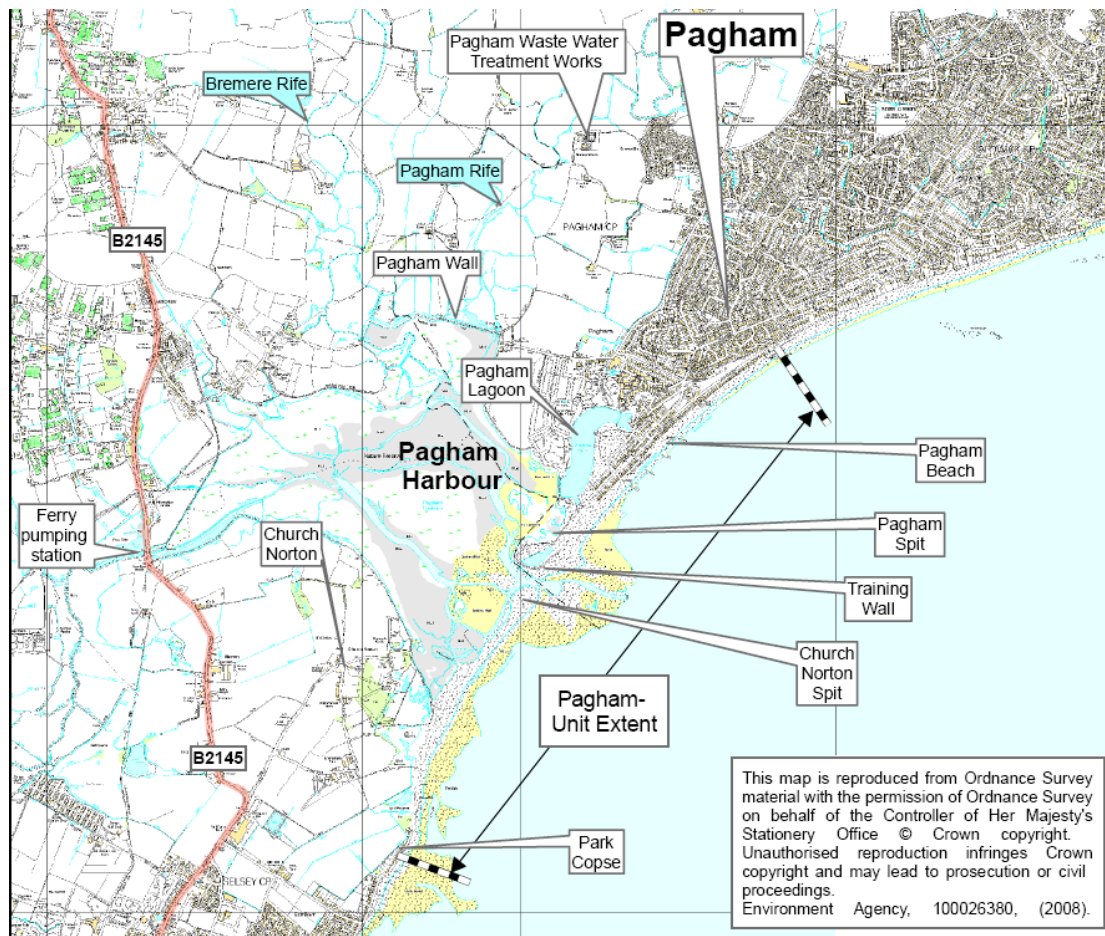


Frequently Asked Questions – Pagham

1) What areas of coastline are covered in the Pagham Harbour frontage and who is responsible for them?



Section 6 of the draft Pagham to East Head Coastal Defence Strategy outlines the extent of the Pagham frontage. On the open coast, this unit of the strategy extends from the northern end of Park Copse at Selsey to the Parish boundary near the eastern end of East Front Road at Pagham as shown on the map above.

Responsibility for setting and implementing policies for managing flood and erosion risk on the coast and inside Pagham Harbour is split between the three strategy partners::

- Arun District Council manages the risks at Pagham Beach on the open coast in front of East Front Road and West Front Road, Pagham;
- the Environment Agency manages the risks within the harbour and the spits around its entrance on the open coast;
- Chichester District Council manages the risks from Park Copse for a quarter of a mile to just past the last groyne at the start of the Church Norton spit on the open coast.

2) Why were these particular boundaries chosen for the Pagham Harbour frontage?

We had previously treated this area as three separate frontages: Pagham Beach Pagham Harbour and Church Norton. We have joined these together in the draft strategy because actions on any part of this unit can affect the risks of flooding and erosion to the whole of the coastline and inside Pagham Harbour. Therefore we have integrated this into one single unit.

3) What does the 'adaptive management' option mean at Pagham Harbour and how might it be carried out?

We have defined Adaptive management as managing complex coastal areas by monitoring changes and acting on them in a planned but flexible way, increasing our understanding over time. At Pagham, we recommend that a group is set up to agree an Adaptive Management Plan as soon as practically possible. This group would be set up by Arun District Council and could include representatives from the three Strategy partners, West Sussex County Council, Parish Councils, Natural England and major land owners.

The Adaptive Management Plan would define a range of possible actions (such as moving shingle or repairing existing defences) and what would prompt them to be done. Risks of flooding and erosion will be considered alongside the Harbour's nationally and internationally important conservation interests.

The management plan will need to consider (but not be restricted to) the following:

- a) studies and further analysis – to improve the understanding of the area;
- b) monitoring and analysis – to identify any changes in risks and understand the effectiveness of the management activities undertaken;
- c) emergency protocols – to enable works to manage risks if required at short notice, potentially in reaction to storm events.
- d) possible management activities. These may include
 - i) beach management activities – the recycling or placement of shingle to maintain beach levels in areas at risk;
 - ii) maintaining an entrance to Pagham Harbour – measures to maintain the harbour as a tidal system with the flow coming in and out. This may require the creation of a new channel if the existing one closes.
 - iii) inner Harbour defences – consideration of new or improved flood defences to manage flood risk inside the harbour as sea levels rise over time.

5) What other flood and erosion risk projects are going on nearby and how do they link to the draft strategy?

The Environment Agency and Arun District Council are working together to produce the River Arun to Pagham flood and erosion risk management strategy. This neighbouring strategy area extends from the east of Pagham to the River Arun at Littlehampton. The draft strategy recommendations are due for public consultation in late 2008. The Pagham Coastal defence Issues Study, commissioned by Arun District Council is also ongoing (see specific FAQ on this study).

What is the “Pagham Coastal Defence Issues Study”

The Pagham Harbour area is a complex inter tidal system that is changing frequently, therefore it is hard to quantify. Recently, the shingle spits at the mouth of Pagham Harbour have grown in size considerably and have caused concerns over flood and erosion risks to people at Pagham Beach. Arun District Council have commissioned a study to better understand the potential risks posed by these changes and identify the best way to manage them.

A report is due by the end of August 2008 with draft recommendations. The final report is due at the end of November 2008. The report will define what should be done at Pagham Beach and the entrance to Pagham Harbour. The recommendations will be taken on as part of the adaptive management approach by the proposed group who will work towards implementing them at the end of summer 2009.

How will the results of the study be communicated?

The outcomes of the study will be communicated via a newsletter that will be distributed widely through community representatives in the area including Pagham Parish Council.

5b) Why is Arun District Council developing an emergency plan for Pagham Beach?

Pagham Beach is in a coastal location and is exposed to tidal flood and erosion risks. We can reduce these risks by management actions but cannot remove them completely.

The Local Emergency Plan (LEP) has been developed by Arun District Council with the emergency services to deal with a significant flood event that could result from a breach in defences or flooding in the area. The District Council is doing this to fulfil responsibilities to ensure that effective plans are in place to manage emergencies and support and care for communities if they happen. The emergency plan does not mean that we expect a breach to happen this winter. However it ensures that preparations are put in place by the District Council and emergency services in case such a breach does occur.

How do the Local Emergency Plan and Pagham Coastal Defence Issues Study relate to the consultation on the draft Pagham to East Head Coastal Defence Strategy?

The Pagham Coastal Defence Issues Study and the Local Emergency Plan are being coordinated by Arun District Council in response to the coastal erosion problems that have made houses and people at Pagham Beach vulnerable. The plan and study are being coordinated by Arun District Council separately from developing the Coastal Defence Strategy and cover the area at Pagham Beach and its urgent problems in more detail than the strategy can.

Both are in line with the adaptive management approach that is recommended in the draft strategy.

6) Why is there fencing on Church Norton Spit?

Pagham Harbour is internationally designated because of its importance for nature conservation. Breeding little terns at Pagham are a feature of this Special Protection Area. The fencing at Church Norton Spit is temporary and has been erected specifically to protect little terns whilst they are nesting on the shingle.

The sole purpose of the fencing is to protect the tern nests from being accidentally trampled or disturbed by beach users. The fencing should not prevent any shingle being moved outside of this year's little tern breeding season and does not inhibit access along the beach to the end of the spit.

The Local Nature Reserve erected the fencing to fulfil their obligations to conserve this special area. Once the young terns and other ground-nesting shorebirds have left their nest and fledged, the area will be reopened to the public and the notices will be removed. This should take place by the end of August.

6b) Could nature conservation designations prevent essential flood risk management work at Church Norton spit?

There should not be a conflict between the nesting terns and flood risk management at Church Norton Spit if it is considered carefully.

Natural England, the Government's advisor on nature conservation, has a statutory (legal) duty to ensure that any effect on the special conservation interests are taken into account when plans or projects are proposed. Each proposal will be considered individually and on its own merits.

Natural England is involved in the steering group for the Pagham Coastal Defence Issues Study and will guide Arun District Council and the adaptive management advisory group on nature conservation issues throughout the process.

We can not pre-empt what the issues study will conclude. However, if it does conclude that a replenishment of the beach at West Front Road using shingle from the end of the spit is needed, Natural England believes that a solution could be found. This would involve removing shingle from the recently deposited sections of the spit and would not have a significant impact on the nesting little terns.