



The GalGael Trust & The Tall Ship

Anchor and Sail Study



GalGael's 30ft Birlinn (Orcuan)

'Restoring Maritime Heritage to the Clyde'

Research & Analysis Study

Prepared by



October 2013



**The GalGael Trust and the Tall Ship
Anchor and Sail Study**

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The GalGael Trust and the Tall Ship

Anchor and Sail Study

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The GalGael Trust and the Tall Ship working in partnership, plan to expand their teaching in traditional boatbuilding by developing a new programme, funded by the Heritage Lottery, focusing on teaching heritage boatbuilding skills through the restoration and construction of traditional wooden boats in Glasgow

The following working definition was adopted for the purpose of the study: -

‘Wooden boats and the skills used in their construction, related maritime skills and heritage associated with their skills and use’.

- A contact list was prepared of boatbuilders and support businesses including a boat designer, traditional sail maker, classic wooden boat operators and marine heritage centres. 52 operators from Shetland to the Solway were emailed an online survey with 49 of these contacts (94%) completing the survey. This provided a robust sample and served as a reliable guide to the current state of the industry.
- 90% of those operators surveyed were actively involved in traditional boat building although this does not reflect orders or the number of boats currently under construction. There were concerns about the level of orders, the cost of wooden boats, training and the lack of promotion in this sector.
- 72% of boatbuilders work alone with many located in rural and often fairly remote areas of Scotland. All 54 traditional boatbuilders identified were male and many of them knew each other, however, the level of ongoing communication between them was relatively low.
- 11% of all Scottish traditional boatbuilders are over retirement age with a further 35% who will all have reached retirement within the next ten years. While 78% are over 45 years of age only 5% are aged 16 - 24.

- 68% of respondents stated that no one was receiving training in the field and 67% highlighted that there was no training support in their local area. There are two main training centres in England but at present there is no formal college training in Scotland.
- There are some good local training initiatives linked to schools in parts of Scotland but it would appear that there is a requirement for more advanced training in Scotland.
- 98% of participants commented on future skills training and the most common statement referred to modern apprenticeships with skills training starting in schools, as boat building is a readily transferable skill that can be used in the construction industry
- Demand determines whether a steady market can justify investment in training. Wooden boats awareness needs to be increased to improve orders and create new sources of work and opportunities. Some sort of collective marketing would help demand, which along with future funding could lead to a shared training programme for the industry.
- Greater public awareness and understanding of maritime heritage is required. Traditional skills could perhaps be recorded in the form of written, photographic or film footage wherever possible so that we do not lose the methods and techniques involved.
- There is optimism with regard to what's being achieved in some locations but others claimed that it is a dying art and unless traditional boatbuilding skills are passed on, the knowledge may be lost. Without a learning centre based in Scotland the future for traditional boats will mean bringing skilled labour from other parts of the UK or abroad to carry out work.
- Public perception about maritime heritage in Scotland met with a mixed response but there were more people who believed that the public have positive views in support of maritime heritage than not.

- We are an island community therefore the sea is what has historically connected Scotland to the rest of the world. Maritime history is extremely important and it is impossible not to be inspired, excited and interested in what we find around our coastline
- Some people may be unclear that maritime heritage is under threat or what Scotland would lose with the demise of traditional wooden boatbuilding. Similarly not enough people are aware of its potential to attract visitor interest and work to the country.
- Scots are proud, nostalgic and enthusiastic about their maritime heritage and Scotland should use this to greater effect by capitalising on its promotion and halting any further decline in these skills losses.
- Countries such as Ireland, Norway, Denmark, Holland, England and France encourage traditional boatbuilding and recognise the green credentials of wooden boats.
- The Scottish Government should be encouraged to support the training, development and promotion of traditional boat building in Scotland and work in partnership with the trade to avoid the implications if Scotland loses traditional boatbuilding skills.



'Rose Leaf' 2002 (currently under restoration in Anstruther), Alastair Ramsay

The GalGael Trust and the Tall Ship Anchor and Sail Study

Background:

The GalGael Trust and the Tall Ship working in partnership, plan to expand their teaching in traditional boatbuilding by developing a new programme, hopefully funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), which will focus on teaching heritage boatbuilding skills through the restoration and construction of traditional wooden boats in Glasgow.

Following a successful first round HLF application it was agreed that during the initial development phase, research would be undertaken in response to the following question:

“What is the current state of the traditional wooden boatbuilding in Scotland? To what extent are boatbuilding skills at risk and what could be done to retain and preserve these skills as well as Maritime Cultural Heritage?”

A tender brief was issued by the partners, outlining a series of questions, to be put to a range of boatbuilders, marine heritage centres and individuals associated with traditional wooden boatbuilding and repairs throughout Scotland.

McKenzie Wilson Partnership (MWP) was subsequently contracted to undertake this work, prepare this report and assist with the preparation and submission of a strong second round application to the Heritage Lottery Fund.



Glenlee Tall Ship, Glasgow Harbour

Working Definition:

For the purposes of defining the scope of this piece of research it was agreed that the following study definition would be adopted: -

‘Wooden boats and the skills used in their construction, related maritime skills and heritage associated with their skills and use’.



Tommy Isbister, Shetland

Methodology:

Following an inception meeting with the client the provisional list of questions was discussed and a final format agreed for the study. MWP reproduced the questionnaire on the programme ‘Survey Monkey’ and launched the live survey online.

At the same time the consultants using a number of sources including client contacts, Internet sites and additional referrals from the survey questionnaires drew up a list of boatbuilders. Contact was also made with a number of support businesses including a boat designer; traditional sail maker, classic wooden boat operators and marine heritage centres and museums.

55 contacts were identified from Shetland to Dumfries & Galloway. Three of the people on the initial list were not contactable. The remaining 52 received the online survey by email and 49 of these contacts (94%) completed the survey. The remaining 3 contacts may return the survey in due course.

It is inevitable that we will have missed some people in Scotland who have traditional wooden boatbuilding skills but even taking that into account, this study does represent a robust sample of key industry operators and serves as a reliable guide to the state of the industry at this particular time.

During the research a number of very useful and informative telephone discussions ensued with some of the operators providing additional valuable information for the study. It is important to recognise, even at this stage in the project, that the consultants are already recording a clear and deep passion within the ‘trade’ for the retention, protection and development of this important sector of Scotland’s maritime heritage and cultural past.

The following sections detail the responses to the questionnaire and where required provides an explanation of the results along with the consultants’ interpretation of the analysis and research feedback. In some cases the interpretation of the results has been used to answer key points of the study and make provisional recommendations for future activity.



Scottish Fisheries Museum, Anstruther

It should be noted that there were 6 open questions included at the end of the survey, which prompted over 250 individual responses. It would have been impossible to list every single comment so the consultants grouped similar themes together, summarised the comments and recorded the key points made by the respondents.

The GalGael Trust and the Tall Ship
Anchor and Sail Study

ANALYSIS AND STUDY RESULTS

In the opening section of the study Question 1 (Q1) asked respondents to list their name, company, position, address, telephone, and email details. Participants were advised that individual responses and personal information would be kept completely confidential by the consultants and would only be used as combined statistics with the information received on all completed forms.

Q2: Do you practice traditional wooden boatbuilding?

When asked ‘*Do you practice traditional wooden boatbuilding?*’, all 49 participants completed this question with 35 respondents (71%) answering ‘Yes’. Of the 14 respondents who said ‘No’ (29%), eleven of them had boat builders associated with their operations. This incorporated a small number of larger operators with multiple staff and included museums, boat trusts and boatbuilders. Two of these locations had associated boatbuilders who were individually surveyed and they were included in the original group who answered ‘Yes’.

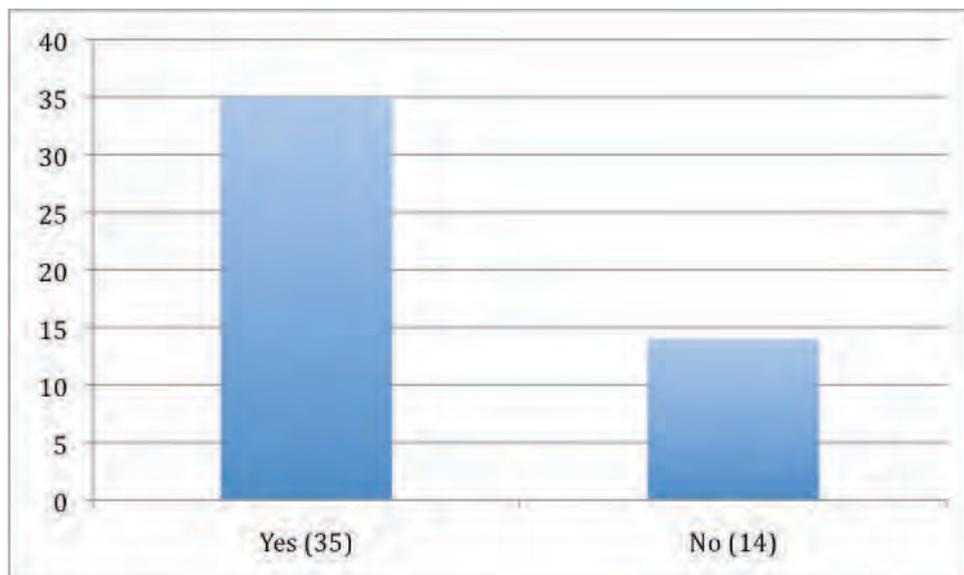


Fig 1. Traditional wooden boatbuilders

If we account for these factors in the overall response it would suggest that 44 of the 49 respondents were actively involved in traditional boat building (90% of those

operators surveyed). It should however be noted that this refers to their ability to build boats and does not reflect orders or the number of boats currently under construction.

General comments associated with this question suggested that orders were fairly thin on the ground overall. There were a number of reasons given for this including the cost of wooden boats, and the lack of promotion in this sector. These points will be considered in greater detail later in the study report.

Q3: Do you repair/restore traditional wooden boats?

When asked ‘Do you repair/restore traditional wooden boats?’ all 49 participants answered this question, with 40 of them (82%) responding ‘Yes’. Of the remaining 9 (18%) a number of them clearly had the capability and experience to repair boats but did not list this as a service that they currently provided.

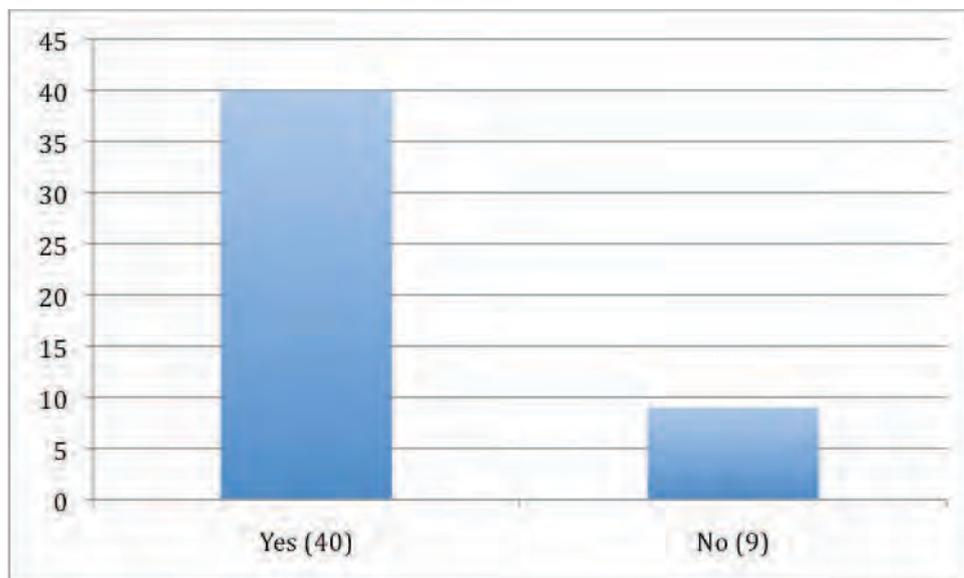


Fig 2. Traditional wooden boat restorers



Peter Matheson, Glasgow

Q4: How many people do you employ as traditional boatbuilders?

When asked 'How many people do you employ as traditional boatbuilders?' All 49 participants answered this question with 35 primarily working alone (72%), four with one member of staff (8%), six with 2 staff (12%), two with 3 staff (4%) and two of the larger companies with 4+ staff (4%).

These figures clearly show the high percentage of people working alone, many of whom are located in rural and often fairly remote areas of Scotland.

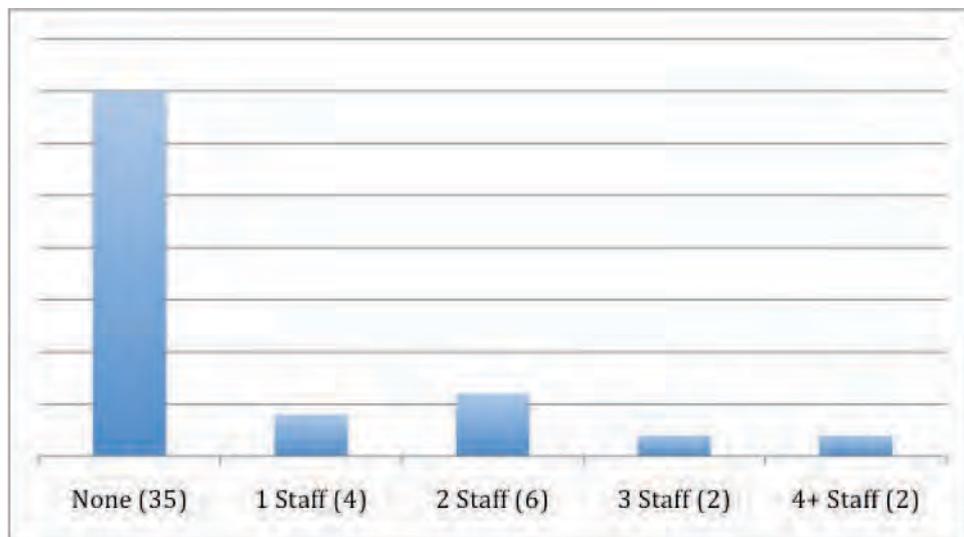


Fig 3. Numbers employed as traditional wooden boatbuilders

Q5: What is their gender?

The 14 respondents who answered this question employed a total of 29 traditional boatbuilders. However, it was apparent early on, that there were some variations in how the question has been perceived at the outset.

The consultants therefore reanalysed the surveys and recorded that 34 self employed individuals or sole traders had indicated that they either built or repaired traditional boats. Taking account of some double counting and reducing the number accordingly, we were able to identify 54 traditional boatbuilders who were all male. There were some females employed at the larger yards but none appeared to be involved in the building of traditional boats.

Q6: How many staff are in each age grouping?

The 14 original respondents who completed the previous question also answered this question. The consultants undertook some further research on the remainder of the 54 staff previously identified as associated with building and repairs and calculated their numbers and percentages within the following age groupings.

Please note that all percentages are rounded up and down accordingly

Age	Number of Staff	% of Total
16 - 24	3	5%
25 - 34	4	7%
35 - 44	5	9%
45 - 54	17	32%
55 - 64	19	35%
65+	6	11%
Totals	54	99%

Fig 4. Staff in each age grouping

Currently 11% of all Scottish traditional boatbuilders and repairers surveyed are over retirement age with a further 35% who will all have reached retirement within the next ten years. While 78% are over 45 years of age only 5% (3 people) are of an age normally associated with apprenticeships. It should also be remembered that some centres have a number of volunteers involved in boatbuilding and repairs who are not listed as being employed in any of the responses.



Dysart Yole (Waxwing), Sandy Macdonald, Ardslnish

Q7: Please list the employment status of any staff

33 participants initially completed this question with 16 others making no response. Among the 33 respondents were 3 of the larger companies who listed all of their staff along with 2 other operators where the staff had no direct involvement in the building or repairing of traditional wooden boats.

If all of the 80 staff in these 5 companies had been included, the analysis of traditional wooden boatbuilders would have been skewed considerably, and would have given the impression that more people were employed in the traditional wooden boat sector than currently are. The initial question should perhaps have been more specific, or broken down into a multiple choice answer.

MWP extrapolated the number of traditional boatbuilders and repairers from the initial list of 33 and reanalysed the remaining 16 participants to ensure that a more accurate assessment of the employment status of traditional boatbuilders was achieved.

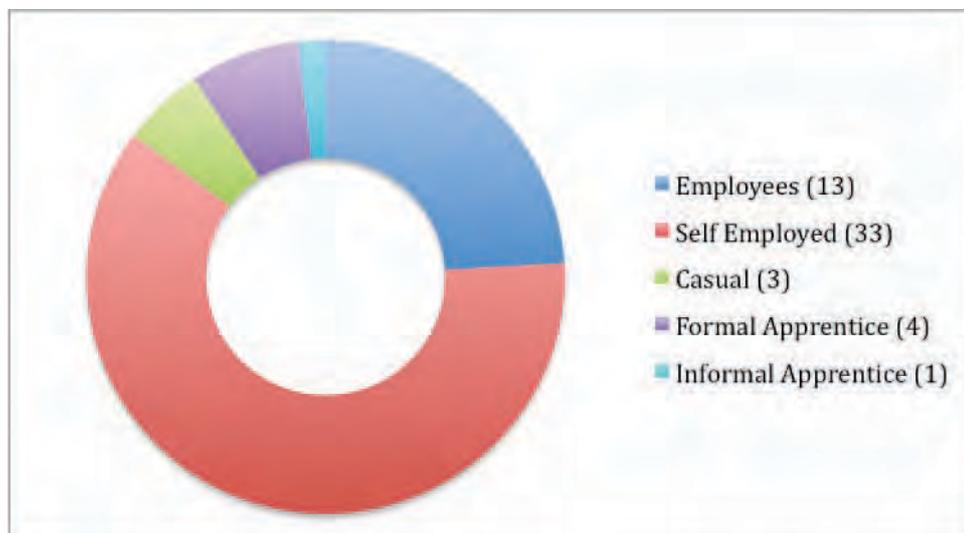


Fig 5. Employment status of all boat builders/repairers

Recording a total of 54 boatbuilding and repair staff it was noted that 13 were Employees (24%), 33 were Self Employed (61%), 3 were Casual (5%), 4 were Formal Apprentices (8%) and 1 was an Informal Apprentice (2%).

Q8: How many people in your area have traditional wooden boatbuilding skills but do not work as professional boatbuilders?

When asked this question all 49 participants responded with 21 businesses recording 'None' (43%), 5 recording 1 person (10%), 5 recording 2 people (10%), 3 recording 3 people (6%) and 15 recording 4+ boatbuilders (31%).



Fig 6. Currently not working as traditional boatbuilders

It should be noted that the consultants are aware that there could be an small element of double counting in the final figure of 31% recording 4 + boatbuilders but we are not able to confirm this from the information provided in the individual surveys.



'Galloway Faering' by Colin Galloway, Inverness

Q9: Can you please provide us with any additional local contacts you may have?

This question was used to gather additional information from known yards and boatbuilders to increase the database of contacts for the study. Twenty-one participants responded and around 15 additional contacts were passed to the consultants who then contacted them with the online survey details.

Q10: How many people in your area are receiving training in the field?

When asked the question, '*How many people in your area are receiving training in the field?*' All 49 responded with 33 participants (68%) stating that no one was receiving training in the field. 5 operators recorded 1 person in training (10%), 2 recorded 2 people in training (4%), 1 recorded 3 people in training (2%) and 8 participants recorded 4+ people in training (16%).

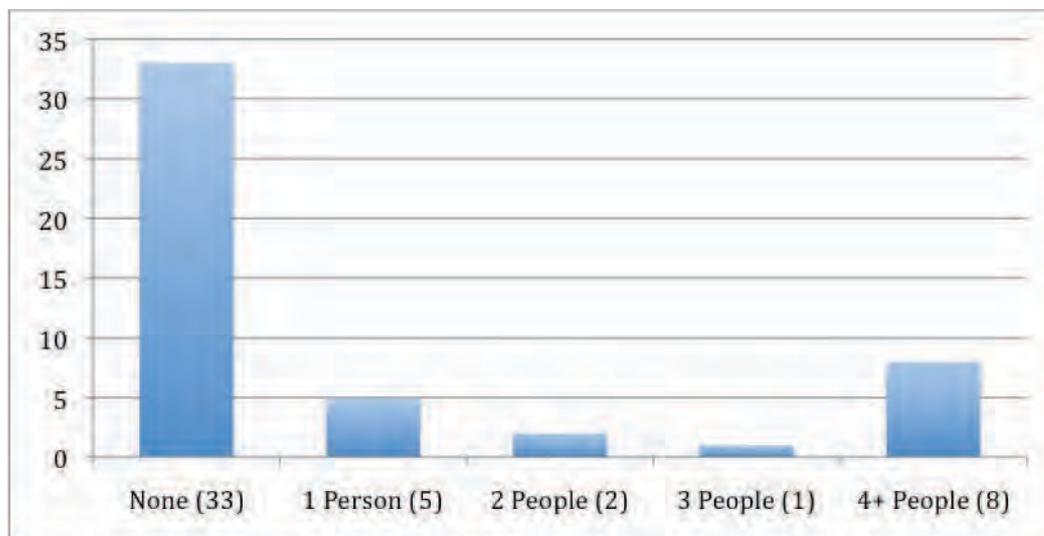


Fig 7. Receiving training in the field



GalGael Workshop, Glasgow

Q11: What form does that training take?

In the previous question (10) only 16 of the 49 respondents stated that they had people in training. The chart below shows the breakdown of each of the main training processes used, which records 5 people in informal training (31%), 3 in formal training (19%), 2 in non-certificated training (13%) and 6 in certificated training programmes (37%).

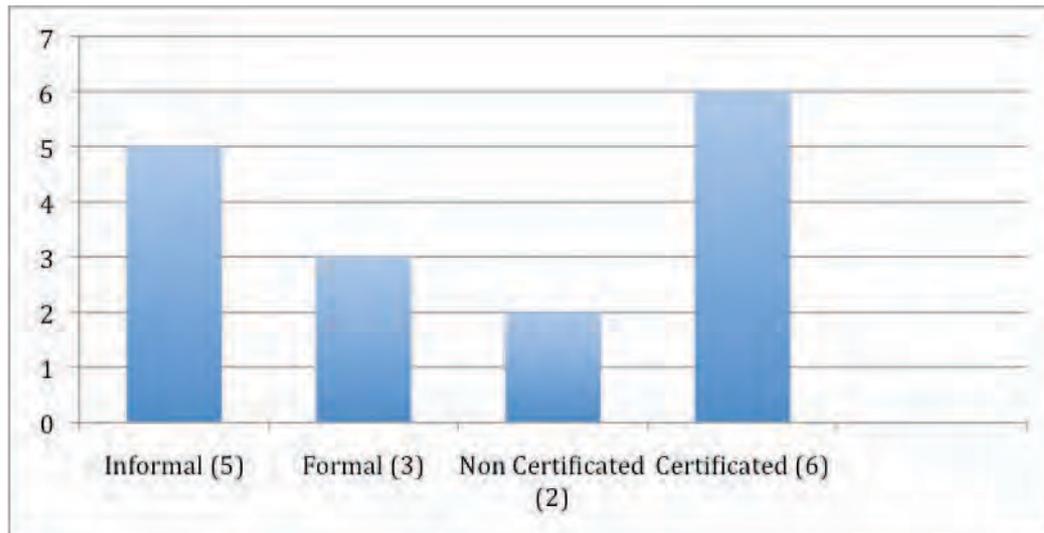


Fig 8. Form of training

Q12: Which specific certificated training best describes your situation?

When asked ‘Which specific certificated training best describes your situation?’ Eleven of the 16 participants undertaking training responded to this question with 2 listing City & Guilds (12%), 5 working with SQA (31%) and 4 with other informal training sources (25%). The remaining 5 (31%) did not list their training provision. MWP believes that some of this training undertaken by the larger companies, may include activities other than traditional wooden boatbuilding but further details were not listed on the survey forms.

There are two main training centres operating in England and a college providing boatbuilding courses in Wales but at present there is no formal college training in Scotland. There are however, some good local training initiatives in some parts of Scotland, such as an initiative in the North East, which has over 300 primary school kids engaged with traditional boatbuilding.

There are also a number of centres where they are either existing or developing programmes for secondary schools where they are working towards offering SQA qualifications. These operators are doing a good job but there is clearly a need for more advanced training in Scotland, on a par with the facilities available in the south of England.



Mark Stockl, Lochbroom (Plockton High School)

Q13: Is there support for traditional boatbuilding training in your area?

When asked this question 47 of the participants responded with 31 (67%) saying that there was no training support in their local area. 29% recorded various comments about traditional boatbuilding training in their local area and a summary of the key comments are listed after the chart below:

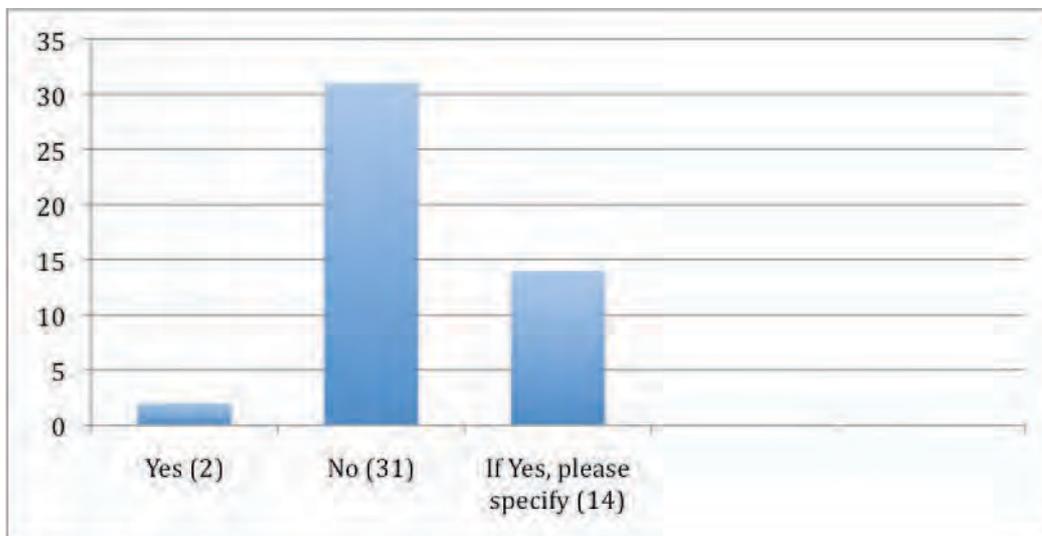


Fig 9. Support for training in your area.

There were a number of comments about the ending of boatbuilding courses at James Watt College in Greenock and recognition that much of the current training is informal and provided by local boatbuilders, some of whom are retired.

The effort of a number of schools across Scotland has created local interest in boatbuilding and funds from Leader, Lottery, local authorities and local donations have supported some of these projects.

Early next year a boat building academy, which will employ 8 one-year pre-apprentices, will open in Ayrshire with the support of the Coastal Communities Fund, a local regeneration company and the local authority.



Adam Way, Lochgilphead (Gylen 2)

There are other levels of support for restoration and training and a small number of boatbuilders run traditional boatbuilding workshops. There are some concerns about how many of the trained personnel go on to make a reasonable living with their skills by progressing into employment.

Q14: What are the main constraints to training in this sector?

When asked ‘*What the main constraints to training were in this sector?*’ There were responses from 40 people (82%) and the key issues are summarised below.

There are concerns about the lack of quality boatbuilding and related skills courses in Scotland tailored to candidates who wish to enter the industry. Difficulties with the availability of funding for apprenticeship training is further compounded by the high costs of specialist boatbuilding courses and the distance to colleges in the south of the UK.

The skills base seems to be diminishing partly due to the lack of regular sources of work and opportunities. Some builders are winding down their business activities due to the lack of work, although some are prepared to re-engage if new boats are commissioned.

Wooden boats tend to cost more, so market size and demand determines whether builders can justify taking on apprentices or employees. There is also a lack of awareness of traditional boats and it is often difficult to find people willing to manage projects. However, there is hope that some new apprenticeship schemes will be established shortly in parts of Scotland.



Peter Matheson, Glasgow (Boy Peter)

The decline of the fishing industry has impacted on wooden boatbuilding and repair. Lack of investment funds, building opportunities, insurance costs, availability of suitable premises, and health & safety conditions always pose a challenge to the sector.

The St Ayles Skiff, which although not a traditional boat, is attracting youngsters and women in particular to coastal rowing. Over 130 have been sold, with 84 in the UK and 78 of them based in Scotland - providing an entry to wooden boat use and competition.



St Ayles Skiff, 'Chris O'Kanaid' Scottish Fisheries Museum, Anstruther

Q15: Is skills training required for the future?

When asked '*Is skills training required for the future?*' 48 people responded to this question (98% of participants). 36 of them commented on skills training for the future and the key issues are summaries in this following section of the report.

The most common statement referred to modern apprenticeships, training at schools, flexible local training. Skills training should start in schools, as boat building is a readily transferable skill that can be used in the construction industry.

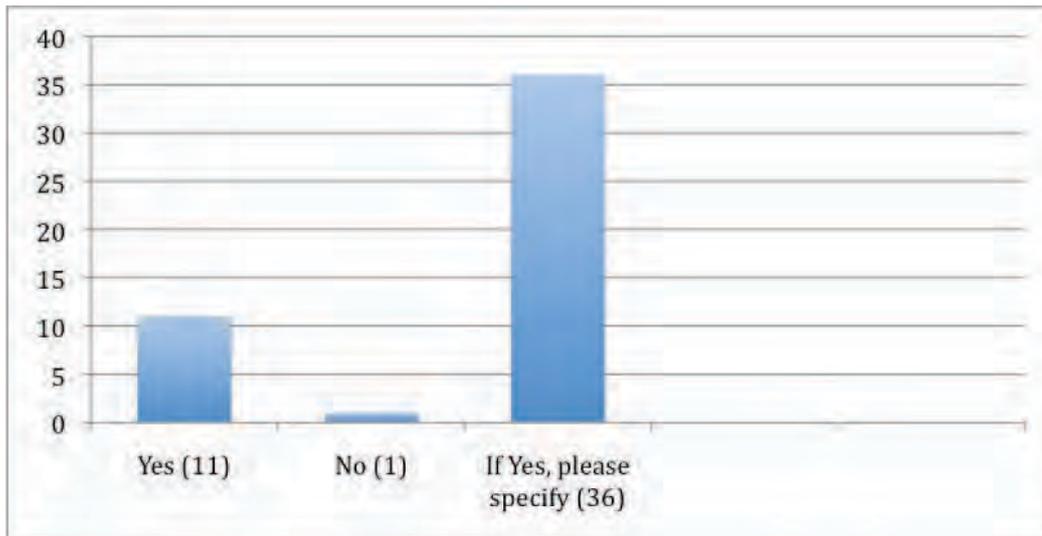


Fig 10: Future skills training required

Schools could use the boats built for competition as this encourages interest and creates a competitive leisure activity. Interested young people should be encouraged to take part in projects, particularly where local boat builders are willing to offer their advice and local training.

Apprenticeships should be used for renovation work and could be operated particularly alongside museums. In the nineties Norway successfully funded a three year programme where 3 boatbuilders employed 2 apprentices each to help counter the decline in traditional boatbuilding.

Creating an increase in demand would be the most helpful driver for the retention of traditional wooden boat building skills. Marketing activity and future funding will be critical to support this as has happened in parts of the USA. A steady market is required to justify investment in training. There is little point in training without work in prospect.

Formal SVQ courses and full time City and Guilds level training is desirable as this is the preferred qualification in England allowing movement throughout UK. The Government should be encouraged to support the training and development of traditional boat building in Scotland. Consider providing assistance for employers to procure grants to enable them to improve the working environment to accommodate additional staff and help ease the wage burden. There also needs to be a greater awareness of the implications if Scotland loses traditional boatbuilding skills.

Q16: What support is required to make a difference in this area?

Thirty-eight participants (77%) responded to this question

There is a need for more wooden fishing or pleasure boats to help restore the market and creating an environment that will support opportunities for builders to make a better living from boat building. Some sort of collective marketing might help with demand, which may lead to some sort of shared training programme.

You need to improve the buying market. Public funding helps but investment needs to come from more sustainable areas to stimulate the market. Funding in the form of bursaries or grants, which would enable smaller boatbuilders to take on an apprentice and the development of a network of support for those offering apprenticeships in the workplace. There are examples where well funded boat building projects that have relevance to the locality have stimulated interest and the involvement of local youngsters.



The Pinnacle at the The Tall Ship, Glasgow

In some cases the challenge for boatbuilders is the need to secure suitable premises and attract financial support to buy certain tools. The availability of timber can be an issue as in the UK (compared to the USA) it is often hard to source good wood at reasonable prices.

The long term training of a smaller group of people to a high level may be better than larger numbers of informally trained people who might find it harder to secure employment. Concentrated support for this type of training is required and should be located in one area. The provision of training should be in Scotland and should be sufficiently flexible to allow companies located away from the central belt to send employees for longer block courses.

Q17: Other than skills training what would ensure preservation of these skills and heritage?

Forty participants (82%) responded to this question with the following themes.

Better marketing and awareness of traditional boats with events as well as the development of websites. Many of the small boatbuilders cannot even afford basic websites or much promotional activity. In certain locations community boat sheds are required along with the progression of skills, which can be rolled out nationally.



'Reaper', Anstruther

Exhibitions and visits to other maritime events and locations where boats and the skills in building them, can be displayed and promoted to the general public. Perhaps Scottish museums could sponsor the building of traditional local boats by encouraging local authorities to assist with the funding

The awareness of our maritime heritage needs to be increased. People know of the east coast fishing boats and the shipbuilding on the Clyde but more information needs to be distributed about the many other traditional boats that were common to Scotland. Greater public understanding of the heritage is required and this could

include oral history and documentary filming. It is important that traditional skills are recorded in the form of written, photographic or film footage wherever possible so that we do not lose the methods and techniques involved.

Encourage the use of traditional boats in activities such as racing and community sailing. More opportunities for folk to volunteer and gain practical experience helping to repair or build boats at various locations throughout Scotland.

Wider public appreciation of these traditional skills and more awareness of our local maritime heritage. Make people aware that professional work on their boat will maintain value, be safer, and add to their pleasure.

Government recognition of what will be a skill only available in other countries such as Ireland, Norway, Denmark, Holland, England and France. These countries encourage traditional boatbuilding. The Government should recognize the green credentials of wooden boats and speak to the governments of these countries.

The sector requires better business planning, capacity to supervise and to develop partnerships and efforts made to encourage the Scottish Government to fund historic ships preservation projects.



International Boatbuilding Training College, Lowestoft

Q18: Do you agree with the statement “Scottish Maritime Heritage is at risk of being lost”?

All 49 participants answered this question and 86% agreed that Scottish Maritime Heritage was a risk of being lost.

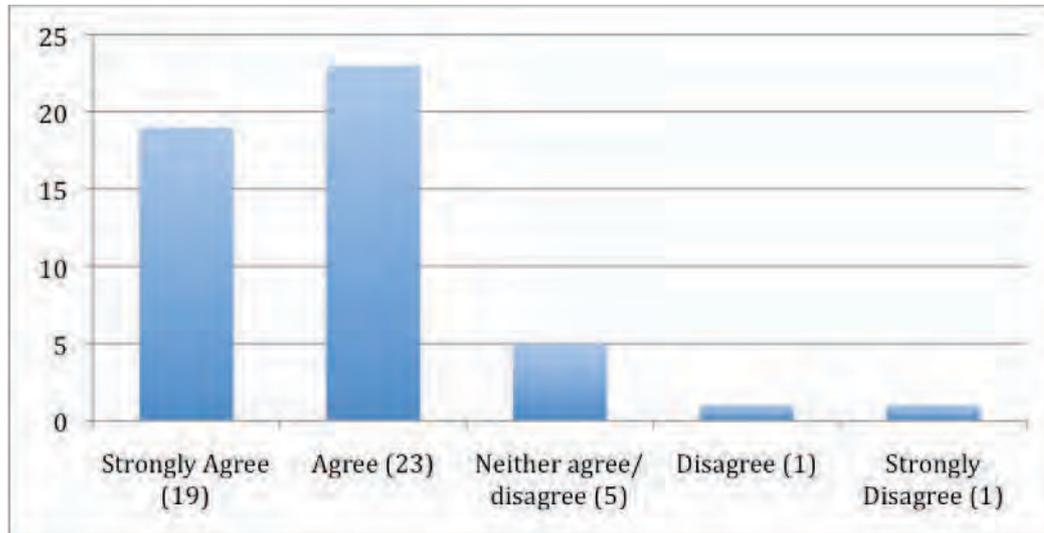


Fig 11: Is Scottish Maritime Heritage at risk

Q19: How do you feel about the future of traditional wooden boat heritage?

When asked, ‘How do you feel about the future of traditional wooden boat heritage?’ 43 (88%) of the 49 participants answered this question.

NHS-UK runs the National Register of Historic Vessels, which lists over 1,200 craft in the UK. 82 of these vessels are located in Scotland and 25 of these form part of the National Historic Fleet, being deemed of pre-eminent significance and therefore meriting the highest priority in terms of conservation. It is vital that the skills to maintain and conserve these vessels are kept alive as happens in Holland, the USA and the United Kingdom. Heritage refers to something inherited from the past and the future must surely be based on the preservation of the vessels still viable for restoration.

Views are mixed on this subject but there is optimism with regard to what's being achieved in some locations. Many people are of the opinion that as long as there is enthusiasm for traditional boats their future will be supported and the heritage

will survive and where there is a competition based tradition the skills are alive.

A number of respondents felt that the sector's value and importance has not been promoted enough. Others say that it is a dying art and unless traditional boatbuilding skills are passed on, the knowledge may be lost.

Without a learning centre based in Scotland the future for traditional boats will mean bringing skilled labour from other parts of the UK or abroad to carry out work. This will incur greater costs and limit the amount of time spent on repairs. Traditional wooden boat heritage is part of an interconnected mix of trades including shipbuilding, boatbuilding, rigging, blacksmithing, joinery and engineering.

It may be too late for Scottish boat builders to pass on their skills. Boat building training centres are now all over England and it will probably be English boat builders who will keep up the tradition in Scotland.



Jonny Burke, Glasgow - Caledonian Yawl 'Rascal'

The future may look potentially bleak but there is interest around and there are opportunities but more skills sharing and partnership working is required. There is a national demand for restoration skills of classic boats but there is a need for the skills to be spread around the coast.

Due to the popularity of home built boats and classic small boat culture there is little risk of that heritage being lost any time soon. There will always be ways to work for small boatbuilding operators and suppliers of traditional boat building equipment and materials, as long as they are prepared to go looking for it.

There are possibilities and it could be a stronger industry if the right support was available. It is running the risk of declining unless newly qualified boatbuilders are given the support they need. Traditional boats carry great stories and illuminate lost cultures of the past.

Since the inception of the Scottish rowing project there seems to be a bit more awareness of our heritage, which will be kept alive. Getting good wood for traditional boats is difficult and expensive.

We are striving to reintroduce almost forgotten boat designs from our local heritage through marketing them to the modern leisure boating public. This we do nationally having just returned from exhibiting at the Southampton boat show, through website and magazine editorial. We are creating a market for ourselves and west of Scotland boats. By creating a market you create demand for the traditional and other skills. Using the work heritage implies that we perpetuate skills purely for some cosy nostalgia, which is not the case.

Q20: What do you think the population of Scotland feel about maritime heritage?

When asked, *‘What do you think the population of Scotland feel about maritime heritage?’*⁴⁴ (90%) of the 49 participants answered this question.

This question attracted a mixed response but there were more people who believed that the public have positive views in support of maritime heritage than not. Those surveyed who felt otherwise made statements such as, ‘I don’t think that the public are interested, probably not bothered until it is too late, people without boats probably don’t even care’.

There were other views that suggested that not enough people are aware of what

we have or what could be lost and that the general public did not realise that maritime heritage is under threat from financial pressures.

‘We have no boat building schools nor is boat building taught in our colleges. There are no wooden boat shows in Scotland. At the risk of turning tall ships into theme parks we need to get the public interested’.

Positive responses claimed that the general public are aware and approve of Scotland’s maritime heritage. Some may be unclear about the extent of its heritage and the potential to attract tourism and more work to the country. When people see an old wooden boat and hear its history they are moved and enthusiastic but otherwise ‘out of sight and out of mind’.



Volunteers at The Tall Ship, Glasgow

‘I think the coastal areas in particular care about maritime heritage but more has to be done to bring it to the attention of the rest of the country. Look how the public support the Tall Ships, Classic Boat Festivals and the Waverly!’

There were a number of comments saying that the Scots are proud, nostalgic and enthusiastic about their maritime heritage and Scotland should use this to greater effect by capitalising on its promotion and halting any further decline in these skills losses. Boatbuilders also stated that wooden boats always get a good response at public exhibitions.

A number of respondents also stated that we are an island community therefore

the sea is what has historically connected Scotland to the rest of the world. Maritime history is extremely important. It is impossible not to be inspired, excited and interested in what we find around our coastline. Even those who hardly ever set foot in a boat will still become excited by maritime history or special events with a maritime theme.

‘There are a large number of Scots who own or use boats throughout the year. This includes sailing and motoring in canals, lochs or the sea. There are also many still fishing commercially or just for pleasure’.

‘We must hope that most people in Scotland are aware of the importance of the sea to our cultural identity and the need to preserve our maritime heritage’.



Adam Way, Lochgilphead

“The consultants would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the participants in this study for their prompt responses and the use of the images supplied”

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**List of 49 Boatbuilders and Organisations who participated in the Survey of
Traditional Wooden Boatbuilding in Scotland - October 2013**

Shetland Museum & Archive - Lerwick, Shetland
Tommy Isbister, Trondra - Shetland
Peter Campbell, The Swan Trust - Lerwick
Unst Boat Haven, Unst - Shetland
Willie Mouat, Haroldswick - Shetland
Ian Best - Fair Isle
Ian Richardson, Stromness - Orkney
Mark Shiner, Orkney College, Stromness - Orkney
Sam Marcus, Westray - Orkney
Angus Smith, Point - Isle of Lewis
Amanda Darling, An Sulaire Trust, Stornoway - Isle of Lewis
Mary Norton, Grimsay Boat Shed, Grimsay - North Uist
Iain Oughtred, Portree - Isle of Skye
Allan Sillence, Waternish - Isle of Skye
Joe Vale, Tiree Maritime Trust, Scarinish - Isle of Tiree
Jack Glover, Portnahaven - Isle of Islay
Topher Dawson, Scottish Coastal Rowing Association, Ullapool - Highland
Adrian Morgan, Ullapool - Highland
Mark Stockl, Garve - Highland
Jamie Kean, Am Bata, Plockton - Highland
Chris Mathieson, Dornie - Highland
Sandy Macdonald, Acharacle - Argyll
Don Hinds, Fort William - Highland
Jack Kay, Ardrishaig - Argyll
Adam Way, Lochgilphead - Argyll
Mark Cameron, Ardfern - Argyll
Phil Robertson, Tarbert Traditional Boat Festival, Tarbert - Argyll
Mike McSweeney, Balvicar, Isle of Seil - Argyll
Ewen Ferguson, Ardmaleish, Port Bannatyne - Isle of Bute
Chris Ings, Garelochhead - Argyll
Peter Matheson, Clydebank - Glasgow
Jonny Burke, Govan - Glasgow
Ben Duffin, The Galgael Trust, Govan - Glasgow
Andy Aire, The Tall Ship, Riverside - Glasgow
Martin Hughes, Fairlie - Ayrshire
David Mann, Scottish Maritime Museum, Irvine - Ayrshire
Tim Goldstraw, Kirkcudbright - Dumfries & Galloway
John Campbell, Beauly - Highland
Robin Graham Reid, Inverness - Highland
Nigel Swearse, Kilmelford - Argyll
Graeme Allan, Keith - Aberdeenshire
Lorna Summers, Portsoy Traditional Boat Festival, Portsoy - Aberdeenshire
Graham Cathcart, Banff - Aberdeenshire
Harry Simpson, Arbroath - Angus
Simon Hayhow, Scottish Fisheries Museum, Anstruther - Fife
Alec Jordan, Leven, Fife
John Ferguson, Stanley - Perthshire
Stan Reeves - Edinburgh
Hannah Cunliffe, National Historic Ships UK, Greenwich - London

There are a number of locations in Scotland where there are developments taking place with traditional boats. Below we have highlighted only two of them although there are many others where individual boatbuilders and other organisations are interacting with school children and other members of local communities.

Scottish Maritime Museum - Irvine, Ayrshire

The Scottish Maritime Museum has received funding from the Coastal Communities Fund, Irvine Bay Regeneration Company and North Ayrshire Council to start a Boat Building Academy, which will employ 8 one year pre-apprentices over the next two years.

The initial courses will ensure that there is a core of young people with a basic knowledge of the skills required and it is hoped that Modern Apprenticeships and commercial courses will be developed and sustained. The inclusion of modern techniques will allow the participants to mix new and traditional skills, which should allow them to endure in the market place. A possible risk would be to have more courses, facilities and trainees than the market could take, as that would make sustainability difficult with training potentially being stopped due to lack of funding.

The current resurgence in Coastal Rowing is excellent but alone is not enough to energise the public interest in wooden boats. Interest in Maritime heritage is growing and that the general public is aware of the role Scotland played in the world. However there is currently little or no appetite to fund the restoration of any major vessels, iron or wood.

Maritime Heritage on the Clyde tends to focus on the Great ships built in the large yards and not the smaller vessels, with Fifes being the exception. We need to retain big yard skills (riveters etc) and ensure that we have boat builders trained if only to maintain the collections held across the country.



Scottish Maritime Museum, Irvine

Scottish Traditional Boat Festival - Portsoy, Aberdeenshire

The Portsoy Organisation for Restoration and Training (PORT), which is the boatbuilding arm of the Scottish Traditional Boat Festival, held annually at Portsoy, aims to maintain and restore existing historic boats from our area.

We raise public awareness and pride in our historic boatbuilding connections and record and share traditional skills and methods while training anyone interested in being part of the group. We have good links with local schools with over 300 primary kids been involved in boatbuilding. Pupils have built and sailed 16 Optimist dinghies - then produced 8 of our own variation - the 'Pessimist' designed to be paddled by four kids.



Primary School Boatbuilders and Sailors

Secondary youngsters also built and launched a 'Faering' and have been involved in our introductory boatbuilding programme. We are currently developing a programme for secondary schools and working towards being able to offer SQA courses.

PORT has received substantial funding to create a Community Boatbuilding Centre (currently underway), also generous Heritage Lottery funding to build and record a traditional wooden 'Salmon Coble'.

A group of local women got involved in the Coastal Rowing Project and built and competed in their own skiff. Not to be outdone, the men also built a skiff, which has just been launched. -We've generated a lot of interest in skiff racing and boatbuilding in general through this project.

We offer hands on skills training under the guidance of experienced boatbuilders. We also will be providing proficiency in the safe use of large boatbuilding tools, which will be undertaken by the first group at Banff/Buchan College in November.

With the completion of our Community Boat Shed, the progression of skills, the development of our website, exhibitions and visits to other maritime events, we can display what has been achieved locally. Everyone currently involved is a volunteer, however, when funding becomes available next year, we will employ a boatbuilder and at least one apprentice. The long term vision is for capacity building for all involved, so that everyone can achieve their maximum potential.

Ends