

Sussex IFCA Annual Conservation and Research Plan 2025-2026

The table below lists the conservation and research work planned for April 2025 to March 2026. Each of the projects are listed under their associated work area with a brief description of the work to be conducted. These are drawn from the Four-Year Conservation and Research Plan 2024-2028. Priorities for this year include a review of the Shellfish Permit Byelaw, the production of Habitat Regulation Assessments for several MPA's, initiating a project to continually update of the Habitat Map and to trial the feasibility of scallop potting.

Project name	Project description	Work area
Shellfish Permit Byelaw Annual Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produced for July Committee - Reports temporal/spatial trends in total landings, fishing effort, and LPUE data that is gathered via the catch returns submitted by potting fishers 	Byelaw review, Monitoring
Shellfish Permit Byelaw review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and update IA - Assess potting activity and impacts - Analyse all catch return data collected to-date (2017-2024) - Review Shellfish Permit Database functionality - Review management - Possible publication of report - Literature review of benthic potting impacts 	Byelaw review
5-year towed video survey report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis of data and report by Chris Yesson and Francesco Marzano - Officers required to review of drafts and provide comment 	Byelaw review, Research
FMPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Input into FMP consultations, engagement events and working groups as appropriate - Update R and D/data gap spreadsheets as appropriate 	Consultations
MCMS consultations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administrate marine licensing consultations via the MCMS portal - To be led and administrated by the Strategic Advisor and Clerk with assistance and approval from C&R Managers. 	Consultations
Rampion 2 consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A decision on Rampion 2 licensing is anticipated for early in the 2025-26 financial year - Some resource may be required to input into further consultations and to assist fishers in accessing relevant groups 	Consultations

121s and IPPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fortnightly catch ups between Research Officers and Research Managers - Plan the weeks ahead and discuss any issues - Set annual goals and priorities for each member of the C+R Team 	Internal Business
Budget planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Throughout year - calculate costs, remaining funds, and remaining commitments - Next year's budget request 	Internal Business
C&R Annual Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Taken from 4-year plan (4-year plan updated to include additional year) - Include projects that need to be carried over from current Annual Plan - Update FMP R+D spreadsheet following annual plan completion (AIFCA request) 	Internal Business
C&R Annual Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produce Annual Report for Q2 Committee meeting - Update on annual C&R work - Research, monitoring, consultation, stakeholder engagement, partnerships, etc 	Internal Business
Committee Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produce C&R update, relevant decision/information items - Attend Committee and Technical Subcommittee Meetings 	Internal Business
Kit maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintenance schedule, guidance, and log for C&R equipment to be developed - Equipment maintained as per developed guidance 	Internal Business
Partnership meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attend partnership meetings as required - Attendee for each meeting specified in Partnership Meetings doc - Attendees to update on meetings outcomes/discussions as appropriate 	Internal Business
Review C&R website material	<p>Check that all C+R related materials are up to date. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact Assessments - Codes of conduct - MCZ leaflets and other comms materials - Research reports 	Internal Business

Training	As required, for example: - STCW - Small fish ID - Statistics and GIS - Condition and Habitat Regulation Assessments	Internal Business
Data sharing	- Production of agreements when sharing data - All data sharing requests to be reviewed/approved by C&R Manager - Liaise with DASSH to send and update survey metadata on MEDIN	Internal Business
Environmental Impact Statements	- Research Officers to draft Environmental Impact Summary section for Enforcement casefiles - All draft sections to be written/reviewed/approved by GB or JL before being sent to Enforcement	Internal Business
TAG meetings	- Technical Advisory Group - Environmental leads across all IFCA's - C&R Managers to attend and administrate actions - Update TAG on developments in Sussex as appropriate	Internal Business
Interactive map	- Update existing layers – Predominately fishing effort - Updating videos, with the aim to increase engagement	Internal Business
Volunteer projects	- Coordinated by Volunteers lead - Steyning Grammar school - Annual	Internal Business, Research
Acoustic array maintenance	- As and when required in coordination with Uni of Plymouth - UoP to lead on dates with MAROPS, C&R to support	Monitoring
BLUE Potting survey	- Potting surveys in August measure the abundance, size, weight, sex and condition of Edible Crab, European lobster and Spider Crab caught in the pots at sites in and outside the Sussex Nearshore Trawling Byelaw area - Data analysis by Adam Rees and Annual Report by Emily Bulled	Monitoring

Fishing Vessel Effort Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produce fishing vessel effort grids for previous 5 years - Watchful track data and data from sightings log to be processed to create a district wide 1kmsq grid network to indicate the average number of sightings per square km patrolled by FPV Watchful. 	Monitoring
Habitat mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extend the SCHIP1 project to cover entire District; detailed habitat data underpins much of C&R's work - Anticipated to be a multi-year collaborative project 	Monitoring
Potting survey - Officer observer on local vessels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observers to join on commercial crab and lobster potting vessels to collect size and catch data - Designed to give Sussex specific data, and feed into an ICES stock assessment – a data gap identified by the FMP 	Monitoring
Small Fish Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting small fish surveys across the District from June – September 	Monitoring
Towed video surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Part of ongoing monitoring of the Nearshore Trawling Byelaw area - Surveys usually take place late July/early August - Once completed analysis is undertaken by ZSL 	Monitoring
Scallop potting trial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trail to investigate the viability of a scallop potting fishery in Sussex - Analysis of data to produce LPUE, total landings, etc - If feasible, expected to take some time to reach the point of establishing a fishery - Collate necessary evidence to support viability (or not) of fishery 	Monitoring, Research
Chichester Harbour SPA – HRA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All gear types known to occur in Sussex to be assessed with a test of Likely Significant Effects - Any gear types known to occur within the site, and have potential to impact features taken to Appropriate Assessment to assess current activities and management against the Conservation Objectives of the site 	MPA
Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay SPA – HRA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All gear types known to occur in Sussex to be assessed with a test of Likely Significant Effects - Any gear types known to occur within the site, and have potential to impact features taken to Appropriate Assessment to assess current activities and management against the Conservation Objectives of the site 	MPA

Solent and Dorset Coast SPA – HRA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All gear types known to occur in Sussex to be assessed with a test of Likely Significant Effects - Any gear types known to occur within the site, and have potential to impact features taken to Appropriate Assessment to assess current activities and management against the Conservation Objectives of the site 	MPA
Kingmere MCZ M&C plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review fishing activity and landings within the site - Establish upper and/or lower thresholds in fishing activity and/or ecological metrics - Define review process that is triggered when thresholds are breached 	MPA
Offshore Overfalls MCZ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaborate with the MMO to assist with the development of management of the Sussex IFCA section of the site. Anticipated to be light touch 	MPA