

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



Annual Report 2025-2026

www.kentandessex-ifca.gov.uk

Publication

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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.

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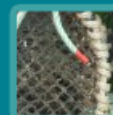
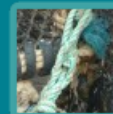
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Background

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 2022-2023 (see www.kentandessex-ifca.gov.uk for documentation).



Foreword

Chairman's foreword

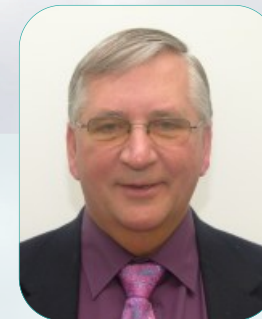
Having had the privilege of serving as Chairman of the Kent and Essex Sea Fisheries Committee, and then the Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority, for more than 20 years, I write this foreword with a mixture of pride, gratitude and reflection. This is my final foreword as Chairman, having now stood down from the role, though I am pleased to continue supporting the Authority as Vice-Chairman.

Over the past two decades, the responsibilities placed on first Sea Fishery Committees and then IFCAs have grown and changed considerably. Throughout that time, the Authority has considered complex and often difficult issues, balancing the needs of local fishers with the long-term protection of fish stocks, marine habitats and the wider coastal environment. These decisions are rarely straightforward, but they are essential if we are to secure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and thriving coastal communities for the future. Through my 8 years as Chairman of the Association of IFCAs I saw how varied and diverse the fishing is around our coast and the importance of developing approaches that reflect and respond to these differences.

I have always been a strong believer that local communities are best placed to make decisions that directly impact their lives and I particularly want to recognise the vital work of IFCA Members in charting this difficult course. The Authority depends on the knowledge, judgement and commitment they bring, drawing on experience from local government, the fishing industry, environmental interests, regulators and coastal communities. Their willingness to listen, challenge, scrutinise and make decisions in public is at the heart of effective fisheries management.

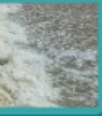
Through their collective effort, the Authority is able to provide a fair, balanced and transparent forum for issues that matter deeply to those who use and care for our seas. Much of this work takes place outside the public eye: reading detailed papers, attending meetings, considering evidence, engaging with stakeholders and helping officers work through challenging management decisions. Their contribution is invaluable, and I am deeply grateful for the work they do and their support over the years. Specifically, I would like to thank and recognise the contribution of John Nicholls my Vice-chairman throughout my whole tenure as Chairman and whose advice, knowledge and support, especially in tough times, has been invaluable. Finally, I would also like to thank my wife Pat for her support and patience over the years.

The sea has always been part of my life. From my memories leaning to sail in the old London docks, to teaching others in the Royal Navy Reserve, through many years of public service in Southend, it has remained both a passion and a defining influence. It has shaped who I am and has helped shape Southend itself, the city I am proud to call home. That lifelong connection to the coast has made my work with the Authority especially meaningful and has reinforced my belief in the importance of protecting our marine environment while supporting the communities whose lives and livelihoods are bound to it.



A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'J Lamb'.

JOHN LAMB
KEIFCA Chair





Overview— 2025-2026

The 2025/26 financial year was a significant and productive period for Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (KEIFCA). The Authority continued to deliver its statutory duties of managing sustainable fisheries and protecting the marine environment across the Kent and Essex district, while supporting local fishing communities and strengthening evidence-based management.

A major achievement during the year was the implementation of the new Thames Estuary Cocker Fishery Order 2024. The replacement of the previous regulating order had been a complex project spanning several years and involved extensive consultation, policy development and legal work. The successful introduction of the new management framework provides a modern and sustainable basis for regulating one of the UK's most important cockle fisheries. This piece of work was one of the most substantial projects undertaken by KEIFCA in recent years. It was not without its challenges—especially with the need to also make a Variation Order, however management was successfully implemented as a result of an extraordinary effort from all involved, particularly Defra.

Science and research remained central to the Authority's work. KEIFCA continued to undertake stock assessments and research programmes relating to cockles, Manila clams and whelks, ensuring management decisions were supported by robust scientific evidence. During the year, more than £100,000 of Defra funding was used to support fisheries management, marine protected area work and sustainable development projects.

The Authority also contributed to the delivery of wider national fisheries objectives, including supporting implementation of the Whelk Fisheries Management Plan. This demonstrated KEIFCA's role in influencing and delivering fisheries management beyond its own local regulatory functions, helping to improve the long-term sustainability of important commercial fisheries.

KEIFCA maintained a strong compliance and enforcement presence through patrols, inspections, intelligence gathering and partnership working with other agencies. These activities supported compliance with fisheries legislation, local byelaws and permit requirements, helping to ensure a fair and sustainable fishing industry across the district. The Authority made progress in the use and implementation of Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM) technologies to improve transparency, strengthen fisheries management and support compliance objectives within managed fisheries.

Overview— 2025-2026



KEIFCA continued to work closely with Local Authority Environmental Health officers, the Food Standards Agency and other partner organisations to improve understanding and management of intertidal shellfish gathering activity within the Thames Estuary. Building on concerns regarding increasing levels of hand gathering on intertidal cockle and shellfish beds, the Authority undertook targeted monitoring and intelligence gathering, especially in the Southend-on-Sea area.

The Authority also continued to explore opportunities for fisheries diversification. Manila clam trials on the Essex coast progressed during the year, helping to assess the potential for future shellfish opportunities while ensuring environmental considerations remained at the forefront of decision-making.

Operational capability was strengthened through investment in vessels and infrastructure. The Authority commissioned a new 10.5m cabin RIB—*Nemo*, progressed work associated with the patrol vessel *Nerissa* and its recoding under Workboat Code 3, and continued to enhance its ability to undertake enforcement, scientific surveys and stakeholder engagement activity across the district.

The Authority delivered its work programme while maintaining a balanced budget, ending the financial year with a small underspend and successfully managing both Defra-funded projects and reserves associated with major regulatory work. However, in the present financial climate, money is tight, with the Authority meeting its budget by receiving income from additional workstreams such as survey work for third parties or vessel chartering.

Overall, 2025/26 was a year of significant progress for KEIFCA. Through delivery of the new Thames Estuary Cockle Fishery Order, investment in science and research, support for national fisheries reforms, advancement of marine conservation measures, enhancement of operational capability and sound financial governance, the Authority continued to fulfil its vision of achieving sustainable fisheries, healthy marine ecosystems and resilient coastal communities across Kent and Essex.

Dominic Bailey, Deputy Chief Officer

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

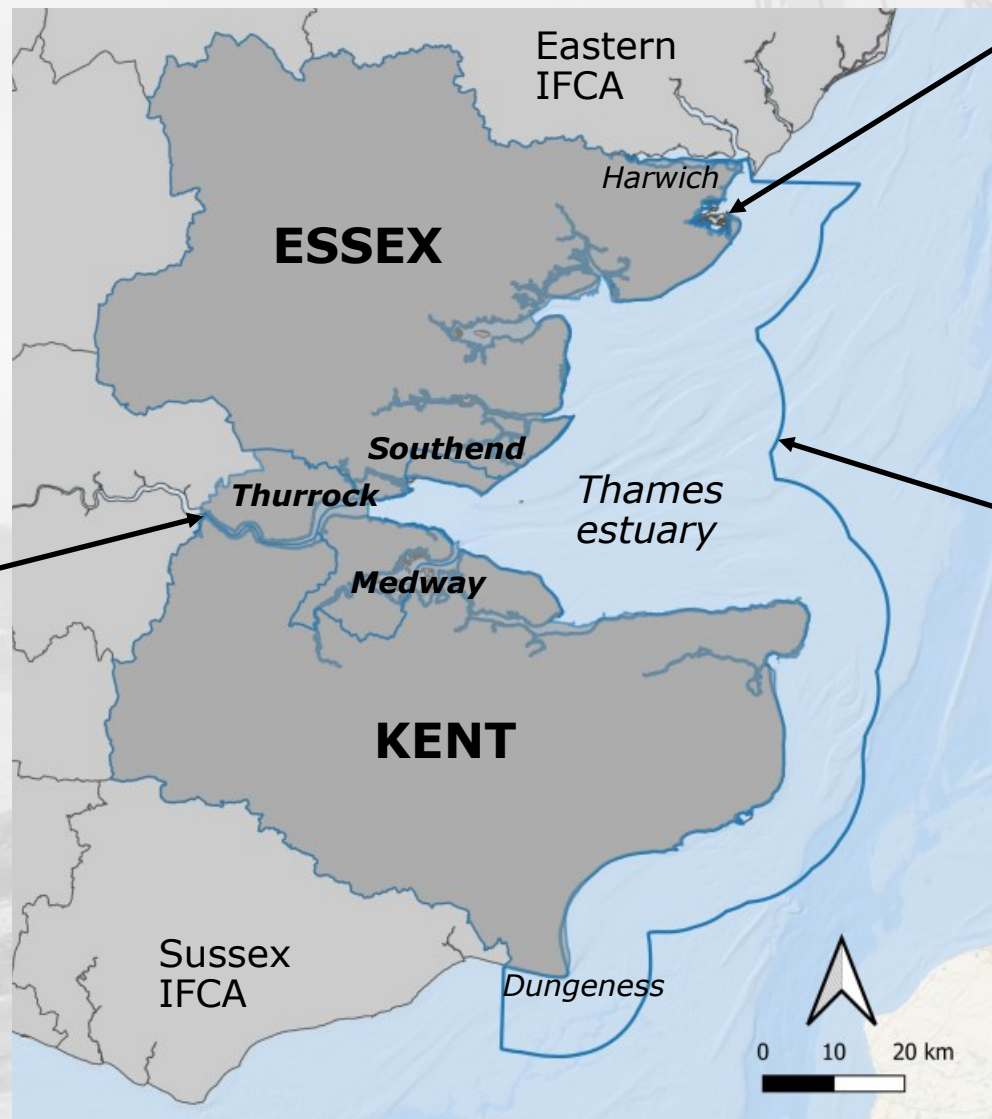
The Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Order 2010 defines the extent of both the landward and seaward elements of the District:

- 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).

Chart of the KEIFCA district



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

The work of the Association of IFCA's – Communication & Engagement

In September 2025, the Association of IFCA's (AIFCA) hired a new Communications & Engagement Manager, Emily Bulled, to support the AIFCA's work in providing representation and support for the 10 IFCA's in England.

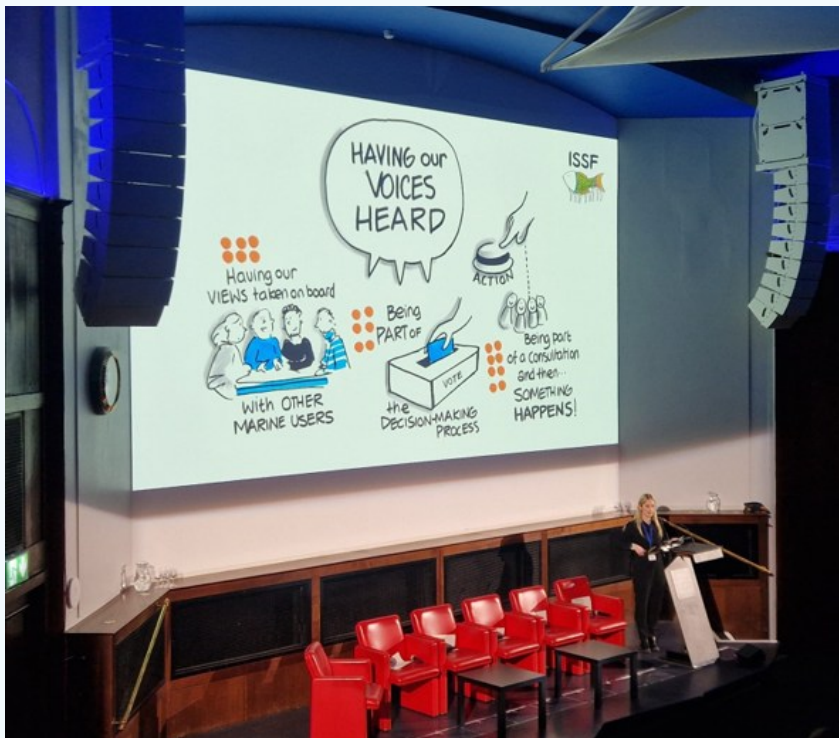
AIFCA's Communication & Engagement Manager leads on AIFCA's national communication and engagement programmes, so that the value, profile and impact of IFCA's are better understood by government bodies, partners, stakeholders, coastal communities and the public, while also strengthening sector engagement and internal communications capacity.

Within the last year, the AIFCA has created a number of new channels and outputs to communicate the progress made by IFCA's in England. This includes the AIFCA's quarterly newsletter 'IFCA Insights' that includes current news stories, case studies, upcoming events and vacancies. The AIFCA has also launched its new social media channels to share work of the IFCA's and highlight the benefits of the IFCA approach, recently sharing successes over the last 15 years to celebrate the 15-year anniversary since the inception of IFCA's.

The AIFCA has also produced four new short films 'Lead, Champion, Protect and Conserve' with Mindfully Wired to share the work of IFCA's from the perspectives of officers and members, which were launched alongside a presentation by AIFCA at Coastal Futures in January 2026. In addition to this, three animations and infographics have been created for members to explain the work of IFCA's, what members do and how they can apply. These are being launched as a joint MMO/IFCA campaign to improve member recruitment.



Success Criterion 1: Communications and Engagement



Further communications work includes the launch of a new series of briefings for IFCA officers and members for information sharing and training on a range of topics. The first session on Habitats Regulations Assessments training was held at the end of July 2026. The AIFCA has also set up a cross-IFCA communications group to identify key messages at the national level, improve consistency and share best practice, as well as identify areas for communications support.

In addition, the Communication & Engagement Manager also represents and supports the IFCAs in a number of national programmes. The AIFCA chairs and plays a key role in the Inshore and Small-Scale Fisheries Consortium, working to sustain small-scale and inshore fisheries in England and recognise them at the national level. The Consortium, with significant support from the AIFCA, have held two large events in the last year. The National Symposium on Inshore and Small-Scale Fisheries in February 2026 brought together 100 people including DEFRA, MMO, 50 fishermen and IFCAs to progress viable actions to support the inshore and small-scale fleet. The National Celebration on Inshore Fisheries in July marked the 15-year

anniversary of IFCAs through a number of presentations and provided an opportunity to share successes in inshore fisheries around the coast. These national events improve collaboration between IFCAs, DEFRA and other stakeholders nationally, and also provide a platform to communicate the work and progress made by IFCAs.

The AIFCA has also been working as part of the Coastal Health programme with Cefas, aiming to support IFCAs in their preparedness for adverse coastal health events, such as wash ups and mass mortalities. The AIFCA look forward to continuing this work in an ongoing partnership in the 2026-27 financial year.

Emily Bulled , Communications and Engagement Officer AIFCA

Success Criterion 1: Communications and Engagement

Engagement with the Local Fishing Industry on a Future Bass Drift Net Trial

At the January quarterly Authority meeting, officers presented the findings of the Bass Authorisation Review and highlighted some of the key recommendations. Authority members discussed the Review and as part of the debate asked that officers meet with the local fishing industry to gauge support and gather practical feedback on how a drift net trial could be taken forward. After chatting with local fishers to agree suitable dates and locations, two industry workshops were held in spring 2026: one in Colchester, Essex on 12 March and one in Whitstable, Kent on 26 March. In total, 24 commercial fishers and industry representatives attended, with 13 at the Essex workshop and 11 at the Kent workshop. Both meetings followed the same format and used interactive surveys to capture individual views and then support wider discussion. This allowed officers to collect quantitative responses on potential trial parameters as well as more detailed qualitative fishers feedback. Officers stressed that the workshops provided a route for local fishermen to have their views consolidated and to be feedback directly to the Bass Management Group and DEFRA.

Fishermen used the workshops to highlight the key challenges affecting the local bass fishery. They reported high local abundance of bass and questioned whether national scientific advice fully reflected what they see at sea. They also stressed the decline of other finfish opportunities on the East coast, making bass particularly important to the viability of the inshore fleet.

Overall, there was strong industry support for a drift net trial, with fishers arguing that inshore drift netting, when properly managed, can be selective, efficient and low impact. They felt that short soak times, attended gear and appropriate mesh sizes could reduce seal predation and weed fouling, lower bycatch mortality compared with fixed nets, and improve the quality and value of landed bass.

The workshops also provided practical detail as to the parameters of the trial. Fishers identified April–May and September–October as key periods of bass abundance, suggesting that a trial across both seasons would capture useful comparisons. They discussed mesh sizes and suggested aggregate net lengths of around 1,000–1,500 metres. For drift nets, most responses pointed to short soak times of one to three hours, while fixed net soak times varied between Kent and Essex. Fishers emphasised that location, tide, season and time of day all effect fishing outcomes, and that these operational factors must be built into the study design. In addition, several fishers indicated that they would be willing to take part in the trial.

Success Criterion 1: Communications and Engagement

Overall, the workshops provided a clear outline of local industry views and helped turn a broad recommendation into a workable trial proposal. The workshops also ensured that the trial would collate information that matters to the local fleet like, seal predation, the impact of weed fouling, and the quality and value of bass caught. By sharing these findings with Eastern IFCA, Cefas, Defra and the Bass Management Group, KEIFCA officers can help ensure that any future drift net trial is regionally relevant and built with the confidence and practical support of the local fishing industry.

Will Wright, Chief Officer



Success Criterion 1— Outputs

Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 1A) Support the Association of IFCA's		• 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) Support national IFCA working groups		• Attended 4 NIMEG meetings and took forward meeting actions • Contributed to the running of NIMEG in officer time. • Attended 4 TAG meetings • Contributed to the running of TAG in officer time • Fed into the annual report to COG • 10 Chief Officers Group meetings	
ONGOING ACTION: 1C) Attend and contribute to external meetings		• 21 Fisheries Management Plan meetings • 10 Chief Officers Group meetings • 7 Natural England meetings • 9 MAFCO meetings	
ONGOING ACTION: 1D) Reply to Consultations/ Correspondence		• 25 consultations processed • Local and national information requests and replies processed	
ONGOING ACTION: 1E) Maintain website, quarterly e-bulletin, and stakeholder database		• 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 • 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
1F) Support the transition to a new Thames Estuary Cockle Fishery Order 2024 (T24)		- Communicated the new T24 licensing arrangements, including the allocation of 15 licences for the first seven-year licensing cycle beginning in 2025 and providing information to applicants on the new fishery management system. - Provided regular updates to Authority Members, licence holders and stakeholders on the implementation of T24, including updates on licensing, management arrangements and the Variation Order process. - Maintained public access to information on the new fishery through the KEIFCA website and cockle review platform, ensuring stakeholders could access details of the Order, management framework and licensing process.	
1G) Engage with the local fishing communities in the running and outcomes of planned Manila Clam trials		Undertook extensive stakeholder engagement and consultation, seeking feedback from fishers and other interested parties on a proposed fishery vision, trial design and application process, before developing a two-year trial programme approved by the Authority in 2025.	
1H) Review and update the KEIFCA website		- Meetings held with website developers and quotation developed and accepted. - Line frame of website received and accepted following modifications and changes by KEIFCA officers - Development of final website undertaken by BAND Agency. - Website received in Spring 2026, with officers then undertaking website content upload and creation.	
1H) Produce an Annual Communication Plan		Communication plan is produced each year and contained within the Annual Plan.	Further updates to website required to improve accessibility



Success Criterion 2: Compliance and Enforcement

Compliance and Enforcement Introduction

KEIFCA is responsible for managing the sustainable use of sea fisheries resources throughout the District through a programme of intelligence-led compliance and enforcement activity. Our warranted officers maintain a visible presence both at sea and ashore, conducting inspections, patrols and targeted operations to ensure compliance with fisheries legislation, protect marine habitats, and support the long-term sustainability of local fisheries.

During 2025-26, enforcement activity was directed through a risk-based approach informed by intelligence gathered through the shared Clue intelligence system and regional tasking processes. This approach supported a range of targeted operations, including joint bass enforcement with the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), participation in the multi-agency Operation EMSTARA maritime security initiative, and dedicated enforcement activity within the Thames Estuary cockle fisheries and Manila clam trial. The Authority also concluded a significant prosecution involving 31 scallop dredging offences, resulting in fines and costs exceeding £12,000.

Innovation and partnership working continued to play a central role in delivering effective fisheries enforcement during 2025-26. The expansion of Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM) across the Thames Estuary cockle fleet, alongside its introduction to vessels participating in the Manila clam trial, has significantly enhanced the Authority's ability to monitor fishing activity and support evidence-based fisheries management. At the same time, KEIFCA has worked collaboratively with partner regulators to develop a new mobile working application for fisheries inspections, helping to modernise operational processes and align enforcement systems with those used by the Marine Management Organisation and Welsh Government. The following case studies explore how these projects are supporting more effective, efficient and joined-up fisheries regulation.



Success Criterion 2: Enforcement at a glance...

Enforcement statistics 2025/26

Number of shore patrols



150

Gear sightings



49

Gear inspections



690

Angling engagements



314

Fishing vessels logged



86

Vessel inspections at sea

4,046

Nautical miles
patrolled



FPV Nerissa

816

Nautical miles
patrolled

FPV Tamesis



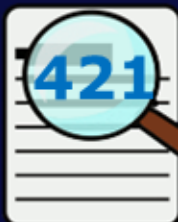
1,712

Nautical miles
patrolled

FPV Vigilant



Intelligence
reports
processed



421



60

Offences



211

Commercial Inspections
from shore



Success Criterion 2: Compliance and Enforcement Report

Introduction of Remote Electronic Monitoring

REM provides accurate information on where and when fishing activity takes place, supported by automatically triggered video clips recorded as "incidents". This data allows KEIFCA to better understand fishing effort and the interaction between gear and the seabed in Marine Protected Area, helping to inform Habitats Regulation assessments and management decisions. The information can also be used to estimate the footprint of fishing activity within Marine Protected Areas, providing a level of evidence that was previously impossible to obtain.

From a compliance perspective, REM is helping to increase transparency throughout the fleet. The availability of objective and auditable fishing records provides confidence that licence conditions, especially spatial management measures are being adhered to. Compliance levels within the fishery have improved and no spatial fishing offences have been detected since the introduction of the programme. This demonstrates how technology can act not only as an enforcement tool, but also as a mechanism for encouraging compliance.

The success of the cockle fleet rollout has also created opportunities to expand the use of REM into other projects. During the year, simplified monitoring systems incorporating Bluetooth gear sensors were deployed within the developing Manila clam trial fishery. These systems provide a cost-effective method of recording accurate fishing time and calculating gear footprint on the seabed, generating valuable data for the trial while avoiding the need for full CCTV systems.

KEIFCA's work on REM continues to attract interest from Defra and other IFCA's and has been showcased through national REM working groups. We have also shared lessons learned from the project, particularly in relation to privacy and data protection. Work completed during the year included the development of a Data Protection Impact Assessment and dedicated privacy notice to ensure that the collection and use of data is transparent and meets GDPR compliance. Looking ahead, 2026 will focus on improving system functionality and reliability with extensive pre-season testing. KEIFCA will continue to refine how REM data is used to support scientific research, fisheries management and compliance activity, while exploring future opportunities for artificial intelligence and machine learning. In time, these technologies may enable automated analysis of catches, improved catch-per-unit-effort data and even more responsive management measures. While REM will remain voluntary in 2026, KEIFCA is aiming to make REM a licence condition from 2027 onwards, representing a significant step towards a fully documented and world-leading inshore fishery.

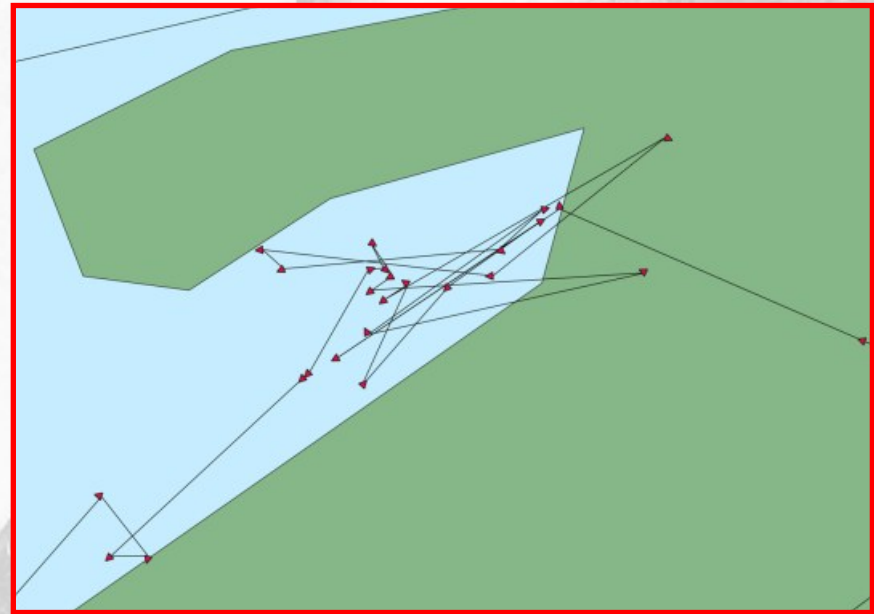


Above: REM CCTV footage of a cockle dredge being brought back to the surface at the end of a fishing operation. A sensor attached to the dredge head sends a message to KEIFCA to notify that fishing activity has stopped.

Success Criterion 2: Compliance and Enforcement Report

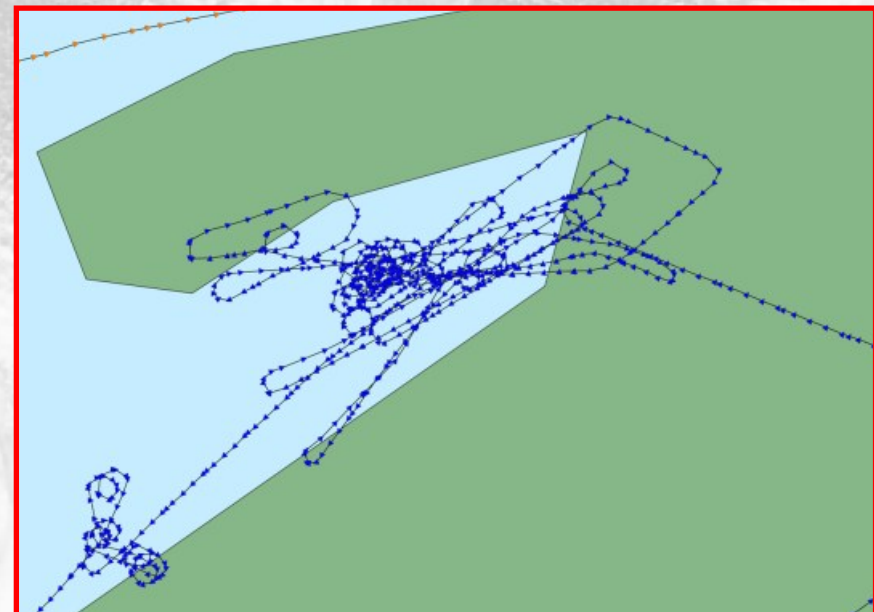
VMS track:

- 5-minute data intervals (low resolution)
- No 'gear in water' information



REM track:

- 30 second data intervals (high resolution)
- Gear sensor - verified 'gear in water' data



Above: Charts show green areas as intertidal cockle beds in the Kent and Essex district. Top images show the old monitoring "Vessel Monitoring System" vessel tracks, compared with the REM tracks below. Note that VMS data is low resolution at minute intervals compared with high resolution REM data at 30 second intervals. Furthermore blue arrows on the REM track show that the fishing gear is in the water, and that the vessel is therefore actively fishing.

Success Criterion 2: Compliance and Enforcement Report

Case study: Developing a Mobile Working App for Inshore Fisheries Enforcement

As fisheries enforcement increasingly adopts digital technologies, the ability to record, access and share operational information efficiently has become more important than ever. The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and Welsh Government currently use the Mobile Working App (MWA), a modern digital fisheries inspection platform built using Microsoft Power Apps. The system allows officers to complete inspections electronically, submit reports instantly from the field, review previous inspection records, undertake follow-up enquiries, and analyse inspection trends through integrated Power BI reporting tools. In contrast, IFCAs continue to rely on paper SF1 inspection forms and legacy databases such as Marine and Coastal Security System (MCSS), creating barriers to efficient information sharing between fisheries regulators.

Recognising the benefits that a shared system could provide, the National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG) established the Mobile Working App Group (MWAG), a task-and-finish group comprising representatives from IFCAs, the MMO and Welsh Government. This national initiative was led and chaired by Hayden Hurst, KEIFCA's Principal Compliance & Enforcement Officer. The group's objective was to explore how the existing MWA platform could be adapted to meet IFCA operational requirements whilst maintaining compatibility with the systems already used by partner organisations.

The Mobile Working App offers significant advantages over existing inspection recording methods. Through a combination of mobile and desktop applications, officers can record all relevant information during vessel boardings, landing inspections, premises inspections and other enforcement activities using tailored inspection templates. Inspection reports are uploaded immediately, reducing administrative burden and eliminating the need for duplicate data entry. Additional features such as searchable records, dropdown menus, autofill functions, built-in calculations and automated inspection reports improve both efficiency and data quality. Critically, a shared platform would allow inspection and infringement data to be exchanged more effectively between IFCAs, the MMO and Welsh Government, supporting intelligence-led enforcement and more consistent regulatory outcomes.

To better understand IFCA requirements, all ten IFCAs were invited to test the MWA platform. Fourteen structured feedback responses were received from enforcement officers across the network. Officers highlighted a range of positive features, including access to previous inspection records, automatic population of vessel and skipper information, photographic evidence capture, built-in compliance calculations and a substantial reduction in paperwork. Feedback also identified areas requiring improvement, including the need for IFCA-specific inspection templates, the removal of sections relevant only to MMO officers, and additional functionality to support activities unique to IFCAs such as unattended gear inspections and inspections of individuals e.g. in recreational fishing or intertidal shellfish gathering.

Microsoft
PowerApps



Success Criterion 2: Compliance and Enforcement Report

Positives	Negatives
• Previous inspections & infringements checks • Autofill features - master/vessel, lat/long etc. • Built in calculations e.g. MCRS % • Formalises inspection procedure • Can add photos • Prevents duplication • "I like the lack of paperwork"	• Initial log in issues • MMO centric, no IFCA specific provisions • Irrelevant sections outside IFCA remit • Time consuming • Missing offence codes • Some prefer paper SF1 / PNB • No unattended gear/individual inspection provision

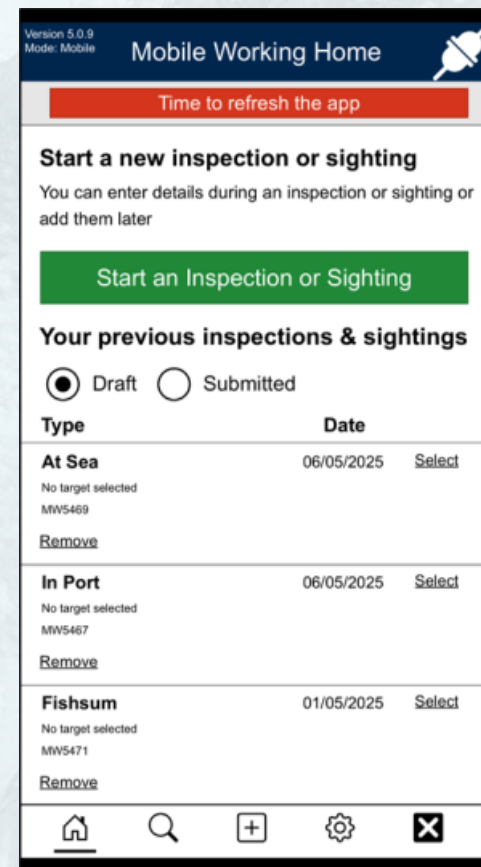
To improve the app:

- Redesign the templates to align more closely with current SF1 Inspection Form
- Shorten templates for IFCA use / remove irrelevant sections
- Tailored sections for IFCA need
- Create templates for unattended gear / individual inspections

Building on this feedback, MWAG undertook a comprehensive review of the existing MMO inspection templates. Each template was assessed screen-by-screen to determine its suitability for IFCA operations. Information already required within IFCA inspection procedures was retained, useful additional functionality was incorporated where appropriate, and sections which were not relevant to IFCA enforcement activity were removed. Where IFCA and MMO inspection activity closely aligned, existing templates were modified rather than rebuilt. For inspection types specific to IFCA working, new templates were developed using the existing framework and architecture of the app. This aimed to ensure that development remained achievable whilst minimising technical complexity, costs and development timescales.

By the end of the reporting period, MWAG had produced a detailed specification for IFCA use of the platform. This included four IFCA-specific versions of existing inspection templates covering -sea inspections, in-port inspections, vehicle inspections and gear-tagging inspections, alongside two entirely new templates for individual inspections and unattended gear inspections. Importantly, some of this new functionality would also provide benefits to MMO and Welsh Government users, demonstrating the wider value of collaborative development across partner enforcement organisations.

The work completed during 2025-26 represents a significant step towards a common digital approach to fisheries inspections across England and Wales. In addition to developing the operational specification, the project identified wider considerations relating to data sharing, privacy arrangements, IT support requirements and the future migration of historic inspection records. By establishing a clear understanding of IFCA requirements and developing practical solutions within the existing application framework, KEIFCA has helped lay the foundations for a more efficient, interoperable approach to fisheries enforcement in the future.



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Success Criterion 2 – Outputs

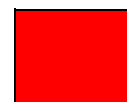
Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 2A) National updates and strategy		• KEIFCA PCEO attended all National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG) meetings. • PCEO chaired the Mobile Working App Group (MWAG), a task and finish group developing mobile working for IFCA's. • PCEO represented NIMEG on the Bass FMP Authorisations subgroup. • Regular joint work with partner organisations was undertaken, including coordinated enforcement operations and patrols. • Intelligence reporting and sharing was improved through the introduction of the new Clue intelligence system. • Training was delivered for partners, including Environment Agency cross-warranting.	Deliver Mobile Working App for IFCA use nationally
ONGOING ACTION: 2B) Information and Planning		• 184 intelligence reports were processed to national standards. • Training was provided to officers on an individual needs basis to improve standards and promote best practice. • Relevant intelligence for partner agencies was gathered and disseminated, with improved awareness through attendance at TCG meetings. • KEIFCA worked with NIMEG to deliver the new "Clue" intelligence system, replacing the national intel database. Clue system now in full use by PCEO and enforcement officers. • Rapid dissemination of officer safety information was prioritised. • The Maritime and Coastal Surveillance System (MCSS) is being phased out for IFCA use, with the Mobile Working App set to replace it as the national inspection recording system. • The PCEO led the NIMEG Mobile Working App Group (MWAG), a Task & Finish group to deliver mobile working for IFCA's.	Continue input on Clue development and Mobile Working app
ONGOING ACTION: 2C) Enforcement systems		• Operation orders were implemented to target high-risk seasonal fisheries, including cockle fisheries, shellfish gathering, joint agency maritime enforcement, and bass non-compliance (in partnership with MMO). • Tasking and Coordination Group (TCG) meetings were held on a bi-weekly basis to focus enforcement resources on high-risk intelligence. • TCG charts were further developed and used effectively to review enforcement outcomes and guide taskings. • The Enforcement SharePoint site was used daily by officers, improving access to operational resources. • The "Enforcement Record System" was used to record all inspection data, with vessel IDs monitored and maintained by a duty officer in each county. • A case file management system was maintained to national standards. • The patrol planning system was updated and migrated onto SharePoint to improve accessibility. • KEIFCA Crib books were reviewed, updated, and expanded to strengthen officer understanding and field knowledge. • Annual enforcement plans and reports were completed. Risk register updated.	Develop use of CLUE Event register for TCG meetings



Objective completed



Significant progress made but objective not completed



Minimal progress made

Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 2D) Case Files and Prosecutions		- Case files were built and proportionate outcomes delivered according to legal advice and in line with the Compliance and Enforcement Strategy. - National protocol and best practices were adopted via NIMEG. - A total of 33 offences were detected, resulting in: 1 Prosecution 3 Financial Administrative Penalties (FAPs) issued and paid 14 Gear offence notices 12 Seizures of illegal catch / gear 16 Official Written Warnings 4 Advisory Letters 14 Verbal Warnings - Two officers attended the Competent Officer course. - On-the-job training and feedback were provided by the PCEO to maintain and develop enforcement officers' skills, particularly around evidence gathering and case file preparation.	Further formal training required to improve and maintain officers skills
ONGOING ACTION: 2E) Sea-going enforcement asset management		- KEIFCA vessels were maintained and operated for enforcement purposes - Vessel-based enforcement equipment was maintained, with boarding bags checked regularly to ensure readiness. - Reports on vessel operation, maintenance, and refits were delivered to the Authority. - Options for best available vessel equipment continued to be explored to ensure operational effectiveness	
ONGOING ACTION: 2F) Enforcement activities – sea-based		99 sea patrols were conducted, resulting in 39 commercial vessel inspections, 6 recreational vessel inspections, and 9 gear inspections at sea. - Six sea patrols were carried out with partner agencies. - Intelligence was gathered and compliance risks prioritised through TCG meetings and Operation Orders, alongside reactive enforcement in response to live intelligence. - KEIFCA improved and updated its understanding of partner agency intelligence needs through joint meetings and external TCGs. - Body Worn Video was routinely used during inspections at sea, with footage providing evidence for case files. - KEIFCA supported MMO and DEFRA by undertaking joint taskings at sea, including targeted enforcement in the key bass fishery.	Further joint agency sea patrol work
ONGOING ACTION: 2G) Shore based enforcement asset management		- KEIFCA vehicles were maintained and used for enforcement patrols. - Shore-based enforcement equipment was maintained, with shore bags checked regularly to ensure readiness. - New Axon Body Worn Video was routinely used during shore inspections, with footage used as evidence in case files and translation feature used to communicate. - New scales and calibration weights were purchased to support inspection procedures. - Regular reporting on the operation, maintenance, and refit of key shore-based equipment was provided to the Authority. - Drones continued to be used to in a limited capacity.	Maintain BWV translation software tool



Success Criterion 2 – Outputs

Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 2H) Enforcement activities – shore-based		• 267 shore patrols resulting in 213 commercial and 675 recreational shore-based inspections being completed. • 26 joint working shore patrols carried out with partner agencies • Intel gathered and compliance risk prioritised and actioned via TCG and Operation Orders in addition to reactive enforcement to live Intelligence when needed.	
ONGOING ACTION: 2I) Enforcement training		• The accreditation programme continued to be developed nationally, led by the DCIFCO. • Updates to legislation and procedures were disseminated to officers by the DCIFCO and PCEO. • CRIB books were issued to all officers and are under continuous review; they are routinely used in the field to maintain legislative knowledge, guide enforcement practice, and form the basis of the operational training package, which supports new staff training and helps standardise/optimise the skills of experienced staff. Training with partner agencies, including Essex Police, the Environment Agency, and MMO, was delivered to strengthen operational capability. • The admin assistant was trained in data extraction and processing for TCG charts, enhancing intelligence and analysis capacity. • 5 officers were cross-warranted with the Environment Agency (limited SAFFA warrants), and 8 EA staff were cross-warranted to enforce KEIFCA byelaws.	All staff refresher training on Conflict Resolution & Breakaway techniques. Accreditation programme requires development.
2J) Improve our use of enforcement information and integrate IVMS into enforcement process		• Enforcement Record System / patrol plans on SharePoint records enforcement data effectively • Working with MMO via NIMEG to develop Mobile Working App for IFCA use nationally • Clue software adopted for IFCA and MMO use as national intel and case management system. • I-VMS project delayed nationally	Adopt tactical use of IVMS once implemented. Develop Mobile Working App for IFCA use
2K) Marine Protected Area enforcement		• MPA byelaws were incorporated into the KEIFCA risk register. • MPAs requiring increased patrol effort were identified through the TCG process and prioritised accordingly.	
2L) Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM)		• Full voluntary REM rollout completed across the 15-vessel TECFO fleet. • REM monitoring expanded to Manila clam trial vessels. • Participated in national IFCA/Defra REM working groups. • Developed REM data applications for fisheries management and compliance monitoring. • Explored future opportunities for REM systems.	Develop GDPR compliance and improve functionality
2M) Manila Clam trial fishery		• Delivered compliance and monitoring programme for the 2025 Manila clam trial fishery. • Utilised REM technology to monitor fishing activity and gear footprint. • Conducted boarding and landing inspections to assess minimum size, damage rates and catch limit compliance.	Continue trial next year



Success Criterion 3: Management Measures

Agreeing then applying for a new cockle regulating order for the Thames

This year represented a landmark period for Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (KEIFCA) with the implementation of the Thames Estuary Cockle Fishery Order 2024 (TECFO 2024). The new Order replaced the previous management framework and was the culmination of several years of consultation, stakeholder engagement, scientific review and legislative development. The objective of the new Order was to establish a modern and sustainable management system for one of the largest and most economically important cockle fisheries in England, while balancing the needs of industry with KEIFCA's statutory duty to protect the marine environment.

The introduction of TECFO 2024 required significant effort from both KEIFCA officers and Authority Members. Extensive work was undertaken to develop the licensing framework, establish governance arrangements and implement the administrative procedures necessary to regulate access to the fishery. The Authority's Annual Report noted that the replacement of the Thames Estuary Cockle Fishery Order had dominated much of KEIFCA's work over a number of years and required substantial input from Members, officers and the Applications Panel to bring the new system into operation.

A significant proportion of officer and Member time was dedicated to progressing the Variation Order associated with the Thames Estuary Cockle Fishery Order 2024. This work ensured that the new management framework could be refined in response to implementation challenges, stakeholder feedback and operational requirements, providing greater certainty for licence holders while supporting KEIFCA's objectives for sustainable fisheries management, effective governance and evidence-based decision making.



Success Criterion 3: Management Measures

During 2025, KEIFCA successfully managed the first fishery operating under the new Order. Scientific stock assessments continued to play a central role in determining the availability of fishing opportunities and ensuring that harvesting levels were based on robust evidence. This science-led approach remained fundamental to the Authority's commitment to sustainable fisheries management and provided confidence that exploitation of the stock could be undertaken responsibly.

The Authority worked closely with licence holders and industry representatives throughout the season to support the transition to the new management arrangements. The introduction of TECFO 2024 provided a clearer and more structured framework for licensing and management, helping to improve long-term certainty for fishers while ensuring that public shellfish resources continued to be managed in a sustainable manner.

Alongside the operation of the fishery itself, KEIFCA continued to invest in research, monitoring and compliance activity to support effective management of the cockle stock. Funding secured through Defra programmes contributed towards fisheries research and management work, ensuring that future decision-making could continue to be informed by high-quality evidence.

Dominic Bailey, Deputy Chief Officer



Success Criterion 3: Management Measures

FMP Implementation Workshop Summary

As national FMP lead KEIFCA helped arrange and facilitate the Regulators FMP Implementation Workshop that was held on 17 November 2025 in London. The meeting brought together Defra, the MMO and IFCA representatives to review progress on Fisheries Management Plan implementation and consider how delivery could be better aligned across national and local structures in the future. The meeting provided an opportunity for Defra and the MMO to share progress, explain thier priorities for the forthcoming year and for each IFCA to describe their contribution to FMP delivery, and identify where they could be more effectively involved in the future.

As part of the meeting Defra outlined their current governance arrangements, including the FMP programme board, the implementation delivery group and the role of management groups. Individual IFCAs then provided detailed updates on the management systems, evidence collection and local implementation work in place across their districts as well as future priorities and projects.

- Crab and lobster: several IFCAs described permit byelaws, pot limitation proposals, monthly permit returns, landings and effort data, catch sampling and local stock assessment work.
- Bass: IFCAs outlined existing netting permit byelaws, estuary and nursery area protections, enforcement activity, tagging and ageing work, and their contribution to the Bass Authorisations Review.
- Whelks: Devon IFCA and North Western IFCA described phased approaches to a 65mm MCRS, while Eastern IFCA identified ongoing work to test whether the local MCRS in Suffolk is set appropriately. Southern IFCA's voluntary LPUE pilot and population survey work, together with Devon IFCA's interest in gene typing to understand stock structure, demonstrated how IFCAs can provide flexible and locally focused evidence to support FMP objectives.
- Scallops: IFCAs described a range of measures and trials, including seasonal closures, dredge limits, restricted permit numbers, "go fish" areas, enviro-dredge trials, REM monitoring in MPAs and sentinel vessel catch sampling.



Success Criterion 3: Management Measures

These updates helped highlight the local management, monitoring and research that is already in place, and the opportunity for IFCA's to help fill evidence gaps and provide practical delivery routes for FMP implementation.

A major theme of the meeting reflected on the governance systems for each FMP, and how they could be developed and improved. The meeting reflected that the Bass Management Group was a good example of the kind of constructive work and progress that can be made by such a group, and its task-and-finish approach was highlighted as a model for other FMPs. Participants also discussed the need to align different delivery tools, including statutory instruments, licensing conditions and flexible byelaws.

Stakeholder engagement was identified as critical to successful implementation, and that IFCA's had an important role in locally tailoring national communication, particularly for the small-scale inshore fleet, who often cannot attend national meetings. Suggestions included better timing of consultations around IFCA meetings, improved transparency through accessible documents and minutes, and greater use of IFCA networks, websites, meetings and social media to explain national proposals in local terms.

The workshop identified specific opportunities for collaboration, including REM trials, local byelaw pilots, gear-impact studies, improved catch and effort data, and targeted stakeholder engagement. Overall, the meeting helped clarify progress, surface implementation challenges and establish a stronger basis for joint delivery between Defra, the MMO and IFCA's over the next phase of FMP implementation.



Success Criterion 3 – Outputs

Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 3A) Administration of KEIFCA licences and permits		• 15 cockle licences issued & 3 management info letters • 34 cockle permits issued & 4 management info letters • Cockle industry meeting held • Cockle catch returns collated • 24 whelk permits issued • Whelk catch returns collated and fed into meeting report	
ONGOING ACTION: 3B) Administration of new KEIFCA legislation (e.g. Byelaws and Regulating Orders)		• Continued to maintain communications with the MMO Byelaw team in order to inform national resource allocation for progression of IFCA byelaws. • Engaged with the MMO byelaw team to provide advance notification of upcoming byelaws in early development by KEIFCA	
3C) Implement new cockle fishery management and start		• Implemented the new Thames Estuary Cockle Fishery Order 2024 (T24), securing a 28-year management framework to ensure the sustainable regulation of one of the UK's most important cockle fisheries following the expiry of the previous 1994 Order. • Established the new licensing system for the fishery, with Members authorising the issue of 15 licences for the first seven-year licensing cycle commencing in 2025, providing a clear and transparent mechanism for future access to the fishery. • Successfully commenced management of the new fishery regime, transitioning from the 1994 Order and opening the first fishery under the new management framework, supported by stock assessments, catch controls, total allowable catches, and ongoing monitoring to ensure sustainable harvesting.	
3D) Take steps to explore the potential of a future Manila clam fishery		• Completed and evaluated a monitored Manila clam trial fishery, collecting data on harvesting methods, catch quality, market opportunities and environmental effects to assess whether a viable commercial fishery could be developed in the Thames Estuary. The trial concluded that Manila clam stocks may support a future fishery and identified priority areas for further research. • Developed and launched a two-year Manila clam trial framework, including participant selection, a code of conduct, vessel monitoring arrangements and scientific studies to assess stock sustainability, seabed impacts, fishing practices and the economic potential of a future commercial fishery.	



Objective completed



Significant progress made but objective not completed



Minimal progress made

Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
3E) Provide support for process of SE Marine Plan review and update		- Engaged with the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and wider marine planning process to provide fisheries and environmental expertise, helping ensure that the South East Marine Plan review reflected the needs of sustainable inshore fisheries management and marine conservation within the Kent and Essex district. - Used locally collected fisheries, habitat and marine environmental evidence to inform marine planning discussions, supporting the review and ongoing implementation of the South East Marine Plan and helping ensure future management decisions are evidence-based and aligned with local priorities.	
3F) Respond to MMO marine licence applications		Reviewed and responded to MMO marine licence consultations, providing fisheries and environmental advice to ensure proposed developments considered potential impacts on inshore fisheries, marine habitats and conservation interests within the KEIFCA district.	
3G) Provide input into national Fisheries Management Plan workstreams		- Supported DEFRA's implementation of Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs) by contributing local fisheries data, scientific evidence and operational expertise, particularly through ongoing management and review of key fisheries such as whelks and shellfish stocks within the Kent and Essex district. - Worked with national fisheries management initiatives and stakeholders to deliver short-term FMP measures, including reviewing management arrangements, monitoring fisheries performance and providing updates to Authority Members on emerging Fisheries Management Plans and their implications for local fisheries.	
3H) Help DEFRA implement the short-term management measures from Fisheries Management Plans.		- Reviewed local whelk fishery data and management measures, providing evidence to support DEFRA's implementation of the Whelk Fisheries Management Plan and future national management reforms. - Briefed Authority Members on new Fisheries Management Plans, including the Whelk FMP, Cockle FMP, Skates and Rays FMP and Southern North Sea Non-Quota Species FMP, helping prepare for the introduction of new management measures and local implementation.	





Success Criterion 4: Governance and Training

Conduct and Operations Report Recommendations Implementation Steering Group (CORRIS)

Following the Government's publication of the latest IFCA Conduct and Operations Report, the Association of IFCAs (AIFCA) has played a central role in coordinating the national response and ensuring that the report's recommendations are translated into meaningful action.

To support this work, the Conduct and Operations Report Recommendations Implementation Steering Group (CORRIS) was established, bringing together Chief Officers, Defra, the Marine Management Organisation and the AIFCA. Acting as the group's secretariat, the AIFCA has coordinated meetings and monitored progress.

Many of the recommendations have been taken forward through the AIFCA Delivery Programme. One of the most significant has been the development of independent best practice guidance for complaints handling and declarations of interest. Rather than each IFCA developing separate procedures, the AIFCA commissioned independent experts to review existing practice, produce consistent guidance, model procedures, standard templates and training materials that can be adopted across the IFCAs. This approach not only improves governance and transparency but also reduces duplication and ensures Members and Officers have access to clear, legally robust advice.

The Declarations of Interest project also highlighted the value of taking a national approach. An independent review of governance arrangements across all ten IFCAs found that, while every Authority had appropriate arrangements in place, there were inconsistencies in how interests were recorded, published and managed, how dispensations were applied, and the level of training available to Members and Clerks. In response, the AIFCA has developed a suite of standardised resources, including a common declaration form, register of interests, decision-making framework, dispensation guidance, and governance training. These resources will help IFCAs to adopt a consistent, transparent and legally robust approach to managing interests, while recognising the important contribution that Members with specialist and local knowledge bring to Authority decision-making.

In the same way, the Handling of Complaints project has produced a template complaints procedure, supported by clear guidance and practical advice, that can be adapted by individual IFCAs while maintaining a common national standard. By establishing a shared approach to managing complaints, the project will help ensure that concerns are handled fairly, proportionately and consistently, while reducing duplication of effort and strengthening confidence in IFCA governance across England.

Improving public understanding of the role of IFCAs has also been a major priority. Working with communications specialists and partners, the AIFCA produced a series of community awareness films explaining the role of IFCAs in protecting the marine environment, supporting sustainable fisheries and making evidence-based decisions. Alongside these, a new suite of animated Member awareness videos has been developed to explain the responsibilities of IFCA Members, the byelaw-making process and how decisions are reached. Together, these resources improve transparency, support informed participation and provide consistent messages that every IFCA can use with local communities, prospective, and newly appointed Members.

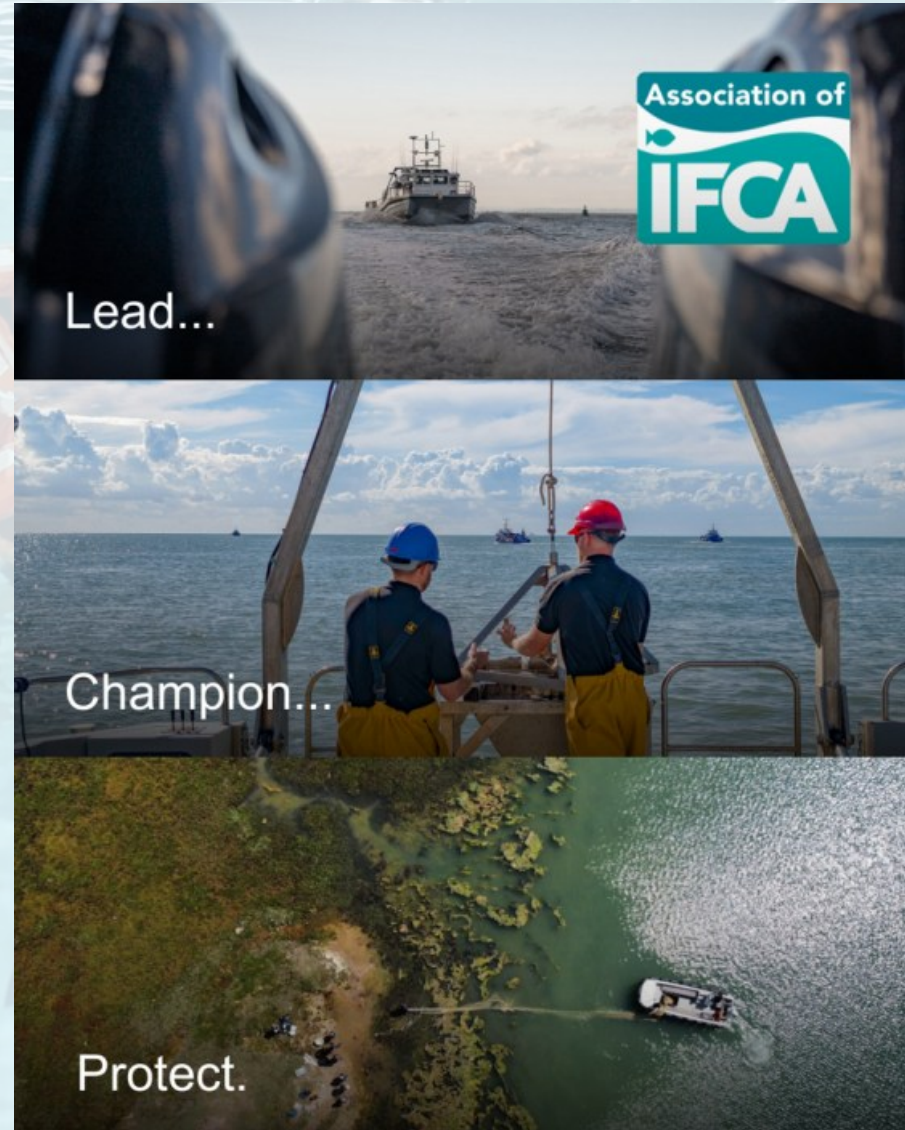
Success Criterion 4: Governance and Training

The AIFCA has also strengthened communication across the IFCA network through the launch of the quarterly IFCA Insights newsletter. Produced in-house, the newsletter provides Members, Officers and stakeholders with regular updates on national projects, policy developments and examples of best practice from around the country. By showcasing achievements, sharing learning and highlighting opportunities for collaboration, IFCA Insights helps strengthen the collective identity of the IFCA family while ensuring Members and partners remain informed about the work being delivered on their behalf. IFCA Insights and the community videos can be found on the AIFCA website: [Home - AIFCA](#).

Behind the scenes, significant progress has also been made to improve collaboration between IFCAs. A new national SharePoint platform has been established, providing a secure environment for sharing information, guidance and best practice. Dedicated workspaces are support national officer groups and provide common repositories for areas such as compliance and enforcement, byelaws, Marine Protected Area management and human resources. By making knowledge easier to access and share, the platform will reduce duplication, improve consistency and strengthen collaboration across the IFCA network.

Much of this work takes place out of the public eye, but it provides the foundations for a stronger, more consistent national organisation. By bringing together expertise, developing common standards and coordinating delivery on behalf of all IFCAs, the AIFCA continues to demonstrate the value of working collectively to achieve improvements that would be difficult for individual Authorities to deliver alone.

Simon Pengelly, Senior Technical Officer—AIFCA



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		• 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 • Budget held for NLTO post on behalf of AIFCA • Processed 1027 invoices	
ONGOING ACTION: 4B) Annual planning and reporting		• Created and published 2026-2027 annual plan and 2024-2025 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.		• Annual staff appraisals undertaken • Recruitment of 1 member of staff	
ONGOING ACTION: 4D) IFCA Meetings - Run and provide support for quarterly IFCA meetings and technical panel meetings.		Held 4 quarterly meetings with approved minutes. • Held 1 x briefing meeting • Maintained handbook for Members	
ONGOING ACTION: 4E) Staff training - Accredited Enforcement Training, Internal training, PACE course training, Sea tickets/training, survey training (ATV training) etc.		• RIB capsizing training – seven • STCW sea survival training – one • STCW fire fighting at sea – one • STCW 1st aid training – two • STCW security awareness training – one • STCW safety & social responsibilities training – one • Manual handling training – one • Confined spaces training – one • Working at heights training – one • Quad bike refresher training – two	



Objective completed



Significant progress made but objective not completed



Minimal progress made

Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 4F) General administration - Fill in timesheets, filing, post, travel & expenses, purchase card etc.		• Management of timesheets • Processed 29 travel & expenses claims • Maintained data records and filing	
ONGOING ACTION: 4G) Health and Safety Systems		• Annual reporting of H&S issues to Authority • Use of SeaFlux system to centralise and monitor all H&S systems for entire organization • Regular meeting of H&S committee to discuss any issues and to put procedures in place to mitigate against further incidents.	
4G) Implement new MCA workboat code requirements		• Planned and commenced major refit works to patrol vessels Nerissa and Tamesis, including boatyard periods specifically dedicated to bringing the vessels into compliance with Workboat Code 3 requirements. • Began replacing approximately 250 metres of flexible hydraulic, fuel and ancillary hosework on Nerissa with solid pipework, as required by Section 6.4 of Workboat Code 3, involving significant modifications to vessel systems and structure. • Worked directly with MCA surveyors and certifying authorities to identify and implement required upgrades, including replacement or enhancement of equipment and compliance with amended operational requirements under the new Code. • Overhauled vessel management, auditing and safety documentation systems, including migration to the SeaFlux vessel management system, updating standard operating procedures, and introducing new logging, inspection, maintenance and drill recording processes to meet Workboat Code 3 requirements.	
4H) Implement new KEIFCA officer staff structure		• Implemented a revised staffing structure to strengthen operational resilience and succession planning, ensuring the Authority had the capacity and specialist expertise needed to deliver its expanding compliance, fisheries management and scientific programmes. • Aligned staff resources and responsibilities with emerging priorities, including delivery of the Thames Estuary Cockle Regulating Order, enhanced fisheries enforcement, vessel operations and marine conservation work, helping the Authority operate more effectively across Kent and Essex.	



Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science Report

Evidence and Science Introduction

Kent and Essex IFCA conduct essential scientific research support Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs), promote sustainable fisheries, and ensure accessible evidence (data and information provision) within our district. The highlights of our 2025/2026 research agenda are presented under three themes: (1) Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), (2) Sustainable Fisheries, and (3) Access to Evidence. The first two themes report on how KEIFCA fulfils its statutory duties as set out in the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, and the third is the organisation's obligation to make information available to the public.

Through field surveys, we collect and analyse data to assess the status of key fisheries stocks, primarily shellfish, which guides fishery management across the district. For example, surveys of cockle stocks inform quota setting, access regulation, and the management of permit-based fisheries. This evidence base also informs decisions when fisheries are in decline, leading to management measures such as byelaws, regulatory adjustments, and enhanced enforcement.

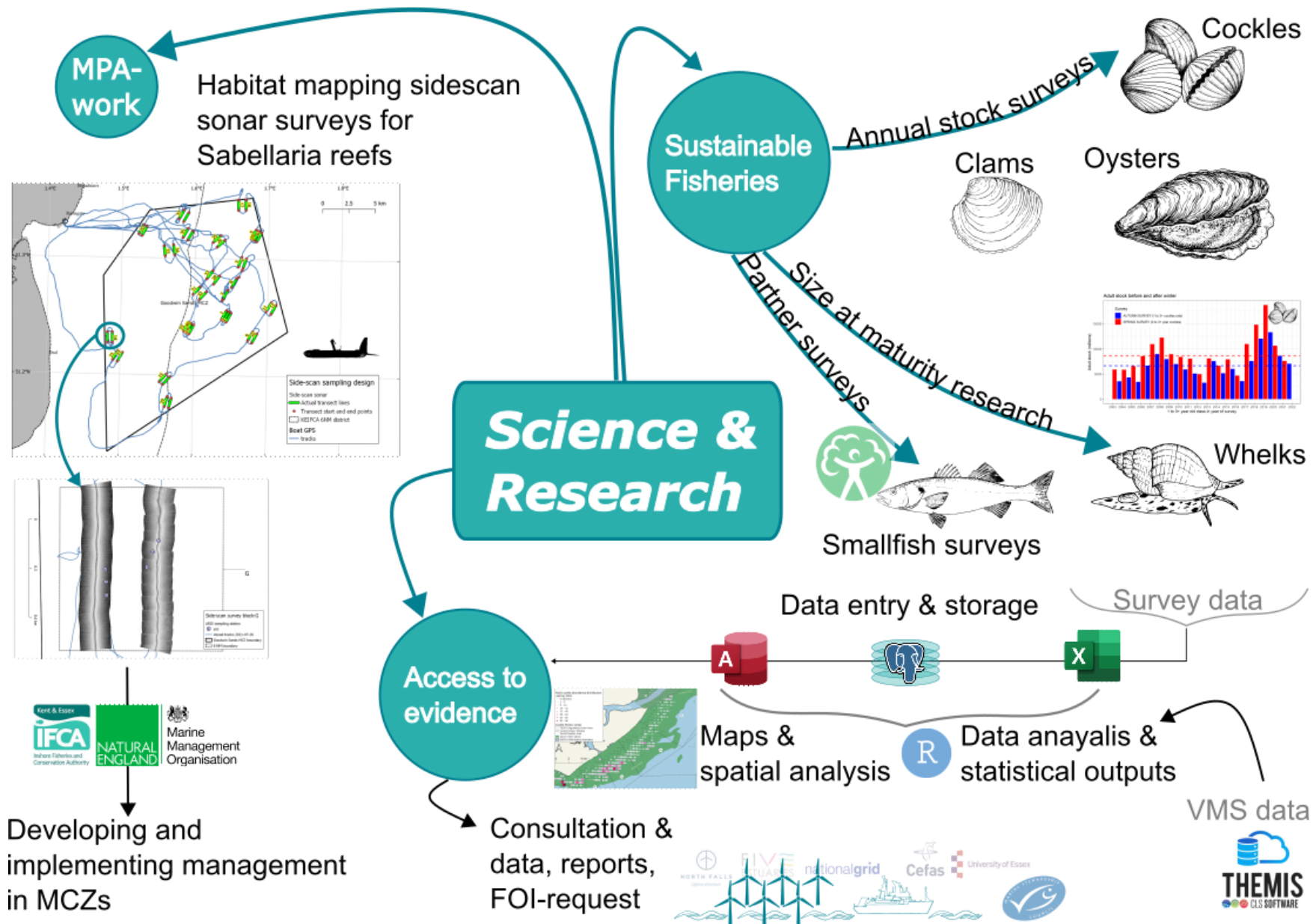
In 2025/2026 KEIFCA Research Agenda focused on three priorities 1) to meet the evidence requirements for the first year of running the TECFO 2024 (T24) cockle fishery, 2) answering management questions for the second year of the Manila clam trial fishery, and 3) developing a PhD study to assess the future shellfish fisheries in the Thames under climate change.

Philip Haupt, Lead Scientific Officer



to

Success Criterion 5: Science at a glance...



Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science Report

Manila clam trail 2026

Trial Set-up

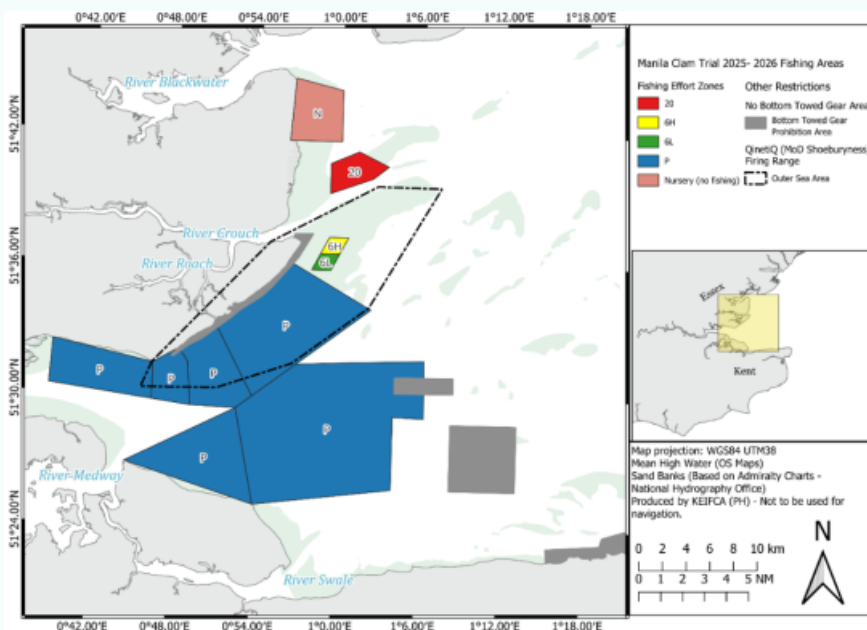
Following a successful 2024 trial fishery, it was decided to extend the Manila clam trial fishery until the end of 2027. The ongoing purpose of the trial is to assess whether a future fishery in the Thames Estuary could be both economically viable and environmentally sustainable.

The second phase of the trial commenced in October–November 2025 but closed shortly after it began due to poor market prices and clam quality. The trial recommenced between 16th March and 1st May 2026 with four participating trialists. The main objectives of the 2026 trial were to 1) evaluate the viability of a spring fishery, 2) test REM as a management tool, and 3) explore the distribution of Manila clams within the estuary, 4) assess the effects of fishing pressure (based on footprint) on the Manila clam population, by carrying out population assessment surveys before and after the trial.

The four participating vessels were permitted to fish within established trial areas (Area 6 and Area 20) and to search for new fishing grounds in designated prospecting areas (see Figure 1). The vessels ranged from under 10 m to 14 m in length and all trialists used a batch dredge with water injection to collect clams. Three trialists used rotary riddles, and one used a flatbed riddle to sort undersize (MCRS 35 mm) and sizeable clams. Each vessel was fitted with Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM) system to show exactly where and when fishing is happening.

Trialists were allocated a total of 13 fishing trips to land low-volume-high-value clams over a period of six weeks with 10 of those trips from the main fishery grounds on the Foulness Sand, Area 6, and Buxey Sand, Area 20. The fishing ground on the Foulness was further divided into two zones, Area 6 High and Area 6 Low, and a control adjacent to these zones was closed to fishing. These zones were of equal size and were designed to test whether REM could be used as a tool to quantify and manage the fleets footprint and assess the change in clam population size where fishing effort was high compared to zones where it was kept low. The remaining 3 trips were designed as prospecting trips, where trialists could explore clam fishing options outside of the main areas to discover alternative beds that might be commercially viable. Trialists were allowed to retain and sell their catch from these areas.

Trialists were visited in port, and REM systems were checked, biosecurity inspections carried out, and communication lines established. KEIFCA carried out Habitat Regulations Assessment and worked closely with Natural England, and the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and local councillors to ensure all fishing areas could be classified and opened.



Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science Report

Key findings

1) Viability of a spring fishery

A total of 46 fishing trips was completed and approximately 15.3 tonnes of Manila clams were landed. All commercial quantities of clams were successfully sold into the UK market, and participants generally reported that market conditions were stronger than those experienced during the autumn trial. However, the trial also identified several factors which may constrain a future spring fishery, these include poor weather, overlap with existing fisheries such as whelk, bass and cockle fisheries, and the availability of resources required to manage concurrent fisheries. From a biological perspective, no immediate changes in clam abundance, biomass or size structure were detected during the small-scale trial, although further evidence is required before conclusions can be drawn regarding larger-scale fishing activity.

2) REM as a management tool

The trial demonstrated the value of REM as a fisheries management tool within Marine Protected Areas. REM data was used to produce dashboards for both managers and trialists, providing information on fishing activity, footprint and catch rates. This supported compliance, informed weekly management discussions, enabled adaptive management and improved transparency for trialists.

By the end of the trial, the fleet had generated a fishing footprint of approximately 0.26 km², equivalent to 37 football pitches and representing only 1.8% of the total trial area. The data provides an important evidence base for future Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) required to support the establishment of a future fishery and to understand impacts on Manila clam stocks from fishing. REM also identified significant differences in vessel efficiency, highlighting opportunities to reduce seabed impact while maintaining catches.

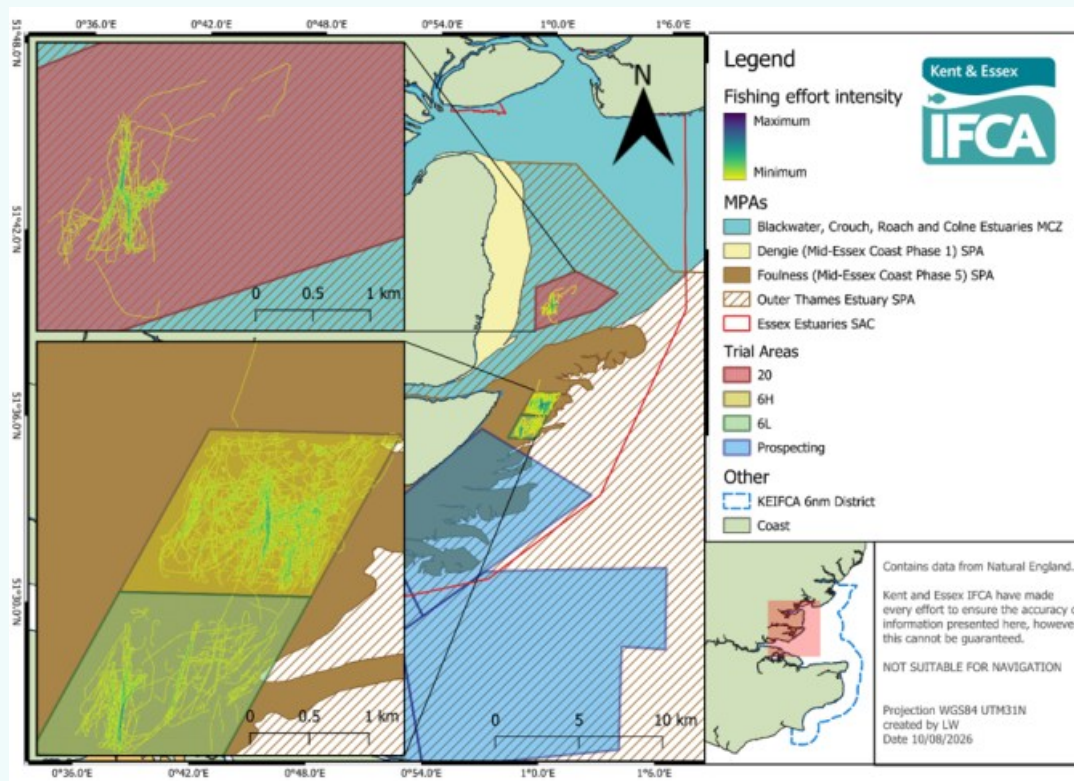


Figure 1. Heatmap of fishing tracks in Manila clam fishing zones.

Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science Report

3) Distribution of Manila clams within the estuary

Eleven prospecting trips were completed across five designated prospecting areas. The most significant outcome was the identification of a previously unknown Manila clam bed in the north of the Maplin Sands. Subsequent fishing trips confirmed that the area could support commercially viable catches, resulting in approximately 2.3 tonnes of clams being harvested from the newly identified bed.

The discovery of additional clam resources is important because a future fishery is currently constrained by the number and size of known beds. Identifying further commercially viable areas may improve the resilience and long-term viability of the fishery.

4) The effects of fishing pressure (based on footprint) on the Manila clam population

We found that fishing pressure (here quantified as fishing footprint) has no measurable effect on the Manila clam or cockle populations in the fishing zones. We ascribe that to the fact that only a small portion of the fishing zones were in contact with the fishing gear (1.8%), and within that, it was unevenly distributed, such that large areas of the zones remained completely unfished. Anecdotal evidence suggests that clams and cockles within fishing tracks, where average densities were lower, were more affected by fishing activity compared to outside of the fishing tracks.

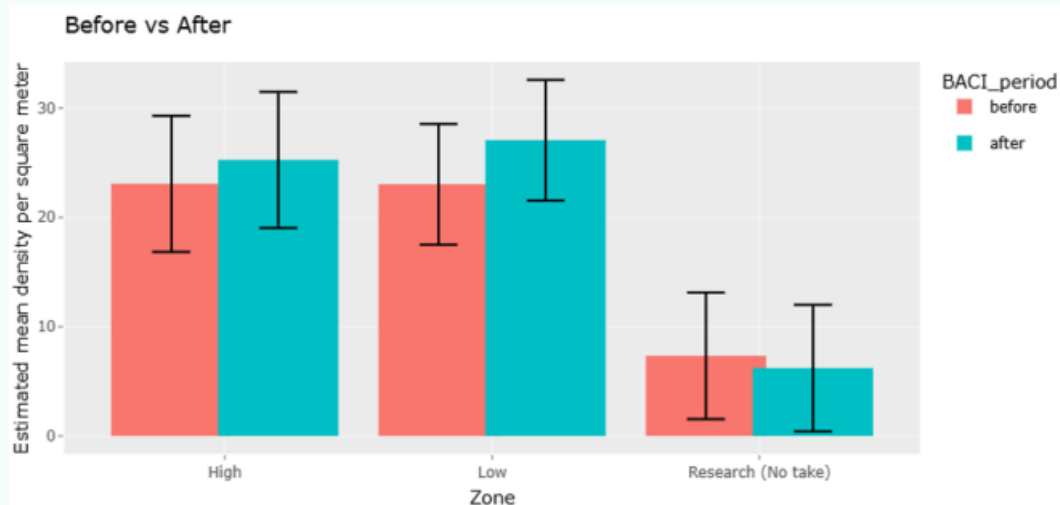


Figure XYZ. Densities of Manila clams before and after fishing in the three fishing effort zones on The Foulness Sand.

The 2026 trial provided KEIFCA with its first opportunity to quantify and manage fishing effort using a footprint-based approach. Traditionally, fishing effort is measured using time spent fishing; however, this trial measured the area of seabed contacted by fishing gear. This provided KEIFCA with a greater understanding of fishing pressure, seabed impacts and potential effects on Manila clam populations, while helping to inform future management of fisheries operating within Marine Protected Areas.

Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science Report

. Conclusion

The 2026 Manila clam trial successfully evaluated the viability of small-scale spring fishery, demonstrated the value of REM as a fisheries management tool and identified a previously unknown commercially viable Manila clam bed within the Thames Estuary. The trial also highlighted continued industry interest in the development of a future fishery, while providing important evidence to support future management and support regulatory requirements.

Next steps include:

- Expanding the scale of future trials.
- Directly comparing spring and autumn fisheries.
- Continuing the use of REM as a core management tool.
- Investigating the newly identified bed in the north of the Maplin Sands and additional fishing opportunities.
- Improving understanding of the impacts of fishing pressure on Manila clam populations.

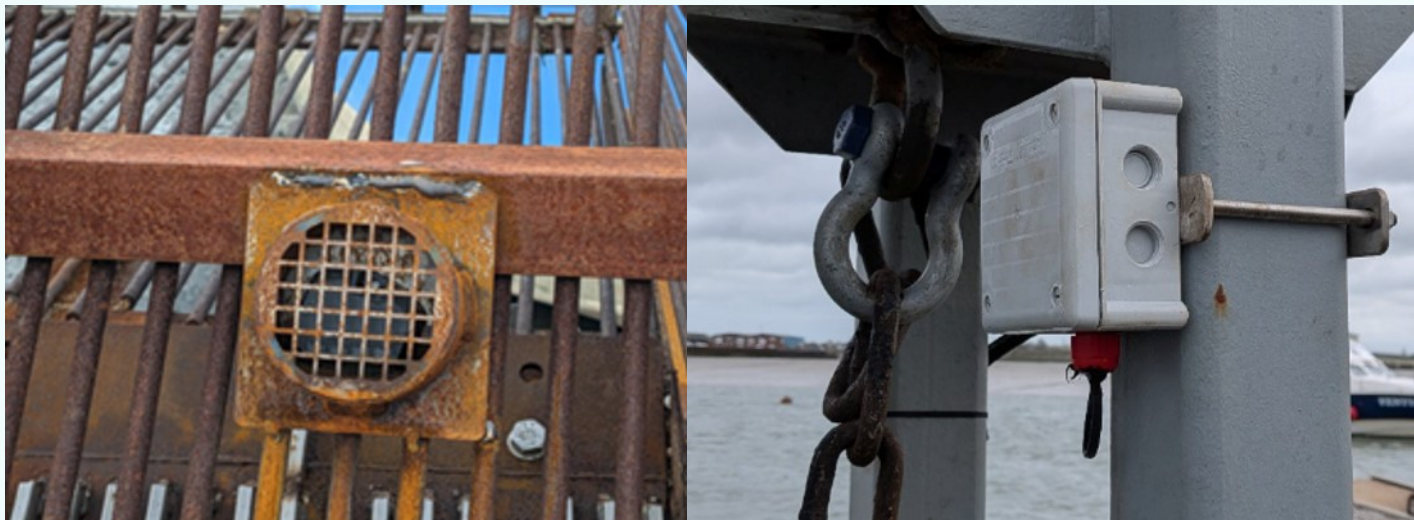


Figure 2. REM Gear Sensors (left) on dredge and REM receiver (right) mounted on deck.

Philip Haupt, Lead Scientific Officer

Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science Report

TECFO 2024 data collection and management

The TECFO cockle fishery remains the largest cockle fishery in Europe and the District's most economically valuable shellfish fishery. Following the expiry of TECFO No. 1 in September 2024, the fishery is now managed under the new Thames Estuary Cockle Fishery Order 2024 (TECFO No. 2). A major focus of the 2025/26 research programme was ensuring that the evidence base underpinning management could continue seamlessly under the new regulatory framework, while also addressing the additional information requirements associated with the revised fishery structure.

To support this transition, KEIFCA reviewed and adapted its long-running cockle stock survey programme. Survey designs were updated to enable direct comparisons between historic and current cockle production areas, ensuring continuity in the stock assessment time series that underpins management decisions.

The revised programme also incorporated additional survey stations within newly designated management areas, while removing stations that no longer contribute to management objectives. Alongside these changes, planning commenced for the collection of data needed to understand the implications of the fifteenth licence introduced under TECFO No. 2 and its potential influence on fishing activity and stock exploitation patterns.



Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science Report



KEIFCA has also continued to work closely with industry to improve understanding of fishery impacts and strengthen evidence-led management. Routine inspections carried out by KEIFCA provide information on cockle damage rates, but in 2025/26 the fishery took an important step towards greater collaborative monitoring through the introduction of fisher self-reporting. This citizen science initiative aims to provide more frequent information on stock condition and support efforts to minimise fishing-related damage throughout the season.

In addition, the first Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM) systems were installed on vessels operating in the fishery, marking the beginning of a transition towards a fully documented fishery. Enhanced monitoring will provide greater confidence in compliance and catch reporting, supporting the flexible management approaches required for a fishery operating within a network of Marine Protected Areas and subject to multiple conservation objectives.

Philip Haupt, Principal Science and Conservation Officer

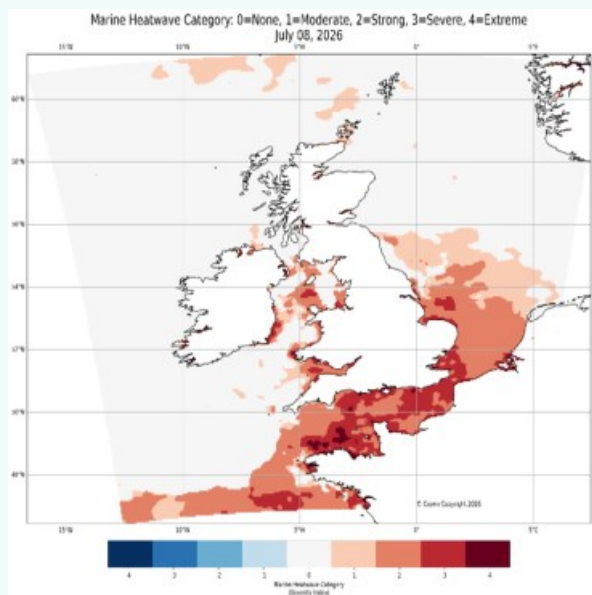


Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science Report

Understanding the Future of Shellfish Fisheries Under Climate Change

Climate change is increasingly recognised as a major driver of change in marine ecosystems within the Kent and Essex IFCA District. Rising sea temperatures and the increasing frequency and intensity of marine heatwaves are already influencing the distribution and abundance of commercially important fish and shellfish species in the United Kingdom. Over recent decades, species such as cod have shifted their distribution northwards, while the severe marine heatwave of 2022 was associated with widespread whelk mortality along the Kent North Coast. The continued warming of coastal waters poses potential risks to the long-term sustainability of several economically important shellfisheries in the District, particularly whelks, cockles and Manila clams.

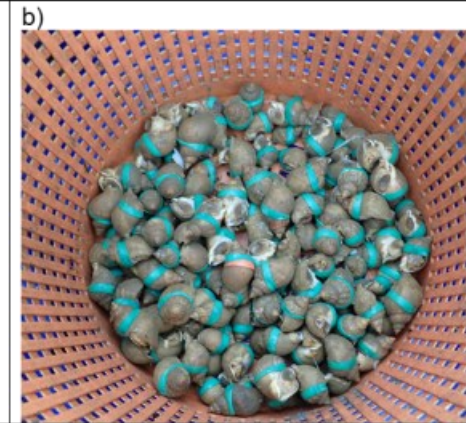
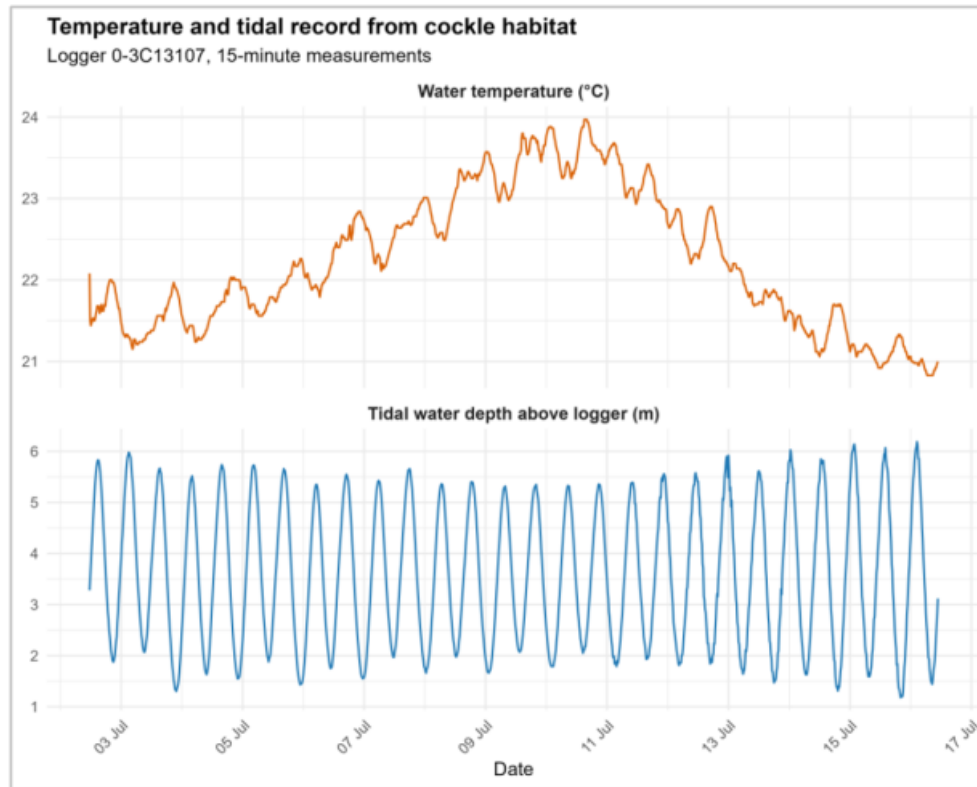
In response to these challenges, KEIFCA has invested in developing an evidence base to better understand the future impacts of climate change on local fisheries through the co-funding of a PhD studentship with The Fishmongers' Company at the University of Essex. Following a competitive recruitment process, Lola O'Mara was appointed to the studentship and commenced work during 2025/26. The project is supervised by Senior Lecturer and Associate Professor Dr Michael Steinke and Professor Tom Cameron at the University of Essex, with co-supervision provided by Dr Phil Haupt on behalf of KEIFCA. The studentship represents a significant investment in research capacity and will strengthen links between fisheries management, academia and industry.



The research programme will combine laboratory experiments, field observations and predictive modelling to assess how commercially important shellfish species respond to elevated water temperatures and marine heatwave events. The study will utilise KEIFCA's long-term water temperature monitoring network within the Thames Estuary to ensure that experimental conditions reflect real-world environmental scenarios. In addition, modelling approaches will be used to explore how shellfish populations and distributions may change under future climate change projections. The findings will help KEIFCA and industry better understand the risks and opportunities that climate change may present for the District's shellfisheries, supporting proactive and evidence-based fisheries management over the coming decades.

Philip Haupt, Principal Science and Conservation Officer

Success Criterion 5: Evidence and Science Report



Success Criterion 5 – Outputs

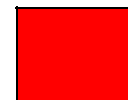
Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 5A) Annual Research Plan & Report		Annual Research Plan and Report produced & reported to Authority	
ONGOING ACTION: 5B) Participate in TAG meetings		- Actively contributed to IFCA TAG meetings & presented at TAG symposium hosted in Jersey - Represented TAG at WMG meetings	
ONGOING ACTION: 5C) Maintain scientific survey equipment		- KEIFCA vessels and equipment provided and maintained for the purposes of scientific surveys and data collection - Vessel status reported to Authority at quarterly meetings	
ONGOING ACTION: 5D) MPA management		- Byelaw signed-off to ban bottom towed gear inside Goodwin Sands-, Swanscombe and Dover-to-Deal MCZs - See Action 5J on Fishing Footprint in MPAs.	
ONGOING ACTION: 5E) Engagement with major marine developments in the district and reply to consultations		- Collated, evaluated and prioritised an overview of all marine developments in the District of relevance - Liaised with Fisheries Liaison Officer and Fisher's groups - Provide data, maps, verbal and written feedback when there is a potential impact on local fisheries, MPAs or byelaws.	Engage London Gateway & cockle fishing industry
ONGOING ACTION: 5F) Evidence gathering and reporting for the T24 licenced and permitted cockle fisheries		- Plan and carry out annual cockle stock assessment surveys (inc. cockle samples for MESL) - Delivery of recommendations relating to stock management (inc. data entry and analysis) - Organisation and delivery of pre-fishery stakeholder meeting (License holders) - Production of Habitat Regulations Assessment, including consultation with NE - Submitted and been successful in funding application to assess the impact of additional T24 licenses¹	¹ Seek consultant to assess impact on seabed
ONGOING ACTION: 5G) Evidence gathering and reporting for the whelk permit fishery and National whelk FMP		- Recruited PhD student to assess impacts of Marine Heatwaves on whelks, cockles and clams - Collated, analysed and prepared whelk landings report - Continued work to improve alignment with FMP objectives - Routinely collected water temperature data & outreach to fishers - Lost water temperature data logger Replace data logger	Replace data logger



Objective completed

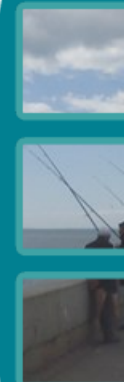


Significant progress made but objective not completed



Minimal progress made

Action	Completion Status	Outputs Completed	Next steps
ONGOING ACTION: 5H) Native oyster fishery management		- Carry out an oyster population survey - Continued membership of ENORI	Postponed survey to 2026
ACTION: 5I) Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs) delivery		- Participate in delivering the FMP objectives such as data and research elements. - Contributed and represented IFCA on Whelk Management Group (WMG) and Whelk Working Group (WWG) - Working Groups role came to completion	Set-up a new group to help aligning with FMP objects
ACTION: 5J) Evidence gathering for a potential clam fishery		- Survey planning & delivery of population status assessment - ongoing, postponed write-up - Organising and mobilising the trial fishery - Production of Habitat Regulations Assessment, including consultation with NE - Developed REM fishing footprint methods and data reporting tool for fishery - Engage with fishermen to communicate results and recommendations - Carried out Fishing Effort Stock Impact Study - Analysis & write-up - Riddling Study 2: Refine riddle bar spacing for sorting clams – deprioritised for 2026 - Develop standardised units for landing clams – deprioritised for 2026	Complete population status assessment
ACTION: 5K) T24 cockle stock assessment database		Substantial improvements made to the T24 cockle & clam stock assessment data recording methods, database, data analysis & reporting mechanisms	Continue to develop
ACTION: 5L) Host TAG 2025 symposium		Hosted a 2-day TAG symposium at Folkstone with wide participation	
ACTION: 5M) Project CHLE		- Attended and contribute to Coastal Health Livelihoods Project meetings and workshops with AIFCA - Explore options to facilitate acting as a coastal node for environmental phenomena - Co-supervise PhD study (University of Essex) to better understand whelk, clam and cockle environmental envelope	



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%

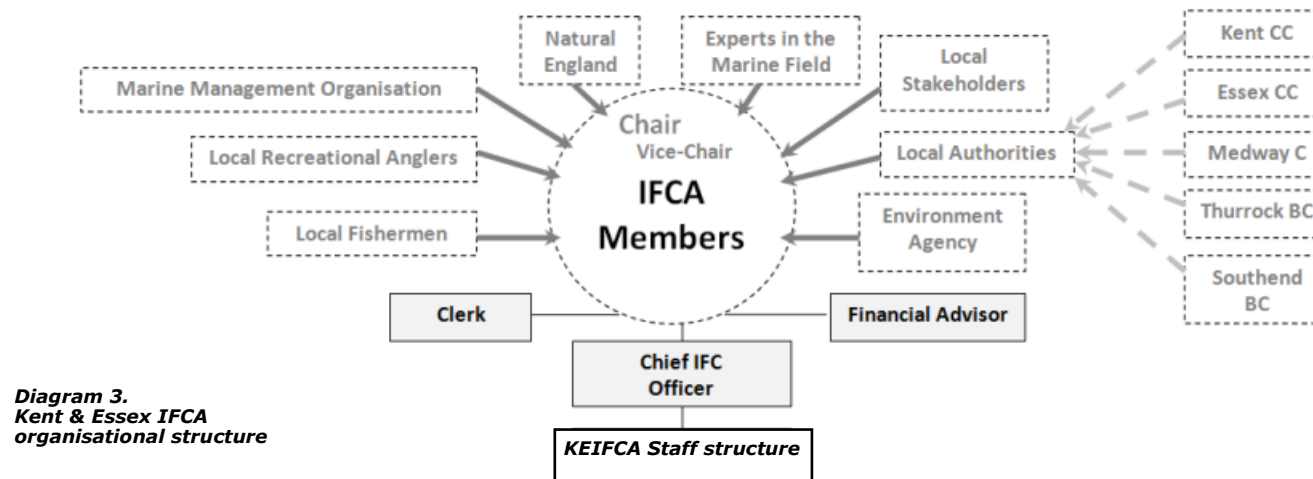
Since the 1st April 2011 local councils have annually received 'New IFCA Burdens' money from Defra via the area based local government grant. This funding is intended to help KEIFCA meet its new duties as stated in MCAA 2009.

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

**Mr John L Lamb	MMO Appointee	Cllr Jane Fleming	Essex CC
Cllr Jamie Henderson	Kent CC	Cllr George Coxshall	Thurrock BC
Cllr John Finch	Kent CC	Cllr Simon Curry	Medway BC
Cllr Mary Lawes	Kent CC	Mr Alex Baker	NE representative
Cllr Alan Goggin	Essex CC	Cllr Carole Mulroney	Southend CC
Cllr Michael Skeels	Essex CC	Ms Lindsay Faulkner	EA representative
Mr Justin Rowley	MMO representative		
*Mr P John E Nichols	MMO Appointee	<i>Commercial- finfish</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>	
Mr William East	MMO Appointee	<i>Recreational</i>	
Mr Craig Collins	MMO Appointee	<i>Recreational</i>	
Mr P Wexham	MMO Appointee	<i>Commercial—finifish</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

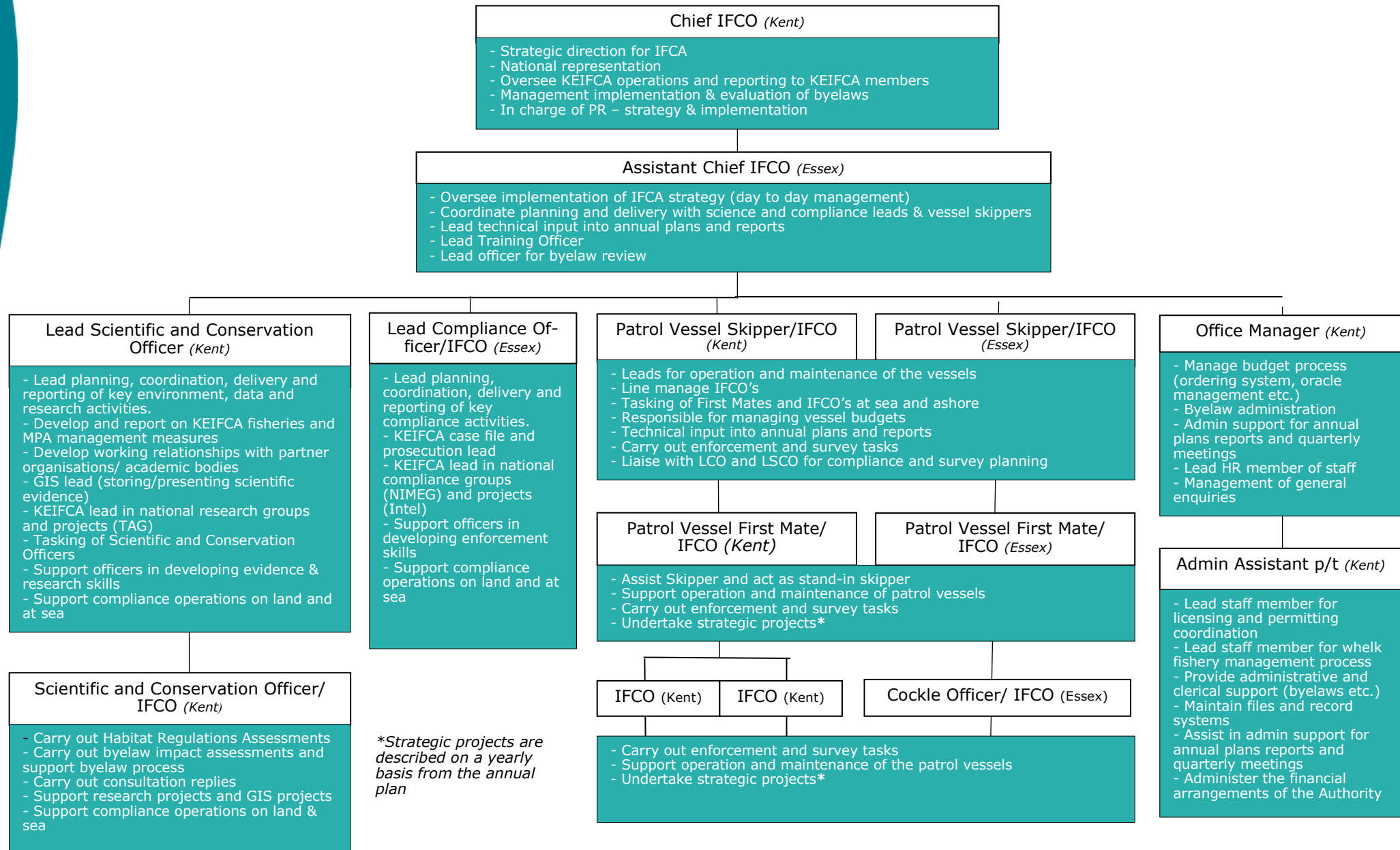


Diagram 4. Kent & Essex IFCA staff structure and key tasks

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

Staff continue to work hard to gain the qualifications and experience they need in order to fulfil the functions of the IFCA. A number of new staff have started with the Authority of the previous year and all are working hard to develop the core understanding, 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). KEIFCA is leading IFCA national 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 IFCAs 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 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 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.

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 three formal complaints or compliments were received, these were addressed using our complaints procedure and we have retained our complaints procedure to deal with any which may occur in future. Three 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

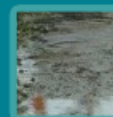
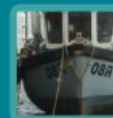
We will seek to understand what our stakeholders need, and develop our services around our stakeholders' expectations. We will:

- 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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