### Plenary session speaker biographies

### Thursday, 14th March

12.30

Welcome

### Trevor Holden, Chair of DCN Chief Executive Group and Managing Director, Broadland and South Norfolk Councils

An experienced and dynamic senior leader of large and complex organisations, with a strong track record of delivery across the private and public sectors. A highly motivational, respected and established senior executive, having built and led high performing teams across national and local organisations.

organisations.

Experienced at working within differing political and economic environments and within 'super-diverse' communities. Delivery

is underpinned by a probing mind, a depth of understanding and pace of delivery, with a clear record of delivering high performance, improved productivity and innovation across a range of different environments: at district and unitary councils, a national housing provider and as an RAF officer.

Trevor has been a local authority Chief Executive for over 14 years and currently chairs the DCN Chief Executive Group as well as being the Managing Director of the merged staff supporting the councils of Broadland and South Norfolk.

12:35

Chairman's address

### CHAIR: CIIr Sam Chapman-Allen, DCN Chairman

Sam Chapman-Allen has been Breckland Council's Leader since May 2019, having previously held the Deputy Leader position. Sam is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the council, ensuring the council meets its statutory duties while delivering projects and initiatives that best support local people and businesses.



He was initially elected to the council in 2007 and served on the council until 2011, before pursuing other opportunities. During this time, Sam worked closely with Rt Hon Brandon Lewis MP, while Mr Lewis served as Minister of State for Housing and Planning at the Department for Communities and Local Government. Sam subsequently stood for election to the district council again in 2015 and has served at Breckland ever since. Sam is currently the Chairman of the District Councils' Network. Along with this he holds the role as a national board member for the Local Government Information Unit (LGiU), Conservative Councillors Association and Local Government Association.

Outside local government, Cllr Chapman-Allen worked for nine years with the Ministry of Defence and continues to work with the MOD in a part-time voluntary role. Sam is often found walking his two mad springer spaniels or behind a tractor.

12:45

Panel discussion: Seizing the initiative on the environment

#### Dr Lucy Hubble-Rose, Deputy Director, UCL Climate Action Unit

Lucy is the Deputy Director of the UCL Climate Action Unit (CAU) and is a Research Fellow in the Department of Earth Sciences at UCL. Lucy is an expert facilitator specialised in helping people & organisations to unpick the knotty problems associated with planning and delivering action on climate change.



Following a PhD in climate change engagement from the University of Exeter and a Masters in Climate Change from the University of East Anglia, Lucy became fascinated by the challenges of making change happen.

At the CAU Lucy is the lead on designing interventions to help clients take action on climate change, delivering detailed end-to-end designs for workshops with clear objectives and outcomes.

#### Professor Adam Beaumont, Environmentalist and Entrepreneur

Adam's passion for technology and its positive impact on the economy, environment and society was recognised by the Maserati 100 awards. He is also an ex-lecturer and alumnus of the University of Leeds and supports its students through his awards scheme to seek out the next generation scientists and technologists. His awards "The Beaumont Awards" recognises research projects which hold promise to positively impact society and the planet. He also privately funds scholarships for



underprivileged students. Adam is a consistent innovator and technologist with a strong cyber security background. He has been a passionate environmentalist since his teenage years – devleoping expertise in thermodynamics which has equipped him to build some of the most energy efficient datacentres, driving profits into protecting ancient woodland across Europe.

He founded telecommunications company aql in 1998 and established IXLeeds in 2010, the first fully independent internet exchange outside London. He supports innovation at the University of Leeds through his awards scheme to seek out the next generation scientists and technologists.

Adam is also a strong advocate of the Northern Powerhouse and the opportunities it creates through collaboration and communication. As part of this commitment, he founded not-for-profit investment platform, NorthInvest which propels multi-million pound co-investments in tech start-ups across the North of the UK.

#### **CHAIR: Adele Gritten, Chief Executive, Local Partnerships**

Adele joined Local Partnerships as Chief Executive in November 2022, having spent the previous two and a half years as Head of Economic Development and Commercial Investments at South Cambridgeshire District Council. Highlights in that role included oversight of £43m of COVID-19 grant funding and a five-year investment strategy including the council's Investment Partnerships. Adele also oversaw Enterprise Zone development.



high street and market town development, growth coaching and business support for regional businesses.

An experienced Board level executive, Adele is currently serving a four-year term as a non-executive director of S4C, the Welsh language Public Service Broadcaster. She was appointed by the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport into the role in January 2021.

For over 20 years Adele has worked in senior management roles for a range of research and strategy consultancies including YouGov, where she oversaw the commercial consulting arm of the business. Adele has also served as European managing director for research firm Lieberman Research Worldwide, and as UK managing director of Future Thinking, now a Savanta owned company.

Adele holds an MA in Social and Political Science from the University of Cambridge. She is a fluent Welsh speaker.

1.55 **Keynote Speaker: The Liberal Democrat view** 

# Helen Morgan MP, Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Housing, Communities and Local Government

Helen Morgan is the MP for North Shropshire and the Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. Throughout her time serving as a representative, first as a parish councillor and now as an MP, Helen has been a vocal champion for local government who takes care to



understand and act on the concerns of local people. Helen works closely with council leaders to make sure their concerns feed into all aspects of her work

#### CHAIR: CIIr Bridget Smith, Leader, Labour Group, DCN

Bridget Smith is the Leader of South Cambridgeshire District Council. Bridget has been the Leader of the Council for since 2018 and the district councillor for the village of Gamlingay for the past 15 years. Bridget sits on the boards of both the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and the Greater Cambridge Partnership.



Other than local politics, Bridget's passions are long distance walking, gardening, baking and spending time with her family.

1.45 Ministerial keynote speech

# Simon Hoare MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

Simon Hoare was appointed Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities in November last year.

However, his representative political career began on a district council – West Oxfordshire District Council – on which he served from 2004-2015. He was also an Oxfordshire County

Council member and a parish councillor.

In 2015 he was elected as the Member of Parliament for North Dorset, a position he was re-elected to in 2017 and 2019. He has served as the Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Farming Minister, Education Secretary and Home Secretary.

He resigned his Home Office position in 2019 in order to successfully stand for the Chairmanship of the Commons Northern Ireland Affairs Select Committee, from which he stood down to take his DLUHC position.

3.25

**Keynote Speaker: Investing in our places** 

#### **Lord Richard Harrington of Watford**

Lord Harrington is a British politician and businessman. He published a report on Foreign Direct Investment into the UK for HM Treasury in November 2023. He was appointed to the Lords in 2022, becoming a joint Minister of State at the Home Office and Department for Levelling Up with responsibility for the resettlement of Ukrainian refugees.



Richard retired as MP for Watford in 2019, having first been elected in 2010. As an MP he held a number of ministerial roles including as Business and Industry Minister and Pensions Minister. Prior to being elected, Richard built a substantial business career in hotels and leisure as well as wealth management, property and investing in start-ups.

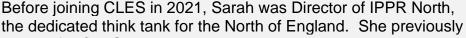
He is on the Board of The Royal Albert Hall and Nesta, a large not-for-profit that invests in companies with a social purpose.

3.55

Panel Discussion: Investing in our places

# Sarah Longlands, Chief Executive, Centre for Local Economic Strategies

Sarah is an expert in regional and local economic development and argues for economic and social justice and the creation of places which enable people to live good lives.



worked for CLES until 2011 and began her career in local government, working in County Durham and North Yorkshire. She has a PhD in Urban Studies from the University of Glasgow.



#### Chris Vann, Chief Operating Officer, Autolus

Chris Vann is an industry veteran with 30 years of experience in both development and business roles. He joined Autolus from Hoffmann-La Roche's Swiss headquarters, where he was latterly responsible for leading the lung cancer commercial team and general management of the Tarceva brand.

He has extensive experience in global lifecycle management of oncology products as well as implementing marketing strategy



at a regional and national level. This includes launching several oncology, immunology and transplant products in countries including China, Japan, Romania, Russia, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the US.

Chris gained his degree in Toxicology and Pharmacology from the School of Pharmacy, University of London.

#### **Andrew Taylor, Group Planning Director Vistry Group**

Andrew spent over 18 years in planning authorities in the southeast of England.

He is a member of RTPI's Board of Trusteesand General
Assembly. He chairs the English Policy Committee, HBF
National Planning committee, Land, Planning and Development
Federation Policy and Technical Committee, Women in
Planning Advisory Board and Chairs the National Planning Forum's Management
Committee.

### CHAIR: Rose Rouse, Vice Chair, DCN Chief Executive Group

Rose Rouse is the Chief Executive of Pendle Borough Council in Lancashire. Prior to this, Rose was Chief Executive of Eden District Council in Cumbria. Starting her local government career in policy and performance, she moved into leading large front-line services and community-led regeneration projects. She has worked for a range of district councils in areas including Yorkshire and the Humber, the West Midlands and the North-West.



Working for a regional association of local government, Rose led major programmes on supporting improvement, social care policy and environmental strategy. In the police service, she worked as a researcher, managing large projects on prevention issues. Rose has run both her own consultancy and coaching business and the family property development business. Early on in her career Rose lived and worked in Turkey teaching English.

#### 4.15 **Keynote speech: Chris Boardman**

#### **Chris Boardman, Active Travel Commissioner**

Chris has been involved in cycling advocacy, largely through his role as Policy Advisor to British Cycling for more than a decade, an activity that led to him becoming Cycling and Walking Commissioner for Greater Manchester. During his 4 years in post, Chris helped the Regions Leaders create a 1,800 mile cycling and walking network plan, a £1.5 billion project that will take ten years to deliver. The methods and guidance they created have since been mirrored nationally.



Perhaps the biggest challenge Chris has ever faced though, is to lead a whole new organisation, Active Travel England. As Cycling and Walking Commissioner, Chris is charged with setting up this organisation and overseeing the administration of a £2

billion budget. It will raise the standards of active travel infrastructure and ensure that every large development in the country enables people to live without cars if they choose.

So far, it's been quite a ride for Chris and his unwavering companion throughout has been the bicycle, a wonderful and simple device that reduces carbon, improves safety and gives health. It has the power to change the world if we create an environment where people feel able to trundle to shops, schools and workplaces under their own steam. The enduring mission for Chris is to help make that happen.

#### CHAIR: Ian Fytche, Vice Chair, DCN Chief Executive Group

lan is Chief Executive of North Kesteven District Council in Lincolnshire. Ian began his career in construction, focused on project and contract management.

He spent 15 years working in sport, becoming director and chief operating officer of Sport England, where he led complex projects, including the redevelopment of Wembley Stadium and the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester.



lan is Vice Chair of the DCN Chief Executives Group and has facilitated delivery of DCN projects on health economics and pathways to net zero.

4.45 **Keynote Speech: The Labour view** 

#### Liz Twist MP, Shadow Minister for Local Services and Communities

Liz was first elected as Member of Parliament for Blaydon in June 2017, having previously worked for the trade union UNISON and latterly as a cabinet member on Gateshead Council. In November 2023, she was appointed as a Shadow Minister for Local Services and Communities within the Shadow Levelling Up, Housing and Communities team.

Prior to this, Liz served as a member of the Housing,
Communities and Local Government Select Committee, before spending three and a half years as a (senior) opposition whip. Liz also chairs the All Party Parliamentary Group on Suicide and Self Harm Prevention, as well as the All Party Parliamentary Group on Rare, Genetic and Undiagnosed Conditions.

#### CHAIR: Clir Susan Brown, Leader, Labour Group, DCN

Susan first stood for election to Oxfordshire County Council when she was 23. The following year she was elected a city councillor for Wood Farm Ward and represented that area for 12 years until she stood down.

Susan came back onto the council and the City Executive Board in 2015 where she held the portfolio for Financial Inclusion and

Customer Services. She was elected Deputy Leader in 2017 and then Leader in 2018. As Leader of Oxford City Council, Susan also leads on Economic Development and partnership working.

Susan sits on a local charity, St Mary Magdalen Parish Charities, is a Director of Oxford Local Economic Partnership, Chair of Fast Growth Cities and a member of the Oxfordshire Growth Board.

5.05

Panel Discussion: Supporting our communities in difficult times

#### Dame Clare Moriarty, Chief Executive Officer, Citizens Advice

Clare is Chief Executive of Citizens Advice and leads the national charity and network of local Citizens Advice charities across England & Wales.

She was previously a civil servant for nearly 35 years, latterly as Permanent Secretary of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs from 2015 to 2019, and of the Department for Exiting the EU until its closure in January 2020.



After leaving the Civil Service, Clare chaired the Health Foundation's Covid-19 impact inquiry and worked with organisations including Transport for London and the Bank of England. She is a non-executive member of the Westminster Abbey Strategic Board, a trustee of the History of Parliament Trust and chairs the South Downs Partnership.

### Sumi Rabindrakumar, Head of Policy and Research, Trussell Trust

Sumi leads policy and research at the Trussell Trust, a charity that supports a network of more than 1,300 food bank centres across communities in the UK. Together, they provide emergency food and additional support to people locked in poverty, and campaign for change.



Previously, she worked for the single parent charity Gingerbread, focusing on influencing social security, employment and child maintenance policy. Prior to this, Sumi worked for the children's charity, Coram, and the Audit Commission on local service evaluation.

#### Dr Simon Kaye, Director of Policy, Reform

Simon joined Reform as Director of Policy in April 2022, leading their Reimagining Whitehall programme and launching the Reform Scholars programme.

In 2024 he is launching a new workstream, Reimagining the Local State. Simon has written major reports on community power, self-governance, levelling up, devolution, and reform strategies for both local and central government. He has previously held roles at King's College London, New Local, The Hansard Society, and The Constitution Unit.

# CHAIR: Cllr Hannah Dalton, Health, Hardship and Housing Spokesperson, DCN

Hannah Dalton has served on Epsom and Ewell Borough Council since 2015 and is currently Chair of the Residents' Association Majority Group (Leader).



Hannah is passionate about a number of areas, and in particular is an advocate for women's rights and the challenges faced by cared for and ex-cared for young people.

5.45	Close of day one: exhibition, networking and free time
7.30	Drinks reception Sponsored by: CCLA GOOD INVESTMENT
8.15	After dinner speaker: Steph McGovern, Journalist and TV Presenter

Award-winning journalist and broadcaster Stephanie McGovern was the presenter of the eponymous Steph's Packed Lunch, Channel 4's daily live lunchtime show. Steph is also one of the hosts of Have I Got News For You on BBC One and regularly appears on TV and radio panel shows.

Before becoming a correspondent, Steph was the lead producer of financial news for the BBC, working with then Business Editor Robert Peston at the forefront of the award-



winning coverage of the credit crunch and banking crisis. She soon began broadcasting herself, and Steph delivered the business news on 5Live, Radio 4 and on the Chris Evans show on Radio 2 before getting a fulltime role on BBC Breakfast.

This is something she has continued in her Channel 4 show, with regular features such as her Small Business Market and Job Clinic. Away from news, Steph launched her own CBBC show looking for the next generation of entrepreneurs, Pocket Money Pitch.

### Friday, 15th March

9.30

The Al Revolution

#### Dr Chris Meah, Founder and CEO, The School of Code

Chris is the founder and CEO of the School of Code - an intensive, free coding bootcamp that pioneered the model in the UK.

Chris started his journey in AI and Computer Science, with a BSc, MSc, and PhD from the University of Birmingham. Recognising the promise of AI, but also the cliff edge of



automation that would impact a lot of society, Chris set up the School of Code to make sure people gained the confidence and capability to shape the future, not be left behind by it.

School of Code's mission is to help people from all backgrounds become skilled technologists, building a unique pool of top tech talent and linking it with the world's best tech companies.

Chris is also Chair of the West Midlands AI and Future Tech Forum, where he aims to bring together a wide group of people to help shape the future of AI to embrace the benefits and avoid the pitfalls.

## CHAIR: Dr Catherine Howe, Chief Executive, Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council

Dr Catherine Howe is the Chair of the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny and is an expert in digital innovation, focusing on the area of digital democracy and social change.

She has a background which connects together technology, community and social change and has worked across a number of different sectors.



She has worked with new collaborative technologies and social networking tools for over 15 years. Initially developing learning applications, including one of the first eLearning community sites, at the London Business School, she was founder director of Etribes.com – an online community consultancy which specialised in working with large third sector organisations.

She is now Chief Executive of Adur and Worthing Councils, a role she took up from her substantive role of Director for Communities which she describes as helping communities direct themselves.

Her research interests cover digital civic space, citizenship and systems linking and she is a Trustee of the Centre for Governance.

10.00

#### Panel discussion: Preventing Future Problems

#### Rt Hon Patricia Hewitt, Former Secretary of State for Health

Patricia has been independent chair of the NHS Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board since July 2022 and was previously chair of the Norfolk & Waveney ICS/STP. In November 2022, she was asked by the Chancellor, Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP, and the Secretary of State for Health and Care, Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP, to carry out an independent review of integrated care systems; her report was published in



April 2023 (<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-hewitt-review-an-independent-review-of-integrated-care-systems">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-hewitt-review-an-independent-review-of-integrated-care-systems</a>) after an extensive engagement with over 400 organisations and over 1000 individuals.

From 2005 to 2007, Patricia was Secretary of State for Health in the Blair Government, introducing the smoke-free legislation, establishing the NHS Choices website (<a href="www.nhs.uk">www.nhs.uk</a>) and creating a ground-breaking public consultation - Our Health, Our Care, Our Say - that anticipated many of the themes of the Five Year Forward View.

Patricia has a long-standing interest in digital transformation of healthcare. As chair of the UK India Business Council from 2010 to 2018, she helped build partnerships between the two countries in healthcare and other sectors, and retains her interest in India as chair of the Oxford India Centre for Sustainable Development. Australian by birth, Patricia came to Britain as a student, graduating from Newnham College, Cambridge. She lives in Norfolk; in her spare time, she is an enthusiastic gardener, active in her village community and loves walking and running (very slowly). She has a daughter in London and a son in Sydney.

#### Sarah Perman: Director of Public Health, Hertfordshire County Council

Sarah is Director of Public Health at Hertfordshire County Council where she leads a team of staff who provide interventions and commission preventative and clinical services to help people in Hertfordshire to be well and healthy. Sarah is also the lead officer for the Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Partnership, a strategic forum which brings system partners together to focus on prevention, early help and inequalities.



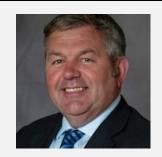
Previously Sarah was Director of Health and Care Integration for Hertfordshire County Council, providing strategic coordination for the council's involvement in the Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care System. Prior to that, she was Deputy Director of Public Health at the County Council. She has held senior posts across the NHS, local government and public health, working in both strategic and commissioning roles in the UK and overseas. Sarah is an experienced Consultant in Public Health and a Fellow of the Faculty of Public Health and is also an educational supervisor for public health registrars.

#### CHAIR: CIIr Richard Wright, Leader, North Kesteven District Council

Richard Wright has been Leader of North Kesteven District Council since 2017.

Cllr Wright has represented his home ward of Ruskington since May 2007 and before becoming Leader served on the Council's Executive Board with special responsibility for enforcement, waste management, licencing, sustainability and related matters.

He has also served on the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee, mapping out the local development framework for North Kesteven, Lincoln city and West Lindsey through to 2036.



He has played a strong role in the development of the council's strong vision, financial resilience and forward plan and is committed to building on the council's substantial achievements and strengthening successful partnerships to deliver Flourishing Communities.

Richard has extensive experience working in public service for the RAF, Ministry of Defence, Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Company and invests significant time and energy in support of his local community as chairman, treasurer and child welfare officer for Ruskington Lions Junior FC.

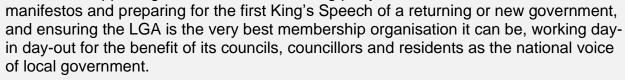
10.45

#### **LGA Chairmans Address**

### Cllr Shaun Davies, Chairman, Local Government Association and Leader of Telford & Wrekin Council.

Shaun was elected as LGA Chair in July 2023, becoming the youngest ever Chair of the Association, and having served previously as LGA Labour Group Leader (where he attended Shadow Cabinet) and as LGA Senior Vice-Chair.

In his inaugural speech as Chair at LGA annual conference, he outlined his <u>vision</u> for the LGA - including a focus on the role of councils in supporting care leavers, influencing party



As part of his ambition for the LGA to be "General Election ready", he has championed the production of a cross-party White Paper outlining how local government could work with central government in a new equal partnership and deliver services and support faster, better, and more efficiently. This work on a new local deal, and Shaun's programme of visits to member councils across the country, is designed to ensure that the LGA reflects the voice of councils of all tiers, regions, and parties.

In the context of significantly reduced Whitehall funding and higher demand for council services, Shaun continues to ensure the LGA is focused on making the case for multi-year settlements and appropriate funding for the hundreds of services our residents rely on.

At home, and as Leader of Telford & Wrekin Council since May 2016, Shaun became the youngest Leader of an English council upon his election, is the longest serving Leader in Telford and Wrekin Council's history, and led the Council to a number of 'local authority of the year' awards, including at the MJ Awards. Alongside securing one

of the largest recent Direct Foreign Investments into the UK and overseeing the transformation of the council's Children's Services from 'Requires Improvement' to 'Outstanding', his 'inspirational' leadership during the Covid-19 pandemic meant Shaun was a finalist for the LGIU Council Leader of the Year in 2021.

12.15 **Keynote speakers: What voters think** 

#### Gideon Skinner, Head of Politics Research, Ipsos

Gideon Skinner is Head of Politics Research in Public Affairs at Ipsos where he has worked since 1997. He leads on research into cross-cutting issues that face all public services, such as public service reform, trust, and research into many political and social trends. As Head of Political Research, Gideon has also been involved in Ipsos coverage and analysis of every general election since 1997. Gideon contributes to many of our published thought leadership reports, including our Understanding Society



publication, our regular Global Advisor international polling series, and is part of the Ipsos Thinks team.

He has presented data to many interested audiences and conferences both in the UK and overseas, to Cabinet Ministers, senior civil servants, business people, and students and schoolchildren, as well as appearing on TV and radio to discuss public opinion on current affairs.

### Professor Sir John Curtice, Professor of Politics, Strathclyde University

John Curtice is Professor of Politics at Strathclyde University in Glasgow, Scotland, and Senior Research Fellow, National Centre for Social Research and the ESRC's 'The UK in a Changing Europe' initiative. He has written extensively about voting behaviour in elections and referendums in the UK, as well as on British political and social attitudes more generally. He has been a co-editor of NatCen's annual British Social Attitudes reports since 1994 and is a regular contributor to British and



international media coverage of politics in the UK, including as co-host of the 'Trendy' podcast and as a member of the BBC's election night team.

John is Chief Commentator at two websites, whatscotlandthinks.org and whatukthinks.org/eu, that provide a comprehensive collection of materials on public attitudes towards (i) how Scotland should be governed, and (ii) the UK's relationship with the EU. He is a Fellow of the British Academy, the Royal Society of Edinburgh and the Academy of the Social Sciences and is an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Statistical Society and the Market Research Society

#### CHAIR: Laura Taylor, Chief Executive, Winchester City Council

Laura is the Chief Executive of Winchester City Council in Hampshire and prior to this held a number of Director roles across the South East.

She started her career in environmental health, moved into leading large front-line services, then into regeneration and organisation transformation. A career highlight was being part of the team that worked with LOCOG to deliver the Olympic Cycle Race in

Surrey in 2012. Earlier this year Laura was part of a team to visit Japan to share views on regeneration and recovery following the Fukushima disaster.

Laura is the Chief Executive co-lead of the DCNs Health, Housing and Hardship workstream. She is also a Board member of SOLACE in Business and part of the National Leadership College.



12.45

#### **Embracing the challenge of leadership**

#### **Luca Feser, Transatlantic Rowing Team**

Luca Feser was part of a 3-person crew that rowed across the Pacific Ocean, from California to Hawaii. It took them 38 days, 16 hours and 18 minutes to complete 2,800 miles, ultimately leading to two World Records of being the fastest ever trio to cross the Pacific Ocean and the first ever male trio to complete this route.

