



**Solent Marine Sites (SEMS)
Annual Survey Report, 2026**

**PREPARED BY THE SOLENT FORUM ON BEHALF OF THE SEMS
MANAGEMENT GROUP**



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Solent Marine Sites Annual Survey Report 2026

1. Introduction

This publication 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 2026. It is prepared by the Solent Forum, the Coastal Partnership for the Solent, in its role as the SEMS Secretariat. The purpose of this survey is to:

- Monitor changes in sixteen non-licensable marine and coastal activities that take place within the Solent's designated sites.
- Identify 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 are 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 management measures and actions for discussion at the SEMS Annual Management Group meeting. All reports are published on the [SEMS website](#).

The activities surveyed mirror the activity categories used in Natural England's [Conservation Advice packages for Marine Protected Areas](#). This enables cross referencing of the survey findings to the impacts of activities as published in this Advice.

Locations and details on the Solent Marine Sites can be found on [Natural England's Designated Sites System](#). The site boundaries can be viewed spatially on [Defra's MAGIC map](#).

2. Survey Respondents

All but one of the 31 Relevant Authorities who were invited to complete the 2026 SEMS survey responded. Table 1 shows a list of respondents. Table 2 identifies the types of Relevant Authorities.

Table 1. SEMS Survey Respondents	
Associated British Ports (ABP)	¹ Natural England (NE)
Beaulieu Enterprises (BRM)	New Forest District Council (NFDC)
Chichester District Council (CDC)	New Forest National Park Authority (NFNPA)
Chichester Harbour Conservancy (ChHC)	Portsmouth City Council (PCC)
Cowes Harbour Commissioners (CoHC)	Portsmouth International Port (PiP)
Eastleigh Borough Council (EBC)	River Hamble Harbour Authority (RHHA)
Fareham Borough Council (FBC)	Southampton City Council (SCC)
Gosport Borough Council (GBC)	Southern IFCA (SoIFCA)
Hampshire County Council (HCC)	Southern Water (SW)
Havant Borough Council (HBC)	Sussex IFCA (SxIFCA)
Isle of Wight Council (IoWC)	Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC)
KHM Portsmouth (KHM)	West Sussex County Council (WSCC)
Langstone Harbour Board (LHB)	Wightlink (WL)
Lymington Harbour Commissioners (LHC)	Winchester City Council (WCC)
Marine Management Organisation (MMO)	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners (YHC)
<i>No Response: Environment Agency (EA)</i>	
<i>¹Natural England respond to the Survey as the manager of the North Solent National Nature Reserve (NNR). Their position on all the activities is built into the subsequent Annual Management Report.</i>	

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

Government bodies	2
Harbour Authority	8
IFCA	2
Local Authority	13
Other	2
Private Company	2

3. Aggregated Activity Data

Section 3 shows the aggregated survey response data for each activity. 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 Activities that fall within the jurisdiction of SEMS Management Group members

Table 3 illustrates how many Relevant Authorities recorded that a particular activity takes place within their jurisdiction.

Table 3. Percentage of Relevant Authorities with an Activity in their Jurisdiction		
Activity	Percentage	Count
Accidental vessel discharges/emissions including oil spill and clean-up	48%	14
Boat Repair and Maintenance	41%	12
Fishing (including shellfisheries)	41%	12
Fishing (shore-based activities)	66%	19
General Beach Recreation	59%	17
Grazing and Foraging	28%	8
Land recreation (incl. walking with dogs)	59%	17
Littering and removal of litter	66%	19
Mooring and Anchoring	52%	15
Operation of coastal flood and erosion risk management schemes	55%	16
Operation of ports and harbours (maintenance of infrastructure)	52%	15
Recreation - light aircraft	31%	9
Recreation - non-motorised watercraft	69%	20
Recreation - powerboating or sailing with an engine	62%	18
Slipway and jetty cleaning and maintenance	48%	14
Wildfowling	21%	6

3.2 Changes Recorded in Activity Levels

Respondents were asked whether, since the last survey in spring 2025, each activity had increased, decreased, had no change or they had no data. Table 4 summarises the data. The mode value is shaded green. 'Don't know' responses recorded where participants do not have enough data to make a judgement.

Table 4. Summary of reported changes in activity levels from spring 2025 to spring 2026					
Activity	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Total Responses
Accidental vessel discharges/emissions including oil spill and clean-up	1	0	10	3	14
Boat Repair and Maintenance	1	0	8	3	12
Fishing (including shellfisheries)	0	2	6	4	12
Fishing (shore-based activities)	1	1	8	9	19
General Beach Recreation	1	0	9	7	17
Grazing and Foraging	0	0	7	2	9
Land recreation (incl. walking with dogs)	0	0	11	6	17
Littering and removal of litter	2	1	11	5	19
Mooring and Anchoring	0	1	11	3	15
Operation of coastal flood and erosion risk management schemes	1	0	11	4	16
Operation of ports and harbours (maintenance of infrastructure)	1	0	12	2	15
Recreation - light aircraft	0	1	3	5	9
Recreation - non-motorised watercraft	2	2	8	8	20
Recreation - powerboating or sailing with an engine	1	3	9	5	18
Slipway and jetty cleaning and maintenance	1	0	11	2	14
Wildfowling	0	0	4	2	6

3.3 Activity Impacts on Designated Sites

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

Table 5a. Activities Impacting on Designated Sites by Total Responses				
Activity	Yes	No	Total Responses	Org Names (where Yes)
Accidental vessel discharges/emissions including oil spill and clean-up	2	12	14	ABP, ChHC
Boat Repair and Maintenance	1	11	12	ChHC
Fishing (including shellfisheries)	3	9	12	ABP, GBC, ChHC
Fishing (shore-based activities)	6	13	19	ABP, EBC, SxIFCA, IOWC, FBC, ChHC
General Beach Recreation	8	9	17	HCC, EBC, PCC, WCC, NE, IOWC, FBC, ChHC
Grazing and Foraging	2	6	8	IOWC, ChHC
Land recreation (incl. walking with dogs)	14	3	17	HCC, EBC, LHB, PCC, CDC, WCC, GBC, NE, WSCC, IOWC, FBC, NFNPA, ChHC, SCC
Littering and removal of litter	11	8	19	ABP, EBC, LHC, LHB, PCC, NE, CoHC, IOWC, FBC, ChHC, SCC
Mooring and Anchoring	5	10	15	LHB, FBC, ChHC, MMO, SCC
Operation of coastal flood and erosion risk management schemes	8	8	16	LHC, LHB, PCC, CDC, NE, CoHC, IOWC, ChHC
Operation of ports and harbours (maintenance of infrastructure)	2	13	15	YHC, ChHC
Recreation - light aircraft	1	8	9	ChHC
Recreation - non-motorised watercraft	11	9	20	HCC, ABP, EBC, LHB, WCC, GBC, NE, IOWC, FBC, ChHC, MMO
Recreation - powerboating or sailing with an engine	9	9	18	ABP, EBC, LHB, WCC, GBC, IOWC, FBC, ChHC, MMO
Slipway and jetty cleaning and maintenance	0	14	14	
Wildfowling	2	4	6	HCC, ChHC

Table 5b. Activities Impacting on Designated Sites by Total Responses

Activity	Yes	No	Total Responses	Percentage yes
Land recreation (incl. walking with dogs)	14	3	17	82%
Littering and removal of litter	11	8	19	58%
Recreation - non-motorised watercraft	11	9	20	55%
Operation of FCERM	8	8	16	50%
Recreation - powerboating or sailing with an engine	9	9	18	50%
General Beach Recreation	8	9	17	47%
Mooring and Anchoring	5	10	15	33%
Wildfowling	2	4	6	33%
Fishing (shore-based activities)	6	13	19	32%
Fishing (including shellfisheries)	3	9	12	25%
Grazing and Foraging	2	6	8	25%
Accidental vessel discharges	2	12	14	14%
Operation of ports and harbours	2	13	15	13%
Recreation - light aircraft	1	8	9	11%
Boat Repair and Maintenance	1	11	12	8%
Slipway and jetty cleaning and maintenance	0	14	14	0%

4. Individual Activity Details

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
Change over 2025/26	1	0	10	3	14
Is the activity impacting on designated sites?					
	Yes	No			
	2	12			14

Respondent Comments

Respondent	Comments
LHC	Increase from two to eight incidents reported. All were minor believed to be from bilge pumps or contaminated storm water runoff.
LHB	<p>Accidental vessel discharges within Langstone Harbour remain relatively infrequent and are typically small scale in nature, involving minor releases of fuel residues, lubricants, bilge water, or other operational fluids from recreational craft. These events are short-lived and patchy, with rapid tidal exchange helping to disperse pollutants.</p> <p>More significant pressures to water quality arise from wastewater discharges and highway runoff entering the harbour, which remain two of the most substantial sources of contamination for the site. Wastewater discharges, particularly when not treated to full stage, can introduce nutrients, chemicals, hydrocarbons, and other pollutants into the harbour. Highways runoff, particularly from the A27 corridor and Eastern Road may also be contributing contaminants such as oils, metals, and microplastics into the harbour, although further evidence gathering required. These inputs are likely to have in-combination effects with other pressures acting on SEMS features.</p> <p>LHB management measures include: - operation and upkeep of the Oil Spill Contingency Plan (OSCP), routine training and exercising of OSCP procedures by Harbour staff several times per year, maintaining an up to date Waste</p>

	<p>Management Plan, immediate investigation of pollution reports by Harbour Officers, with follow up actions and review of internal procedures, engagement with statutory agencies when vessel-related or land-based pollution incidents occur.</p> <p>Overall, marine incidents remain low, but land-based inputs represent an ongoing concern for the ecological condition of the harbour. It is not possible to prevent all discharges, but the Harbour Authority maintains robust response arrangements to minimise impacts. While most small-scale spills are manageable and short-lived, a major incident involving fuel or chemicals could have severe consequences for SPA features and would require rapid, coordinated implementation of the oil spill contingency plan. Continued liaison with water companies and environmental regulators remains important to address the wider issue of wastewater and urban runoff entering the harbour.</p>
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.
ChHC	Oil spills/accidental discharges from within marinas. Impacts of storm overflow WWT plant release causes eutrophication across the harbour but particularly in the upper parts of the channels. This is also cause by farm runoff and groundwater seepage.

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
Change over 2025/26	1	0	8	3	12
Is the activity impacting on designated sites?					
	Yes	No			
	1	11			12

Respondent Comments

Respondent	Comments
LHB	While vessel owners are still encouraged to take their vessels to a boatyard for repairs, LHB have begun to improve shoreside facilities for vessel owners to conduct maintenance. There is a process of continued improvements to take place in order to improve facilities and reduce potential impact on SEMS, including a bunded washdown facilities to minimise water quality impacts.

Respondent	Comments
	<p>Boat repair and maintenance activity within Langstone occurs on a small scale, with most works taking place in yards outside the Authority's direct control. Typical activities include minor hull cleaning, routine servicing, and small repairs carried out afloat or during short periods ashore for launching and recovery. Given the low level of activity, environmental impacts are suspected to be minimal. Occasional risks include the release of antifouling residues, paint flakes, or small quantities of oils and lubricants, but these incidents are generally confined to individual vessels. Southsea Marina is still a relatively small-scale boatyard.</p> <p>Harbour Patrol Officers maintain a presence in the main boating season and routinely advise users on best practice for maintenance, including avoiding scraping or cleaning hulls in the water or on intertidal areas. Any pollution concerns are dealt with in line with the Harbour's existing spill response procedures. Larger commercial vessels are taken to dry-dock facilities, outside of the Solent EMS, to conduct maintenance and repairs.</p>
PCC	Boat repair establishments are located at multiple sites around Portsmouth Harbour.
ChHC	Micro fibres from boat paint and the ongoing use of antifoulants can build up in marine organisms and affect water quality.

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
Change over 2025/26	0	2	6	4	12
Is the activity impacting on designated sites?					
	Yes	No			
	3	9			12

Respondent Comments

Respondent	Comments
YHC	Fishing boats went out less frequently.

Respondent	Comments
SoIFCA	<p>Overall fishing activity remains consistent throughout the Solent, with moderate levels of activity in the scallop fishery and a slight increase in activity targeting the manila clam fishery due to the apparent high productivity of this fishery. The bivalve fisheries within the Solent are managed by conditions for a Category A permit under the Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw.</p> <p>The scallop fishery continues to occur in beds east of Ryde and Portsmouth, primarily outside of the SEMS. The manila clam fishery is focused on beds in Ashlett creek and off Hythe in Southampton Water, as well as wider areas of Southampton Water and Portsmouth Harbour.</p> <p>The links below provide further information on the surveys which Southern IFCA run in the Solent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bivalve Survey, which occurs biannually and looks at Catch Per Unit Effort for Common Cockle, American Hardshell clams, and Manila clams. • The King Scallop survey, which looks at Catch Per Unit Effort across the Solent tri-annually (Solent Dredge Permit). • The Native Oyster survey, monitors the native oyster population within the Solent and the Harbours every two years (Solent Dredge Permit). • The Small Fish Survey, gathers data on juvenile fish populations biannually in Yarmouth, the River Hamble, and Christchurch (Net Fisheries). • The Whelk Survey, gathers information on the population of whelks within the Solent in the Spring of each year (Pot & Trap Fisheries). <p>The Net fishing byelaw, introduced in 2023, 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) or permitting (Net Fishing Permit) 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.</p> <p>Maps and coordinates for these areas can be found within the Net Fishing Byelaw on Southern IFCA’s webpage. In 2025, Southern IFCA’s Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 was signed off by the Secretary of State, extending areas of protection from bottom towed fishing gears to sensitive habitats in the district. Further information can be found on the IFCA website at: BTFG-Byelaw-2023-signed.pdf.</p>
EBC	<p>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, as is likely in Southampton water. Incidental capture of salmonids in estuarine nets is likely and even if fish are subsequently released there are still likely impacts on</p>

Respondent	Comments
	<p>survivorship and reproductive success. In my opinion there should be no permitted netting within Southampton water to protect the Hamble, Test and Itchen populations.</p>
LHB	<p>Commercial fishing activity within Langstone Harbour is very limited, and most effort is small-scale and low intensity. Activities include static gear such as pots and traps, occasional set nets, recreational hand gathering, and rod and line angling from vessels. There has been no recorded instance of demersal trawling, hydraulic dredging, or pelagic netting within the last year.</p> <p>Potting and netting effort is mostly concentrated in the southern harbour, where creeks provide safe access. Seasonal peaks, especially recreational angling, peaks in the summer months when conditions are more favourable. Static gear poses limited seabed abrasion, but lost or abandoned gear can present entanglement risks to both wildlife and vessels. Environmental risk from angling is generally low, though occasional issues arise relating to discarded tackle. Direct engagement with fishers takes place if gear placement risks navigational or environmental impacts.</p> <p>Fishing activity within Langstone remains low-intensity and is generally compatible with the site's conservation objectives. Continued monitoring is important to ensure that static gear does not expand into more sensitive areas, particularly upper intertidal zones supporting SPA foraging. Lost gear remains an occasional issue, and collaborative initiatives with local fishers e.g. gear retrieval via Fishing for Litter may help reduce risks. There is the odd occasion of small groups indiscriminately catching and retaining undersized fish - these instances are reported to sIFCA for follow up. One of these instances resulted in a successful prosecution by sIFCA.</p>
GBC	<p>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.</p>
SxIFCA	<p>Bottom-towed fishing gear, including trawling and dredging (for both oysters and scallops), is prohibited throughout Chichester Harbour under existing Sussex IFCA byelaws. Based on Sussex IFCA sightings data and officer intelligence, fishing activity within the harbour is low intensity. Observed and known activities include recreational angling and occasional netting. The Fixed Engines Byelaw restricts the use of fixed nets (excluding fyke nets) between 1 May and 30 September across the harbour entrance (East Head to Sandy Point), providing seasonal protection during key periods. Potting activity is not commonly observed but has the potential to occur, primarily in the form of pot storage rather than active fishing. Overall, management measures currently in place (including gear prohibitions, seasonal restrictions and permit controls) act to limit spatial overlap and intensity of fishing activity, thereby reducing potential impacts on designated habitats and species within the site.</p> <p>Sussex IFCA completed a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for Chichester Harbour in 2025 to assess the effects of fishing activity on designated features.</p>

Respondent	Comments
	The assessment was reviewed and agreed by Natural England in December 2025. The HRA concluded that fishing activity within the harbour is low intensity and, in combination with existing management measures, does not result in an adverse effect on the integrity of the site. As such, no additional management measures are currently required to protect designated habitats and species.
CoHC	One commercial fisherman based in Cowes, but fishes outside our area.
SW	On going water quality projects including for bathing water quality and shellfisheries.
ChHC	Ongoing likely disturbance to bird roosting/nesting sites in the summer months. Also discarded fishing line causing entrapment.

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
Change over 2025/26	1	1	8	9	19
Is the activity impacting on designated sites?					
	Yes	No			
	6	13			19

Respondent Comments

Respondent	Comments
HCC	Level of fishing on seawalls appears to have decreased since covid.
YHC	More people are fishing from land where they are not allowed to fish from. These are individuals not members of a club and can be quite abusive when asked to move. This could have a small local impact on this part of the site due to the trampling of saltmarsh and bird disturbance.
SoIFCA	Shore-based fishing activity in the Solent covers a range of activities including rod and line angling and the collection of bivalve species such as Pacific oysters (<i>Crassostrea gigas</i>). Levels of activity for these fishing methods remain consistent

Respondent	Comments
	<p>within the Solent, as do the areas where the activities are occurring (Langstone Harbour, Hayling Island, Hill Head). Southern IFCA currently provides management on shore-based fishing activities through a suite of byelaws.</p> <p>Shore Gathering includes 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.</p> <p>In December 2024, Southern IFCA submitted the Shore Gathering Byelaw and the Fishing for Cockles (Amendment) Byelaw to the MMO/Defra for their QA process. The Shore Gathering Byelaw proposes the introduction of defined year-round prohibited areas, summer closure areas (closed 1st March to 31st August), and winter closure areas (closed 1st November to 31st March), within which shore gathering activities will be prohibited. The shore gathering activities covered by the Byelaw include shellfish hand gathering, mechanical harvesting of shellfish, bait digging, crab tiling, shrimp push-netting, and seaweed harvesting. The Fishing for Cockles Byelaw has been amended to remove provisions relating to prescribed methods of harvesting, equipment specifications for hand picking of cockles and the construction/operation of a dredge in relation to fishing for cockles. The Byelaw maintains existing provisions relating to Minimum Conservation Reference Size for cockles and a closed season, applicable to all harvesting methods except use of a dredge in Poole Harbour.</p> <p>During the review undertaken for these byelaws, a Seaweed Harvesting Code of Conduct was also written, which will come into effect when the Shore Gathering Byelaw is ratified. Further information is available on the Southern IFCA website under Ongoing Reviews.</p>
EBC	<p>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. However, in general shore-based fishing is unlikely to be a significant negative factor on SEMs compared to other activities.</p>
LHC	<p>Limited rod and line angling and crabbing. Very limited bait digging at upper harbour limits.</p>
LHB	<p>Shore based activity in Langstone Harbour includes small-scale bait digging, hand gathering of shellfish, and rod and line angling. Activity is typically concentrated in easily accessible areas and increases during warmer months, but overall levels remain low and dispersed. Based on current observations, these activities are not having a significant impact on SEMS features. Disturbance and habitat disruption are minimal and generally confined to very small areas. Bait digging pressure appears low, compared with other Solent locations.</p> <p>Management measures are limited to engagement, awareness messaging, and ongoing monitoring of activity levels. Shore-based fishing appears compatible with the conservation of the SEMS site. Effort is low-intensity and no emerging issues or pressure hotspots have been identified over the past year. sIFCA Shore Gathering</p>

Respondent	Comments
	Byelaw has identified areas of prohibition for the collection of resource, based on spatial habitat features. Believe this currently to be sat with SoS before being formally adopted.
RHHA	For bait digging, very little observation of bait digging gangs. Individuals still present, but still not the large scale in the last couple of years that we previously saw over many years.
SxIFCA	<p>Hand gathering and bait digging are known to occur within intertidal areas of Chichester Harbour. These activities take place year-round, with increased intensity during spring tides and in the summer months when access conditions are most favourable. Potential impacts include disturbance to intertidal habitats (e.g. sediment abrasion and trampling), removal of target and non-target species, and disturbance to overwintering and feeding bird species.</p> <p>Sussex IFCA has implemented management measures through the Hand Gathering (Restrictions and Permitting) Byelaw 2021, which introduces spatial restrictions, bag limits and permitting requirements to manage effort and reduce impacts.</p> <p>Activity is monitored through routine patrols across the district, supported by the use of drone surveys to better understand the spatial extent and intensity of bait digging activity.</p> <p>Shore-based activities were assessed as part of the Chichester Harbour Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) completed by Sussex IFCA in 2025. The assessment concluded that, given the recent introduction of spatial restrictions and monitoring through a permit system in the Hand Gathering (Restrictions and Permitting) Byelaw 2021, these activities do not result in an adverse effect on the integrity of the site.</p> <p>SxIFCA intend to continue monitoring bait gathering activities using catch returns and drone surveys and review the results to identify if there are additional unforeseen impacts.</p>
NE	There is the occasional angler within the permitted area of the North Solent National Nature Reserve.
CoHC	Small scale, leisure fishermen from shore/pontoons.
IOWC	Litter - discarded fishing gear.
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.
SCC	Physical disturbance to mudflat habitat and disturbance of birds feeding on the mudflats. Report commercial bait diggers to environmental health and IFCA when notified.

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 bugging).

Activity	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Total Responses
Change over 2025/26	1	0	9	7	17
Is the activity impacting on designated sites?					
	Yes	No			
	8	9			17

Respondent Comments

Respondent	Comments
HCC	Ongoing disturbance of breeding waders on Hurst Spit. New project centred on Hurst is being led by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust aiming to reduce impacts of disturbance by installing fencing and interpretation on the spit.
YHC	Increased slightly over last summer as the weather was much better than previous year. No issues though as it is a small, controlled beach area with limited access.
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.
LHB	Langstone is not overly popular for general beach recreation - the intertidal area is largely inaccessible and muddy habitat. Other areas in proximity to Langstone are more susceptible to this activity i.e. Gunner Point, Hayling Island.
PCC	Impacts involve disturbance of designated seabirds, particularly through the summer months through beach goers on the foreshore.
CDC	With the exception of East Head, the beaches in our district are outside the SEMS sites.
WCC	WCC is a member of the Bird Aware Solent Partnership which mitigates recreational disturbance across the Solent region. The Upper Hamble is the only part of the SPA that falls within Winchester's district.

Respondent	Comments
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.
NE	This is a regular pressure in the areas of the North Solent NNR with public access and occurs year-round. There are regular patrols by staff or volunteers to observe visitor behaviour and assess any impacts on the ecosystem. The greatest pressure noted is on breeding birds utilising the beach for nesting.
IOWC	Recreational pressure including wildlife disturbance and litter. Busiest beaches for all associated activities) include Ryde, Seaview, St Helens Duver, Seagrove and Priory Bay. Island population increases in summer months, but beaches busy all year round. The Isle of Wight Council, in collaboration with Solent Bird Aware, is working to mitigate increased recreational pressure on SPA through new housing development. Also, the Sanderling Recovery Project, a joint effort between Isle of Wight Council, Ryde Town Council, Bird Aware Solent, Natural England, Common Space and Ryde Marina, has been undertaken to protect the Ryde Sands and Wootton Creek SSSI. The project is reducing recreational disturbance and improving habitat conditions for Sanderlings, Ringed Plovers and other shorebirds that rely on the specific stretch of coast found around the hovercraft in Ryde as a refuge. Includes a targeted communication plan, including signage.
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	On going projects to address water quality - including the Three Harbours project and Pathfinder storm over flow reductions programme.
ChHC	Impacts at busy sites such as East Head.

4.6 Grazing and Foraging

Activity includes grazing on saltmarsh or intertidal areas.

Activity	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Total Responses
Change over 2025/26	0	0	7	2	9
Is the activity impacting on designated sites?					
	Yes	No			
	2	7			9

Respondent Comments

Respondent	Comments
HCC	Ponies graze some sections of the seawall at Lymington and on the foreshore at Tanners Lane. No obvious impact on the SEMS sites.
SoIFCA	The only aspect which may fall within Southern IFCA jurisdiction is seaweed harvesting. Following a review of seaweed harvesting as part of the Southern IFCA Shore Gathering Review finalised in 2024, a Seaweed Harvesting Code of Conduct was written which will come into effect at the point that the proposed Shore Gathering Byelaw is ratified by the Secretary of State. This is an activity which has the ability to be managed by multiple authorities which was considered as part of the review.
NE	There is grazing activity from livestock that occurs throughout the North Solent NNR, including the intertidal and saltmarsh areas.
IOWC	Positive ongoing impacts - grazing at Hersey Nature Reserve by sheep and cows maintains the short, varied grassland structure that many of the site's wetland and wading birds rely on.
ChHC	Potential for disturbance to birds and other wildlife from hand gathering of shellfish on the intertidal and bait digging in the channels. Foraging of saltmarsh plants.

4.7 Land recreation (incl. walking with 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
Change over 2025/26	0	0	11	6	17
Is the activity impacting on designated sites?					
	Yes	No			
	14	3			17

Respondent Comments

Respondent	Comments
HCC	High numbers of dog walkers on Lymington to Keyhaven reserve and Hurst. Possibly some reduction in disturbance incidents due to signage and visible presence of Bird Aware Solent staff but still persistent offenders. Fencing installed across Oxey Marsh to stop people and dogs from entering certain areas.

Respondent	Comments
YHC	Bird Aware have been working in this area and have reported issue with one dog owner who lets their dogs run on the saltmarsh. Local landowner has reported other incidents further upstream but currently unknown if it is the same owner in both areas.
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). While we have no data to support, any general increase in dog population is likely to translate into more impact.
LHC	Dog walking occurs on public footpaths in some parts of the harbour where the seawall abuts the foreshore.
LHB	<p>Hotspots of activity at accessible locations i.e. free car parks, refreshment facilities, toilets etc. such as Farlington Marsh, West Hayling LNR, The Kench, and Hayling Seafront. Much activity is seasonal and takes place April-September/October. Improvements and marketing of KCIII Coastal Path may increase access at these locations. Impacts include noise and physical disturbance through straying off main footpaths, or footpaths being potentially too close to sensitive features. As a Harbour Authority, we have no powers to regulate this shoreside activity.</p> <p>Land recreation (including dog walking) remains an activity incredibly challenging to manage effectively across the SEMS sites. While high levels, or inappropriate, use can lead to disturbance pressures, it is also important that people continue to enjoy and value these coastal spaces so they can develop a sense of stewardship and appreciate the importance of protecting and managing them. While engagement and awareness-raising initiatives, such as those delivered by Bird Aware Solent, aim to promote responsible behaviour change on the ground. Ranger capacity is limited, relative to the scale of the coastline, and therefore impacts can still occur in sensitive locations despite regular messaging. Our focus remains on supporting approaches that encourage people to value and respect the harbour's environment, while recognising that behaviour-led solutions are only partially effective without complementary management measures from the relevant access authorities and landowners. Continued partnership working is important, but further strategic interventions may be needed to manage cumulative pressures in the long term - i.e. rerouting or formalising footpaths to increase separation from SPA features, creation of viewing platforms or defined 'destination points' to concentrate activity away from sensitive shorelines, car park planning to limit or relocate parking close to hotspots, seasonal dog on lead zones near breeding and/or roosting sites.</p> <p>It would be incredibly helpful to have more accurate footfall data for coastal sites around the Harbour, appreciating Bird Aware has some data, but this is not reflective of the entire picture. King Charles III Coast Path footpath, now established, routes across some sites that are highly vulnerable to disturbance i.e. West Hayling LNR lagoons. Now ratified, it is challenging to reroute the path along a less disruptive track.</p>

Respondent	Comments
PCC	Recreation, particularly dog walking is continuing to have an effect on wading and overwintering birds which form the designated features for the Chichester and Langstone Harbours Ramsar/SPA and Portsmouth Harbour Ramsar/SPA. The nature of impact is year-round but particularly prevalent during the winter season when high numbers of waterfowl are present in the area. Portsmouth City Council are a partner to Bird Aware Solent which mitigates the impact of recreational disturbance on SPA/RAMSAR and supporting habitats.
CDC	Although Mitigation through Bird Aware Solent is effective in limiting increases in this activity due to new development, the level remains elevated due to increased population before the BAS project began and also the increase in dog ownership post Covid.
WCC	WCC is a member of the Bird Aware Solent Partnership which mitigates recreational disturbance across the Solent region. The Upper Hamble is the only part of the SPA that falls within Winchester's district.
GBC	<p>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.</p> <p>While the Borough Council has 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 - work remains ongoing since 2025 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 is aiming to deliver the new dog walking park within the 2026/27 financial year. The Council remains an active member of Bird Aware Solent.</p>
NE	The most common land recreation in the area is dog walking. This is a regular pressure in the areas of the North Solent NNR with public access and occurs year-round. There are regular patrols by staff or volunteers to observe visitor behaviour and assess any impacts on the ecosystem.
WSCC	Dogs off lead disturbing feeding and roosting waders and wildfowl. Intensity not known and impacts likely to depend on other factors such as weather conditions and time of year. Impacts observed at Chichester Harbour generally but notably West Wittering & Fishbourne Creek. This remains the case as for previous years.

Respondent	Comments
IOWC	<p>Dogs on beaches disturb wildlife, particularly wintering birds. Impacts on sanderlings has become noticed on Ryde Sands SSSI over the last few years. The Sanderling Recovery Project is a joint effort between Isle of Wight Council, Ryde Town Council, Bird Aware Solent, Natural England, Common Space and Ryde Marina to protect the Ryde Sands and Wootton Creek SSSI, a crucial coastal refuge for wintering birds. The project is reducing recreational disturbance and improving habitat conditions for Sanderlings, Ringed Plovers and other shorebirds that rely on the specific stretch of coast found around the hovercraft in Ryde. This is being done with a targeted communication plan, including signage.</p> <p>Dog walking is restricted seasonally on some beaches via Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) (dog exclusion zones) between 1 May and 30 September - however this does not benefit wintering birds. There may be an opportunity to suggest new PSPOs when they are next reviewed for reinstatement.</p>
FBC	<p>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.</p>
NFNPA	<p>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. Due to lack of any updated 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 for other designated interest (e.g.in the past when NE produced unit level assessments, unit 5 north Solent SSSI at lepe). There are also potential in-combination disturbance effects with other human activities. Access does form part of the second purposes of National Parks (if enjoyment and understanding is interpreted as merely being physical access). The Authority convenes an Access Forum for the area – Natural England has input to this. The Park's Recreation Management Strategy is now beyond its intended operational period and due to lack of resources its facilitation has been suspended. Likely that the Partnership Plan for the National Park area will see this being reviewed and stakeholders will identify other ways to address.</p> <p>Some specific site data may now be available through the Hurst Spit Recreation Disturbance Project being coordinated by Wildlife Trust (mainly breeding birds), part funded through Bird Aware. As in last year, Milford on Sea community group (WINGS) have highlight various disturbance events including on-foot recreation and are continuing to advocate for a more formally recognised sanctuary area on Hurst Spit.</p>
ChHC	<p>Continued regular impacts at busy sites such as East Head.</p>
SCC	<p>Disturbance to birds feeding on the mudflats at Weston Shore. Rangers talk to dog walkers if they encounter them.</p>

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
Change over 2025/26	2	1	11	5	19
Is the activity impacting on designated sites?					
	Yes	No			
	11	8			19

Respondent Comments

Respondent	Comments
HCC	A lot of the litter was left by fisherman on the seawall or on offshore cheniers at Tanners Lane. Decrease in fishing activity has resulted in less litter.
YHC	Not a major issue, some organised litter picking at least twice a year but no other information on any informal litter picking and no reports of an increase in litter.
ABP	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.
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.
LHC	Plastics and other man-made litter washing ashore on the SSSI. LHC operate periodic litter picking to clear up.
LHB	Litter within Langstone Harbour originates primarily from land-based sources including wind-blown waste, drainage outfalls, and material entering the harbour from surrounding urban areas. Additional inputs arise from recreational vessels, although this tends to be low-level and opportunistic rather than deliberate disposal. Common items include plastics, food packaging, fishing related debris, microplastics, and general flotsam. Accumulation is often affected by wind

Respondent	Comments
	<p>direction and tidal cycles, with strandlines forming along Eastney Lake, West Hayling, and other sheltered margins.</p> <p>The environmental impacts of litter are variable - plastics and microplastics can be persistent and may pose ingestion risks to wildlife, while larger debris items can entangle birds. The Friends of Langstone Harbour undertake an annual litter survey for Langstone Harbour, which shows the prevalence of litter items has been on a declining trend in recent years. Overall, litter levels in the harbour remain moderately low and are managed through routine removal.</p> <p>End of life/abandoned vessels can pose a serious marine litter risk, and we have been running a programme of periodic removal over the last four years, resulting in the disposal of approximately 80 vessels. As of March 2026, there are less than ten vessels that now require removal, four of these will be removed by April 2026. Littering within the harbour appears to be driven largely by external, land-based inputs rather than by vessel users and, anecdotally, levels fluctuate with weather patterns and tidal conditions. While routine beach cleans and patrol removal helps manage this issue, microplastic pollution remains a growing concern, reflecting broader regional and global trends. Continued partnership working with local authorities, volunteer groups, and marine organisations is important to maintain regular clearance and to promote responsible waste behaviour across the wider catchment. Opportunities to improve understanding of litter pathways - particularly following heavy rainfall events - may support future targeted interventions.</p>
RHHA	Regular litter picks take place along accessible foreshores by established volunteer groups. Litter volumes often correlate to wet weather events and more run off from land to the river.
PCC	Litter from beaches adjacent to designated sites can enter the sea and impact on adjacent habitats and wildlife. Portsmouth City Council provide facilities such as bins for disposal of rubbish and will carry out cleaning of larger bits of waste. Our Countryside Officer team, who manage both our coastal and inland sites of importance for nature conservation, carry out litter picks of varying frequency, including specific beach cleans once or twice a year. PCC are also aware of a number of voluntary organisations who carry out beach cleans of the coast in the Portsmouth area, although none of these are affiliated with Portsmouth City Council.
CDC	Three incidents where loosening of container restraints prior to entering ports, to save time in port, has led to loss of containers from ships. This has resulted in foam insulation, metal debris and organic material being washed up and beach clearance undertaken. Fortunately, the materials washed ashore outside of Chichester Harbour and although Medmerry compensatory habitat and Pagham Harbour were impacted, these sites are not within SEMS. However similar incidents could easily impact the SEMS sites in future, and we would be interested to hear how Port authorities intend to tackle such risky practices.
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

Respondent	Comments
	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.
NE	There is little land-based litter, however a large quantity washes up on the tide including microplastics, impacting intertidal habitats.
BRM	We provide a pump out free of charge. Hazardous waste disposal.
CoHC	Patrol Officers have nets on the patrol boats to collect floating litter in the river. Installation of two fishing line recycling bins at Town Quay and Trinity Landing is having a positive impact with reduced litter.
IOWC	The Council undertakes seasonal beach cleaning at 15 key beaches. Also, the Council's Volunteer Beach Cleans Policy allows community groups to remove harmful man-made litter from Council-owned beaches while protecting natural materials that wildlife depends on. 410kg was collected in 2025 and disposed of by Council through this collection policy. Marine litter (nets/containers etc), food/drink containers and microplastics most abundant - around whole coastline.
FBC	Evidence of plastic pollution in particular is widespread. The Council provide bins along the coastline which are regularly emptied.
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 via Youth and Climate action Fund which have continued to the present day. We are aware of local groups having concerns with respect to microplastics and number of nurdles being found in the Solent it's difficult to gauge whether concerns reflect a greater predominance, or whether the work of bodies to promote awareness of the issue is resulting in greater concern by itself.
ChHC	Microplastics are discovered widely on shorelines around the harbour, along with general amounts of marine litter. Harbour Watch volunteers and beach clean-up events at busy sites such as East Head take place regularly.
SCC	<p>Consistently high level of litter ending up on the inter-tidal areas at Chessel Bay LNR. This is largely concentrated on the strandline but can be spread into the adjacent woodland by very high tides. The variety and quantities have been recorded in study undertaken by Malcolm Hudson at University of Southampton (UoS). The most obvious litter is plastic nurdles released from plastics manufacturers located along/close to the River Itchen. These are accidental spillages resulting from poor handling of raw materials. The Environment Agency (EA) has taken some enforcement action, but more is needed.</p> <p>A mechanised clean-up of the upper shore was undertaken by Nurdle trialling equipment originally designed for sandy shores but adapted for mud/shingle substrates. The clean-up was effective, but a few days later there was another spill of nurdles. The survey work undertaken by UoS showed that the nurdles only</p>

Respondent	Comments
	<p>formed about 30-40% of the litter. There was also material from boat related activities (fibre glass hulls, chemical containers, rope) with the worst item being cement coated polystyrene pontoons. There was also evidence of domestic litter e.g. crisp packets, bottles, cans, furniture, fridges, bits of motorbikes etc. Plastics breaking down in the environment can't be a positive, but we don't have any data on the exact impacts.</p> <p>The SCC Ranger Team run a twice-yearly litter pick with the Friends of Chessel Bay. Environment Agency take some enforcement action in relation to the licenced plastics companies, however, there are other smaller companies which are not regulated. Sites deteriorate after clean ups take place. Litter from shipping has foreign labels. General food waste at Weston Shore, bringing carrion crows. Public feeding gulls and crows.</p> <p>Abandoned boats and poor condition housing boats at Northam. Ad hoc. complications of working out who is responsible for addressing e.g. is it Crown Estate.</p>

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
Change over 2025/26	0	1	11	3	15
Is the activity impacting on designated sites?					
	Yes	No			
	5	10			15

Respondent Comments

Respondent	Comments
LHC	Small reduction in use of visiting berths linked to uncertain economic climate. Dedicated berthing areas are all outside of designated site. LHC does not permit anchoring in its jurisdiction.
LHB	Licenced mooring numbers have continued to decline over the past year, reflecting both the ongoing Board directive not to licence any additional tidal moorings and

Respondent	Comments
	<p>broader changes in customer preferences. A continuing decrease in deep-water mooring licences is likely linked to vessel owners choosing to dispose of older craft, due to rising maintenance costs or seeking of marina-based facilities and pontoon that offer greater convenience.</p> <p>The environmental impact of existing swing moorings remains a concern, as they create seabed scour through chain movement. There are a small number of tidal moorings located within a seagrass meadow in Langstone, but they are under private ownership, and significant engagement is required to make any changes to this arrangement.</p> <p>Anchoring activity in Langstone remains low due to limited suitable space in the navigational channels and the need to maintain clear access for commercial vessels. Where anchoring is requested, visitors and residents are directed to a specific area, south of Sword Sands in Langstone Channel, to prevent damage to known sensitive habitats.</p> <p>We have recently installed 20 AMS systems in Eastney Lake, designed to provide a fore/aft mooring solution for customers who wish to retain a tidal mooring. The fore/aft arrangement will prevent swing scour and reduce the damage footprint to simply that of the surface area of the vessel's hull. As mooring numbers naturally decrease and AMS reduces scour footprints, they may be opportunities for small-scale habitat recovery or enhancement within previously impacted mooring areas. Monitoring over time will help identify whether ecological improvements are occurring.</p>
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.
BRM	Designated anchoring area. Encouraged to use a swinging mooring.
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.
MMO	Anchoring on seagrass beds uprooting seagrass, damaging habitat for seahorses.
SCC	Erosion of intertidal mud when boats are sitting on the mud at low tide. Loss of inter-tidal mud as available feeding habitat. This relates to moorings and landing stages along the River Itchen/Chessel Bay.

4.10 Operation of coastal flood and erosion risk management schemes

Activity includes the operational effects of coastal defence schemes, for example, accretion of sediment, erosion of intertidal habitats, on-going sediment recycling schemes, coastal squeeze, operation of sluices etc. Includes consideration of vessels/machinery/vehicles associated with maintenance activity.

Activity	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Total Responses
Change over 2025/26	1	0	11	4	16
Is the activity impacting on designated sites?					
	Yes	No			
	8	8			16

Respondent Comments

Respondent	Comments
YHC	Harbour is repairing main breakwater, six bays per year.
ABP	Monitoring of operational effects not undertaken by ABP.
LHC	Positive year-round impact from the Beneficial use of dredged sediment at Boiler Marsh which 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. A trial undertaken at the end of 2024, to raise the sediment previously placed by barge to a position higher in the tidal frame, has resulted in new colonisation of saltmarsh plants in 2025.
LHB	<p>Coastal flood and erosion risk management activity around Langstone continues to influence sediment movement, intertidal habitat distribution, and potentially local hydrodynamics. The largest ongoing intervention remains the North Portsea Coastal Defence Scheme, particularly within the Ports Creek area. Construction and operational phases of the scheme may influence sediment pathways and contribute to changes in accretion and erosion patterns within the northern harbour.</p> <p>Continued erosion of intertidal habitats, including saltmarshes, is evident across some locations. This is likely driven by a combination of sea-level rise, wave exposure, historic reclamation, and sediment availability, which may be exacerbated by hardened coastal structures and tightly constrained shorelines.</p> <p>While LHB is not the operating authority, or regulator, for these schemes, we remain engaged with delivery partners to ensure that operational activities consider the sensitivities of the SEMS site. The constant changes with sediment dynamics, particularly the ongoing losses of intertidal habitat, remains an</p>

Respondent	Comments
	<p>important issue for the long-term ecological condition of the harbour. As coastal defence schemes elsewhere around the Solent continue to harden shorelines, the cumulative effects on sediment availability and flows, and habitat resilience may become more pronounced. Continued liaison with scheme designers and regulators is essential to ensure ecological considerations are integrated into future phases of work, and that opportunities for habitat enhancement or sediment recharge are explored wherever possible.</p>
PCC	<p>Portsmouth City Council is working with Coastal Partners on a number of flood defence works around the city's coast as part of the North Solent Shoreline Management Plan. Current projects by Coastal Partners include the North Portsea Coastal Scheme and Southsea Coastal Scheme. The presence of new flood defences will cause coastal squeeze with climate change impacts. This has been addressed through the North Solent Shoreline Management Plan. Loss of designated habitats will be compensated for under the Regional Habitat Compensation Programme for Solent and South Downs within the relevant epoch.</p>
CDC	<p>Coastal Squeeze and loss of saltmarsh and other intertidal habitats is ongoing due to existing private defences in Chichester Harbour. CDC do not operate coastal defence schemes in the Harbour. We are planning to start work on the Chichester Harbour Investment and Adaptation Plan (jointly with HBC) to plan for future adaptation and managed re-alignment measures.</p>
GBC	<p>FCERM schemes are managed by the Coastal Partners. The Seafield scheme currently has funding shortfalls, and they are exploring opportunities to fund the schemes. The Alverstoke Scheme has now secured funding and is expected to progress. When implemented all schemes will accord with relevant legislation and be subject to the planning process.</p>
NE	<p>Coastal squeeze is currently impacting many parts of the Solent coastline, including in the North Solent NNR.</p>
CoHC	<p>A positive impact as a result of restored saltmarsh.</p>
IOWC	<p>Natural erosion remains high along the Island coastline, more extreme on the west and southern coast in areas such as Totland, Colwell, Fort Victoria and South Wight. The Council has undertaken remedial work to replace groynes within Colwell, Gurnard and Totland. Gurnard restoration project has included the installation of vertipools as enhancement. The Isle of Wight Estuaries Project, hosted by Isle of Wight Council and a partner in the Solent Seascape Project, is undertaking a current long-term project to support existing saltmarsh habitat and restore eroded habitat through the use of sediment replenishment from dredged material.</p> <p>The Council has been involved in moving sand build up in Ryde Sands SSSI around Ryde Harbour and Ryde Pier. Design and implementation of the Shanklin, Yaverland Coastal Protection Scheme are currently in progress with the Environment Agency acting as project manager on Councils behalf.</p>

Respondent	Comments
	The Council is working with the Environment Agency and Artecology to explore how eco-engineered coastal features can contribute to both biodiversity and coastal resilience. Recent research has shown that artificial rockpool habitats installed on seawalls can reduce wave overtopping compared to bare surfaces, with some configurations achieving significant reductions when positioned towards the top of the wall.
FBC	Coastal Partners, a partnership of four Local Authorities (including Fareham), lead on the operation of coastal flood and erosion management schemes.
ChHC	The presence of hard sea defences continues to contribute to coastal squeeze around the harbour. Plans in place to take forward managed realignment projects, BuDs opportunities etc. through CHaPRoN.

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
Change over 2025/26	1	0	12	2	15
Is the activity impacting on designated sites?					
	Yes	No			
	2	13			15

Respondent Comments

Respondent	Comments
YHC	Some positive impact as recent reduction of piles in the seabed due to improved mooring facilities. New Sandhard pontoon has reduced the number of piles.
LHB	The maintenance and operation of port and harbour infrastructure within Langstone is limited in scale but essential for safe navigation and effective harbour management. Activities include routine upkeep of navigation markers, buoys, posts, beacons, slipways, jetties, quay walls, pontoons, and harbour buildings. Maintenance work takes place throughout the year, with the bulk of operational activity taking place during autumn and winter, when recreational vessel

Respondent	Comments
	movements are at the lowest. For larger scale maintenance works, which are scheduled in advance, additional mitigation is put in place. Best practice is promoted in terms of biosecurity, and Officers are encouraged to report anything that looks unusual or out of the ordinary for further investigation.
PCC	Increased activity relating to the installation of 'Sea Change' shore power scheme at Portsmouth International Port which will reduce emissions from berthed ships within the port. In addition, there is business as usual repair and maintenance of port infrastructure.
GBC	Gosport Borough Council unaware of major activity. There are operations related to the Ministry of Defence (including training at Browndown) but the Borough Council has no active involvement in this activity.
ChHC	Hard sea defences/slipways contribute to coastal squeeze. Jetties/pontoons cause shading on mudflats.

4.12 Recreation - light aircraft

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

Activity	Increased	Decreased	No change	Don't know	Total Responses
Change over 2025/26	0	1	3	5	9
Is the activity impacting on designated sites?					
	Yes	No			
	1	8			9

Respondent Comments

Respondent	Comments
YHC	Fewer helicopters this year than last year. They generally land at the adjacent boatyard and fly in from the north and not over the estuary.
ABP	Drone activity over port land requires permission.

Respondent	Comments
EBC	We don't really have any evidence one way or another on this, although anecdotally we know inappropriate use of drones can disturb birds, especially those breeding (e.g. oystercatchers).
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	The Harbour Authority have no direct control of the airspace in Langstone Harbour, but light aircraft are monitored on an ad-hoc basis. If drone flights are requested, we will offer advice/restrictions from a navigational perspective, upon evidence of qualification, RAMS, and CAA compliance. Advice on areas to avoid from an SPA perspective is also offered. There is a shift within the industry to using UAV technologies more routinely for surveying and monitoring efforts. Where this takes place, appropriate permissions will be sought from Natural England with regards the SSSI and EMS features.
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, drones are currently allowed to be flown on public land within Gosport, although restrictions are in place around Solent Airport at Daedalus and Fleetlands. Solent Airport is within Fareham Borough. 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.
NE	This activity is limited at the North Solent NNR but there have been a few records of light aircraft in the area.
ChHC	Ongoing increase but data not current available to substantiate.

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
Change over 2025/26	2	2	8	8	20
Is the activity impacting on designated sites?					
	Yes	No			
	11	9			20

Respondent Comments

Respondent	Comments
HCC	Kitesurfers still causing disturbance at Tanners Lane and Mount Lake in the right conditions. No reports of them landing on offshore marshes possibly due to more targeted messaging. Numbers of paddleboarders increasing.
YHC	We have worked with Bird Aware to create consistent signage to raise awareness of the potential impact of paddlesports. We will monitor the level of activity this year.
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. Better information is likely to come from the River Hamble authority.
LHC	Small reduction in visiting yachts linked to uncertain economic climate
LHB	<p>Non-motorised watercraft activity occurs throughout Langstone and increased significantly during the spring-autumn period, particularly during warmer weather, school holidays, and weekends.</p> <p>Different activity types cluster in different areas: windsurfing and kitesurfing primarily around the Hayling shoreline (kitesurfing is forbidden in Langstone via byelaw); rowing and dinghy sailing largely associated with local clubs; and paddlesports, kayaks etc launching from a range of formal and informal access points.</p> <p>Some non-motorised activity has been observed by both Bird Aware Solent Rangers and LHB Officers causing disturbance to SPA bird species at West Hayling</p>

Respondent	Comments
	<p>LNR, especially by windsurfing which can access shallow and sheltered areas close to feeding and roosting sites.</p> <p>However, the majority of paddlesport activity tends to occur within the main navigation channels or close to the Harbour Office, where disturbance risk is lower and sensitive habitats are largely avoided. Paddlesports are highly accessible and require no prior understanding of the harbour environment. This can lead to both safety concerns (navigational awareness and tides) and environmental concerns when users unintentionally enter sensitive areas.</p> <p>To help manage this, paddle and oar sports are required to obtain a small fee permit to use the harbour. This provides an opportunity for engagement, as each permit holder receives a copy of the Harbour Guide, which includes information on wildlife sensitivities, codes of conduct, tidal safety, and good environmental practice. Patrol Officers provide a regular presence on the water and will directly engage with users where appropriate, and the Harbour Authority liaises with clubs and event organisers to ensure compliance with environmental guidance.</p> <p>Several organised events occur each year, typically run by sailing, rowing, and watersports clubs. These include dinghy regattas, junior training weeks, rowing events, and occasional small-scale paddlecraft challenges. Events are usually held during the summer season and follow established routes in shallower waters, but on high tides. Organisers are required to notify the Harbour Office and, if required, provide risk assessments and follow navigational and environmental guidance. No major regional or national competitions currently take place within Langstone Harbour. Use of small watercraft, particularly paddleboards, anecdotally continues to increase, creating ongoing challenges due to the ease of access and lack of prior knowledge among many casual users. While the permit system helps provide educational material and improve awareness, behaviour-led measures along may not be sufficient to address disturbance in sensitive areas.</p> <p>Monitoring data from both Harbour Officers and partner organisations remains valuable. More consistent or standardised data collection across the Solent would help build a clearer picture of recreational pressure trends and inform future management options. Ideas to manage non-motorised activity could be to define and formalise launching points, creating one or two clearly marked preferred launch points with small areas of hardened shingle or slipway improvements, clear signage, and 'please launch here to protect wildlife' messaging could reduce scatter-launching along the shoreline. Briefings for clubs and any hire centres nearby could be held and include a short environmental introduction and promoting wildlife friendly routes.</p>
RHHA	RHHA continues to promote the water sports for wildlife campaign and map from Bird Aware, and with associated educative signage installed at public launch/access points throughout estuary.
WCC	WCC is a member of the Bird Aware Solent Partnership which mitigates recreational disturbance across the Solent region. The Upper Hamble is the only part of the SPA that falls within Winchester's district.

Respondent	Comments
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.
NE	An increase in paddleboarding has been observed. There has been a noted increase in paddleboarding in the area, this increases access to areas that are typically hard to access which are regularly used by birds. The North Solent NNR staff are working with local sailing clubs to encourage codes of conduct. As well as this, wardening and monitoring of Gull Island is undertaken on weekends and bank holidays of the breeding season.
BRM	Less paddle boarders.
CoHC	Paddleboarding / kayak / dinghies are focussed on the southern part of our jurisdiction, with sailing enjoyed throughout our area. No issues reported.
IOWC	Disturbance of wildlife. Council byelaws restrict speeds to eight nautical miles per hour in certain zones between April and October, but there is no restriction in the winter months.
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.
NFNPA	<p>It could be argued that the Authority does have some involvement due to its second purpose and previous 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 have little impact on the user behaviours, Mount Lake/Hurst Spit are a particular concern re: kite surfing and Natural England and others have been contacted by local groups such as WINGS who highlight the need for enhanced controls.</p> <p>We continue to have concerns around the impact of kite surfing amongst other forms of recreation, where uses are concentrated there are what appear to be significant impacts deserving of better understanding and approaches to management.</p>
ChHC	Whilst we do not have the data, there is continued anecdotal evidence to suggest that this type of activity continues to increase across the harbour, particularly at honey pot sites such as East Head.
MMO	Increase in kitesurfing and paddle boards causing disturbance of foraging and breeding birds.

Respondent	Comments
SCC	Itchen estuary has paddlesports users, increasing (paddleboards and kayakers), lots of boat clubs on lower Itchen, general increase, sit on kayaks. Paddling past at low water, noise disturbance to birds. Cumulative disturbance of background pressure.

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
Change over 2025/26	1	3	9	5	18
Is the activity impacting on designated sites?					
	Yes	No			
	9	9			18

Respondent Comments

Respondent	Comments
YHC	Seem to be fewer jet skis in the area over the past year. Regular club visitors behave well and rarely go south of the bridge into the estuary (and they always ask permission). They refuel in the main harbour. Apparently, it costs about £180 for a jetski to do a lap of the loW so it might be that the cost of living crisis is affecting use in this area. That figure is probably higher now as fuel cost has increased dramatically.
EBC	Noise pollution, pollution from the craft themselves. Most likely along Solent coast although there are public slipways along the Hamble as well.
LHC	Small reduction in visiting yachts linked to uncertain economic climate
LHB	PWC, waterski, and slipway permits have decreased in the 2025/26 year. Other vessel remained at a consistent level. Powered craft within Langstone varies considerably by craft type and tends to peak during the April-October period, with the greatest intensity during warm weather and school holidays. Most motorboats

Respondent	Comments
	<p>and sailing vessels with auxiliary engines use the harbour primarily for transit to and from the Solent, resulting in limited impact beyond normal navigational disturbance.</p> <p>The designated waterski zone continues to function effectively, with activity remaining in the agreed area. Impacts from these activities are generally predictable and manageable due to their spatial confinement.</p> <p>Personal Watercraft (PWCs), however, present a higher disturbance risk because of their high manoeuvrability and shallow draft, which allows users to access areas of the harbour that are unsuitable for deeper hulled vessels. These areas can coincide with sensitive habitats and SPA feeding and/or roosting locations, particularly around the northern and western harbour margins. To help mitigate these risks, PWC users are required to obtain a Harbour Permit and must provide evidence of a recognised marine qualification. This ensures users are aware of their responsibilities as mariners, including environmental considerations and safe operating practices.</p> <p>For the 2027/28 season, we are seeking to include specific information relating to environmental awareness into the terms and conditions of this permit. The Harbour Authority operates a seasonal patrol function with Officers engaging directly with users, monitoring behaviour, and intervening where necessary to address irresponsible or unsafe activity. A 10 knot speed limit applies throughout the harbour (excluding the waterski zone). Although primarily for navigational safety, it also serves to reduce noise and wildlife disturbance.</p> <p>Launching and recovery activity is overseen through designated slipways, with signage and guidance available to support compliance. Although most powered recreational activity in Langstone Harbour remains well managed through existing controls, occasional issues still arise where vessels launch from unmanaged access points. This can make it difficult to ensure all users are aware of speed limits, navigational constraints, and environmental sensitivities. The existing patrol function continues to play a key role in mitigating disturbance and maintaining safe operation on the water, particularly during the busy summer season. Evidence gathered through patrols suggests that the combination of the 10 knot limit, designated waterski zone, and the permit zone is broadly effective, but increasing and cumulative recreational pressure across the Solent may require a more coordinated, cross-boundary approach in future. This could take the form of coordinated and Solent wide PWC code of conduct and requirements, shared patrol intelligence, shared approach to novel powered activities e.g. e-foils, flyboarding, hydrojet boats - a Solent wide framework could determine where they're appropriate, what qualifications are required, what environmental safeguards are necessary.</p>
RHHA	Six knot speed limit in estuary, plus various other RHHA byelaws help to manage and reduce impacts.
WCC	WCC is a member of the Bird Aware Solent Partnership which mitigates recreational disturbance across the Solent region. The Upper Hamble is the only part of the SPA that falls within Winchester's district.

Respondent	Comments
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 have remained the same. At the North Solent NNR, most of the activity is from vessels passing by the coast.
IOWC	Disturbance of wildlife. Council byelaws restrict speeds to 8 nautical miles per hour in certain zones between April and October, but there is no restriction in the winter months.
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.
NFNPA	Kayaking and canoeing have been anecdotally mentioned by site managers (e.g. HCC) as having impact as the craft tend to be able to operate close to saltmarsh/mudflat and users may beach the craft. HCC do put out signage around breeding sites to try to manage. With prospect of changes to HCC and management of sites, there is concern regarding potential changes and how these might affect those managing recreation sites and their activities.
ChHC	Likely impacts to birdlife and to seal behaviour caused by boats getting too close, not sticking to maximum speed limits etc. Also impacts to seabed at anchoring points.
MMO	Increase in disturbance through above water noise to breeding and foraging birds. Potential to be impacting benthic sediments.
SCC	Control of public hard, facilitate access to the water e.g. Crosshouse Keys, Priory Road.

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
Change over 2025/26	1	0	11	2	14
Is the activity impacting on designated sites?					
	Yes	No			
	0	14			14

Respondent Comments

Respondent	Comments
LHB	High-pressure water and a brush are used to remove algae from the slipways during LHB operations. Routine maintenance and cleaning for safety is required more frequently during the summer, both because access needs are higher, but algal growth is also more prolific.
CoHC	Increased cleaning of pontoons and Trinity Landing wall.

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
Change over 2025/26	0	0	4	2	6
Is the activity impacting on designated sites?					
	Yes	No			
	2	4			6

Respondent Comments

Respondent	Comments
HCC	Less reports from members of the public about wildfowling offshore could be a result of lower numbers of active wildfowlers.
LHB	Difficult to ascertain whether this activity is having an impact on the SEMS site without any qualitative information on returns or disturbance during the activity. LHB have no control over wildfowling in the Harbour - activity is regulated via lease arrangements with the landowner i.e. The Crown Estate and RSPB.
NE	There is a limited amount of wildfowling activity in the North Solent NNR.
ChHC	Disturbance to birdlife is difficult to measure (other than in the specific number of birds taken) but also more likely due to general disturbance caused by gunshot.

5. Activities resulting from Plans and Projects

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

Respondent	Details
HCC	Works on Hurst Spit to reduce impact of visitor numbers on ground nesting waders.
EBC	No, not yet, but see comments regarding Hamble Airfield.
LHC	A further BuDS trial was undertaken in Autumn 2025 to raise the sediment previously placed by barge to a position higher in the tidal frame. This is expected to result in new colonisation of saltmarsh in 2026.
PCC	Planning application 24/01117/FUL St James' Hospital was approved pending conditions on 8th August 2025. This relates to the construction of 58 residential dwellings and therefore risk of increased recreational disturbance. Financial contributions were made to the Solent Recreational Mitigation Strategy (Bird Aware) as mitigation for this increase in recreational impact. Elsewhere, although small-scale development has occurred within the city, these changes have not been of note compared to previous years.
CDC	Small scale private defences in front of residential properties (coastal squeeze) permitted after HRA, but using compensation from the Solent HCRP.
WCC	Increased residential development linked with the Local Plan is being mitigated through the Bird Aware Solent Partnership.
GBC	The Borough Council is currently consulting on the Publication Gosport Borough Local Plan 2042 (Regulation 19). This is a statutory six-week consultation which closed on the 16th April 2026. The Local Plan will then be submitted for Examination later in the year.
TVBC	Test Valley Borough Council is continuing to prepare its emerging Local Plan.
NFDC	Development of the Hurst Spit to Lymington Strategy.
CoHC	A new marina is planned off East Cowes. This may introduce a slight increase in leisure traffic and to the maintenance of structures/infrastructure connected with the marina facility.
FBC	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	15
Yes	12

Respondent	Details
YHC	Assisted with the IFCA annual small fish surveys in June and October.
SoIFCA	<p>Southern IFCA surveys within the Solent:</p> <p>The Bivalve Survey, which occurs biannually and looks at Catch Per Unit Effort for Common Cockle, American Hardshell clams, and Manila clams. This survey took place in March (Spring) and October (Autumn) in 2025.</p> <p>The King Scallop survey, which looks at Catch Per Unit Effort across the Solent tri-annually (from January 2024). This survey took place in February (Mid-season), April (Spring) and September (Autumn) in 2025.</p> <p>The Native Oyster survey, which monitors the native oyster population within the Solent and the Harbours every two years. This survey last took place in July of 2024.</p> <p>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 October in 2025.</p> <p>The Whelk Population Survey, which gathers information on the population of whelks within the Solent in the Spring of each year. Data on the whelk populations within the Solent were collected in May 2025. Results from each survey are held by Southern IFCA.</p> <p>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. The information gathered through the survey programme forms one source of evidence which helps to inform the management of the relevant fishery.</p> <p>Within the Small Fish surveys, Southern IFCA work with partners including Yarmouth Harbour Authority, Natural England, and local academic institutions.</p> <p>The shellfish surveys are undertaken in partnership with members of the relevant local fishing fleet.</p>

Respondent	Details
LHC	Long standing ongoing monitoring as part of marine licence conditions for beneficial use of dredging schemes.
LHB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solent Seal Monitoring (Chichester Conservancy, Beaulieu, Newtown volunteers) and Small Fish Surveys (sIFCA, UoP, BMF, Coastal Partners, HIWWT, NE, others). • RSPB conduct seabird nest/fledgling counts on their reserve. • Spill incident logs and reports of any oil or fuel discharge events. Informal maintenance of locations where maintenance occurs. Note any pollution risks or debris generation. • Ad-hoc monitoring of commercial fishing activity i.e. location and intensity. Information is passed back to sIFCA to inform patrols. • Monitoring of mooring levels and identifying overlap with sensitive habitats. • Operation of ports and harbours: informal vessel movements and infrastructure maintenance. • Ad-hoc monitoring of light aircraft and UAVs i.e. locations, impacts, etc. • Movement patterns, speeding complaints etc for powerboating/sailing with an engine.
RHHA	Ongoing reactive observational monitoring in the Hamble estuary of bait digging activities and of pollution (such as diesel spill from boats). Patrol officer sightings and reports from members of the public are logged and supplied to SIFCA and MCA respectively. This is reactive monitoring so not all incidents are captured.
WCC	Bird Aware monitors the impact of recreational activities and the effectiveness of mitigation measures on SEMS on WCC's behalf.
SxIFCA	Sussex IFCA undertakes ongoing monitoring of fishing activity through both sea-based and land-based patrols across the district. During patrols, sightings data are recorded, including gear type, vessel name and vessel length. These data contribute to the Authority's evidence base and were used to inform the Chichester Harbour Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) completed in 2025. The Authority works in partnership with local organisations, including Chichester Harbour Conservancy and RSPB Pagham Harbour, to share intelligence and improve understanding of fishing and hand gathering activity within these sites. In addition, drone surveys are being undertaken to better understand the spatial extent and intensity of bait digging activity within intertidal areas.
NE	North Solent NNR staff monitor bird nesting sites during breeding season which includes observing human activity and any impacts.
IOWC	Saltmarsh restoration project has a monitoring plan. Sanderling project will be monitored. Biodiversity Net Gain sites (developments and habitat banks) are monitored by Isle of Wight Council for 30 years in line with legislation.
SW	Currently we are developing a monitoring programme as part of a WINEP obligation into the three harbours entitled ' Three Harbours and wider Solent

Respondent	Details
	<p>collaborative working' under a 25 year environment programme driver. In addition, a PhD with the University of Brighton is 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 and the development of a source apportionment tool. The PhD has been extended and runs to February 2026.</p> <p>We have deployed a Water Quality buoy in Langstone Harbour in partnership with RSHydro, looking at using Tryptophan as a surrogate for bacteriological water quality and investigating a possible link with algal concentrations by monitoring in situ Chlorophyll. There is an ongoing commitment to the Three Harbours Partnership project and the Solent Forum. Three Harbours have recently published its 2024-2028 strategy. We also have a WINEP obligation to deliver an investigation to establish a long-term monitoring and evaluation approach in the harbours, this is to be completed by 30th April 2027.</p>
MMO	Marine conservation team are currently completing a site screening and site assessment for the impacts of marine non-licensable activity and potential management measures for the following MPAs: Solent Maritime SAC, Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA.

Are you considering monitoring in SEMS?	
Respondent	
HCC	No formal monitoring of recreational activities on our sites. Observational and ad hoc records and complaints.
YHC	We will try to improve monitoring of paddlesports this year as quite anecdotal at the moment.
LHB	Would like to undertake more in-depth monitoring of the use of the coastal footpath in some locations i.e. Farlington, West Hayling LNR, The Kench, Milton Common to understand footfall numbers better. This will need to be a partnership project, likely with Bird Aware, HBC, and PCC.
PCC	No direct monitoring occurring however Bird Aware Solent carries out monitoring of recreational disturbance as part of funding.
SxIFCA	Monitoring of fishing activity is ongoing and will continue as part of Sussex IFCA's routine enforcement and evidence-gathering programme.
FBC	Monitoring of activities is undertaken by Bird Aware Solent. Its Recreation Mitigation Strategy provides the management measures to address the impacts of recreational disturbance on the SEMS.

Are you considering monitoring in SEMS?

SW	Details of monitoring will be available when the WINEP investigation is complete at end of April 2027. In addition, there is ongoing collaboration with the Universities of Portsmouth and Brighton.
ChHC	Proposing to monitor people/dog numbers on East Head and the number of anchoring vessels.
MMO	Currently using data available online but will be holding engagement events to find out further information on activities.

Are you aware of any other new monitoring of activities or their impacts?

Respondent

RHHA	Solent Seascape are monitoring oyster reef (including water quality) in Hamble. Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust are monitoring sea grass restoration potential. Southern Water consultants are monitoring sediment and water quality in Hamble during 2026 (so in this SEMS reporting period and later this year).
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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	19
Yes	8

Within this MCZ(s), do you have any concerns about any of the activities covered by the SEMS Survey?

Respondent	
SxIFCA	Sussex IFCA has no current concerns regarding fishing activity within Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) in the district. Fishing activities within MCZs are subject to existing management measures and are routinely monitored through Sussex IFCA's ongoing patrols and evidence-gathering. Monitoring of fishing activity will continue across all MCZs within the Sussex IFCA District.
IOWC	The Needles MCZ, Yarmouth to Cowes MCZ and Bembridge MCZ are situated in waters surrounding the Isle of Wight, therefore impacts are considered within planning proposals in consultation with NE and MMO.

8. Other Issues

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	Additional Information
SW	We have a range of investigations as part of our WINEP programme for SSSIs, shellfisheries and MCZs around the Solent area that are due for completion 30/4/27, approx.
SCC	Research by the University of Southampton into microplastic pollution at Chessel Bay which focused on invertebrates but needs to be broadened out to include other species groups.