

NWIFCA Authority Meeting
18th September 2020; 11.00 a.m.

AGENDA
ITEM NO.
7

PATROL AND ENFORCEMENT REPORT –
1ST MAY 2020 – 31ST JULY 2020

Purpose: For information.

Recommendations:

1. That the report is received

Introduction

Patch Summaries for the quarter are given in the table below:

Patch	Summary Points
Haverigg Point – Burgh Marsh Point – IFCOs H & E Thinnesen	<p><u>Haverigg Point-Burghmarsh Point – 1st May to 31st July 2020</u></p> <p>Report by the Master/IFCO re-assigned to shore duties due to Covid-19 restrictions</p> <p>TRAWLING Landings have been light in the local ports, with most of the trawlers again tied up due to the knock-on effect of Covid 19. Huge problems remain for the local fleet with fish buyers and fish markets being unable to take enough bulk off the fishermen. As a result of this a group of local trawler fishermen took matters into their own hands and started selling their catch from their boats directly to the general public on the quay sides. This activity has become very popular at both Whitehaven and Maryport and has created a good atmosphere and buzz around the harbours, along with many satisfied customers.</p> <p>A number of visiting trawlers have been seen throughout July, however only one vessel made a couple of landings into Whitehaven after finding a market for his Prawns (Nephrops) which were shipped over to a fish factory in the North East of England.</p> <p>SHRIMP VESSELS – SILLOTH Patrols to Silloth have continued throughout the reporting period and have again not seen any vessel activity in the upper Solway.</p> <p>POTTING Lobster and brown crab catches have been varied with some fishermen reporting very good landings from the southern part of the Cumbrian district and others reporting moderate returns mainly in the Northern part of the District, prices have also have been on a downward trend. Hopefully this will pick back up quickly with the restaurants bars and hotels now opening back up for business.</p> <p>The whelk vessels continue to make regular landings into Whitehaven and Maryport.</p> <p>ANGLING Angling has become very popular over the last couple of months throughout the whole of the Cumbrian district with sightings of 100 plus fishing off the piers, at times. Thornback ray and spotted dogfish are again the main species which appear to be in abundance in the northern part of the district.</p> <p>Night fishing for cod off the rocks has again been good when conditions were right.</p>

Boat anglers have also reported of good catches of Thornback ray along with good sized plaice. Anglers both shore and boat have reported that there is a lot of small bass throughout the district.

BAIT DIGGING

Bait digging has been observed throughout the District

OTHER DUTIES

Deliveries of additional PPE due to Covid 19 were made to officers throughout the district, when required.

Maintenance and repairs were carried out on patrol boats and other equipment during the quarter.

Reports written and attendance at virtual meetings.

NORTHERN WESTERN PROTECTOR

Covid 19 along with other factors has restricted activities on the main patrol boat. Annual coding MCA safety inspection was carried out during the quarter with marine surveyor Nigel Ling assisted by patrol boat crew.

All servicing schedules are up to date on North Western Protector, Protector Charlie and Protector Bravo.

Report by Senior IFCO whilst shielding due to Covid-19 restrictions

TRAWLING

With having to shield from the beginning of lock-down due to COVID-19, most of this quarters report were obtained through VMS online only. In May some visiting vessels came over from Northern Ireland to fish the prawn grounds southwest and south of Saint Bees Heads. 45 local and visiting over 12 metre vessels were located in areas between 4 miles west and southwest of St bees Head, and 8 – 10 miles west of Silcroft, and therefore unable to report on catches made by these vessels.

During June and July a further 64 vessels were located using VMS surveillance, and on one occasion a vessel had encroached the west of Walney MCZ area, which was subsequently reported to NWIFCA Intel system.

Three local vessels adjusted their way of landing their catch, due to Government's advice on social distancing etc., and have been selling their catch straight to the public, during May. Large queues were seen by other officers at vessels when carrying out inspections at Maryport, where the public maintained social distancing, and bought fish and prawns directly from the vessels.

POTTING

12 metres and over vessels were sighted on VMS, and these are the only ones reported. The vessels sighted were whelkers, apart from one vessel which fished both lobster and whelk pots, with all the whelking gear set outside the district in the old CSFC district area.

Activity from lobster and crab boats were from south of St Bees to west of Walney inside of the district. Other whelking vessels fished their gear outside of the district in the north CSFC area, while others fished north of Wales, in Scottish waters in the Solway Firth and north east of the Isle Of Man.

In total 135 sightings of potting vessels were visualised by myself on VMS. No reports on catches, although recently while being actively back at work, one lobster man told me that in July he landed over 2 tonnes of lobsters for the month, in areas south of St Bees Head all the way up the coast to areas off Maryport.

ANGLING

No angling was seen by any officer till lockdown eased in late May. Officers, from this time until the end of July, reported seeing anglers in large numbers, mostly on the two piers at Whitehaven, with up to 120 anglers seen on one occasion. These anglers were seen targeting mackerel, with some anglers being seen on beaches throughout the district, targeting sea bass, and rays. One person reported a 19lb bass caught at Seascale, this was also posted by the angler, onto Social media for others to see.

	<p>OTHER DUTIES Due to covid-19, I along with other officers were enrolled on a competent officer's accreditation course, and over the quarter I was given 3 units to complete. Each unit contained 12 modules relating to relevant fisheries law, national and EU. I completed my units by the end of July.</p>
<p>Haverigg Point – Arnside – IFCO Dixon</p>	<p>POTTING Two vessels working lobster pots outside the district from Barrow, One new licensed vessel potting part time from Barrow within the district, One licensed vessel trialled potting in the Foulney area but was only observed for a short time.</p> <p>NETTING There has been very little activity due to large numbers of smooth hounds and small bass present, reports of moderate catches of bass occasionally. One beach net observed in the Leven estuary targeting pot bait. One flue net was also inspected during the quarter.</p> <p>ANGLING Very popular throughout the area, due to large numbers of Bass being caught, mostly for sport, Patrols were increased to deter possible offending</p> <p>SHRIMPING One tractor observed fairly regularly in the Leven channel, catches quite poor but enough to be viable. No commercial shrimping observed from Flookburgh fishermen.</p> <p>MUSSELS Regularly a group of up to 12 fishermen working on Foulney, up to 3 weeks a month.</p> <p>SAMPLING Sampling has continued to take place for Barrow Council and South Lakes District Council for mussels and cockles.</p>
<p>Arnside – Lytham IFCO Waltho</p>	<p>COCKLES All cockles beds have been closed during this period.</p> <p>Regular patrols have been conducted monitoring all inter tidal areas for potential illegal cockling or gathering of other bivalve species.</p> <p>Assistance has been provided at Leasowe for enforcement patrols, as well as assisting on science surveys.</p> <p>MUSSELS There has been no interest in Heysham Flat Seed Mussel.</p> <p>ANGLING Heysham Bass Nursery Area. Joint working has been completed with the Marine Management Organisation and the police. This working will be continued where possible.</p> <p>Angling levels have been at their highest levels during June when hotspots included Fleetwood and Gynn Wall Blackpool, where in one day over 90 anglers were seen. Catching reports varied from schooly bass to good sized rays. Bare Ayre in Morecambe has also been a consistent spot for angling.</p> <p>Catches in Morecambe have reportedly been higher numbers of thornback rays and smooth hounds than previous years, with many dogfish also present.</p> <p>BAIT COLLECTION Low levels of bait collection have been observed throughout the area with sightings being most common at Half Moon Bay, Heysham, and Fleetwood Marine Hall down to Rossall Point.</p> <p>SAMPLING The sampling schedule for Pilling cockles and Ribble Training Wall Mussels has continued as usual, maintaining monthly collections for classification monitoring.</p>

	<p>Warton Sands cockle bed classification sampling schedule has been completed with the initial 10 samples. We are awaiting confirmation from Lancaster City Council for the final results.</p> <p>Knott End sampling sites (Knott Spit and Sea Centre) have been inspected with the plan for sample collections to be restarted by Wyre council.</p> <p>COVID-19 Where officers have had to work from home, they have fulfilled their duties including producing intelligence reports and working towards completing an officer accreditation scheme.</p>
<p>Dee-Southport – IFCOs Brownrigg, Taylor & Capper</p>	<p><u>LEASOWE EMERGENCY BYELAW</u></p> <p>During this quarter all IFCO's have been entirely focused on the enforcement of the new emergency byelaw under the title "Operational Wistful".</p> <p>Officers have been working continuously through the period since the inception of the byelaw on the 3rd June. Both preventing those attempting to breach the byelaw and removing those who doing.</p> <p>There have been difficulties in obtaining details from some offenders however officers have been largely successful in this and providing evidence to senior management.</p> <p>Officers have worked jointly with other agencies where possible and the addition of three private contractors from the Red Snapper Group has greatly assisted in the distribution of officer's time and effort along the coastline. Red Snapper officers can operate under delegated powers from S.260 of MACAA.</p> <p>Equipment has been seized from individuals where appropriate.</p> <p>Many of the offenders are still travelling long distances to access the foreshore.</p>

General Update

- HoE has attended NIMEG and other national working group meetings
- HoE has completed two years as chair of NIMEG and has stepped down to allow a new chair to take over. Sam Dell from Southern IFCA was nominated and appointed as chair of the group.
- Progress has been made with the MCRS byelaw, Intertidal hand gathering byelaw and netting byelaw.

COVID 19

Under the current working practices IFCOs have continued to operate with minimal disruption. The procurement of an additional vehicle in the Whitehaven area has allowed officers to work independently during shore patrols.

Working practices have been put in place to allow RIB patrols and sea going operations to take place. The vessel activity has been more affected by other working objectives and the weather rather than Covid 19.

Health & Safety

Operations manager has been continually reviewing guidance on Covid 19, providing updates to risk assessments and operational policy documents as guidance and regulations change. Where required excellent personal protective equipment has been procured to allow officers to carry out their functions as IFCO's.

There has been work on reviewing other documentation relating to health and safety.

Emergency Byelaw

During this reporting period the Leasowe emergency byelaw was implemented on the 3rd of June. This was reported by officers at the June NWIFCA Authority meeting.

Since last reporting there has been a decrease in the numbers attending however there is still a consistent number of people who are travelling with the intent of gathering intertidal bivalves. Those who are attempting to access the beach to gather shellfish are being stopped and equipment confiscated. IFCO's and supporting private contractor staff are present the majority of the days tides. This is a significant resource burden however it is necessary to provide a deterrent and also conduct enforcement where necessary.

To date over 100 official warning letters have been issued to offenders from across the UK. There have been a small number of serious offences where the quantity has deemed further investigation or where there have been offences committed against officers such as failure to comply and obstruction. These offences are too serious to be dealt with by a warning letter and legislation states that fixed administrative penalties cannot be issued for S.292 of MACAA offences. Therefore they will be submitted to the magistrate's court for prosecution.

Magistrates Court

Magistrates courts are now beginning to operate and cases are beginning to progress through the courts system again.

Fishery Report

Reporting data from IFCO sightings reports and Byelaw 3 permit returns are collated below.

All cockle beds remained closed during the reporting period. Heysham flat seed mussel fishery was opened under authorisation and was not fished by any Byelaw 3 permit holders authorised to do so.

Black Scar/Perch Scar at Fleetwood saw very limited fishing from two dredge boats operating in strictly authorised areas dredging seed mussel. Permits were issued under the Dredge Byelaw.

Sanctions, Infringements and Court Activity

A total of 91 sanctions were applied during the quarter. A number of investigations are ongoing. The table below summarises these;

Sanctions	Comments
Verbal	None
Advisory Letters	None
Official warning letters	66 official warning letter issued for Emergency byelaw breaches (specifically within the reporting period) 7 official warning letters for minor breaches of HBNA
Home office Cautions	None
FAPs	None
Permit suspension	None
Prosecutions	None
Prosecutions Pending	11 case files have been submitted to the prosecutor with regards to repeat offending at HBNA. Four- dates set for first hearing One- Referred for case management One- Adjourned for sentencing One- Awaiting trial.

Shore Based Activity Report

Number of:	Haverigg Point – Burgh Marsh Point	Haverigg Point – Arnside –	Arnside – Knott End –	River Wyre – River Alt –	Mersey, Wirral and Dee
Shore patrols by all NWIFCA officers*	49	63		23	112
ATV patrols	15	19		15	25
ATV patrol hrs	30	49.2		42.5	60.83
ATV kms covered	325	432		369	905
Inspections under taken	120	110		171	1394

*undertaken either by vehicle or on foot without using ATV

Annex A

Vessel	No of patrols	Patrol time (hrs)	Distance patrolled (nm)	Boarding's	Closings	Sightings	Inspections (inc. gear inspections)
Bay Protector	1	4	46	Boardings suspended in Covid-19 risk assessment	4	5	1
Protector Gamma	1	1	10		0	0	0
Protector Bravo/Charlie	3	8.58	108		0	6	11
Totals for the quarter	5	13.58	164		4	11	12

Annex B

Patrol Vessel	Patrol Date	Patrol Time (hrs)	Distance (nm)	Area Covered	Risk/ Purpose	Sectors Covered	No. Boarding	No. Closings	No. Sightings	No. Inspections
Bay Protector	20/05/20	4	46	Liverpool Bay & River Mersey	Potting & angling activity	- Liverpool Bay SPA - Mersey Estuary SPA	0	4	5	1
Total	1	4	46				0	4	5	1

Patrol Vessel	Patrol Date	Patrol Time (hrs)	Distance (nm)	Area Covered	Risk/ Purpose	Sectors Covered	No. Boarding	No. Closings	No. Sightings	No. Inspections
Protector Gamma	30/07/20	1	10	Walney Channel	Sea trials after lock-down	- Walney Channel - Morecambe Bay EMS	0	0	0	0
Total	1	1	10				0	0	0	0

Patrol Vessel	Patrol Date	Patrol Time (hrs)	Distance (nm)	Area Covered	Risk/ Purpose	Sectors Covered	No. Boarding	No. Closings	No. Sightings	No. Inspections
Protector Bravo/Charlie	02/06/20	2.5	43	St Bees, Harrington, Workington, Maryport	Potting, netting, trawling & angling activity	- Cumbria Coast MCZ - Solway Firth SPA	0	0	6 vessels 91 sets static gear	11
Protector Bravo/Charlie	08/06/20	1.08	5	West of Whitehaven	Returned to port with engine problems		0	0	0	0
Protector Bravo/Charlie	24/07/20	5	60	Ravenglass, Flimby	Potting, netting, angling activity and bass fishing	- Morecambe Bay & Duddon Estuary SPA - Solway Firth SPA	0	0	0	0
Total	3	8.58	108				0	0	6 vessels	11