

Report Nov 2022 CPP Helensburgh and Lomond Area
Plastic Free Helensburgh an Accredited Plastic Free Town.

We continue to work with Surfers Against Sewage and to promote climate friendly initiatives and our Local Business Champions and Community Allies on our face book pages

<https://www.facebook.com/PlasticFreeHelensburgh>

Helensburgh Litter Pickers

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/729373511080067>

Climate Emergency Training

Many thanks to A&B for arranging this, TfC for encouraging them and to all Councillors attending this. We sincerely hope all councillors attend and that this training is extended to officers and employees across all A&B departments.

Top Up Tap

Many thanks to Scottish Water, hopefully this will appear shortly near the start of the John Muir Way. Please note the tap is programmed to run continuously for around 10 minutes a day to self cleanse.

Events

Reducing Bills and Mitigating Climate Change

CardrossCan Warm Homes Event

<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=162698516376974&set=a.158157910164368>

Are you worried about paying bills this winter? Unsure what renewable options are suitable for your home? Would you like to find out more about how to save money or reduce your environmental footprint?

Cardross CAN in association with Home Energy Scotland would like to invite everyone to our Cardross Warm Homes Event.

Saturday 12th November 12pm-4pm. Drop in anytime and everyone is welcome. Lifts available upon request for those unable to access the event.

Further details regarding our programme of talks/stands will be published closer to the time.

Please feel free to spread the word to friends and family who may otherwise miss this event.

If you are wondering about heat pumps, solar panels, battery storage,

CMS Surveyors

Smart Group

Cleaner EV

will be available to chat about your own home, and which renewable technology would suit best

Take-a-Ways and Single Use Ban

Our surveying finds local businesses embracing the change. Supplies are more readily available and 'Scotland's single-use plastic ban will be exempt from the UK Internal Market Act from 12 August 2022, allowing the ban to be fully effective'.

There remains a lack of facility to dispose of eco-ware type products for full composting.

Talking Rubbish

Plastic Free Helensburgh is about reducing all rubbish and suitable disposal.

We await an outcome from our survey submissions and meetings with Corporate Services on the agreed need for better bins in the public realm in Helensburgh and note that the large bins on the pier site are really good, even although the post holes are tip-toe height for youngsters.

Again partnering HCC, we are surveying the proliferation of bins serving businesses in the town, congesting pavements and cycle racks. There are multiple private refuse firms and multiple bins per business for separated waste, placed either permanently or overnight for collection.

In our opinion, this is contrary to planning objectives, spoiling and failing to support the vitality and viability of our established town centres.

Rubbish is Costing Us All

Rubbish going to landfill is taxed, partially this is as an incentive to recycle better to just refuse and reduce.

The long running case between Revenue Scotland and BARR, who run the landfill facility at Alexandria, serving H&L highlights just how much rubbish is costing people and the planet.

Beach Clearing and Marine Debris

The last of the seasons beach cleans with HCC is Saturday 31 October.

During the summer period the beaches were thick with fine green Ulva algae, this discouraged the use of the beaches by visitors and townspeople. However, lighter wind conditions meant that in-bourn litter levels were reduced.

The September storms, have again brought large quantities of litter strewn kelp and wrack and large timbers and leaves onto our beaches, burying the summer layers of Ulva.

Once more seaweed washed onto the Proms bears a high percentage of old light plastics and small pieces.

Based on our previous observation, we predict that debris will continue to pile in over the winter period. We intend to continue with storm cleans in the coming months.

Currently the slippery seaweed is up to a metre deep and picking plastic and other debris from the beach is hazardous. Despite this two to three dozen people regularly turn out to PFH picks and many residents also remove litter on their daily walks.

Retaining this community cohesion and pride in the town is endangered by the lack of external resource to dispose of the very large quantities driven into the town beaches over the winter.

We strongly feel that we can rally a community response to gather storm debris on a large scale but there needs to be a comprehensive plan for disposal and removal. It is discouraging to see plastics and other debris washing in and floating back out in a continuous cycle and washing to sea is unacceptable as the remedy for disposal.

Along with HCC we are grateful that A&B Council provide a skip to help with the spring clean but disappointed that the provision is far outstripped by the quantity of debris built up over the winter and lack of end of season skip provision and again wish to express gratitude to Heron bros for providing three additional skips to remove the spring pile. The remainder stands proud next to the sea wall, happily growing a covering in tomato plants sprouted from sewage outflow.

As the lee shore for most storm conditions we see the build up of marine debris as a long term problem and seek solutions. This also chimes with the paragraph above on landfill, tax and in this case common good. Our marine debris is too contaminated to use as fertilizer, contains salts, sulphur and other chemicals that corrode incinerator plants and leaches climate warming methane as it rots in landfill. Once the biodegradable to landfill tax comes in, it seems that there is no where to go except plastics polluting the sea.

Anchor Group Status

<https://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/upstream-battle/inspiring-action/anchor-groups-clyde/Upstream Battle | Keep Scotland Beautiful>

<https://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org> > upstream-battle

Instigated by Keep Scotland Beautiful, Upstream Battle Clyde is an alliance, supported by all of the Local Authorities in the Clyde Basin from Inverclyde to West Dunbartonshire, bar Argyll. The mission is to change littering behaviour and prevent marine litter at source.

In recognition of the work we do and our strategic position in the upper estuary where much of the litter gathers, PFH have been invited to become an Anchor Group.

We are looking forward to strengthening the alliances made with groups from all of the local authorities keeping the Clyde and its tributaries clear of litter and monitoring the flow down-stream, up-stream, across the river and trapped circulating in the upper estuary on our door step.

Other Activities and Events

We have met with the SCANN Climate Hub coordinator and look forward to further cooperation and action.

Steering group members joined the GRAB Trust, 'sew your own pad', period workshop.

During the climate Fringe Week, we had an interesting morning at Helensburgh COOP, helping promote their soft plastic recycling bins and other measures reducing plastic, both on the floor and importantly further back in the supply and distribution chain.

The main take away from this, is that, while many people are committed and a lot are interested, there is a long way to go to change habits to thinking of the waste cycle and climate change as a priority in busy stressful lives. The description of "a hard crowd" was apt.

Spirits were lifted the following day as one of the stalls at Time for Change Argyll and Bute, Land and Sea event in Lochgilphead. Inspirational speakers and displays of the great work going on in Argyll. There was interest from other areas in setting up Plastic Free Communities and opportunity to learn and share experiences.

<https://timeforchangeargyllandbute.org/land-and-sea-event-goes-swimmingly/>

It was great to see our friends in Cardross there and hear more about their seagrass monitoring project.