

# Lyme Bay Fisheries and Conservation Reserve Consultative Committee Meeting

Meeting held at the Royal Lion Hotel, Lyme Regis on 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2015

## Minutes of the meeting

### Present:

Tim Glover, Blue Marine Foundation (Chair)  
Charles Clover, Blue Marine Foundation  
Neville Copperthwaite, Project Coordinator/Committee Secretary  
Simon Harding, Blue Marine Foundation  
Tom Rossiter, Succorfish  
Mike Spiller, Angling Trust.  
Rowena Taylor, Lyme Bay Reserve  
Simon Pengelly, Southern IFCA  
Vicky Gravestock, Southern IFCA  
Tim Robbins, Devon and Severn IFCA  
Rachel Irish, Marine Management Organisation  
Emma Sheehan, Plymouth University  
Adam Rees, Plymouth University  
Gavin Ziemann, Axmouth Fisherman, static gear  
Dave Sales, Fisherman, West Bay, static gear  
Angus Walker, Fisherman, Axmouth, static gear  
Dave Hancock, Fisherman, Axmouth, static gear  
Nigel Hill, Lyme Regis, static gear  
John Worswick, Fisherman, West Bay, scallop diver  
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  
Jamie Smith, West Bay, static gear  
Robert King, Lyme Regis diver  
John King, Lyme Regis, static gear  
Michelle Sutton, Defra  
Rebecca Low, Defra  
Kesia Trench, Defra  
Mark Hix, Hix Restaurants

## **1) Apologies:**

Andy Woolmer, Fishery Adviser

Robert Clark, Southern IFCA

Jerry Percy, NUTFA

Gus Caslake, Seafish

Joana Smith, Natural England

Martin Foley, Fisherman, Weymouth, whelk gear

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.

Nigel Bloxham, Crab House Cafe

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

The minutes were agreed.

## **3) Updates on implementation of the Management Plan**

### **a) Potting Study**

Adam Rees reported on the Potting Study Group meeting that took place earlier in the day and included stakeholders from Defra. Among the items to be discussed was a Study update, milestones and outputs to date. Adam said he had now taken all the video footage and it would now be analysed, post-storm. The autumn phase of potting was ready to go and at Axmouth, Angus and Walker and Peter Ives are now involved with potting operations. At Beer, Dave Newton has now taken over the mantle.

### **b) Ports Infrastructure.**

Tim Glover reported that regarding the ongoing problem of the ice facility installation on the Cobb, a meeting had taken place with Officers of West Dorset District Council (WDDC) which was chaired by local MP Oliver Letwin and attended by himself, Neville and fishermen from Lyme Regis and Axmouth. Solutions had been suggested by Oliver that included speaking to the main objector of the scheme, Aquarium owner, Max Gollap. At the time of writing, Mr Gollap was not responding to calls. Dave Hancock suggested that WDDC Officers be encouraged to visit the completed ice facility at Axmouth as he was sure this would put their concerns to rest.

The Lease Heads of Terms for the West Bay chiller room facility put forward by WDDC has recently been agreed by Blue and finalisation of the Lease is now in the hands of WDDC Officers and ought to be completed in the near future. It is hoped that the facility will be installed before the end of this year.

c) Fully Documented Fisheries

Tom Rossiter gave a PowerPoint presentation of the aggregated iVMS data collected to date which included graphs showing fishing patterns and hotspots. He demonstrated the scale capability of the system which can give a finer, more accurate picture of fishing effort within the Bay and which can be applied in any geographic location. This fine tuning is achieved because of the high frequency of data transfer from the fishing vessel, once every 2 minutes. Simon Pengelly said that this is fantastic data which will help the IFCA's to move away from the precautionary principle. Emma Sheehan asked if the data is shared or could the fishermen refuse to share it. Tom said that they could refuse. Tim Glover said that membership of the Reserve Seafood scheme is dependent on continued use of iVMS equipment by the fishermen. Aubry Banfield asked if the group could sell the data. Tim Glover said he would look into this and that it could be part of how the group could be funded in the future. Jamie Smith asked who is responsible for maintaining the iVMS equipment. Tom said it was the vessel owner's responsibility. He also reminded the group that airtime costs of approximately £10 per month will kick-in soon. Tom also presented the results of the Catch App pilot. He showed the group a sample of the raw data and then presented a number of tables and graphics showing the potential value of the data to a number of users. It was explained that the catch App data over-laid on the positional data gives an incredibly clear picture of what is happening in the Bay and that this information will be critical for the fishing industry to maintain their fishing rights whilst helping to sustainably manage the resources within the bay.

d) Seafish Responsible Fishing Scheme (RFS)

Gus Caslake was unable to attend so this agenda item is shelved until the next meeting.

e) Schools outreach programme.

Dave Sales said that he is now doing repeat visits to schools. He informed the group that Bridport based fish merchants Samways have offered to let schools visit their fish factory as part of the Schools Outreach program.

#### **4) Lyme Bay Reserve Seafood**

Tim Glover said the scheme is ready for a soft publicity launch now that most of the start-up teething troubles have been ironed-out. Jim Newton praised the scheme, saying that the system is easy to use and that fishermen don't have to worry about fish market price fluctuations. He predicted that even the more sceptical fishermen would soon come aboard. Rowena Taylor said that West Country ITV were keen to do a piece on the scheme within the next few weeks. Tim reminded the group of the criteria needed to be part of the scheme:

- Fishermen must be signed up to the Seafish responsible Fishing Scheme and in date.

- Fishermen must carry Inshore Vessel Monitoring Systems on their boats and have it switched on.
- Fishermen must be signed up to their appropriate Port Association Agreement which includes adherence to the Lyme Bay Voluntary Code of Conduct.

Charles Clover pointed out that the Lyme Bay scheme can be considered a substitute to the MSC Accreditation scheme for inshore fisheries.

## **5) MMO and IFCA updates**

Tim Robbins reported that following a 10 week consultation the D&SIFCA has decided to ratify its decision to increase female edible crabs from 140mm to 150mm minimum landing size. 143 permit holders were consulted about the change, 15 responses were received, one supportive from a processor, 11 fishermen supported the change and 3 did not support the change. Additional scientific evidence was sort which showed valid reasons for the increase in MLS to support the stock. IFCO officers also went to sea with local fishermen to record catches and numbers of 140-149 hen crabs which had to be returned. He also reported that D&SIFCA are very close to signing a contract for 120 iVMS units which all mobile gear fishing boats will have to carry after 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2016. Tim Robbins pointed out that this is a third of the English towed gear fleet. In addition, he is talking to iVMS supplier Succorfish about trials on gear-in and gear-out monitoring kit.

Rachel Irish said that MMO will type approve iVMS by the end of this year. She reminded the group that Bass minimum landing size has been raised to 42cm and various other catch limits are now in place, both for commercial and recreational fishing. The EU is looking for an 80% reduction in Bass landings so there are likely to be further measures.

Simon Pengelly updated the group on Southern IFCA's activities since the last meeting. Southern IFCA is continuing its approach to assessing the impacts of commercial fishing activities within European Marine Sites. A screening assessment has been completed for all interactions between designated features and fishing activities and more detailed Habitats Regulations Assessments have been planned where there may be a significant effect on the condition of the site. This screening assessment has revealed that the highest risk activities involve shellfish dredging within areas of the Solent. At this stage it is not expected that additional management will need to be introduced for static gear fishing activities within Lyme Bay, however this will depend on the outcome of a more detailed assessment of their impacts. Additional evidence provided through the potting impacts study and the fully documented fisheries project will be invaluable to this process. Southern IFCA plans to introduce a Marine Protected Areas Regulatory Notice byelaw to succeed existing MPA byelaws and provide a mechanism for the introduction of any future management. Southern IFCA and Devon and Severn IFCA has successfully prosecuted the fishing vessel Harms Johannes for scallop dredging within the Lyme Bay SAC closed area and seven other offences. The skipper, Lee Shields, and the vessel's owners were fined £12,240 for the offence.

Dave Spiller asked if there had been any leisure fishermen prosecutions for exceeding the 3 bass catch bag limit. Simon said there is one prosecution of a fisherman in the Portland area.

## **6) Ecosystem services and economic benefits study**

Tim Glover reported that he had a meeting two weeks ago with scientists from Plymouth and Exeter Universities regarding an Ecosystem Services and Economic Benefits study of the Lyme Bay Reserve. This will necessarily mean looking at the activities of this group in order to make assessments. There is a workshop planned to be held on 13<sup>th</sup> October at Charmouth and fishermen of Lyme Bay are invited to attend. Neville said that ecosystem services need to be understood in order to demonstrate the value of MPA's to funders. Rebecca Low said that Defra would be interested in the long term benefits that this study might highlight in order to help consider funding.

## **7) Communications**

Social Media

Festivals

Rowena Taylor reported that Blue attended three festivals this summer:

- Weymouth Seafood Festival on 11th & 12th July, Weymouth
- Great Outdoors Festival on 23rd August, Seaton
- HIX Food Rocks Festival on 5th & 6th September, Lyme Regis

She said the lure of our fish tank at the Weymouth Seafood Festival drew the crowds, allowing us to engage with them about the Reserve. A big thank you to Neville, Tim, Sara-Jane, Angus, Gavin, Jim, Dave and Nicky (Schools Outreach Co-ordinator) for helping out at the festivals.

Seaton Jurassic Centre

BLUE have been invited to be part of the Seaton Jurassic Visitor Centre. Rowena Taylor met the interpretation designers on Thursday 1st October at the Centre to start fine tuning the content for the interpretation material, which focuses on key Reserve topics such as; the Codes of Conduct, Integrated Fisheries Management Plan, Fully Documented Fisheries (including working iVMS modal and Seafish Responsible Fishing Scheme) and the Scientific potting study. The plans include a harbour set which will be high-impact, with nets, pots, ice boxes, safety vests (Seafish PFDs) to give people the experience of a fisherman. The centre is due to open in 2016.

Social Media

Twitter: 1,377 (up 83)

Facebook: 663 (up 40)

#### Interpretation Boards

Work on this is currently on hold until the Seaton Jurassic Centre project has been finalised. The interpretation board development should resume in November.

#### **8) Funding update**

Tim reported that fundraising was a continuous process at BLUE and the current emphasis is on raising funds for our involvement in the Seaton Centre and for the Ecosystems Services study.

#### **9) Media and PR**

Charles said that that there will soon be a press release about Reserve Seafood.

#### **10) A.O.B.**

There was no other business.

#### **11) Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> of December, to be held at the Royal Lion Hotel, Lyme Regis at **6pm**

#### **Duration of meeting:**

7pm – 9:45pm

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