

Devon and Severn IFCA News

Potential Changes to the Scallop Closed Season

D&S IFCA's Byelaw & Permitting Sub-Committee to discuss potential changes to permit conditions in early 2021.

Review Process & Timelines



The Mobile Fishing Permit Byelaw and the Diving Permit Byelaw are being subjected to a five-year review. In both cases this is effectively a re-make of both byelaws.

The reviews of the overarching byelaws provide the opportunity to review aspects of the associated permit conditions that are used to manage the different fishing activities.

As each overarching byelaw is reviewed (re-made), it is logical and time efficient to examine the Permit Conditions that will potentially become (or remain) as conditions for fishers.

It was envisaged that the recent "[Have Your Say](#)" consultation on the Scallop Closed Season would inform the review and re-making of both the Mobile Fishing Permit Byelaw and the Diving Permit Byelaw, rather than informing a review of present permit conditions that fall under the current permit byelaws.

The scallop closed season applies during the months of July, August and September each year. Reviewing whole byelaws, with a view to re-making them, is time consuming and is likely to extend into the second half of 2021. Work includes consultation, discussion by the [Byelaw and Permitting Sub-Committee](#), taking legal advice, drafting work and documenting the process. All this work is required; however, for fishers impacted by the existing scallop closed season, this timeline is not suitable as potential changes to the scallop closed season would not be introduced before the summer of 2021.

Speeding up the Process

Work is now being undertaken to enable the Byelaw and Permitting Sub-Committee to be able to discuss the issue earlier than originally expected. A report is being prepared for discussion by the Byelaw and Permitting Sub-Committee and this report will be posted on the website, including the [Consultation Page](#) when it is finalised.

Officers have concluded that if the findings of this consultation result in the Byelaw and Permitting Sub-Committee concluding that changes should be implemented, this can be approached in a different way.

It is possible that changes, if there are any, could be applied to current permit conditions (via the review process) in the shorter term, rather than solely to inform re-made byelaws and the associated permit conditions that will accompany re-made Byelaws.

Scallop Closed Season – Suggestions for Changes

The consultation ended on 9th October 2020. The report being prepared will include a lot of information to assist the Byelaw and Permitting Sub-Committee with their decision making. The report will highlight the many different suggestions put forward by stakeholders. Suggestions include, but are not limited to the following:

- Increase the Minimum Conservation Reference Size for scallops (across the board) to 110mm
- Changing the months of the year when a closed season should apply
- Rotate defined closed season areas
- Introduce catch limits for scallops, rather than have a closed season
- Allow limited access (days at sea to catch scallops) within a restricted season for scallops
- Introduce a closed season cycle - three-months open, three-months closed
- Ban weekend fishing
- Extend the closed season (April to September inclusive)
- Extend areas where mobile fishing activity is not permitted within the District
- Reduce effort to four dredges per side
- Have no closed season for scallops

Following the Work

Current D&S IFCA Permit Byelaws and associated permit conditions can be viewed [here](#).

All agendas and papers/reports for meetings of D&S IFCA's Byelaw and Permitting Sub-Committee are posted on the website. Papers can be viewed on the [Meetings Tab](#) and within the website [Resource Library \(Section B\)](#). Approved minutes from meetings are also published on the website.

If you are a permit holder, providing us with an email address helps us communicate with you. It is far more efficient than sending information in the post and helps to protect the environment.

Please [contact us](#) if you would like to provide us with your email address or amend any details we already hold.

Providing us with an email gives you the option to receive our free quarterly e-newsletter "Inshore Insights".

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