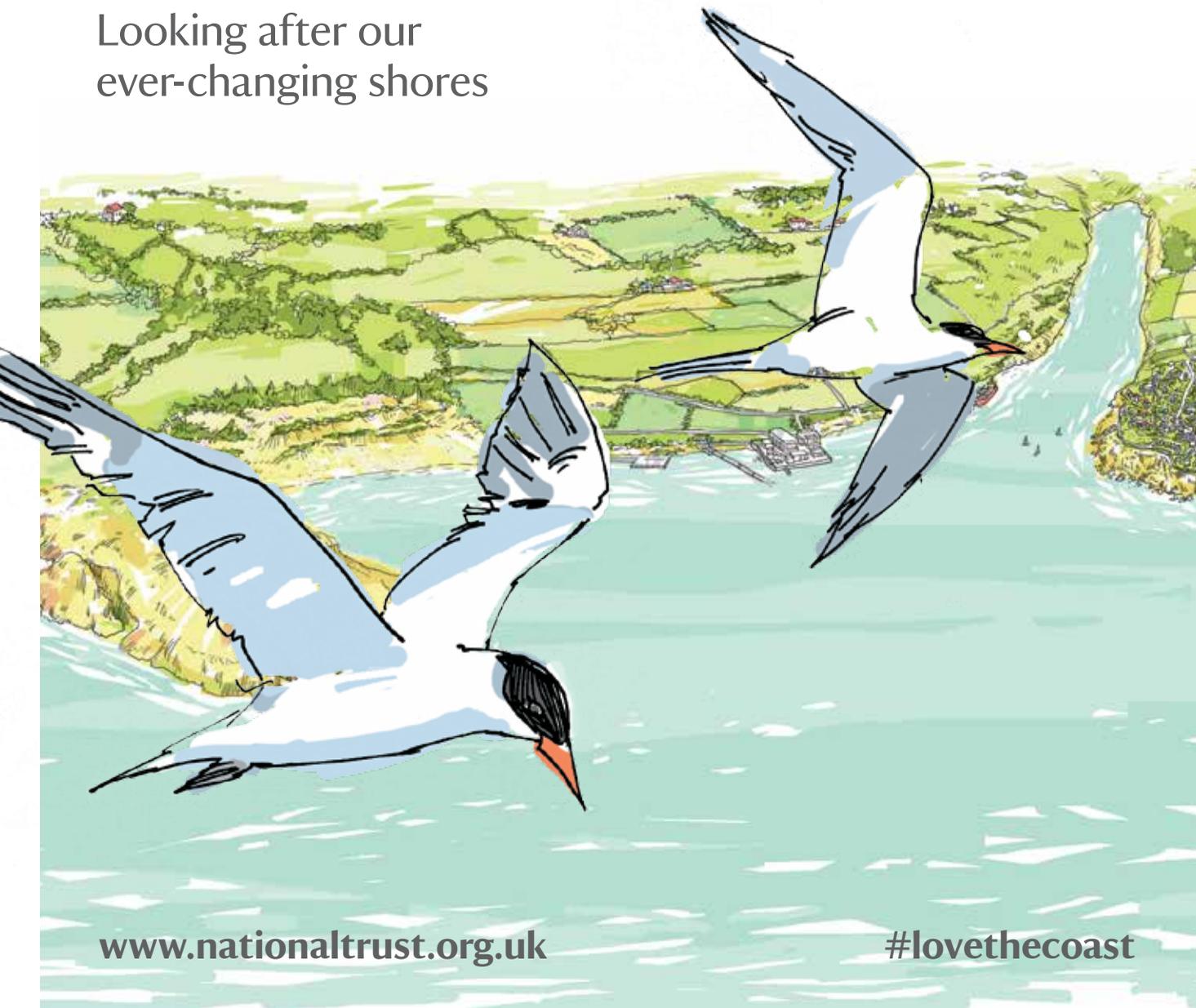


Coast



National
Trust

Looking after our
ever-changing shores



www.nationaltrust.org.uk

#lovethecoast



The coast is very special to British people. It's a place that captivates us and has become part of our DNA. We go to the coast to play, to relax and to connect with the natural world and the elements. Days at the seaside or walks along coastal cliffs are deeply engrained in our collective memory.

The coast is at the heart of the National Trust story from its very beginnings. Our first ever site was a small cliff top perched high above Barmouth in North Wales. Thanks to the generosity of generations of supporters, we now care for 775 miles of beautiful, dramatic and diverse coastline in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

When we launched the Neptune Coastline Campaign back in May 1965 there was a real risk of the coast being developed and industrialised. There was a clear and simple call to action for all lovers of the coast: we need your support to help save our coastline.

In the twenty-first century we face many new challenges along an ever-changing coastline. We can only meet these challenges by working with coastal communities, partner organisations and people who care as much as we do about the coast.

This document sets out our vision for the future of the coast. Our overall will be to create space for people and nature along the coast – including securing the future of coast paths, working with the forces of nature and creating new habitats for wildlife.

The coast is a place for everyone to enjoy, somewhere to recharge the batteries and have those precious moments with family and friends. This is why the National Trust puts the coast at the centre of its land, outdoors and nature work.

Helen Ghosh
Director-General



The story of our coast

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, we look after 775 miles of coast

The Giant's Causeway is one of four World Heritage Sites found along the coast we look after.

We've looked after the Farne Islands for 90 years.

Blakeney Point was our first major stretch of coastline.

Formby is the fastest eroding stretch of coastline in our care.

Whiteford Burrows on Gower was the first Neptune acquisition.

Golden Cap is the highest point on the south coast.

We care for nine lighthouses including South Foreland Lighthouse, which was the first to use electric light.

Key

 Coastline cared for by National Trust



Our ambitions for the coast

Looking forward to the next 50 years and beyond, how do we manage the coastline we now own? We must do it sensitively, but what will this require? And we must do this with foresight and planning for the long term. Just as importantly, how can we help visitors enjoy it even more?

This document sets out our vision and ambition for the coast, and there are two principles that underpin this:

Working with nature. Where possible, our principle is to work with natural processes – the action of waves, weather, tides and changes in sea level – to help wildlife adapt to a changing climate and shoreline.

Working with people and partners. We will support and work closely with our neighbours, other landowners, farmers, conservation organisations. And we'll work with both national agencies and local communities. By working together we can ensure the whole coastline is somewhere we can all enjoy and be proud of.



Our vision for the coast

For the coast to flourish, it must be healthy and rich in wildlife. At the same time, we must ensure its integral beauty and cultural heritage is protected, and that it can be accessed and enjoyed by local people, day-trippers and holidaymakers. Finally, we believe land can and should be productive – as long this does not jeopardise these other goals.

Six principles shape our vision for the coastline. We want:

- The coastline to be clean and healthy, shaped by natural forces.
- The sheer beauty and diversity of our coastline to continue to inspire and refresh generations of people.
- Wildlife to be rich and abundant, not marginalised.
- People to enjoy walking on every stretch of coastline, not just the land managed by the National Trust.
- A coast that is alive with history, where heritage and monuments are preserved.
- Coastal resources, such as land, or popular visitor spots, put to good use, to contribute to the economy, as long as this is done respectfully and sustainably.

Healthy and adaptable

We'll work with nature as it continues to shape our coastline.

Natural processes keep our coast alive: the White Cliffs of Dover would soon turn grey without continual erosion. But making sure the conditions are right for nature to function isn't always easy. It's true that sea defences are sometimes the only short-term option. But coastal change isn't going away, so we, local communities and others must look at what is projected to happen in the long term.

Whether it's pollution contaminating our seas or litter on our shores, we'll continue to work to clean up.

Where sea defences are failing, doing more harm than good, or interfering with natural processes, we will dismantle them.

By making way for rising sea levels, we can create space for new habitats, such as salt marshes and dunes.

Rich in wildlife

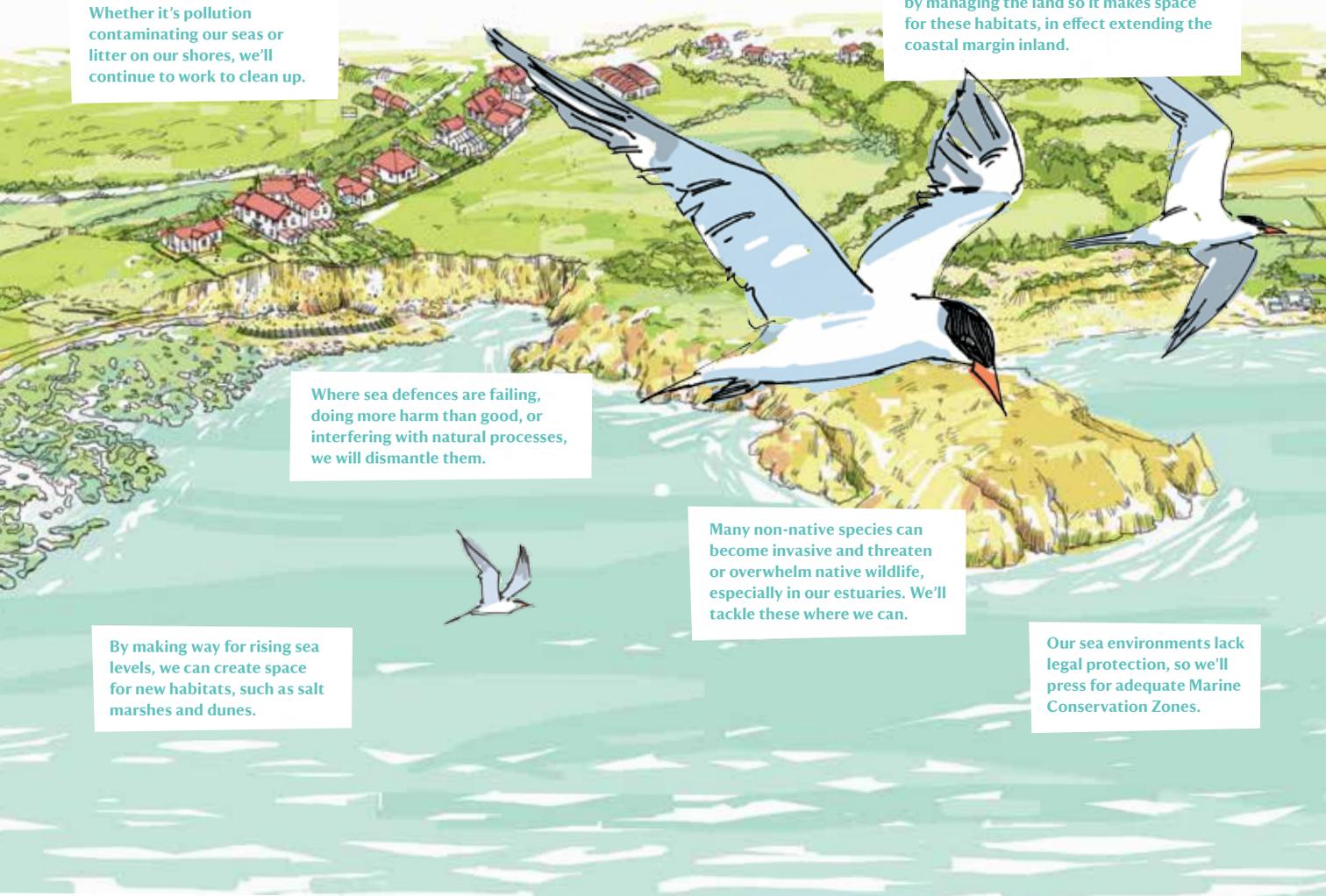
We'll conserve our coastal and marine wildlife.

The coast, both on land and in the sea, is home to a great diversity of wildlife, including some of the world's most important species. So we need to make sure coastal habitats are in good condition and can adapt to change. This means creating space inland so wildlife can move, adjust and retreat as the coastline changes. We'll also look for ways to widen and join up habitats, which will make them more resilient.

As sea levels rise, coastal and shoreland habitats become squeezed. We can help by managing the land so it makes space for these habitats, in effect extending the coastal margin inland.

Many non-native species can become invasive and threaten or overwhelm native wildlife, especially in our estuaries. We'll tackle these where we can.

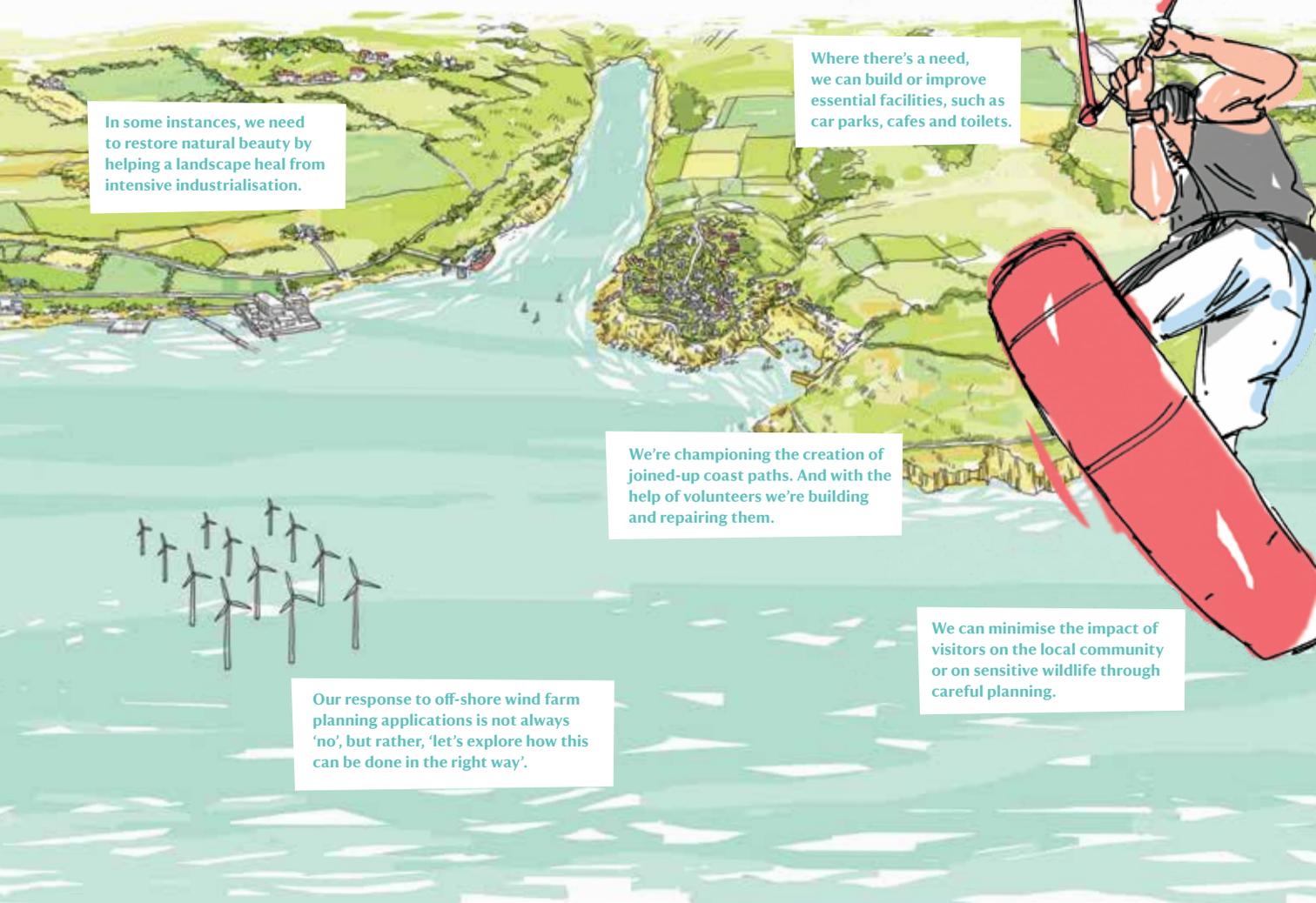
Our sea environments lack legal protection, so we'll press for adequate Marine Conservation Zones.



Beautiful

We'll protect and restore our coastal land and seascapes.

Where possible, we don't want anything to get in the way of an amazing view. We want to preserve the integrity and distinctive character of whole stretches of coastline and will work with other organisations and parties to achieve this. Our actions might involve prevention: influencing plans for onshore and offshore windfarms. Or they can involve regeneration: enabling a landscape to recover from industrial use.



In some instances, we need to restore natural beauty by helping a landscape heal from intensive industrialisation.

Where there's a need, we can build or improve essential facilities, such as car parks, cafes and toilets.

We're championing the creation of joined-up coast paths. And with the help of volunteers we're building and repairing them.



Our response to off-shore wind farm planning applications is not always 'no', but rather, 'let's explore how this can be done in the right way'.

We can minimise the impact of visitors on the local community or on sensitive wildlife through careful planning.

Enjoyed

We'll help people enjoy and care about the coast.

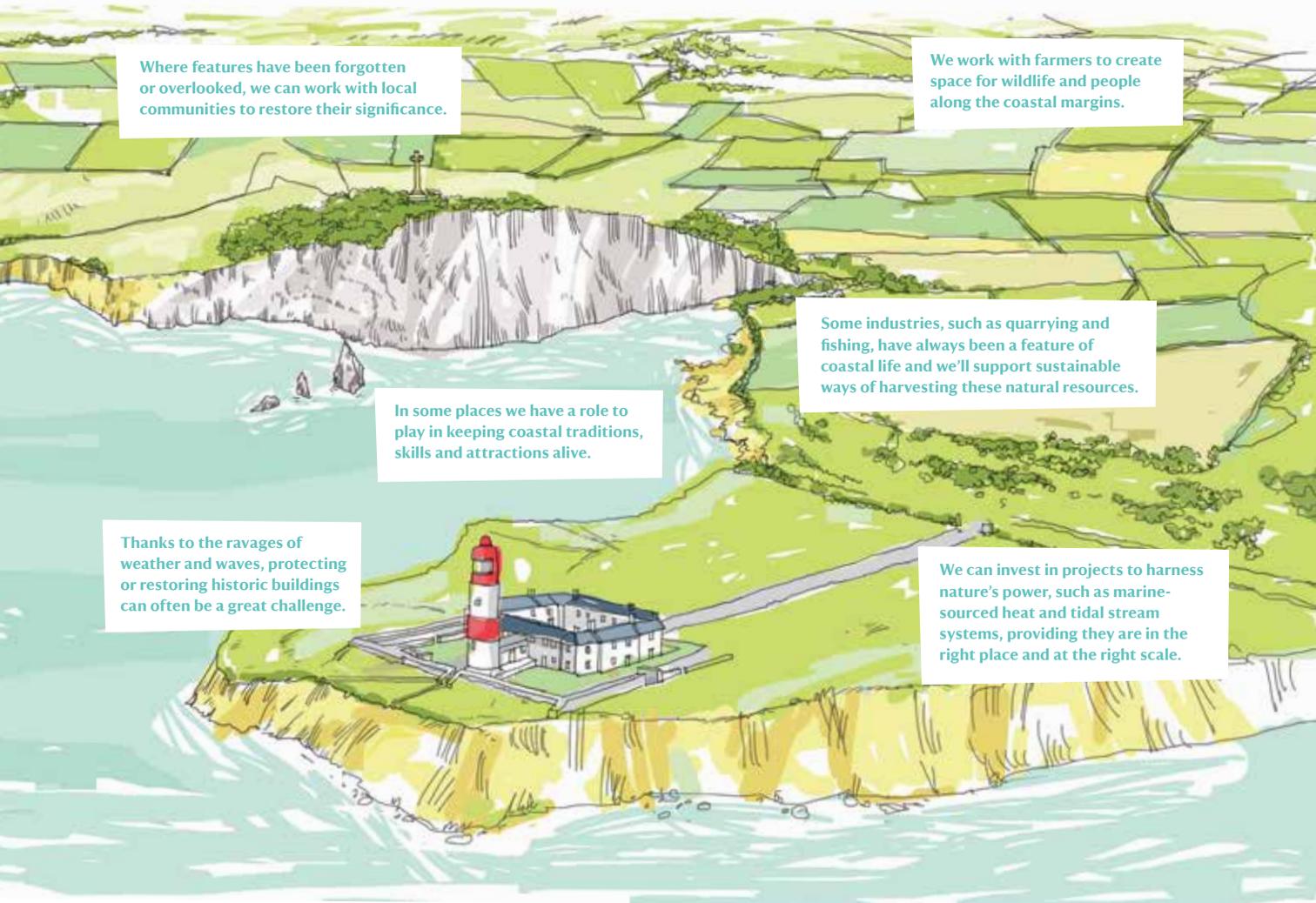
It turns out half of us keep a shell or a stone we've found on the beach at home as a reminder of a great day out. Helping people enjoy more of the seaside means providing more access and well-maintained or new facilities, and stimulating interpretation as well as space for relaxation and adventure. We want to spread this message and strengthen relationships through volunteering opportunities and strong community engagement.



Rich in culture

We'll cherish the history and the human legacy of the coastline.

Just as history has shaped our coastline, so our island's coastline has shaped our history. We want to tell the stories of people who lived and worked by the coast. Yet sometimes, we're presented with difficult decisions: just as erosion can reveal undiscovered layers of archaeology, it can destroy features. We have to choose what to save, where to intervene, and what to record before it perishes.



Where features have been forgotten or overlooked, we can work with local communities to restore their significance.

We work with farmers to create space for wildlife and people along the coastal margins.

Some industries, such as quarrying and fishing, have always been a feature of coastal life and we'll support sustainable ways of harvesting these natural resources.

In some places we have a role to play in keeping coastal traditions, skills and attractions alive.

Thanks to the ravages of weather and waves, protecting or restoring historic buildings can often be a great challenge.

We can invest in projects to harness nature's power, such as marine-sourced heat and tidal stream systems, providing they are in the right place and at the right scale.

Productive

We'll find sustainable ways to use our coastal resources and generate income.

Our coastal properties can play a key role within local economies creating direct and indirect incomes related to our activity. We also recognise the need to produce food and energy, as long as this is done sustainably. If wood is a local resource, how should we best use it? We'll set good examples, support pioneering schemes and work to prevent activities that are inappropriate.

Our work involves:

Managing

Day-to-day we'll be working on our own land and with neighbours and tenants to create space for nature and conserve heritage. We will involve local communities as we explore our plans and funding.

Engaging

We do, and will continue to, listen. But we must also explain our position, the challenges and the costs. At times of crisis or extreme weather, we'll get stuck in and help in any way we can. We also need to ensure people have every opportunity to access and enjoy the coast. That way we can build a common approach to coastline management with the best results for nature and people.

Building partnerships

As we work towards this shared vision, we'll have realistic conversations with our partners, understanding their needs, as well as retaining our ambitious spirit. Following the success of the Wales Coast Path, we'll be supporting plans to create a coast path for England, and exploring ways to improve coastal access in Northern Ireland.

Acquiring

In the past, we've acquired stretches of pristine coastline. Thanks in part to our success, there are now fewer opportunities to acquire this kind of land, but when these chances do arise, we want to be ready. In some cases, the best contribution we can make is to restore coast that has been degraded to a healthier, more beautiful condition.

Raising support

We own one in ten miles of our coastline, but this would have been impossible without the overwhelming and humbling level of support for the Neptune Coastline Campaign. We are incredibly grateful to all our members and other supporters and funders. Continuing to raise income to fund future projects is critical, so this engagement and encouragement will continue.

Did you know it costs £3,000 to care for a mile of coastal footpath every year?

And our work goes a lot further than just footpaths. Ongoing maintenance, such as ensuring safe access to beaches and protecting wildlife habitats, costs a great deal more.

Membership income only covers a third of our costs, and we rely on donations from our generous members and supporters to fund our vital coastal conservation work. With your help we can make sure our coastline can be cherished for ever, for everyone.

**To make a donation please visit
nationaltrust.org.uk/coast-campaign**



If you'd like this information in an alternative format, please call us on 0344 800 1895. Or you can email enquiries@nationaltrust.org.uk