



Eastern Shellfish Liaison Group

Local Action Plan

Contents

1	Introduction
2	Members of the Local Action Group (LAG)
3	Scope of Local Action Plan
4	Conditions for operation of the plan
4A	Investigative State Trigger Levels and Notification Criteria
4B	Action State Trigger Levels and Notification Criteria
4C	Bio toxin and Phytoplankton Trigger Levels and Notification
4D	Phytoplankton Water Sample - Alert Levels
5	Communication and notification
5A	Initiating the Local Action Plan
5B	Review of Local Action Group contact details
6	Procedures to be followed for Investigation State
6A	Investigation State Levels and Notification Types
7	Procedures to be followed for Action State
7A	Investigative (Action State) Sampling
8	Procedures following Biotxin Results – Flesh
8A	Sample Above the Trigger Level but Below the Action Level
8B	Sample Above The Bio toxin Action Level
8C	Criteria for Disregarding High Bacteriological Results
9	Other Pollution Incidents
10	Weekends and out of hours arrangements
Annex 1	Maps and further details of Classified Areas
Annex 2	Shellfish classification categories and permitted levels
Annex 3	Template of standard notification message of an Investigation or Action State result
Annex 4	Template Test message
Annex 5	Generic Temporary Closure Notice Template
Annex 6	Temporary Downgrade Template
Annex 7	TCN Revocation and Downgrade Template
Annex 8	TCN Revocation Template
Annex 9	Revocation of Temporary Downgrade
Annex 10	Public Warning Notices

Annex 11 Information on Local Authority Boundaries within The Wash

Group 1 Contacts List – Held by Local Authorities (LA)**Group 2 Contacts List** – Held by each LA for industry contacts located in their area**(1) Introduction**

As the Competent Authorities (CAs), Borough Council Kings Lynn West Norfolk (BCKLWN), North Norfolk District Council (NNDC), Boston Borough Council (BBC), Wisbech Port Health Authority (WPHA) (Covering Fenland District and South Holland administrative areas) and East Lindsey District Council (ELDC) are responsible for shellfish classification sampling for *E. coli*, bio toxin monitoring and dealing with other pollution incidents.

Official Control Regulations (OCR) details the classifications of shellfish production and relay areas and the treatment methods that Live Bivalve Molluscs (LBMs) must undergo before they can be placed on the market for human consumption.

This document outlines the procedures for when 'high' *E. coli* or bio toxin sampling results are received for a harvesting area, and other pollution events.

Local Authorities (LA) responsible for classified shellfish production areas must ensure an effective Local Action Group (LAG) and Local Action Plan (LAP) are established.

The purpose of a LAG is to protect public health by:

- developing and implementing an effective LAP
- assisting CAs in investigating high results including Action/Investigation States and pollution events
- facilitating electronic data exchange
- providing data and/or other information to identify possible causes of high results.

LAGs consist of representatives from the Local Authority, FSA, Cefas, Environment Agency, Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority, Anglian Water, members of local industry and anyone else interested in local shellfish issues.

Each LAG must develop an effective LAP to implement 'Investigation' and 'Action' states when high *E. coli* results or bio toxin or pollution events occur.

(2) Members of the Local Action Group (LAG)

Co-ordinating local authority – Borough Council Kings Lynn West Norfolk (BCKLWN)

Other local authorities – North Norfolk District Council (NNDC)
Boston Borough Council (BBC)
Wisbech Port Health Authority (WPHA) - Covering Fenland District and South Holland administrative areas.
East Lindsey District Council (ELDC)

Other Agencies - Environment Agency (EA)
Anglian Water (AW)
The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)

Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture
Science (CEFAS)
Food Standards Agency (FSA)
Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA)
Official Laboratory (UKHSA)

Local Industry Representative(s) - Any member of local fishing industry welcome.

Each Local Authority will keep contacts for industry, trade associations and businesses (Group 2 contacts) located within their area to which matters contained within the Local Action Plan are relevant.

(3) **Scope of Local Action Plan**

This Local Action Plan is for the Eastern Shellfish Liaison Group (ESLG) – which is the Local Action Group covering shellfish production areas in **The Wash and North Norfolk Coast**.

Species fished from this area are:

- Mussels - *Mytilus edulis*
- Cockles - *Cerastoderma edule*
- Pacific Oyster – *Crassostrea gigas*

This plan covers the following classified production areas, **Table 3.1**:

Classification Zone	RMP	RMP Name	Species	Species Sampled	Local Authority
Blakeney (Mussels and Cockles)	B006R	Wells – The Pool	Mussels & Cockles	Mussels	NNDC
Blakeney – Southside (Oysters)	B006T	Southside	Oysters	Oysters	NNDC
Brancaster (Mussels and Cockles)	BO5AS	Norton Creek Mussels	Mussels & Cockles	Mussels	BCKLWN
Brancaster (Pacific Oysters)	BO5AT	Norton Creek Oysters	Oysters	Oysters	BCKLWN
The Wash					
Heacham & Hunstanton (Mussels)	B004L	Hunstanton Holme	Mussels	Mussels	BCKLWN
Mare Tail, Gat and Toft (Mussels)	B003V	Toft	Mussels	Mussels	Boston (Samples collected by IFCA)
Welland & Witham Inner (Mussels)	B003M	Welland Wall	Mussels	Mussels	Boston, (Samples collected by IFCA)
Stubborn Sand Inner (Cockles)	B04AP	Stubborn Sand	Cockles	Cockles	BCKLWN

Heacham & Hunstanton Outer (Cockles)	B04AW	Stubborn Sand Outer	Cockles	Cockles	BCKLWN
Ouse Mouth (Cockles and Mussels)	B04AM	Ouse Mouth	Cockles & Mussels	Mussels	BCKLWN (samples collected by IFCA)
Nene Mouth (Cockles and Mussels)	B04AT	Nene Mouth	Cockles & Mussels	Cockles	Wisbech Port Health Authority (WPHA) (Samples collected by IFCA)
Witham and Welland Outer (Cockles and Mussels)	B04AV	The Dills	Cockles & Mussels	Cockles	Boston (Samples collected by IFCA)
Freiston to Wainfleet (Cockles)	B003X	North Lays	Cockles	Cockles	Boston (Samples collected by IFCA)

Annex 1 contains maps of classified areas and further details can be found at -

[Shellfish classification and microbiological monitoring - Cefas \(Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science\)](#)

[Shellfish monitoring results - Cefas \(Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science\)](#)

Sanitation survey results are published via the FSA <https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/shellfish-production-area-assessments>; recent surveys are saved <https://www.carcinus.co.uk/environmental-services/water-quality-and-sediment-quality/shellfish-representative-monitoring-point-and-boundary-assessments/>

Table 3.1 above indicates the nominated Local Authority responsible for arranging and ensuring sampling is undertaken in accordance with CEFAS/FSA sampling plans and the Local Authority that would lead on receipt of any high results or incidents. Within THE WASH the boundaries of each Local Authority across The Wash should be given consideration during any incident, investigation or action state, in particular with regard to formal/legal action and press communications. **Annex 11** contains further information on Local Authority Boundaries within The Wash.

(4) Conditions for operation of the plan

The OCR specifies the use of *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) as an indicator of microbiological contamination in bivalves. The bacterium is present in the faeces of animals in large numbers and is therefore indicative of faecal contamination.

The Plan will come into operation following the appropriate notification of a high result falling within 'Investigative State' or 'Action State' trigger levels.

It was also come into operation following biotoxin and pollution events, such as crude oil or chemical spills and unconsented discharges/emergency sewerage discharges or any other event likely to have an adverse impact on live bivalve mollusc in a classified harvesting area.

Shellfish Classification Categories and permitted levels can be found in Annex 2.

4A: Investigative State Trigger Levels and Notification Criteria - Upon receipt of the notification, the LA receiving the result and responsible for the classified area, will initiate investigation state procedures as set out in the LAP, **see Section 6**.

Investigation State - Summary Table (<i>E. coli per 100 g</i>)
Class A – Any result above 230 but below 700
Class B – Above 4,600 but below 18,000
Class C – Not applicable.
Any result above 46,000 is a prohibition result and considered an action state.

4B: Action State Trigger Levels and Notification Criteria - An Action State is where immediate action is required to deliver a responsive public health control system. If a sample result is above the Action State trigger levels, as shown below, the CA responsible for the area will be notified by CEFAS or an Official Laboratory. Upon receipt of the notification, the CA receiving the result and responsible for the classified area, will initiate 'Action State' procedures as set out in the LAP, **see Section 7**.

Action State - Summary Table (<i>E. coli per 100 g</i>)
Class A – Above 700
Class B – Above 18,000
Class C – Above 46,000

4C: Bio toxin and Phytoplankton Trigger Levels and Notification

At certain times of the year naturally occurring algae in the water can give rise to blooms, which may not necessarily be noticeable. Algae in these blooms may produce potent bio toxins. These can accumulate in bivalve molluscs and eating shellfish contaminated with marine bio toxins may pose risks for those consuming them.

The OCR specifies the requirements for the monitoring of toxin producing phytoplankton within shellfish production areas. Water samples from classified shellfish production areas are tested for the presence of toxin producing phytoplankton throughout the year.

Phytoplankton monitoring in England and Wales is carried out by CEFAS on behalf of the FSA. Water samples are collected from designated shellfish growing areas and analysed, by light microscopy, for various species of phytoplankton.

Biotoxin and phytoplankton monitoring results are reported by email to CAs responsible for sampling. CAs will review the results and take action, set out in **Section 8**.

There is no investigation possible for Phytoplankton as the algae are naturally occurring. Phytoplankton levels in water above alert levels will trigger additional sampling – not closures.

Biotoxins in flesh exceeding the maximum permitted level (MPL) will trigger declaration of an 'Action State' and will result in a Temporary Closure Notice (TCN) being issued. All members of the LAG will be informed together with local harvesters, **see Section 8**.

Bio toxin	Trigger Level (water)	Action Level (flesh)
ASP (Amnesic Shellfish Poisoning)	>150,00000 cells l ⁻¹	>20mg kg ⁻¹
PSP (Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning)	Detected	>800µg kg ⁻¹
DSP (Diarrhetic Shellfish Poisoning)	>100 cells l ⁻¹	>160µg kg ⁻¹
AZA (Azaspiracid Shellfish Poisoning)	None established	>160µg kg ⁻¹
YTX (Yessotoxin)	None established	>3.75mg kg ⁻¹

(4D) Phytoplankton Water Sample - Alert Levels

Alert Level Phytoplankton Concentration		
Biotoxin	Phytoplankton	Alert
PSP	<i>Alexandrium</i> (Saxitoxin)	Greater than 0 cells/litre of <i>Alexandrium</i>
DSP	<i>Dinophysis</i> (Okadaic Acid)	Greater than or equal to 100 cells/litre of <i>Dinophysis</i> , and by historical data.
DSP	<i>Prorocentrum lima</i>	Greater than or equal to 100 cells/litre of <i>P. lima</i> , and by historical data.
ASP	<i>Pseudo-nitzschia</i> (Domoic Acid)	Greater than or equal to 150,000 cells/litre of <i>Pseudo-nitzschia</i> , and/or historical data

Harvesters should take the necessary precautions if wanting to harvest under alert conditions.

(5) Communication and notification

(5A) Initiating the Local Action Plan

All members of the Local Action Group will be notified by the CA immediately when the Local Action Plan has been activated following a high result. The CA experiencing the exceedance or pollution incident will make the notification. Details will include:

- Reasons for activating the plan
- Control measures activated/being considered
- The procedures in the LAP being/to be actioned

See Annex 3 for standard notification messages for an Investigation and Action State.

This communication will be through e-mail or by telephone to the LAG found in **Group 1 Contacts List** (Regulatory Bodies and Organisations) and **Group 2 Contacts List** (Local Industry, Fishermen, Approved Premises, Trade and Interested Parties). These lists are held by CAs, for where the document is held within CAs see Contents Page.

The LA responsible for arranging and ensuring sampling is undertaken for the classified area would receive the report of high levels / incidents and will be the Lead Local Authority responsible for actions required. Within THE WASH the boundaries of each LA across The Wash should be given consideration during any incident, investigation or action state, in particular with regard to formal/legal action and press communications.

Due to Data Protection Act, each Local Authority will keep their own **Group 2** contacts list for industry, trade associations and businesses located within their area. Each CA will be responsible for cascading information from the LAG to their local members and keeping their own Group 2 contacts list up to date.

The local harvesters and trade will be informed of all contamination incidents and any temporary restrictions on beds.

LAG members are required to respond to notifications as well as providing the administrators with up-to-date contact details.

Press and Member Briefing: The Lead Authority, typically the Authority responsible for the monitoring location where the information / incident relates, will lead on press statements and communications to members. This will ensure the communications stay consistent across the liaison group and its members. Where this has a wider impact this may be led by the communications team from FSA, UKHSA or EA.

(5B) Review of Local Action Group contact details

A test message, as shown in **Annex 4**, should be sent by the local authorities on a yearly basis, at a minimum, to ensure Local Action Group contact details are up to date.

Each Local Authority is responsible for sending this annual test message to their Group 2 contacts.

All members should ensure that their Local Authority is made aware of changes to contact details.

(6) Procedures to be followed for Investigation State

An Investigation State is triggered when a result above the classification threshold is recorded in Class A & B beds (Class A – results between 230-700 *E. coli* per 100g, B – results between 4,600 – 18,000 *E. coli* per 100g). Cefas will issue an appropriate notification to the responsible LA. The notification type sent will depend on the compliance of the site.

Investigation State trigger levels and notification criteria are outlined in **Table 6A** below.

(6A) Investigation State Trigger levels

Class A
<p>Trigger: Any result above 230 <i>E. coli</i>/100g but not greater than 700 <i>E. coli</i>/100g in the rolling 12-month-period (greater than 700 <i>E. coli</i>/100g would trigger an Action State).</p> <p>Two notification types:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cause for concern (investigation only) – issued following a result over 230 <i>E. coli</i>/100g (but less than 700 <i>E. coli</i>/100g) in rolling review year. Site still complies with Class A criteria so notification for investigative purposes only. 1-year compliance is 80% or above so no change in classification needed. 2. Possible downgrade - issued following a result over 230 <i>E. coli</i>/100g (but less than 700 <i>E. coli</i>/100g) in rolling review year that takes compliance below 80% limit.
Class B and B Long-Term areas
<p>Trigger: a result above 4,600 <i>E. coli</i>/100g but not greater than 18,000 <i>E. coli</i>/100g in the rolling 12-monthperiod (greater than 18,000 <i>E. coli</i>/100g would trigger an Action State).</p> <p>Three notification types:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cause for concern (investigation only) - site still complies with Class B/B-LT criteria so notification for investigative purposes only. 1-year compliance is above 89.5% so no change in classification needed. 2. Cause for concern (Class B/B-LT: marginal compliance) - site no longer complies with class B/B-LT criteria but does not meet criteria for immediate downgrade. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-year compliance is below 89.5% • rolling 3-year (B) or 5-year (B-LT) compliance is 84.5-89.5% so site falls within 5% buffer. 3. Possible downgrade - Triggered by a further result above 4,600 <i>E. coli</i>/100g such that 1-year compliance is below 89.5% and rolling 3-year (for Class B) or 5-year (for Class B-LT) compliance is also below 84.5%.

Class C
Not applicable. Any result above 46,000 <i>E. coli</i> /100g is a prohibited result and considered an action state.

The investigation will be carried out by the responsible LA in conjunction with the Environment Agency (EA) to determine if the result can be attributed to a “one-off” event and therefore waived. This information is assessed by Cefas/FSA and outcomes communicated to the responsible LA. LAs will share the trigger notification with LAG members (including harvesters) and feedback any comments to the investigation and confirm outcomes.

Upon receipt of the notification, the responsible LA, as the LAG coordinator, will initiate investigation procedures as set out in this LAP.

The investigation follows a three-phase approach.

Phase 1

1. The LA receives notification from UKHSA /CEFAS that *E. coli* levels are **between 4,600 and 18,000** *E. coli* per 100g of flesh.
2. Notification containing relevant information sent to LAG including details of the affected area and sample results, template at - **Annex 3**.
3. Local fisherman informed of the affected area and results.
4. Investigation begun.

Phase 2

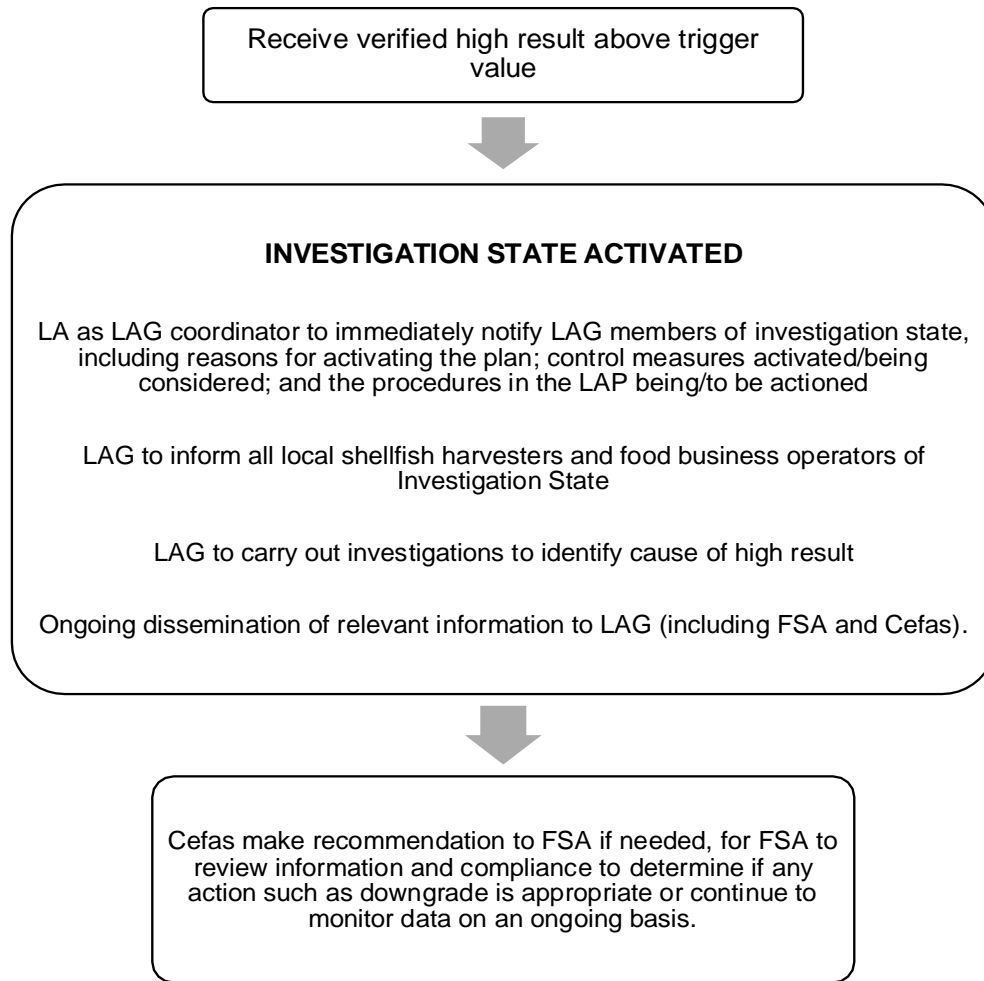
5. LAG members should circulate information relating to possible causes of high results to the LA (copying all other LAG members).
6. The LA considers any further available information received from LAG members together with CEFAS / FSA comments and recommendations.
7. Following guidance from CEFAS and FSA the LA undertakes further monitoring samples as required (see section (7B) for investigative sampling information).
8. Cefas/FSA will assess the information and confirm the outcome of the investigation to the responsible LA for circulation to the LAG.
9. The LA to consider whether the possible cause of the increased *E. coli* level poses an increased risk to public health, or an ongoing problem has arisen.

Temporary downgrade or closure of affected area not to be considered until investigation indicates whether there is a potential risk to public health.

Phase 3

10. Standard monthly monitoring to continue and data to be re-evaluated.
11. LAG to be kept informed of any change of status and investigative findings.
12. Any relevant information to be passed to trade as necessary.
13. When levels of *E. coli* fall below 4,600 per 100g the LAP will be revoked, and all parties informed.

Investigation state flow diagram – A and B classifications only



(7) Procedures to be followed for ACTION STATE

Action State Trigger Levels

Class A
above 700 <i>E. coli</i> /100g
Class B
above 18,000 <i>E. coli</i> /100g
Class C
above 46,000 <i>E. coli</i> /100g

An action state has been introduced into the shellfish classification arrangements in England and Wales to deliver a more responsive public health control system. It consists primarily of 2 aims: the first involves the implementation of prompt and appropriate short-term health control measures, the second is an investigation into the cause(s) of high results to determine their relevance to the classification of the area and also to allow identification of

remedial measures in order that such events can be avoided (or more effectively dealt with) in the future.

The LA should implement short term control measures to protect public health, examples of high result scenarios and short-term control measures are shown in Table below.

Examples of high result scenarios and short-term control measures

Class A
Scenario: a result above 700 but not exceeding 4,600 Action: temporary downgrade to Class B or temporary closure
Scenario: a result above 18,000 but not exceeding 46,000 Action: temporary downgrade to Class C or temporary closure
Scenario: a result above 46,000 Action: temporary closure
Class B and Long-Term B areas
Scenario: a result above 18,000 but not exceeding 46,000 Action: temporary downgrade to Class C or temporary closure
Scenario: a result above 46,000 Action: temporary closure
Class C
Scenario: a result above 46,000 Action: temporary closure

The responsible LA will contact local shellfish harvesters and FBOs to inform them of the Action State (**See Annex 3**) for standard notification messages for an Action State.

LAG members are asked to supply any information relating to potential pollution incidents and rainfall events as part of the Action State investigation process to the LAG group and Cefas for inclusion in the action state outcome report.

(7A) Investigative (Action State) sampling

Additional sampling to the monthly monitoring programme will be required during an Action State.

Short term control measures should remain in place until investigative (Action State) sampling demonstrates results below the lower compliance threshold for the area. The timing and frequency of investigative (Action State) sampling will be dependent on the magnitude of the trigger result:

Action state trigger results below 46,000 *E. coli*/100g

In Class A and Class B areas where the trigger result is **below 46,000 *E. coli*/100g**, additional sampling may be undertaken as soon as practicable:

- If the result of the first re-sample is below the lower compliance threshold (230 and 4,600 *E. coli*/100g, respectively), and there are no other risks to public health, short-term control measures may be revoked.

- If the result of the first re-sample is above the lower compliance threshold (230 and 4,600 *E. coli*/100g, respectively), further sampling should continue and short-term control measures remain in place until a compliant result (i.e. a result below the lower compliance threshold) is obtained. Additional sampling may be undertaken as soon as practicable in all circumstances.

Action state trigger results above 46,000 *E. coli*/100g

Additional sampling should commence at least one week (7 days) after the Action State trigger sample was collected.

Short-term control measures must remain in place until two results below the lower compliance limit from consecutive samples taken at least one week (7 days) apart are reported.

The LAP follows a four-phase approach and provides a transition back into the normal classification sampling routine.

Phase 1

1. The LA receives notification that *E. coli* levels are above the permitted level per 100g⁻¹
2. The LA, in consultation with CEFAS, UKHSA, and FSA will determine any short-term control measures to be enacted.
3. Closure Orders shall be drafted and posted as appropriate, Annex 5 - 9.
4. Public Warning Notices placed as appropriate, template, Annex 10.
5. Information will be immediately sent to LAG including details of the affected area and sample results and that the procedures for an Investigation and 'Action State' have been implemented (template at **Annex 3**).
6. Details of short-term control measures sent to local fisherman and FBOs (Group 2 contacts) including any temporary downgrade, closure measures, or details of any Closure Order that have been issued. Advice should include the following information, where applicable.
 - a. details of the affected area and short-term controls applied (including if a temporary closure notice or temporary downgrade is in place).
 - b. increasing end product testing regimes to ensure remaining stockharvested on or after the day of sampling is safe.
 - c. all customers that received the product should be informed.
 - d. advice regarding product withdrawals and recalls.
7. LAG members must supply any information relating to the potential causes of high results.
8. The classification of the site may be affected by the outcome of the investigation.

Phase 2

9. CEFAS will advise LAG on any changes to the statistical assessment of water quality.
10. Additional sampling to the monthly monitoring programme will be required during an Action State. The timing and frequency of investigative (Action State) sampling will be dependent on the magnitude of the trigger result (see **section (7A)**).
11. The LA will notify the LAG of any decisions and analysis made to establish cause and to request further assistance in contacting stakeholders including the trade to notify of controls and to request any known cause.
12. The LA to consider any further available information from LAG members to help with investigation.

Phase 3

13. The LA will undertake additional samples as directed.

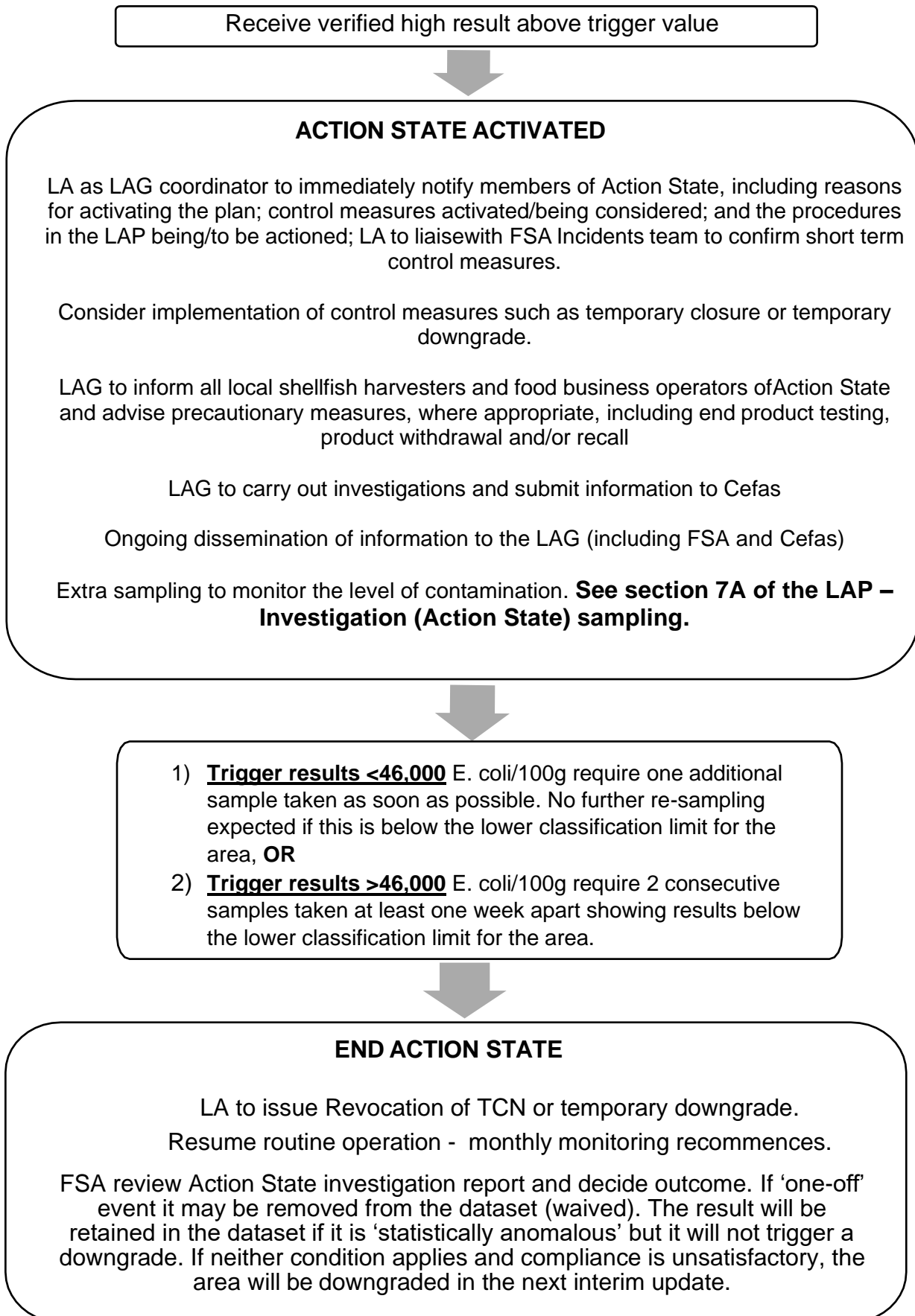
14. For sites with **trigger level results of <46,000** if contamination levels drop below the lower compliance thresholds (e.g., Class B <4,600 *E. coli*/100g), and there are no other risks to public health, then revocation of the Action State may be considered.
15. For sites with **trigger levels results >46,000** contamination levels must drop below permitted levels for two consecutive weeks (samples taken at least 7 days apart), for revocation of the Action State to be considered, however, the investigation may continue (see action state flow diagram for more information).
16. LAG to be kept informed of change of status and investigative findings.
17. The trade will be informed of any changes to the Action State or changes to any closure orders.

Phase 4

18. As required any closure orders or temporary downgrades will be cancelled following satisfactory sample results.
19. Cefas will coordinate an investigation into the Action State result and prepare an action state outcome report. This will include information submitted by the LAG, an assessment of sampling data and statistical analysis undertaken by FSA to determine if the result is statistically anomalous.
20. In conjunction with CEFAS and FSA the Long-Term Classification of the affected bed(s) will be reconsidered
21. Regular monthly monitoring will restart.
22. Cefas will issue recommendations to the FSA on the outcome of the investigations of the action state result in an action state outcome report within 5 weeks. The report will be sent out to the LA responsible for the affected production area once finalised.
23. LAG and the trade will be informed of all changes.
24. The FSA will consider the report and recommendation and, if necessary, will downgrade the bed via an interim update to stakeholders.

An Action state can last for a maximum of 3 months. After this, monthly monitoring should be carried out to assess the status of the bed.

The LA has final responsibility for lifting any closures or restrictions in place and for lifting the 'Action State'.

Figure 2: Action state flow diagram – all classifications

8. Procedures following Biotoxin Results - Flesh

The Trigger and Action (closure) levels for toxins in shellfish flesh

Bio toxin	Trigger Level (water)	Action Level (flesh)
ASP	>150,00000 cells l ⁻¹	>20mg kg ⁻¹
PSP	Detected	>800µg kg ⁻¹
DSP	>100 cells l ⁻¹	>160µg kg ⁻¹
AZA	None established	>160µg kg ⁻¹
YTX	None established	>3.75mg kg ⁻¹

Results below trigger level: Results below trigger and action levels are for information only. No action is required.

(8A) Sample Above the Trigger Level but Below the Action Level

Results above trigger level: Results above trigger levels from phytoplankton or biotoxin monitoring samples would instigate additional flesh and phytoplankton sampling the following week. All additional samples will be requested by Cefas in the covering email when reporting monitoring results.

A sample giving a result above the recognised trigger levels but below the action level does not trigger an investigation as the existence of algal blooms and the bio toxins produced is not influenced solely by pollution events.

(8B) Sample Above The Bio toxin Action Level

Action level breaches: Action levels are equal to or greater than the regulatory limits.

As above there is no investigation as to the source of the bio toxins. The LA undertakes additional monitoring whilst levels naturally reduce as the algal bloom disperses.

Phase 1

1. The LA receives notification that bio toxin levels are above the Actionable levels
2. Biotoxin action level breaches would instigate a closure of the area monitored by the RMP sampled.
3. Information sent to LAG including details of the affected area and sample results and that an 'Action State' have been implemented. These should include temporary closure measures and details of any Closure Order that has been issued.
4. The LA will inform the local industry of the result, and they should amend their end product testing and food safety management controls accordingly.
5. If any shellfish has been harvested since the collection date which have been placed on the market, this should be withdrawn/recalled. As a precautionary measure, they should also consider any shellfish harvested shortly before the collection date.

Phase 2 (within 7 days)

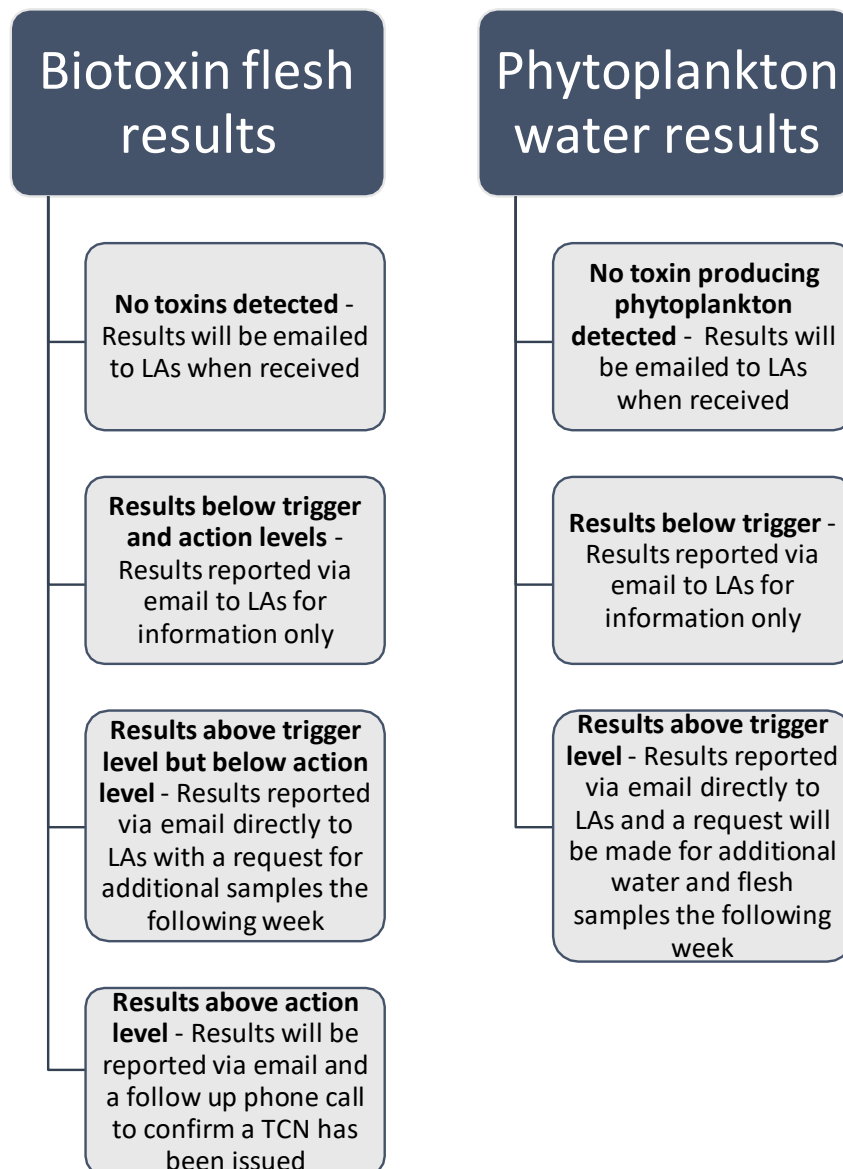
6. An additional flesh sample will be required for the week following the high result, phytoplankton samples will not be required until the first sample below the action level regulatory limit has been reported.
7. The area will only be permitted to re-open once two flesh samples have returned results below the regulatory limit.
8. The LA will plan additional sampling dates to be at least 7 days apart.

Phase 3

9. When bio toxins reduce below the Action Level then the Action Plan reverts to the previous level. Following advice from CEFAS/FSA any closure orders issued are cancelled.
10. LAG to be kept informed of change of status and investigative findings.
11. Local Fishermen informed of any change in status
12. When the bio toxin levels fall below the trigger level then this action plan is cancelled and sampling reverts to the standard monitoring program.

**The LA has final responsibility for lifting any closures
or restrictions in place and for lifting the 'Action State'.**

Figure 3: Biotoxin and phytoplankton results flow chart



The published biotoxin and phytoplankton results are updated on a weekly basis. A link to the results can be found on the [biotoxin and phytoplankton monitoring page](#) of the FSA's website.

(8C) Criteria for Disregarding High Bacteriological Results

High bacteriological results may be waived by the FSA if there is sufficient evidence to justify this. Results would have to be attributed quite clearly to very unusual or 'one off' events that have been resolved and unlikely to recur. An event up to 48 hours prior to sampling is usually considered.

Exceptional events that may allow results to be waived include -

- 1 in 5 year storm event – rainfall
- Major sewage treatment works failure – since rectified

- Other exceptional pollution event e.g. slurry spill/septic tank spill – since rectified
- Failure to comply with sampling protocol

(9) Other Pollution Events

This plan will apply to pollution events which could affect the safety of shellfish in harvesting areas. Examples include:

- An abnormal and significant discharge/s of sewage / effluent such as unconsented discharges
- Chemical spillage e.g. oil / fuel affecting the waters around the relevant shellfish harvesting areas

Any member of the LAG who is aware of a pollution incident with the potential to affect the shellfish harvesting areas covered by this plan, should notify details of the incident to their LA.

Specifically, Anglian Water and EA will notify details of any exceptional discharges of sewage / effluent and also significant extraordinary discharges from consented overflows.

FSA Food Incidents team will contact the LA if they have received information directly that may impact on a classified harvesting area for which the LA is responsible. However, if the LA receive intelligence of a pollution event impacting on a shellfish production area before being notified by the FSA, please alert the FSA incidents team, copying-in the shellfish delivery team via the links below.

foodincidents@food.gov.uk and shellfish@food.gov.uk

LAG members should also notify the LA of other exceptional events which have the potential to adversely affect the shellfish beds e.g. oil spill, dredging, piling or other construction activity.

The LA will undertake a risk assessment in conjunction with FSA/CEFAS/UKHSA and other members of the LAG, as appropriate, as to the public health significance of the incident. The outcome of the risk assessment may result in one or more of the following:

- Sampling/re-sampling of shellfish from relevant harvesting beds
- Short term control measure – temporary downgrade / closure of relevant harvesting beds
- Tracing & recall of products harvested from relevant harvesting beds
- No further actions

Shellfish harvesting seasons/restrictions and trade patterns will be taken into account in determining the necessity of above measures.

10. Weekends and out of hours arrangements

Local Authority contacts below can be used to cascade the details of pollution events, including other relevant information obtained during investigations to all harvesters, traders and food business operators concerned outside normal operating hours.

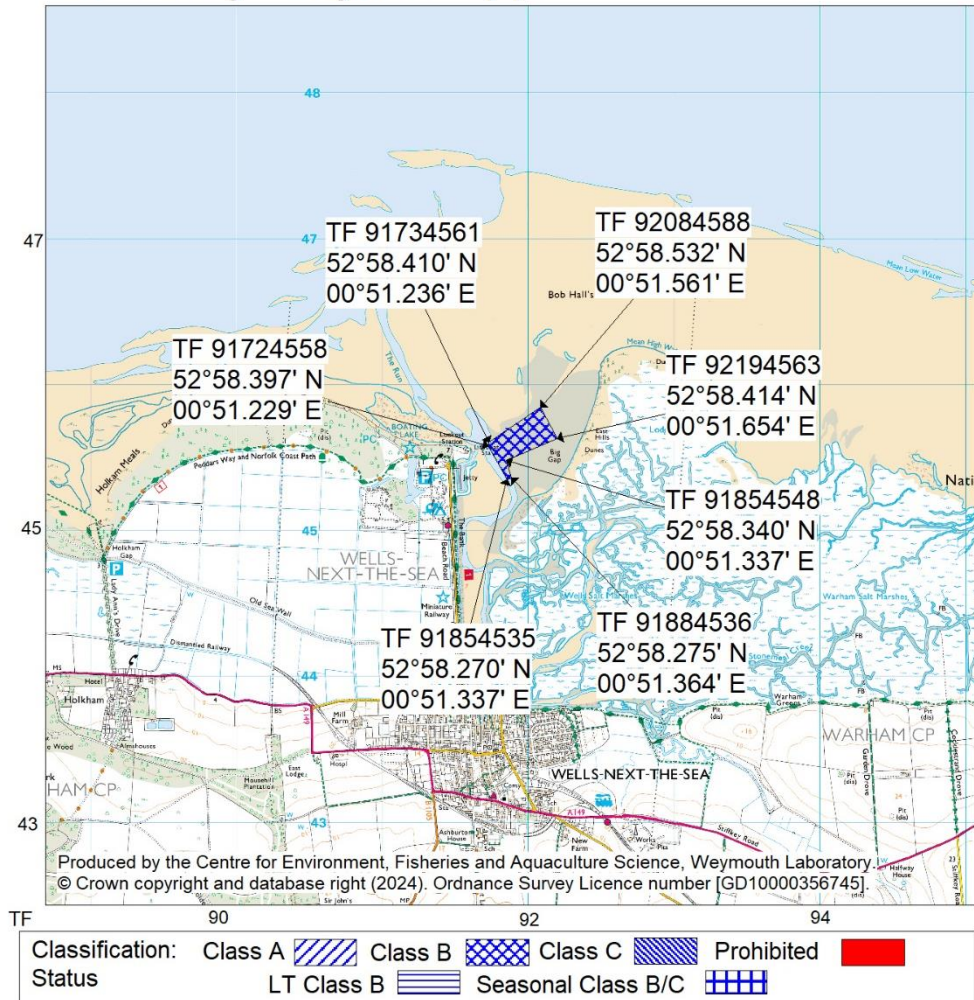
Local Authority	Procedure
BCKLWN Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk	Phone CCTV out of hours (01553 616 601) explain situation and ask for an EHO/Food Safety Officer.
NNDC North Norfolk District Council	In first instance contact Sue Webb on 07748641721. The Answering Service tas@my-calls.co.uk Number: 01223 849782.
FDC Fenland District Council	01354 654321
BBC Boston Borough Council	01205 362151
ELDC East Lindsey District Council	01507 601111

ANNEX 1 – MAPS AND FURTHER DETAILS OF CLASSIFIED AREAS

BLAKENEY – CLASSIFIED MUSSEL & COCKLE BED (Wells – The Pool)

Blakeney - Mytilus spp.

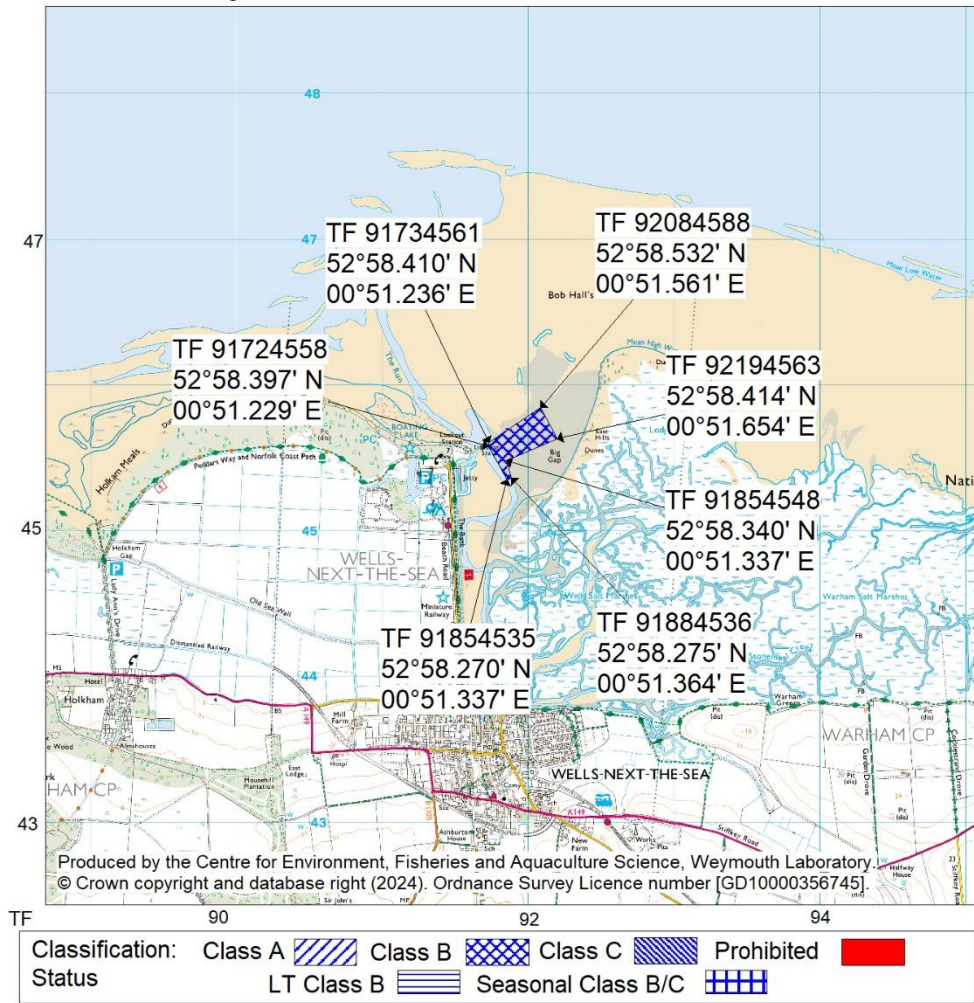
Scale - 1:26000



Classification of Bivalve Mollusc Production Areas: Effective from 2 September 2024

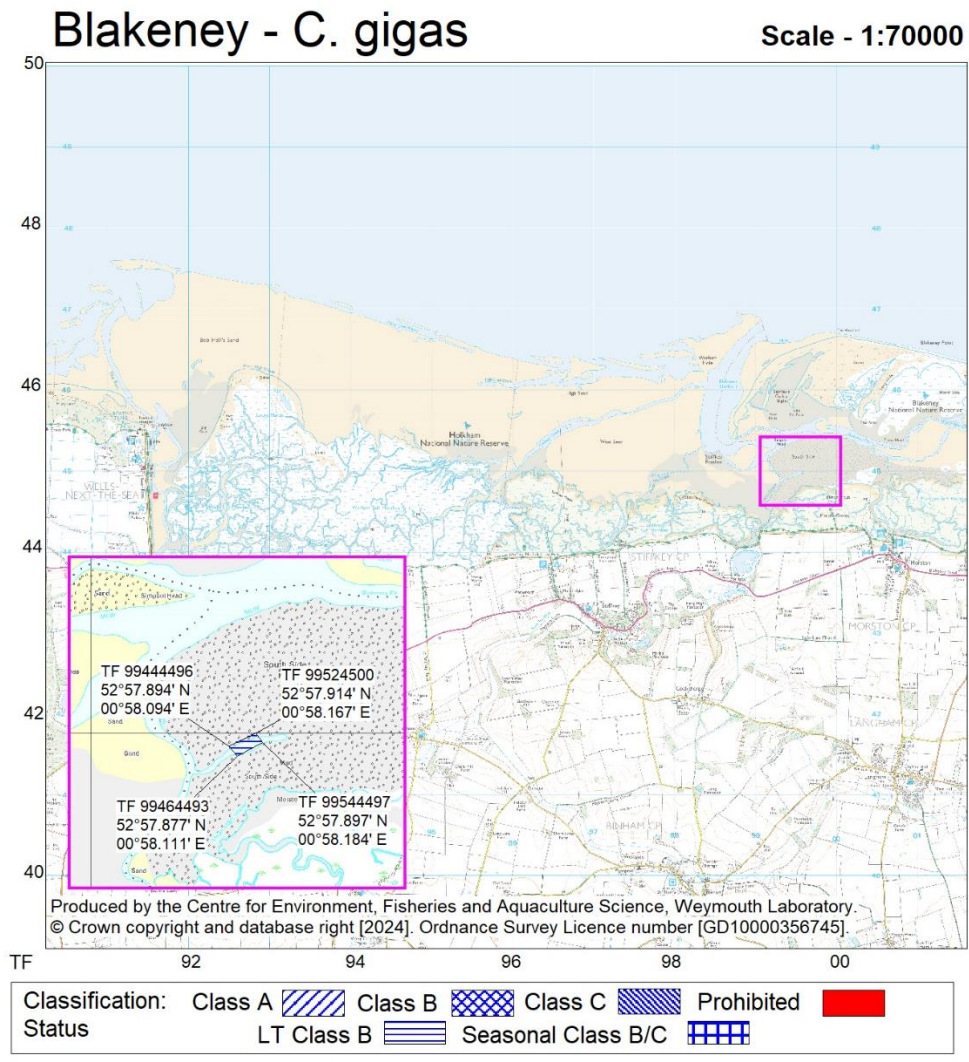
Blakeney - C. edule.

Scale - 1:26000



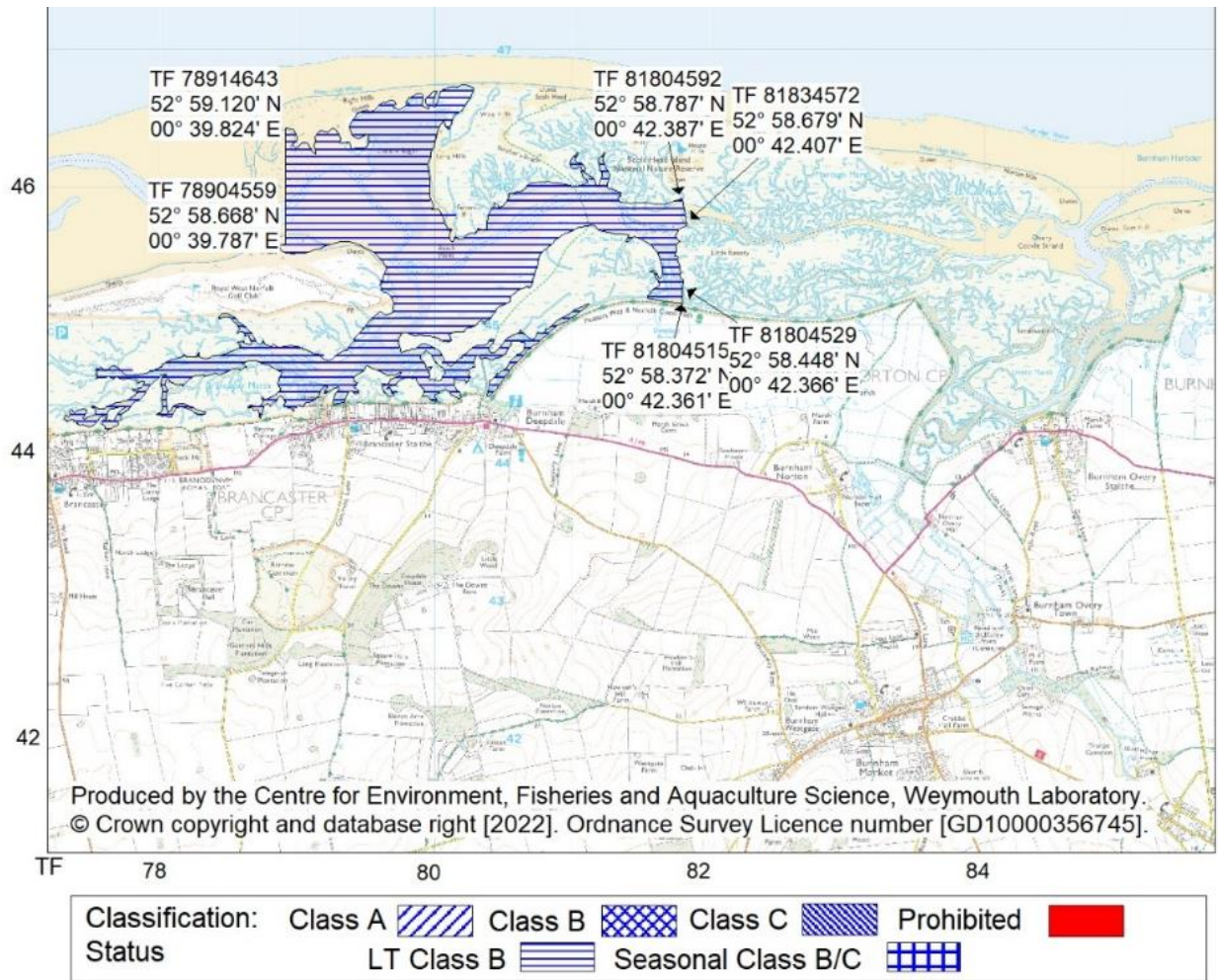
Classification of Bivalve Mollusc Production Areas: Effective from 2 September 2024

BLAKENEY – CLASSIFIED OYSTER BED (Southside)



Classification of Bivalve Mollusc Production Areas: Effective from 3 October 2024

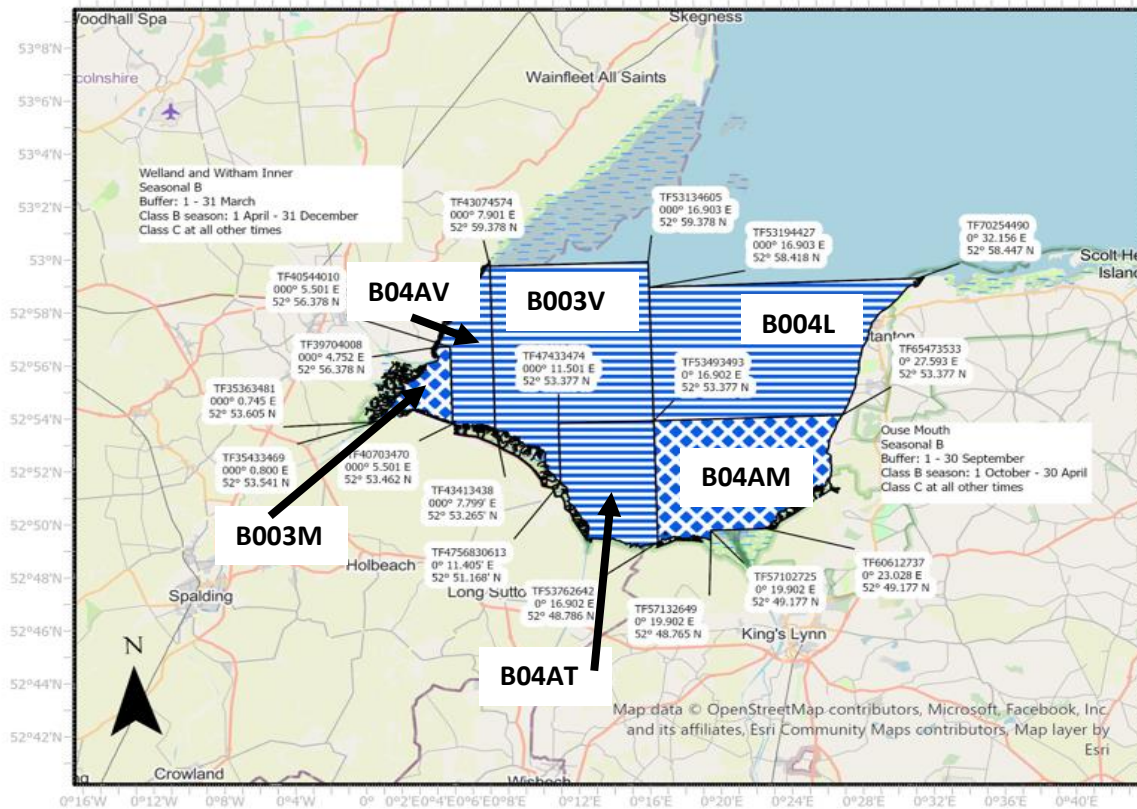
BRANCASTER -



THE WASH - CLASSIFIED MUSSEL BEDS

The Wash - Mytilus spp.

Scale: 1:377,476



<u>SIN Code</u>	<u>Classification Zone</u>	<u>RMP Name (Mussels)</u>	<u>Classification – MUSSEL</u>
B004L	Heacham & Hunstanton (Mussels)	Hunstanton Holmeside	B
B04AM	Ouse Mouth (Cockles and Mussels)	Ouse Mouth	Seasonal Class B. Class B season 1st Oct to 30th April. Class C at all other times. September results must be compliant with Class B E.coli levels to allow the Class B season to start in October.
B04AT	Nene Mouth (Cockles and Mussels)	Nene Mouth	B
B003V	Mare Tail, Gat and Toft (Mussels)	Toft	B

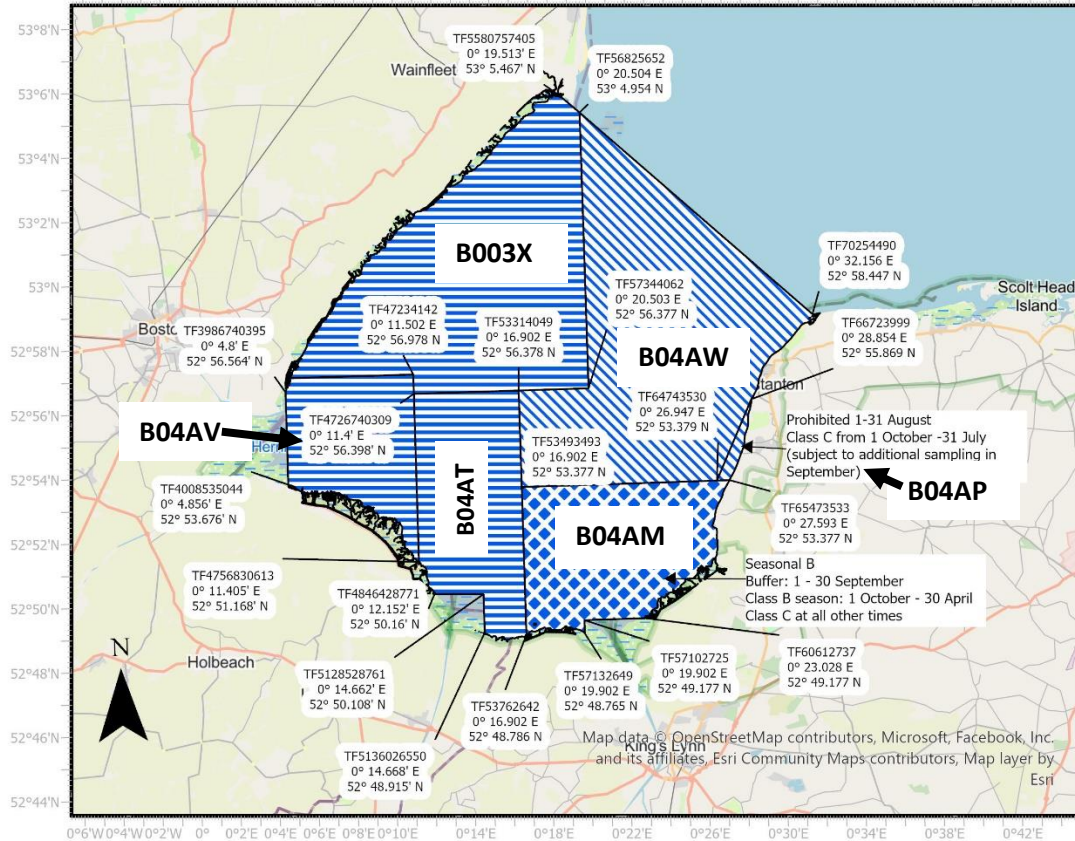
B003M	Welland and Witham Inner (Mussels)	Welland Wall	Seasonal Class B. Class B season 1st April to 31st December. Class C at all other times. March results (buffer period 1-31 March) must be compliant with Class B E.coli levels to allow the Class B season to start in April.
B04AV	Welland and Witham Outer (Mussels and Cockles)	The Dills	B

Map available on CEFAS website - [Classification zone maps - Cefas \(Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science\)](#)

THE WASH - CLASSIFIED COCKLE BEDS

The Wash - C. edule

Scale: 1:325,000



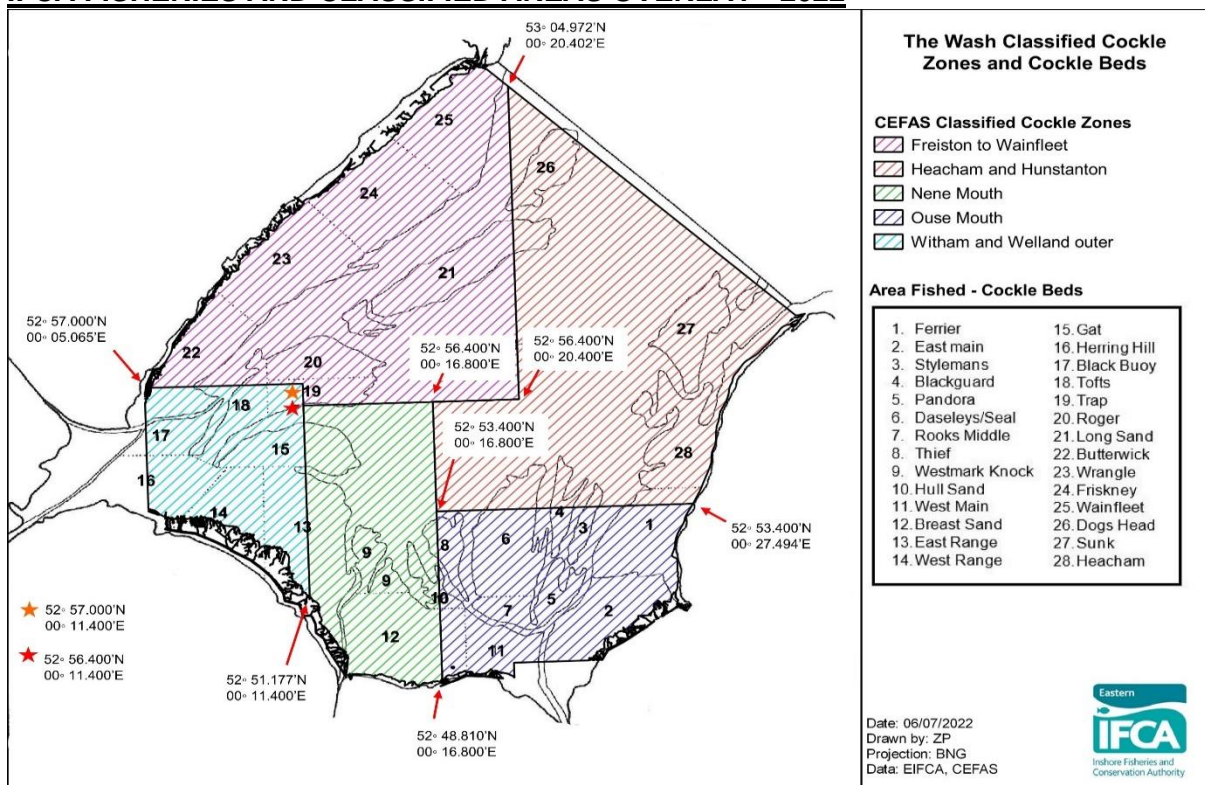
Classification of Bivalve Mollusc Production Areas: Effective From 2 December 2024.

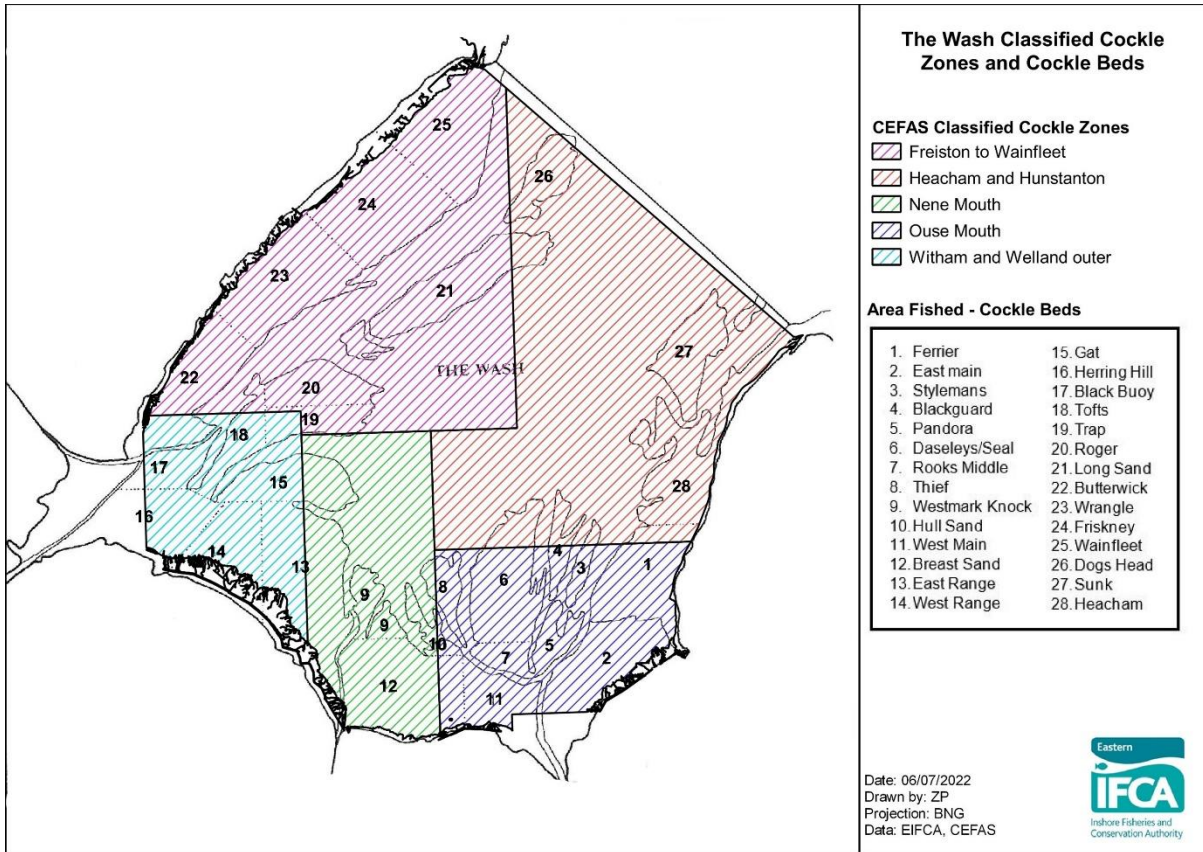
SIN Code	Classification Zone	RMP Name (Cockles)	Classification
B04AP	Stubborn Sand Inner (Cockles)	Stubborn Sand	Class C with Time Limited Prohibition (TLP). Harvesting is prohibited between 1st August and 31st August. Harvesting may only resume in September after satisfactory additional sampling i.e. two consecutive samples taken at least 7 days apart are below 4600 E.coli per 100g.
B04AW	Heacham and Hunstanton Outer (Cockles)	Stubborn Sand Outer	B

B04AM	Ouse Mouth (Cockles and Mussels)	Ouse Mouth	Seasonal Class B. Class B season 1st Oct to 30th April. Class C at all other times. September results must be compliant with Class B E.coli levels to allow the Class B season to start in October.
B04AT	Nene Mouth (Cockles and Mussels)	Nene Mouth	B
B04AV	Welland and Witham Outer (Mussels and Cockles)	The Dills	B
B003X	Freiston to Wainfleet Boston	North Lays	B

Map available on Cefas website - [Classification zone maps - Cefas \(Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science\)](#)

IFCA FISHERIES AND CLASSIFIED AREAS OVERLAY - 2022





ANNEX 2 - SHELLFISH CLASSIFICATION CATEGORIES AND PERMITTED**LEVELS**

Class A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% of sample results less than or equal to 230 E.coli/100g with none exceeding 700 E.coli/100g • Live Bivalve Molluscs can be harvested for direct human consumption.
Class B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90% of sample results must be less than or equal to 4,600 E.coli/100g with none exceeding 46,000 E.coli/100g; • Live Bivalve Molluscs can go for human consumption only after <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. purification in an approved establishment OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. relaying in a Class A relaying area OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. after an EC approved heat treatment process
Class C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than or equal to 46,000 E.coli/100g • Live Bivalve Molluscs can only go for human consumption after <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. relaying for at least two months in a Class B relaying area followed by purification in an approved establishment OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. relaying for at least two months in a Class A relaying area OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. an EC approved heat treatment process
Prohibited
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample results over 46,000 E.coli/100g² – unfit for commercial harvesting for health reasons.

ANNEX 3 – TEMPLATE OF STANDARD NOTIFICATION MESSAGE OF AN INVESTIGATION OR ACTION STATE RESULT

Email: Eastern Shellfish Liaison Group – Investigation / Action State Activated

To All members of the Eastern Shellfish Liaison Group

Investigation / Action State Activated – Temporary Closure / Temporary Downgrade

Re: Classification zone: <INSERT>

We have received notification of a high E. coli result that falls within Investigation/Action State criteria obtained in a classification sample:

Classification zone (including sample coordinates): <INSERT>

Sample date: <INSERT>

Result: <INSERT> E. coli/100g

Species sampled: <INSERT>

Existing classification: <INSERT>

This message is notification that the Local Action Plan has been activated. In accordance with the agreed LAP we would refer members to the procedures for Investigation / Action States.

Actions:

1. Our initial response will be to **request further information / temporarily close/downgrade/[other control measures]**^{1 3} the production area. Please find a copy of closure / downgrade Notice attached.
2. Additional sampling to the monthly monitoring programme **[will/will not]** be carried out.
3. Members are requested to investigate and submit any information on incidents or other factors that may have contributed to this high result(s) to assist with the investigations.
4. Members should cascade the information to all harvesters, traders and food business operators concerned.
5. **[Tracing/withdrawal/and recall]**¹ of already harvested products **[will/will not]**¹ be required on this occasion.
6. The results of other sample sites from (insert sampling area (e.g. Hunstanton) were **satisfactory and well within the classification limits/are being awaited etc.**

<INSERT MAP OF CLASSIFIED ZONES>

Many thanks for your assistance.

ANNEX 4: TEMPLATE TEST MESSAGE

Subject line: Test Message: Eastern Shellfish Liaison Group

Email:

To all members of the **Eastern Shellfish Liaison Group** for classified shellfish production areas in **The Wash and North Norfolk Coast**.

This is a test message for all members of the above Local Action Group.

Please respond to this email to confirm your contact details remain correct. No other action is required.

If you have received this email in error and are not a member of the Local Action Group please reply in order that your details can be removed from the circulation list.

ANNEX 5 - GENERIC TEMPORARY CLOSURE NOTICE TEMPLATE

<INSERT LA LOGO>

NOTICE OF TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF PRODUCTION AREA

<INSERT CLASSIFICATION ZONE>

<INSERT RMP and RMP NAME>

REGULATION (EU) 2019/627 of 15 March 2019 laying down uniform practical arrangements for the performance of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council and amending Commission Regulation (EU) No 2074/2005 as regards official controls.

Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 S.I. 2013 No 2996

Pursuant to the power conferred on it by Article 18(6) and Article 18(8)(b) of Regulation 2017/625, and Article 62 of Regulation 2019/627, being satisfied that the results of sampling show that the health standards for molluscs are exceeded, there might be a risk to human health.

As Competent Authority for the purposes of the above EC provision by virtue of regulation 4 of the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 S.I. 2013 No 2996:

The **<insert LA name>** has temporarily closed the production area identified in the Schedule to this notice for the production and harvesting of **Mussels (*Mytilus spp*), Cockles (*C.edule spp.*), Oysters (*C. gigas*)** by Food Business Operators until further notice.

Signed:

Dated this [] day of [] 202[]

Executive Director

On behalf of **<insert LA name>**.

SCHEDULE

Area[s] in which the production of **Mussels (*Mytilus spp*), Cockles (*C.edule spp.*), Oysters (*C. gigas*)** by food business operators is prohibited by reason of this order: -

<INSERT CLASSIFICATION ZONE>
<INSERT RMP and RMP NAME>

Food business operators must not collect the affected animals from this area by any method; it is unsuitable for their production for health reasons and has been temporarily closed.

Collection of affected animals from the area that is temporarily closed amounts to the commission of a criminal offence under regulation 19 of the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 S.I. 2013 No 2996.

On conviction, a fine or imprisonment for a term of up to two years or both might be imposed.

PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS ARE STRONGLY ADVISED NOT TO GATHER COCKLES (*C. edule spp.*) FOR THEIR OWN CONSUMPTION FROM THE AFFECTED PRODUCTION AREA. THERE MIGHT BE A RISK TO HUMAN HEALTH IN DOING SO.

Recent analysis of samples taken by **<insert LA name>** from the affected area has shown that **Mussels (*Mytilus spp*), Cockles (*C.edule spp.*), Oysters (*C. gigas*)** exceed safe levels of E. Coli.

<insert LA name> will continue to take samples for analysis and keep its decision to close the area under review.

To check the current status of the area you may contact **<insert LA name>** by telephone on **<insert relevant contact>** or by emailing **<insert relevant contact>**.

ANNEX 6 - TEMPORARY DOWNGRADE TEMPLATE**<INSERT LA LOGO>****NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DOWNGRADE IN CLASSIFICATION OF PRODUCTION AREA****<INSERT CLASSIFICATION ZONE>****<INSERT RMP and RMP NAME>**

REGULATION (EU) 2019/627 of 15 March 2019 laying down uniform practical arrangements for the performance of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council and amending Commission Regulation (EU) No 2074/2005 as regards official controls.

Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 S.I. 2013 No 2996

Pursuant to the powers conferred by the above regulations, <insert LA name> are satisfied that the results of samples show that the health standards for **Mussels (*Mytilus spp*), Cockles (*C.edule spp.*), Oysters (*C. gigas*)** are exceeded and there may be a risk to human health. As Competent Authority for the purposes of the above EC provision by virtue of Regulation 4 of the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 S.I. 2013 No 2996 :-

<Insert LA name> has temporarily downgraded the production area identified above for production of **Mussels (*Mytilus spp*), Cockles (*C.edule spp.*), Oysters (*C. gigas*)** from **Class B** to **Class C** until further notice -

Food business operators must ensure that all product harvested from this area by any method, must, until further notice, be processed by one of the methods below. Live bivalve molluscs from this area are unsuitable for direct human consumption unless:

- (a) relaying for at least two months in an approved class B relaying area (the area has to be classified specifically for relaying purposes) followed by treatment in an approved purification centre**
- (b) relaying for at least two months in an approved class A relaying area (the area has to be classified specifically for relaying purposes)**
- (c) after an approved heat treatment process**

For a food business operator to contravene this order amounts to the commission of a criminal offence under Regulation 19 of the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 S.I. 2013 No 2996. On conviction a fine or imprisonment for a term of up to two years or both may be imposed.

Signed:

Dated this [] day of [] 202[]

Executive Director On behalf of <insert LA name>

<Insert LA name> will continue to take samples for analysis and keep its decision to temporarily downgrade the area under review. For further information please contact <insert LA name> by telephone on <insert relevant contact> or by emailing <insert relevant contact>.

ANNEX 7 - TCN REVOCATION AND DOWNGRADE TEMPLATE**<INSERT LA LOGO>****REVOCATION OF TEMPORARY CLOSURE NOTICE AND NOTICE OF TEMPORARY
DOWNGRADE OF PRODUCTION AREA****<INSERT CLASSIFICATION ZONE>
<INSERT RMP and RMP NAME>**

REGULATION (EU) 2019/627 of 15 March 2019 laying down uniform practical arrangements for the performance of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council and amending Commission Regulation (EU) No 2074/2005 as regards official controls.

Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 S.I. 2013 No 2996

Pursuant to the powers conferred by the above regulations, **<insert LA name>** are satisfied that the results of live shellfish samples from the production area identified above now indicate that the area can now be re-opened subject to a temporary downgrade from **Class B** to **Class C** production area.

As Competent Authority for the purposes of the above EC provision by virtue of Regulation 4 of the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 S.I. 2013 No 2996:-

Harvesting of Cockles (*C. edule spp.*) is hereby permitted and the Notice of Temporary Closure for Production Area of **<INSERT CLASSIFICATION ZONE> <INSERT RMP and RMP NAME>** is herewith revoked.

<insert LA name> has temporarily downgraded the production area identified above for the production of **Cockles (*C. edule spp.*)** from **Class B** to **Class C** until further notice -

Food business operators must ensure that all product harvested from this area by any method, must, until further notice, be processed by one of the methods below. Live bivalve molluscs from this area are unsuitable for direct human consumption unless:

- (a)** relaying for at least two months in an approved class B relaying area (the area has to be classified specifically for relaying purposes) followed by treatment in an approved purification centre
- (b)** relaying for at least two months in an approved class A relaying area (the area has to be classified specifically for relaying purposes)
- (c)** after an approved heat treatment process

For a food business operator to contravene this order amounts to the commission of a criminal offence under Regulation 19 of the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 S.I. 2013 No 2996. On conviction a fine or imprisonment for a term of up to two years or both may be imposed.

Signed:

Dated this [] day of [] 202[]

Executive Director On behalf of **<insert LA name>**.

<Insert LA name> will continue to take samples for analysis and keep its decision to temporarily downgrade the area under review. For further information please contact **<insert LA name>** by telephone on **<insert relevant contact>** or by emailing **<insert relevant contact>**.

ANNEX 8 - TCN REVOCATION TEMPLATE**<INSERT LA LOGO>****REVOCATION OF TEMPORARY CLOSURE NOTICE****<INSERT CLASSIFICATION ZONE>****<INSERT RMP and RMP NAME>**

REGULATION (EU) 2019/627 of 15 March 2019 laying down uniform practical arrangements for the performance of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council and amending Commission Regulation (EU) No 2074/2005 as regards official controls.

Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 S.I. 2013 No 2996

Pursuant to the powers conferred by the above regulations, **<insert LA name>** are satisfied that the results of live shellfish samples from the production area identified above now indicate that the area can now be re-opened.

Harvesting of shellfish **Mussels (*Mytilus spp*), Cockles (*C.edule spp.*), Oysters (*C. gigas*)** is hereby permitted and the Notice of Temporary Closure of Production Area of **<INSERT CLASSIFICATION ZONE> <INSERT RMP and RMP NAME>** is herewith revoked.

Signed:

Dated this [] day of [] 202[]

Executive Director On behalf of the **<insert LA name>**.

For further information please contact **<insert LA name>** by telephone on **<insert relevant contact>** or by emailing **<insert relevant contact>**.

ANNEX 9 - REVOCATION OF TEMPORARY DOWNGRADE**<INSERT LA LOGO>****REVOCATION OF TEMPORARY DOWNGRADE IN CLASSIFICATION OF
PRODUCTION AREA****<INSERT CLASSIFCATION ZONE>****<INSERT RMP and RMP NAME>**

REGULATION (EU) 2019/627 of 15 March 2019 laying down uniform practical arrangements for the performance of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council and amending Commission Regulation (EU) No 2074/2005 as regards official controls.

Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 S.I. 2013 No 2996

Pursuant to the powers conferred by the above regulations, <insert LA name> are satisfied that the results of samples of live shellfish from the production area identified above are compliant with the assigned classification of **Class B** and the temporary classification downgrade to **Class C** can end.

The Classification of Production Area of <INSERT CLASSIFCATION ZONE> <INSERT RMP and RMP NAME> **Classification B** is hereby reinstated.

The classification of a production area determines the treatment required. As a **Class B** area, this means that any <Insert Species> harvested from the area can only go for human consumption after one of the following <CHECK REQUIREMENTS DEPENDING ON CLASS> –

- a) after purification in an approved plant, or
- b) after re-laying in an approved **Class A** re-laying area, or
- c) after an approved heat treatment process

<Insert LA name> will resume routine sampling operations and monthly monitoring with recommence.

Signed:

Dated this [] day of [] 202[]

Executive Director On behalf of <insert LA name>.

For further information please contact <insert LA name> by telephone on <insert relevant contact> or by emailing <insert relevant contact>.

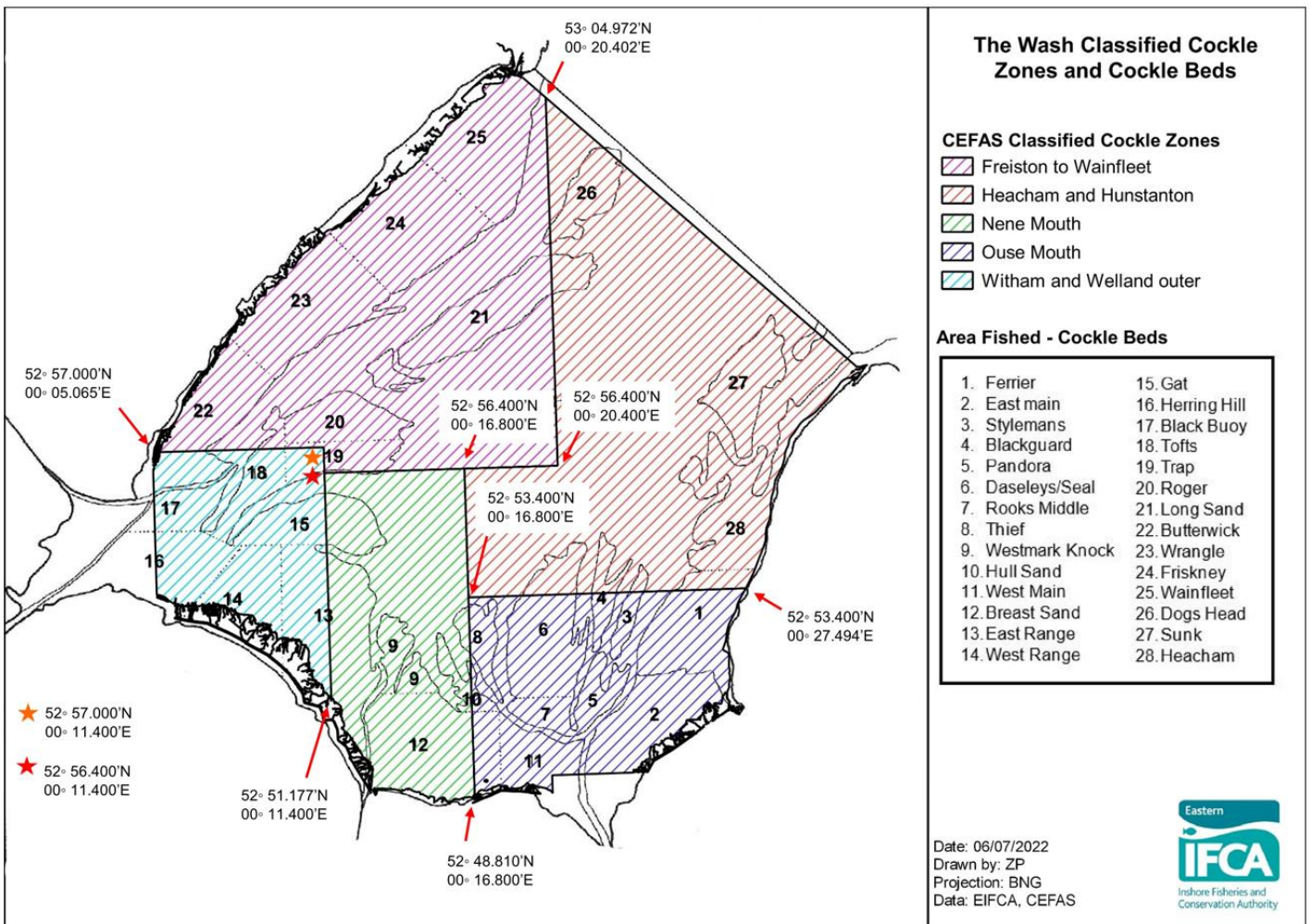
ANNEX 10 - PUBLIC WARNING NOTICE

<INSERT LA LOGO>

WARNING NOTICE

**PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS ARE
STRONGLY ADVISED NOT TO
GATHER COCKLES (*C. EDULE*)
FOR THEIR OWN CONSUMPTION
FROM THE AFFECTED
PRODUCTION AREA. THERE
MIGHT BE A RISK TO HUMAN
HEALTH IN DOING SO**

For further information please contact **<insert LA name>** by
telephone on **<insert relevant contact>** or by emailing **<insert
relevant contact>**.

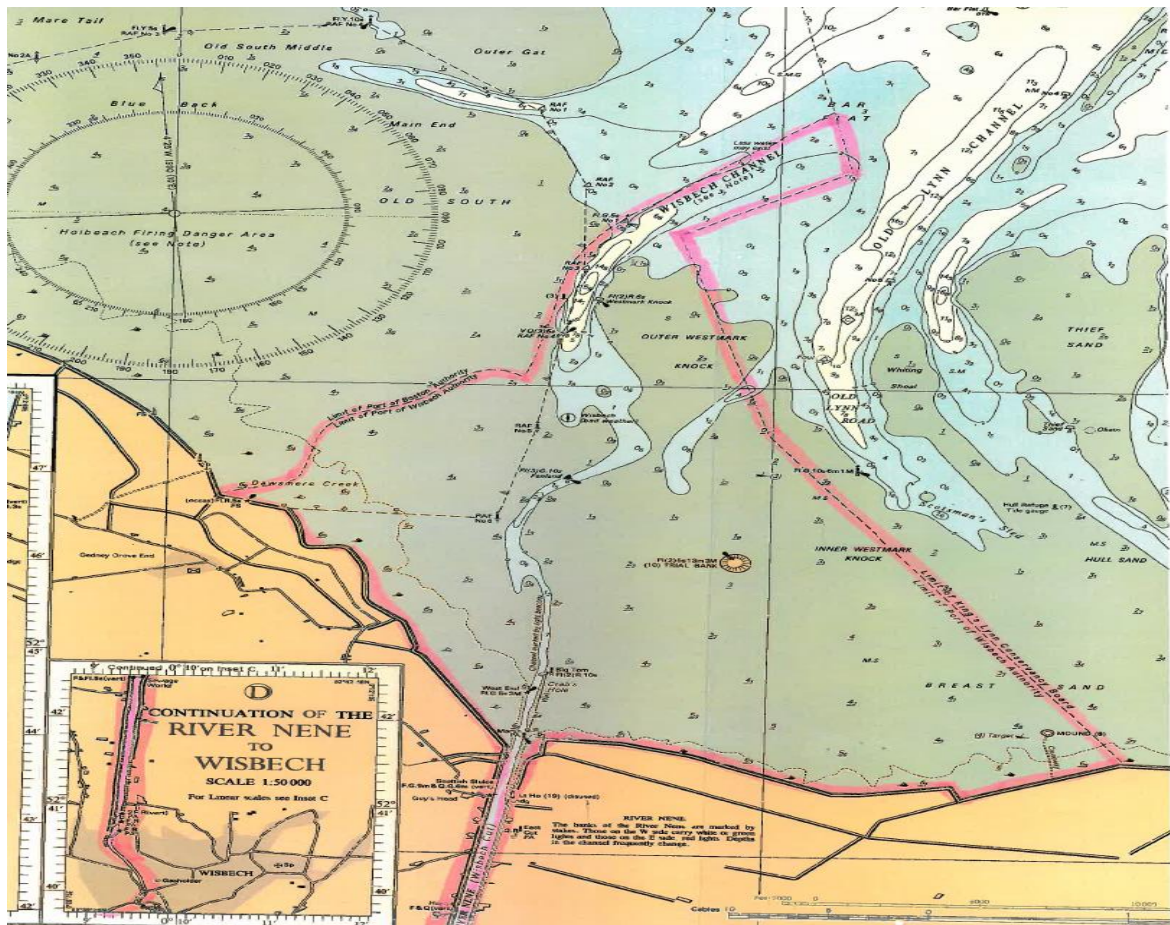


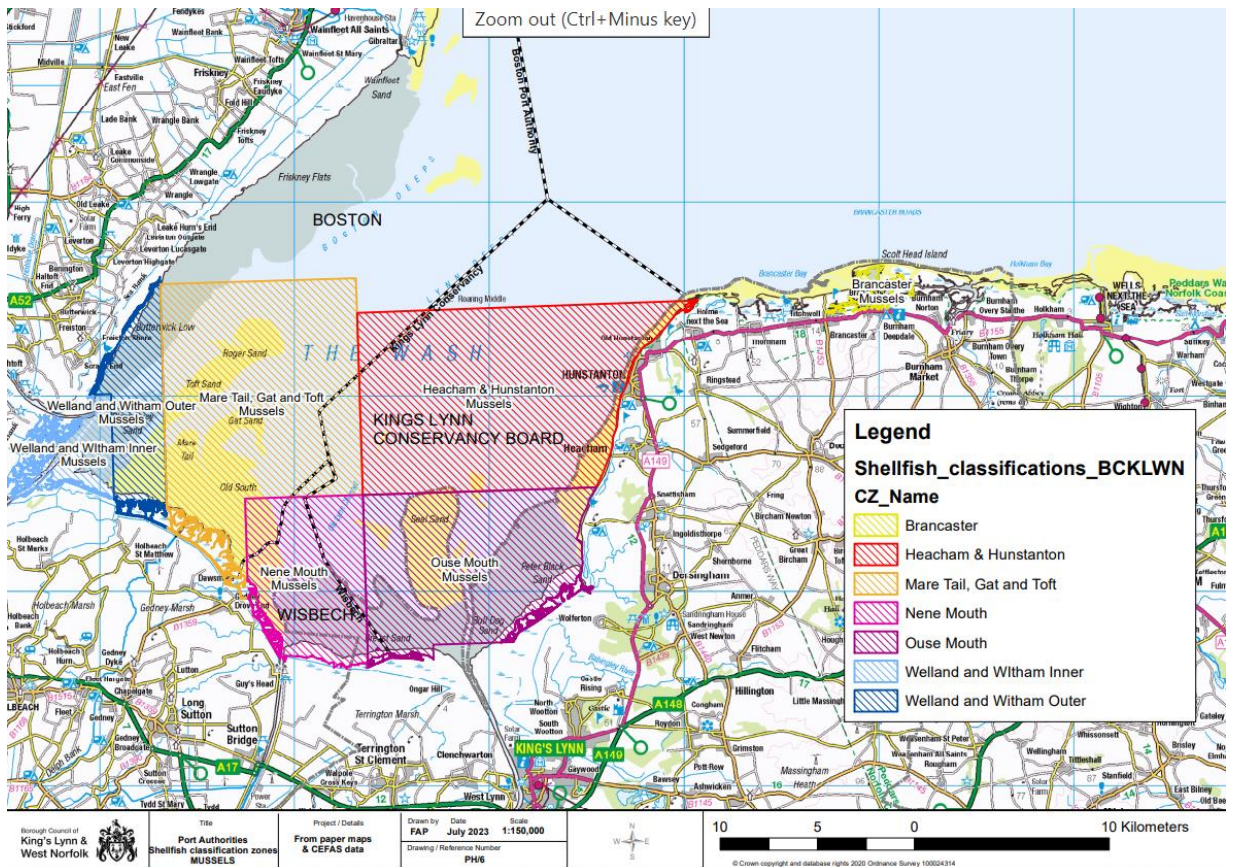
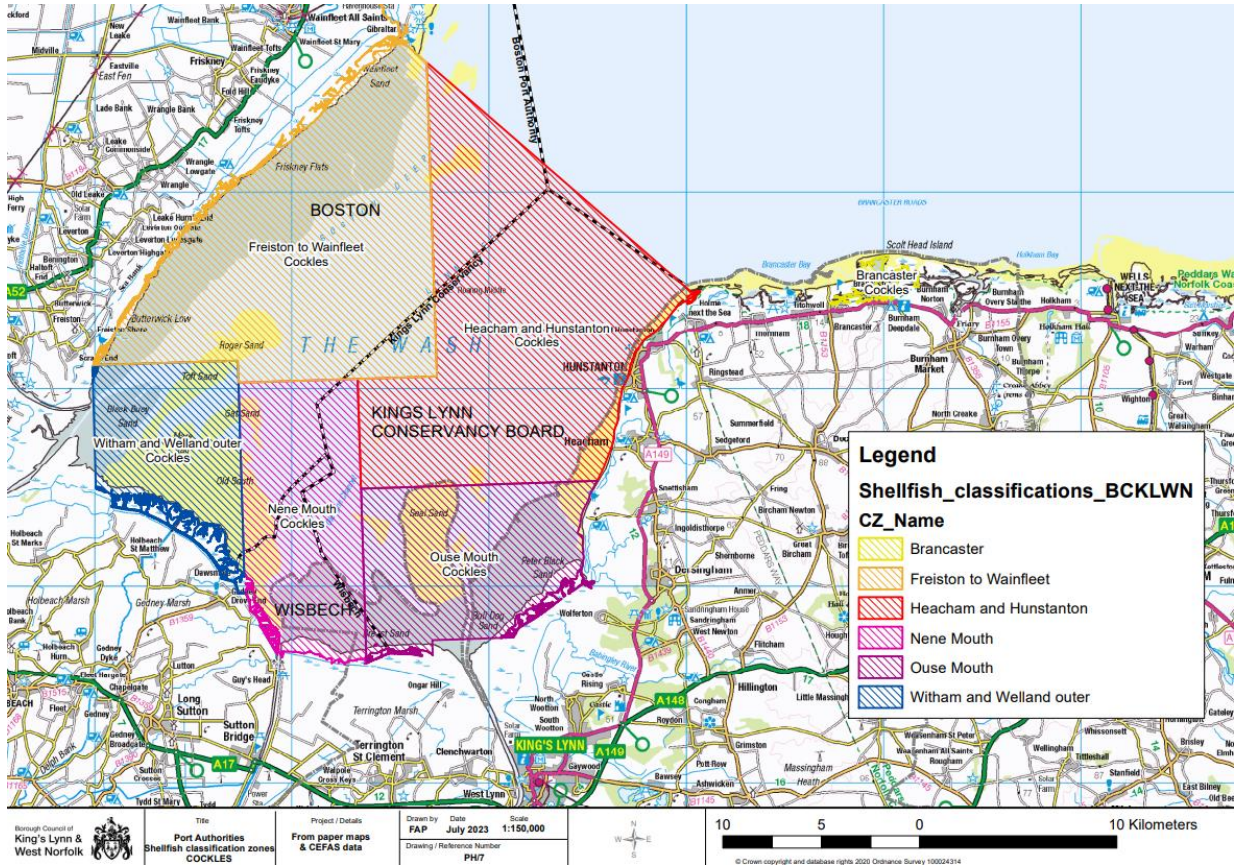
Date: 06/07/2022
 Drawn by: ZP
 Projection: BNG
 Data: EIFCA, CEFAS



Annex 11 Information on Local Authority Boundaries within The Wash

Limit of Port of Wisbech Authority - Map





Date	Name	Update		
11/07/2023	Rachel Clipston	Nene Mouth RMP has changed from B04AL to B04AT. Freiston to Wainfleet (Cockles) responsibility updated to Boston BC due to Port Health Boundaries and info on CEFAS maps (East Lindsey removed).		
28/07/2023	Rachel Clipston	BCKLWN Cockle and Mussel Maps Inserted into Annex 11		
12/10/2023	Amy Burgess	Update to LAP procedures following FSA guidance released in August 2023 which changes investigative sampling requirements and short-term control measures following OC shellfish classification results above action state triggers.		
25/10/2023	Rachel Clipston	<table border="1" data-bbox="619 674 1386 712"> <tr> <td>B04AV</td> <td>The Dills</td> </tr> </table> BO4A0 Black Bouy RMP replaced with BO4AV The Dills. RMP moved to new sample location.	B04AV	The Dills
B04AV	The Dills			
29/02/2024	Rachel Clipston	Maps and classification designations updated following FSA Annual Review Dec 1st 2023		
10/12/2024 & 19/12/2024	Rachel Clipston	Map inserted Blakeney SouthSide. Classifications updated following FSA Annual Review. 19/12/24 Updated Wash Maps included.		
18/02/2025	Rachel Clipston	Mussel Wash Classification Map and Table Updated following classification change of B003M. Classified area codes added to Cockle and Mussel classification maps.		