



# New moorings at Loch Creeran now open for business

THE MARINE Resource Centre (MRC), based at Barcaldine, is diversifying its operations into the leisure sector by introducing 100 new boat moorings at Loch Creeran. Fifty moorings have already been placed in the water and the remaining 50 are well on their way to being in place for the 2007 season.

MRC is based on the shores of Loch Creeran, which is a Special Area of Conservation and is the doorstep into some of the best sailing waters and most stunning scenery in the UK.

Not only that, it is just 12 miles from Oban, around two hours from Glasgow and six miles from Oban Airport, which is due to have scheduled air services by September this year.

By the start of next season MRC hopes to have an access point in place, a revamped car park area - with secure parking under cover another option - and luxury shower suites. Landscaping, with a band and trees, will screen the area from the more industrial activities on site, creating a marina ambience.

Boat owners will be able to drive straight to the waterside, unload their vehicles, bring their boat alongside the pontoon,



Yacht being launched at the MRC slipway

load up, park their vehicles up, take on board fuel and water, and then sail off.

Already a highly successful campus for a number of commercial marine resources in the west of Scotland, MRC identified a need to increase from its eight moorings last summer and started the process of gaining permissions to lay them which was eventually completed in April this year.

In consultation with Scottish Natural Heritage, MRC has developed swinging moorings that will minimise any damage to the seabed, by using travel buoys that lift the riser chain,

to which the moorings are attached, off the seabed.

Not only that, extensive research was carried out to ensure that the biogenic reefs grown by Sempulid worms, for which the loch has been designated an SAC, would not be affected by the moorings, the comings and goings of yachts or anti-fouling agents used on the hulls of boats.

MRC also has a policy which users of the moorings will be made aware of that does not allow anything other than unpolluted water to be drained at the moorings.

MRC's intention is to maintain Loch Creeran as a productive and sustainable loch which fulfils and meets the amenity needs of its users,' said Martin Waterhouse, chief executive of MRC. The deep-water swinging moorings are in a minimum depth of six metres and consist of 54mm ground chain secured by a three tonne concrete block. A seven-metre surge chain is shackled to the ground chain at 30-metre intervals and a rope riser is shackled to the surge chain at the travel buoy and a rope riser is attached to a surface buoy.

The moorings are capable of taking vessels up to 11.6m in length and 15 tonnes gross weight and all are professionally inspected and serviced. The high quality of the moorings and sheltered aspect of the MRC in Loch Creeran means that boats can be left on the moorings over winter.

But if owners prefer to take their vessels out of the water then MRC has been operating successful undercover boat storage for up to 100 boats since 1999. It has grown to become the largest indoor yacht store in the West Highlands. The yard can slip and store craft up to 15 tonnes displacement

and 4.5m beam and winter storage includes scrubbing off, cradling in the yard and up to 26 weeks' storage, routine checks and relaunching.

Among the tenants on site at the MRC are a marine engineering and a rigging specialist as well as there being numerous other companies in the local area offering everything from boat electrics to new sails.

With a hammerhead planned at the end of the access pontoon, the potential for charter boats to use the services at MRC in addition to other yacht owners will increase.

Charter clients will be able to use the parking area and walk straight on to the boat, while charter vessels will be able to stock up on fresh water and fuel as well as loading goods on board with ease, avoiding the congestion of Oban's harbour area.

'This is a new venture, the potential for charter boats to use the services at MRC in addition to other yacht owners will increase.

'We are using our experience that we have developed in aquaculture and are adapting it to the leisure sector. We have also been involved in sponsoring the Glencoe Boat Club annual regatta since 2004 and MRC is proud to be involved with this



Top: View of the MRC moorings at Loch Creeran.



Above: Yachts stored undercover.



Left: Yacht in hoist

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Good Luck to MRC with this exciting new venture from all at

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All the best to MRC with their new Marina development

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Good Luck to Martin at MRC from  
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**NORTHERN LIGHT CHARTERS**  
send best wishes to Martin at MRC for his future endeavours  
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Good Luck to MRC from **FPM Henderson**  
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Every success to Martin at MRC with the new moorings development at Loch Creeran  
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