

Beachy Head West Marine Conservation Zone: Recommended Voluntary Code of Conduct

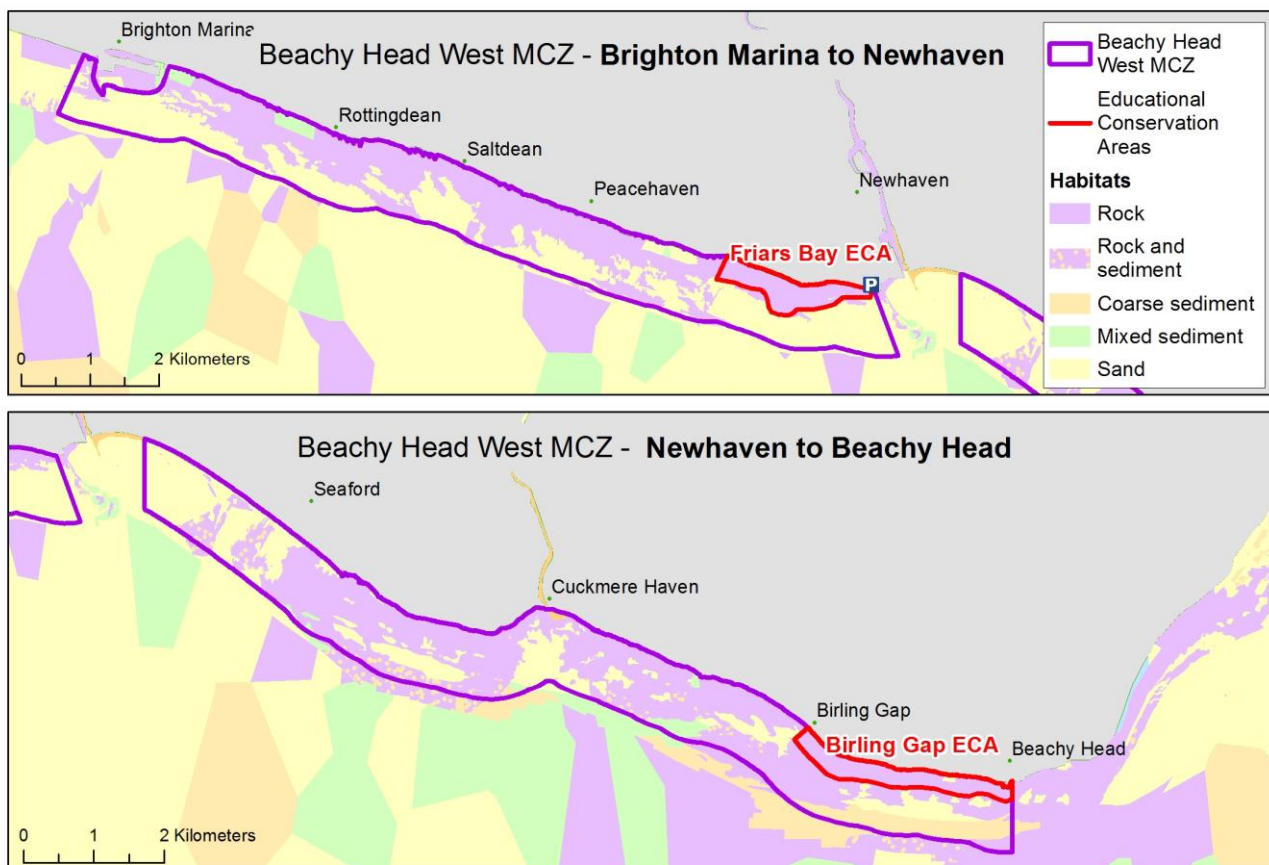
The following Fisheries Code of Conduct for Beachy Head West MCZ has been developed by Sussex IFCA to support the site's regulatory regime and help achieve the best conservation outcomes for the site. It has been consulted on with the wider community, with certain aspects to be further developed with fisheries representatives, and will be subject to regular review.

All Fishers

Anchoring

- Use methods that minimise damage to sensitive areas. Best practice to avoid anchoring over rocky reef and within the Education Conservation Areas (see maps below), consider drifting where practicable, or if necessary use a lower impact anchor

Purpose: To minimise rocky reef damage



Beachy Head West feature maps, SCHIP1 and NE data, and Education Conservation Areas

*** For the full byelaw and BHW MCZ schedule text see**

<http://www.sussex-ifca.gov.uk/beachy-head-west-mcz>

Seahorses

- Return seahorses directly if caught
- Report catch information to Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre (location, species and photograph)
- Avoid areas of high seahorse bycatch

Purpose: To help build a better understanding of the presence and distribution of this protected feature, and reduce potential impacts



Short Snouted Seahorse © JNCC



Long Snouted Seahorse ©JNCC

Maximum sizes

- Maximum landing sizes for certain finfish and shellfish species
Sussex IFCA is exploring the potential for maximum landing sizes for some species with fishing representatives, and will update the code of conduct based on further research and consultation
Purpose: To protect larger, more fecund individuals and contribute to sustainable fisheries
- Return crippled lobsters (animals which have lost one or both of their claws)
Purpose: These lobsters can be landed and sold but do not achieve the same price as those with both claws intact, however if returned to the sea they are capable of re-growing their missing limbs and contributing to the population.

Recreational Fishers

Landing fish

- Use landing nets to lift fish into boats; wet hands before handling fish carefully; unhook fish while in the landing net; if a photo is desired, support the fish while taking a photo and unhooking; if practicing catch and release, quickly return fish to the water
Purpose: To promote good handling and unhooking practice to minimise damage and increase potential survivability of those fish returned

Fish retention

- If retaining fish dispatch fish quickly and cleanly
Purpose: For fish welfare

- Take photos rather than retain trophy fish
Purpose: To protect larger, more fecund fish
- Return females in roe
Purpose: To allow eggs to hatch and contribute to the next population

Catch data

- Supply catch and fishing activity information to Sussex IFCA.
Purpose: To help us better understand our recreational fisheries and inform management

Hand gatherers and bait collectors

- Refer to statutory bag limits for intertidal fisheries resources gathering and exclusion areas for the site. See www.sussex-ifca.gov.uk/beachy-head-west-mcz
- Follow the Angling Trust's bait collection code. See <http://anglingtrust.net/page.asp?section=814>

Legal Requirements

Minimum Size Byelaw (Fish, Crustacea and Molluscs) 2021

- Designed to prevent the taking of juvenile or undersized fish and shellfish species, this byelaw applies to both commercial and recreational fishers within the Sussex IFCA district. For a full list of minimum sizes, seek guidance online at <https://www.sussex-ifca.gov.uk/regulations>