



**Agenda Item C5
Recreational Angling Report
Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority Quarterly
report for the period January 2023 to May 2023**

Overview

Strong winds have dominated most of this period preventing charter boats from leaving port as often as they would like and shore anglers from being able to fish comfortably. With recreational anglers being able to keep two bass per day, bass has started to feature more on social media. The gathering of bait has become a hot topic with anglers as Canterbury Council has issued a Public Space Protection Order which from 1 April bans the commercial collection of bait from their foreshores.

KEIFCA Progress

Angling shops have been visited with minimum size stickers being handed out. KEIFCA officers have been patrolling angling hotspots throughout the district checking for minimum sizes and other regulations. Minimum size stickers and business cards have continued to be distributed to anglers.

Kent Angling Summary

With the spring moult of shore crabs, thornback rays, sting rays have been targeted and caught by shore anglers, with the first of the smoothhounds also being landed. Anglers braving the more difficult conditions have been able to get good size bass from the surf around the Kent coast. Whitings, spotted dogfish and poutings continue to be caught, with the first of the plaice being caught from Hythe.

Essex Angling Summary

As with the Kent beaches, Essex has had an influx of thornbacks and sting rays looking for peeler crabs, with anglers catching plenty of the former, whilst sting rays are being caught by the anglers putting in the effort. Bass, whitings and a few flounders are also being landed.

Inner Thames and River Medway

Flounders are now featuring in the catches further up the rivers with small bass and whittings making up these catches.

Boat fishing

Smoothhounds are making up a good percentage of the catches from the charter boats. Bass are also being targeted with a few bigger fish being caught. Thornbacks are down this year in numbers but enough are being caught to keep the anglers on board happy. Whittings and spotted dogfish are still about stealing baits meant for the bigger fish. One charter vessel from Essex managed a couple of days where he was able to locate some bigger cod.

David Deverson,
Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer.