

MCZ CLOSED AREAS

Three mandatory closures remain in place to prohibit commercial and recreational potting activities for the Natural Disturbance Study.

Closed areas are currently demarked with yellow marker buoys but these will be removed during the winter period due to deteriorating weather. Fishers are asked to mark the co-ordinates of closed areas in vessel plotters to ensure continued compliance during the period. [Click here to view the closed areas.](#)

STAKEHOLDER GROUP

The next Stakeholder Group Meeting is scheduled for:

Thursday 6th
November 2025
18:00 – 20:00
Via Zoom

If you haven't done so already please RSVP to receive a meeting invite.

If you would like join the group please use the contacts below to request to join.

POT TAGS

Under the Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Byelaw 2023 pot tagging within the MCZ will be required.

If you have not done so already please use the contacts below to request tags. See our [FAQs page](#) for more information.

On track

Scheduled

Delayed

Not started

MANAGEMENT PROGRESS

Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Byelaw 2023		
Byelaw		Confirmation of the Byelaw is delayed. Although the byelaw has not come into effect by the target date significant delays are not anticipated. Delays are a result of the QA process rather than significant issues with the byelaw itself.
Permit conditions		It was agreed at the 61st Authority meeting that permit conditions should continue to be developed whilst the rates of damage assessment is being refined. In line with ARM an incremental approach to developing permit conditions is being taken forward and a management plan setting out how this will be achieved is in development.
Voluntary Code of Best Practice		
Monitoring		Monitoring is ongoing and will be evaluated in the upcoming 2025 Interim report. Findings from the evaluation will inform future adaptations to the monitoring process.

RESEARCH PROGRESS

Natural Disturbance Study (NDS)

Whilst initially delayed, progress is now back on track. A second set of ROV surveys were completed over summer and data is currently being processed before it is analysed externally. Acoustic surveys (multibeam and side scan) were also completed at the beginning of October, providing the fourth data set in the time series. Acoustic data collected prior to this is currently being analysed externally, with draft outputs anticipated by the end of December. An independent review of the study is currently being undertaken to ensure its design and sampling methods are robust and sufficient to achieve its objectives. Final feedback from this review is anticipated in November. Fishing activity in open and closed areas continues to be closely monitored with one brief incursion currently being investigated.

Mapping sensitive features

This workstream is complete. The final rugged chalk extent is available on our [habitat mapping webpage](#).

Mapping fishing activities

Whilst previously significantly delayed the project is now progressing as a result of the interim measures and the requirement for vessels to have IVMS, both established in spring. Both measures require vessels to provide positional data every 3 minutes at a minimum, enabling potting activities to be mapped.

Adaptive Gear Trials

This project has been placed on hold due to challenges with funding and achieving a robust study design with the resources available.

Determining value of rugged chalk

Studies into the social value of the fishery have been completed by Newcastle University and final results are awaited. Determining the value of the rugged chalk is delayed as was previously on hold but has now been picked up and data collection is ongoing.