



King's Lynn Joint Advisory Group meeting: 1800-2000 1st November 2018

King's Lynn Conservancy Board, Common Staithe Quay, King's Lynn, PE30 1LL

- Welcomes/introductions
- Apologies
- Previous minutes/matters arising

1. WNNMP

- Managing recreational pressures
 - Disturbance monitoring
 - Recreation guide
 - PROWAD – nature protection as a driver for sustainable growth in tourism
- Litter Free Coast and Sea
- Wild Seas Week
- Annual Management Plan

2. Coastal Site Manager updates

3. Eastern-IFCA: Managing Fisheries in Marine Protected Areas

- Fisheries management
- Community Voice Method
- Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning

4. Natural England

- Condition Assessment
- Conservation Advice Package
- English Coastal Path
- Offshore windfarms
- Wildfowling

5. Photographs

6. Date of the next meeting

7. AOB

Eastern IFCA update

1. Managing Fisheries in Marine Protected Areas

1.1. Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)

Eastern IFCA have drafted an assessment of the impacts of commercial fishing activities on features of the Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone. Our assessment was submitted to Natural England in September for formal advice. Although final conclusions have not yet been drawn, tentative results suggest that the potting fishery does not cause significant damage to the habitats protected in this site. [We are separately considering the sustainability of crab and lobster stocks – please see below.] However, we identified that trawling would damage chalk habitats, so we are considering spatial restrictions on this type of fishing within the site. Where new management is proposed, it will be introduced following engagement with fishery stakeholders as well as public consultation.

The Agents of Change project recently held public workshops and surveys relating to the MCZ, attended by a range of stakeholders, with feedback indicating that these workshops were well-received and informative. Any queries regarding these consultations can be addressed by Hilary Cox or Alice Tebb.

1.2. Haisborough, Hammond and Winterton Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

This site extends between 5 and 25 miles offshore, off the east coast of Norfolk. Eastern IFCA is responsible for managing fisheries in the 0 to 6 nautical mile area. We are currently developing measures to restrict trawling within this site to protect *Sabellaria spinulosa* (Ross worm) reef from damage. We are liaising with Natural England in relation to the extent of this sensitive feature. We want to understand what impact these closures could have on fishing – so we will be keen to engage with anyone who fishes in that area.

1.3. North Norfolk Coast Habitat Mapping

We've been out on our patrol vessel FPV Sebastian Terelinck off the North Norfolk Coast recently, using our Sidescan Sonar and drop-down camera to enhance our knowledge of benthic habitats in the area. The results of these surveys are being processed, and we are hoping that they will help us to determine the sensitivity of sediment in the area to fishing.

2. Other Marine Science Workstreams

2.1. Whelk Project

Results of Eastern IFCA's research on the size of maturity of whelks over the last few years are in the process of being written up into a research report and are due to be published shortly. We would like to thank all the fishers who have provided us with whelk samples.

2.2. Offshore Wind Farm Developments

The Crown Estate recently announced a new Leasing Process for offshore wind farms and extensions to three wind farms off the Norfolk coast: Race Bank, Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon. Five development areas in the North Sea are likely to require export cables through inshore waters of Norfolk, Suffolk and Lincolnshire. Eastern IFCA has highlighted to The Crown Estate concerns over potential impacts on fisheries and conservation interests in the inshore area. We also highlighted concerns over the lack of research into impacts of electromagnetic fields (EMF), particularly with the proliferation of windfarms currently and plans to double the national GW capacity reaching the shore to 30 GW by 2030. Eastern IFCA will continue to input to the consultation process for existing and new offshore wind farm project.

2.3. Annual Mussel Surveys in The Wash

Eastern IFCA are in the process of completing our annual surveys of the Regulated intertidal mussel beds in The Wash. Results of these surveys will be used to calculate the total stocks and analyse the size of mussels on each bed to decide whether there is potential for a mussel fishery in The Wash. If a fishery is proposed,

Eastern IFCA will undertake an appropriate assessment to help identify measures needed to ensure the fishery will not adversely affect the site.

2.5 Crab and Lobster Stock Assessment

Eastern IFCA is responsible for ensuring fisheries are sustainable, in relation to stocks as well as interactions with the environment. We are currently analysing landings data from the crab and lobster fisheries to help us understand the status of the stocks. We are working closely with Cefas and other experts. Our engagement with fishermen is crucial in helping us understand the fishery. The work could lead to changes to management of these fisheries; if required, proposals will be discussed with fishery stakeholders before being implemented.

3. Marine Protection

3.1 The Shrimp Permit Byelaw 2018 and Marine Protected Areas Byelaw 2018

The formal consultation on the two byelaws has ended and Eastern IFCA are considering the responses received. Officers would like to thank all those who participated in the formal consultation. More information on the results of the consultation, including how Eastern IFCA have listened to responses, will be available in due course.

3.2 The Wash Emergency Byelaw

The High Court handed down a decision regarding the boundary of the Le Strange Estate (The Wash, Norfolk) on the 27th July 2018. The judgement reduced the seaward extent of the boundary with the effect of leaving a gap between the boundary of the Wash Fishery Order 1992 and the Le Strange Estate within The Wash, where no management measures applied. To protect the area (which is within The Wash and North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site) from potential impacts of fishing activity, Eastern IFCA implemented an emergency byelaw. The byelaw enables Eastern IFCA to manage fisheries by issuing permits with conditions. A fishery is currently open under this byelaw. More information can be found on the Eastern IFCA website: <http://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/wash-emergency-byelaw-2018/>.

3.3 Wash Fishery Order 1992 Cockle Fishery

The 2018/19 Wash Fishery Order cockle fishery is still underway. The level of fishing activity is reducing, and the total allowable catch is nearing exhaustion. General feedback from the industry indicates that it has been a relatively successful fishery.

3.4 Inshore Vessel Monitoring Systems (iVMS)

The Department for the environment, food and rural affairs (Defra) is consulting on the proposed national roll out of iVMS for vessels under 12m in length and is seeking the views of interested parties. More information can be found at the following link: <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/marine-management/introduction-of-inshore-vessel-monitoring-systems/>

3.5 Bass Measures for Recreational Fishers

Bass restrictions in relation to recreational fishers have been amended. From the 1st October to the 31st December 2018, recreational fishers are permitted to retain one fish, per person, per day. The increased minimum conservation reference size of 42cm does apply. More information can be found on the Eastern IFCA website and the MMO website at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bass-industry-guidance-2018/bass-fishing-guidance-2018>

4. Engagement

Please follow what we've been up to lately on our social media pages:

https://twitter.com/eastern_ifca <https://www.facebook.com/eastern.ifca> For any specific questions feel free to message on social media, give us a call on 01553 775321, e-mail us at mail@eastern-ifca.gov.uk or pop into our office at 6 North Lynn Business Village, Bergen Way, King's Lynn PE30 2JG

Natural England update

1. Condition Assessment

We are currently finalising the condition assessments for the Wash and North Norfolk Coast, the two offshore sites (Inner Dowsing, Race Bank and North Ridge SAC and Haisborough, Hammond and Winterton SAC), the Alde Ore and Butley Estuaries SAC and Orfordness to Shingle Street SAC. Natural England's marine team met with EIFCA earlier this month to discuss fishing activities and how this influences the condition assessment and as a result The Wash habitats such as mudflats are being reviewed in light of EIFCAs evidence. Once we have all the information needed to make the assessment it will then be subject to internal review to ensure consistency between sites, and we will then be able to share the results with you.

2. Conservation Advice Package

Breydon Water SPA and Benacre to East Bavents SAC draft conservation advice packages were published September 2018, they are currently in the invitation to comment stage.

Great Yarmouth North Denes SPA and Minsmere-Walberswick SPA are being drafted for publication in March 2019.

Following the publication of the draft packages for Stour & Orwell SPA and Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ (in March 2018). Natural England have responded to stakeholder feedback - either through the area team or in some cases the feedback has been escalated to specialists who will respond accordingly.

3. English Coastal Path

The English Coast path will form a national trail which will extend around England's coast.

a. Skegness and Mablethorpe

This is still at the same stage as was reported at the June meeting. The first section of the England Coast Path in Lincolnshire, between Skegness and Mablethorpe is due to be officially opened in Spring 2019. Currently works including signage and installation of gates etc. is being undertaken.

b. Sutton Bridge to Skegness section.

This is still at the same stage i.e. Stage 4 – Determining as was reported at the June meeting.

On 24 January 2018 Natural England submitted its coastal report to the Secretary of State for coastal access for the 57 mile (92km) stretch of the coast between Sutton Bridge and Skegness. The period for making representations and objections about the report closed at midnight on 21 March 2018. The report is still available to view.

Objections were considered by an independent planning inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. The inspector will make recommendations to the Secretary of State in respect of each one.

Natural England may not make any further changes to the report as a result of the representations and objections. In April Natural England made comments about the representations and objections for consideration by the Secretary of State and, in the case of objections, the appointed planning inspector. The Secretary of State will consider all the representations and objections before making a decision about Natural England's report.

Once the Secretary of State has approved the report, Natural England will start work with Lincolnshire County Council on preparing the route for public use.

The first step will be to contact owners and occupiers of the affected land to discuss the design and location of any new infrastructure which is required such as signs and gates.

When preparations are complete, new access rights will be brought into force along the route and adjoining spreading room. This is expected to happen in summer 2019.

c. Weybourne to Hunstanton stretch

NE published our proposals for the stretch on Wednesday 21 March 2018 and the period for making formal representations and objections about them closed at midnight on 16 May 2018. All objections have been forwarded for consideration to an independent planning inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. The inspector will make recommendations to the Secretary of State in respect of each one. Natural England may not make any further changes to the report as a result of the representations and objections, but will make comments about them for consideration by the Secretary of State.

We are currently analysing the objections and representations received and considering all the additional /new information presented in them. Many relate to the saltmarsh at Burnham Overy Staithe and Wells-next-the-Sea where we proposed restrictions to public access on the grounds of suitability and safety. Most respondents wanted the existing access arrangements to remain. In light of this we are considering if there may potentially be ways, other than statutory restrictions, of managing use of the saltmarsh to minimise risk.

At Burnham Overy Staithe we have decided to recommend that instead of our proposed S25A restriction, we supplement or replace existing signage with bespoke advisory signs telling people how to stay safe on the saltmarsh. If approved by the Secretary of State we would place these where regularly accessed routes adjoin the line of the ECP. We will do the same at Brancaster which is currently experiencing a high number of safety incidents. At Wells next the Sea we are still considering what our recommendations should be, but plan to make a decision about this in the next month.

We hope local people will be heartened to see that the process Natural England follows to improve access to the coast works. We received a lot of additional information in objections and representations on our proposals, we've listened to these, talked further to local people about them and refined our recommendations accordingly.

d. Hunstanton to Sutton Bridge

Natural England is still visiting land on this stretch of coast that is likely to be affected by our proposals and discussing the options in detail with owner's occupiers and other relevant interests. Due to the length and complexity of this stretch, this phase of site visit work will take some months to complete. The proposals will be finalised and then published in a report to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. This is expected to take place in winter 2019.

Dogs on the Marsh

As part of this work Natural England will be having further conversations with RSPB / LWT regarding signage along the route (in particular to control of dogs) – specifically around Gibraltar Point and River Steeping area but also RSPB Frampton/ Kirton Marsh. I hope to be involved with this along with The Wash NNR manager and also ECP Lead Advisor.

Following on from this we have had an enquiry from a Member of the Public, asking about keeping their dogs under effective control. We have supplied them with some information including a copy of the Countryside Code, Lincs CC guidance which NE inputted into along with the Kennel Club. These documents are available on the internet and we can provide a link if anyone is interested. The member of the public has been persistent in coming back to us, the query has been passed to our legal team, and one of our solicitors has provided a formal response.

4. Offshore windfarms

a. Hornsea Project 3 – Examination has started 2nd October 2018 – 2nd April 2019

The documents can be found at

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/eastern/hornsea-project-three-offshore-wind-farm/?ipcsection=overview>

The deadline for our Written reps on the project is the 7th November and we have a week of issue specific hearings in December and January.

We are working with the developer on statements of common ground and by default uncommon ground. They have also provided some clarifications notes on key areas of concern in our relevant rep - which we are starting to review. These clarification notes will be submitted to PINs at deadline 1 on 7th December. However, initial review is indicating that some outstanding concerns remain, in particular for Ornithology and Benthic.

b. Race Bank OWF

The project has entered its operation phase.

The Race Bank windfarm has applied for a marine licence variation to increase the operation and maintenance cable remedial work that can be done over the life time of the project. This is in the region of a 100% increase. Natural England is currently unable to support the application as we require more information in relation to the rationale and justification. There is obviously a necessity here, but it is not clear on location etc.

Equally we have had a marine licence application consultation on the cables which have not been sufficiently buried in the Wash. This includes sections that are sub-optimally buried, on the seabed and free spanning where the cable are hanging. There are also trenches that have been created during the cable installation procedure that have created trenches. The suggested solutions include backfilling with material from either just inside The Wash or just outside or rock armouring. We are aware the fishermen have asked that there is no rock armouring landwards of KP17 and that according to Ørsted the harbour authorities would like the whole lot rock armoured. Again having looked at the documentation further evidence/information is required, but over all Natural England believes that the proposals pose a significant risk to interested features of the site and will provide our full comments to the MMO by 7th November. However, we are in discussions with the Harbour authorities and EIFCA.

We will also have the monitoring surveys of the cable installation to review.

c. Lincs OWF

We continue to have discussions about potential impacts to the Greater Wash SPA from the presence of the turbines. We have also had consultations under our discretionary advice service in relation to further operations and maintenance works they are proposing to do. We hope to update you more on our advice once this becomes a formal application.

d. Dudgeon

Post construction monitoring continues.

e. Sheringham

Post construction monitoring expected in 2019.

f. Extension Projects

The Crown Estate has published the list of proposed OWF extension projects and included in them are:

- Race Bank
- Sheringham Shoal
- Dudgeon

Natural England has provided advice to The Crown Estate and the developers on the proposals raising our concerns about these three extensions. We understand the cable routes will not go through The Wash, but there are still considerable concerns about grid connection and cable route as well as other significant concerns relating to birds and seascape.

We will be feeding into the Strategic Habitats Regulation Assessment on these before Christmas and leasing decision is due to take place in Spring next year.

5. Wildfowling consents

Natural England is looking to develop the working relationship with Wildfowling groups on The Wash as a part of moving to a longer term way of working and a more regional way of assessing bag returns. Contact from wildfowling groups that Natural England's Gillian Fisher hasn't yet met or worked with would be very welcome.

Please Contact Gill Fisher for further information.

Gillian.fisher@naturalengland.org.uk or 02080261750

6. Other

Friskney Lane

We have been working with other members of the WNNMP to restrict access onto The Wash at Friskney Lane to discuss the pro/ cons of the potential options. We met on site on the 4th September and again on the 17th October with the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO), WNNMP Project Manager, LWT, Wainfleet and Skegness Wildfowling and landowners. Natural England will be working in the coming weeks with the DIO so to help facilitate the consent and depending on the approach used we will undertake a HRA.

Filming on The Wash Over the summer we had a report of unauthorised filming activities on the saltmarsh at Holbeach – we have undertaken an investigation of the incident and have contacted both the landowner and the film company so that they are now aware of the correct process i.e. asking Natural England for a consent. We are considering sending out a reminder to owner/ occupiers on the process that they need to follow in similar situations and for any other projects that may cover The Wash. Natural England uses a Film Locations Management Company (Locality online) who have, since this case came to light, contacted the main Funding Bodies such as Creative England to pass on the correct process to their members.

Boston Haven

We have been contacted for our initial advice on Boston Haven flood embankment works from the EA National Environmental Assessment Service. The project is only at the tender stage, but works are expected to start next year. I have suggested they contact the RSBP as the works will lie adjacent to the RSBP Frampton site.

Litter Pick

Natural England (with the EA) undertook a litter pick along out stretches of the River Nene and across the upper saltmarsh/ sea defence along the Sir Peter Scott footpath. We collected 4 large building sacks worth of rubbish (a lot of plastic but a lot of glass bottles which had been left on site rather than washed up with the tide) which we were kindly allowed to use a skip donated by Black Sluice IDB.

No minutes taken

