

Eighth annual plan

1 April 2018 –
31 March 2019



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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 non-statutory framework of success criteria and indicators was published in 2015. IFCA were asked to have regard to this framework in planning and reporting.
6. By resolution in 2012 agreed with Defra, the annual plan is maintained as a working document for development by members to meet changing priorities during the year.
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 plan may be proposed by members at quarterly meetings and adopted by resolution. Officers will report progress at each meeting.
9. **Finance:** The core budget for 2018-19 is the same as last year. This represents a real terms cut by the inflation rate as in 6 previous years (Table 2).
10. The proposed levy for 2018-9 is increased in line with the Authority resolution in 2013 for a 2% increase per year for 5 years to fund vessel replacement.
11. **Personnel:** NWIFCA will maintain 21 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 2018-9. 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. 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 2018 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 is a government priority. NE, MMO and EA each have an officer on the Authority by statute. National Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) are in place with MMO (2014, reviewed in 2017), EA (2011), NE (2011) and Cefas (2011). A local GLA - NWIFCA MOU was agreed in 2011. NWIFCA has an informal data and information sharing agreement with Lancashire Police.
17. MOU 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. MOU are available from the Clerk.
18. Officers of Partner bodies such as 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 are on the website. In December 2017 there were 2 vacancies which will be filled when MMO next recruits.
22. New members will continue to receive induction information about the Authority and the role of members. Depending on demand, the Authority plans 1-2 awareness days for new members in 2018.
23. Meeting dates of the Authority and its Technical, Science and Byelaw (TSB) Committee in 2018-19 were published in December 2017 and are on the website. Agendas and papers will 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 training towards accreditation is expected to make significant progress in 2018-19.
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, Scheme of delegations 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 in the District

Species	Gear	Area	Season
Cockle	Hand gathering, occasional dredge	Solway, Morecambe Bay, Ribble, Wirral, Dee Estuary	Closed season 1 May to 31 August
Mussel	Hand gathering of seed and size mussel. Seed dredging in Morecambe Bay	Solway, Morecambe Bay, Ribble, Wirral, Dee Estuary	Size mussel can be fished 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	Spring to Autumn
Queen Scallops	Dredge	North, outer Solway, mostly outside District. Some landed in Whitehaven.	
Whelk	Pots	Outer Solway 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

Table 2. NWIFCA BUDGET 2018-19

2% LEVY INCREASE TO FINANCE PATROL VESSEL

EXPENDITURE	2017-18	2018-19
Employees	£888,227	£888,227
Premises	£56,800	£56,800
Transport	£205,280	£205,280
Replace Patrol Vessel	£95,952	£121,151
Supplies & Services	£61,400	£61,400
Corporate	£30,800	£30,800
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£1,338,459	£1,363,658

INCOME

7151 Levy 2% Increase	£1,259,959	£1,285,158
7251 Shellfish Sampling	£7,000	£7,000
7257 Permit Fees	£64,000	£64,000
7351 Interest	£7,500	£7,500
TOTAL INCOME	£1,338,459	£1,363,658

SURPLUS/DEFICIT	NIL	NIL
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Fig 1. NWIFCA Officers and line management as at January 2018. 1 IFCO vacancy and 1 IFCA (science advisor) vacancy

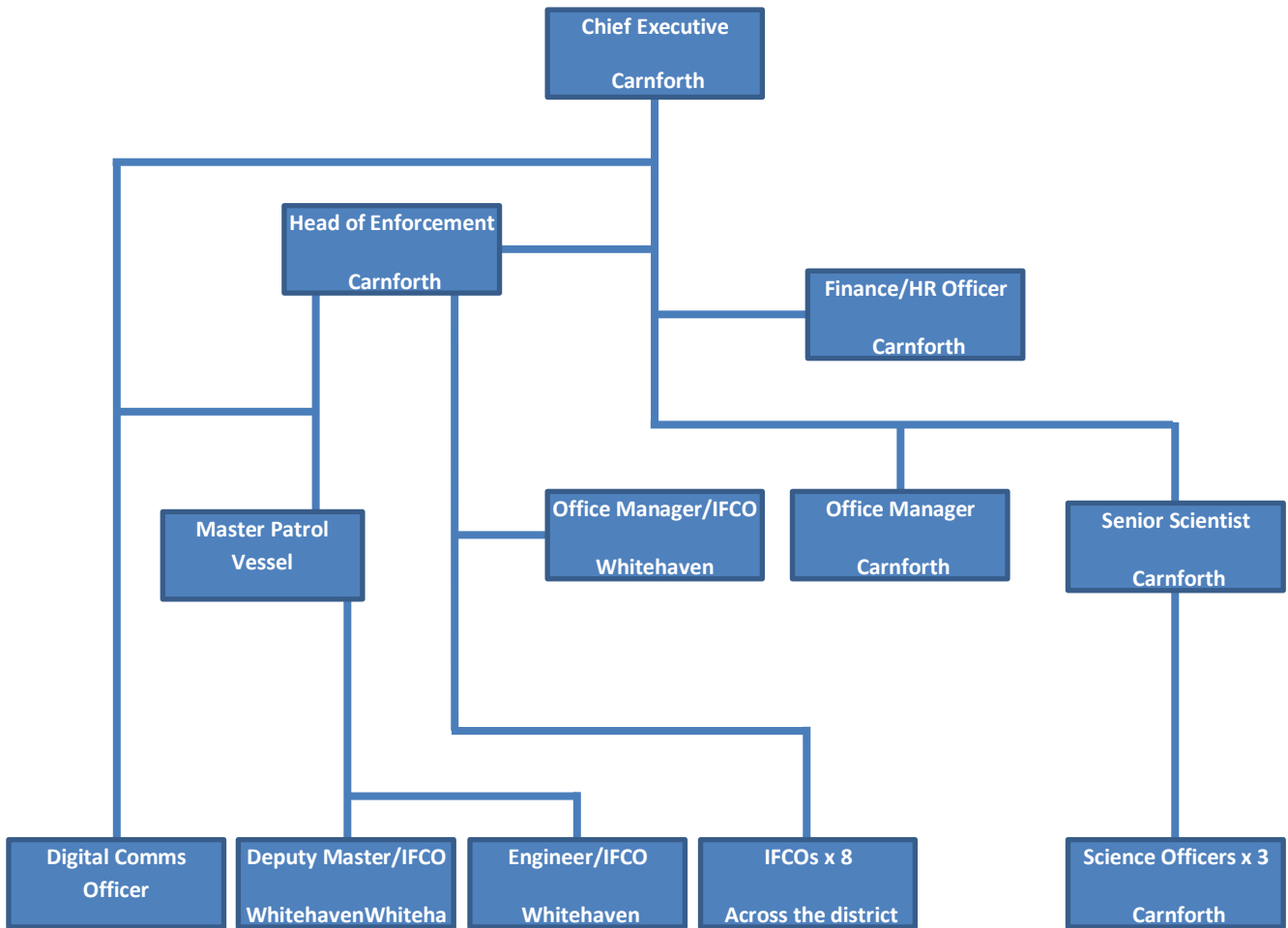


Table 4. 2018-19 Meeting Defra success criteria

Defra Success Criteria and indicators (revised 2015)	Tasks					Lead Officer
Success Criterion 1: IFCA's are recognised and heard, balancing the economic needs of the fishery whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
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 from which permit schemes will be operated to be reviewed by 31 March 2019.					AG
SC1B: The IFCA will review its communication strategy and implementation plan by 31 March each year.	Review communications strategy by 31 March 2019..					AG
SC1C: The IFCA will review website by the last working day of each month.	Content will be developed and the website monitored.					AG
SC1D: The IFCA will ensure website meets the objectives of its communication strategy, by 31 March.	New website will be assessed against the Communications strategy by 31 March 2019.					AG
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. Reviews of MOU are national tasked led for IFCA by the AIFCA working with appointed reps of NE, EA, Cefas and MMO. National MOU are outside scope of each IFCA.					SA
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 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.					SA
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.	Review Enforcement strategy by 1 April 2019. Risk registers reviewed by the Authority in December and by external auditors around May June. Risk based enforcement will continue.					JM
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 2017-8 to be published in Autumn 2018 and sent to the Minister. Joint working to achieve consistent quality, application and enforcement of management measures will be reported.					SA/JM
SC2C: Record enforcement activity in a standard format, provide to NIMEG and publish on its	Enforcement activity will be reported to the Authority in quarterly reports, made public via the website. Data will continue to be securely stored on the Authority's					JM

website.	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 and will be consistently applied; (see Enforcement strategy). Annual review is a national task outside remit of each IFCA. No responsible body is identified					JM
SC2E: The Code of Conduct for IFCOs is reflected in work objectives and annual appraisals for <u>all</u> Warranted Officers.	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.					JM
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.) <u>All</u> undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD).	The Authority will contribute to development of accreditation scheme. 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: <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 					JM

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 subject to resources. The NWIFCA MPA Monitoring and Control Plan will be implemented. Management of MPA will be reviewed in collaboration with other regulators. A Byelaw for management of Tranche 2 West of Walney MCZ will be progressed with MMO.. Management of Tranche 3 MCZ may be developed if required. NWIFCA will assist planning of management measures if needed. Decisions will be based on best available evidence.					MK

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.					SA, JM, MK
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.					MK
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.					JM / MK
SC3E: New IFCA management measures selected for development and implementation are delivered within agreed timescales	The byelaw review follows agreed priorities (Table 3). Priorities may change according to risk. Byelaw development will follow Defra guidance.					SA / MK / JM
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.					MK
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 2017-18. Science team will plan development of species management plans within available resources					MK
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 financial year. A copy will be sent to the Secretary of State.	Annual plan is scheduled for publication by end March 2018 year and sent to SoS. Plans include objectives and priorities under criteria set by Defra and local priorities.					SA
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.					SA

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 2018-19 to be issued. Appraisals for 2017 -18 will be completed 31 May 2018.					SA, MK, JM
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.					SA
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.					MK
Success Criterion 5: IFCAs 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 2018-19 (Table 5) shows current projects to be continued, future proposals subject to resources and an outline survey programme for 2018. Survey plans are indicative only. Collaboration with Universities other agencies NGO and industry will be developed in 2018.					MK
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 at quarterly meetings showing how evidence is used to support decision making. A summary of work will be included in the NWIFCA Annual Report.					MK
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.					MK

Table 5 Science plan 2018-9

A. Research Programme 2018-19		NWIFCA Role
1a	Development of capacity for subtidal survey on new NWIFCA vessel – using side-scan sonar, underwater camera and video, grab sampling, trawls and scientific dredges.	Regulator
1b	Develop capacity for joint / partnership work with other agencies for subtidal survey, to provide data for monitoring of impacts of fishing activities in MPAs.	Regulator / Partner
2	If funding bid successful, joint project with Cefas bass tagging and distribution study working with other IFCA's, commercial and recreational fishers.	Regulator / Partner
3	St Bees head MCZ and management of netting in relation to breeding bird entanglement. Monitoring of compliance and appropriate seasonality of Vol Code of Conduct – potential byelaw needed.	Regulator
4	Further development and implementation of NWIFCA Recreational Angling Strategy to improve understanding of importance of RA, fill data gaps, develop work with stakeholders.	Regulator / Lead
5	Continue to provide data, advice and support to PhD started in Jan 2017 at Bangor University supported by the seed mussel industry: developing a Morecambe Bay bird model.	Regulator / Partner
6	Continue to develop programme for small fish surveys – to report to Authority on capacity for 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
7	Develop project with Liverpool University investigating plastics in bivalves within NWIFCA shellfish beds.	Partner
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
9	Develop Masters project with Lancaster University for 2019 student.	Partner

B. Proposed survey programme 2018-19 subject to changing priorities			
Project Title	Location	Method	Timing
Silloth sub-tidal Mussels	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, industry AGDS	Apr-Aug
Seed Mussels	Morecambe Bay - Heysham Flat	Dutch Wand	Apr - Aug
Morecambe Bay Mussels	Morecambe Bay - Foulney	Dutch Wand	Jul, Nov, Feb

Morecambe Bay Mussels	Morecambe Bay North	Dutch Wand	Sep, Jan
Fleetwood Mussels	Fleetwood and Wyre End	Dutch Wand	May, Aug
Cumbria Mussels	Solway Firth	Dutch Wand	Jun-Sep
Mersey Mussels	Mersey Estuary	Dutch Wand	May
Dee Mussels	Dee Estuary	Dutch Wand	Aug / Sept
Solway Cockle survey	Solway Firth	Grab / quadrat survey	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	North West Marine Plan – contribute to development with MMO	Consultee
4	Coastal fora: NW Coastal Forum, Morecambe Bay Partnership, Solway Firth Partnership, Dee Estuary Conservation Group, Tidal Dee Catchment Partnership, Mersey Estuary Conservation Group. Attend meetings, provide advice and data.	Participant / Partner
5	Advice to Dee Estuary Liaison Group and management of Dee cockle fishery	Partner
6	Convene and run multi-agency planning committees as required to develop and agree collaborative management of shell fisheries	Regulator
7	Attend meetings and advise Shellfish Liaison Groups to promote compliance with shellfish waters classifications.	Regulator
8	Facilitate Bivalve Mollusc Working Group to consult on cockle and mussel management plans in the District	Regulator
9	MPA management and monitoring – carrying out HRA, and MCZ assessments	Regulator
10	Advise IFCA Technical Advisory Group (TAG) on national projects	Partner
11	Preesall Gas Storage: liaison and issuing necessary authorisations	Consultee
12	MMO Marine Licence consultations average approximately 50 per year	Consultee