



Motorcycle Tourism

May 2009 - April 2011

Final Report

Managed by: Moffat & District Community Initiative



Contents

1.0 Background

2.0 Project Summary

3.0 Project Budget

4.0 Key Project Activities

4.1 Website developments

4.2 Social networking

4.3 International advertising

4.4 Consumer media campaign

4.5 Route brochures

4.6 Dumfries & Galloway 'Biker Friendly' network

5.0 Impact & Innovations

6.0 Lessons Learned & The Future



1.0 BACKGROUND

Motorcycle Scotland (MCS) is a partnership of five like-minded bike friendly businesses with the objective of attracting touring motorcyclists and biking groups to the south of Scotland. The Moffat based founder businesses: Buccleuch Arms Hotel, Lochhouse Farm Retreat Centre, Limetree House Guest House, Moffat Mill and the Dales and Borders Motorcycle Company.

The original Biker Tourism study carried out by Helen Keys in 2006, identified a growing target market – male, aged 40+, long term or returning riders, who ride larger touring bikes, high uptake of safety training, high income brackets, extremely sociable and well networked, take around 36 leisure trips each year. MCS has recognised that Dumfries and Galloway epitomises ‘Real Biker Territory’ and developed a route based website and marketing communications strategy geared towards the touring motorcyclist and is enjoying great success.

During 2008 MCS launched a website www.motorcyclescotland.com utilising funds from the VisitScotland Challenge Fund. During 2009 and through to 2011, the Motorcycle Tourism project has been financially supported by the European financed LEADER Programme, Dumfries and Galloway Council and the Dumfries and Galloway Safety Camera Partnership along with contributions from MCS. In-kind support was given by the MCS group, the Crichton Carbon Centre and Nathon Jones website designer.

Project aim– to establish Dumfries and Galloway and South of Scotland as a must visit destination for motorcycle tourism.

Project objectives

- Further developments of website
- Recruitment of 36 biker friendly businesses and visitor attractions on routes
- Press campaign, creation and distribution of printed route maps
- Create promotional DVD or sat nav download facility for routes
- Implementation of marketing plan including targeting ferry companies and international visitors
- Develop carbon offset scheme

2.0 PROJECT SUMMARY

Motorcycle Scotland has created iconic biking journeys, are freely sharing them online (motorcyclescotland.com), actively promoting them, communicating through niche media and networks and in so doing attracting hundreds of new visitors to the region and generating thousands of bed nights. For motorcyclists it is all about the journey, MCS aims to establish Dumfries and Galloway and the south of Scotland as a must visit motorcycle tourism destination.

This innovative and economically driven project has been facilitated by the Moffat and District Community Initiative and a part-time Project Officer (1 day per week) recruited to manage the project. The project activities were delivered by the Project Officer with significant in-kind support from the group members.

The project has clearly contributed towards the development of a diverse and dynamic base within the region as can be evidenced in the achievement of the following outputs and outcomes:

- **Economic impact**, an assessment study was completed and the results are contained in a ‘Motorcycle Tourism Economic Impact Assessment May 2011’ report. The report indicates



significant economic success, shared by many businesses throughout the region. The assessment found that Motorcycle Tourism is a growing and significant market within Dumfries and Galloway, generating over £1.6 million pounds of revenue across the sample survey of 39 businesses in our region. It can therefore be assumed that the total expenditure from motorcycling day trippers and touring motorcyclists generates millions.

- **Rider safety**, a tie in with the Dumfries & Galloway Safety Camera Partnership (SCP) has contributed to a fall in rider casualties.
- **Green riding**, a green biking section features ways of reducing carbon emissions through riding behaviour, fuel management, tyres, etc.
- **Networks**, partnerships have been an important feature in the Biker Tourism project, most notably MCS has created a biker friendly business network in Dumfries & Galloway.
- **Added value**, spin-off product developments to add customer value.
- **Awareness** of Dumfries & Galloway as a motorcycle destination was raised throughout the lifetime of the project amongst the motorcycle fraternity in the UK and Europe through marketing and social media.
- **Award recognition**, the project won the LEADER Rural Awards Wealthier & Fairer Scotland category and appears in the Good Practice Guide.

3.0 PROJECT BUDGET

The project was anticipated to cost £46,242 with Leader providing 50% of the funding (£23,212 awarded). At the conclusion of the project 99% of the budget was expended, with total actual costs incurred of £45,895.43, and LEADER funding of £22,947.72.

The match funding profile changed during the course of the project due to an expenditure review of national Safety Camera Partnership policy, to mitigate this change the MCS group increased its in-kind and financial contributions. The final match funding picture was: £12,000 from Dumfries & Galloway Council, £2,500 from Dumfries & Galloway Safety Camera Partnership and £2,676.42 from the MCS members. In kind support came from the Crichton Carbon Centre valued at £2,983.50 and from Nathan Jones web designer and the group members £2,787.80

4.0 KEY PROJECT ACTIVITIES

4.1 Website developments the website updated to reflect new funding arrangements, includes social networking buttons (Facebook, Twitter Wordpress blog & YouTube) and the content management has been improved to allow the group to update more areas of the website. New sections have been developed including, safe riding, green riding and international links. Other developments have centred on the route descriptions, more detail has been added to the route description, more information on 'friends' (2nd tier businesses), the Google directions now feature video images of the roads. A further two routes have been developed and are in the process of being uploaded onto the website, 15 routes are now featured. The growth in the website visitors is shown in the 'Motorcycle Tourism Economic Impact Assessment' May 2011 report.

4.2 Social networking has been a major element of the marketing campaign. MCS created profiles on Facebook and YouTube, a twitter account has been registered and most recently word press where a regular blog is live. Additional activity on motorcycle forums has also taken place along with a regular blog. The activity is gaining momentum and provides a 'mesh' effect to the campaign by interlinking the chatter and signposting it back to www.motorcyclescotland.com. Linking with Dumfries & Galloway College we have been able to produce 3 promotional films to up-weight social networking activities.



4.3 International advertising, having identified the key international markets website bookings made include: Germany - www.schottland.de (2010 only) along with Holland & Belgium – www.mobikehotel.com. Motorcycle Scotland partnered VisitScotland in hosting a press trip for European journalists in October 2010 that to-date has resulted in 3 features in foreign magazines with others to follow. Examples of international media coverage can be found in the Media Directory.

4.4 Consumer media campaign, press visits have taken place in 2011 which has resulted in coverage in the motorcycle press, most notably 4 Dumfries & Galloway roads are highlighted as 'Great Routes in Scotland' in the July 2011 issue of Ride magazine. Motorcycle Scotland has achieved at least 30 media mentions during the course of the project in local regional and national publications, examples of media coverage can be found in the Media Directory.

4.5 Route Brochures, 8,000 route brochures were printed and distributed with an on counter display box amongst motorcycle dealerships in –

- North England -York, Grimsby, Isle of Man, Newcastle, Blackburn, Manchester (2)
- Midlands - Chester, Stoke on Trent, Birmingham (2), Derby, Stratford-upon-Avon, Leicester, Nottingham
- South England -Bristol, Hemel Hempstead, Plymouth, Cambridge
- Scotland – Glasgow, Edinburgh

4.6 Dumfries & Galloway 'Biker Friendly' network, a wide range of businesses appear on the website. These 35 businesses cover a variety of sectors: accommodation, visitor attractions, cafes, retail and garages. The businesses are located across the breadth of the region as well as Lanarkshire, Borders, Northumberland, Cumbria and Ayrshire.

5.0 IMPACT & INNOVATIONS

An **economic** impact assessment study was completed and the results are contained in a 'Motorcycle Tourism Economic Impact Assessment May 2011' report. The report will be sent to funders and a press release with the top-line findings will be circulated to local, regional and consumer press. The evaluation using a wide range of primary and secondary research sources provides evidence that the project has exceeded expectations and is a bona fide economic success, one shared by many businesses in the region.

The assessment found that Motorcycle Tourism is a growing and significant market within Dumfries and Galloway, generating over £1.6 million pounds of revenue across the sample survey of 39 businesses in our region. The survey amongst businesses and verified by road usage demonstrates a wide impact benefiting accommodation, food and retail outlets, visitor attractions and garages across the region. Northern England and the Central Belt were the most popular home destinations for visitors whilst international visitors were regularly spotted. It can be assumed that the total expenditure from motorcycling day trippers and touring motorcyclists generates millions of pounds per annum into the tourism economy for our region.

A key feature of the project is an innovative approach and these can be highlighted in:

Rider safety, a tie in with the Dumfries & Galloway Safety Camera Partnership (SCP) has contributed to a fall in rider casualties. Members of the SCP have attended events during the course of the project and this partnership to promote safe riding will continue post funding in 2011/12.



Green riding, a green biking section features ways of reducing carbon emissions through riding behaviour, fuel management, tyres, etc created by Garry White and his team at the Crichton Carbon Centre. This advice encourages reductions in carbon emissions.

Social media, MCS has been innovative in its approach to social networking utilising the various channels to great effect. Word of mouth is a key communication channel for bikers and social networking is the natural extension of that.

Technology, MCS has adopted a 'can do' approach to technology. MCS has used Google maps to create the route maps and linked these to 'satnav' systems, developed an iPhone application which highlights the 15 MCS routes and links to GPS navigation and included unique functionality.

Networks, partnerships have been an important feature in the Biker Tourism project, with funders MCS has gone the extra mile to involve, inform and add value to the relationships. The Crichton Carbon Centre, Dumfries & Galloway College, Institute of Advance Motorists, Stena Line and MAG to name but a few have been involved in the development of Biker Tourism. MCS has created a biker friendly network in Dumfries & Galloway and supported the network with personal visits and a 'Welcome Pack'. As a leading supplier of touring motorcycles BMW motorcycle dealerships have distributed Motorcycle Scotland route brochures.

Added value, spin-off product developments to add customer value: Moffat Mill has introduced a Motorcycle Scotland Discount Card and The Buccleuch Arms Hotel built 10 motorcycle garages in addition to the biker bedroom packs already introduced by the hotel. The motorcycle garages are believed to be the first of their kind in any hotel in the UK.

6.0 LESSONS LEARNED & THE FUTURE

- The public sector funding has allowed the group the scope to be innovative. This can be evidenced in three areas particularly, that of networking, technology and the quality of the marketing materials.
- The importance of a strong leader and motivated group. The input from volunteers in terms of vision, expertise, time and enthusiasm cannot be underestimated. The project has grown arms and legs and has demanded much from the founder members and the MDCI.
- Facilitation by the Project Officer has brought many benefits to the project, in terms of marketing expertises, management, reporting, keeping things on track and allowing the group the space to develop the project. In the view of the group a dynamic and professional Project Officer is a critical success factor for any project.
- The project has been focused on economic benefit from the outset and this vision has proved successful. Working in collaboration with other businesses and using public funds does create an element of community altruism which can dilute activities and it has been testament to strong leadership that the project has stayed true to the vision.

The MCS group members have the ambition to commercialise and restructure following the cessation of public funding. All members are committed to working together to grow Motorcycle Tourism in the future and for there to be benefits for businesses throughout the region.

The project can be regarded as a great success and has exceeded expectations on many levels - its primary impact is the economic benefit to the region. For MCS, the most important legacy is that Motorcycle Tourism is now recognised as an important genre within the tourism industry by public sector agencies. In addition, businesses throughout the region have been made aware of the opportunity, an opportunity identified and catalysed by Motorcycle Scotland.

