



SOLENT FORUM

- Coastal Partnership -

March 2023.

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Background (1)

Aims of the Solent Forum

1. To promote, facilitate and support integrated planning and sustainable management of the Solent
2. To provide a broad based consultative forum

Objectives of the Solent Forum

1. To raise awareness and understanding of the members' roles and aspirations
2. To improve sharing of the information base
3. To facilitate better communication, consultation and liaison
4. To raise awareness and understanding of the human and natural changes likely to materially affect the Solent area and its interests
5. To promote the national and regional importance of the Solent in policy, development and plan making
6. To raise awareness and understanding of the impacts of Climate Change on the Solent and appropriate mitigation, resilience and adaptation measures

Background (2)

- Covers Selsey Bill to Chewton Bunny (Hampshire/Dorset border) in the New Forest and the North shore of the Isle of Wight
- Multi-sector membership
- Steering Group to help lead the work programme
- Non-profit making organisation.
- Core Service
- 3 Sub-groups
 - Natural Environment Group
 - SEMS Scheme of Management
 - Bathing Water Quality Awards
- Work carried out via a business plan



Solent Forum Staff

- Peter Barham – Solent Forum Chair
- Karen McHugh – Solent Forum Manager
- Kate Ansell – Solent Forum Officer



Solent Forum Members

LOCAL AUTHORITIES

- Chichester District Council
- Eastleigh Borough Council
- Fareham Borough Council
- Gosport Borough Council
- Hampshire County Council
- Havant Borough Council
- Isle of Wight Council
- New Forest District Council
- New Forest National Park Authority
- Portsmouth City Council
- West Sussex County Council

HARBOUR AUTHORITIES

- Associated British Ports
- Beaulieu River Management
- Bembridge Harbour
- Chichester Harbour Conservancy
- Cowes Harbour Commissioners
- River Hamble (HCC)
- Langstone Harbour Board
- Lymington Harbour Commissioners
- Portsmouth Commercial Port
- Kings's Harbour Master, Portsmouth
- Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners

Solent Forum Members

OTHER ORGANISATIONS

- ABP
- APBmer
- Angling Trust
- Blue Marine Foundation
- BP Oil UK Ltd
- British Marine Aggregate Producers Association
- Boskalis Westminster
- Carcinus
- Environment Agency
- Final Straw Foundation
- Haskoning DHV Ltd
- Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust
- Hampshire and Wight Trust for Maritime Archaeology
- Natural England
- Marina Projects Ltd
- Mackley
- National Oceanography Centre
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
- Royal Yachting Association
- Solent Protection Society
- Southern and Sussex IFCAs
- Southampton Solent University
- Solent Gateway
- Portsmouth University
- Southampton University
- UKSA
- Vectis Boasting and Fishing Club
- Westminster Dredging Co. Ltd
- Wightlink
- Winchester CC
- WWF

Core Services

- Bi-annual Steering Group meeting of key partners.
- Bi-annual conference style meetings
- Bi-annual Solent News publication
- Monthly E Newsletter (c. 400 recipients). Twitter like/retweet relevant information – 396 followers.
- Extensive website
- Student Mike Clark Bursary Awards - call for projects each April 2023. Five awarded in 2022.
- Solent Information Database – ongoing population as part of our news service. Please send your research/reports to us for inclusion.



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Sub-Groups

- **Solent Marine Sites (SEMS) Secretariat** Kate Ansell
 - Online survey of activities takes place in March/April
 - Annual Management Group meeting in September
 - Annual Management Report – published to SEMS website
 - SF Officer has regular telecoms with other national MPA Officers
- **Natural Environment Group** Karen McHugh
 - Meetings in April and September . Discussions will take place on actions arising from SEMS Annual Survey and Management Report
 - Key project for NEG = Solent Seascapes Project Working Group to produce Solent Pressure and Activity Mapping (delivers Solent Bird Sensitivity and Activity Mapping Project)
 - Three projects funded 2022/23. Fathom Ecology, Intertidal Seagrass Restoration in the Solent; HCC Recoding Snipe on coastal site using one thermal imager; HCC equipment to capture Snipe at Lymington/Keyhaven
 - Call for NEG funding for 2022/23 due February 2023
- **Bathing Water Quality Awards** Karen McHugh
 - 2023 awards underway and will be published March 2023.

Members Services

- **Clean Solent Shores and Seas**

Hub to signpost a range of issues and sectors to improve water quality in the Solent. Sections now complete on: Littering, Microplastics, Nutrients, Governance, Habitats/Species and Boating. Next section to finalise – Amenity and Public Health and Marine Invasive Species

- **Building Biodiversity in the Solent Hub**

Information hub to collate work in the Solent (and nationally) on improving the biodiversity of coastal infrastructure. SF keeping up to date with national work on this topic, including attendance of the Marineff working group (national group promoting this topic being led by Bournemouth University).

- **Habitat Restoration Hub**

Collating information and links on habitat restoration initiatives such as REACH and ReMeMare, Local Nature Recovery Strategies, natural capital, blue carbon, Solent seagrass and net gain.

- **Solent Plastics Pollution hub**

Initiated as part of the Environment Agency's Preventing Plastics Pollution Project. SF will maintain web resources and Facebook page until 2028.

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Projects and Events

- Beneficial use of Dredgings in Solent (BUDS)

Phase 2 complete. Phase 3 – Bottom Placement of dredgings project commenced April/May 2021. Project due to be completed March 2023. Phase 4 – Saltmarsh Restoration requires funding.

- Solent Marine Recovery

Solent Forum has led a series of meetings with key stakeholders to assist with the joining up of the marine space with the forthcoming 3 Local Nature Recovery Strategies being produced by Hampshire County Council, West Sussex and Isle of Wight. A webpage has been produced and a scoping document drafted to assist. [Solent Forum - Solent Nature Recovery Scoping](#)

- Solent Marine Invasives and Biosecurity Planning

Working with Natural England, APEM Ltd and the Marine Biological Association to raise awareness of marine invasives in the Solent and developing biosecurity measures.

3 workshops planned - Book online via the Forum's website. [Solent Forum - Biosecurity Workshops](#)

1. Portsmouth: 15th March at the Royal Maritime Club
2. Southampton: 22nd March at the National Oceanography Centre
3. Isle of Wight: 30th March at the UK Sailing Academy

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Externally Funded Project Support

We can provide letters of support, stakeholder engagement services and web hosting for externally funded projects. Current projects supported include (lead partner in brackets):

- Dynamic inventory of seascape restoration activities in the Solent to Sussex Bay area (University of Portsmouth) 3Cs funded project. Jan to March 2023. Solent Forum is a partner in this project and will help design the inventory database to be hosted on the SF website.
- Preventing Plastic Pollution in the River Itchen Estuary (Environment Agency) - 5 years commenced 2023.
- Three Harbours technical summit (Southern Water). Ongoing.
- Solent Seascapes (Blue Marine Foundation). From 2022 to 2027.
- Valuing Marine Biodiversity for use in Decision Making (University of Portsmouth). Nov 2022 to August 2025.
- Solent Cluster (Solent LEP).
- Solent Water Quality and Boating (Environment Agency and Natural England). Ongoing, ad hoc.

Horizon Planning

Environment Act/25 year plan environmental targets for biodiversity on the land and in the sea, water and air quality and resource efficiency and waste reduction. Sea/river targets:

- Improve riverine health by **reducing nutrient pollution and contamination** from heavy metal sources as well as improving water use efficiency
- **Stop the decline in wildlife populations** through legally binding target for species abundance by 2030 with a requirement to increase species by 10% by 2042
- Requirement for **Local Nature Recovery Strategies** – this will help inform strategic net gain targets
- The Environment Act also puts a key focus on driving towards nature's recovery and new proposals
- **Net Zero Strategy** to decarbonise all sectors of the UK economy in order to reach net zero emissions by 2050. This was also a widely discussed climate goal at COP26 last autumn.
- Plans to Pilot Highly Protected Marine Areas (**HPMAs**)

Horizon Planning

Key Issues in Members Survey 2022/23

1. Water quality and catchment management
2. Habitats and species
3. Ports, harbours and shipping
4. Fisheries and aquaculture
5. Joint cultural and heritage, marine industry, flood and coastal erosion risk management

Natural England highlighted priorities from members survey 2022:

- Small scale habitat loss
- Coastal eutrophication and algal mats on the intertidal
- Nutrients
- Invasive non-native species (INNS)
- Access to updated evidence

Thank You



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