

JUDITH + foto

MINSMERE LEVELS STAKEHOLDERS GROUP

Notes of a meeting held at 1 Old Store Gardens, Eastbridge
10 May 2008

Attended by:

John Keeble (Convenor)
Jon Swallow
David Robb
Pauline English
Janet Lister
John Rea Price (Secretary)

1. **Apologies and group membership.** Apologies from Judith Croton and Tish Tucker. Tish had informed us that pressure of work meant that she felt that she had to withdraw from the group, though would continue as a supporter. It was agreed that Steve Brett would approach Nat Bacon of Theberton Hall Farm as a replacement.
2. **Minutes of the Meeting** held of meeting held March 30 2008 was agreed.
3. **Matters Arising** Jon has reminded us that we need to follow up outcomes of the consultation on behalf of the RSPB that we attended at Westleton, and also that a date needs to be fixed for Steve's guided tour of the marshes.
4. **Public Meeting 11 April.** Jon Swallow reported from his notes. Over 60 people had attended and the response, with about 30 having signed up as having a continuing interest, had generally been very positive. David Robb had set out the local situation and issues very clearly and succinctly, as had Adam Rowlands in an informative talk from the RSPB perspective. David Andren had possibly spoken at rather too great a length, which perhaps accounted from the later reaction of some attending that the MLSG concerns was primarily with coastal defences, rather than inland water and flooding. The subsequent discussion had been lively and engaged, it was good that the important, but for MLSG, subordinate issue' of new development at Sizewell was only raised towards the end of the meeting. It was noted that the acoustics for those at the end of the hall had been poor and this would have to be taken account of at a future meeting.
5. **Report on contacts made and future programme of work.** David reported that he had circulated all relevant agencies with an account of the public meeting and a number of positive responses had been received.
 - **Inland Water.** David Robb reported that Adam Rowlands, RSPB, had been nominated by DEFRA as the representative of the landowners of the Minsmere Levels to serve on the new East Suffolk Internal Drainage Board (IDB) for the first year. Thereafter elections would be held. Adam had made it clear that he would seek to represent the interests and concerns of

Minsmere Levels Stakeholders' Group The initial meeting had been held the previous week, and appeared to have been largely a matter of the new representatives getting to know each other. As of then, the newly appointed District Engineer to the Board had not himself visited Minsmere; however both David and John RP had had very positive responses from Ian Hart indicating that he would want to work closely with MLSG and that he was shortly to visit Minsmere for the first time. David would keep in close contact with Adam to ensure that MLSG as fully informed of progress.

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- **Role of the Environment Agency** in relation to the Minsmere River and Sluice. It was noted that remedial work on the sluice had been completed the day before the MLSG public meeting (!), and seemed to have resulted in a considerable improvement. However, we remained concerned whether the depth of the river which resulted from the annual excavation permitted a sufficient water flow
- **Coastal Protection.** David reported that Black AND Beach Consultants were charged with producing the Minsmere component of the Shoreline Management Plan. A first draft of this should appear in the late summer, and this would no doubt raise important issues about the future management of North Marsh. A likely complexity is that most of the small area land most immediately affected is owned by the National Trust, whilst the larger area adjacent to it belongs to RSPB. It was agreed that MLSG has to be very vigilant in watching for the appearance of this report, and then be ready to come forward with an early response.

John RP had received that morning an invitation from Terry Oakes Consultants on behalf of Suffolk CC to a conference on June 14 at Southwold on Suffolk Estuaries and Coast. It was agreed that John K and David would represent MLSG

6. **Newsletter and next public meeting.** It was agreed that there was a need to ensure that MLSG maintained the interest and attention of those who had indicated their continuing interest at the meeting on 11 April. It was agreed that a newsletter should be produced, and David agreed to start of work a first draft. It was agreed that this should announce a further public meeting and Friday 18 July was identified as the most suitable date. John K would check that the public hall was available and report back to John RP
7. **Financing Minsmere Levels Stakeholders' Group** It was agreed that the newsletter should invite those who had expressed an interest to contribute an annual subscription of £5. John RP would seek to open a bank account with the Norwich and Peterborough with John K and himself as signatories. John RP would, for the time being, combine the role of secretary and treasurer.

8. **Date of the next meeting**

4pm Saturday 21 June 2008
1 Old Store Gardens