

Ninth annual plan

1 April 2019 –
31 March 2020



Contents

	Page
Background, Resources, Monitoring, Training	2
Working in Partnership	3
Membership and Governance	4
Science and Research	4
Fisheries in the District,: Table 1	5
Budget Table 2	5
Main priorities 2019-20: Table 3	7
Meeting Defra criteria: Table 4	8
Strategic Science research plan, Table 5	12

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 listed in Table 1.
4. **Audience:** The main audience is Secretary of State Defra to satisfy MCAA s177 which requires each IFCA to publish 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. Changes to the plan may be proposed by members at quarterly meetings and adopted by resolution. Officers will report progress at each meeting.

Resources (to be completed when budget agreed)

8. **Finance:** The core budget for 2019-20 will be £1,390,361 This includes a 2% increase in the Levies as agreed at the December 2018 meeting. Planned expenditure is broken down in to summary budget heads in table 2.
9. **Personnel:** NWIFCA will maintain 21 full time equivalent posts with line management structure as shown in figure 1.

Monitoring

10. **Performance monitoring:** Table 3 shows summary aims for the Authority in 2019-20. Members are invited to comment on these to ensure they meet agreed priorities.
11. 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.
12. **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 2019 audit.
13. **Health and safety:** The Authority will continue to retain an external qualified H&S consultant to keep 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 will continue to be reviewed for each quarterly meeting.

Training

14. The Authority will continue to operate an officer training programme for all new and experience officers including:
 - I. induction training on appointment.
 - II. IFCO training for enforcement officers with advanced training as required
 - III. safety and use of equipment training
15. An officer accreditation training scheme is being developed to be rolled out to all IFCOs when available. Two NWIFCOs are taking a pilot accreditation course to be

completed in 2019. The aim of accreditation is to provide national common training and skills for enforcement officers in a range of regulatory agencies. A national IFCO training resource was set up in January 2019 to create standard professional training so that in future all FCOs will be trained and accredited to comparable levels.

16. NWIFCA training includes:

- I. Mandatory training to safely and competently deliver each role including health and safety, use of equipment, first aid, sea survival, .
- II. Training for qualifications in specified roles such as warranted IFCO.
- III. Tailored personal development training to meet organisation and personal objectives for each officer;
- IV. 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.
- V. External training available to bridge identified capacity gaps;
- VI. Monitoring and evaluation of training to achieve added value and effectiveness.
- VII. Monitoring, job reviews and job plans for all officers.

Working in Partnership:

17. 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 (2017), EA (2011), NE (2011) and Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas (2011)). A local Gangmaster Licensing and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) MOU was agreed in 2011. NWIFCA has an informal data and information sharing agreement with Lancashire Police. MOU are on the website in Policies and Reports and available from the Clerk.
18. Officers of partner bodies such as Cumbria Wildlife Trust, RSPB and North West Coastal Forum will continue to be MMO appointees to the Authority. When required NWIFCA will continue regular liaison to promote good environmental management with GLAA; Councils, Environmental Health Services (EHS), Food Standards Agency (FSA), Cefas, Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), Natural Resources Wales (NRW), Marine Scotland and other organisations as the need arises.
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. Operational Enforcement will continue to be co-ordinated with MMO and EA by sharing weekly tasking priorities.

Membership and governance

21. The Authority has 30 members as defined in SI2200, 2010. Names and brief biographical information are on the website. In December 2018 there is 1 vacancy 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 and resources, the Authority plans 1-2 awareness days for new members in 2019.
23. Meeting dates of the Authority and its Technical, Science and Byelaw (TSB) Committee in 2019 were agreed at the September 2018 meeting and are on the website in the calendar. 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 training towards accreditation is expected to make significant progress in 2019-20 with the appointment and establishment of a national IFCA training coordinator in November 2018. The aim of this post is to achieve comprehensive and standardised training across IFCA and partner regulators.
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 website.

Science and Research

29. The plan of proposed strategic research in 2019-20 is in Table 5. The plan focuses on:
 - I. survey and impact assessment of potential new fisheries;
 - II. development of fisheries management,
 - III. the ongoing byelaw review and development of new byelaws,
 - IV. supporting Government's marine protected area priorities including MCZ designation and management,
 - V. development consultation responses,
 - VI. new and ongoing research projects.

Table 1 Fisheries in the District

Species	Gear	Area	Season
Cockle	Hand gathering, occasional dredge if Authority permits	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 if Authority permits	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 inside and outside the District. Landed in Whitehaven	Spring to Autumn
Queen Scallops	Dredge	Outside District - north, outer Solway, Some landed in Whitehaven.	
Whelk	Pots	Outer Solway, Liverpool Bay & 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

NWIFCA BUDGET 2019-20 2% LEVY INCREASE		
EXPENDITURE	2019-20	2018-19
Employees	£912,713	£888,227
Premises	£55,800	£56,800
Transport	£217,597	£205,280
Replace Patrol Vessel	£121,151	£121,151
Supplies & Services	£52,600	£61,400
Corporate	£30,500	£30,800
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£1,390,361	£1,363,658
INCOME		
7151 Levy 2% Increase	£1,310,861	£1,285,158
7251 Shellfish Sampling	£8,000	£7,000
7257 Permit Fees	£64,000	£64,000
7351 Interest	£7,500	£7,500
TOTAL INCOME	£1,390,361	£1,363,658
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	NIL	NIL

Fig 1. NWIFCA Officers and line management as at January 2019.

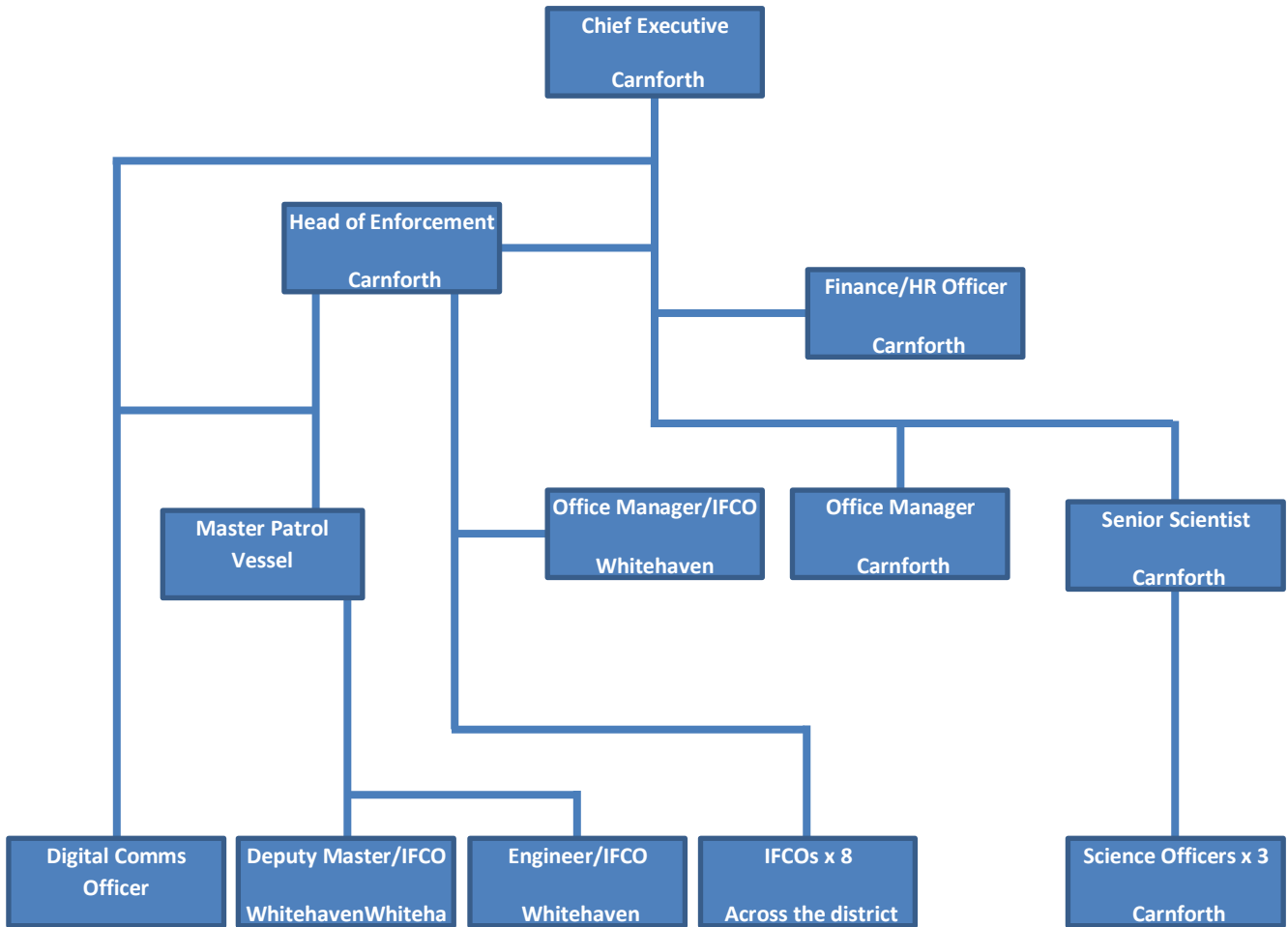


	Table 3. Summary of this Authorities main priorities and aims for 2019 –20.	Targets
1.	To operate the Authority to highest standards of probity and in compliance with the Authority’s constitution, standing orders, public sector regulations and policies on health and safety, financial auditing, risk assessment, transparency, freedom of information, data protection, operation of meetings.	Ongoing
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 contribute to delivery of Defra requirements for an orderly Brexit and any structural changes in agencies responsible for marine and fisheries management.	As required.
4.	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
5	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
6	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
7	To continue byelaw development in priority order as follows. Nb: priorities may change according to risk. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete review of Cockle and mussel permit scheme byelaw 3. 2. Complete District wide potting byelaw. 3. Review of netting byelaws 4. Review vessel size limit byelaws 	2019 2019 2019 2020
8	To develop use of new main patrol vessel for advanced research and survey.	Ongoing
9	To develop further communications and stakeholder engagement	Ongoing
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 main tasks for 2019-20 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. 2019-20 Meeting Defra success criteria.

Defra Success Criteria and indicators (revised 2015)	Tasks	Monitoring				Lead Officer
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
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 tasks led 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 contribute to relevant activity as required and within available resources. Bodies active in 2018: IFCA Chief Officers Group (COG), Association of IFCA, National Intelligence & Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG), IFCA Technical Advisory Group (TAG), Defra 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		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Lead
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.	Annual report 2017-8 to be published 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	Enforcement activity reported in quarterly reports and on website. Data to be stored on NWIFCA intelligence management system and reported to NIMEG.					JM

publish on its website.						
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.	Code adopted by NWIFCA in 2012 and applied consistently; (see Enforcement strategy). Annual review is a national task undertaken by NIMEG.					JM
SC2E: The Code of Conduct for IFCOs is reflected in work objectives and annual appraisals for <u>all</u> Warranted Officers.	New IFCOs trained to comply with code. Performance assessed and monitored by the Head of Enforcement and discussed in annual appraisals. Training to be kept up to date.					JM
SC2F: Warranted Officers attain accreditation. All undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD).	The Authority will contribute to development of accreditation scheme. Mandatory training of all IFCOs to be maintained to nationally agreed standards. All IFCOs to receive CPD to meet needs. Training register to be maintained. Training in-house, jointly with partner agencies or purchased from external providers to be reviewed. Training objectives to be identified in job reviews.					JM
Success Criterion 3: IFCA use evidence based and appropriate measures to manage the sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources and deliver marine environmental protection.		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Lead
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 to be compiled in Impact Assessments for new measures posted on website. Stakeholders to be consulted before introduction. Impacts of new measures to be assessed from survey and enforcement data and reported at 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	The byelaw review follows agreed priorities (Table 3). Priorities may change					SA / MK

selected for development and implementation are delivered within agreed timescales	according to risk. Byelaw development will follow Defra guidance.					/ 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.	2017-8 Annual report to be published by 30 November 2018. 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 2019-20 to be issued by 31 March 2019. Job Reviews for 2018 -19 to be completed 31 May 2019.					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 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: IFCA's make the best use of evidence to deliver their objectives						

<p>SC5A: The IFCA will show progress towards identifying evidence needs by publishing a research plan each year.</p>	<p>Research plan 2018-19 (Table 5) shows current projects, future proposals subject to resources and outline survey programme to be adjusted as required. Collaboration with Universities other agencies NGO and industry to be developed.</p>					MK
<p>SC5B: The IFCA will publish a research report annually that demonstrates how evidence has supported decision making.</p>	<p>All science work to be reported at quarterly meetings showing how evidence is used to support decision making. A summary to be included in Annual Report.</p>					MK
<p>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.</p>	<p>NWIFCA will continue contributions to national programmes and report to the Authority.</p>					MK

Table 5 Science plan 2019-20

A. Research Programme 2019-20		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	Whelk Age / Size at Maturity study to inform management approach. Samples obtained by industry.	Regulator
3	Continue joint project with Cefas bass tagging and distribution study working with other IFCA's, commercial and recreational fishers.	Regulator / Partner
4	Continued 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	Development of collaborative razor clam research project with industry	Regulator
7	Continue development of project to link in with BlueCoast (National Oceanography Centre) study in sediments and morphology in Morecambe Bay in relation to cockle recruitment and distribution	Partner
8	Develop Masters project with Lancaster University for 2019 student.	Partner

B. Proposed survey programme 2019-20 subject to changing priorities			
Project Title	Location	Method	Timing
Silloth sub-tidal Mussels	Solway Firth	Dredge, grab, Sonar Camera	Mar-Apr, Sep-Oct
Seed Mussels	Morecambe Bay -South America	Aerial, RIB, 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
Dee Mussels	Dee Estuary	Visual assessment and sampling	All year potential

Solway Cockle survey	Solway Firth	Grab / quadrat survey	Apr, Aug/Sep
Morecambe Bay Cockles	Morecambe Bay – 7 beds	Quadrat survey	All year
Ribble Cockles	Ribble Estuary – 5 beds	Quadrat survey	March - October
Wirral Cockles	Leasowe	Quadrat survey	Feb and August
INNS screening - Chinese Mitten Crab	Morecambe Bay and Dee mussel beds	Woolmer protocol	Feb and June

C. Other on-going priorities		NWIFCA Role
1	MPA management and monitoring – review effectiveness of existing management through Monitoring and Control Plan. Carrying out HRA, and MCZ assessments.	Regulator
2	Habitats Regulations Assessment of Bait Collection across all NWIFCA MPAs	Regulator
3	Development and implementation of NWIFCA Potting Byelaw	Regulator
	Cumbria Coast MCZ and management of netting in relation to breeding bird entanglement around St Bees Head. Implement Vol Code of Conduct. Monitoring of compliance and appropriate seasonality of closure.	
4	North West Marine Plan – contribute to development with MMO	Consultee
5	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
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 in the District	Regulator
10	Collaborative work with IFCA Technical Advisory Group (TAG) on national projects	Partner
11	Preesall Gas Storage: partner in Marine Monitoring Group	Partner
12	MMO Marine Licence consultations average approximately 50 per year	Consultee