

LUNDY MARINE PROTECTED AREA 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 Forum for the island.

Established: 1985



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Notes of the 5th meeting of the Lundy Marine Protected Area Advisory Group

(formerly known as the Lundy Marine Conservation Zone Advisory Group, the Lundy Marine Nature Reserve Advisory Group, and originally the Lundy Marine Consultation Group, of which this was the 62nd meeting)

held on **Tuesday 11th October 2016** at 7.00 p.m. at the Ilfracombe SAC Clubhouse, Ropery Road, Ilfracombe.

Present:

Keith Hiscock	(KH)	Marine Biological Association – Chair
Robert Irving	(RI)	Lundy Field Society – Hon. Sec.
Derek Green	(DG)	Lundy General Manager
Alison James	(AJ)	Historic England
Mike Deaton	(MD)	Appledore SAC
Andrew Bengey	(ABen)	Lundy Diving
Shaun Galliver	(SG)	Ilfracombe BSAC
John Fanthorpe	(JF)	Charter boat <i>Lundy Castaway</i>
A. Hall	(AH)	
Geoff Huelin	(GH)	Commercial fisherman
Mel Parker	(MP)	Natural England
Chris Mandry	(CM)	BSAC
Amanda Gartshore	(AG)	Ilfracombe BSAC
Annette Dutton	(AD)	MARINELife
Robert Durrant	(RD)	Coastwise North Devon
Dave Jenkins	(DJ)	Morte Wildlife Group
Leigh Hanks	(LH)	Lundy Diving
Lauren Parkhouse	(LP)	Devon & Severn IFCA

The Chairman (KH) welcomed all to the meeting, especially the new attendees. The purpose of the Group, he explained, was to allow the users of the Lundy MPA to “have their say” and to raise any particular issues they would like to see addressed. Any concerns or matters of importance can then be conveyed to the Lundy Management Forum at their next meeting (usually the following day) by the Group’s Hon. Sec.

1. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from: Beccy MacDonald (Lundy Warden); John Balls (N Devon Fishermen's Association/NFFO); Maggs Ashton (Ilfracombe BSAC); Clive Pearson (Charter boat *Jessica Hettie*); Sarah Clark (Devon & Severn IFCA); Rick Morris (MARINELife); and Ben Bengey (Lundy Diving).

2. **Notes on the last meeting of the MCZ Advisory Group, held on 27th April 2016**

- 2.1 Copies of these notes had been circulated by the Hon. Sec. prior to the meeting. No amendments were raised by those present, so the notes were signed by the Chairman as being an accurate record of the meeting.
- 2.2 Matters arising: KH & DG asked MP whether the report of the SAC sublittoral rock monitoring studies (undertaken in 2014 & 2015) by PML Applications Ltd. was now available. Neither had seen the report and yet the surveys had been completed over a year ago. MP confirmed that it would be soon available on-line (see section 4.2).

3. **Matters arising from the last Lundy Management Forum meeting on 28th April 2016**

- 3.1. DG summarised the marine 'highlights' of the last LMF meeting held on the island on 28th April 2106. The Forum is a partnership of all the stakeholders in Lundy and includes the Devon & Severn IFCA, the Environment Agency, Historic England, Natural England, Landmark Trust, the Lundy Field Society, the National Trust, the RSPB and the Lundy MPA Advisory Group. It was agreed that the next meeting of the Forum would be held on Thursday, 13th November 2016, at Killerton House, near Exeter.
- 3.2. RI reported on what had been discussed at the Advisory Group meeting two days earlier (see the Notes of the 4th meeting of the Lundy MPA Advisory Group).
- 3.3. Beccy MacDonald presented her Warden's Report. Discussion afterwards focussed on the Marine Management Plan which BM had been working on over the winter. Whilst it was lauded for its presentation style and format, some issues were raised regarding the accuracy of its content and the criteria used in selecting the featured species. It was hoped that the comments made on it by invited reviewers could be incorporated before it was 'signed off' by the Forum.
- 3.4. Updates were given on various monitoring projects (little to report). KH gave an update on Lundy Field Society activities, including the Society's recent AGM held in Crediton. Another 'Discover Lundy' week was being planned to take place in September 2016 to celebrate the Society's 70th anniversary, with a week of events on the island. SC (D&SIFCA) reported on the new legislation for the protection of the harbour porpoise; and new recording forms for divers to report seabed sightings of crawfish.
- 3.5. DG reported that the Anthony Gormley sculpture, set in place for 12 months in SW Field close to the Devil's Limekiln, was due to be removed at the end of May 2016.

4. **Warden's Report**

- 4.1 BM had sent her apologies for not being able to attend the meeting. In her absence, DG presented her report (accompanying these Notes as a separate pdf file). As many of those present will be already aware, BM will be leaving her post later this month (20th October) in order to take up a job with Somerset Wildlife Trust. BM has been Lundy's Warden for 3 years 8 months during which time the range of responsibilities of the Warden has increased considerably: as well as heading the

Conservation Team she has also been in charge of the Coastguard Team on the island. DG wanted to express his thanks to Beccy for all her hard work and dedication to the role. RI agreed to write a letter of thanks to Beccy on behalf of the Advisory Group.

- 4.2 MP was asked if the Marine Management Plan was now available for circulation. She explained that a limited number of copies would be printed and distributed to key individuals. DG agreed to put it up on the Lundy website. It is now accessible via the following pages:

[http://www.landmarktrust.org.uk/Documents/lundy/Marine Management Plan 2016 online version.pdf](http://www.landmarktrust.org.uk/Documents/lundy/Marine%20Management%20Plan%202016%20online%20version.pdf)

or from a link on this page:

<http://www.landmarktrust.org.uk/lundyisland/discovering-lundy/Conservation1/Marine-Protected-Area/>

- 4.3 RI asked if there had been any progress with updating the MCZ/MPA website. DG explained that the intention was for the Lundy site to host the MPA pages (which had previously existed as a separate site). He had asked the Landmark Trust IT department to add this to their 'to do' list.

5. Natural England update (Mel Parker)

- 5.1 MP explained that NE no longer had any funding to be able to put towards monitoring projects within the MPA. That said, there had recently been a small team of NE personnel on the island undertaking a count of grey seals. This was part of a study assessing numbers of grey seals throughout the whole of the south-west (particularly around the Isles of Scilly and the Cornish coastline).
- 5.2 The new Marine Management Plan (funded by NE but authored by BM) had now been 'signed off' by the Management Forum. NE intended to base their management of the MPA on this Plan, together with their Marine Conservation Advice packages for the MCZ and the SAC.
- 5.3 The only sub-feature of the SAC which had been found to be in 'unfavourable' condition by the monitoring studies undertaken in 2014/2015 by PML Applications Ltd., was the 'Vertical and over-hanging circalittoral rock' sub-feature, specifically the continuing decline in the small population of the rare sunset cup coral *Leptopsammia pruvoti*. As a consequence, a small amount of money had been assigned to investigate the causes of this decline, with the consultancy Sea-Scope being asked to carry out further photographic studies. Unfortunately, Sea-Scope had been unable to undertake the work this summer owing to various complications (neap tides coinciding with good weather, good viz. and an available boat). It was hoped it might be possible to do the work next summer if funding was still available.
- 5.4 KH added that some years ago he had taken tissue samples from individual sunset cup corals at Lundy, the Isles of Scilly, Plymouth and Roscoff (Brittany) so that their DNA could be compared and hopefully some indication of the relationship between these populations (and their degree of isolation) would become apparent. The analysis by an individual at the University of Liverpool had never been completed but KH had managed to recover the samples and was now hoping the work could be done by staff at the MBA in Plymouth. Unfortunately, it was likely to cost in the region of £4,000 to carry out the work and he wasn't sure where this might come from!
- 5.5 Another study which the Management Plan had highlighted as being a priority was the disturbance of grey seals by human activities. It was hoped funding might be found to investigate this further. MP also asked those present if they were aware of any other MPA management-related issues which they thought might warrant investigation, but no ideas were immediately forthcoming.

5.6 KH added that, in response to a request for opinions on the current status of MPAs in the UK by the House of Commons Environmental Audit Select Committee, he had submitted his own personal evidence. He had made some positive comments about the new Management Plan, amongst other issues.

6. D&SIFCA update (Lauren Parkhouse)

6.1 In the absence of Sarah Clark, LP presented an update of matters which D&SIFCA had been involved in.

6.2 All but one (towed gear over sandbanks) regulation had now been 'signed off' by the Authority. Following a PhD literature review at the University of Plymouth and a study based around Start Point off S. Devon, the impact of potting on the seabed and its associated biota was regarded as being negligible/acceptable. There would therefore be no additional conditions imposed at Lundy regarding potting, although potting 'pressure' (i.e. the number of pots being set at any one time) would be kept under review. A draft of this regulation has been passed on to Natural England for comment.

6.3 Regarding crawfish tagging, one of LP's colleagues had been out to Lundy with the Ilfracombe Diving Club earlier in the summer but the divers had had no luck in finding any crawfish, let alone bringing one to the surface to be tagged. Apparently, BBC's One Show are interested in filming the crawfish 'hunt' and their ability to make a noise using their antennae.

6.4 GH pointed out that he had caught several crawfish of varying sizes this summer in his lobster/crab pots. He had managed to tag some of them.

6.5 DG asked if D&SIFCA were in a position to continue (by means of funding) some or all of the monitoring studies which the Warden had been undertaken and which were having to be suspended due to lack of funds. This may well have a bearing on the job description for the new Warden. DG will discuss this further with SC at the Management Forum meeting in two days' time.

6.6 ABen asked if LP was aware if other IFCAs were going down the route of permitting byelaws. He asked because he had had divers on his boat this summer who were not aware that they needed to have a permit before they could take any crustacea/shellfish within the District. ABen pointed out that he didn't allow crustacea/shellfish to be brought back on board his boat anyway. LP explained that the present system of applying for a licence by post was slow and cumbersome but that soon (& RI can now confirm this has since happened) an on-line system of purchasing a permit would be up and running on the D&SIFCA website which would be a lot quicker. LP offered to send ABen some D&SIFCA leaflets which related to the issuing of permits, for him to distribute to interested divers.

7. Historic England update (Alison James)

7.1 AJ confirmed the new process of diving on either of the island's two protected wrecks. One licence now covered both wrecks (a corporate licence issued to the Lundy Company), to which further names could be added, though this must be done in writing.

7.2 Very few visits had been made to either wreck site this summer, largely due to poor weather. It was hoped there would be more dives made on the wrecks next season.

7.3 AJ confirmed that HE were looking at the possibility of creating 'virtual' dives trails, which would allow anyone to 'get a feel' for the wreck site in question. She also added that a current HE project was entitled 'Enriching the List' whereby divers could add to their own personal enhancements to the descriptions given of sites.

- 7.4 KH asked AJ if she was aware of any thought being given to designating the wreck of the HMS *Montagu* as a protected site. AJ was unaware of this wreck (of which there is very little left apart from some massive, kelp-covered 8" thick armour-plating strewn across the seabed off Shutter Rock, SW Lundy), which sank in 1906 having accidentally run aground. AJ would be happy to investigate further. [RI has subsequently lent AJ a couple of small books on the HMS *Montagu*, its demise and the subsequent court-martial of its captain; KH has sent her some underwater images of the wreck too].

8. Report of marine wildlife sightings by MARINELife officers (Annette Dutton)

- 8.1 AD acknowledged she had come along to the meeting as a substitute for Rick Morris, who had sent his apologies. She was only able to give a very brief report, as the data from this past summer had yet to be analysed.

- 8.2 The recorded sightings of marine mammals (see from *Oldenburg* crossings and from surveys, April - September 2016) were as follows:

Harbour porpoise: 115 Common dolphin: 250 Bottlenose dolphin: 1
Grey Seal: 86

Recorded seabirds included the following species: black-headed gull; common tern; cormorant; fulmar; gannet; great black-backed gull; great skua; arctic skua; guillemot; herring gull; kittiwake; lesser black-backed gull; Manx shearwater; oystercatcher; puffin; razorbill; shag; & storm petrel.

- 8.3 DG asked if any basking sharks had been recorded. AD did not think any had. KH added that only a few basking sharks had been seen (off SW Cornwall) throughout the whole of the SW peninsula this summer. MP asked if the observers added records from 'Round the Island' trips, but AD explained sightings were added just from the crossings (Bideford-Lundy or Ilfracombe-Lundy and vice-versa).

9. Any other business

- 9.1 Proposed mooring buoy at Brazen Ward. During the summer, LH had dived on the area in question and identified a suitable boulder to which the heavy mooring chain could be attached. A photo of this boulder had been shown to KH, who had agreed that the marine life growing on the boulder was 'seasonal' (mostly of various seaweed species growing within the kelp zone), and so the boulder would be suitable to use. DG confirmed that Beccy MacDonald had got the paperwork ready for submission to the MMO with accompanying payment. The MMO will then contact NE for comment. It was hoped the mooring could be established at the start of next year's diving season.

- 9.2 KH asked if anyone knew if the two temperature loggers for the MPA were being properly maintained and downloaded. Had they been recovered recently? DG knew that the one on the wreck of the Robert had recently been exchanged by divers, but he wasn't sure about the one at the end of the jetty. KH pointed out that the data acquired by these units was vitally important, and that should they need replacing with more up-to-date models they should be (the cost would not be that great).

- 9.3 KH also stressed the usefulness of observational records made by divers of unusual marine life sightings. There was an LFS Logbook for marine records in the Tavern in which records could be entered. ABen pointed out that the location of the Logbook in the Tavern wasn't so good for many divers, who are likely only to be on the island for a short time.

It was suggested that a Facebook page could be created which would act as a suitable repository for unusual sightings, photos of marine life and general discussion. This could be a 'Lundy MPA Facebook page' and be linked with the

Lundy Conservation Team pages. Those present all thought this was a good idea.

- 9.4 KH wondered if there were any further copies of the small intertidal species ID Guides available, as produced by Nicola Saunders and Sophie Wheatley a few years ago. MP didn't think NE had any more copies and DG didn't think there were more on the island. KH wondered if more could be printed as it was a very useful little photo-ID guide, which may visitors would find helpful for shore visits.
- 9.5 DG brought the Group up to date with progress on seeking funding for the restoration of the Church. Unfortunately, despite intense efforts, it had not been possible to raise the £400k needed to 'match' the National Lottery award of £900k, within the specified time limit. Consequently, it had been decided to re-bid for a smaller amount (totalling £800k) and scale-back the restoration work somewhat. A decision from the National Lottery will be due in March 2017.

Date of next meeting: **Monday, 15th May 2017** at 7:00 pm on board the MS *Oldenburg* tied up alongside Bideford Quay.

Annex A Warden's report (April 2016 - October 2016)

Note: this document has been sent separately as a pdf file.