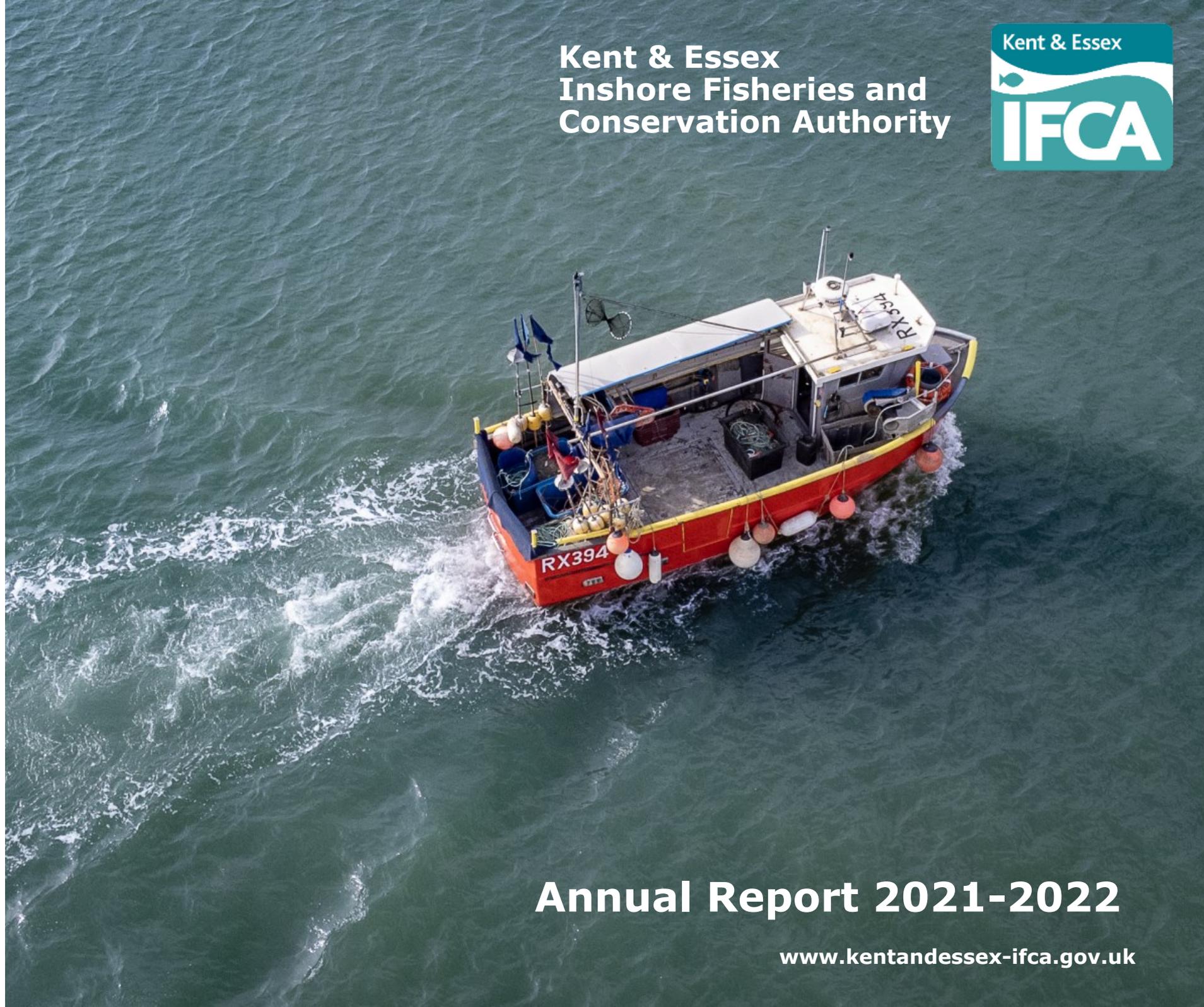


**Kent & Essex
Inshore Fisheries and
Conservation Authority**



Annual Report 2021-2022

www.kentandessex-ifca.gov.uk

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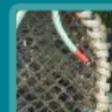
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Background

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 2021-2022 (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** - IFCA's 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** - IFCA's implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime.
- **Success Criterion 3: Management measures** - IFCA's 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** - IFCA's have appropriate governance in place and staff are trained and professional.
- **Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science** - IFCA's make the best use of evidence to deliver their objectives.

Overview— 2021-22 at a glance...

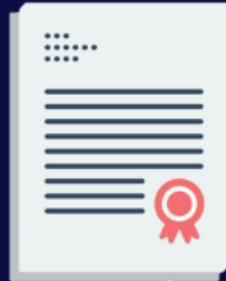
KEIFCA 2021-2022

14 staff



52

Consultation responses



7,052 million

Cockle population in the Thames



1373

Cockle samples taken

236 km²

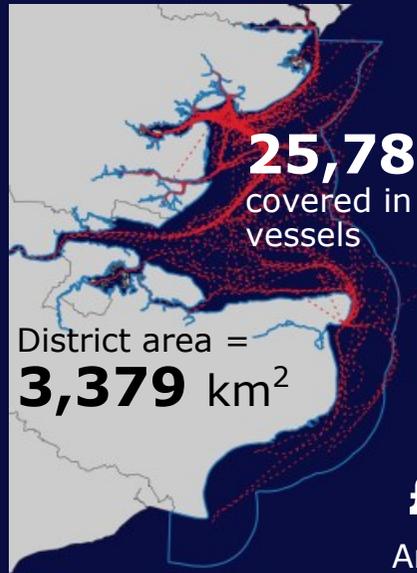
of MPAs with protective management measures



867
Marine mammal sightings



316
Fisheries inspections



36
Whelk permits issued

43

Educational signs installed



£900 K
Annual budget



19
Authority members



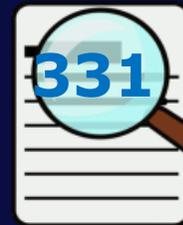
13
Scientific Dispensations issued



13
Staff training courses completed



67
Fisheries Offences recorded



331
Intelligence reports processed

Twitter followers



Foreword

Chairman's foreword

A lot can change in a year, with the combination of Brexit and COVID-19 the Authority and the local fishing industry has worked through a year of significant upheaval. The impacts of the pandemic dramatically shaped the year, as the 4-step COVID-19 recovery plan and the rolling back of COVID-19 measures framed how we could all work. In May we held our first face-to-face Authority meeting for over a year and gradually returned to business as usual as the specific COVID-19 measures fell away. Some practices have remained however, with far more meetings held online, resulting in a new way of doing business both internally and externally.

At an international fisheries level, the Trade and Cooperation Agreement now sets out the new UK – EU fisheries relationship for the next 5 years, resulting in more UK quota. As we work through the detail, and implementation, of the new system, hopefully the new quota can be swapped or traded for locally important species fished by Kent and Essex fishermen.

At a national level the shaping and development of Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs) has been a significant workstream both for KEIFCA and the Association of IFCAs. In January 2021, DEFRA initiated a consultation on the draft Joint Fisheries Statement that included a list of proposed FMPs. Building on this, DEFRA then tasked specific groups with developing FMPs, and IFCAs are now feeding their data and knowledge into these groups and helping them engage with the local fishing industry. The ambition of everyone is that more focused national plans will help us move towards a more prosperous and sustainable industry as well as provide a better framework for regional fisheries management to work within.

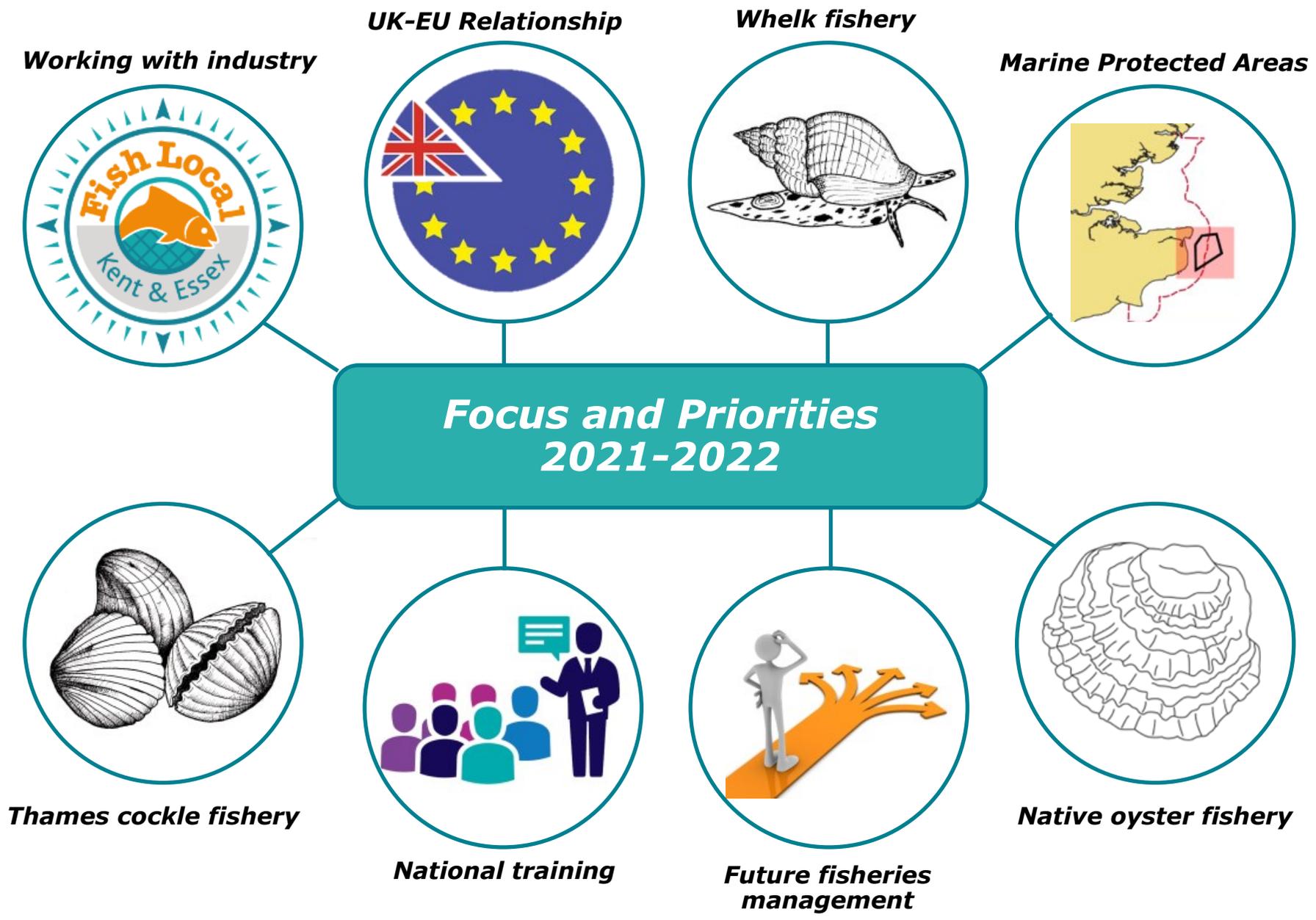
Our challenges will continue as we forge ahead and progress with the important decisions that will help shape our local communities and the natural environment. We will continue to provide opportunities for people to both get involved in, and understand, the decisions we make. KEIFCA members are at heart of our success, and I would also like to acknowledge the expertise and dedication of our members and thank them for their continuing support especially as we work through the detailed cockle management review. I would also like to particularly thank our Vice-Chair, John Nichols, who has supported me tirelessly throughout the year.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Lamb". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

JOHN LAMB
KEIFCA Chair

2021-2022 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 Order 2013.

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

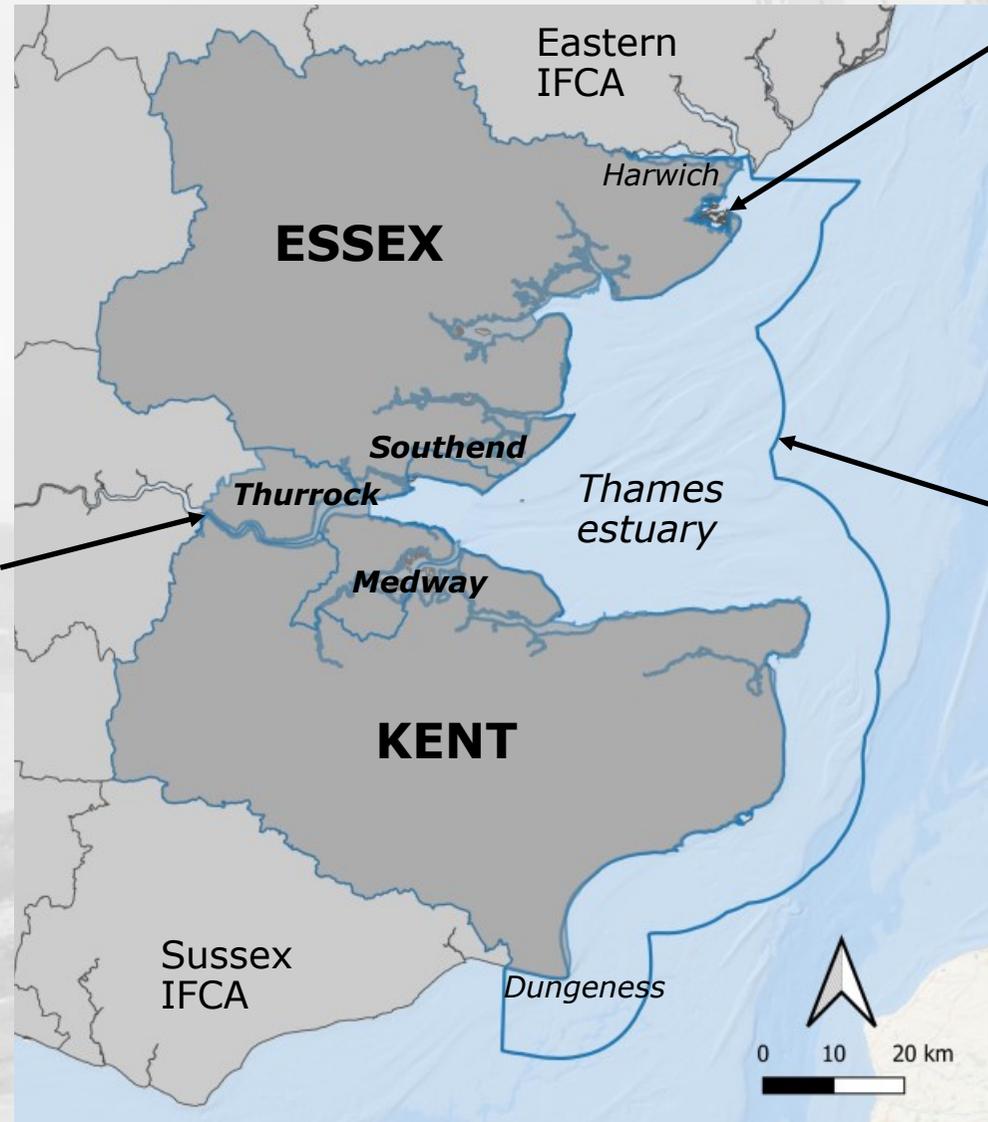
Chart of the KEIFCA district

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 six 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

The Idea

Forged from the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Fish Local project (www.fishlocal.org) created new ways for the local fishing industry to educate, promote and sell local fresh fish. Building on this success, and a renewed appetite from the local seafood industry to develop domestic demand for local fish, we have refocused the Fish Local project to look at creative ways of promoting the amazing seafood caught right on our doorstep.



Selecting a local species to promote as a regional speciality

Fish Local has always been led by drive from the local fishing community, and in the last year we have continued to do so by holding focused meetings as well as speaking directly to several industry insiders and other stakeholders. From these meetings it was decided that the best way to promote sustainable local fish into UK markets would be to select an undervalued yet abundant local species and remodel it as a highly desirable "regional speciality". To do this, the Fish Local team listened to a wide range of stakeholders about the advantages and disadvantages of selecting different fish species to focus effort and future promotion and branding efforts.

Initially the project considered all 52 of the main species of finfish and shellfish we find in Kent and Essex waters that might benefit from better promotion using Fish Local. To narrow down the selection, we used criteria that were based around species that were: 1) locally abundant and sustainable 2) not currently popular within the UK market, 3) a species with potential to develop a narrative around local speciality. This enabled us to create a shortlist of five realistic contender species, which was eventually whittled down to one. Between the top two choices of Smooth Hound and the Herring it was a close call, however, the evidence suggested that Herring should be taken forward.

Local herring is a prime choice as it can be fished sustainably in a highly targeted and low impact fishery, can be incredibly locally abundant and has the greatest potential to create a local speciality in the region due to the internationally recognised Thames-Blackwater subspecies that occurs in our waters.



Above: Thames herring is a local subspecies that can be caught sustainably in large numbers in a highly targeted, low impact fishery using drift nets.

Success Criterion 1: Communications and Engagement

Case study: Fish Local continued

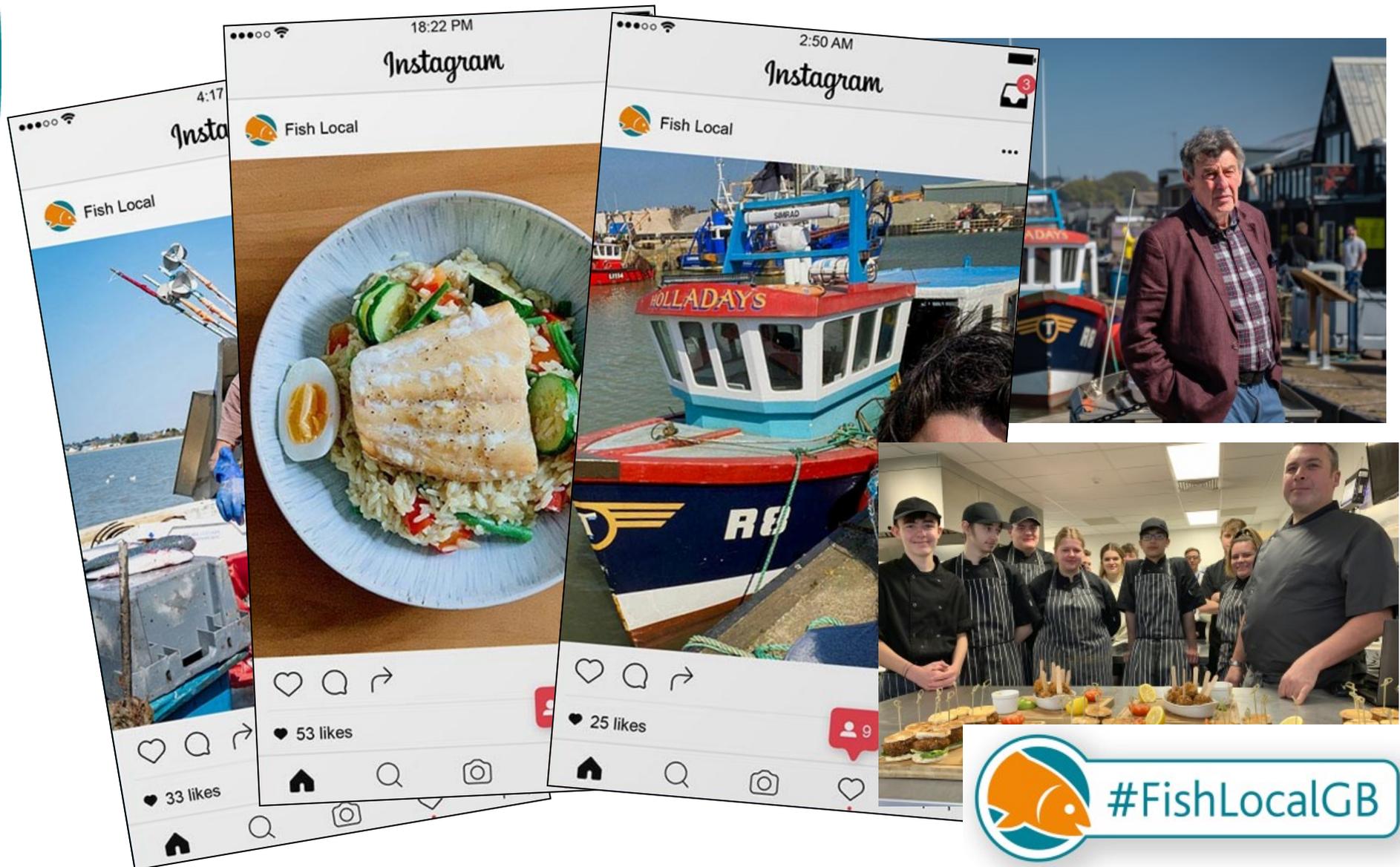
Outcomes of the project this year

- We have highlighted a species (herring) that can be viably added to the supply chain. It has the backing of the industry as well as the likes of CEFAS, MCS, the local IFCA and the Minister. It can be fished sustainably and can be controlled by local fisheries management.
- We have given Kent & Essex caught herring a relevant, ownable identity with no gross negatives and support from the community and the industry
- We have brought attention to the local industry via wide press attention across all of the main media channels, while connecting young people to the industry. A particular success was working with Dover Christ Church Academy where we had them making Herring dishes for Fish & Chip and a short documentary about the local industry.
- We have shown that fish eating consumers in Kent & Essex not only have very few issues with herring, but they would also choose locally caught Herring.
- We have established that there is a desire to research the exact species of Herring most commonly found in the Thames Estuary. There is a reasonable chance we could show that the Thames Variant Herring, currently only recognised in the Blackwater, is in fact the Herring caught all over the Thames Estuary. There lies the potential of our newly named species with its own MCS rating in the good fish guide and further classification as well as being recognized as a local specialty. There is currently a scientific interest in Herring.
- We can keep momentum to bring Silver Shore Herring to the shore. We have interest from hospitality in Kent & Essex, such as Shepherd Neame and Amanda's in Margate to put it on their menus while purchasing from local fishers. We also have local fishers say that are going to go out for local herring when the season starts in October 2022.
- Local herring, that was heavily under utilised, now has a route to market with a fresh outlook, local interest and a sustainable future.



Jesse Seaward, Partner at Band Agency

Success Criterion 1: Communications and Engagement



Above and right: examples of Fish Local promotions from the last year, including Dover school student's newly created Herring dishes

Link to the students' documentary: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r0ID7zTJ0a0>

Clip from ITV Meridian news who covered a tasting at the school: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9vNhOq_MyY

Success Criterion 1: Communications and Engagement



Success Criterion 1 – Outputs

Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 1A) Association of IFCAAs – working to coordinate national IFCAAs policy and approach		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributed financially to the funding of the AIFCA • Attended 3 AIFCA meetings and took forward meeting actions • CIFCO sits 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 IFCA and partner organisation compliance activities.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended 4 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 IFCAAs 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 IFCAAs). Meetings primarily focusing on national policy. (SHARED OBJECTIVE: MMO)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21 Fisheries Management Plan meetings • 10 Chief Officers Group meetings • 7 Natural England meetings • 9 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 	
ONGOING ACTION: 1H) Website content		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New website developed to ensure aims of consultation process for the review of the cockle fishery within Kent & Essex are clear and transparent 	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). 	in process
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 relevant fishing activities to check for compliance with the legislation that we enforce.

As ever, we maintain a risk-based approach to enforcement, using the best available intelligence to target and focus our compliance monitoring and inspections, 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.

2021-22 has seen the workplace return to business as usual for the most part as the nation moved out of COVID-19 restrictions. Officers were able to resume the full suite of enforcement operations, in particular those such as boarding inspections at sea which were scaled back to high-risk targets only under COVID-19 protocols. This change is reflected by statistics such as the number of inspections compared with the previous year and the number of offences detected in the 2021-22 period, as well as by a welcome increase in joint enforcement work with partners such as the Marine Management Organisation, Police and Environment Agency.

Unfortunately the legacy of COVID-19 did continue to impact some aspects of our work, a prime example being the limited opportunities for formal training courses for officers throughout 2021, particularly practical courses held in person. As such, increasing the breadth and frequency of enforcement training will remain a priority into the coming year.

Hayden Hurst, Lead Compliance Officer



Success Criterion 2: Enforcement at a glance...

Enforcement 2021/22

Number of shore patrols



137

Gear sightings



338

Fishing vessel sightings

8943

Nautical miles
patrolled



FPV Nerissa



143

Vessel inspections at sea



45

Gear
inspections

FPV Thamesis

8618

Nautical miles
patrolled



8222

Nautical miles
patrolled

FPV Vigilant



331

Intelligence
reports
processed



67 Offences
recorded



202

Inspections in port



Success Criterion 2: Compliance and Enforcement Report

Case study: Bass compliance - joint agency operations

European seabass is an iconic species. These powerful silver-scaled fish can reach sizes of over 1m, and fish have large mouths which are indicative of their predatory lifestyles. Bass migrate hundreds of miles each year from offshore breeding grounds in winter to coastal waters in spring in order to spawn. Most juvenile bass spend the first three or four years of their lives in estuaries (the network of shallow estuaries off Essex being a prime juvenile bass habitat), before joining the adult migration in their fourth year, although typically they will not reach sexual maturity in cold Northern European waters until they are six to seven years old.

Bass are a favourite target of recreational anglers as a sport fish, and are also very popular to eat, making them one of the most valuable fish for commercial fishermen, fetching over £10 per kg at wholesale markets. Kent and Essex have a long history of bass fishing among both the commercial and recreational fishing communities, although in recent years this iconic species has been under threat.

Several years ago scientific analyses confirmed that bass stocks across Europe were suffering unsustainable fishing mortality, resulting in a call for an 80% reduction in catches to turn the situation around. In response, EU-wide legislation was put in place to restrict fishing for seabass, which remain in place in 2022 as stocks are still in recovery from this historic low. Recreational anglers are currently limited to 2 bass per day, and commercial fishermen can only retain bass under a specific authorisation using a limited selection of permitted gear types including fixed gillnets, demersal trawl/seines, or hook and line. For each permitted gear types there is a limit on how much bass can be retained, and all other methods of fishing, including the previously popular method of drift netting for bass, are currently prohibited.

Although the majority of fishers are compliant with bass regulations, unfortunately where there is money to be made some individuals will operate outside of the law, especially in some parts of Essex. In these cases, developing intelligence led, targeted operations to intercept and prevent illegal fishing is necessary. In the case of bass, the powers for enforcing regulations lies with both IFCA's and the Marine Management Organisation. Joint working with partner agencies has always been a core part of KEIFCA's enforcement operations, and is essential when dealing with issues where we have shared responsibility. With good communication between operational leads, joint agency operations can be highly effective, as we are able to pool each organisation's assets and specialist expertise to robustly counter any compliance risk.



Success Criterion 2: Compliance and Enforcement Report

Building on intelligence of illegal bass activity off the Essex coast our 2022 joint operations targeted a range, including but not limited to:

- Fishing for bass without an authorisation.
- Drift netting: this is a highly efficient method of targeting bass where fishers deploy a long, unanchored gillnet which drifts with the tidal current over a wide area. As bass tend to swim in the water column rather than the seabed, it targets them very effectively. Drift netting is prohibited.
- Mis-reporting of gear type : for example fraudulently recording bass as line caught when gill nets have been used, because hook and line has a greater annual catch allowance.
- Misallocation of fishing vessel: bass catches are fraudulently attributed to a different fishing vessel than the one that actually caught them (usually a small vessel that is inactive) a method of using manipulating paperwork to increase seemingly legal bass catches.

In 2021-22 two joint KEIFCA and MMO enforcement operations were enacted to address this. KEIFCA's primary role was to provide seagoing assets to intercept and deter vessels from drift netting at sea, and to provide the MMO with access to fishing vessels coming into port on floating moorings. Meanwhile the MMO were responsible for following the paper trail of bass catches to detect anomalies where catches were misallocated, and to provide support on shore for landing inspections. The two operations yielded good results, with 5 vessels intercepted drift netting for bass, and two other offences being detected including retention of bass from a vessel without authorisation, and misallocation of bass catches between vessels. Both of these offences are currently under investigation with a view to taking enforcement action, thereby demonstrating the benefits of KEIFCA and the MMO working in tandem to robustly tackle illegal fishing in the district.



Success Criterion 2: Compliance and Enforcement Report

Case study: KEIFCA prosecutions

Enforcement of fisheries and marine conservation legislation is essential for the protection of stocks and the environment, and ultimately supports the achievement of Good Environmental Status indicators outlined in the UK Marine Strategy. Most marine users are responsible and conscientious of regulations and understand that they are in place for a reason, and KEIFCA will always strive to educate to achieve compliance in the first instance. However where it is necessary, KEIFCA officers have full legal powers to deal with offences and take instances of non-compliance extremely seriously. As an authority we have a range of enforcement sanctions at our disposal, including official warnings, out of court financial administrative penalties (FAP), and prosecutions in court. In the last year KEIFCA have taken two cases for prosecution after offences were detected in two of our major fisheries: the Thames Cockle Fishery and the Whelk Permit Fishery.

The first case concerned a breach of regulations within the Thames Estuary Cockle Fishery Order (TECFO), specifically the use of a dredge which was larger than the approved size. The offence was detected by officers following a boarding inspection at sea while the cockle dredger was fishing. The vessel was directed to port and for the oversized dredge to be seized as evidence, but on arrival at port the master of the fishing vessel refused to remove the non-compliant dredge from the boat when directed to by officers. This resulted in an additional offence being recorded against the skipper for failing to comply with a direction given by an enforcement officer. The full circumstances of the case were investigated and legal advice recommended the case be brought for prosecution. The case was heard in Folkestone Magistrates Court where the defendants (including the master and the owner of the vessel) plead guilty to all charges. Following this the master and owner of the vessel were fined, and ordered to pay costs, totalling £11,064.



Success Criterion 2: Compliance and Enforcement Report

The second case was taken to court following an offence detected in the whelk permit fishery. Our officers carry out regular compliance checks for the KEIFCA whelk fishery flexible permit byelaw by hauling and inspecting fleets of whelk pots on patrol vessels. When gear is hauled aboard, firstly we check that all pots are fitted with KEIFCA issued whelk permit tags as required under the byelaw as a means of limiting the number of pots to 300 for each permit holder. If pots are found without permit tags, there is a risk that extra pots (more than 300) are being used, giving an unfair advantage over other permit holders and risks the sustainability of local whelk stocks that are crucial to so many inshore fishermen. Secondly, officers will check each pot is fitted with at least ten 25mm escape holes as required by the byelaw as a measure to enable juvenile whelks to exit the pots unharmed.

During gear hauling operations in 2021, officers found a fleet of gear set inside the District which contained a significant number of non-compliant whelk pots, lacking both permit tags and the correct escape holes.

The gear was therefore seized as evidence for an investigation, which revealed that the owner of the gear had committed a further offence of failing to submit catch returns. Following an interview under caution with the master of the fishing vessel used to set the illegal gear, KEIFCA legal advisors recommended issuing a Financial Administrative Penalty (FAP) of £250 to settle the case. However, the FAP was not paid which left no choice but for the case to be progressed to court.

Both defendants (the master and the owner of the vessel) were summonsed to Folkestone magistrates court and maintained a plea of not guilty at the beginning of the trial. After hearing evidence magistrates found both defendants to be guilty of both offences. The court noted that the defendant's had been offered the £250 FAP but did not pay, meaning significant expenses for the local authority had been wasted. The court imposed fines and costs totalling £2,780.

This case sent a strong message to the whelk fishing community that all permit holders will be treated fairly and equally, and crucially that if any person attempts to gain an unfair advantage over other fishers by breaking the rules, KEIFCA will act decisively to ensure any potential gains made from illegal fishing are quickly reversed.

Hayden Hurst, Lead Compliance Officer

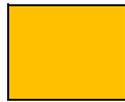


Success Criterion 2 – Outputs

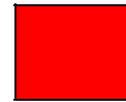
Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
NEW ACTION: 2X) EU Exit enforcement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopted national strategy from MMO on EU Exit enforcement approach. Maintained core communication channels with MMO/ DEFRA/Ops to ensure updated intel and was disseminated. Memorandum of understanding: working arrangement including costings for MMO for patrol vessel charter work in place. 	COMPLETED No further action required
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. KEIFCA representative sits on steering groups within NIMEG for investigations, C&E strategy and FAP development. Plans for updated C&E strategy will be delivered in next period in line with national guidance agreed between IFCA's at NIMEG. 	
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 (cockles and bass) 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 including Environment Agency, Border Force, and MMO. Increased emphasis on filling intelligence gaps based on the number of reports submitted 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. 	



Objective completed



Significant progress made but objective not completed



Minimal progress made

Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 2C) Enforcement systems		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intel: 331 intelligence reports processed. Training given to officers on a individual needs basis to foster best practise and improve standards. Relevant intel for partner agencies gathered and disseminated. Improved reporting/awareness of intel between partner agencies relating via attendance at TCG meetings and secured KEIFCA access to national (MMO) intelligence database via NIMEG. • TCG content updated: inclusion of dispensations active and national vessel of interest lists. • MCSS: sea patrol data and offence data (PFV) submitted to MCSS. Steps taken to improve input of landing inspection data for MCSS including officer training and access to MCSS for individual officers. • COVID sitreps and response groups discontinued as no longer required, in line with government advice and subject to review. • Enforcement SharePoint site used on a daily basis by officers. "Enforcement Record System" used to record all inspection data, vessel ID monitored and maintained by a duty officer in each county. • Case file management system implemented following national model. • Patrol planning system updated and streamlined, now in use on daily basis by officers in the field. Reporting on outputs has improved and become easier as a result. 	Improve MCSS data input
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 Compliance and Enforcement Strategy. • National protocol and best practises adopted via NIMEG. • X2 case files taken to court, both guilty verdicts and therefore successful prosecutions. X5 FAPs issued and paid. X6 official written warnings issued. • Some formal training for officers (including investigative interviewing Red Snapper course) but still hampered by COVID restrictions and delays. Normal delivery of courses should resume in the next financial year under direction of NLTO. On-the-job training and feedback from supervision of LCO given to officers routinely when building case files and gathering evidence. 	



Success Criterion 2 – Outputs

Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
<p>ONGOING ACTION: 2E) Sea-going enforcement asset management</p>		<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. 	
<p>ONGOING ACTION: 2F) Enforcement activities – sea-based</p>		<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. 	
<p>ONGOING ACTION: 2H) Enforcement activities – shore-based</p>		<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. 	



Objective completed



Significant progress made but objective not completed



Minimal progress made

Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 2I) Enforcement training		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation programme undertaken by a select number of IFCOs. • Updates to legislation and procedures disseminated to officers by ACIFCO and LCO accordingly • 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 procedure. • 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 SAF-FA warrants. Also 7 EA staff cross-warranted to enforce KEIFCA byelaws. 	Increase formal IFCO training
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 	Increase formal IFCO training following COVID
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. 	
2M) Dispensations from KEIFCA byelaws		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13 dispensations were provided from Byelaws for survey and related work, including Bradwell B, CEFAS surveys, University of Essex, Environment Agency and Maldon Council among others. • Alteration made to dispensations to reduce impact on sensitive protected areas. 	



Success Criterion 3: Management Measures

Case study: Thames cockle fishery review

On the 28 September 2024 the TECFO, which started in 1994, will end, providing a timely opportunity to review how cockle stocks are managed across the District. The Thames cockle fisheries provide income and jobs for many fishermen and, with coastal towns like Leigh-on-Sea and Whitstable, provide tourism, cultural and historic links between the cockle fisheries and wider society.

The fisheries also take place with a complex mosaic of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and the cockle stocks provide food for a wide range of bird and fish species, whilst also providing other wider environmental benefits such as filtering seawater and CO2 capture.

Balancing the needs of different stakeholders; be it local community needs, current CFFPB permit holders, current TECFO licence holders, other fishers working within the cockle industry, cocklers working in the Wash, environmental NGOs, or other commercial fishermen from the Thames and beyond, is a significant challenge.

The review process started with general evidence gathering exercise or 'listening phase' where we gathered views and ideas from a wide range of stakeholders. Key to this approach was to understand what works well within the current fisheries management system and where stakeholders believe changes need to be made.

To best capture views and ideas, a bespoke engagement and consultation process was developed, with a specific questionnaire and recorded oral evidence sessions.

The Listening Phase consultation started on the 27 September and ran for 6 weeks, with emails being sent out to stakeholders and the questionnaire going live on the KEIFCA website. KEIFCA officers worked with Thames Estuary Partnership to promote the consultation to the wider stakeholder community.

KEIFCA officers then started engaging with fishers around the coast and posters were put up and business cards handed out with key details of how and when to engage in the process. A two-day filmed oral evidence hearing was held at Thurrock Hotel on the 20 and 21 October and provided a good opportunity for fishermen and stakeholders to talk directly to Authority Members and express their views. The session helped add a different type of evidence into the decision-making process and helped capture personal experience and examples which would have most likely become lost in the written evidence. A total of 202 emails, 224 e-bulletins and 53 paper copies of the questionnaire were sent, in addition to 70 business cards which were distributed across the district by Fishery Officers. Of the 35 bookings for the oral evidence sessions held on 20-21 October 25 people attended and a total of 50 questionnaire responses were received.

Dominic Bailey, Assistant Chief Officer

Success Criterion 3: Management Measures

Below: KEIFCA developed a dedicated website to help stakeholders navigate through the review of future cockle fishery management and engage in the consultation process, rolled into a "one-stop-shop" platform.

cocklereview.kentandessex-ifca.gov.uk

The screenshot shows the website's navigation bar with the Kent & Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) logo on the left. A horizontal timeline in the center marks the following stages: Background, Listening Phase, Consultation 1, Consultation 2 (highlighted with a blue circle), Consultation 3, Consultation 4, and Statutory Consultation. A hamburger menu icon is on the right.

Consultation process for reviewing and developing future cockle management

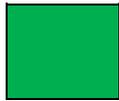


Above: selection of background reports available on the website to provide stakeholders with the information required to make informed decisions on consultation responses.



Success Criterion 3 – Outputs

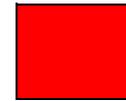
Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 3A) Cockle and Whelk Administration e.g. producing, collating & sending out licence info & licences, and permits. Arranging and managing cockle industry meetings		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processed 28 cockle permits and 14 licence applications • Produced 3 cockle fishery update letters • Held industry meetings to discuss management measures for cockle fishery • Processed 34 whelk permit applications • Produced 1 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"> • Worked with DEFRA and the MMO to get the Whelk fishery flexible permit byelaw and the Vessel length and engine power byelaw signed off by the Minister. 	
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"> • Lead IFCA for coordinating national IFCA Brexit workstream, feeding into DEFRA coordination group • Attended meetings with partners regarding Brexit planning • Dialled in to daily telecalls and fed into weekly Sitreps • Updated members with Authority papers • Continued review of existing byelaws, including those which may be impacted by Brexit 	
3D) 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. 	



Objective completed



Significant progress made but objective not completed



Minimal progress made



Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
3E) T3 MPA assessment and management – addition of T3 MCZ sites to current legislation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T3 MCZ fisheries assessments in 2nd draft format • Worked with local stakeholders to develop management options for Goodwin Sands site. • Discussions with MMO and NE held about joint site management. 	
3F) Whelk Fishery byelaw 2020		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 2021 new Whelk Fishery Flexible Permit Byelaw was confirmed by the Minister. • Byelaw introduced to stakeholders including admin systems, education, communications and compliance activities. 	
3G) Future fisheries management - 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"> • Commencement of discussion and consultation process with stakeholders and Members on the review of the cockle fisheries within the Kent and Essex district. Listening Phase, oral evidence session and Member workshop held. 	
3I) Fish Local		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked with Thames Estuary Partnership to obtain funding from London Gateway develop the Fish Local project and build a stronger local market for fish. • Assisted with bid from Seafood and Fisheries Fund to help support and grow the project • Members of Fish Local presented to Members on work undertaken at IFCA meetings 	

Success Criterion 4: Governance and Training

National training update

The previous 12 months have brought many challenges to IFCA training, not least the problems caused by lockdown and the availability of training given subsequent restrictions, travel issues, understandable reluctance of delegates to travel and mix outside their immediate circles and the obvious problems caused by short notice sickness and self-isolation.

Despite this we have endeavoured to keep training on track and will use the lessons learnt during lockdown and restrictions to better cater for our needs moving forward. We have embraced online learning in a positive way, utilising this as easily accessible medium to facilitate specific training evolutions that lend themselves well to this delivery style.

Open Source Intelligence Training

We have delivered this during a number of 2 day seminars, the training looks at the use of information that is already in the public domain such as websites and social media to assist us with intelligence gathering. Some of the many different subjects that are covered include understanding the basics of effective use of search engines and searching social networking sites really does help narrow down the desired results, while the information and intelligence that can be gained from imagery shared on social media, such as location, time of year and even time of day can be obtained by utilising the websites and resources that are provided on the course. This course have proven extremely popular with IFCA staff, all of which really have opened our minds to this very much underused method of intel gathering.

Interview Skills Training

Proficiency in interviewing is a key requirement of our staff, and this skill has been both developed and maintained during both online sessions and a practical face to face course at a specialist training facility in London. This allowed delegates to review recordings of their performance during practical sessions, identifying good practice in their techniques as well as possible areas for development. The online course also trialed as an option, this despite lacking in some of the actual face to face sessions was still delivered in a way that allowed some excellent participation between the delegates in breakout preparation and interview sessions, offering a very good product to equip new officers with the core knowledge, as well as being of great benefit as "refresher" or CPD to current officers, some with decades of law enforcement experience.



NLTO Steven Travis on a sea survival course

Success Criterion 4: Governance and Training

Competent Officer Course

All Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Officers undergo a formal foundation training programme, of which a 5 day Competent Officer Course was an integral part. This course was traditionally delivered in a face to face format at a specified location. The difficulties we have experienced over the past year has meant that a viable alternative was required to get the necessary theory training out to new entrants on the course to provide the foundation knowledge required for them to successfully undertake their duties and build upon as they undertook shadowing opportunities with their parent IFCAs.

To address this, we developed and delivered a 3 day online course, which focused on the theory subjects delivered during the face to face course, as well as introducing new elements such as updated health and safety sections and also a code of conduct for inspections session. We were also able to incorporate regular Guest Speaker's sessions onto the virtual courses, allowing for some really interesting and informative discussions as well as question and answer sessions that provided an open forum for clarification on any points. This format also allowed qualified staff who would not normally be required to attend to participate and to join any sessions that were of interest to them. This once again provided excellent refresher training to maintain and enhance skills. The plan is to deliver a 3 day face to face module to support this online delivery. The second part will focus heavily on the practical hands-on elements of the job, which were normally covered during the 5 day course.

Other Training Initiatives

Throughout the year we have conducted many joint training initiatives with partner agencies such as the Marine Management Organisation, devolved administrations and local authorities. A great example of this locally was a seminar that was conducted with the Environment Agency and Kent & Essex IFCA staff. This provided an excellent opportunity to clearly define the role, purpose and vision of IFCAs, not only within Kent & Essex, but nationwide. We were also able to gain a valuable insight of the work undertaken by the Environment Agency, especially with their duties around enforcement work on rivers and inland waters.

These workshops have also taken us into areas that we perhaps traditionally didn't cover, such as counter terrorism and modern slavery. These events have also been enormously beneficial in sharing information and skills and assisting us in building effective collaborative working relationships.

Future Plans

During the next period we are looking to develop and deliver training in a number of key areas, these will include an update on our current syllabus for both Competent and advanced Officers, as well as some new topics. Bespoke training evolutions covering case file preparation, courtroom skills, practical inspections, along with some industry related health and safety training such as working within the intertidal area are also under development.

Steven Travis, National Lead Training Officer



Success Criterion 4 – Outputs

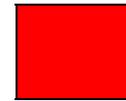
Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 4A) Budget Management - Handling invoices, Oracle Administration, compile budget, budget meetings etc. Manage and coordinate funding applications e.g. EU		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved budget with quarterly updates • Maintained and processed 13 oracle statements • Held internal budget planning & review meetings • Mid and end of year Internal audit completed • Interim emff claim made against NLTO training application • Processed 663 invoices 	
ONGOING ACTION: 4B) Annual planning and reporting		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created and published 2022-2023 annual plan and 2020-2021 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 	
ONGOING ACTION: 4D) IFCA Meetings - Run and provide support for quarterly IFCA meetings and technical panel meetings.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held 4 quarterly meetings with approved minutes. • Held 1 x 2 day cockle review meeting for Members • 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"> • 2 officers completed sea survival training • 1 officer completed RYA Yacht master offshore practical & theory qualification • 3 officers completed advanced interview training • 1 officer completed the online competent officer course • 6 officers received training to obtain their Environment Agency limited cross-warrant 	
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 80 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 	
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 within the District that supports the management and conservation of Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs), sustainable fisheries and provides access to evidence (data and information).

The data we collect is analysed to inform the type and geographical location of management measures to promote the recovery of designated conservation features in MCZs. Our research data provides evidence when fisheries are in decline and management measures are required, such as byelaws, regulations and enhanced enforcement. Each year this data is used to assess the status of various fishery stocks in the district (primarily shellfish), and in turn used to inform the sustainable catch limits, opening and closing of certain stocks and particular shellfish. Furthermore, the IFCA provides this data to the public, research organisations and other conservation bodies.

The research agenda for 2021/2022 focussed on gathering evidence about the geographical distribution of *Sabellaria* reefs in Goodwin Sands MCZ, and carried out the first phase of research to feed into the TECFO cockle fishery review.

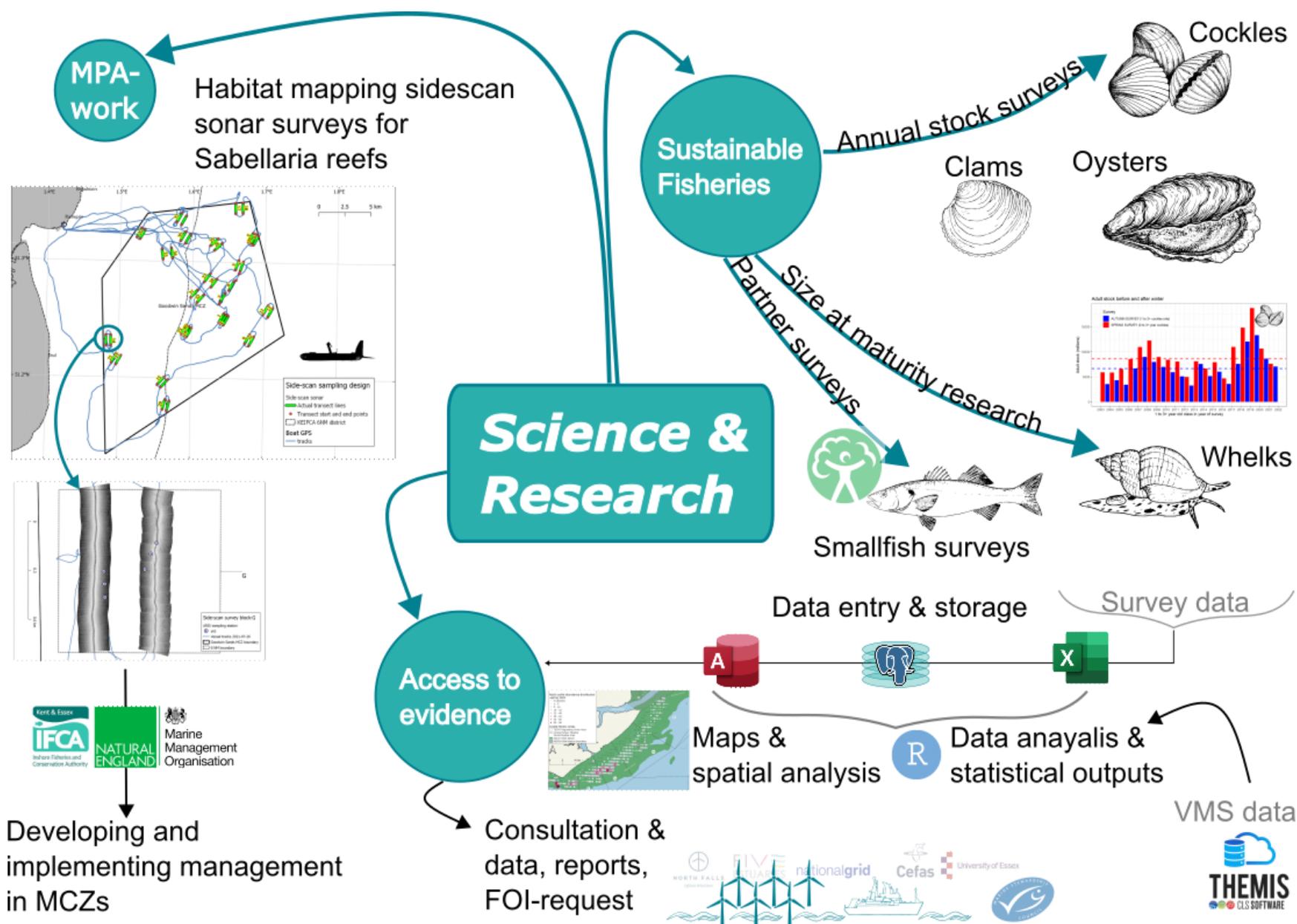
COVID-19 had less of an effect on the Research Schedule in 2021-2022 with restrictions easing, and the majority of monitoring activities were completed this year.

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: Science at a glance...



Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science Report

Case study: Marine Protected Area— Goodwin Sands MCZ

KEIFCA is the delivery body for MPAs enforcing regulations within Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) and European Marine Sites within the District's waters. Goodwin Sands MCZ is a large protected area famous for its long list of shipwrecks scattered around notorious subtidal and intertidal sandbanks less than 4 NM offshore from Ramsgate Harbour. The MCZ was designated to conserve *Sabellaria* (Ross worm) reefs and *Mytilus* (mussel) beds among other features, which have conservation objectives to recover to a favourable condition.

Sabellaria reefs are associated with increasing local biodiversity, but they are sensitive to the impacts from bottom towed gears on the seabed, and it was recommended during the fisheries assessment for the MCZ to implement management for the site which would reduce the impacts on these reefs. However, knowledge of the location of the *Sabellaria* reefs in the MCZ was relatively poor, relying on a few point-locality records, of which the most recent ones were collected in 2014. Consequently, information on the location of these reefs was required. The focus of MPA-work during 2020-2021 was using acoustic survey techniques to map the seafloor of the Goodwin Sands MCZ and identify potential *Sabellaria* reefs in partnership with Natural England who contributed funding towards the project.



KEIFCA completed 43 one-kilometre by 200-meter-wide side-scan sonar transects during which echograms (sound images) of the seabed were collected. The imagery was analysed and where the texture of the seabed suggested *Sabellaria* may be present, an acoustic resonance imaging sonar (ARIS) camera was deployed to obtain further evidence of the shape and size of the reefs. During the survey a potential *Sabellaria* reef was found inside of 6 NM which extended beyond the length and width of the entire transect, with far greater insight than the point locality records and providing much needed resolution to inform management for the site.

Various smaller reef systems were found both inshore and offshore, and the ARIS camera showed that one reef in the north-eastern area of the MCZ had particularly high relief (vertical structure of the reef) suggesting that this would be an important reef to protect from impacts of bottom towed gears. However, further surveys were required to obtain data from deeper sites and map out the extents of the large inshore reef, as well as obtaining ground truthing data to prove that the potential reefs are indeed *Sabellaria* reefs. The information gathered so far will be fed into NE's marine evidence base to improve habitat maps and better inform the location of no bottom towed gear areas in the MCZ.

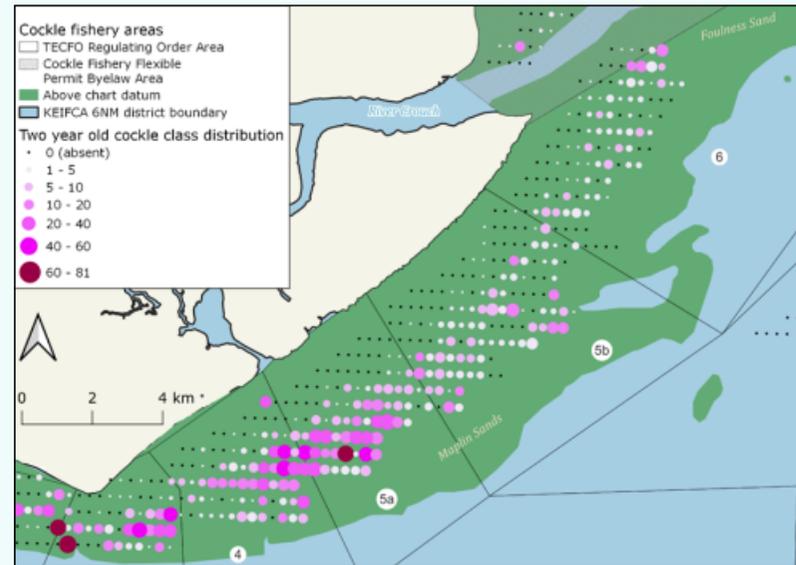
Philip Haupt, Lead Scientific Officer

Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science Report

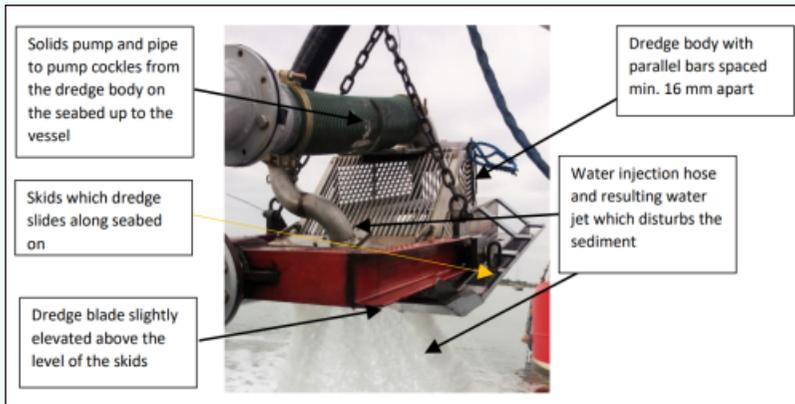
Case study: Thames cockle fishery review

The sustainable management of inshore fisheries in the District is one of KEIFCA's primary mandates. Within this role, KEIFCA's management and research focusses strongly on shellfish because most commercial fish species are managed under national legislation, while shellfish in the District has a lot of local management regulations. The Thames cockle fishery is one of the largest and economically important cockle fisheries in the country, and the most economically important shellfish fishery in the Kent and Essex District. The fishery has been managed by KEIFCA under the TECFO 1994 which comes to an end in September 2024 and new management will replace it. In 2021/2022 the research agenda was dominated by providing critical information to KEIFCA Chief Officers and Authority members to assist the review and decision making about the new management system.

As part of this review Research provided two reports, namely, (1) The Spatial distribution and stock review of cockles in the Kent and Essex IFCA District, and (2) Review of environmental impacts of hydraulic suction dredging for cockles- Kent and Essex IFCA District.



Above: Adult cockle abundance distribution over main cockle beds



Above: annotated picture of a cockle suction dredge components

The first report provided information about the long-term trends of cockle stocks in the Thames Estuary, along with the geographical distribution of constraints in the District, such as Marine Protected Areas, private grounds, firing ranges and habitat sensitivity. From the analysis it became clear that the Maplin Sands provides the mainstay for the cockle fishing industry in the Thames, and that while lucrative subtidal cockle beds exist, their stocks are less stable.

The second report described the impacts of hydraulic suction dredging on habitats, benthic species (species that live on and in the seabed), the ecosystem supported by cockles, potential for overharvesting cockles and potential loss of stocks through high damage of returned cockles. The report also quantified the impacts of the current cockle fishing fleet in the District by quantifying the fishery footprint and the rate of loss of benthic species.

Collectively the outcomes of these two reports provide information to aid decisions about the spatial configuration of the areas in the Thames allocated to a potential new regulating order as well as the number of licences that could be made available to the fishery.

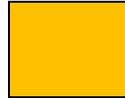
Philip Haupt, Lead Scientific Officer

Success Criterion 5 – Outputs

Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 5A & 5B) Annual Research Plan & Annual Research Report		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepared the annual research plan and report: Assess annual research priorities, plan time and resource. Report on achievement of objectives set in Annual Research Plan and demonstrating use of evidence for decision making 	
ONGOING ACTION: 5C) Participate in TAG meetings		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively contribute to IFCA TAG meetings Provide TAG with Kent and Essex updates Report back regarding outcomes and workstreams resulting from TAG meetings 	
ONGOING ACTION: 5D & 5E) Sea-going scientific survey capability		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KEIFCA vessels , vehicles and equipment for the purposes of shore- and sea-based scientific surveys and data collection were provided and maintained Planning and reporting to the Authority of operation, maintenance and refit of vessels and key equipment 	
ONGOING ACTION: 5F) Support development of MPA management measures		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sidescan and ARIS sonar surveys carried out, and fed into management planning for the site. Summary report sent to NE 	
ONGOING ACTION: 5G) Dispensations from KEIFCA byelaws		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of and provision of dispensation for activities from byelaws, in consultation with Lead Compliance Officer 	
ONGOING ACTION: 5H) Consultation and engagement with major developments		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided evidence and attend meetings as and when needed: Five Estuaries, North Falls, National Grid were 3 major infrastructure developments Provided written responses to various applications to developers, Government and the Planning Inspectorate 	



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"> • Provided evidence and attend meetings as and when needed: Five Estuaries, North Falls, National Grid were 3 major infrastructure developments • Provided written responses to various applications to developers, Government and the Planning Inspectorate 	
ONGOING ACTION: 5I) Cockle fishery stock assessment and fishery recommendations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual cockle survey planning and carrying out shore and sea based surveys. • Data entry and analysis of cockle survey data. • Delivery of recommendations relating to stock management. • Organisation and delivery of pre-fishery stakeholder meeting (License holders): • Production and distribution of cockle papers. • Provision of cockle samples for MESL. • Production of Habitat Regulations Assessment, including consultation with NE and subsequent advice. 	
ONGOING ACTION: 5J) Native oyster stock assessment and fishery recommendations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No oyster survey was carried out in 2021-2022 because of COVID-19 and problems with Tamesis • Delivered recommendations relating to stock management to Authority based on past data and Alice Lown's PhD work 	Commence surveys in 2022-2023



Success Criterion 5 – Outputs

Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 5K) Whelk EMFF population study	Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data and statistical analysis completed Recommendations for candidate indicators of stock health. Submitted report for whelk EMFF study Article for a peer reviewed scientific journal in preparation 	
ONGOING ACTION: 5L) Native Oyster ENORI projects	Yellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attended monthly and quarterly meetings & NORA symposium Actively contributed to potential use of beneficial dredge materials as part of restoration effort 	
ONGOING ACTION: 5M & 5N) Long-term small fish surveys	Red	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small fish surveys were postponed to 2022-2023 owing to resource constraints within the EA and KEIFCA Engaged and provided advice to EA and Essex University to make plans for carrying out surveys in 2022-2023 	
ONGOING ACTION: 5O) Data analysis and services	Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of GIS, data and analysis to inform evidence requirements, e.g. maps, vessel sightings, fish stocks 	
5P) Prepare MCZ Fisheries assessments for Dover-Deal, Dover-Folkstone and Swale MCZs	Yellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe site objectives, designated features and characterise fisheries. Carry out Appropriate Assessment of impact from fisheries and develop management recommendations. Engage with Natural England throughout and seek their advice. 	
5Q) MPA education and awareness	Red	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project was dropped owing to resource constraints after a member of staff left 	



Objective completed

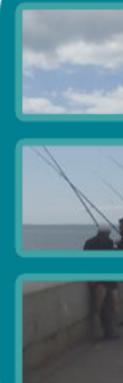


Significant progress made but objective not completed



Minimal progress made

Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
5R) Develop species management plans for fish caught in district under Fisheries Act 2020		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal discussion held re new Fisheries Act and Statements and taken a stance on what KEIFCA relevant was best placed to contribute. • Joined AIFCA meetings to further discuss all IFCA's approach to Fisheries Management Plans • Actively contributed to science subgroup of the Whelk Fisheries Management Group set up to develop the science feeding into Species Management Plan for whelks. • Assess data held and data requirement to inform species management plans. Prepare a database holding species management plan data. (postponed until clarity about approach is reached). • Develop stock models or indicators of stocks (postponed until clarity about approach is reached). • Prepare new and update existing KEIFCA species management plans (postponed until clarity about approach is reached). 	Await further instructions from central Government
5S) Co-supervision of PhD student - Whelk PhD project at the University of Essex		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student project dropped owing to student was unsuccessful in obtaining funding 	Cancel
5T) Native Oyster - Fishing industry collaboration project		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project postponed until resource becomes available 	Postponed
5U) Native Oyster dredge efficiency study with Essex University		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study in progress to be completed in 2022 	
5V) Crab and Lobster Fisheries Improvement Project		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KEIFCA contributed by contacting Harwich fishermen, but project cancelled by organisers subsequently 	Cancel
5W) Clam population assessment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clams collected as part of cockle surveys and measurements recorded • Spatial distribution mapped • Initial indications of biomass calculated 	Continue data collection Calculate stocks Communicate results
5X) Develop relational databases for key shellfish species monitoring and landings data: oysters, clams, whelks and cockles		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relational database developed for clams • Whelk data assimilated into single spreadsheet 	Database development for oysters.
5Y) Data analysis automation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cockle data analysis routines improved 	Develop VMS data analysis routines



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%

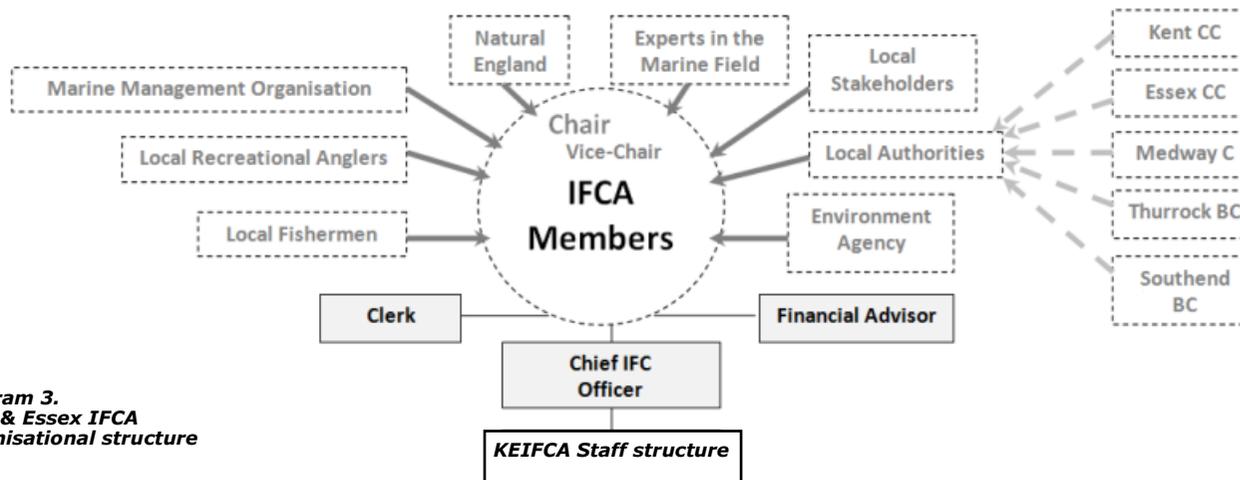
Since the 1st April 2011 local councils have annually received 'New IFCA Burdens' money from Defra via the area based local government grant. This funding is intended to help KEIFCA meet its new duties as stated in MCAA 2009.

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

**Cllr John L Lamb	Southend BC	Cllr Jane Fleming	Essex CC
Cllr Mike Dendor	Kent CC	Cllr Mark Coxshall	Thurrock BC
Cllr Tony Hills	Kent CC	Cllr Habib Tejan	Medway BC
Cllr Andy Weatherhead	Kent CC	Mr Alex Baker	NE representative
Cllr Alan Goggin	Essex CC	Mr Justin Rowley	MMO representative
Cllr Michael Skeels	Essex CC	Ms Lindsay Faulkner	EA representative
*Mr P John E Nichols	MMO Appointee	<i>Commercial- finfish</i>	
Mr Peter Wexham	MMO Appointee	<i>Commercial - finfish</i>	
Mr Andrew Rattley	MMO Appointee	<i>Commercial - shellfish</i>	
Mrs Esther Gilson	MMO Appointee	<i>Commercial - shellfish</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 Structure

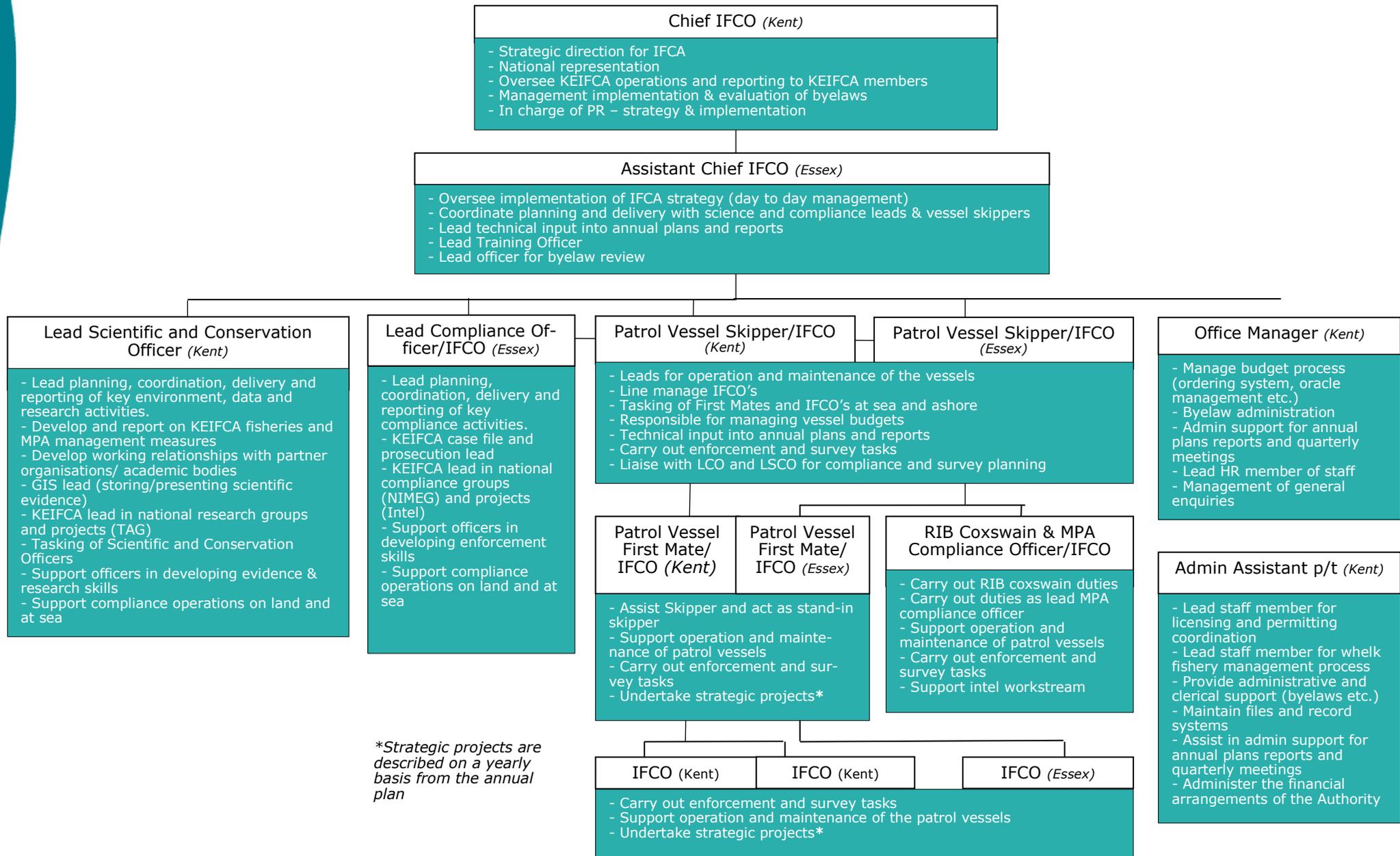


Diagram 4. Kent & Essex IFCA staff structure and key tasks

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 13 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 2021-22 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). With the world returning to business as usual following COVID, and with the National Lead Training Officer in post, we hope that the next year will bring better training opportunities than ever for our team.



KEIFCA strategically working with partners

Joined up government

KEIFCA has worked in conjunction with the other IFCA's to develop MoUs with key public authority stakeholders. The MoUs layout 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 AIFCA's. The Association is an important national body that allows all 10 IFCA's 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 IFCA's 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 IFCA's.

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 IFCA's 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. No Freedom of Information requests were received this year. 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.



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



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		
KCC	Kent County Council	SxIFCA	Sussex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
KEIFCA	Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority	SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
LSCO	Lead Scientific and Conservation Officer	SPA	Special Protection Area
MC	Medway Council	TBC	Thurrock Borough 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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