

# Scottish Tourism Forum Autumn Newsletter: **September 2008**

Dear STF,

Welcome to your latest newsletter from Scottish Tourism Forum, the independent forum for tourism in Scotland.

This newsletter details information on STF activities and events, including our forthcoming **STF Open Meetings**.

## STF Activities

### Fire Regulations

STF continues to collate members views on current Fire Regulations laws, with B&B's coming under the new self-assessment regulations for the first time.

### EETC Report

Tavish Scott, MPS, will be updating delegates on the review of Energy, Enterprise and Tourism Inquiry at Scottish Tourism Open Meeting 'Taking the Lead' on 2 October 2008.

### Forthcoming Strategic Work

STF continues to work with the Scottish Government, and met with Jim Mather recently to discuss the review of the Tourism Framework for Change strategy.

## Red Tape News

### Licensing Law

David Adams from Glamis Castle, recently reported to us a positive meeting with his local Licencing Clerk despite receiving a five page document of amendments prior to the meeting. David was met with a sympathetic and contrite response to his requests and David now is far more confident about licencing situation than before. It would appear the 'five page document of amendments required' is Board policy and it is up to the Board to relax their rules. The recommendation from David is to try to meet with the entire board, after a preparatory meeting with the Licencing Clerk, and be prepared to explain any of your issues individually.

## STF Open Meeting - Taking the Lead 2 Oct 08

Scottish Tourism Forum Open Meeting 'Taking the Lead' will be held on 2 October 2008, Best Western Park Hotel, Falkirk.

The meeing will discuss the best approach to training excellence in the tourism industry, as well as discussing the benefits and challengs from

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Keep in touch with the STF team about your news and events.

Email your news, events and suggestions to [Ruth](#).

Please advise [Elaine](#) of any changes in your contact details.

Kind Regards

STF Team

Awards

becoming a Destination Management Organisations in the industry. Listen to Tavish Scott giving an update on the review of Energy, Enterprise and Tourism Inquiry and hear Visit Scotland's view on global competition. Raise your questions throughout the day at the three Q&A sessions.

**Delegate rates:**

Members: STF members are entitled to one free delegate place and up to three guests at £20+VAT per guest.

Non-Members: £45+VAT per delegate.

**Exhibition rates:**

**Members:**

Insert into delegate pack £50+VAT

Exhibition space (includes one free delegate) £150+VAT Exhibition space and insertion £175+VAT

**Non-members:**

Insert into delegate pack £75+VAT

Exhibition space (includes one free delegate) £250+VAT

Exhibition and insertion £275+VAT

To book your exhibition space, or to buy a delegate place contact [events@stforum.co.uk](mailto:events@stforum.co.uk)

### STF Events - e-Business Workshops

**e-Business Workshops LAST CHANCE TO BOOK**

Are you sure your site is maximising business benefits for your company? Are you attracting enough of the right kind of visitor to your web site? Do you know how visits to your site translate into bookings and profits?

25 September 08 - Glasgow Audi Centre

26 September 08 - Stirling Management Centre

Members £35 + VAT Non-members £45 + VAT

Call Elaine on 0131 220 6321 or email

[elaine.townsend@stforum.co.uk](mailto:elaine.townsend@stforum.co.uk) to reserve your place. For more information and agenda for the workshops visit our [web site](#).

### Government Activities

**Licensing for Migrant Workers outside the EU**

The UK Border Agency recently announced that businesses in the UK wishing to employ skilled workers from outside the UK will have to register for a sponsor licence with the UK Border Agency and pay between £300 and £1,000 under new immigration rules. Under the Government's new Points based System, similar to the Australian system, potential employers who wish to bring in skilled workers from outside the EU must register for a sponsor licence before employing

### 24 October Thistle Awards 2008

The Award Ceremony and Gala Dinner to celebrate the winners of the Thistle Award 2008 will be held at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre.

The awards, which are organised by [VisitScotland](#), honour tourism businesses that excel through quality and innovation and are widely recognised as one of the top accolades in the industry.

The awards were;

- Business Tourism
- Collaboration
- Customer Care
- Events and Festivals
- Innovation
- Marketing Initiative
- Operator Programme of the Year
- PR Excellence
- Sustainable Tourism
- Young Tourism
- Entrepreneur

Tickets cost £110. For further information or to book a place visit

[www.scottishthistleawards.co.uk](http://www.scottishthistleawards.co.uk)

### 1 March 2009 Scottish Hotel of the Year Awards, SECC

For further information please visit

[www.scottishhotelssoftheyear.com](http://www.scottishhotelssoftheyear.com)

### Training & Events

**6-21 September 2008**

**Scottish Food Fortnight**

Events held across Scotland to celebrate food. For more

foreign workers from outside the EU.

The Home Office introduced fines this year, for business employing illegal works and has issued 450 penalties of up to £10,00 a time.

Most workers within Europe are allowed to seek work in the UK under the free-market rules that also allow UK workers to work in the EU countries.

For more in-depth information visit [www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk)

## Welcome to New Members

### ACME Creative

Acme Creative is a boutique design and marketing business based in Edinburgh. We can provide creative graphic design to help your business make an impact including- design for logos, brochures, leaflets, newsletters and exhibition display material- plus website design and email newsletters. The team behind Acme have a good understanding of the tourism sector, having worked for the De Vere Group, Airtours, Hilwood Resorts and others. Please call Neil or Margaret on 0131 477 1488 or email: [ideas@acmecreative.co.uk](mailto:ideas@acmecreative.co.uk) web address : [www.acmecreative.co.uk](http://www.acmecreative.co.uk)

### DS Consulting GmbH

[schottland.de](http://schottland.de)

We operate the German-language online travel portal [www.schottland.de](http://www.schottland.de) which provides German visitors to Scotland with information about accommodation, activities and attractions throughout Scotland. In particular we promote last minute Scottish accommodation and other offers in the German market.

### McKinlay Kidd



Tour operator specialising in tailor-made self-drive holidays throughout Scotland and the Islands. For more information visit

[www.seescotlanddifferently.co.uk](http://www.seescotlanddifferently.co.uk)

### Occupancy Marketing



Occupancy Marketing work with some of the leading UK travel and tourism brands to increase online exposure via search and social media. The companies services are designed to increase direct online bookings via non commissionable channels. Occupancy Marketing clients include Apex Hotels, The Townhouse

information

[www.scottishfoodfortnight](http://www.scottishfoodfortnight)

### 8 September 2008

**Glasgow Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament**, Hilton Park Golf Club Auldmarroch Estate Milngavie. For further information

[www.glasgowchamberonline.org](http://www.glasgowchamberonline.org)

### 9 September 2008

**SCDI Scotland's Energy Future Conference**

Murrayfield Stadium Edinburgh.

SCDI Member £150 plus vat.

Non Member £200 plus vat.

For more information visit

[www.scdi.org.uk](http://www.scdi.org.uk) or email

[nicola.seeley@scdi.org.uk](mailto:nicola.seeley@scdi.org.uk) T: 0141 352 8548

### 15 September 2008

**The Beach Conference - Keep Scotland Beautiful, St Andrews**

Speakers include SEPA and Scottish Government. For more information

visit [www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org](http://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org)

### 25-28 September 2008

**Kirkcaldy Comedy Festival**

STF member, Kirkcaldy Town Centre Management Initiative launches four day comedy festival. For more information visit

[www.kirkcaldycomedyfestival.com](http://www.kirkcaldycomedyfestival.com)

### 2 October 2008

**Scottish Licensed Trade**

**Association Dinner**, Radisson S.A.S Hotel Glasgow.

Keynote: Cabinet Secretary for Justice Kenny MacAskill MSP.

Tickets £70 per person or £650 for a table of 10. For more information

[www.sita.info](http://www.sita.info) 0131 225 5169

### 8th October 2008

**VisitScotland Scottish Business Tourism Workshop**, The Balmoral Edinburgh

For more information or to book a place contact

[caroline.smith@visitscotland.com](mailto:caroline.smith@visitscotland.com) T: 01292 673756

### 23 October 2008

**Scottish Audience Development Forum**

How to develop audiences for arts and culture, film by maximising Web 2.0 technology.

For more information visit Scottish Arts Council

### 24th October 2008

**Scottish Thistle Awards ceremony and gala dinner**, EICC.

Tickets are £110. To book a place

[www.scottishthistleawards.co.uk](http://www.scottishthistleawards.co.uk) F: 0131 472 2223

Company, City Inn, Eton Collection, Gleneagles, The Grove and Chewton Glen. For more information visit [www.occupancymarketing.com](http://www.occupancymarketing.com)



## SURGEONS' HALL

### Surgeons' Hall

Surgeons' Hall is the recently established conference and events venue housed within the magnificent Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh. Surgeons' Hall offers a fantastic variety of venues which are rich in architectural and artistic history, yet offer the latest in modern conference and banqueting amenities. In addition, Surgeons' Hall boasts its own stylish hotel '[Ten Hill Place](#)' an ideal base for attending events and for accommodating visitors to the city. For more information visit [www.surgeonshall.com](http://www.surgeonshall.com)

### Wilson-Macleod Consulting

Following his departure from VisitScotland earlier this year Willie Macleod has established his own firm, Wilson-Macleod Consulting. The business specialises in tourism, hospitality and economic development. In addition to consultancy, he is a trustee of the New Lanark Conservation Trust, a non-executive director of New Lanark Trading Limited, New Lanark Hotels Limited and Lennoxlove House Limited.

## Other Industry News

### Adventure Tourism Management BA degree at Lochaber College UHI



Based at Fort William, this degree offers the opportunity to strengthen practical and leadership skills, and build knowledge and understanding of business management and giving students real-life experience and advice on adventure tourism management.

The course can be studied full or part time for more information visit [www.lochaber.uhi.ac.uk](http://www.lochaber.uhi.ac.uk) or email [info@lochaber.uhi.ac.uk](mailto:info@lochaber.uhi.ac.uk)

### Auchgourish Botanic Garden & Arboretum become members of the botanic gardens Conservation International in June 08

Auchgourish Botanic Gardens is a participant of the International Agenda for Botanic Gardens in Conservation. At this early stage the Garden's role for the time being is to maintain ex situ populations of cert plant genera; e.g. Liliun, Malus, Paeone and Prunis whilst conserving genetic material. For more information please email [info@auchgourishbotanicgarden.org](mailto:info@auchgourishbotanicgarden.org)

### Moffat became the first 'Walkers are Welcome Town' in

### 4 November 2008 UK Customer Management Conference - EICC

For the agenda or to book a place visit [www.ukcustomermanagement.co.uk](http://www.ukcustomermanagement.co.uk)

### 2 December 2008 Developing a Sustainable Events Industry

National Events Conference - Gleneagles Hotel  
Speakers: Jim Mather MSP, Chris Hoy MBE, Louise Martin CBE (Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games). For details and to book a place visit [EventScotland](#)

### 3 December 2008 Royal Hotel, Bridge of Allan

For more information or to register your email [events@stforum.co.uk](mailto:events@stforum.co.uk)

## Scottish Tourism Week

Scottish Tourism Week, initiated by STF in 2006, encourages business to business networking and brings together the private sector and elected sector towards a positive single agenda.

ScotHot, held at SECC Glasgow, will be the first event to fall within Scottish Tourism Week and during the three days (2-4 March 2009) there will be a series of seminars, demonstrations and competitions. For more information visit ScotHot website

Confirmed dates include:

**4 March 09 - STF Open Meeting**, Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh

**4 March 09 - STF Parliamentary Reception**, Edinburgh

**9 March 09 - STF Industry Dinner**, Edinburgh

Visit our website for regular updates. [www.stforum.co.uk](http://www.stforum.co.uk)

## ScotHot events at Scottish Tourism Week

The Federation of Chefs Scotland will be holding the **27th Scottish Culinary Championship at ScotHot 2009**. There are three new competitions that will run alongside the core competitions.

**Scottish Banqueting Challenge - 2-**

## Scotland in 2007 and has since been joined by Kilsyth in 2008

The intention of 'Walkers are Welcome Town' network is to bring together towns of varying sizes that wish to promote their walking credentials or promoting walking festivals. To find out more visit [www.walkersarewelcome.org.uk](http://www.walkersarewelcome.org.uk) or contact Geoff Kitt, Chairman of [Moffat and District Community Initiative](#).

## Tourism in the cold climate - is the media right?

With the media obsessed with the credit crunch, soaring oil prices and lengthy discussion on when the UK economy will move into a recession; STF wanted to know if this reflects the members' views on the business of tourism.

Examining statistics published by VisitScotland, the most recent Tourism Barometer May/June 08, comments that the Spring period for this year 'compares less favourably' than last year. The opinions seemed fairly evenly split; 31% above average, 27% average, 36% below average business compared with the same period in 2007, to view the figures visit

[http://www.visitscotland.org/visitor\\_attraction\\_barometer\\_may\\_2008.pdf](http://www.visitscotland.org/visitor_attraction_barometer_may_2008.pdf)

STF asked a few members their view on the current market. How has business fared up to now, is business worse than last year?

Martin Couchman, Chief Executive of British Hospitality Association felt that tourism is such a mixed picture. When it is reported there are rooms available in Edinburgh during the festival, it suggests something may be wrong. However in London the hotel industry is fairly stable and the view is quietly optimistic; the business hasn't seen the predicted downturn. Costs of supplies is problematic with hoteliers facing the increase food and rising fuel costs. BHA commented that petrol sales at motorway service stations were down by 5% this year compared with 2007, which suggests less travelling, possibly impacting on the highlands. On the positive note, with the strong dollar against the pound Martin felt we might see an increase in American tourism.

David Smythe, Association of Scotland's Self Caterers said the self catering business over the last few months has been steady and matched last year's figures. The overall view is that business seems good. There are some areas that are sluggish; Moray coast and Loch Lomond have reported a drop in bookings, and the 5% luxury end market has experienced difficulties. The Highlands have reported an excellent season, reflecting the good weather they have experienced and the fuel crisis doesn't appear to have affected their business. David reported that pricing is crucial at the moment to the success of the market.

Eva McDairmid, Association of Scottish Visitor Attractions commented that the visitor attraction figures have increase by 1.6% year to date (January - July) from last year, although July 2008 figures compared with July 2007, business is down by 1.4% (or if including Kelvingrove down by 5.2%). It is clear the figures are variable; Glamis Castle was down last month but up this month, Dynamic Earth and the Edinburgh Zoo have both experienced an increase, yet Edinburgh Castle saw a drop in business of 14.5%. As many of the visitor attractions' customers are Scots (not requiring accommodation) the impact of fuel costs may have less effect. As Edinburgh Castle is dependent largely on foreign visitors could this account for the drop in business? Eva felt that despite the increase in fuel costs people are reluctant to forgo their leisure breaks.

### 3 March 2009

This is a team cook and serve competition. The team will serve a three course meal to 60 covers including five for judging, held at the Restaurant of Nations in the centre of the exhibition.

### Scottish Contract Catering Chef of the Year

Open to chefs working in a contract catering unit in Scotland. Competitors prepare a three course dinner for two covers. The final 10 competitors will compete in the final at ScotHot 2009.

### Scottish Pub Chef of the Year

Open to chefs working in public houses, wine bars, bistros, inns and gastro pubs. Competitors prepare two course meal; a sustainable white fish with garnish and a modern interpretation of a traditional steamed pudding dessert.

For more information contact [marieclare.james@freshrm.co.uk](mailto:marieclare.james@freshrm.co.uk)