Working in partnership
The SMP has been prepared by a Client Steering Group (CSG) comprising representatives from:
• New Forest District Council
• Christchurch Borough Council
• Bournemouth Borough Council
• Borough of Poole
• Purbeck District Council
• Environment Agency
Also on the CSG were five associate partners:
• Natural England
• National Trust
• Dorset County Council
• Hampshire County Council
• Poole Harbour Commissioners

The CSG commissioned consultant engineers Royal Haskoning to prepare the SMP. Funding was provided by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

Further information
The SMP (including all supporting documents) is available to download at www.twobays.net. Alternatively, the full SMP document can be viewed at the offices of the relevant councils.

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Details of neighbouring SMPs can be found at:
Selsey Bill to Hurst Spit (North Solent Shoreline)
Lead Authority, New Forest District Council
www.northsolentssmp.co.uk

Durlston Bay to Rame Head
(South Devon & Dorset)
Lead Authority, Teignbridge District Council
www.sdadcag.org

Your future coastline…
We live in a spectacular part of the country that has been shaped by natural coastal processes. The shoreline is constantly changing, sometimes gradually, sometimes dramatically, and these changes have created some of the coast’s most beautiful and important features.

These changes also, however, represent a threat to many of our coastal communities and in the last 100 years attempts have been made to stop the effects of erosion or flooding in order to protect those communities.

The way erosion changes our coast depends largely on geology. Erosion of coasts with harder rocks, such as limestone and chalk, tends to be slower and can form dramatic rock formations over time including tunnels, bridges and stacks such as at Old Harry Rocks.

Where coastal geology is formed out of softer deposits, such as clay, erosional processes can be faster and pose more of a risk for people and property.

Coastal erosion is not always gradual and can occur through events such as landslips, where many metres of land may be lost in sudden dramatic single events.

Rates of erosion are expected to increase by the end of this century because of increasing frequency of storms and rising sea levels, brought about by climate change. This will also lead to an increased risk of tidal flooding to many properties with more frequent and dramatic floods. Protecting coastal communities will become an even increasing challenge.

The predicted future erosion and flooding maps produced as part of the SMP are available in Appendix C, looking at the ‘No Active Intervention’ and ‘With Present Management’ scenarios.

Historical change

The shoreline throughout much of the SMP area has been defended only for the last century or so, therefore the erosion that we see today is nothing new.

Historic photographs document the changes in coastal features such as Old Harry Rocks, Durlston Bay and the landslips around Barton-on-Sea. Records from Christchurch Priory, dating back to the 14th Century, provide evidence of the loss of land to erosion.

Future management of the coast
One of the difficulties facing us as a nation is the economic, social and environmental cost of continuing to protect shorelines to the extent that we do at present.

The development of the adopted SMP policies has taken into consideration:
1. Economic
The equivalent cost of providing coast protection is likely to increase over the next century to between two and four times the present cost. In simple terms this means that either more money needs to be invested in coastal defence, or expenditure has to be prioritised. Implementation of the SMP policies will depend on funding being available

2. Socio-economic
The coast is important for recreation and leisure activities, particularly those that rely on good quality beaches and easy access to the sea. It supports a thriving tourist industry and an increasing number of commercial and industrial interests along the coast. The continuation of these industries is essential to the economy of the region as a whole.

3. Environmental
Coastal management can have a significant impact on geological features, wildlife habitats, coastal processes, landforms and heritage features.

The conservation of these habitats and features in a changing environment remains a key aspect in terms of environmental sustainability.

Future management of the coast must allow natural habitats and features to respond and adjust to change such as accelerated sea level rise. It must also comply with the legislation relating to important conservation designations protecting many habitats within the SMP area.

What happens next?
Putting the plan into practice…
Now the SMP has been adopted the relevant coastal authorities can begin to plan the coastal defence programme, depending on the policy selected for each area, and the availability of funding. Strategy Studies will determine how the policies adopted in the SMP can be put into practice.
**Poole and Christchurch Bays Shoreline Management Plan**

The first Poole and Christchurch Bays Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) was adopted in 1999. Significant progress has been made in the understanding and mapping of coastal processes over the last 10 years, and the 1999 SMP has been reviewed. Work started on the updated SMP in October 2008; a first draft underwent public consultation in Winter 2009 and the final document was published in November 2010. Feedback from roadshows and public meetings helped to shape the final document. Thank you to all who provided feedback on the draft Plan!

**What the plan does**

A Shoreline Management Plan is a strategic document that sets out policies for the management of our coastline and our response to coastal flooding and erosion risk management over the next 20, 50 and 100 years. It provides a large-scale assessment of the risks to people and to the developed, historic and natural environment. It addresses risk in a way that does not tie future generations to costly and unsustainable management, and attempts to balance potential conflicting interests along the coastline. While an SMP provides the framework for future decisions, the implementation of the policy relies on the availability of funding. Planning for the future is vital.

**The area covered by our SMP**

Poole and Christchurch Bays SMP covers the 190km (118 miles) of open coast, harbours, estuaries and headlands between Hurst Spit in the east and Durlston Head in the west. It includes the coastal communities of Milford-on-Sea, Barton-on-Sea, Highcliffe, Christchurch, Bournemouth, Poole, Studland and Swanage.

The coastline covered by this plan is extremely varied, ranging from large urban centres such as Bournemouth and Poole to natural areas that are recognised for their heritage, landscape, geological and biological value. This combination of assets creates a coastline of great appeal and a tourism economy of regional importance.

**SMP policy options**

There are just four generic policy options set out in the Defra SMP Guidance documents (March 2006) and considered by the SMP:

1. **Hold the Line**
   - Defences are maintained and upgraded or replaced in their current position where funding permits.

2. **Managed Realignment**
   - This policy allows realignment (forwards or backwards) of the shoreline with management to control or limit the movement. Any increase in flood risk will also be managed. Although this policy typically applies to low-lying areas at risk of flooding it can equally apply to cliffed areas, whereby cliff recession could be slowed down for a period of time.

3. **No Active Intervention**
   - This is a policy decision not to invest in the provision or maintenance of any defences. Where there are no existing defences, the shoreline will continue to evolve naturally. This policy can also apply to areas that are currently defended but may not be defended in the future. These areas will evolve more naturally, which may include an increased risk of flooding or coastal erosion. It may be necessary to intervene (by removing old defences) in order that a No Active Intervention policy can be implemented.

4. **Advance the Line**
   - New defences are built seaward of existing defences, involving a significant reclamation of land in the process. The policy summary map below displays the policies adopted for individual policy units over the three time periods: present day (0-20 years), medium-term (20-50 years) and long-term (50-100 years).

**The map displays the policies adopted for individual policy units over the three time periods:**

- Present day (0-20 years)
- Medium term (20-50 years)
- Long term (50-100 years)

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