

# **The Western Yar Estuary Management Plan**

**December 1998**

**Revised Edition 2004**

## Foreword

Few will deny that one of our great responsibilities in life is to try and leave the world such that those who come after us can enjoy it as much as we have.

For each one of us, the sources of enjoyment are many and varied. They range from the pleasures of a solitary walk in quiet and beautiful surroundings, through all the variations of sport, the ability to study and learn about the world around us, the love of animals, through to the thrill of speed, the excitement of creating a thriving business or of being one of a noisy crowd with something to celebrate.

A glance at this, far from exhaustive, list illustrates at once the conflicts which arise in trying to preserve all those things which we enjoy as an individual and if we go on to consider how opinions about what gives rise to pleasure vary from one person to another, the task becomes more complex. We have only to add the pressures of increasing population and technology into the equation to see how difficult decisions about land-use must always be.

Management Plans such as this are to be seen as merely a tool to assist in making these decisions and function by bringing together all the issues and the whole range of viewpoints relevant to the area they cover.

The Western Yar valley is a very attractive area which affords many people pleasure of many kinds. The town has great character due in part to it having been prevented from sprawling by its natural boundaries of Solent, river and marshes.

We need to be wary, however, of the 'dinosaur syndrome' and the stress laid in this document on the importance of preserving a strong economy will be noted. Nationally and internationally more resources than ever before are currently being devoted to the conservation of the environment and this can only be sustained within a climate of sound economies.

The old joke is that the Island is some twenty years behind the rest of the UK! Perhaps we need to recognise this as the asset which it is, enabling us to move forward learning from the mistakes and successes of others.

What a challenge indeed!



## Acknowledgements

The preparation of the Estuary Management Plan was overseen by the Steering Group of the Western Yar Liaison Committee; their support and constructive comments have been invaluable. Considerable thanks go to Mr David Court who, as Chairman, oversaw the process. The Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners are also acknowledged for providing the meeting venues. English Nature and the Isle of Wight Council (Centre for the Coastal Environment) provided valuable administrative support.

All the individuals and organisations who responded so promptly and positively to the consultation exercise and who participated in the Focus Workshops are thanked. Involvement will continue to be an essential part of implementing the Estuary Management Plan.

The financial assistance of the following organisations is also recognised:

- Eastern Yar Valley Project
- English Nature
- Environment Agency
- Freshwater Parish Council
- Isle of Wight AONB Project
- Isle of Wight Council
- River Yar Boatyard
- Royal Solent Yacht Club
- Solent Protection Society
- Wightlink Ltd
- Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners
- Yarmouth Sailing Club
- Yarmouth Society
- Yarmouth Town Council

Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners have continued to provide valuable assistance to the Committee in the form of a meeting venue and, together with English Nature, the Environment Agency, Isle of Wight Council, The Crown Estate and Cowes Harbour Commission, have supported and developed the Isle of Wight Estuaries Project.

### Revised Edition 2004

The review of the Estuary Management Plan was completed in 2004 by the Western Yar Estuary Management Committee. The Committee's hard work and commitment to the Plan has ensured that it remains a relevant and valuable document for the local area.

## Preface

Estuaries are some of the most sensitive and highly valued resources in England. They are of fundamental importance to the British economy and subject to a wide range of uses and pressures. The Western Yar Estuary Management Plan (EMP) was prepared in response to Government calls for the improved management of estuaries. The waters of the Western Yar provide for many activities which are reviewed in Part B of this Report.

The Western Yar EMP was initiated by the Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners and was prepared under the direction of the Western Yar Liaison Committee. This Committee is made up of a cross section of interests, including; those with a responsibility for the estuary and adjacent land; landowners; local business and local people.

This Report has been produced with the purpose of providing all of those with an interest in safeguarding the future of the Western Yar with an opportunity to influence the development of the EMP's policy framework. The EMP depends on local strong local support. Its purpose is to secure action on the ground where it is seen to be needed.

### Revised Edition - 2004

After the production of the EMP, the Western Yar Liaison Committee set up the Western Yar Estuary Management Committee which works with the Isle of Wight Estuaries Project to assist in the implementation of the Plan. The Isle of Wight Estuaries Project employs a Project Officer who helps to coordinate the actions and activities.

The EMP was revised in 2004 and the text has been updated to incorporate changes in legislation and new initiatives. The Key Policy Areas in Part D have been reviewed and updated by the Western Yar Estuary Management Committee.

**Some of the policies/actions in the original EMP were no longer relevant and have not been included in the revised edition. The numbering of the policies has been left the same however so that policies contained in the original plan can still be referred to if necessary.**

## List of abbreviations

AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
BMIF	British Marine Industries Federation
CA	Commercial Area
CEC	Crown Estate Commissioners
CHaMPs	Coastal Habitat Management Plans
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DETR	Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions
DOT	Department of Transport
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
EA	Environment Agency
EH	English Heritage
EMP	Estuary Management Plan
EN	English Nature
HAP	Habitat Action Plan
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
IWCCE	Isle of Wight Centre for the Coastal Environment
KPA	Key Policy Area
LEAP	Local Environment Agency Plan
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (now within DEFRA)
MLWM	Mean Low Water Mark
MPCU	Marine Pollution Control Unit
NFU	National Farmers' Union
PDO	Potentially Damaging Operations
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance
RNLI	Royal National Lifeboat Institute
RYA	Royal Yachting Association
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SCOPAC	Standing Conference on Problems Associated with the Coastline
SFC	Sea Fisheries Committee
SINC	Site of Importance for Nature Conservation
SLR	Sea Level Rise
SMP	Shoreline Management Plan
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SWQC	Solent Water Quality Conference
STW	Sewage Treatment Works
UDP	Unitary Development Plan
YHC	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners

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## Part A: Introduction

### A1: Philosophy behind the Western Yar Estuary Management Plan

The Western Yar EMP is a voluntary initiative and has no legal or statutory power; however it is in line with Government Policy. The purpose of the Plan is to co-ordinate and increase local community involvement in decision making and to integrate the numerous uses of the area. The EMP will be used as a tool to help secure the long term future, health and very special value of the estuary, adjacent land and sea.

Underpinning the whole management process is the principle of safeguarding the future of the Western Yar by using its resources **wisely** and in a **sustainable way**. This is particularly important as some of the nature conservation and heritage assets of the Western Yar are of national or international importance and are rare and irreplaceable.

The aim of the EMP, outlined below, sets the context for all of the other aspects of the EMP. It has been written in plain English, avoiding the use of jargon, and reflects what is special about the Western Yar.

**The Western Yar is a special place...  
...by working together we aim to safeguard its natural and cultural assets and encourage a strong local economy.**

The Western Yar EMP process is founded on the following principles:

1. **Integrated management** - Activities in the coastal zone seldom have purely local effects. Action and decision making must take place within a wider, integrated management framework.
2. **Local ownership** - The people who are going to make the EMP work and are going to be most directly affected by it are the local community, landowners and the users of the estuary. It is imperative that there is a close involvement of those groups and individuals throughout the development and implementation of the Plan. An agreed EMP will build on existing statutory responsibilities of relevant authorities and the existing arrangements of the Western Yar Liaison Committee. The local community will be able to feed into the EMP process and therefore influence the actions and decisions about the future of the Western Yar.
3. **Stewardship** - The estuary is something to be looked after now before passing it on to the next generation.
4. **Nature conservation** - The wildlife assets of the Western Yar are particularly important. These are reflected by the designation of parts of the estuary as an SSSI and the designation of areas as component parts of a Special Protection Area (SPA), a Ramsar site and maritime Special Area of Conservation (SAC). It is important that the Western Yar is managed in a way that protects, and if appropriate enhances, these important wildlife sites.
5. **Historic environment** - Yarmouth is a fine medieval town and port set within a valley which has harboured Islanders and seafarers since prehistoric times. Whether upstanding or concealed, all of the archaeological and historic assets of the Western Yar deserve good stewardship for the benefit of future generations.

6. **Positive management** - It is not enough for the Western Yar EMP to simply respond to problems, it must be proactive and act as a mechanism to deal with *potential* conflict. Positive actions are needed to improve and enhance the resources and guide their use.
7. **Harmony** - The aim of management is to provide for the use of the estuary in ways, forms and locations that are in harmony with the environment and other uses.
8. **Implementing management action** - The Western Yar EMP must lead to management actions which will result in benefits for the area. The EMP must not become bureaucratic or complicate decision making, rather, it should seek to simplify the decision making process by improving dialogue, resolving conflict and presenting a common approach for decision makers in the area
3. Encouraging a Strong Local Economy
4. Landscape Quality
5. Pollution
6. Access and Public Rights of Way
7. Recreation
8. Safety and Emergency Planning
9. Communication and Raising Awareness
10. Data Management and Research

Each of the KPA identifies:

- the general **aim**
  - the **issues** for consideration
  - the **policies** for implementation
  - an **Action Plan** for each policy indicating the action which is proposed, the timescale, the bodies with primary responsibility and those who would wish to participate.
- **Part E**, which in conjunction with the Action Plans outlined in Part D, indicates how it was proposed that the EMP would work and the changes since it was originally published in 1998.

## A2: Format of the report

The Report is laid out as follows:

- **Part A** provides a background to the EMP, describing the study area and the Plan's philosophy and aims.
- **Part B** puts the EMP in the context of the legislative framework and also describes the management of the estuary.
- **Part C** summarises what is known about the environment of the Western Yar and the activities which take place on and around it.
- **Part D** outlines the Key Policy Areas (KPAs) which were identified as a result of the Project's earlier consultation exercise and evolved from the main areas of concern. These KPAs are:
  1. Maintaining the Special Character of the Area.
  2. Physical Processes

## A3: The Estuary Management Plan Area

A “**core area**” and two “**commercial areas**” are defined and shown on the map (**Figure 1**) and specific policies may apply to these areas. However through the consideration of the surrounding area the Plan also allows external influences to be taken into account as appropriate.

This approach has been adopted because it has the following advantages:

- A single study area can never take full account of external influences and pressures and always represents a compromise;
- It helps target policies, resources and management action towards those areas which are most sensitive or require the most detailed consideration or urgent management action;

- It provides a mechanism to consider the impact of the numerous human activities and influences that arise from outside. External influences include water quality from the catchment of the River Yar and the Western Solent, landscape impacts from the visual envelope of the estuary or management decisions made from outside the core area;
- It locates development and commercial activity into the existing and most appropriate areas.

Matters from the surrounding area of wider influence will only be considered by the Estuary Management Plan if they directly affect, or impact upon, the resources or activities of the core area.

**The Core Area:**

*The boundary of the core area upstream of the breakwater is the highest spring tide level as far south as the Causeway. To the North the core area extends offshore into the Solent to the limit of the Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners jurisdiction. The boundary is shown as a thick red line on the accompanying map (see Figure 1).*

**The Commercial Areas:**

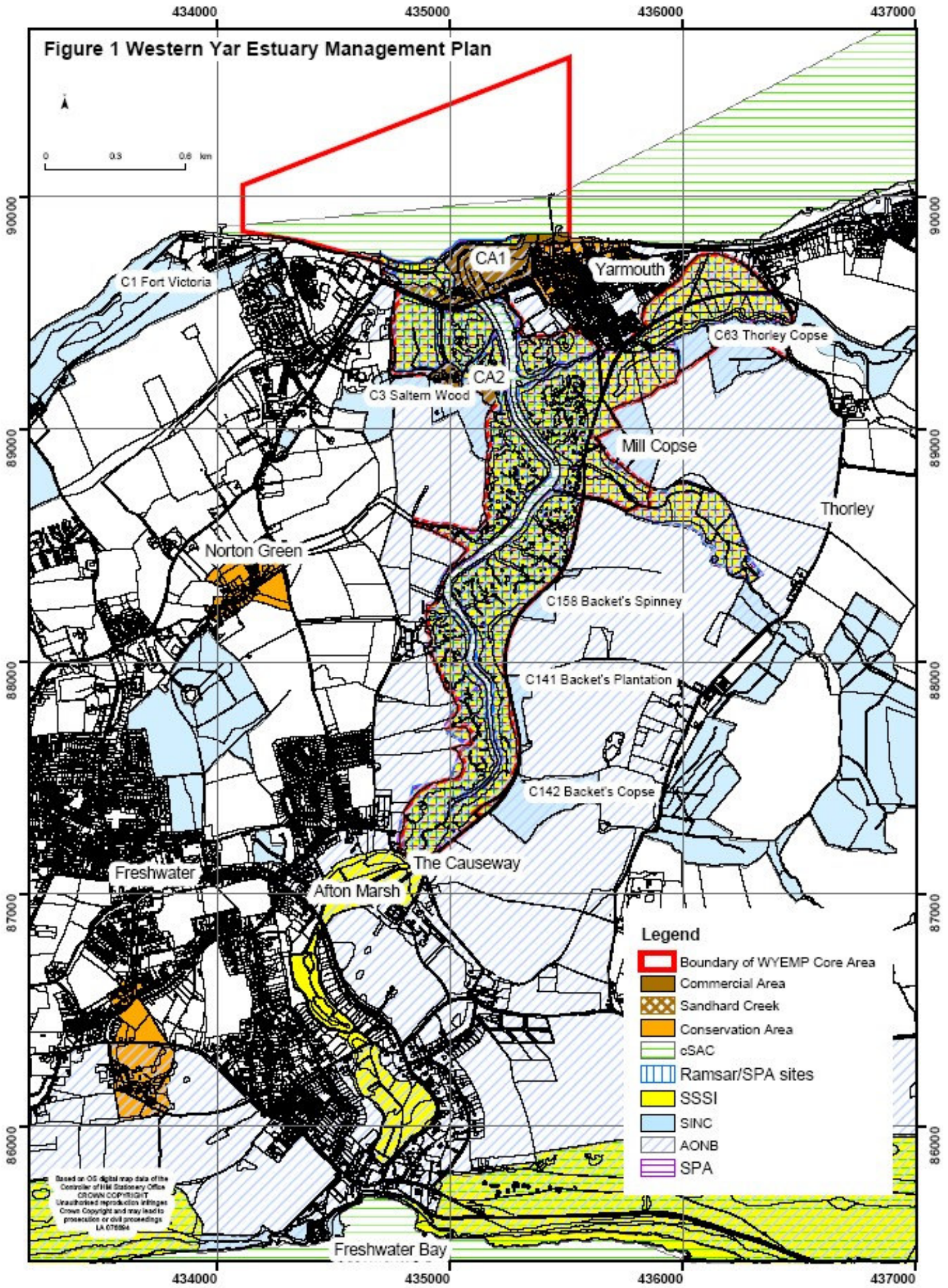
*Two commercial areas (CAs) have been identified on Figure 1 and are defined as follows:*

- CA1** The harbour area north of the bridge which is dominated by the Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners, Wightlink, commercial fishing and marine services.
- CA2** The land to the west of the main channel and to the north of Saltern Wood including the River Yar Boatyard complex.

Part of the area known as **Sandhard Creek** has been identified on **Figure 1** for separate consideration. Sandhard Creek is defined as the area between Norton Beach and the A3054. The area floods at high water and drains at low water leaving a small stream which flows from the west end of the area into the harbour at the eastern end.

Ownership of Sandhard Creek is divided by the stream, to the north it is owned by Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners and to the south it is owned by Harold Hayles Boatyard. The area shown on Figure 1 only includes part of the area in the ownership of Harold Hayles Boatyard to the south of the stream.

In the first draft of the Western Yar EMP the area was included within the Core Area and within a commercial area. In a subsequent draft the area was included within CA1, this raised a number of concerns as the definition of the area as a 'Commercial Area' was felt to conflict with the area's designation as an SSSI, SPA and cSAC. Following further consideration of the issues surrounding the area, the Steering Group determined that for the purposes of the policies contained within this plan, it would be defined as a separate area. (See KPA 3.8)



**Figure 1 Western Yar Estuary Management Plan**



0 0.3 0.6 km

**Legend**

- Boundary of WYEMP Core Area
- Commercial Area
- Sandhard Creek
- Conservation Area
- cSAC
- Ramsar/SPA sites
- SSSI
- SINC
- AONB
- SPA

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Figure 2: Western Yar Estuary Mooring Areas



## **PART B:**

# **Management of the estuary and its relationship to the Western Yar EMP**

## **B1: The Management Framework**

An important aspect of any coastal area is that it is administratively complex. A range of organisations have statutory responsibilities (with the Harbour Commissioners holding the largest element of control), often with competing aims and priorities. The way in which these different interests communicate can often be confusing and is rarely clearly defined.

**The EMP can unite different interests behind a common aim that may otherwise be in open competition or conflict.**

Many interest groups are involved in decision-making around the estuary. The relationships between these different interest groups, sectors and government agencies are not based on a hierarchical structure as no single organisation or interest group has control of all development or activity in the estuary.

The local community is essential to the framework of an EMP and in the Western Yar area links into the plan directly through the Western Yar Estuary Management Committee. The local community also has important links to the regulatory system through other groups i.e. the Town and Parish Councils and through the Harbour Commissioners Advisory Committees. Local input into the management of the estuary is essential for the successful implementation of an EMP. The EMP will strengthen this role by providing a focus for communication and discussion.

The successful operation of the Management Framework is key to the overall success of the EMP. By simplifying and improving channels of communication,

misunderstandings can be avoided and conflicts resolved. If the Management Framework is supported by an agreed EMP, it provides an even footing over which issues can be discussed and widely acceptable solutions found. Its successful operation will also help simplify and accelerate discussions and negotiations over any proposed changes to the existing management arrangements or use of the EMP area.

Appendix I lists the organisations that have responsibilities within the area.

## **B2: Planning background and the legislative context**

### **B2.1: Background to EMP production in England**

The Western Yar EMP is part of a national initiative that began in 1992 when the UK Government published Planning Policy Guidance Note 20 "Coastal Planning" (PPG20). PPG20 supported the need for integrated management of the coastal zone and endorsed the preparation of EMPs. Local Authorities, in partnership with other organisations (Harbour Authorities, for example) were targeted to take the lead in the preparation and subsequent implementation of these non-statutory management plans. EMPs are now being implemented throughout the country.

### **B2.2: The EMP and the system of statutory control**

The relationship between the non-statutory Western Yar EMP and the existing system of statutory control must be made clear from the outset. Details of the existing statutory controls are outlined below.

It is neither appropriate nor desirable for the EMP to replace nor undermine the existing statutory decision making process which will remain the primary system of control. However, the EMP should seek to influence the policies and activities of the statutory authorities such as Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners, the Environment Agency, Isle of Wight Council and English Nature. It should respect the rights of the Riparian owners, and should be considered in the implementation or revision of policy

documents.

The EMP has the strength that it will support the existing system of regulation and will also provide an overview of the issues and pressures on an estuary-wide basis. The added value of the EMP is that it can go further than simply satisfying the minimum requirements of the legislation by setting targets and goals that the regulating authorities and other parties will be encouraged to achieve or exceed.

The Western Yar EMP was incorporated into the Strategic Guidance for the Solent and will continue to feed into other local and regional coastal zone management initiatives. It has also been used as an excellent example on which to base other Estuary Management Plans.

### **B2.3: Regulation of activities**

There is a complex web of organisations involved in the management of the estuary, each addressing a specific interest. These many different organisations and systems are subject to different Acts with different arrangements for the ways in which decisions are taken. A summary of the most relevant legislative control is given here and more specific information is included in Appendix II.

The policies set out in Part D of this report lie within this statutory framework, and in many instances, there will be legislation or national or regional strategies in place to guide local policy. A critical feature of the future management of the Estuary will be improved dialogue between these different statutory bodies and between statutory bodies and land managers. The Western Yar Estuary Management Plan must achieve and promote this dialogue if it is to succeed.

#### *Local Authority*

Planning, land use and development proposals on land throughout the estuary are largely regulated by the local authority through the planning system; this includes land covered by water south of a line between the breakwater and the ferry pier. The Isle of Wight Unitary Development Plan (UDP) is the statutory development plan and the main means of managing land use in the

area. It was adopted in 2001 and provides both the strategic and local planning guidance for the Island until 2011. The Isle of Wight Council, as a Planning Authority, considers planning applications for development in the context of the guidance provided by the Unitary Development Plan to determine whether planning permission for development should be granted. This process also involves wide statutory and non-statutory consultation with interested persons and organisations potentially affected by the proposed development. Certain types of development are deemed to have been granted planning permission by the Secretary of State either through other legislation or due to their minor nature; such development is known as 'permitted development'. Persons carrying out permitted development still have to comply with the requirement of the Habitats Regulations and other legislation.

A key assumption of the UDP is that there is a strong desire to maintain the Island broadly as it is and that major development proposals, which would detrimentally change the character of the Island and its communities, should be resisted. This view was confirmed locally in Yarmouth by "The Report on Initial Consultations" (Court, 1995); see Part D, Key Policy Area 1.

Although it is beyond the remit of this report to carry out a detailed appraisal of the UDP, there are a number of important considerations for the town of Yarmouth:

- The "development envelope" is drawn very tightly around the Town;
- The former railway line from Yarmouth to Freshwater is safeguarded as a transport route. It is currently a bridleway which can be used by pedestrians and for riding horses and bicycles.
- The only proposal for additional housing in Yarmouth is adjacent to the recreation ground.

The UDP does not include a definition of the coastal zone as in some aspects the whole of the Island is influenced by the coast. The former South Wight Borough Council

prepared a Management Strategy for the Coast in 1994 and, together with the Environment Agency, the Isle of Wight Council prepared a Shoreline Management Plan in 1997. These provide specific guidance in parallel with the UDP. In the UDP the coast is divided into developed and undeveloped coast according to whether it falls within or without a defined settlement and therefore, whether countryside policies or those for the built up area apply.

While the UDP provides the current planning framework for the Island, a new system of plan-making initiated as a result of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Bill will be introduced. This will be known as the Island's Local Development Framework (LDF) and will form part of an overall Local Development Scheme. The Government's reasons for bringing in a new system for the preparation of development plans are to speed up the preparation of plans and to achieve more effective involvement with the community. The LDF will eventually replace the adopted Unitary Development Plan and will consist of a portfolio of Local Development Documents that set out the spatial strategy for the Island.

In addition to planning, the Isle of Wight Council also has responsibilities as a Coastal Defence Authority, a Highway Authority, as well as other statutory duties. It is also responsible for the provision of open space and access to the countryside, facilities for sport, recreation and leisure and it can create and manage Local Nature Reserves. It can create byelaws regulating public behaviour on the foreshore, regulating bathing and navigation of pleasure boats up to 1,000m from MLWM. It is also responsible for the protection of beaches from pollution, clean up operations and for keeping specific areas free of litter.

#### *Harbour Authority*

Yarmouth Harbour is a Trust Port formed under the Pier & Harbour Orders (Cowes & Yarmouth) (Isle of Wight) Confirmation Order of 1931. Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners is the statutory authority that manages Yarmouth Harbour under this Act and their area includes the harbour and the River Yar as far as the Causeway at Freshwater. Within the Harbour is the Yar

Bridge which is owned by the Isle of Wight Council and operated by Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners. The bridge operates within the Yar Bridge Act of 1858.

Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners' (YHC) responsibilities include managing the harbour within the various Acts and statutes laid down for this purpose. *Inter alia*, these require YHC to improve, maintain and manage the harbour, exercising the power to control the mooring and the keeping of vessels within the harbour, to dispose of wrecks and to charge for the use of moorings. The various orders require YHC to make byelaws and regulate vessels within the harbour.

In 1998 the DETR Ports Division undertook a review of Trust Ports. The review, entitled "*Modernising Trust Ports*" found that Trust Ports perform a valuable role in the support of the local, regional, and national economy. On a national scale the review highlighted the need for a general openness and accountability of the Trust Port's business. This led to recommendations about the structure of the Trusts board of Commissioners and the introduction of wider stakeholder involvement and consultation through advisory committees. YHC now has a General Advisory Committee and an Elected Councillors Committee. The Committees meet regularly to discuss elements of the operation of the Harbour and other associated issues.

Throughout the management of the harbour the Commissioners have a statutory obligation to take full consideration for the preservation and improvement of the environment.

#### *Nature Conservation Legislation*

Nearly all of the area covered by the EMP is subject to national and international nature conservation designations. English Nature is responsible for advising Government on nature conservation in England and for identifying and notifying Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Areas (SPA), Ramsar sites (Ramsar) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). The implications of these designations are explained in Appendix II. The other statutory authorities mentioned above are

required to consult with English Nature over activities under their jurisdiction, which are likely to affect an area designated for its nature conservation importance.

The SSSI network establishes a consultation system between English Nature and the owners and managers of the land, which aims to safeguard the nature conservation interest. English Nature notifies landowners/occupiers of the site's conservation interest and the activities which could cause damage - known as potentially damaging operations (PDOs). The landowner/occupier is required to consult with English Nature before carrying out any PDO on the site, or any operation adjacent to the site which could cause damage. This consultation process enables English Nature to advise over ways of managing the land that takes into account the special interest of the site.

The international designations (SPA, Ramsar and cSACs), give the sites further protection and are aimed at specific species and habitats. The Western Yar Estuary is included within the Solent and Southampton Water Special Protection Area and Ramsar site (SPA and Ramsar) and within the candidate Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation (cSAC). The SPA was proposed under the EC Birds Directive for its population of overwintering and breeding waterfowl. The cSAC was proposed due to the presence of a number of habitats (estuaries, Atlantic saltmeadow and Cordgrass swards) and was submitted in 1998 as a candidate SAC to the European Commission.

In 2003 the Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation was accepted by the EC as a candidate SAC. The whole site now has the status and protection afforded to a Special Conservation Area. When fully notified by the EC it will no longer be called a 'candidate' site.

The background and implications of the international designations are important considerations in the overall management of the areas. They give all statutory authorities a duty to have regard to the requirements of the Habitats Regulations that govern the management of SPAs and SACs. The

Planning Procedures are outlined in Planning Policy Guidance 9 on nature conservation. Any activities, plans or projects, (whether inside or outside the site) which are likely to have a significant effect on the conservation status of the features of the site now require an assessment by the relevant authority who is responsible for granting or withholding permission.

The Habitats Regulations also state that a statutory 'Management Scheme' is required for each European marine site. The Western Yar Estuary is covered by the management scheme for the Solent European Marine Sites which was produced in 2004 after an extensive period of consultation. It builds on the considerable progress already made through other management initiatives on the coast including the Western Yar EMP. Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners were involved throughout the process as a 'relevant authority' and the Isle of Wight Estuaries Project was a member of the Strategic Advisory Group.

#### *Landscape legislation*

The whole of the area covered by the EMP falls within the Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Designated in 1963 the Isle of Wight AONB covers half of the land mass of the Island and is part of the national family of protected landscapes including National Parks and Heritage Coasts. The purpose of the designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area. Reflecting on the importance of the relationship between people and place, decisions and management of the conservation of the landscape character and special qualities of the area should also take into account farming, forestry and rural business needs.

The Countryside Agency is responsible for advising Government on AONB management in England and for designating these nationally treasured landscapes. The Countryside Agency and the Isle of Wight Council jointly fund the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership to work to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the Isle of Wight AONB and to represent its needs at a

regional and national level.

The designation was strengthened by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act in the year 2000. All local authorities with an AONB within their administrative area are now required to work with key stakeholders to formulate their policies for the area and include them within an AONB Management Plan. The Isle of Wight AONB Partnership was formed in 2002 to oversee this process and the delivery of the AONB Management Plan's Action Plan. The Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan 2004-2009, published in April 2004, sets out the policies and policy objectives for the AONB and lists actions that will be undertaken by the AONB Partnership over the next five years. In addition to this statutory responsibility all public bodies now have a statutory duty to have regard towards the purposes of AONB designation in their operations, policy formulation and decision making.

This has given AONBs an equivalence to National Park status in land use planning terms, which is reflected in government Planning Policy Statement 7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas.

## PART C:

# REVIEW OF THE ESTUARY AND THE EMP AREA

Part C reviews the **Estuary Resources** and the **Main Human Activities** in the EMP area.

The Western Yar estuary is situated on the western tip of the Isle of Wight. To the east is the town of Yarmouth; to the west is Norton with the Needles a few miles distant. The village of Freshwater, Freshwater Bay and Afton marshes mark the southern boundary. Norton Spit extends partially across the mouth of the estuary and is terminated by a small sand dune system.

The catchment of the Western Yar is predominantly rural with land use dominated by agriculture. There is little riverside development south of the road bridge and the Western Yar valley offers magnificent views of the estuary and surrounding land.

Human activity is concentrated to the north of the road bridge in the town and harbour areas and Norton. Commerce is located in two areas at Saltern Quay and the Harbour (see **Figure 1 and KPA 3**).

## C1: Estuary Resources

### C1.1: Geology and Evolution of the Estuary

The Western Yar estuary was formed in a former northward flowing tributary of the Solent River which was drowned by rising sea levels following the last Ice Age. The Western Yar has been partially infilled by sedimentation of predominantly marine clays. The fluvial transport of sediment from the catchment is negligible.

Saltmarsh has developed in the estuary south of the road bridge only relatively recently since about the nineteenth century. This process was accelerated with the reduction of dredging activities in the upstream reaches of the estuary.

### C1.2: Physical processes and coastal defences

The health of many of the landforms and habitats within the estuary is largely dependant upon the maintenance of physical processes. Norton Spit, Sandhard Creek, sand dunes, freshwater marsh, and the distribution of saltmarsh are all sensitive to changes in the physical processes dominating in the estuary.

The Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) for the Isle of Wight provides an overview of the dominant physical processes in the Western Solent, though little detail is provided about the Western Yar estuary south of the road bridge. Nonetheless, some of the information contained in Part C has been abstracted from the SMP (Halcrow, 1996).

The coast of the Western Yar is exposed to both rapid tidal currents and open sea waves entering Hurst Narrows. A major pathway transports material north east up the central Solent channel, but at least two circulating eddies adjacent to the Island's coast produce locally reversed transport. There appears to be little exchange of material from the mobile sand and gravel banks within the Western Solent channel and the harbour as evidenced by recent bathymetric studies. The processes that sustain Norton Spit are still poorly understood.

The ebb current in the Western Solent is of greater velocity and shorter duration than corresponding flood currents. This causes net seaward flushing of coarse bedload currents and a net input of suspended sediment into the Yar estuary. This material is probably derived from local sources of clay cliff erosion to the east between Bouldnor and Newtown and to the west of Norton.

In general the Isle of Wight Council is the statutory authority for coastal protection up to the High Water Mark as set out in the Coast Protection Act 1949. Flood defences are constructed to prevent the inundation by seawater, and the Environment Agency is the statutory authority.

The main coastal defence in the EMP area is Norton Spit which extends eastwards

across the mouth of the estuary. The spit effectively encloses the Harbour and has associated coastal defences including timber breastwork, timber groynes and a rock armour breakwater. The Harbour Commissioners are responsible for the maintenance of this structure.

Within the Harbour itself, the main defences are a length of steel sheet piling used for the mooring of yachts and fishing boats whilst a length of concrete wall with toe piling is used as a berth for the ro-ro ferry. Further upstream in the estuary there is a length of revetment which follows the route of a former railway line, this revetment is composed of a short length of wall and a length of gabion mattress.

The SMP identified that many of these defences are substandard and offer poor protection. The management option recommended by the SMP for each of the three management units located within the core area is to hold the existing defence line.

### **C1.3: Nature conservation resources**

The Solent and Isle of Wight are of international importance for nature conservation because they form a unique complex of estuaries, lagoons and coastal marshes. The Western Yar estuary lies within the candidate Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) and the Solent and Southampton Water Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar Site. Adjacent to the southern limit of the Western Yar SSSI is the Afton Marsh Local Nature Reserve.

The Western Yar estuary is of great significance for nature conservation, the majority being designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) as amended. Minimal waterside development has helped maintain the integrity and diversity of the habitats and there are good examples of the transition from maritime to freshwater wetland habitats. This is a reflection of careful management by riparian private landowners over many decades. In 1995, the SSSI was extended to include the shallow lagoons and reed marsh to the west of the River Yar Boatyard and to the north

west of Saltern Quay. To the east of the Old Mill a large area of brackish and freshwater grazing marsh has also been included within the SSSI.

The SSSI contains a range of important habitats including botanically rich salt marshes containing at least two nationally scarce species of plant. The marshes are relatively young and the distribution and species diversity of the salt marshes continues to evolve. Recently, concern has been raised throughout the region over the loss and erosion of saltmarsh habitat and especially, the decline in the distribution of the Common Cord Grass *Spartina*. It is likely that a number of processes have combined to cause this retreat of the saltmarsh including slumping of banks and steep slopes adjacent to the main navigation channel, natural "die back" of *Spartina*, organic pollution and increased sedimentation. It is not clear whether a similar situation is occurring in the Western Yar and a five year monitoring scheme began in 2004.

The SSSI includes a shingle spit, brackish water reedbed and one of only two sand dune systems on the Island (containing the only record of Sand Cat's Tail on the Island). The shingle spit and the fringing saltmarsh at the mouth of the estuary host four nationally important plant species.

The SSSI also hosts an important invertebrate fauna on the marshes and intertidal mudflats (such as the rare starlet anemone in the brackish drainage channels). The subtidal areas within the estuary are included within the candidate SAC and there are notable sub-tidal communities south of the road bridge including a species of rare sponge.

### **Changes to legislation re: SSSIs**

The estuary is also of significant interest for migratory waders and wildfowl. Of particular interest are the dark-bellied Brent geese and the large flocks of overwintering teal and wigeon, though many other species such as curlew and redshank are regular visitors.

The estuary and the relatively shallow

sheltered waters of the Western Solent are also important breeding and nursery grounds for a variety of commercially important fish species.

The implications of the national and international designations on the Western Yar are outlined in Appendix II.

#### **C1.4: Landscape**

The special qualities and character of the landscape of the Western Yar Estuary led to its inclusion in the designation of the Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 1963.

The Western Yar Estuary area was included in a Landscape Assessment of the AONB undertaken by the Countryside Commission in 1994 which defines the key characteristics of the area through eleven distinct Landscape Character Types. Two of these fall within the Western Yar Estuary Plan area:

Landscape Character Type - Harbours and Creeks:

Key Characteristics:

- Flat exposed tidal mudflats with saltmarsh, shingle banks and grazed marshes.
- Open aspect.
- Peripheral; enclosure created by fringing oak woodlands.
- Quietness and tranquillity

Landscape Character Type - Intensive Agricultural Land:

Key Characteristics:

- Large open fields
- Large-scale hedge removal with relict hedges degraded
- No hedgerow trees
- Land use predominantly rural
- Large farms and farm buildings
- Trees restricted to shelter belts

When viewed from the Western Solent, the town of Yarmouth and the Harbour provide a spectacular view in the backdrop of the estuary and the river valley.

**Table 1** provides a list of the statutory and non statutory designations covering the Western Yar area.

**Table 1 Conservation Designations within the Western Yar area**

<b>Name and Designation</b>	<b>Important Habitats and Species</b>
<b>Statutory Designation</b>	
Solent Maritime candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC).	Estuaries, Atlantic salt meadows and cordgrass swards.
Solent and Southampton Water Ramsar Site.	Internationally important wetland habitats.
Solent and Southampton Water Special Protection Area (SPA).	Wild bird coastal breeding, overwintering and migratory habitat.
Yar Estuary SSSI.	Saltmarsh flora, reedbed, overwintering waders and wildfowl.
Freshwater Marshes SSSI.	Base-enriched fen.
Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).	A nationally important landscape with special landscape characteristics, including estuaries, woodland, farmland, downland and coastlines.
Yarmouth Conservation Area.	Area of special heritage, archaeological and historic interest.
Afton Marsh Local Nature Reserve.	Locally important marsh habitat.
<b>Non-Statutory Designations</b>	
Saltern Copse Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SINC).	County site of conservation importance, semi-natural ancient woodland.
Thorley Meadows Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).	Grazing marshes.

## **C2: Human activities**

### **C2.1: The historic environment**

Yarmouth is one of the oldest settlements on the Isle of Wight. It is an historic port and the medieval castle overlooks the eastern entrance to the Harbour and the western approaches to the Solent. The narrow streets, restaurants and pubs help to preserve the unique character and atmosphere of the town which has a population of less than 1000.

Immediately to the west of the town is the harbour complex which includes the Wightlink ferry, the Harbour Office, quay and boat yards. On the western bank of the estuary is the River Yar boatyard and the Saltern Quay complex.

The area is rich in archaeological and heritage assets which are both upstanding and below ground. There is evidence of occupation dating from the Roman period. The narrow shoreline at Yarmouth has a proven propensity to preserve medieval and Tudor midden material beneath its shingle. At Yarmouth Roads, seabed scatters of Roman and medieval pottery are evidence of the town's early maritime importance. The wreck of the Santa Lucia (AD 1567) demonstrates the preservative qualities of the seabed beneath the town's traditional anchorage.

Some sixty sites of archaeological significance have so far been identified in the vicinity of the estuary. These include a Neolithic post alignment on the seabed near the mouth of the harbour. Indeed, it is likely that there are many other historically significant artefacts and wrecks, which are vulnerable to disturbance, awaiting discovery within a short distance of the Harbour.

### **C2.2: Agriculture and land management**

Agriculture is the largest single land use on the Island. The catchment of the River Yar is dominated by agriculture where several large farms and estates are located. The quality of the land is generally grade 3 or 4 and agriculture is mixed, with dairy cattle

and cereal crops dominating. It is Government policy to protect the best and most versatile land from adverse development.

The low lying saltmarsh adjacent to Thorley Brook is grazed by dairy and beef cattle during the drier summer months. Much of these meadows and the surrounding woodlands are drained with ditches.

Some areas of the grazing saltmarsh are managed to maintain their conservation interest. Grazing levels can be seasonally adjusted whilst water levels could be managed. Mill Copse is now managed for conservation purposes since its acquisition by the Wight Nature Fund.

Afton Marsh is an Isle of Wight Council owned Local Nature Reserve south of the estuary. It has a management plan and all interested parties contribute to the Afton Marsh Management Advisory Committee.

The remainder of the area is managed by the relevant landowners.

### **C2.3: Commerce, development and transport**

Yarmouth is one of the key tourist destinations on the Island because of the harbour, ro-ro ferry terminal, tourist information and the historic interest of the ancient town. The ro-ro ferry is also used by the Island residents many of whom commute daily or weekly to the mainland.

Yarmouth has a lot to offer with a good provision of visitor facilities and attractions such as the castle, the pier, pubs, restaurants and, coastal and estuary-side walks. The businesses within the commercial areas are dominated by chandlers and marine services for local and visiting sailors.

It is, therefore, not surprising that the trade and employment patterns in Yarmouth are highly seasonal and that the working proportion of the population of the town is below the average during winter.

### **C2.4: The Harbour and boat traffic**

Yarmouth Harbour is under the jurisdiction

of Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners (YHC) and is home to one of the Island's three ro-ro ferry links. The harbour has a small entrance that gets congested during busy periods and is carefully managed by the Harbour Master with a 4 knot speed limit in force. The Wightlink ferry terminal is a major generator of vehicular and pedestrian traffic and is crucial to the economy of Yarmouth and the Island.

Yarmouth Harbour is a key destination for visiting yachtsmen and helps to underpin the local economy, especially during the summer months. Recent improvements to the facilities offered by the Harbour Commissioners have been aimed at increasing attractiveness for visiting yachtsmen and the quality of the facilities available for those using the ro-ro ferry. Facilities include pile moorings and pontoons, toilets, showers and laundry, water taxi and easy access to the Town.

To the south of the swing bridge, the main low water channel is lined by further privately owned pontoons and mooring piles. This area is also used for racing sailing dinghies and providing sailing tuition to young people. In recent years there have been concerns about maintaining a free right of navigation through the upper estuary and ensuring that the yacht moorings do not obstruct this right and also that there is sufficient water depth and width for navigation.

### **C2.5: Fishing**

Approximately 28 local fishing boats use Yarmouth harbour for mooring. The main fishing effort is concentrated outside the core area to the west of the Isle of Wight. A range of methods are used including potting for shellfish. When the original EMP was written the oyster beds in Yarmouth Roads remained closed due to problems experienced with water quality. They were reopened in 2003 when the quality of the water had improved.

Estuarine resident fish species include mullet and flounder. Although there is little fishing activity within the estuary it is thought to be an important nursery ground for a variety of commercially important species.

Sport angling takes place on Yarmouth pier and along the seafront. There is some potential for conflict between shore anglers and boat owners. Angling and bait digging in the Harbour is controlled under byelaw. Within the estuary, angling would require access across private land.

### **C2.6: Environmental quality**

The main bodies concerned with waste management and environmental quality in the Western Yar estuary and the Solent are Southern Water Services, the statutory sewerage undertaker for the whole of the Isle of Wight, and the Environment Agency which regulates inputs and discharges and enforces the appropriate legislation to avoid adverse effects on the environment. In addition, the Council is concerned about the health, well-being and quality of life of residents and, through this remit, has an interest in ensuring satisfactory air quality through environmental health powers.

Overall, the water quality of the Western Yar estuary is good. This is largely due to the rural catchment of the river and because there are no direct discharges of sewage into the estuary. The estuary is generally free of algal blooms which are a consequence of coastal nutrient enrichment and can have adverse impacts on water quality, fisheries and the ecology of the area. Although there is little information available, reports of surface scum and foaming during the summer months could be attributed to excessive algal growth in the water. This could be a natural phenomena but it could also be due to nutrient enrichment.

The impact of nutrient enrichment on water quality and the general health of the natural coastal system is a further concern. Nutrients primarily enter the estuary from agricultural land use in the catchment, natural run-off and sewage inputs. The Environment Agency regulates these inputs and monitors water quality. There have been anecdotal reports of periodic problems with agricultural pollution of some of its tributaries such as Thorley Brook and

Barnfields Stream, although no data is available on this issue.

Before 1998 the greatest concern regarding water quality in the Yar estuary, harbour and Western Solent related to the impact of the pumped discharge from the Norton sewage treatment works (STW) via the short sea outfall. Since the plan was written, Southern Water Services has undertaken an agreed programme of investment to transfer waste water from West Wight for discharge via long sea outfall at Sandown Bay. The outfall at Norton now functions as a storm discharge, only operating during periods of exceptional rainfall.

Few problems have been experienced with the discharge of human waste from visiting yachts and any additional risk is expected to be low in the future as a result of the EC Recreational Craft Directive 1994, (transposed into UK legislation through the Recreational Craft Regulations 1996) which states that yachts placed on the market must have provision for holding tanks. In 2000 Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners installed a sewage pump out facility which pumps sewage from the holding tanks directly to the main sewer system.

There are two old landfill sites in the EMP area. Immediately south east of the road bridge an area of the estuary has been reclaimed and is now a car park and boat storage area. A second landfill site is located on the old gasworks near Saltern Quay.

The impact of noise and light pollution is of concern throughout the estuary especially from the town and commercial areas.

### **C2.7: Recreation**

The Western Yar has a great deal to offer the local community and visitors and is widely used for a diversity of recreational activities. People enjoy the quietness and tranquillity of the walks south of the bridge whilst the sheltered waters of the estuary and the more challenging waters of the Solent are much used by sailors. The natural assets of the area are complemented by a range of high quality

facilities which include the modern facilities provided at the Harbour Office and a wide range of marine services available in the harbour, the town and Saltern Quay.

Sailing in the estuary generally occurs over high water. Local sailing clubs and youth groups such as the canoe club and Sea Scouts use the tranquil and safe waters of the estuary south of the bridge for dinghy sailing and training. Many of these dinghies are launched and retrieved over the tide.

The Harbour Master manages water-based recreation activity and the 4 knot speed limit within the estuary is strictly enforced.

There are many opportunities for the local community and visitors to enjoy the wealth of natural resources of the Western Yar. The estuary benefits from having a circular footpath that follows a former railway line along its eastern shore. The footpath crosses the estuary at the Causeway and then follows field boundaries on the higher ground to the west. The estuary walk is well way-marked and there are several connections with the Island's Rights of Way Network. This excellent network of footpaths, bridleways and byways links the core area to the wider countryside, AONB and the Island coastal walks. Other important recreational pursuits that occur within the Western Yar include cycling, horse riding and shooting.

The estuary offers spectacular views of large numbers of waterfowl in the dramatic backdrop of the AONB. There are undoubtedly many fine opportunities for bird watching and quiet recreational pursuits such as walking and birdwatching. The marshland, bisected by Thorley Brook, is an important wetland for birds and the Wight Nature Fund own Mill Copse and the hide that overlooks Barnfield Stream.

## **PART D: Policies**

### **Key Policy Area 1: MAINTAINING THE SPECIAL CHARACTER OF THE AREA**

**Aim:** To recognise that the Western Yar is generally in good condition and that the special character of the area should be maintained.

Compared with other estuaries in the United Kingdom the Western Yar is in good condition. For its size, the estuary has a high proportion of semi-natural habitat (saltmarsh and mudflats), water quality is good and no human activity occurs to such intensity that it upsets the natural beauty of the estuary. As a result there is much about the Western Yar that does not need to be changed but may require protection. It is recognised however that both natural change and changes in human activity and needs are occurring. It is therefore important that these changes are managed such that the special character of the Western Yar is protected.

Key Policy Areas 2 - 10 focus on the management of change, where needed.

#### **Policies:**

- 1.1** Ensure that the landscape, cultural and nature conservation resources of the Western Yar estuary are maintained in line with the requirements of relevant legislation.
- 1.2** There should be no net increase in the area of moorings established south of the Yar Bridge. Efficient use of the present mooring area will be encouraged by the provision of pontoons, as appropriate, or other suitable mooring systems.
- 1.3** Maintain existing navigation channels, where appropriate, ensuring consistency with the requirements of relevant legislation.
- 1.4** Any appropriate further development should be contained within the Commercial Areas, taking into account current legislation. The remainder of the estuary should be retained as a tranquil area and should be safeguarded from further development or other intensive use that is likely to have an adverse impact on the natural environment.
- 1.5** In considering the landscape the balance between open water, the moorings, the dredged channels and the saltings is particularly important in maintaining the character of the area.

## KPA1: Action Plan (Revised)

## MAINTAINING THE SPECIAL CHARACTER OF THE AREA

EMP Policy	Body /bodies having primary responsibility	Current policy/ similar relevant document where appropriate	EMP Partners working with bodies having primary responsibility	Action	Timescale
<b>1.1 Ensure that the landscape, cultural and nature conservation resources of the Western Yar estuary are maintained in line with the requirements of relevant legislation.</b>	Isle of Wight Council (Archaeology, Planning and Countryside) English Nature English Heritage Environment Agency	National legislation and government guidance (e.g. Policy Planning Guidance notes) Isle of Wight Council Unitary Development Plan AONB Management Plan	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners Estuaries Project Officer AONB Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep a watching brief</li> <li>Continued monitoring</li> <li>Secure with Isle of Wight Council a programme and commitment to enhance the coverage of the County Sites and Monuments record throughout the EMP area.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>1.2 There should be no net increase in the area of moorings established south of the Yar Bridge. Efficient use of the present mooring area will be encouraged by the provision of pontoons, as appropriate, or other suitable mooring systems.</b>	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners controls: 1972 Commissioners Policy River Yar Management Policy	Marine industries Yacht/sailing clubs Isle of Wight Council (Planning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor demand and usage.</li> <li>Establish indicators for monitoring</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>1.3 Maintain existing navigation channels, where appropriate, ensuring consistency with the requirements of relevant legislation.</b>	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners	1931 Yarmouth Harbour Confirmation Act -Statutes controlling Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners (and subsequent Acts).	English Nature Yacht/sailing clubs Environment Agency Marine industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners to produce annual dredging programme for consultation</li> </ul>	2004 / Ongoing
<b>1.4 Any appropriate further development should be contained within the Commercial Areas, taking into account current legislation. The remainder of the estuary should be retained as a tranquil area and should be safeguarded from further development or other intensive use that is likely to have an adverse impact on the natural environment.</b>	Isle of Wight Council (Planning)	Isle of Wight Council Unitary Development Plan AONB Management Plan	Statutory consultees and public consultation as prescribed by the planning process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep a watching brief</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>1.5 In considering the landscape the balance between open water, the moorings, the dredged channels and the saltings is particularly important in maintaining the character of the area.</b>	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners environmental policy and strategy. Solent European Marine Site Management Plan (in progress) AONB Management Plan	English Nature Environment Agency AONB Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep watching brief</li> <li>Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners to work with regional statutory authorities to help develop and implement Solent European Marine Site management plan.</li> </ul>	Medium / ongoing

## Key Policy Area 2: PHYSICAL PROCESSES

**Aim: To allow the physical and other natural processes within the Western Yar to function with the minimum of human modification.**

Understanding the physical processes which operate within the Western Yar estuary is important if the appropriate management solutions are to be found. The sensitive habitats of the Western Yar, especially Norton Spit, Sandhard Creek, the saltmarshes, mudflats, freshwater meadows and Alder and Willow Carr, are dependant on the physical processes operating within the estuary. It is also important to understand how the processes dominating in the Solent and in the catchment of the River Yar influence the Western Yar estuary.

All coastal habitats are dynamic and subject to change. A lack of understanding of natural coastal processes often leads to a resistance to change. For instance, the diversity of habitats and landforms found in the Western Yar are the result of the natural succession of habitats from the sea to the land. The accrued sediments in the estuary provide paleo-ecological and archaeological evidence of the long term coastal change.

The Western Yar estuary has been filling with marine silt for the past 7000 years. This process has accelerated since the 1800s when the dredging of the channel to Freshwater ceased. There is a long term trend for fine material to be transported into the estuary by the tide from the Western Solent. More recent observations suggest that these processes are creating a redistribution of habitats within the estuary and particular concerns are the impacts on the depth of navigable water, the stability of the castle and the distribution and flora of the saltmarshes.

Probably the most significant long term source of change affecting the Western Yar is the impact of sea level rise (SLR). The effect of rising sea levels in combination

with the sinking coast (as a result of glacial unloading in Northern Britain) and the predicted increases in storminess (as a consequence of climate change) has potentially serious implications for habitats and riparian development.

The Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs) for the Solent and the Isle of Wight provide the strategic guidance on coastal defence and shoreline behaviour. The SMP predicts that, as a consequence of increases in sea level, much of the low lying land adjacent to the estuary could become flooded over the next 75 years. This, plus concerns over the erosion of saltmarsh within the estuary and the need to monitor and improve the coastal protection offered by the breakwater, highlights the need for a detailed assessment of the physical processes within the Western Yar.

The West Wight Coastal Defence Strategy Study stems from the SMP and includes more detail at a local level. It will identify specific management of the coastal defence system over the next 5 years and provide valuable information about the local coastline. Consultation will take place before the end of 2004 and the study will be completed in 2005. It is expected to lead to further monitoring of coastal change.

Superimposed on these natural changes is the impact of human activities such as dredging, the construction of flood defences and sea walls within the estuary and more widely in the Western Solent. Maintenance dredging of the main navigation channel and the Harbour is essential for the continued boating and commercial water use of the estuary. Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners maintain this free right to navigation by dredging to a maximum depth of 2.5m below chart datum. It is important to understand the influence that these activities have on the natural balance and historic resources of the estuary.

As the processes of natural and human induced change occur within the Western Yar, adverse impacts should be minimised to allow the estuary to function as a natural and self sustaining system.

**Policies:**

- 2.1 Develop a knowledge base on the Western Yar's physical processes, the influence of processes operating in the Solent and use the information to inform future decisions.
- 2.2 The natural and physical processes within the Western Yar should continue with the minimum of human modification. This should allow present and future activities and processes of the estuary to co-exist or restore more natural coastline or processes.
- 2.3 Protect, as appropriate, the urban and commercial development (people, property and businesses) in the core area and area of wider influence from erosion and flooding by the sea.
- 2.4 Maintain, as appropriate, the existing defences to protect people and property from flooding.
- 2.5 Hold the defence line by maintaining the level of coast protection afforded by the breakwater whilst minimising the adverse impacts to the natural processes of sediment transport, especially those which sustain sensitive habitats.
- 2.6 Any new built development that does not rely upon a coastal location should not be constructed in coastal areas. Development should also be avoided in areas that are at risk from either flooding or coastal erosion.
- 2.7 Any improvements to the level of coastal defences should take into consideration or, if possible, enhance the nature conservation resources of the Western Yar as well as according with the Shoreline Management Plan, DEFRA guidance and the Habitats Directive.
- 2.8 Any future coastal defence works will be encouraged to comprise soft engineering solutions which minimise any disruption or adverse impact to natural physical processes and which are in accord with the policies of the Shoreline Management Plan.
- 2.10 Develop a water level management plan to agree water level management in the non-tidal section of the Western Yar.

## KPA 2: Action Plan

## PHYSICAL PROCESSES

EMP Policy	Body /bodies having primary responsibility	Current policy/ similar relevant document where appropriate	EMP Partners working with bodies having primary responsibility	Action	Timescale
<b>2.1 Develop a knowledge base on the Western Yar's physical processes, the influence of processes operating in the Solent and use the information to inform future decisions.</b>	Isle of Wight Council (Centre for the Coastal Environment) to co-ordinate. IW Estuaries Project Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners	Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) West Wight Strategy Plan (WWSP) Solent Coastal Habitat Management Plan (CHaMPS) IW Mitigation Study YHC Dredging studies	University departments Environment Agency English Nature	Financial driver needed hence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use YHC sustainable dredging and/or realignment study to pull together knowledge into one report on baseline and trends.</li> </ul>	2005
<b>2.2 The natural physical processes within the Western Yar should continue with the minimum of human modification. This should allow present and future activities and processes of the estuary to coexist or restore more natural coastline or processes.</b>	IW Estuaries Project for positive projects Licence / consent regulators and advisers: DEFRA (MCU), IWC, EN, EA.  In partnership with applicants YHC, landowners.	IWC Unitary Development Plan (IWC UDP) SMP WWSP DEFRA policy EN / EA Policy Legislation: Habitat regulations, CROW Act YHC Policy	Town & Parish Councils English Nature Environment Agency Landowners Local nature conservation interest groups Isle of Wight Council Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners	Achieve policy through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive projects like realignment feasibility studies and work generated by licence applications (e.g. dredging and coastal defence work).</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>2.3 Protect, as appropriate, the urban and commercial development (people, property and businesses) in the core area and area of wider influence from erosion and flooding by the sea.</b>	Isle of Wight Council (Centre for the Coastal Environment, Development Control) Other owners of defences Regulators / advisers DEFRA (MCU) English Nature Environment Agency	Isle of Wight Shoreline Management Plan WWSP IWC UDP DEFRA policy	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners (as owners of defences)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defence owners and landowners to seek to maintain defences</li> <li>Regulators will develop and implement policy in relation to applications.</li> <li>EMP partners input to public consultation on policy documents</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>2.4 Maintain, as appropriate, the existing defences to protect people and property from flooding.</b>	Isle of Wight Council (Centre for the Coastal Environment, Development Control) Other owners of defences Regulators / advisers DEFRA (MCU) English Nature Environment Agency	Isle of Wight Shoreline Management Plan WWSP IWC UDP DEFRA policy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defence owners and landowners to seek to maintain defences</li> <li>Regulators will develop and implement policy in relation to applications.</li> <li>EMP partners input to public consultation on policy documents</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>2.5 Hold the defence line by maintaining the level of coast protection afforded by the breakwater whilst minimising the adverse impacts to the natural processes of sediment transport, especially those which sustain</b>	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners and other owners of defences Regulators/advisors IOWC development control DEFRA (MCU)	Isle of Wight Shoreline Management Plan WWSP IWC UDP DEFRA policy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defence owners and landowners to seek to maintain defences</li> <li>Regulators will develop and implement policy in relation to applications.</li> </ul>	Ongoing

EMP Policy	Body /bodies having primary responsibility	Current policy/ similar relevant document where appropriate	EMP Partners working with bodies having primary responsibility	Action	Timescale
sensitive habitats.	English Nature Environment Agency			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EMP partners input to public consultation on policy documents</li> </ul>	
<b>2.6 Any new built development, that does not rely upon a coastal location, should not be constructed in coastal areas. Development should also be avoided in areas that are at risk from either flooding or coastal erosion.</b>	Isle of Wight Council (Centre for the Coastal Environment, Development Control) Other owners of defences Regulators / advisers DEFRA (MCU) English Nature Environment Agency	Shoreline Management Plan WWSP IWC UDP DEFRA policy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defence owners and landowners to seek to maintain defences</li> <li>Regulators will develop and implement policy in relation to applications.</li> <li>EMP partners input to public consultation on policy documents</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>2.7 Any improvements to the level of coastal defences should take into consideration or, if possible, enhance the natural and historic conservation resources of the Western Yar as well as according with the Shoreline Management Plan, DEFRA guidance and the Habitats Directive.</b>	Isle of Wight Council (Centre for the Coastal Environment, Development Control) Other owners of defences Regulators / advisers DEFRA (MCU) English Nature Environment Agency				
<b>2.8 Any future coastal defence works will be encouraged to comprise soft engineering solutions which minimise any disruption or adverse impact to natural physical processes and which are in accord with the policies of the Shoreline Management Plan.</b>	Isle of Wight Council (Centre for the Coastal Environment, Development Control) Other owners of defences Regulators / advisers DEFRA (MCU) English Nature Environment Agency				
<b>2.10 Develop a water level management plan to agree water level management in the non-tidal section of the Western Yar estuary.</b>	Environment Agency		English Nature Isle of Wight Council		Medium (2005)

### **Key Policy Area 3: ENCOURAGING A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY**

**Aim: To encourage a strong economy, in Yarmouth, the Harbour and the estuary hinterland, commercial activities being located within the specified Commercial Areas 1 and 2.**

The town of Yarmouth, the Harbour and the estuary hinterland all support important local businesses, including farming, boat yards, marine services, shops and restaurants. The economy of the harbour and the town are closely linked and dependant on each other. With unemployment levels in West Wight running at 13.1% (which is 4.5% above the national average), maintenance of the viability of existing business and, where appropriate, expansion that is in keeping with the cultural identity of the area, is critical for the future well-being of the local community. Within the EMP core area there are two clearly identifiable Commercial Areas as defined in Part A3 and shown on **Figure 1**. For reasons explained in Part A3, Sandhard Creek is also defined separately.

It is important to recognise that the visiting yachts play a vital role in supporting the local economy, approximately 20,000 yachts visit Yarmouth each year producing an estimated figure of £1 million into the immediate economy.

The main harbour has been at capacity at weekends for many years and Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners have advocated an outer harbour. However, proposals for such construction are held in abeyance until the right economic situation becomes apparent. An outer harbour would provide visitor berths and the main harbour could then be devoted to residential moorings. A full Environmental Impact Assessment and hydraulic and sedimentation flow studies would have to be undertaken before such a scheme could be considered.

In the Commercial Areas, economic activities need to be maintained at current

levels within the defined boundaries. This activity must be in line with current planning policies and other relevant legislation with leeway for appropriate future growth accommodated within the defined boundaries. It is important that in these areas more is done to "commercially link" the harbour with the town, through promotion, interpretation and high quality development. Opportunities exist for encouraging people disembarking at Yarmouth Harbour to visit the local area and use the services provided before setting off to explore the rest of the Island. It is crucial for the continued success of businesses that adequate navigable water is available from the main channel to Saltern Wood Quay, moorings and Kings Manor (in line with Policy 1.3) and that the access road from the main road to CA2 is maintained.

Outside these Commercial Areas, the objective should be to maintain the tranquillity and natural character of the estuary core area. In the tranquil area it is best to promote only low-key boat-related activity. Additional proposals for new development should be strongly resisted.

In considering changes to existing use of the Commercial Areas, it is recommended that proposals are discussed at an early stage and prior to the submission of a planning application. By developing a culture of openness and trust, potentially damaging effects can be identified and, where possible mitigated. This process should help avoid costly conflict and help speed up decision making.

#### **Policies:**

- 3.1 Development planning around the Western Yar estuary should protect the traditional uses of the tranquil area, there should be no net increase in developed areas and damaging land use activities should be avoided.**
- 3.2 Proposals for new development and/or commercial activity are encouraged to locate within Commercial Areas 1 and 2 in line with planning policies and other**

- relevant legislation, and:
- special regard should be paid to high standards of landscaping and layout;
  - the special environmental sensitivity (eg. intertidal habitats) and archaeological value of the EMP area should be respected;
  - the character and cultural identity of the Harbour, Norton Spit and surrounding Parishes should be maintained.
- 3.3 Where a development proposal may generate a significant adverse environmental impact on the EMP area, early dialogue between the interested parties will be encouraged and, where appropriate, an environmental appraisal carried out.
- 3.4 Existing businesses should identify and develop opportunities to reduce the seasonality of trade.
- 3.5 Ensure commercial fishing activities in the EMP area harvest fin fish and shellfish wisely and at levels that are sustainable.
- 3.6 Encourage the farming community to continue farming practices which minimise any adverse environmental impacts within the EMP area, in line with existing legislation and current initiatives.
- 3.7 Businesses within the EMP area will be encouraged to adopt a philosophy of “continuous improvement” in planning, managing and carrying out their activities, within the existing planning policy framework, in order to maintain and enhance the special environment of the Western Yar.
- 3.8 Ensure that the existing use of the area of Sandhard Creek identified on Figure 1, i.e. the use of inter-tidal areas for mooring / landing of small craft during the summer and limited use (max. 10 craft) of existing piles/buoys in the winter, is not exceeded.

## KPA 3: Action Plan

## ENCOURAGING A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY

EMP Policy	Body /bodies having primary responsibility	Current policy/ similar relevant document where appropriate	EMP Partners working with bodies having primary responsibility	Action	Timescale
<b>3.1 Development planning around the Western Yar estuary should protect the traditional uses of the tranquil area, there should be no net increase in developed areas and damaging land use activities should be avoided.</b>	Isle of Wight Council (Planning)	Monitored through the Unitary Development Plan / Development Control process AONB Management Plan	Town & Parish Councils (through Parish Protocol) Landowners AONB Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep a watching brief</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>3.2 Proposals for new development and/or commercial activity are encouraged to locate within Commercial Areas 1 and 2 in line with planning policies and other relevant legislation, and:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Special regard should be paid to high standards of landscaping and layout;</li> <li>The special environmental sensitivity (e.g. intertidal habitats) and archaeological value of the EMP area should be respected;</li> <li>The character and cultural identity of the Harbour, Norton Spit and surrounding Parishes should be maintained.</li> </ul>	Isle of Wight Council (Planning)	Monitored through the Unitary Development Plan / Development Control process AONB Management Plan	Town & Parish Councils (through Parish Protocol) Landowners AONB Partnership Local nature conservation and natural history interest groups		
<b>3.3 Where a development proposal may generate a significant adverse environmental impact on the EMP area, early dialogue between the interested parties will be encouraged and, where appropriate, an environmental appraisal carried out.</b>	Isle of Wight Council Planning Isle of Wight Council (Centre for the Coastal Environment)	Requirement under the Habitats Regulations as process for appraising development proposals. AONB Management Plan	English Nature AONB Partnership		
<b>3.4 Existing businesses should identify and develop opportunities to encourage out of season trade.</b>	The West Wight Business Association Yarmouth Business Association		Isle of Wight Council Town and parish councils Landowners Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners AONB Partnership	Encourage the members of the West Wight Business Association and the Yarmouth Business Association to develop a shared commercial vision and jointly promote the area within the aim of the EMP.	Ongoing
<b>3.5 Ensure commercial fishing activities in the EMP area harvest fin fish and</b>	Southern Sea Fisheries DEFRA		Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fishing interests to liaise with Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners;</li> </ul>	Ongoing

EMP Policy	Body /bodies having primary responsibility	Current policy/ similar relevant document where appropriate	EMP Partners working with bodies having primary responsibility	Action	Timescale
shellfish wisely and at levels that are sustainable.			Local commercial fishing interests	DEFRA and Southern Sea Fisheries	
<b>3.6 Encourage the farming community to continue farming practices which minimise any adverse environmental impacts within the EMP area in line with existing legislation and current initiatives.</b>	National Farmers' Union	AONB Management Plan	Farmers Landowners AONB Partnership English Nature Environment Agency Isle of Wight Council Island 2000 Trust Local nature conservation interest groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landowners to accord with advice/ good NFU practice to prevent environmental damage and encourage sustainability of farming industry.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>3.7 Businesses within the EMP area will be encouraged to adopt a philosophy of "continuous improvement" in planning, managing and carrying out their activities, within the existing planning policy framework, in order to maintain and enhance the special environment of the W. Yar.</b>	West Wight Business Association		Local businesses Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage businesses to prepare a business plan highlighting the qualities of Yarmouth, the services provided and relationship between landscape/estuary/town.</li> <li>Seek regular discussions with business groups.</li> </ul>	2 years
<b>3.8 Ensure that the existing use of Sandhard Creek (see Figure 1), i.e. the use of inter-tidal areas for mooring / landing of small craft during the summer and limited use (max. 10 craft) of existing piles/buoys in the winter, is not exceeded.</b>	English Nature		Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners Harold Hayles boatyard Isle of Wight Council (Planning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project officer to report on agreement between landowner and English Nature.</li> </ul>	Short

## **Key Policy Area 4: LANDSCAPE QUALITY**

**Aim:** To enhance the beauty of the estuary both in terms of natural features and historic buildings by ensuring that future development reflects the local character of the area.

The area around the Western Yar is beautiful. This is reflected both by the national Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) designation that covers the whole estuary valley and the large number of visitors every year. The townscape of Yarmouth and other built structures within the area (eg. Freshwater church, the Mill, King's Manor and the Causeway), make an important contribution to the visual character of the EMP area, as does the view of Yarmouth seen from the Solent. There is an overall need to ensure that the area remains natural and picturesque, with careful consideration given to the visual impact of different activities or development and steps taken to mitigate visual intrusion wherever possible.

### **Policies:**

- 4.1 Carry out a landscape character assessment to include the built environment with local people and service providers. This could include an identification of key views and degraded areas and opportunities for landscape protection and enhancement.**
- 4.2 Any modification of the landscape of the area should adopt a high quality of design, paying particular attention to the needs of the conservation area, visual intrusion associated with incremental development and the cumulative effect of different activities.**
- 4.3 Rationalise signs and street furniture to minimise clutter and adverse visual impact.**

- 4.4 Ensure that changes to the rural landscape character of the estuary are in keeping with the ecological requirements of the different habitats within both the core area and surrounding hinterland.**
- 4.5 Where appropriate, encourage habitat creation / restoration.**

## KPA 4: Action Plan

## LANDSCAPE QUALITY

EMP Policy	Bodies having primary responsibility	Current policy/similar relevant document where appropriate	EMP Partners working with bodies having primary responsibility	Action	Timescale
<b>4.1 Carry out an evaluation of the landscape (including buildings) with local people and service providers. This could include an identification of key views and degraded areas and opportunities for landscape protection and enhancement.</b>	Island 2000 Trust Town and Parish Councils AONB Partnership	AONB Management Plan AONB "Landscape Character Assessment" Village design statements	Isle of Wight Council (Planning) Yarmouth Society Campaign for the Protection of Rural England AONB Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update AONB "Landscape Assessment" to provide more detailed review and strategy for Western Yar EMP area.</li> <li>Begin photographic record of key views and degraded areas</li> </ul>	2004
<b>4.2 Any modification of the landscape of the area should adopt a high quality of design, paying particular attention to the needs of the conservation area, visual intrusion associated with incremental development and the cumulative effect of different activities.</b>	Isle of Wight Council (Planning)	Architectural standards already set with Conservation Area Status – applications reviewed by the Isle of Wight Council's Conservation Design Team. AONB Management Plan	Campaign for the Protection of Rural England AONB Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor outcome of planning applications in the EMP area</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>4.3 Rationalise signs and street furniture to minimise clutter and adverse visual impact.</b>	Working Group		IWC (Planning, Highways, Rights of Way) Landowners YHC WightLink Yarmouth Society Campaign for the Protection of Rural England AONB Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep a watching brief to ensure previous work to remove excessive street signs etc remains effective</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>4.4 Ensure that changes to the rural landscape character of the estuary are in keeping with the ecological requirements of the different habitats within both the core area and surrounding hinterland.</b>	Isle of Wight Council (Countryside Section) DEFRA		Local nature conservation interest groups Campaign for the Protection of Rural England AONB Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collate information about existing habitats and produce habitat zone map</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>4.5 Where appropriate, encourage habitat creation/restoration.</b>	English Nature Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners Landowners		Isle of Wight Council (Countryside Section) Island 2000 Trust Local nature conservation interest groups AONB Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English Nature/Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners/Landowners to agree plan</li> </ul>	Ongoing

## Key Policy Area 5: POLLUTION

**Aim: To ensure that the environment of Western Yar is safe, clean and pollution free.**

The term pollution covers atmospheric emissions, discharges to water and land, litter, noise and light pollution.

The Western Yar's water quality is generally good. This is an important asset and should be used to promote the area more widely as there is a general perception that the water of the estuary is polluted. Much can be done to publicise where improvements have been made, and are planned for, and where undesirable water clarity and colouration is the result of natural phenomena. Marine litter is a problem within the core area. It is kept under control at present which reflects the successful management of the estuary by private landowners.

Improvements have been introduced since the EMP was written in 1998 in the form of a sewage pumping station at Norton. This redirects waste water away from the West Wight to a sewage treatment facility at Sandown. There is a storm water overflow at Norton which only operates during periods of very wet weather. To achieve any further improvements in the water quality of the core area, the EMP should encourage the regulating authorities to go further than merely meeting the legislative minimum, through increased investment in sewage treatment. This could be accomplished through joint working between local interest groups, and where appropriate, lobbying.

A further concern, especially in the tranquil waters south of the road bridge is the need to avoid noise pollution. However, a certain amount of noise is to be expected periodically from farm activity within the wider area. The adverse impact of noise and light pollution is of concern throughout the estuary and potential sources, especially from the town and commercial areas should be kept to the minimum required for approved operations and safety. The policies in KPA7 aim to avoid noisy recreational pursuits in the area but it is

equally important that what activities do take place avoid unnecessary noise. Air quality in the core area is good and atmospheric emissions will be monitored by the Isle of Wight Council which is also responsible for the preparation of a local air quality management plan.

### Policies:

- 5.3 Ensure that, where possible, the marine and coastal environment of the Solent, including commercial fisheries, is not adversely affected by sewage and industrial discharges.**
- 5.4 Ensure that, where possible, agricultural practices within the catchment of the River Yar avoid the use of damaging chemicals and other pollutants and, that the discharge and/or release of nutrients into the EMP area is minimised.**
- 5.5 Encourage motor vessels and yachts to adopt a code of good environmental practice and do not discharge human waste into the waters of the core area and Solent. Commercial operators of moorings and pontoons are encouraged to follow the example of Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners in providing appropriate reception facilities for human waste. Encourage the use of the waste facilities provided.**
- 5.6 Encourage motor vessels and yachts to adopt a code of good environmental practice and do not discharge garbage into the waters of the core area and Solent. Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners and commercial operators of moorings and pontoons are encouraged to provide the appropriate reception facilities for garbage.**
- 5.7 Reduce the incidence of all forms of litter within the Western Yar**

- estuary. Raise public awareness of the Western Yar as a litter free zone.**
- 5.8 Ensure that the Environment Agency provides the local community with information on current estuary water quality and groundwater quality monitoring programmes.**
- 5.9 Encourage the Environment Agency to identify water quality targets for the Western Yar estuary.**
- 5.10 Improve public understanding and awareness of water quality issues in the Western Yar.**
- 5.11 Noisy recreational activities in the tranquil area should be minimised by the enforcement of appropriate bylaws (e.g. adherence to the current 4 knot speed limit) and the promotion of good practice.**
- 5.12 Light pollution within the whole area should be minimised with the appropriate design and use of external lighting.**
- 5.13 Prevent "fly tipping" and dumping of material along the estuary shores by rigorous enforcement of statutory legislation and prompt removal of unauthorised materials.**

## KPA 5: Action Plan

## POLLUTION

EMP Policy	Body /bodies having primary responsibility	Current policy/ similar relevant document where appropriate	EMP Partners working with bodies having primary responsibility	Action	Timescale
<b>5.3 Ensure that, where possible, the marine and coastal environment of the Solent, including commercial fisheries, are not adversely affected by sewage and industrial discharges.</b>	Southern Water Services Isle of Wight Council Environment Agency Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners		Isle of Wight Commercial Fishermen's Association Solent Water Quality Conference Solent Forum Solent Protection Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop liaison with Isle of Wight Commercial Fishermen's Association and Solent Water Quality Conference</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>5.4 Ensure that, where possible, agricultural practices within the catchment of the River Yar avoid the use of damaging chemicals and other pollutants and, that the discharge and/or release of nutrients into the EMP area is minimised.</b>	Environment Agency	Isle of Wight Local Environment Agency Plan (LEAP) Isle of Wight Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy AONB Management Plan	Country Landowners' Association Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners National Farmers' Union Landowners / Farmers AONB Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor</li> <li>Improve liaison</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>5.5 Encourage boat owners to adopt a code of good environmental practice and not to discharge human waste into the waters of the core area and Solent. Commercial operators of moorings and pontoons are encouraged to follow the example of Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners in providing appropriate reception facilities for human waste. Encourage the use of the waste facilities provided.</b>	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners	BMIF: Navigate with Nature RYA YHC Waste Management Plan and Environmental Policy	RYA BMIF Yacht/sailing clubs Local marine industries Environment Agency Estuaries Project Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educate boat owners and raise awareness through distribution of literature, e.g. Navigate with Nature and Safeguard our Solent.</li> <li>Develop waste facilities leaflet for Yarmouth Harbour users</li> </ul>	2003 / Ongoing
<b>5.6 Encourage boat owners to adopt a code of good environmental practice and not to discharge garbage into the waters of the core area and Solent. The Harbour Commissioners and commercial operators of moorings and pontoons are encouraged to provide the appropriate reception facilities for garbage.</b>	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners	BMIF: Navigate with Nature RYA YHC Waste Management Plan and Environmental Policy Bylaws (IWC and YHC)	RYA BMIF Yacht/sailing clubs Local marine industries Island Waste Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educate boat owners and raise awareness through distribution of literature, e.g. Navigate with Nature</li> <li>Develop waste facilities leaflet for Yarmouth Harbour users</li> </ul>	2003 / Ongoing
<b>5.7 Reduce the incidence of all forms of litter within the Western Yar estuary. Raise public awareness of the Western Yar as a litter free zone.</b>	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners Isle of Wight Council (Operations)	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners Waste Management Plan Bylaws (IWC and YHC)	Town and Parish Councils Yarmouth Society Town Trust Local marine industries Island Waste Services CPRE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mount appropriate campaign to persuade the public to dispose of their litter responsibly and encourage recycling.</li> <li>Encourage Isle of Wight Council (Operations) to provide and service</li> </ul>	Ongoing

EMP Policy	Body /bodies having primary responsibility	Current policy/ similar relevant document where appropriate	EMP Partners working with bodies having primary responsibility	Action	Timescale
				adequate litter receptacles.	
<b>5.8 Ensure that the Environment Agency provides the local community with information on current estuary water quality and groundwater quality monitoring programmes.</b>	Environment Agency	IW Local Environment Agency Plan	Western Yar Estuary Management Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formulate regular reporting system with the Environment Agency.</li> </ul>	Short to medium
<b>5.9 Encourage the Environment Agency to identify water quality targets for the Western Yar estuary.</b>	Environment Agency	IW Local Environment Agency Plan	Western Yar Estuary Management Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish targets with Environment Agency.</li> </ul>	Short to medium
<b>5.10 Improve public understanding and awareness of water quality issues in the Western Yar.</b>	Environment Agency	IW Local Environment Agency Plan	Western Yar Estuary Management Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produce regular information sheet to be made publicly available.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>5.11 Noisy recreational activities in the tranquil area should be minimised by the enforcement of appropriate bylaws (e.g. adherence to the current 4 knot speed limit) and the promotion of good practice.</b>	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners	Relevant bylaws	Harbour users Adjacent landowners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue enforcement of bylaws as appropriate.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>5.12 Light pollution within the whole area should be minimised with the appropriate design and use of external lighting.</b>	Isle of Wight Council (Planning)	Village Design Statements Unitary Development Plan AONB Management Plan	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners Town Council Marine industries Yarmouth Society AONB Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey and reduce where possible.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>5.13 Prevent "fly tipping" and dumping of material along the estuary shores by rigorous enforcement of statutory legislation and prompt removal of unauthorised materials.</b>	Isle of Wight Council (Operations) Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners Environment Agency	Relevant bylaws	Landowners Town and Parish Councils Marine industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicise reporting system available.</li> </ul>	Ongoing

## **Key Policy Area 6: ACCESS AND PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

**Aim: To encourage and promote public enjoyment of the estuary through careful provision and management of access and rights of way.**

There are good opportunities to view the wildlife and numerous activities occurring within the confines of the Western Yar estuary, the Harbour and the Western Solent. This part of the EMP discusses access and public rights of way on land whilst KPA 7 discusses water-use and navigation.

There is already a well established system of public rights of way with public footpaths and bridleways way-marked and numbered.

An excellent circular route around the estuary follows the old railway line along the eastern bank. One can cross the estuary at the Causeway or continue the walk to Freshwater via Afton Marsh. Alternatively, walkers can enjoy elevated views of the estuary, surrounding farmland and the river valley from the path as it crosses private agricultural land along the western side towards Norton. There are good links between the estuary walk and the wider countryside of the West Wight including the coastal path and the Tennyson trail.

Although opportunities for interpretation have been taken at visitor honey-pot areas, such as the main car park at Yarmouth, further opportunities to improve awareness of the estuary resources should be considered. It is important that signage clutter is avoided and that information is sensitively located and designed. It may be more appropriate to design a comprehensive estuary information leaflet that complements existing sources of information. This could help inform the visitor, identify particular places of interest and help generate income to finance action through the EMP. The leaflet itself could be sponsored by local business and include advertising space. To maximise the use of the leaflet it should contain relevant and appropriate information such as estimates of

the length of time for a walk and what facilities i.e. toilets and refreshments can be found along the way and could also include information regarding the nature conservation importance of the area.

The disused railway line is a bridleway (Public Bridleway Y19/F61) and is particularly heavily used by the local community on foot, horseback, pedal cycles and by school parties. Under the 1968 Countryside Act bridleways can be used by cyclists provided that they give way to horse riders and pedestrians. This path offers excellent opportunities for estuary-side access. It must be stressed however, that the marshes are privately owned and there is no public access across them. Nonetheless, the quiet user can often be rewarded by having breathtakingly close views of the estuary's wildlife, especially the birds.

Use of the bridleway is managed informally by the Parish Councils. Following resurfacing there have been a number of concerns regarding public safety as cycles can attain high speeds. Since the EMP was produced in 1998 the signage has been improved at both the Causeway and Yarmouth to encourage users of the bridleway to respect the needs of people of all abilities and obey laws regarding cyclists' use of bridleways. This should be monitored and the Parish Councils need to continue to be vigilant and actively manage the rogue user.

Opportunities for working with the Isle of Wight Council to improve the network of footpaths and bridleways (which are the responsibility of the Isle of Wight Council and landowners) should be explored. By maintaining the status quo the rights of land owners and the special environmental sensitivity of the Western Yar must continue to be protected.

Norton Spit is particularly sensitive to visitor pressure such as trampling and erosion. It is imperative that visitor use is carefully managed because the Spit and its associated rare plant communities are dependant on the maintenance of sand transport processes.

Sport angling only occurs to any significant level on the pier because it is controlled under bylaw in the harbour area. South of the bridge access to deep water would require access across privately-owned land.

**Policies:**

- 6.1 To assist the Isle of Wight Council and landowners in ensuring that all rights of way remain unobstructed and waymarked to an appropriate standard, in consultation with local users and interested parties. The surface should be appropriate with its use.**
  
- 6.2 Access to the estuary waterside should be carefully managed to protect wildlife, sensitive habitats and the rights of private land owners.**
  
- 6.3 Users of the bridleway along the old railway track should respect the needs of others and should not create a public nuisance through inconsiderate or dangerous use. This will continue to enable people of all abilities and interests to enjoy the special experience of the Western Yar estuary.**
  
- 6.4 Develop a common format to signs which is specific to the Western Yar but which is restricted to the main access points (near the Old Mill and the Causeway) and is in keeping with the natural and open character of the area.**
  
- 6.5 Replaced with KPA 9.8**
  
- 6.6 The tranquil waters of the estuary south of the bridge should be freely navigable and be used and enjoyed for quiet, water-based recreation which respects its special sensitivity for wildlife.**

## KPA 6: Action Plan

## ACCESS AND PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

EMP Policy	Body/ bodies having primary responsibility	Current policy/similar document where appropriate	EMP Partners working with bodies having primary responsibility	Action	Timescale
<b>6.1 To assist the Isle of Wight Council and landowners in ensuring that all rights of way remain unobstructed and waymarked to an appropriate standard in consultation with local users and interested parties. The surface should be appropriate with its use.</b>	Isle of Wight Council (Rights of Way)	Isle of Wight Council Milestone Statement 1994 Rights of Way Strategy 2001 - 2006	Local users Landowners Town and Parish Councils Yarmouth Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Raising awareness of reporting system to Isle of Wight Council.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>6.2 Access to the estuary waterside should be carefully managed to protect wildlife, sensitive habitats and the rights of private land owners.</b>	English Nature Isle of Wight Council (Rights of Way) Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners	Wildlife and Countryside Act Bylaws Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act) AONB Management Plan	AONB Partnership Landowners Local nature conservation interest groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish actions to provide agreed places for countryside access to meet demand where there is least disturbance.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>6.3 Users of the bridleway along the old railway track should respect the needs of others and should not create a public nuisance through inconsiderate or dangerous use. This will continue to enable people of all abilities and interests to enjoy the special experience of the Western Yar estuary.</b>	Isle of Wight Council (Rights of Way)	Countryside Act 1968, Section 30. Riding of Pedal Bicycles on Bridleways. Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act)	Town and Parish Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Target user groups about proper use of the bridleway.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>6.4 Develop a common format to signs which is specific to the Western Yar but which is restricted to the main access points (near the Old Mill and the Causeway) and is in keeping with the natural and open character of the area.</b>	Refer to Policy 4.3	Refer to Policy 4.3	Refer Policy 4.3	Refer to policy 4.3	Refer to Policy 4.3
<b>6.5 Replaced with KPA 9.8</b>					
<b>6.6 The tranquil waters of the estuary south of the bridge should be freely navigable and be used and enjoyed for quiet, water-based recreation which respects its special sensitivity for wildlife.</b>	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners	Bylaws (as per 5.10)	Royal Yachting Association Local yacht/sailing clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ref. 5.10</li> <li>▪ Educate through leaflet (see 9.8) and liaison</li> </ul>	

## Key Policy Area 7: RECREATION

**Aim: To maintain the recreational use of the Western Yar through voluntary systems of management and co-operative agreements. Intervention or regulation will only be used when the voluntary approach proves ineffective.**

Sailing is the largest single recreational activity carried out within the core area. In addition to the berths within the harbour and estuary, visitor moorings are provided outside the breakwater with anchorages further offshore.

Yarmouth Harbour has a very narrow entrance that gets congested on busy summer weekends when visitor numbers dramatically increase. It is the responsibility of the Harbour Master to manage boat traffic in the Harbour and its approaches. There is a free right to navigation within the Harbour, its approaches and the estuary south of the bridge. Mooring and anchoring is controlled by Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners and enforced under byelaw. This is an effective means of managing the location and number of visiting boats.

There is a good relationship between Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners and the users who are represented by the local sporting clubs. This goodwill has been used with great effect to manage and help inform those who are perhaps less aware of the high standards expected of the users of the Western Yar. When occasional problems do arise they are often associated with the "rogue" user and the Harbour Master will take appropriate action. The local users and landowners help provide the eyes and the ears of the Harbour Commissioners.

The harbour and much of the area south of the bridge is an important mooring area for a range of craft. A flexible approach to the location and management of the appropriate mooring systems within the existing area should continue as present. This approach has the distinct advantage that it enables a

response to changes in trends and patterns of boating and the prevailing physical processes within the estuary in the future without introducing unnecessary "red tape".

The Public Bridleway (Y19/F61) along the old railway line is heavily used by the local community for walking, dog walking, running, cycling and horse riding with potential opportunities for conflict.

Opportunities for recreation on land and on water must be sympathetically managed so that the wildlife and natural beauty of the area can be appreciated without any adverse effects.

### Policies:

- 7.1 Maintain the estuary outside Commercial Areas 1 and 2 as a tranquil place for farming, leisure and recreation recognising the existing commercial activities.**
- 7.2 Ensure that Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners, in partnership with the local sport and recreation clubs and other interested parties, prepare and implement a voluntary code of estuary care which respects the special environment of the Western Yar and the needs of others.**
- 7.3 Improve the information boards around the estuary at appropriate locations and provide information in a common format at key locations on access, heritage, safety and sensitive habitats.**
- 7.4 Assess current and proposed activities, including educational visits and surveys, to ensure that they are not having an adverse effect on the nature conservation interests of the estuary (e.g. disturbance to birds, bait digging trampling). Where appropriate, consider mechanisms to improve the voluntary management of such activities.**

**KPA 7: Action Plan****RECREATION**

<b>EMP Policy</b>	<b>Body /bodies having primary responsibility</b>	<b>Current policy/similar document where appropriate</b>	<b>EMP Partners working with bodies having primary responsibility</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
<b>7.1 Maintain the estuary outside Commercial Areas 1 and 2 as a tranquil place for farming, leisure and recreation recognising the existing commercial activities.</b>	Isle of Wight Council (Planning)	Unitary Development Plan Policy AONB Management Plan	Town and Parish Councils Local yacht / sailing clubs Landowners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Keep a watching brief supporting present policies.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>7.2 Ensure that the Harbour Commissioners, in partnership with the local sport and recreation clubs and other interested parties, prepare and implement a voluntary code of estuary care which respects the special environment of the Western Yar and the needs of others.</b>	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners	-	Sailing clubs Town and Parish Councils Business interests Landowners English Nature Local nature conservation interest groups AONB Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop voluntary Code of Practice in consultation with users to be included within the Harbour Guide and leaflet (see policy 9.8).</li> </ul>	Medium
<b>7.3 Improve the information boards around the estuary at appropriate locations and provide information in a common format at key locations on access, heritage, safety and sensitive habitats.</b>	Working Group (see Policies 6.4 and 4.3)	Refer to Policy 4.3	Refer to Policy 4.3	Refer to Policy 4.3	Ongoing
<b>7.4 Assess current and proposed activities, including educational visits and surveys, to ensure that they are not having an adverse effect on the nature conservation interests of the estuary (e.g. disturbance to birds, bait digging, trampling). Where appropriate, consider mechanisms to improve the voluntary management of such activities.</b>	-	AONB Management Plan	Isle of Wight Council (Centre for the Coastal Environment) Local nature conservation interest groups AONB Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Initiate scoping study with view to commissioning research.</li> </ul>	Short to medium

## **Key Policy Area 8: SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PLANNING**

**Aim: To ensure that the Western Yar is a safe place.**

In the summer the Western Yar estuary and its hinterland are used by many visitors. Whilst safety is ultimately the responsibility of the participant, many organisations in the area have safety-related responsibilities (eg. Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners, Wightlink and the RNLI), and are keen to encourage a high standard of health and safety. This issue is particularly important for the Harbour where emergency services, commercial and recreational activities occur side by side. The system of visitor management of the Harbour must maintain a safe and free right to navigation that avoids conflict with the commercial uses.

Concern has been raised about the health, safety and nuisance problems caused by the large flocks of pigeons in the Harbour. Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners are actively seeking solutions to the problem which is likely to require ongoing management.

It is important that information is readily available to the public on safety issues and health hazards but not in an over prescriptive way.

Finally, the wider Solent is covered by the strategic Solfire and Solspill contingency plans in the event of an oil spill. An Island Oil Spill Contingency Plan is currently being developed by the Isle of Wight Council. Locally, there is also a contingency plan for the handling of pollution incident within the Harbour.

### **Policies:**

**8.1 Make information readily available to assist and improve knowledge of the safety implications of recreation activities on the Western Yar.**

**8.2 Consider the need for traffic**

**calming and road crossing options between the harbour car park and waiting area and the town of Yarmouth.**

**8.3 Explore the options that are available for improving the current system of river traffic controls at the bridge.**

**8.4 Ensure that the relevant emergency contingency plans take account of the policies and information included within the EMP and that the plans are regularly practised, updated and reviewed.**

**8.5 Ensure that the number of pigeons in the Harbour does not affect health and safety.**

**KPA 8: Action Plan****SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PLANNING**

EMP Policy	Body/ bodies having primary responsibility	Current policy/similar document where appropriate	EMP Partners Working with bodies having primary responsibility	Action	Timescale
<b>8.1 Make information readily available to assist and improve knowledge of the safety implications of recreation activities on the Western Yar.</b>	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners Isle of Wight Council (Public Protection)	-	Emergency Services Sailing/yacht clubs Estuaries Project Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Safety information to be included within Harbour Guide.</li> <li>▪ Monitor the effectiveness of safety information by recording incidents that could have been prevented by better awareness.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>8.2 Consider the need for traffic calming and road crossing options between the harbour car park and waiting area and the town of Yarmouth.</b>	Isle of Wight Council (Highways)	No current policy	Ferry operator (Wightlink) Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners Town Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Keep under review</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>8.3 Explore the options that are available for improving the current system of river traffic controls at the bridge.</b>	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners	Information available in tide tables and Harbour Guide Relevant Bylaws	RYA Sailing /yacht clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Keep under review.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>8.4 Ensure that the relevant emergency contingency plans take account of the policies and information included within the EMP and that the plans are regularly practised, updated and reviewed.</b>	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners Isle of Wight Council (Emergency Planning) Wightlink Marine and Coastguard Agency	Harbour Emergency Plan Isle of Wight Council Oil Spill Contingency Plan SOLFIRE/SOLSPILL	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Keep watching brief.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>8.5 Ensure that the number of pigeons in the Harbour does not affect health and safety.</b>	Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners		Isle of Wight Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Investigate and implement appropriate measures to control the number of pigeons in the Harbour.</li> </ul>	Ongoing

## **Key Policy Area 9: COMMUNICATION AND RAISING AWARENESS**

**Aim: To improve communication between different users of the estuary and ensure that appropriate and high quality information on the EMP is available**

The Western Yar EMP identifies a number of areas where management of the Western Yar estuary and the human activities needs to be improved and existing practises reinforced. As the EMP is a non statutory document the policies will be implemented through a voluntary approach relying on consensus. Relying on statutory control for implementation is only seen as appropriate where a voluntary approach has proved inadequate or where there is a strong case for enforcement.

Providing opportunities for effective communication about the Western Yar and raising the awareness of the EMP is the key to achieving consensus and therefore the key to the successful implementation of the Plan. Clearer messages must be communicated to the local community and visitors about what the Western Yar has to offer and what the EMP aims to achieve. Over the long term greater public awareness of the natural resources and appreciation of the management issues will encourage self ownership and commitment to the Plans policies and will therefore help safeguard the estuary's future.

Conflict can often be avoided if the users of the estuary understand each others needs and are aware of the consequences of their activities. Therefore improved communication will help the community and estuary users both be aware of and care for their resource. This will help underpin a positive image for the area and encourage a willingness to modify or restrict activities, or alter habitats, to ensure the estuarine environment is protected for future

generations.

The Western Yar Estuary Management Committee was formed in order to implement the Estuary Management Plan. The Committee has a particularly important role to play by co-ordinating early opportunities for dialogue and by acting as a point of contact on estuary matters. It provides the crucial link between the EMP and the people of the Western Yar and also between the Plan and other appropriate groups and initiatives.

The policies presented below provide a practical way forward for improving communication and raising awareness.

### **Policies:**

- 9.1 The Western Yar Estuary Management Committee will act as the focus for the EMP and will seek to ensure that all relevant interests are fully informed about the progress of the EMP and its implementation programmes. To ensure this, the membership and terms of reference of the Western Yar Estuary Management Committee will be under continuous review.**
- 9.2 Improve communication in the EMP area through linkage to other existing networks.**
- 9.3 Encourage proposed and existing management initiatives to take account of the policies of the Western Yar EMP and where appropriate ensure that the Western Yar Estuary Management Committee is represented on other regional initiatives and groups.**
- 9.4 Publicise the Western Yar Estuary Management Plan.**
- 9.5 Identify and prioritise the messages which need to be**

relayed to users of the Western Yar including those which educate people and promote:

- the high quality facilities and attractions in the harbour and the town;
- appreciation of the tranquil area;
- opportunities for sustainable wildlife tourism;
- the interpretation of the areas cultural, natural and historical assets;
- understanding of water quality issues on the Western Yar;
- an understanding of safety and responsibility in the Western Yar;
- an understanding that the majority of the Western Yar is private land and of the important role that private landowners play in the management of the area;
- an understanding of agricultural activities.

**9.7 Monitor the effectiveness of action to raise awareness and change attitudes in the Western Yar estuary through the implementation of the EMP.**

**9.8 Raise awareness of the Western Yar and surrounding area including places of interest, public rights of way and its importance for nature conservation.**

## KPA 9: Action Plan

## COMMUNICATION AND RAISING AWARENESS

EMP Policy	Body/ bodies having primary responsibility	Current policy/similar document where appropriate	EMP Partners working with bodies having primary responsibility	Action	Timescale
<b>9.1 The Western Yar Estuary Management Committee will act as the focus for the EMP and will seek to ensure that all relevant interests are fully informed about the progress of the EMP and its implementation programmes. To ensure this, the membership and terms of reference of the Western Yar Estuary Management Committee will be under continuous review.</b>	Western Yar Estuary Management Committee	Western Yar Estuary Management Plan.	All consultees		Ongoing
<b>9.2 Improve communication in the EMP area through linkage to other existing networks.</b>	Western Yar Estuary Management Committee	Western Yar Estuary Management Plan.	All consultees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subject to 9.1</li> <li>• Regular reporting</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>9.3 Encourage proposed and existing management initiatives to take account of the policies of the Western Yar EMP and where appropriate ensure that the Western Yar Estuary Management Committee is represented on other regional initiatives and groups.</b>	Western Yar Estuary Management Committee	Western Yar Estuary Management Plan.	All consultees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that the Western Yar Management Committee is advised/consulted on relevant issues.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>9.4 Publicise the Western Yar EMP.</b>	Western Yar Estuary Management Committee	Western Yar Estuary Management Plan.	All consultees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publicise the EMP on the web sites of the IW Estuaries Project, the Solent Forum, Isle of Wight Council, YHC and Arc Manche</li> <li>• Where relevant include information in all leaflets and guides about the harbour</li> <li>• Hold copies of EMP in libraries and IW Coastal Visitors Centre</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>9.5 Identify and prioritise the messages which need to be relayed to users of the Western Yar including those which educate people and promote:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the high quality facilities and attractions in the Harbour and the Town;</li> </ul>	Western Yar Estuary Management Committee	Western Yar Estuary Management Plan.	All consultees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify opportunities to take these actions forward with appropriate timescales.</li> <li>• Work with Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners and include information about the estuary in any relevant publications.</li> </ul>	Ongoing

EMP Policy	Body/ bodies having primary responsibility	Current policy/similar document where appropriate	EMP Partners working with bodies having primary responsibility	Action	Timescale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ appreciation of the tranquil area;</li> <li>▪ opportunities for sustainable wildlife tourism;</li> <li>▪ the interpretation and protection of the areas cultural, natural and historical assets;</li> <li>▪ understanding of water quality issues on the Western Yar;</li> <li>▪ an understanding of safety and responsibility in the Western Yar;</li> <li>▪ an understanding that the majority of the Western Yar is private land;</li> <li>▪ an understanding of the important role that private landowners play in the management of the area;</li> <li>▪ an understanding of agricultural activities.</li> </ul>					
<p><b>9.7 Monitor the effectiveness of action to raise awareness and change attitudes in the Western Yar estuary through the implementation of the EMP.</b></p>	Western Yar Estuary Management Committee	Western Yar Estuary Management Plan.	All consultees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add feedback system to the website</li> </ul>	Medium
<p><b>9.8 Raise awareness of the Western Yar and surrounding area including places of interest, public rights of way and its importance for nature conservation.</b></p>	Isle of Wight Estuaries Project	<p>Making the most of the Yar: Stay in Yarmouth Harbour guide  Isle of Wight Council (Rights of Way) leaflets.  Isle of Wight Council Milestone Statement 1994.  AONB Management Plan</p>	<p>Landowners  Isle of Wight Council (Rights of Way)  Town and Parish Councils  Nature conservation interest groups  Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners  Relevant user groups  AONB Partnership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Produce an information leaflet on the Western Yar estuary in consultation with all appropriate parties and ensure that it is readily available and widely distributed to visitors.</li> </ul>	2005

## **Key Policy Area 10: DATA MANAGEMENT AND RESEARCH**

**Aim: To identify and prioritise research and information needs.**

Management decisions must be made on the best available information about the resources and uses of the Western Yar estuary. Problems between different uses often stem from a lack of reliable data and the fact that it is poorly communicated.

Throughout the EMP issues have been identified where more information is required to make management decisions. Five key areas for information gathering and dissemination have been identified:

1. Physical processes operating in the estuary, how they affect the estuary's wildlife and human activities and, what is likely to happen in the future.
2. The extent, sensitivity and uniqueness of the EMP area's plant and animal species and wildlife habitats.
3. The trends and effects of human activities.
4. The archaeological resource of the estuary.
5. How the performance of the EMP can be measured, assessed and communicated.

A great deal of information already exists on the Western Yar and is held by a number of organisations, such as Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners and the Isle of Wight Natural History and Archaeological Society, on a range of subjects including water use and the distribution of rare plants. This is held in a variety of formats (e.g. reports, anecdotal evidence and data base). Although these sources of information are very useful, there are a number of

shortcomings in the existing arrangements as these records are not held centrally and do not cover all subjects. The result has been that much useful work remains inaccessible within various organisations, especially colleges and universities. Often, permission is sought from English Nature and landowners to carry out this work but they are frequently unaware of its findings. Information may exist but because it is either inaccessible or inappropriately presented, decisions are based on only part of the picture.

It is recommended that a sub-group of the Western Yar Estuary Management Committee is set up to act as the first point of contact for those wishing to carry out research and monitoring. This Research and Monitoring Sub-group could co-ordinate research and advise on relevant sources of information, methods to be used and measures to safeguard sensitive areas and uses.

New information can be gathered cost effectively if the current knowledge gaps are identified and new research and data collation is co-ordinated and jointly funded where appropriate.

### **Policies:**

#### **10.1 Carry out an audit of the human uses, natural and historic resources of the Western Yar estuary which:**

- Identifies gaps in understanding;
- Prioritises research and monitoring needs;
- Identifies costs;
- Results in an agreed timetable of work;
- Informs decision making and leads to improved management of the resources of the Western Yar estuary.

#### **10.2 Establish a comprehensive data base of information on the flora, fauna, human uses and heritage of the Western Yar.**

- 10.3** Develop key indicators and targets that will need to be monitored to assess the effectiveness of implementing the EMP and which measures progress towards the wise use and sustainable development of the Western Yar.
  
- 10.4** Develop a mechanism to co-ordinate and prioritise programmes of research and monitoring on the Western Yar and ensure that information is readily accessible to partners in the EMP.
  
- 10.5** Monitor the performance of the EMP policies and action programmes and subject its policies to periodic review in the light of new information, improved understanding, the performance of policies, legislative change and changing conservation priorities.

## KPA 10: Action Plan

## DATA MANAGEMENT AND RESEARCH

EMP Policy	Body/ bodies having primary responsibility	Current policy/similar document where appropriate	EMP Partners working with bodies having primary responsibility	Action	Timescale
<b>10.1 Carry out an audit of the human uses, natural and historic resources of the Western Yar estuary which:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identifies gaps in understanding;</li> <li>▪ Prioritises research and monitoring needs;</li> <li>▪ Identifies costs;</li> <li>▪ Results in an agreed timetable of work;</li> <li>▪ Informs decision making and leads to improved management of the resources of the Western Yar estuary.</li> </ul>	Western Yar Estuary Management Committee	Western Yar Estuary Management Plan.	All consultees		Ongoing
<b>10.2 Establish a comprehensive data base of information on the flora, fauna, human uses and heritage of the Western Yar.</b>		Sites and Monuments Record	Isle of Wight Council (Ecology Officer) Local nature conservation interest groups English Nature English Heritage AONB Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collate and build on existing information</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>10.3 Develop key indicators and targets that will need to be monitored to assess the effectiveness of implementing the EMP and which measures progress towards the wise use and sustainable development of the Western Yar.</b>	Subject to 10.1	Western Yar Estuary Management Plan. Strategic Guidance for the Solent	Solent Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise with Solent Forum on Flagship Project looking at environmental indicators.</li> <li>• Establish a sub-group as necessary.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>10.4 Develop a mechanism to co-ordinate and prioritise programmes of research and monitoring on the Western Yar and ensure that information is readily accessible to partners in the EMP.</b>	Western Yar Estuary Management Committee	Western Yar Estuary Management Plan.	Isle of Wight Council (Ecology Officer, Centre for the Coastal Environment) Local nature conservation interest groups. Estuaries Project Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop projects to achieve 10.4</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>10.5 Monitor the performance of the EMP</b>	Western Yar Estuary	Western Yar Estuary Management	Isle of Wight Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish reporting procedure</li> </ul>	Ongoing

EMP Policy	Body/ bodies having primary responsibility	Current policy/similar document where appropriate	EMP Partners working with bodies having primary responsibility	Action	Timescale
<p>policies and action programmes and subject its policies to periodic review in the light of new information, improved understanding, the performance of policies, legislative change and changing conservation priorities.</p>	<p>Management Committee</p>	<p>Plan</p>	<p>(Ecology Officer)</p>		

## Part E: Implementation

The preparation of an EMP should be swiftly followed by implementation in order to ensure that the benefits of an agreed policy and decision-making framework improve the co-ordination of action and decision making.

The success of the EMP also depends upon the continued commitment of many organisations.

### E1: Management framework for implementation

At the meeting of the Western Yar Liaison Committee on 10<sup>th</sup> September 1998 the structure for implementing the EMP was revised by converting the Steering Group, which had carried out the detailed work in producing the EMP, to a Management Committee. In light of the considerable local interest and commitment shown throughout the development of this plan it was felt strongly that this Committee should represent the full range of interests in the Western Yar.

It was agreed, therefore, that the Management Committee should comprise:

- an independent chair;
- a representative from each of the organisations with statutory powers in the Western Yar, namely English Nature, the Environment Agency, Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners and the Isle of Wight Council;
- a representative of the marine industries;
- a representative of recreation;
- a representative of private landowners.

The Management Committee were responsible for the day-to-day decisions involved in the Plan's implementation. It was suggested that the Western Yar Liaison Committee should remain in being and meet about once a year to review and monitor progress and to consider future modifications to the plan.

The management structure above was agreed and contained within the original EMP but regarded as flexible. It was

anticipated that many other organisations within the area will be involved in specific topics as and when they arise. The essence of the Plan is "involvement" and if groups or individuals feel left on the sidelines the Plan will be failing in its objectives.

### E2: Project Officer

The implementation of the EMP was greatly assisted by the decision to appoint a Project Officer who would spend approximately one day per week dealing with matters associated with the Western Yar EMP. The post was jointly funded by the Isle of Wight Council, Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners, Cowes Harbour Commission, English Nature and the Environment Agency, and was for an initial period of three years. One of the Project Officer's tasks was to obtain funding for the Estuaries Project after that period.

### E3: Isle of Wight Estuaries Project

The Isle of Wight Estuaries Project now co-ordinates the implementation of the Western Yar EMP and the Project Officer's other activities. The Project currently covers the Western Yar and the Medina estuaries and is a partnership between the funding organisations: Cowes Harbour Commission; Crown Estate Commission (2001-2004); English Nature; the Environment Agency; the Isle of Wight Council; and Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners. These organisations form a Steering Committee which discusses and sets out the Estuaries Project's priorities and the activities of the Estuaries Project Officer.

The Western Yar Estuary Management Committee assists in the prioritisation of activities related to the EMP and meets to discuss issues raised about the estuary and the harbour.

## **Appendix I: Responsibilities in the coastal zone**

### **European Commission (EC)**

Although the EC has ultimate authority over fisheries, it has no direct responsibility for regulatory controls in Member States. However, the Directives and Regulations and international obligations that Member States have signed up to require them to put in place regulatory and other mechanisms to achieve the EC objectives. Failures or breaches can be challenged in the European Courts. Main Directives include 76/160/EEC Bathing Water, 79/409/EEC Birds; 85/337/EEC Assessment of Environmental Effects, 91/271/EEC Urban Waste Water Treatment and 92/43/EEC Habitats and Species.

### **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)**

DEFRA was created in June 2001 and is formed from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) and the environmental and countryside business areas from the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR).

It is responsible for nature conservation, national flood defence, protection of the marine environment and safeguarding human health. It is also responsible for previous MAFF functions such as agriculture, horticulture, food, trade and animal health.

### **Sea Fisheries Committee (SFC)**

Fishing activity is regulated by the Sea Fisheries Committees and DEFRA. There are 12 Sea Fisheries Committees which regulate local sea fisheries around the coast of England and Wales out to 6 miles. Sea Fisheries Committees are empowered to make byelaws for the management and conservation of their district's fisheries. In 1995 their powers were widened to include the control of fisheries in their districts for environmental reasons.

### **Crown Estate Commissioners (CEC)**

The Crown owns the sea bed out to territorial limits and the foreshore. However, about half the foreshore around England has been transferred historically to private owners, harbour authorities etc. Some areas of sea bed are also in private ownership, e.g. parts of the Severn and Exe Estuaries. The CEC administer the foreshore and seabed owned by the Crown with responsibilities to maintain and enhance the value of the estate and the return obtained from it, but with due regard to the requirements of good management. Beyond the limit of territorial waters the Crown does not own the sea bed but, with the exception of oil and coal, the CEC have mineral rights to the continental shelf.

Ownership of the foreshore and sea bed applies only to the "land" or "soil", not to the water above it. The public have general rights to navigate and fish tidal waters and to anchor or ground vessels but not to place fixed moorings which need consent / licence/ lease from owners. Rights can be regulated by byelaws e.g. of Harbour Authorities to control navigation. Other public activity on the foreshore is not a legal right but is widely tolerated.

CEC have no statutory responsibilities to follow specified procedures or regulations. However, the CEC follow the "Government View Procedure" which is intended to ensure wide consultation to inform decisions taken by the CEC. This includes consultation with English Nature.

### **Countryside Agency (CA)**

The Countryside Agency replaced the Countryside Commission and was established by the Government in 1999 to conserve and enhance England's countryside and spread social and economic opportunity for the people that live there.

The Countryside Agency works with Local Authorities and others to implement landscape

protection and improvement policies. It also works to safeguard existing public access and recreation and provide new opportunities where appropriate. The Countryside Agency is also in partnership with local authorities to define and manage Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and Heritage Coasts. The Western Yar Estuary is within the Isle of Wight's AONB.

### **English Heritage (EH)**

Historic buildings and monuments. Archaeology.

### **Health and Safety Executive (HSE)**

Matters relating to health and safety, including development at or near to a harbour area.

### **Environment Agency (EA)**

Control of land-based pollution of coastal waters including discharges from pipelines from land to any distance out to sea. Management of inshore coastal water quality having statutory responsibilities relating to the environmental quality of controlled waters out to 3 miles below MLWM. Overall supervisory responsibility for flood defence, and a large number of sea defences and some tidal barriers. Conservation responsibilities in coastal waters and land associated with such waters in England and Wales. Regulation of pollutants for land and air. Maintaining, improving and developing freshwater fisheries and control of fishing for salmon, sea trout and eels out to 6 miles beyond MLWM. Can create byelaws regulating navigation and recreational use where there is no Harbour or Navigation Authority.

### **English Nature (EN)**

English Nature is responsible for advising Government on nature conservation in England and for identifying and notifying SPAs, SACs and SSSIs etc. Other statutory authorities mentioned above are required to consult with English Nature over activities under their jurisdiction which are likely to affect an area designated for its nature conservation importance. This is explained in more detail in Appendix II.

### **Isle of Wight Council (IWC)**

Local authorities have an input into the regulation of activities in the coastal zone in a number of ways. Land use and development is controlled to a large extent through the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act, the implementation of which is the duty of the Planning Authority. Local authorities are restricted in their powers regarding the control of water quality and their control only extends to mean low water in most coastal locations. However, they are also concerned about the health, well-being and quality of life of their residents and through this remit also have an interest in ensuring satisfactory air quality through environmental health powers.

The Isle of Wight Council is also the Coast Protection Authority for the Island. Under the Coast Protection Act 1949 it is empowered to carry out such coast protection works whether within or outside their area as may be needed for the protection of any land in their area.

Local authorities also have an input to emergency planning. In a major emergency the functional role of the local authorities is to support the emergency services during the 'life-saving' phase and to provide those services it considers required for the well-being of those in distress. Principal responsibility for the clean up of the coastline in the event of an oil spill also lies with local authorities. Although Councils have no statutory duty in this respect, they have the powers to incur expenditure to alleviate the effects of an emergency or disaster.

### **Southern Water Services (SWS)**

Responsible for water and sewerage services generally and the retention, treatment or disposal of sewage, trade-waste, or sludge. Distribution and supply of electricity and gas services etc.

### **Harbour Authorities**

Each Harbour Authority is governed by its own legislation found in Orders under the Harbours Act 1964 or specific legislation e.g. the Associated British Ports Act 1990. Responsible for all development and operations and for navigation in the area defined in a Harbour Empowerment or Harbour Revision Order (Harbours Act 1964). The Transport and Works Act 1992 simplified Order procedures, extending them from purely commercial shipping issues to recreational boating and imposing a duty to take account of environmental considerations. Harbour Revision Orders can impose duties on Harbour Authorities for nature conservation and enable them to make byelaws for nature conservation. Functions can be transferred to the Environment Agency.

### **Private landowners**

Most of the frontage of the Western Yar is privately owned. In terms of coast protection, private landowners do not have a duty to protect their frontages although under the Coast Protection Act 1949, the coast protection authority may require them to take action to do so. For conservation purposes, landowners work with English Nature and the local authority to ensure compliance with relevant legislation. Similarly, landowners consult with the relevant authority to ensure compliance with legislation governing all forms of land use and other activities.

## **Appendix II: Nature conservation legislation**

### **National designations**

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are notified by English Nature under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. They aim to safeguard the nature conservation value of an area by establishing a consultation system between English Nature and the owners and managers of the land. English Nature notifies landowners/occupiers of the sites conservation interest and the activities which could cause damage - known as potentially damaging operations (PDOs). The landowner/occupier is required to consult with English Nature before carrying out any PDO on the site, or any operation adjacent to the site which could cause damage. This consultation process enables English Nature to advise over ways of managing the land which takes into account the special interest of the site.

### **International designations**

There are a number of international nature conservation designations which are of relevance to the Western Yar Estuary. The background and implications of these designations are important considerations in the overall management of the area. The three relevant designations are the Ramsar site, Special Protection Area and Special Area of Conservation which are explained below.

Ramsar sites are designated under the 'Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitats'. It ensures that special measures are taken to protect internationally important wetlands. They are called Ramsar sites because they were identified by the signatory states to the international convention that was held in Ramsar, Iran. In the UK the sites are identified by English Nature on behalf of the Government. Areas which are designated as Ramsar sites are often also Special Protection Areas.

Natura 2000 is the title for the network of areas designated to conserve natural habitats and species of wildlife which are rare, endangered or vulnerable in the European Community. The term Natura 2000 comes from the 1992 EC Habitats Directive. The Natura 2000 network includes two types of area: a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) may be designated where the site supports certain types of species or contains certain types of habitats (listed in the Habitats Directive); and a Special Protection Area (SPA) may be designated where an area supports significant numbers of wild birds and their habitats. Some sites may be designated as both SPA and SAC.

Where the designated area includes areas covered continuously or intermittently by tidal waters, it is described as a 'European marine site'. There are two candidate European marine sites relevant to the Western Yar Estuary, Solent & Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar and Solent Maritime SAC. The Solent and Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar is based on the SSSI network on the north coast of the Isle of Wight, Western Solent and Southampton Water and recognises the importance of these intertidal and estuarine areas for overwintering and breeding waterfowl. The Solent Maritime cSAC forms a complex of interlinked sites of importance for a range of marine, coastal and maritime habitats. The particular features whose international importance has been recognised are the estuaries, Atlantic saltmeadows and cordgrass swards. Once listed as a candidate site, the level of protection is the same as fully designated sites.

### **The implications of the international designations.**

The main aim of the Habitats Directive is to promote the maintenance of biodiversity, taking account of economic, social, cultural requirements and local and regional characteristics. The UK Government is required to ensure that there is no deterioration of: i) the habitats themselves; ii) the habitats of the species; or, iii) the disturbance of the species for which the site has been designated.

To ensure the above, any activities, plans or projects that are likely to have a significant effect on the conservation status of the features for which the site has been put forward, shall be subject to assessment. This is the case whether they are inside or outside the European marine site. Generally, such plans and projects may proceed only when it has been ascertained that they will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned. However in certain cases where it has been shown that the plan or project will have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site, the plan or project may still go ahead if it can be shown that there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest of an economic or social nature and that there are no alternative solutions. This decision will always be taken by the Secretary of State. The assumption is not that all activities will normally be in conflict with the nature conservation importance of the area. In fact this is far from the truth as has been demonstrated by a number of examples. In the Solent the nature conservation interest remains of international importance despite its intensive usage for commercial and recreational purposes. English Nature have stressed that in most cases existing activities at time of selection will remain unaffected as the special interest of the cSAC co-exist with current levels of marine industry and marine activities.

The Habitats Regulations make special provisions for European marine sites. This is because the management of marine areas for their conservation interest is a relatively new concept in the UK. In addition, the system of overlapping jurisdictions produces a complex system of rights and responsibilities. The Habitats Regulations state that a single management scheme may be written for each European marine site. Where European marine sites overlap, only one management scheme may be written. The development of a management scheme for a European marine site will be an ongoing consultation process. Relevant authorities (those authorities with statutory responsibilities in the marine and coastal environments), will form a management group with responsibility for producing the plan, but Government Policy also states that it should be produced in full consultation with other interested parties such as user group representatives and voluntary conservation organisations.

The management scheme will build on the considerable progress already made through other management initiatives on the coast. Relevant authorities are encouraged to use or adapt existing management structures and best practice to keep the amount of new work to a minimum. On the Solent the situation is slightly more complicated as there are a number of initiatives underway at present e.g. Strategic Guidance, Estuary Management Plans and Shoreline Management Plans etc. These plans and the management framework within which they work will be of great benefit, but it will be up to the relevant authorities to determine the exact relationship between existing voluntary plans and the European marine sites management scheme.

The process of consultation and the development of a management scheme will review all current and likely future activities on the site. English Nature is required to provide advice to the management scheme on conservation objectives and operations which may cause deterioration or disturbance to the features of interest. Only those operations which may cause deterioration or disturbance to the conservation features of the site may be subject to restrictions under a management scheme. Within European marine sites it is considered unlikely that activities which are not causing significant damage to the European interest of the site will be adversely affected by management schemes. The management scheme for the Solent European Marine Sites is underway.

English Nature provides advice on the conservation objectives in its document "*Solent European Marine Site. English Nature's advice given under Regulation 33 (2) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994*" that was produced after consultation with relevant authorities. English Nature is also responsible for setting up a programme of monitoring at each site, to monitor the condition of the conservation features of the site and to assess the effectiveness of management measures taken.

## Appendix III: Glossary

**Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).** These areas are defined and declared by the Countryside Agency. The aim of declaring AONBs is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape of an area without compromising the needs of those who live and work there. This is achieved through planning controls and practical countryside management in partnership with the Countryside Agency.

**Biodiversity.** The total variety of life on earth. All genes, species, ecosystems and the ecological processes of which they are part.

**Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).** A series of action plans for key habitats and species, approved by the Government as part of the overall UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

**Breakwater.** A rock or concrete armour faced structure which may be aligned with or parallel to the coastline.

**Breastwork.** Vertical or raking timber or steel piled structures supporting horizontal planking and often containing a rock infill.

**Coastal Defence.** Collective term for the protection of the coast against erosion and sea defence against flooding.

**Coastal Habitat Management Plan (CHaMP).** Coastal Habitat Management Plans are intended to provide a framework for managing European and Ramsar sites that are located on or adjacent to dynamic coastlines. They will provide a way of fulfilling the UK Government's obligations under the Habitats and Birds Directives and the Ramsar Convention, to avoid damage and deterioration to Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites; particularly when developing Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs) and flood and coastal defence strategies, and planning maintenance and capital works.

**Coastal Squeeze.** The process by which the coastal habitats and natural features are progressively lost or drowned, trapped between rising sea levels and coastal structures.

**Competent Authority.** In relation to the Habitats Regulations, a Competent Authority is any Minister, Government Department, public or statutory undertaker, public body or person holding public office that exercises legislative powers.

**Conservation Area.** Locally defined areas of special architectural and / or historic significance worthy of protection and enhancement. Within such areas there are strengthened controls over demolition, minor development and protection of trees.

**Conservation Objectives.** A statement of the nature conservation aspirations for a site, expressed in terms of the favourable condition that the species and/or habitats for which the site has been selected should attain. Conservation objectives for European Marine Sites relate to the aims of the 'Habitats' and 'Birds' Directives.

**Core Area.** The boundary of the core area upstream of the breakwater is the highest spring tide level as far south as the Causeway (see Figure 1). To the north the core area extends offshore into the Solent to the limit of the Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners jurisdiction.

**Ecology.** The study of the relationship between an organism and its environment.

**Ecosystem.** A dynamic complex of biological (plant, animal, fungal and micro-organism) communities and their associated physical (non-living) environment interacting as an ecological unit.

**Environment.** This term encompasses all the facets of our surroundings: landscape/natural beauty, flora, fauna, geological or geomorphological features and buildings, sites and objects of archaeological, architectural; or historic interest.

**Estuary.** A partially enclosed area of water and tidal shore and its surroundings. There is daily interchange of saline water from the sea and fresh water from rivers, land run-off or seepage.

**EU Directive.** A type of legislation issued by the European Union which obliges Member States to achieve specified results but which leaves Member States to determine the methods nationally e.g. EU Bathing Waters Directive.

**European marine site.** A European site (SPA or SAC) which consists of marine areas.

**Favourable Condition status.** A range of conditions for a natural habitat or species at which the sum of the influences acting upon that habitat or species are not adversely affecting its distribution, abundance, structure or function throughout the EU in the long term (i.e. The condition in which the habitat or species is capable of sustaining itself on a long-term basis).

**Flood Defence.** A structure which protects against flooding, by rivers as well as by the sea.

**Gabion Mattress.** Rock filled mesh baskets or linked pre-cast concrete units which act as a defence against scour.

**Groynes.** Structure in rock and timber generally perpendicular to the shoreline used to control beach material movement.

**Habitat.** The characteristic dwelling place of a species or community.

**Habitat Action Plan (HAP).** An Action Plan for a specific habitat within the Biodiversity Action Plan.

**Habitats Directive.** The abbreviated term for the European *Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the 'Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and Fauna'*. It is the aim of this Directive to promote the conservation of certain habitats and species within the EU.

**Habitats Regulations.** The conservation (Natural Habitats & c.) Regulations 1994 which transpose the Habitats Directive into UK law.

**Intertidal.** The area of land covered by water at high tide but exposed at low tide.

**Landfill.** The disposal of waste by its permanent deposition in or on the ground, involving either the filling of man made void or the construction of features above ground level.

**Local Nature Reserve.** Areas of land of local importance declared by the Local Authority in consultation with English Nature under the provisions of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949, which are managed to enhance their natural value.

**Managed realignment.** The management of a process of establishing a new coastal defence line, often set back from the existing position, with the aim of improving the long-term sustainability of the coastal defence, or contributing to other aims such as habitat creation.

**Management Plan.** A plan that recommends prescriptive actions and nominates responsible parties and a timetable for action.

**Management Scheme.** The framework established by the relevant authorities for a European marine site under which their functions are exercised to secure, in relation to that site, compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive.

**Medieval.** Relating to the time period from AD 1066-1540.

**National Nature Reserve (NNR).** Areas that are managed for the benefit of natural features within them that are of national value. Unlike SSSI, NNRs are owned or leased by English Nature or an approved body, and they are managed primarily for conservation.

**Palaeo-ecological.** Relating to the changes of the environment through prehistory and history, particularly the more distant past.

**Physical Processes.** Coastal phenomena such as sediment transport, erosion and accretion responsible for shaping the coast and underpinning its dynamic qualities. It refers to geological/earth science processes only.

**Planning Policy Guidance.** A series of notes issued by the Government setting out national policy guidance on planning issues, such as the countryside, nature conservation, coastal planning, unstable ground etc.

**Pollution.** The addition of materials or energy into the existing environmental system to the extent that undesirable changes are produced directly or indirectly in that system.

**Ramsar site.** An internationally important wetland, designated under the 'Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Wildfowl Habitat (Ramsar, Iran) 1971' and which is, as a matter of Government policy, afforded the same protection as a site designated under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives.

**Revetment.** A cladding of stone, concrete or other material to stabilise and protect shorelines, embankments or shore structures against erosion by wave action or currents.

**Right of Way Network.** Bridleways, footpaths and byways that provide public access.

**Roman.** Relating to the time period from AD 43 - c.410.

**Sandhard Creek.** Area south of Norton Beach and north of the A3054.

**Sea Defences.** A structure that prevents the ingress of sea over the land.

**Sea Level Rise (SLR).** Phenomenon mainly produced by isostatic movement (north west Britain is rising following glacial withdrawal at the end of the last Ice Age, causing the south-east of England to sink), combined with subsidence of the coast associated with a tectonic fault between the Solent and north-east France, and more recently exacerbated by global sea level rise as a result of climate change. The rise in sea levels is due to global warming causing thermal expansion of the oceans and to a lesser extent from melting of the ice caps and glaciers. Relative sea level rise refers to the effective change in sea level relative to the land surface and takes account also of long-term land movement. The combined effect of these changes are thought to result in an annual SLR in Southern England of about 6mm per year.

**Sewage.** Liquid waste matter from domestic or industrial source that is carried in sewers or drains (sewerage) to a sewage treatment works (STW).

**Shoreline Management Plan (SMP).** Plans developed by members of Coastal Defence Groups covering a stretch of coastline, which address factors such as the geological structure of the coast, the natural processes which influence it, the land use in the area, development plans and the flood and erosion risks along the coast. The SMP proposes a strategy for the future approach to the defence of the coast, where that is appropriate, looking ahead for up to fifty years but subject to a five yearly review.

**Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).** Areas of land of local importance for the conservation of semi-natural habitats including mosaics of heathland, unimproved grassland, scrubland and plantation and/or habitats which support rare local wildlife species.

**Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).** Area of land or water with important biological or geological features defined by the Wildlife and Countryside Acts. Sites are identified by English Nature who provide notice to owners/occupiers, local authorities and the Secretary of State.

**Solent Forum.** Established in December 1992, in order to develop a greater understanding among the authorities and agencies involved in planning and management in the Solent area. The Forum does not

have any executive powers and its members do not have any voting rights, but operates as far as possible on an 'equal' partners basis.

**SoIFire.** Voluntary contingency plan dealing with marine emergencies. It provides the organisational framework necessary to respond to an incident.

**SoISpill.** Voluntary contingency plan dealing with marine pollution incidents. It provides the organisational framework necessary to respond to an incident.

**Spartina – cordgrass.** Species of plant found in saltmarsh habitats.

**Special Area of Conservation (SAC).** A site of European importance designated by the Member States where the necessary conservation measures are applied for the maintenance or restoration to a 'favourable conservation status' of the habitats and/or species for which the site is designated. SACs are part of the *Natura 2000* series which also includes sites designated as SPAs under the Birds Directive.

**Special Protection Area (SPA).** A site designated under the Birds Directive by the Member States where appropriate steps are taken to protect the bird species for which the site was designated. SPAs are part of the *Natura 2000* series which also includes sites designated as SAC under the Habitats Directive.

**Statutory Authority.** Any government department, public or statutory undertaker, public body or person holding a public office that exercises legislative powers.

**Strategic Guidance for the Solent.** Document produced for the Solent Forum. It sets out a voluntary agreement about how the Solent should be planned and managed in the future and sets out an Agenda for Solent-wide action.

**Sustainable.** Capable of being maintained at a steady level without exhausting natural resources or causing severe ecological damage.

**Sustainable Development.** The use of resources to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

**Unitary Development Plan.** A Local Authority plan which covers both strategic and local plan functions for the control of development and use of land.

**Voluntary principle.** An approach to site management based on the regulation of activities through agreement and consent rather than through the use of statutory controls.

## Appendix IV: List of project participants (original WYEMP)

1. Mr Adams (Solent Protection Society)
2. Mr Alderton (Yarmouth Society)
3. Mr Allen (River Yar Boatyard)
4. Mr Badman (Solent Forum)
5. Mr Bastian (Thorley Manor Farm)
6. Miss Bayliss (English Nature)
7. Mr Blackman (Puffin Fisheries)
8. Mr Boyd (Isle of Wight AONB Project)
9. Mr Bray (Freshwater Parish Council)
10. Mr Bright (English Heritage)
11. British Gas
12. Mr Busby (RNLI)
13. Mr Campbell (Harold Hayles Boatyard)
14. Mr Castle (Yarmouth Sailing Club)
15. Mr Caws (Southern Water)
16. Mr Chambers (English Sports Council)
17. Mr Charrington (Yarmouth Harbour Assoc.)
18. Mr Chatters (Hants. And Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust)
19. Mr Cotton (Yarmouth Society)
20. Rev Cox (RSPB Local Group)
21. Mr Court (Steering Group Chairman)
22. Mr A Davidson (W&D Mouldings)
23. Mr T Davidson (W&D Mouldings)
24. Mr Dallinson (Yarmouth Society)
25. Mr Dolman (English Sports Council)
26. Mr Edmunds (Wight Nature Fund)
27. Mr Edney (IoW Council)
28. Dr Ekins (English Nature)
29. Mr Freeman (Shalfleet Parish Council)
30. Mr Gilbert (RSPB)
31. Mr Greenen (Solent Protection Society)
32. Mr Grogan (Wight Nature Fund)
33. Miss V Gwynn (Western Yar Action Group)
34. Mrs Hancock (British Field Sports Society)
35. Mr Hayles (Southern Sea Fisheries)
36. Mr Hailey (Environment Agency)
37. Mr Harold (Isle of Wight Natural History and Archaeology Society)
38. Mr Herbert (Medina Valley Centre)
39. Mr Heming (Royal Solent Yacht Club)
40. Mrs Henderson (Totland Parish Council)
41. Mr Hibbard (Hants. and IoW Trust for Maritime Archaeology)
42. Mr Hill (Saltern Sail Co)
43. Mr Howe (Yarmouth Society)
44. Mr Hammer (Yarmouth Society)
45. Miss Jewell (IoW Council)
46. Mr Keevil (NFU)
47. Mr Kefford
48. Mr Kershaw (Freshwater Parish Council)
49. Miss Kimpton (Freshwater Parish Council)
50. Mr King (Wightlink)
51. Mr Kingston (Draft Haven Ltd)
52. Mr Kitcher (Buzzard Marine Ltd)
53. Mr Lemonious (Yarmouth Marine Services)
54. Mrs Lord (Yarmouth Sailing Club)
55. Mr McInnes (IoW Council)
56. Col. Maltby (Yarmouth Harbour Assoc.)
57. Lady Le Marchant (Landowner)
58. Mrs McMullan
59. Mr Mylchreest (Yarmouth Harbour Assoc.)
60. Mr Miles (Yarmouth Marine Services)
61. Mr Moore (IoW Council)
62. Mr Morrison (Crown Estate Commissioners)
63. Mr Norledge (Western Yar Action Group)
64. Mr Pitt (Yarmouth Water Taxi)
65. Dr Pope (IoW Council)
66. Mr Richards (West Wight Fishermans Association)
67. Ms Riley (Medina Valley Centre)
68. Mrs Rowcroft (Yarmouth Sailing Club)
69. Col. Shapland (CLA)
70. Mr A Sheldon (Landowner)
71. Mr J Sheldon (Landowner)
72. Mrs S Sheldon (Landowner)
73. Mr Sherwood (CPRE)
74. Mr Slade (IoW Council)
75. Mr Smith (Afton Marsh Management Advisory Committee)
76. Southern Electric
77. Mr Sparks (Hants. and IoW Trust for Maritime Archaeology)
78. Mr Stafford (Isle of Wight Natural History and Archaeology Society)
79. Ms Stay (Yarmouth Sailing Club)
80. Mr Stevenson (Chartered Skippers Association)
81. Mr Stuart (Environment Agency)
82. Mr Taylor (Yarmouth Mill)
83. Mr Temple (Yarmouth Sailing Club)
84. Dr Tomalin (IoW Council)
85. Mr Tutton (The National Trust)
86. Mr Vetcher
87. Mr Ward (Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners)
88. Mrs Weston (Yarmouth Town Council / Yarmouth Town Trust)
89. Mr Wise (IoW Council)
90. Mr Wright (Yarmouth Sea Scouts)

## Appendix V: Members of the Western Yar Estuary Management Committee / Liaison Group

1. Mr Allen (River Yar Boatyard)
2. Mr Basford (IW Council – Archaeology)
3. Mr Bernowicz (Western Wight Angling Club)
4. Mr Brownscombe (AONB Partnership)
5. Mr Campbell (H Hayles Ltd.)
6. Mr Caws (Southern Water)
7. Mr Court (Inaugural Chairman)
8. Mr Dallison (Yarmouth Society)
9. Mr Grogan (Wight Wildlife)
10. Miss Gwynn (Western Yar Action Group / Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners)
11. Ms Hawley (IW Estuaries Project)
12. Mr Hayles (Southern Sea Fisheries)
13. Mr Heming (Yarmouth Sailing Club)
14. Dr Lambert (English Nature)
15. Lt Col Langford (Country Landowners Association)
16. Mr Lemonius (Yarmouth Marine Services)
17. Dr McInnes (IW Council – Coastal)
18. Mrs Mence (Chair of Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners' General Advisory Committee)
19. Mr Moore (IW Council – Forward Planning and Policy)
20. Mrs Niven (Wightlink Limited)
21. Ms Plant (Campaign for the Protection of Rural England)
22. Dr Pope (IW Council – Countryside)
23. Mr Price (Solent Protection Society)
24. Mr Rogers (Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners)
25. Mr Scivier (Freshwater Parish Council)
26. Ms Sheffield (Environment Agency)
27. Mrs Sheldon (Kings Manor)
28. Mr Stafford (Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust/IW Natural History & Archaeological Society/RSPB)
29. Mr Stallard (Yarmouth Town Council)
30. Mr Williams (National Federation of Sea Anglers)
31. Mr Wright (Isle of Wight Scouts)