

Item 5b: Report from HMNB Clyde

1. In common with the last few reports, I asked if there were any specific questions or issues of local interest that the Rhu and Shandon Community Council wished to be updated on in relation to recent activities at the Naval Base.
2. On this occasion, 5 specific questions were raised. These are detailed below, with an accompanying response.

Q. Is there an update on the development of Smugglers Way?

A. In the immediate term DIO Accommodation had hoped that the demolition project, post-demolition groundworks and grassing over of the site would be complete by April 2021. Due to the impact of CV-19, adverse weather, and concerns that the groundworks required a longer time to settle, this date was revised to April 2022. This remains the aspirational completion date. In the longer term, there are currently no plans to redevelop the site. In early 2019 the in-post Captain of the Base for HMNB Clyde made a commitment that any future plans would involve consultation with the Community Council and there has been no change to our stated position.

Q. Is there an update on what is to happen to St Andrew's house and the possible development of a skills and training centre?

A. A similar question was asked in September 2021 and the response I provided was 'We routinely and regularly review both the land and property holdings of the MOD in the vicinity of HMNB Clyde in conjunction with both the Defence Infrastructure Organisation and MOD Land Management Service'. There has been no change to this position. However, there are no active discussions or proposed projects within MOD to develop this site as a skills and training centre.

Q. Are the Navy hosting an Armed Forces Day or similar community event this year and if so on what date? (We hope Rhu Gala will be able to return this year and do not want them to clash)

A. Pre the pandemic, HMNB Clyde hosted a Families Day each summer, which was typically held at the Helensburgh Rugby and Cricket Club. We hope to be able to do something similar this year, but no date has yet been agreed and it remains aspirational at present. Should it be possible to hold the event, then we would – of course – look to do everything practical to deconflict the event from clashing with the Rhu Gala.

Q. We understand the new carpark is now not being built inside the Base, is there a plan to build something else instead?

A. No.

Q. We understand 2000 families will be relocating to Helensburgh and district over the next two years. What arrangements are in place (with A&B C) for housing these families and ensuring there is sufficient educational and medical infrastructure in place to cope with the increase in population?

A. Since February 2017, the Royal Navy and Argyll and Bute Council (Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership) have been in a formal agreement – ratified at ministerial level – to conduct regular meetings in a programme referred to by the Council as the 'Faslane Maritime Change Programme'. Topics include transportation, education and school capacity, housing, community projects and wider economic benefits within Argyll and Bute, to name but a few. The senior Board level meetings are chaired by the Chief Executive of Argyll and Bute Council, with the principal Naval Base representative being the Naval Base Commander. Key council officials for all the topics listed above attend, with a clear emphasis on better understanding, planning for and resourcing future community infrastructure requirements. All our forecast figures are shared with the Council and all the sub-level working groups have both Council and Naval Base representation. The latest senior Board level meeting (Chief Executive/Naval Base Commander) took place on Wednesday 9 February 2022. The forum also brings together other key stakeholders such as Police Scotland, The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and Scottish Enterprise.

3. Should the Community Council require any further detail on any of the points above, then I shall be happy to assist.

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