

**Minute of the
Rhu and Shandon Community Council
11th December 2024
Location: Rhu and Shandon Parish Church**

IN ATTENDANCE:

RSCC:

GUESTS

John Mc Gall – Convenor	(JM)	Cdr Jon Fletcher MBE RN HMNB	(JF)
Jean Cook-Secretary	(JC)	Cllr Maurice Corry	(CllrMC)
Fiona Baker	(FB)	Philip Hartley	(PH)
Arnold Bretman	(AB)	Laura Freeland	(LF)
Allan David MacFadyen	(DM)	Shellie Montgomery	(SM)
David Lang	(DL))	Christopher Gardner	(CG)
Hilary Lancaster	(HL)	Anne Carswell	(AC)
Calum McNichol	(CMcN)	Kate Temple	(KT)
Rob Stuart	(RS)		
Nick Barton	(NB)		

1. APOLOGIES:

Received from Jeannette Loram, David Whitham, Cllr Mark Irvine, (CllrMI) Cllr Shonny Paterson.(CllrIP)

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None

3. GUEST REPORTS:

a: Report from Police Scotland.

This was provided by PC Kelly LeCore and is posted on the website. The total number of calls to the police was not recorded but five Crime Reports were issued; one for resisting arrest, two for threatening and abusive behaviour and one for assault. There was one Fixed penalty Notice for refusing to leave a licenced premises. There were two missing persons reports. The public is encouraged to publicise any suspicious circumstances either in person or anonymously via 0800 555 111 or Crimestoppers-uk.org online.

b: HMNB Clyde.

Following the collapse of MoD embankment on 24th November, the Deputy Head of Infrastructure(DHI) has issued full time contracts to make repairs to the embankment of the related Toe Ditches. In addition Clyde Coast Cutters have been instructed to clear the toe ditches on the hill behind Faslane and the rest of the ditches associated with the track of the old railway line, although there is no time scale for the latter.

The flooding in the wood below Aldonaig is not included.

Boundary documents of Aldonaig wood will be sent to JF with copies to Murdo McLeod, Jennifer and Karen Haggerty.

Traffic Management plans are underway in the long term to reduce the traffic using the A814, in favour of the use of the Haul Road.

In response to a question about the long term use of the vacant land by Woodlea Crescent, it was confirmed that this would be parking with the short term use by

contractors undertaking building work within Faslane.

JF confirmed that the breakwater would be repaired but this is not expected to happen soon.

Under consideration for the long term plans for travel to and from the base include a bus from Kilcreggan Ferry, a train station by the North Gate and possibly a ferry from Helensburgh Pier to the base.

In the medium term more parking is to be scoped for areas north of the base with access from the A817.

4. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 9TH OCTOBER 2024**

The minutes were accepted as a true record

Proposed by FB and seconded by HL.

Agreed unanimously.

5. **MATTERS ARISING FROM OCTOBER 9TH MEETING**

5a: from 6b: **CLEARING OF CYCLE PATH FROM AROS ROAD THROUGH WOODLAND.**

A thank-you note has been written to Brian Murdoch.

5b: from 6c: **BREAKWATER AT RHU SPIT:** This action is ongoing

5c: from 6d: **DEFIBRILLATOR SIGNS.** Roads and Infrastructure Argyll and Bute are being uncooperative about their siting despite the fact that their use has resulted 50 lives being saved in Lomond and Dumbarton. It was agreed to write to R&I supporting the requests made by Sheenah Nelson.

ACTION JC

5d: from 6e: **SHORT TERM PARKING AT BRAE SHOP.**

ONGOING-ACTION CLLRMC

5e: from 6f: **NOTICE BOARD:** We have received notification that we do not have to have Planning Permission. Our preferred Joiner has been asked for a price.

5f: from 7a: **23/02472/PP. BESS – Refused.** Decision Notice issued 28th October 2024

5g: from 8c: **LITTER BIN ON RHU SPIT.** Following our last request for a larger litter bin, we had a reply to say that the team leader had visited the site and the bin was an appropriate size. However several days later the bin was replaced by a larger one.

5h: from 8f: **BEACH CLEANS.** The final two beach cleans of the year took place on October 12th and November 9th. At the October meeting we were joined by a photographer from the Helensburgh Advertiser and in November we recovered a boat!

Once again we are very grateful to Clare Dickson for her organisational skills. We are taking a break now until Saturday February 8th. Post meeting note. Change

of date - the first Beach Clean of the New Year will be on February 22nd.

5i: from 11: Kanga Rhu has relocated to the Community Centre.

5j from 14: The PhD student's thesis is entitled "Meeting at the Crossroads: The intersection of local communities with Faslane and Coulport nuclear submarine bases". It was agreed that we advertise this in the Newsletter and invite interested residents to contact the student.

ACTION JC

END OF MATTERS ARISING

6. PLANNING MATTERS

No significant planning matters

7. OTHER MATTERS

7a: SPEED THROUGH RHU VILLAGE: Following a request to A&B for reduced speeds in Rhu, we received a reply including a map showing roads that are under consideration for reduced speeds. This was published in the Newsletter and on social media. The speeds in the village have concerned the parents and teachers at Rhu Primary for some time and CllrISP is advocating Average Speed Cameras (ASCs). The publication on social media of a video showing children on the sidewalk near Rhu Primary being passed by a double-decker bus demonstrates very clearly that the hazards on this road are wider than just the speed of vehicles, although the general agreement was that the current speed limit is ignored by many motorists, so ASCs would be useful. Solutions involving building new roads in conjunction with the proposed cycle path and erecting barriers on the edge of sidewalks to increase safety, but some of these were recognised as being long term, and the immediate problem is with us now.

In a wide ranging discussion, it was noted that there were other roads on Rhu which warranted a 20mph speed limit. It was also noted that the speeds on the A814 through Shandon poses a hazard as only two of the turnoffs between Aros Road and the Peace Camp have a turning lane.

The strength of feeling of the local residents who attended our meeting on this matter is in no doubt. Several suggestions were made on how this can best be conveyed to A&B.

The Scottish Government is committed to expand 20mph in Scotland, with an agreement that "all appropriate roads in built up areas will have a safer speed limit of 20mph by 2025."

Local authorities have been provided with an implementation guide and £14m to help roll out 20mph speed limits. The guide emphasises the importance of consulting with residents who will be affected by the changes. It was agreed to ask A&B when this consultation will take place.

ACTION JC

b. FORESTRY MATTERS AND RELATED ISSUES. Report by RS

Luss Estates Long-term Forest Plan (LTFP)

This is still at the pre-planning application stage with RDS Forestry(RDSF). It does not include any new woodland creation schemes such as Blairnairn. Scottish Forestry(SF) requested our comments on the proposed LTFP from Luss Estates South and our reply with a number of concerns was sent on Nov 1st. This has been uploaded onto the R&CC website. We have expressed particular concerns regarding the species selection and the use of chemicals within the water catchment area of Fruin Water.

Blairnairn / West Kilbride New Woodland Creation (NWC)

This NWC scheme is still at the pre-planning consideration stage. Ecology, bird and archaeology reports from the Agent, RDSF, have been received and uploaded to the R&CC website. The Peat Survey and detailed strategy for the use of chemicals during the establishment and maintenance of the NWC have been requested from RDSF. We have suggested that Loch Lomond Angling Association be included as a consultee. A more detailed response from the CC will be made once these have been received.

Helensburgh Reservoir 2 24/FGS/77699

This scheme was reviewed and felt to be of merit and reasonably well presented. No comment was deemed necessary.

Letrault and Stuckenduff New Woodland Scheme (NWC)

Ground preparation and planting has been completed. No further road construction has been undertaken. Assurances have been received from SF that they are satisfied that the assessment of peat depth was accurate and that all areas of deep peat have been identified and have not been planted upon. We have expressed concern and lodged evidence to the contrary.

Highlandman's Wood

SF have been contacted to inform them of the widespread issue of escapee Sitka Spruce. This is particularly significant in the riparian zones. Assurances have been received that the agents Scottish Woodlands will be made aware of their responsibilities to remove Sitka Spruce from areas outside of the plantation scheme. To date there is no evidence that any control of invasive Sitka has been undertaken. It was suggested that, if the trees are still there a year from now, we request that we be allowed to harvest the trees and sell them for Christmas trees. This will have the dual purpose of stopping any further damage to the environment and boosting our funds.

Timber Haulage Route through Rhu village

Alternative timber haulage route: There was some timber haulage carried out in the early part of this year limited to diseased larch which had to be removed by Government decree. The matter of trying to establish an alternative haulage route is still ongoing. It was agreed that JMcG will contact Adam McLean informally.

ACTION JMcG

C. CHRISTMAS EVENT

Despite the weather the event was declared a success

Help was received from the following:

- Tartan Harmony singers
- Leah Muir singer
- Val at The Toyshop for, supplying, wrapping and donating Santa's gifts.
- The Christmas Shop Helensburgh who supplied extra lighting.
- Co-oP who supplied sweets for the children.
- John Fraser from DCF Builders and Joiners Ltd for the fencing.
- The Anderson family for the generator
- Andy Broadbelt / Mark Stewart Beano Disco. Ultimately they donated their services.
- Staff at Rhu Inn for supplying hot soup and mulled wine.
- Fiona Spittal, for bringing her donkey.
- Members of Rhu and Shandon Church for supplying hot chocolate.
- .Red Cross for providing First Aid Cover.
- Alan Hier for assisting on the evening in a major role.
- Mirren and Milo from Rhu Primary School P7 for switching on the lights.
- MOD and staff for supplying and assisting in the erection of the tree.
- A&B Council personnel for attending on the day to erect the stage and for dismantling it again at the end of the evening.
- Kilcreggan Cafe Hog Roast van.
- All members of the R&SCC, their families and friends who helped set up, ensure that the event ran smoothly and dismantled at the end.

The following is a summary of the expenses and income associated with the night.

	Income.	Outgoing
Light up toys purchase.		£75.00
Sale of toys on the night.	£179.00	
Sale of left over toys.	£ 50.00	
Santa Visits.	£ 72.00	
Donation allocated from BoS	£40	
First Aid Cover.		£48.00
Council Stage / Sound syst.		£200.00
Total.	£341.00	£323.00
Profit / Loss.		£18.00

It was agreed that thank-you letters should be sent to all concerned.

As this event is classed as promoting the Community Council, the last two outgoings will not be set against the Christmas Fund.

Given the stage was purchased from the "Town Centre Improvement Fund" to support community events, the Community Council was disappointed that Argyll and Bute chose to charge as much as £200 for its hire.

ACTION AB AND JC

C. CULVERT ISSUES IN SHANDON.

Report by David Lang

- Ardchapel Burn – The collapse of the railway embankment led to significant flooding on the road on 24th November. Network Rail are working to clear the culvert on uphill side. See the report by JF in 3b.
- MOD Toe Ditch - still no update on the ownership from Commodore Malkin. A further collapse took place overnight on 6th/7th December. The blocking of the Toe ditch means that there is a significant flow of water down to the houses through railway embankment.
- Work has started on the blocked culvert/culverts at Blairvadach by George Morrison's team. There is still significant runoff onto the A814 after rain.
- Drains – There are still many blocked drains. It appears that most drain cleaning is reactive. There are many along the newly resurfaced slip road. It was agreed that we ask Roads and infrastructure to provide a schedule of the cleaning for Rhu and Shandon with dates. Given that Helensburgh and Lomond now has a dedicated drain cleaning vehicle, producing a schedule should be possible.

ACTION JC

- No update has been received on the Flood study being undertaken by R&IS. It was agreed that an update be requested from CllrMI

ACTION DL

- Information from SEPA was circulated and is posted on the [website](#).

Issues such as protection of properties from flooding and residents obligations will be discussed by the Culvert Group. This is ongoing.

e. LOCAL PLACE PLAN (LPP)- Report provided by FB

NB and FB have had two meetings to discuss the way forward on the Local Place Plan. Due to other commitments, progress is slow, but there is progress. They propose a community consultation event to be held in Rhu Community Hall, probably over two days in late February. This would involve questionnaires, white boards / flip charts and post it notes and probably a World Café approach. An on-line survey will also be required. We need to write formally to A&BC to say we have commenced the LPP process and also to our neighbouring CCs to advise them. Draft letter will be provided to the Secretary in due course. It is hoped to make further progress on organising the LPP consultation and format over the Christmas break.

ACTION FB&JC

h. CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP OF ARDENCONNELL WOODS.- Report by FB
Rhu and Shandon Community Trust(RSCT)

Once acceptance of the offer by the community to purchase Ardenconnel

Rhu and Shandon Community Council
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Wood was confirmed, a steering group of ten residents was formed following a community meeting on 9 October. The steering group has been meeting weekly and have drafted a constitution for a charity. An update on the progress of the steering group and the form of charity was provided at a public meeting on 26 November attended by 49 people. The community purchase and formation of the charity received support from 48 of those present. The charity application needs to be approved by the Office of the Scottish Charities Regulator. The application is to form a two tier Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) with asset transfer and community right to buy powers covering the whole R&S CC area. The proposed name, which requires approval, is Rhu and Shandon Community Trust. This is a membership based charity - i.e. the members decide what is done rather than a small board - which must have 20 members and will have a board of Trustees to be elected every year at the AGM. There are 7 Trustees and the option to co-opt up to 3 more. Consideration was given to having a member of RSCC as a fixed member of the Board of Trustees, however, it is possible to co-opt a member of R&SCC to represent the R&SCC on the Board. The steering group are of the view that it would be advantageous to have a representative of R&SCC on the board so that the new charity and the CC are in clear communication and supporting each other's efforts. Any member of the board needs to abide by the rules and guidance for charity Trustees as proscribed by OSCR and the Charities Act.

R&SCC agreed to have a co-opted Trustee on the board of the proposed RSCT. Proposed FB seconded JM, agreed unanimously.

9. TREASURER'S REPORT: David Lang

The Treasurer has arranged that we move to on-line banking. Due to the delay encountered, the bank has credited the account with £40 in compensation. This has been allocated to the Christmas Lights fund. There are still many items pending from the Christmas event. These items have been excluded until they are formalised. The only amount shown in the accounts was the £40 mentioned above leaving .

General Account £4717.93, Christmas Lights Fund £172.81. Bank Total = £4890.74

10. CORRESPONDENCE

- Reminder that as members of the Community Council there are many OU courses that are free. Details have been circulated.
- The National Centre for Resilience (NCR) Community Council Fund FY 2025/26. Open to: Scottish Community Councils. Grant Amount: £500.

Application Deadline: 31st January 2025

- Argyll and Bute Customer Service Questionnaire: Closes 20th December. Details on website.

- The Church is applying for a grant from Historic Environment Scotland to help in the restoration of the Tower. It was agreed that we would write a supporting letter, pointing out the many community activities sponsored by the church.

ACTION JC

- The National Centre for Resilience (NCR) is dedicated to building resilient communities across Scotland. Through this funding initiative, the NCR aims to support Scottish Community Councils by providing funding to develop local resilience plans that address potential natural hazards such as heavy snow, landslides, high winds, and other disruptive events and subsequently enhance their local community preparedness and response to natural hazards. It was agreed that DL would apply.

ACTION DL

- Phone call this afternoon regarding Earth Watch and the Great Water Blitz held in September. Twice as many people and sites were involved than in June. The detailed report is on the website. Scotland came out very well. Only 29% of sites were rated poor compared with 61% in the UK as a whole. Earth Watch hope to scale the operation, with Blitzs again in April and September. They asked for a donation of £5 per month. Since it is not appropriate for the CC to donate, we agreed to advertise this in the next Newsletter, and allow people in the community to contribute if they see fit.

ACTION JC

11. COUNCILLORS REPORTS

Cllr ISP

CllrISP has been lobbying on the speed issue behalf of Rhu Primary and has brought it to the attention of the authorities and the police. He has seen the video referred to in 7a and has passed it onto the police. He is a firm believer in Average Speed Cameras(ASCs). If he can get approval for these, it will take some time to get them installed. Meantime he has asked Sergeant McNee if officers could be placed outside schools with speed detection equipment, when pupils are arriving in the morning and departing in the afternoon. He recognises that resources are stretched but Sergeant McNee said these are quiet time for officers, and the latter has said that he will see what can be done. The police have been monitoring outside Arrochar and Tarbet primary in recent weeks and CllrISP thinks that Rhu should be on the priority list.

CllrISP says that ASCs are instrumental in reducing Road traffic collisions(RTCs). He would like to see them installed in our towns and villages. He pointed out that since they were installed in Old Dalkeith Road Edinburgh, there has been a dramatic reduction in incidents of speeding and RTCs.

He is looking into seeing how feasible it would be to get them installed, particularly near schools. He is focusing on Arrochar and Rhu.

CllrMC:

CllrMC provided a brief update on the Helensburgh Pier Company which now has charitable status and the support of the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee who approved the leasing of the Pier to the company. He is hopeful that the Waverley will be able to use the pier later this year.

He noted that the proposed Visitor Levy is meeting resistance from the hospitality industry. The Scottish Government legislation allows local authorities to introduce a charge for overnight stays in hotels and other short term accommodations. A&B will decide on 20th December whether to approve a three month consultation exercise to run from January to March.

There will be a budget gap in even in the best case scenario, however the reserve fund is good health.

12.PUBLIC QUESTIONS : None

13.MEMBERS REPORTS:

From Fiona Baker: **Community Planning Group(CPG)**

I continue to attend the CPG meetings representing RSCC (and also Destination Helensburgh). Sarah Davies, Secretary of Helensburgh CC is now the Chair and the meetings are becoming more focussed and useful. I am part of a short life working group on Community Wealth Building, which is exploring options for increasing the circular economy and retaining and building wealth in the community throughout H&L. As a member of the CPG I give a short update on activities and concerns in RSCC – e.g. flooding issues, speed limits etc. The agenda and minutes of the CPG meetings are circulated by the RSCC Secretary. Any particular matters which the CC wish to be raised should be notified to me in advance

14. AOB: None

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

This is scheduled for Wednesday February 12th. Kanga Rhu are likely to be still using the McColl Room. The main hall is free on Tuesday or Thursday or we could meet again in the Church Hall. It was agreed that we will meet in the Church Hall.

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