Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) Workshop: Coast and Marine Workshop – 16 January 2024. Stakeholder comments and conclusions.

Key Headlines from Workshop Findings

- Partnership working is essential to share knowledge, data, expertise and make the most of funding. There is lots of experience and ambition in the Solent for nature recovery, but it needs an organisation to coordinate and communicate work. In the Solent, the Solent Forum could take on this role.
- 2. We need to take a seascale approach to nature recovery, sites don't stand in isolation, they are connected across the terrestrial/coast/marine interface and the wider water environment. In the Solent, Blue Marine's Solent Seascape Project is taking this approach to nature recovery over the next five years.
- 3. Nature recovery has multiple benefits and this need to be set out clearly to the people that work and live in the Solent to get political and public support. The Isle of Wight Council has passed a 'Motion for the Ocean' and the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust have been undertaking public engagement work through their Secrets of the Solent project and now the Solent Seascape project. The Solent Forum has been running the Solent Marine Sites Management scheme for over 20 years to address pressure from non-licensable activities.
- 4. In the Solent, nature recovery is already happening and many people that work there are comfortable with and used to working in partnership sharing knowledge, expertise and resources. This is positive start in an area that is heavily used for commerce and recreation where habitats are under pressure.

Introduction

As part of the engagement for the Local Nature Recovery Strategies, this workshop was organised by the Solent Forum on behalf of the Isle of Wight Council and Hampshire County Council who are the responsible authorities, along with West Sussex County Council, for the Solent coastline. It included key stakeholders, landowners, and community groups. It was held on 16 January 2024 at the National Oceanography Centre, Southampton. It was coordinated and delivered by the Solent Forum in association with the Responsible Authorities, Natural England, Environment Agency and the Solent Seascape project. Please see appendix 2 for more detailed information on LNRS delivery.

This in person workshop was fully booked at a capacity of 60, attendees came from all around the Solent including industry, government agencies, Ministry of Defence, local and harbour authorities, Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities, charities, and non-government organisations (please see appendix 1). A series of short presentations was held and delegates were asked five questions to discuss in groups.

Q1. What are the key issues facing the Solent in achieving successful nature recovery and how might they be overcome?

Delegates raised the issue of the importance of wider environmental conditions and the need to address these for recovery to be successful such as water quality, sedimentation, non-native species spread and recreational disturbance. The Solent is a heavily populated and well used area and there are many local demands on it and global and regional terrestrial drivers that influence it, such as nutrient import and climate change.

In the Solent there is a lack of available coastal land and land values are high. Much of the Solent shoreline is privately owned, identifying landowners and land and asset managers to source restoration sites can be complex. Identifying potential mitigation sites for developers in a strategy is helpful. Development is difficult to do if land for mitigation cannot be sourced including environmentally beneficial projects such as decarbonisation work which is essential to tackling climate change.

Restoration and recovery are long term challenges and we need to account for factors such as climate change and sea level rise when planning work to ensure it has longevity. It also means change to practices and behaviour and people have to be onboard with that. Organisations can have fragmented expertise and rapid staff turnover so partnership working is crucial for success.

Licenses and consents are still prohibitively expensive with no 'restoration' discounts. Monitoring costs can also be prohibitive, monitoring can be mediated by partnership working with further education using the student resource. Regulators could help with trials and pilots by waiving fees. Resourcing of government organisations is a key challenge. Processes need to be simplified so that things can happen quicker using the huge amount of local passion and expertise.

Restoration needs someone to lead across an area to actually make things happen, in the Solent this could be the Solent Seascape Project. It also needs to be undertaken over the larger scale i.e. landscape or seascape intervention rather than site specific.

We need people to report and record projects that are finished and successful. This helps to convince the public and politicians they are worthwhile. The Solent Seascape Project has produced two excellent videos on their work.

Communication is important to get the public and politicians onboard as is managing expectations. People can help with passive restoration by changing their behaviour. People also need to be encouraged to think long term. Volunteers are a great resource but need to be managed which is time consuming and satisfying the risk assessments for fieldwork can be difficult. Volunteers could prove a useful resource for monitoring of sites which is often lacking due to budget constraints.

Q2. Is there any other mapping we need to produce a habitat map of the Solent for inclusion in the LNRS and what data is required behind this to represent habitats that support particular key species?

Hampshire County Council will be producing an interactive online map for their habitat mapping, which will include coast. Defra are trialling a <u>LNRS Data Viewer</u>.

The Solent Seascape Project will be producing a mapping portal that will include both coastal and marine habitats, this will be useful in the long term especially for marine data but there needs to be consideration of its long term legacy. It would be helpful if the MMO marine plan explorer could include local data in addition to national data sets.

Mapping needs to be accessible to all and data produced in standard formats so that it can be uploaded to different systems. Where mapping is not available, we need to use the best data that we have and also have a bank of local experts to ask.

There is a need to map habitat condition and condition assessment findings in addition to habitat location. Non-native species need to be mapped to monitor their extent and spread. We also need to record byelaws and management measures as data layers.

Designations were thought to be more useful for planning then to help manage public behaviour which is just as important an issue as controlling development. Suggestion to produce a data layer that shows where public use is impacting on areas.

Non designated sites are also important as they serve the designated sites, and it is useful to map SANGS, wildlife corridors, more informal sites and country parks maps for example. Broad scale designations fail to show key sites of importance for wildlife. There was a discussion regarding the designation terminology and how this can be confusing for the public. The term 'nature reserve' seems to be better understood by the public than SSSI for example, even though SSSI is in theory more protected. How can public understanding better match the designation requirements?

Many species are mobile and mapping them should concentrate on their breeding and feeding sites and migratory routes.

Q3. What are the existing projects/initiatives in the Solent that can contribute to nature recovery?

One important aspect for delegates was having a <u>list of projects</u> that is held online for example by the Solent Forum. People undertake projects for a variety of reasons, but it is important that they can access and build on existing work, learn from each other and look to form partnerships.

Nature recovery should also be embedded into business as usual work in addition to specific restoration projects. This will help with recovery in the long term. Recovery works should also highlight the benefits to people in its outputs in addition to the intrinsic benefits for wildlife.

There is a need to take a wholescape approach to water management and connect coast and marine with the rivers and wetlands. Solent Forum staff sit on the relevant catchment partnerships for the Solent to bridge this gap.

Q4. How do we identify future priorities and opportunities for nature recovery (habitats and species) in the Solent?

Delegates believe that we need to find our baseline for what we think is realistic for recovery in the Solent. What is acceptable for the environment in the light of existing recreational and commercial use? Portsmouth University's 'Sea the Value' project should be able to provide insight into what people value. How do we measure recovery, there may need to be different success indicators depending on the audience.

Delegates were shown a list of the key habitats and species in the Solent but felt that it wasn't helpful to pick out individual ones as people have different priorities and areas of interests depending on their role and remit. Some species are more visible and charismatic and they can be used to engage the public in the wider recovery debate. Keystone species are also important as they can be indicators for wider recovery.

Preserving what we already have should be our first priority. Next should be those habitats that are both in poor condition and under threat.

We need to better understand habitat connectivity across the terrestrial/intertidal/subtidal interface. With such a shortage of land in the Solent it may be better to identify sites that are available for restoration and look to enhance them rather than focus on individual habitats and species and searching for sites for them with the right environmental conditions. For any restoration on the coast

we need to build in how this connects to both the terrestrial and marine habitats. Passive restoration should be a key focus across the wider Solent, removing habitat pressures.

Delegates suggested a project hub, which has an overview over existing and future projects and funding opportunities.

Q5. What are the challenges to achieving these priorities?

Delegates queried how and if we can use net gain funding for passive restoration such as recreational disturbance management or to address wider environmental conditions.

As designations are feature based people felt we need to work wider than designation boundaries for habitat connectivity and to address wider environmental issues.

Delegates raised complexities and expense in the regulatory regime, sourcing and obtaining the consent of landowners and continuity of work due to political change. It was also noted that much of the legislation is about maintaining and improving the status quo but external factors like climate change will have a strong influence on what we can achieve. Nature needs time to recover once conditions are met so recovery work must be long term.

Some delegates noted the imbalance of nature recovery work across the Solent. For a variety of reasons, they felt there has been a focus on Langstone and Chichester Harbours and that there should also be a focus on the potential of the Western Solent, Portsmouth Harbour and the Isle of Wight. They also stated the need to work across the whole water environment to account for terrestrial drivers which impact the environmental conditions in the Solent.

The challenge of monitoring nature recovery work was discussed. This was both in terms of monitoring any nature recovery work happening and monitoring existing sites to check things were not worsening. With a lack of monitoring, often linked to lack of budget, behaviour in designated areas can be less than desirable as people believe they will not be challenged.

Appendix 1: Summary Statistics and Workshop Attendees

60 people attended the workshop and could be broadly divided into: local authority (18), conservation organisation (6), central government/agency (e.g. Natural England, Environment Agency, MMO) (9), charities and NGO's (11) and private individuals/ landowners/ consultancies (6), Harbours (5), Academia (5). A full list of participants can be found below.

Artecology Cally Barnes BCP Council Matthew Phillips Beaulieu Estate Natalie Hands Bird Aware Solent Juliette Scott Blue Marine Foundation Rick Stafford Bournemouth University Rachel Wylde Carter Jonas - Managing Agent for The Crown Estate Charlie Thompson Channel Coastal Observatory Jessica Vagg Chichester Harbour Conservancy Lucy Sheffield Coastal Partners Helen Butt Defence Infrastructure Organisation (Ministry of Defence) Rosie Horner Defence Infrastructure Organisation / MOD Paul Howe Eastleigh Borough Council Charlotte Lines Environment Agency Simon Kennedy Fareham Borough Council Mike Short Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust Jumie Marsh Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust Hampshire County Council Jim Hobson Hampshire County Council		
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Melissa Newton Hampshire County Council	Phil Fernandes	Hampshire County Council
	Wolfgang Ritter	Hampshire County Council
Laura McCulloch Hampshire County Council	Melissa Newton	Hampshire County Council
	Laura McCulloch	Hampshire County Council

Jemima Phipps	Hampshire County Council
Tristan Norton	Havant Borough Council
Carolyn Herbert	Isle of Wight Council
James Brewer	Isle of Wight Council
Sue Hawley	Isle of Wight Estuaries Partnership
Meg Roberts	Langstone Harbour Board
Ryan Willegers	Lymington Harbour Commissioners
Kate Heath	Marine Management Organisation
James McClelland	Natural England
Jess Taylor	Natural England
Kenneth Johnstone	Natural England
Stephanie Evans	Natural England
lan Barker	New Forest National Park Authority
Christine Sams	NOC
Rebekah Noakes	Project Seagrass
Alison Fowler	River Hamble Harbour Authority
Adam Taylor	RSPB
Wez Smith	RSPB
Fay Pisani	RSPB/Three Harbours
Kate Ansell	Solent Forum
Peter Barham	Solent Forum
Lindsay McCulloch	Southampton City Council
Hester Churchouse	Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
Gordon Watson	University of Portsmouth
Prof Jasmin	
Godbold	University of Southampton
Keith Metcalf	WINGS Wildlife Heritage (WWH)

Appendix 2 – Background to LNRS' and the Preparation of the Hampshire LNRS

Underpinned by the 25 Year Environment Plan (2018) and the Environment Act (2021), Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) are a new system of plans for nature recovery covering the whole of England. They are a key mechanism for planning and delivering the National Nature Recovery Network. The outputs to Defra will consist of a habitat map and a Statement of Biodiversity Priorities. This includes prioritisation based on spatial factors and wider public benefits.

Hampshire County Council (as the Responsible Authority) convened a series of stakeholder engagement events, both online and in-person, from January to March 2024. These workshops were either aligned to the National Character Areas – e.g. North Hampshire, New Forest, Central Chalk, or followed more generic or cross cutting themes – e.g. Woodlands, Rivers & Wetlands, Access to Nature & Health/Wellbeing, and Species Recovery.

Objectives of the LNRS stakeholder workshops were to:

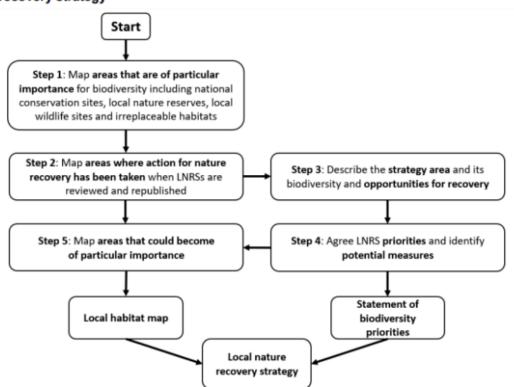
- To build mutual understanding of Local Nature Recovery Strategies, how the Hampshire LNRS is being developed and where these workshops fit in.
- To share views and data on opportunities, challenges and priorities for nature recovery, and potential mechanisms for delivery.
- To share the proposed next steps in development of the Hampshire LNRS and further opportunities to be involved.

Details of the Isle of Wight LNRS development can be found on their Island Nature site.

Appendix 3: Workshop Discussion Resources

Defra flowchart on contents of LNRS

Figure 2: Order of steps to be followed in preparing contents of a local nature recovery strategy



Solent Habitat and Species list

Habitats

Irreplaceable habitats highlighted in yellow.

- Maritime Cliff and Slopes
- Chalk subtidal and littoral
- Coastal Vegetated Shingle
- Coastal Sand Dunes
- Coastal Saltmarsh Spartina swards
- Intertidal Mudflats (and component sub-features)
- Seagrass beds (intertidal and subtidal)
- Sheltered Muddy Gravels
- Estuarine Rocky Habitats
- Peat and Clay Exposures
- Subtidal Sandbanks (and component sub-features)
- Saline Lagoons
- Kelp
- Grazing marsh
- Rock / Reef
- Maerl beds
- Sea-pens and burrowing megafauna
- Sea Caves (south coast of IOW)

Species

- Atlantic Salmon
- Brown/sea trout
- Bullhead
- Lamprey (river, sea and brook all in Solent)
- European Eel
- Native Oysters
- Stalked jellyfish
- Short snouted seahorse
- Long snouted seahorse
- Lagoon sandworm
- Tentacled lagoon worm
- Peacock's Tail algae
- Sabellaria sp.

Birds

(list of all designated SPA features):

- Bar-tailed godwit (Limosa lapponica), Non-breeding
- Black-tailed godwit (Limosa limosa islandica), Non-breeding
- Common tern (Sterna hirundo), Breeding
- Curlew (Numenius arquata), Non-breeding
- Dark-bellied brent goose (Branta bernicla bernicla), Non-breeding

- Dunlin (Calidris alpina alpina), Non-breeding
- Grey plover (Pluvialis squatarola), Non-breeding
- Little tern (Sternula albifrons), Breeding
- Mediterranean gull (Ichthyaetus melanocephalus), Breeding
- Pintail (Anas acuta), Non-breeding
- Red-breasted merganser (Mergus serrator), Non-breeding
- Redshank (Tringa totanus), Non-breeding
- Ringed plover (Charadrius hiaticula), Non-breeding
- Roseate tern (Sterna dougallii), Breeding
- Sanderling (Calidris alba), Non-breeding
- Sandwich tern (Thalasseus sandvicensis), Breeding
- Shelduck (Tadorna tadorna), Non-breeding
- Shoveler (Spatula clypeata), Non-breeding
- Teal (Anas crecca), Non-breeding
- Turnstone (Arenaria interpres), Non-breeding
- Wigeon (Mareca penelope), Non-breeding
- · Waterbird assemblage, Non-breeding

Table of existing known Solent habitat mapping

Key Solent Habitat	Marine/Coa st	Defr a Magi c	MMO Data Explor er	ссо	SSP Restorati on Map	SSP mappin g	EMODn et	Seascape Restorati on Network	Project Seagra ss	Habitat Networ ks - Coastal Habitats Groupe d (NE)	LNRS Data Viewe r	OMRE G
Mudflats	С	У	У	У	·							
Sandbanks (subtidal)	М		У									
Saltmarsh	С	У	У	У	У						У	
Seagrass	М	У	У		У		У				У	
Oysters	М		У		у							
Shingle	С	У	У	У								
Kelp (Wight offshore)	М											
Sand dunes	С	У	У									
Saline lagoons	С	У	У	У								
Maritime Cliff and Slopes	С	Υ	У									
Sheltered Muddy Gravels	М						У					
Subtidal Sands and Gravels	М						У					
Active Restoration Layers												
Native oyster restoration	М		У					У			у	
Seagrass restoration	М		У					У				
Mud stretches	С		У					У				
Habitat creation sites within floodplain	С		У					У			У	
Materials suitable for mudflat/saltmarsh rest	М		У									
Bird Islands	С							У				

Infrastructure modification	C/M									У
Beneficial use of dredgings	C/M									У
Restoration networks	С							У		
Other useful layers										
Designated sites	C/M	У	У						у	
Intertidal substrate	С	У								
Priority habitats	C/M	У	У							
Seabed mapping	M			y (partial)		У				
Essential fish habitats	М		У							
Important bird areas	С		У							
Habitat suitability modelling (seagrass)	М						У			
Regulated tidal exchange	С									У
Wader zonal map	С								У	
Restorable habitat								У		
Habitat Networks Grouped	С								У	
Shoreline MP Mapping	С								у	
Flood risk	С								у	

Links:

Magic Map Application (defra.gov.uk)

https://coastalmonitoring.org/cco/

https://emodnet.ec.europa.eu/geoviewer/

https://explore-marine-plans.marineservices.org.uk/

http://www.solentforum.org/services/Member Services/Habitat Restoration/Solent to Sussex Bay Seascape Restoration Inventory/

https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fmars.2022.1004829/full - seagrass HSM

Defra Data Services Platform

LNRS Data Viewer (arcgis.com)

Table of initiatives and projects in the Solent that can assist with nature recovery

List of initiatives and projects applicable in the Solent that could assist with nature recovery – LNRS workshop 16 Jan 2024

Name and lead organisation	Details	Location	Mappable	Timescale
Project/Initiative				
REACH (Restoring Estuarine and Coastal Habitats) ReMeMaRe (Restoring [seagrass] Meadows, [salt] Marsh and [oyster] Reef). Prioritisation exercise includes some natural capital work	Seagrass, saltmarsh, oyster, saline lagoon, sand dune, kelp, maritime cliffs, vegetated shingle potential	National	yes	Current maps
Habitat restoration potential prioritisation maps, which included some analysis of natural capital/ecosystem service data.	EA, NE and MMO refined this so they reflect the most likely to happen/beneficial sites. includes saltmarsh, seagrass, oysters, kelp, saline lagoon, maritime cliff, veg shingle, sand dune habitats			Waiting on maps
Blue Marine report on integrated restoration on the south coast	Seagrass, saltmarsh, kelp, oysters etc.	South Coast	No	Report and stakeholder consensus
Blue Marine – <u>Solent Seascapes</u> <u>Project</u>	Nature Recovery Plan – mapping restoration opportunities may begin early 2023 and take 6 months	Solent	Yes	2022-2026
3Cs project - Inventory of Seascape Restoration projects Solent and Sussex Bay (part of wider NERC project which looks at setting up a Solent and Sussex Bay Restoration Network) Solent Forum - Solent to Sussex Bay Seascape Restoration Inventory	Project will detail all coastal and marine projects (including planned) and research	Solent and Sussex Bay	yes	Complete April 2023
EA Habitat Compensation & Restoration Programme	Habitat creation opportunities over three epochs to offset coastal squeeze. Mudflat, coastal grazing marsh and saltmarsh.	Solent and further	yes	Current
Sussex Kelp Restoration Project Sussex Wildlife Trust and Sussex IFCA	Kelp	West Sussex to Brighton	yes	current
Hampshire CC LNRS Nature Recovery Mapping	Any data layers currently available?	Hampshire		
Isle of Wight LNRS Mapping	Any data layers currently available?	loW		

List of initiatives and projects applicable in the Solent that could assist with nature recovery – LNRS workshop 16 Jan 2024

Name and lead organisation	Details	Location	Mappable	Timescale
West Sussex CC LNRS Mapping	Any data layers currently	West		
	available?	Sussex		
Intertidal SSSI areas in unfavourable	Can 'condition' of sites be	National		
condition	mapped?			
SAC areas in unfavourable condition	Info on Designated sites system			
Natural England	'			
Solent Seagrass Restoration	Seagrass	Solent	yes	current
HIWWT				
ReMEDIES Project	Seagrass	Solent	yes	current
Natural England				
Coastal Resilience and Saltmarsh	Saltmarsh/Coastal Grazing	Chichester	yes	current
Restoration	Marsh	Harbour		
<u>Life on the Edge</u>	RSPB. Habitats for terns and shorebirds	Chichester Harbour	yes	current
Return of the Tern		Langstone		
RSPB		to		
		Medmerry		
North Solent and IOW Shoreline	Managed retreat mudflat	Hurst to	yes	Current
Management Plans. Also Flood risk	saltmarsh	Lymington		maps
management strategies				
 Hurst Spit to Lymington 				
strategy				
Beneficial Use of Dredgings in the	Opportunities for BUDS	Solent	yes	Current
Solent				
ABPmer				
<u>Green Halo</u>	Any work from these sources	New Forest		
	that can support coast?			
New Forest NPA				
<u>Greenprint</u>	Framework for green	All PUSh	yes	
	recovery. PforSH. Uni of	but pilots		
Uni of Soton	Soton, NFNPA, Uni of	currently		
	Portsmouth and Southern	PCC and		
	Policy Centre	EBC		
	Key theme is World class			
	blue/green environment – sub			
	themes 1. Land restoration			
	and protection. 2. Water			
	restoration and protection			
<u>CHaPron</u>	Mudflat, saltmarsh, oysters,	Chi	yes	current
	seagrass, birds	Harbour	II.	1

List of initiatives and projects applicable in the Solent that could assist with nature recovery – LNRS workshop 16 Jan 2024

Name and lead organisation	Details	Location	Mappable	Timescale
Southern and Sussex IFCA	Oyster/shellfish ESS Maps	Sussex, Hants, IOW	yes	current
Three Harbours	Strategy being developed,	Chichester,	Webmappe	
Southern Water & Partners	focus on water quality and nature recovery	Langstone, Pagham	r by Atkins Ltd	
LPA nature recovery strategy guidance				
Brent Goose Strategy HIWWT		Solent wide	Yes	
Bird Aware	Passive restoration via education.	Solent		
Solent Oyster Restoration Blue Marine Foundation	Oyster reef restoration	Langstone Harbour, River Hamble, Cowes		
ABPmer - ID coastal habitat restoration projects that The Crown Estate could support	Overlap with, or lie alongside, TCE landholdings	England, Wales and N Ireland	Yes?	Current
Marineff Bournemouth University led	Eco enhancement of coastal and marine infrastructure	National		
RaNTrans (Rapid reduction of Nutrients in Transitional waters). UoP	Reducing algal mats	Solent		
<u>'Sea the Value' project</u> . PML and UoP	Quantify the interlinkages between marine biodiversity, natural capital, and ecosystem services.	Solent one case site	Yes	Maps in prep
Drivers/Other				
Green Finance opportunities		National		
Nutrient neutrality	Being actioned by Solent LPAs	National		
Biodiversity Net Gain and Marine Net Gain	MNG in development, BNG April 2024.	National		
FCREM non-mandatory BNG, and Carbon Offsetting	Pilot (in development)	Solent, Sussex, England	Yes?	Current
Landowners ELMS opportunities	Water quality improvements from farming	National		
Solent Forum Partnership Opportunities work <u>Solent Forum -</u> Partnership Opportunities And Project Tracker <u>Solent Forum -</u> Greater Solent Project Tracker	Record of what is happening in the Solent.	Solent		Current
Solent Forum Information Database	Lists known research and reports in the Solent. Search by topic including habitats and species.	Solent		

Workshop Maps

- Solent marine designations
- Solent marine and coastal habitats (zip file). Habitat Mapping Legend.
- MMO habitat creation maps (zip file) Map key.
- Isle of Wight Solent shoreline projects
- Please use Defra's <u>MAGIC map</u> to look at more specific locations or obtain greater detail on habitats.