

Lyme Bay Fisheries and Conservation Reserve Consultative Committee Meeting

Meeting held at the Royal Lion Hotel, Lyme Regis on 1st December, 2015

Minutes of the meeting

Present:

Tim Glover, Blue Marine Foundation (Chair)
Charles Clover, Blue Marine Foundation
Neville Copperthwaite, Project Coordinator/Committee Secretary
Lauren Nelson, Blue Marine Foundation
Gerry Irwin, Marine Management Organisation
Tom Rossiter, Succorfish
Mike Spiller, Angling Trust
Rowena Taylor, Lyme Bay Reserve
Nicky Mitchard, Lyme Bay Reserve
Simon Pengelly, Southern IFCA
Joana Smith, Natural England
Gus Caslake, Seafish
Adam Rees, Plymouth University
Matthew Ashley, Plymouth University
Gavin Ziemann, Axmouth Fisherman, static gear
Dave Sales, Fisherman, West Bay, static gear
Angus Walker, 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
Kieran Perree, Fisherman, Lyme Bay, scallop diver
Jamie Smith, West Bay, static gear
Robert King, Lyme Regis diver
John King, Lyme Regis, static gear
Anna Bunny, ORCA
Lucey Babey, ORCA
Clare Leverton, Fishing for Litter

1) Apologies:

Tim Robbins, Devon and Severn IFCA
Emma Sheehan, Plymouth University

Mark Machin, Samways Fish Merchants
Martin Attrill, Plymouth University
Jim Newton, Fisherman, Beer, static gear
Dave Hancock, Fisherman, Axmouth, static gear
Gavin Ziemann, Axmouth Fisherman, static gear
Andy Woolmer, Fishery Adviser
Robert Clark, Southern IFCA
Jerry Percy, NUTFA
Martin Foley, Fisherman, Weymouth, whelk gear
Bridget Betts, Dorset Coast Forum
Paul Wason, Fisherman, Lyme Regis, towed gear
Mark Cornwell, Fisherman, West Bay towed gear
Jim Portus, SWIFA.

Tim Glover welcomed Gerry Irwin as the new Committee member representing MMO and thanked his predecessor, Rachel Irish, for her work on the committee over the years.

2) Agree minutes of the 28th Working Group meeting:

The minutes were agreed.

3) Updates on implementation of the Management Plan

a) Potting Study

Adam Rees reported that he had given Rowena Taylor some clips of the static and towed underwater video for the website. Defra also has information about the potting study on their website including the latest potting study report. Asked if there was any feedback from the Defra working group meeting, Adam said nothing of significance had been fed back.

b) Ports Infrastructure.

Tim Glover reported that regarding the the ice facility installation on the Cobb, there is still a battle in progress with WDDC for a lease reassignment. Regarding the chiller installation at West Bay, it was hoped that the lease could be signed in the next few days and work could start on Monday 7th December. However, the Harbourmaster Jamie Radcliff is on leave that week and he has refused permission for work to start in his absence. It has been pointed out that if works cannot start on the 7th, we will run out of time to draw down the EFF grant. The WDDC Surveyor Bill Wilberforce has magnanimously offered to stand-in instead but the harbourmaster has refused this also.

c) Fully Documented Fisheries

Tim informed the group that Aubrey Banfield had called a meeting to discuss iVMS data ownership issues and specifically airtime costs, which Tim travelled to Weymouth to attend along with Aubrey, Neville and eight fishermen. Concerns were aired and were

subsequently put to Tom Rossiter By Tim and Neville at a meeting in London. Tim proposed that a consortium should be organised consisting of Authorities and Universities and other interested parties who would pay the group for access to the iVMS data. This would have the potential to initially help fund airtime costs and sustain the Lyme Bay project into the future. It would also protect the principle of aggregated data ownership belonging to the group. Tom Rossiter apologised to the group for using the aggregated data for promotional purposes at a recent trade show and whilst he had done this for the best of reasons he said he had underestimated the sensitivity around this issue. He said Succorfish would not charge airtime for the iVMS equipment within the Lyme Bay Reserve scheme until 1st March 2016 and subject to the consortium being set-up and those fishermen that had already paid will get their money refunded. In addition, the iVMS warranty will be extended for a further year. Tim asked Aubrey if he would join a steering group to enable the consortium idea. Dave Sales said we should be careful about who sees the data.

Action point: Neville to get a steering group together.

d) Seafish Responsible Fishing Scheme (RFS)

Gus Caslake informed the group that a new RFS will soon be introduced. This will be a more comprehensive scheme which targets such problems as slavery aboard fishing vessels. Unlike the previous scheme, Seafish will not directly audit, instead a role for Training Providers is being developed. The costs to fishermen will be £125 with an interim audit of £75. Charles Clover said he is not happy that the new scheme does not include provision for codes of conduct, which was what Seafish had previously promised to do. Gus replied that this can still be achieved by including a code of conduct on a case by case basis and although it will not be possible for an auditor to inspect the actual gear out at sea, the relevant questions can be added to the audit. Aubrey Banfield said that the RFS is not beneficial to him as an inshore fisherman. Gus replied saying that increasingly the larger retailers and then the smaller ones will insist that fishermen are signed up to this accreditation. Tim pointed out that RFS is a condition of being able to sell within the Reserve Seafood scheme. Gus said he would relay the meeting comments to Seafish and report back.

e) Schools outreach programme.

Nicky Mitchard reported that 44 schools have been contacted in the Lyme Bay area, the majority of these are Primary (approx 30), and there are 10 Secondary schools, 2 middle schools and 2 special education schools. Dave Sales has made 20 school visits to date and 3 are booked in for the New Year.

The next steps are to target youth groups in the area; 13 have been identified. Dave said he did not want extend his involvement in the programme to the older pupils. Nicky said she would liaise with Adam Rees regarding incorporating his research in the school visits, particularly to target secondary schools.

Action Point: Nicky to come back with a plan to expand the scheme to older pupils.

f) Ecosystem services study

Matthew Ashley gave a concise explanation of the Lyme Bay ecosystem services study which is a piece of work being undertaken to quantify the ecosystem and socio-economic benefits

of the Reserve. Component one is about what should be looked at, for example physical features and fish stocks. Component two is about the well-being elements which include the effects on the local economy, job satisfaction etc. Weather events, recovery indicators and spatial activity are also taken into account. This is important to feed into a timeline for future management. John Worswick asked if it would be possible to aggregate the four ports within the Reserve in order to compare these with activity outside. Matthew said it would be possible.

4) MMO and IFCA updates

Jerry Irwin reported that the two companies that had applied for iVMS type approval didn't quite get through but this should be rectified in a couple of weeks.

There is to be an EU Fisheries Council meeting in December to discuss bass management measures and there are draconian measures on the table, such as a 6 month total ban on bass fishing. Demersal Landing obligations which come into effect in January will affect some vessels but not others. The MMO will initially take a soft touch approach but persistent offenders will be prosecuted. There will be a phased introduction of species. Simon Pengelly reported that Southern IFCA held a meeting on September 9th in Weymouth which discussed an assessable account of bass stocks resulting from tagging in Weymouth and France. There is a consultation in progress on MPA's in the Solent. There was a successful prosecution of a whelk fisherman in the Solent. He was fined £4,500.

Joana Smith said that Natural England has provided conservation advice on Lyme Bay and this could be accessed on the NE website.

Charles Clover said the bass workshop which Blue held in London resulted in identifying things we don't know about bass management and there was alarm about the state of the stock. Within Lyme Bay Reserve, if we are to say bass is sustainable, should we be doing more than the national and international regulatory measures? Should we be tagging for instance? Simon Pengelly said to remember the number of bass within the Reserve at any one time is an extremely small part of the EU stock. In addition, the statistics show that inshore fishermen catch a very small percentage of the stock so it should be the larger boats that get penalised.

Charles agreed that there seems to be a new fight about who should fish the stocks and said that there was quite a lot of agreement at the London meeting between anglers and inshore commercial fishermen. Tom Rossiter said that regarding bass conservation measures over and above regulation, the Catch App could help understand bass movements. This could also feed into the Ecology of Seabass study that is starting at Plymouth University.

5) Lyme Bay Reserve Seafood

Tim Glover informed the group that a sign written van is about to be delivered which will be dedicated to the collection of Reserve Seafood. The Van is being supplied by Direct Seafoods and will be based in Lyme Bay.

Tim said a press release had accompanied the soft launch of the Reserve Seafood scheme.

Nigel Hill said he is impressed by the scheme and would be joining as soon as the ice facilities are installed in Lyme Regis. Angus Walker said the scheme has totally transformed Axmouth port for the better. Since the ice facilities were installed and the scheme started there has been an uplift in landing prices of some 20% - 25%.

Dave Sales said he was not happy with the press article as Blue got too much credit whilst he received none. Dave reminded the group that he had once been to 10 Downing Street to meet with Prime Minister Blair.

Charles Clover disagreed with Dave's interpretation of the article while acknowledging Dave's long-term contribution. He said publicity was necessary to get movement on planning issues from West Dorset.

Tim said he thought it was a very good article that reflected well on the fishermen and contained positive quotes from fishermen in Beer and Axmouth.

Aubrey Banfield helpfully produced a cutting of the article.

The article can be seen here:

http://www.bridportnews.co.uk/news/14103170.Lyme_Bay_fisherman_sign_up_to_boat_to_plate_scheme_for_top_prices/

6) Presentation From Clare Leverton of Fishing for Litter

Clare Leverton gave a presentation on the Fishing for Litter scheme which encourages fishermen to bring litter that is caught in their nets back to shore by providing them with hard wearing bags and helping with waste removal infrastructure such as skips and facilities within harbours. In the South West area there are currently 8 harbours involved in the Fishing for Litter project: Brixham, Looe, Newlyn, Newquay, Plymouth, Padstow, Mevagissey and St Ives. Clare hopes that this will spread around the coast. Anyone interested in joining this scheme can get involved through these contact details: Fishing for Litter South West, Project Coordinator - Sarah Crosbie, Seafood Cornwall Training Ltd. Tele: 01736 364324. southwest@fishingforlitter.org.uk

7) Presentation from Anna Bunney of ORCA

Anna Bunney gave a presentation on Whales and Dolphins and the work ORCA is doing in collecting data from aboard ferries. Orca believes the way to protect our whales and dolphins is to identify areas where they are vulnerable and study their habitats. That way, these places can be protected by adjusting the way we use them. That includes shipping, fishing, noise pollution, marine litter and more. Best of all, this information can be shared and used across the globe. And that's the local solution to the global problem. In the English Channel there are seven species that are seen on a regular basis. Orca is always on the lookout for volunteer surveyors to travel on the ferries. To contact ORCA, go to their website: <http://www.orcaweb.org.uk/survey-group/>

8) Communications, exhibitions, festivals

Rowena Taylor updated the group.

On social media, numbers were up as follows:

Twitter: 1440 (up 63)

Facebook: 685 (up 22)

Adam Rees of Plymouth University has shared video footage of the underwater remote survey work, which is being used to great success via social media.

Regarding the Seaton Jurassic Centre, content for the exhibits has now been approved and the design and production of the exhibits is underway. The Centre is due to launch in spring 2016.

Interpretation Boards work will resume in 2016 when a West Dorset planning application will be submitted.

9) Funding update

Tim reported that much of BLUE's work is fundraising and continuous effort is put into filling the holes still remaining in the Lyme budget.

10) Media and PR

The soft launch publicity for Reserve Seafood had already been discussed.

11) Date of next meeting

Tuesday 1st of March, to be held at the Royal Lion Hotel, Lyme Regis at **6pm**

Duration of meeting:

6pm – 9:45pm

Contact: Neville Copperthwaite

Project Coordinator/ Committee Secretary

Tele: 07789961292

Email: n.copperthwaite@btinternet.com