



Cornwall & Isles of Scilly
Marine & Coastal
Partnership



Cornwall
Wildlife Trust

Fal and Helford Charter of the Sea Community Workshop



Falmouth Marine
Conservation
Community • Collaboration • Conservation

HELFOED
VOLUNTARY MARINE
CONSERVATION AREA

March 2024

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Workshop Report

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Introduction

This work is part of the Cornwall 3Cs Project which funded the launch of the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Marine and Coastal Partnership (MCP). More information can be found at [Coastal Partnerships | Cornwall Wildlife Trust](#). The MCP officially launched as on February 22nd 2024 with the overall vision being:

‘By working collaboratively, the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Marine and Coastal Partnership will support the delivery of resilient marine and coastal ecosystems and the growth they can deliver through collaboration, joint solutions and community-based capacity building.’

The work on the Fal and Helford Charter of the Seas allows us to bring the community voice to the MCP to represent the communities marine and coastal priorities.

The Fal and Helford Charter of the Sea project is being led by the MCP with input from the local Your Shore network members: Falmouth Marine Conservation Group and Helford Marine Conservation Group.

The community focused workshop took place on Thursday 7th March 2024, 5.30-8.00pm at National Maritime Museum Cornwall, Falmouth. The workshop was open to all members of the community, primarily targeted at those from the Falmouth and Helford areas. We had 82 people sign-up for the event and 68 attendees. Following presentations from the local Your Shore network groups (see agenda below), the focus of the workshop was to discuss and create a new plan of action to promote nature recovery in their local marine environment, entitled the ‘Charter of the Sea’. This included local marine conservation priorities; current actions and community projects; and what resources and capacity there is already within the local community. This initial workshop is the first in a series of planned engagement events to create a full Charter of the Sea for Fal and Helford. The method for this process will mainly follow that of the production of the Mounts Bay Charter of the Sea. As well as looking at the local conservation priorities, the Fal and Helford Charter of the Sea will incorporate current initiatives that are working towards marine conservation in the local area. This charter will then be brought to the MCP and Fal & Helford SAC management forum to be used to guide commitments from stakeholder organisations and decisions involving relevant projects.



Pic 1. Workshop attendees during discussion and workshop

Agenda

March 7th 2024

Time	Session	Speaker/Participant	Duration
17:30	Arrival & registration	ALL	30mins
18:00	Welcome and Introduction	Jenny Wright	5mins
18:05	Mounds Bay Charter of the Sea	Katie Bellman	10mins
18:15	Helford Marine Conservation	Sue Scott	5mins
18:20	Falmouth Marine Conservation	Meg Hayward-Smith	10mins
18:30	Introduction to workshop	Jenny Wright	5mins
18:40	Fal and Helford Charter of the Sea – Workshop and group discussions	ALL	75mins
19:50	Next steps/Closing	Jenny Wright	10mins

Slides from the presentations can be seen in Appendix A.

Workshop & Group Discussion Outcomes

Various questions were asked to help guide the conversations. The aim was to gain a holistic overview of marine conservation priorities and efforts in the Fal and Helford areas.

Guiding questions included:

- What are the marine conservation priorities for your community?
- What are some successful marine conservation initiatives you've heard of or are involved in, locally?
- What role can local businesses, schools, industry, statutory bodies etc. play in marine conservation, locally? And how can we better support this?
- What role can you play in local marine conservation?
Are there any key connection or opportunities that you can bring to help drive action towards local marine conservation priorities?

Attendees were asked to record the key elements of their discussion on flip chart and post it notes (a full write up of all responses can be found in Appendix B). These outcomes have been consolidated into 10 categories for the local marine conservation priorities of the Fal and Helford which forms the initial draft of the Fal and Helford Charter of the Sea. A separate list has also been created showing current and past project, initiatives and community groups that have involvement in marine conservation within Fal and Helford.

Draft Charter of the Sea for Fal & Helford

Pollution

- Reduce abandonment of boats – work with local authorities, harbours, and stakeholders
- Reduce pollution direct from boats e.g. bilge and black water outputs
- Recycling bins on all beaches
- Seagull-proof bins around coastal areas
- More frequent bin collections especially during peak tourist season
- Lobby for legislation on leisure vessels to have holding tanks and not to discharge sewage into sea

Plastic pollution

- Work with local business and local authority to reduce single use plastic

- Ban fly rings, helium balloons and Chinese lanterns – lobby Cornwall Council
- Engage with local businesses to increase plastic-free beach toys in local shops
- Introduce a recycling/hire scheme for beach toys and bodyboards
- Increase number of public water stations
- Lobby local authorities, government and global brands to change policy on single use plastic

Inland impact

- Stricter laws, fines and testing by independent bodies for water companies
- SWW to invest in sewage infrastructure locally
- More monitoring of road run-off, work with highway agency
- Physical alerts and signage on beaches to warn of spills ALL YEAR ROUND
- Work with farmers to reduce run-off e.g. plant rows perpendicular to slope/sea, tree planting and riparian restoration
- Water quality testing at the source points (CSOs) and beaches

Tourism & recreation

- Introduce a tourist tax e.g. boat tours and cruise ships
- Implement a sustainable business stamp
- Public information signage at coastal hotspots e.g. highlighting local species and habitats
- More engagement with local recreational boating community, looking at impacts and mitigation
- Raise awareness of marine disturbance e.g. encourage participation in the WISE training scheme
- Enforce boating speed limits

Education

- Educational Resources for accommodation providers (Air BnBs, hotels, campsites etc.)
- After-school Beach Clubs & marine and conservation focussed youth groups
- Target all generations from nursery to pensioner
- Marine conservation boat trips for schools and other educational organisations
- More outreach education in schools
- Education resources for yachting and boating communities e.g. anti-foulant and waste information

Engagement

- Make use of social media to raise awareness, not just of the issues but positive stories and how to get involved
- Ensure engagement events are inclusive and accessible for all
- Engage more with cruise groups to highlight local marine information and Fal & Helford as an eco-tourism destination
- Raise awareness of current and on-going projects with talks and stalls etc.
- Engage with and utilise local academic and educational institutes and their research

Protections & restoration

- More areas of protection and no take zones
- Expand on the current voluntary no-anchor zones
- Create legally protected areas around the seagrass rather than just voluntary
- Encourage the installation or change to advance mooring systems to better protect seagrass etc.

- More restoration activity both passive and active e.g. AMS in the harbours and planting seagrass in the Helford
- Encourage use of reef cubes and bio-blocks in new developments

Development & sustainable water use

- Lobby Government and local authorities to put in building regulations and legislation for developers to have to invest in infrastructure e.g. sewage
- More engagement around seaweed aquaculture – benefits and impacts
- More engagement around sustainable water use from water companies and local authorities
- Lobby local authority and developers to build in sustainable water use plans on all new developments

Fisheries

- Engage more with local fishers, encouraging knowledge sharing and sustainable fishing practices
- County wide scheme for recovery of big nets or government coordinated recovery
- Promote and subsidize plastic-free fishing
- Ghost net & discarded gear clean-ups and incentives to hand in old/damaged fishing gear/ checks to make sure they return with the same amount of gear
- Engage with local anglers around regulations and recording their catch
- Work with fishers and stakeholders to reduce use of micro-filament netting

Research & data

- More survey work to map habitats to aid in proper protection designations
- Develop 'living labs' where people can more easily access the local marine environment
- More accessible mapping information for non-academics
- More engagement around citizen science, training and how to get involved in research & data collection
- More monitoring of microplastics and the impacts
- More monitoring of invasive species, especially Pacific Oysters

Local Projects & Initiatives

- **Plastic Free Communities** (Mylor, Falmouth, Penryn, Helford River)
 - Community cleans
 - Working with businesses to reduce single-use plastic
 - **Plastic Free Falmouth**
 - Beach toy libraries – project currently scoping for Plastic Free Falmouth
 - Looking into potential single-use plastic free zones
 - Monthly community cleans
- **Friends of Mylor Creek**
 - Water quality monitoring
 - Boat wreck clearance
- **Falmouth Marine school**
 - Community cleans
- **Sand safe**
 - Initiative by Falmouth Town Council, Plastic Free Falmouth and others
- **CWT-led initiatives**
 - Sea Quest
 - Shore Search
- **Sailors Creek community interest company**

- Promoting better environment amongst liveaboard communities and local creek (e.g. reed bed to filter grey water and composting toilet to reduce waste being pumped into creek)
- **Falmouth Harbour**
 - seawall tiles
 - removal of swing moorings
 - sea bin
 - cleaner sailor
- **FMC**
 - Seagrass
 - Sea Quest
 - Rock pooling
 - Cetacean trend tracking
 - Pacific Oysters
- **Pendennis Community hub**
 - support to get pool working. So local kids can learn to swim
- **Other**
 - SAS
 - Flyer campaign about seals and safe frisbees was successful in Cornwall
 - Native oyster project in Helford (ZSL)
 - Shelly – recycling oyster shells (WBG)
 - Yellow fish
 - Clean Ocean Sailing
 - Water quality monitoring with WCRT
 - Soul Farm – local farming – reduce soil erosion
 - Seeds for change
 - Nurdle project – Truro and Falmouth

Next Steps

The 10 categories for the local conservation priorities will now be put into a survey form to be completed by local community members. The survey will be promoted at local events; talks will be offered for local groups; and it will be advertised in local mailing lists such as the MCP e-Newsletter. The survey will ask people to rank the priorities within each category from most important to least. There will also be an option to add other priorities if people feel there is something that has been missed from the list. The survey will be open for 8 weeks and will be advertised at many local events and promoted at local community groups. An example of what the survey might look like can be found [here](#).

A second workshop will be held after the survey has been complete, taking the top three priorities from each of the ten categories and looking at what projects or initiatives can be undertaken by the community and/or how the MCP can incorporate those priorities into delivery plans. These priorities and actions will be the basis for the final Fal and Helford Charter of the Sea.