



To: Economy and Jobs Board

On: 31 August, 2016

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Renfrewshire Tourism Framework Progress
Inc. 'Renfrewshire Brand' Presentation

1 Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide the Economy and Jobs Board with an update on the progress of the Renfrewshire Tourism Framework, approved by Board in November 2014. The report will provide progress against the 4 main themes within the supporting action plan and an update on the development of a destination brand for Paisley and Renfrewshire.

2 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board note the progress made and agree that a new Visitor Strategy will be brought for approval in December 2016.

3 Background

3.1 The Renfrewshire Tourism Framework was approved by Board in November 2014, the framework had 5 objectives:

Objective 1: To tell the story and define the visitor product for Paisley and to subsequently display, curate and align the town's heritage assets around this offer

Objective 2: To establish the significance of Paisley as an international visitor destination by presenting its cultural assets within national and international audiences and markets and to define a set of actions that derives maximum economic benefit for the economic regeneration of the local community

Objective 3: To develop consistency in terms of the visitor experience in relation to town centre cohesion, function and management

Objective 4: To develop a programme for community, business and cultural animation based around the cultural asset base

Objective 5: Develop a refreshed brand and publicity strategy for Paisley in the context of an international market place for tourism and the wider Renfrewshire offer

- 3.2 A Tourism Officer was appointed in June 2015 to support and direct the delivery of the Tourism Framework, as part of the Town Centre Management and Events team within Development and Housing Services. An Action Plan for 2015-2017 was subsequently developed (Appendix 1) and is being delivered, linking to the National Tourism Development Plan for 2020 and the following 4 themes:
- Leadership and collaboration
 - Building our capabilities
 - Improving the customer journey
 - Providing authentic experiences
- 3.3 Responsibility for Events and Tourism has since transferred to the Chief Executives Department (January 2016) as part of an amalgamated Marketing and Events Service. This will enable a clear focus on destination and consumer marketing and the development of a new national and international narrative about the region's outdoors, cultural and heritage assets.
- 3.4 Extensive publicity has been generated from November 2015 to date, focusing on Paisley's ambitions for 2021, the region's cultural and historic assets and Renfrewshire's events programme, this has culminated in £1.9 million in advertising equivalent value in positive news coverage about the area with an audience reach of 13 million who have had the opportunity to see or hear about Renfrewshire.
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4. Progress on Action Plan 2015 to 2017: January to August 2016

4.1 Leadership and Collaboration

- 4.11 A dedicated Tourism Officer was appointed in June 2015. The Tourism Officer has focused on developing strategic partnerships and positive relationships with industry providers – hoteliers and attractions, leading on Renfrewshire's presence at the Visit Scotland Expo in 2015 and 2016 and developing visitor accommodation and attraction packages for the British Pipe Band Championships and European Curling Championships in 2016.
- 4.12 Progress has been made in relation to developing up-to-date and detailed baseline data around Paisley and Renfrewshire's tourism and visitor economies. An Economic Impact and Tourism workstream was established in January 2016 as part of support arrangements for Paisley's Bid for UK City of Culture 2021. This group includes representatives from Visit Scotland, Glasgow International Airport, Scottish Enterprise. The group meets monthly, chaired and directed by the 2021 Bid Manager with a remit that includes:
- Establishing and analyzing baseline tourism and visitor data
 - Projecting the level of economic impact expected from tourism across Renfrewshire as a result of a successful UK City of Culture bid
 - Scoping and the infrastructure improvements required to be able to cope with the increase in visitors e.g. venue development, accommodation development, transport
 - Linking the bid with Renfrewshire's current plans for tourism development and the wider national agenda, including our role within the Glasgow City Region
- 4.13 A strategic tourism and visitor planning team has been established by the Head of Marketing and brings together Visit Scotland, Scottish Enterprise and Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce with the purpose of developing a draft visitor strategy for Renfrewshire, owned by each partner organisation and private industry providers. The planning group will produce a draft strategy in advance of consultation with industry providers due to take place in October and November 2016. Consultation will take place with hoteliers, visitor attractions, venues, retailers, UWS, West College Scotland, Skills Development Scotland and transport providers. A finalised strategy will be used as a basis for a £100,000 bid to Scottish Enterprise Competitive Fund in January 2017, and will support Paisley's bid for UK City of Culture in 2017.
- 4.13 The draft visitor strategy consultation process will be used as a basis to establish a new Tourism and Visitor Group, responsible for delivering the Strategy, supported by the public sector partners.

4.2 Building Our Capabilities

- 4.21 Baseline and visitor profile - Currently Renfrewshire's visitor and tourism economy represents only 2% of Renfrewshire's economy. Progress has been made in developing our baseline visitor data to support our bid for UK City of Culture 2021 and to understand the settled state of visitor contributions to our economy, the impacts of events and festivals on that norm, the role and performance of our attractions in pulling visitors into the town/area and how our hotel accommodation sector is performing.

Current research commissioned via the Economic Impact and Tourism workstream includes:

- A Paisley Visitor Survey – duration 12 months, delivered by STR/Deloitte to determine the profile of visitors to Paisley and a settled state indicator of the value of visitor spend in Paisley. Around 700 individuals will be surveyed by means of a qualitative and economic survey.
 - A Paisley/Renfrewshire Visitor Attraction Monitor is being delivered by the Moffat Centre at Glasgow Caledonia University and will provide a bi-monthly monitor and annual performance report of a suite of indicators measured from a range of visitor attractions:
 - Paisley Museum and Observatory
 - Paisley Abbey
 - Paisley Art Centre
 - Sma Shot Cottages
 - Threadmill Museum
 - Kilbarchan Weavers Cottage
 - Lochwinnoch
 - Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park
 - Gleniffer Braes Country Park
 - Kibble – The Experience
 - Intu Braehead and Braehead Arena
 - Paisley/Renfrewshire Hotel Monitor - an occupancy survey has been established to expand survey data beyond the more routinely surveyed airport hotels
 - 10 Renfrewshire hotels will be included within Scottish Enterprise's commission of Review Pro for Metropolitan Glasgow region. This enables sentiment analysis of hotels, attractions and retail centres/clusters from online referral sites e.g. Trip Advisor.
- 4.23 Capability and capacity building - There has been limited progress in providing business development support for local attractions over and above marketing support. A detailed plan for skills development, customer service training, cross promotion and digital training and web development will be

developed in partnership with industry representatives during the Tourism Strategy consultation.

- 4.24 Marketing - a comprehensive marketing and social media strategy is in place to promote festivals and events to an external visitor audience, targeting visitor groups within a 45 min to 2 hour drive time. This includes partnership marketing with The List, Visit Scotland and Scotrail, and a targeted national media strategy. A partnership with The List to provide enhanced listings and what's on information for Renfrewshire is being developed.

An increase in event attendees has been recorded at Paisley Beer and Food Festival (from 8,700 in 2015 to 13,500 in 2016) and the Sma Shot Festival (from 3,000 in 2015 to 7,000 in 2016), with 15,000 visitors attending the first British Pipe Band Championships. Cross promotion of visitor attractions and forthcoming events is integrated within each event programme.

The Moffat Centre has been commissioned to conduct event research at each large event to assess visitor profile, direct economic impact and the effectiveness of each marketing campaign. An update on the results of this commission will be brought to the Board at a later date.

The 2016 event programme has generated 158 media articles with a reach of 7million year to date, and an additional 450,000 people have been reached via social media. A refurbishment of the Renfrew Road advertising hoardings was carried out to improve in town event advertising.

Attendance at trade shows has enabled the team to begin to engage with tour operators and an investment audience about the potential for Tourism investment in Renfrewshire. Publicity packs were developed for Visit Scotland Expo and MIPIM (see Appendix 2).

- 4.25 Work is continuing with Visit Scotland, East Renfrewshire Council and Inverclyde Council to develop a rural leisure offer and a series of mini tourist trails for walkers, cyclists and drivers, linked to local businesses, and promoted locally and via Visit Scotland. The main aim is to promote outdoor 'things to do' and increase custom for local businesses. Further work to identify potential for tourism-related farm diversification projects through LEADER will commence in the last quarter of 2016.

4.3 Improving the customer journey

- 4.31 The focus of the action plan has been to gain better insight into the profile and behaviour of visitors to Paisley and Renfrewshire. Developing the existing tourism product will be progressed as a priority as we gain better insight into our potential audience and on establishment of our Tourism and Visitor Group.

- 4.32 We have introduced effective cross-promotion of accommodation and attractions, and the showcasing attractions through the live event programme:

- May: British Pipe Band Championships – accommodation and attractions package promoted

- June: Scottish Album of the Year (SAY) Awards at Paisley Town Hall – successful bid by Renfrewshire Council, accommodation package negotiated
- June: Medieval Fayre at Paisley Abbey – funded and marketed by Renfrewshire Council
- July: Sma Shot Festival – incorporated Sma Shot Cottages, museum collection and performance at Town Hall and Paisley Arts Centre

4.33 A strategy on Road Signage for Paisley Town Centre has been developed by Community Resources, including improvements to gateway signage and simplification of directional signage and visitor signage. Further consideration is being given to tourism signage throughout Renfrewshire to promote the area.

4.34 The opening of the Paisley 2021 bid base will provide a key site in Paisley Town Centre for on-arrival visitor information. The base is due to open in October 2016.

4.4 Providing Authentic Experience

4.41 The council's event programme in 2016/17 will attract an estimated 150,000 residents and visitors to Paisley, generating a positive economic impact, stimulating businesses and creating opportunities for local suppliers. Renfrewshire's event programme was expanded in 2015/16 and again in 2016/17 to demonstrate our ability to host events. New events for the programme include British Pipe Band Championships (secured for 3 years), European Curling Championships 2016, Scottish Album of the Year Awards 2016 and 2017, Paisley Make Scotland Redesigned Textile Conference 2016 and the TRAD Awards 2017. Further competitive bids for major cultural events are in development.

The council's event team was restructured in May 2016 and a programme of event enhancements implemented in order to maximise penetration of new external audiences, in addition a new events strategy is being developed with the following objectives:

- To change perceptions of Paisley and Renfrewshire locally and nationally
- To demonstrate a track record and our capability and capacity to hold large scale events
- Position Paisley as a centre of cultural and heritage excellence
- Attract visitors from 45 mins to a 3 hour journey time
- Improve event accessibility
- Support 2021 step changes
- Improve our scope for external funding

5 Development of Destination Brand for Paisley and Renfrewshire

Work is underway for the development of a refreshed identity for Paisley, for completion prior to the submission of the bid for UK City of Culture 2021

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – none
 2. **HR & Organisational Development** – none
 3. **Community Planning** – none
 4. **Legal** – none
 5. **Property/Assets** – none
 6. **Information Technology** - none
 7. **Equality & Human Rights** - The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website
 8. **Health & Safety** – none
 9. **Procurement** – none
 10. **Risk** – none
 11. **Privacy Impact** - none
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Renfrewshire Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2015-17

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Strategy and Action Plan sets out an aspirational programme for the growth and development of the tourism sector as a significant contributor to the Renfrewshire economy. The strategy considers the current position of the Renfrewshire tourism sector and identifies key issues and opportunities for growth. It seeks to align and complement the Paisley Heritage Asset Strategy and the emerging Creative Renfrewshire Strategy in positioning Renfrewshire to bid for the 2021 UK City of Culture during 2017. This requires a strategic approach to build on Renfrewshire's inherent strengths and its potential as a visitor destination working within the considerable tourist market of the Glasgow city region. The vision and action plan of the strategy sets out our approach and provides a framework for detailed actions over the period 2015 – 2017.

The Renfrewshire Tourist Offer

- 1.2 Renfrewshire has a population of some 170,000 and lies to the west of Glasgow on the south bank of the River Clyde. The area enjoys strong transport linkages to the city region, wider central belt and internationally through road, rail and air. It is home to Glasgow International Airport and a range of successful and well known businesses operate within its boundaries. **[Plan similar to that in GIB submission to be used to illustrate location].**
- 1.3 Renfrewshire's tourism offer is broadly driven by the strength of its events programme and assets which reflect its rich history and diverse natural landscapes. The area also benefits from a number of commercial leisure assets which offer experiences unique to Renfrewshire. The key drivers are:-

(i) Events and Festivals

Renfrewshire has a well established events programme which annually attracts thousands of visitors to the area and particularly to our town centres. The programme includes a wide range of unique events, from the UK start of the Monte Carlo Classic Car Rally and the Scottish leg of the cycling Street Velodrome, to those celebrating the heritage of our communities and towns such as Sma' Shot Day and Doors Open Day weekend. The traditional autumn and pre-Christmas programme including festive lights 'switch on' events held in Paisley, Renfrew and Johnstone are hugely popular and bring thousands of visitors each year, providing a significant boost for the local economy. The 'Spree' festival of music and comedy is now firmly established within the events calendar, receiving national media coverage and attendance building year on year.

(ii) Heritage and Culture

The towns of Paisley, Renfrew and Johnstone flourished as a result of the weaving, thread making, shipbuilding and engineering industries in the 19th and 20th centuries. Today there is a strong base of buildings, parks, collections and cultural organisations which celebrate the history of Renfrewshire and its origins. These range from the Abbey, Museum and Art Galleries and Sma' Shot Cottages in Paisley to the Weaver's Cottage in Kilbarchan and community museums in Renfrew and Johnstone. Broadly, these assets are delivered by the public or voluntary sectors.

(iii) Leisure

We are fortunate in being home to a range of major leisure attractions, many of which provide an niche unique to Renfrewshire. These include Braehead, Soar, the only indoor real snow slope in Scotland, and the Ingliston Country Club, voted the UK's best equestrian venue in three consecutive years. These venues and their associated events, delivered by the private sector, have a significant role in drawing visitors to Renfrewshire, particularly from locations outwith the Glasgow city region.

(iv) Natural Heritage

Four fifths of Renfrewshire is countryside, with a diversity of landscapes and natural habitats. Attractions including Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park and the RSPB Visitor Centre at Lochwinnoch provide us with an attractive draw for visitors, offering opportunities for nature, recreation and outdoor pursuits which are amongst the best in Scotland. In some instances the activities at these venues, for example watersports at Clyde Muirshiel, draw participants and visitors from beyond the Glasgow and Clyde Valley area.

Context

National Tourism Development Plan

- 1.4 The national tourism development plan *Tourism Scotland 2020* promotes growth in Scotland's visitor economy and as a national destination of first choice, focusing on key assets and market opportunities. These include *nature, heritage and activities, destination towns and cities and events and festivals*. The plan sets out broad themes which form the basis for regional strategies across the country (Figure 1). The actions within this Strategy are aligned to the key themes in the national plan.
- 1.5 As part of the national plan, the 'Focus Years' programme aims to support and drive Scotland's tourism and events industries to both domestic and international markets. The programme includes the year of Food and Drink in 2015, Innovation, Architecture and Design in 2016 and History, Heritage and Archaeology in 2017. The actions in this strategy will seek to capitalise on this programme, particularly the Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology in 2017.

Renfrewshire Community Plan 2013 - 2023

- 1.6 The Community Plan promotes economic growth within Renfrewshire which builds upon the existing economic base and rich history of the area, developing our town and village centres as cultural, event and leisure destinations, in addition to their community roles. The actions within this strategy are aligned to deliver the Community Plan vision and promote tourist activity across Renfrewshire.

Figure 1: National Tourism Development Plan Themes



Paisley Town Centre Heritage Asset Strategy

- 1.7 The Asset Strategy provides the framework for the long term regeneration of Paisley town centre driven by its heritage, particularly historic buildings, collections and cultural organisations. Tourism is a key element of the strategy and the projects identified within the study have the potential to increase Paisley's tourist economy by £45M over the next 10 to 15 years. The actions within this strategy reflect the outcomes of the asset study.
- 1.8 As part of the Council's approach to the heritage led regeneration of our towns and villages, we intend to bid for Paisley to become UK City of Culture in 2021. This strategy provides a framework for the growth of our tourism sector to support the bid in 2017 and towards a successful City of Culture in 2021.

Renfrewshire Tourism Framework

- 1.9 The Tourism Framework considers leisure and activity assets across Renfrewshire and provides a broad overview of how these could be aligned with actions in the Paisley Asset Strategy to support growth of the tourism sector. Actions within this strategy reflect the outcomes of this study and in particular are aligned to deliver on the key issues and opportunities identified.

2 Current Position

- 2.1 This section briefly reviews Renfrewshire's tourist assets, considers potential markets and identifies key issues and opportunities. The section summarises the more detailed outcomes of the Renfrewshire Tourism Framework.

Assets

- 2.1 Renfrewshire's tourist offer is led by the strength of its events programme and a range of assets which broadly lie within the Heritage and Culture, Natural Heritage and Leisure categories. Key attractions are shown on Plan 1 and Figure 2 below. The list of attractions is not considered to be exhaustive and for the purposes of the strategy has focussed on attractions which are aligned to the tourist market. A detailed overview on each attraction is set out in the Tourism Framework.

Figure 2: Visitor Attractions

Heritage	Natural Heritage	Unique Leisure Assets
Paisley Abbey	Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park	Intu Braehead
Paisley Museum and Art Gallery	Gleniffer Braes County Park	Intu Soar
Coats Observatory	Finlaystone Country Estate*	Ingliston Country Club
Thomas Coats Memorial Church	RSPB Lochwinnoch Reserve	
Sma' Shot Cottages		
Threadmill Museum		
Weaver's Cottage Kilbarchan		
Finlaystone Country Estate*		
Renfrew Museum		
Johnstone History Museum		

* Finlaystone House and Country Estate straddles the Renfrewshire and Inverclyde administrative boundaries.

- 2.2 As Figure 2 illustrates, much of the heritage base is clustered within Paisley, although a smaller range of attractions are located in towns and villages throughout Renfrewshire. Natural heritage and leisure attractions are generally within the rural parts of the area, particularly around Lochwinnoch and Langbank, with a significant exception around Soar and Braehead at Renfrew. Generally leisure attractions are led by the private sector, while heritage assets are either led by the public sector or community and third sector organisations.

Available Markets

- 2.3 Data commissioned by the Council¹ to measure the volume and value of tourism to Renfrewshire indicates that in 2012, the tourism sector generated £157.91M of revenue between the Paisley and Renfrew 'districts'. It is important to note that the data does not consider the whole of Renfrewshire and provides a 'snapshot' of values and trends only. To inform development of the strategy, gathering of consistent and detailed baseline tourist intelligence is required (see paragraph 2.13).
- 2.4 A review of the potential markets available to Renfrewshire indicates that this may be in the region of 7.2 million visitors per annum. Some 4.2 million potential visitors lie within the 'residential' market – those living within one to two hours drive of the area – and a further 3 million potential visitors lie within the wider UK and overseas markets. A key market lies within those who currently visit Glasgow but not the wider Clyde Valley area – some 2.2 million potential visitors. A key objective of this strategy is to develop a tourist product which will enable Renfrewshire to successfully engage with these markets.

Key Issues and Opportunities

- 2.5 To inform the direction of the strategy and build a foundation for success, a vision and actions require to be aligned to the key issues and opportunities for the tourism sector. Building on work developed within the Tourism Framework, in summary these are:-

(i) Events and Festival Development

- 2.6 Renfrewshire's established events programme has a key role to play in the development of Renfrewshire as a tourist destination, particularly as an attractive day trip destination. It is considered that there is significant potential to further develop, extend and add events as part of Renfrewshire's tourist offer. Ensuring that the positive impact of events reaches all towns and villages is an important part of this approach. Key to this aim is the support of the private and voluntary sectors in developing venues across Renfrewshire and their inclusion in event programming.
- 2.7 This area of activity is particularly important if we are to deliver on our ambitious vision of Paisley hosting the UK City of Culture in 2021, where a growing programme of events will form a key element of our bid. The long term opportunities are illustrated in the rise of tourist visits to previous

¹ Scottish Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM) statistics, 2012

City of Culture Hosts. Derry-Londonderry experienced a 50% rise of tourist visits in 2013 while Liverpool, City of Culture in 2008, experienced a 30% rise.²

- 2.8 The development of the events programme has already begun, illustrated by the addition of a Halloween event to the traditional autumn and pre-Christmas programme in 2014. There is however the need to progress this further and revise our programme annually, informed by a review of events and their benefits. Building on the baseline tourist intelligence gathered, there is also the potential to develop or create new events which relate to specific markets or thematic 'groups', such as families.
- 2.9 In the context of the evolving programme and our City of Culture bid, there is also an opportunity to develop a 'step change' in approach and proactively bid for conferences, national and international events which raise the profile of Renfrewshire as a destination and unlock new tourist markets.

(ii) Partnerships

- 2.10 To co-ordinate the development of the tourism product and delivery, an appropriate partnership approach is required. While it is anticipated that complementary organisations will work together where their products have a natural fit, there is a role for the Council in 'brokering' contacts with public and private sector organisations to facilitate working partnerships.
- 2.11 There is also an opportunity to develop strategic partnerships with a host of public and private sector organisations to obtain their support and assistance in driving forward the strategy. The support of Visit Scotland and the Scottish Tourism Alliance will for example be crucial in developing the strategy in view of national objectives, while the support of commercial attractions such as Soar and Ingliston will be key in developing marketing opportunities.
- 2.12 The opportunity also exists for closer working relationships with neighbouring Council areas to provide a strategic approach to the development and marketing of the tourist offer, pooling resources and assets to provide an offer which has a reach beyond the Glasgow city region.

(iii) Baseline Information

- 2.13 Visitor information for our attractions is currently limited and only available from a small number of individual sites. To inform our future approach to the tourism sector, there is a need to have a greater understanding of the type of visitor and their motivation for visiting Renfrewshire. In addition, there is a need to develop a framework for the gathering of detailed tourist intelligence from our assets, particularly in relation to visitor numbers and where appropriate, value generation.
- 2.14 The use of Visit Scotland's approach to visitor classification, informed by the baseline information gathered, will also be used to help tailor our strategy.
- 2.15 While we have a good understanding of the tourist assets and organisations within Renfrewshire, we acknowledge that this is not comprehensive. There is a need to fully map and gather intelligence from all assets with the assistance of the private sector and the community, voluntary and third sector partners to inform our approach and delivery.

(iv) Capability and Capacity

² Derry Figure from BBC website article, Liverpool from DCMS website

- 2.16 We have a strong base of assets from which to build. But many of our attractions rely on the goodwill of dedicated volunteers, while smaller groups or organisations may need support to grow. Through the Creative Renfrewshire Network, there is a real opportunity to nurture and develop these assets and organisations further, encouraging long term sustainability and gradually building capability and capacity. The potential to improve the visitor experience and at the same time begin to realise the commercial opportunities of our attractions is key. Opportunities here include the development of longer term business plans, customer care training, web skills training and staff planning.

(v) Marketing and Promotion

- 2.17 Given our range of assets and events, there are significant opportunities for marketing and promotion. A key issue is the need for a way of co-ordinating collaboration across the public, private and voluntary sectors, to ensure that existing activities and facilities are effectively mapped and promoted to reach potential markets, through nationally recognised channels such as Visit Scotland.
- 2.18 There is also a need to develop a dedicated marketing strategy to ensure that our attractions and events are promoted in a cohesive and complementary manner. In the longer term there are also a number of opportunities which could be considered in the context of a marketing strategy. These could include developing a thematic and segmented 'proposition' for Renfrewshire, bringing together clusters of assets to target specific visitor groups, the events and conference market, as well as cross marketing assets of similar interest. As set out above, this could also include partnership with neighbouring Council areas to develop a marketing strategy which provides for an offer stretching beyond the Glasgow city region.

3 Vision and Action Plan

- 3.1 The purpose of this strategy is to sustainably grow Renfrewshire's tourism sector, maximising its contribution to the local economy and developing our towns and villages as cultural, events and leisure destinations. In the short term the strategy seeks to position Renfrewshire as an attractive day trip destination, increasing the frequency of new visits and capturing more spend from existing visits. The vision for Renfrewshire in 2017 is:-

An attractive, well recognised and individual destination of first choice, with a range of unique assets which provide a high quality, value for money and memorable visitor experience, delivered by knowledgeable, skilled, customer focussed and passionate people.

- 3.2 This vision for the growth and development of the tourism sector is ambitious and requires a long term approach. In the short term however we recognise that to provide for the required step change in our tourism offer, action in relation to the key issues identified in section two are needed. As such, over the period to 2017 the strategy focuses on the following objectives:-

- Developing partnerships and appropriate delivery mechanisms
- Building our knowledge of baseline information and tourism intelligence
- Building the capability and capacity of our assets
- Marketing and promotion of our assets

- 3.3 To achieve these objectives, we need to progress a number of key actions in partnership with a variety of public, private, voluntary and third sector organisations. The Action Plan below identifies these key actions and the partners who will contribute to their delivery. The plan aligns our actions with the themes set out in the National Tourism Development Plan *Tourism Scotland 2020*.

ACTION PLAN BELOW

Action Plan 2015-2017				
Action	Objectives	Outcomes	Delivery	
Theme: Leadership and Collaboration				
Partnership Structure	Developing Partnerships and Delivery Mechanisms	Appointment of appropriate staff resource including dedicated Tourism Officer Identification of complementary organisations and development of working partnerships	Renfrewshire Council Tourist Attractions Tour Operators Hoteliers Visit Scotland Engage Renfrewshire	
Strategic Partnerships	Delivery Partnerships and Delivery Mechanisms	Development of strategic partnerships with key organisations to assist in delivery of key objectives.	Renfrewshire Council Visit Scotland Scottish Tourism Alliance Tourist Attractions Tour Operators Hoteliers Creative Renfrewshire Network Renfrewshire Higher and Further Education Providers Scottish Enterprise Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce	
Theme: Building Our Capabilities				
Asset Mapping	Building our knowledge of baseline information and tourist intelligence	Detailed map of tourism related organisations, assets, activities and courses throughout Renfrewshire Alignment of assets to Visit Scotland classification	Renfrewshire Council Renfrewshire Higher and Further Education Providers Visit Scotland	
Baseline and Visitor Profile	Building our knowledge of baseline information and tourist intelligence	Detailed understanding of visitor numbers, type and motivation for visits within key attractions. Baseline to be revised on annual basis	Renfrewshire Council Renfrewshire Higher and Further Education Providers	
Building Capability and Capacity	Building our knowledge of baseline information and tourist intelligence Building the capability and capacity of our assets	Package of support for attractions to assist in sustainability planning and growth, marketing and customer care	Renfrewshire Council Renfrewshire Higher and Further Education Providers Visit Scotland	

			Customer Care Training for Renfrewshire Council tourism assets	
Marketing	Building our knowledge of baseline information and tourist intelligence Marketing and promotion of our assets		Development of marketing strategy to promote events in strategic and complementary approach Promotion of existing asset base through appropriate channels	Renfrewshire Council Glasgow City Marketing Bureau Visit Scotland Tourist Attractions Tour Operators Hoteliers Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce
Funding and Sponsorship	Building our knowledge of baseline information and tourist intelligence Building the capability and capacity of our assets		Development of funding strategy to assist in securing external funding for tourism assets and projects Support potential development of joint Rural Tourism Business Improvement District (BID) with East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Councils	Renfrewshire Council
Theme: Improving the Customer Journey				
Marketing	Marketing and promotion of our assets		Enhance existing tourism product through targeted promotion, information, interpretation, signage tailored to outcomes of visitor profile work Develop opportunities to integrate and cross market assets of similar interest	Renfrewshire Council Visit Scotland Renfrewshire Council
Theme: Providing Authentic Experiences				
Events and Festival Development	Building the capability and capacity of our assets Marketing and promotion of our assets		Development of evaluation framework for annual review of events and outcomes Annual revision and development of Events Programme, informed by baseline tourist intelligence and review of previous year performance.	Renfrewshire Council

		Development and resourcing of proactive approach to bidding for events such as conferences, national and international events	
Marketing	Marketing and promotion of our assets	Development of thematic and segmented 'proposition' for Renfrewshire targeted at key visitor groups, for example Families	Renfrewshire Council Visit Scotland
Product Development	Building the capability and capacity of our assets Marketing and promotion of our assets	Development of key asset projects identified in Paisley Town Centre Asset Strategy, including:- • The extension of Paisley Museum and Art Gallery as a major textile and fashion Museum • Museum Store • Design Centre • Paisley Abbey Cloister • Sma Shot Cottages	Renfrewshire Council Tourist Attractions Visit Scotland

4 Implementation

- 4.1 The delivery of our ambitious vision will require strong and strategic partnerships between a range of public, private, voluntary and third sector organisations. The Council will play a key role in this process, driving forward the strategy and partnership working across sectors. We will also lead on assembling 'baseline' tourism information which will direct long term implementation.
- 4.2 But the Council cannot deliver the vision alone. We recognise that successful delivery of actions within the strategy will be driven by building on the specialist knowledge and expertise of our partners. Our key role will therefore be one of facilitation across sectors to ensure that actions are aligned with partners most suited to their delivery.

Funding

- 4.3 The Council has secured funding to appoint a dedicated tourism officer to drive forward the initial phases of the strategy. Funding is also in place to deliver on initial 'baseline' information gathering and to deliver a programme of customer care throughout tourism assets owned by the Council.
- 4.4 While funding is in place for a number of the programmes set out in the Action Plan, many actions are dependent on accessing additional sources of funding. We will work with the public, private, voluntary and third sector partners to identify and secure a range of funding opportunities which enable delivery of the strategy.

Monitoring

- 4.5 The timeframe of the strategy aligns with our bid for City of Culture Status for Paisley in 2017. It forms part of a Strategy for Growth which will support the development of our tourism sector to play a key role both in the bid and as a major part of a successful City of Culture in 2021.
- 4.6 Delivery of actions within the strategy will be monitored annually to review progress and report on outcomes. The review will provide an opportunity to consider actions which are not being progressed or being delivered at a slower pace, while allowing the development of new initiatives. The Tourism Strategy and Action Plan will be updated every two years, informed by the monitoring process.

5 Longer Term

- 5.1 The strategy defined above will provide the foundations for sustainable growth in the years 2017 – 2021. Having developed a clear understanding of the assets, gathered intelligence on the current visitor numbers and untapped audiences, brokered the dialogue between agencies, marketed the existing offering to best effect and grown the events and festivals programme, Renfrewshire will be in a good position to further build its reputation as a visitor destination.
- 5.2 From 2017, the focus will shift to growing the available visitor offering in Renfrewshire. With relationships having been cemented, the opportunities identified for cross provider offerings will be exploited. Events and festivals will continue to expand and extend. Visitors will require the private sector tourism infrastructure services to be in place; hotels, bars, restaurants, coffee shops and transport provision should see a real financial benefit that can be measured and make a visible difference to our towns. Additionally, the effect of bidding for events and conferences will increase business visitors into Renfrewshire, assisting the local economy.
- 5.3 Open spaces in our towns, including parks, squares and vacant land, will have been embraced by programmes that utilise these as opportunities for events and venues for supporting cultural activities.

- 5.4 The next strategy will examine opportunities to support the growth of this private sector tourism infrastructure.
- 5.5 In Paisley, a museum store will be open in the High Street, offering access to Renfrewshire's fantastic collections that are not normally on show at the main museum. In addition to a diversification from retail in the town centre, the facility will provide another visitor attraction in the heart of the town and a signpost to the main museum. Funding permitting, the main museum will be undergoing a refurbishment and extension with works commencing in 2018, so the key collections can still be accessible over this time in the museum store.
- 5.6 Once complete (2019-2020), the Paisley museum will be a leading European attraction focused on textiles, costume & fashion and linked to international cultural foundations within the UK, India, the United States and elsewhere. Drawing an international audience, the facility will drive locally based innovation and research into fabric design and fabric conservation. It will act as a creative pathway- a place of learning and skills development in partnership with industry and Renfrewshire's further education facilities. Working with British Council will provide opportunities for creative exchanges with the countries inextricably linked with the Paisley pattern and the town's heritage.
- 5.7 New volunteers will be engaged to support the sustainability of the town's visitor attractions, such as Sma Shot Cottages. With the extra resource, the facility can increase its offering to accommodate the extra visitor numbers that comes with cross marketing.
- 5.8 Paisley Abbey will have had assistance to refresh their proposals for a fourth cloister and visitor centre. Benefitting from business development and marketing support supplied by the University of the West of Scotland as well as additional volunteering resource, the new fourth cloister will provide an additional visitor offer. Following the archaeological opportunities offered by a well publicised dig during 2017 in Scotland's Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology, the strategy will tap into a new audience that can be optimised through targeted marketing.
- 5.9 Clyde Muirshiel Park will be focussed on the delivery of its five year strategy, growing visitor numbers and the profile of the park as a natural destination of choice.
- 5.10 Braehead will be reconfigured to enhance the retail offering available. With the provision of a new hotel and arena, visitors into Renfrewshire will be increased from farther afield, delivering an improved position in addition to the daytrip market into longer stay accommodation. Again with discussion having been brokered in the shorter term strategy, the longer term offers opportunities for an improved Renfrewshire product and cross marketing between suppliers.
- 5.11 Building on the customer care training delivered to staff in Council heritage assets, the offering will be broadened to encompass Renfrewshire businesses who provide the welcome to our visitors and directly influence their perception and everyone they tell about their experience.
- 5.12 Finally, the City Deal programme of investment will bring together eight councils, including Renfrewshire, in the Glasgow and Clyde Valley City Region, sharing £1.13billion of public sector investment over the next decade. Three of the most important projects will see significant investment in the transport network with a new bridge crossing between Renfrew and Yoker, new investment on roads and access to the M8 and rail links between Glasgow Airport/Paisley Gilmour Street and the wider rail network. The longer term tourism strategy will seek to exploit these improved access routes through targeted marketing to the connected areas.

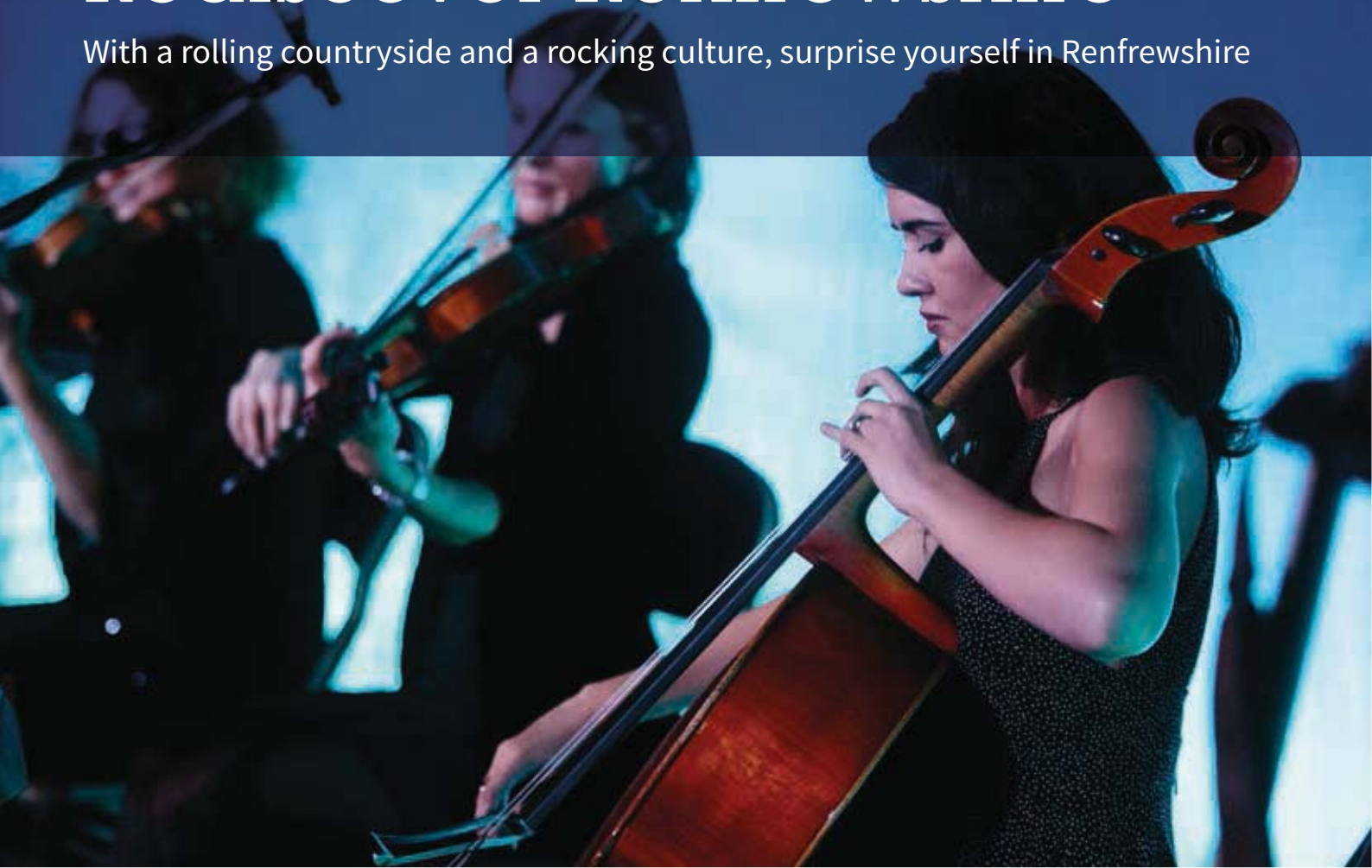
Action Plan 2017- 2021			
Action	Objectives	Outcomes	Delivery
Theme: Leadership and Collaboration			
Active Partnerships	Turn working partnerships into mutual product offering	Combined product offering between organisations	Renfrewshire Council Tourist Attractions Tour Operators Hoteliers Visit Scotland
Develop Creative Pathways with British Council	Increase International Visitors to Renfrewshire	Cultural Exchanges with international destinations on the Paisley Pattern route	UoWS British Council Renfrewshire Council
Theme: Growing Our Capacity and Capabilities			
Develop the tourism supporting businesses available in Renfrewshire	Growing our businesses	Increased demand for accommodation, measured through an increase in the number of hotel beds Increase in hotel occupancy rates	Renfrewshire Council Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce Hoteliers
Develop Paisley Abbey's 4 th Cloister	Preserve and enhance Paisley Abbey to generate greater heritage, economic and social benefits to Paisley, Scotland and the world.	Increase visitors to the Abbey and cross market to other facilities	Church of Scotland Renfrewshire Council
Refurbish and extend Paisley Museum	Widen the museum audience, focusing on international visitors Make a tangible contribution to the regeneration of Paisley as a place and as a leading cultural destination within Scotland	Increase visitor numbers (footfall and frequency) from circa 50,000 to 250,000 visitors per annum	Renfrewshire Council Visit Scotland Tourist Attractions Tour Operators Hoteliers
Clyde Muirshiel Park development	Implement five year strategy	Increase profile and visitor numbers	Clyde Muirshiel Park Management
Braehead Reconfiguration	Growing our businesses	Increase in hotel beds Improved visitor offering	INTU
Volunteering at Tourist attractions	Sustaining our attractions	Increased offering through increased opening hours and additional tours	Engage Renfrewshire
Theme: Improving the Customer Journey			

National and International Marketing for day visitors, cultural tourism and business travellers	Marketing and promotion of our improved assets	New and improved assets included in marketing materials. New marketing channels and audience development	Renfrewshire Council Visit Scotland Tourist Attractions Tour Operators Hoteliers Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce
Rollout customer care training to front facing organisations	Improve the visitor experience to Renfrewshire	Increase in positive ratings for Renfrewshire based attractions Improved customer care	Tourist Attractions Transport providers Hoteliers Restaurants and Bars
Improved connections with West Dunbartonshire as a result of City Deal	Increase appeal of Renfrewshire to our near neighbours	Increased number of day visitors from near neighbours	Renfrewshire Council Tourist Attractions Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce
Theme: Providing Authentic Experiences			
Extend events and festivals programme	Broaden and deepen the events programme Extend events and cultural programmes to new venues, parks and spaces across Renfrewshire.	Extension of events programme to enhance number of overnight stays Increase in visits to more than one attraction through cross marketing Increased number of hotel stays as a direct result of the events and festivals programme Increase in package offers centred around the events and festivals programme Greater awareness of Renfrewshire as an events destination	Renfrewshire Council Private Sector Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce Visit Scotland



Rediscover Renfrewshire

With a rolling countryside and a rocking culture, surprise yourself in Renfrewshire



Contents

Rediscover Renfrewshire	3
Culture and Heritage	5
Renfrewshire Ecclesiastical Trail	6
Museums and art galleries	8
Arts centres and theatres	10
Monuments and heritage buildings	13
Paisley 2021	15
Renfrewshire: 21 things you must do	16
Leisure and Recreation	19
Shopping and entertainment	21
Outdoor Activities	21
Parks and Gardens	23
Events	25
Upcoming events in 2016	26
SAY awards	27
How to get here	28
Contact	28

Rediscover Renfrewshire

With historic town centres and acres of rolling countryside; picturesque villages and some of Scotland's best modern shopping and leisure facilities, there is something for everyone in Renfrewshire.

We couldn't be any easier to reach; not only are we home to Glasgow Airport but we also have excellent road and direct rail links to Glasgow, the west of Scotland and beyond.

We are home to Scotland's largest town, Paisley, the home of the iconic *Paisley Pattern* and a place that still bears the legacy of its days at the centre of the global textile industry.

The town centre boasts the second-highest concentration of listed buildings anywhere in Scotland, including the 850-year-old Paisley Abbey,

Scotland's oldest public observatory, and its largest Baptist cathedral.

And you couldn't be visiting at a better time; the town is currently preparing to bid for UK City of Culture 2021, promoting unique heritage and the area's thriving events and cultural scene.

For those who love the outdoors, we can offer woodland walks, watersports and wildlife. If you fancy some shopping, Intu Braehead on the banks of the River Clyde is one of Scotland's biggest retail, entertainment and leisure facilities.

Come and rediscover Renfrewshire, it will surprise you!



Culture and heritage

Dig into our history and discover the rich heritage of Renfrewshire from William Wallace and Tannahill to royalty and revolutions.

The town of Paisley has a built heritage that dates back 1,000 years. Much of the building stock and the stories it embodies is based within its town centre, a walkable highly-accessible location.

Renfrewshire was at the heart of the industrial revolution. Between the late 18th and mid 19th century, it became synonymous with textiles and weaving. Paisley, the largest town in Scotland was particularly famous for the manufacture of thread and the production of the world renowned Paisley patterned shawl, endorsed by Queen Victoria and in great demand across the British Empire and America during the 19th century.

The cotton and silk thread mills generated vast wealth for some industrialists which is reflected in many of our splendid 19th century civic buildings and churches and in our public collections.

Sir Thomas Coats (1809–1883), responsible for growing J. & P. Coats into one of the largest thread manufacturing companies in the world, was one of the town's main philanthropic figures. His legacy is

substantial and includes the funding of projects such as the Coats Observatory, which houses a collection of late Victorian scientific apparatus relating to astronomy, meteorology and seismology, and the Grand Fountain.

Our internationally recognised textile, art and national history collections at Paisley Museum and Art Galleries and Paisley Shawl collection is the largest and best of its kind and you can watch our weaver in residence working the complex jacquard loom, recreating some of the original Paisley designs.

Paisley has a thriving performing arts sector, the character of which links generations through the diverse work of Paisley artists including the late Gerry Rafferty, playwright and artist John Byrne and Jim Dewar, Carol Laula, Tony McManus and Paulo Nutini.

Paisley is also home to PACE Theatre Company, the largest youth theatre company of its kind in the UK with a membership of over 2,000 young people aged between 5–21 years.

Renfrewshire Ecclesiastical Trail

Renfrewshire, and Paisley in particular, has more spectacular buildings per square foot than any other place in Scotland. The skyline is dotted with beautiful spires and towers. Start with the Abbey, the oldest, most beautiful ecclesiastical building in Renfrewshire and follow the trail around Paisley town centre and beyond to many beautiful rural villages which have their own stories to tell.

Paisley Abbey and the Place of Paisley

Paisley Abbey was founded in 1163 when Walter Fitzalan, the High Steward of Scotland, signed a charter at Fotheringhay for the founding of a Cluniac Monastery on the land he owned in Renfrewshire.

Thirteen Monks came from Much Wenlock in Shropshire to set up the priory on the site of the old Celtic Church founded by St Mirin in 6th century. In 1245, the priory was raised to the status of an Abbey, answerable only to the pope in Rome.

Under royal patronage, the Abbey became wealthy and influential and evidence exists of extensive trade between Paisley Abbey and commercial centres throughout Europe.

The Abbey was also a centre of learning and it is believed William Wallace, who played a prominent part in the Scottish Wars of Independence in the 13th century, was educated by the monks at Paisley Abbey. An architectural gem with a rich past, the Abbey today, as well as performing religious ceremonies, hosts concerts and cultural events throughout the year.

The Abbey offer tours twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 2pm and has a cafe, shop and small visitor centre, where visitors are made very welcome.

The Great Medieval Drain

The Great Medieval Drain is a vaulted subterranean structure dating from the medieval period. Extending to a length of about 90m, this finely crafted stone-lined 6ft high conduit supposedly took waste material from the Abbey complex to the White Cart river. In perfect condition, the navigable section, discovered in the early 1990s during an archaeological dig, is accessed via a surface manhole cover.

The archaeological investigations of the 1990s also unearthed a wealth of objects including rare specimens of organic material such as wood, leather and plant remains. Carved slates, some of which exhibit the earliest written polyphonic music yet discovered in the country and the largest assemblage of medieval pottery recovered from any site in Scotland were also discovered.

St Mirin's Cathedral

Designed by Thomas Baird in 1932, St Mirin's dedicated to the Patron Saint of Paisley, became a cathedral in 1948. This spectacular building is Romanesque with canted apse and tower-flanked narthex.

Thomas Coats Memorial Baptist Church

Built by the Coats family in memory of Thomas Coats, this building is the epitome of Victorian neo-gothic architecture. Designed by Hippolyte J. Blanc, and constructed in 1894 it is possibly the largest and most opulent Baptist Church in Britain, if not Europe. The churches eight arched crown spire is a principle feature of Paisley's skyline. The church, with its excellent acoustics, is often used as a concert venue and location for University graduation ceremonies, exhibitions and other cultural and heritage uses.

Oakshaw Trinity Church

Formerly Paisley High Parish Church, as it is located on the highest point within the Paisley townscape, the Oakshaw Trinity Church as now is, was originally designed by architect John White in 1764 with a steeple added in 1770. The church has a stunning plaster ceiling and seven notable stained glass windows.

Paisley Arts Centre (formerly The Laigh or Low Kirk), 1736

Built by the town council as the Paisley's first post-reformation church, the Paisley Art Centre was a place of worship for nearly 250 years until it was converted to its present purpose in 1987.

The Whithorn Way

A 127 mile (203 km) long distance trail to Whithorn Priory from Glasgow Cathedral that has been walked over the centuries by countless pilgrims.



Museums and art galleries

Paisley Museum and Art Galleries

Paisley Museum and Art Galleries was founded in 1871 and was intended for the intellectual improvement of the whole community. The museum building itself is an excellent example of a Victorian Civic Encyclopaedic Museum, in the same vein as the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum in Glasgow. The building was paid for by Sir Peter Coats of the famous Coats Thread Manufacturing Company.

Renfrewshire Council's Museum and Art Galleries is in possession of over 350,000 objects, comprising of 57 collections, one of the best museum collections in Scotland. The National Audit of Scotland's Museum and Galleries (2002) identified Renfrewshire Council as being seventh in the list of organisations with the largest collection of international, UK and national significance.

The collections include internationally-recognised textile collections—over 1,000 original Paisley Shawls, pattern and design books; internationally-recognised artworks including the Paisley Art Institute collection of Glasgow Boys and contemporary works and one of the best 20th century studio ceramics collections in Scotland and an important British collection; an internationally-recognised natural history collection including James John Audubon's *The Birds of America*—435 hand-coloured aquatint plates, one of the most desirable and spectacular books ever produced, and the nine-volume *"American Ornithology"* by Alexander Wilson. Born in Paisley, Wilson is known as the "Father of American Ornithology". The material held by Paisley is considered second only to Harvard University.

Johnstone History Museum

Established and run by the Johnstone History Society, this small but very informative museum, hosted by supermarket giant Morrisons, contains archival material from two of the town's best-known firms: Wm Paton Ltd—shoelace and twine manufacturers and Clifton and Baird Ltd—machine tool makers, as well as other valuable information relating to the town's heritage.

Renfrew Community Museum

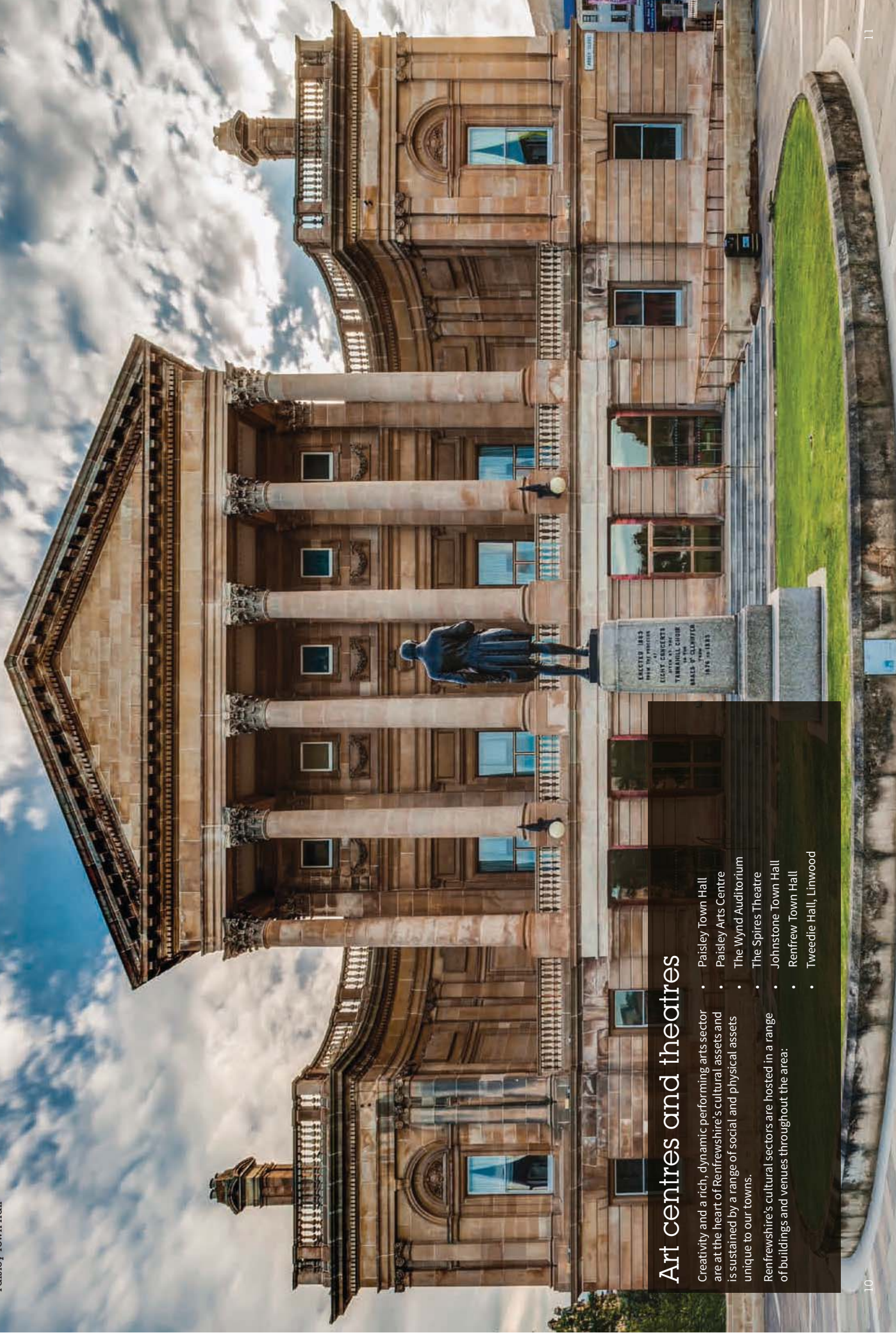
Situated within the Category A listed mid-Victorian Renfrew Town Hall, often referred to as the Disney Castle this relatively new museum tells the story of Renfrew's past and present and commemorates Renfrew's 600 years as a Royal Burgh. With interactive exhibition, listening display and much more, it is well worth a visit.

Coats Observatory

The Coats Observatory is an unique, purpose-built 19th century observatory building comprising of a planetarium and observation platform. The oldest public observatory in the country houses a collection of late-Victorian scientific apparatus relating to astronomy, meteorology and seismology; one of the four best scientific collections in the UK.

One of the key pieces includes a fully-working orrery, (model of the solar system), made by Adam Hilger. Access to the Observatory is via Paisley Museum and Art Galleries.





Art centres and theatres

Creativity and a rich, dynamic performing arts sector are at the heart of Renfrewshire's cultural assets and is sustained by a range of social and physical assets unique to our towns.

Renfrewshire's cultural sectors are hosted in a range of buildings and venues throughout the area:

- Paisley Town Hall
- Paisley Arts Centre
- The Wynd Auditorium
- The Spires Theatre
- Johnstone Town Hall
- Renfrew Town Hall
- Tweedie Hall, Linwood

Monuments and heritage buildings

The Wallace Monument

"Knight of Elderslie and Guardian of Scotland"

On the traditional site of his home in Elderslie, is a memorial erected to Scotland's national hero, Sir William Wallace, (1274-1305), famous for his battles against the tyranny of Edward Plantagenet as part of the Scottish Wars of Independence. The monument comprises a series of sculpted plaques around a column reminiscent of a market cross. The plaques illustrate the key moments in Wallace's career as Knight of Elderslie and Guardian of Scotland.

Paisley's Public Sculptures Trail

The public sculpture and statuary of Paisley stands as a civic collection of the highest quality and widest stylistic span. As befits Scotland's largest town, Paisley can stand against most Scottish cities (Glasgow excepted) in the simple frequency of its monuments. The reason for this is two-fold: the town produced an inordinate number of deservedly famous people and has long history of rising to confess and commemorate those who have contributed to the wealth of human endeavour, particularly over the 19th century.

The Alexander Stoddart Collection

Alexander Stoddart, best known for his civic monuments and classical sculptures, has been Sculptor in Ordinary to the Queen in Scotland since 2008. Sandy's studio, containing approximately 200-300 pieces is currently situated in the University of the West of Scotland's, Paisley Campus.

Textile Heritage

During the 18th and 19th centuries Paisley was one of the leading textile manufacturing towns in Europe. The textile industry, and in particular the Paisley Pattern and later the manufacture of thread, created important symbols of British industry. The wealth created from this manufacturing base is reflected in the ostentatious architecture that dominates much of Paisley's townscape. However, it was not only Paisley that was involved in textiles, much of Renfrewshire was also party to this growth. The Renfrewshire towns and villages and in particular, Paisley, continue to exhibit and celebrate much of this heritage. Visit the loom and shawl gallery at Paisley Museum and Art Galleries.

Sma' Shot Cottages

The Sma' Shot Cottage complex is unique in Scotland and allows a great opportunity to see two distinct periods in Paisley's weaving history. Enter the Weaver's Cottage and be transported back nearly 250 years. After experiencing life in the late 1700s, jump forward 70 years to experience life in the town of Paisley in the mid-1800s, as portrayed by a small row of three cottages that were built for mill workers and their families.

Weaver's Cottage Kilbarchan

Step into the Weaver's Cottage and be transported back to the days when Kilbarchan was at the heart of the thriving Scottish textile industry. This restored historic 18th century cottage vividly recreates the living and working conditions of a typical handloom weaver.

Paisley Thread Mill Museum

Explore the history of Paisley's great thread manufacturers, the Coats and Clark families, in one of the great mill buildings within the Anchor Mills complex.

The Museum holds a wonderful collection of artefacts, photographs, thread samples, machinery, patterns and much more.

Tannahill's Cottage

Robert Tannahill, weaver and Poet, compatriot of Robert Burns, lived here all his life (1774-1810). Built by his father, the cottage is now home to the Paisley Burns Club, founded in 1805, and one of the oldest Burns Clubs in the world. Re-opened in 2003 after a fire, Tannahill's Cottage contains a new display of Tannahill and Burns memorabilia.





Paisley for UK City of Culture 2021

You may already know Paisley is bidding to be UK City of Culture in 2021, as part of ambitious plans to transform the town's future.

Paisley has a unique story to tell as the home of the Paisley Pattern and the one-time centre of the world's textile industry.

The bid is all about re-telling that story to the world, and to bring people here to experience everything the town has to offer for themselves.

(Just to be clear Paisley is a town—Scotland's largest—and not a city, but that's ok as the competition is open to large towns too!)

Winning would mean a year-long programme of major national and international events, attracting tourism and investment, creating new jobs, and using culture to change people's lives for the better, with economic benefits for the wider West of Scotland region.

But the bid is part of a wider set of plans aimed at transforming the town and there are a number of exciting projects set to happen whether Paisley wins the title or not.

That includes a proposed £56.7m transformation of Paisley Museum into an international-class destination based around textiles and heritage, as well as a publicly-accessible museum store on the town's High Street.

The bid will also build on the area's existing successful events programme—which already includes the only UK start leg of the world-famous Monte Carlo Classic Rally, the 2016 British Pipe Band Championships, and the annual Spree festival, due to take place in October.

The UK City of Culture competition is run by the UK Government's Department of Culture, Media and Sport, and the bid is due to be lodged with them in spring 2017, which means the next year is a big one for Paisley.

The bid is being taken forward by a partnership featuring Renfrewshire Council and a wide range of local organisations including business, cultural and community groups.

Find out more about the town by visiting the website at www.paisley2021.co.uk or on Twitter @Paisley2021 or Facebook /paisley2021

You can also show your support on social media by using #Paisley2021

Renfrewshire: 21 things you must do



1. Marvel at the Alexander Stoddart Collection



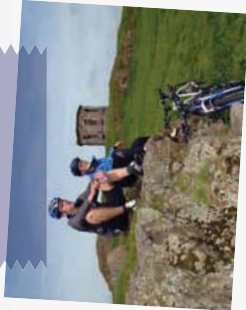
2. Visit Paisley's medieval Abbey—"Cradle of the Stewarts"



3. Follow our fascinating heritage trail



4. Enjoy a theatre production or stand-up comedy at Paisley Arts Centre



5. Hire a bike and cycle your way around some of Renfrewshire's great country parks



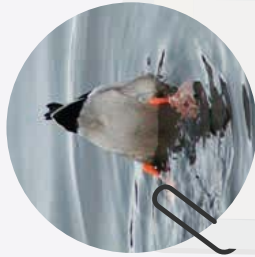
6. Swap your pedals for paddles and kayak, windsurfer or sail across Castle Semple Loch's Centre of Excellence for watersports



7. Scale the heights at Lapwing Lodge Outdoor Centre



8. Give yourself some retail therapy—visit Intu Braehead's shopping centre and leisure facilities



9. Visit our feathered friends at Lochwinnoch RSPB Nature Reserve



10. Take off your shoes and socks and paddle in the Grand Fountain



11. Challenge or pamper yourself at one of our 4/5 star golf and spa resorts



14. Rock out at The Spree—Paisley's annual festival of music and comedy



15. Depart D'Ecosse—join us at the starting line of the Monte Carlo Classic Car Rally



17. Enjoy the British Pipe Band Championships



16. Bang your Drum with the rest of the Paisley Buddies at the Sma' Shot Parade



18. "Go where no man has gone before"—visit the Coats Observatory



20. Have a ghostly experience at our Spooktacular Halloween Festival



21. Design a new "Pattern" at our Paisley Make event



Leisure and recreation

At Castle Semple Visitor Centre in Lochwinnoch you can hire mountain bikes and set out across the rugged hills of Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park, the largest of its kind in Scotland. Alternatively, you can swap pedals for paddles and kayak, windsurf or sail across the waters of Castle Semple Loch.

Why not take up the reins at the five star Ingliston Equestrian Centre and Country Club—the heart and soul of equestrianism in Scotland. It boasts unrivalled facilities for all levels of the sport. This equestrian mecca comprises of; indoor and outdoor riding arenas, livery, comfortable lodges, a luxury boutique hotel, a variety of excellent eating places as well as conference and meeting rooms and a marriage suite. Add some of the best countryside overlooking the Firth of Clyde and you have the complete equestrian experience.

You'll be spoiled for choice by the abundance of parks and gardens Renfrewshire has to offer. Enjoy a lazy afternoon or picnic in the summer sunshine beside the Grand Fountain, or wrap up and enjoy stunning autumn and winter views over the Clyde Valley to Ben Lomond and beyond from the 1,300 acre woodland and moorland of Gleniffer Braes Country Park.

Shopping and entertainment

Intu Braehead shopping and leisure resort

Enjoy the ultimate shopping experience at intu Braehead from fabulous fashion, to food and drink plus a fantastic home and furniture offering.

If you're looking for a day out for all the family, Soar at intu Braehead has real snow slopes where you can ski or snowboard, there are also bars, restaurants, a 12 screen cinema, tenpin bowling, a climbing wall and aerial assault course, all under one roof.

Alternatively if you prefer to spectate rather than participate, pop over to the Braehead International Arena and watch ice hockey, curling or other major sporting events or listen to some of the most memorable big names in the music business.

The Big Adventure at Linwood

Come along to one of Europe's biggest and best indoor adventure play centre for a great fun family day out with the kids. With five levels of slides, climbs, tubes and spinners, the big adventure is the ultimate fun experience. The Big Adventure has play areas to suit all ages, even toddlers under one year old.

Outdoor activities

Golf

In a relatively small area you can play a dozen good-quality golf courses of varying types from low-lying parkland courses, to moorland edge upland courses, with wonderful views over the Clyde estuary. These include courses at Renfrew, Elderslie, Erskine and Mar Hall.

The Sample Trail

Less than half an hour from Glasgow Central and minutes from Paisley, Irvine and Ardrossan, on the National Cycle Route 7, the Sample Trail at Lochwinnoch is the place to find fresh air, great walks, watersports and wildlife as well as traditional pubs, craft and gift shops.

Make a full day of it by walking the whole of the trail's 12.5 kilometres around Castle Sample Loch.

At the RSPB Nature Reserve borrow binoculars to watch wildlife from the visitor centre and hides or go wildlife pond dipping and bug hunting.

At Castle Sample Visitor Centre hire a rowing boat or kayak and get out on the Loch, or hire bikes and enjoy traffic-free routes on the trail and around Muirshiel Country Park.

See the historic features of this once designed landscape, explore the maze and take in stunning views from Courtshaw Hill or Kenmure Temple Hill.

Sample real ales in a 200-hundred-year-old pub or lunch in one of several good eating places in Lochwinnoch or Howwood.

Shop for really interesting gifts and locally-produced food in the village galleries and shops.

Lapwing Lodge Outdoor Centre

Lapwing Lodge started out life as a sanatorium for the Coats Thread Mill workers in 1910 until 1955. In 1960, Paisley Scout Groups began using the building and site for camping before purchasing the site in 1988 and making improvements to the deteriorated Victorian building, Lapwing Lodge.

Lapwing Lodge continues to be used for Scout Camps and other youth organisations but it also caters for individuals, businesses and educational use.

Facilities at the outdoor centre include a climbing wall, archery, kayaking, cycling, high ropes and an army style assault course and is ideal for corporate and team building events and family fun.

Parks and gardens

Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park

The Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park is open everyday with free parking and lots of buggy-friendly signposted walks and nature trails. Escape from the stress-filled world and relax with a tea or coffee in one of the park's centres while the children play, try an outdoor activity with a qualified instructor, or take to the water on Scotland's first aqua-trikes.

For watersports, there is easy access to spacious but safe and shallow Castle Semple Loch, with no speedboats to disturb you. Launch your own dinghy, windsurf, canoe, hire a boat or join one of the clubs. There is a wide range of equipment and fully qualified instructors who offer a variety of courses to suit all skill levels

Lochwinnoch RSBP Nature Reserve

The RSBP is a great place to spend the day outdoors. The reserve includes two shallow lochs (Barr Loch and Aird Meadow Loch), together with their surrounding water meadows, marshes and woodlands. There are also two nature trails; The The Dubbs Water Trail and the Aird Meadow Trail. The reserve is the perfect spot to watch whooper swans, wigsons and a wide variety of ducks. In spring, don't miss the elaborate displays of the great crested grebes.

Gleniffer Braes Country Park

The wildlife of the park is typical of woodland and moorland. Birds regularly seen include skylark, meadow pipit, kestrel and sparrowhawk. The tit families feed in the treetops along with goldcrest and chaffinches. Tree creepers can occasionally be seen in Glen Park where the mature trees provide a constantly changing pattern of colour as the seasons change. Colourful wild flowers include heath spotted orchid, wild pansy and tormentil on the grasslands, and red campion and herb robert in the woodlands. As dusk falls, shy roe deer step from the shadows to graze, and tawny owls hunt for small mammals such as bank voles and woodmice.

Barshaw Park

At 55 acres, Barshaw Park is the biggest of the formal parks in Paisley. Facilities include a pond used by model boat enthusiasts, an outdoor gym, children's play areas, crazy golf and putting (seasonal), peaceful walled gardens, nature corner, café and a fantastic miniature railway (seasonal).

Finlaystone Estate (opposite)

Finlaystone Country Park and Estate

Finlaystone is a beautiful country estate managed by the family of the Chief of the Clan Macmillan. With imaginative play areas, woodland walks, picnic areas, colourful gardens and tumbling waterfalls

Jenny's Well

Unique among Paisley's parks, Jenny's Well is a nature reserve along the White Cart Water—a peaceful haven for wildlife not far from the centre of town. Formerly a quarry, the area has now been landscaped and has a network of paths.

The reserve is home to dozens of species of birds, trees, flowers, orchids, even otters and eels in the White Cart River. There are plenty of benches to sit and have a picnic. If you're lucky you might even see a kingfisher by the river.

Whatever time of year you visit, make sure you spend a little time on the viewing platform overlooking the River Cart. You can also see the viaduct bridge which carries the Paisley Canal railway line over the river. The bridge was built in 1806; it was designed by famous civil engineer Thomas Telford.

Paisley Moss Nature Reserve

Right through the year there is something new and exciting to be experienced at Paisley Moss local nature reserve. You only need an hour to enjoy a circular walk around the reserve, starting and finishing at the entrance off St Andrews Crescent.

Forming part of Glasgow Airport and bounded by motorway slip roads, Paisley Moss is a hidden oasis for wildlife. A remnant of a larger site, it is now a local nature reserve and contains ponds, mossy marshes, reeds and sedge beds supporting hundreds of different animals and plants.

Paisley Fountain Gardens

Originally laid out in 1797, Fountain Gardens are Paisley's oldest public park. The current layout and name date from the 1860s. It consists of a grand geometric layout with broad walkways, all of which lead to the Grand Fountain, an ornate cast-iron fountain at the centre of the park which contains statues of herons, dolphins and walruses.



Events

Renfrewshire has a fantastic line-up of cultural and sporting events planned for 2016. This includes: Scotland's largest Beer Festival, the British Pipe Band Championships, the revolutionary Sma' Shot Day, Scottish Album of the Year (SAY) Awards and the annual Spree, Paisley's national festival of music, comedy and street entertainment. The European Curling Championships are also being held in Renfrewshire this year, showcasing first class facilities and attracting visitors from across the globe.

Upcoming events in 2016

21 May
British Pipe Band Championships
St James Playing Fields, Paisley

One of the biggest events in world piping is on its way to Paisley. Expect hundreds of the world's best bands and thousands of spectators to gather for the free day-long event. Attractions include Highland dancing, family fun and a Scottish food and drink village.

28 May
Medieval Fair
Abbey Close, Paisley

Step back in time as Abbey Close transforms into a medieval campsite for a day. Featuring archery and weaponry demos, live falconry, birds of prey, costumes and fun for all the family.

29 June
Scottish Album of the Year Award (SAY)
Paisley Town Hall

Paolo Nutini, Gerry Rafferty... Paisley is a town synonymous with musical talent and is proud to host this year's most prestigious and exciting arts prize for Scottish artists.

2 July
Sma' Shot Day
Paisley Town Centre

One of the oldest workers' festivals in the world—Sma' Shot Day will kick off with the annual parade from Brodie Park to Abbey Close where visitors can expect an afternoon-long festival of live entertainment, food, street theatre and more, ending with the traditional burning of the Cork.

23 July
Paisley Pipe Band Competition
Paisley Town Hall

Enjoy the sight, sound and spectacle of some of the top pipe bands from throughout Scotland and beyond as they compete in the heart of Paisley.

13 August
Fire Engine Rally
Johnstone Town Centre

Magnificent machines from through the ages will parade into Johnstone town centre for a day of free family fun and exciting fire drills.

29 August–4 September
Paisley Make
Paisley Abbey

Explore Paisley's history of crafting, textiles and artisanship and meet internationally artists and makers in this week-long festival of heritage and creative workshops and talks.

31 August–7 September
Paisley Abbey Drain Archaeological Trial
Paisley Town Centre

Discover the magnificent Abbey Drain, an imposing stone lined tunnel underneath the 12th century Paisley Abbey as part of Doors Open Day.

3–4 September
Doors Open Day Across Renfrewshire

Step inside and explore Renfrewshire's historic and beautiful buildings as their doors open to the public for the weekend. Visit www.doorsopendays.org.uk for more information.

10 September
Stewart 700 Conference
Paisley Abbey

Celebrate 700 years since the birth of the first Stewart King, Robert II, with a one-day feast of music, medieval fayre, guest speakers with Stewarts from all over the world.

14–22 October
The Spree
Paisley Town Centre

Paisley's national festival of music and comedy returns with the Spiegeltent in County Square and heaps going on in the town. Expect great gigs, musical performances, street entertainment and more.

28–29 October
Paisley Halloween Festival
Paisley Town Centre

Join the spooktacular lantern-lit parade through Paisley to kick-off this thrilling two-day event with ghoulishly good fun for kids of all ages.

5 November
Paisley Fireworks Spectacular
Paisley Town Centre

Enjoy a spectacular feast of music and entertainment as Paisley lights up with a stunning fireworks display following an afternoon of street entertainment and family fun.

12 November
Paisley Christmas Lights Switch-On
Paisley Town Centre

Join Santa and his reindeer as they visit Paisley for the switching-on of the town's Christmas lights. Featuring top musical acts, a Christmas market and kids entertainment.

18–26 November
European Curling Championships
Braehead Arena

Immerse yourself in a week of top international curling as hundreds of European curling teams arrive in Renfrew for the phenomenal 2016 championships.

19 November
Johnstone Christmas Lights Switch-on
Johnstone Town Centre

Houstoun Square comes alive with Christmas spirit for this day-long feast of family fun. Expect local musicians, funfair and Christmas themed activities.

26 November
Renfrew Christmas Lights Switch-on
Renfrew Town Centre

Enjoy a day-long feast of Christmas fun and family activities in the heart of Renfrew. Featuring Provost's carol service, outdoor funfair and a sensational fireworks finale.

The Scottish Album of the Year Award (SAY)

The SAY Award will be held in Paisley in 2016 and 2017. Paisley will be drawing on its broad musical roots, with internationally acclaimed musicians hailing from the town including; Gerry Rafferty, Paolo Nutini, Joe Egan, Nicholas Currie aka Momus, David Sneddon (Fame Academy), Kelly Marie (Feels Like I'm in Love), Stealers Wheel, and Chris Glen to name a few.

The SAY Award ceremony is coming to Paisley Town Hall on Wednesday 29 June 2016 as part of the build-up to Paisley's bid for UK City of Culture 2021, focussing on culture and heritage to transform the area's future.

Jean Cameron, director of Paisley's bid for UK City of Culture 2021, said:

"We are all very excited that Paisley will be home to one of the most prestigious events in the Scottish musical calendar. The SAY Award and Paisley are a great fit—the town has a wonderful musical heritage and continues to be a cultural hotspot for creative talent to this day."

2015 SAY awards winner, Kathryn Joseph (pictured) hasn't stopped since winning the prestigious award, when she beat off strong competition from and including; SLAM; Belle And Sebastian and Paisley-born musician, Paolo Nutini, with her album entitled 'Bones you have thrown me and blood I've spilled'.

How to get here

By Air

Renfrewshire is home to Glasgow International Airport, from which 30 airlines fly nearly nine million people to and from 130 destinations across the UK, Europe, the Middle East and North America.

By Rail

Scotland's fourth busiest rail station, Paisley Gilmour Street is 10 minutes by train from Glasgow City Centre. By 2024, Paisley Gilmour Street and Glasgow International Airport will be linked directly by rail.

By Road

At the heart of Renfrewshire, Paisley is an eight mile journey and 12 minute drive from Glasgow city centre.

Contact

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