

Coastal Gateway Visitor Action Plan 2021



Background

This Action Plan builds on the work undertaken to address the pressures experienced at the Sefton Coast Gateways in 2020, arising from the popularity of those locations and the added pressures caused by restrictions on travel and holidays outside the UK, school and business closures etc. due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Whilst the government have announced a Roadmap for the stepped easing of restrictions, including the removal of most measures from June 21st, 2021 (subject to data at the time) there is no guaranteed date for completion of the “whole-population” vaccination programme. At the same time, restrictions and/or the additional cost of foreign travel may also lead to a continued reliance on UK visitor locations, including Sefton’s Coastal Gateways. It is therefore considered sensible to expect another busy, potentially problematic summer.

The Council therefore continues to plan for similar issues that arose in 2020 and to implement a mix of measures, providing longer-term benefit from the investment required, where possible, but recognising the need for some short-term and temporary measures.

As in 2020, the 2021 Action Plan will be guided by the following Principles/Objectives:

- *Clear Communication Messages* – discouraging visitors to these locations and encouraging correct, responsible behaviour from those who do visit (e.g. considerate behaviour, social distancing, compliance with by-laws). Accompanied by proactive and reactive communication with residents regarding the actions herein and ongoing response;
- *Safety First* – prioritising public safety, staff safety and COVID-19 Secure infection control measures;
- *Proactive Management* – taking the actions we can to manage the issues and tensions, but also to manage expectations of visitors (e.g. what to expect when you visit) and residents (e.g. there are limits to our powers, actions and impact);
- *Enforcement* – Enforcement is an important part of the response, but it cannot be the sole response. The Council and partners have limited powers and enforcement resources, and for some people the penalty is an insufficient deterrent (e.g. PCNs considered by some as a price worth paying);
- *Managing Cost* – Additional costs will be incurred, but this must be visible and managed, to ensure that the impact on budgets is understood and agreed.

Managing costs remains important, so as far as possible, investment will be aimed at measures that provide longer-term benefit from the investment required and can generate an income stream to cover the cost and/or enable further investment.

Actions for 2021

The Headlines of the Council's actions for 2021 are as follows:

Whole Coast Management

- *The overarching strategy* – to manage issues at all four gateways in line with vision set out in The Sefton Coast Plan 2017–2030, with a focus on improving the 'offer' and encouraging visitors towards Crosby, Ainsdale and Southport in order to manage and reduce the impact of visitors at Formby;
- *Refreshed Communications Plan* – implementing a refresh plan, learning from experience in 2020;
- *Traffic Management and traffic Regulation Orders* – Following the commissioning of an independent review of traffic management options, to produce a prioritised Traffic Management Plan for the Coastal Gateways;
- *Improved Signage* – Implementation of improved signage on entry to Sefton and on the Sefton road network, highlighting and directing visitors to the Coast Gateways, improved signage and promotion of official car parks at the gateways to direct people to areas where impact can be better managed, on ongoing deployment of Matrix Signs, all informed by the Traffic Management Plan referred to above;
- *Additional Food and drink offer* – at Crosby and Ainsdale-on-Sea;
- *Ambassador offer* – implementation of Ambassadors to meet, greet and support visitors;
- *Additional Waste Capacity* – implement additional waste disposal capacity, adjusting positioning, signage and container type based on learning from experience in 2020.

Crosby Gateway

- *2021 will see the re-opening of Crosby Lakeside Adventure Centre;*
- *Sand Clearance on Promenade* – additional plan has been procured to more effectively clear sand from the promenade and work has been undertaken to signpost alternative, inland routes through the Coastal Park;
- *Public Toilets* – implementation of purpose build permanent facility near Crosby Lakeside and provision of temporary toilets at Mariners Road (scalable option subject to COVID situation, availability of Leisure Centre facilities and demand at the time).

Formby Gateway

- *National Trust* – continue working with National Trust;
- *Traffic Management* – implementation of Temporary Traffic Regulations where necessary to ensure safety for highway users at hotspots.

Ainsdale Gateway

- *Off-beach Car Park* – development of an improved off-beach car park for all-year use;
- *Public Toilets* – implementation of purpose build permanent facility and provision of temporary toilets in the meantime.

Southport Gateway

- *On-Beach Car Park* – Car Park will be open this year (subject to provision of RNLI Lifeguards).

2021 Coastal Gateway Visitor Action Plan

| Issue | Objectives | Ref | Action | Target Date | Update | RAG Status |
|----------------|--|-----|---------------------------------------|-------------|--|------------|
| Communications | To ensure effective communication of key messages to target audiences (visitors and residents) within and outside Sefton | 1 | Ongoing Boroughwide Comms campaigns | Ongoing | <p>Campaign will include some or all of the following, depending upon need/circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint messaging with Sefton Coast Partners • Joint messaging with LCR partners • Messages to interest groups (e.g. Friends of groups etc.) • Alternative Social Media outlets/tools (e.g. Influencers, Facebook Boost etc.) • Initial message prepared for release on 29/03/21 | GREEN |
| | | 2 | Engagement with Ward Councillors | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Traffic Management Report shared with Coastal Ward Councillors • Regular updates to Ward Councillors & Parish Council Clerks, commencing with new Action Plan | GREEN |
| | | 3 | Youth Engagement | Ongoing | Links established with Youth Engagement Teams | GREEN |
| | | 4 | Improved on-site and approach signage | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional signage has been implemented - will keep under review based on feedback • Strategic Signing review to be undertaken (see Action 10) | GREEN |
| | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|------------|--|-------|
| Access, Traffic Management & Car Parking | To minimise disruption and tension in neighbouring residential areas | 5 | Use of VMS displays for messaging | Ongoing | Regular messaging through fixed and strategically placed mobile VMS | GREEN |
| | | 6 | Parking and traffic enforcement | Ongoing | Civil Enforcement Officer (CEO) patrols being targeted towards hotspots and working closely with Police | GREEN |
| | | 7 | Communication with Satellite Navigation providers, to encourage appropriate direction to Coastal Gateways | Ongoing | Ongoing communication with Satellite Navigation providers, to encourage appropriate direction to Coastal Gateways, including, where possible, to visitor hubs and areas where visitor numbers can be better accommodated. Will link in with other signage and traffic management actions | AMBER |
| | | 8 | Reassess the Feasibility of "Tow-Away" parking enforcement areas | 30/04/2021 | Reassessing the feasibility of introducing and operating "Tow-Away" parking enforcement areas at key hotspot locations, considering how such schemes operate elsewhere, and reporting back to Members | AMBER |
| | | 9 | Implement Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders where | 21/05/2021 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with Formby Coastal Ward Councillors commenced to confirm proposed locations • Consultation with other Coastal Gateway Members to follow, as necessary | GREEN |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|----|---|------------|---|-------|
| | | | necessary to ensure safety for highway users at hotspots | | | |
| | | 10 | Undertake a Strategic Signing Review | 30/06/2021 | <p>Undertake a review of signing at principal access routes to Sefton and along key routes to the Coast, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appropriately promote all gateways • assist effective traffic management • direct people towards visitor hubs • assist messaging on busy and extreme days | AMBER |
| | | 11 | Develop a prioritised 5-year plan for further Traffic Regulation measures at Coastal Gateways | 30/06/2021 | Development of a prioritised plan, for the implementation of further Traffic Management measures to improve safety, network management and reduce disruption from visitor traffic | AMBER |
| | | 12 | Improve clearance of windblown sand on and around Crosby Promenade | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New plant procured to improve sand clearance (awaiting delivery) • Signage and promotion of alternative inland routes agreed | AMBER |

| | | | | | | |
|------------|--|----|--|-------------|---|-------|
| | | 13 | Development of an off-beach car park at Ainsdale-on-Sea for all-year use | Autumn 2021 | Project agreed. Project development, including securing necessary permissions, underway. | AMBER |
| Facilities | To make facilities available, where possible, whilst ensuring they remain COVID-Secure | 14 | Provide extra bulk waste capacity | 27/03/2021 | Skips and Eurobins provided at main entrances to Crosby, Ainsdale & Southport coast | GREEN |
| | | 15 | Free refuse sacks provided to visitors | 27/03/2021 | Will be handed out a peak time | GREEN |
| | | 16 | Temporary additional provision of Public Toilets at Coastal Gateways | 27/03/2021 | Portaloos provided in Crosby Coastal Park (CLAC and Mariners Road) and Ainsdale-on-Sea | GREEN |
| | | 17 | Provision of permanent Public Toilets at Coastal Gateways | TBC | Project ongoing to install permanent fit-for-purpose facilities at Crosby (South Road entrance) and Ainsdale-on-Sea | AMBER |
| | | 18 | Refreshment concessions | 01/04/2021 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concessions due to re-commence 01/04/21 • Additional trial concessions to commence at Crosby and Ainsdale for main summer period | AMBER |
| | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|---|----|--|------------|---|-------|
| | | 19 | Aesthetic improvements to Toad Hall, Ainsdale-on-Sea | 01/06/2021 | Project agreed for a mural to be created to improve the appearance of the building and provide an attractive event/feature | AMBER |
| Staffing & Systems of Work | To ensure that systems of work protect staff health, safety and welfare | 20 | Review Risk Assessments for operational staff and bases | Ongoing | Operational and premises risk assessments reviewed and/or developed and subject to regular review, including consultation with staff and Trade Unions | GREEN |
| | | 21 | Recruit additional seasonal Green Sefton Staff | 29/03/2021 | Additional staff recruited and allocated to support service provision - from w/c 29/03 | GREEN |
| | | 22 | Implement Cashless payment system for Ainsdale on-beach car park and Esplanade Park & Ride | 27/03/2021 | Cashless payment system in place. Cash will still be taken if necessary. | GREEN |
| | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------|---|----|--|---------|--|-------|
| Partnerships | To ensure a good shared understanding of issues, resources, priorities and actions across all partners | 23 | Continue to work with Sefton Coast Partnership | Ongoing | Regular liaison with Coastal partners; weekly operational liaison meetings | GREEN |
| | To ensure a good shared understanding of issues, resources, priorities and actions across all partners | 24 | Continue to work with Sefton Coastal Land Owners | Ongoing | Regular liaison with Coastal partners; weekly operational liaison meetings | GREEN |
| | To deliver joined-up action across all partners Anticipate peak activity / issues | 25 | Continue to work with Police, MFRS, BTP, RNLI, NSL, National Trust | Ongoing | Established contacts with all key partners; weekly operational liaison meetings | GREEN |
| | To ensure a good shared understanding of issues, resources, priorities and actions across all partners To deliver joined-up action across all partners | 26 | Extend “busy weekend” planning to whole of summer period including Member engagement | Ongoing | Weekly operational liaison meetings in place; regular meetings with Cabinet Members in place | GREEN |

| | | | | | | |
|------------------|--|----|---|---------|---|-------|
| | Anticipate peak activity / issues | | | | | |
| | | 27 | Work with RNLI to ensure ongoing Lifeguard provision | Ongoing | RNLI Lifeguards on site at Crosby, Formby and Ainsdale from 27/03/21 and at Southport from April | AMBER |
| Public Behaviour | To encourage and enforce, where necessary, correct responsible behaviour by the public | 28 | Engage, encourage and enforce compliance with the law (including national/local laws, Public Space Protection Orders and COVID-19 specific rules) | Ongoing | Established contacts and ongoing liaison between CEOs, Public Protection; ASB Team, Police and other enforcement agencies | GREEN |

