



## **Agenda Item – C4**

### **Report on the patrol vessel 'Nerissa' and daughter RIB 'Nereus' Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority Report for the period Sept to Nov 2024 (13/11/2024)**

#### **Priorities of vessel for quarter**

- Targeted inspection of static gear.
- Patrol District limits for any large/foreign vessel incursions.
- Patrol areas closed to bottom towed gear.
- Inspect pots and traps for compliance of byelaws.
- Inspection of commercial and recreations fishers.
- Patrol, monitor and inspect cockle fishing areas and activity.
- Logging fishing vessels, gear and activity.
- Sightings and intel logged and reported.
- Input key enforcement information into national fisheries enforcement database (MCSS).
- Attend to cockle survey on inside and outside areas as required.
- Attending to tide hight and sea temperature survey equipment and data.

#### **Fisheries Enforcement**

During this period, Nerissa put to sea for twenty two patrols, sighting eighty commercial fishing vessels, eleven charter angling vessels observed actively fishing and twenty one recreational sea angling boats also actively fishing.

Nerissa was worked as a base assisting FPV Vigilant to process the collected Clam samples from the trial fishery; crews were able to swap around and take turns to board all of the fleet and made the most of having extra staff to put two persons aboard. Four commercial fishing vessels were also boarded using Nereus and three fishing vessels alongside or near to Nerissa to conduct a non-boarding inspection.

Twenty-three gear related log entries were made for eighty-nine individual ends recorded. Two sets of gear were hauled for inspection with one string seized due to non-compliance with byelaws.

After every patrol the logs have been entered into the required databases as soon as possible and any required information has been forwarded to the relevant agencies and enforcement bodies in their required format where required.

## **Conservation/Survey work**

Temperature data logger and whelk gear has been turned over and data collected. Monthly samples for cockle classification have also been gathered, safely brought ashore and collected by Thanet District Council for processing. Attending and sampling of the clam trial fishers has been the largest effort, well over 100 samples were processed with the science team joining the vessel to do this with the crew assisting them.

Approximately 230 seals were sighted, mainly hauled out on sands banks in the Thames, in groups of 10 to 100 or individuals swimming, one porpoise was sighted in the far south of the district and another six together in the Thames deep water route.

## **Maintenance**

A workboat code survey has taken place on Nerissa this quarter, and preparations for next years out of water inspection also prepared for with the surveyor.

Outstanding issues with the engines after their reinstatement have been attended to by Bartech but we are still in communications about a few sensor fault/issues that show periodically. These haven't stopped the vessel working but we are working together to find the source, replacing parts and clearing any logged faults to continue monitoring.

## **Other Information**

The crew has continued to work through drills on the vessels and working on their skills that assist in its safe operation.

Stood by a sinking Dinghy, reported to coast guard,

The Vice Chairman of the Authority was able to join the vessel and observe the work undertaken and effort going into the clam trial fishery.

Nerissa spent three days in Brightlingsea working with FPV Vigilant and Essex Police marine unit to train IFCA staff from Eastern IFCA and Northumberland IFCA with safe pacing, coming alongside and boarding of vessels.

## **Statistics:**

Nerissa travelled 1302 miles, took 14,337ltrs of fuel, operating for 135 hours. HVO fuel has not been available in Ramsgate again yet this year but will use it as soon as it is made available again.

Ben Hermitage

*Skipper FPV Nerissa & Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer*