

Solent Forum Annual Report: 2020 - 2021

The Solent Forum is an established partnership that promotes and delivers integrated coastal management around the Solent. Established in 1992, it considers and provides advice on strategic coastal matters and facilitates communication and information exchange amongst its membership. Its work is steered by a group of funding partners, who guide the work of the Forum Officers.

This report sets out what the Forum has achieved in the 2020/21 financial year and what it will deliver in the 2021/22 year. The long term aims and objectives of the Forum are set out in its [Business Plan](#). This can be downloaded from the Forum's website.

The Forum has three categories of work that it undertakes; core service work that is ongoing each year, specific project work that runs for a defined time period and the servicing of subgroups.

The Forum hosts regular events as part of its core service. It also organises other events, both alone and in partnership with others, to support project work and disseminate information on important Solent coastal issues.



Solent Forum Aims

The aims of the Solent Forum are:

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

Solent Forum Members

The Forum has a wide ranging membership with organisations from all coastal sectors. Members include professional bodies such as local government, harbour authorities, industry, user groups, trade associations and NGOs. The Forum is not open to individuals, local residents associations or issue specific lobby groups. It is politically neutral and independently chaired.

Membership benefits include:

- Access to the Solent News service;
- Free attendance at the biannual Solent Forum meetings and reduced entry fee to other Forum events;
- Access to Forum reports, data and the Forum's Solent Information Database;
- Use of the Solent Forum network to communicate with other authorities, organisations and user groups;
- Opportunity to undertake partnership work and influence the direction of future Forum project work;
- Opportunity to join Forum Subgroups: Natural Environment, Bathing Water Quality and Solent Marine Sites.



Solent Forum Objectives

The Forum's Business Plan monitors its progress against an agreed set of five objectives; this Plan sets out in detail how the Forum will deliver them. Below is a summary of the relevant work that the Forum undertakes to deliver its objectives:

1. To raise awareness and understanding of members' roles and aspirations

Relevant Forum work: Solent News Service, Forum website, Solent Forum meetings.

2. To improve sharing of the information base

Relevant Forum work: Professor Mike Clark Award, Solent News Service, Forum websites, Solent Bathing Water Quality Awards, Solent Information Database and topical information sheets.

3. To facilitate better communication, consultation and liaison:

Relevant Forum work: Solent News Service, Forum websites, Solent Forum meetings, topical workshops, Solent Information Database and Coastal Consents Guide.

4. To raise awareness and understanding of the human and natural changes likely to materially affect the Solent area and its interests:

Relevant Forum work: Solent News Service, Forum websites, Solent Forum meetings and Solent Forum serviced subgroups.

5. To promote the national and regional importance of the Solent in policy, development and plan making:

Relevant Forum work: Solent Forum Meetings, Solent News Service, Forum websites, officer input into national coastal policy and plan making, Coastal Partnerships Working Group attendance and strategic opportunities workshops.

6. To raise awareness and understanding of the impacts of Climate Change on the Solent and appropriate mitigation, resilience and adaptation measures:

Relevant Forum work: Solent Forum Meetings, Solent News Service, Forum websites and Workshops.

Solent Forum Core Work

- Biannual [Forum meetings](#).
- News service - biannual newsletter, ([Solent News](#)) monthly updates, Twitter and special alerts.
- Maintaining the Forum website, including hosting partner material
- Provision of the [Solent Information Database \(SID\)](#) - a metadatabase of Solent research and reports.
- Servicing of subgroups.
- Administering the [Solent Bathing Water Quality Awards](#).
- Administering the [Professor Mike Clark Award](#) to support student research in the Solent.
- Maintaining a [Coastal Consents Guide](#) to advise those wishing to undertake development.
- Membership networking and attendance at key local meetings like Catchment Partnerships and the Southern Coastal Group.
- Collating and sharing information on key issues with member organisations.

Solent Forum Subgroups

- [Solent Marine Sites Management Group](#)
- [Solent Bathing Water Quality Group](#) (to administer bathing water quality awards)
- [Natural Environment Group](#)

Solent Forum Work Programme 2020/21

Meetings and Events Held in 2020/21

Meeting	Attendees	Date of Meeting/Event
Solent Forum	Solent Forum members	Autumn 2020 and Spring 2021
Solent Forum Steering Group	Steering Group Members	Spring and Autumn 2020
Solent Marine Sites (SEMS)	SEMS Management Group	Autumn 2020
Natural Environment Group (NEG)	NEG Members	Spring and Autumn 2020
Catchment Partnership Meetings x 4	River Catchment Partnership partners	Throughout the year
Solent Water Quality and Boating Work-shop	In partnership with the Environment Agency and Natural England	Autumn 2020

Projects/Consultancy Services in 2020/21

Project/Service	Objective	Status as of March 2021
Enhancing Stakeholder Engagement (ESE) in the South Marine Plans	The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) contracted the Forum to assist with this ESE Project, funded by the EMFF.	Three year project, completed spring 2020.
Building Biodiversity in the Solent Hub	The Forum will work with Forum member, Artecology, and other members to develop a resource hub on building biodiversity, including ecological enhancement.	A web page of resources has been built at: http://www.solentforum.org/services/Member_Services/Building_Bioversity_hub/ . Information and case studies continue to be added.
Beneficial Use of Dredgings (BUDS)	To explore how material from dredging that takes place in the Solent can be used in coastal defence and habitat replenishment schemes.	The BUDS phase 2 was completed and funding obtained for phase 3. See: http://www.solentforum.org/services/Current_Projects/buds/ .
Coordinating with Catchment Management Partnerships	To make links with the river catchment partnerships in the Solent to coordinate action on issues relating to transitional and coastal waters.	Meetings were attended for all four Catchment Partnerships that drain into the Solent throughout 2020. We will continue this going forward.
Clean Solent Shores and Seas (CSSS)	CSSS aims to collate and share information on a range of topics to help improve the Solent's water quality.	A signposting and resource hub has been established on the Forum's website to collate projects and initiatives on water quality issues in the Solent. See: http://www.solentforum.org/services/Current_Projects/CSSS/ .
Coastal Partnership Network (CPN) Theory of Change Project	To assist the CPN in its aim to support Coastal Partnerships in their work and development and achieve recognition as the 'go to network' for coastal collaboration.	The Forum assisted with this work throughout 2020 and it is now complete.

Proposed Work Programme 2021/22

Meetings and Events Scheduled for 2020/21

Meeting	Attendees	Date of Meeting/Event
Solent Forum	Solent Forum members	Spring and Autumn 2021
Solent Forum Steering Group	Steering Group Members	Spring and Autumn 2021
Solent Marine Sites (SEMS)	SEMS Management Group	Activity survey in Spring 2021, Management Group meeting in Autumn 2021
Natural Environment Group (NEG)	NEG Members	Spring and Autumn 2021
Horizon Scanning (online survey)	Solent Forum Members	Summer 2021
Workshop on net gain and habitat restoration	Forum members and other interested parties	Autumn 2021

Projects Proposed/Consultancy Services in 2021/22

Project/Service	Objective	Details
Beneficial Use of Dredgings (BUDS) Solent Forum - Beneficial Use of Dredging in the Solent Project (BUDS)	Explores how material from dredging in the Solent can be used in coastal defence and habitat replenishment schemes.	Phase 3 will be progressed; the delivery of a recharge scheme at Lymington.
Coastal Consents Guide Solent Forum - Coastal Consents Guide	This Guide gives those who wish to undertake development an overall view of the potential consents required and other key considerations before submitting an application.	We will continue to update this Guide, including information that will arise once the Environment Bill is published.
Building Biodiversity in the Solent Hub Solent Forum - Building Biodiversity in the Solent (BBS): Information Hub	Develop a resource hub on building biodiversity, including ecological enhancement.	The Forum will continue to build case study material and collate and share further knowledge on this topic.
Habitat Restoration - collation and sharing of information Solent Forum - Habitat Restoration	The Forum will be collating information on habitat restoration, including guidance on natural capital, Local Nature Recovery Strategies and net gain.	Information will be shared via our news service and added to the Forum's website.
Clean Solent Shores and Seas (CSSS) Solent Forum - Clean Solent Shores and Seas	CSSS aims to collate and share information on a range of topics to help improve the Solent's water quality.	The Forum will continue to populate the directories under the CSSS umbrella.
Preventing Plastic Pollution (PPP)	PPP seeks to understand and reduce the impacts of plastic pollution in the marine environment, by looking at the catchment from source to sea.	We will look to work with the Environment Agency on providing legacy outputs for this Interegg funded project.

Further Information

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