



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 January 2023 to May 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.
- 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 on inside and outside areas.

Fisheries Enforcement

Sea patrols this quarter have been limited, however those made collected new intelligence as well as expanding current intelligence. With the unpredictable weather and sea conditions remote monitoring of local and visiting vessels using AIS and vessel tracking has been utilised. This has assisted shore work that has been undertaken, making landing and catching up with fishers more targeted. Whilst undertaking survey works the sighting of fishing vessels, their activity and gear sightings were still logged and entered into the various databases

During our sea patrols twenty-two registered fishing vessels were sighted, one of which was approached for a non-boarding inspection and a few charter and private angling vessel were also logged. Entries for gear sightings were made totalling 117 individual markers; the majority of which were well marked. Three gear markers were hauled and inspected with notices issued ashore for marking of gear issues.

Vessel sighting and intelligence reports were produced and were entered into national databases and shared with neighbouring IFCAS and MMO where relevant as well as being discussed in biweekly enforcement meetings. We have also been in touch and working on intel with both shore and sea-based Border Force teams in Kent.

Conservation/Survey work

Nerissa went up to Brightlingsea, with me, for just over a week in March to act as a survey vessel for Cefas carrying out sampling for Anglian Water where she showed her versatility and stability attending to mixed survey methods over several days in some less than favourable conditions.

April and May have seen the vessel taking on a lot of cockle survey work on the Kent coast in some testing conditions. The crew, joined at times by our scientific officer, have really pushed to get all of the works complete and data collated.

A study of water temperature and depth has been started this quarter and will see the patrol vessel collecting data from monitoring equipment weekly for the rest of the year. I have with our scientific officer and fishers, helped to prepare the equipment and method. So far this is going well and we look forward to seeing the complete data set.

Due to sea conditions, sightings of marine mammals this quarter have been limited with just four porpoises in two pairs and three seals entered as individuals into the vessel log.

Maintenance

Wear and tear items have recently needed replacement including a deckwash impeller, valve handles and some hoses as clips. Once cockle surveys works are complete some hydraulic rams will need refurbishment. Refit works for the vessel are being planned with new antifoul and some engine work being need at the end of this year.

Monthly safety checks have been undertaken as well as day to day observations of equipment. Nerissa has had her compass checked and re-swung and lifting gear inspected.

Other Information

Officer have undertaken training drills on board whilst at sea and in harbour. We had an IFCO for the Isle of Silly IFCA join the vessel and team for a sea patrol and some shore patrols back in February.

Statistics:

The vessel has spent more time undertaking survey work this quarter with seven of its twenty trips being purely enforcement. It has spent 117 hours at sea covering 900 miles, taking on approximately 10,000 litres of fuel.

Ben Hermitage

Skipper FPV Nerissa & Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer