

Leigh Port Partnership Ltd  
Thames Estuary Fishermen's Association

Dominic Bailey  
Kent & Essex IFCA  
Sail Loft  
Brightlingsea  
Essex

15th October 2020

Dear Dominic.

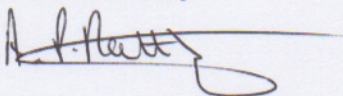
The TECFO cockle fleet in conjunction with some of the visiting vessels for the permitted cockle fishery that opened on the 6th October 2020 observed the following and decided that from a responsible and sustainable management point that the fishery was not viable to continue fishing

The permitted area had very few cockles on and has been overrun with clams, which is of great concern not only to Industry but to the management as well. As the skippers saw first hand on commencement of fishing and 2 hours in to the activity it was not viable to continue as the catch rate was below the minimum requirement, discussions took place over the radios, The skippers acknowledged their responsibility to sustainable fishing and minimum catch rates by taking the decision to cease all fishing activities within the permitted area and return the small amount of catch to the seabed

As a collective Industry and working closely with the management of the fishery we understood fully the implications of no survey having taken place due to the Covid 19 restrictions, and that the fishery was opened on historic data, We are confident that had the IFCA been able to survey the bed the decision would not have been taken lightly to keep the bed closed for the 2020 season

The TECFO cockle fleet and visiting vessels would like the Authority to consider refunding the permit fees for the Permitted cockle fishery that opened on the 6th October 2020 as it would have been refunded had the fishery not been opened.

Yours Sincerely,



Andrew Rattley  
Thames Estuary Fishermans Association.