



Session Three: Community, Culture & Waterways – Celebrating the People, Stories, and Communities of the Severn

Simon Bunn, North Somerset Council



Ocean Literacy: Developing Strategies for engaging coastal communities in England and Wales

Emma McKinley

Cardiff University

SEP Annual Forum 2025, Weston-Super-Mare



Partneriaeth Moroedd
ac Arfordiroedd Cymru
Wales Coasts and
Seas Partnership



Y Môr a Ni



Diverse Marine Values



The Evolution of Ocean Literacy – in one slide!

Ocean Literacy is...

... an understanding of the ocean's influence on you—and your influence on the ocean.

Knowledge

Communication

Behaviour

The 7 principles of Ocean literacy

- The Earth has one big ocean with many features
- The ocean and life in the ocean shape the features of the Earth
- The ocean is a major influence on the weather and climate
- The ocean makes the Earth habitable
- The ocean supports a great diversity of life and ecosystems
- The ocean and humans are inextricably interconnected
- The ocean is largely unexplored



McKinley *et al.* 2023



- Carried out Feb-March 2021 and 2022
- England and Wales (2021/ 2022), Scotland and N Ireland (2022)
- Over 14,000 respondents, including non-coastal communities across the UK.
- Topics on ocean knowledge, emotions, values, concerns, behaviors and more!
- Second OL Report published Nov 2022



Public grasps threat to ocean even as leaders fail to meet targets, poll finds

Survey to mark World Oceans Day today shows in England and Wales believe the fate of oceans and humans is inextricably linked



▲ The focus of the day today is on the ocean. It is a day to celebrate the ocean and the people who work in it. The ocean is a vital part of our lives and the world. It is a day to celebrate the ocean and the people who work in it.

As people mark World Oceans Day today, a new survey by the Ocean Conservation Trust and the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs shows that 94% of people in England and Wales believe the fate of the oceans and humans are inextricably linked, while more than half rate global ocean health as "poor or very poor", according to a government survey.

A new survey of 4,000 people, carried out for the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, the Ocean Conservation Trust and the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, shows that 94% of people in England and Wales believe the fate of the oceans and humans are inextricably linked, while more than half rate global ocean health as "poor or very poor", according to a government survey.



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Cyfoeth
Naturiol
Cymru
Natural
Resources
Wales



ocean
conservation
trust

marine scotland





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Y Môr a Ni

Learning from Ocean Literacy in Wales

- International and national emphasis on ocean literacy.
- One of three priority areas of work for Wales's Coasts and Seas Partnership.
- Over two years of collaborative work to date, bringing together a broad range of researchers, practitioners and policy colleagues from across Wales.

THE CROWN
ESTATE

CARDIFF
UNIVERSITY
PRIFYSGOL
CAERDYDD

Platffwrdd
Wysgchell Cymru
Cyfoeth Natur
Platffwrdd Wales

MARINE
CONSERVATION
SOCIETY
Hlraeth Yn
Y Môr

SIARC

tyf

Ymddiriedolaethau Natur
Cymru
Wildlife Trusts
Wales

Uywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

JNCC

Cyfoeth
Naturiol
Cymru
Natural
Resources
Wales

mpa
Marine Aggregates

PRIFYSGOL
BANGOR
UNIVERSITY

RSPB

MARINE
ENERGY WALES
YNNI MOROL CYMRU

Wales
coastal
centre
Saundersfoot
Harbour

MARINE
CONSERVATION
SOCIETY

cadwch keep
gymruh wales
daclus tidy

sea watch
FOUNDATION

Wales
coastal
centre
Saundersfoot
Harbour

Prifysgol
Abertawe
Swansea
University

angling
cymru
Pysgotwyr Môr Sea Anglers

cadwch keep
gymruh wales
daclus tidy

NatureQuest
ACADEMY

PCF
Coastal Forum

Ymddiriedolaeth
Genedlaethol
National Trust

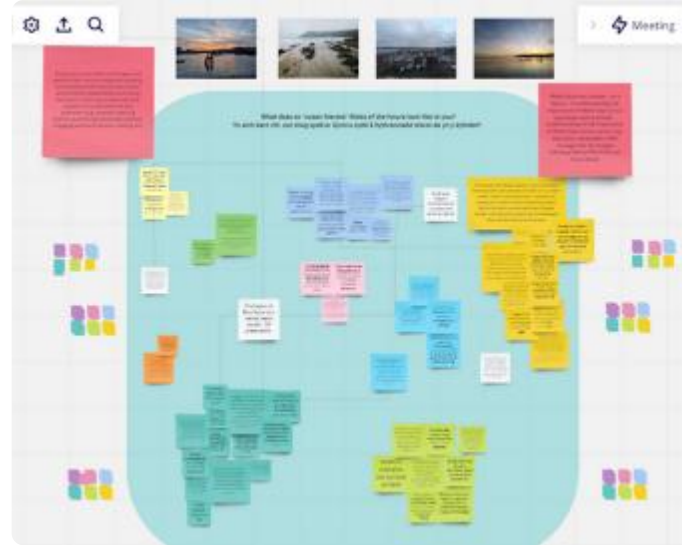
University of
Southampton

Port of
Milford Haven

Co-designing 'Y Môr a Ni - The Sea and Us'

Co-identified priorities:

- Developing a vision and strategy for building ocean literacy in Wales
- Building a base of champions, creating a network of skilled and informed people.
- Enabling information sharing, effective communication and collaborative working.





Partneriaeth Moroedd
ac Arfordiroedd Cymru
Wales Coasts and
Seas Partnership



Y Môr a Ni

Y Môr a Ni

Ocean Literacy Strategy for Wales 2025

Prepared by the Welsh Ocean Literacy Coalition,
part of the Wales Coasts and Seas Partnership



Ariennir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Funded by
Welsh Government



MARINE
CONSERVATION
SOCIETY

Ocean emergency What you

UK's first ocean literacy strategy launches

8 Jan 2025 1 minute read



Y Môr a Ni



Mission

To nurture and grow levels of ocean literacy in Wales for a more sustainable relationship between people and the sea.

Vision

To enact change, we first need to know where we want to be. Our collective vision for an ocean literate Wales is that:

“People are connected to, understand and value our coasts and seas in Wales, making informed decisions that support a safe and sustainable relationship between them.”

Goals

Ocean connection

Physical and emotional connections from accessing and experiencing marine and coastal spaces in different ways. This includes traditional experience such as being at the coast and sea and feeling comfortable and safe whilst there, but also non-traditional experience such as through arts, culture and technology.

Ocean understanding

Knowledge, awareness and action so that we can make informed decisions is critical to positive behaviour change. This includes understanding our own and others impacts, and the need for sustainable management.

Ocean values

Beliefs and principles that enable individuals to take a personal position on how we should value, manage and interact with our coastal and marine spaces, now and in the future.

Six Action Areas

Access and Experience

Ocean Literate Policy

Ocean Literacy Leadership and champions

Knowledge and Skills

Communities and Culture

Network and Capacity Building





Actions

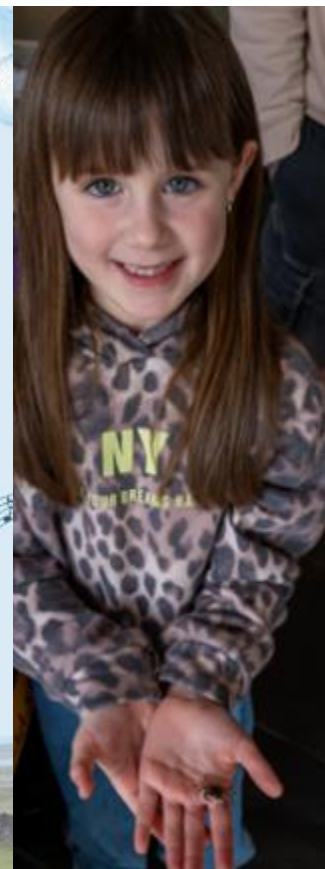
Festivals of the Sea

2 Festivals held in North and South Wales

~ 2000 participants

Action Areas:

- Access and Experience
- Knowledge and Skills
- Communities and Culture

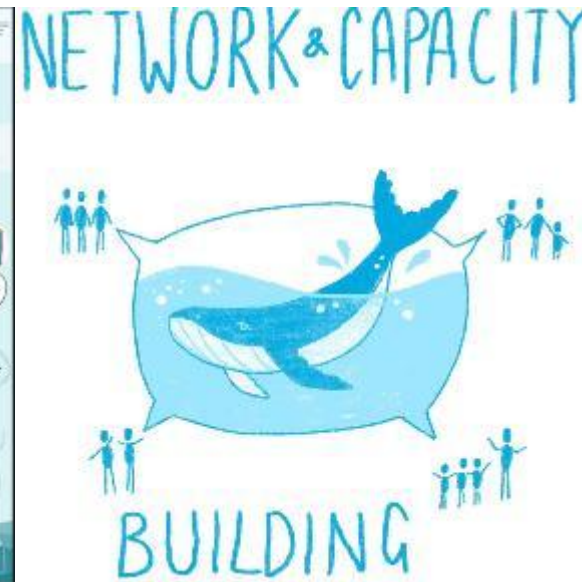
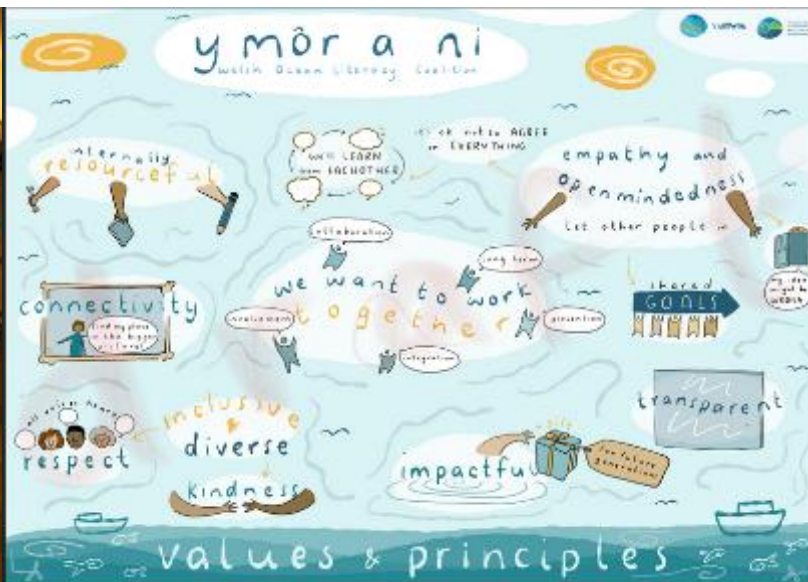




Actions

Capacity Building

- Established the **Welsh Ocean Literacy Coalition (WOLC)** and **Co-ordinator**
- Championing in the **Senedd**
- Launching a Fund to employ **Coastal Co-ordinators**
- Co-designing an **Ambitious Funding Bid!**



Action Areas:

- Leadership and Champions
- Culture and Communities
- Network and Capacity Building



Maximising impact of Y Môr A Ni

- Developing a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework to track impact.
- Ongoing development of the Y Môr A Ni Directory.
- Understanding of relationships and networks within the Welsh Ocean Literacy Coalition.
- Repeating the Wales Ocean Literacy Assessment to update the 2022 data.
- Mapping of WOLC activities against the 6 Action Areas to understand progress, impact and gaps in delivery.





Ocean Literacy Strategies for Engaging Communities in England

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Diverse Marine Value

Co-developing an Ocean Literacy Strategy for England

Revisiting the Future Vision

What does a future Ocean Literate England look like?

Recap the Map

What programmes and initiatives already exist? Where and what are the outcomes?

Looking to the future

What are the priorities for OL in England? What actions need to be taken?



Diverse Marine Value

Early themes from initial workshops



Develop understanding and capacity around ocean literacy as a policy tool

Need to identify enablers and barriers

Ensure inclusivity, equity and accessibility

Create agency and empowerment

Focus on whole society approach



Diverse Marine Value





Next steps and Summary

- Working with OCT to collate feedback and begin drafting of an Ocean Literacy Strategy for England
- Next phases of co-development – July and October 2025; Draft strategy expected Jan 2026
- Aligning the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and the global ocean literacy agendas has been a catalyst for action in Wales.
- Putting Welsh language, culture and communities at the heart of the strategy has been key
- Ongoing work to consider how we can work collaboratively across the UK.
- Active, meaningful collaboration takes time - but it is worth it!



Diverse Marine Values



marinescotland

Thank you!

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Reflections on walking the Severn shores

Dr Rhoda Ballinger

Chair of the Severn Estuary Partnership



Introduction

Background to my personal project





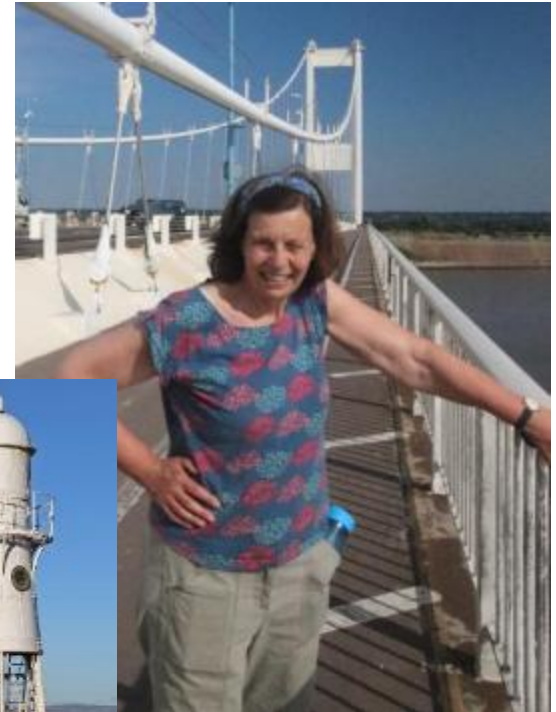
Aims of the walks


- Exploring the shores of our Estuary
- Sampling each local authority's shoreline
- Sharing my thoughts and photos in a monthly blog
- Meeting & connecting with people from around the estuary and finding out what makes the estuary so special to them
- Reflecting on this in my role as Chair



My companions

A few challenges
en route ...

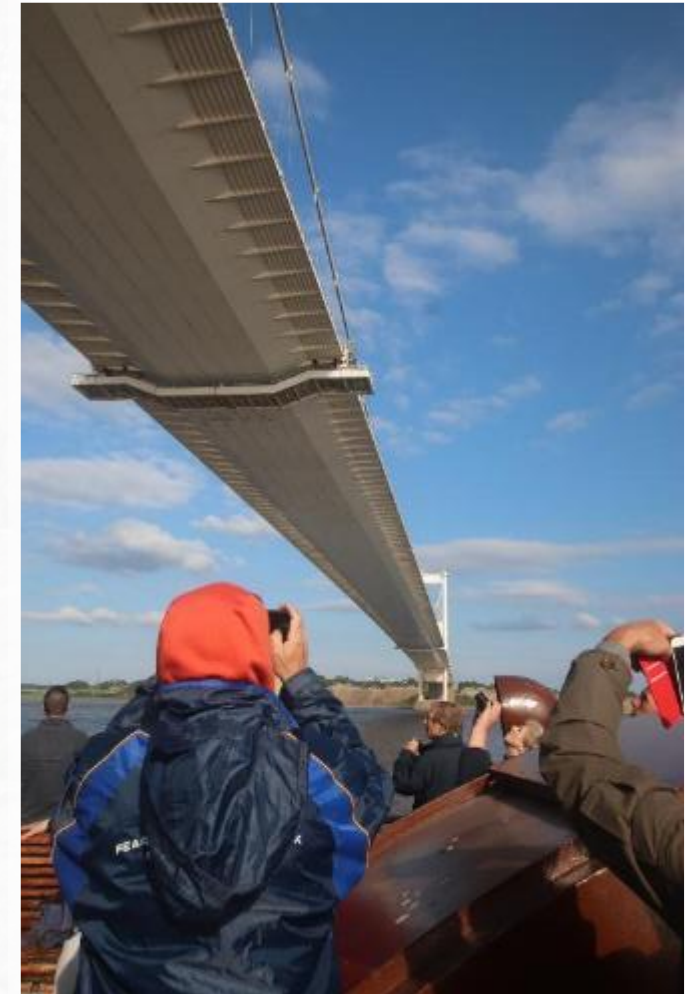


A wide river flows from the background towards the foreground. In the middle ground, a small weir or waterfall creates a splash of white water. The foreground shows a grassy bank with some low-lying vegetation. The background is lined with bare trees and a clear sky.

My journey of discovery

*Some of my personal reflections &
favourite moments*

Discovering new places and experiences



Rediscovering places

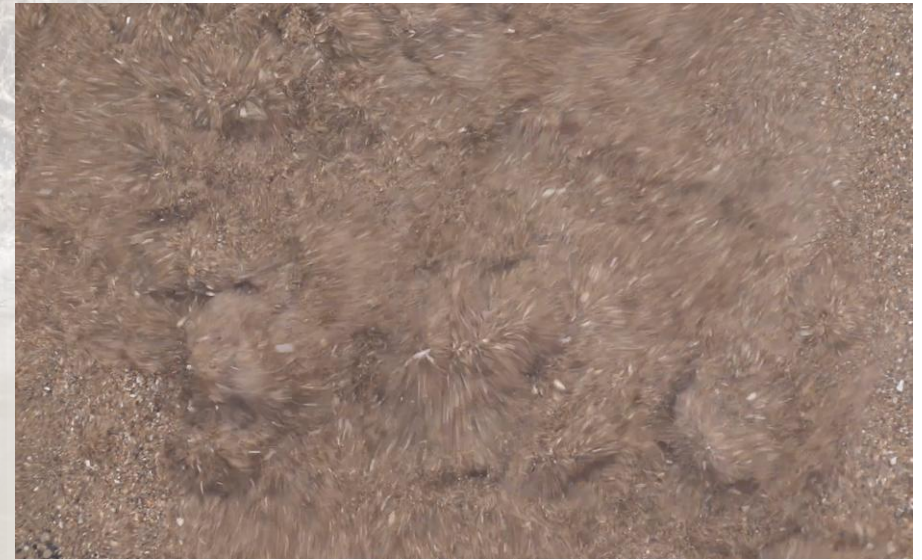
– *new takes on the familiar*



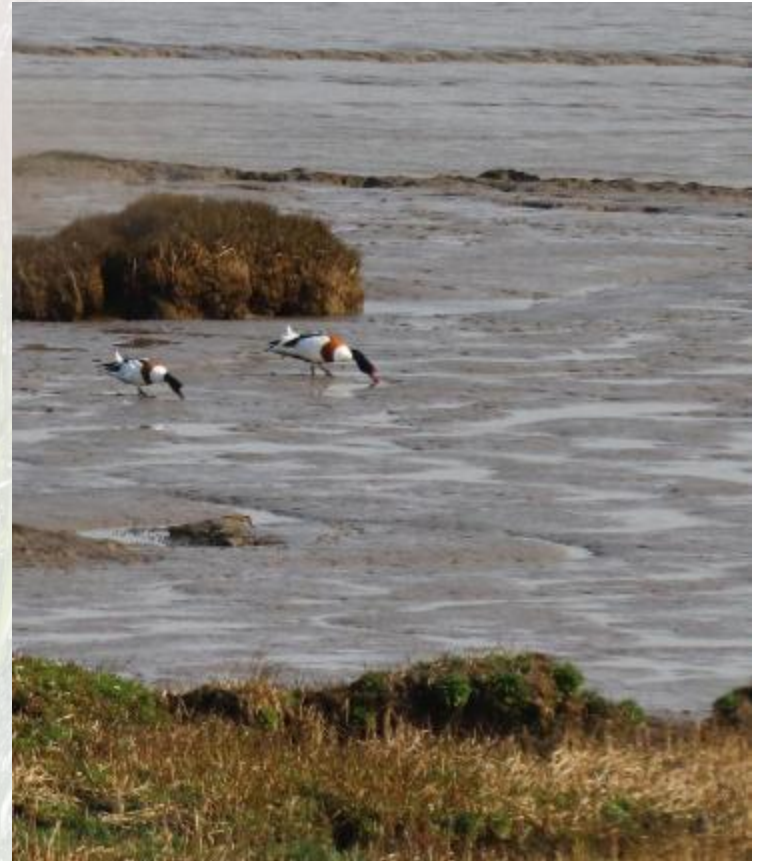
Gaining novel
geographical
perspectives
- *spatial mind games!*



Observing physical
processes first-
hand



Admiring the
biodiversity of our
shores



Cherishing the
estuary's rich
heritage and history



Witnessing some management challenges



... but, also, some solutions!



Connecting with people around the estuary





And appreciating the pride of local communities in their estuary ...



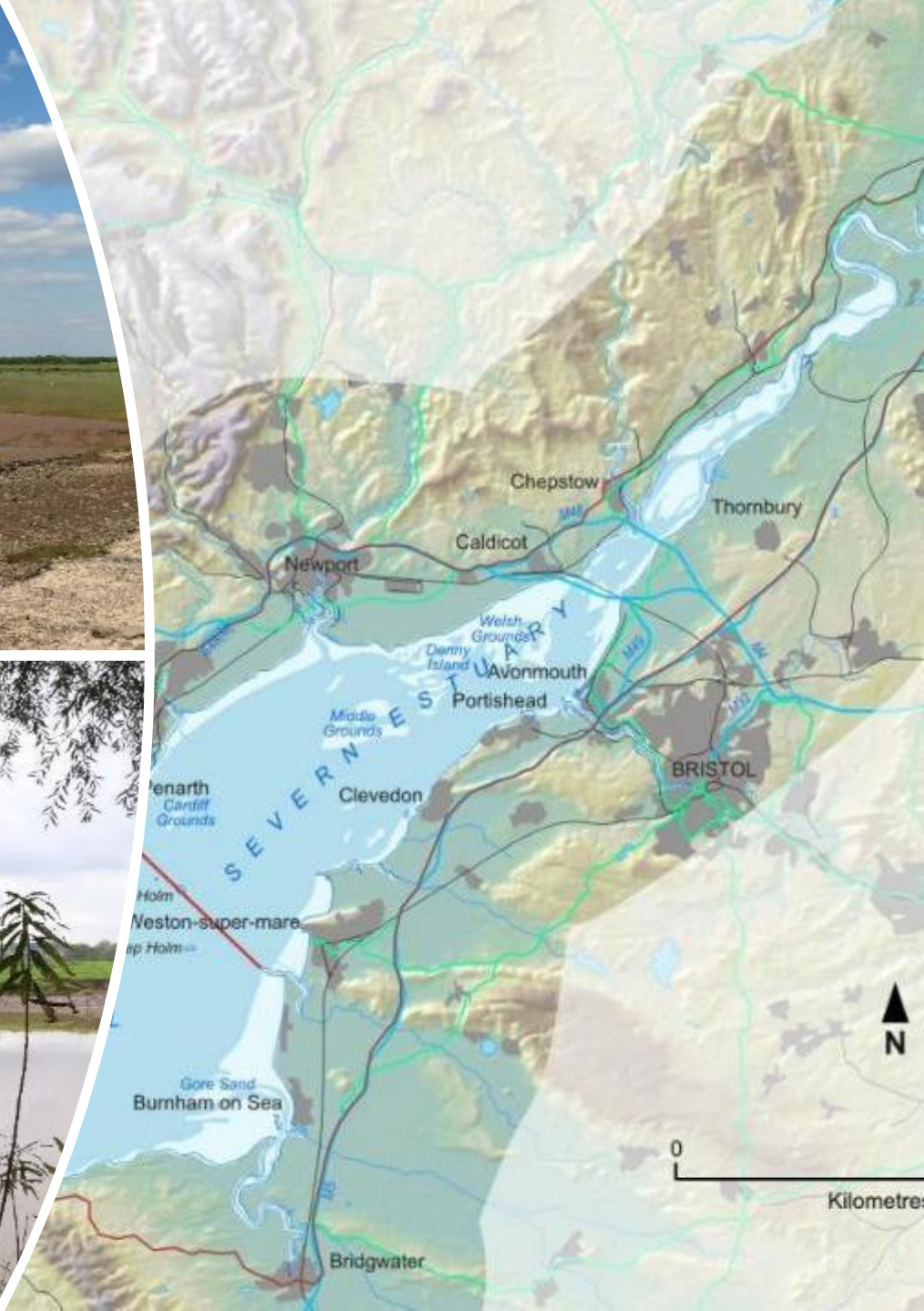
Final thoughts



Spatial aspects



Variability
Connectivity
Boundaries



Temporal aspects

The estuary as a palimpsest

Speed of change

Thresholds





Appreciating the value of engaging in slow tourism / walking

- Estuary immersion!
 - providing connection & connectivity
 - reflecting on geographical discourse
- Experiencing coastal issues first-hand
- Inspiring others to explore our wonderful estuary