

# The New Isle of Man 0-3 nm Marine Nature Reserves

## What You Need to Know: Questions and Answers

### Background

The legislation to designate nine new marine nature reserves (MNRs) passed through Tynwald in July 2018, changing the existing mixture of fisheries closed, restricted areas and conservation zones into the same status as Ramsey Bay.

They will come into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2018.

These new designations were extensively consulted on in 2016 and 2017, with significant input from a range of stakeholders, including the fishing industry.

As a commercial fisherman you should not notice significant operational changes as a result of these changes, since the existing fishing regulations will be the same as in the new MNRs.

However, **IT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT YOU RE-INPUT THE NEW MNR COORDINATES INTO PLOTTING SYSTEMS TO ENSURE THAT YOU ARE FULLY UP TO DATE.**

DEFA is also taking the opportunity to provide some additional information and answer some questions you may have.

If you have any further enquiries about MNRs and their operation please contact Peter Duncan on 01624 685 884 or [peter.duncan@gov.im](mailto:peter.duncan@gov.im)

---

### Why change the existing closed areas to MNRs?

The existing closed areas have been developed since 1989 to serve a range of different functions. They were also established in different ways, and primarily to protect and conserve fisheries resources or undertake research or experimental trials.

However, successful and sustainable fisheries also depend strongly on a high-quality environment, along with a range of different habitats, food types and even predators (fish stocks don't exist in isolation). In addition, different fishery sectors, general biodiversity and other marine users may benefit from the separation of different activities, or may require a particular type of unmodified or restored habitat. Therefore, mechanisms to protect the environment as a whole and other marine interests were required, and the Wildlife Act, via Marine Nature Reserve designation, enables that.

### What has actually changed?

- Broadly speaking, the existing regulations for Ramsey Bay MNR (designated in 2011) have been extended to the new MNRs, although as mentioned, the main fishing regulations for the new MNRs are largely the same as those in place for these areas since at least 2016.
- The MNRs remain closed to mobile gear, but open to static fishing gear as before. Based on feedback received during consultation, provision is made to enable use of towed gear under licence if required in future.

- Similarly, the use of certain other fishing gears, such as long-lines, are not permitted except under a licence.
- There is specific protection for the important conservation features (animals, plants and habitats) of each new MNR, but these should not affect the significant majority of current fishing operations. One potential exception is that static gear fishing is now prohibited in four areas of eel grass (a species already protected under Manx law). These areas are in Ramsey Bay (where protection already existed), and small areas of Laxey Bay, *Baie ny Carrickey* and Fort Island gully (see maps for details, e.g. in legislation documents, or in MFPO office).
- There are new restrictions on anchoring using towable fishing gear, e.g. dredges, in MNRs, and dedicated anchors must now be used. This is partly to ensure safety, but also to protect species and habitats within the reserves. Anchoring of any kind in eel grass zones is prohibited to protect this species. Please note that provisions for emergency situations are made within the legislation.
- We have also better defined the position of the MNRs, making them more accurate and consistent (*see below*).
- There are some new restrictions on recreational diving for scallops and queen scallops within MNRs, again to protect overexploitation of commercial stocks.
- Existing regulations for commercial and recreational fishing in Ramsey MNR remain in place.
- WHEN NOTIFIED PLEASE CHECK YOUR AMENDED SEAFISHERIES LICENCE CONDITIONS AND SCHEDULE FOR THE LATEST REGULATIONS.
- PLEASE SEE THE LEGISLATION (*SEE LINK AT END*) FOR A COMPLETE DESCRIPTION OF MNR BYELAWS AND DEFINITIONS.

### **Will I be able to fish in the MNRs?**

See above. Commercial mobile fishing gear, e.g. dredges, trawls etc., will continue to be restricted in these areas. Static fishing gear is allowed, except in eel grass areas, and, as before, in the relevant existing areas of Ramsey Bay MNR.

There are some new restrictions on recreational fishing in MNRs, e.g. prohibited in the designated eel grass areas, diving for scallops and queen scallops, fishing for European eel is only via 'catch and release', take of spiny lobster (*Palinurus elephas*) and sand eels in the Calf and Wart Bank MNR except by rod and line.

- PLEASE SEE THE LEGISLATION FOR A FULL RANGE OF MNR BYELAWS AND DEFINITIONS.

### **Will the new MNRs have Fisheries Management Zones like Ramsey?**

There are currently no FMZs in the new MNRs, although these may be designated as part of any future zoning plan.

### **Will you be doing any monitoring of the MNRs?**

Yes. DEFA expects to develop a general monitoring programme and management plan based around the key conservation features of each MNR. Specific monitoring and other types of survey may be undertaken in future under licence.

## How do MNRs fit in with the proposals for the 0-3 nm fisheries management proposals?

The 0-3 mile zone is clearly different from the 3-12 mile zone (see Figure 1). There is a reduced number of fishing vessels within this area, and the area is divided roughly equally into fisheries zones and non-fishing areas (MNRs) for towable gears.

The MNRs and fisheries zones should act complementary to each other, with MNRs supporting recruitment and spill-over of commercial species, whilst also enhancing the general quality of the marine environment and hence fisheries productivity.

Management of the MNRs and the inshore fisheries zones will be an ongoing process, with expected benefits to all marine users.

## What are the benefits of MNRs to fishermen?

As indicated above, it is expected, and has been shown both around the Isle of Man, and elsewhere, that MNRs help protect and enhance commercial fishing by providing; protection for adult broodstock, a source of juveniles, nursery areas for young animals, spill-over of adults, improved marine environmental conditions and environmental services (such as sewage treatment, improving water quality, reducing coastal erosion, flood mitigation etc.), and diversification opportunities for commercial and recreational fishing – as well benefits for the wider community. See reports on various benefits of MNRs <sup>1</sup>

## What changes do I need to make?

The new MNRs are part of fisheries management in Manx waters, and will be included in the updated fishing licence conditions from the 1<sup>st</sup> September. As such, it is the individual's responsibility to ensure compliance and breach of licence conditions may result in licence suspension or prosecution.

Although the new MNRs may appear to be the same as the old closed areas, there may have been some adjustments and since they are a part of fisheries management regulations **IT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT YOU RE-INPUT THE NEW MNR COORDINATES INTO PLOTTING SYSTEMS TO ENSURE THAT YOU ARE FULLY UP TO DATE.** If you experience problems with this process please contact DEFA Fisheries or your PO.

## Why are MNR coordinates now shown to four decimal places?

Most mapping is now done with GIS systems, both on land and at sea. GIS files enable easier transfer of mapping data as well as the display of different types of data together, and this has become standard across government, marine developments, fisheries science etc. Therefore, inputting the new MNRs into a GIS format, as well as standardising the presentation of the old closed areas, has resulted in defining the boundaries of the MNRs to four decimal places (of minute of arc, i.e. degrees, decimal minutes, 0° 00.0000'). This broadly enables mapping accuracy to within a metre or so, and while this is not strictly necessary for most fishing, navigation and enforcement activities, it has other applications and is the standard format that has been adopted.

---

1

- <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/marine/docs/Socio%20Economic%20Benefits%20of%20EU%20MPAs.pdf>
- <http://activarednatura2000.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Marine-N2k-benefits.pdf>

### **What if my plotter only goes to 3 decimal places?**

Modern plotters may be accurate to more than is displayed on screen, and so changing the setting may enable you visualise this. We recommend that you input coordinate data to four decimal places, even if your plotter appears to 'round up'. However, as indicated, the current resolution of your navigational and plotting equipment should be sufficiently accurate for you to know where you are in relation to MNR boundaries or navigational hazards.

Where possible, descriptions of landmarks are used within the boundary definitions of the MNRs (see below and Designation Order), but if in doubt, enable sufficient clearance to ensure compliance.

### **Can I sit on my fishing gear in MNRs?**

No, if you anchor in a MNR you must use a dedicated anchor, not fishing gear.

### **Are there speed restrictions in these areas?**

There are no changes to speed restrictions in MNRs, although awareness and consideration of marine animals and other users are strongly encouraged.

### **Why do 'Closed' and 'Restricted' Areas still appear on my Licence Schedule?**

The old fisheries closed and restricted areas may still appear in text due to their description in active legislation which has not yet been amended. However, since these areas have simply changed their names it should be straightforward to identify current MNRs from their former titles.

### **The marker buoys at Port Erin have been removed, what is the reason for this?**

The removal of these marks is not related to the MNR designation, but rather because they are considered unnecessary with the advent of new technologies. A 'Notice to Mariners' has been issued (<https://www.gov.im/media/1362348/notice-to-mariners-no-14-of-2018.pdf>).

### **Where can I find out additional information about MNRs?**

- Copies of the MNR legislation can be found at the following
  - Designation Order: <http://www.tynwald.org.im/links/tls/SD/2018/2018-SD-0185.pdf>
  - Byelaws: <http://www.tynwald.org.im/links/tls/SD/2018/2018-SD-0186.pdf>
  
- Further information can be found at <https://www.gov.im/about-the-government/departments/environment-food-and-agriculture/ecosystem-policy-and-energy/wildlife-biodiversity-and-protected-sites/protected-sites/marine-nature-reserves/>
  
- Or contact DEFA Fisheries on Telephone: +44 1624 685857 or [fisheries@gov.im](mailto:fisheries@gov.im)

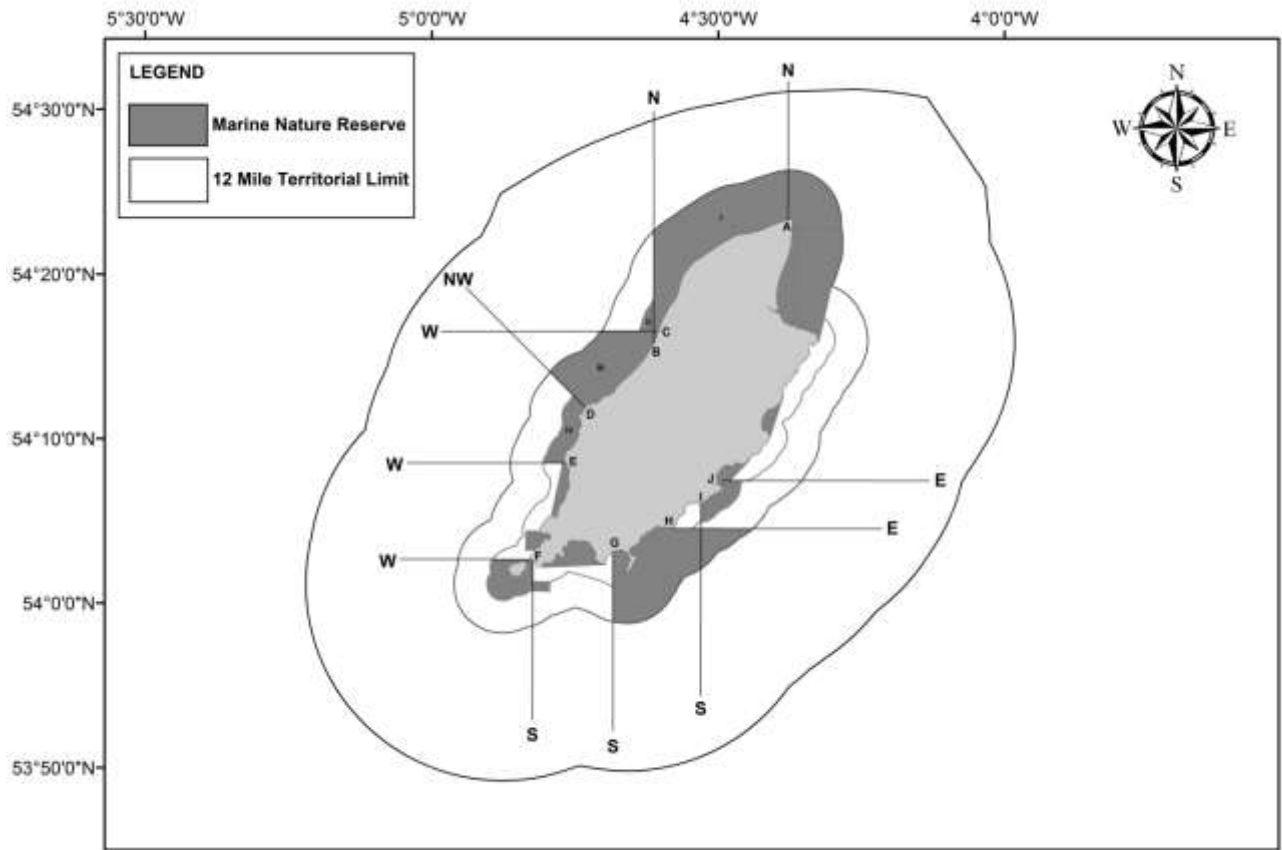


**Figure 1** Overview of marine nature reserves within Manx Territorial Sea Area

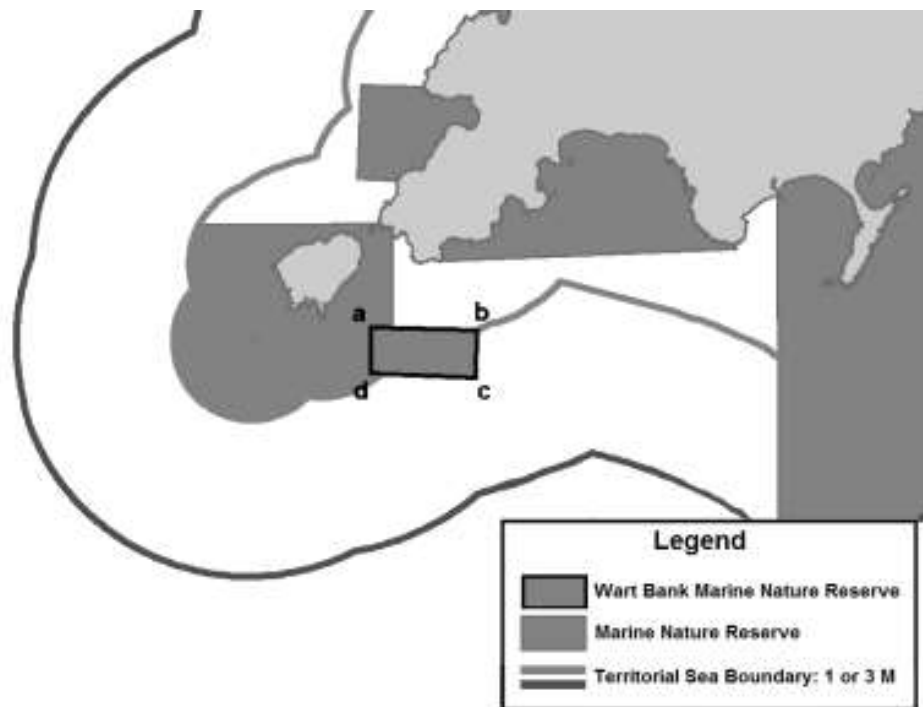
## Description and Coordinates for Marine Nature Reserves

<i>Baie ny Carrickey</i> MNR	means that area of the territorial sea to the north of a line drawn between 2 points at the following co-ordinates — A. Black Head (54° 03.3839' N, 04° 46.2560' W); and B. Scarlett Stack (54° 03.6640' N, 04° 39.9240' W), up to and including the shore up to the Highest Astronomical Tide level (see maps in Figures 1 & 2).
The Calf of Man and Wart Bank Marine Nature Reserve is a single designation but can be divided into 2 sections (Calf of Man, Wart Bank) for ease of plotting	
Calf of Man and Wart Bank MNR (Calf of Man Section)	that area of the territorial sea lying between the Highest Astronomical Tide level and the 1 nautical-mile limit, south of a line projected west from a point F (54° 03.7998' N, 04° 47.2999' W) (in line with Kitterland), and west of a line projected south from a point at F (54° 03.7998' N, 04° 47.2999' W) to the 1 nautical-mile limit (see maps in Figures 1 & 2).
Calf and Wart Bank MNR (Wart Bank Section)	that area of the territorial sea, indicated on the map in Figure 3, and bounded by the following co-ordinates at points: A. 54° 02.5002' N, 04° 48.0000' W; B. 54° 02.5002' N, 04° 45.4000' W; C. 54° 01.9002' N; 04° 45.4000' W; and D. 54° 01.9002' N, 04° 48.0000' W.
Douglas Bay MNR	means that area of the territorial sea to the west of a line drawn between 2 points at the following co-ordinates - the lighthouse at Douglas Head in position 54° 08.6000' N, 04° 27.9500' W; and the most easterly point of Banks Howe in position 54° 10.3500' N, longitude 04° 25.2600' W, up to and including the shore to the Highest Astronomical Tide level (see maps in Figures 1 & 2).
Langness MNR	means that area of the territorial sea lying between the Highest Astronomical Tide level and the 3 nautical-mile limit, east of a line projected south from G (at Castletown Harbour) at 54° 04.3998' N, 04° 39.0000' W and south of a line projected east from H (at Santon Head) at 54° 06.0000' N, 04° 33.0000' W, (see maps in Figures 1 & 2).
Laxey Bay MNR	means that part of the territorial sea to the west of a line drawn between 2 points at the following co-ordinates — the point at Carrick Roayrt in position 54° 14.3742' N, 04° 21.9420' W; and Clay Head in position 54° 11.8044' N, 04° 23.2338' W, up to and including the shore to the Highest Astronomical Tide level (see maps in Figures 1 & 2).
Little Ness MNR	means that area of the territorial sea lying between the Highest Astronomical Tide level and the 1 nautical-mile limit, east of a line projected south from I (Little Ness) at 54° 07.5222' N, 04° 30.1170' W and south of a line projected from J (Conister Rock) at 54° 09.0000' N, 04° 28.0000' W beginning at the seaward boundary of Douglas Bay Marine Nature Reserve to the 1 nautical-mile limit, (see maps in Figures 1 & 2).
Niarbyl Bay MNR	means that area of the territorial sea to the east of a line drawn between 2 points at the following co-ordinates - Elby Point in position 54° 09.7500' N, 04° 44.5602' W; and the headland west of Fleshwick Bay and known as Amulty in position 54° 06.5400' N, 04° 45.6700' W, up to and including the shoreline to the Highest Astronomical Tide level (see maps in Figures 1 & 2).
Port Erin Bay MNR	means that area of the territorial sea from the west coast of the Island and bounded by the following co-ordinates — 54° 05.5500' N, 04° 48.0800' W; 54° 05.5500' N, 04° 46.7800' W; 54° 04.3600' N, 04° 47.2000' W; and 54° 04.3600' N, 04° 48.0800' W, up to and including the Highest Astronomical Tide level (see maps in Figures 1 & 2).

Ramsey Bay MNR	means that area of the territorial sea from the Highest Astronomical Tide level, bounded by a line between the points described by the following co-ordinates — Maughold Head at 54° 17.7186' N, 04° 18.5382' W to a point at; 54° 21.0960' N, 04° 17.2830' W on the 3 nautical-mile limit, then following the 3 nautical-mile limit to a point at; 54° 24.6000' N, 04° 16.4250' W, then following the 3 nautical-mile limit to a point at; 54° 28.0608' N, 04° 22.0999' W on the 3 nautical-mile limit, then south to a point at; (A) 54° 25.0482' N, 04° 22.0999' W on the Highest Astronomical Tide level which is in line with the point; at 54° 24.6000' N, 04° 22.0999' W (on land) (see maps in Figures 1 & 2).
The West Coast Marine Nature Reserve is a single designation but can be divided into 4 parts (i, ii, iii, iv) for ease of plotting (see Figure 2)	
West Coast Marine Nature Reserve (i)	that area of the territorial sea lying between the Highest Astronomical Tide level and the 3 nautical-mile limit, west of a line projected north from A on the Highest Astronomical Tide level at 54° 25.0482' N, 04° 22.0999' W, and east of a line projected north from B (Glen Wyllin) at 54° 16.9998' N, 04° 35.5999' W. See Figure 2.
West Coast Marine Nature Reserve (ii)	that area of the territorial sea lying within the 1 nautical-mile limit, west of a line projected north from B (at Glen Wyllin) at 54° 16.9998' N, 04° 35.5999' W, and north of a line projected west from C (Orrisdale Head) at 54° 18.0012' N, 04° 35.2270' W. See Figure 2.
West Coast Marine Nature Reserve (iii)	that area of the territorial sea lying between the Highest Astronomical Tide level and the 3 nautical-mile limit, south of a line projected west from C (Orrisdale Head) at 54° 18.0012' N, 04° 35.2270' W, and north-east of a line projected north west from D (Thistle Head) at 54° 13.2000' N, 04° 42.4999' W. See Figure 2.
West Coast Marine Nature Reserve (iv)	that area of the territorial sea lying between the Highest Astronomical Tide level and the 1 nautical-mile limit, south-west of a line projected north west from D (Thistle Head) at 54° 13.2000' N, 04° 42.4999' W, and north of a line projected west from E (Elby Point) at 54° 09.7500' North, 04° 44.5602' W. See Figure 2.



**Figure 2** Datum points for plotting marine nature reserves, see text for context.



**Figure 3** Wart Bank Section datum points (see text for context)