



# Wells Advisory Group

The Wash and North Norfolk Marine Partnership

1900-2100 Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2019

The Sack House, Staithe Street, Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk, NR23 1AU

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

## 1. WNNMP

- Recreation Guide
- Disturbance Monitoring Tool
- Recreation Projects: Dog Walking and Aviation
- Recreation Access and Mapping: a possible next step

## 2. Coastal Site Manager updates

## 3. Sedimentation Working Group

## 4. Agents of Change: working with the Cromer Marine Conservation Zone

## 5. Norfolk Coastal Partnership

## 6. Eastern-IFCA: Managing Fisheries in Marine Protected Areas

- Managing Fisheries in Marine Protected Areas
- Other Marine Science Workstreams
- Marine Protection Workstreams
- Engagement

## 7. Natural England

- Condition assessment
- Conservation Advice Package
- England Coastal Path
- Offshore windfarms
- Wildfowling consents
- Other

## 8. Date of the next meeting

## 9. AOB



Last updated: 21 February 2019

## **1. Managing Fisheries in Marine Protected Areas**

### **1.1. Update on the Marine Protected Area Byelaw 2018**

The Marine Protected Areas Byelaw 2018 was submitted to Defra for Ministerial approval in November 2018 and is currently under consideration. This byelaw sets out areas to be closed to certain fishing activities for the protection of Marine Protected Areas. Existing closures are included as well as new closures in the Wash that will affect the shrimp fishery. Two of the proposed restricted areas in the inshore part of the North Norfolk Coast were removed from the byelaw to allow for further consideration. Eastern IFCA has now, in consultation with Natural England, concluded that these closures are necessary for the protection of The Wash and North Norfolk Coast Special Area of Conservation and will seek to include these in the next iteration of this byelaw.

### **1.2. Shrimp Permit Byelaw 2018**

The Shrimp Permit Byelaw 2018 will be submitted to Defra for Ministerial approval in the coming weeks, pending some final minor amendments in relation to electronic monitoring devices. This byelaw will enable Eastern IFCA to manage the shrimp fishery using flexible conditions as required including for example, technical gear requirements and effort limitations.

### **1.3. Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone**

The ongoing review of available evidence for the Cromer MCZ Assessment has indicated that bottom towed fishing gear could damage the chalk feature and therefore measures to exclude towed demersal gear from some or all of the site are likely. The review has also indicated that potting may have an impact upon protruding areas of the chalk feature, but further information is required to properly understand this. Further survey work and management measures to better understand fishing effort are key considerations. The latter are also a consideration for stock sustainability management measures. EIFCA and NE are committed to working with industry to better understand any impacts which may be occurring and to ensure that management decisions are appropriate in an area we all recognise as being extremely important for the local fishery and community.

More information on the Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds site, including maps of the designations and features and online conservation advice can be found at the following web pages:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/marine-conservation-zones-cromer-shoal-chalk-beds>

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/Marine/SupAdvice.aspx?SiteCode=UKMCZ0031&SiteName=MCZ&SiteNameDisplay=Cromer+Shoal+Chalk+Beds+MCZ&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea>

#### 1.4. 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 still in the process of liaising with Natural England in relation to the extent of this sensitive feature. We want to understand what impacts these closures could have on fishing – so we will be keen to engage with anyone who fishes in that area.

## **2. Other Marine Science Workstreams**

### 2.1. Annual mussel surveys in The Wash

Eastern IFCA have now completed our annual WFO mussel surveys after some delays and are exploring the potential for a limited relaying fishery.

### 2.2. Annual cockle surveys in The Wash

The annual WFO cockle surveys are due to start at the end of March. These surveys last for about six weeks, during which time officers will use day grab sampling and intertidal foot surveys to assess the densities and sizes of cockles throughout The Wash Fishery Order area, and as of last year the Ferrier sand area too. This information will be used to inform whether a fishery can be opened within The Wash and the areas that are suitable to be fished.

### 2.3. 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. Our work on crab and lobster stocks indicates that fishing may be at or just beyond maximum Sustainable Yield. We are working closely with Cefas and other experts and we plan to engage with industry shortly in order to explore what management measures might be appropriate to ensure that the fishery remains sustainable.

### 2.4. Benthic habitat mapping off the North Norfolk Coast

In our previous updates we mentioned we were conducting survey work of the North Norfolk Coast. We are currently in the process of working up the data that we collected off the coast of Wells-Next-The-Sea. Initial examination of the data, which is primarily SideScan Sonar data alongside some video footage, indicates that we should be able to get useful information from the results. We intend to go back to collect more video footage to ground truth SideScan data in the area (about 2- or 3-days work).

If you're interested in finding out more about habitat mapping Eastern IFCA have done in the past, a summary of the habitat mapping conducted in 2016 and 2017 can be found on our website here:

[http://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/2018\\_05\\_10\\_Final\\_2016\\_2017\\_Habitat\\_Mapping\\_Report.pdf](http://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/2018_05_10_Final_2016_2017_Habitat_Mapping_Report.pdf)

### 2.5. Slipper Limpets in The Wash

In January the Authority approved a project to clear up a small area of high-density slipper limpets on the Roger-Tofts in The Wash. Slipper limpets are an invasive, non-native species of shellfish, listed on the IUCN list of problematic alien species and under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, meaning it is illegal to introduce them into the wild. In high densities, slipper limpets can reduce the growth rate and survival of mussels, change community structure in the intertidal and subtidal areas, create changes to near-bottom currents and sediment composition and have impacts on the fishing industry – in particular, reputational impacts due to legal issues around importing/exporting Schedule 9 species, and expenses and time involved in sorting and cleaning shellfish catch.

Natural England have reviewed a light-touch HRA for the proposed project and are happy that the activity will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of The Wash and North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site. The current plan is to contract one or two fishing vessels to undertake this work before the beginning of May, using a combination of hand-working and back-raking of sediment.

## **3. Marine Protection Workstreams**

### 3.1. Fishing vessel owner and crew fined for obstruction

Two fishers engaged in the Wash Fishery Order 1992 cockle fishery appeared at King's Lynn Magistrates Court in a case brought by Eastern IFCA. Both pleaded guilty and were ordered to pay financial penalties totalling £2,560 including legal and enforcement costs for prosecution. <http://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/fishing-vessel-owner-crew-fined-obstruction/>

### 3.2. EU exit advice

Eastern IFCA has published a summary and links to Government advice for fishery stakeholders to follow under a no-deal EU exit scenario, available here: <http://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/eu-exit-fisheries-update/>

### 3.3. MMO consultation on the introduction of catch recording

The MMO have launched a consultation on the introduction of catch recording for licensed fishing vessels under 10 metres in length, more information can be found here: <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/mmo/consultation-on-the-introduction-of-catch-recordin/>

### 3.4. Inshore Vessel Monitoring Systems (I-VMS)

Defra's consultation on introducing I-VMS on all British Licenced fishing vessels under 12 meters ended in November of 2018. Defra are analysing the feedback received and intend to publish their response to the public consultation shortly.

### 3.5. 2019 European Seabass Regulations

New regulations have been published for the protection of the European seabass, which came into force from the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019. The complete measures can be found on the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/update-on-fishing-for-sea-bass-in-2019>

#### 3.5.1. *Summary on Commercial Fishing for Bass*

Commercial fishers must have an authorisation issued by the MMO to catch, retain, tranship or land bass. Authorisations are separate for different gear types used. It is prohibited for commercial vessels to fish for bass from 1<sup>st</sup> February to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019. Commercial fishing from the shore is prohibited throughout 2019. Between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 catch restrictions will apply depending on the gear type used (see the MMO website for specifics).

#### 3.5.2. *Summary on Recreational Fishing for Bass*

From 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019, and from 1<sup>st</sup> November to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 only catch-and-release fishing of bass is permitted. From 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019 not more than one bass per person per day may be retained. Any additional bass should be returned immediately to the sea. In addition, the minimum conservation reference size (MCRS) of 42 cm applies – any bass smaller than this must be immediately returned to the sea. These measures apply to fishing from vessels and from shore.

## 4. Engagement

As always, between these meetings you can follow what we've been up on our social media pages:

[https://twitter.com/eastern\\_ifca](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](mailto: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 Summary to the Advisory Groups**

### **1. Condition Assessment**

The Wash and North Norfolk Coast condition assessment is now available on Natural England's Designated Sites System

We are currently finalising the condition assessments for 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.

### **2. Conservation Advice Package**

Great Yarmouth North Denes SPA and Minsmere-Walberswick SPA draft conservation advice packages will be published in March 2019, the Invitation to comment consultation period will begin end of March.

An email went out in 2018 regarding GDPR and only a handful of people responded to remain on the stakeholder list. If you are using a personal email address for correspondence and would like to be kept up to date with Conservation advice publications please email the area team mailbox on [EEMarine@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:EEMarine@naturalengland.org.uk) to request to be added the stakeholder list for correspondence, specifying which MPA's are of interest or more generally the area, Norfolk, Suffolk or Lincolnshire).

Following the publication of the draft package for Breydon Water SPA September 2018, Natural England are currently responding to stakeholder feedback.

### **3. English Coastal Path**

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

#### **a. Skegness and Mablethorpe**

The first section of the England Coast Path in Lincolnshire, between Skegness and Mablethorpe is due to be officially opened in on the 27 February at The North Sea Observatory, Chapel Point, Chapel St Leonards, Skegness PE24 5XA. The final works including building a boardwalk, signage and installation of gates etc. has been completed.

#### **b. Sutton Bridge to Skegness section.**

This is still at the same stage i.e. Stage 4 – Determining as was reported at the November-18 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.

c. Weybourne to Hunstanton stretch

Background

We published our report for the Weybourne to Hunstanton stretch on 21/3/18, the 8 week period for objections and representations has now closed. A Planning Inspector has been appointed to take an independent look at the objections and advise the Secretary of State on these. The first step is for them to determine which objections are admissible under the legislation, and we have been expecting the Planning Inspectorate to advise objectors on this for a while.

Our ECP proposals for this stretch included statutory restrictions to exclude the new coastal access rights to two areas of saltmarsh on grounds of public safety:

- o Wells-next-the-Sea - approximately 6 km<sup>2</sup> of coastal margin adjacent to approximately 4 km of proposed trail;
- o Burnham Overy Staithe - approximately 0.37 km<sup>2</sup> of coastal margin adjacent to approximately 700m of proposed trail.

We reached these recommendations on the basis of expert advice from the emergency services, to keep people safe on a coastline where tides can catch out people unfamiliar with the local area. Following publication, a large number of objections and representations were received and these largely focus on the restrictions and a perception that existing use by tradition, permission or common law would be affected. Whilst this is not the case, some limited areas subject to CROW 'open access' rights at Burnham Overy Staithe would be affected. Most people who made an objection or representation asked for the existing access arrangements to be maintained.

We therefore reviewed the evidence behind these proposals, analysed any new information brought forward in objections and representations and held structured conversations with a selection of key partners and sought further data from rescue services. This uncovered additional information we weren't aware of when we made our proposals, which we are using to consider whether our proposals are still reasonable. The information we've been given by local people shows us how these areas are being used locally and suggests there are potentially ways, other than statutory restrictions, of managing this use to minimise risk. This review is not yet complete but we do expect that we will make some alternative recommendations to the Secretary of State on this, which we hope will meet local concerns.

#### Update

We are now considering if anything needs to be done to protect the species and habitats for which these sites are designated in the absence of these proposed safety restrictions. At Burnham we don't believe anything is needed but this review is ongoing for Wells where we are still collecting and analysing evidence. If a nature conservation restriction is required we will consult on this separately.

Alongside this review a separate matter has come up which affects the whole country and which we also need to take into account. This is the recent ruling at the Court of Justice of the European Union in the matter of People Over Wind. This requires us to take our proposals through an Appropriate Assessment. This affects a very large number of our reports and each will need an appropriate assessment to be done for them in turn. It will be approximately 6 months before we have completed this.

Once our review of the safety restrictions and Appropriate Assessment are complete we will submit our comments on the objections and associated representations received to the Planning Inspectorate who will advise the Secretary of State on these. The Secretary of State will then determine our proposals. This stage of the process sits outside Natural England and is completely independent of us to ensure fairness. It's hard to say how long it will but experience to date suggest it could be upwards of 18 months before our report is determined for this stretch.

#### 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

Following on to the questions regarding walking dogs along the coastal path (and uncontrolled dogs on the marsh) further information provided by Natural England's solicitor is set out below:

- As it currently stands there is no prohibition on taking dogs on the coastal path along the seawall, save for the request featured on signs here and around The Wash that dogs remain under effective control.
- Currently, until the sea defence is adopted as part of the English Coastal Path and the saltmarsh becomes coastal margin there is so far as Natural England is aware, no right to access the saltmarsh and therefore no additional specific prohibition on the taking of dogs on to it. Where there is no right of access to land and no permission granted, the issue of trespass is raised. However this is not a matter for Natural England to advise on and would be a matter for any relevant landowner to consider. In any event, in this area, we would expect the request to keep dogs under effective control to be carefully considered.
- After the area becomes a “coastal margin” the public can exercise their rights over it, subject to any restrictions. Failure to exercise the right in accordance with the restrictions has the potential to raise the issue of trespass. The general restrictions have been set out as part of the English Coast Path proposals that are currently being reviewed by the Secretary of State. It is likely that specific restrictions regarding dog control – i.e. keeping dogs on leads during the bird nesting season, keeping dogs under effective control, or keeping dogs on a lead will be included at different locations due to the importance of The Wash for birds and its European designated habitats i.e. the saltmarsh.

In addition, under Schedule 2 of The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 it notes (with regards the coastal margin):

6A (1) Whatever the time of year, section 2(1) does not entitle a person to be on any land which is coastal margin at any time if – (a) that person has taken onto the land, or allowed to enter or remain on the land, any dog, and (b) at that time, the dog is not under the effective control of that person or another person. (2) For this purpose a dog is under the effective control of a person if the following conditions are met. (3) The first condition is that – (a) the dog is on a lead, or (b) the dog is within sight of the person and the person remains aware of the dog’s actions and has reason to be confident that the dog will return to the person reliably and promptly on the person’s command. (4) The second condition is that the dog remains – (a) on access land, or (b) on other land to which that person has a right of access.

- For completeness, I should draw your attention to certain offences that may be committed in relation to protected wildlife. It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb a bird on Schedule 1 to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 while it is building a nest or is in on or near a nest containing eggs or young or to disturb the dependant young of such a bird. There are also the offences in relation to the SSSI of intentionally or recklessly destroying or damaging features of the SSSI or intentionally or recklessly disturbing the fauna for which it is notified. In this case recklessness could include being aware that birds are vulnerable to disturbance, the effects on them and the kind of activities (i.e. letting your dog off the lead) that would cause that disturbance. In cases where it can be shown that there is knowledge that the site that was damaged was a SSSI there is potential for a greater maximum punishment. Breaches of the legal protection afforded to SSSIs, SPAs and SACs can result in proceedings being taken against the parties involved and if convicted can lead to fines of up to £20,000.

More generally Natural England worked with the Kennel Club to produce specific guidance for dog walking within protected sites it is available here through Lincolnshire County Council webpage.

#### **4. Offshore windfarms**

##### Hornsea Project 3

Natural England continues to advise on the Hornsea 3 examination. However, our position in relation to being unable to exclude Adverse Effect on Integrity (AEoI) of several designated sites including The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC remains unchanged. Our advice on the Cromer Shoal also remains unchanged.

There is the last set of Issue Specific hearings next week, but we will not be attending. The end of examination is 2nd April 2019, but it is highly probable that NE will have continued engagement, but with BEIS after this date, due to our position.

##### Race Bank

Natural England is currently finalising our advice on several additional documents provide by Ørsted to support their cable protection application. It is currently unlikely that we will be able to advise beyond reasonable scientific doubt no AEoI.

We are also responding to a further consultation on disposal dredge and Ornithological monitoring plan.

We have responded to their first year saltmarsh monitoring plan. There is still a long way to go on the recovery, but it good to see that some of the restoration measures i.e. 'Sausages' are having a positive effect. We will be approaching Ørsted about some of less successful mechanisms such as plug planting. And adapting the restoration plan accordingly.

##### Race Bank Extension

NE continues to provide advice to the Crown Estate on their Habitat Regulations Assessment for the proposed extension projects of which this is one. We have been consulted by Ørsted under our discretionary advice service in relation to evidence gather to support any application for such an extension

##### Lincs

NE is currently finalising our advice on an operations and maintenance variation request. There may be more information in time for the meetings

##### Sheringham Shoal

We have had some low MMO consultations in relation to this project, but anticipate more contact because benthic surveys are expected this summer

Dudgeon

Bird monitoring in the form of tagging will continue this summer

Equinor Extension

Again NE Natural England continues to provide advice to the Crown Estate on their Habitat Regulations Assessment for the proposed extension projects of which Dudgeon and Sheringham are included.

Triton Knoll

We continue to provide advice to Innogy and MMO on pre-construction documents to discharge their marine licence condition in advance of starting construction this year

Ørsted

We have had a meeting with Ørsted on 21st February and we are looking to explore with them opportunities for Net Gain in the Greater Wash Area and to develop some habitat enhancement opportunities.

## **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**

Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone Fisheries Assessment

The ongoing review of available evidence for the Cromer MCZ Assessment has indicated that bottom towed fishing gear could damage the chalk feature and therefore measures to exclude towed demersal gear from some or all of the site are likely. The review has also indicated that potting may have an impact upon protruding areas of the chalk feature but further information is required to properly understand this. Further survey work and management measures to better understand fishing effort are key considerations. The latter are also a consideration for stock sustainability management measures. EIFCA and NE are committed to working with industry to better understand any impacts which may be occurring and to ensure that management decisions are appropriate.

## Friskney Lane

We have been worked closely with The Wash and North Norfolk Marine Partnership (WNNMP), Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO), Witham Forth Internal Drainage Board, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, East Lindsey District Council, Skegness and Wainfleet District Wildfowlers and relevant landowners to restrict vehicle access to the marsh at RAF Wainfleet. Over the last 6-months we have been involved in several meetings and discussions to achieve a solution that would meet everyone's requirements. We assisted the DIO by producing the Habitat Regulations Assessment and consent paperwork required to allow the work to be undertaken. The aim of the installation of gates at the end of the public highway at Friskney Lane and concrete blocks on the former helipad is to restrict vehicle access so that it would reduce the occurrence of fly-tipping, minimise the health & safety risks to members of the public to unexploded ordnance and reduce impact on the wildlife/habitats (specifically the saltmarsh and bird interest).

The good news is the gate was installed and the concrete blocks have been installed. Pedestrian access to the saltmarsh is still possible by walking along the Friskney Lane or along the English Coast Path.

We would like to thank everyone involved with this project.

## Boston Haven Flood Embankment

We have been contacted for our statutory advice on Boston Haven flood embankment works from the EA National Environmental Assessment Service. The project is only at investigation and tender stage, but works are expected to start later in 2019. We have been so far involved in assenting and reviewing the Habitat Regulations Assessment for the required geotechnical surveys that are needed. We are aware the RSPB have been contacted by the Environment Agency relating to works within their sites.

## Boston Alternative Energy Facility

Natural England have had an initially project meeting with the Boston Alternative Energy Facility consultancy team. We understand Phase 2 of the consultation on the proposed Boston Alternative Energy Facility has now begun. Opportunities to provide feedback will be available at the Public Information Days are being held in February and March 2019. You can also give feedback about the proposed Boston Alternative Energy Facility via post, email or using the freephone number which can be found here. The deadline to give feedback is 24 March 2019. Further details are available on their webpage and circulated to the Boston Advisory Group members by Rachel Marriott. If members of the Boston Advisory Group wish – then it may be possible to arrange a presentation on the project at a subsequent Advisory Group meeting.

## Minutes Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Sack House, Staithe Street, Wells-next- the- Sea, Norfolk, NR23 1AU

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### Attendees

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Kevin Thatcher	Chair, Wildfowler
Andrew Bloomfield	Holkham Estate
Jake Fiennes	Holkham Estate
Tom Harrison	Blakeney Harbour Association
John Ebbage	Natural England
Peter Connor	Common Rights Holder
Chris Cotton	Common Rights Holder
Brian Everitt	Common Rights Holder
Julian Gregory	Eastern IFCA
Andy Frary	Fisherman
Nicky King	Fisherman
W P Weston	Fisherman
Rob Harris	Fisherman
Victoria Egan	National Trust
Peter Terrington	Wells Resident
Richard Allan	Vice Chair Cley Parish Council
Jonathan Walter	Blakeney Harbour Mussel Assoc & Long Shore Economy
Hayley Roan	RSPB Titchwell Marsh & Snettisham
Geoff Needham	Common Rights Holder
Cyril Southerland	Fisherman and Common Rights Holder
John Hall	Bait Digger
Helen Owen	Secretary, Wildfowler
Marie Strong	Norfolk County Councillor

KT welcomed all to the meeting. Everybody in attendance introduced themselves.

#### Previous Minutes:

KT led the group through the previous meeting minutes, which were approved

CC raised that still SB has not received a written answer from Eastern IFCA regarding the Shrimp Fishery Byelaw and Restrictions to Common Rights Holders.

JG confirmed nothing had been confirmed in writing.

SB DEFRA cannot restrict Common Rights holders and said Common Rights holders do not need permission to take on land they have rights on.

## 1. WNNMP

SL reported on the Recreation Guide. The last Recreation Guide was produced 10 years ago and WNNMP is now in the process of updating this. They have raised the funds for production of the guide and are working with a designer. The finished product will go out to consultation in due course. SL asks for feedback when this is received.

GN asked if there is information in the report of the impact from horses. He has a concern regarding an application for a Livery, Glamping site and roadway for horseboxes. Worried that this will encourage horse riding regularly on the beach and marsh.

AB – Confirmed that Holkham Estate had with a designated route for horse and a lot more was in the pipeline regarding use of horses on the beach but nothing had been finalised as yet.

KT – asked for confirmation of where the planned Livery etc was?

GN - Overstrand Estate – Wheelers Farm being sold off in Lots and the beach in question being Holme beach. The land had been used for horses previously but only for grazing. They would have to cross a footpath to get to the beach

JE – advised if GN could find out who the Landowners were he could contact them.

JE – will contact colleagues and District Planners who will advise if this will affect the SSSI and if so then would automatically come to JE and he would comment if has a negative effect on the SSSI.

Ab – reconfirmed that currently the designated route at Holkham is working as they don't want horses in the dunes or on the marsh. It is adhered to.

Disturbance Monitoring Tool – a new tool is being built to automate the processing of recreational disturbance data collected by volunteers along the coast. Training sessions will be held once complete.

Recreation Projects: Dog Walking – the WNNMP, Holkham and Lincs Wildlife Trust are working collaboratively to launch a sustainable dog walking project. All have jointly funded an advisory report to inform the strategy. Will be available soon.

Recreation projects: Aviation – group formed to help deal with the frequent low flying aircraft along the coast. Group includes, CAA, LWT, RSPB, Holkham, NE, NCP, WNNMP, flying clubs, Norwich City Airport, RAF.

Recreation Access and Mapping: proposed recreational area tool to promote suitable places for recreation that minimise activity conflict and nature disturbance.

Litter free Coast and Sea

Big issue with litter on the coast

WW – bins are overflowing and it blows all over and into the sea, there are not enough bins anywhere to put rubbish, Cley beach has a tiny bin which then blows all over the beach and into sea.  
NK – thought maybe organisations that are encouraging tourism on our coast should contribute in some way.

JE – mentioned the Ely Cartridge have now manufactured a new biodegradable wad. NE wants to see them adopted.

KT – stated facts relating to this, such as

Steel shot needs plastic wad due to barrel damage. Wildfowlers have strict rules re-collecting spent cases. It can be a problem in the dark. Game shooters are using biodegradable wads, there is pressure on producing over the next year and Wells and District Wildfowlers will use them when they can.

## **2. Coastal Site Manager Updates**

JF stated that he has been with Holkham Estate now 3 ½ months.

There is approximately 800k visitors to Holkham per year, 750k of them walk to the beach and the 50k are wildlife watching.

They are in process of ascertain problems with dog walkers and horse access.

The installation of the visitor centre. Holkham is still on a learning curve over the next 12 months.

AB stated that it is a big juggling act with lots happening and problems condensed in one place. It's hard to be a business and fly the flag for conservation and try to find a balance. Holkham is special because of its size and the places people cannot go. Visitor pressure is huge.

JF – The Norfolk Coast Partnership attract 4.4 million visitors to this AONB and 1.1 of them come to Holkham.

AB – There were more rubbish bins back years ago in Wells and less today and surprisingly the problem was worse with the more bins. What they collect now is minimal compared to some places.

JF – it's a reverse psychology, people not seeing a bin are more likely to take their rubbish home with them. Holkham has 60 dog bins which are emptied twice daily.

HR for RSPB –

Titchwell had 80,000 visitors last year and Snettisham 23,000, mainly consisting of general nature lovers and birdwatchers. There has been a rise in the number of dog walkers.

HR reiterated that RSPB have taken bins away and people are taking their rubbish away with them.

The freshwater habitats decision will be in April.

They are putting out cordons for Ringed Plovers earlier this year than they did last.

VE for National Trust

After tagging grey seals in Blakeney Harbour a scientific report shows their movement. 3012 grey seal pups have been recorded for this breeding season.

They have a new strong Ranger Team with more volunteers. They are putting out little tern decoys and electric fencing for their nesting areas.

AB 1<sup>st</sup> time decoys.

National Trust will shortly be recruiting for a Countryside Manager role.

PT asked if there is any news on the mortality rates and the corkscrew effect on the seals.

VE- Mortality rate is 9% on the pups. The corkscrew injury has not been seen for a couple of years but is convinced that this was due to grey seal predation.

## **3. Sedimentation Working Group.**

SL Group has been collating literature to support a full review to understand what is driving observed changes in sand on the N. Norfolk coast.

SL Ne starting a project to understand the drives of sub-tidal sediment changes in the Southern North Sea. Summary read to group.

## **4. Agents of Change**

No representative present. Apologies received from HC

HC and AT are carrying out an education project with Mundesley School bringing MCZ's into the curriculum.

JG – EIFCA is working with AoC on this project

## **5. Norfolk Coastal Partnership**

EH absent.

## **6. Eastern IFCA – Managing Fisheries in Marine Protected Areas**

JG -

Shrimp management

Cromer shoal MCZ – currently talking to the industry. Potting is OK, a better understanding is needed on management levels.

PSP related toxins on the coast. Do not want a repeat of the shut down in Northumberland. Sampling was done and found psb present in some in low levels. As work is not funded they have put in an application for 250k with EMFF to keep the research going for another 2 years.

Mussel survey in the Wash.

Habitat mapping off coast of wells

RH worried about the crab management and as fisherman were not consulted re the shrimpery, will they get consulted on this as they are never kept in the loop.

JG – said they were and he begs to differ on this matter.

RH – reiterated that never once in 3 years did IFCA speak to Wells Club Fisheries about it all. A Consultation was produced in Fishing New by IFCA, this was not enough as the text in the magazine was very small.

JG –the article was readable but agreed it was small and re-published as a result

KT – asked whether there was or was not a consultation?

NK – There was nothing, it was seen as a wash issue so why that's why they got missed out but they were not consulted. Even if IFCA do consult, they do not listen.

RH – had spoken to Greg Brown who sent a folder of byelaws which were not understandable. It is to do with bottom trawler gear only?

GB – confirmed yes.

RH – spoke about the problems where incorrect information was given

JG – said he wasn't present, but they are going to write to all organisations and want to work with all industry and are open to learn lessons and willing to listen.

AF – in 1991 shellfish poisoning ruined the fishing industry through media, they didn't close down but there was a lot of scaremongering.

MS – asked if IFCA had all contact details of all around the coast?

JG – advised yes they did and will write, email, talk to all.

MS – advised to check the list over and make sure they definitely have all contacts.

KT – stopped this discussion, advising that this needs to be between the Fisherman's Assoc and IFCA.

AF – suggested that JG come to Wells AGM for the Fisherman's Assoc

JG – Would love to!

## **7. Natural England**

Update on the Coastal path, consulting on the proposals. Cobblers, Burnham Overy Staithe, Warham, Wells Marsh.

VE – asked to be kept in the loop.

MS – Who is consulting?

JE discussion with NE JE who is SSSI coast path people (Coastal Access Team) and JF.

The final decision will be before the Secretary of State.

MS – pointed out that there are no nesting birds when they say there are on the path on East Quay, report says Red Shank do

PT instead of looking as an isolated area can it be looked at as a wider area re NT on either side when people using the NT one with bridges.

JE Warham/Wells marsh is of special interest as it the last wilderness of the North Norfolk Coast

VE it being clear on why is it just Redshank or more?

JE its breeding, vegetation, the Harriers

AB there is historical data for Redshank on Wells/Warham marsh for 90's early 2000's. Should be available. There was a breeding bird's survey contract given.

KT it's the last area of wilderness that hasn't been ruined. Access is our access for Wildfowling. Irritated that been taken out of the equation re people counter on the WDWX bridge, should be kept in the loop.

JE – the deal is not done yet

WW – are you trying to stop people going down there and stop bait digging and samphire picking? That's our livelihood

JE No, no one is doing that. If you permission you are fine but not banning anyone, not making it an open access area. JF can you stop people?

JK holkham turns a blind eye to locals but doesn't want everyone going out there.

VE advised NT have counters on Stiffkey bridges and they are in contact with the RNLI and Coastguard trying to manage safety.

JE Wildfowling – still a big issue with a Wildfowling club. JE has met with Andrew Jamieson and JF to discuss the problem and who is responsible, it is not know who should be responsible.

KT in State of North Norfolk Coast report. Wildfowling report is inaccurate, please talk to and get input from Clubs.

PT offshore windfarms, re NE should not exclude the impact of windfarms, the windfarm extension and the impact on the North Norfolk Coast could be enormous.

IFCA has some concerns on this.

NK – has heard of a seaweed farm plans, can't see that this will do the habitat any good and want to register concern as a Fisherman.

JE – had no idea on this

JG had heard no details.

AF – also raised about the sedimentation and confirmed that the harbour had silted up back in the 1970's before the windfarms.

## **8. Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2019 at The Sackhouse.

## **9. Any Other Business**

MS – discussed signage on sides of road and advertising  
Contitious of local ones such as carnival etc but