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## **Forth Estuary Forum**

### **E news bulletin**

### **February 2018**

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#### **The Forth Estuary Forum has moved**

The Forum has moved from our office at Rosyth to new premises at Grangemouth.

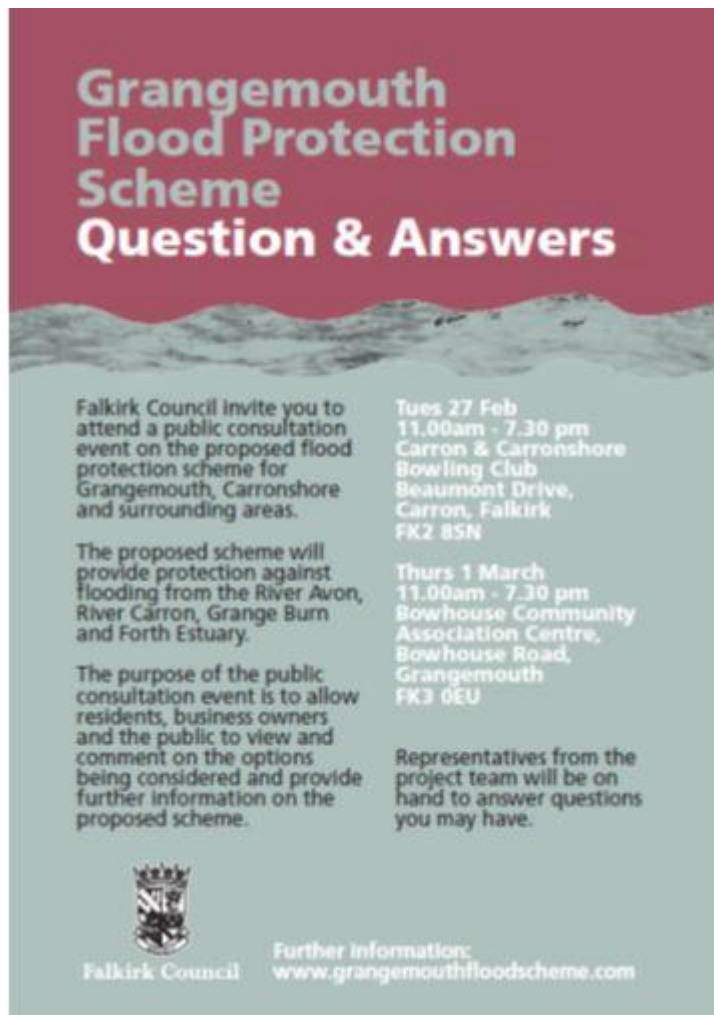
Our new address is:

Forth Estuary Forum  
Baltic House  
Central Dock Road  
Grangemouth FK3 8TY

Tel: 01324 473760  
Mob: 07584 817479

Our e-mail addresses remain the same, and you can continue to follow us through Facebook and Twitter as normal. Many thanks to Forth Ports for continuing to host us.

**Consultation events on the proposed flood protection scheme  
for Grangemouth and surrounding areas**



## Marine Conservation Grants – Applications Invited

If you are planning a marine conservation project, you may be eligible to apply for a grant from Sea-Change. They give a number of small grants (generally under £1,000) and tend to support grass roots and community based projects. The projects funded will achieve one or more of the following objectives:

- To address the root causes of marine conservation threats and challenges in the UK.
- To prevent or reduce negative impacts on UK coastal and marine environments and / or species.
- To add to the body of knowledge about marine conservation threats and challenges in the UK.

### New 2018 Marine Litter Fund

Applications from Scotland are especially welcome

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litter issues. Approximately 60% of this funding will support projects in Scotland with 40% going elsewhere in UK.

The latest round of applications for both funds is currently open, with a closing date 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018. The application process is very straight forward and the proportion of grants that are successful is generally over 50%.

Find out more here: <http://www.sea-changers.org.uk/charities>

### **Now there are THREE humpback whales in Forth**

Whale watchers along the coast of the Firth of Forth had a spectacular treat in late January, with the revelation that there are actually at least three humpbacks off the Fife coast. The discovery comes as watchers lined the banks for the Forth in the hope of catching a glimpse of the giant mammals.

It is the second year running there has been a humpback in the Forth, with a run of breathtaking pictures showing the playful whales breaching and diving. The humpbacks are being watched closely by the British Divers Marine Life Rescue, and Paul Smith, area co-ordinator for Fife and Stirling, said there's no telling how long they could stay. "It's not unusual in Scottish waters, but in the Firth of Forth it's a bit different.

"They're just feeding and having a wee holiday in Fife. They tend to migrate, they go to the cooler waters for feeding and the warmer waters for breeding.

"They live off the fat reserves when they're doing the migration, and then they just bulk up. "If these humpbacks are not of breeding age, then they may just stay up here all year round, because there's no point in going to the warmer waters if you're not breeding.

"Health-wise, they're fine. They're showing normal behaviour, they're feeding normally, and there doesn't seem to be any cause for concern over their welfare." Some of the best viewing points are appear to be Kinghorn, Pettycur, and Burntisland, but Paul said that it was important not to get too close.

Read more [here](#). Some excellent photos can be seen [here](#).

### **Seabird Centre collaborates with SQA to develop new Environmental Science coursework**

Conservation and education charity, the Scottish Seabird Centre, North Berwick, has worked in collaboration with the Scottish Qualifications Authority to develop approved coursework linked to the Curriculum for Excellence.

The coursework, which is suitable for National 5 Environmental Science students (and also Biology and Geography teachers), focuses on assessing species distribution (zonation) down a rocky shoreline. It was developed by the Scottish Seabird Centre's Education Officer, Andrew Grieveson. A former secondary school teacher, and with a Zoology degree, Andrew was well-placed to develop content he knew would work for the

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Centre's Marine Advisory Group and Principle Adviser for Marine at Scottish Natural Heritage, Professor John Baxter.

Both teacher and pupil guides have been developed. The teachers' guide features details of mandatory course key areas as well as suggested learning activities, encouraging students to undertake their own research along the shoreline. There is a fieldwork guide, methodologies and information on further resources. The video content features Professor John Baxter who provides a step-by-step guide on how to undertake the practical research: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u5W89iYt6h8>

Andrew Grieveson, Education Officer at the Scottish Seabird Centre, said: "Awareness about marine issues and conservation are now high on the agenda and we want to help teachers raise awareness of these issues, among their students, in a scientific way.

"The world's seas and oceans are facing several growing threats such as plastic pollution and increased greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, the latter of which also contributes to climate change. Combined, these issues pose a serious threat to life in the earth's marine habitats. It is therefore vital that scientists monitor the distribution of species in our seas and observe the health of their ecosystems."

Robert Quinn, Head of Qualifications at the Scottish Qualifications Authority, said: "This is a fantastic addition to the resources available to both teachers and learners undertaking the National 5 Environmental Science course. In particular, these materials will encourage learners to research the shoreline as a potential context for their assignment."

For further information visit: <https://seabird.org/learning/resources/sqa/20/77/225>  
The Scottish Seabird Centre is currently developing further coursework ideas to offer teachers a range of options for students wishing to carry out marine fieldwork.

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