

2021 BRITISH SAIL GP PLYMOUTH

Briefing Paper Part I



PLYMOUTH
CITY COUNCIL



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Introduction and Context

In 2011 Plymouth hosted the America's Cup – an inshore 'stadium' racing event that is still viewed as one of Plymouth's golden moments for economic impact, global positioning and spectator engagement. Plymouth Sound is a stunning natural amphitheatre that provides an unprecedented UK location for inshore stadium racing events.

As such, we have been tracking a number of events in recent years to find a match that would best enable us to exploit this USP. Sail GP is the fastest, most competitive inshore stadium sail racing in the world and shares a lot of the same DNA as Plymouth, leading the way in marine technology and sustainability. We began courting the race organisers since the concept was first announced several years ago, and this year were invited to take part in a competitive bidding process to gain the rights to host the UK event in 2021. We were taken to preferred bidder stage in August 2020 and as of 1st September have formally won the event.

This provides a great opportunity for Plymouth City Council to place Plymouth firmly at pole position in the staging of major sailing events in the UK.

Event Overview

Sail GP is an annual global sailing championship. Teams compete across a season of multiple grands prix internationally in cities including San Francisco, New York and Sydney with the first season being held in 2019. The boats are identical F50 catamarans, the fastest and most technologically advanced racing boats ever built – they are engineered for racing at speeds exceeding 50 knots (60mph). The 2021 teams are: Great Britain (skipper: Ben Ainslie), USA, Australia, France, Japan, Spain, Denmark and New Zealand.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rr7r42OX6CE>

In Plymouth, the racing will take place 17th and 18th July 2021 very close to the shoreline in Plymouth Sound, with practice sessions taking place the week prior. The race village and activity hub will be located on the Hoe with a mixture of hospitality and public free and ticketed areas with live commentary, screens and concessions to enhance the spectator experience. Amazing viewing will be plentiful across the entire waterfront area.

The technical area (similar to F1 pit lanes) will have a longer period of occupation at Millbay on Clyde Quay and Trinity Pier where the race boats will be constructed and craned in and out of the water each day for servicing. The public will be able to get up close to view this unique and exciting process. The fifty strong fleet of support vessels will be moored at King Point Marina, Millbay Marina, Sutton Harour, the Longroom Camber and Drakes Island.

Youth Engagement

Inspire is SailGP's community, education and outreach initiative, that aims to leave a positive legacy and build a sustainable sport – by providing equal, life-changing opportunities and new career pathways for all.

We will work with Sail GP and city partners to develop a bespoke engagement programme throughout 2021 to allow young people to:

- Experience sailing for the first time

- Learn through engaging and innovative STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math)-based modules
- Develop professional routes into the sport through internships, work experience and coaching
- Gain valuable life skills as well as knowledge about health, nutrition and the environment

Sustainability

Global climate change and carbon emissions are some of the biggest threats current and future generations will face unless unprecedented action is taken to limit global warming by 1.5 degrees. This requires the world to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. SailGP aims to reach this goal by 2025 through driving technological innovations in sport and event management.

Awareness will be driven through Plymouth's active involvement in Sail GP's sustainability programmes and by linking the event with existing programmes such as the ground-breaking EU 'Remedies' project that will improve the condition of four marine habitats of European importance, including Plymouth Sound. A key part of the project is about the restoration and protection of seagrass beds. Seagrass can capture carbon from the atmosphere up to 35 times faster than tropical rainforests. The project includes raising awareness and inspiring better care of habitats by key users including the sailing community. There is potential for Sail GP to become a key player in this initiative.

Links with the Council's overarching strategic objectives

The delivery of Sail GP plays directly into the vision and ambitions laid out in the Plymouth Visitor Plan 2020-2030:

Plymouth is Britain's Ocean City, famous for its Waterfront. We will be one of Europe's finest waterfront cities, celebrated for our unique and diverse marine life, culture and experiences. We will continue to be recognised as unique among UK cities for our natural drama and 500-year history as a place of embarkation and exploration.

Our waterfront and our culture are part of the DNA and 'urban spirit' of the city and have shaped our place and our people over generations and continue to do so today. That means we will deliver original experiences that visitors and local people alike will want to enjoy.

We will continue to use events, festivals, sport and significant celebration years to showcase what is distinctive about our city, project strong positive images to our target markets, attract new visitors and leverage further benefits for our city. We have already secured the British Art Show for 2021.

Tourism is one of the big success stories in Plymouth. Over the last decade tourism has seen visitor numbers and visitor spend each grow by over 20%. Over 5 million visitors make a trip to the city every year spending £347m. Today tourism employs over 8,000 people.

85% of visitors to Plymouth are on a day trip. To significantly improve the productivity of tourism and deliver a sustainable tourism sector for the future, we need to focus on growing the higher value markets. That means UK short breaks, international leisure visitors (building on the profile created through Mayflower 400), and business and conference tourism.

Plymouth needs more high quality, distinctive 'only here' products and experiences that provide a reason for visitors to choose our city for a short break or a business trip

Within the Corporate Plan the event is squarely aligned with the key priorities of economic growth and a vibrant cultural offer.

Economic Recovery

Underpinning the Visitor Plan is a major events strategy to encourage day and repeat visitors to the city. These events are characteristically one-off opportunities with national and international appeal that generate significant media coverage and have the potential to attract significant volumes of visitors. The 2021 British Sail GP event will bring significant economic benefit to Plymouth. In 2019 the event took place across 5 global locations. There were over 130,000 live spectators with a global audience of 1.8 billion and a total economic impact of 115 million dollars.

Positioning Plymouth globally will also raise awareness of opportunities within the city for business investment as young, innovative and forward thinking city to do business in particular the marine industries will benefit from the opportunity.

Sail GP will deliver an return on investment of £1:26 and an economic impact upwards of £3.5 million.

Model of Operation

Sail GP will deliver the event as a 'turn-key package', taking full responsibility for all racing, technical and spectator aspects of the event. They will be supported by the Council's Events Team who will provide use of the Hoe premises licence, broker relationships with the emergency services and other key stakeholders as well as oversee traffic management and use of key event infrastructure. Plymouth City Council will work collaboratively with Sail GP to create a bespoke marketing, communications and engagement plan which will include an announcement of the event as a key part of the Mayflower International Festival alongside the Mayflower Military Muster and Four Nations Ceremony due to take place the previous weekend.

Financial Implications

The financial implications are set out in part 2 of the report.

Summary

We are requesting approval and commitment from Plymouth City Council to host the 2021 British Sail GP event as outlined above and in Part 2 of this Briefing Paper.

This event will be of significant benefit to the City, generating additional income for businesses, positioning Plymouth on global stage and giving the residents of Plymouth a spectacular event to attend in line with the Visitor and Corporate Plans.

