

Minutes of the 32nd AGM of West Highland Anchorages and Moorings Association held on 25 November 2017 in the Corran Halls, Oban at 10.30 a.m.

1. Present

R Adam	Bidwells	John Anderson	CCC
T Bennett	Bidwells	Val Coghlan	Bidwells
C Davidson	Learagoligan MA	F Gillanders	Kames Bay MA
D Hitchin	Achnacree MA	R Kincaid	Mid Kerrera MA
D Martin	Oban Bay CB	John McArthur	Tayvallich MA
J McFarlane	Balvicar Bay MA	John MacDonald	Achnacree MA
R Rhodes	DBMOA	J Rhodes	DBMOA
R Thwaites	S Shian MA	J Traynor Chair)	Tobermory Harbour
C Perring	Crinan Harbour	D Wilkie	RHYC
D Wilkinson	West Connel MA	J Wilkinson	West Connel MA
J Wilson	Seil Sound MA	D Vass (Secretary)	RHYC

2. Apologies

Camas a'nt Salainn MA, Airds Bay MA, Shildaig MA, Sound of Ulva MA, Stein MA, Achintore MA and J Cooper.

3. Minutes of the 2016 AGM

These were approved.

Proposed by D Wilkie. Seconded by R Rhodes

4. Matters arising not already on the agenda

None

5. Chairman's Report

Good morning ladies and gentlemen and welcome to the WHAM AGM of 2017.

While this year was not the best as far as weather was concerned the west coast was as busy as ever with new and old visitors making use of the many facilities and anchorages available.

Boatyards have increased their capacity to make up for the loss of the MRC.

WHAM continues to be part of the Cross Party Group on marine tourism and is working closely with other bodies including Crown Estate Scotland.

Your committee continues to work for its members and I would particularly mention David and John for their work especially in attending meetings throughout the year.

Finally, I would also like to mention that WHAM lost a very good friend this year in Bob Clements.

6. Secretary's Report

At the time of writing there have been only 56 Marine Licence applications in our area of interest. This continuing slow trend downwards is surprising given the overall increase in marine activity. The vast majority have been fish farm developments, largely continuing the trend to bigger farms using circular pens but with the same footprint. Continued engagement with applicants, where appropriate, before a full application has been submitted has resulted in no objection being submitted this year though some pre-application modifications have resulted. All Councils now let us have sight of applications at the pre planning stage and this has been very beneficial in avoiding controversy while allowing some modification before expensive applications are submitted. The moorings scene has been very quiet

and one wonders what is 'in waiting'! The renewables scene appears dormant in our area with even the Sound of Islay scheme yet to be executed. There are plans to begin this scheme in 2018. In the meantime the 'ownership' of the scheme has changed hands and it is now being progressed by the same organization as that installing the Meygen scheme in the Pentland Firth. However, we have also seen the first application to extract heat from sea water, perhaps an indication of a trend? Always provided you have a convenient stretch of sea handy!

The discussions concerning the 'fate' of the Crown Estate in Scotland have been continued throughout the year. You will have had the opportunity to respond to consultation on the issue and the preliminary results of the consultation have been published. Further consultation by telephone is in progress. In the meantime Crown Estate Scotland has come into being and will continue until after the Crown Estate Bill has passed through the Scottish Parliament and the consequential changes have been made. The exact nature of the changes will not be clear until the draft Bill is published in December. In the discussions which have been held with stakeholders during 2017 we (and RYAS) have been at pains to draw attention to the existence of communities of interest as well as communities of population. While this has been noted and commented on it is not yet clear whether it has influenced the legislation drafters. There has been much talk by the politicians about devolution of control to communities but notable lack of comment on the consequential liabilities. In our case these include clearance of the sea bed when facilities cease to be used. A pilot scheme is proposed for trial purposes though the nature of this is a bit unclear and it seems unlikely that it would be complete before the Bill reaches Parliament. If you are getting the impression that changes are afoot but their nature is unclear then that is the secretary's perception too! Members will be also aware that the date for fee revision is now well past and we would welcome clarity on the future fees likely to be sought. The only certainty for the immediate future is change.

Tobermory Harbour Authority have been granted their HEO and this has to be a welcome development. Small craft, we are assured, will continue to be able to anchor in approved areas without incurring a fee. The extra facilities at Gigha and Morvern have been well used but we are unclear about the financial success of the expanded Western Isles facilities---and they continue to expand.

WHAM committee are very concerned at the state of Oban Bay. We have had several discussions on the subject and with the 'Management Group' and 'harbour manager'. That the Bay needs an effective harbour authority is not in doubt but WHAM feel strongly that a Trust Port is the only acceptable option. Such an organization would have representatives of all stakeholders and the capability to control navigation and ensure safety in the Bay. Importantly it would be independent of all users and have the power to re-invest any monies recovered in excess of costs.

The meeting in Perth with Marine Scotland mentioned in last year's report took place in January. It was welcomed by MS and led to useful clarifications. Importantly, the suggestion that MA's with more than 1 area (though close to each other) should pay a licence fee for each separately was withdrawn.

Sadly, I have to report the passing of Bob Clement in October. Bob had served WHAM for a long number of years as a committee member and was our immediate past chairman. A well kent face, his advice and knowledge will be our loss.

At the AGM the secretary re-emphasised the importance for all MA's to study the draft Bill on Crown Estate to be published at the end of 2017/beginning 2018. If there are aspects with which they are unhappy or unclear it is imperative that they make their views known to their MSP so that changes may

be accommodated at this stage. Once the consultation stage is past the opportunity for amendment has hugely reduced

7. Membership

Oban Marine (Kerrera Boatyard) have returned to the fold and are most welcome.

8 Treasurer's report

The accounts have been circulated and were adopted.

Proposed by R Kincaid Seconded by John Wilson

In discussion it was suggested that if we moved the AGM to January then we could address the immediately past year's accounts rather than the current practice where the accounts are almost 12 months old. The meeting agreed that the committee should examine this suggestion.

Action. WHAM committee.

9. Subscriptions

No change.

10. Independent Examiner

The examiner was re-appointed nem.com

11. Election of Office Bearers

The Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer were re-elected.

Proposed by C Davidson Seconded by D Martin

12 Election of Committee

The existing committee, namely C Davidson, R Rhodes, R Kincaid, D Wilkie and D Wilkinson, were re-elected and the vacancy was filled by C Perring.(Nominated by D Vass and D Wilkie). There were no other nominations.

Proposed by J Wilson Seconded by D Martin

13 Address by The Crown Estate (Tony Bennet)

Tony Bennett gave an update on behalf of Crown Estate Scotland:

CES formally started trading on the 1st April with an opening bank balance of zero; at present it is not only in credit but is also on track to meet the various targets agreed with the Scottish Government for the current financial year.

Legislation is currently being finalised and will hopefully be before Government in the next month or so; it will then go out to public consultation for approximately nine months. Members were urged to read the legislation as this will be the last opportunity for input.

Both Holyrood and the Board of CES have been considering options for the future management of the CES assets. These include:

1. Managing the assets at a national level;
2. Full devolution to local authorities or councils;
3. Assessment on a case-by-case basis.

It is understood that Ministers favour the third option. CES have therefore appointed Sarah Brown to assist with establishing a number of pilot projects that will trial the management of assets at differing scales. It is understood that this might involve local authorities, development trusts and community groups, and will include assessments of financial, social and environmental factors.

Perhaps of greater interest to WHAM members is the fact that the moorings scheme is currently being evaluated by CES. Earlier in the year the Bidwells and CES marine teams met in Edinburgh as part of this process, and all three Marine Officers agreed that:

- Consideration should be given to trying to make the removal of unlicensed moorings more straightforward;
- They would like to see the introduction of a scheme similar to the Marine Stewardship Scheme which existed under TCE; this would enable local groups such as MAs to receive financial support for projects involving CES assets.

These thoughts have been forwarded to the consultants who are undertaking the review of the Moorings Scheme on behalf of CES.

Other than that it has been business as usual, and Tony ended by thanking WHAM members for their continued support and input into the consultation process.

14. Discussion on Oban Bay Developments

After a brief introduction by John McArthur (who represents WHAM and RHYC on the User Group) Fergus Gillanders (Deputy HM Oban) gave an excellent up-date on developments involving the Bay. Briefly, it has finally been established that A&BC are the harbour authority for that part of the Bay bounded by Dunollie Point and Oban Sailing Club i.e. excluding the North Channel. They and their predecessors have been the authority for more than 100 years. He outlined the history of the Bay and its piers and the status and authority of the 'Management Group' and the participants.

Discussion ensued and the meeting was clearly concerned about the obvious need for better maritime safety but also about who would control the final harbour since, in order to include the North Channel, a new Harbour Empowerment Order/Harbour Revision Order would be required which included the North Channel and a decision would be needed on who should be the Port Authority and what its nature should be e.g. Municipal Port or Trust Port.

15. AoCB

None