



Kent & Essex
Inshore Fisheries and
Conservation Authority

Annual Report 2020-2021

www.kentandessex-ifca.gov.uk

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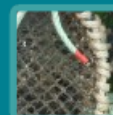
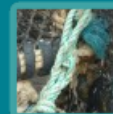
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Background

The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MCAA 2009) provides a framework for managing the demands put on our seas, and aims to ensure clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas, by putting in place better systems for delivering sustainable development of the marine and coastal environment. Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (KEIFCA) and the District for which it has responsibility were established by the Secretary of State under sections 149 and 150 of MCAA 2009 and took on its full statutory role from the 1st April 2011.

The Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority has clearly defined duties to manage fisheries in a sustainable manner and conserve the wider marine environment within the coastal waters of Kent and Essex. This annual report provides information regarding how the Authority has fulfilled its duties and reports on actions taken during this year which contribute towards the Government's Marine Policy Statement and High Level Marine Objectives.

Although the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 provides the outline of change, important detail has been added by the implementation of Orders and Defra guidance documents. These documents include the IFCA vision statement, success criteria and high level objectives, as well as key outputs and performance indicators; these have been used to assist in the development of our priorities as an organisation for 2020-2021 (see www.kentandessex-ifca.gov.uk for documentation).





Introduction to IFCA Success Criteria

This report summarises the outcomes of the Annual Plan, structured in relation to progress against the five IFCA Success Criteria:

- **Success Criterion 1: Communications and engagement** - IFCAs are recognised and heard, balancing the economic needs of the fishery whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders.
- **Success Criterion 2: Compliance and Enforcement** - IFCAs implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime.
- **Success Criterion 3: Management measures** - IFCAs use evidence based and appropriate measures to manage the sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources and deliver marine environmental protection within their districts.
- **Success Criterion 4: Governance and Training** - IFCAs have appropriate governance in place and staff are trained and professional.
- **Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science** - IFCAs make the best use of evidence to deliver their objectives.

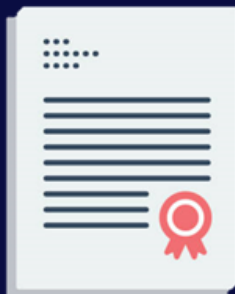
Highlights

KEIFCA 2020-2021

15 staff



2 Byelaws made



53mm
New whelk
minimum size



>12,000
Whelk data
points analysed

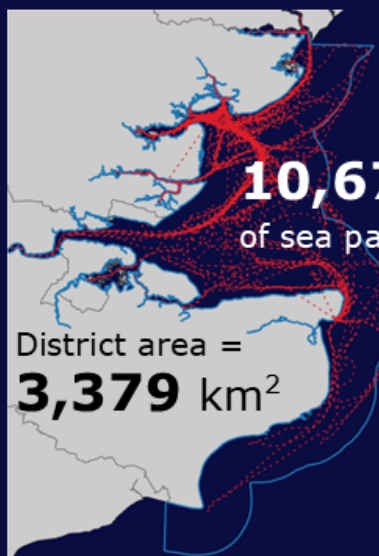


236 km²
of MPAs with protective
management

74 minutes
of TV air time for



443
Fisheries inspections



ZERO
Cases of COVID
at work



20 Authority
members



£1 million
Annual budget

32
Educational
signs installed



Twitter followers



792



25
Development
consultations
responded to

34
Staff training
courses
completed



46
Fisheries
Offences
recorded



553
Intelligence
reports
processed

10,336
Cockles
counted



1214 cockle
sites sampled

Foreword

Chairman's foreword

The start of the 2020 financial year in April was a time when the nation, and indeed the world, was caught in the dark depths of the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the challenges of working under lockdown restrictions, I am proud that our officers and members remained resolute in the continuation of their essential work to safeguard sustainable fisheries and a healthy marine environment in Kent and Essex. As the year went on, our officers and authority members have learned, adapted and improved our ways of working to ensure that the high standards expected of us are upheld.

With most people remaining in their local area throughout 2020/21 due to the pandemic, as a society we experienced a rejuvenated love for the great British seaside. With this came a realisation of just how fortunate we are to live in an area with such a diverse and beautiful coastline, which will bring us health and wellbeing through delicious local seafood, picture perfect seascapes and places to meet and see family and friends.

The last year has also been a time of great solidarity, as even with limited face to face contact we have used technology to work more closely than ever with our partner agencies including the Marine Management Organisation, DEFRA, Natural England, councils, the Environment Agency and neighbouring IFCAs on a huge range of workstreams, from EU Exit to local community issues.

With our recent departure from the European Union it should also be a time to look forward to the future of fisheries management, and seek to build on opportunities as they arise as we make our way forward as an independent coastal state. It will be key to act decisively to strike the right balance of new prospects for our local fishermen with sustainable management and the protection of key marine species and habitats.

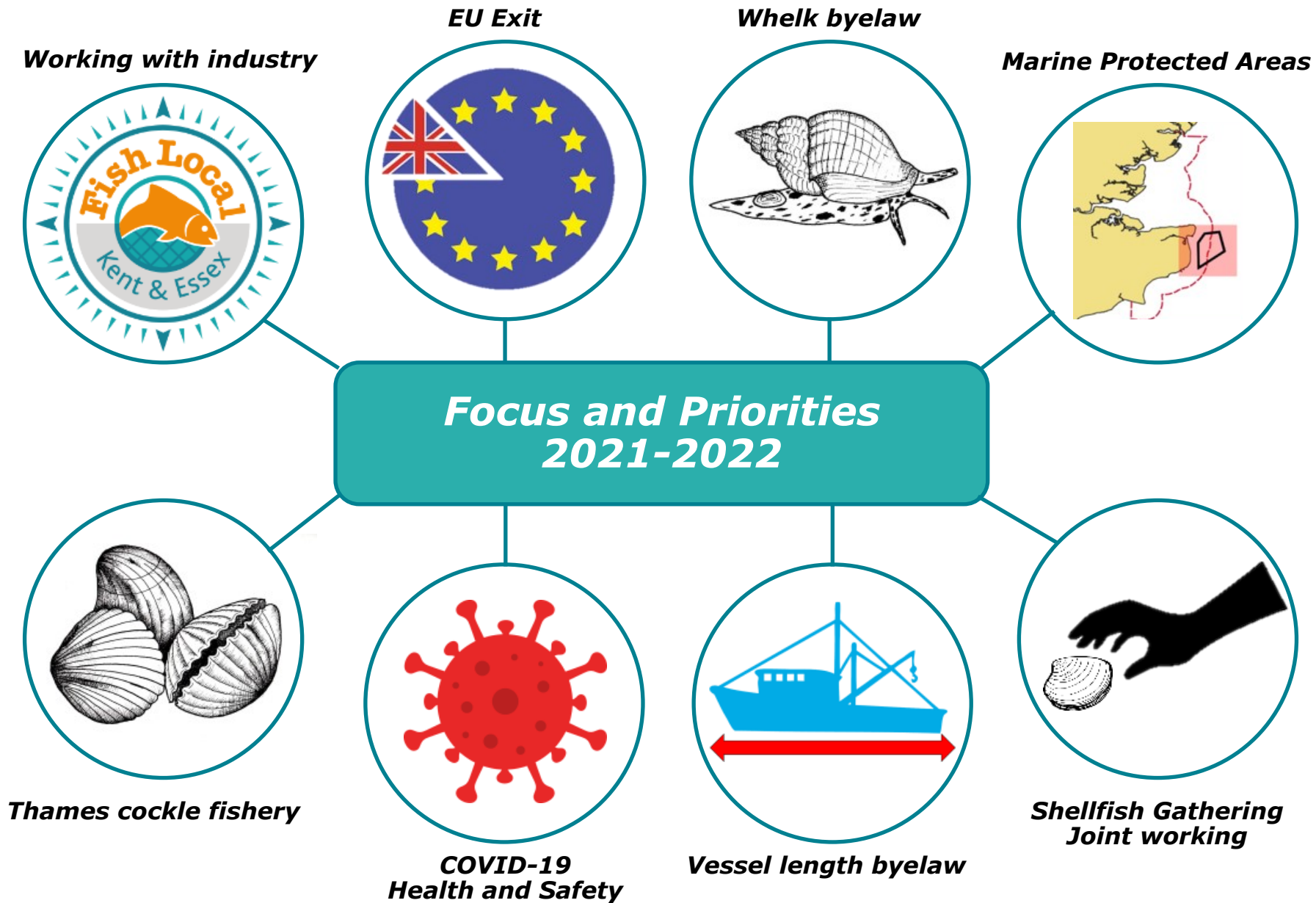
With the Fisheries Act 2020 mirroring of the core ethos of IFCAs in terms of economic and environmental sustainability and applying an ecosystem-based approach to management measures, our aim is that IFCAs will remain a vital part of fisheries management. Our goal is to allow the benefits of coastal life we have grown to value over this year, to be available and thriving for generations to come.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'J Lamb'.

JOHN LAMB
KEIFCA Chair

2020-2021 focus and priorities outlined in the Annual Plan



Vision and Duties

The national IFCA Vision

"Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities will lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment and inshore fisheries, by successfully securing the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry"

Kent and Essex IFCA DUTIES

Competent and Relevant Authority for transposed directives:

- The Habitats Directive 1992
- The Water Framework Directive 2000
- The Marine Strategy Framework

Managing local fishery orders:

- The Thames Estuary Cockle Fishery Order 1994
- The River Roach Oyster Fishery

Duties under Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009

Section 153. Managing the exploitation of sea fisheries resources in the district:

- a) Ensure exploitation of resources is sustainable.
- b) Balance social and economic benefits of fishing with environmental protection and recovery.
- c) Take steps to achieve sustainable development.
- d) Balance the different needs of stakeholders.

Section 154. Protection of marine conservation zones:

- a) Seek to ensure that the conservation objectives of any MCZ in the district are furthered

The Kent and Essex IFCA District

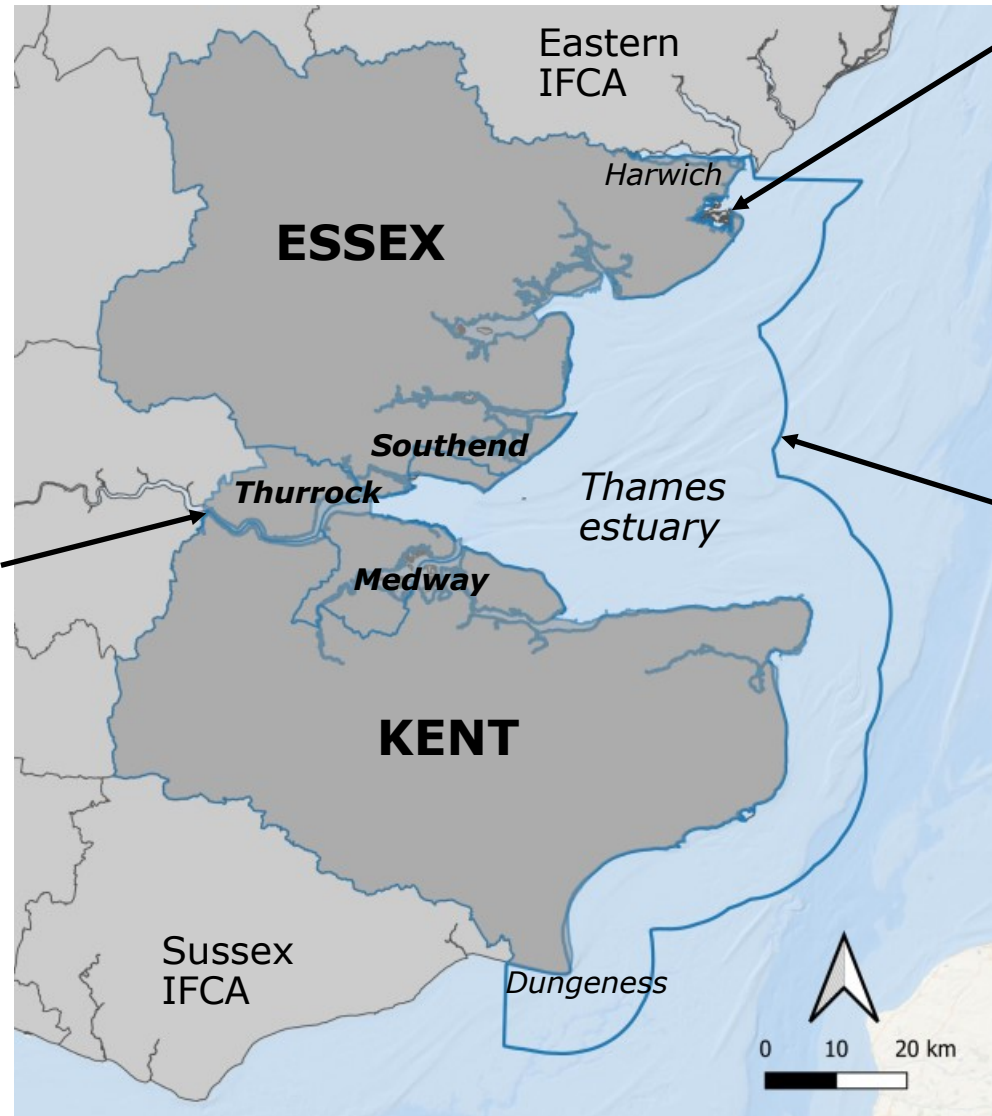
Chart of the KEIFCA district

The Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Order 2010 defines the extent of both the landward and seaward elements of the District:

- the combined areas of the relevant councils (the "basic area" of the district); and
- the sea adjacent to the basic area to a distance of 6 nautical miles from the 1983 baselines.

Upstream district boundaries

The up-river KEIFCA boundary in the Thames includes the waters adjacent to Kent County Council and Thurrock Council, with the district boundary running from Dartford creek (River Darent) on the south shore to Mar Dyke on the north shore. District limits for other rivers and estuaries located within the boundaries of Kent and Essex are to their tidal limit (including the Medway, Blackwater, Crouch and Colne).



Coastline

The coastline of the District is extremely varied, including the reported 'longest coastline of any county' in Essex with its creeks and rivers, to the open Channel coast and chalk cliffs of South Kent, stretching approximately 800km.

Seaward district boundaries

Kent & Essex IFCA district covers an area of over 3,379 km², and extends from the east end of Rye Bay in Kent to the northern boundary of Essex on the River Stour. The seaward boundary follows the 6 mile nautical limit measured from the 1983 baseline, which, due to drying sand banks, extends up to 15 miles offshore at its furthest point.



Success Criterion 1: Communications and Engagement

Case study: Fish Local

As the country entered lockdown in spring 2020 KEIFCA worked with a group of partners and fishermen to launch Fish Local, a project that aimed to connect the local community with the local fish supply, by using the power of social media. Working with industry leaders and a local media and communications company (Band Agency), in 17 days we set up a website and social media pages, then worked with a PR company and local fishermen to help promote the site and the local industry. Features on regional BBC and ITV news as well as 'This Morning' helped raise the profile of the project as well as numerous articles in the regional written press. A bid to help fund and roll out the project in both the KEIFCA and Eastern IFCA District's, was developed by KEIFCA, SAGB and EIFCA, and submitted to the emergency Domestic Seafood Supply Scheme (DSSS). Unfortunately, neither bid was successful.

As the businesses started to operate more normally again after the initial lockdown, albeit within COVID-19 guidelines, KEIFCA continued to keep the project running working with Band Agency, local fishermen and local fish shops in the District to get feedback and comment about the project as well as ideas on how the project could develop in the future. In conjunction with this and working with Thames Estuary Partnership, efforts were made to follow up leads with potential funding partners: Seafarers UK, Crown Estates and London Gateway. From these initial discussions, a Fish Local project proposal was submitted to both London Gateway and Seafarers UK in the autumn. Unfortunately, we were not successful with the project bid with Seafarers UK but London Gateway did agreed to help contribute to the project, and indicated they were interested in supporting the project in the future.

With the signing of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement in December 2020, an announcement of a new £100 Million fund, and an incentive to develop new non-EU markets to avoid export costs and off-set the impact of future trade tariffs, a working group of local fishermen and IFCA members was created to capitalise on these new opportunities. The group looked to work to identify projects that could help fishing communities' better access national funds and quota as well as develop a stronger local market for fish.

Allowing initially broad discussions from the working group, agreement started to consolidate around developing projects that create more demand for fish caught locally, this in turn developed into updating the Fish Local website to focus more on locally caught species and develop a 'branding' project to identify and 'rebrand' a locally caught fish.

Thames Estuary Partnership have taken this project forward and submitted proposals to London Gateway and the Fisheries and Seafood Scheme (FaSS).



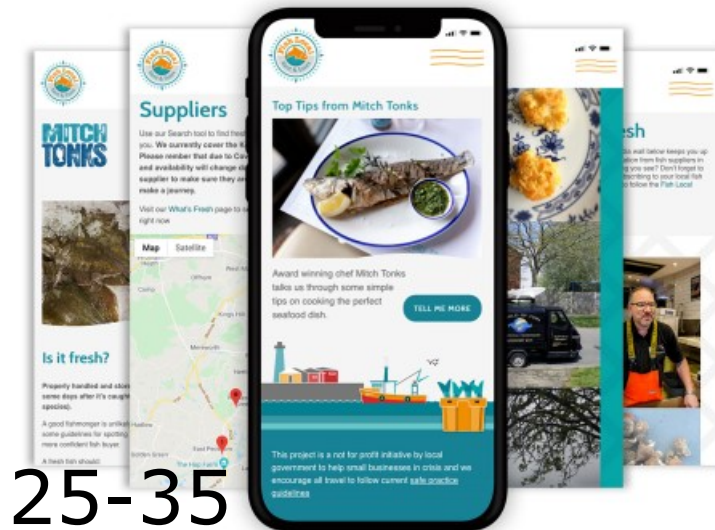
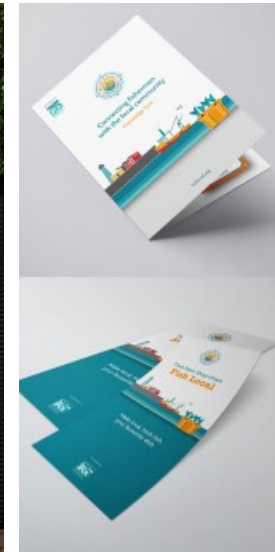
Above: Masterchef judge John Torode visits local fishermen on FV Abbie Lou in Leigh on Sea for ITV's "This Morning" to promote Fish Local

William Wright, Chief Officer

Success Criterion 1: Communications and Engagement

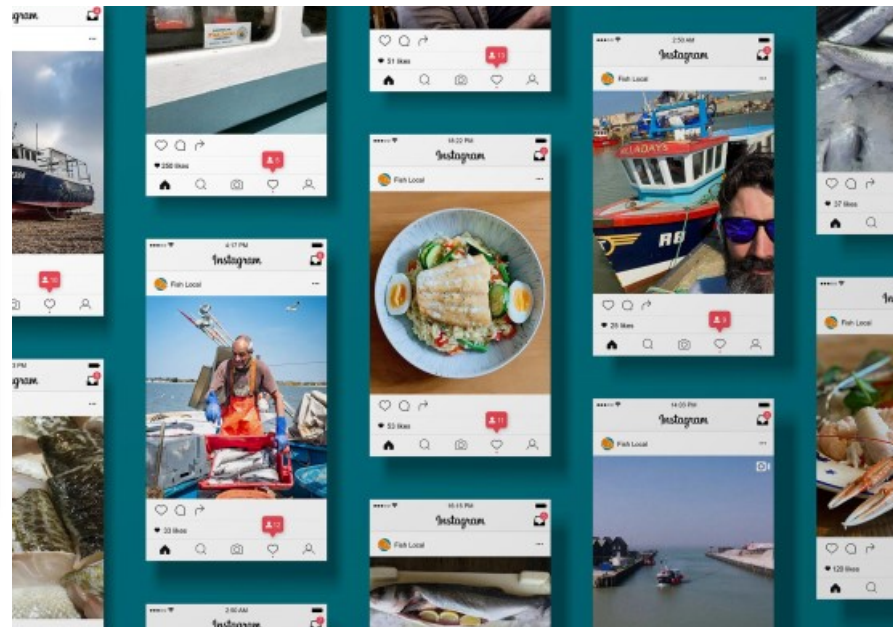
74 minutes

Of local and national TV and Radio coverage achieved including BBC and ITV



25-35

Top age demographic on FishLocal.org



Above: the Fish Local website can be used to find locally sourced seafood in your area, provides an advertising platform for merchant's social media channels, and gives tips on how to cook the freshest local fish! www.fishlocal.org

Success Criterion 1— Outputs

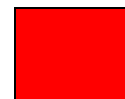
Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 1A) Association of IFCAs – working to coordinate national IFCAs policy and approach		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contributed financially to the funding of the AIFCA Attended 4 AIFCA meetings and took forward meeting actions CIFCO sits as on AIFCA as a Director Chair of KEIFCA sits as a member of AIFCA Fed into AIFCA annual plan and report 	
ONGOING ACTION: 1B) National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG) – working to coordinate IFCAs and partner organisation compliance activities.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attended 3 meetings and took forward meeting actions Contributed to the running of NIMEG in officer time. 	
ONGOING ACTION: 1C) Technical Advisory Group (TAG) – working to provide technical input and advice to the Chief Officers Group (COG) and provide direction on national fisheries and marine science for IFCAs and partner organisations.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attended 4 meetings Contributed to the running of TAG in officer time Fed into the annual report to COG 	
ONGOING ACTION: 1D) External Meetings - Partnership coordination; attend meetings with national partners (MMO, NE, CEFAS, EA, other IFCAs). Meetings primarily focusing on national policy. (SHARED OBJECTIVE: MMO)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 Fisheries Management Plan meetings 3 Regional Fisheries Meetings 10 Chief Officers Group meetings 13 other national planning and liaison meetings (Brexit/ Covid) 5 MAFCO meetings 	
ONGOING ACTION: 1E) Consultations/ Correspondence - replies to national partners e.g. MMO licences, policy consultation on legislation, information requests asking for KEIFCA stats for national purposes.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25 consultations processed Local and national information requests and replies processed 	
ONGOING ACTION: 1F) Stakeholder database		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintained an up-to-date list of addressed and email addresses of stakeholders, updated every 12 months 	



Objective completed

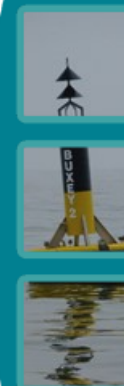


Significant progress made but objective not completed



Minimal progress made

Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 1G) Website and e-bulletin		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The website has been regularly updated with Quarterly meeting papers, before meetings so that the community can be briefed before the Authority meeting. Decisions made by Members are added within 1 week of each meeting to the papers. The ebulletin has been reviewed to include more content relating to the work of bodies that work in association with the IFCA 	Further updates to website required to improve accessibility
ONGOING ACTION: 1H) Website content		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The website has been upgraded to allow better functionality for users and to bring security standards to a higher level 	Further updates to website required to improve accessibility
ONGOING ACTION: 1K) Tranche 3 Marine Conservation Zones		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate with partner organisations to communicate introduction of T3 MCZs (Goodwin Sands). Outreach to industry to explain each site and discuss and develop management options where required; notably for Goodwin Sands, Dover-Deal and Thames Estuary Consult with industry and NGOs to inform management measures and the impacts they will have 	
ONGOING ACTION: 1L) New UK-EU relationship - Working through Association of IFCA's with Defra and partners		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance at meetings relating to UK-EU relationship through Association Contribution of local knowledge and experience to national planning Use of Authority meetings and comms network to update stakeholders on developments 	
ONGOING ACTION: 1M) Communication Plan		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication plan is produced each year and contained within the Annual Plan. 	



Success Criterion 2: Compliance and Enforcement

Compliance and Enforcement Introduction

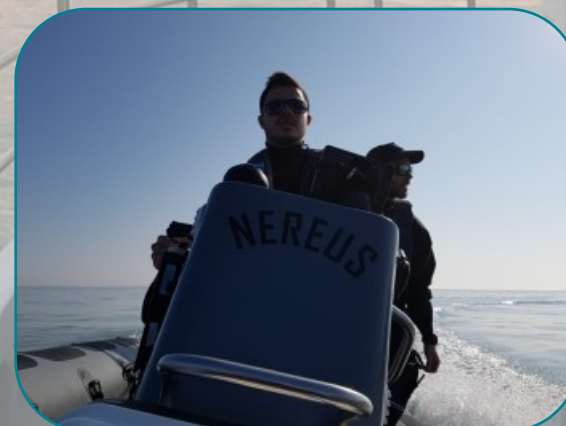
KEIFCA has a statutory duty to manage the sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources in our District. In order to do this we aim to maintain an effective enforcement presence around the coast at all times, carrying out patrols, conducting inspections of people undertaking relevant fishing activities to check for compliance with the legislation we enforce.

As ever, we maintain a risk-based approach to enforcement, using the best available intelligence to target those individuals who are likely to be operating illegally, thereby making our operations as efficient as possible. We share key information and carry out joint working with partner agencies such as the MMO, Environment Agency, Local Authorities, Border Force and the Police in order to support their objectives and receive support for our own in return.

2020-21 has been a challenging period as we have adapted to working under new COVID-19 protocols for the safety of our own officers and members of industry and the general public that we interact with on a daily basis. Throughout the various lockdowns IFCOs were recognised as key workers necessary for the continuation of fisheries management measures critical for food production sustainability and human health. KEIFCA was the first point of contact to support the fishing industry during the outbreak, and worked closely with partners such as the MMO to provide reliable intelligence on the impacts of COVID to DEFRA for national decision making.

Our presence on the coast, albeit reduced compared with normal circumstances, has remained effective. Officers have conducted numerous patrols, intercepted multiple offences and have collected and processed large volumes of key intelligence crucial to the success of our operational conduct, the details of which can be seen on the next page.

Hayden Hurst, Lead Compliance Officer

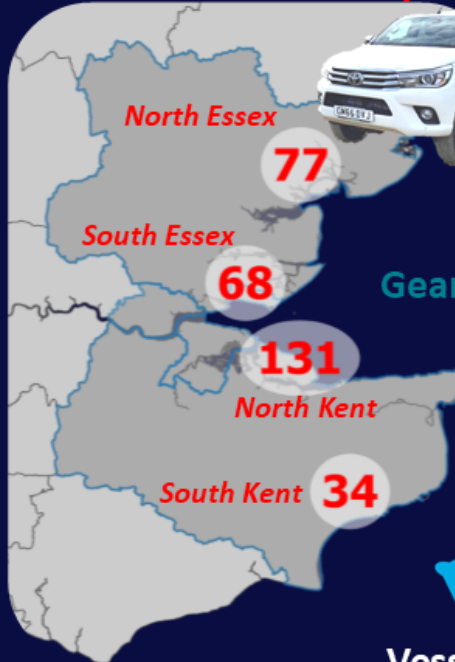


Success Criterion 2: Compliance and Enforcement Report

Enforcement at a glance...

Enforcement 2020/21

Number of shore patrols...



137

Gear sightings



538

Fishing vessel sightings

1192

Nautical miles
patrolled



FPV Nerissa

844

Nautical miles
patrolled

FPV Tamesis



4422

Nautical miles
patrolled

FPV Vigilant



159

Vessel inspections at sea



35

Gear
inspections



Intelligence
reports
processed

553



46 Offences
recorded



249

Inspections in port

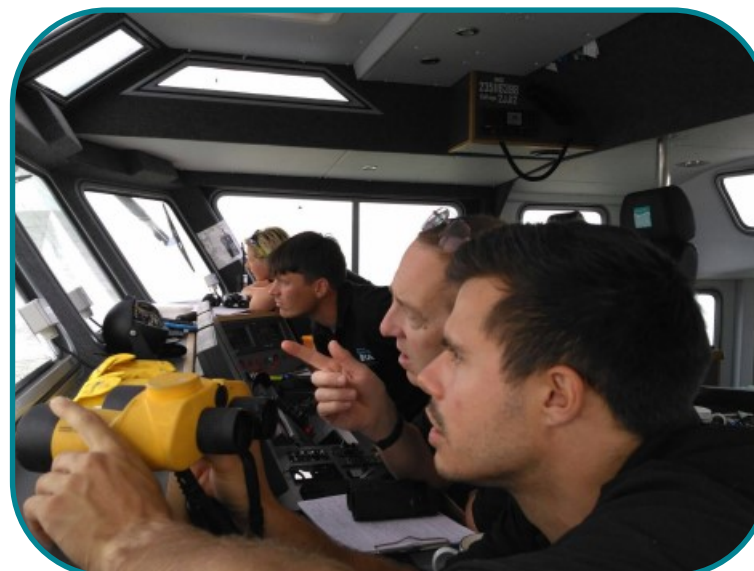


Success Criterion 2: Compliance and Enforcement Report

Case study: EU Exit Compliance operations

In the past year Kent and Essex IFCA have been on the frontline of EU Exit fisheries enforcement. We have played a key part of central government led taskings to monitor foreign fishing vessels operations within UK territorial waters in partnership with the MMO. KEIFCA vessels and crew were chartered for national taskings to intensively patrol the 6-12-mile limits on the leadup to EU Exit in January 2021. These taskings continued in the weeks and months following our departure from the EU, when restricted access to UK waters for member state vessels came into place.

Both FPV (fishery patrol vessel) Nerissa and FPV Tamesis operated out of Ramsgate harbour during this period due to the proximity of the Kent coast to EU waters, running patrols on both the 6- and 12-mile limits to primarily monitor activity and gather intelligence. In this period KEIFCA also conducted additional patrols of the district 6-mile limit to prevent incursions of foreign vessels.



Success Criterion 2: Compliance and Enforcement Report

On charter patrols, all EU flagged vessel sighted fishing or steaming were approached, their position and activity logged, and photos taken. Our crews were set target vessels to intercept or areas to attend and sent a full report at the end of each day to the MMO operations team including our FPV track, details of interactions and photographs. During our own IFCA patrols extra efforts were made to patrol the 6-mile limits where additional sightings of these larger vessels were logged, in addition to usual sightings of inshore vessels. These were highlighted with an email to the operations team as well as being entered into the usual databases.

There was a robust response plan in place in case of finding illegal fishing activity, which included hailing procedures, methods of communication with foreign vessels, and evidence recording systems to be initiated as necessary. Sign boards were carried to signal VHF radio channels to operate on, satellite phone in place on board to contact MMO operations team if required and good quality stabilised cameras available to collect photo evidence. Thankfully no fishing vessels were found to be fishing illegally within the 6-mile limit during the operation.

Once the new licencing system for EU access to the 6-12 limit was in place the necessity of high intensity patrols in territorial waters was reduced, and operations gradually returned to normal for our patrol vessels and their crews. This was a great example of Kent and Essex IFCA rising to support national efforts as a government enforcement agency with sea-going capability, and helped to ensure the security of our national and local fisheries interests in a time of need.

Ben Hermitage, Kent Patrol Vessel Skipper



Success Criterion 2: Compliance and Enforcement Report

Case study: Shellfish gathering joint agency "Operation Sealion"

As the UK entered its first coronavirus lockdown, summer 2020 saw an upsurge in incidents of people hand gathering shellfish across the UK. A likely blend of these lockdown measures and fine weather saw KEIFCA and Kent Police flooded with reports of shellfish gathering in the District - particularly on the Isle of Sheppey. Similar incidents had also occurred in Thanet and Hythe in Kent, and Harwich, Southend and Mersea in Essex. A huge range of shellfish species were targeted including pacific oysters, manilla clams, cockles, common shore crabs, mussels, limpets, spider crabs and winkles.

While some groups of gatherers were simply families out at the beach taking small amounts (within 5 kg limits) for personal use, others were large groups of 10 or more people taking excessive quantities. With the big groups there was concern that large volumes of shellfish that were not safe for consumption were being sold into the human food chain. A multi-agency approach was key to ensure these activities are carried out legally from both a fisheries management and public health perspective. As a result, the multiagency Operation Sealion was established.

KEIFCA received and responded to the increased reports of shellfish collection along the Kent coastline by focusing inspections on potential breaches of minimum size legislation and specific legislation on the removal of cockles from the district. Intelligence gathering was used to support other partnering agencies with regards to commercial shellfish harvesting from unclassified shellfish beds and protection of designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) where some shellfish gathering was reportedly occurring.



Success Criterion 2: Compliance and Enforcement Report



Since the operation began in June 2020, KEIFCA officers have dedicated time to joint patrols with partner agencies. This included patrols with local environmental health officers (EHOs) to determine whether hand-gathered shellfish was being collected for commercial sale, Gangmasters & Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) to identify modern slavery offences and Kent Police Rural Task Force for other associated offences including immigration issues. KEIFCA have conducted 40 shore patrols dedicated to Operation Sealion, inspected a total of 31 groups of gatherers and issued 24 verbal warnings for various offences such as removing shellfish below minimum size and removing cockles without a license or permit. Large quantities of unsafe shellfish were seized by Environmental Health Officers on public health grounds.

With increased enforcement presence taken positively by members of the public, the focus of this joint agency approach fell naturally to the launch of an education and prevention project - establishing signage on the Isle of Sheppey and advertisement of regulations via social media. In partnership with Swale BC, Kent Police and Natural England, 21 signs were proposed and secured around the Isle of Sheppey coastline. These signs look to inform and educate the FSA 5kg limit and explain the rules of shellfish gathering on the coast and in SSSI areas. Now with most of the coronavirus restrictions lifted in the UK and the joint work on illegal shellfish gathering prevention measures put in place, 2021 has seen a significant decrease in the number of reports of shellfish gathering around the District. Although promising, KEIFCA and partnering agencies continue to maintain a presence in known hand gathering hotspots ensuring any shellfish gathering is conducted legally and safely.

Ellie Wyatt, Kent IFCA

Success Criterion 2 – Outputs

Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
NEW ACTION: 2X) EU Exit enforcement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopted national strategy from MMO on EU Exit enforcement approach. Attended EU exit strategy planning meetings and took part in scenario training for day one readiness. Maintained core communication channels with MMO/DEFRA/Ops to ensure updated intel and outcomes from EU Exit patrols was disseminated. Conducted MMO chartered sea patrols as required to complete national taskings and supply intel. Working arrangement for MMO for patrol vessel charter work including costing in place. 	No further action required unless directed
ONGOING ACTION: 2A) National updates and strategy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data and enforcement processes were reviewed periodically and improved. Risk register was updated to reflect Annual Plan requirements and COVID working capability. National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group meetings attended and contributed to by enforcement managers to develop national best practises. 	
ONGOING ACTION: 2B) Information and Planning		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> X3 Full operation orders implemented to target enforcement on high risk seasonal fisheries Tasking and Coordination Group (TCG) meetings held on biweekly basis to focus resources on high risk intel. Increased attendance at TCG meetings from partner agencies . Increased emphasis on filling intelligence gaps from each of the six district areas. TCG charts continued and improved, used effectively for enforcement outcome review and taskings. Annual plans and reports completed. 	
ONGOING ACTION: 2C) Enforcement systems		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 553 intelligence reports processed, and sea patrol data submitted to MCSS. Intel training given to officers on a individual needs basis to foster best practise and improve standards. Formal training not possible during COVID restrictions. H&S intel dissemination prioritised, especially for COVID-19 risks and EU Exit. Relevant intel for partner agencies gathered and disseminated. Improved understanding of intel needs other agencies relating shellfish gathering, including Gangmasters Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA), local authority Environmental Health teams, Police rural taskforce, Natural England SSSI protection interests. Enforcement SharePoint site used on a daily basis . "Enforcement Record System" used to record all inspection data, vessel ID guides monitored and maintained by a duty officer in each county. Case file management system implemented. 	
ONGOING ACTION: 2D) Case Files and Prosecutions		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case files built and proportionate outcomes delivered according to legal advice in line with KEIFCA Compliance and Enforcement Strategy. Best practises adopted via NIMEG where appropriate. No formal training possible for officers due to COVID restrictions, but some home-based training in the form of national accreditation undertaken by selected officers. Normal delivery of courses should resume in the next financial year. Informal training and feedback, mainly via supervision of LCO, given to officers when building case files. 	Formal training to resume next year
ONGOING ACTION: 2E) Sea-going enforcement asset management		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KEIFCA vessels maintained for enforcement purposes, including refit of FPR Nereus for replacement sponsons, and refit of FPV Tamesis navigational computers. Enforcement equipment maintained. BWV cameras upgraded to Halo system, proven to be more robust and reliable. New gauges purchased for byelaw enforcement . Reports on vessel operation delivered to the Authority. 	



Objective completed



Significant progress made but objective not completed



Minimal progress made

Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 2F) Enforcement activities – sea-based		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 134 sea patrols: 159 fishing vessel inspections and 35 gear inspections completed. Adapted procedures to work safely during COVID-19 restrictions. Improved and updated understanding of partner agency intelligence interests from attending joint meetings and external TCGs. Intel gathered and compliance risk prioritised and actioned via TCG and Operation Orders, in addition to reactive enforcement to live Intelligence when needed. Body Worn Video used routinely for inspections at sea and footage used as evidence in case files. 	
ONGOING ACTION: 2G) Shore based enforcement asset management		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vehicles and equipment provided and maintained for enforcement use Reports on vehicles and equipment delivered to the Authority 	
ONGOING ACTION: 2H) Enforcement activities – shore-based		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 310 shore patrols and 249 shore-based inspections completed Intel gathered and compliance risk prioritised and actioned via TCG and Operation Orders in addition to reactive enforcement to live Intelligence when needed. Body Worn Video used routinely for inspections on shore, footage used as evidence in case files. 	
ONGOING ACTION: 2I) Enforcement training		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accreditation programme undertaken by a select number of IFCOs. No formal training available due to COVID. No officers have attend IFCA Competent Officer training course. Updates to legislation and procedures disseminated to officers by ACIFCO and LCO accordingly New CRIB books issued to all officers, content under continuous review. CRIBs are used by officers in the field on a routine basis for specific needs and to maintain knowledge of legislation and procedures. Operational training package encompassed by CRIB books and subject to continuous review. Aim to train new staff and standardise/optimize experienced staff skillsets Admin assistant is trained in data extraction and data processing required for TCG charts Officers completed training and have now been cross-warranted with the Environment Agency (limited SAFFA warrants. Also 7 EA staff cross-warranted to enforce KEIFCA byelaws. 	Normal training expected to resume next year
2J) AIFCA National Training Project		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Lead Training Officer post on-going. KEIFCA provided HR and management support for post 	
2K) Marine Protected Area enforcement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MPAs feature in risk register Enforcement operations yielded detection of 4 MPA offences in total, with 2 fleers of illegal gear seized, and investigations resulting in 2 written warnings. MCSS updated where applicable 	
2L) Private grounds		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with partners including Crouch Harbour Authority to create GIS charts of relevant private grounds and permitted activities within them. Land registry applications for River Crouch and Roach in process of being obtained. 	



Success Criterion 3: Management Measures

Case study: Vessel Length and Engine Power Byelaw

Previously there were four byelaws that set maximum vessel lengths in the KEIFCA district (of which two included a restriction on engine power). The different byelaws were inherited on the creation of KEIFCA from the Sea Fisheries Committee's and Environment Agency (Thames) that previously regulated areas which are now part of the KEIFCA district.

Developing one new KEIFCA specific byelaw helps achieve a number of objectives, whilst at the same time providing benefits to both the local industry and the marine environment.

Objectives

- Standardise legislation across the entire KEIFCA district
- Bring KEIFCA legislation in line with neighbouring IFCA byelaws
- Better reflect the modern profile of the inshore fleet.
- Simplify and rationalise the current system
- Easily understood by stakeholders
- Easily monitored and enforced by KEIFCA

Benefits to fishermen

- Support a long-term sustainable fishery
- Futureproof the fishery from an influx of larger vessels from outside the district
- Benefits to the marine environment
- Effectively limits gear size, limiting impact on seabed
- District wide habitat protection



Success Criterion 3: Management Measures

After many drafts had gone backwards and forwards between the KEIFCA and the MMO and two rounds of consultation with industry, a package containing the finalised byelaw wording and the associated Impact Assessment (IA) were agreed in September 2019. Following some further minor adjustments by Defra and MMO throughout 2020, the final edition agreed limits vessel length to 14m, and engine power to 221 kW for towed gear. The new legislation further specifies that a vessel may have a limit of 243 kW before being derated for inboard engines, and no derated exemption for outboard engines.

In order to reduce the impact of the new byelaw on the very small number of over 14-17m vessels that have fished historically in the District under the old vessel length limits, the byelaw also includes an exemption clause for vessel owners that can prove a track record of fishing inside the District in the last two years.

The intention of reviewing the byelaw was to reflect the size of vessels in the current fleet working inside the 6nm limit, and furthermore to recognise the impact that larger vessels or those with greater engine power can have on the environment. This byelaw does not drastically change the rules, but simply refines and condenses those into one byelaw for the whole District.

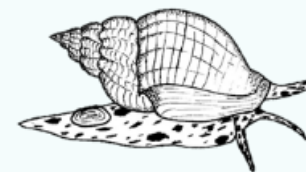
Hayden Hurst, Lead Compliance Officer



Success Criterion 3: Management Measures

Case study: Whelk Fishery Permit Byelaw 2020

In the January 2020 Authority meeting KEIFCA agreed to make an emergency byelaw which translated the minimum riddle spacing of 25mm in the old Whelk Fishery Permit Byelaw into a minimum shell height of 53mm with a tolerance of 5% (research showed that a whelk that measured in width 25mm was the equivalent of a whelk that measured 53mm in height). The emergency byelaw also outlined a clear inspection process for checking whelk catches on landing. This was designed to be consistent and fair, with a standardised 3 x 5kg samples taken from different parts of the catch for measurement.



In order to test the practicality of the new byelaw in a real-world setting, KEIFCA conducted two rounds of pre-arranged demonstrative inspections on whelk vessels. For vessels that failed inspections, enforcement sanctions were not applied in the first instance, but instead advice was given on how to reduce the amount of undersize in the catch. The COVID-19 pandemic delayed the inspection programme considerably between April and July; however, the officers were able to resume engaging once lockdown restrictions had eased.

Officers made particular efforts to engage with fishermen who had raised concerns about the previous riddle-based enforcement to show how the new method was clear and repeatable. Initial inspections showed that the vast majority (75%) of the whelk fleet were compliant with the new emergency byelaw when operating under their usual fishing practises i.e. using a 25mm riddle as required in the permit byelaw. Of those that failed their first inspection, it was noted that many were using smaller riddles which cannot grade whelks as effectively, and best-practice advice was given to help address this.

Success Criterion 3: Management Measures

The second round of inspections was carried out between August and November 2020. Feedback was taken on by whelk fishermen who had failed their first inspection, and after adjusting riddling practises all vessels passed their second inspection with less than 5% under 53mm whelks.

With all permit holders passing during the second inspection KEIFCA verified that the 5% tolerance is achievable for all fishermen. The dramatic improvements observed by fishermen who made simple adjustments to riddling process shows that all permit holders can comply. Some individuals were more resistant to changes than others, however KEIFCA have made every effort to support and educate these fishermen. We provided advice based on observations of how other fishermen managed to change their sorting methods to reduce undersize in their catches, and even lent out our own compact rotary riddle to fishermen to try out on their boats, thereby encouraging best practise.

In the November meeting, Authority Members voted to make the emergency byelaw permanent, and the full byelaw is now in force after being confirmed by the Secretary of State.

Hayden Hurst, Lead Compliance Officer



Above: KEIFCA's compact battery-powered rotary riddle was lent to fishermen to try out.



Reasons for failure

- Use of flat riddles
- Small riddle surface area
- Lack of thorough riddling process
- Muddy or fouled whelks
- Fishing on grounds with higher proportions of smaller whelks



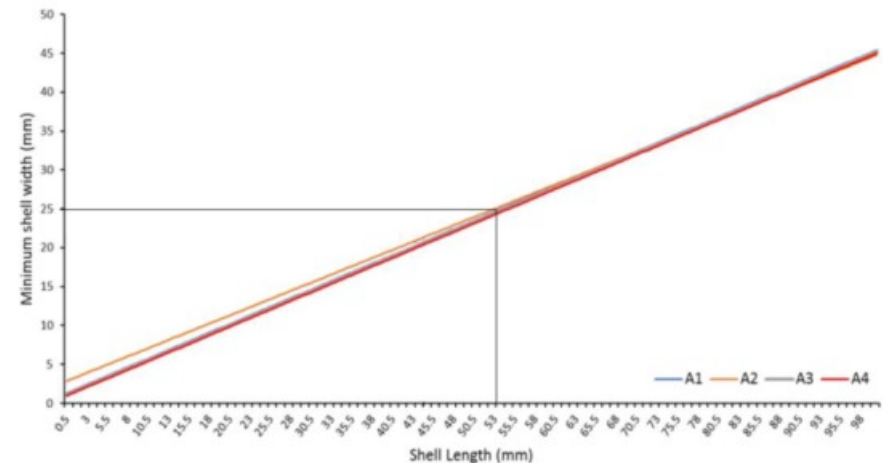
Riddle surface area: **0.18 m²**

Best practise

- Use of rotary riddle/increase riddle surface area
- Increase riddle gap size
- Riddle more thoroughly/increase time in contact with riddle
- Prevent riddle blockage/wash catch
- Check sample with 53mm gauge



Riddle surface area: **1.3 m²**



Above: Graph showing the relationship between shell width and shell length from whelks in KEIFCA district. This shows that 25mm width is equivalent to 53mm length on average.

Success Criterion 3 — Outputs

Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 3A) Cockle and Whelk Administration e.g. producing, collating & sending out licence info & licences, and permits. Arranging and managing cockle industry meetings		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processed 24 cockle permits and 14 licence applications • Produced 10 cockle fishery update letters • Held industry meetings to discuss management measures for cockle fishery • Processed 31 whelk permit applications • Produced 4 whelk fishery update letters 	
ONGOING ACTION: 3B) Byelaw Administration E.g. Arranging advertising, managing the byelaw process, seeking legal opinion etc		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brought vessel length and engine power byelaw into force following final consultations and agreement by authority. • Created new Whelk Fishery Permit Byelaw to replace emergency byelaw and original permit byelaw. 	
3C) UK-EU Relationship - Contribution and engagement to future international fisheries management arrangements which will be key in constantly reviewing our suite of byelaws		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended meetings with partners regarding Brexit planning • Dialed in to daily telecalls from February to April regarding Day 1 readiness planning • Presented four papers to Authority on Brexit preparations and political situation regarding both fishing and trade related to fish products • Continued review of existing byelaws, including those which may be impacted by Brexit 	
3D) MPA management		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swanscombe MCZ site assessment completed and signed off by NE. • Goodwin Sands MCZ site assessment being lead by KEIFCA, with MMO input. • Dover-Deal and Dover-Folkestone MCZ (both T2) site assessments have been completed and submitted to NE. Positive verbal feedback provided on both, currently in final review.. 	Ongoing workstream working with NE and MMO



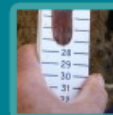
Objective completed



Significant progress made but objective not completed



Minimal progress made

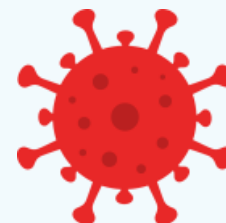


Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
3E) Native Oyster Management in BCRC MCZ		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blackwater, Crouch, Roach and Colne Estuaries MCZ Native Oyster byelaw in force. • Data collection did not occur due to annual survey not taking place under COVID restrictions • Process in place to discuss fishery opening with stakeholders including industry, Natural England, NGO's and other stakeholders. 	Surveys to resume next year
3F) Vessel Length Byelaw – development and introduction		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Byelaw made by Authority in September 2019. • Following formal consultation, byelaw submitted to MMO for QA in January 2020. • Following minor, non-substantive amendments, byelaw was submitted to Defra for confirmation by the Secretary of State in June 2021. 	
3G) MPA byelaws – addition of T3 MCZ sites to current legislation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awaiting final formal advice from NE on site assessments to facilitate efficient Bottom Towed Gear byelaw update process. • Goodwin Sands being developed jointly with MMO. 	Ongoing workstream working with NE and MMO
3F) Whelk Fishery byelaw 2020		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In January 2021, Defra granted an extension to the Whelk Fishery Minimum Size Emergency Byelaw to provide time for the revised permit byelaw to be introduced. • In March 2021, the full, revised Whelk Fishery Flexible Permit Byelaw was submitted to MMO for QA. • In August 2021, the Whelk Fishery Flexible Permit Byelaw was confirmed and came into force. 	

Success Criterion 4: Governance and Training

Case study: Health and Safety - working with COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a massive global impact and had a seismic effect to the seafood sector within the UK, and on the continent. The impact on the working of KEIFCA has also been significant and as have moved from lockdown to an easing of restrictions over the past year, we have constantly reviewed how we can get back to delivering all the aspects of our statutory duties and our annual plan. Throughout all the changes our priority was to keep our staff and community safe, and work with the fishing sector to limit the financial impact of the pandemic and if possible, meet the challenge of developing new ways of working that will help everybody in the long-term.



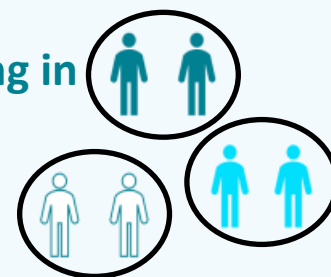
Working in lockdown

In terms of changes to day to day working, managers encouraged staff to contribute to internal policies by holding virtual COVID safety workshops on zoom. Here the team worked together to make a simple Covid-19 KEIFCA information and training pack to help take informed, evidence-based mitigation steps that everyone was happy with. This involved colour coding the different environments that staff regularly work in (offices, patrol vessels, vehicles etc) to think about risks and the mitigation needed (i.e. washing hands or wearing masks) to make it safe.

Within KEIFCA, regular daily staff meetings were held using internet conferencing to help prioritise and discuss work but also to help support each other through some difficult times. The organisation was split into staff members that were classed as vulnerable and required additional shielding, and officers that could undertake limited high priority duties. With the group of officers that could work, we put them into fixed teams that consistently worked together to reduce any spread of the virus.

One of the key planks in our lockdown plan was to use the time as constructively as possible to help train our enforcement officers. We worked closely with the National Lead Training Officer to nationally roll out the accredited training programme and develop a range of remote learning initiatives.

**Working in
fixed
groups**



Shielding



Success Criterion 4: Governance and Training

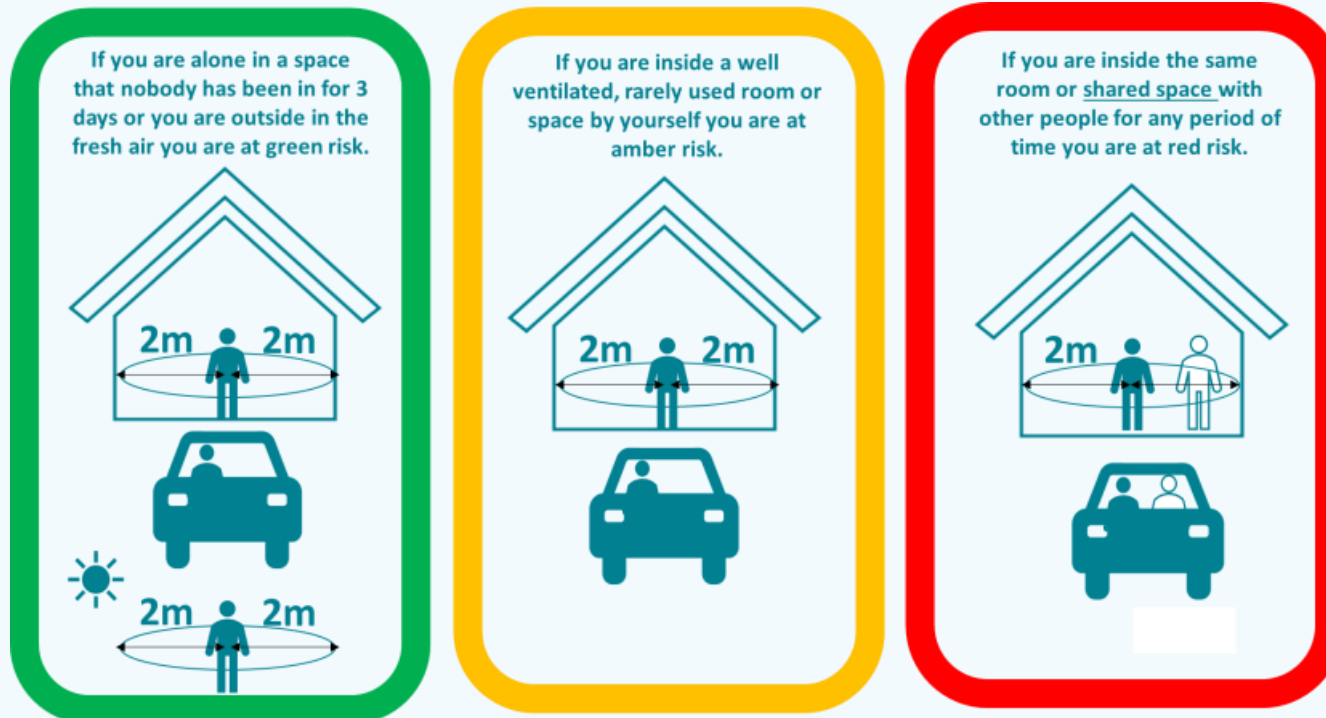


Moving out of lockdown

In general, KEIFCA officers are used to working in high-risk marine environments, implementing measures and using PPE to create a safer working environment. COVID-19 is a risk that needs to be managed using the same process that we use to manage any other high risk activity we undertake at work. The staff therefore were well placed to transfer this skill set over to working during the pandemic as we came out of lockdown.

We have worked closely and consulted with all staff to put consistent, practical, evidence-based safety measures in place that give a framework for how we work in the medium term. Furthermore we have worked closely with other IFCAs and the MMO to develop and implement national COVID protocols for the safe and effective conduct of enforcement operations. All risk assessments are constantly appraised and reviewed to take into account Government guidelines and scientific advice and PPE has been obtained and distributed across the two counties to staff that require them.

Dominic Bailey, Assistant Chief Officer



Success Criterion 4 – Outputs

Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 4A) Budget Management - Handling invoices, Oracle Administration, compile budget, budget meetings etc. Manage and coordinate funding applications e.g. EU		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved budget with quarterly updates • Maintained and processed 13 oracle statements • Held internal budget planning & review meetings • Mid and end of year Internal audit completed • Final claim made against EMFF whelk population application • Change notices applied to EMFF NLTO training application • Processed 577 invoices 	
ONGOING ACTION: 4B) Annual planning and reporting		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created and published 2021-2022 annual plan and 2019-2020 annual report • Documented and presented to Authority and displayed on website 	
ONGOING ACTION: 4C) Facilitating staff matters - Run current staff performance monitoring system. Run annual staff workshop. Recruiting new staff. H&S reviews. Responsibility for HR matters – contracts, payroll, pensions etc.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual staff appraisals and taskings meetings undertaken • Maintained and updated H&S documentation • Recruitment process ran for National lead Training Officer on behalf of AIFCA 	
ONGOING ACTION: 4D) IFCA Meetings - Run and provide support for quarterly IFCA meetings and technical panel meetings.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held 1 briefing meeting and 3 quarterly meetings with approved minutes. • Held 1 Technical panel meeting • Maintained handbook for members 	
ONGOING ACTION: 4E) ,4K) Staff training - Accredited Enforcement Training, Internal training, PACE course training, Sea tickets/training, survey training (ATV training) etc.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 officer completed 1st aid training • 3 officers completed sea survival training • 2 officers completed basic fire awareness training • 1 officer completed manual handling training • 3 officers completed OSIT training • 14 officers completed mental health awareness training • 3 officers completed cyber security training • 1 officer completed GDPR/data protection training 	
ONGOING ACTION: 4F) General administration - Fill in timesheets, filing, post, travel & expenses, purchase card etc.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of timesheets • Processed 9 travel & expenses claims • Processed 88 purchase card updates • Maintained data records and filing 	



Objective completed



Significant progress made but
objective not completed



Minimal progress made



Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 4G) Health and Safety Systems		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual reporting of H&S issues to Authority Regular meeting of H&S committee to discuss any issues and to put procedures in place to mitigate against further incidents. Created and developed risk assessments and procedures to protect staff from Covid 19 virus 	
4H) Health and Safety Audit		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enquiries made with KCC Health and Safety Business Operations Manager to review the existing Health & Safety policy with meetings scheduled to discuss specific requirements. Covid 19 restrictions have delayed the ability to carry these out 	Carry out H&S audit now that COVID restrictions are lifting
4I) Promoting positive mental health in the workplace		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACAS led training for all staff carried out in February 2021 to embed the role of the employer and employee in committing to a shared goal of positive wellbeing and a productive workplace. 	
4J) Database training		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff receive basic training to understand and use new KEIFCA evidence database Staff using database more frequently and as part of their every-day duties will receive additional training and support from the LSCO. 	
4L) Accredited Training – Continue roll out accredited training		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two officers to complete units 1-4 of accredited training for enforcement officers NLTO post to facilitate officer completion for further review of project Staff attend IFCA and MMO training 	
4M) National Lead Training Officer admin and support		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KEIFCA continue to facilitate and host the AIFCA National Lead Training post by: Employ and manage HR requirements on behalf of AIFCA Oversee EMFF funding application and claims process ACFO & OM sit as members of the National Training Group Financial management of process and reporting expenditure, quarterly reporting and reviewing. Purchase of equipment and resources. 	

Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science Report

Evidence and Science Introduction

KEIFCA carries out essential research activities supporting the management of Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs), sustainable fisheries and access to evidence (data and information) provision for the District. The highlights of 2020/2021 research agenda can be summarised within three themes, namely, (1) Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), (2) Sustainable Fisheries, (3) Access to Evidence.

The data we collect is analysed to inform the status of various fishery stocks in the district (primarily shellfish), and in turn used to inform the management of fisheries. For example, surveys of cockle stocks are used to set quotas for license holders, open or close certain areas to the fishery, and inform the opening of fisheries that operate under flexible permit schemes. Furthermore, this data provides evidence when fisheries are in decline and management measures are required, such as byelaws, regulations and enhanced enforcement.

COVID-19 continued to affect the Research Schedule into 2021, especially where multiple staff are normally required to work closely, such as handling oyster dredges during surveys, but new safety measures put in place this year made more surveys possible than were in 2020. KEIFCA continued its Research Schedule into the core shellfish fisheries, namely cockles, oysters and whelks over this period to provide evidence of the status of these fishery stocks.

Philip Haupt, Lead Scientific Officer



Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science Report

Science at a glance...

SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

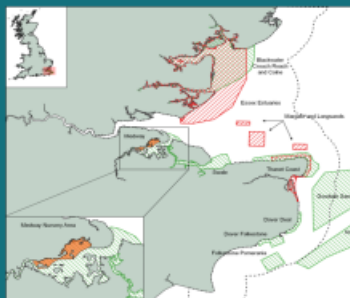


MCZ ASSESSMENTS

Achieved sign off of **2 MCZ** assessment

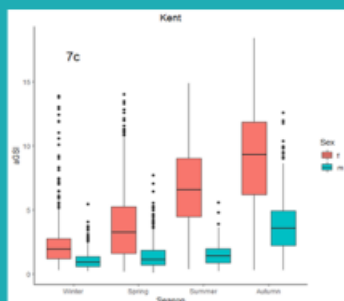
Completed **4 outstanding assessments**

Worked with **MMO** and local partners to **design management** for Goodwin Sands MCZ



DISPENSATIONS

30 + dispensations issued



WHELK RESEARCH

>12,000 data points analysed from our EMFF study

Results contributed to the development of the new **whelk MLS** byelaw



COCKLE SURVEYS

100+ cockle samples undertaken on the Margate sands this year in addition to the annual surveys

CONSULTATIONS

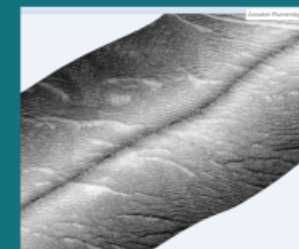
Responded to **>20 consultations**

Involved in discussions with **5 major infrastructure projects** and Natural England



SABELLARIA SURVEYS

40+ side scan sonar samples undertaken of the **Goodwin Sands MCZ** to identify the presence and extent of Sabellaria (ross worm).

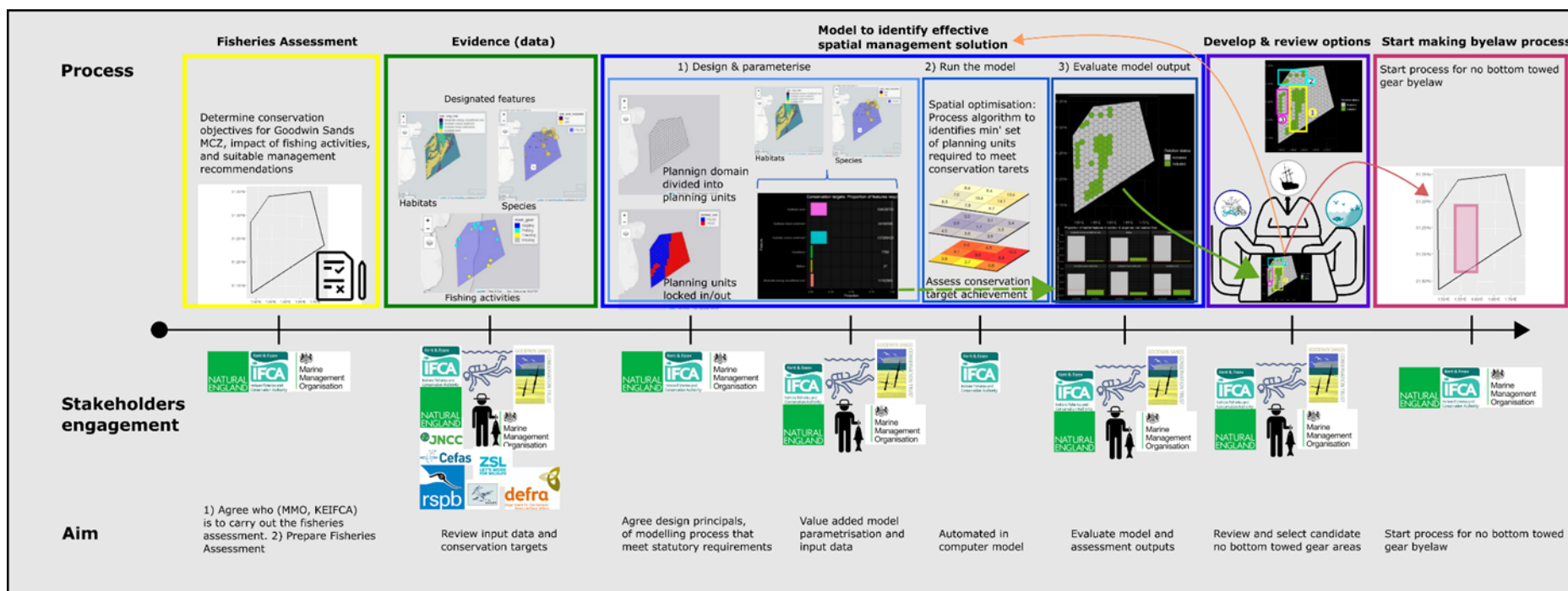


Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science Report

Marine Protected Areas

KEIFCA is the delivery body for MPAs enforcing regulations within Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) and European Marine Sites within the District's waters. During 2020-2021, KEIFCA focussed on developing Fisheries Assessments for MCZs.

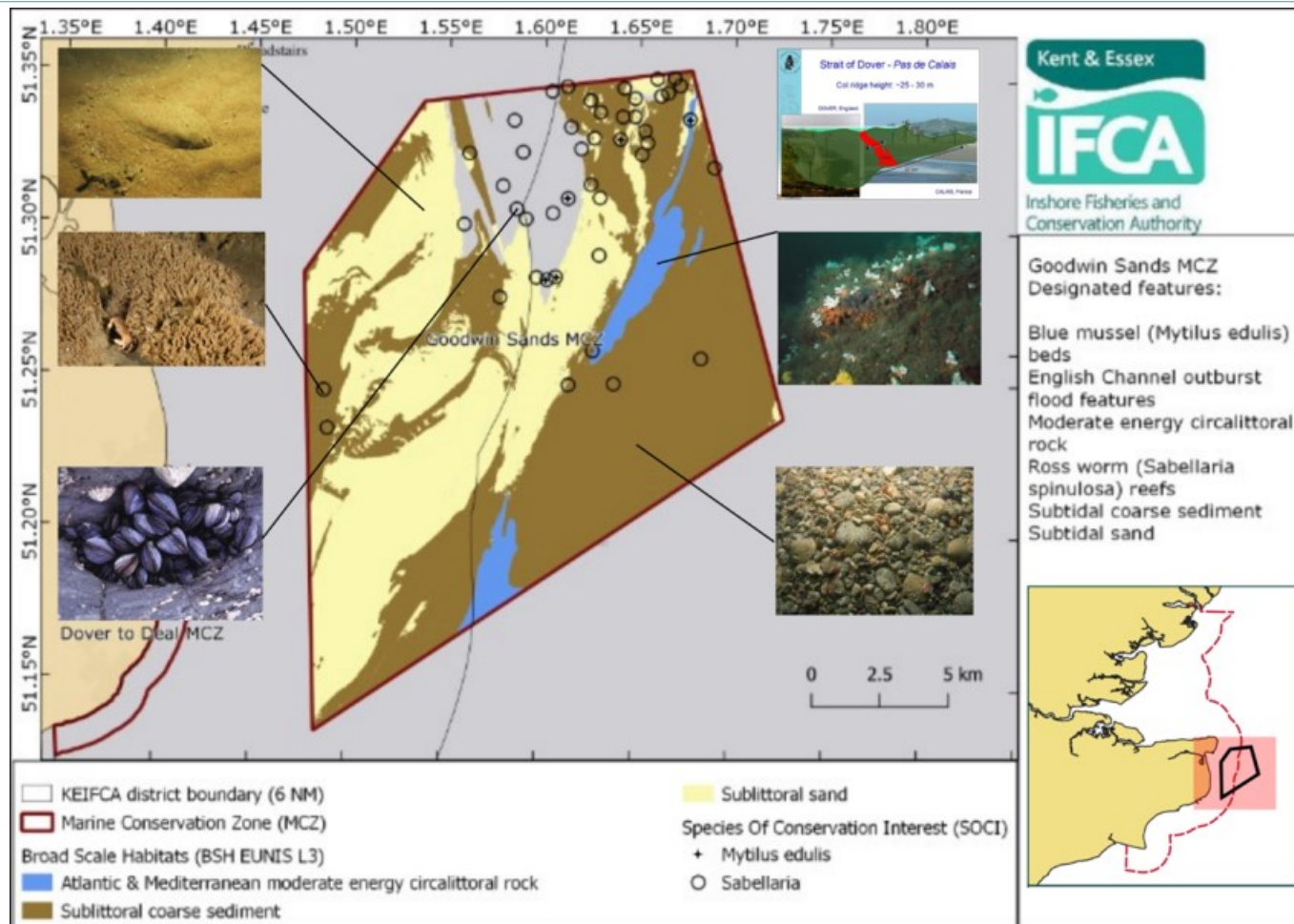
KEIFCA have nine MCZs across the District. During 2020, we successfully authored fisheries assessments for eight of the outstanding MCZs. Each assessment requires us to identify the fishing activities taking place in the site, whether these activities interact with the designated features, and determine whether this will have an adverse effect on the conservation objectives. The Blackwater, Crouch, Roach and Colne Estuaries MCZ assessment was officially signed off from Natural England this year after considerable work since it's designation to identify the best way to protect its Native oyster feature. Swanscombe MCZ assessment also achieved sign off. This year we also worked closely with partners from the Rochester Oyster Floating Fishery (ROFF) to help inform and finalise the Medway Estuary assessment which is currently under final review. Two additional assessments are also in the final stages of assessment, with the aim to be completed early the following year.



Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science Report

Developing management for Goodwin Sands MCZ (below) is a second significant piece of work which was initiated in 2020, for which the bulk of the work will happen in 2021-2022. The Goodwin Sands MCZ is a large (277km²) series of sand banks notorious sand banks within which over 185 known wrecks have been found. A bespoke spatial model has been initiated which uses optimisation algorithms to identify the location of smallest area within the MCZ which will conserve the maximum amount of designated features whilst avoiding areas with existing fishing activities. At this stage we are gathering data and engaging with stakeholders including Natural England, MMO, Fishing Associations and the Goodwin Sands Conservation Trust.

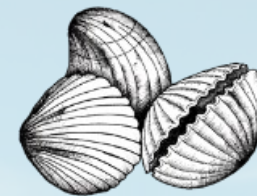
Philip Haupt, Lead Scientific Officer



Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science Report

Research on Sustainable Fisheries: (1) cockles

The Thames cockle fishery is the most economically important shellfish fishery in the District and achieved MSC blue ecolabel status in 2020. This achievement is testament to a well-managed fishery, which is underpinned by 30 years of survey data. The cockle survey is at the top of KEIFCA's research agenda supporting both the Thames Estuary Cockle Fishery Order (TECFO) and the flexible permit cockle fisheries. KEIFCA produces a separate, detailed, annual cockle survey report and only highlights from the survey and catches are presented here.



KEIFCA uses its two larger Fisheries Patrol Vessels (FPVs), each fitted with a 1m² Day-grab to collect samples from the key cockle grounds using a systematic approach which provides a robust long running data set. Land based surveys carried out using custom fitted quad bikes provide additional data from the shallow areas that are not easily reached by our FPVs.

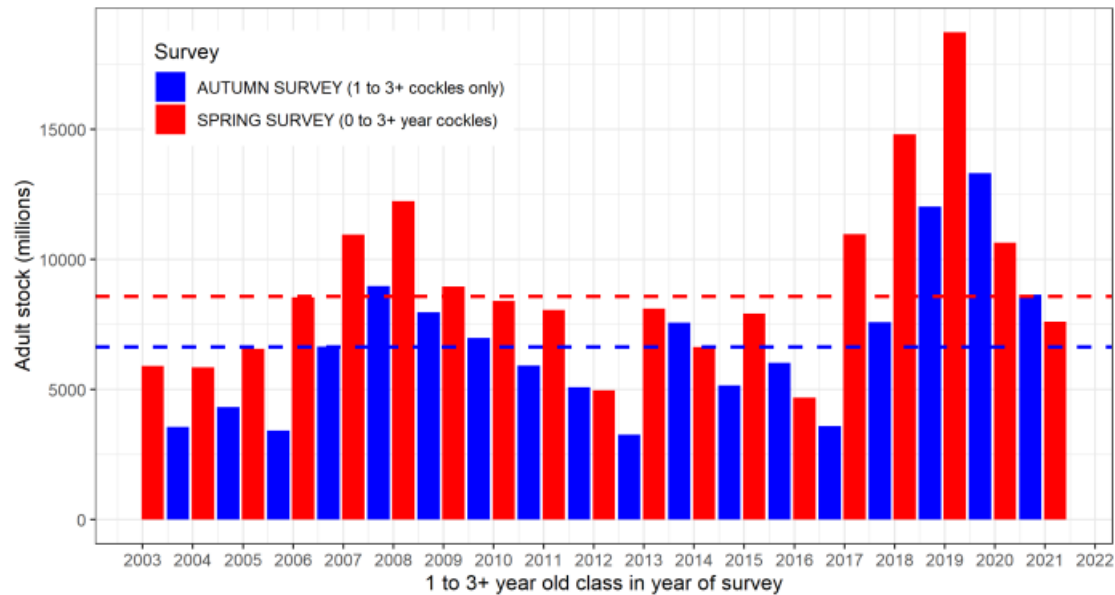
During the survey, each cockle is counted, sized, and then their collective weights are taken for each year class (per size category) in each of the cockle fishing areas. This information is used to derive stock trends, abundance, biomass and finally, to determine annual fishing quotas. Once the annual fishery is operational, landings of cockle catches are recorded.

KEIFCA staff counted 10336 cockles from 1214 sampling sites in 19 of the cockle areas in the district in 2020. This included two new areas which were added to the April 2021 survey, both covering the Margate Sands cockle beds which produced good yields in 2020. The second highest cockle landings over the past decade, of 324,120 baskets, were recorded in 2020, despite the adversities faced during a time of COVID and market uncertainty.

Philip Haupt, Lead Scientific Officer



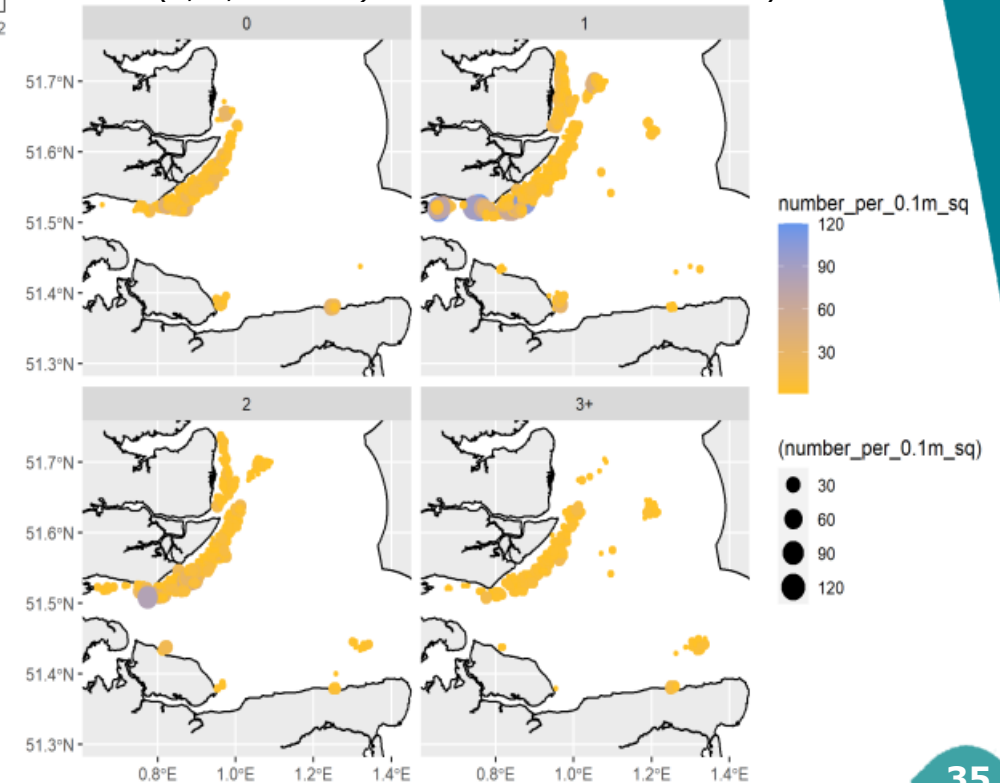
Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science Report



Above: graph showing survey data for cockle stocks before and after winter over time in the Thames Estuary. The dotted lines represent long-term mean values.



Below: chart showing survey data for the distribution and number of cockles for each year class (0, 1, 2 or 3+) across the Thames Estuary.

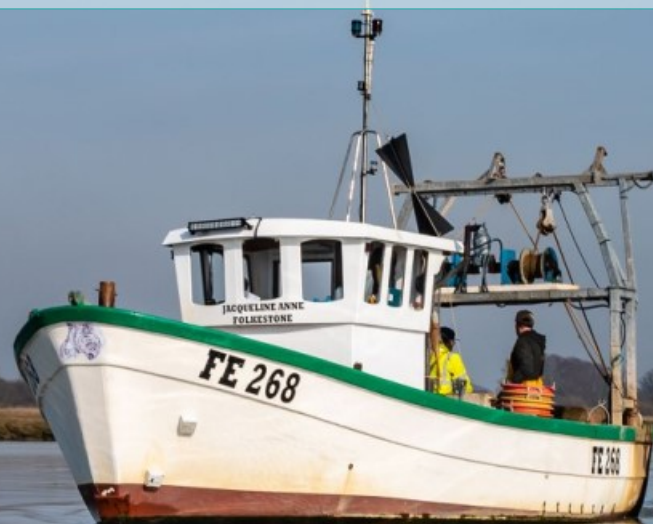


Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science Report

Research on Sustainable Fisheries: (2) oysters

Research of European native oysters is an important focus for KEIFCA's research plan because of the significant global and local declines recorded over the past century which must be balanced with its importance to local fisheries in the district.

No oyster surveys were possible in 2020-2021 because of FPV Tamesis was not in service during March when the survey was scheduled. The surveys have been rearranged to take place in September once the cockle fishery work starts winding down. Despite this set back, KEIFCA actively engaged in its research collaborations with Essex University and ENORI (Essex Native Oyster Restoration Initiative) focussing research on the recovery of European native oyster populations in BCRC MCZ.



Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science Report

The results from the three-year collaborative study between KEIFCA and University of Essex resulted in two scientific papers published by Prof Tom Cameron, Dr Alice Lown and colleagues. The main findings suggested that, firstly, the oyster population in the BCRC will double in 16 to 66 years based on an Integral Population Model using the data collected during KEIFCA surveys since 2016. Secondly, European native oyster population densities were strongly associated with enhanced biodiversity (+ 2.8 additional species at 5 oysters m⁻²) provided that slipper limpet population densities remained low.

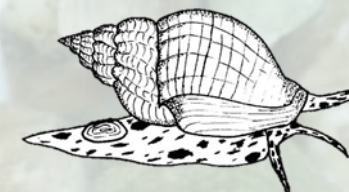
KEIFCA also contributed to the European native oyster habitat restoration handbook UK & Ireland published in November 2020 in which a case study was presented about the restoration work with ENORI in the BCRC MCZ (ISBN: 978-0-900881-80-0). The case study provided an example of how restoration can occur within MPAs and can work alongside a fishery, and then makes recommendations for site selection for future restoration projects.



Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science Report

Research on Sustainable Fisheries: (3) whelks.

Understanding the biology of whelk stocks in the district has been an important focus for KEIFCA over the past few years. Increase in demand from abroad and limiting alternative stocks has led to whelks becoming a popular displacement fishery. Understanding the age at which whelks reach maturity and the time of year they spawn is essential to determining appropriate management measures such as minimum landing sizes (MLS) and riddle spacings.



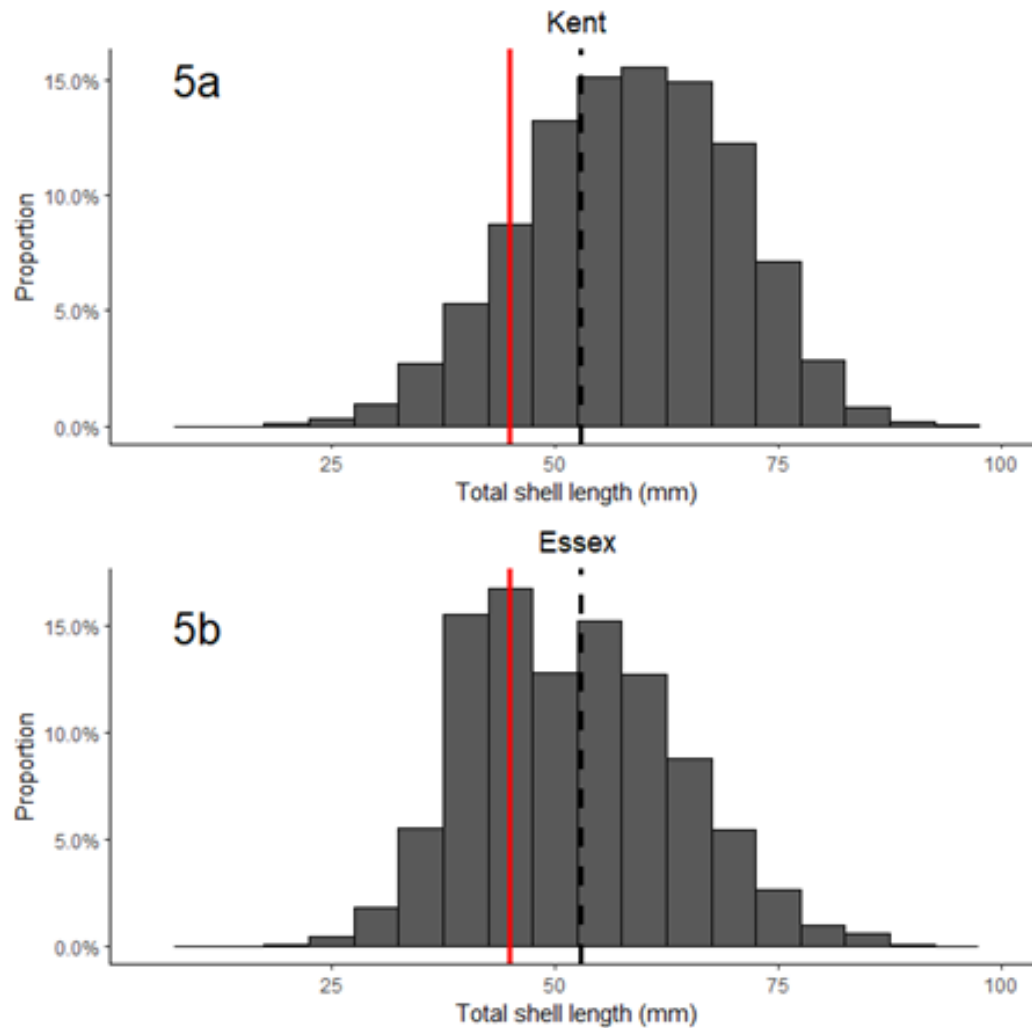
This year we have focussed on the analysis of the 2-year EMFF whelk data set that comprised of over twelve thousand data points from whelks caught across the district over a two-year period. Dr Phil Hollyman, who has previously worked with KEIFCA on whelk research, provided advice on statistical analysis and helped facilitate an in-depth exploration of the data. Our research, combined with that previously provided by Dr Hollyman has helped build a comprehensive understanding of the biological characteristics of whelks in the district and also informed our new Whelk Fishery Permit Byelaw, which specifies a MLS of 53 mm based on initial research data.

Size-at-maturity for whelks was determined to be approximately 54 mm in length, significantly greater than the EU MLS of 45 mm. In addition, the spawning season was identified to take place through the Autumn, the length to weight and length to foot weight was calculated to give an estimation of yield with size, and proportion of immature vs mature was identified to show catch composition. The results of this study will be presented in a report this year.

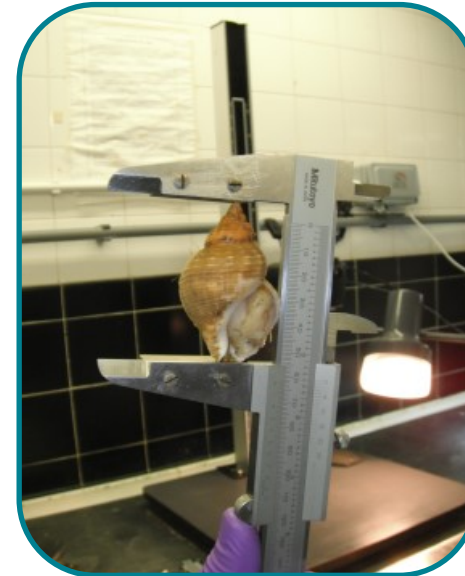
KEIFCA also contribute to the discussions and information shared in the national IFCA Whelk Working Group (WWG) which takes place on a quarterly basis. Much work is going on across the country to identify appropriate ways to quantify whelk stock and KEIFCA have been involved with talks with the Welsh Government, WWG and academics on who best to approach this challenge.

In addition, analysis on catch return data has also begun this year, to identify what social, economic and seasonal drivers may influence the effort which whelk fishers target the fishery. In doing so, we hope to identify the possible indicators that may lead to increased pressures and prepare for how we may address these.

Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science Report



Above: size frequency of whelks caught in Kent and Essex respectively. The red line shows the 45 mm EU MLS and the black hashed the 53mm KEIFCA MLS.



Success Criterion 5 – Outputs

Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 5A) Annual Research Plan		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KEIFCA Annual Research Plan produced 	
ONGOING ACTION: 5B) Annual Research Report		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KEIFCA Annual Research Report produced 	
ONGOING ACTION: 5C) Participate in TAG meetings		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All quarterly meetings attended. • Drew upon expertise for Sabellaria surveys and actively contributed to the TAG meetings in areas of our expertise. 	
ONGOING ACTION: 5D) Sea-going scientific survey capability		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KEIFCA vessels and equipment for the purposes of scientific surveys and data collection were maintained • Maintenance, operation and refitting of vessels were reported to the Authority 	
ONGOING ACTION: 5E) Shore based scientific survey capability		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance was provided for vehicles for shore-based compliance and enforcement • Planning and reporting to the Authority of operation, maintenance and refit of key equipment 	
ONGOING ACTION: 5F) Support development of MPA management measures		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of management for Goodwin Sands MCZ started – see <i>Sabellaria</i> surveys 	Continue to develop management measures following surveys
ONGOING ACTION: 5G) Dispensations from KEIFCA byelaws		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 dispensations were provided from Byelaws for survey and related work in 2020-2021, including Bradwell B, CEFAS surveys, University of Essex, London Gateway, Dover Port and Maldon Council among others. 	The issuing of dispensations will subsequently be taken over by Enforcement team.



Objective completed

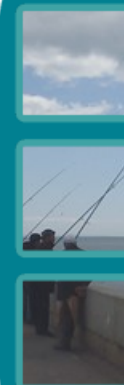


Significant progress made but objective not completed



Minimal progress made

Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 5H) Consultation and engagement with major developments		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fed into the following consultations as a non-statutory consultee Power station: Bradwell B, Cable routing consultations: Five Estuaries, National grid's SeaLink, North Falls 	Continue to feed into assessments, impacts studies and voice concerns
ONGOING ACTION: 5I) Cockle fishery stock assessment and fishery recommendations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed April stock assessment survey, Quota and management recommendations made for TECFO and Outside Fisheries. Cockle report in progress 	
ONGOING ACTION: 5J) Native oyster stock assessment and fishery recommendations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No stock assessment data collected in 2021 owing to COVID 19 restrictions followed by boating issues at critical tie of year. Planned to start later in Sept 2021. 	Surveys have been rescheduled for 2021-2022
ONGOING ACTION: 5K) Whelk EMFF population study		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whelk population study completed. Scientific paper in preparation 	Finalise the report
ONGOING ACTION: 5L) Native Oyster ENORI projects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active participation in ENORI meetings and advice on projects provided 	
ONGOING ACTION: 5M) Long-term small fish surveys		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not possible in 2021 owing to COVID 19 (working with others) 	Surveys will be rescheduled for 2021-2022, if feasible.
ONGOING ACTION: 5N) Juvenile fish use of Essex estuaries		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing advisory and supportive in project. Supported ZSL in the production of a species identification guide. 	



Success Criterion 5 – Outputs

Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 5O) Data analysis and services		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numerous services provided internally and externally to Anglian Water, CEFAS, MMO, NE, Kent Wildlife Trust, and to the public on request. 	
5P) Prepare MCZ Fisheries assessments for Dover-Deal, Dover-Folkstone and Swale MCZs		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 MCZ fisheries assessments drafted 2 were signed off by NE, namely: Blackwater, Crouch, Roach and Colne MCZ and Swanscombe MCZ 	
5Q) MPA education and awareness		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project postponed to December 2021 	Feasibility of project to be evaluated and dropped or planned in for following year
5R) Develop species management plans for fish caught in district under Fisheries Act 2020		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpret the Act and what it means for IFCA Develop a strategy to address FMP requirements 	
5S) Co-supervision of PhD student - Whelk PhD project at the University of Essex		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PhD project cancelled owing to lack of funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find funding, Develop new project Find suitable student for following year
5T) Native Oyster - Fishing industry collaboration project		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project plan drafted but no collaborative survey possible with external partners owing to COVID 19 restrictions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project on hold and options will be investigated for 2021-2022 Oystermen to be updated on plans



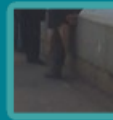
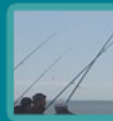
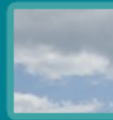
Objective completed



*Significant progress made but
objective not completed*



Minimal progress made



Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
5U) Native Oyster dredge efficiency study with Essex University		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project under development. Continued support from KEIFCA to assess the efficiency of dredges to sample native oysters. 	Provide continued support from KEIFCA to assess the efficiency of dredges to sample native oysters.
5V) Crab and Lobster Fisheries Improvement Project		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KEIFCA playing supportive role in project lead by Eastern IFCA. Project likely to change with the development of FMPs. 	Feed into the Project plan and Needs assessment prepared by EIFCA
5W) Clam population assessment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clam samples collected from all cockle fishing areas. 	Allometric measurements Data analysis Report
5X) Develop relational databases for key shellfish species monitoring and landings data: oysters, clams, whelks and cockles		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Database developed for clams, and new database planned for whelks, oysters and cockles. 	Database development for whelks, oysters and cockles.
5Y) Data analysis automation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several packages developed to automate data analysis building strength to Enforcement reporting, supporting GIS for surveys on boats. Survey design and data reporting. 	Automation of Cockle survey data analysis
5Z) Survey Sabellaria reefs in Goodwin Sands MCZ		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project plan developed Funding secured from Natural England 	Side-scan surveys ARIS surveys Data analysed Report produced

Structure of the Authority

The formation of the Authority

The Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Order 2010 makes provision for the establishment of the Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation District and for the Authority for that district. The Order lays out the membership and proceedings of the Authority and makes provision in relation to the expenses of the Authority and to the reimbursement of members' expenses.

The Order states that the Authority is to consist of 21 members. The Order also makes clear the number of councillors to sit on the Authority (9) the number of "general members" or MMO appointees (10) (of which one member must be an employee of the MMO) and 2 "additional members" drawn from the Environment Agency and Natural England. The Order also lays out how the expenses of the Authority should be divided between the councils.

Relevant Council	Number of members	Percentage payment of KEIFCA levy
Essex County Council	3	43.12%
Kent County Council	3	43.12%
Medway Council	1	7.55%
Southend on Sea Borough Council	1	2.42%
Thurrock Council	1	3.79%

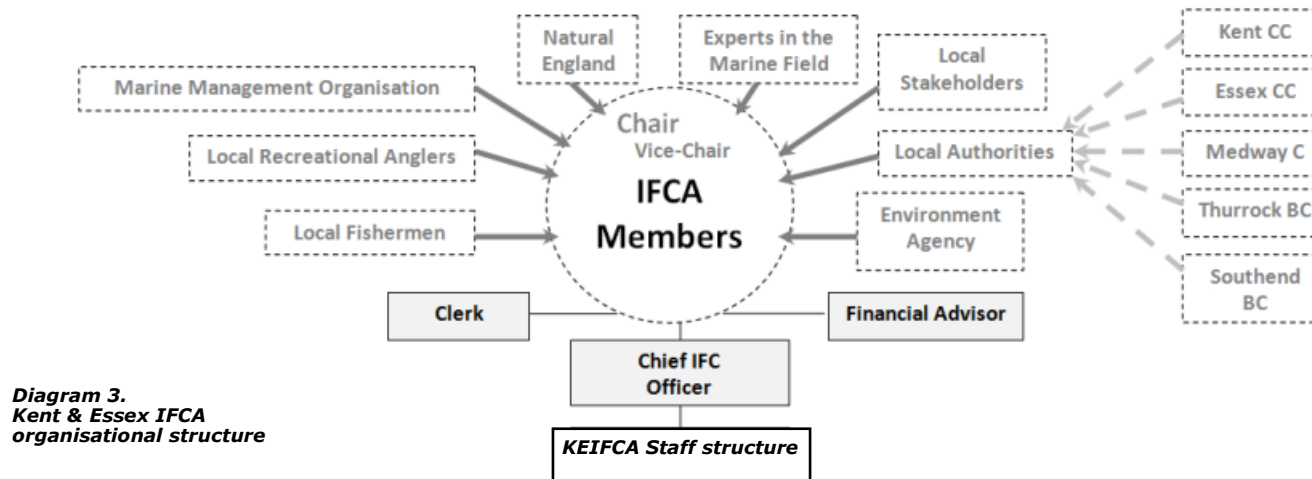
Since the 1st April 2011 local councils have annually received 'New IFCA Burdens' money from Defra via the area based local government grant. This funding is intended to help KEIFCA meet its new duties as stated in MCAA 2009.

List of Members (**Chairman, *Vice-Chairman)

**Cllr J L Lamb	Southend BC	Cllr Jane Fleming	Essex CC
Cllr Nigel Collor	Kent CC	Cllr Mark Coxshall	Thurrock BC
Cllr Tony Hills	Kent CC	Cllr Habib Tejan	Medway BC
Cllr Lottie Parfitt-Reid	Kent CC	Mr Alex Baker	NE representative
Cllr Alan Goggin	Essex CC	Mr Justin Rowley	MMO representative
Cllr Michael Skeels	Essex CC	Mr A Cansdale	EA representative
*Mr P J E Nichols	MMO Appointee	<i>Commercial- finfish</i>	
Mr P Wexham	MMO Appointee	<i>Commercial - finfish</i>	
Mr A Rattley	MMO Appointee	<i>Commercial - shellfish</i>	
Ms Bryony Chapman	MMO Appointee	<i>Marine environment</i>	
Dr L Fonseca	MMO Appointee	<i>Marine environment</i>	
Mr Richard Turner	MMO Appointee	<i>Marine environment and recreational fishing</i>	
Ms Tanya Ferry	MMO Appointee	<i>Marine environment and other</i>	
Mr Eden Hannam	MMO Appointee	<i>Marine Policy</i>	

Governance

Good governance is at the heart of sound decision-making and it is because of this that KEIFCA has already adopted or is about to adopt key working documents that will aid the smooth and transparent working of the Authority (i.e. Code of Conduct, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, register of members' interests and a policy on Members' Allowances/Expenses). As well as this, KEIFCA has formally agreed to use Kent County Council for legal, constitutional, financial and HR support, as well as one-off support on procurement and other key activities.



Members

IFCA members are a vital component of helping KEIFCA deliver many of the key concepts expressed in the IFCA vision, but especially in helping to “secure the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry”.

IFCA members attend the quarterly IFCA meetings, with some members also attending specialist Technical Panel meetings where specific issues are discussed in greater detail; recommendations from these meetings are then taken forward to the next full meeting of the Authority.

The member’s role within the organisation (Diagram 3) is to decide and comment on the strategy and direction of the organisation and to make key strategic decisions (e.g. agree budget, staffing levels, stock management measures, etc.).



Staff

The officers and administration staff implement the strategic decisions that the Authority (i.e. members) have agreed. The IFCA staff, led by the Chief IFC Officer (Diagram 4), are responsible for the ongoing operations of KEIFCA (e.g. appointing staff, setting and managing staff performance, implementing the agreed stock management measures and enforcement etc.) and reporting back to the Members on key issues and matters for discussion each quarter.

At present KEIFCA employs 14 full time staff, 1 part-time staff a part time Clerk and a part time financial advisor. In addition to this the Authority also contributes to the services of the Chair and Vice-chair. The structure and key roles of each member of staff are laid out in Diagram 4. One of the areas that KEIFCA is continuing to develop in the organisation is the ability of each officer to take on each other's roles, and expand their knowledge base so that each officer is competent in a wide spectrum of roles and duties. This approach will give KEIFCA a huge amount of flexibility in being able to deliver all of its duties and to react to events.

Staff performance and assessment

KEIFCA currently apply a system used by Kent County Council (KCC) for staff performance monitoring. The system is based on a yearly review of an employee's performance using a series of objectives that are agreed between the employee's line manager and the employee. The objectives and the outputs of the employee relate back to the overall objectives in the annual plan. Dependent upon how well an employee meets, or exceeds, the targets set during this process, an employee may receive a small percentage increase related to their salary dependant on budgetary constraints and pay scale.

Training

Achieving training targets has been challenging in the 2020-21 period due to the COVID-19 pandemic cancelling face to face courses that usually run. Despite this, our staff continue to work hard to gain the qualifications and experience they need in order to fulfil the functions of the IFCA. There now exists within KEIFCA a core understanding, level of experience and knowledge related to the range of work of the IFCA. The quarterly tasking's process (where staff report on their progress every quarter and identify new goals), has developed into a useful tool to help both staff members and senior management prioritise work streams and identify key issues. Important training areas include developing IFC officer enforcement and seamanship skills, building on survey skills within the organisation and developing officers' ability to undertake a range of surveys and help staff expand their IT skills (including using GIS and website maintenance). Important training areas have included; developing IFC officer enforcement and seamanship skills, building on survey skills within the organisation and developing officers' ability to undertake a range of surveys and helping staff expand their IT skills (including using GIS and website maintenance).

Staff Structure

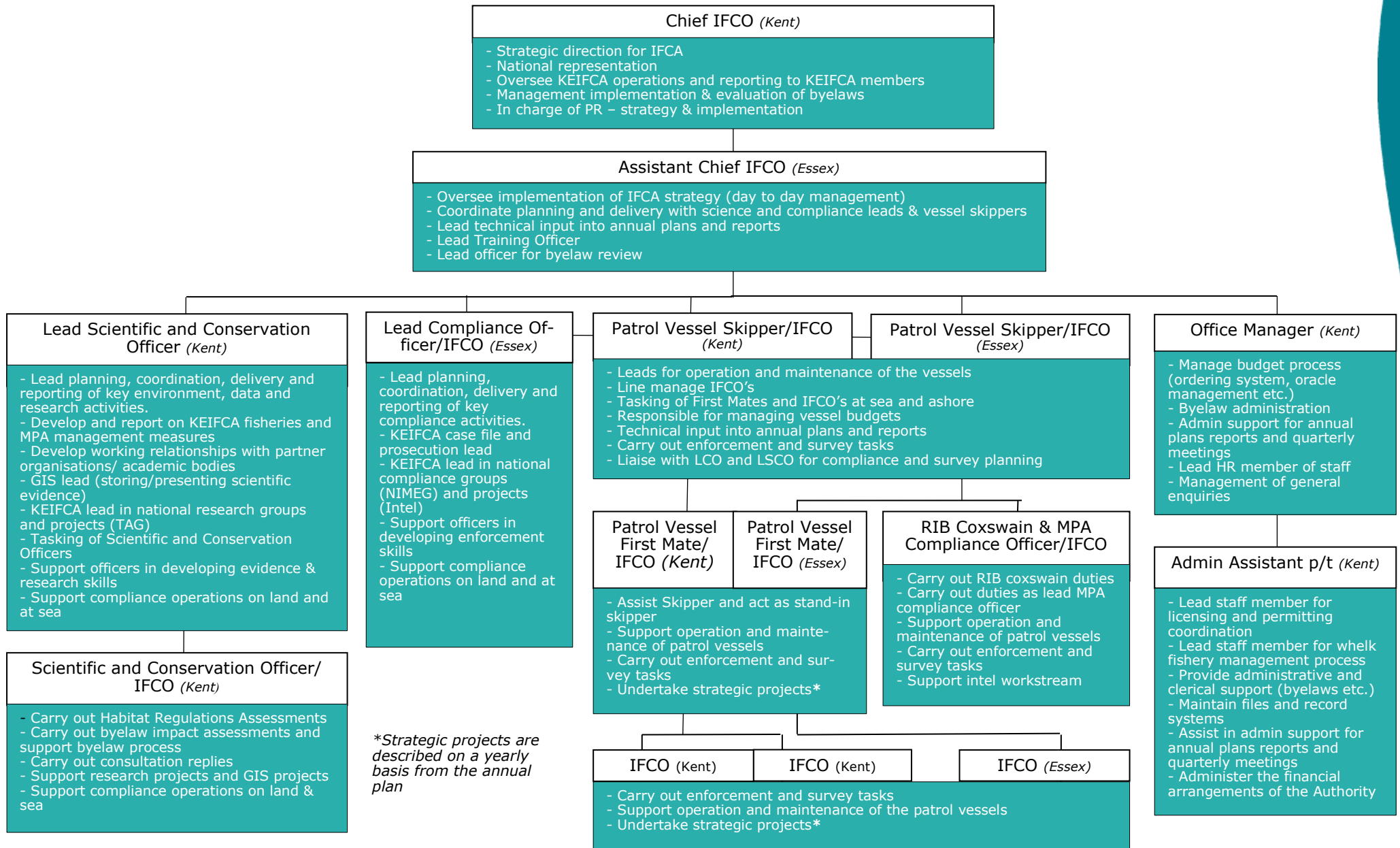


Diagram 4. Kent & Essex IFCA staff structure and key tasks

KEIFCA Assets & Resources

2 offices

Main office in Ramsgate, Kent
Second office in Brightlingsea, Essex



2 patrol vessels



FPV Tamesis 12m, Brightlingsea
FPV Nerissa 17m, Ramsgate

2 RIBs

FPV Vigilant 8m, standalone RIB
FPR Nereus 4.5m, boarding RIB
launched from FPV Nerissa stern ramp



4 vehicles



2 Toyota Hilux's
2 VW Caddy's

KEIFCA strategically working with partners

Joined up government

KEIFCA has worked in conjunction with the other IFCAs to develop MoUs with key public authority stakeholders. The MoUs lay out in broad terms how KEIFCA will work constructively with the Marine Management Organisation, Environment Agency, Natural England and Centre for Environment, Fisheries & Aquaculture Science.

As well as the detailed MoUs the MMO, EA and NE shared objectives have been included in our annual planning process which means that the cooperation and coordination between agencies is hard wired into the system. KEIFCA is looking to build on this relationship to establish protocols of how information will flow between organisations using this mechanism.

Association of Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (AIFCA)

KEIFCA played an important part in the setting up and effective running of the AIFCAs. The Association is an important national body that allows all 10 IFCAs to speak with one voice at a national level on key topics. KEIFCA have strongly supported the Association on national issues such as EU Exit and COVID protocols. KEIFCA see that the Association can act as an important body in helping IFCAs coordinate their actions and resources efficiently.

Technical Advisory Group (TAG)

KEIFCA continues to support and work through the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to help it achieve its aims:

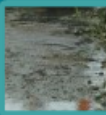
- To improve the quality and extent of fisheries management information through better coordination and dissemination of fisheries related scientific research.
- Define and apply best practice relating to the scientific & technical functions and responsibilities of IFCAs.

National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG)

KEIFCA played an important part in the establishment of NIMEG. The purpose of the group is to bring together expertise in the field of regulation and enforcement within inshore fisheries and marine conservation in order to develop and support joint working and consistency; identify and share best practice; and to promote professionalism and competence. KEIFCA currently provide a secretarial function for the group.

Working with national and local associations and partnerships

KEIFCA continues to build on the current partnerships it has already developed with a wide range of organisations, ranging from fishermen's associations, wildlife trusts, coastal partnerships, harbour authorities to power stations. KEIFCA also sees the need to develop new working relationships with organisations affected by the remit of IFCAs and it is hoped that the communication strategy will help engage with these communities in a productive way. KEIFCA sits on a number of local and national management groups ranging from national enforcement working groups to local marine protected area management meetings. KEIFCA also strongly supports and contributes to the Shellfish Association of Great Britain as well as the Thames Estuary Partnership.



Stakeholder engagement, communication and consultation

Compliments and Complaints: Over the past year no formal complaints or compliments, and have retained our complaint procedure as to deal with any which may occur in future. Two Freedom of Information requests were received; both were responded to and information provided within the required timescales. All other issues have been addressed by the Authority as they have arisen.

Our people

We recognise that we rely on our staff to work with our stakeholders in delivering KEIFCA's objectives. We will:

- ensure our staff are trained and competent to deliver our services.
- ensure our staff treat every user of KEIFCA services as they would wish to be treated themselves, with respect, courtesy and understanding.
- train all staff to work constructively with stakeholders.

Reaching us

We will provide different ways to help people contact us and access the services they need. We will:

- make information about KEIFCA and its services easily available.
- publish opening hours and describe how to access services.
- Keep our website updated.
- provide a welcoming, friendly environment, easily accessible to all.

How we communicate

We want to make every contact a positive experience for our stakeholders. We will:

- always listen carefully to what stakeholders and colleagues say and be polite and honest.
- give a contact name and details.
- let people know what will happen next.
- point people in the right direction if we can't help.
- provide a suitable environment and ensure confidentiality.
- write letters, emails and publications that are easy to read and understand.
- respond to letters and emails promptly and when that is not possible, we will send an acknowledgement with details of who is dealing with the matter.
- let people know if there will be a delay in responding.
- ensure answer-phone messages are clear and tell people when to expect a reply

Involving our stakeholders

We will seek to understand what our stakeholders need, and develop our services around our stakeholders' expectations. We will:

- regularly ask stakeholders for their opinions.
- ensure that our stakeholders help shape the services we deliver.
- be honest about what we can and what we can't do.

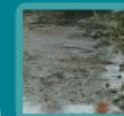
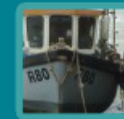
Measuring how we perform

We want to make sure that our commitment to working closely with our stakeholders is making a difference, and we will assess our success by measuring what our stakeholders value. We will:

- seek regular feedback on stakeholder satisfaction.
- publish details of how stakeholders can tell us about complaints, pay compliments and give us feedback and investigate all complaints thoroughly, as quickly as possible, and learn from our mistakes (www.kentandessex-ifca.gov.uk).
- train all staff in core standards of behaviour and how to interact with stakeholders.
- continue our commitment to make 100% of our services (where appropriate) available electronically.
- respond where possible to all public enquiries within 10 working days.
- issue licences and permits within 10 working days of receipt of a correctly completed form.

Abbreviations

ACIFCO	Assistant Chief Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer	MaCAA 2009	Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009
AIFCA	Association of Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities	MCSS	Monitoring and Control Surveillance System
ASFC	Association of Sea Fisheries Committees	MCZ	Marine Conservation Zones
AA	Appropriate Assessment	MMO	Marine Management Organisation
CEFAS	Centre for Environment, Fisheries & Aquaculture Science	MoU	Memoranda of Understanding
CFP	Common Fisheries Policy	MSFD	Marine Strategy Framework Directive
CIFCO	Chief Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer	MPA	Marine Protected Area
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
EA	Environment Agency	MSP	Marine Spatial Plans
ECC	Essex County Council	NE	Natural England
EFF	European Fisheries Fund	NIMEG	National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment	nm	Nautical Miles
EIFCA	Eastern Inshore Fishing and Conservation Authority	RSA	Recreational Sea Angling
EMS	European Marine Site	RIB	Rigid Inflatable Boat
GIS	Geographical Information System	SAC	Special Area of Conservation
IFCO	Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer	SBC	Southend Borough Council
IFCA	Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority	SxIFCA	Sussex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
KCC	Kent County Council	SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
KEIFCA	Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority	SPA	Special Protection Area
LSCO	Lead Scientific and Conservation Officer	TBC	Thurrock Borough Council
MC	Medway Council	TLSE	Test of Likely Significant Effect
MCA	Marine Coastguard Agency		



Meeting our duties

The Marine and Coastal Access Act, 2009 states:

(s.) **178** Annual Report

(1) As soon as is reasonably practical after the end of each financial year, every IFC authority must prepare a report on its activities in that year.

(2) A report under this section must be in such form and contain such information as the Secretary of State may require.

(3) A report under this section must be published in such manner as the Secretary of State may require.

A copy of the Marine and Coastal Access Act is available online at: www.legislation.gov.uk



Further Copies

This document can be downloaded from:
www.kentandessex-ifca.gov.uk

Alternatively a hard copy can be viewed at:
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