

Adapting to coastal change to build better resilience for communities and nature

Autumn 2023

What is the Medway Estuary and Swale Programme?

The **Medway Estuary and Swale (MEAS) strategy** was approved in 2019 and sets out our sustainable tidal flood risk plan to manage the coastline and tidal defences over the next 100 years. We are now starting the **first 10 years of work** recommended in the Strategy with a collaborative team to guide and progress delivery. We need to be innovative and flexible in our approach to deliver a complex set of inter-dependent schemes and we are looking to forge partnerships so we can deliver more together.



The MEAS programme includes:

- **12 schemes** to refurbish and/or raise existing flood defences
- 6 schemes to realign defences and create **compensatory intertidal habitat** to replace that lost due to sea level rise
- sustainable asset management decisions to adapt or hand over maintenance of flood defences to 3rd parties, where we cannot justify spending public money

Delivery of the programme begins with 4 schemes on the Isle of Sheppey, focusing on Sheerness and Queenborough and Elmley and South Sheppey.

Why now? The massive impact if we don't deliver:

- Ageing assets, rising sea levels and increasing risk of failure
- Need to reduce flood risk to **11,200 properties**, industry, farms and other businesses as well as **nationally important infrastructure**
- Significant risk to **internationally important, designated habitat**
- **Accelerating sea level rise** in the Medway estuary (10cm in the last 28 years) is increasing the likelihood and frequency of flooding



Front Brents Faversham, 2013

Why in partnership? Huge opportunities for everyone:

- We have gained approval to spend up to **£14.5million** to develop the projects to outline design stage
- **Better flood protection**, and **better spaces** and places for communities and wildlife
- We can't do this alone. This is a **shared space** with significant opportunities for partners and communities to achieve more for people and wildlife, including sustainable development.

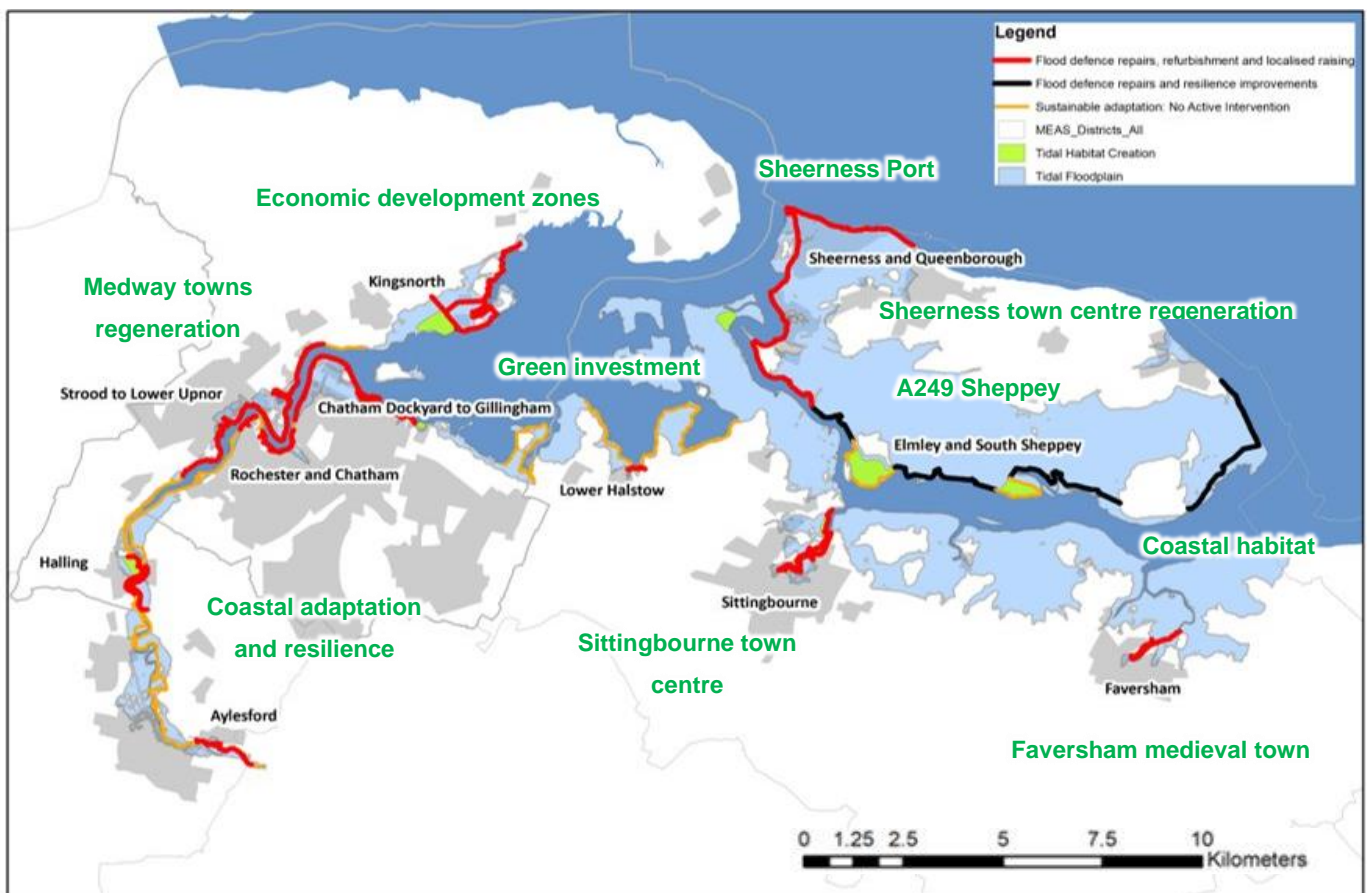
How do we tackle this? We need to deliver differently:

Taking a programme approach across 10 years offers many opportunities:

- **Efficient delivery** - As there are significant interdependencies we have a single business case to develop the MEAS programme. This saves us significant time and money by allowing us to do many activities once and coordinate our plans.
- **Consistency** - the size of the programme enables us to work consistently with all stakeholders to create an integrated and sustainable coastline
- **Integrating sustainable development** - the timescale of the programme gives us time to make the most of future opportunities such as riverside development and regeneration plans
- **Attracting further investment** - the value of the programme means we will be able to access more opportunities for local and national funding sources, alongside Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA)

What do we need from you?

- Your help to **attract and engage others**: MEAS provides a fantastic opportunity to create an integrated and sustainable coast for the benefit of people and the environment.
- Your help to think differently: we'll continue to work closely with partners to innovate, and draw on **your enthusiasm, your input and your experience**.
- Your help to **entice investment into the area**: we have approval to spend FDGiA to appraise options and develop schemes. Constructing the schemes won't happen without partnership funding.



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