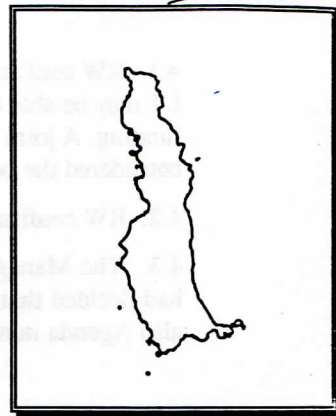


LUNDY MARINE NATURE RESERVE ADVISORY GROUP

rec. 30.4.98



*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:

Mr Robert Irving,
14 Brookland Way, Coldwaltham,
Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 1LT

tel. 01798 873581
fax. 01798 873582
e-mail: r.irving@dial.pipex.com

Notes of the 8th meeting of the Advisory Group

(formerly known as the Lundy Marine Consultation Group, of which this was the 26th meeting)

held on Thursday, ¹⁵ 27th April 1998 in the meeting room,
Torridge District Council Offices, Riverbank House, Bideford at 7.00 pm

Present:

Ian Knight	(IK)	Torridge District Council,	Chair
Keith Bower	(KB)	Devon Sea Fisheries Committee	
Len Hawke	(LH)	M.A.F.F.	
Chris Mandry	(CM)	B.S.A.C.	
Roger Hoad	(RH)	MV <i>Oldenburg</i> / Lundy	
Liza Cole	(LC)	Warden, Lundy	
Max Montgomery	(MM)	Hartland Heritage Coast Service	
John Heath	(JH)	Historic wreck sites & seals	
Steve Waring	(SW)	R.C.H.M.E. / N.A.S.	
Rob Wolton	(RW)	English Nature	
Jo Crix	(JC)	English Nature	
Robert Irving	(RI)	Lundy Field Society	Secretary

1. Apologies for absence: Apologies had been received from: Paul Roberts (Landmark Trust); Reg Lo-vel (Lundy Administrator); Dr Tim Hill (English Nature); Sarah Jones (WWF-UK); Stephen Mulberry (National Trust); Keith Denby (Gratton Information Systems/Lundy web site) & Pippa Morrison (N. Devon Heritage Coast Service, VMCA).

2. Notes on the last meeting, held on 16th October 1997: KB requested that a small alteration be made to these. Under 'Any other business', fishermen would not wish to see the DSFC split into two agencies, but that two sets of byelaws were adopted – one for north Devon and one for south Devon. Otherwise, the notes were accepted as being an accurate account of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters arising: JC was able to confirm to MM that there was a spare display board on the MNR which was at present at EN's offices in Okehampton. It was suitable for outside use and would be available to the Hartland Heritage Coast Service to use.

4. Matters arising from the Lundy MNR Management Group: The Management Group last met on Friday, 13 March at English Nature's offices in Taunton. RW distributed minutes of that meeting to those present (they will be distributed to all Advisory Group members in due course) and went through the main points. Matters of discussion which arose from these included:

*The following organisations sit on the Advisory Group: British Sub-Aqua Club * Devon Sea Fisheries Committee * Devon Wildlife Trust * English Nature * Hartland Heritage Coast Service * Landmark Trust * Local Dive Charter Interests * Local Sea Fishing Interests * The Lundy Company Ltd. * Lundy Field Society * Marine Archaeological Interests * Marine Conservation Society * Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food * Environment Agency * National Trust * South-West Federation of Sea Anglers * Torridge District Council * Worldwide Fund for Nature (UK)*

4.1. RW confirmed that EN would not be able to fund an assistant warden for three months this summer. LT may be able to assist (as they did last year). CM suggested that the BSAC may also be able to help with funding. A joint submission to BSAC from both EN and LT would be required. RI pointed out that the LFS considered the post of assistant warden was essential.

4.2. RW confirmed that EN would be producing a new colour booklet for the MNR.

4.3. The Management Plan (which covers both the MNR and the SSSI) is due for revision in 1999. EN had decided that revision of the MNR Zoning Scheme should be undertaken in conjunction with this (see also Agenda item 8).

5. Report from the Reserve (October 1997 - April 1998) - Liza Cole:

5.1 Fishing and potting activity: Numbers of pots around the Island decreased over the autumn and winter from about 16 strings in early October to none by December. The first pots this year were seen off the North End at the start of March.

5.2 Diving Activity: There has been little or no diving activity in the Reserve this winter. I have updated the 1998 Diving Information and sent it to any interested parties and all the regular diver charter skippers. Dive bookings are up on last year with most weekends between May and September booked up.

5.3 Diver Questionnaires: Diver Questionnaires have not been sent out with the Diving Information this year as this yielded very few returns last year. I will concentrate on asking divers to complete them when I speak to them in person on the Island. Local groups suggested that the questionnaire was not designed for groups who regularly dive the same sites over the season and that perhaps there could be more benefit from these groups 'adopting' a site and carrying out regular monitoring of that site. This was discussed at the MNR Management Meeting and any thoughts that arise from this meeting would be helpful.

5.4 RIB: The RIB was used in September and October to check the beaches on the East Coast for seal pups but unfortunately rough weather conditions prevented the intended detailed survey of the breeding caves from being carried out. The RIB has been laid up for the winter, maintenance work has been carried out and further safety equipment ordered and it is now ready to go back into the water.

5.5 Grey Seals: Although the survey of the breeding caves could not be carried out, pups were seen hauled out in various places around the Island up until the end of October. One injured pup was hauled up on the Diver's Beach for two consecutive days in the middle of October. The animal had sustained lacerations to the head, apparently from a propeller. However, the cuts seemed clean and the animal was alert and well able to show its displeasure when humans approached, so no attempt was made to 'rescue' it. Adult seals were seen displaying courtship and territorial behaviour throughout October and into November. In February a very young, white seal pup was seen hauled out on the rocks on the north side of Rat Island - a very late breeding record.

5.6 Seabirds: Fulmars started coming back to the cliffs in January and large flocks of gulls were seen feeding in Lundy Roads and in wet areas on the top of the Island. By mid to late March kittiwakes were back at their nesting sites and some razorbills and guillemots had started to come in too. Any day now the first puffin of the year should be spotted.

5.7 Marine Litter: Easterly winds over the winter have brought up large amounts of litter into the Landing Bay. This was predominately plastic litter but also contained a lot of fishing net and line.

5.8 Marine Pollution: On 13th December two oiled guillemots were seen in the Landing Bay. One escaped capture but the second was caught, cleaned, given basic First Aid and sent off on the *Oldenburg* which, luckily, was just sailing. The bird was very thin, however, and did not survive the boat trip. On 19th December two more oiled guillemots were seen in the same area. Both evaded capture; one was totally black with oil. On 23rd December another oiled guillemot was caught on the Landing Beach, cleaned and given First Aid treatment. It appeared to respond well and it was arranged that Chivenor would pick it up when on exercise over Lundy the next morning and deliver it to the RSPCA for further treatment and rehabilitation. Unfortunately, the bird did not survive the night. These birds were all presumably the victims of illegal tank washing during rough weather. There was no other evidence of pollution around the Island from these incidents and no further incidents have occurred since then.

5.9 Interpretation: I have produced a Lundy MNR Information Book which is available for reference purposes in the Tavern library and will be placed in the Dive Hut when it is in use. The book contains a copy of the Zoning Scheme with additional notes concerning breeding birds and seals as well as other information of interest to divers. I have also been looking into the possibility of producing a Teacher's Pack for the MNR to attract schools into coming over on a day trip or a residential field trip. The Devon Wildlife Trust have produced one that is very generalised with the intention that other organisations buy them and then customise them to their particular site. I will 'test the waters' by sending a few out to local schools and then maybe go on to selling them if they prove very popular.

5.10 Assistant Warden: I have appointed my Assistant who will be coming over to the Island at the end of May and helping me out for the 3 busiest months of the season. Her name is Jo Ramsay, she is studying for an MSc in Coastal Zone Management at Bournemouth University. She has to carry out work for a dissertation whilst on the Island and has no fixed topic to study yet. If anyone has a suitable project in mind then please let me know.

5.11 Grant Applications: At the beginning of January a combination of high winds and high tides caused the road around to the Dive Beach to collapse in several places. A scaffolding bridge was built across the gaping hole 5m x 2m and 4m deep just past Old Man's Cave, so that the road was passable on foot and a quad bike could be taken part of the way round. Luckily, the Landmark had the go-ahead to start work on some of the grant projects, so the repair work to the road took first priority and work started in February. It is hoped that the work will be completed by the end of May. This repair work involves a lot of heavy machinery so the road and the Landing Beach have now been designated a hard hat area. In view of this I wrote to all the skippers of boats regularly landing at Lundy and all the relevant yacht clubs and informed them of the situation. It means that passengers cannot be landed on the jetty on the Dive Beach but must be landed on the Landing Beach and that it is advisable to ring the Island before bringing passengers over to ensure their safety when landing.

Outline plans have been drawn up for the proposed jetty with the hope of starting work in October and completing the project by next Easter. The grant for rebuilding the dive huts has been confirmed. The size and layout of these will depend on the eventual shape of the platform at the end of the new jetty when it is complete.

Points which arose from the Warden's report:

- RI indicated his willingness to assist with planning projects which local dive clubs could undertake on a more frequent basis than the once-yearly MCS visits. He thought the 'adopt-a-site' scheme was a good idea which could work well at Lundy.
- RW asked if the fact that no pots were present around the island from December to March was normal. LC confirmed that it was.
- KB asked if the fishing net picked up in Gannets' Bay was a cod end and whether it was frayed. Both he and LH thought it unlikely that the net would be from a local boat. Certain foreign boats however (such as Belgian trawlers), were known to cut the cod end from a net and ditch it before returning home.

6. The proposed new jetty in the Landing Bay:

RH had just attended a meeting with John Grimes Partnership who were the consulting engineers overseeing the jetty project. He explained to those present that an open structure was being proposed, about twice the length of the *Oldenburg*, sitting on a number of circular steel piles. The top would be made from pre-cast concrete slabs and would slope down towards the sea. The jetty would be aligned in an approximately north-east direction. Primarily, the jetty was being designed to take the *Oldenburg*, but provisions were being made for cruise ships such as the *Waverley* and the *Balmoral*, as well as smaller craft. The jetty would be useable on both sides, but it probably would not afford much shelter in easterly winds.

Paul Roberts of LT was hoping to apply for full planning permission for the jetty in June, with construction work to start in the autumn. A jack-up rig was to be positioned on site in order to drill the holes for the piles. It was hoped that it would be completed by Easter 1999. RW pointed out that an environmental impact assessment study was a legal requirement prior to planning permission being granted. The effects of the new jetty (both during construction and afterwards) on the MNR had to be kept to a minimum. EN would be advising Torridge District Council on environmental matters. In addition, EN had also been

engaged as grant assessors by the Heritage Lottery Fund. RI, in his capacity as a marine biological consultant, had been asked to tender for marine aspects of the impact assessment and had just been given the go-ahead. He will be going over to the island in a couple of weeks' time with a team of three other divers to undertake this.

LH pointed out that, under the Food and Environment Protection Act, MAFF would need to grant a licence prior to work commencing on the jetty.

7. Proposed activities within the MNR this summer:

The planned diving work on re-establishing the sublittoral monitoring sites off the east coast (which had been due to take place last September) is now due to take place on 4-6 May. The diving team was being led by Colin Munro of Marine Biological Surveys and would involve EN and JNCC representatives as well as RI.

RI plans to take another group of 12 volunteer divers (all members of the Marine Conservation Society) over to the island from 29 June – 3 July aboard the *Datchet*. Possible projects were being discussed with English Nature staff and Dr Keith Hiscock.

In addition to the above, LC pointed out there would be a number of other activities taking place for visitors to the island. These include: snorkelling sessions, rocky shore rambles, seabird walks and weekly evening talks on the wildlife of the Island as a whole, including the MNR. It is also planned to re-instate the Underwater Nature Trail for folks with their own equipment to use.

8th June is World Oceans Day and LC hopes to have a suitable event on that day to highlight this.

8th-15th August is *Marine Week* on the island. There are plans to have a display in the Council Offices in Ilfracombe and to carry out events as last year.

8. Review of the MNR Zoning Scheme

JC explained to the Group that the review of the Zoning Scheme by English Nature (EN) was to be deferred. A paper, which is to be written by EN in collaboration with the Warden and DSFC regarding the management of the MNR (& the cSAC), will be distributed prior to the next meeting of the Advisory Group in October 1998. The Management Plan was due for revision next year (1999). JC was able to confirm to KB that the boundary to the cSAC was exactly the same as the outer boundary of the MNR. Some confusion had arisen over this matter, as the boundary to the proposed (but now defunct) Sensitive Marine Area was larger than the MNR boundary.

RI pointed out that if any ground-truthing was required re. the Zoning Scheme and/or Management Plan, then there was an opportunity for both the MCS group of divers and local diving groups to include it in their programmes for this summer, given sufficient notice. LH pointed out that it was not just local groups which should be consulted re. these matters: fishermen from Port Isaac and Padstow regularly visited the island.

9. Any other business:

- Once again, the matter of potting was raised and though this discussion occurred earlier in the meeting, it is noted here. KB kindly brought those present up to date with what was happening with regard to potting around the island and off the mainland coast. It was unfortunate that no fishermen were present at the meeting. He reflected on the first meeting of the Consultation Group in 1984, when the assurance was given by NCC representatives that the *status quo* regarding fishing practices would be maintained, should a statutory MNR be introduced. RW and JC pointed out the the new SAC was the result of European legislation, that it should be regarded quite differently from the existing MNR, and that EN was required to advise of any damaging activities taking place within it.

KB also mentioned a MAFF-funded study which has been undertaken by Dr Mike Kaiser off the south Devon coast. He has been assessing the effects of potting on areas of the sea bed. It would appear as though the pots themselves do little damage; they also serve to keep out the bottom dredgers and trawlers (who fear snagging their gear).

JC asked what the best way to approach fishermen might be, in order to talk to them about the cSAC. KB offered to help introduce JC to the key players.

RI asked KB how matters were progressing with regard to crustacean conservation measures, a matter that was raised by Tim Dyer at the last meeting. KB explained that, at a local level, a close season from October to May was being proposed for north Devon. This would be for lobster but not crab. He added that the moving force behind getting a new byelaw introduced were the pot fishermen from Clovelly and Ilfracombe. LH added that MAFF were formulating new legislation at a national level too. KB pointed out that, over the past few years, catches had remained about the same, but that fishing effort had increased considerably. RW pointed out that a close season may not be of benefit to the Lundy MNR. Whilst there would be no potting undertaken during the winter, it would lead to increased pressure during the summer. So the actual number of pots being set would be likely to increase (during the summer months) and not decrease. His concern was not so much for the target species but for the potential damage such an increase in activity could have on other benthos. KB indicated that the ideal would be for each vessel to have a permit or catch licence of some sort, but that this scenario was not envisaged in the near future.


- MM informed the Group that the Hartland Heritage Coast Management Plan was now at the printers and that it does refer to Lundy.
- RI informed the Group that he had received draft Shoreline Management Plans for the Severn Estuary and for Swansea Bay. He had not made specific comments on these (as other parties concerned could do that directly), but wished to point out that the Advisory Group was being notified of these matters. He had not, however, been notified of the Plan which included Lundy!

Don't forget the island's website at: <http://www.gratton.co.uk/ilfsac/lundy>

The address for the sailing times of the *Oldenburg* is: <http://www.devon-cc.gov.uk/tourism/pages/lundy>

10. Date of the next meeting: Tuesday, 13th October 1998, 7 p.m., at Riverbank House, Bideford

Robert Irving
10 April 1998

 - 13.10.98.