

Lyme Bay Fisheries and Conservation Reserve Consultative Committee Meeting

Meeting held at the Royal Lion Hotel, Lyme Regis on 16th June, 2015

Minutes of the meeting

Present:

Tim Glover, Blue Marine Foundation (Chair)
Charles Clover, Blue Marine Foundation
Neville Copperthwaite, Project Coordinator/Committee Secretary
Andy Woolmer, Fishery Adviser
Lauren Nelson, Blue Marine Foundation
Lewis Smith, Blue Marine Foundation
Rowena Taylor, Lyme Bay Reserve
Simon Pengelly, Southern IFCA
Tim Robbins, Devon and Severn IFCA
Sarah Clark, Devon and Severn IFCA
Nick Wright, Marine Management Organisation
Rachel Irish, Marine Management Organisation
Jerry Irwin, Marine Management Organisation
Gus Caslake, Seafish
Martin Attrill, Plymouth University
Gavin Ziemann, Axmouth Fisherman, static gear
Mike Green, Beer fishermen's representative
Dave Sales, Fisherman, West Bay, static gear
Angus Walker, Fisherman, Axmouth, static gear
Dave Hancock, Fisherman, Axmouth, static gear
John Worswick, Fisherman, West Bay, scallop diver
Martin Foley, Fisherman, Weymouth, whelk gear

1) Apologies:

Robert Clark, Southern IFCA
Jerry Percy, NUTFA
Erin Priddle, EDF
Joana Smith, Natural England
Tom Rossiter, Succorfish
Mike Spiller, Angling Trust.
Aubrey Banfield, Fisherman, West Bay, static gear

Jon Shuker, Fisherman, Lyme Regis scallop diver
Jim Newton, Fisherman, Beer, static gear
Kieran Perree, Fisherman, Lyme Bay, scallop diver
Bridget Betts, Dorset Coast Forum
Paul Wason, Fisherman, Lyme Regis, towed gear
Michael Coyle, Marine Management Organisation
Mark Cornwell, Fisherman, West Bay towed gear
Jim Portus, SWIFA.

2) Agree minutes of the 25th Working Group meeting:

The minutes were agreed.

3) Updates on implementation of the Management Plan

a) Potting Study

Professor Martin Attrill informed the group that the new replacement pots have arrived in Axmouth and Adam Rees is in the process of organising their deployment with the help of Axmouth fishermen. It is expected that the next set of potting studies will commence in the following week. Lobster tagging will also be included in the study and Adam will be in touch shortly with the four ports to begin organising this. Adam had attended a meeting in Seaton which was organised by the East Devon Fishermen's Association to discuss the increase in crab landing sizes by Devon and Southern IFCA. Adam supplied scientific evidence obtained from the potting study which provided clarity at the meeting. Tim Glover said that this is precisely what data gathering is intended for, so that issues can be discussed informed by solid evidence. Angus Walker thanked Martin for sending Adam along but pointed out that seasonality in crab landings could not be taken into account. Tim Glover said that a Defra steering group meeting will be taking place in due course which he and Martin will be attending. Martin pointed out that the Lyme bay Reserve is now seen as a global way in which to deal with data relating to MPA's.

b) Ports Infrastructure.

Neville Copperthwaite reported that the Axmouth ice making machine and chiller room had been installed and was now in the process of being clad. Angus said the cladding is nearing completion and he hoped the ice facility would be operational within two weeks. He asked if he could have permission from the group to put a plaque above the chiller room door to acknowledge Blue Marine Foundation as funders. It was pointed out that there also has to be some form of recognition of EU funding. Rowena Taylor will liaise with Angus on this. The Lyme Regis ice installation is still at a stalemate due to David Brown, Head of Assets and Infrastructure for West Dorset District Council (WDDC), ignoring Tim Glover's email to him, requesting some dialogue with a view to resolving the situation. Regarding West Bay, Neville reported that Architect Andrew Wilkins is having the same problem of non-communication from the same WDDC department in trying to establish the

likely ground rent for the chiller room on the Quay. Dave Sales said that he didn't think any of the West bay fishermen would use the ice machine and chiller room. It was pointed out that Dave had previously attended a meeting with other West Bay fishermen and members of the Group at which his concern about the cost of running the ice machine was taken on board and subsequently the ice machine was removed from the planning application. Dave disputed this and continued to refer to the ice making machine as well as the chiller room. Tim Glover reinforced the fact that there is only a chiller room to consider and after an exchange of views Tim said that if Dave did not want to be involved with the running of the chiller room then that is up to him, but there are other West Bay fishermen who have said they would use it, so we will proceed on that basis.

c) Fully Documented Fisheries

Simon Pengelly asked how the iVMS data is going to be used, who is going to have access to it. Andy Woolmer said that a discussion needs to be had about who and how. For instance here could be a caveat that precludes the data from being put up on the Website. Simon said that there is a short term desire on the part of Southern IFCA to obtain data within the next year to help with Assessments. Tim Robbins said that the data will be useful to everyone including the fishing industry. Tim Glover suggested that a steering group should be set up for some swift action. Nick Wright said that it would be worth checking whether environmental data regulations apply. Angus thought it a good idea to establish the legal position. Tim Glover said he would get solicitors to check. Neville reported that 22 of the 38 vessels are currently sending data. A mix of technical problems and user problems has caused a disappointing return of data. These problems have recently come to light and are now being addressed by Neville accompanying a technician repairing the units and instructing fishermen in best use of the equipment. West Bay, Axmouth and Beer have been done and there are plans to visit Lyme Regis in the coming week.

d) Seafish Responsible Fishing Scheme (RFS)

Gus Caslake informed the group that a new RFS Scheme is now being trialed with 5 boats nationally being used as pilots. Group member John Hughes from Branscomb is one of those involved in the pilot scheme. Angus reminded Gus that Phil Abrahams of Axmouth has not yet received his fish tallies. Gus said he will chase this up with Mike Bacon.

e) Schools outreach programme.

Dave Sales said that that he had now presented to nearly 1,000 school children, mainly in primary schools and he said that the response from this age group is fantastic. Tim Glover said he had hoped that Nicky Mitchard the new schools project administrator could have been here for Dave to meet

f) Whelks

Martin Foley asked Simon Pengelly if any progress had been made following the last meeting about regularising whelk riddle sizes or the implementation of a closed fishing season for whelks. Simon said there had not been any progress but he would put the whelk riddle standardisation on as an item at the next Southern IFCA meeting. Tim Glover suggested that we discuss the idea of a closed season in more detail at the next meeting. Sarah Clark said that Devon & Severn' IFCA is conducting a study which compares whelk width with length and information could be taken from there. Sarah said that sexual maturity is 10 – 15 mm larger than the current riddle size and there is locational and seasonal variation. Martin Attrill asked if changing riddle sizes would be better than a closed season. Tim Glover said this should be an agenda item at the next meeting and it would be helpful if Sarah could provide her study results. Simon said there are at least 20 boats working Lyme Bay.

4. MMO and IFCA updates

Simon informed the group that a 3 bass bag landing limit for recreational anglers will be introduced. Southern IFCA has set up a sea angling group. In a communication from Ewan Beck he highlights the lack of lobster and crab data and assessments. In response, Southern IFCA has taken on an intern to address this. Data from the potting study may be useful. Poole Harbour dredging permits come into effect soon.

Tim Robbins said that Devon and Severn IFCA's greatest concern at the moment is the crab size increase so we are going to go out on fishing boats to monitor this. The current situation is that hen crab landing size has increased from 130mm to 140mm. We are now reviewing this. Angus pointed out that this increase was never mentioned at any previous Lyme Bay meetings. Sarah said that crayfish are a protected species so we want to find out how many if any, are caught in Lyme Bay. A netting consultation is also in the pipeline. Rachel Irish introduced Jerry Irwin, MMO officer who covers the area from Axemouth westwards.

The window for MMO iVMS type approval has now closed but there are problems due to technical issues from the companies involved so a commissioning date has not been set. The system is working in Wales but the MMO have to be more rigorous. It should be noted that there are further grants available for iVMS projects. Tim Robbins said that Devon and Severn' has iVMS funding for 114 vessels but is worried about the robustness of the equipment. Tim Glover commented on the problems that the LBF&CR fishermen had had with their iVMS equipment and expressed concern over the long-term usage of Succorfish equipment.

Nick Wright reported that the EU Commission has taken seriously the ICES bass stock recommendations which will include a package of measures including a rise in the landing size from 36cm to 42cm plus catch limits which will be significant and include a rise in net mesh sizes. Discussions in Brussels will culminate in July.

Jerry Percy sent an update which Tim Glover read to the group. Jerry explained that NUTFA is a member of LIFE (Low Impact Fishers of Europe) which has been created to provide a

dedicated voice for smaller scale fishermen across Europe at Brussels level. At a meeting between local fishermen and the Fisheries Minister, chaired by Jerry Percy in Hastings prior to the election, the Minister stated clearly that he recognised the long term problems with quota suffered by the under tens and proposed to provide around 25% of the national quota uplift that would be created by the implementation of the discard ban in 2016 to our sector. NUTFA's Coastal PO initiative is moving forward apace, with over 100 members signed up already and more in the pipeline. Jerry's e mail is: Director@lifeplatform.eu

5. LBF&CR post-2016

Tim Glover reminded the group that the original project was planned for 3 years but due to the severe storms delaying the potting study, this period has been extended by a year. Tim said that, together we have achieved a great deal in that time and now is the time to review those achievements with a view to continuing after BLUE steps back from the project. BLUE's initial aims should be borne in mind along with the £1.2 million that has been spent, in future considerations. Charles Clover said that we are all still here which must prove something. Directing his comments to fishermen, he said, we have delivered access to your resource, provided evidence of a sustainable fishery; devised a voluntary code of conduct. You are now in pole position for enhanced quota allocation due to your conservation measures. We have had setbacks, for instance at the moment we are held up with completing port enhancements in Lyme Regis due to petty local bureaucrats. That said, we can't go on spending money forever, so the group needs to become self-sufficient. We will help you do that after 2016. Tim Glover said that BLUE will work towards that over the next 16 months. Angus Walker said that he hoped that BLUE would remain in a limited capacity. We will need to find some funding to enable us to continue so it would be helpful if Blue included the rest of the committee in these matters from now on. He said it has been useful in bringing people from different ports together to talk and get to know one another. Nick said he has been impressed over the years on the momentum and interest the project has generated and BLUE should remain in some capacity. Rachel suggested that the original voting group should sit down and discuss the exit. Mike Green said that the guys need to go to sea to catch fish, not sit around being secretaries so BLUE needs to be around. Charles said there are people and bodies around that could help with this and we will help you find them. Tim Glover assured the group that BLUE would not simply walk away but would help wherever necessary.

It was decided that all would go away to think about what they want or need to happen after BLUE ceases to be as involved. The exit strategy will therefore be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.

6. Lyme Bay Reserve Seafood.

Tim Glover said that he wanted to develop a Lyme Bay seafood product/brand that will come out of the 4 ports in the bay and has teamed up with Direct Seafood to make this

happen. The tallies that will accompany the fish/shellfish sold to Direct Seafood were passed around the group by Rowena Taylor who had recently had them printed. Tim Glover said that he hoped the scheme would become operational in two weeks. Angus said the concept is very good although he and others will be wary at first. It will be a suck-it-and-see thing to start with. Angus asked whether the pricing list, which was set in February, would be updated. Tim Glover said the pricing and conditions would be set in the next 2 weeks. Mike asked whether the fish tallies could be used with other buyers. Tim explained that the fish tallies were exclusively for Direct Seafood sales for one year. This is because of the time and resources put in by them to enable the scheme to become a reality. Andy Woolmer said that the South West Crab fishermen are interested in MSC accreditation and are interested in coming along to the next meeting.

7. Communications

Social Media

Rowena Taylor reported that regarding social media, the Lyme Bay Reserve Twitter account numbers is 1,294 (up 88) and Facebook 623 (up 45).

Interpretation Boards

Designs for the boards are underway. East Devon boards (Beer, Branscombe and Axmouth) are planned to be installed this summer.

Festivals

We will have a display stand at this year's Dorset Seafood Festival on the 11th and 12th July in Weymouth and the Food Rocks Festival on the 5th and 6th September in Lyme Regis.

Seaton Jurassic Centre

A meeting has been arranged on the 10th July with the Seaton Jurassic Centre to discuss further the Lyme Bay Reserve involvement within the Centre.

Press/PR

Local press will be arranged once the Axmouth chiller room has been completed.

Website

The Lyme Bay Reserve website has been updated, which includes a section about the Reserve Seafood brand – due to go live after the Reserve Seafood soft-launch.

8. Funding update

Tim Glover reported there were still a couple of things to fund. These include the Ecosystem Services project with Plymouth University and displays at the newly built Seaton Jurassic Centre.

9. Media and PR

It is planned to involve ITV in coverage of West Dorset District Council's intransigence over the installation of ice facilities in Lyme Regis if a solution cannot be found soon⁹

10. A.O.B.

There was no other business.

11. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 29th September, to be held at the Royal Lion Hotel, Lyme Regis at **7pm**

Duration of meeting:

7pm – 9:45pm

Contact: Neville Copperthwaite

Project Coordinator/ Committee Secretary

Tele: 07789961292

Email: n.copperthwaite@btinternet.com