

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	River Hamble Harbour Board
Date:	6 October 2023
Title:	Environmental Update
Report From:	Director of Universal Services

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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 June and August 2023.

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that the River Hamble Harbour Board:
 - (i) notes and supports the remainder of this report.

Updates

3. **Oil Spill Management and Port Waste Management.**

In line with cyclical statutory requirements, RHHA is currently undertaking reviews of both its Oil Spill Contingency Plan and of the River Hamble Port Waste Management Plan prior to statutory consultation and submission to the regulator (Maritime & Coastguard Agency). Any river users with comments about the provision of shoreside facilities for the disposal of waste generated on board their boats are encouraged to contact the harbour office.

4. **Connecting research and restoration with funding opportunities**

RHHA is often approached externally regarding information on potential opportunities for pre-funded research and restoration projects within the estuary, or for funding opportunities available to support the future development of such ideas. RHHA has played a key role in facilitating many such projects and, because the match-making of opportunities is not specific to the Hamble nor a

remit of RHHA but it is of great value, the Solent Forum has undertaken to produce a list of the [grants and funding streams](#) that can be applied for in respect of coastal projects. It is hoped this will enable funders and project managers to make the most of opportunities available to benefit the Hamble estuary and wider Solent coast, and Members may wish to share this information. See http://www.solentforum.org/services/Member_Services/Coastal_Funding_Opportunities/

5. Solent Oyster Restoration Project

At its meeting on 7 July 2023, the River Hamble Harbour Board requested more information regarding the monitoring of the native oyster restoration reef and research instruments which are in place in the estuary. The Blue Marine Foundation have confirmed the reef will be monitored for at least 5 years. They will be sampling on both the reef site and control site (Warsash Pool) to follow Before/After/Control/Impact (BACI) experimental design. This design will ensure that any observations of change can confidently be attributed to the presence of the oyster reef. The monitoring metrics and methods used in relation to the River Hamble oyster reef includes:

- Oyster habitat area and oyster density – grabs, sonar/bathymetry surveys, video surveys and possibly diver surveys.
- Oyster recruitment and population size frequency – spat collectors, grabs.
- Habitat use by mobile fauna – environmental DNA, Baited Remote Underwater Video units (BRUVS), acoustic telemetry.
- Diversity and biomass of juvenile fish – small fish surveys.
- Water quality and clarity assessment – multiparameter sondes and loggers, Secchi disk for turbidity.

The monitoring will be reported to the funder (Endangered Landscapes Programme) twice per year via Annual and Interim reports. However, regular monitoring of the reef will be conducted to ensure Blue Marine has continuous information on the progress of the restoration.

6. Solent Natural Environment Information Hubs

The majority on environmental challenges that exist on the Hamble estuary and wider catchment are also faced throughout the Solent (and many at a national or international scale). RHHA is a member of the Solent Forum coastal partnership and as such benefits from the services it provides. The Solent Forum has produced several hubs on its website to signpost information of relevance to the Solent's environment. RHHA has contributed local input to these where relevant. These can be found on the services and projects tab of its website or via direct links below:

- [Biodiversity and Marine Net Gain](#)
- [Blue Carbon](#)
- [Beneficial Use of Dredged Sediments](#)
- [Building Biodiversity into Infrastructure](#)
- [Habitat Restoration](#)

- [Natural Capital](#)
- [Solent Catchment Partnerships](#)
- [Solent Plastics Pollution Hub](#)
- [Solent Water Quality and Boating](#)

7. Hampshire County Council Coastal Asset Strategy

RHHA has assisted Hampshire County Council Colleagues by providing information held in RHHA archives of relevance to HCC's pending review of coastal assets. Further enquires to HCC Strategy Land and Assets Team.

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:

1. 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.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

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