



Flotsam and Jetsam

March 2016

Welcome to the Argyll and Bute Beach Forum quarterly e-bulletin. The Argyll and Bute Beach Forum is a project run by The GRAB Trust (as part of our Beaches and Marine Litter Project). Our main aim is to raise awareness of the impacts of and reduce beach and marine litter and to support communities to take action by cleaning beaches.

We hope you will find our e-bulletin interesting. The bulletin is also available by post and on our website. Your contributions are always welcome. We want to make this bulletin as useful as possible. Tell us what you would like to see in the bulletin, it is your bulletin!



Clean for the Queen Initiative

The Lord Lieutenant for Argyll & Bute, Patrick Stewart, contacted us early in the New Year to make us aware of a new initiative. This year Her Majesty, the Queen, will celebrate her 90th birthday. One of the more imaginative initiatives to mark this milestone was the "Clean for the Queen" project. Every area in the United Kingdom was invited to contribute towards the initiative and it was hoped that over 1 million people would take part. It is not surprising that such a long coastline situated facing both the Atlantic Ocean and the Irish Sea receives an unduly large share of the huge amount of marine litter being continuously generated either on shore or at sea. It was hoped that as much of the shoreline and surrounding areas of Argyll & Bute could be done over the week-end of 4 to 6 March. The GRAB Trust contacted all of their groups who are involved in beach cleaning and we had a very positive response. Below is a selection of photographs from some of the groups who took part in the initiative.



6th Argyll Scouts (West Cowal)



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Isle of Seil Coastal Rowing Club



Campbeltown Sea Cadets



St. Columba's Primary



St. Columba's Primary



St. Columba's Primary



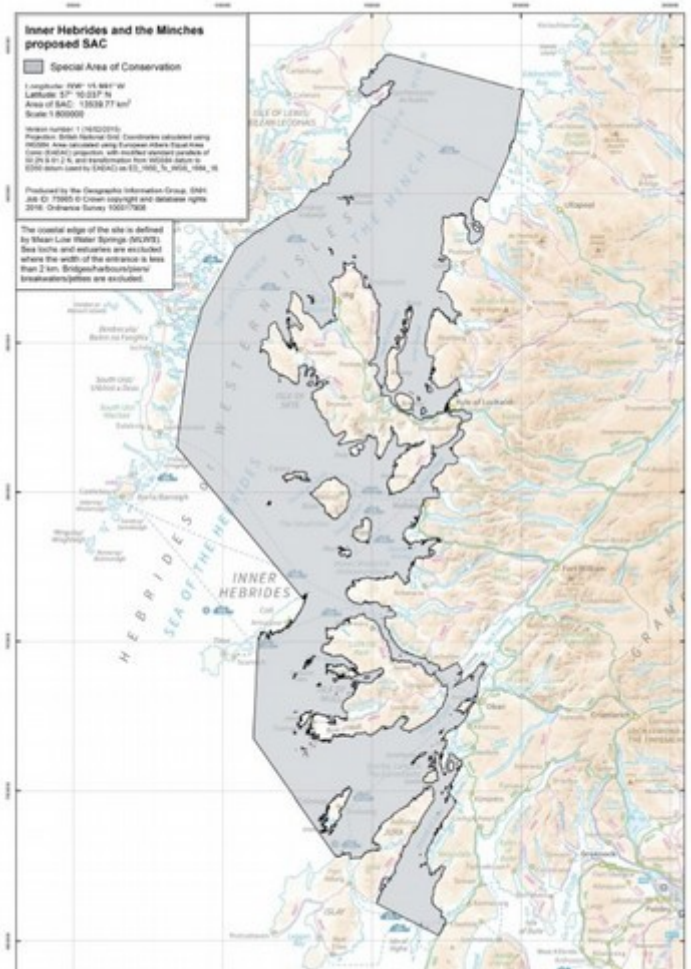
Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) is presently consulting on the proposal to designate the Inner Hebrides and the Minches as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

The proposal will be to designate the Inner Hebrides and the Minches as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for harbour porpoise. The aim of the site is to help protect harbour porpoise and their supporting habitats in Scotland.

The consultation will run for eight weeks from the 23 March to 18 May and seeks public views on the

- Proposed designation
- Scientific evidence
- Advice to support management
- Proposal to develop a conservation strategy
- Business & Regulatory Impact Assessment

Information about the proposal including site boundary, site selection, advice to support management and how to make a response to the consultation can be found at www.snh.gov.uk/porpoiseSAC.





Great British Beach Clean Results 2015

Thank you to all beach cleaners - we did it!

Our 2015 Great British Beach Clean event has been yet another record breaker! When 5,349 volunteers took part in 2014, we were thrilled – but that record was smashed in September 2015 when 6,035 of you headed to the beach – the most in our 22-year history of running clean-ups.

In Scotland we had a total of 45,815 litter items collected from a record breaking 75 beaches (70% increase on last year), as well as over a 100% increase in volunteers participating from 663 in 2014 to 1421 in 2015.

Thanks to each and everyone of you who came out to organise or volunteer at a beach clean in Scotland – we could not have done it without you!

We had 12 beach cleans throughout Argyll and Bute involving over 150 volunteers during the weekend of the 18th-21st September which is absolutely fantastic!

For anyone who has not heard, Beachwatch is the Marine Conservation Society's national beach cleaning and litter-surveying programme - helping people all around the UK to care for their coastline with the Great British Beach Clean being the flagship event.

Last year there was a 43% increase in the amount of plastic bottles we found during our Great British Beach Clean! In Scotland we found almost 80 bottles per kilometre which is a 21% increase on last year. Together with APRS and others, we are supporting the 'Have You Got The Bottle Campaign' which is pushing for a Deposit Return System (DRS) which would put in place a financial incentive to return your drinks containers. Please help show your support through facebook and twitter on @mcsuk and @yougotthebottle or through our website.

After such a successful 2015 we are ready to start making plans for 2016. This year's Great British Beach Clean will run from the 16th-19th September and it would be fantastic to see you all on a beach then!

Whether you want to become a Beachwatch Organizer for your local beach or just come along to one of our registered events, we can help you make it the most educational and fun day out at the beach in your calendar!

For more information and to sign up please go to www.mcsuk.org/beachwatch

Contact: Catherine Gemmell at catherine.gemmell@mcsuk.org



St. Columba's Primary



St. Columba's Primary



6th Argyll Scouts (West Cowal)

Creation of Clyde Marine Planning Partnership - A step forward for marine planning

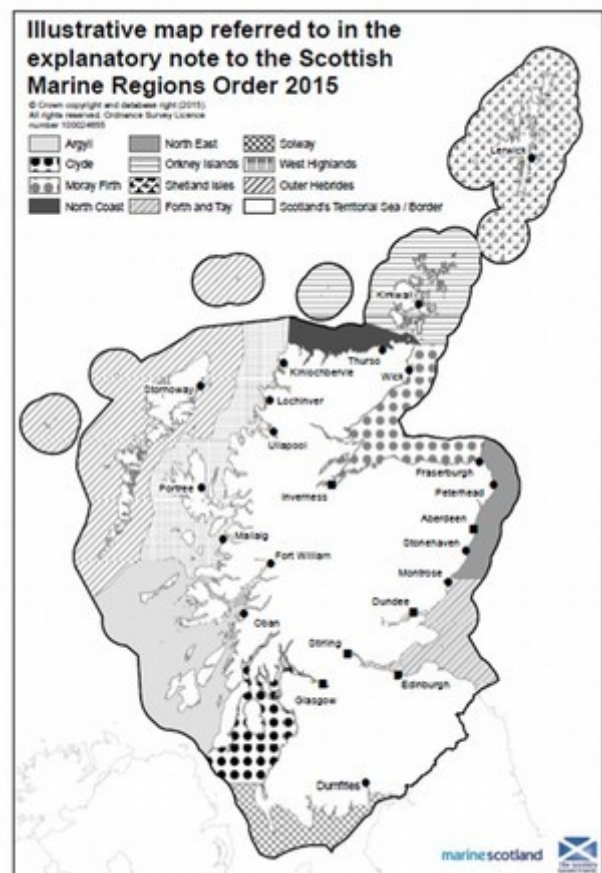
Marine planning is a process that brings together different users of the marine and coastal area, to make co-ordinated and informed decisions about how to manage and use marine resources sustainably. Scotland's National Marine Plan creates a single framework for Scotland's seas to be managed under. Additionally, marine planning is being further devolved in Scotland to the regional level into 11 Marine Regions (See the map below which shows all 11 regions) with marine plans being developed for each region.

Regional Marine Plans will be developed by Marine Planning Partnerships, allowing more local ownership and decision-making about specific issues within their area. Whilst it will take some time to set up Marine Planning Partnerships for all 11 Scottish Marine Regions, Clyde and the Shetland Isles are the first Partnerships to be established and to begin developing Regional Marine Plans.

On 10th February 2016 Core Group members of the Firth of Clyde Forum met to sign the constitution of the Clyde Marine Planning Partnership, marking the establishment of this body. The Firth of Clyde Forum has now effectively been closed and the work of marine planning will be taken forward by the new Partnership. Marine Scotland has proposed to nominate the CMPP as the delegate for taking forward regional marine planning in the Clyde.

Currently, work is progressing on the assessment of the condition of the region. This will identify significant pressures and main issue to be dealt with in the marine plan and includes a summary of human activity on the region. This will help inform the development of economic, social and marine objectives. Ultimately it will inform development of the Regional Marine Plan. This process will build on the Forum's past work, particularly the SSMEI pilot, and draw in learning and experiences from previous projects. The partnership will also continue to work wherever possible on projects that will inform the marine planning process.

In the next few weeks the new Clyde Marine Planning Partnership website will be launched, but in the meantime updates can still be found at: www.clydeforum.org



This edition of the F & J sees us saying thank you and best wishes to children and staff from two mid-Argyll schools who we worked with until October last year. Glassary P1-4 and Tayvallich pre-school-P3 pupils made Carsaig beach at Tayvallich their classroom for six weeks learning how to be safe whilst outdoors; how living things survive and interact; hunting for coastal creatures and looking at how they are able to cope with different environments on the shore. Games and activities assisted understanding of the impacts that litter and other pollution can have on the creatures which make the ocean their home culminating in a joint school clean-up of Carsaig whereby much plastic and rope was removed, helping to prevent entanglement and ingestion of marine litter. Well done everyone!



Glassary & Tayvallich—my shhharrk!



Lochdonhead - building a shelter

The final week saw the participants looking further at their marine litter finds and creating images of some marine creatures on and in the sand. All participants have been presented with their Beach School Achievement Certificates in school assembly and thanked for all their efforts.

Last school term and through the winter we have been working with staff and pupils of Lochdonhead Primary School on Mull. The weather has been incredibly challenging with numerous visits postponed by storm Abigail and subsequent visitors and we have become familiar with Calmac ferry disruption text alerts! Enthusiasm however, has not been thwarted and we are continuing to visit their local stretch of shoreline, just a short walk from the school. Here, for these pupils, teachers and parents, safety at the head of the loch is of concern with mudflats presenting an interesting but dangerous habitat to visit at low tide. The children have used their problem-solving skills to plan safe trips to the beach which will continue regularly through the school year with teaching staff.

Beach School sessions here have focused on this sea loch environment as a whole, with topics covering maths and science such as weather, materials and change of state to fit in with learning outcomes planned for the term as well as learning about the essential requirements for living processes. We will shortly be visiting another beach to compare habitats ecologically and litter deposition during a clean-up and plan an experiment to investigate degradation of plastics. Watch out for updates next edition. Thanks to all so far.

Beach School in Cowal

Since the last edition in September pupils from Dunoon, Innelan and Toward Primary Schools in Cowal have also been out to Beach School with my colleague Michaela Blair investigating their local shorelines and coastal inhabitants as well as carrying out beach cleans to help keep our marine environment clear of debris. Thank you to all of you who participated in the programme and to The Robertson Trust for their support.

Pupils from Dunoon also rolled up their sleeves again in March to collect more beach litter at Westbay, joining in with the 'Clean for the Queen' campaign. Michaela will be starting sessions again in Cowal next term so watch this space for updates.



Cowal Pupils

More beach cleaning activities including Beachwatch Schools update

Joining Park Primary School of Oban who have had the northern area of the Corran Esplanade in Oban under their care for a number of years, St. Columba's Primary School have signed up to Beachwatch, pledging to look after the Corran Esplanade beach from the north pier to the roundabout at the Corran Halls. The upper school were set to task in September taking part in the Great British Beach Clean (GBBC) with their data being input into the long term data set managed by the Marine Conservation Society (MCS). Thank you to Miss McKenna and her class for a great job starting their pledge in September and for cleaning the beach again recently as part of the Clean for the Queen campaign collecting a staggering 21kg of general litter and 7kg of glass!



Oban High School who are hoping to adopt the George Street beach in Oban also kick started their Beachwatch clean-ups in September for the GBBC (thanks to Mr Craik and Mrs Sharp and their 'Clean Team') and along with Dunbeg Primary School P6 and 7s headed by Miss Fraser who did a clean sweep and survey of the back beach at Dunstaffnage, their data was submitted to MCS forming part of the GBBC report for 2015. Thanks to all those who participated in the GBBC for 2015. We had a record number of participants and beaches covered in Argyll this year making it great year for voluntary action through beach cleaning in Scotland.

Other groups have continued their efforts through the winter and new groups have come on board including young people and adults of the Appin Youth Club in north Argyll and the marine science undergraduates at UHI SAMS (University of the Highlands and Islands and Scottish Association of Marine Science). Thank you to all.

Marine Litter is known to be one of the biggest issues threatening the global marine ecosystem and community involvement in cleaning our shore-lines goes a long way to helping combat this international crisis. Please consider participation in surveys near you at any time of the year or perhaps to officially adopt your local beach which you may be looking after already! Survey data is incredibly useful as it provides supporting evidence for the continued problem of marine litter and highlights where efforts need to be focused. It's not too early to mark the GBBC event in September in the calendar for 2016! For more information about the Beachwatch scheme see the article by Catherine of MCS in this issue and visit www.mcsuk.org/beachwatch where you can also download the new Great British Beach Clean Report for 2015.

Surfers Against Sewage - news: Sewage Free Seas and the Big Spring Beach Clean 2016

Another charity fighting the corner to protect UK seas, waves and beaches for all to enjoy are Surfers Against Sewage. Since their humble beginnings more than 25 years ago they and their thousands of volunteers continue to work through campaigning, community action, conservation, education and research. More information on all their campaigns and work can be found at www.sas.org.uk



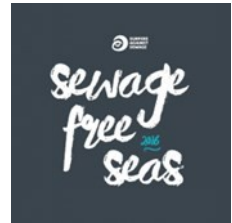
SAS Big Spring Beach Clean is set for 11-17th April

Please join in any event local to you. In Argyll these are at Westport in Kintyre and in Oban but it may not be too late to register your clean-up which you may have planned.

Removal of plastic waste from our coastlines is the most effective clean-up method but a recent survey found that the amount of plastic bottle litter on UK beaches rose by 43% between 2014 and 2015. I'm sure many of you try to recycle the waste where you can but this year, thanks to being joined by 'Parley for the Oceans' SAS are assisting volunteers to recycle and aim to recycle as much of the plastic as possible that will be collected from over 200 beaches. <http://www.sas.org.uk/news/beach-cleans/big-spring-beach-clean-are-you-ready/> or call their office on 01872 553001.

Sewage Free Seas

The UK charity has a new campaign helping to hold sewage free seas in their sights! The Environment Agency has opened a 6-week industry stakeholder consultation on how often water companies should be legally permitted to discharge raw, untreated human sewage effluent directly into the nation's beaches, rivers and coastline.



SAS is calling for 10,000 water users and beach lovers to support UK Sewage Free Seas and sign its response to this consultation calling on the government for SEWAGE FREE SEAS!

To show your concern, SAS is asking supporters to visit www.SewageFreeSeas.org and add their signature. SAS will deliver these voices to the Environment Agency and Environment Minister at its All Party Parliamentary Group meeting in Westminster on 4th May, once the consultation has closed on 3rd May.

Plastic Challenge - a day, a week, a month - how long could you last?

Fed up with the plastic soup and the over use of single use plastics (SUP) in our society? The Marine Conservation Society is running the Plastic Challenge again this year in June.

<http://www.mcsuk.org/plasticchallenge/>

It's not about being plastic free - pretty nigh on impossible and plastic is an incredibly useful material but people have an over reliance on the material, especially SUP packaging.

You can choose to reduce your plastic use or to stop using SUP for a month. Even if you don't want to try to go without plastics for a whole month (it is a challenge!) or to use it for fundraising there are lots of tips posted by the general public to help people to reduce their plastics footprint. Good luck.



Let's Beat the Microbead!

Microbeads are tiny pieces of plastic less than a millimetre in diameter used in personal and some household cleaning products including facial and body scrubs and toothpastes. There are natural alternatives to the small plastic beads which are too small to be filtered out during water and sewage treatment so add to the increasing volume of microplastics in the world's oceans.



Microbeads and other microplastics are regularly mistaken for food by many marine animals from plankton to fish, seabirds, turtles and marine mammals. Furthermore, toxic chemicals can adhere to these tiny particles concentrating their effects and bio-accumulating in the food chain which is likely to have serious implications for marine wildlife and for human health.

Many organisations are campaigning for this issue including Marine Conservation Society, Flora and Fauna International, Environmental Investigation Agency and Greenpeace as well as being supported now by many industry market leaders. These organisations have joined forces with a recent push to urge David Cameron to join President Obama in banning the use of these microbeads which lead to needless pollution. Greenpeace are hosting the petition whereby over 200,000 others have spoken. You can also pledge your use of products that do not contain plastic on the 'Scrub it Out' petition if you have not already and let your friends know about this unnecessary massive addition of plastics into our oceans. For more information see the latest news on www.mcsuk.org where you can link to through to a secure petition site. Alternatively go direct to www.greenpeace.org.uk and search their blog. Also see www.fauna-flora.org/initiatives/the-good-scrub-guide/ and Scrub it Out on the MCS webpages.

Labelling isn't always obvious but there are guides to help you choose your products and an app for smart phones (apple, android and windows) where you can scan a product barcode to check if it contains microbeads or not and which brands are on the way to being plastics free. Download the app at www.beatthemicrobead.org

The most likely culprits in your product are Polyethylene / Polythene (PE), Polypropylene (PP), Polyethylene terephthalate (PET), Polymethyl methacrylate (PMMA) and Nylon.



The Great Nurdle Hunt www.nurdlehunt.org.uk/

The nurdle hunt continues! Just like microbeads these spillages from the plastics industry are adding to the global plastic soup. Please register any nurdle finds from your beach litter collections.

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Please send articles for the Flotsam & Jetsam bulletin to Jean Kennedy.

All Project Workers are part-time so please note that they are not always available to answer all queries in regard to beaches & marine litter issues.

List of acronyms used in the bulletin:

KSB: Keep Scotland Beautiful

SAMS: Scottish Association for Marine Science

HWDT: Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust

SNH: Scottish Natural Heritage

FoCF: Firth of Clyde Forum

MCS: Marine Conservation Society

SEPA: Scottish Environmental Protection Agency

TEAR: Tiree Environmental Action and Recycling

Disclaimer

Thanks for reading. Please note that all views expressed are not necessarily the views of The GRAB Trust or the Argyll and Bute Beach Forum. We hope that you have enjoyed our e-bulletin. We would like to hear from you and would appreciate any comments you may have about it.

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