

LUNDY MARINE PROTECTED AREA ADVISORY GROUP REPORT

Robert Irving (LMPAAG Secretary)

The Lundy Marine Protected Area Advisory Group (LMPAAG) provides a forum for the discussion of all matters relating to the island's waters and shores. The Group includes representatives from the island (the Lundy Company/Landmark Trust), Natural England, the Devon & Severn Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority (D&SIFCA), Historic England, the Lundy Field Society, the Marine Biological Association, MARINElife, local nature conservation groups, commercial fishing interests, dive charter boat skippers, local dive clubs and local sailing clubs.

The Group meets twice a year: in 2019 it met on 7th May on board MS *Oldenburg* moored alongside Bideford Quay; and on 22nd October at the Ilfracombe and North Devon Sub-Aqua Club, Ilfracombe. The Lundy Field Society provides the secretariat for the LMPAAG. Through the Secretary, the Group brings matters of importance to the island's Management Forum (which also meets twice a year, usually immediately after the Advisory Group meetings), the decision-making body which manages both terrestrial and marine aspects of Lundy.

During the two meetings held in 2019, a variety of issues were brought to the attention of the Group and discussed. These are summarised below:

Sharing the minutes of the Lundy Management Forum with Advisory Group members

After 20 or so years of sharing the minutes of each Advisory Group meeting with members of the island's Management Forum, it was suggested that Advisory Group members be allowed to view the minutes of the Management Forum meetings, in a *quid pro quo* agreement. Such an agreement would also mean that a spoken report of each Forum meeting by its Chair, Derek Green, to the Advisory Group would be deemed unnecessary. This proposal was put to the Forum at their meeting on 8th May 2019 with the response that "... Forum members were happy for the written minutes of their meetings to be shared with the Advisory Group, on the understanding that any sensitive issues be redacted". Note that Robert Irving currently acts as Secretary to both the Advisory Group and the Management Forum.

Adding marine biological records to the NBN national database

Keith Hiscock informed the Group at its May meeting that all of Lundy's historical marine records from the 1970s onwards had now been added to the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) database, which means that national distribution maps for species will now include occurrences at Lundy. He had spent some considerable time allocating locations to the Lundy records so that these could be mapped accurately. Access to the database is free of charge and is available at: www.nbn.org.uk.

The North Devon Marine Pioneer project

The Group has been involved with this project, hosted by the North Devon Biosphere, since its start in 2015. It is due to end in March 2020. Most work had focused on producing a Marine Natural Capital Plan, which will complement the Terrestrial Natural Capital Plan produced by the sister Landscape Pioneer project, also centred on North Devon. It is hoped the Marine Natural Capital Plan will fit into the South West Marine Plan (being drawn up by the Marine Management Organisation). The Plan contains an Assets and Risks Register, which was commissioned to be undertaken by Dr Siân Rees and colleagues at Plymouth University.

A number of five-minute films (collectively entitled *Journey to the Sea*) have been produced as part of the project, linking the Landscape Pioneer with the Marine Pioneer. By following the flow

of water from a catchment area, via a river to an estuary and coastal waters, and then to the offshore island of Lundy, they tie in the lives of people directly involved with these areas through interviews. Dean Jones was featured in the Lundy film.

The status of the wreck of HMS *Montagu*

Hefin Meara took over the role of Marine Archaeologist from Alison James at Historic England towards the end of 2018. He intends to come along to as many Advisory Group meetings as he can, although he was unable to make the May meeting. However, he had been involved with supporting the Advisory Group's proposal that the wreck of HMS *Montagu* at Lundy should be recognised in some way for its historical importance. As part of the wreck's assessment, a dive team from Wessex Archaeology, together with volunteer divers from the Help for Heroes charity, had undertaken a number of survey dives on the wreck during 2018, and their subsequent report provided justification for the proposal.

At the October meeting, Hefin was able to tell us that the Secretary of State for the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport had agreed to the wreck becoming a Scheduled Monument. This designation is usually used for terrestrial archaeological sites of importance (Lundy already has 41!) and we understand this is the first time it has been used for an entirely submerged shipwreck site. It means that divers may continue to visit the site without the need for a licence, unlike a Protected Wreck designation (such as the *Iona II*) which requires divers to apply for a licence before visiting the site. Montagu Steps, adjacent to where the wreck lies, have also been designated a Scheduled Monument.

Plans for a Marine Festival at Lundy in 2020

Efforts got underway during the second half of 2019 to start the planning of a major three-month Marine Festival at Lundy from June to September 2020. At the heart of the festival will be a marine bioblitz (where as many species as possible are recorded, both intertidally and subtidally). In addition to the bioblitz, there will also be a number of citizen-science projects which will help to record the 'state of health' of the Marine Protected Area (MPA). Various activities, displays and competitions are also being planned.

Updating the MPA's Zoning Scheme map

The need to update the MPA's Zoning Scheme had been recognised for some time, as the map currently being used dates from 2012. Many of the changes which needed to be included in an updated map related to various new fisheries regulations which had been brought in by the Devon and Severn IFCA. The last of these changes (for the time being), most of which were associated with the introduction of new permitting byelaws, happened towards the end of 2018.

One other inclusion that has been made to the map relates to the designation of HMS *Montagu*, which became a scheduled monument in September 2019, bringing the total number of historic wreck sites within the MPA to three. Collaboration between the IFCA, Natural England, the Lundy Company, the North Devon Biosphere Reserve and the Advisory Group's Secretary allowed for the relevant GIS mapping layers from various organisations to be collated and formed into a single map. The results of this work, in the form of a new Zoning Scheme map for the MPA, are presented on pp.20-21.

Visit by Philip Newman, Marine Environment Protection Officer, Skomer MCZ

For several years now, I have been keen to encourage closer relationships between the Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) team working on the island of Skomer, off Pembrokeshire, with the Conservation Team on Lundy. Like Lundy, Skomer is famous for its nationally important seabird populations. There are also connections in the marine sphere, with the Skomer MCZ also starting out as a Marine Nature Reserve in 1990, being only the second such MNR to be designated in the UK (after Lundy in 1986). The marine life at Skomer is very similar to Lundy's, both intertidally

and subtidally. The island of Skomer is owned by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) with the terrestrial part of the island being managed by the Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales. The intertidal and subtidal parts of the island (the MCZ) remain managed by NRW.

Philip Newman, who was the Marine Nature Reserve's first warden in 1991 and is now the MCZ's Marine Environment Protection Officer, gave a presentation to both the Advisory Group and to Lundy's Management Forum at the October 2019 meeting. Management of the Skomer MCZ is undertaken by a team of two full-time and two part-time staff. They place a very high value on the continuation of consistent monitoring studies, some of which began in the late 1980s. Such long-term monitoring projects are vital in assessing trends in the marine environment and to working out what lessons they are telling us. It is hoped that a reciprocal visit to Skomer can be made in the not-too-distant future.

WWF UK-SEAS Project

The results of the 'Compass Card' questionnaire survey, an assessment system indicating how well or poorly a Marine Protected Area is being managed, were shared with Advisory Group members at the May meeting by Sarah Young of WWF. Lundy had fared pretty well overall, but there were definite areas where an assessment of 'room for improvement' would be apt. These included 'a sustainable income stream to cover management costs' (noted as being a barrier to MPA self-sufficiency); and there were lower scores for the themes of 'monitoring' and 'resources'. Two WWF summary reports on this part of the project are available online: <https://ukseasproject.org.uk/marine-governance>.

Another part of the project looked at the role of sustainable finance for MPAs. A figure of £156,000 *per annum* had been arrived at for a North Devon MPA to be managed effectively. If this figure is then multiplied by the number of MPAs in the UK (175 as of May 2019), this amounts to an annual spend of £27.3 million – a sum that doesn't exist as yet! A further report on this has been published by WWF (available to download at the aforementioned website).

Sadly, the UK-SEAS project was unexpectedly brought to a halt in September 2019 when the main sponsor of the project, Sky Ocean Rescue, decided to withdraw and transfer its sponsorship to tackle plastic pollution in the oceans.

Submission by the Advisory Group's Chair to the government review into the need for Highly Protected Marine Areas

During the second half of 2019, the government initiated a review into the need for Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMAs) throughout English inshore and offshore waters (and also the offshore waters of Northern Ireland), with the possibility of increasing their number. The review was led by Richard Benyon, a former fisheries minister. Lundy's No Take Zone off the island's east coast is one such HPMA, and Keith Hiscock had submitted an online reply to the consultation. He felt there were two main reasons to establish more HPMAs: firstly, as fish recovery areas (which would need to be quite large); and secondly, as areas which would be as close as possible to being in a natural state, so that natural fluctuations in abundance and such traits as growth rates and longevity of species could be studied.

If there are any matters which LFS members would wish to have addressed at the Advisory Group meetings, Robert would be happy to raise them on your behalf: Robert@sea-scope.co.uk.



LUNDY MARINE PROTECTED AREA ZONING SCHEME

The Lundy Marine Protected Area (MPA) was established as a Marine Nature Reserve in 1986 to protect the remarkable diversity of marine habitats and wildlife which are present around the island. The MPA is currently used by a variety of people undertaking various diverse activities. This Zoning Scheme has been developed to enable everyone to enjoy the MPA whilst also protecting this special place.

The Lundy Marine Protected Area encompasses several separate designations, each of which is associated with different specific protections. Originally established as a Marine Nature Reserve in 1986 (under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981), the exact same MNR area became a Marine Conservation Zone in 2010 (under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009). In 2003, the No Take Zone was established under a Devon Sea Fisheries Committee (now the Devon and Severn Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority) byelaw. In 2005, the Marine Nature Reserve became a Special Area of Conservation under the European Habitats Directive (1992); and, in 2016, the whole MPA was included within the much larger Bristol Channel Approaches SAC – specifically designed to protect the harbour porpoise *Phocoena phocoena*. The foreshore around the island (to low water mark) is included with a Site of Special Scientific Interest designation (which includes much of the island) made in 1976.

Within the MPA, special protection is given to the following habitats: intertidal and subtidal reefs; shallow sediment seabeds; and submerged or partially submerged sea caves. The following species are also afforded special protection: short-beaked common dolphin *Delphinus delphis*; bottlenose dolphin *Tursiops truncatus*; Risso's dolphin *Grampus griseus*; harbour porpoise *Phocoena phocoena*; minke whale *Balaenoptera acutorostrata*; long-finned pilot whale *Globicephala melas*; grey seal *Halichoerus grypus*; basking shark *Cetorhinus maximus*; pink sea fan *Eunicella verrucosa*; and spiny lobster *Palinurus elephas*.

Spearfishing is prohibited by byelaw throughout the SAC and MCZ.

This Zoning Scheme is accompanied by a Code of Conduct, much of which is underpinned by law, to which all users of the MPA should adhere.

¹ Features and species protected within the SAC and the MCZ are described above.

² The No Netting Area is designated under D&SIFCA Netting Permit Byelaw (Annex 4).

³ The No Take Zone was established to protect sensitive and slow-growing reef communities and to enhance our understanding of the effects of these zones and their role in wildlife management. All extractive activities are prohibited from within the No Take Zone (unless under the auspices of a scientific licence).

⁴ This area, centred on the Landing Bay, is recognised as being an area where swimming, snorkelling and other water sports are likely to be taking place. Boat traffic should be aware.

⁵ Area closed to demersal mobile gear (dredges and trawls) designated under D&SIFCA Mobile Fishing Permit Byelaw (Annex 1).

⁶ Area open to demersal trawls only designated under D&SIFCA Mobile Fishing Permit Byelaw (Annex 1a).

⁷ Area open to demersal mobile gear (dredges and trawls) designated under D&SIFCA Mobile Fishing Permit Byelaw (Annex 1b).

⁸ A No Anchoring/No Shot Lines Zone extends for 100m around the Knoll Pins in order to protect the delicate marine life associated with these rock pinnacles.

⁹ Lundy has three heritage wrecks. The *Iona II* and the Gull Rock wreck site were designated as Protected Wrecks in 1989. HMS *Montagu* was designated a Scheduled Monument in 2019. A licence is required to dive on a Protected Wreck, but not on a Scheduled Monument.

