

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
Cross Party Group on Recreational Boating
and Marine Tourism, by Conference Call
24th November 2020 at 7pm**

1. Welcome and Apologies

Stuart McMillan MSP welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes and Action Points from Last Meeting

18th September 2020/29th October 2020

Both sets of minutes were approved as an accurate record.

Proposed: Gordon Daly

Seconded: Simon Limb

Action Points from Last Meeting

Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee

PM to contact Clerk to the Committee Lynn Tullis and Convenor Gillian Martin MSP (SNP Aberdeen).

East Coast

PM reported that she had discussed with Graham Russell and there is no East Coast planning group yet. However, Forth Estuary Forum and the Tay Estuary Forum have been carrying out preliminary work that will help underpin the planning of the Forth and Tay Marine Region.

PM to invite Chris Cutts (chris.cutts@forthestuaryforum.co.uk) to discuss.

Marine Litter - Recycling Schemes

PM will send an email to both Audit Scotland and Keep Scotland Beautiful to get information and will circulate information.

Invite to Marc Crothall

PM to send invite to Marc Crothall to meeting on 23rd February 2021.

Future items for discussion at meetings in 2021

SMCM requested that PM send a request for members to feed in the items that they would wish to be discussed at future meetings. A doodle poll will then be issued to rate the most popular items.

3. Update on EU Brexit

SMCM reported that currently there has been no deal been agreed with the EU.

4. Red/White Diesel

PM reported that the RYA response had been circulated to members.

Action: JS asked if we could get an indication of timeframe from HMRC.

SMCM stated that it will be an ever changing issue, whatever the outcome that the sector will respond as required.

5. Marine Tourism Strategy Update

JS outlined his presentation.

JS stated that they are looking for expressions of interest to a commitment to help inform the process. **Action: JS requested that CPG members fed back comments to him and Aileen Monk.**

ML stated that once we have decided the main topics with partners there will be a number of different routes. SL emphasised that it should not be a top- down instruction. GP asked what input and skill set were they seeking. JS stated that they have developed a commitment template that they would work through with the organisation and would test it out to ascertain that it is user friendly. JS stated that we are seeking to help organisations and small businesses and clubs to articulate and shape their contribution. **Action: GP to discuss the Partnership Pack further with JS.**

SMCM asked about the economic and social effects of COVID 19 and what has been planned and proposed in future and asked for thoughts on how it will play out and whether there had been any asks to get help and support from politicians. JS stated that they had decided not to launch 6 months ago and have taken the time to reflect to see the strategy was fit for purpose. There has been partnership working with the Scottish Tourism Emergency Response (STERG) and across various channels e.g. Carbon/Marketing that is a positive move forward for these organisations.

The partnerships will offer the back-bone of support and support each other. Internal communications and passage of information and will also provide Job opportunities/Product opportunities and we are at the beginning of that journey. SMCM stated that the story telling and jobs opportunities will be crucial in years ahead and partnerships in small and rural communities will be very important.

SL stated that we are seeing on the ground accelerated change due to ongoing situation with change of use/patterns/focus on leisure time becoming major focal points. The purchase of second- hand boat sales, holiday cottages/self centre led tourism/brokerages. The Vaccine/Brexit solution will bring significant leisure opportunities in 2022.

SMCM stated that as of next summer there will be various vaccines however there may be a resistance for travel abroad and should encourage staycations. Emma Harper MSP stated that YOCW 2021 will provide a support mechanism to support marine tourism.

AR stated that there is research sitting on Visit Scotland website on self contained/ safe holdings. We will be facing travel restrictions and require to be careful in remote rural areas and be careful in what is presented in a recovery programme. We also require to talk to the Destination Management Organisations and Harbour Authorities and continue to "Respect the destination".

Josie Saunders stated that the opportunity is there and James Stuart and a number of organisations are seeing the opportunities through the Marine Tourism Strategy.

In communications – the partnership opportunities were great in the first Tourism Strategy. The Partnership Plan gives us the opportunity to use it as a promotional tool and the sum of parts will make this connectivity and open up discussions for the group.

6. Impact of Coronavirus (open discussion and sharing)

GD reported that Seagull Trust Cruises had 25,000 passengers on canal with 10 boats and this reduced to zero at present. The crew are getting older and have not had practice this year and have not been able to do any fundraising. The whole fleet has been laid up, the insurance bill is less but there are still other bills to pay. It has impacted on the operation greatly. When they open again there will be reluctance for people to come out of care homes and old crew members and hospital patients. Even although we have vaccines the virus won't have gone away.

SMCM asked GD if he had approached local MSP/MP re any assistance that would be available. GD stated that they are on a sound financial footing. It is more the passenger/crew not knowing what to expect and there will require to be a training programme.

SMCM suggested widening the passenger base as there will be many that won't want to take part it may be an opportunity to bring in new passengers and customers. GD explained that their ethos is free canal cruising for those with special needs but the definition is very broad. The insurers state that because that it their ethos then there has to be that focus.

SK informed GD about the "Adapt and Thrive" Programme where applications for funding can be made to increase the customer base to cover children and young people. GD confirmed that it had been discussed. Myles Farnbank reported that there are schools who are in certain demographics can apply for funding, enhance the number of children, free school meals. GD explained that the schools do not see this as their role.

7. Stranraer Watersports Association Feasibility Study – plans for a Water Sports Activity, Training and Regatta Centre in Stranraer

David Davies provided a presentation and there then followed an opportunity for questions.

SMCM thanked the team for their very informative and interesting presentation and wished him well with the project.

SMCM asked if the videos were available on their website. **Action: David Davies stated that they are not on the website but they would now be posted up.**

Clair McFarlan offered the support and assistance of Solway Firth Partnership with communications and social media. SWSA thanked them and stated that they would be in contact. Ros Surtees, Councillor for Stranraer added her support to this and stated that it would be an excellent opportunity to put Stranraer on the map. Emma Harper MSP commended their work and stated that it crosses many ministerial portfolios. SL stated that

modern watersports will engage with local community and looking beyond there is a real role for schools to play.

SMCM suggested having a sponsored event in the Parliament inviting MSPs to look at this as an opportunity to help promote Stranraer as a location. Emma Harper MSP also suggested having an Oysters and Gin event. Emma Harper MSP asked what the next steps were. Wendi Cuffe stated that they are working with colleges and schools to get young people involved in different areas such as event admin, boat building etc. The “Get Wet Programme” will give them an idea of the type of activities they want to get involved in. The Business Case has support from Dumfries and Galloway Council to take business case forward, they are working for funding to be released and engagement will feed into this. They will be looking to procure funding “Active Beach” and then put in infrastructure that is accessible. The capital will then allow them to start building and align with the local authority for the marina expansion.

They will also deliver the “Get Wet” programme in 2021. Rowing is one of the activities that will be included and they will be looking to build lighter boats and keep the momentum going, this will all be dependant on what the COVID-19 situation is at that time. DD stated that they are getting funding to get professional coaches in place. Scottish Canals offered to help with the media.

Annabel Lawrence provided an overview of the “Snorkel Challenge” and suggested that this might be suitable for this type of activity. WC stated that this would be absolutely the type of suitable activity and that they are keen to learn from other people and are keen to work with organisations. GR suggested that trailer sailing boats would be good to be used in this area too.

Action: Contact details for Annabel Lawrence to be passed to Wendi Cuffe.

SMCM thanked them very much and wished the Stranraer Watersports Association every success.

8. AOCB/Future Business

New Marina - Ramsey, Isle of Man

SMCM reported about the new marina in Ramsey, Isle of Man who had sought support from him and wanted to make everyone aware should further information come through.

Ayrshire Growth Deal

ML gave his congratulations to North Ayrshire Council for securing £25m investment towards tourism in the Clyde.

Sail Scotland – Joint Declaration

AR reported that a joint declaration has been signed between Sail Scotland, VisitScotland and Wild Scotland. Information available on the link below:

www.sailscotland.org.uk/news/posts/2020/sail-scotland-tourism-declares. This was declared as part of Adventure Tourism Week. It falls under the Green Blue banner. It is a world- wide initiative. VisitScotland is the first to make the declaration and it is embedded in the tourism industry. It is a very good development with sailing in Scotland when taking to market. The Sail Scotland Board were keen to deliver and take across business networks and take it down into business activities. There has been good traction and positive action. In the next 12 months an action plan will be devised and they will be working with other partners.

Ronnie Rusack – Josie Saunders informed the group that Ronnie Rusack sadly passed away today. The CPG gave recognition to Ronnie Rusack for the huge role he played in inland waterways. SMCM asked that JS pass on the CPG’s condolences to his family.

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 23rd February 2021 at 6pm.

Thanks were given for all contributions and the meeting closed with vote of thanks to Chair.

APPENDIX 1 – ACTIONS

1.	<p><u>Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee</u></p> <p>PM to contact Clerk to the Committee Lynn Tullis and Convenor Gillian Martin MSP (SNP Aberdeen).</p>	SB	18/9/20	
		SMCM	18/9/20	
2.	<p><u>East Coast</u></p> <p>Forth Estuary Forum and the Tay Estuary Forum have been carrying out preliminary work that will help underpin the planning of the Forth and Tay Marine Region.</p> <p>Invite to be sent to Chris Cutts (chris.cutts@forthestuaryforum.co.uk) to discuss.</p>	PM		Ongoing
3.	<p><u>Marine Litter</u></p> <p>Recycling Schemes – PM to send an email to both Audit Scotland and Keep Scotland Beautiful to get information and will circulate information.</p>	PM		Ongoing
4.	<p><u>Red/White Diesel</u></p> <p>Obtain an indication of timeframe from HMRC in relation to RYA response.</p>	PM		
5.	<p><u>Report for Parliament</u></p> <p>This will be drafted for the Parliamentary end of session in 2021.</p>	SMCM	18/9/20	Ongoing

6.	<p><u>Future Meetings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marc Crothall to be invited to provide detail on the National Tourism Strategy • Investigate the possibility of having a joint meeting with Cross Party Group on Sport • Launch of the Marine Tourism Partnership Charter and invite Cabinet Secretary followed by reception when this will allow. • SMCM requested that PM send a request for members to feed in the items that they would wish to be discussed at future meetings. A doodle poll will then be issued to rate the most popular items. 	PM		To be invited to Feb 21 meeting
		PM		Ongoing
		M Latimer		Ongoing
		PM		Ongoing

**APPENDIX 2
ATTENDANCE**

	Name	Organisation
1.	Stuart McMillan MSP	Convenor
2.	Emma Harper MSP	
3.	Pauline McGrow	RYA Scotland, Secretariat
4.	Andrew Rendle	Scottish Coastal Rowing Association
5.	Jonathan Mosse	RYA Scotland/Inland Waterways Association
6.	Graham Russell	RYA Scotland
7.	Carlene McAvoy	Water Safety Scotland
8.	Sarah Kennedy	Fort William and Shoreline Community Interest Company
9.	David Davies	Stranraer Watersports Association
10.	James Stuart	British Marine Scotland
11.	Harry Harbottle	Stranraer Watersports Association
12.	Wendi Cuffe	Stranraer Watersports Association
13.	Steven Dampney	Stranraer Watersports Association
14.	Athena Carnaghan	Stranraer Watersports Association
15.	Myles Farnbank	Scottish Adventure Activities Forum
16.	Martin Latimer	British Marine Scotland
17.	Annabel Lawrence	University of Highlands and Islands
18.	Simon Limb	British Marine Scotland
19.	Michael Avril	Water Safety Scotland
20.	Stuart Smith	Scottish Canoe Association
21.	Elid Ormiston	West Highland College
22.	Clair McFarlan	Solway Firth Partnership

23.	Glenn Porter	Clyde Cruising Club, Sail Scotland, RYAS/Ocean Sailing Scotland
24.	Alan Rankin	Sail Scotland
25.	Ros Surtees	
26.	Gordon Daly	RYA Scotland/Individual
27.	Josie Saunders	Scottish Canals

APPENDIX 3

APOLOGIES

Andrew Rendle	Scottish Coastal Rowing Association
Carlene McAvoy	ROSPA
Richard Millar	Scottish Canals
Catherine Topley	Scottish Canals