The 2015 season was not the best in fact similar to 2014, the weather and diving conditions were far from ideal. However, data obtained covered 20 sites including three not recorded before (Buffer Pontoon and the wrecks of SS FD Lambert (? there is doubt over the identity of this wreck see: http://www.thediveforum.com/archive/index.php/t-16877.html, and SS Lalen Mendi see http://www.wrecksite.eu/wreck.aspx?80178). This was unfortunate as we desperately need data to help support the the designations of the remaining MCZs put originally put forward, notably in the east, Beachy Head East (which includes the Royal Sovereign Shoals) and Selsey and the Hounds to the west. Hopefully we will be able to focus on these in 2016.

**Sussex Seasearch** dives undertaken in 2015 were:

Wrecks: Indiana
    Clodmore
    City of Brisbane
    SS Lalen Mendis
    Pentrych
    Oceana
    Steam trawler
    SS FD Lambert

Seafront Ledges
Brighton Marina training area (training dives)
Anchor Lump
SW Rocks
Palace Pier Reef
Gullies 250 m west of Brighton Marina harbour wall
Seabed 2.5 miles SSW Brighton
Mixon Hole
Selsey Lifeboat Station* (two full surveys and several training dives
Inner Mulberry
Outer Mulberry
Buffer Pontoon

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**New site: Buffer Pontoon**

This site consists of metal wreckage that formed part of a Mulberry Harbour buffer pontoon (for details on Mulberry Harbour construction and use see: http://www.combinedops.com/Mulberry%20Harbours.htm) which was destined to be a roadway to the beach. The wreckage sits on a seabed of pebbles and sand with some clay exposed. The wrecked roadway consists of horizontal, vertical and inclined metal girders providing numerous surfaces for marine life. Its shallow depth means that it is largely covered in algae with areas of animal turf rich in sponges, squirts, etc. Deadman's fingers occur on the underside of some metalwork.

With the forth coming loss of the Life Boat Station this site and other inshore wrecks will provide new foci for survey work and the distribution of species.

Images ©Michelle Legg
Courses
In April James Lucey taught a course in Brighton organised by Neil Watson where 12 people took part. For 2016 an Observer course is being arranged by Olle Åkesson for the 25/26th April 2016. For further details contact Olle:
olleakesson@sussexwt.org.uk.

Rampion Wind Farm
The Rampion Wind Farm, the large offshore wind farm development by E.ON, under construction off the Sussex coast. It has a target capacity of 400 MW. Construction is expected to be completed in 2018. The first offshore foundation were laid in February.

There are proposals to survey the colonisation of the turbine foundations and have a community benefits fund which may be able to be used to this end. The undersea structures will certainly provide numerous niches for life and be of considerable benefit to the marine diversity off our coast.

See

Special species
A few ‘new’ species to the area were seen, all on the Selsey Life Boat Station: a stalked jelly fish Haliclystus auricula, the tunicates Distomus variolosus and Lissoclinum perforatum. These finds show just how significant this site is and it will be sadly missed when it is demolished hence the homage to the site, below..

Selsey Lifeboat Station Development
The redevelopment of the Life Boat Station progresses and at the time of writing this the steel-work for the new station was being erected (beginning of April 2016). Presumably, once this is complete the old station will be demolished but at present it still stands and is in use despite some damage from storm Katie on the 28th March.

To keep up-to-date with developments visit the website:
http://www.selseylifeboats.co.uk/index.html

A very rare and unusual find below the Life Boat Station was the almost complete tibia of a Pleistocene hippo (?). The adjacent Selsey East Beach is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (linked with Selsey West Beach and the Bracklesham Bay SSSI) This group form an important Quaternary site for a sequence of freshwater and estuarine deposits of Ipswichian Interglacial age. Evidence from the sediments and the pollen and microfaunas they contain, indicates rapid climatic amelioration at the beginning of the interglacial and a marine transgression at about –1.8m OD in pollen zone IIb. At Selsey West Beach raised beach deposits overlying the estuarine sediments extend up to 7m OD. The deposits at Selsey East Beach are of
unique importance in providing Pleistocene vertebrate faunas from the very early part of the Ipswichian Interglacial. The faunas include beaver, straight-tusked elephant, an extinct rhinoceros Dicerorhinus hemitoechus, hippopotamus, horse and European pond tortoise. Much potential exists for vertebrate research at this locality particularly with regard to stratigraphy and pollen zonation.
Oceana
As one of the most heavily wrecked coasts Sussex wrecks provide havens – oases – amongst the relative deserts of sediments of sand, shingle and mixed ground. Species present vary with the depth of the wreckage. Any wreckage is rapidly colonised as is any hard substrate deposited in the sea.

One of the many wrecks is the Oceana, sunk after collision with the Pisagua on 16th March 1912 (for more see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SS_Oceana_(1887) )
Proportions of biotopes recorded

- Mixed faunal turf communities
- Piddocks with a sparse associated fauna in sublittoral very soft chalk or clay
- Infra-littoral fouling seaweed communities
- Silted kelp communities (sheltered infra-littoral rock)
- Crepidula fornicata with ascidians and anemones on infra-littoral coarse mixed sediment
- Sabella pavonina with sponges and anemones on infra-littoral mixed sediment
- Moderate energy infra-littoral rock
- Soft rock communities
- Sublittoral mixed sediment
- Circalittoral fouling faunal communities (wrecks, piers etc)

Biotopes

The predominant substrates recorded include metal and concrete, chalk, sandstone, clay, sand and mixed ground. Each of these supports a number of biotopes characterised by their faunal and floral assemblages.

Metal and concrete wreckage provides niches for a large number of diverse species, followed by soft rock and sediments.

SW Rocks

SW Rocks constitute part of a sequence of chalk reefs which includes Looe Gate and Ship rock, Marine Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (mSNCIs) (non-statutory sites identified due to the occurrence of special interest features (habitats, flora, fauna, unusual geology or geomorphology). In the case of these sites, their submerged chalk reefs and associated biological communities. SW Rocks occurs 4.5 km SW of Hove 50° 47.6’N; 0° 12.5’W. For further information see http://www.seasearch.co.uk/downloads/Sussex%20Chalk%202010.pdf

It consists of 270m of vertical north-facing chalk cliff reaching 2m above the seabed and undercut at its base. The cliff face and upper surface are densely covered in marine life: red algae, sponges and bryozoans. The many piddock holes provide homes for many organisms, including burrowing sea cucumbers found in 1990 (not seen since but not because they are not there still). This is the only record of this species in the eastern Channel.
Proportions of records for each major group for 2015

Species Recorded

Elasmobranchia (rays, sharks)
Scyliorhinus canicula
Cephalopoda (squid, cuttlefish, octopus)
Sepia officinalis
Nudibranchia (sea slugs)
Aeolidia papillosa
Doris pseudoaugus
Fiabellina pedata
Acanthodoris pilosa
Lamica clavigera
Thecacera peninggra
Janolus cristatus
Echinodermata (starfish, urchins)
Asterias rubens
Psammocochus miliaris
Bivalvia (clams)
Pholas dactylus
Mytilus edulis
Crassostrea gigas
Ostreus edulis
Aequipecten opercularis
Pecten maximus
Gastropoda (snails)
Pomatomus saltatrix
Nassarius reticulatus
Nassarius timida
Annellida: Polychaeta (bristle worms)
Arvicola marina
Aphroditia aculeata
Bispira volutacornis
Sabella pavonina
Serpulidae
Filograna
Hydroidea
Spirorbis triqueter
Spirorbis
Larice conchilega
Tunicata (squirts)
Clavelina lepadiformis
Didemnum conicum
Didemnum maculosum
Diplosoma listerianum
Diplosoma spongiforme
Lissoclinum perforatum
Tridactylus cernuum
Aplidium proliferum
Aplidium punctum
Ascidia mentula
Ascidiella aspersa
Ciona intestinalis
Perophora listerii
Molgula manhattensis
Botryllus schlosseri
Dendrodoa grossularia
Distomus variolosus
Styela clava
Bryoza, Ectoprocta (seamats)
Bryoza indet crusts
Pentapora foliacea
Bugula
Bugula flabellata
Bugula plumosa
Bugula tubinata
Cellaria
Cellepora pumicosa
Charlotta papyracea
Flustra foliacea
Membranipora membrandacea
Reteporella
Cystia
Cystia eburnea
Tubulipora
Algae
Didyota dichotoma
Fucus serratus
Halidrys siliquosa
Chorda filum
Laminaria hyperborea
Ulva lactuca
Rhodophycota indet. (non-calc. crusts)
Delesseria sanguinea
Corallina officinalis
Dilsea carnosa
Fuscariella lumbricalis
Chondrus crispus
Gigartina pistillata
Polypoidea rotundata
Scinaea furcellata
Palmaria palmata
Plocamium cartilagineum
Rhodymenia pseudopatulata
Rhodophycota (red algae)
Porifera (sponges)
Porifera indet crusts
Leucosolenia
Sycon ciliatum
Pachymatisma johnstoni
Dysidea fragilis
Ciona celata
Polymastia boletiformis
Suberites carnosus
Suberites fuscus
Axinella dissimi
Halichondria (Halichondria) panicea
Hymeniacidon perlevis
Haliclona (Halicona) simulans
Amphipectus lucorum
Hemimycale columnella
Clathria (Microciona)
Raspailia (Raspallia) ramosa
Cnidaria (seafirs, anemones, corals)
Anemonia viridis
Urticina felina
Didumene cinata
Metridium senile
Actinoboea sphyrodetla
Cereus pedunculatus
Sargaria elegans
Sargaria troglodytes
Alyconium digitatum
Corynactis viridis
Caryophyllia (Caryophyllia) smithii
Tubularia indivisa
Aglaphenopa plum
Clyta hemisphaerica
Obelia geniculata
Halecium halecinum
Obelia pluma
Dendrodoa grossularia
Tubularia indivisa
Smithia perlevis
Inachus dorsettensis
Macropodia tenuirostris
Maja squinado
Homarus gammarus
Pagurus bernhardus
Palaemon serratus
Liocarcinus depurator
Necora puber
Carcinus maenas
Perforatus perforatus
Teleteost (bony fish)
Anguilla anguilla
Conger conger
Gadus morhua
Pollachius pollachiua
Trisopterus luscus
Trisopterus minutus
Parablennius gattorugine
Callionymus lyra
Gobius niger
Gobius paganellus
Gobius usculus flavescens
Pomatoschistus
Pomatoschistus minutus
Pomatoschistus pictus
Thorobobus epiophitus
Ctenolabrus rupestris
Labrus bergylta
Labrus mixtus
Symphodus melops
Dinocranchus labrax
Pholis gunnellus
Spondylosoma cantharus
Pleuronecetes platessa
Zeus faber
Ctenopoma tenuirostris
Corynactis viridis

Thank You All