



The GRAB Trust
 C/o Argyll & Bute Council
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ARGYLL AND BUTE BEACH FORUM STEERING GROUP MEETING
 Oban, SNH HQ
 Thursday 25 February 2016 at 10.00am
MINUTES

Present:	
Jane Dodd	SNH
Sandra McMillan	Beachwatch Bute
Lorraine Holdstock	Argyll & Bute Council
Julie Fairbrass	The GRAB Trust
Jean Kennedy	The GRAB Trust

Apologies:	
Barbara Gritten	SEPA
Marina Curran-Colthart	Argyll & Bute Council
Seonaid Sheridan	Clyde Forum
Catherine Gemmell	Marine Conservation
Janie Steele	The GRAB Trust

Acronyms:

ABBF: Argyll and Bute Beach Forum	BWB: Beachwatch Bute
KSB: Keep Scotland Beautiful	MCDU: Marine & Coastal Development Unit
MCS: Marine Conservation Society	Re-JIG: Recycle – Jura/Islay Group
SNH: Scottish Natural Heritage	

1.	Minutes of Previous Meeting (23 September 2015)
	Approved.
2.	Argyll & Bute Council – Lorraine Holdstock and Marina Curran-Colthart
	Lorraine Holdstock
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Council will be signing up to the Clyde Marine Planning Partnership (CMPP) after their committee meetings on 16 and 17 March. The Council will take the lead with one of the Councillors being a Board member. Jane pointed out that we are outside the Clyde but will eventually have our own partnership. Lorraine reported that at the recent Loch Etive hearing, permission was refused to instal two extra fish cages.

	Marina Curran-Colthart
	➤ Invasive Non-Native Species – working with Billy Shields on Bute in regard to the translocation of native species not native to Bute, i.e. foxes and grey squirrels.
	➤ Writing up timetable for the LBAP review.
	➤ Biodiversity Duty Action Plan for the Council consultation finished and currently updating for agreement.
	➤ Scottish Biodiversity Strategy – re-vamp of working groups – concern that the Marine Group has been dropped with Marine Scotland carrying out this role and their capacity and communication protocols.
	➤ Working with Tarbert Community Development Trust regarding biodiversity input into a new path south of Tarbert. Litter issues to be addressed.
	SNH – Jane Dodd
	➤ SNH now has its own beach trawl and it is stored at Millpark Depot. It would be good to try it with Beach Schools then Sandra might take it for the Summer holidays. There are also three sets of waders and three life jackets. Sandra will plan events around the use of this trawl. Janie Steele has the key to the mess room at the depot where the trawl is stored.
	➤ The moorings for the skate project are going in next week and then the fish tagging will begin. The fish will be tagged with acoustic tags and data storage tags. The aim is to monitor the MPA and see if the management measures are working. To get maximum value from the project, SNH need to get the data storage tags back so there will be a reward if anglers return them.
	➤ Jane had been diving in Loch Creran this week and investigated six sites for signs of carpet sea squirt which is an invasive species and which had been reported to SNH. SNH did not see the carpet sea squirt but has taken samples of other sea squirts and sponge and sent them to Marine Scotland to be examined under a microscope. The carpet sea squirt is very voracious and likes to attach itself to artificial structures like piers and pontoons. It can smother oyster and mussel farms. It has already been reported as being in the Clyde at Largs Yacht Haven. If it is present in Loch Creran, it is unlikely it can be removed from the serpulid reef without causing damage. The sea temperature in this area is too cold for the squirt to reproduce sexually but it can divide itself to reproduce asexually.
	➤ The squirt has been reported growing on old mussel lines and if this is the case, the Council/Crown Estate should get the old equipment removed. Jane has spoken to all oyster farmers in the area about this to warn them about this alert. Scottish Sea Farms have not seen any evidence of the squirt. More samples will be taken from other stakeholders when they have been contacted. Marine Scotland should be leading on this in regard to moving shellfish around. Jane will send round their report with a link to more information. <i>Jane to action</i>
	Beachwatch Bute – Sandra McMillan
	➤ Sandra reported that the new Secretary and Treasurer are working well together and the Facebook page is improving. The funding is through from EB Scotland and the group is financially stable. They were unable to attain the Co-op funding.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Three tonnes of marine litter has been removed from the beach since our last meeting along with one dead cow. The storage bench project is bearing fruit but one bench was wrecked in a storm. Sandra is applying for Third Sector Grant support to purchase more storage benches.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sandra was unable to attend the last few meetings of the KSB initiative – Champions of the Environment.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There have been 857 likes on the Facebook page.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ They have received lots of support from West Coast Motors and are able to keep their tractor and trailer in the bus depot. In return, Sandra litter-picks around their garage premises.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Take time event – new banners and attending events.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The tractor will be resprayed in red this year at the boatyard.
	The GRAB Trust – Julie Fairbrass
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Beach Schools encompasses identifying litter on the beach, counting the litter, building shelters, building fires, whittling sticks and now a beach trawl will be added. Six schools have taken part in the winter term. Janie is funded through EB Scotland and Michaela Blair from The Robertson Trust.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Janie has completed the work with Glassary and Tayvallich Primary Schools (younger children) and continuing with Lochdonhead Primary (whole school P2-P7) currently. The outings were hampered with the poor weather and ferry cancellations at the end of last year. Bitter winds and lack of shelter is a problem.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Schools in planning for the coming terms – Easter and Summer. Island schools and local schools and Islay possibly with a slightly different schedule to allow for the long ferry crossing.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continuing to try to facilitate groups and schools to adopt a stretch of local beach and join Beachwatch.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Julie explained that it is dangerous to take small children to the beach in winter weather conditions so the project stops in November and recommences in March for 4 – 6 schools. Janie and Michaela deliver two different programmes but both are being well received.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The beach trawl will be used soon but only on a sandy beach.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Janie wants to work more closely with Marine Scotland.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There has been a good response to the “Clean for the Queen Initiative” which takes place on 4-6 March.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is a promotion from Helping Hand (litterpicker suppliers) where pickers can be purchased at a reduced price.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ GRAB has withdrawn from the Seaside Award scheme this year as it is too expensive (£800) for Ganavan and Machrihanish and time-consuming to continue due to lack of staff. Julie informed the Council that this should be within their remit.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Julie has stepped down from the Beach Managers meetings.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ GRAB is fully funded until 2017.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is a new Beach Ranger on Islay

	Clyde Forum – Seonaid Sheridan
	<p>The Firth of Clyde Forum has now closed, as of a forum meeting on the 7th February where the constitution for the Clyde Marine Planning Partnership was signed. Currently the draft Direction, which sets out the delegation of functions from the Minister has been made public. This can be viewed on the Marine Scotland website, and is also available for comment and response. Details available at this link- http://www.gov.scot/Topics/marine/seamanagement/regional/partnerships/Clyde</p>
	<p>We are currently working on developing a new website for the CMPP, but in the meantime updates will continue to be shared on the FoCF website, specifically the marine planning page: http://www.clydeforum.com/marine-planning. Applications to the CMPP are open to other organisations or individuals who would like to apply.</p>
	<p>We are currently working on completing a baseline assessment of the Clyde Marine Region (a regional version of the Scottish Marine Atlas) which will highlight the main priorities to be dealt with in the plan and expect this to be finished by late spring. In the coming months we will also be working on developing further stakeholder and public engagement. If anyone would like to be added to the CMPP mailing list, or would like any further information about this please let me know.</p>
	Marine Conservation Society – Catherine Gemmell
	<p>Great British Beach Clean 2015</p> <p>First of all a huge thank you to everyone who helped make this event the biggest ever in Scotland! We had a spectacular 72 events across Scotland that submitted their results in time to be included in the analysis in the annual Beachwatch Report. The Beachwatch report is due out on the 23rd March – if anyone would like paper copies then please do let me know and I can get these sent through.</p>
	<p>There were 12 events run in Argyll and Bute during the GBBC weekend in September so thank you very much to everyone who organized, hosted and supported these events! A further 12 events were run in Argyll and Bute throughout 2015. It would be fantastic moving into this year to match or even beat that number! If the funding for my role is extended post April it would be fantastic to meet up with everyone who has been (or who would like to!) get involved to discuss how I can help and support all the wonderful work you are doing.</p>
	<p>Other work on going includes support for the Have You Got The Bottle Campaign which is asking the Scottish Government to put in place a deposit return system for drinks containers. We had a fantastic parliamentary event where each MSP was delivered a bottle that had been collected from an Edinburgh beach to invite them to the event and to highlight the problem! For more information please see www.haveyogotthebottle.org.uk or for more info on how my work and how our volunteers have been engaged please see our latest Sea Champions blog : http://www.seachampions.blogspot.co.uk/2016/02/have-you-got-bottle.html</p>
	<p>The next Marine Litter Strategy meeting is also due to be held in March and a summary paper of our join actions with Keep Scotland Beautiful and Fidra is attached if useful.</p>

3.	Next Meeting
	➤ Willie Beattie of EB Scotland is keen on this Forum but it is felt that the meetings deliver no major benefit to the groups.
	➤ Jane stated that the meetings should coincide with the various groups' business planning strategies so next February would be the preferred month.
	➤ Jean will e-mail all members of the Forum about frequency of meetings.