

## Minutes General Committee Meeting - October 2024 -

<b>Date</b>	Monday 28 <sup>th</sup> October 2024	<b>Time</b>	13:00
<b>Venue</b>	Newbiggin Maritime Centre, Church Point, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea NE64 6DB		
<b>NIFCA Members</b>	Amelia Henderson (Chair), Frank Armstrong (FA), Liz Dunn (LD), Steph Ingram (SI), Martin Kitching (MK), Steve Lowe (SL), Catherine Seymour (CSe), Catherine Scott (CS), Martin Swinbank (MSw), Ian Thomas (IT) and Alex Wallace (AW).		
<b>Officers</b>	Mark Southerton (MS), Alex Aitken (AA), Emma Stiles (ES).		

<b>3.1</b>	<b>Meeting Matters</b>	<b>Record</b>
<b>Apologies</b>	Guy Renner-Thompson (GRT), Patrick Gray (PG), Colin Hardy (CH), Michael Nugent (MN), Pip Moore (PM), Tommy Mulvenna (TM), James Wood (JW).	
<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	None given at this point in the meeting.	
<b>Guests</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paul Robinson, Member of Cullercoats Fishermen's Association</li> <li>Geoff Cowan, newly appointed NIFCA Member</li> <li>Angus Naylor from Defra</li> <li>Nick Brodin from the MNP</li> </ul>	
<b>Chair's welcome</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome to all of our guests and members.</li> <li>Geoff Cowan joins as a guest but will soon join as a member. He has 50 years RNLI volunteering and a wealth of maritime engineering experience.</li> <li>Great venue at Newbiggin Maritime Centre – Sarah Coulthard's exhibition is displayed around the room for anyone interested.</li> <li>Trying to make papers as accessible and interesting as possible, including as many images as possible – if members would like to see anything else, please let us know.</li> </ul>	

<b>3.2</b>	<b>Draft minutes: General Committee Meeting: 22 July 2024</b>	<b>Approval</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Actions: bios and headshots – ES to email everyone with a reminder</b></li> <li>Great to demonstrate the wealth, knowledge and balance within the membership.</li> </ul>	
<b>Proposed acceptance</b>	SL	<b>Seconded</b> IT <b>Approved by all</b>

<b>3.3</b>	<b>Meetings attended throughout the quarter</b>	<b>Information</b>
<b>MS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Over 60 external meetings attended this quarter – lots of FMP work, marine natural capital ecosystem, regulation/trawl byelaws, MMO CLUE intel system.</li> <li>Officers have attended summer schools to give presentations and others at marine drowning prevention day plus attendance at other events.</li> </ul>	

<b>3.4</b>	<b>Marine Nature Partnership</b>	<b>Information</b>
NB gave a presentation (which he will share by email) on the work of the MNP.		

<b>AH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members have already agreed MNP funding for the coming year.</li> </ul>
<b>AW</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regarding the camera stand for citizen science project on landscape scanning – would like to see one of these in Cambois Bay.</li> </ul>
<b>NB</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a long list of sites we'd like to capture information on – the public can do a "freestyle" photo to share information from other areas.</li> </ul>
<b>SL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reminder to join with Northumbria Uni – they have a lot of work on coastal scanning. Also reminder to link in with Geology courses and submission to ERIC.</li> </ul>
<b>MS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thanks to NB for this and for work on intertidal hand gathering.</li> </ul>
<b>SCe</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Tweed Forum have a grant scheme which MNP could consider applying to.</li> </ul>

<b>3.5</b>	<b>Member Matters</b>	<b>Information</b>
<b>MS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thanks to members for support over last quarter.</li> <li>Geoff Cowan has been confirmed as a NIFCA member, following completion of his induction which will take place shortly.</li> <li>Now have a full 21 members - some members are coming to the end of their terms.</li> <li>Returning members now need to reapply and go through the interview process. The MMO are interviewing Jan/Feb 2025.</li> </ul>	
<b>SL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a disincentive to reapply – they lost my application last time.</li> </ul>	
<b>AH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If anyone wants a chat in confidence, always open to that.</li> </ul>	

<b>3.6</b>	<b>Byelaw Update</b>	<b>Information</b>
<b>3.6.1 – Netting</b>		
<b>MS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NIFCA consulted on our current Fixed Engine Byelaw to introduce wider netting byelaw, which ended in June. Had very little response, except from Tweed Commission and Angling Trust; we have responded to both.</li> <li>The byelaw package has gone to MMO Byelaw team.</li> <li>Sussex and NWIFCA are in the process of a netting byelaw.</li> <li>There is also the possibility of a nearshore netting byelaw being developed by Defra.</li> </ul>	
<b>3.6.2 - Coquet to St Marys</b>		
<b>AA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members previously agreed on management for this area including a cap on level of activity. This management will require a vessel tracking device.</li> <li>We have now taken legal advice and we can manage this on our current byelaw. We have identified the criteria for capping applications which is based on activity monitoring from previous years.</li> <li>Regarding vessel trackers: had a meeting with Rewire (vehicle tracking company which D&amp;S use) and looks promising so far.</li> <li>Boats will need to use these specific trackers while iVMS is not in place nationally. We will revoke our system when the national one comes into play so fishers are not running two systems.</li> </ul>	
<b>MS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Due to the low number of affected vessels, NIFCA would buy the equipment and airtime for the fishers until we can access iVMS data.</li> <li>Being used further down south and confident the device could be used in the correct way we require.</li> </ul>	

<b>3.7</b>	<b>FMP update</b>	<b>Information</b>
<b>AA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely to be an increase in lobster minimum size to 90mm – this has been discussed at a lot of the fishermen's working groups.</li> <li>Defra are looking for more representation from the industry – planning a meeting with the IFCA to consider regional issues.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flat fish FMP has now been published.</li> <li>Deadline for the Joint Fisheries Statement consultation has been extended – NIFCA will review and respond.</li> </ul>
<b>MS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have a dedicated page on the website and Defra has a blog where you can ask questions directly.</li> </ul>

<b>3.8</b>	<b>V-notching</b>	<b>Information</b>
<b>AH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The short film is going forward for a royal tv award.</li> <li>Lovely film – on the website and on social media. Please share!</li> </ul>	
<b>AA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thanks to AB who has really put a lot of work into this.</li> </ul>	

<b>3.9</b>	<b>Risk Assessment Matrix</b>	<b>Information</b>
<b>MS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Now on the website after SMT reviewed and updated in September – there was a risk updated regarding banking investment due to one account maturing. JuS is now looking to invest in another bank.</li> </ul>	

<b>3.10</b>	<b>Annual Report</b>	<b>Information</b>
<b>MS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Been sent out to members.</li> <li>Submission by end of November.</li> <li>Please give comments by 15<sup>th</sup> November.</li> </ul>	

<b>3.11</b>	<b>Summary Reports of Watch and Finance Committee</b>	<b>Information</b>
<b>MS</b>	<p>Finance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members approved previous meeting minutes – received budget reports, considered funding request for MNP for future years.</li> <li>Agreed option 4 of a paper regarding maternity pay.</li> <li>Approved member allowances paper, which will begin in the next financial year.</li> <li>Updated verbally on RDel and CDel funding – one for Revenue delivery and other from Capital delivery. FMPs, MPAs and Capital delivery (asset replacement).</li> <li>Staff matters – full compliment of staffing including 2 student placements.</li> <li>SMT are finalising staff survey ahead of a general review at the end of the year.</li> <li>T&amp;S and Budget meeting will now be on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December (previously 4<sup>th</sup>).</li> </ul> <p>Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approved minutes and received reports.</li> <li>Discussed infringements, including one fisher where large quantity of undersized lobsters were found – will proceed to prosecution.</li> <li>Another prosecution agreed regarding gear.</li> <li>Updated on previous AIFCA minutes and various items from NIFCA.</li> </ul>	
<b>AH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NIFCA continues to be robustly financially managed – thanks to JuS.</li> </ul>	

<b>3.12</b>	<b>IFCO Reports</b>	<b>Information</b>
<b>3.12.1 - Chief Officer's Report</b>		
<b>MS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vessel held up at start of summer so survey work was delayed to later in the summer than at the start.</li> <li>First paid summer placement – received 14 applications (opposed to 1 or 2) and the work has been great. Also had a Year 12 work experience student.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shipping container has been spraypainted with a mural.</li> <li>New government in place – new PM – budget to be announced on Wednesday. May be some financial uncertainty for IFCA in short-term. Association will be demonstrating the benefits of the IFCA.</li> <li>Conduct and Operations Report is delayed due to the election. IFCA has passed on metrics and there have been quayside interviews regarding IFCA performance.</li> <li>Fisher Forums – nothing held in last quarter but dates planned for next.</li> <li>Good Fishing Guide has downgraded brown crab. Practical impact on fishing industry will be minimal to nil.</li> <li>IFCA Theory of Change will be brought to AIFCA meeting for approval in December.</li> <li>ICES – a lot of work involved in this. Huge thanks to CSc for letting us know about this and the support given with this. Enviro team submitted posters and AA presented at the event. Had visits onto the boat. Nice link on website to closing video which NIFCA featured in it.</li> <li>SC exhibition demonstrates the reduction in fishing in the country. Will ask SC to join us at a future meeting.</li> </ul>
<b>LD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thank you for a very comprehensive report – we are excelling in outreach and correspondence. Thanks to NIFCA for attending the South Lynemouth Bay Beach Clean – aim to build on big scheme further north.</li> <li>NIFCA are really getting involved along our local coast.</li> </ul>
<b>SL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thanks for the website – gave some training and raided the website for information and it was really useful.</li> </ul>
<b>3.12.2 - Enforcement Report</b>	
<b>MS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thanks to NW for the report.</li> <li>Note the static gear fisheries – very turbulent winter – concerns whether anything survived inshore but fishers have reported very good landings this year, particularly crab and lobster.</li> <li>Mobile fishing: it has been quiet inside the 6nm.</li> <li>Reduction of permits – good to have awareness of this and keep a close eye on this.</li> </ul>
<b>3.12.3 - Environmental Report</b>	
<b>AA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Natural England Local Team – ground truthing surveys. Awaiting analysis on this.</li> <li>CSc – when the SAC was put forward, decided to look at sandbanks. Were looking for subtidal seagrass and came across 3D merl structure. Managed to get some funding to do some more detailed work.</li> <li>Involved in project re. assessing inshore fish species. Carried out baited camera work and trawl/seine net surveys. Surveying around Farne Islands – pleased to get a range of species including a Topknot.</li> </ul>
<b>AA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anecdotal declines in nephrops fishery inshore – looking at Cefas burrow count surveys to estimate the abundance of nephrops. Outside 12 nm – tried this year to compliment the Cefas survey – borrowed sledge and surveyed inshore – will now touch base with cefas and align with them in May/June.</li> <li>Routine monitoring on crab/lobster.</li> <li>Second AIn Estuary survey carried out in September.</li> <li>ICES brilliant and pleased to share NIFCA internationally.</li> <li>Student placements – Emily stayed for over 6 weeks – great to offer paid opportunity and made it more inclusive for those who couldn't afford to give up their time for free through the summer.</li> </ul>

<b>AA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RSA – Katy been out a lot this quarter speaking with fishers in the district. Fish Species Challenge has had over 900 submissions and 30 species.</li> <li>• Katy launched bass scale project to build up the age and population of bass in the area.</li> </ul>
<b>MS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RSA – Aln Estuary – one of our winners volunteered to take part in survey which we wouldn't have had without the outcome.</li> <li>• Thanks to Jeff and Helen who came and took photos which have been really helpful.</li> </ul>
<b>3.12.4 - Maintenance Report</b>	
<b>AH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oil usage is good.</li> <li>• Robert Arckless has been lifted out for delamination of the tubes – had internal and external patch.</li> <li>• No update on workboat 3.</li> </ul>

<b>3.13</b>	<b>Acronyms Table</b>	<b>Information</b>
<b>AH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accepted</li> </ul>	

<b>3.14</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	<b>Information</b>
<b>AN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AN is a social researcher at Defra.</li> <li>• Conducted a fishing industry social survey, with pilot project in Northumberland. Took a sample of all vessels and asked if they wanted to take part in social survey which Defra are running looking at retirement plans, mental health etc.</li> <li>• Reached out to 180-200 people and had 17.5% response (30+) which as a pilot we consider to be statistically significant. Final dataset for Northumberland will be completed mid-late 2025. It is hoped the budget will be ongoing.</li> <li>• SC was involved in the creation of the survey.</li> </ul>	
<b>Paul R</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cullercoats has been an active harbour for hundreds of years – NT Council own it and gave licence to fishers to fish indefinitely/access yard however they are steadily eroding rights for fishers – now restricting use to maintain their boats – if you can't do it, you lose UK safety certificate, lose permit and the MMO won't let you fish.</li> <li>• Held an event about this to raise awareness locally which was really well attended.</li> <li>• Asked for answers from local Councils but still waiting for a response. Submitting a petition to the Council. Council has cut all communications with us.</li> <li>• Any advice from Councillors to highlight the cause?</li> </ul>	
<b>CSe</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You're doing the right things – held a public meeting – sorry your local Councillors did not attend. Consider getting up to date legal advice.</li> </ul>	
<b>AW</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep onto local MP Alan Campbell – also have the new Authority – LA7 who you should contact.</li> </ul>	
<b>MSw</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May want to contact and involve local media.</li> </ul>	
<b>MS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NIFCA to write a letter of support.</b></li> </ul>	

The meeting was closed by the Chair at 14:15

## **Actions for Next Meeting**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Who</b>
3.2	ES to email everyone with a reminder regarding member bios and headshots.	ES
3.14	NIFCA to send letter of support regarding Cullercoats boat yard.	MS