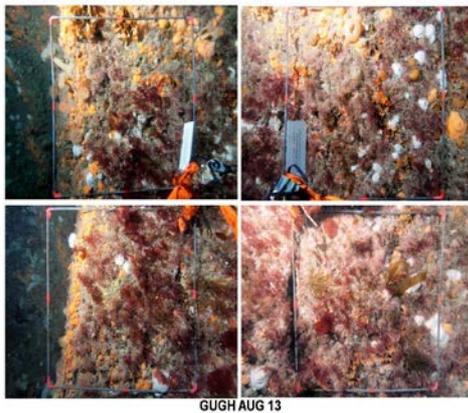




From the IFCA Meeting

We said goodbye to two officers who sit on the Committee at the meeting held on January 27th. Kate Sugar, the Marine Advisor from Natural England who is now on maternity leave and Callum Gough, the Senior Marine Officer from the Marine Management Organisation who is to take up another post within the MMO. The replacement for Kate will be Rob Seebold, but Callum's replacement is not known at this moment.

Data Logging – this project has now reached the end of the initial 3-year phase and the IFCA was presented with the interim report by Professor Steve Hill of Plymouth University, Tim Allsop and Anna Cawthray. The photographic records of the impact the storms we experienced last year when protected species such as Plumrose anemones were ripped out on Gugh Reef were amazing and go some way to asserting that most damage is caused by natural events rather than the impacts of



fishing. The project, assuming that support funding may be found, will continue for a further three years.

Future of the IFCA – as mentioned before in previous newsletters, the IFCA is a statutory function and must be carried out in our district. Because of the new responsibilities (particularly over marine conservation) as a result of the Marine and Coastal Access Act, the government were obliged to provide new burdens funding to support it. That funding will run out in March 2016 and it is unknown at the moment if any more will be available because of two events – the General Election and the

subsequent Comprehensive Spending Review by whichever government is in place, so a few known unknowns there..

Lobster and Crawfish Tagging

As the new season is approaching quickly here is a brief round-up of the progress so far. Over 1,500 lobsters and 90 crawfish have been tagged, but there is not enough data yet on crawfish to draw any significant conclusions, so this coming summer we will hope to shift the focus of the project more towards crawfish. As for tracking the movement of lobsters, preliminary results are that most appear to stay within a 2km radius with younger ones appearing to be more adventurous. Once again this summer we will be using student volunteers and continuing with the payments of £25 a trip to fishermen who assist with the project. So far we've paid out over £500. Other aims this year are to boost the brand of 'Scillonian lobsters' amongst visitors and to undertake more public engagements following the successful event in the Council Chamber in December.

Personal Flotation Devices

The fishing Industry Safety Group, through Seafish Training Cornwall, have a scheme offering **free** lifejackets for commercial fishermen providing an application form is filled out and a brief session is attended on how to put it on and look after it. The PFDs are compact and designed with fishermen in mind and the scheme is supported by the RNLI, the MCA and Seafish and is funded by the European Fisheries Fund. I have received a number of application forms and have blank ones available, but if any fisherman who hasn't already returned an application form and wants one of these free lifejackets contact me quickly at the IFCA office (in the old Primary School, Carn Thomas), and I'll do the rest. The brief training session will probably be undertaken by Wayne Davey here on St. Mary's, so get those forms to me now if you wish to take advantage of this excellent offer. The PFDs should be here in a couple of weeks.



Steve Watt - Maritime Officer, Isles of Scilly IFCA