



<b>Committee</b>	Strategic Planning Committee
<b>Date</b>	12/01/2026
<b>Subject</b>	Coastal Management and Adaptation Update
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Mark Packard Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management
<b>Report Author(s)</b>	Karen Thomas Strategic Lead for Coastal Management and Adaptation <a href="mailto:Karen.thomas@eastsoffolk.gov.uk">Karen.thomas@eastsoffolk.gov.uk</a>
<b>Head of Service</b>	Martyn Fulcher Head of Energy Planning and Coastal Management <a href="mailto:Martyn.fulcher@eastsoffolk.gov.uk">Martyn.fulcher@eastsoffolk.gov.uk</a>
<b>Director</b>	Nick Khan Strategic Director <a href="mailto:nick.khan@eastsoffolk.gov.uk">nick.khan@eastsoffolk.gov.uk</a>

Key Decision?	No
Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN

Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is <b>NOT</b> in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	
---	--

## Purpose/Summary

This report provides a place-based update on locations around the East Suffolk coastline and progress on the Resilient Coast project for which East Suffolk Council is the lead authority.

## Recommendation(s)

That the Strategic Planning Committee notes the work undertaken by the Coastal Management and Adaptation team at ESC.

That the Strategic Planning Committee provides any recommendations as to the content of future updates (if required).

## Strategic plan

### How does this proposal support Our Direction 2028?

<b>Environmental Impact</b>	Reducing harmful materials entering the environment. Working in partnership with stakeholders and communities to manage coastal adaptation and resilience wherever possible.
<b>Sustainable Housing</b>	Ensure all homes in East Suffolk are safe, suitable and sustainable.
<b>Tackling Inequalities</b>	Improve quality of life throughout the district by tackling financial inequalities.
<b>Thriving Economy</b>	Retain natural beaches and enhanced tourist offer.
<b>Our Foundations / governance of the organisation</b>	ESC governance structure.

## Justification for recommendations

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. East Suffolk Council is a Risk Management Authority (RMA) with coast protection responsibilities under the Coast Protection Act 1949 and has permissive powers, not duties, to manage the coast. Whether this is through coastal adaptation, building new coastal/erosion defences, monitoring changes or repairing and maintaining existing defences.
- 1.2. This report provides place-based updates for locations along the East Suffolk coastline and on the Resilient Coast Project.

### 2. Current Position on a Place-Based Update:

- 2.1. **Corton and Gunton** – The Rapid Adaptions Pathways Assessment (RAPA) meetings have developed into an ESC Adaptation Officer Working Group (AOWG), which is focused on a cross-council approach to adaptation opportunities for our coastal communities at greatest risk of erosion. The approach identifies a series of steps to address short term and up to 10 years of adaptation planning. Future updates will discuss this approach further.
- 2.2. **Lowestoft** – The damaged glass balustrade panel along the flood wall has been successfully replaced. The team is now working with the Environment Agency and Suffolk County Council in discussing future opportunities for Lowestoft temporary barrier flood protection. We are working with Economic Growth and Regeneration teams to establish a Mayoral project pipeline bid for a tidal resilience solution and will be exploring a new Treasury Place Based business case approach in the new year - cross council.
- 2.3. **Pakefield** – Regular monitoring and asset surveys continue. A bi-annual newsletter for residents has been circulated (see attached appendix 1 for information). An adaptation plan for Pakefield will be developed by the Adaptation Officers Group with the knowledge and experience of the RAPA process in Spring 2026.
- 2.4. **Southwold** – Southwold, as one of the Resilient Coast pilots, continues to be developed through the RAPA / AOWG process mentioned above. It is anticipated that a draft Pathways plan will be available in early January with the Resilient Coasts Adaptation Plan available in draft by September 2026.
- 2.5. **Thorpeness** – East Suffolk Council held a community meeting in Thorpeness on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2025 to provide high-level results from the readiness assessment survey that ran over the summer. Over 130 people attended the meeting.

The survey results indicated a desire to find out more about the coastal processes affecting Thorpeness and the different risk (coastal erosion and coastal flooding) impacting different parts of the village. Therefore, the Strategic Lead - Coastal Management and Adaptations officer presented an overview of the coastal processes currently impacting Thorpeness following the recent high rates of erosion.

Icarus Collective, an engagement consultancy who ran the survey, presented a summary of high-level outputs from the survey. A copy of the findings is attached appendix 2.

An adaptation plan will be developed throughout 2026 with wider council teams, partners and the community.

We continue to engage with property owners regarding their erosion and flood risk and are developing new planning and legal guidance with the Planning, Building Control and Legal Teams.

- 2.6. **Felixstowe** – Repairs and maintenance work to lollipop groynes, coping stones and Brackenbury beach access steps are now completed. A condition assessment report and repair options are currently being considered for north groynes and central and south seawall. The team have also provided engineering advice to the new Felixstowe Seafront Strategy regarding the coastal defences and access and egress to the beaches.
- 2.7. **Energy Projects** - The team continue to provide engineering and technical expertise to discussions linked to beach management at SZC - including around access and engagement. We have been providing input to applications for Lion Link and Sealink and supporting the Energy team and Members with community enquiries about potential impacts and opportunities of these projects at the coast.

### 3. **Resilient Coast Project Update**

- 3.1. There are different elements of the Resilient Coast Project, and these are broken down below for reference:
  - **Mapping our frontage** – The work for this package is always progressing. Under development is a 'How to guide' for our approach to monitoring. Post storm monitoring has been in high demand during this quarter.
  - **Circular Sediment Economy Simulator** - This significant piece of work is progressing well with review sessions in December and January to develop the final steps of the programme which is still on schedule to deliver next summer. As mentioned previously this work builds on our longer term understanding of how our coast will respond to coastal and climate change and sea level rise. Latest modelling is recreating erosion loss over time at key frontages and will be a critical tool in planning and development decisions on our coast.
  - **Engaging our way to Resilience** – The Thorpeness baseline survey has now completed, and Icarus are analysing the data. Work is progressing with Icarus on the readiness and at-risk engagement approach. Ongoing support is being provided for engagement at Thorpeness. This approach will be rolled out to other locations.
  - **New Economic Approach** - The New Economic Approach is due to be delivered by the end of March 2026, we have held the 2<sup>nd</sup> steering group for the piece. Our consultants RPA are now working on the value of each of the assets at risk and will be establishing coastal 'value', identifying those benefitting from our coast and highlighting who could be potential investors to our adaptation fund.
  - **Costed Asset Management Plan** - Progressing the plan to be available March 2026. The work will demonstrate the costs of different technical solutions for managing our coast. this will then feed into economic appraisal of wider adaptative solutions

and support business case development. this will provide ESC and other potential funders with the information needed to make decisions on the best solutions for our coast and support our ability to attract funding from the council and wider partners and stakeholders.

- **Adaptation Planning** – Three sessions have been held of the Rapid Adaptation Pathways Assessment session (RAPA) with officers from across the council. The Environment Agency have shared that we are leading Nationally on implementing this piece of work.

The ESC Adaptation Officers group are developing adaptation plans for their service areas which we will bring together at the fourth RAPA session in January. This will be our first draft adaptation plan including strategic programme, actions, milestones and potential resource. Following the meeting in January a feedback report will be provided to CLT and Members.

- **Policy** - Work on baselining reports continues to understand what policies we have in place to support adaptation to coastal change and what new policies may be needed to help inform the Local plan review. Lessons learnt from Thorpeness are also being written up as we progress to ensure we embed new ways of working in our future approaches.

#### **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1. No funding implications to report at the time of writing.

#### **5. Legal Implications**

- 5.1. Legal agreements continue to be developed with landowners in relation to the Tidal Wall operation and maintenance, funding for this work is available from the Environment Agency and will be drawn down upon as required.

#### **6. Risk Implications**

- 6.1. There are no risks specific to this report and corporate risks are entered on ESC registers.

#### **7. Options**

- 7.1. There are no additional options arising from this report.

#### **8. Recommendations**

- 8.1. That the Strategic Planning Committee notes the work undertaken by the Coastal Management and Adaptation team at ESC.
- 8.2. That the Strategic Planning Committee provides any recommendations as to the content of future updates (if required).

#### **9. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 9.1. To ensure that the Strategic Planning Committee are updated on the current work of the ESC Coastal Management and Adaptation team.

## **10. Conclusions/Next Steps**

- 10.1. Coastal Management and Adaptation to continue to build, develop and increase awareness of coastal matters across planning, building control and other council service areas.

## Areas of consideration comments

### Section 151 Officer comments:

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no additional comments.

### Monitoring Officer comments:

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted on this report and has no additional comments

### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion/EQIA:

There are no specific implications arising in terms of this matter from the statistics included within this report.

### Safeguarding:

There are no specific implications arising in terms of this matter from the statistics included within this report.

### Crime and Disorder:

There are no specific implications arising in terms of this matter from the statistics included within this report.

### Corporate Services implications:

*(i.e., Legal, Finance, Procurement, Human Resources, Digital, Customer Services, Asset Management)*

There are no specific implications arising in terms of this matter from the statistics included within this report.

### Residents and Businesses consultation/consideration:

There are no specific implications arising in terms of this matter from the statistics included within this report.

## Appendices:

1.	Pakefield Newsletter
2.	Thorpeness Survey Summary

## Background reference papers:

None		
------	--	--