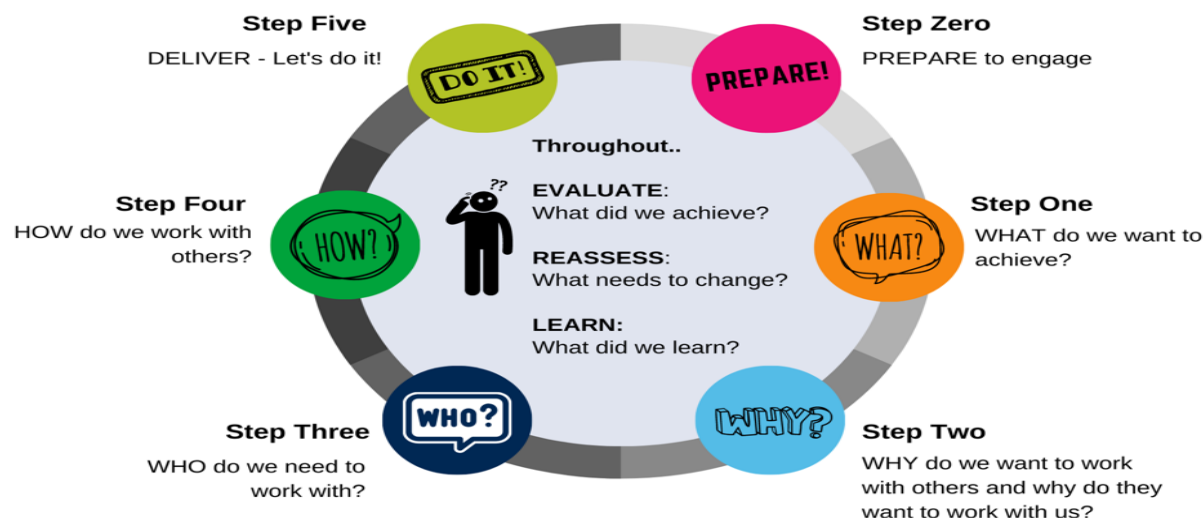


Introduction

Eastchurch - Engagement Plan (Draft - June 2025)	
Purpose of this document	This document provides a summary of all the information generated to date, to support a potential engagement project in Eastchurch in relation to coastal erosion and the development of an adaptation plan for Eastchurch. This draft plan was created with input from staff at Swale Borough Council, the Environment Agency and the Coasts in Mind Project. It provides the basis for the development of a project proposal, but will need to be reviewed and updated prior to the start of any future engagement process.
Overview of WWO approach	The model below is a useful way of framing engagement planning - the Environment Agency's Working With Others approach, which is based on established good practice for the design and delivery of engagement.

Working With Others Approach



Why Do We Want to Engage with the Community?

Business Objectives

- 1) To raise awareness and understanding of the historic and future erosion risk on the coast at Eastchurch, and some background on the larger issues nationally.
- 2) To provide information around erosion processes and the challenges they present.
- 3) To identify potential solutions for adapting to coastal erosion in Eastchurch.
- 4) To develop and agree an adaptation plan for Eastchurch

What are our Objectives in the Engagement Planning

Engagement Objectives

We will work with stakeholders to.....

- 1) Increase stakeholders' understanding of the historic and future erosion risks to Eastchurch.
- 2) Encourage and facilitate open two way communications on the challenges faced both short and longer term with coastal erosion.
- 3) Develop stakeholders' understanding of how the coast is managed.
- 4) Identify potential solutions for adapting to coastal erosion in Eastchurch.
- 5) Promote and encourage planning for the future by those residents at future risk of coastal erosion.
- 6) Develop and agree an adaptation plan for Eastchurch.

Who Do We Want to Talk to?

Whilst our main focus will be to talk to those residents in Eastchurch who will be affected by coastal erosion in the near future, there are a number of other stakeholders that we will look to engage with as part of this process. These include:-

- Eastern Sheppey Community Hub
- Communities “downdrift” (in areas currently benefitting from sediment moving along coast from eroding areas)
- Council Emergency Planners
- Eastchurch Gap Action Group
- Eastchurch Residents at Future Risk
- Eastchurch Parish Council
- Eastchurch Village Hall Group
- Environment Agency – National Coastal Team
- Environment Agency – Kent and South London Team
- Environment Agency – Medway Estuary and Swale Strategy (MEASS)
- Environment Agency – Partnership and Strategic Overview Team
- Environment Agency – Waste Team
- SGN Gas Networks (subject to mains supply in area)
- Health and Care Partnership
- Insurance Companies (Role unclear at this stage but could be affected by outcomes of Coastwise CTAP finance options)
- Kent County Council Community Warden
- Local Business – The Coppice Club
- Local Business – Palmtree Management (Caravan Dealership)
- Local Businesses – Caravan and Holiday Parks
- Local Farmers and Landowners
- Other Local Businesses/Shops in Eastchurch
- Maritime and Coastguard Agency (HM Coastguard)
- Kent County Council – Highways and Transportation
- Kent County Council – Public Rights of Way Officer
- Kent County Council – Waste Enforcement Team

- Kent and Medway Resilience Forum
- Emergency Services – Fire/Police/Ambulance
- Local History Groups (Eastchurch Aviation Museum/Volunteer Group/Minster Gatehouse Museum)
- Marine Management Organisation (MMO)
- Medway Swale Estuary Partnership (Beach Cleans from Sheerness to Shellness)
- Media
- Mobile Food Bank (Sheppey Bus)
- Natural England (Site falls within SSSI)
- Natural England – Coastal Path Team
- Parish Councils neighbouring Eastchurch (Minster, Leysdown, Warden Bay etc)
- Sheppey Matters
- South East Coastal Group
- Southern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee
- Southern Water
- Swale Borough Council – Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee
- Swale Borough Council – Housing Options Team and Housing (Private Sector Team)
- Swale Borough Council – Engineering team
- Swale Borough Council – Planning Team
- Swale Elected Members for North Sheppey
- Swale Farmers Cluster Group
- UK Power Networks
- Other VCS Support Services

How Do We Plan on Undertaking This Engagement?

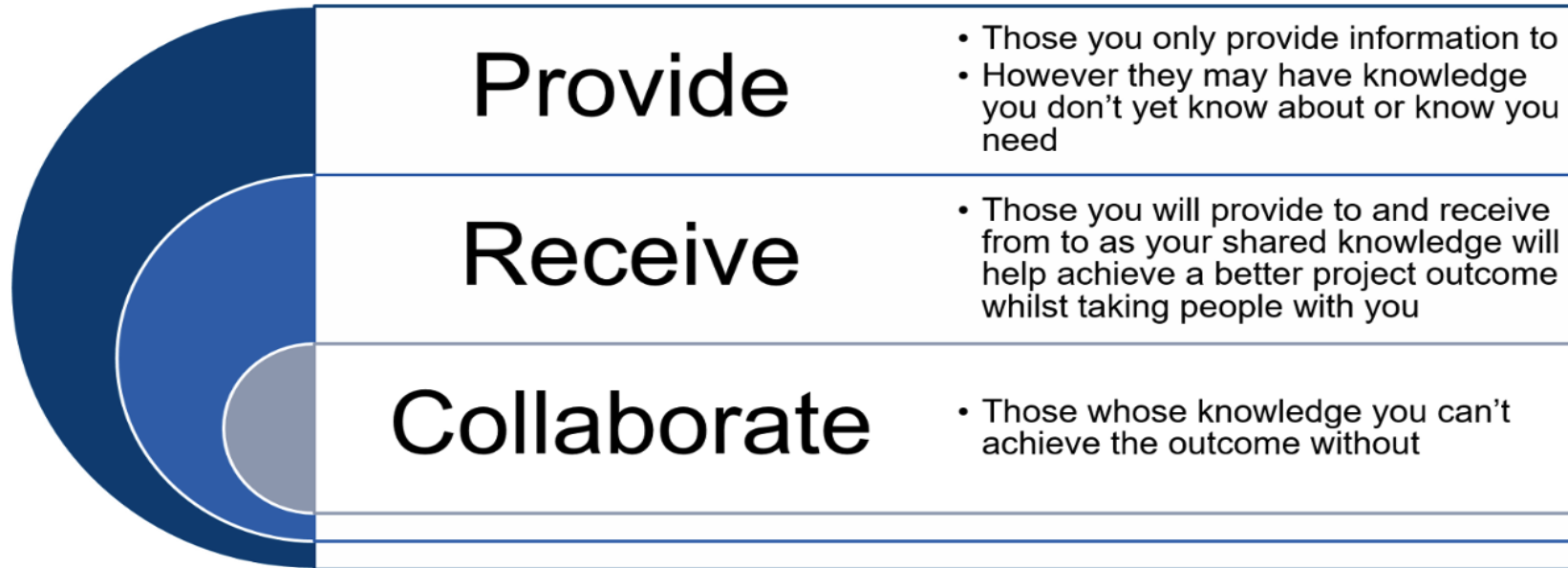
Activity (Residents at Risk)

- Meeting with Parish Council to talk about the issue and present the latest erosion predictions which have been published on the SMP Explorer website. Could also share the draft engagement plan with them to get their feedback
- 1:1 and/or small group meetings with residents at immediate risk to raise awareness of risk, discuss options and support available etc.
- Continue 1:1 conversations/support for those at immediate risk – what support/options are available to them; policies and procedures that apply and how to navigate them
- Provided a dedicated liaison officer from SBC to work directly with affected residents and provide a single point of contact to help build relationships and trust
- Produce a residents pack – including information on coastal erosion in a clear, accessible format (that can be downloaded from SBC website). Pack to include additional information for those at risk, e.g what can and can't be done for support; signpost to relevant teams, resources, etc.

Activity (Wider Community/Stakeholders)

- Hold “listening” sessions (community cafes and drop ins) to start engagement, find out what people are worried about and what they think is important etc and start to raise awareness
- Hold memory sharing workshops/sessions to include outputs and/or activities from Coasts in Mind project to incorporate more creative engagement routes – e.g to encourage storytelling, historic photos of the coast etc.
- Hold community workshops looking at SMP/history of change/environmental/economic rationale for policy – could involve other external experts on coastal management to help explore change
- Identify/use local partners to support 1:1 conversations with those most at risk eg Sheppey Matters
- Explore potential for Local History Groups to develop a history/story of coastal erosion of Sheppey/Eastchurch that could be developed with and shared with residents, businesses and other stakeholders

Levels of engagement



Overall Message House

Your 'umbrella' message

- The coast is changing and we need to develop a plan to change with it.
- We want to work with communities to plan for, and adapt to, coastal erosion.
- This project will help increase community coastal resilience in Eastchurch.

Benefits

- *The community will be better informed, better prepared – and organisations will be better placed to support people.*
- *By getting involved you will be able to be better informed and better prepared.*
- *Working together will ensure we are planning effectively as a community.*
- *The project provides an opportunity for us to work together and adapt to work with nature – better for people and the environment.*
- *We may be able to provide financial or housing support.*

Pre-empt objectives

- *Erosion has always happened along this coast, but planning ahead will mean we are in a better position.*
- *If you don't plan now for the future of your assets, you may incur expensive emergency costs later on.*

Call to action

- *Get involved in helping create a draft adaptation plan.*
- *Please look at our online tools to see if you are at risk [NCERM2, SMP-Explorer]*
- *Come along to our local events and give us your comments on the draft plan.*

Supporting facts, evidence, data – set out in a 'lines to take'

Message House – People at medium term risk (c.2055)

Your 'umbrella' message

- Erosion is happening – we can't stop it, but we can plan how to manage and adapt to the risk.
- Support may be available e.g. demolition costs, Council housing etc.

Benefits

- *By planning now for the future, you can be prepared and others can be better prepared to support you too.*

Pre-empt objectives

- *We can't stop the erosion from happening, but planning for the future is something that we can do and gives you control over how you want to adapt to future coastal erosion.*

Call to action

- *Know your risk and what support is available.*
- *Think about the future of where you leave and create a plan.*
- *Get involved in helping develop an adaptation plan for Eastchurch as a whole.*

Supporting facts, evidence, data – set out in a 'lines to take'

Message House – Infrastructure providers

Your 'umbrella' message

- This project matters to you because coastal erosion is going to keep on impacting this area.
- Your assets are at risk from coastal erosion – do you have a plan?

Benefits

- *By working with us and planning for the future of your assets you will:*
 - *Avoid emergency costs*
 - *Protect your assets*
 - *Protect the communities you serve*
 - *Enhance your company's reputation by being proactive.*

Pre-empt objectives

- *It's not economically, technically, or environmentally viable to stop erosion along this stretch of coast – so we want to plan ahead for how ensure this community is resilient to future coastal erosion.*

Call to action

- *Check your asset log against the NCERM data (include link to data)*
- *Create a plan for the future of your assets*
- *Get involved in helping to shape an adaptation plan for Eastchurch and the options for your assets.*

Supporting facts, evidence, data – set out in a 'lines to take'