

Item:



Report to Islands Transport Forum 25th October 2018

Scottish Islands Passport

Purpose of Report

To update Members of the Islands Transport Forum on the progress being made to develop a Scottish Islands Passport as a marketing initiative that has potential to support both lifeline ferry and air services and develop tourism opportunities especially for the most remote islands.

Background

At the HITRANS Partnership Meeting in April, Members approved a recommendation for Officers to investigate opportunities to develop a detailed proposal for a Scottish Islands Passport.

HITRANS Officers have subsequently engaged with partners at local authorities, the Scottish Government, VisitScotland, other RTPs and third sector stakeholders to understand the appetite for the project to be developed and the mechanisms available to us to take it forward as a collective effort.

Following a positive response from the Cabinet Secretary and subsequent engagement with a Senior Policy Adviser within the Scottish Governments Directorate for Culture, Tourism and Major Events, the Government made the welcome commitment to “develop an Islands passport scheme as a marketing initiative to encourage people to visit more of Scotland’s 80 inhabited islands” within their Programme for 2018/19.

The Passport Concept

Among the most successful tourism initiatives are those which present the visitor with a targeted offer that is packaged either as a route, a trail or just a number of similarly themed attractions. In Scotland itself, successful examples include everything from The West Highland Way or NC500 to the National Trust for Scotland and Historic Scotland. They all use existing attractions that have been marketed and packaged in ways that have encouraged significant increases in visitors.

Further afield, there are multiple similar initiatives. Several of these already use the Passport theme to promote and encourage more visitors. The list includes examples such as the Wild Atlantic Way in Ireland which is based on a long distance route along the west coast of Ireland to the Island based passport schemes in Texel (Netherlands) or Denmark which have been based round an individual island or multiple islands as is proposed for the Scottish Island Passport scheme.

Scottish Islands Passport

A Scottish Islands Passport would seek to use a similar approach to encouraging more people to visit Scotland's islands but would adopt its own unique principles to ensure that the benefits of scheme help the Islands economies grow tourism sustainably.

According to the 2011 census, there were 93 inhabited islands in Scotland with a total population of 103,700. Some of these are privately owned and others even on inland freshwater lochs. The Scottish Islands Passport would seek to extend only to those islands off the Scottish Mainland which can be visited using existing public transport services. This brings the number of islands that would be included down to around 80. These 80 islands are primarily served by at least a passenger ferry but many also by an air service. The services are operated by multiple different operators though the vast majority are accessed by services operated by the following; CalMac, Serco Northlink, Eastern Airways, Orkney Islands Council (Orkney Ferries) and Shetland Island Council, Loganair and Direct Air Services.

Developing the Proposal

Since the welcome commitment to develop Islands passport scheme as a marketing initiative was included within the Scottish Governments Programme for Scotland 2018/19, HITRANS Officers have agreed to provide a more detailed project plan outlining the potential scope of the proposal, its intended market and how it might be delivered. In parallel, HITRANS has agreed to lead on an application to this fund and intend to submit a cooperative application (across the 5 programme areas with Islands) to the EU LEADER funding stream for the Passport proposal.

Each LEADER funding areas has different criteria for match funding but the intervention rate is usually around 70-75%. Higher levels of support can be considered and those projects with match funding are prioritised but with our Partnership including a number of public bodies it would be difficult to make the case for a higher intervention rate.

Attached as an appendix to this report is the scoping document HITRANS have drafted in preparation for submitting the LEADER application and this included some high level costs which are listed in the table below:

Item	Cost
Project Officer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 year term of appointment • Salary £25,000 with on costs for NI & Pension (x1.3 of Salary) • Office, Admin, Phone etc (15% added to staff cost) 	Total = £74,750
Website & App Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website Development • App Development of Virtual Passport collection across IOS, Android and Windows 	Total = £100,000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £40,000 • £60,000
Marketing Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passport Printing • Stamps for Island partner agents • Online Advertising 	Total = £105,000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £20,000 • £5,000 • £40,000 over project timeframe • £40,000 over project timeframe

<ul style="list-style-type: none">Traditional advertising media	
Overall Total	£279,750

Recommendation

Members are invited to note the report.

Report by: Neil MacRae
Designation: Partnership Manager, HITRANS
Date: 11.10.18

Scottish Islands Passport Scoping Report



1. Proposal

The concept of an Islands Passport is to combine the successful elements of similar marketing initiatives in Scotland and beyond so as to encourage more people to visit more of Scotland's Islands. The target audience would be both foreign visitors but also to encourage all Scots to visit more of the wonderful islands that surround the Scottish mainland.

2. Background

An initial proposal on the concept and merit of a Scottish Islands Passport was presented to the HITRANS Board meeting – which includes representation from four of the six local authorities whose area includes populated islands – in April 2018. Following positive feedback it was agreed to write to both the Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs and the Minister for Transport and the Islands.

This scoping report has been prepared following a meeting with an official within the Scottish Government's Tourism and Major Events Division.

The initiative has also already gained widespread coverage in the national press following reference being made to the proposal in the HITRANS newsletter.

3. What could a Scottish Islands Passport Offer?

Among the most successful tourism initiatives are those which present the visitor with a targeted offer that is packaged either as a route, a trail or just a number of similarly themed attractions. In Scotland itself, successful examples include everything from The West Highland Way or NC500 to the National Trust for Scotland and Historic Scotland. They all use existing attractions that have been marketed and packaged in ways that have encouraged significant increases in visitors.

Further afield, there are multiple similar examples. Several of these already use the passport theme to promote and encourage and promote more visitors. These include the examples below where routes, individual islands or chains of islands have each used the concept of a passport in a number of different ways;

Wild Atlantic Way

The Wild Atlantic Way is the world's longest defined coastal touring route. Extending along Ireland's west coast from the most southerly to northerly points, the route covers 2,500km of coastline. A key feature of the trail is the Wild Atlantic Way Passport <http://bit.ly/2pgsbqP>. The concept behind this is that it gives the visitor a guide to the route but also encourages them to complete the route offering the chance to pick up 188 unique stamps along the way and

even a 'Wild Atlantic Way Certificate as an official record of your journey'. It is estimated that it attracted 1.3 million visitors last year.

Danish Passport

The Island Passport lists 37 Danish islands by ferry route, sailing distance and sailing time, number of residents and size. On the ferry, at the port or the tourist information office you will find a clipboard with a special pen that you can use to transfer the silhouette of an island on the passport. You can look forward to unique experiences on the islands, each of which has its own special charm, landscape, residents and attractions, as well as good youth hostels and cycling opportunities. https://issuu.com/sammenslutningenafdanskesmaoer/docs/_-pas_2017_tysk-engelske_udgave

Texel, Netherlands

The island of Texel of the north coast of the Netherlands offers visitors the opportunity pick up a free passport for which 36 Texel business offer a discount on Texel products, sightseeing flights, museums, etc. <https://www.texel.net/en/txelpassport>

4. Scottish Islands Passport

A Scottish Islands Passport would seek to use a similar approach to encouraging more people to visit Scotland's islands but would adopt its own unique approach to ensure that the benefits of scheme help the Islands economies grow tourism sustainably.

According to the 2011 census, there were 93 inhabited islands in Scotland with a total population of 103,700. Some of these are privately owned and others even on inland freshwater lochs. The Scottish Islands Passport would seek to extend only to those islands off the Scottish Mainland which can be visited using existing public transport services. This brings the number of islands that would be included down to around 80. These 80 islands are primarily served by at least a passenger ferry but many also by an air service. The services are operated by multiple different operators though the vast majority are accessed by services operated by the following; CalMac, Serco Northlink, FlyBe/Eastern Airways, Orkney Islands Council (Orkney Ferries) and Shetland Island Council, Loganair and Direct Air Services.

There is an opportunity for either a regional or national body to bring together these partners and develop a marketing strategy that could have the potential to draw significant additional visitors to Scotland's Islands with all the economic benefits that would bring. Among the key added benefits of this scheme, is the potential it has to **encourage more people to visit the smaller and less accessible islands which currently don't benefit as much from the economic opportunities that visitors offer**. A list of the partners who would have already expressed an interest or would need to be involved or at least consulted in the development of this proposal is contained in Appendix B.

The opportunities around this concept are endless but a fundamental element of

its success requires those managing it to clearly establish not only how it is to be developed and by whom but also the key objectives of the scheme and how it will be maintained. Below are some key principles which HITRANS feel are key to its success.

- Once what constitutes an island is clearly defined (see Section 6) the scheme must be Scotland wide to be coherent
- Any governance structure needs to reflect this national coverage
- Among the key aims and objectives of the scheme are that it needs to:
 - Encourage sustainable tourism and economic benefits.
 - Provide value through increased visitor spend and tourism in less well known or less accessible islands
 - Provide an opportunity to focus on slow tourism and accessing the islands by public transport and active travel helping to sustain often fragile lifeline services.
 - Have core marketing materials that are easily maintained. Notwithstanding the attraction of a physical Passport as a marketing device, there is an opportunity to provide much of the supporting information or even the full concept on a Web or App based platform.
 - Provide a clear governance structure but one that enables flexibility and diversification to enable the concept to adapt over time.

5. HITRANS Role & Next Steps

HITRANS believe such an initiative will support all our island economies, in particular those served by the most fragile lifeline transport services. To this end, it could be a low cost and **unifying deliverable of the forthcoming Islands (Scotland) Act**.

2020 is also the Year of Coasts and Water and an Islands Passport would offer a great marketing opportunity to encourage more people to explore this iconic element of Scotland's landscape and heritage.

Recognising the vital element of transport services in enabling visitors to travel to and between these islands, HITRANS is keen to play a pivotal role in developing the Scottish Islands Passport. HITRANS currently supports each of its partner local authorities in providing local public transport information and could extend this to support the Islands Passport. However, for the proposal to be successful it is recognised that support and potentially leadership is needed from an organisation/s with appropriate marketing experience and reach.

HITRANS has had interest from a number of sources offering support in developing the proposal. These include an offer from Robert Gordon University to develop supporting cultural materials or story-tagging that would provide the visitor with

information on the history of each island and what they have to offer.

Orkney Islands Council have also contacted HITRANS, encouraging us to submit a LEADER application for funding to support the development and implementation of the proposal. It is proposed that the application be collaborative across all eligible Local authority areas as this element of the fund is currently undersubscribed.

HITRANS is willing to support the project both financially and with staff resources but there is recognition that additional support is required if the proposal is to be successfully developed. We believe the **proposal should be developed through an island based staffing resource** with a clear accountable governance structure which HITRANS are keen to lead or support.

HITRANS would welcome further dialogue on how the proposal is both managed, resourced and maintained so as to ensure that the Islands Passport can be successful and offer real economic benefit to each of Scotland's Islands.

6. The Islands

What constitutes an island in the context of an Islands Passport is something which will have to be clearly defined. Albeit that this definition could change over time as the scheme develops.

Scotland has over 790 offshore islands. Many of these could be described as just rocky outcrops and a definition that restricts an island to a size of more than 40 hectares or inhabited reduces the number to around 230.

There were 93 inhabited islands in Scotland at the time of the 2011 Census. Their total population is 103,700, which is 2 per cent of the population of Scotland.

As the primary aim of Islands passport is to encourage economic growth through sustainable tourism, it is felt that an Island should be defined as an inhabited island accessible by regular public transport. Using this definition the number would fall to around 80 islands spanning 6 local authority areas (Shetland Islands, Orkney Islands, Highland, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Argyll & Bute and North Ayrshire).

A proposed list of these islands is contained in Appendix A. As the proposal is further developed this list would obviously need to be checked and agreed. Further information from Scotland's Census 2011: Inhabited islands report, 2015 can be found at the following link. <https://bit.ly/2maVn7J>

Appendix A:

List of inhabited Scottish Islands with regular access by public transport

<i>Population rank</i>	<i>Island</i>	<i>Local Authority</i>	<i>Population (2001 census)</i>	<i>Area (hectares)</i>
1	<u>Lewis and Harris</u>	<u>Comhairle nan Eilean Siar</u>	19,918	217,898
2	<u>Mainland, Shetland</u>	<u>Shetland</u>	17,550	96,700
3	<u>Mainland, Orkney</u>	<u>Orkney</u>	15,315	52,325
4	<u>Skye</u>	<u>Highland</u>	9,232	165,625
5	<u>Bute</u>	<u>Argyll and Bute</u>	7,228	12,217
6	<u>Arran</u>	<u>North Ayrshire</u>	5,045	43,201
7	<u>Islay</u>	Argyll and Bute	3,457	61,956
8	<u>Mull</u>	Argyll and Bute	2,667	87,535
9	<u>South Uist</u>	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	1,818	32,026
10	<u>Great Cumbrae</u>	North Ayrshire	1,434	1,168
11	<u>North Uist</u>	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	1,271	30,305
12	<u>Benbecula</u>	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	1,219	8,203
13	<u>Barra</u>	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	1,078	5,875
14	<u>Whalsay</u>	Shetland	1,034	1,970
15	<u>Yell</u>	Shetland	957	21,211
16	<u>South Ronaldsay</u>	Orkney	854	4,980
17	<u>Tiree</u>	Argyll and Bute	770	7,834
18	<u>West Burra</u>	Shetland	753	743
19	<u>Unst</u>	Shetland	720	12,068
20	<u>Westray</u>	Orkney	563	4,713
21	<u>Seil</u>	Argyll and Bute	560	1,329
22	<u>Sanday</u>	Orkney	478	5,043
23	<u>Bressay</u>	Shetland	384	2,805
24	<u>Burray</u>	Orkney	357	903
25	<u>Stronsay</u>	Orkney	343	3,275

<i>Population rank</i>	<i>Island</i>	<i>Local Authority</i>	<i>Population (2001 census)</i>	<i>Area (hectares)</i>
26	<u>Scalpay</u>	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	322	653
27	<u>Shapinsay</u>	Orkney	300	2,948
28	<u>Hoy</u> (inc South Walls)	Orkney	392	14,318
29	<u>Great Bernera</u>	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	233	2,122
30	<u>Luìng</u>	Argyll and Bute	212	1,543
31	<u>Rousay</u>	Orkney	212	4,860
32	<u>Grimsay</u>	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	201	833
33	<u>Raasay</u>	Highland	192	6,405
34	<u>Jura</u>	Argyll and Bute	188	36,692
35	<u>Coll</u>	Argyll and Bute	164	7,685
36	<u>Lismore</u>	Argyll and Bute	146	2,351
37	<u>Berneray</u>	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	136	1,010
38	<u>Eriskay</u>	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	133	703
39	<u>Trondra</u>	Shetland	133	275
40	<u>Iona</u>	Argyll and Bute	125	877
41	<u>Eday</u>	Orkney	121	2,745
42	<u>South Walls</u>	<u>Orkney</u>	120 (E)	850 (E)
43	<u>Gigha</u>	<u>Argyll and Bute</u>	110	1,395
44	<u>Colonsay</u>	<u>Argyll and Bute</u>	108	4,617
45	<u>Muckle Roe</u>	<u>Shetland</u>	104	1,773
46	<u>Vatersay</u>	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	94	960
47	<u>Fetlar</u>	<u>Shetland</u>	86	4,078
48	<u>Flotta</u>	<u>Orkney</u>	81	876
49	<u>North Ronaldsay</u>	<u>Orkney</u>	70	690
50	<u>Fair Isle</u>	<u>Shetland</u>	69	768
51	<u>Eigg</u>	<u>Highland</u>	67	3,049
52	<u>East Burra</u>	<u>Shetland</u>	66	515

<i>Population rank</i>	<i>Island</i>	<i>Local Authority</i>	<i>Population (2001 census)</i>	<i>Area (hectares)</i>
53	<u>Papa Westray</u>	<u>Orkney</u>	65	918
54	<u>Easdale</u>	<u>Argyll and Bute</u>	58	20 (E)
55	<u>Housay</u>	<u>Shetland</u>	50	218
56	<u>Baleshare</u>	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	49	910
57	<u>Kerrera</u>	<u>Argyll and Bute</u>	42	1,214
58	<u>Egilsay</u>	<u>Orkney</u>	37	650
59	<u>Foula</u>	Shetland	31	1,265
60	<u>Muck</u>	Highland	30	559
61	<u>Bruray</u>	<u>Shetland</u>	26	55
62	<u>Papa Stour</u>	<u>Shetland</u>	23	828
63	<u>Rùm</u>	<u>Highland</u>	22	10,463
64	<u>Graemsay</u>	<u>Orkney</u>	21	409
65	<u>Grimsay, South East Benbecula</u>	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	19	117 ^[1]
66	<u>Wyre</u>	Orkney	18	311
67	<u>Ulva</u>	Argyll and Bute	16	1,990
68	<u>Holy Isle</u>	North Ayrshire	13	253
69	<u>Flodaigh, Benbecula</u>	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	11	145 ^[1]
70	<u>Papa Stronsay</u>	<u>Orkney</u>	10	74
71	<u>Eilean Shona</u>	<u>Highland</u>	9	525
72	<u>Erraid</u>	<u>Argyll and Bute</u>	8	187
73	<u>Lunga</u>	<u>Argyll and Bute</u>	7	254
74	<u>Soay, Skye</u>	<u>Highland</u>	7	1,036
75	<u>Canna</u>	<u>Highland</u>	6	1,130
76	<u>Sanday</u>	<u>Highland</u>	6	184
77	<u>Gometra</u>	<u>Argyll and Bute</u>	5	425
78	<u>Oronsay</u>	<u>Argyll and Bute</u>	5	543
79	<u>Tanera Mòr</u>	<u>Highland</u>	5	310
80	<u>Eilean Bàn, Lochalsh</u>	<u>Highland</u>	2	10 (E)

Appendix B:

List of partners to be consulted and / or involved in the development of a Scottish Islands Passport

- Scottish Government
- Local authorities with islands – CNES, HC, OIC, SIC, ABC, NAC
- Regional Transport Partnerships with Islands – HITRANS, SPT, ZetTrans
- Visit Scotland
- Direct Marketing Organisations, eg. Outer Hebrides Tourism, Wild About Argyll, Skye Connect etc.
- Transport Operators including the following;
 - CalMac
 - Northlink
 - Loganair
 - Pentland Ferries
 - John O'Groats Ferries
 - Direct Task
 - Abellio Scotrail
- Scottish Islands Federation
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise
- Historic Environment Scotland
- Robert Gordon University

Scottish Islands Passport: Estimated Development Costs

Item	Cost
Project Officer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 year term of appointment • Salary £25,000 with on costs for NI & Pension (x1.3 of Salary) • Office, Admin, Phone etc (15% added to staff cost) 	Total = £74,750
Website & App Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website Development • App Development of Virtual Passport with Pokemon Go style stamp collection across IOS, Android and Windows 	Total = £100,000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £40,000 • £60,000
Marketing Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passport Printing • Stamps for Island partner agents • Online Advertising • Traditional media advertising 	Total = £105,000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £20,000 • £5,000 • £40,000 over project timeframe • £40,000 over project timeframe
Overall Total	£279,750

