



## News and Events Update

December 2011

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### Dear Subscriber,

Welcome to the December edition of the North West Coastal Forum's News and Events Update. Click the links to read the full articles on our website. Please also please find attached a PDF version with full articles, if you prefer to download and read at your leisure.

Kind regards,

Alasdair, NWCF

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## NWCF News

### Not Just Donkeys on the Beach

December 13, 2011

The British Horse Society and the North West Coastal Forum are working together on an initial audit of horse riding access along the North West coast (between Chester and Carlisle). The audit is in the form of a short survey for horse riders using the North West coast and will contribute towards the establishment of a North West Coastal Trail which would include access for equestrians. The survey will run from December 2011 to March 2012.

In order to proceed on equestrian access improvements we need to prove demand and potential for this route so we have developed a survey which will collect evidence on where access is already good, where access is OK but not secure and where access needs improving or creating. This information will be used by both the British Horse Society and North West Coastal Forum to help develop better access for horse-riders in North West England and will also help with any potential funding we may apply for to take the Trail project forward.

Over 2500 BHS members in the North West have been sent the survey, but anyone with knowledge of equestrian access along or to the North West's coast is welcome to participate. We don't expect everyone to be able to give us all the information requested but any information given, no matter how little, will be really useful.

A letter explaining in more detail about what the survey hopes to achieve, and the survey itself, are available to download from the [publications page](#). For more information on the North West Coastal Trail see the Trail page on this website.

## Accessing the North West Coast

December 2, 2011

A report summarising the findings of the North West Coastal Forum's June 2011 workshop and associated consultation is now available. The event explored the fit between the national coastal access scheme and the North West Coastal Trail project and sought views on current access work being undertaken or planned which will help to implement the Trail on the ground, together with issues and opportunities for future investment. The report summarises existing and planned actions and opportunities on a county basis and also explores what actions might be undertaken by a range of organisations to progress multi-user access to and along the North West Coast.

The report can be [downloaded here](#).

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## Regional News

### Identifying Bacterial Pollution from Source to Sea in the NW

December 14, 2011

The Environment Agency has begun a project to discover sources of bacterial pollution affecting sea water quality in the North West. The NW has 31 bathing beaches, all of which are subject to more stringent standards under the [revised European Bathing Water Directive](#), which the EA will begin monitoring for in 2012. Although there have been huge improvements in sewage treatment at the coast, the quality of the water can be affected by bacterial input as far as 10km upstream. This project, which will run until January 2012, involves Environment Agency contractors walking 1100km along the region's rivers and streams, looking for anything, including drains, septic tanks and sewer overflows, that might affect water quality.

More specific information can be found on the project website: [www.environment-agency.gov.uk/nwwalkovers](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/nwwalkovers)

### Extended Timetable for Marine Conservation Zones

December 14, 2011

The Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) Project's timetable has been extended. The Irish Sea Conservation Zones (ISCZ) group recommended 19 MCZs in its project area; and ISCZ was one of four regional groups whose stakeholders worked together to recommend a total of 127 MCZs. What happens next?

- 8<sup>th</sup> September 2011: ISCZ handed its final recommendations to an independent Science Advisory Panel for analysis; and to the Government's statutory nature conservation advisers – Natural England and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) – to write an impact assessment.
- 15<sup>th</sup> November 2011: Richard Benyon, Fisheries Minister at Defra, extended the MCZ Project's timetable.

- July 2012: Natural England and the JNCC will provide the MCZ impact assessment and their formal advice to Defra.
- End of 2012: Defra will run a formal consultation, when the public can have their say.
- 2013: After the formal consultation, Defra will analyse responses and make any revisions to the impact assessment to help inform the Government's decisions on designating individual MCZ sites.
- 2013: Government will designate MCZs in phases, with phase one planned for 2013.
- Management measures: to be decided by relevant authorities – including Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authorities and the Marine Management Organisation – after MCZs are designated.

To read the Written Ministerial Statement, visit: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2011/11/15/wms-marine-conservation-zones/>

## NWIFCA Quarterly Meeting

**December 9, 2011**

The North Western Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NWIFCA) held its quarterly meeting on December 6th. The papers from this meeting, including detailed reporting on the closure and possible future of the [Ribble Estuary cockle beds](#), are available to download from the [organisation's website](#).

## Otters return to the River Mersey

**December 6, 2011**

Otters footprints have been spotted on the banks of the River Mersey near Fiddlers Ferry. The discovery of the tracks has been hailed as yet more hard evidence that of the river's improving quality which, according to the Environment Agency, is the cleanest it's been since the early 1900s.

The full story and a video can be viewed on the [BBC website](#).

## Government confirms Liverpool Coastguard Closure

**November 23, 2011**

The Government have unveiled revised plans to their [proposed cuts to UK Coastguard services](#), but has confirmed that Liverpool coastguard will be one of the centres to close.

Full details can be found in the [BBC report](#).

## New Mersey River Terminal gets Funding Boost

**November 17, 2011**

Liverpool's new £210m river terminal is set to go ahead after vital investment was secured to dredge the Mersey. Sefton Council have won conditional backing from the Government's Regional Growth Fund (RGF) to pay for the deepening of the river bed by 16m. This will allow large post-Panamax vessels and pave the way for Peel Ports to build its new 'in-river' terminal.

For more information, read the [Liverpool Echo article](#).

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## National News

### MSC Supermarket Seafood Survey 2011

December 12, 2011

The Marine Conservation Society has published the results of their 2011 supermarket seafood survey, which aimed to find out which major supermarkets were the most sustainable in terms of the seafood sold. The supermarkets were scored in four areas: their policy, seafood sales, labelling and consumer information, and sustainability initiatives, and ultimately, the Co-op and Marks and Spencer came out with the Gold Award.

To see the full set of results, click here to visit the [MCS website](#).

### Good Fish Guide iPhone app

December 12, 2011

Building on the success of their pocket and web versions of the Good Fish Guide, the Marine Conservation Society has released an iPhone app. The app is free to download from [the Apple store](#), and gives users access to the most up-to-date sustainable seafood advice right when they need it. To read more about the Good Fish Guide and it's various versions, including the app, visit the [MCS Good Fish Guide website](#).

### Latest Shellfish News Published

December 9, 2011

Cefas has published the latest edition of Shellfish News, of interest to the British shellfish farming and harvesting industry.

Download the Autumn/Winter 2011 edition from the [Cefas website](#).

### Marine Conservation Zones Project Newsletter 7

November 29, 2011

The MCZ project has published its latest newsletter, explaining in more detail ongoing work and the reasons for a revised timetable for MCZ designation, as well as information on the Scientific Advice Panel (SAP) and the MCZ impact assessment.

Download the newsletter from the Defra website here: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-6007>

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## International News

### 'Eye on Earth' Global Mapping and Information Service

December 14, 2011

A new global web service allowing users to create maps and visualise data on environmental issues is now live. The new 'Eye on Earth' global public information service brings together vast amounts of data about the environment in a powerful, visual format.

The web service, developed jointly by the European Environment Agency (EEA), the geographic information system developer Esri and Microsoft, is aimed at everyone, from scientists to academics, NGOs to individuals. Users can not only view information, but also upload their own data, potentially filling crucial knowledge gaps.

For more information on the project, visit the [EEA project website](#). Alternatively, visit the map directly: <http://eyeonearth.org>

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## Open Consultations

### Revocation of Regional Spatial Strategy

Click link above for more information - **closes 20th January 2012**

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## Conferences and Events

For information on upcoming relevant conferences and events, please visit the Events page on our webpage: <http://www.nwcoastalforum.org.uk/events/>