

Success Criteria 2,4,5,6 & 7

By: Project Officer & Chief IFC Officer

To: Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority - 14  
May 2013

Subject: **SOUTHEND FORESHORE OYSTERS**

Classification Unrestricted

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Summary: To report on a meeting to discuss the management of oyster  
stocks on Southend foreshore

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### **1. Background**

Issues relating to the harvesting of *C. gigas* oysters on Southend foreshore have been reported to KEIFCA, and former KESFC, for a number of years. During this period there have been continued allegations that hand gathering has been taking place on a commercial scale but with persons involved not having the required movement documents. These requirements related to Public Health legislation and were not the responsibility of KEIFCA. It is understood that recent investigation into this practice by Southend Borough Council has indicated that most activity is for own consumption where no movement documents are required.

During this period dredging for oysters on the foreshore has also been undertaken by local fishermen who have complied with relevant Public Health requirements. It is understood that the dredging for these oysters is not now being carried out, although it may re-occur.

Local commercial fishermen have also engaged in hand gathering of the oysters for a number of years and this continues at present. It is understood that this operation is compliant with Public Health legislation although one alleged offence is currently being pursued by Southend Borough Council Public Health Department.

### **2. Meeting with local stakeholders**

As instructed by the Authority at the January KEIFCA meeting, KEIFCA officers arranged and ran a meeting 23 April 2013 (**Appendix A**) to discuss the development of a Code of Practice that would relate to the harvesting of oysters on Southend Foreshore. After discussing the merits and problems of different approaches the meeting agreed that developing notice boards would be a good first step towards helping to minimise problems. After developing notice boards a code of conduct detailing harvesting best practice could then be explored further.

### **3. Recommendations**

The Authority is asked to **APPROVE** the following initiatives:

- a) Officers work with partners to develop notice boards on Southend Foreshore, and;
- b) Officers work with partners to explore the development of a code of conduct, detailing harvesting best practice, after the notice boards have been completed.