



# SOLENT FORUM UPDATE

October 2023

[www.solentforum.org](http://www.solentforum.org)



# Solent Forum Staff

- Peter Barham – Solent Forum Chair
- Karen McHugh – Solent Forum Manager
- Kate Ansell – Solent Forum Officer
- Annual Placement Student (Katinka Klein 2023)

# Core Services (1)

- Next Steering Group meeting will be on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024.
- The next Solent Forum meeting will be held on 13th March 2024 in Cowes.
- Next edition of Solent News will be published Winter 2023 deadline for articles Dec 23rd.
- Solent News Service. Monthly E Newsletter (c. 400 recipients). X (Twitter) feeds daily & like/reposts – 416 followers. Forum members can use our news services and mailing lists for free to publicise or consult on work.
- Student Mike Clark Bursary Awards – next call for projects April 2024. One awarded 2023.
- Solent Information Database – Please send your research/reports to us for inclusion.
- Members Survey and Horizon Scanning completed in the summer.
- Partnership webpage for partner projects & partnership opportunities.

# Core Services (2)

## 1. Information Hubs:

- Clean Solent Shores and Seas
- Building Biodiversity into Infrastructure
- Habitat Restoration
- Solent Plastics Pollution
- Other inc: Biodiversity/Marine Net Gain; Blue Carbon; Natural Capital; Solent Catchments

## 2. Member Services

- Solent Marine Recovery (and LNRS's)
- Solent and Sussex Bay Restoration Inventory
- Solent Biosecurity Planning

## 3. Partnership Opportunities

- Partnership working opportunities and Research needs
- Greater Solent Tracker
- Grant funding tool

# 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 each September
  - SF Officer has regular telecoms with other national MPA Officers
- **Natural Environment Group** Karen McHugh
  - Next meeting 1 November 2023. 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)
  - One projects funded 2023/24. It's the water quality, stupid! Identifying the risks to support successful restoration in the Solent. UoP
  - NEG funding for 2024/25 Will be launched February 2024
- **Bathing Water Quality Awards** Karen McHugh
  - 2023 awards published early March 2023

# Projects and Events 1

- Solent Seascapes Project and the Solent Recovery Plan (2022-2027)

The Solent Forum is on the advisory group for the SSP and chairs the Solent Recovery Plan Working Group. The Solent Recovery Plan Strategy includes a data portal and State of Nature report which will inform the voluntary management plan. The plan will focus on how to remove pressures (particularly from non-licensable activities) that are damaging the habitats and species. This work will also deliver the NEG Bird Sensitivity and Activity Mapping Project.

- Solent Marine Nature Recovery (2024 – 2025)

Solent Forum liaising with key stakeholders to assist with the joining up of the marine space with the forthcoming Local Nature Recovery Strategies being produced by Hampshire County Council, West Sussex and Isle of Wight and in partnership with Solent Seascapes Project. A webpage has been produced and a scoping document drafted to assist. [Solent Forum - Solent Nature Recovery Scoping](#). A joint workshop is being discussed to be held February/March 2024. SF recently responded to a NE survey on how marine can be incorporated into LNRS.

# Projects and Events 2

- Beneficial use of Dredgings in Solent (BUDS) Closing

Phase 2 complete. Phase 3 – Bottom Placement of dredgings project commenced April/May 2021. Final project report due. Phase 4 – Saltmarsh Restoration requires funding.

- Sea the Value (2022 – 2025)

Working with PML and University of Portsmouth. Understanding of the role marine biodiversity plays in providing regulating services, and in particular carbon sequestration and bioremediation of waste, valuing these services and applying these values in a policy context. Approaches will be applied and developed at a both local/regional and national scale, including the two case study sites of the Solent and the Moray Firth. Three workshops in the Solent (one already held and other planned for October).

- Solent Forum Business Plan (2025 – 2030)

Business planning will commence at the February Steering Group meeting when we will present the proposed methodology to you.

Members business planning event to be combined with Autumn 2024 members mtg.

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# Externally Funded Project Support

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

- Solent Seascapes Project (Blue Marine Foundation)
- Greater Solent Project Tracker (Solent Forum and partners)
- Preventing Plastic Pollution in the River Itchen Estuary (Environment Agency & partners)
- Solent Cluster (Solent LEP)
- Sea the Value (University of Portsmouth)
- Solent Water Quality and Boating (Environment Agency)
- Three Harbours (Southern Water/RSPB)
- Water Quality and Risks to Habitat Restoration (University of Portsmouth, NEG funded project)



**Thank You**

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