



House of Commons
Communities and Local
Government Committee

Coastal Towns: the Government's Second Response

First Report of Session 2007–08

*Report, together with formal minutes and
Appendices*

*Ordered by The House of Commons
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Communities and Local Government Committee

The Communities and Local Government Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Department for Communities and Local Government and its associated bodies.

Current membership

Dr Phyllis Starkey MP (*Labour, Milton Keynes South West*) (Chair)

Sir Paul Beresford MP (*Conservative, Mole Valley*)

Mr Clive Betts MP (*Labour, Sheffield Attercliffe*)

John Cummings MP (*Labour, Easington*)

Jim Dobbin MP (*Labour Co-op, Heywood and Middleton*)

Mr Greg Hands MP (*Conservative, Hammersmith and Fulham*)

Martin Horwood MP (*Liberal Democrat, Cheltenham*)

Anne Main MP (*Conservative, St Albans*)

Mr Bill Oler MP (*Labour, Nuneaton*)

Dr John Pugh MP (*Liberal Democrat, Southport*)

Emily Thornberry MP (*Labour, Islington South and Finsbury*)

The following member was also a member of the Committee during this inquiry:

David Wright MP (*Labour, Telford*)

Powers

The Committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No 152. These are available on the Internet via www.parliament.uk.

Publications

The Reports and evidence of the Committee are published by The Stationery Office by Order of the House. All publications of the Committee (including press notices) are on the Internet at www.parliament.uk/clgcom

Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Huw Yardley (Clerk of the Committee), David Weir (Second Clerk), James Cutting (Committee Specialist), Sara Turnbull (Committee Specialist), Clare Genis (Committee Assistant), Kerrie Hanley (Secretary) and Laura Kibby (Select Committee Media Officer).

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Coastal Towns: the Government's Second Response

1. Our report on Coastal Towns was published in March 2007.¹ In it we concluded that many coastal towns share common characteristics including their physical isolation, deprivation levels, the inward migration of older people, the high levels of transience, the outward migration of young people, poor quality housing and the nature of the coastal economy. We recognised that none of these characteristics were unique to coastal towns, but, the combination of these characteristics—together with the environmental challenges that these communities face—led us to the conclusion that they face significant and specific challenges that warrant Government action.

2. The Government published its initial response, in the form of a command paper, on 18 May 2007.² On examination we were dissatisfied with the Government's initial response in particular because it failed to recognise the necessity for specific measures to support coastal communities. Our dissatisfaction was shared by other Members of Parliament and organisations. For instance, Members of Parliament expressed their displeasure during a Westminster Hall debate in June 2007.³ Organisations such as the British Resorts and Destinations Association (BRADA) were likewise displeased. Peter Hampson, Director of BRADA, wrote to us to convey this. His letter, received on 20 June 2007, is published as Appendix 1.

3. Our Chair, Dr Phyllis Starkey, wrote to Rt Hon. Hazel Blears, then newly appointed as Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, on 19 July 2007 outlining our concerns and requesting a further, more considered, response from Government. This letter is published as Appendix 2. The Government's further response, in the form of a memorandum, was received on 26 October 2007. This is published as Appendix 3.

4. We are pleased that the Government has reconsidered its original response and has now accepted a number of our recommendations. In particular, we are pleased that the Government has accepted the need for further research on the challenges facing coastal communities, including the disproportionately high rise in the number of people claiming sickness and disability benefit in coastal towns in comparison to the average across Great Britain.⁴ We also welcome the Government's intention to establish a cross-departmental working group on issues affecting coastal towns and its commitment to establish a coastal areas network supported by Government and the Regional Development Agencies.

¹ Communities and Local Government Committee, *Second Report of Session 2006-07, Coastal Towns*, HC 351; www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmselect/cmcomloc/351/351.pdf

² Department for Communities and Local Government Committee, *Government Response to the Communities and Local Government Committee Report on Coastal Towns*, May 2007, Cm 7126; www.officialdocuments.gov.uk/document/cm71/7126/7126.pdf

³ HC Deb, 7 June 2007, col 141-188WH [Westminster Hall]

⁴ Government figures show that since 1997 there has been a 12.3 per cent increase in the number of people claiming incapacity benefit, special disability allowance or income support for disability in coastal towns, in comparison to a 2.2 per cent increase across Great Britain. See Communities and Local Government Committee, *Second Report of Session 2006-07, Coastal Towns*, HC 351; www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmselect/cmcomloc/351/351.pdf, para 49

5. The Government has committed itself to providing further information on seasonal employment in coastal areas. We look forward to receiving this information and to subsequent updates on the Government's progress in tackling the challenges faced by coastal communities.

Appendix 1: Letter from the British Resorts and Destinations Association (BRADA)

I have recently returned from our 2007 Annual Conference in Eastbourne, which was themed around coastal regeneration. Much of the two-day event revolved around your committee's excellent, very detailed and accurate summary of the social and economic issues facing coastal towns.

As a result of our discussions, members of the Association directed that I write to congratulate you and the committee on an excellent report. Sadly, they also directed that I should write to lodge our displeasure at what we jointly view as the Government's complacent response to it. I was asked to formally request that you and the committee consider tackling Government on the response. We would ask that you do so on our behalf and on behalf of all the coastal towns, whose plight, we now believe, Government feels it can legitimately continue to ignore.

It is difficult, in polite circles, to accurately describe to you the depth of displeasure that the Government response has created among many Elected Members from all parties, public sector officers and our colleagues and partners in the private sector. In essence, the response offers little or nothing new; agreeing only with those few things which had no actual Government duty or action attached. It responds to almost all the substantive issues with vague or, on occasion, inaccurate descriptions of individual actions being taken by others. On examination, most, if not all, do little to address the common problems experienced elsewhere in all other coastal towns.

To our mind, the Government's response simply serves to reinforce the point that the issues of coastal towns are not widely understood and that Government departments, individually and jointly, are not doing enough to improve the lot of England's coastal towns and the millions of people who live and work in them. The Association therefore urges you and the committee to consider pursuing the coastal towns issue with Central and, where appropriate, with Regional Government.

P.T. Hampson, Director,

BRADA

20 June 2007

Appendix 2: Letter to the Rt Hon. Hazel Blears MP, Secretary of State, Communities and Local Government

I am writing on behalf of the Communities and Local Government Committee to express my Committee's deep dissatisfaction with the Government's response to our report on Coastal Towns. The response appeared to fail to grasp the central premise of our report, that many coastal towns face significant challenges based on their combination of characteristics, and that as such coastal towns warrant specific attention and action by Government to address their challenges.

My Committee's dissatisfaction reflects that felt by many other MPs and organisations. The British Resorts and Destinations Association (BRADA) has written to us on behalf of its members to express its displeasure and states that in its view, the Government's reply "offers little or nothing new; agreeing only with those few things which had no actual Government duty or action attached".

The level of participation in the Westminster Hall debate on my Committee's report reflects the level of concern over the Government's approach to coastal communities and the issues we raise in the report. During this debate several MPs voiced their dissatisfaction quite strongly. Mr Gordon Marsden MP stated, "I see no reason why the Government should not go back and think a little bit more about the recommendations of the Committee. Some of the details of the response strike me as rather complacent".⁵ Shona McIsaac MP viewed the Government's response as fragmented and incoherent.⁶

The unfocused nature of the response seems at odds with the Prime Minister's recent comments: he said "Because the focus is sometimes on inner-city regeneration, people forget that some coastal towns have large numbers of people who are either socially excluded or unemployed and that such local economies can be difficult. It is precisely for that reason that we are looking at what more we can do to support our coastal towns".⁷ Similarly, Mark Simmons MP called for the Government to take action to support coastal towns just as it has done for inner cities; stating "we have the same problems, exacerbated by distances, isolation, an ageing population and declining public services, including transport".⁸

In light of this debate and the strength of feeling on the matter, I invite you to provide a further, more considered response to my Committee's report and in particular our recommendations on worklessness, seasonal employment and co-ordination of policy.

We drew attention to the Government's own statistics which showed a disproportionately high rise in the number of people claiming sickness and disability benefits in coastal towns. These statistics show that since 1997 there has been a 2.2 per cent increase in the number of people claiming incapacity benefit, special disability allowance or income support for disability but a 12.3 per cent rise in the number of claimants in coastal towns (paras 48-53). The Government does not dispute these statistics but rather belittles our conclusion,

⁵ HC Deb, 7 June 2007, col 150WH [Westminster Hall]

⁶ HC Deb, 7 June 2007, col 161WH [Westminster Hall]

⁷ Official Report, 6 June 2007; Vol. 461, c.254.

⁸ HC Deb, 7 June 2007, col 176WH [Westminster Hall]

countering with other statistics that avoid dealing directly with our central premise on this issue. I do not disagree with the information provided but the Government needs to give greater consideration to our recommendation that this trend be investigated. It is not unrealistic to expect the Government to conduct research into benefit dependency in coastal towns given the hard evidence we provided.

The second area in relation to the economy that I would like to urge you to reconsider is the response given on seasonal work. My Committee called for Government recognition of the significance of seasonal work in coastal towns, and for this to be considered by national policy-makers given the economic and social challenges this brings to coastal towns. Our recommendations were based on clear evidence demonstrating that seasonal work in coastal towns was more than double the English average.⁹ The response disregards the substantive body of evidence that demonstrates that seasonal work is significant in coastal towns. Indeed, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Angela Smith MP, in the Westminster Hall debate showed recognition of the problems seasonal work stating, "Hon. Members also referred to low skills, low pay and seasonal employment. There is an urgent need to tackle those problems".¹⁰ Given that the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State has recognised that seasonal work is a problem that needs to be tackled I would be grateful if you could clarify whether this view is shared by the rest of Government and the action that will be taken to ensure that this is reflected in the work of Government departments.

The third issue that I wish to draw to your attention specifically is the Government's rejection of our recommendation for a cross-departmental working group to be established to examine the implication of policy for coastal towns and how to address best the needs of coastal communities. This is an entirely reasonable and proportionate request given the cross-cutting nature of the challenges faced in coastal towns and the body of evidence that my Committee has presented on the common challenges faced by many coastal towns. As Mr Gordon Marsden MP pointed out that "we do not need to create an enormous, expensive bureaucracy to ensure that a few civil servants from some of the main Government Departments can sit down together two or three times a year to discuss an agenda put to them by BURA, BRADA or other outside groups to look at some of these issues".¹¹

Dr Phyllis Starkey, Chair

Communities and Local Government Committee

19 July 2007

⁹ Communities and Local Government Committee, Second Report of Session 2006-07, *Coastal Towns*, HC 351, para 64

¹⁰ HC Deb, 7 June 2007, col 187WH [Westminster Hall]

¹¹ HC Deb, 7 June 2007, col 151WH [Westminster Hall]

Appendix 3: Supplementary Government response

Communities and Local Government Memorandum on Coastal Towns

PROPOSED POLICY APPROACH AND ACTIONS

Introduction

1. In the Government's response to the Select Committee's report, we said that we would consider what more we could do through the analysis being developed in the Sub National Review to help ensure coastal towns, along with other towns and cities, achieve their full economic potential. This note sets out how the Government now proposes to:

- address coastal towns in developing its wider approach to regeneration in the light of the Sub National Review which gave Communities and Local Government a remit to produce a framework for regeneration
- enhance the co-ordination at national and regional level of policies that impact on coastal towns
- explore the issue of seasonal employment in coastal areas as part of the new co-ordination arrangements.

2. The Government agrees with the Committee that it is difficult to generalise about coastal towns given their very different economic and social profiles. Coastal and seaside towns do exhibit some common characteristics such as peripheral location, demography (particularly an ageing population), seasonal employment, benefit dependency (shared by many seaside and coastal towns) which present challenges for their regeneration and economic development. They may also benefit from some common opportunities such as strong liveability and public realm initiatives to boost tourism and a strong entertainment and leisure offer. However, none of these characteristics are unique to coastal towns and at regional or sub regional level some coastal towns may have more in common with nearby market towns than with coastal towns elsewhere in the country.

3. Accordingly, the challenge is to find ways of categorising coastal towns that allows for meaningful distinctions to be made. Notably, most recent research has tended to concentrate on the challenges facing seaside resorts, rather than everywhere that happens to be by the sea. Our aim is now to understand better which of the factors explaining the poor performance of some coastal towns are most significant.

The Proposed Policy Framework

4. Taking as a starting point the analysis already available, the Government proposes to look at coastal towns as part of the wider framework for regeneration and is considering a number of issues:

(a) understanding the problems

5. The Sub National Review identified that in order to intervene effectively to improve economic performance and to improve the prospects of people in deprived areas, it is important to be clear about the causes of spatial disparities, the interactions between the

characteristics of people and places, and the extent to which they are driven by market or government failures.

6. The Government proposes to build on existing analysis to understand the nature of the problems that arise in some coastal towns. In relation to seaside towns, Beatty and Fothergill's *Seaside Economy* report puts forward the following explanations for poor performance:

- **Decline of traditional tourist industry:** although seaside towns are now more accessible for daytrips; and rising disposable income mean that those that do visit are able to spend more;
- **Failure to diversify:** the location of most coastal towns—except for those within close commuting distance of major cities—does not make them an obvious first choice location for alternative industries (to traditional tourism) that can maintain the strength of the local economy. **Annex 2** would seem to support this;
- **High levels of in-migration:** there has been a growth in jobs in all seaside towns over the past decade but this has not always translated into increases in employment due to in-migration by people wanting to live in seaside towns. This is leading to continuing imbalance in seaside labour markets.
- **Traditional building stock:** Many seaside towns have large, former holiday accommodation residences that makes them highly suitable for single-resident occupancy dwellings. The nature of the housing benefit system tends to drive people to such accommodation. The presence of high levels of inactivity in these areas might, to some extent, be explained by the nature of the benefit system driving the inactive into areas with high levels of suitable housing.

7. The Department has commissioned a short review of the existing evidence about coastal towns from Professor Stephen Fothergill, an expert in the field. This will map out current research and analysis and help to identify the gaps and issues which will inform any further research. The Government will use the findings of this report to inform its policy towards coastal towns, and will share those findings with the Committee.

8. The Department is also working closely with DWP to understand the disproportionately high rise in people claiming sickness and incapacity benefit in coastal towns. The aim is to look at the differences between areas and how policies impact on social and economic changes across them. This study will look at the employment (worklessness/ benefit dependency and skills) situation in coastal towns.

9. The new Local Government Performance Framework will contain a number of indicators on the economic performance of local authority areas, including an indicator to measure the level of benefit claimants within small areas. The Department is working with DWP to develop neighbourhood level employment data to help local authorities and their partners to identify and understand the barriers to employment their residents face. This will be an essential first step in enabling them to devise and deliver appropriate responses that meet the needs of disadvantaged communities within the local area. The proposed indicator will measure the proportion of people claiming out of work benefits within Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs)—statistical areas containing about 1500 residents.

10. Details of further research relevant to coastal towns that CLG plans to fund, or is considering supporting, are listed in **Annex 5**.

(b) Categorising coastal towns

11. Having identified the nature of the problems, the next stage would be to look at how they arise in practice in particular types of place so that those which exhibit significant problem characteristics are identified. An initial typology of the economic performance of coastal towns, based on employment rates, is set out below (this may be refined in the light of further research). The three categories are:

(i) Performing Well;¹²

(ii) Maintaining;¹³ and

(iii) Below Average¹⁴

12. **Annex 1** assesses the performance of seaside towns against a range of key economic indicators, including employment rate. **Annex 2** contains a map of coastal towns showing their classification according to their employment rate. Those highlighted in blue are performing well; those in grey are maintaining their performance vis-à-vis the national average; and those in yellow are declining relative to the national average.

13. Annex 3 shows **employment** rates in seaside towns relative to former coalfield towns, other industrial towns and inner city deprived districts all of which were experiencing a declining industrial base, high levels of migration, low skills and high levels of inactivity. This demonstrates that the performance of seaside towns is comparable to former coalfield towns, but outperforms both inner city deprived districts and other industrial towns.

14. On wider economic variables, the picture is mixed:

- Seaside towns have much lower levels of **inactivity** than the comparators, and this is especially marked in relation to the deprived inner city districts and other industrial towns;
- Seaside towns have a **higher skill base** than both former coalfield and other industrial towns but a lower skill base than inner city deprived districts; this is true at both level 2 and level 4 skills; and
- Seaside towns have a higher proportion of **elderly residents** (65+) than the other groups.

c) Understanding the most effective interventions

15. In order to provide a better basis on which to promote action, the analysis would then need to focus on the kind of interventions that are most effective in these types of place.

¹² Defined as having employment rates above the average for England

¹³ Defined as having an employment rate within 3 percentage points of the average for England

¹⁴ Defined as having an employment rate more than 3 percentage points below the average for England

Initial analysis¹⁵ of coastal towns that are performing well has suggested the following lessons:

- **Physical regeneration**, including that of the public realm, **can act as a catalyst for encouraging wider regeneration**—for example the work carried out by the NWDA in St Annes on Sea and Southport;
- **A co-ordinated approach linking transport, housing and commercial development is needed** if the project is to be self-sustaining—for example the work carried out by ONE on the Seaham project;
- **A Partnership approach between the public and private sector is needed to address the multiple problems** of skills, housing, transport and accessibility faced by many coastal towns—for example, the work carried out by SWDA in Ilfracombe, and the work of SEEDA in Hastings and Bexhill; and
- **Urban Regeneration Companies (URCs)** can be successful in creating the partnerships to undertake the major transformation needed in some of these towns, especially in strengthening their commercial viability—for example the work of EEDA with the coastal towns of the East of England. URCs can offer better co-ordination of existing activities; a stronger focus for local strategies on national priorities; and a clear signal to the private sector of exactly where public agencies should focus their efforts and crucially, their investment.

16. The framework could therefore:

- provide the basis on which Government agencies (including the future Homes and Communities Agency), regional and local partners can come together to develop approaches to support regeneration in the places that most need it
- help with the development of tailored local delivery vehicles to maximise the effectiveness of interventions and to make best use of the available capacity (such as URCs or the City/ Economic Development Company concept).

(d) Local and Multi Area Agreements

17. Responsibility for action within the framework will remain at regional, sub-regional and local level **but Local Area Agreement and Multi Area Agreements (MAAs) can be used to focus action within specific coastal towns** reflecting their strengths and opportunities and their relationship with the surrounding area.

18. MAAs will allow sub-regions to take a much more active role in leading economic development. We expect several coastal areas to be in the first wave of MAAs to be signed in June 2008. MAAs have the potential to secure better outcomes for local areas by helping to ensure there is a co-ordinated approach to economic, social and environmental challenges where the impact or the action is required across more than one administrative area and require sophisticated and joined-up responses. In developing MAAs, sub-

¹⁵ See Annex 4 for examples of good practice in coastal town regeneration

regional partners will need to ensure consistency with both Sustainable Community Strategies and Regional Economic Strategies.

Further Co-ordination at National and Regional Levels

19. The Committee also raised concerns over the extent of central government co-ordination at the national and regional level on policies that impact on coastal towns. In parallel to the development of the regeneration framework, the Government proposes two further sets of measures which reflect the roles to be played at different levels:

- i) **central Government** providing an overall policy context;
- ii) **the RDAs** leading improvements to the economic performance for the regions and well placed to ensure that coastal areas in their regions are helped to achieve their full economic potential, as part of wider strategies to deliver sustainable growth;
- iii) **local authorities and their partners** developing bottom-up approaches to tackle their problems, building on local assets and strengths and vision for their areas.

i) Improved national co-ordination

20. Currently, Departments share a joint regional economic performance PSA that requires regular cross-Whitehall working but this has not explicitly focused on coastal towns. To encourage better co-ordination we propose a cross-departmental working group:

- i) to look at cross cutting policy themes and map out the current framework for dealing with generic/specific issues affecting coastal towns (which would help with some of the analytical work) and
- ii) prepare a co-ordinated policy response. A more informed view can then be taken on whether a separate cross-departmental structure on coastal towns is needed.

ii) Improved sub-regional co-ordination through a coastal towns or coastal areas network

21. At present many RDAs have policies for coastal areas and there are some notable success stories (see **Annex 4**). Coastal towns would benefit from learning about each other's experiences and the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) is leading on development of an RDA network for sharing of best practice on coastal town development and regeneration across the country. Government involvement will help raise the network's profile and encourage active participation across the RDA network. Progress would be monitored through regular dialogue with the RDAs to inform development of regional strategies and share best practice across the RDA Network and with relevant stakeholders.

22. The network would be managed by SEEDA, given their lead role on dissemination of best practice on coastal town regeneration among RDAs, with some support from this Department and possibly other network partners. Membership would involve RDAs

together with relevant central government departments (particularly BERR, DCMS, DEFRA, DWP, DIUS), national agencies with an interest in coastal/ seaside town issues (such as CABE, English Heritage) and coastal/ seaside towns. External bodies like BURA's Seaside Network and BRADA (British Resorts and Destinations Association) would be invited to join.

Seasonal Employment in Coastal Areas

23. The Government recognises the concerns raised over seasonal employment in coastal areas. This is a complex subject with no simple solution, and can be an issue in both coastal and rural areas. CLG is looking closely at what more can be done in consultation with other Departments and the RDAs. We plan to use the new arrangements to improve co-ordination at national and regional/ sub-regional levels to explore the issue further. It will be an important item on the agenda for the informal cross-departmental working group on coastal areas, and for discussion by the proposed coastal areas network to run by SEEDA in partnership with CLG.

24. The RDAs with coastal economies recognise, through their Regional Economic Strategies (RES), the overall strategic importance of coastal towns and the need to create sustainable jobs and businesses in such areas through the RES and other regional and sub-regional strategies. As part of their role in disseminating best practice in coastal town regeneration, SEEDA will also be looking at examples of approaches that tackle the issue of seasonal employment at a local level.

25. We will submit a further note to the Committee on this issue soon.

Cities & Regions

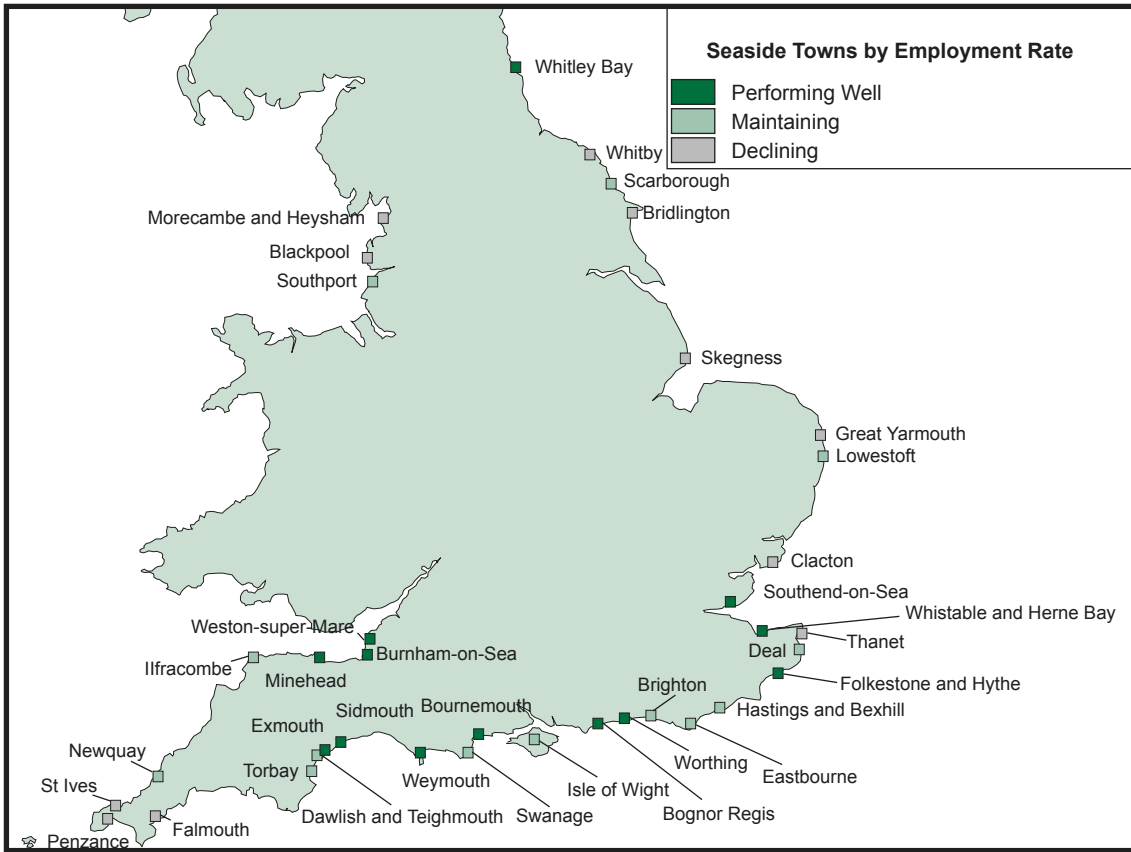
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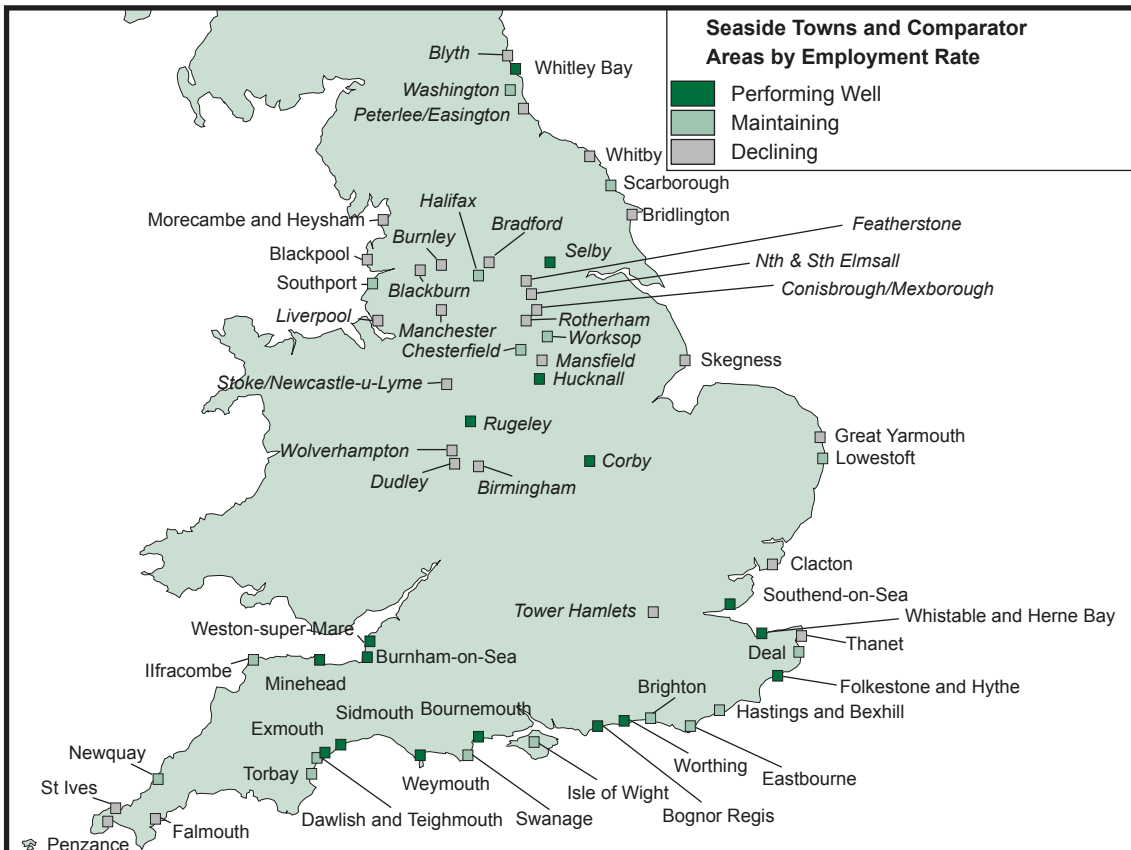
Annex 1: Key economic performance (%)

	Employment	Unemployment	Inactivity	Incapacity Benefit	Level 2+ quals	Level 4+ quals	No quals	65+ pop
Blackpool	66.2	6.8	26.3	14.1	39.4	10.8	31.0	19.6
Bognor Regis	72.0	4.0	21.5	7.0	48.7	15.1	21.6	26.3
Bournemouth	70.5	4.1	22.5	7.7	53.4	18.4	19.2	20.7
Bridlington	62.7	9.1	28.5	13.3	37.0	11.7	32.7	23.9
Brighton	66.9	5.5	24.4	7.9	63.5	30.9	16.8	16.1
Burnham-on-Sea	71.1	4.2	23.1	9.7	43.5	12.6	25.6	26.4
Clacton	64.4	6.1	28.7	12.2	35.5	8.6	33.1	27.9
Dawlish and Teignmouth	68.7	4.4	25.8	10.3	47.8	16.7	23.3	26.5
Deal	69.2	4.9	24.7	8.5	46.3	15.1	24.3	21.5
Eastbourne	69.0	4.6	24.0	8.4	51.1	17.6	21.4	24.7
Exmouth	70.1	3.6	23.3	7.4	50.4	16.3	19.9	23.1
Falmouth	61.3	5.7	29.8	7.6	55.1	18.2	19.0	21.0
Folkestone and Hythe	70.0	6.0	22.6	8.9	46.3	14.9	24.2	20.1
Great Yarmouth	64.0	10.1	26.2	11.2	35.9	8.6	33.1	19.6
Hastings and Bexhill	67.1	5.9	25.7	10.8	45.6	15.0	24.8	23.5
Ilfracombe	67.2	8.2	25.1	13.4	41.1	11.5	27.2	19.9
Isle of Wight	67.9	5.9	25.2	8.9	46.5	15.9	23.2	22.4
Lowestoft	66.9	7.3	25.1	9.4	37.8	10.3	30.1	20.1
Minehead	72.4	5.1	21.5	9.7	46.6	12.4	23.9	29.5
Morecambe and Heysham	65.6	7.6	25.9	12.4	44.6	13.5	25.3	20.8
Newquay	68.9	6.8	23.8	8.4	47.7	12.3	22.2	19.3
Penzance	61.0	8.5	31.2	13.0	48.6	16.1	24.0	22.0
Scarborough	68.0	6.9	23.1	10.6	46.3	16.3	25.3	21.0
Sidmouth	72.6	2.4	22.7	5.6	52.4	19.8	19.2	39.6
Skegness	63.7	6.3	30.3	16.2	32.7	7.0	39.0	23.0
Southend-on-Sea	70.4	5.6	22.8	7.8	47.3	14.3	23.6	19.1
Southport	69.5	5.2	23.5	9.2	52.6	20.4	20.8	22.0
St Ives	65.2	7.1	27.4	8.4	49.1	16.9	23.4	20.8
Swanage	68.5	3.9	26.3	6.0	50.2	18.3	21.3	27.8
Thanet	65.5	7.3	26.4	9.9	43.2	13.6	27.0	21.7
Torbay	68.0	6.7	24.3	10.6	45.4	14.0	23.9	22.6
Weston-super- Mare	71.3	4.3	22.7	11.5	47.1	13.9	22.2	20.7
Weymouth	71.0	4.6	22.6	10.8	47.3	15.5	21.8	20.2
Whitby	66.2	7.0	26.0	9.7	39.6	13.0	31.0	19.9
Whitley Bay	72.0	4.4	21.5	6.7	60.1	27.8	15.4	19.7
Whitstable & Herne Bay	70.7	4.3	23.0	6.9	46.5	15.8	23.0	22.4
Worthing	75.0	3.1	19.3	7.1	52.8	18.7	18.5	23.1
Seaside towns	68.5	5.6	24.2	9.3	48.7	17.0	23.2	21.4
England	69.5	5.1	23.6	7.4	51.7	21.2	23.0	15.8

Annex 2: Seaside Towns by Employment Rate



Annex 3: Seaside Towns and Comparator Areas by Employment Rate



Annex 4: Examples of good practice in coastal town regeneration

NORTH WEST DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (NWDA)

St Annes on Sea Town Centre Regeneration Programme, Lancashire,

Located four miles south of Blackpool on the Lancashire Flyde Coast, St Annes on Sea was created as a Victorian 'garden town by the sea' in 1875. The town remained prosperous until the 1970s when factors including changing patterns of tourism combined to undermine the traditional economic base of the town. By the late 1990s after a protracted period of decline, 60% of businesses stated they were not confident in the town's future and one quarter of all town centre buildings were vacant.

The St. Annes on Sea Town Centre Regeneration programme led by Fylde Borough Council, was established seven years ago to revitalise the town. It has achieved this through high-quality improvements to the public realm using a strong design-led approach, property refurbishments to recover the Victorian character of the resort, the improvement of business and housing opportunities in the town centre, and work on re-branding.

Funding has come from the North West Development Agency, English Heritage and Lancashire County Developments Ltd.

- The innovative project won an award for Best Practice in Regeneration at the British Urban Regeneration Awards in 2005, organised by the British Urban Regeneration Association (BURA) with support from English Partnerships.
- The project was commended for making a positive contribution to economic regeneration, acting as catalyst for wider regeneration and creating a self-sustaining momentum with long-term benefits for the local community.

Southport

- **Pier and Tram**—Agency investment supported a £7m restoration programme for Southport's 3,600 ft Grade II listed Pier. This included the development of an iconic new pavilion at the end of the pier providing a visitor interpretation centre, together with the development of a Pier Tram, the only one of its kind in the world. The 100-seater custom-built vehicle runs the length of the Pier. The Pier won the 'Pier of the Year' award in 2003.
- **Marine Lake**—Investment into other aspects of Southport's visitor offer have also been made including the Marine Lake area.

ONE

The redevelopment of the historic heart of Seaham is the largest, single project in a 10-year plan to revitalise the coastal town following the cessation of coal mining in the 1990's. A multi million pound programme of physical regeneration projects linking transport improvements, new housing and commercial development opportunities on reclaimed coalfield land, together with environmental and public realm improvements, will be cemented by a major new retail facility.

A key regeneration policy for the region and the Tees Valley city region is the Coastal Arc project (comprising Hartlepool, Teesmouth and the Heritage Coast east of Saltburn), which was identified by Tees Valley Vision as a major economic asset.

Further developing the potential of the coast, such as the development of the TVR site at Victoria Harbour within Hartlepool Quays and maximising the potential of Teesport. This transformational regeneration project will enable Hartlepool to develop a critical mass of tourism attractions and business, office employment and a wider choice of housing.

EAST OF ENGLAND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (EEDA)

In general, the coastal towns within the East of England are highly varied, ranging from some of the most deprived areas in the region to some of the most affluent settlements. EEDA has supported the establishment of an Urban Regeneration Company at Great Yarmouth / Lowestoft and one at Southend-on-Sea, invested in major public infrastructure schemes (e.g. the Integreat scheme at Great Yarmouth and Waveney Sunrise at Lowestoft) and undertaken master planning exercises in several coastal areas e.g. Harwich, Felixstowe and Jaywick. With CABE and English Heritage, the agency funded the 'Shifting Sands' event/publication on changing the design and image of seaside towns.

In the Tendring Coast area of Harwich, Brightlingea, Walton and Manningtree, EEDA has provided support for the regeneration of the towns through the Market Towns Initiative, the Single Regeneration Budget, Investing in Communities funding and delegated Sub Regional Economic Partnership funding.

EEDA contributed £8 million to the £16.3 million Integreat scheme that is in its last year and has helped transform the market, Marine Parade and key areas of the town with public realm and heritage improvements. Currently, EEDA is working to develop the proposed Outer Harbour and is also developing with the 1st East URC a low carbon housing demonstrator scheme at Saul's Wharf.

The Outer Harbour project is intended to strengthen the commercial viability of Great Yarmouth's port functions and deliver major regeneration benefits, by providing new facilities to meet industry requirements.

SOUTH WEST REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (SWRDA)

Ilfracombe

Ilfracombe is a former thriving Victorian resort located in a stunning natural setting within the North Devon Coastal Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The town has suffered significantly from the growth of cheap holidays in the sun and has been left with a legacy of large former hotels and boarding houses that have been used as houses of multiple occupation. Specific problems for the town include low incomes, seasonal employment, low skills base, lack of affordable housing for local people, poor transport links and steep access to town from the sea front and harbour.

The Market and Coastal Towns Initiative (MCTI)—funded almost exclusively by the SW RDA—is working to address these issues and improve the quality of life for residents in Ilfracombe and its surrounding area. The MCTI is being driven forward by the Ilfracombe Community Alliance, a community partnership of local residents, town, district and

county councils, businesses, police and a number of different agencies that formed in November 2000. Ilfracombe formally launched its Community Strategic Plan in the summer of 2005.

SOUTH EAST ENGLAND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (SEEDA)

Hastings & Bexhill

The Hastings & Bexhill Task Force is a partnership, formed in 2001, to agree a 10-year regeneration programme for these two South Coast towns. The Task Force's members are SEEDA, Hastings Borough Council, Rother District Council, East Sussex County Council, English Partnerships, Government Office for the South East, Michael Foster, MP for Hastings and Rye, and Gregory Barker, MP for Bexhill and Battle.

SEEDA used its regional perspective and credibility to catalyse action in Hastings, plus it contributed and levered in funds, public and private, notably £38 million from Government, £15 million from EP for the Hastings Millennium Community, and £10 million from the EU. A 5 Point Plan for the regeneration of Hastings was agreed providing a comprehensive approach to improving the urban environment, education, transport, businesses, jobs and homes to create a successful economically vibrant town.

Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH)

SEEDA is actively working with PUSH, an inclusive partnership of 11 local authorities, including the cities of Portsmouth and Southampton, established to take action to improve economic growth performance in South Hampshire (notably an increase in Gross Value Added from 2.75% to 3.5% by 2026 and productivity increase at an average annual rate of 2.4%). PUSH's strategy plans for sustainable development (in line with the Regional Economic Strategy) and the regeneration and renaissance of the cities and other older urban areas.

Brighton

One of the best-known examples of tourist led regeneration is the Seafront at Brighton, winner of the Civic Trust Special Landscape Award in 2001. The strategy sought to provide physical improvements to the public realm but also to animate the space, proving a range of activities such as the basketball court, a children's play area and performance space. An important part of the strategy was to attract private investment, encouraging new businesses to the rundown and depressing seafront by refurbishing the archways for crafts uses, bars and cafes.

Margate

The South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) and Thanet District Council are jointly promoting the regeneration of a town centre site for a mixed-use development comprising residential, major retail, commercial floor space and public realm.

The regeneration scheme will kickstart the comprehensive regeneration of Margate as a whole, which has suffered serious economic decline over recent years.

The Margate Renewal Partnership, made up of members from the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA), Thanet District Council, Arts Council England, the Government Office of the South East (GOSE), the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage, has already secured almost £10 million in funding to bring forward key redevelopment schemes in the local area.

Chaired by SEEDA Chief Executive Pam Alexander, the Partnership is overseeing a number of transformational physical infrastructure, social and economic projects.

The progress of the £15m Turner Contemporary Centre, a landmark gallery due to open in 2009, is also being looked at by the partnership.

Annex 5. Further Research Relevant on Coastal Towns

1. The main academic research on coastal towns was undertaken by Beatty and Fothergill's, 'The Seaside Economy' report in 2003. But it is unclear whether different policy responses are needed in these areas, over and above other types of area, with a new approach to the problems of coastal towns. Some coastal towns are more transient (areas around Dover, for example) and have larger immigrant populations. They can be used as port of entry into the country by migrants who start, perhaps, on benefits but after a while may move on, and use them as a stepping stone to other areas.

2. There are other coastal areas that have suffered more 'structural' decline. Areas like Barrow in Furness (North West) that are physically isolated and have suffered from decline in industries like shipbuilding mean that there are little in the way of alternative skilled employment for these people.

3. Many coastal towns rely heavily on tourism as the key source of employment - and the seasonality of this means that it is difficult for people to get permanent jobs.

4. CLG have commissioned a short review of the existing evidence about coastal towns from Professor Stephen Fothergill, an expert in the field. This will map out current research and analysis and help to identify the gaps and issues which will inform any further research.

5. This review will help inform any further work to explore economic and social development issues in coastal towns and what are the primary reasons for lower employment rates and weaknesses in the local economy.

6. CLG is to fund research to identify and provide evidence of drivers of change for tackling high levels of deprivation within the Margate Central and Cliftonville West wards. This will cover a wide range of complex and inter-related issues such as reducing adult worklessness, identifying how the benefit system creates barriers to employment, tackling poor health, improving low basic skills, investigate ways to manage adult, and child, out of area placements, economic migrants from various EU countries and how local and national service providers can respond to these challenges.

7. CLG is currently drawing up a detailed specification for the research, which is part of the mixed communities work, with Thanet District Council (one of the demonstration projects) and aiming for initial funding of the study to be available by March 2008.

8. There is an evidence gap in terms of data on homes in multiple occupation (HMOs) and the employment status of people who live in such accommodation. Existing data sources such as the Labour Force Survey do not adequately cover such establishments. This is perhaps an area for this Department to take forward in their ongoing research into HMOs. However, the most recent data we have is baseline data in relation to HMO licensing. This is collected on a regional basis so does not include a breakdown by town, and does not extend to the employment status of the occupants of the dwellings. We do not have any plans or resources to commission any more detailed research.

9. The British Urban Regeneration Association (BURA) are planning to undertake research into HMOs through their Seaside Network. The Department is seeking further details of this as part of its effort to map current research relevant to coastal towns.

10. Longer term there will be the findings of the evaluation of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal—the primary data collection phase includes fieldwork in 12 case studies, three of which are in coastal areas, although these will be anonymised in the final report. The evaluation is due to report in March 2008.

Formal minutes

Monday 12 November 2007

Members present:

Dr Phyllis Starkey, in the Chair

Sir Paul Beresford
Clive Betts
John Cummings

Jim Dobbin
Mr Bill Olnier
Dr John Pugh

Coastal Towns

Draft Report (Coastal Towns: the Government's second response), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 5 read and agreed to.

Three papers were appended to the Report as Appendices 1 to 3.

Resolved, That the Report be the First Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chairman make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

[Adjourned till Monday 19 November at 4.20 pm]

List of Reports from the Committee during the current and previous Sessions

The reference number of the Government's response to each Report is printed in brackets after the HC printing number.

Session 2007–08

First Report	Coastal Towns: the Government's Second Response	HC 70
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Session 2006–07

First Report	The Work of the Committee 2005-06	HC 198
Second Report	Coastal Towns	HC 351 (<i>Cm 7126</i>)
Third Report	DCLG Annual Report 2006	HC 106 (<i>Cm 7125</i>)
Fourth Report	Is there a Future for Regional Government?	HC 352-I (<i>Cm 7119</i>)
Fifth Report	Refuse Collection	HC 536-I
Sixth Report	Equality	HC 468 (<i>Cm 7246</i>)
Seventh Report	Local Government Finance—Supplementary Business Rate	HC 719
Eighth Report	Local Government Finance—Council Tax Benefit	HC 718
First Special Report	Local Government Finance—Council Tax Benefit: Government's Response to the Committee's Eighth Report of Session 2006-07	HC 1037
Second Special Report	Refuse Collection: Government's Response to the Committee's Fifth Report of Session 2006-07	HC 1095