

April 2024

CFPO HOSTS DEFRA'S PERMANENT SECRETARY FOR FIRST TIME



By Cornish Fish Producers Organisation

Earlier this month, the Cornish Fish Producers Organisation hosted a visit from the Permanent Secretary for the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, accompanied by senior Defra and MMO staff.

The day began with an early start on Newlyn fish market and auction, and a tour of the harbour. The Permanent Secretary, Tamara Finkelstein, had a full net-to-plate experience and a chance to meet key people across the supply chain.



The tour, which also included a run-down of the Cornish fishing strategy and recently published True Value of Seafood to Cornwall report, was followed by a round table with the CFPO Board.

It provided a unique opportunity for Cornwall's catching sector to share their perspective directly with decision-makers, ensuring the voices, interests, and concerns of the industry were not only heard but also given due consideration at the highest level.



Commenting on the visit, CFPO Chief Executive, Chris Ranford, said: "It is always a pleasure to showcase the dedication of our members, who embrace the chance to interact with government officials face-to-face.

Tamara's acknowledgment of Cornwall's fishing and seafood sector's pivotal role as food producers and in our nation's food security is certainly welcome.

his recognition underscores the importance of integrating fishing in ongoing discussions and strategies aimed at bolstering the UK's food security. Furthermore, it highlights the necessity for heightened governmental awareness regarding potential conflicts among other policies."





Chief Executive of the NFFO, Mike Cohen, was also there: “I was very pleased to see a group of such senior officials wanting to learn about our industry and its issues from the people on the quayside.

There are few places as good as Newlyn for demonstrating what a vibrant and successful fishing fleet can look like. The visitors saw and heard very clearly what our industry can be and what it needs in order to thrive.



Among the points raised at the round table were; 2026 TCA review and future access to the 6-12 mile limit, the need for the continuation and enhancement of industry science partnerships, the need for socio-economic factors to be considered as part of decision-making, and how the fishing industry should be involved in marine spatial planning at the highest level as a respected stakeholder of the marine space.

“Fundamentally, fishing is about producing food and supporting coastal communities. If we are going to secure the future of ports like Newlyn – and see its success spread and be replicated elsewhere – we need a national fishing strategy that recognises and protects the true value of what our industry does.”

