

# NWIFCA Technical, Science and Byelaw Committee

**31st October 2017: 10:00 a.m.**

**AGENDA  
ITEM NO.  
8**

## COCKLE AND MUSSEL FISHERIES ENFORCEMENT REPORT 17<sup>TH</sup> JULY – 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2017

**Purpose:** To provide an update on the enforcement and compliance at the recent Heysham Flat, Leasowe, Flookburgh and Pilling fisheries.

**Recommendation:** Members approve the report.

### Context

- This report gives an activity, compliance and enforcement summary for all commercial cockle and mussel fisheries within the current period.

### Activity, Compliance and Enforcement Summary

- The table below summarises industry and IFCO activity for the current fisheries. The data has been compiled from Byelaw 3 returns and IFCO sightings. It is therefore dependent on fishermen having submitted returns and IFCO's having been present. Where there maybe discrepancies this has been highlighted.

Activity	Leasowe	Flookburgh/Leven	Pilling	Heysham Flat
<b>Overall Attendance (from returns)</b>	1214	597	0	108
<b>Av per day</b>	40	20	0	10
<b>No. inspected fishing</b>	672	275	0	
<b>No. MLS inspections</b>	102	239	0	
<b>Days covered by IFCO's</b>	19	14	3	
<b>Reported landings</b>	September 769,114 kg*	September 278,275 kg*	N/A	August 162,568 kg**
<b>Man hours</b>	September 6705 hrs*	September 3268 hrs*	N/A	August 594 hrs**
<b>Enforcement action</b>				
<b>IFCO cautions</b>	4			2
<b>Advisory letters</b>	5 (returns compliance)			
<b>Official Warning letters</b>	2			2 (returns compliance)
<b>Verbal Warning</b>	1			
<b>FAPs</b>				2 (transit outside authorised area)
<b>On-going investigation</b>	3 (1 case file submitted)			

\*5 returns for September have not been submitted for gatherers who have been sighted fishing.

\*\*1 return is missing for a gatherer who actively fished at Heysham Flat.

(Landings for the month of October have not been included as the fishing is on-going at the writing of this report)

3. Relevant points regarding the sanctions above are as follows:

- a) Two cautions issued for B3 gatherers being outside the area authorised on Heysham Flat. Following two voluntary interviews under caution at Morecambe Police station, two FAPs were issued based on admittance of transit through the area.
- b) One verbal warning was issued at Leasowe for a B3 gatherer not being in physical possession a permit.
- c) Four IFCO cautions were issued at Leasowe, all for gathering more than the recreational limit of 5kg. This resulted in two official warning letters being issued and three on-going investigations (1 case file has been submitted).
- d) Officers did detect a number of other suspected incidents of un-permitted gathering at Leasowe during the first week but due to the nature of the area offenders were able to evade IFCO's present. All though disappointing in not being able to apprehend suspects gathering was successfully disrupted and cockles returned to the bed. A small amount of cockling gear which was left during one incident was seized by an IFCO and notices placed on the website.
- e) There has only been one reported incident of suspected un-permitted gathering at the Flookburgh Cockle fishery.

#### **Minimum Landing Size Compliance**

4. a) Leasowe- MLS compliance has been exceptional due to the large size of the in the bed.
- b) Flookburgh- MLS compliance has been good with fishermen gathering in areas of larger cockles and using riddles where appropriate.

#### **Byelaw 3 Returns Compliance**

5. a) Returns compliance has been excellent.
- b) One returns form is outstanding from August and therefore of permitted fishermen there has been a compliance rate of 99%
- c) Five returns forms are outstanding from fishermen who are known to have been active in September; therefore of active fishermen there has been a compliance rate of 95%
- d) In respect of this 5 advisory letters have been issued and one official warning letter.
- e) The excellent compliance may be as a result of text message reminders and recent advisory letter/ Official warning letters.
- f) The high enforcement priority of this is being continued as it is proving valuable in establishing good statistics on the activities at the fisheries.

#### **Pilling Cockle Fishery**

6. Very little activity has been reported with only a very small amount of fishing being reported in October.

#### **Acting Head of Enforcement - October 2017**