



Responsible Tourism Strategy Quarterly Actions and Progress Report #3 October - December 2024

Introduction:

Following a year-long consultation, the all-agency South of Scotland's [Responsible Tourism Strategy](#) was launched on the 20th March 2024 at the SSDA's Annual Conference. Of the c200 businesses attending the launch: 97% said they supported the strategy (84% 'strongly' support). In other feedback at the end of the consultation process, 95% of business respondents said they saw themselves involved in the delivery of the strategy and 97% said they saw themselves benefiting from the strategy.

It is the collective responsibility of the South of Scotland Destination Alliance (SSDA), VisitScotland (VS), South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE), Scottish Borders Council (SBC), Dumfries and Galloway Council (DGC), and all in the South of Scotland, to deliver on this strategy: increasing our visitor economy by £1bn and supporting a further 6,000 jobs. To succeed, this strategy must be owned and delivered by every visitor economy business and community in the South of Scotland. It is our *collective* ambition. We therefore invite every businesses to get involved in the delivery: [joining the SSDA as members](#), being listed on the 'Scotland Starts Here' [website](#) and [app](#) (our consumer-facing brand), and actively being involved.

The SSDA, VS, SOSE, DGC and SBC can serve an enabling role, establishing the pre-conditions for success, but it is businesses themselves who will ultimately deliver the economic growth we collectively seek. And so we look to support, and get behind businesses, to really deliver on our ambition.

The Strategy has been endorsed by both the Regional Economic Partnership and the Convention of the South of Scotland, and hence it is also owned by, and will be supported by, a wider cast of public agencies including Historic Environment Scotland, Scotland Food & Drink, Forestry and Land Scotland, and the Scottish Government.

At the same time as the Strategy was launched, the first three-year [Action Plan](#) was published, with 122 actions across the four strands of the strategy; each with one or more lead agency responsible for delivery and a clear description of where we want to be by 2027.

We have committed to publishing brief quarterly progress reports for the next ten years, as well as more detailed annual reports and externally produced triennial reports, to ensure we continue to be transparent and accountable for delivering on the unprecedented ambition we have set for the South of Scotland's visitor economy.

This is the third quarterly report, covering October-December 2024. It gives a flavour of some of what we have done in the last three months to advance the strategy but is not exhaustive. We aim to keep these quarterly reports as brief as possible, to maximise the readership. Many of the topics from our first two quarterly reports are, of course, also included here as we continue to push forwards these projects.

[CLICK HERE](#) for further live info and monthly 5-minute briefing videos on what is being done right now to support tourism in our destination.

Delivery systems and progress tracking:

The five agencies (SSDA, VS, SOSE, DGC & SBC) have established systems to push forwards delivery of the Action Plan in a coordinated and coherent way. The responsible officers from these five organisations meet every week for 90 minutes: the first 60 mins are spent focusing on one or two key actions, bringing in external agencies as required, and the last 30 minutes are sharing key updates for that week. For each action, next steps and responsibilities are agreed.

Early in 2025 we will publish a full update on where we are for all 122 actions. Businesses will be able to comment on this and input to any tweaks to the 2024-27 Action Plan as we end year one of delivery.

Areas of delivery in this quarter included:

STRAND 1: Inspire Visitors to come to the South of Scotland

Seasonality marketing campaign [Ref: Action 1.1.i]:

Since October 2024, the SSDA has been running its newly developed Seasonality marketing campaign. The campaign includes a variety of marketing activities, including paid social media, new web content, press and PR, a media publishing partnership and a collaborative element with TripAdvisor (to run in February 2025). The campaign has already exceeded its targets, with: 35,400 additional web visits to campaign related pages, 593k reach on social media ads, 2.78m Impressions on social media ads, 47 business included in autumn/winter publishing activity, 25 businesses and events included in social media ads.

Businesses are supported to get involved by: (1) feeding into the design of the campaign, (2) sharing the content, and (3) being inspired by the campaign to develop their off-season offering.

The SSDA has created a dedicated campaign image folder with new imagery and campaign ads for businesses to use. The SSDA has also for the first time included a short-break competition in the campaign to further engage businesses – 4 businesses offered prizes for the autumn/winter

competition, attracting around 5,000 entries from key audiences, which resulted in 2,500 new newsletter subscribers and increased interest from other SSDA Members to make competitions a regular feature of activities.

New/updated webpages have been created on Scotland Starts Here for [Winter](#) and [Spring](#) content.

Media and Marketing [Ref: Action 1.1.i]:

From October to December 2024, the SSDA had over 50 pieces of positive destination coverage in the media, reaching an estimated audience of 1.3 billion. See sample coverage for [October](#), [November](#) and [December](#).

- In September, VisitScotland Team Europe hosted a journalist from Die Welt (Germany) who was visiting for the Stranraer Oyster Festival and his itinerary included Mull of Galloway, Logan Botanic Gardens, Blandoch Distillery, Kitchen Coos and Ewes and Moffat Distillery showcasing the breadth of product in the region and many with strong a sustainable ethos

- The VisitScotland UK Team hosted a journalist writing for National Geographic Traveller for a feature looking at ‘enjoying the darkness’, great for off-season messaging. This covered Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dumfries &

Galloway. The D&G element included Night Cycling at Galloway Activity Centre. Coverage is due in January

- Following pitching around foodie events in Scotland, Stranraer Oyster Festival was included in the article “Eat Your Way Around the World in 2025” in the US publication The Points Guy – the article highlighted the importance Loch Ryan being a sustainable oyster bed [The 14 best culinary adventures for foodie travellers in 2025](#) - The Points Guy

- VisitScotland content marketing team added a new module to [visitscotland.com](#) Dumfries & Galloway and Scottish Borders pages to promote the SSDA’s 14 new sub regions. Total page views to South of Scotland content in this quarter was 11,602.

- VisitScotland social posts covering the South of Scotland have achieved a reach of 6.75m and have had 494.72k engagements. This has included a post to our Chinese market on the Globe Inn via the Ctrip platform that received 12k likes -[Globe Inn](#)-

- VisitScotland media pitch resulted in a news feature in The Herald on light shows that spotlighted Montevioit Lights in Scottish Borders.

Locally Led Destination Development meetings: [Ref: Action 3.2.i & iii]:

As part of the SSDA’s [Locally Led Destination Development](#) work, the South of Scotland is divided into 14 different areas. The SSDA meets businesses in each area every 6-months. Through November 2024, the SSDA met all 14 LLDD areas with a record 300+ businesses attending these meetings. The meetings started with every business sharing their top priority to strengthen tourism in their local area: these collective priorities have informed the SSDA’s work. Full minutes from all meetings, and collated details of all business priorities and what is being done against these, can be found on the [SSDA website](#). The SSDA is feeding information about business priorities into senior talks with the Councils, SOSE, VisitScotland and others, to help connect the private and public sector.

Locally Led Destination Development videos [Ref: Action 1.1.i & 4.3.i]:

Through the SSDA’s [Locally Led Destination Development](#) meetings in 2023 and 2024, businesses fed into how they want their local area promoted and the SSDA used this input to create 14 dedicated [landing pages](#) on ‘Scotland Starts Here’ and 14 short promotional videos, one for each area, based on this input: [Berwickshire Coast](#), [Berwickshire and the Lammermuirs, Eildon and Leaderdale](#), [The Cheviots, the Tweed Valley \(with Go Tweed Valley\)](#), [Selkirk & the valleys](#), [Teviot, Eskdale and Liddesdale](#), [Annandale, Nithsdale, Dumfries](#), [Heart of Galloway](#), [Solway Firth](#), [The Machars](#), [The Rhins of Galloway](#). Local businesses have a high degree of control over what information appears on these local destination landing pages.

‘Scotland Starts Here’ visibility [Ref: Action 1.1.iv & 2.3.iv]:

SBC has installed road signs on their eight key entry points with the ‘Scotland Starts Here’ brand and is now working on the second wave of gateway signage which will include minor roads into the SBC area and all “walk in” points. We will look to emulate and roll this out to D&G and also build brand visibility *within* the region. The SSDA has established a partnership with Caledonia Retail Park in Gretna (2.4m footfall), with empty units vinyl-wrapped in ‘Scotland Starts Here’ branding. We will track the number of QR code scans and, if successful, we will look at rolling this out in empty shopfronts across the region.

Travel Trade representation [Ref: Action 1.3.iii]:

In this quarter, the SSDA has conducted a travel trade training workshop for 11 businesses which was followed by a one-to-one professional session for each business ready to go to the next stage: Buccleuch Recreational Ltd, Crawick Multiverse, Dark Space Planetarium, Demijohn, Dumfries Tours, Ethical Dairy, Grobdale of Girthon, Jacksons of Jedburgh, Mostly Ghostly Tours, Laggan/Murray Arms, The Eskdale Hotel. The SSDA gave further training to businesses which could not join the workshop such as Gilnockie Tower.

The SSDA represented the South of Scotland at:

- UKInbound networking evening in Edinburgh to meet with travel trade businesses.
- Cruise Scotland conference and meeting to learn from and develop the offering for future small cruise ships at Eyemouth.
- Arival Edinburgh to learn about the different technological advancements and solutions for experiential tourism.

The SSDA also presented the South of Scotland offering to 2 UK travel trade agencies with an international reach.

VisitScotland's travel trade programme has included:

- Providing opportunities for tourism businesses to raise their profile across a number of business development missions (BDMs):
 - Oct 2024, China BDM Johnstons of Elgin,
 - Oct 2024, North America BDM, Jacksons of Jedburgh, Beirhope Alpacas,
 - Nov 2024, Online Luxury Webinar – Schloss Roxburghe, Knockinaam,
 - Dec 2024 New Product session for DMCs – Borderland Tours & Tales, Lowlander Tours, GoWildScotland, Ethical Dairy.
- Lowlander Tours, GoWildScotland, HARP archaeology, Borderland Tours & Tales, Cairndale Hotel & Spa, Ethical Dairy and Kitchen Coos & Ewes were all included in VS Travel Trade newsletters sent to a global audience.

Scottish Dark Skies Observatory [Ref: Action 1.4.iv]:

The SSDA chaired a process of mediation through the final stages of the purchase of Clatteringshaws in the Heart of the Galloway Forest Park. This process was concluded at the end of November and it was announced that it will be used to build new Scottish Dark Skies Observatory, supported by SOSE with £200,000 for acquisition and redevelopment of the site. This was a key early objective in the Responsible Tourism Strategy and it has been secured as a key asset for the South of Scotland. The SSDA and partners will bow work with dozens of local businesses through 2025 and 2026 to build a coordinated, world-class dark skies visitor offering.

Stranraer East Pier proposition [Ref: Action 1.5.i]:

The SSDA has developed a game-changing proposition for the East Pier of Stranraer: to develop a leading national visitor attraction of international significance in order to significantly increase the number of high-spending international visitors. A SOSE-funded a pre-feasibility study has been completed and SOSE's infrastructure team are working with DGC, and engaging with the range of site owners and a wide range of other stakeholders, to identify funding sources and develop a strong case for a full feasibility study and technical survey which would be a necessary step to enable any redevelopment of the wider East Pier. We are hopeful that this can be publicly announced early in 2025. We have actively opposed a planning application for a lorry park on the east pier and are in the process of securing funding for the full feasibility study.

Galloway National Park [Ref: 1.5.iii]:

The SSDA, with VisitScotland and others, has consulted visitor economy businesses in the area of the prospective National Park to gauge views. These have been fed into Nature Scot as the Reporter. NatureScot have also attended each of the November SSDA Locally Led Destination Development meetings in D&G, to brief on the National Park and answer questions. VisitScotland and the SSDA are co-hosting a digital meeting with the CEO of the Cairngorm National Park to give a sense of the lived experience of an existing national park.

STRAND 2: Develop the Visitor Experience

Thistle Awards [Ref: Action 2.1.ii]:

After the record-breaking 2023 (for the first time ever the South of Scotland won more national Thistle Awards than any other region and we secured as many as we had the previous 17 years combined), the 2024 South of Scotland Thistle Awards was successfully delivered on the 3rd Oct. The Regional winners went on to the National Finals where the South of Scotland had its second most successful year in the 30-year history of the awards, with:

- The Globe Inn winning Best Eating Experience,
- Wigtown Festival winning Outstanding Cultural Event or Festival,
- The Cross Keys Inn, Ettrickbridge winning Best Bar or Pub,
- Trimontium Museum winning the Inclusive Tourism Award.

Food and Drink [Ref: Action 2.1.v]:

The SSDA hosted a major roundtable meeting with 30 key food and drink stakeholders from across the region on the 29th August, from which a [clear plan](#) has been agreed as to how we will continue to support and develop our destination's food and drink offering. SOSE has successfully bid for £50,000 from the Scottish Government for small research grants, conducted by a range of organisations, in Jan-March 2025 to deliver on the core objective of getting local food on local plates. This will then inform a larger capital ask in 2025-26 to support local provenance food and drink getting into the hospitality supply chain. Scotland Food & Drink are also delivering online bookability support, which a number of South of Scotland food and drink businesses are benefitting from.

Burns Tourism [Ref: Action 2.2.i]:

Following the successful delivery of a [six-month Burns Tourism Action Plan](#) (Nov 23-May 24), on the 11th June the SSDA convened a high-level meeting for 30 key businesses and partners, briefing on the impact of this surge and together agreeing a [12-month \(Sept '24 – Sept '25\) plan](#) for how this will be

sustained, with 15 clear objectives to have been delivered by September 2025. There was significant delivery across these objectives Oct-Dec, with £25k funding secured from EventScotland's Out of Season Events fund for Big Burns Supper, new promotional material created, new signage put up in Dumfries, and empty shopfronts branded with Burns Tourism information.

Kirkpatrick C2C [Ref: Action 2.2.i]:

The 250-mile [Kirkpatrick C2C](#) cycle route (Stranraer to Eyemouth) was formally launched in May, with DGC commissioning a statue visitors can sit on of the original 'Velocipede' bike, with SSDA helping secure coverage in The Times, the Scotsman, the Herald and the BBC. SBC have installed a KC2C end/start marker at Eyemouth with a UCI 'Squiggly Bike' statue at the Sea Garden and SBC are now working on a permanent artwork plan. SOSE have made a substantial numbers of grants along the route, from Stranraer to Eyemouth, to enable organisations to invest in cycling infrastructure to support the route and their enterprises' sustainability.

Destination Tweed /Tweed Trail [Ref: Action 2.2i & ii]:

Neen Kelly was appointed as the Tourism Business Engagement Officer for a ten-month period to February 2025. This role is part of the Destination Tweed project and the development of the River Tweed Trail. This will build the strategic foundations of business awareness and engagement, product development and future marketing for the River Tweed Trail ready for its launch in spring 2028. It will identify key gaps in the visitor experience and service (e.g. baggage courier) and actively support business to fill these. VisitScotland has provided branding expertise to the Destination Tweed team as they develop plans for marketing and promotion to visitors. In this period Neen developed the first mapping and gapping report, delivered Experience Design workshops and developed resources to help develop a world class trail. The [Destination Tweed website](#) and brand logo were also launched. [Learn more](#). As part of the Tweed Trail, a [new shared crossing](#) has been installed on the A72, Innerleithen Road, Peebles.

Events [Ref: Action 2.4.iv]:

The SSDA worked with Music and the Multiverse, Stranraer Oyster Festival and the Borderlands Whisky Festival to increase the brand visibility of our collective destination brand 'Scotland Starts Here'. The SSDA has developed an ambitious plan as to how this will be scaled up to the top 50 events in the South of Scotland in 2025, encouraging attendees to stay longer, spend more and explore the wider area.

SBC are continuing to attract and develop a range of new events opportunities and continues to support existing events to become more inclusive and diverse. The [Community Cycling Fund](#) and [Community Festivals and Small Events Fund](#) relaunched for 2024/25, supporting new and under-represented audiences. This year the [SEStran Behaviour Change funding](#) is also supporting the CCF. The SBC Events Toolkit was launched at the Event Scotland Regional Workshop at Galashiels on 20th November 2024 and includes business, community and volunteer liaison.

There are a number of hugely significant events which are being supported for 2025, for example:

- Jim Clark Rally has its most-ambitious scale event yet in May with more contestants competing over the longest ever course, supported by SBC.
- Jim Clark's 60th Anniversary Year culminates with an event at Duns Castle 28 & 29 June with a range of legendary cars coming to Scotland for the event.
- Paxton House Anique fairs will extend their destination event again to three long weekends in Spring, Summer and Autumn.
- SOSE is supporting the Stranraer Development Trust to further increase the sustainability of the Oyster Festival.
- The Great Tapestry of Scotland and Kirkcudbright Gallery's programme is going from strength to strength as is Kirkcudbright Book Week

Tour of Britain [Ref: Action 2.4.iv]:

Tour of Britain came back to the South of Scotland in 2024, with the Scottish Borders hosting a full stage of the international UCI 2 Pro level race.

The Grand Depart/Stage 1 was on Tuesday 3 September in Kelso, the route proved to be spectator friendly and there were activities and events in both Kelso and Melrose. Within the event village area there was a mix of event exhibitors, pump tracks and trials bike come-and-try sessions.

Scotland Starts Here signage was used throughout the main event areas and was visible in media coverage.

The whole of the stage took place within the Borders, the race started in Kelso and passed through it again later in the day, before a final sprint along the cobbles in the late afternoon. The 181km route passed through Melrose twice and climbed up Dingleton Hill and to Scott's View on two occasions each.

The Tour of Britain attracts some of the world's top professional cycling teams and riders, 2024 included 6 teams that participated in the 2024 Tour De France, there was 18 teams from 12 countries and a field of 108 riders. ITV's cycling commentary and analysis team of Ned Boulting, David Millar and Pete Kennaugh brought their highly regarded podcast 'Never Strays Far' to the Tait Hall for a live event on the Monday evening which sold out.

The Event attracted large crowds in the sunshine and the impact on the local economy was significant, as was the national and international live television coverage for the area. The Active Travel Hub, as part of this event, encouraged the collaboration of various event organisers and created a collection of active travel activities and information stands.

The full economic impact report will be circulated to all partners when our Comms Team return in January 2025.

Out of season Events support [Ref: Action 2.4.v]:

Through the EventScotland National Events Programme Monteviot Lights (£15,000) and Big Burns Supper (£25,000) have both been provided with funding support. The fund supports additional elements of new activity specifically intended to grow and develop events and encourage new visits to the region. There are an increasing number of out of season events launched and in the pipeline.

Scottish Borders Rail [Ref: Action 2.6.i]:

The SSDA, VS and SBC worked ScotRail and Christine Grahame MSP, with Abbotsford, Trimontium, the Great Tapestry and other key attractions, to develop a '[Kids Go Free](#)' rail discount promotion to increase day visits on Borders Rail. The first phase of this campaign ran through the school holidays, from June to September. [Learn more](#).

Public Transport partnership [Ref: Action 2.6.i]:

A new partnership has been developed with SSDA, SBC, DGC, ScotRail, Borders Busses and other bus operators looking at how we can better connect key attractions and the visitor offering with the public transport network. The next step is to have better public transport mapping on Scotland Starts Here, with businesses' websites having better 'how to get here by public transport' information.

EV Charging Network [Ref: Action 2.6.vi & 4.2.ii]:

- DGC/Business Gateway are continuing to run a Tourism EV Charger of up to £3,000 for any tourism or hospitality business to put in an EV charger funded by the UK government Levelling Up programme with 50 chargers being installed so far across the region at accommodation and hospitality venues
- The SSDA has developed a [corporate partnership with Raw Charging](#) which will allow larger businesses with higher footfall the chance to have EV chargers installed free of charge.

Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund & Dispersal Fund [Ref 2.6.ii]:

The SSDA met with the Deputy First Minister and advocated for the re-establishing of the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF), and for the South of Scotland to be eligible for this. Shortly afterwards the RTIF was re-established in the Scottish Government budget announcement and talks are underway about how the South of Scotland can engage. We are also working with VisitScotland to look at how the South can benefit from the recently announced £1m Dispersal Fund, which aims to better spread visitors out across Scotland.

Inward investment [Ref: Action 2.7.i-iv]:

SOSE have launched the Invest in South of Scotland Inward Investment website to support the work of the Regional Economic Partnership www.investinsouthofscotland.com.

Inward investment - Center Parcs [Ref: Action 2.7.i-iv]:

The largest ever inward investment into tourism in the South of Scotland was secured on the 5th November, with £400m+ to build the first Center Parcs village in Scotland, between Hawick and Selkirk. This will create 1,200 permanent, year-round jobs and c800 in construction. It will likely attract over c350k new visitors a year, with £100m spend onsite and c£27m offsite a year. The [SSDA surveyed local businesses](#) the week of the announcement and found strong support. Collectively, we are working with Center Parcs to support the proposition and ensure it is firmly embedded in the destination brand. Center Parcs have made swift progress following announcement with submission of a screening and scoping report to SBC and launched a [dedicated website](#) for the project. SOSE's infrastructure team are working closely with them to overcome constraints and progress their vision.

STRAND 3: Support Businesses to Succeed:

Short Term Lets [Ref: Action 3.1.ii]:

SBC and DGC are continuing to support businesses to apply for Short Term Let licences where required, supported by the SSDA, SOSE and VS. D&G Council has received 1650 valid STL license applications and issued 1,613 licences with only 8 refused. Scottish Borders Council has received 1,128 applications so far, with 1,078 issued and none refused.

Facilitating Collaboration [Ref: Action 3.1.iii]:

VisitScotland facilitated a Scottish Borders Product Update for key marketing and digital teams to help develop product knowledge and awareness. Participants included The Gordon Arms (Yarrow), HARP, Borderland Taste & Tales, Lowlander Tours and ScotlandShop.

Developing a coordinated programme of business support [Ref: 3.1.iv]:

- VisitScotland supported SSDA as part of their travel trade training programme in autumn with specialist contributors.
- VisitScotland hosted an Events Workshop in Scottish Borders in November that focussed on the new national events strategy and local strategies in the Scottish Borders. The event brought together a range of event organisers from across the region.

Regional Economic Partnership [Ref: Action 3.2.v]:

VS, the SSDA, SBC, DGC and SOSE are all actively represented on the REP, as well as Strategic Action Groups including on Transport and the Convention of the South of Scotland. This allows us to represent tourism at the centre of economic planning.

Workforce development [Ref: Action 3.3.i-viii]:

The Convention of the South of Scotland (COSS) in November, chaired by the Deputy First Minister, looked specifically at workforce matters. It was agreed the SSDA will consult the industry to collate information about workforce challenges and skill gaps which will give tangible recommendations and create an annual measure to be able to assess progress. The SSDA has started working with the two colleges, Skills Development Scotland, the University of Glasgow and others on this work. The DFM will come back in March for the next COSS meeting to review progress against agreed work.

Data insights [Ref: Action 3.4]:

The latest independent STEAM results were shared in November by the SSDA and the Deputy First Minister. These showed the South of Scotland visitor economy grew by 20% (150m) in the last year, with a 14% increase in jobs. The SSDA has collated all known data and made this [publicly available](#) for businesses in one place on its website. It has also conducted a survey of businesses, asking what data businesses want and need ([see results](#)). Following this, we have signed a partnership with Key Data which will give very significantly improved data for the sector (full details to follow in 2025). VisitScotland has refreshed insights for tourism volume and value figures. It has also released regional data for [Scottish Borders](#) and [Dumfries and Galloway](#) from Scotland Visitor Survey 2023.

STRAND 4: Act responsibly for long-term collective benefit:

Southern Upland Way [Ref: Action 4.1.iii]:

Recognising the route's 40th anniversary, DGC have worked with SBC to divide the Southern Upland Way into three marches to make it more accessible and achievable for walkers to complete a march. Sculptures have been erected at the beginning and end of the DGC marches to give a sense of occasion and allow an opportunity for social media. SBC are examining the opportunity to implement sculptures in the Borders

In December 2024 it was announced that the Borders section of the Southern Upland Way is from now on to be known as 'The Merse'. The low-lying part of Berwickshire between the Tweed and the Lammermuirs is known as 'The Merse', taken from the old Scots word for floodpath.

Councillor Watson McAteer, the council's convener, said: "Following a call to elected members I have decided that the most appropriate suggestion for the Borders section of the Southern Upland Way is to be called 'The Merse', an historic reference to southern Borderlands that stretch from west of Kelso to Berwick. I should add that I was assisted in this determination following conversation with a good friend of the council, author and historian Mr Alistair Moffat.

7Stanes Master planning [Ref: Action 4.1.iii]:

We are actively feeding into the FLS consultations around the 7Stanes master planning process: supporting the development of major new multi-user path networks and amplifying local community voices around ensuring that paths remain with faster storm repair work. The SSDA have helped key travel trade voices to connect into these consultations.

Paths and Trails [Ref: Action 4.1.iii]:

The SSDA, with the two councils, is starting a new piece of work to significantly strength the digital information available on Scotland Starts Here (website and app) about paths and trails, for walking, cycling and equestrian use. This will make it much easier to find trails near you, and to better connect these with business offerings.

Meaningful Travel Map [Ref: Strand 4]:

In March VS announced a new partnership with Tourism Cares (a US non profit organisation) to profile trade-ready, responsible tourism experiences . Scotland is the first European destination to feature on the map, this will extend our reach with global tour operators and travel advisors, who are looking to add meaningful travel experiences to their itineraries. HARP Archaeology have now joined Trimontium, The Great Tapestry of Scotland and GoWildScotland

Contacts:

Key contacts for those responsible for delivering the Responsible Tourism Strategy:

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We hope you enjoyed this update. We are, together, committed to increasing our visitor economy by £1bn. We will achieve this by being the most active, engaged, strategic and united destination in Scotland. If you haven't already, [join the SSDA](#) and get involved!