

## Pier and Foreshore

The review in 2000/01 considered all aspects of the management and operation of the Pier and Foreshore Service and coastal and flood defences. The scope of the review included Customer Services, Pier Railway Operation, Health and Safety, Beach and Seafront Cleaning, Byelaws, Environment and Nature Conservation, Leases and Licences, Structural Maintenance and maintenance of Coastal Defences. The review highlighted a number of improvement areas and projected outcomes are:

- Increase customer satisfaction;
- Development of integrated tourism experience;
- Increase the total number of visitors to the Pier and Foreshore.

### *List of Improvements*

New Pier Entrance constructed 2002/03, and opened May 2003, has provided a stylish contemporary glass landmark on the seafront and significantly improved the visitor amenity at Southend Pier.	<b>Achieved</b>
The new entrance was designed to include a Visitor information/shop facility at the Pier and the Tourist Information Centre will move to this location early in 2004.	<b>Achieved</b>
Reconstruction of the 1976 fire damaged area of the Pier Head commenced in 2002 and completed in 2003. The reconstruction of both the main and lower decks has provided berthing facilities for visiting ships and has made available a large area of deck to accommodate future attraction(s) at the Pier Head.	<b>Achieved</b>
A customer lift has been installed within the new Pier entrance in order to improve access from the top deck to Visitor Information Centre and the Pier railway.	<b>Achieved</b>
North station infrastructure works were undertaken during the Pier entrance construction programme to remove decayed joists and to improve the integrity of the platform.	<b>Achieved</b>
Reconstruction of three Pier Walkway Shelters and construction of a replacement shelter at the shore end of the Pier walkway was completed in Summer 2003.	<b>Achieved</b>
Refurbishment of Pier Head toilets including provision of disabled toilet facilities and infant changing facilities was completed in Summer 2003.	<b>Achieved</b>
A fully co-ordinated CCTV and PA system including customer help points has been installed along the length of Southend Pier. The system will be monitored at the Council's central CCTV monitoring office and at the Pier offices.	<b>Achieved</b>
Increased relevant staff training including Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS) Emergency Response training, RLSS/Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) Beach Risk Assessment, Public First Aid and Health and Safety training.	<b>Achieved</b>
Completion of the ENCAMS Beach Management Programme Pilot authority scheme and adoption of the programme as the 'guidelines' for managing the beaches in Southend.	<b>Achieved</b>
Achieving the prestigious Seaside Awards and Blue Flags for beaches.	<b>Achieved</b>
Demolition of the old disused Pier and Foreshore Office at Pier Hill.	<b>Achieved</b>
New and improved beach safety signage at entrances to all beaches was erected during the Summer 2003.	<b>Achieved</b>

Enhancement of Pier Illuminations including regrouping of the dolphin setpieces.	<b>Achieved</b>
The Council, with grant aid from the Department of Food and Rural Affairs, issued contracts in 2001/02 to create 2.5 km of greatly enlarged beach east of the Pier. This work is now complete and provides a standard of flood defence for this area of 1 in 100 years.	<b>Achieved</b>
A consultant has carried out a full investigation of the flood defences on Two Tree Island and the environmental implications of their condition. As a result only 0.6 km of sea wall have been identified as at risk.	<b>Achieved</b>
The result of these actions is that the length of sea wall in need of improvement has reduced to 6.6 km.	
Design and development of improvement scheme to the Marine Parade seafront area including new disabled access to the beach, installation of themed mosaic features on retaining walls and promenade, landscaping and planting.	<b>Ongoing</b>
Restoration and co-ordination of shelters and seating including new colour scheme to enhance and blend with the new Pier Entrance.	<b>Ongoing</b>
Increased spend per customer on the Pier through the sales of merchandise at the Pier Visitor Information Centre.	<b>Ongoing</b>
Achievement of East of England Tourist Board Quality Assurance Mark for the Pier.	<b>Ongoing</b>
Working together with other agencies that have responsibilities for safety in the Thames Estuary and contribution to the River User Group meetings.	<b>Ongoing</b>
Undertake a review of Beach Cleaning to ensure that the contractor provides and the Council receives adequate services and value for money.	<b>Ongoing</b>
Development of Leases and Licences, at appropriate times, to take account of and reflect the tourism business and potential.	<b>Ongoing</b>
Further development of Annual Events programme including a programme of visiting ships to the Pier Head.	<b>Ongoing</b>
Development of Marketing/Tourism strategy to encompass the regeneration works and the expectations of residents and visitors.	<b>Ongoing</b>
Increase awareness of areas of special environmental interest by sympathetic marketing and promotion.	<b>Ongoing</b>
A flood defence scheme to address 0.6 km of 'at risk' flood defences on Two Tree Island is being pursued with DEFRA. This will protect the island and the surrounding marine environment from the risk of gross contamination by landfill waste.	<b>Ongoing</b>
Written health and safety procedures have been developed and consulted over to protect workers and those frequently exposed to potential contact with the contaminated land at Two Tree Island.	<b>Ongoing</b>

### **Audit Commission**

Audit Commission undertook an inspection of the Pier and Foreshore in April 2001. The Pier and Foreshore Service was rated as a 'Fair' (1 star) service that WILL definitely improve.

The report stated:

*"The appearance and condition of facilities is poor on The Pier and along the sea front. There are 10.3km of sea defences in need of repair and communication with some stakeholders has not been*

very effective. We are also concerned as to the state of Two Tree Island, both in term of facilities and the potential environmental issues.”

***The following actions have been taken since the Best Value Inspection.***

Major development and enhancement of the Pier.	<b>Achieved</b>
Reconstruction of seafront shelters.	<b>Achieved</b>
New beach signage.	<b>Achieved</b>
Improved management and supervision at Two Tree Island.	<b>Achieved</b>
New dinghy storage racks at Two Tree Island.	<b>Achieved</b>
Communication with stakeholders improved by formation of Beach Management Advisory Group with membership from external and internal stakeholders.	<b>Achieved</b>
Development of Annual Maintenance Plan.	<b>Achieved</b>
Appointment of Pier and Foreshore Maintenance Contractor August 2003.	<b>Achieved</b>
Monitoring of Two Tree Island and review of staff facilities and accommodation.	<b>Ongoing</b>
Beach Management Advisory Group meetings.	<b>Ongoing</b>
Annual Maintenance Plan.	<b>Ongoing</b>
Improved maintenance of assets by newly appointed Maintenance Contractor.	<b>Ongoing</b>
Improvements to Marine Parade including landscaping and refurbishment.	<b>Ongoing</b>

***Performance Indicator***

Local Performance Indicator: Visitor numbers to Southend Pier. This is reported quarterly to Councillors in the Southend Health Check.

Visitor numbers vary according to seasonal weather conditions. The trend is an increase in visitor numbers.

Target 2003/04 is 404,000. Admissions from April to December 2003 inclusive are 342,495, showing a year on year increase of 20,597 on admissions from April to December 2002, which were 321,898. The 2003/04 target is expected to be met.

***Improvement Plan***

The achievements as stated in paragraphs 2 and 3 meet the targets set in the Improvement Plan.