

Lyme Bay Fisheries and Conservation Reserve Consultative Committee Meeting

Meeting held at the Royal Lion Hotel, Lyme Regis on 25th March 2014

Minutes of the meeting

Present:

Tim Glover, Blue Marine Foundation (Chair)

Charles Clover, Blue Marine Foundation

Neville Copperthwaite, Project Coordinator/Committee Secretary

Kate West, Blue Marine Foundation

Nick Wright, MMO

Rachel Irish, MMO

Sam Dell, Southern IFCA

Lizy Gardner, Natural England

Adam Rees, Plymouth University

Professor Martin Attrill, Plymouth University

Gus Caslake, Seafish

Tom Rossiter, Succorfish

Erin Priddle, EDF

Matilda Bark, Dorset Coast Forum

Mike Green, Beer representative.

John Worswick –West Bay, scallop diver

Dave Sales, Fisherman, West Bay, static gear

Angus Walker, Fisherman, Axmouth, static gear

Alex Jones, Fisherman, Lyme Regis, static gear

Dave Hancock, Fisherman, Axmouth, static gear

Aubrey Banfield, West Bay, static gear

Nigel Hill, Fisherman, Lyme Regis, static gear

Mike Spiller, Angling Trust.

Jamie Smith, West Bay, static gear

Note: Three representatives of the leisure diving industry were present:

Sean Webb, Wreck to Reef

Marcus Darler, O'Three Dry Suits

Sarah Payne, Scimitar Diving

1) Apologies:

Tim Robbins, Devon and Severn IFCA.
Simon Pengelly, Southern IFCA
Fiona Wheatley, Marks and Spencer
Andy Woolmer, Fishery Adviser
Liam McAleese, Marine Planning Consultants
Jerry Percy, NUTFA
Mark Machin – Samways
Rowena Taylor, Graphic Designer
Jim Newton, Beer Fisherman
Bridget Betts, Dorset Coast Forum
Paul Wason, Lyme Regis, towed gear
Michael Coyle, Marine Management Organisation.
Mark Cornwell, West Bay towed gear.
Jim Portus, SWIFA.

2) Agree minutes of the 20th Working Group meeting:

The minutes were agreed.

3) Update on Implementation of Management Plan

a) Potting Study

It was reported that the winter storms had taken its toll on the potting study gear and a total of 53 pots had been lost as well as all the no-fishing area marker dan-buoys. Martin Attrill said that the storms may have affected the study to the extent that it may have to be re-started. Charles Clover asked if a whelk study could be integrated either using whelk pots or an annual survey. Martin said this was possible and he would consider the best way forward and inform the group. Dave Sales reported that the pots are covered in Scallop or Queen Scallop spat and asked if Cefas could be approached to identify them. Sam Dell said he would approach them. Neville will organise the replacement of the lost pots.

b) Ports Infrastructure.

Neville reported that the Beer ice equipment installation had been successfully completed by the suppliers, SPX. This consisted of a walk-in freezer room an ice-making machine and hopper and 6 thermal insulated fish tubs. The three other port applications had been agreed by MMO but were subject to planning consents. The Axmouth planning application has just been passed by the parish council and is now being considered by the district council and both the Lyme Regis and West Bay planning applications are being processed.

c) Fully Documented Fisheries

Tom Rossiter said that the first Fully Documented Fisheries steering group meeting had taken place and was designed to be a 'gentle hand on the tiller'. Aubrey Banfield is the fishermen's representative on the steering group and he explained the reason for the project to the meeting. It had been established that data generated from the project would

not be shared without the permission of the group. Tom said that three boats in West Bay had been fitted with inshore Vessel Monitoring Systems (iVMS) this very morning and that he would be ringing round to make fitting appointments with everyone else. He said it is important that these appointments are honoured. Charles said we need something close to 100% involvement to make the project work in order to supply evidence for fisheries management. Sam pointed out that there are a few fishermen from Weymouth and elsewhere that are not involved with the group and therefore this project. Neville will liaise with Sam to engage with them. Tom said that whelk pots as well as crab/lobster pots will be tagged for the project. Dave Hancock said this is a good idea as whelks are hit hard within the Reserve.

d) Seafish Responsible Fishing Scheme (RFS)

Gus Caslake reported that he now had 90% of the fishermen signed up to the RFS. Steve Symonds from Brixham has been visiting vessels in Lyme Bay to complete full audits during the last month. There are now 10 vessels fully audited into the RFS. Steve asked to send his thanks onto Angus at Axmouth for arranging with the guys to attend the full audits, it was very helpful. Full audits and Coaching will continue over the next month and we are hopeful of covering the majority of fishing effort in Lyme Bay with RFS vessels on completion.

e) Marine Planning Consultants (MPC) (Guardline) study.

Liam McAleese was unable to attend the meeting but sent a brief update by email. Tim reported on his behalf that MPC were just completing the fisheries baseline report which will be circulated shortly. At the same time they are undertaking the habitat risk work he described at the last meeting. He reported that MPC have had staff changes in the fisheries team and have since engaged a new fisheries scientist (Jessica Woo) to help out. Jess has signed a confidentiality agreement so there is no issue regarding information security. Liam would like the opportunity to give a short presentation at the next meeting.

f) Schools outreach program (Dave Sales)

Dave Sales reported that 6 schools had been visited with four more to do in April. He said he had been surprised at how receptive the children were. Tim added that in total 20 schools had been approached with 750 children engaged and plans were being drawn up to extend the scope of the programme to secondary schools and further education establishments.

g) 1. Angling Code of Conduct

Mike Spiller reported that the Angling Code of Conduct had been agreed by the Angling Trust. Mike suggested various kinds of outlets where the printed code should be available and said that he was working on a leaflet design with Rowena Taylor.

2. Diving Code of Conduct

Representatives of the leisure diving industry had volunteered to work-up a diving code of conduct for the reserve area; Sean Webb read-out the draft diving code to the group. A discussion took place resulting in suggestions and some tweaking of the code and Sean said he would now try to get it ratified by the main dive organisations such as BSAC and PADI before bringing it back to the group. Rachel Irish said a dive code had already been worked-

up by a group called Seatorbay which would be useful to refer to. Rachel said the Chairwoman, Alex Schofield would be the first point of contact.

h) Fishing Litter Project

Matilda Bark gave a short presentation about the fishing litter project I she is working on. This is being set up with help from Dave Sales, Lowri at Southern IFCA, Peter Dadds and Richard Stride.

This is what she said:

“Through the Litter Free Coast and Sea project we are trying to reduce marine litter from all sources. We have already done some work on reducing publicly sourced litter and have shipping and angling litter projects in the pipeline. I am telling you this so that fishermen do not think that we are singling them out. This project is about reducing the impact of that unavoidable litter once it reaches the sea.

Through the commercial fishing litter project DFC would like to do the following:

1. Set up a reuse scheme so that reusable buoys, ropes and pots that wash up on beaches can go back to local fishermen and things that cannot be reused can be used to make other things such as carpet tiles.
2. Help to improve quayside waste storage and collection so that it is easier for fishermen to bring in nets and ropes and therefore reduce ghost fishing and marine litter. (Some local fishermen I have spoken to in Christchurch have said that they do not need a communications campaign encouraging fishermen to bring fishing litter ashore, what they need is better quayside waste facilities to bring litter ashore. I would like to find out the situation at other harbours and see if we can set up a locally adapted fishing for litter scheme in this area).
3. Help fishermen share their waste reduction tips and tricks – fishermen are more likely to listen to other fishermen so we would like to share fishermen’s tips on reducing waste and cunning ways to store waste on their boats. We hope that these tips will also include advice on how to cast nets so that they do not get caught etc. to help new fishermen”.

4) Communications

1. Social Media

Rowena could not attend due to illness but sent an email reporting that Twitter followers are up to 926 (up 180... nearly 1000!) and Facebook numbers is 432 (up 35).

2. Website

The website has potting study video footage on it and a feature will be uploaded about the Beer chiller room and ice machine this week and promoted via social media.

The Reserve Round-up’ is now used in the Dorset Wildlife Trust monthly eNewsletter.

3. Interpretation Boards

Neville reported that following site visits with Rowena at the weekend to seek landowner consents, we are still waiting for portfolio holder agreement on the 4 locations in East

Devon (Axmouth, Seaton, Branscombe and Beer). These should be forthcoming within the next few weeks.

In the West Dorset area, meetings have taken place with The Jurassic Coast Team and the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) for the interpretation devices (due to planning difficulties with the standard interpretation boards). We have also been invited to apply for Sustainable Development Funding from Dorset AONB for these devices.

Applications are due in by the end of April.

4. Seaton Jurassic Centre

A meeting is arranged with the Seaton Jurassic Centre (Devon Wildlife Trust) on 9th April regarding interpretation material in the new building, which is currently being built.

5) MMO and IFCA updates

Nick Wright informed the group that the MMO were promoting a compensation scheme for fishermen who had lost gear during the recent storms. This is a European Fisheries Fund (EFF) scheme but the funding is limited.

There has been a slight delay in iVMS type approval but it should be fully functional by August 2014. Devon and Severn IFCA will be part of the supplier approval panel. iVMS installation will be eligible for EFF funding only until it becomes a regulatory requirement. Erin Priddle said that the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) are responding to consultation on regulation and have asked the Commission to roll-back technical impositions on fishermen; so EDF would like to ask fishermen some questions regarding Common Fisheries Policy Reform. The conversation led to by-catch and Aubrey asked who would pay for the storage of it and also where would it go. Nick said that the idea was to make fishermen change their fishing habits which would result in very little by-catch. However, there is going to be a review to get around these problems. This will only apply to quota species. It was mentioned that Defra may be looking for someone to trial a pilot project so Charles said he would approach them to see if Lyme would be suitable.

Sam Dell said he was keeping an eye out for lost gear whilst out on enforcement duty.

Neville asked if he could accompany him to look for any potting study pots that may still be around.

Erin asked if the fishermen had thought any more about how to put more teeth on the code of conduct and if so, would they be interested in attending a workshop. Charles asked if it would be helpful to involve fishermen from further West in the Devon and Severn IFCA area. Sam said that the outcome of the two management systems is the same so this is unnecessary. Erin said she would produce an outline of what a workshop might look like.

6) Funding update

Martin reported that Natural England (NE) is pulling the funding for the main Lyme Bay Survey which Plymouth University has been involved in for several years. This survey underpins much of the science that is currently taking place so it is important that it continues. The annual cost is in the region of £80K. Martin asked that if the group or any

individuals in the room have influence with NE, please could you make representation to them.

7) Media and PR

There was nothing to report

8) AOB

Alex Jones said that he was concerned about the possible detrimental effects of a mussel farm that is currently being constructed offshore to the west of the Lyme Bay Reserve.

Martin informed the group that the proprietor John Holmeyard of Offshore Shellfish Ltd is a responsible person and he will be monitoring his operation for three years. Neville suggested inviting Mr Holmeyard to the next meeting. This was agreed.

9) Date of next meeting

6th May, to be held at the Royal Lion Hotel, Lyme Regis at **7pm**

Duration of meeting:

6pm – 9:45pm

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