



Berwickshire & Northumberland
Marine Nature Partnership

Steering Group Meeting 10.30am 2nd December 2021 Virtual meeting

1. Welcome and Introductions

Attendees:

Alex Aitken	AA	Northumberland IFCA
Nick Brodin	NB	Berwickshire and Northumberland MNP
Anne Brown	AB	NatureScot
David Feige (Chair)	DF	Northumberland County Council
Malcolm Fraser	MF	NatureScot
Gwen Potter	GP	National Trust
Lucy Stainthorpe	LS	Natural England

Apologies:

Debbie Mclean	DM	Scottish Borders Council
Catherine Scott	CS	Natural England
Hannah Westoby	HW	Environment Agency

Andy Tharme has moved on secondment to South of Scotland Enterprise to act as Project Officer for the Rural Land Use Partnership. A replacement for his post at Scottish Borders Council will be advertised soon. The Steering Group expressed their thanks to Andy for all his work on behalf of the Marine Nature Partnership across many years.

2. Minutes of last meeting

The actions from the last Steering Group in July 2021 were reviewed. Progress with action points is summarised in the attached table.

Action	Who	Status
MF will talk to NB about potential contacts at Marine Scotland	MF/NB	Complete
NB to circulate the latest versions of the Management Scheme to the Steering Group	NB	Complete
Any additional comments on the Management Scheme or Delivery Plan to be passed to NB	ALL	Complete
Keep Janet Kahn from SEPA be in the loop over the development of the Marine INNS Strategy	NB	
HW to forward a copy of MSc dissertation on Marines INNS to NB	HW	Complete
NB to contact Wild Oyster Project about potential links to INNS monitoring	NB	Complete
NB to circulate list of proposed CoastSnap locations	NB	Complete
DF to look into what could be outputs from the LNRS pilot can be shared with the Steering Group	DF	
NB to organise a separate call with NatureScot and Natural England to discuss site condition monitoring	NB	Not actioned yet
NB to arrange for contribution letters for 2021/22 to be sent out to members	NB	Complete
AT will forward details of Borderlands marine natural capital project to HW and NB	AT	Complete

The planned discussion with NatureScot and Natural England about site condition has not taken place. AB reported that some new assessments for Scottish sites should be available for the next Steering Group meeting. Any relevant information will be passed to NB **ACTION AB**

3. Partnership Officer Update

A written update was provided with the papers for the meeting.

The Environment Agency launched a call for Expressions of Interest for their Championing Coastal Coordination (3Cs) initiative at the start of September. The purpose of 3Cs is described as "... a collaboration seeking to explore how to enhance and progress coordination for coastal sustainability and resilience in England." The deadline for the submission of Expressions of Interest was the 30th September. NB and Niall Benson from the Durham Heritage Coast and jointly developed a proposal for a project to build a common understanding of the range of likely climate change impacts on our regional coast and sea

among different sectors and to collaboratively begin to identify management actions to address these. Part of the outputs from the project will be local sense checking of habitat restoration and creation opportunity mapping. The EoI was submitted as a regional component of a larger national umbrella bid put in by the Coastal Partnerships Network (CPN) and has been successful (subject to a business case being approved). Work will need to be completed this financial year with a number of online workshops being held from January to March. The 3Cs funding only covers activity in England but NB will be seeking to include Berwickshire within the work.

The revised Management Scheme and accompanying Delivery Plan are now on our website. Some amends have also been made to our online toolkit so that it better aligns with the revised Scheme.

The majority of sections for the proposed Wild Recreation Guide have been drafted and are now out with key partners for feedback/comment.

Work has continued to draft the Marine INNS Strategy. NB hopes to have a draft to circulate in Quarter 4 and to hold follow up discussions with key partners/organisations.

Work to develop the CoastSnap project is still ongoing and posts and signage are being procured. Dr Seb Pitman, a coastal geomorphologist from Newcastle University, has been in touch regarding the project. He has previously been involved in setting up a CoastSnap scheme in New Zealand. Following an initial meeting, Dr Pitman was able to secure some additional funding from the University to produce 3D geological mapping and 360 imagery that can be linked to the CoastSnap points using QR codes.

Additional funding for the Eider Aware Project has been provided by the Natural England Northumbria Team as part of a wider Eider evidence project they are running. The money will be used for additional engagement work, particularly to promote the use of the project's Eider Recording app.

4. Preparation for Annual Partnership meeting on 9th December

The Marine Nature Partnership's annual meeting will be held via Teams on the 9th December. External speakers will include Anna Lamja (Forth Estuary Forum) talking about the East Coast Review, and Lydia Speakman (Natural England) talking about the WADER LIFE Project.

As part of his annual update, NB will be providing an assessment of progress towards achieving a well-managed network of marine protected areas. A copy of this assessment was circulated to the Steering Group for discussion and agreement.

5. Partners Update

NatureScot: Scottish Elections were held in May. This has led to the production of a Cooperation Agreement between the SNP and The Scottish Green Party. MF drew attention to some points of the agreement that are relevant to the marine environment. These include a commitment to designate 10% of Scottish seas as Highly Protected Marine Areas, an accelerated roll-out of fisheries management measures in Marine Protected Areas, and a cap on fishing activity levels <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-government-and-scottish-green-party-shared-policy-programme/>

Dynamic Coast 2 has been produced, which looks at climate change impacts on Scotland's coastal areas. This includes a web-based GIS tool. <https://www.dynamiccoast.com/>

The Scottish Marine Environmental Enhancement Fund (SMEEF) continues to develop and will be launched later this year, with significant amounts of grant money available. Current details can be found at www.nature.scot/funding-and-projects/scottish-marine-environmental-enhancement-fund-smeeef

A new round of the Scottish Government's Nature Restoration Fund has been announced <https://www.nature.scot/funding-and-projects/scottish-government-nature-restoration-fund/nature-restoration-fund-outcomes-and-eligibility>

The SEACOR Project (hosted by the Forth Estuary Forum) is collecting data to inform Marine Plan production in the Forth and Tay region (which includes Berwickshire).

Additional Site Condition Monitoring of coastal sites is underway.

NIFCA: A prohibition on scallop dredging in all of the NIFCA district is under consultation. The new byelaw will require sign-off from Defra and possibly may be in place for Spring of 2022.

A new byelaw restricting use of mobile gear (otter trawls) in the Coquet to St Mary's MCZ is now in place.

Habitat Regulations/Marine Conservation Zone Assessments are being undertaken for hand gathering and bait digging.

The Angling Strategy for Northumberland has been refreshed and engagement with anglers is underway. This includes new signage about minimum catch sizes.

National Trust: GP reported that around 50 grey seal pups on the Farne Islands had died as a result of Storm Arwen. Pup mortality on the Farnes appears to have been much lower than that seen on the Berwickshire coast.

A single Eider nested on National Trust land at Lindisfarne again this year.

The Farne Islands Management Plan has been finalised. The main changes are more drone monitoring of seals and more vegetation management around tern plots.

Northumberland County Council: DF reported that the Environment Bill had passed into law in England, although many of the relevant details will come in secondary legislation. The majority of natural environment measures, such as Biodiversity Net Gain, will be delivered through the planning process.

Natural England: Site monitoring of rocky shore is underway. This has discovered at least one example of Sabellaria reef.

6. AOB

GP asked about the risk of spread of Pacific oysters with rising sea temperature and whether anyone is monitoring this. DF mentioned that he understands that the SSSI consent for the Fenham Flat oyster farm will include monitoring measures. LS will ask CS for an update on this **ACTION LS**

NB drew attention to Operation Seabird which is operating on the Yorkshire Coast as a collaboration between the Police, the MMO, Yorkshire Marine Nature Partnership, East Riding Council and a number of other organisations. The initiative aims to address disturbance issues to seabirds and marine mammals. A Framework has been published (circulated with the meeting papers) for use by coastal managers and regulatory bodies as a guide for establishing Operation Seabird activities in other regions. The Steering Group discussed whether a similar initiative was needed in Northumberland and/or Berwickshire but no conclusion was reached. NB invited anyone who has any additional thoughts after the meeting to forward them to him **ACTION ALL**

7. Table of actions from meeting

Action	Who	Status
AB to pass any relevant information on new Site Condition Assessments to NB	AB	
LS to ask Catherine Scott for an update on Pacific oyster monitoring	LS	
Let NB have any thoughts about the need for an Operation Seabird scheme in Berwickshire and Northumberland	All	
Keep Janet Kahn from SEPA be in the loop over the development of the Marine INNS Strategy	NB	
DF to look into what could be outputs from the LNRS pilot can be shared with the Steering Group	DF	