



A Call for Information

Have Your Say

A Focus on Bait Digging

What's the Call for Information about?

Your view is important. D&S IFCA is inviting you to have your say on how (in your view) the fishing method of bait digging could or should be managed in the D&S IFCA's District. We are directly contacting everyone on our mailing list and are giving you options on how to respond which include a dedicated email address and an on-line survey form.

This information gathering exercise **will end on 26th April 2019.**

We encourage you to read the information we have set out, which includes embedded information (hyperlinks), and base your response around the following questions:

- **Do you dig for bait?**
- **Do you know other people who dig for bait?**
- **Which estuaries do you or others dig for bait?**
- **How often do you or others dig for bait?**
- **Do you think there is an issue with bait digging?**
- **Is further management or restrictions required?**

This information gathering exercise is part two of a three phase approach and forms part of a larger plan for D&S IFCA to begin the task of reviewing the management of Hand Working Fishing Activities. Focus has already been applied to the use of crab tiles and later in 2019 there will be more focus on the remaining hand gathering fishing activities.

Bait Digging in D&S IFCA's District.

Recreational Sea Angling is popular throughout the Devon and Severn IFCA District and, as a result, so is the collection of bait species.

[Bait digger working on the Severn Estuary](#)



Bait digging for polychaete worms is by far the most common activity, with two main species targeted; blow lug (*Arenicola marina*) and king ragworm (*Alitta virens*).

Bait digging is carried out by using forks to dig for the target species on intertidal mud and sandflats, it primarily takes place in estuaries such as the Severn, Tamar, Plym and Exe, but does also occur on beaches, for example in Torbay.

Hard Copy Version of Mail Chimp Circular

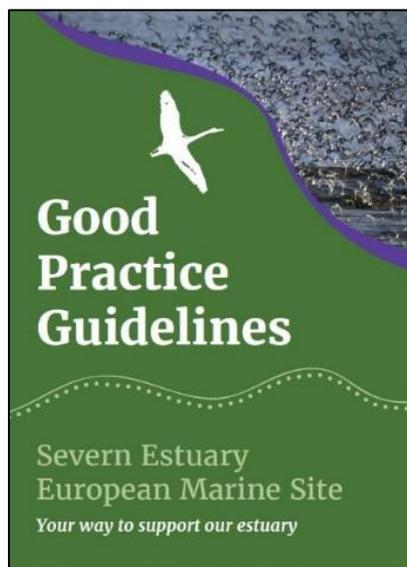
Many of these areas are Marine Protected Areas (MPA) and it is the IFCA's responsibility to assess whether bait digging will impact the habitats and birds using these sites

Other bait collection activities which are popular in the Devon & Severn IFCA District include "crab tiling" - the collection of shore crabs using man-made shelters.

How is bait digging currently managed?

Bait digging is not currently managed in the D&S IFCA's District via [Byelaws](#), however there are some voluntary codes of conduct that do help to manage this fishing activity within the District. The voluntary code of conducts/good practice guides that exist within the Exe Estuary and the Severn Estuary are good examples and have been embedded (hyperlinked) below:

[Severn Estuary](#)



[Exe Estuary](#)



Other voluntary codes of conduct exist in the UK and a selection are [displayed](#) in Section E of the D&S IFCA website Resource Library. There is potential that additional voluntary measures can be considered for other areas within the D&S IFCA's District apart from the Exe and the Severn Estuary. There is also potential that D&S IFCA could consider the use of additional control measures implemented via a new byelaw.

Key questions for you to consider

- Is further regulation needed?
- Where is it needed?
- What is needed?
- Would additional control measures impact you?
- How would you or others be impacted by potential changes?
- Are voluntary measures effective?
- Should voluntary measures be introduced in other areas?

Our Research

D&S IFCA has undertaken several studies looking at the levels and intensity of bait digging activity at key locations throughout the District. The results of these surveys are available on our website and will feed into the MPA assessments that D&S IFCA is undertaking.

The individual reports are embedded (hyperlinked) below:

- [Blow lug *Arenicola marina* density in the Severn Estuary 2012-13](#)
- [Bait Digging in the Severn Estuary European Marine Site \(March 2019\)](#)
- [Bait Digging in the Exe Estuary European Marine Site \(January 2019\)](#)
- [Bait Digging & Hand Gathering in the Torbay Marine Conservation Zone \(January 2019\)](#)
- [Bait Digging in the Plymouth Sound & Estuaries European Marine Site And Tamar Estuary Sites Marine Conservation Zone \(January 2019\)](#)

You can also visit [Section H](#) of our website resource library to read our research reports that relate to bait digging and the use of crab tiles.

Question

- Do you have any additional information about the whereabouts and frequency of bait digging that we can potentially add to our base line information?

How will your information help us?

The information you provide could be added to our existing baseline information and it may help to fill evidence gaps. We will collate the information you provide, and this may help our Byelaw and Permitting Sub-Committee in their decision making. Good quality information from you can reduce the need for D&S IFCA to be overly precautionary in its approach to managing this and other fishing activities.

What about other Hand Working Activities?

Bait digging is not the only form of Hand Working Fishing Activity. D&S IFCA has already asked for and collected information about the use of crab tiles and how different stakeholders feel it should be managed.

The findings of the Call for Evidence (A focus on Crab Tiles) campaign were compiled in a Supplement [Report](#) which has been presented to and discussed by the D&S IFCA's Byelaw and Permitting Sub-Committee in February 2019. The report will be referred to again later this year. Although this Call for Evidence campaign is about bait digging, you can still give us your thoughts on the crab tiles.

Bait Digging and various other Hand Gathering activities will all be examined during 2019. As set out in our [plan](#), bait digging is the second Hand Working type of fishing activity to be examined and discussed by the D&S IFCA's Byelaw & Permitting Sub-Committee in May 2019.

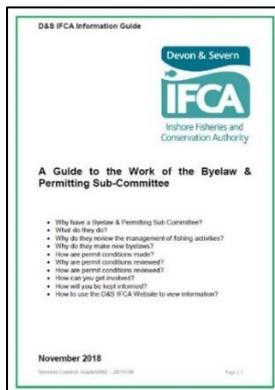
Why is D&S IFCA doing this work?

Because we must.

D&S IFCA must manage the exploitation of sea fisheries resources within its District. This is specified within the Marine & Coastal Access Act 2009.

Do you want more detail?

Our information guides are there to help you better understand our work and reasons we are doing it. Further detail about our review of byelaws and the work conducted by our Byelaw & Permitting Sub-Committee can be found in our [guide](#).



How you can have your say

You have several options to choose from:

1. Try our on-line survey form ([here](#))
2. Contact us via email – consultation@devonandsevernifca.gov.uk
3. Use a combination of email and the on-line form
4. Telephone us or come along in person and speak to one of our officers during dedicated time slots which are as follows:

- Saturday 30th March (10.00 to 12.00 hrs)
- Wednesday 3rd April (16.00 to 18.00 hrs)
- Tuesday 9th April (16.00 to 18.00 hrs)
- Thursday 25th April (16.00 to 18.00 hrs)

Visit us:

Devon and Severn IFCA
Brixham Laboratory,
Freshwater Quarry,
Brixham,
TQ5 8BA.

Phone us:

01803 854648

This information gathering exercise **will end on 26th April 2019.**

How to follow our work?

If you are not already on our mailing list, then you can get yourself added by [contacting D&S IFCA](#). You will then be directly notified of all our consultations. You will also receive our free e-newsletter.

Keep an eye on our [consultation page](#) on our website to read about other work being done and how you can get involved and have your say.

Follow our [latest news items](#) displayed on our website or our face book page.

Explore our website [Resource Library](#) for an extensive range of our information and publications. It's all free.

What do we do with your information – Privacy Policy

We protect any personal data that you may provide. Any personal data submitted in this information collecting process will not be shared with others. The content of responses will be summarised and anonymised where appropriate for documenting in reports that will be presented to the Byelaw & Permitting Sub-Committee and published on our website.

D&S IFCA has a privacy policy which can be found by visiting our website (home page) www.devonandsevernifca.gov.uk

- You can change your preferences at any time.
- We have a duty to consult with D&S IFCA Permit Holders.

You can manage your preferences by contacting D&S IFCA and you can unsubscribe from the Hand Working Call for Information notifications.