

Communications Update

The ability of Kent and Essex IFCA to communicate effectively with stakeholders goes beyond the two success criteria to which it directly relates (SC4 & SC7) insofar as it underpins our high level strategies because effective engagement is essential in order to deliver many of our core objectives.

In the year since the Draft Communication Strategy was ratified much work has been done by the officers of Kent and Essex IFCA in developing the infrastructure which will enable the Authority to deliver on the objectives and goals outlined in the strategy. The following summary should present a clear picture to the members of what has been done and our current position, as well as offering some insight in to how we intend to continue.

- We have created a document outlining our guiding principles so that our organisational values (Collaborative, Professional, Accountable, Knowledgeable, Responsible Stewards) are reflected in our communications.
- We have established our brand and sought to emphasise it by ensuring consistency of appearance in our publications regardless of media or format.
- We have created and distributed an information leaflet outlining who we are and what we do, which the technical panel determined to be our key message. Alongside this we developed a template for additional leaflets which will allow us to put information in the hands of stakeholders and the general public. We have also sourced leaflet dispenser so that organisations can display our materials in prominent places.
- We have developed and published a full colour booklet which describes our role and how we intend to approach our duties in the medium to long term.
- We have developed a series of posters which will draw attention to the key species within our district and our goals as laid out in the shared vision.

- We have created a database of stakeholders and established a method of creating stakeholder groups within the database to reflect parties with shared interests, thereby increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of our communications.
- We have developed and sent an e-bulletin which serves as a brief quarterly newsletter to keep stakeholders and interested parties informed on topics that may affect them. It also acts as a platform to publicise the agenda of upcoming meetings so that stakeholders can engage with the decision making process.
- We have utilised web-based software to gather responses to consultations and questionnaires.
- We have begun to develop educational packages for key stages 1, 2, and 3 which will be distributed to schools and libraries.
- We have held meetings and discussion with other organisations to explore the potential for sharing resources in terms of training and education.
- We have made minor changes to the website and have applied for a new shorter and more memorable domain.

We can utilise the infrastructure we now have in place and intend to build on these achievements over the coming year with a number of parallel workstreams.

- We are working on a range of informational material for anglers including leaflets, stickers, and laminated minimum size cards. We are also aiming to produce an additional range of informational material which we hope will encourage knowledgeable parties to share information with KEIFCA.
- We are also planning changes to our website. Much of the content will remain as it is but it is hoped that ease of navigation and general appearance will be significantly improved.
- We plan to conduct a direct outreach campaign. Officers distributing leaflets and posters will be ideally placed to open a dialogue and build relationships with stakeholders and representatives.
- We plan to further enhance our stakeholder database by encouraging individuals to provide us with contact details and their area of interest so that we can engage with them and involve them in decision making processes.
- We will seek to define our baseline by conducting a survey of public awareness of who we are and what we do. This will serve as a benchmark by which we can measure the success of our communications.
- We are looking to provide PR training for key staff members with particular focus on dealing with mainstream media and writing press releases.
- We are planning to work closely with the Association of IFCA's which will allow us put our message on a national platform.

These are the measures by which KEIFCA can deliver on the Communication Strategy, and provide evidence that it is meeting SC4 (that IFCA's are recognised and heard) and SC7 (that IFCA's work in partnership and are engaged with their stakeholders).

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