Welcome to the

Solent Marine Sites (SEMS) Management Group

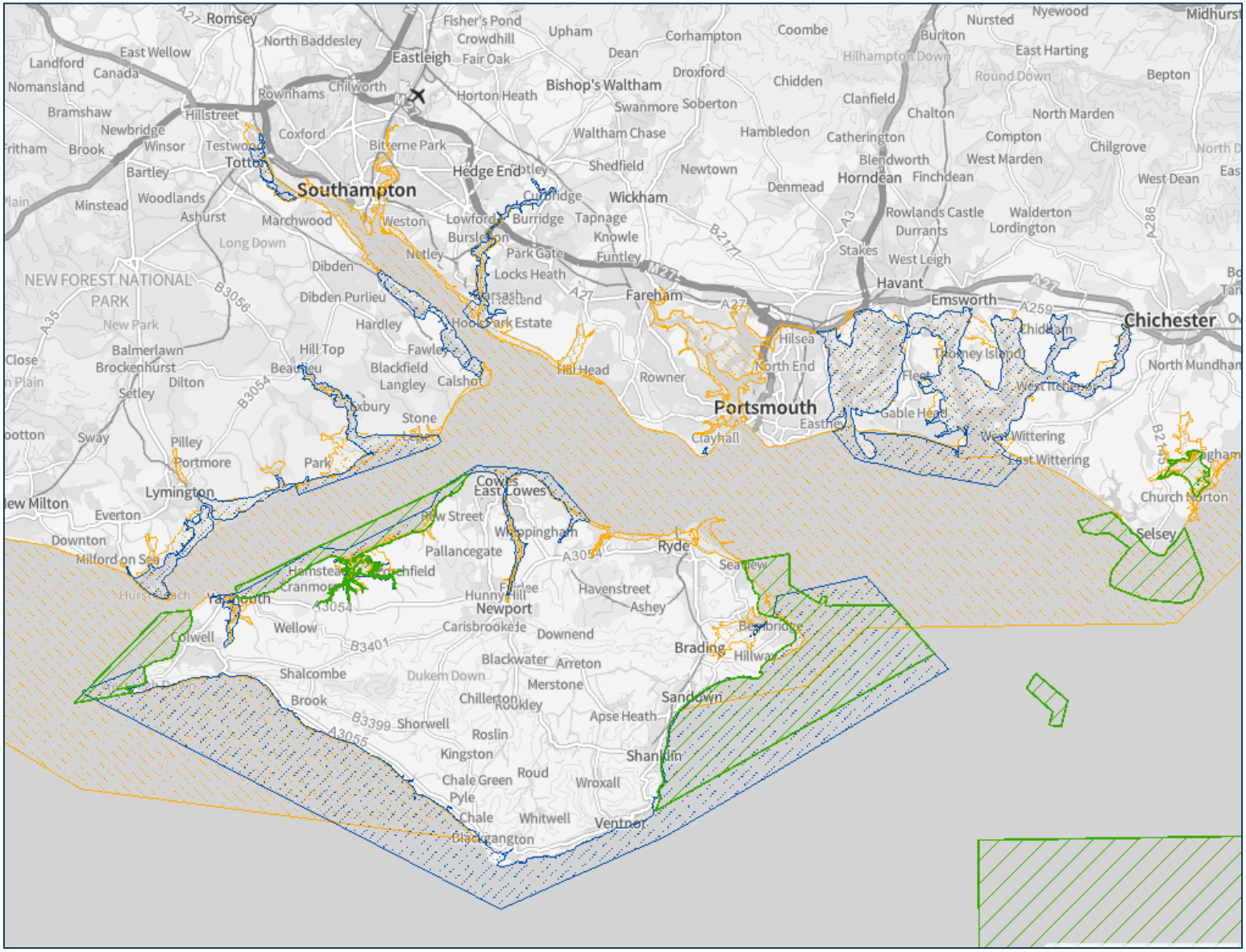
Annual Meeting

18 September 2024

SEMS Staff

- Jason Scott – Chair, SEMS Management Group
- Kate Ansell – SEMS Officer
- Karen McHugh – Natural Environment Group (NEG) Officer
- Jess Taylor – Natural England lead (Chair of NEG)

Solent Marine Protected Areas



Annual Management Scheme Timeline

March/April
Online annual Survey completed by SEMS Management Group (MG). Annual Survey Report published (ASR)

May/June
Draft Annual Management Report (AMR) prepared and discussed by officers and chairs of SEMS/NEG

August
Draft AMR circulated to MG and stakeholder group

September
Annual MG meeting agrees the AMR and its actions

Spring/Autumn
NEG meets to discuss and progress strategic actions

SEMS MG Actions from 2023 Meeting

1. The group agreed that the two land recreation walking categories would be combined in the Annual Survey. A question would also be added to capture information on non-consented developments. Completed by Solent Forum.

2. The group signed off the Annual Management Report and the generic actions.

3. If anyone has any bird data please could they send it to Jess Taylor at Natural England. Jess would like data for Langstone and Chichester as this will be the next site for a SPA condition assessment.

4. Information on Natural England's noise impact monitoring for birds and abandoned marine debris survey to be included with the meeting notes. There was a presentation at April 2024 NEG on the marine debris survey. A presentation on the noise monitoring will be made at the November 2024 NEG meeting.

Annual Management Report 2024

Presentation of Key Findings

Kate Ansell

Annual Management Report Format

- Annual Survey reviews sixteen non-licensable activities that take place around the Solent

- Annual Survey asks about ***changes in activity levels*** and whether respondents think that an activity is ***impacting*** on the designated sites

- Annual Management report evaluates the survey findings and other relevant data collected by the SEMS Officer. Three sections for each activity:

1. Summary of the survey response
2. Evaluation and discussion – incl. information on impacts and management measures. NE states if activity having detrimental impact on SEMS sites.
3. Actions

- Supplementary activity pages mirror the report on the SEMS website at: http://www.solentems.org.uk/sems/SEMS_Activities/

SEMS Management Scheme Activities (Non-Licensable)

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 (change from land recreation other)
6. Grazing and foraging
7. Land recreation - Walking (including 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. Aerial Recreation
13. Recreation - non-motorised watercraft
14. Recreation - powerboating or sailing with an engine
15. Slipway and jetty cleaning and maintenance
16. Wildfowling

Headline Findings of Annual Survey 2024

1. 29 out of 31 Relevant Authorities responded to the Annual Survey.

2. Increases in activity recorded at more than one site were for operation of FCERM and general beach recreation. Mode for all activities is ‘no change’.

3. The top 3 activities highlighted by respondents potentially *impacting* on SEMS sites are: **coastal walking (incl with dogs), operation of FCERM assets and litter.**

4. Trend data (2019 to 2024) shows that the mode response to changes in activity levels across the Solent remains as ‘no change’.

5. For activities where we are seeing ‘no change’ this does not mean that they are not having an impact, as the current levels could still be causing damage to designated sites.

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%

SEMS Draft AMR Comments

- It would be useful to draw out more clearly which of the activities NE think are impacting on sites. *SEMS staff will meet with NE to see how this can be done and it will be included in the 2025 AMR.*

- How will the introduction of Protected Site Strategies impact on the SEMS process? *The formal statutory guidance and supporting advisory toolkit is being developed through five pilot projects. This is likely to come through in spring / summer 2025. NE advise waiting until this process is complete to see potential consideration for SEMS.*

- Can we ensure that if people say an activity is impacting they clarify what it is? *Yes, we can make it compulsory in the Survey that people state key impacts, e.g. disturbance, trampling, etc.*

SEMS Draft AMR Comments (2)

- We need to distinguish between an activity being ‘no change’ and ‘no data available’. *An additional option will be added in the SEMS survey of ‘no data available’ to distinguish this.*

SEMS MG Generic Actions 1 (section 6)

1. SEMS MG members should use this Report and the activity pages on the SEMS website as a reference resource to help shape relevant plans and policies or management measures for activities in designated sites. This information can also be used to help inform Habitats Regulations Assessments on the potential impact of activities from new development. SEMS MG members are also encouraged to share these resources more widely and encourage the adoption of best practice by private landowners.

2. SEMS MG members to feed information on activities to the SEMS office throughout the year (sems@hants.gov.uk) to enable the promotion and sharing of good practice throughout the Solent.

3. Trend data for activity change is showing that activities in the Solent are elevated but stable, we need to ascertain whether this is the case or people do not have sufficient data to make a judgement on change (increase/decrease). Next year the SEMS Survey will include a 'no data available' option for respondents when asked about activity changes.

SEMS MG Generic Actions 2 (section 6)

4. NEG to continue to support the Blue Marine Foundation's Solent Seascape Project in identifying how anthropogenic activity pressure can be managed, especially in sensitive sites like bird nesting and roosting areas.

5. All to use the Solent Forum's Biosecurity plans to help prevent the spread of marine invasives species around the Solent.

Next Steps

Solent Marine Sites

1. Approve the content of the Annual Management Report 2024

2. Agree generic actions – section 6.0 of the AMR 2024

3. Suggestions for future improvements in process or format

4. Please inform SEMS Officer of changes to staff and who should be on the SEMS mailing list

5. Make suggestions as to additional people to be included on the strategic stakeholder group (list at: http://solentems.org.uk/sems/ssg/)

6. Feed relevant evidence and reports to the SEMS Office throughout the year and keep on file material for the Annual Survey

7. Bird Aware partners please liaise with the Bird Aware rangers when completing your annual survey returns

Date of Next Meeting

17 September 2025

Via MS Teams

Natural Environment Group Update

SEMS Annual Meeting

18 September 2024

NEG Roles

- Jess Taylor – Natural England, Chair
- Karen McHugh – Natural Environment Group (NEG) Officer
- Biannual meetings November and April
- Delivers SEMS strategic actions

Update on NEG Actions in 2023 SEMS Annual Management Report

- Solent Forum (NEG Secretariat) continues to chair the Solent Recovery working group which is producing the Solent Recovery Plan and a data portal to map pressures and habitats.

- Littering and especially plastics - Clean Solent Shores and Seas (CSSS) hub continues to signpost resources on littering and many other water quality issues.

- NEG has been monitoring the Catchwise project outcomes. The project will report early in 2025.

- The impacts and management options for paddlesports in the Solent (IMP). Chichester Harbour Conservancy are piloting a 2-year survey methodology, and provided year 1 results for NEG. Year two results are expected.

Solent Seascape Recovery Plan: KEY PROJECT

Encompasses - Solent Bird Sensitivity and Activity Mapping (SBS) Project

- The Solent Seascape Project - Seascape Recovery Plan Working Group (chaired by the Solent Forum) will take forward the SBS project.
- Solent Forum gave £30k funding towards the Seascape Recovery Plan.
- ABPmer are designing and populating a data explorer and preparing a State of Nature Report. The Solent Recovery Plan Working Group will co-design management options with stakeholders.

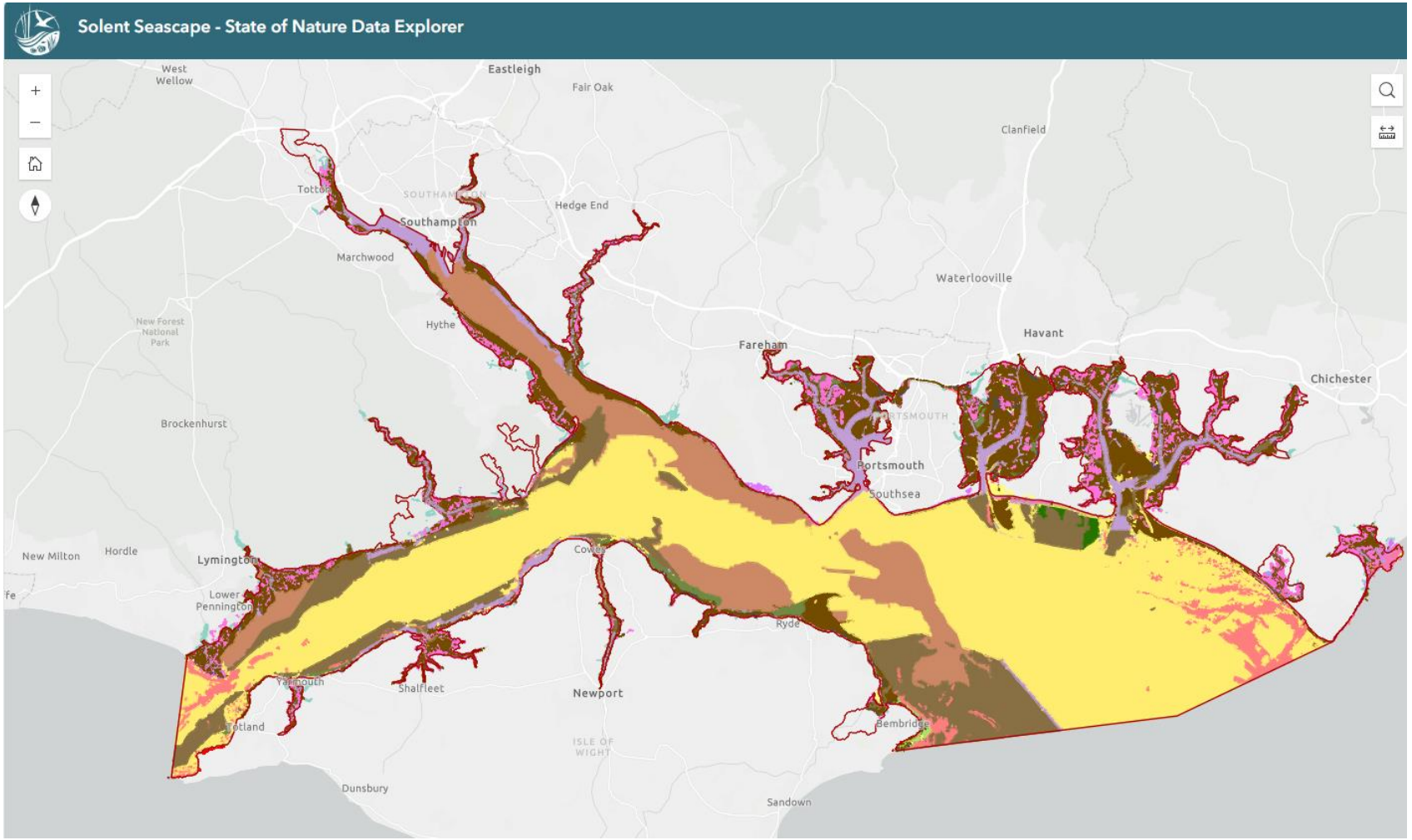
➢ It will set criteria for bird sensitive areas and understand issues of displacement.

➢ It will use current datasets and identify significant gaps. Will include Solent Mudflat Disturbance Project; paddlesports and other non-licensable activities.

➢ It will lead to an evidence based management strategy.

Solent Seascape State of Nature Data Explorer

ABPmer Solent Habitat Map



Clean Solent Shores and Seas (CSSS)

Sectoral Directories: (green is complete)

- Litter
- Microplastics
- Nutrient enrichment (Diffuse and Point Source)
- Polluting contaminants
- Oil pollution
- Non-Native Species Hydrographic and hydromorphological changes
- Acidification

Topic Directories:

- Species and Habitats
- Amenity and Public Health
- Boating
- Ports and Industry
- Farming
- Fisheries and Aquaculture
- Governance and Management

NEG Funded Projects for 2024/25

- Exploring and recording the underwater habitats of Langstone and Chichester Harbours (Southsea Sub aqua club)

- When is a wading bird not a wading bird? The case of the European Starling (UoP)

Questions?