



SEMS Annual Management Group

Minutes of the Meeting – 18 September 2019

1. Chairman's Introduction

Jason Scott (JS), the River Hamble Harbour Master, welcomed everyone to the meeting and said that he was delighted to be able to take over the role of Chairman of the Group.

He thanked Sophie Appleby (SA) from ABP for providing the meeting venue and the refreshments. He noted that there had been a complete change of staff for SEMS in the past year; in addition to a new Chair, Kate Ansell (KA) from the Solent Forum had taken over the role of the SEMS Secretary and Jess Taylor (JT) is the new Natural England representative.

He asked for a round robin introduction and for people to confirm whether they were the correct people from their organisation to represent SEMS; all agreed that they were or would brief colleagues if they were standing in for others. He reminded people to tell the SEMS Office of staff changes.

Action: All to inform the SEMS Office of any staff changes.

2. Attendees and Apologies

A list of attendees is included at the end of the minutes. KA reported that although they couldn't attend, Chichester District Council, Bird Aware Solent and the MMO had all confirmed that they were happy with the 2019 Annual Management Report (AMR).

3. Minutes of the Last meeting

JS went through the minutes of the last meeting and updated attendees on progress with actions from the previous meeting (2018). The following comments were made:

JS noted that the Survey response rate had significantly increased and thanked KA for her work in achieving this improvement.

Jackie Mellan (JM) raised the issue of how water quality should be addressed by SEMS, it was agreed that this important issue would be discussed as a separate Agenda item later in the meeting (see section 6).

JT reported that the Natural England condition assessments for coastal sites will look at terrestrial drivers in addition to marine, which may influence SEMS work in the future, KA asked if she could be briefed on this change.

Action: KA and JT to meet to assess the implications of changes in the drivers for NE condition assessments on SEMS work.

KM reported that no funding has been achieved for the Clean Solent Seas and Shores (CSSS) project, so it has currently been scaled back, to become a signposting service to direct people to relevant information. Under the direction of NEG, she will progress this project next year.

Action: KM/NEG to progress CSSS and report back to SEMS MG 2020.

KA reported to the Group that the Green Blue have launched a new website at the Southampton Boatshow which has lots of useful resources, see: <https://thegreenblue.org.uk/>.

4. Presentation on 2019 AMR

KA presented the findings of the 2019 AMR to the group and explained changes to the format of the report, the presentation is available at: http://www.solentems.org.uk/sems/Annual_Meeting/.

The Group were all supportive of the report and found it clear and easy to use, they particularly liked the highlighting of the mode value in the activity change and impacts tables.

KA clarified that the slide showing key impacts was a summary of both the survey results and the evaluation of impacts by Natural England.

KA thanked JT for all her input into the report by writing the sections on the impacts of activities, particularly the summary of Solent concerns.

5. AMR, 2019 Report Actions

JS went through the AMR report with the attendees, by each activity, and asked for feedback.

Section 4.4 Fishing

Sussex IFCA are proposing a byelaw on netting and trawling which will include Chichester Harbour. This will be recorded in the 2020 AMR. See: <https://www.sussex-ifca.gov.uk/byelaws>.

Southern IFCA are consulting on a new dredge permit byelaw.

Section 4.5 Fishing shore based

Pia Bateman (PB) noted that the MMO have data on the commercial sellers and buyers of bait.

Section 4.6 Grazing

From 2020, this activity will be renamed 'Grazing and Foraging' to monitor seaweed harvesting.

Section 4.7 Land Recreation Other

From 2020, this activity will be renamed 'General Beach Recreation.'

4.8 Land Recreation Dog Walking

Action 4.8.3 on Public Space Protection Orders in Fareham - re-word, "to consider" using such Orders.

Section 4.10 Litter and removal of litter

Once the CSSS project is underway, see if a mechanism can be established for reporting evidence on algal growth around the Solent. Sue Hawley (SH) reported that she has a useful briefing note from the Environment Agency on this topic for the Medina. It may be useful to see if a Solent wide briefing note could be made available.

Action: NEG to explore if the growth of algal mats around the Solent can be centrally recorded.

HWWT are promoting the use of Seabins under the Secrets of the Solent Project. The Environment Agency does not promote their use due to concerns that they can trap eels and sea horses. SA noted that ABP has evidence on seabin usage and she will circulate.

Action: SA to circulate ABP evidence on seabin use (see appendix 1).

Section 4.11 Mooring and Anchoring

Jess Taylor (JT) noted the forthcoming 'Remedies Project' that will look at the impacts from mooring and anchoring on seagrass beds. She will give an update at a future meeting. Louise McCallum asked whether Natural England (NE) have any historical data on where seagrass beds once were in the Solent. JT said there is limited data and the current proposal is to look at extending known seagrass beds. In the Solent, they are particularly looking at installing environmentally friendly moorings in vulnerable areas on the Isle of Wight.

Section 4.14 Recreation Light Aircraft

JT reported that NE believe that drone use is increasing in the Solent and, although not currently of concern, they will be watching this activity to see whether it is impacting on overwintering birds.

Section 4.15 Recreation non-motorised

Louise McCallum asked for clarification on why NE report that this activity is not having an adverse effect. JT replied there is still uncertainty on impacts, we need to monitor this due to paddlesports increasing. Paddlesports users can disturb high tide warden roosts and there are concerns about participants foraging and trampling sensitive habitats.

There group felt there was a role for NEG to support work on blackwater discharge from recreational boating. JS reported that Natural England and the Environment Agency had run a very successful workshop on this topic in summer 2019, which he Chaired.

Action: NEG to discuss and clarify what role it should have with regards to preventing blackwater discharge from recreational boats.

Section 4.17 Slipway and Jetty Cleaning and Maintenance

Alison Fowler clarified that the River Hamble had provided evidence on the amount of algal build up on slipways to the Environment Agency. This evidence was used to help with a bid for grant money to plant cover crops. The action under this topic is not accurate so needs to be removed.

Generic Actions

KA raised the issue that, for Local Authorities, it can be difficult to fill in the annual survey as multiple departments may need to be consulted to obtain information. JT suggested speaking to Bird Aware Solent about their data on recreation. KA will speak to some of the local authorities to see if more

guidance can be given as to the type of proxy data that they already collect that could be used to improve the survey results.

Action: KA to work with Bird Aware and Local Authorities to review proxy data that can be used in the SEMS annual survey.

Activity Trend Data

Dan Young suggested that changes in activities should be recorded as trend data as this would be useful for future monitoring. All supported this proposal.

Action: KA to record datasets for future comparison.

6. Water Quality General Discussion

The group discussed how the issue of water quality should be covered by SEMS. SEMS monitors and evaluates coastal and marine activities in the Solent; the AMR only cover water quality issues directly attributed to those activities, such as black water discharge from boats. It does not cover wider quality issues such as farming practices or SWT discharges, even though these can have a significant impact on SEMS sites.

The group discussed this issue and agreed that it would be useful for SEMS to build better links with the Solent Catchment Partnerships. This would help to facilitate the supply of marine evidence on the impacts of poor water quality on SEMS sites and find out what work is already being undertaken on diffuse pollution and how SEMS/NEG could support it. Catchment Partnership officers could also be invited to NEG meetings when water quality issues are being discussed.

Action: KA and KM to build links to the Solent catchment partnerships and report back to the SEMS Management Group 2020 and at relevant NEG meetings.

7. Promote and Share

Water Quality - Jackie Mellan (JM)

1. JM thanked all those who had sent marine evidence on the impacts of nutrients in the Solent as this makes a real difference to those addressing land management practices.
2. JM reported that a boating and water quality workshop had been held, focusing on the drivers needed to reduce bacterial pollution that impacts shellfish waters, 17 of 18 fail. It looked at how to motivate behavioural change in boating participants and develop a tool kit. A second event is scheduled for January 2020.
3. An Environment Agency national conference had been held in London on Restoring Estuarine and Coastal Habitats (REACH). The national focus is on saltmarsh, seagrass and oysters. JM thinks it would be good to take local action and develop a clear vision, strategy or plan. The EA and NE are planning to get together to discuss this and will then try and involve partners; a workshop is planned for the beginning of December 2019.

Incorporating MCZs into SEMS – Karen McHugh

Karen McHugh (KM) reported that now all the MCZs have been designated, the SEMS secretariat is reviewing whether the MCZ sites in the Solent should be incorporated into the SEMS Management Scheme to cover all Solent Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). A meeting has been scheduled for 1

October on the Isle of Wight to explore this, as the MCZ sites are located adjacent to the Island. If including the MCZs is agreed, the SEMS name will change to Solent Marine Sites.

Louise McCallum asked if there was a total overlap between the existing SEMS sites and the MCZs. KM replied geographically yes this was the case, however they were designated for different reasons.

Ryan Willigers asked who is responsible for the monitoring and reporting of the MCZs. KA replied that the MPA national steering group had produced a paper on the roles and responsibilities of relevant authorities, see: http://www.solentems.org.uk/about/MPA/Duties_on_authorities_in%20relation_to_MPA_management_NSJ_April_2015.pdf. Sue Hawley added that the management measures are not produced until after designation.

JS asked details of the Solent MCZs be linked to the SEMS website. KA replied that this information was available at: <http://www.solentems.org.uk/about/MCZ/>.

8. Date of next meeting

The group will next meet on 16 September 2020.

Attendees

Jason	Scott	River Hamble Harbour Authority
Kate	Ansell	Solent Forum (SEMS Secretariat)
Karen	McHugh	Solent Forum
Jackie	Mellan	Environment Agency
Sophie	Appleby	ABP
Ian	Barker	New Forest NPA
Ryan	Willegers	Lymington Harbour Commissioners
Lindsay	McCulloch	Southampton City Council
Audrey	Jones	Sussex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
Louise	McCallum	Langstone Harbour Board
Dan	Young	Portsmouth City Council
Jess	Taylor	Natural England
Karen	Eastley	Test Valley Borough Council
Pia	Bateman	Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
Grace	Booth	Isle of Wight Council
Dan	Young	Portsmouth City Council
Alison	Fowler	River Hamble Harbour Authority
Sue	Hawley	Yarmouth/Cowes Harbours

Appendix 1. ABP Experience of Using Seabins

- A standard Seabin is suitable for floating docks/pontoons but not for fixed quayside
- The weight of the bag once full can reach 20 kg, this requires lifting out of the water in order to empty the contents
- It requires regular emptying, which may be up to three times a day
- The bin will capture organic matter as well as plastics, so the contents will need sorting to split out plastics for recycling
- Regular cleaning of the bin **and** the internal float is essential as mussels/weed/tubeworm grows very quickly and hinders the performance
- It is only suitable for calmer waters – areas with fast currents/wave heights above 0.3m will not be suitable