

Thanet Fishermen's Association.

[REDACTED],
Ramsgate,
Kent.
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18.10.22

Kent and Essex Consultation Cockle Fishery review.

Dear Members of the KEIFCA committee,

I was a Fisherman and have been a representative of Thanet Fishermen for many years. I previously sat on the Kent and Essex Sea Fisheries Committee, am the Secretary of Thanet Fishermen's Association and write to you on my members behalf. I was on the committee when we drafted the original Cockle order 30 years ago with the aim that it would be reviewed after 30 years.

When we drafted the order, we stated that it would not be transferrable, indeed my brother who fished with the Sun Reve R13, was granted a Cockle license. He fished for Cockles with a towed dredge, when this method was banned he did not wish to change to suction. In compliance with the order, he surrendered his license.

I understand subsequently there was a judicial review which changed the interpretation of the order and granted extra suction licenses and the licenses were made transferrable by attaching them to companies. Consequently, this made the licenses very valuable. This was against the spirit of the thinking when the order was originally drawn up.

Now if it cannot be changed, now is the time to consider the various options available under the review. On behalf of the members of TFA, we consider the New Jamaica option as giving the best opportunity for small scale Fishermen to partake in a fishery which has been closed to them for nearly 30 years. It is a public resource and as such, should be opened up to support a small-scale fishery.

Also, the seven-year review is extremely important because any mistakes and adjustments can be revisited at this time. Small-scale Fishermen need additional opportunities, as we have witnessed the collapse, for whatever reason, of the fin fishery and the tightening of quotas over the last 30 years. Many of our vessels in Thanet, and within the estuary, work single handed (1 person per vessel) due to the lack of opportunity within species and quotas available to them at the moment.

Under the New Jamaica option there would be additional opportunities at certain times of the year to strengthen and support the inshore fleet. TFA would like to add that it does not support an increase in the number of suction dredgers.

The TFA Chairman, John Nichols, has not been part of this decision making process.

Unfortunately, I am not able to attend the review meeting due to my wife being an invalid, and additional personal reasons.

Yours Sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.

T.H.Brown MBE.
Secretary Thanet Fishermens Association.