

Marine Alliance for Science and Technology for Scotland (MASTS)

Marine MSc summer project research ideas by Coastal Community Network partners from around Scotland

In addition to MSc projects being offered directly by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), we have invited members of the Coastal Communities Network (CCN) (<https://www.communitiesforseas.scot/>) to submit proposals in collaboration with Flora and Fauna International (FFI). All proposals detailed below have been submitted to SNH for sharing with MASTS. These have all gone through an initial feedback discussion from SNH.

Contents

1. Community Association of Lochs and Sounds (CAOLAS) – Mapping of <i>Ascophyllum</i> in Loch Sunart.....	2
2. Friends of the Sound of Jura – ROV survey for <i>Swiftia pallida</i>	4
3. Friends of the Sound of Jura - Camera sled	6
4. Sea Change Wester Ross - Maerl recovery monitoring	8
5. Sea Change Wester Ross – Maerl protection & Fisheries.....	10
6. Skye and Wester Ross Fisheries Trust - Maerl monitoring of recovery and associated fish populations	12
7. Skye and Wester Ross Fisheries Trust – Seagrass monitoring	14
8. South Skye Seas Initiative - Marine crofts & rope grown kelp.....	16
9. Fairlie Coastal Trust- Native oysters	18

1. Community Association of Lochs and Sounds (CAOLAS) – Mapping of *Ascophyllum* in Loch Sunart

Name and address of Organisation:
Community Association of Lochs and Sounds (CAOLAS)
Name of the key contact in Organisation:
Mark Woombs Dale Meegan
Contact e-mail and phone number:
Email mark@wamarine.co.uk dalemeegan@mail.com Tel. 01967 431872 / 07534144964 01972 510322 /07718132680
Title of proposed project:
A Proposal to Map the Habitat, Extent, Abundance and Biodiversity of <i>Ascophyllum nodosum</i> ecad. <i>mackaii</i> in the Marine Protected Area (MPA) of Loch Sunart
Project outline and intended outcomes:
<p>The biotope, <i>Ascophyllum nodosum</i> ecad. <i>mackaii</i> beds on extremely sheltered mid-eulittoral mixed substrata, is rare and is a Scottish Priority Marine Feature (PMF) that is found in Loch Sunart, particularly at Strontian and Salen.</p> <p><i>Ascophyllum nodosum</i> ecad. <i>mackaii</i> (wig wrack) develops from broken fragments of <i>Ascophyllum nodosum</i> (egg wrack) and can in sheltered conditions grow in unattached, often bladderless, wig-shaped masses in the mid- to upper-tide zone.</p> <p>It is normally found on extremely sheltered mid-shore mixed substrata, which is subject to variable salinity due to freshwater run-off. The loose spherical mats of <i>Ascophyllum nodosum</i> ecad. <i>mackaii</i> provide a cryptic and humid habitat for mobile species such as gammarids, shore crabs (<i>Carcinus maenas</i>), littorinids (<i>Littorina littorea</i>, <i>Littorina saxatilis</i> and <i>Littorina obtusata</i>) and eels (<i>Anguilla anguilla</i>). <i>Semibalanus balanoides</i> (barnacles) and <i>Mytilus edulis</i> (mussels) are commonly attached to pebbles and cobbles on the sediment, while the infauna may contain <i>Arenicola marina</i> (lug worms), <i>Lanice conchilega</i> (sand masons) and other polychaetes.</p> <p>The proposal is to map the extent (GPS tracking) and abundance (biomass) of <i>Ascophyllum nodosum</i> ecad. <i>mackaii</i>. The habitat and associated flora and fauna, along with its position, would also be recorded.</p> <p>Work would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An initial literature search to find what information already exists for Loch Sunart.• Fieldwork around the Loch to record <i>A. nodosum</i> ecad. <i>mackaii</i> distribution, extent, abundance and associated biodiversity• A report to include data mapping and a comparison with previous surveys.

Any additional comments e.g. details of specific disciplines required, methods to be used, travel involved, where the work would take place (i.e. at the host site or at the University), whether you foresee any Intellectual Property or confidentiality issues (and if so, what form might these take?)

Support and oversight of the student's work would be by CAOLAS committee member, Dr Mark Woombs (Marine Biologist).

CAOLAS would be able to help a student to find local accommodation for the duration of their fieldwork.

2. Friends of the Sound of Jura – ROV survey for *Swiftia pallida*

Name and address of Organisation:

Friends of the Sound of Jura
c/o Ivy Cottage
Keills, Tayvallich
Lochgilphead
Argyll
PA31 8PQ

Name of the key contact in Organisation:

John Aitchison

Contact e-mail and phone number:

john@friendsofthesoundofjura.org.uk

Title of proposed project:

Testing the efficacy of ROV survey, for mapping the extent and distribution of northern sea fan (*Swiftia pallida*) in the Sound of Jura MPA

Project outline and intended outcomes:

Coastal Communities are increasingly aware that their local waters may contain Priority Marine Feature (PMF) species such as northern sea fan, *Swiftia pallida*, and that some sites for this species are currently unknown, hence they may be vulnerable to harm.

Few communities have SCUBA divers with marine survey training, so there is an opportunity to develop survey methods using affordable underwater survey devices, such as the new generation of small Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROVs), particularly beyond SCUBA depths.

The aim would be to survey a coastal area in the Sound of Jura, southwards from Carsaig Island to the Point of Knap, selecting a number of sites depending on the available time and work rate. Examination of charts and conversations with local scallop divers would guide initial surveys. The recent, thorough survey of *S. pallida* at Dounie could act as benchmark for a ground-truthing exercise.

Any additional comments e.g. details of specific disciplines required, methods to be used, travel involved, where the work would take place (i.e. at the host site or at the University), whether you foresee any Intellectual Property or confidentiality issues (and if so, what form might these take?)

The area to be surveyed is the Sound of Jura, in Argyll. The Friends of the Sound of Jura is based in Tayvallich, a coastal village with many boats and interested people. Supporting the survey with boats and practical help would not be a problem. Providing accommodation for at least some of the time is likely to be possible. There is also a camp site in the village.

Friends of the Sound of Jura does not own an ROV, but we hope that member groups of the Coastal Communities Network may own one or more by 2019 and that we might be able to borrow one. A contingency plan would be necessary in case this does not happen.

3. Friends of the Sound of Jura - Camera sled

Name and address of Organisation:

Friends of the Sound of Jura
c/o Ivy Cottage
Keills, Tayvallich
Lochgilphead
Argyll
PA31 8PQ

Name of the key contact in Organisation:

John Aitchison

Contact e-mail and phone number:

john@friendsofthesoundofjura.org.uk

Title of proposed project:

Underwater camera sled for benthic surveys

Project outline and intended outcomes:

Coastal Communities are increasingly aware that their local waters may contain Priority Marine Feature (PMF) species and that the location of many examples of these species is currently unknown, hence they may be vulnerable to harm. Few communities have SCUBA divers with marine survey training, so there is an opportunity to develop an affordable underwater survey device. We envisage a tethered sled/lander with one or more GoPro-type cameras and LED lights. The sled would be deployed by one of two people from a small boat, or perhaps a kayak, lowering it to the seabed on a line, which would also include a video cable to allow some control over the framing. The cameras would record images on internal SD cards for later analysis.

The Friends of the Sound of Jura would provide the cameras. Simple housings would need to be designed for them and the underwater lighting but we have excellent contacts with expertise in this area. The sled itself would also need to be designed and built in such a way that more could be produced for use by other community groups if there is a demand. We have contacts with product designers, trained on the Product Design Engineering course at Glasgow School of Art who might be willing to help with this (<http://www.gsa.ac.uk/study/undergraduate-degrees/product-design-engineering/>).

Any additional comments e.g. details of specific disciplines required, methods to be used, travel involved, where the work would take place (i.e. at the host site or at the University), whether you foresee any Intellectual Property or confidentiality issues (and if so, what form might these take?)

This project has more of an engineering and design brief than marine biology.

The area for testing the design, and where it would be used, is the Sound of Jura, in Argyll. The Friends of the Sound of Jura is based in Tayvallich, a coastal village with many boats and interested people. Supporting the testing of the sled with boats and practical help would not be a problem. Providing accommodation for at least some of the time is likely to be possible. There is also a campsite in the village.

We have no intention to claim or hold on to any Intellectual Property Rights and would hope that this design, once completed, would be freely available to others.

It would help us to know the likely dates as soon as possible.

We do not anticipate a need for SCUBA diving.

4. Sea Change Wester Ross - Maerl recovery monitoring

Name and address of Organisation: Sea Change Wester Ross
Name of the key contacts in Organisation: Sara Nason & John McIntyre
Contact e-mail and phone number: sara@littlegreenislandfilms.co.uk 01854 655382
Title of proposed project: Wester Ross Marine Protected Area maerl bed recovery monitoring project
Project outline and intended outcomes: <p>Wester Ross MPA was set up to recover maerl. The area includes some of the largest and most intact maerl beds within Scotland within it but also has some heavily dredged maerl bed areas, as well as those we think may be impacted by aquaculture too. Many of the maerl beds are within the Summer Isles areas and in the shallow channels and inshore parts around the islands or mainland coast.</p> <p>Sea Change the local marine community group has undertaken a project working with volunteers, fishermen and dive clubs to map and monitor maerl within the MPA and this work has only just begun, so a student project on this would be hugely welcome and would get a great deal of support.</p> <p>This could include a desktop study using existing data collected as well as specific dive targets supported by Sea Change if necessary.</p> <p>From Sea Change (and SubseaTV-SCFF) diver-video survey in 2016 we have good quality footage of transect dives at Fox point and Dornie sound which are dredged areas within the Summer Isles (Wester Ross Marine Protected Area). There is also a little footage from 2015 on go-pro of the Dornie sound area. Both of these are heavily dredged sites now in recovery.</p> <p>We also have high quality footage of an intact maerl bed in the area which is vast and looks healthy around 'planet rock' but this was a spot dive and it is not measured or monitored for percentage of dead-live maerl but from divers reports it is around 150meters long if not more.</p> <p>In June 2018 we set up two 25m transects on maerl beds and took high quality pictures of random quadrats on these. One was at Fox point on a dredged maerl bed at the same transect as 2016 and one on the vast, very intact maerl bed at Planet Rock which was also photographed in 2016. Both are within the Summer Isles area and close to the mainland.</p> <p>We support a student project interested in any aspect of mapping and monitoring the maerl (density, quality and area covered, as well as the biodiversity it supports) especially in other areas</p>

within the MPA.

We are particularly interested in monitoring maerl at Isle Ewe and Horse Island and the channel in the Tanera islands. The Isle Ewe maerl has shown signs of decline when last reported, but the Horse island maerl bed is intact and relatively large. We would also like to monitor the maerl in the shallow channel (3m-10m deep) between Tanera beg and Fada because in a recent survey (Sept 2018) it was reported to have a lot of algae around it (which could be harming it, and may be due to extra nutrients in the water or could be seasonal.)

We welcome all support on any aspect of monitoring mearl.

Any additional comments e.g. details of specific disciplines required, methods to be used, travel involved, where the work would take place (i.e. at the host site or at the University), whether you foresee any Intellectual Property or confidentiality issues (and if so, what form might these take?)

Location:

Wester Ross Marine Protected Area. Sea Change tend to work with divers and video. We also have a drop down system with go-pro. Sea Change could be the point of contact for all sorts of help and support with local expertise and guidance, and contributions of accommodation, boats (dependent on timing) and we would hope, even diver support due to our connection to scallop divers and dive clubs through our existing survey)

5. Sea Change Wester Ross – Maerl protection & Fisheries

Please refer to project 6 as there are similarities. If students are interested in projects 5. and 6. it is important to ensure efforts are not duplicated, but compliment each other.

Name and address of Organisation: Sea Change Wester Ross
Name of the key contacts in Organisation: Sara Nason & John McIntyre
Contact e-mail and phone number: sara@littlegreenislandfilms.co.uk
Title of proposed project: Maerl bed relationship with Fisheries (Summer Isles study within Wester Ross Marine Protected Area)
Project outline and intended outcomes: <p>Sea Change is the marine community group (thinktank) around Wester Ross Marine Protected Area and we are keen to support any studies which develop knowledge and evidence around the relationship of maerl to fisheries.</p> <p>Ideally, over time we want to know how much/ whether protecting key stone species like maerl (which in turn supports wider biodiversity) has an impact on the local fisheries. As well as which fisheries and how significant this impact is.</p> <p>We are interested in this because in turn this supports human beings and supplies evidence of the benefits for protection - if Marine Protected Areas do indeed lead to better fisheries. That is an assumption we would like local evidence for.</p> <p>The fisheries with relevance which have local interest are scallops (scallop spat on maerl - the scallop divers are already reporting widespread improvements in spat but no one has measured this). Before dredgers damaged maerl beds and other habitats in the area, scallop divers reported that it was very abundant so it is a good area for this we imagine going by what the scallop divers say.</p> <p>Herring spawning on maerl (vast winter herring spawn grounds were recently identified near Gairloch) - we would be interested in studies on the relationship of herring and other finfish such as cod and other species which may use maerl in some way.</p> <p>We also note from observation that many crab live on maerl and there is other spawn on it. We wonder if there is an impact of fishing on edible crab or lobster larvae.</p> <p>Wester Ross MPA has vast intact maerl beds within it, some are well mapped, others are less so -</p>

some are also damaged by dredging and others possibly by fish farms. However there are significant numbers of intact beds to study the relationship of live maerl to fisheries as well as damaged beds.

Sea change has a number of records from surveys of the maerl which could be helpful identifying areas as well as good contacts with scallop divers - from this we know there is probably more maerl still unmapped.

David Bailey may have techniques via acoustic surveys and we would welcome working with him or anyone else in the area.

Any additional comments e.g. details of specific disciplines required, methods to be used, travel involved, where the work would take place (i.e. at the host site or at the University), whether you foresee any Intellectual Property or confidentiality issues (and if so, what form might these take?)

Location: Wester Ross Marine Protected Area.

Sea Change tend to work with divers and video during two or three survey weeks a year. However, there are diver clubs in the area we have also collaborated with at other times. We also have a drop down system with go-pro. Sea Change could be the point of contact for all sorts of help and support with local expertise and guidance, and contributions of accommodation, boats (dependent on timing) and we would hope, even diver support due to our connection to scallop divers and dive clubs through our existing survey.

6. Skye and Wester Ross Fisheries Trust - Maerl monitoring of recovery and associated fish populations

Please refer to project 5 as there are similarities. If students are interested in projects 5. and 6. it is important to ensure efforts are not duplicated, but compliment each other.

Name and address of Organisation: Skye and Wester Ross Fisheries Trust (SWRFT) (& National Trust for Scotland (NTS), Inverewe)
Name of the key contact in Organisation: Peter Cunningham (biologist) / Peter Jarosz (administrator)
Contact e-mail and phone number: info@swrft.org.uk / admin@swrft.org.uk 01445 712 899
Title of proposed project: Developing methods for the assessment and monitoring of (1) maerl habitat recovery and (2) wild fish populations in areas of maerl in Loch Ewe, Wester Ross Marine Protected Area.
Project outline and intended outcomes: <p>There is local interest in the conservation and recovery of maerl habitats within the Wester Ross MPA (WR MPA). One area of maerl was recorded near the head of Loch Ewe to the west of NTS Inverewe Gardens. This project aims to adapt methods developed elsewhere, including by scientists at SNH and Glasgow University, to be able to monitor the seabed and wild fish populations in areas with this PMF seabed habitat.</p> <p>The area of interest is an area of maerl close to NTS Inverewe near the head of Loch Ewe, described in Moore, C. G., Harries, D. B., Trigg, C., Porter, J. S. and Lyndon, A. R. (2011), page 32.</p> <p>We anticipate establishing a series of monitoring stations where (1) a drop-down camera can be deployed to assess the seabed habitat and (2) where a baited drop-down camera trap (or other methods) can be deployed to record the occurrence of different fish species in and around the maerl bed. This could be a project for one or two students.</p> <p>The student will gain experience in use of sea bed monitoring methods and collection of data from which the condition of the seabed and associated fauna can be analysed and assessed. The student may be able to contribute towards a baseline from which future monitoring may take place. Further details of the project need to be developed in collaboration with SNH and Glasgow University or other institution.</p> <p>Video footage will assist SNH with the monitoring of the WR MPA. Video may also be of interest to SWRFT and NTS Inverewe where it is envisaged that there will be opportunities to provide interpretation to general public to increase awareness of maerl and other seabed habitats (e.g. other seaweed communities) and their importance for fisheries and other marine wildlife within the MPA. There may also be subsequent opportunities for local community or primary school related projects.</p>

Any additional comments e.g. details of specific disciplines required, methods to be used, travel involved, where the work would take place (i.e. at the host site or at the University), whether you foresee any Intellectual Property or confidentiality issues (and if so, what form might these take?)

SWRFT will help to organise a suitable boat from which to deploy equipment (depending upon what is needed) thereby enabling the student to carry out field work.

SWRFT can provide office space for a student during the field work period (there may be other options).

Options for accommodation for student may include NTS Inverewe or other places nearby for the duration of the field work period.

Peter Cunningham & Peter Jarosz, Skye and Wester Ross Fisheries Trust (please see above)

Kevin Frediani, NTS Inverewe (tel. 01445 712 952).

7. Skye and Wester Ross Fisheries Trust – Seagrass monitoring

Name and address of Organisation: Skye and Wester Ross Fisheries Trust
Name of the key contact in Organisation: Peter Cunningham (Biologist) / Peter Jarosz (Administrator)
Contact e-mail and phone number: info@swrft.org.uk / admin@swrft.org.uk 01445 712 899
Title of proposed project: Development of a methodology for monitoring the health and biodiversity of seagrass beds in and around the Wester Ross MPA.
Project outline and intended outcomes: <p>Seagrass beds are present in Loch Gairloch and in parts of the Wester Ross MPA, notably Loch Ewe and Gruinard Bay. There is local interest in this habitat and relationships between seagrass habitats and other wildlife including fish. The aim of this project is (1) to complete a survey of seagrass within the MPA using satellite and aerial photos and other 'ground truth' information; (2) to establish a series of monitoring locations or transects accessible by paddling (with glass bottom bucket) or snorkelling in shallow water at low tide (e.g. at Inverianvie, Second Coast and Mellon Charles) and simple drop down camera methods. Other methods may be used to record invertebrate and fish fauna present within the beds.</p> <p>The student will gain knowledge and experience of monitoring shallow water habitats. They will contribute to the GIS database for seagrass distribution (for SNH and Project Seagrass). Data will be collected from which the health of local seagrass beds can be assessed and any conservation requirements. The project aims to add to records of biodiversity for this PMF habitat within the MPA, and there may be opportunities for analyses of species relationships.</p> <p>The project will provide opportunities for raising awareness of sea grass beds within the local area and related citizen science activities.</p>
Any additional comments e.g. details of specific disciplines required, methods to be used, travel involved, where the work would take place (i.e. at the host site or at the University), whether you foresee any Intellectual Property or confidentiality issues (and if so, what form might these take?) <p>Ideally the student will be a confident snorkeler with appropriate qualification and have a warm wetsuit (academic institution to provide guidance on this).</p> <p>On selected survey days a suitable 'buddy' from SNH or other organisation will be required to partner up with the student when undertaking field work in the area.</p>

Further details and guidance will need to be developed with SNH, Project Sea Grass & academic institution.

SWRFT can provide limited office space and some other support, including help with finding local accommodation during the field season.

The student may need to have own transport depending upon final choice of study area.

8. South Skye Seas Initiative - Marine crofts & rope grown kelp

Name and address of Organisation: South Skye Seas Initiative, c/o Skye & Lochalsh Environment Forum, The Old Police Station, Isleoransay, Isle of Skye IV43 8QR
Name of the key contact in Organisation: Eileen Armstrong
Contact e-mail and phone number: eileen@thehirsal-on-skye.com 01471 855350
Title of proposed project: Develop the concept of Marine Crofts providing environmental benefits and socio-economic opportunities for Coastal Communities along Scotland's west coast.
Project outline and intended outcomes: Recognising the importance of a Blue-Green Economy within our Marine environment, the development of small-scale Marine Crofts for Kelp and Shellfish Farming offers the opportunity to develop a new aquaculture industry which could be both ecologically and economically sustainable. Growing kelp on ropes is now seen as a commercially viable operation in the Faroe Islands, www.oceanrainforest.com , and Greenwave in New England www.greenwave.org . As well as meeting the commercial demand globally, kelp restores ocean ecosystems, mitigates climate change and could provide much needed jobs for our rural Coastal Communities. The addition of Shellfish Farming (suspended from the kelp ropes) would provide fresh produce for local food establishments, a key economic driver for the Scottish Tourism Industry. Project Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a working model for a Marine Croft• Identify suitable location(s) for a trial Croft within Loch Eishort in south Skye• Review potential impacts on the existing Marine habitats with a focus on existing Priority Marine Features (PMFs). Next steps in the project would be to apply for Scottish Government funding, consult with Environmental and Commercial partners including the Crown Estate and establish a trial Croft. If the trial Croft was successful, this model could be rolled out across other Coastal Communities.

Any additional comments e.g. details of specific disciplines required, methods to be used, travel involved, where the work would take place (i.e. at the host site or at the University), whether you foresee any Intellectual Property or confidentiality issues (and if so, what form might these take?)

It is intended to trial in Loch Eishort, south Skye. This location would facilitate future involvement with Sleat Community Trust which would maintain stability.

Previously, SNH have undertaken some benthic surveys and in addition, SSSI will be carrying out further survey work using a Blue ROV2 underwater drone which would be available for use.

<https://bluerobotics.com/store/rov/bluerov2>

We would endeavour to assist with student accommodation and boat use.

9. Fairlie Coastal Trust- Native oysters

Name and address of Organisation: Clyde Porpoise c.i.c / Fairlie Coastal Trust c/o 1/1 Allanton Park Terrace, Fairlie, North Ayrshire, KA290AW
Name of the key contact in Organisation: David Nairn
Contact e-mail and phone number: david@clydeporpoise.org 07714784473
Title of proposed project: Bioreef Project - Native Oyster and Priority Marine Feature Survey
Project outline and intended outcomes: <p>Fairlie Coastal Trust, a member of the Scottish Coastal Communities Network, has recently reported a native oyster bed on Southannan Sands SSSI. The oyster bed and other Priority Marine Features (PMFs) that are known to exist on the SSSI are not yet listed on the SNH SSI Citation for this site. These PMFs are currently experiencing various impacts and future conservation status at this location is uncertain due to proposed coastal development and plans to develop the Hunterston PARC oil-rig decommissioning port. The presence of this oyster bed is significant due to its location in the upper Clyde and its proximity to industrial facilities and high population areas. The local community has focus to conserve the marine features along its stretch of coastline and have conducted rudimentary biodiversity surveys of the oyster site and wider coast. These features have been reported to SNH, Clyde Marine Planning Partnership and Crown Estate Scotland. Fairlie Coastal Trust has engaged with local marine stakeholders and landowners with permission to act as marine stewards for some areas of the SSSI. The community would like to develop a demonstration and educational 'Bioreef' project with aspirations to enhance and stimulate recovery of local waters. We are currently developing a volunteer and participation centre and have both the facilities and experience to develop a demonstration facility located at the old oyster hatchery and specimen supply buildings beside FSC Millport. We believe having a local facility will help ensure the survivability and resilience of our local oyster bed and hope to transfer and maintain a healthy oyster broodstock but also work on other PMFs and wider community conservation projects from this location. We are looking for scientific and strategic partnerships to share and help enable this journey. We have hosted Honours, MSc and PhD studentships working with our Clyde Marine Mammal Project but can envisage multiple and ongoing Bioreef student projects that would be highly suitable for MASTS candidates. We would greatly appreciate a SNH/MASTS sponsored MSC student to develop an oyster and PMF survey programme for our community. Apart from rudimentary surveys no scientific work has yet been carried out on this population of oysters and presents numerous research possibilities. In first instance we would like to establish the abundance and distribution of oysters in our local area and to establish potential locations for reintroduction.</p>

More specifically there are numerous questions that acquire attention including aspects of toxicology, and genetics suitability for this population to be used to enhance local waters. There is scope within overall project for studentship to progress and become involved more fully engaged with the Bioreef and other projects operating from our new centre. Basically, its an open book and huge potential to conduct primary research on a significant population of oysters.

Any additional comments e.g. details of specific disciplines required, methods to be used, travel involved, where the work would take place (i.e. at the host site or at the University), whether you foresee any Intellectual Property or confidentiality issues (and if so, what form might these take?)

The oyster bed location is easily accessible by public transport and our centre which we are developing is located beside FSC Millport. We can provide vehicle and/or boat access to the site.

The field work and data collection would take place on Southannan SSSI. We plan to have a small lab/ work space fitted out at our centre by the end of Q1 2019.

Students can be provided accommodation at FSC Millport which is adjacent to our new centre. We would expect a cost to be charged by FSC Millport. Otherwise, depending on availability, they are welcome to be accommodated on our survey yacht located in Largs Marina with all share based facilities and access to town.

There is no need for boat work for this project but we do have and can provide access to a number of survey vessels, including yachts and small day boat. All are commercially coded for work and operated by qualified skippers.

Students will be accompanied and assisted on field visits to prevent lone working. We have a number of experienced local marine ecologists and volunteers that are happy to assist any studentship and provide a rewarding experience working with our community.

This position would suit someone that is really keen interest in littoral ecology, and willing to spend time exploring our coastline.

No Intellectual Property issue other than our project to be offered joint authorship on any publications and current funders cited in presentations etc. There are issues around publicising location of native oyster beds and taking advice from SNH on best practice.