

Seventh **annual plan**

April 2017 – April 2018



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Background

1. **Remit:** NWIFCA is the lead regulator under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MCAA) for the District. Duties are in MCAA s.153 to 184.
2. **Vision: (Defra 2009)** To lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment and inshore fisheries in the District by successfully securing the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry.
3. The main fisheries of the District are in Table 1.
4. **Audience: Defra.** (MCAA s177 requires each IFCA to publish and send to the Secretary of State before 1 April each year, a plan setting out the Authority's main objectives and priorities for the year.
5. **Plan format:** A new non-statutory framework of Success criteria and Indicators (Table 4) was published in 2015. IFCA were asked to have regard to this framework in planning and reporting.
6. By resolution in 2012, proposed by Environment Agency and agreed with Defra, the annual plan is a working document for development by members to meet changing priorities.
7. Partner agency members (Natural England (NE), EA and Marine Management Organisation (MMO)) may contribute relevant objectives for the District to promote partnership and common priorities.
8. Changes to the current plan should be proposed by members at quarterly meetings and adopted by resolution.
9. **Finance:** The core budget for 2017-8 is the same as last year. This represents a real terms cut by the inflation rate as in 5 previous years (Table 2).
10. The levy for 2017-8 is increased by 2% per year to fund asset replacement mainly patrol vessel (resolved by the Authority in 2013).
11. **Personnel:** From March 2017 NWIFCA will have 20.6 full time equivalent posts with line management structure as shown in figure 1.
12. **Performance monitoring:** Table 3 shows summary aims for the Authority in 2017-8. Members are invited to comment on these to ensure they meet agreed priorities.
13. Table 4 shows success criteria and indicators set by Defra. Tasks in the right hand column are proposed by the Authority to achieve the indicators in 2017-8. Members are invited to comment on the tasks to ensure they meet agreed priorities.
14. **Risk Management:** The Authority's risk strategy is available from the Clerk. Auditors review risk registers each year. The next review will be undertaken in the 2017 audit.
15. **Health and safety:** The Authority retains an external qualified H&S consultant to maintain the H&S policy up to date and ensure it is compliant with changes in regulations. The current policy is available from the Clerk. The policy and any incidents are reviewed for each quarterly meeting.
16. **Working in Partnership:** Joint working with other agencies, NGO and stakeholders is a government priority. NE, MMO and EA each have an Officer on the Authority. National Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) were agreed with MMO (2014, review in 2017), EA (2011), NE (2011) and Cefas (2011). A local GLA - NWIFCA MOU was agreed in 2011.
17. MOU do not have legal force but are statements of intent to work collaboratively. They are drafted by agencies wishing to establish formal partnership working with IFCA and are subject to agreement by IFCA members before signature by Chairman and /or CEO. MOU are available from the Clerk and will be put on the website
18. Officers of Cumbria Wildlife Trust, RSPB and North West Coastal Forum are MMO appointees to the Authority. When required NWIFCA has regular liaison to promote good environmental management with Gangmaster Licensing Authority (GLA); Councils, Environmental Health Services (EHS), Food Standards Agency (FSA),

Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas), Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) Natural Resources Wales (NRW), Marine Scotland.

19. The Authority will continue to consult partners and stakeholders on policy development and byelaw proposals through Authority meetings, other meetings and discussions, multi-agency fisheries planning committees, Bivalve working committees and published written reports.
20. Enforcement will continue to be co-ordinated with MMO and EA by sharing weekly tasking priorities.
21. **Membership and governance** The Authority has 30 members as defined in SI2200, 2010. Names and brief biographical information will be maintained on the website. MMO has been requested to recruit 3 new members to fill vacancies in February 2017.
22. New Authority members will continue to receive NWIFCA induction information about the IFCA and the role of members. Depending on demand, the Authority plans 1-2 awareness days for new members in 2017.
23. The Authority and Technical, Science and Byelaw (TSB) Committee meeting dates in 2017-8 were published in December 2016 and are on the website. Standing Orders are under review in 2017. Agendas and papers will continue to be circulated to members and posted on the website 7 days in advance of meetings.
24. **Compliance:** The Authority will continue to be an efficient and fair regulator, using a range of measures and sanctions defined in the compliance and enforcement strategy available from the Clerk or website.
25. The Authority will continue to use risk based enforcement directing resources at areas and fisheries according to known priorities and intelligence received.
26. Development of officer accreditation is expected to make significant progress in 2017-8 leading to more consistent enforcement at a higher standard across all IFC officers.
27. **Equality Act 2010.** As a public sector body and as an employer the Authority will continue to comply with the Equality Act and standards.
28. **Corporate monitoring policies.** The Authority is committed to being transparent and accountable. We want partners and stakeholders to know the level of service we will aim to provide. Standing Orders, Financial regulations, Customer service standard, a Freedom of Information Act publication scheme and a complaints procedure are in the Constitution available from the Office and on the website.
29. **Science and Research** (Table 5) in 2017-8 will focus on survey and impact assessment of potential new fisheries; development of fisheries management, support for the development of new byelaws and the ongoing byelaw review; regulatory impact assessments (RIA) for byelaws, supporting Government's marine protected area priorities including MCZ designation and management, development consultation responses, new and ongoing research projects.

Table 1 Fisheries and fishing activity in the District which falls within the duties of the

Species	Gear	Area	Season
Cockle	Hand gathering, occasional dredge	Solway, Morecambe Bay, Ribble, Wirral, Dee Estuary	All year round
Mussel	Hand gathering of seed and size mussel. Seed dredging in Morecambe Bay	Solway, Morecambe Bay, Ribble, Wirral, Dee Estuary	Size all year round Seed usually summer, autumn
Clams (Razor various species)	Hand gathering	Wirral on large tides	Big tides anytime
Shrimp	Nets operated by hand tractors boats	Solway, Morecambe Bay, Ribble, Dee	Spring to Autumn
Prawn (Nephrops)	Trawl	Cumbria fished mainly outside the District. Landed in Whitehaven	
Queen Scallops	Dredge	North, outer Solway, mostly outside District. Landed in Whitehaven	
Whelk	pots	North mostly outside District	
Sole, Brill, turbot, cod, roker (thornback Ray), dab, fluke, mullet	Trawls; Set nets, Angling	All areas.	All year round
Crab, lobster	Pots	Mainly north of Morecambe Bay	Spring to Autumn
Bass	Nets, Angling	All areas	Summer
Sprat, whitebait,	Nets	Estuaries	Spring to Autumn
Winkles	Hand gathering	Cumbria Coast Occasionally Morecambe Bay	Summer Autumn
Bait collection	Hand gathering, worm digging, crab tiling	All areas	All year

Authority.**Table 2 Budget 2017-8**

EXPENDITURE	2016-17	2017-18
Employees	£892,417	£888,227
Premises	£55,150	£56,800
Transport*	£276,587	£301,232
Supplies & Services	£57,800	£61,400
Corporate	£30,300	£30,800
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£1,312,254	£1,338,459
INCOME		
7151 Levy 2% Increase	£1,235,254	£1,259,959
7251 Shellfish Sampling	£15,000	£7,000
7257 Permit Fees	£58,000	£64,000

7351 Interest	£4,000	£7,500
TOTAL INCOME	£1,312,254	£1,338,459
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	NIL	NIL
As in previous years budget includes 2% levy increase to finance asset replacement		
*Of the projected 2017-8 transport expenditure £95,952 is for asset replacement		

Fig 1. NWIFCA Officers and line management

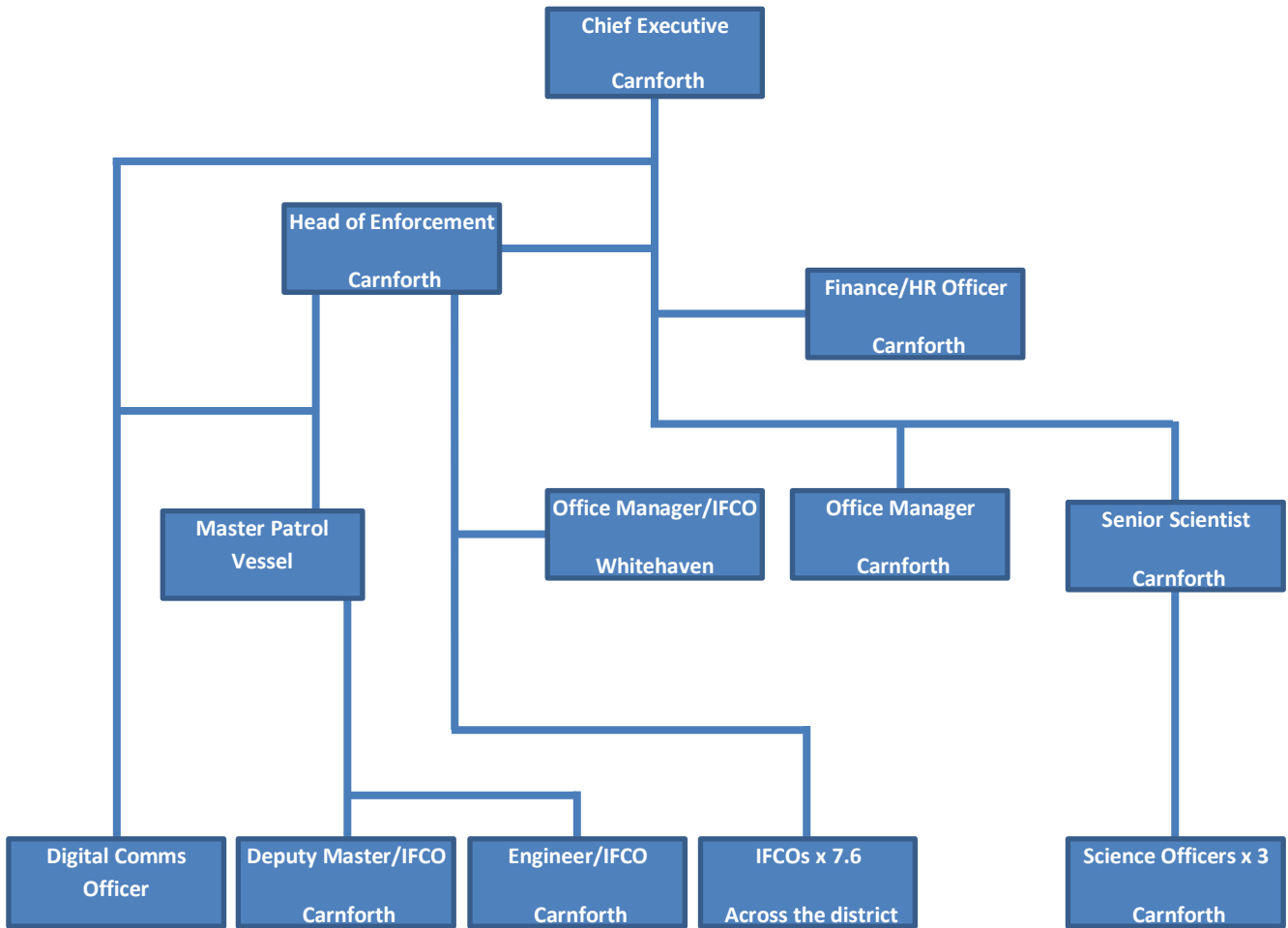


Table 3. Summary of this Authorities main priorities and aims for 2017 –18.		Targets
1.	To operate the Authority to highest standards of probity and in compliance with the Authority's constitution, standing orders, public sector regulations and policies on health and safety, financial auditing, risk assessment, transparency, freedom of information, data protection, operation of meetings. Revised standing orders and scheme of delegations to be published.	Ongoing 2017
2.	To properly manage and care for officers and members by providing training, job reviews, information and consultation on all relevant matters and delegating responsibility appropriately.	Ongoing
3.	To require compliance by fishers with EU, UK and NWIFCA regulations covering exploitation of sea fisheries resources in the District (table 1) by planning, patrolling and inspecting all parts of the District according to risk, making use of available resources. To collect and record data on fishing and fishing vessels in line with agreed protocols and apply sanctions fairly when offences are detected following the Authority's enforcement strategy.	Ongoing
4	To further conservation and sustainable management of the marine environment by developing MCZ designation and management, continuing to apply habitats regulations assessments to fisheries on all MPA and implementing management measures agreed with other regulators.	Keep in line with gov policy
5	To manage shellfish beds (mainly cockle and mussel), so that stocks are exploited sustainably and in compliance with habitats regulations in partnership with other regulators and advisors by means of stock surveys, stakeholder consultations, multi-agency management plans, permit conditions, and consultation with IFCA - industry committees such as the Bivalve Working Group.	Help achieve industry objectives
6	To continue byelaw development in priority order as follows. Nb: priorities may change according to risk. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete District wide Restrictions on dredging byelaw 2017 2. Complete Prohibition of foul hooking byelaw 2017; 3. Review Cockle and mussel permit scheme byelaw 3; 4. Develop and complete West of Walney MCZ Management byelaw 5. Complete District wide lobster protection byelaw; 6. Review vessel size limit byelaws 7. Complete hobby potting byelaw; 	2017 2017 2018 2018 Asap Asap asap
7	To progress procurement of a new main patrol vessel.	2017
8	To develop stakeholder engagement with greater use of website and social media	ongoing
9	To further develop and implement the intelligence management system in collaboration with other IFCA and regulatory bodies	National project
10	To deliver a flexible science programme which supports fisheries and conservation management in the District and byelaw development according to short term priorities.	Meet response deadlines

NB:

1. This summary is not part of the Defra performance monitoring guidance.
2. To avoid confusion all tasks for 2017-18 are listed against the Defra indicators.
3. Members are invited to comment on and propose changes to this list to meet changing priorities.

Table 4. 2017-18 Meeting Defra success criteria

Defra Success Criteria and indicators (revised 2015)	Tasks
Success Criterion 1: IFCA's are recognised and heard, balancing the economic needs of the fishery whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders	
SC1A: The IFCA will maintain a database of stakeholder contacts reviewed and updated by 31 March each year.	NWIFCA will maintain an up to date stakeholder database (rebuilt 2016). From which permit schemes will be operated in 2017 including Byelaws 3; NWSFC 9, 26, 27, 30; Cumbria SFC 26. The new 'Register here' button will support development of stakeholder contacts and their interests including angling and bait collecting..
SC1B: The IFCA will review its communication strategy and implementation plan by 31 March each year.	NWIFCA will review its communications strategy by 31 March each year. The job plan for the Digital Communications Officer in post from Oct 2016, is in development. The new website facilitates a more ambitious communications programme in 2017.
SC1C: The IFCA will review website by the last working day of each month.	Content will be developed and the website continuously monitored by the Digital Communications Officer.
SC1D: The IFCA will ensure website meets the objectives of its communication strategy, by 31 March.	New website will be assessed against the developing Communications strategy.
SC1E: The IFCA will review all Memoranda of Understanding by 31 March each year. Will be plans in place to update MoUs to agreed timescales	National MOU are in place with NE, EA, Cefas, MMO. MMO MOU is under review in 2016-7. Review of MOU are national tasked led by NE, EA, Cefas and MMO beyond control of each IFCA.
SC1F: By 31 March each year IFCA will participate proportionately and at the right level of delegation, in regional and national fisheries and conservation activity identified in the annual plan.	NWIFCA will continue to contribute to all relevant activity as required and within available resources. Bodies active in 2017: IFCA Chief Officers Group (COG), Association of IFCA, National Intelligence & Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG), IFCA Technical Advisory Group (TAG), Defra marine protected area committees and ad hoc policy meetings, Regional coastal fora (e.g.Solway Firth Forum, North West Coastal Forum, Celtic Seas Forum, Irish Sea Forum, Dee Estuary Committees, North Region IFCA coordination meetings.
Success Criterion 2:IFCA's implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime	
SC2A: The IFCA will ensure its enforcement risk register and strategy are published and available on its website from 1 April each year.	Enforcement strategy will be reviewed by 1 April each year. Risk registers are reviewed by the Authority in December each year and by external auditors around May June each year. Risk based enforcement will continue.
SC2B: The IFCA will demonstrate in Annual Reports work with other regulators to achieve consistent quality, application and enforcement of management measures.	The Annual report for 2015-6 was published September 2016 and sent to the Minister. Joint working to achieve consistent quality, application and enforcement of management measures was reported. The annual report for 2016-7 will be published by December 2017.
SC2C: Record enforcement activity in a standard format, provide to NIMEG and publish on its website.	Enforcement activity will continue to be reported to the Authority in quarterly reports, made public via the website. Data will continue to be securely stored on the Authority's intelligence management system and available to National inshore and Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG).
SC2D: The IFCA will adopt the national Code of Conduct for IFCOs, which will be reviewed annually and published on its website by 1 April each year.	The Code was adopted by NWIFCA in 2012; (see Enforcement strategy). Annual review is a national task outside remit of each IFCA. No responsible body is identified
SC2E: The Code of Conduct for IFCOs is reflected in work objectives and annual appraisals for <u>all</u> Warranted	As previously, New IFCOs will be trained to comply with the code. Performance will be assessed and continually monitored by the Head of Enforcement and discussed in annual appraisals. Training will be kept up to date.

Officers.	
<p>SC2F: Warranted Officers attain accreditation. (Nb: The aim of accreditation is to provide national common training and skills for enforcement officers in a range of regulatory agencies. Development of accreditation will continue in 2017 but is not available yet. Previous progress with development nationally was slowed by resource constraints in MMO. In future all NWIFCOs should be accredited.)</p> <p>All undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD).</p>	<p>Accreditation is not yet available. The Authority will contribute to its development in 2017. The Head of Enforcement will become a local assessor. Mandatory training of all IFCOs will be kept up to date to nationally agreed standards. All IFCOs will be given CPD to meet needs. Training register will be maintained. Training in-house, jointly with partner agencies or purchased from external providers will be reviewed. The training objectives of each officer will be identified in staff reviews. Training will include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mandatory training to safely and competently deliver each role including health and safety, use of equipment, first aid, sea survival, . 2. Training for qualifications in specified roles such as warranted IFCO. 3. Tailored personal development training to meet organisation and personal objectives for each officer; 4. Assessment of the Authority's existing and future skills and needs. An inventory of training undertaken and a renewal schedule is maintained and will be updated in 2017. 5. External training available to bridge identified capacity gaps; 6. Monitoring and evaluation of training to achieve added value and effectiveness. 7. Monitoring, job reviews and job plans

Success Criterion 3: IFCA's use evidence based and appropriate measures to manage the sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources and deliver marine environmental protection.	
SC3A: IFCA will record site-specific management considerations for Marine Protected Areas (MPA) and report progress to the Authority	Government MPA policy will be implemented in 2017 subject to resources. Management of MPA will be reviewed in collaboration with other regulators. In 2017 management of Tranche 2 West of Walney MCZ should be agreed by Defra agencies. If needed, a byelaw to prohibit use of bottom towed gear in the site will be developed. Tranche 3 MCZ may be designated. NWIFCA will assist planning of management measures if needed. Decisions will be based on best available data.
SC3B: IFCA will publish data analysis and evidence supporting new management measures, on its website.	Data and evidence will be compiled in Regulatory impact assessments (RIA) for new measures. Stakeholders will be consulted before introduction. Evidence will be publicly reported to the Authority. Impacts of new measures will be assessed from survey and enforcement data. Results will be reported to quarterly meetings and on website.
SC3C: Management information (e.g. sampling and/or survey results) will be collected periodically after new management measures have been implemented, to demonstrate their effectiveness.	Post implementation survey jointly with partners will inform ongoing fisheries management and effectiveness of new measures. Results will be reported to Authority and on website. Inspection and enforcement data will inform the Authority of the effectiveness of measures.
SC3D: IFCA will develop criteria-based management options, explained to stakeholders through the website, and reviewed annually by 31 March.	New management measures will be developed after assessment of options against criteria defining objectives.
SC3E: New IFCA management measures selected for development and implementation are delivered within agreed timescales	The byelaw review follows agreed priorities (Table 3 line 6). Priorities may change according to risk. Byelaw development will follow Defra guidance.
SC3F: The IFCA will include shared agreed objectives and actions from Fisheries Management Plans in its own Annual Plan, published by 31 March each year.	Objectives from plans such as cockle and mussel plans approved by bivalve working groups will be included in the Annual plan.
SC3G: Progress made in relevant Fisheries Management Plan areas, including Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) commitments, will be noted in the IFCA's Annual Report	Cockle and mussel management plans and priority byelaws to be further developed in 2017-8. Science team will plan development of species management plans within available resources
Success Criterion 4: IFCA's have appropriate governance in place; staff trained and professional	
SC4A: The IFCA will publish a Plan on its website by 31 March each year, setting out the main objectives and priorities for the next	Annual plan is scheduled for publication by end March 2017 year and sent to SoS. Plans include objectives and priorities under criteria set by Defra and local priorities.

financial year. A copy will be sent to the Secretary of State.	
SC4B: 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.	An annual report for 2016-7 is scheduled to be published by 30 November 2017. Activity in the year and audited financial information will be included.
SC4C: IFCA staff will have annual performance management plans in place. Annual appraisals for <u>all</u> staff will have been completed by 31 May each year	Job plans for 2017-18 have been issued. Appraisals for 2016 -17 will be completed 31 May 2017.
SC4D: An efficient secretariat of IFCA staff support IFCA Authority meetings which are held quarterly and are quorate. Meeting documentation will meet Standing Orders.	An efficient secretariat is in place. Documentation will be produced and meetings will continue to be run in line with Standing Orders.
SC4E: The IFCA will show, in its Annual Report, how marine, land and water management mechanisms in the District have worked responsively and effectively together.	Targets for Marine Strategy and Water Framework Directives will be delivered as directed by EA.
Success Criterion 5: IFCA's make the best use of evidence to deliver their objectives	
SC5A: The IFCA will show progress towards identifying evidence needs by publishing a research plan each year.	The research plan for 2017-8 in Table 5 shows current projects to be continued, future proposals subject to resources and an outline survey programme for 2017. Survey plans are indicative only. Collaboration with Universities other agencies NGO and industry will be developed in 2017.
SC5B: The IFCA will publish a research report annually that demonstrates how evidence has supported decision making.	All research work will be reported to the Authority showing how evidence is used to support decision making.
SC5C: The IFCA's contribution to Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and progress towards a national evidence needs programme will be recorded in the IFCA's Annual Report.	NWIFCA will continue contributions to national programmes and report to the Authority.

Table 5 Science plan 2017-8

A. Research Programme 2017-18		NWIFCA Role
1	St Bees head MCZ and management of netting in relation to breeding bird ensnarement. Collating activity data, convening stakeholder meetings, liaison with Natural England and RSPB, draw up management measures – potential byelaw needed.	Regulator
2	Small fish surveys - for purposes of data gathering for T3 MCZ sites (smelt), identification of potential bass nursery areas, and overall management of sustainable sea fisheries resource (MACAA core duty)	Regulator – joint working with EA
3	Development and implementation of a 5 year Recreational Angling Strategy to improve understanding of importance of RA, fill data gaps, identify issues that may need addressing.	Regulator / Lead
4	Provide data, advice and support to three PhDs starting Jan 2017 at Bangor University supported by the seed mussel industry: i development of a Morecambe Bay bird model; ii A study of mussel larvae transport and dispersion in North Wales and Morecambe Bay iii Study of the ecosystem services provided by mussels stocks in Morecambe Bay	Regulator / Partner
5	Help facilitate the role out of national bass tagging and distribution study with Cefas and other IFCA's, commercial and recreational fishers.	Regulator / Partner
6	Provide data, advice and support to two BSc dissertations at Lancaster University: i. A study of cockle movements and influential factors; ii. Using satellite images to study Morecambe Bay channel movements. To help inform cockle management plans.	Partner
7	Development of skills and techniques of the use of side-scan sonar and sonar camera to survey sub-tidal mussels in the Solway, and potential for use with sub-tidal conservation features District-wide	
8	Shrimp stock assessments and by-catch in the Morecambe Bay, Solway, Ribble and Dee Estuary tractor and boat fisheries, to inform future species management plans.	Regulator

B. Proposed survey programme 2017-18 subject to changing priorities			
Project Title	Location	Method	Timing
Silloth Mussel survey	Solway Firth	Dredge, grab, Sonar Camera	Mar-Apr, Sep-Oct
<i>Sabellaria alveolata</i> and mussels	Morecambe Bay Heysham Flat	Quadrat survey / Dutch Wand	May-Jun
Drigg Winkles	Drigg Coast SAC	Quadrat survey	Sep-Oct
Seed Mussels	Morecambe Bay -South America	Aerial, RIB, drone, industry AGDS	Apr-Aug
Seed Mussels	Morecambe Bay Heysham Flat	Dutch Wand, drone	Apr - Aug
Morecambe Bay Mussels	Morecambe Bay - Foulney	Dutch Wand, drone	Jul,Nov,Feb
Morecambe Bay Mussels	Morecambe Bay North	Dutch Wand, drone	Sep, Jan
Fleetwood Mussels	Fleetwood and Wyre End	Dutch Wand, drone	May, Aug
Cumbria Mussels	Solway Firth	Dutch Wand	Jun-Sep
Mersey Mussels	Mersey Estuary	Dutch Wand	May
Dee Mussels	Dee Estuary	Dutch Wand	April / May
Solway Cockle survey	Solway Firth	Suction dredge (with industry)/ grab	Apr, Aug/Sep
Morecambe Bay Cockles	Morecambe Bay – 7 beds	Quadrat survey	March - October
Ribble Cockles	Ribble Estuary – 5 beds	Quadrat survey	March - October
Wirral Cockles	Leasowe	Quadrat survey	March and August

C. Other on-going priorities		NWIFCA Role
1	National Grid Developments: Morecambe Bay tunnel and North West Coast Connections	Consultee
2	NuGen nuclear power station, Moorside; impacts on marine and coastal environments	Consultee
3	Water Framework Directive (WFD) environmental assessments incorporated	Regulator

	in Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRA) to allow fisheries in European Marine Sites (EMS)	
4	Marine Strategy Framework Directive responses to consultation and requests for data	Consultee
5	Coastal fora: Irish Sea Forum, NW Coastal Forum, Morecambe Bay Partnership, Solway Firth Partnership, Dee Estuary Conservation Group, Tidal Dee Catchment Partnership. Attend meetings, provide advice and data.	Participant / Partner
6	Advice to Dee Estuary Liaison Group and management of Dee cockle fishery	Partner
7	Convene and run multi-agency planning committees as required to develop and agree collaborative management of shell fisheries	Regulator
8	Attend meetings and advise Shellfish Liaison Groups to promote compliance with shellfish waters classifications.	Regulator
9	Facilitate Bivalve Mollusc Working Group to consult on cockle and mussel management plans in the District	Regulator
10	MPA management and monitoring – carrying out HRA, and MCZ assessments	Regulator
11	Advise IFCA Technical Advisory Group (TAG) on national projects e.g. iVMS implementation, a proposed new Marine and Coastal Surveillance system (MCSS) to be developed by MMO, bass management	Partner
12	Fracking	Consultee
13	Preesall Gas Storage: liaison and issuing necessary authorisations	Consultee
14	MMO Marine Licence consultations average approximately 50 per year	Consultee