

# LUNDY MARINE NATURE RESERVE ADVISORY GROUP

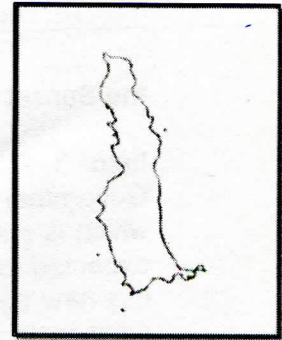
The Aims of the Group are: 1) to provide a nucleus of expertise on the marine habitats and waters surrounding Lundy; 2) to provide a forum for exchanging views on present and proposed activities around Lundy; 3) to safeguard the interests of all those who use the waters around Lundy and its natural resources; and 4) to advise the Management Group for the Reserve / Special Area of Conservation.

Established: 1985

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## Notes of the 29th meeting of the Lundy Marine Nature Reserve Advisory Group

(formerly known as the Lundy Marine Consultation Group, of which this was the 47th meeting)

held on **Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2009** in the Council Chamber,  
Bideford Town Hall, Bideford at 7.00 p.m.

### Present:

Keith Hiscock	(KH)	Marine Biological Association/Lundy Field Society – Chair
Mel Parker	(MP)	Natural England – Acting Secretary
Sarah Clark	(SC)	Devon Sea Fisheries Committee
Keith Denby	(KD)	Ilfracombe & N Devon Sub-Aqua Club
Nick Russell	(NR)	English Heritage
Alison Hamer	(AH)	English Heritage
Damian Board	(DB)	Appledore Sub-Aqua Club
Leigh Hanks	(LH)	Obsession Charters
Chris Mandry	(CM)	British Sub-Aqua Club
Richard White	(RW)	Devon Wildlife Trust
Derek Green	(DG)	Lundy Manager
Nicola Saunders	(NS)	Lundy Warden

*Approved*  
*[Signature]*  
22/4/10

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting, especially those attending for the first time.

### 1. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from: Robert Irving (Lundy Field Society and Marine Conservation Society), Tim Robbins (Devon Sea Fisheries Committee) and Andrew Bengey (Obsession Charters).

### 2. **Notes on the last meeting, held on 23rd October 2008**

Copies of these had been circulated prior to the meeting. KH commented on item 7a he clarified that he believed the biotope map being produced by Ambios *should* be circulated for comment to allow quality control of the final product. With this amendment the minutes were accepted as being true record of the meeting.

### 3. **Matters arising from the previous Lundy MNR Advisory Group Meeting**

Item 3 - KH reported that he has just submitted a paper based on his DNA analysis of

The following organisations sit on the Advisory Group: British Sub-Aqua Club \* Devon Sea Fisheries Committee \* Devon Wildlife Trust \* English Heritage \* Environment Agency \* Landmark Trust \* local dive charter interests \* local diving clubs \* local sea fishing interests \* The Lundy Company Ltd. \* Lundy Field Society \* Marine Archaeological Interests \* Marine Biological Association of the U.K. \* Marine Conservation Society \* Natural England \* North Devon Coast and Countryside Service \* North Devon Fishermen's Association \* South-West Federation of Sea Anglers \* Torridge District Council

the Sunset Cup Coral samples for publication.

Item 3 - MP explained that the Lundy MNR would become the first of the Government's network of Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) under the Marine Bill which is still expected to be enacted at the end of this year. The transition to MCZ is expected to take place at the beginning of January 2010, but it is still unclear whether this new designation will provide the opportunity to protect any species or habitats in addition to those currently protected by the site's MNR status. **Action MP:** MP will provide an update on this process at the next meeting, and will provide an opportunity for members of this group to comment on any proposed changes to the levels of protection offered to the site.

KH clarified that although in the last warden's report it that there may have been some confusion over the location of a monitoring site for Scarlet and Gold Cup Corals. The two sites in question are only 3m apart, and this should be remembered when looking at data over the years as it may explain the changes in numbers present recorded during different surveys.

4. ***Matters arising from the Lundy Management Forum meeting***

There was nothing to report from the last meeting of the Lundy Management Forum as no new MNR- related matters had been discussed.

5. ***Report from the Reserve***

The report attached as Annex A was presented by NS.

In addition to the Warden's report NS explained that the RIB, which had previously been coded as a 'small commercial vessel', does not require a special coding. Confusion over this issue had delayed the use of the RIB so far, but she is now operational and ready to go.

The temperature loggers are going to be changed this summer. KH confirmed that even if there does not appear to be much variation in water temperatures it is still worthwhile to record them as they will provide valuable information on any long term trends.

6. ***Beach Road update***

DG was pleased to report that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase of the beach road project has now been completed and the clean-up of equipment and materials is underway. The sections that are yet to be completed include the work to improve access to the water on the steep slipway which is expected to cost an additional £86k, but the permissions and plans are all in place should the money become available. However, the new slipway on the footprint of the original slip at Landing Beach has made it easier to get the RIB in the water and will suffice for now. The work on the road has been guaranteed for 75 years. Future considerations include the maintenance of other vulnerable sections of the road, and an investigation into the potential for any other access routes to the plateau.

7. ***Beach Building Interpretation Centre***

NS updated the group and the progress being made to renew the interpretation material and use of the beach building facility. The designs have now been signed off by the Landmark Trust who are now leading on the fundraising efforts. £8k of funding has been secured from Natural England. The aim is to complete the work over this winter and to open for business in April. This may be optimistic, but in the interim the

area surrounding the Beach Building is being cleaned up in preparation.

## 8. **Projects**

### 8a **Sediment biota and biotope mapping study**

MP informed the group that the MCA now have the back scatter data that was required. They will pass it on to Ambios who will add it to the biotope mapping they carried out 2 years ago in order to clarify some of the 'sediment' areas and to add more detail to what they know about the rocky areas. The data is due to be given to Ambios next week and they will need 2-3 months to finalise the report. It will then be circulated to the group for comment.

### 8b **NTZ Monitoring write up**

MP advised the group that the 5 year report is almost complete. It is just waiting for a few amendments from Natural England on the final section about recommendations for future monitoring. Once these amendments have been made it will be approved by Natural England and made publically available. A very brief summary of the 2008 results is now available. No diving monitoring of seabed attached fauna was carried out in 2008. The surveyors were asked to give a summary of the findings, not an analysis or discussion. **Action: MP.** The summary will be circulated with these minutes.

### 8c **DSFC Lobster Tagging Project**

SC gave a presentation on the report attached as Annex B. In addition she will look to contact the charter boats and divers, and send them callipers, so that they can report sightings and / or take measurements if they come across a tagged lobster. It was agreed that divers should not take tagged lobsters out of the water in order to measure them. **Action: SC.** SC would rather have details of their tag number and location than risk disturbing them by removing them for measuring. This year's tags are orange as opposed to last year's yellow ones. **Action: SC.** SC is to reissue the lobster tagging information posters for this year.

### 8d **Potting survey**

SC also reported that fishermen have been asked to mark their buoys with name and number to make them easy to identify and monitor. SC will repeat the potting survey this year. DSFC are planning more patrol days this year. There is still no regulation available to cap potting effort in the MNR. SC reminded the group that Keith Bower, Chief Fisheries Officer for DSFC, had some concerns over the methodology for the NTZ monitoring. **Action: SC and MP.** SC and MP to discuss when planning future monitoring of the NTZ.

### 8d **Proposed Studies for 2009**

MP explained that although there is only minimal monitoring occurring on the MNR this year, money has been set aside by Natural England to fund a review of statutory monitoring that has occurred, what is required by way of condition assessment, and recommended methodologies. This work will help to inform a monitoring programme for the site and will give a rolling timetable for the different statutory surveys.

There was some discussion about whether past monitoring reports will be pdf'd and made available on the Natural England website. KH highlighted that the 2004 SAC report contains particularly useful monitoring data.

KH is planning to take a further 25 samples of Sunset Cup Corals this year. He will compare their DNA with samples he is planning to collect from the Isles of Scilly.

## 8. **Any Other Business**

KH requested that if any divers spotted Sunset Cup Corals off the West Coast of the island, they should report their sightings to him. He encouraged divers to take a GPS of the site and to let him know its location.

KD reported that there is no local interest in Seasearch in North Devon this year. KH asked that if people see any 'Dirty Rope Plankton' this year, they report their sightings to him.

RW reported that DWT are investing time and resources in an effort-related cetacean watching programme on the North Devon coast this year. Devon Seawatch and DBRC have both signed an agreement to share data which should provide a very reliable account of recorded sightings. He also reported that the T-POD that was deployed last year will be used again this year. In addition, RW explained that a group of organisations has come together to look at ways of extending the Lyme Bay biotope mapping for the whole of Devon, and possibly the whole of the SW peninsula, and out to 12nm. A small working group will start with a desk-based study of the data that already exists and next summer work to fill in the gaps. The first meeting of the working group (MarLIN, MBA, local authorities and agencies) will be in July. After that meeting other potential partners will be approached.

KH noted the continuing lack of representation of fishing and angling interests at the meetings.

KH explained that the Wireweed removal exercise is an experiment to see if clearance is possible or not. He is hopeful that it might be successful in some intertidal areas.

KD explained a new wifi project which may be useful to Lundy and provide a more reliable internet connection. **Action: KD.** KD to get the engineers to contact DG to discuss. There followed some discussion about the Lundy No Take Zone website and how it would be better to host the information somewhere else so that it could easily be updated and maintained as necessary. KD suggested that the LFS site ([www.lundy.org.uk](http://www.lundy.org.uk)) could host the Lundy NTZ information through a 'blog style' site whereby everyone with a password can upload new reports and articles as appropriate. Other options discussed were to host the information on the Natural England marine pages, or to create an additional arm to the existing lundy.org site which would contain information about the wildlife of the island and could be the best place to keep information. DG observed that he would like to see a separation between a site giving information about Lundy history, archaeology and natural history and the Lundy Company Web site ([www.lundyisland.co.uk](http://www.lundyisland.co.uk)) which should be for information for prospective visitors. KD, NS and MP to discuss the options for hosting the site and linking between sites. **Action: KD, NS, MP.** There should also be a link the Lundy wreck pages on the English Heritage website.

NS told everyone about the Splash In event that the island is hosting on the 20<sup>th</sup> June. It is an underwater photography competition for divers. There has been a fantastic response from sponsors, especially for a first event. She and Sophie will seek feedback from this event to help with planning for future events. NS is contacting local press next week. KH asked NS to contact Neil Hope of the Western Morning News / Sports Diver magazine, but it looked as though he was already attending.

NS warned charter boats and dive boats to stay away from the cliffs and to look out for boats which are too close to the land as she has received a number of reports that vessels are disturbing the seabirds.

DG informed the group that Special Branch had advised him that they are working on 'Operation Cracker' which is looking to tackle the problem of illegal immigrants. He has

been asked to report any suspicious activity so if anyone sees anything they think is suspicious can they please let DG know.

Among a quick review of media and journalistic interest this year DG mentioned that there is a specific Media Day on the 18<sup>th</sup> June to mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Trust becoming the owner of Lundy. The actual anniversary is on the 28<sup>th</sup> of September, but on the 26<sup>th</sup> September there will be a special sailing to mark the anniversary and it is hoped that the Bishop of Exeter will be onboard. Lundy is also expected to feature on the BBC Coast programme in August.

9. **Date of next meeting: Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2009** to be held at 7.30pm. Venue to be confirmed.

## Annex A

### Warden's Report (October 2008 – April 2009)

#### 1 Staff

1.1 After the success of last year's seasonal volunteer post we have recruited again for this year, and Michael MacKinnon joined us on 11 April. He will be assisting Chris, the ranger and helping with general island duties.

#### 2 Human Activity

2.1 RIB – In true Lundy tradition, we've hit a pre-season glitch which delayed launching the boat until 26 May

2.2 Fishing and potting activity: Land based patrols of the MNR have continued throughout the winter season. Pots have been observed within the MNR throughout the winter.

2.3 No incidents to report

#### 3 Wildlife

3.1 Grey Seals: Stephen Westcote is continuing the ongoing seal survey, he is visiting Lundy on a monthly basis and is due to complete the survey in October.

3.2 Summary to date:

	Male	Female	Juv	Unidentified	Total	Pup	Dead Pup
Sept	13	50	1		64	29	1
Oct	34	52	4		90	2	
Dec	8	49	2	3	62	4	1
Feb	13	52	11		76	2	
Mar	5	42	4		51	0	
Apr					93	0	
May	17	60	3			0	
					<b>TOTAL</b>		
					<b>=</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>2</b>

3.3 Of the 29 pups found in September, 19 were found in sea caves, 10 on boulder beaches. The most important single sea cave sites were Seal's Hole (5 pups), Aztec Seal Hole (4, plus one pup in an adjoining cave) and Jenny's Seal Hole (3). By far the most important remote beach site was Halfway Bay beach (5 pups).

8 live pups were found on the south coast, 12 on the west coast and 9 on the east coast. None were found on the north coast.

#### 3.4 Marine Wildlife

3.4.1 **Cetaceans Sighting Pack:** We have put together a new cetacean sightings pack that we would like to issue to all the charter boat, dive boats and fishing boats. The aim is to try and get a good representation on what is being seen in the waters around Lundy. The packs include instructions, ID sheets and a reporting form.

Sophie and I will issue new forms as required and collect the completed forms to collate all the data and report to the SeaWatch foundation so that it is fed into the national database.

- 3.4.2 We've had reported sightings of barrel jelly fish, 25 March at the north end, 10 April in the landing bay and again on 12 April at Brazen Ward
- 3.4.3 The first Basking shark sighting was on 1 June off the east coast (Clive Pearson). On 3 June 3 were seen on the West Coast and another on the East Coast
- 3.4.4 The first Sunfish sighting was on 3 June – NE of the Knoll pins (Roger Fursdon)

### 3.5 Seabirds:

- 3.5.1 First Puffin sighting was on the 23 March, at St. Phillips on the sea, 2 weeks earlier than 2008. We have begun regular checks of the known nesting sites and this year the surveys will include the new colony at Jenny's cove. Early signs are positive and although the St. Phillips Stone colony appears to be having a slow start to the season, numbers overall appear to be up. To date we have 5 confirmed pairs at Jenny's cove and 4 pairs at St. Phillips.
- 3.5.2 Guillemots are incubating and the first chick was seen at Long Roost on 2 June (Sophie Wheatley)
- 3.5.3 The first Manx Shearwaters were seen off the east coast on 21 March, their evening chorus is becoming more regular – with the help of RSPB volunteers we aim to repeat the productivity survey of the Old Light Colony in September. We are also hoping to do a tagging survey this year with Tim Guilford of Oxford university. Tim has been conducting a tagging program on Skomer for the last 3 years and data from Lundy's colony will tie in nicely and add to the overall picture of the shearwaters feeding behaviours.
- 3.5.4 In 2008 a Manx shearwater burrow census took place. The RSPB spent a week on the island to assess the population size and found 560 confirmed burrows an increase of 264% on the 2001 figures. A full report is being prepared by the RSPB.

3.6 Seabird Recovery Project AKA Rats: After last year's scare in May we set up a precautionary contingency grid in January. Although no evidence of rats was uncovered last year it was during peak season when natural food sources would be plentiful, so as an extra pre-caution to ensure that Lundy was still rat free we repeated the exercise when food sources would be minimal when the take of bait would be expected. No evidence was found to suggest a rat was present.

### 3.7 Mammals :

- 3.7.1 The Mammal count was slightly hindered due to a cancelled sailing, so less time was available to complete the survey; Soay 179 (incl 61 lambs); Goat 27; Sika 56; Both the goat and Sika figures are considered to be underestimated – and the Sika count methods will be reviewed next year.
- 3.7.2 Rabbits: Sightings are becoming numerous! Chris is shooting again, and although they are not back in any numbers on the plateaux, they are very apparent on the sidelands especially at dusk. The mammal count returned an estimate in the region of 1700

## 4 Monitoring

- 4.1 Temperature loggers: at the Jetty and the Robert are due to be replaced in the next few months – there is no news yet from the damaged logger that was retrieved from the Robert last year.

- 4.2 In 2009 Sophie and I will be repeating the Rockpool Community Surveys that we first conducted in the 1970's by Keith Hiscock – we have identified the pools and will be surveying the species and comparing the data with the previous surveys
- 4.3 Devon Sea Fisheries Committee are due to do more lobster tagging over the coming season – further details can be obtained from Sarah
- 4.4 Rhododendron: The Rhododendron clearance has been another success we are currently working on the 2 remaining stands (10 & 12), – I have aerial monitoring pictures of the progress to date, if anyone would like the updated information, please let me know (the image files are 17MB so will have to be send through the post)

## 5 Raising Awareness/Events

- 5.1 Events on the Island: The usual programme of talks, and walks continued throughout the winter, and snorkelling has begun
- 5.2 The education program is still in place and we have a healthy number of bookings to keep us busy with 16 school or community groups booked into visit Lundy over the summer.
- 5.3 Sophie spent a few days on the mainland in November and visiting schools and I did the same in February, between us we visited 8 schools or community groups and spoke to over 400 children and adults about Lundy and the Marine Nature Reserve.
- 5.4 Media Interest: We have Countryfile over in June to do a feature on Lundy and The One Show are filming in July
- 5.5 **LUNDY SPLASH-IN:** We are planning an underwater photography competition on Saturday 20th June followed by a Barn Dance with lamb roast and live music in the evening. As accommodation on Lundy is limited, all participants are being offered free camping for the Saturday night and entrance to the barn dance. The aim is to promote and celebrate Lundy's Marine wildlife. It is the first time such an event has taken place on Lundy and there are lots of logistical considerations but we hope we have them all covered, we have had great response from sponsors and have well of £1000 worth of prizes to give away.
- 5.5.1 **PLEASE contact me for further information.** I am particularly keen to hear from the charter boat skippers and dive clubs for your views.

## 6 Interpretation

- 6.1 Leaflets;
- 6.1.1 The Bird leaflet had been completed and is now available – I will bring copies to the meeting in June
- 6.1.2 Sophie is working on a 'Lundy Codes' leaflet which should be finalised before the end of the season; it will include short codes of conducts for the many different users and activities on the island
- 6.1.3 We are hoping to produce two further leaflets in the 09/10 financial year; Walks, to update the existing leaflet that was produced in the 90's and Seals which we'll start after Stephen Westcote has complete the ongoing seal survey.
- 6.1.4 The existing leaflets are now available in PDF format on the Lundy website <http://www.lundyisland.co.uk/leaflets.htm>
- 6.2 The re-design of the beach building is well underway, the project was put out to tender and we have since selected two designers to do the work, Bettina Newman, who we

have worked closely with to produce the 'Lundy Style' and recent leaflets; and Mike Langman who has done various wildlife interpretation projects and has a long connection with Lundy. Mike and Bettina have put forward their final design proposal and Landmark Trust has begun fundraising for the project. We aim to have the project completed for the start of the 2010 sailing season

Nicola Saunders, Lundy Warden



are moving out the NTZ than males. By undertaking further tagging in the No Take zone information can be gathered on the lobsters that have remained within the NTZ since tagging in 2008 and whether lobsters tagged outside have emigrated to the NTZ. This information cannot be gathered from the tag returns from the commercial fishermen working around Lundy as they are unable to fish in the NTZ. It is also important to repeat last year's taking programme as this will allow sufficient tag return data to look at the spillover effect hypothesis and will be able to recapture tagged lobsters before too many of the tags are lost through moulting, in particular on the juvenile lobsters as they moult more frequently, and mortality. The 2009 data will add to that gathered in 2008 to understand movement and migration of lobsters around the Island.

An MOA has been signed between NE and DSFC and funding has been received from NE. Tags have been purchased and one of the fishing <sup>vessels</sup> regularly working around Lundy has been chartered to allow the tagging work to be undertaken aboard this vessel. This vessel will have dispensation for fishing in the NTZ (with a DSFC Officer aboard) and all the catch will be tagged and returned to the sea. Six sites will be monitored and catches tagged around the island.

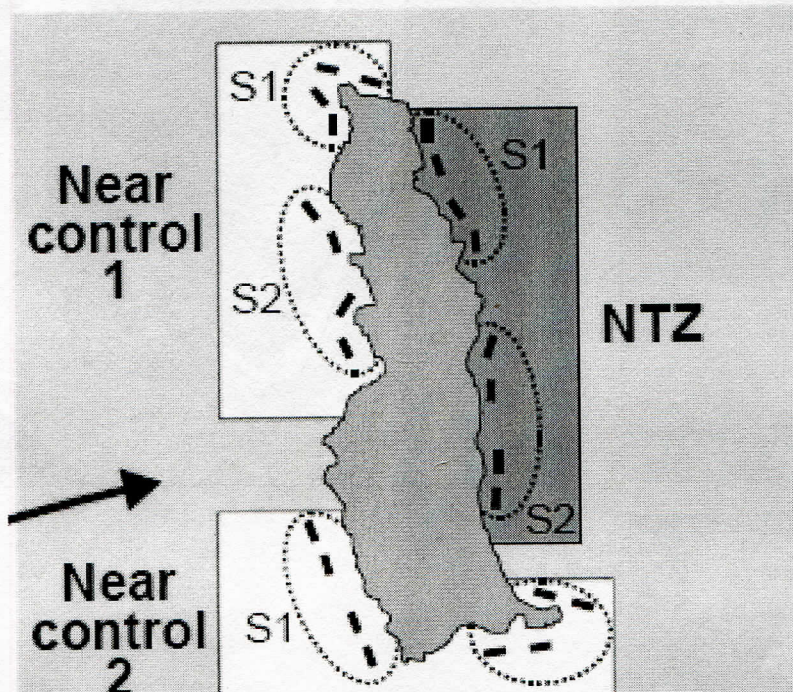


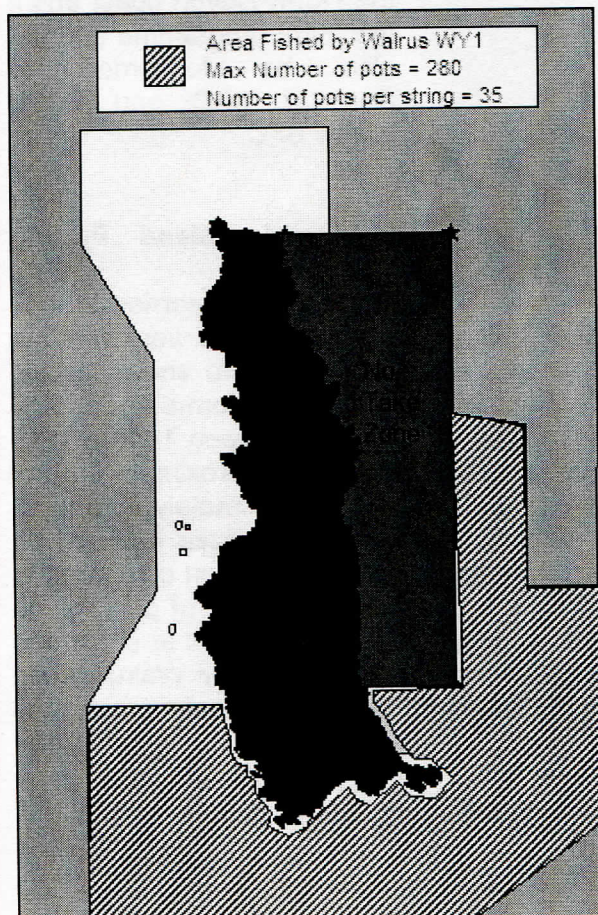
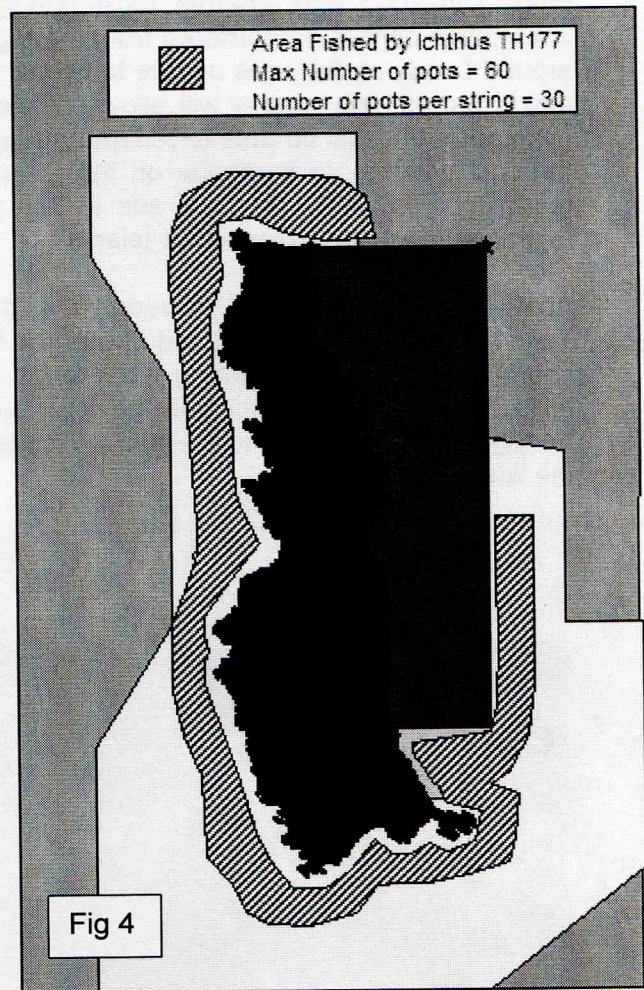
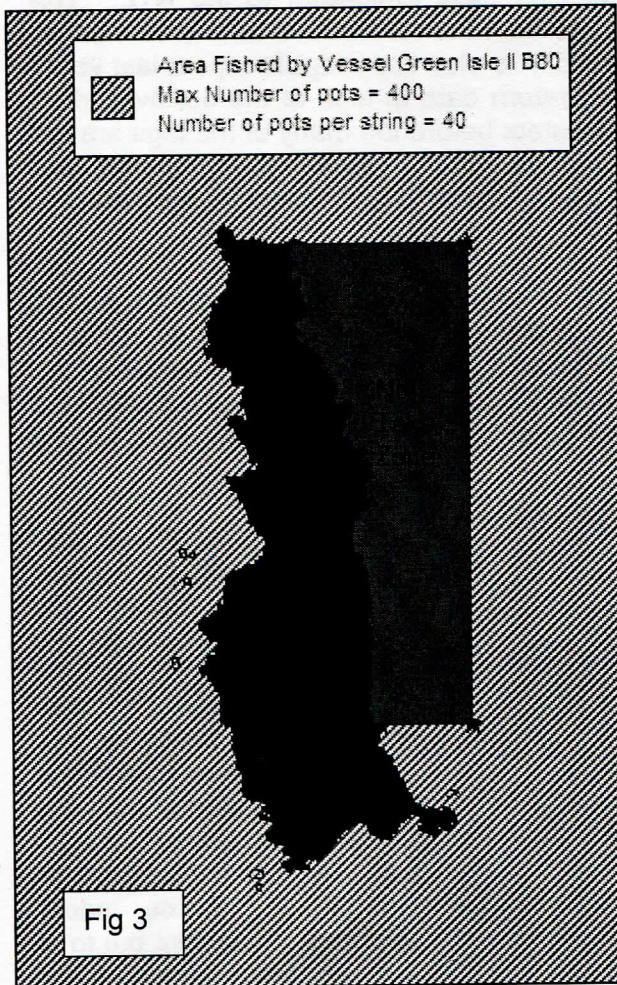
Fig 2 Location of monitoring sites (Hoskin at al 2009)

The location of these sites are two within the NTZ, and 4 control sites around the Island (2 in Near control 1 and 2 in Near Control 2), as per those used by Dr Miles Hoskins in his No Take Zone monitoring survey (see fig 2). The planned start of the 2009 tagging programme is the first week in July but this will be weather dependent. Information will be sent out to all the fishermen working along the North Devon coast about the 2009 programme and will also be forwarded to Cornwall SFC and South Wales SFC.

## 2. Lundy Island Potting Survey 2008

A survey was carried to look at the potting effort around Lundy Island and specifically in the MNR. Forms were sent out to fishermen and the areas fished and number of pots set in the MNR are shown below. Forms were sent out to six skippers of vessels. Four of these returned forms specifically giving information of their activity around Lundy. These vessels set between 1440 – 1640 pots within the Lundy Island Marine Nature Reserve which covers an approximate area of 30.14 km<sup>2</sup>. Therefore it can be calculated that there are between approximately 48 and 55 pots per square km. This seems a very high number. The Compass Rose reported on having up to a maximum of 900 pots in the area which seems very high when compared to the other fishermen potting in the MNR. In 2009 verification of the number of pots will be undertaken as well as days on board the vessels working in the area to look at catch and return figures. Last year only one day was spent at sea on board the FV Walrus when working in the MNR and further data are needed to evaluate the lobster stocks around the Island.

Figs 3-6 Charts of Areas fished by vessels potting in the Lundy Island MNR:





The position of buoys marking strings of pots was recorded on three occasions in 2008 by the Lundy Island Warden. These positions have been mapped (fig 7). This mapping work will continue in 2009.

DSFC are planning several patrol days along the North Devon coast as well as around Lundy Island using a rib this will help gain more information of the boats working in the area and number of pots set. Further days at sea are planned with fishermen as an ongoing survey of lobster stocks along the whole coast of North Devon

