

Protecting The Wash and North Norfolk's marine environment

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The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) is inviting local people, coastal communities and all those who enjoy spending time in or on the water in The Wash and North Norfolk area to join their upcoming workshops.

MMO is hosting five upcoming (Your Coast – Explore, Enjoy and Protect) workshops in The Wash and North Norfolk region, with online options included. These workshops aim to give everyone the opportunity to shape the future management of marine recreational activities in The Wash and North Norfolk's precious marine protected areas. This could include activities such as diving, sailing, kitesurfing, kayaking, powerboating, anchoring and wildlife watching.

This is also a chance for people to learn about MMO's proposals and to share their views.

The Wash and North Norfolk coast is home to two nationally important marine protected areas: the Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) and The Wash and North Norfolk Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC). This stretch of coastline is also home to more than 90% of England's protected harbour seal population.

Topics of discussion include:

- Anchoring activity
- Wildlife watching boat tours
- Seal disturbance
- The removal of abandoned, lost and discarded fishing gear during diving activities

MMO will present its findings so far on how these activities may be impacting the area's protected marine environment, before inviting participants to share their local knowledge and shape its next steps.

Jessica Churchill-Bissett, Head of Marine Conservation (Wildlife), said:

North Norfolk's coastline is truly special, from the chalk beds off Cromer to the seal colonies of The Wash, these are nationally and internationally important marine environments. But protecting them well means understanding how people use and value the sea locally.

We want to hear from divers, boat operators, wildlife watchers, and anyone who enjoys spending time on the water and wants to help us balance marine recreation with the need to protect the natural environment.

Your knowledge and experience are genuinely important to us, and these workshops are a real opportunity to shape how we manage these areas for the benefit of both nature

and the communities that depend on it.

The Your Coast – Explore, Enjoy, Protect workshops are as follows:

- Cromer: Tuesday 24 March, 6pm to 8pm
- The Wash and North Norfolk: Wells Maltings, Wednesday 25 March, 10:30am to 12pm
- Seals in The Wash: Wells Maltings, Wednesday 25 March, 1pm to 3pm
- Cromer Online Event: Wednesday 1 April, 2pm to 3pm
- The Wash and North Norfolk Online Event: Wednesday 1 April, 4pm to 5pm

For more details, locations and to register to attend, please visit register via Ticket Tailor

Seal resting on the sand

Additional Information

These events will not cover shoreside activities or the management of fishing activities.

The Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ and The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC form part of the UK's contribution to the international network of marine protected areas (MPAs), supporting biodiversity and ecosystem services vital to both nature and local livelihoods.

MMO is the government body responsible for the sustainable development of England's seas.

For more information on the MMO's work on marine non-licensable activities, visit: Managing marine non-licensable activities in marine protected areas - GOV.UK

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/protecting-the-wash-and-north-norfolks-marine-environment>