



**Annual Report**

**Financial year**  
**2015-16**



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Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority Report 2015-2016. pp. 48

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Published online 02 November 2016

# Foreword

The annual report provides an overview of the work of Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority undertaken during financial year 2015-16 in order to meet its statutory duties as prescribed in the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MaCAA 09). It describes how the Authority has furthered the sustainable management of inshore sea fisheries resources and marine conservation objectives during the year as an assessment against the associated 2015-16 Annual Plan.

The Authority was created on 1 April 2011 to replace the previous Sea Fisheries Committee structure and has embraced the opportunity to engage with and encourage the involvement of local people in the management of the marine environment within their district. This change was a unique opportunity to establish a centre of excellence, recognised locally, nationally and internationally for the development and implementation of best practice in relation to the local management of the inshore marine environment.

The elected membership of the Authority has remained unchanged during the period save for the replacement of Councillor Patience to reinstate Councillor Byatt who had temporarily withdrawn due to unforeseen circumstances. The MMO appointee structure has been reviewed, refreshed and (re)appointed to ensure that it continues to represent the mix of skills and experience necessary to enable the Authority to make the right decisions for the benefit of the Eastern region inshore marine environment. The balance of the membership has changed in favour of commercial fishing with 6 commercial fishermen taking seats at the Authority table but with improved representation of the wider District outside The Wash. The balance of the membership includes representation from the Recreational Sea Angling (RSA) sector, marine conservation sector as well as others appointed for their wider marine management experience. The year ended with Councillor Goldson taking the position of Chairman of the Authority with Councillor Cox becoming the Vice-Chairman.

The fifth year of operation of Eastern IFCA has seen a continuation of the prodigious workload of the Authority in not only delivering on the protection of the most vulnerable features in regional European Marine Sites but also continuing to deliver outcomes and success across the breadth of the wider remit. This has included managing and regulating valuable cockle and mussel fisheries in the Wash; managing a very productive North Norfolk coast whelk, crab and lobster fishery; conducting public engagement events, responding to 84 marine licensing consultations, strategically reviewing all fisheries within the district and further development and modernisation of enforcement tasking including taking delivery of a new patrol vessel. In short, the Authority has delivered against a significantly different and increased workload to time and on budget. Significant investments in staff training and welfare and a reduction in the rate of staff churn means that the Authority now possesses an agile and proactive workforce cognisant of the increased duties and responsibilities of the IFCA construct which is recognised and heard throughout the Eastern district.

The Authority is majority funded through a levy on the County Councils of Suffolk, Norfolk, and Lincolnshire which is supplemented by New Burdens Funding (NBF) provided via a grant in aid to the constituent councils. NBF represents 25% of the Authority's core funding and is central to the delivery of its mandated outputs. Noting that continued provision of NBF remains the central strategic risk to the Authority's ability to service its remit, the outcome of the forthcoming Defra comprehensive review funding settlement has ensured the continuation of this vital funding until 2020.

The ongoing review of vessels operated by the Authority over recent years saw the sale of the 24m patrol vessel *ESF Protector III* and the trial of a new concept in inshore fisheries enforcement in the form of an 11m cabin fitted, rigid hulled inflatable boat (*FPV John Allen*). The trial proved successful as operating a smaller, less crew and resource intensive vessel enabled greater flexibility and effectiveness in providing an enforcement presence and deterrent effect throughout the district. Having proved the concept the vessel received capability upgrades to deliver greater enforcement utility and to provide research support capability. A second enforcement vessel, *FPV Sebastian Terelinck*, delivered during 2015 has further cemented the utility of this concept and built on the trail of *FPV John Allen*. The focus will now turn to the research vessel, *Three Counties*, to assure that value for money and efficient delivery of mandated outputs, as recognised in our research strategy and annual plan can be delivered.

During the year the Secretary of State for the Environment presented a report to Parliament<sup>1</sup> into the operations and conduct of IFCAs with individual comment upon each one. The report assessed that the IFCA construct is fit for purpose and should continue with an increased focus on joint working with partner agencies and realising efficiencies through asset sharing. The full report is at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/413425/ifca-review-2010-2014.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/413425/ifca-review-2010-2014.pdf)

This is the Authority's fifth annual report. We welcome feedback on this document from individuals and organisations interested in our work so that we can meet your needs in the future.



Julian Gregory  
Acting Chief Executive Officer



Councillor Tony Goldson  
Chairman

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<sup>1</sup> Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities Conduct and Operation 2010 – 2014, Defra, London, March 2015

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# Overview

Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority was created under Section 150 of MaCAA 2009 and was fully vested on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 via Statutory Instrument 2010 No 2189. The IFCA District was created under Section 149 of the Act, while Section 178 requires every IFCA to publish an annual report. This is the fifth annual report of the Authority.

The Authority district extends seawards six nautical miles from the Haile Sand Fort off the coast of Lincolnshire to Felixstowe in Suffolk as well as on land in the three counties of Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. This includes The Wash embayment and river estuaries including the Stour and Orwell in Suffolk. The district encompasses the full breadth of UK and EU form of Marine Protected Areas including Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserves, Special Protected Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, as well as Ramsar sites, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty designations and the newly formed Marine Conservation Zones.

There were 8 priorities for the Authority in Eastern IFCA 2015-16:

- 1. to continue investments in staff to preserve appropriate subject matter expertise;**
- 2. to ensure that the conservation objectives of Marine Protected Areas in the region are furthered by delivering fisheries management measures for 'Amber and Green' designated features within European Marine Sites (EMS) within the mandated timeframe and formulating potential management measures for Tranche 2 candidate Marine conservation zones (MCZ). Support community voice method project.**
- 3. to ensure that sea fisheries resources are exploited sustainably and in accordance with MSFD requirements by continuing the comprehensive byelaw review process guided by the strategic assessment of fisheries within the district;**
- 4. to promote sustainable development through a project to rejuvenate previously productive fishing grounds;**
- 5. to continue the Seagoing Assets Review and to introduce into service a second enforcement vessel;**
- 6. to ensure that the marine environment is protected from the effect of exploitation by reviewing district wide bio-security measures including management of invasive, non-native species;**
- 7. to balance the needs of all within the fishery by assessing the impact of Common Rights Holders activity;**
- 8. to promote sustainable development by reviewing the process to issue WFO Entitlement and explore cost recovery mechanisms**

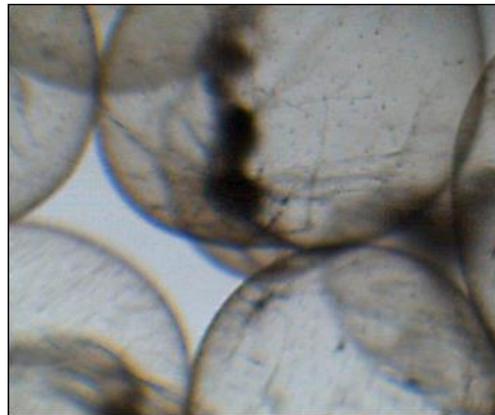
Subordinate priorities, which we aspired to deliver included:

- to influence and shape the national inshore marine management debate and narrative;
- to continue to advance the Authority's understanding of the species, habitats and activities occurring in the district;
- to engage with marine planning issues, including consultations on marine licenses and developments and active participation in Commercial Fisheries Working Groups;
- to continue to promote the work of Eastern IFCA through outreach events;
- as a directing body, contribute to the activities and output of the Association of IFCAs.

Delivery of the above is accommodated alongside the significant day to day work of the Authority and its employees, for example:

- maintaining and operating the Authority's sea going assets;
- enforcing local, national and EU fisheries and environmental legislation;
- building relationships with partners throughout the district;
- performing the role of Statutory Consultee for marine licence applications;
- ensuring value for money to funding authorities and ultimately to the taxpayer through effective administration and operation of the Authority;
- informing and educating the wider community of local marine issues and initiatives.

These priorities have been established to effectively work towards the seven Defra success criteria and their associated high level objectives (HLOs). These provide the guiding principles for our continued development and will provide a framework for working level objectives and individual staff work objectives to be developed for the period to April 2016.



# Vision, Success Criteria and High Level Objectives

The vision for Authority is:

*Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority will lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment and inshore fisheries, by successfully securing the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry.*

The main duties for Eastern IFCA set out within the MaCAA 2009 are:

- 1) to manage the exploitation of sea fisheries resources in its district, in doing so it must:
  - a) seek to ensure that the exploitation of sea fisheries resources is carried out in a sustainable way;
  - b) seek to balance the social and economic benefits of exploiting the sea fisheries resources of the district with the need to protect the marine environment from, or promote its recovery from, the effects of such exploitation;
  - c) take any other steps which in the Authority's opinion, are necessary or expedient for the purpose of making a contribution to the achievement of sustainable development;
  - d) seek to balance the different needs of persons engaged in the exploitation of sea fisheries resources in the district.
- 2) seek to ensure that the conservation objectives of any Marine Conservation Zone in the district are furthered.

The Authority, as Grantee manages the Wash Fishery Order 1992 in a manner that supports the local fishing industry whilst not having a detrimental impact upon the conservation features within the site.

Seven Success Criteria (SCs) and 47 High Level Objectives (HLOs) have been developed for all ten Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs) within England by Defra. It is incumbent on the Authority to meet these in a manner which it sees fit.

As a key delivery body in the marine area, the Authority will also be guided by the governments Marine Policy Statement, the East Inshore Marine Plan and adherence to the High Level Marine Objectives:

- achieving a sustainable marine economy;
- ensuring a strong, healthy and just society;
- living within environmental limits;
- promoting good governance;
- using sound science responsibly.

# Eastern Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority

The Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority is funded by its three constituent County Councils: Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk.

The Authority consists of a statutory committee which meets at least quarterly in order to receive reports from the Authority's officers and to direct officers to conduct work on its behalf to discharge its duties. The Authority's 21 members comprise of 7 County Councillors, 3 Government Agency representatives and 11 individuals appointed by the MMO for their expertise and knowledge of different marine related sectors.

The Authority's members and their attendance at Authority Meetings and Sub-Committee meetings on which they have volunteered to sit are detailed on the following page. The Authority has stipulated within its Standing Orders that a minimum attendance of 50% at meetings is expected. During 2015-2016 a total of 11 Authority and Sub-Committee meetings were held, with attendance recorded on the following page.

The Authority is committed to operating in a transparent manner and as such all Authority and Sub-Committee Meetings are open to the public. Agendas are published ten working days ahead of any meeting, with all papers distributed five working days ahead of any meeting. Agendas, papers and agreed minutes of all Authority meetings are published on the Authority's website. [www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk](http://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk)



## Member attendance at Authority Meetings and Sub-Committee Meetings 2015-2016

Name	% of meetings attended	Authority (5 meetings held)	Sub-Committee			
			Planning & Communication (1 meetings held)	Finance & Personnel (3 meetings held)	Regulatory & Compliance (2 meetings held)	Marine Protected Areas (0 meetings held)
Cllr T Turner MBE JP	87	5		*2		
Cllr R Fairman	87.5	4		3		0
Cllr H Cox	77	#2	1	2	2	0
Cllr M Baker	30	1		1	0	
Cllr M Wilkinson	87.5	5		#2		0
Cllr T Goldson	72.75	*5	1	2	0	0
Cllr P Byatt ~	60	2 of 2		0 of 1	1	
Mr C Donnelly	62.5	4	0		1	0
Dr I Hirst ~	37.5	3	0		0	0
Mr J Stipetic	75	4	1		1	0
Mr S Bagley	83	4	1			0
Dr S Bolt	55.5	3	#1	2		0
Mr R Brewster	75	5	1		0	0
Mr J Davies	71.5	3			2	0
Mr P Garnett	100	5			2	
Mr C Morgan	71.5	3			#2	#0
Mr T Pinborough	87.5	4	1		*2	0
Mr K Shaul	100	5	1			0
Mr R Spray	100	5	1		2	*0
Mr S Williamson	71.5	4			1	0
Mr S Worrall	88.75	5	*1	2		

Key:

*	Chair	#	Vice Chair
~	Did not Complete full term		Lincolnshire County Council
	Norfolk County Council		Suffolk County Council
	MMO/EA/NE Representative		MMO Appointee

## Focus and priorities for the year 2015-2016

Major Priority	Progress	Comment
<p><b>To continue investments in staff to preserve appropriate subject matter expertise.</b></p>		<p>Appropriate skills gap analysis have been completed through performance reviews and personal development plans, so that all employees are set up for success to deliver against the operational objectives as set out in the annual plan. Particular focus has been given to the supervisory population with 'investment in people' management development, so that our workforce can be appropriately guided and contribution to the organisation maximised. Investments in technical training for our marine protection team has seen improvements in confidence as well as ability.</p>
<p><b>To ensure that the conservation objectives of Marine Protected Areas in the region are furthered by delivering fisheries management measures for 'Amber and Green' designated features within European Marine Sites (EMS) within the mandated timeframe and formulating potential management measures for Tranche 2 candidate Marine conservation zones (MCZ). Support community voice method project.</b></p>		<p><b>Ongoing.</b> Officers continued to assess the impacts of commercial fisheries on European Marine Sites throughout 2015-16, using literature reviews and local evidence, including collaboration with site managers. The majority of assessments were submitted to Natural England in December 2015. The Wash shrimp fishery assessment was updated in early 2016 to take into account additional fishing activity evidence. Natural England feedback on assessments was anticipated in Spring 2016, which would enable officers to finalise conclusions and introduce any required management measures (to further the conservation objectives of the sites) by the December 2016 deadline. Priority assessments included those for the brown shrimp fishery in The Wash &amp; North Norfolk Coast, and for commercial bait digging in the Stour &amp; Orwell Estuaries.</p> <p>As the assessment phase nears completion, the emphasis of this work has shifted to the development of management measures, through industry and public consultation. A shrimp fishery workshop was held in July 2015 to discuss initial assessment findings and potential</p>

		<p>mitigation measures. The focus has been to ensure conservation objectives are furthered, whilst as far as possible supporting the viability of the fishery.</p> <p>Only one Tranche 2 Marine Conservation Zone, Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds, has been designated in the EIFCA district (in January 2016). The deadline for fisheries measures (if required) to further the site's conservation objectives is December 2017. An assessment of fisheries impacts in this site, and the development of any such measures, is planned for 2016-17.</p> <p>The Community Voice Method project, run in partnership with Marine Conservation Society and the Wash &amp; North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site project, was designed to engage with a broad spectrum of stakeholders to gather views on management of marine protected areas. 33 filmed interviews were undertaken across the Eastern IFCA district during January and February 2016. The results will be edited to create short films capturing stakeholder views; these will be shown at community workshops during 2016/17 for wider discussion. Although not yet completed, the project has strengthened the Authority's relationship with the Marine Conservation Society and provided a deeper, shared insight into inshore fisheries and wider coastal community issues in the district. More information on this project is given in the next section of this report.</p>
<p><b>To ensure that sea fisheries resources are exploited sustainably and in accordance with MSFD requirements by continuing the comprehensive byelaw review process guided by the strategic assessment of fisheries within the district.</b></p>		<p><b>Ongoing</b> - A new approach was agreed by the Authority in late November 2014, which saw the introduction of a more holistic approach to fisheries sustainability and conservation issues, involving evidence based approach to introducing and revising management measures on a prioritised basis. The new approach ensures that resources are put to the highest priorities and is forward looking as opposed to reviewing legacy byelaws in isolation, which could lead to emerging issues (for which there is no current regulation) being</p>

		<p>overlooked. It also provides a business model that will sustain into the future. A key element is an annual Strategic Assessment to identify fisheries and MPAs that require management measures or changes in management measures and to list them for action in order of priority. This approach led to the identification of whelk as a priority and the preparation of an emergency byelaw.</p> <p>Alongside this it was agreed to undertake a proportionate exercise to effectively 'tidy up' the current suite of byelaws to provide a more coherent set of interim regulatory measures. This has involved the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Removing most of inherited North Eastern Sea Fisheries Committee (NESFC) byelaws</li><li>2. Extending the application of EIFCA byelaws to cover old (NESFC) territory.</li></ol> <p>The 'tidy up' work has stalled as a result of limited capacity within MMO and Defra legal to review and confirm the associated new byelaw which was made by the Regulatory and Compliance Sub-Committee on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2015.</p> <p>In addition, work relating to implementing a permanent set of whelk management measures led to the identification for an innovative permit scheme approach to fisheries management across all elements of the managed fisheries within the district. The Permit Byelaw 2016 was also made by the Regulation and Compliance Sub-Committee on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2015 which represents a framework byelaw which will enable Eastern IFCA to flexibly manage fisheries throughout the district. Whilst the initial focus was on implementing permanent whelk management, the tool is intended to be used where a fishery required it, to implement shrimp management measures and to standardise existing management for other fisheries (i.e. other EIFCA byelaws can be remade to fit this modern framework). This work has stalled as a</p>
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		<p>result of MMO and Defra consideration of the byelaw and work is continuing to resolve the issues.</p> <p>Finally, the Protected Areas Byelaw (made may 2014), which enables Eastern IFCA to implement regulatory notices within MPAs required updating in the light of new MPAs falling into the Eastern IFCA remit. The Marine Protected Areas Byelaw 2016 was made on the 24<sup>th</sup> February 2016 which enabled Eastern IFCA to more flexibly implement regulatory notices across the suite of MPAs within the district. However, legal concerns raised by Defra have indicated issues relating to this approach and as a result, the byelaw may not be consented by the Minister. Work is currently underway to resolve this issue with a view to have a short-term fix in place to meet requirements of the Habitats Directive.</p>
<p><b>To promote sustainable development through a project to rejuvenate previously productive fishing grounds.</b></p>		<p>The inter-tidal mussel stocks in The Wash have traditionally provided a valuable resource for the local fishing industry. They are also an important habitat for invertebrate communities and an essential food resource for the internationally important communities of birds that reside or over-winter in the Wash. In order to protect the sustainability of the fishery and help to achieve the Conservation Objective targets for the site, a suite of management measures have been developed over the years. Although the overall mussel biomass on the inter-tidal beds has seen much greater stability since the introduction of these policies, in recent years natural mortality on the beds has exceeded recruitment. On those in which mortalities have been highest, the beds are now in poor condition.</p> <p>Healthy mussel beds with a good coverage and high mussel density create a raised matrix of live mussels and dead shell bound together with byssus threads. This is an important habitat for attracting fresh</p>

		<p>settlements of seed which find shelter from weather and protection from predators among the crevices. The recent decline seen on many of the beds, however, has left them with mussel densities below that critical level required to form raised matrices. With their ability to attract fresh settlement further reduced, there is a danger that their decline could become terminal.</p> <p>Although relaying partially grown mussel seed from elsewhere would have been the most effective way of facilitating an immediate recovery, the cost of seed was considered prohibitive for large-scale rejuvenation projects and could not be sustained as a long-term viable management option. Instead, in 2014 the Authority began a trial to determine whether a <i>culch</i> of cockle shells deposited on the seabed would successfully attract seed mussels. The initial trial involved relaying 72 tonnes of cockle shells into three 20m x 20m plots located close to a mussel bed. Unfortunately, mussel settlement throughout the Wash during 2014 was found to be poor and the shelly areas failed to attract high numbers of spat. However, sufficient mussels, both old and young, had attached to the shells to warrant the continuation of the trial. An expansion of the original experiment, involving the relaying of 200 tonnes of shells in April 2015 was planned. Exceptional settlements of cockle spat through the proposed trial areas, however, forced this phase of the experiment to be postponed until alternative sites could be identified. Two sites were eventually found close to the Gat and Mare Tail mussel beds, between which 200 tonnes of shells were relayed in March 2016.</p> <p>Further monitoring of the original three experimental plots found the shells had been more successful at attracting mussel seed during 2015. By October the density of mussels attached to the shells was found to be 157 mussels/m<sup>2</sup>. Although their small size contributed</p>
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		little towards the biomass at that time, this is anticipated to increase significantly following growth during the coming year.
<b>To continue the Seagoing Assets Review and to introduce into service a second enforcement vessel.</b>		<p>As a consequence of proving that cabin RIBs provide an effective and efficient platform for seaborne enforcement activity substantial upgrades to <i>FPV John Allen</i> were agreed. These have seen her utility extended through the provision of enhanced electronics (radar, navigation), a tender and an 'A' frame to facilitate some research activity. The Authority also introduced a second enforcement vessel <i>FPV Sebastian Terelinck</i> following on from the lessons learnt through the purchase of <i>FPV John Allen</i>. Following a competitive tendering process, the contract was awarded to Redbay Boats of N. Ireland, the builders of <i>FPV John Allen</i> and was delivered in the summer of 2015.</p> <p><i>FPV Sebastian Terelinck</i> represents a continuation of the modernisation of Eastern IFCA and improves the capacity of the enforcement team to effectively enforce fisheries legislation throughout the district.</p>
<b>To ensure that the marine environment is protected from the effect of exploitation by reviewing district wide bio-security measures including management of invasive, non-native species.</b>		<p>Whilst the Authority's commitment to protecting the districts fisheries from biosecurity risks is a priority, in the context of competing demands the project which aimed to further develop the biosecurity planning within the district has been rolled over to next year's priorities and no progress was made during 2015/16. It was assessed that the current measures in place are sufficient to reduce risk to the Authority and as such, this work was re-prioritised.</p>
<b>To balance the needs of all within the fishery by assessing the impact of Common Rights Holders activity.</b>		<p>Liaison has been undertaken with the county records team to verify the register of Rights in common where these Rights coincide with European Marine Sites. Officers have used established stakeholder groups in Norfolk and Lincolnshire to introduce the project concept to local holders of Rights in common; individuals from within these groups have offered to provide assistance in verifying levels of activity</p>

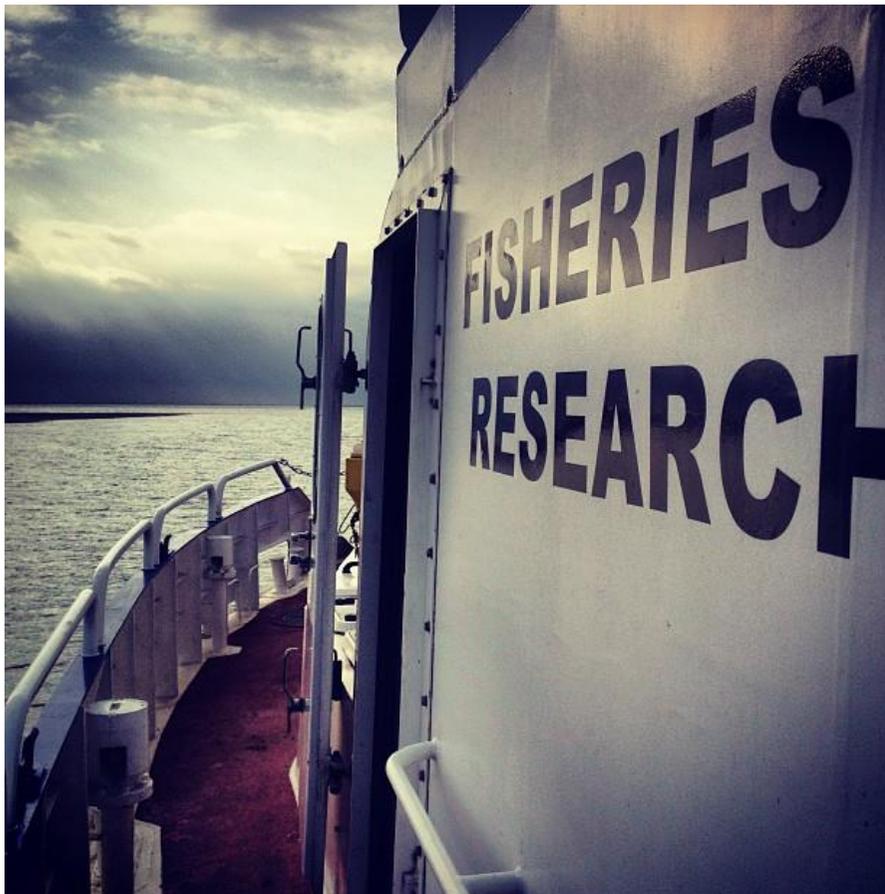
		<p>to inform the assessment. Due to the resource requirements for Marine Protected Area assessment work and the Community Voice interviews during Q4 2015/16, progress with this project has paused and it will be rolled over for completion in 2016/17.</p>
<p><b>To promote sustainable development by reviewing the process to issue WFO Entitlement and explore cost recovery mechanisms.</b></p>		<p>An investigation into the costs associated with Eastern IFCA's management of Wash Fishery Order (1992) fisheries was undertaken. Whilst it was determined that there was scope for cost recovery, mechanisms within the WFO require the consent of the Minister which has already been acquired for the period until 2017 and it was decided that this would be an appropriate timescale against which to consider changes.</p> <p>The waiting list for WFO entitlements was also considered within the context of reviewing the process for their allocation. This process is embedded within the Wash Fishery Order itself and significant amendments to the process would require legislative change beyond the scope originally envisaged. With that in mind, a wider review of the WFO is included as a priority for the 2016/17 plan to ensure that the management policies and processes are fit for purpose in a modern context and will enable fair and effective fisheries management until the Order expires in 2022.</p> <p>Authority duties as defined in the Wash Fishery Order were discharged to enable a cockle fishery in one of the most protected marine areas in Europe. The seed mussel fishery was suspended in the light of an unfavourable stock assessment and to allow for mussel stocks to continue their recovery alongside the mussel regeneration project. The conventional cockle fishery TAC was 2,079 tonnes but total landings eventually exceeded 5000 tonnes as a result of the opening of a contingency fishery to utilise cockles which were dying on one sand in particular (Roger sand) as a result of 'ridging out'. The development of the 2015/16 fishery was in itself innovative to try and</p>

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		<p>make the most of those areas where cockles were available and the additional contingency fishery reflects the Authority's commitment to provide the best available fishing opportunities whilst maintaining one of the most heavily protected areas in the UK. The fishery provided a significant and enduring employment opportunity for all those who chose to partake in the fishery.</p> <p>Poor behaviours by some fishers during the 2015/16 fishery resulted in additional enforcement resource being utilised and ultimately in enforcement action being taken in response to a mass contravention of the management measures. The successful prosecution of these fishers was an unfortunate but necessary eventuality given the behaviours during this fishery. Eastern IFCA continues to look for innovative ways to provide fishing opportunities but has taken into account the 2015/16 fishery with regards to the development of future fisheries management.</p>
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Subordinate Priority	Progress	Comment
<p>To influence and shape the national inshore marine management debate and narrative.</p>		<p>The A/CEO through his role as Chair the National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group, which brings together senior representatives from all IFCAs together with colleagues from the Marine Management Organisation, the Environment Agency, Cefas, Defra and Natural England, has continued to progress the objectives of the group including sharing good practice and achieving consistency in regulation and compliance.</p> <p>Through this role, work has progressed to improve collaboration between the MMO and Eastern IFCA in particular enabling more cost effective delivery of the obligations set out in the Marine and Coastal Access Act. This work has provided additional organisational robustness and operational effectiveness.</p>
<p>To continue to advance the Authority's understanding of the species, habitats and activities occurring in the district.</p>		<p>The annual Strategic Assessment provides the basis for determining Eastern IFCA's priorities by identifying gaps in our understanding as well as our regulation. This is used to inform a more holistic approach to fisheries management and provides a key resource in training and planning.</p> <p>Research projects aimed at filling the identified gaps in our knowledge base have continued to provide crucial information to assist in making effective management decisions. Key work of 2015/16 includes the continuation of habitat mapping (including data processing from newly acquired instruments such as the Hamon grab, side-scan sonar and sonar camera), evidence gathering in relation to the impacts of fishing gears on protected habitats and improved intelligence gathering frameworks to inform enforcement activity.</p>
<p>To engage with marine planning issues, including consultations on marine licenses and developments and active participation in Commercial Fisheries Working Groups.</p>		<p>The Authority has continued to provide a robust input towards marine planning issues through consultations on marine licences, national infrastructure developments and other coastal/inshore marine works. In addition, Eastern IFCA has maintained participation in Commercial Fisheries Working Groups for offshore wind farm developments.</p>
<p>To continue to promote the work of Eastern IFCA through outreach events.</p>		<p>A full suite of Outreach events was conducted to ensure that the Authority is recognised and heard across the full spectrum of</p>

		<p>stakeholders. The emphasis was placed upon attending smaller regional marine festivals as opposed to the larger County shows with a bespoke focus upon harder to reach stakeholders. To complement this initiative, the display trailer was also used to good effect at regional RSPB sites.</p>
<p>As a Directing body contribute to the activities and output of the Association of IFCAs.</p>		<p>The Acting Chief Executive Officer is one of the Directors of the Association of IFCAs and attended 100% of meetings.</p>



## Delivery of priorities

The following sets out progress made against the activities that the Authority planned to conduct during the 2015-16 financial year.

Reporting is divided into seven sections, reflecting the seven Success Criteria agreed with Defra. For each Success Criterion there is an illustrative case study to reflect progress against the respective High Level Objectives (HLOs).



**Case Study - Success Criterion 1: IFCAs have sound governance and staff are motivated and respected**

**Development of our Competency frameworks**

Last year saw the organisation's Core Values developed and introduced across the business. Supporting this, a behavioural competency framework for managers was developed with our management team. A reminder that a competency framework is about the 'delivery method' of objectives and core job performance measures - the 'how we achieve'.

2015/16 has largely been about embedding the framework with managers and developing relevant competences for the wider team which dovetail into the management framework. Time has been spent introducing the competences to the workforce, which has included presentations, one to one discussions and seen them included as part of the performance management process.

Behavioural development is a journey and takes time to become 'second nature'. 2016/17 will focus on increasing familiarity of the competences and embedding them as part of our ways of working.

Behavioural competencies for Managers	Behavioural competencies for Officers
Leading	Embraces change
Achieving	Planning & organising
Communication & influence	Achieving
Managing	Effective communication
Analysis & judgement	Teamwork
Managing self & confidence	Developing self
Teamwork & collaboration	

**Case Study - Success Criterion 2: Evidence based, appropriate and timely byelaws are used to manage the sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources within the district**

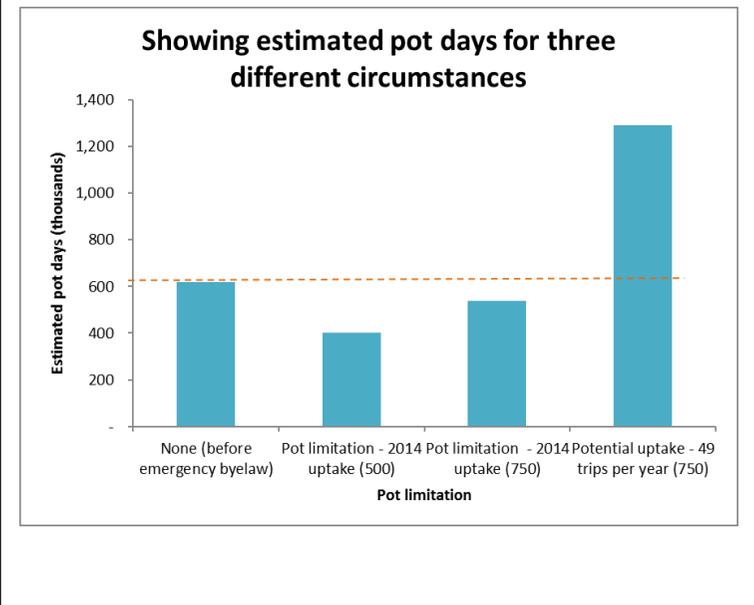
**Development of Whelk fishery management measures**

In April of 2015 the Authority implemented an Emergency Byelaw for the purpose of protecting whelk stocks within the district. Through the analysis of newly available datasets from the Marine Management Organisation it was evident that fishing effort in this fishery was likely to be beyond that which the fishery could sustain. In addition, whelks are known to be very vulnerable to over-fishing due to their slow growth and low mobility. The use of emergency measures was justified by the high risk to the fishery and was, at least in-part, required as a result of the information which Eastern IFCA did not have and reflected a precautionary approach to fisheries management.

Emergency byelaws have a limited lifespan of up to 18 months and as such, once implemented, Officers undertook to assess in greater detail the whelk fisheries within the district and the effect on the industry of their implementation. Data is being collected with a view to develop robust models for assessing fisheries sustainability in line with maximum sustainable yield (as required under the Common Fisheries Policy and Marine Strategy Framework Directive) however this will take years to establish as the process requires a longer time series of fisheries data than is currently available.

To reflect this, the proposed permanent solution to whelk management measures is to implement a byelaw which allows Eastern IFCA to implement flexible permit conditions through a transparent process set out in the byelaw. In this way, Eastern IFCA will be able to effectively reflect the needs of the fishery in accordance with the best available data on an annual basis.

Figure 1 – outputs of a model used to investigate the potential effort in the whelk fishery under different effort limitations. Used in the development of management measures for the Whelk fisheries within the district. Using this model, it was demonstrated that the pot limitation is still an appropriate measure.



Pursuant of this, Officers have in the mean-time reassessed the impacts of the measures on the industry (e.g. Fig 1) to provide additional robustness to the justification of the initial measures. The Whelk Permit Byelaw 2016 is expected to be in place in October 2016.

**Case study - Success Criterion 3: A fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime is in place**

**Further development of the Eastern IFCA regulation and compliance business model**

In November 2014 the Authority considered and approved a new model for planning and prioritising both strategic and operational work in line with a holistic and evidence based approach. This led to the development of the Strategic Assessment which annually assesses the risk to all fisheries within the district to sustainability issues (including environmental impacts) and the Compliance Risk Register which assesses risk of non-compliance with existing management measures. The new model also established the Tasking and Co-ordinating Group (TCG) which uses these new tools to effectively prioritise work at an operational level on a monthly basis.

With these tools established (albeit under constant review and development) further work has been undertaken to embed additional modern practices in the tasking of enforcement activities at an operational level to ensure that Eastern IFCA's compliance regime is as effective and resilient as it can be.

Weekly operations meetings

Fisheries are dynamic and as such, a flexible approach is required in their enforcement. This is true at an operational level and this is reflected in the establishment of Weekly Operations Meetings which were introduced in 2015/16. This provides for consistent communication across the enforcement team and enables flexibility and cohesiveness in carrying out enforcement activities. It allows for the identification of new emerging issues as a result of investigative work and provides a forum to feedback on the progress of monthly priorities and weekly tasks identified at previous meetings.

Introduction of patrol planning and report forms

2015/16 saw the introduction of enforcement patrol forms for shore-based and sea-based patrols. These have increased the effectiveness of the tasking process and have led to more targeted enforcement activities and the reporting of such. The data collated from the forms allows for a more detailed analysis of enforcement activities against the annual, monthly and weekly priorities.

Education

As highlighted in the Regulation and Compliance Strategy, educating fishers of the benefits of compliance is the first stage of effective enforcement and fisheries management. As a recognition of the fact that the majority of enforcement activity is engagement in this vein, monthly TCG meetings include a dedicated section on key engagement priorities. These are borne of the Strategic assessment and reflect the Monthly Risk Profile and any emerging issues identified through intelligence gathering.

Training

The development of the model has led to more efficient use of enforcement team resource but it is also recognised that Officers need to be personally equipped with the tools required to effectively enforce fisheries legislation. Officers have received investigation training and case file building training during 2015/16. The development of expertise feeds back into the planning cycle and informs further development of the regulation and compliance business model.

**Case study - Success Criterion 4: IFCAs work in partnership and are engaged with their stakeholders**

**Community Voice Method (Common Ground): Engaging stakeholders in thinking about the management of the marine environment in our district.**

**Project concept:** The intention is to involve more people in sharing their views about how marine resources in our district are managed. With the recent designation of the first Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) in the Eastern IFCA district, and the ongoing development of fisheries management in existing Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) to consider along with all our other duties, this is a very busy and challenging time for the organisation. It is important that we involve a variety of stakeholders: we want to continue to develop our understanding of the different ways people use and value the coast and sea. We also need to gauge what benefits and impacts management measures will have both for people and for the environment.

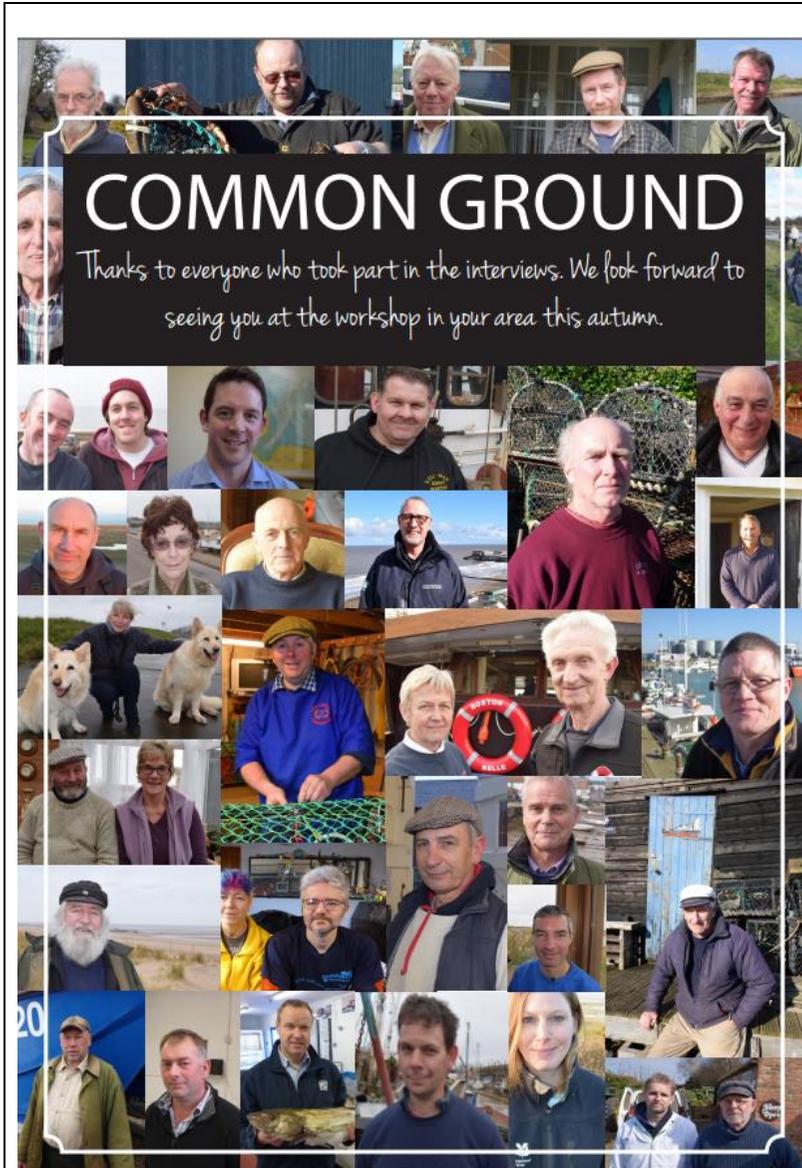
**How it works:** Eastern IFCA continues to engage with stakeholders in all the ways we have done in the past (face-to-face, individual and group meetings, workshops, telephone, email, website, social media, letters, public outreach events and lectures). In addition, during 2015 and 2016 we undertook the Community Voice film project in partnership with the Marine Conservation Society (MCS) and with assistance from The Wash and North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site (WNNC EMS) management scheme.

Through this project we aim to:

- Bring together diverse stakeholders (including fishermen and other sea-users, those with specialist knowledge and those responsible for decision-making and implementation) who can provide input into discussion particularly about MPA management;
- Share information and build understanding of the dynamics and possibly conflicting needs of stakeholders and the environment;
- Capture a diverse range of values of MPAs (e.g. use and non-use, monetary and non-monetary) that give all stakeholders an equitable and credible voice in considering management of MPAs.

Project partners consulted widely for recommendations of people to be interviewed. During February and March 2016, 33 interviews of 39 stakeholders were recorded in Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. A diverse range of local people participated. The interviews included general questions about people's connection with the coast and sea and how they use it, specific questions about management, and finally stakeholder views on key areas of Eastern IFCA decision-making (e.g. fisheries and MPA management). Most interviews lasted about 1 hour.

**Next steps:** The CVM project will be completed in 2016-17. Next steps include the transcription of filmed interviews and the production of a documentary film by MCS to reflect these community views as faithfully and fully as possible. The film will be a constructive tool to help develop a shared understanding of the ways in which people use and value the coast and sea in our district. In autumn 2016, the completed film will be screened at stakeholder workshops held at local venues. After each screening, there will be an opportunity to reflect on peoples' responses to the film and focus specifically on stakeholder views on management of MPAs. The film will help identify common ground and stimulate discussion, which will provide Eastern IFCA with a clear understanding of stakeholders values, views and preferences with regard to marine resource management. MCS will produce a report from each workshop, which will be available online.



The Common Ground project has enabled Eastern IFCA to engage with a wider range of stakeholders than those reached using traditional communication methods alone. It has drawn out some new perspectives as well as capturing views of experienced and knowledgeable sea users.

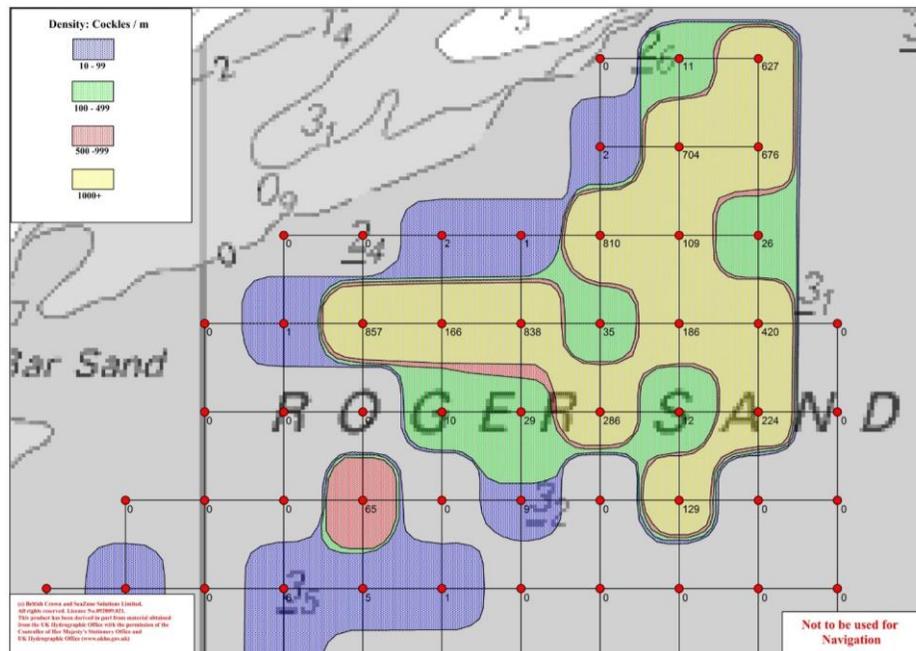
Although not yet completed, the project has already increased Eastern IFCA's profile in local coastal communities as well as with new academic, NGO and maritime industry audiences.

It has further strengthened our existing relationship with the Wash & North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site project.

Working in partnership with the Marine Conservation Society has resulted in an enhanced mutual understanding of the challenges we face in practice and an appreciation of our shared vision for sustainable fisheries, healthy seas and a vibrant inshore fishing economy.

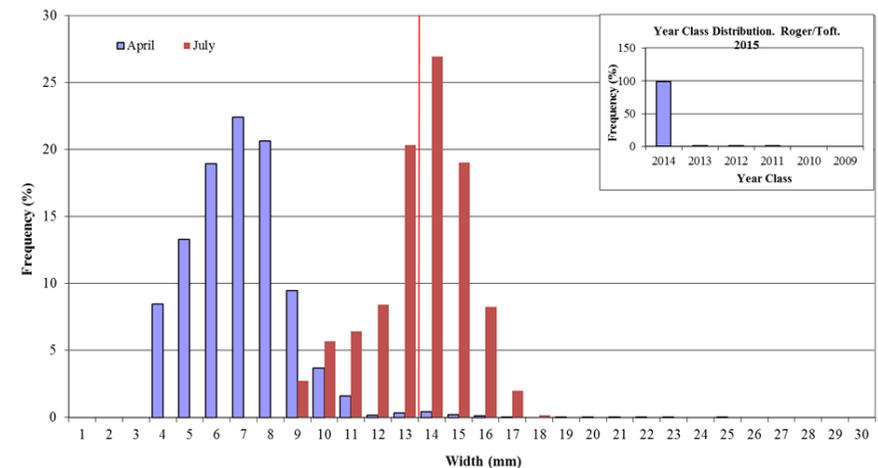
**Case study - Success Criterion 5: IFCAs make the best use of evidence to deliver their objectives**

The Authority is responsible for the management of the Wash regulated cockle fishery through the Wash Fishery Order 1992. The intertidal cockle stocks in the Wash not only provide a valuable resource for the local fishing industry, they also provide a vital food source for the thousands of wading birds that are resident or over-winter in the Wash. It is important, therefore, that the management of this fishery is conducted in a sustainable manner, not only to safeguard the future livelihoods of the fishermen but also to maintain sufficient quantities of food for the birds that rely upon it. Because the consequences of mismanaging this fishery could be so high, the Authority conducts comprehensive annual surveys on the cockle stocks to inform their decisions with the best available evidence. These surveys, which involve sampling approximately 1,250 stations across 21 beds, provide information on the distribution, size and age classes of the cockle stocks. This information is then used by the Authority to determine the annual Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for the coming fishery and which beds can be opened or may require protecting.



The Authority’s evidence gathering for the cockle fishery extends beyond the spring surveys, with additional monitoring occurring throughout the fishery. Following advice from the industry that the cockles within a closed

The size of the TAC for this fishery is determined from the biomass of cockles that have attained 14mm width at the time of the surveys. Although there had been a widespread settlement of cockle spat in 2014, at the time of the 2015 surveys there were relatively few cockles in the Wash that had attained the size of 14mm. As a consequence, the TAC was only 2,079 tonnes. Because there were high densities of juvenile cockles present on many of the beds, in addition to determining the TAC, the survey data was also used to assign closed areas to protect these smaller cockles.



area on the Roger Sand were growing well, the Authority assessed this area in July. Growth was found to have been exceptional, and many of the cockles had reached 14mm.



When cockle stocks are present in high densities, growth can cause problems of over-crowding. In extreme circumstances, when they can no longer all physically fit into the available space, the cockles become displaced in events known locally as “ridging out”. Under such circumstances the cockles are pushed into ridges where they eventually die or are washed away. In extreme cases, whole beds can be lost when the cockles ridge out. During the assessment in July, the cockles were found to be close to ridging out over a widespread area that could have resulted in the loss of several thousands of tonnes of cockles.

Using the evidence from the spring surveys and the assessment conducted in July, the Authority was able to present a strong case that opening this particular area would greatly benefit the industry without posing a risk to the future sustainability of the stocks. Further, as the cockles in this area were highly vulnerable to being smothered or washed away, it was argued that the industry should be given an opportunity to fully exploit them before they died. In order to achieve this, the stocks within this area were “ring-fenced” from the TAC, enabling greater exploitation than would otherwise have been possible under the existing annual quota of 2,079 tonnes. By opening this area and ring-fencing the

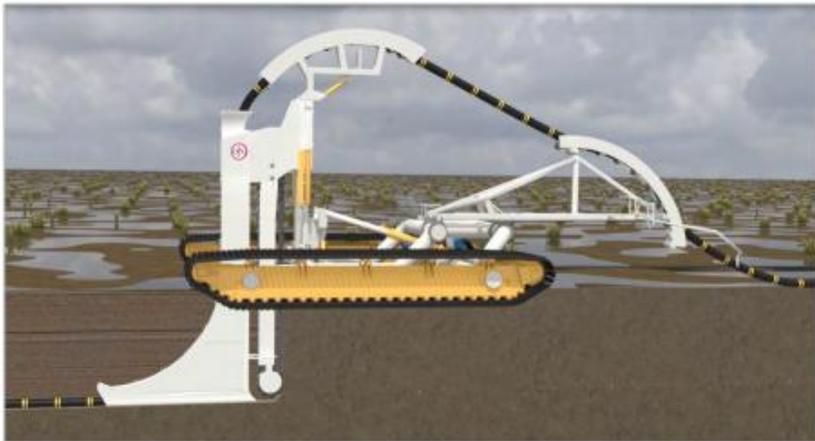
TAC, by the close of the fishery the industry had been able to harvest over 5,000 tonnes of cockles, approximately 4,000 tonnes of which had come from the Roger Sand. This transformed what would have otherwise have been a poor fishery into a highly successful one. Without having confidence in the evidence base used to arrive at these decisions, however, the risks would have been considered too high for the Authority to approve.

**Case study - Success Criterion 6: IFCAs support and promote the sustainable management of the marine environment**

Eastern IFCA contributes to sustainable development in the marine environment directly through the management of inshore fisheries, and indirectly by influencing marine planning and marine licensing decisions. An overview of this work during 2015-16 is given in the “Marine planning and licensing activities” section of this report. An example of Eastern IFCA input to a complicated marine licence decision is given below.

During 2015-16, a major project affecting the Eastern IFCA district has been the Race Bank offshore wind farm. The Authority has responded to several separate consultations relating to the licensing of different works for this development, including export cable installation through intertidal and subtidal habitats, drill arising disposal and bed levelling. Eastern IFCA has highlighted concerns over impacts on crab breeding grounds at the wind farm array, and has liaised closely with the developer DONG Energy to ensure impacts on intertidal cockle beds are minimised as far as possible, and to ensure appropriate monitoring is conducted to enable impacts to be measured.

It became apparent that the wind farm export cable route was to dissect a sub-tidal area that is closed under Eastern IFCA’s Protected Areas Byelaw to towed demersal fishing. Concerns were raised about the impacts of cable burial on the subtidal stony reef (boulder and cobble) habitat that the Eastern IFCA byelaw intends to protect, as well as equity issues about allowing cable burial works to take place in an area in which fishing activity is excluded. The MMO, with Natural England’s advice, directed the developer to undertake detailed survey of the seabed habitat in this area. Initial results were not satisfactory so the developer undertook a second series of surveys. The results showed that the cable route would affect only a small part of the closed fishing area, but that the subtidal stony reef feature was not present in that part of the area. Furthermore, Natural England advised that the discrete location and short-term nature of seabed damage from cable burial works meant this activity posed less risk to the feature than long-term, dispersed demersal fishing activity.



The Authority produced a joint statement with Natural England and the Marine Management Organisation in March 2016, in order to communicate this difficult message to fishery stakeholders. The Authority is due to review the fishery closure of this area during 2016-17, as set out in the Protected Areas Byelaw (Regulatory Notice 2). The review will be informed by the best available evidence on feature presence and condition, as well as evidence on fishing activity and other relevant works in the immediate and surrounding area.

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*Race Bank project: Intertidal mudflats cable burial machine (DONG 2015).*

**Case study - Success Criterion 7: Recognised and heard**

**FPV Sebastian Terelinck naming ceremony**

Eastern IFCA celebrated the service and life of a previous employee, Sebastian Terelinck, who died during service over 100 years ago, by naming its second Enforcement RIB in his honour.

In the context of a very busy year with regards to community engagement, which saw Eastern IFCA attend 14 separate outreach events, Officers planned a special naming ceremony for the Fisheries Protection Vessel (FPV) *Sebastian Terelinck* to coincide with the King's Lynn Heritage day in September 2015. This included the reconditioning of Mr Terelinck's grave, which is located in King's Lynn.

In addition to IFCA Officers and Authority members, the event was attended by some of the descendants of Mr Terelinck and the MP for North West Norfolk Sir Henry Bellingham. Significant media interest included news stories being published in local newspapers and an interview on local radio. A very positive response was received from the King's Lynn community and the event was successfully utilised to spread Eastern IFCA's vision and values. This was supplemented at the event through the use of the aquarium touch tank and show trailer.

The significant reduction in budget associated with community and engagement work has not been reflected in the effect of the work in this regard. This is reflected in the steady increase in social media followers (an increase of 22% during 2015/16) and continued requests to attend further outreach events.



# Risk management strategy

Pages 30-36 of the 2015/16 Annual plan outline the Risk Management Strategy of Eastern IFCA.

Risk Description	Interventions in 2015-16	Residual risk
<p>Eastern IFCA funding substantially reduced</p>	<p>Continued delivery of 25% savings mandated by constituent councils as part of initial levy provision.</p> <p>Continued assurance of financial propriety and operations within financial regulations.</p> <p>Continued drive to seek efficiencies and promote cost effectiveness.</p> <p>Demonstrable value for money.</p> <p>Identification of mechanisms to recover costs for outputs judged to be over and above the core IFCA role.</p> <p>Engagement at the national level to drive the debate surrounding ongoing provision of New Burdens Funding through CEO contribution to AIFCA output as a Director.</p> <p>Engagement with constituent county council finance directors to explain financial strategy and expose both 'in year' budget performance and forecasts for next 3 years.</p>	<p>Policy driven removal of funding directly threatens ability to meet remit and deliver mandated outputs.</p>
<p>Eastern IFCA fails to maintain relevance amongst partners</p>	<p>Eastern IFCA demonstrably engaged across the breadth of its remit.</p> <p>A continued programme of community outreach events, stakeholder meetings and media engagement.</p>	<p>Disparate stakeholder aspirations introduce complexities which may drive perceptions of disengagement or inefficiency.</p> <p>Focus on delivery of MPA protective effect introduces perceptions of bias towards conservation</p>

	<p>Overt and increased use of digital and social media including website, Twitter and Facebook.</p> <p>All stakeholders kept abreast of changes to marine conservation policy and local implications.</p> <p>Wash fisheries management acknowledged by local Industry representatives as a success in 2015.</p> <p>Annual plans used to prioritise and communicate outputs for 2015-16.</p> <p>Representation of community issues to higher authorities.</p> <p>Provision of a leadership function.</p> <p>Significant revisions to Protection team ways of working to promote greater frequency of engagement with stakeholders.</p>	<p>remit from stakeholders.</p> <p>Work load to service MPA protective effect diverts resources from fisheries management tasks.</p> <p>Perceptions of Authority powerlessness in the face of CFP reforms affecting the inshore fishing sector.</p>
<p>Loss of suitably qualified and experienced personnel</p>	<p>Appropriate leadership and management provided.</p> <p>Investments made in professional and personal development.</p> <p>Core values developed with staff and introduced.</p> <p>Staff objective setting and appraisal system fully functioning.</p> <p>Provision of a safe and professional working environment.</p> <p>Flexible working arrangements enabled.</p> <p>Regular internal communications through suite of</p>	<p>Propensity for younger graduate calibre staff to use Research Officer posts as a stepping stone creating frequent staff churn and commensurate loss of experience.</p> <p>Relative remuneration, relocation and rigour of the job when coupled with emergent opportunities in the private sector introduce risk across the breadth of staff but particularly research and environment posts.</p>

	<p>departmental and inter-team meetings.</p> <p>Line management empowered to delegate functions and outputs to the lowest level.</p>	
Negative media comment	<p>Regular engagement with all stakeholders including media outlets.</p> <p>Professional standards and practices embedded.</p> <p>Cultural change delivered efficiently and effectively.</p> <p>Active promotion of EIFCA activity.</p> <p>Recognition and understanding reinforced through community events.</p>	<p>Disenfranchised stakeholders seek to use the media to introduce doubt as to EIFCA professionalism, utility and effectiveness.</p> <p>One off event prompts disproportionate media spotlight.</p>
Degradation of Marine Protected Areas (MPA) due to fishing activity	<p>Habitats Regulations assessments completed on proposed fishing activity in protected areas.</p> <p>Full engagement in national fisheries/EMS project, prioritising management of highest risk fisheries in MPAs and implementing new management measures</p> <p>Enforcement efforts proportionate and effective.</p> <p>Use of adaptive co-management approach to fisheries management.</p> <p>Regular liaison with Natural England regarding fisheries in MPAs.</p> <p>Apply the process agreed by Eastern IFCA for managing fishing activities in MPAs.</p> <p>Continued investigation into the use of VMS as a management tool by the Authority</p>	<p>Attempts to broker balanced solution to provide protective effect whilst mitigating impact on local fishing activity are ignored by fishing community.</p> <p>Fishing vessels fail to adhere to management measures including closed areas introduced through new byelaws.</p>

	<p>Continued research into the impact of fishing activities on MPA features to ensure the Authority has an up to date evidence base to inform its management decisions.</p>	
<p>Shellfish and fish stocks collapse</p>	<p>Annual Strategic Assessment determines risk associated with all fisheries within the district.</p> <p>Annual stock assessment of bivalve stocks in Wash.</p> <p>Allocation of sufficient resources to monitor landings and provide effective enforcement.</p> <p>Consultation with industry on possible management measures.</p> <p>Validation of Wash management measures via MSC pre-assessment review.</p> <p>Development of whelk stock management measures.</p> <p>Consideration of stock conservation measures for crab and lobster fisheries through bespoke research activity, engagement with Cefas and fishing industry.</p> <p>Continued SWEEP research into primary productivity levels within The Wash in line with food availability model which supports activity in private fisheries in The Wash.</p> <p>Continued regular engagement with the industry to discuss specific matters.</p> <p>Continued research into the cockle mortality events.</p> <p>Participation in Project Inshore to inform stock</p>	<p>Failure of biosecurity controls introduces disease in the Wash fishery.</p> <p>Unregulated fishing behaviour threatens stock status.</p> <p>Current management measures fall short of required protective effect.</p>

	management.	
Failure to secure data	<p>Requests for information dealt with in accordance with Data Protection Act.</p> <p>Password protection for computers.</p> <p>Access to the server restricted to individuals through their own computer.</p> <p>Provision of secure wireless internet.</p> <p>Access to electronic files is restricted based on an individual's role.</p> <p>Up to date virus software installed on all computers.</p> <p>ICT equipment and policies provided by Norfolk County Council (NCC) – including encrypted laptops/secure governmental email system.</p> <p>All Eastern IFCA personnel undergo Data Protection Act training conducted by NCC officers.</p> <p>Electronic backup of all Eastern IFCA documents held by NCC offsite.</p>	<p>Malicious release of privileged information.</p> <p>Negligent release of privileged information.</p>



## Resources

The following resources belonged to Eastern IFCA on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.

Vessel details	HP	MCA Work Boat Code	Length	Min Crew	Commissioned	Life remaining (years)	Replacement cost
<i>FPV Sebastian Terelinck</i>	881	Cat. 2 (60 nm offshore)	11.5m	2	2015	10	£420,000
<i>FPV John Allen</i>	570	Cat. 2 (60 nm offshore)	11m	2	2013	9	£420,000
<i>RV Three Counties</i>	1050	Cat. 2 (60 nm offshore)	18m	3	2002	2-5	£1,400,000

Vehicle details	Entered service	Replacement date	Replacement cost
Ford Tourneo bus	2016	2022	£18,000
Peugeot 308 sw	2009	2017	£13,500
Peugeot 207 sw	2010	2017	£14,000
Peugeot 207 sw	2010	2017	£14,000
Skoda Yeti 1.6	2014	2019	£15,000
Skoda Yeti 1.6	2014	2019	£15,000
Skoda Yeti 4x4	2014	2019	£18,000
Isuzu DMax Eiger	2015	2020	£20,000

Description	Purchased	Replacement cost
Side scan sonar	2013	£60,000
Underwater camera	2013	£30,000
Videoray	2013	£15,000
Sonar software	2013	£15,000

NB. *FPV Pisces III* was written-off during the financial year as a result of an accident. As a temporary measure, Eastern IFCA has rented a RIB (*Conchita*) whilst a permanent replacement is considered.

In addition to the assets identified above the Authority leases an office in King's Lynn, moorings at Sutton Bridge for its vessels and a storage facility (close to the offices) in King's Lynn.

The Authority had a budget of £1,391,070 for 2015-16. This figure includes £394,145 in New Burden funding from Defra to enable the Authority to meet the additional duties proscribed under MaCCA 09. It was agreed that New Burden funding from the three constituent councils to the Authority be passed on. Use of New Burden money is not accounted for separately by the Authority due to the accounting and allocation complexities that this would have caused.

The Authority honoured its commitment to meeting the three funding councils' request of reducing the levy by 25% over the four-year period from the 2010-2011 base levy. The levy for 2016-17 remains at the 2015-16 level. By 31 March 2016 the Authority had spent all of its budget and £266,024 of its' reserves expenditure including £431,680 spent on asset replacement. Revenue budget showed a saving of £165,656. The key budget variances were:

- 1) Additional unbudgeted income from Licence Tolls, shellfish sampling, grants and insurance receipts.
- 2) Savings in salaries due to CEO secondment and vacancy management with EIFCA operating below full complement over the whole year.
- 3) Savings in General Expenditure
- 4) Savings on cost of vessel operations.

Reserve name	Amount held within reserve @ 31 March 2016
Research	£89,921
Operational	£150,000
Vessel contingency	
Legal and enforcement	£75,000
ICT	£10,000
Vessel replacement	£1,277,826
Vehicle renewals	£60,000
Fixed Penalty Fine Fund	£17,500
Office Improvements Fund	£10,000
IVMS Fund	
Defra grant	£18,292
Total "IFCA" reserves	£1,708,539

### Remuneration of the Chair, Vice Chair and Chief Executive Officer 2015-2016

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Authority were not remunerated directly by the Authority for their work conducted on behalf of the Authority during 2015-2016. The post of Chief Executive Officer was held by two people during the financial year 2015-2016. The combined remuneration was £72,699. The expenses paid to post holder(s) were:

Mileage	Subsistence	Train/taxi/parking	Telephone	Total
£0	£150	£609	£0	£759



## Ways of working

During the year work to progress the following Memorandum of Agreements (MoAs), Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), Partnership Agreement (PA), Informal Agreements (IA), Agreement in Principle (AIP), Service level Agreements (SLA), Information Sharing Agreements (ISAs), contracts (C) and directorships (D) was undertaken.

These documents set out agreed ways of working for the Authority and attempt to provide clarity for individuals and organisations on their respective roles and responsibilities.

Document	Signatory organisations	Document purpose
MoU	Natural England and IFCAs	Defines roles and responsibilities and ways of working
MoU	Marine Management Organisation and IFCAs	Defines roles and responsibilities and ways of working
MoU	Environment Agency and IFCAs	Defines roles and responsibilities and ways of working
MoU	Kent and Essex IFCA	Defines roles and responsibilities in relation to the Stour and Orwell European Marine Site and the Outer Thames Estuaries Special Protected Area
MoU	North Eastern IFCA	Defines roles and responsibilities in relation to the Humber European Marine Site
MoU	CEFAS and IFCAs	Defines roles and responsibilities and ways of working
MoU	Lincolnshire County Council	Transfer of Defra New Burden money to Eastern IFCA
AIP	Norfolk County Council	Transfer of Defra New Burden money to Eastern IFCA
PA	North Norfolk Fisheries Liaison Action Group (FLAG)	Involvement of Eastern IFCA as a partner in the North Norfolk FLAG
PA	CEFAS, King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council Environmental Health Office	Defines working relationship between regarding the collection of water, cockle, mussel samples for shellfish waters classification within the Wash
MoA	Wash and North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site Project	Employment of Wash and North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site Project Manager by Eastern IFCA
MoA	John Lake Shellfish, Lynn Shellfish, Marine Ecological Services	Delivery of a Brown and Pink Shrimp MSC Pre-Assessment project
MoA	Natural England	Delivery of baseline monitoring survey data relating to <i>Sabellaria spinulosa</i> within the Wash embayment
D	Chief Officers of all IFCAs	Directorship responsibilities of Eastern IFCA Chief Officer acting as a Director of the Association of Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities
C	Norfolk County Council	Provision of Internal Audit services
C	Norfolk county Council	Provision of Health and Safety support
C	Norfolk County Council	Provision of ICT infrastructure and support

C	Andrew Jackson Solicitors	Provision of specialist legal advice (call off contract)
C	Zacobyte Consulting Ltd, Kent and Essex IFCA and Sussex IFCA	Provision of IFCA website template
IA	IFCA Technical Advisory Group	Provision of technical advice to IFCA COG
IA	National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group	Development of good practice, partnership working and advice to COG
C	CEFAS and Natural England	Charter agreement for the study of Cobble and Boulder Communities



# Marine planning and licensing activity

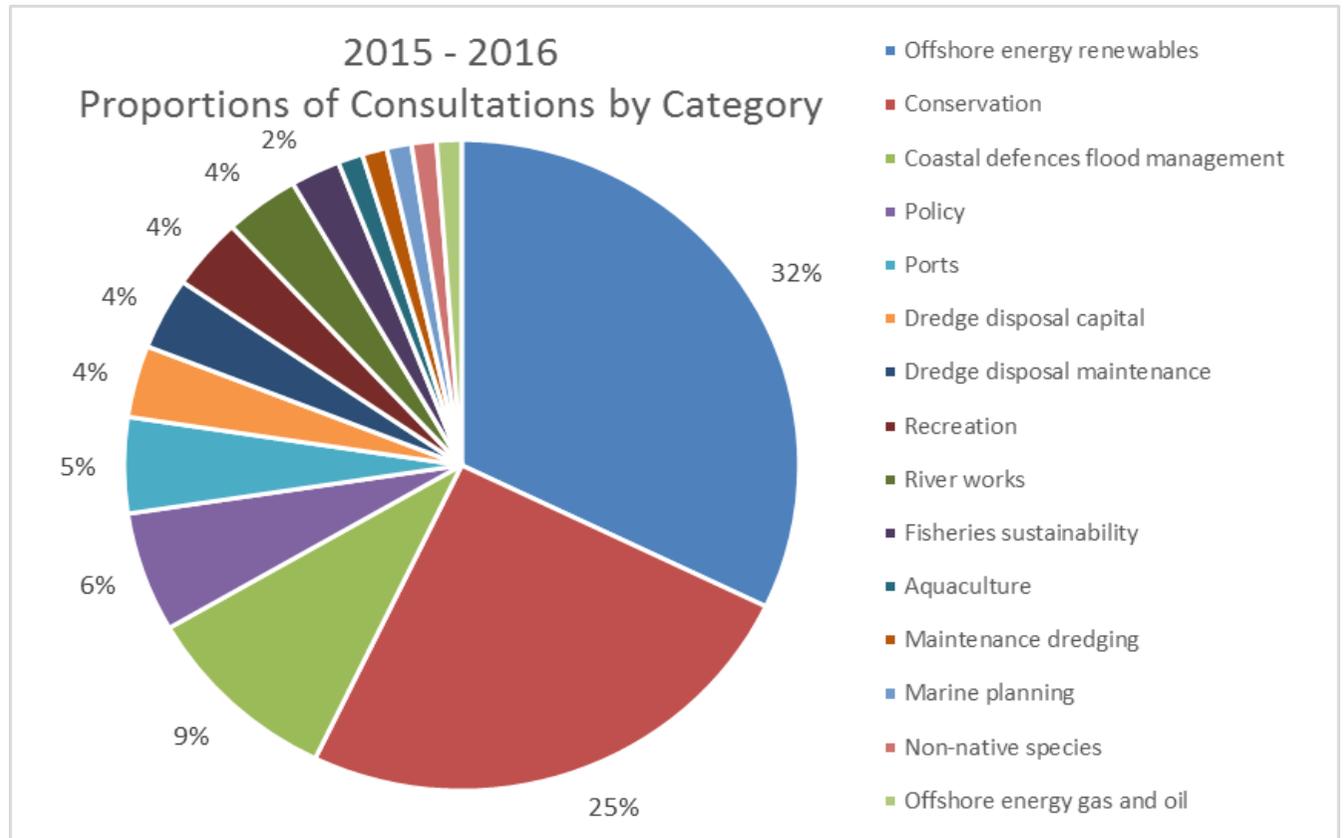
The Environment team sent 84 consultation responses as detailed below:

Eastern IFCA contributes to sustainable development in the marine environment directly through the management of inshore fisheries, and indirectly by influencing marine planning and marine licensing decisions.

A total of 84 consultation responses were provided during 2015-16. These included input to consultations on activities that require a marine licence (regulated by the Marine Management Organisation) as well as on other activities that have the ability to affect the coastal / inshore marine environment.

The pie chart opposite shows the relative proportions of consultations by category of activity that Eastern IFCA responded to during 2015-16. Offshore renewable energy activities formed nearly one third of all consultations, reflecting the large number of offshore wind farm works (e.g. cable burial and protection works) undertaken in this region. Conservation-themed consultations were the second largest group, and included engagement with Natural England in relation to proposed new Marine Protected Areas in the district.

A consultation case study is described on page 24 of this document.



The MMO-led East Marine Plans were launched in 2014. Eastern IFCA ensures its own decision-making is in alignment with Marine Plan policies, and – via the consultation process – highlights the need for developers and regulators to reflect relevant policies (e.g. relating to fish, ecology and marine protected areas) in their own planning and decision-making.

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# Marine management

The Authority recognises the importance of meeting the Success Criteria, High Level Objectives and Organisational Key Performance Indicators as set out by Defra and agreed by all of the IFCAs. These measures do not demonstrate organisational success in the wider sense nor focus on successful outcomes in terms of sound environmental or fisheries management. It is therefore incumbent on the Authority to demonstrate that the various plans that it develops (on its own or in conjunction with stakeholders and partner organisations) deliver their goals effectively.

To provide a flavour of the type of work that the Authority undertakes, several areas of work conducted during 2015-2016 have been detailed below:

## **Wash Fishery Order 1992 management**

The Authority discharges its duties and responsibilities through a co-management process of the Wash Fishery Order 1992 (the Authority is the grantee). The Authority consults regularly with stakeholder groups to ensure that local industry representatives are part of the recommendation making process.

The major fishery managed under the Wash Fishery Order 1992 is the cockle fishery. This is currently a complex fishery due to the demands of the various Natura 2000 designations placed on the Wash and the 'Atypical Mortality' currently being encountered in cockle populations around Western Europe. Building on the successful revision of the management mechanism in 2011, a productive cockle season was enabled. On completion of the cockle fishery there was demonstrable incidence of "ridging out" where younger more vigorous cockle force older stock from the ground. This prompted the Authority to extend the fishery to allow cockle that would otherwise have died to be commercially exploited.

The Authority acts as the 'operator' under the Aquatic Animal Health (England and Wales) Regulations 2009 in relation to the WFO1992 Several Fisheries also referred to as the 'Wash Production Area' to facilitate ease of data collection and reporting to CEFAS.

## **Wider Wash management**

The CEO of the Authority has been Chair of the Wash and North Norfolk European Marine Site Management Scheme and Eastern IFCA hosts and supports the Project Manager.

## **Additional bivalve shellfish management throughout the district**

### **Titchwell mussel fishery**

A small seed mussel bed is surveyed annually at Titchwell on the North Norfolk coast. Prosecution of these mussels can be supported by Eastern IFCA through the granting of a dispensation from Byelaw 4 (Mussels – minimum sizes) to allow the removal of undersize mussels for the purpose of relaying into private fisheries. Unfortunately, during 2015-2016 insufficient settlement of mussel occurred to justify fishing activity.

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### **Horseshoe Point cockle fishery**

On 1 April 2011 the Authority inherited from North Eastern Sea Fisheries Committee the responsibility for the management of the cockle beds that occur at Horseshoe Point in Lincolnshire. Surveys of this bed by the Authority's officers routinely showed that the stocks of cockles within this area were not sufficient to facilitate a fishery and a temporary closure on this fishery was brought in during August 2012 under Byelaw XI. A survey in Autumn 2014 indicated that there were significant stocks of cockles in harvestable densities at the site. In order to support the viability of the local shellfish industry work was set in motion to present a fishing opportunity through water and shellfish sampling to gain requisite health clearances. Subsequent surveys in Spring 2015 showed that sufficient stocks had survived the winter to support a fishery. Unfortunately, a number of problems were encountered when attempting to open this fishery. Not only are parts of the bed within an area closed for the protection of eelgrass beds, but Natural England raised concerns over the potential damage fishers would cause to the fragile marsh while accessing the beds. Further to these issues, parts of the foreshore required to access the beds were found to be owned by a local landowner who wished significant recompense from those wishing to access the beds across his land. Before these problems could be overcome and the beds opened, the majority of the stocks died. Eastern IFCA has remained willing to support the fishery but the recent success of the Wash cockle fishery has reduced the impetus for a fishery at this location further.

### **Stour and Orwell Survey**

Surveys of the River Stour and River Orwell in Suffolk by the Authority have identified that a quantity of Carpet Shell and Manila Clams occur within these rivers. The conservation status of the area led to the Authority and the Kent and Essex IFCA simultaneously introducing a Temporary Closure of Shellfish Fisheries on 4 July 2012 under Byelaw 8. The closure remained in place throughout 2015-16.

### **Marine Protected Area management**

The Authority's approach to managing fisheries within Marine Protected Areas reflects the "sustainable use" ethos, strongly promoted when European Marine Sites were first designated – i.e. to enable appropriately conducted commercial activity to continue whilst ensuring the conservation objectives of the sites are furthered. This has been a key focus in managing bivalve shellfisheries in The Wash for over a decade, requiring collaborative working with local fishermen and statutory nature conservation advisors, to agree suitable parameters. The Authority recognises the current programme of assessment of all commercial fisheries in Marine Protected Areas (the "revised approach") to be a timely driver for the consideration of effects of other fishing operations on protected marine habitats, as well as an opportunity to promote co-management, improve data gathering and where necessary, improve fishing practices.

The Authority's Protected Areas Byelaw was implemented in May 2014. It provides protection (in the form of closed fishing areas) from towed demersal gear to three of the most sensitive, "red risk" habitats (*Sabellaria spinulosa* reef, boulder and cobble communities, and seagrass beds) within two European Marine Sites in the Eastern IFCA District (The Wash & North Norfolk Coast, and Humber Estuary Special Areas of Conservation).

Throughout 2015-16, the Authority prioritised the completion of the assessments of commercial fisheries in European Marine Sites across the district, and the assessments were submitted to Natural England for consideration. The assessments identified that one group of fisheries required further management (to reduce impact on European Marine Site features), namely towed demersal gear fisheries operating in the Wash & North Norfolk Coast Special Area of Conservation. The Authority held a shrimp fishery workshop in July 2015 (in conjunction with Natural England and

Marine Management Organisation) to explain this outcome and discuss management options. By March 2016, it had been agreed that spatial closures across part of the site would be appropriate to reduce seabed impacts, alongside effort reduction in the form of a shrimp permitting byelaw.

A single Marine Conservation Zone was designated in the Eastern IFCA district in January 2016: Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds. Eastern IFCA has allocated resource in 2016/17 to assess fisheries in this site according to potential risk to the site features; should fisheries measures be required, they will be developed in conjunction with local fishing representatives.

### **Bait digging**

On 1 April 2011 the responsibility for contributing to the management of bait digging throughout its district came under the auspices of the Authority. Following concerns that this activity could have a detrimental impact on the interest features of the Stour and Orwell Estuaries European Marine Site, the Authority helped develop a voluntary code of conduct with other management organisations and stakeholder groups. The code of conduct was introduced on 28 October 2011. The Authority's officers and partner organisations monitored compliance with the code throughout 2015-16 and whilst there have been some isolated breaches, the majority have complied with its requirements.

### **Shrimp fishery accreditation**

The East Coast shrimp fishery is seeking Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) accreditation in order to maintain markets. A pre-assessment exercise was undertaken in 2011 and identified that significant changes in practice and management would be required before accreditation could be achieved. Authority officers have supported the shrimp industry (processors and fishers) in working towards accreditation, by working with through the Shrimp Fishery Advisory Working Group. The Authority's involvement was limited in 2015-16, although externally progress was made by consultants developing a harvest control plan and starting work on a wider shrimp fishery management plan. The Authority recognises the benefits of an industry-led fishery management plan, but is committed to working closely with the industry in order to align accreditation goals and management with marine protected area management aims and measures (see above).

### **Recreational sea angling**

The Authority has a duty to manage the marine resources within its district for the benefit of all. Recognising this and the importance of the recreational angling sector to the economies of Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, the Authority became a partner in the national Angling 2012 research project managed by CEFAS. The results of the study were launched by the Fisheries Minister in November 2013 and have been factored into the development of a regional RSA strategy and into the Strategic Assessment and Annual Compliance Risk Register – a reflection of the importance of RSA activity within the district.

**Management metrics**

Additional information on the activities conducted by Authority officers and the use of the Authority's assets are detailed in the table below. It is recognised that this information is being presented with a lack of context however to do so would make this report unwieldy.

<b>Management metrics 2014-2015</b>	
Byelaw derogations (and extensions) issued to facilitate research purposes	13
Freedom of Information requests	0
Environmental Information Regulation requests	0
Wash Fishery Order 1992 licences issued	59
<b>Authority vessel days at sea 2015-2016</b>	
<i>FPV Sebastian Terelinck</i>	21
<i>FPV John Allen</i>	53
<i>RV Three Counties</i>	109
<i>FPV Pisces (used primarily as a tender to RV Three Counties)</i>	35
<b>Fisheries and environmental enforcement 2015-2016</b>	
Boardings at sea	32
Inspections of commercial fishing vessels/landings	1230
Inspections of recreational sea anglers	367
Verbal Warnings	44
Written Warnings	5
Home Office Cautions	0
Financial Administrative Penalties (FAPs) issued	18
Prosecutions	6
Catch Inspections	165
Premises & Vehicle Inspections	19

# Staffing

During the previous financial year, through staff engagement 'pinch points' were identified which were considered to hinder optimum operational output have been identified. As a result, a decision was taken not to replace the 3 vacancies that came about on a like for like basis. Following the feedback, three new positions were created; those being:

- An additional Marine Environment Officer – specifically to lead on consultations
- An IFCO & Crew Member to give more enforcement flexibility across the district, both on shore and at sea
- An IFCO & Project Manager to further support marine enforcement activity alongside the IFCO & Crew Member, whilst using their project management skills to co-ordinate and drive key projects, such as the Byelaw review

The adjusted structure and staff resource positively supported the achievement of the Authority's objectives and has facilitated the better balance of hours worked versus contracted hours. This was reflected in 2014/15 as a reduction in the extra hours committed by staff, which dropped by 572 against that reported in 2013/14.

During 2015, the CEO was seconded for six to the Marine Management Organisation as Director of Operations. This is seen as a key development in the facilitation of improved partnership working with the MMO, particularly in the context of increasing austerity and Governmental cuts to funding.

In the first instance the Deputy CEO took on the extra responsibilities of the CEO and took the post of Acting CEO. Subsequently, the secondment of the CEO to the MMO was extended by another 12 months. To support the post of Acting CEO, the Staff Officer post was created as a temporary position. The post was filled internally and resulted in the movement of several officers across several teams to 'back-fill' the various posts affected. This staff movement and the A/CEO having effectively covered two roles (both the Deputy CEO and CEO role) is the most likely a cause for the increase in extra hours worked in the last financial year. The extra hours worked increased by 142 during the last financial year which is still a significant reduction on the situation in 2013-14, prior to staff restructuring which, in the context of the CEO's secondment is still a positive step forward in staff time management.

April 2013 - March 2014	832 extra hours worked
April 2014 - March 2015	260 extra hours worked
April 2015 - March 2016	418 extra hours worked

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# Performance standards

The Authority, in its 2011-2012 annual plan made a commitment to develop and publish comprehensive performance standards by March 2012 setting out how it will meet the expectations of stakeholders in relation to:

- 1) how quickly Eastern IFCA will respond to queries or correspondence
- 2) how quickly Eastern IFCA will process permits/licences

The following performance standards were approved by the Authority and provide a commitment by officers and the Authority to meet the needs of stakeholders in a timely manner.

## **Wash Fishery Order 1992 entitlement expiry**

Reminders are sent by recorded delivery at least three months prior to the entitlement expiring.

## **Wash Fishery Order 1992 licence issue/renewal**

An individual applying for a licence or renewing a licence will be issued with the licence within five working days (provided all required documentation is present and correct).

## **Authorisations to fish seed mussel**

Derogations to Authority byelaws may be agreed in order to facilitate a seed mussel fishery in the District. Once a fishery has been agreed an authorisation to fish is required this will be issued within seven working days (provided all required documentation is present and correct). Conditions on the Authorisation may be specified.

## **Scientific derogations**

Applications to the CEO to provide derogation to the Authority's byelaws will be processed within twenty-eight working days although, additional time may be required in the event that the proposed activity requires consideration of Natural England in relation to a marine protected area. The application will either be approved, rejected or additional information may be requested. Conditions on the derogation may be specified.

## **Information requests**

Any request for information, including formal Freedom of Information will be recorded and will be replied to within twenty working days. If the information cannot be provided within that time or clarification is sought on the information requested a date that the information will be provided will be specified along with a named contact person. This does not cover consultations as they will be dealt with separately.

## **Legislative guidance**

Upon request, minimum size guidance books, Wash Fishery Order 1992 and byelaw booklets will be sent out within seven working days. If a detailed written response is required, this will be provided within twenty working days of the initial request. If the information cannot be provided within this time we will identify a time frame, the reason and appropriate course of action including a named contact person.

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### Office hours

The Authority's office is open (excluding bank holidays):

Monday – Thursday 09:00-17:00hrs

Friday 09:00-16:30hrs

A commitment is made to ensure that these opening hours are met at least 95% of the time (the remaining 5% is to account for staff training/full staff meetings).

The Authority Office will be closed between Christmas and New Year.

### Authority and Sub-Committee meetings (excluding extraordinary meetings)

Agendas will be sent out to Members ten working days before the meeting. Papers will be sent out to Members five working days prior to the meeting and will be posted on the Authority's website 24hrs prior to a meeting. Minutes of the meeting will be posted on the Authority's website within five working days following confirmation.

### Enforcement Activities

Enforcement activities of the Authority and the standards that the Authority and its Officers strive towards are detailed within the Authority's Regulation and Compliance Strategy and Enforcement Policy.

### Mail

All mail received or sent by the Authority will be logged, date stamped and an appropriate file reference recorded. 'Signed for' mail recording will be used in circumstances where there is a need for a confirmation of delivery, or a history of mail loss.



## Organisational carbon footprint

As a local government organisation with environmental protection and promotion as a core function, the Authority is committed to providing information on its environmental performance.

In 2008-2009 the Authority's predecessor conducted a baseline environmental audit and identified its carbon footprint. The results of that baseline assessment are compared to the Authority's first year of operation below.

<b>Estimated carbon footprint for the Authority in 2015-2016 compared against a baseline of 2008-2009</b>					
<b>Source</b>	<b>2008-2009</b>	<b>2012-2013</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>
Owned road vehicles	24.40 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	21.6 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	20.23 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	22.04 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	23.54 tCO <sub>2</sub> e
Owned ships	197.07 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	111.90 tCO <sub>2</sub> e*	106.20 tCO <sub>2</sub> e*	115.40 tCO <sub>2</sub> e*	119.78 tCO <sub>2</sub> e
Electricity	22.59 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	16.0 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	16.48 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	18.37 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	16.83 tCO <sub>2</sub> e
Train travel	-	0.457tCO <sub>2</sub> e	1.06 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	1.18 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	1.14 tCO <sub>2</sub> e
Flights	-	-	-	-	0.90 tCO <sub>2</sub> e
<b>Total tonnesCO<sub>2</sub>e</b>	<b>244.71 tCO<sub>2</sub>e</b>	<b>149.50 tCO<sub>2</sub>e</b>	<b>143.97 tCO<sub>2</sub>e</b>	<b>156.99 tCO<sub>2</sub>e</b>	<b>162.19 tCO<sub>2</sub>e</b>

*Developed using the Carbon Trust online carbon footprint calculator*

\*FPV ESF Protector III was sold in 2012/13 financial year which most likely explains the vast reduction in emissions

## References

This plan has been developed taking into account and with reference to the following documents:

Anon. (2009) Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. HMSO. London.

Anon. (2010a) Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Order 2010. HMSO. London.

Defra. (2010b) Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities: Vision, Success Criteria and High Level Objectives. Defra. London.

Defra. (2011a) Guidance to Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities on Annual Planning and Reporting Requirements under s.177 and s.178 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act. Defra. London.

Defra. (2011b) Guidance to Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities on the establishment of a common enforcement framework. Defra. London.

Defra. (2011c) Guidance to Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities on evidence-based marine management. Defra. London.

Defra. (2011d) Guidance to Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities on monitoring and evaluation, and measuring performance. Defra. London.

Defra. (2011e) Guidance to Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities on their contribution to the achievement of sustainable development  
Eastern IFCA Annual plan 2014-15



# Glossary

ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers Criminal Records Office
Association of IFCA	Association of Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities
CEFAS	Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquatic Science
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
DCEO	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Defra	Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
EA	Environment Agency
Eastern IFCA	Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
EIFCO	Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer
EMS	European Marine Site
ERLG	Eastern Regional Liaison Group
ESFJC	Eastern Sea Fisheries Joint Committee
FPV	Fishery Patrol Vessel
HLO	High Level Objective
HR	Human Resources
ICT	Information Communication and Technology
IFCA	Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
IIP	Investors in People
Kent & Essex IFCA	Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
LCC	Lincolnshire County Council
MaCAA	Marine and Coastal Access Act
MCZ	Marine Conservation Zone
MMO	Marine Management Organisation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MPASC	Marine Protected Area Sub-Committee
NE	Natural England
North Eastern IFCA	North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
NCC	Norfolk County Council
PCSC	Planning and Communications Sub-Committee

PI	Performance Indicator
PR	Public Relations
RCSC	Regulatory and Compliance Sub-Committee
RSA	Recreational Sea Angling
RV	Research Vessel
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SC	Success Criteria
SCC	Suffolk County Council
SIFCA	Sussex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SoS	Secretary of State
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SWEEP	Study of the Wash Embayment Environment and Productivity
TAG	Technical Advisory Group
VFM	Value For Money
WFO	Wash Fishery Order
WNNCEMS	Wash and North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site