

Double success brings new marina at Corpach closer to fruition

The Scottish Government has announced this week that the Highland Council has been awarded a £1,465,000 Regeneration Capital Grant Fund grant for a new marina on Loch Linnhe at the entrance to the Caledonian Canal at Corpach. The grant is awarded to the Highland Council on behalf of the Caol Regeneration Company, who are developing the Thomas Telford Corpach Marina as a community project.

This follows the recent success on the 26th of January when Thomas Telford Corpach Marina secured the Marine Licences for the dredging and construction works necessary to construct the new marina.

The project will deliver a high quality and sustainable all-year round marina facility at the Western gateway to the Caledonian Canal, including:

- 40 yacht berths
- comprehensive marina services and facilities such as fuel bunkering, waste disposal, laundry, toilets and showers,
- a public slipway,
- 40 car and trailer parking spaces, and
- a café/shop/visitor centre.

The aims of the project are to stimulate regeneration within the communities of Caol and Corpach, neighbouring Fort William, and the wider Lochaber area, and generate significant economic and social benefits.

The marina will be owned by the community, through the Caol Regeneration Company, a registered charity, and will be run as a community enterprise, with other 3rd sector organisations operating the café/shop/visitor centre and providing some of the marina services.

Planning permission is already in place, Caol Regeneration Company, and their project managers Northern Light Consulting will now focus on raising the remaining £1m to £1.5m in funding needed to make the project a reality and starting the procurement process for the contractors to deliver the project.

Thomas Telford Corpach Marina chairman Andy McKenna said:

“I am delighted with this fantastic news – we have a real project at last. This new marina, slipway and café/visitor centre will bring real benefits to our local area including jobs and increased visitor spending, and opportunities for local people to take part in healthy outdoor water-based sports and activities. The marina will also enhance Fort William’s reputation as the Outdoor Capital of the UK by providing excellent access to the water with its sheltered slipway, and quality marina berths for visitors arriving by boat to holiday in the Fort William area.”

Caol Regeneration Company chairman Donnie Corbett said:

“We have been trying to get this project off the ground for nearly 10 years and it’s great to think that we could see boats in the water early next year. We’ve got a lot of hard work ahead of us to raise the remaining funds to make sure that happens, but I’m sure the marina will be a great asset for the local community and a fitting legacy for the late Dr Su Sen who played such an important part in making it a reality.”

Caol and Mallaig Councillor and Chair of The Highland Council's Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee, Councillor Allan Henderson wishes the group the very best with their plans. He said:

"It is terrific news to get confirmation that this funding is in place and credit must go to everyone involved in securing the money. I look forward to seeing work on this exciting project get underway. It's going to certainly breathe new life into this area and will make a very positive contribution to the local community and to the whole of Lochaber."

Working in partnership with Highland Council, Scottish Canals and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, the project is expected to start on site this summer and will be complete in the spring of 2019. The total project budget is just under £3.0m. With the Big Lottery Coastal Communities fund closed in Scotland for the foreseeable future the project team will have to rely more heavily on existing partners and other sources to meet the challenge of raising the remaining funds.

Notes:

The Thomas Telford Corpach Marina is a community project run by the Caol Regeneration Company.

The Caol Regeneration Company (CRC) is a charitable company, limited by guarantee, which was formed in 2008 to contribute to the social and economic regeneration of the Caol area. Its main objectives are to promote urban or rural regeneration in areas of social and economic deprivation (in particular in the Caol ward of Highland Council). This will be achieved through:

- the advancement of training and education among unemployed people,
- the maintenance or improvement of public facilities and
- the protection or conservation of the environment.

Previous projects have included beach clean-ups, improvements to green spaces and footpaths - mainly through voluntary involvement and the use of contractors.

Northern Light Consulting Ltd are a Highland company formed in 2013 and now based in Fort William who provide business and project management services to construction, engineering, aquaculture and food production businesses in the Highlands and Argyll.

For more information:

Full details about this project can be found at <http://www.corpachmarina.co.uk>

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