

Edinburgh & Lothians Area Tourism Partnership (ATP)

9th June 2006

at 9.30 am

Winton House, Pencaitland

Present

Cllr Ricky Henderson (Chair)	City of Edinburgh Council
Nico de Freitas	East Lothian Tourism Forum
Bill McNair	East Lothian Tourism Forum
Richard Jeffrey	Edinburgh Tourism Action Group
Provost Sam Campbell	Midlothian Council
Quintin Young	Midlothian Tourism Forum
Cllr Hugh Owens	West Lothian Council
Pamela McMahan	West Lothian Tourism Forum
Raoul Barbier	City of Edinburgh Council
Kenneth Wardrop	City of Edinburgh Council
Susan Smith	East Lothian Council
Sandy MacMillan	Midlothian Council
John Masson	West Lothian Council
Susan Watson	Scottish Enterprise Edinburgh & Lothian
Ben Carter	VisitScotland Edinburgh Network Office

In Attendance

Sir Francis Ogilvy	Winton House
Rob Steadman	Winton House
Ann Jones	VisitScotland Edinburgh Network Office
Tracy Logan	VisitScotland Edinburgh Network Office
Sharon Watt	VisitScotland Edinburgh Network Office

Apologies

Cllr Donald Wilson	City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr David Costello	East Lothian Council
Fergus Waters	Midlothian Tourism Forum
Stephen Gallagher	Scottish Enterprise Edinburgh & Lothian
Wendy McCann	West Lothian Tourism Forum
Claire Dutton	East Lothian Council
John Beveridge	Midlothian Council
Alistair Shaw	West Lothian Council

1 Welcome and introductions

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Area Tourism Partnership (ATP). Introductions were given to Ann Jones, Business Relationship Manager, Sharon Watt, Office Administrator both from the VisitScotland Edinburgh and Lothians network office, Sir Francis Ogilvy, Director and Rob Steadman, Events and Marketing Manager, Winton House.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to Sir Francis Ogilvy for hosting the meeting at Winton House.

Apologies were noted as shown above.

2 Winton House

- World Travel Award Winner 2005

Rob Steadman presented to the group on Winton House: outlining it's history, what they have achieved since opening for hospitality six years ago and what they are looking to achieve for the future.

Rob stressed the value of partnership working and highlighted the fact that they use local suppliers as often as possible, which helps the economy of the area and subsequently develops good relationships with the local community.

He also highlighted the work of the East Lothian Golf Alliance, a group formed by owner/managers of 18 local businesses who all contribute financially to the group's activities and who have all benefited so far. Rob mentioned the support they have received from East Lothian Council and the East Lothian Golf Officer.

Rob raised concerns regarding VisitScotland's activity in relation to golf press trips and a perceived lack of golf contacts. The VisitScotland Area Director will follow up these points.

3 Minute of 10 March 2006

The minute was agreed upon.

4 Matters arising

Nico de Freitas raised that there is a dip in hotel occupancy for July in relation to June and August. The group discussed this and the general consensus was that the timings of school holidays in England and abroad was a factor.

It was agreed that we should continue to promote activity across the entire summer period and not focus on August alone.

5 Visitor Services: Tourist Information Centres

Ben Carter provided an update on visitor services activity in the area and highlighted that Edinburgh and Lothians TICs received in excess of 800,000 visitors throughout

2005 (17% increase on 2004). It was noted that this growth is mainly attributable to the Princes Street TIC.

The information and sales review has taken place with a view to ensuring visitor services provide value for money and meet the needs of both visitors and tourism businesses. The review has identified activities across 5 programmes:

- Outreach
- Content
- Partnership
- Ease of Purchase
- Customer Relationships

VisitScotland are currently identifying potential pilot projects to progress some of the “way forward” activities identified during the review.

The Area Tourism Partnerships expressed a desire for Edinburgh & The Lothians to become involved in this activity.

The imminent sale of the property at 4 Rothesay Terrace may release surplus funds for use in Edinburgh and Lothians and it was agreed that the Area Director should identify proposals for use of funds in developing visitor services in advance of the September ATP Meeting.

It was also agreed that Willie MacLeod or John Beattie be invited to present to the next ATP meeting.

6 Area Tourism Action Plans and activity – round table update

The Chairman invited each area’s representatives to provide an update on there local activity.

6.1 East Lothian Tourism Forum

Nico de Freitas and Susan Smith presented an update with the following key points raised:

- The East Lothian Golf Alliance continues to work well.
- The 2nd World Hickory Golf Championships take place in Musselburgh on 5th and 6th October 2006.
- Muirfield has been announced as the venue for the 2007 Senior British Open Golf Championship on 26th to 29th July 2007. This will have a significant economic impact.
- Watersports continue to develop and have also come out favourably in the recent economic impact study.
- East Lothian Council’s stand at the VisitScotland Expo in April 2006 was very well attended.
- East Lothian Food and Drink Festival is due to take place from 21st to 24th September 2006.
- The East Lothian Forum group are working together with visitor attractions to develop a website. www.visiteastlothian.co.uk

- Nico has met with VisitScotland to progress the East Lothian leaflet.
- The East Lothian Tourism Action Plan is being updated.
- The Three Harbours Festival (Prestonpans, Cockenzie and Port Seton) took place this month and has been a success.

6.2 West Lothian Tourism Forum

Pamela McMahon presented an update and highlighted the following points:

- The Forum is trying to raise its profile and now has over 100 members.
- An open meeting was held on 20th April. Councillor Willie Dunn presented his vision for tourism in West Lothian. There were 45 attendees.
- The forum are now members of the Scottish Tourism Forum.
- In May the Forum met with VisitScotland to discuss 'Discover West Lothian' leaflets.
- The Forum is drafting a marketing plan and is working on a DVD to promote tourism in West Lothian.
- The Forum reported that Pride and Passion have offered 'fam trips' for local businesses. Concerns were raised regarding the local product knowledge of staff from the Linlithgow TIC.
- Almond Valley Heritage Centre is now developing an education centre for children, showing farming history. The council are forming a bridge around the area in order to make this more accessible.
- Linlithgow TIC has an adjoining room and uses for this are being considered. One suggestion is capitalise on the birth of Scotty from Star Trek and have an engineering theme.
- The Forum reported on Scotch Hop. This is traditional Scottish country dancing event, which is held in the courtyard of Linlithgow Palace and attracts around 400 visitors. The Forum is currently looking at ways to keep the visitors longer and encourage them to visit the restaurants, shops etc.

6.3 Midlothian Tourism Forum

Sandy MacMillan and Quintin Young presented an update and highlighted the following points:

- Da Vinci Code film has been released. Visitor numbers to Rosslyn Chapel have increased sharply although there are concerns that annual visitor numbers in excess of 150,000 will lead to access and parking problems.
- Language training for tourism courses planned for June have been cancelled as there was no uptake.
- The Forum and VisitScotland have worked together on updating the Discover Midlothian marketing leaflets.
- A re-run of the 'Explore Midlothian' trails leaflet is being considered following its initial success.
- A consultant study is to evaluate the success of the Meet in Midlothian initiative.
- Midlothian Council's casino bid has not been successful.
- Arniston fair was a success with £7,000 raised for Friends of Midlothian's children.
- Penicuik House open day takes place on Saturday 10th June 2006.

- The Forum noted that all businesses reported a good start to the season and that some visitors were now making bookings with the specific purpose of visiting Rosslyn Chapel.
- A music festival is being planned for Dalkeith in September 2006.
- Tuesday 13th June 2006, sees the 550th anniversary of Roslin as a Burgh.

6.4 Edinburgh Tourism Action Group

Raoul Barbier presented an update and highlighted the following points:

Events

- The Science Festival reported 68,000 visitors.
- Cow Parade is now in full swing and there are 94 cows around Edinburgh.
- The Edinburgh International Fashion Festival was successful and generated 6,000 attended paying events.

Research

- Edinburgh won the award 'Best for Short Breaks' in www.wotif.com.
- Thundering Hooves – the Minister attended this event.
- ETAG studies are nearing completion:
 - Scenario Planning 2015.
 - Transient Visitors Tax.
 - Accommodation Supply and Demand Study.
 - ECB 5 year Business Plan.

Travel

- New direct routes started to Atlanta (Delta), Hamburg (BA Connect) and Krakow (Sky Europe).
- April shows international arrival figures have increased by 27% on previous year and May shows a further 13% increase.
- The Development of Waverley Station is underway.

Glasgow-Edinburgh Collaboration projects

- Ways to generate more business between the cities are being developed and promoting each other's products in Council free papers are due from September.
- A joint event diary is to be published.
- Concierge exchange.
- TIC staff exchange.
- Further details are on the website www.glasgow-edinburgh.co.uk.

6.5 Scottish Enterprise Edinburgh and Lothians

Susan Watson presented an update and highlighted the following points:

- ETAG skills passport was discussed and is making good progress. Susan reported that 15 businesses have signed up.
- Cow Parade – The National Galleries souvenir programme sold out within 3 days and a full evaluation study will be carried out.
- Ross Band Stand – repair work is being carried out on this, as it is a crucial venue for Edinburgh events.
- The Thundering Hooves report was published in May 2006.

- SEEL are now working with the East Lothian Golf Alliance and East Lothian Tourist Attractions Group as key accounts.
- The Glasgow-Edinburgh collaboration workshop has identified practical initiatives between the cities (e.g. working together on attracting large scale conferences)

7 VisitScotland Edinburgh & Lothians Network Office Report

Ben Carter presented the report to the meeting and gave highlights.

8 Dates of Future Meetings

5th September 2006 – Dalyell Suite, County Buildings, Linlithgow

15th December 2006 – VisitScotland Offices, Ocean Point, Edinburgh