

**Agenda Item C5
Recreational Angling Report
Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority Quarterly
Report for the period November 2021 to January 2022**

Overview

Anglers across the district have been on their winter species hunt - hoping to get their lines through the whiting to reach some flatfish. This quarter there have been consistent catch reports of dabs and whiting throughout the district, along with the occasional bass - but these are small and low in numbers. This winter the skate have been relatively quiet and there have been very little signs of codling on the shore - further offshore however, some charter boats have recently been seeing some decent sized cod aboard.

With regards to the re-opening of Admiralty Pier; at the beginning of December Dover Harbour Board and Dover Sea Angling Association reached an agreement for angling to resume in the new year. Currently there is no news of an opening date.

KEIFCA Progress

As of December, the 2022 bass fishing guidance details the restrictions for recreational anglers catching European Seabass, where they are limited to catch-and-release only during 1st January 2022 to 29th February 2022. KEIFCA officers have been passing on this information to anglers and tackle shops in the district. KEIFCA officers have continued to patrol and inspect anglers along the KEIFCA shorelines and piers, handing out the minimum size ruler sticker when required.

Kent Angling Summary

Kent piers have been returning lots of whiting, decent sized dogfish and a few pouting. Dab, plaice and flounder have also made an appearance on Kent piers and beaches. Bass are still being caught in good numbers.

Shore fishing in south Kent has been steady, with whiting, dabs and dogfish making up the majority of catches. Pouting and rockling have also been making an appearance and some anglers hoping for rays and congers have been successful, with Hythe and Folkestone seeing a few - but these seem to be thin on the ground.

Essex Angling Summary

There were a few angling matches on Essex Piers and beaches leading up to Christmas and New Year and there have been reports of whiting, flounder, dab and rockling being caught. There have also been some mention of smaller bass,

pouting and thornbacks making up some catches, with whispers of the odd codling also.

Inner Thames and River Medway

Fishing in both rivers has been steady again this quarter. Catches of whiting and dogfish are being reported for both rivers, with flounders making an appearance at some Medway and inner Thames marks.

Boat Fishing

The charter boats in the south of the district have been reporting good sport with catches of dogfish and dabs interrupting the 'whiting after whiting'. Although the whiting seem to be dominating, some have been good sized and reports of bass, thornback and a few reports of decent sized cod have made for interesting fishing offshore. Boats off Dungeness have also reported catches of large pollock, making for interesting trips.

The charter vessels that are fishing in the Thames Estuary are also experiencing good catches, with thornback rays, lesser spotted dogfish and whiting making up the majority of the catches. Most of the Essex charter boats are now out of the water conducting annual maintenance.

Ellie Wyatt,
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