

Devon and Severn IFCA News

Multi Agency Patrol at Teignmouth and Shaldon

D&S IFCA and other agencies investigate the concerns raised by the public relating to large scale cockle collection.



There has been an increase in reports from the general public about large scale hand collection of cockles on the Teign Estuary.

Devon and Severn IFCA currently have no byelaw restrictions in place at this time regarding the levels of cockles that can be collected from the public beds for personal consumption and this limits what action can be taken. Despite this, a multi-agency patrol including Devon and Cornwall Police, Environmental Health and Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority was conducted recently to investigate the concerns raised.

As part of this operation, whilst other agencies concentrated on the background of potential gang organised cockle picking and where the cockles would potentially be taken, D&S IFCA Enforcement Officers were able to focus efforts on educating those who did not know about a current prohibition on the removal of mussel, that was introduced in May 2019.

After reading a [Mussel Stock Report](#), presented in November 2018, the D&S IFCA Byelaw and Permitting Sub-Committee [concluded](#) that the Temporary Closure of Shellfish Beds Byelaw should be used to close the public beds in both the Teign and Exe Estuaries. The same byelaw can't be used to close cockle beds.

Where is the temporary Closure for Mussels?

The closed mussel picking area in the Teign runs from the mouth of the estuary to the Teignmouth/Shaldon bridge as shown by the [poster](#) D&S IFCA produced.

What about the management of cockles?

D&S IFCA is in the process of examining the management of many Hand Working Fishing Activities and have assembled information, including information provided by stakeholders, throughout 2019. Maybe you have had your say in one or more of the three separate information gathering exercises completed to date.

- [Managing Crab Tiles](#)
- [Managing Bait Digging](#)
- [Managing Hand Gathering \(including cockle collection\)](#)

The D&S IFCA Byelaw & Permitting Sub-Committee are tasked with considering the management of these fishing activities and will be discussing options for management in November 2019. Options will include the development of a new byelaw or byelaws.