



## Connected Coast Chair's Update: July 2023

**June saw an important development for the redesign of the Embassy Theatre with East Lindsey councillors approving plans to proceed with the delivery of the £5million project funded by the Arts Council England's Cultural Development Fund.**

Cultural Revival: The Midlands Coast, led by East Lindsey District Council and overseen by the Connected Coast Board, will support the plans to establish the Embassy Theatre as a new 'Culture House.' The funding, which complements the Towns Fund investment, will support works including the refurbishment of the auditorium and dressing rooms, the creation of a new interactive classroom and creative workspaces as well as VIP boxes and a refurbished light box to enable high quality productions. There will be improved access and facilities for all users, and a Changing Places toilet will be installed.

The project will also support the first phase of the ambitious, multi-million-pound redevelopment project - led by the Mellors Group - for Skegness Pier and the surrounding area.

This Cultural Development Funding, coupled with the Towns Fund investment, will benefit both local people and visitors alike who can experience and enjoy these two spaces, and all that Skegness has to offer. The improvements will also help to attract jobs, boost the economy, enhance wellbeing, and support pride in Skegness.



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In addition, an exciting and significant new partnership between the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Embassy Theatre was also announced in June. Skegness is one of five towns entering into a new partnership with the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) as part of the RSC's Associate Schools Programme. The programme uses a theatre-based approach to learning to help children and young people unlock their full potential. Schools who join the Associate Schools Programme learn how to use the same techniques that actors use in rehearsals to explore Shakespeare's plays.



The announcement of the new partnerships was made at a special event at the Embassy Theatre.

**The Colonnade and Pleasure Gardens**

Work on the Colonnade and Pleasure Gardens is set to get underway after East Lindsey District Council's Executive Board approved the first phase of work to take place.

Following the approval, on-site work is set to begin in September 2023 and due to be completed before the summer season in 2025.

The first phase of work will provide residents and visitors with a new state-of-the-art pavilion, including a café and restaurant, a Changing Places toilet and exhibition space.



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New beach huts will also be included as part of this phase of the works, as well as improvements to the Pleasure Gardens to create further seating areas, and space for pop-up events and markets.

There will also be planting and community gardens and a new dunes landscape, whilst retaining popular existing features including the anchor water feature and paddling pool areas. The second phase of the planned project will include six seasonal overnight lodges for holiday rentals and visitors to the town.

The redevelopment of the Colonnade and Pleasure Gardens offers a unique opportunity to bring new facilities and opportunities to Sutton on Sea, and this important and exciting project is a priority for Connected Coast.

We are grateful for people's patience and we would like to apologise for the delay as we've worked towards this significant milestone.



### **National Trust Sandilands**

The National Trust at Sandilands has appointed local architects and submitted a planning application for the new coastal nature reserve, which will see major wildlife habitat creation and the construction of an eco-friendly visitor welcome hub.

The carbon-neutral visitor welcome building at the northern tip of the reserve, which is benefitting from £2M in Towns Fund investment, will be designed to complement the nature reserve and surrounding area. This building will include a café and a community



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space. There will also be nearby changing place facilities suitable for children and adults with accessibility needs.

The National Trust's plans also include forming wetland wildlife habitats with open water, islands, reedbeds and ponds, along with grasslands that have sand dunes and marshy areas.

National Trust Sandilands provides a fantastic opportunity for local people and visitors alike to experience our wonderful coastline. The new visitor hub is set to offer a welcoming base, and by helping people to get involved in nature and wide-open spaces it will play an important role in improving people's mental and physical wellbeing.



*Artist Impression of welcome hub © National Trust / Jonathan Hendry Architects.*

### **Campus for Future Living**

Work on the Campus for Future Living is progressing well. The complex on Stanley Avenue is being built by Lindum Group for East Lindsey District Council. The Campus, a Connected Coast project, is benefitting from £8.6m in Towns Fund investment.

Steel frames are now going up on the site, showing a visual change as the building starts to take shape. Led by a coalition of local, regional, and national partners, the development of the Campus for Future Living aims to put Mablethorpe at the heart of the provision for health and care related jobs and businesses.



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**Leisure and Learning Hub**

Work is also progressing well on the Leisure and Learning hub in Mablethorpe, as these new pictures show. All concrete has now been poured to the pool floor and work is continuing on the pool walls and corners. Drainage work for the wet changing area is underway, and an area is being prepared for a crane to be on site towards the end of this month.

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In addition, ISG the firm building the hub, recently hosted a construction enrichment day with students from John Spendluffe Technology College. The day promoted the many skills and career opportunities available in construction as well as team working, mock interview experience and a presentation on the new facility. You can find out more about the day [here](#).

#### **Skegness TEC**

The new, state of the art learning campus for Skegness is set to offer training opportunities – such as digital skills, motor vehicle, construction, and engineering – for the coast. The learning available through the campus will allow people to gain the skills and knowledge





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they need to get the jobs they want, and these visuals illustrate the current direction of travel but are not fixed pending planning so indicative at this stage. The TEC is anticipated to open in September 2025.



### **New Board Members**

We've been pleased to welcome two new board members to the Connected Coast board. Revd. Canon Chris Lilley, the Church of England's Partnership Dean for East Lindsey, is one of the new board members. As Partnership Dean, Chris covers the 165 Anglican churches in the East Lindsey District Council, working alongside clergy and volunteers. Joining Chris on the board is Tim Allen. Tim manages Historic England's Development Advice team covering the north half of the Midlands. Trained as an archaeologist, he is the Inspector of Ancient Monuments for the county and a Fellow of Society of Antiquaries. You can read more [here](#)



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#### Levelling Up

In January it was announced that East Lindsey District Council had been awarded £8m in Levelling Up funding.

The funding will see the transformation of Spilsby Sessions House - Spilsby Theatre, Alford Manor House and Museum of Rural Life and Alford Windmill Trust, securing their futures and bringing new uses for generations to come. The investment will also support the economy of the market towns, the Lincolnshire Wolds and wider district. This new film provides an insight into the plans for Alford Windmill and Alford Manor House: [Facebook](#)

In addition, on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> July, an event was held at Franklin Hall, Spilsby for residents to find out more about the benefits of the Levelling Up funding for Spilsby, and further understand what the changes will mean for Sessions House and Spilsby as a town. Over 100 people attended the event which was hosted by Bruce Knight, Director of the Sessions House CIC. You can see a film about the plans for Spilsby Sessions House [here](#)



#### £824M economic benefit of tourism to East Lindsey

A new report has highlighted the record-breaking benefit of tourism in East Lindsey, with over £824million of economic impact in 2022 alone. The findings showed the £824.2million of investment from tourists to be the highest since the data was first recorded in 2011.





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We have so much to be proud of in East Lindsey, and we can look forward to even more facilities and resources for people to enjoy in future, thanks to investment that includes Towns Fund, and the transformational projects that are being delivered.

Read more [here](#)

#### Dates for your diary

Our AGM and exhibition events will be taking place from **2pm – 7pm on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November at Tower Gardens Pavilion, Skegness** and from **2pm – 7pm on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November at Mablethorpe Library**. The events will provide opportunities to find out more about our projects and progress over the last year; more details to follow in future updates.

Would you like to find out more about any of the projects in this update? Please do get in touch with us: [Connected.Coast@e-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:Connected.Coast@e-lindsey.gov.uk)



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Chris Baron  
Chair, Connected Coast Town Deal Board



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