

LUNDY MARINE NATURE RESERVE ADVISORY GROUP

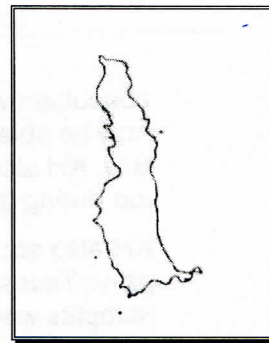
The Aims of the Group are: 1) to provide a nucleus of expertise on the marine habitats and waters surrounding Lundy; 2) to provide a forum for exchanging views on present and proposed activities around Lundy; 3) to safeguard the interests of all those who use the waters around Lundy and its natural resources;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

Established: 1985

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Notes of the 27th meeting of the Lundy Marine Nature Reserve Advisory Group

(formerly known as the Lundy Marine Consultation Group, of which this was the 45th meeting)

held on **Thursday, 17th April 2008** in the Council Chamber,
Bideford Town Hall, Bideford at 7.00 p.m.

Present:

Keith Hiscock	(KH)	Marine Biological Association	Chair
Nicola Saunders	(NS)	Lundy Warden	
Derek Green	(DG)	Lundy Manager	
Clive Pearson	(CP)	Charter Skipper <i>Jessica Hettie</i>	
Gavin Black	(GB)	Natural England (Devon Office)	
Chris Davis	(CD)	Natural England (Devon Office)	
Cat Jones	(CR)	Devon Wildlife Trust	
Tim Robbins	(TR)	Devon Sea Fisheries Committee	
Andrew Bengey	(AB)	<i>Obsession</i> Charters	
Damian Board	(DB)	Appledore SAA	
Chris Mandry	(CM)	British Sub-Aqua Club/Ilfracombe S-AC	
Robert Irving	(RI)	Lundy Field Society & Marine Conservation Society	Secretary

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting, especially those attending for the first time.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Apologies had been received from: Keith Bower (Devon Sea Fisheries Committee) and John Butterwith (North Devon Fishermen's Association).
2. **Notes on the last meeting, held on 18th October 2007:** There had been a delay in producing both the minutes of the meeting held on 18th October 2007 and those from 23rd April 2007. Copies of these were distributed to those present and both were accepted as being true records of the meetings in question and were signed by the Chairman, KH. A general comment made from the floor was that it would be appreciated if the minutes from each meeting could be produced sooner while attendees could still remember what was discussed and agreed. The Secretary agreed to try to speed up this process.

The Chairman pointed out the proposed Management Forum meeting which was due to take place the following day (i.e. on 18th April 2008) had been cancelled. The next meeting of the Management Forum will now take place on 24th October 2008.

3. **Matters arising:** A costed proposal to study contaminants within sediments and within a range of organisms had been mentioned at the April 2007 meeting. KH suggested that, as funding had not yet been found for this project, Peter Henderson, a marine biological

The following organisations sit on the Advisory Group: British Sub-Aqua Club * Devon Sea Fisheries Committee * Devon Wildlife Trust * English Heritage * Environment Agency * Landmark Trust * local dive charter interests * local diving clubs * local sea fishing interests * The Lundy Company Ltd. * Lundy Field Society * Marine Archaeological Interests * Marine Biological Association of the U.K. * Marine Conservation Society * Natural England * North Devon Coast and Countryside Service * North Devon Fishermen's Association * South-West Federation of Sea Anglers * Torridge District Council

consultant working on the Environmental Impact Assessment of the Beach Road repairs, may be able to take some suitable samples from the intertidal zone bordering the Landing Bay. KH also suggested he himself might be able to obtain a number of subtidal samples too during this coming summer.

KH also stated that he had taken some tentacle cuttings from individual *Leptopsammia pruvoti* sunset corals in September 2007 for DNA analysis by an expert in Liverpool. More samples were needed. He also hoped to obtain some tentacle samples from sunset corals in Plymouth Sound.

CM asked what progress there was on the new DVD promoting the NTZ (as mentioned under 5.4, 18 Oct 2007). CD informed the Group that it was undergoing final editing and should be available (free of charge) in the next couple of months. It would run for 9 minutes and would be distributed to as wide an audience as possible. The intention was also to include it on Natural England's website. All members of the Advisory Group and the Management Forum would receive a copy.

CM pointed out that he appeared to be missing out on various matters with which Advisory Group members were being asked to comment on. He asked that his contact details were included for such matters in future.

TR informed the Group that the DSFC boat (together with a RIB) was due to patrol the N. Devon coast (including Lundy) in June. Included in their plan was a survey of potting activity around Lundy. Officers had spoken with the skipper of *Alexander B* which, prior to the last meeting, had been reported using small, inconspicuous dan buoys to mark gear.

Overall concern was raised about the increase in the number of pots which were currently being set within the MNR/SAC (and the fact that potting had continued throughout the winter period). TR pointed out that, when the Marine Bill becomes law, one of the outcomes will be a limit on the number of pots which will be able to be set within the new 'Lundy Marine Conservation Zone'.

4. **Matters arising from the Lundy Management Forum meeting (held on 19th October 2007):** [Note – this meeting took place just south of Exeter on the morning after the last Advisory Group meeting and was attended by KH (on behalf of the Lundy Field Society and the Advisory Group – the latter in RI's absence).

Amongst more general island matters, the following points were raised relevant specifically to the MNR/SAC:

- A revision of the MNR/SAC Code of Conduct is being undertaken by the Warden and will be circulated for comment.
- Concern was raised over the increase in potting effort around the island, outside of the No Take Zone. It was agreed that this needs to be carefully monitored and evaluated by the Wardens and the DSFC.
- A discharge of 'grey water' had been reported emanating from the *Oldenburg* whilst she was alongside the jetty at some time during the summer (see point 2.7.4 of the Advisory Group minutes from the meeting on 18th October 2007). It was found that this was drainage water (not sewage) and had resulted from a faulty water pump. This problem has now been sorted. DG also investigated the processing of waste effluent by both the *Balmoral* and the *Waverley*, and was given reassurances that any necessary discharges from these vessels would occur when the vessels were outside the MNR/SAC.
- The date of the next Management Group meeting was due to be on 18th April 2008, but owing to the likely absence of key members, this meeting was cancelled and the next scheduled meeting will be on 24th October 2008.

5. **Report from the Reserve:** the following report was presented by Nicola Saunders, Lundy Warden.

Warden's Report (October 2006 - April 2007)

5.1 Staff

- 5.1.1 We have recruited a seasonal volunteer, Tim Baldwin who started on Tuesday (15 April 2008). His main role is to assist with general island duties, and he will be working closely with the conservation team. This should allow Sophie and I more time which will enable us to conduct the annual seabird surveys.

5.2 Human Activity

- 5.2.1 **RIB:** Despite the full service of 2007, the RIB was in poor shape so it was decided to send it off again for a complete overhaul. It left Lundy in November and unfortunately the engineers discovered that both engines were right-offs. Thankfully Natural England were able to find additional funds and both engines have been replaced. Unfortunately we have not managed to launch the RIB yet, but it will be very soon!!
- 5.2.2 **Fishing and potting activity:** Land based patrols of the MNR have continued throughout the winter season. Pots have been observed within the MNR throughout the winter with the majority of the effort focused around Rat Island. Potting effort has increase significantly over the last month.
- 5.2.3 **Seaflex moorings:** Weather delayed the placement of the new Seaflex moorings, and with minimal winter use it was decided to delay deploying them until the new season. They are ready to go and will hopefully be in place shortly.
- 5.2.4 **Other moorings:** Most of the mooring licences for 2008 have been issued, with just two outstanding. Smit Towy have requested permission to place a new mooring in the bay, and both Natural England and Landmark Trust have provisionally agreed. This will take the total moorings in the Landing Bay to seven.

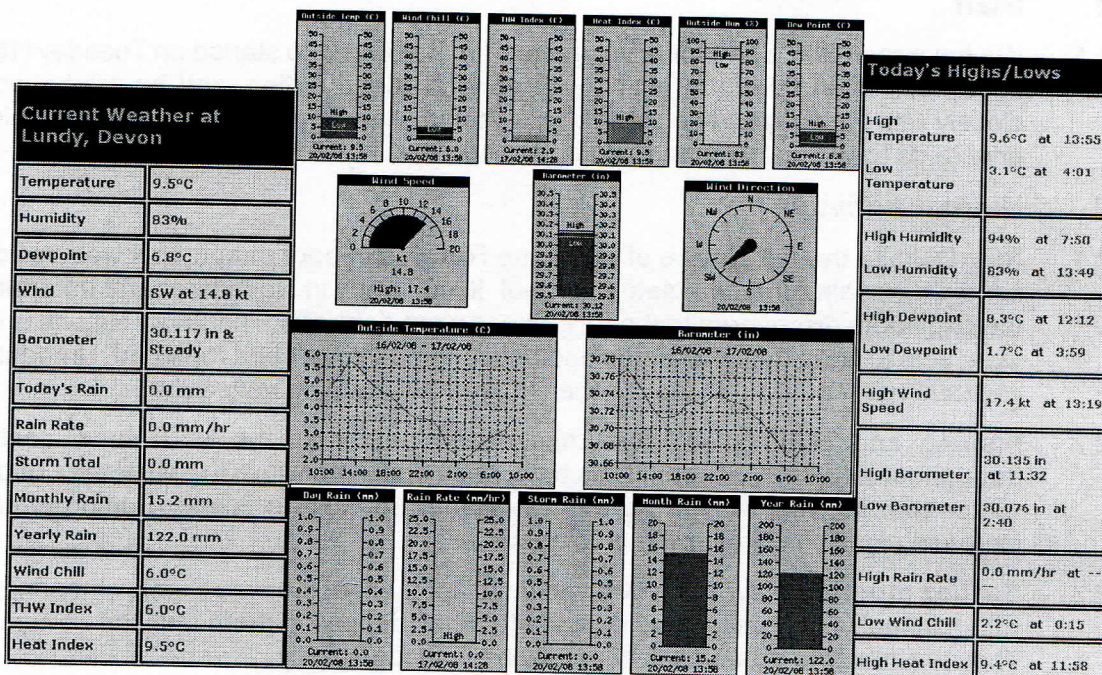
5.3 Wildlife

- 5.3.1 **Seabirds:** As per last year, some of the climbing restrictions were brought in early this year as kittiwakes were present. The RSPB are conducting a full Manx Shearwater survey this year and a seabird census. While they are on the island we will be reviewing the climbing restrictions with a view to extending the closed season. Sophie and I will be conducting the productivity surveys for Guillemots, Fulmars & Kittiwakes as well as guillemot provisioning rates. We will aim to write two reports for the LFS journal detailing our results.
- 5.3.1.1 **Puffins:** The first Puffin sighting was on the 8th April. We have begun regular checks of the known nesting sites so that accurate records can be formed and, weather permitting, we will be conducting additional provisioning surveys for the puffins.
- 5.3.1.2 **Guillemots:** Guillemots and Razorbills have been present since December, with regular sightings and large numbers visiting the nesting cliffs with increasing frequency.
- 5.3.1.3 **Manx Shearwaters:** The first Manx Shearwater was seen from the Oldenburg on 2nd April.

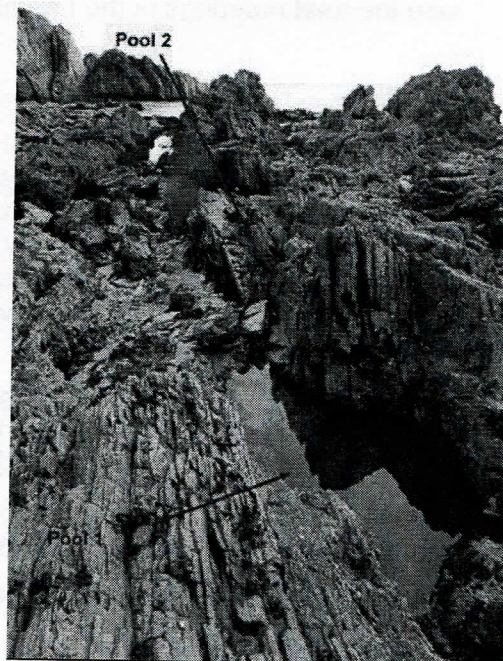
5.4 Monitoring

- 5.4.1 **Temperature loggers:** New loggers were put in last July at the Jetty and on the Robert and we will retrieve and replace them over the summer.
- 5.4.2 **Weather Station:** The Lundy weather station is up and running and we now have an online live weather link, which can be found at http://www.lundyisland.co.uk/Current_Vantage_Pro.htm. I hope this will be of particular use to private vessels visiting the island, as well as a valuable source of data for future survey work. Note that the site is updated every 15 mins. *but only when the island's power and the computer are on!*

An example of the page is shown below:



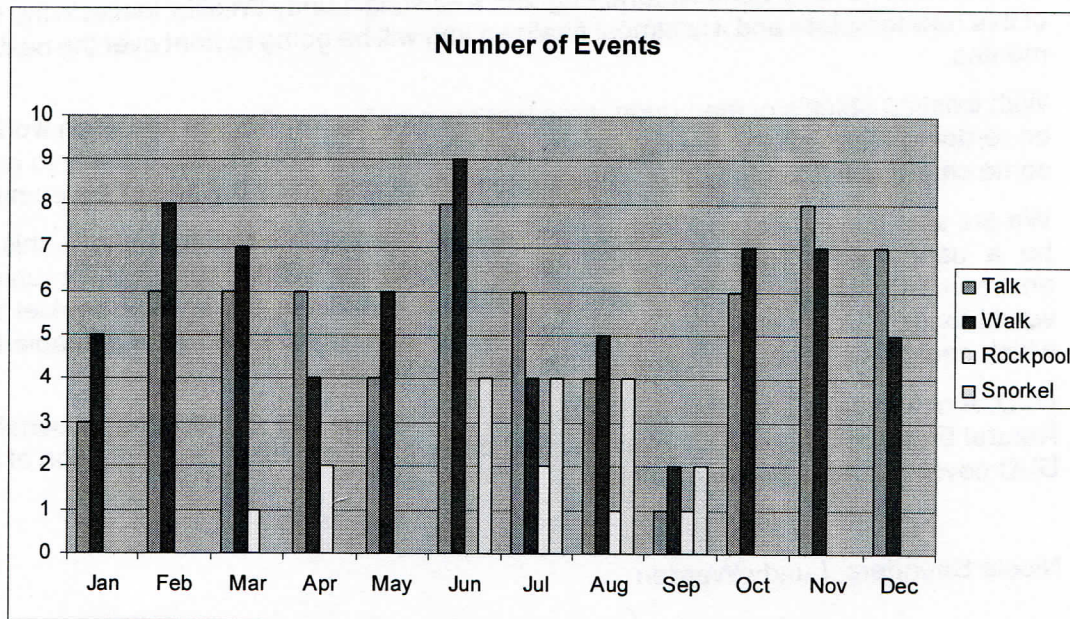
5.4.2 Sophie and I have continued surveying the intertidal cup coral populations. The partial collapse of a rockpool over winter has revealed a new site in Devil's Kitchen and further searches resulted in the discovery of a second new site close by (see photo right). The corals are well developed so it would suggest they have been present for some time, we haven't surveyed these two new sites yet, but initial counts indicate there are at least 25 at pool 1 and a minimum of 10 at pool 2.



5.5 Raising Awareness

5.5.1 **Events on the Island:** The usual programme of talks, and walks continued throughout the winter. In 2007 we had 155 different events with over 1800 visitors participating.

Numbers of events for 2007 (excl. Schools & pre-booked groups)



In 2007 we also introduced a voluntary donation for event participation and managed to raise over £2000 in event donations which has gone to the Lundy Fund and will hopefully be used towards future interpretation projects.

5.5.2 **On the shore:** In 2008 we aim to increase the number of rockpool rambles and we have produced a laminated 'Lundy Seashore Discover Pack' that is available for visitors to purchase as a guide to the intertidal, which will hopefully encourage self exploration.

5.5.3 **Seabird Walks:** These will begin in the next week or so and Snorkel Safaris will be programmed from May. We have also begun offering guided walks for day trippers which have already proved to be a big success.

5.5.4 **Media Interest:** Coast Magazine & BBC Radio Devon are visiting Lundy later this month. The RSPB have arranged for a journalist to stay on Lundy during the Manx Shearwater survey with a view to writing a full article on the Shearwater status since the rat eradication. In June a journalist from Sport's Diver is visiting us for 5 days and intends to write a 4 page spread on diving around Lundy and the island itself.

5.5.5 **School Visits:** Bookings are going well and we are starting to see a lot of repeat visits from schools; to date we have 15 groups scheduled for island visits.

5.6 Interpretation

5.6.1 **Code of Conduct:** A new Marine Code of Conduct has been finalised (see attached copy).

5.6.2 Leaflets:

Leaflet Template – Leaflets are considered to be the best form of interpretation without interrupting Lundy's unspoilt environment. Since last year I have been working closely with Landmark Trust and Lundy Co. on the design of a leaflet template. After

consultation with all the Management partners the leaflet template has now been finalised. (See attached document). The production of a leaflet template will allow the partners of Lundy to produce their own interpretive material that is in keeping with the Lundy brand.

Sophie and I have re-done Natural England's existing 'Lundy Wildlife' leaflet in the style of this new template and it is almost finalised and will be going to print over the next few months.

With existing stock's of the Lundy Birds leaflets running low Sophie has been working on re-doing this leaflet in the new style, and we will be taking the opportunity to make some changes to the old leaflet – this should be completed by the end of the summer.

We are also looking at producing a new Code of Conducts leaflet for Lundy – this will be a user friendly guide on how to protect Lundy whilst enjoying it's unique environment, and we are considering producing a more in depth PDF booklet that would focus on guidelines for individual user groups – this would be a valuable tool which could be e-mailed or downloaded from the website.

- 5.6.3 **DVD:** A new marine DVD has been produced by Doug & Rosie Anderson on behalf of Natural England. The DVD itself is finished and we just awaiting the production of the DVD cover before it will be available.

Nicola Saunders, Lundy Warden

The following discussion point was raised at the end of the Warden's Report:

KH & RI were pleased to hear of the discovery of the new cup coral site in rockpools on the mid-shore of Devil's Kitchen. KH suggested that the temperature of the water be taken on a hot day, to assess the tolerance limits of the corals.

6. **Beach Road update:**

DG brought the Group up to date with progress on the repairs to the Beach Road. Work had now been going on for 18 months and repairs to the upper section (Phase 1) were almost complete. Once completed, work would start on the lower section (Phase 2). This would involve refurbishment of the old slipway in front of the cave (marked by the Trinity House Landing stone); securing the cliff area above the cave; new work on the section of road by the Sentinels; and renovation of the Beach Building. The *Oldenburg* would also be undergoing some improvements too. £165k had been raised since August 2007, with a further £85k being required. Work will be suspended at the end of June and will begin again in October. All project work will be completed by June 2009.

The second phase of the work is presently awaiting planning permission to be granted by Torridge DC, but this is expected soon. A FEPA licence has been required to undertake work in the subtidal area of the Divers Beach jetty where the slipway is to be extended by a further 12m.

CM asked if there were any plans to put safety rails along the more precipitous parts of the Beach Road. DG explained that there were not.

7. **Natural England projects:**

7a **Update of NTZ monitoring:** CD explained that Miles Hoskin of MER Consultants was in the process of writing up last year's results from the NTZ monitoring.

7b **Multibeam survey of part of the Reserve:** GB informed the Group that the Maritime & Coastguard Agency had undertaken a multibeam seabed survey covering a small part of

seabed off the west coast. The information from this study would be added to the biotope mapping work being undertaken by Ambios Consultants. The sediment sampling work which had been undertaken last summer had shown that off the SW coast there was more reef present than previously thought, much of it covered from time to time with a veneer of sand. A report of this work was due at the end of April. KH urged caution with any possible ground-truthing of the biotope mapping work, particularly in light of the mistakes that were made in the late 1990s when a similar exercise was undertaken.

7c Interpretive material: NS handed out copies of the new Code of Conduct to those present, which she had been working on. There is still time to comment on this, but NS would appreciate responses as soon as possible. CM raised the point that whilst divers were being asked to restrict the numbers of crustacea and scallops they might catch to a very small number, commercial fishermen were allowed to take as many as they liked! Should there not be a similar Code of Conduct for commercial fishermen? Clearly, there's an anomaly here: it seems to be one rule for some and another for others! CD explained that there was going to be a detailed assessment of current levels of fishing effort around the island this summer, and it may well be that a maximum limit to the number of pots a single boat can use is considered.

8. Other interpretation: NS explained that an agreed template for the new leaflets had been agreed after 6 months working on it. There was now a Lundy 'style' for these leaflets, with 6 colour options. Examples were passed around those present. NS pointed out that there was a lack of underwater habitat photographs available to use in the leaflets and she would welcome help in obtaining some.

Natural England had awarded a small grant to the Ilfracombe Aquarium to update its Lundy display material.

The large (and heavy!) 'Hoskin' board, which had been made for use on the island but was found to be too awkward to site correctly, has now found a permanent home at the Looe Interpretation Centre.

9 Summary of research projects in 2007: TR explained that a lobster tagging programme had been initiated.

GB informed the Group that a survey of the grey seal population around the island had been undertaken by Steve Westcott.

GB also explained that the Lundy SAC will be acting as a 'guinea pig' by Natural England for an overall assessment of its condition status covering all of features of the whole SAC (including its grey seals, caves and shallow sandbanks).

RI summarised the findings of the survey of the sunset cup coral *Leptopsammia pruvoti* population in September which showed an apparent continuing decline in adult numbers at the Knoll Pins, but also an increase in recently settled individuals too.

10. Research planned for 2008: KH's postponed re-survey of Prof. Harvey's 1947/48 intertidal sites was now planned to take place at the end of August/Start of September.

A Seasearch group was planning to dive around the island at the end of May. Part of their work would be to check on the condition of sea fans.

NS planned to continue with the clearance of japweed *Sargassum muticum* plants from the environs of the Landing Bay.

11. Regulatory issues for 2008: The Group was informed of the background facts to the


potting incident which occurred within the northern boundary of the NTZ in September 2007. DSFC officers had apprehended the culprit and found his GPS to be giving false readings. This had now been re-set.

12. The long-awaited Marine Bill has now been published and it contains a great deal of detail - carefully worded and needing careful reading! TR explained that this was just the start of the process and that many changes would result once the Bill becomes law. SFCs are to get funding from central government as well as from local government; they will be known as 'Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authorities'; the Marine Nature Reserve will become a 'Marine Conservation Zone'; there will be new marine conservation objectives for Lundy; and the Management Plan will be reviewed and updated.

13. **Any other business:** The following points were raised:-

- TR passed on some information from John Butterwith – the minimum landing size of ray was now the equivalent of 2 lbs. The area to the north of Lundy is closed between 1st December to 31st May.
- CD informed the Group that Natural England are proposing hosting an informal conference on Lundy's marine interests in the autumn of this year (2008).
- DG expressed thanks to CD, who was now moving jobs within Natural England and who would no longer be involved with Lundy matters. Lundy's marine matters at Natural England (Exeter) would now be dealt with by Gavin Black and Mel Parker.
- GB informed the Group that seahorses (two species) and the angel shark are now protected species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act.

9. **Date of next meeting:** Thursday, 23rd October 2008 to be held at 7.00 pm in Torridge District Council's Committee Room, Riverbank House, Chanters Lane, Bideford.


23/10/08