



**Wild Isles: Mull and Iona Wildlife Week  
10<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> May 2003**

## **Project Report and Appraisal**

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On behalf of the Wild Isles Steering Group and Mull & Iona  
Community Trust



**Caledonian MacBrayne**  
Hebridean and Clyde Ferries

**Bowmans  
Coaches**



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### Executive Summary

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- At present, sixteen operators offer wildlife trips from various parts of the island. Until now, these operators have all worked independently, promoting their individual business concerns. As a result of an open meeting in January 2003, the benefits of a co-operative marketing strategy were realised as a means of promoting the area more effectively. From this, the 'Wild Isles' and Mull and Iona Wildlife Week concepts were born.
- The Week ran from 10<sup>th</sup> May to 17<sup>th</sup> May 2003 with 18 operators and tourist attractions offering a 10% discount on trips or entry throughout the week to bearers of the Wildlife Passport.
- A number of free events were held throughout Mull and Iona to supplement the discounted trips and encourage visitors and local alike to find out more about the wildlife of the area.
- 69% of visitors who returned the survey were encouraged to visit Mull and Iona by Wild Isles Wildlife Week, which in turn encouraged 70% to experience more wildlife during their stay. 83% of visitors felt that that the week had increased their awareness of the diversity of wildlife on and around Mull and Iona.
- 91% of operators who offered feedback felt that Wild Isles Wildlife Week was a success and would like to be involved in the 2004 Wildlife Week. 64% would consider hosting a special event and 70% of operators would consider offering a prize or part of a prize in 2004.
- Mull and Iona Wildlife Week was a product of Wild Isles. To develop the scope and potential of Wild Isles as an association, the Steering Group may need to be fully constituted. The role of such a body could be to provide an umbrella for Mull and Iona's wildlife operators to host events such as Wildlife Week; develop joint marketing initiatives; liaise with external agencies and act as a lobbying body on issues affecting operators. Wildlife Week would therefore become an output of Wild Isles and become part of a year-round marketing programme.
- Wildlife Week is likely to continue to require external funding but may need to look to individual operators to contribute to the costs of promotion, either through membership fees or selling advertising space to operators. Year-on-year applications to grant-giving bodies is not a sustainable approach, although it is expected to take several years before the event is self-funding through ticket sales for local events, sponsorship and advertising sales.
- Discussions need to be held regarding the continuation of the discount system as a means of incentivising trips. An alternative may be to offer special events throughout the Week. There appears to be no firm evidence that discounts were a key part of the attraction for visitors; on the contrary the "package" that a Wild Isles break can offer seems to be the draw for visitors.

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- Future Wildlife Weeks should also incorporate more of the accommodation providers on the island, many of whom would similarly benefit from increased visitor numbers and would also be able to include Wild Isles material in mail-shots or websites.
- A key factor in the success of Wildlife Week is the distribution of promotional materials. These should go out to mainland locations well in advance of the Week and coincide with press and publicity launches. A more focused approach needs to be taken to marketing, reflecting the high visitor numbers from outwith Scotland. Marketing should continue to target relevant 'outdoor' audiences but adverts should be in place well in advance of the Week to maximize exposure. The media coverage from 2003 should be used as a basis for subsequent press packs.
- While the logo and branding of the Wild Isles material should be retained, the Wildlife Passport may need to be re-designed. The passport could be used to promote the events for the Week or as a year-round brochure. The events could also be listed on the passport, for which a fee could be charged. The website should be maintained year-round, offering more links to operators and wildlife information.
- The Wildlife Week could support more free events on a variety of wildlife themes. A number of agencies are represented on the islands and are willing to contribute time and resources to the Week, thus feeding out to the wider community. These events could range from identification workshops to art exhibitions, which would stimulate more interest in the diversity of wildlife around the islands.
- Increased marketing and a more comprehensive events calendar would merit the creation of a part-time Wildlife Week Co-Ordinator post. This post would report to a fully-constituted Wild Isles committee and could relieve the pressure on operators to move the project forward during the season. It would also create much-needed employment outwith the main tourism periods.

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### **1.0 Background**

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Wildlife tourism is fast becoming a mainstay of the rural economy, generating an estimated income of £57 million in Scotland and maintaining around 2000 jobs. The direct value of marine wildlife tourism on Mull and Iona is estimated at £650 000 a year. In addition, bird watching is believed to be the fastest growing outdoor pastime in the world, with wildlife watching growing by approximately 10-12% per annum in the international market (VisitScotland 2003). This highlights a growing trend in wildlife watching as the main motivation for a holiday or a part of a more general holiday. Wildlife tourism can bring visitors off-season by promoting bird watching in the spring and early summer months; and the marketing of the red deer and wild geese spectacles of the autumn and winter.

Mull and Iona already provides a number of quality visitor experiences for those who wish to enjoy the diversity of wildlife on and around the islands. There is however huge potential for the visitor season to be expanded and for greater collaboration between tour operators and agencies to promote these islands. The location and accessibility of the islands, coupled with the range of flora and fauna on and around them already gives Mull and Iona a competitive edge.

At present, sixteen operators offer wildlife trips from various parts of the island. In the past, these operators have tended to work independently, promoting their individual business concerns. As a result of an open meeting in January 2003, the benefits of a co-operative marketing strategy were identified as a means of more effective promotion. From this, the 'Wild Isles' and Mull and Iona Wildlife Week concepts were born.

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### **2.0 Aims and Objectives**

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The aim of 'Wild Isles – Mull and Iona Wildlife Week' was primarily to work with local operators to promote Mull and Iona wildlife and wildlife businesses by increasing awareness of Mull and Iona as a major wildlife destination, benefiting the island economies that specific week, throughout the season and for years to come.

#### **The objectives of the Week were:**

- To work towards establishing an annual Wildlife Week on Mull and Iona.
- To build partnerships with relevant agencies.
- To encourage co-operation between wildlife operators, accommodation providers and other tourism related businesses.
- To develop a website promoting Mull and Iona wildlife and operators.
- To use this event to encourage a more co-operative approach to marketing.
- To involve the wider local community through special events.
- To enhance the local economy.
- To increase business in the shoulder months.
- To bring new visitors to Mull & Iona.

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### **3.0 Outline Format**

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The Week ran from 10<sup>th</sup> May to 17<sup>th</sup> May 2003 with 18 operators and tourist attractions offering a 10% discount on trips or entry throughout the week to bearers of the Wildlife Passport. (See Section 5.0) In addition to this, a variety of events were held throughout the islands to promote the Week and the islands' wildlife.

### **4.0 Project Management**

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Following a meeting of wildlife operators from Mull and Iona, a Steering Group was created to provide project management and administration. Mull and Iona Community Trust acted as Treasurer for the project. The Steering Group comprised of:

- Colin Morrison, Turus Mara
- Brennen Fairbairns, Sea Life Surveys
- Sue & Richard Dewar, Wings Over Mull
- Richard Atkinson, Island Encounters
- Cally Flemming, Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust
- Juliet Shrimpton, Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust
- Jan Dunlop, Mull and Iona Ranger Service
- Julie Paton, Carraig Partnership

A list of all participating bodies and individuals is to be found in Appendix A.

### **5.0 Promotional Materials**

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The main publicity tool was the Wildlife Passport (See Appendix B). This was intended to advertise participating operators and introduce the Wild Isles concept. It was distributed throughout Mull and Iona and to key sites in Oban, Fort William and the Central Belt. The concept of the Passport was to simultaneously promote the week and give operators a method of gauging the effectiveness of the week in terms of the number of "passports" redeemed.

A website [www.wildisles.co.uk](http://www.wildisles.co.uk) was created for the Week to promote the operators and events. On-going maintenance has been undertaken by the Wild Isles Steering Group.

Two styles of A3 poster were produced to publicise events and operators. One was used as an event listing, the other was an enlargement of the operators' advertisements as listed in the Passport. These were distributed around Mull and Iona prior to events and the Week itself.

### **6.0 Events**

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A number of free events were held throughout Mull and Iona to supplement the discounted trips and encourage visitors and locals alike to find out more about the wildlife of the area. These events were promoted by the Wild Isles Steering Group and made possible through the efforts of both professional agencies and committed amateur enthusiasts.

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<b>Event</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Displays and BBQ	Wings Over Mull, Craignure	Moderate attendance due to poor weather conditions. RSPB and Wildlife Crime Liaison officer were also in attendance
Wildlife Crime Display	Craignure, Fionnphort	Moderate interest at all-day displays
Corncrake Walk	Iona	Abby Patterson, NTS Species Recovery Officer and Dave Sexton, RSPB lead a popular evening walk around the island
Natural History of Mull	An Tobar, Tobermory	Well-attended illustrated talk by Dr Bill Clegg
Otter Walk	Croggan	Fully booked guided walk led by Dave Sexton, RSPB
Trip to the Top	Ardmore Point	Fully booked guided walk led by Jan Dunlop, Mull & Iona Ranger Service
Bottlenose Dolphin Talk	Tobermory	Illustrated talk hosted by Hebridean Whale & Dolphin Trust
Coastal Walk	Fishnish to Garmony	Fully booked guided walk led by Jan Dunlop, Mull & Iona Ranger Service
Birds of Mull	Glenforsa Hotel, Salen	Well attended illustrated talk by Alan Spellman of Mull Bird Club
HWDT Open Day	Tobermory	Open day and launch of 'Silurian', an educational vessel. Very well attended
Bat Walk	Bunessan	Guided walk led by Julie Paton, small but enthusiastic turn out due to weather
Book Launch	Tackle & Books, Tobermory	Launch of new wildlife identification book. Steady interest all day
Otter Display	Calgary Art in Nature	Week-long display on otters. Moderate attendance but well-received.

Events were booked through the Craignure Tourist Office where possible and specifically promoted through the website and posters. Social events were also held in Tobermory, Bunessan and Dervaig to promote Wild Isles to the resident populations. In addition, one operator conducted a one-off Wild Isles trip during the week looking for corncrakes on Iona.

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### 7.0 Funding

Funding was sought from the following agencies to the values noted:

Argyll and Bute Council	£ 400
Argyll and Islands Enterprise	£ 2 400 (30%)
Caledonian MacBrayne	£ 1 000
Local Sponsors	£ 800
Forest Enterprise	£ 200
Scottish Natural Heritage	£ 3 000
Holiday Mull	£ 200
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 8000</b>

'In-Kind' Funding was given by the following operators, accommodation providers, transport providers and individuals. These donations represent a considerable amount of community support for the project:

Jilly Giffen, PR consultant	25 days @ £220/day	£ 5 500.00
Turus Mara	Treshnish Isles and Staffa trip for 2 adults	£ 55.00
Staffa Trips	Trip for 2 adults	£ 28.00
Island Encounter	All-day trip for 2 adults	£ 52.00
Wings Over Mull	½ Day hawk-handling course for 2 adults	£ 150.00
Alternative Boat Hire	All-day hire for 2 adults	£ 75.00
Northern Light Charters	5 day wildlife cruise for 2 adults	£ 900.00
Caledonian MacBrayne	3 x Oban – Craignure return car journeys	£ 135.00
"	6 x Oban – Craignure return foot passenger tickets	£ 38.70
"	4 x Fionnphort – Iona return foot passenger tickets	£ 14.00
Drumnacroish Hotel	2 nights dinner, bed and breakfast for 2 adults	£ 117.00
Tobermory Hotel	2 nights dinner, bed and breakfast for 2 adults	£ 160.00
Seaview, Fionnphort	2 nights bed and breakfast for 2 adults	£ 96.00
Keel Row	2 x 2 evening meals for 2 adults	£ 100.00
<b>Total In-kind Donations</b>		<b>£ 7 420.70</b>

### 8.0 Marketing

The Wildlife Week was marketed through the following channels:

#### 8.1 Competitions (via Radio and Press)

A total of 4 competitions were run in the media to promote the Wild Isles brand, the event website and ultimately the Wildlife Week itself (See Appendix C: Wild Isles Media Releases for digital copies of radio and press features and competition details). All prizes were for 2 adults.

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### **8.1.1: Clyde 2 (Radio Clyde FM) 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> May 2003**

Prize: 2 places on a land-based or sea trip of the winner's choice

Two nights dinner, bed and breakfast for two adults during September in the Drumnacroish Hotel, Glen Aros

1 car and two passenger return tickets on Caledonian MacBrayne's Oban – Craignure Ferry

Potential audience: 207 000

Impacts: 970 000

Opportunities to Hear: 4.7 times (average per listener)

Cost of promotion £500 + VAT. Actual campaign was worth £1 200 in extra mentions and 1 extra live read each day.

Wild Isles Website was promoted through the campaign.

This promotion achieved more than double the value of what was paid for. This prize is due to be taken in September, a shoulder month, affording the opportunity to extend the season and promote Wild Isles beyond the peak summer months. This competition attracted a winner from an urban area who has never visited the islands before.

### **8.1.2: Radio Scotland – "Out of Doors", 10<sup>th</sup> May at 7am and 9pm**

Prize: Trip for 2 to Staffa with Staffa Trips, Iona

½ day hawk handling course for 2 with Wings Over Mull

trip for 2 with Alternative Boat Hire, Iona

2 nights bed and breakfast for 2 at Seaview, Fionnphort

2 x dinner for 2 at the Keel Row, Fionnphort

1 car and two passenger return tickets on Caledonian MacBrayne Oban – Craignure ferry and 4 return foot-passenger tickets for Caledonian MacBrayne Fionnphort – Iona ferry

Reach 1.3 million

Available on BBC website for 1 week after transmission

The programme's researcher commented that there was a very high response rate for this competition. This could be because of the nature of the prize, which was regularly mentioned throughout the programme. The winner booked 2 extra nights accommodation and brought 2 additional people with her, all of whom were previously unaware of the wildlife diversity of the islands. Iona and the Ross of Mull were promoted for this competition which was geared towards outdoor enthusiasts/wildlife lovers.

### **8.1.3: "The Herald" Newspaper, 17<sup>th</sup> May 2003: Weekend Living section**

Prize: Trip for 2 with Island Encounters

Trip for 2 with Turus Mara

2 nights dinner, bed and breakfast for 2 at the Tobermory Hotel, Tobermory

1 car and two passenger return tickets on Caledonian MacBrayne Oban – Craignure ferry

Distribution: 93,522

Number of competition entries: 406

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The production editor commented (unprompted) that this was a very high response for a competition and that the Newspaper would be very happy to be involved in similar promotions in the future.

This competition has succeeded in hooking non-wildlife enthusiasts who “were not aware there was so much wildlife - particularly whales, and thought you had to go up to Orkney to see these”. The winner has already booked one extra night of accommodation on the island for the holiday in September.

### **8.1.4: “The Scotsman” Newspaper: Tuesday 6th May.**

Prize: 5 day all-inclusive luxury Hebridean Wildlife cruise for 2 with Northern Light Charters

Distribution: 100,441

Equivalent advertising spend: £3,040 ex VAT (£3,572).

Total number of entries: 750 (good response for specialist readership and quite an unusual promotion)

“The Scotsman” are extremely positive about being involved in future Wild Isles promotions. The marketing department commented that the branding was good and suggested PR activities at different points in the year.

### **8.2 : National Press Features**

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> May : Article in The Herald “Weekend Living” section  
Feature on Whale watching plus an interview with the event organizers in ‘The Scotsman’  
50 minutes on ‘Out of Doors’ on Radio Scotland, dedicated to Mull and Iona

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May: Article in ‘The Herald’ travel section

The “Out of Doors” broadcast was very well received and provoked interest from the BBC programme-makers to return to Mull and Iona for future articles/ follow up. Generally, press coverage was good in terms of space and location in the publications, and most who took part received fair or good coverage. One operator was disappointed and felt that the return did not justify the investment. It is clear that in terms of PR, there is a greater element of “risk” with journalists covering a story than with other forms of PR over which the organizer or promoter has more control.

### **8.3: Local Press**

Articles appeared in the local Mull and Iona papers (Round and About and Am Muilleach) introducing the Wildlife Week concept and reviewing the events (See Appendix B). A similar article appeared in the Press and Journal and The Oban Times. The winners of the Northern Light wildlife cruise were also featured in the Press & Journal and Oban Times. The week was also promoted on Oban FM radio the week prior to Wildlife Week, a copy of this advertisement is included in Appendix C)

### **8.4: Event Listings**

Wild Isles was listed via the following media:

BBC Wildlife Magazine	May Edition
The List Magazine	Distribution:18,000

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Real Radio	"What's On" (Reach 614,000)
Radio Clyde	"What's On" (Reach 207,000)
Daily Record	"Coming up" (Distribution 613,927)
Scottish Wildlife Trust Website	
Tourism and the Environment Forum Website	
Caledonian MacBrayne Website	
Various participating operator's websites	

### **8.5: Additional PR**

It was intended to amalgamate sea based and land based footage under one loop video for the new plasma screens at the Caledonian MacBrayne ferry terminal in Oban. Unfortunately due to lack of time and technical problems, this was not possible. However some excellent sea eagle footage from the RSPB was used in conjunction with the Wild Isles branding and this ran in the week before Wildlife Week.

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### **9.0 On-Going Projects**

A photographic competition was launched during the Wildlife Week, which ran until 31<sup>st</sup> July 2003 and was promoted through local press throughout this time. The Steering Group intend to use the images entered into the competition for future promotional materials. The website is also intended as a year-round marketing project, subject to discussion with operators regarding its direction and content.

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### **10.0 Evaluation**

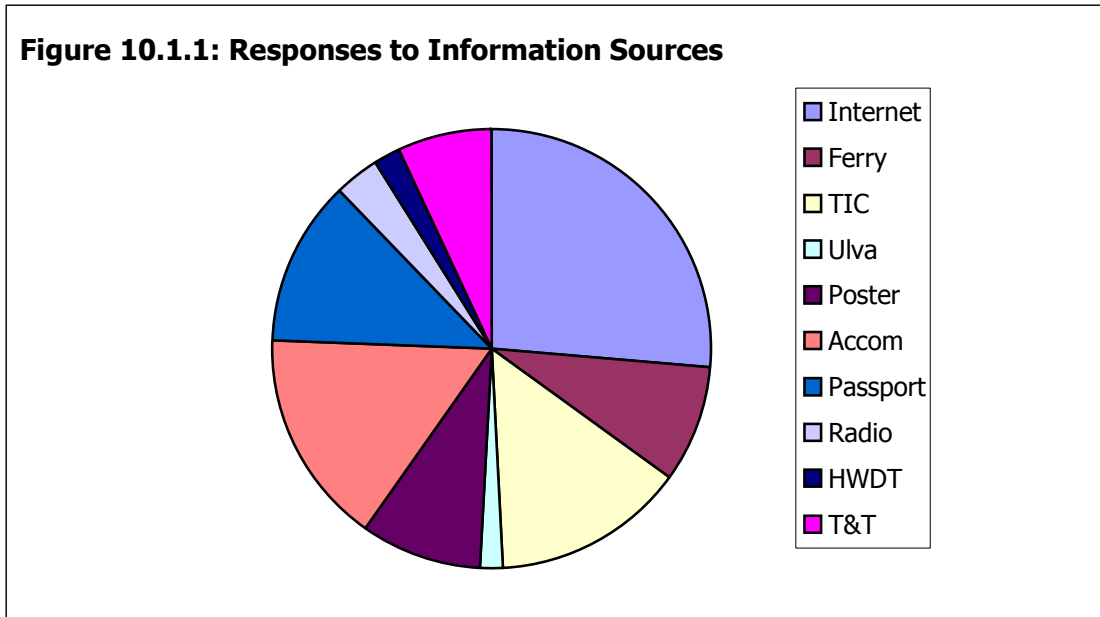
Throughout the Week, operators were asked to distribute Evaluation Forms to all participants for completion and return to the Wild Isles Steering group. Operators were also asked to complete and return operator evaluation forms.

#### **10.1 Visitor Responses**

Wild Isles used a variety of promotional tools. When asked "How did you hear about the Wildlife Week?" participants replied as in Figure 10.1.1 (Note: 'T&T' refers to Trips and Tours, an independent booking office in Tobermory).

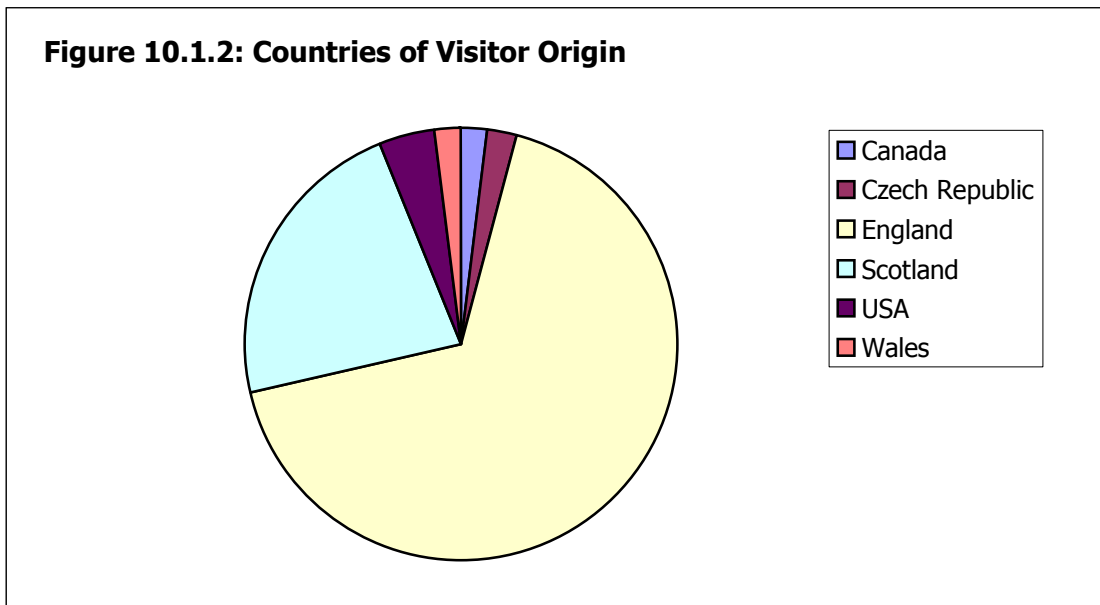
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**Figure 10.1.1: Responses to Information Sources**



According to the Visitor Responses, the average stay on Mull and Iona during the Wildlife Week was 9 days with an average group size of 4. Visitors take an average of 1 trip during their visit with the majority of visitors coming from England as illustrated in Figure 10.1.2

**Figure 10.1.2: Countries of Visitor Origin**



**69%** of visitors who returned the survey were encouraged to visit Mull and Iona by Wild Isles Wildlife Week which in turn encouraged **70%** to experience more wildlife during their stay. **83%** of visitors felt that that the week had increased their awareness of the diversity of wildlife on and around Mull and Iona. **23%** of visitors attended or planned to attend a Wild Isles event.

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Looking to 2004, **66%** of visitors surveyed would come back for Wildlife Week with 59% interested in receiving occasional information about future Wild Isles promotions.

### **10.2 Operator Responses**

A feedback survey was issued to all operators who took part in the Wild Isles initiative. (See Appendix A) 11 out of the 18 operators who advertised in the Wild Isles Passport responded. It should be noted that the survey was issued during the summer season at a time when many operators are at their busiest.

**91%** of the operators who **responded** felt that Wild Isles Wildlife Week was a success. On average, **23%** of visitors used the Wildlife Passport during the week. **36%** saw an increase in numbers compared with the same period in 2002, **27%** saw a slight increase and **18%** saw no variation. **82%** of operators were happy with the discounting system. 2 respondents held a specific Wildlife Week event

**91%** of operators were happy with the Wildlife Passport as a means of encouraging wildlife visitors to Mull and Iona. The promotional material was given a positive appraisal by all.

**82%** of respondents felt that the press competitions were a good way of publicising the wildlife of Mull and Iona.

A further **91%** agreed that the Wild Isles branding should be continued with.

All operators had seen the website and were happy with it. Operators were also happy to see the website expand to become a more general year-round wildlife site and would consider contributing their own area of knowledge towards it.

Of those who responded:

**91%** of operators would like to be involved in the 2004 Wildlife Week.

**73%** would offer the discount next year.

**64%** would consider hosting a special event.

**70%** of operators would consider offering a prize or part of a prize in 2004.

#### **10.2.1 Comments and Conclusions from Operator Responses**

The promotional materials produced for Wild Isles were well-received by operators. A number of operators would have liked to have had more passports earlier in the season to distribute to enquiries. The strength of the Passport was that it represented all operators in one publication, giving the impression of the various businesses all working together. One operator suggested the inclusion of a species list, although this would incur increased costs.

With respect to media promotions, one operator felt that the "write up about us was very poor and we got no enquiries from it", but this was clearly in contrast to the majority of feedback received, which was extremely positive. One operator who could not offer discounted trips during the week owing to the nature of their business donated a prize with a view to supporting a local initiative and sustaining it in the longer term and would be willing to participate in similar competitions in the future.

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A number of suggestions were made regarding the website which did receive a very favourable response in its present form. More web links were requested, both to operator websites and tourist-related sites. More information on wildlife would be welcomed, with suggestions including: a month-by-month flora and fauna guide; more input from operators describing their activities and input from conservation agencies detailing wildlife initiatives on the islands.

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### **11.0 Project Review**

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The overall response from the public and operators has been very positive. In review, there are number of issues which the Steering Group have identified:

11.1 Mull and Iona Wildlife Week was a product of the 'Wild Isles' concept that has been well-received as a brand by both operators and visitors. The majority of operators would like to see the development of the concept in 2004 and are behind the Wild Isles branding. Some discussion does need to be given to the discount concept.

11.2 With respect to the timing of the Week, operators did see an increase in visitor numbers although this may have been tempered by the poor weather conditions prevailing over the start of the Week - adverse weather conditions can however occur at any time of year. One of the aims of the Week was to increase visitor numbers over a 'slack' period and this was achieved.

11.3 Uptake of the Passport was perhaps hindered by problems with distribution. The materials themselves were well-received by operators and visitors.

11.4 With secure funding, promotional materials could have been produced and distributed earlier, increasing their impact and value. More events could have been planned with secure funding allowing more venues to be booked etc. The Steering Group was fortunate to have a PR consultant donate time and resources to the project, which made a considerable saving. It must be noted that the Steering Group had limited resources and a very short lead-in time.

11.5 The website is perhaps the most effective tool for year-round promotion of Wild Isles and in principle, operators are happy to see this develop into a wildlife site for the islands. The expansion of the website will be key to the strategic development of Wild Isles in the future.

11.6 Events were very popular with visitors and locals. Given the time scale and resources available, the events offered were good, but could have been expanded upon. The event listings should have been included in more of the promotional material for wider distribution although even with limited promotion, many events were still fully booked.

11.7 With respect to press and publicity, the Week was a great success considering the relatively short length of time in which it was put together. The most significant factors which provide a strong foundation for the future are the building of strong

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relationships with both the media and those organisations and businesses who supported the event and the establishment of the Wild Isles brand.

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### **12.0 Conclusions and Recommendations**

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It can be concluded that the Week was a success and provides a firm basis for further development. The exercise demonstrates willingness on the part of wildlife operators to work together and collectively promote the islands. Visitors too benefited from the Week and of those surveyed, the Week was seen to achieve the desired increase in awareness of the diversity of the islands.

In light of the experience gained from this first Mull and Iona Wildlife Week, a number of recommendations can be made for the future development of the Wild Isles project:

- Mull and Iona Wildlife Week was a product of Wild Isles. To develop the scope and potential of Wild Isles as an association, the Steering Group will need to be fully constituted. The role of such a body would be to provide an umbrella for Mull and Iona's wildlife operators to host events such as Wildlife Week, develop joint marketing initiatives, liaise with external agencies and act as a lobbying body on issues affecting operators. A properly constituted body would be in a position to apply directly for funding and manage its own financial affairs, although the Group is grateful for the assistance of the Mull & Iona Community Trust in this pilot year. Wildlife Week could therefore become an output of Wild Isles and part of a year-round marketing programme.
- With respect to funding, the Wildlife Week will continue to require external funding but will need to look to individual operators to contribute to the costs of promotion, either through membership fees or selling advertising space to operators. Year-on-year applications to grant giving bodies is not a sustainable approach, although it is expected to take several years before the event is self-funding through ticket sales for local events, sponsorship and advertising sales.
- Discussions need to be held regarding the continuation of the discount system as a means of incentivising trips. An alternative may be to offer special events throughout the Week. There appears to be no firm evidence that discounts were a key part of the attraction for visitors, on the contrary the "package" that a Wild Isles break can offer seems to be the draw for visitors.
- Future Wildlife Weeks should also involve more of the accommodation providers on the island, many of whom would similarly benefit from increased visitor numbers and would also be able to include Wild Isles material in mail-shots or websites.
- Liaison and communication with island transport providers should also be on-going. Greater coordination and marketing with Bowmans Coaches, Caledonian MacBrayne and others would be beneficial. In the long-term, specialist mainland tour operators could be encouraged to bring visitors for this week.

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- A key factor in the success of Wildlife Week is the distribution of promotional materials. These should go out to mainland locations well in advance of the Week and coincide with press and publicity launches. A more focused approach needs to be taken to marketing, reflecting the high visitor numbers from outwith Scotland. Marketing should continue to target relevant 'outdoor' audiences but should be in place well in advance of the Week to maximize exposure. The media coverage from 2003 should be used as a basis for subsequent press packs.

- While the logo and branding of the Wild Isles material should be retained, the Wildlife Passport may need to be re-designed. The passport could be used to promote the events for the Week or as a year-round brochure. The events could be listed on the passport, for which a fee could be charged. The website should be maintained year-round, offering more links to operators and wildlife information.

- The Wildlife Week could support more free events on a variety of wildlife themes. A number of agencies are represented on the islands and beyond and are willing to contribute time and resources to the Week, thus feeding out to the wider community. A diverse programme of events could stimulate more interest in the wildlife around the islands.

- Increased marketing and a more comprehensive events calendar would merit the creation of a part-time Wildlife Week Co-Ordinator post. This post could report to a fully-constituted Wild Isles committee and relieve the pressure on operators to move the project forward during the season. It would also create much-needed employment outwith the main tourism periods.

## **Wild Isles – Mull & Iona Wildlife Week 2003 Project Report**

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### **Appendix A: Participating Bodies**

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Operators:

- Alternative Boat Hire
- Amidas Marine Wildlife Trips
- Discover Mull Tour
- Edge of the World Rib Rides
- Gordon Grant Marine
- Hebridean Whale & Dolphin Trust
- Inter Island Cruises
- Staffa Trips
- Island Encounter
- Isle of Mull Land Rover Wildlife Expeditions
- Northern Light Charters
- Mull Marine Services
- Ecocruz
- Sea Life Surveys
- Silver Swift
- Turus Mara
- Isle of Ulva
- Wings Over Mull

Event Faciliators:

- Royal Society for Protection of Birds
- Mull and Iona Ranger Service
- National Trust for Scotland
- Mull and Iona Wildlife Crime Liaison Officer
- Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust
- Nigel Birch
- Dr Bill Clegg
- Julie Paton
- Alan Spellman, Mull Bird Club

Marketing: Jilly Giffen

Treasurers / Grant Co-ordination: Susie Chalupa, Mull & Iona Community Trust

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### **Appendix B: Wild Isles Passport**

See enclosed leaflet

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### **Appendix C: Wild Isles Media Releases**

Refer to enclosed Wild Isles CD