



SOLENT FORUM UPDATE

October 2024

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Solent Forum Staff

- Peter Barham – Solent Forum Chair until March 2025
- Karen McHugh – Solent Forum Manager
- Kate Ansell – Solent Forum Officer

Core Services & Dates

- Next Steering Group meeting will be on 26th February 2025 via Teams.
- The next Solent Forum meeting will be held on 13th March 2025 in Southampton.
- Next edition of Solent News will be published Winter 2024/5 deadline is 20 December 2024.
- Solent News Service.
- Student Mike Clark Bursary Awards – next call for projects April 2025. Three awarded 2024.
- Members Survey and Horizon Scanning 2024 – have been published and will be summarised in the Business Plan 2025 - 2030
- Solent Forum Business Plan 2025 – 2030 – well underway Members' have been surveyed and a report is available. Presentation of parts of draft plan to be made at Members Meeting in October 2024. Consultation to take place in November.

Core Services (2)

1. Information Hubs:

- Solent Information Database
- Clean Solent Shores and Seas
- Nature recovery
- Habitat Restoration
- Other inc: Biodiversity and Marine Net Gain; Blue Carbon; Natural Capital; Solent Catchments

2. Member Services

- Solent Marine Recovery
- Solent Biosecurity Planning
- Solent Plastics Pollution hub
- Seascape restoration inventory

3. Partnership Opportunities Resources

- Partnership working opportunities and Research needs
- Greater Solent Tracker
- Grant funding opportunities

Sub-Groups

- **Solent Marine Sites (SEMS) Secretariat** Kate Ansell
 - Online survey of activities takes place in March/April
 - Annual Management Group meeting in September
 - Annual Management Report – published each September
 - SF Officer has regular telecoms with other national MPA Officers
- **Natural Environment Group** Karen McHugh
 - Next meeting 20 November 2024. Discussions will take place on actions arising from SEMS Annual Survey and Management Report
 - Key project for NEG = Solent Seascape Project Working Group and data portal
 - Two projects funded 2024. 1. *When is a wading bird not a wading bird? The case of the European Starling (UoP)*; 2. *'Portunus' - Exploring and recording the underwater habitats of Langstone and Chichester Harbours.*
 - NEG funding for 2025/26 will be launched February 2025
- **Solent Bathing Water Quality Awards** Karen McHugh/Kate Ansell
 - 2024 awards published early March 2024

Summary of Current Projects and Events

We provide members with letters of support, stakeholder engagement services, web hosting (including legacy hosting) for Solent Forum member projects. Current projects supported include (lead in brackets):

- Solent Seascape Project (Blue Marine Foundation)
- BUDs Solent
- Itchen Plastic Pollution Project (Evolve Consulting leading)
- Solent Cluster (Solent LEP)
- 'Sea the Value' (University of Portsmouth)
- Three Harbours – Pagham/Chichester/Langstone (Southern Water/RSPB)

Projects and Events (detail)

- Solent Seascape Project (2022-2028)

The Solent Forum is on the advisory group for the SSP and chairs the Solent Recovery Plan Working Group. Will inc. data portal and State of Nature report. Focus on how to remove pressures (particularly from non-licensable activities) that are impacting the habitats and species and will deliver NEG work on Bird Sensitivity and Activity Mapping.

- Beneficial use of Dredgings in Solent (BUDS) Closing

Phase 2 complete. Phase 3 – Bottom Placement of dredgings project commenced April/May 2021 and application for MMO minded to turn down marine licence - thus application has been withdrawn (can be revived). ABPmer preparing final report which will highlight reasons currently un-proceedable and project group will be convened. Phase 4 – Saltmarsh Restoration needs funding.

- Sea the Value (2022 – 2025) (PML and UoP)

Understanding role marine biodiversity in providing regulating services. Approaches will be applied and developed at a both local/regional and national scale, including the two case study sites of the Solent and the Moray Firth. Three workshops in the Solent held.

Awaiting instructions on further work programme.

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Business Plan 2025 - 2030

Key Steps

- The Forum are preparing the next Business Plan to be in place in March 2025
- Review of previous business plan and scoping of this plan published
- Horizon Scanning, 2024 published
- Members' Survey, 2024 published
- Draft business plan to be consulted with membership in November

All documents on website – About the Forum/Business Plan

www.solentforum.org



Business Plan 2025 – 2030 cont...

Members Survey 2024 Introduction



- Survey conducted July 2024
- 19 of 58 members responded
- Range of questions to help guide BP
- See full results on website (QR code above)

Business Plan 2025 – 2030 cont...

Members Survey 2024 Key Findings

Our members have a high regard for the Solent Forum

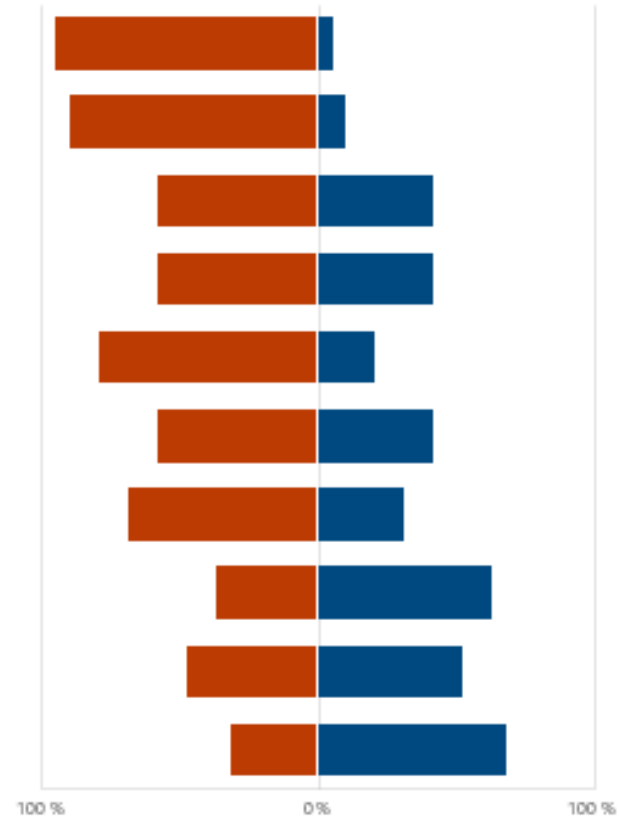
- All are happy with the Forum's aims and objectives
- All are happy with the frequency, format and content of the Forum Members Meetings
- All are happy with the frequency, format and content of the Forum Steering Group Meetings
- All are happy with the frequency, format and content of the Forum Solent Marine Sites and Natural Environment Group meetings
- All believe the Forum offers value for money

Business Plan 2025 – 2030 cont...

Members Survey 2024 Essential and Desirable Services

■ Essential ■ Desirable

- Solent Forum biannual members meetings
- Solent News service (monthly enews and biannual and Solent Newsletter)
- Natural Environment subgroup
- Solent Information Database
- Resources on Solent Forum website, e.g. hubs of information
- Supporting members' with project work
- Horizon scanning
- Annual student placement
- Professor Mike Clark Award (student dissertation funding)
- Solent Bathing Water Quality Awards



Business Plan 2025 – 2030 cont...

Draft Business Plan – Core Services

Solent Forum Core Services to be offered	Ranking of Importance to Members (1)
Members Meetings	1
Solent News and Solent Information Database	2
Forum website and Information Hubs	3
Solent Marine Sites scheme of management/ the Natural Environment Group	4
Supporting members with project work	5
Solent Forum Core Operations	
Steering Group meetings	na
Financial Management – annually invoicing, checking ledger, producing regular financial reports	na
Solent Forum meetings with chair	na
Business Planning and Horizon Scanning	na

1 – Ranking and importance to members in Solent Forum Members' Survey 2024

Chair Recruitment

- We have been lucky to have Peter Barham as chair since 2015
- A new chairperson needs to be sought to begin in March 2025 when Peter steps down
- Please do contact the Forum if you would be interested in the role or have any suggestions
- The role profile can be found on the Forum website under - About the Forum/who are we

Thank You

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