



# Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum

## Off Road Pilgrimage Travel – the Bigger Picture

Nick Cooke – Secretary, SPRF

## Off Road Travel – the Bigger Picture

1. SPRF – current development.
2. Pilgrim walking routes – the development process.
3. ‘Additionality’ of SPRF services.
4. Relevance to Scottish Government interests.
5. Pilgrimage walking routes to Whithorn



## SPRF – Current Development

- Established in May 2012 as a voluntary association.
- 100% increase in SPRF membership to 48 in past 12 months – 28 Full, 19 Associate and one Honorary Associate. Includes NGOs, social enterprises, local tourism businesses, individual churches and Christian denominations.
- 100% renewal for 2013-14 from members to date.
- [www.sprf.org.uk](http://www.sprf.org.uk) - multiple % increase in website traffic.
- Management Committee – bi-monthly meetings, all volunteers. Formal SCT and Green Pilgrimage Network linkages.
- Scottish Pilgrimage Gatherings.



# SPRF – for Organisations and Individuals

Forum meeting and Scottish Pilgrimage Gathering held each year.



## Pilgrim Way walking routes – priorities and development

- Three SPRF priorities - Fife Pilgrim Way
  - Iona to St Andrews Pilgrim Way
  - Glasgow to Whithorn Pilgrim Way
- ‘Twin track’ development – (1) formal / designated; (2) informal / virtual.
- Other PW possibilities – Lothians & Borders; Argyll; Isle of Arran; north-east Scotland; Highlands & Islands.
- SPRF input to NPF3 Consultation: SNH proposal for National Footpath / Cycle Network for Scottish Government approval 2014.



## New SPRF Services – ‘Additionality’ of SPRF services

- Addressing the challenge of long term financial sustainability.
- Identifying ‘outputs’ that benefit all Forum members.
- Two key projects - SPRF recognition / accreditation for new PW routes.
  - SPRF outreach / ‘roadshow’ resources
- Underpinning core secretariat support, building on membership income.
- Strengthening credentials with external funders – seeking SCIO status.
- Giving a sharper focus to working links with key agencies – SNH, ACTS, FCS, Visit Scotland, Paths for All, Sustrans etc.



## Scottish Government interests

- Personal interest in the pilgrim walking routes agenda among MSPs.
- Briefings for MSPs on Iona – St Andrews PW and input to ‘Three Saints Way’ project.
- Identifying a ‘lead’ Minister – Environment, Culture, Tourism are all in the frame. New ‘Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland’ (March 2014) with cross-cutting strategic priorities.
- New pilgrim routes will improve countryside access, promote a more physically active and healthier society, and develop more resilient rural communities. (SPRF leaflet 2013)



# Investment in the rural infrastructure - Iona to St Andrews Pilgrim Way

## Glentarken Bridge, Lochearnhead - re-opening, May 2014





## Pilgrimage Walking Routes to Whithorn - Recent Initiatives

- 1997 Whithorn Pilgrim Way through Galloway . [Whithorn Pilgrimage Trust](#).
- 2010 St Ninian's Ways: ideas and information exchange day. [SUP – Whithorn Trust](#).
- 2012 St Ninian Journey – Glenluce to Whithorn. [Scotland's Churches Trust](#).
- 2013 'Paisley 850' pilgrimage walks from Paisley to Whithorn. [Paisley Abbey](#).
- 2014 'St Ninian Ways' European Cultural Route network endorsed by Scottish Government. [Cormack Brown](#).
- 2014 'The Whithorn Pilgrimage' report. [Solway Centre / Whithorn Trust](#)
- 2014 SPRF Forum. Glasgow – Whithorn Pilgrim Way walking route. [SPRF members / stakeholders \(WT, SCT, Cormack Brown, Paisley Abbey\)](#)



# Paisley 850 Pilgrimage Walks – Glasgow to Whithorn and back!

## The final leg – Glasgow Cathedral, April 2014



**Nick Cooke Secretary, SPRF**

**[Nick@clearserv.co.uk](mailto:Nick@clearserv.co.uk)**

**07901 916884**

