



Solent Marine Sites

Annual Survey Report, 2024

Solent Forum
June 2024



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1 Introduction

This document is the Solent Marine Sites (SEMS) Annual Survey Report, (ASR) which presents the findings from the SEMS annual online survey that took place in Spring 2024. It is prepared by the Solent Forum in its role as the SEMS Secretariat. The purpose of this survey is to:

- Monitor changes in 16 non-licensable marine and coastal activities that take place within the Solent’s designated sites.
- Identify those activities that are having an impact on the features of the sites.
- Gather background evidence for the SEMS Annual Management Report.

The responses recorded in this report were made by the Solent’s Relevant Authorities (RAs) and have been set out verbatim. Analysis of the responses takes place in the SEMS Annual Management Report; this report also sets out subsequent management measures and actions for discussion at the SEMS Annual Management Group meeting.

The activities surveyed reflect the activity categories used in Natural England’s Conservation Advice packages for Marine Protected Areas. This enables us to cross refer the survey findings to the impacts of activities as published in this Advice. The Conservation Advice packages can be accessed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/conservation-advice-packages-for-marine-protected-areas>.

Locations and details on the Solent Marine Sites can be found on Natural England’s Designated Sites System at: <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/>. The sites can be viewed spatially on Defra’s MAGIC map at: <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/magicmap.aspx>.

Past SEMS Annual Survey Reports can be accessed at: <http://www.solentems.org.uk/publications/>.

2 Survey Respondents

Out of the 31 RAs who were invited to complete the 2024 SEMS survey 29 responded. Table 1 shows a list of respondents. Table 2 identifies the types of RAs which responded.

Table 1. Relevant Authorities who completed the 2024 survey	
Associated British Ports (ABP)	New Forest District Council (NFDC)
Beaulieu River Management (BRM)	New Forest National Park Authority (NFNPA)
Chichester District Council (CDC)	Portsmouth International Port (PIP)
Chichester Harbour Conservancy (ChHC)	King’s Harbour Master (Portsmouth) (KHM)
Cowes Harbour Commissioners (CoHC)	Portsmouth City Council (PCC)
Eastleigh Borough Council (EBC)	River Hamble Harbour Authority (RHHA)
Environment Agency (EA)	Southern IFCA (SoIFCA)
Fareham Borough Council (FBC)	Gosport Borough Council (GBC)
Natural England (NE)	Hampshire County Council (HCC)

Havant Borough Council (HBC)	Sussex IFCA (SxIFCA)
Isle of Wight Council (IoWC)	Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC)
Langstone Harbour Board (LHB)	West Sussex County Council (WSCC)
Lymington Harbour Commissioners (LHC)	Wightlink Ferries (WL)
Marine Management Organisation (MMO)	Winchester City Council (WCC)
Southern Water (SW)	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners (YHC)
Organisations who did not respond: Portsmouth International Port (PiP), Southampton City Council (SCC)	

Table 2. The type of Relevant Authority who responded to the Survey

Authority Type	
Government Agency	3
Harbour Authority	7
IFCA	2
Local Authority	12
Other	2
Private Company	3

3 Activity Summary

Section 3 summarises the survey response data on individual activities. Respondents were questioned on sixteen different types of activity.

1. Accidental vessel discharges/emissions including oil spill and clean-up
2. Boat repair and maintenance
3. Fishing (including shellfisheries)
4. Fishing (shore-based activities)
5. General beach recreation
6. Grazing and foraging
7. Land recreation - Walking (incl. dog walking)
8. Littering and removal of litter
9. Mooring and anchoring
10. Operation of coastal flood and erosion risk management schemes
11. Operation of ports and harbours (maintenance of infrastructure)
12. Recreation - light aircraft
13. Recreation - non-motorised watercraft
14. Recreation - powerboating or sailing with an engine

15. Slipway and jetty cleaning and maintenance
16. Wildfowling

3.1 Jurisdiction of Activities in the Solent

Table 3 illustrates how many relevant authorities (RA) recorded that a particular activity takes place within their jurisdiction.

Activity	Percentage of SEMS RAs with jurisdiction	Response
Accidental vessel discharges/emissions including oil spill and clean-up	57%	17
Boat Repair and Maintenance	43%	13
Fishing (including shellfisheries)	53%	16
Fishing (shore-based activities)	60%	18
General Beach Recreation	53%	16
Grazing and Foraging	23%	7
Land recreation (incl. walking with dogs)	57%	17
Littering and removal of litter	73%	22
Mooring and Anchoring	53%	16
Operation of coastal flood and erosion risk management schemes	50%	15
Operation of ports and harbours (maintenance of infrastructure)	53%	16
Recreation - light aircraft	30%	9
Recreation - non-motorised watercraft	57%	17
Recreation - powerboating or sailing with an engine	53%	16
Slipway and jetty cleaning and maintenance	47%	14
Wildfowling	23%	7

3.2 Summary of Changes Recorded in Activity Levels

Respondents were asked whether, since the last survey in spring 2023, each activity had increased, decreased, had no change since the previous year or they had no data. Table 4 summarises the data.

Activity	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Total Responses
Accidental vessel discharges/emissions including oil spill and clean-up	0	1	14	3	18
Boat Repair and Maintenance	1	0	9	3	13
Fishing (including shellfisheries)	1	0	14	2	17

Activity	2023	2024	Change	2023	2024
Fishing (shore-based activities)	1	1	13	4	19
General Beach Recreation	3	1	8	4	16
Grazing and Foraging	1	0	3	3	7
Land recreation (incl. walking with dogs)	1	1	11	5	18
Littering and removal of litter	1	0	14	7	22
Mooring and Anchoring	0	3	14	0	17
Operation of coastal flood and erosion risk management schemes	3	0	9	3	15
Operation of ports and harbours (maintenance of infrastructure)	1	0	15	1	17
Recreation - light aircraft	0	0	7	4	11
Recreation - non-motorised watercraft	1	1	10	6	18
Recreation - powerboating or sailing with an engine	0	3	10	4	17
Slipway and jetty cleaning and maintenance	0	0	14	1	15
Wildfowling	0	0	8	0	8

3.3 Activity Impacts on Designated Sites

Respondents were asked whether they thought that the activities surveyed were having an impact on the features of the Solent Marine Sites. Tables 5a and 5b summarise the data. The mode value in Table 5a has been shaded green.

Activity	Yes	No	Total Responses	Org Names (where Yes)
Accidental vessel discharges/emissions including oil spill and clean-up	3	15	18	MMO, ChHC, IOWC
Boat Repair and Maintenance	1	12	13	ChHC
Fishing (including shellfisheries)	4	13	17	GBC, EA, SxIFCA, ChHC
Fishing (shore-based activities)	5	14	19	NE, SxIFCA, ChHC, EBC, FBC
General Beach Recreation	6	10	16	MMO, HCC, NE, ChHC, EBC, FBC

Table 5a. Activities Impacting on Designated Sites by Total Responses				
Grazing and Foraging	2	5	7	MMO, ChHC
Land recreation (incl. walking with dogs)	12	5	17	WCC, GBC, HCC, CDC, NE, WSCC, ChHC, IOWC, EBC, PCC, NFNPA, FBC
Littering and removal of litter	13	9	22	ABP, LHC, MMO, LHB, WCC, GBC, HCC, EA, ChHC, IOWC, EBC, PCC, FBC
Mooring and Anchoring	6	11	17	MMO, LHB, NE, ChHC, IOWC, FBC
Operation of FCERM	10	5	15	ABP, LHC, MMO, LHB, GBC, EA, CDC, NE, ChHC, IOWC
Operation of ports and harbours (maintenance of infrastructure)	2	15	17	ChHC, IOWC
Recreation - light aircraft	2	9	11	ChHC, IOWC
Recreation - non-motorised watercraft	8	10	18	LHC, LHB, GBC, HCC, NE, ChHC, EBC, FBC
Recreation - powerboating or sailing with an engine	7	10	17	MMO, LHB, GBC, NE, ChHC, EBC, FBC
Slipway and jetty cleaning and maintenance	1	14	15	ChHC
Wildfowling	1	7	8	ChHC

Table 5b. Activities Impacting on Designated Sites by Percentage of Responses					
Activity	Yes	No	Total Responses	Percent 'yes'	Percent 'no'
Accidental vessel discharges/emissions including oil spill and clean-up	3	15	18	17%	83%
Boat Repair and Maintenance	1	12	13	8%	92%
Fishing (including shellfisheries)	4	13	17	24%	76%
Fishing (shore-based activities)	5	14	19	26%	74%
General Beach Recreation	6	10	16	38%	63%
Grazing and Foraging	2	5	7	29%	71%
Land recreation (incl. walking with dogs)	12	5	17	71%	29%
Littering and removal of litter	13	9	22	59%	41%
Mooring and Anchoring	6	11	17	35%	65%
Operation of coastal flood and erosion risk management schemes	10	5	15	67%	33%
Operation of ports and harbours (maintenance of infrastructure)	2	15	17	12%	88%
Recreation - light aircraft	2	9	11	18%	82%
Recreation - non-motorised watercraft	8	10	18	44%	56%
Recreation - powerboating or sailing with an engine	7	10	17	41%	59%
Slipway and jetty cleaning and maintenance	1	14	15	7%	93%
Wildfowling	1	7	8	13%	88%

3.4 Annual Trend Data

Table 6 shows the mode response for activity change for a time series; currently we have data for six years. In 2024 the mode response was 'no change' to all activity levels. Please note this does not mean that these activities are not widespread and/or elevated, for example we know that the Solent is heavily used for recreation. The table reflects that respondents did not notice a significant increase or decrease in an activity in their jurisdiction over the year.

Table 6. Trend data for activity change						
Activity	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Accidental vessel discharges/emissions	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
Boat repair and maintenance	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC

Table 6. Trend data for activity change

Fishing (including shellfisheries)	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	D/NC
Fishing (shore-based activities)	NC	NC	NC	DK	NC	NC
Grazing and foraging	NC	NC	DK	I	NC	N/a
General beach recreation	NC	NC	NC	I	NC	NC
Land recreation - Dog walking	NC	NC	NC	I	NC	NC
Land recreation - Walking (other than dog walking)	NC	NC	NC	I	NC	NC
Littering and removal of litter	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
Mooring and anchoring	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
Operation of FCERM	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
Operation of ports and harbours (maintenance of infrastructure)	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
Recreation - light aircraft	NC	NC	NC	NC	I	NC
Recreation - non-motorised watercraft	NC	NC	I	I	NC	I/NC
Recreation - powerboating or sailing with an engine	NC	NC	NC	I/DK	NC	NC
Slipway and jetty cleaning and maintenance	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
Wildfowling	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC

Key: I = increase, D = decrease, NC = No change, DK = Do not Know

Source: SEMS Annual Surveys: 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020 and 2019

4 Individual Activity Responses

Section 4 gives the individual relevant authority comments for each activity; the comments are presented verbatim. For respondent organisation abbreviations please see Table 1.

4.1 Accidental vessel discharges/emissions including oil spill and clean-up

Activity includes accidental discharges and/or emissions from all types of vessels, including exhaust fumes, wastewater, sewerage, oils, lubricants, and chemicals, including oil spill and clean-up.

Activity	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Total Responses
Accidental vessel discharges/emissions including oil spill and clean-up	0	1	14	3	18

Respondent	Comments
MMO	Any unintentional discharges or emissions from various vessels pose a serious threat to the ecosystem. It is the responsibility of marinas and port authorities to promptly report such incidents to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO).
LHB	Langstone Harbour Board are required to operate and update an Oil Spill Contingency Plan and a Waste Management Plan to identify and mitigate these risks. The plan is exercised and tested multiple times a year to ensure efficiency.
RHHA	RHHA installed a sewage pump out station at its Warsash Jetty in 2022. But numerous sewage spills from land-sources (southern water overflows) reported in the river, included one that shut an activity centre's water programme for a week. This was not vessel derived but from sewerage system failure on land. Some observed spills are reported on to EA hotline and Southern Water by members of public. Ongoing concern in relation to land-side spills.
EA	We are not aware of any significant spills or discharges of unregulated substances to the marine environment - the Harbour Authorities or large industries may notify the EA if this was the case, and the MCA and relevant authorities would lead a clean-up operation for pollution arising from the sea.
CDC	CDC is part of the emergency plan response for a major oil spill. We have not had to implement this plan so far. We are not aware of smaller spills from leisure craft.
CoHC	No known spills this year - one minor spill last year.
ChHC	Discharge and spills from sailing vessels still continue, impacts unknown.
IOWC	No specific reports.
BRM	Very minor bilge water pump outs occasionally, no real impact.

4.2 Boat Repair and Maintenance

Activity includes vessel maintenance and repair on land or afloat, including hull cleaning. Please also consider the vessels, machinery and vehicles associated with this activity.

Activity	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Total Responses
Boat Repair and Maintenance	1	0	9	3	13

Respondent	Comments
ABP	Unaware of scale and frequency of activity within the wider SEMS area. Cannot be definitive as to whether this activity is resulting in an impact on conservation objectives - outside our field of expertise.
LHB	The Harbour Board encourage the use of RYA/Green Blue environment campaigns to ensure that best practice is followed and responsible actions are taken.
WL	Maintenance on laybys does not include hull cleaning. Scupper plugs are used to prevent maintenance spills.
KHM	Only those activities of this nature which are undertaken within the confines of HM Naval Base Portsmouth.
CoHC	No new yards / facilities have started since the last survey.
ChHC	Fibreglass particles found in many marine organisms; overall impacts little known.
BRM	Closed loop filtration in washdown bay.

4.3 Fishing (including shellfisheries)

Activity includes anchored nets or lines, electrofishing, traps, pelagic fishing (or fishing activities that do not interact with seabed), hydraulic dredges, dredges, demersal trawl, demersal seines, diving, and sea angling.

Activity	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Total Responses
Fishing (including shellfisheries)	1	0	14	2	17

Respondent	Comments
ABP	Cannot be definitive as to whether this activity is resulting in an impact on conservation objectives - outside our field of expertise.
LHC	Limited fishing permitted within harbour limits.
LHB	All commercial fishing vessels operating in Langstone Harbour are recorded when sighted, including the type of fishing being undertaken. Recent discovery of plentiful shellfish beds elsewhere in the Solent meant fishers were not using Langstone.
RHHA	New SIFCA byelaw in relation to mullet netting.
GBC	On the whole this activity is not considered to have a significant impact however there is uncertainty how smaller trawling operations just off the coast affect SEMs sites. Further monitoring would be needed to understand the impact.
WL	Fishing Rods from specific locations on Ryde Pier only.
EA	There are on-going concerns in relation to migratory salmonids and netting (though this links strongly to the freshwater designations, the activity occurs within these areas). The only fishery which the EA regulate in this area is the Beaulieu Seine net - now regulated under byelaw rather than net limitation order. The other relevant activity is the fyke net fishery for European Eel which operates within designated sites. All other aspects of fishing

	are regulated by Southern IFCA, of which we have a member on their committee. There has been an increase in intertidal seagrass in Portsmouth Harbour, probably linked to the bylaw stopping shellfish dredging there.
SoIFCA	<p>Overall fishing activity remains consistent throughout the Solent, with a slight increase in activity targeting the scallop fishery due to the apparent high productivity of the fishery. The scallop fishery within the Solent is managed by conditions for a Category A permit under the Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw. The scallop fishery continues to occur in beds east of Ryde and Portsmouth, primarily outside of the SEMS. Activity in the Solent clam fishery remains lower due to limited access to areas as a result of shellfish bed classifications and a preference for engaging in the scallop fishery for those with the appropriate vessels/gear. The Southern IFCA run the following surveys in the Solent: the Bivalve Survey, which occurs biannually and looks at Catch Per Unit Effort for Common Cockle, American Hardshell clams, and Manilla clams, the King Scallop survey, which looks at Catch Per Unit Effort across the Solent tri-annually, the Native Oyster survey, which monitors the native oyster population within the Solent and the Harbours every two years, the Small Fish Survey, which gathers data on juvenile fish populations biannually in Yarmouth, the River Hamble, and Christchurch, and the Whelk Survey which gathers information on the population of whelks within the Solent in the Spring of each year. In 2023 Southern IFCA introduced the Net Fishing Byelaw, which details Net Prohibition Areas (where net fishing is prohibited at all times of year and under any conditions), Net Restriction Areas (where net fishing is subject to seasonal and/or gear restrictions), and Net Permit Areas (where net fishing is managed by permitting named individuals and specific vessels under flexible permit conditions). Further information can be found on the IFCA website relating to the management (Net Fishing: Southern IFCA) or permitting (Net Fishing Permit: Southern IFCA) of the net fishery. Within the Solent, there are two Net Restriction Areas (Langstone Harbour & Portsmouth Harbour), two Net Permit Areas (Southampton Water & River Hamble), and 18 Net Prohibition Areas across the Harbours, Southampton Water, the Solent, and the Isle of Wight. Maps and coordinates for these areas can be found within the Net Fishing Byelaw. During 2023 Southern IFCA undertook a review of bottom towed fishing gear (BTFG) in MCZs, SACs and SPAs across the District. The BTFG Byelaw 2023 was submitted to the MMO/Defra for quality assurance and consideration in October 2023, currently the byelaw is in this QA process. Details on the review can be found on the Southern IFCA website - Ongoing Reviews.</p>
CoHC	Still only one commercial fisherman, but not monitored.
SxIFCA	As a result of the oyster beds remaining closed to dredging in the past year, there has been no oyster dredging activity taking place within Chichester Harbour. There has been no increase in sea angling, netting or potting intensities within Chichester Harbour or the surrounding area over the past year and any impact is very low due to low intensities. We continue to monitor fishing activity on routine patrols in the Sussex IFCA district. Trawling activity remains prohibited within Chichester Harbour under the Sussex IFCA Nearshore Trawling Byelaw.
ChHC	Some illegal netting activity recorded in the harbour; impacts are rather unknown due to limited data on when/how often this activity occurs.
EBC	Permitted inshore netting at the mouth of the Hamble is likely to have a negative impact on estuarine fish species (e.g. mullet sp.). Levels of Illegal setting of nets in the Hamble is unknown but probably does occur.
BRM	Not permitted
SW	As with Bathing waters, our Pathfinder projects will eventually have a significant positive impact on water quality.

4.4 Fishing (shore-based activities)

Activity includes crab tiling, bait digging, shellfish collection (including seed mussel) e.g. by hand (with or without digging apparatus), rake or using 'tiles'. Also includes rod and line angling, the setting of pots and nets from the shore and the use of vehicles or vessels to access the shoreline.

Activity	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Total Responses
Fishing (shore-based activities)	1	1	13	4	19

Respondent	Comments
ABP	Cannot be definitive as to whether this activity is resulting in an impact on conservation objectives - outside our field of expertise.
LHC	Limited rod and line angling and crabbing. Very limited bait digging at upper harbour limits.
LHB	Bait digging and hand gathering still witnessed, mostly during the summer, but tends to be individuals or small groups. Activity is predominantly focused on Pacific Oyster collection - not deemed a concern as INNS.
RHHA	For bait digging, very little observation of bait digging gangs. Individuals still present, but not the large scale we have seen over many years previously. Would be interesting to know if this is only in the Hamble or elsewhere too? Is this as result of displacement, management/police/SIFCA intervention, lack of demand from reduced fishing, or a scarcity of bait - the latter being more concerning to SEMS. Some hand collection of Pacific oysters by commercial fishermen was observed and reported at Hamble Spit and Hook Spit in summer 2002 and summer 2023 - liaison with SIFCA, Southampton Port Health and NE.
EA	Of these activities only rod and line angling falls within the EA's jurisdiction- and this is only partially with EA responsibility for salmonids, sea angling for marine species falls within Southern IFCA's jurisdiction as do the other activities listed. It is unlikely that rod and line angling has a significant impact on the SEMS sites, though there are potential concerns of a low level of impact in relation to removal of species, accidentally discarded fishing gear in terms of plastic pollution, and disturbance from anglers visiting coastal locations.
SoIFCA	Southern IFCA currently provides management on shore-based fishing activities through a suite of byelaws that can be viewed on our website (Shore Gathering : Southern IFCA) that include minimum size requirements, approved shore-gathering practices, and a prohibition on gathering sea fisheries resources in seagrass beds. In addition, Southern IFCA provide guidance and codes of practice for hand gathering of shellfish and bait digging within our district (Shore Gathering : Southern IFCA). The Southern IFCA Shore Gathering Review continues into 2024, reviewing management for shore based activities in relation to MCZs, SACs and SPAs to determine if any new or updated management measures are required.
NE	Activity levels have continued to increase across the Solent. Increased reports of hand gathering of pacific oysters and bivalves have continued. There have also been reports of push netting in subtidal seagrass at Gurnard Bay. This activity may damage seagrass and species living within such as stalked jellyfish and seahorses, these reports have been referred to Southern IFCA.
CoHC	Some occasional recreational fishing from East Cowes/West Cowes beach fronts and off Cowes Parade.

SxIFCA	Bird disturbance, sediment disturbance, potential impacts on target species and impacts on food availability for protected bird species. Largely focused around Nutbourne & Prinstead Channels which feed into Thorney channel; Emsworth channel; Thorney Island; Pilsey island which is accessed either by sea or by land; Chichester Marina and Chidham, all accessible from several locations by land or boat. Other known hand gathering locations are Dell quay, Northney marina, Copperas Point, Westlands, Birdham pool, and Longmere point. Year round activity, over spring tides especially but has been reported to us on a daily basis over summer months. Sussex IFCA has now sent it's Hand gathering Byelaw to Defra for approval. Intensities of shore based activities HAVE NOT increased over the past 12 months. We continue to monitor fishing activity on routine patrols in the Sussex IFCA district.
ChHC	Regular unmanaged shellfish gathering still occurs at top of Thorney channel near Nutbourne and top of Bosham channels, mainly gathering clams or cockles. Disturbance to intertidal mud and birdlife.
EBC	Probably has increased? Coast from Hamble to Netley is popular with shore anglers. Litter can be a problem plus some (low) potential for direct disturbance from anglers. Bait digging, especially for ragworm, may also be a problem along the Hamble estuary in places. In general shore based fishing is unlikely to be a significant negative factor on SEMs compared to other activities.
BRM	Not permitted.
FBC	Some incidences of small scale (individual) shellfish collection and bait digging occurs along the Fareham coastline. It is unclear what level of impact this has on the SEMs.

4.5 General Beach Recreation

Activity includes other coastal land recreation and leisure activities such as educational or scientific studies, horse riding on the beach, fireworks displays, swimming, rock pooling, surfing, and non-motorised land craft (e.g. sand yachting, kite buggying).

Activity	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Total Responses
General Beach Recreation	3	1	8	4	16

Respondent	Comments
MMO	Increase in bait digging and dog walking. Bait digging - holes left behind and removal of natural food. Dog walking on beach - fouling and aggressive animals have been reported, this is a serious health risk.
LHB	Less people visiting the beaches in Langstone - 2023 weather was unpredictable and people preferred to visit elsewhere. Less pressure observed on intertidal beach habitats.
GBC	Officers from Streetscene advise they do not consider this activity to be impacting SEMS sites. There may be some impact in certain sensitive locations such as on the Portsmouth Harbour coast but we have no evidence to support this.
HCC	The increased usage of the beach area in the busier seasons impacts on wildlife and the general site area. Limits on numbers are in place due to car park capacities as well as regular ranger inspections to ensure people are using the park as it is intended.
CDC	Within Chichester Harbour these activities are rare as the shoreline is generally not suitable, the beach areas we have are on the open coast outside the SEMS SPA/ SAC sites.
NE	There has been a notable rise in the number of people landing on the North Solent NNR for BBQs and picnics. Increase also observed on the Isle of Wight, notably at Osborne Bay with recreational activity surveys recording high volumes of activity. Observations of

	people landing at North Solent NNR for BBQs and picnics have increased with trampling of vegetation, disturbance to nesting sites and littering observed, all of which have the potential to damage sensitive habitats and wildlife. Volunteer wardens monitor disturbance to overwintering and breeding birds. Managers increase their presence on the reserve to monitor for disturbances caused by the influx of visitors. This involves regular patrols by staff or volunteers to observe visitor behaviour, enforce regulations, and assess any impacts. Through LIFE Recreation ReMEDIES, recreational activity surveys monitor beach recreation at Yarmouth West, Bouldnor, Osborne Bay, Kings Quay and West Hayling Island between July-September annually from 2021 to inform potential management. These have found Osborne Bay has significantly higher levels than other sites, followed by Yarmouth West.
ChHC	General disturbance to birds and other wildlife on a variety of locations e.g. East Head and Pilsey sands.
IOWC	None specifically reported this year. No impacts reported.
EBC	There is public access (car parks and foot access) along the foreshore on the Solent Coast and from Hamble Common. There is more limited access further up the Hamble Estuary but still likely to be impacts. There will be an impact from these activities although intensity is unknown - disturbance, erosion, littering but intensity unknown and therefore significance of impact unknown.
FBC	Monitoring of activity is undertaken by Bird Aware Solent. The Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy, which is implemented by Bird Aware Solent, provides the mitigation measures to address the impacts of recreational disturbance on the SEMS.
SW	Various measures to address bathing water quality, for example pathfinder projects (south downs and harbours) as well as Solent and Isle of Wight. Three Harbours Project, reviewing water quality. Many of the above projects will have longer term benefits and are currently in pilot, development or partnership development phases.

4.6 Grazing and Foraging

Activity includes grazing on saltmarsh or intertidal areas.

Activity	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Total Responses
Grazing and Foraging	1	0	3	3	7

Respondent	Comments
YHC	Grazing does not occur within jurisdiction but there may be some low level foraging by humans.
MMO	Foraging covers of wild food such as plants, seaweeds, shellfish and crustaceans. Gathering wild foods like plants, seaweeds, shellfish, and crustaceans for foraging puts pressure on the existing stock. Without data on what has been harvested, devising a future management plan becomes challenging.
SoIFCA	The only aspect which may fall within Southern IFCA jurisdiction is seaweed harvesting. A review of seaweed harvesting forms part of the Southern IFCA Shore Gathering Review which is currently underway. This is an activity which has the ability to be managed by multiple authorities which will be considered as part of the review.
NE	New Forest livestock access the coast at Tanners Land and the Lymington/Keyhaven reserve is grazed.
ChHC	Probably minor impacts though very difficult to monitor, light saltmarsh grazing at Gutner point.

PCC	Foraging for personal use on public land doesn't require permission and therefore can't be monitored.
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4.7 Land Recreation – Walking (incl. dogs)

Activity includes recreational participation including with dogs, including the use of dogs in wildfowling.

Activity	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Total Responses
Land Recreation Walking Incl. dogs	1	1	11	5	18

Respondent	Comments
LHC	Dog walking occurs on public footpaths in some parts of the harbour where the seawall abuts the foreshore.
LHB	Trampling sensitive intertidal habitats and dog disturbance to SPA and Ramsar species.
WCC	General increase in residents accessing the countryside for recreation.
RHHA	Police Wildlife, Heritage and Rural Crime Officer has alerted us to Operation Seabird, a multi-agency operation to allow the reporting of wildlife disturbance to try and afford some protection to coastal wildlife, whether birds, seals, dolphins etc. It involves explaining how disturbance affects the wildlife and with the final option of enforcement if necessary.
GBC	No significant changes to report since last year's survey. The Council considers there continues to be potential for recreational disturbance on the coast, with activity along Gosport Borough's entire coastline at high levels. We have no direct evidence to directly quantify this impact although work is undertaken by Bird Aware Solent. The Borough's urbanised nature and proximity of many residents to the coast, increases pressure on the coastline. Lee-on-the-Solent attracts people from the wider sub-region. While we have no direct evidence of impact, dog walking is at a high level around the Borough's coastline as it a popular dog walking destination for people in the Borough and from further afield. The impact is most likely to be more acute on the western and southern coastline of the Borough given the proximity of footpaths to the sea. The prevalence of dog walking is all year round. The Council continues to invest in the Alver Valley Country Park which acts as a SANG to deflect pressure from the coast - although work is ongoing the Borough Council has purchased additional formerly private land within the Alver Valley to improve the Country Park as a destination. Work is ongoing with funds from Bird Aware to create a dog walking park on this land to increase the attractiveness of the Country Park for dog walkers. The Council remains an active member of Bird Aware Solent.
HCC	At Lepe the regular numbers of dog walkers and the significant number of visitors during the warmer periods has an impact on both the area and the animals in the area. We have implemented areas of no dog access as well as guidance around site for responsible behaviour in the park.
CDC	Although Mitigation through Bird Aware Solent (BAS) is effective in limiting increases in this activity, the level remains high due to increased population before the BAS project began and also the increase in dog ownership post Covid.
NE	Some localised increase seen at places such as the North Solent NNR and Isle of Wight. At most other locations frequency appears to have stayed at the same elevated levels as observed in previous years. Increased human activity is disrupting natural behaviours of wildlife, causing stress or displacement, particularly for sensitive species that rely on these habitats for breeding, foraging, or resting. Seasonal increase is seen during warmer months, particularly on the Isle of Wight where the population increases significantly. There is ongoing disturbance to sanderling trying to roost at Ryde. Displaced birds from Ryde are

	likely using Seaview but there is disturbance from walking here too. Trampled strandline flora has also been observed as an impact of walking. Managers at the North Solent NNR increase their presence on the reserve to monitor for disturbances caused by the influx of visitors. This involves regular patrols by staff or volunteers to observe visitor behaviour, enforce regulations, and assess any impacts on the sanctuary's ecosystem.
WSCC	Dogs off leads disturbing feeding & roosting waders & wildfowl. Intensity not known & impacts likely to depend on other factors such as weather conditions & time of year. Chichester Harbour generally but notably West Wittering & Fishbourne Creek.
HBC	New PSPO introduced.
ChHC	General disturbance to wintering and breeding birds in a variety of locations particularly East Head.
IOWC	Evidence through the SRMP work showed that recreational pressure on the SPA is causing disturbance to birds. The Isle of Wight Council, in collaboration with Solent Bird Aware (also known as the SRMP), is working to mitigate increased pressure through new housing development. This does not address existing pressures. Results from recent monitoring work carried out by Bird Aware shows limited success and therefore review of strategy implementation is ongoing. More recently concerns have been raised regarding the impact of recreation on displacement and disturbance of Sanderlings that roost on Ryde Sands (SSSI). This matter is currently being investigated by Natural England and we are working with them to find a resolution, along with other relevant parties.
EBC	Direct disturbance to birds/other fauna, erosion from dog walkers, fouling. Most sensitive sites are along the Solent foreshore through Hamble Common. There are other areas further up the Hamble where this could still be an issue but probably less so (e.g. Manor Farm).
PCC	The City Council is part of Bird Aware. Recreational pressure on the sites and supporting habitat is managed by Bird Aware rangers and the impact of new development is managed by the Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy.
NFNPA	Due to lack of monitoring/research we have no evidence, however it is apparent that walking activities on vegetated shingle cause erosion of the interest features and potentially contribute to overall disturbance levels (e.g. unit 5 north Solent SSSI at lepe) potential in-combination disturbance effects from with other human activities. The Park Authority does not have regulatory powers as such in relation to walking but is the Access Authority for the coastal path - therefore the answer 'yes' to jurisdiction is heavily caveated. Access does form part of the second purposes of National Parks. The Authority has a Recreation Management Strategy and convenes Access Forum for the area. Milford on Sea community group (WINGS) have highlighted various disturbance events including on-foot recreation and are promoting a sanctuary area on Hurst Spit with a partnership (NE/RSPB/NFDC/NFNPA) involved.
FBC	Monitoring of activity is undertaken by Bird Aware Solent. The Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy, which is implemented by Bird Aware Solent, provides the mitigation measures to address the impacts of recreational disturbance on the SEMS.
SW	As part of our Community Conservation Grants schemes, we have awarded 11 grants for projects up to £10,000 to create habitats and improve public access and infrastructure for the local community.

4.8 Littering and Removal of Litter

This activity includes discharges from land, water or air, from all types of vessels, of particulate or solid wastes e.g. plastics, microplastics and other flotsam and jetsam (accidental vessel discharges are a separate category). The toxicity and damage caused by littering materials should be considered as should the cleanup of toxic debris. Please includes information on any strandline clearance and beach cleanup.

Activity	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Total Responses
Littering and removal of litter	1	0	14	7	22

Respondent	Comments
ABP	Unaware of any discharges from vessels. ABP operates its Port Waste Management Plan for commercial vessels providing waste facilities. River Itchen initiative with EA, SCC, NE, Wessex Rivers Trust and University of Southampton. Beach cleans. ABP has also led on a significant project to remove wrecks from the River Itchen - over 100 vessels removed. Can provide further information if required.
LHC	Plastics and other man made litter washing ashore on the SSSI. LHC operate periodic litter picking to clear up.
MMO	The impact of littering materials on the marine environment is significant, causing toxicity and damage. Unfortunately, there is limited available data to determine whether this issue has worsened or improved over time. However, with the recent attention on microplastics, there is optimism that public awareness will lead to a reduction in litter pollution.
LHB	Litter can result in the entanglement/ingestion by designated species, whilst microplastics can enter the food chain and pollute designated habitats. Occasional litter from failures at WWTW are observed, with some potentially toxic contraception/feminine hygiene products are often observed on the strandline. Lots of public interest and community groups in conducting litter picks for macro and microplastics.
WCC	General littering from increased visitors and impacts on the environment
RHHA	Regular litter picks take place along accessible foreshores by established volunteer groups who typically collect food wrappings, plastic bottles, drink cans and fishing litter. Small nurdles are commonly found on the shoreline. RHHA patrols do not routinely collect litter from foreshore areas but do collect items hazardous to vessels within the navigable areas and will attend River Hamble Country Park Jetty when litter is observed.
GBC	Littering continues to be a persistent problem with a high incidence. In terms of the impact, Streetscene officers advise that measures are taken to mitigate the impact through regular cleaning. Short term issues do occur when there is limited staffing capacity or GBC contractors unable to cleanse beaches. However the Borough Council seeks to mitigate the longer term impact through beach cleaning.
WL	Garbage Regulations compliance, no litter to the sea.
HCC	As with the rest of the site litter increases as usage of the park increases. However the use of a 'take your litter home policy' in line with the rest of the New Forest has definitely encouraged more responsible behaviour. Site team and volunteers carry out morning litter picks to ensure site is as clear as possible each day.
EA	Chessel Bay, Itchen Estuary - nurdle pollution from plastic manufacturers losing product from sites via drains/quayside. Microplastic pollution has been at a significant scale in this location in the past, with nurdle hunts are showing more than 1000 nurdles in this area. Southampton University report identifies other micro/macro plastics are of greater quantities. Other sources include polystyrene pontoons, discarded boats, boat related

	plastics, general litter, microplastics from sewage outfalls. Pollution prevention audits in the past to the plastics industries have resulted in investment and improvement to management measures. The Preventing Plastic Pollution Partnership was formed last year with 26 partners. We are currently developing an Action Plan. Other evidence gathering is underway. Impact on SEMS and SSSIs is of concern.
NE	Likely due to increase in walking, dog walking and beach recreation. LIFE Recreation ReMEDIES commissioned a study to map the debris in the intertidal areas of the Solent Maritime SAC. This study found a high quantity of anthropogenic debris and mapped the removability of each item based on the distance from shore and size of the object. This work will be useful to inform any efforts to remove debris in the intertidal.
CoHC	No significant reports of litter in the Harbour, but there will always be the odd bit. Our Patrol Officers collect what they see.
IOWC	It has been observed that following the extensive flooding that has occurred this past year, empty sandbags have been a large source of plastic pollution in coastal waters.
EBC	Litter from visitors to the coast and brought in via wind, watercourses and sea. Intensity unknown - probably increases in summer. Microplastics may be an issue along the Hamble/Netley foreshore.
PCC	Littering is likely to impact on the habitat of the SEMs. This is apparent during the summer months/ warmer weather from additional visitors. Cleaning and rubbish collection from coastal areas is managed by the Council but I'm not aware of any data on how much is collected and where from. There are various volunteer groups who carry out coastal litter picks but I'm not aware of whether data from this is recorded, collated or shared.
NFNPA	As far as I am aware, the Park Authority does not have regulatory powers. However it undertakes litter picks, supports the community in doing the same (New Forest Ambassador Scheme) and promotes campaigns to reduce littering. Partnership with Freshwater Habitats Trust has delivered particularly useful outputs in the last year.
FBC	Evidence of plastic pollution in particular is widespread. The Council provide bins along the coastline which are regularly emptied.
SW	Various projects addressing chemical investigations and micro plastics. Our Bluewave Innovation team are also developing Ofwat Innovation projects to address micro plastic pollution.

4.9 Mooring and Anchoring

Activity includes the operational use of berths, moorings and anchorages including the presence of these structures and the vessels using them. Includes consideration of impacts from vessels when berthing/berthed, mooring/moored, anchoring/anchored. Also includes impacts from anchors and impacts of boat when at anchor or mooring. There is a particular risk of damage from anchoring in seagrass beds.

Activity	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Total Responses
Mooring and Anchoring	0	3	14	0	17

Respondent	Comments
LHC	Although resident boat mooring occupancy has remained unchanged, the number of visiting boats fell by 4.5% on 2022 levels, almost certainly due to the poorer summer weather. LHC does not permit anchoring within its jurisdiction.
LHB	The Harbour Board are not licencing any new tidal mooring sites, in an attempt to control the Eastney Lake area and prevent vessels in a poor state becoming wrecked and abandoned. Also observing deep water mooring holders giving up their sites - again

	potential cost of living? Designated visitor moorings and anchorages aims to reduce the potential of visitors dropping anchor in unfavourable and sensitive locations. Tidal swing moorings are known to create scour patches upwards of 900 square metres.
RHHA	Very limited anchoring permitted in upper reaches only. Over 3000 moorings present in total, the majority of which are fixed piles, but some permanent buoy moorings are present.
GBC	Unable to specifically comment on this activity in any detail. Gosport does have several swinging moorings and bays where anchoring occurs however we don't have evidence to determine the impact on SEMs sites.
KHM	Natural England have just established a VNAZ (Voluntary No anchoring Zone) in Osborne Bay and supported by a LNTM from KHM Portsmouth.
NE	Activity levels of anchoring and mooring remain high across the entire Solent. Both anchoring and mooring impact on the seabed through abrasion and scour pressures. Sensitive seabed habitats such as seagrass are particularly vulnerable to this pressure. Through LIFE Recreation ReMEDIES, recreational activity surveys monitor anchoring and mooring at Yarmouth West, Bouldnor, Osborne Bay, Kings Quay and West Hayling Island between July-September annually from 2021 to inform potential management. Interpretation Panels have been installed as part of the project to inform people of the presence and location of seagrass beds and their importance. These are located at Norton Spit, Hayling Island ferry terminal, Lepe Country Park and Cowes. The activity surveys have highlighted Osborne Bay as an area with elevated levels of anchoring in seagrass. This has led to the installation of a Voluntary No Anchor Zone to reduce this pressure. The efficacy of this will be evaluated through the continuation of recreational activity surveys this summer. ReMEDIES project also commissioned a report that mapped areas impacted by anchoring and mooring pressure in the intertidal areas of the Solent Maritime SAC. Reports have also indicated recreational mooring within seagrass beds at Gurnard Bay during late summer.
ChHC	Mooring and anchoring impacts on seabed, swinging moorings eroding mudflats and seagrass in some locations.
IOWC	Owners of private pontoons have been choosing to replacing anchor chains with fixed piles (and have applying for planning permission) in recognition that anchor chains are detrimental to the environment. Through Habitat Regulations Assessment, any development proposal within the footprint of a designation needs Appropriate Assessment and evidence to support it. This means that there can be further certainty that new proposals for structures, replacement or extensions to existing ones will not be having a significant impact on the marine sites.
FBC	Existing moorings are likely to be having an impact on SEMS however this is not confirmed. The Council is unaware of any additional applications for moorings within its jurisdiction.

4.10 Operation of Coastal Flood and Erosion Risk Management Schemes (FCERM)

Activity includes maintenance and operation of all port/harbour infrastructure including quay walls, jetties, slipways, navigation markers, coastal defence structures etc. Includes consideration of vessels/machinery/vehicles associated with activity. Also include the day-to-day operational use of these structures, lights, buoys, posts, towers, transit marks, supply of fuel/bunkering operations onshore /offshore, etc.

Activity	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Total Responses
Operation of FCERM schemes	3	0	9	3	15

Respondent	Comments
ABP	Monitoring of operational effects not undertaken by ABP.

LHC	Positive Year Round Impact - Beneficial use of dredged sediment at Boiler Marsh is increasing the availability of intertidal habitat due to it being higher in the tidal frame. It is also providing protection to the salt marsh behind against erosion caused by waves and tides.
NFDC	NFDC have undertaken maintenance works at Milford on Sea, beach recharge and timber groyne maintenance. These works were undertaken with appropriate MMO licencing.
MMO	The local government and environmental agencies have been prioritising the protection of seas and rivers through focused efforts on defence measures.
LHB	Works on the North Portsea Island Scheme. The nature of the sea wall along Eastern Road, whilst acknowledging it is imperative to protect Portsea Island, will have a detrimental effect on the integrity of the SEMS, by preventing natural migration of intertidal habitat, specifically saltmarsh. Textured formliner along the sea wall aims to compensate for this, by encouraging intertidal species to colonise it.
GBC	There remains a high level of activity at Stokes Bay. In February 2022, a 135m stretch of seawall and promenade was badly damaged by Storm Eunice. Funding of £1.2m has been secured for a replacement scheme, including £450,000 from Gosport Borough Council. A procurement process is taking place and works could start in May 2024. Other flood defence schemes managed by the Coastal Partners include the Forton Scheme which has secured funding, progressed to detailed design and following delays due to Covid-19 and inflation it is now anticipated construction will re-start in 2024. Other schemes at Alverstoke and Seafield currently have funding shortfalls and the Coastal Partners is exploring opportunities to fund the schemes. When implemented all schemes will accord with relevant legislation and be subject to the planning process.
EA	Coastal Squeeze in places where policy is Hold The Line (HTL) Increase in local wave reflection in front of defences where existing policy is Hold The Line. In the past through historic squeeze and in the future with sea level rise. Maintaining defence in historic position. Management Measures: Regional Habitat Compensation Programme is reviewing further sites to compensate for coastal squeeze. Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management - De-commissioning of Assets Programme may identify sites to change the asset management. Adaptation to future challenges e.g. Sea Level Rise and Climate Change, and Carbon off-setting, and Net Gain are the key focus of all schemes going forward.
CDC	Coastal Squeeze has become an important consideration for planning applications that replace and improve private coastal defences within Chichester Harbour. These seek to use the SMP policy of Hold the line, but still have to pass a Habitats regs assessment This mainly fall under plans and projects, but if Coastal Partners secure funding for the Chichester Harbour Investment and Adaptation Plan (CHIAP) then a more flexible approach to habitat creation and coastal squeeze is likely to emerge.
NE	The number of plans and schemes for coastal flood and erosion risk management have continued to increase, however these generally include measures to mitigate for impacts. Coastal squeeze is currently impacting many parts of the Solent coastline and further consideration is needed on nature-based solutions and to allowing the coast to adapt.
ChHC	Most of the harbour contained by flood defence of some sort, coastal squeeze identified as a major reason for saltmarsh loss.
IOWC	Coastal erosion rates/landslips and breach of flood defences are at an all-time high on the Isle of Wight due to the impact of unprecedented levels of rainfall. Strategic plans relating to these are constantly being reviewed.
PCC	Work has commenced on the Southsea seafront defences in addition to the North Portsea Island scheme. A number of frontages making up the coastal scheme have been completed and further frontages are under construction. The Coastal defence works have been approved with mitigation schemes.

FBC	Coastal Partners, a partnership of four Local Authorities (including Fareham), lead on coastal issues such as the operation of coastal flood and erosion management schemes.
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4.11 Operation of Ports and Harbours (maintenance of infrastructure)

Activity includes maintenance and operation of all port/harbour infrastructure including quay walls, jetties, slipways, navigation markers, coastal defence structures etc. Includes consideration of vessels/machinery/vehicles associated with activity. Also include the day-to-day operational use of these structures, lights, buoys, posts, towers, transit marks, supply of fuel/bunkering operations onshore /offshore, etc.

Activity	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Total Responses
Operation of ports and harbours (maintenance of infrastructure)	1	0	15	1	17

Respondent	Comments
YHC	It is important to maintain infrastructure and facilities to ensure deterioration of structures etc and / or safety issues do not affect SEMS. The increase in maintenance of infrastructure is therefore seen as having a positive impact on SEMS.
ABP	Capital dredge undertaken in Q1 2024 of main navigation channel in Western Docks area.
LHB	The Harbour Board maintain aids to navigation, landing pontoons, and public slipways in Langstone Harbour.
RHHA	Phase 2 completed of re-concreting of RHHA's sea wall which involved inclusion of textured concrete plus pools and ledges to encourage biodiversity. Replacement of pointed pile caps with flat top caps to allow birds to roost.
GBC	Gosport Borough Council unaware of major activity. There are operations related to the Ministry of Defence (including training at Browdown) but the Borough Council has no active involvement in this activity.
CDC	CDC's slipways are all outside the SPA / SAC.
CoHC	Usual planned maintenance continues.
IOWC	Coastal defence structures have been under increased pressure due to unprecedented weather and tides.
PCC	The City Council owns Portsmouth International Port. The Port is undertaking measures to implement shore power which will reduce air pollution from idling ships.

4.12 Aerial Recreation (light aircraft, paramotors, drones)

Activity includes all types of craft used for recreation in the air e.g. small planes and helicopters, microlights, paramotors, hang gliding, parascending (on beach), parasailing (by boat), drones and model aircraft.

Activity	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Total Responses
Recreation - light aircraft	0	0	7	4	11

Respondent	Comments
ABP	Drone activity over port land requires permission.

LHC	We have no powers to control the airspace. However if drone flights are requested, we will only permit the operator to fly the drone from LHC facilities subject to appropriate qualifications, risk assessment (including environmental risk) and compliance with CAA regulations.
LHB	LHB monitor light aircraft on an ad-hoc basis, and issue drone pilots with advice on avoiding disturbance to bird species.
RHHA	In relation to drones - whilst true 'jurisdiction' over this issue is not clear as RHHA jurisdiction is below mean high water level, RHHA occasionally receives third party requests for commercial drone flights in relation to flights over our lease holding of riverbed and some foreshore areas, or in relation to navigational safety. RHHA is using the guidance document, and liaising with NE on individual cases when necessary, regarding any specific conditions required in relation to flight height, duration, distance from SPA birds.
GBC	The use of drones and model aircraft falls within the Borough. Solent Airport is within Fareham Borough Council. Gosport Borough does see helicopter movements with the maintenance facility in the northeast of the Borough however this is managed professionally by the operator and the Borough Council has no involvement.
CDC	Goodwood airfield operations are limited by their planning permission from WSCC, these have not increased. Drone use is outside our influence and we have no data on this.
NE	Continued increase in use of drones privately and for surveying, however data from Bird Aware suggests this is not impacting features of SEMS.
ChHC	Probably some, occasional impact from model planes and drone use around the harbour and occasional light aircraft.
IOWC	There are current proposals to introduce a commercial drone service between the mainland and Isle of Wight (intelliports). Discussions regarding potential ecological impacts are current, with a recommendation that Natural England are consulted regarding any pathways that may impact wildlife within SPAs and SSSIs. More research is required as to the impacts of commercial drones on Solent sites, as it is highly likely that drone use is going to increase over the coming years. Drone use in coastal areas is currently mostly unregulated, other than by CAA. Drones are likely to cause disturbance to coastal wildlife if not used correctly, however have eco-benefits in relation to low carbon logistics and a wider public benefit (e.g. economical/delivering medical supplies for NHS).
EBC	No evidence to suggest impacts one way or another.

4.13 Recreation (non-motorised watercraft)

Activity includes windsurfing, kite surfing, kayaks, canoes, row boats, punts, paddle boards, dinghies and sailing boats. Includes all related participation such as launching and recovery (shore access and trailers) and any land-based practice. Please include information on events and competitions.

Activity	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Total Responses
Recreation - non-motorised watercraft	1	1	10	6	18

Respondent	Comments
ABP	Difficult to assess whether having impact on conservation objectives or any changes in the activity as this is not something we monitor.
LHC	Although windsurfing and kite surfing is prohibited within LHC's jurisdiction, to the east of (and abutting) LHC's jurisdiction in the Pylewell and Tanners Lane foreshore area, these two activities do disturb birds.

NFDC	Increase in these activities at Keyhaven.
LHB	Windsurfing at sensitive sites has been observed having a detrimental impact on SPA/Ramsar species - large flushing observed at roosting locations when windsurfers nearby. Small increase in paddle permits issued, but due to internal process becoming more efficient in targeting clubs. By asking users to pay a small fee, it gives the Authority the mechanism to deliver educational material.
RHHA	RHHA has been promoting the water sports for wildlife campaign and map from Bird Aware, and with associated educative signage installed at public launch/access points throughout estuary.
GBC	Areas of the Borough such as Stokes Bay are a popular destination for this activity with anecdotal evidence of people travelling from other Hampshire districts to Gosport Borough. There is also anecdotal evidence of issues with kayaking in Portsmouth Harbour and people disembarking on sensitive islands however this is not considered to be a significant issue.
HCC	We have a set rigging and launching area which minimises the impact on the wildlife in the area by directing most launching into quieter areas.
NE	Activity levels of non-motorised watercraft remain high across the entire Solent. High volumes of watercraft including paddle boards, kayaks and canoes have been observed across the Solent, most notably the New Forest coastline including Calshot, Lepe, Tanners Lane, Keyhaven and the North Solent NNR. This has potential to disturb both breeding and overwintering birds using the intertidal area. Staff at the North Solent NNR engage in educational outreach efforts to inform visitors about the importance of the reserve for wildlife conservation and the need to minimise disturbance. On the Isle of Wight, wind surfing at Thorness Bay is ongoing. Also, observations continue of people paddle boarding off the back of overnight moored motorboats, particularly in Newtown Harbour. This is having an early morning disturbance impact on birds. However, there are also reports of paddle boarding at Freshwater Causeway that the birds seem unaffected by. Through LIFE Recreation ReMEDIES, recreational activity surveys monitor non-motorised watercraft at Yarmouth West, Bouldnor, Osborne Bay, Kings Quay and West Hayling Island between July-September annually from 2021 to inform potential management. Interpretation Panels have been installed as part of the project to inform people of the presence and location of seagrass beds and their importance. These are located at Norton Spit, Hayling Island ferry terminal, Lepe Country Park and Cowes.
CoHC	Not much activity in the main harbour - mainly focussed in the southern part of the harbour but no issues reported.
ChHC	General disturbance to wildlife around harbour.
IOWC	No impacts reported.
EBC	We don't monitor this so have no empirical data to support any conclusions, but I suspect (and after talking with the River Hamble Harbour Authority) this activity is increasing, especially in the Hamble estuary. Impacts from direct disturbance and damage to habitats (especially sensitive saltmarsh) from landing and hauling out and also from launching.
NFNPA	It could be argued that the Authority does have some involvement due to its second purpose and Recreation Management Strategy links. However it has no regulatory powers. We have received complaints from the public about this type of activity causing disturbance and this would strongly suggest the activity is causing localised issues and harm - potentially at sensitive areas and important items of the year. Voluntary initiatives and guidance would therefore seem to either have little impact on the users or perhaps that the initiatives are in their early stages - Mount Lake/Hurst Spit a particular concern re: kite surfing and NE and others have been contacted by local groups such as WINGS who highlight the need for enhanced controls.

FBC	Monitoring of activity is undertaken by Bird Aware Solent. The Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy, which is implemented by Bird Aware Solent, provides the mitigation measures to address the impacts of recreational disturbance on the SEMS.
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4.14 Recreation (powerboating or sailing with an engine)

Activity includes any motorised boat activity, such as Personal Watercraft (PWC), hovercraft, powerboating and water-skiing. Includes launching and recovery of craft e.g. slipway or beach/shore launching and participation i.e. when activity is underway or making way. Please consider other novel uses of power boats such as flyboarding. The impacts of different craft will vary and should be considered on a case-by-case basis e.g. sailing boats with low power engines moving at slow speeds are less likely to have an impact.

Activity	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Total Responses
Recreation - powerboating or sailing with an engine	0	3	10	4	17

Respondent	Comments
ABP	Comments - as per non-motorised activity.
LHC	While we have no data for overall boat movements, if you take visitor numbers as an indicator of overall numbers, then the number of movements has fallen by 4.5%. This is very likely to be weather dependent as the summer weather in 2022 was much better than 2023.
LHB	PWC, water-ski, and slipway permits fell in 2023. Powerboating remained at a fairly consistent level. Potentially due to cost of living. PWCs can operate at high speeds and can create vast auditory disturbance. Due to their shallow draught, they can also access areas that larger vessels cannot, mainly in the northern reaches of the Harbour where sensitive sites are located. In order to obtain a PWC permit, users must be able to provide proof of marine qualification and vessel insurance - this qualification is proof that the user is aware of their responsibilities. Waterskiing is confined to an area of deep-water and is kept away from intertidal areas and sensitive habitats. Langstone Harbour Board employ a seasonal patrol team who operate from April-October. Much of the patrol's work involves mitigating irresponsible PWC users and the Board have, and continue to, take users to court for infringing of Board byelaws. The Harbour also has a 10 knot speed limit, with the intention of minimising navigational hazards but also mitigating for wildlife disturbance.
RHHA	6 knot speed limit in place. Bird Aware educative signage installed at public launch points throughout estuary.
GBC	The impact on SEMS sites of this activity is uncertain however it is considered more likely to have an impact than non-motorised watercraft. The Borough has several marinas in Portsmouth Harbour. Lee-on-the-Solent and Stokes Bay are also used for launching craft and can be a popular launching location particularly during the summer months.
NE	Activity levels of powerboating and sailing remains high across the entire Solent. The use of small personal watercraft or powerboats allow access close to sensitive habitats that may be otherwise unreachable. As well as this, the wake of these vessels when closer to shore can be detrimental to habitats such as seagrass. Through LIFE Recreation ReMEDIES, recreational activity surveys monitor motorised watercraft at Yarmouth West, Bouldnor, Osborne Bay, Kings Quay and West Hayling Island between July-September annually from 2021 to inform potential management. These have indicated Osborne Bay and Yarmouth West to have the highest level of sailing. Interpretation panels have been installed as part of the ReMEDIES project to inform people of the presence and location of seagrass beds

	and their importance. These are located at Norton Spit, Hayling Island ferry terminal, Lepe Country Park and Cowes.
IOWC	No impacts reported.
EBC	Noise pollution, pollution from the craft themselves. Most likely along Solent coast although there are public slipways along the Hamble as well.
FBC	Monitoring of activity is undertaken by Bird Aware Solent. The Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy, which is implemented by Bird Aware Solent, provides the mitigation measures to address the impacts of recreational disturbance on the SEMS.

4.15 Slipway and Jetty Cleaning and Maintenance

Activity includes the ongoing maintenance, such as washing down, clearing of mud or sediment, algal growth or similar of a slipway or jetty.

Activity	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Total Responses
Slipway and jetty cleaning and maintenance	0	0	14	1	15

Respondent	Comments
RHHA	RHHA continues to redistribute algal mats that build up and obstruct a slipway.
W	Two slipways, rarely used as slipways.
KHM	Only those activities of this nature which are undertaken within the confines of HM Naval Base Portsmouth.
CoHC	No new slipways or jetties, so no change to the amount of cleaning / washing off.
ChHC	Noise and materials from jetties/slipway maintenance contributes to bird and other wildlife disturbance and occasional loss of habitat.

4.16 Wildfowling

Activity includes the use of firearms to shoot wild fowl. This category does not consider the use of dogs during these activities, please use 'Land recreation - dog walking' for any dog related activity.

Activity	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Total Responses
Wildfowling	0	0	8	0	8

Respondent	Comments
LHB	Anecdotal evidence suggests that when wildfowling, large flocks are never shot - with only one or two killed.
RHHA	Operation Seabird, is a multi-agency operation to allow the reporting of wildlife disturbance (including wildfowling) to try and afford some protection to coastal wildlife, whether birds, seals, dolphins etc. It involves explaining how disturbance effects the wildlife and with the final option of enforcement if necessary.
NE	Wildfowling operations occur at Keyhaven and Lymington saltmarshes during the winter season.
ChHC	Chichester Wildfowling continues to operate and feedback on their bags (numbers of birds shot) annually.
BRM	Not permitted.

5 Activities resulting from Plans and Projects

Section 5 looks at whether, over the last 12 months, respondents were aware of any changes to activity levels, or impacts, resulting from plans or projects within SEMs.

Table 7 Activities resulting from Plans and Projects	
Respondent	Details
YHC	There have been some harbour works that have reconfigured the pontoons within existing areas but these have been licenced and have not resulted in changes to activity levels or impacts on SEMs.
ABP	In the past 12 months, ABP has undertaken a capital dredge within the Western Docks at Southampton. Sediment disposal at Nab Tower Deposit Ground - not considered suitable for beneficial use as material principally laminated layers of stiff clay.
TVBC	No but for information, Test Valley Borough Council is in the process of preparing its Local Plan 2040, with a consultation having taken place in 2024. The Habitat Regulations Assessment and Appropriate Assessment give consideration to potential likely significant effects on SEMs designations.
GBC	No. The Borough Council consulted on its new draft Local Plan (The Gosport Borough Local Plan 2038) from September to December 2021. The Plan sets out a revised development strategy and the locations for new development over the period to 2038. The impacts of this plan have been appraised in a Sustainability Appraisal and a Habitats Regulations Assessment is ongoing. It is expected that a Regulation 19 consultation will be undertaken in late 2024 on the now renamed Gosport Borough Local Plan 2040.
KHM	Ongoing - work on the flood defence of Southsea Sea Front.
CDC	Yes, see comments above about coastal squeeze in HRAs of planning application for private coastal defences protecting domestic properties.
NE	The ReMEDIES project has hosted webinars and attended events to engage with recreational users, sharing potential impacts on the seabed from recreational activity and best practice for these activities. We do not yet know if this has altered activity levels, although behaviour change analysis is underway. It is hoped that the installation of a Voluntary No Anchor Zone in Osborne Bay in March 2024 will alter activity levels in the future. Monitoring will be ongoing to determine the efficacy of this and engagement with locals will continue for feedback.
CoHC	No current projects or changes to activity levels that I am aware of.
PCC	Any additional recreational pressure from new dwellings (that require planning permission) should be covered by the Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy. Development resulting in new overnight stays is still required to be nutrient neutral. While development has been permitted in accordance with the Council Nutrient Neutral Mitigation Strategy (2019), an agreement has been signed with the Wildlife Trust to move to a land based mitigation scheme that reduces nitrogen runoff into the Solent through less intensive management of agricultural land. The mitigation site is on the Isle of Wight. The city Council is working with the PFSH SEPO to deliver ongoing solutions for Nutrient Neutrality and BNG.
FBC	None. The Council is unaware of any changes to activity levels, or impacts, resulting from plans or projects within SEMs. The Council continues to work in partnership with organisations such as Bird Aware Solent as well as undertake Habitats Regulations Assessments of new development to ensure that impacts to SEMs are appropriately assessed and that there is adequate mitigation in place if required.

6 Monitoring

Section 6 looks at what monitoring is currently taking place in the SEMS, potential future monitoring and partnership working.

Are you undertaking any monitoring of activities or activity impacts in SEMS?	
Response	
No	17
Yes	8

Respondent	Details
ABP	ABP will be undertaking monitoring of the intertidal in connection with our capital dredge for a period of 3 years in the area of the Western Docks.
RHHA	Ongoing monitoring of bait digging activities in the Hamble estuary, as previous years, comprising patrol officer sightings and reports from members of the public. Not all incidents are captured, but all data held is supplied to SIFCA. Data held by RHHA and SIFCA. Very little to report in last year, hence 'Decreased'. Also, Bournemouth University monitoring of biodiversity changes to RHHA sea wall following maintenance and inclusion of water retaining crevices. Results show increased biodiversity.
EA	Ongoing sea defence, fish, water quality and ecological monitoring - no change from last year's survey.
LHB	LHB conducts and coordinates a schedule of monitoring. Solent seal surveys are coordinated with ChHC, BRM, and Newtown (volunteers from NE and Bournemouth Uni). Monitors numbers, population dynamics, activity, and locations. We also conduct small fish surveys in conjunction with Blue Marine Foundation - similar to those undertaken by SIFCA. These assess juvenile fish numbers within the harbour over time.
SoIFCA	<p>Southern IFCA surveys within the Solent: The Bivalve Survey, which occurs biannually and looks at Catch Per Unit Effort for Common Cockle, American Hardshell clams, and Manilla clams took place in March (Spring) and October (Autumn) in 2023. The King Scallop survey, which looks at Catch Per Unit Effort across the Solent tri-annually, this survey took place in April (Spring) and September (Autumn) in 2023. The Small Fish Survey, which gathers data on juvenile fish populations biannually in Yarmouth, the River Hamble, and Christchurch, this survey took place in June and September in 2023. The Whelk Survey, which gathers information on the population of whelks within the Solent in the Spring of each year. Results from each survey are held by Southern IFCA. Reports for each of these surveys are provided to the Southern IFCA Authority at relevant meetings and are subsequently published on the Southern IFCA website.</p> <p>The information gathered through our survey program forms one source of evidence which helps to inform the management of the relevant fishery. Southern IFCA is part of the Angling for Sustainability partnership, which is a 2-year partnership running from the 1 January 2023 with the University of Plymouth (lead), the Professional Boatman's Association, Natural England, and the Angling Trust. The aim of the project is for researchers to work with fishing communities in Dorset and the Solent to assess the habitats and movement of species including</p>

	<p>sharks, skates, rays, and black seabream. Using this approach, the project aims to ensure the sustainability and survival of the region's Charter boat fishing industry by working with the industry and other partners to help fill the evidence gaps needed for effective, informed management. Within our Small Fish surveys, Southern IFCA has been involved with the 2-year Fin Vision Fisheries Industry Science Partnership (FISP) project, a collaborative partnership with the University of Plymouth (lead), the Angling Trust, the Institute of Fisheries Management, Bass Anglers, Sportfishing Society, National Mullet Club, and the Association of IFCAs. This project aims to develop and apply a novel camera system and citizen science framework to document and monitor inshore juvenile fish habitats. Members of the project from the University of Plymouth have accompanied officers on surveys within the Solent, deploying underwater cameras within Christchurch Harbour, the Hamble, and Yarmouth Harbour. More information is available at FinVision FISP or FinVision - Angling Trust. Additionally, for the Small Fish surveys Southern IFCA work with partners including Yarmouth Harbour Authority, Natural England, and local academic institutions. Our shellfish surveys are undertaken in partnership with members of the relevant local fishing fleet.</p>
NE	<p>ReMEDIES undertakes recreational activity surveys from July-September at Yarmouth West, Bouldnor, Osborne Bay, Kings Quay and West Hayling Island, all within the Solent Maritime SAC. These have been ongoing since 2021 and will be repeated again in 2024. The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust coordinate the surveys.</p>
SxIFCA	<p>Sussex IFCA continue to undertake sea and land based patrols throughout the entirety of the Sussex IFCA district. The Authority has an ongoing list of fishing vessel sightings throughout the entirety of the Sussex IFCA District, which includes details such as gear method, vessel name, and vessel length. This ongoing monitoring contributes towards the production of HRA's and MCZ Assessments for MPA's within our District, as well as any reviews of these sites that are undertaken. Sussex IFCA use these sightings to produce fishing effort grids. The most recent 5 year fishing effort analysis report (years 2019-2023) can be found here: https://secure.toolkitfiles.co.uk/clients/34087/sitedata/files/Conservation-Research/Fishing-Effort-2019-2023.pdf. The Authority is in regular communications with Chichester Harbour Conservancy and RSPB Pagham Harbour regarding fishing and hand gathering activities within these sites.</p>
PCC	<p>Monitoring of the Nutrient Neutral scheme with the Wildlife Trust will need to be monitored as per its legal agreement. This will be carried out by the Isle of Wight Council in this instance. Every six months for the first five years; annually from five to 20 years; every five years from 20 years to the end date (130 years). In addition the Council is undertaking additional nutrient offsetting through water efficiency improvements in its housing stock. The Council monitors all contributions and offsetting.</p>
FBC	<p>Monitoring of activities is undertaken by Bird Aware Solent. The Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy which is implemented by Bird Aware Solent provides the management measures to address the impacts of recreational disturbance on the SEMS.</p>
SW	<p>A 12 month project to monitor water quality off Hayling Island concluded and reported, with data being made publicly available. We are also funding a 3 year PhD with Uni of Brighton looking at nutrient and faecal coliform source apportionment within the Three Harbours and their catchments. This includes sampling of Southern Water assets, private discharges and the wider environment - harbours and rivers. The PhD runs to 2025.</p>

Are you considering monitoring in the SEMS? If yes, please give details.

Respondent	Details
YHC	Considering a project to monitor INNS using settlement tiles. Reviewed and reset the Western Yar saltmarsh monitoring scheme in 2023 in order to gain more information from the monitoring in future.
LHC	Periodic monitoring of effects of ongoing beneficial use of dredged sediment.
EA	This year in the Solent area we are hoping to undertake macroalgal surveys in Chichester, Langstone and Portsmouth Harbours.
SxIFCA	Fishing activity monitoring is ongoing.
SW	Universities of Portsmouth and Brighton; Harbours Technical Working Group, Sea the Value partnership.

7 Marine Conservation Zones

The SEMS Annual Survey monitors what is happening within the Solent MCZs; these sites are not part of the main SEMS Management Scheme as they are designated under different legislation.

Do you have a MCZ within your jurisdiction?	
Response	
No	14
Yes	11

Respondent	MCZ Related Concerns
NE	The Needles MCZ, Yarmouth to Cowes MCZ and Bembridge MCZ all sit within our jurisdiction and at all of these sites, walking, dog walking, beach recreation, non-motorised watercraft and motorised watercraft all occur. Yarmouth is monitored as part of the ReMEDIES recreational activity surveys.
CoHC	No concerns over the current activities, so no plans to monitor them at this stage.
SxIFCA	Sussex IFCA continue to monitor fishing activities throughout the Sussex IFCA district, including all MCZs.

8 Additional Information

Section 8 looks at responses on any additional information such as research on impacts, additional information on activities or any potential research ideas/opportunities.

Respondent	Information
YHC	The ReMEDIES project has carried out annual summer surveys looking at the impact of recreational boat use on the seagrass. This has not raised any issues and 2024 is likely to be the final year for the surveys as the project comes to an end.
RHHA	Police Wildlife, Heritage and Rural Crime Officer has altered us to Operation Seabird, a multi-agency operation to allow the reporting of wildlife disturbance to try and afford some protection to coastal wildlife, whether birds, seals, dolphins etc. It involves explaining how disturbance effects the wildlife and with the final option of enforcement if necessary. Water Quality and Boating campaign, led by Environment Agency and Natural England, is still ongoing albeit reduced comms recently, focussing on black water discharge from recreational vessels.
WL	Wightlink continues to work very closely with the marine sciences department of Portsmouth University.
SW	Two important documents to signpost to 1. Natural Capital Accounts - for our River Catchments - https://www.southernwater.co.uk/about-us/environmental-performance/protecting-and-improving-our-environment/natural-capital/ 2. Our business plans: https://www.southernwater.co.uk/about-us/our-plans/ .

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