

Regional Fisheries Groups NEWSLETTER

Find out more about our upcoming port and coastal visits on our webpage [here](#)

Regional updates and ongoing actions: **YOU SAID**

You asked for more information on Inshore Vessel Monitoring System (I-VMS) rollout, delays, whether funding would be available for new devices fitted and assistance with purchasing a new device.

You requested a visit to Fleetwood to discuss local concerns and feed views into future fisheries management decisions.

Many of you have voiced concerns regarding the volume of seals in the area and the affect they have on catch.

You wanted more information on the bass Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) and the opportunity to feed your views into the FMP consultations.

Regional updates and ongoing actions: **WE DID**

We held a drop-in session in Blackpool on 02 November 2023 along with colleagues from our I-VMS support and engagement team, answering questions and assisting fishers with ordering devices and completing applications for grant funding.

We carried out a port visit to Blackpool on 02 November and Fleetwood on 05 December 2023 to speak to local fishers and merchants.

Caley from the Regional Fisheries Group (RFG) team has partnered with 2 researchers from University of Oxford who are looking into seal depredation of fisheries catch and discussed their work on the RFG meeting.

We carried out visits to a range of ports across the North West (NW) to discuss short-term and long-term goals of the FMP, and assisted fishers with completing consultation responses.

Stage 4 Marine Protected Areas call for evidence

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) is seeking additional evidence and views to support Stage 4 of the assessment and management of fishing in offshore Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).

The consultation will run until **13 February 2024**.

There are three offshore MPAs in Stage 4 designated to protect marine birds:

- Greater Wash MPA
- Liverpool Bay MPA
- Outer Thames Estuary MPA

To respond, please complete our [online survey](#).

Find out more about [Marine Protected Areas](#).

Grant funding opportunities

UK Seafood Fund (UKSF)

[Round 3 of the UKSF infrastructure scheme](#) is currently open for applications until midday on **13 December 2024**, or until all funding has been allocated.

MMO grants team can help talk applicants through the process and assist with completing the relevant supporting information.

They can be reached on:

03300 416579 or at
UKFisheriesSupport@marinemanagement.org.uk

Fisheries and Seafood Scheme (FaSS)

The Fisheries and Seafood Scheme is expected to re-open in February, further information will be available on the [FaSS guidance page](#) in the coming weeks.

Area 7a sole

The Irish Sea sole stock will be subject to a benchmark process by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) in February 2024.

Upon the completion of this benchmark exercise, we will submit a joint request to ICES to publish revised advice based on the outcome of the benchmark.

The EU and UK have committed to amending the TAC for sole in the Irish Sea (SOL/07A) in line with the revised advice.

MCA consultation

An industry-wide 6-week consultation started on 16 January to give industry a chance to have its say on concessions which would benefit fishers on vessels of 10 metres or less.

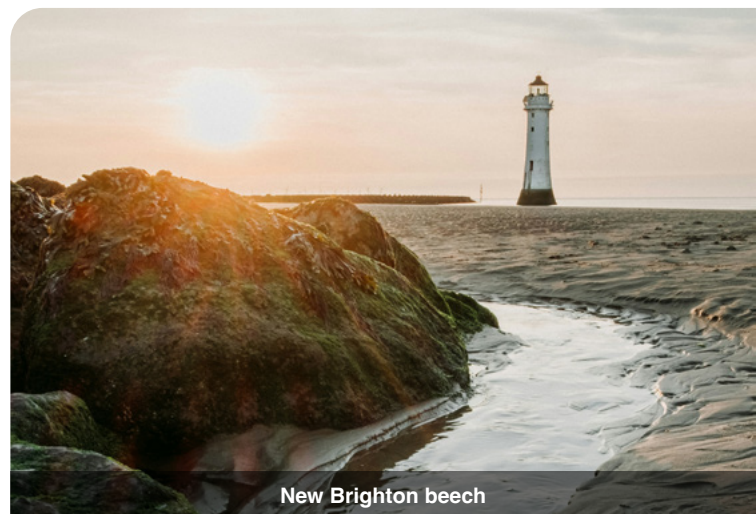
Industry is being urged to have its say on the proposals which are being published by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA).

Have your say by completing a response [here](#).

North West port visits

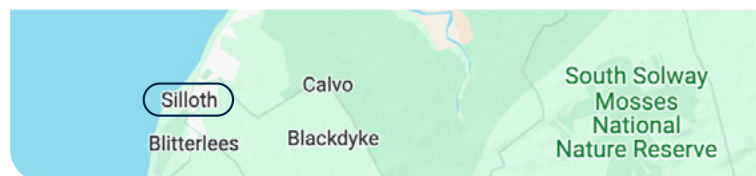
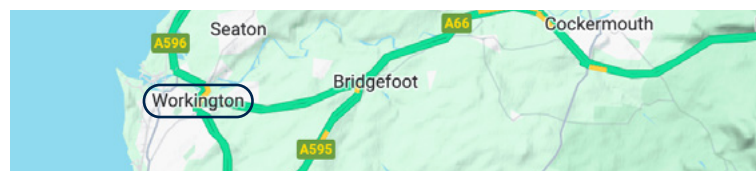
Dan Wardle, along with Steve Johnston, NW Principal Marine Officer, visited New Brighton on 30 January.

Thank you to all of you who took the time to speak to us, we look forward to meeting with you again in the future.



New Brighton beach

Dan will be visiting Workington and Silloth on Tuesday 20 February, along with MMO colleagues to discuss local concerns, answer questions, and assist with responses to ongoing consultations.



Further visits are being scheduled to take place throughout 2024. Requests for visits to your local port are welcomed and we are happy to arrange at a time and place that suits you.

If you would like to get in contact with any member of the RFG team, please email us at:

regionalfisheriesgroups@marinemanagement.org.uk