

# Solent Forum Annual Report: 2025 - 2026

The Solent Forum is an established coastal partnership that promotes and delivers integrated coastal and marine management around the Solent. Established in 1992, it provides advice on strategic coastal and marine matters and facilitates communication and information exchange amongst its [members](#). Its work is steered by a group of key organisations, who also guide the work of the Forum Manager.

This report sets out what the Forum has achieved in the 2025/26 financial year and what it plans to deliver in 2026/27. The long term aims and objectives of the Forum are set out in its [Business Plan](#) that covers the period 2025 to 2030.

The Forum has three categories of work that it undertakes; core partnership work that is ongoing each year, specific project work that runs for a defined time period and the servicing of subgroups. It both leads and works as a partner in externally funded projects.

The Forum hosts regular events as part of its core service, both alone and in partnership with others, to support project work and disseminate information on important Solent 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 from many coastal and marine sectors. [Members](#) are professional bodies and organisations such as local government, harbour authorities, marine businesses, 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 biannual [Solent Forum meetings](#) and free or 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](#) and [Solent Marine Sites](#) (Relevant Authorities only);
- Use the Forum network to assist with project work via letters of support for bids, stakeholder engagement, event hosting and legacy output management.



## Solent Forum Objectives

The Forum has six objectives. Below is a summary of the relevant core work that the Forum undertakes to deliver each objective:

### 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 website, Solent Bathing Water Quality Awards, Solent Information Database, identification of research needs, Natural Environment Group grant funding.

### 3. To facilitate better communication, consultation and liaison:

Relevant Forum work: Solent News Service, Forum website, 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 website, Solent Forum meetings, Solent Forum serviced subgroups and resource hubs.

### 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 website, officer input into national coastal and marine policy work and partnership working.

### 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](#)) and monthly enews.
- Maintaining the [Forum website](#), including hosting partner material and [information hubs](#) of key topical information.
- Provision of the [Solent Information Database \(SID\)](#) - a meta database of Solent research and reports.
- Servicing of ongoing and ad hoc subgroups.
- Running 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 Local Nature Partnerships.
- Collating and sharing information on key issues with member organisations, facilitating partnership working.
- Project legacy support. Chairing and facilitating external project workstreams and workshops.

## Standing Solent Forum Subgroups

- [Solent Marine Sites Management Group](#) (Relevant Authorities only)
- [Natural Environment Group](#)
- Beneficial use of Dredgings (BuDS Solent)

## Work Programme 2025/26

### Meetings and Events Held in 2025/26

Meeting	Attendees	Date of Meeting/Event
<a href="#">Solent Forum</a>	Solent Forum members	October 2025 and March 2026
Solent Forum Steering Group	Steering Group Members	Autumn 2025 and Spring 2026
<a href="#">Solent Marine Sites (SEMS)</a>	SEMS Management Group	Activity survey in Spring 2025, Management Group meeting in September 2025
<a href="#">Natural Environment Group (NEG)</a>	NEG Members	Spring and Autumn 2025
<a href="#">Members</a> survey	Solent Forum Members	Summer 2025
Beneficial use of Dredgings working Group	Port and Harbour Authorities and other interested parties	March 2025

### Projects/Partnership Work Undertaken in 2025/26

Project/Service	Objective	Details
<a href="#">Beneficial Use of Dredging in the Solent Project (BUDS)</a>	Explores how dredgings can be used in coastal defence and habitat replenishment schemes.	Phase 4 commissioned to licence a two donor disposal site at Cockleshell Bay In Lymington.
<a href="#">Solent Seascape Project</a>	A Blue Marine Foundation and partners project to restore and reconnect seagrass meadows, oyster reefs, saltmarsh and seabird nesting habitat over five years (2023 to 2028).	Solent Forum is a member of the project working group and advisory panel.
<a href="#">Information Hubs</a>	Collates information on a wide range of topics of relevance to the Solent.	Hubs built and will continue to be updated. New hub created on <a href="#">beneficial use of dredgings</a> .
<a href="#">Solent Plastics Pollution Hub (SPP)</a> SPP <a href="#">facebook page</a>	SPP collates and publicises work on reducing litter and preventing plastic pollution in the Solent.	We are now in the legacy phase of this project but we will continue to update the project website and Facebook page.
Isle of Wight Local Nature Partnership (LNP)	To implement the <a href="#">Isle of Wight Local Nature Strategy</a>	The Forum sits on the LNP to input on coastal matters via its core work and will help to implement relevant management measures via the SEMS scheme.
<a href="#">Solent Marine Invasive Species and Biosecurity Planning</a>	To raise awareness of marine invasive species amongst Solent stakeholders and help them to adopt biosecurity measures.	The Forum continues to hold, update and publicise these Plans.

# Work Programme 2026/27

## Key Meetings and Events Planned for 2026/27

Meeting	Attendees	Date of Meeting/Event
Solent Forum	Solent Forum members	October 2026 and March 2027
Solent Forum Steering Group	Steering Group Members	September 2026 and February 2027
Solent Marine Sites (SEMS)	SEMS Management Group	Survey of activities spring 2026, annual meeting September 2026
Natural Environment Group (NEG)	NEG Members	Spring and Autumn 2026
BuDS Solent Project Group	Technical invitees	As required
Members Survey	Solent Forum members	Summer 2026

## Project and Partnership Work for 2026/27

Project/Service	Objective	Details
<a href="#">Solent Plastics Pollution Hub (SPP)</a> <a href="#">SPP</a> facebook page	SPP is an information hub to collate and publicise all the work taking place around the Solent and its associated river catchments on reducing litter and preventing plastic pollution.	Continuing project legacy support for this project.
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.	Complete phase 4 by securing a Marine Licence for a disposal site at Cockleshell Bay in Lymington.
<a href="#">Solent Biosecurity Planning</a>	To increase awareness of marine invasive species and adopt biosecurity measures in the Solent.	Our webpages will be refreshed and promoted to coincide with Marine Invasive Species week every May.
<a href="#">Solent Nature Recovery</a>	To assist with delivery of coastal measures in the Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) for Hampshire, Isle of Wight and West Sussex.	We will support the Responsible Authorities with coastal implementation measures and continue to input into national work on marine nature recovery.
Solent Seascape Project	A Blue Marine Foundation and partners project to restore and reconnect seagrass meadows, oyster reefs, saltmarsh and seabird nesting habitat over five years (2023 to 2028).	Solent Forum is a member of the Recovery Plan Working Group and Advisory Group. We will continue to support this project over this period.
National Framework for Coastal Partnerships	To deliver a national framework for Coastal Partnerships, a project being led by the national Coastal Partnership Network.	Member of the project working group and the monitoring and evaluation working group.
Partnership Working across the Solent and wider	We will continue to support and work with other partnerships across the Solent.	Continue to attend Catchment Partnership meetings and support the work of <a href="#">Bird Aware Solent</a> and the <a href="#">Solent Nutrient Mitigation Partnership</a> . Attend the <a href="#">Hurst Spit to Lymington FCERM scheme</a> stakeholder group.