

# NWIFCA Annual Meeting

## 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019: 11.00 a.m.

**AGENDA  
ITEM NO.  
11**

### HEAD OF ENFORCEMENT QUARTERLY REPORT – 1<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY- 30<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2019

**Recommendations:**

- That the report is received

**Introduction**

**Patch Summaries** for the quarter are given in the table below:

Patch	Summary Points
<p>Haverigg Point – Burgh Marsh Point – IFCOs Thinnesen and Sparks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Trawling:</u></b> Throughout the quarter, local Whitehaven trawlers have had very few days at sea. When they did get to sea, nearly all at some point, had targeted nephrops (prawns). Reports of mixed landings, from 12 stone of prawns, and up to 12 boxes of mostly dogfish or thornback rays, reported, for periods 12–24 hours at sea. Some undersize was caught, retained and sold for bait, although most fishermen when fishing for pot bait use larger cod ends, so the majority of juveniles escape. <p>Visiting Irish and Northern Irish vessels have had better landings of nephrops, with reports of between 5-8 boxes of whole prawns, where prices vary from £4.50 – 5.50 per kilo and 4-6 boxes of tailed prawns where prices are around the £5.00 per kilo.</p> <p>At the end of March most of the Maryport vessels who took part in the Isle of Man scallop fishery this year, had changed over to either queen scallop fishing with nets or trawling for nephrops.</p> </li> <li>• <b><u>Shrimp vessels - Silloth:</u></b> Throughout the quarter, shrimp trawlers had some fine trawling days at sea during periods of good weather. Landings have been poor, with reports of 12-40 kilos for a full day’s fishing which is poor for this time of year. Prices are low due to large amounts being caught on the continent.</li> <li>• <b><u>Potting:</u></b> Lobster and brown crab catches were poor as is normal for this time of year. Inspections seen from vessels inspected revealed anything from 2-5 lobsters to 30 kilos landed for a couple of days soaked. Brown crab was poor in the first two months, but as April drew to a close, fishing started to increase with inspections seen from 5-10 single crabs to 15 -40 kilos, this is in the area from Whitehaven to Maryport. <p>Whelk potters report steady fishing of 30 – 100 bags for 2 - 3 days and some better landings. Prices are up as high as £800 per tonne.</p> </li> <li>• <b><u>Angling:</u></b> Mixed reports received. Some codlings at night to the south of St Bees, numbers suggest plenty of feed at night close inshore along cliffs and beaches.</li> </ul>

	<p>Anglers inspected on piers have seen small whiting, dab, plaice and plenty of dogfish about still, some suggesting every cast you get a “dog”. Thornback rays have been caught on beaches around Nethertown and Caulderton.</p> <p>The odd bass has been caught and released. One angler told me it was the best thing EU have done, banning the landing of every bass caught and increasing the minimum landing sizes for bass.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Bait digging:</u></b> Diggers and crabbers have been seen but not in the large numbers of previous years, some lugers had between 50–150 worms, with reports from the commercial side being anything from 200–500 lugworms.</li> <li>• <b><u>Beach netters:</u></b> Only a handful of beach netters have been seen and inspected over the quarter, with plenty of thornback rays being caught between Seascale and St Bees south beach. Mullet have been getting caught along with some codlings, and pelagic species being caught on the night tides.</li> <li>• <b><u>Other duties:</u></b> Shore officers have been assisting with duties on the North Western Protector on a number of occasions, with the boarding of fishing vessels and general crewing. Also at Flookburgh, assisting other officers to monitor the cockle fishery.</li> </ul>
<p>Haverigg Point – Arnside – IFCO Dixon</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Cockling:</u></b> During February as many as 26 gatherers were observed, but numbers soon dropped to between 5 and 15 for the rest of the reporting period. Flookburgh was hardly fished at all, with most gatherers preferring Newbiggin or Pilling.</li> <li>• <b><u>Mussels:</u></b> Up to 11 gatherers worked on Foulney on suitable spring tides on most occasions during the period, preferring to go musseling instead of cockling wherever possible.</li> <li>• <b><u>Shrimping:</u></b> A poor start to the season again, catches low and shrimp’s small, occasional reports of moderate catches.</li> <li>• <b><u>Potting:</u></b> 1 new vessel to Barrow began to pot for crab and lobster occasionally, working inside the district in the Barrow area, 2 other vessels continue to work outside the district from Barrow. 1 larger vessel from the Whitehaven area observed occasionally potting west of Walney Island.</li> <li>• <b><u>Netting:</u></b> 2 vessels from Barrow worked very occasionally in the area west of Walney northwards, 1 reasonably good haul of Thornback was reported, wings sold at Fleetwood and backs sold to a local whelk pot vessel operator. No beach nets observed during the reporting period.</li> <li>• <b><u>Angling:</u></b> Usual locations remaining popular with anglers, activity increased during April after catches of Bass were reported.</li> <li>• <b><u>Peeler crab tiling:</u></b> Activity increased during the end of the reporting period, with the main commercial activity centred on the area between Roa Island and Foulney, also crab tiling checked in the Walney Channel opposite the shipyard and north towards North</li> </ul>

<p>Arnside – Lytham IFCOs Waltho and Burdekin</p>	<p>scale village.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cockles:</b> During March and April, activity tended to be around 15-20 gatherers present per day at Pilling Sands cockle fishery, with gatherers taking 150-200kg of cockle each. Regular minimum landing size (MLS) inspections showed no issues with size. Meat yield was reportedly low throughout the season. Seasonal cockle bed closure at the end of April with cockle closure notices posted throughout the district.</li> <li>• <b>Netting:</b> One unmarked net was removed from Morecambe in April.</li> <li>• <b>Angling:</b> Intelligence reports had recently increased for the Heysham Bass Nursery Area suggesting regular activity of individuals fishing within this no-fishing zone. Regular patrols focusing on this area resulted in five individuals being caught either fishing or with fishing gear within the Byelaw 5 Bass Nursery Area by Heysham Power Station in May.</li> </ul> <p>Anglers fishing around Silverdale-Arnside have reported regularly catching good size flounder.</p> <p>Many anglers report catching good sized smooth hounds around Blackpool up to Morecambe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Bait Digging:</b> Fleetwood to Lytham has a steady presence of bait diggers. Most are recreationally collecting bait for personal angling trips, whereas there are apparently 6 or 7 people who are professional diggers. This area now seems to have a higher percentage of brown blow lug worms compared to a few years ago where it used to be made up of a higher percentage of black lug worms. Lytham Pier has apparently started improving for worm numbers recently.</li> <li>• <b>Sampling:</b> Regular fortnightly cockle samples have been taken for Wyre Council and monthly mussel samples for West Lancs Borough Council.</li> </ul>
<p>Dee- Southport – IFCO Brownrigg, Taylor and Capper</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing investigation regarding three individuals illegally gathering cockles on north Wirral coastline, in particular, this was the first time body camera footage was used. This was a joint enforcement patrol with MPHA.</li> <li>• Routine shore patrols continue daily throughout the area carrying out enforcement and conservation work as well as offering advice and guidance to stakeholders, anglers and members of the general public.</li> <li>• Regular ATV patrols have been carried out along the north Wirral and Southport to Formby coastlines – at present four set nets are active on the East Hoyle Bank and four on Taylors Bank all continue to be inspected and monitored. One long liner observed and inspected.</li> <li>• <b>Shore angling:</b> Officers have observed Plaice, Dab, Flounder, Thornback Ray, Cod and juvenile Bass in the area.</li> <li>• <b>Otter and Razor Clam:</b> have been fished – at present no commercial volume of any shell fish has been seen.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Wirral North Cockle bed:</u></b> remains to be monitored both day and night routinely by NWIFCA and MPHA.</li> <li>• <b><u>Three shrimping tractors:</u></b> have been observed off Southport, however, due to poor weather they have not been active.</li> <li>• <b><u>Bay Protector:</u></b> Bay Protector has been active in the areas of the river Mersey, Liverpool Bay up to the river Ribble (108 nm in total) – to date, 8 boardings and three closings on recreational and charter angling boats have been undertaken – no issues.</li> <li>• Five recreational pots remain active off Taylor’s Bank, Formby Point. Officers believe there are another 11 commercial pots within the area – investigation on going.</li> <li>• Plans are in place to fit Bay Protector with IVMS.</li> <li>• <b><u>Miscellaneous:</u></b> Officers assisted in the survey of the mussel beds on the Dee Estuary, also with the survey on Wirral North cockle (Leasowe) – see MK report.</li> <li>• Officer’s still collect the quarterly MSH sample from Penfold North Cockle bed.</li> <li>• IFCO Brownrigg assisted the HoE with a PACE interview in regard to FV KINGFISHER.</li> <li>• Both Officer’s attended PACE interview and body camera training at Carnforth.</li> <li>• Both officer’s did an evening presentation on NWIFCA for Sefton Sea Anglers Club in Dunny’s Bar, Liverpool.</li> </ul>
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### **General Update**

- Head of Enforcement was appointed Chair of the National Inshore Maritime Enforcement Group at the meeting held in March. NIMEG is a meeting of partner agencies including all IFCA’s, MMO, EA and Welsh Government in which there is the goal of creating standardised enforcement for inshore stakeholders. Meetings are held three times a year in London.
- The review of netting byelaws in the North West is continuing. HoE is progressing with developing a concept for a netting byelaw to cover the entire district.

### **Training**

In early March officers completed 3 days of training in interviewing and investigation techniques. The training was led by IFCA Training Lead Ian Jones. The Authority was the instigating IFCA in the requirement for advanced training in this field. The course was bespoke for NWIFCA officers and featured a variety of theory and practical sessions, thus allowing officers to practice real scenarios relevant to the enforcement required during management of North West fisheries.

Feedback from the course was excellent and all officers received the accredited certificates.

## **Health & Safety**

At the last Authority meeting it was queried if IFCO's should have some form of tracking device. Senior management have investigated this and concluded that this is not required due to already stringent safe working practices. This includes comprehensive risk assessments for all activities and the locations of the activities both at sea and on shore. Personal protective equipment such as life jackets and personal locator beacons are worn for all work in the marine environment. Logs are kept for the servicing and maintenance of these by the operations manager. The Authority has a strict lone working policy where initially lone working is limited but when it does take place there is a buddy system in operation, a log is kept by HoE to monitor the amount of lone working taking place. Other on shore risks have been reduced by recent procurement of body armour, body worn video cameras and superior helmets for ATV and boat working.

There has been one near miss with a rib flooding with rain water after the automatic bilge failed and one minor accident with a vehicle resulting in a double puncture.

## **IVMS installation**

NWIFCA vessels are scheduled to have IVMS units fitted in the coming weeks. North Western Protector, Bay Protector, Protector Gamma and Protector Bravo will all have the units fitted. This will allow better coordination nationally and provide effective data for investigative purposes.

## **Tasking and coordination meetings**

In the interests of providing better joint working and national coordination in the event of EU exit the Head of Enforcement now takes part in daily tasking conference calls where all IFCA's and the MMO provide updates on vessel/ asset whereabouts. NWIFCA have policies in place to assist with joint working and patrols are planned with the MMO and the EA.

## **North Western Protector**

I am pleased to report that the patrol boat has performed well throughout the quarter.

As expected for this time of year the weather, although slowly did start to improve resulting in more patrol days at sea being gained.

Fishing activity in the district amongst the local fleet apart from the Maryport vessels has been low key this quarter, with visitor numbers improving with some very good catches of nephrops (prawns) and thornback rays being landed into Whitehaven.

Whelk vessels which fish outside the district continue to make regular landings into Whitehaven.

North Western Protector has patrolled the sea area around St Bees head on a regular basis usually before or after a patrol south of Whitehaven. I am pleased to report that full compliance with the voluntary code of conduct has so far been maintained.

Patrol boat crew continue to work with the science team with regards to drying the vessel out and surveying areas that have been inaccessible in the past. I am pleased to report that the vessel is now ready to carry out a trial run as soon as possible.

Priorities/patrols/ boarding's/and inspections statistics

- Patrol district for large vessel infringement of byelaws
- Record data of nets and pots in district
- Inspect lobster/brown crab pots and carry out checks on potting vessels
- Inspect gill nets for compliance with EU legislation

- Input enforcement information and vessel activities into MCSS (Monitor and control surveillance system)
- Record data of nets
- Inspect nets for compliance with Byelaw 10 (3)
- Inspect vessels for compliance with EU fishing gear legislation
- Record all vessel sightings data
- Maintain service and repair patrol boats
- Inspect and carry out checks with hobby fishermen/ vessels byelaw 26
- Patrol throughout district for detection of fishery limit line offences

Fishing activities have been monitored throughout the district in both North Western Protector and Protector Charlie.

The weather conditions have again at times this quarter been unsettled.

Patrols, boarding's and inspections of vessels at sea along with static gear inspections using both North Western Protector and Protector Charlie can be found in the annexes.

Compliance with byelaws and other EU legislation has on the whole been good with no offences to byelaws being detected.

### **Specific Fishery Report**

Three specific fisheries were open during the quarter, included in the table below are the statistics relating to the management and enforcement of the fisheries;

- Newbiggin
- Flookburgh/Leven Cockle fishery
- Pilling Cockle Fishery

During this quarter Byelaw 3 permit holders remained fishing across the three open cockle fisheries as well as fishing size mussel in North Morecambe Bay. Effort at the cockle beds was driven by commercial demand and market price. This can be seen in the figures below with the switching of effort between the cockle beds, most preferring to fish Newbiggin or Pilling cockle beds. There were no issues with undersize at any of the cockle fisheries.

IFCO's continued to operate on an intelligence led basis following reports of unpermitted gathering at several cockle beds in the North West, working in collaboration with other agencies such as the Lancashire Constabulary (rural crime), Environmental Health Departments, Mersey Port Health Authority, North Wales Police, Natural Resource Wales and antisocial behaviour officers at Lancaster City Council. Developing excellent working relationships with other agencies has greatly assisted in disrupting illegal cockle gathering through the winter.

Through planned joint working three persons were found on a closed fishery on the Wirral in April, the decision to prosecute was taken and a case file submitted. Summons were served on the defendants to appear at Liverpool Magistrates Court on 20<sup>th</sup> June.

	Cockles			Mussels	
Activity	Flookburgh/Leven	Newbiggin	Pilling	North Morecambe Bay Incl Foulney Mussel Beds	Ribble Training Walls Mussel Bed
<b>Overall Attendance (from returns)</b>	Feb: 124 Mar: 58 Apr: 33	Feb: 294 Mar: 285 Apr: 102	Feb: 9 Mar: 237 Apr: 83	Feb: 192 Mar: 44 Apr: 8	Feb: 1 Mar: 0 Apr: 0
<b>Av per day</b>	Feb: 4 Mar: 2 Apr: 1	Feb: 11 Mar: 9 Apr: 3	Feb: Too low Mar: 8 Apr: 3	Feb: Mar: Apr: Too low	N/A
<b>No. inspected fishing</b>	Feb: 0 Mar: 0 Apr: 0	Feb: 25 Mar: Apr: 14	Feb: 2 Mar: 83 Apr: 23	Feb: 4 Mar: 0 Apr: 0	Feb: 0 Mar: 0 Apr: 0
<b>No. MLS inspections</b>	Feb: 0 Mar: 0 Apr: 0	Feb: 23 Mar: 0 Apr: 0	Feb: 0 Mar: 88 Apr: 47	Feb: 4 Mar: 0 Apr: 0	Feb: 0 Mar: 0 Apr: 0
<b>Days covered by IFCO's</b>	Feb: 0 Mar: 0 Apr: 0	Feb: 4 Mar: 0 Apr: 2	Feb: 1 Mar: 9 Apr: 5	Feb: 1 Mar: 0 Apr: 0	Feb: 0 Mar: 0 Apr: 0
<b>Reported landings</b>	Feb: 16,164 kg Mar: 3,694 kg Apr: 2,017 kg	Feb: 25,333 kg Mar: 19,348 kg Apr: 5,431 kg	Feb: 1,043 kg Mar: 42,709 kg Apr: 11,349 kg	Feb: 169,905 kg Mar: 30,000 kg Apr: 5,500 kg	Feb: 40 kg Mar: 0 Apr:
<b>Man hours</b>	Feb: 538 Mar: 226 Apr: 129.5	Feb: 1248 Mar: 1,316.5 Apr: 484	Feb: 18 Mar: 1,118.5 Apr: 436	Feb: 695 Mar: 167 Apr: 19	Feb: 3 Mar: 0 Apr: 0

## Sanctions, Infringements and Court Activity

There was no court activity during the quarter.

A total of 8 sanctions were applied during the quarter. The table below summarises these;

<b>Sanctions</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Verbal</b>	None
<b>Advisory Letters</b>	None
<b>Official warning letters</b>	None
<b>Home office Cautions</b>	None
<b>FAPs</b>	5-being processed for breaches of the Heysham Bass Nursery Area.
<b>Permit suspension</b>	None
<b>Prosecutions pending</b>	3- poaching of Cockles, Leasowe Court date 20 <sup>th</sup> June 1- Breach of dredge byelaw
<b>Prosecutions</b>	2- unpermitted gathering

## Shore Based Activity Report

<b>Number of:</b>	<b>Haverigg Point – Burgh Marsh Point</b>	<b>Haverigg Point – Arnside –</b>	<b>Arnside – Knott End –</b>	<b>River Wyre – River Alt –</b>	<b>Mersey, and Dee</b>	<b>Wirral</b>
Shore patrols*	52	51		52		59
ATV patrols	0	12		13		7
ATV patrol hrs	0	19.13		14.5		15.5
ATV kms covered	0	105.50		183		213
Inspections under taken	61	234		272		62

\*undertaken either by vehicle or on foot without using ATV

## Maritime Activity Report

A summary table of Maritime patrols is provided below in Annex A.

A full activity report is provided in Annex B.



**Annex A**

<b>Vessel</b>	<b>No of patrols</b>	<b>Patrol time (hrs)</b>	<b>Distance patrolled (nm)</b>	<b>Boarding's</b>	<b>Closings</b>	<b>Sightings</b>	<b>Inspections</b>
North Western Protector	16	132.16	1134	9	14	141	7
Protector Charlie	3			Included in the NWP's statistics above			
Protector Gamma	1	2	10	0	0	0	0
Bay Protector	2	7	108	8	3	12	5
<b>Totals for the quarter</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>141.16</b>	<b>1252</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>12</b>

**Annex B**

<b>Patrol Vessel</b>	<b>Patrol Date</b>	<b>Patrol Time (hrs)</b>	<b>Distance (nm)</b>	<b>Area Covered</b>	<b>Risk/ Purpose</b>	<b>Sectors Covered</b>	<b>No. Boarding</b>	<b>No. Closings</b>	<b>No. Sightings</b>	<b>No. Inspections</b>
North Western Protector	14.02.19	12.50	105	Silloth Channel	Survey & ground discrimination	- Solway Firth EMS	0	0	0	0
North Western Protector	24.02.19	1.33	18	Maryport, Whitehaven		- Solway Firth EMS	0	0	5	0
North Western Protector	25.02.19	8.50	45	Workington, prawn pitch	Potting, netting & trawling activity Bass compliance		2	0	7	2
North Western Protector	26.02.19	12.58	154	W of Sellafield, Liverpool Bay	Potting, netting & trawling activity	- Solway Firth EMS - Cumbria Coast MCZ	1	0	15	1
North Western Protector	27.02.19	12.00	81	Workington, Silloth	Survey & ground discrimination	- Solway Firth EMS	0	0	2	0
North Western Protector	28.02.19	13.33	80	Silloth Channel	Survey & ground discrimination	- Solway Firth EMS	0	0	0	0
North Western Protector	21.03.19	4.08	35	Whitehaven north St Bees	Potting, netting & trawling activity	- Cumbria Coast MCZ	0	0	0	0
North Western Protector	26.03.19	3.67	50	Patrol north, Workington	Potting, netting & trawling activity Bass compliance		0	0	3	0
North Western Protector	27.03.19	9.00	60	W of Ravenglass prawn pitch,	Potting, netting & trawling activity		0	0	5	0

				Workington, Harrington						
North Western Protector	09.04.19	8.75	80	Prawn pitch, Ravenglass Sellafield	Potting, netting & trawling	- Drigg SAC	0	0	20	0
North Western Protector	10.04.19	5.50	80	Prawn pitch	Trawling activity		1	0	35	1
North Western Protector	11.04.19	12.17	110	Prawn pitch, Workington	Trawling, potting & netting		1	0	21	0
North Western Protector	17.04.19	6.92	40	SW St Bees Head	Potting, netting & trawling	- Cumbria Coast MCZ	4	0	9	3
North Western Protector	18.04.19	4.00	51	Prawn pitch, Sellafield	Trawling & potting activity	- Drigg SAC	0	0	4	0
North Western Protector	29.04.19	8.00	95	Prawn pitch, Haverigg Point	Trawling, potting, & netting	- Drigg SAC	0	9	9	0
North Western Protector	30.04.19	9.83	50	Whitehaven Harrington, Silecroft	Trawling, potty & netting	- Cumbria Coast MCZ	0	5	6	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>132.16</b>	<b>1134</b>				<b>9</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>7</b>

Patrol Vessel	Patrol Date	Patrol Time (hrs)	Distance (nm)	Area Covered	Risk/ Purpose	Sectors Covered	No. Boarding	No. Closings	No. Sightings	No. Inspections
Protector Charlie	25.02.19			Workington, prawn pitch	Potting, netting, trawling activity & bass compliance - Included in North Western Protector's statistics above					
Protector Charlie	26.02.19			W of Sellafield, Liverpool Bay	Potting, netting & trawling activity - Included in North Western Protector's statistics above					
Protector Charlie	17.04.19			SW St Bees Head	Potting, netting & trawling - Included in North Western Protector's statistics above					
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>									
Patrol Vessel	Patrol Date	Patrol Time (hrs)	Distance (nm)	Area Covered	Risk/ Purpose	Sectors Covered	No. boarding	No. Closings	No. Sightings	No. inspections
Protector Gamma	18.04.19	2	10	Walney Channel	Routine checking outboard rams		0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>				<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Patrol Vessel	Patrol Date	Patrol Time (hrs)	Distance (nm)	Area Covered	Risk/ Purpose	Sectors Covered	No. boarding	No. Closings	No. Sightings	No. inspections
Bay Protector	17.04.19	5	76	Liverpool Bay, River Mersey	Recreation & Charter angling	- Liverpool Bay SPA - River Mersey	0	0	0	0
Bay Protector	20.04.19	2	32	Liverpool Bay	Recreation & Charter angling	- Liverpool Bay SPA	8	3	12	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>108</b>				<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>