



FISHING INTO THE FUTURE

CORPORATE PLAN

2024 - 2028

A UK charity led by fishermen to chart a course towards sustainable and prosperous fisheries.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This corporate plan is provided to summarise the ambitions of Fishing into the Future (FITF) up to 2028. This will be a crucial time for our charity, as UK fisheries management continues to move more meaningfully towards a co-management structure, underpinned by the delivery of Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs).

This shift represents a potential bringing-to-life of FITF's vision - truly prosperous and sustainable UK fisheries, underpinned by collaborative science and decision-making. To ensure this is the case, we have mapped-out our planned activities and how they will contribute to this desired 'seascape' across the next four years.

Staying true to our essential DNA as a charity, we remain led by fishermen - and design our delivery to support industry, and facilitate their effective inclusion into science and management structures.

We will continue to run our flagship F-REP events, expanding their geography across the UK - at a pace and scale that responds to decision making processes and industry needs, while reaching and benefiting new communities.

We will continue with our online work – hosting Fishing into the Future Talks (FITF Talks) that demystify key issues and trends, and engage individuals from across the sector encouraging conversation and connection in a fishermen-led space. We will maintain, develop and promote our Fishing Porthole website as a place for key information-sharing and communication, which

help us to disseminate insights and resources for all of our audiences - fishing, science, and policy.

Beyond this, we will seek new opportunities to offer bolt-on support for research initiatives engaging the industry: using our expertise and connections as a professional service to others. This strengthens both our own aim of bringing together the worlds of fishing and science, and researchers aims to better connect into fisheries.

At the centre of all we do is a belief that dialogue, time spent together and the sharing of experiences and knowledge, are all parts of the essential foundations to effective co-management. Through these exchanges, confidence and trust can be built: fostering a virtuous cycle of improved engagement and better, more informed decision-making.

Increased funding and resource over the next four years will help us deliver holistically on our mission. To evidence our role in the sector it's important we measure our progress and report on the impact of our mission. We'll be tracking quantitative data such as the number of people we reach and how often we create events and spaces for collaboration. We'll also track qualitative data on how our work improves trust and willingness to participate, as well as specific case studies from people positively impacted by our work.



CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

By David Stevens

Fishing into the Future started long before I took on my role as Chair. In 2013, supported by the then Prince of Wales' International Sustainability Unit and Seafish, our charity was launched - by fishermen, for fishermen - on the clifftops of Brixham, at the Berryhead Hotel. I was delighted to take on the position of Chair in 2019.

Soon afterwards, we were confronted with unprecedented levels of uncertainty in the wider world and in our organisation. We faced stark choices surrounding the future of the charity. However, we were fortunate enough to have support from individuals and organisations that believed in our mission and were prepared to invest in our future.

In 2020, Fishing into the Future received the first instalment of a multi-year funding agreement from the Fishmongers' Company Fisheries Charitable Trust, along with funding from The Seafarers' Charity that enabled the Board of Trustees to appoint Emma Plotnek as our new Programme Manager and to redesign the offering of Fishing into the Future to suit the ever-changing panorama in UK fisheries.

We benefited from new leadership, new voices, and big changes inside and outside our organisation. Since 2020 we have adapted: welcoming these changes and responding effectively as our structure and mission evolved, and refined.

Since then, Emma Plotnek has become Executive Director of FITF and we have resumed our signature three-day residential programmes, re-launched as the Fisheries Resource Education Programme, or F-REP.

Now, we are becoming a key feature in the developing seascape of UK fisheries management. We are attracting more



engagement from a wider constituency, and have become a vital part of the community: one that will build a future where fishermen, scientists and policy makers work together effectively.

We have a growing portfolio of work, with the re-launch of our in-person events at the heart of this. Our refreshed Fisheries Resource Education Programme was delivered in Southampton in November 2023, with over 30 committed and actively engaged fishermen coming together with decision-makers and scientists for three days of learning and connecting, centred on collaboration in fisheries science and effective co-management.

“Bringing us all together reignited optimism and an appetite for collaboration and connection - fisheries need more than words to thrive; they require solutions to the challenges they face, and a commitment of time and funding to problem solve.”

We continue to strive to be a positive force, changing the narrative and shifting the way people work together, trust one another, and approach collaborative efforts in our sector.





VISION AND PURPOSE

OUR VISION

We envision a progressive and innovative fishing sector that harnesses the potential of everyone involved in fisheries. This vision sees the fishing industry play a clear role: working in collaboration with scientists and managers to deliver long-term sustainable and prosperous fisheries.

We believe that the realisation of this vision is genuine UK co-management, based on collaborative and industry-led research.

OUR PURPOSE

Our purpose is to provide people from fishing, science and government with the skills, knowledge, confidence and connections to contribute to creating and operating effective co-management systems and the science that underpins these systems for commercial fishing, in order to achieve prosperous and sustainable UK fisheries.

We are neutral, non-political and seek to include underrepresented voices.

PURPOSE OF THIS CORPORATE PLAN

This four-year corporate plan outlines our expected resources and what we will do to provide people working in, and with, UK commercial fishing the knowledge, skills, confidence, connections and capacity to better realise their potential as professional stewards of the sea.

Equipping fishermen, scientists and fisheries managers with the tools, knowledge and connections to collaborate in the pursuit of sustainable and prosperous fisheries.





WHO WE ARE

We have a Board of Trustees to set strategic direction and ensure good governance of the charity. According to our constitution, two thirds of our trustees must be people working in the fishing or seafood industry; active commercial fishermen, industry representatives, and people working in the seafood supply chain.

We also have on our Board several experts from policy-making, fisheries economics, research and science who share our values and bring a wealth of knowledge and connections to the charity.

Each individual brings their own expertise, supports us while continuing their roles within fishing and seafood, and gives their time voluntarily to advance our charity's mission.

“As an industry-led charity, our work starts and ends with the people in the wheelhouse”

We believe a co-management and a collaborative approach to working will make a positive contribution to delivering sustainable and prosperous fisheries.

We believe that everyone working in commercial fishing across the UK, has the potential to play an important role in marine and fisheries management and the scientific evidence that underpins this. Well-managed fisheries and a prosperous seafood industry depend on people in

science, industry and government being able to work together effectively in science and policy-making.



FITF's approach to supporting sustainable and prosperous fisheries is through building trust and mutual dialogue between the scientists, fishermen and policy makers involved in commercial fishing. Our work creates learning opportunities, facilitates knowledge exchange, encourages collaboration, builds confidence and trust, connects people and enables effective dialogue and mutual understanding among the fishing industry, scientists and fisheries managers.

Combined, these essential elements of collaboration lay a foundation for meaningful co-management.



Our current board members are:



David Stevens (Chair)
Fisherman on the Crystal Sea.
Newlyn, Cornwall



Adrian Bartlett (Vice Chair)
Fisherman & Seafood advocate.
Paignton, Devon



David Anderson
CEO Aberdeen Fish Producers' Organisation



Jimmy Buchan
Retired fisherman & Seafood trader at Amity Fish. *Peterhead, Aberdeenshire*



Hazel Curtis
Fisheries Economist



Carl Davies
Fisherman on the Gwen-Paul-M.
Conwy, Wales



Alexa Dayton
Executive Director at Marine Center for Coastal Fisheries



Hannah Fennell
Head of Orkney Fisheries Association & Researcher



Trevor Jones
Fisherman.
North Wales



Michael Kaiser
Chief Scientist & Professor of Fisheries Conservation at Heriott-Watt University



Jimmy Kelly
Fisherman on the Glen Bay.
Portavogie, Northern Ireland



Steve Mackinson
Senior Research Scientist at Scottish Pelagic Fishermen's Association



Phil McBryde
Policy lead in Domestic Fisheries & Reform at Defra



Ashley Mullenger
Fisherman on Fairlass and Saoirse.
Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk



Mike Park
CEO at Scottish White Fish Producers' Association



Jenny Price
Fishing business owner.
Bridlington



Karl Price
Fisherman on the Isobella M.
Bridlington



Alan Steer
Fisherman on Superb-us.
Beesands, South Devon



Neil Witney
Fisherman on About Time.
Newhaven, East Sussex



Day-to-day work is organised and conducted by our Executive Director, **Emma Plotnek**, with regular support from external contractors.

✉ emma@fitf.co.uk
☎ **07311 812 105**

Fishing into the Future annually reviews its board and recruits new trustees, many of whom join after being involved in our work.



WHAT WE DO DIFFERENTLY

- **We are run by fishermen, for fishermen: with a majority of our Board of Trustees actively working in the catching sector and seafood supply chain.**
- Our board includes experts from fishing and seafood, science, and government.
- **Rather than directly addressing current issues ourselves – we equip people to do this for themselves, through leadership and promoting structures and techniques to enable better collaborative working.**
- We have strong connections with a well-established network of fishermen, researchers and fisheries managers.
- **Our collective experience, validated by the broad knowledge of our Board of Trustees, means we are trusted experts of co-management and a facilitator of respectful and valuable conversations on fisheries management issues.**
- We are not a member organisation and remain politically neutral.
- **We have a growing reach and strong rapport throughout the fishing industry.**





CONTEXT

The UK Fisheries Act 2020 set out new pathways for fisheries co-management through Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs). This context gives us a clear arena for our work with a commitment from government to operate effective co-management.

We anticipate that for many fishermen, being able to participate effectively in FMPs - both in their conception and design, and their ultimate delivery - is an important incentive to get involved with our work: offering them the chance to help shape the future of our industry.

Often it's perceived that different stakeholders have opposing ideas or views, but when you dig into the matter, it's apparent we are all striving for a shared goal of healthy fisheries and marine systems, thriving coastal communities and sustainable seafood – we give people the opportunity and skills to create a mutual dialogue around how to achieve this.

How we seek to impact different groups:

- **Fishermen and people in the industry** feel empowered and know the process of how to contribute to fisheries research and management decisions (i.e. who to speak to, what are the right groups and spaces etc.)
- **Fisheries managers** understand the need for science-based management of fisheries and see the value in co-creation of policy and management alongside industry.
- **Scientists** actively seek knowledge and involvement from the industry to develop research.
- **Other supporting organisations** share our goals and messages. They fund, recommend and validate our work and help us build collaborations and foster support to achieve our mission.





OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

Our approach is based on helping to prepare and equip people to address the widely recognised challenges that face UK fisheries.

These are a few key challenges we have identified as a barrier to our mission, and inform our priorities for 2024 and beyond.

CONNECTIVITY

The fishing industry operates with a disparate workforce, many people are poorly connected with one another, or working independently. This can make it difficult to benefit from collaborative initiatives or effectively share views. Lack of connectivity can mean some people in the industry cannot contribute to important decisions, consultation processes, or benefit from funding opportunities.

NETWORKS

Everyone's work is different but we all need to work together. People within the industry operate on various scales, on different kinds of fishing vessels, using different gear and catching different species. Their work is vastly different to those who operate closely with the industry, such as people in government, research, and tech companies. The varied rhythm and styles of people working in offices vs. those working at sea makes it difficult to build connections and figure

out who is the right person to talk to about different topics and how to reach them.

KNOWLEDGE



People working in UK fisheries have a wealth of knowledge and expertise. In order to progress, it is important that people understand each other's work and insights. However, it can be a challenge to find opportunities to share this knowledge using appropriate language and approaches.



SKILLS



The groups we engage with lack the skills to hold effective dialogue and may not know the right language and approaches when communicating with one another. For example, different skills are required to hold a meeting in a boardroom versus one on the quayside, or for having a conversation with a skipper compared to sending an e-mail to a Minister or local councillor. Empathy and practice are required to develop these skills.



CONFIDENCE



The processes we are expected to participate in don't come naturally to all people, from unmuting and speaking at an online meeting, approaching a fisherman on the quayside to ask a question, or facilitating a working group or formal decision-making meeting. Building know-how is key to ensuring all parts of the fishing sector can engage confidently in science and policy processes.

ACCESSING INFORMATION & REALISING OPPORTUNITIES



Sector information is dispersed across different platforms, or only communicated through certain channels. For example, available funding, public consultations, requests for evidence, or opportunities to work with researchers. Beyond this, understanding how to follow up, and who with, can make opportunities inaccessible for some.



Discussions at F-REP Southampton, Nov 2023

ENGAGEMENT



Participating or engaging in constructive opportunities to develop policy, data collection or other projects requires time and expertise from industry, which often leads to loss of earnings and overload. Reaching people in the industry can be complicated when they are often at sea or not readily contactable via e-mail or onshore for in-person meetings. Finding more appropriate ways to engage, accepted by all, is needed for more efficient ways of working together.



OUR APPROACH

This section sets out a framework for our approach between 2024-2028, underpinned by three core pillars:



ENGAGE: Share opportunities, create spaces, participate meaningfully.

We support people to get involved where their voice matters.

This involves showing people how to get involved, signposting opportunities to engage in conversations and initiatives, promoting and generating interest in sharing feedback and opinions, and encouraging spaces where everyone can share insights and listen to one another.

- Encourage and show people how and where to engage meaningfully.

- Provide people with the foundational skills and knowledge to engage in science and management within the marine environment.
- Uncover and highlight important issues, using a language that is accessible to everyone, so that industry can collectively work with scientists and policy makers to resolve issues.
- Instigate conversations by asking questions to get the industry talking to us, government or to each other.

LEARN: Gain skills, share knowledge, raise confidence.

We share knowledge and facilitate learning from one another

We develop and share content that explicitly provides opportunities for people in the fishing industry to gain skills, acquire knowledge and raise confidence to interact with fisheries scientists and managers, and vice versa, so everyone can contribute to fisheries management and research confidently and competently.

- We share knowledge and tools to help those in the fishing industry learn about up-to-date fisheries policy and science. We encourage non-industry actors to make more effort to learn from the industry, and ensure representative insights and input is included in policy and research.



- We share tools, experience, examples of good practice around co-management and collaborative science.
- We lead by example and show people effective ways to share knowledge and learn from one another, using methods that resonate with fishermen, clear language and industry-relevant examples.
- We help provide an insight into the science that underpins policy and management decisions.
- We include learning that is centred on promoting sustainable and prosperous fisheries.
- We promote and provide examples of the benefits of engaging in scientific studies and data collection that directly feeds into management. In parallel, we provide examples of co-management, exemplifying the governance and working structures for meaningful collaboration.
- We encourage experts to use and appropriately share research, to ensure expertise and experience is being represented and communicated back to the industry.
- We promote opportunities for fishing vessels and communities to be included as a valuable research space; where appropriate, we support and facilitate partnerships.

CONNECT: Create networks, build trust, encourage partnerships & participation.

We forge connections between fishermen, researchers and managers, and help people navigate reaching out and building relationships with one another.

We champion collaborative approaches towards research and management by creating shared spaces for the industry, researchers and policy makers to interact. We highlight positive experiences of working together to encourage collaborative approaches. We work using empathy and understanding towards everyone involved.

- Our charitable activities are shared spaces where people can meet one another and build their networks, through contributing knowledge, experience, and ideas to make positive change.
- We bridge the relationships between different stakeholders working in fisheries.
- We bring together the right people and expertise to showcase their work, examples of good practices; innovative and influential projects.





OUR CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

Over the next four years we plan to maintain our four key areas of charitable activities, working towards our overarching goal of supporting sustainable and prosperous UK fisheries. In doing so, we will remain flexible and responsive to the needs and direction of specific science and management initiatives, specifically supporting Fisheries Management Plans and the science that underpins them.

While we maintain these areas of work, we aim to further extend our reach further, delivering more consistent and regular opportunities over England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, with the expected outcome that this broad approach will catalyse a nationwide shift towards working together more effectively.

The four key areas are:

FISHERIES RESOURCE EDUCATION PROGRAMME (F-REP)

A residential learning event designed to bring together people from the fishing industry, science and fisheries management to understand each other's expertise and work together effectively.

FISHING PORTHOLE WEBSITE

A dedicated portal, spearheaded by the fishing industry, aimed at improving understanding and collaboration in fisheries management & science, and providing insight into initiatives that support a prosperous and sustainable seafood sector. The Fishing Porthole aims to be a one-stop-shop for learning, sharing & collaborating.

FISHING INTO THE FUTURE TALKS (FITF TALKS)

Informal online conversations, hosted by fishing industry people, discussing specific topics to encourage participation and learning within a fishermen-led space.

FISHING INTO THE FUTURE COLLABORATES

Provides our existing skills and connections to work with third party organisations to improve ways of working collaboratively with the fishing industry.



A NOTE ON FITF COMMUNICATIONS

Communicating effectively is central to all of our ambitions for the charity now, and into the future. Fundamentally, co-management can't function successfully without meaningful communication between groups, overcoming barriers between stakeholders who may not naturally use the same language or approaches to tackling an issue.

As a charity working to foster effective co-management, we need to model excellent communication in our work. This is a constant thread through our delivery - ensuring event descriptions and materials are accessible and jargon-free, that we have a consistent voice in our media presence, that we share information effectively and in a range of formats on our website (written text, graphics, film).

By modelling thoughtful communication in as many areas of our delivery as we can, we can help to drive the change we want to see across the sector - encouraging and enabling better forms of communication between fisheries actors.

FISHERIES RESOURCE EDUCATION PROGRAMME (F-REP)

FITF has re-launched in-person residential events, the Fisheries Resource Education Programme (F-REP). These are tailored to support engagement in FMPs and the science used in decision-making.

- These dynamic events help people work together effectively, from the moment of arrival and throughout, fostering trust between attendees via mutual working and socialising. We share learning spaces and we share meals: breaking down barriers to collaboration and dismantling preconceptions around hierarchies and 'in-groups'.

- They are focused on outcomes - ensuring participants leave equipped to engage in fisheries management processes (such as FMPs) now, and into the future.
- They are tailored to be relevant and engaging - facilitated by fishermen and designed to resonate with fishing participants in particular. We use regional, fishery, and species-specific approaches to deliver impactful content.



Activity at F-REP Southampton, Nov 2023

In November 2023, we held an F-REP event in Southampton attended by over 30 fishermen, a dozen industry representatives, fisheries managers and decision-makers from the MMO, Defra and the IFCAs, plus Cefas scientists and academics.

The three-day agenda included fisheries science and research; industry-led data collection; policy and participating in Fisheries Management Plans; effective representation; organising and running fishing associations; social science and anthropology.

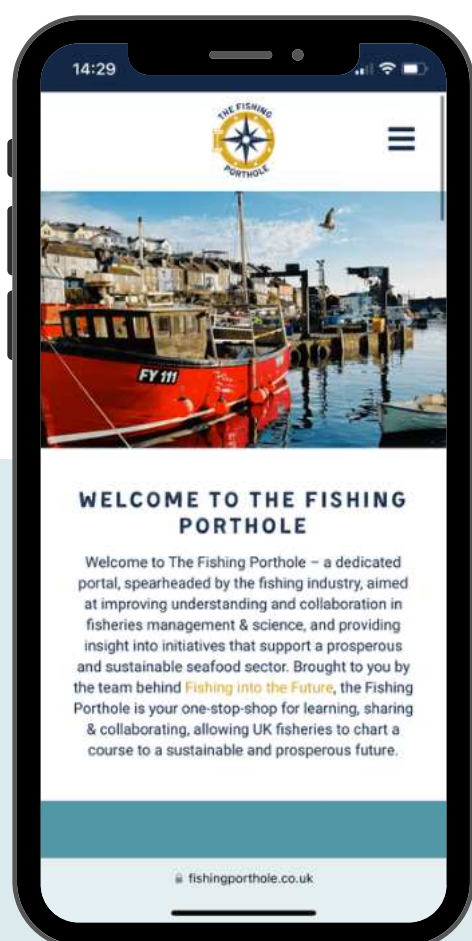
Initial data from the workshop evaluations showed attendees were more likely to engage in fishery management processes after the F-REP and many also reported more trust in the system.



FISHING PORTHOLE WEBSITE

We created the Fishing Porthole website, pioneered by fishermen as a “one-stop-shop” sharing opportunities, tools and knowledge.

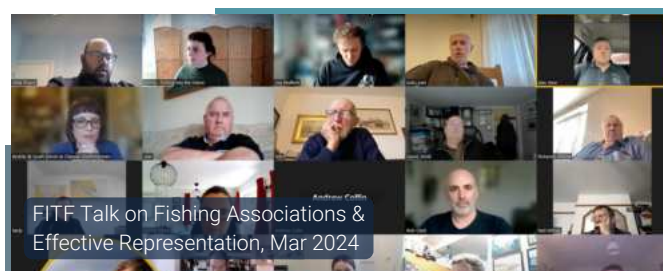
- We provide this space to share important information, signposted resources, and help people engage and connect with each other.
- It is a community resource – we share credible third party information and our own resources.
- The Fishing Porthole website is mobile-friendly with the idea it can be used from the wheelhouse or wherever the internet is available.
- It is continually updated to ensure relevance.
- Information is signposted via communications channels, and all insights across platforms are shared in an accessible format - with visuals and other tools to lay out key concepts.



FITF TALKS

We regularly host FITF Talks - online fishermen-led conversations on timely topics. These sessions aim to inform and connect people – and enable them to continue working together after the session. FITF Talks are:

- Online fishermen-facilitated conversations.
- Prioritising industry voices.
- Focusing on topics suggested by industry.
- At times and on days that are appropriate for fishermen.
- A relaxed, informal and friendly environment to provoke discussions and explore topics in detail.



FITF COLLABORATES

FITF are supporting others to build connections and effectively reach industry by drawing on our expertise, skills and networks. We have been able to participate in steering groups, research projects, and initiatives to ensure others are able to reach out more effectively to representative groups, communicate and engage in appropriate dialogue, and improve language and approaches to working together. This work stream includes:

- Involving fishermen as facilitators to support meetings and uphold credibility of the research.
- Providing feedback and guidance to project teams in other organisations.
- Reaching and connecting with the industry, utilising our networks and delivering messages using appropriate communications materials and channels.



TIMELINE

In the coming years, we plan to continue our delivery of F-REP events at a pace and scale that will meet the needs of industry and develop fisheries management. We'll work to expand through more regions of the UK within all devolved administrations.

Our aim is to hold regular hold FITF Talks based on trends and topics suggested by industry, as well as regularly update and promote the Fishing Porthole website so it becomes a one-stop-shop for fishing industry people to access a wealth of relevant information and signpost ways to engage more effectively in fisheries science and management.

We will work to secure government and philanthropic funds to support the F-REP, FITF Talks and The Fishing Porthole website. Alongside these internal work streams, we plan to develop our work with third party partners to support others working more effectively together, to secure alternative, regular income streams. Our aim is to grow organically and steadily, increasing staff capacity and incoming funding for our work. This will be justified by effective monitoring and evaluation so we can report our results, measure our impact and continue to improve and adapt strategies in response to becoming more effective and in improving the ways we work.



ALEXA DAYTON & THE MARINE RESOURCES EDUCATION PROGRAMME

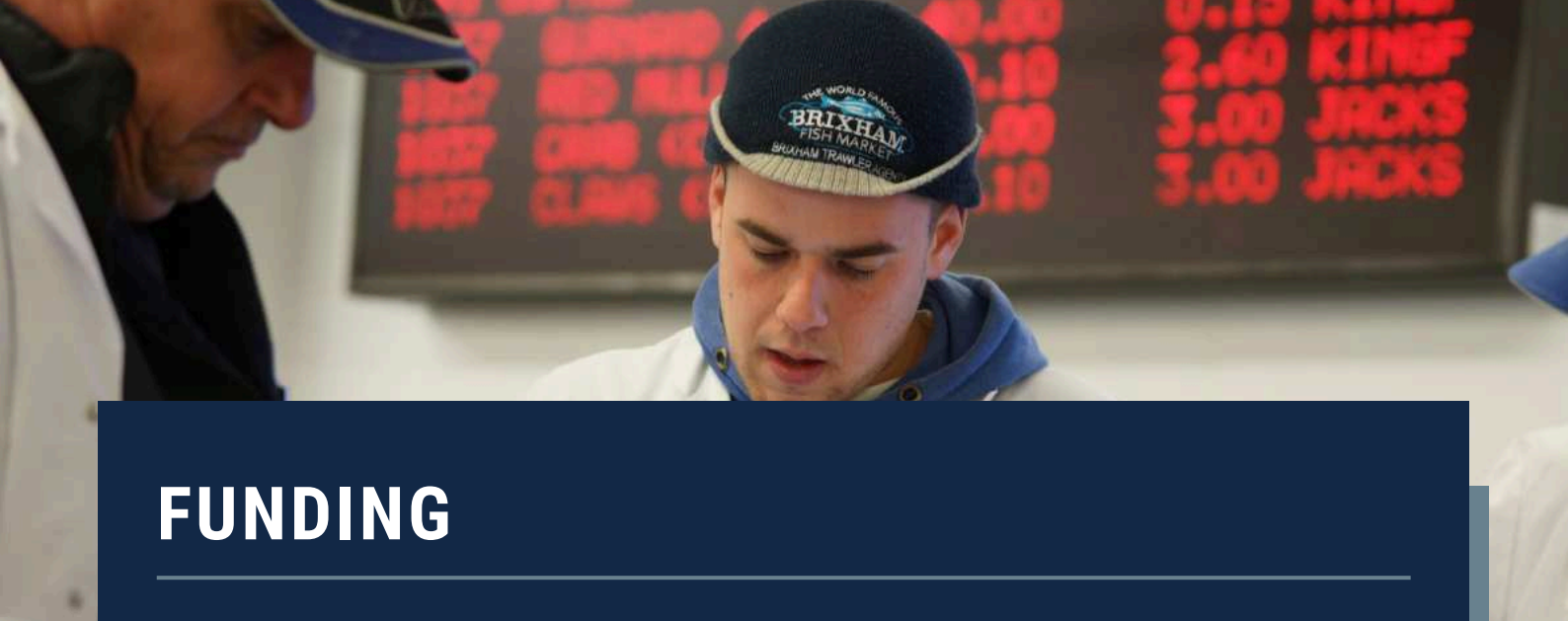
We are lucky enough to have Alexa Dayton as one of our founders and Trustees. Alexa was part of setting up the Marine Resource Education Programme (M-REP) in the USA – where FITF draws many of its ideas and inspiration for how we work.

The M-REP programme was revolutionary in that it brought together fishermen, scientists and fisheries managers to learn about each other's work and, of equal importance, learn how to have engaging and effective conversations to develop successful fisheries management.

In most cases, the fishermen that participate in the Advisory Councils within US Fisheries Management are graduates of this programme, and it is estimated that engaging in this programme also excels a fishermen's experience and knowledge in science and management by more than a decade – improving trust, knowledge and confidence to engage in fisheries science and management.

At FITF, we look to the M-REP programme to inspire us and build our work, as we learn by example through knowledge exchange and partnerships.





FUNDING

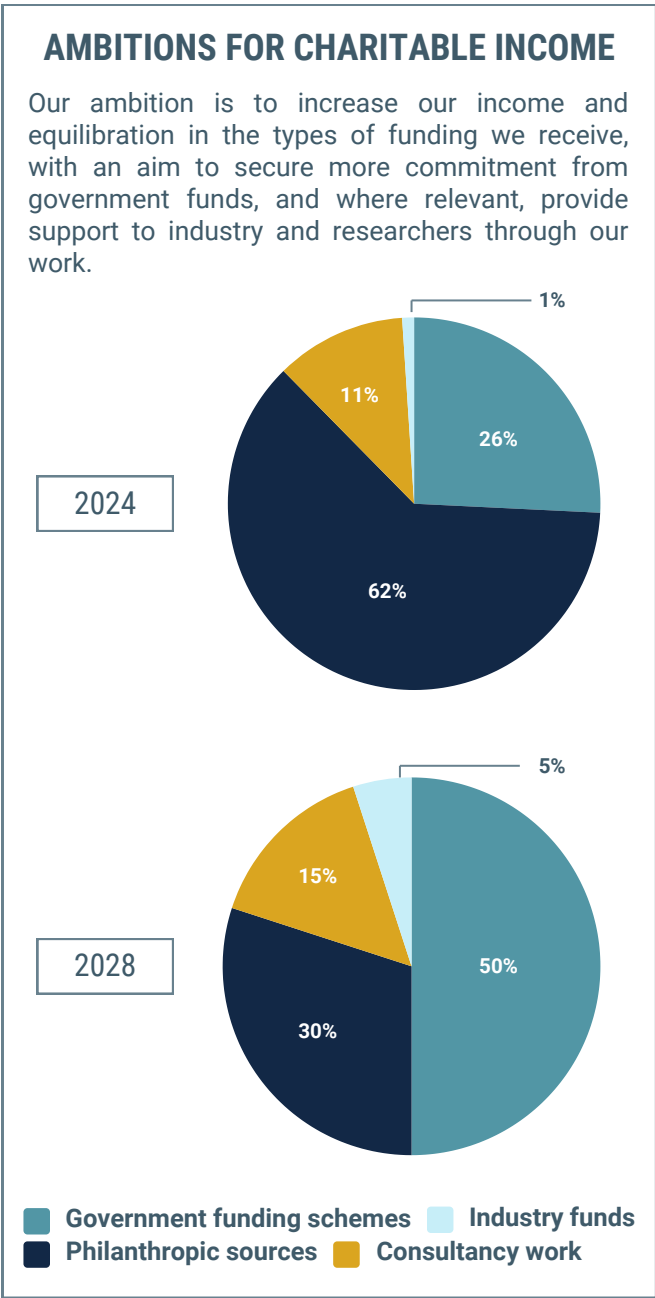
In 2024, we are proudly funded by the Fishmongers’ Company, The Seafarers’ Charity and, for specific projects, by the UK Government Fisheries and Seafood Scheme. Previous funders have included The Princes’ Charities’ International Sustainability Unit, European Maritime and Fishery Fund, and the Seafish Industry Authority.

In the years covered by this corporate plan, we aim to increase our income by approaching UK Government funding schemes, combining successful grants with match funds from philanthropic sources and industry partners.

We plan to build novel income streams through working with academic and industry partners to collaborate in relevant projects. We have recently trialled this with a social research team developing work on behalf of the UK Government, and have supported fishermen-facilitated workshops that successfully engaged industry participation.

We have a well-connected Board of Trustees, and a wider network of supporters, who notify us of suitable funds and income sources, make introductions and guide us to approach new funders effectively, as well as maintain ongoing relationships.

We anticipate increasing our charitable income steadily per annum by 2028, so we can grow organically and increase staff and human resource, as well as activities, in a manageable way.



CONTACT



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www.FishingPorthole.co.uk



www.FishingintotheFuture.co.uk



For all of our socials, go to:

Linktr.ee/fishing_future

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