

Devon and Severn IFCA News

Changes to D&S IFCA's Mobile Fishing Permit Conditions

Amended Category One (at sea) Mobile Fishing Permit Conditions that apply from 1st July 2026.

The Category One (at sea) Mobile Fishing Permit Conditions have changed. D&S IFCA has issued these updated permit conditions to Permit holders.

The changes were agreed by D&S IFCA's Byelaw and Permitting Sub-Committee (B&PSC) at their meeting held on 4th June 2026.



The Proposals and Consultation Response

The formal public consultation, that began on 9th April 2026 and ended on 7th May 2026, set out three separate proposals.

- 1) To open a new dredge fishery for razor clams in the South of the D&S IFCA's District.
- 2) To introduce protective measures, using the Permit Conditions, for mariculture sites that have already been licenced by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and established in Labrador Bay, South Devon and Bideford Bay, North Devon.
- 3) To change the requirement relating to the transmission of IVMS data to reflect the installation of Rewire devices.

Decision Making

During the B&PSC meeting, the Members discussed the responses submitted during the formal consultation. The responses were compiled in a report which can be read [here](#). The main theme of objection related to the proposal to open a new razor clam dredge fishery in an area on the South Coast of Devon.

The draft minutes from the B&PSC meeting are being prepared and will be published in due course. The three Officers' papers that accompanied the formal consultation report, that included the recommendations for Members can be read by using the links below:

- Agenda Item [7a](#) (Razor Clam Dredge Fishery)
- Agenda Item, [7b](#) (Mariculture Sites)
- Agenda Item [7c](#) (IVMS Data).

The B&PSC agreed that the opening of the razor clam dredge fishery would be subject to the approval of a Monitoring and Control Plan. A Monitoring and Control Plan is used where uncertainty exists. They set out detail about a monitoring programme, agreed triggers and management options as a key part of the adaptive management process. To date Monitoring and Control Plans have only been used in relation to fishing activities in Marine Protected Areas. However, the B&PSC determined that although the razor clam dredge fishery would

not be authorised in a Marine Protected Area, a Monitoring and Control Plan should be developed for the new fishery, and examined by Members, before the new fishery can begin.

Subsequent to the B&PSC meeting, Natural England (Government's advisor for the natural environment in England) provided D&S IFCA with advice to help inform the Monitoring and Control Plan.

Officers will also consider other available information and evidence to help inform the Monitoring and Control Plan. Officer work will involve mapping habitats and determining the sites where the razor clam dredge fishery could take place in conjunction with areas classified for shellfish harvesting by the Food Standards Agency. It is anticipated that a revised Monitoring and Control Plan will be presented to the B&PSC for potential approval in September 2026.

What has changed?

The amended Category One Mobile Fishing Permit Conditions (in full) can be viewed [here](#). The amended Annexes can be viewed [here](#).

Vessel Monitoring

The Category One Mobile Fishing Permit Conditions now set out that data from a vessel monitoring device can be received by the UK VMS hub, or the data is made available to the Authority via the supplier's platform.

This agreed change enables all Permit Holders to be compliant with the provisions relating to transmission of data when operating under a D&S IFCA Category One Mobile Fishing Permit within the District if the vessel has a fully functioning IVMS device supplied by either CLS UK Ltd (formally Fulcrum Maritime), or Rewire. Permit holders have been informed that to be compliant with the Marine Management Organisation Fishing Licence Condition, the vessel must have a fully functioning CLS UK Ltd device.

Mariculture Sites

The B&PSC agreed to protect two Mariculture Sites, one in South Devon, and the other in North Devon. These two sites have been added to the Annexes that accompany the Permit Conditions and set out prohibited areas, including Marine Protected Areas, Heritage asset Sites (wrecks), and Mariculture Sites.

- Area D: Labrador Bay (South Devon)
- Area E: Bideford Bay (North Devon)

Charts and co-ordinates of these additional sites are set out in the amended Annexes.

- **In both locations there is no access for mobile fishing vessels operating demersal mobile fishing gear unless the demersal mobile fishing gear is stowed on deck and no fishing is taking place.**

Questions

If you wish to discuss the changes to the Mobile Fishing Permit Conditions please contact us, by email, office@devonandsevernifca.gov.uk or by phone 01803 854648.