

SCOPAC and The Southern Coastal Group

The importance of working together



SCOPAC

STANDING CONFERENCE
ON PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED
WITH THE COASTLINE



INTRODUCTION

The Standing Conference on Problems Associated with the Coastline (SCOPAC) and The Southern Coastal Group (SCG) are networks based in central southern England.

They bring together neighbouring Local Authorities (LA) and organisations that are involved, or interested in, the management of the coastline. Whilst they formed as separate groups, they now work as sister organisations to share and develop research, best practice and resources within the region.

WHAT IS SCOPAC?

SCOPAC was born out of a meeting between officers, councillors and statutory bodies on the Isle of Wight in 1986. It was recognised that there was a need for neighbouring LA's and organisations to work together more closely. By communicating regularly, sharing knowledge and collaborating, different groups could develop a more holistic understanding of the complex coastal issues facing the region: without the limitations of LA boundaries.

Covering the area between Lyme Regis and Shoreham-by-Sea, SCOPAC helps to fund and develop a co-ordinated and sustainable approach to coastal risk management. This is largely done through commissioning research and sharing information.

WHAT IS THE SOUTHERN COASTAL GROUP?

The Southern Coastal Group (SCG) formed in September 2008 and is 1 of 7 strategic groups across the country, as prescribed by Defra.

Working in an area between Portland Bill and Selsey Bill, this group is able to share issues and opportunities by bringing coastal managers from LA's, the Environment Agency and other coastal stakeholders together.

Through this officers are able to share best practice, influence local and national policies and realise efficiencies.

SCOPAC OBJECTIVES

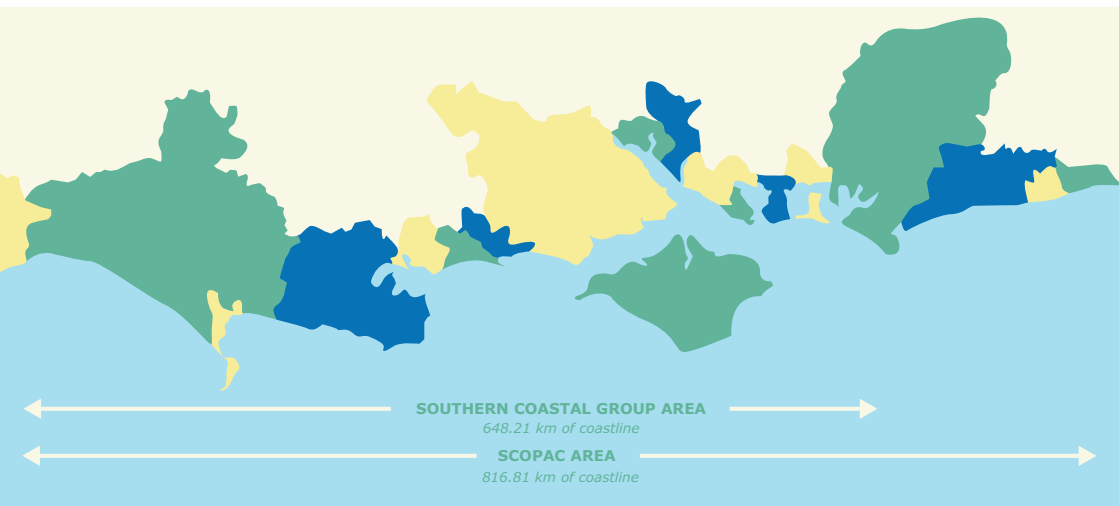


SOUTHERN COASTAL GROUP OBJECTIVES



COMBINED OUTCOMES

- Ground breaking scientific research on complex coastal issues
- Knowledge sharing field trips
- Workshops on topical coastal management practice
- Development and oversight of Shoreline Management Plans and their implementation
- Development and oversight of the South-west and South-east Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes.
- Influencing national policy with a collective Local Government voice
- Shared consultancy frameworks for procurement with significant cost savings
- Supporting higher education bodies with joint research and funding



THE IMPORTANCE OF WORKING TOGETHER

Working together through SCOPAC and the SCG has achieved significant benefits across the region for over 30 years. However, there are now a number of increasing pressures on coastal management which are threatening the wider sector. These include; climate change and sea level rise, public sector austerity and budget cuts, retirement of knowledgeable senior engineers and shifting policy and guidance. This document has been developed to showcase the work of SCOPAC and the SCG and to illustrate why now, more than ever, the continuation and reinvigoration of the groups is paramount to ensure we continue to work together effectively to face these new challenges.

SCOPAC ACHIEVEMENTS

One of SCOPAC's key objectives is to commission coastal research. Since its formation in 1986, SCOPAC has commissioned more than £1 million of coastal research. This programme significantly benefits those involved in coastal risk management.

It allows its members to continue to deliver a diverse programme of work, undertake cutting-edge research and increasingly attract joint funding from other sources. The Southern Coastal Group provides technical support to SCOPAC's research programme.

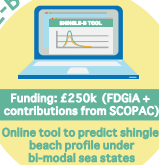
Since 1986
£1 million



SCOPAC funds are utilised for:

- Pilot studies, which may be rolled out nationally, such as the SCOPAC Landfills Study
- Contributions to national projects such as the CIRIA Beach Management Plan guide or the Bi-modal wave study
- Contributions to local projects of regional or national significance, such as the Poole Nearshore Replenishment Trials.

SHINGLE-B TOOL



Fundings: £250k (FDGIA + contributions from SCOPAC)

Online tool to predict shingle beach profile under bi-modal sea states

SCOPAC LANDFILL STUDY



Funding: £70k (Southern RFCC, Wessex RFCC local levy + LGA SIG)

Raising the awareness of landfill site erosion and lack of funding

BRADBURY'S BURSARY



Supports one student project each year, encouraging those who are new to the industry

SEDIMENT TRANSPORT STUDY



Funding: £150k (FDGIA + contributions from SCOPAC)

Study updated to incorporate Regional Monitoring data

RECENT RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

The most utilised SCOPAC research, first developed by The University of Portsmouth in 1991, is the SCOPAC Sediment Transport Study (2012). The Study provides a clear understanding of coastal processes across the region, and helps to underpin the development of strategy studies, schemes and future shoreline management policy.

BENEFITS TO MEMBERS

- Focused regional research programme
- Improved understanding of coastal defence design
- Improved coastal defence maintenance techniques
- Improved understanding of coastal processes
- Raises political profile of regional coastal issues

Members also benefit from the use of in-house skills from partner organisations. This enables focused research to be conducted with the benefits of excellent local knowledge.

By being a member of SCOPAC, cost savings are made through the efficiencies of multiple organisations studying something once, rather than paying individually for research.

Teaming up



On research



Improves efficiencies



Through working together, SCOPAC members are able to bid for ambitious and pioneering research which may not be possible as a Local Authority or the Environment Agency working in isolation.

With the SCOPAC Research Chair sitting on the National FCERM Research and Development programme, the profile of local issues can be raised. This can lead to national research initiatives such as the NERC funded landfill study and Design Guidance for Mixed Sand and Shingle Beaches, which is about to commence.

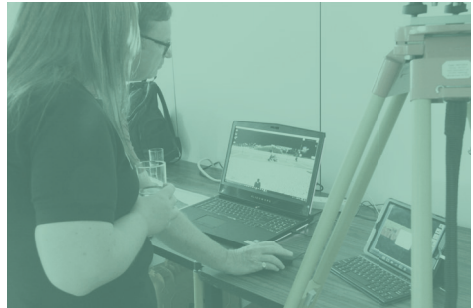
SCOPAC also hosts opportunities to share skills and best practice with its members. This is done through a programme of workshops and field trips.

SCOPAC MEMBER FIELD TRIPS

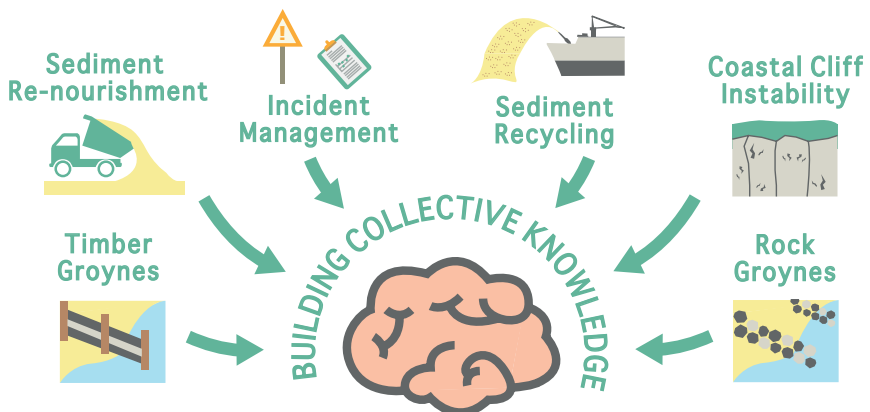
Every year SCOPAC hosts a field trip to a site of interest relevant to coastal management or engineering to help raise the awareness of issues associated with the coastline. Since 2010, nine field trips have taken place, visiting: Hengistbury Head, Old Portsmouth, Hurst Spit, Lyme Regis, Medmerry, Lyme Regis (re-visit), Bournemouth, Christchurch Bay and Portsmouth.

OFFICER WORKSHOPS

SCOPAC also supports a series of workshops called "Andy's Workshops: A Problem Shared", named in honour of the late Professor Andy Bradbury who was chairman of the SCG 2009-2014. Through these, experienced coastal engineers and contractors share their in-depth knowledge and understanding with those new to the industry. This encourages development and best practice across the members.



Beginning in 2010, these workshop have covered topics such as: Timber Groynes, Rock Groynes, Sediment Recycling, Sediment Re-nourishment, Coastal Cliff Instability and Incident Management.

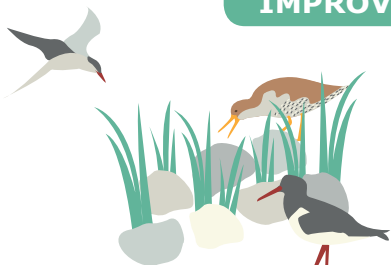


SCG ACHIEVEMENTS

The SCG plays a key role in the development and oversight of Shoreline Management Plans (SMP's). Through the SCG, officers from the various Local Authorities were able to share best practice and learn from each other as they developed the second round of SMP's across the region, between 2006 and 2010.

Since then the SCG has updated the SMP action plans to monitor how the policies which were set are being implemented. The SCG also continues to stay up to date with the national policies and agendas that affect these plans.

IMPROVING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

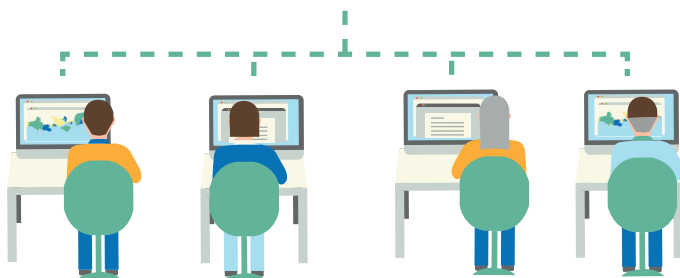


The SCG region is abundant with important designated habitats. The coastal group has an overview of the Regional Habitat Creation Programme and shares information on emerging environmental enhancement opportunities.

STRATEGIC COASTAL MONITORING

The group shares data and keeps informed of the South-west and South-east Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes. This data is essential for improving the understanding of the coast; particularly, how best to manage it in the face of dynamic change.

Sharing data to better understand the region





SHARING BEST PRACTICE

The SCG provides the opportunity for officers and engineers to get together and talk through shared problems and opportunities. In doing so, lessons learnt can be shared and better outcomes can be delivered for our communities. This is a more cost effective approach to learning and development and delivers more focused and applicable outcomes than any expensive training courses could offer.

REALISING EFFICIENCIES

The SCG has developed a programme management tool for its members so they can see the different live, or planned, capital projects across the region. Through this the group can then identify similar projects and look to gain efficiency through shared working, joint procurement exercises and splitting material costs.



PROCUREMENT FRAMEWORKS

SCOPAC funded the development of a minor works and professional services framework across the region in 2017. By using the frameworks, engineers and officers can access pre-qualified high quality suppliers without the need for open market tendering. This makes significant savings in time and money every time they procure services. The group also provides advice for its members on how to use this framework.



INFLUENCING NATIONAL POLICY

Having a collective Local Government voice is essential in order to bring influence to developing policies. The SCG has fed into many national consultations over the years, most recently this has included: Partnership Funding, the National Planning Policy Framework, SMP reviews and the National FCERM Strategy.

PRESSURES

A number of varying factors are placing increasing pressure on the delivery of FCERM in the SCOPAC and SCG region.

INCREASING LEVELS OF RISK



Current guidance estimates that there will be up to a 68cm rise in sea level by 2115. Combined with the ageing defences across the region and a lack of funding to deliver new solutions, this is placing a greater strain on risk management authorities and making it more challenging for them to reduce coastal flood and erosion risk.

FUNDING CUTS

Local government austerity has led to large budget and staff cuts, along with the need for LA's to prioritise different service areas. This means that it is now more difficult to meet the same service levels which were achieved in the past. Unless there has been a recent flood or erosion event, FCERM can often be lower on the priority list, despite risk levels remaining unchanged.



BRAIN DRAIN



Some of the more senior coastal engineers and managers in the region have now retired from the FCERM sector. This has left a considerable experience and knowledge gap. Whilst there are ambitious new engineers starting to fill this gap they often need support to build up the knowledge required to fulfil their roles.

These pressures, along with an increasing drive for regeneration and growth at the coast, means that now more than ever groups like SCOPAC and the SCG are the lifeblood to the sector.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

SCOPAC and the SCG provide a forum for the exchange of ideas, a mechanism to deliver research which would otherwise not be funded and a way to share best practice to help each other deliver more efficiently for our coastal communities.

As an officer or a political member there is plenty you can do to help support the on going functions of SCOPAC and the SCG. This includes:

- Lobbying the relevant departments in your organisation to ensure they remain engaged in the networks and continue with their financial subscriptions
- Ensuring political member engagement with SCOPAC and attendance at meetings and field trips
- Ensuring officer and engineer attendance at the SCG to share knowledge and learn from the group
- Utilising the outputs from the group in your day-to-day work to save your organisation time and money
- Working with SCOPAC and the SCG to ensure better outcomes for your communities and the FCERM sector in our region
- Becoming a Full Member of SCOPAC to help steer and benefit from the latest research



ACHIEVEMENTS

- Research
- Procurement frameworks
- Influencing national policy
- Sharing best practice



PRESSURES

- Climate Change
- Public Sector Austerity
- Brain Drain



SOLUTIONS

- Continue working together
- Re-invigorate members and officers
- Develop new vision for the future

MORE INFORMATION

scopac.org.uk

southerncoastalgroup.org.uk

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SCOPAC AND THE SCG MEMBERS

Beaulieu Manor Estate
Bournemouth Borough Council
Chichester District Council
Chichester Harbour Conservancy
Christchurch Borough Council
Dorset County Council
Eastleigh Borough Council
Environment Agency
Fareham Borough Council
Gosport Borough Council
Hampshire County Council
Havant Borough Council
Isle of Wight AONB Partnership
Isle of Wight Council

National Trust
Natural England
New Forest District Council
Poole Borough Council
Portsmouth City Council
Purbeck District Council
Southampton City Council
Southern Sea Fisheries District
The Crown Estate
West Dorset District Council
Weymouth and Portland Borough
Worthing Borough Council
Yarmouth Harbour Commissioners