

### **Agenda Item – C3**

## **Report on the patrol vessels 'Tamesis' and 'FPV Vigilant' Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority Report for the period September – November 2024**

### **Vessel priorities:**

- Monitor TECFO areas for compliance with regulations
- Monitor Cockle Permit Fishery fleet for zonal and temporal restrictions
- Conduct boarding operations for Manilla Clam fishery trials
- Conduct joint training operations with Essex Police Marine Unit
- Operate as support vessel for MMO enforcement
- Patrol areas closed for bottom trawling under Essex Estuaries byelaw
- Record data of all vessel sightings
- Record data of all static fishing gears (fixed nets and pots)
- Inspect pots and traps for compliance with KEIFCA byelaws
- Inspect recreational angling vessels to ensure compliance with regulations
- Vessel Maintenance

### **Fisheries Enforcement**

During this quarter the Essex vessels were actively involved in a broad range of activities, overseeing compliance, gathering data, providing training, and providing operational support for partner agencies.

At the beginning of this period Vigilant was engaged in monitoring the closed section of area 7 as the Cockle Permit Fishery was underway. There was only an opportunity for one further routine patrol on Vigilant before the beginning of the clam fishery trial. This involved liaising with Nerissa and engaging and boarding the vessels involved in the trial, to collect samples and monitor dredge performance and efficiency. Vigilant was joined on one of these patrols by an officer from the Essex Police Marine Unit to give them an insight into the work we do and establish a closer working relationship.

With the clam trial completed the next tasking for Vigilant saw Brightlingsea hosting skippers and crew from Northumberland IFCA and Eastern IFCA on consecutive days for pacing and cross-deck training with the Police Marine Unit. This involved using two KEIFCA patrol boats, originally scheduled to be Tamesis and Vigilant, but with Tamesis developing an engine problem, Nerissa came to Brightlingsea to stand in.

Vigilant was also on standby as a support vessel for an MMO enforcement operation on Essex ports but was not called into action on this occasion.



**Figure 1 - Pacing training with Essex Police Marine Unit & Eastern IFCA**

Tamesis has only conducted one patrol in this period as she developed a fault on the port engine, though she did manage to carry out some observation on passage to Levington where she was being hauled out.

During the course of this period officers logged 52 fishing vessels, of which 48 were commercial fishing vessels, three were charter recreational vessels, and a further four were recreational angling vessels. Boarding inspections were conducted on 29 of the commercial vessels, though many of these were in the course of the clam trial. Non-boarding inspections were conducted on 8 additional vessels, with no offences detected or suspected.

During this period static fishing gear was inspected on 11 occasions with surface markers being inspected on 6 of these. Two sets of gear were found to have no name or identification. The pots were checked and found to be compliant, so a notice of offence was left on these.

## **Conservation/Survey Work**

### *Surveys*

There was no survey work conducted during this period as the vessels were tied up with enforcement duties and the clam fishery trial.

### *Marine Mammal observations*

Marine mammal sightings were recorded on 15 occasions, featuring individual seal sightings in across north Essex from the Middle Deep to the Blackwater, and on the Eagle Bank and the Buxey. A pair of Porpoises were sighted on a single occasion in the Blackwater.

### **Maintenance**

Vigilant was hauled out for the 900 hour service on the engines, and monthly maintenance was carried out as normal.

Monthly maintenance was carried out on Tamesis, however she did develop a fault on the port engine. Electronic analysis of the engine showed this to be a burnt exhaust which required removal of the cylinder head. The vessel was moved to Levington and hauled and the engine removed, As this necessitated a strip down of the engine, worn piston rings and big end bearings were also replaced. The engine work is due to be completed in the week commencing 19<sup>th</sup> November and should be available for tasking the following week.

### **Other Information**

#### *Statistics*

During this period FPV Vigilant put to sea 16 times taking 1060 litres of fuel to cover a patrol distance of 610 miles. Due to the aforementioned engine fault, Tamesis has been at sea on 2 occasions covering 5 miles and no fuel was taken during this period.

#### *Invitation to Authority Members and P.R*

An open invitation is extended to Authority Members to join the crew on an enforcement patrol or survey aboard the vessel

Colm O'Laoi  
*Skipper FPV Tamesis & Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer*