

Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum

Annual Survey Report 2016

Respondents:

- Cattewater Harbour Commissioners (CHC)
- Devon & Severn IFCA (D&S IFCA)
- Devon County Council (DCC)
- Duchy of Cornwall (DoC)
- Marine Management Organisation (MMO)
- Plymouth City Council (PCC)
- Queens Harbour Master (QHM)
- Sutton Harbour Holdings (SHH)

Surveys conducted in 2016, reviewing actions and activities of TECF member organisations during the period January 2015 – December 2016

Background

The TECF Annual Survey is central to how we monitor the management of the Plymouth Sound & Tamar Estuaries European Marine Site and the delivery of the Tamar Estuaries Management Plan (TEMP) 2013-18.

The information gathered is used to identify any changes to activity levels, monitor the implementation of the TECF Management Plan and to collect headline indicator data that will help us monitor any long or short-term changes.

Changes in management

Devon County Council

DCC is the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) as defined by the Flood and Water Management Act, 2010. The new legislation is designed to improve the way the risk of flooding is tackled across England and Wales following the large summer floods of 2007.

Under Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act (2010), Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) were to be required to establish a SuDS Approval Body (SAB) that would have required Devon County Council (DCC) to approve, adopt and maintain SuDS features in new developments. However, in December 2014, the Government announced that Schedule 3 would not be enacted because SuDS would be dealt with by strengthening existing planning policy instead. This change, which took effect on 6th April 2015, requires Local Planning Authorities to make the final decision about the suitability of the SuDS provision on new developments and whether it is proportionate to the level of flood risk affecting the site.

Whilst DCC will no longer be required to establish a SAB, it is now a statutory consultee for major developments that have surface water implications. This new responsibility requires DCC to provide comments in relation to surface water drainage aspects of planning applications, usually within 21 days.

Cattewater Harbour Commissioners

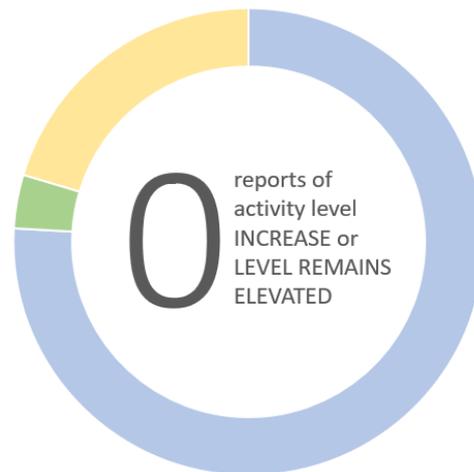
In 2015, Cattewater Harbour was granted the power of [Harbour Directions](#) which applies to the regulation of movement, mooring, manning & equipment of ships within the harbour. CHC reported that the definition of 'ship' (in accordance with sections 40A to 40D of the Harbours Act 1964) gives rise to problems regulating the activities of craft not covered by the definition, for example Jetskis.

Activities within your jurisdiction

TEMP 2013-2018 identifies 23 potentially damaging activities that may impact on the status of the European Marine Site (see table 1 for a full breakdown of activities and the results from the survey). Of the responses received reporting any changes in activity levels, no respondents reported any increases in those activities.

There were three activities reported as unknown only and, therefore, we have no indication of change or lack thereof:

- Habitat loss due to sea level rise and resultant coastal squeeze (*high risk*)
- Physical disturbance of roosting and feeding bird populations (*medium risk*)
- Coastal development (major) (*medium risk*)



Activity level change reported across responses

Other highlights:

- 11 out of the 18 activities that received at least one response were unanimously found as 'no change'
- 2 out of the 18 activities were reported as 'decrease', by QHM – '*Toxic contamination from sediment disturbance*' and '*Maintenance dredging*' due to MMO suspension of dredging disposal licences in Jan 15. Mar 15 survey indicated elevated levels of arsenic in some areas. Temporary embargo in these areas instigated whilst detailed investigation conducted. However MMO reported 'no change' for both activities.
- 1 of the activities reported as 'unknown' by DCC – '*Discharges from industry, sewage works and road run-off*' - DCC noted in their response that an increase in storm activity could have increased run-off.

Table 1: tallied responses to section 3.1 of the TECF Annual Survey 2016 identifying changes in activity levels

	Activity	Increase	No Change	Decrease	Unknown
High risk	<i>Habitat loss due to sea level rise and resultant coastal squeeze.</i>	0	0	0	1
	<i>Invasive species, especially Pacific Oysters, and Slipper Limpet including ballast water discharges.</i>	0	1	0	1
Medium risk	<i>Discharges from industry, sewage treatment works and road runoff.</i>	0	1	0	1
	<i>Discharges from agriculture and historic mine waste.</i>	0	1	0	1
	<i>Coastal development (major).</i>	0	0	0	1
	<i>Small scale coastal development (industrial and residential) i.e. cumulative impacts.</i>	0	1	0	0
	<i>Shipping and navigation including commercial vessel and port management, dredging, ship to ship transfer and pollution events.</i>	0	4	0	0
	<i>Chemical and oil spillage through collision, grounding, stranding or leaks.</i>	0	4	0	0
	<i>Toxic contamination from disturbance of contaminated sediments.</i>	0	2	1	1
	<i>Maintenance dredging including extraction, water injection, plough dredging.</i>	0	2	1	0
	<i>Commercial fisheries (towed gear, scallop dredging, seine netting, static nets, drift nets, potting, hand lining).</i>	0	2	0	1
	<i>Aquaculture.</i>	0	3	0	1
	<i>Anchoring and mooring impacts of recreational vessels.</i>	0	3	0	0
	<i>Boat maintenance / beach berthing / marina activities.</i>	0	2	0	0
	<i>Discharges from boats.</i>	0	3	0	0
	<i>Recreational angling, crab tiling and bait digging.</i>	0	2	0	0
	<i>Physical disturbance of roosting and feeding bird populations.</i>	0	0	0	1
	<i>Marine litter.</i>	0	2	0	0
Low risk	<i>Water sports (sailing, yachts, dinghies, windsurfing).</i>	0	2	0	0
	<i>Scuba diving and snorkelling.</i>	0	2	0	1
	<i>Public access to the waterside impacting on roosting and feeding bird population.</i>	0	1	0	0
	<i>Wildfowling.</i>	0	1	0	1
	<i>Capital dredging.</i>	0	2	0	0

Plans & Projects

This section outlines any activities, actions or decisions taken between January 2015 and December 2016 that the respondent believed may give rise to an increase in activities in the Plymouth Sound and Tamar Estuaries European Marine Site.

Devon County Council

Funding & partnerships:

- Funding partner, Tamar Valley AONB Partnership – Management Plan 2014-19 (in place).
- Funding partner, South Devon Estuaries Partnership – Management Plan 2016-2014 (under development).
- Funding partner in work of Wembury Marine Centre – awareness raising, interpretation and educational work related to the EMS.

Queen's Harbour Master

Yonderberry (Thanks) Fuel Depot Jetty replacement - major construction works planned to replace existing jetty and are due to commence in 2017. The project has been subject to a full EIA and planning approval has been granted.

Key activities in 2015-2016

The following section highlights the activities delivered by respondents, outside of 'business as usual', that relate to the management of the EMS and are aligned to actions contained within the TEMP 2013-2018.

Cattewater Harbour Commissioners

CHC has progressed/supported the following actions:

- Impacts from discharges/litter/ballast water, etc., managed via systems, subject to flag state regulation and port state control inspections.
- Contributed to establishing a new sustainable dispersal site (Plymouth Deep).
- Conducted pollution exercises in accordance with statutory legislation. Tier 2 exercise complete with attendance at minor spills for real time engagement.
- Contributed to the updating of the maintenance dredging baseline document.
- Management of abandoned boats by tracing owners and taking action to recover conservancy dues. **Note:** establishing ownership difficult – national registration scheme would help. Disposal of fibre glass creates a hazardous waste and is prohibitively expensive
- Supporting TECF by financial contribution and circulating information about the estuary. **Note:** water users seem to better catered for than shore based visitors.

D&S IFCA

Smelt Survey – dispensation was given to Natural England for them to conduct smelt surveys. D&S IFCA will conduct MCZ assessments for fishing activities that may impact on this feature.

Quadrennial Crab Tile Survey - completed in 2016, which includes mapping and counts of crab tiles within the Plymouth Sound & Tamar Estuaries EMS. The report was in progress at the time of the survey, but has since been completed. GIS data has been compiled in the form of MapInfo layers; points and polygons, depending on distribution of crab tiles.

Netting Byelaw Consultation - completed in 2016.

Devon County Council

Coastal Pollution Plan - development of the multi-agency contingency plan for the response and clean-up of a major pollution incident affecting the north or south coasts of Devon. DCC is responsible for leading the co-ordination of the clean-up of a major pollution incident that affects more than one district authority. The plan is currently being reviewed in line with the MCA National Contingency Plan and updated Scientific Technical and Operational (STOP) Notices.

Publications and research:

- [Sustainable Drainage Systems Guidance for Devon](#)
- [Rapid Coastal Zone Assessment Survey](#)
- [Valmer Report](#) – Valuing Ecosystem Services in the Western Channel
- New website: <http://www.explored Devon.info/>

Plymouth City Council (TECF)

Publications and research:

- [EMS Recreation Study section 1](#) - interactions and sensitivity of species and habitats to recreational activities.
- [EMS Recreation Study Section 2](#) – survey of recreational use in the EMS.

Queen's Harbour Master

QHM/MoD has progressed/supported the following actions, as outlined in the TEMP 2013-2018:

- Tamar Estuaries Oil Spill Response plan was reviewed and reissued in Aug 15 following full consultation. The plan was tested and revalidated during a major exercise in Oct 15.
- Commissioned Tamar Estuary Source-Pathway-Receptor Conceptual Model: Phase IB - Generic and Quantitative Risk Assessment. (2016). Report subject to final scrutiny.
- Baseline Document for dredging with the Tamar Estuaries updated.
- Supported Community Sea Grass Initiative incl. testing of modified mooring in Cawsand Bay.
- Supported Port of Plymouth Recreation Study.
- 5 yearly review of Port Waste Management Plan completed.
- Contributed to development of Plymouth Plan.
- Statutory consultee for waterside planning applications and MMO licences.
- Rewrite of Dockyard Port Order completed – new draft undergoing legal review.
- Quarterly surveys of dredged areas conducted which will enable an improved management of maintenance dredging.
- Funding characterisation of alternative dredge disposal site – MMO lead.

Key activities planned for 2017

There are a number of activities planned for, or continuing through, 2017 by respondents that relate to the Plymouth Sound & Tamar Estuaries EMS.

D&S IFCA

- Habitats Regulations Assessment - Crab tiling and bait collection.
- Netting Byelaw - to be submitted to the Secretary of State.
- Wrasse fishery – identifying impacts of the developing wrasse fishery and any necessary management actions (partnering with Cornwall IFCA).

Marine Management Organisation

- Rame Head dredge disposal site – an alternative site will be sought and agreed.
- South West Marine Plan - consultation and development will continue until 2020.

Plymouth City Council

EMS CIL Managing Recreational Impacts Programme (Phase 1) - the three year programme will commence in April 2017 with the appointment of a new Natural Infrastructure Officer at PCC.

Activities for 2017 will include:

- Replacement of information panels at public slipways and access points to the EMS.
- Introduction of fishing debris management and information at key angling sites.
- Development of a centralised GIS data resource.
- Revised TECF microsite and a 'Coastal and Blue Spaces' section on plymouth.gov.uk.