

Inside this issue...

- Latest news from the Solent Forum
- Great British Beach Clean
- Microbead plastic ban
- 2017 Bathing Water results
- New fishing byelaws
- New good practice guidance for marine aggregates
- Managing marine recreational activities in Marine Protected Areas
- Saltmarsh recharge at Lymington Harbour
- Waders and brent goose strategy update
- Green Halo project launch
- Environmentally friendly moorings workshop
- The Blue Belt Programme
- Solent Oyster Regeneration project update
- Southern Water tackles misconnections
- The Year of the Pier
- Haslar Barracks development
- Ferry travel art inspiration
- HMS Queen Elizabeth commissioned



Beneficial Use of Dredge Sediment in the Solent (BUDS)

During the course of 2017, the Solent Forum progressed Phase 1 of the 'Beneficial Use of Dredge Sediment in the Solent' (BUDS) project. This showed that around one million cubic metres of fine sediment is typically excavated each year in the area; however, no more than 0.02 percent of this (at best) is used beneficially to protect and restore its deteriorating marshes and coastline.

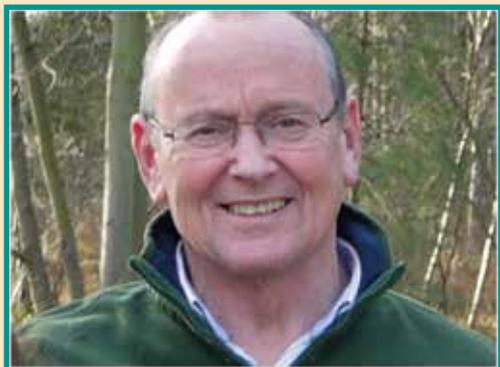
Phase 1 of the project is being undertaken by ABPmer (who have also contributed to the initiative from their own research budget) and is being overseen by a specialist technical group. The project team have undertaken the following tasks:

- A brief introductory literature review to provide a context for the investigation and review the challenges, identify other contemporary initiatives and describe proven case examples.
- A specific investigation into the costs and benefits of using sediment to restore habitats in order to inform discussions about the objectives of, and funding streams for, future projects.
- Determination of a set of 'selection criteria' which can be used to identify beneficial use sites (based on their potential economic and environmental value).
- Development of an online GIS mapping product that collates relevant spatial information which can be interrogated to select, or eliminate, locations where beneficial use projects might be undertaken.
- An engagement process in which many interested parties throughout the Solent were asked for additional information as well as their views and advice.
- A final workshop (held on 6th December 2017) to discuss possible beneficial use project sites with key stakeholders and industry experts.

Phase 1 has highlighted a range of possible beneficial use locations. This includes those where ambitious and visionary large-scale projects could or should be carried out to protect coastal communities and enhance, and prolong the life of, the Solent's marshes. The Solent Forum and ABPmer are very grateful for the excellent advice and support provided by the many consultees on the project. The BUDS Phase 1 report will be issued early in 2018. See www.solentforum.org/services/buds/ for more information.

News from the Forum

Chairman's Column



Peter Barham

Interest in the marine environment is increasing for a number of reasons, which can only be a good thing. Sir David Attenborough's Blue Planet 2 has had some of the highest viewing figures ever recorded; nothing can show better the beauty and importance of marine life than the amazing filming and his commentary. In the last programme David talked in his own very gentle, but very powerful way, about the real dangers that the marine environment faces in modern times, but at the end he was optimistic that we can do something about this if we act and act now.

During the programme he also showed us the damage that plastics are doing to wildlife, and this has been accompanied by public campaigns to make Governments act on plastic and plastic waste. Marine conservation organisations, such as the Wildlife Trusts and Marine Conservation Society here in the UK, have worked hard to raise these issues with Government and Government is responding positively, but much more needs to be done.

Plastic waste is a cultural phenomenon and the result of instant access to products, accompanied by the ease of throwing away the packaging afterwards. A Radio 4 programme described the growth of a billion dollar plus perfume company whose success was based on the recognition that the value of products is directly related to how elaborately they are packaged, but without any thought of the resultant waste that is created. Shopping with my daughter recently, she wanted British tomatoes sold without packaging. She asked one of the assistants who replied that this was not company policy, however, he offered to take some out of the packaging for her. Needless to say we did not buy the tomatoes, but both examples demonstrate the approach we generally take to packaging. Who wants to see litter on the foreshore or in the sea and when was it ever

encouraged? Clearing it up is important and we welcome strongly the actions of councils and volunteers to do this, but until we have a change of culture we are treating the symptoms and not the disease.

So where does all this leave the Solent Forum? It is part of the challenge that we continue to bring marine issues and, more importantly, marine actions to everyone and to continue to encourage the involvement of more and more people to do things which will improve the marine environment for wildlife and for us.

The year 2018 is going to be interesting as we start to see what Brexit brings and how the Government want to see the environment managed. Early in 2018 we should see the '25 Year Environment Plan' published and this will certainly give a strong indication of the direction the Government wants to take. Like Sir David Attenborough we should be optimistic, as Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Michael Gove, is saying that he wants to see the environment not just protected, but improved. The Solent Forum is ready to play its part.

My best wishes for 2018.

Natural Environment Group

The Forum's Natural Environment Group (NEG) met in November with its new Chair, Sue Burton from Natural England. The Group discussed actions arising from the 'Solent European Marine Sites (SEMS) Annual Management Report, 2017' and in particular the issue of marine litter.

The Solent Forum produced a scoping paper for the meeting on how actions can be taken forward to minimise the local activity of littering, which may be causing damage to the Solent environment. NEG agreed that a project on littering should be set up with a strategic Solent campaign to tackle this issue. A Project group is in the process of being formed to help steer the work; the inaugural meeting will be held on 28th March 2018 in Winchester. A project page will be placed on the Forum's website shortly; in the meantime further details can be supplied on request.

Luke Helmer, from the University of Portsmouth, also presented some of the work that he has been undertaking for the Solent Oyster Restoration Project at the meeting. NEG funded him to look at the water quality at his oyster sampling sites. An article on this project is published later in this newsletter. Find out more about NEG's work at: www.solentems.org.uk/natural_environment_group/.

Marine Licence Applications

After a request from members, the Solent Forum is now providing details of marine licence applications around the Solent in its regular monthly newsletter. This includes applications that are open for public consultations and those where decisions or changes to the application have been made in the last month.

Marine Licence applications are available to view on the public section of the Marine Management Organisation's case management system at <https://marinelicensing.marinemanagement.org.uk/mmofox5/fox/live/>.

To subscribe to the monthly newsletter send your email address to info@solentforum.org.

News from the Forum

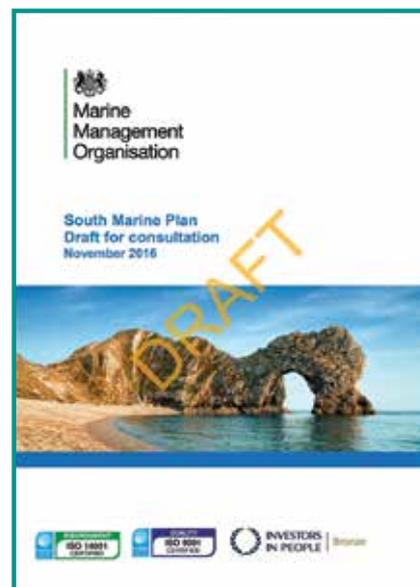
Engaging Stakeholders in Marine Planning

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) is implementing an 'Enhancing Stakeholder Engagement' project to engage with more stakeholders, more effectively and so strengthen the development, implementation and monitoring of marine plans.

It is working with local coastal partnerships, and the consultants Nomensa, to develop knowledge of stakeholders with an interest in the marine area. It is hoped that this work will provide insights into stakeholders' drivers and motivations and identify barriers to engagement in marine planning.

This knowledge will then be used to identify opportunities to raise awareness, and deliver enhanced engagement to all stakeholders. In particular, new and 'hard to reach' stakeholders who are not currently meaningfully engaged in the marine planning process. The Solent Forum is one of the local coastal partnerships selected to assist with this work.

In the Solent, we are awaiting publication of the final South Marine Plans. These are 20 year plans and will be monitored and reviewed every three years. See www.gov.uk/government/publications/draft-south-marine-plan.



Solent European Marine Sites (SEMS)

The Solent European Marine Sites (SEMS) Annual Management Report (AMR) was given a new layout in 2017; it is now a single document incorporating an action delivery plan. The improvements followed suggestions made by the SEMS Management Group (MG); the work was done in house by the Solent Forum team, with input from the Chairs of SEMS and the Natural Environment Group (NEG) and from Natural England (NE).

The AMR was discussed at the annual meeting of the SEMS MG in September 2017; it can be found at www.solentems.org.uk/publications/. An increase in the use of drones was reported at three locations and further action will be taken to address bait digging. Hotspots for littering exist within designated sites and gaps were recognised in the current understanding of both the direct and indirect impacts of litter. NEG will take forward many of the necessary actions that SEMS identified. Revised terms of reference for SEMS were agreed at the meeting. Further refinements to the online monitoring system were suggested and these will be made through January and February 2018.

Several of the frameworks within which SEMS operates are being reviewed by NE, including their conservation advice and condition and risk assessments. In the future it will be possible to tailor risk categories for SEMS activities as a result of the conservation advice and condition assessments. Once the results of this work are available they will improve the focus on key issues to protect SEMS' features, and will clarify where the MG should prioritise its efforts.

The SEMS annual online monitoring survey is undertaken by the SEMS MG and will take place in Spring 2018. For more information on SEMS please visit www.solentems.org.uk/.

Autumn 2017 Solent Forum Meeting

At the October meeting of the Solent Forum, we launched our Coastal Consents Guide and updated our Solent Information Database (SID).

The Coastal Consents Guide provides an overview of all the different types of regulations that those wishing to undertake development or works around the coast need to be aware of before submitting an application. It can be found at www.solentforum.org/publications/key_publications/coastal_consents_guide/.

SID provides a quick and easy way for people to find research and reports from the Solent and nationally on a wide range of topics and areas. It shows when documents were published, by whom, gives an abstract and then a direct link to the document. Forum members are welcome to send details of their research and reports for inclusion. SID can be accessed at www.solentforum.org/publications/sid/. Details of Forum meeting and past presentations can be found at www.solentforum.org/networking/meeting/.

Plastics & Litter

Great British Beach Clean 2017

Last September, thousands of people headed to UK beaches to pick up litter and record their finds in the 'Great British Beach Clean' organised by the Marine Conservation Society (MCS). Just short of 7,000 volunteer beach cleaners picked up 255,209 individual pieces of litter from 339 beaches; nine beaches across the Solent participated. The results show there was 718 bits of rubbish for every 100 metres cleaned and a ten percent rise in the amount of litter picked up from the previous year. As with previous years, tiny bits of plastic were the most commonly found items, in even greater number than in 2016.

This year's results showed litter from eating and drinking makes up twenty percent of all the rubbish. There was 138 pieces of 'on the go' litter found, on average, per 100m of all the beaches cleaned and surveyed by volunteers. This type of litter includes items from drinks cups to cutlery, foil wrappers to straws, packets to lolly sticks, plastic bottles to drinks cans and glass bottles.

Data also revealed a ninety-four percent rise in the number of wet wipes found on UK beaches. The MCS has collected over 10,000 signatures on its petition to the wet wipe industry body, EDANA, asking them to ensure members remove plastic from their flushable products and that flushable wipes comply with UK Water Industry standards. The data shows that litter comes from the following sources:

- Non-identifiable - 46.2%
- Fishing - 10.8%
- Sewage related debris - 8.5%
- Medical - 0.2%
- Fly-tipped - 1%
- Shipping - 2.9%
- Public - 30.4%

The year 2018, will be the 25th anniversary of the MCS Beach Cleans and a series of special events are being planned. Find out more at: <https://www.mcsuk.org/beachwatch/greatbritishbeachclean>.



See Bin, See Change Event

The University of Portsmouth held a 'See Bin, Sea Change' event on the 1st December 2017. The event raised awareness of the ongoing plastic pollution problem that faces the UK, as well celebrating the introduction of the UK's first Seabin by Landrover BAR in Portsmouth Harbour. At the event there were give-aways, a questionnaire about plastic consumption, a world research wall, and a pledge wall for the public to express how they are reducing their plastic consumption.

The Plastic Tide organisation also attended the event; their website, <https://www.theplastic Tide.com>, shows how you can get involved in a citizen science project on beach plastic. Plastic Tide also seeks to enhance our understanding of the amount of plastic on coastlines, by trialling drone-based automatic detection of litter. The aim is to create a global inventory of marine plastic pollution, and help identify hotspots, impacts and the fate of plastic.

Each Seabin collects floating debris and micro plastics down to 2mm in diameter and has the capability to collect 83,000 plastic shopping bags or 20,000 plastic bottles per year. The team are expecting to remove half a tonne of debris from the waters around The Camber in Portsmouth each year, as-well as removing pollutants such as oils and detergents.

Watch a YouTube video of the Seabin at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LsVC28cJffM>.



Seabin. Photo courtesy of Harry KH/ Land Rover BAR

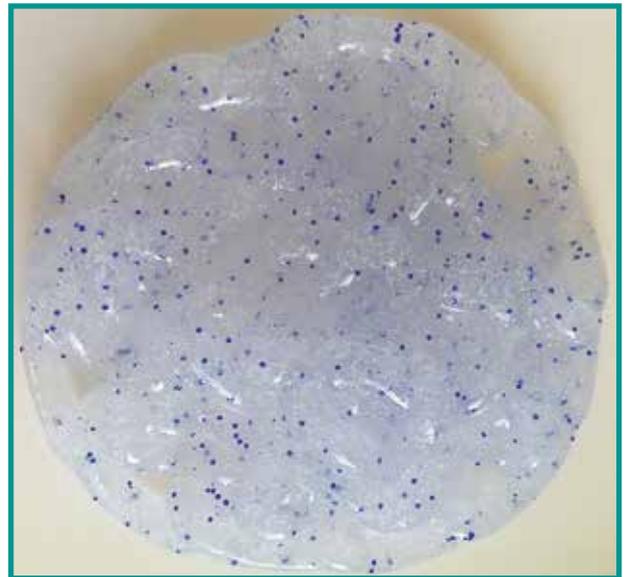
Environmental Quality

Plastic Microbead Ban

In July 2017, Defra published its consultation outcome on proposals to ban the use of plastic microbeads in cosmetics and personal care products in the UK. The consultation asked for comments on proposals for a ban on the manufacture and sale of products. It also sought to gather evidence on the extent of the environmental impacts of further sources of potential marine plastic pollution, to inform future UK actions to protect the marine environment.

The majority of the respondents welcomed the proposed ban. The ban on the manufacture of products containing microbeads began on 9th January 2018. A ban on their sale will follow later in the year.

Many respondents recognised the need to take further action to address additional sources of marine litter from a variety of industries and applications, as well as relevant research. Responses also included possible interventions to address other sources of marine pollution, including improvements to infrastructure, developing technologies and voluntary commitments. View the outcome document at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/banning-the-use-of-microbeads-in-cosmetics-and-personal-care-products>.



Microbeads in a facial scrub

OSPAR's 'Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter' includes an action to evaluate all products and processes that include primary microplastics and act, if appropriate, to reduce their impact on the marine environment. In June 2017 the UK joined the UN Clean Seas campaign, a platform which aims to connect individuals, civil society groups, industry and governments to transform habits, practices, standards and policies around the globe to dramatically reduce marine litter and the harm it causes.

Clean Inland Shipping Solutions

Marine South East is one of the partners in an European project looking at Clean Inland Shipping solutions named CLINSH. CLINSH is a demonstration project which will assess the effectiveness of emissions control technology, alternative fuels and shoreside power systems.

It was officially launched on 1st September 2016. Seventeen project partners have committed to investments totalling over €8.5 million, with co-financing provided by the European Union's LIFE programme. The various project activities are designed to increase the long-term sustainability of the inland shipping sector.

The vessels, which will take part in the practical trials commencing early 2018, have now been selected; a full list can be seen at www.clinsh.eu. These vessels will test various emissions-reducing technologies including the use of alternative fuels. The data gathered will provide valuable information about their environmental performance and the operating costs. The overall purpose of the project is to create a more sustainable inland shipping sector, reducing emissions of hazardous substances such as nitrogen oxides and fine particulates.

It is hoped that the knowledge gained will support new policies intended to reduce harmful emissions, and also reveal the economic implications for vessel owners and operators.

Bathing Water Quality Results, 2017

In November, the Office of National Statistics published the annual bathing water quality results.

For every designated bathing water in England, the Environment Agency monitors *Escherichia coli* and intestinal enterococci in the water, throughout the bathing season. Values can vary depending on factors such as the weather, pollution from agricultural and urban sources and storm water overflows. The results summary for the 413 bathing waters measured show:

- 406 (98.3 per cent) met at least the minimum standard of the Bathing Water Directive.
- 270 bathing waters in England (65.4 percent) met the excellent standard of the Bathing Water Directive.
- Seven bathing waters in England (1.7 percent) did not meet the minimum standard, and were classified as poor.

All bathing waters in the Solent are classified as 'excellent'.

View the statistics at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/bathing-water-quality-statistics>.

The Environment Agency publish bathing water profiles for each designated beach you can view them at <https://environment.data.gov.uk/bwq/profiles/>.

Fisheries

New Fishing Byelaws for Solent European Marine Sites

The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) is responsible for the management of inshore fisheries in the coastal waters off Dorset, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. It has introduced two new byelaws to safeguard the Solent European Marine Sites (SEMS).

The byelaws protect locally and internationally important marine habitats and species within SEMS, together with other Marine Protected Areas in the region; they will support the long-term sustainability of fisheries and coastal communities within these areas. The Southern IFCA carried out extensive public community engagement throughout all stages of the development of both byelaws.

The 'Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw, 2016' bans potentially damaging fishing activities over 990km² of sensitive sea area, protecting over 36.5 percent of coastal areas in Dorset, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The byelaw also introduces management for the newly designated Chesil Beach and Stennis Ledges Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) and Poole Rocks MCZ.

The 'Solent Dredge Fishing Byelaw, 2016' restricts dredge fishing within Langstone Harbour, Portsmouth Harbour and Southampton Water over a four-month winter period, from November to the end of February. It will protect sensitive soft sediment habitats and the populations of invertebrates that live within them, which in turn provide an important food source for internationally important bird species. These measures will also support the sustainability of the Solent's shellfish fisheries, which have experienced a decline in catches in recent years.



Oyster dredging, photo courtesy of Southern IFCA

Southern IFCA also has a duty to further the conservation objectives of Marine Protected Areas and, in European Marine Sites (EMS), to restrict damaging activities that could significantly disturb species or deteriorate the habitats of the protected species or habitat types. It is following a government-led risk-based assessment of the impact of fishing activities on EMS designated features.

Centre for Sustainable Aquaculture Futures

In October 2017, the 'Collaborative Centre for Sustainable Aquaculture Futures' was launched by Environment Secretary Michael Gove, with an ambition of bringing together world-leading scientists to ensure the key challenges facing sustainable growth of the aquaculture industry are better understood, both at home and internationally.

Key issues to be addressed by the Centre include:

- Providing scientific support to reduce the \$6bn annual losses due to disease in aquaculture.
- Providing evidence and tools to ensure that fish, shellfish, crustaceans and seaweeds produced in the global industry are safe to eat.
- Understanding how cutting edge molecular diagnostics, pathology, animal breeding and nutrition can be applied to assist seafood farmers, particularly in more vulnerable societies.
- Ensuring that aquaculture is developed sustainably, for the benefit of communities, economies and the environment.

To find out more please visit www.exeter.ac.uk/saf/.

Marine Industries

Good Practice Guidance for Marine Aggregate Extraction in English Waters

The British Marine Aggregate Producers Association (BMAPA), the representative body for the marine aggregate sector, and The Crown Estate have jointly published a new good practice guidance for marine aggregate extraction operations in English waters.

'Good Practice Guidance: Extraction by Dredging of Aggregates from England's Seabed (2017)' replaces 'Extraction by dredging from the English seabed: minerals planning guidance 1' originally published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in 2002. This was formally withdrawn by the Government in September 2017.

Developed in consultation with Defra, the Marine Management Organisation, Natural England, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Historic England and The Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science, the new good practice guidance has been produced in response to a continuing need for a key reference document to help inform not only industry, but also policy makers, regulators and advisors.

The new guidance reflects modern practice in English waters, providing an overview of the marine aggregate industry. It covers the planning, licensing, environmental assessment, monitoring, mitigation and management methods that are employed to protect the environment and other seabed interests and to ensure the sustainability of the industry.

Download the document at http://www.bmapa.org/documents/BMAPA_TCE_Good_Practice_Guidance_04_2017.pdf.

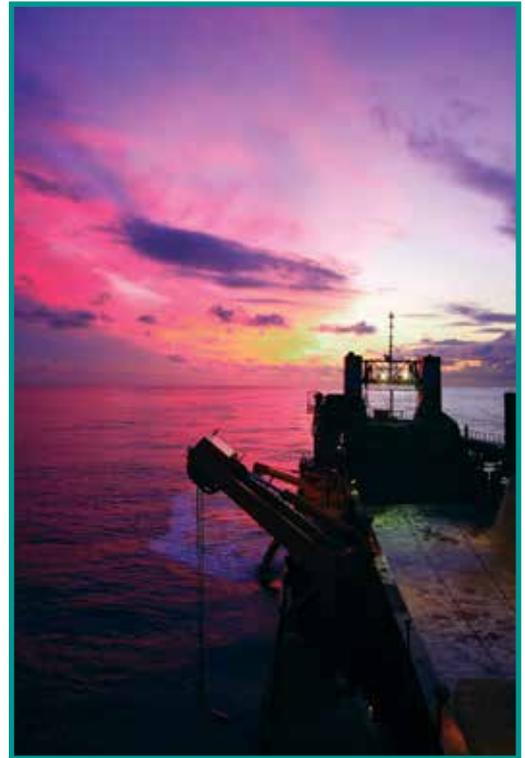


Photo courtesy of BMAPA

Seabed Rights for Offshore Wind

The Crown Estate has announced that it will be working with the offshore wind sector and stakeholders to consider making new seabed rights available to offshore wind developers.

The announcement follows the Government's backing for offshore wind in the 'Clean Growth Strategy' and recognises the industry's on-going development of a Sector Deal for offshore wind. It also follows the recent 'Contracts for Difference' auction which demonstrated significant cost reduction.

The Crown Estate reported last summer that over 1,463 offshore wind turbines were operational on the UK seabed by the end of 2016. There was a strong development pipeline during 2017, with a further 830 turbines under construction and a total of seven new sites expected to reach first power. There has also been significant investment in operations and maintenance bases across a number of the UK's regional ports and harbours.

More detail regarding future offshore wind leasing activity will be released in early 2018.

Shipping Container Logistics

Shipping companies should be better able to organise their empty containers and the routes on which they travel, thanks to the development of a new optimisation model. The new system should improve logistics, saving time and money and reducing emissions.

The tool relies on a set of complex mathematical models to create a sophisticated decision support system for helping liner companies plan their best routes and fleet deployment. It optimises routing of laden and empty containers, which will minimise unnecessary movements of vessels, reducing fuel consumption and CO₂ emissions.

Dr Shahin Gelareh, from the University of Portsmouth, undertook the research in conjunction with the University of Southampton as part of strategies to reduce emissions in line with the Paris agreement on climate change. The long-term aim is to reduce CO₂ emissions from every shipping container transported by 15 per cent until 2020.

The results of the project are published in the Journal of 'Transportation Research Part E: Logistics and Transportation Review'.

Coastal Defence

New Saltmarsh Recharge Licence for Lymington Harbour

Between 2014 and 2017, Lymington Harbour Commissioners undertook a three-year trial to beneficially use mud dredged from the river to recharge an intertidal area in a bay within 'Boiler Marsh' where the saltmarsh has been lost through erosion.

The plan was to create an unconfined intertidal reef within the bay, that will provide shelter to the marsh from wave action or a source of sediment to feed the marsh in the immediate vicinity. It is hoped that by reducing the amount of wave energy reaching the marsh in this area erosion will be slowed.

The trial involved the placement of 2,380 tonnes of sediment in November 2014, building up to 6,900 tonnes in 2015 and 10,000 tonnes in 2016. During the trial, monitoring was undertaken to ensure there was no detriment to water quality or the benthic communities that inhabit the mud, the latter with the support of Natural England and the Environment Agency. Bathymetric surveys were also undertaken before and after each survey to establish the persistence of placed mud over time.

The final monitoring report concluded that the trial had no adverse effect on water quality or the saltmarsh environment and, encouragingly, bed levels had risen by an average of 0.66m in the area of disposal when compared to the 2014 baseline data. This information was used to support a successful application to the Marine Management Organisation for a new extended marine licence. The new licence authorises the placement of up to 10,000 tonnes per year until 2024 and it is hoped that these larger quantities will make a material difference to slowing marsh erosion in this area.

Looking forward, Lymington Harbour Commissioners are members of the Solent Forum's 'Beneficial Use of Dredging in the Solent' project, which seeks to identify wider opportunities for the beneficial use of dredged mud within the Solent. As well as trying to identify wider opportunities around the Solent, this work will include assessing whether there are other strategic areas where mud can be placed to slow down marsh erosion to provide shelter for Lymington Harbour. This will become important as the Boiler Marsh area 'fills up' to the extent that barges can no longer gain safe access.



Photo courtesy of Lymington Harbour Commissioners

Hill Head's New Sea Defences

The Eastern Solent Coastal Partnership (ESCP) have reported that all works on Phase 2 of the Hill Head Sea Defence project are now complete. The project has involved construction of a new and improved seawall, beach replenishment, extensive timber groyne maintenance as well as an improved amenity area.

The main aim of the project was to develop, design and build a cost effective sea defence option which will maintain amenity and leisure access along this frontage for the lifetime of the structure.

Beach levels have fallen at Hill Head since 2012, exposing the seawalls to additional wave action. Records show that storm frequency is increasing with 18 storms in the last three years. The old seawall had reached the end of its serviceable life and was no longer able to withstand this increased wave action, failing regularly, leading to expensive repairs.

South Hayling Beach Management

Funding has been received from the Environment Agency for the continuation of beach management by the Eastern Solent Coastal Partnership (ESCP) on Hayling Island. Funding of £3.3 million has been awarded to cover the next five years of beach management works, plus research in to coastal change on the Island.

ESCP have also received planning permission in perpetuity for the works, and a marine licence extending until 2027. This will allow it to continue its work to reduce flood and erosion risk at Eastoke on Hayling Island.

The first beach recycling campaign took place in October 2017. During the works 10,000m³ of material was extracted from the Open Beach and recycled to Eastoke. Working in Partnership with the Hayling Golf Club, the ESCP also recycled 20,000m³ of material from Gunner Point back to Eastoke to help further reduce the flood risk at this location.

Recreation & Leisure

Environmentally-friendly Moorings Workshop

Anchors and moorings can have a detrimental impact on sensitive marine habitats such as seagrass beds. One potential option to reduce the impact is the use of environmentally-friendly moorings, (or eco-moorings) which are simply systems designed to have less impact on the seabed than conventional swing moorings.

There are a range of different types of these eco-moorings, and different systems in use are being trialled around the country. More work is needed to understand the technology and how it can be best used in the variety of conditions found in UK waters, this starts by bringing together those involved and interested in eco-moorings to share their experiences.

The National Trust hosted a workshop in October 2017, in collaboration with Natural England and the Marine Management Organisation, to start the process of sharing ideas and knowledge. The 28 participants who attended included representatives from research organisations, ports authorities, the yachting and marina industry, the Royal Yachting Association and the Wildlife Trusts.

Delegates shared the results of the various trials of eco-moorings that are underway, from their longer established use around Lundy Island, to early trials of different designs in Torbay and Plymouth Sound. The latter is a recent government led project reviewing current knowledge, the scientific evidence from research on the impacts of anchoring and mooring, and discussions on the management options suitable for different locations and situations.

The October workshop revealed the wide ranging level of interest in this technology and the need to disseminate the current work that is underway. As a result, a network of over 60 individuals and organisation representatives has been established for further sharing of information and ideas for research and funding opportunities. Web pages are in development to hold reports, information and other documentation.

For further information contact Jan Maclennan from Natural England at email jan.maclennan@naturalengland.org.uk.

Managing Marine Recreational Activities in MPAs

Natural England and the Marine Management Organisation commissioned a study to collate and update the evidence base on the significance of impacts from recreational activities on designated features in Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).

The study also carried out a review and collated case study examples of a range of management options such as codes of conduct; it also undertook engagement with the national governing bodies to look at existing national good practice, opportunities for further work and recommendations.

The outputs include:

- Thirteen evidence briefing notes for different activities both marine and coastal, to provide a high level review of the evidence base relating to the impacts of each activity group on biological features and a generic assessment of the likelihood of significant impacts on a designated site's Conservation Objectives.
- A management toolkit (an excel file) to provide a high level review of the types of measures available for managing recreational activities, the roles and responsibilities of relevant authorities and case study examples of different management measures.
- A project report, which provides further information on the study methodology and highlights the recommendations from both regulators and stakeholders in relation to good practice messaging and mitigation of impacts from marine recreational activities.



View the study outputs at <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/>.

Conservation

Waders and Brent Goose Strategy Update

The second year of surveys to update the 'Waders and Brent Goose Strategy' are underway this winter. The aim of the Strategy is to identify the network of sites used by wading birds and Brent geese that are inland of the Solent's Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

Last year, surveys were carried out in the Eastern Solent, this year the project team are surveying the Western Solent. They have developed a new method to observe bird movements to and from the intertidal and also between inland sites in order to better understand how the whole network functions.

Key to the movement surveys is the communication of observed movements between surveyors to work out origins and destinations. There are three surveys each month, one at each of dawn, midday and dusk in order to uncover key habits and behaviours throughout the light cycle of the day. This year the surveyors have also recorded movements across the Solent between the Isle of Wight and the mainland. The surveys are carried out by professional ecologists and volunteer birders, and are co-ordinated by Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust on behalf of the Solent Waders and Brent Goose Steering Group.



Image courtesy of Trevor Codlin

The surveys are carried out by professional ecologists and volunteer birders, and are co-ordinated by Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust on behalf of the Solent Waders and Brent Goose Steering Group.

A third year of survey is planned for next year and an updated Strategy document is to be published in 2019. An interim report for last year's results with new mapping, and importantly new mitigation guidance is now available. For more information on how to access the data please contact the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre and for information on the survey work please contact Deborah Whitfield at Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, email: Deborah.Whitfield@hiwwt.org.uk.

Green Halo Partnership

Business and community leaders have come together to launch a new partnership and pledge to ensure our most precious landscapes work in harmony with the economy.

The Green Halo Partnership brings together organisations from across central southern England to protect and enhance our 'natural capital'; the benefits we derive from nature such as clean air and water, protection from flooding, food and outdoor activities.

Architects, wildlife charities, councils, utility businesses, health bodies, universities and civil engineering firms were among around 70 organisations signing up to the partnership at its launch at the Ordnance Survey in Southampton in November 2017.

The conference included workshops around four themes with ideas put forward to:

- Support the local economy.
- Improve health and well being.
- Encourage sustainable living.
- Enhance the natural environment.

For details see www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/greenhalo.

Landscape Laser Mapping

The Environment Agency has announced plans to map England's entire landscape by 2020, the data will be used to assess flood risk and inform conservation work.

Using aircraft equipped with laser scanners, the Agency will map all 130,000km² of the country, including rivers, fields and national parks.

As well as being used to understand flood risk, the data will also be made available for free to the public and industry to allow them to make and access accurate 3D models of the landscape.

Currently about 75 percent of the country is mapped but with only sporadic coverage of upland areas. The new project, beginning this winter, will cover all of England's national parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

The Environment Agency has been using lidar (light detection and ranging) technology for 20 years to better understand flood risk. The data collected is used to plan flood defences across whole river catchments. Find out more via the Agency's blog at: <https://environmentagency.blog.gov.uk/>.

Heritage

Haslar Barracks Consultation

Local people have been asked to help Gosport Borough Council protect a unique set of military buildings which played a crucial part in British history.

The council is taking steps to make the 19th century Haslar Barracks, near the former Haslar Hospital, into a conservation area.

By doing this, it can tighten up planning rules and help ensure that any future development preserves the site's special character.

To make the protection even stronger, it needed to gather views and information from Gosport's residents so last year it ran a consultation to gather people's ideas on the proposals. This feedback will help it draw up a detailed document setting out the case for protecting the site. This document, the 'Haslar Barracks Conservation Area Appraisal', will be used by planners to defend the barracks against inappropriate development.

In the consultation, residents were asked if they support the designation of the barracks as a conservation area, and if they agree with the area's boundaries. They could also contribute historical or architectural information, and make other comments. Visit www.gosport.gov.uk/haslarbarracks for more information.

Built in 1802, Haslar Barracks is an extremely rare example of a Napoleonic-era infantry barracks. It played a strategic role in the defence of local military establishments at a time when a French invasion was feared to be imminent. After time as a hospital, it was used by the Royal Engineers and then, during the Second World War, as an anti-aircraft brigade. It was then occupied by the Royal Army Ordnance Corps.

After the 1950s it became a youth offenders' centre, before its final use as an immigration holding centre. This closed earlier last year, and the complex is now empty. The owner, the Ministry of Justice, has put it up for sale.



Photo courtesy of Gosport Borough Council

Southsea Castle Water Feature

A new project to enhance Southsea seafront has begun with work commencing on a new water feature outside Southsea Castle.

Portsmouth City Council will be replacing the existing fountain with 30 water jets, each of which has coloured lights and can be coordinated to create a range of different displays.

The area the jets will sit in can also be used to create a reflective pool in front of the castle.

Plans for this new water feature are included within the council's seafront masterplan. When finished, it will complement other improvements being made to the area as part of the D-Day Museum's transformation project.

These include creating a new commemorative space for the D-Day Stone, sympathetically relocating the statue of Field Marshal Montgomery and developing a new space for LCT 7074, one of the few surviving D-Day landing craft, which will display the D-Day Museum's two tanks. The project will be completed in spring 2018.

USS Jacob Jones

The Maritime Archaeology Trust is marking the centenary of the loss of the USS Jacob Jones over 30 miles south of the Isles of Scilly with a new publication and online resources.

The Trust have been researching the vessel and the circumstances of its loss and have published 'Forgotten Wrecks of the First World War: USS Jacob Jones the first US destroyer sunk by enemy action'. This tells the story of the ship, its wartime career and sinking, and pays tribute to those 66 men who were lost. A transcription of information, held in The National Archives, has also been made available on its website.

The Trust are building a project to investigate the seabed wreckage through the survey and the collection of photographic data. This will be used to create a 3D model of the site, which can be used as a 'wreck tour' to provide access to this historic site for the public across the globe and further commemorate those lost at sea. It is also currently seeking support for this project. Find out more at: www.maritimearchaeologytrust.org/uss-jacob-jones.

Harbours & Business

Cowes Harbour Commission Promotes Cruise Calls to the Isle of Wight

Cowes Harbour Commission is working with Destination Cowes and the Island's tourism organisation, Visit Isle of Wight, to promote Cowes as a unique destination port-of-call. There is still a rising demand for the cruise ship market, including growth for Northern European luxury cruises.

Cowes offers great visitor appeal with cruise ship passengers able to visit world famous tourist attractions such as Queen Victoria's magnificent Osborne House in East Cowes. Every year, a number of small and medium-sized cruise ships on Northern European itineraries visit the Isle of Wight to enjoy Cowes, as well as the Island's coastlines and landscapes. This new Cowes Harbour Commission initiative seeks to secure increased cruise calls to Cowes for the benefit of the harbour, town and local economy.

Cruise vessels up to 150m can use the Cowes anchorage in the Solent, with a five minute tender run to Trinity Landing. Larger vessels, over 150m, are safely anchored in the ABP Anchorage, from where it is a 15 minute tender trip ashore to Cowes. Cruise visitors arrive onto The Parade, which is next to Henry VIII's 'Cowes Castle', home to the prestigious Royal Yacht Squadron.



Ocean Majesty at Cowes, photo courtesy of Cowes Harbour Commission

Southern Water Tackles Wastewater Misconnections

Southern Water is carrying out network surveys in seven areas as part of a major scheme to bring bathing water quality up to the 'excellent' rating by 2020, this includes Selsey in Sussex and Shanklin on the Isle of Wight. These areas have been selected for a range of improvements as part of its £31.5 million 'Bathing Water Enhancement Programme', the first of its kind in the UK.

Southern Water spent a year carrying out a range of detailed investigations including watercourse sampling, DNA analysis and CCTV surveys of sewers to understand the causes of pollution at each of the shortlisted bathing waters. They also undertook a series of customer focus groups with local customers and businesses.

As part of the scheme, they are speaking to thousands of customers to help trace property misconnections; where wastewater pipes are incorrectly plumbed into surface water drains. These misconnections lead to wastewater from toilets, kitchens and bathrooms being pumped out to sea before it's treated, affecting the quality of bathing water at local beaches. It is also working closely with local authorities on tackling misconnections and other issues, such as dog waste on the beach, which are currently preventing bathing water reaching the highest standard.

Checking for misconnections is being carried out on Southern Water's behalf by MWH Ltd and surveying experts WERM Ltd. While most of the work will be carried out on public land, surveyors may need to ask permission from householders and businesses to access part of their property to complete the checks. If misconnections are found the water company works with property owners, businesses and the local councils' environmental health teams to find the quickest and easiest way to correct it.

Tom Gallagher is Southern Water's new bathing water manager. His job is to focus on the quality of bathing waters across the region, liaising with colleagues in the Environment Agency, local councils, community groups, wildlife organisations and others, discussing the issues that affect bathing water quality.

For more information on Southern Water's Bathing Water Enhancement Programme please visit www.southernwater.co.uk/bathingwaterenhancement. To check your home for misconnections, visit www.connectright.org.

More News

The Blue Belt Programme

The 'Blue Belt Programme' has been published by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science, and the Marine Management Organisation. It supports delivery of the UK Government's manifesto commitment to provide long term protection for over four million square kilometres of marine environment across the UK Overseas Territories. It provides £20 million of funding over four years (2016 to 2020) to:

- Improve scientific understanding of the marine environment.
- Develop and implement evidence-based, tailored marine management strategies including surveillance and enforcement.
- Ensure management is sustainable and long term.

The UK and the UK Overseas Territories are custodians to the fifth-largest marine estate in the world. These territories and their waters are home to globally significant biodiversity, from vast penguin colonies in the South Atlantic to tropical rainforests in the Caribbean. Some of their species and habitats are unique.

The Programme is initially focused on seven islands and archipelagos: British Indian Ocean Territory, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, British Antarctic Territory, Pitcairn, St Helena, Ascension Island and Tristan da Cunha. Find out more at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-blue-belt-programme>.



Solent Oyster Restoration Project Update

November 2017 saw the opening of the oyster fishery within Portsmouth, Langstone and Chichester Harbours. Using this opportunity, the Blue Marine Foundation were able to purchase and protect a further 10,000 oysters for their Oyster Restoration Project. This is in addition to those purchased in the previous year for suspended cage trials, that were developed with the University of Portsmouth and MDL Marinas. The new oysters will be incorporated into the roll-out of the cages into other marina and pontoon locations across the Solent, further increasing the larval output in suitable areas.

For their work and support as a project partner, MDL Marinas has been nominated for a Boating Business Environment Award.

Seabed trials are now underway and they will be conducted by the University of Southampton's Zoë Holbrook and Chris Hauton, who have deployed oyster-filled gabions as part of Zoë's PhD research. This part of the restoration project will look into the effects of relaying density and elevation from the seabed on the physiological performance of the native oyster.

Previous trials have shown that raising oysters to an environment with lower bacterial counts and reduced sediment load result in more efficient particle clearance than those left on the seabed. This research will also investigate the effect of high stocking density on reproduction and prevalence of disease which is believed to increase with density.

The Project has recently gained the backing of Emsworth's Blue Bell Inn and Portsmouth's Staggeringly Good Brewery who have created a new brew in aid of the restoration effort. 'Emsworth's Bishop Slayer Oyster Stout' is providing both financial support and a vital link that connects the deeply embedded heritage of the local area with the oyster project.



More News

Year of the Pier!

With support from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners', the year 2018 will see the restoration of the Grade II listed Yarmouth Pier and the delivery of The Pier's Tale Project. Along with the replacement of timber piles the project will let the Pier tell its own stories of 140 years of living in Yarmouth, from its original construction and changes in the world around it to what lies beneath.

Structural work begins in February and will take approximately five months to complete. Timber reclaimed from the works at Portsmouth Harbour has been secured for the project, reducing the impact on global timber resources. The wood from the Pier itself will also be reused wherever possible.

The Pier will be closed during the works but there are lots of ongoing activities to encourage engagement with local heritage and to learn more about this fascinating structure's place in the coastal landscape. Over the last six months the Pier has been very busy telling tales and over 400 school pupils have already learnt about its heritage and construction during interactive sessions delivered within schools. These sessions cover the built, social and natural heritage and also highlight the diversity of coastal careers. The Pier has also visited sheltered housing communities and other groups of people that are unable to visit it.

The Pier's Tale Project has also undertaken some great survey work with partners from Bournemouth University and the Southern IFCA, providing a wealth of information about the local underwater world. All of the information collected is being used to enhance the engagement activities and to provide baseline data for future research.

Throughout the year the Pier will update everyone through its Facebook page ([yarmouthpier](https://www.facebook.com/yarmouthpier)) and website: www.yarmouthpier.org.uk. For more information about the project please contact Sue Hawley at email sue.hawley@yarmouth-harbour.co.uk.



Photo courtesy of Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners

Arts Inspiration from Ferry Travel

The fruits of a creative arts project on Wightlink's Lymington to Yarmouth route have been shared with islanders and mainlanders this winter.

Wightlink has welcomed songwriters, poets and musicians on board its ships over the last two years to gain inspiration for artworks on the theme of arrivals and departures.

An exhibition stand, featuring photographs and poems inspired by cross-Solent journeys, has been on display at both Lymington and Yarmouth and on board the Wight Light ferry over the last few weeks.

The Ferry Tales project, led by Robyn Bolam with Lydia Fulleylove, JC Grimshaw, Dom Prag and photographer, Mark Lanigan, was funded by the National Lottery through Arts Council England. It concluded with exhibitions and concerts at Dimbola Museum & Galleries and the Lymington Arts Festival during 2017.

Thanking Wightlink staff for their welcome and support, Robyn comments: "Taking our Ferry Tales display to and fro on the Solent was a wonderful end to a project that reached a lot of people on both sides of the water."

For more information please see www.ferrytales.org or the group's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/ferrytalesproject.



Wightlink steward Tony Edney with the Ferry Tales display

News & Snippets

Channel Electricity Link Project

The IFA2 (Interconnexion France-Angleterre) project is a 1,000MW high voltage direct current (HVDC) link, which will run from Normandy to Hampshire. The project is being carried out by National Grid IFA2 Ltd and RTE (the French transmission system operator).

The HVDC cables will be routed through the Channel and into the Solent to a landfall at Monks Hill Beach, and then around Solent Airport at Daedalus to the Converter Station.

The National Grid has secured planning permission for the principle of building a new interconnector. This includes outline planning permission for the converter station and new public open space, full planning permission for the underground cables to the converter station, and connecting the converter station to the substation near Chilling, Warsash.

The Marine Management Organisation has granted The National Grid a marine licence for the installation of the UK section of the interconnector subsea cables between France and the United Kingdom. IFA2 aims to be operational by 2020.

See <http://www.ifa2interconnector.com/about-ifa2/> for more information.

Bembridge Harbour Plans

In December 2015, the Isle of Wight Council issued a resolution to grant planning approval, subject to a Section 106 Planning Agreement, for the new Bembridge Harbour facilities complex and other benefits to be constructed in a phased plan, before the 13 houses are built together with an obligation for any 'excess' profit to be reinvested within the Harbour. In the following February, Bembridge Harbour Trust issued a legal paper setting out their reasons that four procedural aspects had not been processed correctly when the planning application was considered.

During the intervening months, all the reasons raised by the Trust have been reconsidered by the Council in conjunction with a QC planning barrister, Natural England, the Environment Agency and the District Valuer Services. A full report was reviewed at a planning committee meeting on 12th December 2017.

The planning committee voted in favour of approval as an endorsement of the original decision. There are some slight revisions to the presently agreed Section 106 Planning Agreement, to enable the document to be agreed and signed, and to allow the development plans to commence. The 'master programme' originally drafted in January 2016 is now being updated and revised.

Snippets

- Wightlink won 'Best Family Ferry Operator 2017' and was presented with the award at the third annual Family Traveller Awards ceremony, on 21 November. Attracting a record 45,000 votes from the magazine and website's readership, every element of a family trip was voted on by readers.
- Chancellor, Philip Hammond, has announced a call for evidence on taxing and charging for single-use plastics in the Budget. The Chancellor said the move was to help prevent pollution in the world's oceans and to protect the environment.
- The construction of the second state-of-the-art high-speed passenger ferry, Red Jet 7, is rapidly taking shape at Wight Shipyard Co in East Cowes on the Isle of Wight. The £7m, 41 metre vessel is expected to enter the water ahead of schedule in May 2018.
- A fleet of pioneering marine robots, built and operated by the National Oceanography Centre and its partners, has successfully detected whales and porpoises and recorded the sounds they make in a survey of the deep ocean off northern Scotland.
- 'Seafood 2040 - A Strategic Framework for England (SF2040)' is a new publication that sets out a vision for the seafood supply chain. It identifies actions for how the industry can grow to the recommended consumption level of two servings of fish per person per week, while ensuring continued sustainability of supply in both the wild caught and aquaculture sectors. Read the publication at http://www.seafish.org/media/publications/SEAFOOD_2040_lo_singlep_071217.pdf.
- A new Harbour Master is at the helm at the Port of Southampton. Captain Phil Buckley assumed responsibility on 3rd January when Captain Martin Phipps retired after 28 years at the port and seven years as Harbour Master. The Harbour Master is responsible for the safe navigation of all vessels using the port and operating across the wider Solent, last year 160,000 vessel movements, including some of the largest ships in the world, were recorded excluding leisure craft.
- The Environmental Audit Committee is to consider the nature, scale and impacts of nitrate pollution on the environment and human life, and review the Government's approach to the regulation of the chemicals concerned and its approach to reducing them.

Solent News

HMS Queen Elizabeth Commissioned in Portsmouth

Her Majesty The Queen, has commissioned the UK's new aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth into the Royal Navy. After the commissioning warrant was read out the iconic White Ensign was raised, symbolising the nation's future flagship commissioning.

The ship is one of the biggest warships ever built for the Royal Navy providing four acres of sovereign territory, deployable across the globe to serve the United Kingdom on operations for fifty years.

The ship will berth at the newly-named and upgraded Princess Royal Jetty at Her Majesty's Naval Base Portsmouth, which will be home to both of the new aircraft carriers. The second, HMS Prince of Wales, will be officially named in a ceremony at Rosyth.

Both aircraft carriers are being delivered by the Aircraft Carrier Alliance, a partnership between the Ministry of Defence and industry.

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 15 March 2018.

Solent News is prepared and edited by the Solent Forum Officers. It is a biannual publication and issue 44 will be produced in summer 2018. To find out more about the publication, how to submit articles or be included on the mailing list, please visit www.solentforum.org/publications/solent_news/.

Contact Information

Solent Forum
c/o Hampshire County Council
Economy, Transport and Environment Department
EII Court West 1st Floor, The Castle
Winchester
SO23 8UD
Tel: 01962 846027
Email: info@solentforum.org. Twitter [@solent_forum](https://twitter.com/solent_forum)



The following organisations steer the work of the Solent Forum.

