

'England's Ocean Peninsula'



South West Vision

The vision for the south west marine plan areas in 2041

The south west plan areas are distinctive for the prevalence of fishing, tourism and recreation activities in a traditional and quintessential maritime setting. To the west and south of the plan areas, commercial fishing, tourism, defence, port development and harbour regeneration supports a strong maritime economy which encourages economic growth. To the west, growth of renewable energy opportunities have been realised throughout the south west. marine plan areas The diversity of habitats and species are protected and enhanced and managed as one ecosystem across boundaries and borders. The AONBs and National Parks continue to protect local wildlife and cultural heritage as well as enhancing the outstanding beauty of the South West. A network of Marine Protected Areas has recovered and continue to be valued and protected. The Isles of Scilly archipelago with its extensive environmental protection covering the islands and their surrounding reefs continues to flourish. The Isles have seen an increase in economic activity thanks to an increase in biodiversity and innovative development.

How will the south west marine plan areas look in 2041?

Marine Economy

Marine sectors, particularly commercial fishing, aquaculture and port operations, show increased resilience, diversification, and adaptation to new opportunities, including new sustainable fisheries. Smaller and more vulnerable harbour communities support diversified, profitable marine businesses, including growth of sustainable commercial fishing and recreational angling. Employers are taking advantage of local marine skills and essential coastal infrastructure is in place or safeguarded. Emerging industries, such as seabed mining and potential expansion of marine aggregate extraction, are being managed sustainably, supported by sustainably expanded port operations such as Avonmouth and Falmouth. Water quality has improved, allowing more opportunities for aquaculture production and recreational activities. Sustainable tourism and recreation, such as boating, angling and surfing, contribute to a thriving economy. Projects such as explorethesevern promote the economy towards an extended tourist season beyond traditional boundaries and locations.

Marine Environment

By 2041, the marine and coastal environment of the south west plan areas is being conserved and enhanced. Authorities and NGOs such as the RSPB are working together to successfully apply a single ecosystem approach to ensure the conservation, enhancement and increase of the natural environment and ecological communities. Fish and shellfish populations are healthy; nursery and spawning functions are improved and resilient and invasive species are well managed as biosecurity plans have been implemented across the south west. Improvements in sustainable access have reduced the impacts on birds, fish, cetaceans and seals from pressures such as disturbance, pollution, and underwater noise. Initiatives such as Plastic Free North Devon, ReFILL Cornwall and Litter Free Coast and Sea will mean beach litter and marine plastics are significantly reduced through a combination of better controls and increased public awareness. The importance of the marine environment in mitigating the impacts of climate change is appreciated such as the use of saltmarsh in North Devon. European protected sites are flourishing in Devon and Cornwall and prominent features including, but not limited to, seagrass beds are prominent and fully restored.

Social

Those who live, work or visit the plan areas continue to appreciate the unique sense of place and the cultural, environmental and historic landscapes which define the uniqueness of England's South West peninsula and Severn Estuary. Community cohesion has been enhanced as residents and visitors are able to fully appreciate and benefit from the social and cultural heritage of the plan areas. The health and well-being of communities in the south west plan areas has been enhanced through a better appreciation of, and improved public access to, the coast such as at the harbour development at Lydney. Existing sectors including ports, defence, tourism and recreation continue to be major employers in the area. Development of some seaside towns has helped attract investment for regeneration, increasing sustainable tourism and recreational activities and stimulating local economies. There is greater public awareness of the role of the seas in mitigating the effects of climate change. Initiatives such as the proposed National Marine Park in Plymouth has increased ocean literacy and community involvement in marine conservation.