

'Diverse, distinctive and determined'



North East Vision

The vision for the north east marine plan areas in 2041

The north east marine plan areas are distinctive for their beauty, tranquillity and sustainable productivity. Pristine sandy beaches, together with rich cultural heritage and biologically diverse seas support a growing tourism and recreation sector.

The industrial heritage of the Durham Coast, and rivers Tyne, Tees and Wear continue to provide a range of cultural opportunities which contribute towards the health and well-being of local communities. The increase in local employment has improved the retention of talented and trained employees within the marine industry. Geologically-diverse shores of North Yorkshire support habitats for seabirds who breed on the rugged cliffs and feed in the shallow waters.

A long established network of marine protected areas continues to provide sanctuary for birds and sea life across the plan areas.

How will the north east marine plan areas look in 2041?

Marine Industry

Marine development and activities are thriving with both large industries and small businesses benefitting from sustainable economic growth. Job security has improved and the increase and diversification of employment has resulted in the retention of qualified employees. Building on the success of the oyster farm at Lindisfarne, the north east continues to develop successful aquaculture initiatives to increase and diversify employment in small coastal towns and sustainably meet the needs of a growing population.

The sustainable development of ports and harbours has opened trade to other countries and improved knowledge and appreciation of the coast via the development of visitor centres such as Seaham Harbour. This has resulted in an economic boost as well as increased health and wellbeing benefits. As a result of the innovative Blyth offshore demonstrator site, the north east now has a diverse offshore energy industry, creating more jobs within the area. Pioneering new technologies such as kites, tethered turbines and floating wind are now in use. This allows renewables to extend beyond the limit of the continental shelf into deeper waters. Advancements in carbon capture storage has significantly aided the north east's commitment to reduce carbon output whilst also creating new industry opportunities in the plan area.

Marine Environment

Through twenty years of management favourable conservation status has been achieved within the many marine protected areas within the north east marine plan area. This includes but is not limited to Flamborough Head SAC, Runswick Bay MCZ, Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC and Farnes MCZ. Furthermore, non-designated areas beyond these marine protected areas have been enhanced due to more responsible developments within the area. A well-connected network of marine protected area combined with the management of non-designated areas has ensured the protection of birds, mobile species, habitats and geographical features within the north east marine plan areas. Awareness raising has increased the environmental responsibility to reduce litter within the plan areas.

Strong working relationships between marine and terrestrial authorities has assisted protected estuarine sites such as the Tees Estuary SPA, a leading example of how industry and environment can co-exist.

The fishing industry is benefiting from schemes such as the Amble lobster hatchery to help boost lobster populations. The community support for local fishermen and locally caught produce has increased through the work of local initiatives such as the Northumberland seafood centre and via increased awareness of food miles and the benefits of buying locally. Reducing the pressure on commercial stocks and diversifying the fishing industry has created new opportunities for coastal towns. The threat of non-native species populations from aquaculture development and other sources such as shipping have been minimised and are well controlled using appropriate bio-security measures.

Tourism and Recreation

Sustainable tourism has been supported by the coastal community fund provisioned for the regeneration of seaside towns. This has stimulated economic growth in the north east whilst providing a wealth of social and environmental benefits. Hartlepool has established its investment in innovative engineering as well as supporting its industrial heritage.

The north east's natural beauty and cultural heritage is driving tourism in the plan area. Increased knowledge is encouraging the protection of these natural and historic assets. Northumberland's unique character continues to attract tourists to enjoy both the natural wonders it has to offer and the cultural heritage it contains. Initiatives promoted by the Durham heritage coast has increased diversification of recreational activities. Increased access to the coast has drawn in recreational users such as kayakers and surfers. This has provided a wealth of social benefits such as increased wellbeing and a greater connectivity to the marine area. Sunderland and South Shields have continued to maintain their coastal towns by enabling sustainable development and ensuring safe, clean beaches for locals and tourists to enjoy. Regular coastal events such as the Sunderland airshow and the illuminations continue to attract tourists from across the country.

The integrated management of European Marine Sites across the north east plan areas has promoted sustainable eco-tourism. This has provided an opportunity for visitors to view the spectacular congregation of birds as well as the occasional marine mammal.