

Cross-Party Group on Recreational Boating and Marine Tourism

Tuesday 1st March 2022 at 6pm

Minute

Present

MSPs

Stuart McMillan MSP (Convenor)

Jenni Minto MSP

Invited guests

None

Non-MSP Group Members

James Allan (RYA Scotland, Secretariat)

Pauline McGrow (RYA Scotland Secretariat)

Andrew Rendle (Scottish Coastal Rowing Association)

Jonathan Mosse (IWA Sustainable Boating Group /
(Chair of IWA Biofuels sub-group)RYA Scotland)

Duncan Tannahill (West Highlands and Islands Moorings Association)

Richard Millar (Scottish Canals)

Graham Russell (RYA Scotland)

Esther Brooker (Scottish Environment Link)

Douglas McDiarmid (Thomas Telford Corpach Marina)

Alan Rankin (Sail Scotland)

Simon Limb (British Marine Scotland)

Clair McFarlan (Solway Firth Partnership)

David Davies (Stranraer Watersports Association)
Glenn Porter (Ocean Sailing Scotland)
Momchil Terziev
Fergus Duncanson (RYA Scotland)
Fanny Royanez (Scottish Environment Link)
Sarah Dolman (Whale and Dolphin Conservation)
Paul Bancks (Crown Estate Scotland)
Josie Saunders (Scottish Canals)
Sarah Kennedy (Fort William Marina & Shoreline Community Interest Company)

Apologies

Elena Whitham MSP
Finlay Carson MSP
David Adams McGilp
Gordon Daly
John Ormiston
Martin Latimer (British Marine Scotland)
Aileen Monk, (British Marine Scotland)
Charles Bird (RYA Scotland)
Catherine Topley (Scottish Canals)
Stuart Smith (Scottish Canoe Association)
Eilid Ormiston (West Highland College)
Albert Bruce (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service)
Suzanne Roberts (Keep Scotland Beautiful)
Ian White (Canalside Hub Edinburgh, Paddle sports Liaison)

Agenda item 1 - Welcome and Apologies

Stuart McMillan MSP welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Agenda item 2 -

Minute from Meeting on 14th December 2021

The minutes were approved as an acceptable record pending changes from Sarah Kennedy.

Proposed: Sarah Kennedy (pending amendments being made)

Seconded: Simon Limb

Agenda item 3 - British Marine Scotland Update

SL provided an update and outlined the following:

- The Calor Gas sporadic supply continues to be a problem in Scotland. Marine Scotland have written to Calor Gas but no response has been received as yet. SL asked whether CPG would be willing to write to Calor Gas to support the case. **Action/Decision: This was agreed and SL will send on text from the letter that was submitted by British Marine. Action: SMCM to write to Calor Gas on behalf of CPG.**
- Ross Wombell reported that he has engaged with the Calor Gas and they have informed him that they are trying to supply critical areas in residential areas for home heating. They will start to supply small cylinders for tourism. **Action: RW will share contact details of his contact in Calor Gas.**
- GP stated that new cylinders are in short supply, but there is expected to an increase in non-critical supplies over the next 2 months.
- Red White diesel information has been circulated to marinas and boatyards and they have asked for flexibility from HMRC. Alternative fuels are more expensive.
- There will be a continuation for Returned goods relief on boats coming back from UK waters outside UK and this will not be time limited.
- British Marine Scotland have continued with a focussed approach to skills and careers to fill the skills gap. A labour and skills survey has been issued to members and non-industry sectors and they are aiming to get consistency so in order to obtain trackable data.
- Work is taking place with colleges and training providers and British Marine UK are offering training and support to other regions as a priority.
- There have been 2 strategic appointments to the board.
- **Action: SL will keep the members informed and will share a copy of the Labour and skills survey results once available.**

- British Marine have a national conference on 15th/16th March 2022. The focus will be on innovation and barriers to success, post pandemic and Brexit and will also discuss environmental opportunities and this fits with the themes within Giant Strides. SMCM asked if there will be a report from the conference that could be circulated. **Action: Ross Wombell confirmed that this would be produced and will be circulated to members.**
- SMCM asked what work has been undertaken about the skills and labour gaps and has there been work with Skills Development Scotland and have social media channels be used to promote? SL stated that they are looking at retraining and bringing people in from other sectors and from schools.
- SMCM asked has BM Scotland considered going along to career fairs. SL stated that their intention is to cover stalls at careers fairs and are intending to go to schools to give them an overview of the industry.
- SMCM gave an example of a project in West College Scotland where there has been real success in developing young people and has encouraged them into vocations that they would not have considered and it also assists with other aspects of learning. SMCM suggested that if it can be badged up properly with local colleges then this could be the hook. SMCM stated that it can be difficult for small businesses with modern apprenticeships and it is a complex pattern. We need something that will switch the light on. SL gave an example of a successful boat project in London that resulted in the group competing in Cowes Week and winning many awards and bringing young people in.
- SK stated that there is an initiative “Developing the young workforce” that would be a good avenue to pursue and suggested that this would be a way to link in with University of Highlands and Islands. Glencoe Boat Club and Lochaber Hope are building skiffs and involving young people and this could also be linked up. **Action: SK to provide further details to SL.**
- A Rendle stated that Scottish Coastal Rowing Association have just added their 214th skiff onto their register and Castle Brae has just completed building a skiff.
- AR stated that he attended a meeting with the Scottish Tourism Alliance where discussion took place on “Developing the young workforce” and suggested contacting Marc Crothall who can hook into that process with active funded programmes.
- DT reported that there is also the MCR project, where young people in schools are mentored by an adult outwith the schooling system. The project is also seeking work experience placements.
Action: DT will pass on details to SL.

Agenda item 4

Review of CPG Terms of Reference

SMCM asked if members had any changes that they would wish to be made to the current Terms of Reference .

Action/Decision: The CPG members agreed that no changes were required and approved the current Terms of Reference.

Agenda item 5

Update from Scottish Canals on Moorings and Licence Fees

JS provided a presentation on “**Five year pricing review of moorings & licences**”

There then followed an opportunity for questions:

- GP asked for feedback on how they are finding the balancing act e.g., if you price too low, then there is far too much demand but if you price too high it will put off users. JS explained that they use the market indicator as a clear guide for pricing. In 2016 they took the recommendations to cap it at £100. They have very few vacancies and very high uptake in moorings and this gives them an indication that they are in the right ballpark. They are committed to providing as many mooring sites as they can. The market is not as mature as south of border and need to keep the demand alive and fund the creation of new moorings.
- RM stated that they are now 5 years in from introducing the methodology and has remained fairly steady. The residential moorings are at full capacity. It is about keeping that balance so that we do not tip too far one way. Demand has remained strong and steady and the prices must be in the right zone as people are coming to us and there is a waiting list. There is a drop in demand in Crinan due to covid and the current operation of 5 days per week, once this has been increased to 7 days the berths will fill.
- GP asked is the same methodology applied to transits. RM stated that they have reviewed the pricing of the transit and it has increased gradually and has been reviewed again. RM further explained that there are 3 areas that are looked at: the mooring charge, navigation licence and transit charge. These all are balanced and are working fairly well. It has been a difficult couple of years due to Covid but they want to see increase in usage again in Crinan and Caledonian Canals. The Lowlands Canal uptake is low and are keen to open this back up again.

- SK on behalf of Hamish Loudon raised concern about the high Fort William prices and explained that it is cheaper to get storage in Craobh Haven. SK asked what is the plan to encourage people to berth over winter. RM explained due to the construction works that are taking place this has been an issue but the demand still remains strong. They keep a close eye on the wintering charges however this is not part of this review and it is decided based on the localities and they try to keep them as fair as possible.

Agenda item 6 – Presentation from Alan Rankin

AR outlined his presentation providing an overview of the work of Sail Scotland.

There then followed an opportunity for questions.

- SMCM asked if the sterg will continue? AR stated that they are keen that it continues.
- RM thanked AR for his presentation and the details of the final campaign before he departed Sail Scotland. RM asked if Sail Scotland are recruiting for replacement as the work that he does is critical and it is a great baseline for rebuilding after Covid. AR stated that Daniel Steel will be undertaking a dual role with Ayrshire Council and Sail Scotland and due to his previous time in the role will be able to hit the ground running. SL asked if this will be shared with the group. AR confirmed that there will be a press release.
- AR also reported that there is going to be a top up from the Scottish Government for destinations.

Action/Decision: SMCM suggested inviting the Ivan McKee MSP, Minister for Business, Trade, Tourism and Enterprise to the next meetings on either 14th June or 28th September The group agreed.

SMCM gave his grateful thanks to AR for all that he has undertaken for Sail Scotland, the marine tourism sector and the Cross Party Group and wished him a long and happy retirement.

Agenda Item 7 - AOCB/Future Business

Marine wildlife disturbance Joint campaign Whale and Dolphin Conservation and Marine Scotland – Sarah Dolman

Sarah Dolman reported on the issues with marine wildlife disturbance and that they

are working with many stakeholders to raise awareness. They have pulled together a social media toolkit ahead of the Easter holidays to assist. SD stated that they would welcome the support from the CPG to put out positive messaging in social media posts, on websites and in magazines.

Action: SD will circulate toolkit for onward circulation to members.

SMCM also suggested that they also speak to MSPs in CPG to help with local newspaper posts.

J Minto MSP reported that she visited the Crinan Canal as an MSP and stated that we have so many marinas around the coast and need to take advantage of every opportunity to sell what we have and the beautiful opportunities that are out there. There are whales, dolphins and porpoises washed up on the beaches and we need to make people aware. We require to invite Whale and Dolphin Conservation to come out to the constituencies and tell these wonderful stories as they are very uplifting presentations.

Action: SMCM asked members to engage with their MSPs and ask them to come out and see you to find out what is going on your areas.

Scalasaig harbour on Colonsay

GR reported that a situation arose at Scalasaig Harbour where they were going to ban anchoring, however a small group worked on this and have discussed alternative ways of solving this issue.

Marine litter strategy consultation

GR reported that the consultation is open until 22nd March and encouraged members to make contributions.

Action: RYA Scotland will share their response with members. GR will send link to the consultation for onward circulation to members.

Future Business

200th Anniversary of the Union and Caledonian Canals

JS asked if there would be an opportunity to add this as a future agenda item.

Decision/Action: It was agreed to add the 200TH Anniversary to be added as an agenda item.

Agenda item 9 - Date of Future Meetings

SMCM reported that he has raised this with parliament about when face to face meetings may return and there is a consultation underway. SMCM will keep the members up to date on the outcome of the consultation.

Another consideration will be to hold hybrid meetings which would also help with sustainability.

Agenda Item 10 - Date of Next Meeting

14th June 2022 at 6pm

ACTIONS

Action Point 1 - Covid Ventilation Fund/ Financial Support

SMCM requested that those who have a financial interest re Covid fund write to him to raise these issues and then he will write to Scottish Government. GP will provide contacts to SMCM. (ALL)

Update: GP reported that he was able to take up the issue of non-domestic rates and further covid support and funding was made available. GP recorded his thanks to SMCM for his offer to raise the issue.

Action Point 2 - Use of Hydrotreated Vegetable oil

Write to Scottish Government, UK Government and COSLA to highlight the product to see if they support and start dialogue and raise with UK Government. (JM to draft letter to send to SMCM and EW for amendment)(SMCM/EW/JM)

Update: Text sent to SMCM on 20.12.21, SMCM will report back once response has been received.

Action Point 3 - Future Agenda topics

- Presentation on coastal change from the Dynamic Coast project (<https://www.dynamiccoast.com/>) (PM)

Update: invitation sent for meeting on 14th June 2022 and confirmation received on 11th March 2022.

- Giant Strides Marine Tourism Strategy – Our Waters Clean and Blue
 - The return of the 3-mile fishing zone seeking CPG views. (MF)
 - Impact of dredging on fishing inshore. (MF)

Update: invitation sent for meeting on 28th September 2022.

Action Point 4 - Protected area of Arran and Lamlash Bay

SMCM to have discussion with Elena Whitham MSP. (SMCM/EW)

Update: SMCM has had discussion.

Action Point 5 - Lack of supply by Calor Gas – Letter of Support from CPG

This was agreed by the members an SL will send on text from the letter that was submitted by British Marine for SMCM to prepare a letter of support.

Ross Wombell to share contact details for Calor Gas.

Update: Contact details received and passed to SMCM.

Action Point 6 - British Marine Scotland Skills Survey

SL will keep the members informed and will share a copy of the Labour and skills survey results once available.

Update: Results currently being compiled and will be shared with CPG members once finalised.

Action Point 7 - British Marine Conference

Ross Wombell will circulate conference report to members.

Update: Report circulated with CPG papers on 20.5.22.

Action Point 8 - Developing the Workforce/MCR Project

- SK to provide further details on “Developing the Workforce” to SL.
- DT to provide further details on MCR Project to SL.

Update: Circulated on 2nd March 2022

Action Point 9 - Invitation to Ivan McKee, Minister for Business, Trade, Tourism and Enterprise

Invitation to be sent to Ivan McKee MSP, Minister for Business, Trade, Tourism and Enterprise to either 14th June or 28th September meeting.

Update: Pending

Action Point 10 - Marine wildlife disturbance Joint campaign Whale and Dolphin Conservation and Marine Scotland – Sarah Dolman

SD will circulate toolkit for onward circulation to members.

Update: This was circulated on 5th April 2022.

Action Point 11 - Engagement with MSPs

SMCM asked members to engage with their MSPs and ask them to come out and see you to find out what is going on your areas.

Action Point 12 - Marine Litter Strategy consultation.

- RYA Scotland to share their response with members.
- GR to send link to the consultation for onward circulation to members.

Update: This was circulated on 2nd March 2022

Action Point 13 - 200th Anniversary of the Union and Caledonian Canals

It was agreed to add the 200TH Anniversary to be added as an agenda item.

Update: Pending