

Solway Firth Partnership

Business Plan 2018 – 2021



Working Together towards a sustainable Solway Firth
Solway Firth Partnership

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1. Executive Summary

This Business Plan sets out a framework for the activities of the Solway Firth Partnership over the period 2018 – 2021. The Plan details the activities of the Partnership by identifying key actions and outlining the current management framework and delivery model by which aims will be achieved. A breakdown of funding requirements is given together with an indication of where funds are to be sought.

Our annual report is published in conjunction with our accounts. All our governing and strategic documents are available on our website:

www.solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk



2. Organisation Details

Company Name: Solway Firth Partnership

Address: Campbell House, The Crichton, Bankend Road, Dumfries, DG1 4UQ

Telephone number: 01387 702161

E-mail: info@solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk

Website: www.solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk

Legal Status: The Solway Firth Partnership is a Scottish Company Limited by guarantee and without share capital under Company Number SC250012 and a Scottish Charity under Scottish Charity Number SCO34376.

The Registered office: Campbell House, The Crichton, Dumfries DG1 4UQ

Objects: To provide a framework for marine planning and management that enables engagement by everyone with an interest in our marine and coastal area.



3. Background

The Solway Firth Partnership is an independent Company Limited by Guarantee and acts as a voluntary coastal management mechanism. The Partnership was launched in 1994 as a response to formal support for integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) from the European Union, UK Government and agencies.

Our Mission Statement

To support a vibrant and sustainable local economy while respecting, protecting and celebrating the distinctive character, heritage and natural features of our marine and coastal area.

Our Vision

- To make a significant contribution to sustainable development and environmental protection through supporting integrated marine and coastal planning and management.
- To provide a transparent, balanced and respected mechanism that supports objective, impartial and evidence based decision making for the local marine and coastal area.
- To provide distinctive input to development of a cooperative network of relationships between everyone with an interest in the local marine and coastal area.
- To provide assistance to coastal communities and businesses resulting in tangible local benefits.
- To promote greater recognition and understanding of the high quality environment, culture and heritage of the local marine and coastal area.



4. Future Focus

Marine Planning

In recent years, marine legislation has been enacted throughout the UK introducing a new system of marine planning. The UK Marine and Coastal Access Act came into effect in 2009¹ and the Marine (Scotland) Act was introduced in 2010². These two pieces of legislation govern marine planning for the Solway Firth given its administrative boundary between England and Scotland. The Solway lies in close proximity to the Isle of Man and Northern Ireland, which have separate systems of marine legislation and management. Wales and Ireland bring further administrative jurisdictions to the Irish Sea making this a particularly complex area.

Marine planning is a central means of achieving shared objectives, in conjunction with other key measures including creation of a marine protected areas network and the development of improved fisheries management. There are significant commitments to mitigate the effects of climate change and a need to find ways in which our local marine environment can contribute to these.

Scotland's National Marine Plan was adopted in 2015 and is currently undergoing a three-year review. It is the framework for all marine activity in Scottish territorial waters, applying to the exercise of both reserved and devolved functions³. This National Marine Plan sets out strategic policies for the sustainable development of Scotland's marine resources out to 200 nautical miles. It is required to be compatible with the UK Marine Policy Statement and existing marine plans across the UK, particularly where there is interaction between England inshore and offshore marine plans and Northern Ireland Marine Plans. Following the Scottish Marine Regions Order 2015, the Solway became one of the 11 Scottish inshore planning regions (0-12nm). In due course, Scottish Ministers will direct the formation of a Marine Planning Partnership for the Solway to produce a regional marine plan under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010.

The development of National Marine Plan interactive (NMPi), a web based Geographical Information System (GIS), provides the public with a wide range of spatial data including all the data from Scotland's Marine Atlas⁴. Solway Firth Partnership will continue to gather data and make this available to the NMPi.

¹ **The Scottish Government** (2014). *UK Marine & Coastal Access Act 2009*. Online at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/marine/seamanagement/marineact/ukbill> [accessed 08/01/18].

² **The Scottish Government** (2015). *Marine (Scotland) Act*. Online at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/marine/seamanagement/marineact> [accessed 08/01/18].

³ **The Scottish Government** (2014). *National Marine Plan*. Online at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/marine/seamanagement/national> [accessed 08/01/18].

⁴ **The Scottish Government** (2014). *Interactive Marine Planning*. Online at: <http://http://www.gov.scot/Topics/marine/seamanagement/nmpihome> [accessed 08/01/18]

The Environment

Areas of the inner Solway Firth are designated both as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the Habitats Directive^{5,6} and a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the Birds Directive⁷ – collectively known as the Solway Firth European Marine Site (EMS). The Solway Firth SAC designation reflects the importance of the site's marine and coastal habitats including merse (saltmarsh), mudflats and reefs. The Upper Solway Flats and Marshes SPA designation recognises the large bird populations that these habitats support, particularly in winter⁸.

Important bird species include Svalbard barnacle goose, pink-footed goose, whooper swan and pintail as well as waders such as bar-tailed godwit, golden plover, oystercatcher, dunlin, knot, curlew and redshank.

A proposed cross-border extension to the SPA is currently under consideration with recommendations due shortly⁹. The qualifying bird species in the Solway Firth marine draft SPA include Annex 1 species: Red-throated diver; Migratory species: common scoter and goosander; Migratory species from the 2001 SPA Review: ringed plover, lapwing, cormorant, herring gull, common gull and black-headed gull. Solway Firth Partnership continues to highlight the bird interest of the Solway and is currently working with Natural England to produce a booklet raising awareness of wading birds and the vulnerability of their high tide roosts to the public.

The estuary is also a Ramsar site¹⁰, as it is an important wetland for overwintering birds and the rare natterjack toad, which is found here at the most northerly point in its range.

The Solway Firth is important for the passage of migratory fish such as sea and river lamprey, as well as salmon and sea trout that the local angling economy depends upon¹¹. The Solway also provides an important nursery area for species including skates and rays.

⁵ **JNCC** (2006). Upper Solway Flats and Marshes – Standard Natura 2000 Data Form. Online at: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/SPA/UK9005012.pdf> [accessed 08/01/18].

⁶ **SNH** (2017). Solway Firth Proposed marine SPA - Supporting documents. Online at: <https://www.nature.scot/solway-firth-proposed-marine-spa-supporting-documents> [accessed 08/01/18].

⁷ **JNCC** (2006). Upper Solway Flats and Marshes – Standard Natura 2000 Data Form. Online at: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/SPA/UK9005012.pdf> [accessed 08/01/18].

⁸ **JNCC** (2006). Upper Solway Flats and Marshes – Standard Natura 2000 Data Form. Online at: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/SPA/UK9005012.pdf> [accessed 08/01/18].

⁹ **SNH** (2017). Solway Firth Proposed marine SPA - Supporting documents. Online at: <https://www.nature.scot/solway-firth-proposed-marine-spa-supporting-documents> [accessed 08/01/18].

¹⁰ **Ramsar** (2015). Upper Solway Flats & Marshes – Ramsar Sites Information Services. Online at: <https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris/341> [accessed 08/01/18].

¹¹ **The Scottish Government** (2013). Chapter 8: Wild Salmon & Diadromous fish. In: Scotland's National Marine Plan. Online at: <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/03/6517/9> [accessed 08/01/18].



In English waters, the first tranche of Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) were designated in November 2013 under the UK Marine and Coastal Access Act. This was a significant step towards creating a network of marine protected areas and an achievement for the conservation of important marine species and habitats.

The only site designated in the Solway was the Cumbria Coast MCZ¹², an inshore site that stretches for approximately 27 km along the coast of Cumbria, extending from south of Whitehaven, around the cliffs at St Bees Head, to the mouth of the Ravenglass Estuary.

A second tranche of MCZs was highlighted for designation in 2016. Allonby Bay¹³, including Dubmill Scar and the offshore area of Maryport Roads, was designated in this tranche.

The Bay contains some of the best examples of honeycomb worm reef in the UK. A third tranche of MCZ's is currently being considered by JNCC and Natural England.

In Scottish inshore waters, the Marine Protected Areas (MPA) network covers approximately 20% of the sea. Sites were designated for nature conservation, demonstration and research or historical reasons¹⁴. The MPA site closest to the Solway is the Clyde Sea Sill which stretches from the Mull of Kintyre to Corsewall Point on the Rhins of Galloway. This site is designated for black guillemot, circa littoral sand & coarse sediment communities, and fronts. Luce Bay and Sands SAC in the outer Solway Firth has been designated principally for its seabed and dune habitats and the species which depend on these places¹⁵.

¹² **DEFRA, JNCC and Natural England** (2013). Marine conservation zone 2013 designation: Cumbria Coast. Online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/marine-conservation-zone-2013-designationcumbria-coast> [accessed 08/01/18].

¹³ **MMO** (2016). Marine Conservation Zone 2016 designation: Allonby Bay. Online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/marine-conservation-zones-allonby-bay> [accessed 08/01/18].

¹⁴ **The Scottish Government** (2015). Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). Online at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/marine/marine-environment/mpanetwork> [accessed 08/01/18].

¹⁵ **JNCC** (2015). *Luce Bay and Sands*. Online at: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/ProtectedSites/SACselection/sac.asp?EUcode=UK0013039> [accessed 08/01/18].

The site was one of nine SAC's in inshore waters which was the subject of public consultation by the Scottish Government in late 2014/early 2015¹⁶ regarding new fishery management proposals. In February 2016, the Scottish Parliament passed spatial measures to regulate fishing in Luce Bay¹⁷. There is a prohibition on bottom-towed fishing (pink hatched), but scallop dredging can continue each year from November to February (in the pale purple areas).

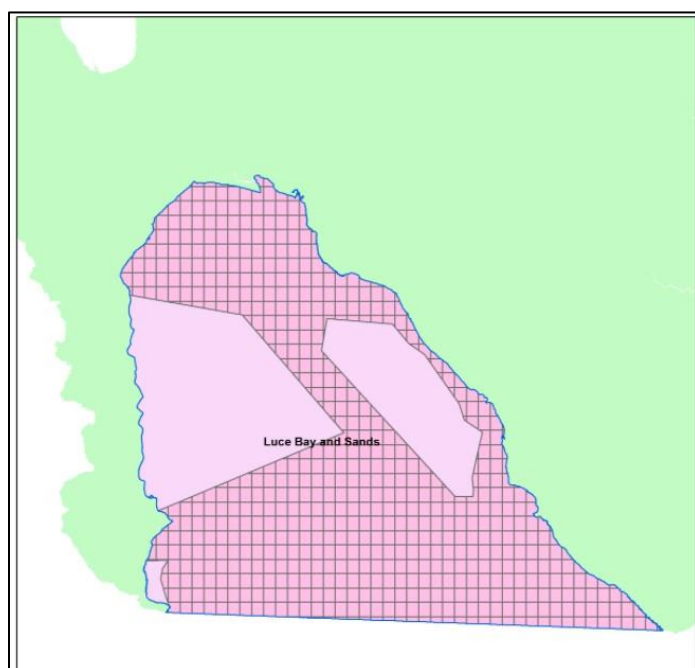


Figure 2: Luce Bay and Sands Fishery Management

European Marine Sites (SPAs and SACs), MCZs and MPAs collectively are intended to form an ecologically coherent network of protected areas across all UK seas.

The Solway coastal lands are heavily influenced by maritime conditions, creating unique and nationally important landscapes. On the south side of the Solway an area is designated as the Solway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)¹⁸ and on the north side there are three National Scenic Areas (NSAs)¹⁹ – the Nith Estuary, the East Stewarty Coast and the Fleet Valley.

¹⁶ **The Scottish Government** (2015). Protected Area G – Luce Bay & Sands SAC. Online at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2014/11/6197/7> [accessed 08/01/18].

¹⁷ **The Scottish Government** (2016) Marine Scotland - Simple guide to fisheries management measure in Marine Protected Areas. Online at <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0049/00493862.pdf> [accessed 08/01/18].

¹⁸ **Landscapes for Life** (2000) Online at <http://www.landscapesforlife.org.uk/> [accessed 08/01/18]

¹⁹ **The Scottish Government** (2014). Countryside and Landscape in Scotland – National Scenic Areas. Online at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/Countryside/Heritage/Areas> [accessed 08/01/18].

Solway Firth Partnership will support work to ensure that MCZ and MPA projects are coordinated across the national boundary. Ways of doing this include provision of information to local stakeholders and cross border consultation on any proposed new sites or changes to the designations of existing sites.

The Solway Firth is part of the Solway Tweed River Basin Management Planning unit for the purposes of implementing the Water Framework Directive (WFD)¹⁸. This placed a duty on the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and the Environment Agency to jointly prepare the first River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) for the Solway in 2009 with the current, second plan having been produced in 2015 for the cycle 2015-2027¹⁹. The process was supported by a Solway Area Advisory Group comprising partners from Scotland and England including Solway Firth Partnership. Solway Firth Partnership continues to provide input on marine and coastal issues to ensure integration between structures for delivering work on WFD and marine planning.



Figure 3: Solway Tweed River Basin District

A small part of the Solway Firth Partnership area is covered by the North West River Basin District (south to St Bees Head) in Cumbria, see Figure 4.

¹⁸ **Scottish Environment Protection Agency** (2015). Solway Tweed River basin District. Online at: http://www.sepa.org.uk/water/river_basin_planning/solway_tweed.aspx [accessed 08/01/18].

¹⁹ **Scottish Environment Protection Agency** (2015). Online at <https://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/water/river-basin-management-planning/the-current-plans/> [accessed 09/01/18].

The plan cycle follows the same timescale as the Solway Tweed with a plan having been produced in 2015 for the second cycle.²⁰



Figure 4: North West River Basin District

Invasive non-native species, known as INNS, have increasingly become an issue in the marine environment, both nationally and locally²¹. These are species which have been intentionally or accidentally released into an environment outside their native geographic range. Marine INNS can be transported in several ways but the most significant method is through shipping by attachment to hulls and in ballast water. The results can be significant, not only in terms of ecological impact but also economically as aquaculture and fisheries can be adversely affected.

²⁰ Defra / Environment Agency (2015) North West River Basin Management Plan. Online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/north-west-river-basin-district-river-basin-management-plan> [accessed 07/03/18].

²¹ Natural England (2016). Investigating the Impacts of Marine Invasive Non-Native Species. Online at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5091100843311104> [accessed 09/01/18].

It can be very expensive to control and eradicate INNS once they have become established. Therefore, it is more cost effective to concentrate efforts to prevent their arrival where possible²².

The presence of INNS can also impact on the status of the water environment and the condition of European Marine Sites, increasing the risk that these sites do not meet their favourable conservation target or the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.

Solway Firth Partnership initially produced a biosecurity plan for the Solway in 2013 which highlighted the issues and sets out actions. The plan has been reviewed and updated, currently at 2018-21 edition²³, and actions will continue to be delivered insofar as resources allow.

Marine litter is a global problem with millions of tonnes of litter ending up in the world's oceans every year. In response to the problem, Marine Scotland have produced A Marine Litter Strategy for Scotland²⁴ which highlights measures and actions to try and tackle the issue.

Solway Firth Partnership share the Scottish Government's vision of a litter-free Scotland²⁵ and have published a Litter Prevention Action Plan²⁶ now displayed on the Zero Waste Scotland Litter Action Plan Portal²⁷. This plan will be reviewed annually to ensure that it fulfils the actions, and to help identify areas where further progress can be made.



²² Williams, F., Eschen, R., Harris, D., Djeddour, D., Pratt, C., Shaw, R.S., Varia, S., LamontagneGodwin, J., Thomas, S.E. and Murphy, S.T. (2010). The Economic Cost of Invasive Non-Native Species on Great Britain. CABI, 1.

²³ Solway Firth Partnership (2018). Marine Invasive Non-Native Species in the Solway. Online at: <http://www.solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk/invasive-non-native-species> [accessed 09/01/18].

²⁴ Scottish Government (2014) Marine Litter Strategy for Scotland. Online at <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2014/09/4891> [accessed 08/01/18]

²⁵ Scottish Government (2014) Towards a Litter Free Scotland: A Strategic Approach to Higher Quality Local Environments. Online at <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2014/06/6565> [accessed 08/01/18]

²⁶ Zero Waste Scotland (2017). Litter Action Plans. Online at <http://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/litterflytipping/prevention-action-plans> [accessed 08/01/18]

²⁷ Zero Waste Scotland (2017). Litter Action Plan Portal. Online at <http://litterplanportal.zerowastescotland.org.uk/Default.aspx> [accessed 08/01/18]

Fisheries

The Solway supports a diverse mixed fishery, resulting in local fishermen targeting a wide range of fish and shellfish species. There are around 80 commercial fishing boats based in Cumbria and smaller numbers working out of Kirkcudbright, Annan and Isle of Whithorn on the Scottish Solway coast. Kirkcudbright is in the top twenty UK ports due to the quantity of shellfish, mainly scallops, landed. The main target fisheries for the larger commercial vessels, based out of Whitehaven and Maryport, is king scallops during the winter and prawns (with a fish by-catch) during the summer. There is also an inshore fishery for the smaller vessels potting for crab and lobster along the coast. Maryport and Silloth host vessels targeting brown shrimps in the Upper Solway and Whitehaven also provides a base for vessels potting for whelks in the Irish Sea.

The Solway is fished by boats from further afield including the Isle of Man, Ireland and larger ports to the north and south such as Girvan and Fleetwood. Additionally, cockles, mussels and winkles are collected from the Solway shores.

Fish processing is carried out around the Solway with processing businesses at Annan and Kirkcudbright, as well as smaller smokehouses on the Galloway coast. The fisheries sector is an important part of the rural economy for the communities of Dumfries and Galloway and Cumbria but is also a primary pressure on the marine environment.



The statutory Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs) operate under the Marine and Coastal Access Act²⁸. The North Western (NW) IFCA jurisdiction extends north to the national boundary in the Solway; its responsibilities include making and enforcing byelaws for the management and conservation of fish and shellfish stocks and conserving the wider marine environment through a 'Set of Principles for Sustainable Fisheries' which were adopted in September 2011²⁹.

²⁸ **IFCA** (2015). DEFRA guidance to the IFCAs. Online at: <http://www.association-ifca.org.uk/aboutus/defra-guidance-to-the-ifcas> [accessed 09/01/18].

²⁹ **North Western IFCA** (2011). Principles for Sustainable Fisheries. Online at: https://www.nwifca.gov.uk/app/uploads/NWIFCA_Adopted_-Principles-for-Sus-Fish_Sept_2011-1.pdf [accessed 09/01/18].

The NWIFCA has a governing Board and fishery officers, scientific staff and administrators work from coastal offices in Whitehaven and Carnforth. The MMO also has a local office in Whitehaven where staff are based.

Scottish Regional Inshore Fisheries Groups (RIFGs) are non-statutory bodies, set up as a pilot in 2013 as IFG's, that aim to improve the management of Scotland's inshore fisheries out to six nautical miles, and to give commercial inshore fishermen a strong voice in wider marine management developments³⁰. In April 2016, the revised format of five RIFGs were established in the North & East Coast, West Coast, Outer Hebrides, Orkney and, Shetland. The RIFGs are now taking forward and developing their respective management plans. The current Chairman of Solway Firth Partnership Board of Trustees, Alastair McNeill, also chairs the West Coast RIFG.

The West Coast RIFG leads on the fishing industry's Code of Conduct in the Solway. Solway Firth Partnership will continue to have active engagement with the West Coast RIFG contributing to consultations on management schemes and marine legislation thereby helping to ensure delivery of local fisheries policy in the north Solway is directly linked to marine planning.

The European Maritime & Fisheries Fund (EMFF) supports the implementation of the EU's maritime and fisheries policies for 2014-2020 with multiple streams of funding available through Marine Scotland³¹ and the Marine Management Organisation³² (MMO). In Dumfries and Galloway a Fisheries Local Action Group³³ (FLAG) assesses projects for the Community Led Local Development Fund. Proposed projects must demonstrate that they will generate benefits to the local community, either through employment or enhancement of the environment. Solway Firth Partnership aims to apply to the FLAG for funding for local strategic projects that will support the local fishers.

The Solway Firth Partnership SMILE (Solway Marine Information Learning and Environment) Project has received support until the end of 2020 from EMFF through Marine Scotland. The project which employs a Project Officer aims to update the 1996 'State of the Solway Review', using innovative communication methods to gather pan-estuary information, learn from stakeholders including fishers and promote a better understanding of the Solway Firth ecosystem. The update is required in the light of new demands made on the estuary's resources and in the context of marine planning.

³⁰ **RIFGs** (2018). Welcome to the Scottish Regional Inshore Fisheries Groups. Online at: <http://ifgs.org.uk/> [accessed 09/01/16].

³¹ **Marine Scotland Grants** (2018). Online at <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/marine/grants-subsidies> [accessed 09/01/16].

³² **MMO Funding** (2018). Online at <https://www.gov.uk/topic/commercial-fishing-fisheries/funding> [accessed 09/01/16].

³³ **LEADER and the EMFF** (2018). Online at <https://www.dgleader.co.uk/about/emff/> [accessed 09/01/16].

Energy

The UK Climate Change Act (2008) set legally binding targets for reducing carbon dioxide emissions: 26% by 2020 and 80% by 2050 compared to 1990 levels³⁴.

The Scottish Government has set a more challenging target of 42% by 2020 through its Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009³⁵. Work is being carried out by the Marine Climate Change Impacts Partnership (MCCIP). This group brings together scientists, government, agencies and NGOs to provide coordinated advice on climate change impacts, adaptation around our coast/seas.

The Scottish Government also has a target of generating electricity equivalent to 100% of Scotland's gross annual electricity consumption from renewables by 2020 (Scotland has already met the 2015 50% interim target), whilst the UK Government has a target of 15% by 2020.

Robin Rigg offshore wind farm which has been operated by E-On Climate and Renewables in the Solway Firth since 2010 was the first offshore wind farm in Scottish waters³⁶. Solway Firth Partnership continues to provide a means of engagement between E-On and local communities through distribution of the EOn Round Robin newsletter as an insert in Tidelines magazine twice yearly. The Partnership also provides administration for the Robin Rigg Community Fund on the Scottish coast.



Solway Energy Gateway Ltd continues to assess the potential for tidal energy generation in the Solway Firth³⁷. To date, an innovative technology - VETT (Venturi-Enhanced Turbine Technology) has been tested on a Cumbrian watercourse and initial research has taken place on the effect of the turbines on fish. The next phase of the work is to carry out a scoping study to look at the planning and feasibility of a new crossing suitable for walkers and cyclists.

³⁴ **Climate Change Act 2008**. (c.27). UK: The Stationary Office.

³⁵ **Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009**. (asp. 12). UK: The Stationary Office.

³⁶ **E.On** (2018). Robin Rigg East and West. Online at: <https://www.eonenergy.com/About-eon/ourcompany/generation/our-current-portfolio/wind/offshore/robin-rigg> [accessed 09/01/18].

³⁷ **Solway Energy Gateway Ltd** (2018). Solway Firth Electric Bridge. Online at: <http://www.solwayenergygateway.co.uk/> [accessed 09/01/18].

Solway Firth Partnership contributes to the cross border Solway Energy Gateway liaison group and ensures the flow of information between sustainable energy regulators/ developers and local communities.

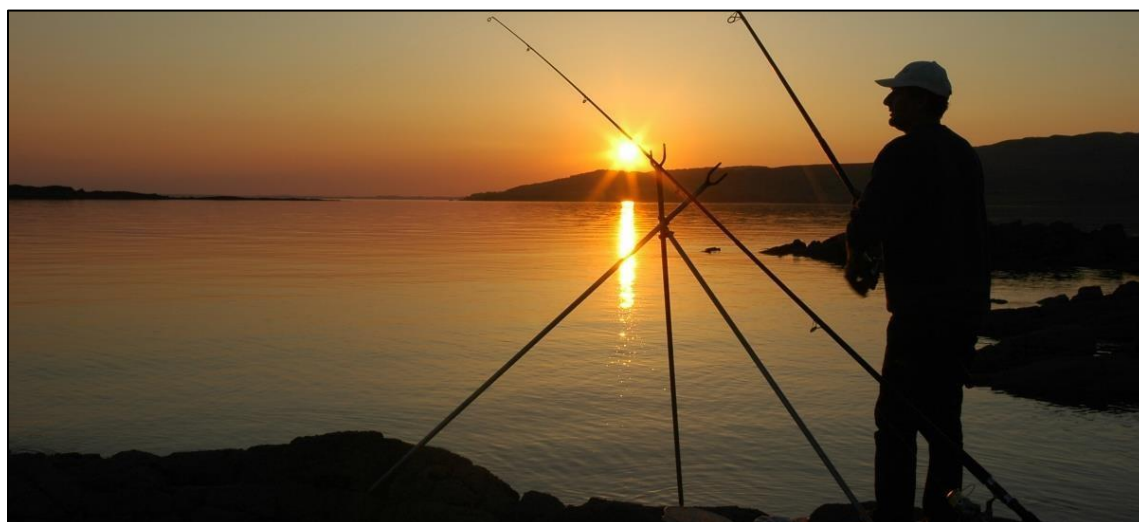
The Partnership works to support a coherent approach across the national border and holistic assessment of Solway wide opportunities as well as potential cumulative impacts of renewable energy developments. The Partnership has facilitated discussion on the development of other renewable energy projects in the Solway through meetings and conference workshops e.g. offshore tidal lagoon (Tidal Electric) and Kite Powered Solutions.

Awareness

Facilitating community engagement, increasing understanding of our natural and cultural heritage, celebrating and promoting the Solway Firth have always formed a core part of the Partnership's activities. The Partnership also encourages engagement in recreational activities such as sailing, kayaking, diving, wildlife watching and coastal walking in and around the Solway.

Good practice is supported by a range of means including promotion of activities and events in E-newsletters and Tidelines magazine which is produced twice yearly and distributed widely around the Solway and beyond.

Recreational sea angling is widely enjoyed on the Solway shores as well as from small boats with several charter boat businesses operating in the area. A variety of species are targeted according to location and time of year including tope, smooth-hound, pollack and mullet. Solway Firth Partnership encourages engagement in angling and has produced webpages promoting responsible sea angling practice and providing local information³⁸.



³⁸ **SFP Website** (2018) Online at <http://www.solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk/recreational-sea-angling> [accessed 10/01/18]

Haaf netting is a traditional and long-established method of fishing for salmon and sea trout in the Solway and is practised on both sides of the estuary. Again, the Partnership has promoted this traditional fishery by producing webpages providing local information³⁹

The Partnership provides advice and equipment to support community beach cleans and promotes the Marine Conservation Society Great British Beach Clean and Adopt-a-beach schemes; Keep Scotland Beautiful Clean up Scotland campaign; and others as they develop. It is anticipated that a project will be developed and funded within the timescale of this business plan to continue raising awareness of the issue of marine litter and plastics / micro plastics in the sea.

The Partnership was successful in a bid to the LEADER D&G programme in 2016 for Solway Coastwise, a three years project that is discovering coastal place names and the stories behind them. Locals are encouraged to share the inspirational Dumfries and Galloway coastline through activities, events, electronic and printed media. The project has published a new Good Beach Guide⁴⁰ and a new Wildlife Guide for the Dumfries and Galloway Coast⁴¹. Future publications include 'Caves and Graves', and 'Tide, Islands and Shifting Sands'.

Solway Firth Partnership is a partner in the Dumfries and Galloway Council led Heritage Lottery Fund Landscape Partnership Scheme focussed on the River Dee catchment including the coast at Kirkcudbright called Galloway Glens. The stage 2 application to HLF, including a SFP project, has been approved. The £60,000 coastal project includes working with volunteers and interpreting the natural, cultural and historic heritage of the Kirkcudbright bay coast.

The Partnership continues to work with Natural England to raise awareness of the special character and species within the Solway Firth European Marine Site (EMS). A guide for the general public will be produced on the bird species within the Solway Firth EMS.

In line with the objective of holding a conference every two years, a joint event with the Solway Coast AONB will be held in Cumbria in late 2018.

Other projects to be developed within the timescale of the plan include the Solway Military Trail and a good beach guide for the Cumbrian Coast.

³⁹ **SFP Website** (2018). Online at <http://www.solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk/haaf-net-fishing> [accessed 10/01/18]

⁴⁰ **SFP Website** (2018). Online at <http://www.solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk/uploads/downloads/New%20Beach%20Guide.pdf> fishing [accessed 10/01/18]

⁴¹ **SFP Website** (2018). Online at http://www.solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk/uploads/Solway%20Coastwise/4538%20WILDLIFE%20GUIDE%202017_web2.pdf [accessed 10/01/18]

5. Action

The Partnership's core activities can be categorised in terms of the following areas:

- Partnership
- Planning
- Environment
- Fisheries
- Energy
- Awareness

The Partnership will pursue its strategic aims and outcomes by taking the actions presented in the table below. Quarterly meetings of the Solway Firth Partnership Advisory Group and regular meetings of the Board of Trustees will review and assess achievements, priorities, developments and potential changes. Actions that are a condition of existing grants, funding applications or a constitutional requirement are shaded blue in the table below.

Activity	Action
Partnership	Maintain regular contact with all stakeholders to support networking especially cross-border
	Facilitate consultation on issues affecting the marine and coastal area and act as an intermediary in conflict resolution
	Hold a conference every two years
	Hold regular management group meetings in compliance with the Partnership's Memorandum and Articles of Association
	Maintain and update the Partnership database and website
	Provide partners with regular updates on key issues through website and E-newsletters
	Attract additional funding to develop the Partnership's capacity
	Manage the Partnership's income and expenditure
Planning	Contribute to development of a Scottish Marine Planning Partnership for the Solway as required
	Gather pan-estuary information, learn from stakeholders and promote a better understanding of the Solway ecosystem
	Work with partners to develop mechanisms to deliver joint planning across national boundaries
	Continue to input to the NMPi with relevant data from the Solway

Activity	Action
	Deliver the three year Solway Marine Information Learning and Environment (SMILE) Project culminating in the production of the 'State of the Solway' Review
	Assist in delivery of the three year MMO Enhancing Stakeholder Engagement Project for the NW Marine Plan area
	Maintain working relationships with marine planning bodies in the Isle of Man and Northern Ireland as well as England and Scotland
	Contribute to the Irish Sea Maritime Forum / Celtic Seas Initiatives
Environment	Contribute to ensuring that conservation objectives for European Marine Sites are recognised and addressed by relevant competent authorities
	Contribute to the conservation of features monitoring within the European Marine Site where resources allow
	Contribute to a review of the European Marine Site Management Scheme if resources allow
	Support integration of the MCZ and MPA programmes and promote understanding and stakeholder engagement with both
	Maintain and develop engagement with all marine recording schemes and centres including the Marine Conservation Society, Cumbria Wildlife Trust, Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre and South West Scotland Environmental Information Centre
	Continue the analysis of coastal and marine biodiversity data availability, accessibility and identify knowledge gaps
	Raise awareness of marine non-native species and complete actions from the Solway Strategy where resources allow
	Raise awareness of the issue of marine litter through website, social media campaigns and participation in national campaigns
	Maintain input to the Solway Area Advisory Group of the Solway Tweed River Basin District and ensure integration with delivery structures for implementation of the Marine Acts
Fisheries	Support consultation on options for sustainable future management of the Solway cockle fishery
	Support cohesion between English, Scottish, Manx and Northern Irish fisheries management regimes
	Support the West Coast Regional Inshore Fishery Group as appropriate

	Develop projects to submit to the D&G FLAG to ensure local opportunities arising from EMFF Axis 4 are maximised
	Contribute to Litter initiatives as appropriate
Activity	Action
Energy	Provide information on climate change and the need for sustainable energy through events and publications
	Provide a means of engagement between existing and prospective offshore renewable energy developers and the local community
	Distribute the E-On Robin Rigg newsletter
	Contribute to the Solway Energy Gateway liaison group
Awareness	Produce and distribute two issues of Tidelines annually
	Update the website regularly
	Produce and distribute regular E-newsletters
	Continue to deliver the Solway Coastwise Project until July 2019, promoting awareness of the D&G coast through place names and oral histories
	Support the development of a Rhins of Galloway Coastal Trail, promoting the regions rich fisheries heritage and marine biodiversity
	Promote good practice and publicise opportunities for marine and coastal recreation
	Investigate coastal projects including the cross-border Solway Military Trail and a Good Beach Guide for Cumbria
	Promote World Oceans Day with appropriate events through the Solway Coastwise Project
	Develop and deliver the 'Kirkcudbright Bay Views' coastal project as part of the HLF funded Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership Scheme
	Issue regular press articles
	Support local action on beach cleans and surveys in line with Marine Conservation Society objectives including lending equipment
	Support opportunities that arise from relevant new initiatives

6. Delivery

Management Framework

The Partnership is constituted as an independent Scottish Charity Limited by Guarantee and operates to a Memorandum and Articles of Association⁴² in compliance with the Companies Acts. The Partnership has an open membership policy, including corporate and individual members, and all are eligible for appointment to the Board of Trustees (Appendix 1 – Board of Trustees). The Board normally meets at least four times per year and directs the work of the Partnership with particular responsibility for financial matters.

The Partnership and Board are guided by an Advisory Group comprising representatives of Corporate Members of the Partnership at an Officer level (Appendix 2 – Corporate Members). The Advisory Group normally meets four times per year and focusses on key issues and developments.

Solway Firth Partnership currently employs a Partnership Manager, Administrator/Finance Officer, Coastwise Project Coordinator, Coastwise Project Assistant and SMILE Project Officer. Staff work closely with the Chairman of the Board of Trustees (Appendix 3 – Meet the team).

Promotion and Advertising

Solway Firth Partnership communicates and engages with the wider community by regular e-newsletters and website updates, Tidelines magazine, meetings, consultation events and the bi-annual conference. The Partnership manages a database of around 1,000 individuals and organisations around the Solway.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of progress on actions identified in this plan are carried out through the Partnership management structure. Minutes of all meetings are recorded. A review of progress on this Business Plan is carried out annually.



⁴² **SFP Website** (2018) Online at http://www.solwayfirthpartnership.co.uk/uploads/downloads/SFP_%20MA_amended_April_2014.pdf [accessed at 10/01/18]

7. Funding

Resources to date

Solway Firth Partnership relies on core funding from Corporate Members who are local authorities or government agencies. The Partnership also benefits from private sector funding from E-ON, specifically for publication and the distribution of Tidelines. The Partnership is very grateful to all those who have provided funding support to date and without whose input the successes described herein would not have materialised.

Core funding

Figures below are based on financial support to date and the best information currently available.

The Partnership carried forward £54,947 of core (unrestricted) funds at the end of financial year to 31 March 2017 (the Annual Accounts for 2017/18 are not yet available). The Solway Firth Partnership's reserves policy is to maintain a sufficient level of resources to enable operating activities to be maintained, taking account of potential risks and contingencies that may arise from time to time such as:

- Shortfalls in income: when income does not reach expected levels as a result of reduced or withdrawn grant support;
- Unexpected expenditure: for example when projects overrun or unplanned events occur.

The general reserve should represent around six months' core expenditure, approximately £40,000, as agreed at the Board of Trustees meeting in September 2014. The Trustees review the policy and progress towards maintaining the target level of reserve annually.

Future funding sources

The Partnership will seek and welcome continued financial support for delivery of all actions from its Corporate Members. Marine Scotland continues to make a funding commitment and the Partnership now has active engagement with the MMO, helping to facilitate stakeholder engagement for the NW marine plan.

Dumfries and Galloway Council have indicated that they will only be able to core fund the partnership until 2019-20. Additional project funding or other sources of funding will be sought to mitigate against this loss of core funding income and these will be identified over the lifespan of the current business plan.

During the lifetime of this plan, future sources of funding from the EU such as the European Maritime Fisheries Fund and the LEADER Programme D&G will no longer be available. The Partnership will continue to monitor the situation and seek funding from outside sources. Heritage Lottery Fund and private trusts will continue to be a source of possible funding.

8. Income and Expenditure

CORE FUNDING			
INCOME	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Marine Scotland, Planning & Policy Dept	38,000	38,000	38,000
EON Climate & Renewables	8,000	8,000	8,000
Dumfries & Galloway Council	6,000	6,000	0
Cumbria County Council	3,850	3,850	3,850
Allerdale Borough Council	1,000	1,000	1,000
Carlisle City Council	750	750	750
Project Fees	6,600	5,180	13,060
TOTAL INCOME	£64,200	£62,780	£64,660

CORE FUNDING			
EXPENDITURE	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Staff Costs			
Salaries and employment costs Partnership Manager 4 days/wk & Admin 2 days/wk	35,500	35,500	35,500
Training	500	500	500
Travel & Subsistence	1,500	1,500	1,500
Total Staff Costs	£37,500	£37,500	£37,500
Operating Costs			
Rent	9,300	9,300	9,300
Contents and employers insurance	1,100	1,200	1,300
Electricity	500	530	560
Telephone/internet/Postage	1,000	1,000	1,000
Stationery & Equipment	500	500	500
IT costs	2,500	2,500	2,500
Meetings & seminars	500	600	500
Conference	2,000	-----	2,000
Legal & accountancy support	2,850	2,850	2,850
Tidelines	6,150	6,300	6,350
Website	300	500	300
Total Operating Costs	£26,700	£25,280	£27,160
TOTAL CORE EXPENDITURE	£64,200	£62,780	£64,660

Project funding

A range of other outputs and activities are enabled by additional grant support for individual projects.

Solway Firth Partnership has a proven track record of maximising the value of core funds by drawing in additional project (restricted funding).

Projects currently being developed and/or delivered:-

Project Title	Status
Solway Coastwise	Being delivered
Solway Marine Information Learning & Environment Project	Being delivered
Solway EMS Interpretation - Bird Guide	Being delivered
MMO Enhanced Stakeholder Engagement	Being delivered
Save the Sparling Project (led by Galloway Fisheries Trust)	Being delivered
Galloway Glens – Kirkcudbright Bay Views	In development
Solway Military Trail	In development
Cumbria Good Beach Guide	In development
Various Solway fisheries projects	In development
Rhins Coastal Footpath (led by DGC)	Supporting



APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Board of Trustees at April 2018

Name	Organisation	Member type
Cllr Anthony Markley	Cumbria County Council	Corporate
Cllr William Jefferson	Allerdale Borough Council	Corporate
Cllr Michael Heaslip (Deputy for Cllr Jefferson)	Allerdale Borough Council	Corporate
Cllr Malcolm Johnstone	Dumfries & Galloway Council	Corporate
Cllr Therese Sidgewick	Carlisle City Council	Corporate
Mr Rupert Shaw MBE	Independent	Ordinary
Mr Charles Edwards	Dumfries Cruising Club	Ordinary
Dr Ann Lackie	Independent	Ordinary
Mrs June Lochhead	Independent	Co-opted
Mr Alastair McNeill	Independent	Co-opted
Mr James Mitchell	Independent	Co-opted

Appendix 2

Corporate Members

Allerdale Borough Council

Annan District Salmon Fishery Board

Associated British Ports

Carlisle City Council

Copeland Borough Council

Crown Estate Scotland

Cumbria County Council

North West Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (formerly Cumbria Sea Fisheries Committee)

Dumfries and Galloway Council

Environment Agency

Marine Management Organisation (formerly Marine and Fisheries Agency)

Natural England (formerly Countryside Agency)

Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Scottish Environment Protection Agency

Scottish Natural Heritage

Scottish Water

Appendix 3

Meet the team

Alastair McNeill

Solway Firth Partnership, Chair
South West Regional Inshore Fisheries Group, Chair
Solway Heritage, Director

Alastair McNeill became Chair of Solway Firth Partnership in 2014. He has been involved with the Partnership since its inception in 1994 and chaired the advisory group from 2003 before becoming a Board Director in 2010.

He had a 40-year career in environmental management, protection and regulation most recently with the Scottish Environment Protection Agency as the Manager for South West Scotland. He has published papers and articles on topics concerning environmental and sustainability issues.

Other current interests include Chair of South West Inshore Fisheries Group since 2013 and a Director of Solway Heritage since 2010.

Clair McFarlan

Solway Firth Partnership, Partnership Manager – 4 days/week

As Partnership Manager with Solway Firth Partnership for the past 4 years and previously as Project Officer for 3 years, Clair has been involved with a wide range of projects and is leading work on stakeholder engagement, marine litter issues and marine invasive non-native species monitoring in the Solway Firth.

Clair represents Solway Firth Partnership on fora including the Solway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Steering Group, the D&G Local Biodiversity Partnership and the Solway Tweed River Basin Area Advisory Group.

In Clair's former position as Ecologist with Solway Heritage, she was responsible for managing projects including Eco-Schools Dumfries and Galloway, The Sulwath Connections Wood Pasture Project and The Dumfries and Galloway Environmental Resources Centre.

Clair has worked in project management, conservation, countryside access, community engagement, environmental education and interpretation for almost 30 years including positions with the Scottish Wildlife Trust, the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Tree Register of the British Isles.

Paul Mackey

Solway Firth Partnership, Administrator/Finance Officer – 2 days/week

Paul, with previous experience as an accountant, manages the day-to-day finances of SFP, is the Company Secretary and prepares the accounts for the Independent Examination by a registered auditor or by the accountant.

Nic Coombey

Solway Coastwise, Project Coordinator – 4 days/week
Project Officer, Solway Firth Partnership - flexible 1 day/week

Nic, a Landscape Architect for over 25 years, has increasingly specialized in the management of heritage projects and spent 13 years as an employee of Solway Heritage nurturing and delivering community aspirations to enhance and conserve the built, natural and cultural landscapes of Dumfries and Galloway.

Solway Coastwise is a project that is discovering coastal place names and the stories behind them. Locals are encouraged to share the inspirational Dumfries and Galloway coastline through activities, events, electronic and printed media.

Morag Walker

Solway Coastwise, Project Assistant – 1.5 days/week
Project Officer, Solway Firth Partnership - flexible

As the Project Assistant for the Solway Coastwise Project, Morag is involved in helping individuals, communities and businesses to get involved in the project. As well as this, Morag helps facilitate training for people to become ambassadors for the coast through a range of workshops, talks, visits and other resources.

Emma Baruah

SMILE Project Officer - Full time

(Solway Marine, Information, Learning and Environment Project)

After completing the SIMCelt Project at SFP, Emma has continued the preliminary background work for non-statutory marine planning in the Solway by updating the 1996 'Solway Firth Review.' Over the next three years, Emma will gather information from a range of stakeholders and information sources to update this book into an online, updatable and interactive format.



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