
Highlands and Islands Regional Access Scoping Study

Final Report

Prepared for

Hitrans

By

Transport and Travel Research Ltd

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report has been prepared by Transport & Travel Research Ltd (TTR) for Hitrans and details a scoping study on public transport tourism development.

The report summarises the findings of a review of public transport services and information provision for some key defined tourist routes in the Highlands & Islands region of Scotland. This project has completed a scoping study that has investigated whether existing public transport and information services are suitable for marketing to tourists and has made recommendations for potential improvements to be made.

The main objectives of the scoping study were to:

1. review the suitability of public transport services and information sources for key tourist routes in the Highlands and Islands;
2. recommend what and how public transport information should be presented on tourist sites;
3. investigate the possibility of providing links to Traveline Scotland;
4. review best practice of similar initiatives for tourists; and
5. recommend marketing themes to encourage modal shift in tourist travel.

A desk based mystery traveller review was undertaken to determine how easy it was to plan a journey by public transport using the internet and telephone. A total of 7 journeys were planned including the 6 Gaelic Rings and a route between the many Whisky distilleries in the region. The exercise revealed that a public transport journey could be planned within the hour for each of the selected routes. Each route was assessed in terms of suitability to a tourist and the performance of the information sources used. The results showed that when compared to the equivalent car journeys the following factors were significant and could deter people from travelling using sustainable modes on the routes:

- Long Journey times;
- Large waiting times between transport modes; and
- Limited alternative options (e.g. what happens if I miss my bus?).

In order to better present and promote the use of sustainable transport options on these routes the study has made recommendations as to how public transport options can be presented and marketed. This has included recommendations of how to provide a user friendly link to the Transport Direct and/or Traveline Scotland Journey Planner and a series of marketing initiatives that to tackle the potential barriers identified above. These initiatives include good practice techniques that have been identified from other tourist web sites that provide public transport information as part of this scoping study.

The scoping study concludes with a series of recommendations to further develop public transport itineraries for each of the routes together with recommendations as to how they could be marketed.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Outline

This project has been completed by Transport & Travel Research Ltd (TTR) on behalf of Hitrans. The project has undertaken a review of public transport services and information provision for some key defined tourist routes in the Highlands & Islands region of Scotland. The project has investigated whether existing public transport and information services are suitable for marketing to tourists and has made recommendations for potential improvements to be made.

1.2 Background

Statistics gathered by Visit Scotland suggest that 85% of tourist travel to, from and around the Highlands and Islands is by private car. Only 10% is by public transport and organised coach with an approximately even split between the two. Existing research has identified many factors that undermine public transport access to cultural and tourist facilities. Research undertaken by Steer Davies Gleave for the Scottish Government identified the following factors which undermine public transport access to cultural and tourist facilities:

- a. Lack of information on existing public transport and other travel options, and lack of promotion of available information sources by those involved in generating travel.
- b. Lack of motivation to promote and achieve access by public transport. The need to develop audiences and attain visitor numbers may override how they reach the venue.
- c. Relating public travel to other objectives - there is a case for cultural activity providers making the most of related reasons to encourage public transport solutions.
- d. There is a clear "cultural" and information divide between those providing cultural activity, and those involved in promoting and providing public transport solutions. Following a discussion with Visit Scotland Hitrans have decided to commission a scoping study to investigate the options of providing and marketing public transport services on key tourist routes.
- e. Lack of clarity over who is responsible for promoting public transport access.
- f. Under utilisation of community transport and demand responsive transport solutions.
- g. Public transport issues are not flagged up at an early enough stage.
- h. Lack of knowledge sharing on successful initiatives or ideas.
- i. Lack of integrated entry and travel ticketing options.
- j. Lack of consideration of the end-to-end journey for the visitor.

1.3 Study Aims and Objectives

The main objectives of the scoping study were to:

1. review the suitability of public transport services and information sources for key tourist routes in the Highlands and Islands;
2. recommend what and how public transport information should be presented on tourist sites;
3. investigate the possibility of providing links to Traveline Scotland;
4. review best practice of similar initiatives for tourists; and
5. recommend marketing themes to encourage modal shift in tourist travel.

1.4 Methodology

The scoping study was divided into the following 4 tasks to address each of the project objectives and provide Hitrans with a way forward to encourage tourists to use public transport to travel around and see the key attractions of the Highlands & Islands region.

Task 1 – Desk Based Mystery Traveller Review

This task reviewed the availability of public transport services on a selection of key tourist routes. For each route a desk based mystery traveller exercise was completed with the objective of producing a public transport travel itinerary for each route. The exercise highlighted information sources that were used and opportunities for improvement.

Task 2 – Public Transport Information Presentation on Tourist Web Sites

This task reviewed suitable information sources for the tourist public transport routes identified in Task 1. Each information source was reviewed in terms of how it can be presented and linked to on key tourist information sites.

Task 3 – Good Practice Review

This task undertook a review of other tourist web sites that contain good links to public transport. The review identified tourist information sites that have effectively provided public transport information.

Task 4 – Marketing Theme Recommendations

This task reviewed the work undertaken in each of the above tasks to make recommendations for themes for marketing strategies and campaigns to promote travel along the routes.

The structure of the remainder of this report is based on the 4 above tasks.

2 DESK BASED MYSTERY TRAVELLER REVIEW

The first task of the project was to undertake a desk based mystery traveller exercise. The objective of this exercise was to test the availability of and ease accessing information on public transport provision on a selection of identified tourist trails in the Highlands and Islands region. The task was completed by a TTR consultant who was asked to follow the methodology outlined below to attempt to plan each route using the internet and/or the telephone.

The objective of the task was to assess each route in terms of:

- Suitability for a tourist;
- Availability of information on services; and
- Ease of access to information on services.

It is important to note that the routes identified in this report may not be the only, or best, option for travelling by public transport for each trail in the region. The results that have been produced are entirely dependent on this particular mystery traveller's internet search techniques. For example, there may be better public transport links or alternative routes than those identified.

The purpose of this exercise was to see what services and routes were identified when a person with no existing knowledge of the local area or local public transport services would identify. Therefore, the event of existing good public transport links not being identified is a result of the study. In such cases the information provision and marketing for these services would need to be reviewed.

2.1 Desk Based Mystery Traveller Methodology

The Mystery Traveller was provided with a briefing note that firstly set the scene by asking them to assume the following:

“You are a tourist who wishes to plan a holiday in June to the Highlands and Islands. You have little or no knowledge of the region and have been recommended a series of tourist destinations/routes. You have decided to fly to Scotland, but have decided to try and travel sustainably during your visit. You are planning your journey from home where you have access to both the internet and telephone. You are not a regular public transport user and you have never heard of or used Transport Direct or Traveline.”

The Mystery Traveller was then asked to attempt to plan public transport journeys for the following tourist routes from the most appropriate gateway (e.g. Airport, Rail station, Port, or bus station) such as Inverness Airport:

- The Gaelic Rings:

-
- Barra;
 - Mull;
 - Skye;
 - Islay;
 - Tiree;
 - Rum;
 - The Speyside Whisky Trail; and
 - The Highland Whisky Trail.

The Mystery Traveller was asked to follow the steps outlined below:

1. To try and plan the above journeys using the internet and/or telephone and create a suggested itinerary or itineraries for each route.
2. Record each step (including screenshots where appropriate) and time taken to complete each itinerary including:
 - Search words used; and
 - Information sources used (also record if the information was available in other languages);
3. Analyse each route by reporting on:
 - whether it was possible to find public transport information for each stage of the route? (Please immediately report any route stage where no information has been found, as clarification will need to be gained to ascertain whether this is the case).
 - the suitability of the route itinerary on a scale of 1 to 3 (where 1 = suitable, 2 = suitable with improvements, 3 = not suitable)
 - how easy it was to find the information on a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 = very easy, 2 = easy, 3 = O.K., 4 = difficult, and 5 = very difficult)
 - the performance of any information sources on a scale of 1 to 4 (where 1 = very good (i.e. perfect), 2 = good (i.e. could be better), 3 = bad (i.e. needs improvement), 4 = very bad (i.e. needs significant improvement)).
 - any gaps/opportunities for improved information (e.g. more detail, additional info, downloadable documents, multi-lingual provision etc...) and/or services (e.g. Increased frequency, more direct, less connections, reduced waiting time etc...).

2.2 Mystery Traveller exercise results

The following sections provide a summary of the Mystery Traveller exercise and the planned route for each of the project routes/trails. The Mystery Traveller has estimated the time needed to visit each location along the route. This is primarily governed by the availability and timetable of the public transport service to the next destination.

2.2.1 Gaelic Rings

The term Gaelic Ring was entered into Google, which led to the following web site being found:

<http://www.gaelic-rings.com/www/index.php>

The home page of the Gaelic rings web site states that travelling between the Gaelic rings can be carried out using the ferry via the Caledonian MacBrayne's Island Hopscotch route tickets (see Figure 1).



Figure 1 Home Page of the Gaelic Rings Web Site

The travel link in the index of the home page contains information on the ferry routes and numbers with a web link provided to the Caledonian MacBrayne website (<http://www.calmacbookings.co.uk/booking/asp/web090.asp>) and a telephone hotline.

Figure 3 shows that the travel section of the web site also provides the links to following information sources for travel within Scotland and for complete journeys within Great Britain:

- Travel Line Scotland (web link and telephone number)
- Transport Direct (web link)
- Scottish Citylink (web link)
- National Rail enquiries (web link)

Information links are also provided for visitors wishing to explore the isles by car, with links to:

- Traffic Scotland (web link)
- The AA (web link)

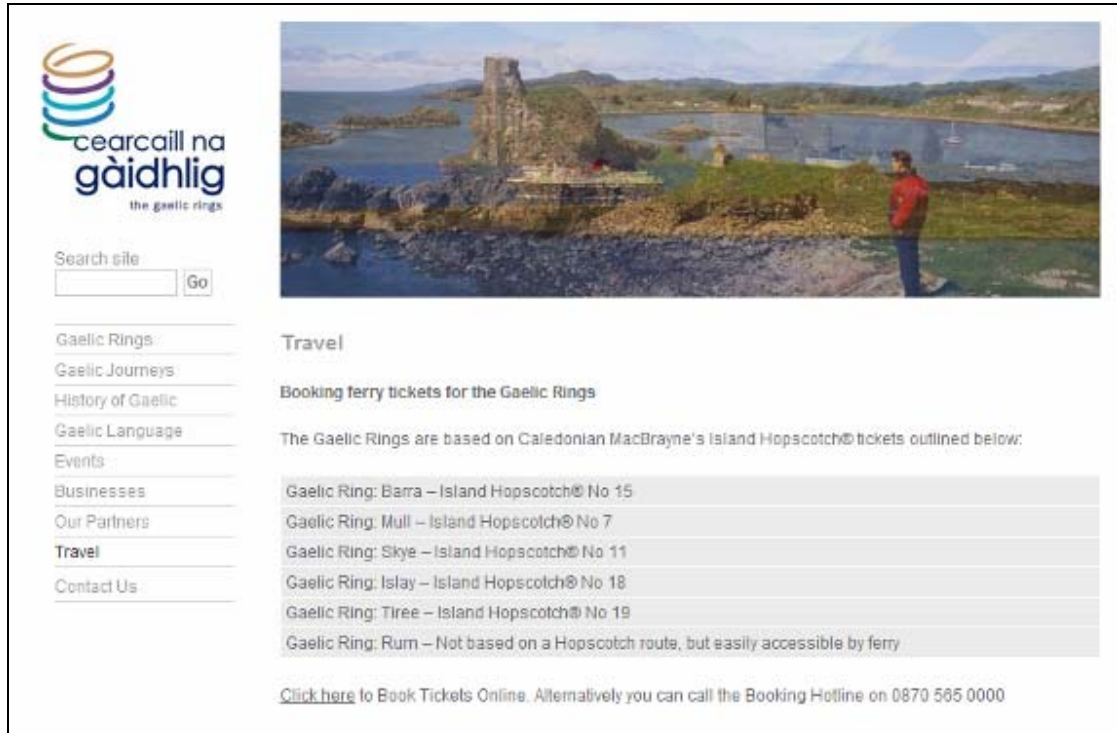


Figure 2 Travel Page on the Gaelic Rings Web Site

Figure 3 Travel Links on the Gaelic Rings Web site

Armed with this information the Mystery Traveller produced the following travel itineraries for each Gaelic ring.

2.2.1.1 Barra Gaelic Ring

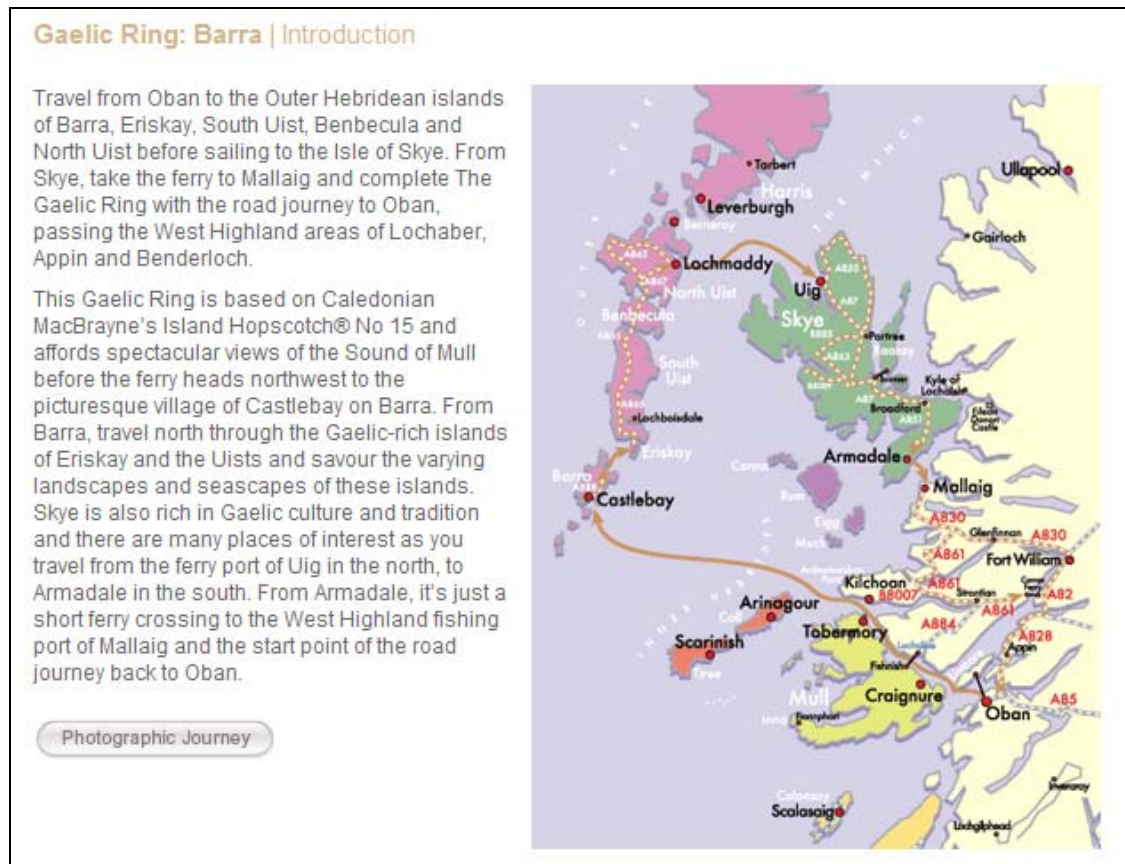


Figure 4 The Barra Gaelic ring route (source: www.gaelic-rings.com)

Figure 4 shows that the Barra Gaelic Ring starts from Oban taking in the Isles of Barra, Eriskay, South and North Uist and Skye finishing back at Oban via the port of Mallaig.

The Mystery Traveller identified that from the Caledonian Macbrayne ferry website, it is possible to get a complete ticket and journey from Glasgow Queen Street to Castlebay on the Isle of Barra. The Mystery Traveller therefore decided to arrive at Glasgow Airport on Monday morning arriving at 09:00 to begin their visit. The resulting planned itinerary for the Barra Gaelic Ring journey is summarised in table 1 below.

Table 1: The Barra Gaelic Ring Route Itinerary

Origin	Destination	Mode	Depart	Arrive	Source of Info	Suitable Route	Ease of Info Finding	Info Sources Perform	Comments
Day 1 - Glasgow International Airport to Barra (11:19 Hours travel time)									
Glasgow Airport	Glasgow Queen Street	Bus Route 500	09:11 (Mon)	09:36	http://www.glasgow-airport-guide.co.uk/transport.html which directs to traveline Scotland (google search Glasgow Airport to Glasgow Queen Street)	1	2	1	No issues with frequency, waiting time or reliability of the bus services or the traveline website. The Bus Route 500, also known as the Glasgow Flyer is 24 hours a day, every 10 minutes.
Glasgow Queen Street	Oban	Train	12:21	15:27	http://www.calmac.co.uk/ and http://www.scotrail.co.uk/sites/files/1Glasgow%20&%20the%20West%20Highlands.pdf	1	3	1	Both of the ferry and rail timetables are downloadable, with the Ferry timetable recommending an origin rail station and journey. There is limited frequency of ferry services from Oban to Barra (1 ferry per day only) and there are limited train frequencies (4 trains per day Mon – Sat). The limited service frequencies led to a long waiting time at Glasgow Queen Street prior to the train departing for Oban.
Oban	Castlebay (Barra)	Ferry	15:40	20:30					
Day 2 – Barra – It is assumed the day will be spent exploring the Isle									
Day 3– Barra to North Uist (9:40 Hours travel time)									
Castlebay (Barra)	Eriskay	Ferry	09:25 (Wed)	10:05		1	2	1	The Barra to Eriskay ferry has a short journey time, with 5 ferries departing and arriving at Barra throughout the day.
Eriskay	Clachan	Bus (operated by DA Travel)	13:10	14:45	http://www.scotland-inverness.co.uk/uist-travel.htm directs to council bus timetables page http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/ (see Figure 6) from which identify the Isles concerned (Google search Eriskay to South Uist Public Transport)	2	3	2	Route from Eriskay to Lochmaddy direct requires a change at Clachan, with a long waiting time. On the Eriskay to Clachan route, there are only 3 buses a day (Mon – Fri).
Clachan	Lochmaddy (North Uist)	Bus (operated by Grenoite Travel and/or A Ferguson Travel)	17:55	19:05					Route from Clachan to Lochmaddy has only 4 buses operating per a day (Mon – Fri), with 2 of these being direct routes, and 2 requiring a change, A map of the isles showing the bus routes would be useful.

Day 4– North Uist – Mallaig (7:20 Hours travel time)									
Lochmaddy (North Uist)	Uig (Skye)	Ferry	11:50 (Thur)	13:35	http://www.calmac.co.uk/	1	2	1	All timetables for the ferries are downloadable. However, there are only 1 -2 ferries per day, which led to long waiting times and a stop over being needed.
Uig	Portree Square	Operated by Rapsons Bus (57a)	13:57	14:25	http://www.uig-skye.co.uk/transport.html (google Uig to Armadale Isle of Skye) – links to Rapsons website, now operated by Stagecoach, with complete timetable of all services on the Isle. http://www.rapsons.com/	2	3	2	Only 3 – 4 57a buses (Mon – Fri) a day, with other services being dependant on whether it is a school day or school holiday.
Portree Square	Armadale	Operated by Rapsons Bus (52C)	17:15	18:24					Only 2 52C buses operate a day which is not dependant on whether it is a school day or school holiday. However, 2 additional buses operate when the Calmac Easter timetable is operation. Due to the limited frequency excluding school dependant buses, there is a long waiting time, which could be used to see the town. No direct service from Uig to Armadale – necessary to change at Portree. No search or route planning option on the website itself, but linked to the stagecoach website which allows for origin/destination searches. In addition, an integrated map showing bus routes and ferry terminals would be beneficial. The bus timetable also appears to incorrectly say there is a ferry at 16:21 to Mallaig, the ferry actually leaves at 17:05.
Armadale	Mallaig	Ferry	18:40	19:10	http://www.calmac.co.uk/	1	2	1	8 ferry services per day from Mallaig to Armadale.
Day 5– Mallaig – Glasgow Airport (6:34 Hours Travel time)									
Mallaig	Fort William	Train	10:10 (Fri)	11:32	http://www.travelinescotland.com/journeyplanner/showJourneysFound.do?rid=12397	1	2	1	There are links to Western Isles Flyer from the website. http://www.road-to-the-isles.org.uk/westhighlandflyer.html

Fort William	Oban	Citylink Coach 918	11:45	13:12	02492022, http://www.scotrail.co.uk/sites/files/1Glasgow%20%20the%20West%20Highlands.pdf and www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/content/roadsandtransport/gettingabout/bus/				However, the timetable was last updated for 2007 on their website (see Figure 7). No evening options were identified on the Traveline website and thus an overnight stop will be needed, with travel to Oban occurring on the Friday. The train service from Mallaig to Fort William, and the Citylink 918 both have frequencies of only 4 services a day (Mon – Sat).
Oban	Stirling	Blue Bus Service 700	13:15	15:35					The journey from Oban to Glasgow requires multiple changes, with low waiting times between changes, although this does not allow for delays or if there are any problems associated with walking between connections. The bus route to Stirling (Blue Bus 700) only operates 1 service each way per a day and as such alternatives would be needed depending on the time of travel.
Stirling	Glasgow Queen Street	Train	15:43	16:13					
Glasgow Queen Street	Glasgow Airport	Blue Bus Route 500	16:22	16:44		1	2	1	

Figure 5 shows the information provided on the Gaelic Rings web site provided by the 'Getting Here' menu option on the Barra ring page. It should be noted that the information provided is targeted at a car driver and does not any timetable information for the ferry services (e.g. Oban – Barra ferry departs once a day at 1540 etc...).

Gaelic Ring: Barra | Eriskay | Getting Here

The information below is a guide to help you plan your journey throughout the Gaelic Ring from Oban to Barra, Eriskay, South Uist, Benbecula, North Uist, Skye and Mallaig.

Travel times/mileage		
Inverness - Oban	Car	2hrs 30 mins*
Glasgow – Oban	Car	2hrs 20 mins*
Edinburgh – Oban	Car	3hrs*
Oban - Castlebay, Barra	Ferry	5hrs 20 mins
Barra – Eriskay	Ferry	40 mins
Eriskay – Lochmaddy, North Uist	Car	52m /84km
Lochmaddy – Uig, Skye	Ferry	1hr 45mins
Uig – Armadale	Car	59m / 95km
Armadale – Mallaig	Ferry	30 mins
Mallaig – Inverness	Car	3hrs*
Mallaig – Glasgow	Car	3hrs 50 mins*
Mallaig – Edinburgh	Car	4hrs 20 mins*

Figure 5 Information available from Gaelic Rings Website http://www.gaelic-rings.com/barra/getting_here.php?sel=2&top=1&mid=1&base=2&ring=Barra

The public transport itinerary for the Barra Gaelic ring took approximately 1 hour to complete. The itinerary produced recommends 5 days to visit the area and Table 2 summarises the journey in terms of modes of transport and total journey time

Table 2: Barra Gaelic Ring summary

Day	Origin and Destination	Modes Used	Journey Time
Day 1	Glasgow International Airport - Barra	Bus/Train/Ferry	11:19 Hours
Day 2	Barra	Day spent on the Isle of Barra	
Day 3	Barra – North Uist	Ferry/Bus/Bus	09:40 Hours
Day 4	North Uist - Mallaig	Ferry/Bus/Bus/Ferry	07:20 Hours
Day 5	Mallaig – Glasgow International Airport	Train/Bus/Coach/Train/Bus	06:34 Hours

The exercise has identified that forward planning, advanced journey planning is crucial when looking to undertake this Gaelic Ring by public transport. This is particularly relevant given the limited frequency of bus, coach, train and ferry services which can lead to long waiting periods. This is represented by the long travel times on Day 1 and Day 3 with travel times of over 9 hours.

The difficulty of completing this Gaelic Ring by public transport is compounded by the number of Isles that make up the Ring, and the need to cross between the various Isles.

The proposed itinerary allows for a day to be spent exploring the Isle of Barra, with further sight seeing envisaged where long waiting periods are needed e.g. At Portree in the 2 hours 50 minute wait to connect with the service to the ferry terminal at Armadale.

Services	Destination	Days
W17	Uist Connections Southbound Page 1 (PDF, 58Kb), Page 2 (PDF, 76Kb)	Mon - Fri
W17	Uist Connections Southbound Page 1 (PDF, 55Kb), Page 2 (PDF, 78Kb)	Sat
W17	Uist Connections Northbound Page 1 (PDF, 59Kb), Page 2 (PDF, 95Kb)	Mon - Fri
W17	Uist Connections Northbound Page 1 (PDF, 79Kb), Page 2 (PDF, 64Kb)	Sat
W18	Connections from Eriskay, South Uist & Benbecula (PDF, 71Kb)	Mon - Sat
W18	Lochmaddy - Sollas - Tigharry - Bayhead - Clachan (PDF, 72Kb)	Mon - Sat
W19	Lochmaddy - Berneray - Lochmaddy (PDF, 102Kb)	Mon - Sat

Figure 6 Bus and coach timetable information screen shot from the council website (<http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk>)

Figure 7 Screen shot of the West Highland Flyer Screen timetable

2.2.1.2 Mull Gaelic Ring

<p>Gaelic Rings</p> <p>Gaelic Ring: Barra...</p> <p>Gaelic Ring: Mull...</p> <p>Oban</p> <p>Mull</p> <p>Iona</p> <p>Ardnamurchan</p> <p>The Rough Bounds</p> <p>Skye</p> <p>Mainland</p> <p>Gaelic Ring: Skye...</p> <p>Gaelic Ring: Islay...</p> <p>Gaelic Ring: Tiree...</p> <p>Gaelic Ring: Rum...</p> <p>Gaelic Journeys</p> <p>History of Gaelic</p> <p>Gaelic Language</p> <p>Events</p> <p>Businesses</p> <p>Our Partners</p> <p>Travel</p> <p>Contact Us</p>	<p>Gaelic Ring: Mull Introduction</p> <p>From Oban or, An t-Oban in Gaelic, it's just under an hour to Craignure on Mull and the port for MV Isle of Mull, the ferry that serves the island. From the picturesque and island capital town of Tobermory at the north of the island, the ferry crosses to the Ardnamurchan village of Kilchoan. It's then by road to Mallaig, by way of the West Highland areas of Moidart and Morar. From Mallaig sail over the sea to the Isle of Skye and head back to Oban via the Skye Bridge, Invergarry, Fort William, Appin and Benderloch.</p> <p>This Gaelic Ring is based on Caledonian MacBrayne's Island Hopscoth® No 7 and takes in the Isle of Mull, the Ardnamurchan Peninsula and the Isle of Skye. Mull is an island of dramatic landscapes and its highest mountain, Ben More can be viewed from near and far. The West Highland mainland areas of Ardnamurchan, Moidart, Morar, Mallaig, Lochaber and the world renowned Isle of Skye provide a richness of language, culture and stunning landscapes and seascapes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Photographic Journey</p>	<p>The map illustrates the Mull Gaelic Ring route, a circular path connecting several key locations. Starting from Oban on the mainland, the route goes to Craignure on the Isle of Mull, then to Tobermory, Kilchoan, Mallaig, and Fort William. The route is marked with various road numbers (A849, A848, A847, A846, A845, A844, A843, A842, A841, A840, A839, A838, A837, A836, A835, A834, A833, A832, A831, A830, A829, A828, A827, A826, A825, A824, A823, A822, A821, A820, A819, A818, A817, A816, A815, A814, A813, A812, A811, A810, A809, A808, A807, A806, A805, A804, A803, A802, A801, A800, A799, A798, A797, A796, A795, A794, A793, A792, A791, A790, A789, A788, A787, A786, A785, A784, A783, A782, A781, A780, A779, A778, A777, A776, A775, A774, A773, A772, A771, A770, A769, A768, A767, A766, A765, A764, A763, A762, A761, A760, A759, A758, A757, A756, A755, A754, A753, A752, A751, A750, A749, A748, A747, A746, A745, A744, A743, A742, A741, A740, A739, A738, A737, A736, A735, A734, A733, A732, A731, A730, A729, A728, A727, A726, A725, A724, A723, A722, A721, A720, A719, A718, A717, A716, A715, A714, A713, A712, A711, A710, A709, A708, A707, A706, A705, A704, A703, A702, A701, A700, A699, A698, A697, A696, A695, A694, A693, A692, A691, 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A358, A357, A356, A355, A354, A353, A352, A351, A350, A349, A348, A347, A346, A345, A344, A343, A342, A341, A340, A339, A338, A337, A336, A335, A334, A333, A332, A331, A330, A329, A328, A327, A326, A325, A324, A323, A322, A321, A320, A319, A318, A317, A316, A315, A314, A313, A312, A311, A310, A309, A308, A307, A306, A305, A304, A303, A302, A301, A300, A299, A298, A297, A296, A295, A294, A293, A292, A291, A290, A289, A288, A287, A286, A285, A284, A283, A282, A281, A280, A279, A278, A277, A276, A275, A274, A273, A272, A271, A270, A269, A268, A267, A266, A265, A264, A263, A262, A261, A260, A259, A258, A257, A256, A255, A254, A253, A252, A251, A250, A249, A248, A247, A246, A245, A244, A243, A242, A241, A240, A239, A238, A237, A236, A235, A234, A233, A232, A231, A230, A229, A228, A227, A226, A225, A224, A223, A222, A221, A220, A219, A218, A217, A216, A215, A214, A213, A212, A211, A210, A209, A208, A207, A206, A205, A204, A203, A202, A201, A200, A199, A198, A197, A196, A195, A194, A193, A192, A191, A190, A189, A188, A187, A186, A185, A184, A183, A182, A181, A180, A179, A178, A177, A176, A175, A174, A173, A172, A171, A170, A169, A168, A167, A166, A165, A164, A163, A162, A161, A160, A159, A158, A157, A156, A155, A154, A153, A152, A151, A150, A149, A148, A147, A146, A145, A144, A143, A142, A141, A140, A139, A138, A137, A136, A135, A134, A133, A132, A131, A130, A129, A128, A127, A126, A125, A124, A123, A122, A121, A120, A119, A118, A117, A116, A115, A114, A113, A112, A111, A110, A109, A108, A107, A106, A105, A104, A103, A102, A101, A100, A99, A98, A97, A96, A95, A94, A93, A92, A91, A90, A89, A88, A87, A86, A85, A84, A83, A82, A81, A80, A79, A78, A77, A76, A75, A74, A73, A72, A71, A70, A69, A68, A67, A66, A65, A64, A63, A62, A61, A60, A59, A58, A57, A56, A55, A54, A53, A52, A51, A50, A49, A48, A47, A46, A45, A44, A43, A42, A41, A40, A39, A38, A37, A36, A35, A34, A33, A32, A31, A30, A29, A28, A27, A26, A25, A24, A23, A22, A21, A20, A19, A18, A17, A16, A15, A14, A13, A12, A11, A10, A9, A8, A7, A6, A5, A4, A3, A2, A1, A0.</p>
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Figure 8 The Mull Gaelic Ring route (www.gaelic-rings.com/ring_mull/index.php?top=1&mid=2&ring=Mull)

The Mull Gaelic Ring starts from Oban taking in the Isle of Mull, Kilchoan and Mallaig on the mainland, the Isle of Skye before returning to Oban via Fort William. From the Caledonian Macbrayne ferry website, it is possible to get a complete ticket and journey from Glasgow Queen Street to Craignure, on the Isle of Mull.

The Mystery Traveller has assumed that they have landed at Glasgow Airport on Monday morning at 09:00 and Table 3 shows the itinerary produced for the Mull Gaelic Ring.

Table 3: Mull Gaelic Ring proposed itinerary

Origin	Destination	Mode	Depart	Arrive	Source of Info	Suitable Route	Ease of Info Finding	Info Sources Performance	Comments
Day 1: Glasgow Airport to Craignure (7:35:00 travel time) with the remainder of the day spent at Craignure with an overnight stay.									
Glasgow Airport	Glasgow Queen Street	Bus Route 905	09:11 (Mon)	09:36	http://www.glasgow-airport-guide.co.uk/transport.html which directs to traveline Scotland (google search Glasgow Airport to Glasgow Queen Street)	1	2	1	No issues with frequency, waiting time or reliability of traveline
Glasgow Queen Street	Oban	Train	12:21	15:27	http://www.calmac.co.uk/ and http://www.scotrail.co.uk/sites/files/1Glasgow%20the%20West%20Highlands.pdf	1	3	1	Both of the ferry and rail timetables are downloadable, with the Ferry timetable recommending an origin rail station and journey. There are limited train frequencies (4 trains per day Mon – Sat) throughout the day leading to long waiting times.
Oban	Craignure (Mull)	Ferry	16:00	16:46	http://www.calmac.co.uk/	1	2	1	There are at least 6 ferries per a day (Mon – Sat) from Oban to Craignure.
Day 2: Craignure to Kilchoan via Tobermory (4:19:00 travel time). It is envisaged that approximately 2 hours will be spent at Tobermory.									
Craignure	Tobermory (Ledaig Car Park) (Mull)	Bus (Bowman's Coaches 495)	10:46	11:27	http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/pdf/filesst-ore/btt495 (google search Craignure to Tobermory Buses)	1	2	1	Limited bus frequency with approximately 6 bus services throughout the day only.
Tobermory	Kilchoan (Mainland)	Ferry	14:30 (Tues)	15:05	http://www.calmac.co.uk/	1	2	1	No comments. All timetables downloadable, frequent service with 6 crossings (Mon – Sat).
Day 3: Following overnight stay at Kilchoan, Kilchoan to Mallaig is not possible to be made directly by public transport – has to be made via Fort William. (7:21:00 travel time).									
Kilchoan	Fort William	Sheils Bus 506 School Bus Only	07:50	10:22	http://www.stagecoachbus.com/uploads/guide3final.pdf	3	3	2	The only bus to serve Kilchoan is a daily school bus service leaving at 07:50 to Fort William. A change is then needed to continue to Mallaig. The stagecoach route finder only identifies the timetable

									for the area – it doesn't identify the specific route needed within the area timetable which could be improved.
Fort William	Mallaig	Shiels Bus 500	13:45	15:11		2	3	2	Only 5 bus services throughout the day leads to long waiting periods.
Day 4: Mallaig to Oban after spending the majority of the day on the Isle of Skye (4:21:00 travel time)									
Mallaig	Armadale (Skye)	Ferry	08:10 (Thur)	08:40	http://www.calmac.co.uk/	1	2	1	No comments. All timetables downloadable, frequent service with 8 crossings per a day.
Armadale	Broadford (Skye)	Rapsons Buses 52C	09:25	09:52	http://www.scotland-inverness.co.uk/skye.htm http://www.uig-skye.co.uk/transport.html (google Uig to Armadale Isle of Skye) – links to Rapsons website, now operated by Stagecoach, with complete timetable of all services on the Isle. http://www.rapsons.com/	2	3	2	No direct route from Armadale to the Kyle of Lochalsh. The only buses from Armadale are towards Portree via Broadford, from where a change is required. The 52C suffers from a limited frequency of services (5 services per a day) which are not dependant on it being a school day.
Broadford	Fort William via Invergarry (Mainland)	City Link, 916	16:03	18:21					Limited frequency of services with only 5 services per a day.
Fort William	Oban via Appin and Benderloch	City Link 918	18:30	19:57	http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/pdf/filesstore/btt918	1	2	1	The through service by bus is beneficial for this route, although there is limited frequency of service (4 services per a day only).
Day 5: Oban to Glasgow Airport (Travel Time 5:26:00)									
Oban	Ballachulish	City Link 918	08:40	09:39	http://www.travelinescotland.com/journeyplanner/showJourneysF	1	2	1	Limited frequency of service results in a long waiting period at Ballachulish

Ballachulish	Glasgow Airport	City Link 915	11:47	14:06	ound.do				
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Table 4: Summary of Mull Gaelic Ring proposed itinerary

Day	Origin and Destination	Modes Used	Journey Time
Day 1	Glasgow Airport to Craignure	Bus/Train/Ferry	7:35:00
Day 2	Craignure to Kilchoan via Tobermory	Bus/Ferry	4:19:00
Day 3	Kilchoan to Mallaig is not via Fort William.	Bus/Coach	7:21:00
Day 4	Mallaig to Oban	Ferry/Bus/Coach	4:21:00
Day 5	Oban to Glasgow Airport	Coach	5:26:00

It took approximately 1 hour to plan this itinerary for the Mull Gaelic Ring and table 4 summarises the journey and modes selected. However, it should be noted that the mystery traveller could not find any suitable public transport options to make the journey from Kilchoan to Mallaig via the West Coast of Scotland taking in Moidart and Morar. Kilchoan itself is only served by 1 bus per a day at 07:50, which is run as a school bus service, which limits the use of public transport for this leg of the Mull Gaelic Ring.

The Mull Gaelic ring has the benefit of at least 6 ferry crossings per a day, but suffers from the limited frequencies of services for buses and coaches that result in long waiting times between key stages of the journey. As with the Barra Gaelic ring it is recommended that advanced journey planning is crucial when looking to undertake this Gaelic Ring by public transport.

Figure 9 shows the information provided on the Gaelic Rings web site provided by the 'Getting Here' menu option on the Mull ring page. It should be noted that the information provided is targeted at a car driver and does not contain any timetable information in order for a route to be planned.

Gaelic Ring: Mull Mull Getting Here		
The information below is a guide to help you plan your journey throughout the Gaelic Ring from Oban to Mull, Ardnamurchan, Moidart, Morar and Mallaig to Armadale on Skye.		
Travel times/mileage		
Inverness - Oban	Car	2hrs 30 mins*
Glasgow - Oban	Car	2hrs 20 mins*
Edinburgh - Oban	Car	3hrs*
Oban - Craignure, Mull	Ferry	46 mins
Craignure - Fionnphort	Car	37m / 60km
Craignure - Tobermory	Car	21m / 34km
Tobermory - Kilchoan	Ferry	35 mins
Kilchoan - Mallaig	Car	57m / 92km*
Mallaig - Armadale, Skye	Ferry	30 mins
Armadale - Fort William (via Kyle of Lochalsh)	Car	48m / 77km*
*Source: www.theaa.com Please note: It is advisable to check your journey before setting off.		

Figure 9 Information available from Gaelic Rings Website (http://www.gaelic-rings.com/mull/getting_here.php?sel=2&top=1&mid=2&base=2&ring=Mull)

2.2.1.3 Skye Gaelic Ring

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gaelic Rings Gaelic Ring: Barra... Gaelic Ring: Mull... Gaelic Ring: Skye... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fort William The Rough Bounds Skye North Uist Berneray Harris Lewis Mainland Gaelic Ring: Islay... Gaelic Ring: Tiree... Gaelic Ring: Rum... Gaelic Journeys History of Gaelic Gaelic Language Events Businesses Our Partners Travel Contact Us 	<p>Gaelic Ring: Skye Introduction</p> <p>The start point for this Gaelic Ring is the mainland town of Fort William, just over 40 miles east of the fishing port of Mallaig, the departure point for the ferry to Armadale on the Isle of Skye. From Armadale, it's a journey from south to north and to the village of Uig and the departure point for MV Hebrides, the ferry that serves the island of North Uist. From North Uist it's across the causeway to Berneray and the ferry to the linked islands of Harris and Lewis. Stornoway, the capital of Lewis, is the departure point for the ferry to Ullapool, Caledonian MacBrayne's most northern mainland port.</p> <p>This Gaelic Ring is based on Caledonian MacBrayne's Island Hopscootch® No 11 and travels through breathtaking West Highland scenery before heading to the romantic and dramatic Isle of Skye. The Cuillin Mountain Range makes a stunning backdrop and as the ferry crosses the Minch to the island of North Uist, you're provided with an opportunity to view the islands of the Inner and Outer Hebrides. The islands of Berneray, Harris and Lewis have their own uniqueness and from Lewis, it's across to Ullapool and the start point for completing the Ring with the road journey to Fort William through a landscape rich in history and tradition.</p>	<p>The map shows the Gaelic Ring route starting at Fort William on the mainland. It proceeds to Mallaig, then to the Isle of Skye via ferry. The route continues through Uig, North Uist, Berneray, Harris, and Lewis, reaching Stornoway and Ullapool. From Ullapool, it goes to Invergarry and back to Fort William via Invergarry. The map also shows various other islands and mainland locations like Aringour, Scarinish, and Oban.</p>
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Figure 10 The Skye Gaelic Ring route (http://www.gaelic-rings.com/ring_skye/index.php?top=1&mid=3&ring=Skye)

The Skye Gaelic Ring starts in Fort William, taking in the Isle of Skye, North Uist, Berneray, Harris and Lewis returning to Ullapool, then Fort William via Invergarry. For the purposes of this exercise the Mystery Traveller has assumed that they will arrive at Inverness Airport at 08:30 on a Monday morning and the resulting itinerary is shown in table 5.

Table 5: Proposed Skye Gaelic Ring itinerary

Origin	Destination	Mode	Depart	Arrive	Source of Info	Suitable Route	Ease of Info Finding	Info Sources Perform	Comments
Day 1: Inverness Airport to Portree, Isle of Skye with overnight stop (Travel Time 6:27:00)									
Inverness Airport	Inverness Bus Station	Stagecoach 11	09:03	09:25	http://www.travelinescotland.com/journeyplanner/showJourneyLegDetails.do	1	2	1	No comments. Frequency of service is approximately 1 – 2 an hour.
Inverness Bus Station	Fort William	City Link 919	09:30	11:20	http://www.scotland-inverness.co.uk/fortwill.htm#transport and http://www.citylink.co.uk/journeyplanner.php	1	2	2	City Link journey planner provided a few problems. Limited frequency (5 services a day Mon – Fri) leads to issues with long waiting times.
Fort William	Mallaig	Train	12:12	13:34	http://www.calmac.co.uk/	1	2	1	No problems or comments. All timetables downloadable and links into train times. Limited train frequency at 5 trains per a day.
Mallaig	Armadale (Skye)	Ferry	13:45	14:15					
Armadale	Portree (Skye)	Bus 52C	14:25	15:30	http://www.scotland-inverness.co.uk/skye.htm http://www.uig-skye.co.uk/transport.html (google Uig to Armadale Isle of Skye) – links to Rapsons website, now operated by Stagecoach, with complete timetable of all services on the Isle. http://www.rapsons.com/	1	2	1	Timetables downloadable from the website. Limited bus service frequency, with 4 services a day Mon – Fri which are not school dependent, although 2 of these only run when Easter ferry timetable is in operation.
Day 2: Portree to Leverburgh (leave after 12:00 to allow for sight seeing in Portree travel time 5:00:00)									
Portree	Uig	City Link 916	13:20	13:50	http://www.scotland-inverness.co.uk/skye.htm http://www.uig-skye.co.uk/transport.html (google Uig to Armadale Isle of Skye) – links to Rapsons website, now operated by Stagecoach, with complete timetable of all services on the Isle.	1	2	1	Limited frequency of service with approx 5 services per a day.

					http://www.rapsons.com/				
Uig (Skye)	Lochmaddy (North Uist)	Ferry	14:00	15:45	http://www.calmac.co.uk/	1	2	1	Limited number of ferry crossings (1 -2 per a day) although do link with buses to UIG.)
Lochmaddy	Berneray	W19 Bus	16:30	17:00	http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/travel/busservice/ - Selecting Uist and Barra	1	2	1	Timetables are downloadable and the bus arrival is scheduled for the ferry arrivals/departures so minimal waiting times. However, only 4 services per an hour.
Bernerray	Leverburgh (Harris)	Ferry	17:20	18:20	http://www.calmac.co.uk/	1	2	1	Bus services arranged to coincide with ferry arrivals from Leverburgh.
Day 3: Leverburgh to Stornaway (leaving after 12:00 and allowing for time in Tarbert) Travel Time 01:58:00 excluding waiting									
Leverburgh	Tarbert Pier (Lewis)	W10 Bus	11:35	12:33	http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/travel/busservice/ - selecting Lewis and Harris	1	2	1	Limited frequency of service at 5 services per a day. The bus route is a through service from Leverburgh to Stornaway. Arriving at this time the next ferry isn't until the following morning necessitating an overnight stop.
Tarbert	Stornaway (Lewis)	W10 Bus	16:00	17:00		2	2	1	
Day 4: Stornaway to Inverness Travel Time 04:10:00									
Stornaway	Ullapool (Mainland)	Ferry	07:00	09:45	http://www.calmac.co.uk/	1	2	1	Limited frequency of service with only 2 ferries per a day.
Ullapool	Inverness	Stagecoach 61	09:50	11:10	http://www.travelinescotland.com/journeyplanner/showJourneyLegDetails.do	1	2	1	The website (http://www.scotland-inverness.co.uk/ullapool.htm) does not provide any linkages between Ullapool and Fort William,, and there are no direct trains or coaches. However, there are direct routes back to Inverness, rather than Fort William from Ullapool by Stagecoach and City Link.

The itinerary took approximately 45 minutes – 1 hour to compile and a summary of the itinerary is shown in Table 6. Although a number of connections between Isles are needed, a number of buses are available allowing for connections between the various ferry terminals. Therefore it is felt that the Skye Gaelic Ring can be made by public transport, although rather than visitors being able to just turn up and complete the Ring, journey planning is still needed. With journey planning, it is also possible to minimise waiting times between the various journey legs.

Table 6: Summary of Skye Gaelic Ring proposed itinerary

Day	Origin and Destination	Modes Used	Journey Time
Day 1	Inverness Airport to Portree, Isle of Skye via Fort William and Armadale	Bus/Coach/Train/Ferry	6:27:00
Day 2	Portree to Leverburgh via Uig and Lochmaddy	Bus/Ferry	5:00:00
Day 3	Leverburgh to Stornoway via Tarbert	Bus	01:58:00
Day 4	Stornoway to Inverness via Ullapool	Ferry/Coach	04:10:00

Gaelic Ring: Skye Skye Getting Here		
The information below is a guide to help you plan your journey throughout the Gaelic Ring from Mallaig to Skye, North Uist, Berneray, Harris and Lewis.		
Travel times/mileage		
Inverness - Fort William	Car	65m / 105km*
Glasgow - Fort William	Car	108m / 174km*
Edinburgh - Fort William	Car	132m / 213km*
Fort William - Mallaig	Car	43m / 69km*
Mallaig – Armadale	Ferry	30 mins
Armadale – Uig, Skye	Car	59m / 94km
Uig – Lochmaddy, North Uist	Ferry	1hr 45 mins
Lochmaddy – Berneray	Car	10m / 16km
Berneray – Leverburgh, Harris	Ferry	1hr
Leverburgh – Stornoway, Lewis	Car	56m / 90km*

Figure 11 Information available from Gaelic Rings Website (http://www.gaelic-rings.com/skye/getting_here.php?sel=2&top=1&mid=3&base=3&ring=Skye)

2.2.1.4 Islay Gaelic Ring

<p>Gaelic Rings</p> <p>Gaelic Ring: Barra...</p> <p>Gaelic Ring: Mull...</p> <p>Gaelic Ring: Skye...</p> <p>Gaelic Ring: Islay...</p> <p>Argyll</p> <p>Islay</p> <p>Jura</p> <p>Colonsay</p> <p>Oban</p> <p>Mainland</p> <p>Gaelic Ring: Tiree...</p> <p>Gaelic Ring: Rum...</p> <p>Gaelic Journeys</p> <p>History of Gaelic</p> <p>Gaelic Language</p> <p>Events</p> <p>Businesses</p> <p>Our Partners</p> <p>Travel</p> <p>Contact Us</p>	<p>Gaelic Ring: Islay Introduction</p> <p>Situated on the Kintyre Peninsula and on West Loch Tarbert, Kennacraig is the departure point for the Ring that comprises the islands of Islay and Colonsay and the ferry crossing from Colonsay to the West Highland town of Oban, often referred to as the 'Gateway to the Isles'. Port Ellen and Port Askaig are the alternative landing points on Islay and it's from Port Askaig on the east side of the island that the ferry sails to Scalasaig on Colonsay and on to Oban.</p> <p>This Gaelic Ring is based on Caledonian MacBrayne's Island Hopscootch® No 18 and the journey is from Kennacraig to Islay, viewing the Kintyre Peninsula and the islands of Arran, Gigha and Jura. Travelling to Port Ellen also affords splendid views to Northern Ireland's Antrim Coast.</p> <p>The sea crossing to Colonsay is spectacular and Kiloran Bay to the north of the island is stunning in every way and well worth a visit. The ferry crossing to Oban also takes in dramatic scenery and as the ferry ties up, you can take time to enjoy this very lively and popular destination. From Oban complete the Ring by taking the road to Kennacraig through some of Scotland's richest historical areas and the villages of Kilmartin, Lochgilphead, Ardrishaig and Tarbert.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Photographic Journey</p>	<p>The map illustrates the Islay Gaelic Ring route. It starts at Kennacraig on the West Coast of Scotland. The route goes south to Port Ellen, then east to Port Askaig. From Port Askaig, it crosses the sea to Scalasaig on Colonsay, then to Oban. From Oban, it goes south to Lochgilphead, Tarbert, and Kennacraig. The map also shows other nearby islands like Mull, Jura, and Gigha, and various ferry routes marked with numbers like A816, A83, A846, and A847.</p>
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Figure 12 : Islay Gaelic Ring route (http://www.gaelic-rings.com/ring_islay/index.php?top=1&mid=4&ring=Islay)

The Islay Gaelic Ring starts at Kennacraig on the West Coast of Scotland, located to the south of Oban. The Ring takes in the Isle of Islay and Colonsay before finishing at Oban. For the purposes of the study, the mystery traveller will be flying into Glasgow Airport at approximately 08:00 on a Monday.

Table 7: Proposed Itinerary for Islay Gaelic Ring

Origin	Destination	Mode	Depart	Arrive	Source of Info	Suitable Route	Ease of Info Finding	Info Sources Performance	Comments
Day 1: Glasgow Airport to Port Askaig (Isle of Islay) (Travel Time 6:57:00)									
Glasgow Airport	Kennacraig	Coach	08:08	12:25	http://www.islayinfo.com/travel.html (see Figure 14)	1	2	1	Service is twice daily only.
Kennacraig	Port Askaig (Islay)	Ferry	13:00	15:05	http://www.calmac.co.uk/	1	2	1	This only allows 5 minutes leeway if problems arise as passengers have to check in 30 minutes before departure.
Day 2: To be spent on the Isle of Islay									
Day 3: Port Askaig to Scalasaig (Isle of Colonsay with the remainder of the day spent on the Isle) (Travel Time 1:10:00)									
Port Askaig	Scalasaig (Colonsay)	Ferry	10:15	11:25	http://www.calmac.co.uk/	1	2	1	Limited frequency on Tuesday affected travel arrangements.
Day 4: Scalasaig to Glasgow Airport (Travel Time 10:00:00)									
Scalasaig	Oban	Ferry	11:40	14:15	http://www.calmac.co.uk/	1	2	1	Limited frequency of service requires overnight stay on Wed night to go to Oban on the Thurs.
Oban	Glasgow Bus Station	City Link 976	18:15	21:05	http://www.travelinescotland.com/journeyplanner/showJourneyLegDetails.do	1	2	1	Limited frequency of service results in long waiting time
Glasgow Bus Station	Glasgow Airport	Bus Route 500	21:15	21:40					

Table 8: Summary of Islay Gaelic Ring proposed itinerary

Day	Origin and Destination	Modes Used	Journey Time
Day 1	Glasgow Airport to Port Askaig (Isle of Islay) via Kennacraig	Coach/Ferry	6:57:00
Day 2	To be spent on the Isle of Islay		
Day 3	Port Askaig to Scalasaig (Isle of Colonsay with the remainder of the day spent on the Isle)	Ferry	1:10:00
Day 4	Day 4: Scalasaig to Glasgow Airport via Oban	Ferry/Coach/Bus	10:00:00

The Islay Gaelic Ring's proposed itinerary took approximately 30 minutes to produce due to the small number of connections that are needed to complete the ring as shown in Table 8. The itinerary only contains one large waiting period located at Oban after completing the ring, and before returning to Glasgow Airport. Whilst the coach to Kennacraig from Glasgow airport is limited by the frequency of service, it was felt by the mystery traveller that this Gaelic Ring could be feasibly completed by public transport.

Figure 13 Information available from Gaelic Rings Website (http://www.gaelic-rings.com/islay/getting_here.php?sel=2&top=1&mid=4&base=2&ring=Islay)

Figure 14 Screen shot of public transport information provision (<http://www.islayinfo.com/travel.html>)

2.2.1.5 Tiree Gaelic Ring

Figure 11: Tiree Gaelic Ring route
http://www.gaelic-rings.com/ring_tiree/index.php?top=1&mid=5&ring=Tiree

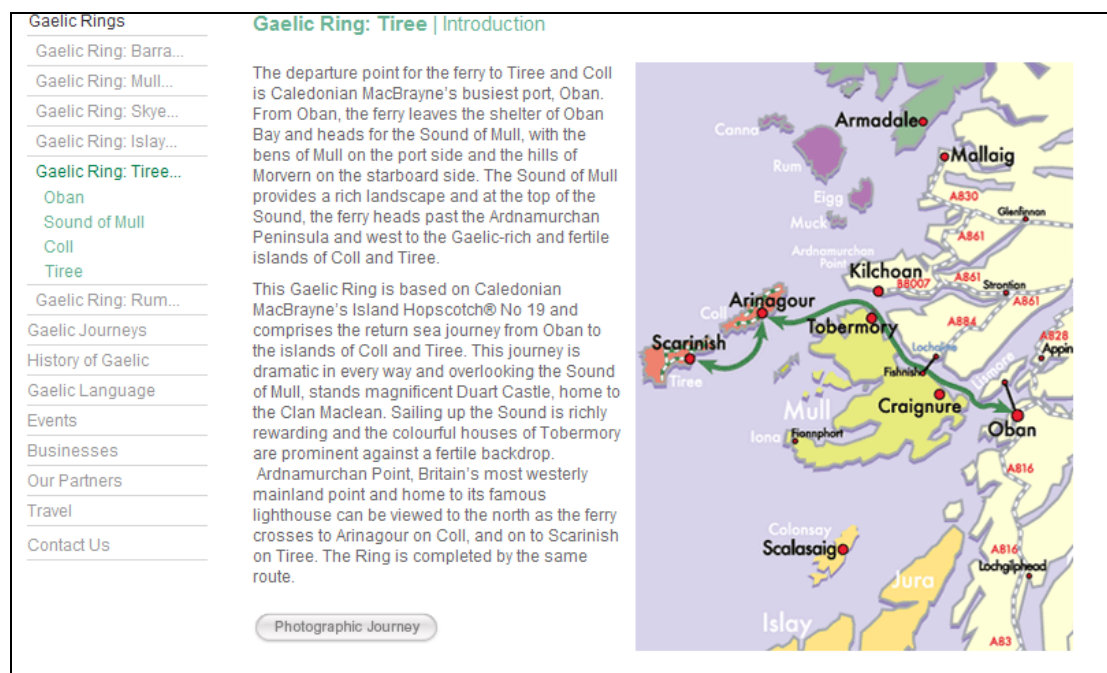


Figure 15 Tiree Gaelic Ring route
http://www.gaelic-rings.com/ring_tiree/index.php?top=1&mid=5&ring=Tiree

The Tiree Gaelic Ring commences and finishes at Oban, taking in the isles of Tiree and Coll via the Sounds of Mull. The Caledonian MacBrayne timetable means that the only ferry available on a Monday from Oban to Coll departs at 08:00 in the morning. However, there is an evening train on the Sun at 18:21 that would allow for this ferry to be caught after an overnight stop in Oban.

However, to avoid this, the mystery traveller decided to fly into Glasgow Airport at 07:00 on a Tuesday morning and catch the 15:00 ferry, which resulted in the travel itinerary shown in table 7.

Table 9: Tiree Gaelic Ring proposed itinerary

Origin	Destination	Mode	Depart	Arrive	Source of Info	Suitable Route	Ease of Info Finding	Info Sources Performance	Comments
Day 1: Glasgow Airport to Arinagour (Coll) (Travel Time 9:54:00)									
Glasgow Airport	Glasgow Queen Street	Arriva Bus Route 500	07:46	08:15	http://www.glasgow-airport-guide.co.uk/transport.html which directs to traveline Scotland (google search Glasgow Airport to Glasgow Queen Street)	1	2	1	No issues with frequency (every 10 minutes), waiting time or reliability of traveline.
Glasgow Queen Street	Oban	Train	08:21	11:27	http://www.calmac.co.uk/ and http://www.scotrail.co.uk/	1	2	1	Limited frequency of the trains affects waiting times and times which are compatible with ferry crossings.
Oban	Arinagour (Coll)	Ferry	15:00	17:40		1	2	1	Frequency and timings of the ferries limits travel options.
Day 2 Spent on the Isle of Coll									
Day 3 (Thurs) Arinagour (Coll) to Scarinish (Tiree) (Travel Time 0:55:00)									
Arinagour	Scarinish (Tiree)	Ferry	11:20	12:15	http://www.calmac.co.uk/	1	2	1	Frequency and timings of the ferries limits travel options
Day 4 Scarinish to Glasgow Airport via Oban (Travel Time 13:35:00)									
Scarinish	Oban	Ferry	09:35	13:15	http://www.calmac.co.uk/	1	2	1	Frequency and timings of the ferries limits travel options
Oban	Glasgow Queen Street	Train	18:11	21:29					Limited frequency of rail services from Oban to Glasgow leads to long waiting time.
Glasgow Queen Street	Glasgow Airport	Bus Route 500	22:48	23:10	http://www.travelinescotland.com/journeyplanner/showJourneysFound.do	1	2	1	No issues with frequency, waiting time or reliability of traveline

The Tiree Gaelic Ring itinerary took approximately 30 minutes to plan and is summarised in Table 10. Whilst this ring could potentially be made by public transport, it is essential that the journeys are planned in advance due to the limited frequency of the ferry service to both Tiree and Coll, and the timings of the ferries, with ferries on Monday, Wednesday and Friday through to Sunday departing Oban before 09:00. Additionally, due to the limited train service frequencies, planning of connectivity between the ferries and train services will minimise waiting times for the visitors.

Table 10: Summary of Tiree Gaelic Ring proposed itinerary

Day	Origin and Destination	Modes Used	Journey Time
Day 1	Day 1: Glasgow Airport to Arinagour (Coll)	Bus/Train/Ferry	9:54:00
Day 2	Spent on the Isle of Coll		
Day 3	Day 3 (Thurs) Arinagour (Coll) to Scarinish (Tiree)	Ferry	0:55:00
Day 4	Scarinish to Glasgow Airport via Oban	Ferry/Train/Bus	13:35:00

Gaelic Ring: Tiree | Coll | Getting Here

The information below is a guide to help you plan your journey throughout the Gaelic Ring from Oban to Coll and Tiree, via the sound of Mull.

Travel times/mileage		
Inverness - Oban	Car	2hrs 30 mins*
Glasgow - Oban	Car	2hrs 20 mins*
Edinburgh - Oban	Car	3hrs*
Oban - Arinagour, Coll	Ferry	2hrs 55 mins
Arinagour - Scarinish, Tiree	Ferry	1 hr
Oban - Scarinish, Tiree (direct)	Ferry	3hrs 20 mins
Scarinish - Arinagour, Coll	Ferry	1hr
Arinagour - Oban	Ferry	2hrs 40 mins
Scarinish - Oban	Ferry	3hrs 20 mins

*Source: www.theaa.com
Please note: It is advisable to check your journey before setting off.

Figure 16 : Information available from Gaelic Rings Website (http://www.gaelic-rings.com/coll/getting_here.php?sel=2&top=1&mid=5&base=3&ring=Tiree)

2.2.1.6 Rum Gaelic Ring

Gaelic Rings

- Gaelic Ring: Barra...
- Gaelic Ring: Mull...
- Gaelic Ring: Skye...
- Gaelic Ring: Islay...
- Gaelic Ring: Tiree...
- Gaelic Ring: Rum...**
- Mallaig
- Small Isles
- Eigg
- Muck
- Rum
- Canna

Gaelic Journeys

History of Gaelic

Gaelic Language

Events

Businesses

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Travel

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Gaelic Ring: Rum | Introduction

The West Highland fishing village of Mallaig is the port for MV Lochnevis, the ferry that serves the islands of Rum, Eigg, Muck and Canna – collectively known as the Small Isles. MV Lochnevis provides a regular and important link to these special islands and the opportunity to undertake this Ring and view the West Highland mainland, the neighbouring island of Skye, the Outer Hebrides to the west and the mountains of Mull to the south, is very appealing.

Although Caledonian MacBrayne's Island Hopscoth® tickets do not extend to this route, CalMac operate a series of non-landing cruises to the Small Isles from Mallaig. Ferry tickets to the islands can also be purchased. See www.calmac.co.uk for details.

Photographic Journey

Figure 17 Rum Gaelic Ring route (http://www.gaelic-rings.com/ring_rum/index.php?top=1&mid=6&ring=Rum)

The Isle of Rum Gaelic Ring originates and finishes from the Port of Mallaig, taking in the islands of Rum, Eigg, Muck and Canna. The Caledonian MacBrayne website state that direct trains are available from Fort William to Mallaig before 09:00 in the morning, to meet ferries departing at 10:15 Monday to Thursday. For this reason, the mystery traveller decided to arrive at Inverness airport at 14:00 on Sunday afternoon and travel to Fort William for an overnight stay before continuing to Mallaig on Monday morning.

The exercise showed that due to the timing, frequency and routes of the ferries, it was not possible to see all four of the Small Isles in one trip and spend any great period of time on them. For this reason it was decided to visit only Rum, Eigg and Muck on this visit and not visit Canna.

Table 11: Rum Gaelic Ring proposed itinerary

Origin	Destination	Mode	Depart	Arrive	Source of Info	Suitable Route	Ease of Info Finding	Info Sources Perform	Comments
Day 1: Inverness to Fort William (Travel Time 2:30:00)									
Inverness Airport	Inverness Strothers Lane	Bus Route 11	16:55	17:22	http://www.travelinescotland.com/journeyplanner/showJourneysFound.do	1	2	1	Due to the departure time of the Fort William Train to connect with the ferry departures, it is necessary to have an over night stop at Fort William before continuing to Mallaig on the Monday. City Link 919 operates a service 5 times a day.
Inverness	Fort William	City Link 919	17:35	19:25					
Day 2: Fort William to Eigg via Rhum (Travel Time 7:50:00)									
Fort William	Mallaig	Train	08:30	09:52	http://www.calmac.co.uk/	1	2	1	Only 1 ferry service per day, that does not stop arrive/depart all of the Isles. Furthermore, due to the timings of the islands drop offs and pick ups, it is not possible to visit all of the Isles in one go, with any significant period of time spent on them all. For this reason, only Rhum and Eigg have been visited.
Mallaig	Rhum	Ferry	10:15	12:45		1	2	1	
Rhum	Eigg	Ferry	15:20	16:20					
Day 3: Eigg to Muck (Travel Time 0:35:00)									
Eigg	Muck	Ferry	13:00	13:35	http://www.calmac.co.uk/	1	2	1	Limited frequency of ferry services affects choice of islands that can be visited as part of the trip and the timings of these.
Day 4: All day on Muck									
Day 5: Muck to Inverness Airport (Travel Time 8:02:00)									
Muck	Mallaig	Ferry	12:35	14:35					Limited frequency of service affects travel arrangements.
Mallaig	Fort William	Train	16:05	17:27		1	2	1	Limited frequency of services (4 a day) led to slight waiting periods.
Fort William	Inverness	City Link 919	18:15	20:05	http://www.travelinescotland.com/journeyplanner/showJourneysFound.do	1	2	1	Limited frequency of service (approx 4 - 5 a day) leads to slight waiting periods.
Inverness Strothers Lane	Inverness Airport	Bus Route 11	20:15	20:37		1	2	1	No comments

Due to the complexities involving the ferries timings and destinations, the Rum Gaelic Ring itinerary took approximately 45 minutes to plan. The limited frequency of the ferry service and the differing nature of the Isles called on each day is slightly confusing. The connections from Mallaig to Fort William do not integrate well with the ferry timings leading to long waiting periods. In this respect, advanced journey planning before visitors try to undertake the Rum Gaelic Ring would be essential.

Table 12: Rum Gaelic Ring proposed itinerary

Day	Origin and Destination	Modes Used	Journey Time
Day 1	Inverness to Fort William	Bus/Coach	2:30:00
Day 2	Fort William to Eigg via Mallaig	Train/Ferry	7:50:00
Day 3	Eigg to Muck	Ferry/Train/Coach/Bus	0:35:00
Day 4		All day on Muck	
Day 5	Muck to Inverness	Ferry/Train/Coach/Bus	8:02:00

The screenshot shows the Gaelic Rings website interface. At the top left is the logo 'the gaelic rings' with the Gaelic text 'cearcaill na gaidhlig' below it. A search bar is present with a 'Go' button. A navigation menu includes 'Events Calendar', 'Getting Here', 'Accommodation', 'Eating Out', and 'Businesses'. The main content area is titled 'Gaelic Ring: Rum | Small Isles | Getting Here'. Below this, a paragraph states: 'The information below is a guide to help you plan your journey throughout the Gaelic Ring from Mallaig to Eigg, Muck, Rum and Canna.' A table titled 'Travel times/mileage' provides the following data:

Route	Mode	Time
Mallaig – Eigg	Ferry	1hr 15 mins
Mallaig – Muck	Ferry	1hr 40 mins
Mallaig – Rum	Ferry	1hr 20 mins
Mallaig – Canna	Ferry	2hrs 30 mins

Below the table, a note says: 'You can also cruise around the isles on a day trip which calls from Mallaig to Eigg, Rum, Muck and Canna, returning to Mallaig on the Ferry, which takes a total of 7hrs 35 mins.'

Figure 18'Getting Here' Information available from Gaelic Rings Website

2.2.2 Highlands & Islands Whisky Trails

The mystery traveller exercise could only find one identifiable whisky trail and could not find specific reference to “Speyside” or “Highlands” whisky trails. “The Malt Whisky Trail” (www.maltwhiskytrail.com) is shown in figure 19 and comprises of 9 distilleries in the Speyside region of Scotland, approximately located between Aberdeen and Inverness. The distilleries are located in the towns/villages of Forres, Elgin, Rothes, Fochabers, Keith, Dufftown, Carron and Glenlivet.



Figure 19 The Malt Whisky Trail (www.maltwhiskytrail.com)

On the Whisky Trail website itself, there is limited transport information, with information relating to rail services from the UK to Aberdeen, Aberdeen airport and if driving to the area. There is no reference to public transport to the individual distilleries on the main travel page¹. There is however a link to traveline for public transport information.

For the purposes of the mystery traveller exercise, it was decided to begin the journey in Inverness on a Monday morning at approximately 09:00, with a view of travelling between the distilleries by public transport in the following order:

- Benromach and Dallas Dhu at Forres
- Glen Moray at Elgin
- Strathisla at Keith
- Glen Grant at Rothes
- Speyside Cooperage and Glenfiddich at Dufftown
- Cardhu at Carron
- Glenlivet

The travel planning tool Traveline Scotland was found to be essential when planning this journey.

¹ <http://www.maltwhiskytrail.com/functions.asp?pageid=TRAVEL>

Table 13: Proposed Itinerary for the Highlands & Islands Whisky trail

Origin	Destination	Mode	Depart	Arrive	Source of Info	Suitable Route	Ease of Info Finding	Info Sources Performance	Comments
Day 1: Inverness to Forres (Travel Time 4:04:00)									
Inverness Airport	Inverness Retail Park	Stagecoach Route 11	09:33	09:46	http://www.travelinescotland.com/journeyslanner/showJourneysFound.do	1	2	1	No information about PT access displayed on the website. It is envisaged to stay at this distillery for approximately 2 hours before moving to the Dallas Dhu Distillery.
Inverness Retail Park	Benromach Distillery, FORRES (IV36 3EB)	Stagecoach Bluebird 305, then 10 min walk	09:55	10:47					
Benromach Distillery	Dallas Dhu Distillery (IV362RR), FORRES	Traveline identifies that the distillery is approximately 40 minutes walk, with the option to use a bus for 0 – 1 minutes of the journey from the Benromach distillery.	12:51	13:37	http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/index/places/propertyresulst/propertyplan.htm?PropID=PL_085&PropName=Dallas%20Dhu%20Historic%20Distillery	3	2	2	Information is available on the distillery website that FORRES is approximately 25 minutes from Aberdeen by Scotrail, with the distillery a 15 minute walk from the station. The maltwhiskytrail.com website also indicates that the distillery can be accessed by Bus or rail to Forres, with the station and a bus stop 1 mile from distillery. Traveline did not originally recognize the distillery postcode
Day 2: Forres to Keith (Travel Time 3:45:00)									
Forres Rail Station	Glen Moray Distillery, Elgin (IV30 1YE)	305 Stagecoach Bluebird	09:20	09:41	http://www.travelinescotland.com/journeyslanner/showJourneysFound.do	1	2	1	No information is available on either the maltwhiskytrail.com or the distillery website relating to public transport access.
		Walk from West Road, Elgin	09:41	09:54					
Glen Moray Distillery, Elgin	Strathisla Distillery, Keith (AB555BS)	Walk to West Road, Elgin	12:07	12:20		2	2	1	
		10 Stagecoach Bluebird	12:20	13:05					
Day 3: Keith to Speyside Cooperage (Travel Time 3:16:00)									
Keith Rail	Glen Grant	Train to Elgin	09:33	09:51	http://www.travelinescotland.com/journeyslanner/showJourneysFound.do	1	2	1	Information is available on the

Station	Distillery, Rothes (AB38 7BS)	336 Stagecoach Bluebird from Laich Moray Hotel	10:09	10:28	cotland.com/journeyp_lanner/showJourneys_Found.do				distilleries website about transport access with buses from Elgin. Buses fairly frequent, without the issue of excessive waiting periods.
Glen Grant Distillery, Rothes	Speyside Cooperage (AB38 9RS)	336 Stagecoach Bluebird	12:28	12:35	http://www.travelinescotland.com/journeyp_lanner/showJourneys_Found.do	1	2	1	No information is available on either the distillery's website or the maltwhiskytrail.com. Bus frequency is one per hour.
		Walk from Craigellachie, The Hotel, At the Hotel	12:35	12:49					
Day 4: Speyside Cooperage to Dufftown (Travel Time 5:15:00)									
Dufftown Square	The Glenfiddich Distillery, Dufftown, Banffshire AB55 4DH	From Dufftown Square, 336 Stagecoach	08:57	08:59	http://www.stagecoachbus.com/timetables/336web_Layout2[1].pdf	1	2	2	The maltwhiskytrail.com website comments that a bus stop is located close to the distillery. The distillery website also provides car based journeys from various gateways including Aberdeen, Inverness and Edinburgh. Initially, there were problems with traveline recognising the postcode, so went through Stagecoach.
Dufftown Station	Cardhu Distillery, Aberlour AB38 7RY	336 Stagecoach Bluebird to Rothes High Street	12:59	13:22	http://www.travelinescotland.com/journeyp_lanner/showJourneyLegDetails.do	2	2	1	Limited frequency of service limits time choices for travel. No public transport information on the maltwhiskytrail.com website, and there isn't any information on the distillery's page on the Diaego drinks group website.
		337 Stagecoach Bluebird to Cardhu Distillery	13:52	14:12					
Day 5: Dufftown to Inverness (Travel Time 11:10:00)									
Dufftown Station	Glen Livet Distillery, AB37 9DB	336 Stagecoach Bluebird to Charlestown of Aberlour	08:27	08:37	http://www.travelinescotland.com/journeyp_lanner/showJourneyLegDetails.do	2	2	1	No information on the distillery's or maltwhiskeytrail.com's websites relating to public transport access.
		362 Central Garage to Glen Livet Distillery	09:05	09:28					
Glen Livet Distillery	Inverness Airport	563 WW Smith to Dufftown	16:18	16:57	http://www.travelinescotland.com/journeyp_lanner/showJourneyL	2	2	1	
		10 Stagecoach Bluebird to	17:04	18:56					

		Inverness Retail Park			egDetails.do				
		11 Stagecoach Bluebird to Inverness Airport	19:21	19:37					

Table 14: Summary of the Whisky Trails proposed itinerary

Day	Origin and Destination	Modes Used	Journey Time
Day 1	Inverness to Forres	Bus, Bus, Walk	4:04:00
Day 2	Forres to Keith	Bus, Walk, Bus	3:45:00
Day 3	Keith to Speyside Cooperage	Train, Bus x2, Walk	3:16:00
Day 4	Speyside Cooperage to Dufftown	Bus x 3	5:15:00
Day 5	Dufftown to Inverness	Bus x 5	11:10:00

The Mystery Traveller exercise has shown that it is possible to complete a trail of the whisky distilleries by public transport. However, some of the routes require the traveller to walk relatively large distances that might make the routes less attractive for some visitors. The process identified that Stagecoach rebranded the 336 bus as the Whisky Trail bus in 2008, with all vehicles being fully accessible and with CCTV cameras for security. The buses are applicable to the trail from Forres to Findhorn, Elgin and Aberlour to Dufftown².

The exercise has shown that more work would be needed in terms of information provision and whether some of the services identified would be suitable for a tourist. Consideration should also be given to recommending day trips using public transport instead of a trail for some parts of the journey itinerary above.

Figure 20 Screen Shots from the Whisky Trail Website and Distilleries – the Trail

Figure 21 Screen Shots from the Whisky Trail Website and Distilleries – PT access to Strathisla

Figure 22 Glen Grant Distillery Screen Shot PT Info

Figure 23 Glenfiddich Distillery ‘Find us’ web page

Figure 24 Reference to Forres Gazette Article regarding rebranding of the bus for the Whisky Trail

² (Google search Term Public Transport Glen Fiddich Distillery) <http://www.scotlandwhisky.com/news-and-events/whisky-trail-bus>. This was announced in the Forres Gazette on 18 March 09 by representatives of HiTRANS and Stagecoach Staff (see figure 24).

Forres • Elgin • Aberlour • Dufftown 336

MONDAYS TO FRIDAYS

	Sch	Sch	NSch	Sch	MSch			
Forres Leachhol Hospital	0620	0720	0835	1355				
Forres Thornhill Grant Drive	0620	0724	0859	1359				
Forres Pilmuir Calder Drive	0620	0730	0905	1405				
Forres St Leonards Church arr	0634	0735	0910	1410				
Forres St Leonards Church dep	0635	0736	0911	1411				
Forres Forbeshill	0640	0741	0916	1416				
Ringhorn Post Office	0652	0754	0840 0929	1429				
Kinloss Primary School	0659	0802	0850					
Kinloss Abbey Crescent	0659	0802	0850					
College Of Roseisle	0709	0812	0903 0945	1445				
Elgin Academy								
Elgin Witter Drive	0718	0821	0912 0954	1454				
Elgin Bus Station arr	0723	0826	0917 0959	1459				
Elgin Bus Station dep	0617 0717	0747	0805	0905	1005			
Elgin Linkwood Road			0811	0911	1011			
Wester Coleburn	0630 0730	0800	0820	0920	1020			
Rothies Square	0639 0739	0809	0829	0929	1029			
Craiglochle Hotel	0645 0745	0815	0835	0935	1035			
Aberlour High School		0840 0840	0940	1040				
Craigellachie Garage	0647 0747	0817 0846 0846	0946	1046				
Slantidich Distillery	0653 0753	0823 0853 0853	0953	1053				
Dufftown Square	0655 0755	0825 0855 0855	0955	1055				
	Sch	Sch	Sch					
Forres Leachhol Hospital	1355	1425	1605	1635	1855	2055		
Forres Thornhill Grant Drive	1359	1459	1609	1659	1859	2059	2251	
Forres Pilmuir Calder Drive	1405	1505	1615	1705	1835	1905	2105	2257
Forres St Leonards Church arr	1410	1510	1620	1710	1840	1910	2110	2302
Forres St Leonards Church dep	1411	1511	1621	1711	1841	1911	2111	2303

then hourly until

Figure 25 Lack of branding on the stagecoach timetable

3 PRESENTATION AND LINKING PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFORMATION

The second task of the scoping study undertook a review of the web sites identified in task 1 to make recommendations as to how public transport links could be added or better presented on each web site.

3.1 Public Transport Information on the Gaelic Rings Web Site

3.1.1 Improving the Gaelic Ring Introduction pages

Each of the Gaelic Rings has a specific page containing information about ‘Getting Here’. However, the link bar containing the link to this page does not appear on the Introduction page for each Ring, and only appears on the sub-pages:

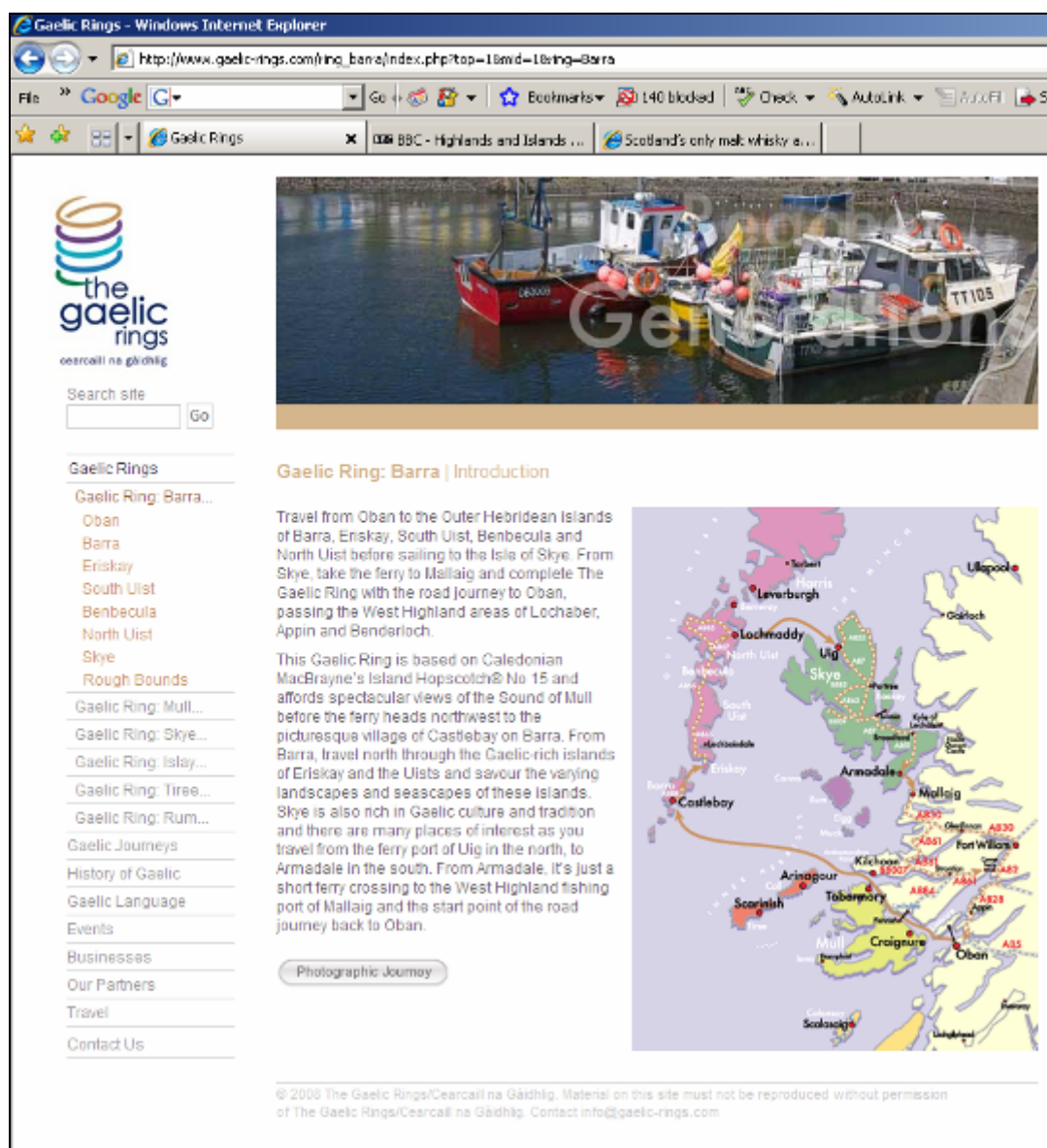
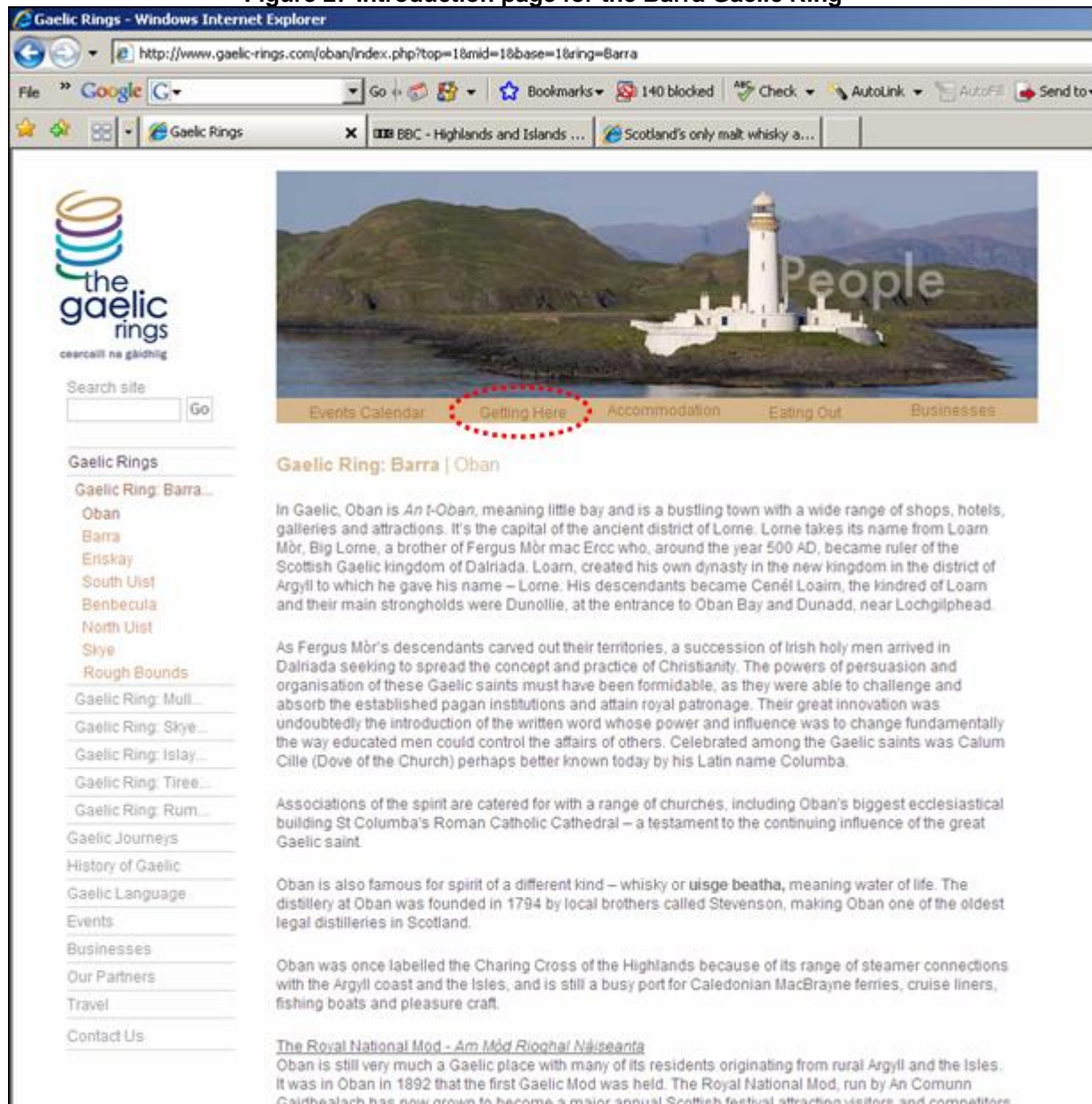


Figure 26 Introduction page for the Barra Gaelic Ring

On the Introduction page there is a button linking to a photographic journey of the Ring and this would be an ideal space for a second button or link indicating 'Plan your journey now' to the user. This link would take the user directly to the 'Getting Here' page that can be accessed from the page for each leg of the journey (see Figure 27). Having seen the photographic journey, the user would then be encouraged to plan the journey for themselves. It is therefore recommended that a link bar is included on the Introduction page and a button (e.g. plan you journey) or link directly to the 'Getting Here' page from the Introduction page.

Figure 27 Introduction page for the Barra Gaelic Ring



3.1.2 Improving travel information for Ring legs on www.gaelic-rings.com

The 'Getting Here' page is a generic page that is common to all legs of a given Ring. The page displays information about three aspects of travel – reaching the start point from Inverness, Glasgow and Edinburgh, travel around the Ring itself, and onward travel from the finish point back to Inverness, Glasgow and Edinburgh.

The information gives car driving times or mileages and ferry travel times. It does not give rail or bus travel times or indicate where such information could be found.

The mystery traveller work has shown that it is possible to travel to the start point of each Rings from Glasgow or Inverness airports using public transport. It has also been possible to travel around the Rings using public transport, including ferries (see annex A). Therefore, this information should be made available to the user through the Getting Here page, both to increase awareness of public transport as an available mode of travel, and to allow the user to find results for any given leg of their journey by any mode.

In terms of presenting travel information to the user, it is recommended that the table is reformatted according the elements presented in Table 1 below (Barra Ring). Obviously the text will vary depending upon the best mode of travel identified in the Mystery Traveller report.

Table 15 Example of how the 'Getting Here' tables could look like

Travel times/mileage	How to travel (click link for travel information for journey leg)	Travel time/distance
Inverness - Oban	Drive or take the train	2hrs 30 mins
Glasgow – Oban	Drive or take the train	2hrs 20 mins
Edinburgh – Oban	Drive or take the train	3hrs
	-	
Oban - Castlebay, Barra	Ferry	5hrs 20 mins
Barra – Eriskay	Ferry	40 mins
Eriskay – Lochmaddy, North Uist	Drive or take the bus	52m /84km
Lochmaddy – Uig, Skye	Ferry	1hr 45mins
Uig – Armadale	Drive or take the bus	59m / 95km
Armadale – Mallaig	Ferry	30 mins
	-	
Mallaig – Inverness	Drive or take the train	3hrs
Mallaig – Glasgow	Drive or take the train	3hrs 50 mins
Mallaig – Edinburgh	Drive or take the train	4hrs 20 mins

(All times and distances are estimated for example purposes).

The [drive](#) link can link through to a preferred motor route planner such as theaa.com or autoroute.com. There are a number of options for how the public transport link may function (ferry, bus or train). In practice these options may represent a development path for the client to follow, based on cost and ease of implementation.

3.1.2.1 *Link to operator timetable.*

The most up to date source of information for the journey leg should be the published timetable of the operator offering the service. The link should open the relevant timetable in a new window for the user to consult and print out if necessary.

The advantage of this approach is that the user can review the timetable and select a day and journey time to suit their needs.

The disadvantage of this approach is that it requires staff time to maintain an overview of timetable changes to ensure that the current timetables are always available.

3.1.2.2 *Link to Transport Direct or Traveline Scotland via page landing*

Online journey planners such as Transport Direct or Traveline Scotland now offer a 'page landing' capability. If implemented for the Gaelic Rings website, this would mean that after the [take the bus](#) link was clicked, a new browser window would open. In the new browser window would be a set of journey results already calculated for the next available journey between a specified origin and destination. The journey planner can do this because the Gaelic Rings website sends it information about the origin, for instance Eriskay, and the destination, for instance Lochmaddy, North Uist. Note that Transport Direct also offers options by car.

The advantage of this approach is that the user does not have to key the information into a journey planner or scan through a timetable. There is also no need to maintain the links to timetables on operators' websites.

The disadvantage is that a satisfactory journey result may not always be returned, since users are likely to be planning a journey at a different time and date to when the actual journey will be made. The journey planners mentioned above do however offer the user the ability to change any detail of the journey, for example changing the date and time of travel, as required.

Further discussions would be needed with Transport Direct or Traveline Scotland to define the relatively simple functionality that needs to be embedded in the Gaelic Rings website to support page landing functionality. TTR has good personal contacts with both services and can make the necessary introductions on request.

3.1.2.3 *Link to Transport Direct or Traveline Scotland via white labelling*

Some website owners may wish to offer a journey planning capability on their website, but prefer not to 'hand off' a user to a page in new browser window. In this case, Transport Direct supports a 'white labelling' capability. If implemented for the Gaelic Rings website, this would mean that after the [take the bus](#) link was clicked,

the user would be taken to a journey planner page that appeared to be **within** the same browser window. The branding of the journey planner would reflect the branding of Gaelic Rings website, even though the journey planner would actually be sending the queries to the Transport Direct website to answer. It is also possible to implement white labelling where a new browser window opens, but the Gaelic Rings website branding is retained.

The example shown in Figure 28 illustrates how white labelling has been implemented for the BBC Highland and Islands website's link to the Transport Direct journey planner. In this case Transport Direct already supports a white labelling capability. Although Traveline Scotland does not currently offer white labelling, this is something that they would consider for suitable partners

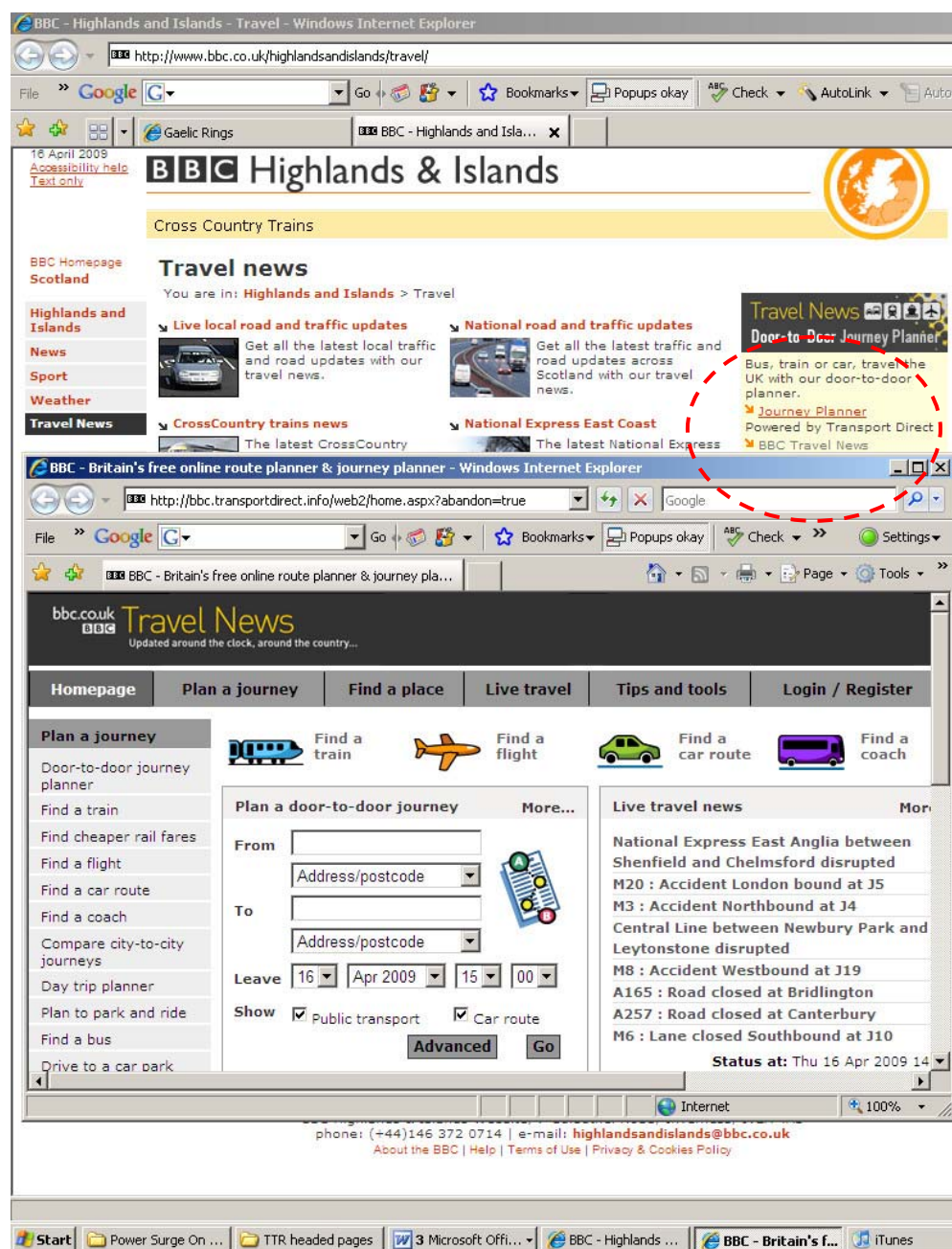


Figure 28: White labelling technique to Transport Direct used on the BBC Highland and Islands website

3.1.2.4 Exploitation of the Transport Direct Day Trip Planner

The Transport Direct web site contains a feature that allows the user to plan a circular trip (see Figure 29). The feature is designed for people wanting to plan a day trip and allows a return journey to be planned with visits to two other locations (see Figure 30). It is recommended that this feature is explored to see whether it is capable of providing travel itineraries for the Gaelic Ring routes.



Figure 29 Transport Direct Link to the Day Trip Planner

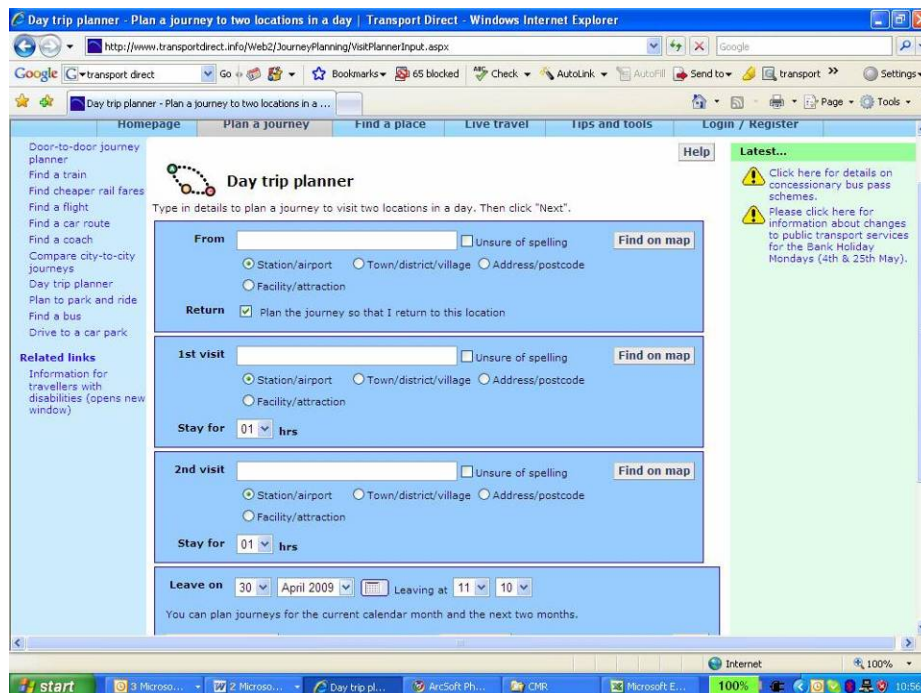


Figure 30: Transport Direct Day Trip Planner

3.2 Improving travel information on www.maltwhiskytrail.com

The Malt Whisky Trail website gives information about nine distilleries that the user may wish to visit. No overall journey plan between the distilleries is given, despite the word 'trail' in the website's title. Some brief information about transport links is given in the distillery descriptions. The mystery traveller exercise has shown that it is possible to plan journeys between the distilleries using public transport (see section 2).

Some users may be planning to visit individual distilleries as part of a wider set of tourist visits. Other users may wish to plan a route that takes in two or more distilleries over a number of days. Other users may wish to travel from outside the area to visit one distillery only. In all scenarios, the user's origin will not be known in advance (unlike the legs of the Gaelic Rings).

Therefore, it is recommended that a Transport Direct 'Get here' link is implemented on each distillery page. The link would be prepopulated with the destination coordinates of the distillery. Users would type in their origin postcode to get directions. Figure 31 shows how the Transport Direct 'Get Here' function has been applied to the TTR web site.

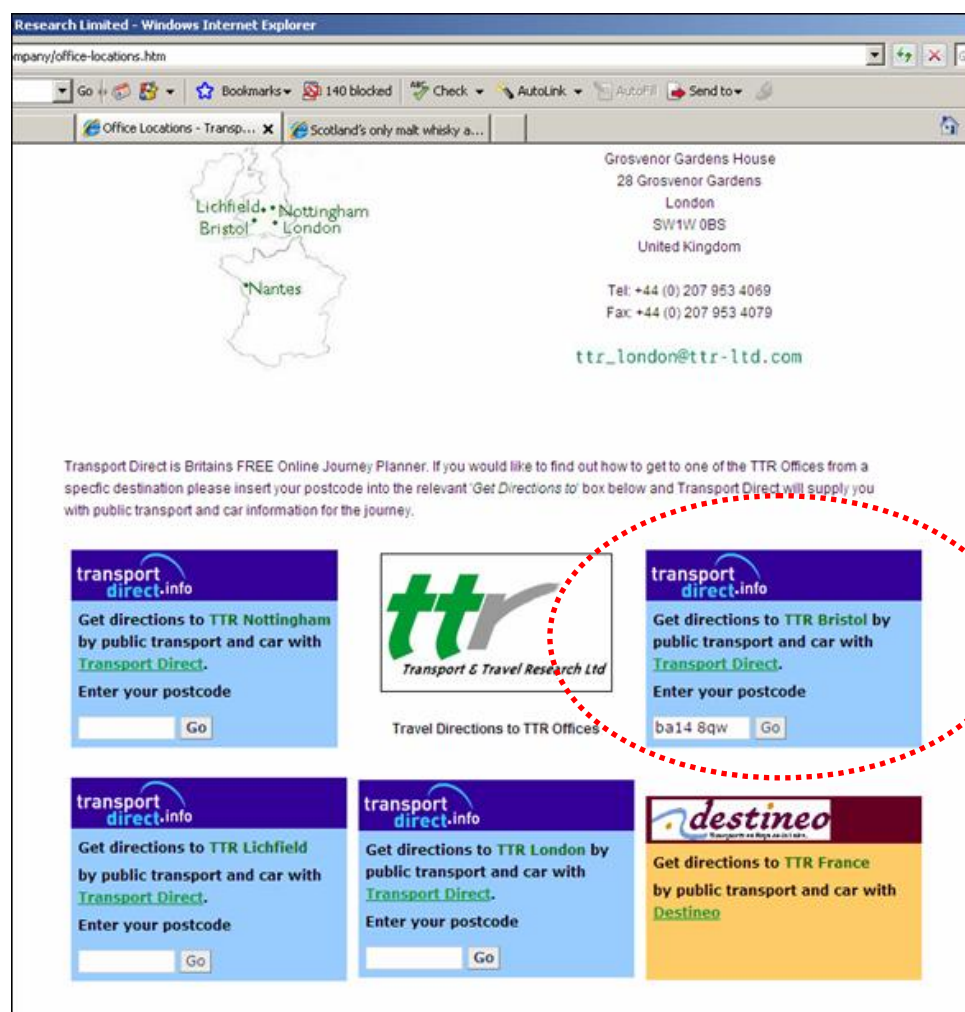


Figure 31 'White labelling' technique to Transport Direct used on the BBC Highland and Islands website

After the user types their postcode and clicks the 'Go' button, they are taken by 'page landing' functionality to the Transport Direct website. In the case of the Malt Whisky Trail, users would be taken to the Transport Direct website. The page would give the results in a journey plan with a map available, using public transport and car modes, as shown in Figure 32 for the example on the TTR website:

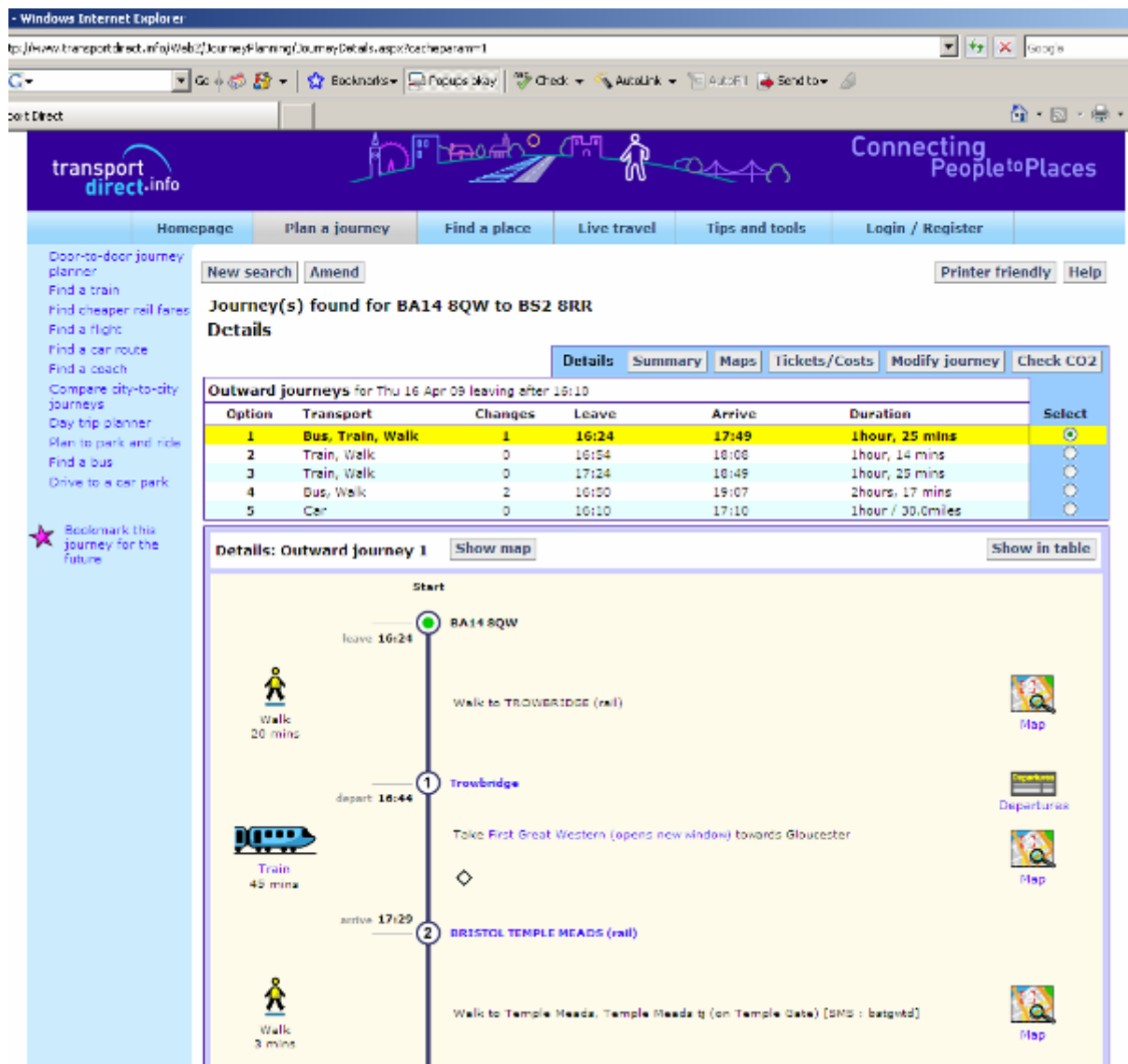


Figure 32 TTR Bristol 'Get Here' instructions supplied by Transport Direct

Using this functionality also has the advantage of including a link to the Transport Direct website within the journey plan box, so that users can plan their own journeys if desired. It is recommended that 'page landing' functionality is used for each distillery web page with pre-populated coordinates.

4 GOOD PRACTICE REVIEW

A review was undertaken by completing an internet search for similar trails to those analysed in this project. The objective of the review was to identify good practice that could be considered for use by the Gaelic Rings or Highland & Island Whisky trails. The following section contains information for eight trails identified by the study.

4.1 Natural England National Trails

Natural England sponsors the national trails website, which provides information relating to 15 trails within England and Wales (<http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/>), with a dedicated website for each of the trails. These trails include:

- Cleveland Way (North Yorkshire)
- Cotswold Way (Southwest England)
- Glyndŵr's Way (Mid Wales)
- Hadrian's Wall (Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyneside)
- North Downs Way (Southeast England)
- Offa's Dyke Path (England/Wales Border)
- Peddars Way/North Norfolk Coast Path (Eastern England)
- Pembrokeshire Coast Pat (Southwest Wales)
- Pennine Bridleway (Derbyshire, Peak District, South Pennines, Yorkshire Dales)
- Pennine Way (Peak District in Derbyshire to the Scottish Borders)
- The Ridgeway (Southern/Central England)
- South Downs Way (Southern England) (<http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/Southdowns/index.asp?PageId=1>)
- South West Coast Path (Somerset, Devon, Cornwall, Dorset)
- Thames Path (Southern/Central England)
- Yorkshire Wolds Way (North and east Yorkshire)

A summary of the public transport information provided for 3 of the routes is shown below.

4.1.1 The South Downs Way

The South Downs are located in Hampshire, in southern England, with a trail existing between Winchester and Eastbourne.

This trail is promoted on the **South Downs Way** National Trail website where a number of transport related links and information are provided, including links to the online journey planner www.travelinesw.com, information for walkers and cyclists, and for those with mobility impairments. In addition, the website contains recommended starting and finishing train stations, and a downloadable public transport information leaflet/guide is available, which contains:

- A map of the local area with bus routes and numbers identified
- A list of the various public transport operators and contact details

- Contact details for taxi and coach operators

A copy of the public transport leaflet is included in Annex A.

Figure 33 The South Downs Way web site

4.1.2 The Thames Path

The Thames Path is located in Southern/Central England and stretches from Cirencester in the Cotswold to Woolwich, Greenwich South East London.

Similarly to the South Downs Way Trail, information related to transport is provided on the Thames Path National Trail website, with web links to journey planning tools of Traveline, the Transport for London online journey planner and the National Rail website, for train related inquiries. A public transport leaflet/guide has also been compiled for the year 2007/08. However, the website states that *“Unfortunately this guide is becoming increasingly out of date and we are unable to publish information for 2008/09 as we have not received any funding this year. We can only apologise and hope that we get funding to update the information next year”*. This highlights one of the difficulties of providing ‘static’ timetabled information.

In the 2007/8 leaflet, information is provided on:

- The location and integrated map of the bus, coach, rail and boat routes;
- The frequency and times of the buses, coaches, trains and boat; and
- The operators of the buses, coaches, trains and boats.

In this respect, the promotion of the travel planning tools is essential. There is also a dedicated page relating to who operates the scheduled boat services and the routes they apply to, with links to each of their websites.

Figure 34 The Thames Path - Public Transport Information

4.1.3 The Cotswolds Way

The Cotswolds Way Trail starts in the south of the Cotswolds close to the market town of Bath, finishing at Chipping Campden in the North of the Cotswolds.

As with the South Downs Way and Thames Way website, information is made available to users about the travel planning tools Traveline and National Rail, with the CountryGoer website (www.countrygoer.org/cotswolds.html), which provides information on *“how to travel the “green way” to the countryside”*.

Furthermore, the Cotswolds Conservation Board have produced an in depth booklet, which gives details about 15 places along the Cotswold Way where it is practical to start and finish your walk using public transport from nearby towns. This booklet is far more comprehensive than the 2 pages leaflets produced for the other two Trails that have been summarized, and additionally, information on the trail is available

broken down in 3 booklets, specifically for the towns of Bath, Stroud and Cheltenham.

Contained with the main booklet is information relating to:

- For each of the 15 places, bus and/or train routes and times for getting to and from each location
- Bus Operators and contact numbers, and if needed, the Traveline contact number.
- Taxi and private car hire operators at 2 locations for back up purposes.

Figure 35 Example page from the Cotswold Way Public Transport Leaflet

4.2 CAMRA Rail Ale Trails

The Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) have worked with a number of transport operators across the country for a number of years to provide trails of numbers of pubs by public transport.

4.2.1 Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership

The Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership (ALCRP) which was launched in 2005, working in conjunction with the South Hertfordshire branch of CAMRA launched the “Rail Ale Trail” to promote *the sensible enjoyment of real ale through reliable train journeys*. The trail is advertised on the Community Partnership’s website (<http://www.abbeyline.org.uk/railale.htm>) with a downloadable 8 page leaflet, which is available in hard copies in a number of strategic locations. Within this 8 page leaflet, information is provided about:

- Fare prices for returns from Watford Junction to each rail station associated with the ale trail and frequency of trains from Watford Junction and St Albans Abbey rail stations
- Links to the Silverlink website for further timetable information
- A profile of each pub on the trail, including directions from each station, pub opening hours and access for the disabled
- A map of the pubs in the close vicinity to St Albans Abbey and Watford Junction stations

Rail Ale Trail

Watford Junction to St. Albans Abbey

Created in partnership with CAMRA – the Campaign for Real Ale – the Abbey line Rail Ale Trail showcases the diverse range of real ales, quintessential English pubs – complete with leafy lanes found along the route between Watford and St Albans. You won't be disappointed, as the 16 pubs have been chosen by CAMRA for their hospitality and breadth of ales on tap. What's more collect a stamp from every pub on the Trail and qualify for a commemorative Tee-shirt. Real proof of some Real Ales – enjoyed!

The six-mile route from Watford Junction to St. Albans Abbey provides the local community with a convenient and affordable train service – as well as key connections to fast, frequent mainline Silverlink trains to London, Milton Keynes and Northampton.

Visit www.silverlink-trains.com for current timetable information and details of great value commuter and leisure-time fares.

Fox & Hounds

Station Road Bricklet Wood AL2 3PQ
Phone 01923 672022

PUB OPERATOR
Punch

PUB OPENING HOURS
12.00-23.00 (Th-Sa-24.00)
12.00-22.30 Sun
In summer, we open at 11.00 on Mon-Sat

BEER RANGE
Greene King IPA + guest

FOOD SERVING HOURS
12.00-15.00 (Mon-Fri)
12.00-14.00 (Sat)
12.00-16.00 (Sun) and
18.00-21.00 (Tues-Fri)
17.00-21.00 (Sat)

FOOD RANGE
Home prepared pub menu lunchtimes, international in eves. Good Vegetarian choices

PUB DESCRIPTION
Former two bar Victorian pub with separate dining alcove and an adjacent garden

CHILDREN
Welcome until 1900 (21.00 if dining)

ACCESS
Wheelchair accessible but no special facilities

O.S. REFERENCE
TL 145020

DIRECTIONS AND DISTANCE FROM BRICKLET WOOD STATION
The pub is immediately opposite the station

The Gate

Station Road Bricklet Wood AL2 3PQ
Phone 01923 675801

PUB OPERATOR
Wells

PUB OPENING HOURS
12.00-23.00 (Mon-Thurs)
12.00-24.30 (Fri & Sat)
12.00-22.30 (Sun)

BEER RANGE
Wells Eagle and Bombardier, Old Speckled Hen + guest

FOOD SERVING HOURS
12.00-15.00 and
17.00-20.00 (Mon-Fri)
12.00-16.00 (Sat & Sun)

FOOD RANGE
Standard lunchtime menu with daily specials offering good pub food-additional evening menu-summer BBQs. Credit cards accepted subject to minimum spend

PUB DESCRIPTION
This split bar pub, popular with locals, has garden and play area. Entertainment is available on Saturdays

CHILDREN
Welcome

ACCESS
Level access to bar and gents' toilet. Pub to be fully accessible from October 2006

O.S. REFERENCE
TL 145022

DIRECTIONS AND DISTANCE FROM BRICKLET WOOD STATION
Turn left outside the station. The pub is at the cross roads, a four minute walk away

Figure 36: Extract from Rail Ale Trail South Herts.

4.2.2 The Devon and Cornwall Rail Ale Trail

The Devon and Cornwall branches of CAMRA, working with the Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership, have launched 6 rail based ale trails, based on 6 railway branches in Devon and Cornwall. These are:

- Maritime Line (from Truro to Falmouth)
- Looe Valley Line (from Looe to Liskeard)
- Tarka Line (from Barnstaple to Exeter)
- St Ives Line (from St Ives to Barnstaple)
- Atlantic Coast Line (from Newquay to Par)
- Tamar Valley Line (from Gunnislake to Plymouth)

The website itself provides weblinks to traveline, the train operator First Great Western and the Partnerships complementary website, Devon and Cornwall's Scenic Railways (<http://www.greatscenicrailways.com/ttable.html>). This website features information about seasonal running of services on the various line, and downloadable copies of the train timetables, with links again to First Great Western and National Rail websites.

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Figure 37 Devon and Cornwall Rail Ale Trails

Figure 38 The Devon and Cornwall Scenic Railway web site

4.3 The Sandstone Trail - Cheshire

Cheshire County Council promotes the walking Sandstone Trail through the website http://www.cheshire.gov.uk/countryside/Walking/linear_trails/sandstone/. This website provides information about rail connections to the start and finish of the trail and promotes the traveline website and phone number. Disability access is provided about the walking route for those with mobility impairment. The web site also provides a link to the Babelfish web site that will translate the information into most languages.

4.4 The Red Kite Trail

In Newcastle, there is the Red Kites walking trail, an 18 kilometre (11 miles) circular walking route through the countryside of the lower Derwent Valley in Gateshead and County Durham. This trail is part of the Northern Kites wildlife initiative which aims to return breeding red kites to the region whilst providing its communities and people with an opportunity to enjoy and appreciate one of the most spectacular elements of our wild heritage.

As part of the trail website³ detailed guides are available for users to download for the various stages of the trail, which include transport and accessibility sections, identifying the bus routes and numbers concerned and their origin. The guide also promotes the Travelwise journey planner (with contact phone number), the website of the SimplyGo transport operator (who operates the bus services in Tyneside) and national rail (website and contact number).

Figure 39 Extract from Red Kite detailed guide

4.5 The Moray Firth Trail

The Moray Firth Trail is located in the Northeast of Scotland, and is part of the North Sea Trail, which is a partnership of 26 regions in 6 European countries that share a North Sea Heritage. The trail stretches from Forres/Findhorn eastwards Cullen on the south shore of the Firth. The trail also links in with other waymarked routes such as the Great Glen Way and the Speyside Way.

The Moray Firth Trail website (<http://www.morayfirth.org/howtogetthere.asp>) provides information about a number of sources of information about how to travel to the trail. These include:

- The journey planners of Transport Direct and Traveline

³ <http://www.northernkites.org.uk/redkitetrail/index.htm>

- The Hi-Ways transport guide (<http://highlandlife.net/transport>) has comprehensive links for all forms of transport in the Highlands, as well as information about accommodation and services
- Connections from other UK and EU airports and ferries destinations
- Rail Connections to Inverness, including links to the National Rail website
- Coach operator web links including for Stagecoach, City Link, Rapsons and Megabus. It is recommended that people wishing to use local bus services are advised to use Traveline Scotland.

Figure 40 The Moray Firth Trail Web site

4.6 The Isle of Wight Food Trail

The Isle of Wight Food Trail was launched to promote the local produce of the Isle of Wight and New Forest, and the trail takes in 24 locations producing goods from meat, wine, beers and ciders, jam, honey, chutneys and juice to seafood. The trail is promoted through the Island 2000's website (<http://www.island2000.org.uk/index.htm>). The organisation "*explores and utilizes every element of the Isle of Wight's cultural and environmental distinctiveness in work that consistently enhances the well-being of those who live, work and visit here.*"

In the supporting leaflet that is available to download from the website, the trail is marketed as being able to be completed without the need of the car and explains that "*bus services from Southampton and Bournemouth criss-cross the New Forest, and connect with the Wightlink ferries. The New Forest Bus tour and bike trailer service operates at least 6 locations*". The leaflet identifies a number of sources of information for public transport information including:

- National Rail Enquiries
- The Isle of Wight and New Forest Tourist/Visitor information services
- 5 bus and ferry operating companies with contact numbers

Figure 41: Excerpt from the Isle of Wight Food Trail Leaflet

4.7 The Serpent Trail

The Serpent Trail was launched by West Sussex District Council to promote the work being carried out by the Sussex Wealden Greens and Heaths Project and to highlight the outstanding landscape of the greensand hills. This is promoted on the Council's website⁴ and although being primarily aimed at walkers, cyclists and horse riders, contains a large number of public transport links for sources of information. These include web links or telephone contact numbers for:

- For ticketing deals: www.southdownsonline.org
- By Road: www.theaa.com

⁴ <http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/ccm/content/leisure-and-tourism/walking-cycling-and-horse-riding/serpent-trail.en;jsessionid=acJyRc7hbTJa>

- By Rail: National Rail Enquiries Tel: 08457 484950 www.nationalrail.co.uk Waterloo, Haslemere, Liss, Liphook, Petersfield, Havant, Southampton. Victoria, Pulborough, Chichester, Portsmouth
- By Bus: Surrey and North Hants. Tel: 0845 121 0180. Hants and West Sussex. Tel: 0845 121 0170. www.stagecoachbus.com
- For details of other public transport options, call Traveline on 0871 200 22 33 (web link).

An in depth guide for the trail is also available from the Council website and this provides further information relating to the actual bus routes/services required.

Figure 42 The Serpent Trail web site

4.8 The Whisky Coast Trail

The West Coast of Scotland is known amongst a number of people as the Whisky Coast (http://www.whiskycoast.co.uk/travel/fort_william.asp) due to the number of distilleries on the mainland and the Highland Isles. Whilst no set trails are described, the Whisky Coast website has been set up to promote the region and the website, in a similar manner to the Serpent Trail website identifies a number of sources of information regarding making public transport journeys around the region. The information and contact sources include:

- The best way to plan any journey by car is with www.theaa.com
- The best way to plan any journey by public transport in Scotland is with www.travelinescotland.com
- By Bus:
 - Scottish Citylink buses leave Glasgow's Buchanan Street for the three hour journey to Fort William (via Loch Lomond and Glencoe) (includes web link to timetable)
 - Scottish Citylink and Highland Country Buses buses leave Fort -- William for the two hour journey to Inverness - Regular daily departures (limited on Sundays) (includes web link to timetable)
 - Scottish Citylink buses leave Inverness for the three hour journey from Inverness to the Isle of Skye – Regular daily departures: (includes web link to timetable)
- By Rail
 - First Scotrail operate train services from Glasgow and Edinburgh to Fort William -West Highland Lines (includes web link to timetable):
 - First Scotrail operate a train service from Inverness for the 2 ½ hour journey to Kyle of Lochalsh (the nearest mainland link to the Isle of Skye) North Highland Lines (includes web link to timetable)
- By Ferry
 - The six-vehicle Skye Ferry operates daily between Glenelg and Kylerhea during the summer months. It is reached via the A87 to Sheil Bridge where there are signs for Glenelg and the ferry. Drivers please note this route is along an alpine style mountain pass (More information at www.skyeferry.co.uk or Tel. +44(1599) 522273)

- Calmac operate a ferry service from Mallaig (via Fort William) to Skye (includes web link to timetables)

5 RECOMMENDED MARKETING THEMES & STRATEGIES

The mystery traveller exercise has shown that it is possible to plan public transport journeys for all of the Gaelic Rings and the Highlands Whisky trails. However, when compared to the equivalent car journeys the following factors could be considered as barriers for using public transport to travel on some or all of the routes:

- Long Journey times;
- Large waiting times between transport modes; and
- Limited alternative options (e.g. what happens if I miss my bus?).

It is felt that people willing to take on these journeys using public transport could be considered to be all of some or all of the following:

- Time rich;
- Adventurous; and
- Environmentally concerned.

5.1 Awareness raising of Public transport options

In terms of marketing the use of public transport on these routes it is felt that work needs to be done to increase awareness and use of the many available journey planning tools and if applicable develop more concise information (e.g. downloadable guides etc...). Section 3 of this document has made several recommendations on how both the Gaelic Rings and Whisky trails sites can improve their web sites in terms of increasing the profile of public transport options and linking to existing information sources.

5.2 Marketing Themes to promote public transport use

As well as increasing the awareness of public transport options it is felt that marketing strategies are needed to address the barriers to using the services instead of travelling by car. It is suggested that where possible positive angles will be attributed to the 3 main barriers as follows:

5.2.1 Marketing Themes to increase acceptability of Long Journey Times

In order to increase the acceptability of some potential visitors from some of the long journey times identified by the mystery traveller exercise it is recommended that the travelling time is presented as part of the holiday experience.

Most of the routes will take the traveller through scenic countryside allowing them to concentrate on the views instead of driving tasks. The fact that they will be using public transport services will also mean that they will be driven (i.e. shown the way) to each stage of the trail and will have the opportunity to interact with local people and other tourists using the services.

Bearing in mind these two factors a marketing theme could be developed that pictures that traveller admiring the view, relaxing on the bus, or interacting with

others on the bus (including the driver whilst boarding the bus). Such images could be used with strap lines such as:

“Take the Scenic route”
“Relax and Admire the Views”
“Meet the Locals”
“A Warm Welcome to the Highlands & Islands”
“Let Us Take You There”

5.2.2 Marketing Themes to address waiting times

The mystery traveller exercise identified that for many journeys large waiting times exist between some of the public transport services. It is recommended that suggestions of things to do whilst people wait are made to minimise the amount of time that travellers are simply waiting for the next service. This would include local tourist attractions at or near interchanges (e.g. museums, architecture etc...) and establishments where they can relax and recharge (e.g. restaurants, public houses etc...).

If the waiting location is in a relatively remote area that has little to offer in terms of tourist attractions etc... considerations should be given to making the interchange as comfortable as possible (e.g. seating and shelter) and be located in a safe place that has interesting views (for example over looking the local river or with a view of the mountains, coastline etc...).

Promotion of waiting time attractions could be achieved by providing list of recommendations of things to do at each interchange point and/or photographs to show any attractive locations that will people will be waiting in on route.

“Scenic Waits”
“You won’t mind waiting here”
“A Wait off your mind”
“Enjoy some well earned food and drink”
“Spend some time with the locals”

5.2.3 Marketing Themes for the environmentally aware

The good practice review identified that many of the trails used environmental benefits to promote their use. This was particularly true for routes that travel through areas of outstanding beauty. This is clearly relevant to the Highlands and Islands where similar initiatives could be achieved. In particular the South Downs way has used the strap line **“Money isn’t all that you will save”** together with images of natural beauty in the area framed in the outline of an animal footprint. Similar imagery could be used to not only promote public transport use but to advertise the local wildlife and fauna.

5.2.4 Strategies to assure travellers that they won’t get stranded

The final and perhaps most important barrier to travelling by public transport is the fear of missing a vital link in the journey, leaving you stranded on route. This is particularly key for routes that have limited alternative travel options. It is

recommended that each route is assessed in terms of the traveller's vulnerability if they make a mistake on route. Where limited services are available prescribed itineraries should be recommended to the traveller that have good connection times and would minimise the risk of missing a link in the journey.

The good practice review identified that one of the National Trails provides the numbers of local taxi firms in case people get into difficulties. For remote areas where it is possible for people to be stranded for long periods of time, and alternative taxi services are not available, consideration should also be given to providing a phone number for the local emergency services. It is recommended an emergency action plan is developed for each route to minimise the risk of travellers becoming stranded on route. The resulting plan not need be advertised to travellers, but could be drawn up in consultation with local emergency services with helpline numbers displayed at interchanges only.

6 CONCLUSION

The main focus of the scoping study was the completion of a desk based mystery traveller exercise that attempted to plan public transport routes for the 6 Gaelic rings and a route between Whisky distilleries located in the Highlands and Islands region. The exercise showed that it was possible to plan a public transport journey for all of the Gaelic Rings and between most Whisky distilleries.

Each route has been assessed in terms of suitability to a tourist and the performance of the information sources used. This information can be used to develop these routes for use by tourists and, improve information for them. The routes would also need to be marketed to address the following identified potential barriers when compared to the equivalent car journeys the following factors were significant and could deter people from travelling using sustainable modes on the routes:

- Long Journey times;
- Large waiting times between transport modes; and
- Limited alternative options (e.g. what happens if I miss my bus?).

The study has also made recommendations as to how public transport can be better presented on the tourism web sites, identified good practice examples of other tourist web sites that provides information and suggested some initial themes for marketing the public transport routes.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are a series of recommendations that have been identified as part of this scoping study. Each recommendation has been categorised into each of the 3 key areas covered in this study.

7.1 Public transport tourism routes

7.1.1 Review Mystery Traveller Results

The desk based mystery traveller review has shown that it is possible to plan a public transport route for each Gaelic Ring and between most of the whisky distilleries. It is recommended that these routes are reviewed to determine whether the best itinerary has been identified. For example there may be better public transport services available for a particular leg of the journey than the mode selected by the mystery traveller.

7.1.2 Monitor/analyse hit rates for each of the tourism routes

The frequency at which each of the Gaelic Rings received the most web site hits should be monitored. This would identify the most popular ring and could determine the order in which public transport routes are developed for each ring. A similar process could be undertaken for the whisky distilleries.

7.1.3 Complete a Mystery traveller exercise

Once a public transport route has been developed a mystery traveller exercise could be completed. The exercise would send a researcher on the suggested journey and they would be tasked with assessing it in terms of how easy it is to follow. The exercise would also review information provided on route and identify any further opportunities to provide better information of improvements to services and /or interchanges that will encourage tourists to use them.

7.1.4 Develop back up plans or identify help lines

A risk assessment process should be followed for each recommended route or strategy. This process will identify potential areas where things could go wrong and measure the impact this would have on the traveller's experience. The assessment would assess each risk and develop contingency plans to minimise their impact.

7.2 Improved public transport information

7.2.1 Provide separate information of starting point and for getting around

The public transport information review recommended that the journey to the starting point of each route and the route itself are separated. This will allow options for different starting points to be developed and mean that only a single route is developed to complete the route itself. The routes could be termed "getting here " and "getting around".

7.2.2 Improve links to journey planning web sites

Section 3 of this document has made the following recommendations for improving public transport information provision and its awareness on the tourism web sites reviewed in the project.

- Include a link to travel information on the introduction page of each Gaelic ring (e.g. Getting here) as appears on subsequent pages.
- Travel to route start points could be planned using the page landing technique. For example the user would enter their home postcode and Transport Direct or Traveline Scotland will provide them with a route to get there (including by car on the Transport Direct website).
- The getting here page should include public transport options and each mode should contain a link that provides more information regarding the service.
- Explore the possibility of using the Transport Direct Day Trip Planner for planning travel itineraries for the Gaelic Ring routes.

7.2.3 Provide recommended itineraries

For routes with limited choice and high risk of failure consideration should be given for providing recommended routes. This would have the advantage of taking away the hassle of planning the route from the traveller, but have the disadvantage of having to be monitored to ensure the information provided is still valid.

7.3 Recommended marketing themes/strategies

7.3.1 Develop marketing themes

A series of recommended marketing themes were made by the study and it is recommended that these are pursued to in order to have a suitable marketing campaign to support the initiative to encourage the use of sustainable transport whilst travelling along the routes.

7.3.2 Investigate “things to do” at key waiting points

A recommendation of one of the marketing ideas was to promote things to do at locations where travellers will be required to wait between public transport services. It is therefore recommended that each identified waiting location is reviewed to produce a list of attractions or places to eat or drink.

7.3.3 Interchange and route audit

One of the key aspects of the public transport journeys will be for the tourist to leisurely admire the stunning views and scenery along the route. In order to demonstrate this, key points of interest along each route should be identified. This could follow a similar method used for the photographic journey currently in place for each Gaelic ring, but would have reference to the particular public transport service (e.g. an image of someone admiring a landmark from the window of a bus or a picture of someone waiting for a bus at a stunning location). The review should also consider relocating bus stops if it is felt that they could be moved to a more suitable location.

7.4 Recommended next steps

It is recommended that the results of this scoping study are carefully reviewed with the objective of developing a public transport option strategy for each of the routes covered in this study. The strategies should include the above recommendations and once implemented monitored to establish how much they are used and evaluated so that further improvements can be made.

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**ANNEX A: SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL TRAIL GOOD PRACTICE
EXAMPLE.**

