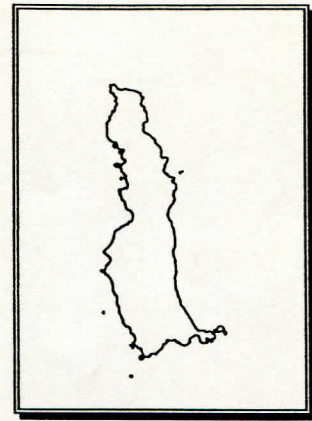


# LUNDY MARINE NATURE RESERVE ADVISORY GROUP

*Aims of the Group: 1) to provide a nucleus of expertise on the marine habitats and waters surrounding Lundy; 2) to provide a forum for exchanging views on present and proposed activities around Lundy; 3) to safeguard the interests of all those who use the waters around Lundy and its natural resources; and 4) to advise the Management Group for the Reserve.*

*Established 1985*



*Please reply to the Hon. Secretary:*

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## Notes of the 3rd meeting of the Advisory Group

(formerly known as the Lundy Marine Consultation Group, of which this was the 21st meeting)

held on Thursday, 19th October 1995 in the meeting room,  
Torrige District Council Offices, Riverbank House, Bideford at 7.00 pm

### *Present:*

Ian Knight	(IK)	Torrige District Council	[Chair]
Nick Phillips	(NP)	South-West Federation of Sea Anglers	
Emma Parkes	(EP)	Lundy, MNR Warden	
Mike Camplin	(MC)	Devon Wildlife Trust	
Brian Mander	(BM)	M.A.F.F.	
Keith Bower	(KB)	Devon Sea Fisheries Committee	
Laurie Winsborrow	(LW)	North Devon Fishermen's Association	
John Heath	(JH)	Appledore Sub-Aqua Club	
Steve Waring	(SW)	Nautical Archaeological Society / Royal Commission on Historic Monuments in England	
John Breeds	(JB)	English Nature (Site Manager, Braunton Burrows)	
Rev. Bill Blakey	(WB)	Lundy Church	
Sarah Welton	(SW)	Marine Conservation Society	
Robert Irving	(RI)	Lundy Field Society	[Secretary]

*Welcome to new representatives:* Nick Phillips, Mike Camplin, John Breeds and Bill Blakey were all welcomed to the meeting.

**1. Apologies for absence:** Apologies had been received from Chris Mandry (British Sub-Aqua Club & Ilfracombe and North Devon Sub-Aqua Club); Tom Hynes (Hartland Heritage Coast Service); Paul Gilliland (English Nature, Peterborough); Joan Edwards (Devon Wildlife Trust); Paul Winter (Torrige District Council); Steve Mulberry (National Trust); Mark Winsborrow (Fishing Interests); Tony Blackler (Agent, Lundy Island).

The Secretary had been informed that Jill Strawbridge had now left her post as a Ranger with the North Devon Voluntary Marine Conservation Area to take up a post with Scottish Natural Heritage; the new Ranger is Pippa Morrison.

**2. Notes on the last meeting, held on 20th April 1995:** In section 5 (vii), the first sentence should read "A survey of seals was to be undertaken this summer by John Heath & Steve Westcott". In section 6, the proposed Lundy SAC was *not* being put forward for its resident seal population. Otherwise, these were accepted as being an accurate account of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

3. *Matters arising:* There were no matters arising from the last meeting.

4. *Matters arising from the Lundy MNR Management Group:* KB informed those present that the Management Group had met on 14th June in Braunton. At the meeting it was proposed that EP should become an Honorary Fisheries Officer and this appointment was later approved by the DSFC on 28th July. Her role would involve reporting on fishing activities and potential problems around Lundy. The next meeting of the Management Group is on 13th November 1995.

5. *Report from the Reserve:* EP informed the Group of activities within the MNR during the summer. It had been a very busy summer season, with a great deal of activity within the Reserve and essentially a positive response from those 'using' the Reserve.

i. EP is now recording **potting activity** within the Reserve. This is being done by marking where pots are on a map, during periodic walks around the coast. The idea will be to provide a record of where the most heavily potted sites are and when they are fished. Local feeling suggests that potting activity has been greater this year than in recent years. One string of pots had been lost at the north end - becoming snagged on the Hen and Chickens. The main potting boats appeared to be the 'Osprey' (Ilfracombe); 'Helena Clare' (Port Isaac); 'Cornish Maid' (Clovelly); & 'Better Days' (Ilfracombe). The string of pots which had been left under water off the east side had now been lifted and were up on the top of the island.

LW pointed out that local potters were seeking an agreement to only use 'inkwell' pots and to ban the use of 'parlour' pots around Lundy. He informed the group that parlour pots were designed with a non-return valve so that they could be left on the sea bed and may continue fishing for much longer periods (several weeks) than the 2-3 days that inkwell pots were left for. EP asked if all pots could be marked with readily identifiable flags, but KB pointed out that this may require a new byelaw. However, it is possible that European law already in place may provide sufficient means to request this. A code of practice may suffice. The DSFC had decided to let the operators of potting boats sort out the use of parlour pots amongst themselves.

ii. **Diving activity** has been considerable this year with several charter boats ('Uriah Heep'; 'Our Unity'; 'Jessica Hetty'; 'Lundy Murrelet') making regular visits. This is in addition to regular visits by local and not-so-local dive clubs. On a busy weekend, one could expect to see 8 or more dive boats in the Landing Bay. Most groups are co-operative and sympathetic towards the aims of the Reserve. EP has produced a questionnaire for divers to complete after their dives, but she has had none returned to her! RI asked if some form of permit system might be introduced, so that EP would know which diving groups were around at any one time. EP would prefer to be able to send out an information pack to groups before they came to the island. This could include a questionnaire and a copy of the Code of Conduct.

EP was still waiting for a **RIB** from English Nature. Apparently there had been problems and delays with the paper work. It was also felt that she needed an **assistant** to help her during the year, especially during the bust summer months. Next year, one Landmark Trust member of staff is due to spend 50% of their time on conservation tasks, though this person will be untrained. SW suggested a student placement may be appropriate to help with the MNR. She agreed to investigate this further by contacting Dr Carolyn Heeps who runs Coastal Management M.Sc. courses at Bournemouth University. WB kindly offered the possibility of the Church vestry as accommodation for an assistant to stay in, if this was going to prove a problem.

iii. **Snorkelling.** This has really taken off this summer and proved very popular. Health & Safety aspects have now been addressed and EP is happy with the running of the sessions.

iv. **Grey Seals.** JH has been surveying the island's grey seal population this summer. A catalogue of identifying portrait photographs has been made, as well as studying behaviour. Recently, EP and others have undertaken a pupping survey; however, adverse weather has made this difficult.

v. There have been 14 confirmed sightings of **basking sharks** this season, all of which have been reported to the MCS Basking Shark Observation Scheme. This has proved a good way to appeal to the interest of visitors to the island - sending them out to search for sharks! KB said he had some excellent (surface) video footage of basking sharks.

vi. **Marine survey work.** Intertidal fixed-point photography had been completed. In addition, Keith Hiscock had helped re-survey the intertidal corals and Paul Gilliland had monitored the rockpool transect in the Devil's Kitchen during visits in the summer. A group of MCS divers had undertaken various tasks during a week-long stay at the beginning of June (see note 7); and Colin Munro had brought over a 4-man team to check the sublittoral monitoring sites (see note 6).

vii. **Litter.** Several volunteers took part in the MCS Beachwatch '95 project on 16/17 September in the Landing Bay. In general, there has been less litter here during the summer than there was in the winter. Two sharks (a 4 ft blue shark and a 3 ft tope) had been washed up on separate occasions during the summer, entangled in netting.

viii. **Yacht wrecks.** Two yachts had been in trouble in the Landing Bay recently. One, aptly named 'Out of Control', was recovered and repaired. The second, named 'Baru', became a total wreck, an event which took place just before the Beachwatch litter survey weekend. Most of her contents were salvaged and the bulk of her diesel fuel offloaded at low water. It is thought there will be no lasting damage to the beach from the remaining fuel. It was suggested that the moorings in the Landing Bay could be improved in light of this event. As it was, it is LT policy to take all of their craft out of the water whenever possible.

EP was asked if she had completed the O<sub>2</sub> Administration course as offered by Chris Mandry. She explained that the idea now was for her to complete a Charter Boat Skipper Rescue course, which would include an O<sub>2</sub> Administration course.

**6. Assessment of sublittoral monitoring sites, July 1995:** MC, who had been part of the 4-man diving team to visit the island for 5 days in July, gave a short presentation on this in the absence of Colin Munro. English Nature had contracted the team to inspect the monitoring sites at Quarry Bay, the Knoll Pins and Gannets' Rock pinnacle, to assess their condition and the ability of the sites to be re-located. Of the 3 sites, only the horizontal transect on a vertical rockface at the Knoll Pins could be re-located with any certainty. All of the marking pitons and ring-bolts had corroded away. A report of their findings has been written for English Nature. One recommendation from this report is for serious investment to be made for marking sites using non-corrosive ringbolts, and for better re-location maps to be drawn.

**7. MCS Working Party to the MNR, 3-10 June 1995:** RI gave a short presentation with slides on the work this group undertook (and which he led). A number of tasks had been attempted on behalf of English Nature, most of which were completed satisfactorily. Biological surveys had been carried out on the MNR's two protected wreck sites: the Gull Rock 'cannon' site and the 'Iona II', the first time this had been done. A survey of sea fans off the east coast was completed, checking on their distribution, abundance and condition. Searches had been made for red band fish in Gannets' Bay and in Halfway Wall Bay, but only their burrows were found. (JH confirmed that 5 fish were seen out of their burrows in June, close to the Knoll Pins). Monitoring photographs had been taken on the wreck of the 'Robert'. *SEASEARCH* records had been made from two sites: SE of Gannets' Rock and at Lee Rocks off the south coast. The cover of *Bifurcaria* seaweed in a rockpool close to the South Light had been checked and was found to be only a little less (21% as opposed to 27%) than when looked at in 1984. An attempt was made to map the sea bed in the area of Gannets' Rock (where there are two underwater pinnacles), but this was only partially successful.

**8. Discussion of other local matters outside the MNR:** KB informed the Group that the DSFC were proposing a new byelaw which would ban trawling from within 6 miles of the coast for vessels greater than 50 ft in length.

BM informed the Group that the area for aggregate extraction to the north of Ilfracombe was likely to receive the 'go-ahead' soon. RI had received a letter from the Welsh Office giving notice of a 3-year research proposal for sea bed sediment studies in the Bristol Channel. BM also said that bulk samples had been taken from the two Baggy Point sites, prior to a decision being reached as to whether extraction at these sites could take place. LW pointed out that local fishermen were adamantly opposed to extraction from these sites, and KB indicated that the DSFC would be objecting as well.

**9. Any other business:** JB gave a short report faxed to him from Paul Gilliland, English Nature (Peterborough). This covered the following points:

1. A contract had been signed with the Landmark Trust covering the running of the MNR and SSSI, employment of the Warden etc.
2. Following the signing of the contract, EN will be shortly purchasing a Rigid Inflatable Boat (RIB) for the Warden, based on a specification discussed with all parties concerned.
3. A Health & Safety audit was carried out by EN's Health & Safety Officer concerning the work undertaken by the Warden and others carrying out projects on Lundy on behalf of English Nature. A number of recommendations were made which are to be considered further by the Management Group or are being acted on, e.g. changes to the operation of the snorkel trail.
4. We will shortly be putting together a paper on monitoring requirements and strategy - covering both biological and use monitoring - for the next Management Group meeting.
5. We are awaiting the results of the visitor survey which is a repeat of the exercise carried out two years ago as part of the Interpretative Review. The video has been used on several occasions in addition to playing regularly on the Oldenburg, e.g. on the BBC's *Really Wild Guide*, and a Foreign Office video about the coasts of Britain. We have approached a consultant about helping prepare an addition to the visitor leaflets on wrecks and marine life within the MNR, but no response as yet. We have approached 'Diver' magazine about an article on the management etc. of the MNR. We will be submitting an article in the near future, but there is no guarantee it will be accepted.

RI apologised for not providing LW with a photograph of 'japweed' (*Sargassum muticum*), but explained he intended to laminate copies of a line drawing he had done which would help fishermen to identify this weed. EP reported that she had not found any attached plants on the island yet.

RI informed the Group that the Lundy Field Society was celebrating its 50th anniversary next year and that a number of events were planned to coincide with this. These included a stamp issue and the publication of a special volume of the Society's Annual Report, which would contain papers from over 20 people detailing the contribution that the island has made to knowledge in their particular field. The volume would be due out next June.

Chris Mandry had informed RI that during a dive on 17th September between the Rattles and Black Rock at 25 m depth, he had encountered a large tangled mass of monofilament netting on the sea bed. He counted at least 20 edible crabs that had become caught up in it.

**10. Date of the next meeting:** Friday, 12th April 1996

18th Oct. '96.