

Cross-Party Group on Tourism

Monday 12 June, 11:00-12:00

Minute

Present

MSPs

Evelyn Tweed MSP
Murdo Fraser MSP
Rachel Hamilton MSP
Jamie Halcro Johnston MSP
Emma Harper MSP
Audrey Nicoll MSP
Colin Smyth MSP

Invited guests

Craig Burn, 2023 UCI Cycling World Championships
David Jackson, VisitScotland
Steve Duncan, VisitScotland

Non-MSP Group Members

Gavin Mowat (CPG Secretary), VisitScotland
Beth Thoms, VisitScotland
Andrew McKean, SLAED Tourism Group
Carole Paterson, Edinburgh College
Carolyn Churchill, VisitScotland
Chris Foy, VisitAberdeenshire
Chris O'Brien, Nevis Range
Colin Wilkinson, Scottish Licenced Trade Association
Aileen Crawford, Glasgow Life
David Weston, Scottish B and B Association
Elaine Wilson, STA
Fiona Campbell, ASSC
Gordon Morrison, ASVA
Chris Greenwood, Moffat Centre for Travel and Tourism Business Development,
Glasgow School for Business and Society, Glasgow Caledonian University
Ian McCall, Paths for All
Karen Christie, STA
Karen Slight, VisitScotland
Kat Brogan, Mercat Tours and Mercat Tours International
Lawrence Durden, Skills Development Scotland

Karen Donnelly, Love Loch Lomond
Anna Leask, Napier University
Lee McRonal, VisitScotland
Louise Purves, VisitScotland
William McKenzie,
Marc Crothall, STA
Scott McMurray (CPG Treasurer), Scottish Parliament
Marshall Dallas, EICC
Melanie Allen, Galloway and Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere
Russell Henderson, Wild Scotland
Shonagh Davidson
Stephen Duncan, Historic Environment Scotland

Apologies

Alexander Burnett MSP
Foyso Choudhury MSP
Paul Sweeney MSP
Karen Adam MSP
Leon Thompson
Susanne Cameron-Neilson
Alasdair Smart
John White
Ross Pollock
David Lonsdale
Barbara Smith

Welcome

Evelyn Tweed MSP (ET) confirmed recent Ministerial changes mean that Jenni Minto, Paul McLennan and Siobhan Brown MSPs have all resigned from the CPG, in line with the Ministerial code.

ET welcomed new MSP members, Audrey Nicoll MSP, Emma Harper MSP and Karen Adam MSP, and thanked them for their support of the group.

Apologies were noted as above.

Approval of previous CPG minutes

The Group approved the previous CPG minutes.

Presentation from Craig Burn, Director of Strategy and Policy Impacts, 2023 UCI Cycling World Championships

Craig Burn (CB) outlined that the 2023 UCI Cycling World Championships will take place over 11 days in August (3-13th) and events are spread across the country. This

is the first time the Championships have taken place as one mega event. It will also integrate para cycling into the events programme – unlike e.g. the Olympics and Paralympics which run as separate events.

8,000 athletes, so it's bigger than the Commonwealth Games. 120-180 countries represented. Fantastic opportunity to showcase Scotland.

Events cover the full spectrum of cycling including road, track, mountain bike, also trials and indoor cycling (tricks and football on bikes). There are ticketed and free events across 13 individual Championships, taking place the breadth of Scotland.

The event will provide a showcase for Scotland via broadcast coverage internationally which is estimated to reach 1m spectators via 160 global broadcast markets. The key partners are BBC Sport and the European Broadcasting Union with ESPN in America, Eurosport in Europe and others.

An outsourced delivery model is being used to deliver the individual events which is a unique approach. There are also important aims for the championships beyond August 2023, with long term policy ambitions and rich partnerships looking to leave a legacy for the event.

The mission is to deliver an event that inspires people to ride and is a catalyst for change with the vision of getting more people cycling. Activity should inspire people and accelerate cycling activity in Scotland. Part of this is driving policy change and action around cycling. Some examples of this include:

- £8M Cycling Facilities Fund (sportscotland & Scottish Govt.): This includes the West Lothian Cycle Circuit as a key example
- South of Scotland Cycling Strategy; 10 year strategy 2022-32
- Ride the Worlds: Participation activation – with over 70 events across Scotland before, after and during Championships

Highlighted that legacy logo is there to be used, available on the website. Activity took place earlier this year as a PR moment to showcase Scottish landmarks adorned in the rainbow jersey colours.

Q&A

ET started the questions section - said this will be an amazing event for Scotland and is impressed with the integration and investment going across Scotland. Asked CB about the plans for post Championships – how will the event and its successes and impacts be reviewed at the end?

CB said Ernest & Young have been commissioned to do this evaluation. This will cover economic, social, policy and legacy. The policy commitment runs to 2027 so another review may be done then. There is currently no national vision for cycling – it's fragmented across active travel, sport, tourism, so this is something to work toward.

Marc Crothall (MC) asked for an update on ticket sales.

CB confirmed some events totally sold out, e.g. Fort William. Some events may be used as opportunity for ticketing for youth or community groups. Consumer behaviour has changed post-covid and people are booking closer to the event now. Around 60% of saleable tickets sold at present.

MC asked how businesses are being engaged on this to ensure they know what is going on.

CB confirmed that there is lots of activity across PR, Marketing, comms among other targeted activity like presentations to business groups. Though budgets are tight there is advertising activity happening and banners in public spaces like George Square, Glasgow. There is also an important role for businesses, partners, agencies to play too. CB acknowledged though this is a major event it is the first of its kind. It is not a known name like Olympics or Commonwealth games.

ET said she will happily take a lead on speaking with MSPs in run up to the event and has been sharing news across her channels.

Presentation from David Jackson, Regional Director and Steve Duncan, Senior North Regions & Sector Marketing Manager, VisitScotland

David Jackson (DJ) outlined that tourism fits within the overall Cycling World Championships policy framework. The event represents a considerable opportunity to inspire new and existing audiences to consider Scotland as a destination in which to cycle,

From the European Cyclists' Federation Benefits of Cycling report in 2018, cycling tourism in Europe is massive at 2.3 billion trips generating around £37 billion for the European economy. Going by our most recent research, the combined value of cycling tourism to the Scottish economy, including over 700k day trips, is £282m. Which is healthy, though only 0.5% and 0.8% respectively of the overall volume and value of European trips.

Hosting the World Championships gives us the opportunity to shine a spotlight on all the work we're doing to improve facilities, accessibility and promoting cycling tourism. We're not likely to have a similar opportunity for some time, so we need to seize this opportunity to stimulate additional spend and visits.

VisitScotland work with a number of partners to raise the profile of cycling tourism in Scotland. Played an active role in the DMBinS consortium since its inception in 2010 and did a lot of work prior to that to raise the profile of mountain biking. VS works closely with DMOs on cycling activity and cycling destination development e.g. Destinations & Sectors Fund activity for Falkirk Council, Kirkpatrick C2C: south Scotland's coast-to-coast. Events directorate have supported the UCI Mountain Bike World Cup in Fort William since 2002.

An important aspect of our legacy activity will be to convene a cycling tourism steering group that coalesces the collective activity and resources of ourselves and our partners to deliver common aims.

Slide 23 lists a full suite of cycle investment which will benefit visitors and communities. Investment here will exceed £50 million. As part of our legacy from hosting the World Championships, many of these initiatives will shape our cycling tourism experiences for years to come.

Cycle tourism can support key visitScotland outcomes of Spend, Spread, Sustainability and Satisfaction. We're doing this through industry and destination development, with partners and supporting businesses through advice, business engagement, working with DMOs etc. Also through marketing activity with the consumer proposition *Scotland. Made for Cycling.* which includes:

- Hero video for YouTube, used edits of it in our spring campaign, we're playing it in 16 iCentres, broadcast at overseas events
- Paid social media - Tweed Valley mountain bike video we created, via YouTube in February and March, which generated over 413k views.
- Further paid social media activity in May (Best Bike Holidays in Scotland) and June (Bikepacking is the new Backpacking) and more will run in September.
- E-newsletter activity
- Our Consumer and Corporate PR teams - recent success with titles including The Guardian, The Herald, Traze Travel, AFAR, BIKE Magazine Germany and more and are working on more pitches.
- Cycling tourism is being included in our influencer and partnership marketing activity – Kinging It – Loch Ness – VS – Scottish Canals – July 2023.
- And we're now planning how we'll sustain our cycling activity in the coming years to make the most of the increasing awareness we're enjoying, as we aim to position Scotland as a leading cycling destination.

Q&A

Melanie Allen (MA) thanked the presenters and asked whether Kirkpatrick C2C can be used at national level marketing

DJ and SD confirmed this would be part of the wider tourism legacy.

MA will pick up directly with DJ/SD regarding messaging around the region and sustainable tourism e.g. UNESCO biosphere.

CF asked about capitalising on the immediate opportunities associated with the event. DJ said cycling would be an important core focus for future marketing message this year. SD agreed we don't want to lose opportunity and highlighted the call out for any good PR stories to be shared with travelpr@visitscotland.com.

Emma Harper (EH) asked about the Sustrans map on visitscotland.com – highlighting the south region didn't have any routes.

SD updated that the C2C would go live on the map on 3rd July and SD/EH agreed to follow up separately on cycling content/marketing for south Scotland.

MD asked how VisitScotland engage with other tourism boards and if there is marketing to EU markets?

DJ updated on collaboration with VisitBritain and others – including a joint campaign between VisitScotland and London and Partners.

SD updated on PR activity in key markets including Germany, US. Also the VisitScotland major marketing campaign *Scotland Is Calling* which is cross-market and includes cycling messaging. There is another campaign focusing on the Highlands and Islands (Spirit of the Highlands and Islands) – next phase is due end August and there is cycling messaging throughout that.

MD highlighted challenges for north of Scotland businesses in particular at the moment.

AOB

DW raised legislation affecting the sector such as Visitor Levy and Short Term Lets licensing. DW said he wanted to see this discussed this at a future CPG meeting.

ET confirmed she and other MSPs knows the importance of this and will consider how to reflect in future.

ET also updated that the CPG with Aviation CPG, which was planned as the next meeting, would be postponed due to personal circumstances of one of the speakers.