

# Cross-Party Group on Recreational Boating and Marine Tourism

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at 6pm

Minute

Present

MSPs

Elena Whitham MSP (Convening on Stuart McMillan MSP's behalf)

Jenni Minto MSP

Invited guests

**None**

Non-MSP Group Members

Andrew Rendle, Scottish Coastal Rowing Association

Scott Johnson, Waverley Excursions Ltd

Eild Ormiston, UHI West Highland

Pauline McGrow, RYA Scotland (Secretariat)

Cameron Marshall, Waverley Excursions Ltd

Derek Peters. Waverley Excursions Ltd

Sarah Brown, Scottish Marine Environmental Enhancement Fund (SMEEF)

Duncan Tannahill,

(RYA Scotland and West Highlands and Islands Moorings Association)

Jonathan Mosse, RYAScotland

Sarah Kennedy, Fort William Marina & Shoreline Community Interest Company

Simon Limb, British Marine Scotland

Brian Wilson, Chair - RYA Scotland

Aileen Monk, British Marine Scotland

Esther Brooker, Scottish Environment Link

## Apologies

### **Name**

### **Organisation**

Kenneth Gibson MSP

Elena Whitham MSP

Alex Rowley MSP

Sharon Dowey MSP

Katy Clark MSP

Myles Farnbank

Scottish Adventure Activities Forum

James Stuart

British Marine Scotland

David Adams McGilp

VisitScotland

Gordon Daly

RYA Scotland

Clair McFarlan

Solway Firth Partnership

James Allan

RYA Scotland

Alistair Rennie

Dynamic Coast Project

## Agenda item 1 - Welcome and Apologies

Elena Whitham MSP welcomed everyone to the meeting.

## Agenda item 2

### Minute from Meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2022

The minutes were approved as an acceptable record.

#### **Actions form Last Meeting**

##### **AGM**

**Action/Decision:** EW proposed that the CPG meeting scheduled to take place on 29<sup>th</sup> November be brought forward to Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November to allow the AGM to take place before the cut- off point of 26<sup>th</sup> November, this was agreed by the members.

##### **Arran and Lamlash Bay**

EW reported that there has been a considerable increase in biodiversity in the area. Species have flourished and it is driving tourism into the area and SMCM will discuss this at a future meeting. EW encouraged members to look at the areas on the website for further details.

##### **Calor Gas**

SL reported that the supply of gas is coming in fits and starts. They are continuing to supply the 4.5 bottles but it is sporadic. They are moving fuel pumps down to the south.

**Action:** It was agreed that we continue with our endeavours to assist in improving the situation.

##### **Marine Protected Areas**

Eiidh Ormiston reported that there are still issues in Argyll and the Islands. SB asked for feedback from members. **Action:** It was agreed that this is to be taken back to SMCM for discussion.

##### **Marine Tourism Skills Survey**

SL stated that they are still working on the results this and the new survey is also running concurrently.

##### **SMEEF (Scottish Marine Environmental Enhancement Fund)**

SB reported that it was launched in May of this year and they issued grants of £700K to date. This funding round will be completed at the end of October with decision taken in November. Deadline for the next round of applications will be 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023.

**Flare Amnesty** – Ongoing action.

##### **Seaweed Farms**

No further information available at present. **Action: GR will keep the group updated on any developments.**

### Peel Ports

There continue to be activities taking place on the Clyde.

## Agenda item 3 - Marine Tourism Strategy Update – Martin Latimer, British Marine Scotland

Martin Latimer provided an update and outlined the following:

- They have had good strong response from the survey and will then move to the production of statistics.
- Report will be out in draft to funders in early December and then will report back in January with launch taking place in the first week in March. SMCM, PM and AM are working on getting a reception booked in the Parliament in March 2023. There has been a high volume of visitors and future trends will be identified. EKOS and Coastal Growth Deal will update their business cases and provide statistics.
- There is strong education and training on the British Marine Board and technical input is provided from Ross Wombell who has good contacts in the industry.
- Discussion is taking place with various colleges to bring out further employment opportunities through colleges in Scotland and in the South West of England.
- Engagement is taking place with schools, colleges and industry to look at how we drill down these statistics and show as a graphic and need to make clear strategies.
- We are also looking at grass roots at Southampton Boat Show, with paddleboarding activities increasing by 40%.
- The “On the Water” initiative is a way of working with people, a QR code is used to provide alerts on phones that picks up information to encourage them to get involved in the boating community right from the start of their experience.
- The “5 Golden rules of going afloat” initiative is in place and they will work with RYA Scotland and draft report on progress will be provided in early December.
- Work is taking place with various partners including North Ayrshire Council and University of Highlands and Islands are looking to develop further.
- EW stated that it was very good news and it is very important how you engage with the new people on the scene. ML also explained that we want to guide them to safe practice.
- EO reported that SUP award is delivered at UHI.
- SL stated that at the Southampton Boat Show there was a great interest in water sports. There is a general drive for outdoor activities, the cost of living

will have an effect but there still is an urge for people to want to be afloat. EW stated that once they try one area it will encourage them to try different areas of boating,

- SL stated that we are on stream with the health and wellbeing alliance .too.

EW thanked ML and SL for the comprehensive update.

## Agenda item 4 – AOCB/Future Business

### **Waverley Excursions Ltd**

SJ provided the following overview of Waverley Excursions Ltd:

Waverley is the last sea-going paddle steamer in the world -and often needs very little introduction in her own right!

Launched on the Clyde in 1947, as the last - she has become iconic and a living reminder of Scotland's industrial and social history and plays a major and central role in Scotland marine tourism sector offering excursion cruises across the country, helping in turn to support the local economies of our coastal towns and our island communities

The first minister has said , “Waverley is a tremendous asset and a great National Treasure.”

First and foremost - we are a charity - registered in Scotland as Waverly Steam Navigation Co and our aim is to keep Waverley sailing, and that Waverley will continue to provide enjoyment, educational, cultural and economic benefits for many years to come.

This year marks her 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the strategic aim of the charity is to ensure that she continues to sail to her centenary year and beyond

As with all charitable endeavours, funding is key to our existence.

Waverley occupies a special niche at the intersection between heritage, tourism and coastal communities – and although that unique position has many benefits - we sometimes suffer in funding terms by not being so easily pigeonholed into mainstream funding structures - there are few such important and popular attractions that receive so little ongoing help in comparison to theatre; art; music; opera; museums; historic buildings who more easily fit into a single category.

Our links with the Scottish government are good and the Scottish government has lots of skin in the game - particularly for the vital contribution to the boiler appeal and ensuring the ship survived in service in 2019.

One thing that has changed is our regular model of consistent and ongoing support from the public purse has shrunk massively, and while the one-off interventions are vital when a crisis occurs, we need to find a more stable model of funding the capital investment required to maintain the ship in its refit cycles, while the operation can be sustainable and self-funding from ticket sales and individual donations.

We also have a role to play in promoting heritage engineering and technical skills needed to maintain and operate the ships heritage machinery, have an interest in the regulatory environment, particularly with the Marine and Coastguard Agency, and work in partnership with pier owners, port operators, and marinas to enable the continued availability of suitable calling points that suit Waverley's unique berthing requirements.

We would like to play an active role in this group, giving us an interface with MSP, Scottish government and supporting and learning from our peers in this vital and important sector of Scotland's economy.

**There then followed an opportunity for questions:**

- EW stated that it straddles the different aspects of the Marine Tourism Strategy.
- ML stated that British Marine Scotland recognises the value of the Waverley, it is a visible face of tourism and offered their to help and asked do you have any new destinations that you would want to introduce? SJ stated that the piers are not accessible due to lack of maintenance. Steamers use the piers in a different way. The placing of the visitor mooring buoys is also a factor, moorings are positioned in a certain way so that it can work for all of us.

**Action: Discussion to be arranged between Waverley Excursions Ltd and British Marine Scotland (PM to provide details to Martin Latimer/Derek Peters/Scott Johnson).**

SK explained that the accessible pier in Fort William enables tendering in and suggested an alternative stop as this would improve the service for people in Fort William. DP explained that the discussion take place with the manager but due to the resilience of the pier it was declined. DP stated that it can be difficult and the tender takes a considerable amount of time. SK stated that a ship has been successful in coming into Fort William with 3 tenders. An additional boat would be needed to provide tenders and come alongside. They would need to be someone else to provide tendering services. They would require local authorities to invest in the maintenance of the piers.

**Action: SK suggested that a discussion take place with Cruise Loch Linnhe re Elsie, the boat that is owned by Cruise Loch Linnhe and could be used to transfer passengers from the Waverley to the pontoons and to shore. Their contact details are as follows:**

Address: Cruise Loch Linnhe , Fort William Town Pier, PH33 6DZ

Call. 07367 436088 (not manned all of the time, email preferred)

E-mail: [info@cruiselochlinnhe.co.uk](mailto:info@cruiselochlinnhe.co.uk)

website: [www.cruiselochlinnhe.co.uk](http://www.cruiselochlinnhe.co.uk)

J Minto MSP stated that they use the Waverley to get access to their surgeries.

**Action: J Minto MSP to have a further discussion with Derek Peters.**

Eilid Ormiston asked if there was any opportunities for the students that are studying for their Coastal Degree at UHI to gain work experience on the Waverley. This would be a research project. DP stated that another factor is retaining the skills. Engineers is an area that is a real preserve and it is hard to find steam engineers. DP further stated that he was unsure if there are schemes that we could set up as there are specific guidelines that you require to be adhered to.

EW stated that the Marine Tourism Strategy needs to focus on delivery of the workforce in order to restore these Victorian piers and cannot underestimate the value of marine tourism.

EW stated that there is an open invitation for Waverley Excursions to attend the CPG at any time.

**Action: PM to share contacts from Waverley Excursions with CPG members.**

### **Any other Business**

SK reported that Fort William, Fort William Marina & Shoreline Community Interest Company had their Fort William Pontoons Extension Grand Opening in August. They have taken £1.5K in income for moorings and it has taken off without the requirement of advertising. EW stated that she was delighted to hear this news and stimulates the recovery.

**Agenda Item 5 - Date of Next Meeting  
22<sup>nd</sup> November 2022 at 6pm (including AGM).**

# ACTIONS

## Action Point 1 - AGM

EW proposed that the CPG meeting scheduled to take place on 29<sup>th</sup> November be brought forward to Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November to allow the AGM to take place before the cut-off point of 26<sup>th</sup> November, this was agreed by the members. **Update: this has been arranged, Save the date sent out on 2<sup>nd</sup> November.**

## Action Point 2 - Lack of supply by Calor Gas

It was agreed that we continue with our endeavours to assist in improving the situation.

## Action Point 3- Marine Protected Areas

Eiadh Ormiston reported that there are still issues in Argyll and the Islands. SB asked for feedback from members. **Action: It was agreed that this is to be taken back to SMCM for discussion.**

## Action Point 4 – Flare Amnesty

SMCM will report back to on his findings on the Firework and Pyrotechnic bill and indicated that the CPG would be happy to help and support.  
**Update: Ongoing action.**

## Action Point 5- Seaweed Farms

### Seaweed Farms

No further information available at present. **Update: GR will keep the group updated on any developments.**

## Action Point 6 – Waverley Excursions Ltd

- Discussion to be arranged between Waverley Excursions Ltd and British Marine Scotland (PM to provide details to Martin Latimer/Derek Peters/Scott Johnson). **Update: PM to provide details.**
- **Action: SK suggested that a discussion take place with Cruise Loch Linnhe re Elsie**, the boat that is owned by Cruise Loch Linnhe and could be used to transfer passengers from the Waverley to the pontoons and to shore. Their contact details are as follows:  
Address: Cruise Loch Linnhe , Fort William Town Pier, PH33 6DZ  
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[E-mail: info@cruiselochlinnhe.co.uk](mailto:info@cruiselochlinnhe.co.uk)  
website: [www.cruiselochlinnhe.co.uk](http://www.cruiselochlinnhe.co.uk)



- J Minto MSP to have a further discussion with Derek Peters. **Update: PM provided details to J Minto on 20<sup>th</sup> October.**
- PM to share contacts from Waverley Excursions with CPG members. **Update: PM to circulate.**

## **Action Point 7 - Future Agenda topics**

- Presentation on coastal change from the Dynamic Coast project (<https://www.dynamiccoast.com/>) (PM)  
**Update: Alistair Rennie has been invited to meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> November meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> November, await response.**
- 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 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022. Myles Farnbank has confirmed attendance. (was unable to attend, invite to a future meeting. **Update: Invite MF to a 2023 meeting.**

## **Action Point 8 - Protected area of Arran and Lamlash Bay**

SMCM to have discussion with Elena Whitham MSP. (SMCM/EW)  
**Update: SMCM has had discussion and will provide report.**

## **Action Point 9 - 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 10 - Invitation to Ivan McKee, Minister for Business, Trade, Tourism and Enterprise**

**Update: Ivan McKee will attend meeting in February 2023.**

## **Action Point 11 - Developing the Workforce**

- Invite the Department of Work and Pensions to a future meeting (PM)  
**Update: Invitation still to be sent by PM.**
- SMCM requested a list of the local events that Scottish Canals are supporting.  
Update: Laurie Piper (sent something on....)
- James Stuart to discuss youth engagement with Scottish Canals.  
**Update: PM to contact JS to get update.**

## **Action Point 12 - Activities on the Clyde**

- SMCM will contact Peel Ports to get understanding and rationale to the changes made. SMCM agreed that the usage needs to increase and wider opportunity has not been taken for the city of Glasgow and economic and health and social opportunities .
- JM to obtain contact details for Hamish Munro, Clyde Marine Services to be passed to group members if they are interested in obtaining the lifejackets.
- SMCM to write to Glasgow Science Centre or the appropriate owner to ask for an update on when the broken bridge is going to be repaired due to the impact on the activities in the city.

**Update: Ongoing action**