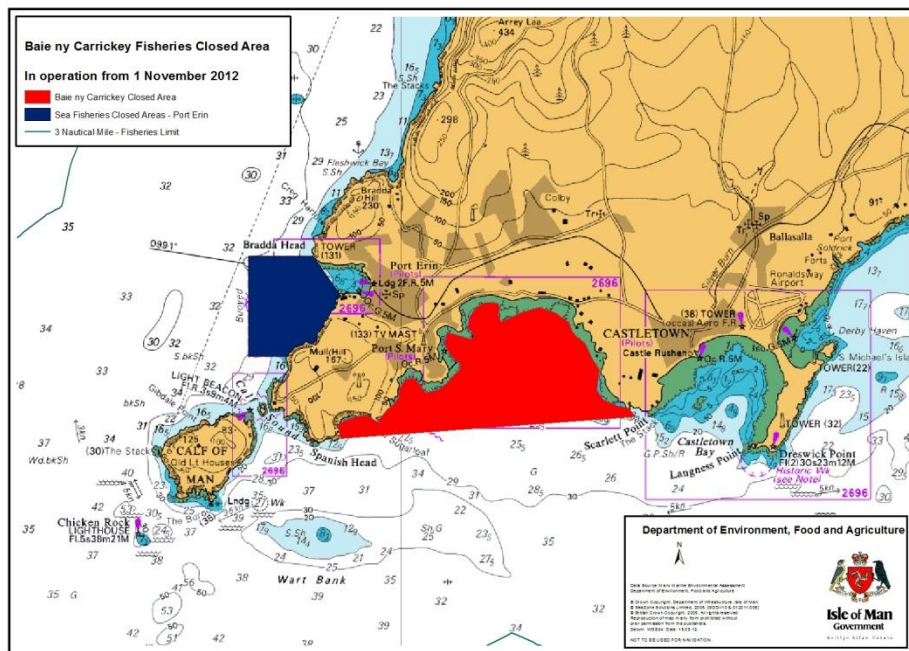




Isle of Man Government

Reiltys Ellan Vannin

Future management options for Baie ny Carrickey



Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture

Rheynn Chymmiltaght, Bee as Eiriny's

Consultation Summary

October 2013

1. Introduction

The work of the Department of Environment Food and Agriculture (DEFA) is guided by the core principles of environmental, economic and social sustainability. In seeking to apply these principles to the fisheries sector, the Department is keen to explore options for safeguarding the sustainability of the fisheries within the Isle of Man territorial sea.

One of these options has been to develop a network of closed areas for various purposes, for example to protect scallop spawning areas and sensitive habitats, and this strategy has been pursued by the Department since 1989. Currently 6 closed areas are in operation, representing 123 km² or 3% of the Manx Territorial Sea.

The most recent trial closure has been Baie ny Carrickey, Port St Mary, where in November 2012, the area was closed to fishing for scallops and queen scallops for a period of 12 months, to protect the rocky habitat, ideal for crab and lobster, from the damaging effects of dredge fishing.

Subsequent to the closure, a group of local fishermen identified an opportunity to develop a local fisheries management plan for lobster and crab, and the Department agreed to a trial period in respect of this. As a result, the area was closed to crab and lobster fishing except to members of the Baie ny Carrickey Crustacean Fishery Management Association and hobby fishermen. A licence was granted by the Department to the Association which required members to comply with a range of measures to reduce fishing effort and ensure that the ecological integrity of the area was maintained.

In July 2013, the Department launched a consultation on the future fisheries management options for Baie ny Carrickey in respect of king and queen scallops and crab and lobster. The consultation document also sought wider views on the best approach to be taken in future when considering inshore Marine Protected Areas and local fisheries management schemes.

The consultation was launched on 18th July 2013 and ended on 23 August 2013. The consultation documents can still be found on the Government's website:

<http://www.gov.im/ConsultationDetail.gov?id=391>

This document summarises the responses received from the consultation process.

2. Summary of Responses

A total of 64 responses were received from the consultation – 57 of these were submitted on the response form and 7 were in letter format.

Of the 64 responses, 45 were from Isle of Man residents, 9 were from the Manx Fish Producers Organisation (also Manx residents), 3 from England, 2 each from Ireland and Scotland and 1 from Wales. Two responses were received from Isle of Man Government Departments.

A summary of the responses received to the questions in each of the 3 sections (section 1: King and Queen Scallops, section 2: Crab and Lobster, section 3: Processes for Local Fisheries Management Schemes) is provided below.

Section 1 King and Queen Scallops

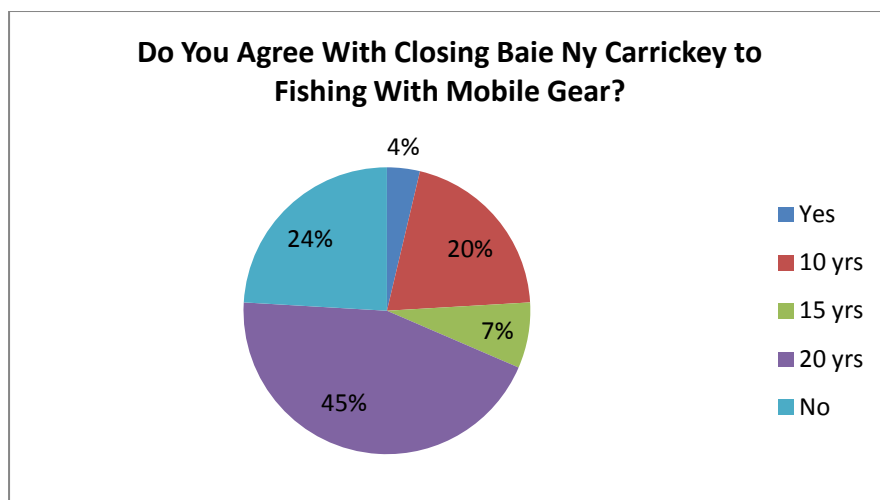
The Department believes that it would be beneficial to extend closure to fishing with mobile gears in Baie ny Carrickey for a prolonged period of time. The evidence from the Port Erin Closed Area and elsewhere indicates that many years are required to ensure habitat recovery and the consequential beneficial effects on biodiversity and fisheries.

Question 1

Do you agree with closing Baie ny Carrickey to fishing with mobile gear?

- if yes, then please indicate preferred period of closure: 10, 15 or 20 years*

The pie chart below demonstrates the overwhelming support (76%) for continued closure of the bay to mobile gear (please note that 'Agree' comments include 'yes', '10', '15' and '20 year' responses).



Of the comments received, the vast majority were in support of the closure as a means of conserving habitat, protecting inshore areas and safeguarding local crab and lobster stocks. Of the negative responses (24%), comments were made on the displacement of effort elsewhere as a result of closed areas and querying the long-term benefits of such closures.

There was a suggestion that the area could be used to trial a dive-caught scallop fishery.

DEFA Response:

The Department will recommend that the Baie ny Carrickey is closed to all mobile gear for a period of 20 years to prevent habitat damage by mobile fishing gear and to protect local stocks of crab and lobster.

However, this closure will be reviewed by the Department after 5 years to determine if adjustments are necessary on the basis of justified fisheries management or socio-economic reasons.

Section 2 Crab and Lobster

The decision to close Baie ny Carrickey to fishing for crab and lobster, except to members of the Baie ny Carrickey Crustacean Fishery Management Association (BNCCFMA) and hobby pot fishermen, was taken to provide an opportunity to trial the impact of capping fishing effort in the fishery.

Alongside the introduction of new and more conservative fishing methods such as an increased minimum landing size for lobsters, the aim of this is to develop a more sustainable fishery, with expected benefits including: increased numbers of crab and lobster and increased reproduction and settlement of juveniles.

To enable a full scientific evaluation of the trial, the Department proposes that fishing with static gear in Baie ny Carrickey be closed for a further 3 years except to members of the Association.

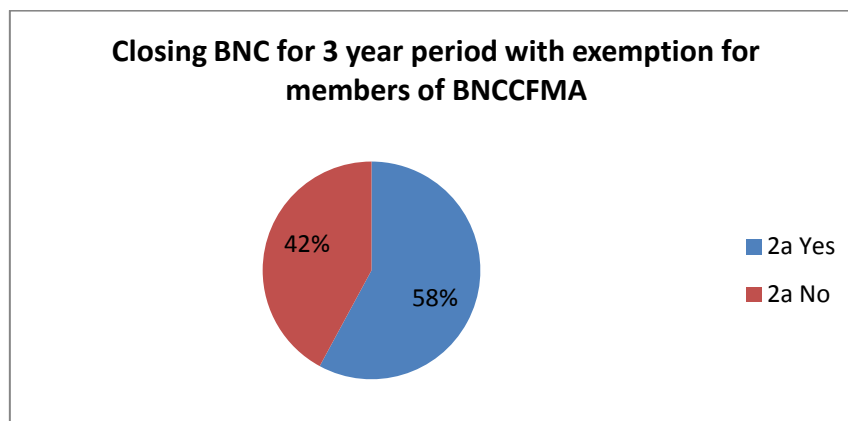
As regards hobby fishermen, current legislation means that there are no restrictions as to where they can fish. As the objective of the trial in Baie ny Carrickey is to test the impact of a reduced fishing effort regime the Department proposes that there be equivalent changes to the access given to hobby fishermen to fish the Baie.

Question 2

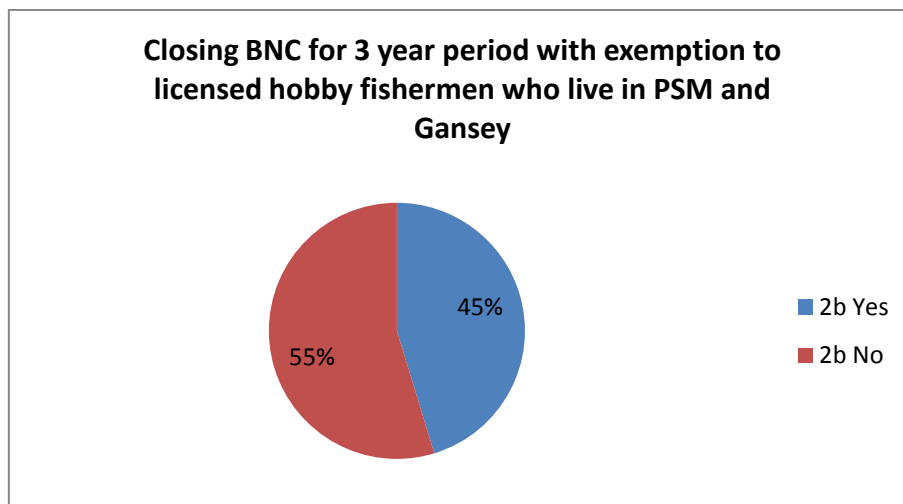
Do you agree with closing Baie ny Carrickey to fishing with static gear for a 3 year period, until October 2016, in order to evaluate the effect of a local area based fisheries management regime, with the exception of:-

- a) Fishermen who are members of the Baie ny Carrickey Crustacean Fishery Management Association?*
- b) Licenced hobby fishermen who live in Port St Mary or Gansey?*

The chart below indicates that 58% of the respondents agreed with the proposal to close the area for a period of 3 years with the exception of members of the Association.



However, 55% of respondents did not agree with the proposed restrictions on licenced hobby pot fishermen:-



DEFA Response:

DEFA will recommend that commercial fishing with static gear in Baie ny Carrickey is closed for a trial period of three years, with the exception of members of the BNCCFMA.

It is further recommended that there is a review of how the trial is set up to ensure the information collected is sufficient to clearly demonstrate the success, or otherwise, of the trial. In addition, Association membership and the licence conditions associated with the trial will be reviewed to ensure that they are both appropriate and reasonable to secure a positive outcome. Both reviews will be conducted by DEFA in conjunction with the BNC Crustacean Fishery Management Advisory Committee, which acts as the independent advisor to the project.

In view of the responses received to the proposed area-based restriction of hobby pot effort, it is recommended that this will not be progressed and there will be no access restrictions imposed on hobby potters in the bay. However, in the context of the fishery management trial, the Department will actively monitor the number of hobby pots and associated catch within the bay, to ensure there is no significant increase in effort. The Department may in future consult on alternative options for an appropriate level of hobby-pot effort limitation in the bay.

Question 3

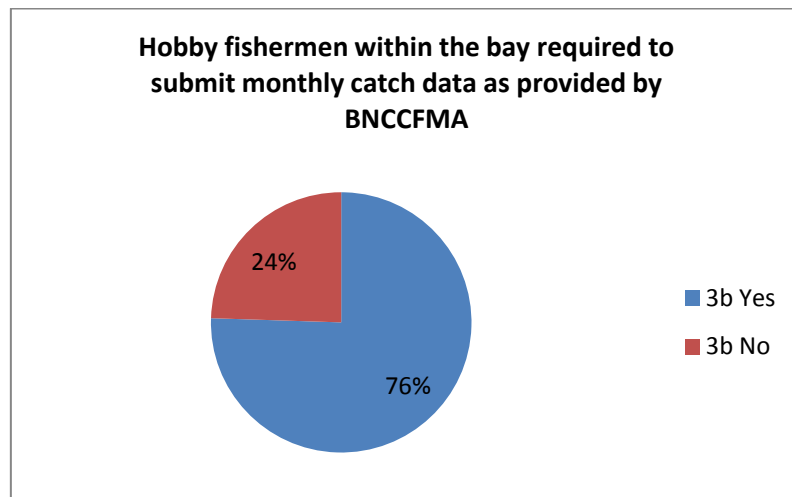
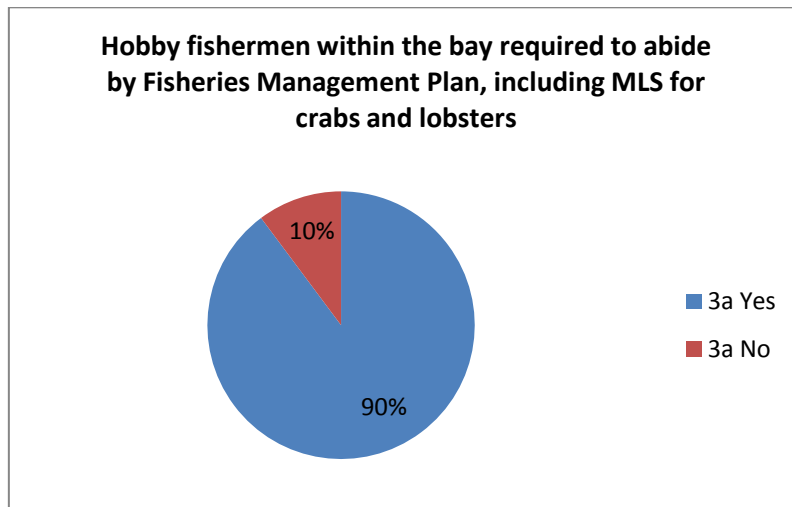
The objective of the trial within Baie ny Carrickey is to test the impact of a reduced effort regime on stocks of crab and lobster in the area. Under the conditions of the Licence, members of the BNCCFMA are required to collect and report data from their catches and also to observe higher minimum landing sizes of both species than those required elsewhere in the territorial sea. The Department proposes that hobby fishermen within Baie ny Carrickey are similarly required to comply with any conditions imposed under a Fishery Management Plan including minimum landing sizes and data collection.

Would it be reasonable to implement the following measures in respect of hobby fishermen:

- a) Hobby fishermen to be required to abide by the conditions of the Fisheries Management Plan including the MLS for crab and lobster (currently 135mm and 88mm respectively)?*

b) Hobby fishermen to be required to send in monthly data sheets as provided by the Baie ny Carrickey Fishery Management Association?

The pie-charts below show that there was considerable support for both of these proposals:-



Comments made in response to the proposals put forward for crab and lobster included views that there should be no restrictions on hobby potters as their catch is negligible, and there was strong opposition to access restriction by post code. There were many comments in favour of the hobby potters complying with the same conditions of licence as required by the Association.

DEFA Response:

It is recommended that there is no immediate restriction on the use of hobby pots in Baie ny Carrickey, however any hobby potters fishing the area must comply with the same conditions of licence as the Association e.g. minimum landing sizes and monthly, rather than annual collection of data. In time, as this data is assessed, there may be a need for specific hobby pot restrictions to be introduced, e.g. reduction in pot allocation, particularly if recreational effort and catches appear to be increasing.

There will be increased monitoring by DEFA of all pot fishing activity within the bay to ensure compliance with trial conditions.

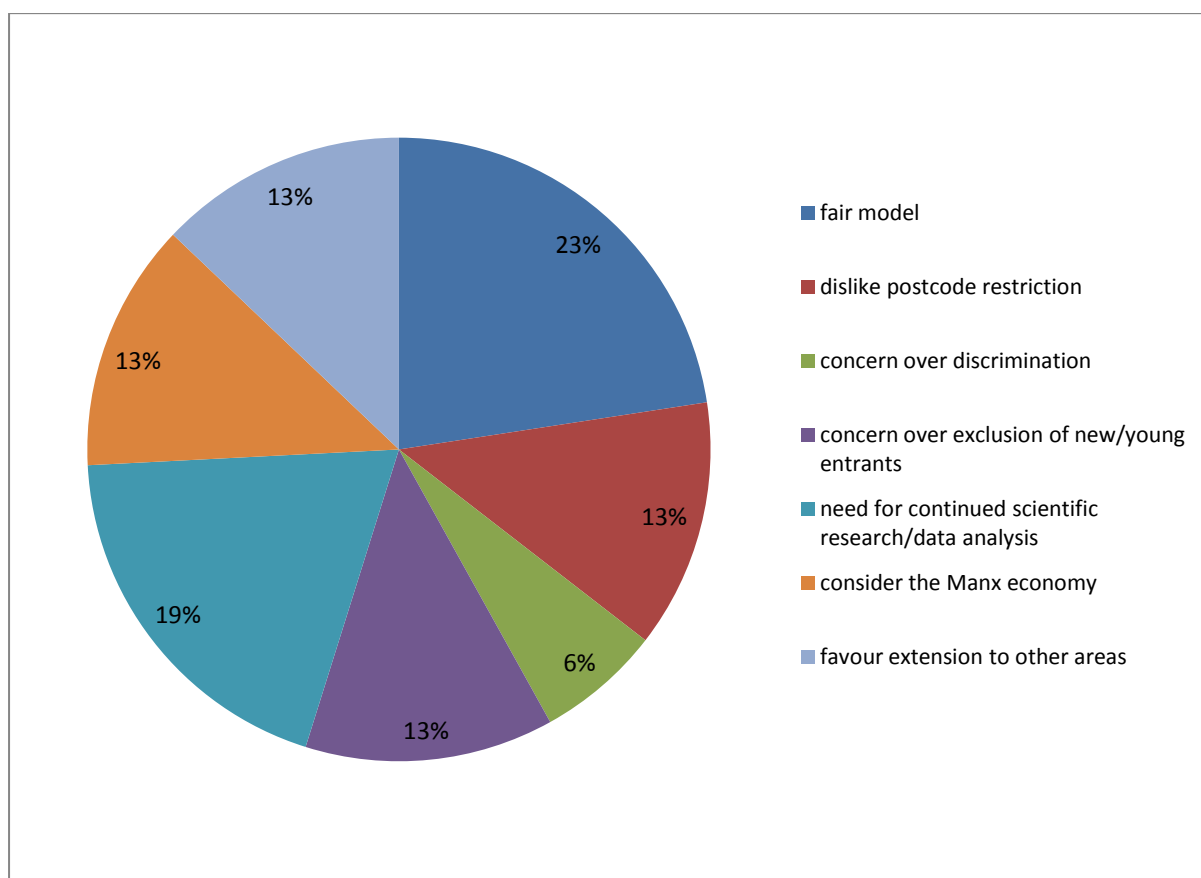
Section 3 Processes for local fisheries management schemes

The concept of local fishery management areas is increasingly being implemented globally and the Department is keen to develop a model for how future local fishery management options may be trialled elsewhere within the territorial sea.

Question 4

A suggested process, set out as a 5-step model was included in the consultation document and comments invited on its appropriateness along with an invitation for the submission of alternative views for the process.

The pie chart below shows the range of responses/concerns received about the model.



Overall, the comments considered the model to be fair and sensible, and many respondents commented on the need for continuing science and research to support local fisheries management schemes. There was some level of support for the concept to be extended to other areas. However, some respondents expressed concern over possible discrimination with some fishermen being favoured over others, and other comments noted the risk of the exclusion of young or new fishermen.

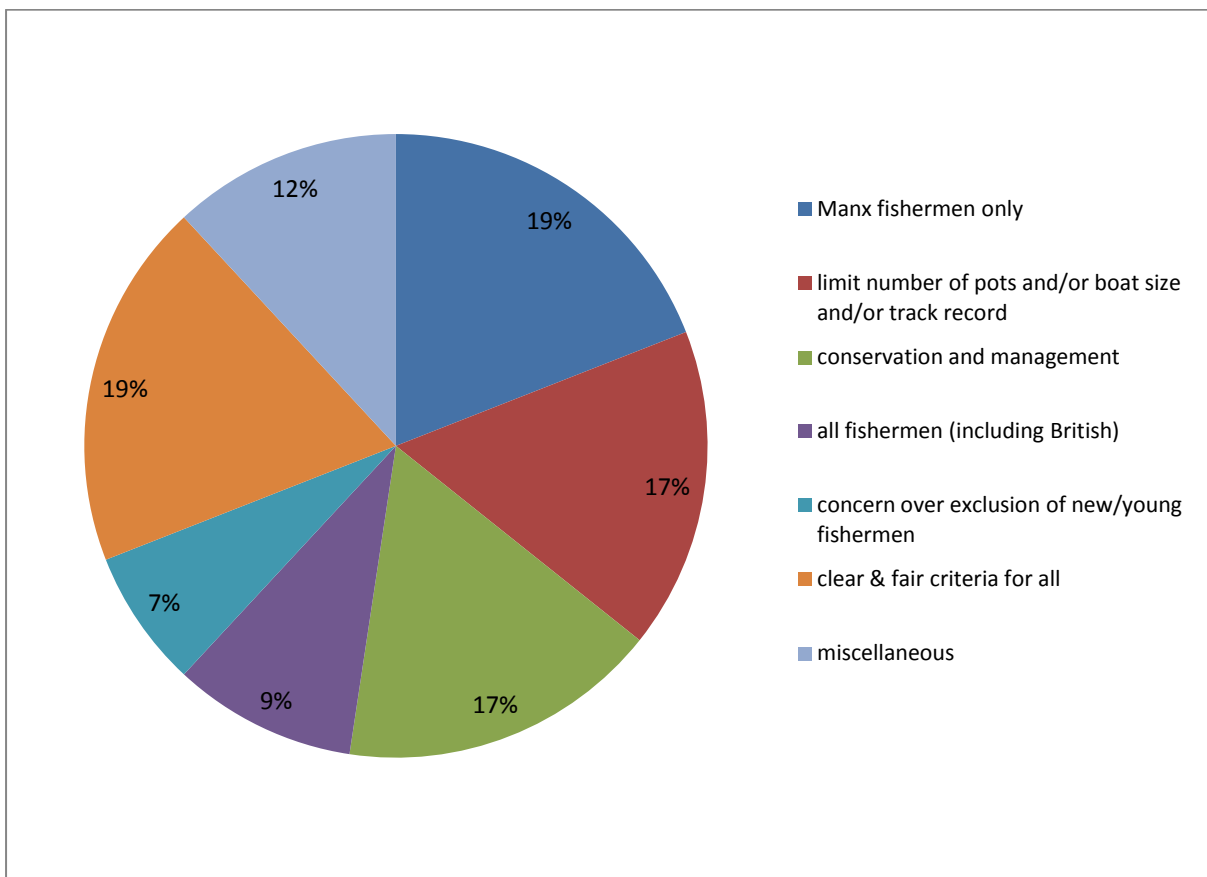
DEFA response:

The Department propose to use the model as a basis for considering local fisheries management arrangements in closed areas in future, bearing in mind the comments received and taking into account the concerns expressed. All decisions on future closed areas and fisheries management plans will be based on, and justified by, sound science.

Question 5

Consultees were asked to submit their views on which criteria should be used to determine the membership of any organisation set up to manage a local fishery management plan, bearing in mind that the majority of such schemes are most likely to be designed on the basis of securing a sustainable fishery.

The pie chart reflects the wide range of responses received on this question, with 19% of respondents supporting a policy of only allowing Manx fishermen to manage local fisheries management schemes. Many of the responses cited conservation and sustainable fishing as valid criteria for consideration, along with fairness in the process. Additional ideas included track records, boat size and the need to consider/specifically include young and new entrants.



DEFA Response:

The Department is committed to the concept of inshore closed areas as important fisheries conservation and management tools and aims to further develop this initiative within the Isle of Man territorial waters in conjunction with appropriate scientific research.

However, at the same time, any future local fishery management schemes within closed areas will depend entirely on the specifics of an individual closed area and in many cases a local management plan may not be appropriate. Where a scheme does appear to be feasible, or is offered for potential development by DEFA, the criteria will be based first and

foremost on the promotion of fisheries conservation and sustainable fishing, and with due consideration of the points raised during this consultation.

Outcomes

As a result of this consultation exercise, the following actions are proposed:

- For the protection of inshore areas and the conservation of local crab and lobster populations, Baie ny Carrickey will be closed to mobile fishing gear for a period of 20 years, with a review after 5 years;
- Fishing with static gear within the Baie ny Carrickey will be restricted to the Baie ny Carrickey Crustacean Fishery Management Association and hobby pot fishermen for a trial period of three years;
- The Licence, Fishery Management Plan and membership criteria of the Association will be reviewed and amended if necessary to reflect the need for an appropriate and fair level of fishing effort, the collection of sound scientific data and to ensure that the outcome of the trial can be demonstrated;
- Hobby pot fishermen will not be restricted from fishing within the Bay, but they will be required to comply with the same or similar conditions as the Association, such as MLS and data collection;
- DEFA will continue to promote the concept of inshore closed areas as a means of conservation and fisheries management where appropriate, and any decisions on new closed areas will be based on scientific justification/research and an appropriate decision-making/review process;
- The adoption of any future local fishery management schemes will similarly be based on an appropriate aim, proposal and monitoring programme in line with the objectives of achieving fair and sustainable fisheries for the Isle of Man.

Timescale

The current byelaw governing the closure of Baie ny Carrickey ends on 31 October 2013. A new byelaw is to be drafted to enable continuation of the closure and for the trial management of the crab and lobster fishery to continue from 1 November 2013.