

1. Was the scheme adhered to or not and what evidence do you have to support this.

No – absolutely not.

Our data attached clearly shows it was not adhered to.

2. If the scheme did not work what is your view on why this was the case.

The shooting groups seemed determined not to even trial this agreement before it started. It seems most of the shooting groups do not get on between themselves and are therefore unable to agree on anything.

The shooters relied on vagueness of Mean High Water mark, foreshore boundaries, difficulty in prosecution and a general desire to not to work with MC or FBLNR.

It was voluntary and it seems the shooters will only comply if a legal requirement.

Shooting tourists have little vested interest in making compromises work on their 'holiday'.

3. Do you have any alternative proposals or amendments to the current scheme that you think would work better.

The only other option that would work better is a ban on all shooting on FBLNR. A full ban on the Bay would allow eco friendly activities year round and is, in the long term, the most low cost effective and enforceable option (see 6)

We cannot see how any alternative schemes would be affordable or enforceable, especially as prosecution of litter/foreshore issues are so difficult to bring to court. Anything less than a clear, legal law will be ignored by the shooters- like this trial was.

4. If you answered question 3, what are your views on the usefulness or otherwise of further mediation, the objective of which would be to bring the various stakeholders together to seek a workable agreement, which would gain majority support across stakeholder group members.

- Very unlikely to progress the situation any further through mediation as the 4-5 shooting groups can not agree with each other - never mind find common ground with others parties.
- The Bay is habitat of red listed species and shooting interferes with their feeding/roosting grounds. Shooting can be transferred to other places, they cannot.
- We are concerned that there may be a perception that mediation should provide the solution to a problem created by conflicting interests of opposing groups within the community. In such a scenario, MC may see themselves as the objective and the uninvolved third party whose role it is to treat the opposing parties 'even-handedly'. Such a perception is a folly. To the shooters, it may be a matter of fighting for their preferences and the joy of shooting birds. However, for us, it is not a matter of preferences. We are supporting ecological principles that should be upheld and protected by Moray Council. We are supporting the rights of the public regarding the proper use of a Nature Reserve, which should be upheld and protected by MC. We are supporting the rights of the local residents, which should also be upheld and protected by MC. Moray Council is involved as the primary stakeholder with a definite duty of care – it cannot be a neutral arbiter.
- This is not about finding a compromise between opposing sets of preferences. We need strong leadership from Moray Council that entails standing up for what is right.

5. If you support further mediation, would you or your organisation be willing to provide financial support to pay for independent mediation.

We are not able to provide financial support for mediation. However, we are not opposed to mediation and will take part in any process that may lead to a meaningful and fair solution to the problem in Findhorn Bay

## 6. Any other comments

- Residents are discouraged from accessing the bay during the shooting season because of intimidation by shooters- this seriously needs addressing.
- Having set up the Nature Reserve to protect wildlife the MC will have shown utmost hypocrisy by their non-action to protect red listed species such as the curlew.
- 10 of the 12 quarry species for shooting are on the birds of conservation concern list, compiled by RSPB and SNH.
- Moray Council should be lobbying SNH and National government on these points to add their weight to the argument, for protection of flora and fauna.
- Turning FBLNR into a National Reserve would be an excellent way forward regarding banning the shooting.
- Bird watching tourism, wildlife tourism, eco tourism, educational use, recreational use, outdoor sports, rambling, water sports, dog walking, etc. can all live simultaneously side by side, and can be expanded to benefit each other. Shooting inhibits all of these happening for 6 months of the year.
- If you want to increase revenue through shooting - which is unlikely to be a reality - it will increase conflicts of interest and create more problems that need MC time and resources to police.
- Plastic litter is now a global problem and needs to be addressed quickly; the attitude of the shooters re this is appalling. Why should shooters, who simply don't care, abuse our local environment?

The Findhorn Foundation already attracts year-round eco tourism. Advertising Findhorn Bay Nature Reserve in cooperation with others such as the FF may be a beneficial financial avenue. With little financial effort from MC it can make Findhorn Bay internationally well known as a tourism highlight, and will make almost certainly more revenue than the comparatively few shooters- but, for this to happen, the Bay needs to be safe all year round.

## 7. Your response will be included in a report to a Council Committee which is available for the public to access, please advise if you wish your response to be anonymous.

No, we do not need our report to be anonymous.  
This was compiled by Friends of Findhorn Bay.  
We would request no individual personal names are used though.

