

Oban Community Harbour Development Association (OCHDA)



Newsletter 3 (September 2020)

General update

Work continues on the development of the Trust Port for Oban, despite the impact of COVID-19. This newsletter will bring members, and other interested parties, up-to-date with recent developments and summarise work that already underway and/or required in the coming months. The newsletter also addresses the cancelled annual general meeting (2020) and arrangements for elections to the Management Committee.

If you have an interest in the development of the Trust Port in Oban then please consider putting yourself forward to join us on the Management Committee where there are currently a limited number of vacancies. We would also welcome approaches from anyone willing to help with one of our working groups (see later) who don't want to join the Committee.

OCHDA is committed to establishing a Trust Port for Oban in 2021. This will require completing negotiations with the council which include the lease of assets at the North Pier and the transfer of existing powers to the Trust Port, thereby establishing a single harbour authority for the waters of Oban Bay and its approaches. It is currently proposed that the Trust Port operation will be based on the North Pier and will cover the waters of Oban Bay with the current harbour area of Caledonian Marine Assets Limited (CMAL) "nested" within it (ie the railway pier used by the CalMac ferries). There will be special provision for areas such as those around Oban Marina (Kerrera) and the Northern Lighthouse Board, as well as measures to accommodate other established users of the harbour.

In addition to the waters of Oban Bay the area that is to be managed by the new Harbour Authority will include the Sound of Kerrera and its approaches. There are a number of options for the seaward boundaries currently under consideration, all of which were presented at the Public Meeting that was held earlier this year. Whilst initial

feedback was received following the meeting there will be a wider consultation on this carried out in coming weeks. For the benefit of those who were unable to attend the public meeting the areas under consideration are included at the end of this newsletter.

The definition of the harbour area, the detail of the arrangements for its oversight and the establishment of the Harbour Trust and Board that will be responsible for running the Trust Port form the basis of a Harbour Order which is to be submitted early in 2021 for approval by the Scottish Government. Work is well under way on the drafting of the Harbour Order with the intention that full consultation will commence later this autumn.

Working groups and invitation to help

In order to ensure that this work is completed, in unison and timeously, a number of working groups have been established by OCHDA to cover the following work areas:

1. A detailed evaluation of the harbour viability under a range of scenarios which will lead to the development of a Business Plan and associated documentation;
2. Determination of the extent of the waters to be managed by the Trust Port, including consultations and negotiations with stakeholders and interested parties;
3. Negotiations with Argyll and Bute Council and Transport Scotland leading to the completion of the Harbour Order; this work is being carried out in collaboration with our legal advisors (Burness-Paul LLP);
4. Raising necessary funds and public awareness to support this work.

These working groups are active, now, but we would welcome additional input from supporters of OCHDA from outside the Management Committee. If you have a contribution to make and would like to join one of these working groups please contact us at ochda@obanharbour.scot

AGM and the Management Committee

It has not been possible to hold an Annual General Meeting in 2020 and we must, therefore, make arrangements to refresh/re-elect the Management Committee. All members of OCHDA are entitled to nominate themselves, or another member, to become a member of the Management Committee. New members to OCHDA are always welcome and will also be able to put themselves, or others, forward for Committee Membership.

If you are not a member of OCHDA but would like to join us - it's free! - please let us know. Similarly, if you would like to be considered for membership of the Management Committee, subject to election (as below) please get in touch. We are expecting that most of the current Committee will seek re-election but there are still a number of vacancies and additional members may also be co-opted.

The arrangements for the election of Management Committee members are that nominations will close at 5 PM on Monday, 28 September. Thereafter, if there are more than 12 nominees, all OCHDA members will be invited to select 12 from the nominations (by email). This process will be undertaken during the week beginning 28 September and will complete at close of business on Friday, 2 October. Results of the election, the membership of the new Management Committee, will be announced on Sunday, 5 October. The new committee will meet 'virtually' during the week beginning Monday, 12 October to collect office bearers (Chair, Vice chair, Treasurer and Secretary).

Funding

As indicated, above, OCHDA will continue to require funds in order to make sure that this work is completed effectively and on time. Whilst OCHDA members and friends are undertaking the vast bulk of this work without any charges, it is inevitable that, for example, legal advice requirements alone mean that significant funds will be needed in the near future. The process of completing and confirming arrangements with Argyll and Bute Council to lease the North Pier, finalisation and submission of the Harbour Order to Transport Scotland and the initial running costs for the new Trust Port will all also require funding.

Bids to various funding sources are in train and a wider public appeal will be launched in due course. The estimated cost of the completion of negotiations and formation of an agreement with Argyll & Bute Council, together with the submission of the harbour order to Transport Scotland is estimated to be between £50,000 and £60,000. Thereafter additional funds will be required to set up the Harbour Board before the Trust Port is able to start operating. At present OCHDA does not have the funds required to complete all of this work and continues to seek donations, of whatever size, to enable this project to be delivered for the benefit of the people of Oban and the users of the harbour.

Further details of the work of OCHDA, Oban harbour and contact information is available www.obanharbour.scot

Possible options - southern harbour extent

2000m radius from Rubha Seanach - blue line

Line between Rubha na Feundain and Minard Point - green dashed line

1 nautical mile radius from Rubha Seanach - red line

Existing limit of Code of Practice - purple line

