
Oban Bay Stakeholder Group Meeting 19 Sep 2016 – Notes from the Meeting

AGENDA

- Situation Report – Progress so far
- Project Plan
- Risk Assessment Review – Findings
- North Channel situation – final decision
- Revised Code of Practice – draft circulated
- Guidance for Small Craft - Be Safe-Be Seen campaign – draft circulated
- Next steps
- AOB

STATUTORY HARBOUR AUTHORITY

We discussed the lack of an SHA and it was agreed that even with everything in place the establishment of an SHA would take time. Without an SHA, establishing a regulated harbour will be very difficult, but in order to address the situation in front of us as soon as possible, we discussed that we could use the Code of Practice as a vehicle to establish a safer regime within Oban Bay and Harbour, acknowledging that this is imperfect and cannot be enforced by rule of law. Nevertheless, provided that the Code is rooted in common sense, sound seamanship and common courtesy it is likely to be agreed by all (or almost all) the port users and so establish a habit of safe navigation within the Bay and Harbour. After all why wouldn't any average competent and reasonable mariner sign up to something that was sensible, safe and courteous?

Post Meeting Note: It is important to highlight to you all that at the Oban Harbour Management Group (OHMG) the following day, the OHMG members reiterated their goal eventually to have a single SHA with responsibility over Oban Bay as a whole. Furthermore, OHMG members made clear that this project should ensure that its work is oriented towards achieving that goal.

PROJECT PLAN

The project will complete on 10 April 2017, with the final deliverables marking a successful outcome of this particular project as follows:

- a. An updated risk assessment
- b. Revised and agreed Code of Practice, to include a protocol for common incident reporting within Oban Bay
- c. Guidance for small craft

- d. Memoranda of understanding (or similar) bringing together Oil Spill Response Plan and Emergency Plans of the OHMG member organisations.

Post Meeting Note: when David Phillips' role comes to an end on 10 April, CalMac will be recruiting a permanent Project Manager to continue this important work

NORTH CHANNEL

There was considerable discussion about the North Channel. At the meeting we agreed that because the safety broadcast was a safety message it should be made on Channel 16.

Post Meeting Note: The OHMG were concerned about excessive traffic on Channel 16, particularly in the event of an emergency. They were also keen to make clear to all that the navigation in Oban Bay is managed and is no longer a 'free-for-all'. An effective VHF harbour operating channel would certainly underpin this goal and point the way towards an SHA. Eventually the following was agreed.

1. Text to go onto charts and other relevant documents governing passage through the North Channel as follows:

☐ Safety Broadcasts

All vessels of LOA 30 metres and greater and all vessels restricted in their ability to manoeuvre entering or leaving Oban Bay by the North Channel, are requested to broadcast a warning message on VHF Channel 16, followed by a more detailed message on VHF Channel 12 giving (among other details) an ETA at Dunollie Light, or ETD from the berth, mooring or anchorage as appropriate. For details see Admiralty List of Radio Signals and the Code of Practice for Oban Bay.

☐ Large Ship Channel

Small vessels entering or leaving Oban Bay by the North Channel should remain outside the Large Ship Channel as far as practicable.

2. The reporting points for making the safety broadcast above, which had not changed from before were agreed.

NEXT STEPS

Next meetings of the Stakeholder Group:

- 7 Nov 2016, beginning at 1800 in order that we might go through the revised CoP and Guidance for Small Craft in detail.
- 16 Jan 2017 at 1900 to approve final drafts Code of Practice and Guidance for Small Craft for immediate posting on website and publication in other media.

AOB

There were no additional points raised at AOB and the meeting was concluded