

### **Agenda Item - C3**

#### **Report on the patrol vessels 'Tamesis' and 'FPV Vigilant' Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority Report for the period May – September 2021**

#### **Vessel priorities:**

- Collect damage rate samples from TECFO fleet
- Monitor TECFO fleet for compliance with regulations
- Monitor areas closed under Cockle Permit Byelaw
- Patrol district boundary for incursions by oversize or foreign vessels
- Conduct monitoring and disruption patrols for bass fishery
- Patrol areas closed for bottom trawling under Essex Estuaries byelaw
- Record data of all vessel sightings
- Record data of all static fishing gears (fixed nets and pots)
- Input key enforcement information into national fisheries enforcement database (MCSS)
- Inspect pots and traps for compliance with KEIFCA byelaws
- Vessel Maintenance

#### **Fisheries Enforcement**

This was a particularly busy period for fisheries enforcement with concerns over vessels drift netting during the spring run of bass, and the opening of the Thames Estuary Cockle Fishery in mid-June.

As in the previous quarter, KEIFCA patrol activity has placed a greater emphasis on Covid secure non-boarding inspections rather than full boarding inspections. This did not have any adverse impact on the principal taskings for period. Boarding inspections were conducted when required, particularly for the task of gathering damage rate samples, and conducting gear inspections on the TECFO fleet.

Additional taskings for this period included monitoring and disrupting vessels believed to be targeting bass, patrolling and monitoring activity on the 6-mile limit north of the London Array windfarm, monitoring activity in the rivers and estuaries, including prohibited areas and gear types. Vigilant also observed vessels moored in ports and marinas and ensured the TECFO start time of 18:00 on Sunday was being adhered to.

During the period May to September, officers logged 145 vessels, of which seven were charter recreational vessels, and four recreational anglers. Officers conducted boarding inspections of commercial vessels on 34 occasions during which they detected four offences, with two skippers being given verbal warnings. Non-

boarding inspections of commercial vessels were conducted on a further 28 occasions.

The patrol vessels also recorded gear sightings on 26 occasions, with gear being inspected on 14 of these. Offence notices were issued for two sets of gear, mainly for non-compliance with requirements for surface markers. Three lobster pots and two fish traps were seized off the coast of Essex and as a result of a joint operation officers seized one fyke net which was subsequently handed over to the Environment Agency.

## **Conservation/Survey Work**

### *Surveys*

There was limited survey work conducted in this period, though Tamesis did put to sea on six occasions to complete the annual cockle stock survey for both TECFO and permit cockle fisheries.

### *Marine Mammal observations*

Marine mammals were logged on four occasions with individual seal sightings in the Blackwater on the Ray sand. The usual populations were observed in the Roach.

## **Maintenance**

Tamesis only required routine monthly maintenance in this period, though it was on the hard at the end of July to clean the growth of weed and barnacles from the hull, and for fitting of an emergency ladder at the stern.

Vigilant was hauled out for a 400-hour service on the engines in accordance with the manufacturer maintenance schedule. Routine monthly maintenance was carried out by officers as normal.

## **Other Information**

### *Statistics*

During this period FPV Vigilant put to sea 37 times using 3838 litres of fuel to cover a patrol distance of 2221 miles. Tamesis has been at sea on eight occasions taking 1244 litres and covering 304 nautical miles.

### *Invitation to Authority Members and P.R*

An open invitation is usually extended to Authority Members to join the crew on an enforcement patrol or survey aboard the vessel, unfortunately however under circumstances due to government guidance on social distancing requirements and the size of the vessels it will not be possible to do until further notice.

Colm O'Laoi  
*Skipper FPV Tamesis & Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer*