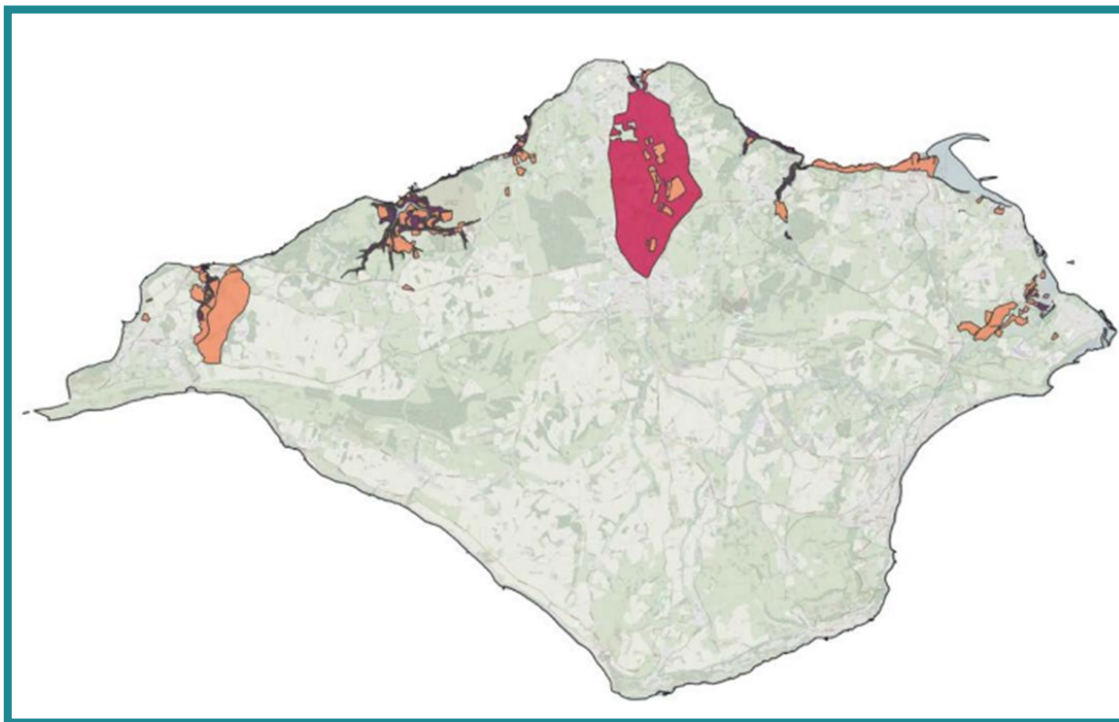


Inside this issue

- Latest from the Solent Forum
- Solent Mitigation Partnership
- Drug accumulation in fish
- Ship Carbon Capture
- Seagrass returns to the River Hamble
- Small fish surveys
- Shipwrights messages
- Road Pollution 'Stressing' Ocean Life
- Gosport Historic Waterfront Regeneration Plan
- Sanderling Recovery Project
- Langstone FCERM Scheme
- Rowing the Great British Coastline
- Communities Co-Creating Coastlines
- Lost Fishing Gear in the Solent

LNRS' for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Published



The Location of Measures for Estuaries, Harbours and Transitional Waters on the Isle of Wight
© [Isle of Wight LNRS Habitat Map](#)

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS') are new statutory spatial plans underpinning the National Nature Recovery Network, produced by responsible authorities in England. The Solent's coast is covered by the Hampshire, West Sussex and Isle of Wight strategies. They are a requirement introduced by the Environment Act 2021, intended to reverse the decline of biodiversity and improve ecological connectivity and functionality across the landscapes of England. The [Isle of Wight Strategy](#) was published in May 2025 and the [Hampshire](#) one in December 2025. The [Sussex](#) one is due for publication shortly.

In the Isle of Wight LNRS, priorities and measures for the estuaries, harbours, and transitional waters include: using the built environment of harbours to add designed habitats for wildlife, reduce pressures from boating and recreation, and enhance public experience of wildlife; conserve, enhance, and extend saltmarsh and intertidal mudflats and their transitions, make room for them to migrate and adapt to changing climatic conditions; improve the environmental and ecological health of the Medina estuary's intertidal habitat; secure existing, and create new safe high tide roost, nesting and feeding areas for priority wader and wildfowl species.

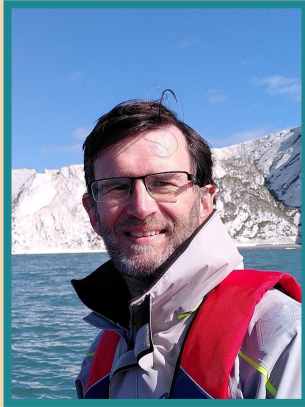
Coastal priority outcomes in the Hampshire strategy include: ensuring existing coastal sand dunes and vegetated shingle sites are protected and well managed; coastal saltmarsh is managed and restored; inter-tidal and saline habitat, including saltmarsh and mudflat, are created on the coastal flood plain, intensive grassland, or arable land is used as part of managed retreat or realignment; restoration of native oyster reefs and seagrass beds; and disturbance from dogs on coastal wildfowl is minimised.

Natural England is a Supporting Authority for each LNRS, they help in interpreting the national regulations and guidance and ensuring consistency with other strategy areas.

The Solent Forum sits on the Local Nature Partnership for the Isle of Wight LNRS.

News from the Forum

Chairman's Column



Phil Horton, Solent Forum Chair

Welcome to the latest edition of Solent News. I must start, as I did with the last edition, with votes of thanks.

Thanks to the amazing work undertaken by the Solent Forum Manager, Kate Ansell, with unwavering support from Hampshire County Council, we have a new host for the Forum from April this year. The County Council has supported the Forum for over thirty years and has enabled it to become one of the most active and effective Coastal Partnerships in the country.

As of 1 April, the Forum will be hosted by the Partnership for South Hampshire with Southampton City Council providing its accountable body and accommodating staff. I would like to thank the teams at both of these organisations and the Forum's Steering Group for enabling this change to happen. I would also like to acknowledge the work done by other potential hosts all around the Solent. Their desire to ensure that the Forum continues to thrive is a real vote of confidence in the value of the work that we all do when we come together to consider issues that affect the area, and to develop and deliver work that makes a real difference.

Our most recent Forum meeting at the UK Sailing Academy in Cowes was fully booked. The presentations were, as usual, superb, and many new connections were made and potential collaborations discussed. This is the real strength of the Forum in convening groups of individuals and organisations to generate new ideas and new opportunities. We rotate the Forum meetings between Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight, to make sure that we keep up-to-date with activities all around the coast, recognising that there is huge diversity across the Solent.

We will continue to see changes in local government over the next few years, and the Forum will remain throughout that process as a stable core of networking and action. Much of our work continues to address our changing natural environment, as reflected here with articles covering carbon capture, habitat improvements, low carbon transport and sea level rise. There are huge opportunities in the region as we move to address locally the global problems of climate change and biodiversity loss.

Forum members, please make sure that you book early to attend the next meeting at the D-Day Museum on 11 March in Portsmouth. The invite will be sent out in February. I look forward to seeing you there.

Solent Forum Update

The year 2025 was a time of change for the Solent Forum. In March we said goodbye to Peter Barham, our Chair of ten years, and we welcomed Phil Horton to the role. In February I took over the role of Solent Forum Manager.

In March we published a new five year [Business Plan](#), and in July we conducted our annual [members survey](#) to see what our members would like from our network.

We held two very successful [Forum members meetings](#) in Southampton and Cowes and we will meet again in Portsmouth in March 2026.

The Forum provides the Secretariat for the Solent Marine Sites Management scheme. In September we published the [Annual Management Report](#), where we included Strava mapping the first time to illustrate how activities take place spatially across the Solent.

We have been inputting into the development of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS') and we sit on the Local Nature Partnership that will lead the delivery on the Island one. We will work with colleagues to help deliver the coastal measures in these LNRS'.

Our key current project is the preparation of a marine licence for a new disposal site for the beneficial use of dredgings at Cockleshell Bay in Lymington.

I look forward to working with all our members in 2026 and beyond. Please get in touch via info@solentforum.org.

If you are interested in joining our network please see our [membership page](#).

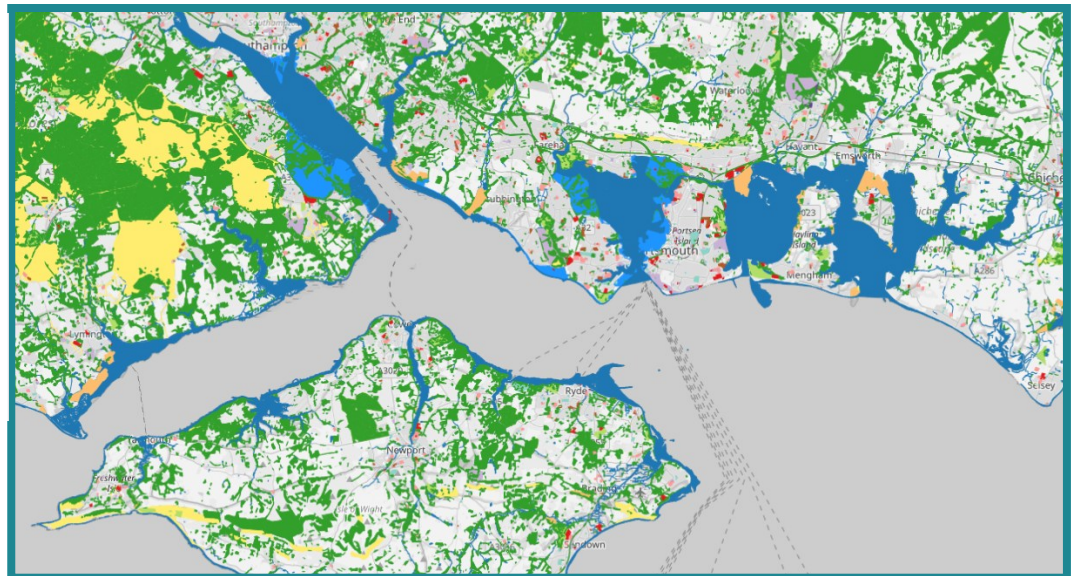
Kate Ansell, Solent Forum Manager

Coastal Management

Green and Blue Infrastructure Across the Solent

Typology

- Public Park - General
- Public Park - Country Park
- Millennium or Doorstep Green
- Local Nature Reserve
- Playing Fields
- Other Sports Facilities
- Access Land (CRoW)
- Coastal Trail and Margin
- Woodland
- Water Courses and Surface Water Features
- Allotments and Community Growing Spaces
- Activity Spaces Provision
- Cemeteries and Religious Grounds
- Golf Courses
- Play Space Provision



© Natural England's Green Infrastructure Map

The [Green Infrastructure Map](#) is an interactive, evidence-based mapping tool developed by Natural England in collaboration with Defra, the University of Manchester, and the Rivers Trust. It is designed to help identify, plan, and improve green and blue spaces across England, supporting the delivery of the Green Infrastructure Framework and the government's commitment for everyone to live within a 15-minute walk of a green or blue space. The map will be updated every five years to track progress in improving access to nature and green and blue infrastructure benefits.

The Green Infrastructure Framework aims to increase green cover in urban areas (targeting 40% in residential areas), ensure equitable access to quality green and blue spaces, support urban nature recovery and climate resilience and guide local authorities in developing green infrastructure strategies.

Solent Mitigation Partnership

The [Solent Mitigation Partnership \(SMP\)](#) has been developed to deliver high-integrity, nature-positive solutions that safeguard the internationally important habitats of the Solent while unlocking new housing. Excess nutrients, particularly nitrogen and phosphorus, pose a serious threat to the resilience of estuaries, harbours, and iconic chalk rivers. Developers are required to mitigate any increase in nutrient levels caused by new homes.

SMP designs and delivers mitigation schemes that generate nutrient credits and supports sustainable communities.

It was established by the Partnership for South Hampshire as a collaboration between local authorities. With funding from the Local Nutrient Mitigation Fund, it kickstarts the delivery of mitigation schemes that meet Natural England's standards, working in partnership with stakeholders. Revenue from credit sales is reinvested into new projects, ensuring a sustainable supply of mitigation. As nutrient pressures ease, the fund will pivot to restoring protected waterways.

The mitigation portfolio targets nutrient reductions at the catchment scale, guided by regional housing forecasts and ecological analysis.

SMP is actively expanding its pipeline and exploring new ways to support the development sector, including the creation of Biodiversity Net Gain units. By reinvesting revenues, aligning with wider conservation strategies, and delivering technically robust mitigation, it offers a pragmatic path to reconciling new housing with the urgent need to protect the Solent's natural heritage. For further information please contact: Rachel Jones, Solent Mitigation Partnership Manager, RJones@fareham.gov.uk.



Marine Business

Ship Carbon Capture

A collaboration between UK-based Seabound, US-based STAX Engineering, and the Port of Southampton operator, Associated British Ports (ABP), has been awarded £1.1m in the sixth round of the UK government's Clean Maritime Demonstration Competition.

It will see Seabound's modular carbon capture units, sized to match standard 20-foot containers, integrated onto STAX's barge-based emission capture and control system.



Image © Seabound

The combined system connects directly to a ship's exhaust, with STAX removing up to ninety nine per cent of particulate matter and ninety five per cent of nitrogen oxides before the newly purified gas flows into Seabound's capture unit, which in turn removes up to ninety five per cent of CO².

ABP launched an Energy Ventures Accelerator programme to support early-stage clean energy innovators like Seabound and STAX in an effort to achieve net-zero emissions across its operations by 2040.

Low Carbon Truck Programme Trial

On 1st September 2025, DP World UK launched a [Low Carbon Truck Programme Trial](#), providing UK HGV fleet owners an opportunity to trial Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO), a cleaner, renewable diesel alternative.

Under the scheme, fleet owners can claim up to 5,000 litres of HVO for the price of diesel for every vehicle that moves through either London Gateway or Southampton port over ninety times within each three-month qualifying period, using the Vehicle Booking System.

Participating companies are asked to attend a free eight hour Carbon Literacy training workshop to strengthen understanding of carbon emissions, reporting and decarbonisation strategies tailored to the road freight and logistics industry. The trial runs until 2027.



Image © DP World

Changes to International Maritime Law

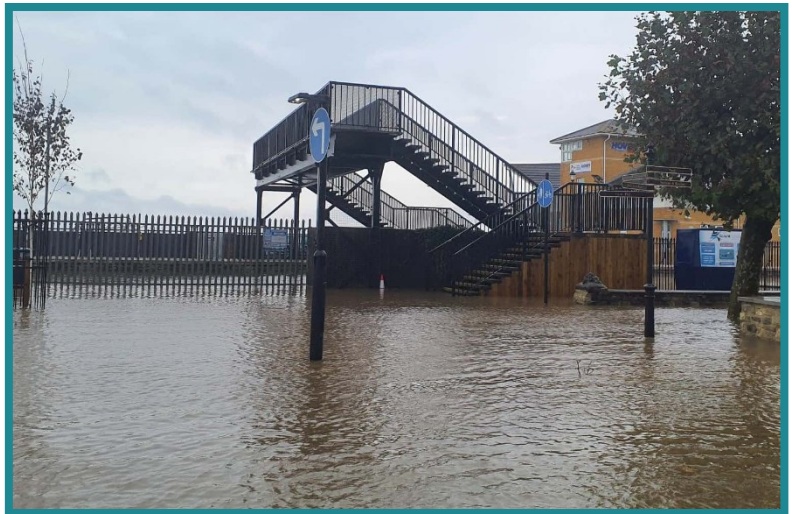
The UK government has introduced a [series of updates to international maritime law](#) designed to enhance safety at sea and reduce environmental pollution. The changes, which came into force on 1 January 2026, will apply to a range of maritime activities including ship construction, crew training, and the prevention of marine contamination. The update also includes a new mandatory reporting requirement for ships regarding the loss of freight containers.

Coastal Change

Coastal Flooding

A new [MCCIP Report on coastal flooding](#) around the UK and Ireland has been published. Key findings include:

- Extreme water levels have become more frequent in the past 150 years, driven primarily by mean sea level rise.
- Mean sea level rise, along with coastal squeeze, changes in sediment supply, variations to ocean chemistry and pollution are contributing to a decline in the extent of saltmarshes and sand dunes, which act as a natural buffer to flooding.
- Exposure to flooding and vulnerability of ecosystems are being exacerbated by population growth, changes in land use and increasing asset values in the floodplains.



Flooding at Ryde seafront © Island Roads

In the future the Report predicts:

- Extreme water levels are certain to increase during the 21st century and beyond, principally driven by accelerating mean sea level rise.
- Continued loss of natural habitat buffers will dramatically increase flood-defence capital and maintenance costs.
- By the 2080s, at current adaption levels, the cost of estimated annual coastal flood damages is likely to increase two-to three-fold from £360 million today, depending on temperature rise and population growth.
- 1,600 km of major roads, 650 km of railway, 92 railway stations and 55 historical landfill sites are likely to be at risk of coastal flooding or erosion by the end of the century.
- Socially vulnerable communities at the coast are disproportionately at risk, and this will increase more rapidly than for other communities, enhancing inequalities.

CoastCraft

[CoastCraft](#) is new educational game that has been developed in partnership by Minecraft Education, Cornwall Council and the Environment Agency as part of the Environment Agency's £200m Flood and Coastal Innovation Programme (FCIP).

It has been created with real-world data and information from Bude in Cornwall, as well as detailed modelling of future coastal changes. It was developed as part of the Making Space for Sand project. This aims to reduce the vulnerability of communities to coastal change by better understanding and modelling what this change could look like, to work with communities to develop adaptation and resilience plans, and support adaptation actions.



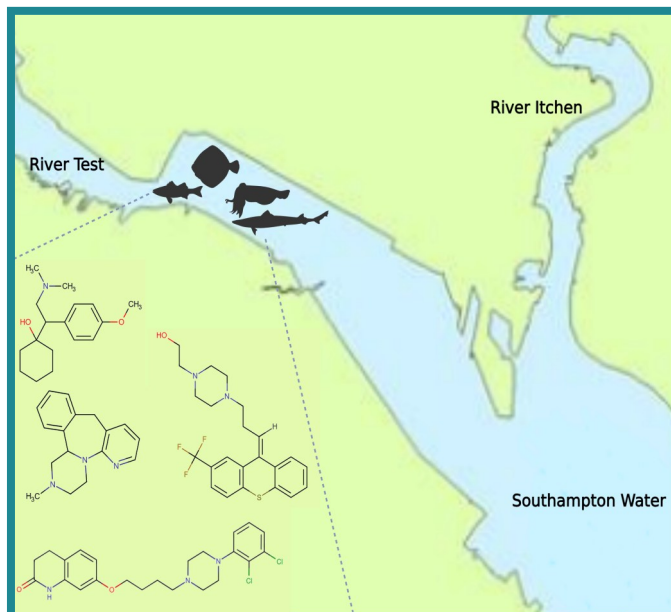
Fisheries & Aquaculture

Drug Accumulation in Fish

Louise O'Neill, PhD student at the University of Southampton, is working on a project aimed at assessing the type and concentration of central nervous system (CNS) compounds, that fish and other marine animals in Southampton Water are being exposed to.

Samples of a broad range of fish, including sprat, gobies, pout, shark, flatfish, sand-smelt, and cephalopods, including cuttlefish and squid, were collected from the Solent at Marchwood Power Station, with the help of Pisces Conservation, at two time periods in July and September 2025.

The samples have been prepared for analysis, which will take place in early 2026, to test for CNS acting drugs that are commonly prescribed in the UK, including antidepressants and antipsychotics. The first results are expected by spring 2026. The information will help guide future research into which compounds are of most concern locally and their potential effects. Drugs acting on the CNS could impact fish survival through their effects on feeding, predatory and reproductive behaviours.



Credit: Louise O'Neill

Langstone HB Obtains FASS Funding

Langstone Harbour Board has secured £98,000 from the Fisheries and Seafood Scheme to support a project aimed at enhancing the harbour's Marine Protected Area (MPA). With a total investment of over £131,000, the project will be delivered by March 2026.

It will:

- Explore saltmarsh restoration and regeneration, helping to improve biodiversity, carbon storage, and coastal resilience.
- Investigate restorative low-trophic aquaculture, promoting environmentally sensitive practices that complement local fisheries.
- Assess improvements to harbour infrastructure for small fishing vessels, ensuring facilities meet future needs.
- Install up to 20 advanced mooring systems, replacing traditional swing moorings to reduce damage to sensitive mudflat habitats.

Small Fish Surveys

Sussex IFCA Officers joined forces with their Research Team to carry out a small fish survey in Chichester Harbour. An important nursery for many young fish species, including sea bass, the sheltered streamlets of the harbour's saltmarsh and mudflats provide a vital habitat for young fish to develop and grow before heading out into the open seas.

Using a boat, the team fans out a 50m seine net in a wide arc before carefully hauling it in. The fish are then transferred into oxygenated seawater buckets to be identified and measured.



Juvenile bass, mullet, and plenty of sand smelts during were found during the survey.

Photo © Sussex IFCA

Solent News

Seagrass Returns to the River Hamble

In April, Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust's marine team planted more than 2,000 seagrass seeds using innovative methods. Just a few months later, healthy plants were growing, flowering, and producing new seed in the estuary, the first signs of a potential comeback for a habitat lost from the Hamble since the late 1920s and 1930s.

Seagrass once stretched from Southampton Water up the Hamble to Bursledon, until a wasting disease outbreak in the 1930s caused widespread loss across the whole North Atlantic area. A survey in 2023 found no remaining beds.

Only fragments of vast seagrass meadows that once thrived across the UK now remain. Over ninety percent of seagrass has been lost over the past century and recovery is limited due to pollution, dredging, boat anchoring and coastal development.

The restoration in the Hamble is part of the Solent Seagrass Restoration Project, and the Solent Seascape Project, which brings together partners including Blue Marine Foundation, conservationists, researchers, and the local community to restore seagrass, oyster reefs, saltmarsh and seabird nesting habitats across the Solent's seascape.



Image © Hants and Wight Wildlife Trust

New Cross Solent Ferry Service

A new cross-Solent ferry service began operating in October 2025, offering passengers an alternative route between Yarmouth and Lymington.

The service has been developed by Quay 2 Quay in partnership with both Yarmouth and Lymington Harbour Commissioners.

Sailings are carried out by 'KRAKEN', a 15-metre catamaran passenger vessel. The boat has capacity for over 100 passengers, with both enclosed and open seating, and onboard refreshments.

It offers a year-round passenger ferry service between Yarmouth and will offer private hire and tourist trips to The Needles.



Image © Quay 2 Quay

Southsea Coastal Scheme Wins Award

The Southsea Coastal Scheme are honoured to be the 2025 winner of the Sir John Armit Award for Infrastructure Leadership at the British Construction Industry Awards. Sir John Armit is a leader in engineering, who has influenced infrastructure planning for the UK. The award recognises the Scheme's outstanding delivery, innovation, and collaboration across Frontage 4 (Southsea Castle) and Frontage 5 (Pyramids to Speakers' Corner) of the UK's largest local authority-led coastal defence project.

Heritage & Archaeology

Shipwrights Messages

The team at the National Museum of the Royal Navy hit a milestone whilst delivering £42m worth of structural repairs for HMS Victory.

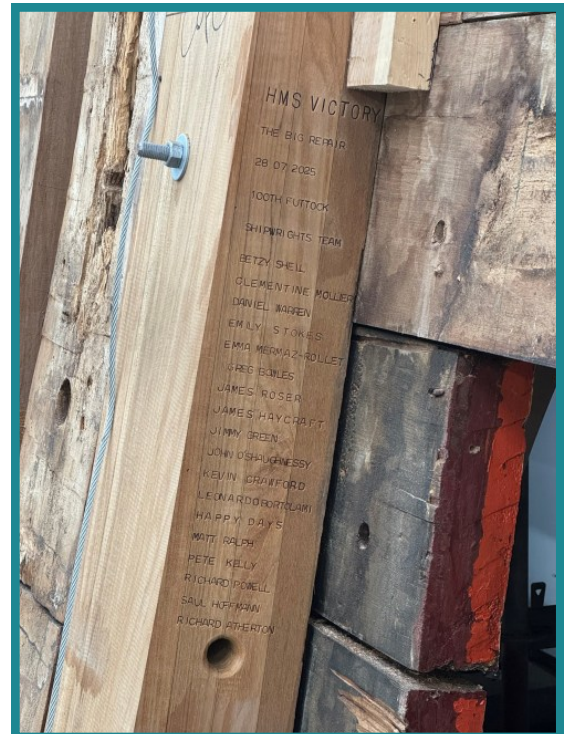
To commemorate the 100th new futtock (the large curved timbers that form the 'ribs' of the ship) being installed as part of the ten-year project, the 16-strong team of shipwrights left their legacy on the ship, by engraving their names onto the timber before it was lowered on the starboard side of the hull.

The futtocks have been hand made by the expert team of shipwrights from laminated teak, which is robust enough to preserve the ship for at least another fifty years.

With only fifty more futtocks left to be installed to replace the decaying wood, the next major stage of work to follow will be re-planking the hull of the ship.

Historic timber marks can be seen in various sections of the ship. It is believed that these marks etched into the ship's timbers, usually using a rase knife, were used as part of a wider identification system to track the construction process. They'd normally indicate a date, the part of the ship the timber relates to, and the Admiralty Broad Arrow, along with the initials of the dockyard manager receiving the timber.

The project is expected to last ten years, work commenced in 2022.



100th Futtock on HMS Victory with the names of the shipwrights along with the date

D-Day Whale Bridge Moves to Marchwood

The D-Day Whale bridge, a vital component of the Mulberry harbours used during the Normandy landings in 1944, has been carefully lifted from its current position near the Red Funnel terminal in Southampton and transported to Marchwood Military Port.

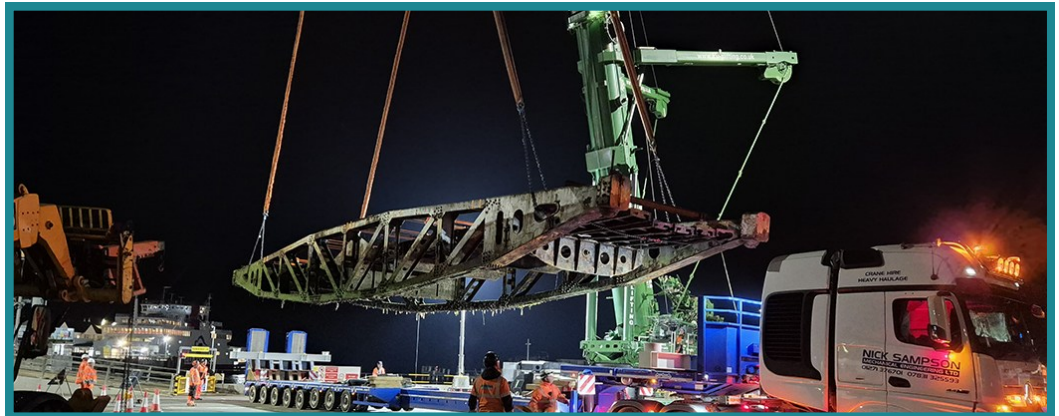


Photo © ABP Solent Gateway

Many of the floating roadway sections, known as a Whale bridge, played a crucial role in enabling Allied forces to land vehicles and supplies on the beaches of Normandy. Its return to Marchwood, where it is believed to have been constructed over 80 years ago, marks a significant moment in the preservation of British military heritage.

Once restored, the bridge will be placed outside the port in Marchwood acting as a gate guardian, making it accessible to the general public for the first time.

Returning this historic structure to the military community that originally built it for the D-Day invasion is a way of reconnecting it to the past and pay tribute to the efforts of those who served.

Recreation & Communities

King Charles III Coast Path

The Isle of Wight has welcomed its first two completed sections of the [King Charles III England Coast Path](#). Natural England has opened 12 miles of path stretching from Chilton Chine to Colwell Chine on the Island's southwest and west coast, alongside nearly three miles from Gurnard Luck to the Cowes Floating Bridge on the north coast.

Natural England has incorporated legal provisions allowing the trail to 'roll back' in response to coastal erosion across most of the 12-mile stretch between the Chines. The shorter northern section includes similar roll back provisions on the seawall at Marsh Road and at Gurnard Cliff, where erosion has previously occurred.

For more information please use the following mapping tool: [PRD Natural England - Open Access maps](#).



Image © Isle of Wight Council

Bramble Bank Annual Cricket Match

Every September, an annual cricket match in the sea, which sees teams arrive by boat, takes place off the coast of the Isle of Wight.

Members of the Royal Southern Yacht Club from Hamble-le-Rice and the Island Sailing Club in Cowes take part in the Bramble Cricket Match.

Teams play on Bramble Bank, a triangular sandbar in the middle of the Solent, which is only revealed at low tides.

The tradition started in 1984 and the game only ends when the tide starts to come in and the pitch disappears under the sea.

Bramble Bank, also known as the Brambles, is about halfway between the Isle of Wight and the entrance to Southampton Water. It is only revealed for short periods at low-water spring tides. It presents a hazard for shipping traffic and numerous vessels have run aground there, including the ocean liner QE2 in 2008.



Gosport Historic Waterfront Regeneration Plan

Gosport Borough Council has secured £6.9 million from the Government's Levelling Up Fund (LUF) to improve connectivity along the [historic Gosport Waterfront](#) and strengthen links with the Town Centre. The aim is to encourage residents and visitors to explore the waterfront, enjoy its heritage and views, and support local businesses along the route.

Alongside the Rum Store restoration (delivered with UK Docks and also funded through LUF), and the People's Park project (old bus station), these improvements are expected to bring economic and employment benefits and showcase this unique waterfront.

Conservation

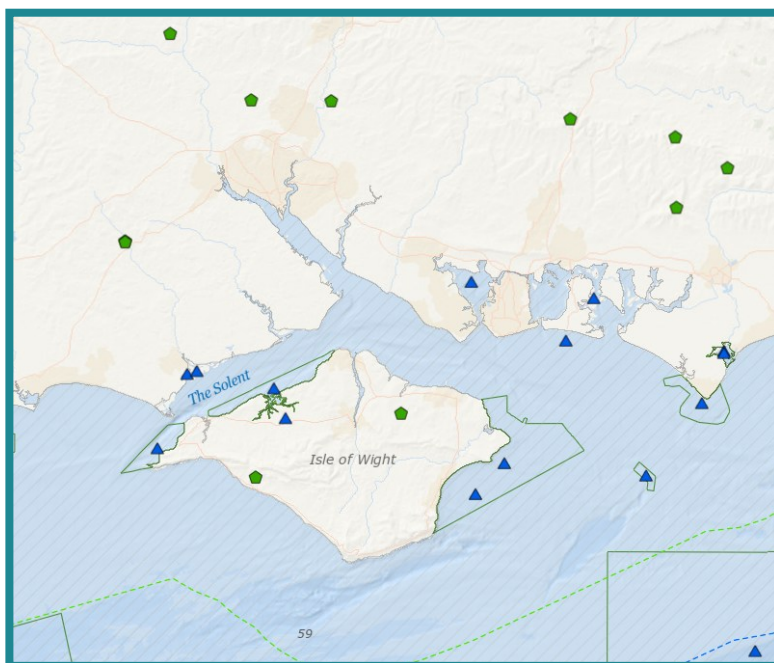
Conservation Advice Packages

Natural England have developed a [Conservation Advice Package Status Interactive Map](#). On this map you can:

- View the status of Conservation Advice package publication for England's designated sites.
- Navigate or search for a specific designated sites using the zoom tools or search bar.
- Click on the markers for pop-up information and useful external links.

Marine Conservation Advice packages are structured sets of guidance provided by Natural England; they support the protection and management of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in English waters. These packages are tools for regulators, developers, and other stakeholders to understand how to manage activities in or near marine sites, to ensure the conservation of their designated features.

Each advice package typically includes: site overview and feature descriptions, condition information (where available), conservation objectives and supplementary advice, sensitivity assessments of features to various activities and site maps showing boundaries and feature locations.



Conservation Advice Packages available for Solent Sites (blue triangles). © Natural England.

Successful Breeding Season at Hayling Island Reserve

At the beginning of the year, two lagoon islands at the heart of Langstone Harbour Nature Reserve on Hayling Island were raised and reshaped with 400 tonnes of shingle, restoring them to a nesting location for terns, gulls and other shore nesting birds. The restored islands proved an immediate success, with a marked increase in numbers nesting on the site in 2025.

The improvements proved timely; thanks to the newly increased height of the rebuilt islands a significant surge tide on 27 May, which previously would have washed away almost all of the nests on site, instead led to a limited number of losses, with the vast majority of nests remaining safe and dry.

The year 2025 saw 501 pairs of Black-headed Gulls nest (a hundred more than the previous year) whilst over 30 pairs of Common Terns nested on the newly restored islands and nesting rafts.

Throughout the year, the RSPB have been monitoring the progress of the restored islands at the reserve. Higher numbers of Common Terns have been recorded breeding on site, as have Black-headed Gulls.

For the first time in recent years, Sandwich Terns and Little Terns have also been using the islands with their fledged young once the breeding season was over. Visitors have been able to watch chicks being fed by their busy parents and take to the sky at the reserve.



Photo © RSPB

Water

Road Pollution 'Stressing' Ocean Life

Chemicals released from car tyres as they wear down are washing into rivers, estuaries and the sea and they could be disrupting life at the base of the marine food web, according to a Portsmouth University study.

Researchers found that just four days of exposure to three common tyre-derived chemicals significantly slowed the growth of tiny marine algae known as diatoms; single-celled plants that produce oxygen and support entire ocean ecosystems.

The findings raise concerns about how urban road runoff could be impacting the oceans, especially in densely populated areas where concentrations of tyre chemicals are high.

The research team examined three chemicals that are widely used in tyre manufacturing or formed as byproducts as tyres degrade: mercaptobenzothiazole (MBT), diphenylguanidine (DPG), and 6PPD-quinone. All three are known to enter the environment via stormwater and urban runoff, but until now, their specific effects on marine plant life have been poorly understood.

The results showed all three chemicals suppressed diatom growth, with DPG and MBT proving especially harmful even at very low concentrations, levels already recorded in waterways in countries including Canada, China and Australia. 6PPD-quinone, which has previously been implicated in mass die-offs of coho salmon, was less acutely toxic to diatoms but still raised concerns. It required higher concentrations to cause damage, but because it's widespread and persistent, the researchers warned it could accumulate in marine environments over time.

The authors of the study are calling for tighter regulation of tyre ingredients, improved monitoring of road runoff, and investment in the development of safer, less harmful alternatives.



Photo © Portsmouth University

Chemical Mixes in Aquatic Environments

The Royal Society has [published a report on](#) the current challenges and potential solutions associated with regulating chemical mixtures in UK aquatic environments. It found that chemical mixtures can impair growth, reproduction, immune function, behaviour, development, and stress tolerance in aquatic organisms. Effects may be seen either at an individual, species or population-level (e.g. reduced abundance, altered species diversity, lessened resilience to other stressors). Combinations of chemicals may be particularly harmful when they act on the same biological pathway (e.g. endocrine disruption).

The UK has a mixed picture for legacy pollutants such as heavy metals and certain types of now banned pesticides, concentrations of these have declined. However, for many emerging chemicals, especially newer industrial compounds, pharmaceuticals, micro-pollutants and personal care product residues, these are becoming increasingly prevalent. Monitoring and regulation tend to focus on a very limited set of chemicals, meaning that much of the chemical pollution in aquatic environments remains unrecorded.

Statutory DWMPs

The Environment Act 2021 set out new legal requirements for water companies to prepare, publish and maintain a Drainage and Sewerage Management Plan, known as the Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP).

The Government published new [Guidelines for Statutory Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans \(DWMPs\)](#) in May 2025. Southern Water have now commenced work to prepare their first statutory DWMP.

This plan will show how it will manage and develop its drainage and sewerage systems to meet obligations under Part IV of the Water Industry Act 1991.

The Water (Special Measures) Act introduces an additional requirement for DWMPs to address the use of nature-based solutions, technologies and facilities within drainage and sewerage systems.

Solent News

Environmental Delivery Plan for the Solent

The Government has published a paper on its plan for implementing the Nature Restoration Fund, which enables housing and infrastructure developers to make payments to meet their environmental responsibilities when projects affect protected sites or species.

The implementation plan requires Natural England to prepare a draft Environmental Delivery Plan (EDP) with local partners on the impact of development on a specified protected area. All EDPs will be subject to public consultation and Secretary of State approval, and most EDPs will be voluntary for developers.

The Government notes that the first EDPs will launch in 2026 and cover nutrient pollution.

Natural England wrote to the DEFRA Secretary with a [formal notification](#) of intent to prepare 23 Environmental Delivery Plans (EDPs) in England, including:

- An EDP covering nitrogen pollution in the Solent catchment and phosphorus pollution in the River Itchen.

Cottonweed Returns to the Solent

Endangered Cottonweed has been reintroduced on Sinah Common as part of the Threatened Species Recovery Actions programme led by Natural England, with support from Hayling Golf Club. The Rare British Plants Nursery grew young Cottonweed specimens which were planted at Sinah Common. They are expected to thrive, setting seed and becoming a self-sustaining feature of Hayling Island. Natural England will undertake annual monitoring to see how the plants progress.



Cottonweed at Sinah © Havant BC

Communities Co-Creating Coastlines

A research collaboration between eco-engineers Artecology, based on the Isle of Wight, and the University of Plymouth has shown how hands-on community creativity can help transform futures for marine wildlife on our built and urbanised coastlines.

Artecology's team of artists and ecologists, have developed a method of production called CoCreate, where communities anywhere and everywhere can handmade detailed sculptures to be incorporated into the new 'pool' interiors of the Vertipools prior to deployment in their area. The ceramic inserts are made from hard-wearing grog clay and high-fired. CoCreators include schools and local environmental projects in Gosport and Portsmouth, as well as Yorkshire and Cumbria. Learning how to understand what marine wildlife wants and needs and being able to see the hands-on impact made, is all part of the CoCreate process.

Scientific and policy response to their designs and to CoCreate shows that scaling is essential to future resilience in coastal communities around the world. Artecology's nature inclusive designs have been developed so that they can be made locally, anywhere in the world, without the need for special tools, materials, or dedicated facilities. Workshops can take place outdoors, in community spaces, or almost any place where people can gather and create together.

For more information please visit www.artecology.space.



Co Creating Refugia Tiles for Sea Walls © Artecology

Solent News

Sanderling Recovery Project

The [Sanderling Recovery Project](#) is a partnership initiative formed as part of the Island's Local Nature Recovery Strategy delivery programme. It seeks to protect and restore one of the Isle of Wight's most important coastal wildlife refuges, the Ryde Sands and Wootton Creek SSSI.

Sanderlings are a priority and 'Champion Species' for the Isle of Wight's LNRS, and they are at risk of local extinction.

Together with Isle of Wight Council, Ryde Town Council, Bird Aware Solent, Natural England, Hover Travel and Ryde Marina, The Common Space's Island Nature team are taking action to reduce recreational disturbance and improve habitat conditions for Sanderlings as well as Ringed Plovers, and other coastal birds that depend on this vital shoreline.

New signage designed by Bird Aware Solent, with the help of The Common Space, is being installed and buoys are next. Habitat protection, community engagement and education are under way. The project is providing a best practice case study for the Solent Forum's Natural Environment Group.



Sanderlings in Flight. © Eileen Hughes.

Langstone FCERM Scheme

The proposed Langstone Flood Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Scheme covers approximately one km of coastline in Havant. The Scheme will improve the standard of flood defences and coastal erosion protection against tidal flooding to the A3023, the only road to Hayling Island, as well as the village of Langstone.

Over the next 100 years, over 120 homes in Langstone are at risk of tidal flooding in an extreme event. The majority of present defences have residual lives of less than five years (without any maintenance) so without a scheme at Langstone, the existing community will continue to be at significant risk from flooding.

The scheme has been divided into 5 frontages, only frontages 3, 4 and 5 will involve works below Mean High Water Springs (MHWS). There will be no disturbance below MHWS during the construction of Frontages 1A and 2, or in Chichester Harbour during the construction of the landward sections of Frontage 5, as these works are either set back from the foreshore or can all be completed from the landward side of the works area.

The proposed defences will have a 50-year design life with minimal maintenance and operation requirements.

Hurst Spit Recharge



Hurst Spit is a natural barrier that protects Keyhaven and nearby communities. Severe storms during winter 2023/24 and Storm Herminia in January 2025 caused significant damage, reducing the crest width of the spit to as little as one metre in places.

A shingle recycling project moved material from accreted areas to eroded sections to restore the crest width to around 10 to 12 metres. The long-term management of Hurst Spit is being addressed through the Hurst to Lymington Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy.

Solent News

Portsmouth Port's 50 Year Anniversary

A port open day and economic report launch are some of the activities planned in 2026, as Portsmouth Port celebrates 50 years since Portsmouth City Council created it in 1976.

On Saturday 13 June 2026, the port will host an open day so residents can see behind the scenes and find more out about all the activities at the port. More than 1,800 people attended in 2023 and of those surveyed after the event, ninety percent said they would come again. In addition to promoting the port, the open day involves partner organisations showcasing their activities, which includes harbour tours, onboard vessel visits and an equipment showcase.

It will be profiling staff who work at the port in roles such as security, traffic, pilotage, berthing and mooring, to innovation, project management and engineering, which is an opportunity for the community to see the critical roles in keeping a major port running.

There will be a formal event on 17 June 2026, exactly 50 years after the first commercial ferry crossing took place from Portsmouth to St Malo.

The year 2026 also marks Portsmouth's centenary, with many events and celebratory moments taking place to mark 100 years of city status, the port will be featuring in the city's Wild Art Trail, which involves specially commissioned sculptured lions positioned across the city, with a lion in the terminal building.



© Portsmouth International Port

Wool Logs at Farlington Marshes

In September 2025, a trial number of wool logs were installed at Farlington Marshes to help prevent coastal erosion. The logs were installed at the base of the embankment to help prevent erosion and accrete sediment. They sit snugly at the toe of the embankment similar to coir logs used in the past.

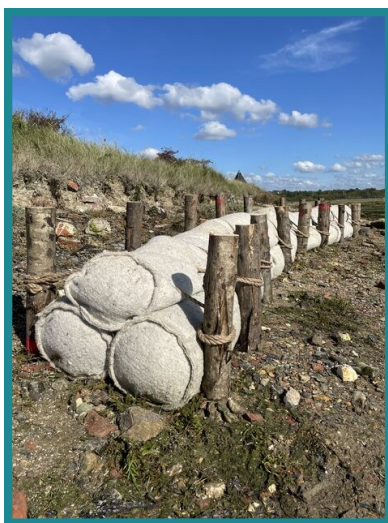
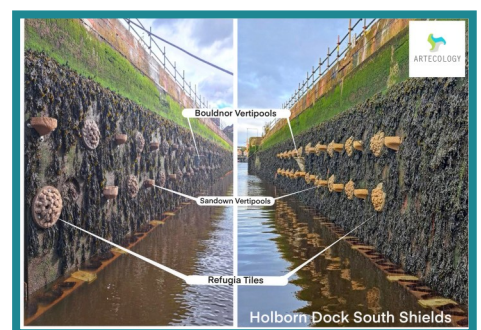


Image © Ruth Lindsey

The wool used for the logs is grown in North Yorkshire, processed in Yorkshire and Lancashire and then sent to Hampshire.

Habitat Harbour: Portsmouth

Artecology are inviting people in and around Portsmouth Harbour to [register their interest](#) in Habitat Harbour, a collaborative initiative to enhance ecological value across the harbour while supporting operations, infrastructure and community priorities.



The project aims to bring together ports, ferry operators, quayside businesses, environmental groups and local authorities to co-design practical, evidence-led habitat interventions throughout the harbour. These may include eco-engineering installations, nature positive enhancements to existing structures, and opportunities for research, monitoring and community involvement.

News & Snippets

Rowing the Great British Coastline

A determined team of adventurers is preparing to take on the GB Row Challenge in June 2026, a non-stop, 2,000-mile row around the British coastline. Nautilus, led by skipper Aoife Luscombe, has crew that includes professionals from sustainability, environmental consultancy, the ambulance service, and the military.

During the row, Nautilus will not only tackle one of the UK's most demanding endurance challenges but also act as a "floating laboratory," collecting microplastic samples, environmental DNA, and underwater acoustic data in partnership with the University of Portsmouth. The data will provide crucial insights into plastic pollution, biodiversity, and the overall health of UK waters.

The challenge also has a charitable dimension. The Final Straw Foundation has been announced as Nautilus' first official charity partner. Known for its work engaging volunteers, schools, and communities to tackle plastic and sewage pollution, the Foundation will use the row to raise awareness of marine conservation and inspire action at local and national levels.

By combining extreme endurance, professional expertise, and scientific research, Nautilus is turning a record-breaking row into a platform for environmental impact. Stroke by stroke, data point by data point, the team hopes to inspire communities, empower future generations, and contribute to a clearer understanding of the challenges facing UK seas. Find out more about the challenge at: <https://www.nautilusrowing.co.uk/>.



challenge at: [https://](https://www.nautilusrowing.co.uk/) *Image © Nautilus Rowing*

Water Recycling: A Sustainable Solution for Water Scarcity

In Hampshire, the majority of the water Southern Water supplies to its customers comes from the River Test, River Itchen and the underground aquifers that feed them. These rivers are two of the world's finest chalk streams and are rare ecosystems that support unique biodiversity. More than 700,000 people in Hampshire rely on these rivers and aquifers for their drinking water, but continuing to take water from them at current levels, especially during a drought, risks harming wildlife.

The company is developing several water recycling projects to help address water shortages. They will use advanced treatment techniques to turn treated wastewater into purified recycled water that can be stored in rivers, reservoirs or lakes.



River Test. © Southern Water

Around the Solent, Southern Water is developing two water recycling plants, one at Sandown on the Isle of Wight and one in Havant. Between them they'll be able to produce up to 68.5 million litres of purified recycled water a day. Learn more at: www.southernwater.co.uk/water-recycling.

Solent News

Lost & Abandoned Fishing Gear in the Solent

In partnership with Natural England, The Common Space are conducting an Island and [Solent-wide survey](#) to understand the distribution of lost and abandoned fishing equipment or 'ghost fishing' gear found in and along our coastlines. This will help us understand its impact on coastal wildlife and habitats. Communities of coastal users are being asked to record anything they spot via a simple form.

Ghost Fishing is the term for the continued impact on marine life from lost, discarded and abandoned fishing gear. Nets, ropes, traps, pots, lines and hooks on our coastlines and in marine waters can cause habitat abrasion, and trap, entangle and kill marine wildlife from fish to sea-birds. Bad weather, high winds and storms, can make the problem worse.

Whether you're fishing, working, walking, beach-cleaning, sailing or fossil-hunting on the coast-line, it's quick and easy to upload your finds to the survey and help map distribution. So far, survey results are pointing to ropes and lines being the largest onshore finds. Please do [share the survey](#) or the QR code with your network and on your social media.



The Solent Forum

Since 1992, the Solent Forum has provided a platform to deliver Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Solent sub-region of the southeast. It operates at a strategic coastal management level, providing a network for closer working relationships, information dissemination and discussion of topical coastal issues. The Solent Forum members meet twice a year and will next meet on 11 March 2026 in Portsmouth.

Solent News is prepared and edited by the Solent Forum Officers. It is a biannual publication and issue 60 will be produced in summer 2026. To find out more about the publication, how to submit articles or be included on the mailing list, please visit our [publications webpage](#).

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