

Devon and Severn IFCA News

D&S IFCA Increases the Legal Size for Whelk

On 1st November 2020 the size of a whelk (the Minimum Conservation Reference Size) will increase from 55mm to 65mm.



Commercial and recreational fishers with a D&S IFCA Potting Permit will see a change in November 2020 regarding the Minimum Conservation Size (MCRS) of whelk.

The change will also apply to fishers with a Category One Mobile Fishing Permit.

A phased increase for the size of whelk began in 2018 when a table of sizes was incorporated into the Potting Permit Conditions and the Mobile Fishing Permit Conditions (Category 1).

The size of whelk increased in November 2018 to 55mm as measured along the length of the shell.

On 1st November 2020 the MCRS of whelk will increase to 65mm as measured along the length of the shell.

The Potting Permit Condition

Time Restrictions – Paragraph 4.3

A Permit Holder or Named Representative is only authorised to remove from a fishery within the District, whelk of a size specified in Table 1 as measured along the length of the shell.

Table 1

Date	Size
1 st November 2018	55mm
1 st November 2020	65mm

Guidance & Riddle Size

Having a riddle on board, or using one, is not a permit condition; however, in 2018 D&S IFCA issued a [guidance note](#) to the industry. This guidance note is still of use and helps to explain what riddle size fishers can choose to use in order to help sort their catch whilst at sea.

For a 65mm shell height MCRS for whelk:

- With a riddle set to the average minimum width of 27mm approximately 7.9% of the retained catch would be undersize, while 8.8% of the sizeable catch could be lost.
- If the riddle is set to the average maximum width of 37mm, no undersize whelks would be retained but approximately 91% of the sizeable catch could be lost.

How and why has there been an increase in size

D&S IFCA conducted extensive research in [2015](#) and [2016](#) to determine the size of sexual maturity of the whelk. The findings from this research formed part of the evidence base. Consultation was conducted in 2018 that also informed the decision making of the Byelaw & Permitting Sub-Committee as part of a three-year review of the Potting Permit Conditions.

The findings from the consultations conducted during 2018 and the whole decision-making process leading to the changes was documented in a report that is posted on the D&S IFCA website ([Resource Library](#)) and can be read [here](#).

The current permit conditions, that include the whelk size increase, can be viewed on the D&S IFCA website or by using the links below:

[Potting Permit Conditions \(Category One and Two\)](#)
[Mobile Fishing Permit Conditions \(Category One\)](#)

Keeping You Informed

Keep an eye on our website for updates and information about future consultations (Have Your Say or Call for Information) that may result in changes to permit conditions.

D&S IFCA's website includes a [Consultation Page](#).

When a consultation is about to begin, we directly notify all our permit holders and all our contacts on our consultation mailing list. Providing us with an email address helps us communicate with you and is better for the environment.

You can subscribe to our free E-newsletter by contacting D&S IFCA.