

Solent Forum Annual Report: 2021 - 2022

The Solent Forum is a well established partnership that promotes and delivers integrated coastal management around the Solent. Established in 1992, it considers and provides advice on strategic coastal matters and facilitates communication and information exchange amongst its membership. Its work is steered by a group of funding partners, who guide the work of the Forum Officers.

This report sets out what the Forum has achieved in the 2021/22 financial year and what it will deliver in 2022/23. The long term aims and objectives of the Forum are set out in its [Business Plan](#).

The Forum has three categories of work that it undertakes; core service work that is ongoing each year, specific project work that runs for a defined time period and the servicing of subgroups.

The Forum hosts regular events as part of its core service. It also organises other events, both alone and in partnership with others, to support project work and disseminate information on important Solent coastal 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 with organisations from all coastal sectors. Members include professional bodies such as local government, harbour authorities, industry, 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 the biannual Solent Forum meetings and 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 and apply for the Solent Bathing Water Quality Awards.



Solent Forum Objectives

The Forum's Business Plan monitors its progress against an agreed set of five objectives; this Plan sets out in detail how the Forum will deliver them. Below is a summary of the relevant work that the Forum undertakes to deliver its objectives:

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 websites, Solent Bathing Water Quality Awards, Solent Information Database and topical information sheets.

3. To facilitate better communication, consultation and liaison:

Relevant Forum work: Solent News Service, Forum websites, 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 websites, Solent Forum meetings and Solent Forum serviced subgroups.

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 websites, officer input into national coastal policy and plan making, Coastal Partnerships Working Group attendance and strategic opportunities workshops.

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](#)) monthly updates, Twitter and special alerts.
- Maintaining the [Forum website](#), including hosting partner material.
- Provision of the [Solent Information Database \(SID\)](#) - a metadatabase of Solent research and reports.
- Servicing of subgroups.
- Administering the [Solent Bathing Water Quality Awards](#).
- Administering the [Professor Mike Clark Award](#) to support student research in the Solent. Hosting a placement student.
- Maintaining a [Coastal Consents Guide](#) to advise those wishing to undertake development.
- Membership networking and attendance at key local meetings like Catchment Partnerships and the Southern Coastal Group.
- Collating and sharing information on key issues with member organisations.
- Hosting of material and legacy support for external projects. Chairing external projects and facilitating workshops.

Solent Forum Subgroups

- [Solent Marine Sites Management Group](#)
- [Solent Bathing Water Quality Group](#) (to administer bathing water quality awards)
- [Natural Environment Group](#)

Solent Forum Work Programme 2021/22

Key Meetings and Events Held in 2021/22

Meeting	Attendees	Date of Meeting/Event
Solent Forum	Solent Forum members	Autumn 2021 and Spring 2022
Solent Forum Steering Group	Steering Group Members	Autumn 2021 and Spring 2022
Solent Marine Sites (SEMS)	SEMS Management Group	Autumn 2021
Natural Environment Group (NEG)	NEG Members	Spring and Autumn 2021
Horizon Scanning survey	Solent Forum members	Summer 2021
Catchment Partnership Meetings x 4	River Catchment Partnership partners	Quarterly throughout the year

Projects/Consultancy Services in 2021/22

Project/Service	Objective	Status as of March 2022
Solent Plastics Pollution Hub (SPP) Website and facebook page .	SPP is an information hub to collate and publicise all the excellent work taking place around the Solent and its associated river catchments on reducing litter and preventing plastic pollution.	This is a five year project which commenced in summer 2021. The main part of the work will be finished by March 2023, but the resources will be maintained and added to thereafter.
Building Biodiversity in the Solent Hub	An ongoing project to develop a resource hub on building biodiversity into coastal infrastructure, including ecological enhancement.	A web page of resources has been built and information and case studies continue to be added.
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.	BUDS phase 3 was progressed and funding is being sought for phase 4. See: http://www.solentforum.org/services/Current_Projects/buds/ .
Coordinating with river Catchment Partnerships	To make links with the river catchment partnerships in the Solent to coordinate action on issues relating to transitional and coastal waters.	Meetings were attended for all four Catchment Partnerships that drain into the Solent. We have been responding to the Environment Agency's FRMP and RBMP consultations.
Clean Solent Shores and Seas (CSSS)	CSSS aims to collate and share information on a range of topics to help improve the Solent's water quality.	A signposting and resource hub has been established on the Forum's website to collate projects and initiatives on water quality issues in the Solent. See: http://www.solentforum.org/services/Current_Projects/CSSS/ .
Championing Coastal Coordination (3Cs)	This is a project being led by the national Coastal Partnership network to review the future direction of coastal partnerships. The Solent Forum is part of a south coast consortium.	This work will run from November 2021 to March 2022 in partnership with the Dorset Coast Forum and Isle of Wight Estuaries Partnership.

Proposed Work Programme 2022/23

Meetings and Events Scheduled for 2022/23

Meeting	Attendees	Date of Meeting/Event
Solent Forum	Solent Forum members	Spring and Autumn 2022
Solent Forum Steering Group	Steering Group Members	Spring and Autumn 2022
Solent Marine Sites (SEMS)	SEMS Management Group	Activity survey in Spring 2022, Management Group meeting in Autumn 2022
Natural Environment Group (NEG)	NEG Members	Spring and Autumn 2022
Horizon Scanning (online survey)	Solent Forum Members	Summer 2022
Workshop on biodiversity net gain and habitat restoration	Forum members and other interested parties	Summer/Autumn 2022

Projects Proposed/Consultancy Services in 2022/23

Project/Service	Objective	Details
Beneficial Use of Dredgings (BUDS) Solent Forum - Beneficial Use of Dredging in the Solent Project (BUDS)	Explores how material from dredging in the Solent can be used in coastal defence and habitat replenishment	BUDS phase 3 is on-going and is due for completion in summer 2022.
Coastal Consents Guide Solent Forum - Coastal Consents Guide	This Guide gives developers an overall view of the potential consents and licences required and other key considerations before submitting an application.	We will continue to update this Guide, including changes that will arise from the Environment Act and the mandating of biodiversity net gain.
Building Biodiversity in the Solent Hub Solent Forum - Building Biodiversity in the Solent (BBS): Information Hub	Develop a resource hub on building biodiversity, including ecological enhancement.	The Forum will continue to build case study material and collate and share further knowledge on this topic.
Habitat Restoration - collation and sharing of information Solent Forum - Habitat Restoration	The Forum will continue to collate information on habitat restoration, including guidance on natural capital, Local Nature Recovery Strategies and net gain.	Information will be shared via our news service and added to the Forum's website. We will support organisations undertaking restoration work.
Clean Solent Shores and Seas (CSSS) Solent Forum - Clean Solent Shores and Seas	CSSS aims to collate and share information on a range of topics to help improve the Solent's water quality.	The Forum will continue to populate the directories under the CSSS umbrella. We will also continue to support other water quality initiatives like Southern Water's technical summit.
Solent Plastics Pollution Hub (SPP)	SPP collates and publicises all the excellent work taking place around the Solent and its associated river catchments on reducing litter and preventing plastic pollution.	We will continue to work with the Environment Agency on servicing the website and facebook page for this Interreg funded project until March 2023.