



NEG MANAGERS UPDATE

April 2026

www.solentforum.org



Important Dates

- Solent Marine Sites – survey deadline has passed and Annual Survey Report will shortly be drafted.
- Date of SEMS Annual Management Group meeting is 23 September 2026 at 10am.
- Next edition of Solent News will be published Summer 2026 deadline is 26 June 2026. 16 page bi-annual newsletter.
- The next NEG meeting will be held on 15 October 2026 in person (National Oceanography Centre).

NEG Chair Opportunity

- Natural England have chaired the group for a number of years
- Commitment is to Chair one Teams and one in person meeting a year
- Solent Forum staff prepare all the papers and presentations, brief and support the Chair
- We will put out a call for applicants in September and then send out a MS Form for group voting if needed
- Agree at the October in person NEG meeting
- Please consider putting yourself forward – good opportunity

Actions from Last NEG Meeting (Nov 2025)

- 1. Funding Call:** For [NEG project fund](#), please share the call and think about making a bid.
- 2. Evidence Gaps:** Share any data that may be held on activities where evidence gaps have been identified in the [SEMS Annual Management Report](#) (table 4b.) Report can be accessed on the SEMS website.
- 3. MMO Wildlife Disturbance Form:** Support soft launch; trial and feedback. *Final checks underway will be ready for this summer.*
- 4. Solent Seascape Data Explorer:** Explore and contribute new data layers, especially Isle of Wight gaps.
- 5. Sanderling Project:** Write up as best practice case study; explore colour-ringing.

Actions from SEMS MG 2025

1. NEG to support further research on how highways run-off could affect the Solent's designated sites.
2. NEG to promote research into the impacts on designated sites of end-of-life abandoned GRP boats.
3. NEG to consider how to obtain greater evidence on coastal footfall across the Solent.
4. NEG to support the development of the Solent Seascapes project's Seascape Recovery Plan, that aims to better protect and manage existing Solent habitats.
5. NEG to define more clearly what constitutes 'disturbance' to the Solent's designated sites to ensure clarity in the SEMS Survey returns.

NEG Project Bids 2026/27

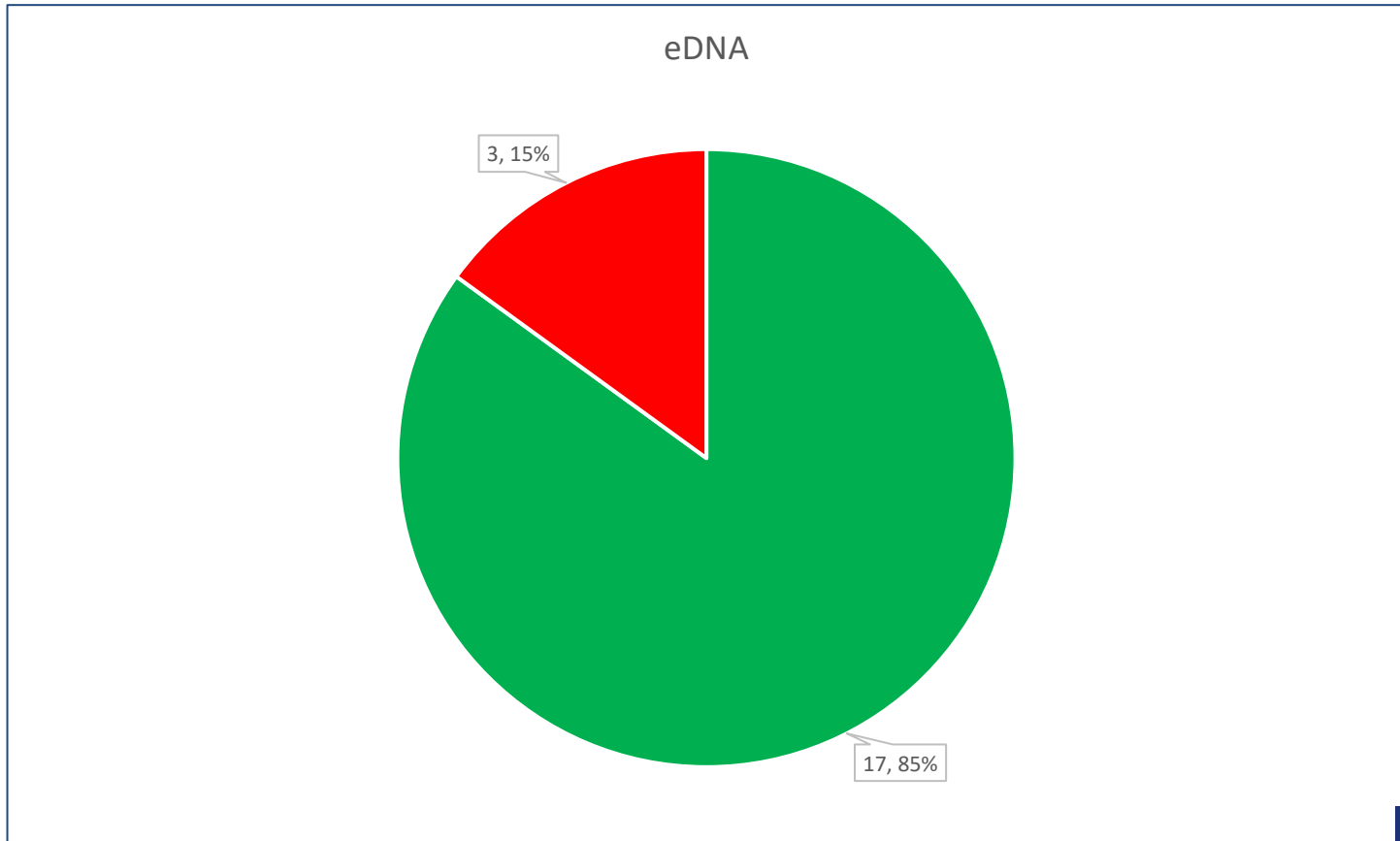
1. Early detection of non-native and invasive species using eDNA in Southampton Water (£2,000) – University of Southampton
2. Ending bogus bivalve labelling: developing finger-printing techniques to manage Solent fisheries (£1,025) – University of Portsmouth

2025/26

Measuring pharmaceuticals in fish and cephalopods in the Solent -
Louise O'Neill, University of Southampton

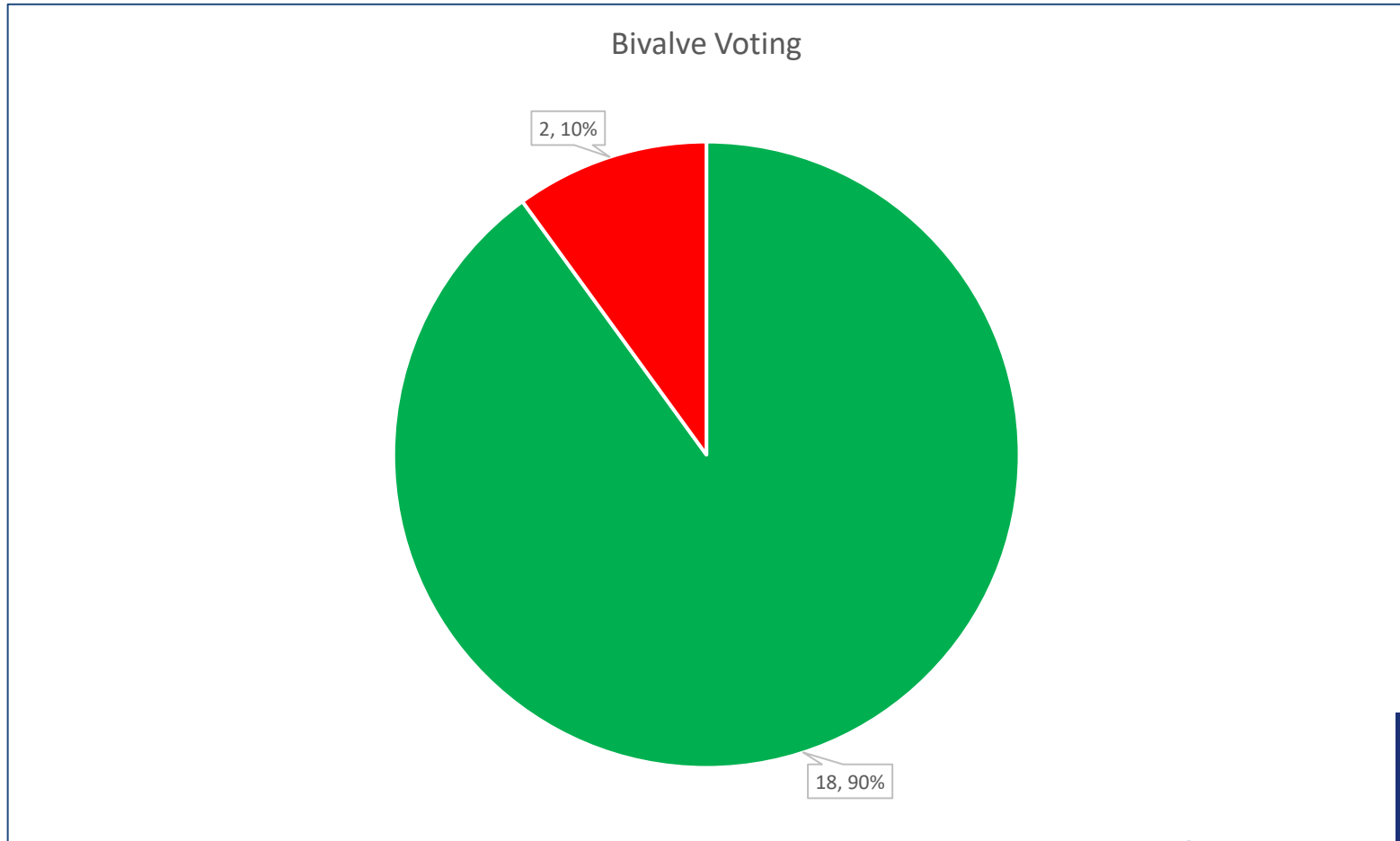
NEG Individual Project Votes 2026/7

Early detection of non-native and invasive species using eDNA (£2000)



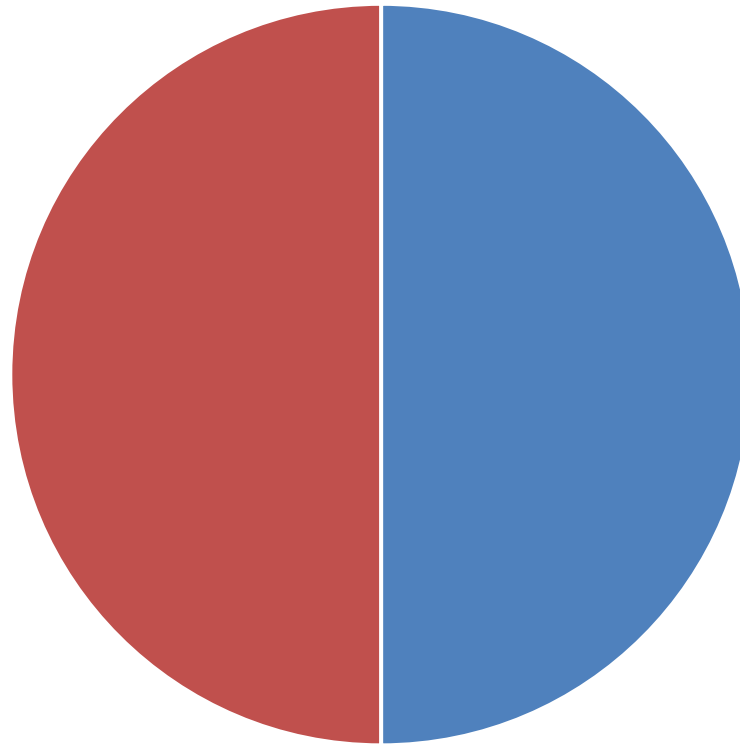
NEG Individual Project Votes 2026/7

Ending bogus bivalve labelling: developing finger-printing techniques to manage Solent fisheries (£1,025)



NEG Project Bids 2026/7 - Ranking

Project Vote Ranking



■ Bivalve ■ eDNA

NEG Project Votes 2026/7 Comments

1. I have marked both response as no because there isn't an option to say potentially as I consider both projects have merit, we just need a little more information/clarification on applicability prior to funding.
2. Both projects could make positive contributions to the ecology of the Solent.
3. An idea for Autumn NEG agenda is to use the preceding year's Survey and SEMS report to try to identify areas required for more targeted research, so to steer/promote applications of relevance for what we really need for the next round/future rounds.
4. Overall, both bids are of good quality and align with SEMS evidence needs in different, but complementary, ways. Together, they provide a balanced contribution to Solent management by supporting both strategic monitoring and more applied management tools. The scale and scope of each project are appropriate to the level of NEG funding sought, and both offer learning and potential relevance to other authorities. Support at this level is proportionate and represents a reasonable use of limited funds.

Future Meetings

- Date of next meeting 15 October 2026 – in person after the Solent Forum meeting (Southampton)
- Proposal - Alternate between in person (spring) and via Teams (autumn)

Local Nature Recovery Strategies

1. Solent Forum sits on Local Nature Partnership for Isle of Wight
2. Will be part of the Partnership for Hampshire in some format once established. Will look at opportunities in Sussex
3. Will seek to support delivery of coastal measures via SEMS Management Scheme
4. This year will be assessing how the SEMS Management Scheme can help to deliver recreational disturbance measures (IoW)
5. Will keep a watching brief on the development of marine nature recovery strategies (been interviewed as part of a national pilot)

Mailing List

Please could you either place in the chat or send via email, the correct people in your organisation that should be on the NEG mailing list if you think these are incorrect.

Email: Solent.Forum@southampton.gov.uk

Thank you