



# 55th Annual Conference



Shellfish  
Association of Great Britain

#SAGB55



# SAGB 55<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE



**FISHING INTO  
THE FUTURE**



11<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2025





## WHO AM I?

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Emma Plotnek (She/Her)

Not a fisherman, not a scientist – just an experienced inexperienced.

✦ In addition to working in Fisheries...

*I like adventuring and riding bikes, I like loud music, I have an amazing 10-year-old kid, I am a resident of Chile, I was once a contestant on can't cook won't cook!*

**So, I'm also a non-fishing human...**





## *“CHARTING A COURSE TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE AND PROSPEROUS FISHERIES”*

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- ✦ UK Charity established in 2015
- ✦ *BY FISHERMEN – FOR FISHERMEN*
  - ✦ “Sustainable” & “Prosperous” (!?)
  - ✦ “Fisheries” (!?)
  - ✦ And “Charting the Course”...  
**Co-Management  
&  
Industry-led & Collaborative Science**





We're going to put on an F-REP event

- It's 3-days
- Specific to a fishery + region
- It's industry-led & facilitated
- We need 50% fishermen + relevant industry reps, scientists, innovators & fisheries managers
- We need a relevant, diverse & engaging agenda
- We want people to go home feeling warm and fuzzy! – and go on to participate *effectively* in Fisheries Science and Management

***Join us & see how we do it!***



# STRONG FOUNDATIONS

“Fishermen are trained to catch fish. Scientists and managers are trained to save fish.

We all need some sort of education on how to work towards the same goals”



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**ALEXA DAYTON**  
**FOUNDER MREP & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
**MAINE CENTRE FOR COASTAL FISHERIES**



# Ye dancin', ye askin'?



We need to be able to easily make direct contact with researchers and managers to progress with innovative ideas – help push us towards the right people to progress - instead of running in circles.



We needed a “hands across the water” moment: bringing together fishermen from the brink of retirement with those just starting out, with other professionals, to build fresh perspectives onto learned knowledge and co-design a route forward in fishing!

In a world of *firefighting* we need the glue to bring people together positively



**IAN WIGHTMAN & ELAINE WHYTE**  
**CLYDE FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION**  
**& CLYDE FISHERMEN'S TRUST**



# TEAM UNITE!

## *Ears to the ground*

When it comes to putting on an F-REP, the team are actively involved in the grass roots of fishing! This means that local knowledge is at the forefront of the event, it's tailored to local fisheries and the issues that affect us.



From the get-go. We plan together, deciding when to hold the event to avoid optimum fishing times, where we hold it - to make sure it's accessible to the coastal ports, right down to making sure the right people are in the room to hold meaningful conversations for our specific fishery and region.

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**JENNY PRICE**  
**DIRECTOR AT KJP SHELLFISH LTD.**  
**POT MAKER, FISHERMAN'S WIFE & OCCASIONAL**  
**(SEASICK) CREW MEMBER!**



# Spreading the Word



Hey there, Emma here from FITF 🐟 we are reviewing applications for F-REP so this is your final call to apply. If you know anyone who might be interested please pass this on.

Fisheries Resource Education Programme: 26-29th February 2024 at Burn Hall near York. We share expertise and build connections for fishermen, scientists and fisheries managers to work together effectively. There are funded places for fishermen. Focus on the Shellfish FMPs

- Apply using this link: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd8ij51QqAe-1kw16V15YLnMvLrdNmSLK7vQVhzreeGUCRjGw/viewform>

- More information on the Fishing Porthole website: <https://www.fishingporthole.co.uk/f-rep/>

11:40 ✓



They will gladly listen to Gus

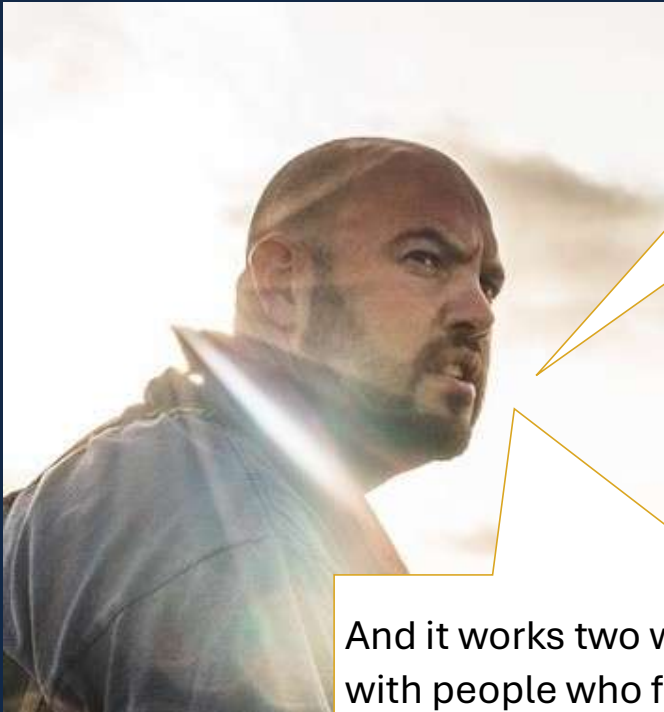
Meanwhile, I'm begging for a 👍

**GUS CASLAKE**  
**SW INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER**  
**SEAFISH**



# Who's onboard

FITF are giving grassroots groups access to the right people – who've got the political clout and or depth of understanding to get a meaningful and ongoing dialogue going!



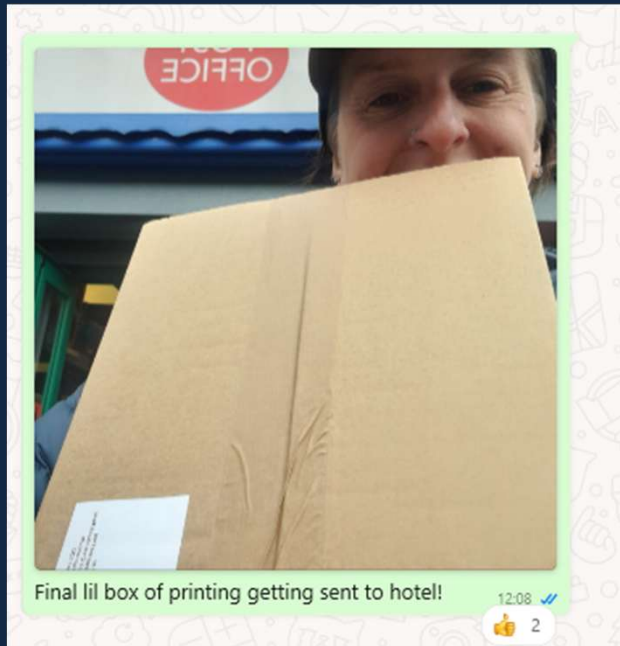
And it works two ways, we've all been in the room with people who from government and science who are very good at their job, but sometimes they don't have a deep understanding about fishing!



**MIKE ROACH**  
**DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**  
**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF**  
**FISHERMEN'S ORGANISATIONS**



# When things go wrong...



Now, we  
know  
that...

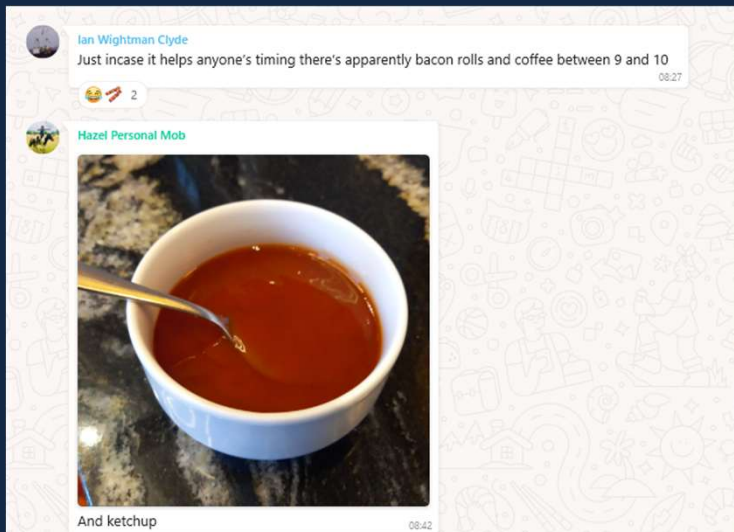
if somebody is sick and suddenly  
can't do something they can take  
a backseat for a while...  
Everybody else will fill the space  
and make it work.



**HAZEL CURTIS**  
**ECONOMIST, FITF "FOUNDING" TRUSTEE**  
**& PREVIOUSLY DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE**  
**RELATIONS AT SEAFISH**



# We've got each others backs!



We meet regularly to ensure everything gets done - my experience has always been people offering to take on work and stepping up where they can. It's powerful! It's one of the best teams I've been a part of in my working life.

The trust and mutual support is exceptional.

## ALL HANDS ON DECK!

Most importantly, it's helps build trust and understanding across the sector — something we urgently need more of.



TELL ME YOU ARE AT AN F-REP

Mediocre hotel, out of town,  
out of season.



WITHOUT TELLING ME YOU ARE AT AN F-REP



# TELL ME YOU ARE AT AN F-REP



Jenny P 🧐

“The F-REP encourages conversations in an informal and relaxed sessions which can be just as beneficial as the more structured parts of the event.”

There’s nowhere to go, but the hotel bar!

Ashley Mullenger 🧐

“It’s an easy way to remember we are human and how to interact with one another – it paves the way for us to have frank, honest and sometimes difficult conversations with decision makers at a human level”

WITHOUT TELLING ME YOU ARE  
AT AN F-REP (PART II)

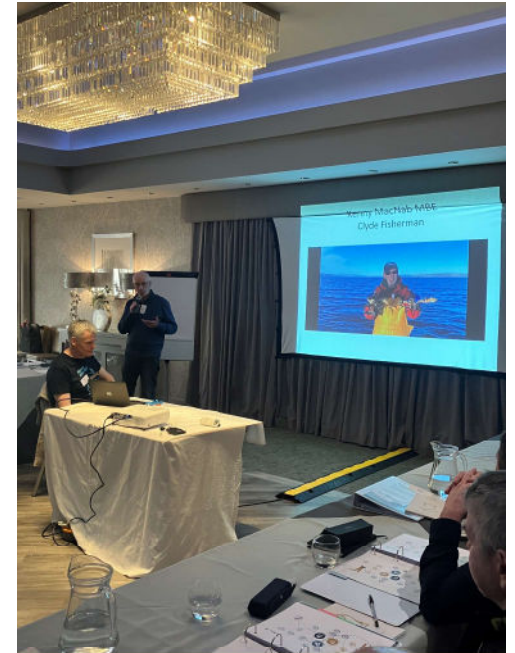


# Devils in the details



FITF ethos is “by fisherman for fisherman” – and our knowledge comes from those before us.

At FITF we follow this long tradition of learning – keeping fishing communities interconnected and passing on knowledge – I originally came as an attendee and Alan Steer mentored me to become FITF Chairman.



**DAVID STEVENS**  
**SKIPPER SS CRYSTAL SEA &**  
**FITF CHAIRMAN**



# Collaborative “LEARNING”

It really helps that we are approachable, and everyone's knowledge is valued.

We're based around real human interactions, with authentic people who know their stuff and most importantly, people who actively want to work collaboratively to affect positive change.



We're a diverse set of people with different expertise, interests, opinions and contacts. And everyone is given space to input, comment, discuss and develop the work. We're working together - for something we all believe in - and in a way that works for everyone - **it's a bit of a magic formula really.**

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**BESHLIE POOL**  
**EXECUTIVE OFFICER AT SOUTH DEVON &**  
**CHANNEL SHELLFISHERMEN LTD**



# WHAT'S ON THE AGENDA?

As a fisherman stood on a pitching deck it's difficult to understand the decisions made by people who've never stood here.

FITF helps bridge that gap in understanding - I've been able to meet scientists and managers, learning about fisheries science and data collection, understand how decisions are made -and they have the opportunity to learn from the fishing industry.



**GEORGE LAMPLOUGH  
FISHERMAN, WHITBY**



# WHAT'S ON THE AGENDA?



The activities & role play elements are so important – switching roles is a light-hearted way of seeing different lenses and objectives. It's also hilarious to see us all play each others' roles.

It holds up a mirror to each other and you think *"oh my god is that what we are like"*



**ASHLEY MULLENGER  
FEMALE FISHERMAN, AUTHOR  
& WOMEN IN FISHERIES**



# THE MIXER & SOCIALS



The winning team in the F-REP quiz – informal as well as more formal events are a key feature of these events, helping to build relationships between the different groups in attendance.

DID ANDY REED GIVE ME  
SOMETHING TO ADD?



It's fun, and relaxed – we have so many scientists keen to attend the F-REP, and have important things to share, but we just don't have the capacity to have everyone in the room.

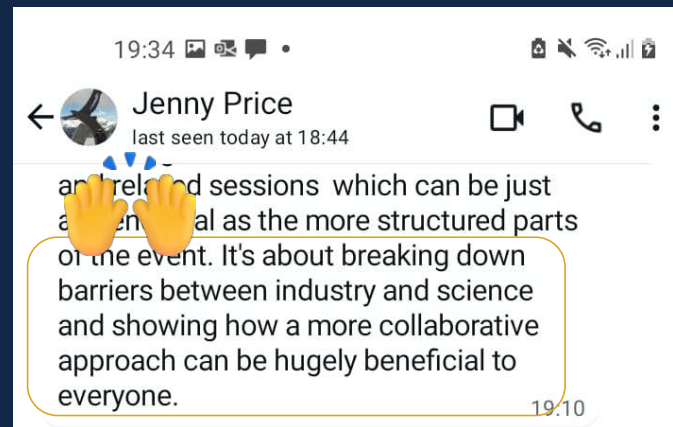
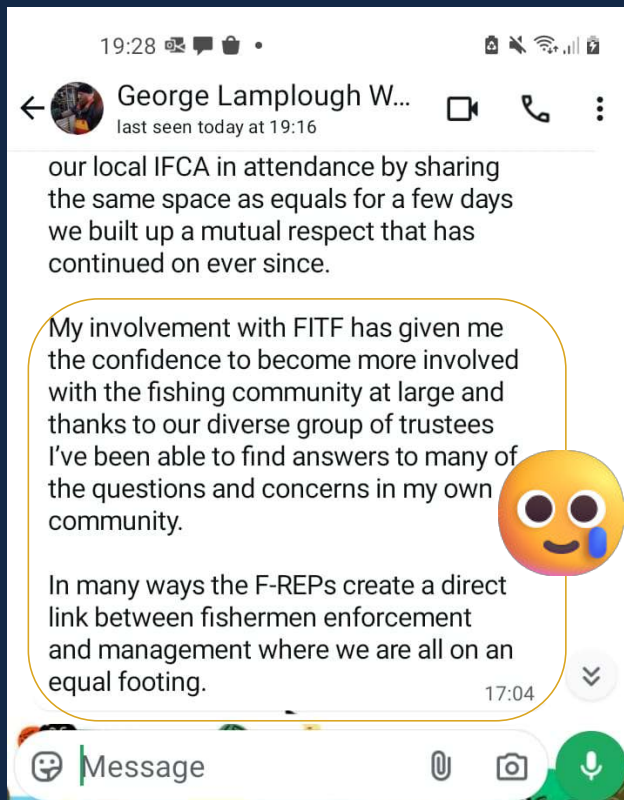
It's a rare chance for so many others to reach a huge subset of industry people, and share ideas, and get some honest (sometimes brutally honest) feedback.



**ANNA PATEL**  
**FITF PROGRAMME MANAGER**



# TAKEAWAYS





# GET THE RESULTS!

It's a gamechanger - understanding processes mean members are more comfortable, confident, and more engaged in management processes. It's also strengthened our association internally - fishermen have seen the weight their voice can have in management – so are keen to put their ideas across and make OFA more effective.



The impact extends beyond those who attended - they spread the word and are leading by example & have encouraged other fishermen to take more active roles in management locally and nationally!

**HANNAH FENNELL**  
**ORKNEY FISHERIES ASSOCIATION & PRESIDENT**  
**OF SCOTTISH FISHERMEN'S FEDERATION**



# WHAT COMES NEXT...

**FISHING NEWS AWARDS**

## THE SUSTAINABILITY AWARD

Shortlisted finalists: Coverless trawl selectivity in *Nephrops* fishery | Isle of Man fisheries co-management | Ocean Recovery Project/Milsped net recycling

**Winner: Fishing into the Future**

"What a brilliant evening! We are still on a high after picking up the Sustainability Award for our F-REP events," said Emma Plotnek, executive director of Fishing into the Future (FITF), celebrating the recognition of their impact.

The charity's Education has been innovative together and man

workshops where fishermen's voices are prioritised.

"It was a great night – winning an award and also having chats with people to help us figure out where to take the F-REPs next," Emma told *FN*, emphasising the collaborative spirit of the charity's work.

FITF's core mission is to empower fishermen to actively participate in the decision-making processes that shape the future of the fisheries and marine environment

**Sponsor: The Marine Stewardship Council**

Lisa Bennett, senior fisheries outreach manager at MSC UK and Ireland, said: "We were proud to once again sponsor



▲ Fishing into the Future trustee Adrian Bartlett and executive director Emma Plotnek with their Sustainability Award, which was presented by Lisa Bennett of the Marine Stewardship Council.

"A big congratulations to Fishing into the Future for winning what was an incredibly competitive category with their Fisheries Resource Education programme initiative. The calibre of entries this year made the judging process a real challenge and a clear sign of the inspiring sustainability work happening

across the fishing industry. A big thanks to all of our amazing judges this year: Kara Brydson, Bryce Stewart, Magnus Johnson, Hannah Fennell and David Warwick.

"Well done to all the winners and nominees, and thank you to *Fishing News* for another brilliant evening!"



**Post F-REP** We recover!

We learn & follow up

We capture our impacts

We made a gang (i.e. new Trustees)

And we get “back on it” for next winter!

*We set the example!*

- **Co-management**
- **Co-management**
- **Co-management**
- **Co-management!**





# CONTACT

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WWW.FISHINGPOTHOLE.CO.UK





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