

Cross-Party Group on Recreational Boating and Marine Tourism (online only)

Tuesday 14th May 2024 at 6pm

Minute

Present

MSPs

Stuart McMillan, MSP

Emma Harper MSP

Invited guests

Ross Wombell, British Marine

Andy Harmer, Cruise Liner Association

David Adams McGilp, VisitScotland

Non-MSP Group Members

Clair McFarlan, Solway Firth Partnership

Stuart Smith, Scottish Canoe Association

Andrew Rendle, Scottish Coastal Rowing Association

Mark Simmonds, British Ports

Finlo Cottier, RYA Scotland

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

Christine Cameron, Lowland Canals Association

Laurie Piper, Scottish Canals

Ian White

Sarah Kennedy, Fort William Marina & Shoreline Community Interest Company

Alan Kohler, RYA Scotland/Cruising Association

Ross Wombell, British Marine

Pauline McGrow, RYA Scotland

Jonathan Mosse, RYA Scotland/Inland Waterways Association

Graham Russell, RYA Scotland

Derek Peters, Waverley Excursions

Anne Shedden, Forth Yacht Clubs Association

Andy Carnduff, Forth Yacht Clubs Association

Aileen Monk, British Marine Scotland

Eilid Ormiston, UHI West Highland

Apologies

Ariane Burgess MSP

Gordon Daly, RYA Scotland

Simon McDonald, Aquaculture, Fisheries Processing Consultant

John Fenwick, Stranraer Watersports Association

Fanny Royanez, Scottish Environment Link

Esther Brooker, Scottish Environment Link

Paul Bancks, Crown Estate Scotland

Momchil Terziev

Simon Limb, Clyde Marina

Martin Latimer, British Marine UK

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.

Proposed: Sarah Kennedy

Seconded: Duncan Tannahill

Agenda Item 3 - Visitor Tourism Levy Bill

Further notification will be received in 2 weeks of the bill.

Action: Link to be sent to CPG members when it becomes available.

(circulated 16th May 2024)

Agenda Item 4 – David Adams McGilp, Argyll and Isles Strategic Partnership’s marine tourism

David Adams McGilp (VisitScotland) outlined his presentation (distributed to CPG members on 16th May 2024) and there then followed an opportunity for questions:

Anne Shedden asked about what the plans are for East coast. DAM stated that he is committed to helping all across the country. **Action: Discussion to take place between DAM and AS.** The first step is to be ambitious. AS reported that the Forth Estuary Forum is in process of being established again. DAM stated that the Scottish Marine Plan provides a commitment and offers shared infrastructure opportunities, and those benefits should accrue to other sectors and local communities.

Agenda Item 5 - Andy Harmer, Cruise Liner Association

Andy Harmer outlined his presentation and highlighted the following:

The cruise industry in Scotland has now returned to full strength and they are increasing the number of berthings and ships in a managed way,

There then followed an opportunity for questions:

JM asked about the sustainability side of operations and what measures are in place about emissions on cruise ships and associated pollution. AH stated that they are very conscious about the destinations that they visit; they have a fuel efficient fleet and are 10% more efficient than previous vessels. They are looking at 40% reduction by 2030 and net zero by 2050. They have altered their itineraries; turning down air conditioning machines to reduce air bubbles and have reduced paint on hulls to cut through the water more efficiently. There are 34 active trials on ELENG and methane and they had their first zero carbon perspective voyage last year. They are investing in new technology to be more sustainable. They have shoreside electricity connectivity and the target is to lower green gases and carbon.

JM stated that they are dealing with delicate destinations and islands may be decades away from that provision and should be looking at this with greater urgency. Some of the technology that captures emissions is more environmentally friendly. Their ships have advanced water plants onboard and food management too. We are looking at all the different strands and have established good partnerships with the destinations.

SK stated that they have 17 cruise ships coming into Fort William and the waterfront needs attention and it would be extremely beneficial to get alongside berthing which would help with the shoreside electricity connectivity. SK asked how many of their locations have these facilities. AH stated that it is good that they are attracting expedition ships and that they would like to work with Fort William Fort William Marina & Shoreline Community Interest Company to look at planning itineraries.

Action: SK to arrange follow up discussion with AH. (PM to provide contact details).

SMCM asked for feedback on the Greenock Ocean Terminal. AH stated that it is a key destination on the coast and is very popular and they are working with local authorities to bring in tourists into the area. SMCM provided an overview of the visitor attractions at the ocean terminal and that there is a hope that the museum can also encourage cruise passengers to visit too. The event and location are outstanding and increasing ships to do overnight stays will also help the environment too.

EH MSP asked if there was an appetite for cruise ships to come to additional ports and destinations in south west area. AH stated that cruise ships are looking for more places to visit and there is a genuine interest in various cruising routes so that they can offer new itineraries, routes and attractions. **Action: EH MSP to arrange a follow up discussion with AH.**

SMCM asked how many ships go into Northern Ireland go to south of the country. AH explained that most ships leave Southampton and have a stop somewhere in Ireland both in the south and north.

SK asked if there had been discussions about the cruise levy. AH reported that they have had some initial discussion with SMCM and some other MSPs. It will be a challenge and they will look for destinations that are easy to operate in and out. Engagement will take place as early as possible in any conversations on possible cruise levy.

Action: Cruise Liner presentation slides to be shared with CPG members.

Agenda Item 6 – Ross Wombell, British Marine, Recreational propulsion and road to net zero

Presentation slides were outlined by Ross Wombell and highlighted the following and there then followed an opportunity for questions:

- Data will assist on how we transition, and the marine industry is supportive, they are going to need help to do so to hit net zero target by 2045.
- RW has been working with UK on Maritime plan; there has been a call for evidence on how many boats are used and how many engine hours per year for the different type of vessels. Decision points will be around type of vessel and type of use.

The following points and actions raised:

Action: SMCM suggested British Marine write to each of the parties to highlight what has been outlined. RW has stated that they have put together a manifesto with the decarbonisation and skills to all of the parties. RW will share this with SMCM.

Action: Stuart McMillan MSP has offered to host British Marine in the Scottish Parliament to further highlight the findings and the interests of the leisure marine sector in relation to the Pathways to

Propulsion Decarbonisation for the Recreational Marine Industry and the emerging policy asks for the short, medium and long term. RW to share with British Government relations team and further discussion to take place.

Grangemouth Refinery – JM asked about this possibility of Grangemouth being used for fuel provision. RW stated that we know that we are going to need our own access and there is a refinery that is being transferred to a transport hub and agreed that it would be a perfect solution to a long term solution. SMCM stated that challenge is the financing.

Action: SMCM suggested First Minister and Cabinet Secretary, Mairi McAllan, send an email round with contact details to CPG members re Grangemouth.

GR stated that it is really good to see the life cycle analysis. In the future availability of fuel is going to be an issue and there is going to be a lot of demand for HVO and there is also a number of other fuels out there. This would be a much simpler solution if there was infrastructure in place and this is exactly the same issue is being experienced by the agriculture and fishery industries. RW explained that in regard to fuel accessibility they looked at 5 fuels, but there are other fuels out there and we should not close our minds to these. The government has invested money into particular studies such as ammonia and ethanol on recreational vessels. When we look at some alternatives then these are more accessible and can easily be transported.

DT stated that there are issues with availability of fuels on west coast of Scotland. DT expressed his concern that alternative fuels may be difficult to access in remote parts of the west coast. DT asked what is the percentage of greenhouse gas in the marine leisure industry. RW stated that it is 0.06% internationally and we are waiting for the call for evidence from the Department of Transport. We do not know the boat usage so would need to look at an international model. RW encouraged members to ensure that they take part in the call for evidence as soon as it is released.

A Shedden stated that within the boating industry there is a safety aspect as HVO compared with diesel has additives and it has a much longer shelf life and diesel brings issue with diesel bug. This is another point to consider on putting our case forward.

AK stated that AS raised a good point as regards safety as he has had diesel bug issues that have stopped the engine. The other safety factor is range which is important for boats in Scottish waters. Usage is for day and weekend sailing but in terms of the scope of this group and marine tourism most of the boats have already travelled a very long distance and one size does not fit all. RW explained that safety was part of the analysis and the requirement to have high voltage electricity next to water and that hydrogen can escape from anywhere. We require to decide on what is the most suitable for the industry. Some of the results were not all what was expected. We are just at the start of the transition; the 2050 solution may not be in people's sight yet; we will need to plan the strategy and enable the industry to have a successful transition with assistance from the government. RW reported that he has shared the report with officials in Department of Transport.

Action: RW will send full report to SMCM to assist with discussions. (circulated 15th May)

Action: Presentation slides to be circulated to CPG members.

Agenda Items 4 – AOCB/Future Business

Action Points from 14th May 2024 Meeting

- **Grangemouth** - Send contact deals for both FM (firstminister@gov.scot) and Cab Sec for Net Zero (CabSecNZE@gov.scot) – Grangemouth – **circulated 16/5/24.**
- **Presentations**
The following presentation slides to be shared:
 - a. **Andy Harmer Cruise Liner Association – to follow.**
 - b. **Argyll and Isles Partnership, David Adams McGilp – circulated 16/5/24.**

- c. IOMCA Report – Ross Wombell, British Marine - **circulated 16/5/24.**
- **Visitor Levy** - Link to be sent to CPG members when it becomes available.
<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/visitor-levy-scotland-bill/stage-3> - **circulated on 16/5/24.**
- **East Coast** - Discussion to take place between DAM and AS.
- **Cruise itinerary planning** – SK to arrange follow up discussion with AH. (PM to provide contact details). **Update:** SK had a meeting with Andy Harmer on 29/07/24 which was very positive and he is very supportive of the plans for the waterfront in Fort William.
- **British Marine, Recreational propulsion and road to net zero** - RW to send full IOCMA report to SMCM to assist with discussions (not for public issue) – **sent on 16/5/24.**
- **Clean Water Sports Alliance** – ([mut14636774501919973730.pdf](#) ([assetbank-eu-west-1.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com](#))). The vision is good and is consistent with, for example, our National Marine Plan. Scotland is, however, a bit different due both to our geography and to Scottish Water being in public ownership. The current Scottish Water annual report (SWAnnualReport2023.pdf) is worth reading. RYA Scotland is considering how best to take this forward, and we hope to talk to Scottish Water.
Action: GR suggested inviting Scottish Water to a future meeting. SMCM to send on contact for Scottish Water. FC is lead in RYA; he is very much willing to have conversation on discussion.
- **Marine toilets** – A Shedden reported an issue with sea water toilets due to lack of pump out facilities. **Action: SMCM and PM will do a follow up discussion to look at it as a future agenda item.**
- **East connected to west and Lowland canals navigability** - 'East connected to west and Lowland canals navigability - AS reported that she attended the Lowland Canals meeting, and the depth has been reduced by 6 inches so there is an issue with getting small boats moving through and also asked for update on weed clearing. **Action: DAM will follow up with Laurie Piper at a future meeting to discuss this further.** GR has said that these issues have been raised with Scottish Canals already and is due to budget issues. AS stated that canals were used as an environmental method to divert water away to stop flooding issues in other areas.
- **Waverley Excursions** - DP thanked SMCM for visiting the ship in the dry dock and for the write up. DP reported that the Helensburgh group are working on their business case to get opened for Waverley and have step ashore facilities and expedition ships. The Waverley is back in Fort William and is national flagship for historic ship. They were able to confirm the economic benefit of £6m to Scottish economy and £11.6m to the UK as a whole. SMCM declared interest in Helensburgh as Councillor for this area works for SMCM.
- **Invitations to meetings:**
 - Invite Skills Development Scotland to a future meeting (ongoing).
 - Greenports – unable to attend, look at future date.
 - Crown Estate Scotland, awaiting response.
- **Lochmaddy**
 - SMCM to send email out to MSPs who represents the Highlands so that they are all aware. **Update: Ongoing**

Agenda Item 5 - Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 24th September 2024 at 6pm at the Scottish Parliament and online.