

**Minute of the
Rhu and Shandon Community Council
17th April 2024
Location: Rhu and Shandon Community Council**

IN ATTENDANCE:

RSCC:		GUESTS	
John Mc Gall – Convenor	JM	Cdr. Peter Noblett	Cdr PN
Jean Cook - Secretary	JC	Jim Crawford	JCr
Laura Freeland	LF	Cllr Maurice Corry	CllrMC
Arnold Bretman	AB	Cllr Mark Irvine	Cllr MI
Jeannette Loram	JL	Fiona Baker	FB
Robert Stuart	RS	David Lang	DL
		Allan David McFadyen	AM
		Margaret Ann Walker	MAW
		Heather Phillips	HP
		Sharon Munro	SM
		Jan Calder	JCa

1. APOLOGIES:

Received from Thomas Baylem, Sally Grummitt, Nick Barton, Cllr Iain Paterson, Calum McNichol

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

NONE

3. GUEST REPORTS:

a: Report from Police Scotland.

The police report has been received and posted on the website. .

In summary, between the dates of 14/2/24 and 10/4/24 there were 31 Incidents and 9 Crime Reports. These are: One theft at the Ardencaple hotel resulting in a person being reported to the Procurator Fiscal, one theft at an address in Shandon and one fraud enquiry regarding car insurance; the latter two are ongoing. There are also ongoing enquiries into one case of careless driving, one of assault which took place at an address in Rhu, two crimes regarding communications offences, one vandalism at a house in Rhu and one vandalism at a house in Shandon.

b: HMNB Clyde.

Cdr PN gave a verbal report.

It has been a busy time with Foreign visitors and the return of Vanguard following a refit. Flooding in the base is still a problem and Culvert Working Group(CWG) is working hard on this and to establish ownership of culverts not actually in the base which are not functioning adequately. The CWG group is involved with the flooding related to Chapel Burn, reported at the last meeting. PN will supply DL with the name of the contact on the CWG, but PN noted that he could always be contacted.

MI suggested that CWG should liaise with the A&B flood team and contact details were exchanged. MI said he was not sure if there was a map of the culverts in the area and accepted that the reduced maintenance over the years and the ancient infrastructure, did not help. He accepted that the state of the roads and the use of tar and chipping in

particular exacerbated the problems.

FB reported a felled live alder tree in Aldonaig Ancient Woodland which she thinks is MoD land. PN will investigate.

Action PN

c: MDP Report no report

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 14TH FEBRUARY 2024

The minutes were accepted as a true record

Proposed by JL and seconded by AB

It was agreed that the note of the number of the Planning Application referred to in 6c should be added to the minute.

5. MATTERS ARISING NOT ON THE AGENDA.

- The cables have been cleared from Rhu Spit. A thank-you letter has been sent to Andrew Nunn from BT
- Lesley Morrison will be the link with Argyll and Bute for the Play Park. She will report progress back to R&SCC.

Ongoing

The first two items were taken out of order in Councillors Reports

- There was a misunderstanding on the signs for defibrillators for which CllrMC has secured funding. The Community Council (R&SCC) do not know where they can be purchased so do not know the cost. CllrMC will take this forward.
- The short term parking sign for the Brae Shop is ongoing
- From 6c of February meeting:23/01502/PP &23/01503/LIB. *This item was taken out of order at the beginning of the meeting.*

JCr provided an update in respect of repeat Planning Application and Listed Building Application at Lagarie House and Grounds where there is a TPO in place, within the Conservation Area and proposal is to access the front garden ground of the 'B' Listed Building from the very busy A814 by removing 40m of historic mature hedging and trees (9 no identified) along with unrecorded bushes, hedges and likely 100 year old significant Rhododendron trees of various flower colours.

JCr. explained that he had received email from the Planning Officer stating 'with regard to the report to Council, the April meeting was cancelled due to the elections and it is likely that it should be progressed to the May committee but this has not been confirmed. I will let you know as soon as I can.'

- Notice Board. The church is happy for us to have a Notice Board alongside theirs. This was confirmed with Kevin McIntosh (Assistant Operations Manager Roads and Amenities Operations) that this is acceptable to A&B. We need to fill in a Planning Application form. CllrMI will investigate the cost to the council.

Action JC

- From 7a: 22/00053/ENFOC. The owners of Duneira have decided not to apply for Planning permission to allow the property to be used for STL. It is on the market.
- From 7b: 23/00615/MPLAN: Masterplan for proposed Clubhouse on the Marina. No movement on this item
- From 7c: 23/02429/PP Siting of Portable Cabin on Marina. A representation was made to Planning regretting piecemeal development on the Marina. This is a mixed use Development area and as such should have a Masterplan in place before any development takes place.
- From 9d: Litter Bin at end of Rhu Spit: After an intervention by MC, Roads and Infrastructure replied; “the team are unable to add an additional bin at this location they will assess other bins in the area and relocate a bin that isn’t used as much.” JM has talked to Andy Nolan, who advised that if we get a bin we should ensure that it is fixed to stop vandalism. If we intend to empty the bins ourselves we should leave the filled bags at the toilet block and he would ensure that they are uplifted.
- From 13: The flooding involving Network rail has been brought under control to some extent but not all the toe ditches are operating adequately. Kirk Brae is on the list of roads to be resurfaced during financial year 2024-25.
- **From 13:** The flooding involving Chapel Burn is still ongoing. The grill on this burn is partially blocked by a tyre. The MoD have not yet accepted responsibility for this and it is being dealt with by the Culvert Working group which involves several base departments as well as DIO (Defence Infrastructure Organisation) who are still trying to establish land ownership.

6. PLANNING MATTERS

- 23/02472/PP: Construction and Operation of a battery energy storage system with ancillary infrastructure.**

It was agreed that an objection should be sent from the R&SCC. CllrMI said that because of the number of objections, the application will go to the PPSLC.

Action JC

- Other significant planning matters**

24/00580/PAN: Proposal of application notice for the erection of 639 single accommodation units for military personnel with associated parking. Anyone interested can view the plans, which are not published on the planning portal at Centre 81 between 1.30 and 8pm on either April 26th or May 17th.

7. FORESTRY ISSUES:

- Update on Forestry Matters concerning Commercial Woodlands.

Following the last meeting, a letter was written to Scottish Forestry(SF) updating

our concerns on Public Access, Archaeology, Flood Risk, Water Pollution, Peat land, Insecticides, Timber Transport, Tree Species Selection and Birds. On 3rd March, before we received a reply, we reported damage to an Archaeological site. On 7th March, Cameron Maxwell replied that Scottish Woodlands(SW) were taking professional archaeological advice, not from the same team who produced the original report, and were aware of the potential constraints in terms of operations and were again taking professional ornithological advice. He also said that any further building work on forest roads will cease until improvements are made on the section already completed. We asked to see the Archaeology report, which was sent, We asked for updates on Access and this is ongoing since none of the Access points have pedestrian gates and the vehicle gates are locked. Also the three Access points to the National Park agreed by Mike Page(SW) have not been provided. There was supposed to be no planting in the bird breeding season which goes on to the end of June. However SF informed us that a new survey has been undertaken and reports that that are no breeding birds. This is not surprising since planting has been ongoing since February! RS, as an individual has challenged SF on the accuracy of the peat depths on the site. Both SF and SW claim that they do not have the data sheets for peat depth maps. RS will submit a FOI for these.

Gresham House received a Preparatory Project Grant to explore an alternate timber transport route to Pier and Station Roads. RS has discovered that the various parties have been unable to reach agreement on access so there is no pathway to applying for an STTS(Scottish Timber Transport Scheme) Grant to build an alternate route. R&SCC have not been informed. Given that the likely suggested alternate route would join the A818, the question was raised as to whether A&B were one of the interested parties. All present accepted that this was a commercial decision. We will apply to see the Report.

Concern once again was expressed on the procedures followed and that there has been no due diligence. The lack of any Planning involvement was seen as one of the many weaknesses. The question on whether approved Timber Transport Routes can be reviewed was raised. RS has been informed that the decision not to require an EIA cannot be reopened.

JM is compiling a dossier on the whole issue, starting with the initial decision to categorise Pier and Station Road as a consultation Route in 2013. This is likely to form the basis of a complaint; meanwhile the logging down Pier and Station Road is likely to resume soon.

In the interim, it was agreed that R&SC will reply to SF in pursuance of these matters and keep the Community informed.

Action Forestry Transport group

- b. TPO for Aldownwick Glen and Torr Wood

The map sent by Planning is incorrect, and FB has redrawn it.

Action FB

- c. Management Plan for Torr Farm. This was forwarded by SF on April 11th. It is

posted on our [website](#).

This was mentioned in a petition hearing in Parliament today by Jackie Baillie as evidence on the disenfranchisement of communities. The promise was that the Community would be consulted in the construction of the Management Plan as Jackie Baillie and Councillor Irvine confirm as they were present at the emergency community meeting which was held at Torr Farm on 10th June 2022, following illegal felling. The basic question of the management of Ancient Woodlands is an issue here. It could come to an official complaint to the Minister. FB will pursue this and advise R&SCC.

Action: FB

8. OTHER MATTERS

a. BEACH CLEANING.

Beach Cleans were held on March 13th(11) and April 13th (6). The next will be on May 11th 10.00 -11.30

b. ISSUES WERE A814 AND SHORE ROAD FROM AROS ROAD TO THE PEACE CAMP

This was taken out of order after the Guest Reports

Four residents attended the meeting with concerns about these issues.

The flooding on these two roads is connected since many of the culverts which should drain into the loch are either partially or totally blocked. The guests raised 1 three specific issues on drains.

MAW, from Ardgare Residents Association(ARA) explained that there is a blocked drain the Ardgare estate, and because this is a private road, A&B claim that they have no responsibility for clearing it. ARA offered to pay for the drain to be cleared but this is not possible. They are proposing to get Dyno-rod but were advised by CllrMC not to do this until the wider culvert problems have been addressed. It was noted that the owner of Letrault arranged to have the culvert which runs through his property checked by camera and the blockage is on A&B land but the latter will not do anything to fix it. MAW was told that half of the Shore Road will be resurfaced out of this year's budget. Since this was not included Road's Reconstruction Programme for 2024/25, decided at the Environmental Development and Infrastructure Committee meeting on 21st March, the two Councillors present were asked to confirm this.

A large hole has been dug in the verge by the Ardgare turnoff which fills with water. It has been covered by two large metal plates which form a trip hazard. On the positive side, in response to a complaint by MAW, several large piles of wood from trees cut down and left lying for months were removed promptly.

HP has repeatedly reported a blocked drain directly outside Ardgare Lodge. This is of long standing. In the heavy rain in October last year, photographs of canoeists outside the lodge were published in the National Press. She asked that the engineers should visit on a wet day. This did not happen and on one of the

few dry days, this drain and the other drains on the Shore Road were declared clear.

In October last year, JCa reported that one of the two burns which run through her property is blocked. This was confirmed by camera from the shore, and because of the resulting flood at the bottom of the garden, 5 large trees have had to be removed. The water is draining into the sewage system and SEPA is involved. The water from this blockage flows onto the A814.

In a moderate to heavy rain there are many streams of water flowing onto the A814. A&B were sent an explanation of the three emanating from Blairvadach on 24th March, but there has been no action taken. From these, a dangerously deep pool of water collects near Aros Road, which could seriously damage cars driving on the road.

It is clear that these problems are related to problems at the top of the hill. The use of grills on the burns has mixed results; for instance, Chapel Burn has a large tractor tyre stuck in the grill, and the grill at the shore road level needs clearing. It was agreed that a review of the hydrology along the loch should be undertaken. The suggestion was made that road officials should be encouraged to take a guided walk around the area, including the top of the hill preferably on a wet day. It was suggested that Tim Henderson be involved.

The suggestion by JCa to map all the culverts was welcomed and the community will be made aware of this. A suitable mapping tool will be sort, ideally one that can merge with the existing system used by A&B.

Both Councillors advised that any problems of blocked drains should be reported, since the severity of an incident is judged by the number of complaints.

CllrMC said that he was aware of all these problems and he will investigate

c. INVASIVE SPECIES WEEK -MAY 20TH – 26TH

Invasive Species Week: May 20th - 26th. It was agreed that we try to map all outbreaks of JK in Rhu and Shandon and inform A&B. Attempts will be made to involve the community.

The information about this came from the [GB Non-Native Species Secretariat](#) and the [Animal & Plant Health Agency \(APHA\)](#)

Action JC

10. **CONSULTATIONS: DETAILS AND LINKS ARE ON OUR WEBSITE**
 - a. [the effectiveness of government consultation and engagement on environmental issues](#): Closing Date 26th May 2024

Scottish Environment LINK is seeking views from community groups on this.

11. **TREASURER'S REPORT** From SG

Closing Balance on last statement was £4937.74. There is one expenditure cheque of £23.87 outstanding.

12. **CORRESPONDENCE:**

The next Helensburgh and Lomond Community Planning Group is on 7th May. Agenda items by 24th April. FB has agreed to represent the Community Council on this committee. Julieann Small, the Secretary, will be informed. It was agreed to submit a paper on drainage and roads in Shandon.

Action JC

13. **COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS**

14. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**
NONE.

15. **MEMBER'S REPORTS:**

AB- submitted out of order at the end of Matters Arising

- The roundabout between Pier and Station Road will be resurfaced during this financial year.
- The kerbstones round the Village Green are a trip hazard, plus there is no disabled access to the Green for wheelchairs or Zimmers. Roads have said that this will be considered when Church Road is resurfaced during this financial year.

LF- submitted out of order at the end of Matters Arising.

LF advised attendees that as a resident, she would pursue the issue of remote footpath 333 as listed on A&B website. Although there are several flights of steps, it contributes to a quicker walking route from the upper sections of Station Road (Rhu) to the main road opposite Rhu Marina. Once again it has become neglected and slip and trip hazards are obvious. A request for a handrail two years ago fell on deaf ears/ or perhaps lack of funds.

This will be requested once again on the grounds of access for all.

LF will return to RSCC to seek support if there is no progress on this matter.

- Broken Pontoon. Large sections of a polystyrene and cement have been floating in the Gareloch. The Mod is aware of them and some have been left on beaches. One was by the Outdoor centre on the shore and a community minded individual wrestled it onto the sidewalk. There is one at the Ferry Road end of the Spit. I have asked A&B to remove them but they have not responded to my request. During the Beach Clean there were a large number of small pieces of polystyrene on the beach, so those that are on shore should be removed ASAP. It was agreed that we should try again.

- Blairvadach. We alerted A&B to the flooding problem associated with the removal of all vegetation from a hillside and the cutting down of many trees. The latter was justified by Planning. This flooding is still not under control.
- Lomond North will remain part of the Dumbarton constituency for the Scottish Parliamentary elections.
- PN e-mailed to say that the Base are organising a spring clean of the beaches on May 1st.

16. AOB: NONE

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is June 12th. This will follow on from the AGM which will start at 7pm. The meeting will take place in Rhu and Shandon Community Centre.

**The minutes of meetings are posted on the website
www.rhuandshandoncommunity.org**