

Scottish Tourism Alliance
STA Council Meeting Note

14th January 2015, Macdonald Holyrood, Edinburgh

Attending

- Alasdair Smart, Assoc of Scottish Visitor Attractions
- David Smythe, Assoc of Scotland's Self Caterers
- Claire Bruce, Deeside & the Cairngorms Ltd
- Denise Connelly, Zero Waste Scotland
- Fiona Bewers, The Caravan Club
- Chris Lawson, Scottish Events & Festival Association
- Judy Rae, Business Tourism for Scotland
- Katherine Taylor, Cycle Tourism Forum
- Keith Legge, SYHA
- Robin Worsnop, ETAG (part)
- Barry McCulloch, Federation of Small Businesses
- Ian Jurgensen, Argyll & Isles Tourism
- Willie Macleod, British Hospitality Association
- Ben Mardall, Wild Scotland
- Gareth Crichton, Discover Orkney
- Jeanette Wilson, British Holiday & Home Parks Assoc
- Henk Berits, National Trust from Scotland (part)
- Robert Kidd, Scottish Destination Management Assoc
- Sue Gruellich, Scottish Tourist Guides Association
- Ian Fordham, Outer Hebrides Tourism Industry Assoc
- Claire Moncrieff, Go Rural

In attendance

- Marc Crothall, Scottish Tourism Alliance (MC)
- Caroline Warburton, Scottish Tourism Alliance
- Stephen Leckie, Scottish Tourism Alliance
- Thomas McGonigle, Dal Riata (part) (TM)
- Fergus Ewing MSP, Minister for Business, Energy & Tourism (part)
- Bruce Crawford MSP (part)
- Emma Sinclair, Scottish Government (part)
- Leon Thompson, VisitScotland (part)

Apologies

- Daniel Steel, Sail Scotland
- Rosanne Mackay, Farm Stay UK
- Mairi Bell, Loch Lomond & Trossachs Natl Park
- Colin Wilkinson, Scottish Licensed Traders Assoc
- Roslyn Halley, Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Association
- Lee Cousins, Scottish Sports Association
- Sarah Troughton, Scottish Country Sports Tourism Group

1. Welcome

Marc Crothall welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2: STA Update

2.1 Scottish Tourism Week: MC outlined the programme of this year's conference titled STA TV (Tourism Vision) and asked everyone on the Council to attend and also encourage their members to attend as well. Key incentives are:

- Excellent programme – something for everyone
- Affordable price
- Members of STA Council associations qualify for STA member rates.
- 20% discount on all Scotrail tickets to Glasgow for conference.

AP1: ALL to promote Scottish Tourism Week to members.

2.2 Public Affairs: MC notified the group that an STA public affairs plan is being developed by MC, STA Board Director David Lonsdale from the Scottish Retail Consortium and STA Council member Willie Macleod from BHA. Those members who would like to feed in to this process were asked to put their names forward. The following individuals stepped forwards, other names welcome.

- Ben Mardall
- David Smythe
- Robert Kidd
- Barry McCulloch
- Alasdair Smart
- Judy Rae

It is intended that STA will increasingly be asked for comment on key tourism issues and Council members will be put forward to comment on behalf of STA where appropriate. Taste Communications have been contracted by STA to handle public affairs for STA.

A short video outlining the role of the STA will also be created.

2.3 STA Council Chair: MC raised the topic of a Chair for the group (currently being done by MC) and sought views from the group. Views were varied and all agreed that as there were no urgency to make a decision further exploration of the role should be undertaken.

AP2: MC to draw up outline role of Chair and present options to Council.

3: Investigating the Skills Gap for the Future & Future Visitor Markets

Paper 1 was circulated prior to the meeting. Thomas McGonigle of Dal Riata provided some preliminary findings from industry survey and encouraged Council to ask members to complete. Council members were also asked to offer any examples of good training/skills initiatives and any individuals who may be interested in contributing further to research at a workshop.

There was a request for regional data in order to encourage completion of survey by businesses. TM agreed that this could be arranged.

AP3: CW to circulate link to Industry Survey to Council members.

AP4: ALL to circulate to members/stakeholders and encourage completion (if not already done so).

Council members to provide industry topics which could be addressed by the academic sector to CW.

AP5: Council Members requesting regional data to provide TM with relevant postcodes.

4: Council Members Update / AOB

4.1: Cross Party Group for Tourism: MC welcomed MSP Bruce Crawford who will be chairing a new Cross Party Group (CPG) on Tourism at the Scottish Parliament. Eleven MSPs have already put their names forward to join the group which will meet 3-4 times a year between 1pm-2pm at Holyrood. The role of the group is to ensure MSPs are up to speed on the tourism industry and TS2020. It provides an opportunity to raise awareness, champion particular themes and encourage engagement with Parliament. Everyone welcomes the creation of the group and Bruce Crawford MSP's attendance at the Council meeting.

4.2: Council Reports: MC encouraged Council members to complete the report template in advance of the meeting. The late submissions will be circulated to the group.

4.3: Industry Events: MC reminded members to provide details of key industry events in order to avoid clashes, duplications and enhance promotion.

4.4: Rehabilitation of Young Offenders: a Summit is being held in Scotland on this topic on 20th May and the tourism industry is invited to contribute. A number of Council members provided examples.

5: Fergus Ewing MSP, Minister for Business, Energy & Tourism

MC welcomed the Minister, and thanked him for taking the time to attend the Council Meeting. A number of issues were raised by the Minister and Council members and a number of actions taken by individual Council members to follow up with information. Key discussion topics included:

- Links between the Transport sector and Tourism sector, particularly at Government and public agency level. The example given of lack of involvement of the tourism industry in the suspension of the Ullapool- Stornoway service at the end of April for six weeks.
- The Minister was clear that there would be no tourism tax whilst he was Tourism Minister.
- Links between the Education and Tourism sectors.
- Living Wage in the Tourism Sector

- Continuation of Government Support for Small Businesses. Initiatives include Small Business Bonus, Business Rates in rural areas, Tourism VAT, APD, TBIDs, Business Rate Incentive Scheme (BRIS), interest-free loans for energy saving technology.
- Short-term Letting Regulations by Glasgow City Council
- Funding for Edinburgh Festivals and potential loss of international market share.
- Policing of Events.

Date of Next Meeting: 12th May, Edinburgh 11am – 3pm