

Oban Bay User Group meeting 1900 21 August 2017 Oban Lifeboat Station

Attendees:

Duncan Martin OBCB	DM
David Isaac Fisherman	DI
Billy Forteith Oban RNLi	BF
John McArthur WHA&M	JM
Sarah Brown RYA Scot	SB
Tony Bennett Crown Estates	TB
Mike Robertson RNLi	MR
Cameron MacPhail CFL	CM
Paul Jennings OBHM	PJ
Amy Dickinson Kerrera Marina	AD
Olly Cotterell Kerrera Marina	OC
Simon Alletson MCA	SA
Neil Stewart Majestic Cruises	NS

Principle behind the Oban Bay User Group

Each Statutory Harbour Authority has to have 2 user group meetings per year to conform to the Port Marine Safety Code. This meeting is the CFL (Caledonian MacBrayne Ferries Ltd) user group meeting. The meeting is currently being held more frequently to allow greater consultation on behalf of the Oban Bay Management Group (of which CFL is a member) who are leading the process to determine how Oban Bay is going to be made into an SHA. Argyll & Bute Council (A&BC) are also an SHA at Oban and also have a user group meeting. That is why there are currently 2 sets of meetings currently at Oban.

It was suggested the meetings be combined to save time as most representation is duplicated, CFL have agreed to this suggestion. A&BC have agreed to consult at their next meeting to see if their users are in favour of this move.

Areas for Moorings in Oban Bay

This subject was raised to provide clarity as to how the moorings system is administered and why the moorings from the north side of the bay, which were moved to make room for the A&BC Transit Berthing Facility, were placed to the south of the Sgeir Rathaid reef and not the east. Also as there were no CFL objections to the area east of the reef being used for the purposes of moorings, could this forum be used to consult on this issue as there is immense pressure on mooring space. The short answer is the current situation presents the best compromise when considering all the interested parties positions.

An update on the Transit Berthing Facility, how cruise ship operations are going to work and how access is going to be managed

No representative from A&BC was at the meeting to answer this question and no written answer was submitted ahead of the meeting. PJ offered to collate questions on this subject by e-mail, to obtain an answer from A&BC and then promulgate the answer to the group. No questions have been submitted to date. An A&BC user group meeting will be held shortly where questions will be able to be raised.

Incident Report

32 reported incidents from 12 June to 18 August 2017. The vast majority of these were direct observations by PJ, very few were reported by a third party and so it could be assumed more incidents are occurring.

These were made up from 2 minor groundings to the SE of North pier, 1 machinery failure resulting in rescue, one incident where creels were causing an obstruction to the fairway, one non conformity to the Code of Practice, 3 incidents where small commercial vessels did not conform to IRPCS rule 15 correctly and 24 incidents where leisure vessels did not conform to IRPCS rule 9 correctly and impeded large vessels using the narrow channel. Under this reporting criteria, not conforming or impeding are defined as the other or large vessel had to take action to avoid collision. Specifically, had to sound 5 short blasts and, or, had to take way off, or alter course significantly, to avoid collision. The majority of incidents are in the large vessel channel 1c to the NW of the Corran Ledge west cardinal buoy.

SA from the MCA stated the MCA were extremely concerned with the level of incidents at Oban and would be supportive of initiatives to improve navigational safety.

Proposed additional initiatives to reduce this level of incidents

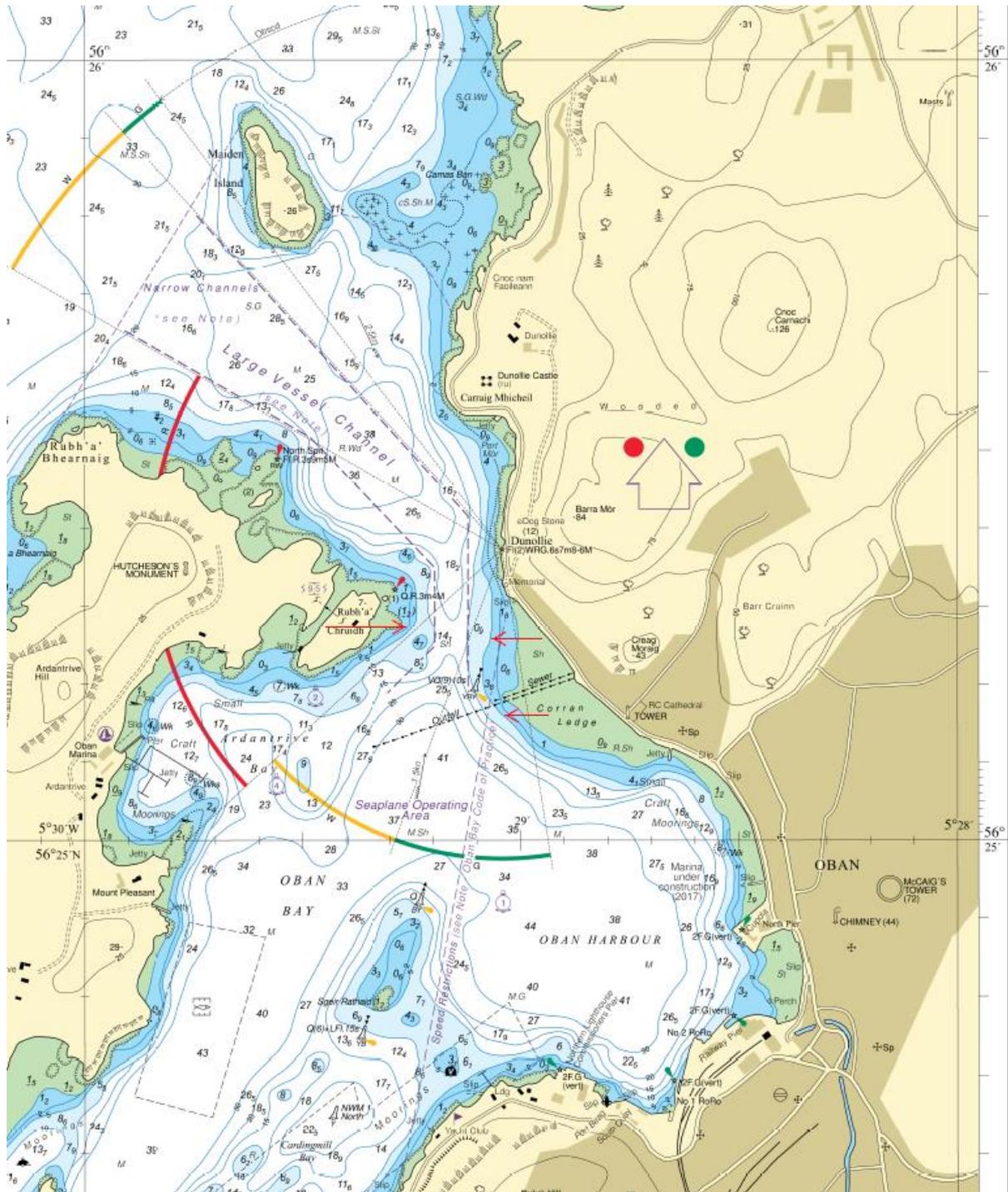
VHF Ch 12 signs to be placed on the 'barbour pole' North Spit Lt at the north entrance and Kerrera Breakwater at the south entrance to encourage leisure vessels to listen to Ch 12 when in Oban Bay, so they are aware of Large Vessel movements.

Safety signage to advise kayaks and small vessels how to operate safely in the area, have been placed at the Railway Pier Fuelling point and the entrance to the Transit Berthing Facility. Additionally at the Tralee Bay Holiday Park, North Ledaig Campsite and Gallanach Campsite.

It is proposed to place 3 additional lateral marks at the narrowest point of the north entrance to assist small vessels to know where the shallow water is, be able to keep the large vessel channel clear for large vessels. This would be a seasonal trial for the 2018 & 2019 summer seasons. There would be no conservancy charge for this trial. No additional liabilities would be incurred by this buoyage as the 3 lateral marks would be aids to navigation like any other lateral mark in MCA waters.

It is proposed to have an advisory patrol vessel to ensure visiting leisure vessel receive a warm welcome at Oban, are aware of the large vessel channel and be given guidance as how to safely navigate through Oban Bay by the safest routes. This would be a seasonal trial for the 2018 & 2019 summer seasons. There would be no conservancy charge for this trial. No additional liabilities would be incurred by this service as all information would be guidance only.

Suggestions of how to engage with visiting yachtsmen were also put forward. Including engaging with foreign cruising associations, sail Scotland, European Boating Association and the Scottish Boat Shows, next at Kipp 14-15 October. Further suggestions to improve navigational safety are invited by PJ.



Oban Bay Management Group Evaluation of what an SHA for Oban should look like

It is proposed to set up a working group with representatives from the OBMG and 2 members of the Oban Bay User Group to determine the evaluation criteria for all the options put forward of how to form an SHA for the whole Oban Bay area. This working group will meet at 0930-1630 10 October 2017 at the NLB offices at Oban. The Chair of the Oban Bay User Group, Cameron Smith, has been asked to nominate 2 people to attend by the end of September 2017.

AOB

CM from CFL reported that a Harbour manager was soon to be appointed to run the CMAL SHA at Oban. This role has previously been fulfilled by the Port manager but under the new contract with CMAL, CFL are required to provide direct reporting to the CMAL Duty Holder for PMSC compliance. So the CFL Harbour Manager will run the SHA at Railway Pier and South Pier, maintenance, berthing and ship handling operations and the Port manager will run the terminal and passenger handling operations.