

# Numbers Make Resilient Industry



# TOURISM







# Tourism – Numbers Make Resilient Industry

Dr Mike Cantlay  
Chairman, VisitScotland

In what has undoubtedly been another tough year for us all, it has become clear that tourism has resilience like no other industry.

Last year, despite ash clouds, airline strikes and severe snow storms, Scottish residents holidaying in Scotland contributed £1bn to our economy - a 13 per cent rise on the year before. This equates to 6.4 million visitor trips, a 9 per cent rise on the 2009.

It is because of this resilience in the tourism industry that I knew taking up the reins at VisitScotland was the right thing to do. As the engine room of the Scottish economy, tourism has stood in the shadow of other industries for too long.

Indeed, a recent report on tourism in Scotland by Deloitte estimated that the industry is worth around £11bn - three times previous estimates. This includes a £7bn value for day trips, something that had never before been evaluated.

But the economic value of tourism is by no means its only strength. For me, what makes tourism so special is the perspective of time. In terms of long-term sustainability, Scotland's tourism industry is simply extraordinary. Ever since Sir Walter Scott's *Lady of the Lake* first brought visitors flocking to these shores in 1810, Scotland has been a world leader in tourism. And there's no reason why we can't lead the way for another 200 years. Our assets are impressive: great cities, great landscapes, great history, great golf, great festivals, great culture, great recreation, a great Diaspora. It's time we recognised the richness of our brand and the boundless opportunities it offers.

For VisitScotland this means that we have to translate these assets into targeted, effective marketing. With one of the world's leading marketers at our helm, Malcolm Roughead, I am confident that we are better placed than most to rise to this challenge - every pound VisitScotland spends on marketing levers £20 of new revenues. But we cannot do it alone, and I am committed to working in partnership with tourism businesses and organisations across Scotland as we strive to return to growth. What I will promise is that VisitScotland will focus on doing what the industry cannot do for itself. And VisitScotland will focus only on doing what it can to maximise yield for the industry.

The country also has much to look forward to in the coming years as we prepare to host the Commonwealth Games and Ryder Cup in 2014. These elite sporting events truly have the potential to attract visitors from all over the world, and VisitScotland is at the forefront of efforts to make sure that these tournaments are enjoyed by as many visitors as possible.

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For information on VisitScotland, Scotland's national tourism organisation, visit:  
**[www.visitscotland.org](http://www.visitscotland.org)**

For all holiday information and bookings go to:  
**[www.visitscotland.com](http://www.visitscotland.com)**

For business tourism information go to:  
**[www.conventionscotland.com](http://www.conventionscotland.com)**

# A Warm Welcome for All

By 2020, Fife will be a sustainable, first class tourism destination, with a year-round economy, where businesses are growing and visitors return year after year. The vision is simple and encapsulates the aspirations of all of Fife's tourism businesses. This strategy will help to realise these ambitions through effective collaboration and the development of enhanced and new tourism activities.



**Tourism is big business in Fife, contributing an estimated £267m to the local economy and supporting over 12,500 jobs. Renowned as the home of golf, Fife has over 45 golf courses including the world famous St Andrews Old Course. It boasts over 100 miles of stunning coastal path, a coastline laced with picturesque fishing villages, and is holder of six of Scotland's seven blue flag beaches. Steeped in ancient history, with a rural environment and a growing reputation for its abundant larder, Fife is well placed to make the most of golf, food, outdoor, and pilgrim tourism.**

The formation of the Fife Tourism Partnership during the latter part of 2010, in addition to the establishment of six Local Tourist Associations and the launch of the Fife Tourism Business Network, has meant big changes for the tourist sector of Fife.

"A lot of businesses in the tourism sector have been working for years to ensure customer satisfaction," said John Parker, Chair of Fife Tourism Partnership. "We listen to feedback, take it seriously, and aim to support each other and know the objectives we are working towards. This makes for a strong foundation that is already in place and therefore works in line with the Economic Strategy for Fife."

In order for the Economic Strategy for Fife to succeed, businesses need more opportunities to collaborate. The strap line "A warm welcome for all" is a legacy of the strategy, achieved by making it easier for tourism businesses to take advantage of business support opportunities so that they can improve their customer welcome and grow their revenue potential.

And this is where The Fife Tourism Business Network really comes into its own. "Individual businesses within the tourism sector of Fife have been given a fantastic networking base where we can learn from each other and exchange information," said Mr. Parker. "It is an excellent platform, and something that was very much needed."

"Very often in the past, individual businesses didn't know what was going on in the area, purely because they were so involved with the survival of their individual business. When you're running a small business you do not actually have a lot of time available. The business network gives all businesses the

opportunity to collaborate, make referrals, communicate, share ideas and celebrate good practice as a business community. All types of businesses are now interacting with one another, and refer and recommend each business in order to help each other and to collectively increase business and financial gain. It also means that in relation to government, the network as a whole will have a strong voice in which to get things done, both now and looking to the future."

Sustainability within the economic, environmental and social areas are seen as an exciting opportunity as well as a challenge by The Fife Tourism Partnership. "People are now starting to holiday more and more at home, and there are many reasons for that, including the economic climate, and also because of the many issues involved in travelling outside of Scotland and Britain, such as the volcanic ash cloud of last year, various strikes, and indeed travel companies going out of business," said Mr. Parker.

"There is also of course the green issue, in that people are choosing not to fly as much, therefore reducing their carbon footprint. However the key here is that, instead of deciding that they will spend all of their two week holiday in one place, in this instance Scotland, what they are actually doing is taking multiple short-breaks over an annual period. This is an excellent barometer for sustainable growth."

When it comes to the seasonal issue, where does Fife stand in attracting visitors year-round? Mr Parker highlights the very

popular Snowdrops Festival which runs throughout February and into March. "Here in Fife we are seeing an increase in visitor numbers for short stays, and in fact during the winter we see a lot of visitors to Scotland. An increase in winter golf tourism, year round events at Knockhill Racing Circuit - Scotland's national motorsport venue - and the annual Snowdrops Festival are examples of how we successfully draw visitors to Fife over the winter season and this is something we will be further developing with more events and attractions in order to continue the economic growth within the strategy."

Quality marks like hotel stars are an important mechanism in the minds of potential visitors, but Fife is taking full advantage of customer feedback tools such as user-generated sites which complement the star ratings", said Mr. Parker. "It's the next best thing to a personal recommendation, and it's amazing how much of a thorough picture it can give to new visitors. That, in line with our enthusiastic and friendly ambassadors of Fife, the Fife residents – or the Fifers – means that visitors can rely on a full and positive picture of Fife through social networking before they arrive, and the warmth and exuberance of our Fife residents when they're here!" Fife is fast becoming a firm favourite on the tourism map for those in the know, and its plans for a sustainable, first class tourism destination, with a year-round economy, where businesses are growing and visitors return year after year, means that this Scottish charmer is set for sensational success.

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