



BERWICKSHIRE & NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND  
COAST EUROPEAN MARINE SITE

[www.xbordercurrents.co.uk](http://www.xbordercurrents.co.uk)

**Steering Group Meeting**  
**10.30am 3 May 2012**  
**Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Berwick**

**Present:**

Claire Hedley	CH	EMS Implementation Officer
Jill McCormick	JM	Environment Agency
Karen Rentoul	KR	Scottish Natural Heritage
Georgia Conolly	GC	St Abbs & Eyemouth VMR
Annie Cunningham	AC	Newcastle University and MSc Student

**Apologies:**

David Feige	DF	Northumberland County Council
Janet Khan-Marnie	JKM	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Richard Kehoe	RK	Scottish Natural Heritage
Andy Tharme	AT	Scottish Borders Council
Jon Green	JG	Northumberland Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority (NIFCA)
Jodie Royal	JG	Northumberland Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority (NIFCA)
Catherine Scott	CS	Natural England

**1. Welcome and apologies**

The members introduced themselves and apologies were given (see above).

CH commented on the reduced numbers of the Steering Group now that the role of the chair, Northumberland County Council and the Northumberland Coast AONB are provided by David Feige alone. CH suggested that now might be a good time to open up a couple of seats to other members of the Management Group.

**ACTION: CH draft a letter to members of the Management Group to see if there is any interest in joining the Steering Group. CH will consult the Steering Group before sending anything out.**

**2. Previous minutes and matters arising**

The previous minutes were accepted and will be published on the EMS website.

Partners are still interested in setting up a joint meeting to enable cross-border working.

**ACTION: CH will send out an invitation and request topics to be included on the agenda. CH will then liaise with partners to arrange a meeting.**

### **3. Implementation update**

CH explained that a great deal of time is time required to undertake the implementation catch-up sessions with each authority and record the outcomes of these meetings. CH attends these meetings, takes notes, and then has to return to the office to type the notes up. Often a few days can pass before this is done. CH asked the group if some of the reserve funds - left over from when the EMS officer post was vacant – could be used to purchase a netbook. This will allow CH to type notes while at the meetings and would save a great deal of time and duplication of effort. This will cost between £200-£300 and would include a license for Microsoft Office applications. The netbook can also be used at other meetings and during train journeys. The group agreed that this would be a valuable purchase. CH had already spoken to RK, DF and Sara Rushton who is CH's team leader, and all agreed that the purchase would be of benefit to the work of CH.

**ACTION: CH to liaise with NCC procurement to arrange purchase of netbook.**

There have been no further updates regarding the letter sent by the Marine Conservation Society (MCS) and Client Earth (CE) to the Marine Management Organisation. Although the MCS and CE have responded to the MMO, this response has not been made publically available.

**ACTION: CH to send links to the letters on the MMO website to GC.**

### **4. EMS officer update**

CH talked through the officer update paper. It was reported that CH will now attend the Farne Islands Advisory Committee meetings as an observer. CH attended the April meeting where a talk from Keith Todd, the manager of the new Marine Station at St Abbs was given. The next meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> June will focus on a joint project between the National Trust and a Scottish partner to look at the detection of viruses and disease in grey seal.

### **5. Forum**

During the annual implementation catch-up sessions, CH will be asking authorities to recommend topic ideas for this year's forum. CH also plans to send out a Mail Chimp campaign to gather topic ideas. Discussion was held about the location of the Forum and a preference was expressed towards somewhere with good parking and a train link.

**ACTION: CH and DF to talk about the Forum. CH to consult with Steering Group members.**

### **6. Peregrini Lindisfarne Landscape Partnership**

Those present were happy to sign off the Terms of Reference. CH has spoken to the EMS chair, Tom Cadwallender, who is happy to sign the document on behalf of the EMS. KR expressed a concern that the project would take up a lot of CHs time. CH informed the group that this has been an issue but is now managing the problem. The Peregrini Board is now aware of the level of capacity CH can give to the project and this will be monitored carefully by CH.

JM asked whether there are any opportunities through Peregrini to engage with the community about the work the EA undertakes. CH advised that opportunities were minimal at this stage but may open up in the project delivery phase. CH advised that JM may want to come along to one of the natural environment working group meetings.

**ACTION: CH to discuss Peregrini with JM and if she wants to get involved, check with the Peregrini natural environment group whether they would be happy to invite the EA to attend.**

## **7. Finance**

All finance is now confirmed for 2012-13 except £185.00 from Berwick Harbour Commission (BHC). CH has a meeting with the harbour master in May and will confirm whether they are able to contribute.

**Action: CH to confirm BHC funding.**

## **8. Partner Update**

GC – there is history of locals burning rubbish on the beach at St Abbs. It is thought that this is commercial rubbish from the harbour, rather than everyday rubbish. It is questionable whether this is having an impact upon the marine environment as the remains are washed into the sea on the high tide. GC asked the group for advice on ways of approaching the issue given the fragile relations at the moment between the VMR and the community. GC has already been in touch with Scottish Borders Council (Darren Silcock) and has spoken to Cllr Michael Cook. CH suggested that it may be worth raising the health and safety issues associated with this activity as the Council may have concerns given the recreational use of the beach. CH offered to provide support in approaching both the council and the harbour.

The VMR constitution has been revised. There have been a number of occasions where creels have been slashed and this is affecting the relationship between fishermen and divers. GC has written an article to try and raise awareness. The voluntary marine ranger will be appointed soon. The Young Marine Rangers project is running and is very successful. GC is also undertaking other outreach and awareness raising activities.

JM – there will be a full survey of Budle Bay and Fenham Flats in the summer to look at the seagrass beds and the macroalgae. This will hopefully inform the Water Framework Directive status for the area, which is presently unclear. JM invited CH to attend some of the survey work. There will be a new member of staff starting with the EA in the next few weeks who will be sharing JM's workload. The new appointee will be welcome at future Steering Group meetings. CH offered to come and talk to the new member about the EMS if needed. JM is attending a conference on contentious marine licensing applications.

**ACTION: JM to send CH dates for survey work and CH to attend.**

KR – the first phase recommended Marine Protected Areas have been submitted to Scottish Government along with the third party recommended sites. At this stage, there are none within or adjacent to the EMS proposed. The closest is an offshore site adjacent to Fife and the Lothian's – the Wee Bankie – which could be protected for its importance for sand eel. CH noted the

difference between the Scottish MPAs and English Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs). MCZs will not protect sand eels and will not be designated for their importance to sea birds. At the moment, there is no date by which sites are expected to be designated.

**ACTION: KR will inform CH and GC when more information is known.**

## **8. Date of next meeting**

Please note the time changes below. The dates remain the same but we will meet slightly earlier to fit in with train times.

**THURSDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> JUL 2012 (TBC) 10.45am Council Offices, Berwick upon Tweed**

**THURSDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> NOV 2012 10.45am Council Offices, Berwick upon Tweed**

The meeting closed at 12.05pm.

Annie Cunningham presented a talk on her MSc project. Using UKCP09 sea surface temperature projections and ecosystem modelling tools, Annie hopes to predict the potential date when optimal environmental conditions will be reached in the EMS, allowing the Pacific oyster (*Crassostrea gigas*) to reproduce naturally. *C. gigas* is a very adaptable species listed as one of the most invasive marine non-natives in the UK. Although no records have been made on the North East coast, *C. gigas* is present in natural populations further south where management and control is taking place. The spread of *C. gigas* is also noted in the 2010 DEFRA Risk Review of EMS as a threat to EMS. Annie's presentation will be circulated to the Steering Group.

## **Table of Actions**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>CH draft a letter to members of the Management Group to see if there is any interest in joining the Steering Group. CH will consult the Steering Group before sending anything out.</b>	<b>Not done</b>
<b>CH will send out an invitation for cross-border group and request topics to be included on the agenda. CH will then liaise with partners to arrange a meeting.</b>	<b>Pending</b>
<b>CH to liaise with NCC procurement to arrange purchase of netbook.</b>	<b>Done</b>
<b>CH to send links to the letters on the MMO website to GC.</b>	<b>Done</b>
<b>CH and DF to talk about the Forum. CH to consult with Steering Group members.</b>	<b>Done</b>
<b>CH to discuss Peregrini with JM and if she wants to get involved, check with the Peregrini natural environment group whether they would be happy to invite the EA to attend.</b>	<b>Done</b>
<b>CH to confirm BHC funding.</b>	<b>Done</b>
<b>JM to send CH dates for survey work and CH to attend.</b>	<b>Done</b>
<b>KR will inform CH and GC when more information is known about MPAs.</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>CH to circulate Annie's presentation to the Steering Group</b>	<b>Done</b>

(The status column will be populated over the coming three months prior to the next Steering Group meeting).