

Hook Lake Coastal Management Study

Visitor Survey Report (Project Launch)

August 2021



FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL



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1 Introduction

Coastal Partners (CP) on behalf of Fareham Borough Council (FBC) are working in partnership with Hampshire County Council, the Environment Agency and the River Hamble Harbour Authority to deliver the Hook Lake Coastal Management Study.

The engineering consultancy 'Binnies' have also been enlisted to help develop the study, which is likely to run for two years from April 2021 until Summer 2023. The study aims to better understand the Hook Lake site, explore the potential for creating new intertidal habitats, identify wider recreation opportunities and develop preliminary designs for a habitat creation scheme. The study will also identify how the potential benefits can be maximised for both local people and wildlife.

1.1 Purpose of this document

This report seeks to set out the engagement and outcomes of the Hook Lake Coastal Management Strategy Launch Visitor Questionnaire carried out between 9th and 28th June 2021.

1.2 Wider engagement

This survey forms part of a wider engagement process being undertaken throughout the duration of the Coastal Management Study.

A stakeholder engagement strategy has been developed with a clear methodology that will help to ensure that the relevant stakeholders are informed and involved at the right time.

Engagement will help inform coastal management options bearing in mind what is technically feasible, publicly acceptable, most financially viable and environmentally acceptable.

Each stakeholder is likely to have a unique view on the use, development and protection of any coastal frontage. Therefore, they can be a source of indispensable information which can be used to define issues and objectives and achieve consensus on a preferred strategy option.

2 Engagement summary

2.1 Community Survey

2.1.1 Survey format

An online survey was developed to seek the community's views on coastal management of the Hook Lake with Warsash Nature Reserve. Responders were asked about their aspirations for the area and what they perceived the key issues to be there. The questionnaire comprised a total of 8 questions, with the last question being optional. Respondents were also given an opportunity at the end of the questionnaire to leave their contact details if they wished to remain updated as the project progresses. An example of the layout and format of the questionnaire can be seen in Figure 1.

The survey was made available online between the 9th and 28th June 2021 (<https://coastalpartners.org.uk/project/hook-lake-coastal-management-study/>)

As the consultation took place during the Covid-19 pandemic, a paper version of the survey was not delivered to residents. However, if residents required a paper version they were able to request one via email or phone which was then posted out direct to them. Four paper questionnaires were requested, delivered to and completed by local residents.

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Hook Lake Coastal Management Study

Visitor Questionnaire

Coastal Partners are undertaking a study at Hook Lake, to investigate the potential for creating new intertidal habitats such as saltmarsh and mudflats along with wider recreation opportunities at the site. The study will look to at how we can maximise the potential benefits for both local people and wildlife to keep Hook Lake a special place.

We recognise how popular this area is to both the local community and visitors, so we would like to hear from you. We would like to understand how you value and use the site, and to gather any information or ideas you have that may help the study.

We would really appreciate your help by completing this short questionnaire consisting of 8 multiple choice questions. You will have the option to leave us your feedback at the end, as well as opt in to receiving future updates to stay informed in the study as it progresses if you wish.

Privacy Statement: This study is being conducted by Coastal Partners on behalf of Fareham Borough Council. The information provided by you in this questionnaire (Questions 1 to 8) is very important to help guide the next stage of the options appraisal and wider opportunities investigations. Responses to questions 1-8 will be published on the project webpages and analysed by our project Consultant Binnies UK Ltd, but no personal identifiable information will be published or shared.

Any personal data provided at the end of the questionnaire will be used for the purpose stated and is collected with your consent. This data will only be shared with the Coastal Partners who are conducting this project on behalf of Fareham Borough Council and this data will be retained securely for the duration of the project and then deleted. Once you have consented to sharing your personal data with us, you can exercise your rights around the retention of this data and further information can be found at <https://www.fareham.gov.uk/privacy.aspx>, or on request.

Question 1

In relation to the Hook with Warsash coastal Nature Reserve, are you a....

- Local resident to Hook Lake and Warsash
- Local organisation or business
- Visitor from elsewhere

If you would like to share the first part of your postcode (for example SO31) please add this here:

Figure 1: Paper Questionnaire Front Page

2.1.2 Distribution

News promotion

Prior to the release of the survey, FBC issued a press release on the Study (15 March 2021), which provided an introduction to the Study, a brief explanation of its aims, and directed readers to the new Hook Lake Coastal Management Study webpage on the Coastal Partners website.

The press release was shortly picked up by a number of local and national news articles, including the Titchfield News on 17th March 2021, the Daily Echo on 23rd March, Dredging Today on 26th March and Hantsdirect on 21st April.

e-Newsletter

On 9th June 2021, notice of the questionnaire was sent through Coastal Partners 'Fareham Coastal Projects' e-newsletter to its 1,114 subscribers, outlining its purpose and how to participate in it.

Website

Between 9th and 28th June 2021, the dates when the questionnaire was live, the [Hook Lake Coastal Management Study webpage](#) had **278** page views. **120** (43.2%) of these were unique page views (where users have clicked onto a link to the page) spending an average time of **2 minutes 29 seconds** on the page. During the time of the survey being live, the Hook Lake Coastal Management Study webpage was the second most popular webpage on the Coastal partners website, with the greatest length of average engagement time.

Local Advertisements

To help spread further awareness of the Study and the project launch questionnaire, A3 & A4 laminated posters were temporarily attached to 6 key locations around the Hook with Warsash Nature Reserve, advertising the questionnaire and detailing how to complete it during the period that it was live. The locations of these are shown in Figure 2 below. The posters aimed to draw attention to the new Study, link to the project webpages and direct visitors to the online questionnaire, using a QR code.



Figure 2: Map of poster locations on site at Hook Lake

The posters displayed can be seen in Figures 3 & 4.

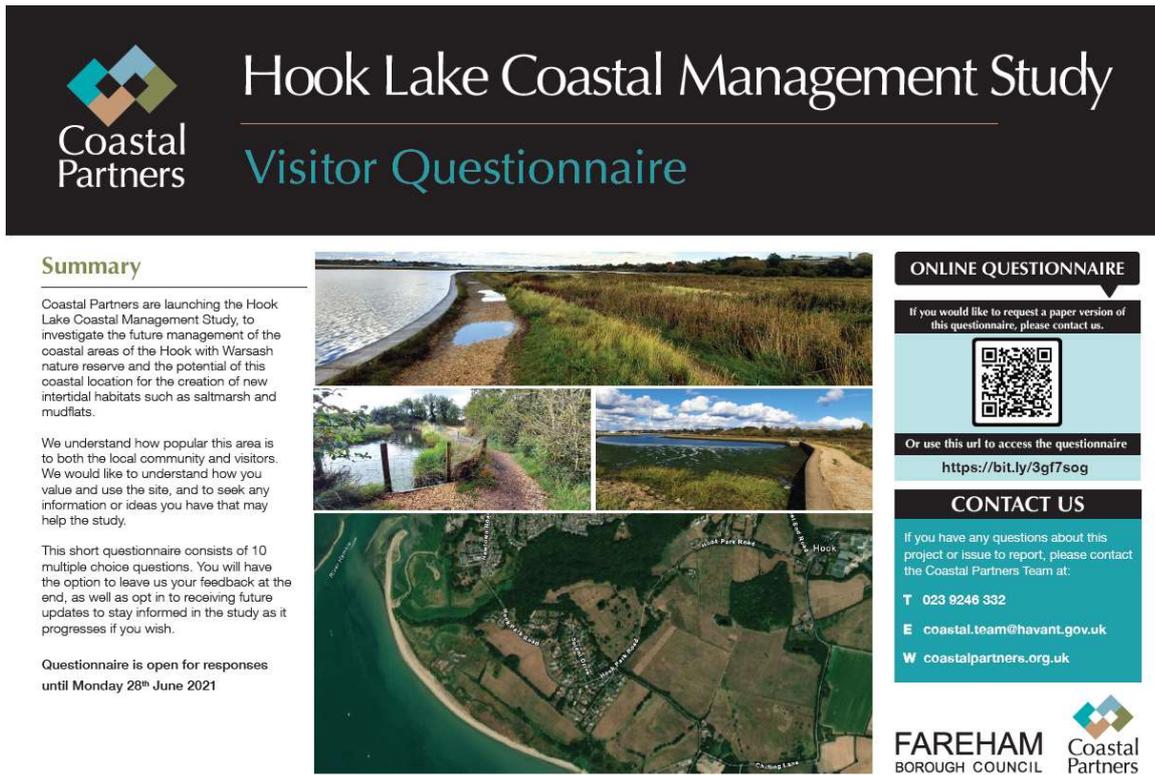


Figure 3: Poster displayed on site at Hook Lake



Figure 4: Example of one of the locations temporarily displaying the posters

3 Results

3.1 Survey Responses

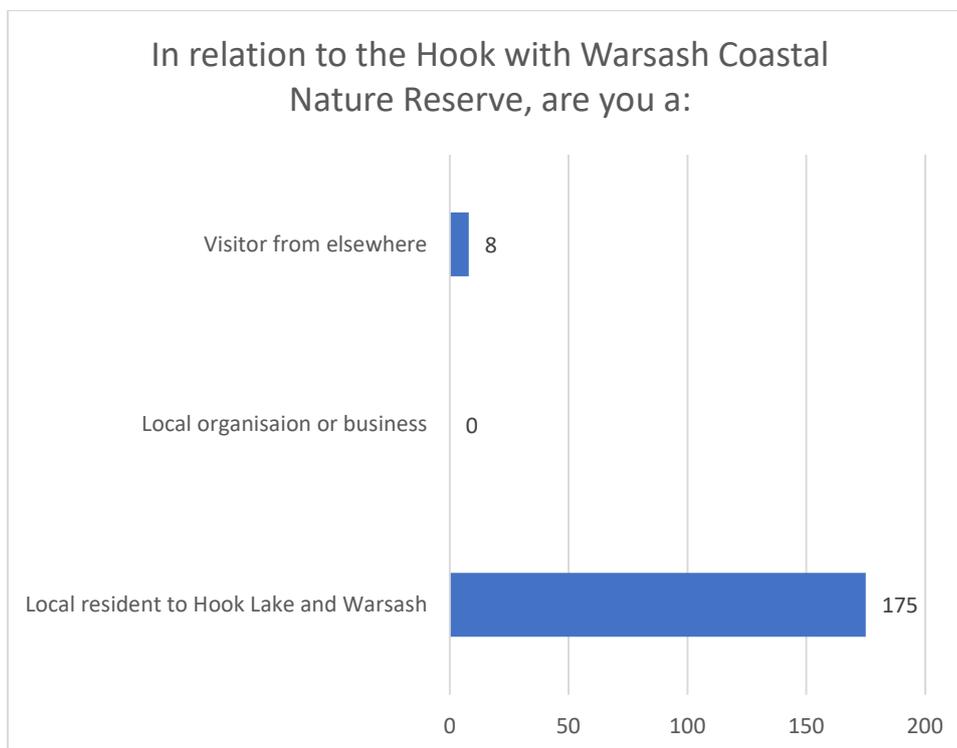
In total 183 consultation responses were received, 179 were completed online and 4 were postal. Some questions were optional and were not answered by every respondent.

It is unknown if the responses were from households or individuals as this was not asked in the survey.

3.2 Results and Analysis

Question 1: In relation to the Hook with Warsash Coastal Nature Reserve, are you a: visitor from elsewhere, local organisation or business or local resident to hook Lake and warsash?

175 of the respondents said they were a local resident to Hook Lake and Warsash, whilst 8 identified as visitors from elsewhere. No respondents identified themselves as from a local organisation or business.

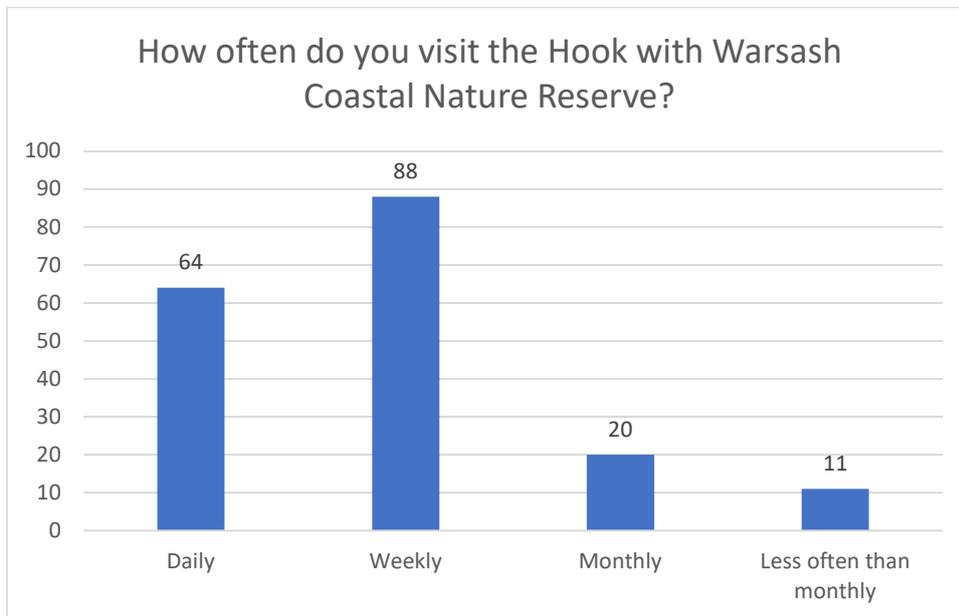


Question 2: If you would like to, please share the first part of your postcode:

Of all 183 people who answered this question, 94% lived within the SO31 postcode area (including Hook and Warsash), 3% lived within the PO14 postcode area, whilst the remaining 3% lived within the SO30, PO11, PO13, BH2 and WA3 postcode areas.

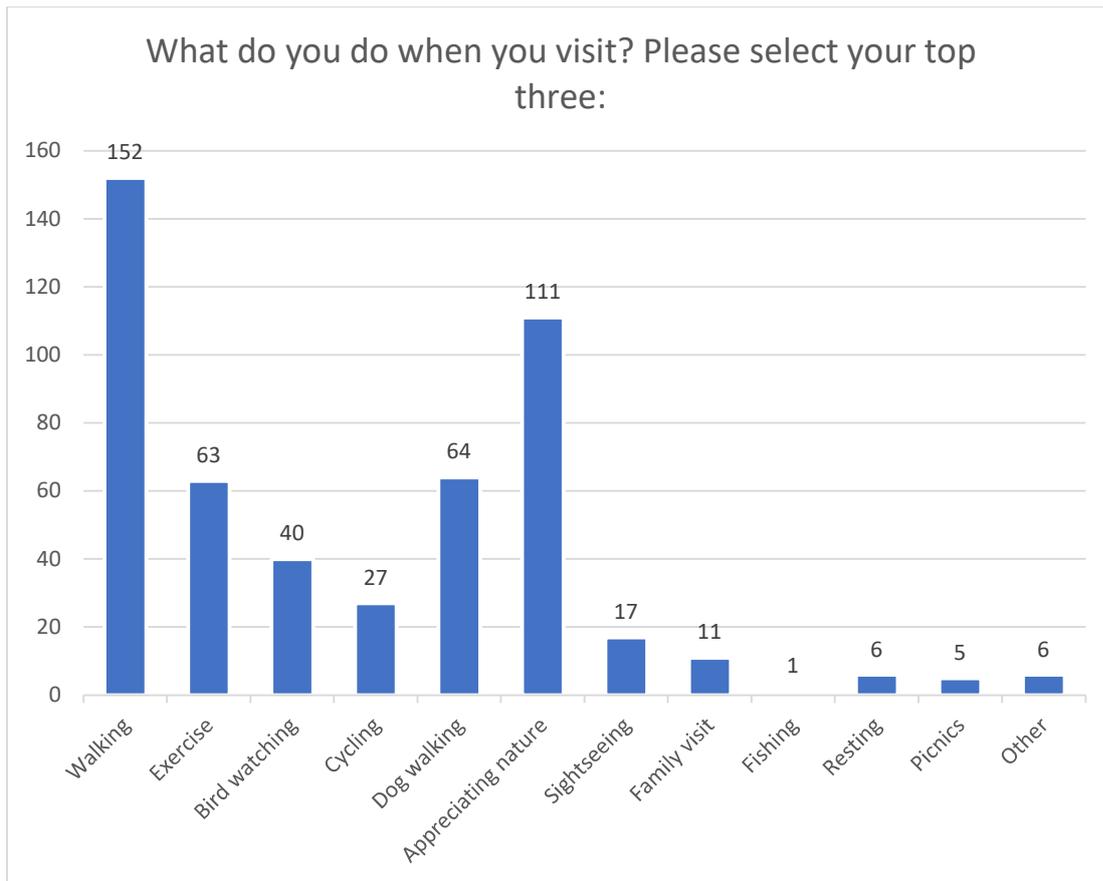
Question 3: How often do you visit the Hook with Warsash Nature Reserve?

The majority of respondents visited the area on a frequent basis, with 88 out of 183 (48%) visiting on a weekly basis and 64 out of 182 (35%) visiting on a daily basis. 20 respondents (11%) visited on a monthly basis, whilst the remaining 11 respondents (6%) visited less often than monthly. This aligns with a significant proportion of respondents being local residents to the SO31 postcode area with immediate access to Hook Lake.



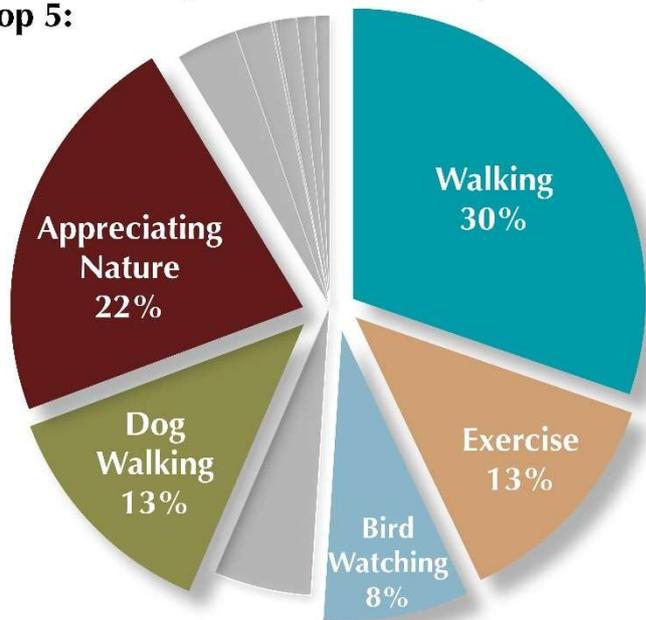
Question 4: What do you do when you visit? *Please select your top three activities.*

Walking was selected as the clear favourite with 152 respondents (30%), followed by appreciating nature with 111 respondents (22%). Dog walking and exercise were selected as the joint third favourite activity, each with 13% of the votes. Bird watching also received 8% of the votes.



What do you do when you visit?

Top 5:





Walking

30%



Appreciating Nature

22%



Dog Walking

13%



Exercise

13%



Bird Watching

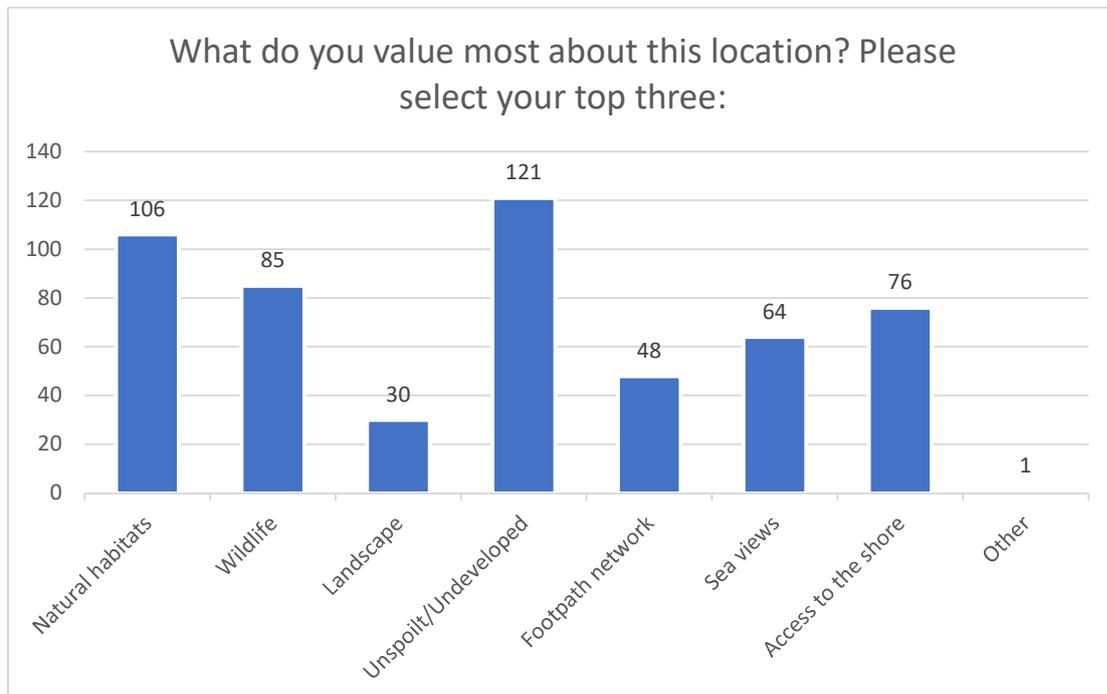
8%

“Other” answers received included:

- “Swimming”
- “Sketching”
- “Views from house”
- “Observing the changes at the coastline over 52 years”
- “Release of tension and sickness, especially during Covid, historical connection”

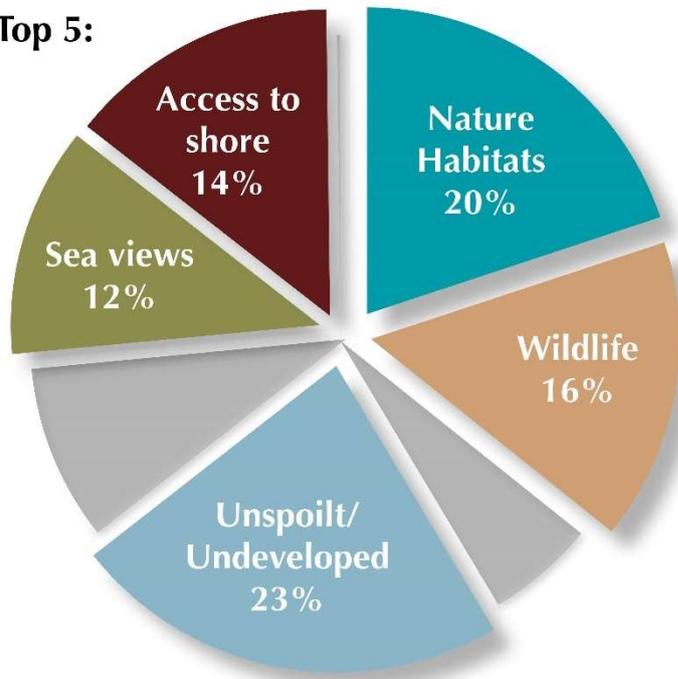
Question 5: What do you value most about this location? Please select your top three:

The unspoilt and undeveloped nature of Hook Lake was selected as the highest valued factor, with 121 out of 183 (23%) respondents selecting this within their top three. Natural habitats closely followed as the second most valued factor, with 20% of votes. Wildlife, access to the shore and sea views were all spread fairly evenly as the next most valued factors, with 16%, 14% and 12% of the votes respectively.



What do you value most about this location?

Top 5:



**Unspoilt/
Undeveloped**

23%



**Natural
Habitats**

20%



Wildlife

16%



**Access to
Shore**

14%



Sea Views

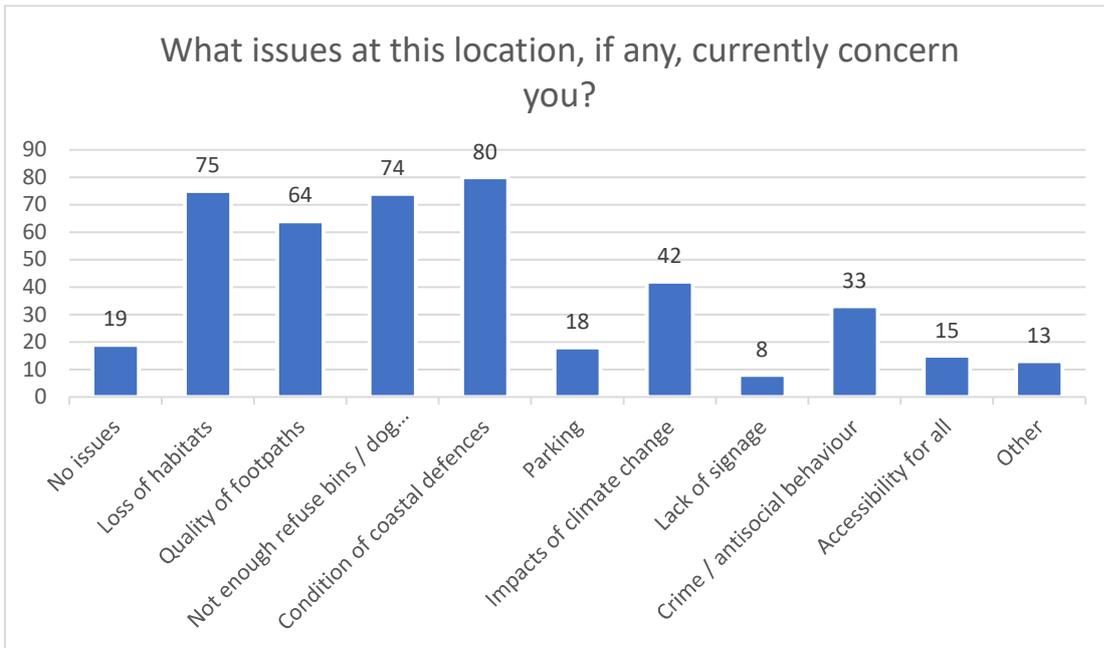
12%

“Other” answers included:

- “My family have been using these paths for over 100 years”

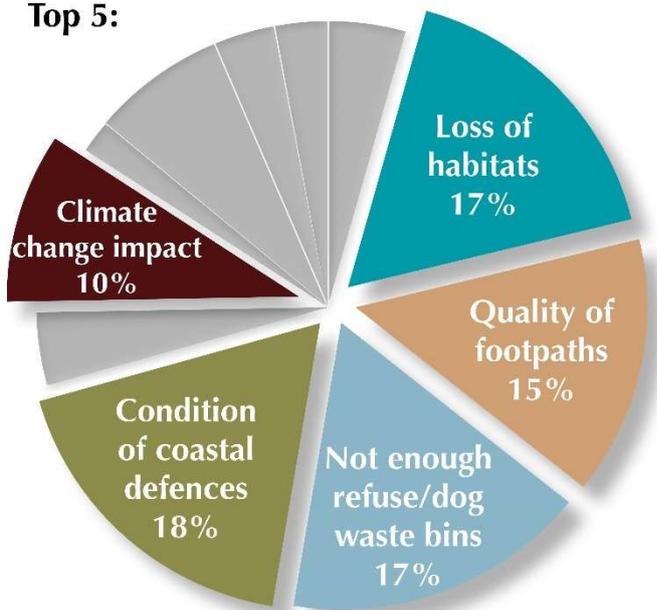
Question 6: What issues at this location, if any, currently concern you? *Please tick all that apply:*

The concerns were spread quite evenly between the options provided, with condition of the coastal defences being the main concern with 18% of votes. Loss of habitats and not enough refuse / dog waste bins came a very close joint second, each with 17% of the votes. Quality of footpaths followed with 15% of votes, with climate change impact taking 10% of votes. 19 respondents (10%) were not currently concerned about any issues at the Hook with Warsash Nature Reserve.



What issues at this location concern you?

Top 5:





Condition of Coastal Defences

18%



Loss of Habitats

17%



Not Enough Refuse/Dog Waste Bins

17%



Quality of Footpaths

15%



Climate Change Impacts

10%

“Other” answers included:

- “Litter”
- “Lack of management, see Q7”
- “Lack of cycling connected paths”
- “Lots of abandoned and rusty metal all throughout the shallow water left from buildings”
- “No disabled access from Newtown Road due to (narrow) ‘gate’ 1”
- “Unsafe and obstacles on coastline”
- “Better quality and/or higher fencing required to reduce number of dogs entering sanctuary areas”
- “Excess nutrients and recreational user pressure”
- “Erosion and encroachment of the sea”
- “Cyclists churning up the paths and beach, some very aggressive. Litter, from boats and fishermen”

Question 7: In addition to creating new habitats, are there any specific improvements you would like to see in this location?

69 people answered this open question and the responses have been categorised into key themes. For each of the key themes, a selection of comments has been included to demonstrate the type of responses received. All responses to this question are available to view in Appendix A of this report.

- **Flood / erosion risk, condition of coastal defences and management.** 13 responses such as:
 - Protection from tidal surge / storm damage
 - The coastal path and sea defences need replacing
 - Improve shore footpath particular muddy sections where erosion is so prevalent. Slow erosion or divert path but retain sea views
 - An appropriate management plan
 - Footpaths need to be built up in places to cope with flooding which sometimes makes them impassable.
- **Accessibility** (footpaths, cycle paths and improving accessibility for all). 15 responses such as:
 - Maintenance of the paths and cutting back foliage over the paths. I am 6ft 3ins and I have to bend through large parts of some of the paths

- The footpaths are in some places really poor, particularly nearer to the Solent Breezes side, when it is wet it is awful through muddy puddles with old planks of wood and the odd stone to get over.
- Paths accessible for disability/wheelchair users & pushchairs.
- Better access to the shore for the public and a better path to join up with Warsash and the Hamble river.
- Gates/styles to prevent mountain bikers damaging the paths and disturbing walkers. Signage reminding people to take their rubbish home. Refurbishment of the coastal defences and footpaths.
- **Development** (including preserving the area as it is). 11 responses such as:
 - Keep it as it is
 - Stop overdevelopment in local area
 - General ongoing low key maintenance. Would hate to see the rural and natural environment become more clinically managed.
 - Avoid any further housing development in Warsash to protect the environment
 - Please keep it as wild and natural as possible.
- **Environment, heritage and enhancement** (supporting and enhancing the existing natural habitats, wildlife and heritage; enhancing the area with seating and planting, prevention of littering). 31 responses such as:
 - Get it fenced and signed to keep out the dogs they are constantly disturbing the wildlife and ruining the nesting sites.
 - More voluntary litter pick sessions. Educate dog owners to keep dogs on leads. Rebuild the islands on the scrape/lake for the nesting birds. Don't work on fences during the bird breeding season. Be sensitive to bird breeding season and retain habitat, scrub etc.
 - Protection of existing habitats
 - Restoration of the lake and thinning out the reed beds. Having a shelter for visitors to rest, seat and take in the peace and tranquillity of the area.
 - Clearing the reeds from Hook & dredging, encourage nesting of swans & other birds. More information on the wildlife and history of the area.

A word cloud has been produced highlighting the key words provided in answer to Question 7. The results of are shown in the following word cloud, where the size of each word or phrase represents the frequency with which it occurred.



As the word cloud demonstrates, the answers provided to Question 7 correlate with those given for Questions 5 and 6, relating to what respondents valued most about Hook Lake and what their key concerns were. The most common themes were the protection of existing

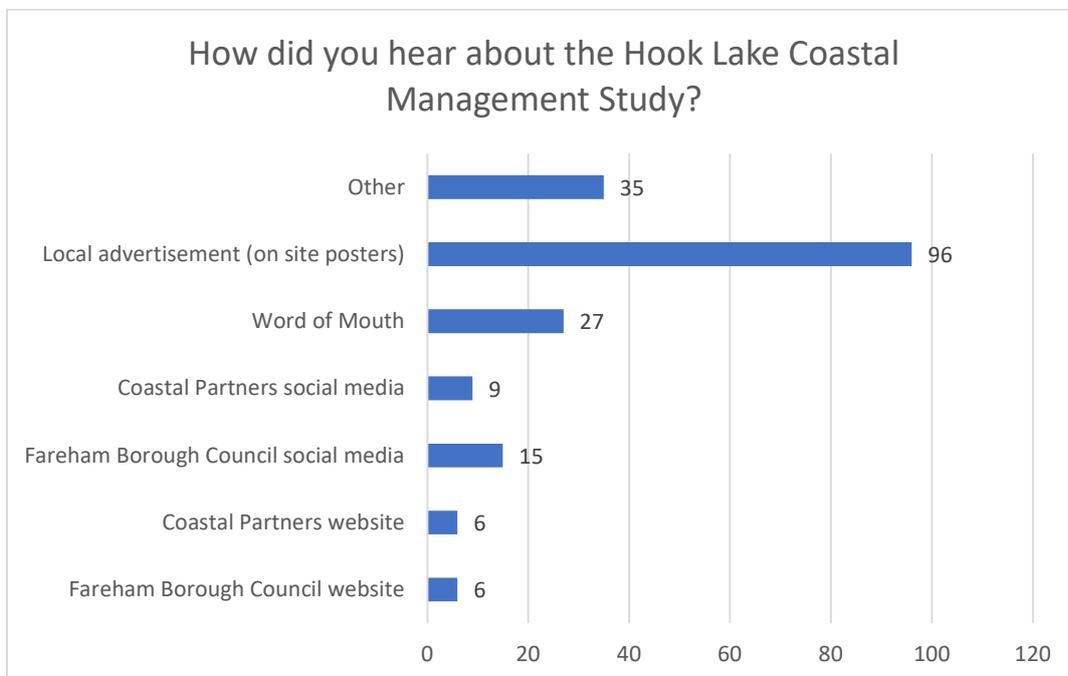
habitats and wildlife, management of litter and dogs, improving accessibility, coastal defences and small-scale improvements to the public realm.

Question 8: Historic information helps us to better understand the location and feed into options for future management of the site. Do you have any information (maps, old photographs, data, anecdotal) you feel would be of use to the Study?

178 respondents answered this question. 165 were not aware of any historical information that they could provide which may help the Study. 13 respondents provided the project team with additional information for the Study. All responses to this question are available to view in Appendix B of this report.

Question 9: How did you hear about the Hook Lake Coastal Management Study?

The results showed that the majority of respondents heard about the Study via local advertisements in the form of on-site posters which were displayed around the Hook Lake with Warsash Nature Reserve. Several respondents also heard about the Study through word of mouth.



“Other” answers included:

- “Coastal Partners e-newsletter”
- “Advertised in “Voice 4 Warsash” on Facebook”
- “Facebook post / group” (no further details given)
- “Hamble Estuary Partnership”
- “Local voice for FB page”
- “Warsash Residents Association”
- “Email”
- “Warsash Local History Society”

It is worth noting that 22 out of the 36 respondents who answered “Other” heard about the Study through the Warsash Residents Association, highlighting the significance that residents associations can play within local communities.

Question 10: Would you like to receive further information about the Hook Lake Coastal Management Study?

In total, 116 respondents (63.4%) answered “Yes” to wishing to continue to receive updates as the Study progresses. The remaining 66 respondents (36%) did not wish to be kept informed of the Study’s progress. 1 person did not answer the question, nor were any contact details supplied.

4 How will the Study use this information?

It is accepted that a questionnaire does not necessarily provide an exact representation of the thoughts of the entire community, especially when considering that not everyone has responded. However, the purpose of the questionnaire was to obtain a steer and provide the opportunity to engage with the project as it was launched. On-site posters were put up to ensure regular visitors to Hook Lake were included in the survey. The responses captured by the survey will give the project team a better understanding of public opinion and help steer conversations with partners and stakeholders, leading to a better Study for all.

The project team will use the information gathered to understand where the key areas of focus need to be, at the earliest stage of the study. At the same time, community concerns, aspirations, opportunities and other ideas will help inform and directly feed into the appraisal process during the next stage of the study. Where additional threads of enquiry are highlighted, these will be investigated further by the project team as the project progresses.

Following the data gathering stage, we will start to develop and appraise coastal management approaches for the study area. At this stage, each coastal management approach appraised will be assessed in relation to community / stakeholder objectives, alongside a selection of other criteria, to help identify approaches to take forward for further community consultation

5 Next Steps

Engagement will take place throughout the Study’s development, with stakeholders providing a key information source.

A Steering Group has been established, made up of professional partners, statutory stakeholders and organisations with jurisdiction around and interests in Hook Lake to support and guide the delivery of the project.

Wider stakeholders will be kept informed through the project website, Fareham Borough Council newsletters and CP social media. Stakeholders will also have the opportunity to be involved as part of public information events which will take place at key stages as the project progresses.

Appendix A

The comments included here are those submitted as part of Question 7 of the survey (“*In addition to creating new habitat, are there any specific improvements you would like to see in this location? Please add.*”).

They are copied as submitted, in the order of submission Any personal information has been redacted.

Damaged fencing repaired to prevent dogs from interfering with bird sanctuary.
Social seating areas with planting, walk/cycle path
Resting places/benches along the coastline
Keep dogs away from wildlife
Get it fenced and signed to keep out the dogs they are constantly disturbing the wildlife and ruining the nesting sights.
Keep it as it is
Hook Lake and the surrounding pasture has now become a massive unmanageable reed bed and needs to be reverted to more varied habitat. Ford's Field Scrape is almost impossible to view from the seawall because of reed growth. Hook Scrape (a) has silted up hence water levels are too high to provide a
Please don't over-develop the area
Maintenance of the paths and cutting back foliage over the paths. [REDACTED] I have to bend through large parts of some of the paths
Protection from tidal surge / storm damage
Encourage people to take their litter home
Improved signage of footpath vs cycle way
Better footpaths and bins!
More voluntary litter pick sessions. Educate dog owners to keep dogs on leads. Rebuild the islands on the scrape/lake for the nesting birds. Don't work on fences during the bird breeding season. Be sensitive to bird breeding season and retain habitat, scrub etc
Shore promenade
The coastal path and sea defences need replacing
Gets overgrown too often and also mosquitoes are a big problematic
Clearing metals littered across the shoreline- DANGEROUS!
Protection of existing habitats
Stop overdevelopment in local area; improve water quality
Improve paths including those forming the access ways in from Newtown Road.
Better dog control. I have seen dogs off leads tearing around Lake, M. Pools, plus scrubland in which Dartford's breed. Comments to owners result in confrontation. I do not believe Councils should be responsible for people's dogs, but owners leave faeces on floor or in bags tied to trees and fences.
Greater deterrent to dog owners who let their dogs disturb nesting birds etc.
As far as I am aware, the only public access to this nature reserve is the beach, so the reserve itself is an unknown quantity. Whatever changes you make will have no public visibility or impact, unless I am much mistaken.
General ongoing low key maintenance. Would hate to see the rural and natural environment become more clinically managed.
General management improvement of existing habitats please.
There has been a massive increase in numbers of people visiting the location since and during the pandemic. They have clearly come from outside the area and don't really understand the fragility of the habitats. Whilst the footpaths and seashore are a wonderful health resource for people living in the area
Less cars allowed on Hook Park Road. Hook Park Road is a quiet residential area and is being spoilt by the amount of cars

Better sea defence management
This question seems to prejudge the outcome of the study. I'm more interested in preserving the existing habitat (including the freshwater lakes for birdlife) and access to it, where practicable to do so.
Stabilising the walk above the shore line is needed urgently
Improve shore footpath particular muddy sections where erosion is so prevalent. Slow erosion or divert path but retain seaviews
Dog walkers keeping dogs away from wildlife and under control- more signage to encourage this.
Litter prevention some how
Better management of Hook Links Scrape, with water levels reduced to allow wading birds to nest. Fords Field scrape to be restored to enable waders such as Common Snipe to return.
Clearing reeds in Hook Lake especially by road bridge to Hook Park to increase flow of water during and after heavy rain.
Deal with littering and anti-social behaviour
to protect wildlife, all dogs must be on lead, better still, it would be really nice to be able to go somewhere that there were no dogs. Educate people on the countryside code Hedging or fencing along footpaths to avoid disturbance to wildlife and nature
Avoid any further housing development in Warsash to protect the environment
Removal of WW2 'junk' and debris from beach and foreshore
Management of cycle access
Ensuring its survival as a nature reserve free from development and 'urbanisation of the countryside free from excess signage, street lighting and pavements.
The footpaths are in some places really poor, particularly nearer to the Solent Breezes side, when it is wet it is awful through muddy puddles with old planks of wood and the odd stone to get over.
Paths accessible for disability/wheelchair users & pushchairs. Education about the site/nature
CCTV cameras to catch the dog poo bag leaving people
No installation of cafe or toilets. Keep as wild as possible
I appreciate the improvements but hope the area can remain looking as natural as possible e.g. signage that fits in with the present area.
Building up sea defences.
Footpaths need to be built up in places to cope with flooding which sometimes makes them impassable.
Disabled access
Better access to the shore for the public and a better path to join up with Warsash and the Hamble river.
Once this project is completed the shore and wetlands should become the responsibility of Titchfield Haven not HCC Southern Sites team, (who are currently responsible for Hook with Warsash nature reserve), thus all bird related sites would be under the same team.
Regular litter collection and bins and improvements to the path. Limit cyclists and fishermen as we find a lot of plastic bottles and wrappers. Also fishing line, hooks and lead weights. It's a great area and it breaks my heart at the amount of litter I pick up everyday. Especially in summer.
Gates/styles to prevent mountain bikers ruining the paths and harassing walkers. Signage reminding people to take their rubbish home. Refurbishment of the coastal defences and footpaths.
Control of cyclists damaging paths which are too narrow and unsuitable
I consider the awarding of a two year study for £556,000 a total waste of monies as this could be used now on the coastal defences.
Better signage

Casual seating at appropriate points (just a 'one off' bench here & there for weary walkers)
Restoration of the lake and thinning out the reed beds. Having a shelter for visitors to rest, seat and take in the peace and tranquillity of the area.
Hedge rows along the paths being regularly cut back
A couple of discreet bins might be useful but above all do not 'protect' 'inform' and 'manage' it out of all recognition
Increased protection for rare plants and ground nesting birds
Info boards re historic landmarks and specific wildlife
An appropriate management plan
Clearer signage
Please keep it as wild and natural as possible.
Due to Covid restrictions I have been unable to visit for 2 years
Clearing the reeds from Hook & dredging, encourage nesting of swans & other birds. More information on the wildlife and history of the area.
Bird migration and availability of space to attract wildlife. Improvement of access has to be balanced with the remoteness of the environment, imperative during bird nesting.

Appendix B

The comments below are those that were submitted as part of Question 8 (*“Historic information helps us to better understand the location, and feed into options for future management of the site. Do you have any information (maps, old photographs, data, anecdotal) you feel would be of use to the study?”*) of the survey.

They are copied word for word, in the order of submission, and have been checked for any personal or identifiable information that would need to be redacted under GDPR.

I have been using the beach area along the sanctuary for 4 decades. The erosion is rapid of late
Bird lists since 2013, spider records (I am an arachnologist), a few photos, I can answer questions.
Many sightings of rare birds, beautiful fox i always see, seal on Xmas day
One inch OS map of the Solent (sheet 180) - 1945?
I first walked the coast between Meon and Warsash in the 1950's
Contact Warsash Local History Society
Book - Warsash and the river Hamble a history and guide by Bryan Woodford.
Have undertaken studies on Solent and River Hamble in relation to saltmarsh decline.
Anecdotal via my friends who have lived here all their lives.
I started to research doing just such a project and have some photographs and research I carried out
Warsash History Society. Shore Road Archive Centre. Some aerial maps.
Hampshire Record Office has good collection of maps. Also Heritage Centre in Warsash. Heritage Centre has a good collection of photos, postcards, aerial photos& sales catalogue for the Hook Estate which should include plans.