

**To: Leadership Board**

**On: 6 December 2023**

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**Report by: Chief Executive**

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**Heading: Renfrewshire's Tourism Today: Tourism Plan 2024 - 2027**

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present Renfrewshire's Tourism Today: Tourism Plan 2024 - 2027. Developed in consultation with national and local partners within the tourism and hospitality sectors, the plan sets out a range of themes and priorities to support the growth of the visitor economy across Renfrewshire over the next three years.
- 1.2 A copy of the Tourism Plan can be found in Appendix 1 of this report.
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## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Board:
- (i) Approves the Tourism Plan as a basis to support the growth of the tourism sector across Renfrewshire over the next three years;
  - (ii) Notes the proposed creation of a Tourism Leadership Group comprised of stakeholders and operators working in the tourist sector, to oversee and drive delivery of actions identified within the plan.
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## **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Renfrewshire Visitor Plan 2018-2021 was approved by the Leadership Board in December 2017, with annual progress reports provided to the Board updating members on activity and progress against strategy targets. A final update report, summarising outcomes on completion of the plan cycle, was noted by the Board of 20 December 2020. This report also set out impacts of the Covid pandemic on the tourist sector and the opportunity to refresh the approach to Renfrewshire's offer in this context.

## **4. Renfrewshire Tourism Plan**

- 4.1 The new Tourism Plan has been developed with key stakeholders from the tourism and hospitality sectors across Renfrewshire, considering post pandemic opportunities to refocus the area's tourism offer and role in the economy. The plan seeks to:-
- Grow the value of tourism in Renfrewshire;
  - Continue to build Renfrewshire's reputation as a tourist destination and visibility to attract visitors;
  - Continue to drive a high quality visitor experience which enhances the benefits of tourism and contributes strongly to the Renfrewshire economy;
  - Prioritise actions which build on Renfrewshire's tourism offer over the next three years.
- 4.2 In particular, the plan reflects on recent and ongoing investment in cultural infrastructure, such as Paisley Museum and Paisley Town Hall, a vibrant cultural and event programme and outdoor active pursuits within rural villages and Country Parks as key to heightening profile of Renfrewshire's tourist offer and driving increased footfall.
- 4.3 Business Pointer, who were previously appointed in 2022 to undertake a review of the current position of Renfrewshire's tourism economy, were commissioned to produce the plan.

### *Consultation and Engagement*

- 4.4 Development of the Tourism Plan was informed by a series of consultation events and workshops with stakeholders from the tourism and hospitality sectors which sought to consider the current position within Renfrewshire and to support the development of a refreshed proposition for the future. This included:-
- Stage one, a review of the current position and proposition of the region, a workshop with the Renfrewshire Economic Leadership Panel and two officer workshops for those teams with a role in delivery of activities contributing to tourism and the visitor economy.
  - Stage two, an online survey to the wider tourism industry and two tourism industry workshops, hosted in Paisley and Johnstone, leading to the identification of key themes and priorities.
  - Stage three, an officer workshop and in-depth interviews with internal and external stakeholders across Renfrewshire based on the draft plan.

## *Key Priorities and Themes*

- 4.5 Consultation outcomes supported the identification of four key priorities as the basis for action and investment to support the tourist and visitor economy in Renfrewshire over the next three years.

These are:-

**(i) Tourism Industry Collaboration**

The focus of this priority is to support more effective partnership working between the public, private and third sectors to support tourism across Renfrewshire, with a particular focus on a stronger private sector lead. The key action underpinning this priority is the formation of a new Tourism Leadership group to drive greater collaboration.

**(ii) Paisley**

This priority seeks to build on the strengths of Paisley, both as a destination and a gateway to wider Renfrewshire, in particular capitalising on the major investment in cultural infrastructure within the town. Key actions under this priority include enhanced marketing of assets, both for events and as a basis for business tourism supporting greater footfall.

**(iii) Rural Renfrewshire**

Actions around this priority seek to grow opportunities around outdoor activities which maximise Renfrewshire's significant natural and heritage assets. Key actions under this priority include supporting enhancements at Castle Semple Country Park and to the tourism offer of Renfrewshire's rural villages, based on both their natural and built heritage.

**(iv) Business Tourism**

This priority seeks to grow the business tourism market in Renfrewshire by supporting greater opportunities for conferences, events, academic and corporate meetings to take place within the area. Key actions within this priority include further work to identify the scale of this opportunity, marketing of venues to support conferences and events, as well as stronger collaboration with the Glasgow Convention Bureau and professional conference organisers.

- 4.6 A series of cross-cutting key themes which underpin the plan and are relevant to the priorities for future action and investment were also produced. These focus on:-

- **Product and Skills Development** – Ensuring that new products and experiences are being developed and supported to enhance and refresh the destination offer within Renfrewshire;

- **Visitor Marketing and the Quality of Visitor Experiences** – To continue to market and promote Renfrewshire, building upon several years of brand investment.
- **The Environment and Sustainability** - Utilising Renfrewshire's 'green assets' such as local parks, nature reserves and larger assets such as Glenniffer Braes and Castle Semple Country Parks and Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park, to respond to visitors' desire for more tourist opportunities which are nature focussed and support the journey to net zero.
- **Infrastructure and Development** - Development of an enhanced active travel provision which links key tourism destinations and visitor activities;
- **Events** - Supporting the attraction of new events to the area which help to drive additional visitor numbers, building on Renfrewshire's already successful events programme.

## 5. Next Steps

- 5.1 The key driver for the plan as a next step is the formation of a new Tourism Leadership Group. This industry-led group will recognise the opportunities, lead on change and confirm the actions required to deliver priorities identified in the plan. The first meeting will take place in Q1 of 2024.
- 5.2 Delivery and the performance of the Plan will be considered by the Leadership group and reported to the Board on a regular basis. Measurement will take place across a range of outcomes, monitored using the STEAM (Scottish Tourism Economic Activity Monitor) model, which is used by many local authorities.

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## Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – None.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None.
3. **Community/Council Planning** – None.
4. **Legal** – None.
5. **Property/Assets** – None.
6. **Information Technology** – None.
7. **Equality & Human Rights** -
  - (a) 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 because for example it is for noting only.

8. **Health & Safety** - None.
  9. **Procurement** – None.
  10. **Risk** – None.
  11. **Privacy Impact** – None.
  12. **COSLA Policy Position** – Not Applicable.
  13. **Climate Risk** – Not Applicable.
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## **Appendices**

- (a) Renfrewshire's Tourism Today – Tourism Plan 2024 – 2027.
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# RENFREWSHIRE'S TOURISM TODAY



TOURISM PLAN • 2024-2027



# INTRODUCTION

Tourism and hospitality's importance to Renfrewshire lies in over 6,000 jobs and 400 businesses in the area, with a value of £120m p.a.

The product is diverse with an extensive cultural and heritage offer, urban and rural experiences, vast areas of green spaces for outdoor activities and wide-ranging accommodation all appealing to a broad demographic. 3.5m people are within 1½ hours drive time.

The Tourism Plan is for everyone in tourism and hospitality, not just the public sector. Successful destinations can only succeed if stakeholders are fully immersed in planning and taking action – in marketing, product development and communication.

Post COVID, there is a chance to recalibrate the area's tourism offer, as well as strengthen tourism's role in stimulating the economy. Crucially, in Paisley, continuing investment in Paisley's cultural infrastructure - including Paisley Museum, the Town Hall and the Learning and Cultural Hub, as well as Paisley Abbey – together with the hosting of successful events and an energetic cultural programme, are changing perceptions of the area and offer new opportunities for heightening profile and footfall.

The rural villages and country parks, including Castle Semple, demonstrated their appeal during COVID and the quality of the rural and active outdoors visitor experience can be substantially built upon too.

## OUR VISION

**A new mindset and bold new approach to tourism, putting our communities, our people, our visitors, our businesses, and our environment at the heart of everything we do.**

## TOURISM TODAY



**6,000**

RENFREWSHIRE JOBS



**£120M**

INDUSTRY VALUE  
PER YEAR



**+400**

RENFREWSHIRE  
BUSINESSES



**+1M**

EST. VISITS TO  
ATTRACTIONS



**9M**

GLASGOW AIRPORT  
PASSENGERS



**19M**

BRAEHEAD AND  
XSITE CUSTOMERS



**3.5M**

PEOPLE WITHIN 1.5 HRS  
DRIVE - RENFREWSHIRE'S  
MARKET



# TOURISM TOMORROW EMBRACING THE GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

## Development of the Tourism Plan

Following surveys and workshops, this Tourism Plan for Renfrewshire identifies the objectives and priorities to build the destination, capitalise on considerable investment to date, build our reputation and sustain and grow the industry and businesses in it over the next three years.

## Tourism Plan Objectives:

- To grow the value of tourism in Renfrewshire
- To build Renfrewshire's reputation and visibility to attract visitors
- To enhance the benefits of tourism by delivering the very best for our visitors, our businesses, our people, our communities and our environment
- To prioritise actions for the private sector and tourism trade and the public sector to further build Renfrewshire's tourism offer

## Why Now?

- Capital investment of £113m in Paisley's cultural infrastructure is nearing completion
- New investment in Castle Semple and Muirshiel Country Parks is now planned
- The impact of investment in destination marketing, with the visitor website - paisley.is with over 1.2m unique users - a one-stop-shop for visitor information as well as funded visitor campaigns and PR generating 1.2bn opportunities to see and hear something positive about visiting Renfrewshire.
- The importance of "greening" tourism in the drive to net zero emissions
- Greater engagement with industry players in the design and promotion of the tourism offer is needed

- Proximity to Glasgow Airport and Braehead and the importance of capitalising on Glasgow City Region, and 3½ million people living within a 1.5 hours' drivetime
- Increasing local and community tourism – encouraging residents to be visitors in their own area
- Build on the national tourism strategy – Scotland Outlook 2030 – with its priorities of building on the quality of people, places, businesses and experiences, with sustainability and industry collaboration and leadership at its heart



# TOURISM PLAN PRIORITIES

The following sets out the priorities for Renfrewshire's visitor economy in the period 2024-2027.

## 1. Tourism Industry Collaboration

**AIM:** To get public, private and third sectors working together to support tourism, with private operators taking a stronger lead across the area

PROJECTS	OUTCOMES
Tourism Leadership Group	Recruitment and establishment of Tourism Leadership Group
Collaborative Marketing	Establish stronger basis for collaboration, with private sector developing a stronger lead over time
Capital project developments	Creating business opportunities and engagement arising from new cultural investment and capital projects across the region

## 2. Paisley

**AIM:** Build on the strengths of Paisley both as a destination and the gateway to Renfrewshire and capitalise on the £113m investment in the town centre

PROJECTS	OUTCOMES
Promotion of key cultural assets including e.g. the Museum, Abbey, Coats, Re-Marks	Marketing programme results in visibility and enhanced footfall/ visitation
Events at Paisley Town Hall	Events programme successfully attracts visitors/ participants to Town Hall conferences and meetings
Improved public realm and wayfinding	Enhanced welcome to Paisley for visitors

## 3. Rural Renfrewshire

**AIM:** Growing opportunities around outdoor activities, the natural environment and historic villages

PROJECTS	OUTCOMES
Castle Semple and Lochwinnoch	Enhance facilities to make Castle Semple and surrounds a truly regional asset
Supporting Villages' tourism offer	Increased capacity to attract and accommodate visitors
Active travel development	Increased infrastructure and quality of the area's rural active travel network

## 4. Business Tourism

**AIM:** To grow this sector by addressing opportunities for conferences, events, academic and corporate meetings

PROJECTS	OUTCOMES
Renfrewshire business tourism assets and performance	Defining the scale of opportunity from business tourism for Renfrewshire
Business events programme	Increased use of Paisley Town Hall and Museum to generate footfall and revenue and encourage hotels and other venues to host events
Glasgow Convention Bureau	Stronger collaboration with Glasgow Convention Bureau
Professional Conference Organisers	Ensure PCOs regularly include Renfrewshire venues for events they are organising
Tourism Ambassadors	Recruit Ambassadors to help mentor potential new venues

# CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

Underpinning the priorities above are cross-cutting themes that impact across the Plan:-

- **Product and Skills Development**

Making sure new products and experiences are being developed and supported to keep the destination offer fresh and exceeding visitor expectations

- **Visitor Marketing and the Quality of Visitor Experiences**

To continue to market and promote the destination building on 5 years of brand investment

- **The Environment and Sustainability**

Utilising the area's green assets, responding to visitors' concerns about the environment, and supporting the journey to net zero

- **Infrastructure and Transport**

Supporting development around active travel provision linking key tourism destinations

- **Events**

Building on Renfrewshire's successful events programme to attract new events and festivals to the area to drive additional visitor numbers and highlight further opportunities for events to support regeneration of communities



**Paul Fraser**  
**MD, Ingliston Estate**  
**and Country Club**



As one of the largest hospitality operators in Renfrewshire, we operate a multi-faceted business that capitalises on our location close to the airport and Glasgow – delivering over 200 live events annually, filling our 32 bedrooms and 14 lodges consistently. Equestrian lovers, business delegates and our new five star motorhome park are testimony to us thriving on innovation and development. We welcome the tourism plan to support future collaboration and innovation across the industry and wish it well

**James Mackie**  
**MD, Barnhill Farm Shop**



Barnhill Farm is a testament to introducing visitors to products that are predominantly “made in Renfrewshire, by people from Renfrewshire”. By rearing our own cattle, sheep and pigs, we are able to showcase our slow reared heritage breeds, with our own butcher counter. We bake our own bread and cakes, create in-house gelatos made with local milk, roast our own coffee, squeeze our own orange juice and much more. We’ve been overwhelmed by the number of visitors we attract from outwith Renfrewshire, who have found us on social media or been recommended.

**Caroline Warburton,**  
**Destination**  
**Development Director**  
**VisitScotland**



With many visitors looking for destinations where they can escape, reset and connect with nature, Castle Semple Country Park is a key asset in Renfrewshire’s tourism offer. On the doorstep of Scotland’s biggest city, the park is an important resource for locals and visitors, with access to country and coastal walks, wildlife and woodlands, cycle paths and water sports, as well as offering environmental education and being a Scottish Cycling Disability Hub. VisitScotland will continue to work with Renfrewshire Council, RSPB Scotland and other partners on the support and development required to ensure that the park successfully provides a responsible and inclusive experience for every visitor and sets an example for other parks in the region.

**Dr Victoria Hollows**  
**Chief Executive, OneRen**



The once-in-a-generation investment made by Renfrewshire Council and partners in Paisley’s key cultural assets will unveil the rich vibrancy of the region’s history, while making an ambitious statement about the future. The curtain is up on the big stage that is the iconic Paisley Town Hall and we’re opening a new chapter with a fabulous new central library. Paisley Arts Centre will follow and in 2024, we will open the doors on the refurbished Paisley Museum.

Paisley will be to Glasgow, what Brooklyn is to Manhattan – a home to vibrant arts, culture and events that everyone will want to experience.

# MEASUREMENT

The tourism plan aims to enable growth across the tourism sector, in line with Renfrewshire's Economic Strategy and the National Strategy Tourism Outlook 2030.

Measurement will take place across a range of outcomes, including:

- Increasing visits, both day trips and overnight stays
- Increasing spend
- Increasing jobs
- Economic impact to the region

This will be monitored using the STEAM (Scottish Tourism Economic Activity Monitor) model, which is used by many local authorities.

# NEXT STEPS TOURISM LEADERSHIP GROUP

We have to do things differently if we want Renfrewshire to build its reputation and appeal.

We have to acknowledge proximity to Glasgow and West Central Scotland. We need to find practical ways to collaborate, innovate, learn from each other, market the destination and nurture new businesses entering the sector.

We're looking to recruit like-minded people involved in tourism and hospitality who want to make things happen to form the tourism leadership group.

This industry-led group will recognise the opportunities, lead on change and as the key starting point will determine the actions to deliver the priorities in this plan.

Get in touch to help us grow tourism in Renfrewshire.



# RENFREWSHIRE'S TOURISM TODAY

TOURISM PLAN • 2024 - 2027

## GET INVOLVED!

For further information on how you can get involved in Renfrewshire projects, contact:  
[regenerationandplace@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:regenerationandplace@renfrewshire.gov.uk)



Renfrewshire  
Council