



# Berwickshire & Northumberland Marine Nature Partnership

## Data, Research and Monitor needs follow-up meeting

Friday 11th October 2019

Lindisfarne NNR Reserve Base, Beal Station

**Present:** Andrew Craggs (NE), Catherine Scott (NE), Katherine Dunsford (Berwickshire Marine Reserve), Liza Coles (NTS), Malcolm Fraser (SNH), Joe Richards (Blue Marine Foundation), Bethany Cowan (Lindisfarne NNR volunteer/postgraduate research student), Anne Brown (SNH), Natalie Wallace (NIFCA), Anthony Crook (EA), Nick Brodin (Berwickshire and Northumberland Marine Nature Partnership)

**Apologies:** Jane Delany (Newcastle University), David Fiege (Northumberland County Council), Gwen Potter (NT), Zahra Ravenscroft (EA), James Mclean (NWL), Stuart Pudney (NWL), Edwin Dick (Port of Blyth), Don O'Meara (Historic England), Christine Bell (Eyemouth Harbour Commission), Doreen Bell (Scottish Water), Alan Punton (Warkworth Harbour Commission)

NB introduced the meeting and thanked Lindisfarne NNR for acting as hosts. The meeting was a follow-up to the data and research needs workshop [held on 2nd May](#). The workshop made good progress in identifying key areas where we have collective gaps in knowledge but had insufficient time to look at next steps and to identify concrete actions.

### 1. Creation of baselines/identifying joint actions

A wide ranging discussion took place around the creation of baselines and the development of joint activities. Discussions focused around three main areas:

#### **Bird data**

There is a need to collate existing and historic bird data in order to monitor changes in populations and distribution. Historic data may be in the form of paper records or internal reports and may need to be digitised before it can be shared. LC warned that there may be data protection issues around making unpublished reports publicly available and that some details (e.g. names of the staff involved) might need to be redacted.

We need to understand what data exists, who holds it, what format it exists in and whether there are restrictions on access to it. There is also a need to articulate why we want the data and what we will do with it.

Historic bird data from St Abbs Head NNR is currently being digitised by a contractor doing work on wind farm proposals for the Forth estuary and should be available by Christmas.

Andrew reported that Natural England and the National Trust are developing a project to map out existing seabird monitoring activity in Northumberland and the purposes to which this is being put. There would seem to be a lot of potential join up with the needs that the meeting identified in its discussion. NB will contact Natural England to discuss further. **ACTION NB**

## **Disturbance**

There is a need to produce a baseline for recreational disturbance and to source what data is available on this. Need to think about whether we are collecting data on visitor numbers to the coast or on the impact from these visitors (or using one as a proxy for the other). A number of organisations collect data on visitor pressure. For example, the St Abbs Head NNR has automatic people counters at points in the reserve, Berwickshire Marine Reserve is collecting data on recreational use of the coast by fisherman, and East Lothian Council make use of data from car parks as a proxy for visitor numbers.

Northumberland County Council will be instigating monitoring of bird disturbance as part of their new Coastal Mitigation Scheme. The methodology for this has still to be determined.

A number of student projects on bird disturbance have been carried out at St Abbs Head NNR

There are likely to be difficulties in collating and interpreting data collected using a number of different methods and we may need to look at developing an agreed methodology for data collection. Any baseline or monitoring methodology needs to be able to pick up increases in pressure at a fine scale (e.g. be able to show where there are increases in visitor numbers at sites that are currently relatively unvisited).

The use of remote cameras to monitor disturbance was raised. This potentially needs a lot of data to train computers to recognise what they are looking at. NB raised [Coast Snap](#) as a potential way of collecting data. This gets the public to submit photos of the coast from fixed points and has been used for monitoring coastal change but could also potentially provide information about visitor numbers.

Discussions focused around the potential use of student placement(s) to carry out a review of current information about disturbance monitoring and impacts of disturbance. This should focus on unpublished information and grey literature.

NB will write up a proposal for student placement to review grey and unpublished literature on disturbance. **Action NB**

There is also an action for everyone to identify what potential funding pots there are to support student placements (e.g. to cover T&S etc.) **Action All**

## Sea Temperature Monitoring

Currently sea temperature monitoring is being undertaken by a number of different organisations:

- The Berwickshire Marine Reserve have circa 30 temperature loggers placed on lobster creels and on the seabed.
- Temperature loggers have also been added to settlement panels used for INNS monitoring put in place by Natural England and Environment Agency.
- CS has provided funding to Newcastle University for 'Robo-limpets' which can be used to collect temperature data in the intertidal zone.
- EA make reading of sea temperature using probes as part of bathing water monitoring (monitoring restricted to the summer months).

Working together to create a coordinated network of temperature loggers is potentially a useful action that the MNP could undertake, although the practicalities of how we would do this needs more discussion. NB will organise a separate meeting to discuss the development of a coordinated network of temperature loggers across the partnership area **ACTION NB**

### 2. Sharing of information

NB would like to look at ways in which we can more effectively share information about the monitoring and research that we are carrying out. He suggested that we create a formalised sub-group of the Marine Nature Partnership to meet once a year to share updates and discuss issues. There was agreement for this.

LC suggested that an afternoon session could be added to the Marine Nature Partnership's Annual meeting on 4th December at which local Universities and researchers could give presentations about what work they do on the Berwickshire and Northumberland coast. This could act to kickstart the creation of a sub-group. NB will look into this. **ACTION NB**