

Protected Areas Byelaw Regulatory Notice 4 (Humber Estuary) Information

What is Eelgrass?

Eelgrass is a grass-like flowering plant with dark green, long, narrow, ribbon-shaped leaves. It is one of the very few groups of flowering plants that live in the sea. Two species of eelgrass are found in England and both are considered to be scarce. They grow in sheltered waters such as inlets, bays, estuaries and saltwater lagoons.

Why do we need to protect Eelgrass?

Eelgrass beds provide important food for wildfowl, such as brent geese and nutrients to support animal communities on the seabed. Their roots catch and trap sediments, reducing coastal erosion. Submerged Eelgrass beds are also used as a nursery area, protecting young fish and shellfish and provide a sheltered home for many other animals, such as pipefish and seahorses. Eelgrass is protected by law as a feature of the Humber Estuary European Marine Site.



Fig. 1: Underwater illustration of Eelgrass

What does Eelgrass look like?

This is Horse Shoe Point Eelgrass at low tide.

How can we protect Eelgrass?

Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (EIFCA) has introduced a flexible Protected Areas Byelaw. Under this Byelaw the Authority will, where necessary, issue, vary or revoke Regulatory Notices which restrict or prohibit fishing where there is a risk to features of European Marine Sites within the EIFCA district.

How does this affect you?

Regulatory Notice 4 prohibits fishing with bottom towed gear, all fishing by handwork (including bait digging) and fishing by crab tiling in one restricted area on the Lincolnshire coast at Haile Sand between Northcoates Point and Donna Nook. Precise location details can be found on Regulatory Notice 4.

The Byelaw and Regulatory Notices have been developed in consultation with a range of service users, stakeholders and partners and seeks to balance the objectives of managing a sustainable marine environment and inshore fishing industry.

We would urge all visitors to this protected area to avoid disturbing eelgrass.

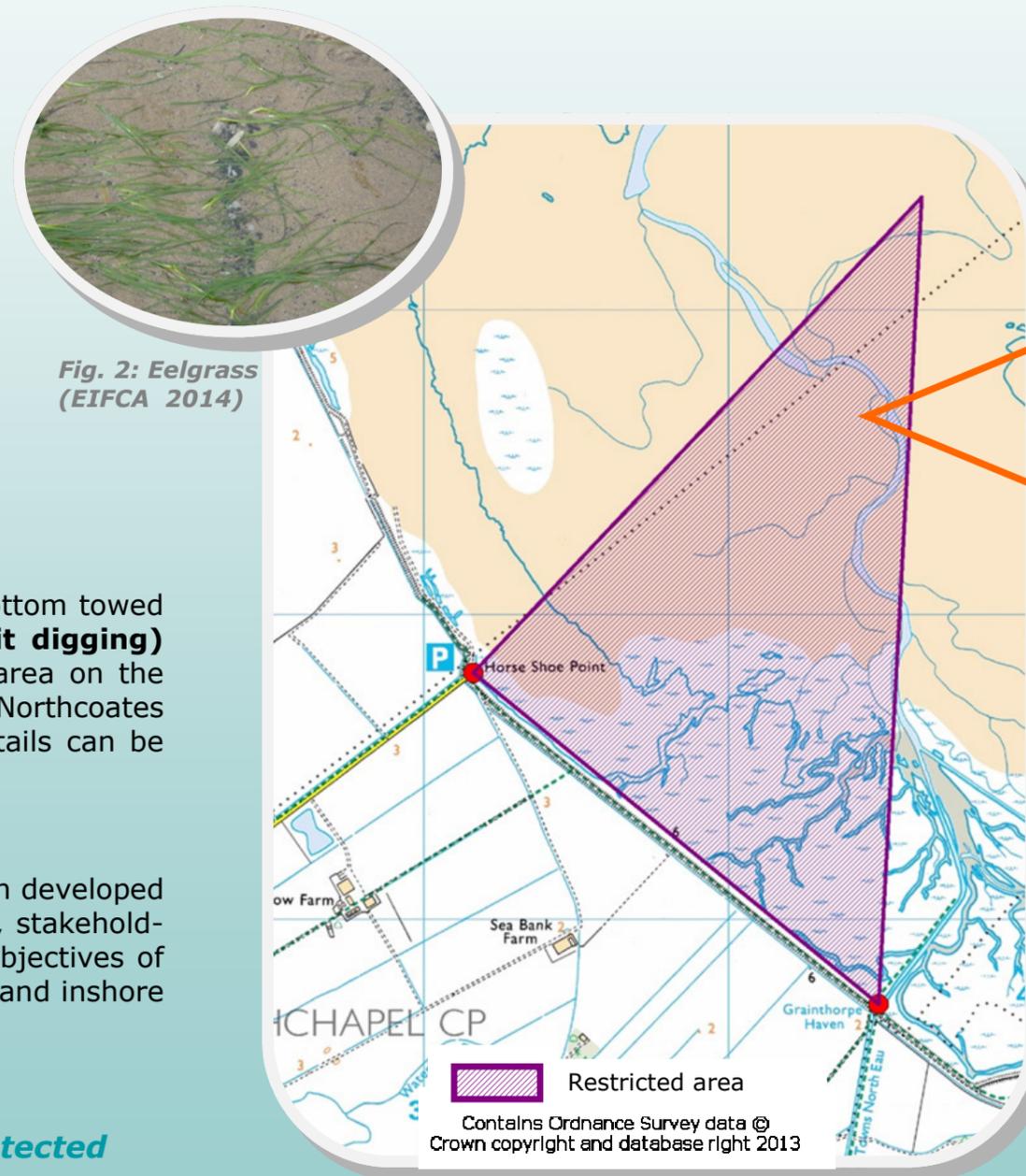


Fig. 2: Eelgrass (EIFCA 2014)

Fig. 4: Location of Regulatory Notice 4 Restricted Area

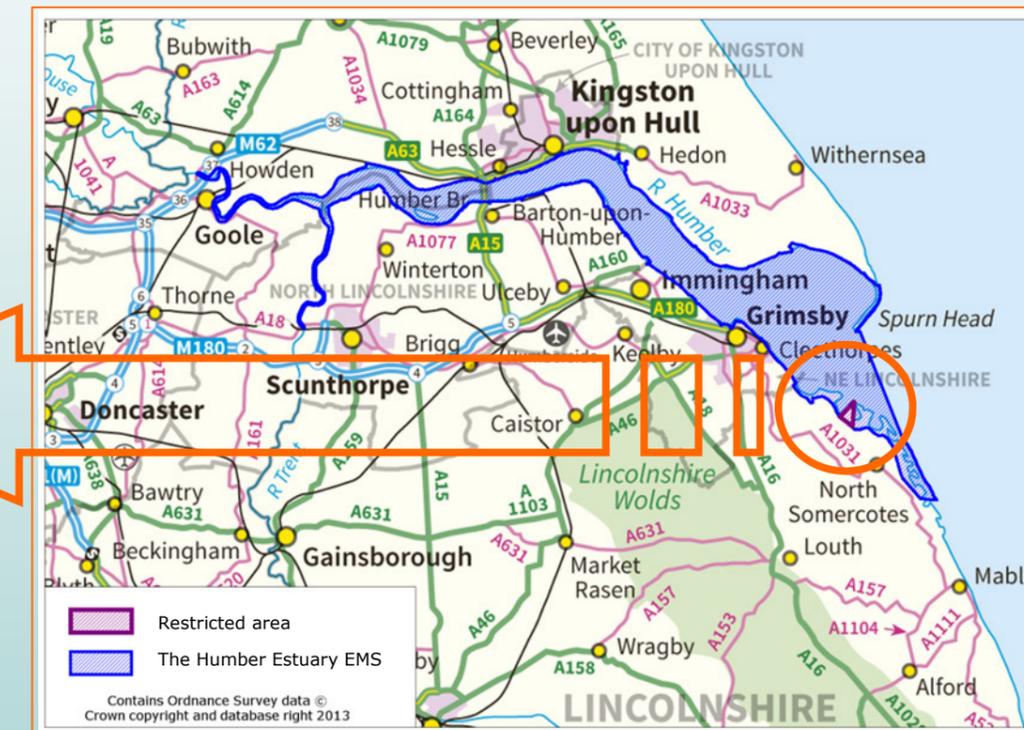


Fig. 3: Location of The Humber Estuary European Marine Site (EMS) and Regulatory Notice 4 Restricted Area

Full details of this Protected Area Byelaw can be found on our website: www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk

We value input from all sea users, coastal communities and the general public, our contact details are:-

6 North Lynn Business Village,
Bergen Way,
King's Lynn,
Norfolk,
PE30 2JG

01553 775321

... Local seas managed well