



Agenda Item C5

Enforcement Update

Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Quarterly report for the period November 2016 to January 2017

Summary:

This report will provide Members with an update on enforcement work carried out within the Kent and Essex district.

Introduction

In undertaking its regulatory responsibilities, KEIFCA starts from the position that the vast majority of the community of people, organisations and industries using the marine area are compliant with the regulation and control that affects them. KEIFCA works to try to ensure that all parties understand both what rules apply to their particular industry and the rationale for the regulation being necessary.

Full compliance with EU, UK and in particular local fisheries and environmental legislation is the overall aim of the Authority. This aim is best achieved through the adoption of an adaptive co-management approach to fisheries management.

Enforcement Activity

Between November 2016 and January 2017, 25 patrols both at sea and ashore have been carried out.

There has been a decline in the number of sea patrols this quarter compared to last with the holiday period and decline in weather conditions resulting in reduced fishing activity. The number of patrols does fluctuate throughout the year and whether they occur on shore or at sea, which is affected by a number of factors including the specific risks being targeted, staff resources, weather, other duties and the objectives of the patrols.

The objectives of many of the patrols during this period were to ensure that both commercial and recreational fishermen were compliant with the whelk permit byelaw and minimum sizes for that species. Thirty three inspections were carried out in this period.

Whelk Fishery

The whelk fishery started up towards the end of last quarter, which primarily takes place off the Kent coastline. A targeted operation has been underway since early December with inspections both at sea and on land being carried out on a regular basis.

Cod Fishery

The cod fishery which would usually be underway at this time of year has not been a major feature this year as a result of significantly warmer sea temperatures right up until the end of December. As a result, enforcement resource has been targeted elsewhere.

Essex rivers patrols

The Essex rivers (Roach, Crouch, Blackwater, Colne and Stour) are some of the more remote areas of the District, where low level offending can go undetected for some time when officers are handling priority issues. These rivers contain vessels working on private oyster beds, several orders and some public ground. A significant number of patrols have targeted these rivers this last quarter, with Blue Jacket being utilised on a regular basis throughout the period as the smaller size of this vessel compared to the large patrol boats and its much quicker transiting speed means it can inspect these remote areas regularly and in a time efficient manner.

Offence Reports

Whelk Fishery Offences

Five offences of landing undersized whelks were reported by officers as well as 1 offence of fishing without a permit. These offences are currently being investigated by officers.

Other Offences

A number of other low level offences were detected during this period which were primarily addressed by education and verbal warnings by the inspecting officer.