

The Fife Tourism Alliance

The Fife Tourism Alliance is the forum which has developed the Fife Tourism Strategy 2007-2015 and which continues to guide the public sector and private sector partners in the development of tourism in the Kingdom.

The key focus for the Fife Tourism Strategy is what is deemed to be Fife's inherent strengths, areas of competitive advantage and opportunity for Fife in what is an intensely competitive environment. The Strategy's key themes are:

- Fife – the location of choice for golf
- Fife's Coastal Fringe – a quality experience
- Building an exceptional experience – the focus on events, activities and attractions
- Fife's Quality Food – from produce to service
- St Andrews – a World Class Destination
- Fife – complementing and capitalising on Edinburgh's success
- Developing the cultural and heritage potential of Dunfermline and Kirkcaldy

These themes are supported by a cross cutting, foundation themes "Investing today for tomorrow's growth" which recognises the need for ongoing investment in skills, training and infrastructure necessary to be a competitive destination. Within each of these themes priorities for action are identified which will contribute to the vision of Fife as a leading destination for leisure and business tourism and which aim to achieve growth in tourism revenue over the period of the Strategy – growing the value to the Fife economy by over 50% from £218 million to £327 million in line with the national ambition for Scottish tourism. The Strategy's annual action plan spells out in more detail the activities under each of these headings and the Fife Tourism Alliance will monitor progress in implementation.

The Fife Tourism Alliance has produced a magazine style publication outlining the key themes of the Strategy and some of the tourism related projects and initiatives that are underway in Fife. This will be distributed to tourism businesses in Fife from summer 2007.

In addition to its role in helping to shape the strategy, the Fife Tourism Alliance is a forum for public and private sector partners to discuss tourism related matters and for the public sector partners in particular to be advised on strategic priorities. The Alliance also advises on investment made from the Fife Strategic Tourism Development Fund and in this respect recent funding support has been made to a number of projects:

- Business development support for arts and cultural festivals
- The Fife Coastal Path economic impact and user survey
- St Andrews Town Audit
- Dunfermline and Kirkcaldy Town centre events and promotions
- Regional launch of the 100K Welcomes initiative
- Hotels Demand Analysis
- Business development support for Pittencrieff Park
- Fife Coastal Path Burntisland Extension – interpretation and orientation
- First in Fife Golf Group – marketing and research
- Culross and environs tourism audit
- Tourism Small grants scheme – supporting local promotional and event activities
- The Fife Tourism Challenge

The Alliance collaborated with Careers Scotland and Springboard on a Fife Tourism Challenge which was aimed at effecting links between Fife secondary schools and tourism businesses and encouraging young people to consider a career in tourism and hospitality. A pilot "Tourism Trail" which was held earlier in spring 2006 in St Andrews proved to be highly successful and the Alliance had been encouraged by the desire by public agencies, the education sector and the tourism industry to work together. The Tourism Challenge was launched in academic year 2006/2007 with 10 of Fife's 19 secondary schools participating, each one undertaking a local investigation and developing initiatives to develop and promote tourism in their area. The event culminated in April 2007 at the Old Course Hotel where the participating teams presented their findings and ideas to the industry judges in a showcase final event. The overall winner was the team from Viewforth Secondary School in Kirkcaldy which had worked closely with Fife Coast and Countryside Trust as part of their project.

The Fife Tourism Alliance also fulfills a lobbying role and, following representations and discussions, it has articulated its concerns over matters including tourism taxation proposals, the ship to shore transfer of oil in the Firth of Forth, and plans for a new Forth crossing. The Alliance continues to take a keen interest in the latter subject given the national and regional importance of this key arterial route and has written to the Scottish Executive over its concerns on the delay in committing to a specific option.

The Fife Tourism Alliance was established in 2005 as the area tourism partnership for Fife and comprises representatives of VisitScotland, Fife Council, Scottish Enterprise Fife, Fife Chamber of Commerce, the Federation of Small Businesses, Fife Colleges, Fife Coast and Countryside Trust and sectoral representatives from the tourism industry. Participation in the Alliance, which meets about 6 times per year, is not intended to be burdensome and anyone who may be interested in representing this sector at meetings should contact Alan Graham, Area Director, at the VisitScotland Fife office.

VisitScotland Fife provides the secretariat to the Alliance which is chaired by Nick White, Inn at Lathones, with Ken Lawson (Spindrift Guest House, Anstruther) as Vice Chair. The other members of the Fife Tourism Alliance are: Tom Potter, Carvenom Cottages by Anstruther (Self-Catering/Caravan and Camping); Linda Greig, BLCC, Lauder College (Business Tourism/Conferences); Steve Blaney (Federation of Small Businesses); Stuart Grey, Knockhill Racing Circuit, by Dunfermline (sports, activities and visitor attractions); Jim McLeod, Burns Tavern, Kennoway (Restaurants and Licensed Trade); Linda McKnight (Further Education Colleges in Fife); Duncan Dewar (Fife Chamber of Commerce); Amanda Drummond (Fife Coast and Countryside Trust); Willie Johnston, Martin Grigg (Scottish Enterprise Fife); Keith Winter, Robin Presswood, Sandra Montador Stewart (Fife Council – Development Services); Iain Whitelaw (Fife Council – Community Services); Councillor Tony Martin; Councillor Ross Vettraino; Councillor William Kay; Councillor Dorothea Morrison (Fife Council).

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