



Berwickshire & Northumberland
Marine Nature Partnership

Steering Group Meeting
10.30am 4th September 2019
Berwick Workplace, Berwick upon Tweed

1. Welcome and Introductions

Attendees:

Malcolm Fraser (Chair)	MF	Scottish Natural Heritage
Nick Brodin	NB	Berwickshire and Northumberland MNP
Anne Brown	AB	Scottish Natural Heritage
Kate Jones	KJ	National Trust
Zara Ravenscroft	ZR	Environment Agency
Andy Tharme	AT	Scottish Borders Council
Natalie Wallace	NW	Northumberland IFCA

Apologies:

David Feige	DF	Northumberland County Council
Gwen Potter	GP	National Trust
Anna Griffin	AG	SEPA

MF welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes of last meeting

The actions from the last Steering Group in March 2019 were reviewed. These are summarised in the table below:

Action	Who	Status
CS to forward details of the St Abbs monitoring transect to NB	CS	
MF to find out if any sea cave monitoring planned and let CS know	MF	Complete
MF to update Steering Group on any future developments regarding the proposed squid fishery at St Abbs	MF	Complete
NB will forward details of the fixed-gear reserve at Eyemouth to MF.	NB	Complete

NB will forward CS the contact details for the St Abbs VMR	NB	Complete
CS to check whether Natural England underwater footage is available and can be shared with the Marine Nature Partnership	CS	Complete
MF to look at what underwater footage might be available from SNH	MF	Complete
Let NB know of any data gaps or research questions that need to be addressed	All	Complete

MF gave an update on squid fisheries. The proposal for a squid fishery at Berwickshire has not substantially progressed yet as the Inshore Fisheries Group for the area has not met since April. Any proposal which comes forward would require supporting information about environmental and fisheries impacts and would require Habitats Regulations Appraisal. MF will find out more about the state of the squid stock off St Abbs and whether it has been assessed **ACTION MF**

NW offered to find out whether CEFAS have a member of staff carrying out stock assessments of squid **ACTION NW**

MF also gave an update on plans for sea cave monitoring. There are no short-term plans for sea cave monitoring in the Scottish section of the partnership area as SNH's site monitoring programme is on hold this year. In the longer term, a marine monitoring strategy is being developed with Marine Scotland.

3. Officer Update

A written update was included with the papers for the meeting. NB talked the Steering Group through the highlights of this.

A new Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), the Berwick to St Mary's MCZ, was declared on the Northumberland coast at the end of May. The site is designated for its populations of breeding and wintering eider. Following on from discussion with partners, a number of discrete actions were identified to further the conservation of eiders on the coast. NB has submitted a short funding application to Northumbrian Water for these.

The HLF Resilient Heritage project, fronted by NIFCA on behalf of the partnership, has now come to a close following a short extension. As part of the project extension a series of infographic for each inshore marine protected area was produced and a training webinar for members was held. NB will place the training slides from the webinar on the partnership website **ACTION NB**

4. Updating the current EMS Management Scheme

NB has been working on an update of the current Management Scheme. The revised Scheme will cover all eleven of the inshore marine protected areas within the partnership's

remit and will be a shorter, more focused, document than the current document, with much on the background information lodged on the partnership's website. The Action Plan in the Scheme will continue to be based around discrete activities but some of these may be merged and the addition of some new activities will be required.

NB will circulate a revised draft to the Steering group by mid October for comments about the general structure and approach of the Scheme. **ACTION NB**

The Management Group meeting in December will be used to gather comments about activities and actions. This will be followed by a consultation in the last quarter of 2019/20.

5. Coquet to Tyne stakeholder workshop

A workshop was held in June to discuss the Coquet to Tyne section of the partnership area and to identify issues and actions relevant to this part of the coast. A number of key issues came out, including minewater discharges, the increased use of tyres to trap peeler crabs, coastal erosion at Lynemouth, the Wansbeck barrage, impacts from recreational disturbance, and the need for engagement with the local community.

These issues will be incorporated into the revised Management Scheme and further discussion will take place about actions to address these.

ZR reported that the Environment Agency, Natural England and NIFCA will be meeting soon to discuss the issues around crab tiling with tyres.

6. Research questions and data needs workshop

A workshop to look at data and research needs for inshore marine protected areas was held in May. The notes of the workshop can be found at

<http://www.xbordercurrents.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Note-of-data-workshop-on-2nd-May.docx.pdf>

A recurring theme from the discussions was the need to develop baselines against which changes could be assessed. This includes the need to mobilise historic and/or paper data. A follow up meeting to discuss next steps will be held on October 11th at the Lindisfarne NNR Reserve base.

AB said that she will see what relevant data and reports the local SNH office holds in paper format **ACTION AB**

7. Project Development/External funding bids

NB has submitted an application to Northumbrian Water's Branch Out fund for work related to eider ducks. The work came out of discussions with partners about the newly designated

Berwick to St Mary's MCZ and involves awareness raising and public participation survey. The outcome of the application should be known by the end of September.

Public engagement/increased interpretation of the value of the local marine environment was one of the themes that came out of the Coquet to Tyne workshop. NB is currently putting some project ideas together for this which he will continue to develop. This strand of work might lend itself to a future bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund. There may also be activities which come out of the October meeting about data and research needs which may lend themselves to external funding bids.

8. Updates from Partners

SNH: MF reported that SNH have received a Freedom of Information request from Blue Marine Foundation about details of monitoring within the Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC within the last 10 years and any reports on the impact of fishing in the SAC. No reports on the impact of fishing are available but Blue Marine have been signposted to reports on conditioning monitoring of SAC features which were joint funded by SNH and Natural England. AB reported that Dr Adam Rees from University of Plymouth, working with Blue Marine, had put in a data request for survey information for the SAC features in Berwickshire.

NIFCA: Fish surveys of the AIn estuary are being held on the 23rd and 24th September. Volunteers are welcome.

A change to NIFCA byelaw 2 is currently being consulted on which will increase current restrictions on dredging out to 6 nautical miles
<https://www.nifca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Byelaw-2-Dredging-Background-and-proposals-3.pdf>

A consultation on proposals to restrict the use of mobile gear in the Coquet to St Mary's MCZ is also running
<https://www.nifca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Coquet-to-St-Marys-Full-Documents-1.pdf>

Responses to either consultation would be welcome.

NIFCA will also be putting out a call for information about periwinkle gathering and crab tiling in their district.

MF reported that SNH has produced guidance on shellfish collection. He will find and circulate this **ACTION MF**

Scottish Borders Council: AT drew attention the Connection the Tweed project which is being developed for submission to the National Lottery Heritage Fund. He suggested that anyone with project ideas for inclusion in the bid should contact the Tweed Foundation.

Environment Agency: EA has reduced resources for monitoring work and is undertaking a Strategic Monitoring Review. TRaC (Transitional and Coastal waters) monitoring of the Tweed will not take place this year.

A CASI (Compact Airborne Spectrographic Imager) has been undertaken at Holy Island to use in classification of habitats. Ground truthing of the imagery will be undertaken over the next two days.

A Water Improvement Plan for Budle Bay has been produced and will contain the monitoring data collected over the last few years. Modelling has shown that the major source of Nitrogen on the sites is from the Tweed catchment, although other evidence also suggest localised issues with diffuse pollution. EA are working with Durham University on a bio-isotope study to look at other sources of Nitrogen.

Modelling work will be taking place to look at the potential for creating new habitat on the Coquet to the north of the A1068.

Work will be commencing on a Blyth estuary study with the University of Hull. This will look at what potential exists for habitat creation/making estuary structures more wildlife-friendly.

The Tyne Estuary Partnership has been launched. An event with EA's Chief Executive will be held in October.

National Trust: KJ reported that the National Trust now have a coastal officer, Kate Martin, in post for the North of England who is currently looking at Estate Management Plans and the potential for incorporating marine work and coastal adaptation into these. The National Trust has developed a new research strand for its work and will be rolling out training etc. for its staff.

It has been a good year for little terns at Long Nanny with 54 chicks fledging, the biggest number since 1990. Arctic terns fared less well with a number of adults being found dead. The likely cause of this was botulism. Puffins and terns on the Farne Islands were affected by heavy rains during June. Final bird numbers for the Farnes is not yet known.

Northumberland County Council: NB fed back an update from DF about the Coastal Mitigation Scheme for Northumberland. Recruitment will begin soon for the first member of staff for this. The Coastal Mitigation Scheme has been created to address the impacts on coastal SPAs and SACs caused by increased recreational activity arising from new housing and tourism developments.

NB will circulate details of Northumberland's Coastal Mitigation Scheme with the minutes of the meeting **ACTION NB**

9. Management Group meeting in December

Due to lack of time to discuss in the meeting, NB will circulate an email about this to the group asking for feedback on venue, format etc. **ACTION NB**

10. AOB

2020 will be Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters. MF will circulate the details of this.

ACTION MF

Table of actions from meeting

Action	Who	Status
MF will find out more about the state of the squid stock off St Abbs and whether it has been assessed	MF	
NW to find contact name in CEFAS for squid fisheries [www.cefas.co.uk/about-us/people/dr-vladimir-laptikhovsky/]	NW	Complete
NB will place the training slides from June's webinar on the partnership website [http://www.xbordercurrents.co.uk/documents-and-links/miscellaneous-events/]	NB	Complete
NB will circulate a revised draft of the Management Scheme to the Steering group by mid October	NB	Ongoing
NB to circulate details of Northumberland's Coastal Mitigation Scheme with the notes of the Steering Group meeting	NB	Complete
AB will see what data and reports the local SNH office holds	AB	Complete
MF to circulate SHN guidance on shellfish collection	MF	Complete
NB to email Steering Group about the Management Group meeting in December	NB	Complete
MF to circulate details of Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters	MF	Complete