

Flotsam and Jetsam

September 2012

Welcome to the Argyll and Bute Beach Forum quarterly e-bulletin. The Argyll and Bute Beach Forum is a project run by The GRAB Trust (as part of our Beaches and Marine Litter Project). Our main aim is to raise awareness of the impacts of and reduce beach and marine litter and to support communities to take action by cleaning beaches.

We hope you will find our e-bulletin interesting. The bulletin is also available by post and on our website. Your contributions are always welcome. We want to make this bulletin as useful as possible. Tell us what you would like to see in the bulletin, it is your bulletin!



MCS annual Beachwatch Weekend, 15th & 16th September

The marine litter surveys carried out this weekend help MCS to produce an annual summary report on the litter found on our beaches. For more information and to check a beach clean near you visit

[www.mcsuk.org.what we do](http://www.mcsuk.org.what_we_do) You can also contact your local beach rangers (contact details at the end of the bulletin) for more information.

Big Green Weekend (6th & 7th October 2012) |

It is organised by the charity CSV (Community Service Volunteers) and other partners and focuses on improving the local environment. It is giving out grants of £250 that can be used for tools, materials and volunteers expenses. Activities such as cleaning up your local beach will qualify. For more information, to register and to apply for the grant visit www.actionearth.csv.org.uk, the deadline is Friday 7th September.

Sam Loves the Sea

The GRAB Trust has developed a storybook called "Sam Loves the Sea", on marine litter. A baby seal called Sam will tell preschool children about the place where she lives and how marine litter is hurting her friends. There will be opportunities for children to touch shells and other beach objects, to use a litter picker, to sing a song and to discuss what they can do to reduce marine litter. They are hoping to take the resource to nurseries this autumn-winter. For more information please contact aisa.nebreda@argyll-bute.gov.uk



News from Islay

Re-JIG's Beach Ranger at the Islay Show

The Islay and Jura Agricultural Show is held on Islay each August and each year Re-JIG (Recycle Jura/Islay Group), has a marquee with display boards and activities. This year, Re-JIG's Beach Ranger, Polly Mather, created an activity for children on the theme of marine pollution. Along side a beach litter display showing all the work done on Islay and Jura with the schools and local community groups, a large fishing net was hung up and children were to make creatures out of recycled card, paper and other materials. The theme was 'What we want in our Seas'. At the bottom of the net was a sign saying 'What we don't want in our Seas', with a box full of the usual beach litter. The show was very busy this year, partly due to the fine sunny weather, so plenty of children came and took part.



The end product was a display of beautiful sea creatures, from mermaids to jelly fish. While the children worked, the grown ups were able to take in the display and find out about Re-JIG's work and their Beach Project.

RSPB Donation: The RSPB on Islay kindly donated to the Re-JIG Beach Project a large inflatable turtle (about 5ft long). Although primarily a beach toy, this turtle can be used for educational purposes too. As many of us know, many marine turtles are in decline because of man's activities. Thousands of turtles drown needlessly after getting entangled in fishing gear, and marine litter/pollution claim many of their lives. Leatherback turtles, in particular, ingest marine litter, such as plastic bags and balloons, probably mistaking them for jellyfish. Litter can block the gut, which will lead to death by starvation.



Beach Cleaning News from Islay

I've done a lot of beach cleaning on a stretch of sandy coastline about 8 miles long called the Big Strand, which attracts a lot of rubbish. Mainly, I seem to be picking up rubbish from fishing boats, like creels, blue gloves, net pieces, pot noodles, margarine tubs, milk cartons and juice bottles. I tried to highlight this issue in our local paper, The Ileaf, by writing a letter, hoping I would get a response from local fishermen. I also wrote about the amazing work done by the Fishing for Litter initiative (www.fishingforlitter.org), whereby fishermen are encouraged to collect litter caught in their nets and drop off waste at their harbours or ports. I wanted our local fishermen to let us know how we can support them to dispose of their rubbish conscientiously. However, no response has ever come of it. If anyone has any ideas, please let me know.

Whilst cleaning along a different stretch of coast, I came across a familiar sight of a bundle of fishing rope, creels, floats and net all tangled up together. This is quite a common find and it is hard work dragging it all into my trailer. This time, however, there was a sheep caught in it. It was still alive but quite tired and distressed. It had small horns which it had managed to get caught up in the net and was thrashing around trying to get out, but to no avail. I managed to cut it free, by holding the sheep still between my knees and cutting away at the net around its horns. Once free, it ran off to join the rest of the flock. Yet another example of beach litter causing damage to animals. For further information on any of the above, please contact Polly Mather at re-jig@btconnect.com.



News from Beachwatch Bute

Spruced-up Tractor Box: We were overwhelmed by the kindness of local company, Ardmaleish Boatyard, recently when they offered to have a look at our tractor box to see if it could be fixed. It was in a terrible state due to age and the effects of the weather and we did not hold out much hope for it. We were amazed at the fantastic job they did on it. The floor was replaced and it was cleaned up and re-painted with a non-rusting coating. We are grateful for such tremendous support.



KSB Visit Bute: The judges from 'Beautiful Scotland' visited Rothesay recently and met with Beachwatch Bute Beachranger, Sandra MacMillan and heard all about the work that they do. We have been very successful in recent years and look forward to mid September to find out how we have done.

Fingers crossed!!

KSB Green Awards: Our Beachranger, Sandra MacMillan (me!) won 4th place in the recent national competition. Chairman of Keep Scotland Beautiful, Derek Robertson, spoke very highly about the work that the Charity does on the island.

The Glenburn Hotel: The Glenburn Hotel continue to give us great support. Recently, we had a bag pack to raise funds and the staff all turned out to help. We raised £715 for the Charity, woo hoo!!!

Facebook: We are reaching over 300 people now on our page. Lots of interesting articles and photos!! Come and visit us, we hope you 'like'!!



Resources

For a list of useful resources and publications please see our Beaches pages on our website www.grab.org.uk

Beach cleans

Inveraray: Sat 15th Sept, meet at recycling point in Avenue Car park, 2pm

Bute: Contact Sandra MacMillan below

Islay: Contact Polly Mather below

Re-Jig Beach Ranger

Polly Mather—Islay

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Beachwatch Bute Beach Ranger

Sandra MacMillan—Bute

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List of acronyms used in the bulletin:

KSB: Keep Scotland Beautiful

SAMS: Scottish Association for Marine Science

HWDT: Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust

SNH: Scottish Natural Heritage

FoCF: Firth of Clyde Forum

MCS: Marine Conservation Society

SEPA: Scottish Environmental Protection Agency

TEAR: Tiree Environmental Action and Recycling

Disclaimer

Thanks for reading. Please note that all views expressed are not necessarily the views of the GRAB Trust or the Argyll and Bute Beach Forum. We hope that you have enjoyed our e-bulletin. We would like to hear from you and would appreciate any comments you may have about it.

The Argyll and Bute Beach Forum is funded by the following Organisations:

