

**North Thames  
Fisheries Local Action Group  
Local Development Strategy  
2016-2020**

**August 2016**

## 1. Executive Summary

Achieving a sustainable fishing industry in the North Thames area, recognising its importance to the area's economy and culture, and better integrating the sector with wider community, economic, environmental and tourism outcomes. This will lead to a more seaward facing community that embraces the ethos of a healthy and productive marine environment underpinning their local economy, and engages with the industry economically and culturally.

The North Thames Fisheries Local Action Group (NTFLAG) Local Development Strategy (LDS) has been produced following many years of engagement with the industry, and through a comprehensive analysis of the challenges and opportunities. A set of five Key Priorities have been identified through which a series of projects and interventions will be delivered through productive partnerships between the industry and a wide range of stakeholders. Lead Partner, Thames Estuary Partnership (TEP) has a 20-year track record of providing a strategic framework for the sustainable development and management of the Thames Estuary and a neutral facilitation role for multi-sectoral collaboration. TEP has overseen a well-attended multi-sectoral Greater Thames Fisheries Action Group since 2004 and assisted the fishing industry and the wider stakeholder base in the NTFLAG through myriad consultations and challenges.

The FLAG's Five Key Priority Areas are:

- Leigh Quay Infrastructure: To secure improvements to the quayside and channels that enable access to the port, creating well-functioning commercial spaces and ensuring that the port is fully accessible by all boats.
- Environmental Monitoring: Changes in the estuary environment have seen some species disappear (Shrimp) while others have thrived (Thornback Ray). Long term research in partnership between the industry, academics and other stakeholders will help to reconcile anecdotal data with formal scientific analysis thus helping to inform marine and fishing policy and management.
- Combined Fish/Shellfish Marketing: Collaboration between the industry and other partners to better promote NTFLAG catch as sustainable and distinctive to the area, creating higher margins and new sales opportunities, and encouraging more direct sales to business and communities.
- Training and Marine Academy: To help up skill new entrants to the industry and provide bespoke training for marine related courses in the local area, as well as offering training/advice for local businesses supporting sustainable links between the fishing industry and the wider maritime and business community.
- Culture and Heritage: Recognising the deep cultural heritage of fishing and the active port to NTFLAG area, there will be activity to celebrate and promote the industry locally (including cooking), with close links to on-going or developing heritage and cultural projects.

The Animator, supported by TEP, Cultural Engine and other partners, will work on the specific challenges to date which face the industry and individual businesses; will provide support for accessing grants and linking to specific FLAG projects and assist in developing new projects uncovered by the FLAG communications and call for applicants. NTFLAG will provide the governance structure and build the capacity necessary to act as a catalyst for inclusion of the fleet and maritime/marine conservation issues in Leigh-on-Sea and Southend-on-Sea's strategic economic development, tourism and regeneration planning.

## **2. The FLAG Partnership**

### **2.1 Proposed membership of the FLAG**

The proposed membership of the North Thames Fishing Local Action Group (NTFLAG) will include representatives from all relevant local stakeholders, fishing and cockling industry representatives, as well as from the local community. It is important that the membership is able to oversee an integrated strategy that recognises the importance of the port at Leigh-on-Sea and the fishing industry to the wider economy, culture and heritage of the NTFLAG area (and indeed the wider South Essex area).

Membership means a place on the NTFLAG Steering Committee which will oversee and make key decisions on strategy development, assess project viability and funding, and manage the monitoring and reporting processes. The Steering Committee will sit above Management Groups for each of the Five Priority areas (see 2.2 below). Members of the Management Groups can also be FLAG members but only have oversight over their key theme. This was decided in order to bring focus and expertise to the Priorities and cut down the meeting time burden for those involved.

The Steering Committee membership will consist of Lead Partner, Thames Estuary Partnership (TEP), Southend Borough Council, Leigh Town Council, Cultural Engine (CE), Leigh Port Partnership, Thames Cackle Fisheries Association, Leigh & Southend Fishermen's Association, Shoeburyness Watermans Association, Leigh-on-Sea Coastal Community Team. The Membership of the NTFLAG Steering Committee is based on many years of successful partnership working through the TEP Greater Thames Fisheries Action Group.

A Partnership Agreement will be developed covering the work of the Steering Committee including such matters as the purpose and objectives of the Committee, governance and accountability, financial and risk management, review processes and dissolution procedures. All members of the Committee will be asked to sign up to and agree to abide by the terms of the Agreement. Similar Agreements will be developed for the Management Groups including the above and their responsibilities to the Steering Committee. All members of the Management Groups will be asked to sign up to and agree to abide by the terms of the relevant Agreement.

Membership of the Management Groups are listed in Section 4: The Strategy in the relevant Priority section.

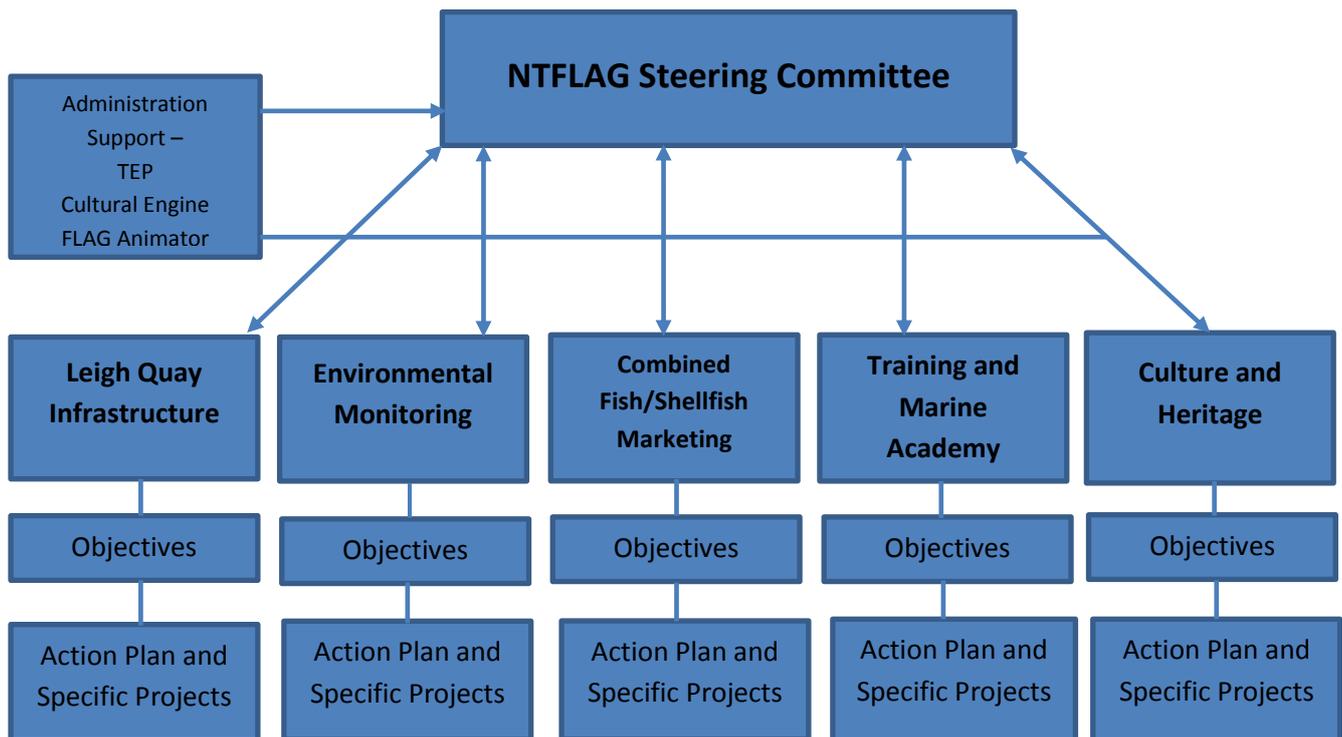
### **2.2 Structure of the decision making process**

The Steering Committee will oversee the whole decision making process for the NTFLAG, and will be responsible for overseeing monitoring, reporting and ensure progress across the whole FLAG programme, project funding and spend. The Committee will be responsible for overseeing the work of each of the Key Priority Management Groups, and for any change or revision of the Local Development Strategy (LDS) and overall FLAG strategy.

The five FLAG Priority Management Groups will report up to the Steering Committee, ensuring that projects are coming forward and progressing, and that the Priority objectives are being met. The Management Groups are based on the five Key NTFLAG Priorities identified in developing the LDS and Stage 1 FLAG application. The Management Groups will include representatives of organisations and stakeholders with a particular interest, experience or knowledge in the Key Priority. Management Groups include organisations

that are delivering or developing specific projects so it is therefore important that the FLAG Steering Committee has objective oversight of the work of each Management Group. The LDS will be reviewed annually and as part of this review the membership of the NTFLAG Steering Committee and Management Groups will be reviewed and updated with additions or reductions depending on the needs of the NTFLAG and progress against identified objectives.

Decisions on funding for projects will be made by the NTFLAG Steering Committee prior to being referred up to the MMO. Criteria will include alignment with LDS, appropriate use of EMFF funding, match-funding and experience and capacity.



### 2.3 The administrative, financial management and staffing roles & responsibilities

The Lead Partner, TEP, will provide all the administrative management, reporting and financial management of the administration and animation costs for the NTFLAG. Administration will be based at TEP offices in London, which are provided free of charge by UCL, cutting down overheads. It will also provide support in further baseline survey work, economic assessment and review of evidence and link to cultural and social programmes in London and Essex. TEP will recruit one part time (0.6FTE) Administrative Officer who will provide logistical support for the NTFLAG Steering Committee and Management Groups including compiling meeting papers, agendas and meeting minutes; compiling project and financial reports and completing the administration around financial claims; set up the processes necessary for monitoring and evaluation against FLAG milestones and monitor progress for reporting and driving the delivery of the Strategy forward. This position will be line managed by TEP Director Pat Fitzsimons and supported by Programme Manager Amy Pryor.

TEP will contract the NTFLAG Animator role to The Cultural Engine (CE), a social enterprise based in Southend. This will ensure continuity as CE has been involved in and integral to the development of the NTFLAG to date. It will also ensure the NTFLAG aligns

with local initiatives and maximises the local and regional match funding potential for projects as they develop. CE's local knowledge, networks and expertise is second to none in the FLAG area and having the Animator hired from the local areas and based with them will instil confidence and reassurance for the local NTFLAG members and wider community. The Animator will be line managed by CE Director Giles Tofield. The Animator and Administrator will work closely together particularly on funding bids for match funding projects and assisting fishermen in accessing EMFF funds.

#### **2.4 Equal opportunities statement**

TEP and Cultural Engine are committed to ensuring equality and diversity amongst all of its employees and volunteers, in line with the Equality Act 2010. Equal opportunities will form part of the FLAG Partnership Agreement and will be expected for all projects funded. Alignment with this policy will be monitored across the FLAG Priorities and delivery.

#### **2.5 Community and consultation activity**

Community involvement and consultation has been important to development of the NTFLAG concept and the priorities for the LDS. This has been primarily through the Leigh-on-Sea Coastal Community Team (LCCT), TEP Fisheries Action Group and public consultation events focused specifically on the NTFLAG.

##### Leigh-on-Sea Coastal Community Team

LCCT was established in 2015 as part of the Government's Coastal Community Teams initiative. The group has published a local economic plan which has a significant emphasis on securing the future of the port and the fishing/cockling industry locally. LCCT includes local community representatives as well as other partners including Southend Council, Leigh Town Council and Leigh Port Partnership. LCCT has therefore been key in terms of engaging the community in the process of developing the NTFLAG. LCCT Vision is – '*A thriving local area which celebrates its long fishing and maritime heritage, recognising the primary importance of the port and fishing industries to the cultural, economic and environmental vibrancy of Leigh. A strong and resilient local economy with an excellent offer for visitors, residents and business.*'

Supporting this Vision is the LCCT main priority which directly supports the NTFLAG process – '*Objective 1: Ensure the future sustainability of Old Leigh as an active Fishing Port*'.

Under Objective 1, establishing the NTFLAG is a priority project, recognising this is crucial to continuing collaboration to address the technical, environmental and investment issues and challenges.

##### TEP Fisheries Action Group

Throughout 2014, TEP held separate meetings with the fisheries industry, K&EIFCA, LPP, SBC (flood defence, tourism and regeneration teams) and local development organisation Cultural Engine to complete a SWOT analysis and discuss the current state of the industry and marine development and economic opportunities. In 2015, these issues and the overall plan for the NTFLAG was presented to and discussed with the wider stakeholder base of the Fisheries Action Group. In total, 20 meetings have been held over 2 years in order to develop the EOI and gather baseline information for the LDS. For the LDS further individual meetings and one Fisheries Action Group meeting was held to gather further views and confirmation of FLAG membership.

### Public Consultation Events

Three days of public consultation have taken place in Leigh to engage residents and visitors in the NTFLAG process, and to inform/confirm the LDS priorities. Two days of public consultation took place on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> June (part of the Leigh Folk Festival which attracts 1000s of visitors and residents to Leigh over the weekend). A further consultation event was held on the 16<sup>th</sup> July (part of Leigh Society's public event). There were over 200 face-to-face interviews at the combined events. Feedback was extremely positive in terms of community and visitor interest in the industry and a real desire to see greater clarity on what constitutes the local catch (better promotion and marketing including cooking demonstrations/tasters). All respondents recognised that the history and heritage of Leigh as a fishing centre and active port was important to the appeal of Leigh as a place to live/visit. There was also excellent interest in Citizen Science projects (Environmental Monitoring – getting local people involved).

### **2.6 Training requirements and planned funding options**

RYA power boat training 2 and Fish Identification courses for up four members of the FLAG. FLAG funding may be used as part of spending in Priority 2 but where possible external funding will be used.

### **3. Lead Partner**

The Thames Estuary Partnership (TEP) will be the lead partner. TEP is a Coastal Partnership with a 20-year track record of providing a strategy framework for the sustainable development and management of the Thames Estuary and a neutral facilitation role for multi sectoral collaboration. TEP has run a well-attended multi-sectoral Fisheries Action Group since 2004 and assisted the fishing industry and the wider stakeholder base in the NTFLAG through myriad consultations and challenges including the Marine Conservation Zone Recommendation Process, London Gateway Port development, offshore wind farms and marine European Marine Sites designations. TEP has a network of 5000 Thames stakeholders between Chelsea and the Southern North Sea providing connections to London and across the Greater London Authority, Essex and Kent County Councils. TEP also provides the secretariat role for the national Coastal Partnership Network which will assist in knowledge sharing and information dissemination between FLAGS and other coastal communities.

#### **3.1 Structure**

TEP is hosted by University College London (UCL) for whom they provide a pathway to impact for academic research and allows them to link to academic funding streams and universities throughout London, Essex and Kent. TEP is overseen by a Board of Trustees of nine representatives from the following organisations: the Port of London Authority, UCL, Thames Water, the Environment Agency, RSPB, Natural England, City of London Corporation, Essex County Council and an independent trustee with a background in the water industry. This Board oversees TEP's business plan and work strategy and meets quarterly with TEP Director Pat Fitzsimons. TEP Director is a UCL employee and directly line managed by Professor David Price, Vice Provost for Research within whose department they sit. The Director directly manages all TEP staff and volunteers.

#### **3.2 Legal basis**

TEP is a charity and Company Ltd by Guarantee.

#### **3.3 Experience of delivering European or similar funding programmes**

Between 2008 - 2011 TEP successfully secured Heritage Lottery Funding to deliver an ambitious estuary wide project, the Thames Discovery Programme which communicated an understanding and informed enjoyment of the historic Thames to the widest possible audience. This successful project has a long lasting legacy, having trained thousands of volunteers and is still running through the Museum of London Archaeology. Between 2010 - 2013, TEP successfully managed and delivered the Defra funded landscape scale Greater Thames Marshes Nature Improvement Area project and subsequently sits on the steering committee for the Thames Gateway Local Nature Partnership. TEP possesses the capacity, experience and systems to successfully administer and project manage large scale public funding programmes. Through UCL hosting and close working relationships with Essex County Council and DP World London Gateway Port, TEP has the capacity to develop and co-lead European funded projects.

### **3.4 The administrative, financial management and staffing roles and responsibilities**

TEP staff includes the full time Director, Pat Fitzsimons, responsible for delivering TEP's business plan and objectives. The full time Programme Manager, Amy Pryor, is responsible for project development, fundraising and project management for active projects in collaboration with the TEP Director. The part time Marine Litter Coordinator Kim Ferran Holt is responsible for local engagement and research on the One Less Campaign seeking to enable London to become single use plastic water bottle free by 2021. Part time PR and Office Manager, Madeleine Tuinstra-Ralston is responsible for the administration and marketing of TEP events and oversight of all communications such the Talk of Thames Magazine and TEP website. Part time Finance Manager, Michelle Ballantyne, is responsible for TEP accounting and financial reporting. TEP also has support from eight part time volunteers who help with our communications and office administration. All staff members and volunteers will play a part in the NTFLAG administration, information dissemination, fundraising and communications as appropriate.

### **3.5 Training requirements**

It is not envisioned at this stage that training will be required.

## **4. The Strategy**

The overarching aim of the NTFLAG is to enable the fishing industry within the project area to become sustainable economically, socially and environmentally. We aim to do this through delivering a Local Development Strategy (LDS) that integrates with local and regional policies and strategies and takes a holistic approach to the fundamental challenges facing the industry today.

The need for the NTFLAG and the identification of the top five priorities were assessed through consultation with the fishing industry and key local stakeholders including Leigh Port Partnership, Southend Borough Council and Leigh Town Council. The NTFLAG needs assessment built upon previous assessments including:

1. A piece of academic work entitled Greater Thames Fishery Knowledge (2001) which highlighted the need to improve communication and liaison between all coastal fisheries stakeholders including fishermen, policy makers and resource managers, and in particular to (a) identify fisheries priorities for the Greater Thames and develop projects in response to partner needs; (b) capture knowledge and information held by partners to inform coastal resource management. The TEP Fisheries Action Group was set up in response to this piece of work.

2. Southend on Sea Borough Council commissioned Southend Fisheries Strategy (2002) comprising a comprehensive survey of the fishing industry within the NTFLAG area outlining recommendations for infrastructure upgrades and market opportunities which initiated the Leigh Port Partnership.
3. Leigh-on-Sea Coastal Community Team Economic Plan (2016) which identified supporting and sustaining the fishing industry in Leigh as the main priority for all partners

The key issues and challenges outlined in all of the above strategies have never been fully tackled and resolved, and this therefore is an excellent opportunity for the FLAG to be the catalyst.

The NTFLAG SWOT analysis (set out below) referenced all of the above strategies as a basis for continued engagement with the industry and other stakeholders and was further honed through extensive consultation with the industry and wider community via bespoke meetings and TEP Fisheries Action Group meetings. The SWOT has not changed since the Stage 1 application as it was deemed by the NTFLAG stakeholders to be rigorous and detailed.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Proximity to London</li> <li>2. Diverse species both quota and non-quota</li> <li>3. Strong tradition of fishing</li> <li>4. Established fishing tourism</li> <li>5. Adaptable fleet</li> <li>6. Fish consumption is growing due to national marketing as a healthy option</li> <li>7. High traceability and low carbon routes to market more appealing to general public who are more environmentally minded than ever before</li> <li>8. World renowned cockle fishery</li> <li>9. Thriving sea angling industry</li> <li>10. Abundant marine wildlife and productive estuarine environment</li> <li>11. A new Coastal Community Team for Leigh-on-Sea which recognises the economic and cultural importance of the industry in the area</li> <li>12. Leigh-on-Sea Town Council Good For Leigh Campaign and Maritime Festival</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Aging infrastructure – quayside in disrepair and space is limited</li> <li>2. Aging fishermen</li> <li>3. Environment in flux – dynamic/shifting environment due to climate change and marine development</li> <li>4. Busy area for other marine industries</li> <li>5. Lack of consistent supply of some species of fish making added value difficult</li> <li>6. Perceived over regulation</li> <li>7. Limited market pathways</li> <li>8. Fractured industry</li> <li>9. Lack of trained workforce and new entrants</li> <li>10. Lack of baseline environmental data and scientific monitoring for integrated marine management and fisheries management</li> <li>11. Estuarine environment not fully understood by scientists</li> <li>12. No marine plan in place</li> <li>13. Not integrated into the wider community</li> <li>14. Private ownership of moorings, illegally sub-let to commercial fishermen at high prices</li> <li>15. Public parking takes up much of the space in the area, some of which may be better used to support the industry/ related fishing heritage.</li> </ol>

Opportunities	Threats
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Invest in infrastructure – improve quayside walls, scope sustainable solution for silting channel, widening entry road for articulated lorries, practical maritime training centre close to London</li> <li>2. Invest in training potential new entrants and practical maritime skills (for industry entrants across East and South East)</li> <li>3. Develop higher value markets – cohesive North Thames brand encompassing cockles and all other species</li> <li>4. Maximise economic synergy with tourism</li> <li>5. Diversify fleet into supporting scientific monitoring through linking with Universities and NGOs in London and Essex</li> <li>6. Common Fisheries Policy Reform</li> <li>7. Clear cooperation agenda for fishermen between industries and wider community</li> <li>8. Habitat creation – nursery grounds</li> <li>9. Mariculture</li> <li>10. Transferable skills exchange with wider community to help improve the skills gaps in surrounding areas</li> <li>11. Closer links with the sea angling community</li> <li>12. Marine wildlife tourism</li> <li>13. MSC accreditation</li> <li>14. Improved facilities for processing and storing</li> <li>15. Fish hatchery for conservation and education</li> <li>16. Opportunities to match sea defence infrastructure funding with other sources to improve facilities</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reduction and change in fish stocks – Thornback ray a choke species</li> <li>2. Lack of new entrants into the industry</li> <li>3. Maritime and marine development</li> <li>4. Fishing industry inability to work together – needs a governance structure to ensure sustainability</li> <li>5. Industrial fishing</li> <li>6. Climate changes</li> <li>7. Brexit</li> <li>8. Marine Spatial Planning</li> <li>9. Public perception of trawling</li> <li>10. Common Fisheries Policy Reform</li> <li>11. Loss of fishing fleet entirely due to aging infrastructure making it untenable</li> <li>12. Local development</li> <li>13. Licences bought and held by foreign companies increasing</li> <li>14. Illegal fishing – shellfish collection and black fish market</li> <li>15. Infrastructure challenges – continued silting of the channel decreasing access</li> </ol>

Through consultation on the SWOT analysis, five priorities were identified as being crucial to the survival and sustainability of the fishing industry.

Priority	Objective	Indicative Budget (£)	
		FLAG	Match
FLAG Admin/Animation	Overarching - To manage the FLAG and ensure objectives are met and delivered.	199,974.60	137,892.60
Leigh Quayside	1. Improve the quayside	100K	100K

Infrastructure	and facilities at Leigh-on-sea  2. Remedy the silting problem in Leigh Creek		
Environmental Monitoring	Independent environmental monitoring to understand the environmental changes happening in the estuary	150K	150K
Combined Fish/Shellfish Brand	1. Develop a holistic brand for shellfish and finfish caught and landed in the NTFLAG area  2. Increase the market value and opportunities for sale of NTFLAG products	100K	200K
Training and Marine Academy	1. To up skill the NTFLAG fishermen and new entrants  2. To create sustainable links between the fishing industry and the wider maritime and business community	130K	300K
Culture and Heritage	Embed fisheries and the marine environment in the tourism offer for the local area	120K	120K
Total		799974.60	857892.60

Table: Key Priorities, associated objectives and indicative budgets/match funding.

#### 4.4 Strategy objectives and Action Plan

Each of these priorities and objectives interrelate and a suite of projects within each of these priorities have been identified, together with likely Management Group members and/or delivery organisations, milestones, resources and outcomes. Whether the whole of this programme of activities can be delivered within the FLAG funded period will depend on a number of factors, including external processes e.g. SBC Shoreline Strategy, the level of EMFF resources available to implement the LDS, the availability of other match funding and the resources required to support and facilitate project development and implementation in a Brexit scenario before the end of the FLAG funded period.

The identified projects have been drawn from the extensive consultation carried out as part of the FLAG development and are considered ambitious, innovative and achievable through strong partnership involvement.

## **Priority 1 - Leigh Quay Infrastructure**

**Objective 1:** Improve the quayside and facilities at Leigh-on-Sea by influencing future major infrastructure upgrades on Leigh Quayside through coordination with flood defence schemes. This could facilitate more space for fishing related access and direct sales, using permeable paving and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs) to improve local water quality.

### **Action Plan:**

1. Work with Southend Borough Council Engineers and Planners and Economic Development to fully integrate the Shoreline Strategy with ambitions set out in the FLAG which are listed below. Once the Shoreline Strategy is finalised and agreed by the Environment Agency (estimated June 2017), planning permission and physical activity can commence. We envisage this starting to happen by Yr 3 of the FLAG funded period. If this is further delayed we are confident that due to the long term nature of our liaison through the development of the LDS and the inclusion of the below in the Shoreline Strategy, we will be involved with delivery once it commences and the ambitions of the FLAG will be achieved as part of our legacy.
  - Potentially widen the turning circle at the western end of the main commercial quay (Cockle Wharf) to allow for safer access of articulated lorries
  - Look at creating more space for direct sales of fish to the public and space for more storage and other relevant events.
  - Use sustainable smart city designs in new infrastructure e.g. permeable paving. An innovation not in place in other active fishing ports.
2. Work with local fishermen to submit bids to the wider EMFF for new storage facilities including cold and dry storage units to maximise product quality and marketing opportunities. Activity on this will take place throughout the FLAG period Yrs 1-3 depending on need.
3. Work with Natural England, the Environment Agency and Essex Wildlife Trust to design productive, multi-functional habitat offsetting for any land reclaimed through beneficial reuse of materials from this project and other infrastructure projects upstream. As plans become integrated in the Shoreline Strategy, plans for this activity will be put into action. We envision this to start in Yr1-2 upon sign off.

**Objective 2:** Leigh Creek, which drains into the channel in front of Old Leigh Quayside, continuously silts up restricting access into the Port and the wharfs. This has resulted in the majority of vessels having to moor up at the Channel Buoy. A sustainable solution to the constant need to expensively dredge this channel is essential. This will require further technical and feasibility studies to identify the most viable, long term and sustainable solution. This is not just a challenge to the fishing industry, but also the wider marine industry that has been developing around Leigh Port for many years. The wider benefit of addressing this issue is to the wider economy which relies upon an active fishing port (tourism for example). Complementary or mitigation measures would include new habitats and increasing fish nursery areas to benefit the wider North Sea stock.

### **Action plan:**

1. Commission a feasibility study to identify the problem (early Yr1) and a second feasibility to clarify and confirm technical solutions (late Yr1).
2. Fundraise to implement the most sustainable solution that provides the most multiple benefits e.g. habitat creation. This will commence mid Yr1.

This Priority interrelates with Priority 3, 4 & 5 as improved facilities will support better access, processing and storage space thus ensuring better market opportunities, training opportunities and more engagement with the tourism industry and local businesses. It will also potentially enhance the environment through habitat creation that may provide aquaculture or shellfish harvesting opportunities.

Management Group members at this time: SBC, Fishermen, LPP, LCCT, CE, SC2 Consultants, Sailing Club representative

### **Priority 2 - Environmental Monitoring Programme**

The Thames Estuary environment has changed considerably over the last decade with fishermen now reporting a steep decline of the shrimp fishery and a sharp increase in abundance of Thornback Ray for example. There is an opportunity to better understand the environmental changes in the Estuary through facilitating partnerships between academia and the local industry, with local boats being provided for scientific research and independent data collection for improved fisheries management, marine spatial planning, catchment management and marine protected area management generating an income stream for the under 10s (u10s) outside of quota. Establishing the NTFLAG as a hub of innovative research focusing on the estuary environment and its importance for wider conservation and climate change issues would utilise local knowledge, making use of the local fleet thus rationalising anecdotal data with scientifically collected data to achieve greater objectivity and more trust. This data could underpin fisheries and marine management in the area and support improved liaison between statutory bodies and the fishing industry. The monitoring programme will also help to inform any regional issues relating to a future UK Fisheries Policy and the South East Marine Plan.

**Objective:** To develop and deliver an independent environmental monitoring programme to better understand environmental changes taking place in the estuary.

#### **Action Plan:**

1. Develop an at sea environmental monitoring programme which addresses current gaps in data and standardisation of data recording through a collaborative approach between academia, NGOs and fishermen. An innovative approach to data collection in estuaries. Activity will start in early Yr with plans to pilot an approach in mid Yr1. Once the programme has been finalised this will continue year on year.
2. Develop a citizen science programme supporting local community and stakeholder engagement in the process of environmental monitoring through developing resources and systems. An innovative approach to data collection in estuaries. This will commence in mid Yr1 with a view to delivery in late Yr1/early Yr2.
3. Develop a voluntary fisheries observer programme to collect observations on marine litter, marine mammal interactions and bird movements. This will commence in Yr2 once the at sea monitoring programme has been tested.
4. Develop a data management protocol and identify a suitable neutral custodian to enable open access data. Collate existing datasets for use as a baseline from e.g. Cefas, EA, MMO, DPWorld London Gateway Port and K&EIFCA. This will underpin the above and maximise research opportunities, analysis of datasets and match funding streams. This will commence in Oct 2016 as part of a TEP initiative. Data collation will begin in Yr1.
5. Support ZSL's Greater Thames seal survey to ensure a continuous dataset and contribute to research in potential humane deterrents for industry use. The survey

will occur in August once a year throughout Yr1-3. Research into deterrents will start in Yr2.

This interrelates with Priorities 3, 4 & 5 as improved datasets will provide an overall picture of the environmental health of the estuary and contribute to the value of the catch and brand as communication about activity and findings to the wider community increase interest. It will also provide a training route and resources and increase the wider community's knowledge of their marine natural assets increasing tourism opportunities.

Management Group members at this time: TEP, CE, Fishermen, DPWorld, PLA, Kings College, UCL, ZSL, Cefas, SC2, Sea Angler

### **Priority 3 - Combined Fish/Shellfish Marketing**

The fishing industry within the NTFLAG area is dominated by the cockle industry which contributes over two million pounds to the local economy annually and having active vessels (both cockle dredgers and trawlers) has shaped the identity of the coastline. Combined with the proximity to London and fantastic access linking the NTFLAG area to London through the C2C line, they provide a considerable draw for tourism with a thriving seafront in Leigh-on-Sea, selling cockles in local cafes.

**Objective 1:** Develop a holistic brand for shellfish and finfish caught and landed in the NTFLAG area.

#### **Action Plan:**

1. Market and brand development through extensive consultation/promotion with local businesses, Leigh CCT, Southend Council and cooperation between fishermen. This will commence in early Yr1 and expected to be launched in early Yr2.
2. Investigate opportunities to maximise existing products (including future discards retained) and opening up niche markets for by-products. This will commence in parallel with the above.

**Objective 2:** Increase the market value and opportunities for production and sale of NTFLAG products

#### **Action Plan:**

1. Develop a business case and application for Protected Geographical Identity for Leigh-on-Sea Cockles. This will commence in Yr1.
2. Work with the Port of London Authority, SBC and fishermen to develop a marine litter collection project and infrastructure. This will commence in Yr1 with expected delivery in Yr2.
3. Work with marine litter organisations e.g. Fishing for Litter to generate skills for recycling of litter and a market for the sale of these products. This will commence in parallel with the above.

4. Investigate which finfish species are eligible for MSC Accreditation and start work towards designation of these. Activity will commence in Yr1, delivery timescale is as yet unknown.
5. Commission a feasibility study for new shellfish grounds. This will commence in parallel with Priority 1, Objective 2, Action Plan point 2.

This interrelates with Priorities 1, 2, 4 and 5 as a holistic brand and maximisation of value and markets for existing products and recycled marine litter will increase the tourist offer, raise awareness of the environment of the area, strengthen the evidence need for improved Quayside facilities and require training in new marketing and business models.

Management Group members at this time: CE, TEP, Fishermen, SBC, LTC, LCCT, PLA, Sea Angler

#### **Priority 4 - Training / Marine Academy**

The proximity to London enables the NTFLAG area to become a training and research hub for the East and South East. By establishing a maritime academy training facility which could train fishermen in marketing and new business models; smart green aquaculture and employ them to train new entrants, as well as provide maritime expertise and local environmental knowledge to a wide cross section of different courses. These could include marine biology, marine conservation, fisheries management, environmental policy, marine technology, basic maritime skills (navigation, radio, radar, etc.). This could create a facility for both practical and theoretical study as well as a base for environmental monitoring and marine conservation activities close to London. This would not only provide formal training but a chance for knowledge/experience exchange across sectors e.g. students of fisheries policy could work with local fishermen to complete consultation documents to experience the industry from the end users perspective, the lessons from which they would take with them into their future careers. This is an ambitious plan and in order to ensure its delivery the NTFLAG will start small and build on successes and lessons learned.

**Objective 1:** To up skill the NTFLAG fishermen and new entrants

##### **Action Plan:**

1. Find a suitable venue for business and marketing training for existing fishermen. Commence in Yr1.
2. Devise a training programme that suits current fishermen's needs through consultation with the fleet. Commence in Yr1 with expected launch in Yr2.
3. Devise a training programme for new entrants through consultation with the fleet and Eastern Training. Commence in Yr1 with expected launch in Yr2

**Objective 2:** To create sustainable links between the fishing industry and the wider maritime, education and business community

##### **Action Plan:**

1. Develop a suite of transferable skills modules and associated apprenticeships linking the wider business and job seeking community with the fisheries. This will commence in Yr2 with expected delivery in Yr3.

2. Develop practical maritime training programme with Eastern Training (SEAFISH). Commence in Yr1 with expected launch in Yr2
3. Develop a suite of theoretical training modules for other marine courses and academia and institutions. This will commence in Yr2 with expected delivery in Yr3.
4. Develop a suite of educational materials for schools linked to existing resources from EWT, Sea Life Adventure Aquarium and DPWorld. This will commence in late Yr1 with expected delivery in early Yr2.
5. Develop a pilot for the Marine CoLABoration Ocean Literacy project currently in development between TEP and the Marine Conservation Society. This will commence in Yr1 with expected delivery in Yr2.

This Priority interrelates with Priorities 2, 3 and 5 as a training facility with a good reputation can only add to the overall brand of the area encouraging tourism and greater knowledge of the marine natural assets. It may also contribute to improved marine and fisheries management and provide a conduit and base for data collected and monitoring programmes. It can create a greater sense of ownership and custodianship of the marine environment throughout the community

Management Group members at this time: TEP, CE, Fishermen, DPWorld, PLA, RYA, New Economics Foundation, SC2 and Sea Anglers.

### **Priority 5 - Cultural and Heritage**

Leigh-on-Sea is the most active fishing port and where all the locally registered vessels land. Leigh-on-Sea and the North Thames area has a recorded history of a fishing industry and associated community for over 1000 years and is the closest active fishing port to London attracting thousands of visitors every year, shaping the character of the surrounding area. The industry is recognised as essential for safeguarding the existing tourism and other related sectors including hospitality and retail.

**Objective:** Embed fisheries and a healthy marine environment in the tourism offer for the local area.

### **Action Plan:**

1. Investigate and develop opportunities for wildlife boat trips. The wildlife of the Thames Estuary is not well understood by local communities and the millions of visitors who come to the Southend area each year. This will commence in Yr1 with an expected launch in Yr2.
2. FLAG Food Hub and 'Classroom on the Coast': To promote the work of the FLAG and the industry, FLAG partners led by Cultural Engine and seek to develop a high-profile Hub near to the Broadway in Leigh. This will be a space from which to inform and consult, promote specific projects, offer demonstration fish cooking sessions and tasters led by local chefs, and sign-post to Old Leigh. It will also work as an informal Leigh base for the Animator. This will commence in Yr1 with an expected launch in Yr2 to align with the branding launch.

3. Training for tourism providers: A package of training for local tourism providers to inform them on the key aspects of the local fishing industry. This will help to support local supply chains and create knowledgeable advocates for the industry across the local area. This will commence in Yr2.

This Priority interrelates with Priorities 1, 2, 3 and 4 as interest in the local offer from the natural marine environment to the products available to the community will increase interest in achieving the outcomes of all the priorities.

Management Group members at this time: SBC, CE, Fishermen, DPWorld, Caterers/restaurants, LCCT, Leigh Society, LPP, Leigh Maritime CIC, and Sea Anglers

#### 4.6 Planned delivery process

Each project will be further developed through the Management Group set up for each Priority. A funding call will be put out through all local channels to advertise each priority and its associated objectives to invite applications from as diverse a range as possible and to ensure that additional projects to those already identified that could deliver against EMFF OP Guidance and objectives e.g. CFP Reform. There may be overlap between FLAG membership and applicants given the involvement to date of a wide range of stakeholders which includes many organisations in a good position to deliver a project. Therefore, in order to be as transparent and fair as possible, the following draft selection criteria for projects will be used by the Steering Committee based on best practice for funders and in consultation with the fishing industry:

Criteria	Question	Scoring Comments
<b>Geographical scale</b>	Does it fall within the NTFLAG area? If not, how does it benefit the NTFLAG area?	Highest weighting and will be a pass or fail unless clear benefits to the NTFLAG area can be demonstrated
<b>Time scale of project</b>	How long will the project take to implement?	Should be implemented within the FLAG
	How long will the project take to produce benefits for the NTFLAG area?	Benefits should be seen within FLAG if possible within 1 year of project completion
	How long will the benefits to the NTFLAG area last?	Long-term benefits to the sector higher score
	Will the project help keep people engaged in the NTFLAG LDS?	If possible the project should promote the FLAG concept
<b>Strategic Context</b>	Is the project aligned with the NTFLAG LDS strategy?	Highest score if it does. Otherwise will need to demonstrate wider benefits in keeping with the aims of the LDS
	Does the project deliver a solution to issues and challenges set out in other relevant strategies	Supporting local economic/regen strategies, or

		regional/national fisheries strategies will score highest
<b>Collaborative working and support</b>	How many partners are involved in the project?	Greater levels of relevant collaboration will be score higher (if partnership is relevant)
	Does the project have local community support?	Higher scoring for projects which can demonstrate support locally
<b>Feasibility</b>	Does the project have permissions from the relevant authorities, or has consideration been given to the requirements of consents?	Highest score for projects that are ready to go or have fewer risks relating to consents and permissions
	Is the project evidence based?	Can the project demonstrate an objective approach to justification?
	Does the applicant organisation have relevant experience of delivering similar projects?	Higher score for relevant experience
	Does the project balance ecology, economy and social values?	Broader outcomes that create a more resilient industry that is integrated with other sectors will score higher
<b>Funding</b>	Does the project currently have funding sources identified? None Potential funding sources identified Part funding secured Full funding secured?	Will have a higher score if all sources of match funding (if required) are in place.
<b>Stage of Development</b>	What stage of development is the project currently at? Conceptual Designed Approved Currently being implemented	Higher score for projects that are ready to go in terms of implementation
<b>External objectives and policies</b>	Does the project meet WFD objectives – directly, indirectly or not at all? Does the project meet Marine Spatial Planning Objectives? Does the project meet Local development objectives? Does the project meet Bathing Waters Directive?	Higher scores if positive answers

<b>Replicable</b>	Could the project be replicated elsewhere (within the estuary or a coastal area)?	Higher score if project is replicable
<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>	Does the project proposal incorporate monitoring and evaluation of the project in line with the NTFLAG criteria?	Higher score if evaluation criteria considered

The Strategy provides a context for this work and will be used to assess the need for and eligibility of specific projects. The final criteria will be posted on the FLAG website.

Application selection will be done by the Steering Committee and where a conflict of interest exists this will be declared and the conflicted organisation will step out of the application selection process for that particular project.

Project approval procedure will be in two stages:

1. Expression of Interest to allow potential applicants a means to establish whether, at an early stage, their proposal is likely to be eligible and if so to provide support for its development.
2. Fully developed project proposal

Both stages are subject to the following approval process:

- a) Eligible Parties submit a fully-prepared project/programmes document to the NTFLAG by the deadline stated in communications
- b) The Animator will screen all proposals against the criteria agreed by the NTFLAG and shortlist a collection of proposals to submit to the NTFLAG Steering Committee at least seven days prior to the scheduled FLAG meeting.
- c) The Committee will review the shortlist and select the projects to put forward to the MMO for selection and sign off.
- d) MMO approves/does not approve/rejects the recommendations
- e) All approved projects will be posted on the NTFLAG website following the conclusion of its selection.

It is recognised that some key fisheries related projects will have to be delivered early in the programme to keep the industry engaged and ensure that the relationships and trust built during the FLAG development to date is solidified and built upon e.g. feasibility study for Leigh Creek and storage unit applications to EMFF. These projects may change and develop during the course of the FLAG depending on resources available and the continued work of the FLAG in identifying changing priorities.

#### **4.7 Planned leverage of other funds and private funding**

Initially, the NTFLAG will focus on securing funding for projects through the following routes (not exhaustive):

- Coastal Communities Fund: Round 5 opens in 2017. Preparation required for projects includes developing full delivery and business plans and ensuring that partnerships are in place. It will be important for the NTFLAG to liaise with Leigh CCT and other local groups in the Southend area to ensure that there is a clear strategy for this fund.
- Heritage Lottery Fund/Big Lottery: There are clear opportunities for Heritage Lottery bids for projects set out in the Action Plan, and also Big Lottery Funding which can support a wide range of projects with clear community outcomes.

- Wider European Marine & Fisheries Fund (EMFF): We intend to apply to the wider EMFF fund.
- Infrastructure investment: At this stage the Southend Shoreline Strategy has not been published, but if investment does come forward for this then the FLAG will need to work with all relevant partners to ensure that match funding opportunities are not lost, for example matching any Environment Agency investment in sea wall improvements with bids to ERDF or EMFF for facility improvements. The Southend Borough Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan for 2014 makes clear reference to investment in sea defences at Leigh, as well as potential investments in public transport schemes which could support elements of the FLAG's objectives.
- Local Enterprise Partnership: The South East LEP has a clear reference to supporting the FLAG application. In addition, Leigh CCT will work with other CCTs in the South East area to ensure that they have a clear voice on priority setting and proposed investment in coastal regeneration which includes cultural investment. The LEP have the key role overseeing EU funding which is relevant to EMFF, ERDF and ESF.
- European Strategic Investment Funds (ESIF): Principally European Regional Development Funding (ERDF) and European Social Fund (ESF). Priority 1's challenges and opportunities are clearly relevant, as well as the diversification opportunities for the industry which ESF could be relevant to. These will be accessed as far as possible depending on the situation with reported suspension of payments by HM Treasury following the vote for Britain to leave the EU.
- Arts and Cultural Funding: There are priorities set out in the Leigh CCT Action Plan that are potentially relevant to Arts Council funding (or indeed other Trust funding for arts and cultural activity), which the FLAG could provide match funding for where synergies exist.
- Visit England: There may be an opportunity as the LCCT led Destination Management Plan process develops to look at securing funding for Priority 3.
- Other Government Funding: The Government opened the first Coastal Revival Fund in 2015 demonstrating a commitment to supporting coastal regeneration above and beyond what may be available in the future through the Coastal Communities Fund. Through working with the Leigh CCT the FLAG will ensure it is ready to make the most of such opportunities in the future, with clarity on priorities and 'oven ready' projects.
- Private Sector: DP World will launch their Local Sustainability Strategy in 2016 and have committed to becoming an NTFLAG member sitting on the Management Groups for Environmental Monitoring, Culture and Heritage and Training/Marine Academy. The NTFLAG priorities and associated objectives align with several of their Sustainability Strategy objectives and thus will be eligible for applying for funding and in kind resource. Other private investment opportunities will be sought over the course of the FLAG for both project delivery and legacy funding.
- Academic Funding: TEP is hosted by University College London and will capitalise on any research funding available through liaison with every department via the Thames Research Forum. The inaugural meeting takes place in September 2016. The Office for the Vice Provost Research (TEP Host) will invite representatives from every department to a one day conference to share information on research projects on-going and in development. TEP will showcase the NTFLAG and seek collaboration from the academic community. In addition, TEP, UCL and HR Wallingford are developing a Thames Research Conference for Autumn 2017 and have gained agreement from academic publishers Elsevier to publish a Thames Special Edition of their journal. Data

collected through the NTFLAG will be showcased and further research collaborations will be fostered.

- Philanthropic Funding: TEP is funded to be a part of a Marine CoLABoration, a LAB approach to devising projects to communicate the values of the ocean and create systemic changes which benefit the marine environment. The nine organisations involved have expertise which ranges across policy, systems change, marine conservation, environmental law and community-led development and management of natural resources and have global to local reach. This project is funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, a large philanthropic funder with a budget for match funding projects that arise out of the LAB work. This group is aware of the NTFLAG plans and has agreed to support the FLAG through inclusion in projects and initiatives that may arise out of the LAB work providing a potential for utilising cutting edge research and approaches and European/Global case studies for fisheries and MPA management.
- Existing projects: TEP have numerous existing and developing projects and relationships with philanthropic funders which can provide match funding where synergies exist.

#### 4.8 Measurable targets, results and outputs

The following table provides an indicative view of potential outcomes from the NTFLAG process. These will be reviewed regularly with the MMO and local NTFLAG Members.

EMFF Indicator	NTFLAG Targets	Rationale
1.8 Employment maintained (FTE) in the fisheries sector or complementary activities	30	The NTFLAG priorities are evidence based upon years of on-going consultation, strategy development and identification of projects. The survival of the existing operations in Leigh could rest on the work of the FLAG (Infrastructure, Marketing and Research in particular)
4.3 Business created	3	Spin-offs from research programme. The FLAG Hub space may support in a new CIC to continue the work of the FLAG. New sales and processing space will create new business opportunities locally.
4.1 Employment created	5	Within existing businesses through improved facilities, more direct sales and processing space. Also FLAG Animator will have a role to expand the Hub space concept with partners.
1.3 Change in Net Profits	£100,000 (approx.)	Improved facilities, sales, and research opportunities through FLAG activities. Difficult at this stage to be precise. Could potentially be a lot higher.
1.4b Change in unwanted catches	TBC	Research priority will contribute to this

#### 4.9 Community and stakeholder involvement in the development of the strategy

The NTFLAG has benefitted from the establishment of the Leigh-on-Sea Coastal Community Team (LCCT) which includes a wide range of stakeholders and community

representatives with an interest in the fishing industry locally, the port and its related heritage and culture. The LCCT is led by the Cultural Engine, and the group has been involved in the development of the five NTFLAG priorities through regular meetings and discussions, recognising the wider benefits to Leigh's economy from a strong fishing industry and active port.

Southend Borough Council (SBC) is an important stakeholder in the NTFLAG and has taken part in the development of priorities for the NTFLAG, including being part of the LCCT. As landowner and statutory authority for coastal defences it is important that there is strong engagement throughout with life of the NTFLAG and SBC will be on the Steering Committee with both executive and Councillor interest.

TEP and Cultural Engine have held public consultation events on the NTFLAG to raise the profile of the work taking place on the LDS Stage 2, and to garner community interest and potential for engagement on a range of issues. Two days of consultation were undertaken on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> June in Leigh-on-Sea where 100s of residents and visitors completed surveys and asked questions. This was followed up by a public engagement event, again in Leigh-on-Sea, on the 16<sup>th</sup> July. Both events have confirmed earlier work on identifying priorities, and a detailed breakdown of responses is available.

The Fishing Industry have been heavily involved in the development of the NTFLAG priorities for over two years, and the current strategic approach was re-confirmed at a special meeting of industry representatives from across the area on the 7<sup>th</sup> June.

TEP have also continued to develop ideas through the Greater Thames Fisheries Action Group which includes a broad range of interested stakeholders including PLA, Zoological Society London, DPWorld and the Institute of Fisheries Management. The most recent meeting was on the 9<sup>th</sup> June when all of the priorities and specific projects were discussed. Other stakeholder organisations have been engaged through meetings including Kent & Essex IFCA, New Economics Foundation (relevant to their work on the Blue New Deal), Eastern Training, Marine Biological Association and Cefas.

#### 4.10 Communications and publicity action plan

The communications strategy provides an outline on how to link the NTFLAG objectives with communication planning. This action plan will provide an overarching communication strategy that sets out communication priorities, different target groups, best ways of communicating with them, and the required resources and desired outcomes. A more detailed communication strategy will be developed once the NTFLAG is set up. This will be updated as projects develop, are delivered and annually when the LDS is reviewed.

Communication Objective (Specific)	Outcomes(Measurable)	Strategies
Present the NTFLAG as a viable and effective programme that will achieve tangible outcomes for the North Thames fishing community	That stakeholders can easily identify with what the NTFLAG project is about and what it is trying to achieve.	Develop a project brand and key messages to effectively promote the NTFLAG project to all stakeholder groups  Establish a FLAG Hub space in Leigh raising the profile of the projects, signposting and

		signing up volunteers, fish/shellfish cooking demos and consultation event space.
Develop key messages for the NTFLAG	Consistent presentation of the NTFLAG so that target groups instantly know what the NTFLAG project is about and what it is trying to achieve.	Develop a range of key messages that represent the NTFLAG objectives and programmes (focus on the Five Key Priorities)
Raise general awareness of current issues in the North Thames fishing industry	That target groups are aware of the value the fishing trade brings to the economy, and the issues, challenges and opportunities faced.	Generate stories in the regional, local and specialist media and on social media – regular updates on progress tackling key challenges websites and social media platforms
Provide overview to stakeholders on the NTFLAG project	Generate interest amongst a wider audience for the project and to ensure that all target groups have knowledge of what the NTFLAG project is about and what it is trying to achieve.	Develop an NTFLAG brochure and webpage and social media presence which provides an overview of the NTFLAG aims and programmes. Have an NTFLAG stall at local events e.g. the Leigh Fishing Festival
Keep stakeholders updated of NTFLAG progress	That all stakeholder groups are informed of the NTFLAG plans and progress	Develop a regular NTFLAG newsletter to keep stakeholders updated Develop an NTFLAG database Vlogs/blogs, e-newsletters, emails, online videos

Target audiences	Needs	Receive information via:
Fishermen/Cocklers/Anglers	Majority aged between 50 and 80. Many do not use technology or social media to communicate. Beneficiaries of the bid. Will need to provide feedback and have significant input into project programmes; access to wider EMFF funding	Word of mouth, leaflets, signs on quayside, local festivals and markets Animator liaison and collaboration. NTFLAG Steering Group and Management Group meetings/minutes

Local councils: Councillors and project leads	Well-briefed local Councillors can be ambassadors for the NTFLAG. They have excellent access through to communities and other stakeholders. It is important that they are clear on priorities, projects and the role that the Local Authority is playing.	Meetings e-mails openings/launch LOGO's on promotions
Regulatory organisations: PLA, EA, NE, IFCA	Will need to be involved in some project design and implementation	Lead partner and Management Group communications Regular updates of progress through email Receive data generated
Leigh on Sea residents	They will need to know how the NTFLAG will make a difference to their community and opportunities to get involved in project initiatives	Word of mouth, local press, local festivals, information in council newsletters, leaflets in local libraries, email updates
NGO's Academic Institutions	Need information on policy and procedures, what is expected of them, access to training on learning, access to application for funding from FLAG	Volunteer Induction pack One to one meetings about what's involved Thank you events
Funders	Need information on how we delivered the programmes.	Formal project update submissions

Monitoring, evaluation and impact of the communications strategy and delivery will be measured through media reach (target publications and coverage, social media, video hits and likes, click through on links in articles); public engagement numbers collected via FLAG newsletter and event sign up; take up of social projects (cooking demonstration and citizen science for example) and submission of project applications. A complete communications tracker kept up to date through the administration of the project will be used for assessing impact, reporting and annual LDS review.

#### **4.11 Planned alignment with other CLLD initiatives including cooperation or partnerships with other community bodies**

There are no other CLLD activities or initiatives taking place in the Leigh area. However the NTFLAG will be well integrated with the Leigh-on-Sea Coastal Community Team which works to similar principles to CLLD with significant community and industry representation.

#### **4.12 Evidence of alignment with regional policies**

As part of the strategy, its context and consistency with other policies, strategies and interventions have been evaluated on two levels: Regional/European, and local. This assessment has been based on publicly available documents which contain information, data and evidence relating to fisheries management at these different levels. This ensures that the strategy's objectives and measures undertaken, enhance and build on strong strategic foundations. These documents and supporting information data are outlined below.

### Regional/European level

The FLAG is referenced as a key initiative within the South East LEP ESIF Strategy (2014). Board members of the NTFLAG include Southend-on-Sea Borough Council (SBC) and Cultural Engine who are key links to accessing the SE LEP and regional development funds as well as flood defence funding which will be critical in delivering Priority 1. Further improvements to the infrastructure on land will include innovative surface water and carbon neutral designs in the quayside to help mitigate climate change (extreme weather events, tidal and fluvial flooding and CO2 emissions) and contribute to the delivery of the Bathing Waters Directive and Water Framework Directive through improved surface water quality from runoff and washing down areas on the quayside.

To achieve Maximum Sustainable Yield of local stocks by 2020 and deliver against the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) and EU Marine Spatial Planning Directive (MSPD), better environmental data is needed.

K&EIFCA have been working with Cefas on the Shark By-Watch UK programme to improve fishing practices and knowledge for sustainable shark, skate and ray fisheries. Cefas will be a member of the Priority 2 Management Group to ensure alignment and will also contribute to Priority 4 to train new entrants in basic fisheries science.

The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 introduced a new framework for the sustainable management of marine and coastal environments, ensuring that they are clean healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse. Priority 2 addresses data gaps in the local area and results may lead to fisheries led conservation areas for Dover sole and local management measures for Thornback Ray.

### Local level

Engagement with the Southend Shoreline Strategy process is important to realise the infrastructure improvements vital for the continued existence of the fishing industry as well as the aspiration to improve space along the front of the main quay (locally known as Cockle Wharf). The Southend Shoreline strategy is expected to be published in late 2016 and is therefore good timing for the NTFLAG as all partners can work together to identify the opportunities to improve facilities over the next few years. Further, the EA are supportive of the aspirations and will help the NTFLAG navigate the political and planning system to get projects moving.

Cultural Engine also led the development of local economic development strategies for two Coastal Community Teams within the NTFLAG area in 2016 – Leigh and Shoeburyness. The need to support the fishing industry, maximise economic development of the industry and the economic opportunities related to it outside of the fishing sector feature strongly in

the Leigh CCT Strategy. The industry is recognised as essential for safeguarding the existing tourism and other related sectors including hospitality and retail, maximising opportunities for growth due to the fisheries industry shaping the identity of the area over hundreds of years. The CCTs provide a link into Coastal Communities Funding and the opportunity to develop projects that recognise and value the cultural embeddedness of fisheries within the local communities, their contribution to sense of identity and other indirect contributions to the coastal community economy.

#### **4.13 Initial proposals for any co-operation activity, setting out the need, opportunity and expected outcomes**

As one of a large number of FLAGs across Europe tackling the same or very similar issues, the NTFLAG will be keen to learn from the experience of FLAGs across Europe and benefit from the support and information provided through FARNET (the Fisheries Area Network), as well as contributing knowledge on key issues such as environmental monitoring, tourism and fishing.

It is the intention of the NTFLAG to stimulate information sharing and cross UK FLAG working groups and beyond via the Coastal Partnership Network and Marine CoLABoration. Areas identified at the first MMO FLAG LDS workshop included an Environmental Monitoring Working Group and potentially a Local Fisheries Management Group. The latter group would share information on progress and seek to learn from previous UK FLAGs and potentially support unsuccessful FLAGs through dissemination of learning. It is the view of the NTFLAG that there is great potential to influence future UK fisheries management and policies in a post Brexit context and will endeavour to work with other FLAGs, past and present, to maximise results and resources to influence an integrated and sustainable approach.

These ambitions may be realised through regular meetings between UK FLAGs, incorporating reciprocal visits to understand the context in which they are working and learn from each other's experience.

#### **4.14 Exit Strategy**

The exit strategy for the NTFLAG is to ensure that there is continued strategic buy-in and capacity beyond the initial three years. The FLAG Steering Committee has representation from all of the local groups with a role to play in ensuring a continued effort to tackle challenges and respond to opportunities. The work and collaborative ethos of the NTFLAG will therefore be embedded in the strategies of member stakeholder organisations and groups. Lessons learned will be analysed annually through the Steering Committee and used to inform LDS review and legacy fundraising culminating in a full evaluation produced in Year 3. This will inform future strategy and local policy relating to the port and fishing industry in Leigh. In addition, several of the potential projects will be developed with monetisation of services in mind. For example the training academy will develop a revenue stream to ensure its long term viability. Overall success and failure will be measured through achievement of objectives and the scale of impact to the fisheries industry and wider community. Impact will partly be measured through the indicators set out in Section 4.8. Annual surveys of the businesses and wider community will measure awareness, uptake of project outputs e.g. attendance at FLAG events and overall satisfaction in activities delivered.

The local organisations/groups which will strategically align with the NTFLAG strategy include:

TEP Fisheries Action Group: This group will continue to meet and assess progress with FLAG and engage with the key issues. Many of the Group will be represented on the Key Priority Management Groups (particularly the Environmental Monitoring Programme).

Leigh Port Partnership: It is likely that LPP will eventually merge with the FLAG management process, utilising its existing charity/registered company status to continue supporting the NTFLAG process beyond the initial three years. LPP includes fishing/cockling industry representatives, as well as other key stakeholders involved with the Port and local related industry.

Leigh-on-Sea Coastal Community Team: LCCT is currently an informal unincorporated organisation which has overseen the development of an economic plan for the Leigh coastal area. LCCT will continue the development of local economic and cultural strategies that focus on the future of the port and the fishing industry. CCTs are backed by Department for Communities & Local Government, and therefore the priorities for the NTFLAG will be reflected in LCCT strategies which will continue to inform and influence local project and policy development and securing funding beyond the initial three years of the FLAG.

Local Authorities: Southend Borough Council are a key partner and will play a full role in the FLAG with representation on the Steering Group and management of projects. The Council are reviewing regeneration priorities including responding to the Thames Estuary Commission, and ensuring that Leigh-on-Sea continues to play a role as an active fishing port is central to this. Leigh Town Council is similarly supportive of the FLAG and the LCCT, and will be important partners for promoting the industry and the port throughout the FLAG and beyond the initial three years.

Marine CoLABoration: TEP's membership of the Marine CoLABoration ensures access to innovative approaches to sustainable marine management and there is significant interest in the fishing industry as ambassadors and custodians of the marine environment. Wherever there are opportunities to align objectives, trial approaches and learn lessons through the NTFLAG, TEP will ensure this is achieved.

#### **4.15 Provisions for addressing horizontal issues**

TEP sits within the Office of the UCL Vice-Provost (Research) (OVPR), and follows their policies and strategies to address issues such as discrimination, diversity, equality, environmental impact, sustainability and innovation. TEP collaborates with various UCL teams to ensure the UCL's Research strategy which has three central aims: leadership founded in excellence, cross-disciplinary grounded in expertise and realising the impact of a global university. As part of this, the OVPR takes a proactive and coordinating approach to planning, harvesting, connecting and prioritising insights from across UCL into an integrated vision as well as supporting interdisciplinary research and funding applications which will be a valuable resource for the FLAG.

TEP mirrors UCL's commitment to providing a learning, working and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all its members are respected, which is free from discrimination, prejudice, intimidation and all forms of harassment. TEP ensures that its equal opportunities policy is implemented and monitored at an organisational and individual level meeting the requirements outlined in the Equality Act 2010.

UCL is dedicated to nurturing and celebrating curiosity-driven research innovation that incorporates multiple disciplines. It has set out a Research Strategy designed to deliver immediate, medium- and long-term benefits to humanity – that is simultaneously extraordinary and in complete alignment with their fundamental values. The UCL European Research and Innovation Office's primary goal is to help UCL maintain its position at the forefront of European collaboration in science and technology. It has participated in over 650 EU Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) projects, has been awarded over 100 prestigious European Research Council grants and is consistently ranked amongst the top 5 university participants in EU collaborative research worldwide (#1 in the UK). TEP and CE will take learning and advice from OVPR to ensure innovation in research, management and business is at the heart of the FLAG programme. This is reflected in the ambitious, integrated approach outlined in the Strategy Action Plan.

UCL seeks to minimise its negative environmental impacts and enhance its environmental sustainability through an Environmental Sustainability Strategy which TEP abides by on campus and builds into developing projects. It sets out commitments and targets so as to maintain an acceptable level of environmental protection, improve environmental sustainability performance and minimise disturbance as far as reasonably practicable. Lessons will be learned from this approach and the FLAG will build on the sustainability and environmental impact targets to influence existing and new businesses delivered by the FLAG. Ultimately, the FLAG will seek to influence the wider community to enable a more sustainable and environmentally inclusive and sensitive society within the NTFLAG area. This is reflected across all the priorities and evident in the identified projects. Horizontal issues will be included in the Partnership Agreement of the FLAG and members will commit to them for FLAG work and seek to influence their wider organisational approaches if best practice is not currently in place.

## **5. Management and Administration**

### **5.1 The administrative and financial management arrangements**

As outlined in Section 2 and 3, core administration will be based at Lead Partner, TEP's offices in London which are provided free of charge by UCL cutting down overheads. TEP will manage the budget for the administration and animation costs. TEP will recruit a part time (0.6FTE) NTFLAG Administrator at the start of the Strategy funded period in Yr 1. This role will be continuous throughout the life of the FLAG as the responsibilities outlined in Section 2.3 will need to be met through until the final report and claims have been submitted and approved. This role will be essential for providing an audit trail and recorded oversight of the project and ensuring the legacy and exit strategy are planned from the beginning allowing for a smooth transition at the end of Yr 3. To ensure that a change of staff within this position does not affect the delivery and work of the FLAG, TEP Director Pat Fitzsimons will directly line manage the position. Pat has over 20 years of experience in managing small to medium businesses and charities. Her background is in business, economics, community development and regeneration. Previous to working in the third sector she worked in the public sector in planning and community development in Local Authorities. Pat is an ideal person to line manage the role as she will have full oversight of the reporting and financial management and ensure efficient processes are put in place. TEP Programme Manager Amy Pryor will support the position and sit on the FLAG Steering Committee and several Management Groups. Amy has over 15 years of experience in commercial fisheries, coastal management, stakeholder engagement and marine conservation. Amy started her working career as an at sea fisheries observer on deep sea factory vessels in the North and South Atlantic Ocean. From there she worked as

Programme Coordinator on ZSL's Global Marine and Freshwater Programme and then as Liaison Officer on Balanced Seas MCZ Project for the South East before joining TEP and managing the EU WFD Catchment Partnership for the tidal Thames. Amy has been integral to the development of the FLAG, driving the process forward with CE and writing the funding applications. She will provide continuity for the FLAG and ensure cross fertilisation with other TEP and partner projects linking the FLAG with external opportunities across the estuary and nationally through the Marine CoLABoration and Coastal Partnership Network for which she is the secretary.

The Animation will be contracted out to CE and the Animator post employed from local applicants. The post will be part time (0.6FTE) from the start of the Strategy funded period in Yr 1. This role will be continuous throughout the life of the FLAG as the responsibilities outlined in Section 2.3 will need to be met through until the final report and claims have been submitted and approved. This position will be critical to the legacy and exit strategy of the FLAG and will work closely with the FLAG Administrator in match funding bids and reporting. Day-to-day Animator management will be based at the CE offices in Southend-on-Sea (again provided free of charge) and the position will be line managed by CE Director Giles Tofield who has led the Leigh Coastal Community Team and partners with TEP to develop the FLAG concept. Giles has over 11 years of experience working in regeneration within Southend and has an excellent relationship with all key partners as well as playing a key role in terms of securing funding for projects. In 2013, he was successful in writing and winning Coastal Community Funds for major projects across Southend-on-Sea.

## **5.2 Project development and assessment procedures**

Please see Sections 2.2 and 4.6 for details on the project development and assessment procedures.

## **5.3 Planned communication and publicity initiatives**

Please see section 4.10 for a detailed communications plan and target audiences.

## **5.4 Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Animator will ensure that project applicants and sponsors are familiar with the conditions of any grant offer and associated reporting requirements including the need for progress reports. Each Priority Programme and associated projects will have milestones, outputs and outcomes against which progress and success will be monitored.

The FLAG Management Groups will receive quarterly reports from the Animator on progress with individual projects and potentially monthly updates on specific projects as they start to roll out. Information on individual projects will be based on claims and progress reports submitted to the MMO from beneficiaries and from regular communication with projects sponsors, including visits as appropriate. The FLAG Steering Committee will receive quarterly reports on the FLAG as a whole with summarised updates on each Priority area. This will enable the Committee to monitor progress in terms of resource commitments and spend as well as physical progress, to allow decisions on whether resources and focus need to be shifted from one Priority to another to ensure progress is made across the whole Programme.

Where issues are raised regarding lack of progress; by the MMO, by project sponsors or by the FLAG Steering Group and Management Groups, the Animator will undertake to investigate and report and be available to assist project sponsors.

THE LDS will be reviewed annually in order to consider progress and priorities and to adjust procedures and financial profiles as appropriate and according to local needs.

## **6. Financial Plan**

### **6.1 Financial plans for delivery of the scheme and investment in the region**

The sharing of resources, both in kind and cash, requires a very clear understanding of financial responsibilities and liabilities. Therefore, the Partnership Agreement of the Steering Committee will outline these clearly. Each member will sign and abide by this agreement.

Where a funding application is to be submitted and awarded in the name of the NTFLAG, the Lead Partner will ensure that a suitable Partner has agreed to act as Accountable Body.

Where funding is awarded to the NTFLAG itself, the Steering Committee is responsible for deciding spending priorities and for approving projects activities in accordance with delegations set out by the funder. The Accountable Body is responsible for ensuring those decisions are carried out in full accordance with the grant conditions and accepts liability on behalf of the NTFLAG in the event of the funder being entitled to claw back grant payments. The Accountable Body will provide the NTFLAG Animator with [quarterly] financial monitoring reports to feed into Steering Committee meetings.

Where an individual partner or group of partners bid for internal or external funding to meet an element of the strategy, on the basis that it has been endorsed by the Steering Committee and MMO, the programme/project activity will be managed through these partners' own financial approval processes and accounting procedures. They are responsible for ensuring the programme/project meets the funder's financial conditions and audit requirements. They will report progress on the outputs and impact of the activity to the Partnership, but there is no requirement for financial reports. The NTFLAG is not liable in the event of the funder being entitled to claw back grant payments.

The NTFLAG will not have an individual bank account. Therefore, the Lead Partner will manage administration and animation funds for the following:

- Sundry running costs associated with the NTFLAG, e.g. hire of meeting rooms,
- stationery, website maintenance;
- Attendance at conferences and training events by NTFLAG representatives where the organisation they represent is not in a position to fund this activity;
- NTFLAG promotional material. This has to be approved by the Steering Committee, which must be satisfied that this represents good value for money.
- The FLAG Administrator and Animator posts, travel and subsistence and on costs

Due to the Administration and animation being consistent over the life of the FLAG, spending and cash flow for this element will closely mirror this.

It is envisioned that the FLAG will need a settling in period as the Administrator and Animator are recruited and start their work. We aim to have these posts filled and in place by January 2017. Engagement will continue during the recruitment period as TEP and CE will convene meetings to finalise the NTFLAG Partnership Agreements with the Steering Group and the Management Groups and further develop identified projects and match funding bids. Therefore spending across the Priorities will be slower to start with activity

picking up towards the middle and end of Year 1, remaining consistently high throughout Year 2 and decreasing in Year 3 as they become self-sustaining and the exit strategy and legacy takes over. Projects identified through the development of the LDS need further development and match funding secured.

Priority	Yr 1				Yr 2				Yr 3			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Admin	20	18	16	18	16	17	16	17	15	16	15	16
P1		50			50							
P2			25	25	25	25	25	25				
P3			25		25		25		25			
P4			50			50			30			
P5		20	20			40	20			20		
Total	20	88	136	43	116	132	86	42	70	36	15	16

Table: An draft budget showing indicative spend from FLAG budget only

## 6.2 Planned leverage of other funds/private investment

As outlined in section 4, various funding streams have been identified as complementary to the planned programme of activity. It is difficult to predict what level of match funding each of the projects will attract at this point in part due to some projects being less developed than others. The following is a table of planned leverage of funding with indicative costs:

Match Funder	Priority and Identified Project	Submission Date	Year 1 (£K) 2017	Year 2 (£K) 2018	Year 3 (£K) 2019
Coastal Communities Fund	4 – Training facility and transferable skills training development	June 2017	-	150	150
Heritage Lottery Fund	4 – Education 5 – Training for tourism providers & interpretation	June 2017	-	25	25
Worshipful Company of Fishmongers	2 – Citizen Science	February 2017	50	50	50

The following is a list of additional funding sources that we intend to pursue but do not have an idea of amounts sought:

- The Green Bank to fund elements of Priority 1 specifically SUDs and permeable paving. Liaison with their Environment Manager has indicated this to be a strong contender for funding.
- Wider EMFF funding:
  - EMFF Stream 2: Improvements to fishing vessels under the Improving the value of your fisheries products, improving the quality of fishery products or how to use unwanted catches – Article 42 and Innovation – Article 26 for

- elements of Priorities 3 & 5 specifically for marketing of catches and new management and organisation systems.
- EMFF Stream 3: Shore-based improvements under the Article 43 - Fishing ports, landing sites, auction halls and shelters for elements of Priority 1 for resurfacing of Leigh Quay by the cockle sheds to improve water quality runoff and Priority 2 – marine litter. Article 68 - Marketing measures for elements of Priority 3. Article 69 - Processing of fishery and aquaculture products for elements of Priority 3.
  - EMFF stream 4: Support for Partnerships, information sharing, advisory services, job creation and training under Article 27 Advisory services for feasibility studies in Priority 1 and Priority 3; Article 28 Partnerships between scientists and fishermen for elements of Priority 2; Article 29 Promotion of human capital, job creation and social dialogue for elements of Priority 4.
  - EMFF Stream 5: The Marine Environment and Inland Fishing under Article 37 - Support for the design and implementation of conservation measures and regional cooperation for elements of Priority 2 specifically for the Thornback Ray; potentially Article 39 – Innovation linked to the conservation of marine biological resources for elements of Priority 2 specifically seal interactions with vessels.
  - EMFF Stream 6: Support for Aquaculture processing under Article 51 Increasing the potential of aquaculture sites and/or Article 54 Aquaculture providing environmental services for elements of Priority 3 specifically if new aquaculture opportunities are found in the area. If so funding under Article 50 Promotion of human capital and networking may also be accessed to provide training.
- External match funding from two Marine CoLABoration projects expected to be funded by the end of 2016, with projects starting in 2017. These include an Ocean Literacy curriculum project and an MPA project. Match funding would most likely include time in kind to bring the Animator position or staff roles within individual projects up to full time; materials for communications and engagement with the wider community and case study research for added learning into and out of the FLAG.
  - City Bridge Trust funding for a TEP Education Officer which will be secured early 2017. This post will partly support the education elements of Priority 4 and interrelate with the Ocean Literacy project above.
  - Private investment through the DP World Local Sustainability Strategy funding stream will be sought for several projects. This fund is seeking to further education and training for young people under 25 and marine protection within several set geographical radii of the port which is situated in Thurrock within the NTFLAG area. It is a unique funding and in kind resource opportunity for the NTFLAG and DP World have committed to sit on three of the Management Groups to help hone projects thus increasing the likelihood of being successful in being granted funding.

### **6.3 Planned Claims Schedule**

A claims schedule will be drawn up in consultation with the MMO. Claims will be made more regularly during the first two years of the Programme to ensure cash flow remains consistent and efficient and supports quick and timely roll out of projects. During the first two years claims will be made on a quarterly basis. This may remain the same for the third and final year depending on LDS review, activity and progress.