

**Project Proposal**  
**Solent Forum recreation study group**  
**Recreation Audit**

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## 1. Aim

- The aim of the project is to conduct a review of water-based recreational activity in the Solent (using the standard Solent Forum area of interest, Hurst Castle to Selsey Beach and north coast of I.O.W.)
- In addition to providing a 'count' of capacity and levels of activity, the report will also include qualitative data that reflects the experiences of participants in a wide range of water-based activities (See Appendix 1 for a agreed list of included activities).

## 2. Objectives

- Provide up to date information to inform the revision of the Strategic Guidance Chapter on Recreation
- Provide qualitative and quantitative data from a user profile survey
- Provide quantitative data that meets the following criteria:
  - Makes no impact assessment or interpretation, but could, for example, inform capacity decisions/debates such as, 'how full is too full?'
  - Can be used to compare actual usage with current capacity maximums
  - Has the potential to feed data to the Alterra model
- Provide quantitative data on type, intensity and location of activity, identifying seasonal variations where applicable.
- Provide replicable survey data capable of linking with the 'State of the Solent' indicators
- Present information both in report format and in electronic and graphical formats. This will include SPSS, Excel, map overlays and GIS if possible.

## 3. Methodology

The Project will seek to establish base line data on users and usage via an easily replicable methodology and identify proxy indicators that can be monitored on a regular and ongoing basis.

### Activities

For the purposes of this proposal relevant activities are considered to be those where use of the waters of the Solent is central to the activity and the major purpose of the visit.

The requirement that the activity itself must be the major focus of the visit is purely pragmatic and imposed to keep the data collection manageable. For example people coming to the Solent area for the express purpose of an organised

swimming event are included in the study's remit where those who have come for a day out and happen to swim or paddle as a way to enhance their enjoyment of the day out are not.

#### Geographic Nature of Data

As mentioned above the survey will be conducted in the Solent Forum area of interest which is from Hurst Castle to Selsey Bill and includes the north coast of the Isle of Wight. Perhaps the biggest issue with monitoring is the fact that the majority of activities within the study area will not be static. Consequently it is not a matter of recording where they are at a given time but rather one of tracking movement over time.

To do this with any degree of accuracy on a census basis (all users on a given day) is cost prohibitive. It is therefore proposed that a 'point of entry' and 'dispersal' model be used. Point of entry (PoE) is the geographic location at which the user accesses the Solent. This is susceptible to census and quantitative based methodologies. Dispersal is the tracking of geographic displacement from the point of entry and requires more qualitative data to be collected.

#### Activity 'Footprint'

In order to determine where usage 'hot spots' or areas of conflict are it is not enough to assess numbers and co-location of participants. The amount of space required for the activity to be pursued without being impeded needs to be considered. This is, using terminology borrowed from remote sensing, described as the footprint of the activity.

This concept of specifying the amount of space required for the activity to be pursued without being impeded is already in operational use in the Solent in the Moving Prohibited Zone (MPZ) for vessels over 150m established by The Southampton Harbour Byelaws 2003 (Byelaw No 11).

#### 4. Phases

The complete audit will be achieved by splitting the work into two phases. Phase One will consist of the initial desk based research. This phase will be used to produce an interim report and workshop which will be used to inform the methods and tools to be used in Phase Two.

Currently there is an assumption that Phase Two will provide an ongoing data collection process but Phase One might highlight that there is enough data currently available from existing sources.

##### Phase One.

A 'desk based' phase when the research team will:

- Identify sources of existing information. This could include: Harbour Authorities; Marinas and Shore-Storage; Clubs & Associations; Charter & Hire companies; Event organisers.

- Identify the types of information that:
  - Might be held by existing sources
  - Would be of use in this study.
- Gather and collate information to form a 'count' of such things as:
  - Number and size of craft on moorings, in marinas or storage - maximum capacities and actual take-up of capacity
  - Number of organisations and membership levels for clubs, LEA activity centres, community ventures and uniformed groups
  - Levels of participation - historical (clubs, associations & events)
- Gather and collate information to provide a map of data and identification of suitable locations for Phase Two data gathering. Factors that could be considered when selecting locations might include:
  - Areas with high levels of activity, either in terms of number or participants in one activity or where there is a wide range of different activities.
  - Areas where there is a perception of activity being close to potential maximum capacity.
  - Areas which can be identified as 'sensitive', e.g. environmental issues, potential conflict with commercial shipping or areas identified for future development.
  - Areas where there is a current data blind-spot
  - The practicality of gathering data from any given location
  - Whether a particular location can be regarded as representative of a wider area, therefore allowing for extrapolation of results
  - Replicable in future studies.
- Gather information on the 'sources' recording methods and 'units of measurement' used.
- Compile a calendar of planned events and competitions.

#### Deliverables from Phase One

1. An interim report will be prepared and presented at a workshop. This will provide a summary of the general findings and a clear picture of the planned "roadmap" for Phase Two.
2. List of sources of water based recreation in the Solent.
3. An overview of provision in the form of a "count" as discussed above.
4. A description of standard units of measurement that can be used:

- a. To present the data from the various sources in a common format
  - b. To provide a counting system for Phase Two data gathering and future studies
5. A data request format that provides 'sources' with a simple way of returning the required information. The data request format tested in Phase One. Lessons learnt incorporated to make changes in preparation for Phase Two data gathering.
6. Identification of a suitable seasonal variations model to be applied during the evaluation stage of Phase Two, thereby providing a year-round picture irrespective of actual dates of data collection.
7. Identification of suitable survey days for Phase Two that best suit the seasonal variation model and identified locations, but which provide a reasonable opportunity to establish 'peak' levels of activity.
8. Identification of areas where either no usage data exists or none or poor data can be obtained from existing sources, i.e. 'data blind-spots'.
9. Data collection instruments, which have been tested where required, to include:
  - a. User survey questionnaires
  - b. Data request forms
  - c. 'Observer' recording sheets
10. A pool of researchers has been selected and trained who will conduct the user surveys and/or any other data collection method to be used.
11. Identification any specific resources that will be required on the survey days for particular locations, e.g. craft to get researchers afloat, binoculars, cameras, etc.

## Phase Two

This phase will focus on 'real-time' user based surveys and 'Observer' recordings but will also include any follow-up requests for current time period data from other sources. The data gathering will be conducted on a number of pre-determined survey days. The current expectation is that there will be one Summer and Autumn day but a Spring and Winter day might be required depending upon the findings from Phase One.

- Each 'day' will have an agreed start and finish time (sunrise to sunset could be one possible example that takes seasonal variation into account).
- Each location will be allocated a minimum of two researchers/observers to allow full coverage throughout the day.
- Each survey will cover between five and ten survey locations.
- Each survey day will have a designated coordinator who will have a reliable way of communicating with each location. Prior to the study day, they will issue all the resources that researchers/observers will require. It will be their responsibility to

ensure that all the data gathered is quickly collected from researchers and that it is correctly collated in terms of date/times and location. They will also ensure the return of any other equipment or resources used.

- A provisional estimate of the costs for each Phase Two survey day is £4,500 excluding VAT.

## 12. Scope and Methodology

At its most simple the question to be addressed is, "Who does what, where, why and when"? With a requirement to be able to monitor the changing nature over time.

With respect to recreation within the Solent region it may be broadly classified as on or in the water, scheduled, ad hoc, group or individual in nature

### Scheduled Recreation

In order to investigate the nature and level of scheduled recreation on or in the Solent a desktop study is proposed which collates the programmes of events published by the various clubs and associations using the Solent. This will be done via an internet search for relevant information and through telephone interviews with clubs and associations.

### 'Point of Entry' data

It will probably be the case that for small craft a single defined point of entry can be determined, albeit a club or public launching point, specified beach or car park. For larger craft based activities this may well not be the case as the participants may be drawn from a range of existing storage facilities within the Solent region (e.g. Moorings, Marinas, Club Boat Parks).

### 'Dispersal' data

The planned area(s) of the Solent to be used for the scheduled activity will be collected along with any selection criteria (wind direction, tidal state etc)

Records of past events such as sailing club log books, will also be investigated as they could provide a rich source of information as to typical patterns of behaviour for given points of entry, activities and conditions.

### Individual Recreation

In considering the nature and distribution of individual recreation it is useful to separate out resident craft and transient craft activities. Where resident craft based activities are those using crafts stored at organised storage facilities within the Solent region (e.g.) Moorings, Marinas, Club Boat Parks). Transient craft based activities are those where the craft is transported to the Solent for the day of use but stored somewhere other than an organised storage facility within the region (eg. home, facilities out of the region).

### ***Resident craft based activity***

The proposed methodology for assessing the level of individual craft based recreation is being called the Subtraction Method. This involves:

- Identification of the organised storage facilities in the Solent Region (PoE)

- Identification of their total capacity
- Audit of their current level of occupancy

It will be necessary to identify the methodology used by each organisation in defining capacity and level of occupancy (e.g. is it based on physical dimensions of facility, number of craft, type of craft, length of craft) as this will allow the data collected to be converted to standard measures. Where the standard measures emerge from the data and hence no precise definitions are offered here. However the concept is modelled on that used for shipping containers where capacity and utilisation is defined in terms of 'twenty foot equivalent units' (TEU's), the lowest common denominator. It is anticipated that there will be at least two principle standard measures, Large Craft Equivalent units (LEUs) and Small Craft Equivalent units (SEUs). Though, as previously stated the exact number and nature of measures will emerge from the data. A by product of this approach is that it should be possible to assess the distribution of actual size of craft in use over time relative the 'equivalent unit' and thus clearly highlight trends.

The subtraction element of the methodology comes from the ability to determine how many craft are in use on a given day by counting how many are left in the storage facility and subtracting this from the known current level of occupancy. The missing craft will be in use on the Solent, for their designed activity, for transport within the region or for transit out of the region.

#### Resident craft dispersal data

It will be necessary to collect data about the patterns of use of the Solent by resident craft. This may be in a number of ways:

- Interviews with experts (Delphi Method)
- Interviews with 'typical' users of the facilities
- Questionnaires to all users of the facilities
- Questionnaires to a stratified random sample of users of the facilities
- Interviews with users on nominated survey days
- Questionnaires to users on nominated survey days
- Shore based observation on nominated survey days
- Analysis of 'Activity diaries' kept by 'typical users for a specified period

A combination of the above

The goal being to also allow distance of travel / typical transit routes from storage facility /activity areas to be identified and these, when plotted on a map (with or without 'footprints') should allow potential area of high usage or conflict to be identified. Activity areas identified should be overlaid with scheduled recreation PoE data .

### ***Transient craft based activity***

#### Transient craft point of entry data and craft dispersal data

It will be necessary to collect data about the patterns of use of the Solent by transient craft. This may be in a number of ways.

- Interviews with experts (Delphi Method)
- Interviews with users at selected access points on nominated survey days
- Questionnaires at selected access points to a stratified random sample of used on nominated survey days
- Shore based observation at selected access points on nominated survey days
- Analysis of 'Activity diaries' kept by 'typical' users for specified period

A combination of the above

The goal being to also allow distance of travel from PoE / typical transit routes from PoE / activity areas to be identified and these, when plotted on a map (with or without 'footprints' should allow potential area of high useage or conflict to be identified.

Both the number of access points and number of occasions to be covered needs to be carefully monitored and reviewed over time to allow valid generalisations about levels and patterns of use to be made.

### Practical Considerations

The method and timing of data collection from participants on survey days needs to be carefully thought through. Asking for information prior to the activity may be seen as an unwelcome intrusion into valuable activity time and only record intended behaviour. Conversely asking for information post activity, whilst able to record actual behaviour, may equally be unwelcome when participants are potentially tired, we and or cold. It may be sensible to adopt a mixed methodology asking all participants a set of quick , core questions and pursuing greater levels of detail from those clearly willing to participate in the survey. Though the issue of bias this introduces will need to be discussed and trained survey staff able assess and record this in situ will be printed.

### 13. Timescale

See Appendices 2 Gantt chart

## ***Appendices 1***

### **Recreation Audit- Activities for Inclusion**

Usage of mooring/anchoring areas

Sea angling from boat

Canoeing

Personal water craft

Powerboating incl. RIBs / day boats

Rowing

Sub-aqua diving

Organised swimming events

Surfing

Water skiing

Yachts cruising

Yachts racing

Motor cruising (with sleeping accommodation)

Dinghy cruising

Dinghy racing

Kite surfing

Windsurfing

## ***Appendices 2 Timescale***

	Nov-08	Dec-08	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09	Apr-09	May-09	Jun-09	Jul-09	Aug-09	Sep-09	Oct-09
<b>Write and submit proposal</b>												
Identify original team												
Determine resource allocation												
original team proposal writing												
<b>Discussions with Project board members about available resources</b>												
Meeting with RYA												
discussion with EA												
Discussion with ABP												
Discussion with Harbour Authority												
<b>Identify the types of information that might be:</b>												
held by existing sources												
of use in this study												
<b>Gather information on the 'sources' recording methods and 'units of measurement' used.</b>												
Gather and collate information to form a 'count'												
Collate returns												
Port databases												
Manual input of data												
QC database												
<b>Compile a calendar of planned events and competitions</b>												
<b>Compile a data request form that provides sources with a simple way of returning the required information</b>												
Pilot data request form												
Evaluate the effectiveness of the data request format used												
<b>Identification of seasonal variation model</b>												
<b>Design data collection instruments for Phase Two survey days</b>												
User survey questionnaires												
Data request forms												
Observer recording sheets												
<b>Present Interim report and workshop</b>												