



Berwickshire & Northumberland
Marine Nature Partnership

Notes of Annual Partnership Meeting (held online)

12th December 2022

Present: Jane Delany – Chair (Newcastle University), Nick Brodin (Berwickshire and Northumberland Marine Nature Partnership), Bex Lynam (North Sea Wildlife Trusts), Blair Easton (St Abbs Marine Station), Alex Aitken (Northumberland IFCA), David Feige (Northumberland County Council), Iain Robson (Northumberland Coast AONB), Anna Griffin (SEPA), Liz Humphries (Natural England), Kate Whitton (Marine Conservation Society), Jamie Gathercole (Marine and Coastguard Agency), Jamie Steward (River Tweed Commission), Alex Higgs (Berwickshire Marine Reserve), Anne Brown (NatureScot), Georgina Reid (Marine Scotland), Brendan Bates (Eyemouth Harbour), Karen Morley (Dumfries and Galloway Council)

Apologies: Helen Downie (Marine Scotland), Sarah Coulthard (Newcastle University), Anna Gerring (Northumberland Ricers Catchment Partnership), Cirian Hatsell (National Trust for Scotland), Liz Charman (RSPB), Stuart Pudney (Northumbrian Water), Catherine Scott (Natural England), Stephanie Ingram (MMO), Christine Bell (Eyemouth Harbour), Gwen Potter (National Trust)

1. Welcome and Introductions (Jane Delany)

JD welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Attendees introduced themselves and NB announced apologies.

2. Previous Minutes and Matters Arising

Previous minutes from December 2021 were accepted. Any matters arising were dealt with as part of the main agenda.

All action points from the last meeting have been discharged.

3. Project Officer Update (Nick Brodin)

NB gave a presentation to update the group on progress since the last meeting. A copy of this is attached to the minutes.

The work of the Marine Nature Partnership in 2022 has included:

- Work on a joint regional project with the Durham Heritage Coast Partnership looking at a regional response to likely climate change impacts on the coast. The work was funded through the Environment Agency's Championing Coastal Coordination (3Cs) fund and formed part of a larger national project led on by the Coastal Partnerships Network. As part of the regional project four workshops with 68 stakeholders from 41 were held February-March 2022. Another regional bid has been submitted to 3Cs to continue this work in 2023. This will focus on collaborative identification of habitat restoration priorities
- Text for the Wild Recreation Guide has been agreed with partners and currently with designer for creation as an e-document. The Guide will be launched in 2023.
- A consultation draft of our Marine INNS Strategy has been completed and [is available for comment](#) Workshops will be held in 2023 to finalise the document
- Continued work on our Eider Aware project

Steady progress has been made on delivering out framework for delivering a well-managed network of marine protected areas. The main area of concern identified is the lack of progress on published condition assessments of sites.

A copy of the presentation can be found [HERE](#)

4. Engagement with fishing communities and the experience of the recent HPMA consultation at Lindisfarne (Alex Aitken, Northumberland IFCA)

(The presentation was produced was produced by Sarah Coulthard of Newcastle University, who had to drop out of the meeting on the day. Alex Aitken kindly stepped in at short notice to deliver the presentation on her behalf)

[The presentation](#) reviewed the background to the proposed designation of Lindisfarne as a Highly Protected Marine Area (HPMA) and the consultation progress around this. During the consultation, the University of Newcastle held a six-week rapid impact assessment covering fishing communities from Holy Island, Seahouses, Berwick and Eyemouth. A total of 56 interviews were conducted with participants including commercial shellfish fishers and their families, wider community, shellfish traders and processors, retailers, local business owners, tour/dive /recreational fishing boat operators.

Three key themes dominated during interviews:

- i) high livelihood dependency and lack of capacity to accommodate the HPMA impacts through livelihood adaptation,
- ii) wider impacts on the area's economy and culture
- iii) a perceived lack of necessity or justification for the HPMA at this site due to efficacy of existing conservation measures

Following on from the HPMA engagement, NIFCA and Newcastle University are exploring new ways of enabling more meaningful engagement in decision-making, especially around Fisheries Management Plans. This includes the use of a number of Fisher Forums by NIFCA

5. Breakout session: Future Priorities and Focus

Attendees were assigned to small groups in break out rooms and discussed their priorities and the ways in which the Marine Nature Partnership could help them with these. Feedback from each of the groups flagged a number of different issues including the importance of communication and networking, the potential impacts of new legislation and policy, and the importance of Citizen Science projects.

6. Borderlands Natural Capital Marine SCAMP project (Karen Morley, Dumfries and Galloway Council)

SCAMP is the Solway Coast And Marine Project. Its aim is *‘To be at the forefront of practical research, development and restoration of marine and coastal habitats in the Solway Firth, for carbon sequestration, biodiversity, community and economic benefit’*.

The project includes work funded from the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal Project for work around habitat restoration and the development of a Marine Research Centre in Stranraer. This investment sets the foundations for significant expansion in activity and investment in the marine and coastal habitats in the Solway. The Borderlands investment is worth £2M. Additional (multi-million pound) investment is being sort for the wider SCAMP Project.

A copy of the presentation can be found [HERE](#)

7. Short Presentations slots for Members

Anne Brown – NatureScot update

There has been staff movement and recruitment across NatureScot’s marine function. Much of this has been prompted by the latest ScotWind leasing round which will see a number of new proposed locations for marine renewables. 2023 will see the publication of draft fisheries management measures and a consultation held by the Scottish Government on Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMAs). The Community Marine Monitoring Equipment Fund is continuing to run.

David Feige – Nutrient Neutrality

In March 2022 Natural England provided a package of advice to Local Planning Authorities concerning development proposals with the potential to cause adverse nutrient impacts within a range of catchments in England, one of which is the catchment of the coastal streams flowing into the Lindisfarne –Budle Bay area. As a result of that advice it is necessary to require nutrient budgets to be submitted with planning applications and only to grant planning permission for development where this will not increase the total amount of dissolved inorganic nitrogen entering the Lindisfarne SPA/SSSI. While some applicants may be able to achieve nutrient neutrality themselves, most will depend on a strategic solution – an intervention or series of interventions in the catchment that will reduce nitrogen levels entering the SPA/SSSI from which credits can then be purchased by developers whose developments will cause nitrogen to flow into the designated sites.

Northumberland County Council will be working to identify a potential scheme that will reduce aquatic nitrogen inputs to the intertidal and marine environment in the Lindisfarne SPA and SSSI.

Liz Humphreys (Natural England) – LIFE WADER project update

LIFE WADER (Water and Disturbance Environmental Restoration) is a 5-year that will improve river, intertidal and marine habitats and the species that depend on them. The project area covers the Northumberland Coast and the cross-border Tweed catchment (England and Scotland). It started in October 2021.

Conservation actions which the project will deliver are: Addressing water quality; Removing opportunistic macroalgae; Creating coastal/intertidal refuges for birds; Reviewing byelaws/codes of conduct; Controlling terrestrial/marine invasive non-native species.

A copy of the presentation can be found [HERE](#)

8. Summing up (Jane Delany)

JD thanked everyone for their attendance and commented on the amount of very positive work that is happening on our coast.