



Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum Annual Report 2011 – 12

The Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum (TECF) is an established coastal partnership that brings together the local authorities, harbour authorities and statutory bodies to ensure the sustainable management of Plymouth Sound and the Tamar Estuaries. Established in 1994, the Forum brings these parties together and provides an identifiable forum for communication and debate whilst providing an effective framework for the management of the water that resolves issues and delivers added value through partnership, collaboration and added value coastal projects.

The Forum receives contributions from the partners to pay for a dedicated Coastal Planning Coordinator whose job it is to deliver the key actions. The officer is Kaja Curry and she is hosted by Plymouth City Council's Planning Services.

This report sets out what the Forum has achieved in the 2011/12 financial year and explains how the delivery of the Tamar Estuaries Management Plan 2006 – 2012 has progressed. This can be downloaded from the Forum's website at www.plymouth.gov.uk/tecf.

The role of the Forum is to cooperate in and consult on the performance of statutory powers and functions that relate to the marine and tidal environments, to oversee the implementation of the Tamar Estuary Management Plan, to work together to achieve sustainable management and to monitor and report with respect to the European Marine Site.

TECF Aims

The strategic aim of TECF is to deliver a sustainably managed estuary and coast, ensuring that the resources of the area are there for everyone, both now and in the future.

The aims of the Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum are to:

- Promote, for the common good and the benefit of all, a viable sustainable future for the people, the waters and contiguous areas of Plymouth Sound and the Tamar Estuaries;
- Develop, implement and monitor a realistic management plan for the common assets and resources of Plymouth Sound and the Tamar Estuaries;
- Provide a strategic lead in protection and enhancement of the Tamar Estuary;
- Promote the sustainable development of the Tamar Estuary and the involvement of all stakeholders in management decision making;
- Carry out a periodic review of the Tamar Estuaries Management Plan.

TECF Outcomes

The Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum delivers the following:

- Statutory compliance and best practice in the management of the Plymouth Sound and Estuaries European Marine Site (see the Tamar Estuaries Management Plan 2006-2012 http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/tamar_estuaries_management_plan_2006_to_2012.pdf)
- Broad based partnership providing a focus for marine stakeholder engagement and management action at a local level bringing together the local authorities, government agencies, harbour authorities and associated organisations;
- Value for money with shared resources being used sensibly to tackle prioritised actions.

TECF Members

TECF membership is made up of all organisations that have principle statutory powers and responsibility for the management of Plymouth Sound and the Tamar Estuaries European Marine Site (with the exception of Duchy of Cornwall who are simply a project partner) . As such it includes the following. Funding partners are shown in **bold**:

Associated British Ports
Cattewater Harbour
Commissioners
Cornwall Council
 Cornwall IFCA

Devon County Council
Duchy of Cornwall¹
 Devon & Severn IFCA
 English Heritage
 Environment Agency
 Marine Management
 Organisation

Natural England
Plymouth City Council
Queens Harbour Master
South Hams District Council
Sutton Harbour Company
West Devon Borough Council

Summary of Achievements

The following provides a snapshot of some of the key activities undertaken by TECF and the Coastal Planning Coordinator during April 2011 – March 2012. It is not an exhaustive list and there will doubtless be activities which are not mentioned. It does set out to provide a flavour of the activities which just one officer can carry out by either undertaking the work directly themselves, or by chivvying others to do work as part of the agreed TECF approach.

1. Plymouth Sound and Estuaries European Marine Site (EMS)

Developing a Risk Based Approach	Natural England completed a risk assessment of all the human activities which could potentially impact on the designated sites and features of the EMS. TECF and the Coastal Planning Coordinator (CPC) has worked to integrate this risk based approach into the management structures in order that most efforts can be focused most on those areas where it is needed most.
Monitoring	Natural England are responsible for monitoring and reporting back to DEFRA on the state of the Plymouth Sound and Estuaries European Marine Site. Their findings are reported back through TECF in order that management practices can be amended where issues are identified.

¹ Duchy of Cornwall is a project partner only.

	<p>Natural England's data on the seagrass beds influences the way in which moorings are managed and work is on-going to improve some of the practices to ensure that there is no hard done to the seagrass beds.</p> <p>Similarly, through Natural England and the IFCAs, work was started to assess the impact of bait digging and crab tiling and management controls will need to be brought in by the relevant authority where necessary. For bait digging and crab tiling this may well be the local authority who are asked to bring in restrictions or it may be the IFCAs but it is on this type of activity where TECF proves its value.</p>
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2. Coordination

TECF Forum Meetings	<p>3 meetings held – attended by officers and local authority members. Has included briefings on up to date information on coastal management issues, new legislation relating to marine issues, establishment and operation of IFCAs, MCZs, and estuarine issues. Has also resolved operational issues and co-ordinated management.</p> <p>Duchy of Cornwall were welcomed as a new funding partner although they are not a relevant authority.</p>
Port of Plymouth Marine Liaison Committee (PPMLC)	<p>3 meetings held. This is the meeting of all the water users – including representatives of the fishing, rowing, sailing and diving clubs, historic environment, moorings management, local parishes, water safety, port health, education and wildlife conservation groups etc etc. It enables everyone to share information, get updates on marine policy development, navigational and safety issues and to hear about all marine issues. It is also the interface between the harbour authorities and the users.</p>
Plymouth Sound and Tamar Estuaries Management Plan	<p>TECF and the Coastal Planning Coordinator has coordinated the delivery of the management plan providing progress reports through the TECF meetings.</p>
Tamar Estuaries Management Plan 2012-18	<p>Through TECF, the Coastal Planning Coordinator has scoped and produced the first draft management plan for 2012 – 18. This plan seeks to bring together all the relevant authorities and get them to all agree how they will work to ensure that the EMS remains in a favourable status. The work is continued during 2012-13.</p>
Cornwall Maritime Strategy	<p>The Coastal Planning Coordinator provided input into the development of the Cornwall Maritime Strategy and TECF has supported the process.</p>
Input into consultations	<p>The CPC provided input into various national consultations, eg. Draft National Planning Policy Framework, MMO consultations on marine planning and DEFRA review of the effectiveness of management schemes for European Marine Sites.</p>

3. Information Management

Information and data	<p>The Coastal Planning Coordinator holds all the data for Plymouth Sound and the Tamar Estuaries centrally – this</p>
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	includes data on slipways and public access, moorings, fundus and riparian ownership, harbour areas, marine habitats, local byelaws etc. The data has proved useful and is passed on whenever requested to relevant authorities. For example information has been provided to Cornwall Council on the byelaws they inherited from Caradon relating to no-mooring, no windsurfing and no bait digging areas. Also riparian owner data where there has been issues with trees falling into the river and fundus ownership data to the harbour authorities.
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4. Landscape & Biodiversity Conservation

Finding Sanctuary and Marine Conservation Zones	Through TECF, the CPC ran the process for a detailed response to the proposed Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) within Plymouth Sound and the Tamar Estuaries. With so many activities taking place within the area, it was critical that the implications were full understood. As a result there was a common response from all the TECF members which led to the boundary of the proposed Tamar MCZ being changed. The proposed MCZ includes the rivers of the Lynher and Tamar.
Saving Seahorses	TECF worked with the National Marine Aquarium (NMA) on Saving Seahorses: a collaborative project that focuses on improving the understanding and conservation of seahorses and seagrass beds. The project aimed to bring together the main applied research projects in order to fill in the gaps where more research is needed. The project would have applied the knowledge to four areas in the South West, one of which being Plymouth Sound and Estuaries. HLF asked for further information and so TECF through the CPC is supporting the National Marine Aquarium in their second application.

5. Historic Environment

Tamar Marine Historic Environment	TECF has brought together the key organisations with a responsibility for the historic environment with a view to getting them to agree a single approach to mapping and protecting the historic maritime environment. Cornwall Council was one of the parties which took part in this.
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6. Water Quality

Pollution Contingency	TECF is recognised as being a key part of the maritime contingency planning process for the waters of the Dockyard Port of Plymouth as it provides the mechanism for consultation with all port users. The Coastal Planning Coordinator also provides the initial environmental sensitivity mapping to the harbour authorities for use in their oil contingency planning documents.
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7. Waterfront and Marine Development & Commerce

<p>Cornwall LDF: Core Strategy Options, Community Network Areas Discussion Papers, Sustainability Appraisal and Statement of Community Involvement</p>	<p>Detailed comments provided – based on TECF’s expertise in the field of planning and the marine environment. The advice reflected the successful approach adopted by Plymouth City Council and set out to ensure that a standard approach is taken to how the marine environment and the European Marine Site in particular is integrated into planning strategy and processes. TECF’s response covered detailed information on where the documents had omitted important references to the marine environment in general and the Tamar Estuaries in particular.</p>
<p>TECF Response to the Cornwall Council consultation on “Planning Future Cornwall – Core Strategy Pre-consultation draft.</p>	<p>In March 2012, further comments were provided to Cornwall’s Core Strategy Pre-Consultation draft.</p> <p>Again detailed practical comments were provided on how to ensure that the documents have due regard for the marine environment and the European Marine Site in particular.</p>
<p>Marine Developments</p>	<p>Coordinated responses are provided for marine developments with the Tamar of which most are in the Plymouth area. Detailed responses have been provided for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Millbay marina, Plymouth; Howards Quay Marina, Plymouth; Baileys Slipway, Plymouth; Hooe Lake Quarry, Plymouth; MoD site, Weston Mill. Waste to Energy Plant, Plymouth Mayflower Marina, Plymouth Drakes Island, Plymouth Southdown Marina, Cornwall; Haye Marsh, Cornwall; Weir Quay, West Devon Tamar and Tavy viaduct works, West Devon. <p>Cornwall has seen a couple – one in Millbrook Lake and also Spaniards Inn at Calstock. TECF has also assisted with the Southdown Marina enforcement action. TECF has also coordinated the response to the MoD’s proposed relocation of landing craft from Poole to Ernesettle. As a result we have limited the periods during which landing craft training can occur and also the areas, in order to minimise impact on the wintering birds. For the Waste to Energy plant at Weston Mill Lake, TECF had an input into the development of the s106 landscape improvement work on the affected Cornish side.</p>
<p>Use of planning tariffs</p>	<p>The CPC continues to ensure that the European Marine Site element of Plymouth City Councils planning tariff to qualifying developments as a means of mitigating for small scale cumulative impacts arising from increases in the water recreation. Whilst it is written into the planning conditions, no funding has yet been received since funding is not triggered until works commence on the ground.</p>

8. Fisheries

Abandoned nets	Through TECF, QHM established an abandoned nets hotline – whereby any abandoned nets are reported to Longroom so that the appropriate body can be notified and action taken.
Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities	The two new IFCAs came into being in April 2011 and the new arrangements are impacting on the management of the Tamar Estuary as where we had just one fisheries organisation before, we now have two. It is therefore vital that they come together through TECF in order to deliver an integrated and coordinated approach. TECF provides the vehicle through which information on the new management practices are integrated with those of EA, MMO and the harbour authorities.
Fisheries Awareness	Recreational fishing is one of the country's most popular pastimes but the rules governing this activity are incredibly complicated with MMO, EA, the four Harbour Authorities and the 2 IFCAs all having responsibilities. TECF has secured funding to produce one single leaflet giving all the information about legislation. (Due to be completed summer 2012).

9. Navigation

Water Users Leaflet	TECF has produced a leaflet: Plymouth Waterways a guide for small craft. This is free leaflet which is distributed to recreational water users within Plymouth and Tamar Estuaries area. It provides an overview of all
Dredging Protocol	QHM completed the Dredging Baseline Document which brings together all the data relating to dredging. This will make it much faster to secure marine licenses for the regular maintenance dredging which needs to take place to ensure safe navigation.
Dredging	Advice has been given as part of the consenting process for dredging although all the applicants have been on the Eastern side of the waters. Also the CPC has provided input into the Marine Management Organisation's review of the Rame Head Disposal Site and ongoing discussions.

10. Public Access, Recreation and Moorings

Water Recreation – review of activity	With the help of a student, a desk-top analysis of recreational activity in the TECF area has been undertaken. This is valuable evidence which will help inform strategies and decision-making when assessing requests for changes to water use.
Coordination of water events	Through TECF meetings, QHM coordinates the Water Events Diary in order that the community regattas and festivals as well as the larger events can all take place. Many of these are on the Cornish side and the meetings ensure that any safety issues are picked up.

Americas Cup	In 2011 Plymouth was host to the America's Cup. TECF and the Coastal Planning Coordinator were heavily involved co-ordinating the on-water requirements including the building of the race marina and liaison between the water based relevant authorities and the race organisation.
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Water Transport	<p>TECF has worked hard to ensure that a common approach is taken in both Plymouth and Cornwall Local Transport Plans towards water transport. In partnership with PCC and TECF, CC produced the 'Tamar River Transportation Study' which reviewed the historical usage of the River Tamar along with relevant current planning policy. The document provides a valuable part of the evidence base for the development of a waterborne transportation strategy.</p> <p>Based on this and through work carried out by TECF, water transport has gone on to form part of a Plymouth City Council bid to the Coastal Communities Fund.</p>
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11. Awareness and Understanding

EMS Logo & Identity for Plymouth Sound and Estuaries European Marine Site.	<p>Created in partnership with University of Plymouth, National Marine Aquarium, and the Marine Biological Association. This attracted over 50 entries from 30 different people. The logos were displayed as part of the World Oceans Day Event held in Plymouth City Centre. The public were invited to vote for their favourite. Votes were also collected at a number of other events and a judging panel consisting of the funders finally agreed a winner.</p> <p>This has already proven useful for events held by the partners and is proving useful in raising the profile of the European Marine Site.</p>
Increasing awareness	<p>With so many organisations within Plymouth who are active in marine interpretation, the CPC has focused on ensuring that the marine awareness initiatives run by others include an element on the European Marine Site and its protected sites and feature:</p> <p>Blue Sound: Coastal Planning Coordinator sits on the Blue Sound working group and helps to steer this project which increases awareness and understanding of the marine environment in and around Plymouth Sound. Their work has included promotion and interpretation on the Tamar Bridge, on the Torpoint Ferry, snorkelling guide, training courses and school activities and websites. and many events on both sides of the water.</p> <p>Bioblitz: Involvement in the Mt Edgcumbe Bioblitz which worked with other marine educators to carry out an audit of the wildlife of Mt Edgcumbe by involving the public.</p> <p>World Oceans Day: CPC had a TECF stand at the World Oceans Day event which attracted many people from</p>

	Plymouth, West Devon and SE Cornwall. Through TECF, the EA and National Trust have designed and erected an interpretive panel about Triangular clubrush at Cotehele.
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Finance

Accounts for year ending 31/03/2012

<i>Income</i>	£	£
Natural England	(7,000)	
Queens Harbour Master - Ministry of Defence	(2,237)	
Associated British Ports	(1,677)	
The Cattewater Harbour Commissioners	(8,270)	
West Devon Borough Council	(3,635)	
Sutton Harbour Holdings Plc	(1,118)	
South Hams District Council	(3,635)	
Duchy Of Cornwall Office	(3,500)	
Cornwall Council	(7,000)	
South West Water Ltd	(3,635)	
Devon County Council	(4,000)	
National Marine Aquarium	(250)	
University of Plymouth	(250)	
Marine Biological Association	(100)	
		(46,307)
 <i>Expenditure</i>	£	£
Salaries	47,946	
Other Employee Expenses	375	
Hire Of Premises	0	
Travel Fares	124	
Casual User Allowances	148	
Printing	43	
Subsistence	169	
Conferences	50	
Projects (Third Party Payments) – fisheries artworks, clubrush interpretive panel, logo and email software.	3,327	
		52,180
(Surplus)/Deficit brought forward from 2010/11		(23,007)
Surplus/(Deficit) carried forward into 2012/13		24,107

Net TECF Position for 2011/12

6,973

(The net TECF position represents PCC's contribution)

An additional £227 will be contributed by PCC in 2012/13 to make up the balance.

Summary

The America's Cup brought the World's attention to Plymouth Sound and its Waterfront and also crystallised to many the importance of having a body such as TECF which brings all the key parties together.

In other ways the year has been a challenging one as TECF has sought to accommodate new legislation and marine initiatives such as the new Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities as well as the Marine Conservation Zones process and the Marine Management Organisation has become more established. The Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum has spent some time examining its ways of working and a new more focused Management Plan is emerging.

For 2012/12, the revision of the Management Plan will continue to dominate whilst new funding mechanisms will need to be examined if the Forum is to continue.

Regarding work items, the focus will be on coordinating and delivering elements of the management plan, developing specific projects, raising awareness and engagement with the stakeholders.

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