

Oban Community Harbour Development Association (OCHDA) Newsletter 4 (January 2021)



Happy New Year!

Since the last newsletter a great deal has happened and, despite the inevitable disruption of coronavirus, we have good progress to report!

Consultation over the precise area to be managed by the new Harbour Authority was completed in December, the conclusions are summarised below. Thanks to those, members and others, who took part. There is a more detailed report available on the website, summarising the process and the findings. The actual pro-forma and the compiled results of the consultation will be available on the website in due course.

Discussions are continuing with Argyll & Bute Council over a lease of premises on the N Pier and a formal Expression of Interest with regard to the planned asset transfer has been made. This will be pursued in coming weeks and months and is a crucial part of developing the necessary Harbour Order.

Donations continue to be received towards the ambitious target that we feel we have to raise in order to be able to pay the predictable bills from lawyers etc and to establish the board. We are aiming to raise in excess of £100,000, principally required to allow us to establish the board of trustees, set up a necessary 'asset holding' body separate from the Trust Port, and to pay for the legal advice required for these and the preparation and submission of the Harbour Order. A fundraising campaign will be launched shortly!

Consultation outcomes

N Entrance

The proposed limit at the North entrance was widely supported and will be adopted in the formal proposal.

S Entrance

The options relating to the South entrance were considered and these were the subject of a number of detailed responses. The conclusion is that we will adopt the straight line boundary at the south end of Kerrera and this will be included in the formal proposal.

A number of respondents expressed concern about potential limitations on traditional activities in the waters of the Bay and Kerrera Sound. There is no intention to restrict any traditional activities within the Harbour Authority area, rather the intention is to ensure that all activities are undertaken safely and that potential conflicts are avoided.

The Harbour Authority will have powers, where for example speed limits are breached, to take action whereas the present limits are entirely voluntary.

Harbour Board

In addition to existing working groups, which have been established for some time, a new working group has been established in order to develop the framework for the appointment of the future Harbour Board. This work is advancing well, supported by members and others including qualified HR personnel. The establishment of the Harbour Board is a crucial step in the establishment of the Trust Port and this will be undertaken by OCHDA, via public recruitment to ensure a good match of appropriate skills.

Trust Port operational base

As noted above, discussions with Argyll & Bute Council are now focusing on a proposal to lease parts of the North pier, including the Harbourmaster's building, through an asset transfer. OCHDA's initial expression of interest was submitted to the Council in December and the matter will be considered at a Council meeting later this month. Thereafter a formal asset transfer request, most likely initially on the basis of a lease, will be submitted to the Council as soon as possible. This will then be considered by relevant Council committees before a decision is made.

Publicity & public awareness

There have been useful articles in the paper, in recent months, as well as the launch of our website. Minutes of meetings and other important documents are available [here](#).

We aim to undertake a programme of awareness raising publicity in coming weeks and months in order to explain to the wider community what the potential benefits of the establishment of a Trust Port are. In parallel, as noted above, we will require to raise a significant amount of money, in order to pay legal bills etc, and a fundraising campaign will be launched.

Membership & support

In the meantime we continue to welcome new members and you are invited to pass this newsletter on to other interested people in order to encourage them to join.

Full details of how to join and some useful background information is available on our website at www.ochda.scot.

If you are able to offer practical help with any task, or financial support, please contact us at: info@ochda.scot