

**SEMS Management Group Meeting
20th September 2018, 10am**

Associated British Ports Southampton

Minutes

Chair – Lindsay McCulloch, Southampton City Council

1 Attendees and Apologies

Lindsay McCulloch (LM) welcomed everyone to the meeting. A list of those who attended or sent apologies can be found [at the end](#) of these minutes.

2 Minutes of the last Management Group (MG) meeting 20th September 2017

The Chair went through the minutes of the last meeting and they were agreed. The actions had either been completed or were on the agenda for this meeting.

3 Improvements

Update from Bird Aware

Dan Young (DY) gave an update on Bird Aware on behalf of Anna Parry who was unable to attend. During 2017-2018, stakeholder workshops were held to draft the long term Solent Recreation Mitigation strategy. Final edits went to consultation and were endorsed by PUSH in December 2017 and approved by each of the 14 local planning authorities within the partnership. This was implemented in April 2018. The new long term strategy is more comprehensive than the interim version – requires a higher level of developer contribution (on a sliding scale) and is based on the bedroom size of the property- (£337 for a one bedroom property rising up to £880 for a five or more bedroom property). Alongside this the partnership has increased their staffing levels to assist in the delivery of this comprehensive package which has included 2 new all-year round rangers and a full-time Brand and Communications lead post. During the winter 2017-2018 period, the rangers carried out a range of activities and grew their social media presence (see table below for statistics of activities carried out in this period).

Achievement	Figure
Site visits	466
Hours on site	1759
Total number of people engaged with during site visits	5184
Engagements related to work of Bird Aware Solent	4645
Engagements related to impact of bird disturbance	2831
Community events attended	33
Number of people engaged with at events	1727
Bird Aware leaflets given out	3407
Twitter followers at 31 st March 2018	733
Facebook followers at 31 st March 2018	381
Instagram followers at 31 st March 2018	142

Monitoring work during the winter 2017-18 period focussed on visitor surveys at coastal locations, pedestrian counters at 10 coastal locations and the production of the first three Access Management Assessments.

The Bird Aware Solent Dog Initiatives Group produced a leaflet at stimulating positive interactions between the Rangers and the dog owner/walker community which was intended to be used in the winter 2018-19 season. However at the beginning of September, the Kennel Club raised a number of concerns about the format of the leaflet and as such it may be that the group decides to defer the use of this leaflet or have an amended version produced for next year in order to avoid any backlash from the dog community.

It is anticipated that there will be a person in post to run the Dog Initiatives Group April 2019 and will be a dedicated resource to roll-out a more comprehensive programme of support for the dog community. Additionally for this season, the group is now working on a comprehensive set of briefing notes for the rangers which will provide them with tips and pointers to instigate positive direction with dog owners as well as support required.

The Bird Aware Steering Group Meeting will take place w/c 24th September 2018 and members of the group have requested to receive further explanation regarding the issues behind the Dog Initiatives Group leaflet.

Chairs and Officers' Meeting

This meeting took place on 18th July 2018 in Winchester – Lindsay McCulloch (Chair of SEMS), Carolyn Francis (Secretariat of SEMS), Sue Burton (Chair of NEG), Karen McHugh (Secretariat of NEG) and Kate Chesman (future Secretariat of SEMS and NEG) attended. The meeting took place as a pre-meeting to the September meeting and as an opportunity to go through the draft Annual Management Report (R) before it was sent out for review.

This meeting will continue to take place annually prior to the SEMS and autumn NEG meeting. LM said it is a hugely useful meeting which gives all a chance to see how work has progressed and provides the secretariat with guidance for writing up the report.

Risk Categories

SEMS annual monitoring previously took place using risk categories, however this practice was put on hold last year as the activities list was being updated. In the summer it was agreed at the Chairs and Officers' Meeting that the risk categories would not be re-instated. The main reasons for this were that the categories forced concentration on the top issues, and lesser issues had little time spent on them. Littering is an example of an issue that was ignored, but has subsequently been

seen as very important. Despite this, it was agreed that a sense of prioritisation does need to be made to the AMR and this could be done by improving the Executive Summary to show priorities.

Action: Kate Chesman (KC) to modify Executive Summary for 2019 to include activities that needs to be prioritised within SEMS

Water Quality and Agricultural Runoff

See Points 5 and 6 of the minutes regarding this topic and a joint presentation from Natural England (NE) and Environment Agency (EA)

Website

The SEMS website has been slightly rearranged to bring it up-to-date but will be revamped in the near future and probably form part of the Solent Forum website. It will keep its unique independent status there but will look more like the Forum website. On the current website, there are resource pages for each activity to assist with completing the annual monitoring survey. These resource pages form a signpost for many local and worldwide references.

Suggestions from MG

No other suggestions apart from highlighting the activities of relative importance in future. Suggestions are invited from the group at any time.

4 2018 Annual Management Report

Comments received on report and how dealt with

There were no comments from the MG on these sections. Some corrections were pointed out by the SSG including comments from Alan Deeming (Anglers Trust) and an addition by The Crown Estate reported in 2017 which had been omitted in the draft 2018 AMR.

A major report commissioned by NE and the MMO has been highlighted throughout the report and refers to recreational activities (section 4.1) and a number of individual reports about most activities (such as drones etc.) which are very useful.

Discussion on AMR Sections 1-3

Response Rate

The level of response has improved since 2017- 23 responded in 2018 in compared to 22 in 2017.

RAs were disappointed in this poor response and suggested that the secretariat invest in one to one meetings with those who didn't respond, this would involve identifying the right people and guiding them on how to complete the survey.

Action: KC to provide support to new and existing users, including HCC, with completing the survey in 2019 in order to improve response rate.

Discussion and Evaluation: Activity by Activity Summary against evidence and national context

The activities and actions needed were discussed one by one. The AMR has been updated accordingly.

Land Recreation - Dog walking

It was highlighted that Bird Aware provides substantial evidence-based observations (which is currently appended to the AMR). A discussion took place as to whether further quantitative research could take place to supplement the annual monitoring survey base that relies on few responses. Such research would need to be undertaken at various places and intervals throughout the year. Advice from Bird Aware could be requested.

A short discussion took place about the English Coastal Path. It was mentioned that a Sensitive Features report has been undertaken to show the effects of recreation on the coastal path. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/691195/highcliffe-calshot-sensitive-features-report-executive-summary.pdf

Action: KC to schedule a telecon with Anna Parry about potential to record other information to supplement report

Action: KC to invite someone from the Coastal Path Team to give a presentation at next year's SEMS meeting and addresses potential monitoring ideas to assess the impact on SEMS.

Land Recreation – Walking (other than dog walking)

The changes to this section should be the same as those for Land Recreation- Dog walking.

Recreation – Non-Motorised Water Sports

No comments or amendments required within sections 4.5.1 to 4.5.2. Sue Burton (SB) referred to section 4.5.3 saying that although non-motorised water sports is unlikely to have an impact on its own, in the executive summary it should be pointed out that a combination of this and other activities could have an effect on the SEMS.

The Paddlesports Guidelines have been disseminated by the RAs; however this action will remain ongoing as a reminder to send out to new users.

The Water Sports Participation Survey action will be carried forward.

Action: KC to follow up with Duncan Savage regarding the Annual Water Sports Participation Survey (awaiting response from data owner).

Recreation - Powerboating or Sailing with an Engine

A discussion about powerboating or sailing with an engine took place and whether further monitoring is required as to the effects of this activity on the habitats. Monitoring the level of activity may be a starting point and then an assessment of the effects on SEMS. It may also be more effective to monitor the activity in sensitive areas.

Action: KC to discuss with NEG (and GB) the quality of monitoring on the effects of boating and boat mooring and anchoring on SEMS, and whether any further monitoring or surveying might be recommended.

Mooring and/or Anchoring

The DEFRA Anchoring Impacts Study has been disseminated. A bid has been submitted by NE for LIFE funding to carry out a study on reduction in eelgrass – action to await findings if study is to go ahead. KC will be attending a RYA Environmentally Friendly mooring workshop in November and will provide an update afterwards.

Action: KC to update NEG group in November 2018 on any findings and discussion from RYA Eco-friendly Moorings workshop.

Recreation - Light Aircraft

The NE/ MMO Study was disseminated and is on the website. Chloe Smith's report was produced in response to concerns raised by LAs and assists authorities with identifying if an UAV Permission request meets the regulations.

A discussion about drone activity took place and it was felt that there is a need to address the scale of activity and if it has an impact on the integrity of the site- it would be useful to have a simple recording mechanism that could be used by the general public or site manager to record location and drone activity.

Engaging with drone users was considered important for influencing behaviour. Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum (PCF) is currently in the process of producing guidance for the recreational use of drones and KC will contact them to see if there is potential of replicating a similar model for the Solent.

Action: ALL to Identify appropriate ways of engaging with drone operators to influence their behaviours.

Fishing (including Shellfisheries)

Patrick Cooper (PC) from SIFCA said the book of byelaws came in to place in November 2017. The SIFCA may adapt the management for a slightly different mechanism and put in permanent measures to protect features in the future. Nick Rogers (NR) from SxIFCA said that they have put in place the shellfish permit byelaw which manages this fishery effectively.

Fishing (shore-based activities)

PC said SIFCA and the MMO had been working on a national project considering bait collection; unfortunately this has been discontinued and instead will be working with NE on a national project developing best practice when assessing bait digging impacts.

One comment had been received from Alan Deeming (Angling Trust) regarding bait digging (see Appendix 6). IFCA's response was that their not solely responsible for this activity and landowners and other parties are.

RHHA help regulate commercial bait digging and feel that it is a growing concern because of the increased amount of activity and would be happy to engage in any scientific studies or management measures.

A joint collaboration formed to produce a successful management solution for bait digging in Poole Harbour. A voluntary agreement was created and a clause reminded commercial bait diggers that they should acquire landowner permission. SB recommended that it would be useful to produce a similar model for the Solent. SIFCA have a good relationship with tackle shops and they regularly provide information which IFCA are happy to forward across.

Chichester Harbour Conservancy regularly undertakes data collection on commercial bait digging activity on behalf of SxIFCA. Kathryn Nelson produced Guidance on Bait Digging for Solent RAs (disseminated by SEMS in September 2018).

Littering and Removal of Litter

NEG have set up a project group called “Clean Solent Seas and Shores” and Karen McHugh produced a draft Project Initiation Document in August 2018 which went out for consultation. The project is seeking funding of £60,000 and a workshop will be held in November with an aim of developing partnership bids for potential funding.

Operation of Coastal Flood and Erosion Risk Management Schemes, Barrages and Sluices

No comments or additions to add to this section.

Boat Repair/Maintenance

The NE Condition Assessment highlighted that marine SACs in the Solent region could potentially be threatened by INNS from recreational craft. Best practice such as sustainable wash-down facilities used in MDL Marinas should be encouraged throughout marinas and boat yards across the Solent to reduce the risk of INNS.

Action: KC to discuss with NEG whether engagement with businesses to undertake best practice in boat repair and maintenance might be a useful tool.

Navigation

A comment had been received from Alan Deeming (part of SSG) regarding section 4.14.2 – NE’s comment required clarification and Ryan Willeger responded that it refers to future work being undertaken by LHC and BRM which will ultimately lead to an increase in activity in the Solent NNR.

5 Solent Maritime SAC Condition Assessment and Improving Water Quality in the Solent – Sue Burton (SB) and Jackie Mellan (JM)

SB and JM gave a presentation on Solent Maritime SAC Condition Assessment and improving water quality in the Solent. The **presentation is attached with these minutes**.

The EA and NE are working together to improve water quality.

The Solent Maritime SAC condition assessment looked at the key features of the SAC and highlighted that coastal lagoons had favourable conditions whilst estuaries, mudflats, sandflats and sandbanks had unfavourable conditions due to elevated nutrient levels (nitrogen is the problem nutrient in estuaries and coastal waters). High nutrient load can cause decline to the whole estuarine system and can also have an impact on recreational users, tourism and fisheries.

Nitrogen can come from diffuse water sources (agricultural practices- fertiliser etc., groundwater, background concentrations in seawater) and point sources such as sewage discharges. A lot of nitrate is held up in sediments and in the groundwater and it could take decades for conditions to improve.

There are several management measures in place to reduce nitrogen inputs into the marine waters which include regulatory and voluntary measures for both point and diffuse sources. A Water Quality Group has also been formed to look at how to deal with growth and input of nitrates in the future.

Ideas for Improving Water Quality in the Solent

- A leaflet was produced for Poole Harbour to increase awareness about the nutrient issue and algal mats. SB feels that this could be easily adapted for the Solent.
- Public awareness campaigns such as “Only Rain Down the Drain” and the Three Ps have also been helpful.
- Provide videos, images and facts for Catchment Sensitive Farming Officers to educate and engage farmers on the impacts of nutrient loading.
- Citizen science projects would be useful such as the Thames Outfall Safari (instigated by the Zoological Society of London), has a community of volunteers who assess outfalls in a specially created app.
- Misconnection campaigns (an ongoing issue everywhere)- building regulations inspectors don't always check, so more enforcement is required.

It was concluded by SB that although water quality and nutrient loading is not an activity, it should not be overlooked in the SEMS annual monitoring. SEMS are to direct actions through JM and SB which will also help to tackle the judicial review.

7 Updates from RAs

The EA is currently putting together a spending review due in October.

8 Election of Chair

Lindsay will be stepping down as Chair of SEMS and nominations for a new Chair were submitted. Jason Scott (HM of RHHA) was approached and agreed to take on role if no objections. CF asked if there were any further nominations. The group were all in agreement for Jason to become Chair. Everyone extended their thanks to Lindsay for all the years as SEMS Chair.

9 AoB

LM also thanked Carolyn for all the work she has done over the last 6 years as she will be retiring at the end of September.

10 Date of next meeting Wednesday 18th September 2019, Southampton

Management Group Members Attending
SEMS meeting 20th September 2018

Name		Organisation
Sue Simmonite	SS	Associated British Ports Southampton
Sarah Boyd	SB	Eastleigh Borough Council
Jackie Mellan	JM	Environment Agency
Grace Booth	GB	Isle of Wight Council
Sue Hawley	SH	Isle of Wight Estuaries / Cowes Harbour Authority
Nigel Jardine	NJ	Langstone Harbour Board
Ryan Willegers	RW	Lymington Harbour Commissioners
Sue Burton	SB	Natural England
Ian Barker	IB	New Forest National Park Authority
Dan Young	DY	Portsmouth City Council (Bird Aware)
Alison Fowler	AF	River Hamble Harbour Authority
Carolyn Francis	CF	Solent Forum
Kate Chesman	KC	Solent Forum
Lindsay McCulloch	LM	Southampton City Council, Chair
Patrick Cooper	PC	Southern Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority
Paul Linwood	PL	Southern Water
Nick Rogers	NR	Sussex Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority

Apologies

Anna Parry	Bird Aware
Tom Day	Chichester District Council
Richard O'Callaghan	Environment Agency
Stevyn Ricketts	Gosport Borough Council
Mathilda Evans	Marine Management Organisation
Dave Barter	QHM Portsmouth
Jason Scott	River Hamble Harbour Authority
Kathryn Nelson	Sussex Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority
Karen Eastley	Test Valley Borough Council
Nick Hey	Wightlink