
Bailiwick Eelgrass Exploration Project: highlights of 2025

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Reviewed by: BEEP partner representatives and core volunteers

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1. BACKGROUND

In 2019, the Bailiwick Eelgrass Exploration Project (BEEP) was developed by Alderney Wildlife Trust, La Societe Guernesiaise, Biodiversity Partnership, Guernsey Biological Records Centre and Seasearch. The aim of this project is to increase knowledge on the presence, location and composition of eelgrass species (*Zostera sp.*, see Figure 1 as an example) across the Bailiwick of Guernsey, through citizen science. To meet this aim, the project consists of three objectives:

- a) To record the presence, distribution, extent and composition of eelgrass around the Bailiwick of Guernsey.
- b) To promote awareness of this important habitat forming species within the Bailiwick to relevant stakeholders, appropriate bodies and the public.
- c) To assess environmental impacts from human activities (such as traditional boat moorings) upon eelgrass beds within the Bailiwick of Guernsey.

BEEP is a volunteer led, voluntary citizen science project. To achieve the project's objectives, volunteer representatives from the project partners, associated organisations and key citizen scientists work closely together to help develop annual action plans, engagement activities and surveys.



Figure 1. Common eelgrass (*Zostera marina*) recorded in Guernsey (taken by Tim Harvey).

2. 2025 COMPLETED BEEP WORKSTREAMS

During 2025, a variety of workstreams (as defined as within the BEEP 2025 action plan) were successfully completed by the project partners, core volunteers, trained citizen scientists, stakeholders and the public. This included both citizen survey and outreach workstreams:

I. Citizen science

2025 was yet another a wonderful year for citizen science! BEEP partners and core volunteers helped organise a variety of citizen science surveys, including:

- **Beach walkover surveys.** A total number of six beach walkover surveys were completed across the Bailiwick (3 x Guernsey, 1 x Herm and 2 x Alderney). The surveys comprised of volunteers recording the presence, location and condition of the upper boundary of several eelgrass beds (see Figure 2). Initial results for 2024 can be seen in Appendix 1 Figure 2. During 2025, Mourant kindly donated a seawater testing kit, which has enabled us to begin to record seawater properties (such as temperature) within Guernsey's eelgrass.
- **Seasearch surveys.** In collaboration with local Seasearch coordinators on Guernsey and Alderney, trained Seasearch volunteers completed several surveys within the islands' eelgrass beds. These results will be added to nbn website (national biodiversity network) in due course.
- **Traditional mooring impact assessment.** Volunteers assessed the impact of the removal of traditional moorings upon eelgrass beds on Herm. This is an annual survey, with results due in 2028.
- **Carbon stock analysis completion.** Analysis of the carbon stock of a number of eelgrass beds across the Bailiwick was completed this year. This was supported by Channel Islands CO-OP. Initial results can be seen in Appendix 1 Figure 2.
- **Eelgrass sightings.** Volunteers helped collect and collate public sightings of eelgrass via social media and recording platforms, such as Seagrass Spotter and irecord.

Collectively, the results from these surveys are being used to assess the ecological condition of the Bailiwick's eelgrass beds. The condition assessment will be completed end 2027/early 2028.



Figure 2. BEEP volunteers recording eelgrass during a beach walkover survey at Salarie Corner, 2025 (taken by Mel Broadhurst-Allen).

II. Outreach

For 2025, BEEP partners and volunteers helped coordinate and support a variety of outreach activities across the Bailiwick. This included providing bespoke workshops/outreach sessions, attending key events, promoting via social media, literature development and general PR.

- **Workshops/outreach sessions.** Over 2025, BEEP partners hosted a number of bespoke presentations/outreach sessions to interested groups, such as Aspida Group Ltd and Guernsey homeschooling group. These sessions comprised of both classroom and field-based elements to showcase the Bailiwick's amazing eelgrass habitats.
- **Event attendance.** For 2025, BEEP partners and volunteers attended and presented at a range of UK and Channel Island events, such as:
 - Inter-islands Environment Meeting (Isle of Man; see Appendix 1. Figure 2 for poster presentation).
 - UK Overseas Territories Conservation Forum (online presentation)
 - Havelet Bay Regatta (Guernsey)
 - 'Lihou Grand Day Out' public event (Guernsey)
 - 'AWT Eelgrass and Green Ormer Survey' public event (Alderney; see Figure 3)
- **Monthly social media activities.** Volunteers regularly showcased eelgrass and BEEP via social media, where possible. The biggest 'hit/interest' was associated with the results of the carbon stock assessment, with 2,340 people 'reached' via one Facebook post.
- **Literature development.** For 2025, volunteers helped create appropriate literature for workshops and public events. This included creating a Seagrass Spotter Identification Sheet, which comprised of photographs of marine life associated with eelgrass beds, for members of the public to use during field-based events (see Figure 4 for a marine life example).
- **Articles and other PR works.** Volunteers helped publish articles and other press related works, such as an article within the 2025 Sure phone book.



Figure 3. Exposed common eelgrass bed recorded during a beach walkover at Longis Bay, Alderney (taken by Mel Broadhurst-Allen).

3. 2026 ASPIRATIONAL ACTION PLAN

The 2025 completed workstreams (described above) has enabled BEEP partners and core volunteers to review, update and streamline previous project deliverables, for the long term. The key feature of BEEP is that it is a volunteer led, voluntary citizen science project. As such, workstreams for 2026 are very much an aspirational action plan, to suit and support the project's incredible volunteers, when they can.

Recommendations for 2026 include:

- R1. Continue Strategy for Nature traditional mooring impact assessment.
- R2. Consider the potential for a deployment of an advanced mooring system/replacement of a traditional mooring within an eelgrass bed.
- R3. Continue BEEP annual engagement plan.
- R4. Continue 'sentinel/reference survey sites' for the long-term assessment of the ecological status of the Bailiwick's eelgrass beds (2024 -2027/28).
- R5. Link to other eelgrass/seagrass stakeholders, projects, research activities and bodies across the Channel Islands and beyond.
- R6. Review 2026 with partners, to ensure its success.

4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

BEEP is heavily reliant on the support of the project's partners, core volunteers and other organisations within the Bailiwick. We are particularly grateful to Aspida Group Ltd, Channel Islands CO-OP, Guernsey Nature Commission, Guernsey Seasearch and Mourant for all their help this year. We would also like to thank the Guernsey homeschooling group for their enthusiasm on the beach. Finally, we would like to thank all our amazing volunteers for their efforts over the year!

5. CONTACT DETAILS

For details on the project or how you can help further, please contact Mel Broadhurst-Allen via marine@alderneywildlife.org. You can find us on most social media platforms, via BEEP. Please also check out our website page here: <https://societe.org.gg/wp/beep/>



Figure 4. Dog whelk eggs recorded on common eelgrass blades, Salarie Corner (taken by Mel Braodhurst-Allen).

Appendix 1.


Bailiwick Eelgrass Exploration Project

The signals of condition:
evaluating the status of eelgrass health across
the Bailiwick through citizen science

Introduction

The Bailiwick Eelgrass Exploration Project (BEEP) aims to record and raise awareness of eelgrass (also known as seagrass) across the Bailiwick of Guernsey, through citizen science. This includes common eelgrass (*Zostera marina*) and dwarf eelgrass (*Z. noltii*) species.

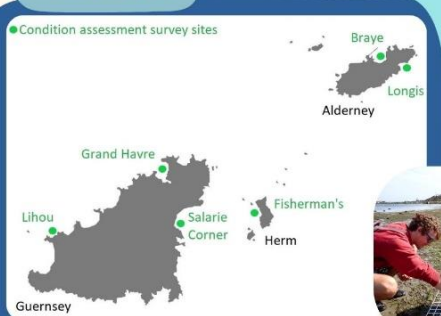
BEEP is a volunteer led initiative setup in 2019 by the Alderney Wildlife Trust, La Societe Guernesiaise, Biodiversity Partnership and Guernsey Biological Records Centre, supported by Seasearch.



Eelgrass is a terrestrial plant adapted to live in the marine environment.

Photograph of common eelgrass (*Z. marina*).

Methods




Condition assessment survey sites

Map of survey sites across the Bailiwick.

From 2024-2027, BEEP volunteers are undertaking a range of field-based surveys with local communities. The aim is to evaluate the health of a number of key eelgrass beds across the Bailiwick, to provide appropriate evidence-led conservation recommendations. Surveys include:

- Plant morphometrics
- Carbon stock estimates
- Seasearch surveys
- Seawater parameter monitoring
- Marine invasive species recording

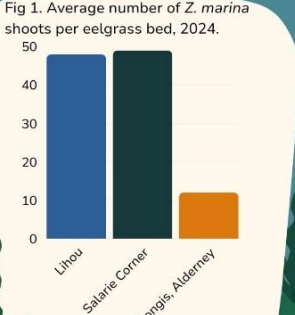


BEEP volunteers recording eelgrass.

Initial results


Eelgrass plant morphometrics (number of shoots and length of blades) and carbon stock levels recorded in the intertidal zones of selected eelgrass beds across the Bailiwick show some variability.

Fig 1. Average number of *Z. marina* shoots per eelgrass bed, 2024.



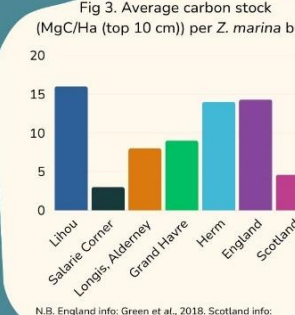
Location	Average number of shoots
Lihou	~45
Salarie Corner	~45
Longis, Alderney	~12

Fig 2. Average length of *Z. marina* blades (cm) per eelgrass bed, 2024.



Location	Average length (cm)
Lihou	~15
Salarie Corner	~16
Longis, Alderney	~27

Fig 3. Average carbon stock (MgC/Ha (top 10 cm)) per *Z. marina* bed.



Location	Average carbon stock (MgC/Ha)
Lihou	~16
Salarie Corner	~3
Longis, Alderney	~8
Grand Havre	~9
Herm	~14
England	~14
Scotland	~5

N.B. England info: Green et al., 2018. Scotland info: Portourogliou et al., 2021.

By Dr Mel Broadhurst-Allen on behalf of BEEP volunteers and partners.
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Figure 2. BEEP poster presentation given at Inter Islands Environment Meeting, Isle of Man, 2025.