

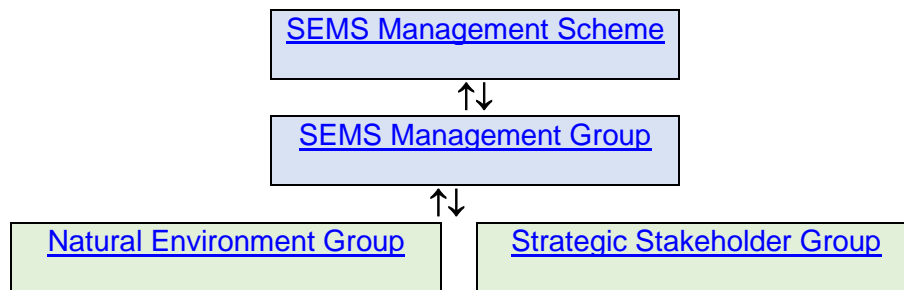


Solent Forum Natural Environment Group (NEG)

Governance and Terms of Reference

Updated 2022

Following review in 2014, the relationship between the statutory Solent Marine Sites (SEMS) Management Group (MG) and the Natural Environment Group (NEG) is shown in the diagram below. The core role of the Group is to support delivery of the SEMS Management Scheme (MS) by investigating and addressing issues of concern directed to it by the SEMS MG.



Aims of the Group

The main aim of NEG is to assist the SEMS MG in their implementation of the SEMS MS and to initiate and manage further research.

NEG also aims to provide a cost-effective mechanism to coordinate the implementation of cross-cutting nature conservation actions by facilitating networking and communication.

Objectives of the Group

- To support the SEMS MG by acting on issues identified by Relevant Authorities (RA) as potentially causing damage to the SEMS, collecting data to fill gaps in knowledge and understanding, and develop a scientific evidence base for the Solent
- To coordinate nature conservation actions with the highest priority given to designated sites in the Solent
- To make better use of our existing knowledge and improve our impartial understanding
- To identify gaps in baseline data and prioritise research and management and monitoring requirements that improve our coastal environment
- To enable activities to continue sustainably for example by identifying and implementing projects that demonstrate adaptive management
- To coordinate local community action focusing on environmental enhancement of the coastal zone
- To maintain a Project Tracker of all nature conservation projects in the Solent
- To promote the nature conservation value of the Solent

Operation

Scope

The boundaries are those of the [Solent Forum](#) and beyond as appropriate.

Chair Person

The Group will be chaired by Natural England. The chair will report to the SEMS MG. The Solent Forum Officer will feed back SEMS work to the Solent Forum Steering Group to ensure compatibility with overall Solent Forum aims and objectives.

Group Members

Membership of the Group will be open to all members of the SEMS MG.

Plus:

- Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
- Local Universities
- Consultancies and specialist groups
- Other organisations involved in nature recovery

Each organisation will normally be represented by one person. Other Solent Forum members may attend as required or as observers.

Meetings

The Group will meet at such frequency as may be necessary but at least biannually on a date agreed by the Chairman. The autumn meeting will normally be held three to four weeks after the annual SEMS MG meeting. The Group may hold conferences, seminars or workshops as and when considered relevant and topical.

Where further work outside the meetings is identified as necessary, sub-groups may be convened for task and finish.

Administrative Support

The administration of the routine business of the Group will be undertaken by Solent Forum staff.

In organising additional events such as conferences, seminars and workshops, Solent Forum staff are to be assisted as and when necessary by member organisations.

Specific project work for the group will be undertaken where appropriate by Solent Forum staff subject to the Solent Forum's annual work programme and resources.

Financial Arrangements

The cost of administering the Group and undertaking relevant projects and initiatives will be financed through contributions from SEMS and non-RA members, plus external funding where appropriate.

Funds will be used in the first instance in [support of projects](#) or other work needed by SEMS MG. Surplus funds will be allocated to nature conservation project work using a bidding procedure agreed by the Group. Further funds will be sought where necessary.

The budget will be overseen by Solent Forum staff.

Member organisations are responsible for expenses incurred in the attendance of their members/officers at meetings of the Group.