

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 6th 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 63rd meeting)

held on **Monday 15th May 2017** at 7.00 p.m. on board the MS *Oldenburg* alongside Bideford Quay, Bideford.

Present:

Chris Mandry	(CM)	BSAC	Acting Chair
Robert Irving	(RI)	Lundy Field Society	Hon. Sec.
Alison James	(AJ)	Historic England	
Dean Jones	(DJ)	Lundy Warden, Landmark Trust	
John Balls	(JB)	N Devon Fishermen's Association/NFFO	
Mike Deaton	(MD)	Appledore SAC	
Lauren Parkhouse	(LP)	Devon & Severn IFCA	
Stuart Carpenter	(SR)	<i>Hampshire Rose</i> (Lifeboat Trips, Ilfracombe)	
Leigh Hanks	(LH)	Lundy Diving	
Maggs Ashton	(MA)	Ilfracombe & N Devon Sub-Aqua Club	
Amanda Gartshore	(AG)	Chair, Ilfracombe & N Devon Sub-Aqua Club	
Robert Durrant	(RD)	Coastwise North Devon	

In his absence, Keith Hiscock had asked CM to stand in as Chair for this meeting as KH was attending an MPA Conference in Poole. CM extended a warm welcome to all, especially to Dean Jones who had been appointed as Lundy's new Warden in December 2016 and had started on the island at the end of January 2017. The purpose of the Group, CM 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 could then be conveyed to the Lundy Management Forum at its next meeting (usually the following day) by the Group's Hon. Sec.

1. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from: Keith Hiscock (Marine Biological Association); Derek Green (Lundy General Manager/Landmark Trust); Andrew Benguey (Lundy Diving);

The following organisations sit on the Advisory Group: British Sub-Aqua Club * Coastwise * Devon & Severn Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority * Historic England * local dive charter interests * local diving clubs * local sea fishing interests * Lundy Company Ltd. * Lundy Field Society * Marine Biological Association of the U.K. * MARINELife * Marine Management Organisation * Morte Wildlife Group * Natural England * North Devon Coast and Countryside Service * North Devon Fishermen's Association * Torridge District Council

Mel Parker (Natural England); Andrew Bell (North Devon Biosphere Reserve); Sarah Clark (Devon & Severn IFCA); Rick Morris (MARINElife); and Shaun Galliver (Ilfracombe & N Devon Sub-Aqua Club)

2. Notes on the last meeting of the MCZ Advisory Group, held on 11th October 2016 (at Ilfracombe SAC Clubhouse, Ropery Road, Ilfracombe)

2.1 Copies of these notes had been circulated by the Hon. Sec. prior to the meeting. As a correction to these notes, under section 7.1, AJ pointed out that the two protected wreck sites did not just have one licence provision covering them both but two separate provisions.

2.2 Matters arising: (a) Following on from her correction, AJ confirmed that, for the *Iona II* wreck site, individual licencees can be added to the corporate licence held by the Lundy Company, or they be registered separately. Any dive boat skippers registered on the corporate licence can now allow any divers on board their vessel to dive on the *Iona II*, as long as the skipper has a record of those divers' names, addresses and diving qualifications. There is also a requirement that the licensee (i.e. a 'listed' skipper) must be on the boat when the site is dived. The Lundy Company, like any licensee, is required to submit an annual report detailing who has dived the wrecks during the season. If anyone would like to be on the Lundy Company licence, they should let Dean or Derek know. The alternative is for dive clubs or skippers to apply for their own licences if they prefer. This will require them to provide their own annual report to Historic England. The Lundy Company does not hold a corporate licence for the Gull Rock site, access to which can only be obtained through individual licencees. [See also section 7 of these notes].

(b) AJ was grateful to have received some photographs (from KH) and a couple of books (from RI) on the wreck of HMS *Montagu*. As this was a 'new' wreck to her, she was interested to learn more about it. She confirmed that she had arranged for a dive team from Wessex Archaeology to inspect the site this summer. She would be grateful to receive photographs of, or information on, any artefacts which are/were associated with the ship.

(c) CM asked AJ whether there were any plans to create a virtual dive trail for the *Iona II*. AJ replied not as yet. However, she did confirm that there were now quite a few virtual wreck sites available to view on the HE website.

(d) JB enquired where KH was hoping to obtain £4k of funding from for his proposed analysis of the DNA of sunset cup corals (section 5.4). In KH's absence, RI answered this question as best he could. For those not familiar with the saga, he explained that the tissue samples which KH had in his possession had come from sunset cup coral populations at a number of sites in SW England (Lundy, Isles of Scilly and Plymouth) and from NW France (Roscoff). They were collected a few years ago but KH is still keen to have them analysed in order to assess the relationship between these populations and their degree of isolation. RI explained that it was thought the individuals at Lundy were likely to be clones of each other, reproducing by asexual means, resulting in a rather weak gene pool. This might be one reason why Lundy's populations are declining so rapidly. The gene pool could be enhanced by the input of new stock originating from any one of these other populations, although the centre of the species' distribution is in the western Mediterranean. Returning to JB's question, RI did not know whether KH had any particular source of funding in mind – he is hoping to get the analysis done at the Marine Biological Association's labs, possibly for less than this amount.

JB then asked if the populations mentioned were somehow connected by a certain tidal flow. RI replied that the abundance and distribution of sunset cup corals may have been far greater hundreds of years ago when our coastal waters were warmer than they are today. [Since the meeting, Keith Hiscock has added: "The recruitment

characteristics of the sunset cup coral are likely to be that its larvae do not travel far from the parent before settling – perhaps just a few centimetres. If, like the scarlet and gold star cup coral, there are occasional ‘fat’ larvae that swim around for a few days, those may get swept to new locations. ‘Jet-stream’ currents that occur very infrequently may bring larvae from distant locations. In reality, the populations are highly localised and rely on self-recruitment.”]

(e) CM asked what the situation was regarding the proposed new mooring at Brazen Ward. LH confirmed that this was now all ready to go-ahead. DG had managed to circumnavigate most of the difficulties (and cost) of getting the site set up, by authorising it under his ‘Harbour Master’s exemption’ for the island. LH confirmed the mooring will be set up in the next few weeks.

(f) CM asked if there was any further information available on the two temperature loggers, with a possible view to replacing them. DJ was unable to provide any further detail on this.

3. **Matters arising from the last Lundy Management Forum meeting on 13th October 2016**

- 3.1. Derek Green would normally present this item, so in his absence RI, who had been responsible for writing the minutes of the last Forum meeting, filled in for him.
- 3.2. RI had reported on what had been discussed at the Advisory Group meeting the previous evening.
- 3.3. Helen Booker (RSPB) explained that a survey of storm petrels was undertaken in July at night and between 10-100 pairs were estimated as being present. This was very encouraging, as the first confirmed nesting since the rat eradication was only in 2014.
- 3.4. DG explained that a shortage of potable water on the island last summer had meant that bottled water had had to be imported from the mainland. Most of the island’s water comes from captured rainwater, with a lesser amount from a small number of boreholes.
- 3.5. Sarah Clark (D&SIFCA) agreed to look into the role of the Warden as a non-warranted Fisheries Officer. This was in light of the fact that the IFCA does not have a patrol boat on the north coast of the county and that staff rarely get out to Lundy. Infringements of the NTZ were the most pressing matters.
- 3.6. KH had pointed out that there was currently a House of Commons Environmental Audit Select Committee looking into the UK’s Marine Protected Areas programme. KH had submitted written evidence to this Committee. [Note that this Committee has now reported its findings; a copy of their report is available here: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/environmental-audit-committee/news-parliament-2015/marine-protected-environment-report-published-16-17/>].

Mention was also made of the new proposed SAC (specifically to protect porpoises) which would stretch between S. Wales and the north Cornwall/Devon coast and include Lundy.

- 3.7. DG had asked for his thanks (and that of the Forum as a whole) be passed on to Beccy MacDonald (outgoing Warden). She had been Warden on the island for 3 years and 8 months and had done an excellent job.
- 3.8. DG informed the Forum that, regarding the fundraising for the proposed building works to St Helena’s Church, the target of £400k had not been reached. However, a modified proposal had been put to the National Lottery and this had been accepted. Part of the work involved developing the rear of the nave as an educational resource centre.

4. **Warden's Report**

DJ presented his report (attached as Annex A).

- 4.1 DJ added to his report that he was considering the idea of encouraging volunteers over to the island on a specific day or two days when a marine 'bio-blitz' could be undertaken. This would attempt to identify as many different species as possible (both intertidally and subtidally?), and would also be viewed as a learning experience for those attending. He had taken part in similar events in Scotland which had proved very popular, when he had worked for the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh. RD indicated he thought many Coastwise members, as well as other organisations with similar interests, would be keen to participate in such an event
- 4.2 CM asked who would be undertaking the seabird survey. DJ explained there would be a mix of organisations represented, including RSPB, the Lundy Field Society and Natural England staff.
- 4.3 CM also asked if the bird flu outbreak, which had affected several stocks of poultry on the English mainland, had had any impact on the island. DJ replied that it hadn't – all the hens had been kept indoors as per the regulations, with none showing any adverse effects.

5. **Natural England (NE) update**

- 5.1 In MP's absence, RI read out the following report which MP had emailed him:

Natural England's present priority areas of marine work at Lundy are to investigate the continuing declines in sunset cup coral *Leptopsammia pruvoti* populations; and to contribute to a wider study looking at seal / human interactions and disturbance.
- 5.3 Survey work in 2017. There is no intertidal or subtidal survey work planned at Lundy this year although I am still waiting on the outcome of a funding bid I made, which could be used to continue some of the long term datasets.
- 5.4 Conservation advice for Lundy. Our comprehensive package of marine conservation advice about the designated features around Lundy is available online here: [MCZ](#) and [SAC](#).
- 5.5 N Devon Marine Pioneer Project. This is a project, led by the MMO, which aims to contribute towards delivery of Defra's 25 Year Environment Plan. It is a partnership project (University of Plymouth, N Devon Biosphere Reserve, WWF, Natural England, D&S IFCA, Plymouth Marine Lab.) which will trial novel and innovative approaches to MPA management, governance, decision-making and financing in North Devon. It is currently in its early stages so watch this space for updates. Any questions, please get in contact: melanie.parker@naturalengland.org.uk
- 5.6 In MP's absence, DJ gave a short Powerpoint presentation on the recently revised Lundy Marine Management Plan (MMP). The production of the MMP has been funded by Natural England and MP provided the following information:

The first, publically available Lundy Marine Management Plan was produced last October. When some additional funding became available we decided to use it to tie up some of the loose ends and get the document professionally proofread. The revised version is now complete and with Dean Jones, ready to be uploaded to the Lundy website.

The main updates have been:

 - a new section (2.4) explaining the day-to-day management of the MPA

- a table detailing the various designations and their monitoring/reporting requirements
- a change in the order of the feature page sections to a more logical layout
- an infographic on how each feature page of the document is set out
- the addition of research references relevant to each feature
- an updated feature map
- the addition of a Glossary of terms and abbreviations
- the splitting of the cetacean and basking shark entries
- the withdrawal of the Devonshore cup coral as a feature and the insertion of branching sponges in its place
- a review of seabird sections (with RSPB and LFS approval).
- Inclusion of the Code of Conduct, definitions of important species & tidal stream information as Annexes
- a professional copy-edit and proofread of the whole text

When the revised Zoning Scheme is available from the IFCA (expected in summer 2017) it will be included in the document. This will include a separate graphic showing the D&SIFCA byelaws and their boundaries. The intention is that the Lundy MMP is a living document which can be updated and changed in the future, as and when necessary and when resources to do so are available.

There then followed a short discussion regarding the inclusion of three coastal archaeological sites (Brazen Ward; the Upper and Lower mangonel platforms in Jenny's Cove; and the Quarries). RI explained he was baffled why these sites had been included by Beccy MacDonald in the first place, as they appeared to have little, if any, connection with the 'true' marine zone (i.e. below high water mark). It was also puzzling why the Fog Battery had been left out. In light of the forthcoming Lundy Management Forum meeting the following day, RI agreed to pass on the "puzzlement" of the Advisory Group regarding the inclusion of these sites within the MMP, in the hope of receiving some form of explanation from the archaeologists present. AJ was unable to offer any explanation but suggested inviting Nick Russell, her colleague who represents Historic England on the Management Forum, to the Advisory Group's next meeting.

- 5.7 After raising this matter at the Management Forum meeting on the following day (16th May 2017), RI was given the following explanation by Jim Parry (National Trust archaeologist for Devon & Cornwall) and Nick Russell (Historic England):

JP pointed out that the MMP was a welcome addition to addressing the Heritage At Risk Register by the National Trust. DG added that he had attended a marine planning seminar last week in London run by the Marine Management Organisation and Historic England where it was explained that, in terms of the risk assessment of the [marine] historic environment within the remit of these agencies' jurisdiction and in relation to MCZs, a 'buffer zone' extended 100m inland from the high water mark (and 500m seaward) should be allowed for. JP pointed out that essentially, in the example of Lundy, this buffer zone is trying to encompass any marine influence to historic sites 'on the seaward side of the island plateau'. Clearly this zone also includes nesting seabirds and the intention is to stitch these all together to present holistic management.

RI, in his role of presenting the views of the Advisory Group to the Forum, stated that members of the Advisory Group were puzzled as to why the three terrestrial archaeological sites had been included within the MMP and sought an explanation for their inclusion from the archaeologists on the Forum. The point mentioned above [in 11.2.2] helped considerably in explaining this, but RI was disappointed this explanation had not been given some time ago when the inclusion of these sites was first questioned.

D&SIFCA update (Lauren Parkhouse)

- 6.1 LP explained the three outstanding matters which have been delaying the production of an updated Zoning Scheme for the MPA (which will be included within the MMP). The first two concerned the results of a consultation exercise on the new mobile gear permit byelaw (particularly covering towed demersal gear) and how that might affect features of the Lundy SAC; and the third was a consultation which had taken place on the status of the Lundy MCZ's only feature, the crawfish or spiny lobster. The byelaw sub-committee of D&SIFCA is meeting today (15th May 2017) to agree upon granting authorization for the mobile gear byelaw. If it goes ahead (as LP is expecting it to) then the Zoning Scheme map for the MPA can be finalized and produced.
- 6.2 Within the Lundy MPA, the mobile gear byelaw is likely to affect towed scallop dredging and some beam trawling, both of which are still allowed to take place off the northern half of the island's east coast outside the NTZ. D&SIFCA have been in discussions with Natural England regarding whether there should be restrictions on these activities taking place within the MPA. Scallop dredging has been found to have greatest negative impact on coarse sediment areas but not on the highly mobile sandbanks which occur in the north-east corner of the MPA. The proposal being consulted upon was to confine scallop dredging to within this north-east corner and prohibit it from all other areas within the MPA. No responses (either positive or negative) were received back from the consultation exercise. In future, should the level of scallop dredging be excessive, then there are powers within the byelaw to limit this.
- 6.3 Regarding towed demersal gear, it was concluded that there still isn't enough evidence to indicate whether this gear has a negative impact on coarse sediment communities or not. The one fishery which may affect the Lundy MPA is the squid fishery, which occurs for three months during the summer, although it hasn't happened over the past three years as the squid haven't been present in sufficient numbers to justify catching them. The proposal (which also went out to consultation) was to introduce a monitoring plan which would come into action when the fishery next takes place. This may require vessels to have IVMS fitted (so that the locations of vessels can be detected remotely) and/or that a detailed log is kept when a vessel is in a given area. D&SIFCA are working closely with Natural England and the Environment Agency to agree a plan of obtaining grab samples from the area of seabed both before and after fishing has taken place.
- 6.4 Apparently, the mobile gear byelaw does not specifically exclude the capture of crawfish from within the MCZ, even though this species is likely to be non-targeted (i.e. as by-catch) using this method of fishing. It has been proposed (and being decided upon today) that any crawfish caught within the Lundy MCZ (or the Bidford to Foreland Point MCZ) by mobile gear, should be returned to the sea. No responses have been received from that consultation either.
- 6.5 LP pointed out that D&SIFCA were still keen to obtain any sightings of crawfish from divers or fishermen and she distributed a number of A5 printed recording cards for this purpose. There have been a lot of reports of juvenile crawfish off the south coast of Devon, so it would be interesting to see if there is a similar increase around Lundy.
- 6.6 The BBC's One Show have now committed themselves to a visit to the MPA this summer in order to record the noise which crawfish can produce by 'stridulation'.
- 6.7 LP confirmed that she would now be representing D&SIFCA at meetings of the Advisory Group in future, with her colleague Sarah Clark attending the Management Forum meetings.
- 6.8 MD asked if there was any change to the Diving Permit renewal period. LP confirmed it was every two years and that an email/letter would be sent out as a renewal reminder when it falls due. She added that this can all now be done on-line, including payment.

- 6.9 CM wanted to make sure that the Group was informed of the outcome of the IFCA's byelaw sub-committee as soon as possible, and not have to wait until the Group's next meeting in six months' time.

This is what LP reported at the Management Forum meeting on 16th May 2017, regarding the outcome of the IFCA's byelaw sub-committee meeting held on 15th May 2017:

Due to the imminent General Election (on 8th June) and the consequent state of 'purdah', no county councillors could attend the Committee meeting and so no decisions were made. The date for such decisions to be made has been put back to 16th June 2017.

6. Historic England update (Alison James)

- 7.1 Very few divers visited the *Iona II* last season, largely due to poor weather. AJ encouraged more divers to visit the site and to provide feedback to Historic England on their experience, what they saw and the Dive Trail. This will help to justify Historic England being able to put more resources into the site. People can post images on Twitter. If they could tag @HE_Maritime or use the hashtag #ProtectedWreck, AJ normally finds them! Such feedback also assists with the overall management of the site. She is also keen to hear of any projects which may help to develop the interpretation of both sites.

- 7.2 The two statutory records for the sites on the National Heritage List for England are:
Iona II - <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1000051>
Gull Rock - <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1000053>

We would really encourage divers to feedback images and notes from any dives on to these links. It's also where AJ will post links to reports etc. about the sites. Good examples of sites that have been updated like this are the *Invincible* here: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1000052> and *Arfon* here: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1432595>

- 7.3 The current licence holders for the two protected wreck sites are:

Iona II

Lundy Island (Corporate Licence and includes Clive Pearson, Andrew Bengey, Colin Eastman, Dean Jones, Ben Bengey, Leigh Hanks and Stuart Carpenter)

Mike Deaton

Rob Jackson

Fiona Hampton Matthews

Gull Rock

Mike Deaton

- 7.4 AJ confirmed that she has arranged for Historic England's diving contractor, Wessex Archaeology, to undertake an initial survey of the HMS *Montagu* wreck site this summer. She extended an invitation to any other divers who might be interested in joining the survey team to get in contact with her (alison.james@historicengland.org.uk). CM asked if it would help if local dive clubs took photographs of the site this season and sent them to AJ. AJ confirmed that she only has management responsibility for sites which are either already protected or are in the process of becoming protected. However, she would be interested to see video or photos of the site which may show how it has deteriorated over time. AG pointed out that last year (2016) was the 110th anniversary of the ship's sinking. She added that the Ilfracombe Club try to dive it early in the season before the kelp takes over!

- 7.5 MD pointed out that he thought the Flickr site which had been set up to take monitoring photographs of sites did not work very well and was rather 'clunky'. AJ explained that the Flickr site had been set up by Wessex Archaeology and agreed it wasn't working that well. She said the best way to pass on such photos was via Twitter (see 7.1 above).

7. Any other business

- 8.1 RI pointed out that this summer, KH still intends to re-photograph the sites where sunset cup corals are being monitored at the Knoll Pins, with RI then analyzing the results, despite there being no funding for this to be done from Natural England. Ilfracombe dive club kindly offered to help with providing access to the site.
- 8.2 KH also asked if divers are going to staying on the island overnight, could they please enter any sightings or unusual occurrences in the marine logbook in the Tavern. If they have such observations but do not intend to land or make their way up to the Tavern, please record them at <http://www.mba.ac.uk/recording> website. RI added that Beccy MacDonald had suggested setting up a Facebook page for photographs and/or particular sightings, but he didn't know if they had got anywhere. DJ indicated he hadn't heard about this. Hopefully something along these lines could be sorted out in the near future.
- 8.3 KH said he had helped the Warden and Assistant Warden to re-survey the scarlet and gold star cup coral populations in Devil's Kitchen in late March. He had also, with Natural England's approval, removed a very few wireweed *Sargassum muticum* plants from rockpools in the Devil's Kitchen. This is a continuation of an experimental study to see if rockpools in a restricted area can be kept clear of a non-native species.
- 8.4 Mel Parker from Natural England had asked RI to raise the following matter on her behalf. As part of the new Marine Management Plan, the idea of introducing 'no anchoring zones' had been raised, with the intention of preventing damage to pink sea fans. She would like to ask those present what they thought of this idea. The sites mentioned were the Quarries, Gull Rock, Brazen Ward and Gannets' Rock (off the east coast) and Battery Point (off the west coast). The zones would also serve the purpose of protecting branching sponges from anchor damage. These zones would take the form of a voluntary agreement and would still allow for anchoring in emergencies on safety grounds. RI wondered if it might be easier to treat the whole of the NTZ as a no anchoring zone, thus avoiding having to identify where a smaller no anchoring zone begins or ends. Pink sea fans occur from the Quarries northwards up the east coast, around the north coast, along the whole of the west coast (less dense but often larger individuals), and around the south coast.

It was pointed out that the Knoll Pins was already a no anchoring zone (for a radius of 100 m), which was fully adhered to. LH pointed out that the Gannets' Bay mooring can get busy on weekends when there are quite a few dive boats around, so some boats prefer to be able to anchor where they like. CM wondered if a nearshore exclusion area might be acceptable, say within 50 m of the shore, north of Gannets' Rock, where both sea fans and branching sponges were known to occur. MD pointed out that Pete's Pinnacle was a favourite dive site for his club and was very close inshore, yet they liked to anchor there when conditions allowed. Another difficulty would be expecting visiting boats from further afield, that might only visit the island on rare occasions, to adhere to a no anchoring policy. Dive boats also like to anchor on the west side, particularly in Jenny's Cove and on the Montagu (SW corner), often between dives. RI wondered if popular anchoring spots could be viewed as sacrificial areas and that boats should be encouraged to restrict their anchoring to those particular sites.

CM added that for many years the Advisory Group had had no representative from the Royal Yachting Association attending meetings. He thought this might be a good

reason to seek out their opinion and suggested RI invite a representative along to the Group's next meeting.

RD suggested that, for this coming dive season, dive boats could be asked to record where they anchor and by doing so a map could be drawn up showing the most popular anchoring locations. The concept could then be discussed again with a bit more hard and fast data. Those involved with diving who were present agreed this would be a sensible starting point.

- 8.5 MD pointed out that the MCZ website, as it can currently be seen, shows a photo of a whale shark – a species more commonly associated with tropical waters and certainly not likely to be seen at Lundy! Apparently if you click on the image, you're taken to a cave full of red fish somewhere... A matter for DJ to sort out.
- 8.6 And finally... CM pointed out this was the 63rd meeting of this Group (which had started in 1985) and for [almost] all of that time there had only been one Secretary doing all of the notes and agendas. So he thanked RI for all of the time he had spent on Advisory Group matters.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday, 17th October 2017 at 7:00 pm at the Ilfracombe Sub-Aqua Club Clubhouse, Ropery Road, Ilfracombe EX34 9EF

[The next Management Forum meeting has been arranged for 19th October 2017]

Annex A Warden’s report (October 2016 - March 2017)

1 Staff

The Conservation team has had a complete turn over this year with me, Dean Jones, taking up the post of the new Warden and Nick Herbert as the new Ranger. Nick had worked as an assistant Ranger three years ago. Siân Scott (from near Newport) arrived on April 22nd and will be with us until end of October as our new assistant Warden. Victoria Edwards (from Stafford) has also joined us as the assistant Ranger from April 13th.

2 Marine - general & monitoring

2.1 Natural England has been unable to provide funding for marine monitoring at Lundy for the 2017 period. This means that the seal population, cup coral and rockpool community surveys have not been supported this season.

2.2 Volunteer cup coral counts were carried out in the Devil’s Kitchen by Keith Hiscock, Siân and I in March.

2.3 Despite the lack of funding, *ad hoc* seal population surveys will continue to be carried out during ‘round the island’ trips onboard MS *Oldenburg*.

Date	Number of:						Total no. of individuals
	Males	Females	Juveniles	Weaners	White coats	Unknown sex	
14/05/17	2	16	-	-	-	17	35

2.4 Again we are very grateful to the local skippers who have undertaken the accreditation training and have adopted the scheme, and also to all who have adopted the seal code of conduct. There have not been any reports of disturbance to seals at Lundy so far this season.

2.5 At least three volunteers are planned to join the Conservation Team throughout the summer to assist with the seabird productivity monitoring at two sites: Jenny’s Cove main colony and St Marks Stone. Unfortunately we are unable to get any more volunteers to help out this season due to accommodation being taken up by contractors, who are planned to work on the restoration of the church.

2.6 Initial seabird site visits were carried out on the May 2nd. By this time numerous kittiwake nests were present in both ¾ Wall Bay and Aztec Bay with 341 birds counted.

Guillemots are back on their ledges in good numbers too with 2000+ birds counted in Jennies and St Marks Stone on May 2nd. As the monitoring of the guillemot site became difficult last season (as the number of guillemots using St Mark’s Stone had increased making it difficult to observe eggs/chicks), a second site has been identified for an additional survey if time allows, to get a more accurate productivity figure this season.

Puffins arrived back on the ledges in Jennies by March 29th (first seen on the water March 7th), between half a dozen and 100 birds have been counted on days since then.

There’s a shortage of accommodation available for volunteers this season due to the the residence used for short-term workers being taken by building staff working on the church. So much of the survey work will have to be done by DJ and his assistant.

- 2.7 In June 2016, 30 artificial nest boxes for Manx shearwaters were made with the assistance of RSPB and LFS volunteers. The boxes have been separated into 5 separate ‘villages’ and placed across the Old Light colony to assist with research into the life histories of these nocturnal seabirds. Signs of use from this year have been found in a number of boxes which includes some rather extensive digging at the back of some of the boxes along with some Shearwater feathers.
- 2.8 A full Manx Shearwater census will be carried out this year starting on May 27th. A team of 11 volunteers, some from the RSPB, will carry out the survey led by Helen Booker until the June 3rd, with a full island seabird census being carried out during the following week.
- 2.9 Another MARINElife surveyor course will be held on the island from 8th -15th July in collaboration with Beccy MacDonald. Weekly surveys onboard the *Oldenburg* have been carried out with reports sent to the Warden.
- 2.10 The final touches have been made to the revised Marine Management Plan and it is now available to download via the link below. We are very grateful for the support of all the stakeholders for their contributions and support for the Plan. We hope that it will be adopted by all users of the Lundy MPA and will support sustainable use of the area for many years to come.

Link: https://www.landmarktrust.org.uk/globalassets/lundy_marine_management_plan_2017.pdf

3 Terrestrial – General & monitoring

- 3.1 Rabbit numbers are still relatively low despite an increase earlier in the year. They are currently being affected by by Viral Haemorrhagic Disease (VHD), a highly infectious and often fatal disease which affects both wild and domestic rabbits. Apparently, it is the rabbit equivalent of the Ebola virus.
- 3.2 Working parties: A team from the Lundy Field Society joined the Ranger for a short stint in February. The team was scheduled to join us for a whole week but unfortunately was only able to join us for 3 nights, due to multiple Helicopter cancellations from poor weather conditions. During their stay, the team helped with rhody seedling searches, planting trees in Quarter Wall Copse, producing kindling from old pallets and the up-keep of some of the island benches.
- A National Trust party also joined us on March 10th for a full week of volunteering. During their stay the team also helped out with rhody seedling searches, some tree planting and the up-keep of the island allotments.
- 3.3 Rhododendron management: Further funding has been found to assist with the rope access works and has allowed the rope works team to visit the island on a couple of occasions in 2016 and 2017 to treat successfully those smaller plants on the east coast cliffs (Angus and his team are due over again on the May 20th). The number of seedlings has declined considerably since last year suggesting that the plan is on target and the island should be rhody free by 2025. Nick has now obtained his pesticide ticket so has been out treating saplings and re-growth already this year.
- 3.4 Bracken management: Specific areas highlighted around some of the island’s Scheduled Monuments have been focused on and the treated bracken has responded better than expected, reducing the amount of treatment needed. Surveys and possibly re-treatment will occur this year in the same areas as 2016.
- 3.5 Control of Alexanders in Millcombe was carried out by the Ranger team earlier in the season.
- 3.6 Lundy cabbage counters are due to arrive on June 1st. Additionally on this date a Lundy cabbage steering group meeting will occur. Numbers of flowering plants have been regularly checked over the past 15 years or so.

3.7 The new Rodent Biosecurity Plan has been drafted by Beccy MacDonald (former Warden) and Helen Booker (RSPB), and is currently at the final stages of review. The plan should be completed in the very near future. The purpose of this plan is to provide clear context and guidance to Lundy management to help maintain the island's rat free status, which is vital for its important seabird populations and visitor experience

Karan Varnham from the RSPB is also hoping to run a Rodent Biosecurity course on the island sometime in October.

4 Education, interpretation & events

4.1 Warden events: Again the demand for guided walks has increased considerably over the past few years, particularly due to the media attention that the island has had in relation to increasing puffin numbers.

With the support of the LFS, guided walks around the south end of the island are carried out on most boat days (weather permitting) and on longer days/non-boat days, walks to Jennies to see the Puffins take place.

The "above and below the waves" illustrated talk has had a re-vamp. Similar to the walks, talks occur every boat day. I would like to take the chance to thank Grant Sherman for covering this event for me while I was finding my feet in my new role.

We have already had numerous Rockpool Rambles in the Devil's Kitchen and have started the season's planned Snorkel Safari's (May 17th).

4.2 Education programme: We have already had one school group over (Bratton Primary) and have at least 4 more groups planned for the 2017 summer season at the moment.

5 Media

5.1 Articles:

- Country Living magazine came over to write an article on April 22nd.
- Sarah Howells from my home town came over on May 18th to write a piece on the island.

5.2 Media appearances:

- Robson Green visited the island for a 'Tales from the Coast' piece that was aired over the winter. Robson spent time talking about the island with Derek, climbing the Devil's Slide with Stu Bradbury, diving with Keith Hiscock and discussing marine creatures with Beccy.
- The BBC was over last week doing some underwater filming and interviewed Derek upon the *Obsession II*.
- BBC Countryfile visited the island on May 18th for an initial film scout and is hoping to come over and film on May 31st.

6 Miscellaneous

6.1 We apologise to all dive skippers for any inconvenience caused by the issues with the dive compressor. Again cancelled sailings have hindered repairs but should be up and running again from May 25th.

6.2 The Brazen Ward mooring application has been submitted. There was a bit of bother regarding application funds but Derek has now sorted this. Fingers crossed the mooring will be put in place in the very near future.