



# The work of the Local Government Association's Special Interest Group

## Mission Statement

The Coastal Issues Special Interest Group will champion and take forward the coastal strategy and represent the collective interests of all maritime local authorities by:

- [a] bringing pressure on the Government to achieve a step change in the level of funding to overcome present and future problems;
- [b] use every opportunity to secure full involvement of local Government at all levels of policy formulation concerning the coast;
- [c] strongly oppose any changes which take responsibility and decision-making powers out of the hands of local democratic leaders.

## Foreword

This leaflet is intended to provide a 'snapshot' of the work of the Local Government Association's Special Interest Group on Coastal issues and is aimed at all Coastal Councils around England.

The objectives of the Group are to:

- Increase awareness and debate at a national and European level, economic and social issues and concerns that directly affect or which may so affect coastal, estuarine and maritime communities
- Act as a focus for liaison between local authorities and other bodies representing coastal, estuarine and maritime interests
- Secure improved cross-departmental co-ordination with Government on coastal, estuarine and maritime issues with a view to ensuring consistency in policy and the provision of resources
- Work in partnership with other organisations with complementary aims



*"As chairman of the Local government Association's Special Interest Group on Coastal Issues, I would commend this."*

Godfrey Allanson (2006)



"The coming years will be challenging for the Group. The Marine Bill is likely to be the most significant piece of legislation relating to the English marine environment that will be implemented. It has the scope to greatly improve the governance arrangements for our coast, provided that the future role of Local Government is incorporated.

Similarly the role of the Local Authority in managing the impacts of climate change, have been reflected in Defra's "Making Space for Water" initiative. The outputs from this important work will create greater synergy and partnership across agencies, all of whom have an important part to play in tackling and managing the demands of nature in the coastal zone.

The Special Interest Group is at the heart of these considerations and will endeavour to work with all agencies to represent the position of Local Government, you are invited to join now to help influence the future'.



The LGA's Coastal Issues - Special Interest Group has commissioned a range of important studies and investigations to encourage implementation of sustainable coastal management in this country through a research programme. The original Action Plan included a range of recommendations directed at the European Union, the Government, the Regions and Local Government as well as the Local Government Association (LGA). These commitments for action were highlighted in an earlier update of the "On the Edge" strategy.

This was part of the original strategy document which was re-launched in 2004. The first Action Plan (2004/05) included the following key tasks which have now been implemented:

- Preparation of the Action Plan itself and prioritisation of the action programme.
- Development and management of a website for LGA's Coastal Issues - Special Interest Group
- Establishment of the framework for a Local Authority's Skills and Best Practice Database.
- Contact with Government Ministers, Departments and Professional and Research Institutions in order to highlight the work of the Coastal Issues Special Interest Group.
- The development of "Best Value Indicators" for coastal management.
- Highlighting the roles played by regional "Centres of Expertise" in the various fields of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM).
- Coastal town regeneration initiatives
- Financial issues relating to the coast including the standard spending assessment.
- The LGA Coastal Risks Pack (launched January 2005)

In addition to the tasks listed above, the current Action Plan is taking forward the following:

- The economic case for ICZM completed.
- ICZM activity survey.
- The coastline and regional agendas.
- Bathing Water Directive Conference and information pack.

During 2005/2006 it was necessary to re-focus the Coastal Issues Special Interest Group's response to the Government's agenda of ICZM and the Marine Bill. At a European level, ICZM has been put on the Government's agenda to ensure that legislation will result in truly integrated coastal zone management spanning the land and sea interface. The work commissioned from the Group's consultants, in relation to the Marine Bill will help to meet this requirement and will be assisted by an ongoing dialogue with Defra over ICZM. The Action Plan also includes the following:

- Review of "Managing Coastal Risks" Study by the University of Cardiff and the Isle of Wight Centre for the Coastal Environment.
- A fisheries issues scoping study.

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See: [www.coastalsig.lga.gov.uk](http://www.coastalsig.lga.gov.uk) for the full text of "On the Edge - the coastal strategy" and details of the LGA's Coastal Special Interest Group.