

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	River Hamble Harbour Board
Date:	15 July 2022
Title:	Environmental Update
Report From:	Director of Culture, Communities and Business 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 mid-February and mid-May 2022.

Recommendation

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

Updates

M27 Bridge Drainage

3. Baroness Charlotte Vere of Norbiton's recent response to the Harbour Board Chairman's letter indicated funding timelines for possible resolution. The Chairman has written to our three riparian Members of Parliament to ask for their support at each stage of the bidding process. The letter is at Appendix 1. Since then, National Highways (NH) has announced that preparation work is underway to control the pollution risk posed to the Hamble by the existing direct drainage from the motorway bridge into the river. The online announcement states that this will include drainage and waterproofing to the bridge, and that these works are being conducted now to take place while contractors are still in the area finalising the Smart motorway scheme. RHHA's Environment & Development Manager (EDM) has since contacted the National Highways Route Manager to ascertain the nature, extent and duration of the works, and requested information to enable consideration of the impacts, if any, that there may be on the ease or safety of navigation for vessels passing under the

bridge, or on the RHHA Oil Spill Response Plan, or requirements for consent. At the time of writing, the Route Manager confirmed that he is using RHHA's information to inform the planning as NH develops the programme for these works, and that he will respond more fully shortly once colleagues have been consulted.

Oil Spill Preparedness & Response

4. The Harbour Master (HM), Deputy HM and the Environment & Development Manager (EDM) have undertaken their required 3-yearly recertification of Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) approved oil spill management training. Two other members of staff have also refreshed their oil spill response practical training.

Port Waste Management Audit

5. On 25 March 2022 the MCA undertook an audit of the River Hamble Port Waste Management Plan in line with The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Port Waste Reception Facilities) Regulations 2003 as amended. The MCA assessed RHHA's compliance with the Plan and its record keeping, and inspected site facilities at the Harbour Office, at Swanwick Marina and at Deacons Marina. The resulting audit report was positive, with the inspected sites found to be compliant with the Plan and maintained in a clean and safe condition. Potential for minor updates and improvements to the PWMP were discussed.

Hook Lake Coastal Management Study

6. On 4 April the EDM attended the Hook Lake Coastal Management Study Steering Group, as one of several representatives of Hampshire Country Council's various interests in the site. As reported in Summer 2021, Coastal Partners (the combined Local Authority team of Fareham, Havant, Portsmouth and Gosport councils) are investigating the future management of Hook Lake (part of the Hook with Warsash Nature Reserve) as part of The Regional Habitat Compensation Programme (RHCP), a strategic programme run by the Environment Agency which seeks to replace habitats that are lost due to the management of coastal defences. The project has undertaken an array of investigations, surveys and modelling to produce a long-list of options. These are being assessed against project objectives and screened to create a 'shortlist' of most viable options that will undergo detailed appraisal, utilising the process set out in the Environment Agency's national Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Appraisal Guidance. A public consultation event of the project - the 'Shortlist Exhibition' was held in Warsash on 12 and 13 July 2022. More at

<https://coastalpartners.org.uk/project/hook-lake-coastal-management-study/>

Harbour Office Sea Wall

7. Work is underway between RHHA, HCC Property Services and consultancy WSP to bring forward to the planned Phase 2 of the Harbour Office sea wall

repairs to this coming autumn and winter. Bournemouth University is continuing its work surveying the effectiveness of both the phase 1 environmental enhancement designs as well those of its own Vertipools installed on the phase 2 section of wall.

Harbour Office Mural - Secrets of the Solent Project

8. Over 200 Over 200 public votes were cast, and a lobster has been painted at the Harbour Master's office. The mural is one of a series of artworks forming part of the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust's marine project, Secrets of the Solent, supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, which is raising awareness of the wonderful marine wildlife within the Solent. A short film, released on World Oceans Day 8 June, promotes the murals and wider project. The lobster has a historical connection to the River Hamble. In the 1800s, Hamble was prominent in the seafood industry and in 1842 supplied markets with nearly 90,000 lobsters and crabs, mainly purchased from fishermen in Ireland or Brittany and transported to the Hamble in sailing smacks. This trade gradually declined after the First World War. Common lobsters are a well-known inhabitant of UK seas, although lobster numbers in the Solent are currently low but it is hoped that the recently introduced ban on the landing of egg-carrying females could help them to recover in the future. More on the mural series at <https://www.hiwwt.org.uk/secrets-of-the-solent/marine-murals>

Solent Oyster Restoration Project

9. RHHA continues to work with the Blue Marine Foundation (Blue) on its Solent Oyster Restoration project to identify an appropriate method and timing for the laying of shells and gravels on specified subtidal areas of the riverbed later this year in order to create the optimum oyster habitat for the subsequent release of juvenile native oysters and spat-on-shell. Similar work has been completed at Langstone Harbour, and this is being used to inform the methodology for the Hamble. The Blue team held a stakeholder engagement event on 14 July in the Hamble to tell the wider community about the project, and is soon to release a short film about the project.

CCBS Climate Change Programme

10. The EDM has been engaging with HCC's Culture, Communities and Business Services (CCBS) Climate Change Programme Manager to ensure awareness between the roles and identify linkages to opportunities. The EDM attended the CCBS Climate Change Natural Environment Workstream. The key focus areas of this are (i) maximising biodiversity benefits and carbon-related opportunities at HCC's natural sites and (ii) 'nature-based solutions' to challenges like flooding and coastal erosion. The work of RHHA's EDM, along with the external research projects RHHA is enabling, as well third-party projects such as the Hook Lake study have some relevance to the objectives of this Workstream. Although RHHA's input will be light, engagement ensures that efficiencies and opportunities can be identified, and also that the relevant ongoing work of RHHA can be captured and reflected within the wider HCC climate change programme.

Climate Change and Carbon Mitigation Impact Assessment

12. 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.

Climate Change Adaptation. A full assessment of climate change vulnerability was not completed as no decision is required in respect of this report.

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:

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.