

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
January 2003

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

THE ASSOCIATION OF SEVERN ESTUARY RELEVANT AUTHORITIES,
THE BRISTOL CHANNEL COUNTER POLLUTION ASSOCIATION,
THE NORTH DEVON AND SOMERSET COASTAL GROUP,
THE SEVERN ESTUARY COASTAL GROUP,
THE SEVERN ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP, AND
THE STANDING CONFERENCE OF SEVERNSIDE LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

Relating to the development and implementation of
the 'Strategy for the Severn Estuary' by the *Severn Estuary Partnership*,
the management scheme for the Severn Estuary European marine site
by the *Association of Severn Estuary Relevant Authorities*,
the Bristol Channel Counter Pollution Plan by the *Bristol Channel Counter Pollution Association*,
and Shoreline Management Plans by two *Coastal Groups*.

Abbreviations:

ASERA	Association of Severn Estuary Relevant Authorities
BCCPA	Bristol Channel Counter Pollution Association
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
ND&SCG	North Devon & Somerset Coastal Group
SCOSLA	Standing Conference of Severnside Local Authorities
SECG	Severn Estuary Coastal Group
SEP	Severn Estuary Partnership

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SUMMARY

The Severn Estuary Partnership, the Association of Severn Estuary Relevant Authorities, the Bristol Channel Counter Pollution Association, the Severn Estuary Coastal Group, the North Devon Somerset Coastal Group and the Standing Conference of Severnside Local Authorities are the parties to this Memorandum of Understanding.

This MoU acknowledges the importance of working together during the development and implementation of plans/initiatives that have an estuary wide remit.

All parties recognise that the geographical area, the similar organisations involved and the timing of the plans/initiatives provide an opportunity for the groups to integrate administrative arrangements, share information and co-ordinate the policies and related actions which are developed by their work.

This MoU has been drawn up in an attempt to:

- i. promote understanding about the relationship between the aims of each initiative
- ii. encourage joint working where appropriate
- iii. integrate existing administrative arrangements, and
- iv. share expertise and information.

Nothing in this MoU shall in any way alter or affect any party's statutory responsibilities.

If any party considers it no longer appropriate to continue with the agreements set out in this memorandum, it shall be entitled to give 1 months notice of termination, and at the end of that period their responsibilities towards this MoU shall cease.

1. INTEGRATING ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

The various estuary groups intend to agree on two dates and venues per year to hold a meeting with a comprehensive agenda. All groups will have a section of the agenda/separate agenda for their part of the meeting.

- a. The Severn Estuary Partnership will be responsible for organising dates and venues.
- b. ASERA, BCCPA, SCOSLA & SECG¹ will be responsible for setting their own part of the comprehensive agenda (separate agenda) and recording their own part of the meeting (unless there is an agreement with the SEP to do this on their behalf).

Any other meetings required by estuary groups will need to be arranged independently.

¹ The ND&SCG will continue with their own administrative arrangements due to the geographical impracticalities of sharing meetings with the other groups.

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2. JOINT WORKING

The various estuary groups should integrate working and share information where this is practical and advantageous to all.

- a. estuary groups to provide information available in the public domain, where appropriate, to the SEP, to enable the SEP in turn to provide services to all estuary groups. These services will include: 'gateway web site' for the Severn Estuary, a who's who database, an estuary newsletter, a media platform, an information system etc. The SEP are to ensure that these and any other services provided are well communicated to other estuary groups.
- b. estuary groups are to consider co-ordinating their data collection activities.

3. CONSULTATION

The Severn Estuary Partnership will provide assistance with consultation on plans/initiatives for any of the estuary groups who may require this, through the Severn Estuary Partnership Forum.

4. GENERAL ITEMS

- a. All information in the public domain will be shared between all groups on a 'no cost' or expenses only basis.
- b. The SEP will be responsible for co-ordinating an update on the progress of all estuary groups for the bi-annual meetings.
- c. The Chairs of the various estuary groups will continue to meet to provide a mechanism for monitoring the success of this MoU, the working relationships and potential further integration of estuary groups and as a mechanism to suggest changes to this MoU to reflect issues arising as the joint arrangements develop.

5. RESOLUTION OF PROBLEMS

- a. Should it appear that any element of this agreement cannot be met, a meeting of the relevant parties should be called to explore and identify alternatives.
- b. Where there appears to be a fundamental disagreement, any party may call a special meeting of the Estuary Chairs Group.
- c. If any party considers it no longer appropriate to continue with the agreements set out in this memorandum, it shall be entitled to give 1 month notice of termination to all of the parties to this agreement. At the end of that period their responsibilities towards this MoU will cease.

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Signed by the Chairs of the parties to this Agreement:

Association of Severn Estuary Relevant Authorities

Signature:

Date:

Name:

Bristol Channel Counter Pollution Association

Signature:

Date:

Name:

North Devon & Somerset Coastal Group

Signature:

Date:

Name:

Severn Estuary Coastal Group

Signature:

Date:

Name:

Severn Estuary Partnership

Signature:

Date:

Name:

Standing Conference of Severnside Local Authorities

Signature:

Date:

Name:

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Aims of Severn Estuary Groups

Organisation	Aim
ASERA	To establish and maintain in being for the Severn Estuary European marine site, a management scheme under which the functions of the relevant authorities shall be exercised so as to secure in relation to that site, compliance with the requirements of the Habitats and Birds Directives.
BCCPA	The BCCPA's aim is to bring together all parties that could be effected by a pollution incident within the Bristol Channel, enable by means of an overarching plan to link individual responses together and carryout preparatory work to enable efficient activation of the National contingency plan locally. To this end the Association aims to share information with all estuary groups, continually develop plans by way of exercises, and re-evaluate sensitivity data as circumstances dictate.
ND&SCG	(a) To provide a point of contact between those with an interest in, or responsibility for managing the coast from Hartland Point to Brean Down. (b) To establish and implement a management framework for reviewing and amending the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) (c) To ensure consistency in all aspects of shoreline management planning. To liase and work with adjacent coastal cell groups and other interested parties in order to develop a regional maintenance strategy.
SCOSLA	To bring together constituent local authorities on both sides of the Severn Estuary in a spirit of mutual support and co-operation, in order to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinate discussion and action in relation to proposals within and adjacent to the Estuary in relation to their strategic estuarial impact; • Continue co-ordination of responses to proposals for the creation of a Severn Barrage, and all economic engineering, environmental and other issues arising from such proposals; • Act as a monitoring organisation in the preparation of management plans for the Severn Estuary; • Co-ordinate and make appropriate responses to statutory and non-governmental organisations, agencies and interest groups; and Provide the framework for effective representation to appropriate European and international bodies dealing with Estuary matters.
SECG	To promote further research and the exchange and dissemination of information on coastal defence matters, to complete, review and update the Shoreline Management Plan for the Severn Estuary and to provide input to the High Level Targets of DEFRA and the Welsh Assembly.
SEP	To bring together all those involved in the development, management and use of the Estuary within a framework which encourages the integration of their interests and responsibilities to achieve common objectives.