



Berwickshire & Northumberland  
Marine Nature Partnership

**Management Group Meeting**  
**10.00am 11<sup>th</sup> December 2018, Berwick WorkSpace**

**Present:**

Jane Delany	JD	Newcastle University, Chair of B&N MNP
Nick Brodin	NB	MNP Project Officer
Don O'Meara	DO'M	Historic England
Neil Robinson	NR	Marine Management Organisation
Natalie Wallace	NW	Northumberland Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority
Mario Ray	MR	St Abbs and Eyemouth Voluntary Marine Reserve
Fay Hieatt	FH	River Tweed Commission
Karl Ferguson	KF	River Tweed Commission
Angela Woodburn	AW	Warkworth Harbour Commission
Catherine Scott	CS	Natural England
Andrew Craggs	AC	Natural England
Paula Lightfoot	PL	Newcastle University
Liza Cole	LC	National Trust for Scotland
Anthony Crook	ACr	Environment Agency

**Apologies:**

David Feige	DF	Northumberland County Council (AONB)
James Maclean	JM	Northumbrian Water
Stuart Pudney	SP	Northumbrian Water
Liz Hall	LH	Scottish Borders Council
Zara Ravenscroft	ZR	Environment Agency
Anna Griffin	AG	SEPA
Martin Willis	MW	Port of Blyth
Helen Quayle	HQ	RSPB
Christine Bell	CB	Eyemouth Harbour
Eamon Murphy	EM	Marine Scotland
Doreen Bell	SW	Scottish Water
Andy Tharme	AT	Scottish Borders Council
Sarah Russell	SR	St Abbs and Eyemouth Voluntary Marine Reserve (VMR)
Duncan Hutt	DH	Northumberland Wildlife Trust
Alan Punton	AP	Warkworth Harbour Commission

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

JD welcomed everyone to the meeting. Attendees introduced themselves and NB announced apologies.

## **2. Previous Minutes and Matters Arising**

Previous minutes from December 2017 were accepted. Any matters arising were dealt with as part of the main agenda.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Status</b>
Discuss potential of provide MNP-related stories for CoCoast volunteers	NB	Complete
Circulate links to national reports once they are published	NB	Ongoing
Let NB know about any queries or concerns about the content of the partnership MoU	All	Ongoing
Think about any training needs around marine protected areas or their management and feed back to NB	All	Complete

## **3. Officer Update and proposed future work**

NB gave a presentation to update the group on progress since the last meeting. A copy of this is attached to the minutes.

A major piece of work this year has been the creation of a new online toolkit for the Partnership. This has been funded through a grant from HLF through their Resilient Heritage programme. NIFCA have fronted the bid on behalf of the wider partnership. The grant included money both for the creation of the toolkit and for the provision of training to MNP partners. NB held a training event on marine protected areas in Newcastle on 26th November which was attended by 18 people. NB is happy to hold additional training events either for groups or on a one to one basis. If anyone would like a training session on marine protected areas then contact NB **Action All** The new toolkit will be going live soon at [www.xbordercurrents.co.uk](http://www.xbordercurrents.co.uk) and NB gave a demonstration of the beta version and the information it contains. The toolkit is very much intended as a working tool for the members of the partnership and NB invited any feedback on its content and ease of use.

Regular beach litter surveys have been carried out at four beaches in South East Northumberland/North Tyneside. NB thanked the volunteers who had helped contribute towards this. The data collected compliments surveys carried out in Scotland by the St Abbs and Eyemouth Voluntary Marine Reserve and in North Northumberland by the Coast Care project. The combined data from these three sources shows clearly that that plastics remain the biggest single source of litter on our beaches. Much of this is in the form of plastic pieces but fishing line and plastic rope are also an issues. Sanitary items are more in evidence since the last systematic survey of the area's beaches in 2007, with a noticeable increase in the number of wet wipes found on beaches in the last ten years. NB will be writing-up the results of the surveys and identifying any follow-on actions required.

A number of consultation responses have been submitted on behalf of the partnership during the last 12-months. These include comments of draft Conservation Advice Packages, Defra's Tranche 3 MCZ consultation, and Scottish Borders Council's revised Biodiversity Action Plan.

NB looked forward to some upcoming work for the remainder of the year. This included an NE-funded stakeholder engagement project around the Coquet to St Mary's MCZ, a review of the current EMS Management Scheme, and input Iteration 3 consultation of the North East Marine Plan.

## **4. Discussion on partnership priorities for the coming year**

As an introduction to the discussion about shared priorities for the partnership, JD asked all the participants at the meeting to say a bit more about their current activities and priorities around the marine environment:

FH: the main marine priorities of the River Tweed Commission are around migratory salmon and sea trout and related fisheries enforcement issues.

AC: Water quality and its impact on seagrass (*Zostera*) communities are a great concern at the Lindisfarne NNR and liaison with the Environment Agency is ongoing over this.

During the summer there is a lot of activity around shorebird wardening. The NNR have also been working closely with the Coast Care project over litter surveys and beach cleans.

CS: In addition to their work at Lindisfarne NNR, Natural England are engaged in a fishing and MPAs with Northumberland IFCA. CS is still waiting to hear the results of internal funding bids for other work.

ACr: the Environment Agency are engaged in an investigation into nutrient sources at Budle Bay/Holy Island. A stakeholder meeting was held in November to present the initial results.

Funding has also been secured for the Coquet Estuary for work on WFD improvements focused on nutrients and algae. As part of the work, Nick Wright from Newcastle University will be installing devices to measure nitrate levels.

Internal funding bids have been put in for other work. If successful, these are likely to include macrophyte surveys of the Coquet and Wansbeck.

NR: Changes to the Landing Obligation ("Discards Ban") are likely to be a significant work area for the MMO. On 1st January 2019, all quota species of fish will be covered by the requirements. All species landed will count towards an individual quota. Measures are being developed for the Farnes Deeps to raise the number of prawns in the area.

AW is commercial Manager for Warkworth Harbour Commission and was at the meeting to learn more about the work of the partnership and how it might affect Amble Harbour.

LC: The National Trust for Scotland have continued their regular monitoring of seabird populations at St Abbs Head. Over a 5-year period most species have shown declines in numbers, however auks and razor bills have shown an increase over this period.

There have also been large increases in seal pupping around St Abbs Head, with pupping seals now found on some publicly accessible beaches. This has led to greater instances of interaction with the people. Temporary electric fencing is being trialled to prevent pups from hauling up onto the Berwickshire Coastal Path and to keep people away from sensitive areas.

The National Trust for Scotland have been working with Edinburgh Napier University on research into the impacts of people on seabirds.

DO'M is Science Advisor in Historic England's Regional Office and was at the meeting predominantly to find out more about the work of the partnership.

NW: Northumberland IFCA are engaged in the fishing and MPAs project with Natural England. Last week saw the publication of a modification to Bylaw 7 with three small areas of sediment within the Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC now open to trawl fishing under licence. Work is also ongoing to raise awareness about beach litter.

PL: Natural England have provided funding to Newcastle University for a project looking at Marine Strategy Framework Indicators and the use of drones and remote sensing data for marine monitoring.

JD: Newcastle University has declared an ambition to become a world-leader on research into marine plastics. Currently taking on a Post-Doctoral researcher to look at microplastics in plankton.

The Capturing Our Coast project is coming to a close and the results are currently being analysed. Some elements will be ongoing, such as the Marine Invaders project and the CoastXplore phone app (<https://www.capturingourcoast.co.uk/content/coastxplore>).

A proposal is being developed for the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) for a project on public engagement in environmental research, including exploring citizen science with hard to reach groups. Newcastle of University has also instigated a series of regular citizen science network events.

A discussion followed about any potential priorities for the partnership as a whole. The need for a better understanding of the impacts of disturbance and the impacts of marine litter both featured strongly in the discussions of organisational concerns. This led to a wider consideration of data gaps within the partnership area. It was agreed that the partnership needs to do more work on looking at data and evidence. NB will collate an initial list of research questions for the Berwickshire and Northumberland coast and organise a workshop in the spring to discuss these in more detail and look at ways in which these questions can be answered **Action NB**

## **5. AoB**

Nothing raised.

## **6. Presentation: Mario Ray - Update from the St Abbs and Eyemouth Voluntary Marine Reserve**

MR gave a presentation about the work of the St Abbs and Eyemouth Voluntary Marine Reserve (VMR). A copy of the presentation is attached.

The VMR has received funding from Scottish Borders LEADER and Blue Marine for a 2-year seabed interpretation project. This will include seabed mapping with SONAR and 3D seabed modelling which will be available on an interactive website. Footage is being taken with a 360 degree underwater camera and an augmented reality trail will be created to allow people to view underwater scenes on their phones at certain locations. Work will be undertaken with schools, including working with children to develop computer games based on the VMR. The tools developed will also aid local decision making

The VMR will soon be rebranding as the Berwickshire Marine Reserve.

## **7. Presentation: Paula Lightfoot - Mapping recreational pressures on the Berwickshire and Northumberland Coast**

PL gave a presentation research being carried out to map recreational pressures along the Berwickshire and Northumberland coast. A copy of the presentation is attached.

The project is a collaboration between Natural England and Newcastle University which runs between April 2018 and March 2019. It aims to understand the distribution and intensity of recreational activities between Fast Castle Head and St Mary's Island, and their potential impacts on MPA features. Predictive models are being used to identify areas which might be vulnerable from recreational activities due to the presence of sensitive features.

## **8. Chairman's summary**

JD thanked everyone for their attendance. There is clearly a wide variety of action being undertaken by different organisations and an appetite to explore collaborations for the collection and sharing of data.

## **Table of actions**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Status</b>
Contact NB if you would like a training session on marine protected areas	All	
Collate an initial list of research questions for the Berwickshire and Northumberland coast and organise a workshop in the spring to discuss these in more detail	NB	