

Devon and Severn IFCA News

Devon and Severn IFCA respond to an increase in reported illegal netting activity.

In 2018 the Devon and Severn IFCA Netting Permit Byelaw came into force. The Netting [Permit Conditions](#) (and [Annexes](#)) that are issued to fishers prevent drift netting and fixed netting within all the estuaries in the D&S IFCA District.

Recently there have been numerous reports from concerned members of the public and the fishing community that the estuaries within South Devon are yet again being targeted by individuals operating illegally during the hours of darkness.

D&S IFCA has four enforcement officers who make use of intelligence received to target their operations. A plan to investigate the suspicious activity was immediately assembled and actioned. The enforcement plan included use of the new enforcement vessel [David Rowe](#) that was transported to Plymouth and kept in a secure location. Officers were then placed on a rotational shift pattern that covered three consecutive days, starting at 0230 hours on all occasions.



The enforcement work included searches and surveillance of the River Plym, Plymouth Sound, the River Yealm, the River Avon and the Teignmouth Estuary. As well as byelaw related enforcement work, checks were also made to establish that there were no breaches of the bass nursery area legislation that does apply within these estuary areas. No illegal netting activity was discovered during these patrols; however, enforcement plans are in place to tackle the seasonal issue of illegal netting and a multi-agency approach has been adopted. The development of joint working opportunities is one of the objectives of the D&S IFCA [2019-20 Annual Plan](#).

During the patrols, officers were also able to check compliance with the Devon and Severn IFCA Potting Permit Byelaw and Potting [Permit Conditions](#) by inspecting static gear placed along the South Devon Coastline. Officers boarded two commercial potting vessels which resulted in an investigation commencing.

Reporting Suspicious Fishing Activity

Devon and Severn IFCA welcome any information concerning suspicious fishing activity.

[Contact us](#)

Out of Hours Duty Number – 07740 175479