

**NWIFCA Technical, Science and Byelaw
Sub-Committee**

6th November 2015: 10:00 a.m.

**AGENDA
ITEM NO.**

5

BIVALVE MOLLUSC WORKING GROUP (BMWG)

Recommendations:

- 1. Members approve the work of Officers in the continuation of the BMWG as a forum for multi-sectoral discussion to inform and assist TSB in decision-making.**
- 2. Members approve the on-going drafting of a Management Plan for Morecambe Bay mussel management to be brought to TSB and the Authority for full approval.**
- 3. Members approve the work of Officers to extend the remit of the BMWG to incorporate multi-sectoral discussion over cockle management issues should commercial stocks be recorded in the District in surveys in the spring.**

In order to ensure multi-sectoral consultation in decisions over the management of mussels in Morecambe Bay, Officers held a further meeting of the Bivalve Mollusc Working Group on 4th September.

Following feedback from representatives on this group, the meeting was run in a more formalised manner with an agenda and clear agreement over actions to be taken. A written note of the meeting was produced and circulated around the group for agreement. The summary note of the meeting is attached as Annex A.

All representatives on this group expressed a view that this was an improved method of facilitating the meetings, and therefore this will be the approach taken in the future. It was also agreed that in order to improve the confidence of any evidence or data provided by members of the group, it should have date and time stamp, plus a GPS co-ordinate / tracking. Evidence can not only be used not only by BMWG, but also in Habitats Regulations Assessments carried out on the fisheries. Recording and saving data and information in this way may also prove useful when the NWIFCA is consulted on over other activities within the District, for example, in MMO Marine Licence consultations for developments that may affect / impact on shellfish beds.

There is a keenness and sense of urgency over furthering the Management Plan for Morecambe Bay mussels, and Officers will endeavour to make some progress and circulate an updated version prior to the next meeting to be held on 19th November.

**Mandy Knott
Senior Scientist
24th October 2015**