

1. How many licences are you issuing?

Fifteen (15) licences have been approved for the T24 2025 fishery.

2. What is the application closing date?

19th January 2025 at 9pm.

3. Do I have to pay for a licence, if so when and how much is it?

Yes, the licence fee for the 2025 fishery is £10,885. You will be asked to pay this if your application is successful. Do not send any money in with your application.

4. How long does a licence last for?

Each licence lasts for one (1) year, with a right to renew for a total of seven (7) years. However, you must reapply each year on a shortened version of this application. We will contact you to remind you to do this. You will also be required to pay a licence fee each year.

5. Who can apply for a licence?

Anyone (company or individual) can apply for a licence and will be referred to as the 'applicant'. It is recommended to check the eligibility of the fishing vessel, and the applicants experience before applying. The information provided under the FAQ 'How likely am I to get a licence?' will offer a greater understanding of what criteria is expected of future licence holders and your likelihood of being awarded a licence.

It is key to check your vessel complies with requirements for fishing within the Kent and Essex district using the Vessel Length and Engine Power Byelaw. In addition, to harvest cockles your vessel must be able to carry the maximum quantity of catch allowed under the licence and has been certified by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency to undertake dredging.

6. Who in a company should apply for a licence?

The company is the applicant and would be the licence holder if successful; however, the contact details must be a shareholder, director or majority company owner.

7. My boat is under 10m, would I still be able to obtain a licence?

Yes, but your boat must hold appropriate Maritime and Coastguard Agency certification and have the capacity to carry the maximum quantity of catch.

8. I have multiple vessels; can I obtain more than one licence?

If both vessels are owned by different applicants, you would be eligible to apply for two licences. However, no applicant may hold more than one licence for the fishery. Where a transitional period licence is issued to an applicant, any person who was a shareholder or officer of that company on 30th January 2024, is not eligible to be granted a licence under this article or a transitional period licence, whether as an individual or as a shareholder or officer of another company.

9. How likely am I to get a licence?

To achieve high scores in the application process, applicants will need to have significant knowledge and experience of fishing for cockles, running an associated business and be able provide examples of both in the application process.

Each application will be scored according to six criteria, with each criterion contributing a different percentage to the total score (see Annex 4 Management Plan for more details):

1. Business Plan (23% of total score)
2. Experience (36% of total score)
3. Landing and cooking cockles in the district (6% of total score)
4. Support of skilled employment (12% of total score)
5. Reducing the impact of fishing operations on both cockle stocks and the seabed (18% of total score)
6. Plans to reduce CO2 emissions and improve the wider environment (5% of total score)

To achieve a high experience score, applicants will need to have held either a TECFO licence or a KEIFCA Cockle Fishery Flexible Permit. If experience is evidenced by holding of a permit, then the score increases the more years the applicant held an interest in a permit (see Annex 4 of the management plan for specific detail). If you have not held a permit in the last 8 years (2017 – 2024), then you would score zero (0) for this section of the experience score.

We advise you utilise the corresponding grade descriptions for each section to assess your likelihood of obtaining a licence. Applications that receive an Unacceptable or Major reservations score from one or more of the questions may be excluded from the process (See the management plan Annex 2 for more information).

10. Do I need to complete every section?

A Transitional Period licence application needs to complete sections 1-5 of the application form, other applications must complete all sections.

11. How much detail do I need to put into these answers?

Bullet points have been provided underneath each question as a guide; however, your answers are not restricted to these. We encourage you to answer these questions in as much relevant detail as possible.

12. What are transitional arrangements?

The transitional arrangements are designed to allow established companies and vessels which have taken part in the TECFO 1994 fishery to continue doing so for the first 7 years of the new Regulating Order (See the management plan Annex 5 for more information).

13. Will you let me know when you have received my application?

Yes, KEIFCA will issue a confirmation of receipt for each application received and each application form will be time stamped.

14. How do you decide who will get a licence?

Your application will be graded by a panel of seven (7) people (five (5) of whom are IFCA members, one (1) is from the AIFCAs and one (1) from CEFAS), based on the answers you give using grade descriptors (details of which are in the management plan and are provided with the application pack). The total score will be used to rank the applications and the top fifteen (15) will be awarded a licence.

15. When will I know if my application is successful or not?

The licences will be confirmed by the full IFCA at a meeting on 27th of March 2025. All applicants will be written to at that stage to confirm if they have or have not received a licence.

16. Can I appeal your decision?

No, the decision of the IFCA on the 27th of March 2025 is final.

17. Who will attend an oral evidence session?

The Applications Panel can invite applicants to orally run through their application if the final scores are similar or identical for two or more applications and at the cut-off point where applicants would or would not receive a licence. The scoring process used at the oral evidence meeting is based upon the scoring system used for all applications. However, the oral evidence meeting is only used to decide the final ranking of those applicants invited to give oral evidence.

Additionally, the Applications Panel could also invite applicants to the oral evidence meeting to clarify key points in their application.

18. How will the overall score be calculated?

Each question will be scored and a total calculated for each of the six criteria. The six criteria are weighted differently, so each contributes to a specific percentage of the overall application score (See the management plan Annex 4 for more information).

Below is an example of how the total score for a question will be calculated:

<i>Question</i>	<i>Mark from question</i>	<i>Divide mark by 100 (a)</i>	<i>Question weighted score (b)</i>	<i>Total score for that question (a) x (b)</i>
<i>Business Plan</i>	85	0.85	23	19.55
<i>Fishing experience track record</i>	100	1	36	36
<i>Landing and cooking cockles caught in the district</i>	80	0.80	6	4.8
<i>Support of skilled local employment</i>	40	0.40	12	4.8
<i>Reduce the impact of fishing operations on both cockle stocks and the seabed</i>	40	0.40	18	7.2
<i>Plan to reduce CO2 emissions and improve the wider environment</i>	60	0.60	5	3
<i>Total Overall Score</i>				75.35