

**NWIFCA Technical, Science and Byelaw
Committee**

11th of February 2025: 10:00 a.m.

**Agenda
Item**

5

Morecambe Bay Oral Histories Project

Purpose: To provide a an update on the Oral histories project undertaken by Natural England on the Morecambe Bay cockle fisheries

Recommendation: Receive presentation

1. Overview

Dr Pamela Buchan (University of Exeter) and Dr Sien Van Der Plank (University of Southampton) will be presenting findings from the Morecambe Bay component of a research project that explores cultural values and responses to change events in coastal communities. This has been done through using an oral history interview-based approach. The aim of the research is to better understand how people's values can be included in local decision-making about the management of the coast and sea. It has been commissioned by Natural England with funding from Defra's marine Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment programme.

The research in Morecambe Bay has focused on cockle fishing and its management because the NWIFCA is interested in exploring how to take more account of cultural and social values and experiences into decision-making, recognising these can be varied. This study is helping explore how an oral history approach might capture those diverse values. The oral histories in Morecambe Bay have been gathered by Clarke Film and Media: 15 interviews were conducted with people associated with cockle fishing in the past and present, and five with people who are not cockle fishers.

These interviews have been analysed by the small research team from the Universities of Exeter and Southampton. The presentation will give an outline of the research methodology and the theoretical framework that has informed it, as well as an overview of the main findings. We hope it will lead to some discussion after the presentation about the use of such findings in decision-making, particularly on cockle fishery management.

29th January 2025.