

North Eastern  
Inshore Fisheries  
and Conservation  
Authority

# ANNUAL REPORT

2020/2021



# CONTENTS

Foreword	3
Executive Summary	5
Introduction	10
National IFCA Success Criteria	12
National IFCA Working Level Objectives	13
Organisational Review 2020/2021	24
Central Policy	25
Legislative Enforcement	26
Environmental and Scientific Research	27
Marine Protected Areas	29
Externally Funded Projects and Initiatives	30
Staff Training and Development	31
Communications, Public Engagement and Partnership Working	32

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# FOREWORD

This report covers the tenth year of operations and provides a summary account and review of the authority's main outputs and achievements up to the year end on 31 March 2021.

The reporting year was dominated throughout by the impacts of a major global viral pandemic which is still enduring (July 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic started to spread across the UK at the beginning of 2020 necessitating a national 'lockdown' on 23 March 2020. In response the authority went through a rapid period of adaption and reorganisation to protect its staff and maintain some level of frontline service delivery. Since March 2020, the UK government has had to impose two further periods of lockdown alongside additional restrictions supported by a national vaccination programme to manage the impacts of the pandemic.

Whilst the pandemic has significantly impacted on the authority's planned programme of work during 2020/2021, I am pleased to report that all NEIFCA staff and officers have remained safe and well and maintained a front line service throughout.

Despite the obvious impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the authority supported the completion of an organisational review which resulted in the implementation of a new staff pay and grading structure on 18 December 2020. In addition to the organisational transformation work, a new 9.5m cabin rigid inflatable boat was built and commissioned as part of the authority's vessel replacement programme.

**Clerk of the Authority**





## NATIONAL VISION

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

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NEIFCA) was formally established on 1 April 2011 under provision contained within the 2009 Marine and Coastal Access Act. The Authority replaced North Eastern Sea Fisheries Committee (NESFC), assuming new duties and responsibilities for managing the sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources within its district.

This tenth Annual Report produced by North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NEIFCA) covers the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. It provides a comprehensive review of the authority's ninth year of operations and charts its main outputs and achievements across key work areas including: Organisational, Legislative Enforcement; Environmental and Scientific Research; Staff training and development; Communications; Partnership working and the delivery of national work streams. The report also provides a summary of the authority's performance and progress against both its national and local working objectives.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ACHIEVEMENTS

Main achievements and outputs during 2020/2021 included the following:

- Agreement achieved on an uplifted sound and stable operational budget of £1,285,236.
- During 2020/2021, despite the significant impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, officers still managed to deliver an effective fisheries patrol service throughout the region which included over 233 active inspections and 1128 vessel observations resulting in the authority issuing 27 informal warnings, 31 formal warnings 18 financial administrative penalties and 7 cases successfully prosecuted in the Magistrates Court.
- Fisheries management was further strengthened by the confirmation of a new regional minimum size byelaw on 12 February 2021. This new regulation will ensure the consistent application of important minimum landing sizes across the unlicensed fishing sector.
- On 18 December 2020, the authority supported the implementation of a new staffing pay and grading structure. This represented the culmination of two years work which included a detailed benchmarking study and the completion of a comprehensive job evaluation process. The new pay and grading structure should significantly strengthen the authority's staffing recruitment and retention levels.
- During August 2020, officers received notification from the Marine Conservation Society (MCS) that they had upgraded their sustainability score for North Sea dredge caught scallop. This decision had been taken in recognition of the improvements that the authority had made to the management of the inshore fishery during the last four years.
- Throughout 2020/2021, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have brought unprecedented challenges for the authority, its members, officers and support staff; requiring rapid and dynamic changes to working practices to both protect staff and maintain core service provision. Without exception everyone has met and embraced the challenges faced. Alongside the supporting measures put in place throughout the pandemic, all NEIFCA staff have remained fit and well and successfully maintained front line service provision.
- At national level throughout the pandemic, NEIFCA has played an active role in supporting government alongside it's nine colleague organisations and key partner agencies such as the Marine Management Organisation (MMO). Primarily gathering intelligence on the impacts of COVID-19 on the local fishing industry and reporting via both regional and joint national tasking groups. During the peak of the first and second waves of the pandemic, the Chief Officer was engaged in weekly operational meetings with his nine counterparts sharing joint operational guidance.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### ACHIEVEMENTS CONTINUED

- Throughout the pandemic, the Offshore Operational manager has led and overseen the build and commission of a new 9.5m Cabin Rigid Inflatable Boat (RIB) as part of the authority's vessel replacement programme. The new vessel was delivered on 19 May to Whitby and following trials and testing has now entered service.

#### Partnership Working

- The authority retains a strong commitment to active partnership working and is seeking to build on that commitment. In many ways in managing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, officers have strengthened active partnership working with all key partner agencies particularly the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and the Environment Agency (EA). Active engagement in monthly tasking and coordination group meetings continued throughout the year alongside active sharing of intelligence and undertaking several joint enforcement operations to target illegal activities.
- During the year the shore operations team supported a national project to encourage anglers to recycle discarded fishing line. The team oversaw the installation of containers and information notices at Whitby harbour to support the collection of the line. Since the start of the scheme in January 2020, the recycling units have collected 16,000 metres of disused fishing line for the anglers national line recycling scheme.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### ACHIEVEMENTS CONTINUED

- Alongside supporting the line recycling scheme, officers have also been actively engaged with families at Whitby to raise awareness of the potential impacts of 'crabbing' and to encourage best practice in terms of the capture, handling and storage of crabs. Crabbing is extremely popular throughout the authority's district providing a very enjoyable pastime for holidaymakers but it is important that the activity remains sustainable for future generations.
- At the end of the reporting year, the offshore team provided a donation of 'redundant' offshore safety equipment to the global charity re-FISH. Re-FISH is a charitable initiative run by the FISH Safety Foundation dedicated to the safety of sea fishers. The initiative reconditions and redistributes serviceable maritime safety equipment to fishermen in third world countries who do not carry even the most basic of safety items. Globally, an estimated 32,000 fishing related deaths occur annually (FAO). The authority's donation was marked for distribution to fishermen in Bangladesh. Each year a range of equipment is replaced, often because the serviceable or useable date has expired although it remains in full working order. Rather than simply store or dispose of this equipment, the Offshore Operations Manager explored the option of donating it to a maritime charity and organised delivery to re-Fish HQ in Southampton.



# North Eastern Guardian III

*Whitby Harbour 2019*



# INTRODUCTION

## Introduction

This tenth Annual Report was developed in consultation with authority members. It provides a summary of the main outputs and achievements across the Authority including: Central policy, encompassing strategic development and legislative review; Legislative enforcement; environmental and scientific research, encompassing fisheries stock assessment, marine survey and monitoring, data management, review of marine consents and licensing applications and marine habitat protection; staff training and development; communications and partnership working. The report complements the authority's 2020/2021 annual plan and also provides a summary of progress against the national IFCA success criteria and high level objectives.

## Background

North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NEIFCA) was established in October 2010 under provisions contained within the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. On 1 April 2011, the authority assumed full statutory responsibility for managing the exploitation of sea fisheries resources within its jurisdiction. The authority continues to draw professional service provision including legal, financial and human resource support from its lead Local Authority member, East Riding of Yorkshire Council. NEIFCA membership comprises of 13 elected councillors representing eleven coastal local authorities together with 14 members appointed by the Marine Management Organisation and singular members representing Natural England, the Environment Agency and the Marine Management Organisation. The total membership of the authority is 30 which is the maximum level permitted under statute.

## Financial Overview

The authority's total annual budget for the reporting period 2020/2021 was agreed by members during March at £1,298,036. The budget is allocated across four main areas:

### Corporate

Expenditure relating to corporate governance.

### Headquarter

The cost of management and administrative support.

### Operations

Direct expenditure incurred in the performance of the Authority's objectives comprising of offshore, land-based and environmental activities.

### Grant aided projects

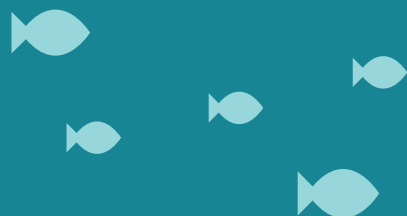
Projects which are specific or time bound and wholly funded by external sources.

See table on Page 11

# COMPREHENSIVE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

2019/2020		2020/2021				
Net Expenditure		Expenditure	Income	Net Expenditure	Original Budget	Variance
£409,888	Central / Headquarters	£433,561	£31,473	£402,087	£463,640	-£61,533
£105,592	Land Based Operations	£121,931	£0	£121,931	£132,200	-£10,269
£412,758	Offshore Operations	£370,694	£10,959	£359,735	£466,150	-£106,415
£114,041	Environment	£54,532	£0	£54,532	£110,650	-£56,118
-£357	Grand Aided Projects	£35,070	£35,941	-£871	£0	-£871
<b>£1,041,923</b>		<b>£1,015,787</b>	<b>£78,737</b>	<b>£937,413</b>	<b>£1,172,640</b>	<b>-£235,227</b>

Income	Sources of Finance	Expenditure	Income	Net Income	Original Budget	Variance
£1,224,320	Annual levy on Local Authorities	£0	£1,285,536	£1,285,536	£1,285,540	£4
£0	Contribution from Reserves	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
£0	Contribution to Capital - Vehicles	£0	£12,500	£12,500	£0	-£12,500
-£112,900	Contribution to Earmarked Reserves	£112,900	£0	-£112,900	-£112,900	£0
<b>£1,111,420</b>		<b>£112,900</b>	<b>£1,298,036</b>	<b>£1,185,136</b>	<b>£1,172,640</b>	<b>-£12,496</b>



## NATIONAL IFCA SUCCESS CRITERIA

IFCAs are recognised and heard, whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders;

IFCAs implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime;

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

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

IFCAs make the best use of evidence to deliver their objectives;

NEIFCA work streams and organisational priorities are geared towards the positive achievement of the national vision: outlined on page 4.

To support the positive delivery of the above national vision, IFCAs have agreed a set of national success criteria matched with corresponding working-level objectives. The vision, success criteria and national working objectives are designed to assist in the creation of a shared understanding of the aims and objectives of IFCAs nationally, and focus positive service delivery towards achievement of the national vision. These national IFCA performance criteria also link directly to the UK Marine Policy Statement.

### **Focus and Priorities for the Year - Annual Plan 2020/2021**

Each year authority members agree and set their objectives and priorities for the year ahead which are outlined within the summary work programme contained within the authority's 2020/2021 Annual Plan. The 2020/2021 plan was adopted by members on 26 April 2020.

# NATIONAL IFCA WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVES

The following tables provide a summary of the authority’s progress towards achieving the Success Criteria and supporting Working Level Objectives (WLO) during the 2020/2021 reporting period.

31 March 2021



Completed



Ongoing



Not started

## WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

The IFCA will maintain and implement an effective communication strategy.

## OUTCOME(S)

The IFCA will maintain a database of stakeholder contacts 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.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2020/2021

Through its fishing permitting schemes NEIFCA maintains an annual database of some 3,000 individual contacts covering both commercial and recreational fishing.

The authority maintains a formal communication strategy which is reviewed annually.

Copies of annual plans are sent to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) Secretary of State by 30 April each year.

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.

The IFCA will have reviewed its website by the last working day of each month.

The authority's website is reviewed as a minimum on a monthly basis and is regularly updated weekly when required.

Copies of annual reports are sent to Defra's Secretary of State by 30 November in the year in which they are published.

## WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

The IFCA will contribute to coordinated activity at a national level.

## OUTCOME(S)

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 within the annual plan.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2020/2021

Throughout the reporting year Authority Officers have engaged extensively in a wide range of nationally coordinated work streams including joint training and joint intelligence gathering through the National Association of IFCAs, the National IFCA Chief Officers Group, the National IFCA Technical Advisory Group and the National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group. In addition, throughout 2020/2021 NEIFCA played a full and active role in supporting the national response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This involved inputting weekly and monthly intelligence into both regional and national feeds.

The IFCA and its principle partners will have a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities. Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with MMO, Natural England, Environment Agency and Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Services (CEFAS) will be maintained.

The IFCA will have reviewed all of its MoUs by 31 March each year. There will be a clear plan in place to update MoUs where necessary, to an agreed standard.

The National Association of IFCAs supports the regular review of MoUs with partner organisations.

## WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

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.

## OUTCOME(S)

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 compile records of enforcement activity in a standard format; provide them to NIMEG and publish them on its website.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2020/2021

The authority publishes a comprehensive annual risk register which covers all aspects of risk including enforcement.

The authority publishes details of its enforcement activity within its annual report and provides statistics to the National Association of IFCAs in a standard format.

The IFCA will manage operational activity and capture, record, evaluate and disseminate intelligence that is compatible with partner organisations. It is engaged in joint working with partner organisations.

Working to the National Intelligence Model (NIM) and participating actively through Tasking and Coordination Groups (TCGs).

Throughout 2020/2021 Officers have been actively engaged in the joint fisheries intelligence gathering project, collating, assessing and exchanging intelligence in accordance with NIM principles. This involved active participation in the TCG process including joint TCGs with MMO officers.

## WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

Warranted Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officers (IFCOs) will be trained and accredited to nationally agreed standards. They will maintain professionalism and make appropriate interventions to deliver efficient, effective enforcement activity.

## OUTCOME(S)

The IFCA will adopt the national code of conduct for IFCOs which will be reviewed annually and published on its website.

Warranted Officers attain accreditation. ALL undertaking continuing professional development.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2020/2021

Authority Officers undergo a wide range of training supported by a nine month probationary process. That training incorporates an induction, an IFCA residential course and 'on-the-job' training and evaluation.

A national code of conduct for IFCA enforcement officers was agreed in 2010 and was adopted by the authority. It is reviewed annually.



## WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

The IFCA will identify issues likely to affect sustainable management of the marine environment in the IFC District; undertake risk assessment and gap analysis; review appropriateness of existing measures; evaluate management options and develop and implement proportionate marine management solutions.

## OUTCOME(S)

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.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2020/2021

Authority officers have completed extensive site feature/activity interaction risk matrices for all Marine Protected Areas (MPA's), including European Marine Sites (EMS's) and Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ's) occurring within the NEIFCA district. A significant supporting management programme commenced during 2013 prioritised towards high risk activities. This work was advanced during 2019/2020 with the confirmation of two regulations protecting features at Flamborough Head, Filey and the Humber Estuary.

The IFCA actively supports 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.

## WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

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.

Proportionate regulation (for example introducing a legal mechanism such as a byelaw) is used as a last resort; The effectiveness of interventions to improve the delivery of beneficial outcomes is continuously monitored; and

There is a clear IFCA Committee process for dealing with agreed interventions quickly, efficiently and effectively, particularly for emergency byelaws.

## OUTCOME(S)

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.

Progress made in relevant Fisheries Management Plan areas, including maximum sustainable yield commitments, will be noted in the IFCA's Annual Report.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2020/2021

The sustainable management of key lobster and edible crab stocks was further enhanced during 2019/2020 through measures introduced in the revised Crustacea Conservation byelaw. Protection for soft shelled and berried lobsters will help to bolster spawning stock of this species, while the introduction of a maximum pot size and reducing the maximum size of vessel permitted to fish within inshore areas are important effort controls that will help to ensure the continued viability of the regionally significant fishery. A new minimum size byelaw, developed in collaboration with a number of other IFCAs, was also introduced, confirmed during February 2021. As was a catch return byelaw aimed at improving data capture to inform future management decisions.

A new Fisheries Management Plan has been adopted to support the inshore scallop dredging fishery. The plan has been informed by a four year pilot trial which commenced following the introduction of emergency control measures at the beginning of 2015. The plan describes the state of the stocks and the fishery derived from research undertaken by the authority, it outlines current national and local management policy and objectives, and highlights the conservation and fishery management measures in place to ensure a sustainable fishery. The plan will guide development of the dredge fishery, balancing the needs of different stakeholders.

## WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

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.

## OUTCOME(S)

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.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2020/2021

The authority has produced an Annual Plan and Annual Report since 2010. The 2020/2021 plan was considered and endorsed by the committee on 16 April 2020 and submitted to the Secretary of State. The Annual Report covering the 2019/2020 period was submitted to the Secretary of State during October 2020.

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.

IFCA staff will have annual performance management plans in place. Annual appraisals for all staff will have been completed by 31 May each year.

Work commenced during 2020/2021 on reviewing and updating the authority's staffing appraisal process to incorporate performance related pay progression. A revised system is expected to be in place by December 2021.

## WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

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.

IFCA committee meetings will be held in public unless material is either confidential or exempt within the meaning of the Local Government Act 1972.

## OUTCOME(S)

An efficient secretariat of IFCA staff support IFCA authority meetings which are held quarterly and are quorate. Meeting documentation will meet standing orders.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2020/2021

During 2020/2021 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic the authority had to move to a system of virtual meetings held via Zoom and Microsoft Teams to conduct its business. Agendas, supporting papers and minutes were published in accordance with the authority's standing orders and posted on the authority's website.

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 made towards identifying its evidence needs by publishing a research plan each year

The authority incorporates its research planning and delivery into both its overarching annual plan and annual report. These are produced in consultation with members and in accordance with statutory procedures. These annual planning and reporting processes are underpinned by an annual research work programme and a five year strategic plan.

## WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

Standard operating procedures describe how data is captured and shared with principal partners.

## OUTCOME(S)

The IFCA's contribution to Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and progress that it has made towards a national evidence needs programme will be recorded in the IFCA's annual report.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2020/2021

The authority's environmental and scientific leads are fully engaged with other IFCA colleagues through the national IFCA Technical Advisory Group. Through this group, the authority's officers have developed and implemented standard operating practices across most of its work streams.

Non-confidential meta-data collected through the IFCA research programme should be recorded in a database available to the marine research community.

Non-confidential data is shared reducing the need for duplication of survey effort.

Authority officers share non-confidential meta data through MEDIN and 'dropbox' and improving internal data sharing within the authority's membership remains an ongoing workstream.

# NORTH EASTERN GUARDIAN III

*Fisheries Patrol*



## ORGANISATIONAL REVIEW 2020/2021

### Main Achievements

- Throughout 2020/2021 the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have brought unprecedented challenges for the authority, its members, officers and support staff, requiring rapid and dynamic changes to working practices to both protect staff and maintain core service provision. Without exception, everyone has met and embraced the challenges faced. Alongside the supporting measures put in place throughout the pandemic all NEIFCA staff have remained fit and well and successfully maintained front line service provision.
- During April 2020, the authority endorsed and fixed an operational budget of £1,285,236 providing a stable and uplifted funding base.
- On 18 December 2020, the authority supported the implementation of a new staffing pay and grading structure. This represented the culmination of two years work which included a detailed benchmarking study and the completion of a comprehensive job evaluation process. The new pay and grading structure should significantly strengthen the authority's staffing recruitment and retention levels.
- At the end of the reporting year the offshore team provided a donation of 'redundant' offshore safety equipment to the global charity re-FISH. re-FISH is a charitable initiative run by the FISH Safety Foundation dedicated to the safety of sea fishers. The initiative reconditions and redistributes serviceable maritime safety equipment to fishermen in third world countries who do not carry even the most basic of safety items. Globally, an estimated 32,000 fishing related deaths occur annually (FAO). The authority's donation was marked for distribution to fishermen in Bangladesh. Each year, a range of equipment is replaced often because the serviceable or useable date has expired although it remains in fully working order. Rather than simply store or dispose of this equipment the Offshore Operations Manager explored the option of donating it to a maritime charity and organised delivery to re-Fish HQ in Southampton.



## CENTRAL POLICY 2020/2021

### **Central Policy and Strategic Development**

Central policy and strategic development is supported by two key internal sub-groups, the Executive Committee and the Science Advisory Group. The Science Advisory Group comprises of MMO appointees and representatives from Natural England, the Environment Agency and the MMO and is responsible for overseeing regulatory review, development and implementation, scientific and survey work, projects and licensing applications and consents.

The Executive Committee comprises of elected and appointed MMO members and provides a smaller more focused decision making group to undertake any work delegated by the full authority, including ratifying emergency byelaw provisions and considering appeals against process. These groups work in tandem with recommendations passing through the Executive Committee for final endorsement by the full authority.

### **Risk Management**

The effective management of risk remains a key priority for officers and members of the authority. A formal strategy supporting the identification and management of risk was first agreed and adopted by members of the shadow authority on 25 January 2011. The strategy and its provisions are reviewed

on an annual basis to ensure that it remains 'fit-for-purpose'. Alongside the strategy, the identification and management of risk is supported through a number of risk registers covering both strategic and operational risk, including a risk based enforcement matrix. All risk registers are subject to six-monthly review with updates reported to authority members and posted on the authority's website. During the reporting year, these reviews and updates were completed during April and December 2020.

### **Emergency IFCA Byelaws**

Section 157 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 provides a mechanism for IFCA's to introduce emergency byelaw regulations to deal with unforeseen issues requiring urgent action. Emergency byelaws are time limited to a maximum period of eighteen months.

Since its inception in 2011, the authority has effectively utilised its emergency byelaw making powers on five separate occasions, most recently on 13 August 2019 to ensure continuity of minimum size regulations.

## LEGISLATIVE ENFORCEMENT

Legislative enforcement forms a key element of the authority's drive to achieve the sustainable management of sea fisheries resources within its district. Enforcement is undertaken by fourteen warranted Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officers (IFCOs) who are responsible for monitoring and inspecting fisheries activities, both offshore and along the coast. Enforcement work is supported by a dedicated 26 metre patrol vessel, North Eastern Guardian III, which carries a 6.4 metre rigid inflatable boat (RIB) that is utilised to board and inspect fishing vessels at sea. During May 2021 the authority took delivery of a new 9.5 metre cabin RIB to support its offshore operations.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a notable impact on enforcement outputs during 2020/2021. In managing risks to staff, the majority of enforcement work has been observational and conducted within social distancing guidelines with the primary objective to maintain a front line presence. Resourcing has been targeted in response to intelligence feeds. As a result, the number of physical inspections recorded reduced significantly from 600+ to 233. Despite the reduction in the number of physical inspections, the levels of sanctions recorded was comparable with previous years.

## ENFORCEMENT OUTPUTS 2020/2021

Enforcement Output	Frequency
Vessel Inspections	233
Vessel observations	1,128
Inspection Reports completed	233
Verbal Warnings	27
Written Warnings	20
Offences Reported	37
Formal Cautions	11
Financial Administrative Penalties	18
Formal prosecutions	7

## ENVIRONMENTAL AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

Marine environmental and scientific research functions continue to develop and expand in line with the developing role and remit of the authority.

The environmental and science team undertake fisheries stock assessment work, collate and analyse seabed habitat and water column data generated by NEG III, review marine licensing applications and consents, support marine habitat conservation and management through engagement with European Marine Site (EMS) management schemes and Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) programmes and oversee the internal management of data. This work is guided by an annual research and evidence plan and a five year strategic plan. Separate to this annual report, findings from the environmental and scientific research work are published within an annual research report.

### **Fisheries Stock Assessment work**

The majority of species exploited within the NEIFCA district are a component of wider stock units which extend beyond the six mile limit. During 2011/2012 officers proposed and presented multiple indicator frameworks, a combination of specific reference points and proxies for measuring progress towards achieving sustainable fisheries. Alongside and at the request of authority members,

officers have incorporated a broader overview, detailing information on gear types, additional species, economic and socio-economic factors. This analytical work is supported, in the main, by a comprehensive stock assessment programme which includes quayside sampling at four main ports including Hartlepool, Whitby, Scarborough and Bridlington and an offshore monitoring programme covering each of the five main ICES areas located within and surrounding the authority's district.

During August 2020, officers received notification from the Marine Conservation Society (MCS) that they had upgraded their sustainability score for North Sea dredge caught scallop which continues to be a developing focus. This decision had been taken in recognition of the improvements that the authority had made to the management of the inshore fishery during the last four years.

Throughout 2020/2021, the primary focus has been to manage the risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. This has had a significant impact on the authority's planned stock assessment work as officers have had to limit direct contact with the industry and prioritise work streams accordingly.

### **Seabed Habitat Assessment and Mapping Work**

The development of the authority's capabilities to assess and map seabed habitats has been one of the main areas of focus for both the offshore and environmental teams. Ongoing work in this area has included the full commissioning of an onboard WASSP multi-beam system and the development of underwater camera technologies. The focus of underwater video camera work during 2019 was to collect evidence on which to assess the impact of the scallop dredge fishery on habitats and commercially important shellfish species. Over 16km of video footage was collected and analysed, allowing a comparative study of impacts based on varying levels of fishing intensity. The information will form a baseline which may be used to support any future management decisions.

### **Marine Licensing and Consents**

During the reporting period, authority officers reviewed 20 licensing and consent applications covering a wide range of projects from maintenance and capital dredging to discharge and infrastructure applications. Further consultation was undertaken regarding major infrastructure projects and planned changes to partner statutory agency fisheries management measures.

# Education and Outreach

Scarborough 2019



# MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

## **European Marine Sites (EMS)**

The NEIFCA district contains five European Marine Sites (EMSs); Northumbria Coast, Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast, Flamborough Head, Humber Estuary and the Greater Wash. Flamborough Head and the Humber Estuary are each supported by a management group comprising statutory authorities and other relevant bodies and NEIFCA plays an active role in each. NEIFCA workstreams within the EMSs focus on four main areas; active participation in the EMS management schemes and associated projects; the provision of guidance to developers and input into the licensing conditions of development consent orders within and adjacent to EMSs; stock assessments of commercially important finfish and crustacea; and the appropriate assessment and management of fisheries within EMS boundaries through both voluntary and regulatory measures.

Significant progress was made during 2019/2020 in reducing risk to designated Marine Protected Area (MPA) features associated with fishing activity.

A seasonal netting prohibition in the waters surrounding Flamborough Head and Filey Brigg came into force to protect the largest mainland UK breeding seabird colony; home to 412,000 seabirds. In addition, a trawling permit management system was introduced for the Humber Estuary. Control of trawl effort will help to protect the valuable habitats and species within the estuary, which also acts as vital spawning and nursery grounds for a range of fish species. Regulations to improve fishery data collection have also been approved.

## **Marine Conservation**

The NEIFCA district contains two MCZ sites; Runswick Bay and Holderness Inshore. Full assessments have been completed on both sites and appropriate management measures supporting their protection are already in place. Work to establish a new Management Group to encompass both MCZs is underway through the Flamborough Management Group.

## **Data Management**

All raw data gathered from the authority's district is stored electronically in spreadsheet and database format enabling ease of manipulation, import into other programmes and statistical analysis. Spatial data is stored in shape file format for presentation and analysis in the GIS platform 'Map Info'. This is a developing workstream that aims to generate key data layers that present information related to the authority's district, such as management regimes, fishing effort, habitat types and commercial species ranges.

## EXTERNALLY FUNDED PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

### **Holderness Coast Lobster Marketing Study**

Funded through the Holderness Coast Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG), phase two of this partnership project with Hull University built on the initial work undertaken to explore the feasibility of improving lobster storage facilities, to improve business resilience given the potential impacts of the UK exit from the EU. The project was completed at the end of February 2020.

### **Marine Research Facility**

During December 2017 the authority agreed to support this project, co-funded through the Holderness FLAG and the Holderness Fishing Industry Group (HFIG). The project involves the building and commissioning of a small research facility at Bridlington Harbour, East Yorkshire. Construction of the facility is now complete and facility opened during August 2020.

## STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Alongside training and development, a staffing workshop is planned during 2020/2022 to consider the development of a new suite of core organisational values with the aim of strengthening and enhancing positive and supporting interactions across teams and delivery of shared goals and objectives.



# COMMUNICATIONS, PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

## **NEIFCA Website**

The authority's website and social media, such as Facebook, remains at the forefront of its drive to improve overall communications, accessibility to information and associated services. The website includes an 'ask the chief' function where questions, queries and comments can be emailed directly to the Chief Officer. Stakeholders can also apply for a wide range of fishing permits online which are then emailed directly to them. The website also provides direct links to tidal and weather information and other partner organisations. During the last four years, the authority has noted a significant increase in the numbers of fishermen and stakeholders accessing information electronically. A major overhaul of the authority's website provision is currently underway and a new website is expected to go live during 2021.

## **Tyne to Tees, Shores and Seas - SeaScapes Partnership**

The SeaScapes project is a partnership of local, regional and national organisations working in the coastal, marine and heritage sectors that have come together to better protect and celebrate the unique coastline between the rivers Tyne and Tees. The first National Lottery Heritage Fund supported Marine Landscape Partnership will deliver around 23 projects over the next four years worth £5 million to the communities of South Tyneside, Sunderland, Durham and Hartlepool.

## **Yorkshire Marine Nature Partnership**

Delivery of a well managed network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) is a key work area for NEIFCA. With the growing number of MPAs, effective site management requires new ways of working and a collaborative approach. As a member of the Flamborough Head European Marine Site Management Group, National Lottery Heritage Funding was obtained to establish the Yorkshire Marine Nature Partnership. The emerging partnership is focussed on supporting, understanding, managing and caring for Yorkshire's seas, coastline and hinterland, working with cross-sector partners to achieve shared aims and promote holistic action in the marine and coastal environment.

### **Feedback System**

Throughout 2020/2021 the authority continued to utilise a formal electronic feedback system supported by East Riding of Yorkshire Council. All feedback is captured and recorded on a database via a dedicated feedback officer. Any complaints are subject to a fixed response time with systems to deal with any vexatious issues. All recorded feedback is then reported back to authority members on an annual basis. During 2020/2021, only one formal complaint was received by the chief officer.

### **Partnership Working**

During April 2011, the authority signed a number of 'High Level' MOUs with key partner organisations. These endorsed the principles of communication and positive partnership engagement and continue to support positive working relationships. NEIFCA actively engages in the national intelligence gathering project in collaboration with other IFCA's and the MMO, which includes monthly regional tasking and co-ordination meetings. Since the project was first established NEIFCA has captured and shared 530 fisheries intelligence reports. Active operational partnership working took place throughout 2019/2020 including joint enforcement work with both the MMO and EA. During the year the shore operations team supported a national project to encourage anglers to recycle discarded fishing line. Despite the impacts of the COVID-19

pandemic active operational partnership working took place on several occasions with both the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and the Environment Agency (EA) to monitor the setting of illegal fixed nets from the shore and check compliance on the quayside. The team oversaw the installation of containers and information notices at Whitby harbour to support the collection of the line. Since the start of the scheme in January 2020, the recycling units have collected 16,000m of disused fishing line for the anglers national line recycling scheme.

### **National IFCA Association**

A national association was established on 24 March 2011 to represent and support the work of IFCA's. NEIFCA continues to play an active role in this association through the chairman, clerk and chief officer, which included supporting important revisions to its internal organisation and governance. During 2020 the national IFCA Association appointed a new chief officer, Rob Clark, who has implemented a number of positive changes particularly surrounding active engagement with national marine policy makers.



North Eastern IFCA staff and BBC presenter Tom Heap courtesy of BBC Countryfile following a film shoot on 18 June 2021 which aired on 4 July 2021.



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and Conservation Authority**

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