



Sussex IFCA Shellfish Permit

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

Why is Sussex IFCA introducing this new byelaw?

Sussex IFCA's role is to manage fisheries in the Sussex District and to help those fisheries get to a sustainable status. The Authority has introduced a comprehensive suite of management measures for pot and trap shellfish fisheries. Previously, fishing control on all principal shellfish species caught in traps and pots inside Sussex District was limited to size limits on crab, whelk and lobster and pot limitation for the lobster fishery. The new effort and gear restrictions will enable effective controls on the impacts of fishing activity on the District's shellfish populations and help achieve long term sustainability of fisheries and the stocks they depend on.

How do I apply for a Permit?

All existing lobster Permit holders will be sent a pack, anyone else should contact us to receive a Permit application pack.

Email: admin@sussex-ifca.gov.uk

Phone: 01273 454407

Write: Sussex IFCA, 12a Riverside Business Centre, Brighton Road, Shoreham by Sea BN43 6RE

All contact details are available on our website www.sussex-ifca.gov.uk

Who does the byelaw apply to?

If you want to commercially or recreationally fish for lobster, crab, whelk, cuttlefish and prawns using pots in Sussex District you will need a Permit. Anyone taking edible crab or lobster by other methods are also affected.

Where can I read the full byelaw and associated Permit conditions?

The full byelaw and Permit conditions can be found on our website www.sussex-ifca.gov.uk. Alternatively call us on 01273 454407 and we can email or post paper copies to you.

What should I do if I don't understand the byelaw or any information?

In the first instance refer to our web pages for information, at www.sussex-ifca.gov.uk, and if you still require help then call and speak to one of our enforcement officers on 01273 454407.

Which shellfish species are managed through the Shellfish Permit?

Whelk, lobster, crab, cuttlefish, spider crab, velvet swimming crab and prawn are now managed under the new Byelaw.

I do not use pots to catch shellfish, do I need a Permit?

You do not need a Permit to recreationally fish for shellfish if you gather shellfish by hand, this includes divers, however, the maximum number you can take in any day, from any one boat is 2 lobsters and 5 edible crabs.

You do not need a Permit to commercially fish from a boat if you do not take more than 2 lobsters and 5 edible crabs in any one day, using fishing gear other than pots or traps e.g. nets or trawls.



You do need a Permit if you are a commercial fisherman using any method and wish to land more than 2 lobsters and 5 edible crabs in any one day.

Can I carry on fishing until I get a Permit?

Yes, whilst the Authority phases in the new Shellfish Permit you can carry on fishing before you apply for a Permit and whilst your Permit application is being processed. We will need to have received all Permit applications from existing fishers by the 1st July 2016. Sussex IFCA will then issue Permits and tags from that first round of applications. From that date onwards any individual who applies for a Shellfish Permit must first both obtain a Permit and fit pot tags prior to fishing within the District.

Does it apply to recreational fishers?

Yes, a recreational fisherman requires a Permit if they fish using pots or traps and will be limited to two lobster and five edible crab per day.

I already have a lobster Permit, what should I do?

The previous Lobster Permit Byelaw (which had limited effort management restrictions) is revoked. If you have an existing Lobster Permit, or have applied for a Lobster Permit, under the now revoked Byelaw then we will send you an application pack at the address given on that original application. If you think your address has changed from that on your previous Lobster Permit you should tell us as soon as possible.

How much does it cost and how long does a Permit last for?

A 'Commercial Permit' costs £200 and lasts for two years from the date on which the Permit is issued. A 'Recreational Permit' costs £10 and lasts for one year. A charge is also made for supply of the tags at 15p per tag.

Does the Permit date commence from the time we receive your payment?

No, the Permit issue date will be as close as practicable to the time you receive the Permit and tags. The period for which the permit applies does not include the application and payment processing period.

Can I delay payment until I receive the Permit?

No, the Authority will not start to process the application unless it is in receipt of your payment. If cheques fail to clear or are post-dated you may be subject to an administration charge.

How do I pay?

You can pay by direct bank transfer or cheque. Cheques will need additional time to process. Full payment details will be supplied when you apply for a Permit. **Do not** send cash or bring cash to the IFCA office to pay.

Who applies for the Permit?

Only owners of vessels can apply, this could be an individual or a body corporate e.g. a company

Can a boat have more than one Permit?

No, only one permit will be issued for each vessel.

Can a person or company have more than one Permit?

Yes, if the Permits relate to different boats.



How many pots or traps can I fish?

Type of pot or trap	Commercial fishers	Recreational fishers
Lobster/crab	300 out to IFCA 3 nautical miles limit, with a total of 600 within IFCA 6 nautical mile limit (IFCA seaward District)	5
whelk	300 out to IFCA 3 nautical miles limit, with a total of 600 within IFCA 6 nautical mile limit (IFCA seaward District)	5
prawn	No limits	5
cuttlefish	300 within IFCA 6 nautical mile limit (IFCA seaward District)	2

Where will I get the pot tags?

Sussex IFCA will issue pot tags to you after receipt of your Permit application and payment.

Where do I put the tags?

Sussex IFCA has produced a guide for fishers showing suggested places to locate the tags on the various types of pots.

Can I get replacement tags if pots and traps with tags are lost or need replacing?

Yes, replacement tags will be available for Permit holders, a procedure for obtaining replacements will exist.

What sort of tags are used?

The tags look similar to very large cable ties marked with the Permit code, they have been used in existing fisheries management.

Can I currently use pots and traps that haven't been tagged?

We will need to have received all Permit applications from existing fishers by the 1st July 2016. Sussex IFCA will then issue all the tags from that round of applications. Once those persons who applied for a permit before 1st July have received your tags they will be given a period of grace, during which you must tag any pots or traps you are using within the IFCA fishery. Any individual who applies for a Shellfish Permit after 1st July 2016 must only deploy pots and traps that are tagged.

What happens if my gear is not marked?

The Authority has the enforcement powers to seize unmarked gear and it will be an offence to use it.

Is the Permit transferable?

The Permits are not transferrable and they have no monetary value to others. If you change vessels during the period of the Permit then contact us to discuss the matter.

How do I get escape hatches?

If you want to obtain bespoke escape hatches to fit to your lobster/crab pots then they can be purchased from local marine fishery product suppliers. Contact us if you are having difficulty sourcing escape hatches.

What do returns forms look like?

We will keep our returns forms as simple as possible, so that they are quick and easy to complete. Returns forms are a vital part of shellfisheries management and will help us collect the evidence we need to make future management decisions. Forms will be sent to you after you have applied for a Permit.

The Authority will explore the use of electronic and web communications so that those who prefer to use this method can.