

Scottish Tourism Alliance
STA Council Meeting Note
12th May 2015, The Scotsman Hotel, Edinburgh

Attending

- Alasdair Smart, Assoc of Scottish Visitor Attractions
- Fiona Campbell, Assoc of Scotland's Self Caterers
- Claire Bruce, Deeside & the Cairngorms Ltd
- Fiona Bewers, The Caravan Club
- Lee Cousins, Scottish Sports Association
- Jane Ali-Knight Scottish Events & Festival Assoc
- Katherine Taylor, Cycle Tourism Forum
- Keith Legge, SYHA
- Robin Worsnop, ETAG
- Barry McCulloch, Federation of Small Businesses
- Iain Jurgensen, Argyll & Isles Tourism
- Willie Macleod, British Hospitality Association
- Daniel Steel, Sail Scotland
- Jeanette Wilson, British Holiday & Home Parks Assoc
- Laura Cheyne, National Trust from Scotland
- Robert Kidd, Scottish Destination Management Assoc
- Sue Gruellich, Scottish Tourist Guides Association
- Fiona Thomson, Scottish Tourist Guides Association
- Andrea Nicholas, Green Tourism
- Graham MacLennan, Outer Hebrides Tourism Assoc
- Rosanne Mackay, Farm Stay UK
- Mairi Bell, Loch Lomond & Trossachs Natl Park
- Paul Waterson, Scottish Licensed Traders Assoc
- Sheena Howden, Go Rural
- Max Thorne, CL Serviced Apartments
- Jeremy Tinsley, Conference of Passenger Transport

In Attendance

- Marc Crothall, Scottish Tourism Alliance (Chair)
- Caroline Warburton, Scottish Tourism Alliance
- Mhairi Clark, Scottish Tourism Alliance
- Gill Brittle, Respitality
- Chris Greenwood, VisitScotland (part)
- Matthew Quinn, VisitScotland (part)
- Euan Mearns, Scottish Enterprise (part)

Apologies

- Judy Rae, Business Tourism for Scotland
- Gareth Crichton, Discover Orkney
- Sarah Troughton, Scottish Country Sports Tourism Group
- Ros Halley, Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Assoc
- Ben Mardall, Wild Scotland
- Denise Connelly, Zero Waste Scotland

1. Welcome

Marc Crothall welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular the organisations and individuals attending the Council for the first time.

2: STA Update

2.1 STA Council Chair: following discussion at the last meeting, the general feeling from the Council was that MC would continue to chair the group. MC would welcome any views (for or against this approach).

AP1: ALL (if appropriate) to forward views on role of STA Chair to MC.

AP2: MC to draw up outline role of Chair (carried forward from previous meeting)

2.2 Scottish Tourism Week 2016: the dates have been confirmed as 11th – 18th March 2016. Events will be held across Scotland (starting in Shetland on February 11th). The main Signature Conference will be held on Fri 18th March at EICC, Edinburgh with the Thistle Awards on evening of 18th and the Parliamentary Reception (probably held at EICC) on evening of Thurs 17th March.

Continuing the joined up approach from 2015, Scotland Food & Drink and Scottish Licensed Trade Association are also planning to hold their events that week as well. Council members asked to consider events (which don't need to be conference) which could be held that week and badged as STW.

AP3: ALL (if appropriate) to notify MC of regional STW events & activities.

2.3 STA Midsummer Conference, 11th June, Westerwood Hotel, Cumbernauld: MC asked Council members to attend and also encourage their members to attend - scottishtourismalliance.co.uk/summeropenmeeting/2/.

MC gave advance notice of the **STA October Conference and AGM on 1st October at EICC**.

2.4 STA Business Plan & Strategic Review: STA have published their strategic review and business plan. Copies will be available to the Council.

2.5 STA Public Affairs: STA is developing its advocacy role and, sharing the costs with BHA, has retained Grayling PR to provide a political scanning service for the two organisations. A public affairs plan is also being developed which will highlight the key issues that STA will lobby on and a short paper will be circulated to the Council in the coming months. MC asked for Council representatives to work with STA on the development of the paper. Individuals who stepped forward were:

- Barry McCulloch, FSB
- Fiona Bowers, The Caravan Club
- Jeremy Tinsley, Confederation of Passenger Transport
- Claire Bruce, Visit Royal Deeside
- Max Thorne, Serviced Apartments
- Willie Macleod, BHA

AP4: Others interested in being involved with development of public affairs paper to contact MC¹.

3: Respitality

Gill Brittle from Shared Care Scotland presented the Respitality initiative. The group were invited to support the initiative, encourage their members to participate and also provide examples of organisations already supporting local carers. Web: www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/resources/respitality/.

AP5: ALL to invite members to support Respitality and provide examples of supporting local carers.

4: Tourism Futures 2025

A background paper to Tourism Future 2025 project was circulated prior to the meeting. Chris Greenwood and Matthew Quinn from VisitScotland introduced the project and a discussion on the drivers of change was facilitated by Ewan Mearns (EM) of Scottish Enterprise. Comments on the drivers included:

- **Time:** whether people will have time to travel in the future
- **Transport:** whether it will be easy/convenient for people to travel
- **Depopulation of rural areas/increased urbanisation:** this affects both markets and products.
- **Infrastructure** (in particular broadband/mobile): influencing where people live (and set up business).
- **Uncertainty in the economy:** nervousness by investors, businesses and consumers
- **Payment methods:** the move from cash towards online payments (via phones) and/or other forms of currency which may be dependent on mobile signal/internet access.
- **Investor attitudes to opportunity and risk:** Scotland perceived as an expensive country offering poor return on investment.
- **Responding to the needs of the 'millennial' market:** need to understand what they want and how they buy.
- **Housing policy,** particularly in rural areas.
- **Cost of compliance:** reduces competitiveness of industry in comparison to other nations.
- **Low-cost airlines:** major driver of change in tourism industry.

MC asked what the next steps are for the project and EM invited further comments from the group.

AP6: EM to provide 2 questions for the Council. ALL to reply with comments.

The meeting had over-run by this point and a number of people left.

¹ Ben Mardall (Wild Scotland), David Smythe (ASSC), Robert Kidd (SDMA) & Judy Rae (BTfs) agreed to contribute at previous meeting.

5: Council Members Update / AOB

Tourism Cross Party Group: there was agreement that the Council should be influencing the discussion topics for future CPG meetings and future topics were suggested, in particular Scotland's competitiveness in an international market.

Date of Next Meeting: 8th September, Edinburgh (time tbc).