

Sustainable vessels: exploring innovation in the North Sea Region

European conference on ferry operations, landings and design

Industry experts, policy makers and academics will gather in Edinburgh on 6 November 2014 to explore the future of sustainable ferry design and operations.

The iTTransfer (Innovative Transport Solutions for Fjords, Estuaries and Rivers) project, part of Interreg IVB, has worked with partners from the North Sea Region Programme to make ferry transport more freely accessible and sustainable, and encourage more people to travel by water.

Laurienne Tibbles, iTTransfer Project Manager at lead partner organisation the Institute for Sustainability, said: "To help drive innovation and new opportunities, iTTransfer has helped ferry designers and operators understand the market for passenger ferries, improve the operations of existing vessels, and benefit from the latest green technologies."

Transport Minister Keith Brown said: "This event will provide the opportunity for participants to share their ideas for the future of sustainable ferry design and ferry operations.

"Ferries are an essential part of Scotland's transport network and the Scottish Government is committed to supporting our island and remote communities. As outlined in our Scottish Ferries Plan, we are very clear about the significant contribution that our ferry services can make to the social, cultural and economic wellbeing of our nation.

"The Ferries Plan makes recommendations regarding where future investment should be focussed. That included the purchase of the first two, and more recently a third, hybrid ferries. Such Scottish Government investment in the CalMac fleet underlines our commitment to investing in cutting edge technology to make our ferries sustainable and reliable. It shows that Scotland remains at the forefront of ferry design and innovation."

Cees de Waal, Managing Director at ferry operator TESO, commented: "Sharing experiences of sustainable vessel design with transnational partners has been beneficial for TESO as we plan for our latest, cleanest vessel and explore ways to reduce the environmental impact of our operations."

Through iTTransfer, partner organisation the South East Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran) has developed a toolkit to help partners combat rising levels of traffic congestion and pollution by moving passengers from road to water.

SEStran is also working in partnership with East Lothian Council to renovate North Berwick's Galloway pier to make it more accessible and suitable for low tide landings. With Maid of the Forth, a privately owned tourist ferry company, SEStran is establishing services from North Berwick Harbour to the Bass Rock, Anstruther and the Isle of May, using the most fuel-efficient operation of the vessel by trialling fuel flow meters and biodiesel fuel mixtures.

Russell Imrie, Chair of SEStan, commented: "SEStran sees ferry transportation as an excellent sustainable transport option for South East Scotland. The combination of changing passenger behaviour and creating more efficient ferry services will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mainstream sustainable approaches to transportation. The Forth estuary should be a transportation hub, not a barrier."



The conference will focus on enhancing the efficiency of existing ferry operations through new technologies; encouraging a more supportive policy framework for public transport; reducing ferries fuel consumption and emissions; and developing innovative sustainable ferry designs.

Delegates will hear from iTTransfer partners, policy makers and industry representatives including Keith Brown MSP, Graham Laidlaw, Deputy Director of the Scottish Government Ferries Division, and Scott Ure, Technical Director at Caledonian MacBrayne Ferries.

Register now for a free place at the iTTransfer conference: 'Sustainable vessels: exploring innovation in the North Sea Region', at Surgeons' Hall, Edinburgh on 6 November 2014, 9.00am – 4.30pm. To register, visit <http://ow.ly/BdXo3>.

Notes to editor:

About iTTransfer

iTTransfer aims to make ferry transport more freely accessible and sustainable, and encourage more people to travel by water. In areas in the North Sea Region (NSR) there are opportunities to replace existing vehicle routes with passenger ferries.

Led by the Institute for Sustainability, iTTransfer is funded by the EU Interreg IVB NSR programme and comprises 16 partners from Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK. The project focuses on improved access and connectivity for people around the NSR. Project partners are working on the following key areas:

Project case studies

- [Sustainable ferry design: exploring innovative technology](#) - development of a more environmentally friendly passenger ferry design.
- [Passenger ferry tool-kit and integration manual](#) - guidance and information to local authorities and others seeking to enhance or create a passenger ferry service.
- [Sustainable ferry landings: optimising infrastructure](#) - opportunities for improved ferry crossings and attracting new operators to the sector.
- [Sustainable ferry operations: maximising operational efficiency](#) – environmental and economically sustainable ferry operations.

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