



## **Agenda Item – C4**

### **Report on the patrol vessel 'Nerissa' and daughter RIB 'Nereus' Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority Report for the period August to November 2023**

#### **Priorities of vessel for quarter**

- Targeted inspection of static gear.
- Patrol District limits for any large/foreign vessel incursions.
- Patrol areas closed to bottom towed gear.
- Inspect pots and traps for compliance of byelaws.
- Inspection of commercial and recreations fishers.
- Patrol, monitor and inspect cockle fishing activity.
- Record data of all vessel and gear sightings.
- Sightings and intel logged and reported.
- Input key enforcement information into national fisheries enforcement database (MCSS).
- Attend to cockle survey in inside and outside areas.
- Attending to tide hight and sea temperature survey equipment.

#### **Fisheries Enforcement**

In preparation to being a crew member down at the end of the quarter we made the best of staff and weather, the vessel was set and checked before during and after storms and came through suffering no notable damage.

During patrols thirty seven fishing vessels were sighted, five registered vessels boarded and inspected, and one non boarding inspection undertaken. Six charter angling boats and seven private angling vessels were also logged. Nineteen log entries to the log were made for gear sightings, listing thirty four individual surface markers. We inspected three gear markers for compliance one being a long-standing target, the gear had not been attended and as such was knotted together making it unsafe to haul. The owner was informed of location and asked to attend.

A single buff with the PLN of a fishing vessel, no longer within the district, was hauled and found to be a mooring anchor, this was returned in the same location with a notice to remove the PLN and a suggestion to add the name of the vessel to which it belongs in its place. It was not necessary to seize any of the fishing gear that was inspected.

Patrols off of Dover, on the Six Mile Limit, led to logging several large fishing vessels. Some were observed fishing but not within our limits or any known closed areas.

Sea going observations have been logged and uploaded into the required databases and relevant information reports forwarded for dissemination to the required agencies and bodies.

### **Conservation/Survey work**

An additional post season survey on the Margate Sands was attended to along with ongoing tide and temperature research projects for the whelk fishery. Continuation of works on the Goodwin sand involved a few days of ground truthing previously visited sites.

Design and development of a suction dredge for transect sampling is underway with components going into build stages. This is building on plans to assist with shellfish gathering for water classification sampling.

One hundred and seventy five seals were sighted as individuals and in groups of thirty plus hauled out on sand banks, a few sighting of porpoises were also logged as groups of two, four and five.

### **Maintenance**

Monthly safety checks have been undertaken as well as day to day observations of equipment and new hydraulic hoses have been fitted. Preparations are being made for refit works, listing areas needing to be looked at and proposed costing.

Some work was required to the Rib Nereus after water ingress to the battery compartments, this required some replacement connections and time spent.

### **Other Information**

Time has been taken to get our new scientific officer to sea and familiar with the vessel assisting with preparing the vessel for sea, prepping and deploying the RIB and attending to surveys.

During patrols some lost fishing surface markers have been recovered and vessel and crew stood by to observe a yacht with its mast down and with no response to attempted coms on VHF16, reported it in to UK Coast Guard.

### **Statistics:**

Nerissa has been split between attending to survey and enforcement works this quarter, fourteen patrols totalling 68 hours, covering 622 miles. HVO fuel has been available every time we have required bunkering with a total of 8105 litres taken.

Ben Hermitage

*Skipper FPV Nerissa & Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer*