
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) OF THE AUTHORITY

Dear Member,

The AGM of the Authority will be held at **the Portsmouth Guildhall, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO1 2AB on the 18th September 2025 at 14:00** to discuss the business on the under mentioned Agenda.

For information on how to get to the venue and the parking facilities available please follow this link [How to get to us | Portsmouth Guildhall](#)

Members of the public can request to attend the meeting through emailing enquiries@southern-ifca.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Pia Bateman, CEO
enquiries@southern-ifca.gov.uk

13:30

Committee Members Briefing (No.5).

To receive a 20 minute presentation from IFCOs on the key fisheries and conservation considerations in Portsmouth & Langstone Harbours.

(Member attendance optional)

14:00

AGENDA

1. Welcome

2. Appointment of Authority Chair and Vice Chair for 2025-2026

To appoint Elected Members to the Audit & Governance Sub-Committee

3. Appointment of Sub-Committee Membership for 2024-2025 (Executive)

To appoint Elected Members to the Executive Sub-Committee (Marked A)

4. Appointment of Sub-Committee Membership for 2024-2025 (Audit and Governance)

To appoint Elected Members to the Audit & Governance Sub-Committee (Marked B)

5. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence.

6. Declaration of Interest

All Members are to declare any interests in line with paragraphs (16) and (17) of the Southern IFCA Code of Conduct for Non-Council Members.

7. Minutes

To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 12th June 2025 (Marked C).

(a) Recommendation 78. That the TAC minutes for February 2025 be updated to removed 'draft' watermark and display the correct meeting date in the header.

(b) Recommendation 80: That the Southern IFCA BTFG position statement be updated to reflect Member feedback.

8. Chairman's Announcements

To receive any updates from the newly elected Chairman.

9. Sub-Committees

To receive and note the Minutes of the following Sub-Committees and to consider the adoption of the recommendations contained therein:

- a) **Executive Committee** held on 10th June 2025 (Marked D).
- b) **Technical Advisory Committee** held on 8th May 2025 (Marked E).

10. Progress Reports

To consider the following:

- a. **Chief Executive Officer updates.** *To receive a verbal report from the CEO (Marked F).*
- b. **Budget Control Statement to July 2025.** *To consider a report from the CEO/Accountant (Marked G).*

ITEMS FOR DECISION

11. Final Statement of Accounts for the Financial Year Ended 31st March 2025. Annual Return from PKF Francis Clark.

To receive the above-named document, following submission to the external auditors, from the Accountant (Marked H).

12. Annual Reporting 2024-2025:

a. Draft Southern IFCA Annual Report 2024-2025.

To consider the submission of the Annual Report to Defra in accordance with the requirements under the MaCAA, 2009. Report by the CEO (Marked I).

b. Draft Constituent Council Reports Initiative

To receive a presentation on the above-named reporting initiative, specific to Southern IFCAs constituent councils and local communities. Report by the CEO (Marked J).

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

13. Compliance and Enforcement Report: To receive a quarterly update from Principal DCO Dell (Marked K)

14. Behind the Scenes: To receive staff reports across the Research & Policy, Compliance & Enforcement and Business Services Teams (Marked L).

15. Marine Licencing: To receive a quarterly update from IFCO Churchouse (Marked M).

16. Sector Group Meetings: To receive the minutes from recent meetings of The South Coast Fishermen's Council and The Recreational Angling Sector Group (Marked N-P).

17. AIFCA Annual Report 2024-2025

To receive the AIFCA Annual Report for Members interest and to report any comments back to the AIFCA via the Southern IFCA CEO and/or Chairman. (Marked Q).

18. Date of Next Meeting: To confirm the date of the next Authority meeting on the Thursday 11th December at RNLI College, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset, BH15 1HZ.

EXECUTIVE SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP 2025-26

Report by The CEO and Chairman

A. Purpose

To invite Council Members to sit on the Southern IFCA Executive Sub-Committee (ESC) for the period December 2025 - December 2026, in accordance with Standing Orders.

B. Recommendation

For **two or more** Council Members to be appointed to the Executive Sub Committee for the year 2025-2026.

1.0 Background

1.1 The Southern IFCA Standing Orders are made for the regulation of meetings, proceedings, and business of Southern IFCA pursuant to and in accordance with The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority Order 2010 No. 2198.

1.2 Under the Standing Orders (15), the appointment of Members to the ESC shall be conducted at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of The Authority and will be conducted by The Chairman.

1.3 The quarterly meetings of the ESC are held in March, June, September and December. The meetings are held either virtually and consider matters in accordance with paragraphs (26) and (27) of the Standing Orders:

(26) The Executive will make recommendations to The Authority on the following matters:

- a. Those relating to The Authority's budget and finances.*
- b. To consider any proposals for the purchase of new capital equipment.*
- c. To consider any subject matter not dealt with by any of the other Sub-Committee.*
- d. To consider any outcomes of formal public consultations, following the making of statutory interventions.*

(27) The following powers are delegated to the Executive:

- a. To consider matters of health and safety.*
- b. To consider matters relating to risk management.*
- c. To consider matters relating to the attendance and conduct of Members.*
- d. The Executive shall ensure that there is always a person appointed as Chief Officer with responsibility for the execution, maintenance and co-ordination of the Authority's duties, functions and responsibilities. Where a vacancy occurs in the office of Chief Officer, the Executive shall appoint an officer to act as Chief Officer until the position is filled in accordance with Schedule 1.*
- e. To consider matters relating to the selection and appointment of the Chief Officer, a Deputy Chief Officer and the Authority's Internal Auditor.*
- f. To act in formal disciplinary and grievance proceedings, in accordance with policy for matters concerning employees and/or Members.*
- g. To make decisions on staff pay and conditions.*

1.4 Business shall not be transacted unless 4 Members of the ESC are in attendance.

2.0 Membership

2.1 Under Standing Orders 2022, paragraph (23), the Executive shall comprise the Chairman and Vice Chairman of The Authority, the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the TAC and **two or more** Council Members.

- 2.2 For 2022-2023 Council Members from the following Councils were appointed:
- Isle of Wight Council
 - Hampshire County Council
 - Dorset Council
- 2.3 For 2023-2024, due to local election timetables and subsequent changes in elected Membership, coupled with a lack of attendance and contribution from Hampshire and BCP Councils, no appointments were able to be made. Both Cllr. R Hughes (Dorset Council) and Cllr. M Winnington (Portsmouth City Council) provided attendance to ensure that the ESC remained quorate for the year in question.
- 2.4 For the 2024-2025 period the following Council Members from the constituent Councils were appointed:
- **Cllr. Barry Dunning:** Hampshire County Council
 - **Cllr. Crispen Goodall:** BCP Council

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP 2025-26

Report by The CEO and Chairman

A. Purpose

To invite Council Members to sit on the Southern IFCA Audit and Governance Sub-Committee for the period December 2025 - December 2026, in accordance with Standing Orders.

B. Recommendation

For **three or more** Council Members to be appointed to the Audit and Governance Committee for the year 2025-2026.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Southern IFCA Standing Orders are made for the regulation of meetings, proceedings, and business of Southern IFCA pursuant to and in accordance with The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority Order 2010 No. 2198.
- 1.2 Under the Standing Orders (16), the appointment of Members to the Audit and Governance Sub-Committee (AGSC) shall be conducted at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of The Authority and will be conducted by The Chairman.
- 1.3 Under the Standing Orders the Chairman of the Authority is ex officio to any Sub-Committee.
- 1.4 The quarterly meetings of the AGSC are held in March, June, September and December. The meetings are held virtually and **consider matters relating to budget and finance**.
- 1.5 Business shall not be transacted unless 3 Members of the AGSC are in attendance.

2.0 Membership

- 2.1 The Under Standing Orders 2022, paragraph (38), the Audit and Governance Sub-Committee will comprise **three or more** Council Members.
- 2.2 For the 2023-2024 period Council Members from Portsmouth City Council and the Isle of Wight Council, in addition to the Chairman (Dorset Council) as ex officio, ensured that the AGSC remained quorate where possible. Neither the June 2024 nor September AGSC were held following local elections and the subsequent changes in Membership, which resulted in the meetings not being quorate.
- 2.3 For the 2024-2025 period the following Council Members from the constituent Councils were appointed:
 - **Cllr. Rob Hughes** (AGSC Chair): Dorset Council
 - **Cllr. Kate Wheller**: Dorset Council
 - **Cllr. Rod Cooper**: Hampshire County Council
 - **Cllr. Matthew Winnington**: Portsmouth City Council

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Full Authority Meeting – 12th June 2025

A meeting of the Full Authority was held at 2pm on 12th June 2025 at The University of Winchester, St Alphege Building Room SAB204, Sparkford Road, Winchester, SO22 4NR

Present

Cllr. Paul Fuller	Isle of Wight Council (Chairman)
Cllr. Rob Hughes	Dorset Council (Vice Chairman)
Cllr. Matthew Winnington	Portsmouth County Council
Cllr Kate Wheller	Dorset Council
Ms Elisabeth Bussey-Jones	MMO Appointee
Dr Heidi Guille	MMO Appointee
Dr Antony Jensen	MMO Appointee
Mr Richard Stride	MMO appointee
Mr Gary Wordsworth	MMO Appointee
Dr Richard Morgan	Natural England
Ms Pia Bateman	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Mr Sam Dell	Principal Deputy Chief Officer (PDCO)
Dr Sarah Birchenough	Deputy Chief Officer (DCO)
Mrs Jennifer Carr	Chartered Accountant

Mr Connor Reid, Natural England was present in the public gallery, in addition to Mr Sean Douglas, Head of Regulatory Assurance Operations, Marine Management Organisation.

Apologies

73. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Barry Dunning (Hampshire Council), Cllr. John Savage (Southampton Council), Cllr. Rod Cooper (Hampshire Council), Cllr. Crispin Goodall (BCP Council), Dr Simon Cripps (MMO Appointee), Mr Neil Hornby (MMO Appointee), Mr Colin Francis (MMO Appointee), Mr James Morgan (MMO Member) and Mr Stuart Kingston-Turner (Environmental Agency Member).

Declarations of Interest

74. There were no pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests declared.

Minutes

75. Members considered the Minutes of the meeting held on the 13th March 2025. The Chairman provided an update on Recommendation 51, stating that the Strategic Authority process was still underway and there were no new updates at this time.

The CEO provided an update on Recommendation 52: that the CEO discuss the implications of the Strategic Authority with Defra and report back to Members. The CEO discussed that Defra were aware of a proposal that is being led by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to rationalise all central government grants to local government. This is likely to include the IFCA new burdens funding grant but Defra hope to be able to confirm this in the summer. Defra say that there is currently significant uncertainty around the detail of this proposal though Defra are expecting MHCLG to launch a public consultation in the next month, and that any proposals are likely to be implemented from FY 2026/2027.

PDCO Dell confirmed that Recommendation 59 had since been resolved.

In relation to minute point 55, Cllr. R Hughes asked whether the prohibition area for bottom towed fishing gear in Lyme Bay is to be expanded. Members discussed that the process for allocating Marine Conservation Zones as part of the National Site Network is largely complete, however the progression of work to offset windfarm placement where there is overlap with an MPA by compensatory habitat being identified in other locations either as new or extended MPAs may complicate this. Members discussed the Government target of 30x30 and while the focus is currently in the offshore area, the topic of appropriate management for bottom towed fishing gear is still under debate.

The minutes were subsequently agreed as accurate via mutual consent.

Chairman's Announcements

76. The Chairman discussed his recent attendance at the third Southern IFCA Community Drop-In Surgery held in Swanage, thanking Members Dr A Jensen and Dr H Guille for their attendance. The Chairman stated that the event had been very positive and allowed for good levels of discussion, particularly around black seabream.

The Chairman provided Members with an overview of the parliamentary event hosted by the AIFCA and how it had provided an opportunity for representatives of the fishing community to speak with Government Ministers and MPs. The Chairman thanked Mr R Stride who also attended the event for his input.

The Chairman outlined he had been providing input to PDCO Dell on ongoing case files which demonstrated the hard work of the CET.

The Chairman attended a recent AIFCA meeting with the CEO, and was in agreement with the need to raise the IFCA profile nationally. The Chairman commented that Southern IFCA was already being proactive in this regard which was very positive.

Sub-Committees

77. Members received minutes of the Executive Sub-Committee held on 11th March 2025 and the Technical Advisory Sub-Committee held on 6th February 2025.

Members raised that the 'draft' watermark needed removing from the TAC minutes as they had been agreed by the TAC and the header needed updating from the second page onwards to reflect the correct meeting date.

Recommendation

78. That the TAC minutes for February 2025 be updated to removed 'draft' watermark and display the correct meeting date in the header.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Chief Executive Officer Updates

79. The CEO discussed how busy it was in the world of both fisheries and conservation with both receiving notable press in recent weeks. She discussed World Oceans Day, which coincided with the wider release of Sir David Attenborough's film Ocean, as well as the UN Conference where nations were convening to address pressing challenges in the world of marine conservation. At this conference, The Environment Secretary announced at the conference that the UK Government will be banning BTFG in 41 of its offshore MPAs in English waters, as part of the Governments continued step towards 30 by 30. Prohibitions are already in place in 18,000 sq. km of offshore MPAs, with the plan to extend this by a further 30,000 sq. km. The MMO have begun a consultation on this, closing 12th September – this is Stage 3 of the MPA Byelaws. The MMO is taking a four stage approach to managing fishing in MPAs. This recent announcement is stage three of that process which targets protection for all designated seabed features not

addressed in earlier stages. Having reviewed the ecological impacts of anchored nets, lines, traps, and bottom-towed fishing gear, the government is now proposing a full ban (whole site – not feature based) on bottom trawling across 41 sites.

The CEO discussed the challenging time for fisheries in recent weeks following the announcement of the 12 year extension on the TCA, this coupled with the release of Ocean and the media interest surrounding the UNOC3 continues to generate a lot of negative press for the fishing industry and more importantly – uncertainty for the fishers.

With regard to the TCA 12 year extension and by way of overly simplifying a rather complex issue, the fishing industry were hoping that the UK territorial waters outside 6nm would be returned to the UK as part of the recent TCA deal, as was the suggestion by the Government when the UK left the EU. Instead the existing arrangements in place since Brexit have been extended by 12 years. The CEO discussed how this agreement has added to the erosion of trust between fishers and government and fishers and policy makers, something the IFCA officers see play out daily. It is also likely to impact the collaborative work that fisheries managers and industry have been achieving in recent years. The CEO confirmed that this hasn't been seen yet at a District level, but some key industry groups are visually stepping back from national discussions and national policy co-development. The CEO confirmed that, at Southern, we need to work hard to continue to champion and maintain our work with industry and uphold trust locally. Another important by-product of current media narratives, is that in an industry that is already being squeezed from multiple directions, it is becoming less and less desirable for new entrants fishers to join the industry, with less opportunities for stable careers. The CEO discussed that the fisheries arena at the moment remains complex, with little light at the end of the tunnel for the fishers on the ground. There are multiple obstacles challenging their everyday.

The CEO discussed that Industry's collective voice has far less gravitas or societal backing than the other side of the coin, so it remains essential for Southern to keep reflecting on our function, to ensure that we maintain balance in all that we do to champion viable and sustainable fisheries in the District for the benefit of industry and the benefit of the environment. The two go hand in hand, and should not be positioned in opposition. This is something we work hard to do in the Southern District.

The CEO reflected on the work that Southern IFCA are achieving in the District, which not only contributes to the 30x30 government target, but importantly demonstrates that these targets can be achieved in combination with, and with input from, an active, secure and viable inshore fleet. In providing context, whilst the BTFG debate makes noise around us, the CEO discussed that across the entirety of the Southern IFCA District 743 sq. km of the inshore marine environment is closed to BTFG – this equates to 27.2% of our District – this is less than 3% away from the target the UK Government have set for 2030, and this percentage doesn't consider all of the other measures we have in place, in addition to BTFG measures.

The CEO reassured Members who may be worried about current narratives, that contrary to the narratives being spun, inshore fisheries are being managed well and fishers are championing this as custodians of their marine environment, on which they depend. The CEO urged that as an Authority we need to maintain the central line and not be afraid to go against the tide of common misconception and demonstrate what we are already achieving with our fishers, who are often at the helm, facilitating our understandings. This collaborative approach which is embedded in our work, is a model that is working.

The CEO discussed recent media, with reference to BTFG, in that it is oversimplifying a complex reality, which our General Members have firsthand experience with. The reality being that MPAs are complex and each one exists in its own right with its own conservation objectives. The bottom line here is where these conservation objectives aren't compatible with BTFG, then BTFG is managed in the District, either outright banned, or via the introduction of mitigating measures, as

is the case in Poole Harbour, a huge success story and a MSC fishery which is internationally recognised) Members will be familiar with the scrutiny of any management measures we develop, scrutiny which is undertaken by NE, the Government advisor on marine conservation, the strapline here is that is missing from all of the current noise is that conservation and fisheries can and do co-exist.

The CEO touched briefly on enforcement and compliance in MPAs, specifically relating to BTFG. One successful prosecution is being banded around in the media at the moment to, I assume to try and infer that MPAs are paper parks (e.g. not being actively managed). This was a prosecution which our colleagues in the MMO took earlier this year against foreign vessel fishing in offshore MPA. This is a brilliant outcome and credit to the MMO for this. What isn't communicated is the action that IFCA's are collectively delivering. Locally and of relevance to Southern IFCA – when considering a brief snapshot – in the FY24/25, the CET team generated 8 case files relevant to BTFG incursions, either under the BTFG Byelaw or the PHDP Byelaw, one of which was a joint outcome with D&S IFCA. 2 of these were settled via a FAP and 3 are ongoing and lawyers have been engaged. Enforcement actions are very much being undertaken where there is noncompliance by BTFG operators. This is important for our Members to contextualise.

One of these BTFG incursions was in Lyme Bay (a joint case with D&S IFCA). Lyme Bay often comes up in the media when BTFG and good management models are discussed, with NGOs taking full credit here. The CEO provided a bit of a reality check, in that it is that was Southern IFCA who developed and implemented the BTFG byelaw in Area 40 in order to protect pink sea fans and the wider reef habitats. It is the Southern IFCA team, who patrol this area and it is Southern IFCA who act on spatial incursions. It is a success story.

The CEO recognised the importance of this Committee to regularly reflect on what Southern IFCA are here to do, recognising the importance of the role that each and every one of us has in maintaining a viable inshore fishing industry, whilst ensuring sustainable marine environment.

The CEO proposed that a simple factual statement be released by Southern IFCA in response to current societal narratives and invited Members to get behind this initiative, sharing the statement across the community and on LA social media and networks in order to help inform the communities and general public in who live in our district. The CEO invited Members thoughts on this before moving onto more usual updates.

Members discussed the proposed Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Statement, Cllr P Fuller stated that he was supportive of a statement being published and emphasised the need to support the fishing industry. Cllr K Wheller also stated her support for issuing a statement and outlined she would be happy to promote it to Dorset Council. Cllr M Winnington also voiced his support, stating that the IFCA's do a lot of good work which should be championed and that he would take the statement to Portsmouth City Council, offering supporting to other Local Authorities in promoting it to cabinet. Cllr Winnington emphasised that the relationship between Southern IFCA and the fishing industry was very positive and needed to be supported and continued.

Mr G Wordsworth commented that engagement from the IFCA has been very good and that explaining management interventions is helpful for industry in understanding why management is needed. Ms E Bussey-Jones stated that a statement would provide a strong message of support and that the work to balance conservation needs with the fishing industry is done very well at Southern IFCA and that balance needs to be maintained. Ms Bussey-Jones suggested that an amendment be made to the wording to reflect that fishers are one of the key custodians of the marine environment.

Members debated MPA feature-based management versus a whole site approach. Dr H Guille suggested that reference needed to be made in the statement to 'best available evidence' to reference how management measures are evidenced and that accessing information on

evidence used is historically difficult which promotes more debate, the more visible this is the greater understanding there is.

Dr A Jensen commented that bottom towed fishing gear is carefully managed in the District with that management being proportional to the risks identified to designated features. Members discussed current management proposals for offshore MPAs and how that is perceived to differ from the feature-based management approach. It was discussed that the term MPA provides an overarching word which encompasses different designations but that there is a perception that MPA equates to a no-go area for fishing although different methods of protection are applied depending on the site being managed. Members discussed different approaches to MPA management under the same overarching legislation and queried whether there was a risk of legal challenge if approaches were not in line with legislative requirements.

Members requested that 'Hampshire' be added to the statement as one of the areas covered by the District.

Following discussions on BTFG the CEO provided updates on the £360million support package via a Defra Fisheries and Coastal Growth Fund as well as the latest opportunities under the Fisheries and Seafood Scheme Fund. She discussed the progress being made nationally with the response to the Conduct and Operations Report 2018-2022, as well as an update on the Southwest Octopus bloom, the AIFCA Parliamentary event and the Swanage Community Drop In. Finally, the CEO concluded that Defra have not yet provided funding for the current financial year.

Recommendation

80. That the Southern IFCA BTFG position statement be updated to incorporate Member feedback.

81. Budget Control Statement to March 2025

The CEO confirmed that the BCS captured the period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025, and that the accompanying paperwork provides a summary of major budget headers as well as more detailed notes to provide an understanding of all positive and negative variance equal to or greater than 1k.

The CEO highlighted that the BCS shows a deficit of c.40k and that although this was a deficit for the full year, when compared to the projected budgeted deficit of c.136.5k at year end, Southern are in a more favourable position by c.96.6k.

The CEO provided a summary of the Major Budget Headers, in that the positive variance captured under the Compliance & Enforcement Header (c.35.6k) represents 5.7k of savings on FPV fuel, 2.5k on maintenance and 2.5k on berthing, most of which were a direct result of FPV Vigilant coming into service later than anticipated combined with the disposal of FPV Stella Barbara in May 2024. The CEO outlined that costs of c.5k for the ongoing 2x REM projects were yet to be invoiced, despite purchase orders being raised, and that a saving of c.6k had been seen relating to access to a National Intelligence System (CLUE), led by the MMO, where the MMO are due to recharge for CLUE licences during the FY2025/2026. The CEO also informed Members that there had been a c.16k underspend in Legal Services, representing the increased number of Fixed Administrative Penalties being paid in preference to Prosecutions.

The CEO explained that the positive variance captured under the Research & Policy Header (c.22.5k) related to projects where anticipated costs had been offset by fishers volunteering data (c.5k whelk monitoring programme), or where there had been a lack of uptake in participating fishers (c.1.2k drift net project), or where a project had been delayed due to external reasons (c.1.5k, Solent scallop research). The CEO outlined that some costs had been incurred for byelaw advertisement, to include those relating to the BTFG Byelaw 2023 and the Shore

Gathering Byelaw, with a saving to date (c.2.5k) relating to ongoing black seabream MPA work. The CEO also outlined that no costs relating to legal support has been incurred during the FY (c.4.6k).

The CEO discussed the positive variance captured under the Business Services Header (c.36k); due to a reduction in staff salary and pension contributions (c.30.5k) as a result of one IFCO taking a sabbatical during the year, the resignation of an IFCO in April, and the carrying over from the previous FY of a vacancy in the Compliance and Enforcement Team. The CEO outlined that savings associated with staff training (c.10k) have been ringfenced for FY2025/2026. The CEO informed Members that an overspend against budget of almost 50% (c.4k) has been seen under Legal Services, relating to HR matters, notably a Constructive Dismissal case which was resolved during the year.

Finally, the CEO discussed the positive variance under the Capital Equipment Header (c.29k), reflecting an underspend relating to a delay in FPV Vigilant entering service.

82. MPA Management Update

DCO Birchenough informed Members that the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 had been subject to two further rounds of QA with Defra, with outcomes not affecting the intention of the Byelaw, rather relating to updates to the Impact Assessment to reflect profit costs to industry versus revenue costs and the provision of information to Defra on how the byelaw process met the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Environmental Principles Policy Statement. DCO Birchenough informed Members that notification had now been received from Defra that the Byelaw package had been passed to the Office of the Minister following completion of Defra QA.

DCO Birchenough outlined that Officers were continuing to work on the first round of QA received from the MMO on the Shore Gathering Byelaw and Fishing for Cockles (Amendment) Byelaw.

DCO Birchenough provided an update on the Black Seabream Workstream, outlining that a public consultation had commenced on 6th May 2025, running until 22nd June 2025, consulting on the draft Shared Principles which had been co-developed by Members and Industry through a series of Working Groups and industry engagement exercises, including an Industry Workshop in October 2024 which was attended by 22 representatives from across the commercial and recreational/charter sectors. DCO Birchenough stated that the consultation was progressing well to date and engagement levels across all relevant sectors was high.

Members discussed the QA process for byelaws and queried what it consists of. DCO Birchenough outlined that the process reviews the byelaw, including content, wording and formatting, the associated Impact Assessment, also considering those three elements, and any other relevant documentation including conservation assessments, permits (where relevant) and any other supporting documents. The aim of the QA is to ensure that Southern IFCA has correctly followed the byelaw making process and that the conclusions drawn on the rationale and associated costs/benefits of the byelaw are robust, with the appropriate level of consultation having been carried out and documented. DCO Birchenough stated that, to date, MMO & Defra QA on Southern IFCA Byelaws has not resulted in material changes to byelaw content or intent but has primarily been focused on ensuring clarity in the information presented, consistency in wording and appropriate formatting.

83. Poole Fishery Order Tranche 3 Update

DCO Birchenough provided Members with an overview of the process to deliver Tranche 3 of the issuing of leases under The Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015, for the period 2025-2030. DCO Birchenough informed Members that the process was now approaching completion, with the TAC at the May meeting having considered the supporting documents for the process (Poole

Harbour Several Order Management Plan: 2025 Revision, Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 Biosecurity Measures Plan [2025 Version], Appropriate Assessment for the Issue of Leases under the Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 for 2025-2030) as well as summaries of intended activities by leaseholder for the lease period as submitted in T3 Business Plans. DCO Birchenough also outlined that additional documents had been prepared to support aquaculture in Poole Harbour, including a literature review on bivalve ecosystem services and a report on monitoring of Pacific oysters.

Following the approval of the supporting documents by the TAC, a period of public consultation was undertaken to enable the Management Plan: 2025 Revision to be scrutinised by any interested parties, in line with Section (4) of The Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015.

DCO Birchenough outlined that the ESC had reviewed the outcomes of the consultation at the June meeting, and that no responses had been received. DCO Birchenough informed Members that the next stage was to publish the Management Plan and to issue the T3 leases before 1st July 2025.

Members thanked PO Meredith-Davies for his work on delivering T3 and for the provision of additional information to promote the benefits of aquaculture through associated bivalve ecosystem services.

ITEMS FOR DECISION

84. Draft Statement of Accounts for Year Ended 31st March 2024

The CEO and Mrs J Carr discussed with Members the Draft Statement of Accounts for Year ending 31st March 2025, explaining the parallels of this item with the item on the BCS. Ms J Carr outlined that following Members approval, the Draft Statement of Accounts would be submitted to external auditors for a limited scope assurance report.

Cllr P Fuller stated that the Draft Statement of Accounts had the support of the Audit and Governance Sub-Committee. Cllr P Fuller proposed the Recommendation which was seconded by Cllr M Winnington. All Members were in favour.

Resolved

85. That Members authorise the submission of the draft Statement of Accounts to the external auditors for the financial year ended 31st March 2025.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Partnership Working: Southern IFCA & the Marine Management Organisation

86. PDCO Dell gave Members a presentation on the partnership working that Southern IFCA is doing or has done with the MMO across the District. PDCO Dell provided an overview of the roles and responsibilities of the MMO and outlined the coastal officers working in the District. PDCO Dell informed Members that Officers undertake joint patrols at sea, where Southern IFCA is the only IFCA to continue to work with the MMO Offshore Operations Team, with IFCOs embarking onto the MMO chartered Offshore Patrol Vessels, covering both IFCA and MMO priorities both inshore and offshore. PDCO Dell stated that MMO Officers are also welcomed aboard Southern IFCA PVs under the Memorandum of Agreement for the provision of services at sea which underpins the joint on-going maritime operations.

PDCO Dell informed Members about joint working for drone operations, including for monitoring the Studland Bay Voluntary No Anchor Zone, the use of shared systems such as CLUE and the Mobile Working App, and close working with the MMO Training Team, Southern IFCA being the only IFCA fully committed to putting Compliance and Enforcement IFCOs through the Accreditation programme to achieve a Level 3 Certificate in Fisheries and Marine Enforcement. PDCO

Dell outlined that IFCOs also participate in the Boarding Officer Safety Course, run in the Solent, where IFCOs and MEOs train alongside one another for boarding fishing vessels at sea.

PDCO Dell outlined that alongside Compliance and Enforcement and operational delivery, Southern IFCA also works with the MMO across Fisheries Management Plans, Regional Fisheries Groups, Marine Licencing, byelaws, access to information, global marine, vessel licencing, the Fisheries Management Team and through MMO representation on the Authority.

Members queried whether there was any duplication of effort between the IFCA and MMO, seeking input from Guest Speaker Mr Sean Douglas, Director of Operations at the MMO. Mr Douglas stated that IFCA has very localised knowledge which is important to retain, the functions provided by both the IFCA and MMO offer benefits which need to be maintained. Mr Douglas outlined that there is work ongoing to develop shared working processes and whilst there have been challenges, relationships have greatly improved which will only continue to be supported by continued investment in joint working practices.

Members also discussed joint training and that this is helping progression with IFCOs to support IFCA focused training. It was discussed that joint training initiatives continue to be explored and that the MMO are looking at face to face courses which could be specific to the IFCA role although there are resource considerations to take into account when exploring how best to further joint training opportunities. It was discussed that MMO representatives present at the IFCA Enforcement Course and IFCOs have also historically attended MMO training courses.

GUEST SPEAKER

MMO Compliance & Enforcement: Inshore Vessel Monitoring System

87. Mr Sean Douglas, Director of Operations for the MMO gave a presentation to Members on the Inshore VMS programme and the progression of the current roll out process.

Members discussed the uses of iVMS, including in helping inform evidence-based decisions on management. Mr R Stride discussed that given the benefits of iVMS for regulators, should the MMO or other relevant regulators be funding the equipment and airtime costs and that there have been difficulties of fishers engaging directly with unit suppliers leading to concerns over the ability to fish if a unit stops working. It was discussed that all units had been subject to type approval and that Government supported funding had been provided for the purchase of units through the EMFF. It was outlined the delays in the iVMS roll out had resulted in some of the issues being faced by industry, but that compliance and enforcement is being delivered proportionately with the understanding of where fishers are making efforts to engage with the process. The staged introduction of a licence condition followed by a later Statutory Instrument is designed to give industry the ability to comply with the new regulations before the SI is laid. It was also discussed that SLAs are being developed with suppliers to support the relationship with the MMO and in turn with fishers.

Members discussed the sequence of events if devices are not working. It was outlined that the MMO would not seek to stop a vessel going to sea if the issue was not the fault of the fisher and that a pragmatic approach was being taken. Members also discussed that the system offered benefits and efficiencies for Southern IFCA but also some risks, for example resource requirements in accessing and interpreting data as well as engaging with industry, and whether the benefits outweighed those risks. It was discussed that iVMS was a significant development and that it provided a tool which could be used on a daily basis to inform knowledge of activity in the District, PDCO Dell outlined that IFCA's will not be directly enforcing the regulations so there is no increased burden on resourcing from that perspective.

***NEW* Compliance and Enforcement Report**

88. PDCO Dell provided an overview of work undertaken by the Compliance and Enforcement Team for the reporting period February to April 2025, informing Members that the report has a

new format including an overview of key active fisheries and highlights. The figures contained within the report are provided to Defra via the AIFCA as well as being published on the Southern IFCA website.

Mr R Stride asked whether intelligence reporting predominantly comes from the commercial or recreational sector. PDCO Dell outlined that intelligence sources are kept confidential. Members discussed the input from different sectors to recorded incidents of non-compliance, PDCO Dell outlined that non-compliance relates to a small section of all relevant sectors.

Behind the Scenes

89. A Behind the Scenes report was provided by all staff at Southern IFCA covering the period of March to May 2025.

Members discussed the consultation on draft Shared Principles for Black Seabream and how this was progressing. DCO Birchenough provided an overview of the engagement opportunities explored to date through the consultation, those which were upcoming and that overall the consultation had been positively received to date with good levels of engagement from all relevant sectors.

Marine Licencing

90. DCO Birchenough delivered an update report on marine licencing applications (MLAs) received by Southern IFCA during the last quarter, as well as an overview for the FY2024/2025, working under Marine Consents. DCO Birchenough outlined that for FY2024/2025, 41 MLAs has been received which required a response from Southern IFCA, with an additional 45 MLAs identified as not requiring a response. This represented a 215% increase on the number of MLAs requiring a response compared to the previous year. DCO Birchenough identified that 6 MLAs had been received between 1st April 2025 and May 2025 which required a response, with a further 7 MLAs identified as not requiring a response, this represents a 33% decrease on the same period in 2024. DCO Birchenough outlined that the report provided a summary of MLAs where a response was required for the last quarter.

Sector Group Meetings

91. The Chairman invited Members to receive the minutes from recent meetings of The South Coast Fishermen's Council and the Recreational Angling Sector Group.

Proposed Meeting Dates 2026

92. The CEO asked that Members consider the dates and contact enquires by 4th July 2025 if any dates present any concerns.

Date of Next Meeting

93. Members considered the date of the next meeting (AGM) to be held at 14:00 on Thursday 18th September at Portsmouth Guildhall, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth PO1 2AB.

Resolved

94. The date of the meeting was confirmed.

The meeting concluded at 16:33.

A meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee (ESC) was held at **14:00 on 10th June 2025** via video conferencing.

Present

Cllr. Paul Fuller	Isle of Wight Council (Chairman)
Cllr. Barry Dunning	Hampshire Council
Cllr. Crispin Goodall	BCP Council
Cllr. Rob Hughes	Dorset Council (Vice-Chairman)
Dr Antony Jensen	MMO Appointee
Mr Richard Stride	MMO Appointee

Ms Pia Bateman Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Principal Deputy Chief Officer (PDCO), Mr Sam Dell, Deputy Chief Officer (DCO), Dr Sarah Birchenough, and Accountant Mrs Jen Carr were also present.

Apologies

35. Apologies were received from Dr Antony Jensen (MMO Appointee).

Declarations of Interest

36. There were no pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests declared.

Minutes

37. The Minutes from the previous meeting of the ESC held on the 11th March 2025 were considered by Members and recorded as accurate.

The CEO provided an update on Recommendation 30, whereby the matter regarding Member attendance had subsequently been resolved.

Progress Reports

38a. Chief Executive Officer Updates.

The CEO updated Members on staffing matters, to include the recent resignation and subsequent departure of Mr. Dominic Parry, who had worked in the Research and Policy Team since 2023, and had recently returned from a year long sabbatical. In addition the CEO updated Members on the forthcoming departure of the Office Manager Mrs Maria Chaplin. The CEO asked that her thanks to both employees be recorded in the minutes.

The CEO discussed the wider Civil Service reform and the impact this was likely to have on other Government Organisations, noting that voluntary redundancies were being rolled out in some partner organisations, which could result in a loss of corporate knowledge.

38b. General Member Updates.

The CEO updated Members on General Member Neil Hornby's temporary secondment to the Rural Payment Agency for a fixed period, anticipating his return to his position as CEO of CEFAS, and subsequently his return to the IFCA membership in Autumn 2025. The Members discussed the value in maintaining Mr N Hornby's position on the Membership, given his expertise and knowledge. Additionally the Members recognised Mr N Hornby's desire to extend his tenure in January 2026. Members looked ahead at key decision areas over the forthcoming Authority Meetings (June and September), as well as the August Technical Advisory Sub Committee.

Members also discussed the time it could take to replace a General Member; further supporting the recommendation to hold Mr N Hornby's position open until his return.

Members recognised how valuable Mr N Hornby was in a General Member capacity. Further, they discussed whether another representative from CEFAS could stand in for Mr N Hornby during this time. The CEO stated that the Standing Orders only permits deputies for Additional Members or Local Authority representatives. The Chairman discussed being able to stay abreast of the work that CEFAS were undertaking during this period. The CEO outlined that the CEFAS newsletter and updates were available online and where IFCOs work directly with CEFAS, Members would be made aware via the usual platforms.

Recommendation

39a. That the CEO update Mr N Hornby following discussions.

39b. That a link to the CEFAS newsletter be provided to all Members as part of the minutes.

Resolved

39c. [Home - Cefas \(Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science\)](#).

40. Budget Control Statement to March 2025.

The CEO described the Budget Control Statement, capturing the period from the 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025, which showed an overall deficit of c.40k across the business; a positive position when comparing this deficit to that projected of c.136.5 at year end.

The CEO provided a summary of the four major budget headers in accordance with information presented on the Executive Summary.

Members discussed committed funds where invoices were yet to be received. The CEO outlined that these commitments were factored into the previous budget setting in December for inclusion in the next financial year's budget. Members also discussed a capital expenditure saving relating to the delay in FPV Vigilant entering service. The Accountant stated that FPV Vigilant becomes an asset at the point it comes into service and depreciates from that point onwards, and that such depreciation can only commence once the vessel has entered service. Members discussed anticipated income from permits that are yet to be ratified and whether in this hiatus any associated work form part of wider duties of relevant IFCOs and therefore whether there is an ongoing cost whilst the legislation is awaiting ratification.

Members discussed the potential sale of FPV Protector. The CEO outlined that money was being held in the Marine Asset Reserve for this purpose, however that the Authority had agreed in December to not act on this matter until later in this financial year, when we would be better informed on the running costs associated with FPV Vigilant and the IFCA remit. PDCO Dell outlined that FPV Protector is maintained as an operational vessel under relevant budget headers and maintains in operational function.

Members thanked PDCO Dell for undertaking national training work and the associated income received by the Authority.

Resolved

41. That the report be received.

42. Reserves & Ringfencing 2025-2026 (CONFIDENTIAL PAPER):

Reflecting on the Year End accounts and the deficit being c.96k lower than anticipated, asked that the Members considered the ringfencing of specific amounts for the current financial year in order for key areas of work to be attended to, in accordance with provisions under Paragraph 10 of the Financial Regulations.

The CEO discussed the recommendation to top up the existing Training Ringfence by 5k in order to satisfy H&S requirements associated with FPV operations, to aid with staff retention and provide a clear learning pathway for the Compliance & Enforcement IFCOs and Seniors, with the intention that this model may be rolled out wider to operational IFCOs in the Research & Policy Team once a trial period has concluded and been reviewed.

The CEO discussed challenges with the estate, relating to an ongoing plumbing issue on the ground floor. She described that this issue had been ongoing since the building was purchased, likely resulting from poor delivery of contracting services c.2018. She discussed the need to attend to this matter, not only for staff wellbeing purposes, but also recognising that these facilities were for the Members and stakeholders visiting the premises. Additionally the CEO discussed the legal requirements relating to provision of lavatory facilities for staff.

The CEO discussed the increasing need to contract HR work externally, detailing some recent examples of HR matters.

The CEO asked that Members consider the creation of a Compliance & Enforcement Reserve in order to ringfence monies gained following the contracting of marine assets and the expertise provided by Southern which is utilised at a National Level (training) when assisting other IFCAs or other Government Departments. The CEO reminded Members that the Research & Policy Reserve was already established.

Members discussed their support for the identified reserve and ringfencing proposals and the benefits of providing transparency in how the General Reserve funds are being allocated for specific and time limited uses. Members discussed the rationale of allocating specific training to an identified number of IFCOs. PDCO Dell outlined for example, the use of the drone and the importance of maintaining IFCO drone currency to operate the equipment under legal requirements. The Chairman discussed the importance of allocating funds for HR support, recognising that the management of HR matters were dominating the CEO's time in recent months.

The recommendations were proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Mr R Stride. All Members were in favour.

Resolved

43.

- a) That Members approve the creation of a Compliance & Enforcement Reserve and an opening balance of 5k.
- b) That Members agree to top up the Training Ringfence by £4,764.
- c) That Members agree to top up the Dilapidations Ringfence by 12k.
- d) That an HR Support ringfence is created, with 8k attributed to it.

44. Draft Statement of Accounts for Year Ended 31st March 2025

Mrs J Carr introduced the draft Statement of Accounts, explaining that the draft document formalises, for the purpose of an annual external audit, the Budget Control Statement in a previous item.

Mrs J. Carr explained that Francis Clark are commissioned annually to audit Southern IFCA's accounts, in order to ensure an extra layer of scrutiny on financial matters, recognising the importance of this oversight when managing public money.

The recommendation was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr. R Hughes. All Members were in favour.

Resolved

45. That Members make a recommendation to the Full Authority on Thursday 12th June to approve the authorisation of the submission of the draft Statement of Accounts to the external auditors for the financial year ended 31st March 2025

46. The Poole Harbour Several Order 2015 Management Plan (2025 Revision)

DOC Birchenough provided Members with an overview of aquaculture activity in Poole Harbour and how this is managed by Southern IFCA under The Poole Fishery Order 2015. DCO Birchenough outlined that the current Tranche of leases, valid for 5-years, comes to an end on 30th June 2025 and that work had been ongoing to administer the issuing of leases for the next Tranche between 1st July 2025 and 30th June 2030. PO William Meredith-Davies has overseen this work, seeking applications from current leaseholders including required Business Plan documentation and reviewing all supporting documentation to support management under The Order. The Technical Advisory Sub-Committee reviewed the documentation related to the new Tranche of leases and agreed all documentation to be taken forward.

The Authority are required to hold a period of Formal Consultation on the revised Management Plan for the coming year (2025 Revision) providing the opportunity for any 'interested parties' to comment. This period of Formal Consultation was held between 9th – 30th May 2025. There were no representations made to Southern IFCA during the formal public consultation and therefore no changes are proposed to the Management Plan 2025.

The recommendation was proposed by Mr R Stride, seconded by Cllr B Dunning. All Members were in favour.

Resolved

47. That Members approve the Management Plan (2025 Revision) for publication on the Southern IFCA website.

48. Accident, Incident and Near Miss Report

PDCO Dell reported on one accident in the previous reporting period which resulted in the loss of a IFCA issued iPhone 10. PDCO Dell discussed mitigations that had been put in place to avoid future incidents of a similar nature.

Members discussed the use of IFCA issued mobile phones by IFCOs including engagement with the fishing industry and the use of compliance tools on smart phone platforms, such as the mobile working app and the CLUE system.

Resolved

49. That the accident and incident report is noted by Members of the Executive Committee.

Date of Next Meeting

50. Members considered the date of the next ESC, timetabled for the 16th September 2025.

Resolved

51. The date of the next virtual meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee was confirmed.

The Meeting closed at 15:13.

DRAFT

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 8th May 2025

Minutes of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), held in the meeting room at the Southern IFCA office in Poole at 14:00 on 8th May 2025.

Present

Dr Antony Jensen	Chairman, MMO Appointee
Mr Richard Stride	Vice Chairman, MMO Appointee
Ms Elisabeth Bussey-Jones	MMO Appointee
Mr Neil Hornby	MMO Appointee
Dr Simon Cripps	MMO Appointee
Dr Heidi Guille	MMO Appointee
Mr Stuart Kingston-Turner	Environment Agency
Dr Richard Morgan	Natural England
Ms Pia Bateman	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Principal Deputy Chief Officer (PDCO) Sam Dell, Deputy Chief Officer (DCO) Dr Sarah Birchenough, Senior Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer (SIFCO) Ms Emily Condie, IFCO's Ms Hester Churchouse and Mr Dominic Parry, Project Officers Ms Imogen Wright, Mr William Meredith-Davies and Ms Chelsea Perrins were also present. Cllr Paul Fuller, Chairman of the Authority also attended.

Dr Peter Davies (Angling for Sustainability, a Fisheries Industry Science Partnership Project) attended in person.

Apologies

36. Apologies for absence were received from Mr James Morgan (MMO), Mr Gary Wordsworth (MMO Appointee) and Mr Colin Francis (MMO Appointee).

Declarations of interest

37. The following non-pecuniary interests were declared: Mr R Morgan (Agenda Item 6 & 7), Mr N Hornby (Agenda Item 7). Mr R Stride declared a pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 5c.

Minutes

38. Members considered the Minutes of the meeting held on the 6th February 2025 (Marked A) and consideration of the following matters outstanding.

- a. **Resolved: Recommendation 26:** that Officers review wording under the Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Fishery Monitoring and Control Plan, SPA Monitoring Programme, Monitoring Variables 4 & 5 to:
 - a. Change the word 'significant' to a different suitable word which does not relate to a quantitative change.
 - b. To add text to outline Southern IFCA's role in monitoring for updated or new best available evidence.

The minutes were approved by mutual consent.

PROGRESS REPORTS

39. Emergent Updates

The CEO focussed her update on MPAs at a strategic level, noting that there have been some

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delays on national MPA work in anticipation of the outcomes of the UK/EU sandeel arbitration, which has now reached its conclusion. The CEO provided a brief overview of this matter, reminding Members that the UK Government had put in place a total ban on sandeel fishing in 2024 in UK waters due to the adverse impact on birds. The EU subsequently took this to court on 3 grounds 1) that the closure not based on best scientific evidence, 2) that the closure was not proportionate 3) that the closure was discriminatory, linked to social and economic impacts on communities. The CEO discussed that The UK Government has now received the sandeel Arbitration Tribunal's final ruling, with the court finding that the UK had successfully demonstrated that the measures taken to close English and Scottish waters were based on the best available science and had sufficient regard to the principle of non-discrimination. Both these matters have therefore been dismissed. The Court however, ruled that during the decision making process which led to the closure, the UK did not have sufficient regard to the principle of proportionality, specifically in relation to EU Rights during the adjustment period, a requirement under the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

The CEO discussed the two key areas of ongoing MPA Policy work being undertaken at a National Level. She provided an overview of the MPA Compensatory Work, reminding Members that this is a specific project, being led by Defra, which is looking to offset the impact of windfarm developments in existing and new MPAs with the aim to facilitate expansion of offshore wind generation. The CEO discussed that compensatory MPAs were likely to be consulted on in 2026.

The CEO touched on the MPA Network Review, an ongoing project looking at the current network of MPAs. She described the origins of this sat with a 'think piece' from JNCC & NE undertaken in 2022 which was submitted to Defra, with the aim of optimising the MPA network. Following Ministerial approval in November 2024 for English waters, a review is now underway. The first report is timetabled to be released in December 2025.

The CEO described how these two Policy areas exist in a wider climate of increased calls for MPA management and discussed how The Office for Environmental Protection (OEP) and the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee (EFRA) have opened investigations into management in MPAs. She discussed a recent OEP report, which highlights specific gaps in MPA management, monitoring, and reporting, matters which were identified as priorities to address, as well as key considerations for the future of the MPA network. She also touched on a film being realised by Sir David Attenborough called Ocean, which will likely renew calls for 30x30 MPA management and the impact of industrial fishing, which will of course add to the wider debates.

The CEO invited Members to consider contributing to the Defra's ongoing consultation focused on the design of the Marine Recovery Fund (MRF); which aims to speed up the consenting of Offshore Wind projects while protecting the marine environment. She described that the MRF will be a voluntary mechanism that organisations undertaking relevant offshore wind activities (such as developers or plan promoters) will be able to pay into to secure appropriate and strategic compensatory measures to compensate for the adverse environmental impacts of their projects on protected sites. This Defra run consultation provides an opportunity for stakeholders to influence how the MRF will function. Defra will use responses to finalise the design of the MRF, including how it will operate and be managed, and to inform relevant secondary legislation.

The CEO summarised the MPA work as a busy Policy space and discussed with Members how it is likely to remain, as we move into 2026 where the renewal of the Trade and Co-operation Agreement will be on the table in Government.

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On Member matters, and for Members to note, the CEO confirmed that on the 7th May the MMO had accepted Mr Charlie Brock's resignation as a General Member. The CEO informed Members that she would be discussing this further at the forthcoming Authority Meeting, alongside other relevant matters.

The CEO invited the General Members to the next Community Forum in Swanage on Wednesday 14th between 16:00-19:30.

Dr S Cripps provided further information in regard to the Ocean film, the main messages it puts forward relating to industrial fishing, MPAs and overfishing and how these relate to wider international campaigns. Members discussed that there are strong political points being made on both sides and how this interacts with the IFCA remit and duties, and legislation related to management of MPAs. Members discussed that recent reports on MPAs had not captured all the nuances of the application of MPA management at different levels.

40. Byelaw Update

DCO Birchenough updated Members on the progress of two MPA byelaws through the MMO and Defra QA process. The BTFG Byelaw 2023 submission package has been through Defra scrutiny and has been passed to the office of the Minister for final consideration and potential ratification. The timeline for this is dependent on the availability of the Minister's office.

DCO Birchenough informed Members that the Shore Gathering Byelaw, made by the Authority in December 2024 and subsequently submitted to the MMO and Defra for consideration by the Secretary of State, had been through round one of quality assurance with the MMO. DCO Birchenough outlined that the comments received were being reviewed and actioned.

41. Black Seabream

Senior IFCO Condie outlined that a consultation on proposed Shared Principles for black seabream management, to complement existing spatial management and support black seabream during the breeding season in 3 MCZs in Dorset, has now started and will run until 22nd June 2025. Senior IFCO Condie outlined the proposed measures being consulted on, stating that the proposal is the Shared Principles would be voluntary, apply within the 3 Dorset MCZs only and during the period 1st April to 31st July only. Senior IFCO Condie informed Members that in addition, views are being sought through the consultation on the development of a voluntary data collection scheme, proposed to run year-round, with the aim of improving the evidence base for black seabream populations and fisheries to ensure that management continues to be based on best available evidence.

Senior IFCO Condie outlined that a questionnaire is available for stakeholders to complete and that port visits, an online meeting, a second Industry Workshop, the Swanage Community Drop-In and targeted patrols would all be used during the consultation to aim to maximise engagement and participation.

42. Solent Dredge Fisheries 24/25 Catch Returns

IFCO Churchouse presented Members with an overview of the 2024/25 Solent Dredge Permit fishing season, providing detail on catch rates and participation levels by permitted fishers for the King Scallop fishery and the Manila clam fishery. IFCO Churchouse provided detail from the Executive Summary on geographic scope of fishing activity and catch per unit effort, outlining that for each month the CPUE for King Scallop was below values seen for the 2023/24 season but similar to values for the 2021/22 and 2022/23 seasons and that the quantity of catch and number of participating vessels was increased for Manila clam compared to previous seasons.

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Members discussed the decreased catch for King Scallop compared to the previous season. IFCO Churchouse stated that the price paid for King Scallop had been reduced on the previous year along with some natural fluctuations in population levels, 2024/25 having been an exceptional year for the King Scallop population in the Solent. Members discussed King Scallop landings coming from the continent which had impacted the market at a national level despite management remaining consistent for international fleets.

43. REM/AI

PDCO Dell discussed how exciting this area of work is for this Authority, and provided a brief overview of where the REM/AI work sits under the provisions outlined in the Joint Fisheries Statement, specifically with reference to exploration of the use of technologies such as remote electronic monitoring for scientific purposes to aid the sustainable management and control of fisheries.

PDCO Dell discussed the ongoing collaboration and engagement with Defra, to include attendance at the REM Quarterly meeting in April, run by the Defra policy team and involving all ALBs working on REM including Cefas, MMO and Natural England. PDCO Dell discussed his presentation of the Southern IFCA project plan, and the IFCAs unique selling point, being low-cost REM solutions that work. PDCO discussed his future plans to continue to work with other IFCAs and across Government to continue to explore the use of REM in UK fisheries with a recent focus on “interoperability”, looking at opportunities for inshore solutions to integrate with offshore/national systems.

PDCO Dell discussed the ongoing development of a National IFCA Strategy, which further strengthens the IFCA response to “interoperability” around the inshore zone. This strategy considers three other IFCAs, in addition to Southern who are currently exploring the use of REM and AI.

PDCO Dell discussed some common issues faced nationally in the use of reliable gear sensors on the towed gear fleet, discussing this particular issue in the context of gear sensors installed on one of the Southern IFCA under 12m trawler in Lyme Bay and subsequent work with Northumberland IFCA and the suppliers to remedy via a re-installation in West Bay.

PDCO Dell looked forward to the next priority fishery, as identified in the Southern IFCA project plan, namely Potting and Netting on under 12m vessels. He described ongoing work with engineers in Lyme Bay which aims to capture videos of both whelk pots and bycatch to inform the work intended in relation to AI in these fisheries.

PDCO Dell discussed the challenges of the REM project, with regard to relying on industry volunteers and discussed how fortunate Southern are in having fishers who are forward thinking who want to volunteer as part of this project to aid in improving scientific understanding of species and quota allocation, to improve how fishers are able to demonstrate that they are fishing responsibly within MPAs, as well as other benefits such as security and safety on-board. PDCO Dell thanked all the fishers in the District who had been involved in the project to date, for the benefit of all.

Members discussed the separation of this project from the iVMS roll out, PDCO Dell confirmed that the licence condition for iVMS comes into effect on Monday 12th May 2025.

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ITEMS FOR DECISION

44. Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Fishery Monitoring and Control Plan

IFCO Parry provided Members with the outputs of the On-Site Monitoring Programme under the Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Fishery Monitoring and Control Plan (M&CP) in relation to Threshold Trigger Levels (TTL) for the Poole Harbour Bivalve Survey Data 2025 and fishery landings data for the 2024 season.

IFCO Parry outlined how data had been collected and analysed, with average values across both data variables used to indicate whether a TTL had been reached, the TTLs having been agreed by the Members of the TAC at the meeting in February when the M&CP for the fishery was formally introduced.

IFCO Parry outlined that the LPUE TTL for the landings data Monitoring Variable had been reached, with an average value of 72.41 kg/day for the 2024/25 fishing season, which is below the LPUE TTL of 78.25kg/day. IFCO Parry further outlined that the CPUE TTL for the Poole Harbour Bivalve Survey Monitoring Variable had not been reached, with an average CPUE value of 43.48kg/m of dredge/hr for the 2025 survey which is above the CPUE TTL of 34.60kg/m of dredge/hr.

IFCO Parry outlined that, as the LPUE TTL had been reached, the control mechanism had been activated, namely for the TAC to determine whether any additional management intervention would be required to support a sustainable fishery for the 2025 fishing season. IFCO Parry stated that although the LPUE TTL had been reached, results from monthly monitoring indicated that catch rates, although lower than the period 2020-2023, were consistent with catch rates from the 2016-2019 period and that anecdotal information from the Permit Holders suggested stocks can exhibit a fluctuating pattern, with a mild winter and increased freshwater inputs potentially contributing to the lower catch rates. On the basis of analysis for the LPUE TTL and CPUE TTL, IFCO Parry outlined that the recommendation was that no additional management was required to support a sustainable fishery for the 2025 season.

IFCO Parry outlined that it is recognised that the CPUE data from the 2025 survey is lower than the previous four years and that the M&CP allows the Authority to take a proactive approach to in-season monitoring as well as annual monitoring, providing for a monthly understanding of variation in catch rates as well as the introduction of a new mid-season CPUE monitoring programme, to be piloted for the 2025 season, providing further understanding of any stock changes.

IFCO Parry informed Members that Permit Holders would be informed of the TAC decision and Permits would be issued to successful applicants ahead of the start of the 2025 season on 25th May.

Members discussed the use of fisher-dependent data and fisher-independent data to inform the M&CP and how both data sources are used to help inform understanding of the sustainability of the fishery. Members also discussed how CPUE values were calculated using weight of catch obtained in the survey above and below minimum conservation reference size, IFCO Parry outlined that size frequency data is also collected as part of the survey and the full survey results will be compiled into a report for the August TAC meeting.

Mr S Kingston-Turner raised that on the Catch Zone Map provided to Permit Holders as part of the annual PHDP permit pack, the current boundary for Zone 11, which overlaps the entrance to the rivers Frome and Piddle could be misleading in identifying where dredge management for the rivers by the Environment Agency takes over from IFCA management.

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Mr S Kingston-Turner queried whether the Zone 11 boundary could be re-drawn to account for the EA management boundary.

Recommendation

45. That the Catch Zone Map for the PHDP fishery be updated for the 2025 fishing season to reflect the boundary of EA dredge fishing management at the entrance to the Rivers Frome and Piddle.

The recommendation in the paper was proposed by Ms E Bussey-Jones and were seconded by Dr S Cripps. All Members voted in favour.

Resolved

46. That Members agree that no additional management interventions are necessary under the Poole Harbour Dredge Permit for 2025/26.

47. The Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015: Tranche 3

PO Meredith-Davies presented to Members on the process for delivering the Tranche 3 issuing of leases for the period 2025-2030 under The Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 ("The Order"). PO Meredith-Davies provided information on how aquaculture is managed by Southern IFCA in Poole Harbour under The Order and the duties which Southern IFCA must operate under when considering aquaculture management.

PO Meredith-Davies outlined that, under the terms of the Lease of Right of Several Fishery of Shellfish Laying in Poole Harbour, Leases undergo renewal in a series of 5-year Tranches, the current Tranche coming to an end on 30th June 2025. PO Meredith-Davies detailed the process for Tranche 3 carried out to date and the required review of supporting documentation for the issuing of Leases which included the Poole Harbour Several Order 2015 Management Plan, the Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 Biosecurity Measures Plan and an Appropriate Assessment for the Issue of Leases under the Poole Fishery Order 2025, the latter having been submitted to Natural England for Formal Advice.

PO Meredith-Davies provided a summary of the Business Plans for 2025-2030 which had been received from applicants for Tranche 3 Leases, detailing that the Business Plans must provide an overview of proposed activity during the Lease period. PO Meredith-Davies informed Members that there were no significant changes to species or activity proposed in the Business Plans for Tranche 3 compared to activity carried out under Tranche 2.

PO Meredith-Davies also outlined the key updates to each of the supporting documents stating that specific management for all Lease Beds would be included as a prohibition on any activity between 18:00-06:00 for November to March to ensure site integrity of the Poole Harbour SPA, SSSI and Ramsar Site. PO Meredith-Davies also outlined that specific management in relation to compatibility between aquaculture and water user interactions would also be maintained under Tranche 3.

PO Meredith-Davies informed Members that new elements had been added to the supporting document package including detail of how The Order supports delivery of national legislation and policy, an overview of research on monitoring of wild populations of Pacific oysters in Poole Harbour and Southampton Water, and a literature review on the ecosystem services provided by aquaculture with relevance to specific services provided by aquaculture in Poole Harbour.

PO Meredith-Davies outlined that, if Members resolved the recommendations in this report then a period of Formal Consultation on the Management Plan would be undertaken with the

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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outcomes reviewed by the Executive Sub-Committee prior to final acceptance of the Management Plan and issuing of Leases for Tranche 3.

The CEO and Members expressed thanks to PO Meredith-Davies for his conscientious efforts on this workstream and the quality of the outputs.

Dr R Morgan provided a verbal update on Natural England's Formal Advice, outlining that NE are in agreement with the conclusion of the Appropriate Assessment drafted for Tranche 3.

Members discussed that the management of aquaculture in Poole Harbour represented a good example of how appropriate management can allow activities to take place within an MPA without an adverse risk to designated features. Members discussed the potential for publishing information from the ecosystem services literature review more widely.

The recommendations were proposed by Mr R Stride and were seconded by Mr S Kingston-Turner. All Members voted in favour, with the exception of Mr N Hornby who abstained.

Resolved

48. a. That Members approve:

- i. the Poole Harbour Several Order 2015 Management Plan: 2025 Revision
- ii. a period of public consultation to enable the Management Plan: 2025 Revision to be scrutinised by any interested parties, in line with Section (4) of The Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015.
- iii. the Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 Biosecurity Measures Plan (2025 Version).
- iv. the Appropriate Assessment for the Issue of Leases under the Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 for 2025-2030.

b. That Members delegate to Officers the ability to make inconsequential updates to the Appropriate Assessment following the receipt of any Formal Advice from Natural England.

c. That Members note the summary of proposed activity under Tranche 3 from the submitted leaseholder Business Plans, noting that there are no proposed changes in activity from T2.

GUEST SPEAKER:

49. Angling for Sustainability, a Fisheries Industry Science Partnership Project

Members received a presentation from Dr Peter Davies, Post Doctoral Researcher in Marine Ecology and the University of Plymouth, followed by a Q&A. Dr Davies presented on the Angling for Sustainability Project, run collaboratively between scientists, fishers, conservation advisors and fisheries managers funded by the Defra Fisheries Industry Science Partnership (FISP) scheme. The project aims to support sustainable fisheries management by filling key knowledge gaps by tracking shark, ray and black seabream movements. Dr Davies presented on data from the project related to black seabream following the conclusion of the project looking at homing behaviour, fine-scale behaviours, post-release behaviours and the overall conclusions and next steps from the project. Through the Q&A Members discussed survivability of tagged fish, fish tagged in different years, seasonality of black seabream in Dorset and observations of potential nesting behaviours. Members expressed thanks to Dr Davies for providing a update on the outcomes of the project and that the information the project has been able to collect is useful in helping to inform understandings of black seabream

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which can be fed into management discussions.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

50. Exploration of the Pump Scoop Dredge as a fishing method in the Solent

Project Officer Perrins provided an overview of the matters captured in the Executive Summary. Dr R Morgan asked for further clarification on the intentions of this work and whether if evidence gaps were able to be filled to complete relevant conservation assessments, then this activity could be allowed to take place in the Solent. DCO Birchenough outlined that being able to complete the relevant conservation assessments is one part of this work, at the first stage the IFCA needs to be confident that legal duties for relevant MPA management can be met, however once this is understood there are other elements to take into consideration including stock management, combined influences of multiple fishing gears operating in the same fishery and a balance between different stakeholders.

Members discussed whether pump-scoop dredges are a lower impact dredge gear type, discussing that to date evidence is inconclusive with regard to benthic impacts and sediment parameters from that gear type and that there has not yet been a direct comparison between this and the box dredge. Members also discussed whether pump-scoop dredging in the Solent would replace existing dredge types or operate in addition to them, DCO Birchenough outlined that this formed one of the points related to this workstream which would require careful consideration.

51. Fisheries Management Plans Updates

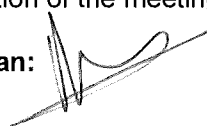
Project Officer Wright provided an overview of the matters captured in the Executive Summary. There were no subsequent questions from Members.

52. Date of Next Meeting

To confirm the date of the next meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee on the 21st August 2025 at Southern IFCA, Unit 3 Holes Bay Park, Sterte Avenue West, Poole Dorset BH15 2AA.

This section of the meeting concluded at 16:18.

Chairman:



Date: 21/8/25

All Members of the Public (in person and virtual) were invited by the Chairman to leave the meeting, due to the subsequent item involving the consideration of information which is exempt by virtue of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and therefore the public are required to be excluded during consideration of this item.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

53. The Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015: Business Plan Request – Tranche 3 Applications

Following an overview by DCO Birchenough, regarding a dispensation for an ancillary vessel over 16.5m to operate under Tranche 3 of the Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015, Members considered the recommendations.

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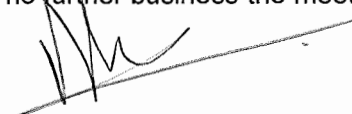
The recommendation was proposed by Dr S Cripps and were seconded by Dr H Guille. All members voted in favour.

Resolved

54. That Members approved the issuing of a dispensation for a vessel over 16.5m to operate under Tranche 3 of the Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 for the period 1st July to 30th June 2026 only.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 16:35.

Chairman:



Date:

21/8/25.



Department
for Environment,
Food & Rural Affairs

Daniel Zeichner MP
Minister of State

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Marked F

Robert Clark
Chief Officer
The Association of Inshore Fisheries
Conservation Authorities (AIFCA)
robert.clark@association-ifca.org.uk

Our ref: PO2025/11651/FA

18 July 2025

Dear Robert,

Thank you for your letter of 27 May about the inshore management of fishing in England's Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). I apologise for the delay in responding.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the 10 regional Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs) for their diligent efforts in managing fisheries within the 0-6 nautical mile zone across the country and for your Association's role in highlighting their essential work. Your combined commitment to sustainable fishing practices and responsible MPA management is vital to preserving marine biodiversity and supporting the livelihoods of coastal communities.

The government acknowledges the significant challenges involved in balancing ecological protection with the economic realities faced by fishing communities. The ongoing work to implement effective management measures in our inshore MPAs is commendable and has set an important precedent for sustainable fisheries management. I know the IFCAs are continuing to complete the introduction of further management measures in MPAs where necessary.

The government recognises the importance of a healthy marine environment and is committed to our international obligation to protect 30% of the world's ocean by 2030, along with our responsibilities under domestic and international law to manage fisheries sustainably. We have a legally-binding target to restore at least 70% of designated features in MPAs to favourable condition by 2042, with the rest in recovering condition.

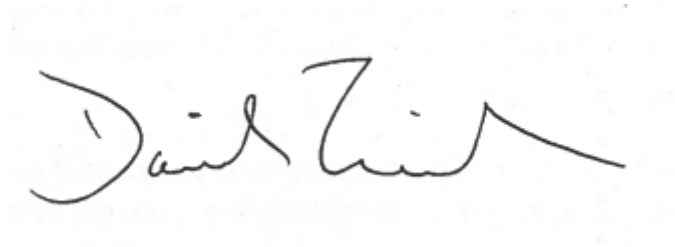
As you already know, at the UN Ocean Conference, we announced a consultation on proposals to ban bottom trawling in a further 41 MPAs, covering 30,000 sq km of England's waters. That closes on 1 September, and I await the results – which cannot be pre-empted. However, I will note that the government's policy is not to restrict fishing unnecessarily. I agree with you that it should only be restricted where it is damaging to the specific protected species and habitats in each MPA. Restrictions are less likely to be needed, for example, in MPAs designated to protect mobile species such as seabirds or harbour porpoises, where seabed bottom trawling restrictions will not help these species. I appreciate that bottom trawling is valuable to the UK fishing industry and that there is currently no commercially viable replacement for it to catch the high-value species targeted.

I am confident that, with the continuation of your collaborative approach to fisheries management and with the swift implementation of appropriate measures, the IFCA's can maintain a balanced approach that safeguards marine ecosystems while sustaining fishing communities.

On a separate note, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the IFCA's and the AIFCA for engaging with the recommendations of the Conduct and Operations Report 2018-2022 constructively and proactively. I would welcome a meeting with you to discuss its findings further and propose arranging a meeting with you and Julian Gregory in the autumn.

Thank you once again for your ongoing commitment and leadership. We look forward to supporting your efforts and to positive developments in the management of our shared marine resources.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Daniel Zeichner', is centered on the page. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

DANIEL ZEICHNER MP

Budget Control Statement

Report by The CEO and Chartered Accountant

A. Purpose

To provide Members with a summary of the Authority's accounts for the period 1st April 2025 to 31st July 2025.

B. Recommendation

That the report be received.

C. Annex

Annex 1: Detailed Budget Control Statement with contextual narrative.

1.0 Budget Control Statement

- 1.1 The Summary Budget Control Statement to 31st July 2025, as shown below, shows a **deficit of c.106k against budget**.

SUMMARY RESULTS Major Budget Headers	Apr25-Mar26 12 mths Budget incl. inflation	YTD 1 Apr 25 - 31 July 25		
		Actual	Budget	Variances
EXPENDITURE SUMMARY				
Compliance and Enforcement	124,317	23,860	47,929	(24,069)
Research and Policy	34,259	1,997	12,824	(10,827)
Business Services	1,129,589	369,336	404,515	(35,179)
Capital Equipment	127,635	32,538	42,546	(10,008)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	1,415,800	427,732	507,814	(80,082)
TOTAL INCOME	1,211,658	967,895	1,154,322	(186,427)
INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	(204,142)	540,163	646,508	(106,345)

- 1.2 The Detailed Budget Control Statement (Annex 1) provide a narrative of all positive and negative variance equal to or greater than 1k., in addition to contextual notes where necessary.

2.0 Summary of Major Budget Headers

- 2.1 The positive variance captured under the **Compliance & Enforcement** Header (**c.£24k**) represents c.£4k of savings on FPV fuel and c.2.5k maintenance costs, relating to operational prioritisation during the first quarter, seeing increased use of the drone and FPV Endeavour. This is likely to even out over the course of the FY. REM Project costs (c.£5k) are anticipated later in the year, as well c.£2k for PPE, which will even out during the FY. A c.£2k quarterly payment to the MMO for access to a National Intelligence System (CLUE) is anticipated imminently. At this stage of the FY, c.£6k of savings are seen under the Prosecutions header, these costs are unpredictable and likely to even out over the course of the FY.

- 2.2 The positive variance captured under the **Research and Policy** Header (**c.11k**) relates mainly to no costs being incurred to date for Byelaw advertisement (c.£3k) and c.£2k saving for the Drift Net Project, costs which may be incurred later in the FY, subject to community uptake. c.£1k is being held prior to reserve transfer for monies received from PHDP holders for costs associated with the offset of MSC Certification fees for the fishery (to reimburse monies that were paid upfront by Southern IFCA previously). Money (c.£2k) ringfenced for Solent Scallop Research remains dependant on another IFCA providing training.
- 2.3 The positive variance captured under the **Business Services** Header (**c.35k**) is due to a reduction in staff salary and pension contributions (c.17k) as a result of one IFCO embarking on a sabbatical for the first 4 months of the FY, as well as the resignation of the Office Manager in June 2025. Costs associated with staff training (c.15k) will be realised later in the year.

Increased and unforeseen costs associated with insurance premiums across the entirety of the business of c.4k have been incurred. This is reflection of increased costs for services.

- 2.4 The positive variance under the **Capital Equipment** Header (c.10k) is due to savings in depreciation on FPV Protector. This FPV was budgeted to be replaced in Q1 with a cost of £120k resulting in higher depreciation in the budget. This replacement has been delayed due to delays experienced in delivery of FPV Vigilant.

3.0 **Total Income**

A deficit in projected income of **c.186k** reflects the outstanding payment of project funding from Defra (c.£140k). c.£50k relates to the potential sale of FPV Protector, which was budgeted for prior to experiencing the delays in procurement and delivery of FPV Vigilant. We may not complete this sale during the current FY. An amount c.4.5k relates to the anticipated issuing of commercial and recreational permits under the Pot Fishing Byelaw. This Byelaw remains with the MMO quality assurance team. It is likely that this delay is due to the national delivery of FMPs and Tranche 1 outcomes. BCP Shellfish Sampling contract (c.£3.5k will be realised later in the FY.

4.0 **Payment of Amounts Exceeding £5,000**

- 4.1 Paragraph (11) of Southern IFCA's Financial Regulations 2022 require that all ex. VAT payments over £5,000 (with the exception of salaries, PAYE, pension contributions and regular payments outside of the Financial Manager's control) are to be reported to the Authority via a BCS.
- 4.2 Between the 1st April 2025 and the 31st July 2025, the following payments equal to or greater than the above-mentioned figure were made,

Amount	Date	What	Who
£43,311.58	01/04/2025	Annual insurance premiums (vehicles, marine assets and estate)	Brunel Insurance Brokers
£14,342.42	17/06/2025	AIIFCA Subscriptions 2025-2026	AIIFCA

DETAILED RESULTS				April 2024	YTD		YTD Notes for positive & negative variance >£1k	
Minor Budget Headers				Actual	Budget	Actual		
Income	Lay	Lay - Harle		364,595	364,595	364,595	0	
		Lay - DOW		129,499	129,499	129,499	0	
		Lay - Dorset		223,684	223,684	223,684	0	
		Lay - BCP		100,563	100,563	100,563	0	
		Lay - Southampton		38,806	38,806	38,806	0	
	Permits & Leases	Lay - Portsmouth		45,302	45,302	45,302	0	
		Poole Harbour Bridge Permits		27,000	35,375	27,000	8,375	This is the extra £75 per permit referred to below for Poole Harbour Recertification
		Solent Dredge Permits Category A		11,180	0	0	0	
		Poole Outer Aquaculture Leases		39,803	16,402	16,401	0	
		Net Fishing Permit		1,870	0	0	0	
	Other	Port Fishing Permit - Commercial		3,600	0	3,600	0	Byelaw currently undergoing MMO quality assurance
		Port Fishing Permit - Recreational		1,050	0	1,050	0	Byelaw currently undergoing MMO quality assurance
		BCP Council Shellfish Sampling		3,765	3,765	3,765	3,765	Not anticipated until later in the year
		Bank interest receivable		25,000	15,141	8,353	0	Leases received as lump sums so more in Reserve Bank Account in early months so more interest earned than pro rata split
		Unforeseen income (including chartering)		2,800	0	0	0	
Compliance and Enforcement	Drone	Delta Spending Review 2025-2026 (SR25, part 1)		140,000	0	140,000	0	Money not yet received from DEFRA
		Equipment Sale (profit/loss)		58,550	58,550	445,697	58,550	Anticipated income following possible sale of FPV Protector (on hold) Actual reflects sale of van (sold for £8,100, minus £810 auction commission, £80 tracker removal and £3,967 for final book value of vehicle)
		Court Costs Recovered		1,600	234	800	0	
				1,600	234	800	0	
				1,600	234	800	0	
	Fisheries Protection Vessels	Maintenance		3,000	548	1,000	1,951	
		Fuel	FPV Endeavour	2,450	753	800	421	
			FPV Protector	12,000	1,389	4,900	0	Protector not refuelled in April and only on two dates in each of the next three months
			FPV Vigilant	24,000	6,504	8,000	0	Operational profiles in July meant less usage of Vigilant that month
			FPV Maintenance (combined 3 FPVs)	15,000	2,954	5,000	0	Mainly due to Endeavour 100-hour service and additional work then discovered
	Projects	Burnt	Combined	5,871	1,988	1,989	0	
			FPV Vigilant	9,568	3,333	3,332	1	
		REM AI NRP Project (with DMS FCA) Phase 1		5,000	4,150	5,000	0	All costs so far have been coded to Phase 1
		REM AI FFB Project (with DMS FCA) Phase 2		5,000	0	5,000	0	
		Personal Protection Clothing		8,348	698	2,753	0	PPO for RAGNET servicing raised but invoice not yet received
Research & Policy	Monitoring Programme	Enforcement Equipment		3,000	1,376	1,000	376	PPO for RAGNET servicing raised but invoice not yet received
		Industry Compliance Aids		1,800	424	600	176	
		CLUE Intelligence System (annual rolling costs)		790	0	790	0	
		Legal Services - Prosecutions		8,152	0	2,089	0	The MOJ states invoices quarterly in arrears so ought to have been one for 30 June but yet to be received
				20,000	165	6,502	0	It is unclear this expenditure is not spread evenly across the year and is unpredictable
	Subscriptions & Memberships	Expenditures		124,317	23,440	47,926	104,008	
		Hydro - Aerials		9,009	0	3,087	0	No byelaws made yet this FY
		Legal Services - Byelaws		2,000	0	667	0	
		Community Engagement		5,000	42	417	0	
		Police Resource Survey		800	960	960	0	
Business Services	Estate	Solent Scallop Survey		4,300	960	1,440	0	
		Solent Breaker Break Assessment		2,800	480	0	0	
		Whale Sampling		600	86	86	0	
		Whale Monitoring Programme Pilot CPUE		500	0	500	0	
		NRP On Net Project		0	2,000	0	0	Costs associated later in the year, subject to community update
	Finance	Survey Equipment and Maintenance		800	226	267	0	
		Wharf Association of GB		750	181	250	0	
		GIS Annual Licence		800	0	267	0	
		Poole Harbour MSC - R6 Certification 2022		1,025	0	1,025	0	Cost offset over a 5-year period by dredge permit additional £75 per permit
		Poole Harbour MSC - Annual Audit		5,275	0	0	0	
	Insurances	Solent SCE research		2,000	0	2,000	0	Training needed from another FCA in using camera equipment, so timing dependent on their (very limited) availability
		Expenditures		34,419	1,887	12,241	10,629	
		Office - General		14,100	3,358	4,701	0	These variances more or less offset one another
		Contractors & services		26,658	9,970	8,689	1,281	
		Office Rates		30,000	10,113	10,000	113	
Capital Equipment	Finance	Equipment (<£500)		2,000	0	667	0	
		Miscellaneous		2,000	383	667	0	
		Finance Audit costs		3,000	0	0	0	
		Xero Software		396	132	132	0	
		Payroll		2,367	538	709	0	
	Subscriptions	Bank charges		600	316	200	0	
		Personnel	Combined personnel	11,324	14,087	11,324	0	General increase in insurance premiums more than anticipated
		Marine Assets	Combined marine assets	4,234	5,169	4,234	0	General increase in insurance premiums more than anticipated
		Vehicle fleet	Combined	22,457	23,457	22,457	0	
		Vehicle Insurance (combined)		4,316	597	1,500	0	Only costs YTD are MOT for HP17 YXS & 20 days' cancelled tracking with Teletac
Staff Costs	Vehicle Fleet Management	Maintenance		4,308	120	1,443	0	
		Vehicle Tracking (Vision)		195	0	100	0	
		All Star Network Service Charge		672	168	224	0	
		Road Tax (combined)		48	56	16	0	
		General		1,310	405	426	0	
	Meetings	APCA Annual Membership		1,900	458	653	0	
		APCA Annual Meetings		14,343	14,343	14,343	0	
		Activity Meetings		2,300	477	625	0	
		COG		290	0	63	0	
		APCA Annual Forum		290	0	63	0	
HR	NMEG		290	153	63	0		
	FAG		290	395	63	0		
	Community Drop In Surgery		290	63	63	0		
	Recruitment		3,000	95	700	0		
	Legal Services		8,500	1,128	1,600	0		
Members Expenses	Employment costs	Salaries and Other Labour Costs		793,797	247,019	263,919	0	Savings reflect 1 x officer sabbatical (Amo of FY) & Office Manager resignation (Jue) (other savings offset by increases)
		LGA Pension Scheme		103,255	34,508	34,419	0	
		2025 NAC Pay Award		38,098	0	0	0	
		National MMO Trainer Contributions		4,980	0	4,980	0	Matter under discussion nationally between FCA and MMO. Spend anticipated later in the year
		National Training Course (C&E)		3,900	0	3,900	0	Costs to be incurred in February 2026
	Expenses	National Training Course (Environment)		1,300	0	1,300	0	Costs to be incurred in February 2026
		Boarding & Pacing		1,720	0	1,720	0	Costs to be incurred September 2025
		Mandatory C&E Certificates & Training		4,308	673	1,443	0	
		Mandatory Training (non C&E)		4,600	0	1,150	0	No expenditure YTD
		Professional Development		3,200	0	1,987	0	No expenditure YTD
Capital Equipment	Equipment Depreciation	Wellbeing & Retention Initiatives		700	0	700	0	
		Office Expenses (combined)		4,250	365	1,100	0	
		Chairman's Fund		1,000	297	333	0	
		Member Networking & Engagement		800	0	400	0	
		MMO apportion expenses		6,500	391	2,000	0	In 2024-25 FY, 67.5% of these expenses were submitted in March
Capital Equipment	Equipment Depreciation	Expenditures		1,158,593	389,336	484,515	125,170	
		Equipment Depreciation		5,195	1,750	1,750	0	
		Vehicles Depreciation		3,488	1,330	1,330	0	
		Equipment Depreciation		8,856	2,865	2,865	0	
		FPV's Depreciation		110,055	26,583	36,000	0	Budget higher than has proved necessary due to budgeted for depreciation on Protector replacement
Capital Equipment	Equipment Depreciation	Expenditures		127,635	32,538	42,546	110,008	
		Equipment Depreciation		5,195	1,750	1,750	0	
		Vehicles Depreciation		3,488	1,330	1,330	0	
		Equipment Depreciation		8,856	2,865	2,865	0	
		FPV's Depreciation		110,055	26,583	36,000	0	
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		Vehicles Depreciation		3,488	1,330	1,330	0	
		Equipment Depreciation		8,856	2,865	2,865	0	
		FPV's Depreciation		110,055	26,583	36,000	0	
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		Vehicles Depreciation		3,488	1,330	1,330	0	
		Equipment Depreciation		8,856	2,865	2,865	0	
		FPV's Depreciation		110,055	26,583	36,000	0	
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		Vehicles Depreciation		3,488	1,330	1,330	0	
		Equipment Depreciation		8,856	2,865	2,865	0	
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		Vehicles Depreciation		3,488	1,330	1,330	0	
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		FPV's Depreciation		110,055	26,583	36,000	0	
Capital Equipment	Equipment Depreciation	Expenditures		127,635	32,538	42,546	110,008	
		Equipment Depreciation		5,195	1,750	1,750	0	
		Vehicles Depreciation		3,488	1,330	1,330	0	
		Equipment Depreciation		8,856	2,865	2,865	0	
		FPV's Depreciation		110,055	26,583	36,000	0	
Capital Equipment	Equipment Depreciation	Expenditures		127,635	32,538	42,546	110,008	
		Equipment Depreciation		5,195	1,750	1,750	0	
		Vehicles Depreciation		3,488	1,330	1,330	0	
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Capital Equipment	Equipment Depreciation	Expenditures		127,635	32,538	42,546	110,008	
		Equipment Depreciation		5,195</				

Statement of Accounts for Financial Year Ended 31st March 2025 Annual Return from PKF Francis Clark

Report by the Chartered Accountant

A. Purpose

To formally accept the Statement of Accounts for the financial year April 2024 to March 2025, following completion of external auditing by accountancy firm PKF Francis Clark, based in Poole, Dorset.

B. Recommendation

1. That Members note the outcomes of the external audit for the financial year ended 31st March 2025.
2. That Members formally accept the Annual Return and that the document be signed at the meeting by the Chairman, the CEO and the Accountant on behalf of the Authority.

C. Annex

1. Annual Return for financial year ended 31 March 2025.
2. Francis Clark Review Report (letter dated August 2025)
3. The Final Statement of Accounts for Year Ended 31st March 2025

1.0 Background

At the meeting of The ESC on the 10th June 2025, following Members consideration of the draft Statement of Accounts for the previous financial year, it was agreed that the ESC make recommendations to the Authority, authorising the submission of the draft Statement of Accounts to the external auditors, PKF Francis Clark for consideration.

At the meeting of The Authority on the 12th June 2025, Members authorised the submission of the draft Statement of Accounts to the external auditors for the financial year ended 31st March 2025.

2.0 Outcomes of Annual Financial Audit conducted by PKF Francis Clark.

Following the Independent Assurance Review no changes have been made to the Statement of Accounts.

Assurance Review Observations and Recommendations:

'During the 2024/25 assurance review, we observed the continued use of electronic filing which was used effectively to store invoices. It was noted that the Fixed Asset Register is well presented, and staff were able to locate items with ease.'

Conclusions:

'Based on our review, nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that the financial statements have not been prepared so as to present fairly the state of the Authority's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and its surplus for the year then ended.'

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Annual return for the financial year ended 31 March 2025

The annual return on pages 2 to 5 is made up of four sections:

- Sections 1 and 2 are completed by the person nominated by the Authority.
- Section 3 is completed by Francis Clark LLP as the reviewer appointed by the Authority.
- Section 4 is completed by Jennifer Carr, the Authority's internal audit provider.

Section 1 – Annual governance statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2025, that:

	Agreed-		'Yes' Means that the body:
	Yes	No*	
1 We approved the accounting statements prepared in accordance with the guidance notes within this Annual Return.	YES		Prepared its accounting statements and approved them.
2 We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	YES		Made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3 We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with generally accepted good practice that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the body to conduct its business or on its finances.	YES		Has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with generally accepted good practice.
4 We provided opportunity during the year for interested persons to inspect and ask questions about the accounts.	YES		Has given all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about these Authority accounts.
5 We carried out an assessment of the risks facing the body and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	YES		Considered the financial and other risks it faces and has dealt with them properly.
6 We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the body's accounting records and control systems.	YES		Arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of the body.
7 We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal audit and external reviews.	YES		Responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external reviewers.
8 We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on the body and where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.	YES		Disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year-end if relevant.

This annual governance statement is approved by the Authority and recorded as minute reference

Signed by:
Chair PAUL FULLER
Dated

Signed by:
Clerk PIA BATEMAN
Dated

*Note: Please provide explanations on a separate sheet for each 'No' response.
Describe how the Authority will address the weaknesses identified

Section 2 – Accounting

statements 2024/25 or:

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

	Year ended	Notes and Guidance
--	------------	--------------------

	31 March 2025 £	31 March 2024 £	Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil Balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records
1 Balances brought forward	1,368,497	1,297,095	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the body's financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2 (+) Income from local taxation and/or levy	845,614	813,091	Total amount of local tax and/or levy received or receivable in the year including funding from a sponsoring body. Excluding any grants received.
3 (+) Total other receipts	264,037	333,671	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the taxation and/or levy (line 2). Include any grants received here.
4 (-) Staff costs	(818,572)	(714,238)	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include salaries and wages, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and employment expenses.
5 (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the body's borrowings (if any).
6 (-) All other payments	(348,590)	(366,122)	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7 (=) Balances carried forward	1,310,986	1,368,497	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) – (4+5+6)
8 Total cash and short term investments	2,016,101	1,599,153	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – to agree with bank reconciliation.
9 Total fixed assets plus other long term investments and assets	1,261,950	1,181,041	The original Asset and Investment Register value of all fixed assets, plus other long term assets owned by the body as at 31 March
10 Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2025 the accounting statements in this annual return present fairly the financial position of the Authority and its income and expenditure, or properly present receipts and payments, as the case may be.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer:

Signature

Date

Section 3 – Review report 2024/25 Cc

We present the findings from our review of the annual re in respect of Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

I confirm that these accounting statements were approved by the Authority on:

Date

And recorded as minute reference

.....

Signed by Chair of meeting approving these accounting statements:

Signature

Date

Respective responsibilities of the Authority and the reviewer

The Authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The Authority prepares an annual return which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2025; and
- confirms and provides assurance on various governance matters in accordance with generally accepted good practice.

We have reviewed the annual return and set out our findings below. Our work does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and therefore does not provide the level of assurance of a statutory audit.

Report

Please see the attached report dated August 2025.

Review signature



Reviewer

Adrian Way

Date

27 August 2025

Section 4 – Annual internal audit report 2024/25 to Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

The Authority's internal audit service provider, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls expected to be in operation during the financial year ended 31 March 2025. Internal audit has been carried out in accordance with the Authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit

conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the Authority.

Internal control objective	Agreed? Please choose one of the following		
	Yes	No*	Not covered
A. Appropriate accounting records have been kept properly throughout the year	YES		
1. The Authority's financial regulations have been met, payments were approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	YES		
B. The Authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	YES		
C. The annual taxation or levy or funding requirements resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate	YES		
D. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	YES		
E. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	YES		
F. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with the body approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	YES		
G. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	YES		
H. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	YES		
I. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, were supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records, and, where appropriate, debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	YES		

For any other risk areas identified by the Authority (list any other risk areas below or on separate sheets if needed) adequate controls existed:

Name of person who carried out the internal audit:

Print name JENNIFER CARR

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit: SignatureDate.....

***Note:** If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

****Note:** If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned, or, if coverage is not required, internal audit must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Private & Confidential

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POOLE
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BH15 2AA

Francis Clark LLP
Towngate House
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Poole
Dorset
BH15 2PW

T 01202 663600
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pkf-francisclark.co.uk

Our Ref: **PS866B/AMW/CW**

21 August 2025

Dear Sirs

Independent Chartered Accountants' Review report to the Committee of Southern Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority ("the Authority")

We have reviewed the Statement of Accounts of the Authority for the year ended 31 March 2025, as prepared by Jennifer Carr.

This report is made to the Committee, as a body, in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 12 August 2024. Our review has been undertaken so that we may state to the Authority those matters agreed in our engagement letter and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Authority for our work, for this report or the conclusions we have formed.

The Authority's responsibility for the Statement of Accounts

As explained at Section 2.2.1 of the Statement of Accounts set out on page 4, the Authority is responsible for making arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to ensure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. The Authority is also responsible for managing its affairs to secure economic, efficient, and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets.

Accountants' responsibility

Our responsibility is to express a conclusion based on our review of the Statement of Accounts. We conducted our review in accordance with International Standard on Review Engagements (ISRE) 2400 (Revised), *Engagements to review historical financial information* and ICAEW Technical Release TECH 09/13AAF (Revised) *Assurance reviews on historical financial statements*. ISRE 2400 also requires us to comply with the ICAEW Code of Ethics.

Scope of the Assurance Review

A review of financial statements in accordance with ISRE 2400 (Revised) is a limited assurance engagement.

We have performed additional procedures to those required under a compilation engagement. These primarily consist of making enquiries of management and others within the entity, as appropriate, applying analytical procedures and evaluating the evidence obtained. The procedures performed in a review are substantially less than those performed in an audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

Assurance Review Observations and Recommendations

During the 2024/25 assurance review, we observed the continued use of electronic filing which was used effectively to store invoices. It was noted that the Fixed Asset Register is well presented, and staff were able to locate items with ease.

Conclusion

Based on our review, nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that the financial statements have not been prepared so as to present fairly the state of the Authority's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and its surplus for the year then ended.

Yours faithfully

Francis Clark LLP

FRANCIS CLARK LLP

E-mail: mail@pkf-francisclark.co.uk

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Unit 3, Holes Bay Park, Sterte Avenue West, Poole, BH15 2AA

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

1 FOREWORD TO THE ACCOUNTS

Provided by Chief Executive Officer Pia Bateman and Chartered Accountant Jennifer Carr

This Statement of Accounts sets out the overall financial position of the Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority for the year 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025.

The core financial statements are:

- **The Statement of Accounting Policies** which details the principles on which the Statement of Accounts has been prepared.
- **The Consolidated Revenue Account** which covers the income and expenditure for the year to 31st March 2025.
- **The Consolidated Balance Sheet** which sets out the financial position of the Authority as at 31st March 2025.
- **The Statement of Total Movements in Reserves** which brings together all the recognised gains and losses of the Authority during the period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025.
- **The Consolidated Cash Flow Statement** which summarises the inflows and outflows of cash arising from transactions with third parties for revenue and capital purposes.

During the year to 31st March 2025 the Consolidated Revenue Account shows that the Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) recorded a net deficit of £39,879 (2023-2024 surplus of £161,705), this was taken to the General Reserve. Of this £39,879 deficit, £140,000 related to a DEFRA revenue grant which will be fully utilised over the next few years. £110,455 of the Defra Revenue grant was utilised during the year.

Levies upon the six constituent councils of Dorset, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, BCP, Portsmouth and Southampton were increased by 4% in comparison with the previous financial year and raised £845,615 (2023-2024: £813,091) (see Section 5 & Note 5.1.8). At the year-end net assets were valued at £2,185,758 (2023-2024: £2,227,615) (see Section 6).

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

2 STATEMENTS ON INTERNAL CONTROL AND RESPONSIBILITIES PLUS CERTIFICATE BY THE TREASURER

2.1 Statement on Internal Control

2.1.1 Scope of Responsibility

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority ('The Authority') takes responsibility for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, used economically, efficiently, and effectively. The Authority also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

In discharging this overall responsibility, The Authority takes responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of The Authority's functions, and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

2.1.2 The Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of The Authority's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively, and economically.

The system of internal control has been in place at the Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority for the year to 31st March 2025 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts.

2.1.3 The Internal Control Environment

The key elements of the internal control environment, include:

- the facilitation of transparent policy and decision-making.
- ensuring compliance with established policies, procedures, laws, and regulations including how risk management is embedded in the activity of The Authority, how leadership is given to the risk management process, and how staff are trained or equipped to manage risk in a way appropriate to their authority and duties.
- ensuring the economical, effective, and efficient use of resources, and for securing continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.
- scrutiny of matters relating to budget and finance, to include scrutiny of the Finance Administration function, as provided by external and independent Chartered Accountant.
- the financial management of the Authority, to include:
 - The function provided by the **Audit and Governance Sub Committee (AGSC)**, which comprises three Council Members, who meet quarterly to consider matters relating to budget and finance; under delegated functions

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

provided by the Executive Sub Committee. The Chair of the AGSC reports to the Executive Sub Committee.

- the function provided by the **Executive Sub Committee (ESC)**, in accordance with delegated functions, as specified under the Authority's Standing Orders. This Sub Committee comprises six Members, to include two Council Members who are independent of the AGSC membership. This Sub Committee's function includes making recommendations to the **Full Authority** on matters relating to budget and finance.

Consideration of matters related to budget and finance at the meeting of the Full Authority, following ESC scrutiny.

2.1.4 Review of Effectiveness

The Authority takes responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of the internal auditors and the executive managers within The Authority who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control environment, and also by comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates.

2.1.5 Significant Internal Control Issues

The most significant Internal Control Issue is the small number of staff to whom tasks can be allocated. There is little or no flexibility in the case of leave or sickness which means that mundane and routine tasks have to be constantly planned in advance.

2.1.6 Financial Internal Audit

Financial internal audit was carried out by Jennifer Carr ACA. Areas examined include:

- Variance of budget against actual
- Prompt banking of receipts
- Authorisation of expenditure
- Salaries, pensions, and PAYE
- Control over fixed assets
- VAT
- MMO appointees' expenses
- Bank reconciliations

The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by:

- the work of officers of the Authority,
- the work of the internal auditor as described above, and
- the external auditors in their limited scope assurance report

Pia Bateman
Chief Executive Officer

Jennifer Carr
Chartered Accountant

Date:

Date:

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

2.2 Statement on Responsibilities

2.2.1 The Authority's Responsibilities

The Authority:

- Makes arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to ensure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In this Authority that officer is the Treasurer.
- Manages its affairs to secure economic, efficient, and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets.

2.2.2 The Treasurer's Responsibilities

The Treasurer takes responsibility for the preparation of the Authority's Statement of Accounts which, in terms of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in Great Britain ("the Code of Practice"), is required to present fairly the financial position of the Authority at the accounting date and its income and expenditure for the year to 31st March 2025.

In preparing these accounts, the Treasurer has:

- selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently.
- made judgements and estimates that were reasonable and prudent.
- complied with the Code of Practice; kept proper accounting records which were up to date.
- taken reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

2.3 Treasurer's Certificate

I hereby certify that the Statement of Accounts for the year to 31st March 2025 has been prepared in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996.

I further certify that the Statement of Accounts presents fairly the financial position of Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority at 31st March 2025 and its income and expenditure for the year to 31st March 2025.

Signed:

Date:
Pia Bateman
Treasurer to the Authority

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

3 AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

With effect from 1st April 2015 Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities are no longer required to have their accounts audited. In order to give a degree of comfort regarding this Statement of Accounts, The Authority has appointed Francis Clark LLP, registered auditors, to carry out a "limited scope assurance report" ('the Report'), a formal procedure recognised by the Institute of Chartered Accountants. This Report will be available from 30th September 2025 and copies may be requested.

4 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

4.1 Accounting Principles

The general principles applied in compiling these accounts are those recommended by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). The accounts have been prepared in accordance with their Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting and with the guidance notes issued by CIPFA on the application of accounting standards (SSAPs).

4.2 Accruals and Historic Cost Convention

The accounts have been prepared under the accruals concept where income and expenditure are brought into account as they are earned and incurred and not as money received or paid and under the historic cost convention adjusted to include the revaluation of assets.

4.3 Basis of Debtors and Creditors

Revenue creditors are recorded on an Income and Expenditure basis, with estimated creditors being introduced into the accounts to cover goods and services received but not paid for by the year to 31st March 2025.

Revenue debtors are accrued to reflect the latest estimates of amounts due. There are no losses or anticipated losses, from non-collectible debts.

4.4 Stocks and Work in Progress

There are no stocks or work in progress included in the accounts.

4.5 Depreciation Policy

Depreciation is charged on all fixed assets. Premises are written down on a straight-line basis at 1% per annum. All other assets are depreciated on the reducing balance method at a rate of 25% per annum.

4.6 European Commission Grant Aid

There are no outstanding payments in respect of support for fisheries training of employees of the Authority.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

4.7 Pension Fund

The Authority is a scheduled body within the Pension Fund administered by Hampshire County Council. The Authority's staff are eligible to participate in this scheme and all have elected to do so. Costs shown represent contributions paid by the Authority into this scheme. Contributions to the fund are determined on a triennial basis by the Actuary. During the year to 31st March 2025 employee contribution of their salary was as follows:

Earnings	Contribution
Up to £17,600	5.5%
£17,601-£27,600	5.8%
£27,601-£44,900	6.5%
£44,901-£56,800	6.8%
£56,801-£79,700	8.5%
£79,701-£112,900	9.9%

The Authority contributed 15% of employee's earnings (Previous year: 14.5% of employee's earnings). Employer's contribution during the year to 31st March 2025 was £102,516 (2023-2024: £92,759).

4.8 Interest and Investments

All interest is from bank accounts. The Authority holds no investments.

4.9 Cost of Services

Recharges for work required under the Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 are made to The Authority's General Reserve from the Poole Harbour Reserve. In the year to 31st March 2025 there was a recharge of £20,464 (2023-2024: £16,710).

4.10 Finance Leases and other Financing Arrangements

The Authority had no finance leases, operating leases or hire purchase agreements in operation during the year to 31st March 2025.

4.11 Reserves and Provisions

The Capital Finance Reserve equates to the net book value of the Authority's fixed asset register to provide a fund for the ongoing replacement of all Authority capital assets (buildings, marine assets, vehicles and equipment)

The **Marine Asset Renewal Reserve** provides a fund for the replacement of marine assets (principally patrol vessels) where costs are anticipated to be in excess of net book value, in addition to provisions for a holding pot for unscheduled significant maintenance works.

The **Defra Revenue Reserve** includes funds committed to by Defra in order for IFCA's to support Defra's delivery of the Fisheries Act Objectives, specifically those related to Fisheries Management Plans, Marine Protected Areas and Marine Consents.

The **Research Reserve (formally the Marine Act Reserve)** is funded from surpluses on third party contracts to fund ongoing research.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

The **Poole Order Reserve** is held within the General Reserve Balance – please refer to Section 9 for further details.

In 2023-2024, a formal policy on the reserves held by the Authority was reviewed and updated. This stated that reserves would be held for three main purposes:

- To establish and maintain an adequate balance of working capital to help cushion the impact of uneven cash flows.
- To create a contingency to protect against the impact of unexpected events or emergencies and to ensure the Authority's long term sustainability.
- To build up funds to meet known or predicted requirements often referred to as Earmarked Reserves. Though accounted for separately they are legally part of the General Reserve.

The Executive Sub Committee review the Reserves Policy every three years. The next review will be undertaken in the financial year 2026-2027.

Following the approval of the annual accounts by The Authority's external auditors an annual presentation will be made to The Authority's Executive Sub Committee to justify the existing reserves and their adequacy or otherwise for the following 10 years.

4.12 Contingent Liabilities

The Authority has no contingent liabilities.

4.13 Related Party Transactions

In accordance with The Accounting Code of Practice the following Related Party Transactions are disclosed for the year to 31 March 2025.

	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Payments</u>
Levy (receipts), Pension (payments)	£845,615	£102,516
Levies received in advance	(£688,833)	
(This amount has been included in creditors)		

4.14 Disclosure of Fees

The fees expected to be charged by Francis Clark for The Report are approximately £3,800 for the year to 31 March 2025.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

5

CONSOLIDATED REVENUE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED **31 MARCH 2025**

		2024-2025	2023-2024
	Notes	£	£
<i>Expenditure</i>			
Employees	5.1.1	818,572	714,238
Premises - General Office	5.1.2	43,746	43,974
Transport Related Costs	5.1.3	21,330	21,461
Supplies and Services	5.1.4	59,302	44,949
Marine Asset Costs:			
<i>PV Endeavour</i>		11,523	9,955
<i>PV Stella Barbara</i>		-	8,659
<i>PV Protector</i>		3,534	5,237
<i>PV Vigilant</i>		14,083	-
<i>Drone costs</i>		4,598	2,708
<i>PV Fuel</i>		15,803	7,266
<i>Insurance</i>		14,285	5,138
Depreciation	5.1.5	68,772	43,317
Establishment expenses	5.1.6	73,983	78,155
Total Gross Expenditure		<u>1,149,531</u>	<u>985,057</u>
 <i>Income</i>			
Interest		40,635	25,277
Other Income		83,402	94,905
Profit on Sale of Fixed Assets	5.1.7	-	73,489
		<u>124,037</u>	<u>193,671</u>
 Total Net Operating Expenditure, to be met from Levies upon Constituent Authorities		<u><u>1,025,494</u></u>	<u><u>791,386</u></u>
 Hampshire County Council		341,629	328,489
Isle of Wight Council		121,345	116,678
Dorset Council		209,598	201,537
BCP Council		94,231	90,607
Southampton City Council		36,362	34,963
Portsmouth City Council		42,450	40,817
Total Financing	5.1.8	<u><u>845,615</u></u>	<u><u>813,091</u></u>
DEFRA Grant Income	5.1.9	140,000	140,000
Net General Fund Surplus		(39,879)	161,705

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

5.1 Notes to the Consolidated Revenue Account

5.1.1 Employees

At year end (31 March 2025) the Authority employed 14 full time, permanent members of staff, 2 part time, permanent members of staff and 3 full time staff on fixed term contracts. (2023-2024: 13 full time, 2 part time, 3 fixed term), at agreed pay bands linked to Local Government Pay Scales. The Authority is required to report specifically on two issues:

1. Employees with remuneration in excess of £50,000. Three employees received emoluments at this level in the year to 31 March 2025 (2023- 2024: Three).
2. The cost of providing pension contributions for employees: In the year to 31 March 2025 this was £102,516 (2023-2024: £92,759)

5.1.2 Premises – General Office

Premises - general office expenses are principally rates, utility bills and other costs incurred in providing the offices at 3 Holes Bay, Poole.

5.1.3 Transport Related Costs

Transport related costs cover mainly the travel and subsistence allowances of the Authority's operational staff.

5.1.4 Supplies and Services

Supplies and services relate principally to protective clothing, legal costs, training, rent, audit, project and miscellaneous costs together with bank interest.

5.1.5 Depreciation

The total is derived as follows:

Premises	Marine Assets	Vehicles	Equipment	Total
£5,199	£47,008	£11,809	£4,756	£68,772

5.1.6 Establishment Expenses

Establishment expenses relate to subscriptions to National associations, printing, advertising, stationery, telephones and communications licences, postages, interest payments and insurance other than those relating to the marine assets.

Under this heading the Authority is required to report specifically under Section 4(5) of the Local Government Act 1986 regarding the amount it spent on publicity. In the year to 31st March 2025 £5,636 was charged to public notices to advertise the audit and byelaws (2023 -2024: £1,653). A total of £3,382 (2023-2024: £12,892) was spent on recruitment advertising.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

5.1.7 Other Income

Other income relates principally to income from the Poole Harbour Shellfish Dredge Permit Byelaw (administrative cost recovery only), The Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw (administrative cost recovery only), rent from leases under the Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 (administrative cost recovery only), grants received, third party project fees, chartering of marine assets, training provided to other authorities and costs awarded from court cases (cost recovery only).

5.1.8 Local Authority Contributions

The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation (Amendment) Order 2019 states that the expenses incurred by the Authority must be defrayed by the relevant councils. Constituent Local Authorities are levied in accordance with the following prescribed formula:

Dorset Council	24.79%
Hampshire County Council	40.40%
Isle of Wight Council	14.35%
BCP Council	11.14%
Southampton City Council	4.30%
Portsmouth City Council	5.02%
TOTAL	100.00%

Levies upon the six constituent Local Authorities were increased by 4% in comparison with the previous year, equating to £845,615 (2023-2024: £813,091).

5.1.9 DEFRA Grant Income

In order to support Defra's work under the Fisheries Act 2020, a revenue grant was received from Defra for the year 2024–2025 totalling £140,000 (1x £130k plus 1x £10k).

5.1.10 MMO appointee expenses

MMO appointee general expenses provided in the year to 31 March 2025 were £2,938. (2023-2024: £627). Details as follows:

	Outstanding at 1 Apr 24	Paid in year	Outstanding at 31 Mar 25	Total per a/cs
L MacCallum		136	-	136
R Stride		1,418	-	1,418
N Hornby		329	-	329
A Jensen		332	-	332
E Bussey-Jones		465	-	465
H Guille		258	-	258
Provision for o/s claims	(1,498)	1,370	-	(128)
	(1,498)	4,308	-	2,810

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

6

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2024-2025 £	2023-2024 £
Fixed Assets			
Office and Equipment	6.1.1	510,458	506,792
Marine Assets	6.1.1	319,001	63,679
Vehicles	6.1.1	35,425	47,234
Assets under construction	6.1.1	<u>9,880</u>	<u>241,405</u>
		874,764	859,110
Current Assets			
Debtors	6.1.2	59,342	168,577
Cash at Bank and In Hand	6.1.3	<u>2,016,101</u>	<u>1,599,153</u>
		2,075,443	1,767,730
Total Assets			
		2,950,207	2,626,840
Current Liabilities			
Creditors	6.1.4	<u>764,449</u>	<u>399,225</u>
Current Assets Less Liabilities			
		1,310,994	1,368,505
Total Assets Less Liabilities			
		<u><u>2,185,758</u></u>	<u><u>2,227,615</u></u>
Represented by			
Capital Finance Account	7	874,764	859,110
Marine Assets Renewal Reserve	7	418,838	434,984
Research Reserve	7	24,903	24,903
DEFRA Revenue Reserve	7	217,048	187,503
General Reserve	7	<u>650,205</u>	<u>721,115</u>
Total Financing		<u><u>2,185,758</u></u>	<u><u>2,227,615</u></u>

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

6.1 Notes to the Balance Sheet

6.1.1 Movement of Fixed Assets

	Premises	Marine Assets	Vehicles	Equipment	Assets Under Construction	Total
Book value 1 Apr 2024	488,948	63,679	47,234	17,844	241,405	859,110
Additions	10,637	5,784	-	2,984	65,021	84,426
Disposals	-	(3,520)	-	-	-	(3,520)
Transfer		296,546	-	-	(296,546)	-
Depreciation	(5,199)	(47,008)	(11,809)	(4,756)	-	(68,772)
Adjustment on disposal	-	3,520	-	-	-	3,520
Book value 31 March 2025	494,386	319,001	35,425	16,072	9,880	874,764

6.1.2 Debtors

	2024 – 2025 £	2023 - 2024 £
Prepayments	53,136	16,470
VAT Control Account	6,206	12,107
Accrued income	-	140,000
	59,342	168,577

Accrued income represent amounts due from Dorset County Council in respect of one Defra grant for the year to 31 March 2024.

6.1.3 Cash at Bank and In Hand

The amount held at the bank, in petty cash and in stamps.

6.1.4 Creditors

	2024 – 2025 £	2023 - 2024 £
Deferred income	688,833	344,916
Other creditors	21,500	18,500
Accruals	54,116	35,809
	764,449	399,225

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

7. STATEMENT OF TOTAL MOVEMENTS IN RESERVES

	Capital Finance Reserve	Marine Assets Renewal Reserve	DEFRA Revenue Reserve	Research Reserve	General reserve	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
B/F 1 April 2024	859,110	434,984	187,503	24,903	721,115	2,227,615
Deficit for the year	-	-	-	-	(39,879)	(39,879)
Transfer to/(from) General Reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfer to/(from) DEFRA Revenue Reserve	-	-	140,000	-	(140,000)	-
Utilised		(492)	(110,455)	-	108,969	(1,978)
Fixed asset movement:						
Additions	84,426	(84,426)		-	-	-
Disposals	(3,520)	3,520		-	-	-
Revaluations	-	-		-	-	-
Depreciation	(68,772)	68,772		-	-	-
Adjustment on disposal	3,520	(3,520)		-	-	-
C/F 31 March 2025	874,764	418,838	217,048	24,903	650,205	2,185,758

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

8. CONSOLIDATED CASH FLOW STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

		2024-2025	2023-2024
	Notes	£	£
<i>Expenditure</i>			
Cash paid to and on behalf of employees		(813,845)	(714,245)
Other operating costs		(238,035)	(209,636)
		(1,051,880)	(923,881)
<i>Income</i>			
Local Authority Precept/Levy (includes early payment for following year)		1,289,101	882,879
Grant income		140,000	50,000
Insurance Claim		-	1,255
Cash received for goods and services		83,520	107,675
Net Cash In/(Out)flow from Revenue Activities	8.1	460,741	117,928
<i>Servicing of Finance</i>			
Interest Received		40,635	25,277
<i>Capital Activities</i>			
<i>Expenditure</i>			
Purchase of fixed assets (including AUC)		(84,428)	(181,004)
<i>Income</i>			
Proceeds from sale of fixed assets (Patrol vessel/van)		-	28,785
Net in/(de)crease in cash	8.1	416,948	(9,014)
		2024-2025	2023-2024
		£	£
<i>8.1 Reconciliation</i>			
General Fund Surplus/(Deficit)		(70,908)	(284,701)
Interest Received		(40,635)	(25,277)
Revaluations of fixed assets		-	23,212
Disposal of fixed assets		3,520	143,917
Adjustment on disposal		(3,520)	(128,623)
Net proceeds from sales of fixed assets		-	(28,785)
Depreciation		68,772	43,317
Sundry Debtors		109,236	206,865
Sundry Creditors		365,224	(278,403)
Movement on other Reserves		29,052	446,406
Cash movement		460,741	117,928
<i>Reconciliation</i>			
Balance brought forward 1 April		1,599,153	1,608,167
Balance carried forward 31 March		2,016,101	1,599,153
		416,948	(9,014)

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

9. POOLE HARBOUR FISHERY ORDER 2015

The Authority manage aquaculture activity within a defined area of Poole Harbour under [The Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015](#) (1346/2015). In accordance with Section 6(1) of this Order, The Authority is required to account for the relevant income and expenditure associated with its duties under this Order. The rents received include the costs associated with the reallocation of lease beds in 2020 (Tranche 2) for the period 2020-2025, as well as annual costs associated with the management under this Order. During 2023-2025 additional costs were incurred in conjunction with the renewal of lease beds (Tranche 3) for the forthcoming period 2025-2030. The initial costs associated with the reallocation of lease beds were incurred in 2020 when the previous Tranche 1 (2015-2020) expired, and were written off over a 5 year period. This model of cost recovery is replicated for both Tranche 2 (2020-2025) and Tranche 3 (2025-2030) where associated costs are written off over the period of the lease.

The balance for the Poole Order is held within the Authority's General Reserve. In the year to 31st March 2025, £54,438 (2023-2024: £26,252) of this balance was used to account for work delivered in accordance with required duties under this Order, leaving £14,132 ringfenced for legal costs/other expenses and £40,000 for a year's total costs associated with the employment of a full time Project Officer.

	2024-2025	2023-2024
<i>Expenditure</i>	£	£
Employee Costs	55,409	59,060
Legal costs	6,000	6,000
Transfer to General Reserve	-	4,144
TOTAL	61,409	69,204
<i>Income</i>		
Rents	35,460	30,494
Net Income/(Expenditure)	(25,949)	(38,710)
<i>Balances</i>		
B/F 1 April	80,081	118,791
Net Income for the year	(25,949)	(38,710)
C/F 31 March	54,132	80,081

SOUTHERN IFCA ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

Report by The CEO

A. Purpose

To receive the Annual Report for the year April 2024 to March 2025, in accordance with paragraph (178) of The Marine and Coastal Access Act, 2009.

B. Recommendations

- a) That Members consider and provide comment on the draft Annual Report.
- b) That Members approve the Annual Report for submission to the Secretary of State.

C. Annex

Southern IFCA Draft Annual Report 2024-2025

1.0 Background

Paragraph (178) of The Marine and Coastal Access Act, 2009 under the title 'Annual Report' requires that:

- as soon as is reasonably practicable after the end of each financial year, every IFCA Authority must prepare a report on its activities in that year.
- a report under this section must be in such form and contain such information as the Secretary of State may require.
- a report under this section must be published in such manner as the Secretary of State may require.
- the IFCA must send a copy of the report to the Secretary of State.



Annual Report 2024 to 2025

**Presented to the Secretary of State pursuant to Section
178 of the Marine & Coastal Access Act 2009**

Prepared by the CEO, Pia Bateman

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Executive Narrative

The Chairman of the Authority

(to add)

Cllr. Paul Fuller, Chairman

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Fuller", with a horizontal line underneath.

The Chief Executive Officer

Building on the National IFCA vision of *sustainable seas, thriving fisheries, and viable coastal industries*, Southern IFCA has this year introduced its own local vision: to **champion prosperous inshore fisheries founded upon thriving marine environments**. The case studies presented in this report illustrate how this vision is being delivered in practice. They build upon last year's focus on strengthening how we capture and communicate the breadth of Southern IFCA's work—always remaining authentic to the IFCA's core duty of achieving the right balance between social, environmental, and economic benefits to secure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries, and a viable industry.

These case studies also highlight the vital role of inshore fishers as key custodians of the marine environment and raise the profile of the industry's positive contribution. Southern IFCA has continued to champion well-managed fisheries that can thrive and co-exist within Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). In many cases, this balance has been years in the making and we remain committed to driving this work forward, recognising that effective inshore fisheries management requires ongoing innovation to ensure that symbiotic management approaches continue to achieve dual and multipurpose outputs.

Collaboration—with both industry and partners—has remained at the heart of our work this year. Of note, our review of Black Seabream has seen the concept of 'co-development' move from theory to practice. At the same time, industry volunteers have played a central role in developing improved understandings of Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM) in inshore fisheries. Our REM pilot projects, funded by Southern IFCA, are exploring ways in which inshore fisheries management can remain adaptable and bespoke to changing circumstances, while enabling the fleet to evidence how fishing practice can be better understood at higher resolutions. We thank the community for its continued investment in these key areas, recognising that successful fisheries and conservation management is best achieved through collaboration and shared knowledge.

Highlights of 2024–25 include:

- **Research and Evidence:** Completion of stock assessments and data collection programmes for whelks, bivalves, scallops, oysters, and juvenile fish, building robust datasets to inform both district management and national Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs).
- **Management Interventions:** Significant progress was made on major regulatory developments which remain relevant in supporting the Government's advance towards protection of 30% of the global ocean by 2030, realised domestically via enhancement of protection for Marine Protected Areas:
 - The Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw remained with the MMO and Defra undertaking quality assurance in line with due process. The ratification of the Byelaw will see an increase in district wide closures for BTFG from 25.5% (696.3km²) to 27.2% (743.1km²).
 - The Shore Gathering Byelaw was submitted to the MMO in December 2024. Ratification of this Byelaw will see 42.8km² of the District managed under spatial closures which will cover 24.2% of SPAs, 32.4% of SACs and 16.1% of MCZs, in total covering 23.1% of the relevant MPAs in the District.
 - Additionally work has continued to advance in relation to Black Sea Bream management, with the exploration of a Shared Principles Model to supplement existing protections across three Dorset MCZs.
- **Compliance and Enforcement:** Introduction of FPV Vigilant in October 2024 and expanded use of drones for compliance monitoring. A successful prosecution relating to the retention of undersized black seabream demonstrates our ongoing commitment to sustainable fisheries.
- **Community and Stakeholder Engagement:** Launch of Community Drop-In Surgeries, creating informal opportunities to meet fishers and the wider community to discuss matters of local and collective importance, strengthening our priorities moving forward.
- **National and Regional Partnerships:** Continued investment in partnerships with Defra, neighbouring IFCAs, MMO, and academic organisations. Contributions to high-profile initiatives such as the National IFCA REM Strategy and Fisheries Industry Science Partnerships underscore the value of strong collaborative foundations.
- **Business Services and Governance:** Financial stability was maintained through levies from six constituent councils and Defra project funding. Governance has been modernised with the introduction of a digital permit system, streamlined HR platforms, and enhanced Member engagement through briefings,

guest speakers, and training. Member attendance and participation across committees and working groups has remained excellent, ensuring balanced, representative decision-making.

As I reflect on the breadth of this Annual Report, I am struck by the achievements of our team of 16, working alongside the 21 dedicated Members of the Authority. Together, they have delivered not only the significant body of work captured here but have also continued to evolve and strengthen inshore fisheries management. This reflects the strength of an established and effective regional co-management model—well placed to support and inform national initiatives. I am immensely proud of the team and deeply grateful to the Members for their expertise, commitment, and guidance. I hope readers will recognise the value of the work Southern IFCA is striving to deliver: securing the balance where a thriving, sustainable inshore fishing industry can flourish alongside the achievement of vital conservation objectives.

Pia Bateman, Chief Executive Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of stylized, overlapping loops and a long, sweeping underline.

1.0 Background to Annual Report

Under Section 178 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009) Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCA's) are required to produce an Annual Report, which provides an account of the work delivered during the previous reporting year. This report must be sent to the Secretary of State annually following the end of the financial year.

1.1 The IFCA Model - National

A 'golden thread' demonstrates the connection between IFCA aims and objectives on a national stage (Vision, High Level Objective and Success Criterion) with operational delivery at a district level (Southern IFCA Annual Strategy and Team Plans).

1.1.1 National IFCA Vision

*“IFCAs will lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment & inshore fisheries, by successfully securing the right **balance** between **social, environmental & economic** benefits to ensure **healthy seas, sustainable fisheries & a viable industry**”*

1.1.2 National IFCA High Level Objectives & Success Criterion

High-Level Objectives and Success Criterion (Table 1) were developed nationally to support attainment of the IFCA Vision and to reflect the developing programme of work delivered by IFCA's nationally and to demonstrate the IFCA's contribution to the delivery of the UK Marine Policy Statement. More detail can be found in Annex 1.

IFCA High Level Objectives	IFCA Success Criteria
Achieving a sustainable marine economy	IFCAs are recognised and heard, balancing the economic needs of the fishery whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders.
Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society	IFCAs implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime.
Using sound science responsibly	IFCAs use evidence based and appropriate measures to manage the sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources and deliver marine environmental protection within their districts.
Living within environmental limits	IFCAs have appropriate governance in place and staff are trained and professional.
Promoting good governance	IFCAs make the use of evidence to deliver their objectives

1.2 Southern IFCA – Local

1.2.1 Southern IFCA Vision 2024-2025

Building upon and with reference to the National IFCA Vision, Southern IFCA developed its own local vision in 2024-2025, to:

*“ champion **prosperous**
inshore fisheries founded upon **thriving marine environments**”*

This local Southern IFCA vision recognises the symbiotic relationship which exists when well managed inshore fisheries reap environmental and socioeconomic benefit.

1.2.2 Southern IFCA Key Themes 2024-2025

In championing these reciprocal relationships, Southern set out to continue to draw upon two key themes throughout 2024-2025 which were embedded and threaded through all of Southern IFCA’s work which, as captured within and central to the wider IFCA model, are essential components to facilitate the delivery of the Southern IFA vision: **industry collaboration** and **partnership working**.

1.3 Measuring Success: Annual Reporting Metrics



This Annual Report provides an overview of how Southern IFCA have performed in its delivery of its Annual Plan priorities for the period **April 2024 to March 2025**, via achievement of, or contribution to the following **reporting metrics**:

- ✓ The **Southern IFCA Vision**
- ✓ The Southern IFCA **Key Themes: industry collaboration** and **partnership working**

In addition, and engrained in the delivery of Southern IFCA’s Core Functions across Research & Policy, Compliance & Enforcement and Business Services, this Annual Report will demonstrate where work has aligned with:

- ✓ the IFCA High Level Objectives via **National IFCA Success Criteria**.
- ✓ **the Eight Fisheries Objectives**, as set out in the Fisheries Act 2020, where IFCA’s are required to have regard to the Objectives in delivery of function.
- ✓ where Southern IFCA have **supported Defra in the delivery of additional and specific functions**, which includes MPA work, further supporting achievement of Government targets set out in the **Environment Improvement Plan 2023**, frontrunner **FMPs** and **Marine Consents**.

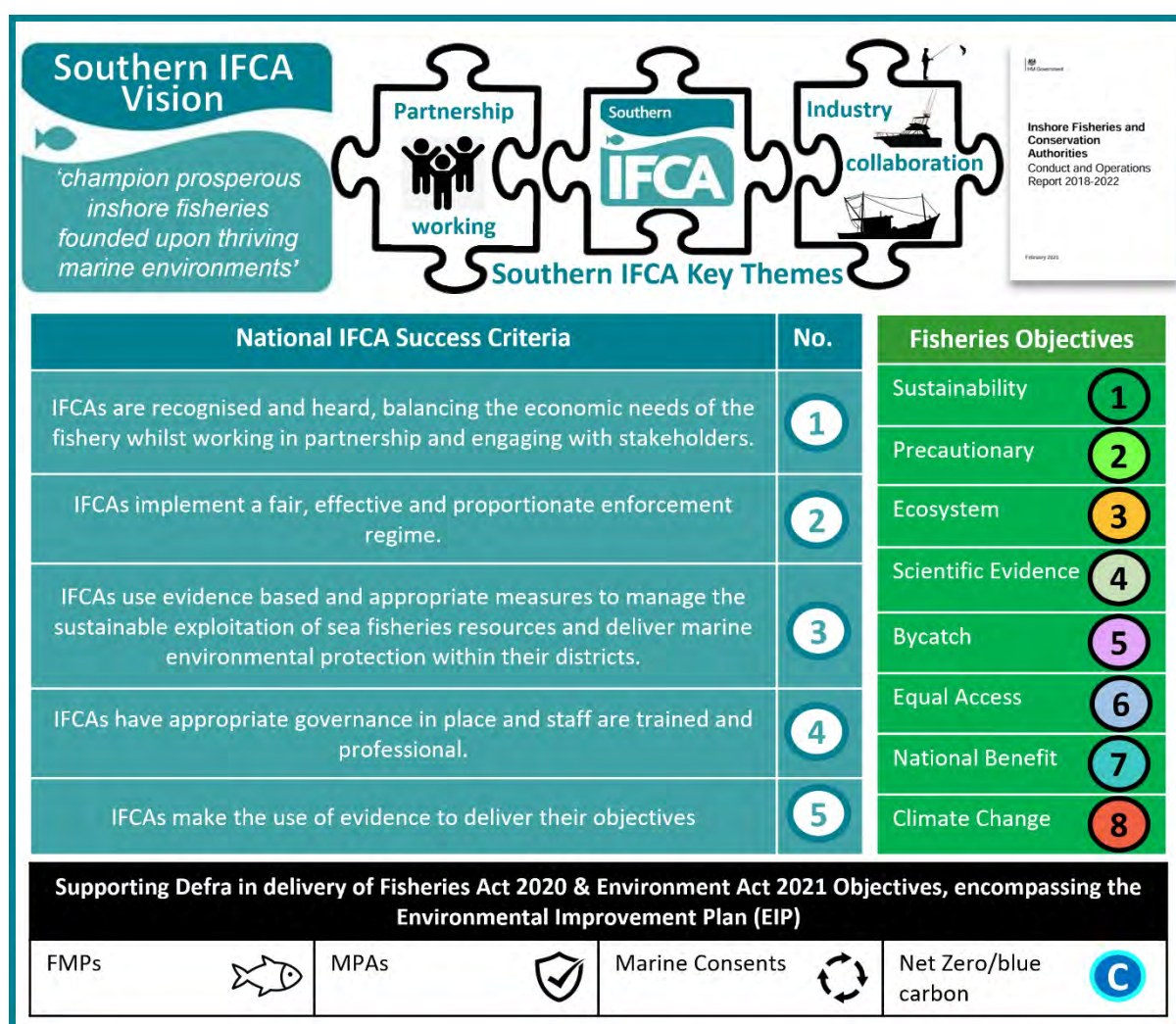
- ✓ the **UK Net Zero Strategy**, via identification and instigation of changes in operations in order to minimise and reduce emissions.

In addition, following publication of the **2018-2023 IFCA Compliance & Operations Report** in March 2025, this Annual Report will demonstrate where Southern IFCA continue to deliver against the recommendations specified within the above named report.

In delivering the above reporting metrics, Southern IFCA are complying with, and demonstrating their **'Biodiversity Duty'**; a requirement upon all public authorities in accordance with the Environment Act 2021, to consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England. This duty is intrinsically interweaved into the work that Southern IFCA deliver and have committed to review annually.

1.3.1 Reporting Metric Symbols

The symbols below are used throughout this report to denote where contributions or achievements to the above reporting metrics have been made between the 1st April 2024 and the 31st March 2025.



2.0 Annual Report 2024-2025: Delivering Southern IFCAs Key Themes

2.1 Industry Collaboration

2.1.1 Co-Designing Black Sea Bream Management



During the year the Authority has worked closely with all relevant fishing sectors, via a staged approach to begin the co-developing and co-designing of draft shared principles of management, to be considered as one of the management tools relevant to the black seabream fisheries in three Dorset MPAs.

Following two Member Working Groups, where the Drivers and Headline Objectives to underpin the shared principles were determined, a number of discussion areas were taken forward to the stakeholder community for consideration at an Industry Workshop.

The Industry Workshop was attended by all key representatives from the commercial, charter and recreational sectors, covering all relevant gear types and those who operate within or adjacent to the relevant MPAs. This included 12 commercial representatives and 10 recreational/charter vessel representatives. Attendees were provided with a contextual underpinning before being divided into three tables; each with mixed representation across the three sectors, with a facilitator on each table.

Attendees were invited to comment on the proposed discussion areas and invited to put forward any industry-informed proposals. All feedback and input was captured by facilitators and then shared collectively. It became quickly apparent that there was a lot of consistency in comments and suggestions across the three tables and different sectors. Attendees commented that they had found the Industry Workshop useful and to have all sectors in the meeting engaging together and sharing ideas had been very beneficial.

The outputs from both the Member Working Groups and the Industry Workshop were taken forward to be reviewed by officers as part of a feasibility exercise, to help to support and inform a further Authority Working Group, where finalised draft shared principles were agreed to be taken to wider public consultation in spring 2025.

Further information regarding this area of work can be found in Section 3.3.3.

2.1.2 Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM)



This year Southern IFCA have been continuing to explore the use of REM and AI in inshore fisheries, facilitated by industry volunteers, funded by Southern IFCA and in close collaboration with Devon & Severn IFCA.

Building on an earlier installation phase during the previous reporting year, the focus this year has been on the continued development and feasibility of small scale pilot trials in three of the districts priority fisheries:

1. **Bottom towed fishing gear (vessels under 12m).** In Partnership with Devon and Severn IFCA REM devices have been installed on two vessels operating in Lyme Bay. The devices allow detection of bottom towed gear being used within MPAs. This year Southern IFCA continued to work with the owner and master on one the trawlers in Lyme Bay, installing additional sensors on the trawl doors to determine whether the gear is inboard or in the water. This work has involved port visits and working directly on the volunteer vessel. Additional cameras overlooking the fish pound have also been installed in order to monitor bycatch to improve information on stocks demonstrating the many benefits for the marine scientific community and help to improve the evidence base for Skates and Rays Fisheries Management Plan.
2. **Inshore netting** (vessels under 12m) (Harbour and Estuarine areas of Southampton and Christchurch). The monitoring and control plan within the Net Fishing Byelaw includes Salmonid management within MPAs. Netting vessels may have interactions with Salmonids and currently relies on self-reporting. The use of AI and REM has the potential to automate the process to monitor if interactions between salmonids and netting vessels are occurring. This year, Southern IFCA fitted a under 12m vessel with REM that operates from West Bay, the vessel uses different types of static gear including whelk pots and nets, although the vessel does not fish in the target area (Harbour and Estuarine areas of Southampton and Christchurch – unable to secure industry volunteers), the vessel does net in the Lyme Bay Net Restriction area, a well evidenced migratory salmonid transit route. In this area there is an all year round three metre surface headline depth restriction for the protection of transiting salmonids. The REM fitted on this vessel has dual purpose in the it can also be used to monitor gear marking requirements under the Net Fishing Byelaw.
3. **Pot fishing** (vessels under 12m). The Pot Fishing Byelaw, currently awaiting ratification, introduces pot limits. AI has the potential to count strings of pots as they are hauled onto a vessel, This system could also be used in conjunction with sensors to help determine the start and end of a string. This process would allow for the pot limits to be enforced. During this reporting year, Southern IFCA has fitted an under 12m vessel with REM that operates from West Bay, the vessel uses different types of static gear including whelk and crab/lobster pots, to date the REM (cameras) have been installed and video capture has started to be analysed. This work is now looking ahead to view the testing of two sensors on a string of whelk pots. This volunteer vessel also has assisted in the Southern IFCA Whelk populations survey to which REM was used to obtain positional data remotely.

2.2 Partnership Working

2.2.1 Working with other regulators

The Southern IFCA CET work in partnership with a number of other organisations, Including law enforcement agencies and local authorities. Section 174 of the MaCAA places a 'duty of co-operation' on an IFCA to work with its adjoining IFCA districts and any other public authority who exercises regulatory functions relating to the sea.



Home Office & International Fisheries C&E Training

Following receipt of a request from the Home Office, the CET worked with the National Wildlife Crime Unit to deliver training to overseas operatives on Environmental Security, as part of a Government to Government assistance programme coordinated by the UK Government.

Defra & MMO C&E Visit

In January, Southern IFCA hosted a meeting with the MMO Director of Operations, Head of Regulatory Assurance and Defra's Compliance & Enforcement National Lead to discuss opportunities and mechanisms through which the three organisations can continue to build upon their existing positive working relationships. The focus of the meeting was on joint working and chartering opportunities.

Joint Patrols with other regulators

During the reporting year the following joint patrols were undertaken with the following regulatory bodies operating in the inshore marine environment:



Regulator	What & Why
Border Force	Poole (land)
Dorset Police	Boscombe & Bournemouth pier (land)
BCP EHOs	Lytchett Bay, handgathering (land)
MMO South Marine Team	Poole Harbour net fisheries (at sea)
MMO Senior Management Team	Solent, gear compliance (at sea)
Hampshire Police & Fareham EHOs	Hill Head, handgathering (land)
Fareham EHOs	Hill Head, handgathering (land)
Kings Harbour Master	Scallop vessels fishing in main channel, Portsmouth (at sea)
MMO Operations Team	4 day patrol on MMO offshore patrol vessel out to 12nm covering 80% of district priorities

MMO & Catch App

Southern IFCA have continued to work with the MMO to share Southern IFCA catch returns as part of assurance activities relating to under 10 metre catch recording.

MMO & CLUE

During the year Southern IFCA have continued to work with the MMO to aid in facilitating a smooth transition to a new national intelligence system, with representatives from the CET attending weekly update meetings to help inform discussions, identify areas of possible troubleshooting, help to develop the system and to support operational officers in their use of the system.

The meetings further provided an opportunity to communicate with IFCA colleagues across the country, as well as the MMO Intelligence Team, working together to ensure that the system under development remains fit for purpose. One key development made in-year were dashboard improvements, such enhancements allow officers to view intelligence relevant to neighbouring IFCA districts, alongside relevant MMO management areas. Additionally improvements were also made to the outcomes register, to facilitate joint access to higher resolution information relating to investigations and sanctions.

Southern IFCA worked with the MMO as the Single Point of Contact, primarily responsible for supporting and facilitating communications and resolving issues between IFCAs nationally and the MMO during the CLUE database development and operational roll out. Additionally, the Southern IFCA SPOC informed ongoing matters regarding compliance and standardisation, SOP management, training needs and best use guidance. Collectively this work has helped to improve the coordination of enforcement priorities across both organisations.

MMO & National Accreditations

The objectives of an SFJ Award Level 3 Certificate in Fisheries and Marine Enforcement (National Accreditation Programme) are to provide learners with the knowledge and skills to carry out the role of a warranted MEO or IFCO. This approach forges consistency in operation across regulatory organisations and is completed through a variety of assessment methods which include written assignments, discussions, Q&A and observations. This ensures that a full range of criteria is being met across the units which demonstrates the learner's knowledge and ability in role of an Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Officer.

The qualification covers:

- UK and EU legislation governing a wide range of marine activities
- The powers and jurisdiction of the MEO/IFCO function
- The procedures to be followed when carrying out inspections of vessels, vehicles or premises for compliance with UK and EU marine environmental legislation,
The procedures and legislative requirements when conducting fisheries and marine enforcement investigation

Southern IFCA have continued to work closely with the MMO on National Accreditations during the reporting year, with one IFCO, in year progressing through the qualification to meet the required standard to be awarded this qualification.

Environmental Health Officers & Shellfish Sampling

Southern IFCA have continued to facilitate BCP Council and the FSA with Shellfish classification and water sampling, securing in-year a 5 year contract with BCP Council to provide a marine platform and appropriate staff resource to carry out this monthly work, across 10 sample sites in Poole Harbour. Mussel samples are destined for the UKHSA laboratory for analysis, with biotoxin water and shellfish samples collected and sent to CEFAS for testing.

The classification samples are tested for *Escherichia coli* (E. coli), with the test results determining the classification for the various species of shellfish that are harvested within the designated shellfish classification zones. Poole Harbour contains the following shellfish classification zones: Brands Bay, Poole Harbour North, Rockley, Southwest Brownsea Island, Wareham Channel, Whiteley Lake, Wych Lake, the West Brownsea Relay Area and the South Deep Relay Area.

'A' classification means that the shellfish within that zone can be harvested direct for human consumption.
'B' Classified shellfish can be supplied for human consumption after either purification in an approved

establishment, relaying for at least one month in a classified Class A relaying area, or after an approved heat treatment.

2.2.2 Working with National IFCAs

National IFCA Enforcement Training

Southern IFCA continue to support the development and delivery of the National IFCA Enforcement Course in Brixham via provision of an experienced course facilitator. This course is designed to provide enforcement officers across the 10 IFCAs with a greater understanding of the IFCA function. The course has a particular focus on the Marine & Coastal Access Act, IFCO powers, provision of basic fish identification, gear technologies, health and safety matters, both at sea and in port, investigatory skills and case file management.

2.2.3 Working with neighbouring IFCAs

Devon & Severn IFCA: REM & AI

The Joint Fisheries Statement provides detail on how the UK authorities including IFCAs will deliver on the eight objectives set out in the Fisheries Act 2020. This includes exploring the use of technologies such as REM for scientific purposes and to aid the sustainable management and control of fisheries. It also commits the fisheries policy authorities to working with the fishing industry and interested organisations to develop and implement effective fisheries management. Technological monitoring solutions for scientific research and fisheries management are also the international direction of travel and are part of a wider trend towards digital transformation.

Southern IFCA are piloting how REM and AI could be deployed and utilised in three key fisheries in the inshore waters. Working closely with Devon and Severn IFCA, as well as other IFCAs to help inform a National IFCA Strategy.

Southern IFCAs ambition is for the REM and AI pilot project is to inform national discussions and further the outcomes and development of the FMPs, seeking novel low-cost initiative solutions to both evidence collation and control and enforcement, working with and collaborating with other IFCAs, Defra and the Fishing Industry.

Sussex IFCA: 167 Agreement

In year, the Authority approved the ten year renewal of a MaCAA Section 167 Agreement with Sussex IFCA which allows for the continued delegation of IFCA Byelaw making powers to Sussex IFCA for a relevant area of Chichester Harbour. The previous agreement, due to expire on the 30th July 2024 required Secretary of State approval in May 2024. The ratified agreement was confirmed on the 10th December 2024, with the pre-election period sighted as the reason for the delay. During the hiatus the relevant area was monitored closely by Sussex and Southern IFCAs. The Section 167 agreement is now in place for a further 10 years.

Devon & Severn IFCA: Drone Surveys

Southern IFCA collaborated with Devon and Severn IFCA to carry out a trial drone survey on the 6th of August 2024. The trial aimed to collect footage and map mussel beds to investigate the feasibility of using a drone to carry out future bivalve monitoring surveys.

This collaborative work allowed Officers to explore the benefits and challenges of drones use for intertidal survey work. The benefits identified included increased capability in accessing hard to reach or high-risk sites such as soft sediments, increasing the area of coverage for a survey and collecting survey data with reduced resource requirements compared to traditional survey techniques. Challenges were related to the dependence of drone operations on weather conditions, these being in some cases more restrictive than for boat or foot-based survey work and the costs associated with analysis of resulting footage. The

requirement for stitching software to appropriately analyse the data is a significant limitation found as part of the exploratory work.

2.2.4 Working with Academic Institutes

Plymouth University: Angling for Sustainability FISP

The Angling for Sustainability Fisheries Industry Science Partnership (FISP) Project, of which Southern IFCA was a Project Partner, concluded at the end of March 2025. During the 2024/25 year, Southern IFCA attended monthly project group meetings hosted by the University of Plymouth, participating in the planning, delivery and engagement aspects of the project and provided expert input on fisheries management related to black seabream and elasmobranch species.

Additionally, Southern IFCA took part in eight days of tagging surveys for black seabream and elasmobranch species in the summer of 2024. Southern IFCA's in-kind contribution to the project as a Project Partner was initially intended to be, in part, through the provision of logistical support for receiver retrieval and data downloads. However, it was agreed with the University of Plymouth that the involvement of Officers would be more effective if redirected toward supporting tagging surveys, therefore increased resource in this area was delivered under the project in the 2024/25 year.

Southern IFCA facilitated engagement on the project through the Hampshire, Dorset and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group in September 2024 and attended three project stakeholder workshop events across the District, engaging with stakeholders on the project and relevance to fisheries management for relevant species, which included a cameo role in the project video. Southern IFCA presented at the final project Conference in early 2025, speaking on black seabream management in a local context, reflecting how the outcomes of the project were providing additional evidence to support understandings of sustainable and proportionate approaches to management for black seabream as a designated species within three Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) in the District.

For further information please see: [Angling for Sustainability Non-Technical Summary](#) and [Angling for Sustainability Project Video](#).

Plymouth University: Fin Vision FISP

The Fin Vision FISP Project, of which Southern IFCA was a Project Partner, concluded at the end of March 2025. During the 2024/25 year, Southern IFCA facilitated the attendance of Fin Vision researchers in June and October 2024 on the Juvenile Fish Surveys in the District, to facilitate exploratory work relating to the use of project camera equipment in observing juvenile fish and to provide the opportunity for the outputs from the camera system to be compared to data collected using the more traditional seine net method employed in the Southern IFCA surveys.

Officers attended monthly project meetings hosted by the University of Plymouth, related to the planning and progression of the project and helped promote citizen science aspects of the project such as the Zooniverse tool, where anyone can help identify the presence of fish species within project video footage, with the District's angling community. Towards the end of the project, Southern IFCA provided support to an online stakeholder workshop, acting as facilitators for round table discussions as well as attending a more wide-reaching online workshop discussing the outcomes of the project.

For further information please see: [FinVision - University of Plymouth](#) and [FinVision | Zooniverse - People-powered research](#).



3.0 Delivering Southern IFCA's Core Functions: Research & Policy

3.1 Data Collection Programme

3.1.1 Permit Fisheries Data Collection



Net Fishing Byelaw (NFB)

Catch reporting requirements under all three Net Fishing Permit Areas require Permit Holders to report the occurrence of any dead salmonids detected in a net, or in the event of an interaction between a net and a salmonid. This data feeds into the On-Site Monitoring Programme, which sit under the NFB M&CP, the outputs of which are linked to control mechanisms which are activated in the event that thresholds are reached.

For Year 1 of the NFB Permits (valid until 28th February 2024), no reported salmonid mortality occurred. There were two reported salmonid interactions, both involving sea trout in Christchurch Harbour; in both instances fish were in good condition and returned. As no trigger levels were reached, the control mechanisms were not activated during the reporting year.

Poole Harbour Dredge Permit (PHDP) Byelaw

Permit Holders are required to submit monthly catch returns detailing, for each day of the month, species harvested & quantities, catch location, fishing duration and buyer information. Commonly harvested species include Manila clam, common cockle, American Hard-Shelled Clam and native clam. Catch return data is used to calculate Landings Per Unit Effort (LPUE) as kg/day, which provides an indication on the abundance and distribution of target species across Poole Harbour.

In year, the catch data from the fishery indicated that LPUE for Manila clam was lower when compared to previous seasons. Subsequently, LPUE analysis was carried out on a monthly basis, with outcomes reported at the [August 2024](#) TAC and [November 2024](#) TAC, which indicated that LPUE was lower than the period 2020-2023 but remained consistent with levels seen between 2016-2019.

During the 2024/25 year, a M&CP was developed and designed which introduced a monitoring mechanism for Manila clam, using catch data as one of the monitoring variables under an On-Site Monitoring Programme and an In-Season Monitoring Programme. The data is used to assess the sustainability of the Manila clam fishery against Threshold Trigger Levels which, if reached, initiate Control Mechanisms to consider additional management to support a sustainable fishery.

For further information please see Section 3.4.2.

Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw (SDPB)

SDPB Permit Holders are required to provide monthly catch returns detailing species caught & quantities, duration fished, location, and number of tows for each of the days fished during that month. The species most commonly reported under this catch data are King scallop and Manila clam.

The catch data is used to monitor trends in the quantities of each species removed from the fishery, allowing comparison with Southern IFCA run stock surveys to monitor the state of commercially important populations.

During the 2024/25 year, the spatial resolution of reporting in the King scallop fishery was refined to provide sub-reporting areas within the main BMA used by this fishery (BMA 3) in order to improve the resolution at which catch data can be analysed against outputs from the Solent Scallop Survey. This

update sat alongside refinements to the design of the Solent Scallop Survey to best align survey sites with commercial fishing activity, cumulatively aiming to give a more detailed picture of fishing effort and stock levels to inform sustainable management under the SDPB. In the event that a review of management under the SDPB is required, data from Permit Holders forms one element of scientific and survey data used to inform the review.

For the 2024/25 season, for the two main commercial species, data indicated that average catch rates for King scallop (kg/hour/vessel) had significantly increased compared to the 2021/22 and 2022/23 seasons but decreased in comparison to the 2023/24 season. Data for Manila clam showed a significant increase in average catch rates for Manila clam (kg/hour/vessel) in comparison to the 2021/22 and 2024/25 seasons. Overall the data indicated that both stocks appeared to remain stable under current management.

Catch data reports for the SDPB fishery can be found [here](#).

Wrasse Fishery Data Collection

Wrasse Fishery Guidance requests that fishers submit monthly catch returns detailing the quantities of species caught for ballan, corkwing, goldsinny and rock cook wrasse species, the fishing method, fishing locations and fishing effort. In year, fisher submitted catch data is used to analyse changes in LPUE and compare this to previous years in addition to a review of the fishery's performance against set monitoring variables as listed in the Southern IFCA Studland to Portland SAC M&CP. Accordingly, a [Live Wrasse Fishery Monitoring and Control Report 2024](#) was presented to the Authority, which reported that no fishing had taken place within the Studland to Portland SAC during the relevant season.

Drift Net Fishery Research Project

During 2024, Southern IFCA explored ongoing evidence collection under a proposed research project to improve understanding of potential interactions between drift nets and salmonids in a non-targeted fishery. Southern IFCA engaged with Net Permit Holders on the implementation of this project but were unable to commence the project due to unresolvable factors relating to the collection of evidence. Southern IFCA will continue to explore the most appropriate method of approaching any further evidence collection in Year 2 of the NFB Permits (1st Mar 25 – 31st Mar 26).

3.2 Stock Assessment and Surveys

3.2.1 Whelk Population Survey



This survey assesses the distribution and abundance of common whelk across the Southern IFCA District. Samples sites for the 2024 survey included Weymouth Bay, Poole Bay and the Solent. The sampling site at Lyme Bay was not sampled during 2024 due to logistical difficulties with participating fishing vessels.

The survey involves collaboration with commercial fishers who collect samples of whelk using a standardised number of pots deployed independently, and collaboration with Bournemouth University, who provide access to lab facilities for sample analysis. Whelk samples are analysed to provide CPUE data for different size classes and length frequency distribution.

Annual sampling supports the development of a time-series dataset and enables the assessment of stock distribution, abundance, and size trends across the District. This allows for the establishment of a robust evidence base to help address several key elements of whelk management:

- To evaluate the effectiveness of future management strategies within the Southern IFCA District under the Pot Fishing Byelaw
- To contribute to addressing evidence gaps identified in the Whelk FMP, with particular relevance to the definition of regional stock boundaries, MCRS and the effectiveness of different types of management measures
- To understand and provide information on potential impacts of future whelk management delivered at a national, regional or stock boundary level on local fisheries within the District.

Data collection for 2024 was carried out between April and July with the 2024 report available [here](#). The 2024 dataset builds upon the baseline data obtained during the inaugural survey in 2023. Findings indicated that features of whelk populations vary across different areas of the District and may even show small subpopulation variations over small distances.

3.2.2 Poole Bivalve Survey



The Poole Harbour Bivalve Survey took place over three days in April 2024. Southern IFCA charter a vessel which is active in the PHDP fishery, which facilitates the collecting of length frequency data for all bivalve species sampled and CPUE data for individuals over and under the respective MCRS for the two most commonly harvested species, Manila clam and common cockle. Data is analysed for length frequency by sampling site and at the level of Permit Holder Catch Zones, allowing for comparisons between survey outputs and catch data supplied by Permit Holders during the previous fishing season.

The survey data contributes to a time-series dataset which looks at the populations of commercially harvested species, aiming to identify the sustainability of the population and any trends or patterns in stock changes over time. This data forms one of the evidence sources used to inform any reviews of management under the Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Byelaw (PHDPB).

Analysis of the [2024 Survey Results](#), along with time-series comparisons indicated that the harvestable populations of both Manila clam and common cockle remained stable with CPUE showing either no significant difference between years or, for common cockle, an increase in CPUE in the last two survey years. Catch levels and length frequency were also noted to remain stable.

The data obtained through the Poole Harbour Bivalve Survey forms one of the Monitoring Variables under the On-Site Monitoring Programme for the M&CP. Data from the 2025 survey will be used for the first time to assess Manila clam CPUE against defined Threshold Trigger Levels, aiming to identify if additional management intervention will be required ahead of the 2025/26 fishing season.

For more information on this area of work, please see Section 3.4.2.

3.2.3 Solent Bivalve Survey



Two separate Solent bivalve surveys were undertaken over three days in October 2024 (pre-season) and three days in March 2025 (post season). These surveys, facilitated by the chartering of an industry vessel, sampled shellfish beds in Southampton Water, Portsmouth Harbour and Langstone Harbour, collecting weight and length data for Manila clam, common cockle and American Hard-Shell clam. The presence of other bivalves, such as native oyster and Pacific oyster were also recorded. The data collected was used to determine CPUE and length-frequency for relevant shellfish populations in these areas, with the data contributing to a time-series dataset allowing for the identification of trends in stock data and an assessment of the sustainability of the fishery.

This data forms one of the evidence sources used to inform any reviews of management under the SDPB.

The 2024 survey report is available [here](#) concluded that the current fishing effort in the SDPB fishery is not having a significant impact on the stock levels, and that the trends observed could be related to the influence of environmental variables. Accordingly, it was determined that the SDPB management measures would not require review.

3.2.4 Solent Scallop Survey



Three separate Solent Scallop Surveys (1 x post fishing season closing: April 2024, 1 x pre- season opening: September 2024 and 1 x mid-season: February 2025) were undertaken with each running for 2-3 days using a commercial fishing vessel based out of a local port, with the aim of sampling the King scallop population in the Solent, collecting weight and length data which is used to determine CPUE and length-frequency with data contributing to a time-series dataset (3 years of consecutive data collection to date).

The 2024 survey [report](#) demonstrated a pattern of stock changes in relation to the fishing season which would be expected, with an overall decrease in CPUE during the fishing season and then an increase in CPUE during the period when the fishery is closed, demonstrating population recovery. The fishery appears to remain stable to fishing pressure and indicates current management remains suitable to support a sustainable fishery, which includes additional effort controls introduced in 2023 under the Solent Dredge Category A Permit.

The Mid-Season survey introduced the pilot of new survey methodologies following consideration of how to align Southern IFCA's survey with monitoring at a national level to facilitate provision of data from the Solent into national datasets to help inform the implementation of the King Scallop FMP and the addressing of identified evidence gaps. The new methodology includes the use of a Queen scallop dredge alongside the standard dredge type used in the fishery, aiming to provide a greater range of size classes in samples, and refinement of survey areas to align with areas of greatest use by the fishery. The new methodology was successfully delivered in the February 2024 survey and will continue to be used in future surveys.

3.2.5 Solent Oyster Survey



The biennial Solent Oyster survey took place over three days in July 2024, facilitated by a commercial fishing vessel with a historic involvement in the Solent native oyster fishery, allowing for the use of fisher knowledge and expertise to support and contextualise the survey. The survey took samples from locations throughout the north and eastern Solent, including Southampton Water, Portsmouth Harbour and Langstone Harbour.

The survey collected weight and length data for native oysters to determine CPUE and length-frequency to provide an indication of the health of the population, in addition to contributing to a time-series dataset to identify population trends. The 2024 [survey](#) saw low CPUE figures across the Solent, with the data indicating that the native oyster population continues to show a fluctuating pattern of stock abundance with the general trend being low CPUE and/or low oyster numbers, both over and under the MCRS. Based on this information, the fishery remains closed for the 2025/26 fishing season.

3.2.6 Juvenile Fish Survey



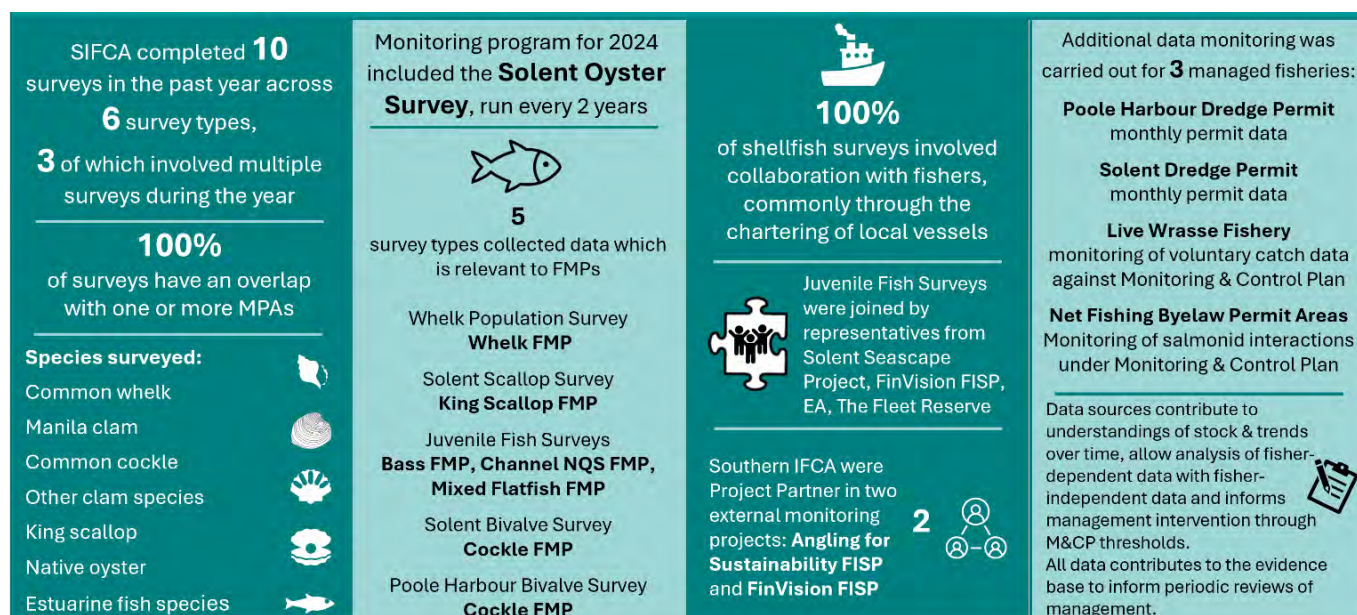
As part of the Juvenile Fish Monitoring Programme, surveys are carried out at a range of sites across the district in order to monitor the occurrence and distribution of juvenile fish species and the size frequency of species sampled. The surveys are carried out twice a year across four sites, with data added to a time-series dataset that allows any changes in fish communities to be observed.

Data from the programme contributes to understandings of the use of Essential Fish Habitats (EFH) by commercially and recreationally important fish species. As part of the Southern IFCA Inshore Netting Review, one of the objectives of the review was to enhance the environmental, socio-economic and sustainability of fisheries within the District by supporting the use of harbours and estuaries as EFH. Of the four areas currently surveyed, three are identified through the Net Fishing Byelaw as requiring management which is linked, in part, to their importance as EFH. Additionally, understandings of EFH are highlighted as an evidence gap across Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs) for fish species, with data from this survey therefore having the potential to contribute to addressing evidence gaps at a national level. The data from this programme has also been provided at the FMP planning and preparation stage for the T4 FMPs Wrasses Complex and Seabreams.

Juvenile Fish Surveys took place in June and October 2024, with the outcomes captured in a [time-series analysis](#). The report looked at total and relative species abundance, species richness and the Shannon Diversity Index for all fish species sampled. To date there are no observable long-term trends in species abundance and species richness varies between sites. For all sites sampled, a variety of fish species are utilising the estuarine habitats with bass, goby species, sand smelt and grey mullet species being the most commonly occurring.

The surveys offer opportunities to work in collaboration with research establishments and organisations with an interest in fisheries and associated management. In 2024, Southern IFCA were joined by a representative from the Solent Seascape Project, a research student from the University of Plymouth FinVision FISP Project, The EA and the Fleet Reserve team.

3.2.7 Data Collection, Stock Assessment & Survey Summary Infographic



3.3 Developing of Management Interventions

3.3.1 BTFG Review



The Bottom Towed Fishing Gear (BTFG) Byelaw 2023 was submitted to the MMO at the end of 2023 for quality assurance. During the 2024/25 year, four rounds of QA were completed with the MMO between April and September 2024. In September 2024 the byelaw package was submitted to Defra for consideration. Three rounds of QA were completed with Defra between December 2024 and March 2025. At the end of the 2024/25 year, the Defra team were completing final checks of the byelaw package before submission to the Minister's Office for ratification.

The MMO QA undertaken during this period related to minor updates to wording, style and formatting of the Byelaw and Impact Assessment with some additional comments on clarity of providing information within the Impact Assessment. Following submission of the byelaw package to Defra, the first round of Defra QA consisted of providing clarity on the spatial footprint of the new byelaw compared to the existing BTFG Byelaw 2016 and further detail on the outcomes of the Formal Consultation.

There were two new elements introduced to the byelaw process through the subsequent rounds of Defra QA which have been addressed and are now being applied to all Southern IFCA byelaw development. The first is the need to report costs to industry in the Impact Assessment as profit costs rather than revenue costs. The determination of costs using landings and catch data is defined as revenue costs, the Seafish Fleet Enquiry Tool is then used to determine, by the appropriate gear type, the profit costs with providing information on Fishing Income relative to Operating Profit. The second was the need to reference how the proposed legislation and its development has considered the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Environmental Principles Policy Statement.

3.3.2 Shore Gathering Review



Work under the Shore Gathering Review during the 2024/25 year followed an Authority Member Working Group held towards the end of the 2023/24 year where Members considered draft management measures for shore gathering activities, informed by the best available evidence (Site Specific Packages), the use of a GPS buffer for spatial management and consideration of how spatial and temporal measures would be defined in accordance with the feature-based requirements of differing MPAs. In-year, draft measures were formulated into the Shore Gathering Byelaw, supported by a Conservation Assessment Package (inclusive of HRA and MCZ Assessments for all relevant MPAs) and an Impact Assessment. The Impact Assessment was developed following a targeted engagement exercise with representatives from the relevant shore gathering activities proposed to be managed (bait digging & collection, shellfish gathering, crab tiling/collection, shrimp push netting, mechanical harvesting and seaweed harvesting). This engagement exercise was undertaken due to the lack of data available from catch records due to the nature of the activities and the large proportion of recreational participation in shore gathering.

Alongside the development of the Shore Gathering Byelaw, the Authority developed an update to the Fishing for Cockles Byelaw, in order to remove provisions related to hand gathering; in addition to a Seaweed Harvesting Code of Conduct, deemed to be an appropriate management mechanism for this activity outside of spatial management areas in the Shore Gathering Byelaw.

The progression of the development of the Byelaws through the 2024/25 year included:

- Finalisation of draft measures and supporting documents following the May 2024 TAC Meeting
- Submission of the byelaws package to NE for Formal Advice
- Consideration by the TAC of the full Byelaw Package, including Formal Advice from NE at the August 2024 TAC Meeting, where two subsequent updates were made to the Byelaw relating to ensure that the proposed management provided appropriate mitigations for the relevant MPAs.
- At the August 2024 TAC Meeting Members agreed to formally notify the Secretary of State of the intention to make the Shore Gathering Byelaw and the Fishing for Cockles (Amendment) Byelaw at the September Authority Meeting.
- The Shore Gathering and Fishing for Cockles (Amendment) Byelaw were Made at the September Authority Meeting
- A period of Formal Consultation on both byelaws was run following the September Authority Meeting, concluding on 14th November 2024
- Responses from the Formal Consultation were considered by Members at the November 2024 TAC Meeting, the December 2024 Executive Sub-Committee Meeting and the December 2024 Authority Meeting, no changes were recommended to either byelaw.
- The byelaws package was submitted to the MMO for Quality Assurance prior to confirmation by the Secretary of State in December 2024.
- The first round of QA from the MMO was received in February 2025.

The total area of the District proposed to be managed under spatial closures (permanent and seasonal) under the Shore Gathering Byelaw is 42.8km², representing 1.56% of the area of the District. For all relevant MPAs covered by the Shore Gathering Byelaw (up to the 2m contour), management will cover 24.2% of SPAs, 32.4% of SACs and 16.1% of MCZs, in total covering 23.1% of the relevant MPAs¹ in the District.

Further information and all documentation can be found [here](#).

3.3.3.Black Sea Bream Review



Background pre-April 2024:

TAC Members agreed, in February 2024 the following General, Evidence and Spatial Principles to help facilitate the progression of management considerations for BSB across 3 Dorset MCZs:

(1) 'further' will be defined as "to take to a greater degree or a more advanced stage" in line with Oxford English Dictionary definition.

(2) The best available evidence used to inform nest locations for black seabream is that provided in:

- a) The Natural England designated features layer provided to Southern IFCA in 2023
- b) Data from Cefas Project Report for NE (2021)
- c) Data from Southern IFCA side scan sonar survey of Chapman's Poole (2016)
- d) Data collected by Collins, K. side scan sonar survey (2010)

(3) Any additional evidence received after 29th January 2024 will be considered during the period of formal byelaw consultation and then (subject to byelaw ratification), in subsequent byelaw reviews, as determined under the provisions of the byelaw.

- (4) In accordance with the best available evidence, three data types are to be used to identify nest locations.
'Nest Data':

- a) individual nests (Cefas and NE data)
- b) polygon data (Southern IFCA data)
- c) nest areas of 50mx50m where nest(s) have been noted to occur (Collins, K. data)

- (5) A 10m buffer will be added to all nest locations to account for confidence in GPS accuracy. This will be referred to as a **'GPS Buffer'**.
- (6) Nest Data and GPS Buffer combined will be called **'Nest Units'**.
- (7) Three or more Nest Units existing within 320m of another will be grouped using straight lines to form **'Hotspots'**.
- (8) Collectively principles 4-7 build to provide **'Indicative Habitat Areas'**.
- (9) Management will be considered within **'Indicative Habitat Areas'**.

BSB Roadmap 2024-25: Quantification Of Impact Exercise

In order to gain an understanding of the potential impact that the introduction of no take zones across 13 IHAs could have, a 'Quantification Of Impact Exercise' was undertaken with the community. The aim of which was to understand the type and volume of fishing activity which occurs within the IHAs. In addition, this exercise considered social, economic, culture and heritage aspects of impact, as well as providing an opportunity to the explore of some of the existing self-governed mechanisms in place across some of the community to support the sustainability of the BSB fisheries. During this initial evidence gathering exercise, 23 stakeholders from the charter fleet (6), RSA community (4) and commercial fishing sector (15) were engaged via targeted coastal engagement, with additional in person (13) and via phone (1). A review of data available online on charter vessels, data obtained from the MMO and data obtained from literature was also undertaken as part of this exercise

At the May 2024 TAC, Members received [cumulative economic assessments](#) which concluded that the introduction of no take zones across the 13 proposed IHAs had the potential to cost the Dorset community c.£1.3million over the course of one fishing season.

BSB Roadmap 2024-2025: In Year Review

The 'Quantification of Impact Exercise' instigated a three month review of BSB work undertaken to date. This process consolidated all relevant material considerations which included exploration of the mode by which the BSB had been designated by Natural England under the MaCAA 117(5) (*'...to conserve diversity due to ecological significance...area considered to be of critical importance to life cycle, where if not protected [the BSB] would be affected at population or sub-population level...and where [BSB] occur at high densities in contrast to surrounding areas*). This route of designation is unique when compared to other MPA work that Southern IFCA have undertaken to date; whereby feature based management of designated species or habitats has been developed following NE designation in accordance with MaCAA 117(4): where species or habitats are rare or threatened due to limited numbers or limited locations where present.

This renewed understanding, alongside consideration of all other relevant material considerations, to include the BSB Conservation Objectives, the best available evidence, the Authority's legal duties,

improved understandings of site relevant fishing activity and consideration of how existing management was already providing protections to the BSB, provided the Members at the subsequent Working Group with wider contextual understandings required to take forward to inform and decision making processes.

Entering the Co-Development Phase:

(1) Member Working Group: Exploring Draft Principles

In August 2024 a Member Working Group was held where Members considered whether additional management intervention was required in the BSB fishery, in addition to the protections currently afforded to the BSB under existing statutory management mechanisms across all of the MCZs, as well as MOD spatial closures relevant to the Purbeck Coast MCZ. Specifically, with regard to Southern IFCA management, under the 2016 BTFG Byelaw where 63% of the 3 MCZs are closed to BTFG, which under the proposed BTFG 2023 Byelaw (awaiting SoS ratification) would see an increase to 98%. Additionally, Members considered the protections already afforded to BSB under the MCRS Byelaw. The Working Group agreed the following **Drivers** to underpin the exploration of a Shared Principles Model, to supplement the protections already in existence across the 3 x MCZs, recognising a need for consideration of additional management to:

Drivers

- (1) Improve understandings of BSB behaviours, fisheries (socioeconomic) and ecosystem management, recognising that these are currently data poor.
- (2) be proportionate in the application of precaution, complementing existing statutory measures for lower impact fisheries (adaptive management approach).
- (3) be precautionary, as despite evidence suggesting that current effort is not having an impact, this remains data poor. Additionally, potential future impact also remains unknown.

Subsequently Members drafted the following **Headline Objectives** which provide the rationale for the exploration of additional management solutions:

Headline Objectives

- (1) To ensure current and future sustainability of BSB populations for the benefit of the marine environment and all sectors
- (2) to improve understandings via data collection
- (3) to monitor and review measures (adaptive management)
- (4) include users in policy development and ongoing management interventions

Members discussed the following **Management Proposals** that they wanted to be taken forward to the stakeholder community for further discussion:

Measure	Member Management Proposal
Spatial	No take zones in IHAs during breeding season (April-July inclusive)
Temporal	
Gear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of circle hooks instead of J hooks • Use of barbless hooks
Effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational bag limit (5 or 6) • 0% bycatch during breeding season in IHAs (April-July inclusive)

Technical Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase MCRS to 30cm (to align with L50) • Introduce Max. Landing size April-July (to avoid removal of males)
Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational data collection • Fishery dependant and independent data collection • Supplementary info. for commercial data (where not already provided via other means) • M&C Programme with thresholds

(2) Industry Workshop: To consider & further inform draft principles

In October 2024, an Industry Workshop was held with representatives from the commercial (12) and recreational/charter (10) sectors, covering all relevant gear types. Combined with the previous engagement exercise. Attendees at the Industry Workshop were provided with a contextual underpinning framed around the Drivers and Headline Objectives developed by the Members. Attendees were invited to comment on proposed management options and put forward any additional industry informed management suggestions:

Measure	Industry Management Proposal
Spatial	No take zones during breeding season in IHA's where there is less socio-economic impact (e.g. IHA 4 & 5). <i>NB: not a preferred option</i>
Temporal	
Gear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of less impactful types of hook
Effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational bag limit (6) • Commercial effort cap 6.2t pa (rod, line, netting)
Technical Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase MCRS to 29cm
Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational data collection & Charter logbooks to include: No. caught, no. retained, no. oversized, no. undersize, no. anglers, areas fished, no. hrs fished in MCZs

(3) Officer Feasibility Exercise

Between August and November 2024, the suggested management options proposed by the Members and Industry were reviewed by officers who undertook a plausibility & feasibility check against all material considerations. This exercise encompassed cross-checking of all of the proposals with compatibility with the MCZ Conservation Objectives, the Headline Objectives, compliance & enforcement considerations, as well as with consideration of overarching policy directives, to include the progression of the BSB FMP. In addition, a literature review for BSB was finalised, with the inclusion of updated evidence coming from publications on BSB tagging studies in Sussex by the University of Plymouth FishIntel Project. Collectively these components informed the feasibility exercise.

(4): Members Working Group

In February 2025 a Members Working Group was held with the overall objective of drawing together and reviewing all of the co-developed components and to consider these in parallel with the outcomes of the officer feasibility exercise. The Members subsequently finalised the following CoD Principles to be taken forward to public consultation in the 2025/26 year:

Application of CoD Principles:	
Voluntary , applying within the 3 Dorset MCZs , and in force during the period 1st April to 31st July .	
Proposed CoD Principles:	
Minimum Conservation Reference Size	28cm
Maximum Conservation Reference Size	38cm
Recreational bag limit	6 fish per person per day
Guidance	Good practice fishing & handling
Data Collection	Year-round, all sectors

3.4 Reviews of Existing Management

3.4.1 Poole Order 2025



Tranche 3 Delivery

Southern IFCA manage aquaculture activity within The Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 (The Order) in accordance with the Shellfish Act 1967. The issuing of leases under The Order is in a series of five-year tranches. The Tranche 2 (T2) period 2020 – 2025 concluded on the 30th June 2025, requiring the issuing of leases for a new Tranche 3 (T3) lease period from 1st July 2025 to 30th June 2030.

As part of this process, an initial review of potential lease bed reallocations was undertaken, which concluded no further action in order to continue to support the objectives of the Poole Harbour SPA, as well as other water users.

All eligible T2 leaseholders formally submitted an Expression of Interest (EOI) to renew their existing leases for the T3 period, along with an End of Tranche 2 Lease Report and a T3 (2025 – 2030) Business Plan.

In order for Southern IFCA to continue to manage aquaculture into the T3 period, the following Supporting Documents were reviewed and amended accordingly:

- The Poole Harbour Several Order 2015 Management Plan: demonstrates how Southern IFCA manage aquaculture activity under The Order. Significant amendments were made to the document, including the introduction of a section describing how the management supports delivery of national legislation and policy, in addition to the inclusion of a “Shellfish Movement Guidance Document” to aid collection and provision of data. (Poole Harbour Management Plan: 2025 Update)
- The Poole Order Biosecurity Measures Plan: which outlines both regulator and leaseholders’ responsibilities in upholding biosecurity standards. No consequential changes were required for T3. (Poole Order Biosecurity Measures Plan: 2025 Update)
- The Habitat Regulations Assessment 2025 – 2030 (HRA) document assesses the proposed activity under T3 of The Order against the designated features and supporting habitats of the Poole Harbour SPA, SSSI and Ramsar Site in line with Southern IFCA’s duties as a Competent Authority under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Additional evidence was provided through a new “Literature Review of Bivalve Aquaculture Ecosystem Services”, and a “Pacific Oyster Monitoring Report”. ([Poole Order 2015 HRA: 2025-2030 Update](#))

Following Members consideration of this area of work, it was concluded that the issuing of T3 leases would not have an adverse effect, alone or in combination, on designated features and their supporting habitats within the Poole Harbour SPA.

Annual Management Review and BAU



- In accordance with the Order, the Authority are required to undertake an annual review of the Management Plan. The TAC considered the annual update in May 2024. It was resolved that no significant changes were required to the MP for 2024/25.
- Shellfish Movements: Southern IFCA operates as the Aquaculture Production Business (APB) for The Order and accordingly are required to record and submit data of all on-shore and off-shore movements to CEFA's in line with biosecurity requirements. In-year 53 on-site movements and 26 off-site movements were reported.
- Fish Health Inspectorate (FHI) Inspection: The FHI conducts APB annual inspections to observe aquaculture operations, engage with leaseholders, and ensure that Southern IFCA comply with its biosecurity responsibilities. SIFCA received notification of a pass for the 2024 APB inspection, which maintains Southern IFCA's APB status. A simplified BMP (2024) was agreed following FHI feedback.
- A Shellfish Movement Guidance Document was developed and provided to leaseholders following the Annual Shellfish Movements Data submission and APB Inspection. The document outlines the reporting requirements for leaseholders in relation to shellfish movements and how this data will be recorded. This document was integrated into the MP (2025) in preparation for the rollout of T3.
- Lease Bed Visits: Lease bed visits are conducted throughout the year following notable changes to a leaseholder's aquaculture operations. The visits allow IFCOs to observe and discuss how BP amendments impact aquaculture operations on the water with leaseholders. Additionally, these visits offer IFCOs an opportunity to engage with leaseholders and fishermen about developments in Poole Harbour or the wider inshore community. 2 lease bed visits were conducted this financial year.

Further information can be found in Annex 2.

3.4.2 PHDPB: Permit Condition Review 2024



The PHDP regulates dredging for shellfish in Poole Harbour through the annual issue of permits. Under the PHDPB, the Authority conducts a review of the suitability of Permit conditions, Permit fees and limitations on the number of Permits every three years or sooner.

During the early 2024 fishing season (25th May – 23rd Dec), Southern IFCA received reports from Permit Holders regarding a reduction in the levels of Manila clams when compared to previous years. Following high resolution analysis of the monthly 2024 catch data; when compared to catches for 2020-2023, the 2024 data was found to be lower, but consistent with the catch rates seen between 2016-2023. This position was presented to the TAC in November, where it was subsequently determined to develop a [M&CP](#) for the fishery in November 2024, which introduced specific On-Site and In-Season Monitoring Programmes for the Manila clam fishery. Additionally, potential changes to Permit Conditions were considered for implementation should in-season management be required to support the fishery.

A consultation with Permit Holders and other interested parties took place between 10th December 2024 and 10th January 2025. The outcomes of the review were agreed by the TAC in February 2025. Following the adoption of the M&CP, LPUE data from the 2024 fishing season and CPUE data collected in the 2025/26 year from the Poole Harbour Bivalve Survey will be analysed against the On-Site Monitoring Programme and, in the event that a Control Mechanism is activated, a decision on the requirement for any additional management to support a sustainable fishery will be taken at the TAC meeting in May 2025.

This program of action sought to facilitate proactive, co-designed collaborative management of the fishery.

3.4.3 NFB: Permit Condition Review: Year 1



The Southern IFCA NFB (ratified in August 2023) defines three Net Permit Areas in the District: Christchurch Harbour NPA, Southampton Water NPA and River Hamble NPA. A Net Permit for each NPA has associated Net Permit Conditions which provide flexible management measures for each NPA. 17 Net Permits were issued for Year 1 under the NFB.

Under the NFB, the Authority reviews the suitability of Permit Conditions, Permit fees and limitations on the number of Permits issued annually or, if required, the temporary closure of an NPA in accordance with the NPA M&CP. During the 2024/25 year Southern IFCA undertook the first annual review under the NFB, considering evidence related to Year 1 Net Permits. This process involved looking at the available evidence feeding into the Annual Review and consultation with Net Permit Holders.

Key Considerations: Available Evidence Feeding into the Annual Review

NPA M&CP

Informs annual management of permitted net fisheries to ensure the Authority are using best available evidence regarding understandings of interactions between net fishing and migratory salmonids within the District's harbours and estuaries.

On-Site Monitoring Programme	Provides triggers for different control mechanisms based upon the type of data collected	No Trigger Threshold Levels were reached under any of the 5 Monitoring Components
Indicators of Salmonid Health Over Time	Supports understandings of salmonid health based on best available data from partner organisations	A review of the listed data sources was conducted which identified new salmon run data. Where available, data up to 23/24 was used to inform the annual review.

Consultation with Net Permit Holders

Took place between 10th December 2024 and 22nd January 2025. During this period Permit Holders were provided with two opportunities to provide comment or feedback.

Consultation Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 requests for a reduction in the cost of an annual permit • 1 request for a reduction in the number of permits for Christchurch Harbour based on competition for space • 1 request to use a drift net in the Southampton Water NPA • 1 comment on Year 2 TTLs being too low as affected by poor run years
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Following an assessment of best available evidence, it was resolved by the TAC in February 2025, that no changes were required to be made to flexible Permit conditions, Permit fees or the number of Permits for the Year 2 season. Accordingly:

- The number of Net Permits is to remain at 17, as compatible with the outcomes of the Conservation Assessments for the NFB
- The calculations informing the cost of a Net Permit continue to accurately represent the Authority expenditure in managing the NPA
- The use of drift nets in the Southampton Water NPA remains incompatible with the Conservation Assessments specific to the River Itchen SAC and Functionally Linked Areas in the River Test and Southampton Water
- TTLs are updated in accordance with the agreed calculation method in the M&CP, analysis on an annual basis allows incorporation of changes in run data

The Atlantic salmon run data was updated in the [NPA M&CP: 2025 Update](#), the TTL for salmonid interactions was updated in line with the new salmon run data, the TTL for salmonid mortality remained at 1 fish:

	NPA M&CP TTLs for Salmonid Interactions			
	Year 1		Year 2	
	S'ton Water (inc. River Hamble)	Christchurch Harbour	S'ton Water (inc. River Hamble)	Christchurch Harbour
TTL: Interactions	10	10	4	8
Best available data	2018-2020	2017-2020	2021-2023	2021-2023

(*) For Christchurch Harbour in Year 1 there was no data available for 2018

The [Inshore Netting Review: Process, Tools & Intentions 2024 document](#) was updated with access criteria for Year 2 with the Year 2 Permits being valid from 1st March 2025 – 31st March 2026, from Year 3 onwards the Permits will align with the financial year.

3.4.4. Mussel Authorisation for Aquaculture Purposes



A request was made to the Authority for consideration of a continuation of an authorisation under the Southern IFCA Mussels Byelaw, which permitted the removal of mussels from the District (less than 50mm) for the purpose of relaying on a lease bed, managed under The Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015, for cultivation.

The proposed activity under the 2025 Authorisation mirrored that for the previous Authorisation, and when considering the best available information provided, it was determined that the Authorisation could continue for the period 1st January to 31st December 2025. Conditions included in the Authorisation included that the activity must take place outside of the boundaries of the relevant MPAs, catch reporting requirements, a limit on the quantity of mussel that can be removed, a specified period for which the mussels must be relayed and the use of electronic monitoring equipment and reporting of activity to be undertaken.

3.4.5 Wrasse Fishery Review



No Triggers were reached under any of the Monitoring Variables set for the [Live Wrasse Fishery Monitoring and Control Plan](#), therefore there was no requirement to review the Wrasse Fishery Guidance or the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Studland to Portland SAC during the 2024/25 year.

3.4.6 MCRS Review



During the 2024/25 year, Southern IFCA continued to engage in the post-publication phase for published FMPs, reviewing outputs from the implementation of FMP actions and providing comment where required, attending workshops and meetings on relevant FMP actions and maintained oversight of identified FMP Evidence Gaps. The cumulative outputs of this work is an ongoing understanding of the timescales over which FMP actions may be delivered and how any actions relate to existing management within the Southern IFCA District and/or the relevant fisheries. As of the end of the 2024/25 year, it was not deemed appropriate to proceed with the MCRS Review at a Southern IFCA level and Southern IFCA continue to review the scope and requirements under this review alongside the development of the national direction in fisheries management.

4.0 Delivering Southern IFCA's Core Functions: Compliance & Enforcement

2



4.1 High Risk, Intelligence Led Work

The Southern IFCA is committed to achieving fair, effective and proportionate enforcement. The [Compliance and Enforcement Framework](#) sets out the Authority's approach and principles the Authority follow and the enforcement actions available. As directed by Defra, Southern IFCA apply a risk-based approach, captured in the Southern IFCA [Compliance Risk Register](#) which, in addition to intelligence reporting informs operational planning via a TCG to focus and prioritise for Southern IFCA's compliance and enforcement activities.

Intelligence Reports (IRs) are the Authority's method of recording, storing, collating and disseminating intelligence that complement our risk-based approach. Additional intelligence granted via access to the UK Fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance System (MCSS) and Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) maximizes the efficient use and deployment of resources on the ground. Southern IFCA uses the National Intelligence Model which incorporates a tasking and coordination process.

Between April 2023 and March 2024 12 TCGs were held by Southern, to include representation from Devon and Severn IFCA, Sussex IFCA, Dorset Police, Hampshire Police, Devon & Cornwall Police, Environment Agency (EA), Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), South East Marine Team (MMO), South Marine Team (MMO), Environmental Health Officers (BCP Council), Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) and UK Border Force.

4.1.1 Operational Deployment

IFCOs conduct both land and sea-based patrols across the district with the overarching purpose to ensure compliance with 24 x [Byelaws](#), 7 x [CoP](#) and the [Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015](#).

Southern IFCA operates three patrol vessels which are used to observe fishing activity, engage with industry, carry out boarding inspections and to target reported illegal activity. On shore, IFCOs conduct land patrols to engage with industry, carry out inspections, observe activity at sea and in ports, visiting a number of locations across the district including commercial premises, recreational angling hotspots, piers, ports, beaches and quaysides. The Authority has a [drone capability](#) to support operational activity. This has enhanced operational delivery and is used to record evidence of possible offences using the onboard camera from perspectives not previously possible, it has improved the prevention (deterrent) and detection of offending.

4.2 Monitoring & Control of Existing Statutory & Non Statutory Measures

4.2.1 Compliance Inspections undertaken

Category	Metric	Details	2023/24	2024/25
Inspections of sea	Vessel patrols	Any patrol vessel or survey (mother /daughter boat combination as one patrol)	57	61
	Fishing vessel boarding	Any fishing vessel (including unregistered / unlicensed) inspected at sea, where boarding was in pursuit of any relevant duty	169	175
	Fishing gear inspections	Store pots, tiers / strings etc. of fishing gear found deployed in sea, where inspection was	0	0

		in pursuit of any relevant duty. Do not count gear inspected onboard a vessel		
Inspections ashore or in port	Shore patrol	Excursion/visit of any length to any part of the coast for an inspection observation of fishing related activity	105	125
	Port visits	Individual port/cove/beach visits within the shoreline	183	207
	Premises inspections	Markets, merchants refrigerated units, retailers, food producers/outlets etc	31	29
	Fish/shellfish landing inspections	Observations of fish/shellfish as landed ashore from a vessel. Does not include inspections of fish in market or in storage unless landing observed	118	140
	Other inspections	Vessel gear/fish checks in port/ashore, diver and shore angler catches, vehicle contents, shellfish on lay areas etc.	73	100
Drone	Drone Flights	No. of times drone has been deployed for operational purposes.	24	38

4.3 Enforcement Actions

4.3.1 Southern IFCA Byelaws: Non Compliance identified and Enforcement Actions Taken

Verbal Warning	23	16 x MCRS byelaw 1x Net Fishing byelaw 1x Periwinkle byelaw 4x BTFG 2016 byelaw
Official Written Warning	7	2x MCRS byelaw 1x Net Fishing byelaw 2x PHDP byelaw (spatial) 1x BTFG byelaw (catch return) 1x SDPB (spatial)
Fixed Administrative Penalty (FAP)	6	2x MCRS byelaw (£500 & £1500) 2x PHDP byelaw (spatial) – 2x £1000 2x BTFG area 40 – £3000 & £2,000 (1x led by D&SIFCA)
Prosecution	1	1x MCRS byelaw – failed to pay FAP, found guilty (costs £5,435.25)
Ongoing investigations	2	1x PHDP byelaw (spatial) – FAP issued 1x SDPB, BTFG, Cockles

4.3.2 MaCAA: Non Compliance identified and Enforcement Actions Taken

Ongoing investigations	1	Failure to comply offences.
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4.3.3 National Measures: Non Compliance identified and Enforcement Action Taken

Verbal Warning	7	6x MCRS/Tech Con 1x Berried lobster
Official Written Warning	3	3x Bass regs – u/s, BNA, exceed rec quota

Southern IFCA v Chi Keung LEUNG media release 31/03/2025



On Tuesday 25th March 2025, Portsmouth Magistrates Court heard how Mr Chi Keung Leung of Southsea, Portsmouth, removed from the sea and retained on board his vessel a quantity of black sea bream that were below the minimum conservation reference size, contrary to the Southern Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority's (Southern IFCA) **Minimum Conservation Reference Size Byelaw**. The charges were laid by the Southern IFCA and the case was heard in Mr Leung's absence. Mr Leung was ordered to pay costs and fines totalling £6,135.25.

On Monday 29th July 2024, Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officers saw Mr Leung fishing with a rod and line from an inflatable dinghy in Langstone Harbour. With the assistance of Langstone Harbour Master, the Southern IFCA officers intercepted Mr. Leung aboard his vessel. An inspection of his vessel and catch was carried out, with officers finding 88 black sea bream in total. Of the 88 fish, 77 were found to be below the Minimum Conservation Reference Size of 23cm (87.5% of the total catch).

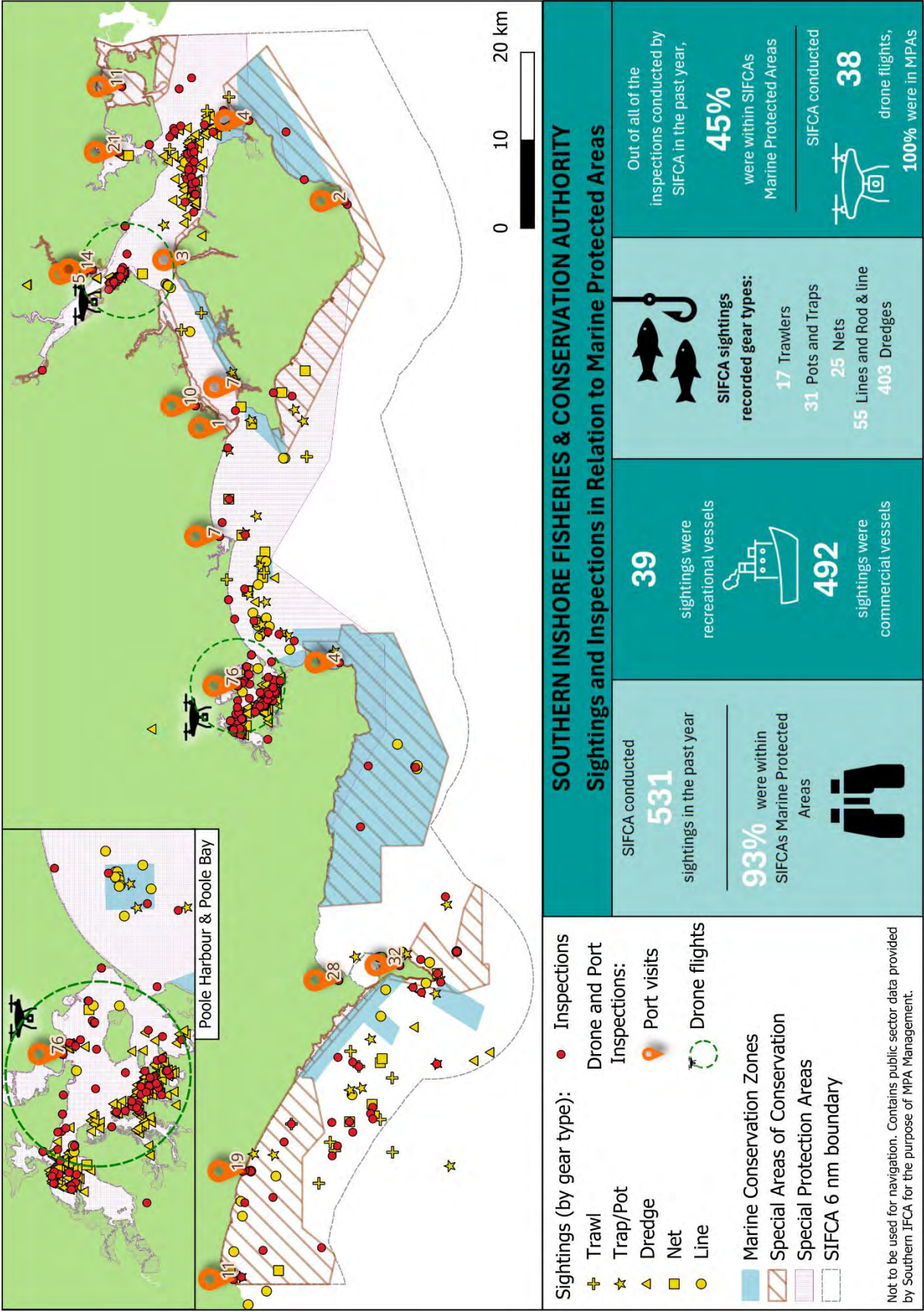
Following a full investigation by the Southern IFCA, Mr. Leung was given the opportunity to discharge any criminal liability for his offending via payment of a £500 Financial Administrative Penalty (FAP) Notice. However, on receipt of the FAP Notice, Mr. Leung informed Southern IFCA of his intent to decline payment. Legal proceedings were subsequently initiated by Southern IFCA following Mr Leung's failure to pay the FAP Notice within the statutory 28-day period and the case was heard in Mr. Leung's absence, after he failed to attend court.

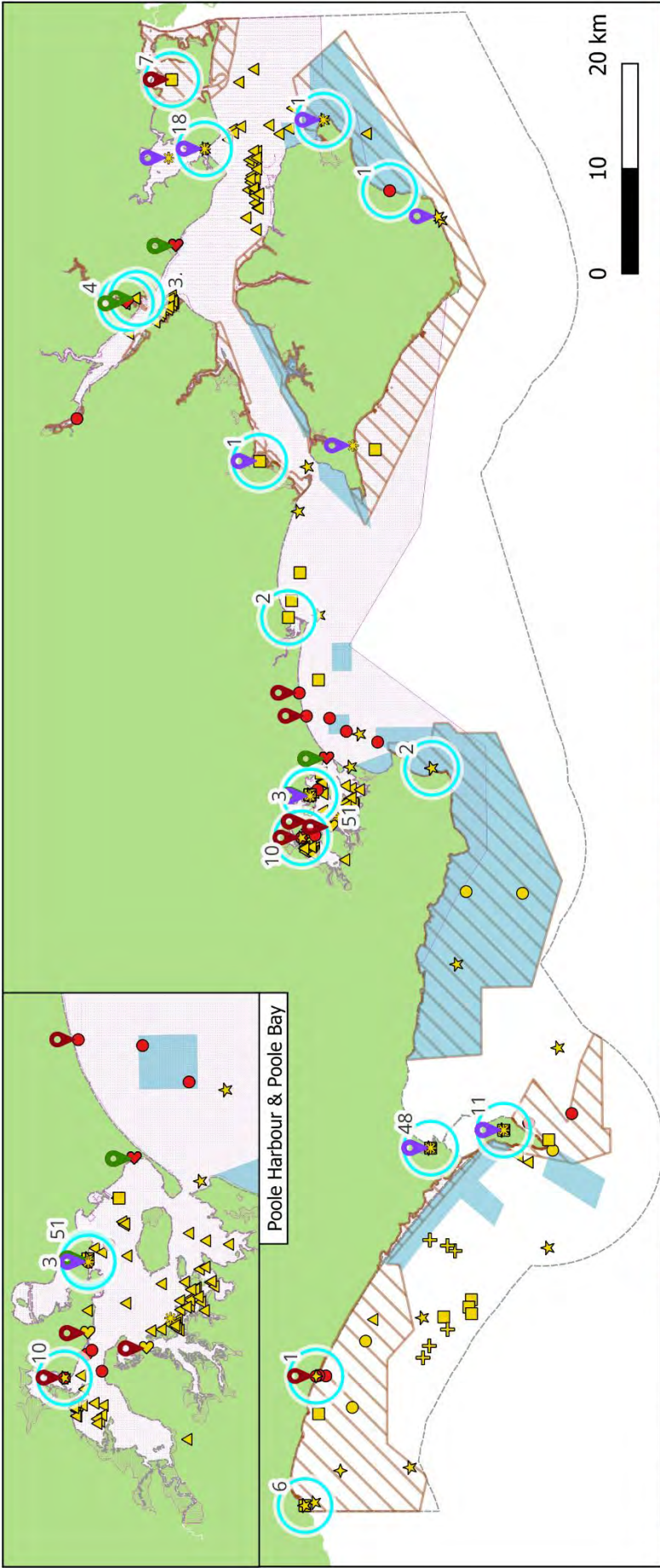
The magistrates were advised that the number of undersized fish retained in the case was exceptionally high and described the unique behaviours of black sea bream who move into inshore waters during the spring and summer months in order to nest. Satisfied with the prosecution's evidence, the court issued a £500 fine and awarded the full investigation and legal costs of £5,435.25, plus a victim surcharge of £200, making a total of £6,135.25.

When asked to comment, Southern IFCA's Principal Deputy Chief Officer Sam Dell said, "*This case sends a clear message that failing to comply with the Authority's regulations will not be tolerated. I would like to publicly thank the Langstone Harbour Master and the IFCA officers involved in this case and recognise their tenacious approach in pursuing all lines of enquiry during this investigation. The Southern IFCA is committed to the protection of fish stocks and coastal fisheries, ensuring healthy seas and a viable industry. By dealing with offenders robustly, we aim to support sustainable local fisheries.*"

4.4 Compliance & Enforcement of Marine Protected Areas

2





SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY			
Inspection Records in Relation to Marine Protected Areas			
<p>Port inspections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">PremisesPersonVehicle <p>Port landing inspections</p> <p>Marine Conservation Zones</p> <p>Special Areas of Conservation</p> <p>Special Protection Areas</p>	<p>Commercial gear</p> <p>Recreational gear</p> <p>Inspections by gear type:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">DivingHand gatheringTrawlingMixed gearPotsNetRod & lineDredge	<p>SIFCA conducted</p> <p>441 inspections in the past year</p> <p>168 of these were at sea, with</p> <p>45% of all inspections being conducted within Marine Protected Areas</p>	<p>Inspections - recorded gear types (% in MPAs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">2 (50%) Diving6 (0%) Trawling25 (24%) Mixed gear30 (27%) Net36 (31%) Hand gathering53 (49%) Lines / Rod & line83 (13%) Pots & Traps205 (66%) Dredging <p>63 inspections related to recreational gear</p> <p>378 inspections related to commercial gear</p> <p>A total of 169 Port landing inspections were conducted across the district</p> <p>Also 33 Premise inspections, 42 Person inspections, and 29 Vehicle inspections</p>

Not to be used for navigation. Contains public sector data provided by Southern IFCA for the purpose of MPA Management.

4.5 Operational Procurement

4.5.1 Marine Assets: FPV Vigilant



Between April and September Southern IFCA visited Ribcraft on thirteen occasions in order to maintain project oversight and collaboratively work on vessel design with the manufacturer, given the bespoke nature of the build. Some of these visits involved attendance by the surveyor, which in turn informed staged payments made by the Authority, ensuring compliance with the agreed contract of sale for FPV Vigilant.

FPV Vigilant was craned in at Portland Port on the 17th September 2024. A Vessel Acceptance Document provided a structure for sea trials, with the document setting out five key parts, to include crosschecking the vessel with the contractual specification (to ensure it was aligned to the signed Contract of Sale e.g. ensuring specified equipment had been fitted to the vessel), testing, which were designed around the requirements in the original tender, to include the Harbour Acceptance Test, the Sea Acceptance Test and the Coding Acceptance Test. In addition an agreed snagging list was drawn up to include contractual provisions for Ribcraft UK Ltd to resolve in a timely manner.

The Authority took ownership on the 11th October 2024 having satisfied the Vessel Acceptance Programme. The change of ownership required a final stage payment which contractually was subject to satisfactory sea trials. The Vessel Acceptance Document was utilised to underpin that decision.

FPV Vigilant entered service on the 14th October 2024.

4.5.2 Land Assets: Drone



In year saw the procurement of two new controllers with IP45 rating which allows for drone operations to continue in less favourable weather conditions. The new controllers also have a larger screen to allow the operators wider views when conducting drone operations. Officers have subsequently added spatial management data into the controller to allow for target overlay with spatially managed areas, for example areas closed to bottom towed fishing gears.

4.6 Updates to Operational Policy and Procedure

4.6.1 Marine Assets: FPV Vigilant Introduction to Service



Following FPV Vigilant's introduction to service, 25 sea patrols have been undertaken; 20 of these east patrols covering the areas between Poole and the Solent, 3 were west patrols covering Poole to Lyme Regis and 2 were undertaken in Poole Bay.

FPV Vigilant has improved endurance for the crew (in line with health and safety requirements, as well as with consideration of officer wellbeing, with provisions for a water boiler, a lavatory, comfortable seating, Wi-Fi connectivity and more. The vessel itself can go further for longer periods due to the added protections (cabin) which increases its capability in district coverage. Officers now spend more time at sea opposed to the road network, which in turn has seen a reduction in use of the Authority's vehicle fleet. As a result, Officers are more efficient when delivering regulatory functions, including but not limited to

the monitoring spatial closures, gathering sightings data, as well as more time engaging with fishers across the district. Officers are also now able to access control and enforcement systems on FPV.

When the vessel entered service Officers had a series of training days to include familiarisation with new systems onboard. This included specific guidance for the safety rail system in order to facilitate boarding operations, training on communication systems and the camera suite. Due to the introduction of Workboat code 3 we now operate with 4 officers onboard.

Since entering operation, FPV Vigilant has been visited by Defra Compliance & Enforcement and the MMO Senior Leadership Team who have indicated an interest in chartering FPV Vigilant to deliver regulatory functions beyond the IFCA boundary. During the first six months of service, there have been two joint deployments with MMO operatives.

The team have embraced the introduction of Vigilant and are continuing to ensure its success.

4.6.2 Workboat Code 3 Compliance



Small commercial vessels operating in UK waters must comply with MCA codes of practice. Workboat Code Edition 3 which entered force in December 2023), specifies details of the technical requirements for equipment, practices and procedures to be followed for new vessels entering service (FPV Vigilant).

The code permits existing vessels (FPVs Endeavour & Protector) that are certificated under Workboat Code Edition 2 to comply with the code by either the vessel's next renewal examination or no later than three years following the date of entry into force (December 2026), whichever is later.

In-year, Southern IFCA have started to implement the codes of practice ahead of specified dates, recognising the health and safety consequences if compliance was not achieved. Section (28) of Workboat Code Edition 3 refers to manning requirements, *'...the purpose of this section is to set out the minimum safe manning requirements for the number of the crew members and their qualifications necessary to ensure the safe operation of a vessel...'.* Under (28.2.1) it states *'...single handed operations are not permitted where a vessel is involved in the transfer of personnel at sea...'.* This requirement has required an update to normal operating procedures, whereby previously single handed operations were permitted where a skipper would remain onboard the FPV whilst boarding operations occurred. Southern IFCA now ensure that an additional officer remains present on the FPV when conducting boarding operations. The changes in manning requirement have been implemented through the Southern IFCA Health and Safety Policy ensuring that operations are now compliant with the new Workboat Code.

Under (28.1.2) of Workboat Code Edition 3, *'...all licences and Certificates of Competency (CoC) shall be appropriate to the vessel's area category of operation and type of operation...and...all Masters and crew responsible for navigation shall complete the required training...'.* In June 2023 Southern IFCA was successful in securing external funding under the Fisheries and Seafood Scheme (FASS) for these additional training requirements which included electronic chart systems & radar training for five IFCOs, this training was completed during 2025.

4.6.3 Dispensations Issued

During the reporting period 26 Dispensations to Southern IFCA Byelaws were issued. Annex 3 provides further detail on these.

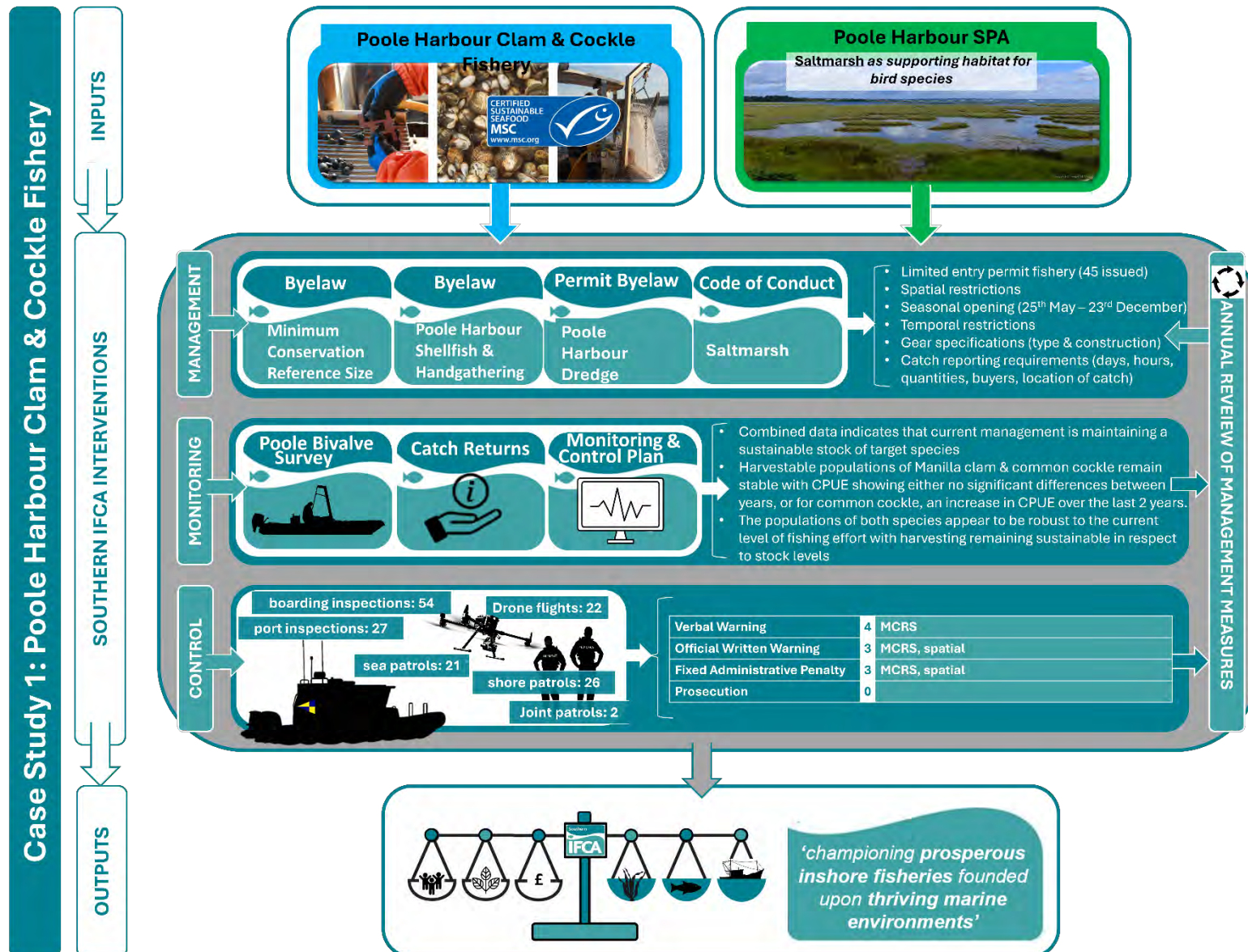
4.7 Project Work: REM & AI Pilot Projects



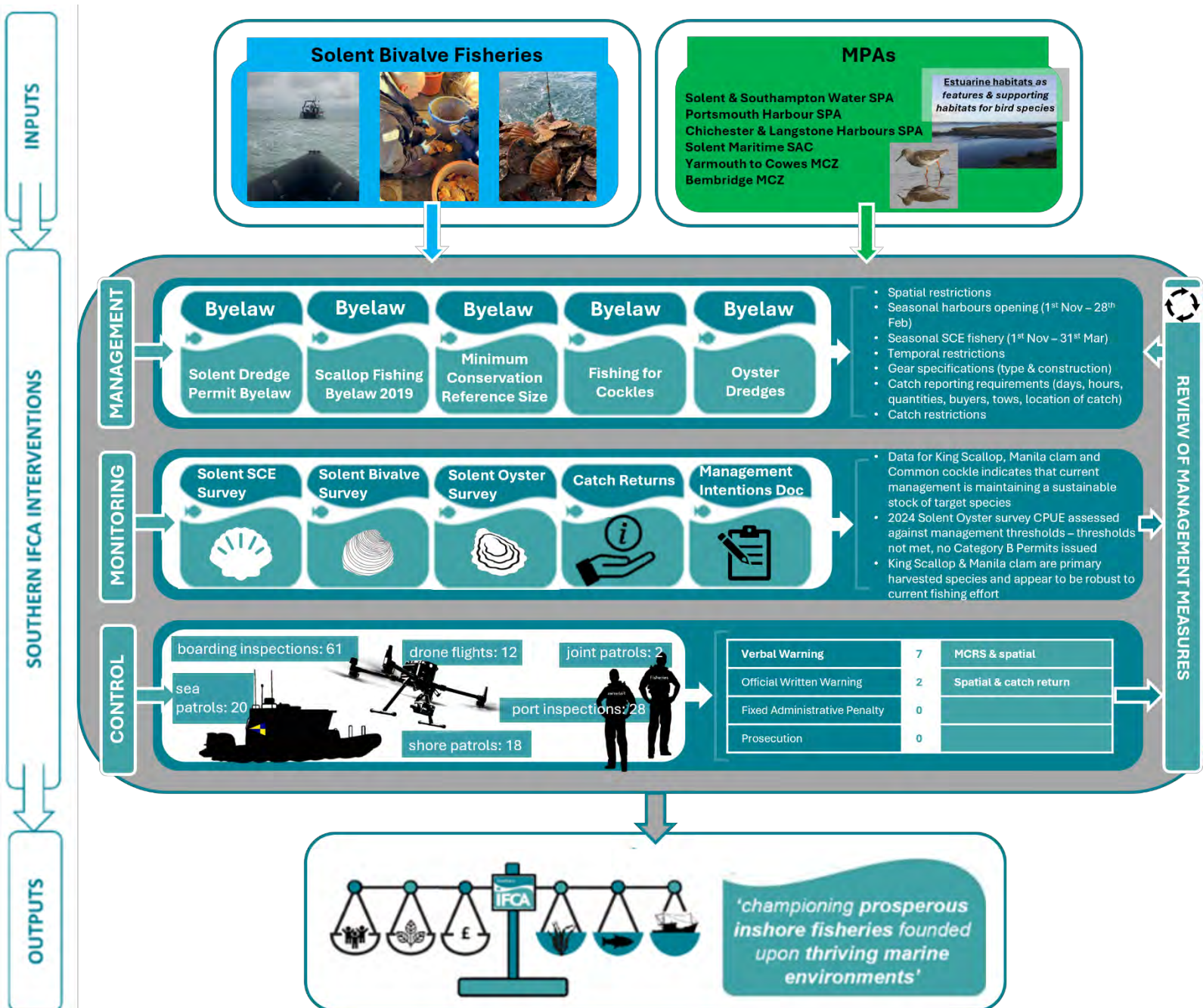
Building on the work undertaken by Devon & Severn IFCA, Southern committed to pilot two small scale REM and AI Inshore solutions. As part of this work officers have continued to engage with industry seeking additional volunteers across the priority fisheries, in addition to maintain the REM suite fitted In a trawler in Lyme Bay. An additional priority fishery has been explored in year, reflecting both the evolving nature of the work, as well as the challenges faced with identification of suitable vessels and willing volunteers across the two original priority fisheries. Further information can be found in Section 2.1.2.

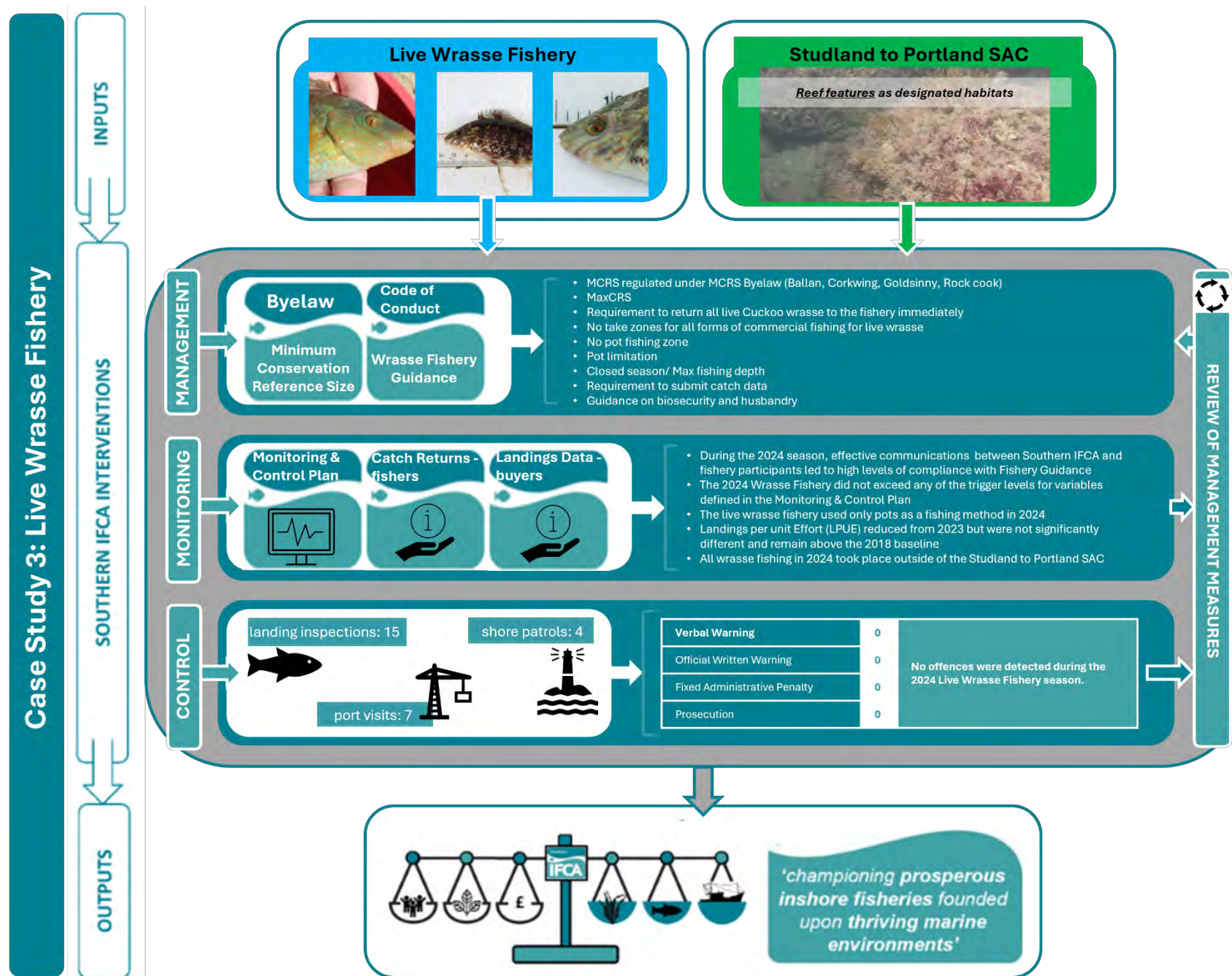
5.0 Case Studies: Where Fishing and Conservation Co-Exist

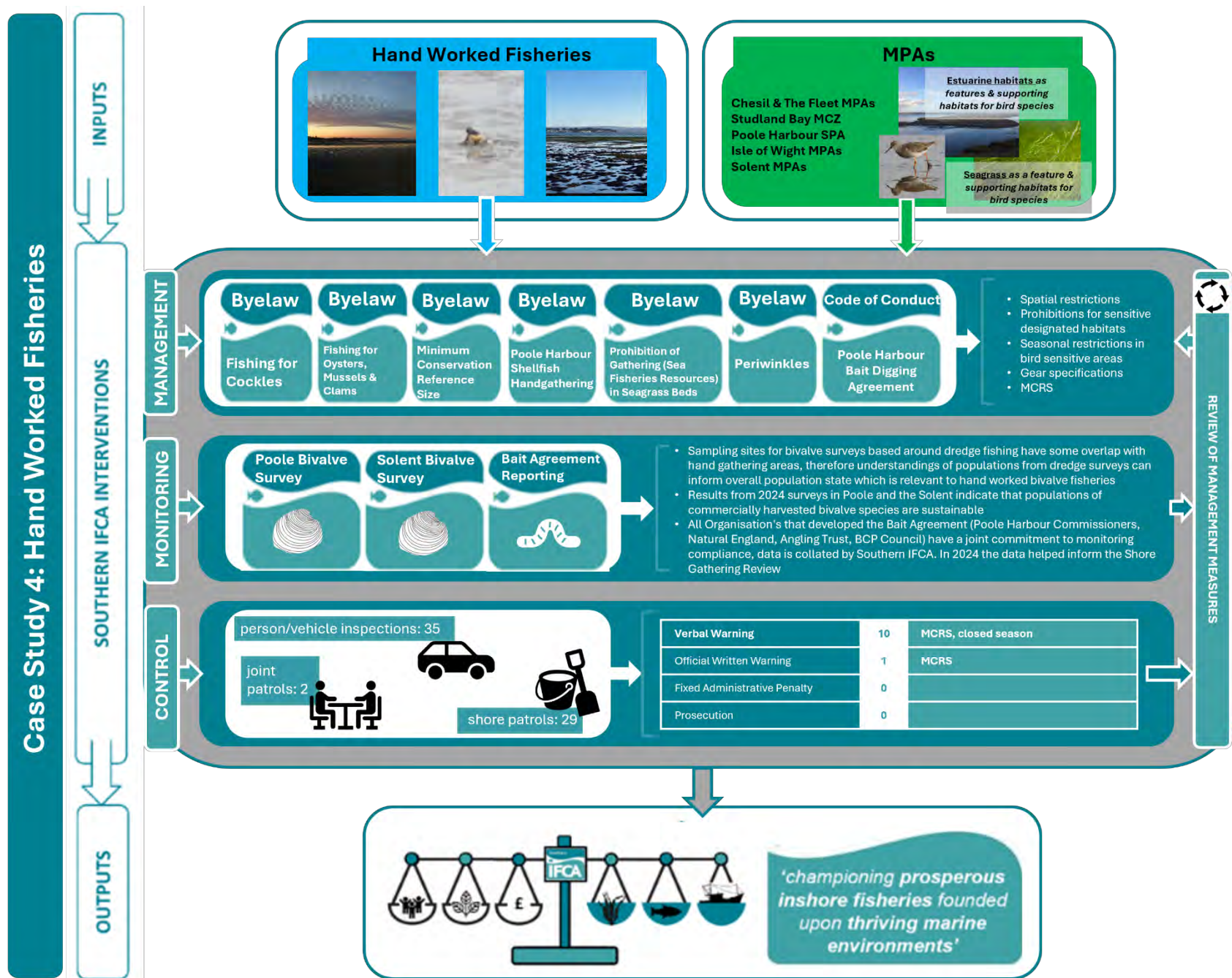
The following four case studies demonstrate where symbiotic management interventions are applied proportionality, a synergy is generated where both fisheries and conservation can flourish across the district:



Case Study 2: Solent Bivalve Fisheries







6.0 Community Engagement

6.1 Community Drop-In Surgeries

Community Drop-In Surgeries are a new pilot initiative which began in late Autumn 2024, whereby the Chairman of the Authority, the Chairman of the TAC, the CEO and PDCO attend Community Drop-In Surgeries across the district every c.4-5 months, with the intention of meeting fishers and the wider community in informal settings to in order to discuss any matters of importance to individuals and the collective across the District.

The overall aim of the Surgeries is to identify where Southern IFCA can focus its attentions to make the inshore industry's daily lives less challenging, where we are able, whilst balancing conflicting priorities.



The poster features the Southern IFCA logo at the top, which includes a fish icon and the text 'Southern IFCA's'. Below the logo, it says 'Community Drop-in Surgery'. A pair of scissors is shown cutting a vertical line, with several strips of paper falling down. Each strip contains the text: 'Lyme Regis: 14th November, Fisherman's College, 16:00-19:00'. To the right of the poster, there is text inviting people to join for a chat, enjoy a cup of tea, and share thoughts on local fisheries and conservation matters. It also states that the first Community Drop-in Surgery will be held in Lyme Regis at the Fisherman's College on Thursday 14th November between 16:00-19:00. At the bottom right, it says 'We look forward to seeing you there.'

Southern IFCA's
Community Drop-in Surgery

Join us for a chat! Meet the Chairman, Chief Officer and some of the team.

Enjoy a cup of tea (with a biscuit or two) and share your thoughts on local fisheries and conservation matters.

The first **Community Drop-in Surgery** will be held in **Lyme Regis** at the **Fisherman's College** on **Thursday 14th November** between **16:00-19:00**.

We look forward to seeing you there.

These sessions are not meetings or gatherings for the sake of meetings, they will be used to inform and shape some of Southern IFCA's priorities moving forward. Reflecting on the outcomes of the first two surgeries, it is the iterative intention to develop an Action Plan over time to consider and identify any common challenges faced by the community across the District and use this to look for opportunities to problem solve across organisations and jurisdictions, for example where Southern borders other coastal IFCA's or the MMO at 6nm.

Southern IFCA are striving to embed in the community, listen and understand, and bring back differing perspectives to help inform and steer better ways of working.

6.1.1 Lyme Bay: November 2024

The pilot meeting in Lyme Regis saw attendance from a cross section of industry (11 in total) from the ports of Lyme Bay and West Bay, to include one of the youngest commercial fishers in the district (21) who skips a trawler from Lyme Regis. In addition the Chief Executive of the Lyme Bay Community Interest Company popped in, as well as Marine Enforcement Officers from the MMO. The main matters of discussion, relevant to the IFCA jurisdiction included recreational potting, gear conflict & spatial squeeze).

6.1.2 Weymouth: February 2025

The focus of conversations in Weymouth were on the whelk fisheries in the context of the Southern IFCA Pot Fishing Byelaw, Black seabream management, FMPs, in particular the intention for Defra to raise the LBE MCRS and the opportunities with regard to the MMO managed Bluefin Tuna fishery. During the afternoon and evening session, there was attendance from 14 stakeholders, to include merchants, commercial fishers, charter anglers, and NGOs. A young demographic of fishers were

present at the meeting and spoke pragmatically about the need to diversify their fishing operations in order to maintain viability in their business practice. This insight was really impressive to see. Attendees were interested to hear about the ways in which science of fish stocks underpins Authority decision making, with a particular focus on whelks and the differing populations across the District. This wider context was welcomed by the attendees who were keen to understand the level of information considered across multiple scopes (science, social, economic) in the decision making processes and how these discussions were informing management decisions, with productive discussion had regarding the ways in which industry could help with supporting our data collection and knowledge of fisheries from the ground.

6.2 Community Consultations

Consultation	Dates	How	Use of Outcomes	Management Outcomes
NFB: Year 1 Review with Permit Holders	12/12/24 22/01/25	Phone calls, consultation letters, emails, in person meetings	Formed part of the evidence base used to inform Authority decision making as to whether the NFB remained fit for purpose	No changes required to be made for Year 2.
PHDP Byelaw Permit Condition Review with Permit Holders	10/12/24 10/01/25	Consultation letter, questionnaire, evidence document, in person meeting & individual meetings	Formed part of the evidence base used to inform Authority decision making re: consideration of the development of a M&CP alongside potential actions to support a sustainable fishery if required.	Development of the Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Fishery Monitoring & Control Plan Administrative changes to Permit conditions to facilitate future use of Southern IFCA Online Permitting System
Ongoing consultation opportunities for Black Seabream development of Shared Principles with all relevant sectors	Mar 23 May 24	Direct in-person engagement exercise with representatives to understand specific information on BSB fisheries	Informed the development of a report on the Quantification of Impact Exercise in relation to an initial iteration of draft measures for the management of BSB in three Dorset MCZs	Quantification of Impact Exercise Report provided to the TAC in May 2024.
	31/10/25 onwards.	In-person workshop meeting and follow up email/letter	Opportunity to provide contextual underpinning for development of draft measures for BSB in Dorset MCZs framed around Drivers and Headline Objectives developed by Authority Members Opportunity to comment on management options and put forward any additional industry informed management options	Proposed management options from industry combined with those from Authority Members reviewed by Officers under a feasibility exercise to inform draft Shared Principles for review by Authority Members at a subsequent Working Group.

6.3 Community Meeting Attendance

Meeting	Format	Meeting/Group Purpose
Fleet Management Group	In-Person (1)	Management group for all activities relevant to The Fleet
Hamble Estuary Partnership	In-Person (1)	Organised by the River Hamble Authority – to discuss issues affecting the River Hamble, monitor & facilitate priority projects and cover issues of shared interest.
Langstone Harbour Board Advisory Committee	Online (3)	Run by the Langstone Harbour Board, a forum for consulting with Langstone Harbour users comprising both statutory members (Southern IFCA) and invited attendees.
Poole Harbour Steering Group	In-Person (2)	A partnership group consisting of PHC, BCP Council, Dorset Council, EA, MMO, NE, Southern IFCA and Wessex Water to discuss and promote the safe and sustainable use of Poole Harbour, balancing the demands on its natural resources, minimising risks and resolving conflicts of interest.
Poole Harbour Study Group	In-Person (2)	A group comprising organisations and individuals involved and interested in the physical and biological interests of Poole Harbour. The groups acts to centralise and encourage the dissemination of knowledge about the Harbour, remaining neutral with regard to planning and other issues involving the Harbour.
SEMS Management Group	In-Person (1)	Partnership of the Solent's Relevant Authorities to deliver a Solent site-wide management scheme guiding the way in which RAs exercise their functions so as to secure compliance with the requirements of the Solent European Marine Site.
Solent Forum	In-Person (2)	Independent coastal partnership to develop a greater understanding among local authorities, harbour authorities, user groups, marine businesses and agencies involved in planning and management in the Solent.

Solent Forum Natural Environment Group	In-Person (2)	To progress strategic actions from the SEMS management scheme and provide the coordination of implementation of cross-cutting nature conservation actions by facilitating networking and communication.
Solent Seagrass Network	Online (10)	Comprising organisations involved in seagrass monitoring, research and restoration across the Solent.
Solent Seascapes Project	Online (10)	A collaborative long-term initiative working to restore multiple habitats across the Solent strait to create a more resilient coastline, enhance biodiversity and support the sustainable delivery of ecosystem benefits.
Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy	Online (one-off)	To understand the focus of the Dorset LNRS and potential for overlap with the intertidal area and relevant fisheries activities.
Hurst Spit to Lymington Strategy	Online (one-off)	To maintain knowledge of the strategy and progression of different stages to help inform any marine licence application responses and/or identify and potential for overlap with fishing areas.
Professional Boatman's Association Annual Meeting	In-Person (one-off)	To give a presentation on Southern IFCA's development of measures for Black Seabream in three Dorset MCZs, delivering the presentation given at the Angling for Sustainability project conference and discussing black seabream management with the PBA.
Poole & District Sea Angling Association	In-Person (3)	Association for recreational sea angling clubs within the Poole & District area to discuss issues and topics of interest, engage with Southern IFCA and facilitate communication.
South Coast Fishermen's Council	Online (6)	A group comprised of commercial fisher representatives from ports within the Southern IFCA District to discuss issues and topics of interest, engage with Southern IFCA and facilitate communication.
Recreational Angling Sector Group	Online (3)	To promote more effective communication between the RSA sector in Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Dorset, and the Southern IFCA.
Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group	Online (2)	To provide a forum for discussion, knowledge exchange and collaboration between Southern IFCA, organisations, projects & persons working in marine conservation across the District.
Regional Fisheries Group 7d	Online (2)	RFGs are an initiative set up to enable the inshore fishing sector to come together to share views and promote collaborative working with organisations such as MMO, Defra, Cefas and local IFCAs.
Regional Fisheries Group 7 e,f,g	Online (3)	
Lyme Bay Fisheries and Conservation Reserve Consultative Committee	In-Person (1)	A cross section of stakeholders including fishers operating within the Reserve, fishing organisations, statutory authorities, conservation bodies, research institutes and local councils working together to develop, promote and implement best practice in sustainable fishery and conservation management within the Lyme Bay Reserve.
Solent scallop survey methods with Cefas & Industry	Online (one-off)	To understand methodologies for SCE surveys at a national level to help inform the updates to the Southern IFCA Solent SCE survey to enable data to be fed into national datasets and inform evidence gaps under the King Scallop FMP. Engagement with industry to support this process and gauge expert input on Solent SCE scallop grounds and potential for updates to the survey methodology.
Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw Community Forum	In-Person (2)	Held up to twice a year, pre-fishing season and, if required, post-fishing season to provide a forum for Permit Holders to engage with Southern IFCA, discuss any updates or emerging issues within the fishery, survey data and key points ahead of the fishing season commencing each year.
Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Fishery Pre-Season	In-Person (1)	Held pre-fishing season annually on the quayside to provide an opportunity for Permit Holders to engage with Southern IFCA, discuss any updates or emerging issues within the fishery, survey data and key points ahead of the fishing season commencing.
Poole and District Fishermen's Association	In-Person (3)	A group comprised of commercial and recreational fisher representatives from Poole and the surrounding area to discuss issues and topics of interest, Southern IFCA are periodically invited to attend to speak on a specific topic.
Bangor University Whelk CPUE Project	Online (one-off)	Meeting held to understand work being undertaken to collect whelk CPUE data in Welsh waters which is feeding into evidence gaps identified in the Whelk FMP. Prior to commencement of Southern IFCA Whelk LPUE Pilot Project to ensure methodologies were aligned with other research.
Poole Harbour Watch	In-Person (4)	Run and managed by boat owners and clubs within the approaches and confines of Poole Harbour and surrounding shoreline, operating with the co-operation of PHC and both marine and land-based police. Aim is deterrence of crime to boats and equipment and where possible, to improve the safety of those using the waters.
Dorset Coast Forum Annual Conference 2024	In-Person (annual)	Hosted by the Dorset Coast Forum, the conference agenda included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on current challenges for the Dorset coast with presentations from the Environment Agency and Shoreline Management Plan lead advisors for Dorset • Positive actions, looking at a deep dive into key areas where proactive measures are addressing challenges in Studland, Charmouth and North Swanage • Connecting people to coastal change, hearing from the Jurassic Coast Trust on how to engage wider audiences and a workshop on communicating difficult conversations with coastal communities

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hands-on engagement tools offering practical experience with interactive tools for delivering essential coastal change information
Fleet Management Group Annual Conference	In-Person (annual)	Southern IFCA presented at the conference on the results and dataset from the Juvenile Small Fish Survey Programme, with a particular focus on the sampling sites within The Fleet.
Angling for sustainability and Pollock FISP Conference & Workshops	In-Person (one-off)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the conclusion of the Angling for Sustainability (AFS) Fisheries Industry Science Partnership (FISP) Project, of which Southern IFCA was a Project Partner, the University of Plymouth hosted a conference on both this project and the Pollack FISP. The event showcased the results of the two projects and included presentations from project partners and guest speakers. Southern IFCA presented "Managing Black Seabream in a Local Context", with a focus on how the AFS Project was helping inform understandings for black seabream and thus contributing to the evidence base to inform the development of a sustainable management model. The presentation gave an overview of Southern IFCA's work on developing proportionate management for black seabream within three Dorset MCZs and the important of stakeholder & industry collaboration and engagement through this process. The conference was well attended by representatives from the scientific community, the fishing industry (both commercial and recreational) and partner Organisation's including other IFCA's. Workshops held to provide updates and outcomes from the Angling for Sustainability and FinVision FISP projects. Workshops were either targeted towards particular sector groups or run as open meetings for all those interested in the project progression and results.

6.4 National Meeting Attendance

Meeting	Format/Frequency	Purpose
MAFCO	1/1 attended online	For the 10 Chief Officers along with the AIFCA Chief Officer and representatives from Defra to meet to discuss relevant strategic matters.
Association of IFCA's (AIFCA) Forum	Quarterly – CEO (3/4) & Chairman attend (4/4)	For the Chairman and Chief Officer of each of the 10 IFCA's to receive updates on the progress of the AIFCA work areas.
AIFCA Directorship	None held	For the Chief Officers of the 10 IFCA's to ensure the effective governance and management of the AIFCA
Chief Officer Group (COG)	Monthly(12 x online)	For the 10 Chief Officers and AIFCA Chief Officer to meet to discuss national matters.
National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG)	2 x in-person, 1 x online - presenting on a range of topics relating to Control and Enforcement Systems, the application of Workboat Code 3 and aligning Compliance and Enforcement Frameworks	To bring together expertise in the field of regulation and enforcement within inshore fisheries and marine conservation in order to develop and support joint working and consistency; identify and share best practice; and to promote professionalism and competence.
IFCO & MMO Licencing Engagement	Online (3)	Meeting between IFCA's and MMO nationally to discuss marine licencing common themes, challenges and consistency in responses across IFCA's as statutory consultees.
IFCA Technical Advisory Group (TAG)	3 of 3: 2 x online, 1 x in-person attendance	Promotes and facilitates communication, collaboration and coordination between IFCA's and other government organisations in relation to fisheries research and marine science. In the 2024/25 year three TAG meetings were held, Southern IFCA attended two of the meetings online (June 2024 and March 2025) and one in person (November 2024).
SAGB Crustacea Committee	Online (2)	Focusing on issues relating to crustacean species such as crab, lobster, nephrops and whelks (due to method of capture).
SAGB Mollusc Committee	Online (2)	Focusing on issues relating to mollusc species including oysters, mussels, clams, cockles as well as octopus and squid.
UK King Scallop Fishery Improvement Project	Online (4)	An industry-led partnership to improve sustainability in UK scallop fisheries and work towards MSC certification.
Whelk Working Group	Online (2)	Facilitate the exchange of information relating to the common whelk between IFCA's, other government agencies, fisheries authorities, academics, researchers and others interested in whelk fisheries.
Defra Fisheries Negotiations	Online (annual)	To understand process and outcomes from Defra fisheries negotiations and relevance to stocks and fisheries in the District.
Pollack FISP Consultative Forum	Online (one-off)	Outcome meeting for the Pollack FISP project, providing data and outputs from research on Pollack fisheries in the South West.
Southern IFCA/MMO Marine Planning	Online (one off)	To meet MMO Marine Planning team, understand further the marine planning process and potential long-term timelines for updates to the South Marine Plan.

All Party Parliamentary Group (Fisheries)	Online (frequency: various)	Attendance at webinars hosted by the APPG which provides a neutral, cross-party forum for debate, discussion and learning within Parliament with a focus on fisheries.
NE Parliamentary Reception	One off/In person	The CEO attended on behalf of Southern IFCA.
AIFCA Parliamentary Reception	One off/In person	The CEO and Chairman attended on behalf of Southern IFCA. In addition General Member Richard Stride was also in attendance.
Defra: FMPs – Progress Made	One off/In person & online	Meetings attended on individual FMPs and the collective FMP Programme to receive information on process progression, updates and provide the opportunity for discussion.

6.5 Engaging with Coastal MPs

Building on ways in which Southern IFCA can engage with local MPs, this year Southern IFCA met with West Dorset MP Edward Morello on salmonid management in the district and its relevance to Dorset rivers. Southern also met with Poole MP Neil Duncan-Jordan to discuss the value of aquaculture in Poole harbour and its unique role as a natural barrier which can mitigate the effects of poor water quality, and of course the role that SIFCA play in managing the Poole Harbour aquaculture fisheries under the Poole Harbour Regulating Order.

6.6 Community Delivery on behalf of the Constituent Local Authorities

Please follow the links provided below to find out more about Southern IFCA's delivery relevant to each of our six Local Authority's, at a community level.

6.6.1 Dorset Council

(add)

6.6.2 Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council

(add)

6.6.3 Hampshire County Council

(add)

6.6.4 Southampton City Council

(add)

6.6.5 Portsmouth City Council

(add)

6.6.6 Isle of Wight Council

(add)

7.0 Delivering Additional Functions

7.1 Supporting Defra's Programme of Works

7.1.1 Fisheries Management Plan Programme



A Project Officer is employed by Southern IFCA to coordinate the provision of information, evidence and data to support the development of Defra led FMPs, to work with delivery partners, to work with local and national colleagues and to help coordinate communications and engagement with the inshore fishing community. The Project Officer also represents Southern IFCA at FMP meetings and working groups. Additional support and expertise is provided by the Senior Managers. A full summary of work achieved by Southern IFCA during this reporting period can be found in Annex 4.

7.1.2 Marine Consents



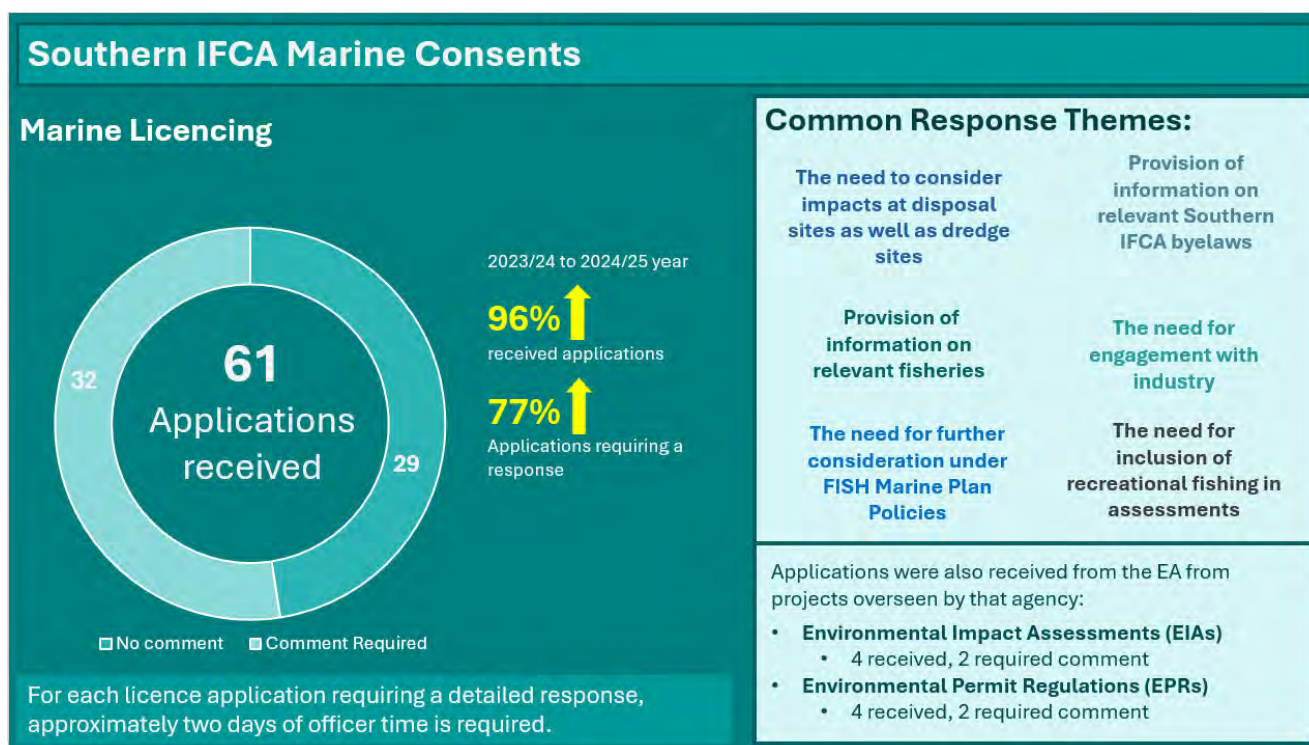
Southern IFCA's work on Marine Consents focused on the marine licencing system administered by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), for which the Southern IFCA is a statutory consultee.

A standing agenda item on marine licence applications received, including a summary of those deemed to require a response, is provided to the quarterly Authority meetings. During the 2024/25 year, Southern IFCA received 61 marine licence applications for review, a 96% increase on the 2023/24 year, 32 of which were determined to require a comment or more detailed response, a 77% increase in the previous year.

Common themes across responses included consideration of impacts at dredge disposal sites, provision of information on relevant Southern IFCA regulations, fisheries & survey work, the need for engagement with industry and the inclusion of recreational fishing in assessments and the need for applicants to consider in more detail the relevance of applications to relevant FISH Marine Plan Policies.

Additionally, Southern IFCA receives Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and Environmental Permit Regulations (EPRs) applications directly from the Environment Agency. During the 2024/25 year, 8 of these received (4 of each type) of which 2 EIA and 2 EPR responses were determined to be required.

Southern IFCA continue to attend meetings with the MMO Licencing Team, to discuss common themes, challenges and consistency in responses across IFCAs. Where applications are cross IFCA boundaries, engagement with the relevant IFCA is sought to identify a collaborative response. Engagement with stakeholders occurs where necessary to allow the provision of specific activity data and to ensure that the views of industry are best represented. This engagement also helps raise awareness of the marine licencing process with the fishing community and Southern IFCA's role as a consultee.



7.1.3 Marine Protected Areas



A Project Officer is employed by Southern IFCA to support MPA work. Specifically for this reporting period, this has included ongoing work on three priority workstreams, identified to support the UK Government progression towards protections of 30% of the marine environment by 2030, realised domestically via enhancement of protections for MPAs.

In addition to the three priority workstreams, detailed research into MPAs within the district has continued to ensure that the spatial extent, designated features, relevant pressures relating to fisheries and the conservation objective are fully understood and easily available for use in MPA related reviews and management development. This information along with Southern IFCA compliance & enforcement data has been compiled in GIS to produce visual representations of the relevant interactions in MPAs. For further information see Section 4.4.

Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Review (BTFG): Phase 1

Following a review of the BTFG 2016 Byelaw between 2019-2023 (with a restructure and reprioritisation exercise undertaken in March 2023, following the release of the UK Government's Environmental Improvement Plan in January 2023), a 2023 iteration of the Byelaw was submitted to the MMO. During the 2024-2025 reporting year, the quality assurance process remained ongoing with the MMO and Defra. Following the Byelaws pending ratification, district wide BTFG closures will increase from 25.5% (696.3km²) to 27.2% (743.1km²). Further information please see Section 3.3.1.

Shore Gathering Review

During the reporting year, the Shore Gathering Review has come to a conclusion, with the Byelaw being submitted to the MMO for quality assurance, prior to consideration by the Secretary of State. Further details on this review can be found in Section 3.3.2.

Subject to ratification of the Byelaw, the total area of the District proposed to be managed under spatial closures (permanent and seasonal) under the Shore Gathering Byelaw is 42.8km², representing 1.56% of the area of the District. For all relevant MPAs covered by the Shore Gathering Byelaw (up to the 2m contour), management will cover 24.2% of SPAs, 32.4% of SACs and 16.1% of MCZs, in total covering 23.1% of the relevant MPAs¹ in the District.

Black Seabream Review

The progression of the BSB Review can be found in Sections 2.2.1 and 3.3.3.

8.0 Business Services **4**

8.1 Funding

8.1.1 Levies

Paragraph (16) of The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation (Amendment) Order 2019 states that the expenses incurred by Southern IFCA must be defrayed by the relevant councils, of which there are six. Dorset Council, Hampshire County Council, Isle of Wight Council and BCP Council receive a grant from central government (via the New Burdens Doctrine³) which totals £329,425.

The constituent Local Authorities are levied on an annual basis by Southern IFCA in accordance with a prescribed formula, as captured in the table below. The total LA levy contributions in 2023-2024 were **£845,615**. This was an increase of **4%** on the previous year.

Constituent Council	Formula (%)	Levy 2024-2025 (£)
Hampshire County Council	40.40	341,629
Dorset Council	24.79	209,599
Isle of Wight Council	14.35	121,345
BCP Council	11.14	94,231
Portsmouth City Council	5.02	42,449
Southampton City Council	4.30	36,362
		845,615

8.1.2 Defra Project Funding

As part of the Government Spending Review 2021, Defra committed to a provision of funding (150k per IFCA) for three financial years (2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25). The funding provision is to enable IFCA's to support Defra in their delivery of the Fisheries Act 2020 objectives, specifically MPA, FMP and Marine Consents work. This Section 31 Grant is to support IFCAs in wider extended responsibilities to support the delivery of statutory duties under the MaCAA 2009 and Marine Licensing (Delegated Function) (As amended) Order (2015). The following amounts were received in year across three programmes of work:

- Fisheries Management Plans: **£50,000** (received January 2025)
- Marine Protected Areas: **£50,000** (received January 2025)
- Marine Consents: **£30,000** (received January 2025)

In addition **£10,000** was received from Defra (via the AIFCA) in year (February 2025) to recognise retrospective works that Southern IFCA had completed on aquaculture and recreational sea angling in the financial year 2023-2024.

8.2 End of Year Accounts

With effect from 1st April 2015, Southern IFCA were no longer required to have their accounts audited. However, in order to ensure that the Authority's financial business is conducted in accordance with proper recognised standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, the Authority appointed Francis Clark LLP, registered auditors to carry out a "limited scope assurance report" which is a formal procedure recognised by the Institute of Chartered Accountants. At the time of writing, this external audit is being undertaken. The following information provides a **Draft Statement**

of Accounts which sets out the overall financial position of Southern IFCA for the financial year 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025. These Accounts were approved by the Authority on the 12th June 2025 for external audit. The full report is available [here](#) (pages 31-47) which includes a Consolidated Revenue Account and consolidated Balance Sheet.

During the year to 31st March 2025, the consolidated revenue account recorded a net deficit on General Reserve of £39,879. Details of this variance are available [here](#) (pages 27-31).

8.3 Resources

8.3.1 The Team

	1 st April 2024	31 st March 2025
Full Time, Permanent	13	14
Part Time, Permanent	2	2
Full Time, Fixed term	3	3

Fifty three percent of the staff body are female and 47% are male, with 58% of employees aged 20-30 years, 11% aged 30-40 years, 11% 40-50 years and 20% 50-60 years. The change in headcount recognises the carryover of a vacancy in the Compliance & Enforcement Team from the previous financial year.

Leavers 2024-2025

Job Role	Team	Time in Post	Reason
Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Officer	Compliance & Enforcement Team	24 months	Resignation
Finance Administrator (part time post)	Business Services Team	15 months	Resignation

Staff Recruitment Campaigns 2024-2025

Job Role	Team
Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer	Compliance & Enforcement Team
Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer	Compliance & Enforcement Team
Accounts Administrator (part time post)	Business Services Team

Professional Development

All Southern IFCA employees are set Personal Work Plans which underpin and describe professional development. In year Compliance & Enforcement Officers have become proficient and trained in the use of QGIS mapping software. Two officers completed Radar and Electronic Chart Training. One officer completed a joint patrol with another IFCA. All officers have been developing their presentation skills and have delivered Member Briefing on fisheries within the district.

In year the Research & Policy Officers have attended various webinars, undertaken MEDIN data courses and undertaken time management training. The emphasis this year has been in-team personal development, via provision of expertise and knowledge within the team, particularly across GIS and data analysis.

IFCO Warranting

There are ten operational officers across the teams, of which 6 hold IFCA warrants (this includes 2x DCOs). 1x officer achieved warranted status in the reporting period which took 9 months from commencement of employment to issue of warrant. The decision to warrant new entrants is underpinned by completion of the national accreditation programme.

IFCO Accreditation

SFJ Awards Level 3 Certificate in Fisheries and Marine Enforcement or National Accreditation Programmes objectives are to provide learners with the knowledge and skills to carry out the role of a warranted Marine Enforcement Officer (MEO) or Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer (IFCO).

The main objective of this qualification is to provide learners with the knowledge and skills to carry out the role of a warranted Marine Enforcement Officer (MEO) or Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer (IFCO). The qualification covers: The UK and EU legislation governing a wide range of marine activities, The powers and jurisdiction of the role(s), The procedures to be followed when carrying out inspections of vessels, vehicles or premises for compliance with UK and EU marine environmental legislation, The procedures and legislative requirements when conducting fisheries and marine enforcement investigation

The Qualification is completed through a variety of assessment methods which include written assignments, discussions, Q&A and observations. This is to ensure that a full range of criteria is being met across the units which demonstrates the learner's knowledge and ability in role of an Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Officer. Between 31st March 2024 and 1st April 2025 one IFCO met the required standard and achieved the qualification

8.3.2 Marine Assets

FPV Vigilant entered service in October 2024. Further details can be found in Section 4.4.1.

8.4 Health & Safety

During the reporting period there were 6x accidents 2x incidents and 1x near miss. All Accidents, Incidents and Near Misses are reported to The Executive Sub Committee, where suitable mitigations and changes in policy and procedure are considered. Further details can be found in Annex 5.

8.5 Governance

8.5.1 Governance Improvement Programme

As part of a review of process and policy, with the purpose to identify efficiencies, maximise performance and consider staff retention strategies, the following improvements across the BST were made:

HR Bright Online Platform

Following a trial period in 2023-2024, in April 2024 an online system called HR Bright was introduced to the team, with the idea to reduce the administrative burden associated with time recording of employee hours by the Office Manager and individuals. The online system is accompanied by an App, as well as providing access to a range of online training tools. The use of this system remains under review to ensure that it is fit for purpose.

Online Permit Platform

Southern IFCA committed to reducing and eventually removing the manual inputting requirement for fisheries which are permitted in the district. Specifically 85 permits across the PHDP, SDPB and NFB

(correct as of 2023). This initiative will provide a user-friendly platform for fishers to reduce a paperwork burden.

During the reporting year, over 50% of the Fish for Sale Permits were transferred to the online Permitting System.

The PHDP have been rolled out for the 2025-26 season using the online platform, with all 45 eligible fishers submitting their applications via the Permitting System.

The system will keep a record of payment of permit fees and all permit documentation will be sent via e-mail resulting in zero postal costs. Applicants are able to see the status of their permits via their individual portals and once the permits have been issued they can also access their permit and guidance documents.

8.5.2 GDPR

During the reporting period 4 Freedom of Information requests, 3 Environmental Information Regulation requests and 1 Data Subject Access Request were received in accordance with [Public Access to Information](#). In addition, 2 requests under the Data Protection Act 2018 were received, one from the MMO (14th June 2024) and one from Devon & Severn IFCA (8th November 2024), both for use in accordance with ongoing investigative matters.

Further information can be found in Annex 6.

8.5.3 Formal Complaints

No formal complaints were received during the reporting period.

8.5.4 Authority & Sub Committee Meetings

In accordance with the Southern IFCA Standing Orders, between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025, four meetings of the Full Authority were held at the following locations across the district: Winchester, Isle of Wight, Poole and Dorchester.

Four Executive Sub-Committee meetings were held, two¹ Audit and Governance Sub-Committee Meetings and four Technical Advisory Sub-Committee Meetings were also held.

8.5.5 Working Groups

Date	Format	Attendance	Workstream	Purpose
24 th April 24	Online	9	Black Seabream	To discuss material considerations and decision making in the context of black seabream management
15 th August 24	In-Person	10	Black Seabream	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the scope of objectives for developing measures for black seabream and potential intervention options presented through a Management Matrix.

¹ In accordance with paragraph (40) of the Southern IFCA Standing Orders, a minimum of three Members to be in attendance for business to be transacted Accordingly the June and September meetings of the Audit & Governance Sub-Committee were cancelled.

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreement of Drivers, Headline Objectives and discussion of management options to be taken forward to the stakeholder community for further discussion.
9 th December 24	Online	2	FMPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To discuss the Formal Consultation on T3 FMPs relevant to the Southern IFCA District; Cockle FMP, Queen Scallop FMP, Southern North Sea and Channel Skates and Rays FMP, North Sea and Channel Sprat FMP. Members provided feedback to be included in Southern IFCA Formal Consultation responses.
15 th January 25	Online	6	Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Byelaw	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review available evidence and discuss the proposed outcomes of a review under the Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Byelaw considering the development of a program of action to allow the Authority to be proactive in the management of the fishery. Members recommended the progression of a Monitoring and Control Plan for Manila clam in the fishery.
25 th March 25	In-Person	10	Black Seabream	Members reviewed fishing activity risk factors related to BSB and discussed finalisation of proposed voluntary Shared Principles to take to the stakeholder community prior to Authority consideration.

8.5.6 Member Attendance: Elected Members

Elected Members (from constituent Local Authority's)		Attendance		
		FA	ESC (v)	AGSC (v)
Cllr Mr. P Fuller	Isle of Wight Council (Chair)+	100% (4/4)	100% (4/4)	100% (2/2)*
Cllr Mr. R Hughes	Dorset Council (Vice Chair)	100% (4/4)	50% (2/4)	50% (1/2)*
Cllr Mr. B Dunning	Hampshire County Council	25% (1/4)	0% (0/2)*	
Cllr Mrs. K Wheller	Dorset Council	50% (2/4)		100% (2/2)*
Cllr Mr. P Miles	BCP Council	0% (0/4)		
Cllr Mr. C Goodall	BCP Council	75% (3/4)	100% (2/2)*	
Cllr Mr. J Savage	Southampton City Council	50% (2/4)		
Cllr Mr. R Cooper	Hampshire County Council	0% (0/4)		100% (2/2)*
Cllr Mr. M Winnington	Portsmouth City Council	50% (2/4)	Attended 100% (2/2) following cancelation of June & Sept AGSC	50% (1/2)*

+Elected as Chairman on 13th June 2024.

*Elected to Sub Committee 19th September 2024 following outcomes of Council Elections.

8.5.7 Member Attendance: General Members

General Members (appointed by the Marine Management Organisation)		In person Attendance		
		FA	ESC	TAC
Dr. A Jensen (Chair of the TAC)	Marine Environment/Academic Sector	100% (4/4)	100% (4/4)	100% (4/4)
Mr. R Stride (Vice Chair TAC)	Commercial Fishing Sector	75% (3/4)	100% (4/4)	100% (4/4)
Dr. S Cripps	Marine Environment/Conservation Sector	75% (3/4)		50% (2/4)
Mr. C Francis	Recreational Sea Angling Sector	50% (2/4)		75% (3/4)
Mr. C Brock	Commercial Fishing Sector	0% (0/4)		50% (2/4)
Ms. L MacCallum	Marine Environment/Conservation Sector	100% (3/3)		66% (2/3)
<i>Resigned 6th December 2024.</i>				
Mr. G Wordsworth	Aquaculture Sector	100% (4/4)		75% (3/4)
Mr. N Hornby	Other: Fisheries Science and Policy Sector	100% (4/4)		75% (3/4)
Ms Elisabeth Bussey-Jones	Other: Legal/Marine Heritage	100% (4/4)		100% (4/4)
Dr Heidi Guille	Marine Environment/Conservation Sector	0% (0/1)		100% (1/1)
<i>Joined 15th January 2025</i>				

General Member biographies can be found [here](#).

8.5.8 Member Attendance: Partner Organisation Members

Representatives of Partner Organisations		In person Attendance	
		FA	TAC
Mr. Stuart Kingston-Turner	Environment Agency	75% (3/4)	75% (3/4)
Dr. R Morgan	Natural England	75% (3/4)	50% (3/4)
Mr. J Morgan	Marine Management Organisation	75% (3/4)	0% (0/4)

8.5.9 General Member Appraisals

In accordance with the Terms and Conditions of IFCA General Membership, as determined by the Marine Management Organisation, annual Member Appraisals are held to consider the contributions that appointees make to the work of the IFCA, as well as consideration of behaviours in accordance with NOLAN principles and community representation. The appraisals also provide a useful opportunity for feedback to the CEO and Chair of both the Authority and Chair of the Technical Advisory Committee. All Member Appraisals were held in August 2024.

8.5.10 Member Briefings

This initiative was introduced following a suggestion raised during the Members Appraisals in August, with the purpose to provide Members with contextual and site specific information on fisheries and

conservation within the district, and where possible, information relevant to specific Authority meeting locations. The Briefings are optional to Members and held prior to the start of the formal meeting.

- **Key Fisheries and Conservation, relevant to the Isle of Wight and Solent** (September 2024), presented by PDCO Dell & DCO Birchenough.
- **Key fisheries and conservation considerations in Christchurch Bay and Poole Bay**, (December 2024) presented by Senior IFCO Mayne and IFCO Mullen.
- **Key fisheries and conservation considerations in Weymouth Bay**, (March 2025) presented by Senior IFCO Condie and IFCO Fullbrook.

8.5.11 Elected Member Training

The CEO provided an online Elected Member Briefing to help induct new Elected Members to the Authority.

8.5.12 General Member Induction

In Year the CEO inducted one new General Members to the Authority.

8.5.13 Public Questions at Authority Meetings

Mr T Lankford (Full Authority Meeting, March 2025)

Mr T Lankford addressed Members with concerns he had regarding the reduction in the inshore fishing community in recent years. He discussed the impact that regulations were having on the fishing fleet and the lack of opportunity for new entrants. He discussed the ban on pollack for commercial fishers, noting that recreational fishers were not subject to restrictions. He discussed the Southern IFCA Net Fishing Byelaw and the restrictions relating to salmon, in addition to the Southern IFCA Shore Gathering Byelaw, and the impact this will have on young fishers handgathering.

8.5.14 Guest Speakers at Authority Meetings

Angling for Sustainability, a Fisheries Industry Science Partnership Project (Full Authority Meeting, June 2024)

Members received a presentation from Dr Peter Davies, Post Doctoral Researcher in Marine Ecology at the University of Plymouth, on a collaborative project run between scientists, fishermen, conservation advisors and fisheries managers, funded by the Defra Fisheries Industry Science Partnership (FISP) scheme. The project, Angling for Sustainability, aims to support sustainable fisheries management by filling key knowledge gaps by tracking shark, ray and black seabream movements. Dr Davies presented an overview of the methods used in the project which involves the deployment of receivers, including in fine scale arrays, in locations across Dorset and Hampshire, and the tagging of black seabream and elasmobranch species with acoustic tags so that movements can be tracked using the receiver network. Dr Davies presented some initial findings from the project and outlined that the further receiver downloads which are planned for the autumn will provide further data to inform reporting on these key species. This was followed by a Q&A session. Members expressed their thanks to Dr Davies for an interesting and informative presentation, recognising how the project outcomes would be helpful in informing discussions on black seabream management in the district.

Seagrass Conservation and Restoration in a WILDER Solent (Full Authority Meeting, September 2024)

Members received a presentation from Dr Tim Ferrero, Senior Specialist in Marine Conservation from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (HIWWT) on seagrass conservation and restoration in

the Solent including WILDER, the Trust's vision for wildlife conservation to 2030 which includes three goals looking at nature in recovery '30 by 30', 1 in 4 people taking action and nature as a solution. Dr Ferrero provided an overview of seagrass, the key benefits offered by the species, the pressures that seagrass habitats face and the intention to protect the seagrass which exists in the Solent and restore where the habitat has been lost. Dr Ferrero reviewed initiatives for protection and restoration including work undertaken by Southern IFCA in managing fishing activities and other activities in the marine environment. Dr Ferrero outlined two restoration projects which are operating in the Solent, the Solent Seagrass Restoration Project and the ELSP Solent Seascape Project and the methods employed to work towards restoration, working with academic institutions and commercial companies.

9.0 The IFCA Compliance & Operations Report 2018-2022

9.1 Background to Report

In accordance with requirements specified under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, The IFCA Compliance & Operations Report is laid in Parliament by the Secretary of State as soon as is reasonably practicable after the end of the relevant four year period. The above named report was published in February 2025.

The report considers IFCAs from a national perspective and identifies the following overarching themes: Accountability, Governance & Finance*, Engaging Stakeholders, Working in Partnership, Evidence & Data, Fisheries Management and Compliance & Enforcement.

The report identifies thirteen government conclusions, eight of which, as specified by the Minister, require immediate consideration (3,5,6,8,9,11,12,13).

9.1.1 Consideration of Report Findings through a Southern IFCA 2024-2025 Lens

The following table considers where the recommendations identified in the report are already being delivered in the Southern IFCA district, when considering through the Annual Reporting lens of 2024-2025. Southern IFCA remain committed to continue to deliver its work in accordance with the recommendations:

Government Conclusions	How Southern IFCA are performing in accordance with the Government Conclusions (2024-2025 Lens)
(1) IFCA Committee Structure & Membership: that there is an imbalance between fisher and environmental interests.	General Membership remains balanced at Southern IFCA, with four General Members representing environmental interests and four sector representatives. In addition, one General Member with legal expertise falls into the 'other' category. Further details General Membership areas of expertise and meeting attendance can be found in Section 8.5.7.
(2) Oversight of IFCA activities: duplication of work with the MMO.	Information on how Southern IFCA work with MMO colleagues on the coast, can be found in Section 2.2.
(3) Transparency around Decision Making: stakeholders not being sufficiently engaged, nor understand how their input has influenced decision making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southern IFCA provide detailed information on the Southern IFCA website describing the stages of Decision Making Processes, which builds on the National IFCA Byelaw Guidance, as provided by Defra. Where management intervention is recommended, A Management Intentions Document accompanies any proposed management intervention in order to provide contextual understandings which have underpinned management decisions. In accordance with the National IFCA Byelaw Guidance, where objections are received in response to a proposed management intervention, full written responses are provided following consideration at Executive Committee level. These responses are subsequently scrutinised by Defra as part of the Defra QA process.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full meeting agendas (to include Executive Summaries of each agenda item) and meeting minutes are published online in accordance with Southern IFCA Standing Orders. • More information on stakeholder engagement can be found in Sections 6.0 and 2.1.
(4) Funding & Accountability	<i>Matter being addressed nationally via AIFCA & Defra</i>
(5) Transparency around consultations & (6) Tailoring engagement	Information on consultations and the various engagement methodologies can be found in Section 6.2.
(7) Promoting partnership working arrangements	Information on partnership working can be found in Section 2.2.
(8) Stakeholder engagement through data collection: fishers want to be able to contribute more to data collection.	Information on industry led data collection initiatives in the Southern IFCA District can be found in Section 3.0.
(9) Balancing stakeholder views in decision making: how fishers can influence management decisions	More information on consultations and the various engagement methodologies can be found in Section 6.2.
(10) Byelaw Making Process – efficiencies across partners	<i>Matter being addressed nationally via AIFCA</i>
(11) Building Trust: that there is a disproportionate emphasis on enforcement.	<p>Southern IFCA is committed to achieving fair, effective and proportionate enforcement in accordance with the Compliance and Enforcement Framework Compliance & Enforcement Framework (published online). Further information can be found here: Compliance & Enforcement : Southern IFCA.</p> <p>Information on specific enforcement actions taken during reporting year 2024-2025 can be found in Section 4.0.</p>
(12) ...differences in MMO and IFCA enforcement approaches and decisions.	<p>Southern IFCA work closely with the MMO locally and nationally. All Southern IFCA enforcement decisions are in accordance with recognised powers, codes of practice and principles.</p> <p>Information on joint patrol work can be found in Section 2.2.</p>
(13) Complaints: for a consistent complaints procedure to be introduced nationally.	<p>The Southern IFCA Complaint Procedure can be found here: Customer Complaints Procedure</p> <p><i>The wider matter to address is being considered nationally via the AIFCA.</i></p>

10.0 Feedback

Southern IFCA are committed to providing an exemplary service. If you are not satisfied with an aspect of our service, we encourage you to let us know and we will do our best to resolve the matter as quickly as possible. Full details of the complaints procedure is published.

11.0 Abbreviations & Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AIFCA	Association of IFCAs
APB	Aquaculture Production Business
BAU	Business as Usual
BCP	Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole
BMA	Bivalve Management Area
BMP	Business Management Plan
BNA	Bass Nursery Area
BP	Business Plan
BSB	Black Sea Bream
BTFG	Bottom Towed Fishing Gear
C&E	Compliance and Enforcement
CEFAS	Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Sciences
CET	Compliance and Enforcement Team
CLUE	
CoD	Co-Development
CoP	Code of Practice
CPUE	Catch Per Unit Effort
Defra	Department of Food and Rural Affairs
D&SIFCA	Devon and Severn IFCA
EA	Environment Agency
EFH	Essential Fish Habitats
EHO	Environmental Health Officer
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union

Acronym	Meaning
FAP	Fixed Administrative Penalty
FHI	Fish Health Inspectorate
FISP	Fisheries Industry Science Partnership
FMP	Fisheries Management Plans
FPV	Fisheries Protection Vessel
FSA	Food Standards Agency
GIS	Global Information System
GLAA	Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
IHA	Indicative Habitat Areas
IFCA	Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
IFCO	Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer
LPUE	Length Per Unit Effort
M&CP	Monitoring and Control Plan
MaCAA	Marine and Coastal Access Act
MCA	Maritime Coastguard Agency
MCSS	Monitoring and Control Surveillance System
MCZ	Marine Conservation Zone
MCRS	Minimum Conservation Reference Size
MEO	Marine Enforcement Officer
MMO	Marine Management Organisation
MP	Minister of Parliament
MPA	Marine Protected Areas
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
NFB	Net Fishing Byelaw
NE	Natural England

Acronym	Meaning
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NPA	Net Permit Area
QA	Quality Assurance
REM	Remote Electronic Monitoring
RSA	Recreational Sea Angler
SAC	Special Areas of Conservation
SDPB	Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw
SIFCA	Southern IFCA
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Importance
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SoS	Secretary of State
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPOC	Single Point of Contact
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
TCG	Tasking and Coordination Group
VMS	Vessel Monitoring System

12.0 Annexes

Annex 1: Achieving National Success Criteria







Performance Indicators for Success Criteria 1

IFCAs are recognised and heard, balancing the economic needs of the fishery whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders

IFCAs will be visible, respected and trusted regulators within coastal communities and will maintain and deliver a strategy to communicate their vision and duties effectively. IFCAs will engage with policy makers, industry, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), recreational and commercial users; and other regulators. They will work jointly and collaboratively with partner organisations across boundaries; will participate and contribute to the development and implementation of regional and national marine policy, including the marine planning regime; will take long-term strategic decisions and manage risks effectively. IFCAs may maintain a national body to co-ordinate the activities of authorities that are party to arrangements

Outcomes	Performance Indicators	Status
<p>The IFCA will maintain and implement an effective communication strategy.</p> <p>The IFCA will maintain its website, ensuring public access to current fisheries and conservation information for the District, including management requirements and byelaws. Non-reserved IFCA Committee papers will be published.</p> <p>The IFCA will contribute to co-ordinated activity at a national level.</p> <p>The IFCA and its principal partners will have a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities. Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with the MMO, Natural England, Environment Agency and CEFAs will be maintained. Opportunities for greater efficiencies, effective joint working and collaboration will be explored and implemented when feasible.</p>	The IFCA will maintain a database of stakeholder contacts (in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations 2018 [GDPR]) that will have been reviewed and updated by 31 March each year.	✓
	The IFCA will have completed a review of its communication strategy and implementation plan by 31 March each year.	✓
	The IFCA will have reviewed its website by the last working day of each month	✓
	The IFCA will have reviewed its website and ensured it meets the objectives of its communication strategy, by 31 March each year.	✓
	The IFCA will have reviewed all MoU's by 31 March each year. There will be a clear plan in place to update MoUs where necessary, to an agreed timescale.	✓
	By 31 March each year, the IFCA will have participated appropriately, proportionately and at the right level of delegation, in regional and national fisheries and conservation activity identified in the annual plan	✓







Performance Indicators for Success Criteria 2

IFCAs implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime		
The IFCA enforcement regime is risk-based, makes appropriate use of intelligence, meets legislative standards and complies with the Regulators Code. It should make effective use of the resources available to regulators; complement and align, if possible, with the regimes in adjacent IFC Districts and management by other organisations including the MMO and Environment Agency. Consistency and fairness are important. Regulatory compliance is promoted. Enforcement action is carried out by trained, professional officers working to clear standards of conduct.		
Outcomes	Performance Indicators	Status
<p>The IFCA will publish its Enforcement Risk Register and Strategy, clearly setting out its approach to achieving regulatory compliance and potential sanctions that may be applied for infringements and/or offences.</p> <p>The IFCA will have developed consistency in regulations (byelaws) with other organisations</p> <p>The IFCA will manage operational activity (e.g., through a Tasking & Co-ordination Group) and capture, record, evaluate and disseminate intelligence that is compatible with partner organisations. It is engaged in joint working with partner organisations.</p> <p>Warranted Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officers will be trained and accredited to nationally agreed standards. They will maintain professionalism and make appropriate interventions to deliver efficient, effective enforcement activity</p>	The IFCA will ensure its Enforcement Risk Register and Strategy are published and available on its website from 1 April each year.	
	The IFCA will demonstrate in its Annual Report how it has worked with other regulators to achieve consistent quality, application and enforcement of management measures.	
	The IFCA will compile records of enforcement activity in a standard format; provide them to the National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG) and publish them on its website.	
	The IFCA will adopt the national Code of Conduct for IFCOs, which will be reviewed annually and published on its website by 1 April.	
	The Code of Conduct for IFCOs is reflected in work objectives and annual appraisals for all Warranted Officers.	
	Warranted Officers attain accreditation. All undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD)	

Performance Indicators for Success Criteria 3

IFCAs use evidence based and appropriate measures to manage the sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources and deliver marine environmental protection within their districts






The IFCAs were created as statutory inshore regulators by the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. They are relevant authorities for implementing international environmental commitments including the Birds, Habitats, Water and Marine Strategy Framework Directives and make an important contribution to securing a network of well managed marine protected areas, including European Marine Sites and Marine Conservation Zones. Fisheries Management Plans identify local management measures which should be based on evidence; be timely; subject to appropriate consultation and in step with national initiatives and priorities. An IFCA should balance the social and economic benefits of exploiting sea fisheries resources with the need to protect the environment. It should make a contribution to sustainable development.

Outcomes	Performance Indicators	Status
<p>The IFCA will identify issues likely to affect sustainable management of the marine environment in the District; undertake risk assessments and gap analysis; review appropriateness of existing measures; evaluate management options and develop and implement proportionate marine management solutions.</p> <p>The IFCA will support implementation of a well-managed network of marine protected areas by: developing a range of criteria-based management options; implementing management measures to ensure that inshore fisheries activities comply with the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 and the revised approach to managing commercial fisheries in European Marine Sites; and that local management contributes to delivery of targets for the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Water Framework Directive and Marine Plans.</p> <p>The IFCA will develop Fisheries Management Plans for priority species where appropriate. Shared objectives will be developed with identified partners; actions identified, and best practice reflected so that management makes a contribution to sustainable development.</p>	The IFCA will record site-specific management considerations for Marine Protected Areas and report progress to the Authority	
	The IFCA will publish data analysis and evidence supporting new management measures, on its website	
	Management information (e.g., sampling and/or survey results) will be collected periodically after new management measures have been implemented, to demonstrate the extent of effectiveness of the intervention	
	The IFCA will have developed a range of criteria-based management options that are explained to stakeholders through the IFCA website, and reviewed by 31 March each year	
	New IFCA management measures selected for development and implementation are delivered within agreed timescales	
	The IFCA will include shared agreed objectives and actions from Fisheries Management Plans in its own Annual Plan, which will be published by 31 March each year.	

Performance Indicators for Success Criteria 4

IFCAs have appropriate governance in place and staff are trained and professional




IFCAs are statutory authorities and sit within the local government family. Authority members may be either general members or local councillors. They comply with Codes of Conduct and the Standing Orders that apply to meetings of local government committees. General members are appointed on merit, through open competition and for a term. They are subject to an annual performance appraisal. An IFCA is funded by levy, charged to its member councils. Funding originates in local taxation. An IFCA is accountable for its use of public resources and should ensure that a proper auditing regime provides confidence in its commitment and spend of public money. It should make effective use of its resources, including staff and assets. An IFCA has a statutory obligation to prepare and publish Annual Plans and Annual Reports.

Outcomes	Performance Indicators	Status
<p>The IFCA will demonstrate its long-term strategic approach to sustainable marine management by having appropriate plan-making, review, update and amendment procedures in place. The IFCA will record its performance against corporate outcomes and indicators as soon as practically possible following the end of the financial year.</p> <p>Staff performance management systems will be in place that link to the IFCA success criteria. There will be an induction procedure for new joiners. Staff training and development needs will be identified. Performance will be managed and, where necessary, improvement procedures will be followed.</p> <p>The IFCA Committee will be supported by an organised, efficient and effective secretariat. New members will receive an induction pack and briefing from the Authority. There will be a rolling twelve-month schedule of quarterly Authority meetings. Notices of meetings and documentation will be made available in line with Standing Orders.</p> <p>IFCA Committee meetings will be held in public unless material is either confidential, or exempt within the meaning of the Local Government Act 1972</p>	The IFCA will publish a Plan on its website by 31 March, setting out the main objectives and priorities for the next financial year. A copy will be sent to the Secretary of State.	
	After the end of each financial year, the IFCA will publish a report on its website describing its activities, performance and a summary of audited financial information in that year, by 30 November. A copy will be sent to the Secretary of State.	
	IFCA staff will have annual performance management plans in place. Annual appraisals for all staff will have been completed by 31 March each year.	
	An efficient secretariat of IFCA staff support IFCA Authority meetings which are held quarterly and are quorate. Meeting documentation will meet Standing Orders.	
	The IFCA will have demonstrated, in its Annual Report, how marine, land and water management mechanisms in the Inshore Fisheries & Conservation District have worked responsively and effectively together.	

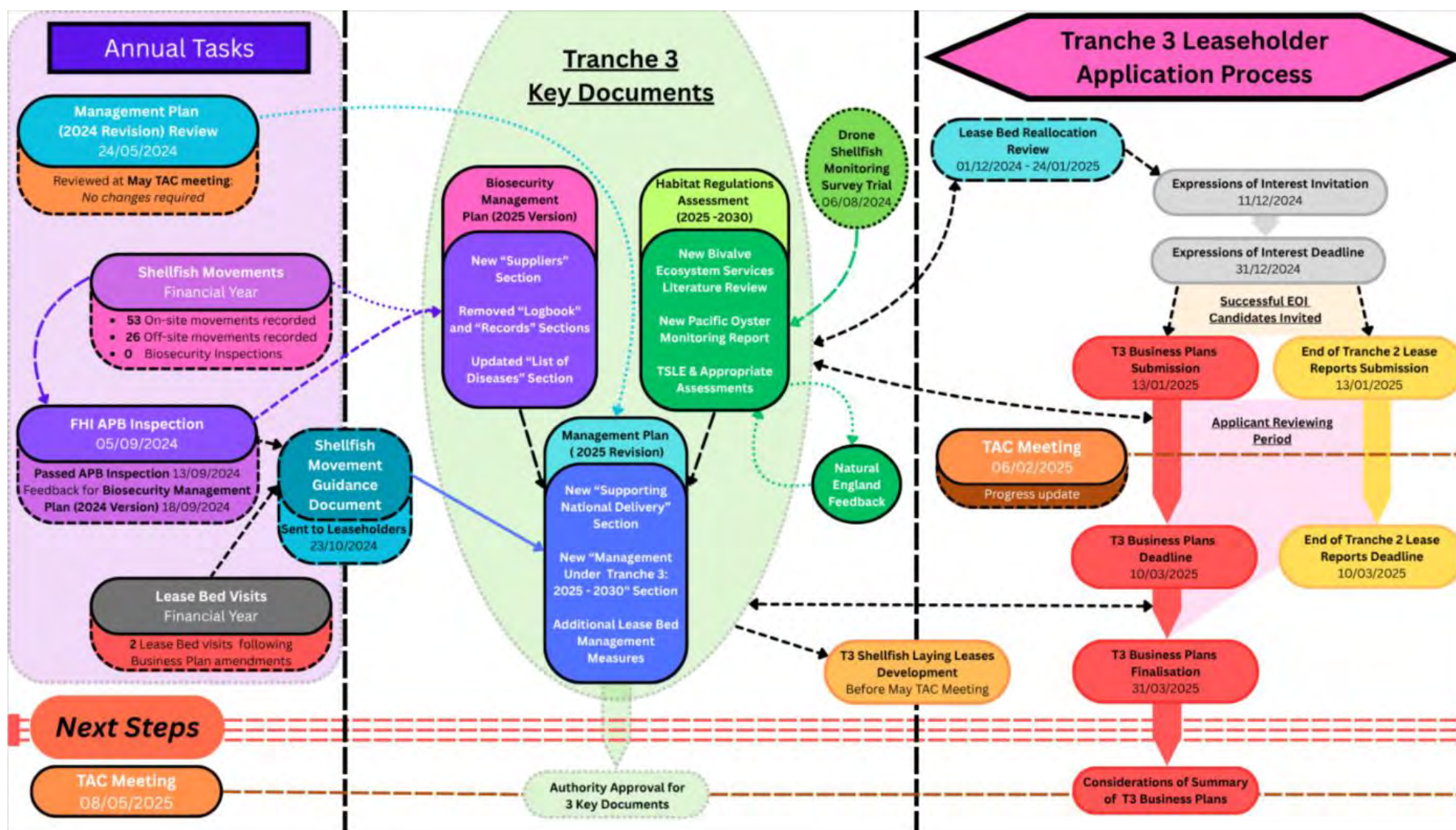
Performance Indicators for Success Criteria 5

IFCAs make the use of evidence to deliver their objectives

IFCAs are statutory regulators for their Inshore Fisheries and Conservation District. Decision-making should be based on evidence. All IFCAs are supported by officers who pool their expertise and share best practice as a Technical Advisory Group (TAG). A programme of research activity and monitoring is planned, developed and updated in consultation with partners. The programme informs management decisions and supports justification for additional research and evidence gathering.

Outcomes	Performance Indicators	Status
A strategic research plan that contributes to greater understanding of the marine environment and delivery of cost-effective management of sea fisheries resources	The IFCA will demonstrate progress that has been made towards identifying its evidence needs by publishing a research plan each year	
Standard Operating Procedures describe how data is captured and shared with principal partners	The IFCA will publish a research report annually that demonstrates how evidence has supported decision making	
A list of research databases held by the IFCA and the frequency of their review	The IFCA's contribution to TAG and progress that has made towards a national evidence needs programme will be recorded in the IFCA's Annual Report	

Annex 2: Poole Order Work 2024-2025



Annex 3: Dispensations Issued 2024-2025

Dispensation Type	Applicant	Reason	Byelaw Dispensing Against
Stocking and Breeding	Commercial Operator (Aquaculture)	Maintain aquaculture operations on lease beds (carriage of gear)	PHDP Byelaw
Scientific	Environment Agency	Ecological Assessment for Water Framework Directive Purposes	MCRS Byelaw & Vessels Used in Fishing Byelaw
Scientific	CEFAS	Scientific survey	MCRS Byelaw
Scientific	Environment Agency	Small fish survey	MCRS Byelaw
Scientific	Environment Agency	Small fish survey	MCRS Byelaw
Stocking and Breeding	Commercial Operator (Aquaculture)	Maintain aquaculture operations on lease beds (carriage of gear)	PHDP Byelaw
Scientific	Langstone Harbour Board/ RSPB	Small fish survey	MCRS Byelaw
Scientific	CEFAS	Scientific Survey	MCRS Byelaw & Vessels Used in Fishing
Educational	Dorset Wildlife Trust	Education Centre	MCRS Byelaw
Scientific	Portsmouth City Council (Port Health Authority)	Shellfish Classification	SDP Byelaw, Fishing for Cockles Byelaw & MCRS Byelaw
Scientific	Southern IFCA	Small fish survey	MCRS Byelaw
Scientific	University of Essex	Small fish survey	MCRS Byelaw
Educational	Hampshire County Council (Calshot Activity Centre)	Small fish seine net	Net Fishing Byelaw & MCRS Byelaw

Annex 4: FMP Work 2024-2025

Front Runners Tranche 1&2: Post Publication	Tranche 3: Awaiting Publication	Tranche 4: Planning and Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crab & Lobster Whelk Bass King Scallop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southern North Sea & Channel Skates & Rays North Sea & Channel Sprat Queen Scallop Cockles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Celtic Sea & Western Channel Pelagic, Celtic Sea & Western Channel Demersal, Seabream Wrasses Complex

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species North Sea & Eastern Channel Mixed Flatfish 		
Planning and preparation phase	Planning and preparation phase	Planning and preparation phase
Publication phase	Publication phase	Publication phase
Post publication phase	Post Publication phase	Post publication phase

Work undertaken relating to Specific FMP Tranches during 2024-2025

Tranche 1&2 'Front Runners'

During the **Post Publication Phase**, Southern IFCA continued to:

- participate in implementation planning discussions and relevant working groups/workshops, providing input to support the seeking of industry representation to implementation groups
- participated in and provided comments on reports and documents related to the development of the Cuttlefish Action Plan (Channel Demersal Non-Quota FMP), associated roadshow and round table engagement events.
- Support the implementation of management measures that resulted from Crab & Lobster, Bass and Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species FMPs delivered through an MMO Licence Condition and The Sea Fisheries (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2024.
- provide ongoing participation in an IFCA workshop on the proposal for an English whelk permit & Whelk Management Science Group Meetings (Whelk FMP)
- provide information to relevant fishers on joining the King Scallop FMP Implementation Group.
- Responded to request for information related to an octopus evidence project (Channel Demersal Non-Quota FMP).
- Develop new methodologies for the Solent Scallop Stock Survey in order to address evidence gaps in the Scallop FMP.
- Expand the Whelk Monitoring Programme, through the development of a District wide Landings Per Unit Effort (LPUE) Pilot Project in order to address evidence gaps in the Whelk FMP.
 - The project aims to contribute to the evidence base for whelk stocks in the UK, through systematically gathering evidence on fishing effort and landings of common whelk through monthly catch returns. The development of a timeseries dataset of whelk data throughout the District will assist in achieving objectives set under the Whelk FMP to improve data gaps and develop data collection programmes. It will also help inform future management such as the Southern IFCA Pot Fishing Byelaw at the point that this Byelaw comes into force and ensure that reviews of management continue to be based on best-available evidence.
 - The project consists of voluntary monthly catch sought from fishers across the District which focuses on the collection of information relating to fishing duration, location, type of bait, the number of pots used, soak time, and total kg of whelk landed. In the 2024/25 financial year, Southern IFCA engaged with fishers while the project was developed and established a list of volunteers to provide us with data throughout the following whelk season. SIFCA consulted with representatives of other whelk data initiatives including Bangor University to understand how similar data was being collected for other fisheries and how this

was feeding into developing an evidence base under the Whelk FMP. Volunteer packs were sent to fishers including the relevant information surrounding the project at the end of the 2024/25 year, data will be analysed following the first year of data collection at the end of December 2025.

Tranche 3

During the **Planning & Preparation Phase**, Southern IFCA continued to:

- supply expertise and knowledge for the FMPs in the development of final drafts for consultation
- provide feedback on all Tranche 3 FMPs through the Formal Consultation and promotion of engagement opportunities within the District
- attend FMP engagement events for Queen Scallop, Southern North Sea and Channel Skates and Rays, North Sea and Channel Sprat and Cockles FMPs

During the **Publication Phase**, Southern IFCA:

- continued to promote Formal Consultations providing relevant links on the Southern IFCA website via the FMPs page and News Page, as well as across all social media platforms including engagement events for the District
- hosted a Southern IFCA Authority Workshop in December 2024 to discuss each FMP and to consider points for inclusion in Southern IFCA formal responses
- attended 2 x in-person engagement events in the District
- attended 3 x online engagement events
- submitted responses to all Tranche 3 FMPs in line with the 19th January 2025 deadline.

Tranche 4

During the **Planning & Preparation Phase**, Southern IFCA:

- have continued to attend and contribute to working groups and provide expertise and knowledge to FMP drafting.
- maintained extensive involvement in working groups, engagement, provision of information and commenting on FMP drafts, specifically:
 - **Celtic Seas and Western Channel Pelagic FMP**
 - Promotion of Defra T4 information webinar, attendance at Partnership meetings (online), submission of feedback on draft FMP to MMO
 - **Celtic Seas and Western Channel Demersal**
 - Promotion of Defra T4 information webinar, attendance at MMO/IFCA scoping meeting, attendance at online stakeholder engagement event
 - **Seabream**
 - Participation in a Working Group, provided links to relevant stakeholders who may be interested in being on the Seabream FMP Working Group, attended a meeting with MMO team to understand developments made to draft FMP

pre-public consultation, held a discussion with MMO & Sussex IFCA on relevant wording for the Seabream FMP to reflect IFCA work in management for Marine Conservation Zones ahead of public consultation.

- **Wrasse**

- Participation in Working Group for this FMP, provision of links to relevant stakeholders who may be interested in being on the Wrasse FMP Working Group, submission of feedback on the draft FMP to MMO team, actioned a request for information from MRAG, working on behalf of the MMO, to provide support/data for FMP drafting and provided information on data collected for the Live Wrasse Fishery.

- **Tasks spanning both Seabream and Wrasse FMPs**

- Promotion of Defra T4 information webinar, actioned request for information from MRAG, working on behalf of the MMO, to provide support/data for FMP drafting, provided information from the Southern IFCA Juvenile Fish Survey dataset - species, location, date, number and length data, responded to a request to contribute feedback on the wording of two questionnaires regarding IFCA Management Measures for the Wrasse Complexes and Seabream FMP, promoted the MMO FMP survey on social media, website and emailed to all relevant District stakeholder groups, promoted 3 x in-person MMO FMP workshops held within the District on IFCA website and social media and dissemination of information to relevant District stakeholder groups, attended MMO FMP workshop in Mudeford, Poole and Weymouth, promotion of MMO online workshop advertised on website and social media, attended the MMO FMP feedback workshop (online) and submitted feedback on the draft FMP to MMO team.

Work undertaken covering multiple FMPs during 2024-2025

- Throughout the FMP process to date, Southern IFCA have provided links between FMP delivery partners and the following district industry liaison groups:
 - South Coast Fishermen's Council
 - Camber Docks Fishermen's Association
 - The Recreational Angling Sector Group
 - The Poole and District Fishermen's Association
 - The Poole and District Sea Angling Association
 - Lyme Bay CIC
- Information has been provided directly to relevant fishers via Southern IFCA held contact details.
- The Southern IFCA continue to host dedicated FMP webpage ([Fisheries Management Plans : Southern IFCA](#)) which outlines general information, links to where more information can be found and details of general engagement events which spanned all FMPs. The webpage also hosts dedicated sections for each of the frontrunner, Tranche 3 and Tranche 4 FMPs relevant to the District. These sections provide information as required on the development stage, FMP specific engagement opportunities and contact details for FMP leads. This webpage is continually updated as new information becomes available and new information regarding engagement and consultation is reflected across social media platforms. Southern IFCA have added links to the North Sea and Eastern Channel Mixed Flatfish in October 2024 in addition to the first five published FMPs to the FMP page of the Southern IFCA website.

- Southern IFCA continue to have a standing agenda item at the quarterly TAC which provides Members with an update on any matters relating to FMPs
- Southern IFCA submitted a formal response to the Defra Consultation on proposed amendments to Annex A of the Joint Fisheries Statement. A response was submitted by the 21st November 2024 deadline.
- Southern IFCA have attended various meetings and workshops at local, regional and national levels, both online and in person, covering multiple FMPs. These have included attendance at:
 - T4 information webinar (online) on 17th April 2024 which launched the Tranche 4 FMP process
 - The Science and Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs): Progress Made and Exploring the Future event, in London on 18th March 2025
- Southern IFCA continue to disseminate information for communities awareness, to include the publicising of Defra FMP Blog to all relevant channels.
- Southern IFCA have had continued engagement with the AIFCA responding to requests to submit information, review evidence summaries and provide details on existing IFCA management.

Annex 5: Accident, Incident & Near Miss 2024-2025

Category	Overview	Actions Taken
Accident	Operational work undertaken without following manual handling training, resulting in injury.	All staff completed a refresher Manual Handling course
Accident	Dehydration and sickness following operational delivery at sea onboard a fishing vessel where there was no access to lavatory facilities.	Review of H&S Policy and Risk Assessment undertaken, which led to a change in operational practice for survey work.
Accident	Cut sustained whilst undertaking a boarding at sea	Review of H&S Policy and Risk Assessment undertaken. NFA
Accident	Damage to FPV A-Frame whilst undertaking compliance work at sea.	Review of relevant Risk Assessments undertaken with relevant changes to operational practice introduced.
Accident	Damage to FPV tubing whilst undertaking compliance work at sea,	Full internal investigation undertaken. Review of relevant Risk Assessments and H&S Policy undertaken with relevant changes to operational practice introduced.
Accident	Vehicle damage following contact with a low wall in a car park.	NFA
Incident	Speeding fine	Actioned in accordance with Vehicle policy
Incident	Speeding fine	Actioned in accordance with Vehicle policy
Near Miss	Rope attached to A-Frame on survey vessel came loose and made contact with IFCO. No damage or injury sustained.	Risk Assessment reviewed. NFA.

Annex 6: GDPR Data Requests

Type	Date Received	Detail	Response Date
Freedom of Information	15 th Apr 2024	Seeking information on the Net Fishing Byelaw and supporting documents.	Request withdrawn on 17 th Apr 2024
Data Subject Access Request	1 st May 2024	Former employee seeking information	20 th May 2024
Freedom of Information	10 th May 2024	Request for information relating to Net Fishing Permits	21 st May 2024
Environmental Information Regulations	30 th July 2024	Consultant requesting information on fisheries activities and species	7 th Aug 2024
Environmental Information Regulations	2 nd Aug 2024	Consultant requesting fisheries activities and species	22 nd Aug 2024
Environmental Information Regulations	4 th Sep 2024	Legal firm seeking stock status of fishery	10 th Sept 2024
Freedom of Information	20 th Sep 2024	Seeking information on the banking and insurance arrangements	10 th Oct 2024
Freedom of Information	16 th Oct 2024	Seeking information on the number of registered fishing vessels in the district.	5 th Nov 2024

SOUTHERN IFCA ANNUAL REPORTING SPECIFIC TO CONSTITUENT COUNCILS 2024-2025

Report by The CEO

A. Purpose

To receive via presentation at the Authority Meeting the 6 x Constituent Council Reports for the period April 2024 to March 2025.

B. Recommendations

- a) That Members consider and provide comment on the draft initiative.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 A new initiative to demonstrate how Southern IFCA are delivering its legislative functions specific to each of the Constituent Local Councils.
- 1.2 With the overarching aim to promote the work of Southern IFCA to our funding bodies and relevant communities.
- 1.3 These reports intend to help inform Elected Members when considering annual budgetary discussions, as well as be used by the Chief Executive Officer and Chairman when attending meetings with relevant Local Councils over the course of the 2025-2026 financial year and beyond.
- 1.4 Looking ahead at possible changes in funding arrangements in 2026, following the UK Governments decision to undertake devolution, it remains vital for Southern IFCA to demonstrate its value moving forward.

Compliance & Enforcement Report Paper For Information

Report by Principal Deputy Chief Officer Sam Dell

A. Purpose

To provide Members with an overview of the Southern IFCA risk-based approach to compliance and enforcement (C&E) for the period May to July 2025.

B. Supporting Information

Further details of the C&E functions, to include the 2025-2026 Compliance & Enforcement Team Plan can be found here: [Compliance & Enforcement : Southern IFCA \(southern-ifca.gov.uk\)](https://southern-ifca.gov.uk).

1.0 Background

The statistical data presented is aligned to national IFCA metrics that are reported to the AIFCA and Defra on an annual basis, in addition to provision of district specific metrics which capture how the CETs work is working to deliver the [Southern IFCA Annual Strategy 2025-2026](#).

2.0 Overview of key active fisheries during reporting period

The key active fisheries for this period have been the **Poole Harbour Dredge fishery** for clams and cockles which opened on the 25th May, 45 permits are issued each year, all vessels in the fishery are less than 9m in length and are small open vessels which carry out day fishing trips during periods of high water, officers have been **ensuring compliance** with the associated permit conditions **including inspecting the fishing gear construction** as well as ensuring compliance with **temporal and spatial restrictions**.

During May, June and July Officers observed an **increase in cockle fishing**, this has been reflected in the **catch reporting arrangements**.

Another key fishery within the district is the **Bass** fishery, **commercial vessels** may fish for, retain and land bass with authorised fishing gear within the specified limits. **Recreational fishers** using rod and line may retain two bass per person, per day.

As expected at this time of year the team observe **an increase in Recreational Fishing and Shellfish gathering** across the district.

The CET continue to enforce the **Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw** which protects features of MPAs across the district and the **Minimum Conservation Reference Size Byelaw** across all fisheries.

3.0 Intelligence Reporting

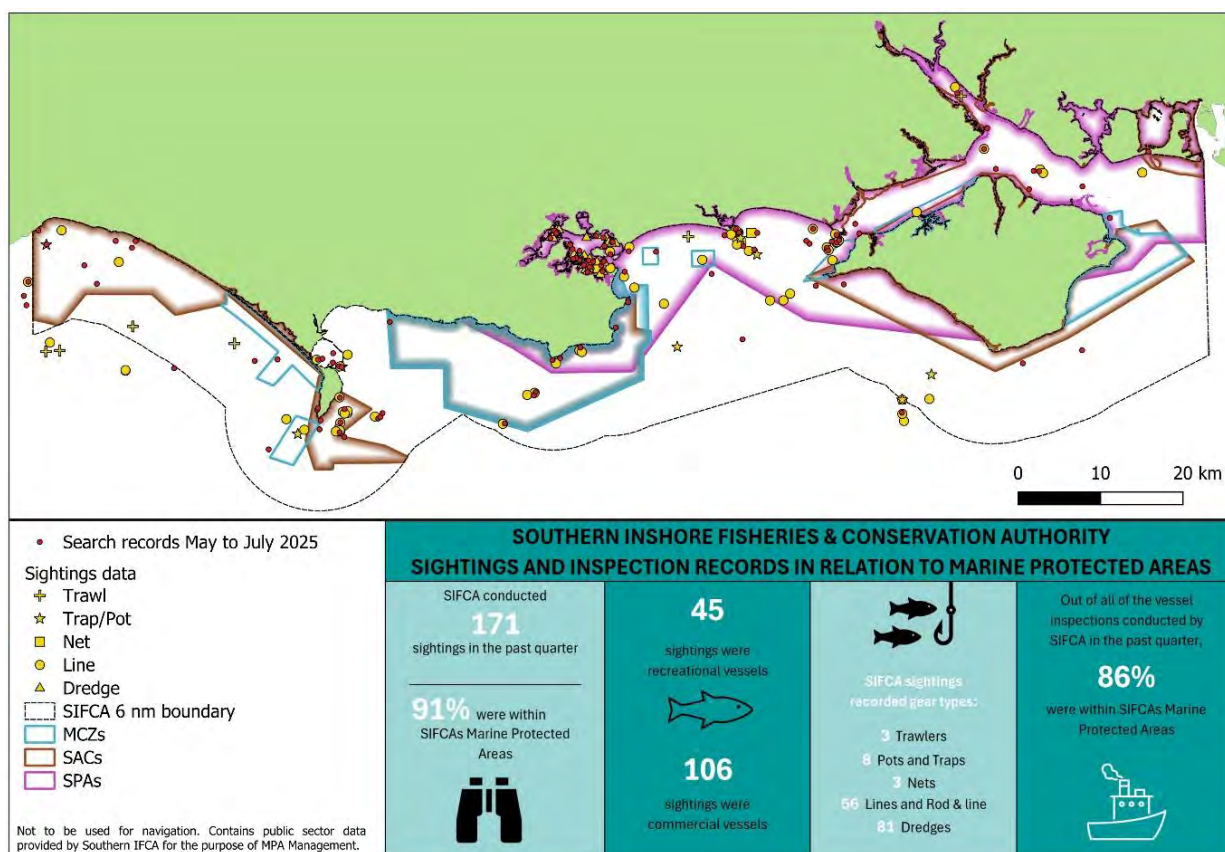
The majority of Intelligence Reports submitted in the reporting quarter relate to the **Poole Harbour Dredge Fishery and dredging in closed areas and retention of undersize**, other key themes identified are **illegal hand gathering activity** across the district.

May	June	July	Total
19	20	22	61

4.0 Compliance Patrols

Category	Metric	May	June	July	Total
Inspections at sea	Vessel patrols	8	9	10	27
	Boardings/inspections	52	22	43	117
Inspections ashore or in a port	Shore patrols	10	9	11	30
	Port visits	33	25	21	79
	Premises inspections	1	1	1	3
	Landing inspections	10	22	10	42
	Vehicle inspections	0	1	4	5
	Gear inspections	30	5	2	37
	Person inspection	5	2	7	14

5.0 Sightings & Inspections relating to MPAs



6.0 Enforcement Actions Arising

The following tables demonstrate the **offence reports submitted by officers for which cases have been generated**, these predominantly relate to breaches of the **Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Byelaw** and an incident of **retention of undersize Cockles** again relating to the **Poole Harbour Dredge** fishery.

Offences Detected	May	June	July	Total
Verbal Warnings	3	4	3	10
Written Warnings	0	0	0	0
Advisory Letter	0	0	1	1
FAP	0	0	0	0
Offence Reports	0	2	1	3

Date of Offence	Offence	Action
24/06/25 & 25/06/25	PHDP breach of Green Island, Ower Bay, Wych and Middlebere Lake closed areas	Investigation ongoing
25/06/25	PHDP breach of Newton Bay seasonal closed area	Investigation ongoing
23/07/25	Retention of undersized Cockles	OWL issued 01/08/25

The following table demonstrates **offence outcomes for this reporting quarter**:

Date of Offence	Offence	Action taken and date
06/12/24	Breach of Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Byelaw (Green Island Incursion)	£1000 FAP issued 09/07/25 – paid 06/08/25
12/02/25	Breach of SIFCA BTFG Area 40, Lyme Bay	£3000 FAP issued 19/06/25 – paid 15/07/25

7.0 Next Steps

That Members receive the report.

Behind the Scenes Paper For Information

Report by the RPT, CET and BST

A. Purpose

To provide Members with an update on aspects of work that the Research and Policy Team (RPT), Compliance and Enforcement Team (CET) and Business Services Team (BST) is delivering behind the scenes.

1.0 Introduction

- This report from the staff across the three teams in the IFCA, RPT, CET and BST captures aspects of work being delivered behind the scenes. This may include standalone projects or supplementary work which complements and supports the Annual Plan and RPT & CET Plans.

2.0 Summary of Key Points

- Reports from the RPT:
 - This quarter the RPT have been working on the delivery of the Southern IFCA Monitoring Programme through analysis of whelk samples collected under the Whelk Population Survey, running the spring Juvenile Fish Surveys across the District and undertaking the Pilot Mid-Season Stock Observer Programme in the Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Fishery to collect data on Manila clam to support in-season monitoring for the fishery under the new Monitoring & Control Plan. Work has also been done following the consultation on the Co-Developed Principles for Black Seabream, collating and analysing stakeholder feedback and in developing a research programme for the Solent Scallop Fishery to further evidence gathering in support of local and national management. IFCO Mullen outlines the beneficial outputs of her sabbatical, detailing how her experiences have provided new perspectives on culture, species protection and community-led decision making.
 - The Project Officers have been working on assisting with delivery of the Southern IFCA Monitoring Programme. PO Perrins oversaw the delivery of the June Juvenile Fish Survey Programme in a new role as lead Officer. Work has also been ongoing in final delivery of the Tranche 3 leases under The Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 and in preparing for the annual Cefas biosecurity inspection of the lease beds. FMP work has continued with a focus on the MMO review of the Bass Authorisation system and associated engagement events which provided good insight into this area of fisheries management.
- Reports from the CET:
 - The CET have been working to ensure continued operational capability of the drone through the renewal of the IFCA's Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) approval, allowing flights for commercial purposes, undertaking the required checks and audits for this process and receiving positive feedback from the CAA. Work has also been delivered for the implementation of the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023, ensuring that FPV plotters are brought up to date with new prohibition areas and through exploring methods for assisting fishers with updating their own plotters. The REM & AI Project has also continued, with an interim report produced on the project and the installation of REM technology onto a potting and netting vessel based in West Bay, achieving another target from the project plan. IFCOs have been undergoing training, both under the Southern IFCA Marine Operations Training Pathway in vessel handling and helming, complemented by the completion of an

RYA Powerboat Level 2 course, and under the Level 3 Qualification in Assessing Competence and Vocational Achievement, which will enable IFCO Fullbrook to formally support and assess other IFCOs through their Fisheries and Marine Enforcement accreditation. Senior IFCO Mayne also reflects on time spent with the Fisheries Department of the Tristan da Cunha Islands, a British Overseas Territory, learning more about their experiences and sharing knowledge through observation of at sea patrol work and the Southern IFCA drone.

- Reports from the BST:
 - The BST have been working to progress financial reporting, with the development of a new internal version of the Budget Control Statement which gives a more detailed breakdown and narrative on all budget lines and new trade accounts secured for refuelling vessels enabling monthly payments. Permitting work also continues with over 50% of the Fish for Sale Permits having now been transferred to the Online Permitting System and the opening of the Solent Dredge Permit application window, with engagement and assistance being provided to applicants to aid in the application process.

3.0 Next Steps

- That Members receive the report.

Behind the Scenes with the RPT



with Senior Policy
Specialist Condie

It's been a busy and varied few months for me. One of the big highlights this quarter was the Whelk CPUE (Catch Per Unit Effort) survey sample analysis. Officers from the RPT, assisted also by Officers from the CET, spent three days working in the labs at Bournemouth University, measuring and weighing over 11,000 whelks – from across four sampling sites within the District. Despite the smell on occasion, the team pulled through and collected important data to help understand trends in whelk populations across the SIFCA District.

Another big task was pulling together a summary of responses from the consultation on the Black Seabream Co-Developed Principles. Over 120 stakeholders engaged in some way with the consultation – the highest number for any SIFCA informal consultation, which is really encouraging. Collating all the feedback and turning it into a clear, balanced document was a challenge, but it was very interesting learning more about the views of a range of stakeholder groups on different aspects of the principles

I also ran a GIS training session for the team this quarter – a chance to demystify some of the mapping tools and give everyone more

confidence in using spatial data in their work. It was great to see everyone getting involved and asking questions, and hopefully it's helped open up more possibilities for how we can visualise and communicate our data moving forward.

Finally, I've been preparing for the handover ahead of my last day on the 5th of September. That's meant sorting files, and making sure everything's documented properly so workstreams I have been involved in can carry on smoothly after I've gone.

I have learnt a lot over the past three and a half years, worked with some great people and enjoyed contributing to important projects ensuring the sustainable management of the inshore waters. I wish everyone the best of luck navigating the endless joys of spreadsheets, inboxes, and fish-related chaos. May your coffee be strong and your data be organized.



with IFCO Churchouse

During the summer months I have been working across a range of my workstreams, including assisting with Juvenile Fish Surveys in the River Hamble and Yarmouth Harbour, and running the Spring meeting of the Hampshire, Dorset & Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group.

One main task has been exploring further research potential in the Solent, which I have found especially interesting as it has involved looking into national initiatives such as Fisheries Management Plans or the Fisheries Improvement Project and determining whether the evidence gaps they are looking to fill are relevant to the SIFCA district, and whether we have the capacity to contribute.



Figure 1: A large (184mm) juvenile Golden Grey Mullet sampled during the Small Fish Survey at Yarmouth Harbour.



Figure 2: Officers undertaking sampling during the PHDP Manila clam Pilot Midseason Monitoring Survey.

In August I was also part of SIFCA's Pilot Midseason Monitoring of Manila clam within the Poole Harbour Dredge Permit fishery. This survey involved collecting catch directly from fishers' who were active on the day, removing that catch to FPV Endeavour to be weighed and measured, and then returning the oversized portion of the catch to the fisher. Myself and the other officers involved believed this pilot survey to be a success, yielding good data and some interesting conversations with members of the fishery. All those involved with the survey were interested and supportive of what we were looking to do.



BEHIND THE SCENES

I recently had the chance to undertake a 4-month sabbatical, which took me to some incredible places from remote hiking trails in Fiordland, NZ, to uninhabited islands in Fiji. As expected, as a member of the RPT and having a big interest in marine life and conservation, I never strayed far from the science bubble, and I would regularly learn niche facts about local species and assist in conservation efforts of protected habitats. I also had the opportunity to meet with some of our New Zealand counterparts. We exchanged insights on fisheries management in both the UK and New Zealand and discussed the community engagement strategies they've found effective in supporting compliance and enforcement.

A highlight was a mini-expedition with a friend, who is starting a PhD in Suva, Fiji, focused on developing catch records and improving knowledge in remote fishing communities. We were welcomed into the remote island villages, and it was fascinating to learn how chiefly systems are deeply tied to fishing practices, resource sharing, and marine stewardship.

Fish is eaten at every meal and shared within the villages, and we lived similarly, sailing between islands and spearfishing daily. We were even invited to join local fishers on a night spearfishing dive, but we politely declined—aware of the sharks and barracudas that regularly swam beneath our boat each night!



A photograph following a sevusevu ceremony with the village Chief (left of photo) and village spokespersons.

It was an unforgettable experience. I gained new perspectives on culture, species protection, and community-led decision-making; insights I'm excited to bring back into my work at SIFCA, especially in supporting engagement and informed fisheries management processes.



Left: The island of Dravuni, where we often moored and visited the community.

Right: Examples of species fished and shared: trevally, jack and sweetlips.



with PO C. Perrins

As an Officer on the Research & Policy team, my role includes attending engagement events and assisting with surveys.

I assisted with the Whelk survey using the facilities at Bournemouth University. An enjoyable though slightly smelly survey where we measured length and class weight of several populations of Whelk from across the district.

As I am now the lead officer for the Juvenile Fish Surveys, I was responsible for organising the surveys (including backup dates) and contacting relevant individuals for access to sites. From our surveys we found the usual common species (Bass, Gobies, Grey Mullet, Smelt and Sole) as well as a few individual Pollack (Christchurch Harbour). The last time this species was recorded on survey was in 2024 at The Fleet.

As a part of Southern IFCA's engagement, I attended a Langstone Small Fish Survey with another officer. The event was on a bigger scale than SIFCA's surveys due to the large amount of volunteers. It was an interesting survey to attend and their deployment of the net using a small vessel was similar to



Top: measuring Whelk in the lab at Bournemouth University.

Bottom (left to right): measuring juvenile fish and packing the net away after a successful juvenile fish survey at Yarmouth.

our net deployment in Yarmouth, Isle of Wight. I look forward to attending future surveys.

I have recently taken the position of IFCO in the Research & Policy Team. This will be a great opportunity to expand my skills and to apply my previous knowledge as a Project Officer to future workstreams.

BEHIND THE SCENES

with PO Meredith-Davies

I started this June by delivering the two-year workstream Tranche 3 (2025 – 2030) of the Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015, which involved meeting with leaseholders in person to discuss and sign the business plans and leases. Following the delivery of this workstream, this quarter marked the beginning of new projects.

I took a more active role in our social outreach by creating social media posts about World Environment Day and National Oyster Day.

These posts highlight the ecosystem services provided by aquaculture in Poole Harbour, and how SIFCA work with fishermen to ensure that sustainable fishing continues across the district.

I was excited to engage with fishermen and participate in SIFCA's first mid-season clam survey to capture Manila clam population dynamics throughout the Poole Harbour Dredge fishing season.

Fishermen operating in Poole Harbour were asked if officers could count, weigh and measure their Manila clam catches, before returning any oversized clams.



As the designated aquaculture production business, SIFCA is subject to an annual Biosecurity Inspection by the Fish Health Inspectorate, with the inspection due on the 3rd of September.

As the officer overseeing aquaculture biosecurity, I have been working this quarter to ensure that all SIFCA's shellfish movements records and Biosecurity Measures Plan are up to date.

Additionally, I have been reaching out to leaseholders to organise lease bed visits for the inspection date to allow the inspector to observe aquaculture operations and to provide leaseholders the opportunity to engage directly with shellfish disease specialists.

BEHIND THE SCENES

with PO Wright

This quarter I've been attending meetings on the Bass Authorisation Review, which is an output from the Bass FMP being delivered by the MMO. These meetings have been held across England and also online. Meetings have been open to the stakeholder community and have involved a variety of commercial fishers, recreational fishers and management organisations.

The main areas being considered by the review are: track record, transfer process, gear, non-powered vessels, reporting and any other business related to the authorisation.

Some of the questions which have been asked during the engagement are; should the authorisation be based on track record or moved to another system? Should the bass fishery remain a closed fishery? Could the bass authorization be allowed to be held on licence entitlements and transferred that way to a new vessel? Should there be a prevention on the increase on engine power and tonnage? Should those with an authorization be allowed to switch from fixed net to hook and line as different gear types?



The engagement brought up a variety of different viewpoints across different groups and within groups. Over the course of the meetings opinions on certain points did change sometimes to form a single answer or in some cases they diverged once the discussions were had. I definitely left these meetings with a much clearer idea of how people are affected by the authorisation and how they see it being able to be improved for everyone.

This is the first time that I have worked on anything related to bass, so it has been a fascinating learning exercise as well. There are levels of intricacy to the legislation that I had not anticipated (I think I might have finally got my head around it, but to start with it was confusing). I'm interested to see what happens next once this review has been completed.

Behind the Scenes with the CET

With Senior IFCO Mayne



During the week commencing 7th July 2025, the Southern IFCA were visited by Rodney Green & Sarah Green-Glass, a husband-and-wife team, who with Sarah's father James Glass, make up the fisheries department of the Tristan da Cunha islands (Tristan da Cunha, Gough, Nightingale, & Inaccessible), a British Overseas Territory.

Situated in the South Atlantic, Tristan da Cunha is the most remote inhabited archipelago in the world, and the only place where the Tristan rock lobster is found. The species, regarded by some culinary aficionados as being the best lobster in the world, can be found on the rocky substrata from the shore down to a depth of around 200m. The volcanic islands rise from the abyssal depths. The lobster fishery is the island's principal source of income. It's been commercially exploited since 1949. Other activities are mainly subsistence fishing and farming.

Part of the Blue Belt Programme, Tristan da Cunha is now a 700,000km² Marine Protected Zone (MPZ) which covers 90% of Tristan's Exclusive Economic Zone. The lobster fishery is deemed sustainable and certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (Please see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0cczLmaFBAQ>). James Glass, the Director of Fisheries & Chief Islander, was recognised for his dedicated involvement in driving forward the MPZ with an MBE in 2023.

Sarah and Rodney's visit covered 2 days. For the remainder of the week, they spent time with colleagues from the Marine Management Organisation. My own involvement consisted of a day with Sarah & Rodney aboard the Southern IFCA Fisheries Patrol Vessel Vigilant. Not only was it an opportunity for them to see how we do things, but it was fascinating to hear about their own fisheries and island life in general. Tristan da Cunha has a population of about 250 people, it's 1,500 miles from its nearest neighbour (St. Helena) and only accessible via a week's ship crossing from Cape Town, so their life experiences were markedly different to my own!

During our time afloat we covered the inshore area between St. Alban's Head & Hengistbury Head, enabling Sarah & Rodney to meet some of the local fishing fleet, observe their methods and view their catches, which included a quantity of European lobster. Of the fishermen encountered was the Southern IFCA's very own committee member Richard Stride. Our meeting Richard was not planned, but incredibly Richard had some years ago attended a course at the North Atlantic Fisheries College where Sarah's father, James Glass, was giving a talk. After which, Richard and James went fishing together from Mudeford, before visiting Cornwall for a talk regarding the crawfish fishery. I am grateful to Richard for the history lesson concerning the volcanic eruption at Tristan da Cunha in 1961, when the islanders were evacuated and accommodated in the UK. For a while, housed at the former RAF Calshot Camp, Southampton Water, now the Calshot Activities Centre.



Sarah & Roney had one more day with the Southern IFCA, during which time they observed more at sea patrol work and were shown the IFCA's drone in action.



With Senior IFCO Parry

One of my responsibilities as Senior IFCO is to ensure the drone maintains operational capability. This requires a renewal of our Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) approval to fly for commercial purposes stated in our operations manual. The operations manual is a live document and as such is updated when there are changes to legislation or our operation (additional drone pilots, etc.).

When we apply for a renewal of operational authority the manual must be checked in line with a CAA pre-defined risk assessment. This is known as PDRA01 which gives details of how drones flights are to be conducted. For example, our authority allows remote pilots who are qualified in the General Visual Line of Sight Certificate (GVC). The reason for having pilots qualified is that our operation exceeds normal operating parameters for most drone operations. Including a max Unmanned Operated Vehicle with a maximum take off mass of 25Kg.

As the lead drone pilot, it is essential that I stay informed of any changes—whether legislative or operational—that may impact our drone operations



Before the operational authority being applied for, we also had a CAA official spend the day with us to observe our operation. We received very positive feedback and in conjunction with an audit completed by the CAA into our operation, where we again received feedback on our safe operation.

The operational authority renewal was applied for and approved in June 2025.



At the start of 2024, I successfully completed the SFJ Level 3 Certificate in Fisheries and Marine Enforcement. Building on that momentum, I've recently enrolled in a Level 3 Qualification in Assessing Competence and Vocational Achievement, delivered by Smart Training Solutions.

This new qualification will enable me to formally support and assess IFCO Bedwell and IFCO Checketts as they progress through their Fisheries and Marine Enforcement accreditation.

So far, I've participated in two weekly coaching sessions and undertaken independent study, exploring the full assessment cycle – from initial planning through to delivering decisions and constructive feedback.

The qualification is structured into two units. The first, a research-based module, has deepened my understanding of:

- ✓ Principles of effective assessment
- ✓ Roles and Responsibilities as an assessor
- ✓ Legal frameworks & quality assurance
- ✓ How to engage learners
- ✓ Best practices for managing information



Having successfully completed Unit 1 of the QA qualification, I've now begun applying the knowledge and the skills I've developed in a practical setting. Unit 2 focuses on gathering evidence of my ability to plan and conduct assessments, make informed decisions and provide constructive feedback to two learners. This involves a range of assessment methods including practical observations, professional discussions and reviewing work products.

To date, I have held induction meeting with both learners, created tailored learner plans that reflect their preferences and learning styles. Alongside a learner I have planned and carried out a practical observation of a premises inspection, ensuring the assessment aligns with both qualification standards and the learner's needs.

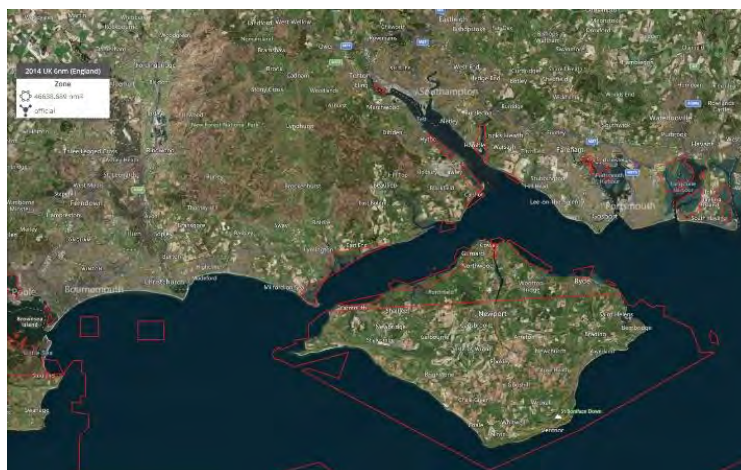




With IFCO Payton

With the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 being ratified on the 7th of July we had to ensure compliance. This first meant getting our Fisheries Patrol Vessels' plotters to have all the relevant closed areas on them. Entering latitude and longitude points onto a plotter one by one can be time consuming. Something that I learnt firsthand whilst sat on FPV Vigilant entering all 43 closed areas. Determined to not have to do that all over again I managed to transfer the closed areas onto a USB memory stick and SD cards which then allowed us to transfer the closed areas straight onto the plotters of FPV Endeavour and FPV Protector.

Of course, this process is not only time consuming for us it is also time consuming for the fishing industry. Whilst on patrol we have been taking this memory stick with us offering the industry the service of putting the closed areas onto their plotters. This saves time but also ensures that no mistakes are made when inputting the coordinates as it is consistently copied across. This has not been without issue, I am no technical expert on plotters by any means and there are many different makes and models of plotters that all work differently. I have been working with the fishing industry to try and better understand the different plotter styles and file types to ensure compatibility and make this transfer process something we can do for the whole industry. There are some plotters which are still problematic, but I am working on solutions and will continue to work with industry on this.





with IFCO Bedwell

In recent months, I, along with IFCO Payton, have been working on the Southern IFCA Remote Electronic Monitoring and Artificial Intelligence (REM and AI) project. We recently produced an interim report outlining our progress to date.

The most recent development is the installation of REM technology onto a potting and netting vessel, based in West Bay. We also carried out a reinstall on a trawler, after talks with the gear sensor supplier around gear sensor connectivity. This work saw us moving forward with the project, achieving another one of the targets in the original project plan, to get a vessel that pots and nets, while also receiving accurate data from our trawling vessel.

The aim of having a potting and netting vessel in the trial, is to see if we can train AI to count pots on and off the vessel. The Southern IFCA Pot Fishing byelaw will include a pot limit in the Whelk fishery, and we are looking at REM and AI technology as a tool to monitor potential pot limitations. Further to this, when nets are being used, footage captured by the REM cameras could be passed through AI software to monitor interactions with sensitive species such as Salmonids and effectively monitor bycatch.

For the trawler, the priority is around spatial incursion detection. If the trawl doors are in the water while the vessel is in a closed area, an incident is created on our monitoring system, and all data is recorded including video. During the reinstall a third camera was fitted looking at the fish pound. It is hoped that our trial can also look at the monitoring of non-retention species such as Small-eyed rays. The objective would be to once again train AI to count the number of species/ individuals being discarded and retained and aid in stock calculations and management.





with IFCO Checketts

During this reporting period, I have made significant progress against my personal development target, focusing on stages of the Southern IFCA Marine Operations Training Pathway. This has been a key area of development for me both professionally and personally, and I'm excited about the progress I've made as I work towards successful completion of Stage 1. With the support and guidance from Senior IFCOs, I have gained valuable hands-on experience that has helped me achieve. Under close supervision, I've been involved in helping all Authority Patrols Vessels. This has included practicing close quarters manoeuvres, such as coming alongside pontoons and other vessels as well as operating at sea.



One of the highlights of this period was helping the Fisheries Patrol Vessel Protector during a patrol in Lyme Bay. As part of the operation, we boarded one of the largest fishing vessels that operates within our district. I was responsible for bringing FPV Protector alongside the vessel in a controlled manner, to allow my colleague to safely transfer from the fishing vessel to the patrol boat, then manoeuvring away, ensuring safety at all times.

Another milestone this quarter was successfully completing the RYA Powerboat Level 2 course in June. This intensive two-day course enhanced my vessel handling skills, including high-speed manoeuvres, man-overboard recovery, and learning about collision regulations. Additionally, I have also completed the RYA Professional Practices & Responsibilities (PPR) online course, which is a key step towards obtaining my Commercial Endorsement and completing Stage 1 of the Southern IFCA Marine Operations Training Pathway.

Behind the Scenes with the BST



with Accounts Administrator
Paul Savage

Monthly finance meetings with the CEO have continued. Alongside quarterly Budget Control Statements, to allow more regular monitoring of the organisation's financial position, for internal use, I have created a version of the BCS that gives a more detailed breakdown and narrative on all lines.

Purchase orders are being raised in Xero with approvals in line with the Financial Regulations and approvals are saved with invoices once those have been received.

We have secured trade accounts for refuelling vessels with our two main fuel suppliers that enable us to pay them monthly. Where we have multiple invoices from the same supplier, they are now paid together. Payment runs are done on a weekly basis. All of this not only streamlines our working practices but reduces bank charges, especially as payments are now made on a future-dated rather than same-day basis.

The accounts paperwork for prior years that we need to retain has been consolidated into two filing cabinets located behind my desk, which are kept locked when not being accessed.

A bank feed has been established for the credit card account so that the transactions can be processed on an ongoing basis, rather than once a month following receipt of the paper statements, as had been the case previously.



with Administration &
Permitting Officer Jo Wilson

Over 50% of the Fish for Sale Permits have now been transferred to the online Permitting System.

Fishers are contacted a month before the expiry date of their permit and notified that they need to apply through the Permitting System but we are looking to expediate this process to move onto a single system this will also assist the industry that access other permit schemes within the Southern IFCA district.

A guidance sheet is provided to assist them with their application and answer any questions they may have.

The Solent Dredge Permit application window was opened in the previous reporting period, and I have been engaging and assisting the industry with applications. Following the closure of the application period on 31st August 2025, all applications received will be reviewed. The fishing industry will be advised of the status of their applications and the awarding of any Category A Permit entitlement after the end of September 2025.

We have asked applicants to refrain from contacting the Southern IFCA to query the status of an application before receiving correspondence detailing the outcome of their application after the end of September 2025. Barring any exceptional circumstances, information regarding their Category A Permit entitlement will be provided in good time ahead of the start of the 2025/26 season on 1st November 2025.

Only Category A Permits will be issued this year.

Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw Category A
2025-2026 PERMIT ANNUAL ACCESS APPLICATION FORM
1st November 2025 – 31st October 2026

Please complete this form to apply for a permit entitlement under the Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw. Please be advised that this form should not be considered a permission and that permit entitlements will only be granted subject to consideration of your application by the Authority.

VESSEL DETAILS	
Name of vessel	
PLN of vessel	
Does the above-named vessel have a current Southern IFCA Permit to fish?	YES / NO
Does the above-named vessel have a current Certificate of Registry (CoR)?	YES / NO
Does the above-named vessel have a valid MMO Licence?	YES / NO

APPLICANT DETAILS	
Name	
Address	
Telephone Number	
Email	
Are you the majority shareholder of the above-named vessel as named on the Certificate of Registry (CoR)?	YES / NO
Are you a nominated representative, as nominated by the majority shareholder? (If yes, please ensure the Nominated Representative Details section is completed and signed)	YES / NO

NOMINATED REPRESENTATIVE DETAILS (if applicable)	
Name	
Address	
Telephone Number	
Email	
Signature of Majority Shareholder to approve Nominated Representative Details	
Majority Shareholder name (Print)	

Marine Licencing Update Paper For Information

Report by IFCO H. Churchouse

A. **Purpose**

To provide a quarterly update on Southern IFCA's input into the marine licencing process between March 2025 to May 2025

1.0 Introduction

- Marine licencing is one of the principal responsibilities of the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) to facilitate the sustainable use of the UK marine environment whilst minimising negative environmental effects and avoiding interference with navigation.
- Southern IFCA is a consultee on Marine Licence Applications (MLAs). For MLAs relevant to the Southern IFCA District, the IFCA is given 21 days to review the application and determine if a response is required to aid the MMO in its decision making and to further inform the applicant of any relevant fisheries information or considerations.
- The South Marine Plan introduces a strategic approach to planning within the inshore and offshore waters between Folkestone in Kent and the River Dart in Devon. The aim is to provide a clear, evidence-based approach, to inform marine users and regulators on where activities might take place within the Marine Plan area, allowing for national policies to be applied in a local context.
- In responding to MLAs, the IFCA must consider any advice relevant to its remit as a fisheries regulator and with regard to the South Marine Plan, taking account of the objectives and policies listed which are related to that remit. The objectives and policies of the South Marine Plan can be viewed in the plan document online - [South Marine Plan 2018.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/684242/South_Marine_Plan_2018.pdf).

2.0 Summary of Key Points

- A summary table is provided indicating the detail of any MLAs which required a response during the last quarter, outlining the nature of the MLA and the points included in the Southern IFCA response.
- There were 9 MLAs requiring a response between June 2025 and August 2025.
- There were 7 additional MLAs received by Southern IFCA where it was determined that no comment was required.

3.0 Review of Marine Consents Work: Apr 2023 to date

- Southern IFCA's work under Marine Consents focuses on the marine licencing system and the role of the IFCA as a consultee for relevant MLAs.
- Work on marine consents has increased over the past 3 years and is observed to increase year on year in terms of the number of relevant MLAs which Southern IFCA receive and the number requiring comment.
- This report provides an update on the MLA work to date for the 2025/26 financial year and how this compares to the previous year.

Marine Licence application timeseries:

Time Period	Comment Required	No Comment Required	% Requiring Comment	% change on MLAs requiring comment to previous year
Apr 2023 – Mar 2024	13	18	42	+86
Apr 2024 – Mar 2025	40	45	47	+208
Apr 2025 – August 2025	16	14	53	+31 on same period for 2024

- For the number of MLAs received per month which require a response, this equates to 1.1 per month for 2023-24 and 3.3 per month for 2024-2025.
- Where an MLA is identified as requiring a response, the time taken to review documentation associated with the MLA, compile any required data to inform the response, which may include engagement with industry and/or other bodies, and draft the response can be up to approximately 2 days of Officer time per response dependent on the complexity of the application and the level of detail required for the response.

4.0 Next Steps

- That Members receive the report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Marked M

Summary of MLA consultation requests submitted to Southern IFCA where a response was issued					
Project Name	Application No.	Application Type	Applicant	Summary of MLA	Response Points
Gosport Boatyard Maintenance Dredging	MLA/2025/00190	MLA	Gosport Boatyard Ltd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application for a 10-year dredging licence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reminder to applicant (who has previously applied for dredging licences) of concerns from stakeholders over impact of dredge disposal material on local fisheries. Acknowledgement of applicant's previous position that they would prefer evidence for these statements, and that direct engagement with industry has not prompted any similar comments.
ABP Southampton Maintenance Dredge Licence	MLA/2025/00234	MLA	ABP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application for a 10-year licence to cover relevant areas of Southampton Water, the Rivers Itchen and Test, and Solent Channels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information provided on the fisheries present within Southampton Water. The applicant was informed of local fisher concerns of the impact of disposal of dredged material at the Solent disposal sites on local fisheries. SIFCA suggested that the applicant undertook cumulative impact assessments in order to address these concerns. The applicant was informed as upcoming assessments to be undertaken by the MMO on the condition of Solent disposal sites. Consultation with key stakeholders was suggested, and facilitation offered.
Hythe Marina Village Approach Channel	MLA/2025/00277	MLA	Marine Developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application for the renewal of a 10-year dredging licence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reminder to applicant (who has previously applied for dredging licences) of Southern IFCA's

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Marked M

Maintenance Dredge			Ltd		<p>suggestion that projects using dredge disposal sites within the Solent should undertake assessments to cover cumulative/in-combination effects on local fisheries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledgement of applicant's previous position that the size of their individual project should be considered within the context of all dredging activity within the Solent.
Ferry Bridge Repairs: Phase 1 Pile Extension	MLA/2024/00635	MLA	Dorset Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works to undertake adjustments to Ferry Bridge, Wyke Regis, that will allow full works for repairs to defects to occur. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information provided on the recreational fishing activity that occurs within the vicinity of the works. Information provided on the Southern IFCA Juvenile Fish Survey that occurs in the vicinity of the works.
QinetiQ Portland Grove Point upgrade, maintenance and repair	MLA/2025/00253	MLA	QinetiQ Ltd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application for installation of a new range. Application also covers works to change the location on the seabed of the cable out to equipment at the Grove Point Range. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information provided on the commercial fishing activity occurring within the vicinity of the works. Further clarification sought on several aspects of the application, including whether exclusion of fishing activity is to be extended to recreational fishing activity. Consultation with key stakeholders was suggested, and facilitation offered.
Ferry Bridge Repairs: Phase 2 Main Works	MLA/2025/00313	MLA	Dorset Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main works for repairs required on Ferry Bridge, Wyke Regis, to preserve the load carrying capacity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reminder to applicant of Southern IFCA's position stated in our response to Phase 1 of the works, that given the location of the works the impact to fish should be considered within assessments.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Marked M

Port Hamble Marina Maintenance Dredge	MLA/2025/00275	MLA	Marine Developments Ltd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application for the renewal of a 10-year dredging and disposal licence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informed the applicant of the presence of a Net Prohibition Area under the Net Fishing Byelaw, designated due to the High Ecological Value of the Essential Fish Habitat within the River Hamble.
Langstone Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Scheme	MLA/2025/00119	MLA	Coastal Partners/Havant Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Langstone FCERMS is set to cover ~1km of coastline around Langstone Village. Flood defences within the plans to include flood embankments, sheet piled walls, various flood walls, and flood gates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informed the applicant that more up-to-date survey data was available than that presented within the report.
Temporary seabed storage of wine for ageing	MLA/2025/00303	MLA	BOAHZ Ltd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application for the deposition of cages of wine on the seabed 3.1 miles SE of Ventnor, IoW, to temporarily house wine for ageing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicant informed of concerns held by fishers over potential conflict between cages and pot gear, especially given strong currents running in the proposed project area. Applicant informed of other activity occurring within the area that fishers felt could impact the potential project. Consultation with key stakeholders was suggested, and facilitation offered.

Note that references to recommendations for engagement with local fishers in responses includes both commercial and recreational sectors as required dependent on the specifics of the proposed works.

Stakeholder Groups Paper For Information

Report by DCO Birchenough

A. Purpose

To inform Members of the activity undertaken by stakeholder groups; The South Coast Fishermen's Council, The Recreational Angling Sector Group and The Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group where minutes from these meetings are available.

B. Papers

- Marked N – The South Coast Fishermen's Council Minutes – 14th May 2025
 - Marked O – The Recreational Angling Sector Group Minutes – 21st July 2025
 - Marked P – The Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group Minutes – 3rd June 2025
-

1.0 Introduction

- The Authority currently provides a secretariat role for the Recreational Angling Sector Group and also the Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group.
- The Authority has given a grant of £300 to the Fishermen's Council in this financial year.
- All three groups are offered free use of a room, at the Committee's office, for meetings. Meetings are held both virtually and in person as required.
- The South Coast Fishermen's Council meets quarterly, from 2024 the Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group meet twice per year in Spring and Autumn and the Recreational Angling Sector Group meet three times per year.

2.0 Summary of Key Points

- The following minutes are presented to the Authority for Members' consideration and to appraise them of the groups' business:
 - The minutes of The South Coast Fishermen's Council dated 14th May 2025, Marked N
 - The minutes of The Recreational Angling Sector Group dated 21st July 2025, Marked O
 - The minutes of The Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group dated 3rd June 2025, Marked P

3.0 Next Steps

- That Members note the report.

SOUTH COAST FISHERMEN'S COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE 382st MEETING held via Teams at 1900 on TUESDAY 14th MAY 2025

PRESENT: P. Dadds - Mudeford and District FMA (Chairman)
 R. Stride - Mudeford & District FMA (Secretary)
 T. Russell - Poole & District FMA (Vice-Chairman)
 B Pool - South Devon & Channel Shellfishermen

I APOLOGIES: J Miller, A. Bamfield, S. Postles, R. Irish (MMO), J Morgan (MMO), S Dell (SIFCA)

The minutes of the 381st meeting held via Teams on 18th February 2025 were taken as read and it was agreed that they be signed as a true record.

II REGIONAL FISHERIES GROUPS

R Stride had attended a meeting of the South RFG on 23rd April. At the meeting Paul Johnston had announced his retirement from the MMO and had wished to thank all those in the industry he had worked with over the years. The minutes of that meeting will be forwarded to members once received.

The quota presentation had been interesting but there are currently no quota constraints. It was noted that the uptake of several species including sole, and skates and rays had been slow so far this year.

R Stride reported that the MMO had given an update on iVMS, which had provided an opportunity to raise concerns about the number of technical problems that were developing with some of the sets.

The next SW RFG is scheduled for 29th May.

III FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PLANS

Bass

R. Stride reported in general terms on the work of the Authorisations sub-group of the Bass Management Group over the 6 meetings that had been held since the last Council meeting. He lamented that he was not at liberty to give details of the discussions, but accepted that there was genuine concern that fishermen should not make any decisions based on the disclosure of matters that might not be taken forward. Members noted that whilst rod and line catches of bass had been exceptional in some parts of the District, this was not the case elsewhere including in the SW. There was some speculation that this might be related to the increased abundance of tuna.

There was general agreement to a suggestion that ad hoc Teams meetings might be held to go into the progress of the bass FMP in greater detail and to serve as a briefing for members who might be called to upon to attend BMG meetings when R Stride is unable to do so.

Wrasse & Seabream

Several members had attended the online meeting of the Seabream FMP working group and were generally pleased with the set of measures in the draft FMP.

However they were dismayed that the measures were to be part of a voluntary code of practice rather than statutory and agreed that this would bring about an unnecessary delay to the effective management of the stock.

Crab & Lobster

B Pool reported that there were no developments to the plan but indicated that DEFRA was pushing ahead with the proposed ban on the use of soft-shelled crabs for bait and the increase in the national MCRS for lobster to 90mm. There has been mixed reactions to the proposed size increase around the country, with fishermen in the north east largely opposed to it. Pilots were due to go ahead in the NE and SW.

IV MMO/ DEFRA MATTERS

iVMS Implementation

The introduction of the licence condition was intended to provide the stimulus to get any technical problems with existing iVMS devices ironed out, and to encourage late adopters to obtain a device before the SI comes into force. B Pool informed members that 10% of the Succorfish units installed in her area were faulty (since July 2024). A network issue was the main suspect. R Stride said that he had received correspondence from Succorfish suggesting that if his device had not been continuously powered it may not be covered by the warranty. However, the warranty conditions only require that the device be powered “regularly” and, in his case, the installation engineer had connected the device to a circuit that is isolated when the vessel is not in use. B Pool noted that the MMO licence condition requires a vessel with a faulty iVMS set to apply for an “Authority to Fish” on a daily basis. However the procedure for making an application had not been published.

V SOUTHERN IFCA MATTERS

R Stride informed the meeting that the pot fishing byelaw is still in the MMO QA process and the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear 2023 is with DEFRA awaiting ministerial confirmation

The meeting learned that Charlie Brock had resigned from the IFCA committee. R Stride was not sure how the vacancy would be filled but urged members not to wait for an invitation to be issued. Applications for MMO appointee positions can be made at any time.

T Russell told the meeting that the Poole Harbour dredge fishery would open on 26th May. The pre-season survey had shown that stocks were lower than last year but still above the level that would trigger additional management. He felt that the introduction of iVMS will be of benefit to the management of the fishery.

VI MARINE PLANNING

BCP dredging and beach replenishment

A meeting of BCP engineers and fishermen from Lymington, Keyhaven, Mudeford and Poole had taken place in Mudeford. P Dadds reported that the discussion had been heated and would have benefited from a moderator. The discussion that took place after the meeting with a reduced number of association representatives had gone somewhat to clarifying industry concerns. Members agreed that it would be beneficial to seek an online meeting with BCP officers in due course.

VII SOUTH COAST SEA FISHERIES TRAINING ASSOCIATION

Two applications for new entrant training grants had been received.

- A new entrant from Dorchester for basic sea survival
- A new entrant from Christchurch for firefighting, first aid and safety awareness courses – approved on the grounds that the candidate would be able to complete all the courses while they are available.

That the grants, to the total value of £585, be approved was proposed by T Russell, seconded by R Stride. All in favour.

VIII NATIONAL REPRESENTATION OF INSHORE FISHERIES

A Bamfield and R Stride had attended a face to face meeting of fishermen from around the UK in London on 20th February. Prof. John Humphries had attended for Poole. The outcome was that a working group would prepare a statement of intent to be presented at an AIFCA reception for MPs held at the House of Commons on 17th March. That action was later felt to be premature and subsequent online meetings led to a resolve to seek funding to set up a website to better inform the inshore industry of progress and register their interest and support. T Russell and R Stride gave an account of the House of Commons reception, which they felt had contributed to the momentum towards a national body.

IX OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business

X ARRANGEMENTS FOR MEETINGS IN 2025. .

The following dates were confirmed: **25 June, 6 August, 17 September, 29 October, 4 December.**

There being no other business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 20:42

Chairman

Recreational Angling Sector Group Meeting Minutes – 21/07/25– 19:00

Virtual Meeting – MS Teams

Attendees

Allan Green
Chris Holloway
David Mayne (Senior IFCO)
Emily Condie (Senior IFCO)

1. Minutes of the previous meeting (18th March 2025)
2. Introductions
3. Southern IFCA Updates/Ongoing items

Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw (EC)

The Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 was ratified on the 7th of July 2025 and came into effect immediately. SIFCA officers have been out on the coast, engaging with vessels that this change effects as well as conducting wider engagement. The Byelaw increases and introduces new closure areas across the district in order to ensure Southern IFCA's legal duties as feature-based managers for sensitive designated features of MPAs (MCZs, SACs and SPAs) are met. The closure areas are defined based on a series of Management Principles based on the location and extent of sensitive designated features and associated buffer zones.

SIFCA are in the early stages of gathering evidence for a second phase of bottom towed gear management in the district that will consider habitats and features considered sensitive to bottom towed gear, but which are not designated features or lie geographically outside of MPAs. Stakeholders will be provided with the opportunity in due course to provide information and evidence relevant to that process.

Members discussed the complexity of the closure areas and recreational anglers being able to understand the coordinates and prohibited areas. Member suggested the closure areas on charts should also be made available.

ACTION: EC to send maps of closures around Purbeck and in Poole Bay to AG

Shore Gathering and Pot Fishing Byelaw (EC)

Both byelaws remain in the Quality Assurance process with the MMO.

Members discussed a new similar Byelaw in the Sussex IFCA district including a bag limit of ragworm which may shift pressure into the Southern IFCA district. EC explained that whilst the Southern IFCA review of shore gathering was being carried out, ragworm were not a designated feature of any MPA in the district, nor was there evidence to suggest

that stocks were at risk. If in the future there was evidence to suggest that management may be required to address a significant risk, SIFCA would consider this and, if required, follow the necessary management development process.

Black Seabream Workstream

The Black Seabream consultation on Co-Developed Principles came to an end on the 22nd of June. A Summary of Responses document will go to the Technical Advisory Sub-Committee in August for Members to consider the next stage in the process. Overall, the majority of stakeholders were in agreement with most measures, points were raised around the maximum size and whether that is appropriate for all stakeholder groups and a minority of respondents discussed voluntary or regulatory management.

Officers explained that the Black Seabream FMP is also still in development and has the potential to consider other measures at a national level, with may differ to any management implemented in the SIFCA district.

FMP Update

** Update provided post meeting**

A series of meetings was held for the Tranche 4 FMPs, relevant to The District: Celtic Sea and Western Channel (CSWC) Pelagic, CSWC Demersal, Wrasses Complex and Seabream. This was to review drafts of the FMPs before they were submitted to Defra. At least one round of feedback was given on all of the FMPs and the CSWC Pelagic, Seabream and Wrasses Complex. The drafts for the T4 FMPs have now been completed and submitted to Defra, and will be open for public consultation later in the year.

The Cuttlefish Action Plan was published in published in April, containing the Action Plan, Trap and Pot Handling Voluntary Code of Practice ICES 7d and 7e and the Cuttlefish Species ID Cards. This has not changed management within The District as there is the SIFCA Cuttlefish Traps Code of Practice already in place which contains the same provisions.

The Bass Authorisation Review has started with public meetings online and in-person to gather an understanding of how people view the bass authorisation and how it could be improved

Compliance Updates (DM)

SIFCA are busy with various ongoing investigations across the district. There is one upcoming court date scheduled for August 2025. A recent Bottom Towed Fishing Gear offence was dealt with by way of a £3,000 Fixed Administrative Penalty (FAP). This has

been paid in full. Additionally, several fines relating to commercial offences from late 2024 have recently been paid, with one FAP payment outstanding.

Members requested for enforcement outcomes to be advertised. DM explained that court outcomes are published on the website and that enforcement statistics can be found in the Annual Report. EC forwarded the details to the Annual Report. Members suggested that a one-page short form document should be circulated to RASG members to disseminate to those interested.

4. Additional Requested Items

Net Fishing Methods (DM)

Members discussed the use of different gear types in various areas across the Dorset Coast.

IVMS Capabilities (DM)

DM provided an explanation around the capabilities of IVMS and the information it can provide: speed, time, location. Whilst IVMS data has not yet been used as the sole source of evidence in a case, it is frequently used alongside other sources of information, such as witness testimony, drone footage, landing inspections, at sea inspections and catch return evidence.

DM also provided an explanation on the uses of Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM) video systems and their potential uses in the future.

5. Any Other Business

RASG Terms of Reference

Members discussed the RASG Terms of Reference Document requiring updating to mirror the current administration of the group. A draft updated document will be circulated prior to the winter RASG meeting for Members to provide comment.

ACTION: EC to update ToR and circulate draft to members

Decline in Ray Landings

Members discussed the monitoring of ray catches in Poole Bay (4 in 6 weeks from one club). Members discussed the possibility of an of internship to interrogate trends in ray landings using angling club data.

Dorset, Hampshire, and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group

Spring 2025 Meeting Notes

Date held: 3rd June 2025

Attendees: Louise MacCallum (LM), Susan Hawley (SH), Vicki Gravestock (VG), Rick Stafford (RS), Peter Tinsley (PT), Hester Churchouse (HC) and Dominic Parry (DP).

1) Welcome and Apologies

HC welcomed the Members of the group to the Spring 2025 meeting of the Dorset, Hampshire, and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group. Apologies received from Matt Doggett, Alice Fowler (River Hamble Harbour Authority), Alice Hall (University of Plymouth), and Megan Roberts (Langstone Harbour Board).

2) Minutes and last meeting

Minutes of the Autumn 2024 meeting received and no changes made.

3) Current focus and activities

Solent Seascape Project (LM)

Work ongoing on the Solent Seascapes Recovery Plan and gearing up for the second round of workshops where attendees will be able to use the State of Nature Data Explorer to assist in the development of potential measures to relieve pressures on habitats and species in the Solent. Updates forthcoming in the coming weeks.

SSP has been actively restoring a number of habitats, including extending the oyster reef in the River Hamble, which is now the size of a football pitch. 10,000 extra oysters have been laid for this extension, with another additional 10,000 oysters to come later in the year. The oysters laid in 2023 seen to be thriving. 12 seabird nesting sites are being restored, many of which are used by nesting birds. Hayling Island oyster beds are looking very strong, and LM reported the use of a camera on Langstone Island, available via the SSP website, which is showing the great successes of the project, including capturing footage of baby sandwich terns. For seagrass restoration, active work in Priory Bay, IOW was reported, alongside planting of seagrass in the Hamble River trial site. Seed collection phase about to begin for those shoots that will be used to extend meadows next spring. LM reported success of one of Chaperone's areas of regenerated saltmarsh where dredged sediment was used, which has a high density of salicornia shoots (photo below) over 0.26ha, with hopes to double this area by summer. LM reported that a new film is being released on Thursday 5th June about 'Bill', a 104 year old, who used to swim in the Solent every day, but now doesn't as he is worried about the pollution in the sea.



Isle of Wight Estuaries Partnership (SH)

SH provided an update on the status of the 3 very different sites overseen by the Partnership - Western Yar, where managed alignment was determined as the best course for saltmarsh recovery; Thorness, where removing an obstacle is required to allow transition and migration to allow saltmarsh to naturally succeed; and Medina, where BUDS is being used to lift the levels of the creek so plants have a chance to recolonise an area. SH reports success in ability to use the dredged material to reinvest onto the Medina again, but that there is a lesson from previous BUDS round which contained too much clay. At Thorness SH reported that recovery of the site requires removal of a heavy concrete bridge (requires the bridge owner's permission) which will help in many cases to remove obstacles that typically get caught under the bridge, effecting hydrodynamics etc. Update provided on the seagrass work and opportunities to help the birds (in relation to disturbance) in the area too, highlighting ways to mix the three main areas of restoration work. At Western Yar SH reported that the site is transitioning on its own, with the old access works well used, and some overtopping and eroding occurring, but that there is a need to make sure that the works still allow overtopping of species and plants along that route. Landowner is keen to do countryside stewardships.

Under general workstreams, paddleboard signage on disturbance provided in Western Yar.

Environment Agency (VG)

Informed that much of the work occurs within freshwater realms, with work on salmon and their decline and what can be controlled within the key environments for their lifecycle (estuarine into marine and transitional zones). One identified priority area sits within the Itchen estuary, where it runs through Portswood. The EA is undertaking water quality monitoring, looking at present conditions, as a bottleneck was identified based on literature, back in the 1990's. Condition of that section of the water body is being compounded by the water sewage treatment works at Portswood, which have been shown to be running at a suboptimal standard. Options for improved treatment being explored.

Bournemouth University (RS)

No relevant projects undertaken within the area since previous meeting.

Dorset Wildlife Trust (PT)

Update provided on the nature of pits in the seabed in Lyme Bay, introduced in Autumn 2024 meeting as signs of possible porpoise activity in Lyme Bay. PT detailed how an F-pod, which records cetacean click data, was deployed both in Lyme Bay and Durlston Bay to investigate cetacean presence.

PT presented the data from Lyme Bay, which indicated the presence of porpoises on a daily basis, but that there were 10 times more instances of dolphin activity. A time of day influence can be seen, with porpoise activity occurring at night and dolphin activity during the day. PT informed that no/low detection of clicks alone doesn't mean the cetaceans aren't there, they could be hunting or present and not making sound. Data contains possible evidence of foraging behaviour based on clicks over 30 seconds. Data received from Durlston Bay shows less frequent click counts than Lyme Bay, which is supported by much lower sightings from shore for this Bay than in the Lyme Bay offshore site. Noise data collected was also visualised on graphs showing frequency of sound over a full 24 hours, which provided a setting for the cetacean clicks. In this the movement of the tide can be seen acting like wind background noise, as well as the high level of boat traffic. It is noted that when occurring at the same frequency passing boats are able to mask dolphin's sounds. When comparing areas of different substrate, more clicks were noted over rocky/reef areas compared to sandy areas.

Update provided on the state of the Purbeck puffins, of which there are 3 pairs left. PT informed that they don't tend to nest in cliff top burrows as in other colonies, but rather on Purbeck coast's rocky cliff ledges. Last year there was indications they successfully built a nest, but no records of adults feeding and that a puffling was being raised. Wildlife Trust have seen no evidence on cameras of predation that may be causing puffling mortality. This year, there are indications they have tried to breed and build nests, with one sighting of an adult bringing back fish. PT suggested that if it survives the puffling could emerge in 5-6 weeks time.

HC enquired when the last time the Purbeck puffins had a puffling fledge was. PT informed that the last was 5-6 years ago.

4) Southern IFCA update

HC provided an update on the SIFCA surveys that have been undertaken since the last meeting, covering two Solent Scallop fishery surveys (mid- and post- season), two Solent Bivalve fishery surveys (pre- and post- season), the annual Poole Bivalve survey, the Autumn Juvenile Fish Surveys in Christchurch, Yarmouth, River Hamble and the Fleet, and the 2025 district wide whelk population survey (ongoing). Members were informed of the latest available reports (2024) for each survey, to be found on the SIFCA website. HC reported the highlights from the most recent round of SIFCA surveys has included the sampling of several scallop < 1 year old with a modified Queenie dredge in the Solent Scallop survey, and the anecdotal recording of a higher number of native oysters within tows undertaken in Langstone Harbour in the Solent Bivalve 2025 post-season survey than previously.

HC provided an update on the progress of FMPs relevant to the SIFCA district, which has solely been the development of a cuttlefish action plan, mainly focusing on increased monitoring and data collection. A voluntary Handling Code of Conduct for 7d & 7e has been published, which mirrors that already in place in the Southern district.

HC informed members that as of 1st May Sussex IFCA's Hand Gathering Byelaw 2021, which implements quantitative and spatial restrictions on the recreational gathering of a number of intertidal species and requires a permit for commercial gathering, has been signed off by the Secretary of State. Further information can be found here: [Regulations](#). HC highlighted a statement from Devon & Severn IFCA relating to the reported predation by octopus on crab and lobster in pots, in relation to the escape gap requirements under their Potting Byelaw permit conditions and their wish to work with industry to continue to monitor the situation. LM enquired whether fishers in the SIFCA district were reporting similar levels of octopus, and how SIFCA were looking to respond from an enforcement perspective. HC informed that currently fishers within the SIFCA were not reporting numbers of octopus within pots at the levels being seen further west and that any action or strategy if the numbers did increase would be determined by senior enforcement officers, however that if a similar route was taken as our western neighbours it could include providing information to stakeholders on the overlap between our regulations and the targeting of octopus with pots.

5) SIFCA Black Seabream consultation

HC informed members that Southern IFCA were running a consultation at the time of the meeting (6th May to 22nd June) on proposed Co-Developed Management Principles for the targeting of Black seabream in the three Dorset MCZs. The co-developed principles, which are proposed to be voluntary, apply within the three Dorset MCZs, and apply during the breeding season (1st April to 31st July), have been co-developed in collaboration with industry and recreational representatives, and SIFCA is now looking to gauge the opinions of a wider range of stakeholders. The management principles include an increase in the Minimum Conservation Reference Size to 28cm, the introduction of a Maximum CRS of 38cm, a recreational bag limit of 6 bream per person per day, creation of handling, release and good fishing practice guidelines, and the introduction of a data collection program which is proposed to run year-round. Further information can be found here: [Live Consultations : Southern IFCA](#). PT inquired as to how compliance with these voluntary measures can be monitored. HC suggested that it would be through targeted and general SIFCA compliance patrol work.

6) AOB

Confirmation of Chair for Autumn 2025 meeting.

PT volunteered to chair, no further nominations received and no rejections made. Confirmation that PT will chair the next DHloW MCG meeting, to be held on Tuesday 7th October online.

Association of IFCAs

Annual Report 2024/25



Foreword

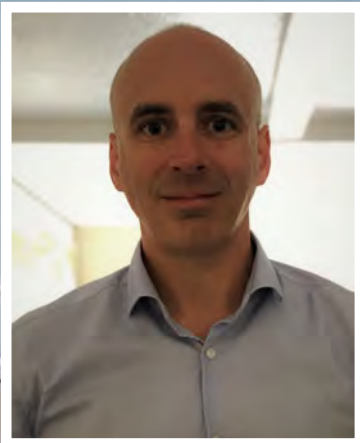
This report outlines the key activities and achievements of the AIFCA during the financial year 2024/25, aligning with the strategic priorities set out in our Annual Delivery Plan.

As an independent coastal state, the UK continues to navigate a changing landscape following Brexit, with the Fisheries and Environment Acts shaping new opportunities for coastal communities. The Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs) remain pivotal in delivering world-class fisheries and conservation management, acting as a crucial bridge between national policy and local implementation.

The AIFCA's role in bringing together the expertise of each Authority at the national level, raising awareness, and fostering collaboration has been more important than ever.



Tony Tomlinson, MBE
Chairman



Robert Clark, M.Sc., MBA
Chief Officer

Introduction

The year 2024/25 has seen the AIFCA continuing to support the ten IFCA Districts in England in their critical role within the UK's marine management framework. Our efforts have focused on enhancing sustainable, responsible, and responsive policies in inshore fisheries and conservation, contributing to the broader goals of the 25-Year Environment Plan. We have progressed initiatives stemming from the IFCA Evaluation, aiming to be ambitious, inclusive, and innovative within the fisheries and conservation management family.

Throughout this period, the AIFCA's Members Forum and Directors have collaborated at formal meetings of the AIFCA to discuss national policy and set strategic direction. This includes four quarterly Members Forum meetings (June 2024, September 2024, December 2024, and March 2025) and Directors meetings. These engagements underscore the commitment to a collaborative approach and effective leadership in fulfilling the AIFCA's mission.

Our ways of working

The AIFCA's operations during 2024/25 have been guided by its four core priorities, designed to support IFCA's through a rapidly evolving marine environment. Our approach continues to be membership-led, fostering effective relationships with key partners and stakeholders.

IFCA's shared purposes and our shared vision

The IFCA's operate under two main statutory duties: the management of inshore fisheries, ensuring sustainability and balancing socio-economic benefits with marine environment protection; and the protection of marine conservation zones (MCZs). The AIFCA's vision is to assist and promote regional IFCA's, ensuring they develop a leading and effective national role in fisheries and conservation management.

Implementing the strategy

The AIFCA has focused on supporting the IFCA's' needs by developing and sustaining positive relationships with key partners and stakeholders, developing supportive policy, and working closely with IFCA Members and Officers.



The AIFCA vision

“The aim of the Association is to assist and promote the regional IFCA’s to ensure that the Authorities develop a leading and effective national role in fisheries and conservation management in line with the IFCA vision”.

How the AIFCA operates

The AIFCA operates through a small team of officers and relies on the collaborative work of the ten regional IFCA’s. The AIFCA Members Forum, composed of IFCA Chairs and heads of professional services, provides strategic leadership, with the Chairman and Vice Chairman elected annually. The AIFCA Directors are responsible for implementing Forum policies and managing the professional service. The AIFCA staff act as a central conduit for information exchange, monitoring parliamentary activities, facilitating communication, and developing collective positions. Officer groups, bringing together specialist teams, facilitate best practice sharing and policy development.

The Members Forum met quarterly, holding meetings in June 2024 (AGM), September 2024, 3rd December 2024, March 2025. The AIFCA Directors held combined and specific meetings, in October and December Members Forum.



Work Programme

England's ten IFCAs, through the AIFCA, have progressed work under four collective priorities and action plans:

National voice of IFCAs - **promoting IFCAs value**

Supporting IFCAs - **making a difference**

An effective forum - **driving collaboration**

Our business - **delivering value**



Promoting IFCAs Value

A programme of promotional work:

The AIFCA produced news releases and maintained a refreshed and updated website to disseminate information about the work and services of IFCAs. An AIFCA newsletter was produced to provide information on our work and engagement opportunities. The Chief Officer actively contributed to numerous national conferences; the “Future Fisheries” panel at the Coastal Futures 2025 Conference, emphasizing the national benefits of sustainable fisheries and presenting findings from workshops on fleet decline. The AIFCA alongside Northumberland IFCA had a strong presence at The International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) Annual Science Conference (ASC 2024) held in Gateshead, UK. The Chief Officer was on the keynote panel, and the international delegation visited St. Aiden, Northumberland IFCAs patrol vessel that was berthed alongside in Newcastle, UK.





Support and co-ordinate engagement with national spending review:

The AIFCA successfully coordinated and submitted the IFCAs SR21 submission to Defra, which resulted in securing a revenue support uplift of £1.5 million per annum and capital funding of approximately £1.5 million for vessel replacement over the 2021 Spending Review period. The AIFCA submitted the Spending Review bid for 2025/26.

Lead the IFCAs' work through the Marine Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment (mNCEA) Programme:

The Marine Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment (mNCEA) programme is a three-year, Defra-led initiative running from 2022 to 2025. Its primary objective is to embed natural capital thinking into marine policy and decision making. IFCAs, through the Association of IFCAs (AIFCA), have played an important delivery role, working closely with Natural England and other partners to design and deliver projects under two key streams: Future Monitoring and Place-Based Decision Making. These projects, flowing through the course of the three year programme, have been instrumental in aligning natural capital approaches with IFCA responsibilities under the Marine and Coastal Access Act, 2009 and the Fisheries Act, 2020.

While the programme has not extended beyond March 2025, its legacy is expected to continue through Business as Usual (BaU) integration by Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs). The outputs already generated offer significant value to IFCA operations, fisheries management plans (FMPs), and wider marine evidence and governance frameworks.

mNCEA Project: Inshore Fish Monitoring

A key strand of the mNCEA work with IFCA has been the multi-method inshore fish monitoring pilot. This project sought to improve understanding of the spatial and temporal distribution of inshore fish communities and their supporting habitats. Trialled in South Cornwall and North Northumberland, the work involved Cornwall IFCA and Northumberland IFCA directly. Methods included seine netting, baited traps, BRUV (Baited Remote Underwater Video), and more advanced techniques such as dive surveys and otter trawling delivered by ALBs.

The aim of the pilot was to identify effective, replicable approaches that could inform the development of a national inshore fish monitoring programme. This would support both natural capital assessments and the long-term evidence needs of FMPs.

A Essential Fish Habitats (EFH) Framework project involved the AIFCA, NE, EA, and Cefas and contributed to identifying and defining essential fish habitats for a selection of fish species. The aim was to create standard terminology and guidelines for identifying and managing key habitats throughout fish life cycles.





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mNCEA Project: Crab and Lobster Fisheries

Three significant projects have focused on crab and lobster fisheries. The Coastal Wellbeing project explored how the balanced management of these fisheries supports the wellbeing of coastal communities. Newcastle University led qualitative research using case studies in Cromer (Eastern IFCA), Northumberland (Northumberland IFCA), and Whitby (Northeastern IFCA). The findings highlight how fisheries provide not just economic benefits, but also cultural and social value to local communities, and how this can be better reflected in fisheries management decisions.

The Crab and Lobster Monitoring project reviewed existing data sources, indicators, and methods used across IFCAs and other bodies for monitoring inshore crab and lobster stocks. This included examining survey methods, stock assessments, landings data, byelaw measures, and permit schemes. The outputs were intended to serve as a reference point for assessing stock health and informing future management approaches.

Currently, national crab and lobster assessments rely on limited data. The Stock Assessment project, involving the IFCA Technical Advisory Group and Cefas, explored the potential integration of IFCA-collected data into national assessments to improve confidence and fill evidence gaps.

mNCEA Project: Measuring Balance in IFCA Decision Making

The Measuring Balance project was developed in collaboration with the Isles of Scilly IFCA, and led by the AIFCA. Its aim was to support transparent and evidence-based fisheries management by developing a tool that helps IFCAs demonstrate how they balance social, economic, and environmental considerations in their decision making.

The project was delivered in two key phases. Part 1 involved a data-gathering exercise within the Isles of Scilly community. Through 26 in-depth interviews, the project identified 34 target sub-themes across the social, economic, and environmental dimensions relevant to local fisheries and IFCA management. Part 2 focused on developing a reporting and decision support tool. These targets were converted into a structured format that can be used to evaluate fisheries management options.

The Measuring Balance tool is not intended to deliver binary answers but it can:

- Visualise and compare the trade-offs of different management options
- Engage IFCA committees and stakeholders more directly in transparent decision making
- Identify evidence gaps or areas requiring further research
Support reporting requirements, including alignment with statutory duties under the Marine and Coastal Access Act and the Fisheries Act 2020



To test the tool's application, the team modelled two contrasting management scenarios for the Isles of Scilly pollack fishery: A complete pollack fishery closure (Zero TAC) and a 250 kg monthly catch allowance using hook and line scenario.

Using these scenarios, the tool was applied to evaluate the trade-offs across the defined social, economic, and environmental dimensions. The outputs visually highlighted where the most acute negative impacts occurred, helping to inform further discussion on mitigation or adaptation strategies, and how the decision's impact varied across the three dimensions.

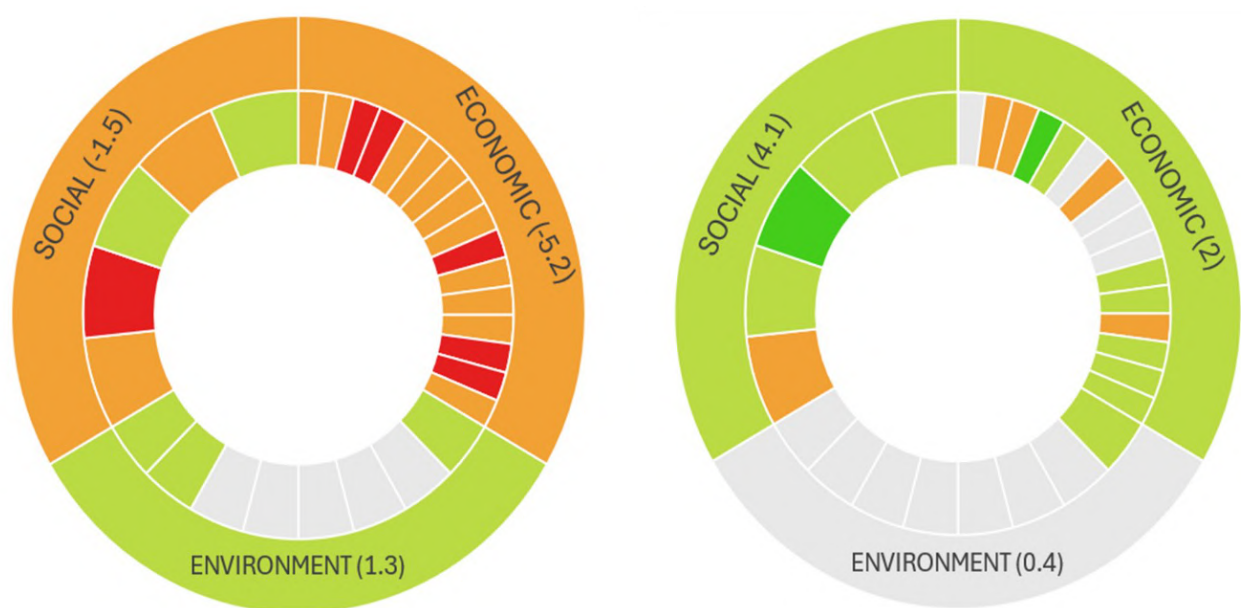


Figure 1 (above): Scenario mapping from the Measuring Balance mNCEA project. The left image shows the potential outcome from a Zero TAC for pollack in the Isles of Scilly. This shows an overall negative impact in the economic and social sectors, clearly as a result in the loss of fishing opportunities. In some cases, this negative impact is severe. The environment sector is shown to potentially experience a positive impact related to the associated stock recovery. Overall, it would be difficult to say that this management decision would be balanced across all three categories. The image on the right shows the potential outcome from a 250kg monthly catch allowance for pollack. Under this scenario the impact is likely to be generally more positively felt by the community, although there would likely to be less of a positive impact on the environment, with a likely slower stock recovery situation. Overall, however this scenario looks to be more balanced across the three sectors with no severe negative impacts.

mNCEA Project: Shellfisheries and Cultural Values

The mNCEA programme also supported place-based work centred on culturally and ecologically significant inshore shellfisheries. The **Morecambe Bay Cultural Values** project, working with Northwestern IFCA collected oral histories from Morecambe Bay cockle fishers and local residents to explore how values and perceptions influence support for fisheries management. The output includes a “community voice” film that captures diverse perspectives and provides social evidence to support future IFCA decision-making.

Bird Food Resource Models (BFRMs) are used to help ensure that the management of shellfish fisheries, such as cockle and mussel beds, is compatible with the conservation needs of overwintering coastal bird species. By combining ecological data on shellfish stocks with information about bird foraging behaviour and energetic needs, BFRMs provide a scientific basis for evaluating the impacts of fishing activity on protected bird species. For IFCAs, this modelling supports evidence-based management decisions and helps meet statutory obligations. It also aligns with the natural capital approach promoted by mNCEA, by showing how marine ecosystems provide services (in this case, food for birds) and ensuring that those services are maintained alongside sustainable fisheries.

A series of BFRM have been developed or updated for key shellfish areas. In Morecambe Bay, a BFRM helped demonstrate that current cockle management is compatible with the needs of overwintering bird populations. In the Taw-Torridge Estuary, Devon and Severn IFCA worked with Bournemouth University to develop a bespoke model based on oystercatcher foraging behaviour. Eastern IFCA also supported a reassessment of the BFRM for the Wash Cockle Fishery, incorporating recent data on shellfish mortalities and stock assessments.

The **Shellfish Monitoring** project involved the collation, review, and integration of existing data on indicators, metrics, and methods for monitoring shellfish stock health. The project helped establish a replicable approach to linking ecological and socio-economic data with shellfishery management, demonstrating how natural capital thinking can support ecosystem service delivery and balanced fisheries regulation. The outputs formed a foundation for several Year 3 projects, including cultural values research and Bird Food Resource Models.

Working with Eastern IFCA, the **Shellfish Mortality Investigation** project explored causes of unexplained shellfish mortality in The Wash. The aim was to gather further evidence alongside BFRM updates to better understand environmental stressors affecting shellfish populations and inform adaptive management.

MORECAMBE BAY

A NEW APPROACH FOR FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

COCKLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

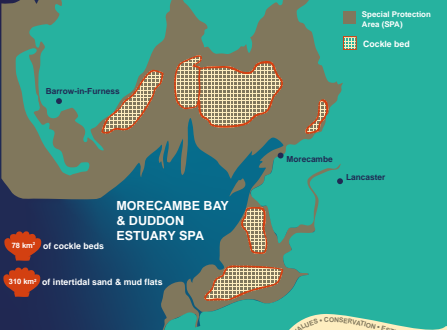
Natural England has been working with the North Western (NW) IFCA to explore how a natural capital approach can help develop equitable and adaptive management of the cockle fishery to support a healthy estuarine ecosystem for nature and the coastal community.

To manage the Morecambe Bay shellfishery sustainably, the NW IFCA assigns regulated access to the cockle and mussel beds under the Permit to Fish for Cockles and Mussels Byelaw. Applying a natural capital and ecosystem approach by incorporating new ecological sampling and insights from social science research will better evidence the environmental, social, and economic benefits of the fishery and trade-offs in the decision-making process.

Natural England's work under the marine Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment (mNCEA) programme has been to deliver evidence, tools, and guidance to enable the practical use of natural capital approaches in supporting recovery in marine and coastal environments. Natural capital approaches can facilitate management which considers the social, environmental, and economic impacts of decision-making.

In collaboration with the Association of Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs), Natural England's work under the mNCEA programme is supporting local shellfisheries management which puts a thriving marine environment at the heart of decision-making for Morecambe Bay.

Follow the oystercatcher's footsteps to find out more about what we are doing to help...



COCKLE CYCLES AND CLOSURES

Cockle beds and the wider mud and sand flats are a dynamic living system, and the Morecambe Bay cockles follow a varying 'boom and bust' cycle, leading to intermittent closure and re-opening of the fishery. For local authorities like the NW IFCA, the challenge is to predict trends in cockle biomass and inform management of the fishery.



ECOSYSTEM PRESSURES

Beyond fishing, intertidal ecosystems are under threat from several other pressures including water quality and plastic pollution, and climate change.

WHAT IS A NATURAL CAPITAL APPROACH?

A natural capital approach considers the intrinsic and monetary value of the environment. It considers the ecosystem as a whole and recognises that a healthy functioning ecosystem supports human health, wealth, and wellbeing, and that the economy, society, and natural world are inextricably linked.

MARINE NATURAL CAPITAL BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Natural England's best practice guidance for undertaking marine natural capital assessments has provided the framework for understanding the different types of evidence that can support management of marine areas.

In the context of shellfisheries management in Morecambe Bay, this included:

- Collecting ecological evidence
- Using this in ecosystem modelling e.g. Bird Food Model
- Integrating social and cultural values

MORECAMBE BAY BIRD FOOD MODEL

Morecambe Bay and the Duddon Estuary SPA is an important overwintering site for wading birds such as oystercatcher and knot.

The mNCEA Bird Food Model assesses the effects of shellfishing and other factors on intertidal food availability, and consequently on bird survival.

Model inputs include:

- Shellfish stock assessments
- Intertidal invertebrate surveys
- Bird ecological data: feeding patterns, & oystercatcher & knot abundance

PARTICIPANT RESPONSES TO CHANGES IN THE COCKLE FISHERY

The 'Cultural Values' research also explores change events related to the fishery and participant experiences of them. This has revealed:

- Concerns about family succession & maintaining local cockling traditions
- The importance of local knowledge, particularly for practicing safe cockling
- Variation in how cocklers have responded to unpredictable cockle cycles & changes in markets & regulation

SHELLFISHERIES: LOCAL AND NATIONAL SCALES

A natural capital approach can be used to determine a more complete value of shellfish beds. The evidence collected is being used to support local fishery management decisions and the development of national Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs).

Shellfish beds provide multiple benefits, including:

- Provisioning of food & fisheries
- Regulation of water quality & coastline protection
- Cultural heritage & recreational value

NEW ECOSYSTEM EVIDENCE

Natural England's mNCEA work has built a new evidence base on the habitats and features of Morecambe Bay, including the marine invertebrate species living in the intertidal sands.

The new ecological evidence is helping to answer the question of how dependent the healthy functioning of the Morecambe Bay ecosystem is on the benthic species living between its tides. This new evidence, alongside the programme's Bird Food Model, will inform site management and the drafting of the cockle FMP.

THE CULTURAL VALUES OF THE MORECAMBE BAY COCKLE FISHERY

Researchers from the Universities of Exeter and Southampton are conducting analysis of oral histories to understand community values related to cockling and the Bay.

Emerging insights on what was valued include:

- Safety & local knowledge
- Pleasure of cockling & the economic benefits
- Family & community fishing heritage, & its role in identity

WHAT DOES IT ALL ADD UP TO?

- New ecosystem data which can be integrated into cockle fishery decision-making
- An enhanced understanding of the true 'value' of estuarine ecosystems & shellfisheries
- Integration of local knowledge & social values
- New evidence on the impacts of decision-making

MORECAMBE'S HAND-GATHERING HERITAGE

Morecambe Bay has a rich cultural heritage associated with its cockle fishery. The cockles are harvested via a highly selective hand-gathering method. By using a traditional mesh tool the fishers 'riddle' the cockles, which allows undersized cockles to be returned to the bed.

The Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary SPA is the most important site in Britain for oystercatchers, carefully considered management can help support the overall population of these charismatic coastal birds!

Click [HERE](#) to see the graphic in more detail

A Continuing Journey

Although the mNCEA programme formally ended in March 2025, many of its tools, datasets, and insights will live on. The projects delivered with IFCA have generated new knowledge, practical tools, and policy-relevant insights that can enhance the delivery of FMPs and support more holistic, evidence-based fisheries management.

By strengthening the role of social and cultural data in decision making, enhancing monitoring methods, and testing data integration into national assessments, the mNCEA programme has helped place IFCA at the forefront of natural capital-based marine governance. Going forward, there is strong potential for the outputs to be embedded in ongoing IFCA work and to influence wider policy and funding decisions related to marine recovery, fisheries management, and coastal community wellbeing.



Lead the delivery of Cockle Fisheries Management Plans (FMP):

AIFCA has successfully delivered the Proposed Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) for cockles in English waters to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). As a key delivery partner for Defra, AIFCA has fulfilled a significant commitment under the Fisheries Act 2020 and the UK Joint Fisheries Statement, establishing a robust framework for the sustainable management of this vital marine resource. Our overarching vision for this draft cockle FMP is to ensure cockle fisheries in English waters are managed to achieve economic, social, and environmental sustainability for the benefit of coastal communities and wider society.

AIFCA played a leading role throughout the development and delivery of this draft FMP, successfully meeting core commitments and fostering essential cross-agency and stakeholder collaboration. AIFCA led the development in close partnership with the Cockle FMP Evidence Group, which comprised dedicated Officers from the Kent and Essex, North Western, Southern, and Eastern IFCAs. This collaboration, alongside input from other industry bodies, government agencies, and environmental non-governmental organisations (NGOs), ensured a comprehensive and informed plan built on the best available science and evidence. Extensive informal and formal stakeholder engagement was undertaken, involving active fishermen, processors, buyers, and wider stakeholders through online and in-person events. This feedback was instrumental in refining the FMP's content, goals, and actions. Stakeholders recognised the benefits of a national approach in raising awareness of cross-policy issues, improving the evidence base, and addressing wider environmental and socio-economic considerations. The draft FMP addresses the need for a national framework to link existing local cockle management practices, acknowledging that a “one-national-size-fits-all” approach is not appropriate for diverse local stocks and harvesting methods. While this iteration does not propose new management measures, it aims to facilitate capacity to address common issues relevant to all English cockle fisheries. The plan prioritises environmental sustainability and evidence enhancement including socio-economic contributions. In setting clear goals and actions, including the development of a national forum to share best practice and identify common issues, it supports stakeholders feedback for a more joined-up, strategic approach within government and regulators. The successful submission of the draft Cockle FMP represents a crucial step towards ensuring healthy seas, sustainable fisheries, and a viable cockle industry in English waters.

Lead the IFCA's' delivery of the Coastal Health, Livelihoods and Environment (CHLE) project:

The AIFCA played a pivotal role as a key delivery partner in the Coastal Health, Livelihoods and Environment (CHLE) Shared Outcomes Fund pilot programme, contributing significantly to a new cross-government approach for understanding and responding to Adverse Coastal Health Events (ACHEs). This initiative, funded by HM Treasury, aimed to ensure the health and resilience of England's coastal ecosystems and their dependent communities.

AIFCA successfully met its core commitments within the CHLE programme, consistently delivering planned outputs. A significant achievement has been our active contribution to the development of a Defra policy playbook for responding to marine incidents of unknown cause. This playbook is a crucial multi-agency response framework that clarifies roles and responsibilities for Defra, seven government agencies, and includes opportunities for IFCA's, where appropriate, regarding sample collection, communications, advice, and decision-making for marine incidents of unknown cause affecting the English coastline. It also outlines arrangements for coordinating across multiple agencies. Our participation in its working groups and workshops was pivotal, and AIFCA contributed to its design, detailing how IFCA's can be engaged in its policy role.





Furthermore, AIFCA collaboratively developed the overarching structure for a Coastal Health Operational Model (CHOM) with Cefas, the Environment Agency (EA), and the MMO. This model is designed to enhance emergency preparedness through anticipation and analysis, aiming to shift from purely reactive responses to proactive management of ACHEs.

AIFCA's engagement in the CHLE programme fostered crucial cross-agency collaboration and improved data integration. AIFCA actively participated in various cross-government workshops and working groups, including the Communications Working Group, which regularly coordinated messaging and responses to incidents. The IFCA Technical Advisory Group (TAG) also played a direct and active role in facilitating knowledge sharing and sample collection training. A critical element of the programme focused on capacity building. Cefas delivered specialized training to regional IFCAs on methods for collecting and processing crustacean samples for disease investigations.

This programme has laid a robust foundation for improving our understanding, prediction, and response to ACHEs, underscoring AIFCA's crucial ongoing involvement and leadership in ensuring resilient coastal communities and thriving livelihoods.

Making a Difference

Lead the national response to the IFCA Conduct and Operations Report:

The Chief Officer informed members about the launch of the IFCA Conduct and Operations Report call for evidence, and members actively promoted it. The AIFCA's response to the report was noted by members. The report, covering 2018-2022, is the most comprehensive published by Defra, incorporating over 500 responses through various channels including questionnaires, in-person engagements, and online surveys. It highlighted thirteen government conclusions on areas such as committee structure, oversight, transparency, funding, stakeholder engagement, byelaw process, building trust, and complaints. Defra confirmed its commitment to address these findings, including reviewing the MMO/IFCA interface, funding arrangements, and strengthening guidance for committee appointments. Immediate recommendations for IFCA's include enhancing transparency and engagement, explaining MPA prioritisation, improving collaboration in regulatory duties, considering industry engagement in enforcement, and improving complaints procedures. The AIFCA is committed to supporting the implementation of the report's findings. Members were recommended to note the report, provide feedback, and agree to collaborative work with Defra to address the recommendations, with the Chief Officer tasked to develop an Action Plan.



Develop an action plan to implement the key findings of the IFCA Stories Project:

A revised draft of the IFCA Stories Project report was received, with editorial oversight from Prof. Williams. The Chief Officer is reviewing the draft and will send it to Chief Officers for comment prior to publication.



Coordinate the actions necessary to implement Fisheries Management Plans:

Beyond the Cockle FMP, the AIFCA is engaged in the wider FMP development process. This includes contributions to lessons learned from frontrunner FMPs and ensuring IFCA's play a central role in their implementation. The AIFCA actively participates in the FMP Programme Management Group (PMG), the FMP Programme Evidence Group (PEG), and the FMP Engagement and Communications Group (ECG), facilitating IFCA input and ensuring their data utility is maximized. The AIFCA is also involved with the frontrunner FMP Shellfish Industry Consultation Group (SICG) and its sub-groups and contributes to the Tranche 4 Celtic Sea and Western Channel Pelagic FMP Technical Working Group.

IFCA Briefing Series: Enhancing Knowledge and Capabilities

The AIFCA is committed to supporting IFCA districts in England through a rapidly evolving marine environment. In line with this commitment, the AIFCA, in collaboration with the Institute of Fisheries Management (IFM), initiated a comprehensive series of five virtual briefings. The primary purpose of this project was to provide IFCA members and officers with opportunities to learn from recognised experts in marine and fisheries policy relevant to their roles, and to share their knowledge, skills, and experience to support and enrich their functions and promote best practice. These briefings, hosted by the IFM, took place between December 2023 and September 2025.

Each briefing was designed with distinct intentions to address critical aspects of IFCA operations and the broader marine management landscape, and covered:

- IFCA decision making: The role of specialist advice
- Marine natural capital
- Marine planning and marine licencing
- IFCA stories project
- Effective marketing and communications

Sessions were very well attended, with an average attendance of over 54 members and officers for each. By providing these targeted briefings, the programme successfully equipped IFCA members and officers with crucial insights and enhanced their capabilities, directly contributing to the Association's mission of promoting and assisting regional IFCAs in their leading national role in fisheries and conservation management.



Driving Collaboration

A skills audit for IFCA members:

A draft IFCA Skills Audit tool was developed by the Chief Officer, with Kent and Essex IFCA agreeing to trial the audit process and report back on their experience. Members considered its use as part of their governance arrangements.

Develop members training and education materials:

The AIFCA plans to continue Members/Officers “teach-in” sessions on new projects and programmes. Promotional materials are also being developed to increase understanding and promote transparency regarding the duties of IFCAs, their role in decision-making, and duties in Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). The AIFCA, for the first time, delivered the IFCA “Environment, Science and Conservation” (ESC) course in Brixham, with nine students from six IFCAs attending. This course was led by Alex Aitken and Colin Trundle, featuring external experts and internal IFCA experts. The Chief Officer is also developing a course manual for peer review.

Hold a national conference on inshore fisheries management:

The AIFCA collaborated with Newcastle University and others to organize two Small Scale Fisheries Workshops, held in Poole (Southern regions) and Whitby (Northern regions). These residential workshops aimed to bring together diverse stakeholders, including commercial fishers, regulators, and academics, to share knowledge on the drivers of decline in Small Scale Fisheries (SSF) and to co-design recommendations to address this decline.

THIS REALLY IS the LAST CHANCE



WE NEED to **ACT NOW**
to **SAVE** OUR
INSHORE FISHERIES

NO FISH
NO FISHERS
NO FISHERIES
NO FISHING CULTURE



Inshore and Small-Scale Fisheries (ISSF) Events Summary 2024/25:

In Autumn 2024, the ISSF Consortium hosted two national workshops in Poole (September) and Whitby (October), bringing together 120 participants, including 53 active inshore fishermen, to address the accelerating decline of the UK's inshore fleet—particularly the under 10m sector. The workshops were designed to generate a shared understanding of the challenges facing small-scale fisheries, highlight root causes of fleet decline, and identify feasible actions to secure sustainable livelihoods for coastal fishing communities.



Participants co-developed a collective vision for thriving inshore fisheries and identified seven priority themes, including:

- Enable the voices of inshore fishers to be heard and build capacity to collectively act
- Effective regulation of all sea users (offshore and foreign fishing vessels, recreational fishing, seals and offshore wind farms)
- Health and safety regulations that match vessel type and size
- Better access to grants for small fishing businesses
- Support for and facilitation of diversification
- Invest in training and recruitment into fishing careers
- Improved public awareness and positive perception of the fishing industry



To extend engagement, the ISSF Coastal Roadshow was launched, taking findings from the workshops back to coastal communities through events and festivals, with support from AIFCA and local fishermen. The roadshow includes a photo exhibition (“Pride in Our Seas II – The English Coast”) and provides a platform for broader public and community voices to feed into the national dialogue. It serves both as a feedback loop and a data-gathering mechanism for regional perspectives.

A key milestone in the project was the House of Commons Reception on 17 March 2025, hosted by AIFCA with support from Noah Law MP. The event celebrated the work of IFCA's in supporting small-scale fisheries and publicly launched two major reports: the [ISSF Policy Brief](#) ("Securing Sustainable Inshore Fisheries in the UK") and the [IFCA Conversations Report](#). Attended by over 100 guests including MPs and the Fisheries Minister, the reception highlighted the value of inshore fishing to coastal identity, food security, and the national economy. Minister Daniel Zeichner publicly thanked IFCA's for their efforts and reinforced Defra's commitment to co-management and sustainable fisheries.



These events form part of a wider strategy to build momentum toward a National ISSF Conference, to be held early 2026, where actionable recommendations will be shaped into a national platform for change.



Develop national policy under the direction of the IFCA Members:

The AIFCA has facilitated the development of Joint Position Statements on key IFCA work areas and provides regular briefings and policy updates on Defra national initiatives and key policy developments. The Chief Officer has been appointed to the APPG on Fisheries Expert Panel, providing expert input to support the UK fisheries industry. The AIFCA also engages with the Fisheries and the Marine Environment Inquiry, highlighting a parliamentary event on 17th March 2025 related to this scrutiny. Furthermore, the Chief Officer will draft a response to proposed changes in Several and Regulating Orders (SROs), incorporating comments from Chief Officers.

Lead the recruitment and retention plan of IFCA members:

The AIFCA leads engagement with Defra and the MMO on the IFCA membership recruitment and appointments process and works to support members' induction and understanding of roles and responsibilities.



Delivering Value

Hold regular meetings of the IFCA Members Forum and Directors:

The AIFCA successfully held quarterly Members Forum meetings throughout the period (June, September, December 2024, and March 2025).

Review internal systems of control:

The Directors reviewed internal control policies, noting changes to the Health and Safety Policy and Reserves Policy. They also adopted the Procurement Policy, the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, the Environmental Sustainability Policy, and the Information and Information Security Policy. The annual planning process allows members to shape activities and monitor progress, with a risk management group monitoring agreed risks.



Implement new systems of financial management:

Budget Control Statements were regularly presented, considered, and approved by both Members and Directors. The Draft Annual Accounts were considered and passed to external accountants for further scrutiny and subsequently submitted to Companies House. The AIFCA 2025/26 Budget was approved. The 2025/26 subscriptions were approved with a 2.5% increase.

A Defra accrual of £186,687.17 for services delivered in FY22/23 and 23/24 resulted in a cash surplus. The Directors agreed to hypothecate this amount to future work programmes of the AIFCA, aligning with the Articles of Association and meeting members' aspirations for proactive engagement and strategic communications. This investment is set to prioritise activities such as data sharing infrastructure, communications, training, and inshore fisheries strategy and characterisation.

Committed to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:

The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy was adopted. A project proposal titled "Supporting diversity and inclusion in fisheries and conservation management with a focus on Women in Fisheries" was agreed and while the project experienced a delay due to a consultant change, its aim is to support women in fisheries management roles and the wider industry by identifying barriers and providing best practice guidance through lectures, workshops, and case studies through closer engagement with the Women in Fisheries Network is receiving further support.



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