



Berwickshire & Northumberland  
Marine Nature Partnership

## Steering Group Meeting 1.00pm 14th October 2020 Virtual meeting

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

#### Attendees:

Alex Aitken	AA	Northumberland IFCA
Nick Brodin	NB	Berwickshire and Northumberland MNP
Anne Brown	AB	Nature.Scot
David Feige (Chair)	DF	Northumberland County Council
Malcolm Fraser	MF	Nature.Scot
Beth Harvey	BH	Northumberland IFCA
Gwen Potter	GP	National Trust
Catherine Scott	CS	Natural England

#### Apologies:

Andy Tharme	AT	Scottish Borders Council
Zahra Ravenscroft	ZR	Environment Agency

The meeting welcomed Beth Harvey who has recently started with NIFCA as a new Environmental and Scientific Officer.

### 2. Minutes of last meeting

The actions from the last Steering Group in July 2020 were reviewed. Progress with action points is summarised in the table below.

Action	Who	Status
AA and NB to discuss potential link up of the MNP with NIFCAs work on a Code of Conduct for hand gathering	AA/NB	Ongoing – picked up in main agenda

Action	Who	Status
Any comments on the draft Progress Report should be sent to NB by Friday 31st July	All	Complete
DF to keep the Steering Group informed on progress with the Coastal Mitigation Service	DF	Ongoing – picked up in main agenda

Terms of Reference for the new Data, Monitoring and Research subgroup have now been produced. The next meeting of the sub-group will be in November.

### 3. Project Officer Update

A written update was provided with the papers for the meeting. The Annual Progress Report has been sent to partnership members and is now available on our website. NB particularly drew the Steering Group's attention to the item on the CoastSnap project. CoastSnap is a citizen science project which asks the public to submit photographs captured on mobile phones for use in monitoring coastal change. The Partnership has secured seed-core money from Natural England to set up a project in our area. As well as collecting data about coastal change, NB would like to see if the approach could be used to provide data for a wider range of uses such as monitoring beach usage or monitoring habitat change. A short-list of potential CoastSnap locations is currently being drawn up. If anyone has potential uses for fixed-point photography data or any sites which they think would benefit from the collection of fixed-point photography then please let NB know **ACTION ALL**

### 4. Progress with Updating the Management Scheme

NB has produced a revised draft Management Scheme which was circulated with the papers for the meeting. The revised Management Scheme is a high-level document which sets out responsibilities and mechanisms for the management of our inshore marine protected areas. Detailed background information will be held on our online toolkit where it can be updated frequently. The Action Plan, which previously formed part of the Management Scheme document, has been removed but will be maintain it as an online document as part of the toolkit. The Action Plan has not yet been completed as discussions with MNP member organisations are still ongoing. The Plan will focus on actions which go beyond the day-to-day statutory roles of organisations, address particular issues of concern, or fill gaps in existing activity. Actions which just restate the day-to-day statutory responsibilities of organisations will be removed as these will be captured as part of the online toolkit. The Steering Group agreed to the approach being taken to the Management Scheme and the Action Plan.

NB proposed that the Management Scheme and the Action Plan be consulted on in parallel. He proposed launching the consultation at the annual meeting of the Management Group in December with a closing date of the end of February 2021. The Steering Group agreed to this.

Although the Action Plan has yet to be completed and consulted on, there are some activities proposed within the Plan which NB would like to commence work on this year. One of these is the production of a biosecurity plan for the marine protected areas that we deal with. The Steering Group agreed that work on this could be commenced. Additional areas of activity involved proposed communications actions and were discussed under the next agenda item.

## 5. Communications

NB explained that he would like to commence work on some proposed communications outputs in advance of the revised Management Scheme Action Plan being consulted on. One proposal is to bring together the various messages about the different activities which take place at the coast into a single document. This would package a range of core messages in a similar format and act as a signpost to local and national Codes of Conduct. This would be similar in concept to the Severn Estuary EMS Good Practice Guide <https://mappedsites.cardiff.ac.uk/asera/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2017/06/Severn-Estuary-EMS-Good-Practice-Guidelines-English.pdf> or the Wild Recreation Guide produced by the Wash and North Norfolk Marine Partnership [https://wnnmp.co.uk/home/recreation/wild\\_recreation\\_guide/](https://wnnmp.co.uk/home/recreation/wild_recreation_guide/) NB is also investigating the possibility of getting some short films or animations (circa 1 minute in length) for use on websites or social media as an alternative means of disseminating information.

The Steering Group were happy for this work to be commenced prior to the consultation on the action plan. NB asked for volunteers to act as a sounding board group for the production of the document. AA, BH, CS, and GP all expressed an interest. Any additional volunteers please contact NB **ACTION ALL**

As part of the Management Scheme review GP and NB have been discussing the Northumberland Wildlife Watching Boating Code of Conduct which the partnership produced several years ago <https://www.xbordercurrents.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/CODE-OF-CONDUCT-A4-POSTER.pdf> GP explained that the National Trust will be reviewing licences for charter boats to land on the Farne Islands. A condition of the licences will be that boat operators confirm to any codes. There are a couple of areas where the partnership's existing Code of Conduct could be improved, for example by giving examples of visual signs that animals or birds are suffering from

disturbance. NB has included an update of the Code of Conduct as an activity in the draft action plan and will start work on this in consultation with partners.

NIFCA have produced draft text for a potential leaflet on rocky shore activities (circulated with the papers for the meeting). BH explained the background to this. The text covers both hand gathering, which is covered by NIFCA's remit and their recent periwinkle Code of Conduct, but also wider recreational activity which is outside of their remit. Because of the wide remit covered, other organisations are being approached to gauge interest in being involved in the production and dissemination of any leaflet. The Steering Group is happy to partner any future publication.

## 6. Annual Management Group Meeting

NB proposed that this year's annual meeting of the full Management Group be held as an online event. As a result the meeting is likely to be largely made up of presentations with less opportunity for roundtable discussion. This was agreed by the Steering Group. Proposed date for the meeting is the morning of Wednesday 2nd December. The agenda is still being put together and is likely to consist of some longer presentations about topics or activity of interest together with some shorter 5-minute presentation slots for members of the partnership to provide showcase something they are doing. If there are any topics that Steering Group members would be interested in hearing a presentation on as part of the meeting then please let NB know **ACTION ALL**

## 7. Partner Updates

NIFCA: A new byelaw restricting use of mobile gear in the Coquet to St Mary's MCZ was agreed at the last quarterly meeting and is currently with Defra and the MMO for sign-off. Discussions about the use of mobile gear in the rest of the NIFCA district will be held at the next quarterly meeting.

Periwinkle surveys are ongoing but the Aln Estuary fish surveys have been cancelled for this year as it is not possible to carry these out in a socially-distanced manner.

Natural England: CS reported that bird disturbance surveys have started at Lindisfarne. The survey will map disturbance incidences across the Reserve to gain a better understanding of the effect that this has on bird distribution and movements.

The National Trust: GP reported that the Management Plan for the Farne Islands NNR is in production. If people would like more details then GP is happy to speak to them individually.

Nature.Scot: AB and MF provided an update on Nature.Scot, the new operating name for Scottish Natural Heritage. Conservation advice packages for terrestrial SACs will be published in January. As yet there are no proposals to publish equivalent advice for SPAs. The Marine Programme is currently postponed so as yet there is no news about the potential consultation on new marine SPAs.

MF reported that the North and East Coast Inshore Fisheries Group (IFG) met virtually in September under their new Chair Jennifer Mouat. The rumoured proposal for a new squid fishery on the Berwickshire coast, which has been mentioned at previous Steering Group meetings, was not brought to the IFG meeting.

AB reported that Liza Cole had been made redundant from her at St Abbs Head as part of the recent restructure of the National Trust for Scotland. The St Abbs Head ranger post has been combined with that for Grey Mares Tail and the role is being undertaken by Ciaran Hatsell. Liza was an active member of the Marine Nature Partnership and the Steering Group recorded their thanks and good wishes.

Northumberland County Council: DF reported that the Coastal Mitigation Service for Northumberland has now formally launched under the name of Space for Shorebirds. Richard Willis, the Senior Wildlife Ranger, is being joined by Katherine Dunsford, who started in post last week. The project will be engaging with the public and will be carrying out regular disturbance monitoring.

The Examination in Public for the Northumberland Local Plan resumes next week.

Northumberland has been chosen by Defra to be a pilot area for the production of Local Nature Recovery Strategies. These are one of the measures contained in the Environment Bill and will identify areas for improvement measures for habitats and species. DF raised the coast at a recent meeting about the pilot and it has been agreed that marine habitats/species will be included. DF will discuss further with NB **ACTION DF**

## 8. AOB

None

## 9. Table of actions from meeting

Action	Who	Status
Let NB know of any potential sites which it would be useful to include within the CoastSnap project	All	
Any additional volunteers to form part of the sound board group for the proposed communications document contact NB [AA, BH, Cs and GP expressed an interest during the meeting]	All	
Let NB know of any topics or issues that you would like to see made the subject of a presentation on at the Annual Meeting	All	
DF to discuss inclusion of marine within Local Nature Recovery Pilot with NB	DF	Complete