



BEEP REPORT 2023

BEEP 2023 Activities

For 2023 BEEP partners, volunteers, stakeholders and members of the public helped complete a variety of amazing eelgrass works across the Bailiwick. This included:

Internal workshops

During 2023, BEEP partners hosted internal workshops to secure, review and update the projects' aims and objectives for the long term. This included a 'recording' workshop aimed to enhance our citizen science works and a 'outreach' workshop, aimed to increase our engagement activities within the islands' communities.

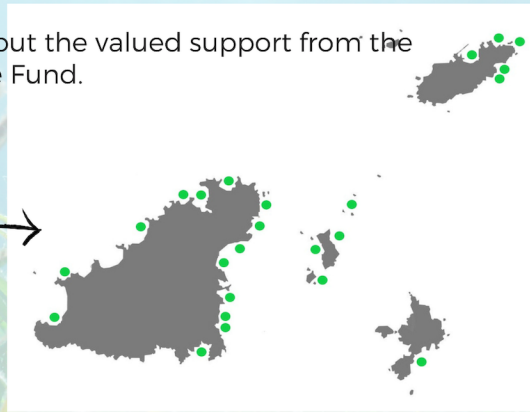
Event attendance

For 2023, BEEP partners and volunteers attended and presented at a range of UK and Channel Island events, such as:

- UK Seagrass Symposium (Plymouth)
- Inter-islands Environment Meeting (Sark)
- Seafront Sunday (Guernsey)

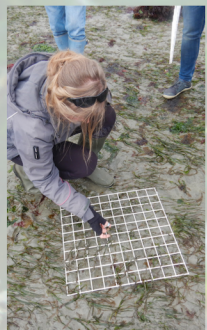
This could not have been undertaken without the valued support from the Biodiversity Partnership Strategy for Nature Fund.

Green markers showing Eelgrass sightings collated by BEEP



Savvy navy initiative

In May (2023), BEEP developed a new initiative with 'savvy navy' to showcase Channel Islands' eelgrass information on their marine boating app. Eelgrass presence, location and extent information collated by BEEP, the project partners and the Marine Resources Team, States of Jersey can now be accessed via the 'savvy navy' app, with the aim for boaters to reduce their anchoring/mooring activities within the beds.



Public workshops

BEEP partners ran several public workshops to raise awareness of the project, the importance of eelgrass and how to record via citizen science. Workshops were held on Alderney and Guernsey, and also offered to members of the public online.



Background

In 2019, the Bailiwick Eelgrass Exploration Project (BEEP) was developed by project partners The Alderney Wildlife Trust, La Société Guernesaise, Biodiversity Partnership and Seasearch.

The aim of this volunteer led project is to increase knowledge on the presence, location and composition of eelgrass species (*Zostera* sp.) across the Bailiwick of Guernsey, through citizen science. To meet this aim, the project consists of three objectives:

- To record the presence, distribution, extent and composition of eelgrass around the Bailiwick of Guernsey.
- To promote awareness.
- To assess environmental impacts from human activities.



Citizen Science

2023 was a wonderful year for citizen science! BEEP partners enabled a variety of citizen science surveys, including:

- Running seven public beach walkover surveys to find and explore the upper boundaries of eelgrass beds across the Bailiwick.
- Supporting volunteer Seasearch snorkellers and divers record within the island's eelgrass beds, through Seasearch.
- Initiating an ecological impact assessment of traditional moorings upon selected eelgrass beds in Guernsey with the Blue Dolphins Sub-Aqua Dive Club.
- Helping an MSc academic student from the University of Plymouth assess the health of the Channel Island's eelgrass, which was supported by Butterfield Bank Ltd.
- Collating public sightings of eelgrass across the Bailiwick, with new sightings recorded at Moulin Houet, Pembroke, Rouse, Port Grat and Havelet.

Outreach

With support from the Biodiversity Partnership Strategy for Nature fund, BEEP partners developed its first annual engagement plan. The plan helped initiated several deliverables:

- Monthly social media activities
- Literature for public workshops and events (e.g. information cards, posters)
- Events (see above)
- Articles and press works. This includes segments written in AWT newsletter.

2024 Aspirational Action Plan

The key feature of BEEP is that it is a volunteer led, voluntary citizen science project. As such, workstreams for 2024 are aspirational, to suit and support the project's amazing volunteers, when they can. Recommendations for the 2024 plan include:

R1. Implement Strategy for Nature traditional mooring dive impact assessment (ongoing project 2022 – 2024).

R3. Implement Strategy for Nature for Nature engagement plan (ongoing project 2023 – 2024).

R5. Link to other Eelgrass/Seagrass stakeholders, projects, research activities and bodies across the Channel Islands and beyond.

R2. Deployment of an advanced mooring system (ongoing project 2022-2024).

R4. Select key 'sentinel/reference survey sites' for the long-term assessment of the ecological status of the Bailiwick's eelgrass beds (2024 -2027).

R6. Review 2024 with partners, to ensure its success.