



Agenda Item C4
Report on the patrol vessel 'Tamesis'
Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
Quarterly report for the period July-September 2015

Vessel priorities:

- Conduct cockle damage rate checks on TECFO fleet
- Sidescan Sonar and Day grab survey Blackwater, Crouch and Colne Estuaries MCZ
- Oyster Dredge Survey on the Blackwater, Crouch and Colne Estuaries MCZ
- Monitor fishing vessels for compliance and enforce Kent and Essex IFCA Byelaws, EU Legislation and Regulations

Fisheries Enforcement

Risk based enforcement has continued through this quarter and the vessel log database allow vessel sightings, gear sightings and inspections to be recorded and transferred to the GIS package for detailed analysis of fishery activity and areas worked.

Throughout this period the vessel was primarily tasked with survey duties though additional patrols were carried out for enforcement activities. In this period eighty vessels were sighted and recorded. In addition nineteen boarding inspections were carried out and a further twenty four non-boarding inspections were undertaken. Private and charter vessels have been sighted and boarded with general guidance given to individuals on minimum size of species and new bass regulations.

Patrols within the district have resulted in inspections of drift and fixed nets and of pots and traps. Twenty one static gear sightings were recorded two of which were hauled for inspection. One of these cases resulted in an offence notice being issued for non-compliance with KEIFCA byelaws.

Conservation/Survey Work

Cockle damage rates

Tamesis was utilised to conduct cockle damage rates for a short period when the Ken Green was unavailable. This was carried out mainly on the East Barrows and in the vicinity of the Blacktail spit on vessels operating within Thames Estuary Cockle Fishery Order

Sidescan Sonar Survey

Following on from the baseline survey a post-harrowing sidescan sonar and day grab survey was conducted covering 12 sites in the Ray Sand Channel and the Blackwater. The survey was conducted again one month later to assess the impacts over a longer term.

Oyster Stock and Habitat Assessment Survey

Following on from the extensive survey conducted in August 2014 the vessel conducted an oyster dredge survey on the 38 sub rectangles in which oysters were found during the original survey. On this occasion two tows were conducted in each site and GoPro cameras were also fitted to the dredge.

Marine Mammal observations

Patrols have led to one off sightings of marine mammals on 8 occasions. Large groups of seals were sighted on the Foulness and Buxey sands with individuals observed in various areas including:

- Ray Sand Channel
- Bench Head
- River Stour near Wrabness
- Potton Creek on the Middleway
- The Knoll
- The Colne Bar

Maintenance

Three days of programmed maintenance and safety checks on engines and equipment have been carried out with hard copy records retained. The vessel was placed on the hard in Brightlingsea for scheduled cleaning of hulls and inspection of the propellers and rudders.

Emergency repairs were carried out following failure of a hydraulic hose feeding the gantry. A further repair was required following a terminal hardware failure on the ships navigation system.

Other Information

Statistics

During this quarter, Tamesis has undertaken twenty one patrols, used 2423 litres of fuel and travelled 601 nautical miles. The engines have run an average of 112 hours.

Training and Procedures

Standard operating procedures have been finalised for survey methods and equipment on board Tamesis; the procedures outline safe working practices for employees and other agencies whilst working on the boat.

Invitation to Authority Members and P.R

An open invitation is extended to Authority Members to join the crew on an enforcement patrol or survey aboard the vessel.

Colm O'Laoi
Acting Skipper & IFC Officer