



Berwickshire & Northumberland
Marine Nature Partnership

Steering Group Meeting
10.30am 3rd March 2020
Lindisfarne NNR Reserve Base, Beal

1. Welcome and Introductions

Attendees:

Alex Aitken	AA	Northumberland IFCA
Nick Brodin	NB	Berwickshire and Northumberland MNP
Anne Brown	AB	Scottish Natural Heritage
Andrew Craggs	AC	Natural England
David Feige (Chair)	DF	Northumberland County Council
Malcolm Fraser	MF	Scottish Natural Heritage
Thomas Hendry	TH	National Trust
Clare McCarty	CMc	Marine Management Organisation
James Porteous	JP	National Trust
Harriet Reid	HR	National Trust
Catherine Scott	CS	Natural England
Mark Southerton	MS	Northumberland IFCA
Hannah Westoby	HW	Environment Agency

Apologies:

Anna Griffin	AG	SEPA
Gwen Potter	GP	National Trust
Andy Tharme	AT	Scottish Borders Council

DF welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Natural England for acting as host.

2. Minutes of last meeting

The actions from the last Steering Group in September 2019 were reviewed. All action points have been discharged and are summarised in the table overleaf. MF confirmed that no information is available about squid stocks off St Abbs. The proposal for a squid fishery at Berwickshire mentioned at the last Steering Group has not substantially progressed and MF

is not aware that any official request for a derogation from the current fixed gear reserve has been submitted to Marine Scotland.

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	Complete
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	Complete
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

3. Project Officer Update

A written update was included with the papers for the meeting. The majority of activities were addressed during the main agenda of the meeting.

4. North East Marine Plan

CMc gave a presentation on the North East Onshore and Offshore Marine Plans. A copy of the presentation slides will be circulated together with these minutes.

The Plans cover the area from the Scottish Border down to Flamborough Head in Yorkshire. The consultation covers the Plans themselves as well as the associated Technical Annex and Sustainability Appraisal. The Technical Annex contains further detail about each of the policies. The closing date for comments is 6th April. Comments can be submitted at https://consult.defra.gov.uk/mmo/draft-north-east-inshore-and-offshore-marine-plans/consult_view/

Now that consultation has started, the Marine Plan documents are a material consideration in decision making. Public authorities must also **have regard** to marine plans in taking any

other decision which relates to the exercise of any function capable of affecting the UK marine area. For example, through the adoption of plans that go on to inform authorisation or enforcement decisions, e.g. local plans (see slides 11 & 13). Where decisions are not in accordance with the marine plan then the Public Authority must give a reason why. The types of decisions that should be made in accordance with the marine plan include EA discharge consents, local authority planning decisions, and creation of IFCA byelaws.

This Marine Plan only covers England but Scottish authorities will need to give consideration to the plans. Marine Planning in Scotland is achieved through Scotland's National Marine Plan. MF reported that consultation about marine planning for the Forth and Tay Region (which covers the Borders area) is imminent.

5. Updating the Management Scheme

A paper outlining proposed changes to the structure of the Management Scheme was circulated prior to the meeting. A shorter document will be created with much of the technical information contained in the current Scheme being held on our online toolkit. The previous scheme only covered the Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast EMS. The revised Scheme will deal with all of the Marine Protected Areas which the partnership covers.

Two sections are proposed for the revised Scheme:

- i) A covering document which describes the background to the Scheme, sets out how organisations will work together to deliver marine management, and how progress will be monitored and reported upon
- ii) An action plan covering management of activities; data, research and monitoring, communication issues, and overarching management of the site network/adapting to future coastal change.

The Steering Group approved the proposed changes in format to the Management Scheme.

NB will meet with individual partners and use these discussions to populate the action plan section of the Scheme. A draft of the new Scheme/action plan will be brought to the next Steering Group meeting. **ACTION NB**

6. Updates from Partners

Northumberland County Council: DF gave an update on the Coastal Mitigation Service (which will be given the name of "Space for Shorebirds"). The Service is intended to mitigate against the additional pressure on coastal sites caused by new housing development or tourist accommodation within 10 km of the coast. The Service will aim to influence people's behaviour at the coast (particularly dog walkers) but will have regulatory powers which it can draw upon. A Senior Wildlife Ranger (Richard Willis) has been appointed and is working on setting up the Service. This will include producing baselines for recreational disturbance against which changes can be monitored. A steering group has been set up which includes representatives from NCC, Natural England, and the Marine Nature partnership.

CS called attention to the work on mapping sensitive areas for recreational activities which was commissioned from Paula Lightfoot at Newcastle University. CS now has the output maps from this but is unable to share them due to the high file size. A summary report has also been produced which NB offered to put on the Marine Nature Partnership's website.

SNH: A grant scheme linked to the Year of Coasts and Seas has been running and closed for applications at the end of February. Decisions on this should be made soon. MF reported that a consultation on a suite of new Marine SPAs is imminent. This will include an Outer Firth of Forth SPA whose boundary will extend into part of the partnership area. The proposed boundary for this can be viewed at <https://sitelink.nature.scot/site/10478>

Environment Agency: HW reported that Nick Cutts (formerly of University of Hull) has been commissioned to identify potential habitat improvements in the Blyth estuary. The report from this will be circulated once it is available.

A budget of £10K has been allocated for engagement activities and implementation of water quality improvements around Budle Bay. There is a possibility of using this as match funding for a [Facilitation Fund](#) application but would need to identify an organisation to lead on this bid. Any offers or suggestions for a lead organisation should go to HW **Action ALL**

The [Challenges and Choices Consultation](#) is running till the 6th April. Much of the current focus is on freshwater issues so comments by marine stakeholders are particularly welcome.

The Environment Agency is looking at ways in which it can reduce its carbon footprint and as part of this is looking at travel to meetings. HW asked whether it would be possible to alternate Steering Group meeting between Newcastle and the north of the partnership area. This was agreed. We will seek a meeting venue in Newcastle for the next meeting.

National Trust: The Management Plan for the Farne Islands NNR is currently being reviewed and will be subject to consultation with partners. The National Trust is also working with the Biosecurity for Life project headed by the RSPB. JP reported that there have been significant changes to the dunes at Seahouses and Beadnell. This has particularly affected the area around Long Nanny and it may be necessary to reopen beach access this year as the alternative route is no longer accessible. It is proposed that the little tern eggs will not be moved on to fishing crates this year. If scrapes are washed out by tides it is hoped to encourage alternative nesting sites, such as Embleton Bay.

Natural England: CS is currently bidding for funds for work for next financial year. This includes bids for the purchase of robolimpets for seawater temperature monitoring, work on INNS monitoring, and intertidal rocky-reef monitoring. Rocky-reef monitoring may be carried out in-house if funding is not available.

AC reported that consultation is currently underway for the stretch of the England Coast Path which includes Lindisfarne. Additional people counters will be deployed to monitor usage.

The Shorebird Project which Natural England has been developing with the National Trust has now been submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund. This will work on a range of important coastal birds including ringed plover and terns.

The Byelaws for the Lindisfarne NNR are currently being revised. Changes are likely to include a limit on dog numbers, a requirement to have dogs on leads, and a ban on bait collection. This latter change may have knock on impacts on other sites.

NIFCA: AA reported that work is taking place to collect data on lobster and about intertidal collection of shellfish. An ongoing call for information about periwinkle collection is [on the NIFCA website](#). Annual mussel bed surveys at Holy Island and Fenham Flats are taking place next week. A Bait Aggregation Device (BAD) Working Group has been created to look at issues around the increasing use of crab tyres on the coast. The group has membership from a range of interested parties. Initial work will focus on the Coquet and the Aln estuaries, where crab tiling is only a recent development.

Scottish Borders Council:

AT was unable to attend the meeting but sent the following update: the Council's Flood Protection Team are developing both a Berwickshire Coast Shoreline Management Plan and an Eyemouth Coastal Study. This large-scale assessment will consider *"the risks associated with coastal processes and will be used to identify the most sustainable combination of actions required to manage the flood and erosion risks in the short, medium and long term"*.

9. Eider Aware North East

Funding from Northumbrian Water and from the Northumberland Coast AONB has been secured for an eider duck project linked to the new Berwick to St Mary's MCZ. Eider Aware North East will celebrate the importance of the Northumberland Coast for eider and raise awareness of some of the threats that they face. Project outputs will include a public participation survey (using [an app](#) developed for us by ERIC North East), a leaflet, a public events programme, social media activity, and a short video (local wildlife filmmaker Cain Scrimgeour has been commissioned to produce this).

10. Data, Monitoring And Research

A meeting to discuss data and monitoring knowledge gaps was held in October. This was a follow up to the workshop held in May and was intended to look at next steps and follow-up 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 numbers, disturbance and sea-temperature. The notes of this meeting can be found at: <https://www.xbordercurrents.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Notes-of-Data-Research-and-Monitor-needs-follow-up-meeting-11th-October-2019.pdf>

A meeting to discuss the possibility of setting up a sea temperature monitoring network was held in February. This led to the project proposal involving the use of roblimits (details of the project

proposal circulated with the papers for the meeting). from Heather Sugden of Newcastle University that was circulated with the papers for the meeting. CS is looking into use of underspend to buy robolimpets. NB raised the prospect of using MNP funds towards purchase of robolimpets if required. The Steering Group agreed to this.

A successful research networking event held following December's Management Group meeting. Following on from this a Data, Monitoring and Research subgroup of the MNP will be formed. NB will produce a Terms of Reference for this. **ACTION NB**

11. AOB

NB will soon be sending out requests for 2020/21 financial contributions towards the core costs of the Marine Nature Partnership.

Table of actions from meeting

Action	Who	Status
A draft of the new Scheme/action plan will be brought to the next Steering Group meeting	NB	
Any offers or suggestions for a lead organisation for a Facilitation Fund bid on coastal streams should go to HW	All	
Produce a Terms of Reference for the new Data, Monitoring and Research subgroup	NB	