

Access to the English Coast



The England Coast Path

Gosport to Portsmouth (GPM)



What will the coast path bring...



- Secure, continuous, clearly way-marked, well managed route
- National Trail brand and funding
- Tourists with spending money, International draw
- Reconnecting people with their local coast
- New management of some sites/routes
- A unique and straightforward way to deal with coastal change (roll back)
- The longest continuous coast path in the world

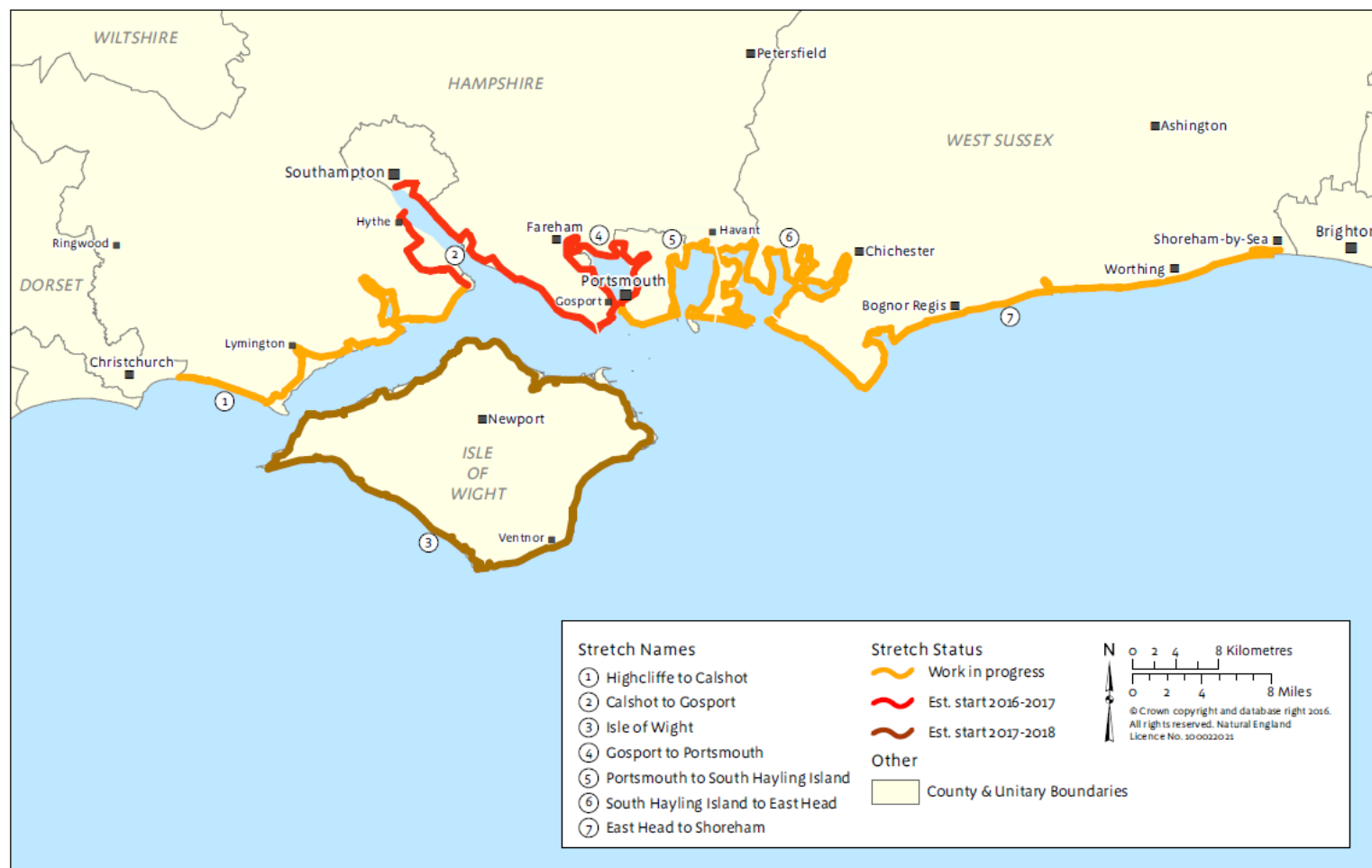
So what is the England Coast Path?

- The **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009**, establishes the *coastal access duty* - to create;
 - a **long-distance walking route** around the English coast, and
 - the **coastal margin**, land beside it, which should be accessible to the public on foot.
- In discharging this duty we follow statutory guidance – the **Coastal Access Scheme**.
- Sets out an approach and ensures that a balance is struck between the interests of those who own the land and the public in having new access rights over the land.
- It also enables us to respond to **coastal change** (*‘roll back’*) and ensures protection of the **natural environment**.

Where we are delivering - locally

Coastal Access Completion by 2020 - Provisional Timings and Stretches

South Hub Team - 25th January 2016





Principles of alignment



- First we align the route of the trail in consultation with owners and occupiers of affected land, identifying the least restrictive option necessary to achieve suitable outcome
 - Adopt an existing PRow or promoted route
 - Adopt a permissive or de-facto walked line
 - Create a fresh 'line'
- Everything seaward of that line becomes spreading room, bar 'excepted land'

Excepted land categories



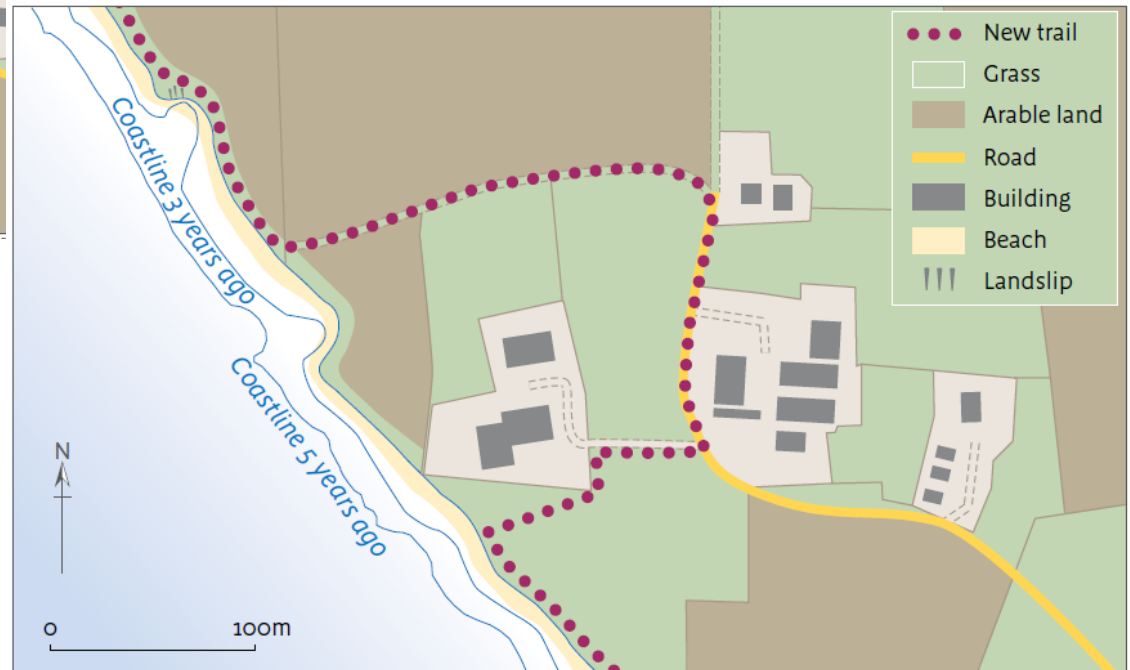
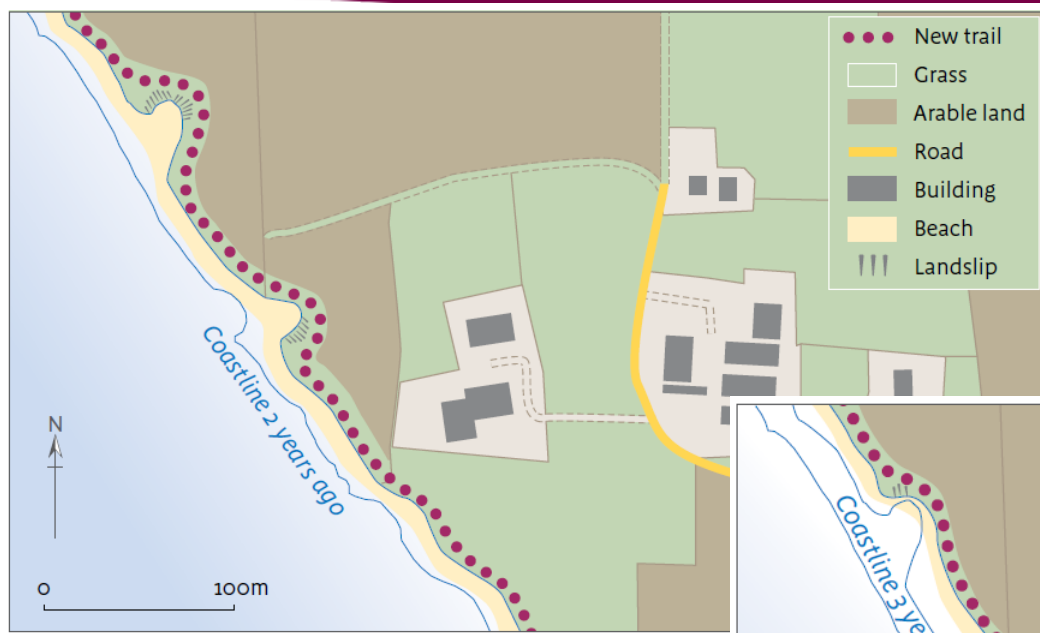
Excepted in full

- buildings, their curtilage, parks and gardens;
- land used for the purposes of a railway, racecourse or aerodrome;
- land used for statutory undertaking, although not flood defences;
- school playing field or associated land;
- land in use for mineral extraction;
- MOD land subject to byelaw; and
- land which is, or forms part of, a highway.

Excepted, but legislation allows for a route (only) to be proposed:

- arable land;
- golf course;
- a regulated caravan or camping site; and
- burial grounds.

Roll back – repositioning the trail due to coastal processes



Balancing public & private interests



Public interest

- Proximity of the trail to the sea
- Views of the sea from the trail
- Safety and convenience
- Continuity of the trail

Private interest

- Operational needs
- Income
- Privacy
- Changes of use

- Enjoyment and protection of the natural environment
- Responsiveness to coastal change – ‘*roll back*’

Access and Sensitive Features Appraisal

- Developed an Access and Sensitive Features Appraisal (ASFA), incorporates Habs Regs Assessment (HRA), extended to SSSI and EPS
- Ensures consistency of approach and compliance with all legal requirements
- Iterative approach to developing proposals...
 - identifying sensitive features and locations e.g. roost sites
 - Identifying existing use (patterns/frequency) and management on sites
 - identify avoidance measures (trail location)
 - mitigation and management as necessary and to the level that's necessary – least restrictive option
- 'Access & Nature Conservation Review Panel' to give advice for controversial cases

Some available management measures...

Least Restrictive



Most Restrictive

- Trail location
- Signing, waymarks and guide posts
- Mown surfaces
- Interpretation boards
- Natural barriers – vegetation, screening inc. temporary fencing
- Guide fencing or permanent fencing
- Direction to restrict access, temporary, seasonal, area based e.g. dogs on leads between dates
- Direction to exclude access, temporary or permanent, area based

Management and Maintenance

- Natural England will work on the proposals with the Access Authority and other key stakeholders.
 - Will have MOA in place with Access Authorities asap.
 - Can delegate to NPA or other body – offer/ask
- Once the ECP has been established, responsibility for its maintenance sits with the Access Authority who will be required to:
 - Deliver a well maintained trail
 - Undertake a survey not less than every 3 years and report on the condition of the route and any issues over its alignment.
 - Fulfil specific grant conditions for reporting and claiming.
 - Fulfil the National Trail and ECP quality standards.
 - Demonstrate match funding at a minimum agreed ratio (local contribution: NE contribution).

Reduced liability and future management



- Areas of land covered by the trail and/or spreading room attract **reduced occupier liability**
- Landowner cannot be sued for accidents involving natural or man made features on land covered by coastal access rights
- The Access Authority is responsible for the ongoing management of the England Coast Path National Trail.
 - National Trails funding available to assist.

Developing the Coast Path



Stage 1: PREPARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Define extent of coastal stretch, in discussion with local access authorities ■ Ask key organisations about their ideas and concerns for this stretch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Initial look at any issues for key sensitive features ■ Assess problems, opportunities, constraints ■ Consider existing access patterns and early route options
Stage 2: DEVELOP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contact owners of relevant land ■ Do alignment checks on the ground ■ Share our initial thinking with owners and occupiers and offer to 'walk the course' with them if they wish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Plan protection of key sensitive features ■ Talk further to key interests as necessary ■ Reality check our developed proposals
Stage 3: PROPOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Finalise our proposals and associated maps ■ Publish them in a statutory report to the Secretary of State (SoS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Invite any representations on our report from anyone who wishes to comment ■ Invite any objections to our report from owners or occupiers of affected land
Stage 4: DETERMINE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Receive any representations or objections ■ Forward or summarise them to the SoS together with any comments by us 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Appointed person adjudicates on any objections and advises SoS ■ SoS decides whether to approve our proposals, with or without modifications
Stage 5: OPEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Establishment works done on approved stretch after discussion with those owners ■ Any agreed restrictions or dedications implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Approved map published ■ Order brings new public rights into effect ■ England Coast Path now exists on this stretch