



9 February 2024

Dear Stakeholder,

Whelk fishery – Reminder to apply for a new whelk permit 2024 – 2025

The current whelk permit period, 1 March 2023 to 29 February 2024 is coming to an end. To continue fishing for whelk with pots in the Welsh zone, owners of licensed fishing vessels, if they haven't already, will need to apply and pay for a new whelk permit for the next permit period 1 March 2024 to 28 February 2025.

We have updated the whelk fishery web page (<https://www.gov.wales/apply-permit-fish-whelks-pots-2024-2025>), which provides useful links to all relevant information including how to apply for a permit and guidance on how we manage the whelk fishery.

Welsh Government aim to conserve whelk stocks across the Welsh zone and ensure the sustainability of the fishery by enabling 'adaptive management' in response to changes in the environment or stock levels. The fisheries management system includes:

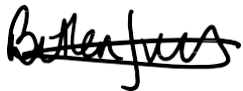
- Permits – anyone fishing for whelk using pots in the Welsh zone will require a permit for each vessel and for each permit period. **There will be a fee of £304 for this permit.**
- Permit Period – the annual permitted fishing season will run from 00:01 on 1 March each year to 23:59 on the last day of February the following year.
- Annual Catch Limit (ACL) – scientific monitoring and catch data will be used to set an Annual Catch Limit (ACL) for the entire permitted fleet. This will be set at **4,768 tonnes** for the permit period beginning 1 March 2024 and thereafter will be varied based on evidence.
- Flexible Monthly Catch Limit (MCL) – All permit holders will be issued the same MCL in any given month. Initially for the permit period beginning 1 March 2024, this will be set at **50 tonnes in March** and, if necessary, will be varied in subsequent months to ensure the ACL is not exceeded and the benefit of the fishery is spread across the permit period in line with historic fishing patterns.

- Monthly Catch Returns – All permit holders will be required to submit an accurate catch return for each permitted vessel at the end of each month as a permit condition even if they have not fished.

If you would like any further information about the new whelk management system, please contact Fisheries division:

Email: milfordhavenfisheriesoffice@gov.wales or Phone 0300 025 3500.

Yours faithfully



Bethan Jones

Head of Fisheries Trade

Welsh Government