



National Framework for Coastal Coordination

3Cs Development Phase 1 2022-23

Final Report

Executive summary

Coastal communities and their environments are on the front line of climate change. The Championing Coastal Coordination (3Cs) programme recognises the critical need for a systemic, integrated approach to management through better communications and infrastructure supporting coordination. Breaking down the current siloed way of working requires capacity building and supporting collaboration across land and sea, between sectors and at the national, regional and local scales.

Coastal and Estuary Partnerships (CEPs) and the Coastal Partnerships Network (CPN) are recognised by stakeholders as Coastal Champions for their valuable convening and connecting role, and ability to strengthen stewardship at the local, regional and national level around the whole of the UK.

The CPN and partners proposed the need for a flexible and enabling 'National Framework for Coastal Coordination' (NFCC). The initial 3Cs Pilot Phase 2021/22 proposed a NFCC which would rationalise and prioritise local delivery, whilst achieving consistent and coherent integration and implementation of national policy delivery at the local scale. The recommendations of the CPN illustrated how investment in the CEP approach, with suitably designed and governed participatory processes, can deliver this need.

This report details the progress made against the evolution of the NFCC in the 3Cs Development Phase 1 2022/23. It covers the activities, outputs, learnings and anticipated outcomes which could be achieved through Development Phase 2 in 2023/24.

The report showcases a huge collaborative effort at the national, regional and local scales, with and for CEP officers, the CPN, other coastal groups and cross sector partners. Achieving this in a very short period of time, from January to March 2023, demonstrates the ongoing commitment of the CPN, CEPs and Partners to co-create the infrastructure and resources needed to secure long-term coastal coordination. It showcases the collaborative advantage which is possible when social capital is resourced (e.g., through CEPs) and the indicative Return on Investment (ROI) of funding programmes such as 3Cs. The key messages collated here are a snapshot of the learning, ongoing challenges and emerging opportunities across the six High Level Objectives that form the component parts of a NFCC. These are explored in more detail through the report.

Developing the right governance model for national coastal coordination is complex and challenging, even for those Coastal Champions in the newly formed NFCC Leadership Group. The silos between legislation, government and sectoral working practices are deeply entrenched. We require new levers to strengthen collaborative governance and coordinated delivery. A flexible, adaptable NFCC needs both the stability of good governance but be porous and transparent to allow for new challenges, approaches and associated expertise to be welcomed into the Leadership Group and NFCC. The silos go beyond practice and span administrative boundaries at all scales. The Leadership Group must therefore scope the structures and tools to establish a truly fit for purpose NFCC which will include all Devolved Administrations and people (reflecting Equality Diversity and Inclusion) beyond the current bubble, to engage new Coastal Champions in waiting.

Consistency of approach is needed for the coordination and national monitoring of regional and local place-based delivery, CPN have drafted an Evaluation Plan to be co-created by CEPs for CEPs (and similar initiatives) with its' evolution overseen by the Leadership Group. Over the long term, the NFCC is envisaged to be the place where all coastal management and restoration implementation can be integrated. It would inform future multidisciplinary research and development programmes, - to ensure that the right questions are asked and the best evidence sourced - to enable an integrated approach to be embedded in future policy. To provide coherence across and between sometimes conflicting terrestrial and marine legislation and planning, the CPN and Partners recommended, in the Pilot Phase, that nested Coastal Plans could be a mechanism for meaningfully integrating terrestrial local development plans with marine plans across the land-sea interface. They would recognise that the 'coastal space' is much more than the intertidal zone and lever the necessary commitment to deliver place-based governance.

Opportunities abound to scope the 'gap in the overlap' at the land sea interface. With Natural England's marine Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment Programme scoping marine extensions to LNRS, together with the Environment Agency's 3Cs programme and the ReMeMaRe initiative – there is a focus on coastal habitat restoration planning and natural capital. Local Nature Recovery Strategies were recognised as being a key statutory mechanism from which a more holistic Coastal Plan could evolve. They would evolve beyond nature recovery to integrate the socio-economic and environmental targets that would bring in ROI. Alongside the private sectors' support for development of Marine Net Gain, there is potential alignment to test the nested Coastal Plan recommendation.

In parallel, a focus on the health, skills and economic deficit in coastal communities has never been so high. The recent Communities on the Edge report commissioned by the OneCoast Coalition, highlights how the Levelling Up Regeneration Bill is failing coastal communities. It is also failing to take account of the supporting services which healthy natural capital can bring to socio-economic challenges beyond climate resilience. The dual opportunities of the Coastal Communities APPG Coastal Inquiry and the UK Marine Strategy Regulations refresh, presents an opportunity to advocate for a UK Coastal Strategy that could embed the integrated approach and provide the much-needed leadership to fill the 'gap in the overlap' and the 'missing middle' in governance. There is potential to embed stronger coastal co-ordination through nested Coastal Plans around the whole UK, led under the umbrella of a UK Coastal Strategy. The groundwork for delivery has been established through place-based CEPs.

Key to realising the collaborative advantage proposed by the NFCC, is robust and accessible data and resources through a Coastal Hub and robust monitoring and evaluation tools to demonstrate the value of investing in communication and collaborative effort. Our consultations and engagement activity clearly shows the appetite and need for well-designed programmes and platforms that support collaboration at all scales. However, the need for information was seen to be one of the lesser challenges affecting coastal coordination. More immediate and practical challenges are associated with how to tackle the complexities inherent in coastal governance and the short-term approach to project funding. The need for, and value of, evolving a suitably designed and governed NFCC which offers collective leadership, is demonstrated in this report.

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Introduction

Championing Coastal Coordination (3Cs) looks to examine best-practice at the coast in response to the challenges of our time - i.e., climate change, levelling-up and the biodiversity crisis - and how effective coordination of collaborative processes delivers better Return on Investment (ROI) for all concerned.

The coastal context was fully articulated in the Coastal Partnerships Network (CPN) 3Cs Pilot Phase EOI and Final Report 2021/22 (See Appendix 1). **In summary:** coastal communities and environments are on the front line of climate change. A systemic, integrated approach to management and communications is critical; breaking down the current siloed way of working requires building capacity and supporting collaboration at national, regional and local scales, across land and sea and across sectors. Coastal and Estuary Partnerships (CEPs) and CPN are recognised by stakeholders as Coastal Champions for their valuable convening and connecting role, and ability to strengthen local stewardship at the local, regional and national level.

In response to this need, the CPN and partners proposed the need for a flexible and enabling '**National Framework for Coastal Coordination**' (NFCC) as a strategic prerequisite to rationalise and prioritise local delivery, whilst achieving consistent and coherent integration and implementation of national policy at the local scale through the initial 3Cs Pilot Phase 2021/22.

The recommendations for the NFCC and the High Level Objectives (HLOs) that form its component and supporting parts were co-designed through a collaborative and participatory process, leveraging the extensive collective experience of CEPs and other national and regional coastal, catchment and marine networks. This input informed a business case for future investment in the partnership approach across and along the full length of the English coast, and across borders with Devolved Administrations (recognising our estuaries and coasts need managing in a *wholescape approach* regardless of human administrative boundaries and siloed government funding streams). This process converted the lessons learned from CEPs, Coastal Groups, Catchment Based Approaches, and Marine Pioneers (amongst others) into a synthesised communication and management approach, underpinned by a robust evaluation process that spans the entirety of the UK. It was supported by a suite of regional and local projects, evidencing the potential for value and benefits across multiple socio-economic and environmental strategies when investment is made in the CEP approach.

The resulting recommendations (See CPN 3Cs Final Report, Appendix 1) embody the value that suitably designed and governed participatory processes can deliver, demonstrating the impact that can be achieved when investment is made in the CEP approach. An NFCC will provide clear benefits to coastal regulators and relevant authorities through the joined-up delivery of a wide variety of policies and programmes, focused on delivering multiple benefits for coastal communities, economies and nature. The NFCC will provide clear leadership at a time of growing awareness of the needs of the coast, and the challenges induced by climate change.

The CPN and Partners proposed a three-year phased development approach to take forward the recommendations through a logical, meaningful process that builds capacity for coastal coordination throughout and beyond its lifespan. The proposed three phases in summary were:

Development Phase 1 - Planning and Governance Foundations (Jan - March 2023)

In this phase we have laid the foundations for taking forward the six High Level Objectives (HLO) of the NFCC recommended in the 3Cs Pilot Phase. With dedicated workstream leads driving each HLO forward, we collaborated through a deep planning phase within and across each HLO workstream and started to establish the governance of the recommended Collaborative Coastal Governance Group (CCGG). Activity took place at national, regional and local scales coordinated by the CPN through the lead partner Thames Estuary Partnership (TEP). During this time the CPN submitted an application to the Charities Commission for legal 'CIO' status and started to establish a formal NFCC Project Management and Governance Framework to underpin delivery of the next two Development Phases.

Development Phase 2 - Development, Design and Delivery of the NFCC (April 2023 - March 2024)

In this Phase we will activate the plans established in Phase 1 including undertaking deep engagement across sectors and consulting with CEPs to establish the mechanisms and governance of the NFCC and prioritisation of delivery including coastal and inshore marine habitat restoration planning. The further evolution of the NFCC Leadership Group and NFCC design will be facilitated through an action-research-learning cycle utilising systems change approach. We will develop a robust evaluation tool with expert leads, further design a Building Capacity Programme and design and build the Coastal Communications Hub. This will involve further development of the Coastal Data Hub through national, regional and transboundary trials, with a view to soft launching the platforms to support delivery and evidence ROI in Phase 3. We will maximise funding opportunities to secure match funding for Development Phase 3 and beyond.

Development Phase 3 - Embed, Deliver and Evaluate the NFCC (evidencing the ROI and securing further investment) (April 2024 – 2025)

In this Phase we will further evolve the operational and governance arrangements of the NFCC and business case based on activity and outcomes from Development Phase 2. This may include supporting delivery of more local and regional projects and testing and trailing the evaluation tool, collaborative communication and data platforms and the building capacity programme. We will complete monitoring and evaluation of both CEPs and the work delivered embedding tools to support longer-term project and partnership funding. We will further build the business case for investment and secure private and philanthropic investment before the end of the funded period.

This report will focus on the activity completed throughout Development Phase 1 and makes recommendations for the next two phases of development.

Development Phase 1 January - March 2023

Good progress has been made across every aspect of the development of a National Framework for Coastal Coordination (NFCC). Each HLO objective is reported on individually, highlighting throughout where work and collaboration has been completed and further is needed across HLOs. In each section we highlight the next steps in Development Phase 2 and this will form the basis of the next proposal which is being developed alongside this report.

- [HLO 1 Establishing a Collaborative Coastal Governance Group \(CCGG\)](#)
- [HLO 2 Prioritisation of coordination across the land-sea interface to support local decision-making at the regional and local scale](#)
- [HLO 3 Building capacity across framework delivery partners and wider sectors to enable multi-level governance and inclusive decision making](#)
- [HLO 4 Coastal Communications Hub: Streamline communications across the complex myriad coastal messages and across sectors](#)
- [HLO 5 Monitoring and Evaluation: Improve evaluation of Partnership working to attract blended investment and grow Partnership working across sectors](#)
- [HLO 6 OneCoast and Coastal Communities APPG: Enable long-term systemic change through providing evidence to shape future coastal governance](#)
- [CPN Cross-cutting work strand: NFCC Management and Governance Framework](#)

Establishing a Collaborative Coastal Governance Group (CCGG) (HLO 1)

The CPN brought the Pilot Phase National Working Group (NWG) back together to form the recommended Collaborative Coastal Governance Group (CCGG) aiming to lay the foundations for the oversight and governance of the NFCC over the long term. The CPN led the group through a facilitated, iterative process building on the last iteration and working towards developing the plan of engagement for finding other Coastal Champions to join at the national level. The CCGG met five times in total on a fortnightly basis from mid-January onwards starting with a refresh meeting.

The first meeting focussed on reviewing the activity to date, the original intent of the group and the activities planned for this and across each of the HLOs. We established the collaborative platforms we would use including TEAMS for online meetings, Miro Board for collaborative co-design and Google documents for information sharing and co-reporting. We also established a standing agenda for each subsequent meeting to ensure the group could be kept up to date with activity across the project including a brief summary of overall progress, activity and emerging intelligence from each HLO strand and a group activity to build consensus around specific needs for this HLO working towards achieving the objectives set out in the proposal. We agreed that the priority of the CCGG was to define the role and remit of the group through the drafting of a Terms of Reference (ToR) and stakeholder analysis. This would help us identify the types of Coastal Champions and expertise missing from the current group and over the course of this Development Phase 1, collaborate on establishing an engagement and recruitment plan to be activated in Development Phase 2.

Terms of Reference

A draft ToR Task and Finish Group was set up to co-produce a first draft and included those on the CCGG who had extensive experience of creating ToRs for complex projects such as this one. The group consisted of Bryan Curtis (CGN), Susannah Bleakley (Independent Consultant, FCRIP, previously Chief Exec of Morecambe Bay Partnership), Natasha Bradshaw (Independent governance expert, HLO 5 Lead) and was supported by Amy Pryor (HLO 1 & 2 Lead, overall Project Manager).

Through the process of drafting and discussing the ToR, we agreed that the name of the group was confusing as it didn't immediately connect with the NFCC in people's minds. Clear communication includes careful naming of the governance to ensure that collaborators can identify with the responsibility being asked of them and therefore the decision was made to change the name to the **NFCC Leadership Group**. This clearly articulates that each member of the group will be supported to be leaders in their field, are collaborating to strengthen leadership in coastal coordination and collaboration and be the Coastal Champions we need at a national and regional level. It will also clearly articulate what the purpose of the group is to those we wish to engage further to join us as leaders in this space.

A first draft was presented to the Leadership Group for discussion which led to the understanding that the Leadership Group may have different functions for the Development

Phases and for after the NFCC has been established for operating over the longer term. The NFCC needs development across multiple strands and therefore the type of person, representation, seniority and skill sets needed will differ to those that may be needed over the long term after establishment. However, there was also a recognition that the NFCC must continue to evolve after establishment according to external and internal needs. **A flexible, adaptable framework needs both the stability of good governance but be porous and transparent to allow for new challenges, approaches and associated expertise to be welcomed into the group and NFCC.** There was also a recognition that the ToR needs to meet the needs and capacity of new members from different sectors and therefore their input would be needed to make sure it worked for all. Therefore, the draft ToR submitted with this report (see Appendix 2) focusses on the Leadership Group role during the Development Phases and is an evolving document which will be further refined as new members are onboarded and the NFCC is further developed to understand its long-term governance and championing needs. A final ToR for the established NFCC will be developed for the end of Development Phase 3 with the input of all Leadership Group members' sectors.

Transboundary Working Group

NFCC Leadership group members, Alys Morris (Severn Estuary Partnership), Clair McFarlan (Solway Firth Partnership) and Nick Brodin (Berwickshire and Northumberland Marine Nature Partnership), representing CEPs working across English and Devolved Administration boundaries, undertook a scoping exercise to make recommendations for a Transboundary Working Group. They collaborated to facilitate an online workshop with stakeholders from across the UK. Workshop participants identified a number of region-specific issues as well as a range of common issues across the UK, highlighted below.

- Funding (deadlines/timescales/eligibility/annual timescales)
- Monitoring (gaps and methodologies)
- Consensus building between multiple partners.
- Easy to fall into the "Someone else will do it" mentality.
- Information sharing
- Lack of resourcing and support for partnership working
- Differences in legislation and policy
- Capacity (time and staff)
- Partnership resource useful to share knowledge and communicate with stakeholders.
- Staff turnover

A full report and associated appendices can be seen in Appendix 3.

Proposed Approach to Transboundary Working

The initial proposal for a Transboundary Working Group was modified following discussions in the workshop. Attendees were supportive of a group that would allow local transboundary practitioners to share experience, identify issues and seek opportunities for collaborative working. In parallel to this there was thought to be a need for access 'upwards' to those who have decision making powers within their organisations and who may not currently be sighted

on transboundary issues. It was felt that the Arm's Length Body Advisory Group proposed by the NFCC Leadership Group would likely provide a mechanism for reaching such individuals and that the creation of a separate Transboundary Working Group might represent duplication of effort.

The proposal for improved transboundary working developed through the workshop has two elements:

1. Creation of a **Marine and Coastal National Transboundary Advisory Forum**
2. Ensuring that the **Arm's Length Body Advisory Group** proposed by the NFCC Leadership Group contain representation from all of the countries of the UK and to be tasked with considering key transboundary issues raised by the National Transboundary Advisory Forum

The Marine and Coastal National Transboundary Advisory Forum would report back to the ALB Advisory Group and provide, on request, local knowledge and expertise to support Task and Finish Groups created by that group. A draft Terms of Reference for the Marine and Coastal National Transboundary Advisory Forum is given as Appendix 4 of Appendix 3.

Outstanding Transboundary Issues

The following issues will be addressed during Development Phase 2:

- Establishment of the Marine and Coastal National Transboundary Advisory Forum
- Ensure there is representation, at the appropriate level, from devolved countries on the National Arm's Length Bodies Group and that the Terms of Reference for this group include identifying action to address transboundary issues.
- The need to engage with a wider range of transboundary stakeholders including those from Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands, and the Isle of Man. Because of the short timescales involved in this first phase of 3Cs funding it was only possible to concentrate on transboundary issues between Wales, Scotland and England.

Role and Remit of the NFCC Leadership Group

Through the drafting of the ToR, the Leadership Group identified that there are two distinct but interrelated roles of the group that will be needed for both the next Development Phases and once established:

1. External: be the Coastal Champion in the outside world - advocacy and championing of the integrated, collaborative approach to coastal coordination and management across their sphere of influence to:
 - a. Attract practitioners to engage with and utilise the NFCC.
 - b. Attract funding and investment into the NFCC itself, the CPN, local CEPs and others delivering on the ground.
2. Internal: bring in knowledge, intelligence and expertise to oversee the operation, evaluation and evolution of the NFCC to ensure it remains fit for purpose and meets the

needs of all sectors and evolving legislation. This will include identifying and onboarding new members into the Leadership Group as needed.

Each member of the Leadership Group is a Coastal Champion, a representative of a sector or practitioner approach and will have the responsibility of engaging with identified people and/or certain sectors on behalf of the NFCC. To do this, each member will be supported by the CPN and will need resources for engagement including briefing packs tailored to that person or sector, the draft ToR and a clear onboarding process for the new member. These resources will be developed through Development Phases 2 and 3.

NFCC Leadership Group Development Phase 2023-25

During the NFCC Development Phases 2023-2025, we will need champions of the integrated approach, collaboration and partnership working for external advocacy, and specific expertise to help shape and strategically develop the NFCC and its supporting elements. Both the expertise needed for each HLO and the operational infrastructure of the Leadership Group were discussed. The Leadership Group will function best if numbers are kept to a manageable size (e.g., 20) for constructive discussion and decision making. However, there may be expertise we need to attract in specific areas that would not be needed for the overall oversight. It was decided that the best way to organise the Leadership Group would be to have an overarching national umbrella group with thematic Communities of Practice to evolve and develop key areas of the NFCC, with each Community of Practice led by an established Leadership Group member. It was recognised that this may be another way to find future Coastal Champions that may wish to join at the national level over the longer term and would be taken account of in the engagement plan and onboarding process.

The Leadership Group identified the following Communities of Practice, the kinds of activity they may undertake and how they are linked to the current HLOs:

- Cross-cutting:
 - Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) - should underpin how the NFCC is developed and run.
 - Fundraising - traditional fundraising from philanthropic and academic sources which could include project portfolio creation and packaging of different NFCC needs according to funder strategies and targets.
 - Investable business models/green finance (HLO 5) - targeted more at private industry and the investment world.
 - Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning process (MEAL) (HLO 5) - how we prove our ROI and crucially the social impact and capital inherent in collaborative working and CEPs.
 - Collaborative process design e.g., systems change processes, scenario building and horizon scanning (CPN framework management, HLO 3)
- Policy and Governance (HLOs 1&2)
 - Navigating complex decision-making structures
 - Understanding key policy drivers and opportunities (HLO 2)
 - Principles of good governance

- Collaborative governance
- Transboundary collaboration
- Nature Recovery
 - Natural Capital and metrics (links to HLO 2 & 5)
 - Coastal habitat restoration planning and delivery at whole system scales (HLO 2 & 3)
- Data support and central repository (HLO 2, Data Hub)
 - GIS specialism and mapping
- Skills and Training
 - Skills/Training approaches
- Communications and Engagement (HLO 1, 2, 3 & 4)
 - Key stats, narrative to support coastal communities.
 - Images and content that support advocacy.
 - Press and media for public awareness raising.
 - Marine Citizenship

Members of the Leadership Group signed up to either run or be involved in one or more of these Communities of Practice and suggested names of others they knew who could be approached. This will be further developed in Development Phase 2 to establish the objectives and scope of work for each group with associated milestones and timelines. Collaborative platforms for each group will be designed into the Coastal Communications Hub (HLO 4). Some of these needs will be packaged into complementary funding applications, see [Fundraising Plans below](#).

NFCC Leadership Group post establishment 2025 and beyond

Once established the Leadership Group will need to take on different responsibilities of oversight akin to a Project Board or Steering Group whilst also maintaining the flexibility to evolve practice and to take account of new challenges, policies and legislation. Therefore, the internal aspects of responsibilities will expand to include:

- National oversight of monitoring and evaluation of the delivery and impact of the NFCC and practitioners utilising it
- Monitoring and assisting articulation of Return on Investment (ROI)
- Monitoring risk and barriers to success to find solutions.
- Monitoring of operational and financial management of the NFCC
- Ensuring sustainable investment is in place.

The remit of the Leadership Group at this stage will evolve through the Development Phases and in particular the emerging monitoring and evaluation process which will incorporate evaluation of the governance structure.

Arm's Length Body Advisory Group

To date, representatives from across the Defra Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs) have been invited to Leadership Group meetings as they are integral to the development and the long-term operation of the NFCC with the primary function of the NFCC being to improve coastal

coordination and collaboration to accelerate local delivery of national legislative targets. However, attendance has been limited due to the relationship between the NFCC as a Defra funded project and the representatives of the ALBs being a part of 3Cs funding decisions. It is a conflict of interest whilst the development of the NFCC is primarily funded through 3Cs in a competitive process. Therefore, the original ambition of establishing a ToR for an ALB Advisory Group in this Development Phase was not possible to progress.

A critical area is the emerging work under HLO 2 which is defining and prioritising delivery of government targets and articulating how these are met. Over the course of the next two stages of development, the CPN will continue to liaise with the ALBs to evolve the governance relationship post establishment when the conflict of interest will no longer be an issue. One of the recommendations which came out of the Transboundary Working Group was that the membership of the Arm's Length Body Advisory Group be expanded to include representatives from all of the administrations of the UK and have a role in addressing transboundary coastal issues.

The Leadership Group also recognised that whilst priority has been given to understanding and mapping out the Defra targets, their current programmes of research and development and the equivalent ALBs and targets of the Devolved Administrations, other Government Departments and associated ALBs need to be engaged. As this mapping and prioritisation work evolves through HLO 2, the linkages across government departments will be mapped and an engagement and advocacy programme developed through HLO 6 (OneCoast and the Coastal Communities APPG).

Over the long term, the NFCC is envisaged to be the place where all coastal implementations can be integrated and therefore can **help inform future research and development programmes across socio-economic and environmental needs to ensure that the right questions are asked to enable an integrated approach** to future implementation and embedded in future policy.

Government Cross Departmental Working Group

Through discussion in the Leadership Group, OneCoast Coalition and with ALBs, it has become clear that a Government Cross Departmental Working Group is not within the gift of the NFCC. Advocacy is needed through the OneCoast Coalition and Coastal Communities APPG's call for a Coastal Minister. The best approach is thought to be through the establishment of a Coastal Minister to oversee a Coastal Task Force consisting of senior civil servants from each government department who in turn would manage a departmental Coastal Working Group. This would also be one mechanism for achieving the long-term ambition for a UK Coastal Strategy to enable a statutory approach to integrated coastal management. Advocacy for the Coastal Minister and UK Coastal Strategy will continue through the OneCoast Coalition and Coastal Communities APPG utilising the evidence generated through the NFCC, CPN and CEPs. In addition, influencing the planned refresh of the UK Marine Strategy Regulations to include scoping of a future UK Coastal Strategy will be pursued.

Scoping the need for NFCC Regional Structures

In addition to the need for transboundary working and collaboration across the Devolved Administrations, regional collaboration and therefore governance arrangements in England have also been discussed. To understand the regional collaboration appetite and needs, fuller consultation with CEPs and mapping of the overlap and gaps of relationships across the catchment, coastal and marine fora is needed. Currently, there is appetite for regional collaboration within the NE, NW, SE (as evidenced by the Regional Demonstration Projects) and SW with some uncertainty for the South and East regions. These latter two regions, aligned with the Marine Plan administrative boundaries, are much larger in comparison to the other areas and they will need careful consideration. Operational and ecological scales need to be factored in i.e., at what regional scale is collaboration meaningful, practical and needed or indeed wanted. Any regional governance agreements will be designed to be flexible to allow collaborative governance and leadership to join the NFCC Leadership Group at the national level. Crucially, the CPN and NFCC is not looking to impose any governance or infrastructure on CEPs who do not wish or need it. alternative arrangements or geographical groupings will be agreed in collaboration with local groups and designed to support them and their needs. This has an impact on the emerging monitoring and evaluation, particularly where funding may be secured for delivery of specific targets for example through Defra funding stream for water quality and habitat improvements. Since many CEPs are long established and have geographical remits and ways of working with neighbouring CEPs, it is important to support them in a way that meets their needs.

Discussion within and between the Regional Demonstration Projects (NE, NW and SE) highlight that all have regional differences and are building on existing collaborative efforts, but more support and infrastructure is needed and wanted. The opportunity of having an NFCC Regional Hub (including regional portals within the Coastal Communications Hub and Data Hub) are recognised as critical for wholescape, land and seascape working beyond coastal habitat restoration. In the SE, for example, there are very few established CEPs and those that are established and emerging are small with limited capacity and uncertain funding streams. There are no mechanisms or platforms that can facilitate cross estuary, regional collaborations. There is also the recognition that through collaboration and formalising relationships between CEPs, more than the sum of our parts can be achieved and efficiencies made with resources. Below are some of the key areas identified by the SE CEPs as potential benefits of more supported collaboration:

- Sharing resources and skills e.g., GIS support, restoration facilities e.g., for seagrass nurseries or expertise; peer to peer training;
- Co-development of land/seascape scale projects and funding partnerships
- Co-development of approaches e.g., standardisation of monitoring activities and impact; developing consistency of local coastal codes and developing a SE approach (using a values based approach); traineeships and coastal warden schemes.
- Co-development of case studies on local best practice approaches and identification of the challenges and opportunities currently being missed through lack of collaboration.
- Co-development of a SE Coastal Plan

- Scoping of umbrella infrastructure to support the CEPs in governance transition e.g., hosting mechanisms and long-term sustainable business models.

In Development Phase 2, the CPN will progress the regional discussion through engagement and consultation with CEPs within the Network alongside the stakeholder, relationship and governance mapping recommended under this HLO (see next section below).

Who are our Coastal Champions? - Engagement and Recruitment Plan for Development Phases 2 & 3

The process of drafting the ToR and thinking through the governance structure and development needs, raised questions as to who, how and why new members would be engaged on to the national Leadership Group. The qualities needed go beyond expertise and sectoral representation to include the values the NFCC and Leadership Group members embody and want to attract as well as the reach and influence the national members may need to be most effective.

To deepen understanding of who to engage as a priority, key questions were asked and the Leadership Group collaborated to answer them through breakout groups. This led to the recognition that alongside a ToR, the Leadership Group would essentially need a 'job description' to help identify potential new members which would detail some key requirements including skills, personality traits and reach of an individual or organisation. A summary of the output of this session can be seen below and the full output in Appendix 4.

Key questions considered were:

- Why do we need Coastal Champions?
 - Answers included: the complexity of the coastal space, the need for leadership, empowering local communities for stewardship, tackling sea blindness and enabling an inclusive and integrated approach to management at all scales, across sectors and administrative boundaries.
- What does the role of a Coastal Champion entail (e.g., specific activities)?
 - Answers included: connecting across sectors, knowledge of coastal needs and activities, problem solving, solution creation through impartial decision making, willingness to learn and ability to fundraise.
- How do Coastal Champions benefit from being involved?
 - Answers included: personal and professional development, realising multiple benefits and therefore enabling value for money, access to solution innovation and new funding partners, creating shared goals, learning new approaches and potential to influence at a national level.
- What makes a Coastal Champion?
 - Answers included: passionate about the coast, integrated approaches and collaborative working, power to advocate, leverageable networks, impartiality, experience of high-level governance, ability to reach up and down through local credibility.

This activity led the Leadership Group members to be inspired to list priority contacts they felt met these emerging criteria. These names are not reported here as it is a key part of our engagement in the next Development Phase, however there are 14 people and organisations identified with 3-5 in each of the private, public, third and academic sectors. **It was recognised that these priority contacts are already warm to the need for an integrated approach and collaboration across the coast and therefore can help the Leadership Group learn and design the best approach to reach those not engaged in the need - to find those beyond the current bubble, new Coastal Champions in waiting.**

There was also a recognition that there are many existing structures, groups and fora in operation that we each interact with, as will our national Coastal Champions. It is imperative that the NFCC bring added value, not duplicate effort and not create unnecessary time burdens on Leadership Group members therefore a process for maximising the relationships and information being shared utilising these existing structures needs to be developed as part of the governance structure. This may include a robust information sharing and reporting platform as part of the Coastal Communication Hub and support of Leadership Group members from the CPN to synthesise information coming from and into the NFCC.

Therefore, a phased approach to engagement will be taken over the next two years of development. In Development Phase 2, prioritised Coastal Champions will be engaged to further evolve the ToR, develop the onboarding process and key assets we will need to engage those harder to reach. This will commence in the interim period between 3Cs projects, starting with Bryan Curtis, Coastal Group Network (CGN), through his period of handover as Chair. Bryan will step down in August 2023 and therefore this provides the perfect opportunity to learn and evolve the onboarding process and assets needed. Simultaneously, through discussion on the ToR, a process will be co-developed for bringing together Coastal Groups and CEPs to enable enhanced FCRM delivery of Nature Based Solutions (NbS) and coastal and inshore marine habitat restoration (HLO 2).

To understand the relationships, representation on existing structures and the reach of current and priority Leadership Group members, an extensive stakeholder social networking mapping exercise needs to be completed. This will include all the major current coastal fora, advisory groups, task and finish groups and partnerships at regional and national scales and will cascade down to mapping out the current governance and network relationships of the local CEPs over time. This will also contribute to the understanding of the individual and collective social capital and collaborative advantage and help further the initiative mapping and targets integration work needed under HLO 2.

Reframing the Framework

As Development Phase 1 got underway, the Leadership Group quickly realised that the original framing of HLO 2 as: *A National Framework for Coastal Coordination - a national supporting framework and more regular exchange of information and coordination between delivery partners can accelerate integrated delivery linking planning, policy, administrations and sectors across the land and sea for landscape-scale delivery*, was not correct. The NFCC encompasses all the current HLOs and additional challenges identified as part of this phase. Therefore, the

NFCC has now been lifted out of HLO 2 to be the overarching objective of the project and the remaining elements of HLO 2 underpin the local delivery of targets, to be further prioritised in Development Phase 2. This is where the monitoring and evaluation of delivery impact will provide ROI for public funding sources in particular. Figure 1 below shows the emerging thinking of how each of the component parts underpin the next to form the overall NFCC and starts to articulate the governance and operational structure above it. This will be further developed to provide a clear visualisation of the NFCC, as the elements become more clearly defined and developed through the next two Development Phases.

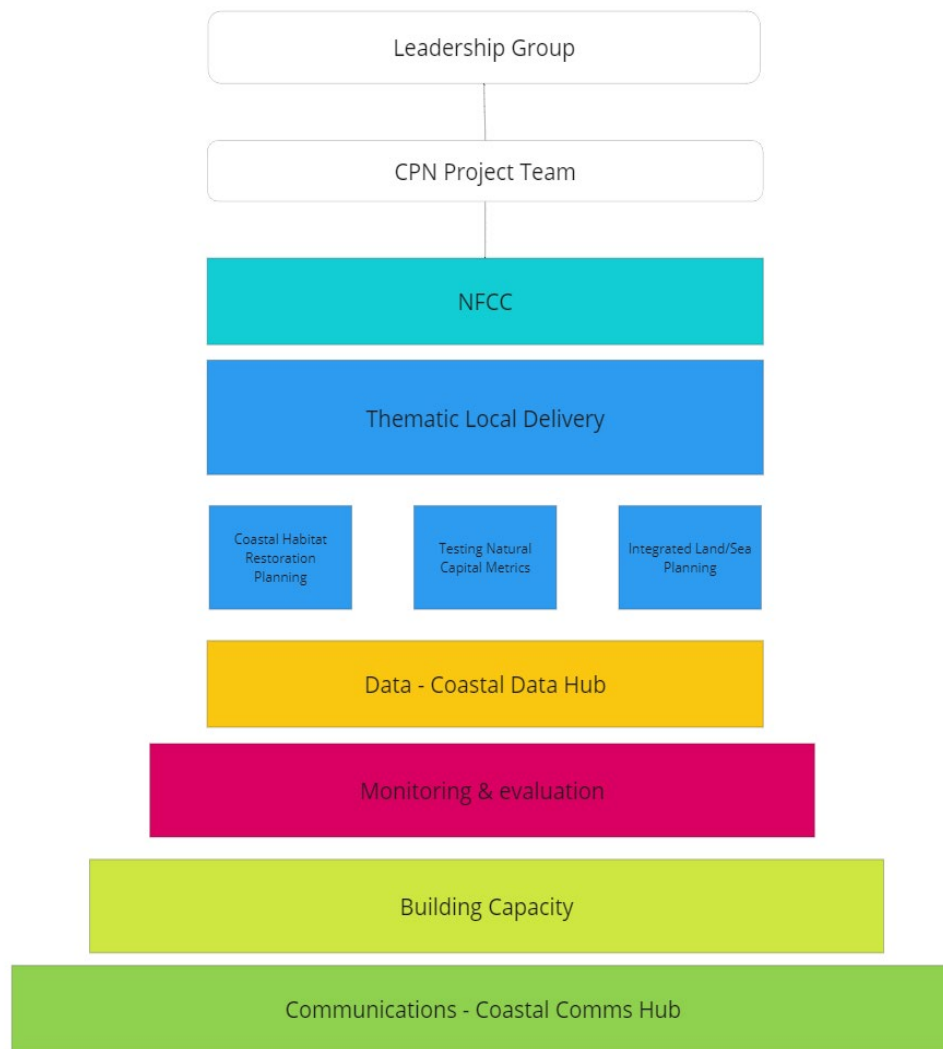


Figure 1: Emerging conceptual visualisation of NFCC governance and how the elements of the NFCC interact.

Prioritisation of coordination across the land-sea interface to support local decision-making at the regional and local scale (HLO 2)

It was the aim of the CPN to comprehensively map policies, ongoing initiatives and programmes within ALBs, Local Authorities, academia, private and third sector to identify priority targets for local delivery and gaps in knowledge and approach that CEPs and other similar coastal groups could facilitate action and evidence through collaborative partnership working. However, due to the complexity of the current policy and legislative frameworks where they intersect at the land-sea interface, and a lack of coherence articulated in and between existing management and/or recovery and restoration frameworks and their associated targets, this piece needs more in-depth development in Development Phase 2.

Policy Mapping through the lens of achieving GES

To interrogate the current legislative landscape and where targets could be integrated across the land-sea interface and delivered by local partnerships through the NFCC, Natural England (NE) invested in capacity to work with the CPN through this Development Phase 1 to examine where and how the UK Marine Strategy (UKMS) and its central framework for Good Environmental Status (GES) might be best applied through Business as Usual and other new areas of work. The resulting draft report 'Operationalising Good Environmental Status at the Local Level: Part 1 Mapping Policy and other drivers across the land-sea interface' (NE, March 2023; unpublished) addresses some of the structural and systemic issues associated with marine recovery across the land-sea interface and makes recommendations as to how these may be remedied. The full report will be available once published and the main points are summarised below.

UK Marine Management suffers from a lack of coherence at the legislative, policy and target levels where multiple frameworks for assessment and action intersect. Interconnections are not always mutually beneficial and opportunities for improving the strategic alignment between different legislative instruments exist through the development of the NFCC and support of CEPs to deliver locally. However, to achieve this across the complexity of the land-sea interface, **a systems thinking and systematic approach is needed.**

The main unifying frameworks for the land-sea interface are the Environment Act and its Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP2023), the UK Marine Strategy Regulations (UKMS), the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations and the Flood and Water Management Act which are heavily influenced by a large number of other legislative instruments including the Marine and Coastal Access Act, the Climate Change Act, the British Energy Security Bill and the Levelling up and Regeneration Bill (LURB). Understanding the content and inter relationships between these instruments will be essential to fully leveraging their commitments to improving the environment, their associated governance and delivery mechanisms. The report recognises that we have most of the tools we need to recover the state of our estuaries, coasts and seas but identified issues in achieving this are:

- Lack of coherent governance across the land-sea interface.
- Lack of SMART and Interim targets that drive change.
- A perpetuation of siloed thinking between marine and terrestrial planning systems.
- An Environment Act that reinforces the land-sea divide by not extending Local Nature Recovery Strategies below mean low water.

- A lack of detailed spatial prioritisation in marine planning.
- A reluctance to propose the methods, means and motives for justly transitioning away from the most damaging industrial and extractive practices toward those which contribute to marine recovery by reducing pressures where possible.

The following were suggested as being potential ways to improve the situation:

- Establish SMART and Interim targets for both the UK Marine Strategy and the Water Framework Directive River Basin Management Plans.
- Update the UK Marine Policy Statement to reflect changes in legislation and sovereignty.
- Formally extend LNRs below low water out to 1nm to help unite planning and governance systems across the land-sea interface possibly by defining a 'Coastal Strategy' for the UK and using the Shoreline Management Planning governance and processes as a template for this.
- Establish clear governance structures along and across the coast that ensure integrated thinking and doing are supported at all scales, with Coastal and Estuary Partnerships and the National Framework for Coastal Coordination as the focus for this.
- Establish clear capacity requirements as outputs from Higher Education – upskilling the coastal and marine managers of the future with systems-thinking, collaborative and integrated approaches from the outset.
- Formally adopt spatial prioritisation as a founding principle in the next round of marine plans.

The Office for Environmental Protection (established as a key component of the Environment Act 2021) operates to hold the government to account for its failure to meet targets and legislative duties. In their recent report - [Progress in improving the natural environment in England 2021/2022](#)- eight attributes were identified for the EIP2023 that would improve the impact of the EIP specifically, but which are applicable across all relevant policies and legislation. They recommend that an EIP should:

- clearly translate vision into policies, commitments and actions for the whole of government
- establish clear and simple governance arrangements that drive delivery on the ground.
- have a unifying overall delivery plan and one for each goal area.
- set and pursue clear and achievable interim targets that are as ambitious as possible in the areas needing most attention.
- make clear use of robust and current data and analyses that are well aligned with all targets.
- establish an evaluation framework and use it to generate feedback on actions and progress, to learn and to improve delivery.
- use enhanced understanding to diagnose the cause of adverse trends, identify the most urgent, harmful or widespread concerns, and develop effective and timely responses.
- develop assessment regimes that look more to the future.

Recovering our ecosystems to robust sustainable states is a hugely complex and difficult challenge with competing interests and drivers across socio-economic and environmental legislation vying for primacy. Business as Usual is not delivering sufficient improvements to recover and regenerate extensive ecosystem function. The process of developing the rationale, form and function of an NFCC presents an opportunity to examine where and how improvements can be made for marine recovery, and to offer CEPs as one vehicle that can help improve Business as Usual by integrating thinking and doing along and across the coast to accelerate marine recovery. The NE report offers an analysis and interrogation of current frameworks to help identify where and how the 'attributes' proposed by the OEP might apply across a wide range of legislation and policy.

The mapping completed during this Development Phase 1, was completed at a high level reviewing the suite of policies and legislation across the land-sea interface. Appendix 5 includes figures and appendices from the NE report - Figures 9a - 9c proposes an overarching structure with the Environment Act and UKMS as the unifying legislation, how the functionally relate to other key legislation e.g., Levelling Up, how the key policy delivery mechanisms for each piece of legislation in turn can be aligned and a suite of detailed policy maps for further reference. The interconnections and relationships between each of these legislative frameworks are too numerous and complex to fully illustrate. The policy maps focus primarily on the environment but each draws heavily on socio-economic perspectives.

The complexity of the legislative landscape, the marine and coastal environments, and the interplay between and among different interest groups (governance) demands **collaborative and partnership-based approaches to problem-solving and action-taking**. Whilst some of the recommendations above are not within the direct gift of the NFCC, it is clear that the NFCC, CPN and CEPs have a role to play in supporting the legislative coherence and enabling the delivery coherence locally and regionally and can work with ALBs, NGOs and private industry to develop SMART targets that meaningfully integrate existing targets across the land-sea interface (see Figure 2 below).

NE presents an idealised overview of how the different components of a marine recovery process can be arranged into a meaningful framework for change. Figure 2 (Figure 10a in the NE report) below introduces the idealised process for establishing legislative, policy, delivery and assessment coherence across the many drivers for marine and coastal recovery (see Appendix 5, figures 9a-9c). Chief among these is the need for:

- Common goals and objectives
- Shared visions and missions
- Apex targets where possible
- SMART and Interim targets for driving change and enabling assessments that are competent to direct future management measures.

Figure 3 below (Figure 10b in NE report) seeks to show how partnership working at the coast contributes to an improved evidence base and overall operational coherence across the land-sea interface. These two components of an idealised framework for marine and coastal recovery can be unified as shown in Figure 4 below (Figure 10c in the NE report), which



illustrates how coherence at the legislative and policy-making level empowers and supports all actions that flow from this. Building coherence across legislation, policy, delivery and assessment of recovery in the marine environment, based on the 'attributes' proposed by the Office for Environmental Protection ([Progress in improving the natural environment in England, 2021/2022](#)).

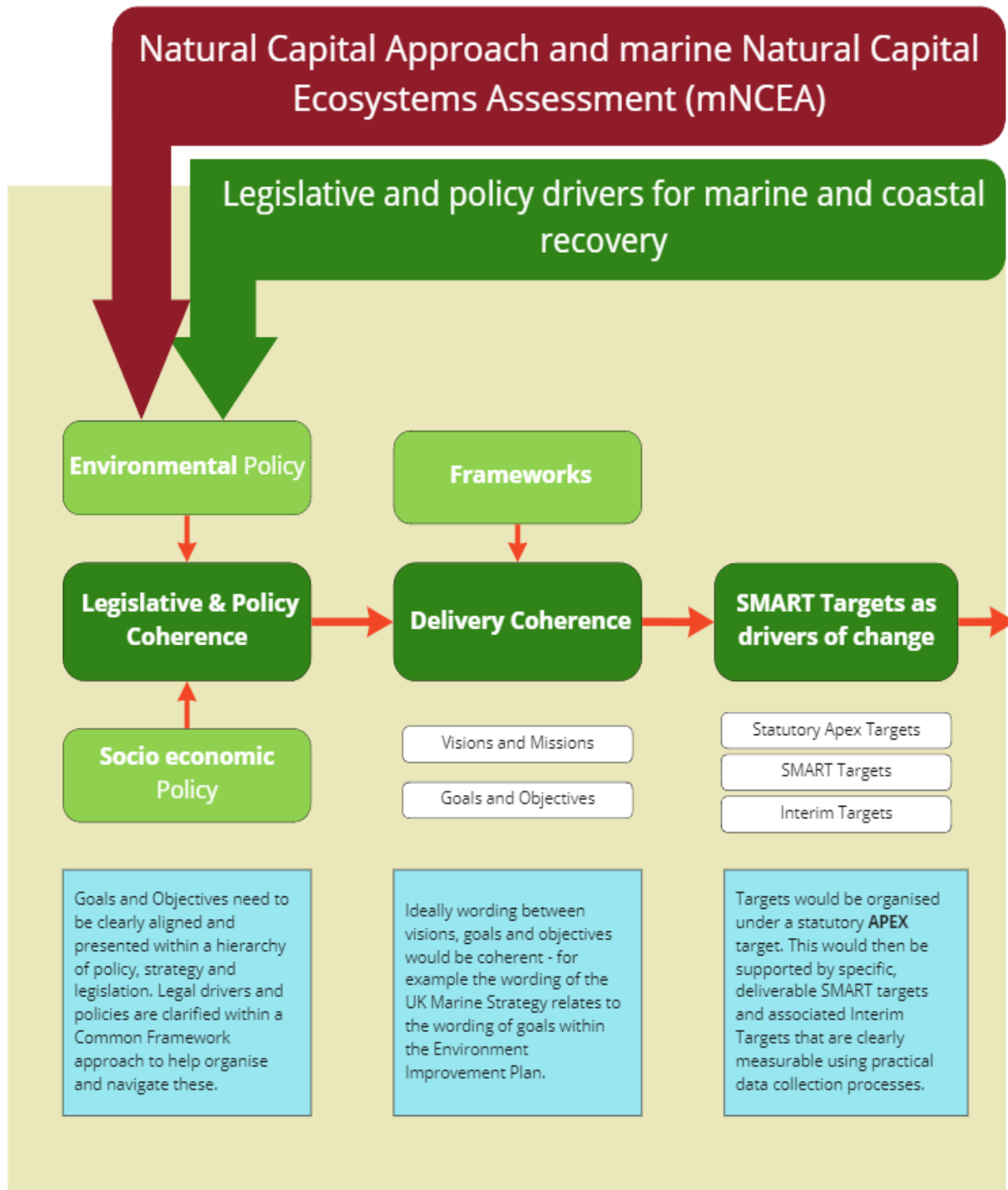


Figure 2: How partnership working at the coast contributes to an improved evidence base and overall operational coherence across the land-sea interface (Figure 10a Operationalising GES at the Local Level, NE March 2023, unpublished)

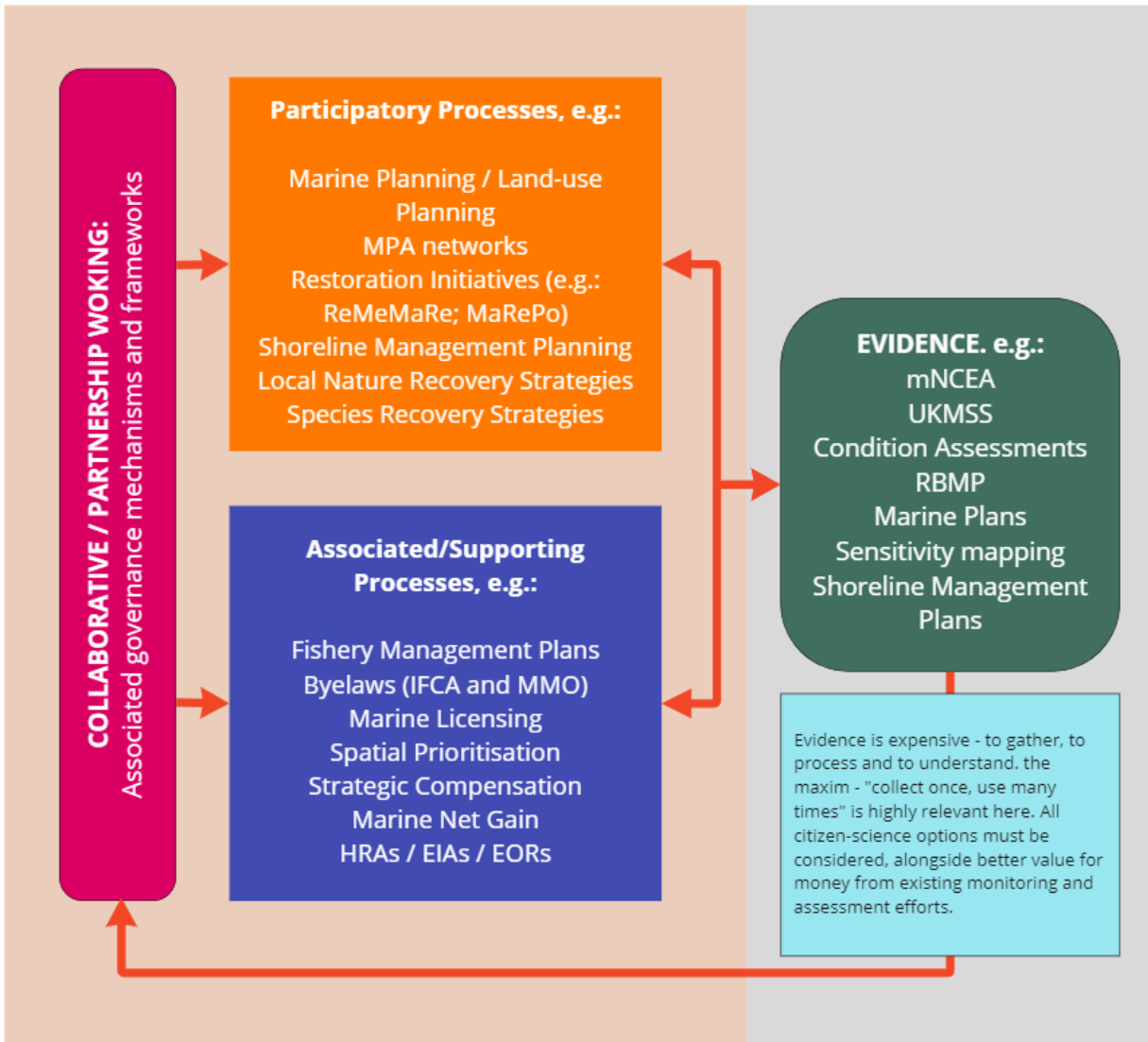


Figure 3: The relationship between collaborative and partnership working, associated formal processes and their supporting counterparts. These generate – and rely on - data and evidence (Figure 10b Operationalising GES at the Local Level, NE March 2023, unpublished)

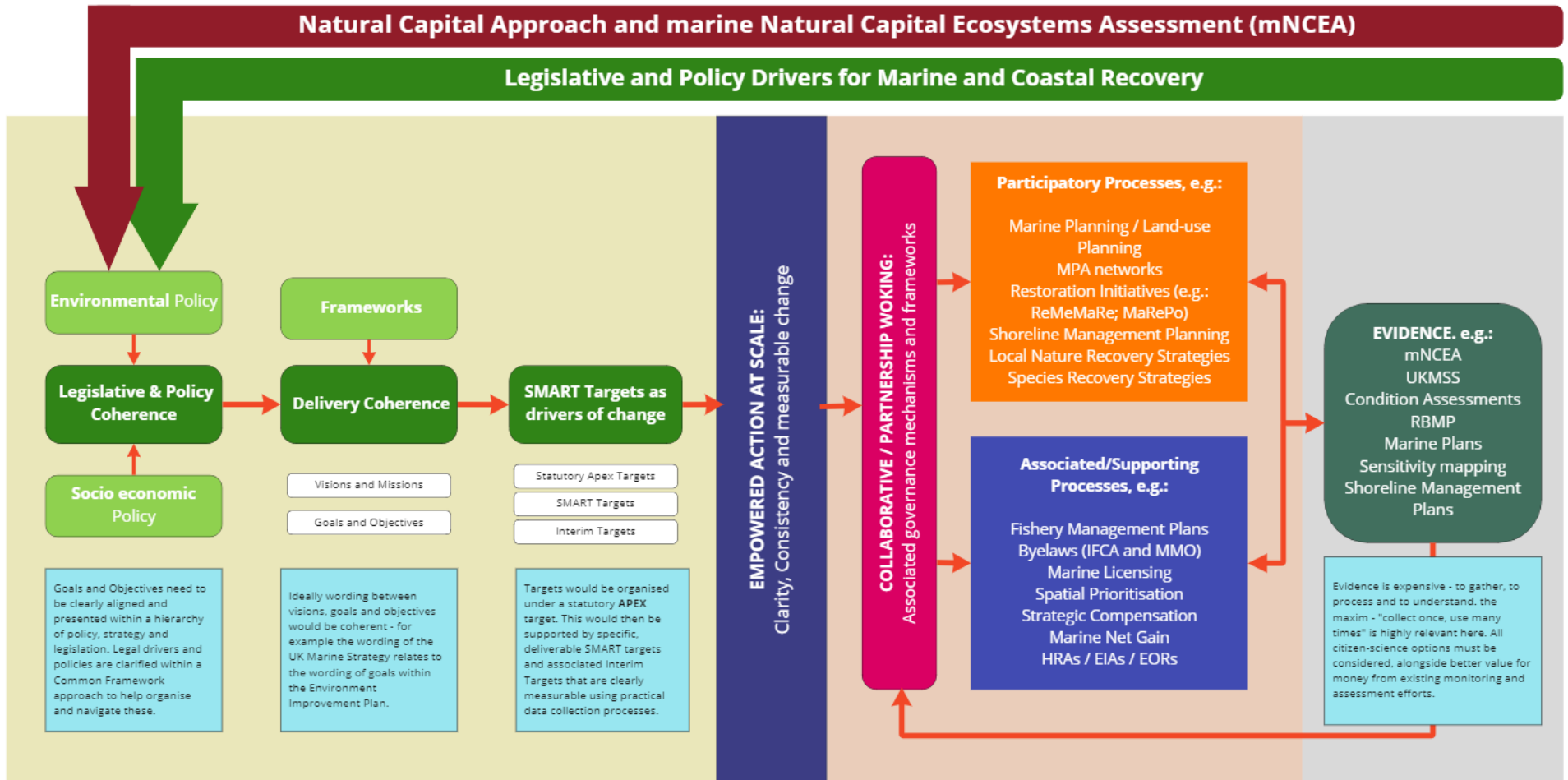


Figure 4: Showing how delivery coherence leads to empowered action at scale – from local through to regional and national – which in turn supports impactful collaborations and partnership working. (Figure 10c Operationalising GES at the Local Level, NE March 2023, unpublished)

CEPs offer an established, locally empowered vehicle to bring together disparate organisations, individuals and interests and help them navigate complexity in the search for sustainable solutions that work on the ground. One way of viewing this is to represent partnership working - or the collaborative process – as an iterative cycle that proceeds through many different phases, leading to intentional change. This can work at any scale and with any number of participants, and even works simply as a means of maintaining dialogue and engagement in arms-length processes in order to improve integration along and across the coast. Figure 5 below (Figure 11 in the NE report) attempts to represent this complexity in one place, implying the iterative, dialogue and process-focused approach that CEPs can bring. Each of the different components that enter the process vary in significance throughout, but each needs consideration from the outset.

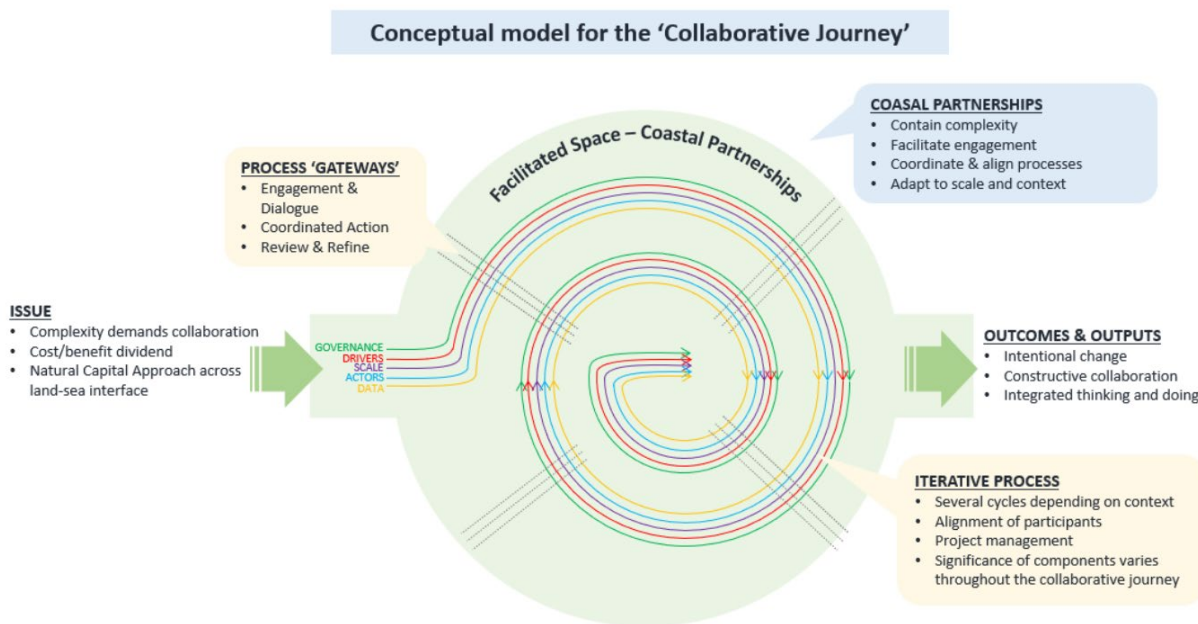


Figure 5: The iterative and complex process of partnership working: “The Collaborative Journey” (Figure 11 Operationalising GES at the Local Level, NE March 2023, unpublished)

Mechanisms for bridging the gap in the overlap between terrestrial and marine planning and nature recovery

Figure 6 (figure 12 in NE report) seeks to show where and how the drivers for marine, coastal and estuarine habitat restoration programmes (like Restoring Meadow, Marsh and Reef (ReMeMaRe) and Marine Restoration Potential (MaRePo)) intersect and may help direct thinking for other issues such as integrated coastal governance, marine planning (with nested marine or coastal plans) and spatial prioritisation. The ‘wheel’ could be expanded further to include other processes and initiatives, but this gives a flavour of the central components and could be adapted to suit.

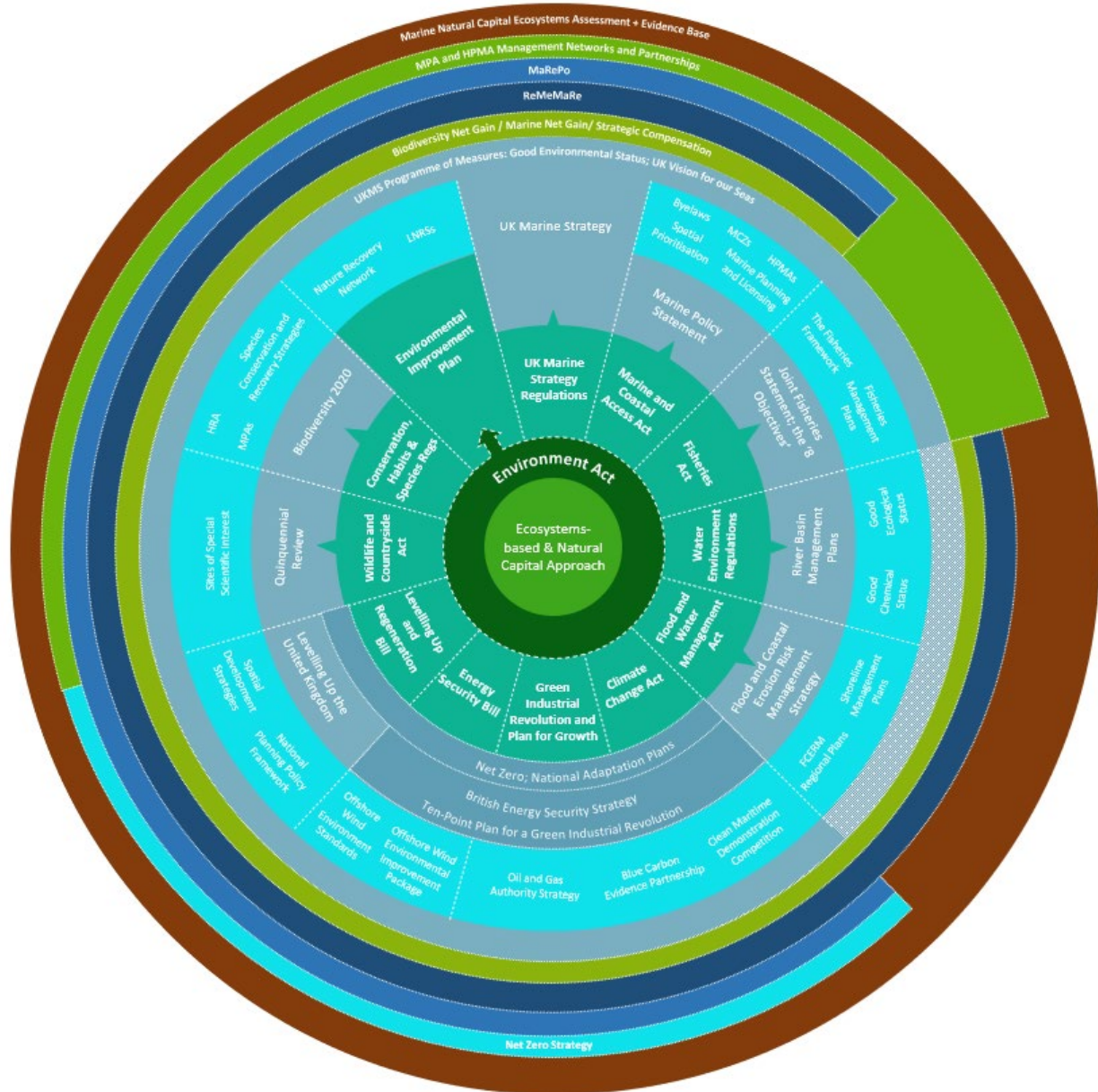


Figure 6. The Marine Recovery Wheel – interpreting drivers for marine, coastal and estuarine habitat restoration (Figure 12 Operationalising GES at the Local Level, NE March 2023, unpublished)

This wheel highlights the **persistent divide between terrestrial and marine governance and legislation, exacerbated by the hard barriers between the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Marine Planning. Local Authorities hold the responsibility and remit for both but the lack of joined up systemic and collaborative thinking undermines the delivery of both.** The NPPF is due to be reviewed under the LURB and is seeking to enshrine Biodiversity Net Gain as a mandatory undertaking from November 2023.

Local Authorities also have the remit for producing Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) which are only mandated to mean low water (MLW) further exacerbating the problem. Marine extensions to LNRS are being discussed and developed within NE's marine Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment Programme (mNCEAP) in recognition that some coastal Local



Authorities recognise the need to go beyond MLW. However, this needs to be coherent around the UK, perhaps as a nested marine plan. The mNCEAP team will be trialling this approach with pilots planned in Cornwall, North Yorkshire and the Humber and learning from the North Devon Marine Pioneer.

In the 3Cs Pilot Phase, the CPN and Partners recommended that nested Coastal Plans would be a mechanism for meaningfully integrating terrestrial local economic plans with marine plans across the land-sea interface, recognising that the ‘coastal space’ is much more than the intertidal zone (Bradshaw, 2023). There is an opportunity to align these two ideas to bring marine extensions to LNRS into a more holistic local Coastal Plan. If this can be formally adopted by the Local Authority and within the relevant Marine Plan, it provides a mechanism for integration of existing policies and legislation across the land-sea interface and an action plan process for implementation that CEPs can help develop, facilitate and monitor.

The mNCEAP team and CPN recognise the opportunity to work together during the next two years of both the mNCEAP and the Development Phases of the NFCC, to develop some example plans to include an evidence package that stakeholders could use to base their decisions on. An evidence pack may include natural capital, mapping of beneficiaries and investment opportunities. The CPN can build communities of practice and facilitate knowledge exchange with those outside of the pilot areas to pull in further case studies and build this process into the development of the NFCC.

Looking at the social capital of natural capital – who really benefits from marine recovery and marine planning, the social impact investment potential in collaborative processes and delivery of marine and coastal recovery can be tested and trialled. This is crucial if natural capital is to be nested in a wider socio-economic investment framework. This area of work will be progressed under HLO 5 (see below).

This builds directly on the national and regional work during this Phase and the Pilot Phase where some CEPs led on local coastal habitat restoration planning. **LNRS were recognised as being a key statutory mechanism from which a more holistic Coastal Plan that goes beyond nature recovery on land and sea and integrates across the socio-economic and environmental targets and what that would bring in ROI.** The NFCC/CEPs/CPN can play a central role in the development and delivery of local Coastal Plans and would seek to advocate and support the call for a UK Coastal Strategy from the Coastal Communities APPG in collaboration with the OneCoast Coalition. Timing for this should coincide with a refresh of the UKMS and NPPF for greatest impact (HLO 6). The need for this and the OneCoast Coalition has been evidenced Bradshaw (thesis 2023) where participants in a Delphi process interrogating needs for coastal governance observed the need to obtain a coastal voice covering social, economic (as well as) environmental (beyond Defra) issues. A unified coastal voice would be driven across government departments, with statutory responsibility across the three pillars of sustainability for advice. A national strategy for the coast at/above central government could integrate departments (Cabinet Office level) and reduce reliance on regulatory functions. Examples of who could build this approach included research councils, government (including EU) and CEPs but not large NGOs who were not seen as leading collaboration or inclusive enough of the social agenda (Bradshaw, 2023).

This initial mapping work has been preliminarily reviewed and welcomed by the Environment Agency’s ReMeMaRe and FCRM teams; NE’s Marine and marine Natural Capital and

Ecosystem Assessment teams and the MMO's Evidence team. All recognised the need for alignment and recommended that the work continue drilling deeper into the specific targets of key areas of legislation e.g., the River Basin Management Plans, Shoreline Management Plans and emerging LNRS and associated marine extensions.

It is important to note that things get rather messy around the intersection between the Water Environment Regulations (WFD) and their associated River Basin Management Plans and the UK Marine Strategy Regulations (UKMS). The WFD Regulations hold legal primacy from the 1nm mark offshore, but the UKMS and associated GES assessments include assessments of intertidal benthic habitats and communities. The WFD monitoring and assessments programmes formally contribute data to the intertidal benthic assessments. The UKMS is also concerned with contaminants in water, eutrophication and hydrographic conditions, all of which feature in the WFD and River Basin Management Plan considerations. It will be important to map these interconnections in more detail, and to review how these relate to the EIP and associated indicators as a 'triumvirate' of drivers for habitat restoration and assessment. Working with the Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) on this aspect will be key to understanding the interconnections and is explored more below.

In Development Phase 2, the CPN and partners will continue to work with Defra and the ALBs to further examine and map the interconnections to understand where targets dovetail or indeed contradict each other to start to develop what an integrated approach to delivery could be and a gap or 'clash' analysis can be devised. A technical Working Group will be set up to bring in the expertise and thinking from the ALB teams, private industry and NGOs working on the integration of targets across the land-sea interface to start to develop a suite of SMART targets. This may include some members of the OWEC Strategic Marine Net Gain T&F Group helping develop Marine Net Gain targets for emerging Defra policy e.g., the RSPB working on Intertidal Net Gain and The Crown Estate. Further technical expertise will be identified to pull in as need is identified. The approach will be developed over the interim between 3Cs projects, but two options are currently under discussion:

- Case study approach - identify an ongoing or recently delivered coastal habitat restoration project and work backwards to identify the drivers, targets and metrics being used to evidence the ROI and success of the project and any missed opportunities where other targets had not been identified.
- Targets and metrics review across a subset of legislation e.g., WFD and UKMS to review alignment and contradictions and build out to include metrics from other drivers.

This will dovetail with the fora and group mapping under HLO 1, to understand what new approaches and information are emerging from ongoing projects, thematic Working or Task and Finish Groups to ensure there is no duplication of effort e.g., Flood and Coastal Risk Innovation Projects. This would include socio-economic targets across relevant legislation building on the challenges identified in the Communities on the Edge Report commissioned by OneCoast (see section Appendix 14) detailing how the LURB is failing coastal communities and fails to recognise the role a healthy environment has in supporting coastal economies and health and wellbeing. In particular the report highlights how metrics used to measure ecosystem health are not comparable with socio-economic metrics and scales. The process of aligning environmental and socio-economic targets and understanding the benefits of improving natural capital must take account of this barrier and socio-ecological scales, if metrics are to be integrated and useable for monitoring benefits and impacts of enhancing and restoring coastal environments.



Through this we will start to develop a delivery prioritisation process and align with HLO 5 for helping to devise monitoring and evaluation metrics to prove ROI of public and private funding. This will also help to shape future government led programmes through identifying key questions and research needed to ensure an integrated approach as outlined under HLO 1.

As this work did not progress as far as was originally envisaged for this Phase due to the complexity of the legislative landscape, the needs and gaps have not yet been identified and therefore could not be prioritised. It was intended to take this out to consultation with CEPs to include local priorities, building capacity and resource needs for prioritised delivery areas. However, coastal habitat restoration planning has already been identified as a critical need through which natural capital can be further tested and trialled. Therefore, a consultation was undertaken under HLOs 3 & 4 to understand needs for the development of the building capacity and Coastal Communications Hub, in which we included questions about Natural Capital understanding and use and specific questions around coastal habitat restoration planning ambitions and needs. Progress on coastal habitat restoration planning and the resources needed within CEPs according to the consultation results are explored in the HLO 3 section below.

Coastal Habitat Restoration Planning - Regional/Local Projects and CEP Consultation

One area that has already been identified as a key priority is coastal habitat restoration planning for which CEPs are ideally placed to facilitate. Regional case studies/demonstration projects were progressed to inform the development of the NFCC, Coastal Communications Hub and Coastal Data Hub and showcase how, with dedicated capacity and a supportive NFCC, CEPs can mobilise stakeholders and achieve shared objectives across sectors through development of local Coastal Plans. Whilst the overall focus would be cross-sector and scale collaboration (based on ICZM principles), a preliminary focus could be on coastal and inshore marine habitat restoration planning. The long-term aim of these projects is to develop a cross-sectoral local Coastal Plan informed by local knowledge, data and opportunity mapping. This would include the ability to accelerate coastal habitat restoration and link this into land and marine development and management plans for investment. Engaging with the Coastal Group Network and Regional Flood and coastal Committees will be required to ensure that any local Coastal Plan incorporates the Shoreline Management Plan refresh and FCRM potential for Nature Based Solutions (NbS) (as well as aspirations for LNRS to link to the marine environment) i.e., coastal habitat restoration and landward side greening.

South East

In the South East regional demonstration project, the Thames Estuary Partnership (TEP) collaborated with the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) to build on the first attempt at ground truthing the national coastal habitat restoration opportunity maps completed in the Pilot Phase. It was envisaged that an additional workshop would take place to refine the maps further, map out the interconnections between terrestrial and marine legislation and examine how local priorities aligned with the national mapping work described above. However, due to the complexity of this work and the extremely short delivery time, the SE project partners decided to focus on co-

developing a complementary proposal through a funding stream that opened during this time. The Endangered Landscape Programme (ELP) is a Cambridge Conservation Initiative programme that aims to restore natural ecological processes, species populations and habitats for a better and more sustainable future. It signals a shift away from a narrative of ‘slowing declines’ and ‘no net loss’ to a positive and creative conservation agenda in which the potential of our land and seas is recognised. The aim of Planning Grants is to catalyse the development of landscape restoration plans across Europe. Funding supports the work needed to build alliances, establish baselines for biodiversity, prepare landscape restoration plans, and/or draft funding proposals. The grant is for up to \$100,000 for up to 2 years of development work which aligns with the next two Development Phases of the NFCC. There is then the possibility of applying for up to \$5 million to help towards delivery of landscape scale restoration. Estuaries such as the Humber and Solent have been successful applying for these grants before which has helped catalyse large scale coastal habitat restoration. Therefore, a successful EOI was developed and submitted, led by ZSL for the Greater Thames Estuary, including the Medway/Swale and Essex Estuaries recognising the multiple plans and great ambition for coastal habitat restoration across this land/seascape, which was evidenced in the Pilot Phase of this project. A subsequent application is currently in development with the proposed activities and outputs detailed below, and an updated coastal habitat opportunity map that was developed for the application can be seen in Figure 7 below:

Transforming the Thames: A plan for seascape scale restoration of coastal habitats in the Greater Thames Estuary

- ZSL will lead the delivery of the plan and facilitate four working groups:
 - Habitat Restoration: through mapping exercises and on the ground visits, this group, led by ZSL, will develop a plan to connect existing fragmented coastal habitats to bring biodiversity back, restore natural processes and promote seascape scale movements for wildlife across the estuary. Current and proposed projects will be included in the plan and restoration will be considered for seagrass, saltmarsh, native oyster, blue mussel, grazing marsh, ground nesting bird habitat and saline lagoons.
 - Protecting existing and future habitat: led by Essex Wildlife Trust, this group will examine the most significant threats to existing and restored habitat. These will include water quality, disturbance and the impacts of climate change. The group will determine what action could be taken upstream and across the estuary to overcome barriers to restoration.
 - Synching with policy: This working group, led by TEP, will align the plan with existing and proposed national and local policies and embed it within local plans, such as Local Nature Recovery Strategies.
 - Sustainable financing: led by KWTG, this group will work on sustainable financing options for the restoration plan. This will include investigating the blue carbon potential, calculating nitrogen offsetting, and biodiversity offsetting potential of the planned restoration.

The partnership will hold workshops with community groups, industry, academics, and landowners for feedback, co-creation and knowledge sharing to ensure success of the plan.

- Outputs:
 - Holistic plan for habitat restoration, creation and repair in the Greater Thames Estuary to include detailed online maps, a theory of change, stakeholder analysis

and proposals for reducing threats and integrating the plan with local and national policy.

- Costed-up budget.
- Funding Proposal – to include traditional grant and philanthropic donations and sustainable financing options.
- A partnership agreement.

Whilst not guaranteed (next application outcome expected by June 2023) as it is within a competitive process, the strength of this work being nested within the NFCC development brings benefits to both this project and the creation of a regional approach. In Development Phase 2, TEP will ensure that the approaches and learning from the project will directly benefit the NFCC development via the CPN and knowledge exchange nationally with other CEPs. Should the second stage ELP application be unsuccessful, TEP/ZSL will build on the momentum with partners to further develop and deliver the elements of the plan that directly benefit the NFCC and the advancement of coastal habitat restoration planning within the next Development Phase and will work to secure match funding from private and philanthropic funds to support the partners capacity.

Transforming the Thamescape Project Area

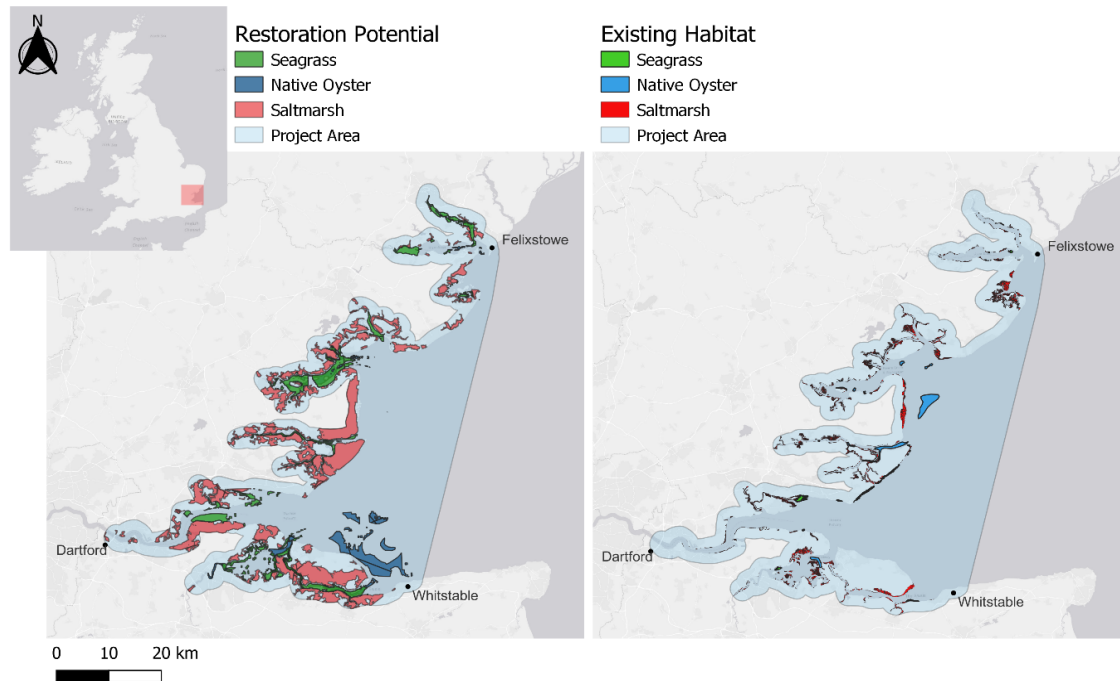


Figure 7: updated coastal habitat opportunity map focussed on ReMeMaRe habitats, developed for the ELP proposal building on TEP/ZSL's mapping workshops in the Pilot Phase.

North East

The Berwickshire and Northumberland Marine Nature Partnership (BNMNP) and the Durham Heritage Coast Partnership (DHCP) held two workshops to discuss coastal habitat restoration in



the North East of England. The two workshops attracted a total of 38 participants from 25 different organisations including Statutory Agencies, Local Authorities, Academia, Environmental NGOs, Utility companies, and Rivers Trusts.

Workshop participants were split into groups and asked to consider the types of activities and opportunities which they would wish to see included within a Regional Coastal Restoration Plan. There was general agreement that a Plan should capture opportunities which go beyond traditional habitat restoration and creation and also consider opportunities to improve the condition of existing habitats and to reduce other pressures on coastal ecosystems. The workshop groups were asked to consider the barriers and constraints preventing local restoration activity. A number of the constraints identified were relevant to the emerging proposals for an NFCC. These constraints included the need for knowledge transfer and information sharing, skills gaps in implementing habitat restoration schemes, and access to available data.

In the final part of the workshop participants were presented with the national habitat opportunity maps for saltmarsh, seagrass and native oyster developed by the Environment Agency's ReMeMaRe project and asked to provide local sense checking to identify areas which were unfeasible to restore due to local obstacles or restrictions. Participants were then asked to annotate the maps to identify additional areas where there is potential for restoration projects, ongoing or planned work, or the possibility of extensions of existing projects. This stage looked at coastal and marine habitats in the round and did not concentrate solely on the three habitats dealt with in the ReMeMaRe habitat opportunity mapping.

The outputs from the workshops are being collated and analysed by staff from BNMNP and DCHP and will be collated and presented to stakeholders via the Berwickshire and North East England Coastal Network. Further work is proposed for the next Development Phase to develop the work further which will see a prioritisation of the opportunities identified and the identification of collaborative action to realise these. A summary report can be seen in Appendix 6.

North West

In the North West regional demonstration project the North West Coastal Forum (NWCF) brought a wide range of organisations together to explore the needs and potential for regional habitat restoration and creation and make recommendations for future action to enable readiness for further development and implementation. These include recommendations to changes in consenting and licensing processes both at local and national level, data and evidence recommendations, community engagement recommendations and some more general recommendations around enabling more strategic and collaborative working in the North West.

Over 90% of the North West coastline is internationally protected for key habitats and species, with many more national or local site designations. It is mostly low lying and sedimentary with many large estuaries and expanses of salt marsh and sand dunes as well as other important habitats such as seagrass beds. Despite the protections in place, it is a very pressurised coastline, with human activity, natural coastal change and the increasing impacts of climate change causing habitat degradation and loss, however it has a lot of potential for habitat creation, particularly in the numerous estuaries, and many organisations across the North West

are actively working to record, monitor and change the current situation for the better. But apart from the areas identified for managed realignment in the Shoreline Management Plan there is no overarching regional plan and nothing that brings together the many projects and organisations working in this field together, so opportunities are potentially being missed.

To explore what needs to happen to make coastal habitat work and strategic planning in the North West more effective and efficient, a workshop - *Regional Habitat Creation & Restoration in North West England: exploring issues and opportunities for maximising the potential* - was held to bring together organisations involved in delivery – existing or planned - of habitat creation or restoration projects and those involved in drawing up habitat creation or restoration plans and strategies for the North West England coastline. The aim was to discuss the key challenges faced in moving projects forward and possible mechanisms to help to ensure easier implementation, greater collaboration opportunities and more joined-up thinking for the future.

The event successfully achieved the desired outcomes, with sharing of information on projects and shared learning arising from those projects, as well as a robust discussion of the key issues impeding progress and mechanisms to help address these which led to a series of recommendations for future action to maximise opportunities for coastal habitat restoration and creation in North West England. Full details are available in the workshop report (see Appendix 7). The recommendations arising from this work include:

Permits and Consents Recommendations:

1. Simplifying and making less expensive/onerous to comply, whilst maintaining a necessary level of control to ensure the best habitat restoration or creation for that site is undertaken.
2. A single source of information – which is regularly updated - should be drawn together and made freely available through a national coastal data portal and signposted by any regional data and information hubs.

Data and Evidence Recommendations:

1. Reviews should take place to determine what datasets exist within each region for local datasets and nationally for nation-wide datasets; this should also assess the validity of data and its accessibility (data licences etc.).
2. Data and evidence gaps which form barriers to strategic planning of habitat restoration and creation projects, including where data has been collected but is not of sufficiently robust standard or which is not accessible to other users, should be identified and clearly flagged up on any data hub or portal to facilitate opportunities to plug the data and evidence gap.
3. Strategic-level planning for habitat restoration and creation should take place at a regional level as well as national level and should cover a wide range of coastal habitats.
4. Within each region habitat restoration and creation projects should be identified and listed on a regional data and information hub
5. Organisations developing new projects and commissioning data should, at the outset, give careful consideration to both accessibility of the data to other users and the standards.

Community Awareness and Engagement Recommendation:

1. Guidance on a range of community awareness and engagement issues should be brought together and form part of the regional (and national) data hubs.

Working Together in the North West Recommendations:

2. A regional data and information hub should be established,
3. A regional habitat restoration and creation strategy should be developed.
4. A regional habitat group should be established.
5. An event bringing together organisations working on habitat restoration and creation should be held.

This information will be used to inform the work of the NWCF going forward as the NWCF has the potential to develop its website to include a regional data and information signposting service and its wide outreach and regional remit makes it a suitable organisation to bring others together for future workshops, meetings and events.

Local Projects

During the Pilot Phase, some areas identified the need to collaborate locally with CaBA Partnerships for a wholescape approach (Rivers Trust and CPN, 2021) and developing whole estuary strategies. Two local projects, in the Mersey Estuary and Exe Estuary, were supported in this Development Phase, building on previous work delivered in the Pilot Phase and the Wholescape Approach to Marine Management ([WAMM](#)) (The Rivers Trust and CPN, 2021).

Mersey Estuary Blueprint

The Mersey Rivers Trust (MRT) established a Mersey Estuary & Coastal Forum stakeholder group to develop a management and development strategy - the Mersey Estuary Blueprint. In this Phase, MRT facilitated two workshops in Liverpool for the stakeholder group to review existing plans and strategies and explore the framework for the Blueprint. The strategic topics discussed will be developed further in Development Phase 2, leading to objectives and management measures also being developed for the Mersey Estuary Blueprint. Knowledge sharing is to be enabled with a shared repository to facilitate collaboration. The Mersey Estuary stakeholder group will be supported in working with the Lower Mersey CaBA Partnership so that the developing Mersey Estuary Blueprint can be included in whole catchment planning. For a summary report see Appendix 8.

Exe Sedimentation Project:

The Exe Estuary Management Partnership (EEMP) worked with the East Devon Catchment Partnership (EDCP) during the Pilot Phase to develop a mechanism for engaging estuarine and marine stakeholders in catchment management, an area which was previously underrepresented, by creating a new Marine Sub-Group as a branch of the EDCP. The Marine Sub-Group were able to identify issues in the marine and estuary environment that required attention, thereby fully encompassing the water environment from source to sea. One issue in particular which required immediate attention was sedimentation in the Exe, which is affecting just about every aspect of the estuary from habitats and wildlife to navigation and shellfisheries.



In order to reduce the impacts of this, it is critical to understand sources and sinks for sedimentation in the Exe, evaluate sediment transport and identify locations in the catchment where work could be targeted to help address this knowledge gap. The Marine Sub-Group has now expanded to involve a variety of partners in this collaborative project, including the Universities of Exeter and Plymouth, Devon Wildlife Trust, Westcountry Rivers Trust, South West Coastal Monitoring and the Hydrographic Office.

Phase one of this project has enabled the Marine Sub-Group to undertake several invaluable pieces of work:

1. A desk study bringing together existing information and economic evidence.
2. Core sampling from various locations within the estuary and from the main river inputs, analysed for major and minor element geochemistry to see if the tributaries of the Exe have distinct geochemical signatures that allow us to see their relative input over time to muds behind the spit at Dawlish Warren.
3. Analysis of existing data, including change reporting using the airborne LiDAR and bathymetry by the South West Coastal Monitoring Programme and survey data from the Exe Harbour Master. This work would start to build a picture of sediment movement throughout the Exe.
4. UAV LiDAR and single-beam bathymetry survey of the entire estuary, to take a snapshot of sediment topography in the Exe. This will be used as baseline data to compare future surveys against, to map changes in sedimentation and inform future phases of the project.

Phase two would include a full phase of investigation and testing:

- A need for yearly LiDAR / bathymetry surveying, to explore how weather events could be impacting the movement of sediment within the area.
- Sand/sediment grabs from determined locations of accretion (based on the 2023 LiDAR and bathymetry data) to help understand sources and sinks. This would be by foot for intertidal areas and by boat with a day grab for the subtidal environment. Samples would be analysed and characterised.
- In identified areas of concerning accretion and erosion, a sediment trap-type monitoring system would be beneficial to scope a rate of change over the months. Acquiring data on the rate of sediment moving on a monthly or fortnightly basis would benefit future action plans for the estuary regarding the timeframes needed for action and to help ascertain whether the management partnership should let nature take its course.
- Further testing of the samples taken could also explore the importance of the estuary's sediments in terms of harbouring contaminants, including faecal coliforms that impact on bathing water and shellfish water quality around the estuary, coasts and offshore in Lyme Bay. This additional element of the proposal could also potentially provide indicators of sediment movement (if different contaminants are found in different parts of the estuary).
- A proposal for a PhD project is currently being formed, which will be presented to the University of Plymouth on 27th April 2023 for the 2024 cohort.

The full report for this phase of the Exe Sedimentation Project is pending.

CEP Consultation - Coastal Habitat Restoration Planning

A consultation with CEPs was completed scoping the needs for the building capacity programme (HLO 3) and the Coastal Communications Hub (HLO 4). The results of this consultation are outlined within the relevant sections below. Within the building capacity consultation, CEPs were asked about their ambition, current work and future resource needs to lead on local or regional coastal habitat restoration planning. This is explored in more detail through the lens of capacity building in the section on HLO 3 below.

19 CEPs covering each region of the UK (including each English region) responded positively that they are either already thinking and working on coastal habitat restoration planning and projects at local and regional scales or have an interest in undertaking. Some either had existing management plans that could be expanded to include a coastal habitat restoration plan, are planning to include it within an emerging LNRS or see it as a way to establish a strategic plan for their area where none currently exists. 17 of these respondents showed interest in potentially being a pilot area in Development Phase 2 and 3. Resources they need included capacity building on facilitation and strategic planning, technical support on data and GIS and financial support for dedicated officer capacity. In terms of the financial resources needed, most areas felt that either a full time or part time dedicated officer for 2-3 years would be needed with costs ranging from £20K - £50K inclusive of employer costs and expenses.

In Development Phase 2, this ambition and local needs will be scoped further to understand where efficiencies can be made through regional collaborations or existing structures and will be accounted for in the development of an investable business model, working with The Crown Estate and other partners.

Due to the short delivery timescales of this round, a common approach to coastal and inshore marine habitat restoration planning learning from the three regional projects could not be developed. However, with the next steps for the policy mapping, the lessons learned through all three regional projects and the two local projects to date and further scoping with CEPs, this will be developed throughout Development Phase 2.

Working with CaBA for a wholescape approach

The Framework focuses on bringing the marine and coastal waters into terrestrial plans and planning to ensure that the coast is considered as more than the intertidal strip or the land adjacent to the water - this is the 'gap in the overlap' that needs addressing.

To achieve the kind of integration across policies and targets as outlined above, and achieve the ambition of nested Coastal Plans, collaboration between CEPs and Catchment Partnerships (CaPs) are key to achieving the collaborative advantage needed for a wholescape approach to the water environment. Building on the Pilot Phase and the successful Wholescape Approach to Marine Management (WAMM) project, in which The Rivers Trust (RT) and CPN collaborated on a national scale and supported local CEPs and CaPs to collaborate in a local pilot (Morecambe Bay), the CPN and RT identified several key themes where the NFCC and CaBA need to collaborate. Sediment flows, nutrient neutrality, Natural Flood Management (NFM) and Nature



Based Solutions (NbS) are all areas where the wholescape approach will be needed to support coastal habitat restoration, NbS in FCRM and joining up river restoration and urban greening solutions to coastal water quality and habitat improvements (The Rivers Trust and CPN, 2021).

In addition, investigating the downstream benefits of upstream improvements and vice versa will also be needed to understand how to evidence success of an integrated approach across our estuaries and coasts and enable marine management and recovery to be supported through terrestrial plans, FCRM and associated funding streams. Both the further work on mapping the connections between the targets within WFD/FCRM and the LNRS process are prime opportunities to bring these needs together. In Development Phase 2, the CPN and RT will build on WAMM to co-develop an approach for furthering understanding of these key areas. Longer term research may be needed due to the complexity of working across whole systems and therefore this scoping exercise may result in a suite of research questions for government, academia and the private sector. For example, CPN will collaborate with RT in the following areas:

- The potential to seek accreditation of CaBA Partnership Plans and its relevance to the existing suite of voluntary coastal plans which are co-ordinated by CEPs.
- How the new Natural Flood Management Hub connects with the proposed Coastal Data Hub (HLO4).
- Strive for integration of Local Nature Recovery strategies into CaBA and CEPs objectives (HLO2)
- Discussions with government about the 'missing middle' through jointly engaging with Ministers with strategic efforts to better integrate delivery and finance; including how the potential for an integrated water strategy could connect with calls for a UK coastal strategy.
- Working with the CaBA National Support Group over national success measures including M&E reporting (HLO5).

RT will undertake mapping of the current CaBA Working Groups to understand which have a relevance for the Estuaries and Coasts CaBA Working Group and together the CPN and RT will develop a process for ensuring the flow of information between them and the NFCC and how to apply learning from both sides into the research and approaches of both. This goes beyond simple knowledge exchange to application on the ground and building capacity across sectors, land and sea. We will support the achievement of full integration through CaBA Partnerships and CEPs working closely together.

Coastal Data Hub

To underpin and enable more inclusive, evidence-based decision making nationally, regionally and locally, a robust data and evidence base is needed. **The development of a community driven Coastal Data Hub** will support collaborative coastal management at all scales. The Data Hub can be used to help develop a pipeline of proposals, build a shared understanding of priorities for action and engage wider stakeholders, informing the content and aligned with the functionality of a broader **Coastal Communications Hub for communications and collaboration (HLO 4)**.

The aim of RT’s contribution to the larger 3C’s project is to create a coastal data hub to enable shared understanding to support coordinated delivery across the land-sea interfaces. This will be delivered via three phases as outlined in the project plan where the coastal hub will be developed iteratively in collaboration with stakeholders to ensure it meets the demands of the users.

The goal of this hub is to enable CEPs and other groups to design and execute localised coastal management for habitat restoration. To support collaborative coastal management, practitioners working on coastal issues for example such as (1) coastal communities and climate change, (2) coastal habitat & wildlife degradation, (3) pollution and water quality, (4) tidal flooding and coastal erosion, need access to relevant data to support integrated coastal management planning with data of minimal to no paywall, timely, useful resolution, and spatial coverage.

This work builds on previous learnings from the development of the Coastal Data Explorer developed under the WAMM project, the Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) where the Data & Evidence Team at the Rivers Trust have undertaken a coastal data platform review.

As part of Development Phase 1, a live draft version of the Coastal Data Hub has been created and is available at the following link for feedback from coastal practitioners: <https://coastal-data-hub-theriverstrust.hub.arcgis.com/pages/feedback-coastal-data-hub>

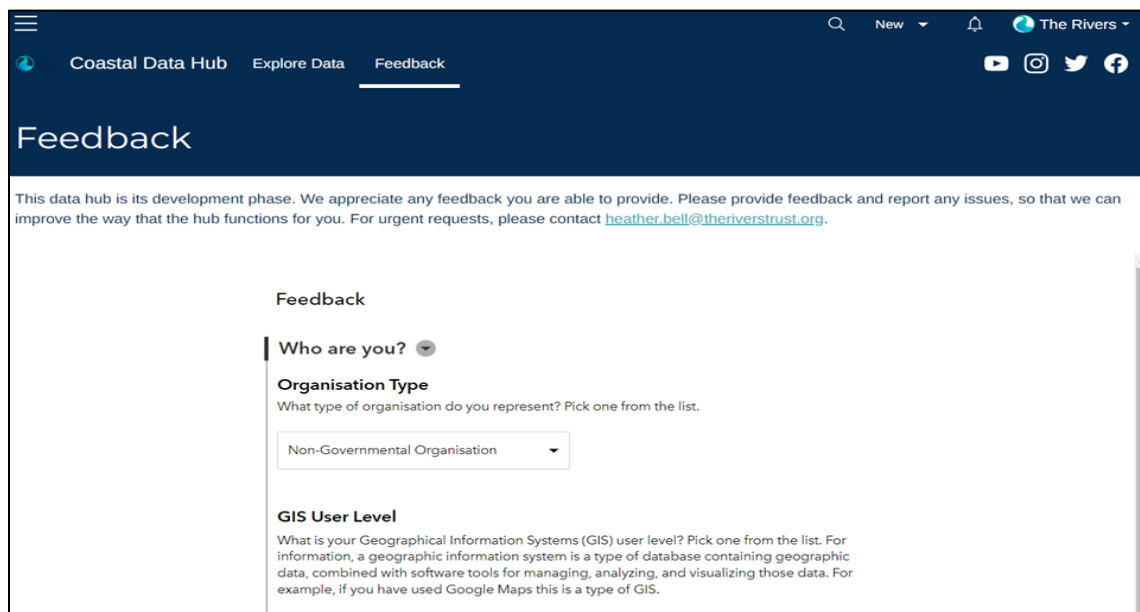


Figure 8: The mock-up Coastal Data Hub with a view of the ‘feedback’ page.

The mock up in Figure 8 above was briefly presented to the Leadership Group for their feedback and to inform the next steps of the work in Development Phase 2.

Further to the generation of the Coastal data Hub mock up, RT worked with regional partners to understand the needs and challenges around transboundary data requirements for different users. RT collaborated with the Severn Estuary Partnership to understand initial work which



may need to be undertaken to address transboundary data needs for different users. Meetings are ongoing with data providers in Wales such as Natural Resources Wales.

Development Phase 2 will further develop the coastal data hub to co-design a beta version. Development Phase 3 will finalise and launch the coastal data hub as well as project training to ensure coastal partnerships can develop, use GIS resources and create useful outputs for their work.

Key outputs from this project focus on new iterations of the data hub being developed at the end of each project stage where it has been co-created with engagement and guidance from stakeholder groups. As we go through each project phase the hub will become more developed and tailored to suit needs. The final iteration of the hub will be created in parallel with upskilling opportunities for the local coastal partnerships.

The Rivers Trust will primarily be responsible for the delivery of the database/ hub with facilitators contracted to help deliver a focus group with key stakeholders (Coastal practitioners, Coastal Partnerships, CaBA Partnerships, Local Rivers Trust, Wildlife Trusts, Community groups & LGA Coastal SIG).

The Rivers Trust have been developing a number of thematic nature based solutions (NbS) databases for monitoring and evaluation of terrestrial environmental restoration (see the [NFM Hub](#)) with the Environment Agency FCRM team. These NbS databases have been identified as a working model for NbS databases when demoed to organisations such as Defra and Natural England. During the focus groups for the development of the Coastal Data Hub, features such as having an NbS database will be explored with users and how this may be applied to a coastal context.

Building capacity across framework delivery partners and wider sectors to enable multi-level governance and inclusive decision making (HLO 3)

Building capacity across framework delivery partners and wider sectors has been highlighted as important in order to enable multi-level governance and inclusive decision making. During the Pilot Phase, the need for a building capacity programme was needed to build skills and thematic knowledge across and between sectors would assist in levelling up understanding of each other's work and increase trust and accountability.

During this phase, consultation was focussed primarily on CEP needs recognising that the NFCC is being designed to support local, place-based delivery and CEPs are recognised as established Coastal Champions of the coastal coordination. Therefore, topic areas CEPs would welcome support and training across was explored. Back in 2020, as part of the CPN's strategic development, the CPN asked the Network what support CEPs would like from the CPN - including the areas of work they wanted to prioritise for local delivery, building capacity, knowledge exchange and national collaboration. Based on these needs, the CPN developed a Strategy and Business Plan to take forward the recommendations. To sense-check and build on this insight gathered, a focused Capacity Building consultation was conducted in March 2023 as part of the broader consultation on the Coastal Communications Hub and coastal habitat restoration needs. The feedback from this is directly informing plans for the development of these resources during Development Phase 2, to ensure the right support for CEPs and other coastal practitioners is built. Mindfully Wired Communications (MWC) led on the assembly of the survey, using Google Forms as the platform and, mindful of CEP resource capacity, each survey was designed to be completed in 15 minutes or less.

The capacity building survey was circulated to all 55 CEPs around the UK coast and the NFCC Leadership Group. 28 responses were received, with a good geographical spread across the country. Given the time capacity constraints of many CEPs during this January - March period, a response rate of over 50% of CEPs was encouraging. However, this supports the need for deeper engagement of CEPs that have not engaged with the NFCC development to date. In Development Phase 2, deeper engagement will be enabled through dedicated capacity for 1-2-1 discussions and further consultation.

The survey was split into five main sections: Initial details, CPN Mentoring Programme, Training Programme Strands, Funding & Financing and Emerging Themed Training Opportunities (comprising sub-sections on Building Capacity for Coastal Habitat Restoration and Planning and Sea The Value: Marine Biodiversity Benefits for a Sustainable Society). Below is a summary breakdown of our findings and summary of how we will be taking each sub-strand forwards within the next phase.

CPN Peer to Peer Mentoring Programme

CEPs are envisaged as being involved as both mentors and mentees, using the Network to both seek advice and impart experience on topics in which they are well versed. Through the Capacity Building consultation, interest was gauged and key questions asked around structure and topic content.

- 75% of respondents are interested in being a part of a CEP mentoring network.
- 82% think a sub-group for new starters/less experienced CEP officers would be of benefit for the professional development of their staff.
- 89% think a sub-group for CEP Managers (senior level staff) would be of benefit for sharing insight, experience and support.
- From our 2021 consultation, an exchange-based, non-remunerated model came out as the most popular. 86% agree that this is still their preferred mode of operation.
- In the 2021 consultation CEPs were asked what areas of expertise they would be willing to provide support on through the mentoring network. During this consultation, these topics were sense-checked and willingness re-gauged. The topics with the most training offers were: community engagement (61%), interdisciplinary project development (54%), workshop facilitation (39%) and effective communication (29%). There were also offers to provide support on fundraising (25%), consensus building (21%) and financial management (14%). The lower percentage of CEPs who would feel confident in providing support of these topics suggested that these are areas CEPs would benefit from receiving support on, perhaps through sourcing accompanying expertise from outside the CPN.

To check these expertise areas for 2023, please indicate if you would be interested in providing support for the below (please tick all that apply):

28 responses

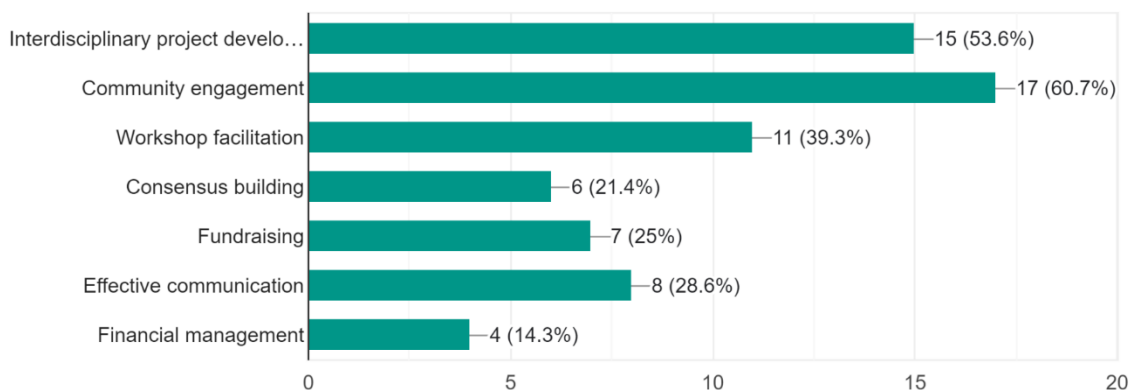


Figure 9: Graph showing responses for CPN Mentoring Programme, topics CEPs feel confident they could support others in learning.

- CEPs were asked what topics they would most like to receive support around. These emerged in the following order: interdisciplinary project development (64%), fundraising

(61%), effective communication (54%), consensus building (50%), community engagement (39%), workshop facilitation (32%) and financial management (18%).

These figures imply that even on topics CEPs feel confident to provide support on, they still feel they have more to learn and would also welcome further expertise.

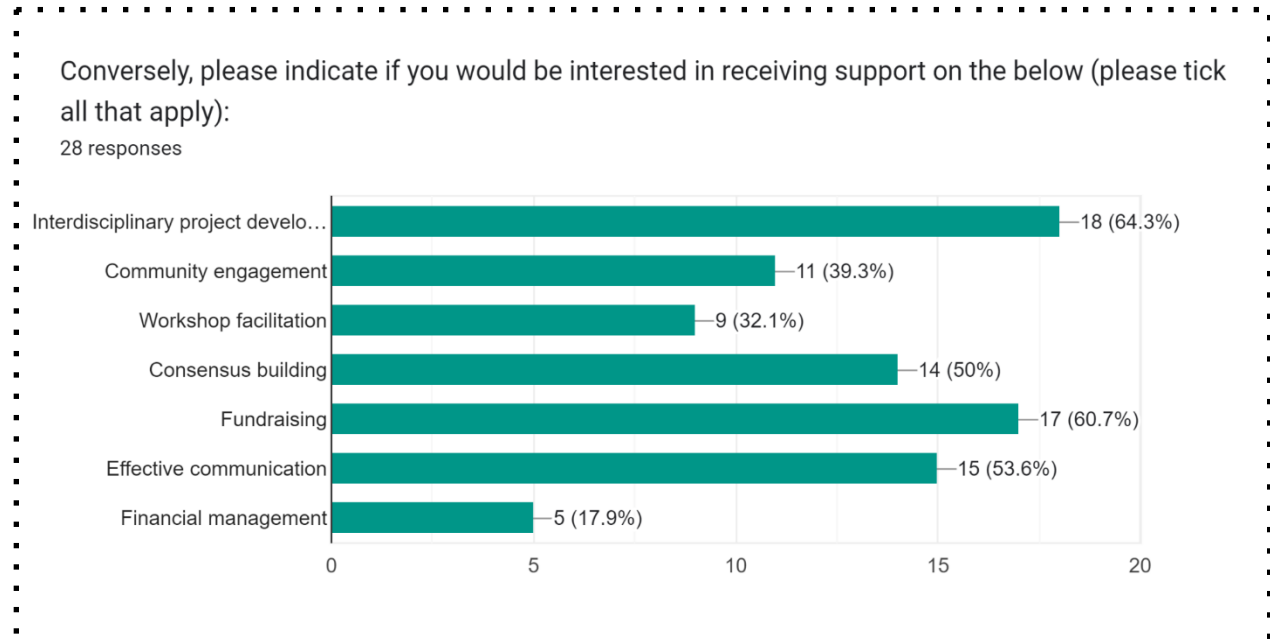


Figure 10: Graph showing responses for CPN Mentoring Programme, topics CEPs feel they would like to receive further support on developing.

- 75% of the CEPs that responded would welcome a monthly virtual drop-in to connect with other CEP staff. Of the seven who responded ‘no’, at least two feel that monthly would be too frequent but would welcome a quarterly drop in, for instance.

In Development Phase 2, CEPs will be asked to register for the CPN mentoring programme and the structure will be trialled. This may consist of:

- a self-selecting matching process where CEP staff can cultivate a supportive relationship with other CEP staff who possess expertise they seek;
- two support groups for practitioners and different levels;
- and trial training seminars around the internal operational priority areas identified for receiving support. For the trials, priority areas will be selected that align with the offers to provide this expertise.

Training Programme Strands

The training programme stands will be a key component of the CPN Learning & Development programme, helping to upskill CEPs in priority areas. In this consultation, topics suggested in the past and knowledge of CEP skills needs were used to suggest a range of topics and ask CEPs to indicate which they would be interested in receiving training around.

The top areas emerged as: monetary valuation for habitat restoration, green finance/blended investment options and behaviour change science & principles. 75% of CEPs would be interested in receiving training on these three topics.

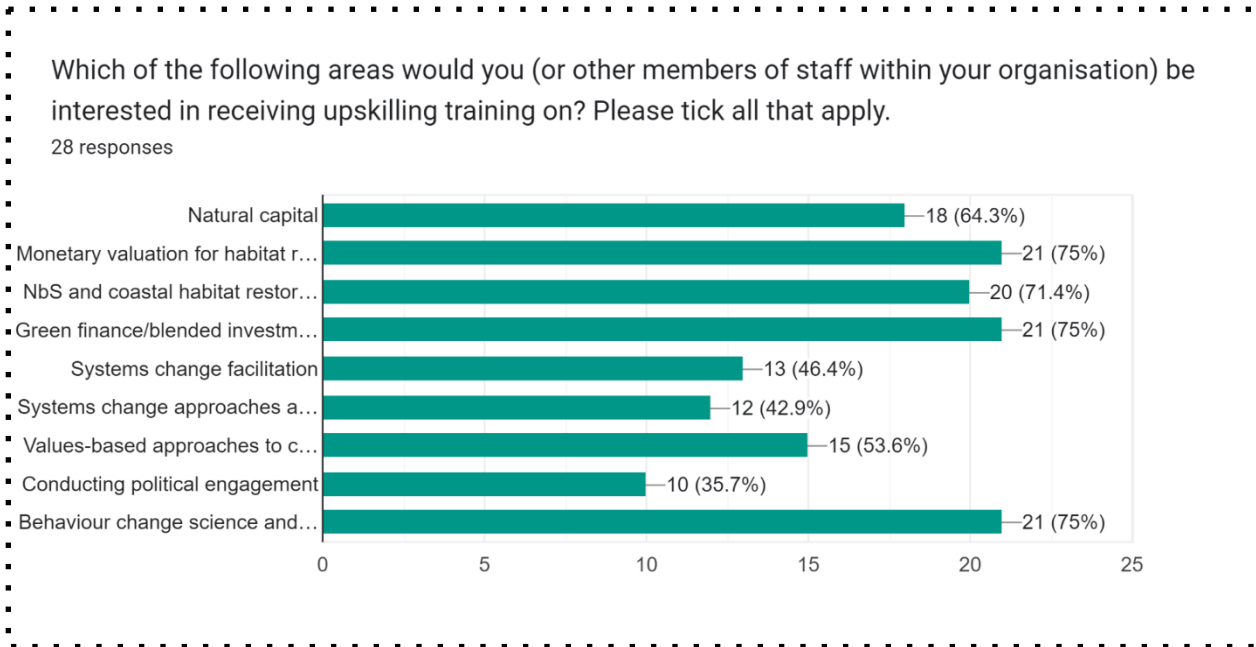


Figure 11: Graph showing responses for Training Strand topics for further training.

Close behind were Nature-based Solutions and coastal habitat restoration delivery (71%), natural capital (64%) and values-based approaches to communication (54%). At least a third of CEPs were interested in all topics suggested, indicating demand across the suggestions.

When asked about current understanding levels across topics, the majority of CEPs indicated that they were either aware of or had a basic understanding of systems change facilitation, systems change approaches and models, values-based approaches to communications, how to conduct political engagement and behaviour change science. The maximum number of CEPs self-identifying as having a 'good level of understanding' of any of the topics was three, displaying that understanding across the CEPs who responded is currently largely at a basic level.

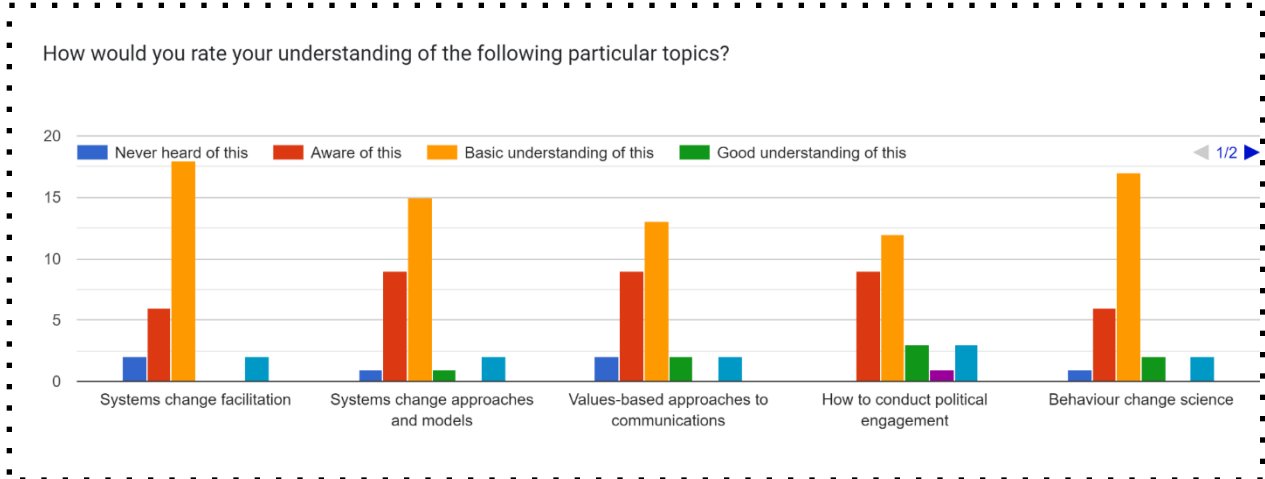


Figure 12: Graph highlighting the level of current understanding in CEPs of training topics.

During the next phase, the approach to these training programme strands will be trialled, hosting a seminar series on two of the topics - gaining feedback on content, design and process, as well as accessibility and engagement. This feedback will be taken on board, the necessary adjustments made and training sessions will run across Development Phase 3.

Funding & Financing

To support the work around green finance (HLO 5), CEPs were asked some introductory questions about their funding and financing. These will be followed up with more in depth questions, to accompany those on monitoring and evaluation, during the next phase.

Specific exploration around funding and financing wouldn't be relevant to all CEPs or all respondents - so if respondents didn't have a direct interest in the work themselves, they were asked for an alternative contact within the partnership (if relevant). This will help to explore this topic in more detail in the next phase.

To gain insight on levels of understanding, CEPs were asked how they would rate their understanding of green finance/blended investment options to diversify their funding streams, Environmental Social Governance (ESG) investing, social impact investing, Return on Investment (ROI) in the context of attracting blended finance to fund their work and the Just Transition agenda (these are the full labels for the chart below).

The majority of CEPs indicated an awareness or basic understanding of the topics. Very few cited a 'good understanding' and high proportions had 'never heard' of some of the concepts.

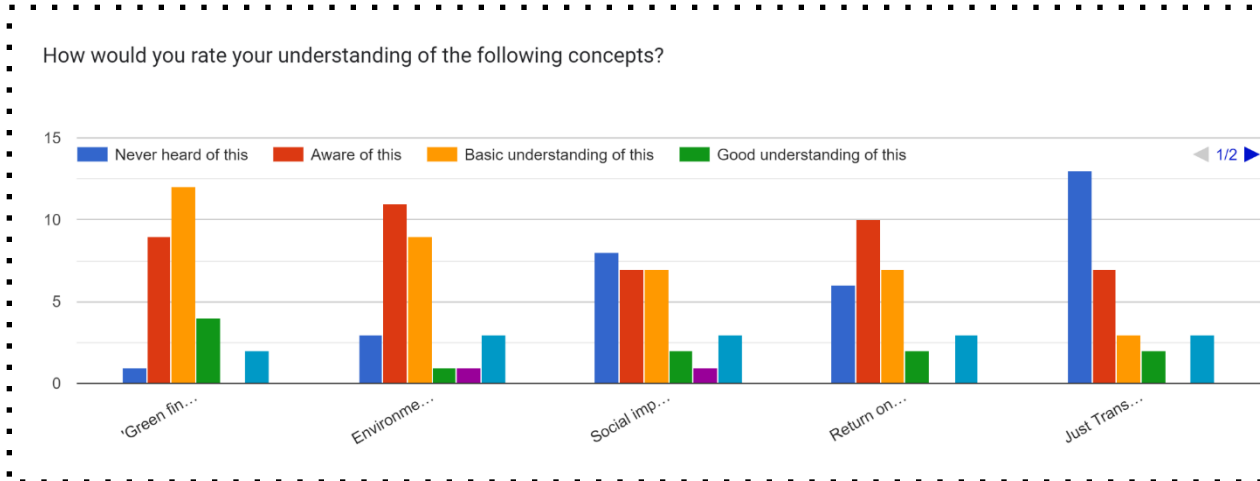


Figure 13: Graph showing the level of current understanding in CEPs regards finance and investment

CEPs were asked if they had put a bid into the Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund (NEIRF). Only 3 of 28 CEPs indicated that they had. Of these, all three were successful (two were involved in the bid of a partner organisation and now have a supporting role). This will be explored further in the next phase and plan to deliver a seminar session to introduce green finance concepts and the potential investible models could hold as one of the funding streams for CEP activity.

Emerging Themed Training Opportunities

The final section of the building capacity consultation focused on two emerging themed training opportunities: Building Capacity for Coastal Habitat Restoration and Planning and learning coming out of the Sea The Value: Marine Biodiversity Benefits for a Sustainable Society project.

Building Capacity for Coastal Habitat Restoration and Planning

The CPN has been working in an advisory capacity with Defra and their Statutory Bodies in several initiatives, namely, ReMeMaRe and the mNCEAP. In 2020, CEP Officers were consulted on various topics including opportunities for further collaboration. The following feedback was provided in relation to coastal habitat restoration:

- ReMeMaRe – saltmarsh is the most common habitat of concern for CPs (by almost a third). Seagrass is second, followed by oyster beds.
- 75% are interested in developing a coastal restoration plan for their area.

There is an opportunity through the development of the NFCC to focus resources and capacity building for CEPs to facilitate coastal habitat restoration planning at local and regional scales. Therefore, we included a section in the capacity building consultation to ask questions to understand how to support CEPs should they be interested in this role.

68% (19 of the CEPs who responded) would like to coordinate a coastal habitat restoration planning process in their area. Through the survey, it was found that all of these CEPs would be interested in being a pilot area to develop, test and trial a coastal habitat restoration planning

process in future Development Phases. To prepare for this and build the business case for matched funding, resource needs were scoped out across the following:

- Training on specialist knowledge e.g., habitats, policy, funding streams
- Training on processes e.g., facilitation, strategic planning
- Technical support on data e.g., interpretation of datasets, natural capital assessment metrics
- Technical support on GIS e.g., training on GIS tools, workshop support
- Financial support

If you answered yes to the previous question, what resources would you need?

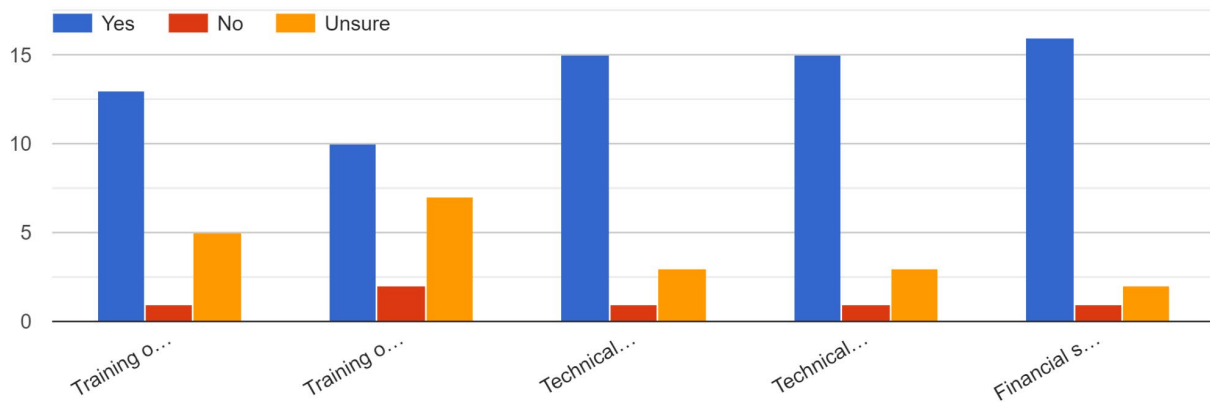


Figure 14: Graph showing the resource needs across CEPs for coastal habitat restoration planning and delivery.

This insight helps to plan and deliver the support needed to enable as many CEPs as possible to be involved in the delivery of local coastal habitat restoration.

CEPs were also asked whether local CEP areas had an existing strategy or statutory plan that a coastal habitat restoration plan would be embedded in or whether they envisaged the process being a way to establish a local or regional strategic plan (e.g. a management plan or wider coastal strategy) - answers varied across CEPs but the majority currently lack any existing strategy or statutory plan, displaying the gap CEP delivery can fill and the CPN/NFCC can support.

Sea The Value: Marine Biodiversity Benefits for a Sustainable Society

The CPN is involved with a UKRI project called [Sea The Value](#) (STV), led by Plymouth Marine Laboratory. The project aims to:

- Quantify the interlinkages between marine biodiversity, natural capital, and ecosystem services, taking quantity (extent), quality (condition), and resilience into consideration.

- Determine the economic and social values associated with carbon sequestration and bioremediation of waste and apply these values to support natural capital accounting frameworks and engage real world communities in mapping social values and trade-offs.
- Connect the ecological, economic, and social values of biodiversity to decision-making through co-design and implementation of green investment to maintain and enhance biodiversity.

The CPN will be helping the project partners to devise a seminar series to share the learning from the work. To help inform the development of these resources, CEPs were asked about the sessions they would be interested in attending should they be designed and created.

Working with STV partners, the CPN devised the below list of seminar topics and sense checked them with CEPs to gauge interest:

- **Seminar 1:** An introductory overview of natural capital and different ways of understanding 'value'.
 - 14 CEPs interested, 8 highly interested.
- **Seminar 2:** An in-depth look at the work conducted to quantify the linkages between Biodiversity, Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services
 - 13 CEPs interested, 7 highly interested.
- **Seminar 3:** An in-depth look at participatory mapping to explore the value of coastal habitats.
 - 20 CEPs interested, 5 highly interested.
- **Seminar 4:** An in-depth look at Natural Capital Accounting, including financial mechanisms.
 - 14 CEPs interested, 4 highly interested.

Baseline data was collected on current levels of understanding and confidence of practical application across key topics, so impact can be effectively tracked, a key part of CPN's and the NFCC's monitoring and evaluation strand (HLO 5). This insight also assists in ensuring the sessions are designed at the correct level and are useful and accessible to CEP staff.

How would you rate your understanding of the following?

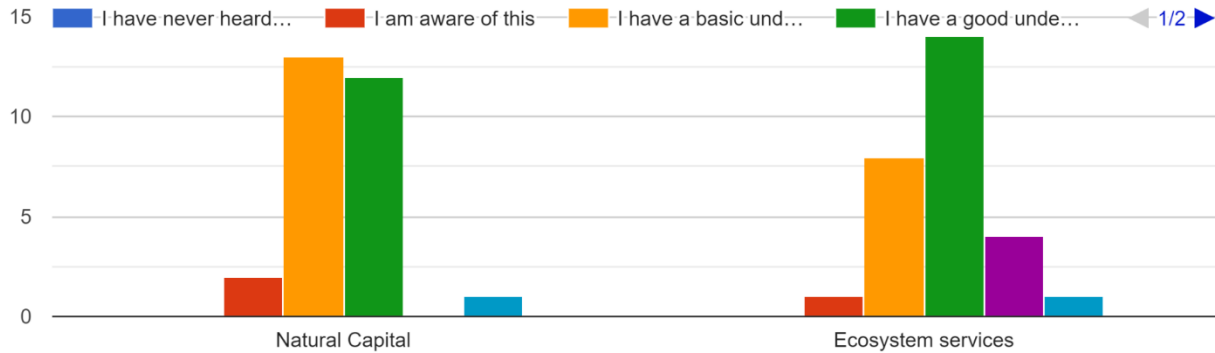


Figure 15: Graph highlighting the current understanding in CEPs of natural capital and ecosystem services (The full answer options for the above are: I have never heard of this; I am aware of this; I have a basic understanding of this; I have a good understanding of this; and I have an excellent understanding of this)

Which of the following statements reflects most closely your understanding of the 'value' of different habitats?

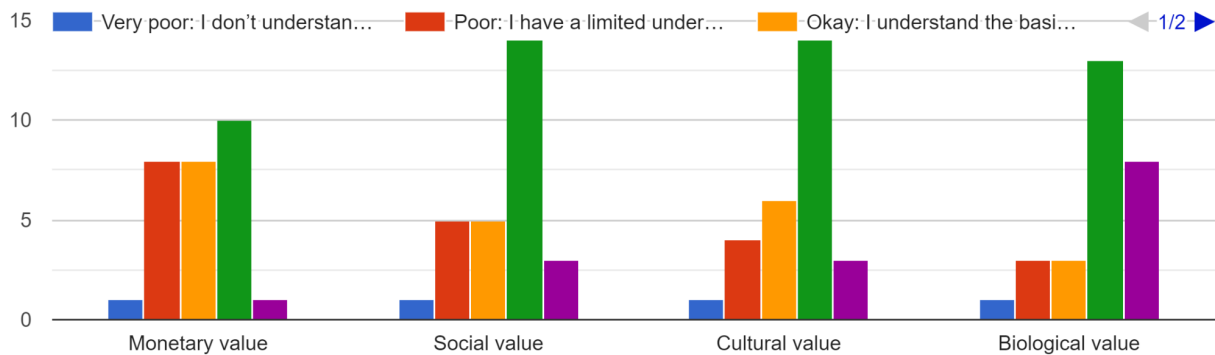


Figure 16: Graph highlighting the current understanding in CEPs of different types of value (The green and purple bars indicate a good or very good level of understanding or confidence)

Using this data, seminar sessions can be designed with the STV partners. It is planned to have an introductory session, to make CEPs aware of the project and its work in Development Phase 2, then the four-part seminar series will be delivered in Development Phase 3.

Resource Needs

In terms of capacity to be involved in the Learning & Development programme and partake in the training sessions, 61% of CEPs indicated that they would need financial support in order for their staff to be involved in capacity building activities. This need will be built into the building capacity model, so that the training is accessible and the largest number of CEPs can benefit. It also displays the need for external support to ensure that CEPs are best equipped to deliver wide-reaching benefits through their local work.

Building capacity needs across other sectors will be further scoped both via further discussion with CEPs with regards their local network partners and at the national level via the Leadership Group.

HLO 4 Crossover: Coastal Communications Hub

During this phase, MWC conducted simultaneous scoping for the Coastal Communications Hub. The HLO 3 strand lead will be working closely with the development of this as the hub will incorporate a building capacity portal and mentoring platform functionality. In this phase, this involved initial liaising with MWC over the inclusion of these features. In the next phase, it will involve ensuring these needs are included in the deeper scoping work and assisting with design when needed. Once a prototype has been created, we will trial the portal & mentoring platform (timeline is dependent upon HLO 4 work package).

To see in greater detail how we are taking the Capacity Building strand (HLO3) forwards, please read our full Learning & Development Plan in Appendix 9. This is a draft plan and will be iterative, evolving according to need - with sessions prioritised if circumstances change or opportune partnerships for training delivery arise.

Coastal Communications Hub: Streamline communications across the complex myriad coastal messages and across sectors (HLO 4)

The fundamental objective for HLO4 is to streamline communications across the complex myriad coastal messages and across sectors, as a critical enabler to effective collaboration and coordination. One critical component of this work is the development of a one-stop, common-access 'hub' for coastal issues, policies, formal resources, and more informal knowledge exchange – a Coastal Communications Hub. Alongside the Hub, additional communications assets will be produced underpinned by a communications strategy for delivery of the NFCC and supporting communications training. The Hub will form the focus of all communications activities for HLO4 in Development Phase 2.

The Coastal Communications Hub will be developed as part of the establishment of the NFCC, providing a central collaborative resource for users, facilitating both internal and external communications. As a space for collaboration and informing delivery, learning and decision making, the Hub will include key information on priority issues and policies, guidance on how to implement policy, and access to case studies demonstrating both successful and unsuccessful approaches to coastal coordination. The aim of the Hub will be to allow for smooth and equitable access to resources across the UK CEPs and other coastal practitioners, and space for informal knowledge exchange and collaborative communications. Crucially, the Hub will link up to the Coastal Data Hub (HLO2) and the training resources being developed under a programme of capacity building (HLO3).

During this development phase, initial exploratory work relating to the form and function of the proposed Hub was undertaken by Mindfully Wired Communications (MWC). This was achieved via a simple piece of desktop research on comparator hubs for benchmarking, which in turn informed a scoping survey of NFCC Leadership Group members plus CEP officers to identify needs and expectations which will inform the next round of in-depth stakeholder engagement.

This summary sets out the findings of this survey, and the key messages from this will be used to shape the next phase of in-depth engagement with critical stakeholders in the next phase of work, during which a prototype Hub will be developed for piloting purposes.

The survey sought initial reflections from key stakeholders on what the core content of the Hub should include and its key functionality. The survey was circulated to all 55 CEPs around the UK coast and the NFCC Leadership Group, generating a total of 29 responses – exceeding the minimum target of 20, and just shy of the target of 30 responses. The initial reflections collected from the survey will be used to develop a more in-depth programme of consultation on the Hub's development, with a wider range of potential users and other key stakeholders. At this

stage in consultation, high-level trends and findings were sought as opposed to detailed and specific reflections.

The survey comprised three sections: objectives and resources, functionality, and users. Key findings from each section have been set out below.

Key Findings of the Coastal Communications Hub consultation

Objectives

This section of the survey sought to understand what key users felt were the underpinning objectives for the Hub, building on the feedback from the Pilot Phase National Working Group workshops which identified good communications as key to effective coordination. A number of objective statements were shared, generating the following responses:

- 83% of respondents recognised the following objectives as very important:
 - To bring together relevant resources from across the sector into one easily searchable location
 - To provide space for sharing best practice and stimulating discussion between local coastal practitioners
- 55% of respondents recognised the following objectives as very important:
 - To raise the profile of CEPs and associated local collaborative networks.
 - To provide a forum to find and develop partnerships to co-develop projects.
- The objective considered least important (but still with 38% respondents noting it as “very important”) was “to support the establishment of new CEPs and associated local collaborative networks”.

Respondents were provided with the opportunity to identify additional objectives for the Hub. Those provided by respondents included the need to provide a space for training, an interactive space for private discussion, and space for funded projects to be shared post-conclusion to generate a lasting legacy.

Resources

Respondents were asked to consider a range of resource types and to identify how readily available they are in relation to their current role. The resources set out were not intended to be specific datasets, only data types. The below chart sets out the total number of survey participants who responded with “readily available” or “available”.

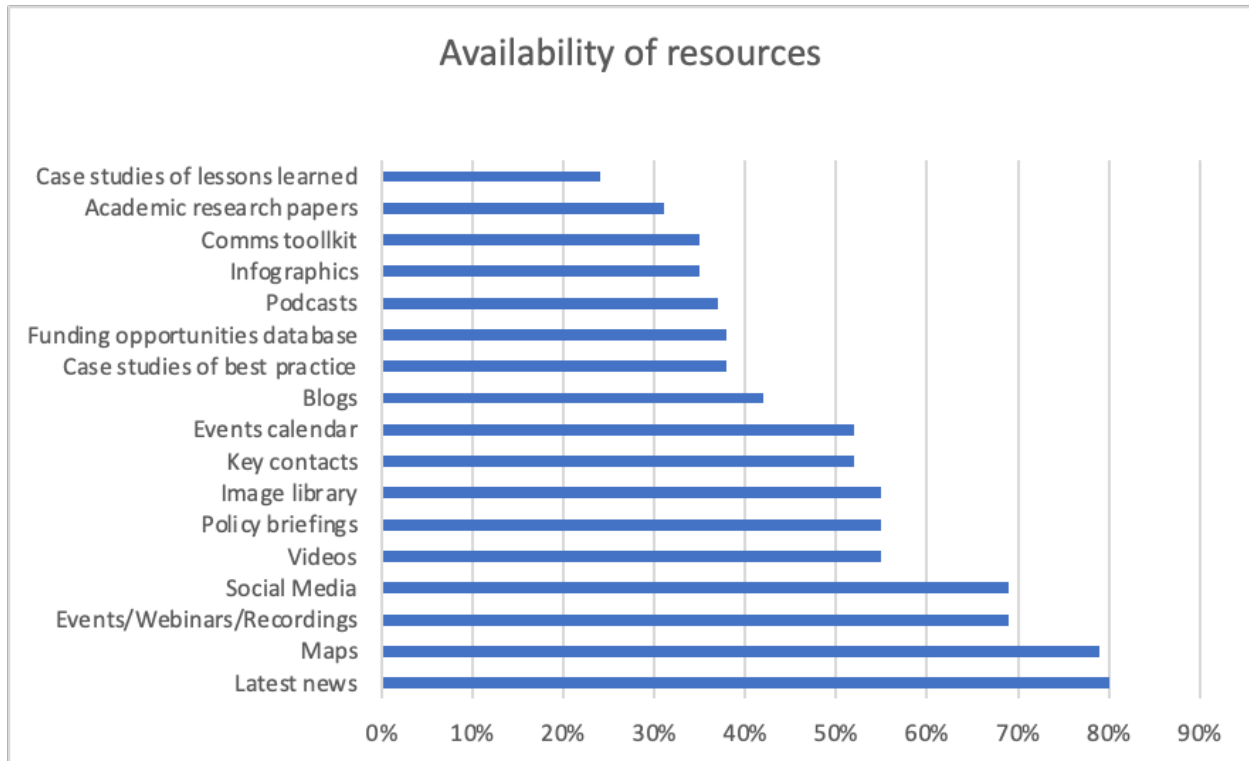


Figure 17: Graph showing the responses to questions around availability of existing resources.

Of these resources, the regularity of usage for each type was predominantly occasional as opposed to regular across the board, with maps and a funding opportunities database the only resources that were deemed to be in regular use by more than 50% of respondents. Combining the scores for regular and occasional use, the resources which respondents considered to be most frequently in use are ranked as follows:

1. Latest news, Events calendar, Case studies of lessons learned: 100%
2. Case studies of best practice, Maps, Image library: 97%
3. Funding opportunities database: 94%
4. Academic research papers, Key contacts: 93%
5. Comms toolkit: 87%
6. Infographics: 86%
7. Policy briefings, Events/webinars/recordings: 83%
8. Social media: 80%
9. Videos: 73%
10. Blogs, Podcast: 45%

This demonstrates that a sustained effort must be undertaken to collate case studies of lessons learned, which are clearly in high demand yet most poorly available, along with case studies of best practice, a funding opportunities database, and academic research papers. The other clear gaps in current resource availability which misalign to demand are a comms toolkit and infographics. A concerted focus on identifying case studies, which will help enhance learnings across partnerships, and these additional resources should be undertaken during future in-depth consultation activities.

Additionally, it was clear from responses that whilst resources are often available, either via local databases/resource banks (e.g., Solent resource hub) or via subscription services, these are often siloed, and aren't necessarily joined up or widely accessible – something that ways of working in Local Authorities was felt to contribute to due to a limited understanding of the needs of collaborative working.

Barriers to use of available resources were also considered with the following results (ranked in order of the total number of respondents acknowledging the barrier):

- Too little time: 86%
- Knowing what information is actually available: 76%
- Knowing where the information is stored: 69%
- Knowing who to contact to obtain information: 59%
- Knowing which resources are most up to date and applicable and Duplication of information across multiple sources: 45%
- Understanding the content of resources due to technical or complex presentation/language: 21%
- Information is not always relevant to work or is too in-depth for what is needed and Cost (i.e., paywalls): 3%

The Hub will therefore, through its objectives, seek to address the issues associated with the data itself, although it will not resolve fundamental capacity issues, save to make resource identification and use more efficient. A resource map will address the issues associated with duplication and storage – so this will need to be a critical output post-in-depth consultation. As such, consultation will need to explore in more detail what people currently have access to and where it sits; this will also meet the second most-challenging barrier.

Priority Areas of Work

Survey respondents were also asked to identify their priority areas of work and to consider how well resourced these thematic areas are currently. This information was sought to determine key thematic content requirements for the Hub and which themes will require greater focus in relation to resource identification and collation.

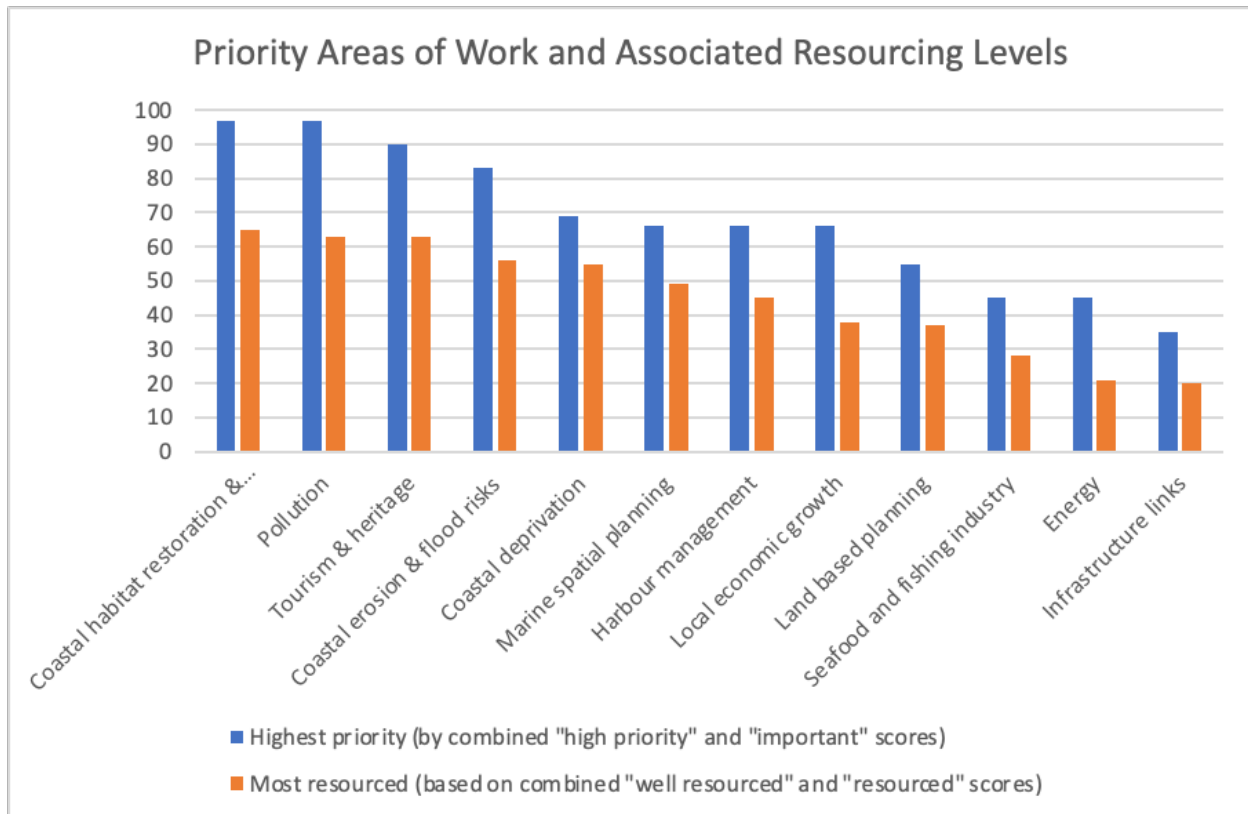


Figure 18: Graph indicating the differences between priority areas of delivery and current awareness of resources for delivery.

Across the board, no theme generated a poor or under-resourced response rate of more than 20% save for coastal habitat restoration & conservation which generated a collective response rate of 24%. As the greatest priority area, this has to be considered a key area of focus for further consultation to identify what resources exist, and where, and what the resource gaps are. On average, across each area, 26% of respondents indicated that they were unsure about the state of resourcing, which reiterates the findings thus far relating to a lack of awareness about what resources are actually available.

Challenges affecting coastal coordination

Respondents were asked to comment on what they felt are the key challenges currently affecting coastal coordination, in order to better understand how the Hub can be constructed to respond to these challenges, where possible. The following have been ranked based on the highest number of combined “strongly agree” and “agree” responses:

- Complexities of cross-sectoral working: 93%
- Lack of funding: 90% (this generated the highest number of “strongly agree” responses)
- Complexities of local governance: 83%
- Limited local community engagement: 65%
- Limited opportunities for sharing and learning from others: 56%
- Barriers to accessing critical information: 45%

- Lack of specialist knowledge: 34%

Interestingly, barriers to accessing critical information was seen to be one of the lesser challenges affecting coastal coordination, with more immediate and practical challenges including complex governance and limited funding presenting more pressing issues. In consultation for the Hub going forward, exploration of the “complexities of cross-sectoral working” will be pursued in more detail, to understand how a Hub can address this challenge practically. **The role of the Hub in providing a directory of funding opportunities would also respond to the challenges associated with funding, unless the issue is a fundamental lack of funding as opposed to an awareness of funding opportunities.**

Additional barriers worth exploring in more detail, both in relation to the development of the Hub but also in relation to improved coordination across the wider NFCC programme were noted to be: siloed working from statutory agencies and inflexibility resulting in limited information sharing and restrictions; a shortage of time and capacity to understand what information is available to support coordination; a lack of joined up work from the local to the national scale resulting in duplication or conflicting work; a lack of strategic funding decision-making; and competing legislative frameworks. In addition, it was noted that whilst a subject area may be well-resourced, this does not necessarily mean that local situations are adequately represented, and therefore supported, by the resources available.

A number of respondents offered additional reflections on content requirements from such a Hub, noting that since **many of the larger local CEPs have their own resource hubs, this Hub may benefit from focusing on national level information and resources.** This is something that should be explored in more detail during in-depth consultation to understand both what is currently available via local-hubs and the scope and scale of the resources for this central Hub to ensure it meets needs and avoids duplication whilst offering portal options for regional scale collaborations and interpretation of national level resources to local needs. Other respondents noted that the Hub would benefit from being cross-disciplinary to represent the coast accurately and flagged the importance of ensuring existing hubs and materials (e.g., the FCRIP and CTAP proposed online virtual hubs) are joined into the Hub to provide a “one-stop-shop”.

Functionality

Respondents were asked to comment on what they felt the key features of the Hub should be, to inform the development of a Hub specification for a web developer in the subsequent phase of work. The following were noted as the key features of the Hub:

- Downloadable resources: 96%
- A search function by location: 69%
- An advanced search and filter function: 62%
- Resource upload feature: 55%
- Segmentation by region: 48%

It was also clarified that accessibility requirements are factored into the design and build of the Hub to ensure hearing and visual impairments are suitably accommodated.

Respondents were also asked the following question:

Would you be interested in an interactive space for open discussion on key themes e.g. via online chatrooms?

29 responses

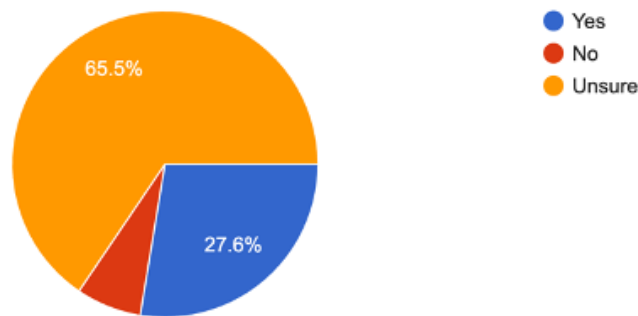


Figure 19: Graph showing interest in an interactive space for discussion.

There was clearly some uncertainty relating to the need for and nature of an interactive space for CPN-members only. Those who responded favourably to this feature indicated that a shared space for ideas and resources, and both thematic and less specific chat topics would be of benefit. However, the practicalities of maintaining such a feature were flagged; resourcing (paid or otherwise) to moderate, stimulate, and manage such interactive sessions would be required to ensure it was used to maximum benefit. The Pakefield online virtual hub was noted as a comparator to review. Further consultation should seek to unpack the nature of a private members-only area and interactive space in more detail, to understand both what will be of benefit and practically achievable. Lessons can also be learned from the CPN’s ongoing Compass Course which utilises collaborative learning platforms such as Circle.

Users

The final section of the survey focused on who the users of the Hub would be, and therefore who should be consulted on its development during the subsequent phase of the work.

Other than CPN members, respondents felt there were no other potential user groups who would regularly use the Hub. In comparison to 97% of respondents noting CPN members as regular members, the only other user groups deemed to be regular users by more than 30% of respondents were eNGO representatives and university representatives. Other representative groups recognised as occasional users by more than 50% of respondents were: IFCA members (83%), local community groups (73%), local authority representatives (62%), university representatives and harbour authority representatives (59%), and marine developers and eNGO representatives (52%).



Respondents felt that the following should be consulted on the content and form of the Hub in future consultations – and this must be factored into stakeholder mapping for these subsequent phases of engagement: CPN members, national government representatives, local authority representatives, eNGO representatives, harbour authority representatives, local community groups, and IFCA members. It was noted that representatives from such groups should be geographically diverse, reflecting Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish voices to ensure the Hub is a resource that can be used across the entirety of the UK.

Next Steps

In Development Phase 2, the findings from the survey and desktop research will be used to inform in-depth consultation activities with key stakeholders i.e., the future users of the Hub. In line with the key findings above, the focus of these sessions will need to include:

- Identification of key case studies to compile into a best practice and lessons learned section of the Hub.
- Identification of sources for a funding opportunities database
- Identification of current hosts for academic research papers and critical papers
- Exploration of key barriers to coordination, particularly the “complexities of cross-sectoral working”, to identify how a Hub can practically meet these challenges.
- Exploration of the barriers to awareness of resources and their accessibility
- A focus on resource requirements relating to coastal habitat restoration and conservation, including identification of what resources currently exist (and where they are held) and what the gaps are. This should be expanded to other key themes to inform a resource map.
- Exploration of a private, interactive space for cross-network knowledge exchange and dialogue

Once the consultation is complete, a specification for the Hub will be drawn up which will be used to appoint a suitably qualified web developer with significant UX experience. Mindfully Wired Communications, lead for HLO4, will work closely with the developer to create a prototype Hub for piloting with a select group of stakeholder representatives, prior to refining the final Hub for rollout in future stages of the work. In addition, ongoing dialogue with other relevant HLO leads (i.e., 2, 3, 5 and 6) will be undertaken to ensure that the Hub incorporates the requirements of these strands of activity.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Improve evaluation of Partnership working to attract blended investment and grow Partnership working across sectors (HLO 5)

Building on the Pilot Phase evaluation, the CPN sought to further develop a monitoring tool for CEPs to evidence the Return on Investment (ROI) in the social and knowledge capital that leads to multiple benefits for natural and economic capital. Preparation of an outline Evaluation Plan was undertaken using the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) pilot recommendations alongside development of a Business Case. The evaluation strand seeks to:

- Demonstrate value for money to local partners and central government.
- Develop metrics associated with partnership working.
- Demonstrate CEP role in supporting legislative/policy targets and delivery on the ground.
- Evidence the potential of value for money for private investors
- Evidence impact of social capital/value associated with the CEP itself and the host body/officer.
- Evidence knowledge exchange (for increasing social and natural capital)
- Inform future actions for CPN to increase beneficial exchanges between partnership officers.

During the Pilot Phase it became clear that it is essential to on-board CEP officers and gain their commitment to M&E rather than imposing heavy reporting requirements on them. It is therefore crucial that a good number of CEP officers are involved in its co-design. Further interviews and the proposed roundtable were postponed in favour of plans to establish a longer-term CPN Evaluation Working Group. The very limited time available in Development Phase 1 (2-3 months) and stop/start nature of 3Cs annual finance presented a limitation to getting this underway. However, progress has been made towards the envisaged three phases of M&E development, to improve understanding of key areas and co-develop evaluation scope and indicators.

Many CEPs have evolved over three decades and developed their own M&E approaches. During the pilot it was evident that future evaluation designed by CPN would need to build from local methodologies in order to succeed at gaining the necessary commitment to collating a national evidence base. CEPs are in a different scenario to CaBA where M&E evolved as a requirement to draw down catchment-specific finance. CEPs rely heavily (if not entirely) reliant on local sources of finance and there is currently no comprehensive national picture of the variety, diversity and extent of investment in them. Clear justification of the value of participating in national M&E is also needed, to secure the time and commitment towards the next objective, to design and build a project evaluation tool which respects and reflects existing monitoring and evaluation, plus build support for an ongoing consistent reporting framework. CEPs evolved from the 'bottom-up' and have established ways of working over decades, therefore CPN can't impose too heavily from the 'top-down'. However, the original intention remains - to design an annual return which contains metrics to demonstrate at the national level the value of local investment in CEPs.

Pilot Report (November 2022): Supporting processes and components

The Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) has been supported by Defra through the EA for a decade and has been able to evidence the value of central government investment alongside local partners' contributions. It provides a model of how CEPs could demonstrate their value. For the purposes of the CPN 3Cs project, a small working group was established, involving advisors to CPN and CaBA to identify evaluation needs, options and undertake a pilot survey and workshop with CEP officers and 3Cs project leads.

An 'audit' of existing CEP officer approaches is needed before building towards a new national evaluation programme. It was not considered appropriate to go back to CEP officers following the very informative pilot, until CPN were on a more secure and longer-term footing with the NFCC programme, so it will form part of Development Phase 2. In addition, self-evaluation at CEP level is encouraged to support organisational maturity – therefore this work requires substantial investment of effort and development with a trial group of CEPs as identified above. CPN will be in a stronger position to propose a collaborative approach with the selected CEP officers when we have 18-24 months to develop it (rather than 2-3 months in the 2022-23 phase).

Based on the findings from the pilot phase (2021-2022), the following CEP locations have been identified for deeper engagement in evaluation design: Solent, Severn, Seascapes (NE), Morecambe Bay, South Devon/Dorset and the Thames Estuary Partnership (this is not an exhaustive list). The next step will be to expand the CPN Evaluation Working Group to include the expertise of CEP Officers from these (or other) locations.

Business Case Development

The following objective for the NFCC has been established:

Improve evaluation of Partnership working to attract blended investment and grow Partnership working across sectors.

Business Case

A more robust case is needed to demonstrate the value of long-term investment in Coastal and Estuary Partnerships (CEPs). The aim is to attract blended investment to support core costs and grow partnership working across sectors. This is to be achieved through improving understanding, transparency and a standard approach to the evaluation of CEPs activity.

An **Evaluation Plan** will lead CPN towards a National Evaluation Tool, which provides annual evidence of the value of investment. It builds on and supports existing local CEP monitoring and evaluation processes, to ensure broad and continuous participation. It will support and strengthen the network of CEPs.

CPN are building on the pilot evaluation and developing a monitoring tool for CEPs to evidence return on investment in the social and knowledge capital that leads to multiple benefits for natural and economic capital. CPN have found that knowledge and understanding of CEPs varies substantially across the country, between sectors and at the local and national level. As



well as better definition of CEPs purpose, type and scale of working, evidence is needed to better communicate what they do and their value.

The **Business Case** explored three options for further evolution of work towards the ambitions of HLO5.

1 - Do Nothing – *Discontinue Evaluation Plan for M&E programme for CEPs*

Over the last 30 years, approximately 55 CEPs have emerged from the ‘bottom-up’ with basic levels of core funding provided by NDPBs/Local Authorities and local stakeholders. This has resulted in huge diversity, mixed experiences of success/failure and a lack of national understanding/awareness of the unique role of CEPs. CPN has long considered that there is more to gain from national recognition of the role and value of CEP work, including the possibility of core funding contributions which would reduce emphasis on short term projects and enable the local co-ordination and governance activity to have much more impact. During 2021-2 CPN appraised the possibility of a national M&E programme by engaging in discussion with evaluation experts and piloting potential evaluation criteria with some local CEPs. If we do nothing further, this work will not progress any further towards a national evaluation programme. CEPs will continue to operate in local areas with no aggregation of their impact into national policy, and reduced opportunities for nationally sourced/collective financing to support their local activities.

2 – ‘Do Minimum’ – *Progress design of an M&E tool for CEPs based on the 2021-2 pilot*

The CPN 3Cs pilot M&E made a good start towards an Evaluation Plan, engaging a handful of CEP officers in trialling potential evaluation criteria. The Theory of Change (ToC) established a framework from which further evaluation criteria could be designed and trialled by CEP Officers/advisors for CEPs and CPN. Feedback from this work produced 11 recommendations. Many of these could be pursued effectively by CPN staff with capacity through 3Cs. However, there is a risk that this work would be undertaken in an ‘echo chamber’ where we have already piloted an approach based on the ToC and CaBA tool. The advantage of this option is that it would be a user-led and designed M&E programme. However, it is likely that this route would be quite slow as we test and trial different approaches. It carries some risk of mixed response without external input/the authority of specialist evaluation expertise.

3 – ‘Fulfil the Pilot Recommendations’ - *Develop a full Evaluation Plan with external evaluation expertise to support the evolution of an M&E programme and tool by March 2025.*

Recommendations from the pilot phase include gaining a deeper understanding of impact evaluation criteria at the outset of any new national M&E programme. In particular, recommendation 7 proposed that CPN engage social capital expertise to gain understanding of existing dialogue challenges and design evaluation methods to indicate collaborative governance performance. Recommendation 8 similarly suggested that CPN work with CEPs to explore financial capital impacts and how CEPs could develop strategies for growth in financial security. There was a suggestion that we align with the Office of National Statistics indicators reporting to increase the ability of CPN to reach into Government Departments/Treasury. This option would engage the necessary external (beyond CPN) expertise to support design of a

CEP M&E programme that aligned more closely with best practice, resulting in a higher chance of longevity/impact. This option carries some risk that the programme would be steered too far from the ‘bottom-up’ approach of CEP officers designing their own M&E which is realistic and achievable. In addition, the full Evaluation Plan would dovetail with the other 3Cs pilot projects - see further context below under the heading ‘[Capitalising on Coastal Knowledge Capital](#)’.

Emerging Evaluation Plan

An outline **Evaluation Plan** has been prepared to form the basis for convening 1-1 engagement with CEP officers through a CPN Evaluation Working Group, to determine the scope for evaluation expertise and present it to the NFCC leadership group.

Benefits/Outcome Name/ID	Pilot recommendation no.	Description	Owner	Users	Target Date		
<i>Recommendations 1-12 from Pilot (2022)</i>							
5_0		Evaluation Plan: Review ToC	12	Evaluation Plan: Review ToC for impact evaluation from pilot phase - test assumptions, provide clarity of purpose and gain approval of NFCC LG (baseline for 5_1 from 06_23)	NB	NFCC LG	06_2023
5_1		Typology (Purposes and Services)	1	Scope and Boundaries of Evaluation = Typology for CPN purpose and services	CPN Evaluation WG	CPN	08_2023
5_2		Framework	2	Framework for M&E based on common purpose and services	CPN Evaluation WG	NFCC LG	10_2023
5_3		Policy Relationship Mapping	3	Purpose and services of CEPs mapped to government policy/priorities (based on 5_2)	CPN Evaluation WG	NFCC LG	12_2023
5_4		Capacity Audit	4	Audit of CEP funders , capacity and activities (based on CPN typology @5_1)	CPN Evaluation WG	CEPs & NFCC LG	12_2023
5_5		Clarity of Terminology: more reliable M&E data	5	Glossary of shared terminology for evaluation	CPN Evaluation WG	NFCC LG	12_2023
5_6		Stakeholder Representation Mapping	6	Stakeholder mapping and analysis of engagement activity across individual CEP geographic extent.	CPN Evaluation WG	CEPs	03_2024
5_7		Dialogue: Social Capital Evaluation	7	Evaluation method to assess social capital (for collaborative governance)	CPN Evaluation WG/Specialist Expertise	CEPs & NFCC LG	03_2024
5_8		Strategy, Planning and Priorities: Financial Capital Evaluation	8	Evaluation method to assess financial capital (and growth strategies - evolving from 5_4)	CPN Evaluation WG	CEPs & NFCC LG	03_2024
5_9		M&E Case studies	9	Insights into existing CEPs M&E processes (case studies)	CPN Evaluation WG	CPN Evaluation WG	03_2024
5_10		M&E Tool	10	Strategy/tool to monitor engagement in CEPs (based on 5_6 and 5_9)	CPN Evaluation WG	CEPs & NFCC LG	06_2024
5_11		Piloted M&E Tool	11	Pilot M&E impact factors across sustainability pillars	CPN Evaluation WG	CPN Evaluation WG	09_2024
5_12		Rollout of M&E Nationally to all CEPs	12	Annual national evidence of CEP outcomes & impact	CPN NFCC	CPN	03_2025

Figure 20: Emerging Evaluation Plan

This Evaluation Plan will form the basis for CPNs Development Phase 2 business case for investing in monitoring and evaluation.

The Evaluation Plan is building towards the following outcomes:

- CEPs are committed to being involved in a monitoring and evaluation framework.
- CEPs and other coastal initiatives are actively involved in annual reporting.
- CPN will be able to build the knowledge, relationships and evaluation metrics to attract blended investment for the long-term support of the NFCC, CPN and CEPs
- The NFCC obtains data to demonstrate Returns on Investment from CEP investment.



- Increased efficiencies and effectiveness are recognised by Government and NDPBs from
- investment in CEPs, leading to stronger public sector commitment and private sector.
- engagement/financial support.
- Evidencing the value of investing in collaborative governance mechanisms leads to an increased.
- Profile for national coastal policy and increased business investment in CEPs and CPN.

The outcomes from this review and development phase strengthen the case to develop M&E with CEP officers and suggest this should be the priority rather than recruit substantial external expertise. CPN requires the coordination capacity to invest time in working with CEP officers to evolve a robust M&E system which individual CEP officers take ownership of and therefore are better committed to annual reporting.

Measuring and monitoring social capital is seen as a key gap in knowledge, as reported from the pilot phase. Enhanced Social Capital is an important impact from coastal collaboration and includes information exchange; coordination (management); co-operation (projects); and co-creation/co-delivery. Social capital (e.g., collaboration, trust, networks etc.) stands at the heart of what CEPs are aiming to achieve, bringing together stakeholders to achieve better outcomes, either environmentally, socially or economically for the wider coastal community. As such, it is important to evaluate the type and extent of changes in social capital outcomes. When it comes to valuing social capital changes, given the difficulty of valuing elements of social capital, the best approach is to explore how social capital contributes to wider social outcomes, through measuring changes in those outcomes and then determining the level of attribution to CEPs.

There exist many definitions for 'social capital', but all focus around themes of social cohesion, relationships, solidarity, trust, cooperation, and sense of community. Given the scope of stakeholders that each CEP impacts are both diverse and wide-ranging, an evaluation framework that defines a standardised list of key stakeholders will prove challenging. However, to properly evaluate impact, efforts should be made to develop a structured means of identifying who is impacted. One approach would be to use the range of organisations and stakeholders who are partners involved with CEPs as 'representative' of the coastal community. The 3Cs initiative logic model Theory of Change (ToC) describes Outcomes and Enhanced Social Capital components in its change pathway of the 3Cs programme. Under each of these components are the following outcomes:

- Change in stakeholder attitudes.
- Change in stakeholder behaviours.
- Increased best practice uptake.
- Changes in natural resource use

These should lead to the following outcomes:

- Increased collaborative governance.
- Improved cross-sector coordination
- Improved collective action.

- Increased green jobs.
- Improved community resilience.

Enhanced Social Capital sits next to Natural and Financial Capital under Impact, with Outcomes feeding into Impact (which could also be termed long-term outcomes resulting from changes in stakeholder attitudes, behaviours, practices and resource use). The activities and outputs of the CEPs change coastal stakeholder attitudes/behaviour, resulting in a better environment, better partnerships and stronger communities. Tools to support design of social capital evaluation include the Office of National Statistics indicators for social capital and adapting these to the CEP context. Further context is provided below under the heading [‘Evidencing and understanding social capital and impact for development of investable business models’](#).

Next Steps

In Development Phase 2, the Evaluation Plan will be reviewed by members of the emerging NFCC leadership group. CPN will re-engage with CEP officers who were actively involved in the pilot phase, and others from leading CEPs to test commitment to it. This will ensure ownership and future co-design and decide on the scope of expertise to support Development Phases 2 and 3. Development Phase 2 will involve trialling an annual project evaluation tool with CEPs and other coastal initiatives (Phase 2) and establishing an annual return on investment framework, to be overseen by the NFCC (Phase 3). The approach taken by the EA to M&E of other 3Cs projects will need to be factored into this (i.e., ongoing collaboration with Eunomia). We will also continue to collaborate with the Rivers Trust through the CaBA National Steering Group, in particular over their reporting on national success measures for the Water Environment Improvement Fund and how it dovetails with the emerging framework for CEP monitoring and evaluation.

Capitalising on Coastal Knowledge Capital

The 3Cs Pilot Phase carried out in 2022 generated a wealth of knowledge and experience through the 13 funded projects from all around the country. The resulting 59 documents consisting of reports, supporting appendices and descriptions of a wide range of outputs and outcomes represent one of the most comprehensive collections of projects, initiatives and write-ups of practical coastal management in recent years. The CPN reviewed this resource and have made recommendations as to how to bring this together into a single library to ensure that the key learning points from each of the projects are made available through a searchable, online database along with previous and ongoing CEP projects.

The work will appraise the 3Cs project outputs and make them accessible for future reference, thereby making it easier for projects from around the country to identify initiatives tackling issues which are similar to their own, or to explore practical approaches using new techniques. With the increasing challenges that we face, it is even more vital that we make the most of the collective knowledge capital in order to share experiences, avoid repeating the same mistakes and deliver faster.

This work links in with HLO 5 as the framework for the project database will reflect the key success criteria and themes that are identified in the evaluation process. This also links with HLO 3 to



inform the emerging Building Capacity programme, HLO 4 where the database will sit within the Coastal Communications Hub and CPN knowledge exchange and promotional activities to share best practice and showcase impact.

Throughout Development Phase 1 all of the previous 3Cs Projects reviewed, the online database was scoped to identify the key themes and a wireframe was developed to illustrate how this might be presented on a website. Themes have been selected to reflect emerging priorities such as LNRS and blue carbon.

Development Phase 2 will see the creation of the online library resource and the searchable database to reflect the emerging evaluation framework. Development Phase 3 will see the application of the evaluation framework to complete the knowledge resource library and the library further extended to include the new documents, projects and lessons learned so that tested approaches can quickly be transferred to other areas as knowledge becomes more accessible. This database will be further built on to collate themes and outputs from across successful CEP projects and other initiatives such as the Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund (NEIRF) projects, Flood and Coastal Risk Innovation Projects (FCRIP) and the Sustainable Management of Marine Resources projects (SMMR). Scoping and mapping of these will be developed through HLO 2 and the CPN management of the digital assets over the longer term.

Evidencing and understanding social capital and impact for development of investable business models

Understanding the difference between social capital, natural capital, social impact investing and green finance is crucial to the success of attracting long term investment into the NFCC over and above grant funding. Creating opportunities for investment will require the business modelling of both tangible and intangible ‘assets,’ the provision of services, creating scalable credit and offset schemes where appropriate. The issues noted under the heading [*‘Policy Mapping through the lens of achieving GES’*](#) outlined earlier in this report, including the lack of coherent governance across the land-sea interface, lack of SMART and interim targets that drive change, and siloed thinking between marine and terrestrial planning systems will directly impact whether or not options for investing in estuary and coastal spaces can be achieved, at the scale required to sustain the activity and interventions needed to support these complex nature systems.

Blended finance in both the social and climate investment spaces are still at reasonably early stages of development. Both require governance that allows the private sector, non-profits and government to sit in the same space and build investment programmes, usually characterised by long term lending arrangements and front-end grant funding elements. Governance, policy and legal arrangements are required to construct the space where these parties can come together in a fiscally responsible way. Conceptualising the building blocks of appropriate blended finance options, consultation with likely investors, the expertise and likely costs required need to be scoped out in tandem with the mapping of measurable outcomes at both the national and local scale, as noted throughout this report.



Understanding what Return on Investment (ROI) truly means for potential investors into the CEP and how to monitor, evaluate and evidence it will be a key part of the evaluation strand but ultimately crosscuts through all HLOs and the programme management framework from the start, as each of these elements will require modelling investment impact monitoring and for instance, establishing maintenance covenants between parties over time.

Further work is needed towards understanding social capital in the environment sector and how it interrelates with and corresponds to natural capital accounting. Social capital is not measured in the same way as natural capital; an assessment of how to meaningfully bring the two together is needed as part of the next development phase. It is clearly understood that both the social and climate strands need to come together, however in investment terms, they have been operating in siloed sectors and work is needed to bring disparate financial analyses together into a singular effective model. There are clear opportunities (e.g., increasing a more diverse work force into the environment sector which is currently underrepresented). Currently, larger issues stand out on the world stage as urgent, such as food security, biosecurity and climate inequality, and there is work to do in the next development phase to articulate the specifics of how social impact is going help deliver 3C's targets and vice versa.

Currently, funding streams are siloed within and between socio-economic and environmental drivers and restricted through short term funding rounds. An integrated approach to funding delivery would secure natural capital benefits via established social capital mechanisms, thereby enabling a unified voice across socio-economic and environmental realms. This would effectively influence and shift policy implementation, achieving deeper impact and benefit for our coastal communities and environments.

The monitoring and evaluation metrics that will be further developed in Development Phase 2 (2023/24) to evaluate the social and knowledge capital of CEPs and partnership working that leads to natural capital delivery and social impact will need to evidence the ROI and therefore must align closely with the emerging field of Social Impact Investment and Green Finance. Throughout this Development Phase, the CPN focused on understanding the potential to develop a building capacity strand to support CEPs and others in understanding ROI and planning on how to develop an investable business model for the NFCC and CEPs. TEP's Chief Executive developed this brief to articulate the challenge framed through the lens of the Just Transition to a Zero Carbon Economy, which financial institutions and leaders in regenerative economics are currently working to. A two-year plan to trial a pilot, or pilots of business case model (s) on areas of delivery through the NFCC is in development, however, with continuing development needed across HLO 2 and 5, this plan will continue to be developed through Development Phase 2. This will also closely align with the onboarding of new members of the Leadership Group, particularly with the private sector and the development of a funding strategy for the NFCC long term (see Funding Strategy section below).

To understand what areas of work that provide investment opportunities for private industry, The Crown Estate (TCE) has agreed to join the NFCC Leadership Group and work with the CPN through a Sub Group led by TEP's Chief Executive, to define what areas of emerging work align with their strategy and responsibilities and help to engage with those within their sphere of influence. TCE are already scoping the opportunities of Carbon Markets, Natural Capital



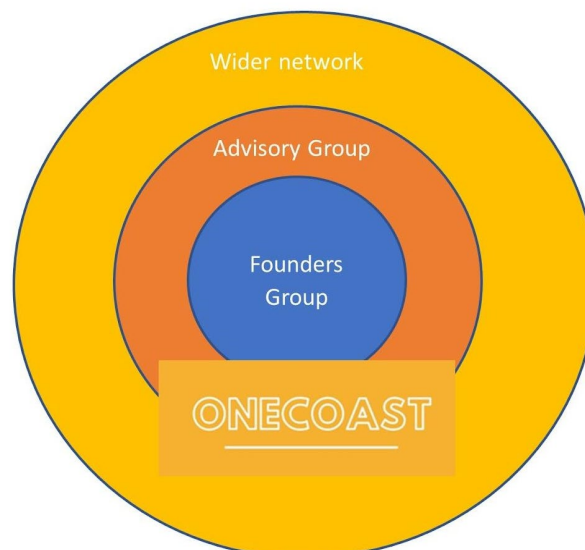
Markets and the potential for leasing areas for restoration projects and therefore much can be learned together through this collaboration. In this way, the NFCC can ensure that scenarios where long-term investment is viable are trialled, tested and refined in partnership with the private industry. All other areas of delivery can then be defined as appropriate for public and civic financial support as described in the [Funding Strategy](#) section below.

OneCoast and Coastal Communities APPG: Enable long-term systemic change through providing evidence to shape future coastal governance (HLO 6)

The cross-sector OneCoast coalition is currently formed of the CPN, Local Government Association Coastal Special Interest Group (LGA Coastal SIG), Coastal Communities Alliance (CCA) and National Coastal Tourism Academy (NCTA) with support from New Economics Foundation (capacity dependent). These five organisations form the Founders Group who formed the coalition to be a united coherent voice from a cross-section of national organisations with a coastal interest to support collaboration and sharing. The ambition for the coalition is to have the capacity, and resource, to drive action and coordination forward to the benefit of coastal communities.

The coalition represents 57 local coastal authorities, over 100 Coastal Community Teams, over 87 CEPs and wider initiatives, 35 Coastal Destination Management Organisations, and thousands of small businesses. Following the Pilot Phase delivery, the Group has begun to steadily grow towards its ambition to become a strong and influential cross-sector group representing industry, the public sector, environment, commerce and national bodies, and to partner with Government in delivering change across the coast and support the levelling up agenda to build back better, increasing community and environmental resilience.

The Founders Group has now established an Advisory Group, which currently includes representatives from RNLI, The Piers Society, Southwest Coast Path, LEP Coastal Group, NOCC and others. Through the Pilot Phase, the OneCoast Meet & Greet introduced a wider audience to OneCoast and whilst establishing the need for the Coalition, there was also an appetite for a OneCoast Network that would support national themed events and provide a means to support collaboration and learning (currently being considered through the use of an online platform such as BaseCamp in the interim period until the Coastal Communications Hub is operational).





The relationship between the elements that make up the OneCoast Coalition can be seen in the graphic above. Together they form the OneCoast Coalition.

Through this phase, it was clear that due to the time pressures being experienced by stakeholders many of whom were involved in multiple 3Cs projects, it was not possible to engage the wider OneCoast Network throughout this phase of delivery in a manner that would avoid stakeholder fatigue. Therefore, the time to deliver engagement with them through this phase was diverted to complete a gap analysis of the current Advisory Group and wider Coalition members. The database of organisations was reviewed by the OneCoast Founders Group and potential supplementary members to the Advisory Group were discussed with the objective of strengthening the current Advisory Group. Through these discussions an action identified for Phase 2 was to further this analysis through the expansion of the formed database to collate all identified organisations into sector groups. This action would support the development of OneCoast interest groups e.g., academia interest group, industry interest group, training and skills interest group etc.

Communication strategy summary

The OneCoast Founders Group carefully considered the potential options for expanding the current level of engagement with the Advisory Group, OneCoast Network and wider audience. In order to develop the strength of the coalition and increase its recognition, the following should be delivered through Phase 2:

- A mechanism to support agile communication streams with the OneCoast Network should be put in place - as previously mentioned this is currently being considered through the use of an online platform such as BaseCamp in the interim period before the Coastal Communications Hub is operational.
- The web content across the Founders Group should be reviewed and updated.
- The Advisory Group should be approached regarding content on their websites on their involvement in OneCoast.
- A slide deck on the coalition should be developed and added to current online content to expand understanding of the group.
- An event schedule to bring together the Network on common themes should be developed - potentially as a series of online topic-based webinars or a single themed event.
- The opportunity to develop an online virtual engagement room in the style of a conference exhibition to showcase the current projects of each organisation within the network as part of the Hub should be explored for potential development in Phase 3 if deemed appropriate.
- The branding of OneCoast should remain as #OneCoast and a campaign across the Advisory Group and Network will be used to promote its inclusion in social media that relates either to the coalition or to engage other coalition members.
- Use of the current OneCoast branding should be expanded to allow the Advisory Group to use online to show their support for the coalition.

APPG for Coastal Communities

Three of the OneCoast steering group members form the secretariat for the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Coastal Communities. The APPG looks to consider current issues affecting coastal communities across the UK and to actively seek strategies to address these to enhance health, wellbeing, education, infrastructure, and economies within these unique communities. Officers (MP's) of the APPG attend from all four nations and therefore the scope of the group must be UK wide.

The Coastal Communities APPG provides a conduit to take issues impacting the coast directly to MPs for discussion and action however for an effective process and meaningful outcomes there must be evidence to support this. OneCoast provides an opportunity to take the topics being discussed to a wider audience supporting and forming evidence for the APPG sessions.

Coastal Inquiry

In the pilot phase (2021-22), 3C's providing funding to support planning for the Coastal Inquiry. This is being delivered through an agile approach through each session acting as an evidence session producing briefing notes and actions tasked to attending MPs to be completed. These actions will be reviewed at the APPG's Annual General Meeting in May. The sessions are currently delivered as Parliamentary Briefings (1 hour with up to 4 speakers and a discussion session), Roundtable (1 hour with 1 expert speaker and a discussion session) and Information Sessions (30 mins with up to 3 speakers).

The graphic opposite shows the planned 2022-23 sessions that have been delivered to date in yellow and those to be delivered in blue, with Figure 21 below showing the plan for 2023-24.

The complexities of the challenges and opportunities faced by coastal communities require the APPG Coastal Inquiry process to have inbuilt flexibility, being able to adapt to current needs. Therefore, whilst this plan has been developed with the OneCoast Founders and discussions with the wider Advisory Group, there could be changes to the intended delivery timeframes however the Inquiry will be inclusive of the topics throughout its progression over the next two phases.



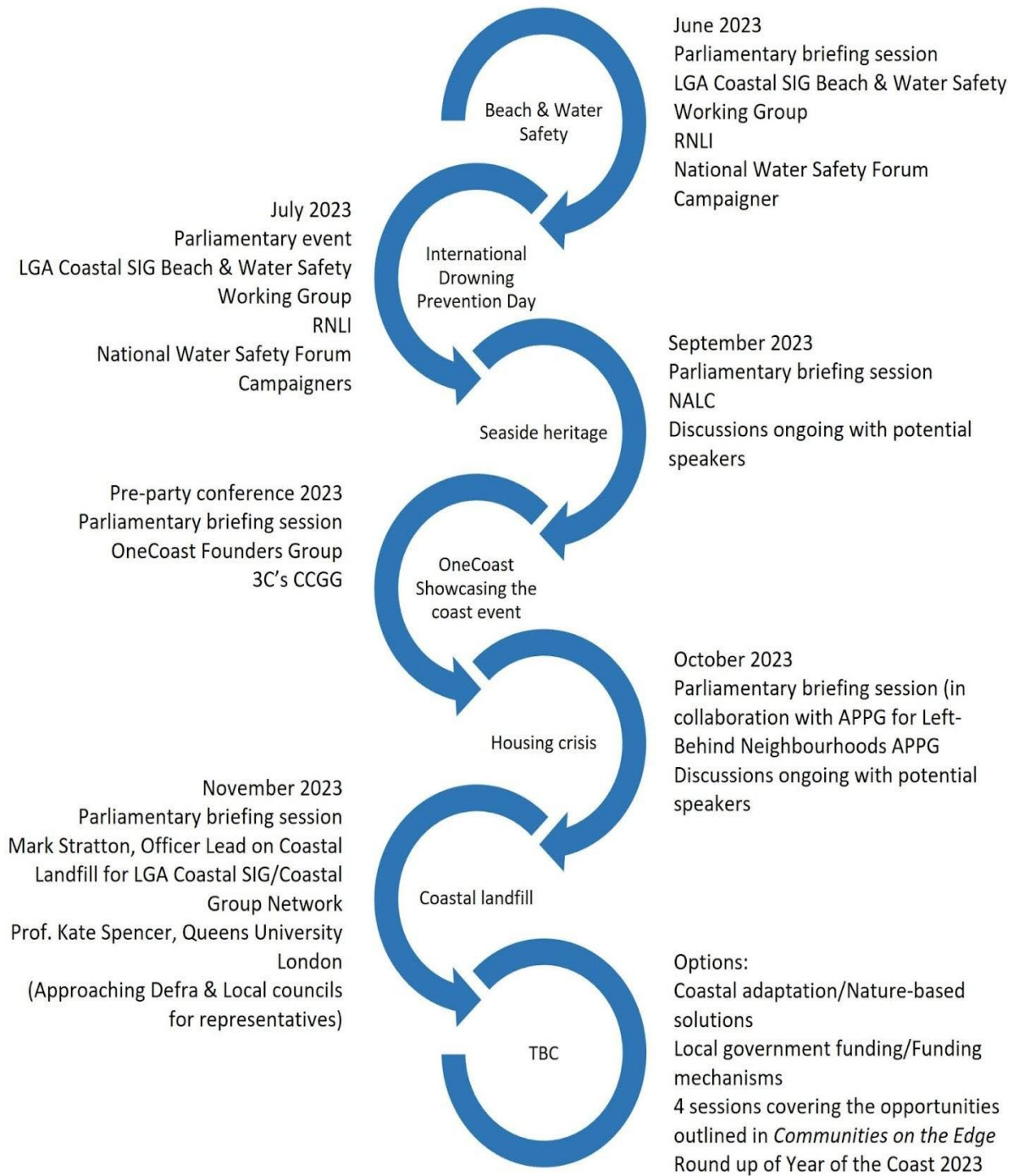


Figure 21: Planned coastal inquiry sessions for 2023/24

As the APPG Inquiry Process has been supported by 3Cs there have been changes to the way that the Secretariat is able to function (increase in resource/capacity). The Coastal Inquiry process was reviewed through this phase, with consideration given to how it could work in a more effective manner and be able to expand the reach of its outputs. The graphic below illustrates how the process will alter over the course of the next two phases and can only do this with further support (capacity and resource) to manage the increase in deliverables (and consequently its impact):

This change in the process will need to be supported in conjunction with the evolution of the OneCoast Coalition as described in the previous section.



Additional actions delivered

Attendance to the APPG for Coastal Communities sessions is similar to that for other such closed¹ APPGs which does not accurately reflect the number of MPs who have signed up to the

¹ Only advertised to MPs and not for public circulation - members of the public can attend with permission from the Chair.



APPG. To enhance our understanding of the interests of MPs, a data-trawl on MPs covering coastal constituencies was undertaken forming a database of MPs, their constituencies, their interests and contact information.

Alongside this, to ensure that the APPG for Coastal Communities leads the way for collaborative working, a data-trawl of APPGs was undertaken to highlight the APPGs with whom this APPG should be delivering sessions where there is cross-over. To date a session has been delivered with the APPG for Ocean and a session is being developed with the APPG for Left Behind Neighbourhoods on the Housing Crisis.

Communications strategy summary

Through the Pilot Phase and current Development Phase 1, the level of communications around the work of the APPG has remained the same with the delivery of low-level social media posts by the co-Secretariats on Twitter after sessions and minutes from the sessions are posted on the webpage (currently hosted on CPN's website). This strategy has been adopted due to the minimal resource and capacity available across the co-Secretariat.

Through Phase 2:

- The APPG for Coastal Communities email needs to be properly resourced, with the Secretariat implementing an appropriate strategy to resource this communication stream.
- Development of a Virtual Engagement Room (VER) for the Coastal Inquiry with MPs as the primary audience, showcasing the sessions to date, the future sessions and ways to engage including actions to take forward.
- A standalone APPG website to be developed to enhance engagement of MPs and wider audiences with the work of the APPG.
- Production of Parliamentary Briefing Notes on topics to be published through parliamentary channels to expand the audience.
- Determine a funding plan to support ongoing Secretariat functions relating to communications for the APPG to go beyond Phase 3 - including analysis of current funding formulas for other APPGs.
- Develop engagement between the APPG and OneCoast Network using the established platform/hub.
- Finalise the Comms strategy with Mindfully Wired and determine the level of engagement that can be maintained meaningfully.

Through Phase 3:

- Maintain and enhance the delivery of the communications strategy.
- Determine a secure funding strategy to support the work of the co-Secretariat including communications.
- Review the success of the VER and determine whether to continue with the tool.

CPN Cross-cutting work strands

NFCC Management and Governance Framework

The development of the NFCC will be managed as six interconnected Projects, aligned to each HLO, within the NFCC programme. A preliminary project management framework, including lifecycle, project control including milestones, and tools and templates, was created as part of Development Phase 1. This ensures the NFCC programme delivery through Development Phases 2 and 3. As delivery was underway and approaches emerging up to the end of this Phase, the full suite of Project Initiation Documents are still undergoing completion and will be fully produced by the start of the next Development Phase.

This framework will evolve as the activity and NFCC needs are refined and established through Development Phases 2 & 3. It will ultimately be the management framework for the CPN to maintain the NFCC over the long term as one part of the CPN's emerging project portfolio and support of CEPs through the CPN Business Plan.

Key activities completed in the development of the NFCC project and programme management framework:

1. NFCC final report review and familiarisation

The first step in the development of the project and programme management system was to review the NFCC report from the previous phase of work to understand what the programme of works and embedded projects would look like as a delivery framework to create the operational NFCC after the two years of 3Cs funding.

Upon review and discussion with the CPN team it was concluded that each HLO within the NFCC would become a dedicated project, and each HLO Lead would be the dedicated project manager for that HLO/project. An additional project was identified to be included: the creation of the Data Hub by the Rivers Trust.

There are 7 inter-related projects that run concurrently within the programme. Each HLO Lead/Project Manager is responsible for the delivery of that project. The programme management system does not duplicate or take the place of project management. The programme management system organises aggregate project items and needs that span all projects.

2. Project Management using Prince 2

The NFCC will be a national entity and as such will be accessible to a wide range of users throughout its creation, use, and development. It was agreed that using an established project management methodology would be valuable to aid accessibility and recognition across a wide variety of users and sectors. Prince 2 was chosen as one of the most well established, widely used, and comprehensive project management methodologies available.

The workstream lead undertook Prince 2 Foundation and Practitioner Training over a course of 5 days to develop the project management system.

3. The Project lifecycle, and Project Initiation Documents

The project management lifecycle (based on tailored Prince 2 methodology) provides a pathway for creation of the NFCC, broken down into 3Cs funding stages and governance levels of direction, management, and delivery. The roles and responsibilities for these governance levels are described in the programme management framework.

This project management lifecycle has been agreed through a collaborative session with the HLO and cross-border representatives for Wales and Scotland.

The Project Initiation Documents were first written as templates that satisfy the project management requirements for all 7 projects. The PID are divided between two documents for each project: a business case that contains all the PID sections, and a spreadsheet that contains greater detail for certain sections of the PID. The PID sections include:

- *Executive summary*
- *Background and Reasons for the Project*
- *Objectives and Rationale*
- *Options Analysis*
- *Benefits/Outcomes Register and Management Approach **
- *Products/Outputs Register and Management Approach **
- *Roles and Responsibilities*
- *Risk/Issue Register and Management Approach**
- *Plans and Timescales**
- *Communications Management**
- *Costs*
- *Investment Appraisal*

The asterisks denote where greater detail for that section of the PID is given in the separate spreadsheet.

4. Training sessions for all HLO Leads and check-ins for the completion of PIDs

All HLO Leads/project managers have been requested to complete the entirety of the PIDs for their projects, assuming that they are working in isolation from one another. Although all projects are interrelated, this approach was used to ensure completeness of PIDs and to enable identification of areas of HLO/project crossover that can be supported through the dedicated programme management system.

Over a period of 6 weeks, all HLO Leads/project managers had weekly check-ins to support completion of the PIDs. Due to delays in 3Cs grant agreement sign off and competing pressures for the HLO Leads to date only 3 out of 7 PIDs have been completed. The remaining PIDs will be completed in time to commence 3Cs Phase 2.



5. Programme Management using MSP (Managing Successful Programmes)

In accordance with the reasoning for using Prince 2, the programme management Framework MSP (Managing Successful Programmes) has been used for the NFCC. MSP has been chosen as it has been developed in line with Prince 2 methodology and supports simple tailoring to the needs of the programme. Sam Lew undertook MSP Foundation Training over a course of 3 days to develop the programme management system.

6. Design of the Programme Management framework

The programme management framework has been fully scoped and designed using tailored MSP. Due to delays in the completion of HLO PIDs, there are sections within the programme management system that have not been completed.

The sections within the programme management system include:

- **Governance approach** including the NFCC programme Terms of Reference, relationships with wider governance systems, role definitions, decision points and criteria, audit trail and reporting.
- **Design approach** including the NFCC vision statement, benefits mapping linking outputs, to capabilities to outcomes and benefits across all HLOs/Projects, the Target Operating Model for the NFCC upon completion, and aggregated programme risk.
- **Stakeholder engagement and communications approach** including a programme wide synthesis of each project's communications approach.
- **Information approach** including what information will be created, who can access it, and rules for information integrity, security, version control and retention.
- **Knowledge and learning approach** including a synthesis of past knowledge, new knowledge, and the conversion of tacit to explicit knowledge, and how knowledge will be shared, and lessons learned.
- **Funding approach** including a list of investors, funding mechanisms, phasing of investments and implications on cash flows, budgets and contingency.

Environment Agency Oversight Support and Capacity for the future NFCC

In addition to the development of the NFCC Programme Management framework, the CPN will liaise with the EA to scope out the EA staff capacity and support mechanisms needed for the long-term success and operation of the NFCC. Lessons will be learned from the CaBA approach and associated internal support from the EA. The NFCC will need to interact and align with the CaBA National Support Group for catchment to coast coordination, however, the NFCC



must operate outside of the CaBA NSG in recognition that the integrated approach along and across the coast has different challenges, opportunities, time scales and associated solutions to those that exist upstream. As the relationship between the NFCC and CaBA develops throughout Development Phase 2, the CPN will develop a business case with the EA for the internal oversight process needed and associated investment. This may include assigning regional 'coastal coordinators' within EA Area teams or potentially establishing internal EA integrated working groups to bring together all the relevant EA expertise e.g., geomorphology, FCRM, fisheries, biodiversity and water quality to support local delivery.

Establishing the CPN as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation

To support the establishment of the NFCC long term, the CPN has been working towards gaining legal status of Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and establishing the formal governance and internal infrastructure that will be needed to operate as a robust third sector organisation and employer. The voluntary CPN Committee formed a 'Shadow Board' to finalise the CPN Constitution with legal advice (see Appendix 10). The Constitution of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation with voting members other than its charity trustees ('Association' Model Constitution) was submitted along with an application to the Charity Commission 7th March 2023. The decision from the Charity Commission is pending at the time of submitting this report and the Charity Commission are struggling with a backlog of applications since they reopened the ability to register. However, legal status will be achieved in Development Phase 2. Once legal status is confirmed the CPN will open a bank account and establish the financial and management policies required.

Ahead of the submission, the CPN Committee voted to establish the Board of Trustees (with five Trustees that constituted the 'Shadow Board') and an Advisory Council consisting of the remaining Committee members. Each of these bodies will have voting rights (as per the Association Model Constitution) on CPN's ongoing and evolving strategy. The Advisory Council will always be made up of at least 50% CEPs to ensure the decision making on CPN strategy remains firmly rooted in supporting CEPs and allows a democratic and transparent decision-making process holding the Board of Trustees and the CPN Executive Team (staff) to account. The first CPN Board meeting was held 27th February 2023 and the minutes of this and the CPN Committee meeting where the decision was logged can be viewed in Appendices 11 and 12.

While the CPN lays its foundations, there will be a period of 'handover' between TEP, the hosting CEP and the CPN to build the track record of the CPN for future funders. From 2023 onwards, pending successful securement of legal status, the CPN will start to be a lead partner and accountable body of other secured funds. TEP and partners will continue to support the CPN through this period of time to evidence our collective commitment to establishing the CPN, our collaborative approach and impact. The CPN Business Plan (Appendix 13), strategically developed in 2020/21, was updated to include the NFCC as a major project and outlines how the CPN will manage and build on the emerging work to support CEPs and others within the network. We will undertake a review of our progress and Business Plan annually to prepare for the future. As the CPN is establishing its governance and operational infrastructure, the current 3Cs Project Lead (TEP's Technical Director) will be the designated leader of the CPN Executive Team (CPN staff) and CPN staff roles will continue to be hosted at TEP under the TEP



Technical Director's management. The timeframe of NFCC development aligns with and complements the plans for establishing the 'CPN Engine' i.e., core team and developing the key service areas as outlined in the CPN Business Plan.

CPN Process Management and Dissemination

The CPN will be responsible for furthering the development of the NFCC through management of knowledge generated, dissemination of knowledge, further consultation and engagement with CEPs (both those that have engaged to date and those that have engaged so far) and developing supporting collaborative processes.

Knowledge Sharing and CEP Engagement

Building on the 3Cs projects database collation detailed under HLO 5, a full database of coastal projects and approaches will start to be developed through engagement and consultation with CEPs around the UK. Dedicated capacity for this will be supported in Development Phase 2 from October 2023 to March 2024, including 1-2-1 discussions with every CEP. The CPN will also map local governance and representation in existing and emerging CEPs to identify where case studies may be able to develop and further our understanding of the current collaborative advantage in the existing network of CEPs. This will enable a gap analysis of local governance and inform on where new CEPs or similar may need to be supported to establish leading to full coverage of CEPs around the UK in the future.

An event is being planned for September 2023 to showcase the 3Cs work to date, CEPs and the integrated approach and the advocacy being supported through the OneCoast Coalition. This was originally planned for this phase of work; however, advice was received that a more strategic time for greatest impact would be in the first two weeks of September to coincide with the end of the Summer Recess in Parliament and before the party conferences start. Therefore, CPN and MWC started planning for the event in this Phase with a view to delivering in the next phase.

Process Planning and Facilitation

To ensure that the NFCC, the Leadership Group and partners can achieve the ambitions of a systemic approach, the CPN will develop a system change process and facilitation approach utilising the skills that have been learned through the CGF funded Marine CoLABoration and Compass Course and the School for System Change facilitation training the CPN team completed before the start of this phase. **By embedding systems change approaches into the heart of the NFCC infrastructure and governance we can ensure that all partners experience the approach and can maximise the collaborative advantage.** The CPN can support partners and practitioners to learn and do the same in their sphere of influence.

NFCC fundraising plans 2023-2025 and beyond

It is the ambition of the Leadership Group and CPN, to establish a blended finance model for the ongoing maintenance and operation of the NFCC during and beyond the life of the 3Cs funding stream. HLO 5 is aimed at proving the ROI on any funding sources but is preliminarily targeted at proving the ROI for public and private funding sources. Therefore, the CPN and partners have been assessing the potential for complementary funding from academic and philanthropic sources.

It is the ambition of the CPN to develop a funding strategy alongside the emerging workstreams across the HLOs to identify which areas of work are most appropriate for private, public and civic society funding sources and essentially 'package' the different development and support needs for engagement with funders. This will be progressed through a Leadership Group sub group, alongside the further initiative mapping recommended under HLO 2 and expanded to include mapping across funder strategies and emerging academic research interests and emerging funding streams.

The following live funding opportunities have been identified and will be pursued throughout Development Phase 2. A brief summary of how these align with the NFCC development and establishment of the CPN has been outlined under each. However, full details cannot be disclosed at this time due to the competitive nature of the funding opportunities.

UKRI Resilient Coastal Communities and Seas

The objectives of the funding call and timescales for research align closely with the emerging NFCC and local delivery potential of CEPs and other coastal groups:

- apply place-based approaches to transform our understanding of climatic, environmental, health, economic, social, and cultural factors affecting UK coastal communities and seas.
- develop the resilient management of UK coastal seas, coastal communities, and the natural capital these areas depend on and support, by delivering the evidence base, tools and practical solutions.
- inform policy and enable transformative decision making in collaboration with local communities.
- build capacity and capability for transdisciplinary research and the mobilisation of research evidence within UK coastal communities and seas.

In particular, we envisage that this call provides the opportunity to further understand and/or develop:

- EDI framework to understand the intrinsic values and cultural connections present within coastal communities and how to engage and work with diverse communities to improve ocean climate literacy and communications.



- Deeper research into the challenges in existing governance arrangements and how decision making is coordinated between decision making bodies.
- Test and trial participative inclusive decision-making processes for local decision making to ensure that all values and coastal voices are represented and empowered in e.g. coastal habitat restoration planning, Coastal Plans
- Scoping social capital as part of natural capital to understand how enhancing natural capital benefits coastal communities and unlocking approaches to developing initiatives that can ensure the benefits are maximised e.g., green/blue skills and jobs.
- Establishing the evidence base needed to integrate impact monitoring across socio-economic and environmental drivers e.g., social capital metrics as part of natural capital.
- Facilitating a coordinated impact pathway and integrated approach to transdisciplinary research with community and environmental needs at the heart of research to ensure research can be applied.

The CPN has been liaising with various academics who have been supportive of the development of both the CPN and NFCC to start building an interdisciplinary and cross sector project consortium. This proposal will be developed for submission in July 2023. If successful through the two rounds, the funding will support the NFCC, CPN and some CEPs from April 2024 - September 2028 and activities will be aligned with supporting Development Phase 3.

Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation has been integral to the development of the CPN between 2020 - present day, supporting the strategic development of the CPN and the key service area of building capacity. CGF's new five-year strategy focuses on effective engagement on climate and ocean action, recognising that the climate and nature crises are interlinked. Ocean protection is central to effective climate action and can play a key role in climate solutions. Through projects, grants and convening stakeholders, they seek to increase the capability of local authorities, civil society and other sectors to leverage change in Portugal and the UK, and to spread what works internationally through collaboration. They invest in research, capacity building, tools and networks to develop and deploy effective approaches at scale and support flagship projects which evidence the benefits to people of climate action and have the potential for widespread impact.

Through ongoing funding support to develop the Learning and Development Programme within the CPN, which has supported the NFCC HLO 3 evolution, CPN has kept CGF up to date with the 3Cs work and is now in discussions to look at the next steps for support. The CPN recognises the potential for CGF to continue to support the building capacity and communications needed to ensure an integrated and collaborative approach can be embedded across sectors, at all scales.

Approaches to influence public funding streams

In the Pilot Phase Final Report the CPN and Partners, recommended central government seed fund the Framework in Years 1-3 to enable its development and establishment. The Leadership Group highlighted the need to:



- Influence funding mechanisms to support integrated and inclusive coordination and collaboration. Funding streams need to be integrated across environmental and socio-economic policy at a central level, not driven by one policy.
- Advocate that central government investment needs to reflect the mix of strategies across land and sea with combined funding from national departments and agencies, and criteria that spans socio-economic and environmental drivers.
- Advocate for the same integrated approach to funding with cross-border collaborations between England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland for an integrated approach to funding across all UK countries.

It is our ongoing ambition to support Defra in communications across departments via the OneCoast Coalition and Coastal Communities APPG to recognise the need to align and streamline public funding across socio-economic and environmental drivers and the cross-cutting policy focus of the coordination and delivery enabled through the NFCC. This has been reflected in the recent OneCoast Coalition report '[Communities on the Edge](#)' commissioned to highlight how Levelling Up is failing coastal communities and environments as detailed under HLO 6.

Acknowledgement

The lead author of this report was Amy Pryor (Project Lead, Coastal Partnerships Network and Technical Director of lead partner Thames Estuary Partnership) with input and review by Jim Masters and Natasha Bradshaw. Contributions were gratefully received from the HLO Leads - Alice Watts (HLO 3), Sophie Daniels at Mindfully Wired Communications (HLO 4), Rebecca MacDonald-Lofts (HLO 6) and Dr Sam Lew (NFCC Project Management Framework), members of the NFCC Leadership Group, regional and local project CEP leads and numerous consultants working across the various streams. This was a huge collaborative effort across sectors, across borders and across the land and sea interface. With thanks to the Environment Agency for continuing to support the project and Championing Coastal Coordination.

Suggested reference: Coastal Partnerships Network (2023) National Framework for Coastal Coordination, Development Phase 1. Report led by Amy Pryor, Jim Masters and Natasha Bradshaw for the Environment Agency Championing Coastal Coordination programme, March 2023.

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Operationalising Good Environmental Status at the Local Level: Part 1 Mapping Policy and other drivers across the land-sea interface' (NE, March 2023; unpublished)

Appendices

- Appendix 1: 3Cs Pilot Phase Final Report 2021/22
- Appendix 2: NFCC Leadership Group draft Terms of Reference
- Appendix 3: Transboundary Report and appendices
- Appendix 4: HLO 1 Breakout Group Sessions Miro Board Output
- Appendix 5: Policy maps from NE report
- Appendix 6: NE Regional Project Summary Report
- Appendix 7: NW Regional Project Final Report
- Appendix 8: Mersey Rivers Trust Local Summary Report
- Appendix 9: HLO 3 Learning and Development Plan
- Appendix 10: CPN Constitution
- Appendix 11: CPN Board Minutes
- Appendix 12: CPN Committee Meeting Minutes
- Appendix 13: CPN Business Plan
- Appendix 14: Communities on the Edge – Levelling up England’s Coastal Communities