

[News story: Update on investigation into Whitstable oyster farm activity](#)

The Marine Management Organisation has provided an update on [the investigation it began in early 2017](#) under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. This related to alleged unlicensed depositing of oyster trestles on a privately owned area of Whitstable Beach by the Whitstable Oyster Fishery Company or its manager Mr Green.

After investigation and careful consideration the MMO has concluded there was insufficient evidence to prove a criminal offence in relation to its remit under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.

The MMO licensing team has also considered the facts and circumstances of the deposit of trestles on Whitstable Beach and has concluded based on an [independent navigational risk assessment commissioned by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency](#) that the array of trestles do not currently constitute an obstruction or danger to navigation. This activity benefits from an exemption relating to shellfish propagation and cultivation under [the Marine Licensing \(Exempted Activities\) Order 2011 as amended \(Article 13\)](#).

The MMO is dealing with the issue [in line with its compliance and enforcement strategy](#) and does not intend to take further, retrospective legal action.

The MMO has a difficult task in managing competing uses of the marine area and appreciates there has been much public debate about the issue. It previously met with a number of local representatives, including the former MP for the area, on the matter. As it is important that the MMO carries out its duties and obligations impartially and fairly it did not feel it appropriate to open this process to a wider audience during an ongoing investigation.

Whilst this investigation has concluded the MMO will continue to monitor the situation and consider issues raised on a case by case basis.