Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds
Management Update

Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Byelaw 2023 timeline

8 March 2023
The Byelaw was made to provide a flexible mechanism to manage potting using adjustable permit conditions.

11 December 2024
Phase 1 permit conditions formally agreed at the 58th Eastern IFCA meeting.

20 September 2025
Agreed that phase 2 permit conditions should be further developed whilst the rates of damage assessment is refined.

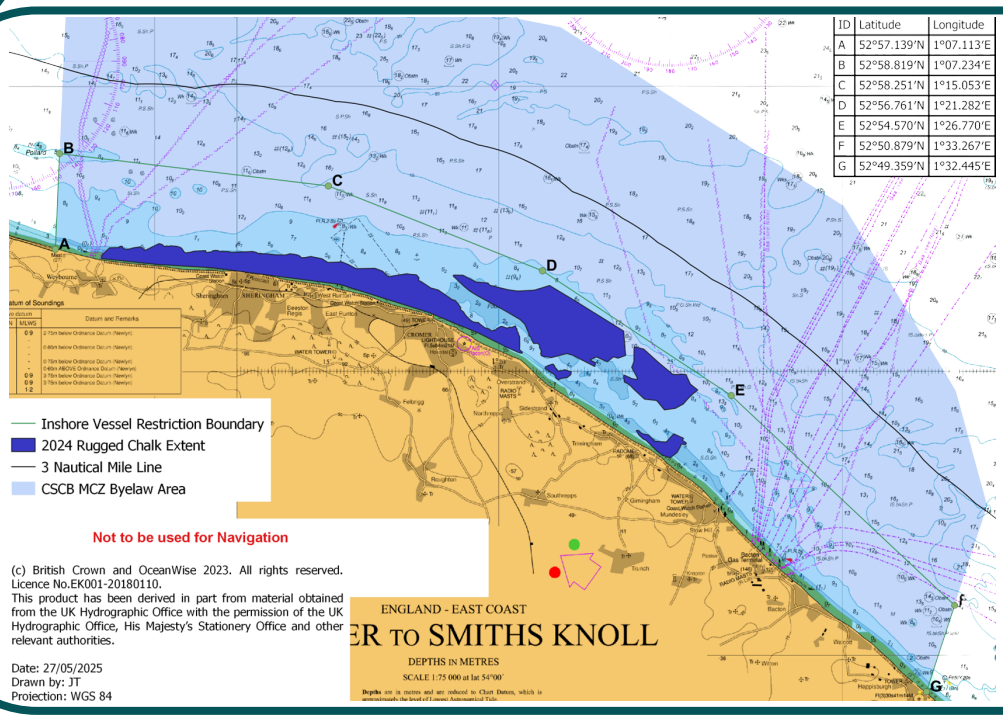
A management plan to develop permit conditions using an incremental approach was agreed in principle.

10 December 2025
Develop and refine rates of damage assessment to inform risk review

Submit Byelaw to Secretary of State for confirmation.

2026
Submit Byelaw back to MMO for final sign off

These Permit Conditions are not currently in effect and will come into effect once the byelaw is confirmed by the Secretary of State

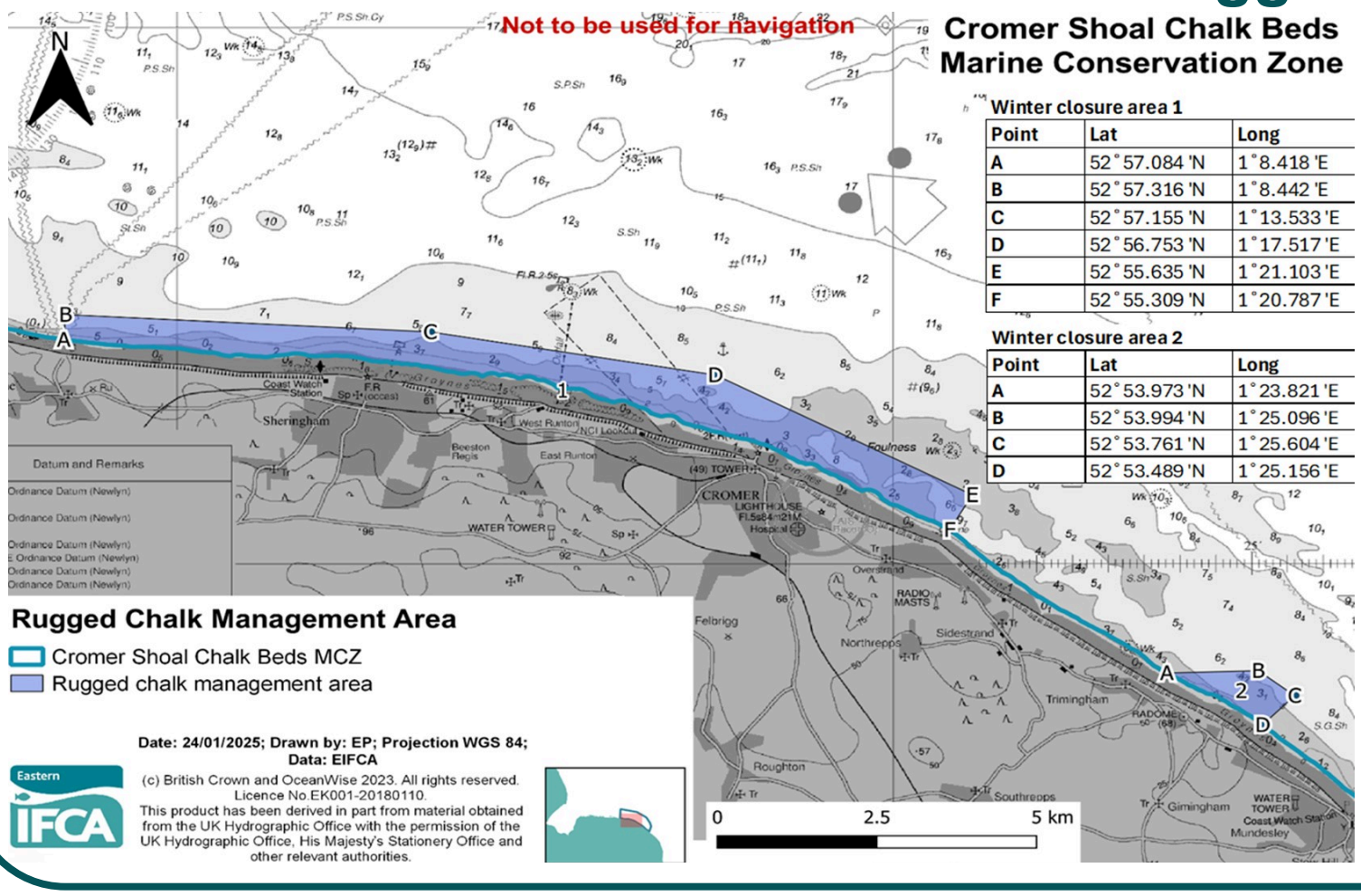


ID	Latitude	Longitude
A	52°57.139'N	1°07.113'E
B	52°58.819'N	1°07.234'E
C	52°58.251'N	1°15.053'E
D	52°56.761'N	1°21.282'E
E	52°54.570'N	1°26.770'E
F	52°50.879'N	1°33.267'E
G	52°49.359'N	1°32.445'E

Inshore vessel restriction

- Fishing with pots is prohibited within 3 nautical miles of the coast inside the MCZ (see chart).
- Beach-launched vessels are the only exception to this restriction.
- Aims to prevent larger vessels which can deploy many more pots from increasing fishing pressure.

Winter closure of the rugged chalk



Winter closure area 1

Point	Lat	Long
A	52°57.084'N	1°8.418'E
B	52°57.316'N	1°8.442'E
C	52°57.155'N	1°13.533'E
D	52°56.753'N	1°17.517'E
E	52°55.635'N	1°21.103'E
F	52°55.309'N	1°20.787'E

Winter closure area 2

Point	Lat	Long
A	52°53.973'N	1°23.821'E
B	52°53.994'N	1°25.096'E
C	52°53.761'N	1°25.604'E
D	52°53.489'N	1°25.156'E

- Fishing using pots is prohibited in the rugged chalk management area (see chart) during **January** and **February**.
- Longer soak times in winter increase the chance of repeated contact with the same chalk features.
- More frequent stormier weather in winter causes more pot movement, raising the likelihood of damage.
- The closure applies only to areas with high-density, complex rugged chalk.

https://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/cscb-mcz-phase-1-permit-conditions/

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INTERIM MEASURES

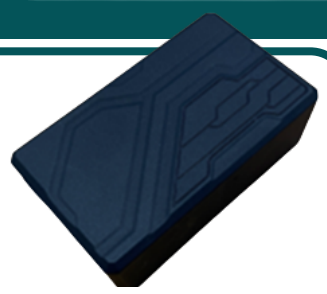
The Authority has brought into effect two temporary interim measures to facilitate to delivery of ARM.

1. All beach launched vessels fishing within the MCZ using pots for crab and lobsters must provide location information every 3 minutes under Byelaw 11.

2. Mandatory closure of the Natural Disturbance Study (NDS) areas under Byelaw 8.

https://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/cromer-shoal-chalk-beds-mcz-interim-measures/

TRACKERS



Eastern IFCA is providing trackers free of charge to facilitate this measure. These trackers must be kept charged and used when potting in the MCZ.

If you have any issues with trackers or need a new one please use the contacts below

CLOSED AREAS

- Three areas (see coordinates) are closed to commercial and recreational potting.
- Marker buoys are placed at all four corners of each area, their positions are indicative so pots should not be set close to them.

Sherigham	52°57.031 'N	1°13.070 'E
	52°57.017 'N	1°13.274 'E
	52°56.894 'N	1°13.250 'E
	52°56.908 'N	1°13.046 'E
West Runton	52°56.887 'N	1°14.558 'E
	52°56.868 'N	1°14.761 'E
	52°56.746 'N	1°14.731 'E
	52°56.764 'N	1°14.528 'E
East Runton	52°56.530 'N	1°16.713 'E
	52°56.501 'N	1°16.913 'E
	52°56.380 'N	1°16.865 'E
	52°56.409 'N	1°16.665 'E

VOLUNTARY MEASURES

Fishers' Code of Best Practice:

1. Pots will never be stored in the MCZ while not being used to actively fish.
2. Pots will be kept out of the rugged chalk if not regularly turned over (at least every 3-4 days) to minimize the risk of damage to gear and the rugged chalk of the MCZ.
3. During winter months and periods of bad weather pots will be kept away from the rugged chalk of the MCZ to minimize the risk of gear loss and damage to the chalk as a result of bad weather.
4. Fishermen will make every effort to retrieve or otherwise make secure (e.g. by moving to deeper water and away from the rugged chalk) any pots at sea prior to any forecasted storm event to prevent pots from becoming lost and to minimize any potential damage to the rugged chalk resulting from stormy weather.
5. If a fisherman is unavailable (e.g going on holiday) they will remove any gear from rugged chalk areas or make arrangements for their gear to be regularly turned over (at least every 3-4 days) by somebody else in their absence.
6. Fishermen will maintain all gear and avoid using old and damaged gear that is more likely to become lost.
7. If gear is old and unwanted, it will be disposed of safely and responsibly and never discarded at sea.
8. Fishermen will make every reasonable attempt to recover gear which has become snagged or lost as soon as possible.
9. If a fisherman is unable to recover gear which has become irretrievably snagged, missing or lost, they will notify Eastern IFCA as soon as practicable.
10. Notify Eastern IFCA with as much detail as possible and include such information:
    - Name and PLN of vessel
    - Type and quantity of gear missing, lost or snagged
    - Date/time when the gear became missing, lost or snagged
    - Position
    - Measures taken to retrieve the gear

https://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/lost-gear-management/

POT TAG INITATIVE

Plastic Tags have been voluntarily rolled out in the CSCB MCZ following a WWF-funded trial.

- Tags will become mandatory once the byelaw comes into effect.
- One tag **should be fixed securely inside the parlour** where movement of catch keeps tags clean.
- To request more tags please use the details below.

Please note: Eastern IFCA has been made aware that some tags have become unreadable due to fouling; this is being reviewed in dialogue with fishermen. Please be aware Eastern IFCA will be in touch with those affected.

CONTACT US ON...

01553 775321

mail@eastern-ifca.gov.uk

Or speak to one of our **IFCOs**

https://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/cromer-shoal-chalk-beds-mcz/