

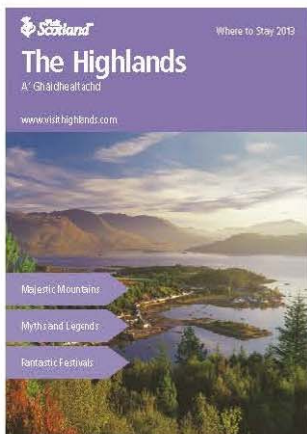
VisitScotland's purpose is to grow and develop the sustainable economic benefit of tourism to Scotland's visitor economy. This is supported by five corporate objectives:

Marketing • Information provision • Quality and sustainability • Working in partnership • Events

## VisitScotland core marketing activity that benefits the Highlands.

Much of VisitScotland's core marketing is undertaken for Scotland as a whole with funding from the Scottish Government and businesses. The Highlands are central to the imagery and messaging used in much of this and benefit from extensive coverage in VisitScotland's pan Scotland marketing campaigns and guides.

### Publications



The Highlands 'Where to Stay' guide and a suite of five 'What to See & Do' guides are produced annually. The Where to Stay guide presents a wide range of accommodation options while the What to See & Do guides aim to inspire visitors to make the most of their visit to the area.

In the Year of Natural Scotland 2013, VisitScotland guides and leaflets are helping to

highlight outdoor activities across Scotland, which the Highland area has an array of. These included:

- Active in Scotland 2013 and Walk in Scotland 2013, in association with Forestry Commission Scotland, both featuring activity holidays, businesses and places to visit within the Highlands.

- Golf in Scotland 2013 has an introduction by Colin Montgomerie, describing Scotland as a location where there is a course for every golfer. Castle Stuart and Royal Dornoch Golf Club are highlighted alongside the historical development of Golf in the Highlands.
- Fish in Scotland 2013 features scenery from around the Highlands, including Scotland's only VisitScotland 5 star graded fly fishing school, Fishing Scotland, Roy Bridge.

### Website

- VisitScotland.com receives over 14.5 million visitors per year and features the Highlands strongly. VisitHighlands.com is currently the Highlands regional website, which includes business data from VisitScotland.com and provides visitors with more area specific information for the region.



### Film tourism - set jetting

The impact of Scotland's scenery being shown on the big screen is a superb advertisement for the country with around 20 per cent of visitors saying that seeing Scotland in film or on TV was important in their decision to book a Scottish holiday.

VisitScotland has worked with a number of film production companies to ensure positive benefits for the Highlands using films such as *The Waterhorse* and *The Eagle* as hooks to promote the area.

Most recently VisitScotland joined forces with Disney•Pixar to attract more visitors to Scotland on the back of *Brave*, which had a gala screening in Eden Court Theatre on Sunday 1 July 2012. Local talent from Disney•Pixar's *Brave*, joined the Director Mark Andrews, Producer Katherine Sarafian and Tourism Minister Fergus Ewing, MSP to present the epic action-adventure, which showcased the Highlands and Scotland across the world.



Local stars of *Brave* - Peigi Barker, Julie Fowlis and Kevin McKidd with Fergus Ewing MSP.

## Twitter and Facebook

VisitScotland's Twitter feed and Facebook page for the UK are increasingly important parts of the VisitScotland marketing mix. The Highlands has been featured in numerous photographs, tweets and stories. As part of the Big 5 campaign with Scottish Natural Heritage, VisitScotland showed off the Big 5 - Scotland's best loved wildlife. This included a Red Deer Stag at Glen Affric and a Harbour Seal at Dunvegan Castle, Skye.



## Surprise Yourself



As part of our nature focused tourism drive a VisitScotland Year of Natural Scotland TV advert was launched in January 2013. The advert features mountain biking at Torridon in the Highlands and the beach at Arisaig in the West Highlands. It follows on from a Year of Creative Scotland version last year that also featured the Highlands and was seen by more than 18 million adults each time it went to air. The Highlands and Islands feature on the Surprise Yourself website, national direct mail and PR. The spring/summer 2012 phase of the nearly £1.8 million national Surprise Yourself campaign proved to be very successful generating £72.4 million of additional economic benefit for Scotland.

## Scotland Week 2013

VisitScotland's North America teams in International Marketing, PR and Business Tourism attended Scotland Week 2013 where the Highlands were strongly represented. The US is Scotland's largest overseas market in terms of volume of tourism, in 2011, making an estimated 333,000 visits and spending £228 million, while Canada made an estimated 103,000 visits and spend of £83 million. Michael Smith, the head chef from The Three Chimneys on Skye, and winner of BBC's Great British Menu, joined 'Team Scotland' and representatives from VisitScotland in the United States and Canada as part of the Scotland Week celebrations.

## Growth Fund Awards

A number of groups throughout the Highlands have benefited from VisitScotland's Growth Fund, designed to support industry groups with marketing projects that aim to increase visitor numbers and reach new target markets.

- A partnership between Celtic Fringe Tourism Association and the Gairloch Business Association to promote the area under the 'Wild About Gairloch' theme and raise awareness of the wider Wester Ross to visitors, was awarded £8,368.
- £25,000 was awarded to encourage consumers to 'Discover their Natural Talent' by visiting the Outdoor Capital of the UK to try one of a host of exciting natural experiences.
- The Natural Loch Ness promotional campaign by Destination Loch Ness which aims to raise awareness and enhance the reputation of the Loch Ness area was awarded £27,240.
- A campaign to bring together a wide range of 'natural' themed experiences and events in the North Highlands under a distinct and recognisable brand by North Highland Initiative was awarded £21,875.

## e-Newsletters

Our international e-newsletters are sent to around 1.1 million consumers on our international database. Our UK & Ireland 'Surprise Yourself' e-newsletters are distributed to 740,000 consumers. The Highlands are often featured in both copy and images.



## Events

VisitScotland, through their directorate EventScotland, play a big role in bringing and supporting events to the Highlands. This includes:

- Supporting the second edition of the CELTMAN! Extreme Scottish Triathlon in 2013, centered on the stunning Torridon mountains, with £4000 to contribute to the costs of tracking equipment for competitors.
- Helping to bring the Scottish Open to Castle Stuart Golf Links in 2011, where it was held again in 2012. The event delivers an economic impact in the region of £4m to the Highlands and presents a huge opportunity to profile the area on the global stage. EventScotland, along with local public partners in the Highlands, will continue to support this event with additional funding from the Scottish Government in 2013.
- Continued support for the Fort William event of the UCI Mountain Bike World Cup since 2003. For 2013, the event has been awarded £100,000 towards various elements of event infrastructure to ensure that organisers continue to deliver the event at a world class standard and to support marketing and PR activity.

## Explore Scotland

A supplement entitled 'Explore: The Highlands' highlighted things to see and do across the area to 161,000 readers of The Herald as part of a collectible series. A full-page advert for the Highlands was published in the Sunday Mail, which has 878,000 readers.

Spring themed radio adverts targeted central and east Scotland (Total Clyde, Forth and Tay). Using local people as its stars, selected to help broadcast the area's tourism credentials.

Explore Scotland is part of the national Surprise Yourself campaign. A direct mail was sent to over 77,000 homes as part of the spring/summer 2013 campaign. The mailer targeted people who live in Scotland and Northern England and highlighted the wealth of attractions and natural landscapes which the Highlands offer.

During the 2012 Surprise Yourself campaign, over 4,500 Highlands Where to Stay guides were requested.



## Additional marketing activity

- '2-for-1 Scottish Days Out' gave families looking for things to see and do during the Easter school holidays the opportunity to visit local attractions. The Highland Wildlife Park and Loch Ness Visitor Centre were among the attractions featured in VisitScotland's promotion.
- Big April Adventures saw VisitScotland team up with Scottish transport providers for a major ticket giveaway. At least 20,000 people enjoyed free travel during April - allowing them to visit Scottish islands or travel all over Scotland - courtesy of Caledonian MacBrayne, Northlink, ScotRail and Stagecoach. The ticket ballot saw over 30,000 people register.



VisitScotland's regional Business Tourism Unit (BTU) based in Inverness, works with the teams in

Edinburgh and London, to raise the profile of the Highlands as a destination for MICE - Meetings, Incentives, Conferences & Events. This high spending market is worth £878 million to Scotland, accounting for 19% of total tourism expenditure. Business visitor spend per night is 1.5 times higher than that of leisure visitors.

The local office advises 160 venues and 67 suppliers across the Highlands on how to access this lucrative market and last year handled enquiries worth over £7,246,724 for the area.

BTU runs an Ambassador programme which encourages influential locals to bring high value international conferences to the Highlands focusing on key sectors such as creative industries, food & drink, tourism, life sciences and energy & sustainability. BTU has recently been working closely with The Highland Council to maximise the benefit from Inverness' new subvention fund and the new National Bid Fund.

## VisitScotland Information Centres

Highland Council region	Open All Year/Seasonal	Footfall 2012-2013 Full Year	Additionality 2012-2013
Aviemore	Open All Year	103,096	£551,564
Daviot Wood	Seasonal	19,938	£106,668
Drumnadrochit	Open All Year with reduced winter opening	42,347	£226,556
Durness	Open All Year with winter opening limited to offer Council Service Point facilities	22,336	£119,498
Fort Augustus	Open All Year	73,100	£391,085
Fort William	Open All Year	163,852	£876,608
Grantown on Spey	Seasonal	19,226	£102,859
Inverness	Open All Year	122,756	£656,745
Lochinver	Seasonal	20,283	£108,514
North Kessock	Seasonal	19,235	£102,907
Portree	Open All Year	115,269	£616,689
Strontian	Seasonal	9,981	£53,398
Thurso	Seasonal	11,917	£63,756
Ullapool	Seasonal	27,864	£149,072
£235,000 funding - additionality return per £1 = £17.55. Figures are based on the estimated visitor expenditure generated by visitors to VisitScotland Information Centres in the Highland region and the return against every £1 of funding over and above the income generated by the VIC, the figures are based on footfall and gross expenditure and results of a VisitScotland Economic Impact Survey		771,200	£4,125,920

Information Point in Partnership	Enquiries Year 2012/2013	Cost per enquiry	Opening Hours
Ballachulish	73,165	£0.06	All year
Bettyhill	3,058	£1.24	Seasonal
Broadford	24,623	£0.34	Seasonal
Cluanie	1,879	£2.16	All year
Dornoch	24,956	£0.43	All year
Dunvegan	13,367	£0.30	Seasonal
Eilean Donan	294,653	£0.02	Seasonal
Gairloch	14,071	£0.78	All year
John O'Groats	24,864	£0.14	Seasonal
Kingussie	7,135	£0.53	All year
Kyle	25,217	£0.15	Seasonal
Lairg	14,635	£0.26	Seasonal
Nairn	4,975	£1.22	All year
Strathcarron	4,254	£0.83	All year
Strathpeffer	4,161	£2.13	Seasonal
Wick	2,772	<b>£1.28</b>	All year
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>537,785</b>	<b>0.15</b>	



Within the Highland Council Region in 2012-13 there were 14 VisitScotland Information Centres and 16 Information Points in Partnership (IPIPs). Seven Information Centres were open all year and seven were seasonal. Eight IPIPs were open all year and eight were seasonal.

During 2012-2013 the total enquiries dealt with by Information Centres was 771,819 visitors and 25,720 telephone, mail/email enquiries. While IPIPs dealt with a total of 537,785 visitors.

Thurso Information Centre has relocated to shared premises within Caithness Horizons in Thurso and Ullapool Information Centre has been completely refurbished ready for the 2013 season as part of the programme of rebranding the VICs across the network.