

# Saltfleet to Gibraltar Point Strategy Review

Strategy consultation

Consultation response  
document



# 1 Strategy Review

## 1.1 Introduction

The Environment Agency's tidal flood risk management work between Saltfleet and Gibraltar Point currently helps us reduce the risk of flooding to around 20,000 homes, 1,700 businesses, 24,500 static caravans and 35,000 hectares of farmland as well as a bustling tourist industry.

Since 1994, we have managed coastal flood risk on this stretch of the coast by restoring beach levels lost due to natural processes on an annual basis. By maintaining healthy beach levels, we protect the hard defences from the impact of waves and tides.

We recognise that this approach may not be sustainable in the future. The effects of climate change could lead to sea level rise and increasingly frequent storms, which would mean more and more sand is likely to be needed each year to restore beaches to their appropriate sand levels. The cost as well of the carbon footprint of the beach nourishment works would therefore increase significantly over time.

This is why we have reviewed our strategy to determine a new vision for the future of coastal flood risk management on this stretch of the coast. In the summer of 2019, we presented this new vision to the public as well as our partners and stakeholders, in the form of our draft strategy. We invited all interested parties to submit their views on the draft strategy through a consultation, which ran for 12 weeks over the summer. We are pleased to now present a summary of these views in this document.

## 1.2 Purpose of this document

The purpose of this document is to summarise the responses received during the consultation on the draft Saltfleet to Gibraltar Point Strategy, and to provide acknowledgement of these responses, highlighting where responses have resulted in changes to the final documents. This document also describes how we carried out the consultation, and who we consulted with.

## 1.3 Background

The consultation set out our new draft strategy for tidal flood risk management between Saltfleet and Gibraltar Point over the next 100 years. The draft strategy put forward proposals to introduce structures in combination with continued beach nourishment on this section of the coast. The draft strategy was shaped through economic, technical and environmental assessments as well as extensive consultation with partners, business owners and the general public. This process was set out in the documentation we published when the consultation was launched.

#### 1.4 How we ran the consultation

The consultation ran for 12 weeks between 3 June and 25 August. The consultation was publicised through a press release, newsletters, partner updates as well as messages in local community bulletins. Twitter was utilised to promote the consultation as well.

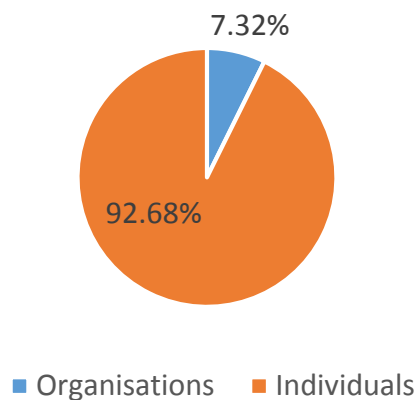
To coincide with the launch of the consultation, we published a non-technical summary of our draft strategy, a technical strategy document, and a full environmental report. These documents were shared with our stakeholders and copies of the non-technical summary as well as the survey were made available in publicly accessible places.

As part of the consultation we carried out three external drop-in events which were open to the general public. Consultees were able to respond online or via post, and details of a named contact were shared for any queries.

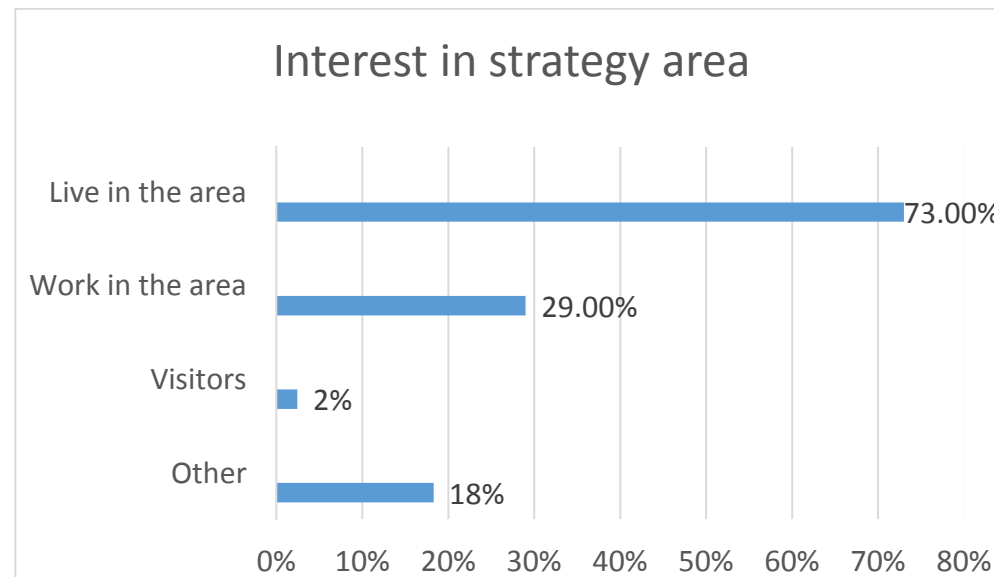
## 2. Consultation findings

We received 82 survey responses: 37 online and 45 written. 76 responses came from individuals while 6 were submitted on behalf of organisations. We have separately received representations from 4 partner organisations.

### Organisations versus individuals



### Interest in strategy area

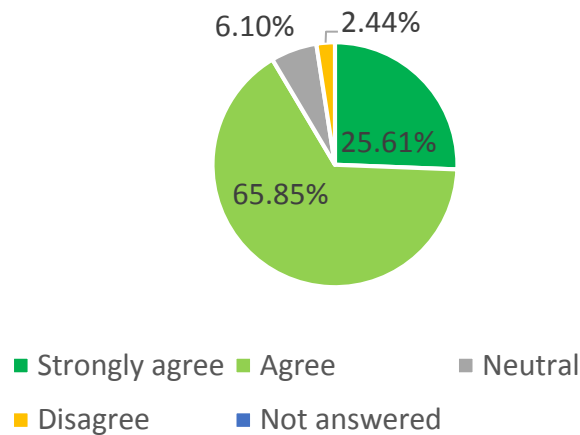


## 2.1 Summary of responses

Questions 1 to 5 have been omitted from this summary due to the fact that these questions focus on the respondent's personal details, such as how they found out about the consultation, why they are interested in the strategy and whether they give consent to having their response published.

**Question 6: Please indicate how you feel about the following statements.**

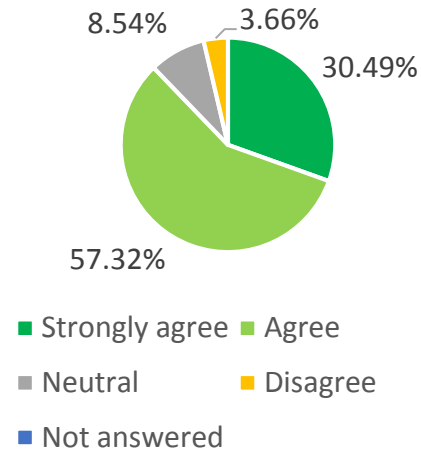
**Question 6.1: "the Environment Agency's draft strategy proposals to manage coastal flood risk over the next 100 years are clearly set out."**



Over 90% of all respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. We are pleased that such a large portion of respondents agreed the documentation we provided clearly set out our vision.

As we did with the draft strategy, we will publish both a non-technical and a more technical summary of the final strategy in due course. These documents will be similar in style and content to the documents we produced for the summer 2019 consultation.

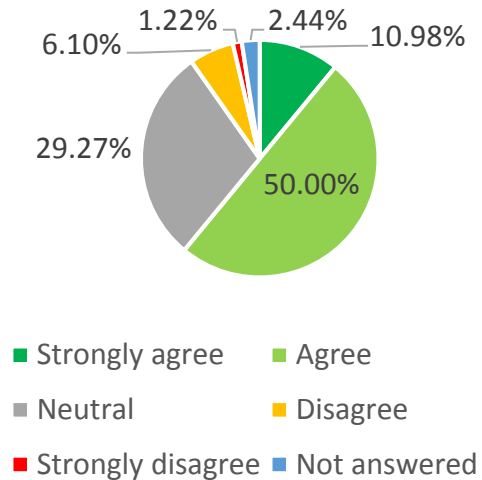
**Question 6.2: "This strategy can adapt to change based on the identified triggers."**



88% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. 4% of those responding disagreed with the statement. We also received some comments from the public that indicated some lack of understanding about how triggers would work in practice.

On this basis, we will offer further explanation about how triggers will regulate the strategy in our final strategy documents, including in the non-technical summary. Triggers are an important part of this strategy, so it is crucial that the general public understand how they factor into the overall strategy.

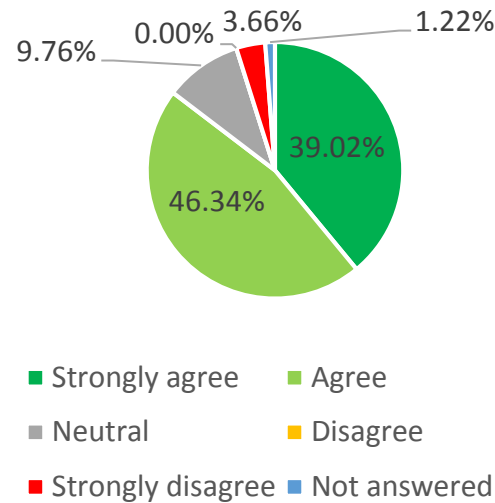
**Question 6.3: “The strategy makes clear how government funding is applied, including potential third-party funding contributions.”**



61% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. 29% indicated that they were neutral, while 7% disagreed or strongly disagreed. This suggests that our explanation of government funding rules and the potential for third-party funding contributions, was not clear. We will therefore include additional wording to further clarify how the funding element of the strategy operates in the final strategy documents. Where we cannot provide assurances, we will explain why.

Some of the comments received with regards to this question specifically raised concerns about central government’s commitment to flood risk management funding. The Environment Agency does not set funding policy; we are subject to the funding policy set by central government. We are therefore unable to give reassurances about central government’s commitment to flood risk management funding and would urge anyone with specific concerns regarding this issue to contact central government via Defra.

**Question 6.4: “The introduction of structures to sustain beach levels and reduce sand movement along the beach provides the best solution for tidal flood risk management in the strategy area for the long-term future.”**



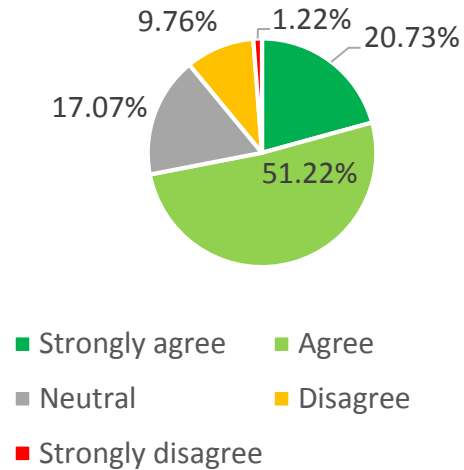
85% of respondents agree or strongly agree with this statement. We are delighted to note such strong support for the preferred approach identified in the draft strategy.

We will now seek to obtain formal sign-off of the strategy from the relevant bodies, after which we will be able to move to delivery of the strategy.

We received some responses from people who felt uncertain that structures would be as effective on this stretch of the coast as they have been in other parts of the country. We acknowledge that the effectiveness of structures elsewhere does not guarantee their effectiveness on the Lincolnshire coast. In the event that any structure introduced to manage flood risk on the Lincolnshire coast does not perform as expected, we would review the structure and assess our options for mitigation.



**Question 6.5: “I am confident that coastal flood risk between Saltfleet and Gibraltar Point will continue to be managed over the next 100 years.”**



72% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. 11% either strongly disagreed or disagreed. Based on the comments provided by those responding, we believe that some individuals demonstrated a lack of confidence due to concerns surrounding central government’s ability and willingness to continue to fund flood risk management to the extent that is required.

As highlighted earlier in this document, we are unable to provide assurances on central government’s ability and willingness to continue to fund flood risk management since the Environment Agency does not set funding policy. However, we are able to provide assurances that the Environment Agency will continue to work hard to make the case to government that flood risk management should be properly funded.

**Question 7: Regarding the consultation, how satisfied are you with the following?**

**Question 7.1: The information provided**

87% of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with the information provided. This is a good indication that the documents published were generally well received. However, this leaves 8.5% of respondents who were neutral, and 5% of respondents who were either very dissatisfied or dissatisfied. We will work to ensure that the final strategy documents are clear, informative and suitable for their intended audiences.

**Question 7.2: Helpfulness of staff (if applicable)**

87% of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with the helpfulness of our staff; no respondents indicated they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. We are obviously delighted to learn that we were able to provide helpful and welcoming customer service, and we appreciate the positive feedback we have received through some of the comments submitted throughout the consultation.

**Question 7.3: Online consultation tool (if applicable)**

Only a minority of people responding to the consultation used the online consultation tool to submit their views. Of the 46 people who responded to this question, 78% were either very satisfied or satisfied; 2% were dissatisfied; and 20% of respondents indicated they were neutral.

We envisage that our consultation tools will continue to evolve in the future. We are exploring ways to engage with people in new ways and we will develop our engagement strategy as best practice develops.

**Question 7.4: Overall consultation experience**

90% of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with the overall consultation experience; only 3% were dissatisfied. This is a strong indication that our engagement strategy for this stage of the strategy review was effective.

A small minority of respondents reported that they had not heard about the strategy in the past. While we have carried out extensive engagement at various points throughout the development of the strategy, we acknowledge that we may not have been able to engage with all those individuals who wished to participate in the various consultation stages of the strategy development. We will continue to explore new channels and methods of engagement, which in turn will help us reach out to even more people in the strategy area in the future.

**Question 8: Do you have any further comments on the consultation?**

Exactly 50% of all respondents provided additional comments in response to this question. Most of the responses given reiterated comments made on earlier questions in the consultation survey. 16% of responses related to helpfulness of staff, 7% referred to specific suggestions for additionality, and 4% of respondents expressed concerns over confidence in central government.

7% of respondents indicated that they felt they had not received adequate information. As indicated above, we will continue to work on the development of our engagement tools and we will strive to reach new audiences through additional channels. This will include social media, tailor-made presentations for schools and community groups, and continued partnership working with local councils and other organisations to disseminate our message to wider audiences.

**3. Conclusion**

We are very pleased to note that reactions to the consultation have been overwhelmingly positive. Clear support exists among respondents for the preferred approach of introducing structures to the beach.

Whilst we take many positives away from the consultation, we appreciate that respondents also felt certain aspects of the draft strategy were lacking. We will take all the views submitted to us, including those that were critical of our plans, into account as we finalise the new strategy. We expect to publish the strategy in 2020.