

Loch Tay Association
Meeting of Monday 21st September 2026 @ 6pm
Comrades Hut, Acharn

Present: Steve Thomas, William Lindsay, Billy Duff, Daniel Howie, Peter Ely, Robin Menzies, Adam Harrison, Donald Riddell, Mairi McAdam, Graham Milroy, Jenny Robertson and Wilma Harrison.

1. Apologies: Bill Oppenheim and Andy Aitken
2. Previous Minutes – Propose to accept PE. Approved by those present.
3. Update on water testing: The following extract is from KDCC Minutes of 13th Aug:

Lengthy discussion took place following recent water sampling undertaken by Loch Tay Association. The discussion questioned whether the samples taken by LTA were taken in appropriate locations? In addition, no information was provided on the guideline levels set BDT SEPA which would have given context to the readings. As such it was agreed that it would be useful to review the results of independent testing. Olive suggested reviewing the test results of the analysis carried out by the University of Stirling which Lorna had suggested would be independent.

Phosphorus is implicated in promoting the growth of Blue-green algae; the point being made at the meeting, there are other sources of phosphorus pollution into the Loch, namely septic tanks, forestry, and agriculture. The volume of water in Loch Tay is enormous, leading to a significant dilution of levels.

The Fish Farm indicated that over the years they have undertaken rigorous checks and review of standards. As a result, they can confirm that the levels of phosphorus being discharged into the Loch by the fish farm are now significantly lower than they were previously and are well within the levels specified by SEPA. Even with an increase in the levels of phosphorus discharged (as per the planning application) the levels will still be lower than was previously the case and would remain well within the requirements determined by SEPA.

Following the KDCC meeting DR has prepared the following statement:

As the lead for our water testing initiative on Loch Tay, I want to address the discussions that took place at the recent Kenmore Community Council meeting regarding the application by Kames Fish Farming to double its phosphorus discharge limits.

While the council debated the expansion, a sentiment emerged that I feel I must push back on. The discussion left a distinct impression that our monthly volunteer water testers are being framed as 'amateurs' whose data carries little worth. I want to be unequivocally clear to this committee: nothing could be further from the truth.

Our team works with direct scientific backing from professional ecologists and environmentalists at Freshwater and Earth Watch. This non-profit organization exists to harness citizen science for genuine environmental protection. They helped trained our volunteers, established strict protocols for data collection, and scientifically mapped out the best sampling locations to ensure our findings are robust and undeniable. The community volunteers give up their own time to protect this loch, and their dedication is backed by rigorous methods.

We need to address the core argument being used to justify this 112% increase in phosphorus discharge. Kames relies completely on a model from the University of Stirling's Institute of Aquaculture. This model relies on one massive, flawed assumption: that Loch Tay is completely mixed and that phosphorus will distribute itself evenly across its entire volume. Our actual field data completely refutes this assumption. Loch Tay is 23 kilometres long. It does not perfectly mix. Our localized monitoring shows sharp, severe phosphorus spikes at the east end of the loch specifically at Bay South, East of the fish farm and several other locations. Meanwhile, opposite ends of the loch, like Killin and Fearnan, remain consistently clean.

A loch-wide average threshold means absolutely nothing to the ecology near the cages. If you dilute a massive spike across an entire 23-kilometer body of water, of course the mathematical average looks safe on paper. But mathematically masking a spike doesn't stop localized ecological damage, toxic blue-green algae blooms, or habitat degradation right where the fish farm operates.

While there are other sources of pollution—such as forestry, agriculture, and septic tanks—we cannot allow a single commercial operator to drastically increase a known hazard based on flawed theoretical modelling.

Moving forward, our stance as the Loch Tay Association must be firm.

Our volunteers are not amateurs. They are the eyes and ears of this loch, and their data is the most accurate reflection of Loch Tay's true health.

We must protect them, support them, and use their data to protect this body of water from irreversible harm.

Thank you."

It was the opinion that nobody spoke disparagingly of the water testers and that all written accounts are open to personal interpretation. Following comments from people who were present at the CC meeting the wording of the minutes were revised.

The decision on the Fish Farm has not yet been made, as far as we are aware. It was agreed that should there be a favourable decision on the application, then we should vigorously object to that decision. RM/DR to look into the decision process and any recourse available to us. LTGL CC also objected to the proposal.

75% of septic tanks around the loch are not registered with SEPA. A campaign of education and perhaps a collective emptying programme may be useful for owners. We had a blockage caused by Blue Roll at the end of August which caused an outflow into the loch. It is not possible to pinpoint the property responsible. We will write to Scottish Water. **DH/WH**

4. Planning Application 25/00168/FLM:

The application is not yet showing up on Stirling Council Planning Website.

5. Proposed Development at Carie:

JR reported that LTGL CC are to meet with the developers soon. There is potential for up to 300 people on site once it is operational. The operators are a Christian Charity and will host young people on the site, providing many outdoor activities. Water in/Water out will be a big consideration as this would significantly add to the already high number of septic tanks. Another issue expected to come up for consideration is noise, both during construction and when in operation. A group meeting with developers, CC's and LTA would be an advantage and save numerous different meetings. JR to advise on arrangements.

6. A.O.C.B.

- The makeshift pedestrian crossing at Taymouth Marina has been assessed as non-compliant and is not a lawful crossing. PKC is aware. The easiest remedy to the dangerous crossing on this public road would be for the reception building to be relocated in the carpark on the top side of the road, thus removing most of the footfall. The roads sub-committee of the CC is in abeyance at present.
- MMcA highlighted the proposed signage for the beach area, primarily focused on water safety. All asked to have a look and provide feedback.
- The Ecology Talks are being arranged for later in the year.
- The Crannog Centre have taken over the care of Sandy MacTaggart's Arboretum.

Chair thanked those in attendance. Meeting closed at 7.10pm