

'Hot Off the Press': Innovative Tools for Community Engagement and Self Help

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Background to Somerset Pathfinder

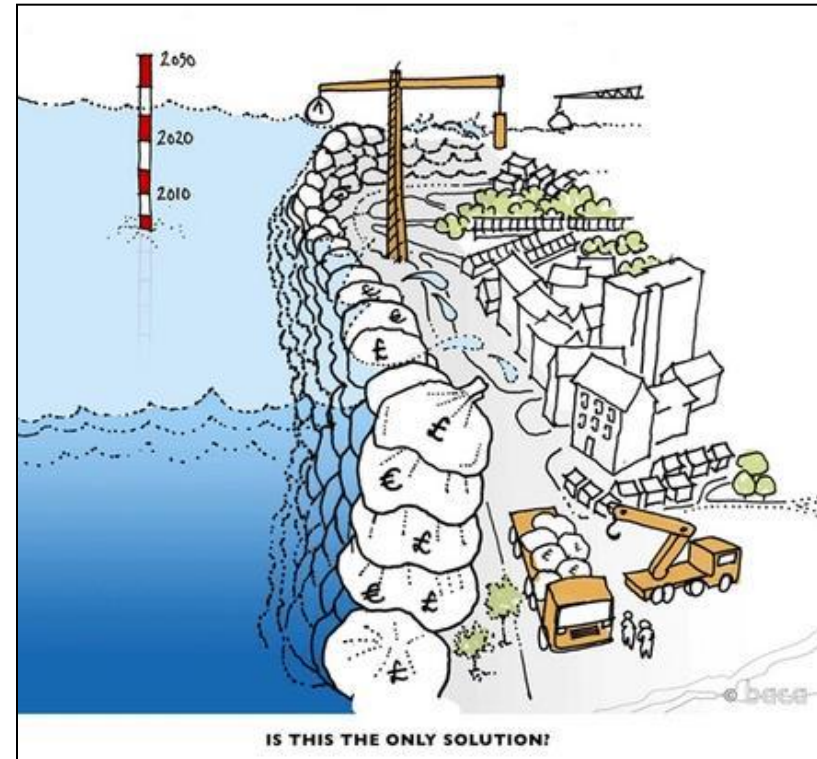


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The need for coastal adaptation

- History of flooding along Somerset coastline
- 'No Active Intervention' or 'Managed Realignment'
- Defra assessing how communities can best adapt to increasing risks
- 'Big Society' encourages communal solutions



Defra Pathfinder projects

- £11 million Coastal Change Pathfinder fund
- Defra's aims:
 - ***“To improve understanding of how coastal communities can adapt to coastal change, and what the costs and benefits of different approaches are”;***
and
 - ***“To provide practical lessons and examples that can be shared with other practitioners, particularly on community adaptation planning and engagement and delivery of adaptive solutions”.***



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Somerset Pathfinder

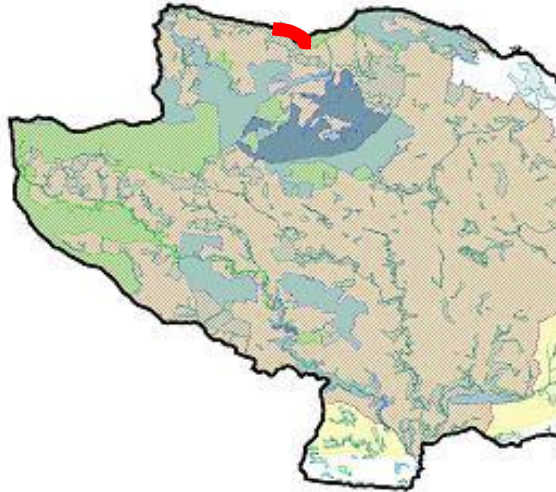
- Led by Somerset County Council on behalf of partner organisations



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Porlock Weir

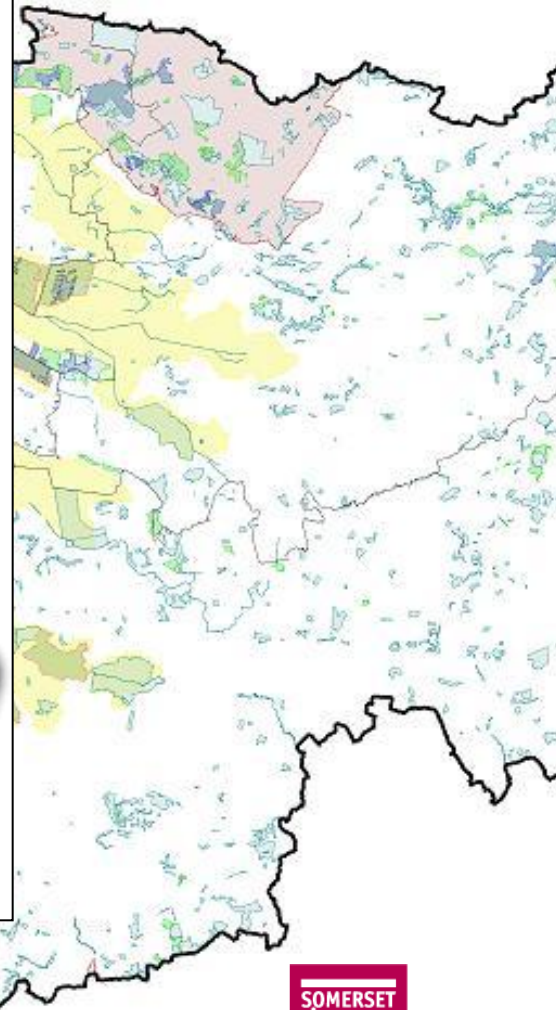


Brean and Berrow



Steart

3



Pathfinder in Practice: Porlock Weir

Flood risk in Porlock Weir



1910



1996

- 16 residential and 12 commercial properties at risk

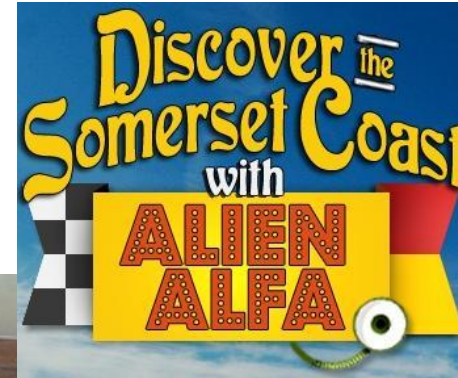
Challenges for adaptation

- Located within Exmoor National Park
- Designated as a Built Conservation Area
- Part of Porlock Manor Estate



Working with the community:

1. Encouraging involvement





1910 - 2000

1910 Great Storm
The west coast of the UK is struck by a devastating storm. Many coastal towns

1920 1950

The Somerset Coastline: A Biography

Explore & contribute to the history of coastal change in Somerset from the Ice Age to the present day.

Discover how the coastline we know today has changed dramatically over the centuries, and continues to change.

Somerset Coastal Change on Facebook

Welcome to Somerset Coastal Change Pathfinder

22 people

The Somerset Coastal Change Pathfinder is a community-led project to help areas most affected by rising sea levels.

The project aims to raise awareness of key issues around coastal change, and to give advice on how you can adapt to the changing environment.

Most of all we want to hear from you about your experiences of coastal change and answer any questions you may have.

A series of consultation events are being held in and around the key areas of Porlock Weir, Stear and Brean and Berrow and you are invited to give your input at these events and on this website.

4 days ago Severn Bore 2011 times:
<http://bit.ly/fPtMeb>
 Are you going? Send us your pics by uploading to Flickr witâ€¦ (cont)
<http://deck.ly/~Pj3bi>

Posted from Twitter

Somerset's Changing Coast
from Kevin Redpath

Somerset's Changing Coast from Kevin Redpath.

NEWS

The future for Porlock Weir

Four years ago the North Somerset and Devon Shoreline Management Plan was updated.

This set out how the coast including Porlock Weir was to be managed over the next 100 years. The adopted policy for Porlock Weir is 'No Active Intervention', which means that no government money from either the Environment Agency or Local Authorities will be invested in flood defences for this section of the coast. As a result, defending Porlock Weir from coastal flooding is up to private landowners and local residents.

John Buttivant from the Environment Agency added "Just because there will be no capital investment in defences does not mean that nothing can be done to help Porlock Weir during times of flooding. For example, an Emergency Action Plan, like the one devised by residents with Somerset County Council and West Somerset District Council for Porlock village, can vastly reduce the damage and disruption caused by a flood. We also offer a flood warning service called 'Floodline' that residents in flood-prone areas can sign up to."

Porlock Weir is quite unusual in being almost entirely owned by Porlock Manor Estate, with the properties in the village being rented to local residents, traders and tourists.

In response to the recent floods, Mark Blathwayt of Porlock Manor Estate said "This is a big blow to the Estate and to Porlock Weir and I am trying to assess what the costs will be to get it back to a position where it will once again be the jewel on the Somerset coast. The damage is much less where I had already taken steps to make buildings more flood resilient by changes to floors and electrical fittings in particular. One cottage has most of its living accommodation on the first floor and this is almost back to normal already."

There will be many people thinking about adapting in the future to deal with increasing risks. Everyone we spoke to is determined to make sure Porlock Weir returns to its position as one of the favourite havens of relaxation in the West Country.

Miller's at the Anchor

Porlock Weir, Somerset



For over 200 years the Anchor has served Porlock Weir's 15th century harbour for sailors, walkers and husbands alike.

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The Exmoor Glass Cranberry Range

From our Science Correspondent



■ The complex low pressure system that caused the wide scale damage across Somerset.

The storm on Wednesday night that caused such devastation in Porlock Weir and many communities on the Somerset coastline, followed a pattern which has become more frequent in recent years. A complex low pressure system moving into Ireland developed a secondary low to the south, which moved from the south west up the Bristol Channel. The pressure chart for 10pm on the 5th February is shown above.

Low atmospheric pressure causes tide levels to rise above those predicted by the position of the moon and planets and Wednesday night's tide surged by over a metre above the level shown in the tide tables for West Somerset. The track of the depression meant that winds which had been from the east for most of the day,

swung to the north-west and reached gale force eight by early evening.

The combination of a surge tide with onshore gales is one which tests the strongest of sea defences and natural shingle ridges such as those in Porlock Bay are particularly vulnerable to overtopping and damage in this type of event.

Whilst there can be no certainty that the storm was a result of climate change, it is entirely consistent with the predictions of rising sea levels and increasing storminess. The tide on the 2nd of February was the highest predicted for 2014 and had the same surge and wave action occurred then, the effects could have been even worse. Scientists generally agree that sea levels will rise by at least 0.4m by 2100 and this will increase risks further.

PORLOCK NEWS

THE Coastal

Friday 7th February 2014

www.somersetcoastalchange.org.uk

No 7

A unique collection of hand picked pastimes, hangings, amigurumi, and french soaps, T. DEAN BOWEN 01372 981754 Fax: 01372 981754

'DEVASTATION'



Porlock Weir hit by massive storm on Wednesday night

Reporter Paul Jones

The idyllic coastal setting that brings thousands of tourists to Porlock Weir each year turned into a scene of devastation on Wednesday night. A storm surge

coincided with high tides and gale force winds to cause flooding and severe damage which has driven local people from their homes.

■ CONTINUED next page

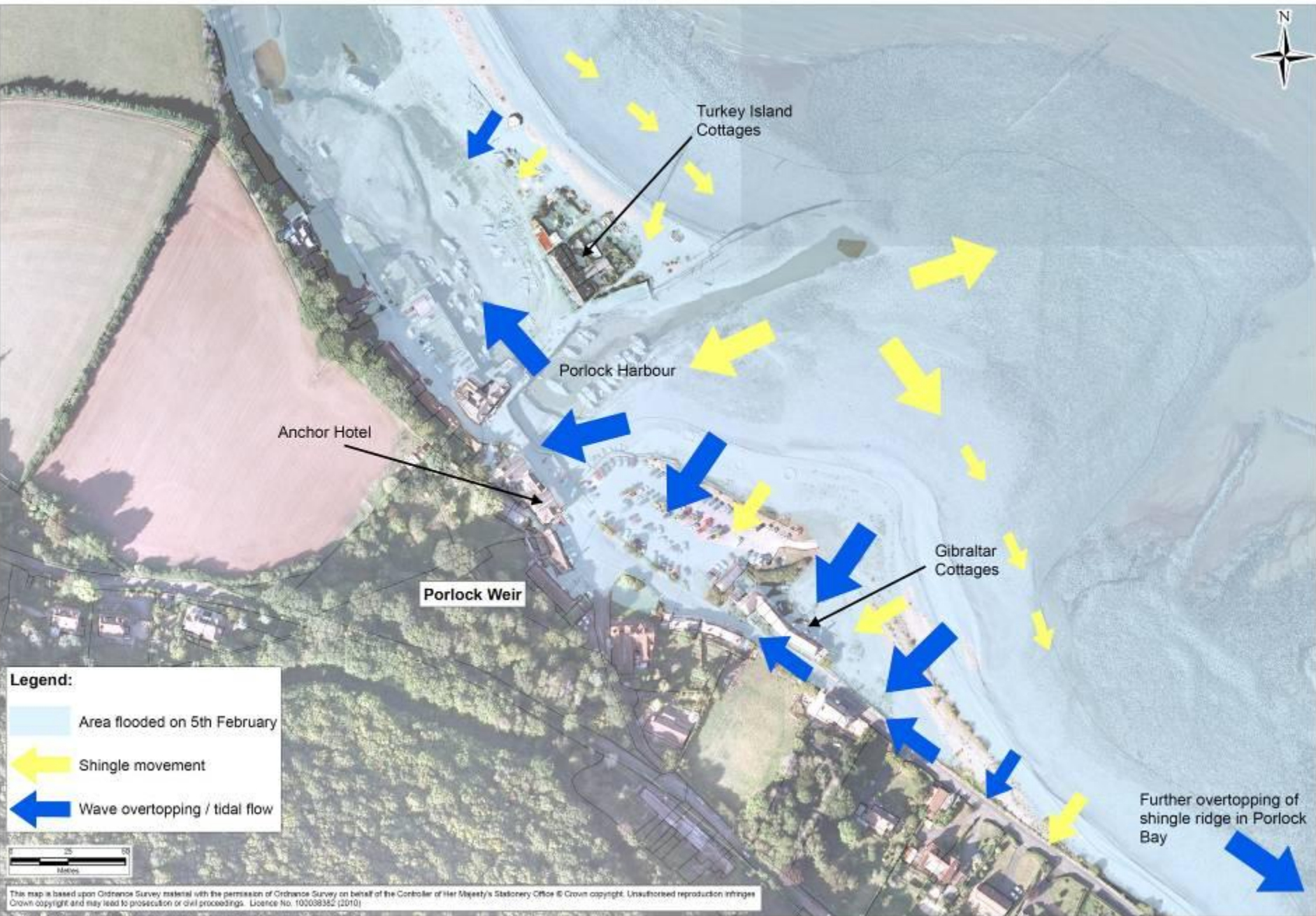
Andrews on the Weir

Restaurant & Rooms

Tel: 01643 863300

info@andrewsontheweir.co.uk





Legend:

- Area flooded on 5th February
- Shingle movement
- Wave overtopping / tidal flow



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Working with the community:

3. Adaptation Action Planning



community flood plan

Parishes and communities working together

Community or group: Address:

Headline contact telephone: With Environment Agency flood warnings, are you registered to receive?

Local flood warning trigger (e.g. when water reaches bottom of the bridge, around door):

Date:

Be prepared for flooding. Act now

- Three drop-in sessions
- Produced an Adaptation Action Plan
- Specific actions identified by the community
- Flood Action Group

Successes and Lessons Learnt



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Lessons Learnt

- Little experience of a severe flood event
- Scenarios are useful tools, but consider how they are portrayed
- Encouraging good attendance at drop-in sessions:
 - Publicity
 - Accessibility
 - Format
 - Provide answers to queries

Successes

- A dedicated Project Officer
- Practical, close-knit community
- Stepped development of Adaptation Action Plan
- Non-technical outputs
- Porlock Weir Flood Action Group is being formed

'Big Society' and Localism

- Reduced sea defence funding can incentivise communities to seek a communal solution
- Local knowledge is essential
- Parish Council play an important role in mobilising community



'Big Society' and Localism

- Inter-community relations promoted
- Use of social media
 - Coastal monitoring programme



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