

## 2018

The Sussex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority's purpose is to develop sustainable inshore fisheries whilst providing appropriate protection for the marine environment and the fisheries resources it supports.

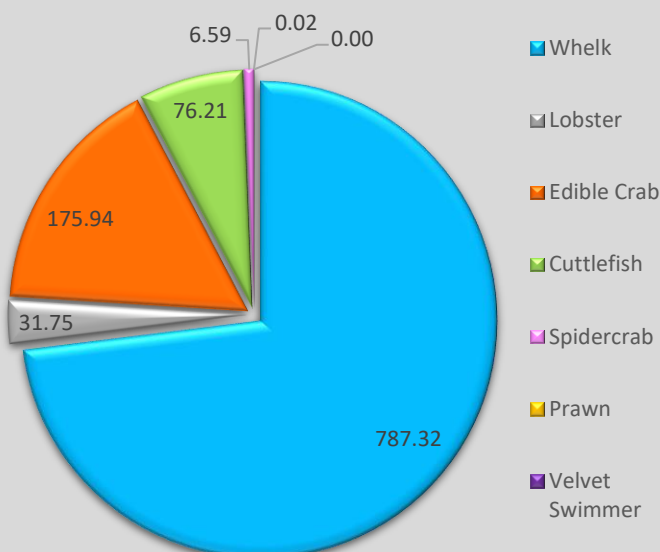
In 2016 the Authority introduced a comprehensive suite of management measures for pot and trap shellfish fisheries under the Shellfish Permit Byelaw. The new inshore controls built upon existing measures such as minimum sizes and introduced effort limitation, better selectivity for juvenile stock and protection of berried lobsters. The Byelaw effort and gear restrictions enable effective controls on the impacts of fishing activity on the District's shellfish populations and help achieve more productive and sustainable fisheries through improved stock management.

The Sussex IFCA Shellfish Permit Byelaw requires all permit holders to provide shellfish catch and fishing effort information to support inshore shellfish fisheries. This catch returns data is a vital part of shellfisheries' management and will help the IFCA to gather the evidence needed to make future management decisions. The Authority understands that permit data may also be of interest to permit holders, providing a better understanding of the fishery in the context of their own detailed knowledge. Trends such as seasonality of different fisheries and catch rates might be of particular interest for future planning.

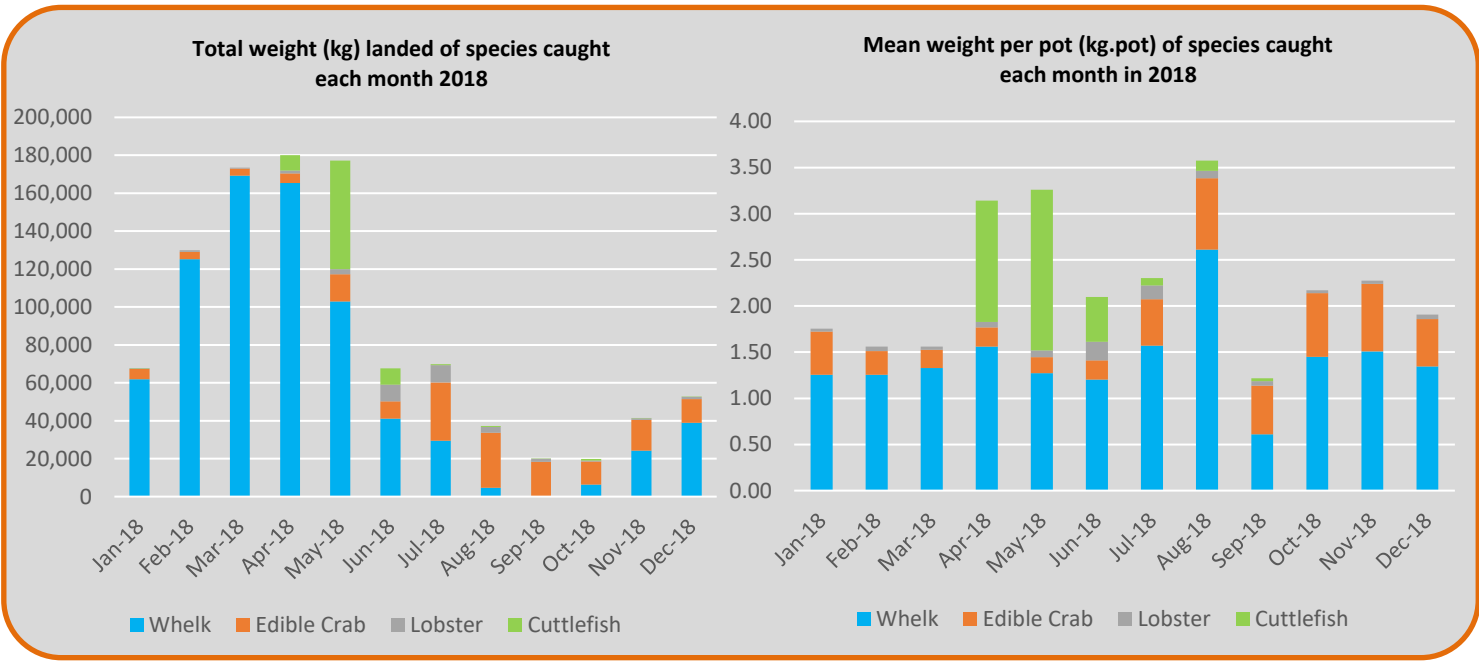
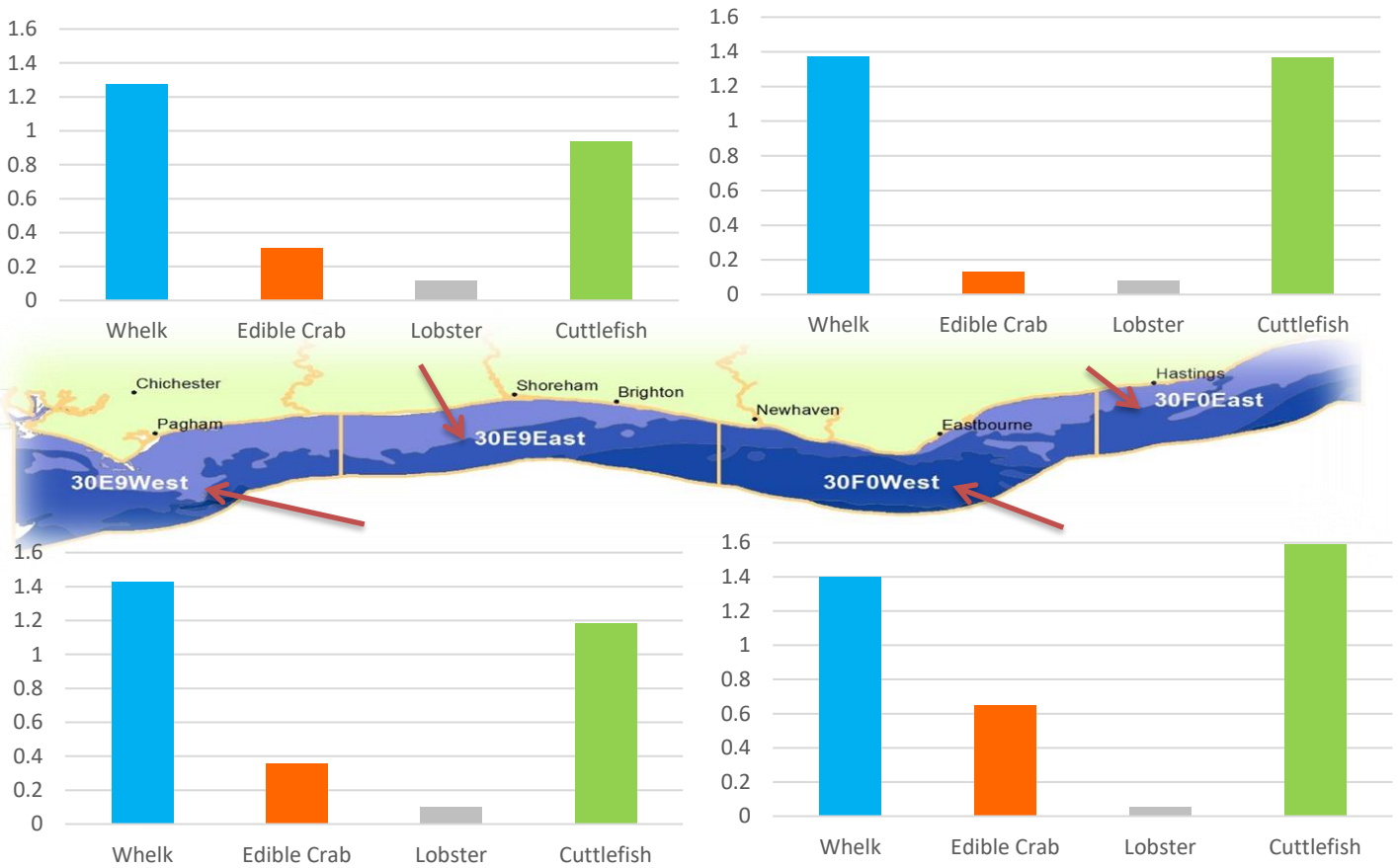
### Overview:

- Since October 2016, (the introduction of the Shellfish Permit Byelaw) to the end of December 2018, 63% of the total 190 permits have been assigned to commercial fishermen, with 37% to recreational.
- 10% of these permits expired in 2017 and were not renewed during 2018.
- There were 51 active recreational permits and 120 active commercial permits during 2018.
- A total of 1078 tonnes of shellfish was reported being landed on catch returns in 2018.
- The four-main species landed from the seven included under the shellfish permit byelaw, were whelks (73%), edible crab (16%), cuttlefish (7%) and lobster (3%).
- Very few spider crabs or prawns and no velvet swimming crabs were reported as being landed.
- The weight of species per pot, or catch per unit effort (CPUE), is similar in each area of the District.
- CPUE for whelks is greatest in area 30E9west, edible crab 30F0west, lobster 30E9East and cuttlefish 30F0west.
- CPUE is greatest for edible crab in the late Autumn to early Winter months.
- CPUE for lobster was highest in June and July.

**Total (tonnes) landed per species 2018**



**Average weight (kg) per pot of shellfish species in the Sussex IFCA areas 30E9West, 30E9East, 30F0West and 30F0East**

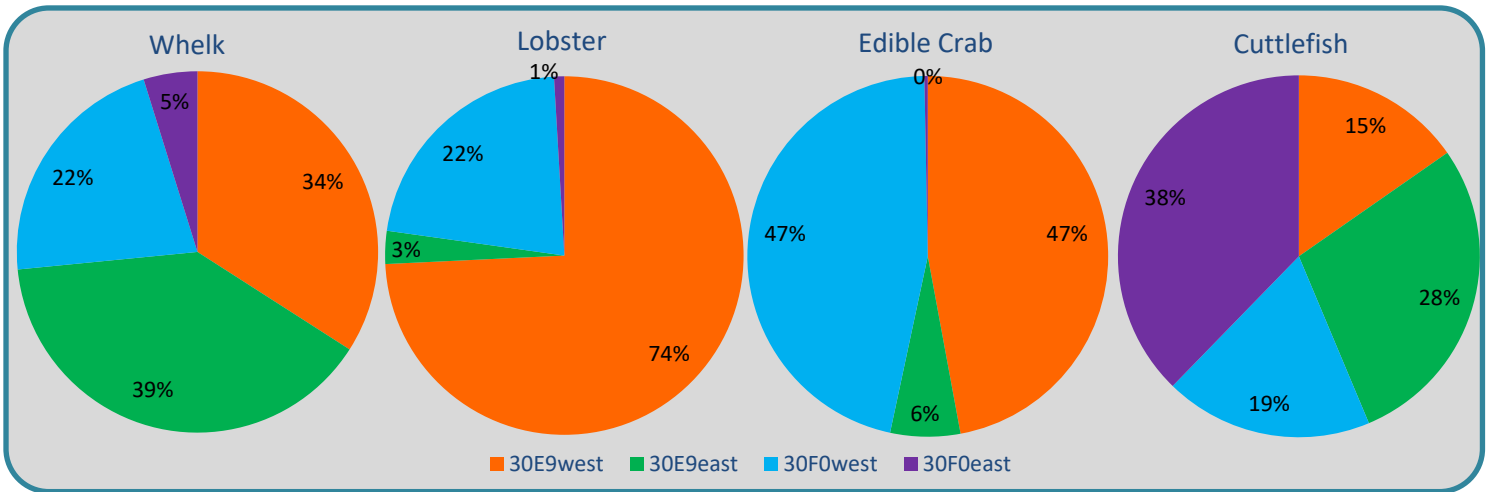


**Whelk and Cuttlefish**

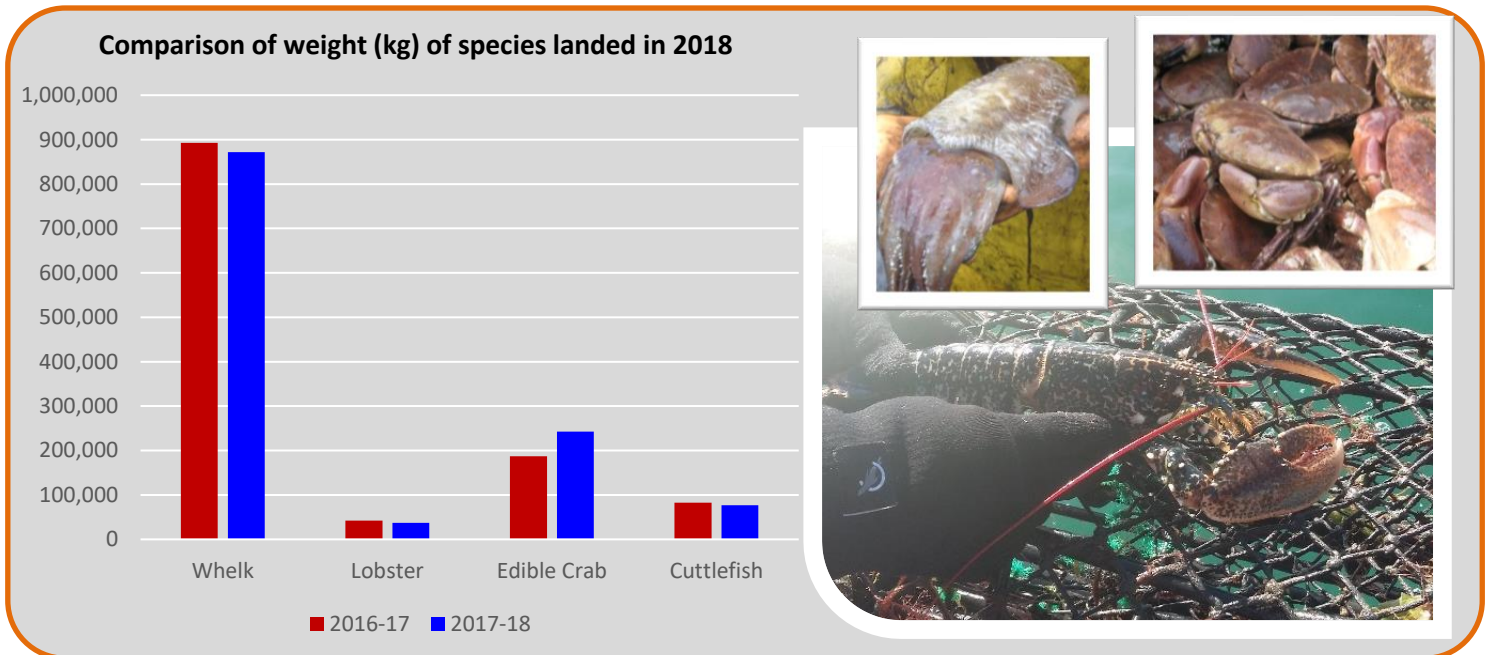
- Whelk and cuttlefish landings within the District vary both spatially and seasonally. Whelk seasonal variances are seen during the summer months when there is a rise in sea temperatures which causes the whelks to move to deeper, cooler waters. The cuttlefish season only lasts between April and June, when they move into the shallower coastal waters to breed.
- There was an increase in CPUE in August for whelks, as more whelks were caught per pot however, less pots were hauled.
- 71% of the total weight of whelks landed in 2018 was landed between February and May, with 43% landed in March and in April.
- The catch data reveals that 7% of whelks landed were caught from areas 30E9west and 30E9east (Western part of the District). Since October 2016, 72% of all whelks landed were caught from these same two areas.

- 75% of total weight of cuttlefish landed in 2018 was landed in May.
- The catch data reveals that 38% of cuttlefish landed were caught from area 30F0east. Since October 2016, 31% of all cuttlefish landed were caught from area 30F0west, 29% 30E9east, 23% 30E9west and 17% 30E9west.

**Percentage distribution of shellfish species landed in the Sussex IFCA areas 30E9West, 30E9East, 30F0West and 30F0East 2018**



- The catch data reveals that 68% of the total weight of edible crab landed in 2018 occurred between July and November, with 34% in July/August.
- 93% of total weight of edible crab were caught from areas 30E9west and 30F0west, with less than 1% from 30F0east. Since October 2016, 56% has been caught from 30E9west and 41% from 30F0west.
- The highest landings of lobsters occurred in June and July, with 56% of the total weight landed being in these two months alone.
- 74% of the total weight of lobsters were caught from area 30E9west and 22% caught from 30F0west. Since October 2016, 65% has been caught from area 30E9west and 31% from 30F0west.



Catch data submitted will enable Sussex IFCA and others to better understand the seasonality of the shellfish fisheries and changes over longer time periods. The data will also help to understand the changes in catches and the status of stocks in response to the levels of fishing effort within the fisheries.