

**Agenda item C5**  
**Sea Angling Report**  
**Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority**  
**Quarterly report for the period ending 31 March 2014**

---

Summary: To report on the Recreational Sea Angling Sector in KEIFCA District

---

**KEIFCA Progress**

The start of the year saw the distribution of angling minimum size material continue to be handed out after a second print run was delivered due to the positive feedback and increased demand for minimum size stickers and cards from anglers and tackle shops.

February saw Kent and Essex IFCA (representing itself and the Association of IFCAs) invited to attend a workshop held by the MMO to provide technical advice on where angling activity occurs around the English coast. The information provided was used in association with information given from other national bodies representing recreational marine user groups and existing data sets of coastal and marine infrastructure and oceanographic information to create a recreational activity matrix. This matrix will allow the MMO planning department to predict possible future interactions between recreational activities such as angling and future commercial planning applications. This matrix is to be used as part of the MMO South Inshore Marine Plan which includes part of the KEIFCA district.

More data on fishing effort by anglers is required to continue with data collection following the release of the Sea Angling 2012 project results in November 2013. As a result, officers on shore patrol are now recording sightings of anglers along the coast and the number of angling vessels at sea and effort through rod counts when out on routine sea patrols. It is hoped this information will help to produce activity maps for angling to feed back into the quarterly Angling report.

**Essex Angling Summary**

This period saw a similarly low number of larger cod caught by anglers across the Essex coast as was seen at the end of 2013. Catches of smaller cod from piers and boats were relatively steady throughout the period with good catches of 3-5lb codling from Clacton and Walton piers reported. From mid-February to the end of March, large numbers of herring were seen resulting in a good number of Thornback Rays being caught on a bait of fresh herring.

January and February saw the usual lull in private boat activity as owners took vessels out to protect them against the rougher weather as well as the lower number of good sea going days available during this period. However, by mid-March the number of private angling boats recorded fishing inside the Gunfleet wind farm was back to its usual high numbers with in excess of 30 boats sighted on good weather days.

### **Kent Angling Summary**

Many of the piers along the Kent coast were closed during this period due to bad weather conditions and damage. This meant that shore angling was limited to beaches and sea walls for many anglers along the Kent Coast at the start of 2014. For those anglers willing to battle the elements, January provided little to catch other than a significant number of pin whiting in rivers such as the Medway and close in to the shore. However, some good sized dabs were seen in fair numbers in the south of the district from Dungeness.

By February the mild winter and warming waters meant that anglers could start to enjoy good numbers of dabs and flounder in the southern part of the district. Fair numbers of plaice moved up the coast again in February from the south mirroring this period last year. Also making an appearance with the warming water were plenty of Thornback rays along the North Kent coast down to Dover. The usual show of dogfish was also seen across the southern part of the district.

### **Upcoming Angling Events**

The annual Southend 'Try Pier Fishing' event 2014 has been confirmed for Sunday 1 June 2014. Organised by Southend Pier Anglers and local volunteers from angling clubs, the day permits children and interested adults to have a go at pier fishing free for the day. KEIFCA will be there to assist with the day and provide educational information to those attending as well as promoting sustainability with anglers.

**Alex Senechal**

**Essex Shore IFC Officer**