

Report To: Environment & Regeneration Committee **Date:** 17 January 2013

Report By: Corporate Director – Environment, Regeneration & Resources **Report No:** RC/13/01/07/SJ/JH

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Subject: Update on Inverclyde Tourism Action Plan 2009-2016

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to apprise Members in regard to progress on the Tourism Action Plan.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Inverclyde Tourism Action Plan 2009-2016 is now mid term. The Local Area Tourism Partnership (LATP), together with Discover Inverclyde (DI) and other partners, are undertaking a review of action points with measurable outputs to be delivered over the remaining 3 years of the plan.
- 2.2 With the publication of the updated Scottish Tourism Strategy by the Scottish Tourism Alliance in July 2012 and a new Visit Scotland Corporate Plan, there is now a need to align our plan with that of the new national strategies and review the list of actions that Council and its partners aim to achieve over the next 3 years.
- 2.3 Although much has been achieved there is more to be done. The progress report on the Tourism Action Plan at Appendix 1 provides a summary of what has been achieved to date, however, it is worth highlighting the following:
- New products and services such as Taste of Inverclyde; Golf & Stay Packages and Marine/Sailing activities are being developed by Inverclyde businesses through the LATP. This has been encouraged by two innovation events organised by Scottish Enterprise and Visit Scotland.
 - There has been progress on the potential development of a Terminal 2 at the Ocean Terminal to increase capacity for cruise ships with support of RI, Inverclyde Council, Clydeport and interest from Scottish Government.
 - 3 businesses are in the process of joining Visit Scotland accreditation schemes as a result of the assistance made available by Inverclyde Council.

- 2.4 As part of the review, the Council will be consulting with local businesses, stakeholders and members of the LAMP and DI over the next 3 months to ensure the Inverclyde Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2009-2016 links closely with the new Tourism Alliance Strategy for Scotland and Visit Scotland's Winning Years Strategy.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That Committee note the progress and ongoing development of the Tourism Action Plan.

Stuart Jamieson
Head of Regeneration and Planning

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Economic Development Service produced a Tourism Strategy for 2009-2016, in consultation with tourism related businesses and services. It was approved by the Regeneration Committee in May 2009 with the Action Plan subsequently approved at Committee on 3 September 2009.
- 4.2 The strategy outlines the key objectives required to maximise the potential of Inverclyde.
- 4.3 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.
- 4.4 The tourism sector is diverse including leisure, arts, accommodation, hospitality and a high quality public realm. The amenities which support the tourism sector are valued by the resident population and will assist towards addressing population decline.
- 4.5 The aim of the Tourism Action Plan is to provide the framework, direction and focus for all Inverclyde tourism activity over the next 3 years to allow the local tourism sector to maximise opportunities through joint working and seeking to significantly increase the impact of Tourism in Inverclyde by 2016.

5.0 FINANCE

- 5.1 Financial Implications – None

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	Allocation for Tourism expenditure included within existing Economic Development budget.

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 the Regeneration and Planning Service which are non-discriminatory on the grounds of gender, ethnicity, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 6.1 No consultation has taken place as there are no HR, Legal or Financial implications.

Progress Report on Tourism Action Plan

	ACTIONS & TASKS	UPDATE NOTES	PROCEDURE	Direction of Trend
1.1	Develop a comprehensive monitoring and feedback mechanism for tourist visitors to Inverclyde	Steam shows an increase of 19 on total revenue for 2011 compared with 2010. RI survey of cruise ship passengers shows an overall improvement in town centre perceptions. DI website now requiring updates and moving site to new provider using Wordpress	<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	LATP now formed and comprehensive list of accommodation providers, visitor attractions, food & drink an visitor services now exists	<i>Encourage promotion on Discover Inverclyde website</i>	↑
1.3	Investigate and research new and evolving niche markets particularly recreational marine related tourism	Mountain biking, walking, sailing ideas being progressed and golf & stay packages underway. Training events attended by LATP and DI members	<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	This has been done and in 2012 now offering a series of training workshops – sailing, food & drink, social media. DI members have been attending mountain biking, whisky appreciation workshops to develop new products. Exploring Glasgow with Style training as an alternative to Welcome host	<i>Customer care with tourism focus</i>	↑

	ACTIONS & TASKS	UPDATE NOTES	Partners/ Additional Details	Direction of Trend
2.1	Invest in the development of skills and training for staff to ensure that customer expectations are exceeded	Training workshops organised in conjunction with DI. New products being developed.	<i>Relates to 1.4</i>	↑
2.2	Encourage and promote participation in Visit Scotland quality schemes by all tourism businesses	Offer of accreditation scheme membership – good uptake of enquiries (3 new businesses going for accreditation and 5 strong enquiries that are being followed up)	<i>Time to develop projects and see results</i>	↑
2.3	Encourage the development of local inspirational managers and leaders in tourism businesses through local ambassadors	No progress but DI have organised events with Douglas Rae and are looking to encourage Richard Wilson to come to Inverclyde and Birdie Bowers event with Ranulf Finnes	<i>DI & Master classes</i>	↔
2.4	Improve access and transport links to bring more visitors to Inverclyde	Development of coastal path/Heritage Inverclyde project/ DI walking trail/new cycling trails. Negative impact is the withdrawal of car ferry from Gourock	<i>Time to develop / prioritise ideas of interested parties</i>	↔
2.5	Improve public realm areas – signage, streetscapes	RI investment in town centres, tidy up of cruise passenger route from terminal to town centre and improvements in Port Glasgow and Gourock. DI using Community Facilities Fund for signage / trails	<i>Planning, Roads, Econ Dev</i>	↑
2.6	Improve built environments (remediation of derelict land and decaying infrastructure)	RI and IC working together - James Watt dock/sculptures/Tall Ships event/town centre improvements	<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	Working together RI/IC/LATP/DI to bring phase 1 of Heritage Inverclyde on stream in 2012 linking to CFF.	<i>Time to develop / prioritise ideas of interested parties and utilise available partner budgets</i>	↑
2.8	Continue to work on improved visitor facilities and experience at the Ocean Terminal	IC working through ITG to improve visitors experience – new Greenock town centre map, upgrade ITG facilities, development of new famous people leaflets and new trails	<i>Incremental improvements each year with available budgets</i>	↑

2.9	Recognise the assets of the natural environment and promote effectively	Development of Friends of Wemyss Bay group, Inverclyde Ramblers/Gourock Rotary developing coastal path to link Ayrshire and Renfrewshire	<i>Prioritise ideas of interested parties and utilise available budgets</i>	↑
2.10	Encourage and promote participation in the Green Tourism Business scheme by tourism businesses	Being encouraged through Visit Scotland accreditation scheme membership	<i>Officer time promote / support</i>	↔
2.11	Encourage all tourism development projects to adhere to sustainable principles	LATP is growing in cohesiveness and new partnerships are being formed eg golf & stay	<i>Partners time to develop projects</i>	↔
2.12	Work in partnership to develop and promote a clean and green Inverclyde	New carbon trust workshop being held in Inverclyde	<i>Time</i>	↑
2.13	Encourage a sense of "Pride in Inverclyde" for local people to become ambassadors and informal promoters of the area	Will not be achieved overnight but VS beginning to recognise the potential of Inverclyde and the pride that local people have in the area	<i>Officer Time</i>	↔
2.14	Co-ordinate and distribute up to date tourist information to all tourism outlets	In addition to normal distribution 20,000 leaflets (Discover Inverclyde and Walkabout Inverclyde) will have been distributed (summer 2011 and spring/summer 2012) by a distribution company in a 1 and ½ hours drive distance. DI "Passport to Inverclyde" distributed at Tall Ships and beyond	<i>Officer time to co-ordinate activity + SLA</i>	↑
2.15	Support and develop The Inverclyde Tourist Group who potentially will form the support/outreach for the Inverclyde ambassadors	Continue to provide financial support to ITG and work jointly with LATP members	<i>Volunteer and Officer Time + Financial support (Tourism budgets)</i>	↑
2.16	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.	No clear replacement for Welcome Host but Glasgow with Style emerging is now available for all in the Greater Glasgow & Clyde Valley area and highlights best practice examples	<i>Liaise with SLAED tourism members on national consensus</i>	↔

	ACTIONS & TASKS	UPDATE NOTES		Direction of Trend
3.1	Develop membership of the local area tourism partnership from Discover Inverclyde and seek participation by local politicians	This has been done and the average attendance at LATP meetings is around 10 active members. Convenor now sits on the Board of DI	<i>IC and DI to discuss mechanism</i>	↑
3.2	Explore options for joint Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire & Inverclyde initiatives and projects	Potential Leader bid with Ren/East Ren/Inverclyde in 2014. Needs political support to develop other partnerships.	<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 has established a database of all visitor/tourism providers and on website but updating content issues being resolved	<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	Projects have been identified and linkages established between ITG + projects from 71/2 JWS + local community projects	<i>Volunteer / Officer 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	Events now sits with Corp Comms so cannot comment on progress	<i>Sector should be included over time as strategies updated</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	No progress – ITG do some work with schools but with changes to personnel and the courses offered at JWC, mean that the development of local tourism focussed young people is not as prominent.	<i>Schools partnership</i>	↔
3.7	Work to Develop and work in partnership with the Inverclyde TRAL (Tourism/Retail/Arts/Leisure) group (DI)	LL & RG work closely with DI/ITG to create opportunities to encourage their members to participate in events outwith the area to promote their businesses and the DMO eg Expo and Tourist Week conference, briefing to tourism MSP	<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	Tall Ships 2011, creation of the DI Passport, Golf & Stay packages, DI Tourist walking trail	<i>LATP / DI Time to develop packages</i>	↑

	ACTIONS & TASKS	UPDATE NOTES		Direction of Trend
4.1	Recognise and build on existing assets through feasibility studies, business development, identifying funding sources and investing in future sustainability	Heritage Inverclyde (RI/IC/ITG/DI)	<i>Prioritise ideas of interested parties and utilise available budgets</i>	↔
4.2	Develop new products and services by encouraging innovative ideas	Out of brainstorming sessions has come – Cathcart Square experiment, led by DI. Taste of Inverclyde, Golf & Stay, Mountain Biking and Sailing potential identified, coastal path development	<i>Brainstorming Session</i>	↑
4.3	Gather, disseminate and share customer feedback	Yes but could develop more at other bigger annual events and collate feedback from attractions	<i>Time to collect analyse and disseminate information</i>	↔
4.4	Assist and encourage tourism businesses to start up and grow, developing working relationships and facilitating meetings.	Stable. No significant increase in the overall numbers of tourism businesses	<i>Encourage more start ups, IC BusDev funds</i>	↔
4.5	Developing leadership & management skills amongst tourism businesses	Training workshops and highlighting opportunities for LAMP/DI members to attend external events such as Tourism Week Conference and Expo	<i>Inspiring future business leaders</i>	↑
4.6	Develop and promote a range of quality events and festivals through improved collaboration and partnership	Events no longer within Economic Development but seeking a nomination from Corporate Communications to join DI/LAMP	<i>Events budget / time to promote</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	An additional 3 new businesses going for accreditation and 5 strong enquiries that are being followed up	<i>Star grading scheme available for all tourism businesses</i>	↑
4.8	Actively promote tourism as a long term career choice	No opportunities identified and unsure about status of interest of JWC in developing skills in tourism – volunteering with ITG still proving	<i>Time</i>	↔

		popular		
4.9	Work in partnership to develop quality of town centres and retail facilities experience for visitors	Greenock/Gourock/Port Glasgow town centre improvement projects in partnership with RI	<i>Partnership approach to lever funding.</i>	↑
4.10	Develop and promote quality open space / greenspace provision in Inverclyde, linked and supported by a network of safe cycle, walking and horse-riding routes	Heritage Inverclyde development of phase 1/DI development of tourist trails/Inverclyde Ramblers development of the coastal path/Clyde Muirshiel development of bridle path at Hardridge	<i>Officer time to prioritise ideas of interested parties and utilise available budgets</i>	↑
4.11	Encourage the development of a range of water and land based activities	Sailing Innovation workshop in February may stimulate some new joint projects and product development	<i>Financial, advice on applications + time to develop collaborative projects</i>	↔
4.12	Develop local sports and recreation facilities	Pursuing through Inverclyde Leisure/IC and seeking opportunities for 2014	"	↑
4.13	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	Offering workshops in conjunction with DI/through tourism grants/encouraging attendance at external training events/circulating information with links to Tourism Intelligence/IC staff attending events and disseminating information	<i>Financial support to businesses</i>	↑
4.14	Develop a plan to maximise sources of funding to support tourism development in the area and increase the take up of business development grants	Good uptake of IC grants for tourism businesses but external applications for VisitScotland/ Awards For All etc, hampered by lack of resource to co-ordinate.	<i>Time to develop local capacity to apply to external funds</i>	↑
4.15	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	Increasing year on year. 41 visits in 2012	<i>Visits increasing over time financial support to ITG</i>	↑
4.16	Work in partnership to improve public transport options and increase awareness	Discussions at a more strategic level with IC/RI/SPT/Scotrail focussing around improvements at Gourock interchange	<i>Officer Time</i>	↑

	ACTIONS & TASKS	UPDATE NOTES		Direction of Trend
5.1	Develop and implement a brand strategy to position and differentiate Inverclyde from surrounding areas	Development and refocus of the Discover Inverclyde Board is planned for 2012. Need to look at other DMO's to see how they are organised and funded to learn from others.	<i>DI /officer time + Tourism Budgets</i>	↔
5.2	Create targeted marketing campaigns to focus on niche market opportunities such as watersports, cruise liners	The impact of Tall Ships /Expo 2012/Tourism Conference. Focus of promotion needs to be on specific target interest groups Food & Drink/Sailing/Mountain Biking/Walking	<i>DI /officer time + Tourism Budgets</i>	↔
5.3	Identify and actively promote the unique selling points for Inverclyde to appropriate segments of the market	Some potential USP's have been identified giving rise to the following opportunities - Food & Drink/Sailing/Mountain Biking/Walking	<i>DI /officer time + Tourism Budgets</i>	↑
5.4	Proactively market both water and land based leisure activities	This will largely be led, driven and delivered by the private sector under the banner of Discover Inverclyde	<i>DI /officer time + Tourism Budgets</i>	↔
5.5	Proactively market all Inverclyde events and festivals	Need to get Corp Comms and DI working more closely together to coordinate and develop promotion of events	<i>DI /officer time + Tourism Budgets</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	No progress. Events / Tourism split between services	<i>DI /officer time + Tourism Budgets</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	Several famous people of Inverclyde have been identified but no approaches have been made. We are producing a new series of historical famous people of Inverclyde leaflet (John Gault, Bowers, Paraffin Young, James Watt, Highland Mary)	<i>DI /officer time + Tourism Budgets</i>	↔

5.8	Further develop and promote the Discover Inverclyde website	DI website is moving to a new provider and changing to Wordpress The site will be more flexible and easier to use so that members can amend and add information more easily	<i>DI /officer time + Tourism Budgets</i>	↔
5.9	Facilitate joint promotional activity eg special VS campaigns	Entries in Visit Scotland GGCV Visitor Guide. Attendance at Tourism Week Conference, stand at Expo 2012, distribution of 20000 Discover and Walkabout leaflets	<i>DI /officer time + Tourism Budgets</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	Gourock VIP, all libraries in the area have Inverclyde tourist information leaflets, ITG will have a new map for cruise ship passengers and all of our tourist leaflets	<i>DI /officer time + Tourism Budgets</i>	↑

	ACTIONS & TASKS			Direction of Trend
6.1	Organise a brainstorming session across the tourism sector in Inverclyde to identify potential projects for the next 7 years	Cathcart Square Events trial closure, Taste of Inverclyde, Golf & Stay, Mountain Biking and Sailing potential identified, coastal path development, possible webcam	<i>DI / LAMP Time</i>	↑
6.2	Identify potential funding sources and make appropriate applications as joint partnership bids	Community Facilities Fund, potential for Growth Fund Application and Awards for All if DI can focus its efforts on a couple of projects	<i>DI / LAMP 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	No progress but temporary closure of Holiday inn Express has demonstrated that the loss of a budget hotel fills all beds in Inverclyde. We no longer get the coach business with the loss of the Gantocks and nothing has replaced this.	<i>Officer Time</i>	↔
6.4	Increase capacity and the opportunity for a dedicated terminal at the Ocean Terminal for cruise ships through a feasibility study	Feasibility study done but this will be a private sector initiative to take forward	<i>Time + financial</i>	↔
6.5	Develop the Inverclyde sailing product for visitors	SE running Innovation Sailing Workshop in February	<i>DI / LAMP Time</i>	↑
6.6	Develop ideas for major new innovative events that will be attractive to day visitors	We still need the next "Big Idea" although the Heritage Inverclyde project could be the catalyst.	<i>DI / LAMP Time</i>	↔
6.7	Support Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park into becoming a National Park	Long term aspiration and no progress currently	<i>Officer Time</i>	↔
6.8	Explore the development of improved public transport options across the area	Inverclyde is well served by public transport although the weather is always a factor out of season	<i>Time + financial</i>	↔
6.9	Consider legacy projects following the Commonwealth Games	No progress on this although DI members have expressed an interest in finding out how they can get benefits/spin offs here in Inverclyde	<i>Time + financial</i>	↔

Summary of significant successful objectives from the action plan:-

1.2 Establish a comprehensive database of all Inverclyde tourism products and operators

1.4 Conduct research to ascertain the training needs and requirements of businesses and then create suitable local training opportunities

2.2 Encourage and promote participation in Visit Scotland quality schemes by all tourism businesses

2.8 Continue to work on improved visitor facilities and experience at the Ocean Terminal

2.14 Co-ordinate and distribute up to date tourist information to all tourism outlets

3.1 Develop membership of the local area tourism partnership from Discover Inverclyde and seek participation by local politicians

3.8 Develop opportunities for businesses to cross sell and promote each others products/services through the LATP / Discover Inverclyde

4.2 Develop new products and services by encouraging innovative ideas

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

5.9 Facilitate joint promotional activity eg special VS campaigns

6.1 Developing the Inverclyde water activity product for visitors