

Channel Coast News

Issue 6 - October 2003

The newsletter for the Southeast Strategic Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme www.channelcoast.org

Introduction

The large attendance at the first programme annual review was a great encouragement to the project team and helped to reinforce the value of the programme to its partners. It was very encouraging to receive positive partner feedback on the programme; some useful suggestions have already been implemented and are highlighted in this issue. The message from the partners was clear - we are making good progress, but the programme is clearly at an early stage of development.

Andy Bradbury - Regional Coordinator

Annual Partners Meeting

More than 60 Partners attended the Annual Meeting on 15 September, kindly organised by Worthing Borough Council. The meeting opened with a brief introduction from the Chairman, Steve McFarland, and continued with a series of short technical talks.

Andy Bradbury began with an overview of the Programme, its aims and objectives, and the way it is administered, and followed this later with the specifics *i.e.* what the Partners can expect from the Regional Monitoring Programme.

Chris Longmire took us through the important subject of contract procurement and explained clearly the UK and EU regulations involved in tendering a contract of this size. Bryan Curtis introduced the Project Board's communications policy and asked all Partners to consider ways to ensure that the information from the Programme reaches those end users who may not have access to the customary forms of dissemination.

Travis Mason illustrated the recent deployment of the WaveRider buoys and gave examples of standard data which will be archived from the wave buoys and tide gauges. More detailed analysis of individual storms can be carried out at the Channel Coastal Observatory, on request. She also highlighted the facility for sending a text message to a mobile phone if the wave height at a given buoy exceeds a given threshold.

The morning session concluded with an open discussion about Partners' concerns and suggestions. The afternoon session took the form of a series of Case

Studies illustrating how the data collected by the Regional Monitoring Programme can be used for coastal management. These were based on several sites in the region where a long-term profile dataset is available.

Dave Harlow showed how analysis of repeated profiles can be used to project forward when recharge might be needed and Jon Clarke showed data from Tankerton to underpin the design of new engineering works, with subsequent cost savings produced by wider groyne spacing. Ian Thomas talked of the role of the Pevensy Coastal Defence initiative and raised some wider issues about the type and quality of data which are needed to make informed management decisions. Andy Bradbury concluded with the application of monitoring data in the design of Hurst Spit, including how the use of modelled wave data was unreliable in areas with complicated bathymetry.

A number of issues were raised by Partners in the discussion periods and are being addressed by the Project Board and Team as follows:

- A non-technical leaflet for Partners to present to Councillors and other interested parties will be produced by December.
- More detail is needed for Partners concerning the analysis of the data *i.e.* volumetric/area analysis, in addition to a timescale for delivery of data after collection. A schedule for data delivery was agreed at the last Project Team meeting and will be disseminated by the area representatives. The definition of the subsequent data analysis will be agreed at a data analysis workshop, which will be organised by the Channel Coastal Observatory in January (details to follow).
- A small handout about the purpose of beach survey, for surveyors/beach engineers to give to the public on request, will be produced by the Channel Coastal Observatory by the end of October (distribution via the usual channels).
- Meetings for operational managers will be organised in four regions.

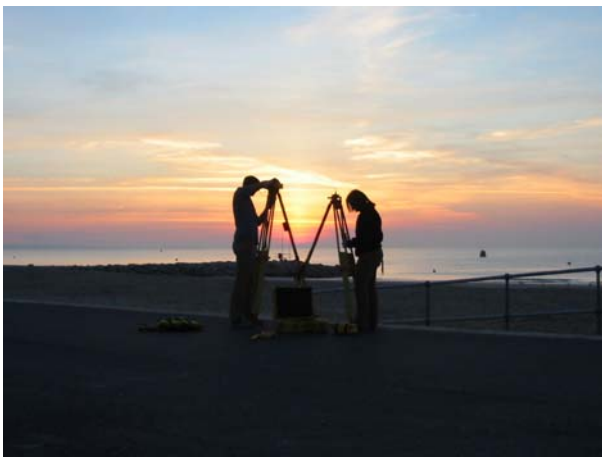
A day in the life of a topographic surveyor

By Francesca Pert & Stuart McVey

It's 4:30am and the alarm is buzzing. Stuart, Duncan and I are meeting at Southampton Oceanography Centre at 5am ready for a day's surveying at Sandbanks, Poole.

Low water is at 07:33 today so the race is on to get to our location and start before waves begin to engulf the beach. We need to take with us two tripods, a GPS base station, 3 pairs of waders, life jackets, detail poles and a camera; which takes all 3 of us, fully laden, to haul down to the Land Rover. The drive to Sandbanks takes 45 minutes and we arrive at sunrise - a stunning sight today.

We set up the GPS base station over our control point at Sandbanks Pavilion and set it transmitting a radio signal. This takes 15-20 minutes. We then initialise and measure on a known point to ensure that the base is set up correctly. Our measured points must not be >30mm different in any dimension from the known point.



Chess and Duncan set up the base station at sunrise

We've decided that Stuart will measure beach profiles perpendicular to the shoreline (15 in total). Meanwhile, Duncan and I walk up and down the 1.2 km stretch of Sandbanks beach measuring every break in slope and, if the beach is flat, a contour every 5m. This procedure is called continuous topographic surveying; we carry a rucksack containing a GPS receiver surmounted by an antenna. Providing we can receive data from at least 5 satellites, the equipment gives us the height of the beach above Ordnance Datum, Newlyn.

The beach at Sandbanks is 85m wide, down to Mean Low Water Springs, which is the seaward extent of our survey. We begin in waders, surveying 6 lines

whilst wading in the sea. Later, we change into walking boots and shorts to escape the sweaty and restricting neoprene. In all, we walk 11 lines each with numerous deviations for structures. This equates to approximately 14km in total, on soft sand - the Sahara beckons.

By 11:30am the three of us have covered every detail of the beach and answered numerous queries from dog walkers and sunbathers as to what on earth we are doing. Amusing guesses are spear fishing, detecting terrorists and searching for treasure.

After a welcome brunch at the local beach café we make our way back to the Oceanography Centre. There we complete the metadata, which records the area surveyed, the surveyors, weather conditions and any equipment faults. All the survey data are downloaded and backed up on the network. Our measured points are checked against the control and any corrections to antenna heights are made before anyone forgets. Finally, we go home for a well-earned rest knowing another survey is safely completed.

Contacts

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