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To manage moorings within Argyll and Bute Council Harbour Authority areas a licensing system is in operation. A properly licensed and consented mooring provides security of tenure for boat owners while protecting the interests of other marine users.

Navigation in coastal waters is a public right, including casting an anchor while in the course of navigation. The laying of a permanent mooring or other equipment to hold a vessel, however, is not part of the public right and requires Crown Estate consent.

There are three types of Crown Estate Scotland mooring licence:

, suitable for private individuals.

, for those operating a business utilising the mooring(s), such as ferry operators, boatyards, charter boats and diving vessels.

once established, a Mooring Association is given a lease for an area of seabed enabling it to manage the moorings in their specific area. The advantage of being part of a Mooring Association is that the annual charge is half the standard charge per mooring for groups of ten or more.

Although a mooring licence from Crown Estate Scotland runs indefinitely (provided the annual fee payment is made) the licence holder or Crown Estate Scotland can bring it to an end at any time by giving the relevant notice of termination, as will be set out in the Mooring Licence.

As well as the licence from Crown Estate Scotland, applicants will need to apply for statutory navigation consent from the Harbour Authority Harbour Master. The purpose of the navigation consent is to ensure that installing the mooring(s) will not constitute a hazard to navigation.

Argyll and Bute Council as Harbour Authority:

- a) Will not take the role currently carried out by Crown Estates who are and will remain the owners and managers of the seabed in Argyll and Bute Council Harbour Authority

e) Any new mooring applications made to Crown Estates will be granted consent so long as there are no objections or conflict to safe navigation for harbour users. The Harbour Authority may charge for the administration of new mooring applications in the future.

*Note: Argyll and Bute Council fees and charges are set annually by the Council.*

f) Conflicts of interest and objections can be raised, discussed and mediated through the stakeholder user's forum and the Harbour Master.

Kirsty Flanagan

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