

# **Cross-Party Group on Recreational Boating and Marine Tourism**

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 6pm

Minute

Present

MSPs

Stuart McMillan, MSP

Emma Harper MSP

Invited guests

Ronan O'Hara, CEO Crown Estate Scotland

Esther Black, Director of Corporate Operations Crown Estate Scotland

James Adams, Tourism Resources Company

Non-MSP Group Members

Martin Latimer, British Marine Scotland

Duncan Tannahill, RYA Scotland and  
West Highlands Anchorages and Moorings Association

Gordon Daly, RYA Scotland/Scottish Waterways for All/Seagull Trust Cruises

Scott Johnson, Waverley Excursions Ltd

Clair McFarlan, Solway Firth Partnership

Momchil Terziev

Simon Limb, British Marine Scotland

Graham Russell, RYA Scotland

Matthew Leitch, Office Manager to Stuart McMillan MSP

Aileen Monk, British Marine Scotland

Sarah Kennedy, Fort William Marina & Shoreline Community Interest Company

Finlo Cottier, CEO, RYA Scotland

Alan Kohler, Cruising Association (Celtic)

Barry Schafe, Forth Estuary Forum/Scotboats

Simon McDonald, (Fisheries Aquaculture and Processing Consultant)

Cameron Marshall, Waverley Excursions

Stuart Smith, CEO, Scottish Canoe Association

## Apologies

### Name

### Organisation

Finlay Carson MSP	
Eilid Ormiston	UHI West Highland
Charles Bird	RYA Scotland
Jonathan Mosse	RYA Scotland
Laurie Piper	Scottish Canals
Andrew Rendle	Scottish Coastal Rowing Association
John Telfer	Scottish Government
David Adams McGilp	VisitScotland
Derek Peters	Waverley Excursions

## Agenda item 1 - Welcome and Apologies

Stuart McMillan MSP welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

## Agenda Item 2 – Minutes and Action Points from last meeting

The minutes were approved as an accurate record with the following changes:

**Proposed: Gordon Daly**

**Seconded: Simon Limb**

- Page 4, heading 3, paragraph 2, a dot and extra spaces on line 2 "and . conversation"
- Page 4, heading 3, paragraph 6, "being a restricted and" - should restricted be restriction?
- Page 5, agenda item 4, 2nd paragraph, "British Marine Scotland s a" should be "is a"
- Page 5, penultimate paragraph, no t on last word
- Page 6, paragraph 5 - comma at end instead of full stop
- Page 6, paragraph 8 - comma after space instead of before "facilities ,where"
- Page 7, paragraph 3 - doesn't make sense "what the approach that has taken at all levels." would it be "what the approach is that has been taken at all levels"?
- Page 9 is blank so needs to be removed
- Eilid Ormiston, UHI West Highland – add to present list

Simon McDonald asked that the details in the HPMA section be amended:

The following highlighted amendments to be made:

**GR stated as regards Highly Protected Marine Areas a lot of this has been scoped out and also MPA on recreational areas. Recreational boaters recognise the importance of the fishing industry and it is at a beginning of a process.**

**Simon McDonald (West Coast Inshore Fisheries Group) stated that there is currently a spatial squeeze and the HPMA will be rearing its head shortly. There is a MPA specifically for the leisure industry and would welcome ideas and discussion that could take place between the two groups on offshore renewables and larger developments all the time especially in the east coast and provided example of Machair development in Islay. There are worries about this being a restricted and there is HPMA about to come for marina renewables and aquaculture. There is also a proposed seaweed farm on east of Bute.**

**Corrections made to:** Simon McDonald (Fisheries Aquaculture and Processing Consultant) stated that there is currently a spatial squeeze and the HPMA will be rearing its head shortly. It would be helpful to hold discussions between the two groups on offshore renewables as there are larger developments all the time especially in the east coast. He also provided example of the Machair development in Islay. There are worries about this being restriction on sailing. There is also a proposed seaweed farm on west of Bute.

## **Agenda item 3 -Simon McDonald, (Fisheries Aquaculture and Processing Consultant)**

SM outlined that there has been a lot of concern regarding HPMA's from the recreational industry and Fisheries. The Consultation has gone out however it is a very difficult process to complete the form. SM has held 2 meetings with the HPMA Team and they have indicated that you can submit responses from email. There has been a lot of press around the issues.

Overall people understand the sensibility of having certain restrictions but the fact that it is 10% of the waters that are being identified as HPMA's is what is causing concern. SM asked what the scenario would be if there was a fish farm and a marina in the HPMA areas, would they have to move. The HPMA team have confirmed that they would need to be moved. A question was also raised if the fish farm had to be moved who would be liable for the costs. They confirmed that there would be no compensation available.

There is a lot of work going on in the sea grass in Loch Craignish and if this was to become a HPMA then this would be a serious issue. We need to look at a way forward for leisure, fishing and aquaculture and those who have moorings to have joined up thinking. Crown Estate Scotland would lose a large amount of income. There are areas that need to be protected but it needs scientific evidence.

GR stated that he understood SM's viewpoint and they are deciding on the methodology of where they must be. The HPMA's do not meet the standard of people and communities. Engagement with the whole process is key and identifying areas that are problematic. GR does not think that moorings will be a problem. The information being put out is very complicated.

EH stated that the social media is negative and engagement has just started and the Cabinet Secretary is absolutely committed to engaging with a science and evidence-based approach.

SMCM reported this is at the beginning of the process, There will be no imposition on communities and there will be dialogue and consultation and agreement with local communities. SMCM will engage in the process and by the time they come to a HPMA we want to ensure that we are at a position to be able to input if there are any negative responses from communities. We also need to consider the environmental aspects.

SL reported that British Marine Scotland have put in an industry response that aligns with RYA Scotland's response. There should be transparency and community buy in and where there is infrastructure they should be treated as existing ports and harbours.

SMCM stated the message from the government is "engagement". Alan Kohler, Cruising Association (Celtic) stated that in case of yachts he agreed that it is at an early stage and we will require to look at impact on marine tourism and he supports the evidence based approach rather than blanket bans. The existing ports and harbours are not covered. We should consider yacht moorings as "ports and harbours" so that they can be protected.

AK provided an overview of "eco moorings" and explained that they are screwed into bed and there is no concrete or metal block and there is a rope so there is no circle of damage and is at just one point. AK further stated that we need to ensure that they are not blanket based as Loch Seaforth for example is a huge sea loch and 3 spots are yacht anchorages and we need to preserve these. AK stated that the Cruising Association would be delighted to work from a RYAS and CPG point of view. GR stated that there are mitigations that we can put in place and be in the discussions right at the beginning so that there is buy in.

**Action: EH explained that she is a member of the Rural Committee and is attending a meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> May and may be in a position to raise this with Mairi Gougeon MSP (Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands).**

GR has asked the HMPA Team if it would be possible to prepare a FAQ document to help understanding.

ML asked what timescale are we looking at for consultation. SMCM advised that the next stage will be the method of assessment followed by a study to identify the HPMAs. SMCM stated that HPMAs will be agreed in 2026 but there will be a lot of work in the lead up to that time. SL stated that we need to ensure that communication remains strong from now until 2026 to ensure that people keep on investing.

**Action: It was agreed that HPMA be added as a standard item on the agenda so that we members can be kept updated on progress.**

## **Agenda Items 4 – Crown Estate Scotland and Report on socio-economic analysis of moorings - James Adams, Tourism Resources**

JA outlined his presentation (slides circulated)

## **Rohan O'Hara, CEO of Crown Estate Scotland**

RO provided an outlined the work of Crown Estate Scotland.

Since 2019 Crown Estate Scotland has been devolved to Scottish Ministers and they manage half of the foreshore and sea bed up to 12 nautical miles. This goes to the Scottish Government and down to local authorities to support coastal activities.

There is a return of £40m to coastal communities. There are complementary activities to support marine tourism and they have a Memorandum of Understanding with North Ayrshire Council and have funding for a Marine Tourism officer in North Ayrshire and support Marine Scotland.

Crown Estate Scotland have contributed to the EKOS study and the baseline data gathered will assist others to bid for funding. They have launched a capital investment fund. The Boat Based Tourism Fund has identified Corpach Marina and there has been £400k investment from Crown Estate Scotland. There are 6 others under appraisal and they provided advice and support e.g. to community marine officers, tenants and associations.

There then followed an opportunity for questions:

- GD asked are there statistics that break down into categories of cruisers and racers.
- Duncan Tannahill, (West Highlands Anchorages and Moorings Association) stated that they are keen to work with Crown Estate Scotland to help moorings associations and are currently working with Tony Bennett. DT stated that there is an ongoing debate re blue space v green space users and asked if that result was skewed towards that. JA explained that this data was drawn from wider research of studies that have looked across different environments.

**Action: Presentation slides from James Adams (Tourism Resources Company) to be shared with CPG members.**

**Action: The full Moorings report will be circulated to CPG members.**

EH MSP stated that she really liked the links with mental health and wellbeing. The countries that are focussing on wellbeing are countries that have coastlines and this would assist for discussions with the Health and Wellbeing Committee. JA explained that it references the wider studies. RO stated that 93-95% of people experienced a health and wellbeing benefit and the wider research backs this up. Esther Black stated that the study has shown inequalities with access to marine coastline.

FC emphasised the importance of sailing clubs to develop the next generation and this is supported by moorings associations, we require to find ways of easing that relationship and have safe mooring for clubs. JA stated that the sailing clubs are in some cases the moorings association too so there is engagement between the two organisations.

ML stated that British Marine Scotland are thankful for all the support received from Crown Estate Scotland. In the case of Boat based tourism there is a lack of understanding of the return. There are 6 projects and we need to look at how we can unlock those. Watersports hubs will bring in the training but there is a lack of available skills. ML stated that we understand that Crown Estate Scotland have a statute and require to look at ways that we can work together.

RO explained that there is a value for money obligation that underpins the statutes and we have managed to get our first project across the line. There is a business case process and they look at value projects. They will keep on working on these business cases to get them through. We need to agree the principle that they are devolved in the community until this can be achieved.

ML stated that if there is a future round, we require to decide on what we should differently to ensure success. We need to look at how we deliver under Boat based tourism fund and as quickly as possible and hit the projects on the head if they are not deliverable. RO provided assurance that he has taken on board his comments and they will be looking at continuous improvement.

AK asked about the availability of moorings and marina berths as these are very important to provide marine tourism benefits. People have moorings that live outwith Scotland and there is a big growth in micro businesses. There is a lot of marine spend coming into Scotland.

## **Agenda Items 5 – Marine Tourism Strategy Update – Martin Latimer**

ML reported that activity is quiet in this period. They have launched the EKOS Study and have got the figures out and these are being used for the growth deals for the local authorities and government and this brings better value and shows continuous growth.

James Stuart will be doing work on partnerships. We will be going out to businesses and the focus will be on education on training. There is an ageing demographic and we require to look at more service and technical skills. The 2 watersports hubs are growing, we are encouraging employability and have developed an affinity with the water and they will come back and spend their money in the marine industry. We are working with the RYA regards training. Through partnerships we are making the industry more accessible to break down barriers.

SL stated that British Marine UK have got a point assessment for industry level qualifications and we will be having meetings to do this through the Scottish system too.

SMCM asked if consideration had been given to the next Marine Tourism Strategy. SL stated that this will be raised with British Marine Board. It may be delayed slightly due to the pandemic with last launch taking place in 2020. SL stated that we will be looking at softer emphasis on people, places, communities and environmental

aspects are definitely making a difference. SL stated that we need to look at how will it be delivered; we have 36 partners and funding was given by 7 partners to support EKOS study as they recognised the importance of this work.

### **AOCB/Future Business**

**Hybrid Meetings** - SMCM asked if everyone was happy to continue with hybrid meetings. The members agreed to these arrangements.

### **New CEO, Scottish Canals**

GD reported that Scottish Canals have a new CEO, John Paterson.

**Action: It was agreed that we invite John Paterson along to the next CPG on 26<sup>th</sup> September.**

**National Marine Plan 2** – GR reported that he has circulated information round the members and activity is happening in the background. **Action: GR requested that members let PM know if you would like to be placed on the mailing list. Members can also sign up to HMPA mailing list too. We need to consider what we want included and also feedback negative issues too.**

SMCM gave his thanks to Simon McDonald, Rohan O'Hara and Esther Black for their very informative presentations.

### **Acton Points from Last Meeting – 7<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

- Invite Skills Development Scotland to a future meeting. **(attending on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023)**
- SMCM reported that he had a discussion with the Tourism Minister in Gibraltar on a recent visit regarding marinas and flight travel from Scotland.
- Contact be made with each of the 32 local authorities (education directors) to make them aware and also provide a list of the types of jobs available so that they can feed into Modern Apprenticeship Week. **(Action ongoing)**

### **Actions from 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023 Meeting**

- EH to raise HPMA's with Mairi Gougeon MSP (Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands). **Action now closed.**
- Presentation slides from James Adams (Tourism Resources) to be shared with CPG members. **Circulated 11.5.23.**
- Full Moorings report to be circulated to CPG members. **Circulated 11.5.23.**
- Invite John Paterson (new CEO, Scottish Canals) along to the next CPG on 26<sup>th</sup> September. **Awaiting notification of attendance.**
- National Marine Plan 2 - Members let PM know if you would like to be placed on the mailing list. **Completed.**

## **Agenda Item 7 - Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 6pm at the Scottish Parliament.  
(Hybrid meeting)