Cumbrae Community Council

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 24 September 2026

Attendance included : Gregor Harvie (Adviser CCC**), Cllr Tom Marshall , Duncan Fraser CCC (FSC), Lorraine Fraser (Cumbrae Forum), Diane Smith** (Walking Orchard), **Angus Campbell** CCC

Meeting Chair: Angus Campbell.

Apologies: Alex Harvie (Chair CCC), Graham Wallace (Adviser CCC), Scott Watson (Carbon Neutral Islands), Jan Wilkie CCDC, No North Ayrshire Council officer present.

Meeting recorded: https://youtu.be/UrJgWkBnG8s

Quick updates – organizations

Police

- No Police Scotland representative present; no report.

IOCTA

- All information on the busy September weekend is available on the posters, leaflets and webpages.

CCDC / Garrison House

- Millport Pride held the first-ever event around Garrison House on Sat 12 Sept – well attended.
- Emergency Services Day on Sun 13 Sept well attended, with all island emergency services represented plus mainland organizations including RNLI and several other voluntary rescues services.
- New exhibition open until end of October. Craft fair Sat 26 Sept.
- Garrison House: all window frames now painted. Next phase of work to commence 5th October.
- EOI submitted to North Ayrshire; invited to apply for stage one funding for a feasibility study on the DA Hall / old dance hall area. Stage one application submitted in September.
- CCDC awarded Scottish Land Fund funding for two surveys for West Lodge. Cllr Alan Hill and Jan meeting CEO and Executive Director of Cunnigham Housing Association Thu 1 Oct.
- Fintry Bay Pit Stop toilet block reopens Sat 3 October.

Cumbrae Forum

- Weekly Lunch Club restarted last Wednesday – over 70 attended. £40,000 National Lottery grant received over two years (£20,000 p.a.) to support the Lunch Club.
- Dementia Café launches Fri 2 Oct, 2–4pm, Cumbrae Parish Church.

Cumbrae Primary School

- No Primary school representative present; no report

Field Studies Centre

- Busy month for university visits: Liverpool, Cork and Queen Mary (London) made their annual visit – over 200 students, staying on average a week.
- Five schools brought over 150 pupils for geography and marine biology projects – conditions challenging but “character building”.

Ferry Users Group

- June and August carrying figures down 6-7% on previous years, reflecting summer timetable restrictions; July up due to better weather but still below pre-COVID levels.
- Winter timetable 2026/27: CalMac not willing to support the 5-minute turnaround. Hybrid agreed: more frequent sailings in the morning and late afternoon, 10-minute turnaround for the rest of the day; refuelling break moved to mid-

afternoon to help people get off the island around **9am.** Not what was wanted, but some engagement achieved. Timetable to be published. Public Meeting scheduled for 1st October and FUG to publicize.

- Meeting with Cabinet Secretary for Transport (Stephen Flynn MSP) along with constituency MSP Kenneth Gibson still to take place in late September – concerns over CalMac's engagement and consultation with communities on service changes and compliance with the Islands Act.
- ICIA: CCC challenged the lack of an Island Communities Impact Assessment for the 25% reduction in peak capacity. CalMac's internal review upheld its decision, stating the proposals were not of a nature or scale to meet the threshold of a significantly different effect on island communities. Winter timetable reductions also challenged.
- Gregor Harvie noted the outcome was unsatisfactory – CalMac in effect reviews its own decision. Options: raise at the Cabinet Secretary meeting, approach the Scottish Government Islands team on interpretation of the legislation, or judicial review (potentially costly).
- Slipway: George Leslie progressing new slipway/deck. Traffic management to be removed Fri–Mon for the September weekend. New slipway and marshalling area expected to be handed over in January after the winter break; between January and end of next summer (c. 9 months) old slip removed and terminal building constructed to the north of the new slip by another contractor. Public meeting on next steps expected towards end of the year.
- FUG has asked NAC whether land used by George Leslie could be used to expand the car park once works complete; Cllr Collier has passed this to officials.

Action: Raise ICIA/Islands Act concerns at meeting with Cabinet Secretary for Transport; consider approach to Scottish Government Islands team.

Little Cumbrae

- No representative present; no report

Dun Creag Shores

- No representative present; no report

Quick updates – key island projects

- Place Plan (Gregor Harvie): new project, with Scott Watson, on properties in the conservation area – identifying cost-effective ways to reduce energy use and improve comfort where solar, external/internal wall insulation and heat pumps are restricted. Will look at solutions for different property types, barriers to adoption and funding, avoiding unintended consequences (damp, mould, poor ventilation). At scoping stage – anyone with interest or expertise asked to contact Gregor.
- Carbon Neutral Islands (report read on Scott's behalf by Diane Smith): installer appointed for next phase of Millport solar PV/battery project; £144,000 secured for 17 households; installs expected by end of year. Continued engagement on the "Cumbrae Model" white paper, incl. several Scottish universities; Scott invited to speak at Community Energy Scotland national conference in October. Solar car park (DA Hall/old ballroom site): talks with NAC ongoing, no progress yet. Conservation area retrofit proposal being developed with CCC (see Place Plan). Swedish delegation visiting end of month via Scottish Government exchange. Knotweed treatment undertaken by NAC – thanks to Andrew Joyce; similar projects underway on Raasay and Islay and we are liaising with them on the effectiveness of progress and treatment.
- Japanese knotweed discussion: Gregor Harvie reported many long-known large stands do not appear to have been sprayed – a recurring pattern where NAC cites lack of equipment (boom length) and treatment is deferred to the following year. Cllr Marshall advised stem injection with glyphosate is far more effective than spraying. Cllr Murdoch noted the contractor used by Amey on the A78 (Largs–Skelmorlie) had been effective and will ask NAC who it was; if in-house treatment is not effective a contractor should be brought in.
    - **Action:** Chair asked for a review of NAC's approach. Cllr Murdoch to ask NAC who Amey's knotweed contractor was and request a review of NAC's treatment, mapping and tracking approach. Gregor Harvie/Diane to liaise with Scott on what was sprayed.

- Walking Orchard: feasibility fieldwork almost complete – assessing shelter, aspect, existing vegetation and invasive species; findings being compiled into an interactive map. Team roles: Jack (geology/ground conditions), Fiona (suitable fruit tree varieties), Jack and Fiona (environmental conditions), Hayley and Diane (landownership, project plan). Aim is a wide variety incl. heritage varieties. Several possible sites identified, subject to assessment and permissions; knotweed near some sites may limit options. Three sign makers approached. Questionnaire display at Garrison: all feedback positive (5 verbal, 8 written); visit to Lunch Club next Wednesday planned. School and youth organisations have offered help. Full update next month with finished map, species list and funding plan.
- Town Hall: No Update.
- Marina: Graham Wallace sent apologies. Meeting tomorrow between NAC and the five North Coast & Cumbrae ward councillors, arranged at Cllr Marshall's request – project has been on the drawing board ~6 years; with flood defences fixed there is no reason not to proceed. Cllr Murdoch stated elected members, highly involved at the outset, should not have had to ask to be included. Tourism forum (chaired by Cllr Marshall) also meeting tomorrow. Gregor Harvie asked councillors to press NAC to publish a programme from now to completion, given the £9m funding is time-limited; Cllr Marshall agreed, still to be spent. Cllr Murdoch noted the proposed merger of the three Ayrshire councils could also affect this.
    - **Action** : Councilors to press NAC to publish a timeline project program for the marina development to confirm how the investment will be spent in a timely manner whilst funds are available
- Cathedral: no update.

Planning and licensing

- 38 Marine Parade: application to remove two trees (believed diseased).
- West Bay Sewage Pumping kiosk: retrospective application, as kiosk not sited where permission was granted.
- Pier Hotel beer garden and conservatory: application withdrawn following objections from the Community Council, NAC Roads and NAC Flooding; may return in a different form.

North Ayrshire Council update

- No NAC officer present; no update.

Councillors' update

- Cllr Marshall: Edinburgh has agreed a visitor levy and other large authorities are following; NAC has decided to hold off for now. Cllr Marshall opposes a levy as it would add 5% to the cost of staying, particularly on the islands.
- Cllr Marshall: as budget preparation begins, concern about second homes council tax – councils previously limited to a 100% premium, but the Scottish Government has removed that cap (200–300% possible). The Conservative group will oppose any increase; Cllr Marshall will ask for investigation of the effect of the existing 100% premium.
- Cllr Murdoch: concerns over the proposed merger of the three Ayrshire councils and its effect on the ward and islands. Only political group leaders were invited to the Scottish Government meeting held the day before full council – NAC independents were not invited or consulted (East Ayrshire likewise; South Ayrshire independents attended as a group). Local press coverage did not reflect what happened at the meeting.
- Cllr Murdoch : at Planning Committee the latest stage of LDP3 and the Clyde Marine Plan were adopted – questioned how three councils' LDPs and policies could be merged in three months. Urged everyone to keep an eye on the merger as it will have a major impact.

AOB

- Residents concerned about vehicle speeds entering/leaving St Beya Gardens from Copeland Crescent, with more children now playing in the area. Cllr Murdoch: enforcement is a police matter, traffic calming is NAC – requests for speed bumps are usually unsuccessful but he will raise it; suggested highlighting it on social media and in the local paper.
- Around 10 potholes along Ninian Street beside the park, now very difficult to drive. Cllr Murdoch will look at them when on the island on Saturday for the fireworks.

- Pensioner unable to get a wasp nest removed at top of Ferry Road (private property). Advised to book via NAC contact centre on 01294 310000 (chargeable, c. £60).
- Scheme of Establishment for Community Councils – concern that it gives officers more control. Cllr Murdoch confirmed that it was approved at a special meeting after last week's full council; consultation now finished.

Action: Cllr Murdoch to raise St Beya Gardens traffic calming and Ninian Street potholes with NAC.

Next meeting

Thursday 29 October, 6–7pm

Action summary	**Lead**
Raise ICIA/Islands Act concerns with Cabinet Secretary for Transport; consider approach to SG Islands team.	Ferry Users Group
Publicize winter timetable public meeting for 1st Oct for 2026/27.	Ferry Users Group
Ask NAC who Amey's knotweed contractor was; request review of knotweed treatment, mapping and tracking.	Cllr Murdoch
Liaise with Scott on which knotweed sites have been sprayed.	Diane / Gregor Harvie
Press NAC for a published marina delivery programme before funding deadline.	Cllr Marshall / Cllr Murdoch
Ask for investigation of effect of existing second homes council tax premium.	Cllr Marshall
Raise St Beya Gardens / Copeland Crescent traffic calming with NAC.	Cllr Murdoch
Inspect Ninian Street potholes.	Cllr Murdoch
Contact anyone interested in conservation area retrofit project.	Gregor Harvie
Walking Orchard: full update with map, species list and funding plan.	Walking Orchard team