



Mobile Gear Byelaw – informal consultation

Background:

North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NEIFCA) is currently considering the development of a new **Mobile Fishing Gear Byelaw**. The proposed byelaw would replace the following existing byelaws:

- III Trawling Byelaw 1956
- XXVI Flamborough Head Fishing Byelaw 2014
- XXIII Method and Area of Fishing (Scallop Dredges) Byelaw 2015
- XXXIII Beam Trawling Byelaw 2024

The primary aim of introducing a new byelaw is to simplify the current legislative framework, improve clarity for stakeholders, and update byelaws that are no longer reflective of modern fishing practices or contemporary environmental management requirements.

The proposed approach would introduce a single, consolidated byelaw supported by flexible permit conditions. This would enable NEIFCA to respond more effectively and proportionately to emerging evidence, environmental pressures, and changes in fishing activity. Given that the dynamic nature of the marine environment and potential challenges due to climate change, the use of flexible permit conditions would allow appropriate management measures to be implemented or amended in a time efficient manner where necessary to protect stocks, the fishing industry and sensitive habitats.

Consultation questions:

Question 1: Maximum vessel length inside 6 Nautical Miles

Under the current byelaws, the maximum vessel length permitted inside 6 nautical miles is 18.3 metres. Do you think this is still appropriate or should it be changed?

- Keep the current limit to 18.3m
- Reduce the maximum vessel length to 15m
- Reduce the maximum vessel length to 12m
- A different length (please specify)m

Question 2: Should the maximum vessel length inside 3 Nautical Miles be aligned with the 10m vessel size for potting?

- Agree
- Disagree

Question 3: Engine Power Limits

Under the current byelaws, the maximum engine power permitted inside 6 nautical miles is 400 KW. Do you think this is still appropriate or should it be changed?

- Keep the current maximum engine power at 400 KW
- Reduce the maximum engine power to 300 KW
- Reduce the maximum engine power to 250 KW
- Reduce the maximum engine power to 200 KW
- Reduce the maximum engine power to 150 KW
- Different engine sizeKW

Question 4: Non-commercial trawling (Recreational)

To allow trawling for recreational purposes only, how should it be managed?

- Introduce a permit system (Hobby permit) with a fee
- Restrict by vessel size & engine power
- Restrict gear size (beam width, net width & length)
- Other measures (please specify):

Question 5: Scallop dredging

The current scallop dredging byelaw allows permit holders to retain their permits provided they commence fishing within two months of the date of issue. To reduce the risk of permits being retained without active use, which may limit access for other applicants, NEIFCA is proposing to introduce annual eligibility criteria for permit renewal. These criteria could be based on either a minimum number of fishing days or a minimum landed weight of scallops within a season. Which of the following approaches do you consider most appropriate?

- Keep the current permit application conditions
- Introduce a minimum number of fishing days required to be eligible for renewing a permit
- Introduce a minimum landed weight of Scallops required to be eligible for renewing a permit
- Other processes (please specify):

Question 6: Additional Comments

Are there any other issues, concerns, or suggestions you would like the Authority to consider when developing the **Mobile Fishing Gear Byelaw**?

Next Steps

This consultation is an **informal consultation**. The responses received will be used to help shape the development of a proposed Mobile Fishing Gear Byelaw and to inform the content of any **future formal consultation**.

All feedback provided will be considered by the Authority before deciding whether and how to progress to a formal consultation stage.

Thank You For Your Feedback

The consultation will close on Friday 27th February 2026.