

## **Our Coasts – An unexpected conflict zone.**

The **land** along the coasts is used for different activities: tourism, industry, fishing, trade and transport. There are many different groups of people who have an **interest** in how coastal areas are managed. These include:

- local residents
- environmental groups
- Scientists
- developers
- local councils
- national governments
- tourist boards
- National Park Authorities, such as the Pembrokeshire National Park Authority

Each interest group may have a different view about what should be done to protect and manage coastal areas. A difference of opinion can cause **conflict** between interest groups.



## **Why might we be concerned about the coast?**

- Erosion may be threatening beaches and/or settlements (houses, shops ...).
- People may want to develop tourism (e.g. build hotels to earn money).
- There is a danger of flooding if sea levels rise.
- There could be a problem with sewage and/or pollution.

## **Let's travel back to Dorset and Durdle Door!**

Here is a selection of groups with interest in the coastal area:

**Water sports:** A coastline provides numerous areas where people can participate in a variety of different water sports, like swimming, water skiing, windsurfing and yachting.

**Military:** Military training takes place along many coastlines and sometimes a footpath might run through an army range (shooting practise, tanks etc.), like the South West Coast footpath runs through Lulworth (army) Range.

**Historic Attractions:** The Dorset coast has many historic attractions like Corfe Castle, Thomas Hardy's cottage and a number of historic ruins.

**Coastal footpaths - Recreation:** The area along the Dorset coast has many coastal footpaths where walkers can enjoy the stunning and varied scenery of the region. The South West Coast long distance footpath for example, passes along cliffs where they will see caves, arches and stacks and bays with sandy beaches. Landscape features which tourists come to see include Lulworth Cove, Durdle Door, Old Harry and Tilly Whim Caves.

**Wildlife & Science:** The coastlines have varied wildlife due to the variety of landscapes that are formed here such as sand dunes, lagoons, salt flats and calm bays. Durlston Head is famous for bird watching, whilst Brownsea Island Nature Reserve is home to red squirrel and wildfowl.

## **Conflicts between land users in Dorset**

### **Tourists vs. locals**

- Increased traffic congestion in areas such as Corfe Castle (called 'honeypots') → increased noise and pollution (e.g. 20,000 visitors can visit Studland beach on a hot summer's day),
- Coasts attract second home owners → locals find it more difficult to buy houses or find accommodation → businesses and shops might have to close,
- Increased walkers/visitors means more footpath erosion (→ can threaten cliffs),
- Increase in litter → threatens wildlife and habitats,
- Erosion of sand dunes → threatens wildlife and habitats, but also settlements (spring and autumn storms don't get stopped or reduced by weakened dunes),

### **Tourists vs. tourists**

- Swimmers and sunbathers may be disturbed from the noise of motor boats,
- Anglers may be disrupted by activities such as water skiing, swimming etc.,
- Camp and caravan sites spoil views and could increase sewage and waste in the area,

### **Tourists and locals vs military**

- Noise from military training may disrupt livestock,
- Noise may also spoil the peace and quiet for tourists. Walkers can be denied access to rights of way such as the South West Coast Path during training activities,
- Local and tourist traffic may be delayed by military vehicles,

### **Tourists/locals/farmers vs. quarrying**

- Large lorries cause damage (e.g. through vibration) to roads, houses etc., but also increase congestion, noise and pollution,
- Quarrying can produce large quantities of dust → settles on plants and crops → reduced growth and harvest,