

**LATEST UPDATE ON THE CLIPPER ROUND THE WORLD YACHT RACE
OBAN STOPOVER ACTIONS**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide the Policy and Resources Committee with an update on the progress of the Clipper 2023-2024 Round the World Yacht Race Oban Stopover Actions plan.
- 1.2 The Council was approached by Clipper Ventures in the autumn 2023 to be a host port for Clipper 2023-2024 Round the World Yacht Race Stopover. Clipper Ventures were attracted to Oban given our North Pier pontoons investment that enables the berthing of yachts and mini cruise ships in Oban. Also, one of their older boats had a positive experience of stopover in Oban for two summers running one of their programmes of introducing young people to sailing.
- 1.3 After the Council was given a one-off opportunity to secure the first race stopover in Scotland the fee was negotiated for £60,000 while the usual fee for a host port is in excess of £250,000 and can be over £1m. The fee of £60,000 is split between the Council staycation fund (£30,000); BID4Oban (£25,000) and the Town Centre Partnership (£5,000).
- 1.4 Clipper is an adventure race, not leisure sailing open to people from many backgrounds. It introduces a new market for Argyll and Bute and ties in well with our Adventure Coast marketing strategy and the AISTP (Argyll and Isles Strategic Tourism Partnership) Strategy 2022-2025.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
 - Note progress on actions delivered for the Clipper 2023-2024 Round the World Yacht Race Oban Stopover (**Table 1**).
 - To approve up to £50k of funding to deal with additional costs linked to the event from the council's priority fund;
 - To note the key Oban Stopover civic events including Clipper Award civic ceremony on 16 July, Clipper Connect Business event on 19 July and VIP Reception on the Clipper Race departure day, on Sunday 21 July.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 Argyll and Bute Council and Oban Business Improvement District (Bid4Oban) partnered and signed the agreement with Clipper Ventures to host the Oban Stopover to be held from 12 July to 21 July 2024.
- 3.2 Chaired by the Head of Development and Economic Growth Service, the Steering Committee for the Oban Stopover is involved in creating the Festival from the start of the planning process. Two subgroups, one focussing on the marine/consenting aspects of the race and the other on the marketing and land-based event activities.
- 3.3 The Festival of the Sea is planned as an overarching community engagement programme and is designed to be an inclusive event. The Festival delivery partners include Food from Argyll, Rockfield Centre, Scottish Association for Marine Science, Oban Sailing Club, Royal Yachting Association Scotland, Oban High School, LiveArgyll, Furan Gaelic Centre, Oban Rotary Club, CHARTS, and a number of other potential partners are also in the process of being approached.
- 3.4 All venues have been secured for the event with the most important one being North Pier and North Pier pontoons (Table 1). Other venues include, the Corran Halls, Rockfield and Oban High School will be the site where the sails will be repaired. Clipper are liaising with the School Hostel to stay there for the event with their 30 staff at their own cost. Rockfield will host the media centre and office space for Clipper at a cost agreed with Clipper together with the food and drink festival.
- 3.5 Overflow car parks at the Oban High School and at Mossfield have been agreed with Road and Infrastructure Services. HIE have offered their car park at SAMs.
- 3.6 HITrans will supply hire bikes ahead of the Stopover, the West Highland Yacht race and potentially until the National Royal Oban MOD in October.
- 3.7 To help visitors to orientate Oban Venue maps will be printed; free wifi will be supported in town; and free Love Oban app with the Festival programme will also be provided. Additional road signage will also be provided in the town. The town will also be branded during the event with Clipper and Love Oban branding to help provide a festival atmosphere.
- 3.8 The Festival of the Sea will celebrate the area's outstanding maritime environment and water-based adventure tourism offer; history and culture; and local produce and will comprise of Food and Drink Village, Ocean Health - marine conservation demonstrations, On the Water – sports club taster sessions, Gaelic heritage – workshops, storytelling, For the Love of Print – maritime art and craft exhibition, The Big Tune – music and singing (**Appendix 1**). Cultural elements will celebrate the region's maritime history, our Gaelic tradition, music, songs and literature. Ocean Health workshops will deliver a series of activities to highlight our outstanding natural environment. Five days of showcasing the artisan quality of local food and drink will be an integral part of the Oban and Argyll visitor experience. This includes additional yacht races; fun events; food and drink

village and cultural events at the Corran Halls and other private venues across Oban.

3.9 The crew will also take part in wider tourism opportunities, environmental works (beach cleans) and a business connect meeting to be held at SAMS.

3.10 The objectives of the Festival are:

1. To showcase the world-class produce from Argyll and Bute and establish new business relationships
2. To stimulate investment across key sectors of food and drink, events and festivals, hospitality, and retail
3. To exhibit local crafts and culture, and provide experiences of the Gaelic language
4. To bring more local people into activities on the water and improve well-being in the area
5. To promote Argyll and Bute area as a leading adventure sports destination in Scotland.

3.11 The Festival of the Sea during Oban Stopover for Clipper Round the World Race has close synergies with local tourism and economic strategies developed by the Argyll and Isles Strategic Tourism Partnership (AISTP).

3.12 Tourism is a key industry for Argyll and Bute together with the Oban and Lorn area with 2,491,000 visitors in 2022 according to the latest STEAM report.

3.13 Oban has a record of successful delivery of events, including Food from Argyll Festival and Gin and Whisky Festivals and Festival of the Sea. As a seaside town with its fresh locally caught seafood, it gained the accolade of 'Seafood Capital of Scotland'.

3.14 To coordinate Food and Drink Village, the Council partnered with the Food From Argyll (FFA) cooperative as the Event Organiser. The cooperative of local food and drink producers from across Argyll and Bute aims to raise awareness of Argyll produce. The cooperative showcased its members at national events like the Royal Highland Shows since 2016. In September 2023 FFA successfully delivered the first-ever Argyll Food Festival in Oban with 23 stalls attended by over 1500 visitors.

3.15 The Rockfield Centre is chosen as a venue for the Food and Drink Village due to its community-centred values, central location and outdoor space available for the Village. The Outdoor space is currently being upgraded with Crown Estates Monies previously agreed by the Council.

3.16 Oban High School car park will be used as an overflow parking during 10 days of the Festival. The parking will be managed by the Rotary Club of Oban with funds collected from daily parking charges to be redistributed for the local charities.

3.17 The Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) will hold tickets open for public sustainability workshops on 18 July. The workshops will include science

busking; showcasing ocean explorer tartan products; bringing ROVs to show the water below the boats; microscopes to explore life in a drop of seawater; public artwork; outdoor workshops to learn about identifying local marine mammals and birds; Scottish ocean storytelling; seaweed extravaganza.

- 3.18 SAMS will host Clipper Connect Business Networking event on 19 July showcasing SAMS innovative businesses. This B2B event will aim to establish new business relationships for local world-class producers; stimulate investment in innovation across key tourism industry sectors; and promote Oban and Argyll and Bute as a leading adventure sports destination.

4.0 MARKETING

- 4.1 Argyll and Bute Council teamed with Argyll and the Isles Tourism Cooperative (AITC) as the regional Destination Organisation to provide a marketing campaign for the Clipper 2023-2024 Round the World Yacht Race Oban Stopover. Links to Clipper Ventures allocated on AITC and Bid4Oban websites will provide the most up-to-date race information, including the shore-side agenda for the public about the Festival programme. AITC engages with the Clipper Venture to provide content and coordinate an international marketing campaign.
- 4.2 AITC aims on different groups of the target audience to be addressed with relevant content – local communities, food and drink producers, hospitality businesses and transport operators. All the target groups have to recognise the business opportunities of the first stopover of the Clipper Round the World Race in Scotland. The primary web channel will be supported by timed releases on www.wildaboutargyll.co.uk For the rest of Scotland, the UK and International visitors links from www.visitscotland.com/events will help build consumer awareness of the racing fleet's arrival and demand for the Festival programme.
- 4.3 Negotiation is ongoing with West Coast Motors and ScotRail to promote the event. Transport Scotland is also in the process of being notified of the event.
- 4.4 The event will open opportunities for the business community to take full advantage of considerable international media exposure. Organisations and businesses are invited to express their interest in participating in the Festival of the Sea Programme and running their events. For activity proposals to be included in the Festival programme, businesses will have to demonstrate an approach to reducing their environmental impact. Selecting the activities for the Festival Programme is outlined in the Expression of Interest form and requires presenting the best possible impression of the town to participants, spectators and visitors.
- 4.5 Accommodation bookings are already being taken very quickly for the stopover period. Therefore it would be reasonable to assume that there will also be a large number of day visitors to Oban.

Likely economic impact: The event will attract both domestic and international visitors due to the global coverage of the first-ever Stopover of the Clipper Round the World Race in Scotland. It is difficult to estimate the number of additional

visitors as it is a largely non ticketed event however a peak of 2,000 to 3,000 additional visitors per day of the event is anticipated at the peak time of the race. However, the capacity of the accommodation will be a decisive factor.

5.0 CLIPPER RACE DETAILS

- 5.1 Oban will welcome the final leg of the Clipper 2023-2024 Round the World Yacht Race and provide a 10-day Festival of the Sea programme of events. For the first time ever the fleet of eleven 70-foot ocean racing yachts will berth in Scotland after a 40,000 nautical mile race around the world ([Clipper Round The World Race](#)).
- 5.2 There are 22 crew per boat plus 30 support staff. Since this Washington DC - Oban leg is the last one before the finish in Portsmouth it is anticipated that the crew's families and friends are coming to meet the boats after their Atlantic crossing.
- 5.3 Glencruitten Hostel is offered as an accommodation for the support staff and rooms in Rockfield Centre are offered as Press Centre, all with the cost to Clipper Race.
- 5.4 The yachts will arrive over five-day window from the 12 of July, weather permitting. The yachts are stationary at the breakwater of North Pier Pontoon from that date. Two days of activation are planned for 18-19 July where people can visit the boats. Sailing trips are planned for invited guests on the same dates.
- 5.5 The Race will depart on the 21 of July for Portsmouth with a parade of sail and a massed start. The crew parade from Station Square to North Pier will take place on the Sunday just prior to the race start. This will in reality be a rolling road closure covering a short distance along the public road.
- 5.6 Clipper will also be inviting a range of VIPs to the event and there is an opportunity to connect with these people. Over 100 delegates are being asked to attend this day of business activity supported by Business Gateway and SAMs. It's a marine economy theme with the environment at its heart and the possibilities of expanding our marine economy and its will be a great opportunity to promote Argyll and Bute as open for business.
- 5.7 The anticipated worldwide media attention on the homecoming leg will attract both domestic and international visitors. That will put the town at the forefront of sailing destinations in Scotland and provide a welcome boost to the local economy. Oban already features prominently in Clipper Venture's digital marketing activity, and in 360°, the Clipper Race Souvenir Magazine 2023/24 issue https://issuu.com/clipperace/docs/issuu_doc.
- 5.8 The Clipper Round the World Yacht Race is a prestigious global sporting event and presents outstanding showcase opportunities for the region and for Oban to host adventure sport events of an international scale. Successfully delivered event will make Argyll to be internationally recognised as a destination dedicated

to sustainable event industry, and, therefore, will contribute to building Scotland’s reputation as the Perfect Stage for events.


6.0 COSTS AND OUTLAYS





- 6.1 Whilst this is a key promotional event for Oban and wider Argyll and Bute the Council is doing it on a basis of collaboration and minimising costs. The Council partnered with Bid4Oban/Scotland Towns Partnership to successfully fund the bid and co-host the Oban Stopover. To deliver the Festival, Argyll and Bute Council and the partners make an in-kind contribution to project management.
- 6.2 After the Council was given a one-off opportunity to secure the first race stopover in Scotland the fee was negotiated for £60,000 while the usual fee for a host port is in excess of £250,000 and can be over £1m. The fee of £60,000 is split between the Council staycation fund (£30,000); BID4Oban (£25,000) and the Town Centre Partnership (£5,000).
- 6.3 Rockfield Centre will host the Food and Drink Village of local produce and is linked to a £100,000 investment in Rockfield’s outdoor space (Crown Estate Funded). Clipper is also paying to rent some offices from the centre.
- 6.4 Event Scotland funding of £15,000 award is granted for infrastructure hire to set up the F&D Village.
- 6.5 Business Gateway contributed with £5,000 support for SMEs (no-members of FFA) to present their produce at the F&D Village.
- 6.6 An ask is being made for up to £50,000 consisting of discretionary funding to cover event costs associated with Clipper from the Council.
- 6.7 Several business sponsorship opportunities are being followed up with a number already secured.

7.0 OBAN STOPOVER ACTION PLAN








- 7.1 **Table 1** provides an update with the current status of each action which is shown using a Red as not approached, Amber as in progress, and Green as completed (RAG) indicator.

Table 1: Update of Actions

Tasks	Actions	Status to Date
Local Committee for Stopover of Clipper Round the World Yacht Race	Local Oban Committee is created with the first meeting held at the Rockfield Centre on the 2nd of October 2023; Fergus Murray (Argyll and Bute Council)	

	<p>Andrew Spence (Bid4Oban) Zalina Dzhatieva (Argyll and Bute Council) David Adams McGilp (Visit Scotland) Beth Anderson (The Rockfield Centre) Robyn Horton (Highlands & Islands Enterprise) Cathy Craig (AITC Wild About Argyll) Anuschka Miller (Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS)) Ronnie Forbes (Rotary Club of Oban) Alex Edmonstone (Live Argyll) Ciorsti Baxter (Rotary Club of Oban) Aileen MacLennan (Argyll and Bute Council) Iain Fulton (Oban High School) Scott Reid (Argyll and Bute Council) Vicki McKenzie (Argyll and Bute Council) Kay McDonald (Bid4Oban) Sayward Harris (The Rockfield Centre) Teagan MacCuish (The Rockfield Centre) Kirsteen MacDonald Andrea Harris (Argyll and Bute Council) James Jackson (Argyll and Bute Council) Karen MacCorquodale (Bid4Oban) Iain Fulton (Oban High School) Fergus McKilligin Robyn Horton Carol Devine meet up monthly</p>	
Event Subgroup	The Event Subgroup of Local Committee for Stopover of Clipper Round the World Yacht Race meets up via MS Teams every second week	
Agreement Between The Clipper Ventures plc and Argyll and Bute Council and BID4Oban	Negotiation of the Agreement with legal support from Commercial Contracts Legal Manager, Legal & Regulatory Support; The Agreement to host Oban Stopover of Clipper 2023-2024 Round the World Yacht Race is signed	
Invitation letters for Clipper Race crew visa applications	Request submitted to Clipper Ventures for the list and details for the crew members requiring visa to enter the UK; Issuing 10 letters of support with legal support from Senior Solicitor – Commercial	
EventScotland Funding application	The application was submitted to fund Food and Drink Village to be held on 17-21 July during Festival of the Sea; £15,000 EventScotland funding award is granted for infrastructure hire to set up the F&D Village; EventScotland Award Contract is signed;	

	The budget update is provided to the Events Manager, EventScotland	
Account for Clipper Oban Stopover	Finance Officer was approached to create Account for Clipper Oban Stopover; the code is set up in the ledger; coding invoices can be done	●
Invoices from LiveArgyll for venue hire	Venue hire of Corran Halls is booked and paid for key civic ceremonies of award prize giving on 16 th July and VIP Reception on 21 st July; and also for Clipper Race crew briefing on 20 th July.	●
Business Gateway Funding support	BG paid FFA £5,000 to subsidise stall fees for a list of up to 30 local businesses to be able to attend F&D Village at the FFA member rate; food and drink related, marine themed, Argyll and Bute local provenance	●
Microsoft Team creation for the Oban Stopover Local Committee	New MS Team request submitted; external organisations domains were run through a security check by ICT Compliance and Security Officer; DEG-EG-Clipper Oban Stopover MS Team is created	●
Event Planning meeting with Clipper Race representatives in Oban	The meeting was held on 6 Feb 2024 with visits to venues including the Municipal Building, Albany Street, Oban Train Station Square, Harbour Master Office, North Pier Parking, North Pier Pontoon, Esplanade, Corran Halls, Rockfield Centre, Oban High School, Glencruitten hostel, Mossfield parking, McCaig Tower, SAMS, Atlantis Leisure; The agenda included planning for key events to be delivered by the Council and bid4Oban; a public engagement plan, stakeholder engagement, and communication; this was publicised in the Oban Times.	●
Expression of Interest form	Expression of Interest form for the Festival of the Sea Program is approved by LOC to allow local organisations and businesses to express their interest in having an event during the Festival	●
NPP website		●
ABC catering	Have been approached to quote for the catering for the presentation and civic event	●

Service Level Agreement with Food From Argyll	Subcontractor	
Service Level Agreement with LiveArgyll	Subcontractor	
Oban Lifeboat	Key stakeholder of the event; open day is included in the programme with displaying their new £2m Lifeboat.	
Atlantis Leisure	Competitors being made aware of Atlantis and costs of using equipment/pool etc.	
AITC	Clipper is included in approved AITC marketing strategy for 2024;	
Public Liability Insurance for the event	Coordinating with Senior Clerical Assistant, Legal & Regulatory Support on PLI for Oban Stopover	
Guest Lists	Save the date notices have been put out to key guests.	
Glencruitten Hostel	Glencruitten Hostel was visited and approved for accommodation for the Clipper Race support staff	
Service Level Agreement with Oban High School	Subcontractor	
Service Level Agreement with Rotary Club of Oban	Subcontractor	
Service Level Agreement with SeaGrass Marine Ltd	Subcontractor	
Service Level Agreement with SAMS	Subcontractor	
Service Level Agreement with Oban Sailing Club	Subcontractor	
Service Level Agreement with Rockfield Centre	Rooms in Rockfield Centre are offered as Press Centre, all with the cost to Clipper Race; negotiation is on-going One it is finalised SLA will be signed with the Centre as a Subcontractor	

TTRO application for a procession application	Parade to be held on 21 st July during the Stopover and application for a procession application to be submitted for it	●
Goody bags	secured 250 good quality tote bags branded better journeys that can be used as the goodie bag for the crew; donations from businesses to be included in the bags;	●
Event Safety Management Plan	To create and submit Event Safety Management Plan	●
RIS	Involved in traffic management; creation of fan zone on North pier; carpark management; overflow parking and also the marine side of the event; notice to mariners issued. A plan for North Pier has been agreed.	●
AB Water Safety group	Have been consulted and a plan is being put in place. RLNI is a partner.	●
Police Scotland	Contacted and have no concerns; they will have 2 police officers on duty at North Pier for duration at no cost to the event. Border Force will also attend as boats arrive again at no cost to event.	●
ScotRail	Have been approached and made aware of the event and likely demand.	●
Oban airport overflow parking for campervans	Arrangements made for temporary use of Airport carpark for motorhomes; This is an overflow area; motorhomes are being directed to official sites as first preference;	●
Extended Licensed Hours For On Sales Premises	Application to be made to the Argyll And Bute Licensing Board for Extended Licensed Hours For On Sales Premises during event; Similar to MOD.	●

8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 Clipper 2023-2024 Round the World Yacht Race Oban Stopover is a one-off event for Argyll and Bute and is the first time it has come to Scotland. It offers an outstanding marketing opportunity for the region and will help raise the profile across the world. Event Scotland have recognised through providing funding for the Food and Drink Festival associated with the event.
- 8.2 The Council is a host port partner with BID4Oban and the Scottish Towns Partnership who have part funded the host port costs. There is a range of local and national partners signed up to help deliver the event. More partners are being

invited to take part including business sponsorship. There are a number of key civic events associated with the event and will form a key part of the programme. The main event is ticketless and open to everyone to enjoy.

- 8.3 The Festival of the Sea activities are scaled to the available budget. The focus is on creating a warm Highland welcome, showcasing our produce, our culture and our natural marine environment.
- 8.4 It is anticipated that Clipper will bring a new audience to Oban and wider Argyll and Bute. The Race has the potential to create great experiences and images that can be used for future marketing. Produced marketing material could also be used as a legacy in the future as part of our future corporate branding and tourism marketing.
- 8.5 The event is anticipated to provide a significant economic boost for Oban, Lorn and wider Argyll and Bute. It is difficult to estimate exactly given it's a largely un-ticketed event free to attend. It is intended to monitor the economic impact and report back to the council and partners following the event.

9.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Policy - This event is designed to raise awareness of Argyll and Bute across the world via this global event; This supports both the AISTP Tourism strategy and the new Argyll and Bute Economic Strategy.
- 9.2 Financial – This report asks for a sum of up to £50k to cover core council costs associated with the event including additional waste collection, traffic management and additional hosting requirements.
- 9.3 Legal – All appropriate legal implications will be taken into consideration.
- 9.4 HR – None arising from this report.
- 9.5 Fairer Scotland Duty - The Fairer Scotland Duty, Part 1 of the Equality Act 2010, came into force in April 2018. The duty places a legal responsibility on particular public bodies in Scotland, such as Argyll and Bute Council, to pay due regard to (actively consider) how they can reduce inequalities of outcome, caused by socio-economic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions and how this has been implemented.
 - 9.5.1 Equalities - All activities will comply with all Equal Opportunities/Fairer Scotland Duty policies and obligations.
 - 9.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – All project activities will comply with the council's socio-economic duty.
 - 9.5.3 Islands – None directly from this report.
- 9.6 Climate Change – Clipper is run on a basis on raising environment issues with

the ocean; SAMs are a key partner of the event and every effort will be made for recycling and minimising waste.

- 9.7 Risk – The Council has signed a contract to be the host port for Clipper and as such has agreed to certain obligations with our partners; A full Safety Management Plan is currently being produced with an emphasis on water safety.
- 9.8 Customer Service – None.
- 9.9 The Rights of the Child (UNCRC) – None.

Kirsty Flanagan, Executive Director with overall responsibility for Development and Economic Growth

Councillor Jim Lynch, Leader of Argyll and Bute Council

10th April 2024

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Programme of the Festival of the Sea

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[Clipper Events Programme | north-pier-pontoons \(northpierpontoons.com\)](http://north-pier-pontoons.com)