

Humber Oil Spill

In December 2004, an oil spill from an Oil Refinery adjacent to the Humber was briefly mentioned in the national press when crude oil from an overland pipeline leaked into the South Killingholme Drain. A small quantity of oil made it as far as South Killingholme Haven before the leak was detected. Contingency plans were immediately activated to contain the spill and implement full clean up procedures. The Oil Refinery has co-operated fully with the Environment Agency in the clean up and investigation into the incident.

This spill has provided a valuable evaluation of emergency response procedures, and a debrief meeting for the range of organisations involved has already been held to ensure that the lessons learnt as a result of this experience are shared and fed into contingency plans for the future.

Lighting the Humber Bridge

The Humber Bridge is an engineering marvel and for many years it was the world's longest suspension bridge. It dominates many views of the estuary, and people are justifiably proud of their bridge that is also an important part of the region's infrastructure.

Almost since it's construction, proposals to light the Bridge have been discussed. The possible benefits include important economic gains for the region, however, many are concerned about potential effects of additional lights on the Humber's wildlife. The Humber Bridge Board are trialling a new lighting proposal using narrow beam lasers and

Light Emitting Diodes. The proposal would also replace the current yellow street lighting with white light which some have suggested may not effect migratory birds.

New proposals, such as the lighting, require specific statutory consent and are not considered by the Humber Management Scheme. If progressed, the lighting proposals will be subject to detailed scrutiny, including consideration of potential impacts on the estuary's wildlife before any consent is given.



Humber Bridge at Night © Humber Bridge Board

Stallingborough Power Station

This is a large natural gas combined cycle turbine power station that uses water from the Humber as a coolant. Fish are entrapped in the intake; the number and species affected are the subject to ongoing research. Legally, the Power Station's abstraction activity is considered a 'plan or project' under the Habitat's Regulations and as such is outside the brief of the Humber

Management Scheme, nevertheless, the partners are regularly discussing this issue.

The current monitoring regime, undertaken with the full cooperation of the operators, has provided valuable information on fish in the estuary and has also shown that both River and Sea Lamprey, which are listed in the

European Habitats Directive, are being caught in the intake. This issue is being treated very seriously by all parties involved and any decisions must be based on proper evidence. Currently, an appropriate assessment is taking place; this should be ready by March 2006, and the current consent will be reviewed by March 2008.

HUMBER



Management Scheme

The next issue of Ebb & Flow will be produced in 2006 when we will publish the first annual review of the Management Scheme. If you want further information about the management scheme, please contact Chris J Manning, Humber Project Manager at the new office c/o Humber INCA Waters' Edge Visitors Centre, Maltkiln Road, Barton upon Humber, North Lincolnshire, DN18 5JR

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design by human 01302 342447

EBB & FLOW

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE HUMBER MANAGEMENT SCHEME

No 4 Summer 2005

Minister Launches Humber Management Scheme and Codes of Conduct

We were delighted to welcome Elliot Morley - Minister of State (Climate Change and Environment) to The Deep on 1st July for the formal launch of the Humber Management Scheme. Over 50 guests enjoyed a presentation on the Humber's wildlife and industrial importance, the development of the Humber Management Scheme and the roles of the Humber Estuary Relevant Authorities Group and Humber Advisory Group. This introduction was delivered by a team representing both the 35 members of Humber Estuary Relevant Authority Group and the Humber Advisory Group.

The main focus of the evening was Elliot Morley's speech. The Minister is a keen ornithologist with an intimate knowledge of the Humber, who amused the audience with tales of his exploits in the Humber's treacherous mud.

Elliot Morley thanked the 35 Relevant Authorities and the Humber Advisory Group, who have produced the Management Scheme over the past four years, noting the unprecedented level of co-operation involved in the scheme's development. The Minister said that he had "taken a particular interest in its development".

Elliot Morley, who is now the Minister responsible for floods and coastal defence, noted the critical link between the Humber Management Scheme and the Environment Agency's strategic approach to flood management including the detailed hydrological and geomorphological studies. This work includes the managed realignments such as that at Paull Holmes Strays where flood risk and conservation of the estuary are implemented in tandem.



Elliot Morley and members of the Humber Estuary Relevant Authority Group with Management Scheme

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Management Scheme

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Water's Edge Country Park

The transformation of this former contaminated industrial site at Barton-upon-Humber into a wildlife haven continues, with the whole site already open to the public. A new visitor centre is being built and is due to open in the summer. The visitor centre will incorporate an innovative wildlife surveillance network that will show images and sounds from 23 cameras located over 100 km of the Humber Estuary. Water's Edge is a North Lincolnshire Council project costing £11 million, with funding secured from Yorkshire Forward and Europe. The camera system has been funded by Biffaward and Enventure.

Humber Estuary Confirmed as 3rd Biggest Wildlife Site in England

In parallel with our development of the Humber Management Scheme, English Nature has been reviewing the Humber's statutory designations and consulting interested parties on proposed changes. The Humber has now been confirmed as England's 3rd largest Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Codes of Conduct

The Codes of Conduct produced by the Humber Advisory Group are now available. Elliot Morley described the Codes as "critical to the Scheme's implementation". These codes provide advice on issues such as: safety, angling, recreation, walking and wildfowling and are designed to allow people to continue to enjoy these particular activities while minimising

any adverse effects. A copy of the Codes is included with this issue of Ebb & Flow. Please contact us if you want further copies for your club or association, as we need your help to distribute them to as wide an audience as possible.



Elliot Morley and members of Humber Advisory Group with the Codes of Conduct

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Management Scheme

New Appointments

The founder Chairman of the Humber Estuary Relevant Authorities Group, Tony Edwards, and Vice Chairman, Paul Hames, both retired in Autumn 2004. Tony's environmental and water management career began with the Yorkshire Rivers Authority in 1973 and, after 31 years working in the region, he has retired from the post of Humber Strategies Manager with the Environment Agency. Tony will be undertaking some lecturing together with a part time job as Chief Executive of the Humber Industry Nature Conservation Association. Vice Chairman, Paul Hames worked alongside Tony during the Management Scheme's formative years. Paul, who first went to sea at the age of 16, joined the Humber pilot service in 1978 and was appointed Harbour Master, Humber in January 1998.

The new Chairman of the Humber Estuary Relevant Authorities Group is Captain Phil Cowing. Phil, is a Master Mariner and joined ABP in 1993, he served as Master of the trailing suction hopper dredger, UKD Marlin, before moving, two years later, to the Hull Dockmaster's Department. In 2001, he made the move into pilotage as Pilotage Operations Manager before being promoted into his present post. Phillip Winn is the Environment Agency's new Humber Strategies Manager, and Vice Chairman of the Humber Estuary Relevant Authorities Group. Phillip, a river and coastal engineer, who trained and initially worked in his native New Zealand, originally joined the NRA in 1995. Since, 1996 Phillip has been working on long-term Humber flood defence planning and will continue to lead the development of the Humber Estuary Shoreline Management Plan and Flood Risk Management Strategy for the Agency, that together form an integral part of the Humber Management Scheme. These new appointees reaffirm the commitment of the Relevant Authorities to delivering effective implementation of the Humber Management Scheme in the years ahead.



Phil Cowing
Chairman of HERAG



Phillip Winn
Vice Chairman of HERAG

Humber Estuary Low Tide Count

Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) core counts have been undertaken on the Humber for a number of years, with teams of volunteers counting the water birds. Low tide counts were first undertaken on the Humber in 1998/99 and have been repeated during 2003/04. Results from the

recent survey, completed in August 2004, are currently being analysed, and the results will be published shortly as a Research Report by English Nature. The volunteers enjoyed a boat trip on the estuary organised as a "thank you" for all their hard work over the season. This

clashed with the sighting of a Whites Thrush at Easington (a bird that would normally be expected to be seen in South East Asia), but equally interesting for those who attended was the sighting of the remains of a male (and not-so-recently deceased) Bottle Nosed Dolphin at Broomfleet Island.

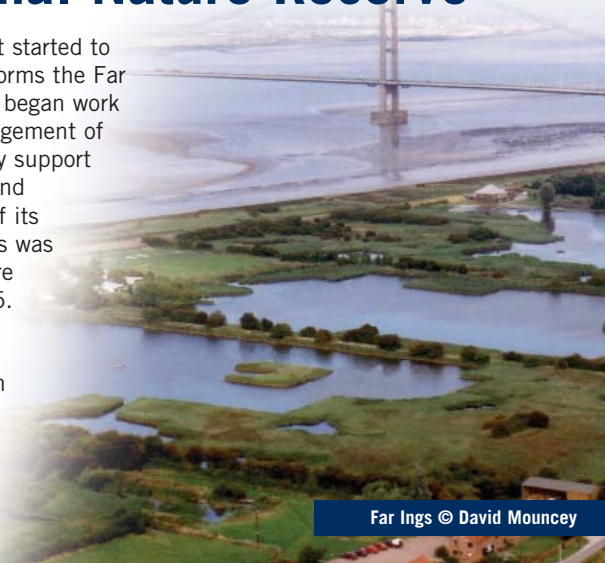
Bottle Nosed Dolphin at Broomfleet Island © IECS

Far Ings Designated a National Nature Reserve

The designation of Far Ings as a National Nature Reserve completes a remarkable transformation in the area's fortunes. Since Roman times, brick and tile making industries have flourished alongside the Humber with some 15 brick and tile yards and a cement works working the clay at the end of the 19th century. Supplies of clay began to run out during the early 20th century leading to the works being abandoned. The pits then began to fill with water and were colonised by wildlife. In 1983 the

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust started to acquire land which now forms the Far Ings Nature Reserve, and began work on the conservation management of the reedbeds, which today support breeding marsh harriers and bitterns. In recognition of its great importance, Far Ings was declared a National Nature Reserve on 15 April 2005.

Far Ings adjoins the Humber Estuary European Marine, and is part of the wider Humber suite of designated sites.



Far Ings © David Mouncey