



LUNDY MARINE CONSULTATION GROUP

c/o The Honorary Secretary
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Notes of the 14th Meeting of the Consultation Group

held on Thursday, 19th March 1992 in the Council Chamber,
Town Hall, Bridge Street, Bideford at 7.00 pm.

Present:

R. Kimberley	(Devon Sea Fisheries Committee)	Chair
K. Bower	(Devon Sea Fisheries Committee)	
D. Laffoley	(English Nature)	
S. Warman	(English Nature)	
D. Townshend	(English Nature)	
C. George	(M.A.F.F.)	
P. Ford	(Torridge District Council)	
M. Winsborrow	(Bideford Trawlerman)	
L. Winsborrow	(Bideford Trawlerman)	
S. Pullen	(Worldwide Fund for Nature)	
C. Mandry	(British Sub-Aqua Club)	
J. Edwards	(Devon Wildlife Trust)	
S. Mulberry	(National Trust)	
D. Spooner	(Lundy Company, MV Oldenburg)	
R. Hoad	(Lundy Company, Captain MV Oldenburg)	
R. Irving	(Lundy Field Society)	Secretary

1. Apologies for absence:

J. Puddy	(Lundy Co./ Lundy Agent)
A. Gibson	(Lundy Warden)
R. Evans	(Landmark Trust)
J. Baker	(Royal Yachting Association)
S. Gubbay	(Marine Conservation Society)
L. Hawke	(M.A.F.F.)
N. Downes	(Devon Sea Fisheries Committee)

Mr Russell Gomm of English Nature, who was instrumental in establishing the Consultation Group in 1984, has informed the Secretary that his responsibilities within the SW Region of English Nature have changed and that he will no longer be attending meetings.

2. Notes on the last meeting, held on Thursday, 5th September 1991. In the fourth paragraph of section 4 (Proposed fishing exclusion zone off the east coast) it was stated that "...far more shellfish have been removed from the Reserve since its designation...than before." Keith Bower pointed out that there was no scientific evidence to

support this statement and so it should be ammended. The alteration to the Secretary's notes now reads, "It is thought that more shellfish have been removed from the Reserve since its designation...than before, though this is not proven." It was to be hoped that Andrew Gibson may be able to elaborate on this at the next Group meeting.

3. Matters arising: Following the Warden's question at the last meeting regarding marking the boundary of the Reserve, Steve Mulberry asked if this had been taken any further. Using buoys for this purpose would be totally impractical and extremely expensive, he was told. It would be far easier to purchase a hand-held rangefinder which the Warden could use, allowing him to judge how far offshore visiting vessels were.

4. Report from the Reserve: In the absence of Andrew Gibson, Steve Warman read out a written summary which Andrew had sent him from the island. Only one fishing boat seems to be working Lundy at the present, the "Rosa Jade" out of Ilfracombe. There has been no sign of potting activity on the east side since before Christmas. Rough weather is still causing large movements of shingle, creating discoloration of water close to the Landing Beach. The sea has washed away gabions supporting the new road adjacent to the Dive Beach and work has already started to fill and wall the area. The new steps to the South Light are completed and some time this year the old wooden steps will be removed. The Belgian trawlers have not been using Lundy for shelter in bad weather this winter. The MV Oldenburg completed dry dock and her DTI survey early and is about to return to service. A notice regarding use of surface marker buoys by divers is to be put up in the kitchen area of the diving complex. English Nature have produced new signs displaying the Reserve's Code of Conduct.

5. Any other business: Following a question raised by Chris Mandry concerning the diving concession on the island, it was confirmed that the Lundy Company were considering re-letting the divers' accommodation on top of the island, together with use of the compressor and the Divers' Beach. Steve Warman stated that English Nature would wish to be involved in drawing up a new contract for the diving concession.

Philip Ford believed that the Reserve was being over-fished of shellfish. However, Laurie Winsborrow stated that the fishing effort of late had actually decreased. Only two boats were working there at present, with 400 pots each. These were on shorter strings of about 15 pots per string (as opposed to up to 70 pots per string being used before). Steve Warman explained that English Nature had been the recipient of some stern criticism of late concerning the heavy level of potting which the Reserve had suffered in the past. However, there's only anecdotal evidence that overfishing is taking place. An expansion of the present monitoring programme is being considered which could provide the much needed scientific evidence. At the moment, EN are drawing up a statement of the management aims and objectives for the MNR. EN wish to consult as widely as possible on

this, and the next meeting of the Group would provide a useful forum to discuss their long-term objectives.

Chris Mandry reported that tangle nets had been set off the west coast by a boat up from Padstow or St Ives. Keith Bower confirmed that 2 licences had been issued by DSFC for use of nets last year, though none had been issued this year.

The Secretary had recently received a letter from The Heritage Division of the Department of the Environment stating that they had been informed that the wreck of the "Iona II" (a wreck officially protected last year) had been damaged, possibly from the anchors of diving boats trying to moor on the nearby site of the "MV Robert". The letter went on to suggest that the wreck of the "Robert" should be marked with a mooring buoy. Chris Mandry pointed out that the Warden already did this. Perhaps EN could provide funds for this to be done properly in the future. It was wondered how DoE could assess that damage had been done when there's so little of the wreck left intact.

Dan Laffoley explained that the six years' worth of intertidal and subtidal monitoring undertaken within the MNR had recently been assessed. The results showed that certain species of nature conservation interest, such as the cup corals, were long lived and that the communities of which they were part appeared very stable. The data sets are believed to be the best in Europe for this type of work. The monitoring programme will continue and be expanded to include diver damage and impact monitoring.

Roger Hoad asked if EN had any plans whereby visitors to the island (which he carried aboard the Oldenburg) could help or participate in MNR related activities. This was a matter he was often asked about by visitors. Steve Warman explained that it was EN's job to make visitors aware of the MNR, but not to promote "going to Lundy". The Warden's efforts at trying to make the MNR more accessible to non-diving visitors were then briefly discussed. Doubts were expressed regarding the wisdom of purchasing a glass-bottomed boat, as the poor water visibility would mean it having to stay very close to the coast which could prove dangerous. The number of days when the sea was calm enough for its use may be few. EN had made a grant to cover 50% of the purchase cost of snorkelling equipment, with other contributions from the LT and WWF. Other suggestions for showing the delights of the Reserve's underwater world included a video tape-loop and direct diver-to-boat communications.

6. Dates of the next meetings: Thursday, 24th September 1992
Thursday, 25th March 1993

R. D. Kimberley 24th September 1992.