprived areas, the 2001 census recorded a significant movement of people within and out of these areas, with some areas having a third of their population moving a year. However, within these areas there are stable, core populations, who are trying to maintain community values. The transient populations tend to come and go without establishing positive links with the community, causing major issues for both the community and the services. The community has to deal with a continuous stream of vulnerable people who utilize services and resources, yet add little to community well-being. The services are stretched and end up merely “fire-fighting”, often resulting in local peoples less serious/urgent issues and problems taking second place, which causes resentment and long term repercussions<sup>16</sup>. The transient populations problems (addictions—alcohol and drugs, anti-social behavior, and poor health—physical and mental) are often compounded, as they have no social roots within the area to draw upon, and the local communities and services are unable to cope due to their numbers. A recent KCC report (October 2004)<sup>16</sup> concluded that due to the numbers of vulnerable people the chances of the individuals developing relationships with “good” role models is severely reduced, and the opposite was likely to happen, which is particularly an issue for young people. In the case of youth there is anecdotal evidence that local juveniles are being lead astray by the “troubled” juveniles.

### *Lack of community facilities*

20. The relatively shortage of community facilities in Thanet increases social tensions. Residential homes, particularly those servicing youth and young adult often use sports and leisure facilities<sup>16</sup>. They tend to arrive in mini-buses in large numbers and the local population feels swamped and pushed out from “their” facilities. The fact that many of the “looked after” children do not attend local schools increases their alienation from the local communities. The Rowntree Foundation (2005)<sup>17</sup> identified good cultural and sporting facilities as a key driver for the regeneration of areas as they made the area desirable to young, well-educated professionals and families, so reversing their flight.

<sup>14</sup> Report on the Kent Child Protection Committee Inquiry into general concerns expressed by officers and politicians in the Thanet area regarding child and public protection issues, Kent County Council, 2004.

<sup>15</sup> Thanet crime and disorder audit 2004, Thanet Community Safety Partnership.

<sup>16</sup> Report on the Kent Child Protection Committee Inquiry into general concerns expressed by officers and politicians in the Thanet area regarding child and public protection issues, Kent County Council, 2004.

<sup>17</sup> Economic segregation in England: causes, consequences and policy, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2005.

21. The local environment is especially important for coastal towns involved in tourism, as people have a huge choice of destinations and the competition for their custom is fierce. The development of short weekend breaks is an area that Thanet hopes to develop, as its proximity to London, would give it an edge, particularly with improved transport links. The improvement of the physical environment is important in attracting high spenders and repeat visitors, which is why the council is supporting the development of Turner Contemporary and Margate Old Town as a cultural quarter.

#### *Low skills*

22. Thanet residents' qualification profile is low, ranking 279th of 408 British local authorities<sup>18</sup>. Over 40% of those living in Thanet hold qualifications below NVQ level 2, above the Kent and Medway average (39.1%) and above national and regional level with 36.4% and 32.5%, respectively (Table 1).

**Table 1**

THE PROPORTION AND LEVEL OF QUALIFICATIONS WITHIN THE WORKING POPULATION

	<i>Proportion of working population qualified (%)</i>			
	<i>Below NVQ 2</i>	<i>With NVQ 2</i>	<i>With NVQ 3</i>	<i>With NVQ 4+</i>
<b>Thanet</b>	<b>41.7</b>	<b>18.1</b>	<b>18.1</b>	<b>22.1</b>
Kent and Medway	39.1	22.0	19.0	19.9
South East	32.5	22.2	18.8	26.4
Great Britain	36.4	21.5	18.4	23.7

Source: Local knowledge, Local Futures<sup>18</sup>

23. The poor educational and skill levels of the population restricts the ability of Thanet's population to take advantage of the opportunities available in the rest of the Kent and South-East economy, and is a major barrier to improving the lives of people living in Thanet (Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, 2005)<sup>19</sup>.

24. Until recently the opportunities to undertake post-16 academic and vocational courses was severely restricted. This has been improved by the opening of the Canterbury Christ Church University's Broadstairs campus; however, many students still have to travel outside the area to access their choice of course, which greatly increases the cost, and is therefore a major deterrent in gaining qualifications.

#### *Transport links to major conurbations*

25. The geographical isolation of the Isle of Thanet is compounded by poor transport links. Currently:

- The fastest train link to London from Thanet is via, Herne Bay, Faversham, Medway and London, with the fast train taking approximately 1 hour 50 minutes. This service is planned to be reduced to make way for fast trains between Sittingbourne and Medway.
- None of the three main roads (A28, A256 and A299) that link Thanet to the rest of Kent and the South-East are completely dual carriageway.

26. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation report (2005)<sup>20</sup> on mixed communities and the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit report (2005)<sup>21</sup> identified one of the critical drivers for sustainable communities as being well connected to the wider metropolitan areas. This enables the area to piggyback on the growth of the regional and national economic growth. This is particularly the case with areas of deprivation surrounded by prosperous areas and is why the local authority and businesses place such importance to:

- The upgrade of the Thanet, Canterbury and Ashford train link to enable the area to benefit from the speed and frequency of CTRL domestic and international trains to London and continental Europe.
- The completion of the last phase of the East Kent Access, which involves the up-grading the A229 and A256 to dual carriageway.

27. The improved transport links would enable people to access jobs available outside the district; encourage industries to invest in the locality. Improved transportation links would give a boost to the expansion of the Port of Ramsgate. Port of Ramsgate is one of the few ports in the south of England with space available for expansion. This is why the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit identified the transport links as one of six areas that need to be addressed in Thanet<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> Local Knowledge, Local Futures.

<sup>19</sup> Improving the prospects of people living in areas of multiple deprivation in England, Prime Minister's Strategy Unit January 2005.

<sup>20</sup> Economic segregation in England: causes, consequences and policy, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2005.

<sup>21</sup> Improving the prospects of people living in areas of multiple deprivation in England, Prime Minister's Strategy Unit January 2005.

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#### CURRENT REGENERATION FUNDING REGIMES AVAILABLE TO COASTAL TOWNS

28. No single unified Government funding programme currently exists to tackle the wide range of social, economic and environmental issues that are prevalent in these areas.

29. However a wide range of different funding programmes have been available in the past and at the present time have been applied to the issues described elsewhere in this memorandum.

30. The Thanet area has benefited from European Regional Assistance programme since 1993 under the Objective 2 strand. However this programme is due to end in 2008 and no successor programme is currently proposed. Objective 2 has been deployed to tackle a wide range of regeneration issues including skills development, inward business investment, infrastructure improvements and initiatives to strengthen the local tourism economy.

31. The Department of Trade and Industry is due to consult shortly on the UK's draft National Strategic Reference Framework which will seek views on the methodology for allocating competitiveness funding under the new 2007–13 European regional aid programme. Strong arguments appear to exist for mechanisms to be established within the methodology for coastal towns to benefit.

32. Other major funding programmes to benefit Thanet are private sector housing renewal (ODPM) Safer and Stronger Communities Fund (ODPM/NRF), SEEDA devolved funding (DTi), Building Schools for the Future (DFEE/KCC) and SRB rounds 1-6 ODPM/DTi.

33. In addition various funds have been granted for direct delivery eg Learning and Skills Council (DTi) or Crime Prevention (Home Office).

34. In the absence of a single dedicated programme the District Council works hard to access the wide range of external funding available and maximise its impact through creative partnership arrangements.

35. Strong arguments therefore appear to exist for improving the targeting of these various funding regimes to ensure maximum impact and value for money.

#### SUCCESS OF RDAs AND OTHER BODIES IN SUPPORTING AND DEVELOPING THE ECONOMIES OF COASTAL TOWNS

36. Thanet Council has strong working relationships with the South East of England Development Agency (SEEDA) on a wide range of projects. SEEDA is the principal in the East Kent Spatial Development project—an innovative infrastructure initiative to provide utilities services. The SEEDA Chief Executive chairs the Margate Renewal Board. SEEDA have also promoted devolved funding to area partnerships in our case the East Kent Partnership for which the Council acts as accountable body.

37. Other key players in local regeneration are Kent County Council, the Government Office for the South East, English Partnerships, the Arts Council South East, English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery fund. All these bodies have provided excellent support to our local programmes.

38. Together the key partner agencies have aided significant inward investment and substantial reductions in headline unemployment rates since the early 1990s. However timing and availability of programmes has rarely been synchronised creating additional complexity in on the ground delivery and invariably slowing down programme delivery. The short term nature of many programmes has also tended to restrict long term planning, as effective regeneration requires up to 20 years commitment to achieve lasting results.

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#### Memorandum by Jenny Lennon-Wood and Christopher Wood (CT 24)

Having examined the issues covered by the ODPM's Coastal Towns Inquiry, we have sought evidence of the impact of any special initiatives or RDA support on my home town, Minehead. It is surprising and disappointing that an internet search results in almost no recent relevant information, even on the West Somerset District Council (WSDC) website where one might hope to find it. The implication is that coastal town initiatives have had little influence on Minehead's development and this may explain why significant development decisions made by the District Council appear to take no account of ODPM research findings.

As a seaside town, Minehead's huge potential to attract tourists has yet to be maximised. Whilst acknowledging that tourism forms the heart of West Somerset's economy, WSDC have voted to sell a large car park close to the seafront to a major food retailer. Most visitors to the town are primarily drawn to the seafront, so it is inevitable that tourist numbers will be affected adversely by the loss of this car and coach park.

While this proposal was under discussion, such out-of-town retail development was already against Government guidelines. Opposition from local residents was unprecedented. Many of us made democratic representations through correspondence, meetings, the media, a 6,000 signature petition, and a 500 strong rally. Degeneration of the town centre is a prime concern as such major national retailers are known to drive out all competition ruthlessly from small towns and surrounding villages. It is feared that any jobs created

will be low in pay and quality and will be outweighed by the number lost through local small business closures. Furthermore, long-distance transport of large quantities of food will damage both the environment and the livelihoods of local producers.

The ODPM's own commissioned report "Impact of large foodstores on market towns and district centres" has concluded: "Our research has shown that large foodstores can and have had an adverse impact on market towns and district centres. It is vital that those responsible for the future of market towns and district centres take positive steps to improve the range and quality of food shopping in these centres, and adopt a cautious approach to considering the location and likely long term consequences of the development of large foodstores in non-central locations." Why has WSDC been allowed to ignore these conclusions and pursue a course which is likely to destroy the heart of our vibrant coastal town? How can this fulfil the coastal towns' employment and environmental objectives?

The vast majority in Minehead's community believe that the seafront area should be used for improved leisure facilities and ample vehicle parking for tourists. Yet WSDC have made only perfunctory attempts to enhance our town's tourism potential. We would welcome any innovative ODPM initiatives to improve facilities for both tourists and residents; generate income to enhance the vitality of the town centre; offer high quality job opportunities; and facilitate the construction of affordable housing.

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### **Memorandum by Cornwall County Council (CT 25)**

#### SUMMARY

Coastal towns have a unique role and character. They are critical to the economy.

Their unique combination of geography and socio-economic factors make a case for special initiatives.

They need a strategic context to planning and intervention for these towns and complementary roles between them.

Civic leadership needs to be prioritised and facilitated, without it nothing will happen.

#### INTRODUCTION

1. Cornwall County Council is pleased to submit evidence to the ODPM Committee. This is an important and timely inquiry. Britain is a maritime nation facing massive challenges of changing global economies and climate.

2. Our evidence show that:

- the important role and unique character of our coastal towns needs special attention and appropriate treatment to address their vulnerable social, economic and environmental position;
- this needs a robust strategic context to set out their role in National, Regional and Local strategy to ensure investment is well informed and complementary between coastal and non coastal towns; and
- because of the complexity of agencies with statutory responsibility for Coastal towns and their interface with the sea there is a clear need to rationalise this to provide more effective local mechanisms and an opportunity for delivery through civic leadership and well placed funding.

3. The significance of coastal towns to Cornwall is an amplification, but symptomatic of, the national picture: Over half of our towns are on our 400 miles of coast and account for almost a quarter of all Cornwall's residents and jobs. The majority of the jobs are in industries dependent on their coastal location and are often vulnerable and challenging; maritime; fishing; tourism; and leisure sectors. These towns are diverse; they vary in size from 2,000 to over 20,000 residents swelling in some cases in excess of three times their size with summer tourists. They also provide local service centres for surrounding hinterlands.

4. In spite of this diversity there is strong commonality. The obvious and most influential is their coastal location. This has advantages and disadvantages. Geography dictates that these towns only really have the economic benefit of half a hinterland, relatively poor access and aging infrastructure makes economic restructuring difficult but they are attractive for tourism and leisure in their own right. These are not always compatible.

5. In addition coastal towns have; a high proportion of pensioners and economically inactive; outflow of skilled workers; influx of unemployed; and a higher proportion of single person households. Coupled with summer tourists that swell the population of towns up to ten times these demographics place considerable burden on infrastructure and the environment.

6. A cursory review of initiatives in Cornwall and the South West suggest that there is considerable merit in establishing local delivery mechanisms emerging through the South West's Market and Coastal Towns Initiative that can benefit from a strategic position like the one based on the Single Programming Document for Objective One. Progressive work and activity by a range of agencies shows that positive action can bring about good progress.

#### CASE FOR SPECIAL INITIATIVES

7. Coastal towns share a unique combination of physical and socio-economic characteristics. Most importantly, they face onto the sea, their defining characteristic determined by geography. This was their *raison d'être* and is the foundation for their future sustainability.

8. These towns, especially in Cornwall, also share a similar economic base. These area traditional industries in the maritime, fishing, tourism and leisure sectors. Each facing challenging restructuring or decline and representing difficult livelihoods. Their geography and accessibility tends to constrain future economic prospects to modernised and improved versions of the traditional sectors. The findings of the DTI's Maritime Foresight Panel made similar conclusions.

9. The dominant sectors vary between places; Newlyn is one of the UK's major fishing ports, Falmouth is one of the world's deepest natural harbours and Newquay has an international reputation as a tourist destination. But each has a component of the other sectors and outdated infrastructure.

10. Infrastructure in coastal towns tends to be old. Investment in the last 50 years has been very limited and the physical space to provide for the needs of modernising industries is constrained both physically by the sea and also through environmental policy protecting valuable landscapes and environmental assets commonly found around coastal towns. In Cornwall there is very little land available for new maritime and fishing employment uses and many traditional buildings are under pressure to be converted to lucrative apartments. Almost all of our harbours are in the AONB or Coastal protection zones.

11. The demographics of these towns also create a disproportionate level of elderly and other economically inactive and the poor employment prospects forces out the younger and skilled workforce. These social difficulties are compounded by overheating housing markets historically higher than inland areas creating significant affordability issues.

12. These towns are environmentally vulnerable too. Their attractive environment is the basis for their success in the tourism sector but their success is often a threat to the environment and does not always complement the traditional industries which can be unsightly and smell. Climate change is more of a threat.

13. It will be coastal towns that face rising sea levels and increased storminess, the Environment Agency's flood maps illustrate that much of the employment base of these towns is at greatest threat from this. The costs of readying these towns to deal with rising sea levels is not known yet. A recent study by the National Trust into the cost implications for one of their harbour walls stretched into many millions of pounds and concluded that a staged decline of the wall was the practicable solution.

14. The cost implications for the economically active harbours needs to be assessed and the cost will need to be absorbed by someone. The cost of projects in coastal towns is usually higher than inland areas and can be less attractive to investors as a result. This "coastality" must be factored into initiatives when assessing value.

15. These towns need to face economic restructuring without up to date infrastructure, modern skills or land as well as facing threats from climate change. These issues are not dealt with by main stream initiatives but the shared combination of factors provides a unique basis for specific initiatives to address them.

#### CASE FOR STRATEGIC APPROACH

16. Special initiatives are required to address the unique issues facing coastal towns, but these need to be set in a strategic and complementary strategy. Coastal towns do not exist in a vacuum. The success of special initiatives will be dependent upon resources being successfully targeted at projects that will be supported by wider activity.

17. Coastal towns have a strategic importance. Although their roles are changing they continue to make a profound contribution to the important economic sectors described above. These in turn make an important contribution to the economy. There remains a profound interdependence between harbours and prosperity of the whole community & surrounding areas.

18. Employment in maritime sectors is significantly more important in Cornwall (about 1%) than in the South West (0.6%) and the UK (0.3%) and as a growth sector in Cornwall is far outstripping the UK. This sector is, of course, dominated by many of the coastal towns often employing up to a quarter of local residents.

19. There is a need for a national strategy that provides coastal towns with a robust context. The Single Programming Document for Objective One status in Cornwall provided a basic but clear strategy and context for coastal towns. This enabled bids and initiatives to nest more effectively in wider activity and context.

20. The need for a strategic context is not solely due to economic factors. Coastal towns will face the brunt of rising sea levels, increased storminess and flooding due to global warming. Other areas have a role to play in the management strategies and long term planning to deal with this. Equally, many coastal areas have important natural environments that need a joined up approach and strategy to address this potential conflict of economic and economic interests. Even where the environment is the economic interest this needs management.

21. Regeneration of coastal towns must focus on unlocking their economic potential in a sustainable manner.

22. Planning for the potentially conflicting factors in coastal towns benefits from the strategic overview. Limitations on land availability and conversion of land and buildings from traditional industrial uses for shorter term gain and issues of affordable housing and important environments needs management.

23. Experience has shown that substantive and sustainable change is brought about by a focus on strategic interventions. These initiatives provide for a step change through infrastructure delivery. These complement and fit in the wider strategies. Several major examples exist in Cornwall, such as the Combined University at Falmouth/Penryn and the Tate at St Ives.

24. Other less iconic but influential and successful projects include the lobster hatchery at Padstow and the fishing stores at St Ives. Strategies and programmes need to be substantive enough and flexible enough to accommodate considerable diversity and enable this type of pivotal project that is appropriate to specific towns.

25. The interface between coastal and maritime activities demands a more co-ordinated approach to strategy between the two. Joint preparation of these is necessary.

#### CASE FOR CIVIC LEADERSHIP

26. Special initiatives with a clear strategic context and focussed intervention require stronger local leadership to deliver it. Coastal towns are an important interface between on and off shore activities where there is often a lack of clarity over responsibilities and lack of synergy between strategies. Delivering initiatives can be problematic in these circumstances and there is an acute need to simplify this multiplicity of agencies.

27. There is clear evidence from the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative in the South West that places with stronger civic leadership perform better. Over half of the 12 towns in the MCTI scheme in Cornwall are coastal. Particular successes have been achieved in Looe with strong leadership much less so in Newquay where consensus between a wide range of community groups has not been achieved. Additional focus of initiatives on civic leadership and community cohesion to back projects is important.

28. The living landmark bids have, arguably, been better prepared and been taken up more quickly than MCTI because of the nature of the process that requires a clear leader role and focus on strategic projects. They may well suffer similar difficulties to the MCTI if wider consensus has not been achieved in the bid process. The MCTI process, while slower in gaining momentum does present the opportunity for wider engagement and, importantly, bringing new groups together.

29. The implementation of strategies and initiatives with many stakeholders are usually better delivered through partnership working between local government, community and commerce that includes environmental interests. Equally, however, an over emphasis on voluntary arrangements can lead to fragmentation and lack of focus and driver. A simplified set of responsibilities and strong leadership with some form of democratic accountability would provide a more delivery oriented focus.

#### CONCLUSION

30. The coast is both a precious asset and a significant economic and social opportunity. Coastal towns have a unique combination of social, economic and environmental attributes. They are a vital component of sustainable regeneration for Cornwall, the SW and more widely, the UK and need tailored solutions and support.

31. There continues to be a need for greater investment in understanding the important and ongoing role and opportunity for coastal towns in our economy. Initiatives in isolation or without focus are weak and require a wider strategy approach to provide the context and guide investment.

32. Strong leadership is vital to champion and deliver initiatives.

### **Memorandum by the Theatres Trust (CT 26)**

1. The Theatres Trust welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Coastal Towns Inquiry.

#### **BACKGROUND TO THE THEATRES TRUST**

2. The Theatres Trust is an advisory Non-Departmental Public Body and a statutory consultee on planning applications that affect land on which there is a theatre. It was established by The Theatres Trust Act 1976 “to promote the better protection of theatres”. The Act defines a theatre as “any building or part of a building constructed wholly or mainly for the public performance of plays”. The General Development Order (1995) requires under Article 10 (v) that all planning authorities must consult the Trust before a decision is issued on any planning application or development involving land on which there is a theatre as defined in the 1976 Act. Thus the Trust’s remit extends beyond buildings currently in use as theatres and includes those not in use. Our main objective is to safeguard theatre use, or the potential for such use, but we also provide expert advice on design, conservation, regeneration, property and planning matters to theatre operators, local authorities and official bodies.

#### **THE IMPORTANCE OF THEATRES TO COASTAL COMMUNITIES**

3. The importance of theatres in Britain’s holiday coastal towns is regularly highlighted and prioritised in development, regeneration and local planning policies as protection of theatre use contributes to the economic sustainability and social well being of coastal communities. Many of the towns that expanded in the Victorian and Edwardian period have architecturally significant variety and pier theatres that have achieved heritage listing and are important attractions in their own right. During summer seasons when many coastal towns depend upon the visitor economy for their livelihoods, theatres are an important magnet, presenting a wide range of theatre, plays, variety entertainment and musicals. Out of season, theatres continue as cultural anchors of their communities, offering opportunities for residents, businesses and off-season visitors to be entertained, informed, challenged and educated. Theatres therefore further support coastal towns by helping to extend visitor seasons through year round presentations of performances.

4. It is our understanding that The Coastal Towns Inquiry is concerned with the regeneration of coastal towns whose major economies are not driven by tourism, and asks a number of questions to understand what initiatives would help to tackle their needs. This response therefore, rather than focusing on the needs of holiday destination coastal towns, considers the impact of initiatives upon theatres in other coastal areas.

5. In coastal towns and cities theatres play an important part in helping to forge community cohesion. Theatres provide places where people interact not only with the themes and spirit of the play, but with each other, encouraging diversity, reflecting local life and helping to forge communities’ cultural identity. In areas where there is little cultural life or access to leisure and entertainment, a theatre that services its local community provides an important cultural reference point. Some coastal towns, such as Dover and Folkestone, are the first point of entry for migrant communities into the UK. They now face increased social cohesion and housing pressures which have a significant impact on older resident communities. Theatres, in these, and other coastal areas are important cultural anchors which encourage discourse and debate and help to develop understanding of diverse communities.

#### **RESPONSE TO THE SELECT COMMITTEES ISSUES**

6. The case for special initiatives to tackle the needs of coastal towns: The Theatres Trust welcomes any initiative that provides resources and investment into theatres in coastal towns. Securing existing local theatres, or providing theatre use within community centres and school facilities ensures vital places of assembly and entertainment are provided for that community. Theatre buildings also serve a useful role in regeneration by bringing life back to run-down areas and enhancing the townscape. They often act as a focal point and as a catalyst for regeneration. They are often a focus of local pride, even for people who do not go to the theatre, and they are a source of memories for all sectors of the community. Because of this we would caution against any loss of theatre use and through our statutory role we would object to any planning application that resulted in a loss of theatre use to a coastal community.

7. ODPM’s work on effectiveness, focus and funding of current coastal town initiatives: It is worth drawing attention to the DCMS’s document *Culture in the Heart of Regeneration* (DCMS 2004) and the ODPM’s *Sustainable Communities: People Places and Prosperity* (ODPM 2005). In both these documents sense of place, good quality community facilities, including cultural assets, are seen as essential components in the development of communities. Theatres can foster community activity, through, for example, education projects and amateur productions. Both participation in a production or attending a performance can promote social inclusion, particularly as theatres seek to broaden their production policies and attract new audiences, targeting young people and ethnic minority groups in particular. We support the aims of both these documents and would urge future initiatives in coastal towns to make reference to the implementation of both of these policies.

8. Security of future funding for regenerating coastal towns: Many theatres located in areas of deprivation along Britain's coastline have either directly or indirectly benefited from European Structural funds. These theatres are potentially at the greatest risk as structural funding comes to an end in 2006–07. We would ask the Committee to look into the impact, and benefits to be gained from transitional and new funding in these areas to mitigate loss of structural funds.

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### Memorandum by Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council (CT 27)

#### SOUTHPORT—REGENERATING A COASTAL RESORT TOWN ON THE NW COAST

##### INTRODUCTION

From the boom times of the 50s and 60s Southport, together with most other English coastal resort towns, sat on its hands and watched its customers learn a new way of both taking their annual holidays and enjoying their leisure time and spend.

Once the need for action was recognised Southport commenced its regeneration story with the aim of transforming the resort into something that the contemporary market place would find attractive and therefore use. The following paper aims to provide feedback against the six questions posed in the brief using the experience gained through that (ongoing) regeneration process. It is not meant to be an exhaustive or detailed account but merely to provide an overview that the committee may find informative. Considerable additional information is available if required.

##### THE STARTING POINT

By the early 90s the consumer product of Southport had been relatively unchanged for considerable time and essentially comprised the famous Victorian boulevard of Lord St with its core retail element together with a traditional beach, pier and seafront fairground offer. Between the two were a series of parks and gardens including a substantial man made recreational lake used by dinghy and pleasure sailors.

Initial strategic thinking was that the weakest part of the resort product was without doubt the seafront and the early regeneration efforts should therefore be concentrated in that area. The biggest single issue that stood in the way of progress was inadequate sea defences. The real world effect of this was that the “seafront promenade” was closed due to tidal effect for between 90–100 days per year. The prospect of enticing serious private sector capital investment into the seafront was consequently non-existent.

Accordingly, work on new sea defences commenced in the mid 90s with the first of the three phases being the critical centre element in front of the core seafront area. This was a multi-agency funded project.

The underlying logic employed in regenerating Southport has always been that carefully designed public sector infrastructure projects would encourage private sector investment which would then in turn generate some momentum to the renaissance of the town. The seawall project therefore had a key objective of the appropriate unlocking of the latent private sector investment potential of the seafront.

A decade later considerable progress has been made by substantial investment from both the public and private sectors. Southport now has a revitalised seafront and is enjoying growth in visitor volume and value. Alone this would represent substantial progress but it wouldn't be sufficient to guarantee success in a modern changing destination market place. For this a rather more holistic approach to regeneration is required. An example would be Southport's round 3 SRB programme that was as community driven as it was private sector driven.

True successful regeneration requires not just refreshed public realm but serious progress in all the major elements that make a successful and thriving community. In this sense a coastal town isn't greatly different from a city for example but it does have characteristics that differentiate.

The inquiry poses six questions and the following is a necessarily brief response to them.

##### 1. *The case for special initiatives to tackle the needs of coastal towns*

Southport is a clear case where “special initiatives” such as SRB, NRF, Sure Start, EU funding etc have been and will continue to be crucial to assisting the regeneration process. While none of these are targeted specifically to coastal towns, there needs to be awareness that coastal towns do require the kind of support these vehicles provide.

The NWDA commissioned “New Vision for North West Coastal Resorts (2001)” does effectively act as a regional coastal towns special initiative aimed at setting out the strategic potential for them. It was successful in focusing local and regional thinking. The principles within may well have benefit if applied on a national basis and would support previous national work on this issue.

2. *Is ODPM's work on housing, social and environmental problems sufficiently focussed or adequately funded for coastal town purposes*

A key issue is the need to join up support and/or initiatives across various Government Department/policy areas. It's clearly not only ODPM's responsibility. In this context the need for an integrated approach to regeneration is the same in coastal towns as for most inner city areas. The same lessons (good and bad) can be applied. Experience in Southport has shown that it is often difficult to persuade Government and Regional agencies that there is a problem—eg difficulty in accessing SRB funding, getting Southport appropriately recognised at Regional Economic Strategy (RES) level and at Objective 1 level in GONW. The issue is perhaps not so much the level of funding, but the recognition of the need and relevance for funding in the first place.

3. *What is the effectiveness of ODPM's liaison with other departments in key areas such as employment, migration, social housing and cooperation with LAs*

Housing policy is of course within ODPM's gift, and here the issue for Southport is affordable housing and the tension around the scale of agreed house building figures, in particular where local new regeneration-based house building would help solve local problems without interfering with broader objectives to focus on Brownfield and city-based Sustainable Communities agendas. Some flexibility (which could be given a specific coastal town policy focus) from ODPM and the Regional assemblies in this respect would help.

Health issues are significant because of the age profile (not specific to Southport), and the uplift generated by visitor loading. Some recognition of this in PCT/NHS allocations would be helpful—there is of course a related social impact.

Transient working population due to seasonal jobs is an important economic development and employment issue specific to coastal towns. Intervention around diversification, better training, improving the quality and seasonal spread of the tourism industry/local offer has impacted this issue. Much of this is covered by standard DTI/RDA policy but at times it appears difficult to get some agencies to recognise the particular problems faced by coastal towns.

For example Southport acted as one of the case studies in the 2003 Sheffield Hallam University study of the Seaside Economy in Coastal Resorts which highlighted amongst many other things strong growth in jobs being masked by the effects of in bound commuter migration. This study provided a fresh robust understanding around coastal town economic and employment issues. Since then additional dynamic change driven by rapidly evolving transnational migrant worker issues has come into play which is indicative of the volatility of the labour market in coastal towns. The need for cross agency aligned response is plain.

4. *Is there a case for more specific regional initiatives, and is enough attention paid to regional disparities*

As covered above the NWDA has in fairness to them tackled this head on through its "New Vision for Coastal Towns" report (and allied reports). This has to some extent fed through into funding allocations but it hasn't been without issue. There is little in the way of general recognition of the issue in the current RES. Although Southport is now, after considerable lobbying, recognised as a "transformational activity"—we wait to see how this will feed into continuing funding support for the long term action that is required.

To some extent this discussion is partly being transferred into the City Region and Northern Way process, but this will not cover all the coastal towns. There is still a major question about the future of the smaller Cumbrian coastal communities, for instance.

5. *Security of funding for coastal towns*

This cuts across all funding programmes and initiatives, and it would be very difficult to assure coastal towns of any special treatment. However, remarks above about the recognition of the range of real issues facing coastal towns would at least provide opportunity to access funding, despite all the obvious caveats about short-termism.

The requirement for "public structural funding" to deliver key infrastructure projects is a common characteristic of modern regeneration programmes but it is not without problem. Many projects are built around multiple funding streams that invariably have different criteria attached to them. The complexity of securing and administering funding streams, which inevitably have differing measure and spend profiles let alone output and outcome requirements, whilst developing and then delivering projects is a major issue.

Whilst the use of public funds requires robust transparency and justification one is at times left with the thought that there must be a better way. Participation through the Regional Development Agency's planning processes (RES, RSS etc) and the emergent sub regional City Region Development Plans may provide some opportunity for a rather more refined mechanism for delivering appropriate, timely and joined up support.

## 6. Success of RDAs and other bodies in supporting and developing the economies of coastal towns

See comments on NWDA above. Where we have been able to access resources the result has been a resounding success. This illustrates the need for recognition which at least offers some chance of a more structured long term approach, rather than having to battle at each stage.

One aspect worth noting is that coastal towns often contain important elements of the country's heritage, and this raises the question whether some of the National Lottery funding streams should be given a specific "coastal" focus (an example is the success of HLF work in Southport)

As set out in the "New Vision for NW Coastal Resorts" Southport did have to decide if it had a destination product future which it quickly did. Its role and position amongst the RDA's wider suite of assets is something that cannot be decided solely from a local or regional perspective and agreement is vital between respective stakeholders. It is vital that clarity exists from all sides as to the future strategic direction of the coastal town and its role and future in the market place. Also critical is clarity as to which agency is doing what and when to achieve said direction. The RDA has a key role in this process utilising mechanisms such as the New Vision for NW Coastal Resorts.

### LESSONS LEARNT SO FAR

The underlying logic employed in regenerating Southport has always been that carefully designed public sector supported regeneration activity including major infrastructure projects would encourage private sector investment which would then in turn generate some momentum to the renaissance of the town. This has been borne out in the progress made so far.

One of the most important factors in making progress has been the role of and leadership provided by the Local Authority. Whilst there are examples of private sector led regeneration it is clear that Southport's regeneration has been predominantly led by the Council. This has particular relevance given the present discussion around the role of LA's in tourism delivery.

A partnership approach is fundamental. Southport has a number of robust and stable public/private partnerships in place covering regeneration delivery (The Southport Partnership), town centre management (Southport Business Enterprise) and marketing (Southport Tourism Business Network. Alongside them of course is the Local Strategic Partnership and the Council's democratic process.

The alignment of funding streams and stakeholders to projects can be a major issue especially when funding windows are invariably time limited and therefore fragile. Understanding and managing the risks endemic in wide scale regeneration is vital when progressing complex regeneration projects or programmes. Equally important is a clear appreciation of the determination required to ensure successful completion.

The planning process has an ability to support or suppress the regeneration process. It must be both aligned and in tune with the overall strategic direction for effective and efficient delivery.

This is increasingly true for the sub regional, regional and national planning processes. If there is a lack of understanding and agreement between the various partners driven by inadequate strategic alignment and buy in then it is extremely difficult to move progress. In this situation the private sector confidence so vital to the sustainability of the regeneration process is severely damaged. If this loss of confidence is allowed to grow then any momentum built up is lost. Once lost it is far more difficult to restart the process.

Genuinely successful regeneration of a coastal town requires prolonged and sustained focus and support. Short term or quick fix mentality is not an option. As evidenced in many areas of life it is actually more cost effective to ensure a critical mass of investment, both public and private, is in place than to take a more short term ad hoc approach.

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## Memorandum by the National Piers Society (CT 28)

### INTRODUCTION

Coastal towns that boast seaside piers tend to have an identity all their own. Indeed their pier often becomes the focus of the town's seaside activities. Another piece of brilliance from the Victorians, these piers were the stimulus that promoted tourism around the coast principally of England and Wales. They were engineering and architectural feats of excellence and over time provided the basis of all sorts of seaside entertainment, the best seen and still to be seen in the larger pier theatres. The interlinking of these structures with the lives of inhabitants of and visitors to the towns with which they are associated is crucial. Imagine, for example, Blackpool without its three piers; similarly, Brighton is all the poorer for the loss of its West pier.

As the years go by, seaside piers in England and Wales, and on the Isle of Man, are in ever increasing danger of being lost to their communities. Many reasons can be cited, but if a pier loses its sense of purpose, it is a sign of general malaise in the town itself. For example, many piers have (or had) landing stages built

for the days when there were many more visiting pleasure craft and ferries. Closing or removing these landing stages can cost a town more than their upkeep, particularly if tourism value is taken into account. Apart from anything else, they are another means of contact with neighbouring coastal communities.

#### BENEFITS OF SEASIDE PIERS

- Provide identity to the town, both in engineering and architectural qualities.
- Provide employment and, if well managed, not just in the summer months.
- Encourage tourism, particularly day trippers.
- Can provide sea borne contact with other communities and tourists.
- Can encourage the arts and establishment of arts communities associated with pier life.
- Encourage angling and other leisure activities.
- Provide refuge for those in the twilight of their lives.
- Encourage interaction of people from all walks of life and of all ages.

#### THE FUTURE

If our understanding is correct, the forthcoming Marine Bill will make it more attractive and easier for developers to propose a pier in their schemes of redevelopment of the coastal fringe.

The Society will support all projects where a new seaside pier is proposed, for example currently at Jaywick Sands.

The Society continues to support all piers that promote small scale family entertainments which are often the financial lifeline of these structures.

Coastal towns that have seen a renaissance through renovation of their seaside pier include Cromer, Deal and Saltburn to name but three. Maybe towns that lost their pier through financial neglect or political expedience could benefit from having a new pier built, New Brighton, Herne Bay and Margate for example, thus enhancing their status locally and nationally and encouraging new moves to using our very special coastal resource.

The Society welcomes all coastal town development, particularly if a new pier or sustenance of an existing pier results.

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#### **Memorandum by Dover District Council (CT 29)**

As a partner, Dover District Council has responded to this Inquiry through our work with the East Kent Partnership and the Dover Pride board. This response builds on those comments and provides specific comments from a local authority viewpoint that we would like considered.

#### 1. TO EXAMINE THE CASE FOR SPECIAL INITIATIVES TO TACKLE THE NEEDS OF COASTAL TOWNS

1.1 There is a high level of identified deprivation throughout the coastal towns that is not being given enough priority. In light of increasing pressures from climate change and sea defences to the encouragement of further housing growth, special initiatives should be available to coastal towns, as currently available to the Growth Areas.

1.2 Dover District Council recognises the importance of coastal towns, particularly, of Dover town and the issues facing the area in terms of high levels of deprivation, topographical issues, lack of investment opportunities and has now made it the priority of the Council in terms of major projects, investment and partnership working.

1.3 Dover suffers from relative disadvantage in the region and serious deprivation in several of its urban wards. Some wards have unemployment levels three times the national average and are ranked in the worst 20% nationally (IMD 2004).

1.4 Dover has suffered decline like many similar towns on the South Coast. However, despite the successful port, the town is suffering from lack of investment that has led to the high levels of deprivation within its urban ward. Additionally, the reliance on the marine sector has, particularly in the recent past, shown the vulnerability of the local economy eg Hoverspeed, P&O, problems in France, particularly with strikes and problems with the closure of berths.

1.5 A 30-year vision and action plan has been developed with key partners, to tackle the issues relating to Dover, particularly around communication, education and community, business and skills, urban renaissance and transport infrastructure.

1.6 Other smaller seaside towns, along the coast, for example, Deal, also require support in light of changing demographics with ageing populations and the impact of this economically and socially.

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## 2. TO LOOK AT THE WORK ODPM IS DOING TO ADDRESS THE SOCIAL, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS COASTAL TOWNS FACE, AND TO EVALUATE WHETHER IT IS EFFECTIVE, WELL-FOCUSED OR ADEQUATELY FUNDED

2.1 The work currently undertaken by ODPM is not focused on coastal towns and therefore in light of this, it is difficult to give an opinion on its effectiveness to these areas. More could be done to support coastal towns, however, unlike Neighbourhood Renewal, many of the coastal areas have missed out due to the scale of the scheme. Multiple deprivation is a useful indicator, however, the individual indices need to be utilised to tackle specific issues affecting coastal towns as well as considering other issues facing coastal towns such as ageing population and topographic restrictions that reduce catchment areas affecting employment and business opportunities, infrastructure etc.

2.2 The SEEDA Regional Economic Strategy does mention the coastal area as a priority, however, the sheer size of this area in the South East will mean that resources are spread too thin and there appears to be less focus on bringing deprived areas up to the standard and reducing the prosperity gap across the South East. Due to the overall success of the South East, pockets of deprivation, including East Kent, is lost and therefore is not seen as a priority.

2.3 Overall inadequate attention is being given to addressing the extremely worrying disparities within the South East and in particular to the structural weaknesses that exist in the East Kent economy. This is important to the success of the Growth Agenda as it is to neighbouring areas. Nor is there the prospect of adequate and secure funding streams (post-SRB) to provide community regeneration initiatives. This is further compounded by the fact that none of the coastal towns across East Kent provides the critical mass to succeed to the standards seen in the large city concentrations of Southampton, Portsmouth and Brighton.

2.4 A concerted effort from Government is needed to build on the momentum of local delivery vehicles such as Dover Pride, together with intervention and investment to achieve the vision. This can be achieved through better co-ordination and communication between government agencies and mainstream funding being focused and implemented through the coastal regeneration priorities as part of a sub-regional economic strategy.

2.5 Overall support for major infrastructure development in towns such as Dover is required and issues of public realm in the smaller coastal towns such as Deal.

## 3. TO ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ODPM'S LIAISON WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS, IN KEY AREAS SUCH AS EMPLOYMENT, MIGRATION, AND SOCIAL HOUSING AND CO-OPERATION WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES

3.1 Again this is limited as there has been a limited focus on the coastal towns. There is some co-operation, however, this does seem focused to the growth areas. The plethora of agencies leading on such initiatives does make it very difficult to access information and ensure any progress.

3.2 Dover District Council is part of the Local Area Agreement for Kent, however, apart from a target around bringing empty properties back into use, there is no focus on coastal towns. The priority for coastal towns should come from central Government and disseminate down to local authorities through the LAA.

## 4. TO EXAMINE WHETHER THERE IS A CASE FOR MORE SPECIFIC REGIONAL INITIATIVES, AND WHETHER ENOUGH ATTENTION IS PAID TO REGIONAL DISPARITIES

4.1 As mentioned, the previous Regional Economic Strategy focused on reducing the gap between the prosperous areas in the South East and the deprived areas, however, in the current draft RES this priority has been diluted.

4.2 With the current debate around double devolution and local government reorganisation, it needs to be questioned if "regional" is the right level for these disparities to be dealt with, or whether future initiatives could be rolled out through the Local Area Agreements.

4.3 More focus should also be given to the social and environmental issues facing coastal towns, as the current focus of SEEDA is on economic outputs alone and does not prioritise these issues, which are essential to improve.

4.4 Locally, the problems of successive economic restructuring, the competition from neighbouring areas and poor connections between the key elements of the town has led to a number of fundamental issues in Dover:

- Economically, the Port of Dover dominates the economy and expansion to meet forecast growth should aim to maximise regeneration benefits for the town. Additionally, new economic activities are needed in Dover to diversify.
- Low morale and negative attitudes are a major issue in Dover and strong leadership is required to reverse current expectations.
- The quality of education and training provision needs to be improved.
- The lack of the sense of place, visitor facilities and evening economy, essential for a visitor and tourist destination.

- A comprehensive approach to tourism development should include improvements of the range and quality of tourist accommodation.
- Remote location of Dover with difficult access impacting on property values and development potential.
- Economic regeneration and housing growth could help shift, diversify and balance the character of the town and attract new investment and visitor expenditure.
- It is essential key transport issues in and around Dover are addressed, in particular, dualling of the A2, A20 environmental improvements, securing CTRL to Dover and a solution to Operation Stack that affects Dover town, the A20 and M20.

#### 5. TO CONSIDER THE SECURITY OF FUTURE FUNDING FOR REGENERATING AND SUPPORTING COASTAL TOWNS

5.1 To ensure the sustainability of any improvement to coastal towns, sustainable funding sources are essential. Short term funding, as with SRB, does help to address issues short term, however, many of the long term issues facing coastal towns will require more commitment.

5.2 To date, regeneration within Dover district has been limited due to lack of public sector investment and priority from Government. Dover, as the Gateway to England, should be a priority. A major development site that the Council has been working with partners to secure along the A20 leading up to the Port has taken almost 10 years and, as the first impression of England from the Port, this should have been a priority for improvement.

5.3 The Dover Pride Regeneration Partnership seeks to improve the town through strong civic, community and business leadership essential for long-term economic growth and regeneration. However, despite the intentions and commitment of Dover Pride, funding is only available for three years to enable the partnership to be set up and deliver some small intervention based projects (funding currently from SEEDA via the East Kent Partnership). Greater levels of funding will be needed to sustain Dover Pride and enable it to achieve its regeneration plans.

5.4 Unlike its neighbours Thanet and Shepway, Dover has not had significant European and Private Sector investment, nor has it had the same levels of Government intervention as Hastings, which suffers from very similar issues. However, as an internationally known place, with magnificent assets such as the White Cliffs and Dover Castle and the gateway to England, Dover deserves the commitment of all levels to ensure its regeneration.

#### 6. TO EVALUATE THE SUCCESS OF THE RDA'S AND OTHER BODIES IN SUPPORTING AND DEVELOPING THE ECONOMIES OF COASTAL TOWNS

6.1 Through the East Kent Partnership, devolved funding is beginning to make a difference to the coastal towns of East Kent. EKP recognises the priority towns of Dover and Margate and are striving to improve these areas.

6.2 As previously mentioned, the RDA is too focused on economic outputs and there needs to be more funding available to support social and environmental projects that will not only physically regenerate the area but also ensure all residents have the right to access economic benefits.

6.3 Despite the development of Dover Pride and the funding of some early projects, progress is difficult due to the lack of interventions and investment. There is a need for the government to recognise the importance of Dover and the issues it currently faces. There is a need for the RDA to target coastal regeneration through its current review of the Regional Economic Strategy and focus funding and interventions to the pockets of deprivation that exist in these areas.

#### 7. SUMMARY

7.1 Dover District Council welcomes this inquiry and the potential for the regeneration of Coastal Towns to be a priority on the Government's agenda. There is a need for the government to realise that coastal regeneration is as important as the Growth Areas and acknowledge the positive work being put in place to raise aspirations and confidence in Dover.

7.2 Dover District Council will continue to prioritise the regeneration of urban Dover within the district and work with partners to deliver the Dover Pride Vision. However, long-term resources, commitment and support is required from all partners and Government to achieve this.

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## Memorandum by East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC) (CT 30)

### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Many coastal towns face a range of specific and inter-related issues: deprivation, isolation, poor transport links, coastal erosion, restructuring of tourism/other coastal industries and would benefit from consistent and long-term funding support.

1.2 There is a need for a more joined-up policy approach across Government to address the issues of remoteness, peripherality and access that are inherent to coastal towns.

1.3 Greater flexibility and responsibility should be devolved to RDAs and Local Authorities to ensure that effective regeneration is delivered locally.

### 2. BACKGROUND ON THE EAST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE, EAST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE COUNCIL AND SPECIFIC FUNDING WITHIN EAST RIDING'S COASTAL TOWNS

2.1 The East Riding of Yorkshire has one of the longest stretches of coastline of any Local Authority area in England, extending 52 miles (84.5km) from the chalk headland at Flamborough, through the Holderness plain to the Humber Estuary. Flamborough Headland and the southern end of the East Riding coastline at Spurn Point have Heritage Coast designations, with Flamborough also designated as a European Marine site and the Spurn peninsula as a National Nature Reserve. (See attached map on page 8).

2.2 The East Riding has one of the fastest eroding coastlines in North West Europe, with coastal protection in place only at the main centres of population and areas of national interest—this amounts to only 11.4 km of the total length of 84.5km. The rate of erosion on the unprotected stretches (mainly in Holderness) is currently averaging 1.8 million per annum.

2.3 The East Riding has a population of around 325,000, of which around 20 live in its coastal communities. The seaside resorts of Bridlington (33,589), Hornsea (8,243) and Withernsea (5,980) are the main coastal towns, while numerous smaller settlements, which are often scattered and isolated, lie along its coastal length.

2.4 East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC) is England's largest unitary authority council by area, covering 930 square miles. The Council is also one of the biggest employers in the area with a workforce of nearly 9,000 full time equivalent employees.

2.5 In December 2005, as part of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, the Audit Commission ranked the council as "improving strongly" and as one of only a few councils in the country to demonstrate this level of continued improvement.

2.6 The main coastal towns have previously received external funding support (totalling approx £5 million) under time-limited schemes (three to five years): Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) for both Bridlington and Withernsea and Market Town Initiative (MTI) for Hornsea. The continuity and length of these schemes has created problems as they have not operated for a long enough period of time to embed the new services and initiatives they sought to deliver and, therefore, the long-term impact these programmes may have had, has been limited.

2.7 Bridlington and the coastal strip (excluding Hornsea and Withernsea) were, however, awarded Objective 2 status under the 2000–06 Yorkshire and Humber Programme, which recognises the need for coastal locations to invest in projects that broaden their economic base and create new employment sectors, whilst enhancing the environmental asset base of coastal towns, which in most cases is their key locational lure.

2.8 Bridlington has adopted a comprehensive Regeneration Strategy approach to maximise the benefits of Objective 2 and RDA funding. The strategy details the vision and objectives for change, whilst also providing a broad spatial plan for guiding future development in the town to 2016, which will become an Area Action Plan within the Local Development Framework.

2.9 It has been much harder to secure further funding (post SRB and MTI) for our other main coastal towns of Hornsea and Withernsea. This is in part due to their failure to secure Objective 2 status when, despite exhibiting high levels of deprivation, they were taken out of the Programme (along with other coastal and estuary towns) to help balance the required population figures.

2.10 However some of the coastal towns and areas that were excluded from Objective 2 are eligible for funding under the Leader + Programme (2000–06), albeit with a lesser rate of grant intervention.

### 3. THE CASE FOR SPECIAL INITIATIVES TO TACKLE THE NEEDS OF COASTAL TOWNS

3.1 There are clear-cut issues facing coastal towns of all sizes. These issues are highlighted by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2004, which shows deep pockets of deprivation within the coastal zone, including low income, benefit dependency, high unemployment, poor health and lower educational achievement (areas of Bridlington fall within the top 3% nationally). There is also a broader zone of economic deprivation along the coastal strip, reflecting more general traits such as isolation and low aspiration.

3.2 This is illustrated in the allocation of Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) and the Neighbourhood Element of the Safer and Stronger Communities Fund (SSCF). Most of the 22 coastal local authorities eligible for NRF programmes featured because they cover major industrial towns/cities and therefore have strongly urban neighbourhoods. In contrast, individual, “stand-alone” coastal towns exhibit smaller, but particularly intense, pockets of deprivation.

3.3 These did not qualify for NRF as levels of deprivation were measured at ward level. The introduction of Deprivation Indices at the smaller Super Output Area (SOA) level highlighted these pockets and we very much welcome their recognition in the allocation of the Neighbourhood Element of SSCF. In common with Bridlington, the North Somerset coastal area and the towns of Kings Lynn, Southend, Portsmouth and Thanet have also recently been awarded SSCF whilst not being eligible for NRF.

3.4 Coastal towns tend to be more remote and isolated than urban areas, as they only serve a 180-degree hinterland. Road and rail infrastructure is often poor. There is no dual carriageway access to the East Riding coastal towns and only Bridlington has a rail link.

3.5 The demographics of coastal towns are unique. There is a higher population of older residents in the East Riding with an in-migration of retirees. The aspirations of young people are often low and influenced by low wage, low-skill, part-time and seasonal employment, with few graduates returning home to the coast. Seasonal employment and cheap rented accommodation also continues to attract itinerant households, often with chaotic lifestyles, again putting pressure on services.

3.6 It is important to note the considerable population increases in coastal towns across a large part of the year in relation to both day and overnight visitors. This is particularly pertinent to the large number of caravan sites and the impact this increased and transitional population has on local service delivery and education. There is often a greater cost of service delivery, even in comparison to rural areas, with difficulties experienced in the East Riding in attracting sufficient qualified staff (dentists, nurses, midwives etc) to the coastal towns.

3.7 Tourism is a key industry for coastal towns yet the nature of visitors has changed with increasing day and short-stay markets for both leisure and business. We accept that this is the reality and future of tourism for coastal towns. It is, therefore, vital that such seasonal criteria are into account by funding bodies when determining value for money of, for example, Park and Ride facilities and improvements to rail infrastructure.

3.8 The decline in long-term visitor stays to coastal towns has also had a great impact on the appeal and usability of town centres such as Bridlington, particularly for its local resident population. As a result, spending levels in the town centre are too low to support a wide range of service jobs, small businesses in other sectors do not want to operate from the town centre, the retail and leisure offer is inadequate to meet the town’s needs and civic life is not of the quality that the local community wants and needs.

3.9 While tourism will always remain one of the most important sectors of Bridlington’s economy, the “offer” needs to be updated. The most plausible tactics for achieving this are to:

- Make coastal town centres work better for their existing residents.
- Attract more residents of working age.
- Provide the operating and commercial environment in town centres that will be conducive to developing and growing a competitive, year-round retail, leisure and small business service offer.

3.10 East Riding coastal towns have previously relied on former industrial areas (such as the South Yorkshire coalfields/steel producing areas) for the majority of their tourist visitors. As these areas begin to recover and become more affluent, so do their residents, who consequently have more disposable incomes and higher expectations. If coastal towns are to retain their existing business, then they too will need to improve their offer.

### 4. TO LOOK AT HOW ODPM IS ADDRESSING THE SOCIAL, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS COASTAL TOWNS FACE, AND TO EVALUATE WHETHER IT IS EFFECTIVE, WELL FOCUSED OR ADEQUATELY FUNDED

4.1 We do not believe that Government has responded adequately to the issues identified in “On the Edge—A Strategy for the Coast” (published by the LGA in 2001 and reviewed in 2004), which outlines in detail the social and economic problems facing communities that are affected by coastal geography.

4.2 There are no explicit programmes or policies to address the problems faced by coastal towns. In our city region and in the context of the Northern Way agenda, the focus on the regeneration of the city-region threatens to marginalise coastal areas, as many significant seaside towns do not fit well into the city-region

framework. However, many of the Investment Priorities, eg “Marketing the North to the World” and “Getting More People into Work” are directly relevant. It is also important to emphasise that without a successful city (Hull), it is impossible to have a successful city-region.

4.3 The obvious additional costs to maintaining the physical and social infrastructure of coastal towns, let alone improving or enhancing the physical offer and public areas, are not adequately reflected in Government allocations. For example, sea-front routes/esplanades need far more frequent maintenance cycles and up-grade programmes than normal minor routes. With very limited resources in the first place, “bending” to meet the specific needs of coastal communities is very difficult to achieve. We are, however, using the Local Area Agreement (LAA), which is due for implementation from April 2006, to coordinate resources and give priority to deprivation “hotspots”, particularly Bridlington.

4.4 The establishment of DMOs (Destination Management Organisations), an initiative encouraged and part-financed by the RDAs, may play a larger role in contributing to the improved economic performance of coastal towns. A joint DMO for Hull and the East Riding is currently being developed and will be the first in the Yorkshire and Humber region.

#### 5. TO ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ODPM’S LIAISON WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS, IN KEY AREAS SUCH AS EMPLOYMENT, MIGRATION, AND SOCIAL HOUSING, AND CO-OPERATION WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES

5.1 The emphasis thus far appears to have been on coastal protection and associated work with DEFRA. The East Riding has one of the fastest eroding coastlines in Europe and the effect of coastal erosion has caused a major blight on the private housing market along the Holderness coast, as the cost/benefit analysis approach used by DEFRA when calculating compensation has disadvantaged this area. Uncertainty and low property values consequently impact negatively on the economy of coastal towns.

5.2 Such communities, although relatively small, are therefore suffering housing market failure similar to that experienced in inner city and former coalfield areas, which are being supported by Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder programmes—a similarly cohesive and comprehensive approach is needed to enable such communities to achieve protection or be supported in relocating. (The Hull and East Riding Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder intervention area does not stretch to our vulnerable coastal communities).

5.3 The lack of a national Ports Strategy is a major issue where much stronger coordination across Government is needed. Ports that have Trust Status are required to have “regeneration” written into their articles, but this is neither consistently nor rigorously applied by the Department of Transport. This has caused particular problems in Bridlington, where ERYC is keen to promote a Marina and re-developed harbour facility, as part of the regeneration strategy, but is unable to progress the project without the active commitment of the port’s Harbour Commissioners. This issue needs to be addressed if Government is serious about using ports as vehicles for regeneration.

5.4 The need for more joined-up thinking and liaison between Government departments will become even more essential in view of the greater devolution to local authorities, as demonstrated through the rural pathfinders (ERYC is currently heading the Humber Rural Pathfinder) and Local Area Agreements.

#### 6. TO EXAMINE WHETHER THERE IS A CASE FOR MORE SPECIFIC REGIONAL INITIATIVES, AND WHETHER ENOUGH ATTENTION IS PAID TO REGIONAL DISPARITIES

6.1 Regional and sub-regional policy markers are already in place: Regional Economic Strategy (RES), Hull and East Riding Joint Structure Plan (JSP), Humber Economic Development Investment Plan (HEDIP) and Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan (ICZM), with the RES and HEDIP currently under review. Other emerging policy documents include the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and Regional Rural Framework (RRF).

6.2 ERYC’s Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan (ICZM) is a non-statutory approach that recognises the inherent linkages in coastal management both between different geographical areas and sectors. It recognises that many different organisations and agencies can make a difference to the long-term management of the zone and aims to gain commitment from these to a common vision.

6.3 It is vital to ensure that any new regional initiatives are linked to local delivery and also to realise that there is diversity within regions not just between regions. The JSP recognises the special characteristics of the coast (peripherality, remoteness, seasonal employment, environmental pressures etc) and a specific policy response is provided. A similar approach is emerging in the new RSS for Yorkshire and the Humber with a specific Coastal sub-area also identified.

6.4 The coastal areas of the Northern and Midlands Regions are less densely populated than those in the south. Coastal towns, therefore, vary significantly in the degree of connection between them in terms of labour markets, transport systems etc and distance from visitor markets. It is more difficult to demonstrate critical mass and high returns on investment for northern “stand alone” coastal towns. Any coastal towns policy/programme would, therefore, need to adopt criteria that reflect the differing circumstances of each, rather than a “blanket” approach, which may favour better “connected” coastal towns such as Brighton.

## 7. TO CONSIDER THE SECURITY OF FUTURE FUNDING FOR REGENERATING AND SUPPORTING COASTAL TOWNS

7.1 ERYC has been fortunate to secure significant funding from its RDA, Yorkshire Forward, for Bridlington. However the status of Bridlington as an Objective 2 area has been a key factor in this.

7.2 A consistent and reliable long-term source of funding for coastal towns, with a strategic and programme-led rather than a project-led delivery approach would be of great benefit for future development and regeneration objectives within the coastal zone. (Our current commitment with Yorkshire Forward for Bridlington only runs until March 2008). The issue of private sector match funding is a particularly difficult one for many seaside towns as the capacity in the private sector often isn't there.

## 8. TO EVALUATE THE SUCCESS OF THE RDAs AND OTHER BODIES IN SUPPORTING AND DEVELOPING THE ECONOMIES OF COASTAL TOWNS

8.1 Yorkshire Forward have been proactive in making the major coastal towns of Scarborough, Bridlington and Cleethorpes "Renaissance Towns" and the smaller resorts of Hornsea and Whitby part of the Market Towns/Renaissance Market Towns Initiatives.

8.2 Their approach has centered on improving the "quality of place" to underpin economic development. However, the status of being a "Renaissance Town" does not ensure that a significant funding package is attached and coastal towns are yet again faced with competing for funds against the larger regional city centres.

8.3 Equally as important to note are the difficulties encountered in accessing support for revenue measures, which remain critical to the ongoing success of capital projects. We feel that Government should afford more flexibility to RDAs with regard to the split between capital and revenue funding.

8.4 Whilst support from the Humber and Urban Renaissance Teams of Yorkshire Forward has been very good, coastal towns do not appear to be high on the agendas of the cluster and tourism teams at Yorkshire Forward and there is no dedicated coastal unit for the region in either the RDA or Government Office, despite the region's 100-mile long coastline.

8.5 Arguing the regional or sub-regional impact of a project is often very hard for coastal towns, due to their locality, yet this is a key element for securing RDA funds from its single pot allocation. Special dispensation for coastal towns would make this process inherently fairer.

8.6 We support the concept of Coastal Action Zones, spearheaded by the Lincolnshire local authorities, which seek to improve the living standards of coastal communities and comprises all public service providers in the area.

## 9. CONCLUSION

9.1 East Riding of Yorkshire Council feels that the needs of coastal towns should be seriously considered by Government and would welcome a set of specific initiatives, which recognise their unique issues and form part of a long-term, strategic and programme-led funding assistance package.

9.2 The roles and responsibilities of RDAs should be enhanced, allowing more flexibility to promote Orders and negotiate capital and revenue funding splits.

9.3 The roles and responsibilities of sub-regional partnerships should also be enhanced, with a focus on localised delivery, where this is appropriate and also where quality thresholds can be met.

9.4 We would advocate the use of a Masterplanning approach for the regeneration of coastal towns and/or coastal zones. In the case of Bridlington, we felt there was a clear need to adopt an Area Action Plan process to provide the broad spatial strategy for the long-term regeneration of the town. Although we recognise that this approach is costly both in time and resources, it is one that we hope will work for us.

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### Memorandum by United Utilities (UU) (CT 31)

#### UNITED UTILITIES

United Utilities (UU) operates the water and wastewater systems, and the electricity distribution network for the North West of England. UU also successfully manages support services for a range of organisations in the UK and overseas including a growing number of local authorities. UU also manages and maintains nearly eight million water, gas and electricity meters in the UK.

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## INTRODUCTION

Predictions of global warming and the potential effects on sea levels with the subsequent effect on our coastal utility infrastructure is a cause of concern and UU comments may have most relevance to issues 5 and 6 for the Committee's consideration.

## PLANNING CONSULTATION

UU's investment programme is agreed with our regulators OFWAT and OFGEM in five-year cycles and the current programme is for the years 2005 to 2010. The charges that we can pass on to our customers in that period is controlled by our regulators and the emergence of investment needs for which no funding provision has been made can lead to delays in improvement works.

It is very important that local authorities and developers consult with utility infrastructure suppliers on a regular basis in order that infrastructure service provision can be coordinated and link to the aspirations of our customers.

If we are not given advanced notice of the aspirations of our customers for major works/development we may not be able to fund the necessary infrastructure provision in the same time frame as our customers expectations.

The major re-generation and flood defence works at Blackpool is a prime example where there is the potential for problems in terms of treatment of sewage, discharges to bathing beaches and foul flooding of properties.

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## Memorandum by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) (CT 32)

### ROLE OF THE LSC

1. The LSC is working in partnership with Local Strategic Partnerships and other bodies within its area to ensure that local post-16 training and education needs are planned and met. Fundamental to this aim is to contribute to the overall local economic, social and environmental objectives of local areas as agreed at regional and local level.

2. Hampshire and the Isle of Wight has significant coastal areas, towns and City Pods. The economic history and nature of these areas is such that economic diversification and regeneration are key factors in their future prosperity and the LSC plays a key role in identifying the needs arising from regeneration initiatives and in supporting them with focused provision of education, training, learning and skills.

3. The LSC has a key part to play by contributing to the skills agenda and is committed to working in partnership with agencies and stakeholders to ensure alignment of priorities and investments. The LSC, at local and regional level, wishes to be fully engaged with ODPM to achieve this.

### COASTAL TOWNS IN HAMPSHIRE AND THE ISLE OF WIGHT

4. Hampshire's coast includes the City Ports of Southampton and Portsmouth. Although very different in nature to smaller coastal towns which have typically suffered from decline, for example as resorts or fishing ports, they do share issues of unemployment, lower activity rates, lower average wage rates and changing skill needs. The 2004 Multiple Index of deprivation indicates that Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight were ranked 88th, 96th and 126th respectively, of the 354 local authorities in the whole of the country (where one was the most deprived).

5. Although both Cities have been very successful in growing their core port activities (Southampton as a container and cruise port and Portsmouth as a ferry port), other maritime-related activities have experienced mixed fortunes and there has been decline in traditional manufacturing activities. In both Cities, this has resulted in a legacy of brownfield sites which have issues such as poor access and contamination which distinguish them from inland sites. Gosport, which has traditionally been dependent on MOD activity and land ownership also experiences these urban coastal challenges.

6. The Isle of Wight's economy traditionally has been dependent on the tourism industry and thus has been vulnerable to seasonal unemployment and a need to diversify its economy as well as develop and adapt its tourism and leisure sectors. Regeneration of its coastal towns is a critical part of developing the Island's economy and Cowes Waterfront regeneration projects and initiatives in Ryde will boost the local economy. Development of the Island's Area Investment framework has attracted £2.8 million investment through SEEDA devolved funding over the next three years. Although various initiatives are making a valuable contribution to regeneration of coastal towns there is a local view that a commitment to longer term funding would provide greater certainty and a more comprehensive approach.

7. As noted in both the Draft Regional Plan and the Regional Economic Strategy there is significant variation in levels of economic performance and deprivation within the South East Region. Some coastal areas of the South East may be more similar to those in other Regions than to other areas in the same Region, although their proximity to more prosperous areas may offer greater opportunities than their counterparts in other Regions.

#### FUTURE PLANS FOR GROWTH AND REGENERATION

8. The Draft South East Regional Plan has proposed the Isle of Wight as a Special Policy Area, giving priority to the regeneration of the Island in order to address its concentrations of social and economic deprivation.

9. The Draft Plan identifies South Hampshire as a growth area of strategic significance, raising its levels of development and at the same time addressing the needs of significant areas of social deprivation particularly in areas of Southampton and Portsmouth. The Partnership for Urban South Hampshire is seeking a step change in the local economy, raising the long term annual growth rate in GVA from 1.7% per annum to 3.5% per annum and generating major increased employment growth. There will be a major challenge to meet the skill requirements associated with this growth and ensuring the economic benefits accrue to the coastal areas in most need of economic regeneration.

#### CONCLUSIONS

- Coastal towns have distinct economic features requiring strong partnership working between local authorities other local bodies, supported by the funding of SEEDA and other relevant government departments. There is a local view that longer term commitment to specific funding would be beneficial.
- The growth plans for South Hampshire, allied to the regeneration needs of the coastal urban areas, will require the support of initiatives aimed at spreading the economic and social benefits of growth into the more deprived areas, not least through the raising of skills of local people to compete for new employment opportunities.

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### Memorandum by Kent County Council (CT 33)

#### SUMMARY

I. Kent County Council finds the ODPM Inquiry into Coastal Towns welcome and timely. Coastal Towns, throughout the nation, have suffered decline since the 1960s and the unique problems they face can make regeneration much harder to deliver. The combined effects of poor accessibility, social dumping, ageing population, deteriorating physical fabric, 180 deg catchment and a low-wage seasonal economy have prevented many coastal towns from successfully reversing decline despite a range of imaginative regeneration initiatives supported by SRB, European and other external funding.

II. Within Kent, the impact of the disappearance of the traditional English seaside holiday has been compounded by the decline of other key sectors not just within the towns themselves but within the immediate agricultural and mining hinterland. Recovery is progressing but is still hampered by a range of impediments including low basic skills and skill shortages, low property and land values and an enduring perception of peripherality.

III. We find the inquiry timely. It comes just as many of Kent's coastal towns are developing clear regeneration strategies and now have major opportunities to lift themselves out of a long period of decline—yet major funding streams are being lost.

IV. As well as ODPM funding, there must also be effective liaison with other government departments with funds to tackle the root causes of deprivation on the coast—in particular: transport, housing, culture/media/sport, industry, education, work & pensions and health.

#### 1. THE CASE FOR SPECIAL INITIATIVES TO TACKLE THE NEEDS OF COASTAL TOWNS

1.1 Kent's coastline runs for 350 miles from Romney Marsh to Dartford—longer than any County in England and more than half of the rest of the Region's coastline. The north Kent section from Dartford to Sittingbourne currently benefits from ODPM Growth Area Funding, but from Herne Bay to Lydd no such dedicated funds exist and support has been piecemeal, area-based, and often subject to very complex funding bids and monitoring. Consequently this stretch of coastline, a prominent part of our prosperous southeast, remains one of the poorest parts of Britain and Europe.

1.2 Kent's Coastal Towns face key social problems arising out of a number of factors:

- higher than average benefit dependency and in-migration of benefit dependants;

- higher than average proportion of elderly;
- higher than average levels of infirmity;
- higher than average unemployment and underemployment;
- low qualification levels;
- low seasonal wages; and
- declining tourism.

1.3 The Kent Coastal Towns Analysis (KCC Feb 2002—Appendix 1) examines Kent's urban areas and clearly reflects this position. While it is apparent from this analysis that Kent's most deprived areas are primarily around the coast in the eastern half of the county, based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004, it shows that 19.4% of Margate's Super Output Areas (SOAs), 15.8% of West Sheppey's, 15.4% of Ramsgate's and 9.7% of Folkestone's are in the 10% most deprived in England. 19% of Dover's SOAs are in the 20% most deprived.

1.4 In housing terms, the issues are equally stark. These towns experience:

- lower than average property values;
- a high proportion of private sector absentee landlords;
- higher than average building repair maintenance costs;
- a higher than average proportion of older buildings in multiple occupancy, particularly former hotels and guest houses; and
- remote access and a 180 degree hinterland.

1.5 The findings of the Thanet Inquiry 2005 (Appendix 2) found that these circumstances combined to produce a substantial in-flow of population with a preponderance of older people and benefit claimants. It also highlighted the fact that several of Kent's coastal towns are significant importers of children, placed there by other local authorities. This constant population churn produces highly transient populations resulting in unstable and unsustainable communities. These issues are addressed in the negotiation of Public Service Agreements with central government and are key targets of the County Council's Supporting Independence Programme.

1.6 Kent's coastal towns have suffered from their proximity to London and the effect of London dumping since the 1960s and 1970s, but have not yet benefited from the combination of faster rail links and low property values that should give rise to a growing demand for middle class second homes and a lively cultural economy. There are examples where this is just beginning, eg: Whitstable and Folkestone, but the pressures from other factors in towns such as Dover, Margate, Ramsgate and Herne Bay are such that the decline has not been arrested and, in Thanet, unemployment is rising. Consequently, intervention by ODPM would be both timely and welcome.

1.7 As the London Olympics approach, the global spotlight will fall increasingly on East London and its environs, where Kent's coastal towns may become Olympic "gateways". Dover is a case in point. Some 25 million passengers pass through its port each year—and this throughput is expected to double during the Olympics.

1.8 Considerable public investment is still required if these towns are to create an appropriately positive impression while, at the same time, providing good bases for Olympic visitors with a modern range of visitor facilities. The image of despair and dereliction evident at the centre of too many of these towns at present needs to be sharply reversed if they are to benefit from a positive "Olympic effect". As part of a package of Olympic related opportunities, we should ensure that our coastal towns share in the new employment created from the construction phase onwards, both directly and through the supply chain, particularly for high quality local produce that will have travelled the minimal number of food miles.

1.9 A KCC Select Committee on Coastal Towns, reporting in 2004, identifies the need for a County Strategy and Action Plan aimed at improving the Coastal Economy and redressing decline. The emerging Kent Coastal Towns Action Plan establishes a 15-year vision for the Kent coastal zone with an initial seven-year revival programme leading into the London Olympics.

1.10 Skills and opportunities for young people; improved accessibility; and diversification of the economy and more effective integration of the visitor and evening economy with other economic activity, including leisure, creative industry, business development, catalytic design, ports, sports and culture; are key elements of this plan.

1.11 There is a need to work with Kent's coastal airports at Lydd and Manston (avionics engineering, business parks, cargo) and its port and harbour authorities (marinas, short sea shipping, freight and materials handling) to ensure that they are in a position to exploit development opportunities while at the same time making a positive contribution to the prosperity, vitality and environmental appeal of the Kent Coast.

1.12 Within this, every attempt should be made to enhance the role played by the fishing industry. Links between marine-based industry and leisure activity should be exploited where possible, taking account of the attractiveness to visitors of a bustling waterfront, active at all hours.

## 2. THE WORK ODPM IS DOING TO ADDRESS THE SOCIAL, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS OF COASTAL TOWNS—IS IT EFFECTIVE, WELL-FOCUSED AND ADEQUATELY FUNDED?

2.1 Although the ODPM has generally not been particularly active in the regeneration coastal towns, in recent months, Kent County Council has welcomed significant initiatives from the ODPM that begin to address some of these issues. Thanet is to be the main beneficiary but it is, as yet, too early to comment on the likely effectiveness of the developing programmes.

2.2 In July 2005, Thanet was allocated £3.7 million in Neighbourhood Renewal funding through the Safer & Stronger Communities Fund (SSCF). Assuming that the approach to the use of this funding is approved by GOSE in February, the initiative should provide significant support to Thanet District Council's Neighbourhood Renewal Programme (NRP) for Margate in three Super Output Areas. The NRP is, in turn, an integral part of the Margate Renewal Partnership's plans for the town and, since this new Partnership brings together all major agencies and authorities with an interest in Margate's regeneration, there is every possibility of ensuring a well co-ordinated approach to the town's renewal and development.

2.3 The Margate Renewal Area is also being considered by the ODPM and local partners as the focus for a Mixed Communities pilot demonstration project. While this project has still to be finalised, it offers a unique opportunity to focus on the area's housing tenure, which, unusually for such an area, comprises predominantly small units within the private housing sector. All of this work fits well with the issues addressed by the Local Area Agreement.

2.4 Kent County Council, in partnership with the four District Councils of Dover, Shepway, Swale and Thanet, recently launched No Use Empty—a campaign aimed at tackling the problem of empty housing in the East Kent region. No Use Empty aims to bring some 7,000 empty properties back into use. The strength of initiatives such as Local Area and Public Service Agreements shows that, working with government, local authorities can tackle new issues.

## 3. ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ODPM'S LIAISON WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS, IN KEY AREAS SUCH AS EMPLOYMENT, MIGRATION, AND SOCIAL HOUSING, AND CO-OPERATION WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES

3.1 There is a vital need for better liaison with other government departments, particularly in terms of issues relating to housing, in-migration and social dumping. As well as better liaison with government housing and employment departments, liaison in the following areas is critical:

- Transport: improved access alone will have a major impact on the economic vitality of coastal towns and, without it, none of the other measures will achieve their full impact. Key issues to address are speeding-up and improving efficiency of rail travel including extension of CTRL domestic to Dover; a fast effective long-term government response to Operation Stack; investment in seaports and coastal airports. As a key transport hub, Dover's traffic issues must be resolved.
- Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF) is a welcome additional funding stream, targeted at facilitating regeneration, employment and housing in Growth areas. CIF should be extended to coastal towns where the objectives are equally valid.
- Sport and Culture: A notable difference between those coastal towns that are beginning to pick-up and those that are still very much in decline is the lack of a lively evening economy and cosmopolitan year-round leisure and cultural offer. Where this is good or improving, new residents, businesses and visitors are attracted; and sense of place, identity and local pride are strong.
- Industry and Education: a particular focus on strengthening the links between business and education and those key sectors supported by vocational skills in construction, catering, leisure, beauty, healthcare, and all the cultural and creative industries would bring direct benefits to coastal towns and the development of construction, leisure and visitor economy throughout the southeast.
- Work and Pensions: need to reduce the high concentrations of benefit dependency and pilot measures suggested in the recent Green Paper to support people back into the workforce. This could be the basis of an Explorer Partnership with ODPM, DWP and the Kent Public Service Board, linked to the Kent Local Area Agreement.
- Health: across a range of public health indicators, Kent's coastal towns are amongst the most disadvantaged in England. The joint KCC/NHS Dept of Public Health for Kent gives us a unique opportunity to integrate tackling health inequalities with wider social regeneration.

## 4. IS THERE A CASE FOR MORE SPECIFIC REGIONAL INITIATIVES, IS ENOUGH ATTENTION PAID TO REGIONAL DISPARITIES?

4.1 The South East is one of the UK's most prosperous regions. In recent years, nationally, it has exhibited the highest growth in productivity and in Gross Value Added (GVA) per head, it has the best performing labour market and the lowest proportion of its population living in the country's most deprived areas. But this picture obscures significant disparities in economic performance and prosperity across the region.

4.2 In the evidence base of its review of Regional Economic Strategy 2006–16, (November 2005), SEEDA points towards the rise of three conceptual economies within the region:

- the Inner South East, a relatively wealthy core around London;
- the Outer South East, a largely rural area with well-established market and county towns; and
- the Coastal South East, a less prosperous periphery with large urban areas offering strong economic potential alongside coastal towns that have had mixed success in reinventing themselves.

4.3 The Coastal South East is characterised by low productivity and employment rates, a high concentration of economic inactivity and structural unemployment, a low skill profile with low business density and start-up rates. This is accompanied by a high dependence on public sector employment, a low proportion of employment in knowledge based sectors and an increasingly ageing population. When this is then combined with poor infrastructure and connectivity and a tired public realm, there can be little doubt the communities living in these parts of the South East, which include Kent's coastal towns, need more attention. The market is clearly not delivering. Public sector intervention is required.

4.4 A new concerted approach, owned by all authorities, agencies and stakeholders, is now required to address the broad regeneration needs of our coastal towns. Such an approach would be aimed at influencing the spending plans of major funders and government departments and better integrating their activities. In Kent's case, this requires the establishment of a strategic and widely accepted vision for the coast and its towns, anchored within a wider vision for the Region with mechanisms to marshal and focus funding capable of achieving a sea change in the fortunes of these areas.

## 5. THE SECURITY OF FUTURE FUNDING FOR REGENERATING AND SUPPORTING COASTAL TOWNS

5.1 Major funding streams are being lost. ERDF Objective 2 funding, which has been applied to Thanet and parts of Dover, is coming to an end. The Single Regeneration Budget is also now exhausted, as is the Heritage Lottery Fund's Seafront and Townscape Heritage Initiative. The uncertainty about regeneration funding for these needy urban areas on Kent's coast is in stark contrast to the high level of Government attention and funding afforded to Kent's "Growth Areas" where the case, in terms of Indices of Multiple Deprivation, is much less compelling. This funding imbalance needs to be addressed and it must be ensured that some of the benefits of development planned for the Ashford Growth Area feeds through to the surrounding coastal communities.

5.2 This was recognised in "What Price Growth?", KCC's 2003 response to the ODPM's development proposals (Appendix 3) which identified the need for a 20 year, public sector spend of almost £1,000 million in the coastal districts of Thanet, Dover and Shepway alone. The need to redress this imbalance and ensure that "Growth Area" benefits filter through to the coastal zone is also reflected in SEERA's developing sub-regional strategy for Ashford and Coastal Kent.

5.3 It is to be hoped, as with former coalfield communities, that the government and particularly the ODPM recognises the levels of deprivation being experienced by communities in many of our coastal towns. Uncertainty about funding remains a major obstacle to progress. A clear lead is now required from government, Regional Development Agencies and English Partnerships with a realistic funding stream that enables:

- long-term joined up delivery with commitment from other government departments, particularly transport, housing, health, education, industry and culture/media/sport;
- establishment of Coastal Task Force for Kent; and
- extension of Community Infrastructure and Neighbourhood Renewal Funding together with more support for LAA and PSA delivery in the coastal zone.

## 6. EVALUATE THE SUCCESS OF SEEDA, ENGLISH PARTNERSHIPS AND OTHER BODIES IN SUPPORTING AND DEVELOPING THE ECONOMIES OF COASTAL TOWNS

6.1 Across the Region, SEEDA has devoted considerable funding to coastal town regeneration and achieved marked success in Woolston, Portsmouth, Cowes and Shoreham. Its work in Hastings through a significant funding package and the creation of a dedicated task force has been even more noteworthy. But more than half the SEEDA coastline is in Kent and, as yet, its coastal towns have received less attention from the Agency and less direct development funding than coastal towns in other parts of the region.

6.2 But this is not to imply that SEEDA has not worked effectively in coastal Kent. For example, working with KCC and its District Council partners, SEEDA has overseen the creation of the East Kent Spatial Development Company, which is now working to fill the gap in the provision of utilities on key development sites in the districts of Dover and Thanet. It has also acquired and is now developing the key Buckland Mill site in the centre of Dover. The Development Agency is also active in partnerships formed to take forward the planned regeneration of Margate, Dover and Folkestone.

6.3 In addition to its direct funding of projects, SEEDA has developed a system by which an amount of its funding is channelled through Area Strategic Partnerships (ASPs). Each of these has developed an Area Investment Framework (AIF) and from this identified key regeneration and economic development priorities. SEEDA has made a welcome three-year funding commitment to each of these partnerships, but the proportion of this devolved funding against the Agency's overall budget is small.

6.4 Furthermore, it could be argued that the geographical boundaries of the ASPs in Kent are not always appropriate for addressing key strategic issues. While the coastal districts of Dover, Canterbury and Thanet are joined within the East Kent Partnership, Shepway, which shares many of the same challenges, is placed within the Channel Corridor partnership which also includes Maidstone and Ashford.

6.5 As currently configured, no partnership can speak for, prioritise or integrate regeneration activities along the whole Kent coast. The County is probably the natural level at which to develop policy with the Kent Local Strategic Partnership and its Public Service Board overseeing the delivery of the first wave pilot Local Area Agreement informed in its decision making by the content of the Area Investment Frameworks. This role of rationalising coastal town activities at a sub-regional level is particularly critical with regard to inward investment, tourism and transport infrastructure.

6.6 Within the emerging Regional Economic Strategy, SEEDA's identification of the "Coastal South East" as its less prosperous periphery is very welcome. It remains to be seen how this will be converted into interventions that address this major area of market failure and in particular how these will benefit Kent's coastal towns.

6.7 English Partnerships are potentially a key partner in the regeneration of Kent's coastal towns, the centres of which abound with brownfield sites and housing need. Currently their main investment priorities in the south-east remain Hastings and Bracknell and with their increasing focus on the NHS portfolio and East London ahead of the Olympics, it remains to be seen how much resource they will be able to commit to the Kent coast.

6.8 While many of the agencies have worked towards regeneration in the coastal zone, there is a lack of cohesion in the approach of different regional agencies and key issues are often hampered by political/geographical boundaries and area-based or boundary constraints. We welcome the intervention of ODPM, particularly where it can enable a cross-boundary approach and the opportunity to tackle strategic issues that hamper effective robust regeneration.

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#### **Memorandum by the South East of England Development Agency (SEEDA) (CT 34)**

1. The South East region has a long coastline with a large number of coastal towns. It includes resorts such as Margate, Folkestone and Eastbourne, major coastal cities such as Brighton, Southampton and Portsmouth, cross channel ports such as Dover and the particular role of the Isle of Wight.

2. From a regional economic perspective, the coastal towns of the South East are largely those areas where regeneration is a major priority. A considerable part of SEEDA's activities are concentrated in the coastal parts of the region, with the objective of improving their economic performance to the levels achieved by the most prosperous parts of the region, for example Thames Valley.

3. SEEDA's approach is to design regeneration programmes to suit the particular circumstances of each coastal town, on the basis that what is most appropriate for the Cowes area of the Isle of Wight is not necessarily the same as that for Worthing.

4. The detailed contribution SEEDA is making to each of the coastal towns in the region has been supplied to ODPM as part of the comprehensive response to the enquiry. The purpose of this paper is to set out for the Committee the example of Hastings, as a case study in comprehensive regeneration for one of the most economically challenging coastal towns in the South East region.

#### **HASTINGS AND BEXHILL REGENERATION: SEASPACE**

5. Hastings and Bexhill were recognised as priorities for regeneration by the ODPM in May 2002, when Lord Falconer announced a 10-year investment programme with an initial three year funding of £38 million committed through SEEDA's budget. The end of that first three years will be reached in March 2006 giving an opportunity for the Committee to examine a project which features all of the six issues into which it has resolved to inquire.

#### *The Background*

6. A Five Point Plan was the basis of the original bid to Government which secured the funding through SEEDA. The key themes are:

- Urban Renaissance.
- Business and Enterprise development.

- Excellence in Education.
- Broadband Connectivity.
- Transport improvements.

7. This strategy informed the Business Plan developed in 2003 and approved by all the partners who comprise the Task Force set up to steer the regeneration programme: East Sussex County Council, Hastings Borough Council, Rother District Council, Government Office for the South East, English Partnerships, SEEDA and the two local MPs. In turn, a dedicated team of about 20 staff has been established at Hastings, largely funded by SEEDA but with secondees from the local authorities. Such staff resources are a key component of success. Most recently, a company has been established (Hastings and Bexhill Regeneration) with the direct responsibility of carrying forward the strategy and business plan.

8. The targets are to achieve:

- 100,000m<sup>2</sup> commercial and education space;
- 5,700 new jobs;
- 100 new businesses;
- 2,000 higher education students; and
- 1,850 new homes;

#### *Progress to date*

9. Projects so far delivered or under development include:

- Hastings Station—part financed with SEEDA funds including SRB.
- University Centre Hastings—space for 1,000 students; 600+ in place.
- Creative Media Centres 1 and 2—supported office accommodation for up to 50 businesses—24 in occupation.
- Innovation Centre Hastings due for completion summer 2006 with space for 74 additional businesses.
- Queensway—a £20 million facility for General Dynamics UK Ltd.

Major Projects—Hastings Town Centre:

- Station Plaza, Priory Quarter and Pelham Place.

#### *The SEEDA Funding Commitment*

10. The various elements of funding dedicated to Hastings & Bexhill by SEEDA include:

- The initial £38 million announced by Lord Falconer.
- £19 million underwritten for 2006–07 and 2007–08 by SEEDA.
- £17.6 million bank facility for Queensway.
- Funding from SEEDA single pot to provide:
  - Single Regeneration Budget £26 million, 10 years to 2007.
  - Area Investment Framework funding £2.75 million to 2008.
  - Enterprise Hub £0.25 million over 3 years.
  - Enterprise Gateway £0.25 million over three years.
  - Access to SEEDA programmes eg MAS, Finance South East.
  - Plus leadership of partners' commitment to funding from mainstream programmes—Local Authorities, Learning and Skills Council, English Partnerships.

#### *Objective 2 Funding*

11. The Government Office for the South East has facilitated an additional £6.5 million of ERDF funding into the capital regeneration projects, Hastings being a qualifying area within the South East Objective 2 Programme together with Thanet.

### *Contribution to Housing Supply*

12. The total projected housing increase to the year 2021 resulting from the programme is 7,450 units, which is being delivered as follows:

English Partnerships	
Millennium Communities Project	1,400 new homes
Allocated sites in Hastings in 2011	2,100 new homes
North Bexhill Housing	1,100 new homes
Allocated sites in Bexhill to 2011	850 new homes
Future years	2,000 new homes

13. The present housing market is extremely fragile and is totally dependant on the local economy and new infrastructure. Without the provision of roads, jobs and skills training for local people there will be no market for housing.

### *The Challenge*

14. The regeneration programme is only now just getting underway, and in many respects this is the key lesson: to commit sufficient staff and financial resources over a long period. The immediate challenges are:

- £71 million additional public funding is required to complete the priority projects.
- Partners' commitment and slippage reduces this requirement to £30 million.
- The Post-16 education review decision produces a further funding need.
- Phase 4 of University Centre Hastings will require additional capital funding in advance of income to increase the Higher Education student population from the current capacity of 1,000 to a sustainable 2,000.
- Income streams being predicted to support capital borrowing for business support

### *The Potential Outcome*

15. Full implementation of the agreed 10-year Business Plan and its outcome targets have the potential to deliver transformational improvements in the most deprived community in the South East. Uniquely for the region there is the capacity to deliver 7,500 new homes, but demand for these will only crystallise with a stronger employment base supported by investment in education and skills training, provision of new business premises, innovation and enterprise support and continued transport upgrading.

16. Whilst a dedicated team has been committed by SEEDA to deliver the key projects, success can only be achieved through the broad partnership of the public sector agencies, community participation and the cross departmental working that has been prominent to date. Maintaining this commitment over a substantial period is a crucial requirement.

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## **Memorandum by Shepway District Council (CT 35)**

### **1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

1.1 The District Council would like to thank the Committee for giving it the opportunity to submit evidence to this inquiry. The Council's aim in providing evidence is to add value to this important debate about the needs of coastal towns and the measures in place to address those needs. The Council's response is based on its practical experience over the last decade of implementing a programme of economic regeneration in the coastal district of Shepway.

1.2 The regeneration effort led by the Council and local SRB partnerships over the past 10 years has in large part been focused upon addressing the deep-seated economic, social and environmental decline of the District's principal coastal town of Folkestone as well as the coastal rural areas. It is hoped that the outcome of this inquiry will be an enhanced profile for the unique challenges faced by coastal towns, and a renewed financial and organisational commitment from central and local government to enabling local partnerships to build upon the momentum for positive change created in recent years.

1.3 It is first necessary to re state the case for coastal towns and the key features of their decline. Fishing, tourism and ferry industries especially have all experienced and are continuing to experience, long-term contraction that has brought with it pronounced social and economic deprivation and environmental degradation. Although the effects of industrial re-profiling are universal, the problems faced by coastal towns are compounded by unique barriers to economic development attributable to peripherality, restricted local markets and a lack of economies of scale. This is in contrast to the experience of city led regeneration

that is currently transforming city centres and larger urban areas throughout the UK. The erosion of the traditional functions of coastal towns and their original *raison d'être* is an important backdrop to this policy debate and the evidence set out in this response.

1.4 Taking the example of Folkestone, decline of the town's tourism industry is being driven by a lack of modern visitor infrastructure and a self-perpetuating concentration of residual low-value tourism. This has been exacerbated by the relatively recent closure of the town's ferry service diminishing potential for a rejuvenated tourist trade while increasing reliance upon the Channel Tunnel. The Tunnel, although adjacent to the town, provides a direct link to the motorway network so that the majority of visitors effectively bypass Folkestone. Fishing, at one time a thriving industry and symbol of the town's vibrancy, has been marginalised by the impact on profitability of falling stocks and the quota system. It is against this background that the Council has shaped its belief that the needs of coastal towns are of paramount importance for policy makers.

1.5 It should be noted, however, that some of the traditional functions of coastal towns remain. For example, Folkestone is still a retirement zone, proving attractive to those who remember the town's peak as a coastal resort as well as those who simply value the benefits of a seaside location. Similarly, the coastal defence function remains, as does tourism, the latter of which still accounts for almost 15% of employment across the District.

1.6 Unfortunately, these functions are not entirely positive in their contribution to the District's future prospects. An ageing population limits economic vibrancy because it puts increased pressure on services while simultaneously reducing economic activity levels. At the other end of the spectrum, Kent's coastal towns have for a long time become home to large numbers of "looked after" children (many from outside the county), as well as benefit claimants and people discharged from mental health institutions. This phenomenon has placed additional responsibility on already struggling towns to cater for the needs of vulnerable and often dependent individuals. Coastal defence and the traditional function of defending the country from foreign invaders is now also understood in the context of global warming and rising sea levels which threaten the very existence of coastal towns. Although there are many positive aspects of a military presence, the inherent transience of military families can have a negative effect on schools and social cohesion generally. A further significant impact is that MOD training land imposes a major constraint on development for housing and employment. When these social and environmental factors are considered alongside the weakened economic base described above, it is easy to explain why coastal towns are in need of assistance.

The remainder of this response seeks to address specific issues raised by the committee.

## 2. TO EXAMINE WHETHER THERE IS A CASE FOR MORE SPECIFIC REGIONAL INITIATIVES, AND WHETHER ENOUGH ATTENTION IS BEING PAID TO REGIONAL DISPARITIES

2.1 The Council believes that regional disparities are demonstrable when consideration is given to coastal towns in relation to the wider South East region. Indeed relevant government planning policy recognises this disparity and hence Regional Planning Guidance (RPG9) for the ROSE area (which excludes London and the Thames Gateway) identifies the coastal towns of East Kent, including Shepway's main urban centre of Folkestone, as Priority Areas for Economic Regeneration (PAER). Paragraph 4.16 of the Guidance states:

*a number of areas of regional significance are identified in this guidance as Priority Areas for Economic Regeneration (PAER). The criteria for designation include above average unemployment rates, high levels of social deprivation, low skill levels, dependence on declining industries, derelict urban fabric, peripherality and insularity. These areas need tailored regeneration strategies backed up by appropriate resources to address their problems and maximise their contribution to the social and economic well being of the region.*

2.2 By most measures, Folkestone was and continues to be an economically under-performing town. In 2000, government indices of multiple deprivation indicated that four Folkestone wards fall within the 20% most deprived wards nationally, and that one of these, Folkestone Harvey Central is within the 5% most deprived. Taken together, these constitute a significant concentration of deprivation within the coastal town of Folkestone, which is home to approximately half of the District's total population. The focus on economic regeneration is particularly pertinent because income and employment deprivation are the main drivers of these wards' deprivation score. For example, one super output area within Folkestone Harvey Central ward is among the 0.4% most deprived in England and Wales in terms of income deprivation. For the purpose of this inquiry, these statistics underline the scale and depth of deprivation experienced within coastal towns and the extent to which a priority focus upon economic regeneration is required if regional disparities are to be addressed. The Council believes that in an otherwise prosperous region, this level of deprivation is both unacceptable and becoming increasingly entrenched when compared to the region's core and growth areas.

2.3 In recognition of this priority status within the ROSE area, the PAER became one of three categories of area requiring a particular policy approach according to regional planning guidance, the others being the western policy area and potential growth areas. However, despite being afforded equal status with the growth areas such as Ashford, PAER have not received comparable levels of investment from national and regional agencies.

2.4 As an illustration of this, Ashford, as a designated growth area and neighbouring district to Shepway, has been able to bid to a £164 million “Sustainable Communities” fund. By comparison, the main source of regional funding currently available to Shepway is from SEEDA through the sub regional Channel Corridor Partnership (CCP), which covers the local authority areas of Ashford, Maidstone and Shepway. The CCP has a budget that equates to an approximate annual total of just £450,000 per District, a sum which is far less than that achieved over the period 1998–2003 when the “Believing in Folkestone” and “CASK” Single Regeneration Budget programmes were at their height. This is also clearly of a much lower order of magnitude than the level of resources available to the growth areas. Last week, for example, Ashford was awarded in excess of £20 million for infrastructure projects.

2.5 Over and above special investment funds, the growth areas have also benefited from the co-ordinated approach described in Chapter 12 of the recently revised RPG9. This sets out a clear policy framework for the development of Ashford over the next 30 years and describes the partnerships and delivery mechanisms needed to deliver growth. There is clear evidence, in Ashford, of the commitment of a range of national, regional and other organisations to the achievement of that growth and hence the objectives of RPG9.

2.6 It is the District Council’s view, therefore, that the approach taken with respect to the growth areas contrasts greatly with that taken for the Priority Areas for Economic Regeneration and the coastal towns within these. The former have benefited from targeted funding and a co-ordinated approach whereas the latter have not. This can be partly understood when considering the approach taken by SEEDA as regional development agency.

### 3. TO EVALUATE THE SUCCESS OF THE RDAS AND OTHER BODIES IN SUPPORTING AND DEVELOPING THE ECONOMIES OF COASTAL TOWNS

3.1 The role of Regional Development Agencies is clearly a vital one in terms of supporting and developing the economies of coastal towns and enabling their sustainable regeneration. It is important that the peculiar needs of coastal towns are understood because taken together these make a special case for investment which the Council believes should be reflected in the Regional Economic Strategy in terms of a geographical priority approach to resource allocation by SEEDA and other government agencies. However, as suggested above, this hasn’t been the case.

3.2 Whilst the Regional Economic Strategy for the South East (RES) 2002–12 recognised the priorities set out in RPG9 it also introduced a number of other spatial priorities; emerging areas of economic success, leading urban areas, small rural towns, other deprived areas and deprived rural areas. The spatial priorities map contained within the RES thus showed a much broader range of geographical priorities than RPG9, with the boundaries of Priority Regeneration Areas extending well beyond those of the PAER within RPG9.

3.3 This trend of a diminishing geographical focus by SEEDA is becoming even more pronounced. The current Review of the Regional Economic Strategy for South East England 2006–16 Consultation Document introduces a Coastal South East Economic Area. This designation does not distinguish between more or less deprived areas and makes no specific reference to the PAER and gives minimal consideration to the needs of coastal towns. It would therefore seem to be a further departure from the geographical priority approach of regional planning guidance, in favour of a region wide categorization and hence a regional spread of investment.

3.4 The lack of a priority focus is further reflected in the absence of a clear strategy for coastal areas within the RES. Although reference is made to their untapped potential, the RES would be strengthened if it set out specific investment priorities for skills and enterprise development, transport infrastructure, coastal town renaissance and business support mechanisms for example. A strategy would provide a framework within which local partnerships could develop programmes to unlock the potential of what the RES refers to as a “string of pearls”.

3.5 The actual strategy being pursued by SEEDA would appear to prioritise activities designed to boost the international competitiveness of the region over tackling inequalities. The lagging economies of peripheral coastal towns with relatively small populations (compared with the larger urban concentrations) and restricted local markets, are thus placed at an immediate disadvantage when bidding for funding. The ultimate result of this is that coastal towns in the South East region are left to compete with towns in other regions but without access to the levels of funding available from other regional development agencies. Furthermore, Kent’s coastal towns do not benefit from the economies of scale associated with larger coastal towns and neither are they close enough to London to benefit from proximity to the capital city.

3.6 Despite all of the difficulties faced by coastal towns there are nonetheless clear opportunities for regeneration and an improved quality of life as well as an improved contribution to the regional economy. However, success is only likely to be achieved if private sector activity is pump primed by public sector investment to exploit opportunities and demonstrate confidence.

#### 4. TO CONSIDER THE SECURITY OF FUTURE FUNDING FOR REGENERATING AND SUPPORTING COASTAL TOWNS

4.1 The security of future funding for regeneration activity is of immediate and pressing concern to the District Council. Single Regeneration Budget funding comes to an end in March 2006 and coastal towns such as Folkestone lack the requisite concentrations of deprivation to qualify for alternatives such as Neighbourhood Renewal Funding. Medium sized coastal towns are therefore unable to access a funding stream that has been so successful in driving the economic regeneration of the former industrial heartlands of the Midlands and North. This is despite the fact that, taken together, the deprivation of East Kent coastal towns is considered to be of regional significance.

4.2 The absence of a comparable successor programme means that the ability of local partnerships to invest in regeneration projects is seriously compromised. For example, in the mid-1990s the Council and its partners were successful in bidding for approximately £10 million of Single Regeneration Budget funding to finance in excess of 50 projects. The success of these schemes was underlined by their ability to secure £22 million in leveraged funding from private, public and voluntary sources. They were focused upon the following strategic objectives:

- Enhancing employment prospects, education and skills.
- Encouraging sustainable economic growth.
- Protecting and improving the environment.
- Improving housing and housing conditions.
- Addressing social exclusion and enhancing opportunities for the disadvantaged.
- Tackling crime and improving community safety.
- Enhancing the quality of life and capacity of local people.

Projects have included new business support facilities, public realm improvements in the town centre and seafont, and a significant expansion in early years provision to name but a handful. In many respects, these have provided the foundations for regeneration in the town but now established they will require a sustained commitment in order to ensure their continued viability and contribution to the regeneration of Folkestone. Critical to this future momentum are the human resources of personnel and experience gained by Local Authorities and SRB Partnerships during the implementation of these projects. These are now under threat and, if lost, would be extremely difficult to resurrect in the future.

4.3 This long-term programme will also need to be supported by projects that build upon this first phase of regeneration so that momentum is maintained and the area can begin to close, rather than simply maintain, the gap with the rest of the region. This will require partnership at the strategic as well as at the community level, in much the same way as Ashford's Future has brought together the likes of English Partnerships, the LSC and SEEDA in a high level partnership to commit resources to the delivery of Ashford's growth agenda.

4.4 While the focus of this evidence has predominantly been to highlight the adversity faced by coastal towns within our District, the Council would like to emphasise its confidence that, given sufficient resources and a long-term commitment, these communities will be successful in regenerating themselves. The private sector led Creative Quarter is already breathing new life into a neglected part of the town centre, adjacent to the harbour and once among the pre-eminent Victorian shopping destinations. Physical renewal of the town's built heritage is being complemented by the cultivation of new hope for a growing nucleus of creative entrepreneurs. This renaissance has been supported by a package of physical regeneration measures that have sought to capitalise on the inherent built and natural heritage of a Victorian coastal resort. The factors that have driven Folkestone's attractiveness as a retirement zone, could also inspire a lifestyle-led transformation of the town given the future prospect of waterfront living driven by redevelopment of the harbour and completion of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link scheduled for 2009. Nonetheless, if Folkestone and the other coastal towns within the District are to realise these opportunities for both existing and future residents, they will need to be supported by public sector investment and a focus upon both social and economic regeneration.

#### 5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.1 To conclude, Shepway District Council believes that, within the context of the South East, RPG9 provides a rationale for improving the region and addressing inequalities based on a number of strategic priorities including designated PAER which essentially consist of the main coastal towns within the region displaying high levels of deprivation and economic under performance.

5.2 Progress in tackling the problems of the PAER has however been slower than expected for two main reasons.

- (i) Firstly the Regional Economic Strategy's spatial priorities and preferred partnership arrangements introduced the concept of a Broader Priority Regeneration Area which has had the effect of diluting efforts to regenerate the PAER.
- (ii) Secondly, since 2001, whilst much effort has been directed towards the development of partnership arrangements, delivery mechanisms and funding programmes for the growth areas this has not been matched by a similar commitment to the PAER.

5.3 The Council would therefore welcome a greater focus by the ODPM on the regeneration of coastal towns but believes that, with regard to the South East Region, this should focus on the achievement of the existing policy objectives contained within RPG9 through a clear targeting of resources and efforts. This is particularly relevant now that SRB funding has ceased.

5.4 This evidence has also highlighted that, despite falling behind contemporary expectations of tourist destinations, coastal towns remain attractive places in which to live and visit. Notwithstanding these opportunities, however, if industrial structure and demographic factors are taken into account, economic regeneration will be vital in order to address issues of economic underperformance and structural weakness.

5.5 Regeneration of coastal towns cannot be tackled by adopting the city-led model of urban renaissance due to the lack of a significant urban centre in Kent. It can only be achieved through a long-term programme of regeneration supported by commitment to pooling resources from the community level right up to the mainstream activities of relevant government agencies.

5.6 This is particularly important in coastal towns, where employment and income deprivation are pronounced and it is difficult to secure private sector investment and growth due to a degraded urban environment.

5.7 If the growth areas become an exclusive magnet for jobs and growth, coastal towns will be placed under even greater pressure and the preservation of towns considered to be key components of our national heritage will be even more uncertain.

The District Council hopes that the above is helpful to the committee and will ultimately enable us and other community leaders to secure a better quality of life for local people.

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### **Memorandum by Brighton & Hove City Council (CT 36)**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Brighton & Hove City Council welcomes the opportunity to submit evidence to this enquiry. We have experienced both success and a range of difficulties in dealing with the challenges of being a coastal authority. Our response below is focussed on two key questions:

1. How do we ensure our economic prosperity as a coastal authority?
2. How do we ensure that we promote social inclusion as a coastal authority?

#### **1. ENSURING ECONOMIC PROSPERITY**

Brighton & Hove has adapted well to the changing nature of tourism and leisure in Britain which has had a detrimental impact on many coastal towns. The SEEDA/NEF study "Coasting Along" (August 2005) recognises that "coastal towns are largely failing to face up to the need to adapt and create more diverse and entrepreneurial economies". The LGA "Coastal" Special Interest Group Report on Coastal Economic Development particularly cites Brighton & Hove's success in developing a niche market for cultural and creative industries and capitalising on its appeal as a conference destination. In order to continue to adapt and thrive in this way there are certain issues we consider would be best tackled as part of a joined up approach to coastal regeneration with SEEDA, ODPM and other government departments, backed by dedicated funding streams for this purpose.

SEEDA's draft Regional Economic Strategy (3rd edition) recognises the importance of coastal towns but this is not backed up with significant dedicated or specific funding. For example, the city council and Adur District Council fully developed and agreed the investment priorities for this part of the Sussex Coastal region through the Area Investment Framework (AIF). Those investment priorities include the redevelopment of the Brighton Centre, which is essential for the continued success of the city and its region as a conference destination. While supported by SEEDA, the amount of funding potentially available from them to support this project is small in relation to the overall costs of the scheme. The AIF was also in part developed in line with the Priority Area for Economic Regeneration (PAER) for the Sussex coastal towns from Shoreham Harbour to Hastings. However that designation as a PAER does not bring with it any dedicated funding. The competition for existing funding streams in the region, given developments such as the Thames Gateway, presents further risk to Brighton & Hove's continued prosperity.

The Sussex Coastal Towns Strategy, developed by the city council in conjunction with East and West Sussex County Councils and the relevant boroughs and districts (which will be included in the South East Plan), has identified the following relevant indicators of economic prosperity which need to be addressed:

- gross value added (GVA) per head, in the sub-region as a whole, is 30% below the regional average;
- gross weekly earnings in the Sussex coastal districts are the lowest in the South East (excluding the Isle of Wight) and, generally around 15% below the national average; and
- unemployment rates in many of the wards along the Sussex Coast are typically significantly higher than the regional average.

The Sussex Coastal Towns also face linked risks from net commuting outflow, currently nearly 37,500 from the sub-region. Failure to create secure well paid local employment opportunities given the scale of relatively insecure and low paid seasonal employment typical of resort authorities will perpetuate this and the poor economic statistics shown above. This is further compounded by the focus on developing further housing without related local employment opportunities. This continues to push up house prices with increasing numbers of people commuting to London and creating major pressures on affordable housing locally.

Table 1 below compares average house prices and local pay levels for Brighton & Hove to the England & Wales average and to other coastal unitary authorities.

**Table 1**  
COMPARISON OF AVERAGE HOUSE PRICES AND LOCAL PAY LEVELS

<i>Authority</i>	<i>Average Property Price Oct—Dec 2005*</i> (a)	<i>Gross Annual Pay 2005**</i> (b)	<i>Multiplier (a)/(b)</i>
England & Wales	£191,327	£23,756	8.1
Brighton & Hove	£220,846	£20,716	10.7
Bournemouth	£197,989	£18,424	10.7
Southend-on-Sea	£175,448	£18,371	9.6
Torbay	£177,702	£16,963	10.5

*Source of data:*

\* Land Registry—Average price of residential property sales completed October to December 2005.

\*\* 2005 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)—Annual gross pay for all employee jobs by place of work.

Tourism will continue to be crucial to the economic prosperity of the city and other coastal resorts. As mentioned above we have successfully adapted to the changing market particularly through our enhanced cultural offer. However ongoing success is dependent on improved transport access to the city and a more diversified economic base for our tourist industry to ensure that our clients and suppliers can physically be accessed. We support the views of the British Resorts Association that the historic buildings and wider public realm in resorts such as Brighton & Hove are costly to maintain but yet are crucial to the visitor experience. We also support the SEEDA/NEF study's findings (referenced above) about the risks that resorts face as a visitor destination from poor water quality, shortcomings in beach facilities and consumer expectations about overall ambience. It is therefore of great concern to Brighton & Hove that the data used by the ODPM to calculate visitor numbers to the city and hence drive revenue support grant funding which should go some way to assisting us with funding issues of this nature is so inaccurate.

Table 2 explains how the ODPM calculation of day visitors for Brighton & Hove compares to the England & Wales average and the figures for other coastal towns.

**Table 2**

#### DAY VISITOR DATA USED FOR DISTRIBUTING FORMULA GRANT

Information—Day visitor data is used in the calculation of Formula Grant for all authorities in England. In 2005–06 it distributed about £200 million grant to authorities nationally. The day visitor data is very old using survey data from 1988 to 1991. Following much criticism of this data set consultants were employed by ODPM to update the data for inclusion in the 2006–07 Grant Settlement, however, this updated data set proved to be highly questionable and was not used. The methodology for allocating day visitors between areas appears to be highly unfair to coastal towns. Coastal towns have also argued that additional local authority costs arising from a day visit to the seaside are very much greater than those arising from a trip to a shopping complex or a private leisure park. It is not known what ODPM intend to do about the day visitor data.

<i>Selection of coastal towns</i>	<i>Data used in the 2006–07 Grant Settlement</i>		<i>Updated data not used in the 2006–07 Grant Settlement</i>	
	<i>Annual day visitors per head of population</i>	<i>National ranking out of 354 authorities</i>	<i>Annual day visitors per head of population</i>	<i>National ranking out of 354 authorities</i>
Blackpool	67.5	4	19.6	219
Eastbourne	20.8	103	18.2	249
Great Yarmouth	20.5	111	16.3	272
Brighton & Hove*	19.3	127	11.9	328
ENGLAND average	19.2		23.2	
Weymouth	17.1	176	17.4	258
Torbay	16.6	189	18.7	233
Southend-on-Sea	15.7	209	12.6	321
Redcar & Cleveland	14.2	251	12.8	317
Scarborough	14.2	252	6.9	352
Bournemouth	13.0	274	19.3	223
Worthing	10.4	323	24.1	167
Hastings	9.4	341	20.2	211
Thanet	8.5	350	9.8	343

Data Source: 2006–07 Revenue Support Grant Settlement and papers to the Settlement Working Group in 2005.

Note:

\* According to the data used in the formula Brighton & Hove has less day visitors per head of population than either Slough, Wigan or Middlesbrough. According to the updated data Brighton & Hove has just under 3 million day visitors, less than either Bracknell Forest, Daventry or Chester-le-Street.

A linked issue is that Formula Grant also does not account for the numbers of English language students that many coastal authorities see. These students bring with them their own costs, including in particular for waste disposal and street cleaning but no income to local authorities. Students are not counted as part of the Census as they are not “usually resident”, and they are not counted as day visitors as they stay for several weeks or months at a time.

Taking the above into account the issues that we consider would need to be addressed in a new approach to coastal regeneration with dedicated funding are set out below:

- ability to secure the unlocking and redevelopment of key brownfield sites (such as Brighton Centre referred to above and Shoreham Harbour referred to below);
- major investment into providing better standards of transport infrastructure, particularly east-west links and measures to deal with congestion within the city;
- raising skills levels and providing for an increased supply of quality sites and premises for businesses;
- increasing the supply of affordable housing; and
- addressing the effects of climate change, coastal protection and maintaining and enhancing the public realm.

An example of a major initiative that could be supported through a new approach to addressing the needs of Coastal Towns would be the redevelopment of Shoreham Harbour. This key brownfield site presents a significant opportunity to create very substantial employment, housing, leisure, retail space and public realm. It can only be unlocked however with detailed consideration of a regional ports strategy and securing major investment into transport infrastructure, particularly east/west. A scheme of this scale and regional significance could lend itself well to a model such as has been used to deliver the “Northern Way”—perhaps a “Southern Way” to recognise the particular opportunities and challenges facing the South Coast cities and towns.

## 2. PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION

The Sussex Coastal Towns Strategy recognises the very high levels of multiple deprivation in many of the Sussex coastal towns and in particular in Brighton & Hove. As a city we have benefited from SRB, NRF and NDC funding as a result of this but consider that there are specific issues as a coastal authority that such funding streams do not necessarily address.

Table 3 shows the levels of housing benefit recipients as a proportion of all households in the authority for Brighton & Hove and a selection of coastal towns. The SEEDA/NEF study referred to above points to the availability of accommodation in B&Bs and small hotels and the quality of life offered in coastal towns as attractive for benefit claimants and recognises that this has been a particular problem for Brighton,

Bournemouth and Margate. We consider that this also creates attractions for homeless people and those with substance and alcohol abuse issues and mental health problems, all adding to the challenges of promoting social inclusion in coastal authorities.

**Table 3**

HOUSING BENEFIT RECIPIENTS AS A PROPORTION OF ALL  
HOUSEHOLDS IN THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

<i>Selection of Coastal Towns</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Ranking out of 354 authorities</i>
Blackpool	23.9	30
Hastings	22.3	38
Brighton & Hove	20.3	47
Redcar & Cleveland	20.2	48
Thanet	19.9	51
Great Yarmouth	19.1	61
Southend-on-Sea	18.1	76
Eastbourne	18.0	77
Bournemouth	17.4	91
Torbay	17.4	92
Scarborough	16.5	100
Weymouth & Portland	15.1	128
Worthing	11.4	216

Data Source: DWP Quarterly Statistics for August 2005.

We are also concerned that funding for children's social services does not adequately reflect the needs seen in coastal authorities. We consider that further research should be undertaken to consider the causes of this. In Brighton & Hove we consider that a range of factors may be contributors to both levels of looked after children, children in need and the costs of their care and support. In particular our detailed analysis of caseloads show alcohol and substance misuse and mental health problems in parents and lack of access to affordable housing to be key factors. Table 4 sets this out the funding and needs comparisons in more detail for coastal unitary authorities.

**Table 4**

COMPARISON OF SPENDING ON CHILDREN'S SOCIAL SERVICES AND THE RELATIVE  
NEEDS FORMULA

Background Information: The children's social services element of the formula grant calculation was significantly changed for 2006–07. Whilst this may have produced a formula with a better fit for the country as a whole it seems to be a very poor predictor of need in most of the urban coastal unitary councils.

<i>Selection of Coastal Unitary Councils</i>	<i>Ranking of budgeted spend on children's social care per child aged 0–17 out of 47 unitary councils</i>	<i>Ranking of children's social services RNF per child aged 0–17 out of 47 unitary councils</i>	<i>Difference in ranking</i>
Brighton & Hove	1	19	– 18
Blackpool	4	15	– 11
Plymouth	6	23	– 17
Bournemouth	15	31	– 16
Torbay	16	26	– 10

Data Source: 2006–07 Revenue Support Grant Settlement and CIPFA Finance & General Statistics 2005–06.

Brighton & Hove also faces challenges in relation to the nature of its housing stock. In 2005, the council worked with neighbouring authorities to carry out a sub-regional housing needs survey. The survey was commissioned in association with Lewes District Council, Wealden District Council, Eastbourne Borough Council, Rother District Council, and Hastings Borough Council. The key sub-regional findings were:

- affordability is a major issue due to local house price/income relationships, particularly for new forming households and key workers (as described above);
- annually there are shortfalls of 3,468 affordable housing units in the sub-region;
- there is a requirement to develop a mix of house types and sizes in both market and social sectors to meet the needs of new and existing households and to provide a balanced housing market; and

- the population is ageing, with implications for support and specialist accommodation provision.

The key findings relating to Brighton and Hove include an annual need for 2,520 affordable housing units, 1,202 more than the existing supply from re-lets. This is a new supply requirement significantly higher than current rates of delivery but unless it is combined with local secure well paid employment opportunities could continue to exacerbate the issues raised in section 1.

The survey also indicated high levels of support needs:

- 20% of Brighton and Hove households consider they have a support need, as compared to a 15% national average;
- 25.7% of these households consider that the support they needed was in not currently being met; and
- of all households with a support need, 10.3% contained at least one wheelchair user.

We are concerned about the links between these findings and those presented earlier on housing benefit dependence and high costs of children's social care provision.

The SEEDA/NEF study also points to a cycle of property decline in coastal authorities. It describes a pattern of B&Bs remaining vacant, impacting on the physical state of streets and neighbourhoods and the low quality rentals provided by Houses in Multiple Occupation. The proportion of households renting from private landlords in Brighton and Hove is above 20% of all households and we have more than 10 times the national average of bedsits and shared houses. Brighton and Hove has the highest proportion of overcrowding outside London. Brighton and Hove also faces the challenge of meeting Public Service Agreement targets to increase the proportion of vulnerable households in the private sector living in decent homes. In Brighton and Hove 74% of homes were built before 1919 compared with a national average of 53%. We estimate that 10% of private sector homes in the city are unfit compared with 7% nationally. We believe that 12% of private sector homes will fail the Decent Homes standard because of disrepair and that 32% of private sector homes will fail the Decent Homes standard because of lack of proper heating and insulation.

We consider that integrated interventions in coastal authorities should be considered that are specifically designed to tackle levels of dependence on housing benefit and health, care and support needs in conjunction with skills and employment opportunities that recognise the reliance described earlier on seasonal, low paid and insecure jobs. We also consider that the particular issues facing coastal towns in relation to housing need and condition should be recognised in existing or future targeted or holistic regeneration initiatives in order to promote social inclusion.

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### **Memorandum by English Heritage (CT 37)**

The coastal towns of England, both the larger urban ones and the smaller ones that are essentially rural market towns on the coast, are of special importance to the culture and heritage of an island nation whose trade with all other nations has since prehistoric times been by sea, and which has had to rely on the sea as a major source of food. Additionally, for over 200 years coastal towns have been central to much of the growing leisure industry. The late C20, however saw a major decline in all three of these activities that gave these coastal towns their livelihood. Much investment has been put by Government and its agencies into the regeneration of these settlements, including from English Heritage, and in the last 10 years the Heritage Lottery Fund. This submission summarises our views of those consequences.

#### **THE CONTEXT**

1. English Heritage is the Government's statutory adviser on all matters relating to the historic environment in England. We are a non-departmental public body established under the National Heritage Act 1983 to help protect England's historic environment and promote awareness, understanding and enjoyment of it.

2. The historic environment is all around us and encompasses the whole of our historic landscape and buried archaeology, not just visible buildings and scheduled monuments. It is our most accessible cultural resource and has a powerful influence on peoples' sense of identity and civic pride. It contributes significantly to the character and "sense of place" of rural and urban coastal communities and lies at the heart of sustainable growth.

3. English Heritage supports the need for major investment in coastal towns to ensure their regeneration and to equip them to meet the challenges of the C21. English Heritage believes that many Government initiatives for delivering sustainable communities and stimulating economic, environmental and social improvements are delivering real benefits to coastal communities. We further believe that the most successful heritage-led regeneration schemes in seaside towns offer valuable lessons for other organisations and individuals engaged in similar projects elsewhere.

4. The scale of the investment needed and the changes of focus of these settlements have important consequences for the historic environment. It should not be seen as a threat to that environment but as an opportunity to exploit its full potential to help create sustainable communities by reinvigorating existing ones. The historic environment, properly understood, sensitively managed and intelligently developed, can make a positive difference to these revitalised towns.

5. English Heritage has developed a significant degree of expertise in undertaking regeneration projects in coastal towns, particularly in partnership with other organisations with similar and complementary areas of interest. This submission focuses on our work in this area, and we do not propose to comment in detail on every area of the Committee's inquiry.

#### EXAMINING THE CASE FOR SPECIAL INITIATIVES TO TACKLE THE NEEDS OF COASTAL TOWNS

6. There is little doubt surrounding the continuing need for special initiatives to tackle the problems facing coastal towns. While many of these social and economic problems are not unique to coastal towns, such as high unemployment levels, low income levels and housing problems more readily associated with inner-city areas, the underlying causes and any potential solutions are distinct from those elsewhere in the country. The combination of the decline of traditional maritime industry (including ship-building, fishing and naval support) allied to changing holiday preferences present a unique set of issues with which coastal local authorities, their partner organisations and local communities have had to grapple.

7. These issues have had consequent effects on the built environment and the public spaces that gave coastal and seaside towns their particular character and attracted visitors and businesses as a result, often resulting in a downward spiral of decline. In many cases, a "tipping point" has been passed which has proved extremely difficult to reverse. The problems associated with coastal towns continue to demand a specific and coherent programme of action to address them.

#### EVALUATING THE SUCCESS OF RDAs AND OTHER BODIES IN SUPPORTING AND DEVELOPING THE ECONOMIES OF COASTAL TOWNS

8. A focus on the built and historic environment has proved to be an essential element in many successful examples of coastal heritage-led regeneration projects. English Heritage and other bodies (particularly the Heritage Lottery Fund) have been able to offer funding, time and expertise to these projects to ensure their success. These include:

9. *Chatham Royal Naval Dockyard*. The regeneration of the northern area of the former Royal Naval base (known as Chatham Maritime) has been managed by South East of England Development Agency, which has also provided significant funding. It has seen former naval buildings provide the area with shops, a pub, restaurant, community centre, school and doctor's surgery. Around 900 homes have been built with another 2000 planned.

10. The Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust has worked closely with partners (including English Heritage) to revitalise the dockyard as the core of a vibrant and mixed use site. The project is now nearing completion, with the dockyard a key attraction for the area with around 130,000 visitors per year, and around 125 commercial tenants on site (employing approximately 1,000 people). The entire 32 hectare site, a focal point for community identity in Chatham for over 300 years, has been retained and converted to a new use, generating around £20 million annually for the local economy. The historic environment has been used to develop a model sustainable community, where people want to live, work and visit.

11. *Great Yarmouth*. Protecting, promoting and enhancing the town's heritage are central components of the Borough Council's regeneration strategy. Funding from English Heritage's Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS) concentrated on investing in environmental improvements and repairs to historic buildings and areas. Schemes for shop front improvements in the town centre area were particularly successful, where the improvements lifted the visual profile of the streets and increased retail confidence. English Heritage funding of £380,000 eventually levered in over £2,000,000 of private sector funding and over £700,000 of other public sector funding. Allied to the establishment of the Norfolk Nelson Museum, the heritage-led regeneration of the town has been highly successful in creating a high quality and well-used townscape.

12. *St Anne's on Sea*. Like many other seaside resorts, the local economy in St Anne's on Sea in Lancashire has faced difficult times in recent years due to changing patterns of tourism. While several regeneration and environmental improvement projects had been undertaken on the seafront of the town, the symptoms of decline have also been particularly evident in the town centre conservation area. Research undertaken by the local authority revealed a lack of confidence in the future of the town on the part of local businesses.

13. English Heritage targeted investment in this part of the town under another HER Scheme. Funding of £121,000 from English Heritage levered in another £3,000,000 of public and private money, which has enabled a whole series of works to improve the look and feel of area. The project was concluded in 2003, and

included the restoration of shop fronts, conversion of upper floors to town centre housing, improvements to the public realm, façade refurbishment and re-roofing of selected properties and the refurbishment of forecourts.

14. *Falmouth*. Another HER scheme that has delivered significant benefits was undertaken in Falmouth, and concentrated on the commercial centre of the Falmouth Conservation Area. The project commenced in 2001, and total funding of £190,000 from English Heritage proved to be the catalyst for a further £1,200,000 of private and public sector funding for the project. The end result has been a further £3,000,000 in additional sales revenue for the local retail sector.

15. There are many other examples of heritage-led regeneration in coastal towns, and we would be pleased to give further details if necessary.

16. *Weymouth*. As one of the venues for the 2012 Olympic Games, the regeneration of Weymouth is obviously a high priority for the Government and the organising bodies. A number of significant projects have already been announced or are underway with a historic environment dimension, including the Heritage Lottery Fund's Townscape Heritage Initiative scheme around the Esplanade. The South West RDA is also exploring the possible redevelopment of the Pavilion theatre and ferryport site.

17. Given the importance of "showcasing" the best of our built environment to the rest of the world during the Olympics, it is obviously important to ensure that projects such as these are completed in good time. Furthermore, we feel that the regional development agency, other funding bodies and the local authority should not overlook the benefits that can be achieved by area based heritage-led regeneration projects. Restoring and refurbishing historic character clearly restores both community and business confidence in particular areas and can have much wider impact than simply the employment involved in carrying out the work.

#### CONCLUSION

18. It is generally acknowledged that coastal towns need to move towards sustainable, all-year round economies to be able to provide better employment opportunities and address the issues that currently beset many of them. While the Government continues to make strides in addressing the prevalent socio-economic issues, the underlying causes are unlikely to disappear over the next few years. This means that local planning authorities and other public sector bodies will have to innovate in their strategies to stimulate local economies.

19. A focus on the local historic environment provides an excellent method of doing just this. Almost every single coastal community in the country has a distinctive and important local character, whether this is based on its role in supporting fishing fleets, the navy or trade with other countries. Many have a rich architectural heritage created through times of prosperity as a result of their coastal locations. At a time when domestic tourism is undergoing something of a renaissance, we believe a renewed focus on what originally created local character and prosperity can play an important role for coastal towns.

20. In order to ensure that such an approach leads to long-term benefits, local planning authorities need to adopt a similarly long-term vision for the development of their area. Character appraisals of their historic areas should be undertaken to develop understanding of local character, and this information should be used to feed into strategic forward planning documents.

#### INFORMATION SOURCES

Heritage Dividend, English Heritage 1999.

Heritage Dividend 2002, English Heritage 2002.

East of England Heritage Dividend, English Heritage 2003.

Shifting Sands, CABE/English Heritage 2003.

Sea Changes, English Tourism Council 2001.

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### Memorandum by South Tyneside Council (CT 38)

#### INTRODUCTION

The Borough of South Tyneside is located in northeast England and is bounded to the north by the River Tyne and to the east by the North Sea. South Tyneside Council is a metropolitan local authority undertaking a comprehensive range of local governance and community leadership functions; a number of which are directly relevant to and/or influenced by the coastal nature of the Borough.

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This short submission to the Coastal Towns Inquiry is intended to exemplify some of the issues that are faced by coastal communities.

#### CONTEXT

The Borough has a rich industrial heritage, intrinsically linked to its coastal location, and most significantly to shipbuilding. The administrative centre of the Borough is South Shields which is itself located at the mouth of the River Tyne, while the Borough's other main population centres such as Jarrow and Hebburn owe much to the past success and world dominance of the shipyards that adjoined the Tyne.

#### EMPLOYMENT

The decline of local industries such as manufacturing, shipbuilding, coalmining and fishing in the latter part of the twentieth century has left a legacy that continues to present challenges for the Borough.

Employment opportunities remain limited and those in service sectors such as leisure and tourism tend to be of a casual, seasonal and transient nature. Consequently, average household income in the Borough falls below the national average and a number of the Borough's neighbourhoods are amongst some of the most deprived in England. Clearly such neighbourhoods face challenges in terms of social exclusion and disengagement, which might be observed particularly amongst young people.

#### TOURISM AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY

The Borough's coastline is spectacular comprising a mix of cliffs, beaches and dunes and provides a significant regional/sub-regional tourist attraction as well as being host to the Great North Run. South Shields also has an active night-time economy. As such tourism makes a vital contribution to the local economy and the viability of the Town Centre. Visitors to the area appear, however, to come from the northeast region and stay for only a short duration and this tends to be reflected in a relatively low level of visitor expenditure.

#### HOUSING

Much of the Borough's housing was developed as part of the industrialisation of the area and is now therefore ageing and in need of significant investment to achieve the decent homes standard. Poor housing conditions coupled with other factors such as deprivation and social exclusion are likely to significantly impact on the health and well-being of residents.

Associated with its coastal location, South Shields has a concentration of guesthouses, bed and breakfast accommodation and houses in multiple occupation and these present some challenges in terms of ensuring appropriate housing standards are maintained.

#### ENVIRONMENT

The Borough's coastal environment faces a number of particular challenges arising from coastal erosion, potential loss of assets and coastal flooding. One specific high profile problem currently being dealt with in the Borough is a former landfill site that is subject to coastal erosion. Unfortunately, because of the particular nature of the site its remediation is likely to fall outside of both Defra's contaminated land and coastal protection funding regimes, but Government funding is still desperately needed.

Future challenges include the potential loss of highway infrastructure and designated wildlife habitats as a consequence of coastal erosion. At the same time, however, there is a real opportunity to develop and regenerate the Borough's foreshore area in an attempt to increase tourism. Clearly any such development if permitted would carry with it the cost of implementing any necessary coastal defence work; such costs are likely to deter private investment. Again this is an area where Government funding would prove to be invaluable.

#### CONCLUSION

Coastal Towns face a range of social, economic and environmental challenges some of which will be common to all such communities, others to a given region and others specific to a particular locality. This inquiry is very much welcomed and it is hoped that the Committee will recognise and make recommendation in relation to these significant issues. The Committee may possibly consider whether the problems faced by coastal towns should be specifically recognised in the FSS and through capital funding.

### Memorandum by Kent Green Party (CT 39)

Kent Green Party has a variety of comments about the current situation of coastal towns in Kent:

#### 1. HOUSING

Concentrations of empty property 3000 units in Thanet, 700 in the Shepway district, justify our argument for extra empty homes officers which we made in a letter to the ODPM in January 2005. We await a reply.

#### 2. SEA LEVEL RISE

It is evident from recent reports on climate change that global temperatures are rising more quickly than expected, in part because of the release of greenhouse gases from areas of permafrost such as in northern Canada and Greenland. We must emphasise the increased risks of flooding to coastal areas due to global warming. It is feared by imminent NASA scientist Jim Hansen that sea level will rise much higher than expected and much faster than expected. Sea levels could rise by 21 feet if all the ice of Greenland melts which it is doing now at accelerated rate. (See The Independent Friday 17 2006-for full details). Kent Green Party is concerned that the Government's policy of managed retreat will be extremely harmful to specific coastal communities (St.Nicholas at Wade, Thanet; the Medway estuary area; the Dungeness promontory-Romney Marsh area). The safety of homes and of tourism based in these areas requires a more engaged and realistic approach to the nature of the climate change we face before the end of this century. UK Greenhouse gas emissions rose in three out of the last four years and special pleading of "successes" in this area ignores abject failure to reduce transport sector emissions.

#### 3. SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Is needed for coastal towns, as they don't fall into the same category as towns inland. We feel the lack of economic "pull" they have is probably because of their limited geographical range, ie Thanet, Dover and Folkestone can only pull in people from a limited area, compared to towns like Canterbury and Tunbridge Wells (the latter which is the same size as Folkestone in terms of population, but has a much more vibrant, thriving economy). Also, many coastal towns have for too long been treated as just passing points for tourists. There is also what may be described as peripheralisation: land locked council areas are surrounded with other council areas each with their own facilities. This is appreciably different for coastal settlements which are, in the case of Kent's coastline, both geographically peripheral and at a distance from many facilities especially health care with the reduction in departments, bed and hospitals of recent years. (See A Pollock NHS PLC for a detailed account). Also, the appearance of factors promoting prosperity may be misleading eg the fact that Dover is the busiest port in the UK seems to do little for the town's regeneration, as no one is actually stopping there, just passing through. There is a huge residual problem of deprivation in coastal towns—especially Thanet and Folkestone. The large, ornate high quality resorts that they were once (providing substantially large victorian/edwardian high quality housing) proved ideal for flat conversion, high occupancy dwellings. Coastal towns also suffer from high mental health problems relative to other areas, and we recall reading in the Folkestone Herald that Folkestone has one of the highest rates of mental health related problems of all seaside towns (apart from Brighton due to its larger population).

#### 4. SUB-REGIONAL DIFFERENTIATION

A democratically elected regional assembly with unitary authorities operating at local level are necessary initiatives to re-connect people with democracy in our coastal towns. However, we note some evidence that Rainham-Gillingham residents did not want to be merged into the Medway Unitary. Kent Green Party believes that local people not population numbers should determine unitary boundaries through local referendums. In short, we do not think that merging district council areas is a necessary or desirable step. We note that local authorities on the continent tend to be far smaller than in the UK (see Herrschel and Newman Governance of Europe's City Regions and Balchin et al Regional Policy and Planning in Europe).

#### 5. SECOND HOMES

(See attached appendix showing second homes in just one coastal district of Kent, Shepway. Data supplied by Kent County Council. See also attached a list of who owns the empty homes in SE England) We are concerned that housing targets imposed on district councils and unitaries may just cater to the desire of high income groups to have second homes notably in fashionable locations like Whitstable, but as a general phenomenon in Kent. We believe that new housing in the Canterbury

district has also been occupied in large part by the rapidly increasing student population rather than meeting local residential needs. We suggest that second homes be subjected to higher rates of taxation to force owners into renting or selling such properties.

## 6. HISTORICAL CHARACTER AND TOURISM POTENTIAL

We believe that the real green tourism potential of Kent's coastal towns has yet to be realized. Given the Peak Oil effect (see ODAC website and research offered by the Association for Peak Oil, Exxon and other sources) it is inevitable that air fares will rise significantly in the short term. This, combined with the perceived and actual threats of natural disasters stimulated by climate change and man-made disasters including those resulting from acts of terrorism, means that the rise in domestic tourism may continue. However, this may be undermined in the short-term by the expansion of small airports like Lydd, Manston, Biggin Hill etc (See Friends of the Earth Briefing: Why airport expansion is bad for regional economies on their website). A strategy for maximizing the benefits of the special character of many of the coastal towns. Sandwich, Dover, Hithe and New and Old Romney are four out of the five historic, "Cinque Ports", whilst Lydd is a "limb" of New Romney. The history of these is of a profound impact on national history ultimately leading to the creation of the British Empire thanks to the gaining of naval dominance. They retain much of their ancient architecture and much archaeological and documentary research remains to be done. This special character can translate into commerce. The heritage industry is enormous and has a sound long-term future. An intelligent, proactive response from the ODPM in liaison with informed bodies such as English Heritage, the NT, the National Maritime Museum, the Imperial War Museum, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and the Department of Culture Media and Sport, could transform the somewhat depressed aspect of some of these towns, ie, Romney and Lydd, into destinations on the tourist itinerary, to the joy of local traders. ( See also Better Green Tourism [www.kentgreenparty.org.uk](http://www.kentgreenparty.org.uk))

## 7. ECONOMIC HINTERLAND

Most coastal towns suffer economically simply from the fact that their "catchment" or "hinterland" must usually only be 50% that of an inland town. In some cases, eg Thanet towns the hinterland is only 75% that of inland towns. Coastal towns that are successful may base their success on a number of factors. For example—if they are a trading port then effectively their hinterland is greatly expanded. A ferry port also has some advantages here but they are not so great (because people and goods are only passing through). Obviously there will be coastal resort towns that can be successful, though they suffer from seasonal blight. Some towns achieve success based on processing of imported raw materials. Some fishing towns also used to come under this category. We would argue there is a very strong case for giving some coastal areas some sort of "coastal regional aid", including selective and perhaps multi-purpose sea defences eg Thanet would be a good example: protecting the coastal and enhancing walking and cycling routes near St Nicholas at Wade, for example.. Another thing that could be done is to create "economic corridors" that go inland perpendicularly to the coast, without using greenfield sites. Investment in the corridor would be targeted towards the poorer areas of the "corridor". The aim would be to iron out economic disparities along the corridors. This sort of thing is planned for with the Thames Gateway, ie linking poorer lower Thames coastal towns such as Gravesend and Medway towns to London. We recognize that developers are reluctant to fund the Kent Thameside infrastructure and that the emphasis on houses rather than a lot more apartment style developments is leading to excessively low density housing. Both economic development and housing in the Thames Gateway should be at far higher densities, as Richard Rogers and Anne Power have suggested (Cities for a Small Country).

## 8. WATER

Expansion of so-called "Sustainable Communities" as promoted by the Office of the ODPM has taken place with insufficient regard to the availability of water. No current plans for a water grid or adequate water conservation exist, in part due to the shareholder-led approach of the privatized water industry and the relaxed approach of OFWAT. Kent Green Party supports national Green Party policy that the water industry should be returned to public ownership and that its truly appalling wastage of 3,600 million litres of water a day can only be achieved through full public control and accountability. This seriously under-regulated industry is also catering to UK citizens using about 135 litres of water per day rather than the continental average of about 110 litres (More 4 News, 24 February 2006). Kent's coastal towns are amongst the worst in recent years for rainfall with no natural water sources available in Thanet and the likelihood of full metering being applied to the Shepway district after a prolonged period of low rainfall and continued population growth. The Government must take a more strict line in this sector if serious water shortages are not going to impact upon Kent households.

**Supplementary memorandum by Kent Green Party (CT 39(a))**

**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL SECOND HOMES BY WARD**

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Dymchurch and St.Mary's Bay	108
Elham and Stelling Minnis	13
Folkestone Cheriton	6
Folkestone East	6
Folkestone Foord	3
Folkestone Harbour	24
Folkestone Harvey Central	43
Folkestone Harvey West	58
Folkestone Morehall	4
Folkestone Park	10
Folkestone Sandgate	67
Hythe Central	79
Hythe East	10
Hythe West	15
Lydd	138
Lympne and Stanford	9
New Romney Coast	82
New Romney Town	10
North Downs East	8
North Downs West	20
Romney March	12
Tolsford	8

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## Supplementary Memorandum by Kent Green Party (CT 39(b)) (continued)

County	Local Authority/Borough	Total empty homes	Percentage of homes empty	Local Council <sup>1</sup>	Who owns the empty homes?				Private Landlord <sup>2</sup>	Private homes empty more than 6 months	Households accepted as homeless by local council in 2004
					Housing Association <sup>2</sup>	Other public body <sup>2</sup>	1	2			
<b>Isle of Wight</b>	Isle of Wight	1,148	1.80%	6	78	1	1,063	694	223		
<b>Kent</b>	Ashford	1,343	2.94%	101	14	0	1,228	548	94		
	Canterbury	1,093	1.87%	71	22	0	1,000	180	123		
	Dartford	1,097	2.94%	28	11	0	1,058	488	138		
	Dover	2,186	4.55%	83	15	14	2,074	732	85		
	Gravesham	1,283	3.27%	82	5	0	1,196	699	246		
	Maidstone	#	#VALUE!	0	82	#	1,078	550	110		
	Sevenoaks	965	2.08%	0	10	4	951	424	129		
	Shepway	2,447	5.28%	24	61	4	2,358	363	151		
	Swale	914	1.63%	0	211	0	703	351	175		
	Thanet	* 3,728	6.17%	43	102	0	3,583	2,923	197		
	The Medway Council	#	#VALUE!	31	82	#	2,787	1,749	502		
	Tonbridge and Malling	1,252	2.76%	0	75	19	1,158	316	129		
	Tunbridge Wells	* 1,110	2.47%	0	88	0	1,022	49	157		
<b>Kent Total</b>		<b>17,418</b>		<b>463</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>20,196</b>	<b>9,372</b>	<b>2,236</b>		
<b>Oxfordshire</b>	Cherwell	1,057	1.90%	0	57	0	1,000	501	124		
	Oxford	#	#VALUE!	197	56	#	55	55	236		
	South Oxfordshire	1,160	2.12%	0	100	20	1,040	300	102		
	Vale of White Horse	349	0.73%	0	49	0	300	#	95		
	West Oxfordshire	955	2.31%	0	17	188	750	318	64		
<b>Oxfordshire Total</b>		<b>3,521</b>		<b>197</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>3,145</b>	<b>1,174</b>	<b>621</b>		
<b>Surrey</b>	Elmbridge	1,621	3.08%	0	191	0	1,430	437	190		
	Epsom and Ewell	419	1.46%	0	50	0	369	299	24		
	Guildford	1,008	1.88%	46	8	106	848	424	68		
	Mole Valley	1,393	4.07%	45	5	5	1,338	943	29		
	Reigate and Banstead	1,166	2.20%	0	79	15	1,072	398	147		
	Runnymede	734	2.27%	46	5	8	675	454	24		
	Spelthorne	764	1.95%	0	51	0	713	464	86		
	Surrey Heath	1,168	3.49%	0	36	92	1,040	907	42		
	Tandridge	1,203	3.67%	39	22	1	1,141	451	53		
	Waverley	964	1.96%	112	7	0	845	313	54		
	Woking	1,142	2.99%	44	41	26	1,031	448	96		
<b>Surrey Total</b>		<b>11,582</b>		<b>332</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>10,502</b>	<b>5,538</b>	<b>813</b>		

## Supplementary Memorandum by Kent Green Party (CT 39(b)) (continued)

County	Local Authority/Borough	Total empty homes	Percentage of homes empty	Who owns the empty homes?					Households accepted as homeless by local council in 2004
				Local Council <sup>2</sup>	Housing Association <sup>2</sup>	Other public body <sup>2</sup>	Private Landlord <sup>2</sup>	Private homes empty more than 6 months	
<b>West Sussex</b>	Adur	* 693	2.60%	14	4	0	675	328	81
	Arun	* 1,702	2.53%	24	14	0	1,664	840	196
	Chichester	* 1,642	3.39%	0	66	0	1,576	#	35
	Crawley	* 331	0.83%	63	30	1	237	132	110
	Horsham	1,030	1.92%	0	51	0	979	556	84
	Mid Sussex	829	1.50%	0	82	38	709	466	72
	Worthing	1,067	2.31%	0	77	1	989	443	80
<b>West Sussex Total</b>		* <b>7,294</b>		<b>101</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>6,829</b>	<b>2,765</b>	<b>658</b>
<b>SOUTHEAST TOTAL</b>		<b>75,866</b>	<b>2.40%</b>	<b>3,035</b>	<b>3,480</b>	<b>1,127</b>	<b>75,279</b>	<b>32,711</b>	<b>9,516</b>

\* Figures in italics are based on incomplete figures provided by local authorities and are, therefore, lower than actual totals.

Regional totals as supplied by ODPM may differ from individual boroughs due to additional cross-referencing with other bodies such as Government departments and the Housing Corporation. Regional totals have been grossed for missing values.

Notes:

1. Each year the Department of Transport, Local Governments and the Regions collects data on the number of empty homes from each local authority in England and from other Government departments and bodies.
2. "Local council" is the local authority, eg borough council, metropolitan borough council, metropolitan borough council; "housing associations" are organisations which provide social housing; "other public body" refers to Government departments and organisations such as the NHS, Highways Agency, Ministry of Defence, etc; "private landlords" can be individuals or private developers.

### Memorandum by Bournemouth Borough Council (CT 40)

The following are the main comments on the issues from a broader tourism perspective in Bournemouth:

#### NEED FOR SPECIAL INITIATIVES

- Coastal resorts require special consideration as a result of the demands placed upon them by the non resident, visiting population. In Bournemouth's case this represents some 5.2 million people every year—more than double the resident population on which the level of financial support for many services is based.
- Attractive coastal resorts are also a magnet for disproportionate numbers of individuals with special housing and social needs that place a further strain on local finances.
- The physical limitations of development, expansion and communication from the seaward boundary, place resorts at a unique disadvantage in comparison with inland towns.
- The inherited Victorian public infrastructure (piers, promenades, gardens etc) is expensive to maintain and yet is considered to be a definitive feature of the British resort and a distinctive part of our national heritage.
- The seasonal nature of demand in coastal towns produces pressures that need special measures to avoid serious environmental, economic and social problems.

#### ODPM SUPPORT

- Bournemouth welcomes the interest of ODPM in the specific needs of coastal resorts.
- Bournemouth was disappointed that the Liveability Fund did not appear to recognise the special position of coastal resorts as both a public resource for the wider British community and the public amenity and recreational role of the seafront in providing public open space for the local community.
- Bournemouth would like to see specific funding to support ground breaking initiatives to better manage the night-time economy. The social problems at night in seaside resorts are not the product of the local community but are peculiar to the appeal of coastal towns as a recreational venue for large numbers of non-residents. This can place a severe strain on policing, transport and cleansing.

#### REGIONAL INITIATIVES

- Bournemouth believes that certain regional initiatives in coastal towns would be facilitated by a more focused approach in the Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) adopted by the regions. The current variation in the content and structure of these strategies around the country can lead to serious omissions and unnecessary barriers to development.
- Not only should the variations between regions be recognised but the different characteristics and needs of coastal towns within a region need to be adequately assessed and addressed.

#### REGENERATION FUNDING

- Sustainability of projects should be a more important consideration within funding criteria. Financial support should be directed to pump-prime initiatives that have the genuine potential to continue when funding is withdrawn. Building on success should be just as important as trying to redress past economic failure when the market may well have moved-on.

#### RDA SUPPORT FOR COASTAL TOWNS

- The comment made above regarding unacceptable variation across the regions applies equally to the support for tourism in coastal towns through the RDA. Bournemouth would like to see much greater clarification of the respective roles of the agencies involved in publicly funded tourism industry support. The current system of National Tourist Board, Regional Development Agency, Regional Tourist Boards (in some areas but not others), sub regional Destination Management Organisations (some areas) and local tourist offices is very confusing and has too many layers to be cost effective and lacks transparency and accountability.
- There is a good case for a stronger national lead to restore order and efficiency from the anarchic situation that exists and to rationalise the support network as was achieved by the original Development of Tourism Act in 1969.

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## Memorandum by the British Amusement Catering Trades Association (BACTA) (CT 41)

### INTRODUCTION

1. BACTA (the British Amusement Catering Trades Association) is the largest trade association for UK gaming and the only association which represents the pay-to-play leisure industry. We currently represent the interests of over 685 companies and 1,170 individuals covering the entire supply chain from manufacturing, through distribution and including retail premises. Our membership includes family entertainment centres (seaside arcades), adult gaming centres, clubs, pubs, bingo halls, casinos, betting offices and bowling alleys, machine manufacturers and suppliers.

2. The Association aim to create an optimal trading environment for all sectors of our industry, improve the industry's image and encourage good practice and social responsibility. We also implement a voluntary Code of Practice which clearly defines responsible working practices.

3. BACTA is pleased to submit evidence to the ODPM Select Committee's inquiry into coastal towns.

### CONTRIBUTION TO COASTAL TOWNS

4. British seaside towns are a well-established and important part of the UK's tourism industry, offering a unique and reasonably-priced leisure package for very many people around the country. BACTA members up and down the country have been a central feature of these towns for many years, playing a pivotal role in attracting tourists and providing jobs for local people. In some areas, they have been an integral part of the traditional seaside leisure experience for over a hundred years.

5. Thousands of families visit our seaside-based members every year, most commonly those operating seaside amusements arcades, which fall into our Family Entertainment Centre (FEC) division. There are approximately 1,000 FECs across the country, many of which are located in seaside resort destinations. FECs provide family-orientated entertainment in a well-regulated environment, offering a wide range of family games and pay-to-play machines for all to enjoy.

6. These seaside leisure venues are often long-established, varying in size from Brighton Pier and large seaside arcades to shop size units. Most are part of very small groups which are usually owner-operated. They are generally at their busiest during the summer season and at weekends, although many are open all year, allowing them to keep permanent staff.

7. The importance of FECs to the appeal of coastal towns as leisure destinations was illustrated by the results of a BACTA-commissioned omnibus survey carried out by ORB in 2001. When those questioned were asked what they thought the main attractions of a seaside resort in this country were, 27% identified amusement arcades—the second most frequent answer after funfairs and rides, and ranked above other factors including the weather, the location and presence of piers in importance.

8. FECs make an important contribution to the local seaside economies as both visitor attractions and major employers, spending about £100 million per year and directly employing around 8,600 people (whole time equivalent) and indirectly supporting tens of thousands more in their local economies. As such, they are critical to many of the UK's seaside towns, particularly the smaller ones.

### POLICY CONCERNS

9. Our seaside members and others in the British seaside tourist industry are facing stiff competition from a growing range of sources for the general public's leisure pound.

10. FECs often operate on very tight margins and changing leisure habits—for example, an increase in foreign holidays brought about by more available cheap flights, and the rise in home gaming consoles—have contributed to a decrease in their profitability in recent years. This trend has broader knock-on effects for manufacturers of machines sited in FEC, who suffer declining demand for their new machines.

11. Ongoing regulatory reform has also contributed significantly to the tough trading environment in which BACTA's seaside members operate. Like the gaming industry as a whole, they have had to endure a prolonged period of regulatory uncertainty over the last few years. This began with the publication of the Budd Report on the reform of gaming regulation in 2001 and continued with Parliamentary scrutiny of draft legislation and the passage of the Gambling Act into law last year.

12. BACTA members face further uncertainty with the implementation of the Gambling Act 2005 taking up to two years. Because the lasting impact of the new regulatory regime on our industry remains unclear at the present time, the investment decisions of our seaside-based members (as with our members located inland) have, perhaps unsurprisingly, been cautious. This causes damage further up the supply chain, harming the machine manufacturers and operators on who are dependent in part on demand from the FEC sector.

13. The Gambling Act 2005 envisages the setting up of regional casinos as a means of stimulating economic regeneration in seaside areas. BACTA remains to be convinced that regional casinos will be of benefit to seaside areas and fears that their establishment could instead merely result in the displacement of

leisure spend from existing often family owned business to large multinational companies. This is why we fully support the piloting of the policy and having only one regional casino in the first instance, probably in a seaside area like Blackpool. Only after a three year pilot period and careful economic and social evaluation has been undertaken should the Government then consider whether to increase their number.

14. Against this backdrop, it is vital that both central and local government gives due consideration to how they can most effectively support and regenerate coastal towns and their economies. A key pre-requisite for seaside areas is to be able to compete more effectively with inland cities and urban areas for leisure customers. Central to this is the development of comparable transport connections. We would certainly welcome greater Government focus on how transport links into coastal towns could be improved and the transport facilities offered to tourists and day-tripper by these towns enhanced.

15. A common complaint from many of our members, for example, is the inadequate provision of car parking in seaside towns. Families are the lifeblood of the seaside tourist industry and many families choose, for convenience, to travel to coastal resorts by car. It is important that local councils and planning authorities make proper provision for reasonably-priced and accessible car parking in order to avoid discouraging families from coming or returning to coastal towns.

16. Furthermore, with competition for the population's leisure time and money continually growing, it is essential that seaside towns are visible as well as accessible. It is vital that local authorities, Regional Development Agencies and highway authorities work with the private sector and make sufficient resources available to ensure that seaside tourist destinations are effectively marketed and, equally as importantly, sign-posted. Seaside resorts will continue to be sustainable over the longer-term only if people know how to access them and are sufficiently tempted to make the journey.

#### CONCLUSION

17. BACTA members' long standing presence in coastal towns gives us a unique and knowledgeable insight into the workings of local seaside economies. Whilst our engagement with the Government on policy matters to date has been primarily with the DCMS as the department responsible for gaming and leisure policy, we would be keen to contribute to the development of cross-Government policy focused on supporting and regenerating coastal towns, and we welcome the ODPM Select Committee's focus on this issue.

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### **Memorandum by the British Resorts And Destinations Association (BRADA) (CT 42)**

#### INTRODUCTION

1. The British Resorts and Destinations Association (BRADA) (formerly British Resorts Association) represents 60 local authorities (49 in England), all with substantial tourism interests. Most are coastal, with responsibility for more than 150 coastal towns (and cities) and a multitude of smaller urban coastal communities. The latter do not meet the general criteria of a "town" and are not considered further. This is not to say that smaller communities do not share common problems with the towns, but merely that their issues are often different in terms of their scale and effect, and thus different in terms of their social and economic impacts upon the wider district within which they sit.

1.1 Not all of the 150 towns were purpose built, or subsequently adapted to cater for visitors, but the majority were. Not all towns with a history of hosting tourists retain their reliance on tourism as a social and economic driver, but the bulk of them still do. Given tourism's importance we are focusing our comments on the widely misunderstood and often maligned coastal tourism industry. We assume that individual authorities will give the specific local detail and examples. We also assume that others will represent the interests of those few coastal towns, which have little or no attachment to the visitor economy and will raise those few issues, which have no direct or indirect bearing on tourism, or vice versa.

1.2 Our area of expertise may lie in tourism, but this brings us into daily contact with a raft of wider social and economic issues. Tourism does not operate in isolation, but is woven into the fabric of the host community, particularly where tourism has been long established. As a tourism body, we have often found ourselves at the forefront of the efforts to raise the awareness of the much broader issues affecting coastal towns, and arguing the case for a more tailored approach to what must be a holistic programme of regeneration for each individual coastal town. We welcome the opportunity to address the Inquiry's questions and in parallel to clarify the realities of modern coastal destination tourism and the continuing roles and functions of local government in facilitating and nurturing tourism as one part of a wider balanced local and sub regional economy.

1.3 Before we address some of the specifics we believe it may be helpful to set the scene and refer to some basic principles and to past studies and papers. Regrettably this means that the memorandum is longer and broader ranging than the committee and we might have wished. Nonetheless, we believe that it is essential

that the issues faced in coastal towns are seen in their proper context. If they are not then there is a continued likelihood that many Government programmes will simply address the symptoms but not necessarily the root causes of the problem experienced.

#### HAPPY HOLIDAY MEMORIES

2.1 Attitudinal Barriers. Tourism suffers from a presumption of knowledge and understanding. We all holiday, everyone is a tourism expert. This may in part explain the common attitudinal barrier, which can be presented simplistically as:

- 2.1.1 We all used to take our holidays at the British coast, it must have been very big business. We now all holiday abroad, leaving no one to holiday at home. (ie Direct substitution from a fixed holiday pot).
- 2.1.2 This means no, or few, visitors to the coast, which equals economic collapse, a fact evidenced by the well-publicised social and economic problems seen in coastal towns. (ie Everyone worked in tourism, now they can't and don't and so must be unemployed).
- 2.1.3 A failing massive tourism industry must have created large-scale unemployment and in turn lead to all the associated social and economic problems. (ie What else possibly could have?)
- 2.1.4 In such circumstances it would be a waste of resources to try to improve social and economic conditions by supporting a failed or failing tourism industry. (ie The solutions must lie elsewhere outside tourism).

2.2 A Flawed Assumption. These are plausible arguments, not least because there are elements of truth in them, but it is by no means the full picture. The flawed arguments start with the assumption that the "good old days" were that good. The "heyday", to which today's industry is so often compared, occupied a 30 year post war period between 1945 and 1975, peaking in terms of volume in 1973 and falling away sharply thereafter. It was a high volume, low value, highly seasonal, low reinvestment market, which met the relatively simple expectations of the time; a time which is now nearer in terms of date and social conditions to the end of the Second World War, than it is to today's date and society. It would be truly depressing if another 30 years on from 1975 domestic tourism had not moved on, just like every other aspect of life in Britain has done.

2.3 The following extract from Professor Victor Middleton's recently published work on tourism may help put the period in its proper context:

- 2.3.1 "The British seaside retained its majority hold on the domestic tourism market throughout most of this period. Many regard the 1950s and 1960s as the golden age of the resorts. In volume terms it was, but ominously for the future, the leading contenders were still offering what, to the more travel experienced customers, was now recognisably the same tired product formula as they had 50 years earlier. Most resorts were then approaching 100 years old and it showed. There were clear signs of decline and decay, compounded by rising car traffic congestion by the end of the 1960s, although such signs were evidently not enough to stimulate effective response by the local councils responsible for their areas. The unsustainable economic realities of the 16-week holiday season were becoming clearer every year and post-war 1940s accommodation standards were increasingly perceived as just not good enough. There was by now a clear international yardstick to measure such standards".

#### A MUCH CHANGED INDUSTRY

3.1 A Bigger Market Place. Professor Middleton's book *British Tourism—The Remarkable Story of Growth* (Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann ISBN: 0 7506 3374 3), contains a wealth of information tracking and evidencing the changing face of the UK's tourism industry. As the title suggests, domestic tourism, including the coastal tourism sector has not collapsed, but changed dramatically and largely for the better, to become a 365-day a year enterprise, demanding very different responses, structures and products. The simplistic views that everyone now goes abroad, therefore no one holidays at home misses the point. For the average UK resident, holiday no longer means just a week, or a fortnight away in summer with one, perhaps two bank holidays and the odd day trip away from home. Leisure is now all but a lifestyle, not a luxury, and it is a lifestyle enjoyed by the majority, not just a minority.

3.2 Not unsurprisingly in a small Nation made up of 6,100 islands with a combined coastline of 9,040 miles (9,335 km), the coast's and coastal town's intrinsic appeal continues to attract a significant slice of the much bigger UK overseas and domestic holiday, leisure and business travel cake. In terms of value and volume today's domestic tourism market is of greater consequence than that which went before, albeit a very different market, supporting a different industry that now trades in the wider visitor economy and not simply in tourism and/or leisure.

3.3 A Faltering Start. The challenge for all coastal towns has been to adapt their ageing and, in part, outdated infrastructure, in order to make their towns become year round destinations, catering for a range of different types of leisure and business visitors, seeking a wider range of different experiences, across and throughout the full year. The majority failed to rise to the challenge during the late 1970s and the 1980s, as

the traditional short sharp summer trade rapidly declined and before the new more dynamic and flexible markets developed and expanded in the 1990s to fill parts of the void. In their defence there was little or no structural support for the coastal authorities during this period of traumatic change, nor any central recognition that tourism could still be part of the solution to much deeper economic and social problems, rather than being at the root cause of them. In defence of Central Government they had much bigger and, at the time, more pressing problems to address in the older, mainly inland, industrial towns and cities. During this period there was often a chronic lack of public and private sector investment, which has only served to add to the scale of today's task.

#### TOURISM HAS ONLY EVER BEEN ONE PART OF THE PUZZLE

4.1 A Mixed Economy. If post war tourism was such a highly seasonal industry, it does beg the question, how did these significant communities survive out of season? It could be that tourism was so hugely profitable that no one needed to work for two thirds of each year. In part it could have been that many of the businesses were micro businesses and their lifestyle motivated owners who had limited aspirations and got by in what was a much simpler, less materialistic age. Or, as is near the mark, it could have been that, all coastal towns had one or more other significant partner industry within or surrounding them. Typically these included: agriculture, fishing, local docks, ship building and boat repair, coal and other mineral extraction (including china clay), steel making and other heavy industry manufacture. There was also a tradition of light engineering and general manufacture, much of it tourism related, including coach building, caravan manufacture and the manufacture of tourism supplies, for example beach toys, novelties, confectionery and so on.

4.2 The Decline of Traditional Industries. Some of these partner industries continue to thrive in the UK, but there is a depressing theme running through the majority, which have, to a greater or lesser degree, failed or moved abroad over the last 40 years. The coastal towns, just like their inland counterparts, have suffered from the effects of a wider industrial decline, but in the coastal towns' case the otherwise dramatic overnight impacts of large scale closures have been masked by and then, in time, subsequently blamed in part upon the tourism industry. Tourism is part of the solution, just as re-establishing a broader based mixed economy has an important function to play in redefining coastal towns.

4.3 Tourism The Hidden Employer. Another important piece of the puzzle is the multiplier effect that tourism has on all other activities in a community. Visitors not only create direct and obvious demands themselves, they also generate demands all down the supply chain, while also helping underpin a wide range of other non tourist related front line businesses and services, in excess of the number that the town on its own would support. If anyone doubts that tourism has a hidden role in sustaining communities and keeping the several more butchers, bakers and candlestick makers, builders, window cleaners, printers and so on in business, they need look no further than the indirect impact that Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) had on rural communities. No one recognised tourism's wider role in a rural environment until tourism disappeared and took with it a swath of other front-line and supply chain businesses. If the multiplier effect applies in a quiet rural environment, then it will apply all the more in an obviously busy tourist town. The move away from a highly seasonal industry also has implications, as the multiplier effect now increasingly underpins the small business model in destinations throughout the full year and not just on a seasonal basis.

#### THE COASTAL CONUNDRUM

5.1 So Good, Yet So Bad. In trying to establish the case for holistic resort regeneration to include tourism in the late 1990s, we have continually come up against the classic coastal conundrum. If tourism really remains buoyant and apparently has more potential, as we claim, then why are so many of the barriers to tourism development associated with high levels of social deprivation? Could very similar problems be caused in very different coastal towns, purely by the failure of often very different partner industries? Or is there some other rogue factor at play?

5.2 The Seaside Economy Report. A major part of the answer lies in The Sheffield Hallam University Study; The Seaside Economy, published in 2003 (Sheffield Hallam University ISBN: 184387 020 X). Although it is not our report, it is of such significance that we are submitting it in full (Annexe A) to ensure that the Committee has access to it.

5.3 The report's seven point summary is so worthy of note that it is reproduced below. It states:

5.3.1 This report provides the first comprehensive examination of economic change in Britain's seaside towns. The focus is on the whole local economy, not just the tourist sector but, in particular, the report explores how local labour markets have responded to the challenge posed by the rise of the foreign holiday. The widely held view is that this has resulted in the unemployment that can now be observed in many seaside towns.

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- 5.3.2 The research involved the assembly of data on employment, unemployment, and other aspects of labour market change over the whole of the last thirty years. This analysis covers all Britain's 43 principal seaside towns. These have a total population of about 3.1 million.
- 5.3.3 The research also involved an interview survey of just over 1,000 non-employed adults of working age in four towns—Blackpool, Great Yarmouth, Southport and Thanet (which covers Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs). This gathered a wide range of information on skills, work experience, benefits and job aspirations.
- 5.4 The research generates seven main findings.
- 5.4.1 First, and perhaps most surprising of all, there has actually been strong employment growth in seaside towns. Between 1971 and 2001, total employment in seaside towns grew by around 320,000, or more than 20%. A great deal of this growth took place in the sectors most closely linked to tourism as well as in the rest of the local service economy. This employment growth occurred among both men and women, and among both full and part-time workers. It indicates that the assumption that the rise of the foreign holiday has led to severe economic decline in British seaside resorts is well wide of the mark.
- 5.4.2 Second, in-migration to seaside towns is outstripping local employment growth, and it is this that is leading to continuing imbalance in seaside labour markets. Between 1971 and 2001, net in-migration to seaside towns increased their working age population by 360,000. Most of this in-migration was among the over 35s, and it is additional to inflows of people over state pension age.
- 5.4.3 Third, a great deal of the in-migration to seaside towns appears to be driven by residential preference. Put simply, many people move to seaside towns because they want to live there. Work-related reasons for moving are cited less often—by fewer than one in five non-employed recent migrants, for example. People under pension age who have moved to seaside towns to retire account for relatively small numbers. Most migrate with the expectation of continuing to work, at least initially.
- 5.4.4 Fourth, there is evidence that some of the in-migration to seaside towns, and some of the resulting unemployment is housing-driven. The closure and re-use of some small hotels and boarding houses has created a stock of small privately-rented flats that is often thought to draw in benefit claimants from neighbouring areas and elsewhere. Among the in-comers surveyed, around one in seven said that housing had been a factor in their move. There is also evidence that the private rented sector does indeed act as a point of entry to the local housing market.
- 5.4.5 Fifth, there is extensive joblessness in seaside towns beyond recorded, claimant unemployment. Taking all seaside towns together, claimant unemployment is actually only marginally higher than the national average, though in most seaside towns it is well above the level in surrounding areas and in a few towns it is high by national standards. However, the survey findings indicate that there are large numbers of men and women who are claiming sickness benefits (and therefore not recorded as unemployed) who say they would like a job. There are also large numbers of women presently looking after family or home who say they would like paid employment. Overall, it is estimated that the “real” rate of unemployment in seaside towns is nearer 10% than the 4% recorded by claimant unemployment data.
- 5.4.6 Sixth, the jobless in seaside towns are broadly similar to those in other areas. Non-employed men of working age, for example, are a predominately older group, with around two-thirds coming from manual occupations. They are also more likely to describe themselves as long-term sick than unemployed, and to claim Incapacity Benefit rather than Jobseeker's Allowance. Just under half say they would like a full-time job, but only a quarter also think there is a realistic chance of getting one.
- 5.4.7 Seventh, the successful adaptation of individual seaside towns has depended more on regional location than on size. The seaside towns in the South West and, to a lesser extent, the South East, have fared better in terms of employment and in-migration than those in Wales, the North West and on the East Coast. This seems to owe something to the strength of the holiday trade in the South West and to the prosperity of the wider South East economy, which spills over into seaside towns in the region. The high-fliers include both large and small resorts, as do the weaker performers, but net losses of people and jobs are confined to just a handful of places.
- 5.4.8 The report concludes that seaside towns should not be bracketed with Britain's other problem locations, such as older industrial areas. Although some of the outcomes in terms of claimant unemployment are similar, the underlying economic trends are radically different. Unlike many other “one industry towns”, seaside towns do not, on the whole, suffer from a downward spiral of decline.
- 5.4.9 Whilst there has clearly been restructuring in the wake of the rise of the foreign holiday, the continuing resilience of employment in and around the parts of the local economy most dependent on tourism suggests that there has often been successful adaptation. The seaside tourist industry remains one to be nurtured, not written off as a lost cause.

5.5. Our Interpretation . Some have interpreted the remark that coastal towns are not to be bracketed with the older industrial towns to mean that the resort towns' problems are not in the same league as, and are thus somehow less deserving of the type of support, already enjoyed by many older industrial towns. This is not the case. What is meant is that the problems are of an equally serious nature, however since their causes and some of their effects are markedly different, different solutions will be required from those tried and tested in the older industrial areas. This is surely a key message for ODPM and other Departments and, critically, for any programmes they may wish to apply to coastal towns.

5.6 Incapacity Benefit. The identification of Incapacity Benefit as a major hidden contributor to economic inactivity in coastal resort towns is also significant, particularly in light of recent announcements concerning the reform of the Incapacity Benefit system. This may be yet another area where action tailored to meet the peculiar convergence of circumstance in coastal towns will be required. Bringing individuals off incapacity benefit and into suitable employment is a challenge. To do so in areas where there are both significant pockets of incapacity and a series of external factors militating against general employment growth will take some considerable effort and imagination. Targeted programmes may be one solution, removing the remaining barriers to general growth would be a far more fruitful approach.

#### THE SYMPTOMS OF COASTAL TOWNS

6.1 The Common Symptoms. Professor Fothergill's report makes it clear that while the resort towns have actually done remarkably well to date, they have had to run much faster than other towns simply to avoid drowning in, what has in part been an imported problem. Many of the symptoms of the in-migration of adults of working age outstripping otherwise healthy job growth were identified in the British Resorts Association's, 1999 Seaside Resorts—Behind the Façade and the English Tourism Council's 2001 Sea Changes reports. Although at the time, without the benefit of the Sheffield Hallam work, we could not fully explain what all the primary causes might be. The earlier reports both identified the common issues as:

- 6.1.1 Higher than average tourism and service sector dependency.
- 6.1.2 Low rates of economic activity.
- 6.1.3 High annual average claimant costs.
- 6.1.4 Low wage economies.
- 6.1.5 Low comparative levels of GDP per head.
- 6.1.6 Higher number of single person households as a %age of all households.
- 6.1.7 Significant numbers of seaside resorts in the worst deteriorating districts within the DETR's 1996 Index of Regeneration.
- 6.1.8 High number of elderly residents.

6.2 Physical Barriers. These reports also identified common unique physical barriers which being beside the sea creates. The first is that, "coastal towns are peripheral to the main markets and the primary transport infrastructure that links them. With land access of at best 180 degrees, attracting new investment to diversify local economies has proved difficult without Government support". The issue of physical access remains critical for many coastal towns. With the sea limiting catchment and distribution areas it is a brave business which voluntarily seeks to locate by the sea, particularly when typical road and/or rail access is poor. But access is not just an industrial issue, it also severely impacts on the visitor economy and it limits the town's attractiveness for both inward and outward commuting options. Service and manufacturing sector industries, the visitor economy and commuting, combined form the key ingredients for holistic regeneration. Access issues hamper all three. Currently National transport policy does not recognise the special need of coastal towns, being primarily designed for inland urban communities and for the different economic, social and geographic conditions that apply to them.

6.3 Public Realm. The nature of the harsh coastal environment and the demands of maintaining public realm are also highlighted as major, uniquely coastal town problems, as was the additional burdens of pollution control, environmental and public safety demands imposed by promenades and beaches. If coastal towns are to be successful as both places to live and work and as places to visit, it is essential that the public realm is maintained in near pristine condition and that the resident/visitor services meet modern expectation. Unfortunately, the public realm in coastal towns and, in particular, in purpose built resort towns, is typically on a grade scale. Also while it may have much historic and architectural merit, it is often of very limited commercial value. Piers, parks, promenades, Victorian shelters, bandstands and so on are all part of the fabric of coastal towns. They are largely here to stay and thus represent a significant and unavoidable financial burden on the local authority.

6.4 Capital Programmes. Fortunately in recent years some of the long overdue capital works in many coastal towns have started to receive attention. European and UK structural funding, lottery grants and latterly Development Agency inspired programmes have been directed towards some coastal towns. The approach has been varied and appears to owe as much to luck of geographical location and administrative boundary, as it does to identifiable need and to any clear National strategy, or plan for the regeneration of coastal towns. Some towns have done very well from past and ongoing residual UK and European

programmes. We also now see some Development Agencies actively seeking to improve the lot of their coastal towns, while others have different priorities, perhaps understandably, given their own markedly different financial resources.

6.5 Revenue Programmes. What is certainly not being addressed properly anywhere, in our view, is the revenue spending issues. There is simply not enough allowance being made to cover the cost of maintaining the inherited and newly created public realm, or for the additional cost of dealing with the demands created by the sea. Nor is there proper allowance for the cost of hosting visitors and providing the services that they rightly expect, including specific coastal services like beach lifeguards. Unless coastal towns are maintained and serviced properly they will not be chosen as places to live, work or to visit, particularly given their peripheral nature and the transport issues already highlighted. Coastal towns are special places but then they need to be kept special, in order to overcome their inherent disadvantages of being out on a limb.

6.6 New Regional Support Structures. The issue of revenue spending has been further confused by the different RDAs attempts to rationalise and streamline tourism support. Most of the differing approaches applied have recognised the local authority role in providing basic infrastructure, like parking, street cleaning, bins, public toilets, parks and gardens, and tourist information. However, some have failed to understand that all local authorities provide these prerequisites of the visitor experience for their own residents, regardless of the status of the town as a destination. The real issues are actually about the management of those facilities in genuine tourist destinations, so they meet the often-unpredictable ebbs and flows and critically the additional levels of demand created by visitors. We regard this Destination Management function to be a role best run at the destination level and by default a function usually best left to the local authority, or a local authority led or facilitated partnership. Beyond this in truly popular destinations, including many of the coastal towns, local authorities often have a much bigger role, that of co-ordinating, facilitating and, where necessary, leading the public private sector partnership efforts of the town to promote and market itself. Many of the more popular destinations have well established, highly professional tourism departments which pull the town's disparate tourism products together and run or facilitate things like events programmes, which would seldom be organised for the benefit of the whole town by the private sector operating alone.

6.7 A failure to recognise that there are at least three different levels of local authority role, depending on local circumstance, has served to undermine and threaten some of the more successful, well-established local authority led partnerships and tourism structures. Arguably while doing very little, yet, to improve the situation where the visitor economy is not a major economic driver, although there are now signs that as the new arrangements settle in, attitudes are changing. In the meantime, there is the ever present danger that cash starved local authorities may be tempted to abandon non statutory tourism support, merely ticking the tourism box by dint of the fact that they are providing the basic infrastructure that they already supply for their residents. If they are told often enough that that is the extent of their important role in tourism, then we should not be surprised when they decide that that is all they will do.

6.8 Destination Management Organisations. The term "Destination Management Organisation" (DMO), and variations on the theme are being used widely across all the RDA areas for new structure and organisations. Previously in local authority circles the term meant the organisation that physically ran and organised all aspects of tourism delivery in a definable destination, usually a town or a recognised tourist area. Since there is no national definition of a destination, or of what a management organisation manages or does, and since we now have a plethora of new bodies claiming to be the destination managers there is currently considerable room for confusion. At the local level businesses are not yet necessarily sure yet who they should be working with and to on what aspect of tourism. At the national level we are told that everything is now under control because tourism is now being managed by a streamlined system of something in the order of 110 DMO across England. We all know its not a National system as such and that instead of the old understandable local authority, Regional and National tourist board structure, we have a multitude of different regional and sub regional structures. The question is do they know it and understand the implications for national delivery and for national policy. If tourism interests find it confusing what hope for ODPM and others trying to deliver broader policies with tourism implications? Thankfully DCMS, the National Tourist Board, the RDAs and the industry are beginning to address some of these issues. A good starting place would be a clearer definition of terminology and of roles and functions. Given that we may now be stuck with a system where roles and functions may vary significantly from region to region and even between sub regions, a mapping exercise of who does what, where may have to suffice.

6.9 Accommodation Imbalances. The reports also discuss the oversupply of large Victorian and Edwardian properties, many of which have fallen into a spiral of low revenue usage and decline. Lately this problem has, in part, begun to address itself, particularly in more desirable, or more genteel destinations, or in those towns where rail and/or road links are set to improve (South East Coast fast rail links for example). Property values have increased sufficiently to make redevelopment for private housing a viable proposition. But this is not a universal trend and it seldom addresses the very worst of the problems. Ironically it can also help create others.

6.10 Houses In Multiple Occupation. Some towns continue to suffer from significant numbers of poor quality Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) which, because of their state of repair, blight the locality. Sometimes it is simply that the town remains an unattractive proposition for redevelopment, often because of access issues, in others it may simply be the sheer numbers of HMOs in operation. Where the housing

market has taken a positive hand, it can result in a shortage of affordable public and private sector housing which, in turn, can inadvertently support the viability of the very worst quality HMOs. The strength of the property market can also put pressure on hotels and other tourism stock in prime locations, as it is not always the properties that the councils, residents or the tourism industry would most like to see reconverted that are.

6.11 Affordable Housing. A supply of affordable, good quality public and private sector housing is not just a socially desirable aspiration. Given the Sheffield Hallam estimates of upwards of 10% of the adult working age population being economically inactive, we would have something in the order of 150,000 unemployed in 43 principal resort towns, most of whom will struggle to afford their own homes, or to pay high rents. Beyond that we must recognise that a good deal of the tourism industry employment remains low skilled, low paid and, in parts at least, still seasonal. Many of those in work cannot afford expensive accommodation and those out of work but in accommodation, can not always afford to take up work, particularly on a seasonal basis. It is our contention that it is not purely a lack of skills, or willingness in the UK workforce that is driving up the number of overseas workers in the tourism industry. It is the willingness of “temporary” overseas workers to live in the typically temporary, on the job accommodation made available to them, which is a major contributory factor.

6.12 Targeted Programmes. The work of Housing Associations, and programmes like Living Over The Shop have all contributed to improving the physical condition of property, while increasing the availability of the affordable accommodation. But more work is required to break the cycle of slow decline, disrepair and negative impact on the locality, followed by eventual conversion back to expensive private housing stock. There needs to be specific programmes designed to help move a significant proportion of larger poor quality HMOs in to affordable good quality housing in coastal towns. Inevitably there will always be some poorer quality HMOs in operation and indeed a clientele who will seek out this type of accommodation by choice. The problem in some coastal towns is the numbers of poor quality HMOs in operation and lack of choice being offered to lower income residents.

6.13 Linked Concerns. We also identify high numbers of single households and the high levels of pupil turnover in some schools as typical coastal town issues. Without over stressing the point both are often housing related, the schooling issue being linked to high levels of adult transience within and very often between seaside towns.

6.14 Retirement and The Elderly. Finally higher than average numbers of elderly people are identified as an issue. This should not be confused with the issue of retirement and the continuing attractiveness of coastal towns as retirement havens, although there is a direct link. The retired usually bring with them resources and contribute positively to the economy and the social fabric. The problem is that a constant influx of retired people distortion in the age profile and as a direct consequence coastal resort towns end up with much higher numbers of elderly, vulnerable residents needing care and support than would otherwise be the case in non retirement towns. The popularity of coastal towns as the location for many commercial and charitable retirement and care homes (driven in the past by the property profile) has also added to the pressure on local support services by drawing in already elderly residents from elsewhere. In addition the retired inadvertently distance themselves from the support of family and long term friends. Years down the line when partners have passed on, the elderly in coastal towns are far more likely to need residential care, or at home support from their local authority, than those who have stayed within easy reach of their own families. Needless to say the allocations to coastal local authority social services and to local NHS budgets take little, or no account of the retirement factor.

## INQUIRY QUESTIONS

7.1 The Case For Special Initiatives. We believe that there is a case for a special initiative to tackle the needs of coastal towns, or at the very least an initiative, which ensures that existing initiatives and programmes recognise the uniquely different conditions driving the seemingly familiar social and economic problems experienced in seaside towns.

7.2 Throughout this memorandum we have stressed the need for tailored solutions. Our experience suggests that this means tailored for both the unusual but common coastal factors and then tailored again to meet the specific set of circumstances in each town. Coastal towns share common problems but they are not all the same and a one size fits all coastal solution, is not the answer. We have also stressed the need for an holistic approach to regeneration. Our experience suggests that there is a raft of diverse social and economic issues, which appear to stand-alone but which actually inter react, one upon the other in a circular fashion. By way of illustration, it would be a pointless exercise improving the social housing stock, without also improving job prospects. Tourism job prospects, in particular, are unlikely to improve much unless the public realm is improved and is then properly maintained. However, poor housing stock and the economic consequences of high levels of economic inactivity often impact visually on the public realm and effect the level of funding available to maintain it. Thus all three aspects need to be addressed in parallel and if they are there is the added benefit that a currently negative cycle, become a virtuous circle.

7.3 ODPM's Work . Is ODPMs work in coastal towns effective, well-focused or adequately funded? The answer to this question is that it is almost impossible for us to tell as it is relatively unclear to us what ODPM and others are doing, where, with what, why and when. There does seem to be much more happening in

coastal towns by way of programmes and projects now. However, there is little sense, from where we stand, that there is some National strategy, or an overarch plan of holistic coastal town regeneration driving it, but rather there is a mass of passing opportunities which are offered to, or sought out by some authorities but not by others. Some authorities are clearly more skilled at putting forward their case than others and a combination of success and experience does tend in our view to breed further success. Whether it is the skill and the tenacity of the local authority, the obviously greater needs of some towns, or the focused approach of ODPM and others that have lead to some towns getting more support than others is open to question. As to funding availability, the question is how much is adequate? The fact that there are a raft of serious social, housing and environmental issues still to be resolved in coastal towns would suggest that ODPM's efforts and those of others in coastal towns could be better funded.

7.4 Liaison With Other Departments. We do not have a view on the effectiveness of ODPM's liaison with other Departments in key areas such as employment, migration, and social housing and co-operation with local authorities. This is primarily because we do not see their liaison in action, nor are we particularly aware of seeing any obvious signs of the outcomes of liaison. If there is any fault involved, it is as much ours for not engaging with ODPM much more than we currently do.

7.5 Regional Initiatives. Several of the RDAs have instigated coastal initiative, or applied regional initiatives to coastal towns. Other RDAs, as far as we are aware, have not specifically attempted to address coastal town issues across their region, although individual projects in individual coastal town may have been supported. We would like to see specific coastal initiatives being instigated in every region, primarily to ensure that the specific coastal issues are properly identified and thus adequately addressed and to encourage a more holistic approach to coastal town regeneration for all the reasons already stated above. We also believe that the disparity in RDA funding is already leading to a serious disparity in investment in to different coastal towns in and across different regions. Certainly for those with continuing tourism aspirations this has very serious implications. Those that are regenerated will continue to do well out of the visitor economy, those that are not will need to look elsewhere and in all likelihood will find that the barrier to tourism success are the selfsame barriers to other economic activities.

7.6 Longer Term Security. We are concerned that the RDAs may take a classic intervene, solve and withdraw approach. For capital projects this is less of a problem, but for the longer term we see coastal towns needing steady ongoing investment and adequate revenue funding of service and of public realm provision, particularly in support of the tourism industry. Some of the new tourism support structure recently put in place and currently funded by the RDAs have inadvertently sidelined the local authorities, assuming seemingly that the long-term future lies with ongoing private sector investment. Years of local authority experience suggests that the private sector can be rather more fickle, supporting part publicly funded schemes, where it makes sense to do so and abandoning them when significant public funding starts to dry up. Of equal concern is that history shows that when times are hard and the supporting mechanisms are most needed, are the very times when the private sector is forced to pull its financial support.

7.7 The Success of RDA. It is still far too early to judge the success of the RDAs in supporting and developing the economies coastal towns. Even where there are obvious signs of success it usually transpires that the groundwork predated the RDAs and that what we see now is the reward of past work. What is more telling is the amount of energy and resource being directed in to future and ongoing projects. The degree of activity today often links to past efforts, for example RDAs not unreasonably tend to support ongoing projects in areas that have access to residual EU funding ie areas and projects where they can achieve greater financial leverage. Some RDAs clearly see coastal towns as one of their priorities and are putting imagination and significant funding into regeneration. Others may give them rather less priority, however, given the disparity in RDA funding this is perhaps hardly surprising.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

8.1 We welcome this opportunity to respond in to the committee's enquiry and would also welcome an opportunity at some later date to flesh out some or all of the many areas touched upon. In summary these are:

8.2 We are taking a tourism viewpoint but tourism affects many coastal towns and interacts directly with a broad range of social and economic issues and visa versa. We believe that currently there remains a real danger that the right problems could be addressed in coastal towns for the wrong reasons, and thus potentially in the wrong way. Tourism continues to have a vital function within a wider balanced economy, which can be best achieved via a tailored holistic programme of regeneration for individual towns (1.1 to 1.3).

8.3 There is a fundamental misunderstanding about the causes of social and economic problems in many coastal towns, the received wisdom is that failed formerly massive tourism industry is largely to blame (2.1 to 2.3).

8.4 This is not the case, a significant changed industry has, after a difficult period in the late 1970s to late 1980s, been created (3.1 to 3.3). That industry's success has masked the decline of other traditional coastal partner industries. (4.1 to 4.2). The multiplier effect of tourism has spread that success into the supply chain and underpins the activity of many other businesses and services in coastal towns. (4.3).

8.5 Many of the problems experienced in coastal resort towns are caused in part, or are sustained by excessive in-migration of adults of working age, which has outstripped otherwise impressive economic growth. This is a hugely important factor and one only being identified by Sheffield Hallam University as recently as 2003 (5.1 to 5.4.9).

8.6 Although as serious in their nature as the problems experienced in the older industrial towns the cause and effects are markedly different, Therefore logically the tried and tested template solutions used in the older industrial towns may also need to be different (5.5).

8.7 The high number of Incapacity Benefit claimants identified also throws up some interesting sub issues given recent announcements regarding reform of the Incapacity Benefit system (5.6).

8.8 Despite adaptation of the coastal economy, there remains a series of common social and economic problems seen in most coastal resort towns (6.1 to 6.1.8). There are also serious physical barriers associated with being peripheral to main markets and the primary transport infrastructure. Failure to address rail and road access issues is blocking the development of the three most important legs of coastal regeneration, which are: the recreation of a broad balance of service and manufacturing industries, the visitor economy and inward and outward commuting opportunities. (6.2).

8.9 Coastal towns also have serious issues regarding the nature and scale of their public realm and the harsh coastal environment. (6.3). Capital programmes are now starting to address some of the long term capital under investment issues. However, different RDAs with different resources understandably have had to take differing approaches. (6.4).

8.10 Revenue issues are not being addressed. There are insufficient allocations to meet the needs of maintaining the inherited and new public realm, or for the additional cost of dealing with the demands of the sea. Nor is their proper allowance for the cost of hosting visitors, or providing the services for visitors and residents that they rightly expect, and which are needed to help overcome the inherent disadvantages of being out on a limb. (6.5).

8.11 The different new and untried tourism structures being imposed by the different RDAs are not helping maintain the active engagement of all local authorities. At the heart of the problem is a failure to recognise that there are different levels of local authority engagement and at least three different potential levels of role, depending on the relative importance of tourism (6.6 to 6.7). Confusion over who is currently doing what, compounded by the use of vague terminology to describe new organisations is not helping the situation. Given confusion and financial pressures, there remains an ever-present danger that some local authorities will abandon their historic role of co-ordinating the activities of a disparate tourism industry (6.8).

8.12 A fundamental issue in most coastal towns is the imbalances in housing stock and the impact of an oversupply of larger Victorian and Edwardian properties. The housing market has started to mop up some of the problem properties but in doing so it fails to address the issues of affordable good quality housing for both the unemployed and for those working in the often low wage service sector heavy coastal town economies. (6.9 to 6.12). Many of the other social and economic issues, for example high numbers of single households and high levels of pupil turnover in some schools are to large degree housing driven. (6.13).

8.13 Coastal towns also suffer from problems of caring for higher than average numbers of elderly residents. Some of the elderly are imported directly into care and other homes, which were themselves attracted to coastal towns by the property profile. The bigger problem comes from the coast's attractiveness as a retirement haven. The retired usually bring with them resources and contribute positively to the economy and the social fabric. However, when they come in numbers year on year they also distort the age profile, leading directly to higher numbers of genuinely elderly people living in the coastal towns at any one time. The fact that the retired deliberately distance themselves from family means that down the line they are far more likely to rely on local authority or NHS care, neither of which receive additional resources in recognition of the localised issue. (6.14).

8.14 There is a case for specific initiatives to cater for the peculiar causes of the otherwise familiar common problems seen in coastal towns. Coastal towns need tailored solutions for their special common issues and tailored again for the specific circumstances in each town. The initiatives need to be holistic, tackling a range of issues and preferably tackling them concurrently (7.1 to 7.2).

8.15 We are not convinced that ODPM, or indeed anyone else's efforts in coastal towns is effective, well-focused or adequately funded because we get no sense, perhaps incorrectly, that the many programmes taking place are necessarily part of a specific programme, or working to any coherent National strategy or plan. In equally simplistic terms, since there is still much to be done the adequacy of the resources available must be questioned. (7.3).

8.16 We have no view on ODPMs liaison with other departments on key issues, simply because we have had not seen that liaison in action, nor are we overtly aware of seeing the outcomes of that liaison. The fault, if there is one, lies as much with us as it does with ODPM, or others. (7.4).

8.17 Several RDAs have instigated specific coastal programmes, or applied general programmes to coastal towns, others with less available resources have been less active. We would like to see specific programmes if only to ensure that the specific problems of coastal towns are properly recognised and

therefore properly addressed. There is disparity in RDA funding for coastal towns, and while this is understandable given the disparity in their resources, it has serious implications for those towns which will effectively be left behind by their peer and competitor towns (7.5).

8.18 We have serious concerns about the long-term security of the RDAs support for coastal towns and, in particular, for the support of tourism, which has traditionally needed modest ongoing publicly funded co-ordination. Some RDAs are sidelining the traditional local authority based co-ordinating organisations and partnerships, setting up instead new bodies, which are looking largely to the private sector for their funding. Past experience suggests that as over time the proportion of public funding decreases the private sector support rapidly follows suit. In addition in the all too often times of crisis, when the supporting bodies are most needed, the private sector can least afford to contribute (7.6).

8.19 It is largely too early to tell if the RDAs have been successful in their programmes in coastal towns. Where there is obvious success, the origins of the work predate the RDA. There is much good work going on and much to be optimistic about in some areas. In others, where the overall funding is more limited, there is much less progress and much less to be optimistic about. (7.7).

8.20 A co-ordinated effort to address the cause and effect of coastal towns' social and economic problems is both justified and needed. The changing face of tourism may in many coastal towns have helped in part mask the worst of the problems. Without a step change it is unlikely that tourism will continue to be able to cover the gaps, or grow to reach its full potential. Access housing and revenue funding being the three common critical barriers, to the holistic redevelopment of coastal towns.

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#### **Memorandum by Shepway Economic Regeneration Partnership (CT 43)**

Can we firstly confirm our full support for the response provided by Shepway District Council and make a request that urgent attention is given to the continuing economic and social problems surrounding coastal towns such as Folkestone

Without debating the reasons for the town's spiral of decline over the past fifty years or more, it now seems clear that a focus is needed on a major regeneration programme and that this needs to be embraced within an overarching strategy for establishing a new vibrancy for coastal towns in the south east.

Our responses to specific issues raised by the committee are as follows:

- (1) We believe there is a very strong case for a series of specific regional initiatives that recognise the particular needs of coastal towns.
- (2) Such initiatives should encourage these coastal towns to work together and to learn from each other. They should not be competitive and must provide more opportunities for partnership working at grass roots level.
- (3) There is also a need to ensure a balance of attention, investment and resources with growth areas adjacent to these coastal towns.
- (4) We have already made strong representations to SEEDA for supporting and developing the economies of coastal towns such as Folkestone and enabling their sustainable regeneration.
- (5) It is our believe that within the Regional Economic Strategy for the South East (RES—2002–12) full consideration should be given to the needs of coastal towns rather than a regional spread of investment.
- (6) The identification of any significant Govt funding for regeneration activity is of real and immediate concern to the local business community in Folkestone and the surrounding area.
- (7) With no immediate prospects of long term "secure" funding, or a successor to the SRB programme that ends this year, we are left with a serious problem of retaining our most successful local businesses and sustaining our current employment levels.

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#### **Memorandum by Devon County Council (CT 44)**

##### **SUMMARY**

Devon County Council strongly supports a move towards special initiatives for coastal towns. This is based on knowledge and understanding of a range of particular needs and issues that a large proportion of coastal towns in the County face, as summarised below. These issues are related to the unique environment, geography and heritage of coastal towns.

### *Transport and Accessibility*

- Coastal towns are peripheral in location and physically restricted by their geography, which in turn restricts accessibility.
- Accessibility difficulties are exacerbated by inadequate public transport (especially decline in local rail and sea links) and heavy reliance on the car, which in turn results in congestion.
- Access to services is often inhibited by the centralisation of services, either (i) within the coastal town centre itself or (ii) at larger inland centres some distance away.
- Need for major transport infrastructure investment.

### *Economy*

- Traditional industries, such as port/fishing activities, have long been in decline. Some revitalisation happening/likely but on a small scale.
- Over-reliance on tourism which has typically created low wage, seasonal work and slow adaptation to national changes in tourism.
- Lack of replacement industry—need to fully grasp the potential for economic diversification in sectors such as environmental technology and marine.
- Unique opportunity to harness the environment as the economic driver.

### *Demographics and housing*

- In-migration/high proportion of older/retired people stretches local health/support services, whilst little is contributed economically to the area.
- Out-migration of (existing/potential) key workers and entrepreneurs, especially those in the 20–40 age group, in search of better paid and more job varied opportunities lacking in many coastal towns, and affordable homes.
- Skewed housing market, due to in-migration/gentrification, second homes, and high land costs, making local homes out of reach of many local people.
- Urgent need for an affordable supply of housing for local residents, and to enable those with key skills—nurses, teachers etc—to stay in the area.

### *Deprivation*

- Many of Devon's coastal towns have wards/super output areas in the top quartile of the most deprived in the country.
- Key issues as indicated above include access to services, unemployment (seasonal), low wages, skills mismatch, reliance on benefits, health issues etc.
- Deprivation often hidden by the “picture postcard” image.
- Six of 11 priority communities in Devon, recently agreed for targeted action by the Devon Strategic Partnership and Devon County Council on the basis of various indicators of need, are in coastal locations.

### *Environment*

The environment can present a conflict of interest because:

- Natural beauty of coastal areas attracts people both to live and visit, and therefore needs to be protected/maintained. It is the key economic driver.
- Lack of developable land puts prices at a premium and restricts development opportunity.
- Development/change is needed to address some of the key issues around employment and housing, but it must be carefully managed.
- Attractive historic built environment, but costly to maintain and suffering from underinvestment.
- Coastal defence is a major issue with ever-increasing significance.

### *Views on Past and Future Initiatives and Funding*

- Devon County Council notes that there have been very few initiatives specifically for coastal towns. It is considered that “across the board” initiatives will not be sufficient to address the above structural problems in coastal towns.

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- Devon County Council considers that the RDA has had some success but that this is inconsistent across the region. DCC is not specifically pushing for a region-specific coastal initiative but considers there are benefits from making links between coastal communities around the UK and beyond.
  - New initiatives must be focussed on addressing the structural, underlying issues in coastal communities, in particular diversifying the skills base, developing housing and employment for the local work force, and overhauling the local transport infrastructure. The Local Area Agreement offers potential as an opportunity to improve integrated action between agencies.
  - Initiatives must be based on sound evidence and therefore research is needed. Devon County Council offers that the ODPM use of a Devon coastal town as a case study.
  - Devon County Council calls for a long-term commitment through integrated initiatives in order to make a sustainable improvement to quality of life of coastal towns, backed up by sufficient resources—both staffing and funding.
  - Devon County Council points to shortcomings in recent initiatives, such as the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative, where local hopes have been raised but that moving into the implementation phase will require significant resources. There also needs to be a recognition in policy/initiatives of the higher costs per head of delivering improvement programmes in coastal towns through appropriate weighting in funding.
  - Devon County Council is keen to work with the ODPM in developing and piloting special initiatives for coastal towns, and proposes that the RDA use towns in Devon to demonstrate the principle of the environment as an economic driver.

### **ODPM Coastal Towns Consultation**

#### **DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL RESPONSE**

Devon County Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on ODPM's consultation  
Set out below is the County Council's responses to the questions relevant to its functions.

#### **DESCRIPTION OF ORGANISATION AND RELEVANCE TO THE INQUIRY**

Devon County Council is the largest authority in the South-West and Devon is the third largest county in England. DCC has a special interest in this inquiry because Devon is the only county with two coastlines (totalling 289 miles), which are completely separated geographically. It also has a significant number of coastal settlements, including 12 coastal towns. Furthermore, approximately 90% of the population of Devon (730,000 for the County Council area and 1,100,000 for the geographical county of Devon using ONS forecasts for 2006 calculated on mid year estimates 2003) live in cities, towns and parishes within 10 miles of the coast.

#### **SECTION 1:**

##### *The Case for Special Initiatives to Tackle the Needs of Coastal Towns*

1.1 Devon County Council would fully support a move towards special initiatives for coastal towns. This is because of the particular issues they face as a result of their unique environment, heritage and geography which is tied into the strong interdependence that exists in coastal towns between land and sea. Many of these issues (described below) are found in other towns, but are compounded in coastal communities due to their particular characteristics, whilst others are specific to coastal communities.

##### *Transport and Accessibility*

1.2 Due to their coastal location, coastal towns have a restricted overland geographical perspective which differentiates them from other towns. This is often further restricted by the existence of river estuaries. This physical boundary limits the overland transport connections and as such restricts accessibility and increases congestion.

1.3 Access and transport issues have been exacerbated over time in many cases due to closure of local branch line rail links and decline of links by sea. There are also difficulties for access to bus services as indicated by the fact that only 29.5% of households in rural Devon live within a 13 minute walk of an hourly bus service. As a result there is now an over reliance on the car. 80% of visitors to Devon come by road and traffic flows have increased by approximately 3% per annum since 2000. This, combined with the limited number of roads in and out of towns due to the restrictive valley and coastal location, tends to result in significant congestion, particularly throughout the peak holiday seasons.

1.4 The historical road system is often inadequate to cope with the rising levels of vehicular traffic, especially of a commercial nature. The limited number of road bridges over river estuaries within the coastal town boundary causes particular problems with traffic build up and circulation. Infrastructure improvements are needed to improve access for freight, including to facilitate port activity expansion, eg at Teignmouth and Appledore, and also to create a more pleasant environment within town centres.

1.5 The potential of our coastal town ports and harbours could be greatly enhanced by removing transport from roads and promoting more sustainable methods via the sea. For example, the town of Ilfracombe has aspirations to re-open ferry links with South Wales and Ireland to both increase the volume of tourists and open up access to major centres, such as Swansea, for the local population.

1.6 The historical core of coastal towns tends to be focussed near the seafront because of the port/fishing industry from which many became established. This often means that as the town has expanded, mainly through housing development, some residents can be isolated from the town centre. This is often particularly true of housing estates, which are often areas of social housing, built without no/few facilities. It is often exacerbated by the steep hills that exist in many coastal towns which make accessing services and shops on foot more difficult. Facilities such as health, local retail, and employment tend to be very centralised, or are frequently located outside at sub-regional centres involving travel to access them (see attached table at Appendix 1). As such, accessibility issues can exist both within the town as well as externally.

1.7 Transport can act as a significant barrier to social/economic inclusion, indicated by a recent survey by the Government's Social Exclusion Unit which revealed that:

- 40% of jobseekers say lack of transport is a barrier to getting a job.
- Over a 12 month period, one in four people miss, turn down, or choose not to seek medical help because of transport problems.
- 16% of people without cars find access to supermarkets hard, compared with 6% of people with cars.
- 18% of non car owners find seeing friends and family difficult because of transport problems.

1.8 There is therefore a particular need for support for innovative community transport solutions and investment in public transport. The forthcoming free bus travel for over 60s from 1 April is seen as an opportunity to fill spare off-peak capacity and increase viability of, and access to, services.

1.9 The peripheral location can also make coastal towns rather insular and inward looking, with a resistance to change, which prevents them in some instances from taking full advantage of new opportunities. However, there is also a strong self-help attitude apparent in many coastal communities—largely because of the relative isolation from the centre—this has been particularly brought out through the Market and Coastal Towns programme (MCTi).

### *Economy*

1.10 Coastal towns have a unique commercial history from port and fishing activities. Due to global factors, these mainstay industries have been in decline, and there has been a distinct lack of replacement industry. The fishing industry is likely to continue to decline, due to dwindling fish stocks and also a lack of infrastructure, training, and difficulty competing with the strong fishing culture in other European countries. It will, however, retain a small workforce and 22 of the settlements within the County of Devon have an interest, to varying degrees, in the fishing industry (see list at Appendix 2).

1.11 Coastal towns are now heavily dependent for employment on tourism which has typically resulted in seasonal, low paid work. Due to the lack of well-paid employment opportunities, particularly for graduates and others in their 20s and 30s, incomes of people of working age are generally low—a characteristic largely of the traditional tourism and agricultural sectors. Income from earnings in Devon is below the England average, and this problem is particularly acute in Torridge and North Devon districts (both of which have coastal communities). For example, the median gross annual pay in England in 2005 was £23,313 but in Torridge district, it was only £16,672 (Source: ASHE). As well as out-migration of the younger age-groups in search of better pay, this also leads to coastal towns becoming dormitories for commuters working in the main commercial centres in the region.

1.12 The reliance on tourism following the decline of traditional industries (fishing/farming etc.) and the lack of replacements has made the economy of some coastal areas vulnerable to nation-wide economic fluctuations and changing holiday trends. There has been a well-documented move away from the traditional “bucket and spade” summer holidays, to greater demand for a higher quality tourism offer and a growing short-breaks market. Coastal towns have in many cases been slow to adapt to or grasp these developments. The quality of offer needs to be raised in many cases and local distinctiveness through the creative industries, culture, local food etc promoted and marketed.

1.13 The conversion of hotels to flats in coastal towns is continuing at a rapid rate across the county, potentially leaving a shortage of accommodation and limiting future opportunity to expand the range of accommodation on offer. There is a need to provide a range of accommodation, including hotels, camping sites, hostels for walkers and cyclists, B&B/guest house accommodation etc, in order to meet the needs of different visitors. In many of our coastal communities, a good range of quality accommodation is lacking,

especially, high quality hotels. District planning officers have expressed they would in some cases like to resist developer plans for conversion of hotels to flats but find it very hard to do so, particularly with pressure from Central Government to increase the concentration of residential uses in town centres.

1.14 A very few settlements in Devon, such as Croyde and Salcombe, have recently become increasingly popular as holiday destinations, but this has had the effect of gentrifying the areas to such an extent that key workers (lifeboat crew/firefighters/teachers etc) are priced out of the housing market and either have to live quite a distance away and commute, or are forced to completely re-locate putting essential services at risk.

1.15 The heritage and cultural distinctiveness of coastal towns is their unique selling point, coupled with their high quality natural environment and the potential for a high quality of life. The opportunity that coastal towns present for industry that requires a coastal location needs to be harnessed and to be more actively promoted. Opportunities include:—

- Mariculture—local food (especially seafood) etc.
- Boat building.
- Marine engineering/biology.
- Renewable energy—especially re tidal power.
- Watersports, sea angling etc.
- Non-beach tourism—eg bird watching, coastal walking.

1.16 These fit well with the current priority sectors of the South West RDA:- marine; leisure and tourism; food and drink; environmental technologies. With regard to the latter, the RDA has estimated that around 12,000 new jobs could be created in the environmental technology sector in the South West. Furthermore, as the RDA's economic strategy and the developing economic development and enterprise block of the Devon Local Area Agreement recognise, the environment is a key economic driver. Devon County Council sees an opportunity to develop demonstration towns in Devon to this end.

1.17 It is considered that economic prosperity of coastal towns can, to an extent, be engendered from within, with the appropriate support. For example, there is significant opportunity for self-employment and development of social enterprises in coastal areas. Furthermore, there is the increasing ease and take up of home working, with an attractive environment and the rise of broadband technology as incentives.

### *Demographics and Housing*

1.18 Coastal towns often have skewed demographics with a lower proportion of young people/people of working age, and an above average proportion of older (retired) persons (see Appendix 3a and 3b). Approximately 30% of coastal residents are over 60, compared to the 20% national average. This creates a range of issues around accessibility, health, demand for services, the local economy and community relations. Regarding the latter, sometimes tensions result from a strong “NIMBY” attitude from the older generation which can restrict development of opportunities for the younger members.

1.19 The younger workforce (20–40 age group) tend to move out to develop their careers, and to get on to the property ladder, and as such this resource is lost to the community. Those who move in to the area are often retired and relatively wealthy. They spend money locally but do not otherwise contribute economically to the town. This in-migration, together with the large numbers of second homes, skews the housing market, making house prices artificially inflated and out of reach of many local people—especially first time buyers (see Appendix 4). For example, in some parts of Devon, such as the South Hams, the cost of an average house can be more than eight times the average salary.

1.20 Rises in house prices have also resulted from successful regeneration of coastal towns as they become more sought after (as indicated in 1.13)—therefore intervention is needed to ensure an on-going supply of affordable housing for local people in perpetuity. Similarly, expansion of coastal towns through housing developments, including at harbour/dock locations, has not been matched by development for industrial or employment use—this is clearly unsustainable. There is therefore a need to safeguard appropriate waterfront land for employment-related uses (see section 1.14 for potential growth industries).

1.21 Other social issues identified in coastal towns are:

- in-migration of people on benefits due to a surplus of private rental properties in the winter months and seasonal jobs in the summer.
- lack of “things to do” in the winter months—particularly for the younger residents as well as those out of work—which can lead to anti-social activities such as drug taking, vandalism etc, which in turn can become more serious issues like drug and alcohol addiction and higher level crime.
- increased pressure on health and social/support services—particularly due to the high proportion of older people.
- a significant transient population exists in many coastal towns which can result in less strong community bonds and cohesion than in other rural market towns.

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### *Environment*

1.22 The attractiveness of coastal towns, in terms of both the natural and built environment, can present a “double-edged sword” in some respects. A unique and common thread with coastal towns is that their economy tends to be based largely around their environmental assets. As Devon County Council’s Maritime Role and Action Programme (See Appendix 5) states, “Devon’s coasts and the visitors they attract remain one of the key economic assets of the County”. People are undoubtedly attracted to coastal towns, whether as visitors or to live, by their natural beauty—and probably also by their relative remoteness.

1.23 It is vitally important, therefore, to maintain a high quality environment—both for its own sake and for the economic benefit generated by it. There are significant opportunities in Devon for increasing the economic benefit of environmental assets, with world recognised landscapes such as the Heritage Coast and Biosphere designations, as well as large Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty etc.

1.24 On the other side, high levels of in-migration place significant development pressure on the environment of coastal towns, particularly for housing. Development of housing, tourism-related facilities and new industry all require careful management to ensure they do not damage the special environment of the towns. There is a demand from developers, particularly house-builders, but a lack of developable land due to constraints from both topography and environmental designations. As such, there is a premium on developable land, making costs high—both for development and purchase/rental. This results in a severe shortage of affordable housing for local people (as discussed under 1.18).

1.25 Another significant environmental issue is around coastal flood defence measures which it is considered are likely to become increasingly visually intrusive in order to protect towns against rising sea levels, as a result of global warming. Sea defences are likely to require significant investment and will need to be handled sensitively to take full account of the fact that the environment is a key economic driver in coastal towns. Sea defence issues/coastal flooding is a source of concern/uncertainty in a number of Devon’s coastal communities at present, including Teignmouth/Shaldon, Ilfracombe and Sidmouth. Devon County Council is concerned at the delay in reviewing shoreline management plans and would emphasise the importance of good strategic planning for coastal protection, together with strong local accountability.

1.26 Regarding coastal protection, DCC also wishes to highlight the importance of planning for the future of the mainline south coast rail to London which is threatened by coastal flooding caused by climate change. This is a key rail link to the far west and plans for alternatives to continue this in the future, as well as a clear short term strategy, are vital for the economy and vitality of towns on this line, such as Teignmouth and Dawlish.

1.28 There is also a widely-held perception of good quality of life in coastal towns, largely because of the environment. While this may be true for many residents, the idyllic environment can also hide, and gloss over, deprivation faced by others (see “Deprivation” section below).

1.29 It is not just the natural environment of coastal towns which makes them attractive. They also have significant built historical and cultural heritage. However, the changes in the economic fortunes of many coastal towns over a long period has left many with redundant buildings and a general issue around under-investment in the built environment. There needs to be funding available to help property owners to maintain buildings which have architectural merit and are important to the character/heritage of an area. There also needs to be imaginative new uses for old buildings, eg redundant hotels, cinemas etc..

1.30 Investment in the public realm is also an integral part of the overall package, including street furniture, public spaces, signage etc. and can help create and signify the individual character of a town—which can help to attract visitors, investors etc. Cleanliness in terms of litter and dog fouling in towns and on beaches is also a problem in some coastal towns and threatens the tourism offer/attraction of the town for visitors.

### *Deprivation*

1.31 As indicated by the above sections, there are many issues affecting quality of life in coastal towns which can result in deprivation. This is borne out by the fact that a number of Devon’s coastal towns have wards featuring in the top quartile most deprived in the country, including Ilfracombe, Bideford, Teignmouth, Dawlish, Westward Ho! and Seaton. The Devon Strategic Partnership and Devon County Council have recently agreed a list of priority communities (see Appendix 6) with an identified need for a concerted effort from the authority and its partners to tackle the ingrained issues resulting in deprivation and restricted life chances; six of the 11 settlements in this list are coastal towns. Their peripheral location, particularly on the northern coast of Devon, can also result in a feeling of isolation or neglect by agencies—although to an extent this has helped to engender a “self help” attitude by the communities themselves.

## SECTION 2

*Experience of the Effectiveness of Existing Central Government Initiatives and Policies for Addressing the Social, Housing and Environmental Problems Coastal Towns Face*

2.1 Initiatives to date have mostly been applicable across any or all towns—or those in specific geographical parts of the County—and not specific for coastal communities. This may have inadvertently resulted in other towns benefiting disproportionately from initiatives, because of the increased costs of bringing forward developments in coastal towns, lack of an appropriate skill base, problematic access issues, and NIMBY attitudes making obtaining planning consent more difficult.

2.2 One of the most significant initiatives in recent years in the South-West has been the Market and Coastal Towns initiative (MCTi), led by the RDA. Most MCTi groups have now reached the stage of producing a community-led plan and are looking at implementation, whilst struggling with the sustainability of their group which tends to be largely reliant on volunteer time. Groups are already starting to fold and plans are starting to look unrealistic and unachievable which means there is likely to be a lot of disappointment and disillusionment among the communities.

2.3 The MCTi Initiative raised false hopes at the start about the level of budget that would be available, which in reality was considerably less than expected. Devon County Council is now being approached for funding and support/guidance from MCTi groups across the County and does not have capacity or resources to meet all these competing demands. As they move into the implementation stage, coastal towns are likely to find it particularly difficult due to their peripheral locations and the higher development cost in these areas. There needs to be a significant financial commitment from the Government—channelled through the RDA—to supporting delivery of the MCTi plans, which recognises the higher costs in coastal communities.

2.4 Devon has benefited from the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder Initiative, and has the only national rural pilot—in Ilfracombe. This is a coastal town, facing many of the issues outlined above and experiencing high levels of deprivation. This initiative is now starting to show some positive progress, and the potential length of the programme (seven years) is encouraging for what it may achieve in the future. On this note, it is important to recognise through regeneration initiatives and funding that real sustainable regeneration is a long term process that requires a long term commitment—the underlying issues cannot be resolved through a series of quick wins over a two or three year period.

2.5 There is a concern that government and other agencies—at all levels—have failed to recognise and support the particular needs of coastal towns, many of which have been in a spiral of decline for some considerable time. A “one size fits all” approach for all towns is considered unlikely to address the deeply embedded issues in our coastal communities described in section 1. There is considerable opportunity seen for cross-over with the maritime agenda in developing initiatives.

2.6 Devon County Council considers that the Local Area Agreement is potentially an important tool in targeting resources to areas in most need and does provide a new opportunity for coastal towns to receive a more joined up approach from key agencies which have the capacity to affect quality of life issues in their area.

## SECTION 3

*Experience of Effectiveness of ODPM's Co-operation with Local Authorities*

3.1 Devon County Council acknowledges that in the past it may not have adequately championed the needs of coastal towns on a county basis in the past, and therefore welcomes this Inquiry. It also considers that there is a lack of baseline data and research into the special issues in coastal towns. DCC would welcome Government funding to undertake research/obtain baseline data and is trying to identify some funding currently for commissioning consultants to undertake some work. DCC has recently co-operated with the ODPM on providing a case study coastal town (Teignmouth) for the neighbourhood level working research, and also has the ODPM neighbourhood pathfinder at Ilfracombe from which learning is beginning to flow across the county—particularly with regard to innovative ways of bringing improved co-ordination between all stakeholders in a community.

3.2 Devon has taken positive steps to improve joint working by holding the inaugural meeting last year of the Devon Maritime Forum as a mechanism for discussion and generating/testing ideas. Coastal regeneration formed a topic at the first meeting, and it is hoped that a temporary officer can be appointed to take the Maritime Forum forward. This concept has worked well in other areas such as Dorset and Hampshire and there has also been cross-county co-operation between Devon and Dorset through the “Gateway Towns” forum which brings together the towns within the Heritage (“Jurassic”) Coast designation in order to maximise the opportunity that this brings in a managed and sustainable way. Devon also has a Towns Forum which is supported by DCC and is proving useful in making links between towns in sharing issues, experience and good practice.

3.3 Devon County Council would also like to stress the important role of District Council's in addressing the issues in coastal towns due to their local knowledge and links.

## SECTION 4

### *View on Case for More Specific Regional Initiatives, and Whether Enough Attention is Paid to Regional Disparities*

4.1 Devon County Council is not pushing for a specific regional initiative in this case as it is felt that coastal towns have more in common with other coastal towns all around the UK and beyond, than perhaps with other towns in their immediate region. However, there are naturally differences in the weight of certain issues between areas; for example tourism is of far greater significance in the south-west's region's economy in terms of GVA, than it is in the south-east. Flexibility to apply initiatives to meet local circumstances is therefore important. However, the overall goal must be to create meaningful, workable initiatives, regardless of the scale at which they are set/offered.

4.2 There is certainly benefit to be had in improving networking, learning and sharing of experiences between coastal communities—including better dissemination and take-up of LEADER + ideas (see 5.4 below). This could indeed be a theme for the new Cohesion Fund, with opportunities to link across the channel.

4.3 Devon County Council invites the ODPM to use a Devon Coastal Town as a case study for the research into the special needs of coastal towns. The suggested town for this is Ilfracombe which would present an opportunity for the ODPM to see how the Neighbourhood Management Scheme could work in tandem with a coastal towns study.

## SECTION 5

### *View of Funding Available (Now and in The Future) for Regenerating and Supporting Coastal Towns*

5.1 Significantly more funding is needed to compensate for insufficient investment over a long period of time in the infrastructure of our coastal towns and to drive their regeneration/sustainability.

5.2 Funding should be particularly directed at diversifying the skills base and developing affordable homes and diversified employment opportunities for the workforce—in order to address some of the key issues set out in Section 1. Funding is also needed to support a coherent transport policy for the coastal towns, with major funding necessary for infrastructure improvements, particularly in more sustainable forms of transport such as rail and sea.

5.3 It is important to recognise that funding for regenerating and supporting coastal towns needs to take account of the greater cost per head of delivering initiatives in these areas.

5.4 Opportunities exist regarding the future of EU fisheries funding where the focus is changing from fisheries to include the families and communities themselves. This is an opportunity which in Devon can be related to the 22 settlements with fishing connections (see Appendix 2). It is felt that much can be learned from the style of the LEADER + programme/initiatives, ie grassroots, area-based initiatives that help empower people on the ground to develop innovative new ways of working to address local issues. This may be particularly effective in fishing communities which can often feel quite remote and find it difficult to engage, or resist engagement, with more “top-down”-style initiatives.

## SECTION 6

### *View of Success of South West RDA and Other Bodies in Supporting and Developing the Economies of Coastal Towns*

6.1 Devon County Council considers that the RDA has had some success in regenerating coastal towns, particularly in Cornwall by matching Objective 1 money, but that this has been patchy across the region. Comparison of Cornwall's GVA against the national position, before and after Objective 1, shows that it is still very low, but has shown considerable improvement. Overall, the Cornwall Economic Model (2005) shows an improvement from 63.2% of national GVA in 1993 to 72.0 in 2003. Over the same period, the Devon Economic Model (2005), shows a fairly static overall position from 78.3% of the national average in 1993, to 77.9% in 2003.

6.2 There are gaps identified in the RDA's approach. For example, although the RDA states that the maritime sector is a key sector it has no joined-up maritime strategy for the region. Secondly, it is felt that there has been inconsistency in the RDA's approach to the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative (see section 2 for more on the MCTi Initiative)—which in its own right can lead to disparity of opportunity between towns to access support for projects aimed at developing their economies.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Devon County Council believes there is a strong case for:

- (a) special initiatives for coastal towns due to the particular needs and issues of these communities; and
- (b) recognition in design of initiatives/policies to benefit all towns (coastal and market) of the special circumstances of coastal towns, in order to create a level playing field. There needs to be particular accommodation for the higher costs per head of delivery in coastal towns.

7.2 DCC would be keen to co-operate with the ODPM in developing and piloting such initiatives.

7.3 The issues of coastal communities are deeply inter-related and as such, there is a need for an integrated, focused response—relating to the skills base, affordable and key worker housing, environmental enhancement, and so on. Initiatives need to tackle the social, economic and environmental issues together. With regard to the particular opportunity of the “environment as an economic driver”, the Authority believes that the South West RDA could identify demonstration coastal towns in Devon.

## APPENDIX 1

### ACCESSIBILITY OF DEVON’S COASTAL TOWNS TO SUB-REGIONAL CENTRES

<i>Coastal Town</i>	<i>Nearest Sub Regional Centre</i>	<i>Distance to Sub Regional Centre (miles)</i>	<i>Distance to Sub Regional Centre (km)</i>	<i>Travel time to Sub Regional Centre (miles)</i>	<i>Bus Frequency</i>	<i>Train Frequency</i>
Bideford	Barnstaple	10.3	16.6	19	high	no service
Ilfracombe	Barnstaple	13.6	21.9	32	high	no service
Teignmouth	Newton Abbot	6.2	10.0	14	high	medium
Dawlish	Newton Abbot	9.5	15.3	22	high	medium
Westward Ho!	Barnstaple	9.8	15.8	19	high	no service
Seaton	Exeter	27.5	44.2	49	medium	no service
Dartmouth	Torquay	10.4	16.7	32	medium	no service
Salcombe	Plymouth	23.9	38.5	62	low	no service
Exmouth	Exeter	10.4	16.7	26	high	medium
Sidmouth	Exeter	15.1	24.3	39	high	no service
Lynton	Barnstaple	18.8	30.2	45	medium	no service
Budleigh Salterton	Exeter	14.4	23.2	38	low	no service

*Frequency of service*

high	> half hourly service
medium	half hourly—two hourly service
low	< two hourly service

Nb Salcombe is approximately the same distance/travel time from three sub-regional centres.

## APPENDIX 2

### *The 22 Fishing Communities in Devon*

- Appledore/Bideford
- Barnstaple
- Beer
- Brixham (outside DCC area)
- Budleigh Salterton
- Clovelly
- Dartmouth
- Exmouth
- Hallsands/Beesands
- Ilfracombe
- Kingswear
- Paignton (outside DCC area)
- Plymouth (outside DCC area)

- Salcombe
- Seaton/Axmouth
- Sidmouth
- Teignmouth/Dawlish
- Torquay (outside DCC area)

Source: SWRDA.

**APPENDIX 3a**

**COASTAL TOWN POPULATION STRUCTURE**

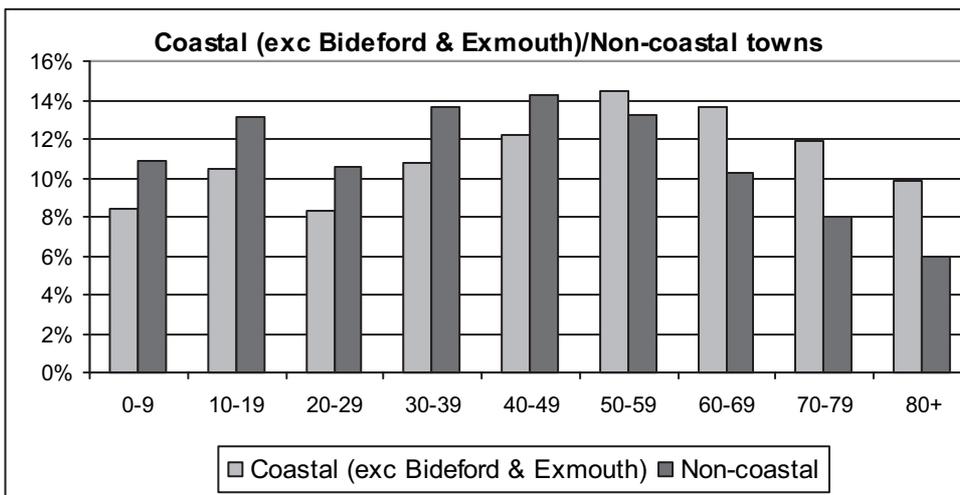
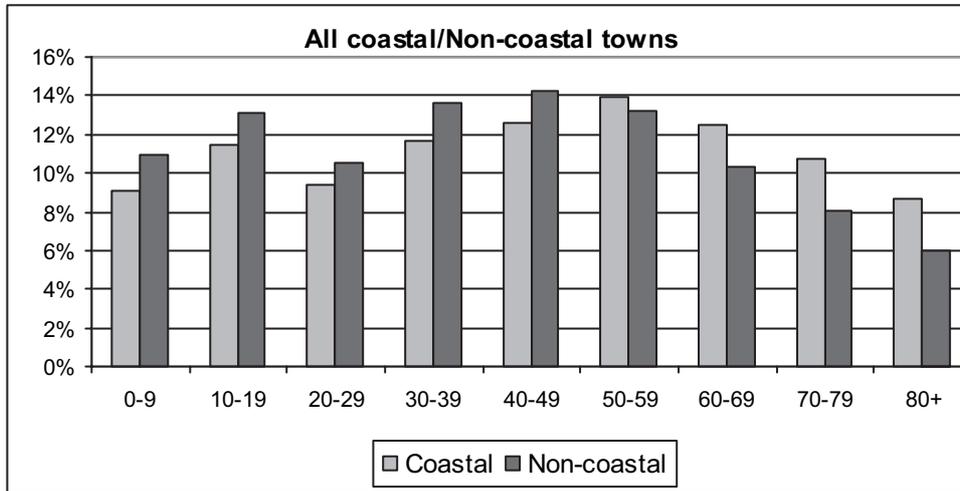
	0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80+
<b>Coastal</b>									
Bideford	11.7%	14.5%	10.9%	14.4%	13.9%	13.0%	9.5%	7.5%	4.6%
Ilfracombe	10.2%	12.7%	10.1%	13.7%	13.8%	15.1%	11.5%	7.4%	5.6%
Teignmouth	8.9%	12.2%	9.3%	10.9%	13.1%	14.9%	11.7%	10.3%	8.7%
Dawlish	8.6%	10.9%	8.2%	11.1%	12.9%	15.0%	14.0%	10.9%	8.3%
Westward Ho!	6.7%	9.0%	7.2%	10.8%	12.1%	16.1%	17.5%	11.8%	9.0%
Seaton	6.8%	7.7%	6.8%	8.7%	9.9%	13.6%	16.0%	16.4%	13.9%
Dartmouth	9.2%	10.2%	8.8%	12.1%	12.4%	15.6%	13.4%	10.5%	7.9%
Kingsbridge	9.4%	12.4%	9.5%	11.5%	13.9%	13.5%	10.5%	10.2%	9.0%
Salcombe	5.8%	8.1%	9.7%	9.0%	11.8%	16.0%	16.5%	13.3%	9.7%
Exmouth	9.7%	12.3%	11.2%	12.6%	13.1%	13.1%	11.0%	9.5%	7.6%
Sidmouth	7.0%	8.9%	6.5%	8.7%	10.4%	13.1%	15.4%	16.0%	13.9%
Lynton and Lynmouth	7.3%	9.0%	10.4%	12.1%	14.6%	17.5%	12.5%	9.7%	6.7%
Budleigh Salterton	7.6%	6.8%	5.8%	8.8%	9.0%	12.8%	16.8%	15.8%	16.5%
<b>Coastal</b>	<b>9.1%</b>	<b>11.4%</b>	<b>9.4%</b>	<b>11.7%</b>	<b>12.6%</b>	<b>13.9%</b>	<b>12.5%</b>	<b>10.7%</b>	<b>8.7%</b>
<b>Coastal (exc Bideford and Exmouth)</b>	<b>8.4%</b>	<b>10.5%</b>	<b>8.3%</b>	<b>10.8%</b>	<b>12.2%</b>	<b>14.5%</b>	<b>13.6%</b>	<b>11.9%</b>	<b>9.9%</b>
<b>Non-coastal</b>									
Honiton	10.4%	12.2%	9.4%	13.3%	13.0%	12.5%	11.4%	10.0%	7.8%
Tiverton	11.7%	12.9%	10.9%	14.0%	13.2%	12.7%	10.8%	8.3%	5.5%
Ivybridge	12.8%	16.0%	9.2%	15.0%	17.2%	13.2%	8.1%	5.0%	3.5%
Tavistock	9.7%	13.2%	8.9%	11.5%	14.3%	14.8%	11.8%	8.9%	6.9%
Newton Abbot	10.5%	13.0%	11.7%	13.8%	14.2%	12.9%	9.8%	8.0%	6.2%
Totnes	9.5%	11.3%	12.0%	13.7%	14.1%	14.4%	10.2%	8.3%	6.5%
<b>Coastal</b>									
Bideford	1,849	2,292	1,721	2,269	2,190	2,044	1,497	1,189	728
Ilfracombe	1,270	1,582	1,250	1,694	1,709	1,868	1,422	923	692
Teignmouth	1,324	1,828	1,387	1,628	1,956	2,226	1,752	1,538	1,296
Dawlish	1,173	1,484	1,120	1,512	1,753	2,038	1,910	1,476	1,131
Westward Ho!	144	194	155	232	260	347	377	254	194
Seaton	487	547	484	622	706	968	1,139	1,169	989
Dartmouth	523	581	504	691	707	887	766	597	448
Kingsbridge	552	726	557	674	814	789	612	597	524
Salcombe	114	159	189	175	230	313	321	260	190
Exmouth	3,443	4,363	3,950	4,457	4,634	4,625	3,879	3,369	2,703
Sidmouth	966	1,229	906	1,204	1,446	1,818	2,138	2,215	1,929
Lynton and Lynmouth	126	155	179	208	251	300	215	167	115
Budleigh Salterton	386	343	295	445	454	647	846	800	832
<b>Coastal</b>	<b>12,357</b>	<b>15,483</b>	<b>12,697</b>	<b>15,811</b>	<b>17,110</b>	<b>18,870</b>	<b>16,874</b>	<b>14,554</b>	<b>11,771</b>
<b>Coastal (exc Bideford and Exmouth)</b>	<b>7,065</b>	<b>8,828</b>	<b>7,026</b>	<b>9,085</b>	<b>10,286</b>	<b>12,201</b>	<b>11,498</b>	<b>9,996</b>	<b>8,340</b>
<b>Non-coastal</b>									
Honiton	1,197	1,402	1,082	1,527	1,490	1,434	1,304	1,142	893
Tiverton	2,347	2,587	2,190	2,819	2,648	2,542	2,175	1,664	1,096
Ivybridge	1,583	1,969	1,132	1,845	2,122	1,623	1,003	622	427
Tavistock	1,100	1,501	1,011	1,299	1,618	1,677	1,336	1,007	781
Newton Abbot	2,621	3,239	2,934	3,447	3,552	3,228	2,441	1,992	1,539
Totnes	784	933	991	1,124	1,157	1,185	838	683	534
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,632</b>	<b>11,631</b>	<b>9,340</b>	<b>12,061</b>	<b>12,587</b>	<b>11,689</b>	<b>9,097</b>	<b>7,110</b>	<b>5,270</b>

Source: Family Health Service Authority (FHSA) 2004.

Data are produced for DCC by South Devon Health Informatics Service.

APPENDIX 3B

COASTAL TOWN POPULATION STRUCTURE



## APPENDIX 4

## HOUSE PRICE TO INCOME RATIO IN DEVON

	<i>House price (2004)</i>	<i>Income (2004)</i>	<i>Ratio</i>
<b>Coastal</b>			
Bideford	155,707	22,007	7.1
Ilfracombe	174,141	22,801	7.6
Teignmouth	177,577	26,176	6.8
Dawlish	189,083	24,864	7.6
Westward Ho!	191,427	26,479	7.2
Seaton	176,933	22,311	7.9
Dartmouth	237,599	24,968	9.5
Kingsbridge	205,514	21,754	9.4
Salcombe	396,844	23,448	16.9
Exmouth	180,803	24,299	7.4
Sidmouth	273,635	26,821	10.2
Lynton and Lynmouth	186,571	23,212	8.0
Budleigh Salterton	259,334	28,967	9.0
<b>Coastal</b>	<b>201,744</b>	<b>24,478</b>	<b>8.2</b>
<b>Coastal (exc Bideford and Exmouth)</b>	<b>217,023</b>	<b>29,731</b>	<b>7.3</b>
<b>Non-coastal</b>			
Honiton	170,436	24,751	6.9
Tiverton	162,044	24,256	6.7
Ivybridge	170,604	32,974	5.2
Tavistock	193,635	28,538	6.8
Newton Abbot	161,558	26,114	6.2
Totnes	188,376	23,028	8.2
<b>Non-coastal</b>	<b>170,004</b>	<b>26,382</b>	<b>6.4</b>

## APPENDIX 5

Extracts from Devon County Council five year Maritime Role and Action Programme—“Our Coast: Our Common Asset”, March 2003.

The overall vision within the document for the coasts and seas of Devon is that “We should strive for the coast of Devon and the seas that surround it to be a rich and diverse natural, historic, cultural and economic environment that provides a place to live and work and an escape from the busy world, for its communities”

The document contains a number of policies around goals for the economy, transport, the environment, culture & heritage and safety. Of particular relevance to coastal towns and the issues brought out in this response are:

- Commerce: support for measures that favour development of those industries dependent on a coastal location, such as ports, mariculture, fishing, shipbuilding etc. provided they are environmentally sustainable.
- Towns: support for initiatives to re-generate coastal towns.
- Transportation (Congestion): DCC will assume the view, when devising transportation policy, that coastal areas require special treatment because of seasonal congestion and that the provision of real choices of transport mode is fundamental.
- Transportation (Ports): support proposals that unlock the potential of ports, rail links and infrastructure that are environmentally sustainable.
- Spatial Planning: DCC will assume the view, when devising spatial planning policy, that the coast is an invaluable resource that must only be developed in such a way that the ability of future generations to make choices regarding it is not compromised.
- Biodiversity: DCC will value the unique biodiversity of the coast and marine environment and consider our actions that affect it carefully against its conservation.
- Knowledge, awareness, networking and good practice: DCC will consider participating in initiatives that increase the knowledge base, public awareness and that promote dialogue, discussion and exchange of good practice on issues relating to the maritime environment at a local, regional, national and European level.

*The objective of the policies of the programme include:*

- To realise a prosperous and competitive coastal economy that is inclusive of all.
- To maintain an efficient, effective and integrated transport system that meets the needs of Devon, its coastal communities and visitors.
- To secure spatial planning policy that supports sustainable development of the coast.
- To conserve the natural, cultural and historic environments.
- To ensure that European, national, regional and local policy frameworks reflect the needs of Devon's coast.
- To secure additional funding which will support the County Council's coastal role.

## APPENDIX 6

### *Priority Communities*

As agreed by the Devon Strategic Partnership and Devon County Council, based on analysis of Indices of Deprivation:

*1st phase:*

#### TIER 1

<b>Locality</b>	<b>Type of Settlement</b>
Ilfracombe	Coastal town (ODPM Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder)
Barnstaple	Large market town
Exeter—selected wards	City

#### TIER 2

<b>Locality</b>	<b>Type of Settlement</b>
Bideford	Coastal town
Teignmouth	Coastal town
Princetown	Small market town

### *Rural deprivation*

Pilot whole of rural Torridge as a study area, defined as Torridge district outside Bideford.

*2nd phase: (Learning from phase 1 and refining models)*

<b>Locality</b>	<b>Type of Settlement</b>
Dawlish	Coastal town
Westward Ho!	Small Coastal town
Seaton	Coastal town
Tiverton	Market town
Newton Abbot	Market town

Nb Targeting of the above not to preclude activity in other areas—but to set the framework of priorities for allocation of time and resources.

## APPENDIX 7

### *Action for Market Towns Conference on Waterside Regeneration (August 2005)*

Action for Market Towns, a national membership organisation supported by the Countryside Agency, held a conference at Dartmouth in Devon in August 2005 bringing together a wide range of experts and practitioners to look at regeneration of market towns with rivers, canals and coastlines. This was attended by Devon County Council and proved valuable, particularly for sharing experiences. Topics covered included rediscovering water-based industries; marketing and tourism; making the link between town and waterside; and master planning for coastal towns.

A central topic for discussion was around how towns experiencing decline in traditional tourism could reinvent and re-market themselves. Key questions to ask were identified as “who is using the town?”, “why would people come here?”, “what do they need/want?”, “area we satisfying their needs?”, “how can we give them what they want?”, and finally “how do we tell them what we have on offer?”.

The key message from the event was the need to take a strategic long term view when planning the future of towns, paying particular attention to reuniting towns with their waterfront areas as these can be a driver for regeneration. On the one hand, good interpretation, heritage based tourism opportunities, and an enhanced waterside environment, can help to encourage people to visit a town. On the other hand, clear signage and improved links can draw visitors from the waterside into the town centre for maximum economic benefit. Success factors were seen as: undertaking a healthcheck/SWOT analysis; having a thorough understanding of the key issues facing the town; gathering existing information as an evidence base; backing up community consultation with desk research; avoiding the temptation to start with solutions in a piecemeal ad hoc way, and; developing an agreed action plan. There were positive views given on the likelihood of attracting funding for waterside regeneration schemes and the importance of partnership working was emphasised.

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### **Memorandum by Lincolnshire Coastal Action Zone (CAZ) Partnership (CT 45)**

The Lincolnshire Coastal Action Zone warmly welcome the establishment of the ODPM Select Committee Inquiry into Coastal Towns and the opportunity of contributing to a rigorous debate into the challenge of creating sustainable communities on the English coast.

The CAZ is a partnership of organisations (see below) who seek to promote new methods of addressing the deprivation issues and service delivery problems of Lincolnshire coastal towns, with the objective of realising the potential of this part of the East Midlands.

The CAZ believe that a new national direction is required to create sustainable communities by the sea. Our submission makes the case for:

- a National Coastal Regeneration Strategy;
- pump-priming interventions; and
- new local delivery partnerships to reverse unique coastal deprivation.

Given the space available, this CAZ response focuses on the major initiatives that local experience indicates are pre-requisites for the creation of sustainable coastal towns. We have appended three documents that illustrate the circumstances of the Lincolnshire coast.

Representatives of the CAZ, believing that our areas is at the more problematic spectrum of coastal communities, would welcome the opportunity of providing oral evidence to the Select Committee Inquiry. We also extend an invitation to the Select Committee to visit the Lincolnshire coast to get a real sense of the challenges facing remote coastal towns in England.

The following members of the Lincolnshire Coastal Zone have contributed and support this response:

- Lincolnshire County Council
- East Lindsey District Council
- Environmental Agency
- Lincolnshire Tourism
- Business Link Lincolnshire and Rutland
- Lincolnshire Enterprise (The RDA accredited Sub-regional Economic Partnership)
- East Lindsey Primary Care Trust
- Coastal Academy (network of coastal schools in Lincolnshire)
- Children’s Links

JobCentrePlus  
 Lincolnshire Police  
 EMDA  
 GO-EM  
 Learning and Skills Council  
 Education Business Partnership

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 There is a pressing need for a national coastal regeneration strategy to address the unique form of deprivation in English coastal towns.

1.2 The scale of coastal deprivation is such that macro interventions are required to pump-prime sustainable regeneration.

1.3 There are two coasts in England—the well-connected coast and the disconnected, deprived coast. A new strategy is needed for the latter.

1.4 Coastal partnerships, such as the Lincolnshire Coastal Action Zone, are considered essential for the effective delivery of joined-up services at the local level.

1.5 Concentrated and devolved medium to long-term funding is required to facilitate sustainable coastal regeneration.

1.6 A new suite of coastal regeneration initiatives are required to address market failure, raise local expectations, and to attract external investors.

## 2. OUR ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

### Question 1—*The Case for Special Initiatives*

2.1 The Government already accept the case for strategies for rural and urban areas and there is a compelling argument for a national coastal regeneration strategy to address the unique deprivation issues in coastal settlements. Seaside towns can be said to suffer from “rurban” problems—the worst aspects of rural and urban deprivation, created by such factors as in-migrating elderly people, transitory young populations (both enabled by accessible housing), seasonal employment, low incomes, un-dynamic economies, weak transport links, poor access to services, poor physical and mental health, and all compounded by remoteness from major settlements (Appendix 1—Defining coastal areas: Urban, rural, or specifically coastal?)

A new national coastal regeneration strategy is required to create sustainable communities by the sea and to reduce the considerable costs of delivering public services to remote and deprived settlements. The strategy should shape the Government’s vision for coastal settlements and focus on the regeneration and environmental sustainability of seaside towns.

This new strategy needs to achieve the alignment of delivery mechanisms from the national, to the regional to the local. Within this new strategy there would be categories of action for all three tiers of delivery, as illustrated below:

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Level</i>
New England Coastal Regeneration Strategy	National
New Coastal Investment Status akin to present Intermediate and Assisted Area Status	National
Relocation of public sector employment	National
Coastal Venture Fund	Regional
Coastal Enterprise Zone	Regional/local
Housing led special allocation for challenged coastal towns	Regional/Local
Focused employment, housing, health and environment activities relevant to local circumstances through the creation of Coastal Action Zones	Local
Coastal Proofing to examine the impact of National/Regional and Local activities on coastal settlements	All

Question 2—*Focus of social, housing, environment challenges*

2.2 There is a lack of joined-up policy across Government to address the social, housing and environmental issues of coastal towns. For example, the perceived threat of global warming to coastal settlements is a major cause for concern and many areas fear being written off by coastal defence plans. For example, key agencies potentially “withdrawing” from Mablethorpe in terms of coastal defences. The town, like many coastal settlements, is an important rural service centre with the potential to offer a high quality of life to existing and new residents.

The Lincolnshire Coastal Action Zone (CAZ) recognise that coastal defence and flood risk are complex areas where the objectives of different Government departments may conflict, viz flood risk and regeneration. The Government should provide a clear vision for the future of coastal settlements and end the uncertainty that currently hampers investment decisions and regeneration.

The creation of sustainable communities on the coast requires economic and population growth and that a “bullish” approach is required both to protect and to regenerate coastal settlements. This should involve the Government intervening to overcome negative development equations, and regional players making housing allocations to promote housing led regeneration in coastal towns. Short-term action is now required to reverse stagnation and to raise expectations, while a longer-term strategy is needed to imbed economic and social sustainability.

It is possible to develop a public/private blueprint for the renewal of coastal settlements based on management of the interdependent nature of community, housing, environment and economy issues. This is best brokered at the local level but facilitated nationally and regionally through a new Coastal Regeneration strategy.

Question 3—*Effective liaison between Government departments around: employment, migration, social housing, and local authorities*

2.3 We believe that not enough emphasis is being placed upon a more joined-up approach by Government departments when addressing coastal issues. The socio-economic and environmental challenges and opportunities of coastal England require a clear national strategy in order to maximise regeneration potential. Most national activities related to coastal England, outside of a few major cities, are largely swept up in terms of policy synthesis by the Government’s Rural Strategy. This is neither effective nor satisfactory for the majority of coastal towns.

Given that many of the economic interventions available to rural areas are focused on agriculture and market towns, there is a risk that assistance may be misdirected if the coastal dimension is not recognised. One of the objectives of the CAZ is to stimulate joining-up service delivery and to integrated environmental, social and economic objectives. For example, there are Combined Action Teams for children services and cross- organisational mentoring support in addressing worklessness. These local trends that should be extended through a National Coastal Regeneration Strategy.

Question 4—*The case for more specific regional initiatives and issues around regional disparities*

2.4 Seaside towns share many characteristics and there is more national than regional commonality to coastal challenges. Our response to Question 1 set out an indicative table of key issues and the administrative levels at which they might be addressed, underpinned by a national Coastal Regeneration Strategy.

Question 5—*Security of Funding for Coastal towns and regeneration*

2.5 The regeneration of coastal England should have a number of key foci: at the national level it should involve interventions through special area status, and other initiatives, to drive investment and raise confidence and morale. At the regional level it should involve designated finance for the creation of new coastal venture funds and enterprise parks, and clearer longer-term funding for maintaining sea defences against growing climate change and rising sea levels.

The overall aim of this approach should be to develop sustainable coastal communities where economic intervention enables housing and population growth. At the local level, specific coastal mini LAA style initiatives should be promoted to bring key local organisations together, pooling budgets and getting more resources to the point of delivery.

Question 6—*The Success of RDAs and others*

2.6 emda and its Strategic Sub regional Partnership, Lincolnshire Enterprise (LE) have been supportive of our efforts to stimulate coastal regeneration. However, some of the major challenges facing the coast extend well beyond the economic development agenda and embrace environmental, housing, health and other wider issues. This requires a major joining-up of more than just the economic development resources of emda and LE. On the economic development front various programmes have helped provide support

on the coast under the SRB. For example, almost £2 million to Mablethorpe Regeneration and the Coastal Regeneration Partnership, in addition to other investments in rural and property developments in recent years.

However the magnitude of the problems of the coastal area requires a more macro-interventionist approach, maybe exceeding the more normal level of investment per capita of population.

The new Regional Economic Strategy its final draft stage and we are hopeful that the final RES will reflect more strongly the strategic needs of the East Midlands coast, including reference to the particular problems of access and deprivation and the existence of the UK's first Coastal Action Zone.

The recent Lincolnshire Economic Strategy (Appendix 2—The Lincolnshire Economic Strategy—2006) summarised Lincolnshire as being “an under-performing county” with “a hidden crisis in economic growth and performance” that required “a concerted and substantial response”. The strategy called for a major injection of funds to dramatically raise the productivity of the area.

There is both a synergy and a conflicting economic dislocation between the coast and the rest of the region. In some ways the coast shares a similar economic profile with the former coalfield areas of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire and many people from these areas retire to the Lincolnshire coast, often with problems of poor health. On the other hand, the problems of the coast have a greater economic similarity with coastal areas of neighbouring regions—particularly Yorkshire and Humberside and East Anglia. We believe that there is scope for greater policy coherence through the establishment of a national coastal strategy similar to the strategies that underpin the current urban and rural activities of RDAs and other government agencies

A National Coastal Regeneration Strategy should also promote wider forums than currently exist and which would enable more positive locational relationships and cut across illogical public sector boundaries.

### 3. ANALYSIS

#### 3.1 *Introduction*

3.1.1 This response is from the Lincolnshire Coastal Action Zone which seeks to develop local solutions to the entrenched social and economics problems of the East Midlands coastal strip. The root problem of coastal deprivation is economic and unless the standard of living on the coast can be raised then deprivation will persist. Changes in coastal economies can only be achieved through a sophisticated alignment of priority and effort at national, regional and local level and given impetus through a new national coastal regeneration strategy.

A Coastal strategy is needed because current structures and programmes designed to address urban and rural deprivation are not effective in the coastal context. Whilst the Inquiry is primarily concerned with the activities of ODPM, coastal deprivation creates costs and issues for every Government department.

#### 3.2 *The Disconnected Coast.*

3.2.1 There are around fifty seaside settlements in England that are the main service centres for their areas, serving a population of about 3.5 million people.

3.2.2 A handful of coastal towns are of considerable size, well located, vibrant and they make significant contributions to local, regional and national economies. The majority of coastal towns, however, have small populations, weak economies, are remote from the influences of larger settlements, lack economic and social diversity, have poor access to education and opportunity, and whose deprivation makes considerable demands on public services.

3.2.3 The 2004 Indices of Deprivation highlight how coastal England is different from mainland England on a range of social, economic and demographic characteristics. This information has been mapped and is attached (Appendix 3—The Condition of the Coast).

#### 3.3 *The Commonality of Coastal Concerns*

3.3.1 Many coastal settlements exhibit the following common features:

- Transport costs are increased for businesses and employees.
- Agglomerative advantages are fewer—there are less economies of scale.
- Rates of investment and entrepreneurship are lower.
- Influence on Government is weaker.

- Demographics makes the provision of services more expensive.
- The areas are low in wages, skills, opportunities and aspirations.
- Cheap accommodation and transitory populations.

3.3.2 Coastal socio-economic problems vary in locational intensity—from being the dominant and debilitating features of many smaller resorts, such as “disconnected” Mablethorpe, to being almost submerged beneath the cosmopolitan vibrancy of well connected Bournemouth and Brighton.

3.3.3 It is the interrelationship between coastal characteristics that create the unique problems of seaside towns. For example, the relationship between rented accommodation, transitory populations, seasonality and the benefit system, or the relationship between an in-migrating aging population and the demands on health and social services, or the lack of critical mass that makes the areas unattractive to investors, businesses or professionals. For example, coastal population movements, assisted by the uniqueness of coastal housing markets, create pressures and problems for public services, instability in schools, and all compounded by the difficulty of recruiting essential staff. Too many coastal settlements foster homelessness, deprivation and social exclusion.

Such complex localized inter-relationships require localized solutions. There is not sufficient national thinking at present to adequately direct regional and national tiers of administration to facilitating local solutions for disadvantaged and isolated coastal communities.

### 3.4 *From National Strategy to Local Delivery*

3.4.1 Lincolnshire’s response to the challenges of the East Midlands coastal strip has been to create the Coastal Action Zone, which comprises all the public service providers in the area. The CAZ is not a project. The CAZ is a process that seeks to improve the standard of living of coastal communities by a) maximising the impact of the resources available through new partnership arrangements, b) clarifying coastal needs and opportunities, and c) locating resources in order to permanently improve the quality of life for coastal people. The CAZ is a delivery vehicle for the East Lindsey LSP.

3.4.2 The CAZ members have identified four unifying issues which impact upon the provision of public services on the coastal strip. These are:

*Low Aspirations* . . . in education, business, skills development, health, law and order.

*Access* . . . or rather the lack of physical access to services.

*Recruitment* . . . of professionals and skills to improve the delivery of public services.

*Demography* . . . importing elderly and unhealthy, exporting youth and vitality.

3.4.3 The Lincolnshire CAZ exemplifies the new delivery structures that the Government are introducing through Local Area Agreements, Modernising Rural Delivery, Pathfinders and Public Service Agreements. The underlying philosophy of these initiatives is that many national targets are often best achieved by local action based upon local knowledge and experience. A National Coastal Regeneration Strategy could provide the framework for localised coastal regeneration partnerships to apply national policies to local circumstances.

### 3.5 *The Need for Macro Interventions*

3.5.1 The disconnected Lincolnshire coast is the least productive area of a low productivity county and, being heavily reliant on low wage tourism, does not have the social and economic capital to regenerate itself. Apart from the historic tourist links, the area cannot expect to benefit from the economic and social vitality of near major settlements, such as Grimsby (25 miles), Lincoln (46 miles), Nottingham or Peterborough (both 70+ miles).

3.5.2 An indication of the scale of the problem on the East Midlands coastal strip is illustrated by the following example of raising the coastal wage level to the national average.

#### THE LINCOLNSHIRE COAST NEEDS 3,000 x £36k JOBS

To increase the local gross weekly wage of £388 to the national average of £515 per week would require a 25% rise in local incomes, and an increase in the coastal wage bill from £342 million per annum to £445 million per annum. To achieve this level of economic growth would require the development of a new labour market of 3,000 professional and skilled jobs on the coast. The in-migration of professional and skilled people and their families could increase the CAZ population by 10,000 to 70,000. This in turn would create a new residential market and new demands for personal services and business space. The expansion of incomes coupled with the additional critical mass of population, could create a virtuous circuit of growth and regeneration.

### 3.6 *Pump-priming sustainable Coastal Regeneration*

3.6.1 There is a need for more devolution of funding over longer time horizons and to build on current national designations of intermediate and assisted area status. A consideration of how this approach facilitates investment in coastal resorts with a view to the evolution of a clearer designation focused upon remote coastal areas, along with potential ring fencing of future structural funds to drive coastal investment, should arise from this approach.

3.6.2 While additional resources are required for sustainable coastal regeneration in the medium-term, the overall objective of this approach is to reduce the demand and costs of tackling coastal deprivation by increasing the standard of living of coastal communities.

### 3.7 Special Initiatives to Raise Expectations

3.7.1 The challenge of raising the economic status of the coast is significant and will require special and wide-ranging initiatives to start the regeneration process and to create confidence in the area among amongst residents, in-migrating families, and business and property investors. Specific areas where the Government could lead this process in Lincolnshire are:

3.7.2 *A Coastal Enterprise Zone.* A Coastal Enterprise Zone is required to attract new business sectors and to maximise on the availability of broadband. The Enterprise Zone should have access to venture capital and entrepreneurial support focused around the development of a specific Intermediate and Assisted Area Status approach specifically for “challenged” coastal areas.

3.7.3 *Housing Led Regeneration.* Major new, fully serviced, mixed housing developments in a small number of the more challenged coastal resorts. Such housing should attract additional population to the area and introduce higher incomes, more families and skilled people, drawn by the housing and the landscape.

3.7.4 *Re-locating Public Sector Employment.* Currently the coastal area cannot attract professionals and skilled staff with families and good incomes. Re-locating Government jobs to the coast, particularly those related to coastal areas of concern—such as education, health, social care—could start the process of making the coast more attractive to skilled staff.

3.7.5 *Coastal Proofing.* Rural proofing has made some impact on public bodies thinking about how their activities impact on rural communities. At little additional cost this approach could be fine tuned (in the light of our argument above that coastal settlements are not straightforwardly rural or urban) to extend specifically to coastal areas.

3.7.6 The strengths of the Lincolnshire coasts are considered to be the following and are not nationally un-typical of the areas where local, regional and national effort should be focused:

- the sea and the natural coastal environment;
- the resorts—still attracting millions of visitors per year;
- wind power—renewable energy;
- the attraction of the coast for retirees—a positive market opportunity;
- quality broadband services now available; and
- front line public sector delivery staff.

### 3.8 *Summary*

3.8.1 *Rurban Deprivation.* Coastal deprivation exhibits the worst aspects of rural and urban deprivation and creates the unique circumstances and need for a national coastal regeneration strategy. Poor health, access to services, poor housing, and low incomes are all contributory factors and are all interlinked and mutually reinforcing. The rural and urban policies pursued by the Government, including the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, Rural Strategy 2004, and the Sustainable Communities initiative recognise the importance of tackling social exclusion in urban and rural contexts, but the nature of coastal deprivation is not addressed.

3.8.2 Investment and diversification are the keys to sustainable development of the coastal economy, however, there are many barriers, especially peripherality, that have to be overcome. Further barriers are related to low qualifications, low aspirations, economic inactivity, lack of affordable housing and poor health, and all need addressing collectively and locally.

3.8.3 Interventions to improve social inclusion and economic development need to be specifically coastal in context. Many of the measures already in place to combat social exclusion and improve economic development in urban and rural areas cannot be directly translated to the coastal context, although they may be adapted to find a coastal solution. Any solution needs to be holistic—incorporating means to address the social and economic problems of coastal areas.

3.8.4 The coastal resorts of England are historic, romantic and nostalgic places that host millions of new and returning visitors each year. To visitors wandering the hot streets or basking on crowded beaches the notion of deprivation could appear risible. However, unless new visions and economic activities can be created for our seaside towns, the high costs of public service provision will continue and sustainable deprivation will be maintained.

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**Supplementary Memorandum by the Lincolnshire Coastal Action Zone (CAZ) Partnership (CR 45(a))**

**APPENDIX 1**

**DEFINING COASTAL AREAS: URBAN, RURAL, OR SPECIFICALLY COASTAL?**

*David Lloyd East Lindsey District Council*

Rural and urban are the two main classifications used by the Government to assist in targeting policy delivery. Typically Local Authorities have been divided into urban, accessible rural, or sparse rural categories to aid our understanding of the problems that they face. These areas have been regarded as having similar problems, be it high crime in urban areas or poor access to services in remote rural areas. However, evidence suggests that many coastal towns in rural areas do not face typically rural issues, giving rise to suggestions that “coastal” should be a separate classification to urban or rural.

Despite the classifications that are used, urban and rural areas should not be regarded as homogenous and nor should coastal areas. Coastal towns can be as different to one another as they are from inland towns, which causes problems in classifying an area as coastal. Coastal communities range from large industrial cities, to fishing ports, seaside resorts and small villages, all of which share a social and economic link to the sea, but all of which are quite different.

The East Lindsey Coastal Action Zone focuses upon the coastal strip of the East Midlands, predominantly the seaside resorts of Skegness and Mablethorpe and their surrounding area. Evidence revealed that deprivation within the Coastal Action Zone (CAZ) area was among the highest in Lincolnshire and more akin to the levels that one might expect to find in poorer urban areas rather than the typical rural area. Although the levels of deprivation in the CAZ are similar to some of the poorer urban areas, the nature of deprivation is quite different. Analysis of the available evidence reveals that the socio-economic structure of the coastal towns and surrounding area incorporated within the CAZ reflects neither the average urban or rural area.

The East Midlands may not be unique in the problems that it faces along the coast, in fact the evidence suggests that it is not alone. Recognising the unique problems of coastal towns in rural areas as neither urban nor rural is necessary to spur the development and delivery of policies to regenerate coastal areas. Without the unique nature of coastal deprivation being addressed coastal areas could potentially fall into a gap between urban and rural policy initiatives.

**PERIPHERALITY AND THE COASTAL ECONOMY**

By definition coastal towns are on the periphery. Being situated by the sea is a strength for coastal towns that have derived their wealth from fishing, shipping, and tourism; indeed it is their *raison d'être*. However, when it comes to economic development many coastal towns are not only situated on the geographic periphery, but also on the economic periphery, far from economic centres. Such peripherality can increase the expense of providing services and infrastructure to coastal towns, while also increasing the costs for people living and doing business in the area.

Peripherality is a feature that shapes and defines the economy of many coastal areas including those in Northumberland, Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, East Anglia, the South West and Cumbria. Distance from economic centres is partly responsible for creating the economic structure of many coastal towns and the structure has been compounded by poor transport networks. In many ways the coastal economy suffers in a similar fashion to the rural economy due to peripherality. Peripheral rural economies share the following characteristics:<sup>22</sup>

- Transport costs are increased for businesses and employees.
- Agglomerative advantages are fewer (ie there are less economies of scale) and clusters of businesses are less likely to form.
- Rates of innovation and entrepreneurship are lower.
- Influence on Government is weaker.
- The provision of services is more expensive.

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<sup>22</sup> “Slippery or soft? Is peripherality changing?”, Copus A, and MacLeod M, Scottish Agricultural College, April 2004.

However, this is where rural and coastal economies diverge. While the rural economy is largely characterised by primary industries, the coastal economy, especially that of seaside resorts, is orientated further towards service industries. Many of the economic interventions proposed in the Government's Rural Strategy are specific to rural areas characterised by agriculture and market towns rather than to coastal areas. Many coastal urban centres fall within rural districts and there is a risk that assistance by be misdirected if this is not recognised.

Urban policies to stimulate economic growth generally focus upon regional or sub-regional urban centres. Cities are regarded as having the potential to grow and to drive regeneration within their sub-region. Urban led regeneration has resulted in the establishment of city regions that conceptualise core cities as driving the economic growth of their hinterland. Sustainable development supports the concept of the city region as an area in which communities contain, or can access, all the factors that make for continual and beneficial renewal.<sup>23</sup>

Coastal towns may currently be considered inherently unsustainable in economic terms. Traditional coastal industries are declining and the economies of scale, infrastructure, workforce, and services that make for sustainable city regions are not present in coastal areas. Neither does the model for a sustainable rural economy apply to coastal towns. Rural businesses are characterised by small enterprises that often depend upon distant customers and suppliers<sup>24</sup>, rather than the clustering effect that occurs in many urban areas. Many coastal towns have economies that have failed to diversify and remain tied to declining industries that are specifically local in context.<sup>25</sup> Proximity to the sea is no longer the economic advantage that it once was.

Levels of enterprise have been stagnating or declining within East Lindsey and many other coastal areas, which supports the contention that economic growth suffers in peripheral areas. The Composite Enterprise Index<sup>26</sup> is an indicator composed of new business formation, change in business stock over the past 10 years, and the business survival rate. The index shows that East Lindsey ranks 386 out of 408 areas for enterprise within the United Kingdom.

The Composite Enterprise Index also reveals that:

- 21 out of the bottom 25 ranked areas are coastal.
- None of the top 25 areas are coastal.

The Lincolnshire coast and that of many other rural areas might be regarded as the periphery of an already peripheral area. Access to services in coastal areas is generally poor in comparison to urban areas and in this respect coastal areas face many of the same challenges as rural areas. Due to the peripheral nature of the coast Local Authorities often struggle to justify providing services that need to serve a wider area. Private sector companies also struggle to provide a wide range of services for commercial reasons, as demand is lower due to the peripheral siting and the relative deprivation of seaside towns.<sup>27</sup>

The combined road distances to services indicator relates to the road distances to the nearest General Practitioner, primary school, post office, and supermarket or convenience store. Within Lincolnshire it is apparent that access is poor along the coast.

<sup>23</sup> "Our Cities are Back", ODPM, November 2004.

<sup>24</sup> "Literature review of the English Rural Economy", Winter M and Rushbrook L, University of Exeter, May 2003.

<sup>25</sup> "Coastal Economic Development", Churchill N, Canterbury City Council, report to the Coastal Issues Special Interest Group, [coastalsig.lga.gov.uk](http://coastalsig.lga.gov.uk)

<sup>26</sup> "Business and enterprise", [localknowledge.co.uk](http://localknowledge.co.uk)

<sup>27</sup> "Private sector service withdrawal in deprived neighbourhoods", Joseph Rowntree Foundation, February 2000.

**Barriers to housing and services, Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2004** <sup>28</sup>

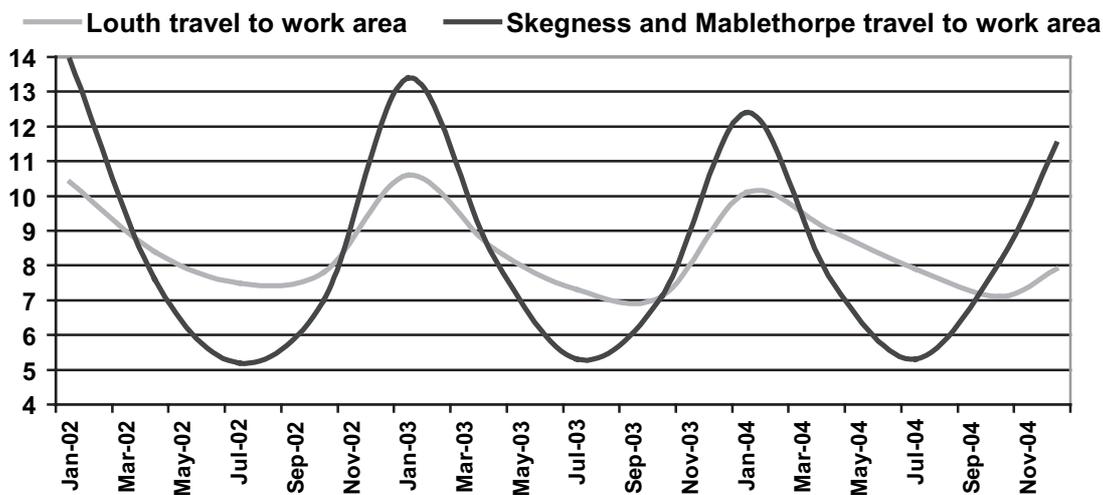
EMPLOYMENT

Employment in coastal areas reinforces a cycle of low skills, low aspirations, and low wages that ensures there is neither the supply nor demand for a better qualified labour market. Much of the employment is part-time and seasonal, peaking during the summer months in support of the tourist industry. The seasonal employment opportunities are generally unskilled and require no qualifications leading many people to believe that qualifications are irrelevant.<sup>29</sup> Low qualification levels also lead to reduced aspirations and self-esteem, which evidence from other deprived areas suggests is also linked to a decline in social capital.<sup>30</sup>

Unemployment is higher among coastal communities than in nearby inland areas. Comparing the claimant count for Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) in the Louth Travel to Work Area to the Skegness and Mablethorpe Travel to Work Area during 2004 reveals generally higher levels of unemployment along the coast. The average proportion of the population claiming JSA during 2004 was 1.9% in Louth and 2.5% in Skegness and Mablethorpe.<sup>31</sup>

Due to the high proportion of the population that work within the tourist sector, and also to some extent in the agricultural sector, the District experiences fluctuations in the number of people that are out of work on a seasonal basis. The following graph displays the fluctuations in the Claimant Count on a seasonal basis in Skegness and Mablethorpe in comparison to Louth. Changes to the Job Seekers Allowance regulations whereupon claims are averaged out to 16 hours per week over the year is beginning to have a negative impact, whereupon those who were previously in seasonal employment now claim benefit all year round as the changes disincentivise taking up such seasonal employment, thus increasing unemployment.

SEASONALITY: DISTRIBUTION BY MONTH (AS A PERCENTAGE) OF TOTAL JOB SEEKERS ALLOWANCE CLAIMS PER YEAR 2002-04



ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Coastal areas also suffer from high levels of economic inactivity. Economic inactivity is the proportion of the working age population that are not part of the labour market. People may be economically inactive for a number of reasons, although ill health, disability and early retirement are the main causes. Coastal areas suffer from many of the principal causes of economic inactivity and in this respect they are more similar to inner city areas, and even to former coal mining communities, than they are to rural areas.

Economic inactivity affects productivity as people that are out of work often find that re-entering the labour market has become more difficult as a result of their time away. Being in work increases the likelihood that an individual will receive training and acquire skills, thus being in a more competitive position in the labour market.<sup>32</sup> This self-reinforcing cycle also helps to reduce self-esteem and aspirations, making it more likely that those without work will not seek better qualifications or better paid work.

<sup>28</sup> Lincolnshire Research Observatory, research-lincs.org.uk (not printed).  
<sup>29</sup> "Finding work in rural areas", Monk S, Dunn J, Hodge I and Fitzgerald M, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 1999.  
<sup>30</sup> "Policy Action Team on Skills final report", Neighbourhood Renewal Unit.  
<sup>31</sup> Nomis, nomisweb.co.uk  
<sup>32</sup> "Productivity in rural England", Defra, November 2005.

Worklessness is the term used to describe concentrations of economically inactive and unemployed people. Worklessness in East Lindsey is located along the coast. Research by the Social Exclusion Unit has revealed that living in a worklessness area will seriously lower the expectations and probability of a person starting a job.<sup>33</sup>

#### QUALIFICATIONS AND EDUCATION

Qualification levels, productivity and wage levels are all linked. Qualification levels among the coastal labour market are poor, which ensures that coastal towns are not an attractive location for knowledge-based industries to invest. More productive companies, paying higher wages, usually look to locate in areas where the workforce are more highly qualified.<sup>34</sup>

Proportion of 16–74 year olds  
with no qualifications

Proportion of 16–74 year olds  
qualified to NVQ level 4 or 5<sup>35</sup>

Patterns of migration are a contributing factor to the low levels of qualification in the coastal area, although the cause of the problem is also linked to the economic structure of the area, which does not demand highly qualified labour. Deprivation and social exclusion also combine to reduce confidence and aspirations, therefore lowering the expectations of people to participate in further education.

Due to not having the same levels of critical mass as more urban areas of the East Midlands, sustainable resources are hard come by to support training and upskilling activities and companies themselves do not have the size or financial wherewithal to provide for their own training needs. Some local initiatives have been developed such as joint working between Butlins and the Primary Care Trust to develop a local health skills training centre, however these are purely openly inspired and supported initiatives.

#### MIGRATION AND POPULATION AGEING

Coastal areas share many similar demographic characteristics. Particular patterns of migration, especially to and from coastal resorts, have shaped the coastal population in such a way that it differs considerably from population structures found in most rural or urban areas. Demographics in coastal areas provide a challenge that is unique.

Population ageing is a defining feature of coastal areas. Coastal areas provide an attractive destination for retirement, indeed of the top 10 favourite locations for retirement in the UK 6 are on the coast and Skegness is at the top of the list.<sup>36</sup> In-migration to the coast of people upon retirement is growing to such an extent that the population structure of coastal areas is becoming quite distinct from other areas. Increasing life expectancy also contributes to the ageing population in coastal areas and the trend appears set to continue.<sup>37</sup>

#### **Proportion of the population aged 65 or over** <sup>38</sup>

Out-migration of younger people from coastal areas exacerbates population ageing. Younger people often migrate away from coastal areas in order to study or find better working opportunities.<sup>39</sup> Population ageing is also occurring in rural areas, although not to the same extent as in coastal areas. Research on migration in rural areas found that young people migrating away tended to be richer, better qualified and more likely to be single than their counterparts that moved within rural areas.<sup>40</sup> The pattern of migration to and from coastal areas is a contributing factor to low skill levels in the labour market.

The following maps show high levels of in and out migration from coastal communities:<sup>41</sup>

#### HEALTH

Health in coastal areas is relatively poor in comparison to other areas. Levels of disability, long-term illness, and premature mortality are high. Strong correlations are evident between the areas in which health is poor and the areas that are experiencing an ageing population. Poor health along the coast can be largely, but not entirely, attributed to the ageing population and the associated health problems.

<sup>33</sup> “Jobs and Enterprise in Deprived Areas”, Social Exclusion Unit, ODPM, September 2004.

<sup>34</sup> “Skills, workforce characteristics and firm-level productivity in England”, Galindo-Rueda F and Haskel J, Department of Trade and Industry, July 2005.

<sup>35</sup> “The Census Atlas 2005”, Lincolnshire Development.

<sup>36</sup> “Retirement homes on the coast”, *The Independent*, 26 November 2005, money.independent.co.uk

<sup>37</sup> “We must plan for elderly migration”, *The Guardian*, 14 December 2000, society.guardian.co.uk

<sup>38</sup> “The Census Atlas 2005”, Lincolnshire Development. (not printed).

<sup>39</sup> “Focus on Older People”, Office of National Statistics, May 2004.

<sup>40</sup> “The demography of rural areas”, University of Gloucester, May 2003.

<sup>41</sup> “The Census Atlas 2005”, Lincolnshire Development. (not printed).

Disability and limiting long-term illness are represented in high levels in coastal areas, although not all of the health problems can be attributed to age. Incapacity Benefit is available to those under the state pension age that are unable to work due to disability. Coastal areas of East Lindsey show markedly higher rates of people claiming Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance. 19.4% of the working age population are claiming Incapacity Benefit in some coastal areas of East Lindsey in comparison to the national average of 7%.<sup>42</sup>

Poor health also impacts upon the labour market and effects economic productivity. Where large proportions of the working age population cannot work due to incapacity there is also a corresponding rise in the number of people of working age that are required to provide unpaid care. The impact upon levels of economic activity is evident as rates of economic activity in the coastal areas are low.

THE TRANSIENT POPULATION

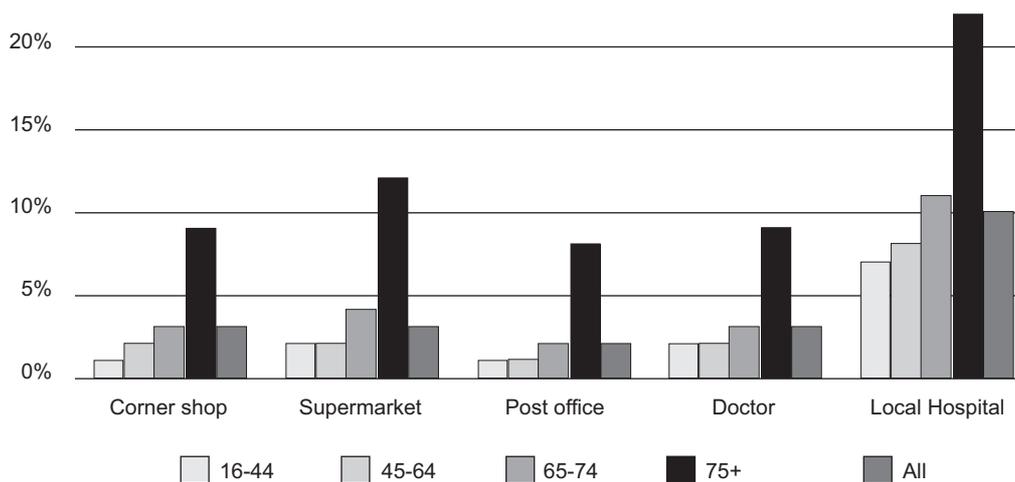
Migration patterns and the seasonal nature of employment in coastal areas contribute to a large transient population in seaside towns. During the summer months seaside resorts face a substantial influx of part-time workers and holidaymakers that are not present during the winter.

Experiencing a large transient population threatens the sustainability of communities and causes problems for the delivery of services. Demand for services is higher during the tourist season than it is during the winter months, which makes the provision of such services less efficient and cost-effective out of season. Many private sector services, shops for example, close completely during the winter in coastal resorts which decreases access to services.

Levels of social capital might also suffer in coastal towns as the transient population are less likely to involve themselves in social networks and associations, therefore contributing less to the well being of the community than the resident population. Lower levels of social capital contribute to the burden on public services, as the community will provide less support for themselves. Higher levels of social capital contribute to the ability of civil society to organise and provide support for themselves and improve social inclusion.

Mobility is a problem for many people considering the high proportion of the population that are older or suffering from a disability or an illness in coastal areas. Lack of mobility reduces the choice and availability of services when poor mobility further necessitates the need for good access to services.

HOUSEHOLDS WITH VERY DIFFICULT ACCESS TO LOCAL AMENITIES BY AGE, 2002-03, ENGLAND<sup>43</sup>



<sup>42</sup> Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance Claimants, August 2004, Neighbourhood Statistics.

<sup>43</sup> "Survey of English Housing", ODPM.

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## TEENAGE PREGNANCY

Research also identifies the transient population and the “carnival atmosphere” of seaside resorts as key factors in encouraging teenage pregnancy.<sup>44</sup> Teenage pregnancy reduces the chances that young mothers will work or continue in education, therefore support and interventions to improve access to childcare would benefit coastal regeneration.

Levels of teenage pregnancy are higher in coastal areas than in rural areas. Between 2000 and 2002 the District had a conception rate of 42.5 per 1,000 of the female population aged 15–17 (ranked 149 out of 353 Local Authorities), this is higher than the average of 38.4 that might be expected for an area classed as “coastal and countryside”.<sup>45</sup> More predominantly coastal Local Authorities report even higher a rate of teenage pregnancy, the rate in Great Yarmouth is 58.3 (ranked 32 out of 353) and the rate in Scarborough is 50.0 (ranked 82 out of 353).

## HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

Coastal areas, especially coastal resorts, have particular housing problems. The transient population in coastal resorts contribute to a number of housing problems including a high level of homelessness. Seasonal employment is a major contributing factor to homelessness in coastal areas, as many people working in the tourist industry face unemployment outside of the tourist season. The experience in Skegness is that many homeless people from outside the area are drawn to the resort. Those employed in seasonal jobs are often housed in accommodation that is tied to the job, for example in caravans that are restricted occupancy, and find themselves homeless once the season has finished.<sup>46</sup>

Coastal housing is often of a poor standard and there is a higher proportion of Houses in Multiple Occupation than elsewhere. Much of the accommodation is designed for holiday lets rather than longer-term family living and the standard of the accommodation is often inadequate.<sup>47</sup> Demand for social housing along the coast is also high as a result of the level of homelessness presentations and the transient population, hence the reliance upon cheap although often unsuitable private sector holiday accommodation for residential housing.

Demand for social housing from those on the Housing Register in East Lindsey<sup>48</sup>:

Skegness	34%
Louth	14%
Mablethorpe	11%

Migration patterns place acute pressures on service provision. Housing applications show that 60% of all new applicants for the Housing Register since 2004 have shown that they wish to reside within the coastal area of the district. The inability to set local preference on Housing Register applications has led to extreme housing demand. East Lindsey is highly recognised for its work on homelessness and has one of few “fit for purpose” assessed Housing Strategies in the nation.

Despite low house prices in the coastal communities in the District affordable housing remains a problem. Low wages are the main factor contributing to the lack of affordability along the coast, although the higher than average number of second homes and the degree of inward migration of older people provide another inflationary pressure on house prices, especially as older people are more likely to own their own home. The nature of affordability within the District encourages young people to leave the area in search of better-paid work, which adversely impacts upon the labour market and further discourages new employers from settling along the coast.

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<sup>44</sup> “Living on the edge: sexual behaviour and young parenthood in seaside and rural areas”, Bell J, Clisby S, Craig G, Measor L, Petrie S and Stanley N, University of Brighton, University of Hull and University of Liverpool, February 2004.

<sup>45</sup> Compendium of Clinical Health Indicators, nchod.nhs.uk

<sup>46</sup> “Report on housing issues in coastal areas”, East Lindsey District Council, February 2004.

<sup>47</sup> East Lindsey District Council Housing Strategy 2005–10.

<sup>48</sup> East Lindsey District Council Housing Strategy 2005–10.

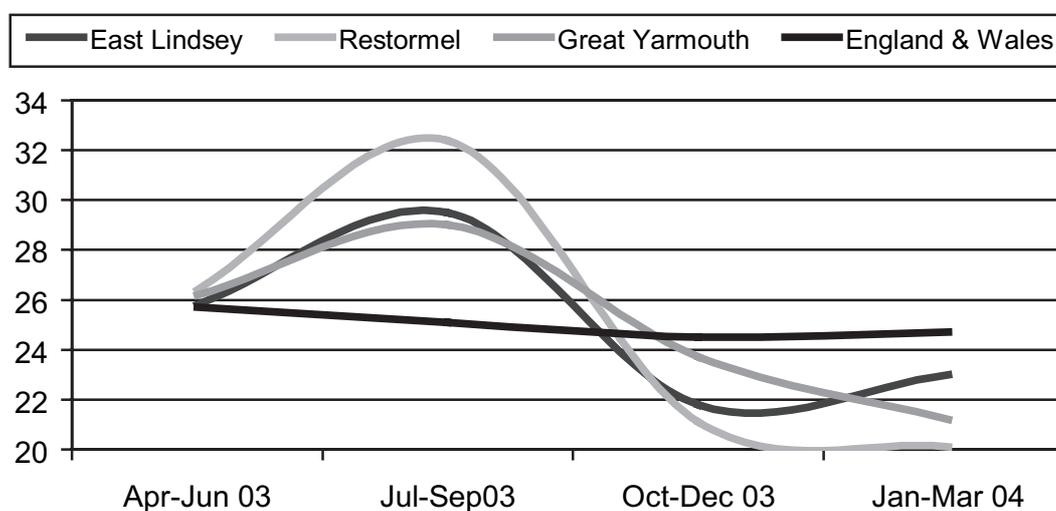
**House prices to gross household earned incomes (households aged 20 to 39)<sup>49</sup>**

The previous map shows that affordability within many coastal areas is poor, especially those in the South West, although it is also comparatively poor in many parts of the east coast. Affordability within many urban areas, especially in the North is considerably better than in coastal areas. The main causes are both economic and demographic, as mentioned previously, which is symptomatic of many issues that coastal areas face.

**CRIME**

Crime levels are relatively high in coastal areas that contain seaside resorts due in the main to the large transient population that is present during the summer. The following map of East Lindsey reveals that crime is more than twice the rate for the District as a whole in parts of Skegness and Mablethorpe. Comparing three seaside areas to the national average (graph at the bottom of the page) reveals a trend of more offences being committed in seaside areas during the summer months than the winter.

**OFFENCES PER QUARTER AS A PERCENTAGE OF ALL CRIME PER YEAR<sup>50</sup>**



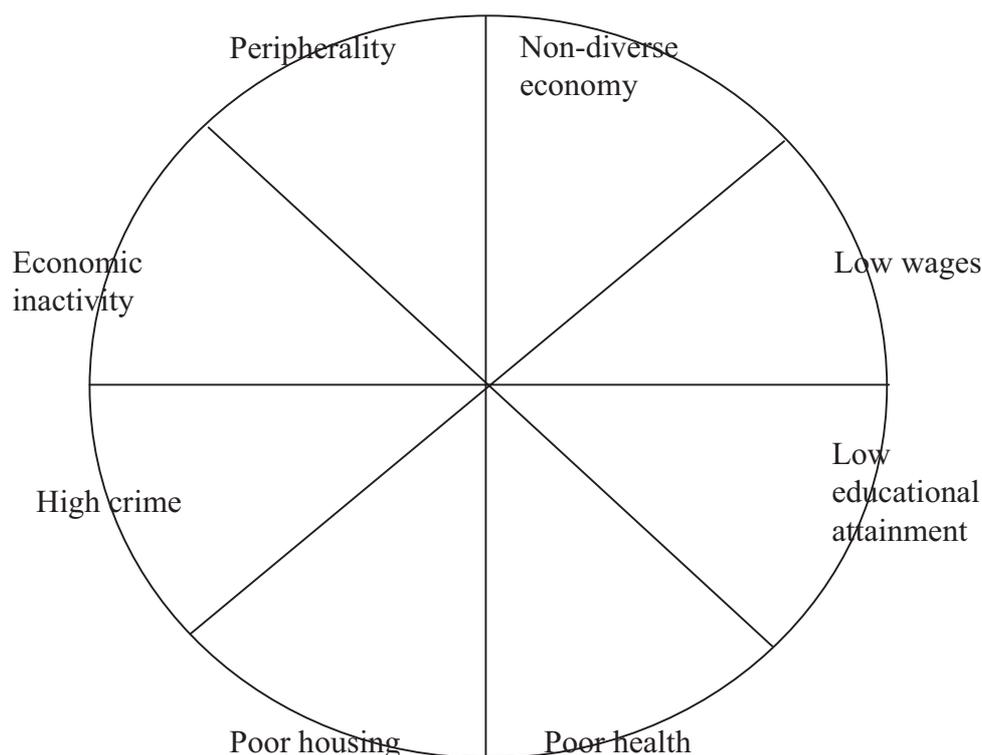
Social exclusion in coastal areas is both the result and the cause of continued deprivation. Poor health, access to services, poor housing, and low incomes contribute to social exclusion and all of these factors are present in coastal areas. The contributing factors to social exclusion are all interlinked and are mutually reinforcing. The rural and urban policies pursued by the Government, including the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, Rural Strategy 2004, and the Sustainable Communities initiative recognise the importance of tackling social exclusion in an urban and rural context.

Economic development must also be improved if any solution to coastal problems is to be found. Diversification is the key to sustainable development of the coastal economy; however, there are many barriers, especially peripherality, that have prevented the economy from diversification by itself. Further barriers to economic development are related to social exclusion (low qualifications, low aspirations, economic inactivity, lack of decent and affordable housing, poor health), therefore both social exclusion and economic development need to be tackled in tandem.

Interventions to improve social inclusion and economic development need to be specifically coastal in context. Many of the measures already in place to combat social exclusion and improve economic development in urban and rural areas cannot be directly translated to the coastal context, although they may be adapted to find a coastal solution. Any solution needs to be holistic—incorporating means to address the social and economic problems of coastal areas.

<sup>49</sup> “Affordability differences by area for working households buying their homes—2003 update”, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, jrf.org.uk (not printed).

<sup>50</sup> crimestatistics.org.uk



**Supplementary Memorandum by the Lincolnshire Coastal Action Zone (CAZ) Partnership (CCT 45(b))**

**LINCOLNSHIRE ECONOMIC STRATEGY**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

*An under-performing county*

1.1 Lincolnshire is facing *an economic crisis*. Lincolnshire is under-performing in comparison with the East Midlands, and this looks set to continue and become more severe. Lincolnshire has been growing slowly in recent years, at a rate that is well below that for the region and for the UK as a whole. The result has been an increasing gap, as Lincolnshire has been “left behind” when compared with many other parts of the country. On current trends, Lincolnshire will continue to lag behind the East Midlands and the UK, and the gap will continue to widen.

*A “hidden crisis” in economic growth and performance*

1.2 The rural nature of Lincolnshire, combined with local growth “hot spots”, has hidden deeper structural issues and problems that contribute to and underpin low levels of comparable economic wealth and growth. This “hidden crisis” has created a situation where future economic development and growth will need to focus on bringing the performance of the Lincolnshire economy up closer to the regional average. There is a need for urgent action to address the performance of one of England’s lagging counties.

*A need for a concerted and substantial response*

1.3 Effective and successful response to this crisis will require concerted action from local partners as well as from regional agencies and other stakeholders. It will also require substantial investment, of effort and commitment as well as resources, to address the structural issues and barriers to growth that exist. Given the scale of the development challenge, investments will need to demonstrate a clear “return on investment” of public as well as private funds. Future actions will need, in other words, to have a real and substantive effect on the longer-term growth and economic competitiveness of Lincolnshire.

*The strategy as a response to these issues*

1.4 The Lincolnshire Economic Strategy is a framework for future action and focus. The strategy addresses the major structural issues and barriers to economic growth and development that Lincolnshire faces. The starting point for the strategy, as a result, is to identify and focus on “what needs to be done” to unlock the Lincolnshire economy and its future growth. The underpinning principle is to address these fundamental issues and to assess the success of the strategy by changes in economic performance that “narrow the gap” with the region and the country. Actions are needed that make significant impact.

*A collective strategy*

1.5 This strategy has been developed by Lincolnshire Enterprise with inputs from the University of Lincoln. It is supported by the Lincolnshire Assembly, and developed as an integral part of the Regional Economic Strategy. It has been subject to a broad and intensive consultation process that has sought to engage organisations and individuals across Lincolnshire and beyond. This document, as a result, enjoys broad support across Lincolnshire.

## 2. PURPOSES OF THE DOCUMENT

*A strategy for economic growth and renewal*

2.1 The Lincolnshire Economic Strategy is Lincolnshire’s strategy for economic growth and renewal. Its content is based on extensive analysis of Lincolnshire’s current and anticipated economic circumstances, and on previous research undertaken on the local economy.

*A framework for co-ordinated action*

2.2 The Strategy highlights the key characteristics of the economy and uses this as the basis for identification of priorities and recommended areas of future action. It provides a framework for collaborative and co-ordinated actions to support and enhance the economic development of the county.

*Fitting within the regional dimension*

2.3 The regional dimension is also important, as Lincolnshire is part of the East Midlands economy. The Strategy seeks to influence regional policy, and is also influenced by regional economic priorities and the developing Regional Economic Strategy. It is also shaped by the Community Strategies of Local Strategic Partnerships in Lincolnshire.

2.4 The three purposes of the Lincolnshire Economic Strategy are to:

- I. Provide a shared framework for future economic development activity.
- II. Inform and guide planning on what to do with resources that are or will become available to support economic development.
- III. Identify where additional activities and resources are needed.

*The aim: addressing economic performance*

2.5 The primary aim of the Strategy is to address the central challenge facing Lincolnshire’s economy, namely tackling poor economic performance and the need for substantial and effective future action and investment of resources.

## 3. THE LINCOLNSHIRE ECONOMY

*Falling GDP and slow growth*

3.1 Lincolnshire has low and falling GDP per capita, relative to the UK average. According to the latest data, in 2002 Lincolnshire’s GDP was 74% of the UK average, down from 76% in 2001. Real growth from 1995 to 2002 was 0.7% per year, compared with 2.7% for the rest of the East Midlands and 3.1% for the UK over the same period. Over that period, GVA indices fell from 87% of the national average to 74%, indicating substantial slipping back in comparison with the UK as a whole.

*A widening gap with the region and country*

3.2 Not only is Lincolnshire below the regional and national average, by some margin, but the gap is widening because of the very low relative annual growth rate. On current trends, the rest of the East Midlands and the UK will grow away from Lincolnshire, leaving it with a falling relative GDP rate.

*Real deprivation and rural isolation*

3.3 Parts of Lincolnshire are experiencing real deprivation. Of Lincolnshire's 392 Super Output Areas, 63 are in the bottom 25% according to deprivation indices and 13 are in the lowest decile. The Eastern areas, and in particular the coastal strip, have lower levels of wealth and higher levels of disadvantage. Along the coast, for example, are ten settlements that have been nationally recognised as Enterprise Areas due to their high levels of deprivation. Many rural areas and settlements across Lincolnshire have low and dispersed populations and low average per capita income levels.

*with some local areas of growth*

3.4 Even though the overall rate of growth of Lincolnshire is slow, and well below the regional and national averages, the picture of growth is not uniform across the county. There are "pockets" of local growth across the county. Greater Lincoln and the West of Lincolnshire are projected to grow at rates around or above the regional average (although not at projected national average growth rates).

*But not enough to reverse the trend and move closer to the region*

3.5 These variations within Lincolnshire do not translate into an overall growth rate that looks set to arrest falling relative GDP. For Lincolnshire as a whole to move closer to the regional and national average, the overall growth rate would need to exceed the national average by a significant margin for a sustained period. Current data indicate that the opposite is likely: that even if growth improves slightly it will not be enough to pull the county up to regional and national levels.

*Impact needed*

3.6 The Lincolnshire Rural Strategy estimates that the cost of actions to ensure that Lincolnshire can start to catch up with the UK average GVA are in the region of £300–600 million over 10 years. This will include the creation of 1,000 jobs a year and £160 million of additional external investment each year, and an extra £50 million worth of business support.

*A weak skills position*

3.7 The skills position is weak. Almost one third of adults in Lincolnshire have no qualifications. The county has a lower proportion of people with qualifications at level 3 or higher (21%) than the region (24%) and England (28%). Although Lincolnshire performs well at A-level it has one of the lowest levels of Higher Education participation in the country. The county suffers from a serious brain drain of young people leaving for Higher Education and high skilled jobs, and not returning.

*Reliant on "traditional" industries—a need for more enterprise and innovation*

3.8 Lincolnshire is heavily dependent on well-established and mature industries, in particular those associated with agriculture and land-based activities. There is some concentration of engineering and related manufacturing business in larger settlements, although at a lower contribution than historically has been the case. And although tourism has been growing, it has not been doing so at the national growth rate in this sector. There is little by way of new and technology-based industry emerging in the county. There is a pressing need for more enterprise, through business start-up, and growth, through innovation.

*Faster growth to meet the region's "top 20" goal by 2010*

3.9 Judged against the twelve strands of the current Regional Economic Strategy as at 2005, Lincolnshire does not perform well and is experiencing development challenges in each strand. The county's problems mean that the East Midlands is unlikely to become a "top 20" EU region while growth in Lincolnshire continues to be well below the regional and UK average. For the region to meet its "top 20" goal, Lincolnshire's economy needs to grow rapidly above the regional and national average for a sustained period.

## 4. THE STRATEGIC APPROACH

*A framework for addressing the causes of slow economic growth*

4.1 "Where we are now?" and the challenges that Lincolnshire is facing have been widely reported and are well established. This Economic Strategy is a framework for addressing the causes of slow economic growth and historical under-performance by focusing on the structural issues faced by the county. Using systematic and rigorous analysis, the strategy identifies what should be done to close the strategic gap between Lincolnshire's aspirations and what is likely to happen without action.

*Drivers of the Lincolnshire economy*

4.2 The challenges to future economic development and current under-performance are produced by a small number of major factors that determine the current condition of the economy and its previous path of development. These “drivers” of economic activity and change will influence future economic growth in Lincolnshire. There is a need to address these drivers in ways that enable faster and more equitable growth and that remove or resolve barriers and constraints to development.

4.3 Table 1 summarises the factors and conditions that are shaping the Lincolnshire economy and its development and current structure. The Table highlights the key drivers of economic development, and for each summarises the outcomes to be achieved through the Lincolnshire Economic Strategy. The drivers represent where the economy is now and where it is going. The outcomes represent the results of successful implementation of the strategy.

4.4 The five drivers of Lincolnshire’s economy and its development are set out in Table 1 together with the changes that this strategy is intended to achieve.

They are:

*A more diversified industrial structure*

1. Developing a more balanced and diversified industrial structure that moves the economy more towards innovation and to greater levels of competitiveness in the business population. This will require renewal and rejuvenation in established and existing sectors as well as the development of and diversification into more innovative and higher value-added sectors, and markets, such as sustainable energy and similar “upstream” sectors. To reverse the brain drain requires the development and attraction of higher value added industries that create higher skilled jobs.

**Table 1**

**DRIVERS OF THE LINCOLNSHIRE ECONOMY**

<i>Driver</i>	<i>Outcomes to be achieved</i>
<i>Existing industrial structure</i>	
— Reliance on “traditional” industries such as engineering, agriculture and land-based	— Sectoral competitiveness sustained and built on in established industries
— Although, overall structure relatively broad (ie relative over-dependence)	— A need for more innovation
— Little indication of emergence of “new” and technology-driven sectors	— Diversification into new sectors
— Low levels of business start-up	— Emergence of new sectors and areas of business activity through enterprise
<i>Low wage, low skills economy</i>	— Enhanced business-to-business collaboration and clustering
— Low wage rates, in relative UK terms	— Increased skills in the workforce
— Low levels of skills attainment	— Increased FE and HE participation
— Low levels of productivity, against UK & EU	— Attraction and start-up of businesses employing at higher skills levels
— Shortages of affordable housing	
<i>A dispersed and rural county, on the economic periphery, and with poor linkages and connectivity</i>	
— Poor physical infrastructure and under-developed ICT connections	— Greater connectivity through ICT
— Poor use of ICT	— Innovative use of ICT resulting in productivity gains
— Lack of scale in economic activity	— Maximise the benefit of the presence of the East Midlands Media Computing Technology Centre
— No major geographical concentrations of business activity	— Improved infrastructure to improve links in the county and with key markets
— Relatively low levels of local demand	— Greater consumer and business-to-business activity within Lincolnshire
— Difficult to access markets & opportunities	— Greater support to gain access to markets and customers and exploit opportunities outside the county
— Growing firms seek opportunities outside county	

<i>Driver</i>	<i>Outcomes to be achieved</i>
<p><i>Enhancement of school education &amp; expansion of post-16 education</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Growth of University of Lincoln in Lincoln and FE provision across much of the county</li> <li>— Expansion in 16-19 participation and provision</li> <li>— Low levels of participation in Higher Education and post-18 Further Education</li> <li>— Variable education offer up to 16</li> <li>— Need to develop a more entrepreneurial population</li> <li>— Reverse the brain drain</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Greater participation in HE and FE leading to higher skills, knowledge and qualifications in workforce</li> <li>— Increased local retention of graduates</li> <li>— Increased interactions between FE/HE and businesses</li> <li>— Improvements in areas where schools are not performing as well</li> <li>— Enterprise education through schools, colleges and universities</li> </ul>
<p><i>Variation in local communities and their prosperity and opportunities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Concentration of high deprivation at local level, particularly in certain parts of the county</li> <li>— Areas of relative wealth concentration, both urban and rural</li> <li>— Effects of growth outside county on the South (Peterborough), the West (Nottinghamshire) and the North (Yorkshire &amp; Humberside)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Address communities and local “pockets” of disadvantage</li> <li>— Greater integration and connection within Lincolnshire communities</li> <li>— Greater opportunities across the whole population, including those facing disadvantage</li> </ul>

*More enterprise through start-up*

2. Moving from a low wage, low skills economy by increasing the skills, qualifications and capability of the workforce and by encouraging more businesses involved in higher value-added activities. This will require an overall improvement in skills levels and participation in vocational further education, higher education, and continuing and lifelong learning. It will also require higher levels of business start-up, particularly in competitive industries and markets, and greater success in attracting existing businesses active in these sectors.

*A peripheral, rural and dispersed a need for “connectivity”*

3. Addressing the dispersed, peripheral and largely rural nature of Lincolnshire by enhancing integration with other markets, raising local levels of economic integration, and building “critical mass” in the local economy. Increasing connectivity, through ICT and via improvement of the physical infrastructure, is critical. The innovative use of ICT will lead to productivity gains as well as and through improved connectivity.

*Building on our strengths in education and addressing weaknesses*

4. Building on education strengths and addressing areas where education can be enhanced. Lincolnshire performs well in parts of its schooling, as well as in the education of its 16 to 19 year olds, and has recently seen rapid growth in higher and further education. However, there is wide variation in schools education attainment. Higher education participation continues to be amongst the lowest in the UK, and students have tended to leave and not return. This “brain drain” needs to be reversed.

*Addressing the social and economic aspects of disadvantage*

5. Addressing the social as well as economic effects of income disparities within and between communities. Lincolnshire has areas that are highly prosperous, as well as communities that have some of the highest levels of deprivation in the country. In areas of deprivation and lower wealth, indices suggest that the causes and measures of disadvantage relate to lower employment and education prospects and other indicators of socioeconomic opportunity, such as health. Addressing deprivation as a result of lack of or reduced access to socioeconomic opportunities will lessen disadvantage and increase the overall productive capacity of Lincolnshire.

*Within a regional as well as sub-regional context*

4.5 Lincolnshire's economic development occurs within a regional as well as sub-regional context. The Regional Economic Strategy and in particular its key drivers will have a material impact on the development of Lincolnshire. For this reason, the Lincolnshire Economic Strategy is based on the underpinning drivers of the Regional Economic Strategy as well as on the local drivers of economic change.

*With drivers from the Regional Economic Strategy*

4.6 Six drivers have been prioritised from amongst the 14 RES themes that have been highlighted in the current strategy and the consultation documentation for the new RES. These are:

1. Economic wellbeing
2. Growth
3. Sustainability
4. Enterprise and opportunity
5. Diversity
6. Sustainable communities

*A framework for economic development*

4.7 Table 2 brings together Lincolnshire's drivers of economic development and the key drivers of the Regional Economic Strategy. Combined, the framework for the Lincolnshire Economic Strategy focuses on local issues within a regional frame. The strategy relates, as a result, to local drivers of economic development and to the broader economic strategy for the region.

*Addressing issues underpinning the "hidden crisis"*

4.8 Each of the identified priorities for future economic development represents responses to the specific economic issues faced by Lincolnshire, and so ensures that the focus of the strategy is on addressing the "hidden crisis" of economic under-performance that is the rationale for this strategy.

*Actively engaging with these issues*

4.9 A broad principle of the strategy, therefore, is that economic development and related activities should contribute to Lincolnshire's growth by explicitly engaging with and resolving the priorities and issues highlighted in the framework.

4.10 The strategy is not an action plan. It offers a framework within which action can be set. What the framework does highlight is the broad areas of future activity will be that contribute to the development of the Lincolnshire economy.

*A need for real impact and large-scale action*

4.11 Large-scale action and innovative responses that lead to real impact will be needed to address the priorities identified in the framework. This may entail "transformational" projects as well as extensions of existing activities, or new projects of more modest size.

## 5. PUTTING THE STRATEGY INTO ACTION

*Strategy into action*

5.1 This strategy provides a framework for future action and prioritisation. The next step is to move from the strategic framework to action.

*Building on what we do*

5.2 As a starting point, what we currently do will be assessed against the strategic framework and the highlighted priorities for future economic development and change. Opportunities for change will be identified by more explicitly matching activities to priorities and their associated targets.

*A three-year action plan*

5.3 A three-year action plan for the Lincolnshire Economic Strategy will be produced, based on the priorities identified in Table 2 of the strategic framework. The action plan will provide specific resources, timescales and objectives associated with each priority as well as with the overall strategy.

*An annual review of progress*

5.4 A review of progress against the Strategy and specific measures will be undertaken, in the form of an annual “development report” on the Lincolnshire economy and its development. This report will assess how activities and interventions are contributing to the overall development of the economy, as well as analysing progress against specific priorities and related actions

*Priorities as the basis for action*

5.5 How will this be done? For each priority (as identified in Table 2), areas for action and intervention will be identified. Implementation of the strategy will require delivery of actions identified for each priority, which will provide a logical framework for action and monitoring of effectiveness and impact.

*Assessing progress*

5.6 The three year action plan will be used to assess progress and impact. Each action will be monitored against its related priority in order to ensure that progress is being made against broader objectives, in particular increasing GDP levels in relation to the region and the national benchmark.

*Monitoring*

5.7 Monitoring is likely to be undertaken at three levels:

- (1) How GDP and GVA is increasing, in absolute and relative terms, and in particular how Lincolnshire is improving its position against the regional and national averages.
- (2) How specific actions and activities are addressing particular, targeted priorities.
- (3) How actions are fulfilling tier 3 targets, as well as how the actions are contributing in an attributable way to Lincolnshire’s economic development.

*Role of partners*

5.8 The role of partners will be to ensure effective delivery of the strategy, and wherever possible, to ensure that approaches are coherent and co-ordinated and that resources are matched and leveraged. Specifically, partners will be asked to:

- (1) Agree and confirm the measures and possible actions for priorities.
- (2) Work towards economic development within the framework of specific priorities that address Lincolnshire’s economic drivers.
- (3) Contribute, via activities and resources, to the achievement of the strategy.

*Areas for action*

5.9 The strategic framework summarised in Table 2 provides a logical framework for implementation of the strategy. For implementation, two additional tables will be produced using the same framework. These will be:

- (1) Specific areas for action within each priority.
- (2) Specific output targets for each priority.

*Specific targets*

5.10 These areas for action and targets will be updated on a regular basis, as part of the annual review and for each three-year action plan.

**Table 2**

**A FRAMEWORK FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF LINCOLNSHIRE**

	<i>Economic Wellbeing</i>	<i>Growth</i>	<i>Sustainability</i>	<i>Enterprise &amp; Innovation</i>	<i>Diversity</i>	<i>Sustainable communities</i>
Existing industrial structure	1. Greater future competitiveness in established sectors	2. Emergence of new sectors 3. Attraction of businesses into Lincolnshire 4. Clustering	5. Addressing environmental issues in sectors	6. Improved innovation in established businesses 7. More new business started in existing and new industries		
Low wage, low skills economy	8. Improved access to education, training & skills 9. Upskilling of existing workforce and new entrants	10. Companies employing higher skilled staff 11. Productivity increased in companies		12. Self-employment/ business start-up, by indigenous & in-migrant populations 13. Increase in higher quality starts	14. Labour migration & integration	
Dispersed county, on the economic margins	15. Improved ICT connections and innovative use of ICT 16. More integration with wider economy 17. Improved infrastructure	18. More growth of local businesses, within and beyond Lincolnshire	19. Effects of economic change on the environment	20. More entrepreneurs in “local” economies		21. Community development strategies
Expansion of post-16 education	22. Greater participation in Higher & Further Education	23. More involvement of HE & FE in the economy	24. Opportunities for “exemplar” projects or activities	25. Increase in “intellectual” entrepreneurship		
Variation in local communities & their prosperity			26. Preserving quality of life and natural assets of county	27. Stimulating enterprise in deprived communities		28. Fewer deprived and less prosperous communities

*Explanatory footnote to Table 2:* The RES framework identifies two broad foci for regional economic development and 12 particular themes. In order to align the Lincolnshire Economic Strategy with the regional framework, the table below provides a synthesis of the RES and current consultation framework, by identifying six priorities: (1) economic wellbeing (2) growth (3) sustainability (4) enterprise and opportunity (5) diversity (6) thriving enterprising communities. The framework takes the outcomes, as identified regionally, from economic strategy and uses these to create a framework for Lincolnshire that, via its identification of local drivers of change, places the overall regional strategy within the context of the particular conditions within and needs of the county.

**Supplementary memorandum by the Lincolnshire Coastal Action Zone (CAZ) Partnership (CT 45(c))**

**THE CONDITION OF THE COAST**

Coastal England is different from mainland England on a range of social, economic and demographic characteristics. The 2004 Indices of Deprivation have been used in the “smoothed” maps below to contrast the conditions of the Lincolnshire Coastal Area in comparison with other parts of the country. The Indices employ seven indicators of deprivation—employment, health/disability, income, education/skills/training, barriers to housing/services, living environment, and crime—which are collated into a combined score each area of the country.

The maps reveal the pockets of deprivation around the country, including urban centres and other rural and coastal areas. The enlarged map highlight the bands of deprivation running through the Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire coalfields—areas which historically supply the majority of tourists to the Lincolnshire coast and a large proportion of the people who retire to the coastal area.

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THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LINCOLNSHIRE COASTAL AREA AND THE FACTORS, WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE MOST CONCENTRATED AREA OF DEPRIVATION IN THE COUNTY, ARE LISTED BELOW

*Population*

Approximately 60,000 live within the area identified as the most deprived (Figure 1: zones 1 and 2).

The age profile of residents in the area is much older than the national average, with 26% of residents aged 65 and over, compared to 16% nationally.

*Migration*

On average for every two people aged 18 to 24 who move out of the area three people aged over 60 move in.

Seasonal migrations and the ageing population create increased demands on the provision of medical and social services within the area.

*Employment, Skills and Qualifications*

The economic activity rate in the area is just 54% compared to 66% in Lincolnshire, reflecting the aging population.

Seasonality of employment is illustrated by the 400% increase in unemployment between August 2003 and January 2004 compared to almost no change in GB.

Over 40% of employment within the coastal area is in part time jobs compared to 32% nationally.

50% of residents in the area have no qualifications compared with 29% in the region.

Only 13% of residents are qualified to NVQ level 3 or above compared to 48% nationally and just 8% to NVQ level 4/5 compared to 28% nationally.

*Health*

Almost 30% of residents class themselves as having a limiting long-term illness compared to 19% in the county. This equates to 17,500 people.

Many of the people moving into the area also have a limiting long-term illness.

*Tourism*

Tourism is one of the major industries in the area generating an annual visitor spend of £376 million.

Each year over seven million visitors are happy to leave the Lincolnshire Coast.

Every year over seven million visitors are happy to return to the Lincolnshire Coast.

But the influx of staying visitors places an additional burden on already stretched health and social services.

THE IMPACT OF THE FACTS

Collectively the characteristics detailed above make considerable demands on the providers of public services in the area, in terms of staff and financial resources and effectiveness. A survey of all public service providers earlier this year highlighted four collective themes for the CAZ to address. These are (a) raising aspirations—among children, parents, young people, communities, businesses, employees and the under-employed, (b) increasing access—both physically access and access to better public and private services, (c) demographics—the need to gain recognition for the unique coastal demographic structure and the challenges this presents to service providers, and (d) recruitment—raise the profile of the area and the quality of employment to attract much needed skills and professions to the coastal area.

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**Supplementary memorandum by the Lincolnshire Coastal Action Zone (CAZ) Partnership (CT 45(d))**

The LGA Coastal Special Interest Group (SIG) welcome the ODPM Select Committee Inquiry into Coastal Towns. In 2000 the SIG produced “on the edge . . . The Coastal Strategy” which, among the physical challenges of the coast, highlighted the social and economic problems faced by many coastal communities.

Over the past 18 months the Coastal SIG has supported the efforts of the Lincolnshire Coastal Action Zone partnership to raise national awareness of the conditions of coastal towns and to lobby for new methods of addressing coastal deprivation.

The Coastal SIG wish to maintain that support for the work of the Lincolnshire CAZ by endorsing the attached written response to the Select Committee Inquiry. We particularly support the need for a National Coastal Regeneration Strategy for seaside communities. Such a strategy we consider would reinforce the socio-economic aspects of the SIG's "Coastal Strategy" and promote a more joined-up approach to dealing with coastal deprivation.

The Coastal SIG will not be making representations directly to the Select Committee but would stress that all the issues raised by Lincolnshire CAZ are those which the SIG would highlight and support.

*Councillor G W Allanson*  
Chairman of LGA Special Interest Group Coastal Issues

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### **Memorandum by the Isle of Wight Council (CT 46)**

#### INTRODUCTION

1. Coastal towns are special. They face particular issues resulting from their geographic location, and social, environmental and economic history. They require support that is flexible, innovative and forward thinking. Funding needs to be substantial, long term and locally focussed and national and regional strategies need to be capable of interpretation, relaxation or amendment to take account of the coastal zone's particular circumstances. This needs to be supported by a planning system and other mechanisms that will contribute to coastal town regeneration within a framework of integrated coastal zone management. Together these are vital for both the economy and communities of coastal towns.

#### THE ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL

2. The Isle of Wight has a population of 138,000 (2004) and is part of the South East region of England. In common with this region the Island has a rapidly growing economy, a dominant service sector and a rapidly growing population. While growth has outstripped national and regional indicators, this has to be sustainable. The Island does not share in the general wealth of the region, it has lower than average prosperity, a large retired population and a service sector dominated by retailing and the public sector, especially health. The Isle of Wight Council is the Unitary Authority for the Island and, in partnership with the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) and the Isle of Wight Economic Partnership, plays a major role in encouraging investment and regeneration and is passionately determined to focus on the right priorities.

3. The Isle of Wight has the longest coastline of any Coast Protection Authority in England and over two thirds of the population lies within 1 km of the coastline. Coastal towns have common issues that need to be addressed in the context of their individual characteristics. The peripherality of coastal towns is magnified on the Isle of Wight due to their geographically limited hinterland and the Isle of Wight coastline is particularly vulnerable to the effects of coastal erosion and landslip. As such, the Isle of Wight Council is particularly well placed to comment on the special case for coastal towns.

#### THE CASE FOR A SPECIAL INITIATIVE FOR COASTAL TOWNS

4. Coastal towns have individual characteristics, but there are a number of issues that are particular to most towns situated in a coastal location. Many coastal towns originally grew up around maritime industries with access primarily by sea, not land. Such industries have declined over many years, as the UK fishing industry demonstrates. However, in many coastal towns, maritime industries were often replaced or supplemented by tourism, particularly during the Victorian era. With the more recent decline of the traditional British 'seaside holiday' combined with that of traditional maritime related industries, the economies of coastal towns are struggling. Many have stocks of redundant property, particularly outdated tourist facilities (old fashioned holiday parks and hotels) lacking investment, which can become derelict and vandalised. Employment prospects are often uncertain or reliant on seasonal, low paid tourist related activities.

5. Access to coastal towns can be difficult. Transport infrastructure is frequently outdated and inadequate for current day requirements in respect of road, rail and maritime access. Access from the sea can often have great potential, but appears underexploited.

6. Social trends have seen many younger people moving away from coastal towns to access training and jobs whilst older people move to coastal towns in retirement. This has skewed the demography, with resultant additional pressure on health and social support services as well as the economy and infrastructure. The increased cost of housing linked to holiday homes and retirement housing in some coastal towns creates a barrier for young people to get into the housing market.

7. The effects of sea-level rise and the potential for increased storminess related to climate change is likely to have a substantial impact on coastal towns with the possibility of increased flooding, erosion and other associated impacts.

8. Integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) is a dynamic continuous and iterative process considering all physical, social and economic issues designed to promote sustainable management of coastal zones. ICZM has been moving up the agenda in Europe and will soon be a Member State imperative. The relationship between ICZM and coastal town planning and regeneration is key.

9. A number of strategies are available to develop more sustainable communities in coastal towns. A high street that has local specialist shops and a unique feel establishes an identity that can attract people to both visit and live locally. Holiday homes which are left empty much of the year or rented out on a short term basis can detract from the community aspect of coastal towns. In both cases, it would be possible to positively influence the development of coastal towns were the adoption permitted of planning policies which protect housing for local people, encourage the provision of high quality accommodation, and counter the development of “clone-town” and “ghost-town” characteristics. This would require co-operative working between public bodies at national, regional and local level to ensure locally flexibility in planning policies whilst ensuring public, private and community sector involvement in developing and implementing plans and proposals which focus on the identity of a town. There could be substantial financial implications, some of which could be borne by the private sector provided they are adequately engaged in the process.

#### CURRENT ODPM WORK TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEMS OF COASTAL TOWNS

10. At present there are no programmes targeted specifically at coastal towns. Some coastal towns may benefit from socio-economic development programmes, generally via ad hoc funding streams accessed through competitive bidding. Examples such as the Market Towns Initiative, Single Regeneration Budget (SRB), Area Investment Framework (AIF) and Leader+ have all benefited coastal towns on the Isle of Wight but there has been little consistency of approach in terms of addressing the issues faced by coastal towns. Should a portion of the business rate be transferred to local level (perhaps be under the control of the Chamber of Commerce) from Government?

11. At a local level funding has been used where possible to target the achievement of agreed priorities in accordance with local and regional strategies, but too many of these strategies (such as regional spatial and transport strategies) are handed down from Government or the region, rather than developed from the localities up. However, the criteria and purpose for which the different funding streams can be used (and the time scales) are rarely compatible with one another, and not always “fit for purpose” when assessed in relation to local need. There are far too many competing and conflicting schemes which demand a high level of administrative activity up-front (at both grant-seeking and grant-giving ends of the process) for limited return. The ODPM should publish the full cost, at both ends, of each £ distributed. Overall, the end result has not been particularly focused or effective. In many instances the funding available is limited which can only enable minor, often short term, improvements which are frequently unsustainable.

#### EFFECTIVENESS OF ODPM’S LIAISON WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS

12. ODPM is working towards a national agenda that often appears to take little account of local need or provide appropriate solutions at the local level. The messages given by ODPM are frequently inconsistent with those given by other government departments, which can prove confusing to local authorities. This gives the impression that there is little or no liaison between government departments.

13. The most recent example of this has been the formation of Local Area Agreements (LAAs) where the stated agenda is for these to be “locally driven”. However, additional funding linked to the delivery of Local Public Service Agreement targets (LPSA) has in some instances been dependent on delivering government targets, whether or not these address a local need. This is well illustrated in the Isle of Wight where one of the local targets was to “reduce the perception of crime on the Island”. There was considerable pressure from ODPM to change this to “reduce crime on the Island” when in reality there is a low crime rate, but a higher perception of crime.

14. It would be valuable if a consistent, co-ordinated policy could be agreed by central government departments in relation to local authorities and local agendas.

#### THE CASE FOR SPECIFIC REGIONAL INITIATIVES WITH ATTENTION TO REGIONAL DISPARITIES

15. Not all coastal towns are the same, but they do have a lot of issues in common. Any initiative targeted at coastal towns must therefore allow for regional, sub-regional and local variations, not least to promote the individual character of the town and avoid the “one size fits all” approach that historically has had limited success.

16. The Isle of Wight is a good example of sub-regional variation. Whilst it has coastal towns of varying size and character, it is also an island. Therefore, in addition to issues in common with other coastal towns, there are problems of insularity. In particular, the hinterland for coastal towns is geographically restricted and shared with the Island's capital, Newport. Regional Strategic Guidance (RSG) does not take account of such Island factors.

17. Access as a barrier to regeneration and investment is exacerbated in the Isle of Wight as cross-Solent transport places additional costs on a range of services and supplies both through the ferry cost and the additional costs associated with increased delivery time.

18. The Isle of Wight also has a limited ability to take advantage of economies of scale, for example in the provision of health and fire services. It is not practical to share a fire engine with Hampshire so the cost per head of population in providing such services is greater than on the mainland.

19. Unlike regional airports and some rail routes which are subsidised, there is no such support for Isle of Wight ferry crossings. Therefore competition with other areas is not on a level playing field.

#### SECURITY OF FUTURE FUNDING FOR REGENERATING AND SUPPORTING COASTAL TOWNS

20. If there is serious intent to regenerate coastal towns in a holistic way to help maximise their contribution to the national economy, whilst strengthening social infrastructure and safeguarding the environment, there needs to be a dedicated initiative to address the specific needs of these communities.

21. Funding should be tailored to address the relevant issues and should be of sufficient magnitude to have a significant impact. Where possible, the duration of funding should be a minimum of three–five years to ensure assisted projects can become self sustaining. These problems are faced by many Western European coastal settlements and the Island is leading research to establish knowledge transfer to find sustainable solutions. Single Regeneration Budget funding was too focussed on unsustainable outcomes (“hairdressing and hanging baskets”) than long-term economic development.

22. Local authorities undertake a very broad range of functions, many of which are inextricably linked with the coastal zone. These responsibilities range from planning to construction and maintenance of coastal highways and footpaths, to water quality, food safety, coastal defence, monitoring and studies of coastal processes, tourism, leisure and seafront amenities, emergency planning, oil spill response and addressing maritime incidences as well as offshore dredging. Alongside these functions local authorities are often major coastal landowners and have responsibility for all aspects of maintenance and public safety. As such, local authorities have a leading role to play in terms of economic regeneration of coastal towns and are will placed to implement policies which reflect local needs. This requires support at the Regional and National level, both in terms of investment and policy.

#### ADDITIONAL MEASURES TO SUPPORT COASTAL TOWNS

23. Funding is not the only factor which could support the long term viability of coastal towns. Additional measures such as changes to, or relaxation of, relevant planning regulations and policies could help in the delivery of local scale benefits that, by helping coastal towns to become thriving and viable communities, will enable them to contribute to the regional as well as the local economy.

24. Current inflexibility in planning regulations make it extremely difficult to control the designation of disused holiday chalets or caravans as housing stock. This results in a stock of sub-standard housing and restricts the potential for redeveloping, often prime sites, into viable commercial assets for the community. The ability to place a time limit on any such arrangement could help address this problem.

25. Many such holiday parks are located by the coast and, aside from any commercial potential, could have implications for coastal defence provision in the future. It would be necessary to carry out any such changes of use within the framework of integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) to ensure that any planning decision is time limited and no permanent structures are built in those locations.

26. Changes in VAT rules to include new build as well as building repairs could generate new funds to be spent locally. At the same time, such a change in VAT could encourage renovation of existing disused building stock such as hotels in coastal towns this could contribute to regeneration and help restore coastal towns and their communities. Other measures to encourage this would also be welcomed.

27. Developing a knowledge based economy is a key focus of current European and Regional (SEEDA) strategies and could be targeted towards coastal towns. By linking this with higher education and training specific to such industries it could provide a specialist pool of knowledge that would generate well paid local employment. However, currently there are few mechanisms in place to enable this to be taken forward.

28. The Isle of Wight has already had proven success in enhancing investment potential through innovation and maritime clusters in the Medina Valley, developed through the Cowes Waterfront project and supported by substantial Regional Development Agency (RDA) funding and investment. This has been a major, long term project and its success to date has been largely due to extensive consultation and

partnership working, both vertically between the Isle of Wight Council, Isle of Wight Economic Partnership and SEEDA, and horizontally with extensive local consultation and partnership working between public and private sector organisations.

29. Short-breaks are already developing significantly, but a national strategy is needed to reduce long-haul tourism in the interests of the global environment. Initiatives such as this will benefit coastal towns.

30. The Isle of Wight could potentially benefit from developing improved port facilities to better manage trade by sea in the 21st century, but it is unclear whether there would be a funding source for related scoping studies. For instance, if the Isle of Wight could solve the problem of importing construction materials by boat, then other coastal towns which are not on islands could learn by our example. This will be reviewed as part of the Island Plan within the Local Development Framework (LDF).

#### EVALUATION OF PAST SUPPORT FOR REGENERATING AND SUPPORTING COASTAL TOWNS

31. Whilst by no means excluded from accessing a range of RDA funding and being part of RDA driven initiatives, coastal towns have been reliant on matching the criteria of these to their specific needs and arguing the case on a project-by-project basis. Dependant on the funding stream, the amount available, the associated criteria and the timescale, this approach has had mixed success.

32. Where substantial funding has been available to run a programme, such as European Objective 1 or 2 areas, the potential to have a successful, coherent regeneration programme is increased. Coastal towns which have accessed small amounts of funding on an ad hoc basis have only been able to take forward isolated small scale projects.

#### CONCLUSION

33. Coastal towns need support to help them regenerate in a sustainable way if they are to achieve the economic potential that they and the nation deserve. Global risks and tensions are opening up opportunities to reposition these towns in the market place and these can be exploited positively if the right priorities and planning regime can be put in place.

34. The Isle of Wight has grown successfully over recent years outstripping regional and national indicators. There is still a lot to do, and a passionate determination to raise standards and create opportunities.

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### **Memorandum by Blackpool Council (CT 47)**

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Blackpool, the UK's largest and most important coastal resort, welcomes the opportunity to present evidence to the Committee's inquiry into coastal towns. It is our belief that this memorandum will provide a valuable insight to the needs of coastal towns and how government, and the ODPM in particular, can best assist us in meeting the significant challenges we face.

1.2 Over the last three decades the economy of Blackpool has been subject to serious decline. This reversal in economic fortunes has produced a series of highly specific, interrelated problems, which have led to some of the worst social outcomes in England and Wales. To date, existing central and regional policy has paid insufficient attention to these particular challenges, and the specific interventions required to reverse worsening trends. Nevertheless, in recent years a dynamic local response has begun: Blackpool, spearheaded by a new Urban Regeneration Company (Re Blackpool), has framed and started to implement a radical Masterplan that will reinvent and regenerate the resort—physically, economically and socially.

1.3 Drawing upon the realities of the Blackpool experience, this submission is structured around the following sections:

- The Case for Intervention: an outline of the principal challenges and needs of the UK's most important coastal town.
- The Local Response: a brief description of the coordinated action partners in Blackpool are taking to meet the challenges described.
- Existing Policy and Cross Government Coordination: an examination of existing regional and national policy and the extent to which it supports our needs.

#### 2. THE CASE FOR INTERVENTION

2.1 The sections that follow briefly outline the principal challenges facing Blackpool, namely economic decline, housing failure, transience and multiple deprivation. It is important note that although these sections have been separated for the purposes of clarity, the challenges described are closely interrelated, and have a tight causal relationship; at root level however, this is an economic problem.

## 2.2 Economic Decline

The economies of many coastal towns are dependent on tourism. In the case of Blackpool, the unique scale of accommodation and attractions enabled it to survive better than smaller rivals, but has reinforced and concentrated the effects of sharp decline<sup>51</sup>. From 1987 to 2003, visitor numbers to Blackpool reduced from 13.2 million pa to 10.6 million. More significantly, the average stay over this period declined from an average of five days to 2.4 days; visitor spend reduced from £800 million pa to £500 million pa. In consequence, employment rates in Blackpool are considerably worse (70.2%) than the national average (75.1%), and mean earnings in 2004 were 72% of the English average and also well below those for the region. In August 2005 some 28% of Blackpool's working age residents (22,125 people) were in receipt of benefit (JSA, IB, SDA, IS)<sup>52</sup>. The labour market has been further imbalanced in recent times by an influx of EU Accession State labour, which has been felt more heavily in Blackpool than elsewhere in the region owing to the predominance of low value job sectors and the seasonal nature of working patterns<sup>53</sup>. Blackpool's VAT registered stock declined by 1.3% between 1997–2004, compared to a growth rate of 7.2% for the North West region, and 10.1% for England.

2.3 In a physical sense Blackpool, like many other coastal resorts, now has a “tired” look, with many of the principal hotels in need of refurbishment, and important areas of the Golden Mile being seriously run down. Core attractions such as the Tower, piers and tramway are in need of substantial investment<sup>54</sup>. But even though the problems are clear, it is evident that efforts to attract investment and diversify the economies of major coastal resorts such as Blackpool are fundamentally disadvantaged. For example:

- There are no derelict factories, empty buildings and cleared sites providing a ready opportunity for regeneration. The stark conclusions of the CURS Study of 8,000 properties in the declining holiday areas of Blackpool showed that the costs of acquisition are likely to comprise well over half of redevelopment costs, undermining the viability of the whole range of investment options, whether for redevelopment or refurbishment.
- There are serious limitations on the potential for coastal resort economies to diversify and develop competitive and complementary roles. Their restricted 180 degree catchment and peripherality from other economic drivers means at the outset they are at a competitive disadvantage. Unless there are specific local conditions and opportunities, such as close proximity to buoyant economies such as London (eg Brighton), most declining resorts face real problems in attracting any significant level of new investment and economic activity when compared to favoured major inland conurbations and motorway focused hubs of expansion.
- Coastal resorts struggle to win central funding for investment in infrastructure because of the inherent seasonality of their peak usage, especially when in competition with city-centres and commuter towns. Cost-benefit analysis used to prioritise public sector funding decisions will militate against investment which pays back only over five or six months, whereas costs accrue over the full year.

## 3. HOUSING FAILURE

3.1 Decline in the tourist economy has engendered a particular form of housing market failure in Blackpool. As a consequence of the reduction in tourism, Blackpool has lost approximately 40% of its accommodation stock of premises in the last 12 years<sup>55</sup>. However, unlike more easily identifiable areas of market failure—such as those designated Housing Market Restructuring Pathfinder status (HMR areas)—premises have not become derelict or lost their commercial value. On the contrary, hundreds of former bed, breakfast and guesthouses have been converted into houses in multiple occupation (HMOs).

3.2 There are approximately 3,400 known HMOs in Blackpool, of which only 820 are registered<sup>56</sup>. Each HMO has an average of five letting units (therefore approximately 15,000 units in Blackpool). These properties have become magnets for dependent individuals and families from across the country<sup>57</sup>. In the case of Blackpool, it is no coincidence that the wards with the highest concentrations of private sector

<sup>51</sup> Factors contributing to the decline include competition from international destinations, rising levels of disposable income and expectations amongst holidaymakers, and the development of footloose tourist attractions in non-traditional areas such as cities.

<sup>52</sup> Out of season this figure increases further, as many local people fall out of employment.

<sup>53</sup> Between April and September 2005, 812 registered with Blackpool Jobcentre, of which 647 were Polish.

<sup>54</sup> An £88 million bid to undertake an essential upgrade to the tramway has won regional approval through the process of Regional Funding Allocations (RFA), and was submitted to DfT on behalf of the region by the Northwest Regional Assembly in January 2006.

<sup>55</sup> Although average hotel occupancy rates in Blackpool remain very low—around 23%—the few hotels that offer high quality accommodation continue to prosper. This trend argues strongly for the view that if the quality of accommodation and experience were better, Blackpool would not be enduring continuing decline in visitor numbers.

<sup>56</sup> Approximately 1,900 HMOs are exempt from registration because of building regulations (1991), although the new Housing Act (2004) will make some of these previously exempt properties subject to the new licensing regime.

<sup>57</sup> The Housing Needs report in August 2004 highlighted this trend, as research into the resort's most deprived central area revealed that 66.3% of the transient population came from outside of the North West. Research has demonstrated that coastal towns such as Blackpool are attractive to the dependent, as these areas are perceived as a better place to claim benefit than inland towns or cities with similar social profiles (termed the “bright lights syndrome”).

housing are also the wards with the most striking levels of multiple deprivation. In addition, the extent of available, cheap but very poor quality private rented accommodation in our inner areas has had a negative affect on the Council's attempts to return households presenting as homeless—particularly younger adults—back to their home towns (where they are more likely to secure services and support), as those who reject the Council's help have no problem in easily self-placing within the areas least appropriate to support their needs.

#### 4. TRANSIENCE

4.1 The term transience has come to describe the movement of people with a high degree of residential mobility, which frequently accompanies a chaotic lifestyle. In Blackpool, the magnitude and consequences of transience create acute challenges for local public services.

4.2 Only inner London has higher levels of transience than Blackpool<sup>58</sup>. The 2001 Census revealed that using commonly accepted criteria, 11% of the Borough's population could be classified as transient. Further evidence from housing tenure and benefits data suggests that within the first six months of settlement, 55% of Blackpool's transients are likely to move again within the Borough. The consequences of transience are of the highest concern to local service providers. Reasons include:

- The pattern of movement between properties perpetuates a culture of using temporary addresses on a short-term basis, which in turn, creates eligibility and tracking problems for the main agencies on which this group of people frequently rely for support. In areas where transience is high, it is extremely difficult to create a sense of community cohesion, neighbourhood development and the capacity of neighbourhoods to become sustainable.
- Pupil mobility is a feature of transient lifestyles that we are more easily able to capture, and this mobility typically has a negative impact on child welfare and attainment, and creates additional pressures on teaching staff and the overall school system. In 2004–05, 1,306 children in Blackpool transferred schools; between 1998–99 and 2004–05 four primary schools regularly experienced rates of pupil mobility in excess of 30%, with one experiencing 61% in 2000–01. One secondary school regularly experiences rates between 20% and 30%. When attainment is compared between stable and mobile pupils the %age of transient pupils achieving 5 + A\* - C is more than a third lower (29%) than the %age of stable pupils (43%). Also, the %age of transient pupils (9.5%) not achieving any GCSE passes is more than twice the %age of stable pupils (3.5%).

#### 5. MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION

5.1 The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004 (IMD) lists Blackpool as the 24 most deprived local authority area in England. Set against other locations, Blackpool houses the greatest concentrations of multiple deprivation of any coastal town in the country<sup>59</sup>.

5.2 Health statistics for Blackpool correlate closely with the economic, housing and lifestyle challenges described above. Blackpool has one of the highest rates of suicide in the UK, and very poor life expectancy (two worst in country for men). Teenage pregnancy rates in Blackpool are 73% higher than the national average, with low aspirations amongst young females an important contributory factor. An analysis of the causes of early death in Blackpool compared to the national average highlights the principal reasons for poor life expectancy as being digestive disorders which are related to alcohol, injuries and poison, coronary heart disease and cancer. The latter diseases are caused by poor nutrition, low levels of physical activity and smoking. Interestingly, many people suffering from illness are drawn to Blackpool as a result of fond memories of holidays (perhaps in childhood) or by the notion that living in a coastal town has health benefits.

5.3 The retired population of Blackpool will increase from 16% to 21% of the population by 2021. There is an inextricable link between ageing and disability and almost 61% of those with a support need are over 60 years old; 32% of households in the Borough contain somebody with a support need.

5.4 Educational attainment is very poor, with 90% of localities below the national average. Many of the children who move into the town throughout the year also have special educational needs (SEN). Spending on Pupil Referral Units in Blackpool is more than double that of its statistical neighbours due to the service being inundated with transient pupils (especially at KS4 where they are more difficult to place) and excluded pupils, 75% of whom have SEN which schools are clearly struggling to address.

<sup>58</sup> The Audit Commission recognised the scale of the phenomenon in Blackpool and reviewed the position of transience in the Borough as part of its Annual Audit and Inspection.

<sup>59</sup> See appendix 1.

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## 6. THE LOCAL RESPONSE

### *Blackpool: Towards a World Class Resort—a great place to visit, a better place to live*

6.1 Local stakeholders accepted that radical change was necessary if Blackpool was to reverse decline and secure its future. In 2003 a Masterplan was developed for Blackpool designed to deliver the economic, physical and social regeneration of the town, for the benefit of local residents and visitors. In short, the Masterplan comprises a revolutionary plan to create in Blackpool:

- A new, international 21 century year-round entertainment destination.
- A place with balanced and healthy neighbourhoods that is also the retail, business, civic and cultural centre for the Fylde coast sub-region.

6.2 Central government backed the Masterplan, and in February 2005 the ODPM granted Blackpool a URC as a mechanism for turning the plan into reality. ReBlackpool (the URC) has now been established to lead the delivery of the Masterplan, and it is supported and funded by the Council and the Northwest Regional Development Agency. Sir Peter Hall, one of Britain's most eminent town planners and regeneration practitioners, chairs ReBlackpool. The Masterplan covers a 200 hectare area, with a resident population of 31,000, including Blackpool's sea front, airport, main visitor area, town centre and the inner (most deprived) residential neighbourhoods. A comprehensive regeneration strategy for the next 15 years has been set out, and some of the first physical projects are already nearing completion. Importantly, the Masterplan carries the almost unanimous backing of Blackpool's elected representatives, businesses and wider population.

6.3 The single most important element of the Masterplan involves the creation of a year-round, sustainable economy, which hinges on the development of super casinos on available sites adjacent to the main promenade. It is estimated that the delivery of the Masterplan will create approximately 20,000 new jobs for the regional economy, with many in higher value occupations. However, delivery of this programme is dependent on the acquisition of a regional casino licence, as only then will Blackpool lever in the scale of private investment required to ensure the resort's future<sup>60</sup>.

6.4 It is important to recognise that the Masterplan is far more than super casinos. Masterplan proposals include the wholesale regeneration of the town centre, a remodelling of the seafront and gateway areas, plus the renewal of our inner neighbourhoods. Much of this work is already underway. For example, work on a new seafront has already begun utilising £63 million from DEFRA, and extensive improvements to inner neighbourhoods have already taken place, such as the new Health Village in Talbot and Brunswick. Furthermore, partners in Blackpool are determined to ensure that the principal beneficiaries of economic benefits of the Masterplan are local people. Indeed, February 2006 saw the launch of the Regional Gaming Academy, which is equipping residents with the skills required to take advantage of expected new job opportunities. As a part of this holistic approach, the Council and Local Strategic Partnership are using innovative approaches to partnership working through the Local Area Agreements to deliver the social regeneration of the resort.

## 7. EXISTING POLICY AND CROSS-GOVERNMENT COORDINATION

### *7.1 Economic Regeneration, Planning and Tourism*

7.2 Evidently there is a need for a greater degree of state intervention to create a strong, viable new product in coastal towns worst hit by the decline in traditional tourism. Past SRB initiatives have helped and there is now increased recognition of the challenges facing coastal resorts in regional housing, economic as well as tourism strategies. At national level however, there has been no revision of PPG20 and PPG21 on Coastal Planning and Tourism since 1992, and national tourism policy does not help channel investment and direct footloose tourist development to coastal resort locations. Indeed, since 1990 there has been £194 million of public investment in visitor attractions in the Northwest of England. However, only a fraction of this figure came to traditional tourist areas such as Blackpool, with £150 million going to Greater Manchester and £35 million going to Merseyside; needless to say, concentrating public investment in this way has actually helped undermine traditional tourist areas.

7.3 The Planning and Compensation Act 2004 has led to preparation of sub-regional strategies as part of RSS. In the Northwest much of the new focus, most notably the Northern Way, is on the adoption of an economic growth strategy based on City Regions. Such a change in emphasis is supported, but it is essential that the Government provides the necessary strategic direction and balance to secure regeneration alongside economic growth. Whilst backing winners, Government must seek to ensure that the particular economic weaknesses of coastal towns are addressed within any new national and regional agenda for tourism and

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<sup>60</sup> At present there is one regional casino licence available for the UK. Blackpool is submitting its application for the licence to the Casino Advisory Panel in March. The process will then include an examination in public prior to recommendation to ministers at the end of the year. The Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA) has backed Blackpool's bid, following research that confirmed Blackpool's status as the best location for a super casino in the region; the Northwest Regional Assembly has taken the same stance in incorporating the Blackpool Masterplan, to include the development of a super casino, in the draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS).

that where major new development can be successfully and sustainably accommodated in coastal towns, it is afforded priority. For Blackpool, one crucial example of this applies to the future award of a regional casino licence.

7.4 In August 2004 the ODPM commissioned research into Integrated Coastal Planning in the North West Region. Controversially, this study did not recommend that regional policy should be interventionist in targeting investment and development to address coastal regeneration needs. Draft RSS goes some way in proposing, at our suggestion, that coastal resorts should be priority locations for footloose tourism development, but it is considered the absence of any national recognition of the need for this sequential test means that this approach will not survive EIP and/or not have any substantive effect on local development frameworks and decisions on development.

7.5 In the Northwest the NWDA's draft Regional Economic Strategy (2006–09) does include delivery of the Blackpool Masterplan as one the region's key transformational projects. That said, the profile in the draft RES of coastal towns more generally and their particular needs are largely absent as the focus is primarily upon city regions. It is our view that ODPM and government should scrutinise the strategic investment plans of relevant Regional Development Agencies and establish the extent to which existing and planned investments reflect the status of need and opportunity in coastal towns. In addition, it is hoped that government will work to ensure that arrangements for European post-structural funding are as supportive as possible in attempts to regenerate coastal areas.

7.6 In the terms of business support, the existing categorisation of tourism holds it to unfair disadvantage, as it is seemingly not considered a "real" industry. This anomaly puts tourist businesses at a distinct disadvantage, as they are excluded from grants and other forms of assistance as they do not meet criteria. For example, Blackpool Pleasure Beach, the UK's number one free tourist attraction, brings approximately £70 million spend into Blackpool on an annual basis. The company also employs circa 2,000 local full and part-time staff. However, despite the importance of this business to the local economy, it has been unable to qualify for any type of business grant or other assistance; at the same time countless smaller firms in the region receive considerable support as they are classified as differently, eg manufacture, business services etc

## 8. HOUSING AND TRANSIENCE

8.1 As outlined above, the rise of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in Blackpool has led to a disturbing swell of low quality, private rented accommodation in our most deprived areas. Given the problems this has caused to date, and the fact that it is getting worse, it is our view that intervention in the housing market is essential to avert further collapse. At present the Council is doing what it can utilizing existing powers to tackle with this issue. For example, the Council is looking at additional and selective licensing on top of to statutory licensing, focusing on poor quality, badly managed private rented accommodation in our inner areas. Furthermore, the Council and local partners are using freedoms and flexibilities within the Local Area Agreement (LAA); in this case allowing direct payments of housing benefit to private landlords meeting decent homes standards in priority neighbourhoods. Irrespective of these innovative attempts, we require much firmer support from central government if we are to realistically remedy the situation. Indeed, it is our belief that once government has fully recognised the complexity and seriousness of the problem, it should consider making special resources and powers available to tackle this specific issue. One possibility is granting affected areas a special form of pathfinder status, enabling the authority to take effective action to improve and rebalance the housing stock.

8.2 Transience is closely related to housing issues, and impacts widely on existing policy areas both at a local partnership level and nationally across Government Departments<sup>61</sup>. For ODPM, there are clear policy crossover implications with the Home Office, Department of Work and Pensions, Department of Health and DFES. It is our view that Government should provide specific support and policy solutions to:

- Specific support to develop a co-ordinated response to assist families and young people with transient lifestyles, requiring support from a number of agencies through initiatives such as "Springboard"<sup>62</sup>.
- Undertake a cost benefit programme that recognises specific savings can be identified and social exclusion factors resolved with proactive rather than reactive initiatives.
- Acquire sufficient funds to enable a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach to housing renewal to be undertaken to provide a real choice of housing from both the social and private sector that meets the Decent Home Standards by 2010.

8.3 Existing ODPM homeless policy also fails to take into account the realities of towns such as Blackpool. For example, of the 391 priority homeless households who presented as homeless from April to December 2005, 150 (38%) were from outside Blackpool. 90% of these were placed in temporary accommodation on that day ie they were homeless on that day. The ODPM has informed Councils that they must reduce the use of temporary accommodation by 50% by 2010. The average %age in England of

<sup>61</sup> The Social Exclusion Unit is currently running a research project into transience, with results due in Spring this year.

<sup>62</sup> Springboard is a cross agency project in Blackpool that delivers specific support to the most marginalised families and young people that place the highest demands upon support networks.

homeless households presenting on the day as homeless is only 25% and therefore the Governments target is, for these areas, achievable. In Blackpool's case however we will have to practically eradicate homelessness in our resident population if we are to reach the target.

## 9. FINANCING LOCAL SERVICES AND NATURAL BOUNDARIES

9.1 Local authorities in coastal towns face additional burdens as a result of the tourist economy. At present, funding from central government takes very little account of these pressures. For example, the existing system for measuring visitor numbers at LA level is crude in the extreme, with coastal resorts on the receiving end. This is of importance as visitor numbers are used in the formulae for distributing Formula Grant, in the Highways Maintenance and Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services (EPCS) blocks. Currently, visitor data is disaggregated from national surveys to arrive at local authority figures, typically resulting in under-estimations for known tourist "hot-spots" such as coastal towns. In consequence, the numbers attributed to a town such as Blackpool are fractions of the actuality. A review of visitor indicators was commissioned by the ODPM in 2005, but revealed that there is no acceptable way of updating the data based on currently available information. This means that services such as street cleansing, waste collection and disposal, and public conveniences will continue to be underfunded in Blackpool, and local taxpayers are left to meet the additional cost. Less additional income (such as car parking fees), we estimate that Blackpool Council incurs a minimum cost of £5.4 million as a result of seasonal tourism, for which it receives no central assistance.

9.2 With regard to the forthcoming Green Paper, coastal towns such as Blackpool would be better placed to address the challenges they face if they were able to plan for their natural economic geography and sphere of influence. The administrative boundary of Blackpool comprises a narrow strip of land wedged between the coast and the remainder of its urban hinterland, making it one of the most densely populated authorities outside of London. In this environment planning and transportation policy is unduly complex as existing boundaries pay little regard to the real movements of people on the Fylde peninsula, of which Blackpool is the natural centre. It is hoped that coastal towns such as Blackpool benefit from any future reorganisation in ways anticipated by metropolitan authorities.

## APPENDIX 1

### COASTAL TOWNS AND INDEX OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION 2004

<i>LA Name</i>	<i>IMD 2004 Rank of Average Score</i>	<i>Rank of Extent</i>	<i>Rank of Local Concentration</i>	<i>Rank of Income Scale</i>	<i>Rank of Employment Scale</i>
Blackpool	24	35	10	73	59
Hastings	38	38	39	107	126
Great Yarmouth	70	72	35	117	117
Brighton and Hove	83	87	74	50	43
Thanet	85	84	63	88	90
Scarborough	91	89	67	123	123
Restormel (inc Newquay)	93	137	144	150	154
Torbay	94	113	119	95	94
Bournemouth	95	101	103	91	81
Southend-on-Sea	114	111	97	79	89
Eastbourne	117	142	150	168	194
Weymouth and Portland	125	126	139	253	230
Torbay	126	165	175	101	108
Wyre (incl Fleetwood)	161	134	117	170	151
Worthing	198	181	181	204	214
Fylde (incl St Annes)	240	236	235	288	241

### Memorandum by Torbay Council (CT 48)

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(1) Torbay Council appreciates the opportunity to present this paper and would welcome further opportunities to develop its ideas to Members of the Committee.

(2) Most coastal towns face very similar problems and issues and this paper is based mainly upon Torbay's experiences but these are equally applicable to all other coastal towns.

(3) The current regional structure is too large to meet the demands of coastal towns who often have to compete against major conurbations for funding.

(4) Coastal towns tend to attract a higher proportion of elderly residents compared to the national position which has a consequential impact on certain services.

(5) Coastal towns also tend to have a lower than average number of residents in the under 50 age bracket, often because the industry is not present to retain the young highly qualified residents.

(6) Peripherality is often an issue for coastal towns which has an impact on transport systems and prospective investment in its maintenance to these towns.

(7) Coastal towns, of which many were built in Victorian and Edwardian times, now need significant investment to maintain the infrastructure, much of it dating from when there was the initial investment.

(8) Transience and migration brings a number of problems especially in the areas of social care, housing and educational provision.

(9) With a heavy dependence upon the tourist industry, there are disproportionate levels of environmental costs which are not reflected in the current revenue support grant.

(10) Torbay believes that by the use of economic regeneration of the area through new industries or re-direction of the core but declining tourist and marine industries would ease some of the problems. However, this requires significant financial support from government agencies who are not always able to respond quickly to emerging opportunities.

## INTRODUCTION

1. Torbay Council welcomes this opportunity to contribute to the inquiry into Coastal Towns by the Parliamentary Committee and wishes to bring forward some specific examples of the issues facing coastal towns which it is hoped will contribute to the Members' understanding. The remit given to the Committee is very wide for the contributions sought and whilst the Council could contribute on a wide range of issues, it will focus on its current strategic approach and highlight areas where assistance is currently being provided and further assistance would be useful.

2. It is clear from discussions with colleagues in other coastal town authorities that the issues facing Torbay are very similar to those being faced in other towns such as Blackpool, Southend, Brighton etc It was decided that the Council's response would be based upon the "Torbay" experience but that the comments could and should equally be applied to the other towns in a similar position.

3. Torbay operates a series of integrated strategies that cover the complete spectrum of Torbay residents from the very young to the elderly which is aimed at helping Torbay develop its full potential. It is our intention to highlight these strategies and identify both how the ODPM, or associated government departments, help with these or could lend further assistance to help alleviate some of the problems which are certainly inherent in Torbay and, from associated evidence, also prevalent in other coastal towns.

## CONTEXTUAL AND GENERAL GEOGRAPHIC AND HISTORICAL ISSUES

4. Torbay is made up of the three coastal towns of Torquay, Paignton and Brixham and has a population of 132,500 with an average age of 43.2 years (38.6 nationally).

5. Torbay is part of the South West region which covers a geographical area of 24,314 sq km and extends from Gloucester in the north, Swindon in the east, the main coastal towns of Bournemouth and Poole in the south and Lands End in the west. From Swindon in the east to Truro in the west, the two principal population centres at each extreme, it is a total of 170 miles. Clearly with this distance and area, Torbay is a very small area although in terms of population it is 2.6% of the whole south west population and is the 10 largest conurbation in the South West region.

6. With regards to areas identified for growth and support in the South West the latest population estimates do show significant disparity in size for the authority areas mentioned.

**Table 1**

### 2004 MID YEAR ESTIMATES FOR OTHER LAs MENTIONED

South Gloucestershire UA	247,500
Swindon, UA	182,200
Bristol, City of UA	393,900
Exeter	115,200
Plymouth, City of UA	244,400
Torbay UA	132,500

However, the main areas identified for growth and support, are Gloucester, Swindon, Bristol, Exeter and Plymouth where, in some cases, the populations are not significantly greater than Torbay's but are seen as regional centres. None of which are coastal towns, with the possible exception of Plymouth, which has different issues with regards to its marine and naval backgrounds.

7. Like other Coastal Towns, Torbay has a large proportion of residents aged 50 and over.

**Table 2**

PROPORTION OF TOTAL POPULATION AGED 50 YEARS AND OVER  
(2004 MID YEAR ESTIMATE)

England & Wales	33.8%
Blackpool UA	38.3%
Southend-on-Sea UA	36.5%
Plymouth UA	33.3%
Torbay UA	43.2%
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	41.9%

8. The latest subnational population projections show Torbay to be a high growth authority, with a projected increase in population of 15.3% (2004 to 2020), compared to a 7.3% increase for England for the same period. Most noticeably, the number of residents aged 50 and over is projected to exceed 50% of the population in 2020 compared to the national projection of 39.3%

9. With such an area and limited government support evidence indicates that 80% of regional funding goes to the 5 areas mentioned in paragraph 5 and the rest of the region, including all the coastal areas, are immediately only able to contest for 20% of the total funding.

10. Our view is that the region is too great and is not able to sustain such a mixed need. This is further evidenced by the GVA figures for the region. Swindon has a GVA of 147%, whereas Torbay's GVA 62% and Cornwall's is 63%. This similar analysis can be seen in other coastal towns as shown below:

**Table 3**

2003 GROSS VALUE ADDED (ONS)

	<i>% of England</i>	<i>% of Region</i>
Torbay	62	68
Cornwall	63	69
Blackpool	68	78
Southend	77	82
Plymouth	80	89

Once again the disparities of both the coastal towns with the rest of the country and within the region can be seen and is apparent as to why we believe that the current large regional approach is not working for the coastal areas. To this end we believe that specific aid should be directed at the coastal towns and we also believe that the Government should review its regional structure and consider smaller regional areas that do not have to cover such significant large geographical and economically diverse areas.

11. Linked with this is the issue of peripherality and that most coastal towns are away from major direct transport links. We would use Torbay as an example, but the points made here are common to other coastal towns.

- (a) Until recently the main motorway route to the South West (M5) was deemed not to be of national significance.
- (b) The main trunk route to the South West (A303) has large lengths of single carriage track and is not deemed a major priority.
- (c) The main route into Torbay (A380) is not deemed a trunk route and therefore cannot attract national funding to support the improvement of the route into Torbay which would then open up significant possible regeneration opportunities which are currently not available because of time taken to get into Torbay from the motorway network.
- (d) There is not a regular direct train service to London from Torbay, but the line serving the three stations in Torbay are considered to be on a branch line which further enhances the image of peripherality.
- (e) The rail line to the South West, from Paddington, is not being considered for upgrades to offer the opportunity of new high speed trains being able to operate to the South West and the line to Waterloo is still single track in many parts.

12. Many of the coastal towns saw investment and expansion in the Victorian and Edwardian times with significant investment in the infrastructure at that time to standards which were appropriate. Whilst this infrastructure has served the locality well over the subsequent years, no further major investment has taken place and many of these towns are now witnessing the need for major repairs or renewal in the infrastructure.

So, in the case of Torbay, sea defences, promenades and drainage systems are all in need of significant repairs and much of the accommodation is similarly in need of repair. It is understood that other authorities will also be making similar points.

13. Similarly the traditional industries which sustained these towns, namely tourism and marine related industries, have seen declines due to the changing nature of holidays, with a direct correlation between the increase in cheap package holiday flights abroad and the decline in “at home” holidays. Similarly the old industries of fishing and marine engineering have seen a decline due to the changing global and European economic climate.

14. The points in the above paragraph relate more to the long term regenerative effects of coastal towns and will come about through capital investment either directly in the community via grants or will open up opportunities through investment in the infrastructure of the area. Many coastal towns though also suffer deprivation of resources through the revenue account also and once again we will use Torbay as an example of the issues concerned.

15. The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004 places Torbay as the 94 most deprived local authority in England for the rank of average score, whilst it is accepted that the majority of Torbay has limited levels of deprivation, Torbay does have very severe pockets of deprivation.

16. Unlike other coastal towns, Torbay is not in receipt of Neighbourhood Renewal funding despite the severe pockets of multiple deprivation. Torbay is just outside the criteria set by the NRU to receive funding, and there are concerns that this could increase the levels of deprivation in Torbay without additional resources to target specific areas of need.

#### IMPACT OF POPULATION MIGRATION/TRANSIENCE

17. In common with many coastal towns there is significant inward migration into Torbay which significantly outweighs the net decline of the resident population and the outward migration of highly educated school leavers seeking tertiary education who do not then return to live permanently in the area until their mid to late 50's. This brings a number of significant problems, both social and physical.

18. These issues include, not listed in any specific order:

(a) *Social Care—Adult*

With the particularly heavy weighting of the elderly population as a %age of the population compared to the national averages (as detailed in paragraph 6 table 2) the Council has to invest in its Adult social care budget to a significant extent. It is recognised that the Government provides funding for these services through the local government spending formula but the particular problem this Council has faced in recent years is the transfer of specific grants for identifiable clients or services into general funding but where the formulaic approach means the funding is not transferred on a “pound for pound” basis, even though the client still requires the same level of service or the actual level of service is still required generally. To alleviate some of the problems, this Council has merged its adult social care provision with the Primary Care Trust to create a new Adult Care Trust with effect from 1 December 2005 with the approval and encouragement of the CSCI Inspectorate and the Department of Health. Although this should bring about some economies of scale for the Council it should also provide a better package of care for the clients with their total needs being assessed by one individual rather than a group of people. However, in common with most similar authorities the funding provided continues to fall short of that required to meet the increasing demands and more realistic levels of care funding is needed to support these services.

The pressure on the adult social care budget is not just from the elderly but also from other groups of society. High suicide rates are very common in coastal towns and the implicit mental illness which causes such events to take place raises major budgetary pressures on both mental health and social care budgets.

(b) *Social Care—Children*

There are also significant issues within the Children's social care budgets which the Council, in common with many similar Councils, has to address. The Council has had a large number of children with Care Orders, often related to transience issues (see below) which require the children to be moved into specialist and often expensive care facilities away from Torbay. The Council, in conjunction with CSCI has been developing a strategy to reduce the reliance on “out of area” placements and to try and resolve any issues at source before serious care intervention is necessary. However, also in common with the many other local authorities, the funding provided through the formulae used is often inadequate to meet the needs of the area.

(c) *Housing*

The reliance on service industries, particularly Tourism has created a low wage economy, common to many coastal towns. Members' attention is once again drawn to table 3 shown in paragraph 9, GVA. Consequently an affordability ratio of earnings against house prices, shows Torbay to be significantly less affordable than the national figure. With 8.4m tourist nights Torbay remains the

largest overnight destination in the country. Due to its natural beauty and the long standing tourist business, Torbay is also a popular place to retire to and relocate to. The profile of inward migration shows larger proportions of retired people and people either on low income or benefit moving to Torbay. The housing profile is also unique, with 8% social housing, 17% private rented and the remainder owned. The housing waiting list has 4,300 households on it and a recent housing needs survey suggests housing needs compare to inner London. Like many coastal town the opportunities for growth and development are limited by the coastal zone and surrounding countryside and planning restrictions.

(d) *Environment*

Being a coastal, tourist area the Council has had to develop a series of strategies to ensure that Torbay is an attractive area both to live in and for people to come to visit as holiday destination. Therefore the Council follows an approach which is aimed at producing a clean, tidy and safe Torbay.

However the issues that are prevalent as a consequence include:

(1) *Waste Disposal*

During the tourist periods of May through to, and including, October the amount of litter collected each month from litter bins ranges from 40% to 270% more than is taken in the winter months, assumed to be solely residents. In total an extra 237 tonnes of rubbish was collected during 2004–05 above an average monthly collection based upon winter collection. Taking into account collection and disposal costs, including landfill tax, this extra rubbish costs Torbay residents £45,000 to collect and dispose of. Information to date in respect of 2005–06 suggests that the trend is continuing at a similar level.

(2) *Beach Cleaning*

In order to make the environment pleasant for both residents and visitors, the beaches need to be kept clear of seaweed and other rubbish. In 2004–05, 1,725 tonnes was collected and disposed of and during the summer period of 2005–06 2,235 tonnes has been disposed of, at an estimated cost of £80,000 per annum.

(3) *Costs of providing beach services*

Whilst every effort is made to recover costs of beach services through charging for such things as concessions, equipment hire etc there is still a net cost to the Council, and thus to the residents, for providing beach management, including life guards, quality parks and gardens adjacent to the tourist areas, lighting and similar services. This costs the Council approximately £600,000 per annum after all the income is taken into account.

(4) *Storm Damage*

Also related to revenue spending is the impact winter storms have upon a Council's financial standing. Coastal towns tend to suffer more regular storm damage compared to inland areas but these are not generally insurable. Whilst it is recognised the Government operates the Bellwin scheme for aid, there is still the need for the Council to fund significant sums from within its own resources. In Torbay's case the Council has to meet the first £0.280 million and then 15% of the balance which, when the Council is only carrying £2.6 million in balances, can rapidly diminish these balances and then result in criticism from external auditors and inspectors for the low balance which can then only be remedied at the expense of the local taxpayer.

(5) *Revenue Implications*

To put these costs into perspective, an increase in Council Tax raises approximately £0.5 million so it can be seen that items (1) to (4) above, costs the residents of Torbay at least a 1½% Council Tax increase.

(e) *Transience*

Some of the more complex families who arrive in Torbay do not arrive at the beginning of a school year and upon arrival the children have to be placed in a suitable educational environment, usually one of the local schools and due to the nature of the housing often focused in one or two key wards. The impact of these arrivals can be very disruptive to the existing children and there are examples within Torbay schools where there is over 40% turnover of pupils in one year group per annum.

As the families get more settled in the area and obtain permanent accommodation so the children get moved again, increasing the problems they are already facing and causing further educational disruption to the other children in the class.

Transience in itself is not a bad thing, in fact it could be encouraged to ensure a constantly changing and evolving society. However in social terms it does put a strain on families and without the support of extended families in the area or established neighbourhood support, problems escalate often to the point where publicly funded social care support is needed.

It is regrettable but a hard fact that many of the child social care issues arise from families who are newly arrived in the area. Torbay has witnessed some years where more than 50% of the children taken into care in that year had arrived in the area in the previous 12 months.

(f) *“Benefit” economy*

A further pressure facing coastal local authorities such as Torbay are socio-economic issues arising from the high number of benefit claimants in the area. Paragraph 3 above referred to the number of claimants in the area and this has a disproportionate impact on the general economy. This core case load is then enhanced by other families (who are often attracted by the spectre of a “holiday by the seaside”) and then remain. A recent case in point arose when a family of 18 indicated they needed to be re-housed and opted to move to Torbay as one of the family had been on holiday there and thought it nice. This is not uncommon and puts considerable strain on the housing resources in the area where there is already a low %age of rented accommodation available within the area. Torbay, in recent years, has been witnessing a steady 3% per annum growth in housing and council tax claimants Latest figures show that Torbay has the highest proportion of working age population claiming Job Seekers Allowance (2.9% Torbay) in the South West Region (1.6% South West), and a figure higher than the national (2.6%).

(g) *Impact of the Elderly*

Most coastal towns prove to be a magnet for the elderly and retired which has an impact on the services which the Council needs to provide for. It is recognised that there is funding for some of these services through the revenue support grant mechanism for social care costs but what the system does not take account of adequately is the pressures placed upon such services as Concessionary bus fares, libraries etc.

19. Torbay Council, in common with all local authorities, receives a significant element of its annual revenue funding from the Government formula grant.

In previous years, when comparisons were possible using the FSS system, it was clear that the overall funding being made available to the Council was inadequate to meet the needs of Torbay and as such to keep Council Tax rises down to a reasonable level. As a consequence reductions in budgets were necessary in these areas which are seen as discretionary in the Government’s eyes, such as parks, gardens and beaches but in the eyes of the residents highly necessary and essential both in order to make Torbay an attractive place to live and also to retain the tourist numbers necessary to sustain the local industry.

All these items listed above are costs which are peculiar to coastal towns but are not specifically recognised in the funding formula. When the revenue support grant funding formulae are looked at, the only funding source applicable to coastal towns which may be interpreted as being applicable to meet these costs are day and night visitor numbers.

Whilst this sum is recognised in the calculations for the allocation of grant, it by no means compensates for the additional costs that the Council has to find. Therefore it would be extremely beneficial to coastal local authorities if some recognition could be factored into the Relative Needs Formula calculation that reflected these additional burdens.

#### TORBAY SOLUTION—SOCIAL FACTORS

20. The Council is working in conjunction with both Registered Social Landlords (RSL’s) and the private sector to develop schemes which both meet the needs of clients and ensure a pool of accommodation is available for emergency lets but at the same time does not commit the Council to significant costs. Although the Regional Housing body is working with Torbay, it is very much constrained by resources available regionally and the Council believes much more could be achieved if specific funding were made available to enhance and improve its current work with private sector partners.

21. An issue which affects a number of our schools is the issue of transience, developed above, which is frequently linked to families moving to the area for social reasons, but without any firm social roots in the area. These families also have an impact on the social care problems.

22. The Children’s Services, an amalgamation of the Education function and Children’s Social care function as recommended in the “Every Child Matters” paper, has a number of strategies available to help both the schools in question and the families concerned, where appropriate but once again resources are limited. Any action taken by the Council to deal with schools issues obviously has to be dealt with by using schools block money, thus denuding the monies going to schools which, arguably, schools in other areas will not have to address.

#### TORBAY APPROACH—ECONOMIC REGENERATION

23. As a final component element, the industrial base of Torbay is very weak and is highly dependant upon the tourism and locally to Brixham, the fishing industries to provide employment along with “public administration”, education and health. As referred to earlier the economic deprivation in Torbay is significant with the authority recorded as the 94 worst in the country on the Index of Multiple Deprivation. The Council will only be able to improve this by both supporting the existing core sector strengths such as tourism and by widening the industrial base of the area. At present it is doing this by a number of approaches:

#### CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

24. The Council has embarked on major capital programmes aimed at both supporting existing sectors and laying the foundations for new ones. Thus a £22 million public/private initiative in support of the tourism industry has recently been completed in Torquay and a further £3.5 million phase is currently under construction. This project has benefited from robust support from external funders such as the SWRDA and GOSW. An even larger capital programme aimed at the comprehensive regeneration of parts of Brixham is currently at the planning stage

#### IMPROVED TRAINING AND EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES WITHIN TORBAY

25. The Council is working closely with South Devon College, which has recently moved to new, modern facilities, in developing training opportunities for young people in order to widen their skills base. It is planned to introduce business incubation facilities into these college premises to ensure the transfer of the vocational skills into the commercial arena as rapidly and effectively as possible. In view of the capital and revenue pressures traditionally experienced by such facilities, this is an area where funding support would be exceptionally valuable. The Council has also been identified as an authority which can receive £20 million for the rebuild of a new school and it intends to use this money to enable the new school to be a specialist business studies school, once again broadening the skills base in the area.

#### ESTABLISHMENT OF INDUSTRIAL STARTER UNITS

26. The Council has, throughout the area, a number of small industrial starter units which, in conjunction with the RDA and Government Office, it is hoping to increase in number. Whilst the funding for these units is very welcome, a very slow and bureaucratic process has to be undertaken to release the funding which is not conducive to the occasional need to move quickly on some of these projects.

#### INTEGRATED TRAINING SUPPORT

27. In addition to the above initiatives aimed at the creation of more and better jobs and the facilities required for these, Torbay Council is developing programmes to assist those currently excluded from both employment and social opportunity. This is being achieved by the integration and collaboration of various community groups, Housing Services and several other Council functions in order to offer a continuous pathway from the bottom end of deprivation (ie homelessness, alcoholism, drug addiction etc) through to work experience, employment and ultimate economic self-sufficiency.

However to make a long term significant improvement to the economic base, the Council needs to make significant investment in both infrastructure and facilities in conjunction with partners. However this usually requires match funding and the Council does not have the resources available and to utilise regional resources usually means bidding against areas which are much more economically vibrant and more able to attract new business to join existing businesses. To this end the Council believes specific, earmarked funding for large scale projects should be made available.

#### SUMMARY

In summary the Council, in putting its view forward in this paper, has concluded that:

- (a) The limitation placed upon the submission does not allow the Council to fully develop the issues facing a coastal town and would welcome the opportunity to further develop the case in front of members of the committee.
- (b) The existing regional structure is too large to be able to deal with the specialist issues facing coastal towns.
- (c) Transience, whilst not inherently bad, causes many problems for any authority but it can be particularly pronounced in coastal towns.
- (d) Being a coastal town, additional costs are incurred in the maintenance of the area which are not reflected in the current revenue funding regime for local authorities.

- (e) Significant capital investment is often required to regenerate the coastal towns of developing new industries to replace the declining tourist and marine related industries and also to renew the Victorian infrastructure still in place in many of these towns.
- (f) Retention of the younger population is seen as crucial to the sustained growth and regeneration of these towns and long-term support is needed to enhance existing training facilities and new businesses.

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### Memorandum by Wyre Borough Council (CT 49)

#### SUMMARY OF VIEWS FORMED—EXECUTIVE APPRAISAL OF NEEDS

##### 1. Wyre Borough Council would wish to draw the Committee's attention to:

1. The need to recognize the unique challenges for coastal resorts as distinct from urban centres.
2. The need to have an understanding of the grass-roots impact of regional priorities, in arresting further decline and redressing imbalances, together with the need to provide integrated solutions to such issues.
3. A requirement for packaged support availability to recognize the need for infrastructure measures, that provide the economic catalysts to sustainable economic growth.
4. The need to develop and provide sub-regional investment policies, which transcend traditional boundaries, and create joint working best practice.
5. The need to gear any measures to practical delivery, and, where necessary, provide "hot spot" support.

##### 2. PROFILE

2.1 Wyre Borough Council is a Lancashire district authority covering urban and rural settlements, including the coastal towns of Cleveleys and Fleetwood. This submission's focus is Fleetwood.

##### 3. DEPRIVATION

3.1 Fleetwood is a peninsular town located on the Fylde Coast. It has a population of 26,882 (source ONS, 2006) with three out of five of its wards falling into the 5% to 10% most deprived wards in England, based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation. This evidences the progressive deterioration in the socio-economic structure of Fleetwood, as only one ward (Pharos) was previously within the 10% category.

##### 4. UNEMPLOYMENT

4.1 Unemployment levels in Fleetwood stand at an average of 3.1%, over the five wards, rising to 4.3% in the Pharos Ward, compared to the district average of 1.5% of the total working age population (source ONS, January, 2006). These figures peak for males in the Pharos ward, at 6.4%. There are 5.2%, 4.8%, 4.7% and 3.0% male unemployment levels in the adjacent four wards. Female unemployment is significantly higher also in the five Fleetwood wards.

##### 5. HOUSING

5.1 The main stock of housing in the urban core wards, where deprivation is of great concern, has remained at basic amenity standard for many years, and although not fundamentally unsound or incapable of revitalization, there is a lack of prosperity to address the problems, and seek to improve neighborhood standards.

5.2 There has been no major programme of house building, adding to or upgrading quality, for many years. Much of the new build is sporadic, as is the improvement of older stock.

5.3 Some premises have been developed for transient use and multiple-occupation, but not to the same extent as major resort towns.

##### 6. EDUCATION

6.1 Levels of attainment for school leavers are below average at Fleetwood High School, the only state sector school in the town, with 27% of pupils achieving A\* to C GCSE grades, by comparison with the national average of 53.7%, and the local education authority average of 53.8%. The attainment in A\* to G grades was equally well below the national and LEA averages. (source DfES league tables 2005)

## 7. FURTHER EDUCATION

7.1 Such levels of attainment are also reflected in the accessibility to further education and employment. Of 258 school leavers in 2004, 143 (55.4%) went into further education, mainly to redress the shortfall in qualifications gained at high school level, whilst a minority, 24 (9.3%) went into any form of employment with associated vocational training. Some 54 (20.9%) entered worklessness, adding to the statistics. (source Careerlink 2004)

## 8. SKILLS AND TRAINING

8.1 The workforce within Fleetwood is both adaptable and versatile.

8.2 Former occupations such as fishing and the chemicals industry having now disappeared, caused a considerable problem in re-skilling into other industries at craft and semi-skilled levels. This left an unskilled and labour-only workforce to fend for itself. The problem has not yet been totally eradicated.

8.3 Some unemployment has been absorbed by the building and construction industry, although there is an emerging demand for this training to be re-instituted. Many redundancies gave opportunity to those displaced to enter into self-employment, as a result of which, the Wyre district boasts a self-employed sector of some 8,500.

## 9. WORKLESSNESS

9.1 Benefit dependency in Wyre district amounted to some £31 million in 2004 with the largest proportion attributed to worklessness and long-term disablement benefit payments in Fleetwood wards (source Jobcentre Plus)

## 10. CRIME AND DISORDER

10.1 Pharos ward has a considerable crime and disorder problem, (1,278 crimes) mainly centered around the 15 to 19 year old age group, and predominantly male. Of these 87% was re-offending activity, and 25.9% of which was committed by the unemployed. (source Lancashire Constabulary 2004)

## 11. TRANSPORTATION

11.1 Transport links into Fleetwood are problematic. The A585 link into the motorway network (M55—Preston to Blackpool) is poor and the proposed new link to the motorway has not been recognized as a regional priority. There is no rail link into Fleetwood, having been cut as part of the 1960's Beeching Review. Investment is required to upgrade the Blackpool tramway, and extend this into a light railway proposal which could serve the Fleetwood peninsular and on into the hinterland, where there is limited rural service. The problems associated with the A585 and accessibility to the motorway network is cited by local businesses as the single most inhibiting factor for development in Fleetwood.

## 12. INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE

12.1 Industrial and commercial development has been at a standstill for some 10 to 15 years, in Fleetwood. The town has a substantial number of mid-band SME companies, but no employer with a profile beyond the level of 200 employees. Companies have not grown in size or stature, nor have there been any major developments in the fields of new technologies or non-traditional businesses.

12.2 The stock of commercial property is generally in decline, with little evidence of investment in renewal or growth. Many properties and sites have remained unoccupied for periods in excess of 3 years, and as a consequence their condition has deteriorated, making them unattractive to potential investors.

## 13. RETAIL

13.1 A similar situation applies to retail property, with much of the worn-out Victorian stock having seen poor quality multiple restorations, wearing out the structures to a point where major restoration/regeneration would be necessary to attract interest, or areas would be considered as clearance standard, to afford future opportunity.

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## BACKGROUND

### 14. *Port Economy*

14.1 Fleetwood has a strong tradition as a fishing port. There has however been a sharp reduction in the number of fishing vessels operating out of Fleetwood, with approximately 18 as of October 2004. The industry that once provided employment for 9000 people now employs, directly and indirectly about 1000. Recognising this, the focus of the Fleetwood fishing industry has shifted from the catching sector to the processing sector. Whilst independent studies (Poseidon 2002? commissioned by the NWRA and more recently the Maritime Study commissioned by the NWDA) have identified strong growth potential within the fish-processing sector, sustainability continues to be of concern. A further study, commissioned by the NWDA and the local industry and prompted by the Maritime Strategy is currently underway.

14.2 It has the principal objective of preparing an option analysis of the maintenance and development of the Fleetwood fish-processing sector. The draft report has already identified that the potential for development in Fleetwood cannot be considered in isolation from the problems and opportunities facing the remainder of the British fishing industry.

14.3 It identifies key drivers for change including the importance of supermarkets in the distribution of fish and fish products, an inclination towards traceability of fish products, market trends, the need for product differentiation and the increasing importance of regional foods. The draft report asserts that given favorable circumstances, the Fleetwood fish processors can use these drivers in rejuvenating the sector on the basis of their traditional activity and experience in the sector.

14.4 Within a regional context, however fishing is deemed of limited importance. This is reflected in the Regional Economic Strategy for the North West, which does not refer to the sector: an approach that may not be consistent with other Regional Economic Strategies. Fishing is of considerable importance in terms of local economies, and a healthy fish-processing sector can generate increased economic benefits with limited public expenditure and this is important where alternative economic opportunities are scarce.

14.5 Investment is required in the infrastructure and to support cluster development. At this time, there is concern that the lack of recognition for the industry within the RES and therefore, subsequently, the lack of intervention may prohibit the delivery of effective solutions for the industry. Not only would this hamper the growth potential of the industry, but also without intervention the industry is unlikely to be sustainable.

14.6 With regard to other port activities, it is essentially a Ro-Ro ferry port for the Irish market, handling accompanied and unaccompanied freight. It has restricted maritime access and a report, commissioned by the NWDA, NW Ports Economic Trends and Land Use Study has questioned the long-term viability of the port for commercial traffic, with a future focus on leisure activities. (The port does have a successful marina operation, which is the only facility on this reach of the coast, between north Cumbria and north Wales.)

14.7 Whilst the issue of viability is disputed by the port owners and Stena-Line who operate a successful service ferry service, the potential impact on the local economy if the assumptions are correct is of concern. Within the RES, Fleetwood is not identified as a key port. The RES has identified Liverpool and Heysham docks for significant investment, direct competitors of the Fleetwood port. Again, as with the fishing industry, the concern is that the lack of a coordinated approach to intervention in Fleetwood will not only hinder growth, but will actually decimate the local economy even further.

### 15. CHEMICALS INDUSTRY

15.1 Historically, the second major employer in Fleetwood was the chemical sector. However, the closure of ICI (1999) which at its height employed 4,500 people (source ICI) has resulted in the loss of several million pounds spending power from the local economy. The ICI site transferred to NPL Estates and it is probably the largest unrecognized strategic site in the north west either through the regional spatial strategy or the Regional Economic Strategy.

15.2 As a brownfield site in need of remediation due to its use as a chemical complex, it has a unique ability to accommodate chemicals investment in the northern part of the north west. Indeed, the chemical companies on the site are already committed to investing up to £45 million over the next three years. Companies are considering further phases of investment but will require recognition of the site at a regional level and an acceptance that packaged support measures will be available.

### 16. TOURISM

16.1 Fleetwood is unlike many other coastal resorts in so far as its heritage is as much as a fishing town than as a resort. The impact of the changes in the tourism market and leisure expectations has however impacted on Fleetwood. Outward signs of this decline are in the town centre where the loss of visitor expenditure and competition from out of town facilities, poor road and rail access has led to a decline in the quality of the shopping "offer" and the lack of investment to plough back into the improvement of the physical infrastructure and environment.

16.2 Fleetwood does attract visitors however, with attractors including large static caravan sites, Fleetwood Market, Fleetwood Museum etc A report produced on behalf of the NWDA—A New Vision for Coastal Resorts (2003) confirmed Fleetwood, despite changes in the tourism market, as still having power as a destination. As such it proposed that Fleetwood develop its brand as a “UK Capital of Value”.

16.3 The report concluded that to achieve the brand destination vision, including up- lifting the town centre, significant public sector-led investment was required in the public realm working in conjunction with private developers to implement the strategy.

## 17. INTERVENTION

17.1 Fleetwood has derived its funding in a limited form from:

- Single Regeneration Budget.
- European Objective 2.
- European Support for the Fishing Industry.

Fleetwood benefited from funding through the Single Regeneration Budget Round 3, between 1997 and 2004, of £3.1million. An evaluation of the scheme concluded that whilst the scheme successfully delivered its outputs and leveraged some £27 million in benefits to Fleetwood, in cash and in kind, the scheme was not of significant enough size to trigger associated private sector investments, outside the realm of community development. Since the completion of this scheme there has been no further access to sources of co-ordinated intervention

17.2 Whilst Objective 2 monies have been directed towards Fleetwood, the specific schemes have all been developed in Pharos ward, and should properly be regarded as complementary activity, rather than structurally beneficial.

17.3 Support is available to the fishing industry through the Marine Fisheries Agency. Whilst some community benefit has been derived from this funding source, it does not provide the significant infrastructure investment to make a lasting impact.

## 18. INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL

18.1 There is potential for growth in Fleetwood, so far as land and property are concerned. Some 11 hectares of land is available for redevelopment on the Copse Road industrial estate, mainly covered in run-down commercial buildings and factory units, which have seen better days. The Wyre Dock is suitable for mixed development, including residential, and adds a further 15.4 hectares, and other miscellaneous sites add a further 2.4 hectares (source Wyre Local Plan 2001016).

18.2 The difficulty in advocating development in Fleetwood is the accessibility to the road and rail network. New and incoming businesses require good access if there is a need for goods to be moved from the point of manufacture to a purchaser destination, without undue delay and added cost. The lack of these basic infrastructure standards means that Fleetwood is not a recognized destination for business. Creating the route to business is a key activity, but one without a solution, unless there is recognition within the RES and the Regional Transport Policy. This has not been forthcoming, nor is there any prospect of this happening within current programmes.

18.3 Another key factor, allied to the availability of land is brownfield site remediation, to restock Fleetwood with a cost-effective alternative for companies to consider against the stock of available land elsewhere. The RES considers only sites of regional strategic importance in the allocation of funding and remedial priority. This policy may be appropriate to large urban areas where employment opportunities have been wiped away, and there is a need to revitalize the potential for development and create new jobs.

18.4 It is equally suited to addressing the problems of smaller areas however, where the long-term effects of worklessness and deprivation have become deep-rooted, and are now becoming ingrained in the socio-economic fabric of the community.

18.5 Whilst there is no pressure placed on the availability of land in Fleetwood, the same is not true in other parts of the district. The two market towns of Poulton-le-Fylde and Garstang, where market town initiative work programmes are being undertaken, in association with the NWDA, are being put under pressure for additional land allocations for industrial/commercial development.

18.6 These would most likely be green field sites, if they were available, rather than considering the possibility of locations in Fleetwood, where brownfield opportunities are plentiful. The ability to offer incentives to take up this type of land, linked to confirmed long-term use for commercial activity, would provide Wyre with a means of pump-priming new development.

## 19. RETAIL

19.1 As part of the SRB programme, funding sources including European, delivered improvements to the main retail area, Lord Street, with the purpose of triggering private sector enhancement and providing the lead to sustainable development. A shop front improvement scheme was introduced to act as the catalyst in circumstances where major renewal could not be expected.

19.2 The two elements achieved limited success, mainly due to the economic situation of owners and tenants. It was impossible to create further packages of support, from the limited funding available, although it was evidenced, from the number of enquiries made to the Regeneration Partnership, that a grants and loans scheme could have had a high rate of success in improving the overall retail “offer”.

19.3 Recent investment by Asda, in a town centre supermarket, may re-formulate retail viewpoints along the single-street high street, but this would require a massive step change. The Freeport Shopping Centre, at the edge of the town, the new Asda store and the Council’s Traditional Market, make significant contributions to the retail economy. There are, perhaps six other stores that maintain and add to an economic dynamic for the town

19.4 A recent survey of planning use of the main retail area shows that some 70% of properties are in A1 and A2 retail use, but that the quality of the businesses is generally poor, with over 80% committed to the sale of cut-price goods or “cheap and cheerful” tourist/visitor goods. There has been some speculation that without a step change being triggered in the retail offer, there will be no businesses surviving in middle to high-end retailing, in the next three to five years.

19.5 In all other aspects, businesses are at survival levels.

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### Memorandum by the Environment Agency (CT 50)

#### SUMMARY

The Environment Agency supports the sustainable development of coastal towns to ensure their social and economic viability and safety from environmental risks. Coastal towns and their communities now face significant environmental challenges from climate change and sea level rise in addition to the social and economic challenges that face them.

- Scientific studies demonstrate that climate change and sea level rise is an increasing threat to many coastal settlements.
- Coastal habitats are rich in wildlife—a significant proportion are protected by European Environmental Directives. They are vulnerable to sea level rise and are of great value to coastal protection. Policies that ensure the maintenance and increase in these habitats are vital.
- The Environment Agency believes that strategic policies and plans, including those for coastal towns and communities, must take full account of long-term change and the increasing risk of flooding and coastal erosion.
- Close co-operation between the Environment Agency, Defra, ODPM, Local Planning Authorities and Regional Government on strategic planning and investment decisions is essential for the sustainable regeneration and redevelopment of coastal towns.
- The Environment Agency strongly recommends that plans for coastal redevelopment, only be promoted where they fully support the aims and policies of strategic planning frameworks such as Shoreline Management Plans, Estuary Strategies and River Basin Management Plans, especially for the maintenance and increase in vital coastal habitats. This means the implications of those strategic planning frameworks need to be better understood by spatial (land use) planners and those making spatial planning decisions.
- The challenge of future coastal flooding and erosion will require consideration of innovative and maybe radical solutions where coastal communities can no longer be sustained. Existing spatial planning policy guidance (PPG20 *Coastal Planning*) and coast protection legislation may need to be reviewed to reflect the new challenges of climate change and sustainable development. We welcome the consultation on draft Planning Policy Statement PPS25 *Development and Flood Risk*—the ODPM is currently considering consultation responses on this draft PPS.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Environment Agency is the Government’s lead agency for managing flood risk and depending on the Government’s new strategy for flood and coastal erosion risk management in England, the Environment Agency may also become the lead agency for coastal erosion risk management. It is also the sole competent authority for implementing the Water Framework Directive and a consultee for much of the land based spatial planning process.

Coastal towns will face increased risk from unavoidable flood and erosion. How to support sustainable development on such coastlines and protect internationally designated coastal habitat and landscape is a major challenge for Government, planning authorities and communities. Traditional approaches to investment in coastal infrastructure have often left an expensive legacy of maintenance. The Environment Agency is leading new thinking on how to plan and deliver long-term sustainable solutions in partnership with communities, and can contribute across the whole spectrum of coastal investment policy.

## 2. SCIENCE TO UNDERPIN PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING

The Government has funded a programme of science research to evaluate the effects of climate change. Particular emphasis has been on how sea level rise will impact our coastline and the communities who live and work there.

### 2.1 *The Foresight Flood and Coastal Defence Project*<sup>63</sup>

This £1 million study involving 40 researchers and sophisticated computer models of climate and coastline has confirmed that even under the most positive scenario, in which the world takes substantial steps to reduce the impact of climate change, the impact on the United Kingdom will be great.

Flood risk will rise by at least 30% around our southern and eastern coasts. Under worst-case scenarios coastal areas will become 30 times more vulnerable to devastating wave surges, raising the annual economic costs of flooding from £1 billion to more than £20 billion. By 2080 the UK could be facing major flood events once every three years compared to every one hundred years in the past.

Because of the nature of this threat, it is essential that any decision on how we respond to coastal change, or plan to invest in areas that will be affected, must take full account of our latest scientific forecasts on flood risk and coastal erosion. In some instances this will mean retreating from existing defences to allow habitat creation and room for estuaries to expand in order to reduce flood risk overall.

A significant length of our coastline is internationally important for wildlife, has enormous value in reducing flood defence costs through wave energy absorption and is at great risk of loss to coastal squeeze. Coastal squeeze occurs as sea level rises against fixed defences and consequently reduces the area of inter tidal habitat. Apart from the flood defence imperative, European and UK wildlife law insists that such habitat is replaced which largely has to be achieved through retreating existing defence lines across agricultural land.

## 3. THE IMPORTANCE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

Owing to the increased threat from sea level rise and coastal erosion, and the need to invest public funds wisely, a nationally consistent approach to coastal risk management and decision making is essential. This must start with a science based planning approach to future coastal defence and erosion protection, which in turn will drive decisions about future sustainable development. Close co-operation between government departments, particularly ODPM and Defra is essential alongside regional and local government and the Environment Agency.

### 3.1 *Shoreline Management Plans*

Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs) are the primary strategic planning mechanism for flood and coastal risk management, combining scientific analysis, environmental assessment, socio-economic assessment and community engagement. These plans provide a strategic assessment of the threat to the coast and coastal towns from flooding and coastal erosion and recommend the most sustainable management options over the next 100 years considering the potential impacts of sea level rise. Coastal groups comprising the Environment Agency, local authorities, English Nature (Natural England) and Defra, in consultation with coastal communities, will have fully reviewed all SMPs by 2010. This review will incorporate the latest scientific findings on climate change and decide the preferred management policy for coastal risks over the next 100 years including managed realignment where prudent so to do. The Government strategy for flood and coastal risk management in England called Making Space for Water may give the Environment Agency a national strategic overview for all flood and coastal erosion risk management. Such a move should ensure that all SMPs are consistent in their approach to coastal planning issues.

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<sup>63</sup> Future Flooding, Foresight Programme, DTI, 2004.

### 3.2 *Coastal and estuary strategies*

These strategies consider how best to implement the SMP coastal management policies. They undertake a more detailed feasibility assessment of the practical solutions and identify where viable actions can be taken to reduce the risks from flooding and coastal erosion. These strategies promote detailed community engagement and work with landowners, industry, councils and voluntary organisations to promote measures such as coast/sea defences, flood resilience and alternative land management to adapt to a changing coastline.

### 3.3 *River Basin Management Plans*

The Environment Agency is the competent authority for implementing the Water Framework Directive in the UK. The Directive seeks to achieve “good status” for all water bodies in environmental terms, and this includes coastal waters. River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) will be key strategic planning mechanism in helping identify and deliver environmental improvements for coastal towns and communities. The River Basin Management Plans will identify a statutory Programme of Measures (action plans). All government departments, RDAs and local authorities will be important partners in delivering these RBMP action plans. These plans will need to influence and take into account SMPs.

The government’s future policy for regenerating coastal towns must take full account of the Government’s strategic planning priorities for managing coastal flood and erosion risk. Shoreline Management Plans provide a focus for the science and socio-economics of long term sustainable coastal policy, and must be fully reflected in any plans for future funding for social, housing or environmental regeneration. There is also an urgent need for a port strategy to balance expanding port development pressures with the need for an integrated planning approach for our coast and shoreline. Such measures are essential to ensure a balanced approach to obligatory and necessary habitat creation and maintenance alongside economic development. Any increased development affecting coastal habitats will certainly be required to provide additional compensatory land. This will need to be considered in land use (spatial) allocation through the various planning processes.

### 3.4 *Spatial Plans—Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks*

Spatial development in coastal towns and communities will be driven by spatial plans—Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) and Local Development Frameworks (LDFs). These plans are to be soundly evidence based and subject to sustainability appraisal, incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment. Such appraisals, and the plan evidence base, must take full account of strategic coastal planning frameworks such as SMPs and RBMPs, including emerging work on those frameworks where final plans are not in place. It may be necessary to review RSS and LDFs on final publication of SMPs and RBMPs. Above all, the complex relationship of plans in the coast means that the implications of coastal strategic planning frameworks need to be much better understood by spatial planners and those taking spatial planning decisions.

It is essential that coastal spatial planning issues are effectively dealt with at a strategic level. RSS should provide a strategic approach to the spatial development and re-development of the coast with LDFs being in conformity with it. Coastal planning authorities should liaise closely in developing their LDFs to ensure they are consistent with other LDFs along the coast

Planning Policy Guidance note PPG25 indicates that “it should be recognised that climate change is expected to increase flood risk and some existing development in more exposed locations may not be sustainable in the longer term and may need to be replaced in safer locations. Local planning authorities should consider ways in which the planning system might be used positively to help tackle the legacy of past development in unsustainable locations” (PPG25, paragraph 9). In preparing their LDFs local planning authorities need to effectively address such difficult challenges.

PPG25 is in the process of being reviewed. We welcome the consultation draft of PPS25 and the continuing emphasis it places on the sequential test—the objective of locating new development in areas of lowest flood risk—and using strategic flood risk assessments to search for suitable development sites. The new PPS needs to reiterate the previous advice (above) in PPG25 in respect of existing development.

The existing Planning Policy Guidance note PPG20 Coastal Planning was published in September 1992. It may now need to be reviewed to reflect increased understanding of the potential impact of climate change on the coast and the associated challenges of achieving sustainable development in coastal locations.

## 4. INNOVATION AND PARTNERSHIP TO DELIVER SUSTAINABILITY

Because of the escalating storminess arising from climate change, traditional coastal engineering solutions may no longer be appropriate. The erosive forces are greater and more persistent. Extreme events are likely to occur more often and place even more people and coastal communities at risk from flooding and coastal erosion. Many of our traditional hard defences are increasingly being undermined and overtopped, and when they fail it is often catastrophic. Building bigger does not solve this problem; it merely buys time and

places an escalating financial repair and maintenance burden on the public purse. We need to find more affordable and sustainable approaches to managing these risks around our coastline. Examples will include restoring inter tidal marshes, sand dunes and shingle ridges to provide a natural coastal buffer zone. This will include no longer maintaining some of the rural defences around our coastline where economics and environmental objectives must be achieved.

Whilst coastal agricultural land has an existence value its greater future role may be in providing vital increased flood and coastal erosion protection capacity. Retreating to historic coastlines even in developed areas will in some places be the only sustainable option.

## 5. APPROPRIATE POWERS AND PLANNING MECHANISMS

Some coastal legislation, policy and practice no longer fully reflect the need given the challenges posed by sea level rise and climate change. Legislation, for example the Coast Protection Act 1949, Land Drainage Act 1976 and the Food and Environmental Protection Act 1985 need to be replaced with a combined Act, providing more flexible powers to the Environment Agency and coastal authorities to reflect the challenge of sea level rise and coastal erosion. Similarly, PPG20 is now 14 years old and may require updating.

This problem is recognised in the Government strategy for flood and coastal risk management, Making Space for Water. The work streams that underpin Making Space for Water include analysis of the barriers to sustainable development and one on adaptation toolkits. This will consider the adaptation of policy and legislation needed to address necessary but controversial decisions made on the coast, such as setting back of defences or coastal cliff erosion leading to property loss. The Environment Agency is actively contributing to these programmes. Delivering new strategic solutions to support coastal communities during a time of adaptation and change will demand streamlined and innovative legislation and we look forward to the results of the current work and on its consequential delivery. Key policies promoted in Making Space for Water include, a single authority for overseeing the management of the coast, better mapping of coastal erosion and flood risk, one body with an overview of all flooding (including, urban, highway, sewerage and groundwater), improved mechanisms for funding and planning the future of the coast, better acknowledgement of the multiple benefits that can accrue to society from flood risk management expenditure, and different approaches to land management in upper reaches of river systems to reduce flooding problems lower down the river.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 The Select Committee recognises the importance of understanding the future effects of climate change and sea level rise, and adopts the scientific recommendations of the Foresight Report as a foundation for any new initiative to help sustainable regeneration or redevelopment of coastal towns.

6.2 Shoreline Management Plans, coastal and estuary strategies, River Basin Management Plans and spatial plans are recognised as key strategic plans in the formulation of regional and local regeneration or redevelopment initiatives. This needs to be reflected through effective integration of these plans and a review of existing spatial planning policy, for example the potential production of a new style Planning Policy Statement on Coastal Planning.

6.3 The Environment Agency is recognised as a source of expertise in the development of innovative coastal solutions and as the key body to oversee the strategic management of the England and Wales coast.

6.4 The Select Committee supports the approach in Making Space for Water and the issues listed in 5 above, especially:

- The need for new legal measures to update existing legislation and provide greater powers to control land use in flood and erosion risk areas.
- More integrated policy and process to assist the delivery of sustainable coastal management in response to increasing sea level rise and coastal erosion.
- Recognition that the coast supports internationally important habitats and species. These areas may provide protection for the coast, and the communities that live there, but are sometimes at risk from unsustainable development
- That new and innovative approaches are investigated to facilitate coastal erosion and managed realignment where it is appropriate to do so.
- Due to the complex relationship of plans in the coast, the implications of coastal strategic planning frameworks need to be much better understood by spatial planners and those taking spatial planning decisions.
- Recognises and promotes the huge value of coastal habitats and the economic, social and biodiversity drivers for their maintenance and enhancement.

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## **Memorandum by Suffolk Coastal District Council (CT 51)**

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Within the Suffolk Coastal area there are three coastal towns, geographically close but socially diverse. The largest is Felixstowe, which is Britain's largest container port. This is a strong identifying factor that sets it apart from other coastal towns and has a huge influence on its infrastructure and demographics. It is also a seaside resort and satellite town for Ipswich.

Suffolk Coastal District Council, in conjunction with the Haven Gateway Sub Regional Economic Partnership and informed by the views of the community of Felixstowe and its hinterland, is presently considering options for the future development of Felixstowe, including options for improving the town's tourism offering. Aldeburgh and Leiston are within five miles of each other but hugely different. Aldeburgh scores exceptionally well on all economic indicators; Leiston has the greatest deprivation in the District and is home to the Sizewell Nuclear Power Station.

### COMMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE INQUIRY

1. In common with other coastal towns, these in Suffolk Coastal are "far-flung" from regional administrative and commercial centres, literally at the end of the road and the end of the railway line. As a result, the demographics are distinctive. All of these towns attract older, retired and economically inactive residents. Schools are in general under-subscribed whilst health and social care facilities are well-used. House prices are high, particularly for bungalows and cottages.

2. Aldeburgh's high proportion of second-homes means that many of its residents are economically active, but employed elsewhere. This affects both the social infrastructure and market forces within the town. House prices in the Suffolk Coastal area are higher than the national average, but even more so in Aldeburgh. This seriously affects the ability of young people to afford housing in the town, which in turn affects its long-term sustainability.

3. Tourism is important to the economy of both Aldeburgh and Felixstowe. Whilst Aldeburgh is thriving and perceived as a desirable, upmarket destination, Felixstowe has seen much decline, in common with other resorts, and related to the reduced appeal of the traditional seaside holiday. It has a shortage of good-quality accommodation (many of its hotels and guest houses have been converted into flats or retirement homes) and is predominantly a destination for day-trippers. The most deprived wards and the highest crime statistics in the Suffolk Coastal area can both be found in the resort area of Felixstowe. Both Aldeburgh and Felixstowe experience seasonal unemployment due to tourism-related seasonal work patterns.

4. Regeneration in Felixstowe has hitherto been constrained by lack of available funding. The town's strong port-related economy masks the decline in tourism and related sectors. Felixstowe has also been ineligible for funding packages targeted at both large urban areas and market towns and local initiatives over the past 10 years have thus been unable to reverse the situation. By contrast, both Aldeburgh and Leiston were eligible for Single Regeneration Budget funding but this has now ended.

5. A study to look at how Felixstowe might be regenerated has been commissioned, part-funded by EEDA and by local interests, and the final report is awaited. It is clear already that without financial support from the Regional Development Agency, the local authorities and private sector will lack the scale of resources necessary to make the step-change that is required.

6. Leiston has traditionally been dependent on manufacturing rather than tourism and the presence of the Sizewell Power Station has to some extent compensated for manufacturing decline. There is a recognised need to encourage a more diverse economy but efforts to do so are held back by the lack of discrete regeneration provision for coastal towns.

7. Suffolk Coastal's seaside towns are under threat from coastal erosion and flooding, in common with other low-lying areas in East Anglia. It is anticipated that there will be continuing local authority expenditure in this area and a continuing need to review the level of threat posed by this problem.

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## **Memorandum by the British Associations of Leisure Parks, Piers & Attractions Ltd (BALPPA) (CT 52)**

### INTRODUCTION

1. BALPPA is the leading trade association representing the interests of owners, managers, suppliers and developers in the UK's commercial piers, leisure parks, static attractions and zoos sector. We speak for some 300 members and include leading UK attractions like Blackpool Pleasure Beach, Alton Towers, British Airways London Eye, Butlins, Colchester Zoo, Madame Tussauds, Thorpe Park and Woburn Safari Park among our members.

2. The BALPPA membership cover a wide range of leisure attraction sectors but our obvious interest in this inquiry predominantly stems from those BALPPA members who own, maintain and operate seaside attractions from the Blackpool Pleasure Beach complex through Butlins holiday locations to traditional

seaside arcades and Victorian piers such as those at Brighton Llandudno, Clacton, Teignmouth and Blackpool. This particular sector of BALPPA has much expertise in operating in various coastal locations across the UK and has in many cases had a long-term presence in these areas, with some family run businesses going back generations.

3. BALPPA believes this is a very important inquiry, investigating ways to continue the sustainable future and preservation of businesses, jobs and community in the UK's coastal towns and we outline our key thoughts in more detail below. In summary BALPPA seeks:

- Specific ODPM consideration for schemes and funding to assist in the long-term sustainability of coastal towns.
- Particular attention for skills development, business support, housing provision, community development, transport links and all season employment opportunities.
- Private sector tourism involvement in discussions with stakeholders seeking to introduce schemes specifically targeted at coastal towns as these individuals and their trade associations have much to offer to discussions and debate.

#### SPECIAL INITIATIVES TO TACKLE THE NEEDS OF COASTAL TOWNS

4. BALPPA is urging ODPM to give special consideration to the preservation of seaside piers. If we fail to act we will lose in the 21st century what the Victorians bequeathed to us in the 19th. Magnificent piers in our seaside towns that are magnets for tourist activity. BALPPA is calling on the Government to consider exempting Britain's remaining piers from the Uniform Business Rate at a total annual cost to the Treasury of £1.7 million. This is a relatively small amount to help protect seaside piers for the future and assist the seaside tourist economy.

5. Coastal towns are very important feature of the UK, stretching across the length and breadth of the country. They are a natural magnet for people of all generations and social groups seeking some time away in a pleasant seaside environment hoping to find accommodation, eateries, leisure and entertainment facilities.

6. BALPPA has many members who are residents, business people and employers in coastal towns and they are acutely aware of the difficulties encountered by people living and working in a seasonally focused environment, trying to secure employment all year round whilst also trying to get their foot on the housing ladder. In order for the government to be able to help coastal towns, they must understand the particular problems experienced by employers and employees, look at schemes to tackle the key problems including seasonal employment and wider job opportunities. In order to demonstrate to the people who live in coastal towns their value to the UK, we should be encouraging them to develop their skills, giving them the confidence to innovate and expand their business interests, as well as providing enough housing at reasonable prices to prevent young people leaving for pastures new where they often see greater opportunities.

#### ODPM'S WORK IN ADDRESSING PROBLEMS FACING COASTAL TOWNS

7. BALPPA has not previously been involved with the ODPM in schemes to assist coastal regions as a specific group but would be happy to become so. Furthermore BALPPA is firmly of the view that the long term sustainability of coastal towns requires careful thought and investment given their importance to the UK generally and the tourism industry in particular.

#### ODPM'S LIAISON WITH THE DCMS

8. BALPPA believes that it is essential that cross-departmental discussion occurs to ensure that all the key elements that impact on coastal towns are considered. The key department for BALPPA is the DCMS. which should be able to provide assistance to the ODPM with its understanding of our traditional tourist seaside destinations, businesses, skills, housing and other employment issues. However these areas obviously draw on other key government departments like the Department for Trade and Industry, Department for Work and Pensions and Department for Education and Skills, as well as the regional development agencies, regional assemblies, local governments, tourism organisations, business organisations and key sector skills agencies.

#### SPECIFIC REGIONAL INITIATIVES AND ADDRESSING REGIONAL DISPARITIES

9. The UK coastal towns are a key feature of our nation and although some have become very popular in recent years, many towns are still in desperate need of government drive and initiative to bring them up to date and stimulate innovation and development to sustain their future viability. There are schemes that the ODPM is undertaking to tackle regional issues, for example, the Northern Way, as a growth strategy

to boost prosperity and productivity, looking at housing, transport, development and skills, which seem to have been neglected in some regions over the years. The Northern Way scheme is seeking to work with local stakeholders to achieve the best for the region and may indeed cover coastal areas of the northern region.

10. BALPPA is already trying to address some of the issues affecting their members in this regard. We engage with the DCMS regularly about issues affecting our industry. We have built up a good relationship with the Highways Agency to ensure that they are aware of key events our members are holding and peak operation times when there is likely to be a large amount of traffic. In turn, the Highways Agency lets us know about their planned roadworks, so that we can make provision to inform our customers appropriately. In general, BALPPA feels that a specific scheme to help coastal regions would be very useful.

#### SECURITY OF FUTURE FUNDING FOR REGENERATING AND SUPPORTING COASTAL TOWNS

11. BALPPA believes that a government scheme promoted by the ODPM would encourage a coordinated approach to funding, supporting and regenerating our coastal towns. Many stakeholders, both local, regional and national will have the expertise and finances to assist to this regard, but the effort should be focused and well organised in order for achievements to be made. Forums for consultation and discussion should involve private sector players as well as public sector stakeholders and BALPPA is one organisation who would be very keen to be involved, bringing a wealth of knowledge and expertise to discussions around this issue which should be harnessed.

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### Memorandum by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) (CT 53)

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Britain has always been a seafaring nation and this relationship with the sea has shaped our identity. The buildings, landscapes, collections, places and indeed memories associated with the coast and seafaring are central to our heritage. Without that heritage, Britain would be a poorer and less diverse place.

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has funded a wide variety of heritage in coastal towns, ranging from parks and regeneration, to museum projects and activities. Projects funded by HLF can make a direct contribution to sustainable communities through regenerating run down areas, reviving public parks and improving public spaces, as well as by contributing to social goals. Over eleven years HLF has given more than £3.3 billion to 16,000 projects, over £1 billion of which has gone into urban regeneration making HLF one of the bigger regeneration funds in the UK.

HLF has funded a range of coastal heritage from landscapes to community projects, over £234 million of which has gone to 517 projects in those towns that are defined as English Coastal Resorts.

The Government is currently consulting on future lottery shares to heritage and it is important to retain that share if this work is to continue.

#### 1. ABOUT THE HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND

HLF is the UK's leading heritage funder, distributing the heritage share of National Lottery proceeds. It is the only heritage organisation that both operates UK-wide, and funds all types of heritage—including: built heritage; museums, libraries and archives; natural heritage; industrial, maritime and transport heritage; and the heritage of language, dialect and cultural traditions.

HLF currently distributes 16.66% of the money for good causes and since 1995 has committed £3.3 billion in 16,000 awards to heritage projects. The aims of the Fund are to:

- conserve and enhance the UK's diverse heritage;
- encourage more people to be involved in and make decisions about their heritage;
- ensure that everyone can learn about, have access to, and enjoy their heritage; and
- bring about a more equitable spread of our grants across the UK.

#### *National Heritage Memorial Fund*

The parent body for HLF is the National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF), set up by the National Heritage Act 1980 with wide powers to fund heritage throughout the UK in memory of people who have given their lives for the UK. The NHMF operates as a fund of last resort, saving items of national importance that would otherwise be lost. In its 25 years it has awarded £220 million for more than 1,200 projects.

## 2. FUNDING FOR COASTAL TOWNS

HLF operates a series of different grant programmes, including Your Heritage (grants under £50,000) and Heritage Grants (over £50,000). There are also a series of targeted initiatives, covering places of worship, young people, landscape partnerships, townscapes, public parks and local heritage. Coastal heritage projects can be funded under any one of HLF's different grant programmes.

Using the definition provided by the British Resorts Association, HLF has, since 1994, given £234 million to 517 projects in English Coastal Resorts—that includes a project in nearly every English Coastal Resort town (see Appendix One and Appendix Two). This list excludes funding to other towns or cities on the coast of Britain such as Chatham, Southampton or Liverpool.

Around £104 million of that funding has gone to Coastal Resorts in deprived areas, including Blackpool, Falmouth, Great Yarmouth, Hastings, North Shields, Penzance, Redcar, Saltburn-by-the-Sea and Southport. Around £23.5 million has gone to projects in Coastal Resorts that are in former coalfields (some of which are also defined as deprived areas) including Herne Bay, Whitley Bay, Whitstable, Sunderland, South Shields and Hartlepool.

## 3. EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS IN COASTAL TOWNS

### *Public Parks*

Public parks were often created as a central feature in Victorian seaside towns. HLF has funded 41 historic public parks in resort towns, including the Marine gardens on the seafront in Clacton which now attract over two million visitors a year. Once hailed as the finest public gardens in the world, Mowbray Park in Sunderland was unsafe and unappealing until a major HLF-funded restoration project transformed the gardens, creating a new winter garden and recreating a sense of public pride and ownership. In combination with other projects including a Townscape Heritage Initiative and funding to the museum, the area is now safer and more attractive and has become a focus for new residential development.

Other examples of the restoration of public parks in Coastal Resorts include Tower Gardens in Skegness, Stanley Park in Blackpool, the Jubilee Bathing Pool in Penzance and the Southend Cliffs in Southend-on-Sea. Each of these projects has given new life to public spaces, making them more welcoming to tourists and local communities, and increasing business and public confidence.

### *Townscape Heritage Initiatives*

Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) is a grant programme which promotes conservation as an essential part of urban regeneration, encouraging the repair and reuse of historic buildings in partnership with local planning authorities and others. HLF has given over £66 million to 43 THIs (and previously Conservation Area Partnerships) in coastal resorts. For example, the historic fishing village of Staithes in Yorkshire retains much of its 18th and 19th century character; following the closure of the railway line and changes in regional industries, most local employment now relies on tourism. HLF has worked with North York Moors National Park, Scarborough Borough Council and Yorkshire Forward to regenerate the town in order to improve the quality of life for residents. Similarly, St Leonards was built as a Victorian coastal resort but by the 1990s, many of its grand buildings were in poor condition. A £1 million THI grant from HLF has attracted nearly £1 million in additional funding and has already made a significant contribution to regenerating this town. It is linked to other initiatives such as tackling crime, security and public transport, and already the image of the town is improving.

These are just two examples of coastal towns from across England where heritage is contributing to sustainable communities by acting as a catalyst for wider regeneration.

### *Conservation*

HLF has contributed around £75 million to building conservation in coastal resorts either as part of THIs or individual grants, bringing many individual historic buildings back into productive use. For example, Saltburn Pier was built in the 1860s and is now the only remaining pleasure pier in the North East. Over £1 million from HLF has restored the pier and improved access, contributing to a growing local tourism spend. In Bexhill, the once-condemned De La Warr Pavilion has now been restored to its former glory as an iconic modern building.

HLF has also funded a number of historic ships that lie at the centre of regenerated harbour-side areas. HMS Trincomalee, built in Bombay in 1817, is the oldest ship afloat in the UK. An HLF grant of £4.8 million has helped restore and interpret the ship, and has made a significant contribution to the regeneration of the Hartlepool dockside. The award-winning project has changed the perception of the area so much that it now features in a national VisitBritain tourism campaign.

Because conservation tends to make greater use of local labour and materials, all of these projects are likely to be making a more significant contribution to the local economy than new build.

## *Museums*

HLF has supported more than 600 museums across the UK. On the south coast of England alone we have supported museums in Brighton, Bournemouth, Bexhill, Hastings, Eastbourne, Torquay and Exeter among others.

One of the most spectacular HLF projects is the new National Maritime Museum Cornwall at Falmouth, an impressive waterfront building with underwater windows through which visitors can see marine life and a 30 metre tower with panoramic views of the harbour. By helping to strengthen the year round visitor economy and lengthen the visitor season, the museum is an extremely important asset for the Cornish tourist economy.

Great Yarmouth was once a top seaside destination for Victorian and Edwardian holiday-makers, but has been in decline for many decades to the extent that two of the wards are among the most deprived in the UK. The Tower Curing Works has been brought back to life as the Time and Tide museum which celebrates the maritime and fishing heritage of Great Yarmouth, bringing to life its herring curing industry and the lives of the people who worked there. The £4.7 million project, funded by Great Yarmouth Borough Council, the Heritage Lottery Fund, East of England Development Agency and ERDF, aims to provide the community with a sense of place in history, identity and self esteem. Together with other initiatives supported by HLF—a THI and work to Nelson’s Monument—this project is helping to make Great Yarmouth a year round destination and helping to tackle underlying social problems.

## *The Slave Trade*

2007 is the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the trans-Atlantic slave trade in British Ships. The major coastal cities of Liverpool, Hull and Bristol were important centres for this trade. This is a critical part of our heritage which has shaped the society in which we live today, and is represented in museum and archive collections and in many historic buildings and places. The anniversary will be an opportunity to deepen and spread knowledge about a significant part of our history. HLF has supported 28 different projects relating to slavery, including major awards to National Museums Liverpool for the National Museum and Centre for the Understanding of Transatlantic Slavery, to Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery for the new city museum itself which will include a gallery on Bristol and the slave trade, and Hull Museums and Art Gallery for the development of the Wilberforce House Museum. We have also produced guidance to help applicants develop projects relating to the bicentenary, and are members of the Ministerial Bicentenary Advisory Group co-ordinated by ODPM.

## 4. FUNDING FOR COASTAL HERITAGE

HLF funds a wide variety of coastal heritage, not all of which is necessarily found in Coastal Resorts; cities such as Liverpool, Southampton and Hull have all benefited from major HLF projects—Liverpool alone has had over £73 million in funding. At Chatham in Kent for example, HLF has helped conserve three historic warships—HM Submarine Ocelot, HMS Cavalier and HMS Gannett. The dockyard closed in 1984 but as a result of HLF funding, it has been revived as a centre for heritage and regeneration, bringing around £20 million to the local economy each year. The improvements have already had wider regeneration implications for the Thames Gateway area.

HLF has also supported many other projects around the coasts of Britain; our broad definition of heritage includes biodiversity, and groups such as the Helford Voluntary Marine Conservation Group have had funding to care for and interpret the biodiversity of the local estuary. At Abbots Hall Farm the Essex Wildlife Trust are undertaking an innovative coastal biodiversity project; with support from HLF, they have breached the sea walls, reducing coastal erosion in nearby areas and recreating important wetland habitats. HLF has also funded outstanding coastal landscapes such as the Jurassic Coast as well as projects to conserve historic docks and harbours, such as the docks at Lydney in Gloucestershire.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Britain has always been a seafaring nation, and its relationship with the sea has shaped our identity. The buildings, landscapes, collections, places and indeed memories associated with the coast and seafaring are central to our heritage.

Coastal towns and cities—and indeed Britain’s coastline—have benefited greatly from the £3.3 billion HLF has invested in the heritage of the UK, from tiny community projects to major capital developments. Many of those projects have generated partnerships between regional funding bodies, local authorities and HLF. They have shown that heritage can be a catalyst for physical, economic and social regeneration—creating sustainable communities by caring for what people value.

The Government is currently consulting on the future shares of Lottery income for the good causes; it is vital that we at least maintain our share in order to continue to support conservation, regeneration and public involvement at this level.

## APPENDIX ONE

## HLF FUNDING TO ENGLISH COASTAL RESORTS BY GRANT PROGRAMME (USING THE DEFINITION OF A RESORT PROVIDED BY THE BRITISH RESORTS ASSOCIATION)

<i>HLF Programme</i>	<i>Number of projects</i>	<i>Total</i>
Heritage Grants	234	£125 million
Your Heritage	107	£4.04 million
Townscape Heritage Initiatives (THI) and Conservation Area Partnerships (CAP)	43	£66.4 million
Repair Grants for Places of Worship	22	£2.9 million
Public Parks	41	£860,000
Project Planning Grants	29	£1.02 million
Young Roots	31	£658,000
Tomorrow's Heathland Heritage	1	£591,000
Millennium Festivities Fund	5	£859,000
Major Museums Archives and Libraries Programme (MAP)	4	£31.8 million
Total	517	£234,184,872

## APPENDIX TWO

## HLF GRANTS TO ENGLISH COASTAL RESORTS BY REGION (USING THE DEFINITION OF A COASTAL RESORT PROVIDED BY THE BRITISH RESORTS ASSOCIATION)

<i>Region</i>	<i>Coastal Resort</i>	<i>Total Value</i>	<i>No of Projects</i>
East Midlands	Skegness	1,232,360	3
East Midlands Total		1,232,360	3
Eastern	Aldeburgh	133,842	3
	Clacton-on-Sea	501,495	3
	Cromer	787,300	4
	Felixstowe	25,000	1
	Frinton-on-Sea	6,500	1
	Great Yarmouth	6,419,375	13
	Hunstanton	38,000	1
	Lowestoft	4,879,370	9
	Sheringham	1,327,340	6
	Southend-on-Sea	1,659,300	4
	Southwold	308,600	2
	St. Ives	67,600	1
Eastern Total		16,153,722	48
North East	Hartlepool	7,912,350	12
	North Shields	1,652,600	9
	Redcar	942,124	7
	Saltburn-by-the-Sea	1,446,000	3
	South Shields	6,074,725	10
	Sunderland	15,751,100	18
	Whitley Bay	157,680	3
North East Total		33,936,579	62
North West	Blackpool	6,063,500	10
	Fleetwood	28,300	1
	Grange-over-Sands	448,519	8
	Lytham St. Annes	168,600	5
	Morecambe	177,800	3
	Southport	5,552,000	8
	Thornton-Cleveleys	49,700	1
	Whitehaven	1,386,400	7
North West Total		13,874,819	43

<i>Region</i>	<i>Coastal Resort</i>	<i>Total Value</i>	<i>No of Projects</i>
South East	Bexhill-on-Sea	3,341,900	4
	Bognor Regis	1,802,700	3
	Brighton	1,365,862	27
	Broadstairs	433,000	1
	Christchurch	413,400	2
	Eastbourne	2,492,750	8
	Folkestone	2,126,618	5
	Hastings	4,819,100	8
	Herne Bay	1,230,400	3
	Hythe	2,581,750	2
	Margate	1,954,725	5
	Ramsgate	4,034,750	8
	Ryde	2,383,500	6
	Sandown	2,573,729	3
	Southsea	479,465	4
	Ventnor	30,000	1
	Whitstable	490,625	4
Worthing	2,210,245	10	
South East Total		32,032,795	104
South West	Bournemouth	3,431,025	7
	Bristol	73,601,388	78
	Brixham	119,300	4
	Bude	85,700	5
	Burnham-on-Sea	431,400	1
	Christchurch	2,670,000	2
	Clevedon	1,221,013	2
	Dartmouth	72,000	2
	Dawlish	20,400	1
	Exmouth	50,000	1
	Falmouth	21,017,031	22
	Ilfracombe	1,203,000	3
	Lyme Regis	492,800	6
	Minehead	787,000	6
	Newquay	89,000	3
	Paignton	71,700	2
	Penzance	4,384,812	23
	Poole	1,480,700	9
	Sidmouth	684,100	3
	St. Ives	648,700	2
Swanage	109,600	3	
Teignmouth	50,000	1	
Torquay	7,530,800	9	
Weston-super-Mare	2,042,140	11	
Weymouth	2,747,288	5	
South West Total		125,040,897	211
Yorkshire and The Humber	Bridlington	184,900	4
	Cleethorpes	324,000	2
	Filey	114,000	3
	Hornsea	186,900	3
	Saltburn-by-the-Sea	230,500	2
	Scarborough	3,472,500	16
	Whitby	7,397,100	15
Withernsea	3,800	1	
Yorkshire and The Humber Total		11,913,700	46
Grand Total		234,184,872	517

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**Memorandum by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (CT 54)**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Government welcomes the Committee's inquiry into coastal towns and the opportunity to highlight the work currently being done to meet the social, economic, housing and environmental challenges that coastal towns experience. The Government agrees with the Committee that a review of our progress in creating sustainable communities in this important context is timely.

Coastal towns, like other places, vary tremendously, and the Government does not use a fixed definition. In order to form our response to the Committee we have used evidence from a range of larger cities and resorts such as Brighton, Blackpool, Great Yarmouth or Southend. However, many coastal towns are far smaller, and settlements such as Cromer, Padstow and Bude play an important and distinctive role, with their own challenges.

We have looked at a variety of indicators for coastal settlements, using the list of 40 larger UK towns that underpins the recent report, *The Seaside Economy*.<sup>64</sup> The evidence shows wide variation between towns such as Blackpool and smaller settlements such as St Ives. Nevertheless, certain common challenges can be seen across former resort towns as a whole, including a high rate of poor housing—much of which is in the private rental sector; significant numbers of older people; and low incomes. Twenty-one of the 88 most deprived authorities are in coastal areas, including five resorts (Blackpool, Brighton, Great Yarmouth and Penwith (St Ives and Penzance)).

Yet these problems need to be seen in a context where most coastal towns have experienced high population growth, and, as the Seaside Economy showed, have coped well with economic change, avoiding the cycle of depopulation and decline that had been observed in some other contexts.

Clearly, there will be no single solution for every area. However, coastal towns do need significant support from central government to meet their needs. As can be seen in the recent announcement of the first funding tranches from the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative, this need is being recognised. In this submission we have reviewed the impact of our policies on coastal areas—showing the wide range of support and targeted interventions and both national and regional level from which these towns have benefited. The Government does not believe that these areas have “fallen through the gaps”.

To date, the focus of such support has been to help individual authorities provide an effective local response to local problems through additional funding and tools. However, the Government recognises that more may need to be done to support development and regeneration in some coastal sub-regions. We are aware of the proposals from the South East RDA to establish a growth and regeneration strategy along the South East Coast. The Government believes that the potential of such regional projects to overcome some of the spatial and infrastructure challenges faced by such settlements, and to promote continued inward investment and job growth, merits further consideration.

In this light, the Government intends to consider in more detail the nature of the challenges facing coastal towns and to examine a broad range of potential options for addressing this problem. This will be a central theme of our forthcoming Coastal Towns City Summit. The Government looks forward to discussing the emerging conclusions with the committee, and hopes that the committee's work can support further policy development in this area.

**INTRODUCTION: UNDERSTANDING COASTAL TOWNS**

The Government has not undertaken any large scale research in recent years into the problems facing coastal towns, but the wide range of data held through our Neighbourhood Statistics project and from other research points to a suite of issues faced by coastal towns. These include:

- their peripheral location which can be reflected in weaker transport links;
- the impact on the local economy of the changing trends in tourism;
- comparatively high levels of seasonal employment;
- larger numbers of older and younger people;
- large numbers of private rented homes; and
- higher than average rates of poor housing conditions.

However, there are also many differences between coastal towns, including varying size, the impact of regional and historic contexts and different patterns of economic development. It is therefore difficult to generalise about places ranging from Bournemouth and Brighton to Skegness and St Ives.

Coastal towns have been the subject of a range of research. Most recently, “The Seaside Economy”<sup>65</sup> made an important contribution to the debate exploring the problems of coastal towns.

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<sup>64</sup> *THE SEASIDE ECONOMY—The final report of the seaside towns research project* by Christina Beatty and Stephen Fothergill, Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, Sheffield Hallam University, June 2003.

<sup>65</sup> *THE SEASIDE ECONOMY—The final report of the seaside towns research project* by Christina Beatty and Stephen Fothergill, Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, Sheffield Hallam University, June 2003.

The report noted that, unlike other traditional industrial areas which have suffered decline in their main industry, seaside towns have experienced strong population growth, not an exodus of people, concluding that “economic trends in seaside towns place their problems in a different category to those of older industrial areas”,<sup>66</sup> and that the “spiral of decline” seen in areas such as the coalfields, has not taken hold.

However, this does not disguise that there are real and important problems facing coastal towns, particularly in the areas of housing and economic and social regeneration. These issues are being addressed through priority policy and programmes that are delivered by the Government and regional partners.

Analysis of the neighbourhood statistics relating to a sample group of coastal towns reveal some interesting trends, and can be seen to some extent to support commonly held assumptions.

The table overleaf sets out a range of statistical evidence relating to a sample group of coastal towns, set in comparison to the national average.

**Table 1**

	<i>England/ Wales Average</i>	<i>Blackpool</i>	<i>Brighton</i>	<i>Cromer</i>	<i>Thanet</i>
Population		260,700	279,900	7,749	121,300
% retirement age	19	22	18	30	24
% people of working age in employment in summer 2004	75	69	72	73	69
% dwelling classes as unfit	4.8	7	8.5	3.1	7.7
% households owner-occupiers (including with mortgage)	68.3	75.3	61.1	53.2	70
% households renting from private landlord	8.7	16.3	20.4	37.1	13.2

A fuller table looking at a wider range of towns is attached as Annex A and information on housing conditions is in Table 2 (see Ev 177). These figures show:

- Higher numbers of low income households.
- Higher than average levels of rented housing, and non-decent housing. Many commentators have suggested that this is a legacy of the guesthouse and coastal tourism industries.
- Rapid population growth.

It also seems that some areas experience problems of poorer education attainment, lower life expectancy and higher rates of homelessness acceptances, although these areas are closely related to the regional conditions that are found.

## 1. PROTECTING COASTAL ENVIRONMENTS, ENHANCING COASTAL TOWNS

Coastal towns benefit from their location by the sea and from their valuable heritage as traditional tourist destinations. The Government is committed to ensuring these features are protected and the economic and environmental benefits are maximised as far as possible.

However, coastal locations also pose a unique set of challenges arising from their coastal location, including environmental issues related to flooding and erosion and town centres that may be suffering from symptoms of decline as fewer tourists visit British seaside towns.

### *Managing Coastal Environments*

Towns on the coast can be at risk from flooding by the sea and coastal erosion and this requires special consideration of planning issues if new development is not to be put at unnecessary risk. In respect of existing populations, the Government funds the Environment Agency and coastal local authorities to manage the risk from sea flooding and coastal erosion. Large sums have been invested at Blackpool, Brighton, Southend, Bournemouth, Lyme Regis, Scarborough and many other locations. These investments can contribute to wider objectives including regeneration and amenity.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) leads on coastal policy. The Government is committed to adopting an integrated approach to the coastal zone in general, as stated in our first Marine Stewardship Report “Safeguarding Our Seas” in 2002.<sup>67</sup> Integrated Coastal Zone Management

<sup>66</sup> As above.

<sup>67</sup> Also see the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2002, concerning the implementation of Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Europe (2002/413/EC).

(ICZM) is an approach which aims to harmonise the different policies and decision making structures in coastal areas by considering the different factors affecting both the marine and land elements of the coast (including economic and social considerations); and ultimately, to support our general goals for sustainable development.

Shoreline Management Plans provide a long-term vision for a sustainable coast where future decisions can be taken with confidence using the best available evidence and effective engagement with local communities. In the longer term climate change and sea level rise pose significant challenges. Defra is reviewing roles, responsibilities and policy to manage the impact through development of its *Making space for water strategy*.

Measures to reduce risk by building defences may not be feasible in all locations, particularly given the impact of climate change. Under the *Making space for water* programme Defra is seeking to assess the scale and effect of concerns where long term defences cannot be sustained and to develop options to help communities adapt to a changing coast.

Through Planning Policy Guidance 20—Coastal Planning (PPG20), (released in September 1992), planning authorities are provided with advice on the issues that should be considered when making development decision in or near the coast. PPG20 states that a precautionary approach should be taken to land affected, or likely to be affected, by erosion or land instability, and in the case of receding cliffs, development should not be allowed to take place in areas where erosion is likely to occur during the lifetime of the building. PPG20 suggests that such areas should be clearly identified and mapped, and shown in development plans.

#### *Improving local environmental quality*

The quality of public space and local environment is essential to the well being of these communities. Good quality spaces can attract new residents and tourists, increase community safety and help tackle deprivation.

Local authorities are being supported in improving the local environmental quality of coastal areas by the provision of new legislative tools for tackling issues such as litter, graffiti, abandoned vehicles, dog fouling, fly-tipping and fly-posting in the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. Most of the remaining provisions in the Act will be made available from April 2006, including new and improved fixed penalty notice powers for tackling a range of enviro-crimes. Local authorities will be supported in the use of these powers through comprehensive guidance on the legislation, the development of enforcement training and promotion of good practice. This is backed up by funding from the Cleaner, Safer, Greener Programme (CSG) focuses on improving the quality of planning, design, management and maintenance of public spaces and the built environment This is helping to help deliver physical improvements to public spaces in a number of coastal locations, including Blackpool, Great Yarmouth, Thanet and North Somerset.

In addition, ENCAMS (Environmental Campaigns), an environmental charity funded by Defra, administer the Seaside Awards and the Blue Flag Campaign and have run anti-litter campaigns targeted at visitors to coastal areas. These aim to improve the environmental management and public awareness of coastal areas and encourage visitors.

In 2006, ENCAMS will be launching a new “Quality Coast Award” which will replace the Seaside Awards in 2007. This will provide a new system for recognising well-managed coastlines that address the requirements of different coastal users. It will offer a more holistic approach to coastal management, maximising enjoyment of these areas by minimising conflicts between different users, preventing damage to the environment and promoting local environmental quality standards.

The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), funded in part by ODPM, and English Heritage have also published a joint report, “Shifting Sands—Design and the Changing Image of Seaside Towns”, which looks at a number of different ways in which seaside resorts are developing, changing or re-inventing themselves and at the role that new high quality buildings and open spaces that make the most of their seaside context can have on these changes. Further design work led by English Heritage and CABE has looked at preserving the unique sense of place and architectural heritage of the Thames Gateway.

## 2. PROMOTING INCLUSION, TACKLING DISADVANTAGE

### *The Issues*

Economic and social trends—including shifts in the tourism industry and the effects of an ageing population—have combined to pose particular problems for some coastal areas, which require careful management.

The evidence shows that communities such as coastal towns with an above average number of older and younger people can experience higher than average rates of worklessness and social exclusion, whilst an ageing population presents challenges for public service providers and local authorities.

At the same time, a combination of the physical legacy of guesthouses and high-density housing, combined with the attractiveness of seaside environments, has led to particular housing problems. The table overleaf shows that, in 2001, (currently last data available using the 1991 Census Area Classification which identified “declining resort” centres at ward level), virtually half of all stock in these resorts was non-decent (compared to 33% elsewhere), and 6% assessed as unfit compared to 4% elsewhere. These poor housing conditions are exacerbated by a much greater than average dependency on private renting (at 20% of the stock of these resort areas, twice the rate as elsewhere) and with below average levels of owner occupation and social housing. These phenomena can place strains on communities, undermining the stability of neighbourhoods and bringing a range of social problems. Many coastal local authorities also face higher than average numbers of homelessness acceptances, although there is no visible national trend.

### The Government’s Approach

The Government has a range of policies in place to help tackle disadvantage and support vulnerable people living throughout the country. Our national policy framework for tackling issues such as homelessness and for support vulnerable people, is designed to give local areas the flexibility to respond to local circumstances and needs. The nature and extent of these challenges vary considerably from one location to another, so a flexible approach driven by the local area delivers the most effective solutions. We are giving new tools to local authorities—through planning policy and new Housing Act powers—to deal with problems within the context of local strategies.

At the same time, we are targeting additional financial support to those areas facing the greatest needs. Twenty-one (out of a total of 88) coastal authorities receive funds from the Neighbourhood Renewal fund (including Blackpool, Brighton and Hove, Hastings and Great Yarmouth) whilst other coastal areas have benefited from New Deal for the Communities Partnerships, neighbourhood management pathfinders and the new Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (dealt with in chapter 3).

### *Creating sustainable communities*

Because of their large stock of private rented and unfit housing, coastal towns will benefit from two measures in the 2004 Housing Act, Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licensing and selective landlord licensing.

The 2004 Act introduced a licensing regime for HMOs to help drive up standards in the private rented sector. This is essentially aimed at raising both physical and management standards in HMOs for the benefit of the occupiers and the wider community.

The decline of the use of bed and breakfast and guesthouse establishments by tourists in seaside towns has led to many of these properties being used as HMOs. There is a widespread perception that the number and quality of HMOs in coastal towns has adversely affected the character and amenity of the neighbourhood in which they are located. Licensing enables authorities to raise both the physical and management standards of HMOs, helping authorities deliver better neighbourhoods and improving the quality of life for local residents.

### Selective Licensing

Some commentators<sup>68</sup> have pointed to the transient population passing through the large stock of rental accommodation as a source of anti-social behaviour and poor quality local environments in coastal towns. The Housing Act 2004 also provides for Selective Licensing of other privately rented properties with the primary aim of ensuring landlords take active part in the management of such properties.

Landlords will be expected to ensure that references of prospective tenants are checked and will be able to work with local authorities to address the behaviour of tenants who are proving a nuisance in the local community.

The same conditions for granting HMO licences will also apply but in the case of Selective Licensing, the emphasis is very much on the landlord’s fitness to manage the property rather than the physical conditions of the property. Management orders can also be made where a licensing has been refused or revoked and no suitable alternative licence holder can be found.

These measures, with other available measures, will enable local authorities to more effectively regulate such properties in their areas and go a long way in tackling problems of HMOs, unscrupulous landlords and their tenants in coastal towns.

<sup>68</sup> *CLES submission to ODPM Select Committee on Coastal Towns.*

Table 2

## HOUSING CONDITIONS AND TENURE IN “DECLINING RESORTS”, 2001

	<i>conditions</i>		<i>tenure</i>			
	<i>non-decent</i>	<i>unfit</i>	<i>owned</i>	<i>privately rented</i>	<i>social stock</i>	<i>all stock</i>
<i>number of dwellings within areas (000s):</i>						
declining resorts	149	18	186	59	56	302
elsewhere	6,905	883	14,600	2,111	4,178	20,888
all areas	7,053	901	14,786	2,170	4,234	21,190
<i>%age of all stock within areas:</i>						
declining resorts	49.3	6.0	61.7	19.6	18.7	100.0
elsewhere	33.1	4.2	69.9	10.1	20.0	100.0
all areas	33.3	4.3	69.8	10.2	20.0	100.0

Source: 2001 English House Condition Survey.

Note: “declining resorts” are derived from the ward level 1991 Census Area Classification, developed in 1996 and last updated 1999.

### Homelessness

While all Coastal Towns may have unique homelessness issues, ODPM does not have any evidence that they are experienced uniformly across all coastal towns (see statistics Annex A). Approaches to tackle and prevent homelessness are equally valid in coastal towns as anywhere else.

In 2002, legislation was introduced requiring every local authority in England to put in place a strategy in place to tackle and prevent homelessness in their area. Many coastal authorities have achieved considerable success through these strategies.

ODPM has supported local authorities’ strategies with resources to invest in prevention schemes. We have invested £280 million revenue funding since 2002–03 backed up with guidance and advice from a team of specialist advisers to ensure that best practice is widely disseminated.

Our approaches are working and we have demonstrated considerable success including:

- achieving a 75% reduction in rough sleeping since 1998, with reduction sustained at lowest recorded levels;
- ending the scandal of homeless families with children living for long periods in cramped and unsuitable B&B hotels; whilst
- 2004 saw the first sustained reductions since the mid 1990s in the number of people who face homelessness and seek help from councils under the homelessness legislation.

Our homelessness strategy *Sustainable Communities: settled homes; changing lives* (2005) sets out how we will build on these successes and deliver the challenging target to halve the numbers in temporary accommodation by 2010, working alongside local authorities, other Government Departments and our key delivery partners.

### A balanced approach to supporting Asylum Seekers

Concern about the impact of asylum seekers on coastal areas was raised in 2000, with a perception that these areas might be bearing a disproportionate impact from a transient population which could damage their tourism industry.

The National Asylum Support Service (NASS) provides support for destitute asylum seekers. Before the introduction of the NASS support arrangements the London Boroughs and other parts of the South East carried a disproportionate share of the responsibility for supporting asylum seekers. Support for asylum seekers is now co-ordinated on a national basis and asylum seekers requiring accommodation are dispersed around the country, thereby alleviating the pressure on London and the South East.

In identifying cluster areas in 2000 regard was had as to whether there was a ready supply of suitable and available accommodation and whether it would be possible to develop the support of voluntary and community groups to assist asylum seekers. Account was taken of particular concerns about dispersal to some areas or types of area when designating cluster areas.

There is limited dispersal to a number of seaside towns—with the support of the relevant local authorities. Resort towns include Brighton (under 50) and Hastings & St Leonards (110). There is also dispersal to other coastal towns that would not be regarded as tourist destinations—again with the agreement of the relevant authorities.

#### *Supporting Areas in Greatest Need*

The Government is investing considerable funds in our most deprived areas to enable them to tackle disadvantage and improve quality of life. The total Neighbourhood Renewal Fund allocation for 2005–06 is £525 million and in Spending Review 2004 over £1 billion was made available for the period 2006–08. Not all coastal towns benefit from Neighbourhood Renewal Fund as it targets the very poorest neighbourhoods in England—but four of the 88 authorities currently receiving help are coastal resorts Blackpool, Brighton, Great Yarmouth and Penwith (St Ives and Penzance), and a total of 21 authorities are on the coast.

In addition, there are a number of New Deal for Communities partnerships in particularly deprived wards in coastal towns—including Southampton, Brighton and Plymouth. These are tackling deep rooted problems of crime, transport, and health.

In Plymouth for example, the NDC has helped tackle a number of problems in the local area, including leading the way in a “Bobbies on the Beat” project, development of an action plan to address local barriers to improving health and preparation of a framework for the future use of surplus MoD land.

Finally, several coastal towns have neighbourhood management pathfinders including Ilfracombe, Bournemouth, Poulton and the Isle of Wight.

In Poulton, the NMP’s strategy is based on improving the housing and physical environment and tackling crime and anti-social behaviour which is seen as essential to making the town more attractive to tourists and investors and also bettering residents’ quality of life. Lancaster City Council will receive total funding of £3.7 million over seven years until 2008–09 to support this.

### 3. THRIVING LOCAL BUSINESSES, SUCCESSFUL REGIONAL ECONOMIES

#### *The Government’s Approach*

Bringing a sustainable and successful economic future to every community is a top priority for the Government.

Tourism and fishing have historically been key industries for coastal areas. 27% of holiday trips by the British are to the seaside, and there were 270 million day visits to the British coast in 2003—up by 11% since 1998—and generating a £3.1 billion spend. Tourism received around £300 million of public money in 2004–05. The Government continues to support this industry grow and develop, working on standards and best practice with the LGA, beacon authorities and others.

Fishing is another key industry for coastal areas which is facing change, and the Government is putting measures in place to help communities overcome problems caused by reductions in fishing quotas, through regeneration funding and the European fisheries grant scheme (FIFG).

Despite this support, coastal areas can face problems in attracting and retaining new industries and businesses. These settlements can face challenges linked to their peripheral location, lack of higher education facilities or need to upgrade the local public realm and environment. Many coastal towns have been extremely successful in turning around their fortunes—Brighton, Bournemouth—but others have struggled. The Government believes that high quality subregional strategies are needed to enable local authorities in coastal locations to work together to promote their offer, make best use of their assets and infrastructure, and form an integral part of regional and city-regional economic strategies.

At the same time, local authorities face real challenges in raising the level of skills and entrepreneurship within their areas, and in providing adequate support to new enterprise. The Government was pleased to announce a substantial contribution to this agenda through the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative. Below, we examine how Government—working with and through the RDAs—has sought to promote this, and outline new ways in which this vision can be realised.

#### *Towards Effective Regional Strategies*

The Government is working with the nine Regional Development Agencies, English Partnerships and European funds to help develop and implement Regional Economic Strategies that support and enhance the development of coastal areas. Responsibility for managing such programmes has been devolved to the local and regional levels, and RDAs are the primary vehicle for delivering support for the economic development of coastal authorities.

All of the RDAs are giving active consideration to the way in which the coastal parts of their regions can be supported to grow, making best use of their assets and infrastructure.

For example:

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- The South West RDA supports a Market and Coastal Towns Initiative, which is helping the more deprived market and coastal towns develop an effective Sustainable Community Strategy, connected to spending on regeneration, skills and business support.
  - The East Midlands is supporting Lincolnshire County Council in developing a Coastal Action Zone, which seeks to integrate the use of resources.
  - OneNorthEast has commissioned a framework for the development of the Visitor economy in the North East Coast.
  - Yorkshire Forward is investing in the development of the economies of coastal towns, primarily through their Renaissance Towns and Cities programme. The coastal towns involved include Bridlington, Immingham, Grimsby, Cleethorpes and Scarborough. In Scarborough Yorkshire Forward is investing £6 million to 2009–10 targeting five priority projects to encourage regeneration including:
    - The transformation of the Harbour area.
    - The reinvention of the iconic Rotunda Museum.
    - Significant investment to transform the Spa complex into a conference and entertainment venue.
    - The establishment of a centre to facilitate the development of the cultural and creative industry sector in the town.
    - Capacity building to accommodate “home-grown” business development.

#### Case Study: Sea Space

The Sea Space task force, supported by SEEDA, English Partnerships (EP), East Sussex CC and the two local authorities is driving forward a prospectus for the redevelopment of the East Sussex Coastal Region as a whole, with work focussed around new and existing stations on the Ashford to Brighton line, and major developments in Hastings and Bexhill.

The task force aims to draw together the different projects underway and promote the area—linking them to the 900 homes proposed for the EP-led Millennium Community, the University Centre Hastings and other skills provision, plus commercial, community and leisure facilities—to draw in new investment and promote job growth. This is a 10 year investment programme with substantial private sector finance secured in addition to government funds.

The area is already benefiting from the opening of the new University Centre Hastings (UCH) in September 2003. The Centre offers a broad range of subjects, most of which are commercially focused to help benefit the local economy. Participating universities are Brighton, Canterbury Christchurch, the Open University, Sussex, Westminster and Hastings College of Arts and Technology.

This work is in addition to substantial contributions from the European Regional Development Funds, comprising £196 million under the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Objective 1 programme and £247 million in Objective 2 areas. In Cromer for example, ERDF funding is being used to support a seafront enhancement programme to reconnects and strengthens the linkages between the Cromer seafront and foreshore area with the commercial heart of Cromer town centre.

Finally, the Government announced at the end of February 2006 that two coastal towns would receive funding from the first tranche of the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI), Hastings (£3.6 million) and Great Yarmouth (£8.7 million). The money will be used to increase total entrepreneurial activity among the population; support the growth and reduce the failure rate of locally-owned businesses; and attract appropriate inward investment and franchising, making use of local labour resources.

Local authorities and English Partnerships are responding to such initiatives, often by establishing special purpose vehicles to lead change, such as Urban Regeneration Companies (URCs). A number of URCs have been set up in coastal areas, including in Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft, Southend and Blackpool. URCs are already delivering widespread physical regeneration comprising housing delivery, business accommodation and the reclaiming of derelict and underused land. They are leading major provision of infrastructure and improvements to the public realm, such as a new town square and redesigned promenade at Blackpool; an upgraded university campus at Southend and the waterfronts of Lowestoft and Yarmouth.

#### *Joining up—within and without*

With such a range of programmes and policies, ensuring that Authorities are in a position to create and operate workable and integrated strategies is key to effective delivery. The Government believes that Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs), bringing together a range of local service providers and stakeholders, are capable of providing such a focus at local level. We have just finished consulting on the future of LSPs and once we have evaluated the responses we will consider ways to improve their capacity and how to take forward the evolution of Community Strategies into Sustainable Community Strategies, probably through revised guidance later in the year.

The Government recognises that more may need to be done to support development and regeneration in some coastal sub-regions. We are aware of the proposals from the South East England Development Agency, working with local authorities, to develop a coastal strategy within the forthcoming Regional Economic Strategy for the area stretching from Whitstable on the North Kent Coast round to the west of Southampton. This area is characterised by some of the country's cleanest beaches, major environmental assets such as the Downs and the Channel Coast, and a number of towns and cities with their own distinct character and history. Yet it is also an area of substantial untapped economic potential, characterised overall by lower levels of educational attainment, lower skills in the workforce, fewer business start ups, fewer knowledge-based businesses, poorer transport connectivity and poorer levels of health than the rest of the South East.

SEEDA has calculated that if this area were to match the average economic performance of the UK, a further £13 billion in GVA would be added annually to the national economy. In addition, over 100,000 current residents of working age who are not currently in work would be brought into economic activity.

The Government believes that the potential of such regional projects to overcome some of the spatial and infrastructure challenges faced by such settlements, and to promote continued inward investment and job growth, merits further consideration. The development of such thinking will be a key issue for the forthcoming Coastal Towns Summit, to be held in Brighton in May 2006.

#### *New Opportunities, New Challenges*

Looking forward, a number of key policy developments offer opportunities for many of our coastal towns.

Many have identified casinos as potential drivers of economic recovery in coastal towns. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) is the lead Government department for casino policy and, in this context, works closely with ODPM on planning and regeneration issues relating to casinos.

#### New Opportunities—Housing Growth and Regeneration

The Thames Gateway is a national priority for regeneration and growth and is the first and biggest of the Government's four growth areas identified in the Sustainable Communities Plan, launched by the Deputy Prime Minister in February 2003. Delivery of the Thames Gateway is supported by Government as a whole, with £6 billion invested in the Gateway since 2003.

Southend is a popular coastal town within the Thames Gateway project. In common with many other areas within the Gateway there are significant pockets of deprivation. The local economy is in decline and is reliant on a few sectors (eg financial services), much of the office infrastructure is in need of modernisation and there is a high level of out commuting.

In order to reverse these trends ODPM (as well as English Partnerships, East of England Development Agency and Southend-on-Sea Borough Council) has provided the resources for a dedicated delivery vehicle to lead the regeneration of Southend. Renaissance Southend—the most recent or youngest urban regeneration company—one of 21 across the country—will bring together all the public and private players in the area together sharing a common agenda and goal.

To date Southend has been successful in securing over £35 million of investment from the Thames Gateway programme. This has supported a range of projects which are integral to the renaissance of Southend, including Prospects College of Vocational Skills and the creation of new campus for University of Essex at Southend.

Plans are that Southend will also accommodate up to 13,000 new jobs and up to 6,000 new homes by 2021. (Subject to these figures being tested by the Examination in Public of the East of England Plan).

The Gambling Act received Royal Assent in April 2005 and will come fully into force in September 2007. The Act provides for three new categories of casinos. There will be one regional casino; eight large casinos and eight small casinos.

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport has set up an independent Casino Advisory Panel to recommend the local authority areas in which the 17 new style casinos should be located. The Panel will be asked to identify areas for the new casinos which will provide a good range of types of locations, and a good geographical spread of locations across Britain. The primary criterion will be to ensure that locations satisfy the need for the best possible test of social impact of the new casinos to be made. The Panel will also include areas in need of regeneration (as measured by unemployment and other social deprivation data) and which are likely to benefit in these terms from a new casino.

The development of these new casinos, but particularly the one regional casino, will offer clear potential for regeneration. It will provide not just a range of gambling activities, but may include hotel accommodation, conference facilities, restaurants, bars, areas for live entertainment and other leisure attractions.

Finally, a number of coastal towns are considering becoming partners for housing growth (see above). The Government believes that when accompanied by appropriate infrastructure, investment and job growth, housing growth can help some coastal towns attract and retain new people and improve their competitiveness.

As part of the response to Kate Barker's Review of Housing Supply, the Government is seeking expressions of interest from those locations that would like to accommodate additional housing growth. It is envisaged that selected locations would be the focus of government attention and support in delivering growth outcomes. Coastal towns are eligible to apply for this program and those places that are experiencing population growth that is not matched by housing supply, are encouraged to contact ODPM directly for discussions.

#### CONCLUSION

Our coastal towns are a vital part of the nation's historic, environmental patrimony. And, with rising populations and an increasingly dynamic economic base, their potential to make a major contribution to the national economy is growing. The Government recognises that, although the funding and statutory measures that are in place will make a difference, there remain significant challenges and opportunities for these areas. However, given the varied needs of these communities, a national programme to address these issues may not be the the best way forward, given the importance the Government attaches to regional and local strategies and decision making.

Looking forward, coastal towns need to make the most of their location, forming the powerful sub-regional partnerships they will need to compete effectively, attract inward investment and retain high-skilled and entrepreneurial people. This is a challenging agenda, but the foundations for such work have been laid, with a new awareness of the opportunities amongst the RDAs and the emergence of effective local strategic approaches. The Government hopes that the work of this committee together with our forthcoming engagement with the Coastal Towns, will provide new impetus to such efforts and continue to reinforce the success of these important communities.

**Supplementary memorandum by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (CT 54(a))**

<i>Town</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>England</i>	<i>Age (UV04) All People Persons Count April 01</i>	<i>Dwelling Stock by Tenure and Condition LA Dwellings that are Unfit Percentage April 04</i>	<i>Dwelling Stock by Tenure and Condition, Owner Occupied and Private Rented Dwellings that are Unfit Percentage April 2004</i>	<i>Mid-Year Population Estimates by Broad Age Band; Percentage of Population; 16-44 Years June 2003</i>	<i>Population Change 1982-2002 Persons Percentage June 2002</i>	<i>Homelessness Percentage of Homeless Acceptances Households Percentage April 2003- March 2004</i>	<i>Life Expectancy at Birth, Females Persons July 02</i>	<i>People aged 16-74; Economically inactive; Permanently sick/disabled Percentage April 2001</i>	<i>Best Value Performance Indicators, Satisfaction with Cleanliness of Streets/ Land, Percentage Very or Fairly Satisfied Persons Percentage April 2000- March 2001</i>	<i>Indices of Deprivation 2004: Local Authority Summaries, Rank of Average Score (1 = most deprived, 354 = least deprived)</i>	<i>GCSE/GNVQ Achievements of 15 Year Old Pupils in Maintained Schools (Referenced by Location of Educational Institution), All 15 Year Old Pupils Achieving 5+ A*-C September 2002-August 2003</i>	<i>Income Support Claimants; Claim Rate Percentage August 2004</i>	<i>Standardised Mortality Ratios</i>
<b>Town</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>England</b>	<b>49,138,831</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>40.38</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>80.72</b>	<b>5.3</b>	—	—	<b>52.9</b>	<b>6.25</b>	<b>99</b>
Isle of Wight	Unitary Authority	Isle of Wight	132,731	—	3.4	32.65	13.7	13.6	81.7	5.76	64	126	44.3	6.59	93
Greater Bournemouth	Unitary Authority	Bournemouth	163,444	0	3.5	40.9	13.2	10.9	81.5	5.33	73	95	54.6	7.03	96
Bognor Regis	Non-Metropolitan District	Chichester	106,450	0	2.5	32.44	8	1.7	82.3	2.96	67	279	57.2	3.31	84
Bridlington	Unitary Authority	East Riding of Yorkshire	314,113	0.1	2.4	34.64	16.6	6.6	81.1	4.51	65	208	48.2	3.77	99
Burnham-on-Sea	Non-Metropolitan District	Sedgemoor	105,881	0	2.1	34.05	19	5.7	81.9	5.18	66	169	51	5.04	96
Clacton	Non-Metropolitan District	Tendring	138,539	0	5.9	29.92	23.3	10.5	80.8	6.9	64	103	47.7	6.97	91
Dawlish/Teignmouth	Non-Metropolitan District	Teignbridge	120,958	—	5.6	32.29	27.9	8	82.7	5.01	71	177	50.5	4.39	86
Deal	Non-Metropolitan District	Dover	104,566	5.6	12.8	34.85	2	8.4	80.6	5.76	56	154	55.9	6.15	98
Eastbourne	Non-Metropolitan District	Eastbourne	89,667	0	7.7	34.82	15.5	9	82	5.08	72	117	43.5	7.01	87
Falmouth	Non-Metropolitan District	Carrick	87,865	0	4.4	34.01	16.1	10.5	82.4	5.38	74	149	57.4	5.06	86
Folkestone/Hythe	Non-Metropolitan District	Shepway	96,238	0	11.5	34.93	11.5	14	80.3	5.58	59	131	51	7.1	101
Blackpool	Unitary Authority	Blackpool	142,283	9.3	7	36.36	-4.1	4.7	78.4	9.83	45	24	38.9	11.02	119
Brighton	Unitary Authority	Brighton and Hove	247,817	0.6	10	47.55	4.8	12.3	80.9	5.27	42	83	47.8	7.17	101

Worthing	Non-Metropolitan District	Worthing	97,568	0	4.3	35.73	5.1	7.3	81.1	4.7	73	198	51.5	5.3	98
Hastings/Bexhill	Non-Metropolitan District	Hastings	85,029	—	12.1	36.86	12	28.9	79.4	7.42	59	38	41.2	9.92	107
Ilfracombe	Non-Metropolitan District	North Devon	87,508	—	5.7	32.83	12.7	9.1	81.6	5.01	66	133	51.2	5.51	97
Lowestoft	Non-Metropolitan District	Waveney	112,342	0	0	33.07	12.3	12.2	81.5	5.88	70	113	50.9	6.58	93
Minehead	Non-Metropolitan District	West Somerset	35,075	—	6.1	28.53	22.3	6.2	82.1	5.38	68	110	50.3	5.69	85
Morecambe and Heysham	Non-Metropolitan District	Lancaster	133,914	0	3.4	40.65	6	19.9	80.2	6	86	107	56.9	6.23	101
Newquay	Non-Metropolitan District	Restormel	95,562	—	4.7	34.73	23.6	4.7	80.8	6.09	73	93	56.5	5.79	98
St Ives	Non-Metropolitan District	Penwith	63,012	—	6.1	31.9	19	15	80.7	7.63	73	56	57.5	7.64	94
Skegness	Non-Metropolitan District	East Lindsey	130,447	—	2.7	31.11	25.7	7.6	80.6	7.61	77	89	49.9	6.22	98
Southend-on-Sea	Unitary Authority	Southend-on-Sea	160,257	0.1	5	37.7	1.1	11	80.2	4.93	68	114	56.6	7.53	102
Southport	Metropolitan District	Sefton	282,958	0	3.6	35.73	-5.4	3	79.9	8.13	59	78	52.9	8.39	104
Swanage	Non-Metropolitan District	Purbeck	44,416	0	5.4	32.06	9.7	12.4	82.9	3.76	70	248	59.2	3.39	78
Thanet	Non-Metropolitan District	Thanet	126,702	0	8.8	33.46	4.4	9.7	80.3	6.8	52	85	47.6	8.64	106
Torbay	Unitary Authority	Torbay	129,706	—	2.9	32.86	16	14.1	81	7.11	59	94	51.8	8.29	97
Weston-super-Mare	Unitary Authority	North Somerset	188,564	0	3.6	34.38	16	12.2	81.5	4.58	63	228	54.8	5	92
Weymouth	Non-Metropolitan District	Weymouth and Portland	63,648	—	4.6	35.5	10.5	15.2	81.6	5.93	69	125	50.1	6.43	94
Whitley Bay	Metropolitan District	North Tyneside	191,659	4.2	2.3	37.74	-3.1	23	79.9	7.61	68	80	48.2	7.31	109
Whitstable/Herne Bay	Non-Metropolitan District	Canterbury	135,278	0	3.4	39.23	10.4	6.8	81.6	4.73	68	190	52.8	4.85	96