

Sunart Community Company
Loch Working Group - 22nd February 2017
Note of Meeting 6.30 – 9pm

Present: Louise Cameron, John Jones, Isobel Baker, Peter Ford, Kate Campbell, Thomas Coope, Laura Bungey, Michelle Hilder, Barnaby Edwards, James Hilder

Present for first half hour from CAOLAS (Community Association of Lochs and Sounds) Mark Woombs, Alisdair Firth, Andy Jackson, Dale Meenahan.

Apologies: Pete White (Abernethy), Chris and Brian Evans,

1) Intros and Welcome

Members from CAOLAS came to introduce themselves and briefly introduce their project. The group covers the Sound of Mull and Loch Sunart. It formed in order to give communities a voice during consultations over the Marine Protected Areas which cover the area. They are working to help communities to engage with and promote the resource of our marine environment whilst being aware and considerate of it and protecting it.

The meeting agreed to keep in touch with CAOLAS and vice versa. There is potential to work on a joint funding bid for marine interpretation for the whole loch at some point in the future.

2) Where we are now....

- a. Transferring Marine Scotland Licence for moorings (27, 15 used last year)
- b. Taking over the Crown Estate lease for moorings and jetty.
- c. In 2015 a Structural Assessment carried out by a Structural Engineer. We have a report on current condition and then two schedules one for repairs and another for improvements.
- d. Taking ownership of Jetty, Tin Shed and Carparking land adjacent from the Highland Council- Transfer not yet complete.
- e. SCC will be performing the functions of a mooring association.
- f. Other areas we are looking at – stables etc. SCCompany are looking to get funding to carry out valuation and feasibility study for the Stables that are for sale on the opposite side of the Jetty.

3) The Loch Workshop. There were so many great ideas about facilities, user groups and the types of activities that could be enhanced or created (see printouts). These have all been captured so we can keep coming back to them.

A. The vision type ideas that came from the Workshop

- A vibrant community – draws in people to live work and visit
- Facilities, opportunities, and activities for local people
- Strontian becomes a ‘destination’
- Increasing tourism use – both from land based and boat based visitors.
- Build it and they will come
- Employment possibilities
- Recreation
- Education
- Improved Access
- Increased use and connection with the Loch
- ‘Special Protected Area’ – make people aware this is a special resource.

B. What we have now

How can these things be used to achieve what we want to achieve? What is good about them now? What improvements do you want to see?

- Jetty
- Slip
- Moorings
- Tin Shed
- Parking area

- The Jetty is in definite need of repair
- Visitor moorings should be put in – and they need to be of good condition and properly surveyed.

- General tidying up can be done now – the fence between jetty and slip, strimming the carpark. Pressure washing the slip and jetty and general tidying up can be done on the Village Clean Up day in April (9th).
- It was agreed that it would be easier to manage and get funding for one big project rather than lots of little ones. So meeting agreed to investigate other parts of the project before looking for funding for just jetty repairs. The process is to spend a few months researching potential use of more moorings and a floating walkway with hammerhead (as opposed to a 'pontoon') in order to gather the data for funding bids.

C. New possibilities –

What we could take on or develop to achieve what we want to achieve?

- Stables and land
- New facilities
- Floating pontoon
- Information boards
- Access from village
- SCC are applying for funding to carry out Valuation and Feasibility Study for the Stables opposite jetty.
- Information leaflets for now could be put in the display board with the tide timetable
- Floating walkway & hammerhead would be a good idea – need to do some investigation work

4) Draft terms of reference

Briefly looked at the draft terms of reference – All present took a copy away and we will discuss at the next meeting.

5) Structure of the group – Chair, minutes etc. *Not resolved but will be decided at next meeting.*

6) Date of Next Meeting – 28th March 2017

Action points

1. Carry on with transfer of lease and licence – **SSCompany, Izzy**
2. Push Council to proceed with transfer of assets – **SSCompany and SCCouncil** – JH and JJ to arrange for letters to be sent.
3. Proceed with applying for funding to value and carry out feasibility study for the Stable plot – **SSCompany**

Gather Information on Pontoons / Walkways

- Live research
 - Talk to Marinas, Charter Companies
 - Talk to marine users – yacht users eg in Salen, Lochaline, Tobermory
 - Talk to other Community Pontoons and see who funders were, who manufacturers were and any tips
 - Manufacturers
 - Fusion Marine – talk to about site – see if they will visit?
 - Specialist advice on Locating the pontoon – may not be Fusion Marines remit
4. Contact Fusion Marine for a site visit to advise on a pontoon. – **Barnaby to contact**
 5. Talk to community pontoons – what funding, what manufacturers – **James and Angela**
 6. Survey for Local Tourism Organisations

What loch based facilities/activities would enhance your guests stay, encourage you to come back or to tell others about Sunart? – In conjunction with Tourist Association – Michelle to email round list of questions to working group for comments

7. Survey for Charter Companies, Marine users/yacht owners – **in conjunction with Tourist Association - Michelle to email round list of questions to working group for comments. Group can assist with calling and asking questions, also help to compile list of places to call.**
8. Take down decrepit fence between slip and jetty – **Peter Ford**
9. General tidy up – all on the Sunday 9th April

Date of Next Meeting 28th March 2017, 7pm Dail Mhor