

SOLENT EUROPEAN MARINE SITES MANAGEMENT GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

July 2017

Introduction

The Habitats Regulations provides for the establishment by the Relevant Authorities of an agreed management scheme for any site. Such management schemes will set the framework within which activities will be managed, either voluntarily or through regulation, so as to achieve the conservation objectives of the site. Where a management scheme exists Relevant Authorities who are part of that scheme are obliged to exercise their functions under the scheme to secure the requirements of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). *Source: Duties of public authorities in relation to Marine Protected Area (MPA). Management Note prepared by the MPA National Steering Group (NSG).*

The terms “Habitats Directive”, “Relevant Authorities” and “management scheme” will have the same meaning as in the Conservation (Natural Habitats & C) Regulations, 1994.

Solent European Marine Sites (SEMS)

“The Solent European Marine Site (the “site”) comprises; the Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation, the Solent and Southampton Water Special Protection Area, the Portsmouth Harbour Special Protection Area, Chichester and Langstone Harbour Special Protection Areas and the potential SPA for foraging terns. One management scheme has been developed to cover all of these sites.

SEMS Management Scheme

The Management scheme for the Solent European Marine Sites guides the way in which Relevant Authorities will exercise their functions so as to secure compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

An annual online monitoring survey will be undertaken each year by the Relevant Authorities. This will monitor changes to activities in SEMS sites; the activity categories selected will match those used by Natural England in their conservation advice packages to ensure that change can be directly related to the impacts listed in this advice.

The Annual Management Scheme will include the completion and evaluation of the annual monitoring survey responses, input from the Strategic Stakeholder Group, an annual management group meeting and an Annual Management report.

Membership

Membership of the Management Group should comprise all the Relevant Authorities as defined in the Habitats Regulations. Duties of public authorities in relation to Marine

Protected Area (MPA) management can be found in the following document:
http://www.solentems.org.uk/about/National_Steering_Group/Duties_on_authorities_in%20relation_to_MPA_management_NSG_April_2015.pdf.

SEMS Management Group

The Management Group will:

- Submit an annual monitoring survey response and agree the subsequent Annual Management Report;
- Ensure that any relevant actions identified in the SEMS Annual Management Report are carried out;
- Ensure stakeholder involvement in the Annual Management Scheme by consulting a Strategic Stakeholder Group (SSG);
- Where necessary consult with local interests, owners and occupiers, user groups and conservation groups or other existing advisory fora to ensure a comprehensive annual monitoring survey return and to help fulfil actions or management measures identified in the Annual Management report.

Chair

A chair will be agreed by the Management Group, but no relevant authority shall have precedence or powers over any others. This chair will stand for three years and following this period can be re-elected or a new chair can be appointed.

Administration

The Solent Forum will act as the secretariat for the Management Group and Strategic Stakeholder Group. It will provide the following services:

- Conduct an annual online monitoring survey of activities within SEMS, and prepare an Annual Management report from the findings for discussion by the SEMS Management Group.
- Be the Secretary for the Management Group i.e. co-ordinate meetings and prepare agenda, papers and minutes as and when required;
- Provide the secretariat for consultation with the Strategic Stakeholder Group;
- Provide a contact point for general enquiries regarding SEMS matters;
- Conduct a 5 yearly review of the Management Scheme;
- Host the SEMS website;
- Ensure engagement with all Relevant Authorities;
- Represent the interests of SEMS on the national European Marine Sites Officer working group.

Meetings

The SEMS Management Group will meet annually to discuss the findings from the SEMS Annual Monitoring Responses, and to agree the actions and management measures set out in the Annual Management Report.

In addition there will be an annual meeting of the SEMS Chair and staff to steer the SEMS management scheme process and identify when and if changes need to be made. Outcomes from this meeting will be reported to the annual SEMS Management Group meeting as a standard Agenda item for ratification.