



Stakeholder Engagement Workshop for a Local Nature Recovery Strategy: Solent Marine and Coast – UPDATE REGARDING MARINE ELEMENT – August 2024

Dear Colleague

Following the Local Nature Recovery Strategy [workshop](#) held in January 2024, coordinated by the Solent Forum in partnership with Hampshire County Council, Isle of Wight Council, Natural England and the Solent Seascape Project, there is a need to provide you with an update.

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS') are being developed by the Responsible Authorities (RAs) Hampshire County Council (covering Hampshire, Portsmouth, and Southampton) and the Isle of Wight Council as a requirement of the Environment Act, 2021. These two strategies will set out priorities for nature recovery and propose measures in the locations where it would make a particular contribution to achieving those priorities.

The statutory guidance requires that LNRS follow administrative boundaries into the inter tidal zone **only** to mean low water. Despite this, many coastal counties explored a voluntary marine extension of the LNRS, but in May 2024 Defra provided clarification, giving the following reasons to RAs for **not** including marine at this time:

- Maps and proposed activities in marine areas outside the statutory LNRS boundary will not be underpinned by legislation.
- Users of the strategy must be clear on which proposals they are obliged to consider – for example the requirement on public authorities to “have regard” to LNRSs would not apply to proposals outside of the LNRS boundaries.
- Having statutory and non-statutory components in the same document could cause confusion, impacting how useful the LNRS is in encouraging delivery.
- Work is underway at the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) to explore how spatial planning for marine nature recovery might develop in the future.

In the Solent, the January workshop included the Solent marine space below mean low water and valuable inputs from local coastal and marine stakeholders were obtained. Although it is no longer permitted to include a marine extension, the Solent Forum continues to have an ambition to promote Solent Recovery for marine and coast and ensuring the proper linking marine with coastal margins and estuaries; the Solent Seascape Project is key to developing successful long term Solent nature recovery. The Forum and partners propose to:

- Support the RAs in identifying coastal and intertidal priorities and delivering appropriate actions
- Support work on aligning the Hampshire and Isle of Wight LNRS' with the South Marine Plans.
- Continue to host all the workshop work and inputs relating to Solent marine nature recovery to inform future work, this will be shared with the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and local stakeholders.
- Continue to work with the Solent Seascape Project Recovery Plan and help align this with current and future statutory coastal and marine recovery policy.

Please follow the Solent Forum webpage on Solent Recovery for future updates. [Solent Forum - Solent Nature Recovery](#).

Regards
Karen McHugh
Solent Forum Manager