

Devon and Severn IFCA News

D&S IFCA's Annual Plan 2025/2026

Read about the work to be undertaken by D&S IFCA in its Annual Plan 2025/2026.

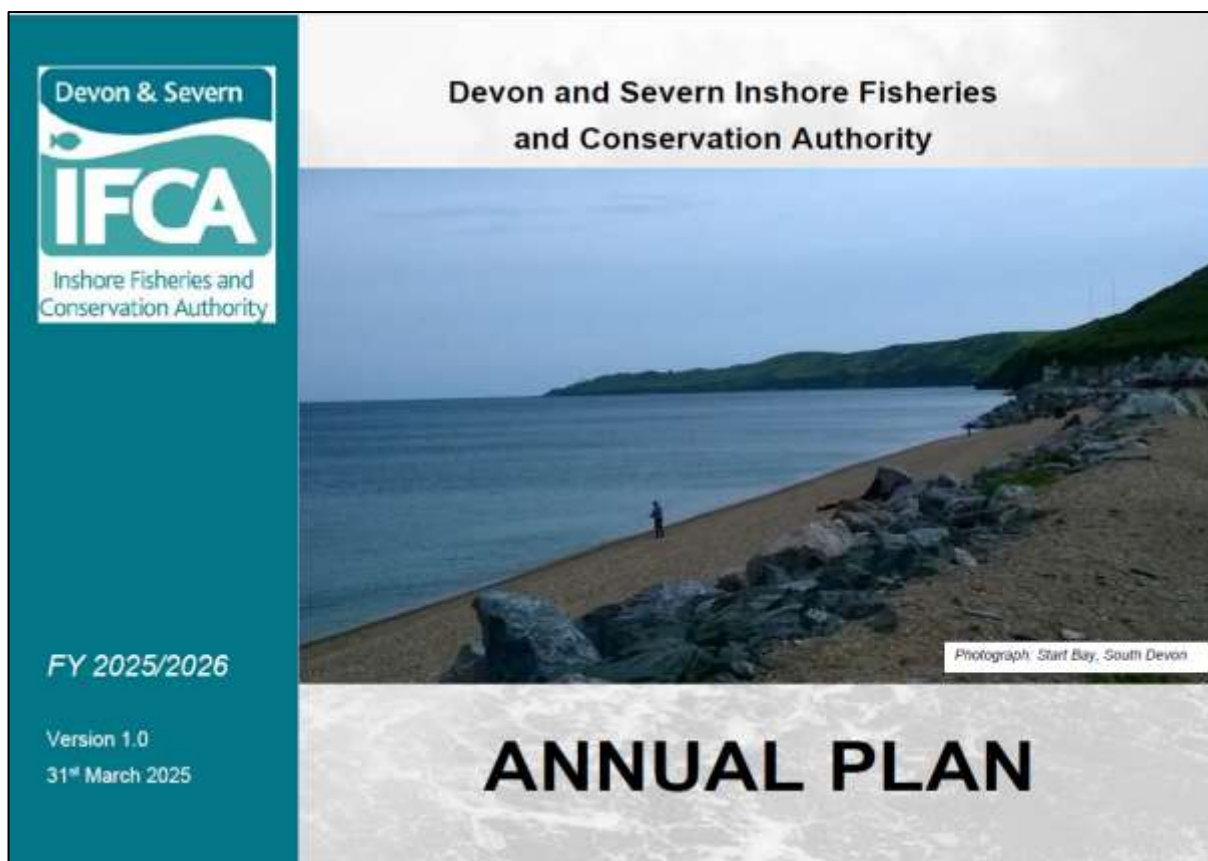
Background

D&S IFCA has the largest of the ten IFCAs' districts and has two separate coastlines. D&S IFCA's District includes the areas of Devon, Somerset, and Gloucestershire County Councils; Bristol and Plymouth City Councils; North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Councils and all adjacent waters out to six nautical miles offshore or the median line in the Bristol Channel with Wales. D&S IFCA's core work is divided into enforcement work, research work and byelaw work (including engagement).

The Full Authority is comprised of 30 Members drawn from relevant Local Authorities (Councillors), General Members (appointed to the Authority by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO)) and Statutory Appointees representing the Environment Agency (EA) and Natural England (NE). A list of our Authority Members can be viewed [here](#). D&S IFCA is funded primarily from Central Government, with additional contributions from the eight relevant funding Local Authorities.

Annual Plan 2025/2026

As specified in the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, D&S IFCA must publish an Annual Plan. The Annual Plan can be read [here](#).



D&S IFCA's 15th Annual Plan sets out the known priorities for the forthcoming year and sets out many other areas of work necessary to support the organisations governance and business as usual functions.

Despite an increase of 6.75% in the Revenue Budget for 2025/2026, a recruitment freeze remains in place and the delivery of the work set out in the Annual Plan is expected to be achieved by the existing compliment of Officers, 12.6 FTEs. When Members approved this Annual Plan, it was recognised that key workstreams were not able to be included and this would result in D&S IFCA continuing to fail to meet all its Statutory duties.

D&S IFCA will continue to support the funding Local Authorities and Defra in seeking changes to its funding structure to allow it to operate on a more sustainable basis.

The Annual Plan identifies the work that can be achieved to support local and national priorities. D&S IFCA recognises the importance of the Fisheries Management Plans (FMPS) that are being introduced through the Fisheries Act 2020. D&S IFCA recognises the importance of its role in shaping the management in draft FMPs and supporting the delivery of the short-term measures identified in the front running FMPs.

D&S IFCA intends to complete the remaking of its Mobile Fishing Permit Byelaw and make progress towards remaking its Potting Permit Byelaw, its Netting Permit Byelaw, and introduce new permit conditions.

D&S IFCA continues to recognise the importance of its role in supporting the sustainable development of other marine activities including renewal energy and coastal mariculture farms through reviewing marine licence applications and providing expert advice.

Following the completion of the assessments of fishing activities in the Bristol Channel Approaches SAC in 2024, D&S IFCA will consider what management, if any, is necessary. Once Members have made a determination regarding the management of the site and introduced any required measures, D&S IFCA will have met its commitment to have management in place for all fishing activities occurring in coastal MPAs.

Estuarine MPAs will require the development of a Hand Working Permit Byelaw but this cannot be achieved due to D&S IFCA's limited resources.

D&S IFCA will prepare a submission to Defra to include all evidence relating to the application of Measures of Equal Environmental Benefit (MEEB) for habitats in the Skerries Banks and Surrounds MCZ and Start Point to Plymouth Sound and Eddystone (SPPSE) SAC. This work follows on from initial discussions with Defra and Natural England in 2024 on the application of MEEB.

Structure of the Annual Plan

The Annual Plan is divided into two main sections. The opening pages highlight key tasks for 2025/2026. The latter part of the Annual Plan sets out task tables that incorporate "business as usual" tasks and how these relate to national IFCA success criteria.

More Information

A website page has been developed to display all recent Annual Plans and Annual Reports. The website page "Annual Business Plans & Reports" can be viewed [here](#).