

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	River Hamble Harbour Board
Date:	31 March 2023
Title:	Environmental Update
Report From:	Director of Universal Services

Contact name: Alison Fowler

Tel: 01489 576387

Email: Alison.fowler@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to summarise activities relating to the River Hamble Harbour Authority's (RHHA) environmental management of the Hamble Estuary between December 2022 and mid-February 2023.

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that the River Hamble Harbour Board notes and supports this report.

Contextual information

Oil Spill Preparedness and Response

3. RHHA's annual return regarding oil spill exercises and training has been approved by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, ensuring RHHA's ongoing compliance with the Merchant Shipping (Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response Cooperation Convention) Regulations 1998.

Maintenance Works

4. Phase 2 of the repair of the sea wall around the Harbour Master's Office is taking place from the end of February over a 9-week programme.
5. Approval has been granted for the like-for-like replacement of the fuel berth pontoon at Port Hamble Marina. The fuel berth will be closed throughout the works, taking place between 27 February and 31 March 2023.

End-of-life recreational vessels

6. RHHA was asked to contribute, via interview, to a Defra-commissioned study researching options to improve waste management for end-of-life recreational marine vessels. It is covering a range of issues including vessel abandonment, number and type of vessels coming to the end of their life, disposal options and barriers, current clean-up efforts, and potential policy options to tackle the issue. Defra will use the study to help inform policy decisions and shape the development of future legislation.

Inshore fisheries and hand gathering

7. RHHA has been invited to join the Southern Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority (SIFCA) led Conservation Group for the Solent, comprising stakeholders in the District who can provide information and advice regarding the conservation and management of local fisheries and activities, including bait digging, hand gathering of shellfish, and oyster restoration. Attendees include the Environment Agency, National Trust, harbour authorities, The Wildlife Trusts, RSPB, Blue Marine Foundation and other Non-Government Organisations.

Solent Oyster Restoration project

8. After a short delay in respect of a Marine Licence variation, the Blue Marine Foundation team is in liaison with RHHA to make the final preparations for their planned placement of a layer of shells and gravels on specified subtidal areas of the riverbed to create a native oyster habitat. This is now planned for March and April 2023, alongside associated monitoring and surveys.

Solent Seascape Project

9. The Blue Marine Foundation, along with 9 project partners, has secured a \$US 5 million grant from the Endangered Landscapes Programme to restore seagrass meadows, oyster reefs, saltmarsh and seabird nesting habitat across the Solent over the next 5 years. In addition to physically restoring areas of these four key habitat types, the Solent Seascape Project will also work with landowners and regulators to improve the protection and management of existing Solent habitats, to monitor the benefits of seascape scale restoration scientifically and to ensure that local people and sea-users co-design the project, thereby becoming more connected and engaged with their own marine environment. RHHA will continue to encourage and facilitate any proposals in the Hamble, which will likely build upon those already underway with Blue Marine Foundation, the Environment Agency and Portsmouth University

Visiting Walrus!

10. A juvenile male walrus was spotted off the mouth of the Hamble in December. After hauling out at Calshot, he then headed north to Scarborough, and more recently to Iceland. The RBPB has produced a nice article at [Thor the wandering walrus heads home after his UK tour | The RSPB](#)

Climate Change Impact Assessment

- 1.** Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience impacts of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.
- 2. Climate Change Adaptation.** A full assessment of climate change vulnerability was not completed as no decision is required in respect of this report.
- 3. Carbon Mitigation.** A full assessment of carbon mitigation vulnerability was not completed as no decision is required in respect of this report.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

4. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

5. Equalities Impact Assessment:

An EIA is not required as no negative impacts are anticipated.