



## **The Economy of the Manhood Peninsula**

### **A Key Statement from the Manhood Peninsula Partnership**

The aim of this Key Statement is to influence all those who can act to improve the economic prosperity of the Manhood Peninsula, including:

- Local communities, particularly Parish Councils as they develop neighbourhood plans; and respond to planning applications
- Chichester District Council as it implements the economic strategy for Chichester District 2013-2019, Creating a Prosperous and Sustainable Economy
- West Sussex County Council as it implements its economic strategy, West Sussex 2012-2020
- The Coastal West Sussex Partnership and the Local Economic Partnership as they develop strategies and projects and consider funding applications
- Funding bodies as they consider making contributions towards business development and employment creation
- Local businesses as they consider new business opportunities

### **The economy of the Manhood Peninsula**

The Manhood Peninsula Partnership supports and advocates sustainable economic development across the peninsula. We want to see a vibrant place attractive to a wide range of businesses, visitors and residents and offering a wide range of employment opportunities.

### **The local economic character**

The Manhood peninsula is a great place for business and supports a wide variety of businesses, large and small. The peninsula's natural and cultural assets are the cornerstone of its economy and the reason why it is one of England's most attractive places in which to work, live and visit. The natural environment needs to be viewed as an economic asset that can be worked with, not an obstacle to securing sustainable economic growth: a healthy, well-functioning natural environment is the foundation of sustained economic growth, prospering communities and personal wellbeing.

The peninsula is known for blue skies, open countryside, beaches and clean water. It is home to a thriving range of businesses, most importantly: tourism; leisure; agriculture and horticulture; and manufacturing. The marine environment fosters diverse economic activities including fishing and water sports. Increasingly, energy generation is being regarded as having economic potential on the peninsula. There is a small office and commercial market and significant self-employment. The interests of each sector must be balanced with the need to protect the special environmental qualities and distinctive character of the peninsula.

Tourism plays a crucial role in the economy of the Chichester District as a whole, accounting for nearly half of the total spend by all visitors. Many of these visit the area to enjoy the beach, walk, cycle and bird-watch, again emphasising the importance of the local environment to the economy. Tourism is particularly important to the peninsula; development proposals need to be carefully managed in order to preserve its appeal.

In common with many coastal areas, the peninsula is host to a number of complex issues arising from its coastal location. Communities are exposed to significant and specific challenges that have been exacerbated by the 2008/09 economic downturn but, optimistically, signs of growth and change can now be seen, particularly in the visitor economy.

## **Key benefits of sustainable economic development**

Enhancing the amount, range and types of economic activity and employment on the peninsula will have significant benefits:

- creating more robust, sustainable communities
- creating more diverse, more balanced communities with more young people and young families
- providing local job opportunities that allow for more flexible patterns of work and improved work: life balances
- providing jobs attractive to young people to enable them to stay in the area rather than having to leave in search of employment/better employment
- reducing the need for commuting

A co-ordinated approach to engage, support and promote the different business sectors on the peninsula could encourage economic prosperity – particularly in the key sectors of tourism and horticulture - by:

- Ensuring the peninsula is recognised as a leading area nationally for food and drink production
- Increasing awareness and consumption of local foodstuffs, especially fish and salads to reinforce local distinctiveness
- Increasing cross sector awareness between horticulture and tourism, providing benefits to both
- Making best use of the Manhood Peninsula's natural assets
- Boosting the local economy by providing opportunities and activities outside the usual holiday periods to encourage visitors to spend more time on the peninsula
- Supporting the integration of renewable energy production and green waste disposal into local businesses

## **Proposed Actions**

The Manhood Peninsula Partnership has brought together suggestions from all of its partners to produce the proposed actions listed below. It advocates that all bodies responsible for economic development across the peninsula consider and implement the following actions:

### **Tourism**

- Encourage day visitors to become stay visitors
- Promote the virtues of the environment, including the dark skies suitable for astronomy, as an asset to encourage longer and repeat stays by visitors
- Create the Green Links across the Manhood (GLaM) network in order to make best use of the economic opportunities offered through a package of activities - cycle hire facilities; links between cafes and other destinations spanning the peninsula

- Create links with the South Downs National Park and other key destinations
- Use the Medmerry managed realignment scheme and RSPB reserve as an opportunity to boost economic activity
- Work with tourism and cultural organisations, including Visit Chichester, the hotels association and key local venues to develop co-ordinated, high value visitor packages and to increase the significance of tourism and culture to the economy.
- Promote and market local food and drink as part of the visitor experience
- Develop local food initiatives, for example, the Peninsula Breakfast; and promote networking events for accommodation providers and the hospitality industry

### **Agriculture/Horticulture**

- Engage with local growers to improve awareness of the high level employment potential of the agri/horticulture industry
- Support closer links between tourism and local food producers through marketing and events
- Support the peninsula's farmers, horticulture businesses and landowners to make best economic use of their buildings and land assets by creating education opportunities and holding information events
- Consider how best to support existing businesses and bring new businesses into the Sidlesham and Almodington Horticulture Development Areas

### **Aquaculture**

- Investigate the local potential for fish farming, including crustaceans, using students from local colleges and universities to undertake research
- Promote fish and other local produce by supporting a fish and salad fair

### **Marine**

- Develop a local information package with Chichester Harbour Conservancy for the boating sector visiting Chichester Harbour
- Support marine-based recreation through events and local promotion
- Investigate and implement tourism related sea-life observation and education opportunities

### **Retail**

- Develop a co-ordinated approach to engage, support and promote the retail sector, particularly in relation to specialist areas such as water sports, cycling and walking.
- Improve and diversify the retail offer in coastal locations by holding networking events to introduce retailers to opportunities presented by new visitor attractions

## **Implementation**

We need to make sure that the many bodies responsible for the economy of the Manhood Peninsula take account of opportunities for economic development that are in keeping with the environment of the peninsula.

The next stage is consultation with key MPP partners and other stakeholders to refine the proposed actions set out above. Given the extensive range of economic activity supported by very experienced people on the peninsula we also want to use this Key Statement to promote discussion and debate. We aim to invite local business people to join an economic task force for looking at issues affecting the peninsula economy, identifying needs, and suggesting solutions.

Given the organisations that the MPP is seeking to influence, it hopes that the **Economy of the Manhood Peninsula Key Statement** will be adopted by them and will influence their actions and decisions. As the MPP develops projects it will use this **Key Statement** to support and justify bids for funding and hopes that others will do the same.

Further information about the **Manhood Peninsula Partnership** can be found at:

<http://peninsulapartnership.org.uk/>

Or by contacting the MPP Project Officer, Jane Cunningham 01243 521091 [jcunningham@chichester.gov.uk](mailto:jcunningham@chichester.gov.uk)