




The background of the cover is a photograph of a sunset over a beach. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright, golden glow that reflects on the wet sand. Several silhouettes of people are visible in the distance, standing on the beach and holding fishing rods. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds, and the overall atmosphere is serene and peaceful.

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

 Northumberland IFCA

 @N_IFCA

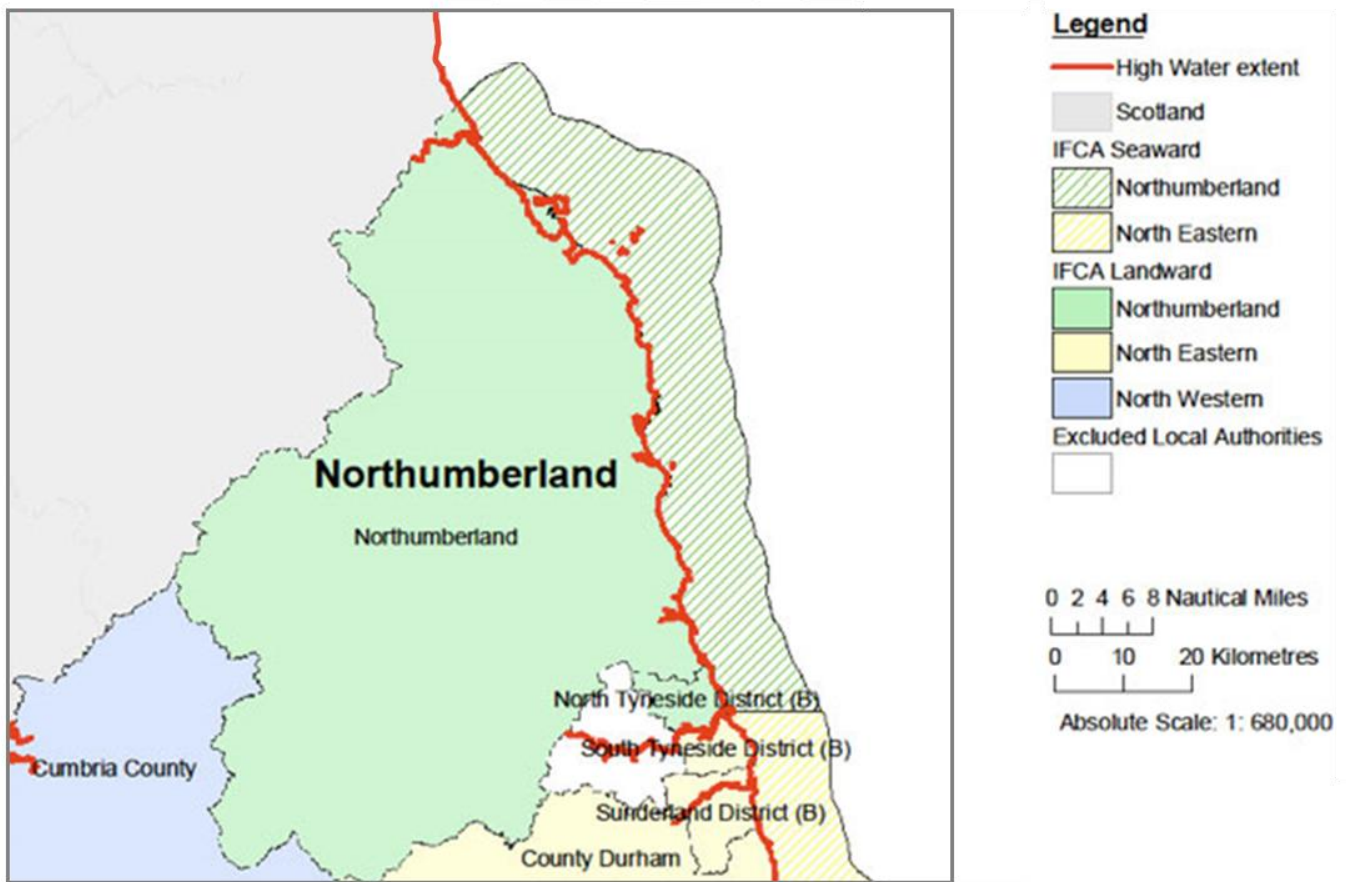
 northumberland-ifca

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Inshore Fisheries and
Conservation Authority

Map Of Northumberland IFCA District



NIFCA Office, 8 Ennerdale Road, Blyth, NE24 4RT



Exit the A189 into Blyth,

Go straight across the roundabout next to ASDA,

Continue on Cowpen Road and turn left at the main set of traffic lights onto Coniston Road,

Take the next left onto Ennerdale Road,

Continue on Ennerdale Road, past Volvo on your left and follow the road round to the right,

NIFCA is the white building on the left through the green metal gates.

NIFCA Annual Report

Covering the Period from 1st April 2023 - 31st March 2024

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Purpose

Northumberland Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NIFCA) is the lead statutory regulator under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MaCAA) for protection of the marine environment and sustainable use of sea fisheries resources within its district. The Authority's duties are defined in MaCAA Sections 153-184. There are ten IFCA's across England, covering English coastal waters out to six nautical miles. The IFCA's' collective vision is to lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment and inshore fisheries within its districts by successfully securing the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry.

S178 of MaCAA requires each IFCA to prepare a report on its activities in the previous financial year as soon as is reasonably practical after its end. The report may be used by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) to measure the performance of the Authority, its accountability and value for money.



Foreword

At the closure of our thirteenth year of operations on 31st March 2024, I would like to express my gratitude to Les Weller, who retired as a general member in April 2024 after a 15-year tenure, including 6 years as the Chairman of this Authority and Vice Chair of the AIFCA. Les will be greatly missed at both local and national levels. His leadership and support have been instrumental in our achievements over the years, and his dedication to public service leaves behind a legacy that will continue to inspire us, we wish Les a long retirement and good fishing.

Significant developments in the management of inshore fisheries and the marine environment continued, with the ongoing development and publishing of national Fishery Management Plans, particularly as we move more towards the implementation phase of Fishery Management Plans.

Looking back at 2023-24, we mostly benefitted from a full and balanced membership, consisting of individuals who bring great knowledge and understanding to the work of NIFCA, particularly in setting policies. We would like to express our appreciation to the members for their valuable time and contributions to this Authority. During 2023-24, we welcomed new member Michael Nugent, an experienced commercial fisherman, bringing the Authority back to a full 21 members.

During the past year, there were changes and developments in the NIFCA staffing, with Environmental IFCO Beth Harvey leaving the Authority and the appointment of Kate Owen. Additional revenue support from Defra enabled the recruitment of Vicky Rae to support National Policy work, putting NIFCA in an extremely strong position for the future.

During the year, NIFCA fully engaged with several national policy developments through various groups, including the Chief Officers Group, the Association of IFCAs, the Technical Advisory Group, and the National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG).

The main policy areas that have seen progress were:

- Development and publication of Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs) to help deliver sustainable fisheries. The first six front-runner FMPs were established, with five published at the end of 2023.
- Continuation of our RSA work, refreshing our Sea Angling Strategy and engagement in this sector.
- HPMAs, the north-east of Farnes, an offshore site adjacent to Northumberland, was designated in July 2023.
- A review of the Fixed Engine byelaw with informal consultation and call for information, further byelaw development through member working groups before statutory consultation.

NIFCA received additional Defra RDEL revenue funding to support additional national policy areas, including Fishery Management Plans (FMPs), Marine Sustainable Development and Marine Protected Areas.

As we move into the new IFCA year, we are confident and positive about the challenges ahead, based on the hard work and active collaboration of our officers and members, and our proactive collaboration with stakeholders and partner agencies in the district, and of course, additional revenue funding to prioritise national policy areas.

We hope you enjoy reading this report and please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries or would like to discuss something. We thank everyone with whom we have worked and engaged with during this year and hope to continue to do so in the coming years.

Mark Southerton
Chief Officer



IFCA Vision & Success Criteria

The National IFCA Vision: "Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities will lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment and inshore fisheries, by successfully securing the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry."

Success Criterion 1

IFCAs are recognised and heard, balancing the economic needs of the fishery whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders

Definition: IFCAs will be a visible, respected and trusted regulator within coastal communities and will maintain and deliver a strategy to communicate their vision and duties effectively. IFCAs will engage with policy makers, industry, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), recreational and commercial users; and other regulators. They will work jointly and collaboratively with partner organisations across boundaries; will participate and contribute to the development and implementation of regional and national marine policy, including the marine planning regime; will take long-term strategic decisions and manage risks effectively. IFCAs may maintain a national body to co-ordinate the activities of authorities that are party to arrangements.

Outcomes

- The IFCA will maintain and implement an effective communication strategy.
- The IFCA will maintain its website, ensuring public access to current fisheries and conservation information for the District, including management requirements and byelaws. Non-reserved IFCA Committee papers will be published.
- The IFCA will contribute to coordinated activity at a national level
- The IFCA and its principal partners will have a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities. Memoranda of Understanding with MMO, Natural England, Environment Agency and Cefas will be maintained. Opportunities for greater efficiencies, effective joint working and collaboration will be explored and implemented when feasible.

Indicators

- SC1A: The IFCA will maintain a database of stakeholder contacts that will have been reviewed and updated by 31 March each year.
- SC1B: The IFCA will have completed a review of its communication strategy and implementation plan by 31 March each year.
- SC1C: The IFCA will have reviewed its website by the last working day of each month.
- SC1D: The IFCA will have reviewed its website and ensured it meets the objectives of its communication strategy, by 31 March each year.
- SC1E: The IFCA will have reviewed all of its Memoranda of Understanding by 31 March each year. There will be a clear plan in place to update MoUs where necessary, to an agreed timescale.
- SC1F: By 31 March each year, the IFCA will have participated appropriately, proportionately and at the right level of delegation, in regional and national fisheries and conservation activity identified in the Annual Plan.

Delivery of SC1

NIFCA has continued during 2023-24 to communicate regularly with stakeholders, partners and the wider community. NIFCA have continued both at sea and shore patrols to have a presence throughout the district, regularly communicating with key stakeholders face to face. NIFCA have continued regular communication with partner agencies to deliver our remit under SC1. NIFCA continued to focus on the Authority website and social media and have continued to increase its following on both Facebook and Twitter platforms:

Followers per platform	March 2023	March 2024	
Facebook	1 152	1 252	↑
X	1 105	1 106	↑

Throughout the year, NIFCA has been diligent in keeping their stakeholders informed about their work and national policy areas, particularly national Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) being developed and published for English waters. They achieve this by regularly posting on social media, while also considering other platforms such as LinkedIn and Instagram. Website development has also included FMP-specific sections where the latest information relating to FMPs can be found. In addition to social media, traditional media outlets such as Fishing News, Newcastle Journal, Northumberland Gazette, and The Ambler were also used to keep the readership informed of NIFCA's work and promote their role within the community. They also publish periodic newsletters that highlight the work being done along the coast. NIFCA also produces newsletters/updates (Fisher Focus newsletter) specifically targeted at the commercial fishing industry to provide updates on developments on relevant local and national topics. NIFCA recognised an increase in non-English speaking stakeholders accessing intertidal fisheries and has developed appropriate signage with information in several different languages accessed through QR codes on infographic signage.

To facilitate two-way communication between NIFCA and the industry, NIFCA continued with 'Fisher Forums' this year. These forums allow officers to arrange a convenient time with fishers to hold a meeting in ports throughout the district. To assist in the success and encourage greater participation at these events, the Authority's patrol vessel was used as a drop-in venue for meetings to take place. NIFCA also developed a 'Fisher Focus' newsletter, which includes information relevant to fishers, particularly as FMPs have been developed for English waters.

NIFCA commissioned a report by Newcastle University to interview NIFCA stakeholders, which was submitted as part of the FMP consultation process. The report helped NIFCA ensure that stakeholders' voices were heard in local and national decision-making processes. This communication has supported the Crab and Lobster Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) process.

NIFCA continued engagement through the Local MMO RFGs and updates on NIFCA workstreams using slots on that platform, reps of the RFG teams joined the IFCA Fisher Forum meetings. NIFCA supported Seafish Introductions to Commercial Fishing courses and presented on the roles and remit of the Authority to students. In The RSA space NIFCA piloted a "Species Challenge" competition and had over 60 anglers sign up submitting data over the year.

NIFCA works closely with Authority Members from Natural England (NE), the Environment Agency (EA), the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), Newcastle University, and Northumberland County Council. The Authority also maintained its Joint Working Arrangement (JWA) with NE, EA, and the MMO. Officers worked on patrols and projects with representatives of all of those organisations, including joint working with North Eastern IFCA. NIFCA has continued links with both the Gangmasters Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) and Northumbria Police to address enforcement risks within the district, conducting joint patrols and liaised activities.

Media and Communications Advisor Amy Maughan provides professional advice to NIFCA on managing and promoting the Authority's image and works. Promotion of and communication regarding the work of the Authority was kept under regular review during the year, including updating the stakeholder database.

In conclusion, NIFCA has taken all necessary measures to maximize the opportunities for close partnership working and achieved all the outcomes of the first success criterion, especially regarding the development of FMPs for English waters. The report by Newcastle University was instrumental in ensuring that stakeholders' opinions were considered and heard in the decision-making process.

Success Criterion 2

IFCAs implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime

Definition: The IFCA enforcement regime is risk-based, makes appropriate use of intelligence, meets legislative standards and complies with the Regulators Code. It should make effective use of the resources available to regulators; complement and align, if possible, with the regimes in adjacent IFC Districts and management by other organisations including the MMO and Environment Agency. Consistency and fairness is important. Regulatory compliance is promoted. Enforcement action is carried out by trained, professional officers working to clear standards of conduct.

Outcomes

- The IFCA will publish its enforcement risk register and strategy, clearly setting out its approach to achieving regulatory compliance and potential sanctions that may be applied for infringements and/or offences.
- The IFCA will have developed consistency in regulations (byelaws) with other organisations.
- The IFCA will manage operational activity (e.g. through a Tactical & Coordination Group) and capture, record, evaluate and disseminate intelligence that is compatible with partner organisations. It is engaged in joint working with partner organisations.
- Warranted Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officers (IFCOs) will be trained and accredited to nationally agreed standards. They will maintain professionalism and make appropriate interventions to deliver efficient, effective enforcement activity

Indicators

- SC2A: The IFCA will ensure its enforcement risk register and strategy are published and available on its website from 1 April each year.
- SC2B: The IFCA will demonstrate in its Annual Report how it has worked with other regulators to achieve consistent quality, application and enforcement of management measures.
- SC2C: The IFCA will compile records of enforcement activity in a standard format; provide them to the National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG) and publish them on its website.
- SC2D: The IFCA will adopt the national Code of Conduct for IFCOs, which will be reviewed annually and published on its website by 1 April.
- SC2E: The Code of Conduct for IFCOs is reflected in work objectives and annual appraisals for all Warranted Officers.
- SC2F: Warranted Officers attain accreditation. All undertake Continuing Professional Development.

Delivery of SC2

NIFCA has successfully complied with all the indicators SC2A to SC2F during 2023-24. The organisation has increased the number of its warranted IFCOs to 10 and ensured that its officers underwent professional development, including additional training programs offered by the Association of IFCAs (please refer to Training Summary in Annex 2). Furthermore, NIFCA and its partner organisations have been working closely within the national IFCAs/MMO intelligence program, resulting in enhanced and positive outcomes from the previous years, along with increased levels and quantity of intelligence gathered, with the assistance of the Tactical Coordination Group (TCG).

Joint working opportunities arose with MMO, EA and NE IFCA, as well as intertidal activities being supported by the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority. Two former police officers as IFCO Intel Leads have been a great asset to the Authority, and the overall experience and knowledge of the enforcement team have also contributed to the success of this IFCA Success Criterion.

NIFCA fully engages with the national NIMEG group, bringing in expertise in the field of regulation within marine fisheries and marine conservation, to develop and support joint working and consistency to promote professionalism and competence as well as best practice.

NIFCA has also benefitted from the use of one of the country's leading marine solicitors for the Authority's prosecution work and related legal advice.

Success Criterion 3

IFCAs use evidence based and appropriate measures to manage the sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources and deliver marine environmental protection within their districts

Definition:

The IFCAs were created as statutory inshore regulators by the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. They are relevant authorities for implementing international environmental commitments including the Birds, Habitats, Water and Marine Strategy Framework Directives and make an important contribution to securing a network of well managed marine protected areas, including European Marine Sites and Marine Conservation Zones. Fisheries Management Plans identify local management measures which should be based on evidence; be timely; subject to appropriate consultation and in step with national initiatives and priorities. An IFCA should balance the social and economic benefits of exploiting sea fisheries resources with the need to protect the environment. It should make a contribution to sustainable development.

Outcomes

- The IFCA will identify issues likely to affect sustainable management of the marine environment in the IFC District; undertake risk assessment and gap analysis; review appropriateness of existing measures; evaluate management options and develop and implement proportionate marine management solutions.
- The IFCA will support implementation of a well-managed network of marine protected areas by: developing a range of criteria-based management options; implementing management measures to ensure that inshore fisheries activities comply with the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 and the revised approach to managing commercial fisheries in European Marine Sites; and that local management contributes to delivery of targets for the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Water Framework Directive and Marine Plans.
- The IFCA will develop Fisheries Management Plans for priority species where appropriate. Shared objectives will be developed with identified partners; actions identified and best practice reflected so that management makes a contribution to sustainable development.

Indicators

- SC3A: The IFCA will record site-specific management considerations for Marine Protected Areas and report progress to the Authority.
- SC3B: The IFCA will publish data analysis and evidence supporting new management measures, on its website.
- SC3C: Management information (e.g. sampling and/or survey results) will be collected periodically after new management measures have been implemented, to demonstrate the extent of effectiveness of the intervention.
- SC3D: The IFCA will have developed a range of criteria-based management options that are explained to stakeholders through the IFCA website, and reviewed by 31 March each year.
- SC3E: New IFCA management measures selected for development and implementation are delivered within agreed timescales
- SC3F: The IFCA will include shared agreed objectives and actions from Fisheries Management Plans in its own Annual Plan, which will be published by 31 March each year.
- SC3G: Progress made in relevant Fisheries Management Plan areas, including Maximum Sustainable Yield commitments, will be noted in the IFCA's Annual Report.

Delivery of SC3

During 2023-24 NIFCA continued with the implementation and development of measures to manage sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources and deliver marine environmental protection. NIFCA has an experienced and knowledgeable team of environmental officers who undertook research and data analysis in support of management, reporting to Quarterly Meetings of the Authority and its quarterly Technical and Scientific sub-committee meetings. Close working with partner agencies, in particular Natural England, support this workstream.

Continued attendance at national IFCA Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meetings, reference to the Authority's Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), membership of the Northumberland Marine Nature Partnership (MNP) and a particularly close working relationship governed by a Memorandum of Understanding with Newcastle University School of Natural and Environmental Sciences have all contributed to the fulfillment of this Success

Criterion and the fulfillment in 2023-24 of the above indicators SC3A to SC3G. The Authority's byelaws and permits have also been kept under review, bearing in mind the balance which is fundamental to the IFCA Vision.

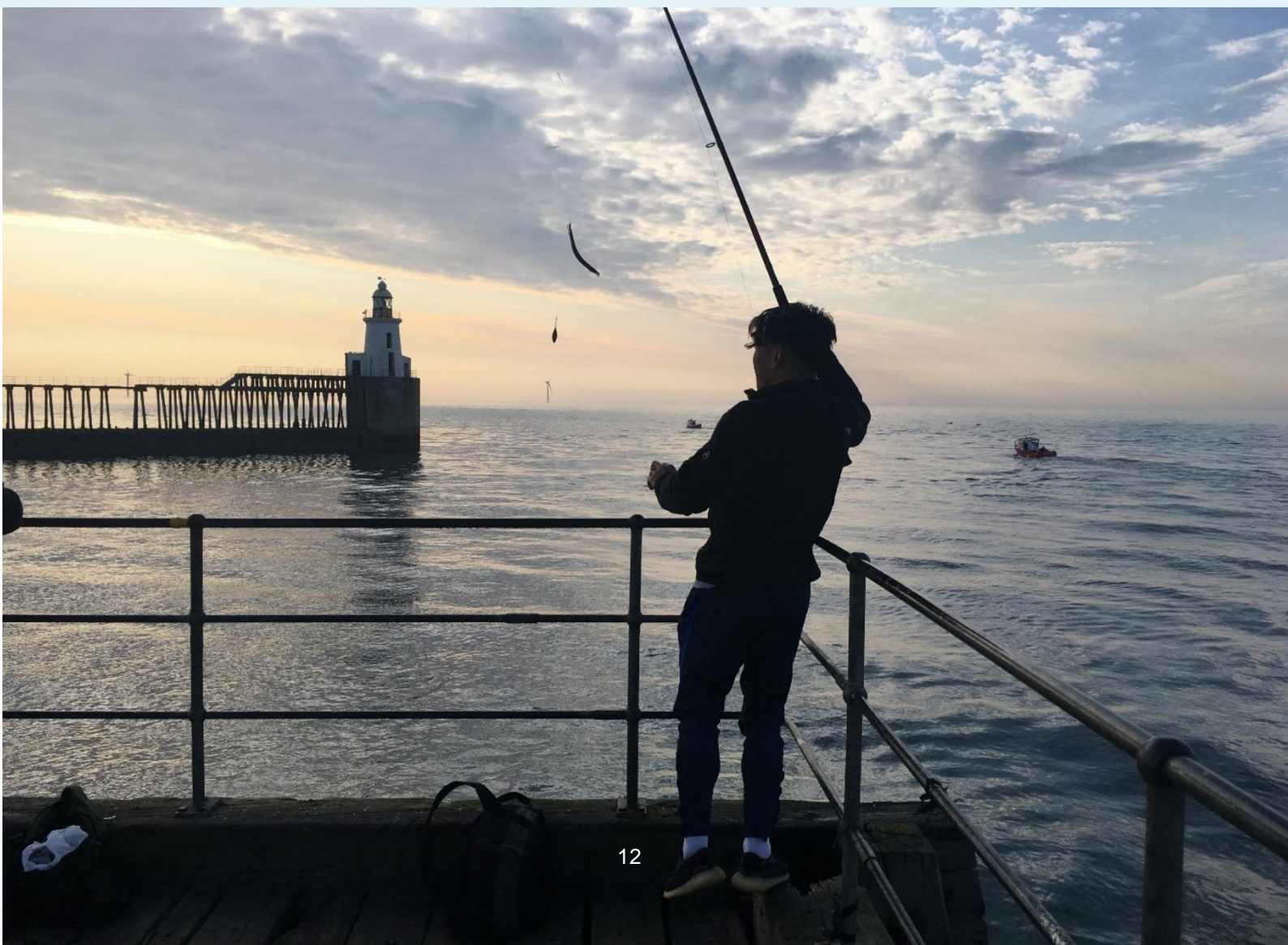
NIFCA has worked to deliver key Defra workstreams for which we received funding in this financial year. This includes work on Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the district and NIFCA continues to prioritise work in MPAs and liaise with Natural England on the development of this work area. NIFCA has worked to ensure all commercial feature-fishery interactions have been assessed by December 2024, with management in place, or progressing, by this deadline. NIFCA have also implemented monitoring and controls plans to monitor fishing activity in line with the conservation objectives of MPAs.

NIFCA have supported the development of FMPs and the implementation phase of the plans published in December 2023. NIFCA carry out research and monitoring work on key fisheries in the district with the aim of attaining best available evidence for use in local decision-making processes. The team continued with annual monitoring surveys including Crustacea fishery monitoring work. This forms a large part of the team's research and monitoring work which all feeds into annual Fishery Status reports. They include information on catch and effort and aim to understand the level of fishing effort and exploitation levels on the local stocks. This information has fed into the FMP process.

NIFCA use best available evidence in our capacity as respondents to Marine Licence Applications with a dedicated officer to review and respond to relevant licence applications. NIFCA also have a process for issuing dispensations against byelaws for scientific purposes. NIFCA have developed a Recreational Sea Angling Strategy through which we have improved relationships with recreational anglers and improved datasets relating to inshore fish.

NIFCA also have a long-standing permit return system for commercial potting and trawling fisheries which collects information on catch and effort for these important fisheries. This information is used in multiple workstreams.

All of the research work is detailed in the NIFCA Annual Research Plan available on the NIFCA website.



Success Criterion 4

IFCAs have appropriate governance in place and staff are trained and professional

Definition:

IFCAs are statutory authorities and sit within the local government family. Authority members may be either general members or local councillors. They comply with Codes of Conduct and the Standing Orders that apply to meetings of local government committees. General members are appointed on merit, through open competition and for a term. They are subject to an annual performance appraisal.

An IFCA is funded by levy, charged to its member councils. Funding originates in local taxation. An IFCA is accountable for its use of public resources and should ensure that a proper auditing regime provides confidence in its commitment and spend of public money. It should make effective use of its resources, including staff and assets. An IFCA has a statutory obligation to prepare and publish Annual Plans and Annual Reports.

Outcomes

- The IFCA will demonstrate its long-term strategic approach to sustainable marine management by having appropriate plan-making, review, update and amendment procedures in place. The IFCA will record its performance against corporate outcomes and indicators as soon as practically possible following the end of the financial year.
- Staff performance management systems will be in place that link to the IFCA success criteria. There will be an induction procedure for new joiners. Staff training and development needs will be identified. Performance will be managed and, where necessary, improvement procedures will be followed.
- The IFCA Committee will be supported by an organised, efficient and effective secretariat. New members will receive an induction pack and briefing from the Authority. There will be a rolling twelve-month schedule of quarterly Authority meetings. Notices of meetings and documentation will be made available in line with Standing Orders.
- IFCA Committee meetings will be held in public unless material is either confidential, or exempt within the meaning of the Local Government Act 1972

Indicators

- SC4A: The IFCA will publish a Plan on its website by 31 March, setting out the main objectives and priorities for the next financial year. A copy will be sent to the Secretary of State.
- SC4B: After the end of each financial year, the IFCA will publish a Report on its website describing its activities, performance and a summary of audited financial information in that year, by 30 November. A copy will be sent to the Secretary of State.
- SC4C: IFCA staff will have annual performance management plans in place. Annual appraisals for all staff will have been completed by 31 May each year.
- SC4D: An efficient secretariat of IFCA staff support IFCA Authority meetings which are held quarterly and are quorate. Meeting documentation will meet Standing Orders.
- SC4E: The IFCA will have demonstrated, in its Annual Report, how marine, land and water management mechanisms in the Inshore Fisheries & Conservation District have worked responsively and effectively together.

Delivery of SC4

NIFCA operated within clear and established policies which were kept up to date where required with oversight by the Chief Officer and Administrative Officer. Those policies continued to prove effective in 2023-24 to support and strengthen governance and management of the business of the Authority. This was also aided by the Authority continuing to have an experienced, highly trained, professional workforce together with a well-informed, responsive and supportive membership. Members were further supported by the AIFCA working with the Institute of Fisheries Management who provided additional educational material in the form of online workshops, these sessions are archived on the members area of the website for reference, as well as new member induction support. All of the above indicators SC4A to SC4E were met during the year, with the Authority subject to the Annual Audit conducted by Northumberland County Council which is reported to and signed off by the membership.

Success Criterion 5

IFCAs make the best use of evidence to deliver their objectives

Definition:

IFCAs are statutory regulators for their Inshore Fisheries and Conservation District. Decision-making should be based on evidence. All IFCAs are supported by officers who pool their expertise and share best practice as a Technical Advisory Group (TAG). A programme of research activity and monitoring is planned, developed and updated in consultation with partners. The programme informs management decisions and supports justification for additional research and evidence gathering.

Outcomes

- A strategic research plan that contributes to greater understanding of the marine environment and delivery of cost-effective management of sea fisheries resources
- Standard Operating Procedures describe how data is captured and shared with principal partners
- A list of research databases held by the IFCA and the frequency of their review
- Non-confidential meta-data collected through the IFCA research programme should be recorded in a database available to the marine research community

Indicators

SC5A: The IFCA will demonstrate progress that has been made towards identifying its evidence needs by publishing a research plan each year.

SC5B: The IFCA will publish a research report annually that demonstrates how evidence has supported decision making.

SC5C: The IFCA's contribution to TAG and progress that has been made towards a national evidence needs programme will be recorded in the IFCA's Annual Report.

Delivery of SC5

Throughout 2023-24, NIFCA demonstrated a consistent record of fulfilling the above indicators and meeting the given criterion. This was evident through the publication of a strategic Research Plan for the upcoming year and a strategic Research Report for the preceding year. Additionally, NIFCA contributed to the national IFCA Technical Advisory Group (TAG) by ensuring attendance by a member of our Environmental IFCO team to all TAG meetings, and by appointing Lead Environmental IFCO Alex Aitken as the vice-chair of the TAG. All evidence gathering and use are reported to and approved by members of the Authority at regular Technical and Scientific meetings.

Furthermore, regular meetings were held with the Authority's Natural England member to analyse the Authority's work in relation to MPAs, including the production of Habitats Regulation Assessments (HRAs) and MCZ Assessments. Through close working relationships with partner organisations, joint working and data sharing were encouraged, and a number of MoUs were established to cover this. The Authority also provided support for local organisations, including the Northumberland Marine Nature Partnership, Coastcare, and the AONB Partnership in Northumberland, which enhanced the working capacity of all organisations involved. All data collected through the work set out in the Annual Research Plan is shared with ERIC NE (Environmental Records Information Centre North East), which can be accessed by the research community.



Local Targets & Priorities - NIFCA attainments

1. To ensure the continued successful performance of NIFCA, delivering all of its duties and fulfilling the IFCA vision and success criteria.
(Success Criteria 1-5)

1. Achieved in 2023-24 as referred to in this report and with particular reference to the Authority Joint Working Arrangement (JWA) locally with the Marine Management Organisation, Natural England and the Environment Agency, enshrining principles of joint working and partner agencies achieving joint objectives.

2. To maintain an effective management and enforcement regime in the district to ensure a sustainable fishery and marine environment on an ongoing basis. (Success Criteria 2 & 3).

2. Achieved with regard to effective use of intelligence and monthly TCG meetings and assessment of risk. Joint working opportunities with MMO EA NE IFCA and other agencies to share resources and have greater outcomes. A proactive and beneficial enforcement policy, with additional warranted officers, development of measured policies to achieve the balance in the IFCA Vision.

3. To refer to the Authority Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and 2023-24 Annual Research Plan of the district when considering and making management measures. (Success Criterion 3)

3. The Authority SEA is evaluated on a two-yearly basis and a copy of the evaluation is on the Authority website. This in particular confirms actions taken under the various recommendations in the SEA and also actions that are needed in the future. The Annual Research Plan has also been followed and referred to in the Annual Research Report of the Authority.

4. Marine Protected Areas - there are a total of 10 of these in the NIFCA district.

For Marine Conservation Zones:

- Aln Estuary MCZ
- Coquet to St Mary's MCZ
- Berwick to St Mary's MCZ

We will aim to properly monitor and carry out assessments of fishing activity and bring in any necessary management measures, consulting with stakeholders and partner agencies. (Success Criteria 1 & 3)

Regarding European Marine Sites (EMS):

- Tweed Estuary SAC
- Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC
- Lindisfarne SPA Farne Islands SPA
- Coquet Island SPA
- Northumbria Coast SPA
- Northumberland Marine SPA

NIFCA is a competent and relevant Authority in relation to EMS under the Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) and has a duty to fulfil conservation objectives to ensure

4. Work to ensure that the conservation objectives for all MPAs within NIFCA's district and where needed management measures in place has continued in 2023-24. Officers have built on the wealth of work completed since Defra announced the Revised Approach for fisheries management in Marine Protected Areas in 2013.

The main priority for assessment is Coquet to St Mary's MCZ mobile gear (light otter trawl) and subtidal mud to meet the 2024 management deadline if needed. The development of management measures continued to evolve during the report period.

Assessments for fishing activities in MPAs (Article 6 of the Habitats Regulations) have continued to be worked on and significant progress has been made on bait digging and hand gathering assessments. A longstanding close working relationship in this regard with the Natural England member of NIFCA is noteworthy.

NIFCA has also continued to develop monitoring and control plans for fishing activity within the district to be kept under continuous review.

NIFCA officers continue to operate effectively in terms of MPA work generally and have an active role in the Berwickshire and Northumberland Marine Nature Partnership.

that qualifying features are maintained in a favourable condition. In accordance with Defra’s revised approach to the management of fisheries in EMS, NIFCA has largely completed the review of ‘Amber risk’ fishing/feature interactions. NIFCA will continue to play an active role in ensuring that the objectives and aims of the management plans for all MPAs within the Authority’s district are met and enhanced, NIFCA have developed a Monitoring and Control plan process with Natural England for fishing in MPAs to monitor fishing impacts on MPA features post assessment. This will also be achieved by Authority activity including NIFCA officers sitting on the management and steering groups of the Berwickshire and Northumberland Marine Nature Partnership and attending relevant meetings. (Success Criterion 3)

5. To keep the Authority byelaws under continuous review and consider any representations made regarding the same and any other management measures brought in by the Authority such as codes of conduct. (Success Criteria 2)

5. Byelaws have been kept under continuous review and as referred to in 2 above. Development following the review of NIFCA byelaw 6 Fixed Engines was undertaken and the process of statutory consultation began at the end of this reporting period. Reviews also include the NIFCA Bait Collection Code of Conduct for the River Blyth which was updated in 2021 with input from stakeholders, NIFCA Periwinkle Collection Code of Conduct and NIFCA Gear Marking Code of Conduct which was implemented in April 2018. Information signage was updated and refreshed with additional languages included, and audit carried out of sign locations updated

6. To continue annual monitoring of mussel beds in the district (Fenham Flats, Holy Island, and Blyth Estuary). (Success Criterion 3)

6. NIFCA conducted mussel surveys on the Blyth Estuary, Holy Island Sands and Fenham Flats in March 2024. Details can be found in the reports on the Authority website. NIFCA have also been involved in partnership projects with Newcastle University to look at the potential reasons for declines NIFCA has recorded through surveys

7. To continue working in accordance with the national IFCA MoUs with each of the MMO, NE, EA (and particularly the local Joint Working Arrangement with the MMO, NE and EA – copy on the Authority website), and Cefas; also with commercial and hobby fishermen including recreational sea anglers, the School of Natural and Environmental Sciences at Newcastle University, the Tweed Commission, Amble Development Trust/ The Northumberland Seafood Centre, the police when necessary and other stakeholders including NECP to facilitate compliance with the IFCA objectives and duties as resources permit. Also to continue Joint Working with other IFCA particularly through the Association of IFCA, Chief Officers Group, National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG) and Technical Advisory Group (TAG). (Success Criterion 1)

7. There has been joint working and a collaborative approach with all of the bodies mentioned and as detailed elsewhere in this report.

8. To keep under review all evidence and data systems to ensure the best use of available evidence and that data is securely held and used appropriately in NIFCA decision making including in respect of the Intelligence Program with the MMO. (Success Criteria 1 & 5)

8. This has continued and is detailed elsewhere in this report.

9. To continue an active programme of meeting stakeholders both informally in the district e.g. Officers meeting commercial and recreational fishermen when on patrol in the district; and arranging and attending meetings with commercial fishermen, attending Recreational Sea Angling clubs and other stakeholders at events organised by the Authority with the aim of educating interested parties about the remit and work of the Authority. (Success Criterion 1)

9. This has continued in 2023-24 as detailed elsewhere in this report. Additionally, this year and going forward, NIFCA have been able to present at the Anglo Scottish Seafish Training Association introduction to commercial fishing course, as well as hosting RSA meetings at the NIFCA office. NIFCA also had the opportunity to support the AIFCA at Boatlife at the NEC Birmingham, speaking to recreational anglers around the country.

<p>10. To continue to support the lobster hatchery in the Authority district at Amble, with a wide range of benefits for stocks, the environment, the fishing industry, and education. (Success Criterion 1)</p>	<p>10. There continues to be liaison with the local lobster hatchery which has the support of NIFCA for its objectives and attainments. Although the hatchery has been further scaled back due to higher running costs, NIFCA provides the hatchery with a dispensation for fishers to land berried lobsters allowing the hatchery to receive berried lobsters for the facility.</p>
<p>11. NIFCA projects – NIFCA will continue with research projects – these include the Authority monitoring of the local lobster and brown crab population. NIFCA will continue annual monitoring work including mussel bed condition surveys and the Aln Estuary MCZ Fish survey. NIFCA will continue intertidal monitoring surveys to increase knowledge on the impacts of intertidal collection activity. In addition, NIFCA will continue to support the North East Cetacean Project which is determining the distribution and abundance of seabirds and cetaceans in the district. (Success Criterion 5)</p>	<p>11. NIFCA research projects have continued and come into effect, as detailed in the Authority’s Annual Research Plan and Annual Research Report. Lobster and crab biometric surveys on local fishing vessels continued, as did quayside sampling programs</p>
<p>12. To continue with an adequately resourced and proactive training programme for staff and with training for new Members and also to facilitate continual training development of existing Members to the maximum possible extent. Training of staff will be reviewed through the Authority system of Review/ Appraisals which began in a revised and enhanced form in 2015. Staff and Members will be asked to contribute with ideas and suggestions for training and development and the Authority will seek to meet all reasonable and affordable needs in that respect. (Success Criterion 4)</p>	<p>12. Training IFCA Officers and staff to the highest possible standard in respect of their area of work is a key NIFCA priority and has obvious benefits in the quality of work undertaken and outputs from the Authority. Details of training undertaken can be seen in Annex 2 of this report.</p>
<p>13. To continue with the programme of fish surveys in the district which have been carried out successfully to date in the Aln Estuary. (Success Criterion 3)</p>	<p>13. Surveys have continued to a carefully programmed schedule in the Aln Estuary. Details can be found in the fish survey reports on the Authority website.</p>
<p>14. To continue with adherence to the principles laid down in the Defra Guidance to IFCA’s and as resources permit in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The common enforcement framework b) Evidence based Marine Management c) Monitoring and Evaluation and Measuring Performance d) Contributing to the Achievement of Sustainable Development e) Annual Planning and Reporting f) Byelaw Making Powers under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 	<p>14. There is continued adherence to guidance from Defra and also the suite of policies which have continued to be developed particularly by the Authority Admin Officer and kept up to date, including completion of review of the Authority’s Member Handbook and Governance and with all necessary matters reported upon to quarterly and subcommittee meetings of the Authority, further enhancing planning and member involvement.</p>



Work Plan Summary

2023-24

In the thirteenth year of operation, Northumberland IFCA continued to closely follow its work plan under the leadership of Chief Officer Mark Southerton, supported by a senior management team structure, IFCOs and admin support staff. The Authority aimed to fulfill its operations and performance requirements by following the national Success Criteria for IFCAs as well as local targets and priorities referred to in Sections 3 and 4.

The Authority and its officers are committed to enhancing and improving the performance and delivery of objectives for stakeholders to benefit sustainable fisheries and the marine environment. The Authority's MPA work is a prime example of this, with excellent partnership working with the Authority's Natural England Member and the ongoing development of the Authority's Strategy and outputs in relation to the Fishing in MPAs project (Revised Approach).

Budget management is a crucial area for which the Authority has a consistent plan, including the Finance Officer reporting weekly and more frequently as required to the Chief Officer. The Authority follows financial regulations closely and liaises with the Senior Management Team. Financial matters are also reported quarterly to meetings of the Authority, and annual budget planning centres upon an Authority Members' meeting in December.

The Authority followed a work plan primarily based on its policy on Health and Safety, led by our Chief Officer/Health and Safety Officer. Apart from any incidents requiring immediate attention, the Chief Officer also reports quarterly to the Authority Quarterly Meeting.

In 2023-24, strong and long-term external relationships with other bodies were also maintained by all possible means, particularly with the MMO, Natural England, EA, Tweed Commission, Cefas and Newcastle University. Communication and relations with stakeholders were also emphasised and maintained guided by the Authority's Promotion and Communications Policy.

The Authority also kept its Risk Management Strategy under review and updated it every six months, following a meeting of the Risk Strategy Working Group led by the Chief Officer.



 FISHERIES PATROL

Northumberland

Inshore Fisheries and
Conservation Authority

NATALIE KRISTEN II
HELYN
AMBLE

Resources Report

2023-24

Premises

The Authority moved to its current premises at 8 Ennerdale Road, Blyth in September 2013. Following a review and negotiations with the Landlord, FES, a new 10-year lease began in September 2023. The Authority carried out some remedial work and improvements to the premises at a cost of 37K. The rent will remain at £27,500 p.a for the first 2 years of the new lease period, after which it will increase to £30,000 p.a and will also be subject to review at the 5-year break point. The premises continue to provide an excellent work base and storage facilities at a reasonable cost.

Vessels and Vehicles

The Authority's main patrol vessel, berthed at Royal Quays Marina in North Shields, is a 16m GRP catamaran named St Aidan which it acquired in April 2015. The vessel cost £680,000 and was financed entirely from the Authority's own reserves. St Aidan is equipped with an on-board 5.3m RIB named TT St Aidan which can also operate independently of the main vessel and be mounted on a trailer and towed to onshore launch areas for shore patrols and survey work.

The Authority also operates a 9m cabin RIB, the "Robert Arkless MBE" built by Ribcraft in 2019, the total cost of the cabin RIB was a little under £150,000, around 70% of which was financed by EMFF grant funding. The RIB is berthed at Amble Marina and can function as an additional patrol vessel as well as carry out survey work.

In addition, the Authority owns a 3.2m Zodiac inflatable purchased in 2013 at a cost of £1,700. This is used principally for estuarine survey work.

The Authority maintains service level agreements with Northumberland County Council for the hire and maintenance of a 1.6 litre Ford Connect minivan and a 2.2 litre Ford Ranger 4x4 for use on shore patrols, surveys and general Authority business. The current lease agreements for both vehicles began in 2020 and are due to run until September 2025 at an annual cost of £4,540 and £5,850 (ex VAT) respectively. A 3rd fleet vehicle, a 2nd hand Citroen Berlingo minivan, was purchased outright by the Authority at a cost of 11.2K in March 2024.

Reserves

The Authority considers it essential to set aside funds every year to pay for eventual vessel replacement. This year the budgeted transfer of 42K to the Renewals Fund was augmented by a further 43.3K from investment account interest and hire of the vessels and marine equipment. This increased the Fund to £693,396 as at 31/3/24.

The Authority's General Reserves are separate from the Renewals Fund and are now maintained at a minimum level of 20% of total turnover to fund budget deficits, cover any financial emergencies and fund additional capital expenditure to enhance the Authority's capabilities. Any budget surpluses are transferred to General Reserves. The net effect of the budget surplus and capital expenditure drawings for 2023-24 (see Narrative) was to increase the level of General Reserves from £217,779 to £246,202 as at 31/3/24.



NIFCA Budget Summary 2023-24

	Estimate £ 2023-24	Actual £ 2023-24	Variance £
Expenditure			
Employee expenses	637,300	600,671	36,629
Patrol vessel, RIB & Leased vehicles expenses	97,900	103,166	(5,266)
Renewals & Capital Expenditure	35,000	35,918	(918)
Other Enforcement & Environmental expenses	37,600	39,182	(1,582)
Defra R-Del project expenditure	147,000	62,935	84,065
8 Ennerdale running costs	52,000	56,681	(4,681)
Other management & administrative expenses	81,500	66,119	15,381
Operating expenditure	1,088,300	964,671	123,629
Income			
Fishing permit & tag charges	23,000	20,016	(2,984)
Hire of vessels & equipment	0	24,380	24,380
Defra R-Del Funding	147,000	62,935	(84,065)
Other income	6,447	25,557	19,110
Total income	176,447	132,888	(43,559)
Net cost of service	911,853	831,783	80,070
Contributions & Reserves			
Annual contribution from Revenue to Renewals Fund	42,000	42,000	0
Other contributions to Renewals Fund	3,500	43,347	(39,847)
Capital Expenditure drawn from General Reserves	(35,000)	(35,918)	918
Surplus / (Deficit)	23,200	64,341	(41,141)
Total expenditure	945,553	945,553	(0)
Precepted Income			
Northumberland County Council	790,913	790,913	0
North Tyneside Council	154,640	154,640	0
Total Local Authority precept	945,553	945,553	0

Budget Summary Narrative

An increase of 5% to the annual Precept for the year 2023-24 was agreed by the Authority members. The increase was deemed necessary due to the anticipated arrival of a new part-time IFCO from April 2023, as well as agreed incremental and CoL salary rises for all staff apart from the Chief Officer, the anticipated cost of an additional fleet vehicle and other cost increases arising from the impact of inflation.

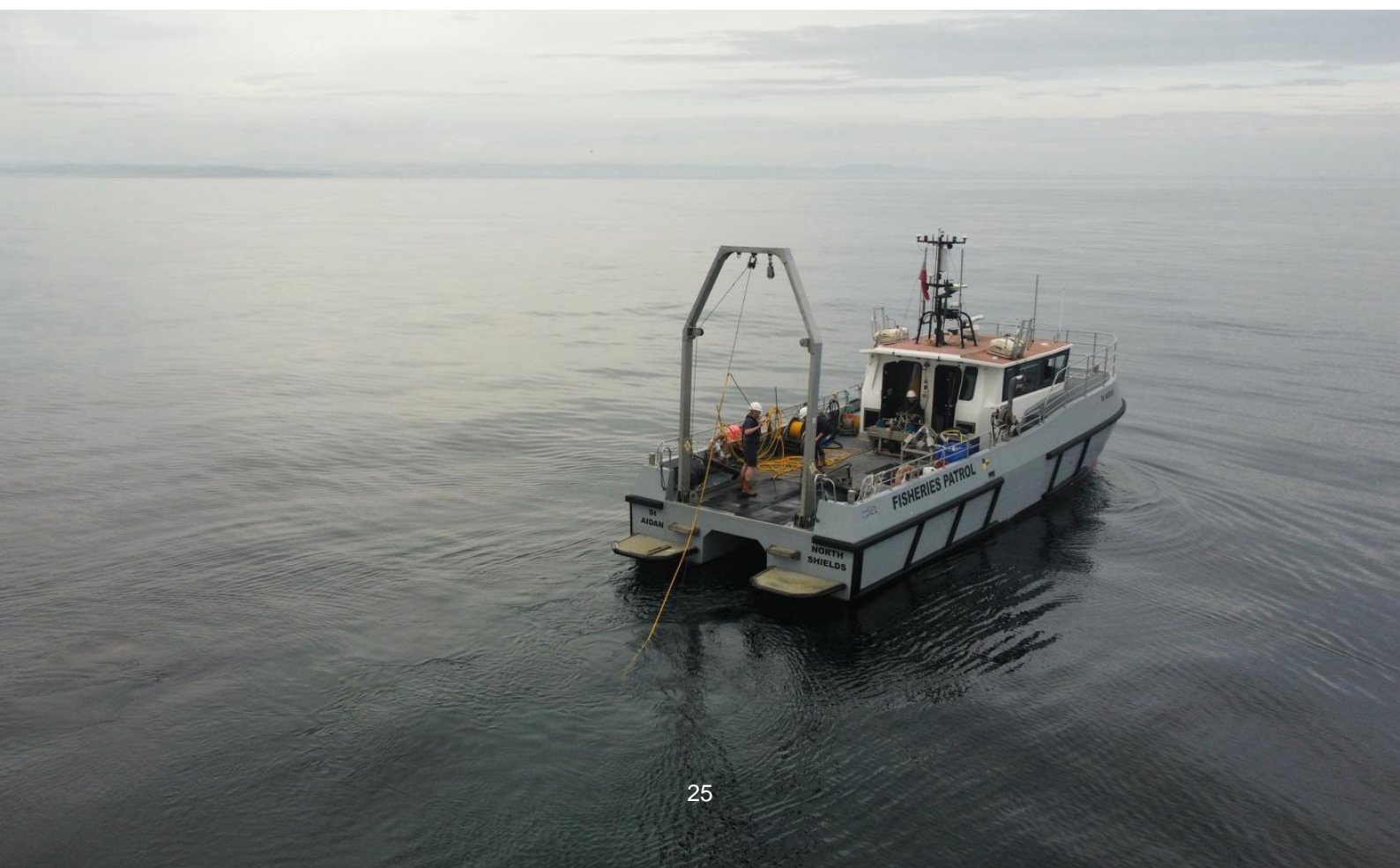
The original projected net budget surplus of £23,200 has risen to an actual surplus of £64,341 (a positive variance of £41,141) after deducting the 42K annual contribution to the Patrol Vessel Fund. The largest single variance from budget, in employee expenses (reduced by 37.6K), was caused by delaying the appointment of an additional part-time IFCO until 2024-25, the delay in appointing replacements for two departing IFCOs and the Senior Administrator's maternity leave.

The other significant projected budget underspend is for the Management/Administrative expenses (15.4K), due to not needing to spend the Contingency Fund as well as to the removal of the National Lead Training Officer post and lower than budgeted spending on promotion, the AIFCA subscription insurance and stationery/printing.

The overall positive variance is slightly mitigated by increases in vessel and vehicle costs (5.3K) due to a rise in maintenance costs and the purchases of a marine drone and a 2nd hand fleet vehicle. The increase in office running costs (4.7K) is due to the cost of a new front gate and railings and is offset by the Landlord's insurance company payout of 5K (part of Other Income).

The Defra R-Del Funding (147K) and its associated expenditure (63K) for 2023-24 do not affect the budget calculation as they are assumed to be budget-neutral with any surplus being carried forward as deferred grant income. The income from bank interest (19K) and vessel charters (24.3K) also does not alter the net budget surplus as it is transferred directly to the Renewals Fund (see Resources). Bank interest has increased significantly from the previous year due to the steep rise in interest rates.

Capital Expenditure for the period (35.9K) included office refurbishment and remedial work for the office (25.5K with an additional 11.5K spent in the 1st month of the following period), a new box trailer and a HYPACK software licence for survey work.





Governance Report

2023-24

NIFCA is a public body with a committee of 21 Members who provide governance, as defined in The Northumberland Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Order 2010 no. 2197, who meet quarterly and on other occasions as referred to below. Seven council members come from the Authority's two constituent councils, while 11 are appointed by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) from various stakeholder groups, each having skills and experience relevant to the management of inshore fisheries and marine conservation. Additionally, there are 3 statutory members from the MMO, Environment Agency (EA), and Natural England (NE).

Throughout the year, the Authority held four in-person General meetings (quarterly meetings) in April, July, October, and January. NIFCA has good meeting facilities at 8 Ennerdale Road which were used for multiple meetings during the year. To improve access for members and the general public in the north of the district, NIFCA also held meetings at the Hub in Seahouses and County Hall in Morpeth.

For all Authority meetings, papers are prepared by the Chief Officer with the assistance of Authority Officers. The General meetings are open to the public and the press and are publicised on the Authority website in advance. The procedures for these meetings continue to be governed by the Authority Constitution and Standing Orders, which are kept under review. Reference is also made, where necessary, to the Authority Code of Conduct for Members. Minutes of each meeting are produced as soon as possible and approved at the next quarterly Authority meeting. They are then posted on the Authority website.

As usual, before each annual (April) and quarterly meeting, the Authority Watch and Finance Committees meet on the same day. These meetings are held in private and are reported upon by the Authority Chief Officer (and Chair when appropriate) to the general meeting which follows. Minutes of those meetings are also produced for approval at the following quarterly Watch and Finance meeting.

In addition to the above meetings, the Authority has several subcommittees and Working Groups which have met when required or requested. These meetings provide guidance and make recommendations upon Authority policy to the main meeting of the Authority.

Details of the subcommittee meetings can be seen on the next page of this report.

Member Meetings attended 2023-24

It is important to note that NIFCA recognises the incredible contributions of time, expertise and effort given to the Authority by its membership. General members, appointed by the MMO, give their time voluntarily and their efforts and dedication serve the public for free. With the aim of monetarising these contributions, and to give a fiscal value of our membership's commitment and dedication to our vision, a £45 per hour value has been assigned to their attendance at meetings.

Colour Code: x In attendance A Apologies given o Did not attend (no apologies) na Not on subcommittee

Member	Apr-23			Jul-23			Oct-23			Jan-24			T&S meeting Sep 23	Budget Dec 2023
	F	W	G	F	W	G	F	W	G	F	W	G		
*Chair Les Weller	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	A	x
*Frank Armstrong	na	na	x	na	na	x	na	na	x	na	na	x	x	x
*Paul Dent	na	na	x	na	na	x	na	na	A	na	na	A	na	o
*Amelia Henderson	na	na	A	na	na	x	na	na	x	na	na	x	na	x
*Martin Kitching	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	x	x	x	A	o
*Steve Lowe	x	x	x	x	x	A	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	A
*Pip Moore	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	A	A	A	o	A
*Michael Nugent (joined April 23)	na	na	na	na	na	x	na	na	A	na	na	x	na	o
*Jim Stephenson	A	A	A	x	x	x	A	A	A	A	A	A	x	o
*Ian Thomas	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
*James Wood	A	A	x	x	x	x	A	A	A	x	x	x	x	A
**Brian Burdis	A	A	A	x	x	x	x	x	o	A	A	A	o	o
**Liz Dunn	na	na	x	na	na	A	na	na	A	na	na	x	na	x
**Alex Wallace	na	na	x	na	na	x	na	na	A	na	na	x	na	A
**Colin Hardy	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	na	A
**Guy Renner-Thompson	x	x	x	A	A	A	A	A	x	A	A	A	na	A
**Catherine Seymour	na	na	A	na	na	o	na	na	x	na	na	x	na	A
**Martin Swinbank	na	na	x	na	na	x	na	na	x	na	na	x	na	A
***Phil Rippon	na	na	x	na	na	x	na	na	x	na	na	A	x	A
***Steph Ingram (joined Aug 23)	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	x	na	na	x	o	x
***Patrick Gray	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	A	x	x	x	na	x
***Catherine Scott	na	na	x	na	na	x	na	na	A	na	na	x	x	A

Length of Meeting (hrs)	1	0.75	2	1	0.75	2	1	1	2.5	0.75	1.25	1.75	1	0.75	Total hours & cost	
No. of General Members*	1	1	2	6	6	8	4	4	6	5	5	8	5	4	Hours	Cost @ £45/hr
Meeting Time hrs (General Members)*	1	0.75	4	6	4.5	16	4	4	15	3.75	6.25	14	5	3	87.25	£3,926
Number of Councillors**	2	2	5	2	2	4	2	2	4	1	1	5	0	1		
Meeting Time hrs (Councillors)**	2	1.5	10	2	1.5	8	2	2	10	0.75	1.25	8.75	0	0.75	50.50	£2,273
Number of Statutory Appointees***	0	0	3	1	1	3	1	1	2	1	1	3	2	2		
Meeting Time hrs (Stat. Appointees)***	0	0	6	1	0.75	6	1	1	5	0.75	1.25	5.25	2	1.5	31.50	£1,418

* General Members

** Councillors

*** Statutory Bodies

In addition to these meetings, our Members often undertake significant additional work from time to time, such as assisting with survey work and attending external meetings on behalf of the Authority, which is not included in the table above.

Furthermore, members' travel time to meetings is not factored in because it varies from member to member and can sometimes exceed 2 hours for a round trip.



Staffing & Service Standards 2023-24

The Authority is proud to have a dedicated and experienced workforce committed to achieving the IFCA Vision, Success Criteria and Local Targets. The employees are stable, and their efforts are regularly appreciated by the Members, stakeholders and partner organisations.

The year saw the maintenance of high standards, with all officers and staff undergoing an Annual Appraisal (including a 6-month review) in a well-established format with their line manager. Additionally, Best Practice Ltd provided all officers with an Occupational Health Test.

The Authority recognises the importance of a well-trained workforce, and appropriate training is provided as needed, with planning and a strategic approach applied to the training program. The training is budgeted for, and a detailed summary of the training for 2023-24 can be found in Annex 2 of this report.

Photo below by Helen Cowan





Strategic Review

A significant portion of the funding for Northumberland IFCA comes from Defra under the "New Burdens" scheme, which began in 2011 and continues to date. Northumberland County Council and North Tyneside Council each receive a share of £154,640 from Defra, and then provide it to Northumberland IFCA by way of the annual funding precept. This funding has already been allocated for the 2023-2024 year but will be reviewed between now and 2024-2025. When there is financial certainty as far ahead as possible, more complete strategic planning can be undertaken.

Aside from the "New Burdens" funding, Defra has also provided an additional £1.4 million revenue (RDEL) to IFCA, including Northumberland IFCA, receiving 1/10 £140k to support increased resources for supporting national policy areas. This additional work includes supporting national Fishery Management Plans, MPA management and Marine Sustainable Developments. This additional financial support has enabled the IFCA to bring in additional support in two FT posts to support these national work areas.

The organisation has also been planning for any possible future developments or financial models. Due to the success of the work carried out by Northumberland IFCA to date, including in respect of Marine Protected Areas, Fishery Management Plans, and Marine licence and consents, there is continued justification for the funding that has been contributed from Defra to IFCA via their constituent councils.

Northumberland IFCA has taken a flexible and proactive approach to developments in the marine environment, planning as far as possible and following core principles for fulfilling its vision. The organisation has given particular focus to the delivery of local targets and priorities, while also taking into account the wider national situation. Northumberland IFCA works closely with and supports the Association of IFCA, as well as the national Chief Officers Group (COG), Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG), all of which are attended by senior Authority Officers. The Chief Officer also attends the MAFCO Group meetings, which are held between Defra officials and IFCA Chief Officers, giving vital assurance regarding appropriate engagement and action required in relation to national development. The Authority Annual Research Plan also details strategic planning for the NIFCA Environmental team and directs their research and monitoring work for the year ahead and beyond when possible.

In response to growing concerns around climate change, Northumberland IFCA has developed the capability to monitor and improve its carbon impact. This priority will be carefully considered during the creation and review of future policy to ensure a proactive and pragmatic response to the crisis.

The role of members in the development of Northumberland IFCA policies and supporting their implementation is crucial to the organisation's success and continued reputation as managers in the inshore fisheries and marine zone. The Authority also closely focuses on risk in all areas of its remit, in a proportionate manner, and as shown in the Authority's Risk Assessment Matrix, which is kept up-to-date and reviewed on a bi-annual basis.

In summary, strategic planning has been a key part of Northumberland IFCA's work in 2023-24 and will continue to be a fundamental aspect of what it does.



Annex 1

List of Press Reports referring to NIFCA - 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

Date	Paper	Title
27 April 2023	Fishing News	HPMAs: MP broke news embargo
14 July 2023	Northumberland Gazette online	Newbiggin fisherman fined for failing to return 179 undersized lobsters to the sea
20 July 2023	Fishing News	Serial offender fined for 179 undersize lobsters
24 July 2023	Northumberland Gazette online	Fisherman who volunteers with Tynemouth RNLI appointed to Northumberland Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority board.
Aug/Sept 2023	The Ambler	Commercial fisherman fined for breaching fisheries legislation
17 August 2023	Fishing News	A Day in the Life – Andrew Boon
24 August 2023	Fishing News	Fishers and NIFCA co-design FMP response
8 September 2023	Northumberland Gazette online	Fishermen urged to shape the future of crab and lobster fisheries management in Northumberland
25 September 2023	Fishing News	Crab and Lobster FMP: Fishers and NIFCA Co-design FMP Response
5 October 2023	Fishing News	NIFCA appoints two environmental IFCOs
13 October 2023	Northumberland Gazette online	Fisheries and Conservation Authority welcomes two new environmental officers
31 October 2023	Northumberland Gazette online	Newbiggin-by-the-Sea fisherman prosecuted for damaging conservation efforts with lobster catch
9 November 2023	Fishing News	NE fisherman guilty of byelaw breaches
25 January 2024	Northumberland Gazette online	Northumberland fisherman barred from holding a permit and fined nearly £2,500 for latest rules breach.
1 February 2024	Fishing News	Serial offender loses shellfish permit
14 February 2024	Northumberland Gazette online	Family of fishermen ordered to pay £5,000 after breaching NIFCA rules about tagging shellfish pots
29 February 2024	Fishing News	£5k for permit breaches
14 March 2024	Fishing News	Service Provider of the Year (NIFCA nominated)

Annex 2

Training Summary 2023-24

Date	Training	Attendees
May 2023	5-Day MCA Small Ships, Navigation and Radar Course	2 x IFCOs
June 2023	1-Day RYA Advanced Power Boat Course	1 x IFCO
June 2023	2-Day Internal Vessel Training	4 x IFCOs
June 2023	Social Media Training	3 x IFCOs and 1 Admin Staff
July 2023	5-Day MCA Small Ships, Navigation and Radar Course	1 x IFCO
July 2023	2-Day Internal Vessel Training	4 x IFCOs
September 2023	1-Day Briggs Marine – Oil Spill Awareness and Response Training	2 x IFCOs
October 2023	1-Day STCW Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting Training	1 x IFCO
October 2023	1-Day STCW Personal Sea Survival Training	1 x IFCO
November 2023	5-Day MCA Small Ships, Navigation and Radar Course	1 x IFCO
December 2023	Internal Vessel Training	5 x IFCOs
December 2023	1-Day First Aid Course	1 x IFCO
January 2024	2-Day Internal Enforcement Training	3 x IFCOs
January 2024	5-Day AIFCA Enforcement Training	3 x IFCOs
February 2024	2-Day Briggs Marine Beachmaster Course	2 x IFCOs
March 2024	1-Day RYA Advanced Power Boat Assessment	1 IFCO
March 2024	2-Day Internal Vessel Training	3 x IFCOs

Annex 3

It is essential to highlight the considerable amount of time that our officers spend reading through documents, attending meetings, summarising the key points to members, and providing thoughtful responses to consultation feedback.

Marine licence Applications

Date Received	Name of organisation	Consultation	Response date
April 2023	MMO	Northeast England Cetacean Bioacoustics Survey MLA/2023/00017	May 2023
May 2023	MMO	Cambois Connection Nearshore Borehole Campaign – Backfilling MLA/2023/00094	May 2023
May 2023	MMO	Wild Oyster Restoration Tyne & Wear MLA/2023/00051	June 2023
May 2023	MMO	Testing Methods for Monitoring Cetaceans at Future Offshore Development Sites MLA/2023/00158	June 2023
August 2023	MMO	Morven Metocean buoy Deployment MLA/2023/00215	August 2023
August 2023	MMO	Tyne Bridge Major Maintenance Scheme MLA/2023/00185	September 2023
August 2023	MMO	Blyth Capital Dredge MLA/2023/00276	September 2023
October 2023	MMO	Berwick Bank Cambois Connection Marine Scheme MLA/2023/00334	November 2023
November 2023	MMO	Northeast England Cetacean Bioacoustic Survey MLA/2023/00399	December 2023
November 2023	MMO	Berwick Old (AM) Bridge Phase 2 Refurbishment MLA/2023/00382	December 2023
February 2024	MMO	South Harbour, Safe Jack-up Berth MLA/2023/00474	February 2024

Dispensation Requests

App DATE	Applicant	Description	Location	Start Date
05/05/2023	Northumberland Lobster Hatchery	Berried Lobsters	NIFCA District	09/05/2023
-	Newcastle Uni	General	NIFCA District	25/05/2023
-	Natural Power	Trawl fish surveys	Cambois, Blyth & Newbiggin	05/06/2023
31/07/2023	Tees Rivers Trust	Harvesting seagrass seeds	Lindisfarne	02/08/2023
14/08/2023	Institute of Fisheries Management	Intertidal Fish Survey	Wansbeck	08/09/2023
29/08/2023	EA	Tweed Estuary Fish survey	Tweed Estuary	14/09/2023
-	DEFRA (Peter Clark)	Gear Trials	Southern NIFCA District Outer Area	01/10/2023
14/09/2023	CEFAS	Discard Co-Sampling	NIFCA District	01/01/2024
09/01/2024	Newcastle University	General	NIFCA District	01/03/2024
17/01/2024	Wageningen Marine Research	Discard Sampling	-	-
-	DEFRA (Commercial Fisher)	Gear Trials	Southern NIFCA District Outer Area	22/02/2024
-	Commercial Fisher	Nephrops presence/abundance	Traditional Nephrops Grounds	01/06/2024

General Consultations

Name	Date Responded
Consultation on spatial management measures for industrial sandeel fishing	26/05/23
Proposed removal of the quota finfish license cap on English 10 metre and under vessels	29/08/23
Consultation on the proposed Crab and Lobster Fisheries Management Plan	29/09/23
Consultation on the proposed Whelk Fisheries Management Plan	29/09/23
Consultation on the proposed Seabass Fisheries Management Plan	29/09/23
Consultation on the proposed Southern North Sea and Eastern Channel Mixed Flatfish Fisheries Management Plan	29/09/23
Discards reform	06/10/23
Remote electronic monitoring	06/10/23
Consultation on policies to inform updated guidance for Marine Protected Area assessments	28/03/24



Annex 4

Enforcement and Operations Summary 2023-24

During the period 2023-24 the Authority employed the following IFCOs:-

- Chief Officer M Southerton

From the Operations and Enforcement Team

- Lead Enforcement IFCO N Weir
- Patrol/Research vessel skipper/engineer IFCO W Mitchell.
- IFCO E. O'Regan
- IFCO T. Nash
- Part-time IFCO R Willis
- Part-time IFCO M Lynn

From the Environmental Team

- Lead Environmental IFCO A. Aitken
- Senior Environmental IFCO A. Boon
- Environmental IFCO K Smart
- Environmental IFCO V Rae - Started August 2023
- Environmental IFCO K Owen - Started August 2023 – Left February 2024

2023–2024 has been a positive year for NIFCA's Enforcement Team with some notable successes, the team is settled after the high turnover from 2020-2022 when a number of staff retired or moved on. Enforcement activities were directed on compliance inspections with commercial and recreational fishers and prioritising the risks to the fishery identified using intelligence gathered internally or through the local NIFCA/MMO TCG (Tasking and Coordination Group) meetings. This intelligence is then graded against the Authority's Enforcement Strategy Matrix to determine the enforcement priorities. This allowed NIFCA officers to normalise enforcement activity throughout the district whilst providing a robust response to any seasonal trends.

Marine Capability

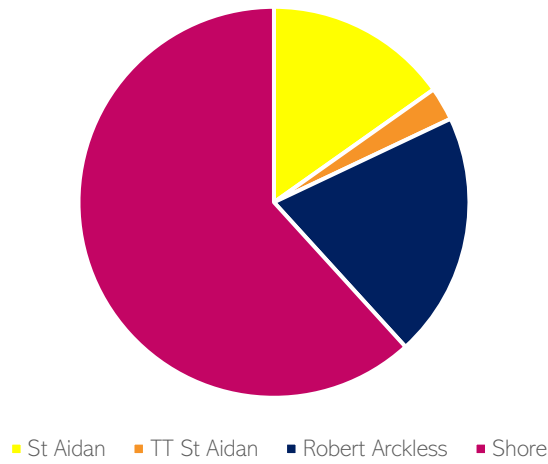
The Authority continues to operate the *St Aidan* as its main patrol/survey vessel. *St Aidan* is a 16m Catamaran, coded to category 2 and can be operated with a minimum of 3 crew or a maximum of 10 and is moored at Royal Quays Marina. *St Aidan* is now in its 9th year of operation. The Authority also operated its 9.5m cabin RIB *Robert Arckless MBE*, which is moored at Amble Marina, a mid-point in the NIFCA district, allowing the vessel to be capable of reaching either north or south NIFCA border within 2 hours. The vessel can be crewed by a minimum of 2 or maximum of 4 officers, making an ideal boarding platform to vessels operating inshore as well as offshore, and is coded to category 3 to operate 20 miles from a safe haven without restrictions. The Authority also uses the 5.3m Rigid Inflatable Boat (RIB) *TT-St Aidan*, this vessel can operate either as a tender launched from the *St Aidan* or be trailer launched across the district to provide shallow water enforcement capability, *TT St Aidan* is coded category 3 with seasonal and weather restrictions.

Annually the patrol vessel *St Aidan* gets lifted out of the water at the Royal Quays Marina, North Shields for two weeks annual maintenance and MCA Inspection. The majority of the work and maintenance is carried out inhouse by the Authority's Engineer and staff with specialist support contracted in as required.

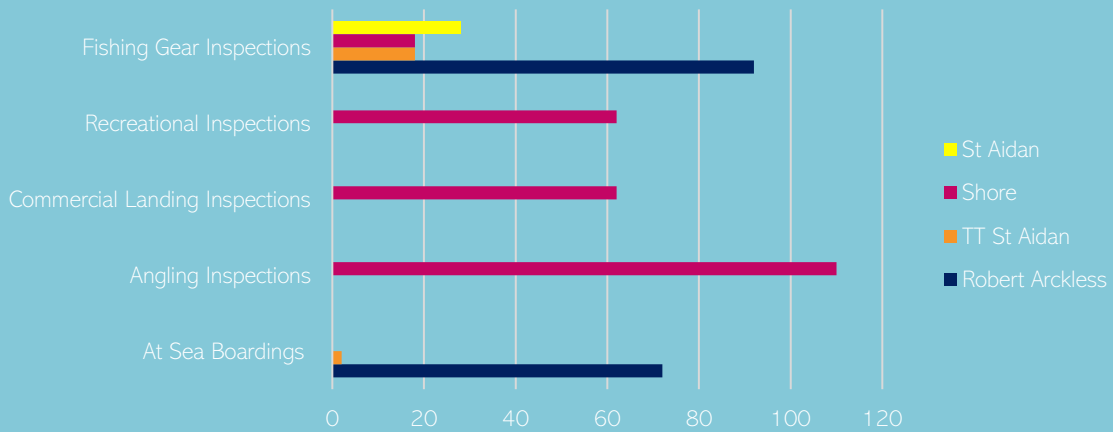
The *Robert Arckless* undergoes periodic maintenance inspections and services as directed by the outboard engine servicing routine, this is set for every 100 hours and is undertaken by the manufacturer's local representatives. These services are conducted at Amble Marina and the other maintenance is carried out by the Authority Engineer.

The Authority began 2023 operating 2 vehicles that can be used by IFCOs for shore work. These are a 2.2 litre Ford Ranger 4x4 which provides towing capacity for *TT St Aidan* and a 1.5 litre Ford Transit Connect minivan. In March 2024 a 1.6 Litre Citroen Berlingo minivan was purchased by the authority, this vehicle can be used for enforcement work and to support the Authority's Environmental Team.

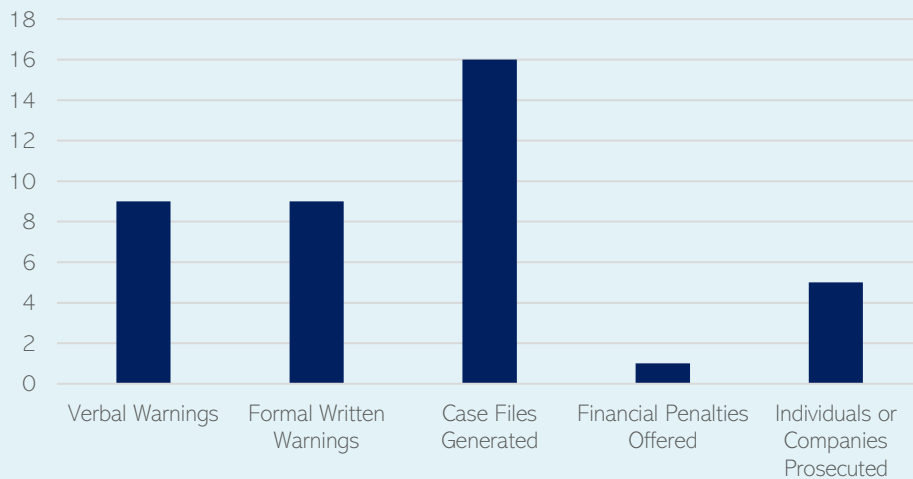
Patrol Method



Patrol Outputs



Investigation Outcomes



Operations Report

Category	Metric	Detail	Total
Inspections at sea	Vessel patrols	Count any patrol by any of the NIFCA's vessels (mother/daughter boat combination counts as one patrol)	83
	Fishing vessel boardings	Count fishing vessels (including unregistered/unlicensed) inspected at sea, where boarding was in pursuit of any relevant duty	74
	Fishing gear inspections	Count store-pots, tiers/strings etc of fishing gear found deployed in the sea, where inspection was in pursuit of any relevant duty. Do not count gear inspected on board a vessel	138
Inspections ashore or in port	Shore patrols	Excursion/visit of any length to any part of the coast for an inspection or observation of fishing related activity	134
	Port visits	Individual port/harbour/beach visits within a shore patrol	274
	Premises inspections	Markets, merchants, refrigerated units, retailers, food producers/outlets etc	14
	Fish/shellfish landing inspections	First-hand observations of fish/shellfish as it was landed ashore from a vessel. Do not count inspections of fish laid out on a market or in a storage facility unless the landing of that fish was observed	62
	Other inspections	Count vessel gear/fish checks in port/ashore, diver and shore angler catches, vehicle contents and shellfish catch from shore gatherers	175
Investigation outcomes	Verbal warnings	Verbal Warnings for minor breaches of legislation (no further action taken).	11
	Case files generated	For a serious breach of legislation which was thought would, or did, lead to a formal warning letter or the application of a legal sanction	15
	Formal written warnings	For a serious breach of legislation, where evidence gathered was sufficient to take legal proceedings, but where a letter was instead deemed the most appropriate action	9
	FAPs offered	Count all the FAPs relevant to any one case	1
	Individuals / companies prosecuted in court	Count all the persons and companies relevant to any one case	5

Financial Administrative Penalties

Date of offence	FAP
5 th October 2023	Commercial Fisher, Blyth. Who failed to return to the sea 3 egg bearing female lobsters contrary to Sea Fish Conservation Act 1967 in respect to UK statutory instrument 2017 No 899. Cat 2, Miscellaneous, Penalty Level 2, First Offence £500, Paid.

Prosecutions

Date of offence	Prosecution
31 st July 2023	Commercial Fishers x 3, Newbiggin by the Sea and Blyth. Who fished for specified shellfish using pots without tags issued to the commercial permit holder and named vessel affixed, contrary to NIFCA Byelaw 4 Crustacea and Molluscs Permitting and Pot Limitation. Pleaded guilty.
16 th August 2023	Commercial Fishers, Amble. Who fished for specified shellfish using pots without tags issued to the commercial permit holder and named vessel affixed, contrary to NIFCA Byelaw 4 Crustacea and Molluscs Permitting and Pot Limitation.
16 th November 2023 & 16 th January 2024	Commercial Fisher, Holy Island. Who failed to return to the sea 4 egg bearing female lobsters contrary to Sea Fish Conservation Act 1967 in respect to UK statutory instrument 2017 No 899



GLOSSARY OF RELEVANT TERMS USED IN THIS ANNUAL REPORT, OF INTEREST AND/OR OF RELEVANCE TO NIFCA REMIT

ABBREVIATIONS

AED	Automated External Defibrillators
AIFCA	Association of IFCAs
AIS	Automatic Identification System
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
B&NNC SAC	Berwickshire & North Northumberland Coast Special Area of Conservation
CEFAS	The Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science
CO	Chief Officer
COG	Chief Officers Group
CPUE	Catch per Unit Effort
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
EA	Environment Agency
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMFF	European Maritime and Fisheries Fund
EMS	European Marine Site
EUNIS	European Nature Information System
FAP	Financial Administrative Penalty
FLAG	Fisheries Local Action Group
FMP	Fisheries Management Plan
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Global Positioning System
HPMA	Highly Protected Marine Area
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
IFCA	Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
IFCO	Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer
IVMS	Inshore Vessel Monitoring System
JFS	Joint Fisheries Statement
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
JWA	Joint Working Arrangement (in the district with the MMO, EA and NE)
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
LPUE	Landing per Unit Effort
LSE	Likely Significant Effect
MCA	Maritime & Coastguard Agency
MaCAA	Marine & Coastal Access Act 2009
MCRS	Minimum Conservation Reference Size
MCSS	Monitor and Control Surveillance System
MCZ	Marine Conservation Zone
MEO	Marine Enforcement Officer
MLS	Minimum Landing Size
MMO	Marine Management Organisation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPA	Marine Protected Areas
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
MSFD	Marine Strategy Framework Directive
MSY	Maximum Sustainable Yield
NAREC	National Renewable Energy Centre
NCC	Northumberland County Council
NE	Natural England
NeBBS	North East Beached Bird Survey
NEBOSH	National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health
NECP	North East Cetacean Project
NGO	Non-Government Organisation

NIMEG	National Marine Enforcement Group
NIFCA	Northumberland Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
nm	Nautical Miles
NNR	National Nature Reserve
NSFC	Northumberland Sea Fisheries Committee
NTL	Normal Tidal Limit
NTMBC	North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council
PACE	Police and Criminal Evidence Act
PPR	Professional Practices and Responsibilities
RDEL	Resource Departmental Expenditure Limits
RIB	Rigid Inflatable Boat
RNLI	Royal National Lifeboat Institution
RSA	Recreational Sea Angling
RYA	Royal Yachting Association
SAC	Special Areas of Conservation
SAGB	Shellfish Association of Great Britain
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SOG	Strategic Operations Group (MMO and IFCAs)
SOLAS	The International Convention for the Safety of Life At Sea
SPA	Special Protection Areas
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
STCW	Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping
RYA	Royal Yacht Association
TAC	Total Allowable Catch
TAG	Technical Advisory Group
TCG	Tactical and Co-ordination Group
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
VMS	Vessel Monitoring System



GLOSSARY: POLICY AND LEGISLATION

Birds Directive	Aims to protect all European wild birds and the habitats of the species listed in the directive. The Birds Directive is the abbreviated term for Council Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds.
Byelaw	A regulation made by a local authority.
Common Fisheries Policy (CFP)	Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) is the fisheries policy of the European Union (EU). It sets quotas which indicate how much of each fish species each member state is allowed to catch, as well as encouraging the fishing industry by various market interventions.
Fisheries Act 2020	An Act to make provision in relation to fisheries, fishing, aquaculture and marine conservation; to make provision about the functions of the Marine Management Organisation; and for connected purposes. The Act gives the UK full control of its fishing waters for the first time since 1973.
Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs)	FMPs are evidence-based action plans, developed in collaboration with the fishing sector and other stakeholders. Their purpose is to deliver sustainable fisheries for current and future generations.
Habitats Directive	Aims to protect the habitats and species listed in the Directive's Annexes. The Habitats Directive is the abbreviated term for Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora.
Habitats Regulations	Transposes the Birds Directive and Habitats Directive into UK law.
Joint Fisheries Statement (JFS)	The JFS sets out the policies for achieving the 8 fisheries objectives in the Fisheries Act 2020. It will ensure we deliver a thriving, sustainable fishing industry and healthy marine environment. The JFS enables the UK fisheries policy authorities to develop Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs) to help deliver our ambition for sustainable fisheries.
Marine and Coastal Access Act	Seeks to improve management and increase protection for the marine environment within English inshore areas. The Act includes provisions for the establishment of the MMO, IFCA and the creation of a network of MCZs.
NIFCA Byelaws	A set of regulations enforced by NIFCA within the NIFCA district.
Statutory Instruments	This legislation is made in accordance with provisions contained within one or more of the UK primary fisheries Acts.

GLOSSARY: MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

Annex I Habitats	A natural habitat(s) listed in Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive for which Special Areas of Conservation can be designated.
Annex II Species	A species listed in Annex II of the Habitats Directive for which Special Areas of Conservation can be designated.
Annex I Species (Birds Directive)	A particularly threatened species for which EU member states must designate Special Areas of Protection for their survival, and all migratory bird species.
Appropriate Assessment	The process and documentation associated with the statutory requirement under the EC Habitats Directive to assess the impact of a plan or project on a European site
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	Area of high landscape value protected by law to conserve and enhance its natural beauty.

Assemblage	A collection of plants and/or animals characteristically associated with a particular environment.
Coastal Change Management Areas	Areas at the coast which have specific temporal and spatial planning policies attached to mitigate the long-term impact of coastal change.
Competent Authority	Any minister, government department, public or statutory undertaker, public body or person holding a public office that exercises legal powers (see also relevant authority).
Conservation objective	The goal of maintaining or restoring natural habitats and populations of species of wild fauna and flora at a favourable conservation status.
European Marine Site	A European site (SAC or SPA) which consists of marine areas.
European Site	A Special Protection Area (SPA) designated under the EC Birds Directive, or a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) designated under the EC Habitats Directive.
Favourable Condition	A range of conditions for a natural habitat or species at which the sum of the influences acting upon that habitat or species are not adversely affecting its distribution, abundance, structure or function within an individual Natura 2000 site in the long term. The condition in which the habitat or species is capable of sustaining itself on a long-term basis.
Feature	A natural or semi-natural feature for which a European site has been selected.
Habitat	The place in which an animal or plant lives.
Habitat Regulations Assessment	An assessment required under the EC Habitats Directive of the impacts of plans or projects on European sites.
Implementation	Putting policies and proposals into effect.
Implementation Officer	The officer employed by the Management Group to develop the management scheme and support implementation of the scheme
Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)	Co-ordinated management of the coastal and inshore marine area across multiple sectors, taking a long-term approach to planning.
Likely Significant Effect (LSE)	The first step of a Habitat Regulations Assessment to determine whether a plan or project might impact a European site.
Littoral	The margins of a body of water, an area which is occasionally washed by the tide
Maintain	The action required for an interest feature when it is considered to be in favourable condition. Management may still be required to keep this status.
Management Group	A group of statutory and non-governmental organisations working in partnership to manage a European Marine Site.
Management Scheme	The framework established by the relevant authorities at a European marine site under which their functions are exercised to secure, in relation to that site, compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive.
Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)	Marine areas in English waters designated under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 to protect marine habitats and species typical of UK waters.
Marine Protected Area	A marine area that is protected by statutory or voluntary measures to control human activity. The term is also used to describe Scotland's national network of marine nature conservation sites.
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	Important areas for wildlife which are protected, managed and accessible.

Natura 2000 Network	The European network of protected sites established under the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive, made up of SPAs and SACs.
Plan or Project	Any proposed development that is within a relevant authority's function to control, or over which a competent authority has a statutory function to decide on applications for consents, authorisations, licences or permissions.
Ramsar Site	A site held on the list of wetlands of international importance, especially as habitats for wildfowl, under the Ramsar convention.
Relevant Authority	The specific competent authority which has powers or functions which have, or could have, an impact on the marine environment within or adjacent to a European marine site.
Restore	The action required for bringing a qualifying feature back to favourable condition.
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Areas designated in the UK for their internationally important flora, fauna and geological features.
Shoreline Management Plan	A document setting out strategic guidance for the management of coastal defence over the next 20, 50 and 100 years.
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	An area designated under the European Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.
Special Protection Area (SPA)	An area designated under the European Birds Directive 79/409/EEC
Statutory Nature Conservation Body	Government's main advisors for the natural environment – Natural England and Scottish Natural Heritage in England and Scotland respectively.
Steering Group	A group of statutory and non-governmental organisations with delegated powers from the Management Group. The Steering Group oversees the work of the Implementation Officer.
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	The assessment of environmental effects of major strategic plans. SEA is a European requirement.
Sub-Feature	An important component part of a qualifying feature – e.g. kelp forests are a sub-feature of the rocky reef.
Voluntary Marine Reserve	A marine area that is protected through voluntary agreements with site users.

GLOSSARY: OTHER/FISHERIES AND ENVIRONMENTAL

Berried crab/lobster	A crab or lobster with eggs or spawn attached to the tail or other exterior part.
By-catch	A fish or other marine species that is caught unintentionally while catching target species.
Carapace Length	The carapace length of a lobster is measured from the rear of the eye socket to the rear of the carapace on a line parallel to the centre line of the body.
Carapace Width	The carapace width of a crab is measured from the widest part of a crab's carapace.
Crustacea	A group of arthropods, which includes crabs, lobsters, crayfish and shrimp.

Discards	Those components of a fish stock thrown back after capture e.g. because they are below the minimum landing size or because quota has been exhausted for that species.
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	The assessment of environmental effects of major projects and development proposals to inform decision making. EIA is a European requirement.
Escape gaps	An opening in the pot of a size that allows undersized target and non-target species to escape, whilst retaining legal sized target species.
Geographic Information System (GIS)	A system which captures, stores, analyses, manages and presents data that is linked to a location. The software ArcGIS is used by NIFCA to produce maps.
Ground-truthing	The collection of ground-truth data enables the accuracy of remote- sensing data (such as underwater video footage) to be determined, aiding the interpretation and analysis of the remotely-sensed data.
Landing Obligation	Under the landing obligation all catches have to be kept on board, landed and counted against quotas. Undersized fish cannot be marketed for human consumption.
Management Regime	The current NIFCA management regime consists of byelaws and regulations.
Maximum Landing Size (MaxLS)	Lobsters greater than the MaxLS in Scotland should be returned to the sea.
Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY)	MSY is the largest average yield (catch) that can theoretically be taken from a species' stock over an indefinite period under constant environmental conditions.
Minimum Conservation Reference Size	The size for a given species below which the sale of catches shall be restricted to reduction to fish-meal, pet food or other non-human consumption products only. (MCRS)
Minimum Landing Size (MLS)	The EU Common Fisheries Policy implemented EU minimum landing sizes (MLS) now known as Conservation Reference Sizes (CRS) for quota species which define the smallest fish measurement at which it is legal to keep or sell a fish.
Mitigation	The action of reducing the severity or seriousness of something.
Soft shelled Crab/Lobster	A crab or lobster which has recently cast its shell
Stakeholder	Any organisation or individual that has a direct interest in actions or decisions. Their interest may be because they will have a role in implementing the decisions, or because they will be affected by the decision.
Stock Assessment	Provide fisheries managers with the information that is used in the regulation of a fish stock. Biological and fisheries data are collected in a stock assessment.
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	Assesses the impact on the environment from public plans, programmes and strategies
Sustainability	The collection of policies and strategies employed by companies to minimize their environmental impact on future generations.
Total Allowable Catch (TAC)	Catch limits (expressed in tonnes or numbers) that are set for most commercial fish stocks.
V-notching	V-notching puts a notch in the tail flap of a lobster, predominantly sized and berried female lobsters (87mm or larger). This gives the female one or two more

chances of spawning before being eligible for recapture. It is an offence to land a V-notched lobster, male or female.

GLOSSARY: ENFORCEMENT

Automatic Identification System (AIS)	An automatic tracking system used on ships and by vessel traffic services (VTS) for identifying and locating vessels by electronically exchanging data with other nearby ships, AIS base stations, and satellites.
Code of Conduct	A set of rules outlining the social norms and rules and responsibilities of, or proper practices for, an individual, party or organization.
Global Positioning System (GPS)	A satellite-based navigation system.
Inshore Vessel Monitoring System (I-VMS)	I-VMS devices are similar to the VMS tracking devices used by fishing vessels of 12 metres and greater. I-VMS devices, using GPRS monitor inshore fishing activity to help improve the management and sustainability of our marine environment, ensure proper fishing practices and prevent illegal fishing to help protect and enhance the livelihoods of fishers.
Landings	The catches of marine fish landed at a port.
Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)	A formal agreement between two or more parties. MOUs are not legally binding.
Nautical Mile (nm)	A nautical mile is a unit of distance, set by international agreement as being 1.852 km; 1,852 m; 1.151 mi or 6,076 ft.
Patrols	Monitoring of a specific geographic area.
Permit	An official document giving someone authorisation to fish.
Pot Limitation	Limits the number of pots a permit holder can fish within the district (the NIFCA limit is 800 pots).
TCG	Tactical Co-ordination Group
Vessel Monitoring System (VMS)	Systems that are used in commercial fishing to allow environmental and fisheries regulatory organisations to track and monitor the activities of fishing vessels via satellite.

GLOSSARY: FISHING METHODS AND GEAR

Bait Collection	The collection of intertidal animals to use as bait.
Bait Digging	Method of collecting angling bait which uses a fork, pump or spade to target lugworm and ragworm living in intertidal sediment.
Cleek	Pole with a hook on the end used for catching lobsters.
Cleeking	A method of catching lobsters in the intertidal zone using a long pole with a hook on the end.
Cod-end	The end of a towed net where the catch collects.
Crab Tiling	Collecting soft shelled shore crabs referred to as peeler crabs for use as angling bait. Shelters made from tyres or pipes are set on intertidal sediment.
Dahn	A pole with a float, weight and flag attached.
Dredge	A rigid structure towed on the seabed in order to collect target species
Drift net	Nets which hang vertically in the water column without being anchored to the bottom. The nets are kept vertical in the water by floats attached to a rope along the top of the

	net and weights attached to another rope along the bottom of the net.
Fixed Engine	A fixed (stationary) net used for the taking of fish.
Gill Net	A single wall of netting that can either be fixed or allowed to drift.
Hand Gathering	The process of gathering sea fisheries resources by hand for food or bait.
J-Net	A net in the shape of the letter 'J'.
Marker Buoy	Any surface marker float which can be used to identify the location of fishing gear.
Mobile Gear	Any dredge, trawl or similar device that is designed to be towed or pushed to take sea fisheries resources on the seabed.
Net	Any trammel, gill, tangle or other enmeshing net used for the capturing of sea fish.
Passive Gear	Longlines or nets which are rigged with top, bottom and connecting ropes and may be equipped with anchoring, floating and navigational gear.
Pot	Any pot, creel, trap or cage used for the catching of sea fish.
Purse Seine Net	A large circular net which surrounds fish to capture them.
Static Gear	Static gear is set to allow fish to swim into it, or to attract fish by bait, and consequently become caught in the gear (e.g. pots).
Tangle Net	A net with large meshes set on the seabed.
T-net	A net in the shape of the letter 'T'.
Trammel Net	A net which consists of 3 parallel panels with different mesh sizes.
Trawling	The operation of towing a net to catch fish.

GLOSSARY - SPECIES:

A list of the minimum conservation reference sizes for the following species will be found on the FAQ page of the Authority website.

Brown/Edible Crab	<i>Cancer pagarus</i>	
Lobster	<i>Homarus gammarus</i>	

Velvet Crab *Nectora puber*



Green Crab *Carcinus maenas*



Spider Crab *Maja squinado*



Stone Crab
(often referred to as a spider crab)
Lithodes maja



Prawn/
Nephrops *Nephrops norvegicus*



Whelk *Buccinum undatum*



Mussel *Mytilus edulis*



Native Oyster *Ostrea edulis*



Pacific Oyster *Crassostrea gigas*



Scallop *Pecten maximus*



Cod *Gadus morhua*



Haddock *Melanogrammus aeglefinus*



Plaice *Pleuronectes platessa*



Flounder *Platichthys flesus*



Dab *Limanda limanda*



Bass *Dicentrarchus labrax*



Herring *Clupea harengus*



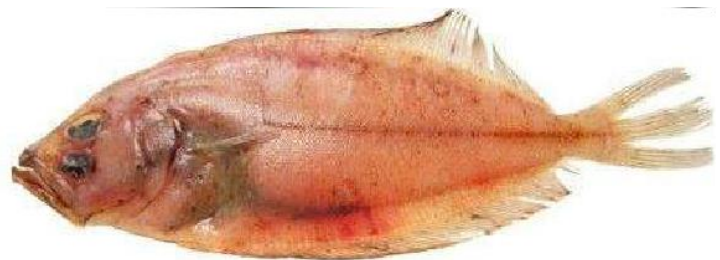
Sprat *Sprattus sprattus*



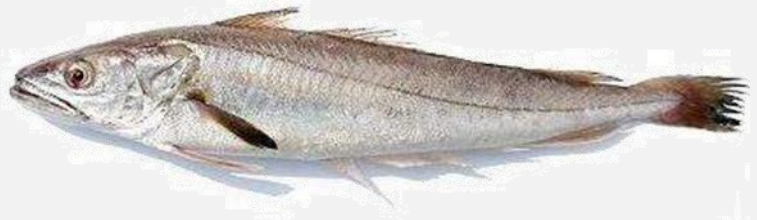
Mackerel *Scomber spp.*



Megrim *Lepidorhombus spp*



Hake *Merluccius merluccius*



Pollock *Pollachius pollachius*



Whiting *Merlangius merlangus*



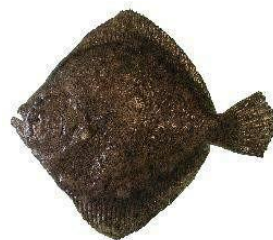
Ling *Molva molva*



Saithe *Pollachius virens*

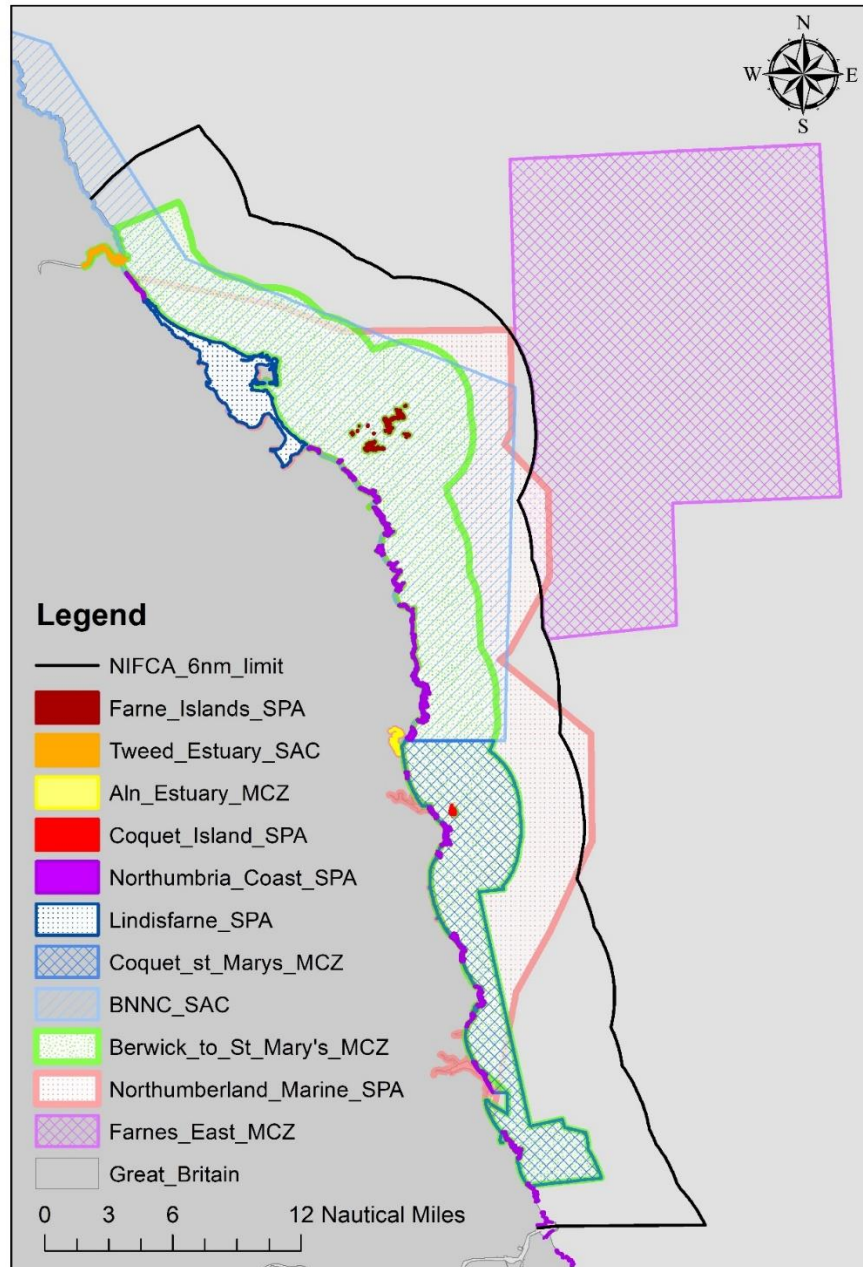


Turbot *Scophthalmus maxima*



MARINE PROTECTED AREAS WITHIN OR ADJACENT TO NORTHUMBERLAND IFCA'S DISTRICT

- Local Protected Sites
- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
- Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC
- Tweed Estuary SAC
- Special Protection Areas (SPA)
- Northumbria Coast SPA
- Coquet Island SPA
- Farne Islands SPA
- Lindisfarne SPA
- Northumberland Marine SPA
- Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ)
- Aln Estuary MCZ
- Coquet to St Mary's MCZ
- Farnes East MCZ
- Berwick to St Mary's MCZ





2023-2024 Annual Report

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