
Report To:	Regeneration Committee	Date:	3rd Sept 2009
Report By:	Corporate Director- Regeneration and Resources	Report No:	RC/09/09/15/SJ/LL
Contact Officer:	Stuart Jamieson	Contact No:	01475 715555
Subject:	Inverclyde's Tourism Action Plan		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Committee's approval of the "Action Plan" arising out of *Inverclyde's Tourism Strategy 2009 – 2016*.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Economic Development Service produced a tourism strategy for 2009/16, in consultation with tourism related businesses and services. This received Committee approval in May 09. In developing this plan, account has been taken of related strategies and plans developed by the Council and key partners, as well as national strategies, for example, the Scottish Government's Tourism Framework for change; the Corporate Plan, Community Plan, the Directorate Plan and the forthcoming Economic Regeneration Strategy for Inverclyde.
- 2.2 The development of tourism in Inverclyde is seen as a major opportunity to change perceptions of the area and create a more positive profile and image. Inverclyde's Tourism Strategy aims to provide a strategic focus for the community of Inverclyde together with other stakeholders.
- 2.3 This sector is diverse, including leisure, arts, accommodation, and hospitality also including a high quality public realm. The amenities which support the tourism sector area also valued by the resident population and will assist with addressing the population decline.
- 2.4 The strategy outlines the key objectives required to maximise the tourism potential of Inverclyde. As with the Strategy, the Action Plan is being developed in conjunction with key partners. Feedback was sought on the draft and a consultation and a workshop took place on 18th August.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That Committee: Approves the Action Plan attached as Appendix 1 as a companion document to the 1 *Inverclyde's Tourism Strategy 2009 – 2016* approved in May 09.

Stuart Jamieson
Head of Economic & Social Regeneration

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Finance:

Financial Implications – One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Year	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Allocation for tourism expenditure included within existing Economic Development budget 2009/10 and 2010/11

Financial Implications – Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (if Applicable)	Other Comments
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Personnel: None. Activity will be delivered by existing staff.

Legal: N/A

Equalities: Full consideration is given to equality and diversity processes within employability and business support programmes delivered by Economic & Social Regeneration which are non-discriminatory on the grounds of gender, ethnicity, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

Programme design is undertaken with consideration of the diverse needs of target clients and to fully enable their participation.

The employability agenda is an integral component of promoting social inclusion and geographical targeting at our most disadvantaged areas and individuals.

Appendix 1

THE INVERCLYDE TOURISM ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan takes into account the marketing context set out in the previous section and the key tourism strengths of the area. It identifies some of the issues which affect tourism nationally, but focuses on the issues which have been raised through local strategies and consultations as being the main priorities which should be tackled over the next seven years. A system of colour coding has been used to identify where the lead responsibility for implementing each action lies, but the lead partner will be able to call for support from the other partners named in the “Delivered by” column, as well as others considered to be relevant.

The Action Plan will focus on certain key areas aligned with the strategy:

- *Providing strategic direction to the industry.*
- *Focus on expanding markets.*
- *Attracting visitors by building a successful Inverclyde tourism brand.*
- *Engage and work in partnership with the tourism industry.*
- *Developing the skills base.*
- *Utilise expertise with James Watt College of Further & Higher Education to develop research centre of excellence.*
- *Enhancing the visitor experience.*
- *Improve and support product development.*
- *Linking with other sectors - including food and transport.*
- *Increase capacity of quality accommodation.*
- *Increase the capacity of tourism businesses.*
- *Ensure benefits arise from the Regional Park.*
- *Develop initiatives around Visit Scotland and Event Scotland initiatives*
- *Develop **Discover Inverclyde**, where all stakeholders support each other in growing the market locally.*
- *Play to our area strengths particularly in environmental / green tourism markets and in the adventure sports sector.*

Events are an important factor in tourism. The Inverclyde Events Strategy, which has been developed by Inverclyde Council and its partners, will make an important contribution to the Inverclyde Tourism Action plan. This will be through the role of events in profiling the area nationally and internationally; having a valuable economic impact on the local economy and contributing to the quality of life and well-being of communities.

A positive cultural environment enhances quality of life, promotes individual and social development and attracts interest and investment. The Inverclyde Arts Strategy states that the Council and its partners will work to attract investment and support employment, business and tourism through cultural life and in maximising the impact and effectiveness of cultural activity in Inverclyde.

Inverclyde Council Support for Tourism

In the current financial year, Inverclyde Council has committed a total of £98k towards tourism and events development. Of this total, £25k has been allocated to a Service Level Agreement with Visit Scotland which includes promotion of Inverclyde attractions and places to stay in various publications including The Accommodation Guide, The Visitor Guide, The Tourist map and on the Visit Scotland website.

The contribution to Visit Scotland will also provide an opportunity for the Council to negotiate improved tourist information provision in Inverclyde through an unmanned Tourist Information Point and also includes the potential to promote a specific sector of the Inverclyde tourism product in relevant markets. The balance of the Council budget allocated to Tourism in 2009/10 will be allocated to individual tourism businesses as business development grants on a 50/50 basis. The aim of these grants will be to help tourism businesses with specific projects that they have identified as likely to increase employment and/or, improve the quality and quantity of the tourism product in Inverclyde. Finally in terms of financial support from Inverclyde Council, there may also be additional grants and loans and specialist advisory services such as marketing and business planning and these are available to all types of SME businesses including Tourism.

Layout of the Plan

The detailed action plan that follows:-

1. Seeks to identify individual actions and tasks that will be required to meet the objectives of the strategy.
2. Identifies whether the actions need to be carried out in short/medium/long term timeframes
3. Identifies who will be involved/responsible for the actions
4. Indicates what resources will be required in order to realise the objectives (these resources may be financial or in kind in terms of time, expertise and knowledge of individuals within the organisations identified
5. Acknowledges that all actions need to be delivered through partnership working if the objectives are to be achieved in the timescales identified.

The aim of the plan is to provide the framework, direction and focus for all Inverclyde Tourism activity over the next 7 years to allow the local tourism sector to maximise opportunities through joint working and seeking to significantly increase the positive economic impact of Tourism in Inverclyde by 2016.

MONITORING & EVALUATION

Targets/Outcomes/Priorities	Indicators/Measures
To increase local earnings	Average weekly earnings data
To increase local employee jobs	Total number of employee jobs
To improve unemployment rate in relation to Scottish average	% of economically active unemployed
To improve our economic performance	% change in Inverclyde GDP growth
To increase the number of tourism related businesses operating in Inverclyde	% change in the number of tourism related businesses
To improve the levels of vocational qualifications in tourism	Number of vocational qualifications gained
To increase tourism visitors	Number of annual visitors
To increase tourism expenditure	Total amount of tourism expenditure locally
To encourage participation in the Visit Scotland green tourism scheme	Number of Green Tourism members
Increase participation of accommodation providers in VS Quality Assurance scheme	Number of local providers who are members of the scheme

Key Objective 1: To develop quality market information

Engage more closely with Visit Scotland and James Watt College to undertake more comprehensive research that will inform future strategy. Establish a framework that will allow performance to be measured and be able to compare local performance with that of national and international trends. Provide research into the full range of existing and proposed tourism facilities to develop an understanding of the local market and encourage the development of new and existing tourism businesses and services.

How will success be measured?

- *Quality of information being submitted to Visit Scotland by tourism providers*
- *All providers actively seeking feedback from customers and sharing information*
- *Dissemination of market information amongst providers*

	ACTIONS & TASKS	Partner(s) (lead in BOLD)	S/M/L Timescale	Notes
1.1	Develop a comprehensive monitoring and feedback mechanism for tourist visitors to Inverclyde	IC , ITG, PS	<i>M</i>	<i>External reports (STEAM), software + time. ITG feedback from Cruise passengers</i>
1.2	Establish a comprehensive database of all Inverclyde tourism products and operators	IC , DI	<i>S</i>	<i>Encourage promotion on Discover Inverclyde website</i>
1.3	Investigate and research new and evolving niche markets particularly recreational marine related tourism	IC , VS	<i>M</i>	<i>Including land and water based activities</i>
1.4	Conduct research to ascertain the training needs and requirements of businesses and then create suitable local training opportunities	IC, JWC , PS	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>Customer care with tourism focus</i>

Abbreviations

S - Short term timescales

M - Medium term timescales

L- Long term timescales

IC – Inverclyde Council

VS- Visit Scotland

ES- Event Scotland

DI- Discover Inverclyde

RC – Renfrewshire Council

ITG- Inverclyde Tourist Group

CMRP – Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park

PS – Private Sector

IL – Inverclyde Leisure

ERC – East Renfrewshire

GCC – Greenock Chamber of Commerce

JWC – James Watt College

RI – Riverside Inverclyde

BG – Business Gateway

Key Objective 2: To exceed visitor expectations

Encourage training and uptake of quality assurance and green business schemes to improve the quality of tourism experiences. Support tourism business development activity linked to Business Gateway, Scottish Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland, James Watt College, private sector trainers and Greenock Chamber of Commerce.

How will we measure our success?

- Benchmarking through market research analysis & reporting
- Training activity
- Participation in Quality Assurance Schemes
- Development of collaborative partnerships

	ACTIONS & TASKS	Partner(s) (lead in BOLD)	S/M/L Timescale	Notes
2.1	Invest in the development of skills and training for staff to ensure that customer expectations are exceeded	PS , JWC, IC	S/M/L	<i>Relates to 1.4</i>
2.2	Encourage and promote participation in Visit Scotland quality schemes by all tourism businesses	IC,VS , EAT SCOTLAND	M	<i>Time</i>
2.3	Encourage the development of local inspirational managers and leaders in tourism businesses through local ambassadors	DI	M – L	<i>DI & Master classes</i>
2.4	Improve access and transport links to bring more visitors to Inverclyde	RI , IC, SPT	L	<i>Time</i>
2.5	Improve public realm areas – signage, streetscapes	IC	M	<i>Planning, Roads, Econ Dev</i>
2.6	Improve built environments (remediation of derelict land and decaying infrastructure)	IC, RI	S/M/L	<i>Partnerships</i>
2.7	Evaluate the effectiveness of tourist signage in the area and work with stakeholders to carry forward signage projects eg signage from the Ocean Terminal to Greenock Town Centre	IC, RI, DI , ITG	S – M	<i>Financial + time</i>
2.8	Continue to work on improved visitor facilities and experience at the Ocean Terminal	IC, VS, Clydeport, RI	S /M/L	<i>Time + financial</i>
2.9	Recognise the assets of the natural environment and promote effectively	CMRP, IC	M-L	<i>Financial</i>
2.10	Encourage and promote participation in the Green Tourism Business scheme by tourism businesses	VS , IC	M-L	<i>Time</i>
2.11	Encourage all tourism development projects to adhere to sustainable principles	IC , VS, CMRP	Ongoing	<i>Time</i>
2.12	Work in partnership to develop and promote a clean and green Inverclyde	IC, CMRP, VS	Ongoing	<i>Time</i>
2.13	Encourage a sense of “Pride in Inverclyde” for local people to become ambassadors and informal promoters of the area	DI , All	M	<i>Time</i>
2.14	Co-ordinate and distribute up to date tourist information to all tourism outlets	VS, IC	S-L	<i>Time + SLA</i>
2.15	Support and develop The Inverclyde Tourist Group who potentially will form the support/outreach for the Inverclyde ambassadors	IC , VS	S	<i>Time + Financial support</i>
2.18	Develop a consistently high standard of customer service excellence through the delivery of a programme of local “Welcome Host” type awareness courses for all involved in tourism. Seek to lobby for a national replacement to Welcome Host, 100k Welcomes.	VS, JWC, IC , PS	Ongoing	<i>Liaise with SLAED tourism members on national consensus</i>

Key Objective 3: To develop effective partnerships for tourism in Inverclyde

Led by the private sector and facilitated by the Council with strategic direction from Visit Scotland, the main focus of the partnership(s) will be to increase day visitors to the area in the short term and to work together in the longer term to maximise and expand existing tourism capacity to attract visitors from a radius of 120 minute travel time of Inverclyde. The development of a website for the partnership will be able to provide information to visitors and will also be able to monitor virtual visitors and their movements within the site. This website will also engage tourism providers in a more active way allowing them to promote their goods and services and advertise special offers to encourage more visits and uptake of products and services.

How will we measure success?

- Funding and delivery support
- Industry involvement
- Package and partnership development
- Training
- Benchmarking success
- Levering additional funding

	ACTIONS & TASKS	Partner(s) (lead in BOLD)	S/M/L Timescale	Notes
3.1	Develop membership of the local area tourism partnership from Discover Inverclyde and seek participation by local politicians	IC,DI VS,	<i>M – L</i>	<i>IC and DI to discuss mechanism</i>
3.2	Explore options for joint Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire & Inverclyde initiatives and projects	IC, RC, ERC, VS	<i>M</i>	<i>IC to initiate discussions</i>
3.3	Gather and disseminate to all businesses and communities, a comprehensive set of information about tourism products and operators in the area eg share market research findings and listings of all tourism providers and products on DI website	DI, IC	<i>S</i>	<i>DI and Econ Dev to work together</i>
3.4	Identify, develop and work with the third sector and local communities to create more information providers and tourism ambassadors	DI, ITG, IC	<i>M – L</i>	<i>Time</i>
3.5	Ensure that tourism is recognised by all Alliance partners and included in all relevant strategies and plans including the Events and Arts Strategy	IC	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>Time</i>
3.6	Work with schools (principally P4 – S1) to encourage the development of tomorrow's ambassadors. Develop close partnerships between tourism industry and education to encourage young people to consider careers in tourism	DI, ITG, IC, JWC	<i>M</i>	<i>Schools partnership</i>
3.7	Work to Develop and work in partnership with the Inverclyde TRAL (Tourism/Retail/Arts/Leisure) group (DI)	DI	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>Aims to be a mini DMO</i>
3.8	Develop opportunities for businesses to cross sell and promote each others products/services through the LATP / Discover Inverclyde	DI, IC, PS	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>Time</i>

Key Objective 4: To improve the quality and range of the tourism product through innovation and product development

How will we measure our success?

- Quality assurance
- Investment in services and facilities
- Town Centre developments
- Events
- Activities

	ACTIONS & TASKS	Partner(s) (lead in BOLD)	S/M/L Timescale	Notes
4.1	Recognise and build on existing assets through feasibility studies, business development, identifying funding sources and investing in future sustainability	IC , DI, RI, L ATP	S/M/L	<i>Time + financial</i>
4.2	Develop new products and services by encouraging innovative ideas	IC, DI , VS	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>Brainstorming Session</i>
4.3	Gather, disseminate and share customer feedback	DI, PS, IC , VS	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>Time</i>
4.4	Assist and encourage tourism businesses to start up and grow, developing working relationships and facilitating meetings.	IC , BG	<i>S/M</i>	<i>Encourage more start ups, IC BusDev funds</i>
4.5	Developing leadership & management skills amongst tourism businesses	IC, VS, JWC, GC	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>Inspiring future business leaders</i>
4.6	Develop and promote a range of quality events and festivals through improved collaboration and partnership	DI , IC, ES	<i>M-L</i>	<i>Financial + time</i>
4.7	Encourage participation by all tourism providers in the Visit Scotland quality assurance schemes. Maintain & improve VS star grading and develop existing visitor attractions	DI, PS, VS , IC	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>Star grading scheme available for all tourism businesses</i>
4.9	Actively promote tourism as a long term career choice	DI, ITG, JWC, SDS	<i>M-L</i>	<i>Time</i>
4.10	Work in partnership to develop quality of town centres and retail facilities experience for visitors	IC, PS Retailers, Trades Associations, RI	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>Partnership approach to lever funding.</i>
4.11	Develop and promote quality open space / greenspace provision in Inverclyde, linked and supported by a network of safe cycle, walking and horse-riding routes	IC , LOWER CLYDE GREENSPACE , CMRP, DI	<i>M</i>	<i>Time</i>
4.12	Encourage the development of a range of water and land based activities	Sail Clyde, IC, VS, DI, BG, PS, CMRP`	<i>M-L</i>	<i>Financial, advice + time</i>
4.13	Develop local sports and recreation facilities	IL , IC, PS. BG	<i>S/M/L</i>	<i>"</i>
4.14	Encourage the development of a minimum E-business capability for all tourism operators to increase the number of businesses that regularly use email/internet as part of their business	IC , DI, VS	<i>S-M</i>	<i>Financial support</i>
4.15	Develop a plan to maximise sources of funding to support tourism development in the area and increase the take up of business development grants	IC , DI	<i>M-L</i>	<i>Time</i>
4.16	Work in partnership to increase the number of cruise ships coming to Ocean Terminal Greenock and make Greenock the preferred Scottish port of choice for cruise ships	PS, VS, IC, DI	<i>M-L</i>	<i>Time + financial</i>
4.17	Work in partnership to improve public transport options and increase awareness	SPT, IC, VS	<i>S/M/L</i>	<i>Time</i>

Key Objective 5: To market and promote the Inverclyde tourism product

How will we measure our success?

- Number of messages/adverts appearing in key publications
- Monitoring and evaluation of visitor numbers
- Number of visitors to Inverclyde tourism websites

	ACTIONS & TASKS	Partner(s) (lead in BOLD)	S/M/L Timescale	Notes
5.1	Develop and implement a brand strategy to position and differentiate Inverclyde from surrounding areas	DI, IC	<i>M</i>	<i>Financial + time</i>
5.2	Create targeted marketing campaigns to focus on niche market opportunities such as watersports, cruise liners	DI, Sail Clyde, PS	<i>M</i>	<i>Financial + time</i>
5.3	Identify and actively promote the unique selling points for Inverclyde to appropriate segments of the market	DI, IC, VS	<i>S-M</i>	<i>Time + financial</i>
5.4	Proactively market both water and land based leisure activities	VS, PS, DI, IL	<i>M-L</i>	“
5.5	Proactively market all Inverclyde events and festivals	IC, DI, PS	<i>Ongoing</i>	“
5.6	Identify a key officer and team within Council to act as a single point of contact for tourism, leading and implementing the strategy and promoting the tourism Inverclyde product	IC	<i>S</i>	“
5.7	Identify a media personality (who has connections with Inverclyde) to act as a product champion for the area and promote a positive image of what's available here to change negative perceptions	ALL	<i>S-M</i>	<i>Time</i>
5.8	Further develop and promote the Discover Inverclyde website	DI	<i>S</i>	<i>Time + financial</i>
5.9	Facilitate joint promotional activity eg special VS campaigns	IC, VS	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>Financial</i>
5.10	Investigate need and current provision of information facilities for visitors and appraise opportunities and the way forward for tourism information points and provision	IC, VS	<i>M</i>	<i>Time</i>

Key Objective 6: To develop innovative, aspirational projects for the future

How will we measure our success?

- Feasibility studies
- Funding sources identified and secured
- New events attracting more visitors
- Number of innovative new business start ups

	ACTIONS & TASKS	Partner(s) (lead in BOLD)	S/M/L Timescale	Notes
6.1	Organise a brainstorming session across the tourism sector in Inverclyde to identify potential projects for the next 7 years	DI	S	<i>Time</i>
6.2	Identify potential funding sources and make appropriate applications as joint partnership bids	IC, DI, LAMP	M-L	<i>Time</i>
6.3	Investigate the need/market for increased bed spaces and seek to attract an additional hotel to Inverclyde if required through contact with hotel operators	RI , IC, VS, PS	L	<i>Time</i>
6.4	Increase capacity and the opportunity for a dedicated terminal at the Ocean Terminal for cruise ships through a feasibility study	Clydeport , RI, IC	M-L	<i>Time + financial</i>
6.5	Develop the Inverclyde sailing product for visitors	Sail Clyde, PS, IL	M-L	<i>Time</i>
6.6	Develop ideas for major new innovative events that will be attractive to day visitors	IC, DI, PS, ES	L	<i>Time</i>
6.7	Support Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park into becoming a National Park	CMRP, SNH, IC, Scottish Govt	L	<i>Time</i>
6.8	Explore the development of improved public transport options across the area	SPT, IC, VS	L	<i>Time + financial</i>
6.9	Consider legacy projects following the Commonwealth Games	VS, IC, DI	S/M	<i>Time + financial</i>