



Roundtable: Communities on the edge

Wednesday 1st February 2023 – 09:30-10:30

Online

Coastal Communities

Chair: Sally-Ann Hart MP

Speakers:

Nicola Radford – Coastal Communities Alliance (Lincolnshire County Council)

Rebecca Munro (Pragmatix Advisory)

HEADLINES & ACTIONS

- The *Communities on the edge* considers the challenges and opportunities faced by coastal communities against the Levelling Up metrics – available online here: [Communities on the edge report](#)
- The narrative on coastal communities needs to change to showcase the immense value that these unique places have.
- Attendance to the Debate on Local Government Funding Formulas to raise the report's findings
- Report to be shared with the Chancellor of the Exchequer
- Letter with report to be sent to Prime Minister and SoS for Levelling Up including a call for the use of more granular data.
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BACKGROUND

Better targeted investment in Britain's coastal communities could see them contribute more to the wider UK economy and support the government's climate goals, according to research by Pragmatix Advisory.

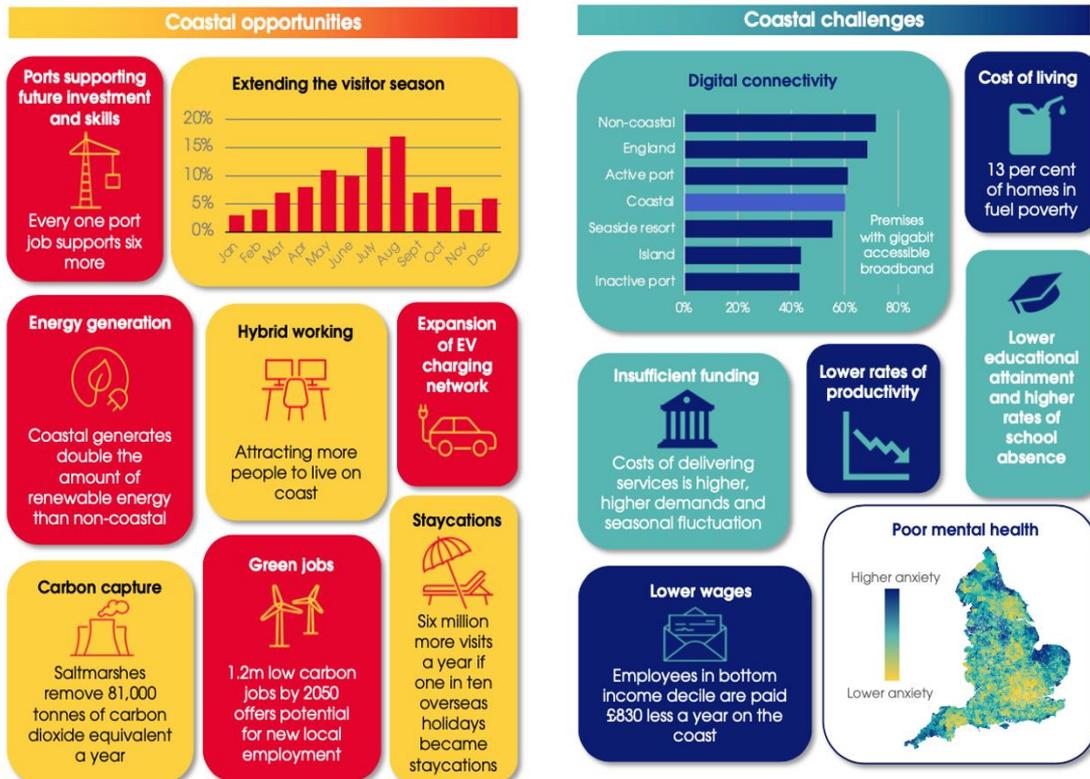
However, the study shows that despite efforts under the government's Levelling Up agenda and other policy initiatives, the coast continues to fall behind inland parts of the UK on a wide range of measures.

Coastal disadvantage has become a longstanding and damaging national problem which needs to be addressed urgently.

The Pragmatix Advisory study *Communities on the edge* was commissioned by the Coastal Communities Alliance, the Local Government Association (LGA) Coastal Special Interest Group (SIG), the Coastal Partnerships Network and partner organisations.

It spells out the huge potential for coastal towns and villages to contribute to the UK's growth and contribute significantly to the country's progress towards Net Zero. But it also pulls together alarming evidence of a divide between the performance of coastal and non-coastal communities.

The evidence shows that one-off and time limited government support schemes have so far failed to change the story of coastal decline. The report’s authors recommend the government considers a more strategic approach to tackle coastal deprivation and unlock the potential these important and valued parts of Britain can make.



IN ATTENDANCE

- Sally-Ann Hart MP (Chair)
- Sir Peter Bottomly
- Anne-Marie Bond
- Rebecca Munro
- Samantha Richardson
- Simon Read
- Peter Aldous MP
- Anna Peran
- Lia Nici MP
- Researchers obo Caroline Ansell MP, Victoria Atkins MP, Anne-Marie Morris MP, Selaine Saxby MP, Brandon Lewis MP
- John Moorcroft
- Mark Hammett
- Nina Emmins
- Joe Jems

APOLOGIES

Apologies sent were noted

SECRETARIAT

- Beccy MacDonald-Lofts
- Nicola Radford
- Bethany Handson
- Alice Watts

INTRODUCTION TO THE REPORT – Nicola Radford – Coastal Communities Alliance

- The Coastal Communities Alliance (CCA) has supported Select Committee reviews into coastal communities.
- As part of the OneCoast Coalition there was an opportunity for collaborative funding to glean a better understanding of the impact of Levelling Up on coastal communities.
- From experience within Lincolnshire County Council, short-term funding is useful however it does not deliver for meaningful change and therefore longer-term sustainable funding is needed.
- The solution does not just lie with government as there needs to be facilitated community-led change.
- The *Communities on the edge* report is the first to look at the opportunities and solutions for coastal communities.
- There is no quick fix but there needs to be a systematic change to a more cross-department strategic approach that is aligned to tackle deeper issues and work collectively to move forwards.

Key recommendations:

- Cross-departmental strategic approach is needed alongside longer-term sustainable funding.

COMMUNITIES ON THE EDGE – Rebecca Munro – Pragmatix Advisory

- Coastal disadvantage has become a longstanding and damaging national problem which needs to be addressed urgently.
- A higher proportion of children live in workless households.
- Household income in coastal areas is almost £3,000 per year lower than in non-coastal communities
- Nearly one in five jobs are below the living wage – a greater proportion than for England overall.
- Disabled people are less likely to find work.
- There is a damaging “digital divide” with gigabit broadband and 4G provision lagging behind.
- Educational outcomes are often poorer, with a lower proportion of children achieving GCSE qualifications in maths and English
- Children are more likely to be persistently absent from school.
- People suffer poorer health outcomes, with higher rates of depression, suicide, alcohol-related hospital admissions, and emergency admissions for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease.
- With the right investment coastal communities have much to offer.
- Coastal areas generate more renewable energy than the national average and make a significant contribution to the UK’s efforts to increase energy security and achieve lower carbon emissions.
- Marine development and infrastructure represent a coastal opportunity with port freight expected to increase by nearly 40% over the next 20 years.
- Fishing fleets could develop sustainable and profitable business models.
- Increases in hybrid and remote working represent an opportunity for coastal communities to draw in skilled, higher paid workers, growing the economy in peripheral parts of the UK.
- Remote learning could allow students new opportunities to gain qualifications without the need to move away from the coast (only possible with investment in digital capacity and transport).
- Developing sustainable tourism and investment in projects which would help local communities extend the season would

- There are fewer council houses, leading to a greater reliance on the private rented sector where housing costs are higher.

lead to higher paid, year-round jobs and make this important industry more attractive to young people.

Key recommendations:

- Changing the local government funding formula to better reflect deprivation and the needs of coastal communities.
- Long term, sustainable funding to support projects across their full lifespan.
- Strategic funding which would allow authorities to merge different streams to achieve levelling up in coastal communities.

DISCUSSION – Main points

Research into Levelling Up in regional reports has shown that there are issues around education, skills, transport, health and housing.

Initiatives and funding are being put in place however revenue funding is a challenge and local government funding mechanisms need to change as the need to constantly bid for additional funding is not helping.

There is a need to change monitoring to a more granular level for national and local governments, organisations and charities to gain a clearer understanding of what is happening within coastal communities as they are lost within district data.

Strategic long-term strategies are needed to be cross-departmental and have a wider input from the communities themselves alongside funding that is also cross-departmental.

Challenges lie within the communities themselves as culturally these communities are very different and we need to re-engage them from within – need for community-led regeneration through partnership funding.

Local government authorities and their communities feel real disappointment when they put considerable effort into funding bids that are subsequently unsuccessful, and it is a huge ask on

resources and capacity in producing these bids that could be used more meaningfully and effectively elsewhere to benefit the communities.

The funding cake isn't getting any bigger however how it is divided needs to be reconsidered.

Once coastal communities are fully supported and able to attract private investment then they have already shown that they have endless opportunities. Governmental funding should be considered as seed funding to build the solid foundations needed for true regeneration and form a platform for investment.