

Poole Harbour Bait Agreement



The Memorandum of Agreement for bait digging in Poole Harbour was produced in partnership with bait diggers and anglers. It allows for the protection and improvement of the marine environment of the inshore waters of Poole Harbour whilst allowing for sustainable bait collection.

Poole Harbour is a European Marine Site (EMS), designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA), Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Ramsar site.

The Harbour comprises of a mosaic of intertidal habitats which, each year, support thousands of over-wintering and passage birds that are of national and international significance.

Please help us to look after our Harbour and support the sustainable collection of bait.



Backfilling

All diggers should ensure that they backfill any holes which are dug

Holes Bay

Holes Bay is a site of particular importance for bird species within Poole Harbour. The enclosed nature of the bay and its sheltered position create a refuge for bird species when other areas of the Harbour are affected by adverse weather.

In order to preserve this area during particularly vulnerable periods, please do not dig for bait:

- Within the area north of the railway bridge **at any time of the year**
- And in the remainder of Holes Bay, during the months of **January and February**



Seagrass

Seagrass beds are an important habitat, supporting a wide range of species. Seagrass is considered to be highly sensitive to physical disturbance including that caused by trampling, digging and other hand gathering activities

- Bait diggers must abide by the Southern IFCA byelaw 'Prohibition on gathering (sea fisheries resources) in seagrass beds byelaw'
- Bait diggers are asked to not walk across seagrass beds

General Provisions

- Collect bait sustainably and only gather what is needed to ensure future stocks
- Avoid taking green spawning worms
- Keep to access paths and avoid trampling saltmarsh, reedbeds and other similar habitats
- Avoid bait digging around moorings, slipways and sea walls
- Be aware of use of torch lights at night which can disturb roosting birds
- Keep to all local byelaws and regulations

Commercial diggers are required to obtain landowner permission before digging activity is carried out

Bird Sensitive Areas

In some areas of the Harbour visual and noise disturbance are likely to be more significant to the bird interest. Sediment recovery from baitdigging in these areas is also likely to be slower.

Bait diggers should avoid conducting activity in defined bird sensitive areas between **1st November and 30th March inclusive**.

For a full list of co-ordinates defining these sensitive areas please see the full Agreement at www.southern-ifca.gov.uk

