

Wash Cockle Fishery 2026: Full consultation pack

This consultation pack contains the 2026 cockle fishery consultation questionnaire and information material.

This consultation closes at midday on Thursday 11 June 2026

Contents

- Overview and key management measures
- Questionnaire
- High-density juvenile cockle & seal haul-out closures (Charts 1 to 3)
- Wash Shellfish Lays closures
- Operating times
- Draft Permit Conditions
- Wash Cockle Mussel Byelaw: Schedule 2 restrictions
- 2026 Cockle Stock Survey Report

Overview and key management measures

The Authority has drafted management proposals for the 2026 Wash cockle fishery following the completion of the annual Wash cockle survey and initial dialogue with Wash fishing industry at the meeting of 19 May 2026.

The key management measures for the 2026 Wash Cockle Fishery are as follows:

- The Authority is seeking to open the fishery on 15 June 2026 but this is subject to reaching agreement with Natural England
- The earliest date to confirm the opening date and notify industry will be Friday 12 June
- A Total Allowable Catch (TAC) of 4,992 tonnes
- The fishery will start with a 2-tonne daily quota
- The daily quota will be kept under constant review and may be altered to provide adequate opportunity to take the majority of the TAC prior to mid-November when cockle yields reduce
- Closures for the protection of high-density Year-0 cockles will be monitored throughout the fishery and reviewed in the event of die-off being detected
- *The decision to include closures for high-density Year-0 cockles is required under the Wash Cockle Fisheries Management Plan however, following feedback from the fishing industry meeting, the effectiveness of such closures has been considered in more detail, and an associated report has been published.*
- Closures to prevent seal disturbance will be in place until 31 August (opening on 1 September)
- All vessels must have on board trackers (either functioning I-VMS or trackers provided by the Authority) which provide location data at least once in every 3-minutes
- Wash aquaculture areas will remain closed to fishing until such time as the Authority's revised policy on this matter has been implemented, which is anticipated to be during the cockle fishery
- Measures for the protection of small cockles which includes a requirement to sort catch to prevent landed catch containing more than 30% of cockles less than 10mm.
- No management measures specific to the Hunstanton cockle bed are initially proposed. However further consideration is being given to fishing in the area which includes potential limitations on its opening times and tides.
- Other well established management measures, including catch return requirements and restrictions on prop-washing, are also included within Schedule 2 of the Wash Cockle and Mussel Byelaw 2021 ([link below](#)).

The Authority is seeking the views of Industry via a short consultation which will close as of **Thursday 11 June 2026**. The short consultation is intended to facilitate the preferred opening of the fishery (of 15 June 2025).

Questionnaire – Formal Consultation

Wash Cockle Fishery 2026



This consultation closes at midday on Thursday 11 June 2025

We are seeking the views of Wash fishermen about the management measures proposed for a hand-work cockle fishery this year.

We would like your views on all the management measures, but there are some key areas we would like feedback on:

- Opening date of the fishery.
- Closed areas.
- Operating times for the fishery.
- Other management measures.

This questionnaire is intended for you to have your say on our proposals and to inform a decision on the matter.

The information you provide will be processed in accordance with our privacy notice found here: <https://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/consultations/>

Thank you for taking the time to respond to our consultation.

Please return completed questionnaires to the address below. You are welcome to provide a written response instead of filling out a questionnaire, also to the address below.

The CEO
Eastern IFCA
Unit 6 North Lynn Business Village
Bergen Way
King's Lynn
Norfolk
PE30 2JG

This consultation closes at midday on Thursday 11 June 2026

Section 1. Your Details

Please provide your details below. This will enable us to provide specific support if it is requested and to contact you about your answers if we require further clarification.

Full name:

Operating port:

Vessel name(s) and PLN:

Address:

Telephone (landline):

Mobile:

Email:

Section 2: Opening Date

Based on feedback from fishing industry provided at the industry meeting held on 19 May 2026, the Authority is seeking to open the fishery on **Monday 15 June 2026**.

Opening the fishery on this date is dependent on the Authority having reached agreement with Natural England that the fishery will not impact the integrity of the Wash Marine Protected areas.

Opening the fishery on this date will also mean that the earliest the Authority can notify fishing industry of the open date is Friday 12 June 2026 and as such fishing industry will likely have two-days' notice.

Please tick as appropriate

Question	Yes	No
Are you in agreement with the proposed opening date?		
Are you in agreement with the potential for a short notice period for the opening of the fishery?		

Please use the space below to provide the reasons for your answers including any alternative opening dates and any potential impacts for providing short notice that the fishery will open?

Section 3: Closed Areas

The following closures are proposed for this year:

1. Closures to protect high density, juvenile cockles.
2. seal haul-out sites between 1 June and 31 August inclusive.
3. Closures to protect private shellfish lays (Wash Shellfish Lays Charts).

Please use the space below to provide any comments on the proposed closures. Please mark the charts provided as necessary to help illustrate your comments and send these to us along with this consultation.

Section 4: Operating times

The established principles for developing open times are as follows:

- 4 days per week
- Minimum tide height of 6 metres
- Weekdays and preferably Mon to Thursday

At the 2023 Wash Forum, stakeholders identified that often these principles result in the loss of fishing opportunity, and we sought to provide additional fishing opportunities by including 5 day weeks and Sunday openings on occasion to make up for days lost due to long periods of inappropriate tides. We have adopted the same approach in proposing the operating times this year.

To help us understand if the right balance has been achieved, please indicate (tick) your views in relation to the following:	Too few	Just right	Too Many
Sunday Openings			
Friday openings			
5-day weeks			

Please use the space below to provide any comments or thoughts to support your view. Please also provide any suggestions for alternative dates or principles.

Section 5: Other management measures

Please use the space below to provide feedback on any of the other management measures proposed for this year's fishery including the continuation of the 'measures to protect small cockles' and the 'vessel tracker' requirements.

2026 Wash Cockle Fishery: Closed Areas

High Density Year-0 Closures

The cockle Fisheries Management Plan sets out that areas of high-density juveniles (i.e. year-0 cockles at densities of more than 1000 per m²) are closed to the fishery. This is intended to ensure that the juvenile stocks remain above conservation thresholds and to prevent impacts on future fisheries by protecting pre-spawning individuals and areas likely to support fisheries in future years.

There are 19 areas identified as containing high-density juvenile cockles, two of which are broader areas which contain a mixture of higher and lower density Year-0 cockles. These are set out in the charts below along with the seal closures. One of these closures coincide in part with the seal haul-out closure. The proposed closures would protect an estimated 3,133 tonnes of Year-0 cockles, representing 54.9% of the overall biomass of that cohort. In doing so, the fishery would lose access to approximately 5.3% of the biomass of cockles ≥ 14 mm width and 4.2% of the total biomass of cockles older than Year-0. These closures, therefore, offer a good protective value to the stocks, while causing limited restriction on access to larger cockles.

Harbour Seal Haul-Out Sites

Harbor Seals are a protected species within the Wash Marine Protected Areas. The population is in decline, in contrast to the grey seal, and the current conservation advice is to take a precautionary approach to mitigating potential impacts.

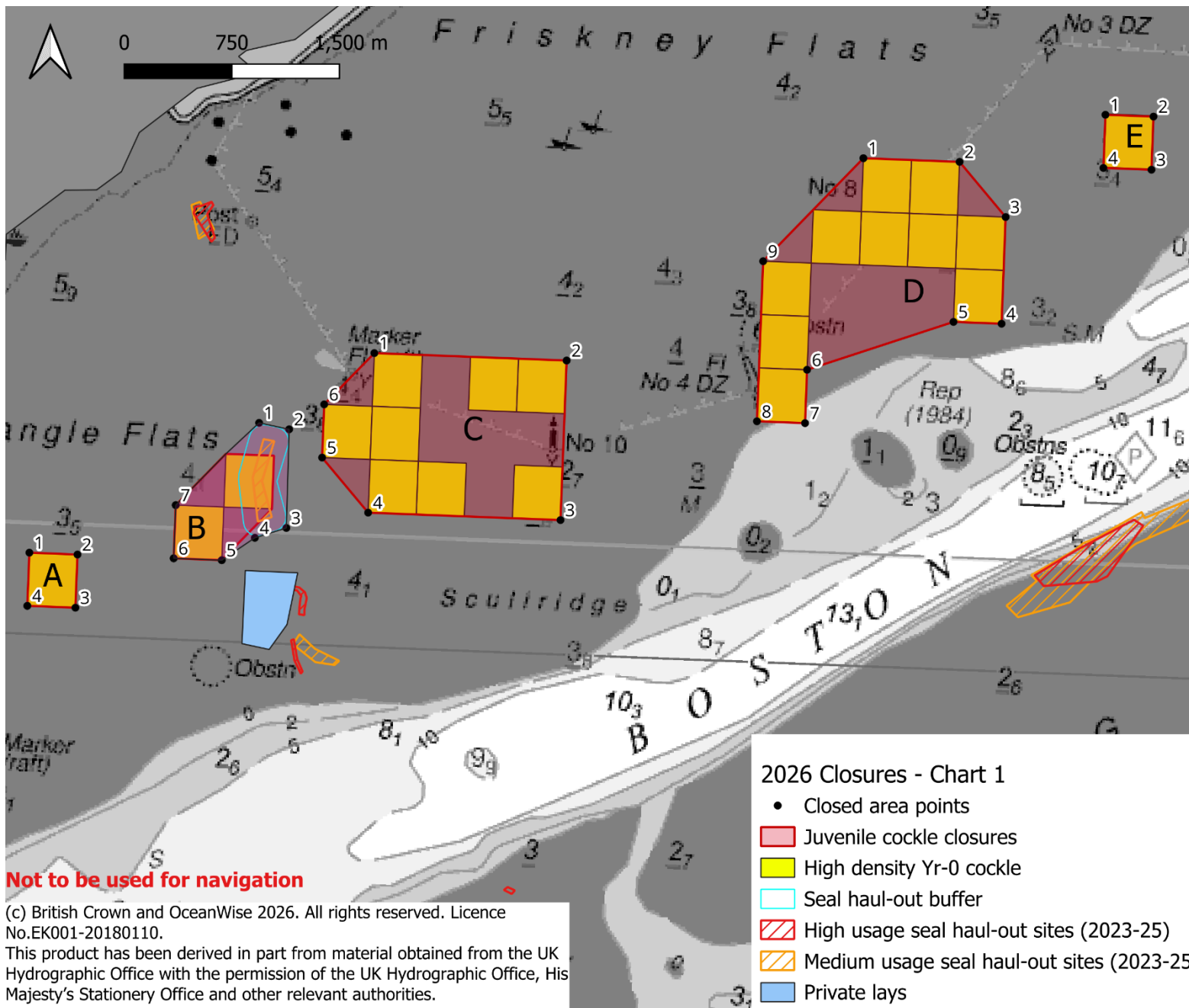
Seals are particularly prone to disturbance during the 'pupping season' between 1 June and 31 August. During this time, seal pups are fed on 'haul-out sites' – drying sands and banks within the Wash. Hand-working near haul-out sites can cause disturbance causing seals to leave the haul-out site and reduce the feeding of young which in turn may reduce the likelihood of pups surviving.

Harbor seal haul-out sites are monitored annually by the Sea Mammal Research Unit who provide data to Eastern IFCA to consider whether the cockle fishery will impact the seal population. Within the Habitat Regulation Assessment, seal data is analysed to determine which areas are important seal haul-out sites and whether they are likely to be visited by fishers in the cockle fishery.

The 2026 assessment identified five areas as being at particular risk to the fishery and it is proposed that this area is closed to the fishery during the sensitive pupping period. Several other areas which represent important haul-out sites are not proposed as closed on the basis of the assessment because the likelihood of

disturbance was much lower (e.g. because a sand-bank will block seals from seeing fishing activity).

The proposed closed area is set out in Charts 1-3 (below).



Not to be used for navigation

(c) British Crown and OceanWise 2026. All rights reserved. Licence No.EK001-20180110.
 This product has been derived in part from material obtained from the UK Hydrographic Office with the permission of the UK Hydrographic Office, His Majesty's Stationery Office and other relevant authorities.

2026 Closures - Chart 1

- Closed area points
- Red box: Juvenile cockle closures
- Yellow box: High density Yr-0 cockle
- Cyan box: Seal haul-out buffer
- Red hatched box: High usage seal haul-out sites (2023-25)
- Orange hatched box: Medium usage seal haul-out sites (2023-25)
- Blue box: Private lays

A	
1	53°0.300 'N 0°10.750 'E
2	53°0.300 'N 0°11.050 'E
3	53°0.100 'N 0°11.050 'E
4	53°0.100 'N 0°10.750 'E
B	
1	53°0.821 'N 0°12.150 'E
2	53°00.801 'N 0°12.339 'E
3	53°00.43 'N 0°12.346 'E
4	53°00.388 'N 0°12.152 'E
5	53°00.300 'N 0°11.950 'E
6	53°00.300 'N 0°11.650 'E
7	53°00.500 'N 0°11.650 'E
C	
1	53°01.100 'N 0°12.850 'E
2	53°01.100 'N 0°14.050 'E
3	53°00.500 'N 0°14.050 'E
4	53°00.500 'N 0°12.850 'E
5	53°00.700 'N 0°12.550 'E
6	53°00.900 'N 0°12.550 'E
D	
1	53°01.900 'N 0°15.850 'E
2	53°01.900 'N 0°16.450 'E
3	53°01.700 'N 0°16.750 'E
4	53°01.300 'N 0°16.750 'E
5	53°01.300 'N 0°16.450 'E
6	53°01.100 'N 0°15.550 'E
7	53°00.900 'N 0°15.550 'E
8	53°00.900 'N 0°15.250 'E
9	53°01.500 'N 0°15.250 'E
E	
1	53°02.100 'N 0°17.350 'E
2	53°02.100 'N 0°17.650 'E
3	53°01.900 'N 0°17.650 'E
4	53°01.900 'N 0°17.350 'E

F		
1	52°57.237 'N	0°06.724 'E
2	52°57.068 'N	0°06.938 'E
3	52°56.931 'N	0°06.611 'E
4	52°57.087 'N	0°06.448 'E

G		
1	52°56.300 'N	0°08.65 'E
2	52°56.300 'N	0°08.950 'E
3	52°56.100 'N	0°08.950 'E
4	52°56.100 'N	0°08.650 'E

H		
1	52°57.100 'N	0°09.850 'E
2	52°57.100 'N	0°10.150 'E
3	52°56.900 'N	0°10.150 'E
4	52°56.900 'N	0°09.850 'E

I		
1	52°53.951 'N	0°04.830 'E
2	52°54.653 'N	0°05.808 'E
3	52°55.291 'N	0°06.852 'E
4	52°55.698 'N	0°07.670 'E
5	52°55.629 'N	0°07.891 'E
6	52°54.810 'N	0°06.994 'E
7	52°54.669 'N	0°06.619 'E
8	52°54.626 'N	0°06.421 'E
9	52°54.343 'N	0°06.089 'E
10	52°54.187 'N	0°05.615 'E
11	52°53.820 'N	0°05.529 'E

J		
1	52°54.874 'N	0°07.559 'E
2	52°54.848 'N	0°07.758 'E
3	52°54.574 'N	0°07.625 'E
4	52°54.574 'N	0°07.418 'E
5	52°54.750 'N	0°07.408 'E

K		
1	52°54.300 'N	0°08.260 'E
2	52°54.300 'N	0°08.560 'E
3	52°54.100 'N	0°08.560 'E
4	52°54.100 'N	0°08.260 'E

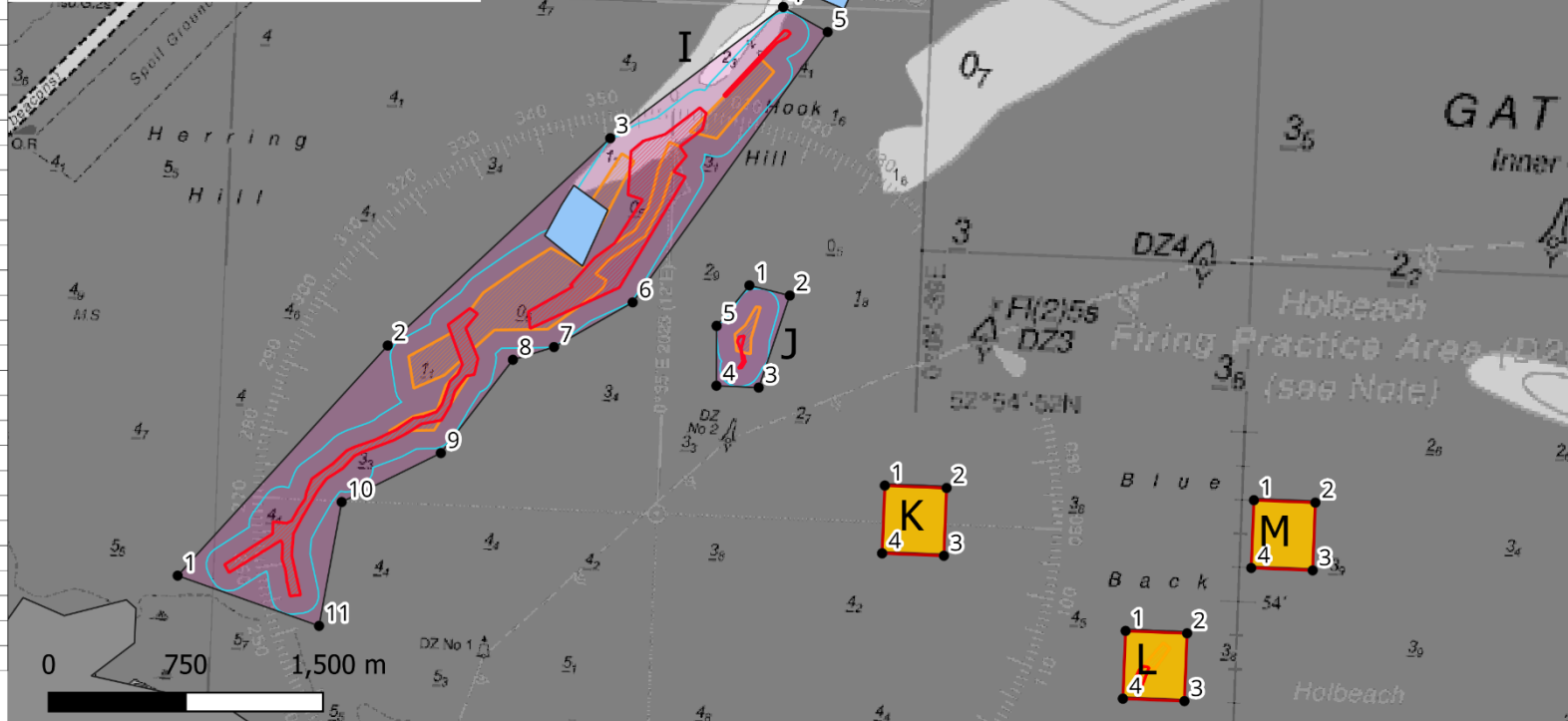
L		
1	52°53.900 'N	0°09.460 'E
2	52°53.900 'N	0°09.760 'E
3	52°53.700 'N	0°09.760 'E
4	52°53.700 'N	0°09.460 'E

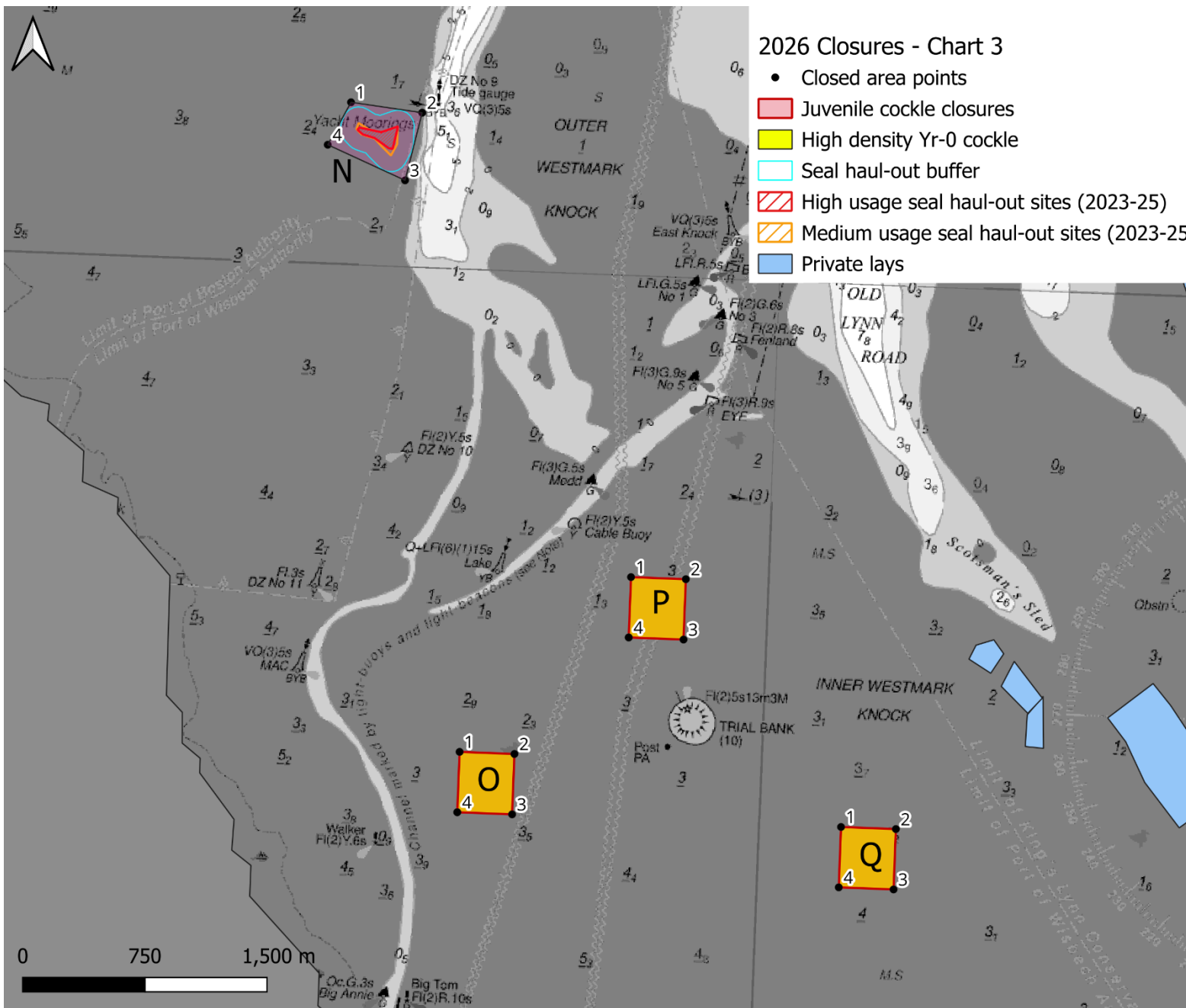
M		
1	52°54.300 'N	0°10.060 'E
2	52°54.300 'N	0°10.360 'E
3	52°54.100 'N	0°10.360 'E
4	52°54.100 'N	0°10.060 'E

2026 Closures - Chart 2

- Closed area points
- Juvenile cockle closures
- High density Yr-0 cockle
- Seal haul-out buffer
- ▨ High usage seal haul-out sites (2023-25)
- ▧ Medium usage seal haul-out sites (2023-25)
- Private lays

(c) British Crown and OceanWise 2026. All rights reserved. Licence No.EK001-20180110.
 This product has been derived in part from material obtained from the UK Hydrographic Office with the permission of the UK Hydrographic Office, His Majesty's Stationery Office and other relevant authorities.





N	
1	52°52.536 'N 0°12.619 'E
2	52°52.510 'N 0°13.010 'E
3	52°52.284 'N 0°12.931 'E
4	52°52.392 'N 0°12.501 'E
O	
1	52°50.400 'N 0°13.350 'E
2	52°50.400 'N 0°13.650 'E
3	52°50.200 'N 0°13.650 'E
4	52°50.200 'N 0°13.350 'E
P	
1	52°51.000 'N 0°14.250 'E
2	52°51.000 'N 0°14.550 'E
3	52°50.800 'N 0°14.550 'E
4	52°50.800 'N 0°14.250 'E
Q	
1	52°50.200 'N 0°15.450 'E
2	52°50.200 'N 0°15.750 'E
3	52°50.000 'N 0°15.750 'E
4	52°50.000 'N 0°15.450 'E

Not to be used for navigation

(c) British Crown and OceanWise 2026. All rights reserved. Licence No.EK001-20180110. This product has been derived in part from material obtained from the UK Hydrographic Office with the permission of the UK Hydrographic Office, His Majesty's Stationery Office and other relevant authorities.

Closures to protect Wash Aquaculture Areas

Positions of Lays

Toft

TOA	52° 57.487'N	0° 10.412'E
	52° 57.600'N	0° 10.269'E
	52° 57.423'N	0° 10.320'E
	52° 57.566'N	0° 10.135'E
TOB	52° 57.600'N	0° 10.269'E
	52° 57.667'N	0° 10.386'E
	52° 57.560'N	0° 10.319'E
	52° 57.612'N	0° 10.422'E
TO1	52° 57.423'N	0° 10.320'E
	52° 57.566'N	0° 10.135'E
	52° 57.352'N	0° 10.126'E
	52° 57.518'N	0° 09.940'E
TO2	52° 57.352'N	0° 10.126'E
	52° 57.518'N	0° 09.940'E
	52° 57.469'N	0° 09.741'E
	52° 57.282'N	0° 09.938'E
TO3a	52° 57.324'N	0° 09.578'E
	52° 57.399'N	0° 09.808'E
	52° 57.187'N	0° 09.716'E
	52° 57.282'N	0° 09.938'E
TO3b	52° 57.324'N	0° 09.578'E
	52° 57.409'N	0° 09.490'E
	52° 57.469'N	0° 09.741'E
	52° 57.399'N	0° 09.808'E
TO4a	52° 57.110'N	0° 09.558'E
	52° 57.244'N	0° 09.400'E
	52° 57.324'N	0° 09.578'E
	52° 57.187'N	0° 09.716'E
TO4b	52° 57.244'N	0° 09.400'E
	52° 57.289'N	0° 09.470'E
	52° 57.377'N	0° 09.378'E
	52° 57.349'N	0° 09.278'E
TO4c	52° 57.324'N	0° 09.578'E
	52° 57.289'N	0° 09.470'E
	52° 57.377'N	0° 09.378'E
	52° 57.409'N	0° 09.490'E

TO5	52° 57.030'N	0° 09.327'E
	52° 57.154'N	0° 09.214'E
	52° 57.110'N	0° 09.558'E
	52° 57.244'N	0° 09.400'E
TO6	52° 56.950'N	0° 09.221'E
	52° 57.086'N	0° 09.086'E
	52° 57.030'N	0° 09.372'E
	52° 57.154'N	0° 09.214'E
TO7	52° 56.950'N	0° 09.221'E
	52° 57.086'N	0° 09.086'E
	52° 56.882'N	0° 09.083'E
	52° 57.021'N	0° 08.940'E
TO8	52° 56.810'N	0° 08.951'E
	52° 56.949'N	0° 08.809'E
	52° 56.882'N	0° 09.083'E
	52° 57.021'N	0° 08.940'E
TO9	52° 56.810'N	0° 08.951'E
	52° 56.949'N	0° 08.809'E
	52° 56.663'N	0° 08.810'E
	52° 56.757'N	0° 08.657'E
TO10	52° 56.567'N	0° 08.529'E
	52° 56.519'N	0° 08.652'E
	52° 56.663'N	0° 08.810'E
	52° 56.757'N	0° 08.657'E
TO11	52° 56.567'N	0° 08.529'E
	52° 56.519'N	0° 08.652'E
	52° 56.440'N	0° 08.438'E
	52° 56.415'N	0° 08.503'E

Closures to protect Wash Aquaculture Areas

Clay Hole

CH1	52° 56.540'N	0° 59.980'E
	52° 56.540'N	0° 61.180'E
	52° 56.630'N	0° 63.300'E
	52° 56.640'N	0° 61.120'E
CH1a	52° 56.630'N	00° 06.300'E
	52° 56.629'N	00° 06.383'E
	52° 56.540'N	00° 06.180'E
	52° 56.540'N	00° 05.980'E
	52° 56.463'N	00° 06.081'E
CH2	52° 56.640'N	00° 06.120'E
	52° 56.630'N	00° 06.300'E
	52° 56.750'N	00° 06.450'E
	52° 56.750'N	00° 06.290'E
CH2a	52° 56.630'N	00° 06.300'E
	52° 56.629'N	00° 06.383'E
	52° 56.540'N	00° 06.180'E
	52° 56.540'N	00° 06.980'E
	52° 56.463'N	00° 06.081'E
CH4	52° 56.850'N	0° 06.580'E
	52° 56.810'N	0° 06.350'E
	52° 56.880'N	0° 06.450'E
	52° 56.900'N	0° 06.680'E
CH6	52° 56.155'N	0° 05.629'E
	52° 56.135'N	0° 05.461'E
	52° 56.077'N	0° 05.462'E
	52° 56.103'N	0° 05.631'E
	52° 56.165'N	0° 05.725'E
	52° 56.210'N	0° 05.724'E
CH7	52° 56.493'N	0° 05.815'E
	52° 56.448'N	0° 05.879'E
	52° 56.454'N	0° 05.660'E
	52° 56.406'N	0° 05.700'E
CH8	52° 56.540'N	0° 05.980'E
	52° 56.463'N	0° 06.081'E
	52° 56.493'N	0° 05.815'E
	52° 56.448'N	0° 05.879'E

Roger

RG1	52° 56.973'N	0° 12.732'E
	52° 57.029'N	0° 12.330'E
	52° 57.414'N	0° 12.914'E
	52° 57.413'N	0° 12.664'E
RG2	52° 57.960'N	0° 11.213'E
	52° 57.877'N	0° 11.310'E
	52° 57.827'N	0° 11.200'E
	52° 57.919'N	0° 11.103'E
RG3	52° 57.884'N	0° 10.873'E
	52° 57.741'N	0° 10.971'E
	52° 57.710'N	0° 10.862'E
	52° 57.790'N	0° 10.689'E
RG4	52° 57.827'N	0° 11.200'E
	52° 57.919'N	0° 11.103'E
	52° 57.884'N	0° 10.873'E
	52° 57.741'N	0° 10.971'E

Black Buoy/Herring Hill

BB1	52° 56.340'N	0° 08.410'E
	52° 56.300'N	0° 08.440'E
	52° 56.260'N	0° 08.310'E
	52° 56.210'N	0° 08.340'E
BB2	52° 56.232'N	0° 08.202'E
	52° 56.190'N	0° 08.310'E
	52° 56.094'N	0° 08.070'E
	52° 56.046'N	0° 08.172'E
BB3	52° 56.094'N	0° 08.070'E
	52° 56.046'N	0° 08.172'E
	52° 55.847'N	0° 08.067'E
	52° 55.886'N	0° 07.932'E
BB4	52° 55.699'N	0° 07.967'E
	52° 55.728'N	0° 07.841'E
	52° 55.847'N	0° 08.067'E
	52° 55.886'N	0° 07.932'E
HH1	52° 54.996'N	0° 06.552'E
	52° 55.088'N	0° 06.627'E
	52° 55.148'N	0° 06.684'E
	52° 54.911'N	0° 06.742'E
	52° 55.078'N	0° 06.855'E

Closures to protect Wash Aquaculture Areas

Thief

TH2	52° 51.200'N	0° 17.760'E
	52° 51.580'N	0° 17.480'E
	52° 51.220'N	0° 17.850'E
	52° 51.600'N	0° 17.550'E
TH4	52° 51.712'N	0° 17.788'E
	52° 51.575'N	0° 17.819'E
	52° 51.511'N	0° 17.853'E
	52° 51.435'N	0° 17.886'E
	52° 51.340'N	0° 17.926'E
	52° 51.351'N	0° 17.987'E
	52° 51.717'N	0° 17.846'E
TH5	52° 51.844'N	0° 17.781'E
	52° 51.917'N	0° 17.789'E
	52° 51.724'N	0° 17.838'E
	52° 51.837'N	0° 17.839'E
TH6	52° 51.922'N	0° 17.536'E
	52° 52.045'N	0° 17.208'E
	52° 52.060'N	0° 17.475'E
	52° 51.908'N	0° 17.292'E
TH7	52° 51.897'N	0° 17.784'E
	52° 51.897'N	0° 17.861'E
	52° 51.837'N	0° 17.839'E
	52° 51.845'N	0° 17.781'E
TH8	52° 51.897'N	0° 17.784'E
	52° 51.897'N	0° 17.861'E
	52° 52.162'N	0° 17.861'E
	52° 52.148'N	0° 17.948'E

Scotsman's Sled

SS1	52° 50.386'N	0° 17.100'E
	52° 50.240'N	0° 17.298'E
	52° 50.330'N	0° 17.489'E
	52° 50.430'N	0° 17.340'E
SS2	52° 50.652'N	0° 16.523'E
	52° 50.600'N	0° 16.447'E
	52° 50.686'N	0° 16.296'E
	52° 50.770'N	0° 16.362'E
SS4	52° 50.819'N	0° 16.150'E
	52° 50.772'N	0° 16.114'E
	52° 50.728'N	0° 16.236'E
	52° 50.794'N	0° 16.303'E
	52° 50.839'N	0° 16.246'E
SS5	52° 50.658'N	0° 16.527'E
	52° 50.595'N	0° 16.444'E
	52° 50.490'N	0° 16.440'E
	52° 50.486'N	0° 16.540'E
SS7	52° 50.386'N	0° 17.100'E
	52° 50.614'N	0° 17.153'E
	52° 50.518'N	0° 16.988'E
	52° 50.430'N	0° 17.340'E
SS8	52° 50.518'N	0° 16.988'E
	52° 50.614'N	0° 17.153'E
	52° 50.430'N	0° 17.340'E
	52° 50.330'N	0° 17.489'E
	52° 50.364'N	0° 17.558'E
	52° 50.644'N	0° 17.226'E
	52° 50.714'N	0° 17.126'E
	52° 50.595'N	0° 16.884'E

Closures to protect Wash Aquaculture Areas

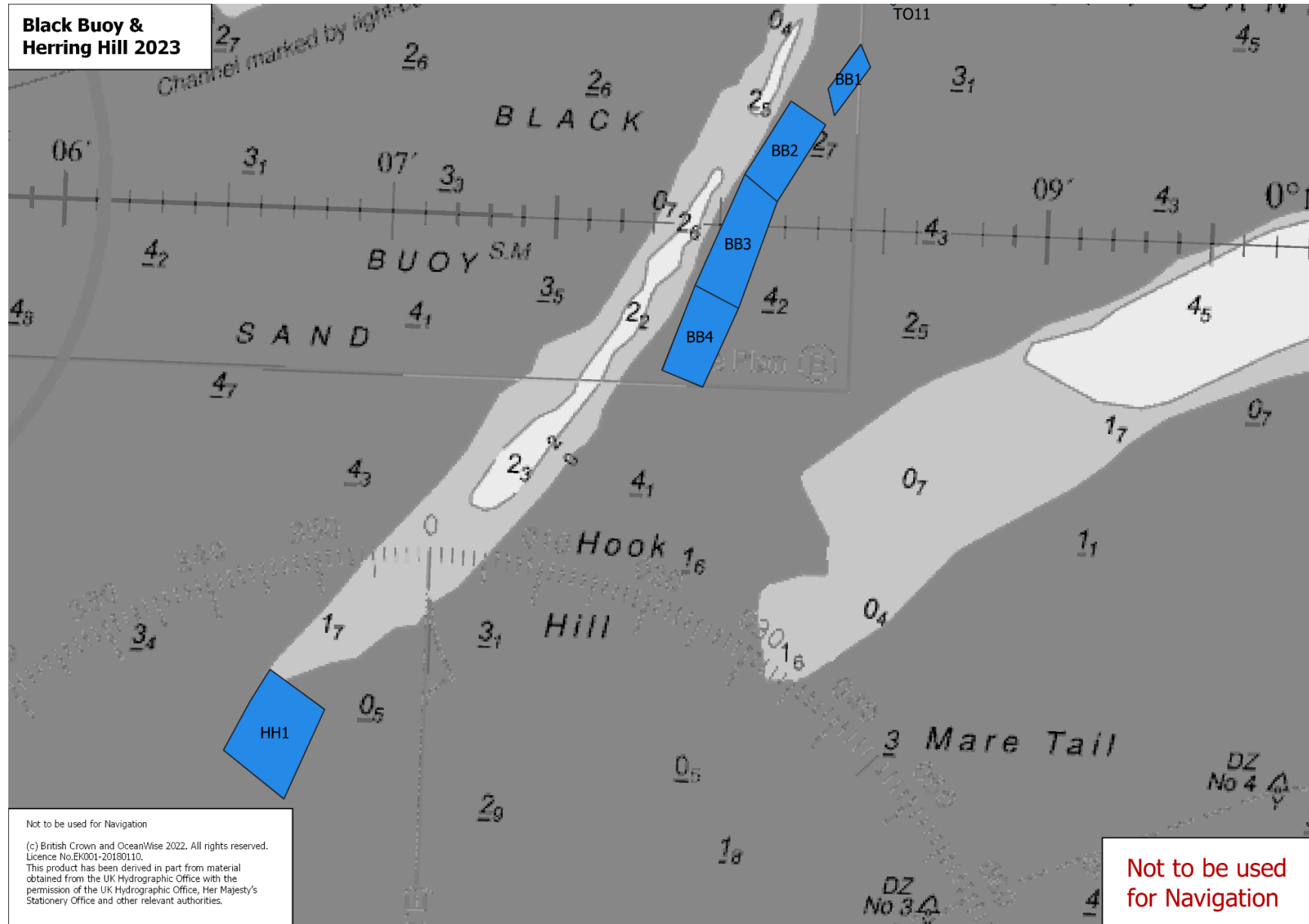
Pandora

P6	52° 51.860'N	0° 21.573'E
	52° 51.808'N	0° 21.651'E
	52° 51.724'N	0° 21.557'E
	52° 51.576'N	0° 21.481'E
	52° 51.600'N	0° 21.385'E
	52° 51.726'N	0° 21.473'E
P7	52° 51.476'N	0° 21.377'E
	52° 51.471'N	0° 21.460'E
	52° 51.576'N	0° 21.481'E
	52° 51.600'N	0° 21.385'E

Wrangle

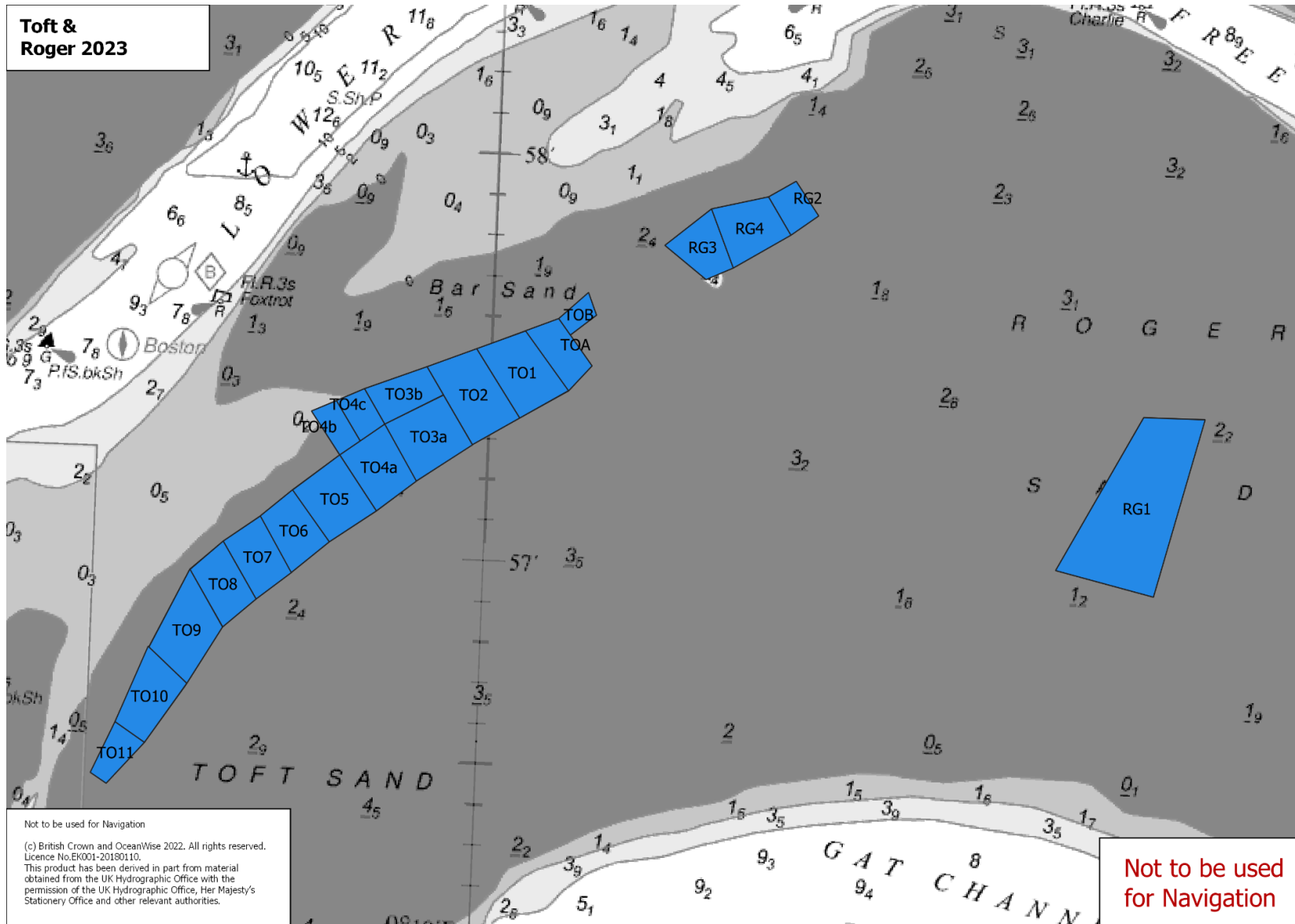
W1	53° 00.264'N	0° 12.100'E
	53° 00.262'N	0° 12.266'E
	52° 59.989'N	0° 12.097'E
	52° 59.979'N	0° 12.194'E
W2	53° 00.262'N	0° 12.266'E
	53° 00.263'N	0° 12.427'E
	53° 00.067'N	0° 12.373'E
	52° 59.971'N	0° 12.268'E
	52° 59.979'N	0° 12.194'E

Closures to protect Wash Aquaculture Areas



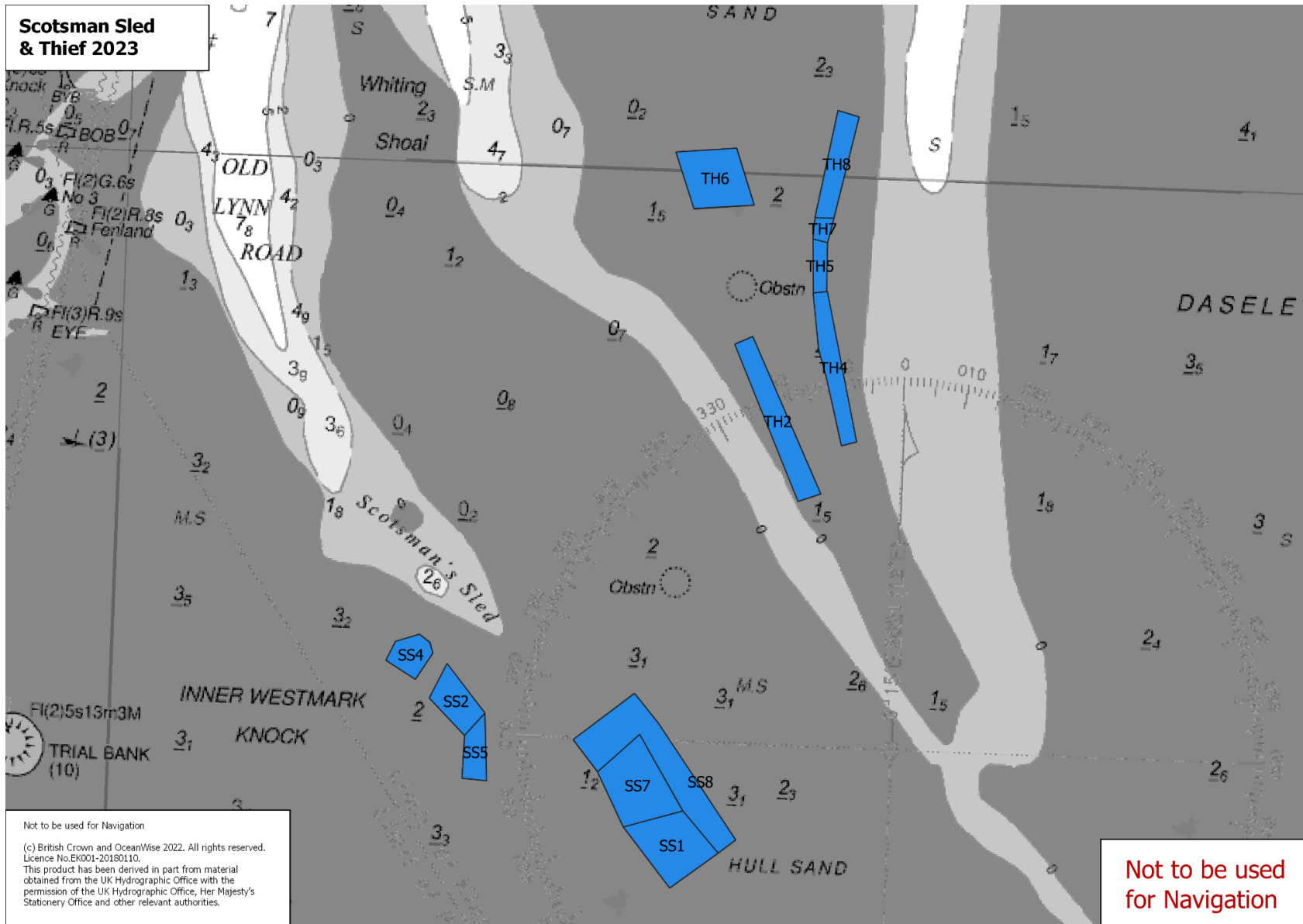
Wash Lays Chart 1 – showing the area of Black Buoy and Herring Hill sands and private lays

Closures to protect Wash Aquaculture Areas

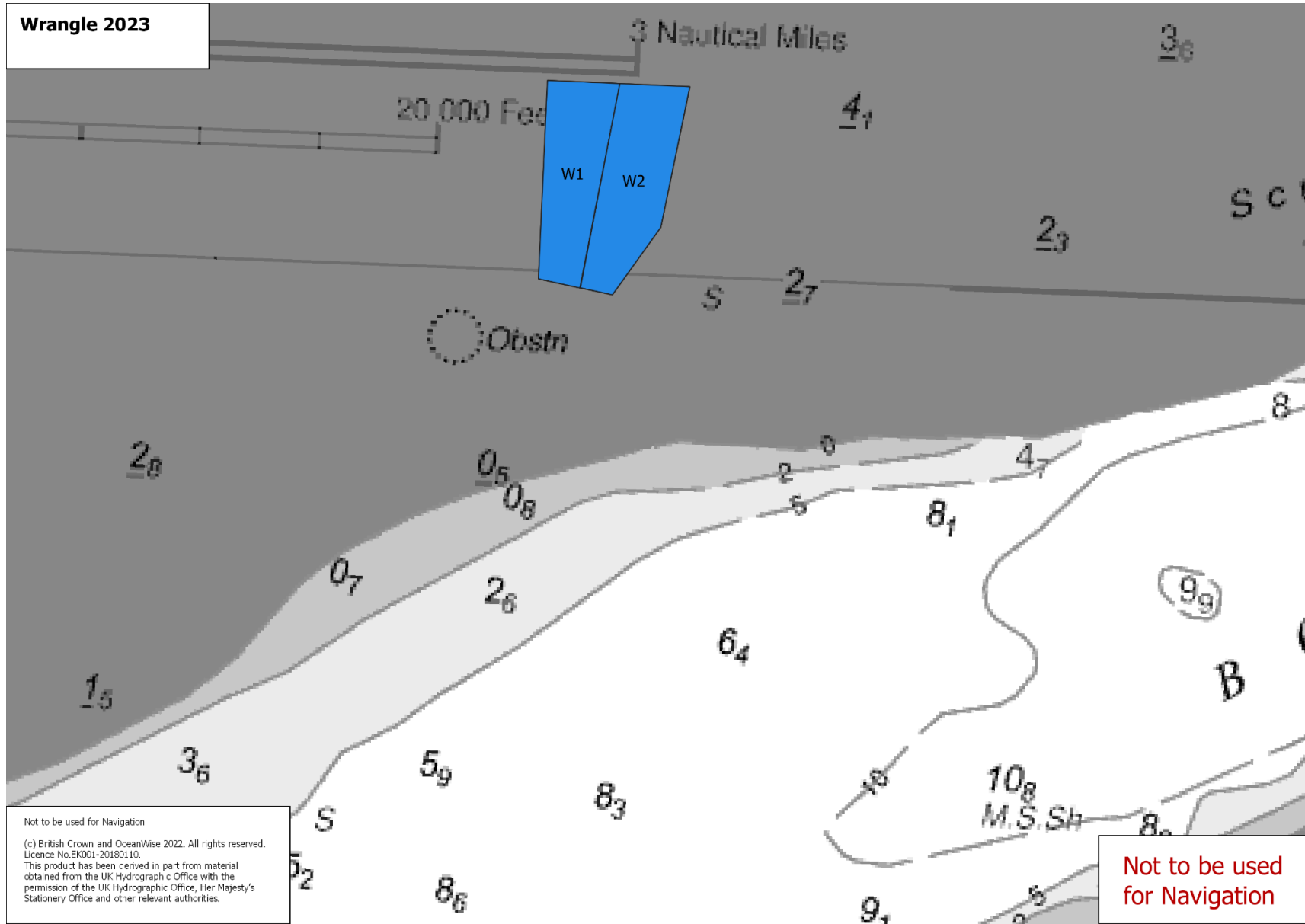


Wash Lays Chart 4 – showing the area of Toft and Roger sands and private lays

Closures to protect Wash Aquaculture Areas



Wash Lays Chart 5 – showing the area of Scotsman Sled and Thief sands and private lays



Wash Lays Chart 6 – showing the area of Wrangle and private lays

In accordance with permit condition 6, it is prohibited to fish outside of the periods specified as open in this schedule.

	White rows are open periods
	Blue rows are closed periods

June

Date	Day	High Water	Height	High Water	Height	Open/close
1	Mon	07:46	6.91	20:12	6.63	
2	Tue	08:19	6.93	20:48	6.52	
3	Wed	08:52	6.88	21:24	6.38	
4	Thu	09:25	6.77	22:00	6.2	
5	Fri	10:01	6.62	22:39	6.01	
6	Sat	10:40	6.43	23:23	5.81	
7	Sun	11:24	6.24	****	****	
8	Mon	00:14	5.64	12:15	6.1	
9	Tue	01:15	5.58	13:15	6.06	
10	Wed	02:23	5.67	14:23	6.16	
11	Thu	03:27	5.91	15:28	6.41	
12	Fri	04:25	6.24	16:30	6.71	
13	Sat	05:21	6.58	17:30	7	
14	Sun	06:13	6.9	18:30	7.25	
15	Mon	07:03	7.17	19:28	7.43	Open 0500hrs
16	Tue	07:51	7.38	20:24	7.49	
17	Wed	08:37	7.48	21:17	7.4	
18	Thu	09:23	7.47	22:09	7.17	
19	Fri	10:09	7.34	23:03	6.84	
20	Sat	10:56	7.12	23:57	6.47	Close 0100hrs
21	Sun	11:45	6.82	****	****	
22	Mon	00:54	6.12	12:40	6.48	
23	Tue	01:53	5.86	13:44	6.17	
24	Wed	02:51	5.73	14:53	5.96	
25	Thu	03:49	5.74	16:00	5.9	
26	Fri	04:43	5.9	17:02	5.97	
27	Sat	05:31	6.13	17:54	6.12	
28	Sun	06:14	6.4	18:41	6.28	Open 0400hrs
29	Mon	06:52	6.64	19:22	6.41	
30	Tue	07:29	6.82	20:00	6.5	

July

Date	Day	High Water	Height	High Water	Height	Open/close
1	Wed	08:03	6.94	20:36	6.54	
2	Thu	08:37	7.02	21:10	6.55	
3	Fri	09:12	7.06	21:45	6.52	Close 2345hrs
4	Sat	09:47	7.03	22:21	6.43	
5	Sun	10:22	6.94	23:00	6.28	Open 0830hrs
6	Mon	11:00	6.8	23:41	6.1	
7	Tue	11:42	6.64	****	****	Close 0130hrs
8	Wed	00:28	5.92	12:32	6.47	
9	Thu	01:27	5.8	13:35	6.31	
10	Fri	02:37	5.8	14:49	6.27	
11	Sat	03:49	5.98	16:06	6.39	
12	Sun	04:58	6.31	17:21	6.66	
13	Mon	06:00	6.72	18:30	7.01	Open 0400hrs
14	Tue	06:54	7.13	19:29	7.31	
15	Wed	07:41	7.47	20:21	7.47	
16	Thu	08:26	7.7	21:09	7.48	
17	Fri	09:09	7.8	21:55	7.31	Close 2359hrs
18	Sat	09:51	7.73	22:38	7.02	
19	Sun	10:32	7.5	23:18	6.64	Open 0830hrs
20	Mon	11:12	7.13	23:59	6.24	
21	Tue	11:57	6.65	****	****	Close 0200hrs
22	Wed	00:44	5.87	12:48	6.12	
23	Thu	01:39	5.56	13:56	5.65	
24	Fri	02:47	5.42	15:19	5.41	
25	Sat	03:59	5.52	16:39	5.51	
26	Sun	05:03	5.82	17:41	5.81	
27	Mon	05:53	6.21	18:29	6.13	Open 0400hrs
28	Tue	06:34	6.57	19:09	6.4	
29	Wed	07:11	6.87	19:45	6.6	
30	Thu	07:45	7.11	20:18	6.75	
31	Fri	08:18	7.3	20:51	6.87	Close 2300hrs

August

Date	Day	High Water	Height	High Water	Height	Open/close
1	Sat	08:51	7.43	21:24	6.91	
2	Sun	09:25	7.47	21:57	6.85	Open 0730hrs
3	Mon	09:58	7.4	22:32	6.7	
4	Tue	10:33	7.24	23:07	6.46	
5	Wed	11:12	6.99	23:49	6.18	
6	Thu	11:59	6.64	****	****	Close 0200hrs
7	Fri	00:42	5.88	13:03	6.23	
8	Sat	01:57	5.66	14:29	5.96	
9	Sun	03:26	5.74	16:06	6.06	
10	Mon	04:49	6.15	17:30	6.51	Open 0230hrs
11	Tue	05:53	6.72	18:33	7	
12	Wed	06:44	7.26	19:25	7.36	
13	Thu	07:28	7.68	20:10	7.54	
14	Fri	08:09	7.96	20:51	7.55	Close 2300hrs
15	Sat	08:48	8.05	21:28	7.41	
16	Sun	09:25	7.95	22:03	7.15	Open 0730hrs
17	Mon	10:02	7.66	22:35	6.81	
18	Tue	10:39	7.21	23:07	6.43	
19	Wed	11:16	6.64	23:43	6.03	
20	Thu	****	****	12:00	5.99	Close 0200hrs
21	Fri	00:29	5.6	13:02	5.36	
22	Sat	01:37	5.26	14:40	5.02	
23	Sun	03:10	5.23	16:18	5.2	
24	Mon	04:32	5.58	17:24	5.67	
25	Tue	05:27	6.1	18:10	6.14	Open 0300hrs
26	Wed	06:10	6.59	18:48	6.52	
27	Thu	06:47	7	19:21	6.81	
28	Fri	07:20	7.32	19:53	7.03	Close 2200hrs
29	Sat	07:53	7.58	20:24	7.18	
30	Sun	08:26	7.75	20:57	7.25	Open 0630hrs
31	Mon	08:59	7.8	21:29	7.2	

September

Date	Day	High Water	Height	High Water	Height	Open/close
1	Tue	09:33	7.71	22:02	7.01	
2	Wed	10:08	7.46	22:37	6.72	
3	Thu	10:48	7.07	23:18	6.34	
4	Fri	11:39	6.52	****	****	Close 0100hrs
5	Sat	00:12	5.91	12:51	5.95	
6	Sun	01:33	5.58	14:36	5.69	
7	Mon	03:18	5.68	16:20	6.03	
8	Tue	04:42	6.23	17:33	6.63	Open 0300hrs
9	Wed	05:42	6.89	18:27	7.13	
10	Thu	06:28	7.43	19:11	7.42	
11	Fri	07:08	7.82	19:48	7.54	Close 2200hrs
12	Sat	07:45	8.04	20:22	7.54	
13	Sun	08:21	8.08	20:54	7.44	Open 0630hrs
14	Mon	08:57	7.92	21:25	7.25	
15	Tue	09:33	7.58	21:54	6.98	
16	Wed	10:06	7.08	22:24	6.64	
17	Thu	10:41	6.49	22:57	6.23	
18	Fri	11:21	5.83	23:37	5.76	Close 0100hrs
19	Sat	****	****	12:18	5.2	
20	Sun	00:38	5.3	14:00	4.84	
21	Mon	02:15	5.11	15:45	5.06	
22	Tue	03:48	5.43	16:52	5.6	
23	Wed	04:51	6	17:39	6.15	Open 0300hrs
24	Thu	05:36	6.57	18:16	6.61	
25	Fri	06:14	7.05	18:50	6.96	Close 2100hrs
26	Sat	06:48	7.44	19:22	7.22	
27	Sun	07:22	7.72	19:54	7.4	Open 0530hrs
28	Mon	07:56	7.91	20:27	7.48	
29	Tue	08:32	7.95	21:00	7.43	
30	Wed	09:09	7.81	21:36	7.23	

October

Date	Day	High Water	Height	High Water	Height	Open/close
1	Thu	09:50	7.46	22:14	6.89	
2	Fri	10:37	6.94	22:59	6.46	
3	Sat	11:36	6.32	23:58	5.99	Close 0100hrs
4	Sun	****	****	13:00	5.79	
5	Mon	01:22	5.68	14:51	5.76	
6	Tue	03:06	5.86	16:16	6.21	
7	Wed	04:25	6.41	17:19	6.73	Open 0230hrs
8	Thu	05:21	6.99	18:07	7.11	
9	Fri	06:05	7.43	18:46	7.31	Close 2100hrs
10	Sat	06:43	7.7	19:19	7.4	
11	Sun	07:19	7.83	19:50	7.44	Open 0500hrs
12	Mon	07:55	7.81	20:21	7.42	
13	Tue	08:31	7.63	20:51	7.3	
14	Wed	09:06	7.29	21:20	7.09	
15	Thu	09:40	6.83	21:49	6.79	
16	Fri	10:15	6.31	22:21	6.41	
17	Sat	10:54	5.77	23:00	5.97	Close 0030hrs
18	Sun	11:47	5.26	23:55	5.53	
19	Mon	****	****	13:12	4.93	
20	Tue	01:16	5.26	14:49	5.05	
21	Wed	02:48	5.41	16:00	5.5	
22	Thu	03:57	5.89	16:52	6.04	
23	Fri	04:49	6.45	17:35	6.53	
24	Sat	05:32	6.95	18:12	6.94	
25	Sun	05:11	7.37	17:48	7.24	Open 0300hrs
26	Mon	05:49	7.68	18:23	7.45	
27	Tue	06:28	7.87	18:59	7.56	
28	Wed	07:10	7.9	19:36	7.53	
29	Thu	07:54	7.73	20:16	7.36	
30	Fri	08:43	7.36	21:00	7.05	Close 2300hrs
31	Sat	09:37	6.85	21:50	6.65	

November

Date	Day	High Water	Height	High Water	Height	Open/close
1	Sun	10:42	6.31	22:50	6.27	
2	Mon	****	****	12:09	5.95	
3	Tue	00:06	6.03	13:39	5.97	
4	Wed	01:39	6.12	14:51	6.25	Open 0001hrs
5	Thu	02:53	6.48	15:50	6.57	
6	Fri	03:50	6.85	16:37	6.82	Close 1830hrs
7	Sat	04:36	7.12	17:15	6.99	
8	Sun	05:17	7.29	17:48	7.12	Open 0300hrs
9	Mon	05:55	7.36	18:20	7.23	
10	Tue	06:33	7.33	18:51	7.28	
11	Wed	07:11	7.19	19:23	7.24	
12	Thu	07:48	6.94	19:54	7.1	
13	Fri	08:22	6.61	20:25	6.88	Close 2230hrs
14	Sat	08:57	6.26	20:58	6.6	
15	Sun	09:36	5.89	21:37	6.27	
16	Mon	10:23	5.54	22:25	5.93	
17	Tue	11:23	5.27	23:26	5.68	
18	Wed	****	****	12:40	5.21	
19	Thu	00:39	5.64	13:54	5.44	
20	Fri	01:52	5.87	14:54	5.84	
21	Sat	02:52	6.28	15:45	6.29	
22	Sun	03:44	6.73	16:32	6.71	Open 0200hrs
23	Mon	04:33	7.13	17:15	7.07	
24	Tue	05:21	7.45	17:56	7.33	
25	Wed	06:09	7.66	18:38	7.51	
26	Thu	06:59	7.72	19:21	7.56	
27	Fri	07:51	7.61	20:06	7.49	Close 2200hrs
28	Sat	08:43	7.34	20:52	7.31	
29	Sun	09:39	6.95	21:42	7.04	Open 0730hrs
30	Mon	10:39	6.52	22:36	6.74	

December

Date	Day	High Water	Height	High Water	Height	Open/close
1	Tue	11:52	6.19	23:39	6.47	
2	Wed	****	****	13:05	6.03	
3	Thu	00:54	6.32	14:10	6.03	
4	Fri	02:09	6.32	15:09	6.15	Close 1700hrs
5	Sat	03:12	6.42	16:00	6.33	
6	Sun	04:07	6.55	16:42	6.53	Open 0200hrs
7	Mon	04:54	6.67	17:21	6.74	
8	Tue	5:39	6.76	17:56	6.93	
9	Wed	06:19	6.81	18:30	7.06	
10	Thu	06:58	6.78	19:04	7.11	
11	Fri	07:35	6.69	19:37	7.09	Close 2130hrs
12	Sat	08:09	6.55	20:10	7.01	
13	Sun	08:44	6.38	20:44	6.87	
14	Mon	09:20	6.18	21:20	6.68	
15	Tue	09:59	5.95	22:00	6.45	
16	Wed	10:43	5.72	22:45	6.23	
17	Thu	11:36	5.55	23:38	6.06	
18	Fri	****	****	12:40	5.5	Close 0200hrs
19	Sat	00:43	6.01	13:5	5.65	
20	Sun	01:54	6.14	14:54	5.95	
21	Mon	03:00	6.42	15:53	6.34	
22	Tue	04:03	6.76	16:48	6.74	
23	Wed	05:04	7.1	17:39	7.11	
24	Thu	06:03	7.38	18:26	7.42	
25	Fri	06:57	7.56	19:12	7.64	Close 2100hrs
26	Sat	07:49	7.59	19:57	7.74	
27	Sun	08:39	7.45	20:42	7.7	Open 0630hrs
28	Mon	9:29	7.16	21:27	7.52	
29	Tue	10:19	6.77	22:13	7.22	
30	Wed	11:12	6.35	23:03	6.83	
31	Thu	****	****	12:09	5.98	Close 0100hrs

Wash Cockle and Mussel Byelaw 2021: Hand-Work cockle Fishery Permit Conditions



2026 Wash Cockle Fishery

Persons operating under the Authority of a **Hand-work Cockle Permit** for the purpose of fishing within the **cockle** fishery, issued under paragraph 8 of the Wash Cockle and Mussel Byelaw 2021 must fish in accordance with the following conditions.

These Permit Conditions apply should be read in conjunction with the Wash cockle and mussel byelaw including the restrictions set out in Schedule 2 of the byelaw which also apply. These restrictions are appended to the permit conditions for ease of reference.

Interpretation

1. In these permit conditions:
 - a. "UK VMS Hub" means the UK's secure interface platform which is maintained by the Marine Management Organisation and the fisheries policy authorities to collect, store and manage fishing boat monitoring data for use by the MMO and fisheries policy authorities.

Opening of the fishery

2. The fishery will open from 0500hrs on 15 June 2026.
3. It is prohibited to fish for, take or remove from the fishery any cockles prior to the open date and time in paragraph 2.

Open / closed areas

4. It is prohibited to fish for, take or remove from the fishery and cockles from any area specified as closed to the fishery in Schedule 1 of these permit conditions.
5. Areas designated as open or closed may be subject to change and Eastern IFCA will provide a minimum of 12 hours' notice of such via text or e-mail to Permit Holders and Nominated Deputies.

Operating times

6. It is prohibited to fish for, take or remove from the fishery any cockles outside of the Operating times specified in Schedule 2 of these permit conditions.

Fishing methods

7. It is prohibited to fish for, take or remove from the fishery any cockles using bottom-towed-gear.

Vessel Monitoring Devices

8. Vessels with an overall length of less than 12m must at all times whilst at sea:
 - a. Have either a Nemo or SC2 I-VMS MMO type-approved I-VMS device installed onboard and operations;
 - b. Have the I-VMS unit switched on and transmitting data to the device supplier hub for onward transmission to the UK VMS Hub at least once in every 3 minutes; and
 - c. Ensure that the device has not been manually overridden, has not been tampered with or damaged and is not obstructed or interfered with so as to compromise or prevent the effective transmission of data to the UK VMS Hub.
9. Subject to condition 10, vessels with an overall length of 12m or more must at all times whilst at sea:
 - a. Have onboard a VMS or VMS+ unit;
 - b. Have the VMS or VMS+ unit switched on and transmitting data to the device supplier hub for onward transmission to the UK VMS Hub at least once in every 3 minutes; and
 - c. Ensure that the device has not been manually overridden, has not been tampered with or damaged and is not obstructed or interfered with so as to compromise or prevent the effective transmission of data to the UK VMS Hub.
10. Where a vessel to which condition 9 applies is not able to meet condition 9(b), condition 9 shall not apply if;
 - a. the vessel has onboard a tracker provided by the Authority; and
 - b. the permit holder or nominated deputy remunerate the Authority for the associated subscription cost.

Measures for the protection of small cockles

11. A person must not remove from the fishery or retain cockles unless cockle catch has been sorted for size in such a manner so as to comply with permit condition 12 and any catch rejected through such sorting must be returned immediately to the sea as close to the area it was taken from and spread evenly and thinly over the cockle bed.
12. It is prohibited to remove from the fishery or land cockle catch which contains more than 30%, by weight, cockles which would pass through a riddle with bar spacing of 10mm.

Confirmation

The Permit Conditions come into effect at 0500hrs on 15 June 2026.

Signed: 

J. Gregory, CEO

Failure to comply with an exemption condition is an offence under section 163(2) of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. The master, owner and charterer (if any) of a vessel used in the commission of an offence shall each be guilty of any such offence and liable to a fine on summary conviction.

Permit conditions are subject to change and fishers will be notified of any amendments to the conditions.

Schedule 1 – Areas closed to the 2025 Wash Cockle Fishery

[charts and operating times have been removed from permit conditions and are available separately for the purpose of the consultation]

Wash Cockle and Mussel Byelaw: Schedule 2 restrictions

Schedule 2 of the Wash Cockle and Mussel Byelaw 2021

The following restrictions apply to fishing in The Wash and should be read in conjunction with relevant permit conditions.



Restrictions in The Wash

The following restrictions apply in relation to fishing for, taking or removing from the fishery, cockles or mussels from within The Wash in accordance with paragraph 4(c) of this byelaw.

Vessel length restrictions

1. Subject to paragraph 2 of this schedule, a person must not use a vessel which is more than 14 metres in overall length to fish for, take or remove, from a fishery cockles or mussels.
2. Paragraph 1 of this schedule does not apply where an exemption existed immediately preceding this byelaw under Regulation 5 (vessel length restrictions) of the Wash Fishery Order and only to the effect and extent that that exemption applied.
3. Any change in beneficial or legal ownership of a vessel exempt under paragraph 2 of this schedule shall cause the exemption to end unless ownership is transferred within the same business and with the agreement of the Authority.

Daily catch restrictions (cockles)

4. A person must not, unless otherwise specified in a flexible permit condition, in any one calendar day, fish for, take (save for doing so with the intention of riddling or otherwise sorting catch in accordance with paragraph 12 of this schedule) or remove from the fishery more than 2000 kilograms or the maximum weight or volume of cockles specified in a permit condition, by hand.
5. For the purpose of determining the weight of catch, no allowance will be given for the weight of any containers or sand or other material.

Daily catch restrictions (mussels)

6. A person must not, unless otherwise specified in a flexible permit condition, in any one calendar day, fish for, take (save for doing so with the intention of riddling or otherwise sorting catch in accordance with paragraph 12 of this schedule) or remove from the fishery:
 - a) more than 4000 kilograms of mussels from a harvestable mussel fishery; or
 - b) more than 8000 kilograms of mussels from a re-laying mussel fishery.
7. For the purpose of determining the weight of catch no allowance will be given for the weight of any containers or sand or other material.

Wash Cockle and Mussel Byelaw: Schedule 2 restrictions

8. A person must not fish for, take or remove any mussels from a harvestable mussel fishery if, during the same calendar day, that person has fished for, taken or removed any mussels from a re-laying mussel fishery.
9. A person must not fish for, take or remove any mussels from a re-laying mussel fishery if, during the same calendar day, that person has fished for, taken or removed any mussels from a harvestable mussel fishery.

Mussel dredge restrictions

10. A person must not use a mussel dredge with an inside opening of more than one metre to fish for, take or remove from a fishery, mussels unless otherwise specified in a permit condition.
11. A person must not use more than two mussel dredges at any one time to fish for, take or remove mussels from a fishery unless otherwise specified in a permit condition.

Sorting of catch

12. A person must immediately return to the sea or seabed any material rejected through the sorting of catch of any bivalve mollusc, as near as possible to the place from which it was taken and must spread it thinly and evenly over that area.

Transshipping prohibition

13. A person must not tranship or otherwise relocate any cockles or mussels, or containers of any description containing any cockles or mussels, caught from the fishery from one vessel to another.

Requirement to land (cockles)

14. Subject to paragraph 15 of this schedule, a person fishing for cockles must:
 - a) take any cockles caught straight to port;
 - b) land such cockles immediately; and
 - c) not leave cockles on the sand or deposited in the water in bags or any other container for later collection.
15. Paragraph 14 of this schedule does not apply where a person has written authorisation from the Authority to re-lay cockles onto private shellfish aquaculture areas prior to them being landed.
16. A person must not land cockles on more than one occasion during one calendar day.

Wash Cockle and Mussel Byelaw: Schedule 2 restrictions

Dual fishing prohibition

17. A person must not fish for, take, or remove, from a fishery any cockles or mussels under the authority of a permit if, on the same calendar day that person fishes for, takes or removes cockles or mussels from:
- a) within The Wash under the authority of a separate permit issued under this byelaw; or
 - b) within the Wash or the le Strange Estate other than under the authority of a permit.
18. A person must not have on board any bottom towed gear which could be used to fish for, take or remove from the fishery within The Wash any cockles or mussels when fishing for, taking or removing from a fishery any cockles or mussels from a hand-work fishery within The Wash.

Standard bags

19. A person must not land mussels or cockles unless the species caught is contained in a bag which must:
- a) be of the following dimensions:
 - i. 60 centimetres or 120 centimetres in height;
 - ii. 97 centimetres in depth;
 - iii. 97 centimetres in width; and
 - b) have the words 'Wash Fishery' written on at least two sides with lettering which is at least ten centimetres tall.

Prop-washing

20. A person fishing for cockles must not use an anchor which affixes the vessel to the bottom of the seabed during the practice of prop-washing;
21. A person must spread any cockles dislodged by prop-washing thinly and evenly over the ground, as near as possible to the area from which they were dislodged before leaving the area fished.