

STF members' newsletter 21st June 2006

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Scottish Tourism Week gains momentum across Britain

Scottish Tourism Week 2007 will take place during the week of March, 12th – 16th March. *Mark the week in your diary!* Events will be confirmed as soon as we can.

STF's inaugural Scottish Tourism Week proved so successful that it has now been adopted in England, with the first "**British Tourism Week**" to take place in 2007, which will focus on two events in Birmingham: VisitBritain's British Travel Trade Fair (March 13-14) and UKinbound's 30th Anniversary Convention (March 14-15).

World Cup Press Coverage

STF has been quoted in most Scottish papers, stating that First Minister's Jack McConnell's remarks (that he is more likely to support Trinidad & Tobago or Angola) were not helpful to the development of Scottish Tourism with so many visitors coming to the country annually from south of the Border. Whilst STF supports the business case, we wish to emphasise that English market is one of the highest for tourist spend.

VisitScotland has gathered some impressive statistics.

The value of tourism from the UK markets is currently almost **£3.6 million** annually. Did you know that:

- *91% of tourism volume to Scotland is made up from visitors from within the UK?*
- *Of the total UK population, approximately 47% of adults (18+) have **never** taken a holiday or short break in Scotland*
- *Of those, 57% stated that they **would** like to take a holiday or short break in Scotland - so there is lots of potential!*

STF offered a Trade Surgery on England and the Home counties during Scottish Tourism Week but sadly it was cancelled. We plan to re-run the event in the autumn if there is sufficient interest, so please email us now on mail@stforum.co.uk to ensure it goes ahead.

EVENTS

18th July, HMRC Open Day, Murrayfield Stadium, Edinburgh, EH12 5PJ 10.00 – 5.00pm.

HM Revenue & Customs Business Advice Open Day offers free advice and information.

Scottish Tourism Forum is delighted to work with HMRC to provide tailored tourism sessions.

Select from seminars on: General taxation, Tourism, Construction, Good environmental business practice, Property development for tourism, Starting your own business and Self-assessment.

Many small businesses which have signed up for schemes have managed to reduce their VAT accounting time to a matter of a **couple of hours per year**. Are you aware of the:

- *Tourism Operators Margin Scheme (TOMS)*
- *Annual Accounting Scheme* that enables 9 monthly Vat returns to help you manage your cash flow
- *Flat Rate scheme* which can reduce tax payable, paperwork and time

Drop in when it suits you to get free one-to-one advice in private, and sign up ON-LINE for the seminars that will help your business. Cost – FREE. For more information call 0121 697 4065, or go to www.businessadviseday.co.uk to view and book your chosen seminars online.

To download the programme leaflet go to <http://www.stforum.co.uk/events.asp>

27th June - Massive Action Day

Want to plan effectively for your business for the next 90 Days? Want to have a clear set of goals and the actions that will deliver them? Want to network with other like-minded, proactive business owners? Well then, sign up for Action International's Massive Action Day on 27th June.

Here is what one STF member said:

"The Massive Action Day was a real shot in the arm for me and a wake-up call for my business... I'd recommend this programme to anyone who wants the inspiration and support to move their business up to a new level." *Stephen Spencer, Director of Innovation, Ascension Solutions Ltd.*
Call Richard Norris on 01738 450401 or email richardnorris@action-international.com.

STF MEETINGS

The next dates for members' meetings are:

5th October 2006 - AGM, followed by Open Meeting

6th December 2006 - STF Members' meeting

Thursday 15th March 2007- STF Members Open Meeting and Parliamentary Reception - Scottish Tourism Week

Tourism Tax

The STF members online survey headlines:

Local Tax: 17% For - 83% Against

Scottish National 8% For - 92% Against

UK National – 5% For - 95% Against

More details and breakdown to follow in July.

STF in Action:

- Planning E-Business Roadshows for winter 2006/07
- STF on judging panel for Challenge Fund on behalf of industry
- Attended British Hospitality Association Scotland meeting
- Attended VisitScotland Trade Association meeting on Information & Sales changes
- Attended BHA's MSP Reception at Holyrood
- Preparing response to National Transport Consultation
- Took promoter's briefing on Edinburgh Airport Rail Link (EARL)
- Ran our online survey on Tourism Tax with STF members
- Met with Scottish Retail Consortium regarding the Christmas & New Year Trading Bill
- Meetings with Scottish Executive to progress Tourism Framework for Change
- Made initial response to SNP's Manifesto Booklet (2007) which makes NO reference to tourism
- Attended VisitScotland's final "Information & Sales Review" consultation meeting

Strathclyde University Pilot Project

The Advancing Women's Employability Project (AWE) is developing a range of innovative methods to engage and support older women in aspiring to new careers in higher level jobs particularly in growth areas in the Scottish Economy such as Tourism and Hospitality. The project assists women aged 50+, to explore their options, acquire learning, develop new skills and enhance their future employability.

The project, managed by the University of Strathclyde "Senior Studies Institute" and funded through the Scottish Equal Programme, is currently being piloted in South Lanarkshire, Glasgow and Lochaber.

This offers long term benefits to tourism employers. Mature women are far more likely to stay in a position than their foreign and younger counterparts. For further information, contact Alice Morton on 0141 548 4706.

News in Short

Minimum Wage increases in October

The minimum wage is to increase by 30p to **£5.35** an hour from October 2006. The rate for workers aged 18 to 21 will rise by 20p to **£4.45** while workers aged 16 and 17 will see their minimum rate increased by 30p to **£3.30** an hour.

The 5.9% increase is higher than the increase in average earnings, currently running at around 4% and will mean a pre-tax rise of £12 per week or £48 per month for workers doing a 40-hour week.

More than 140,000 Scottish workers are expected to benefit from the rise – two-thirds of whom are women.

Glasses in Glasgow

Glasses have been allowed back into pubs and cafes in Glasgow following a change of ruling by the Licensing Board. It was felt that the glass ban, if it had gone ahead, would have portrayed the city in a negative light. Wine would have had to be served with plastic glasses in bar- restaurants and premium ranges of drinks would have suffered from poor presentation.

The amended policy will allow the board to monitor and review each licensed premise's risk assessment as necessary on a case-by-case basis in order to sustain a high standard of public safety across the city.

Solo Round Scotland Challenge

Alan Rankin, Chief Executive of STF, completed his challenge to sail and cycle solo around Scotland on 1st May. It was a long haul but worth it, in his view, as he has raised approximately £11,000 for charities: Parkinson's Disease Society and the Ocean Youth Trust Scotland. Thanks for the fantastic support that many of you have given him! You can still help by donating or simply view his route (& photo gallery) on www.soloroundscotland.com.

Decrease in Visitor Spend

Tourism Alliance reports that, since 2000, spend per visitor to the UK has decreased 6.3% from £508 to £476 – equal to a 16.6% decrease in real terms. The growth in total visitor numbers since 2001 has been driven by a strong increase in visitors from Europe while the long-haul market (41% of whom come from the USA) has remained static. This in itself would not be a problem provided that the two markets were interchangeable. However, they aren't. European visitors spend only £356 per visit while long-haul visitors spend more than twice as much at £786 per visit.

So unless we can regain growth in the long-haul market, average spend per visit will continue to decline. See article on Chinese tourism below.

Chinese Tourists are a retailer's dream

The Economist reports that, although only 1m Chinese tourists visited Europe last year, by 2020 there will be 30m "genuine" international tourists. However Chinese tourists are frugal and groups will choose the cheapest hotel—even 30 miles outside a city— as only repeat visitors look to stay in 4* & 5* hotels. Groups travel by bus and eat only Chinese food, but will spend their money on branded goods.

In Germany the second most visited place after Berlin is Metzingen, a small town in the Black Forest unknown to most Germans, but home to a giant Hugo Boss discount store. The French group Accor has adapted 56 mid-range hotels in Europe offering noodles for breakfast, Chinese TV channels and Mandarin-speaking staff. Galerie Lafayette, the famous department store in Paris, celebrated China's "Year of the Dog" this February, supplying greeters fluent in Mandarin, a Sichuan restaurant and deep discounts on its designer goods. Not surprisingly the Chinese spend more in the shop than any other group of foreign visitors.

Westminster Minister for Tourism

The new DCMS Creative Industries and Tourism Minister, Shaun Woodward MP, has replaced James Purnell MP (who was promoted). Mr Woodward has had 10 years in the broadcasting industry. Prior to DCMS, Mr Woodward was Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Northern Ireland Office.

Scottish Museum Council recently worked with a group of Scottish industrial museums (including the National Archives of Scotland) and the Ancestral Tourism Initiative on a project addressing the increasing amounts of genealogy enquiries received by these sites. A mapping exercise examined the industrial archives held, and suggested a series of recommendations for future Ancestral Tourism visitors.

Scottish Book-Printing Anniversary 2008

The launch of a new website in June supports preparations to mark 500 years of book-printing in Scotland, to be celebrated across the country in 2008. The only known copy of the earliest dated book printed in Scotland is in the National Library rare book collections. The website will be used to publicise events from now on. There is always a tourism market for such a niche anniversary and further information is available to you on www.nls.uk/news/.

Heritage Lottery Funding

The [HLF](#) in Scotland enables communities to celebrate, look after and learn more about their diverse heritage. From museums and historic buildings to parks and nature reserves to celebrating traditions, customs and history, the HLF has awarded over £3.3 billion to projects that open up our nation's heritage for everyone to enjoy.

They hold monthly pre-application advice surgeries at their office in Edinburgh. To arrange a time slot for you or your group, please contact Annabel Bath on 0131 225 9450, Scotland@hlf.org.uk.

Cairngorm National Park are launching a new summer season **Cross-Park Heather Hopper bus service** between Grantown-on-Spey and Ballater to support tourism development. It connects with buses from Aberdeen and Perth, and outside the standard village bus stops, the bus will operate a "Hail & Ride" service. Now there is old fashioned service for you!

Profile Plus to specialise in leisure and lifestyle sector

STF member Profile Plus has adopted a new brand strategy in order to focus on the *leisure and lifestyle* sector and strengthen its position as experts in the field.

Director, Robyn Glynne-Percy said: "This is a natural progression for Profile Plus. We have a strong history of working with leisure and lifestyle companies such as Prestonfield, One Spa and Ian Macleod Distillers. We believe tourism is a major growth sector."

STF member **Promotional Print Distributors** has launched the summer edition of its popular '**Bags of Info for Kids**' packs, which include a range of fun and informative leaflets aiming to encourage children and their parents to get out and about this summer. Over 160,000 packs are distributed to primary school children just in time for the school holidays.

1745 Trading Co, another STF member, designed a board game and a fun website. To celebrate "How Scottish are you?" it plays the song "Jason Scotland". OK, so Trinidad & Tobago are now out of the running for the cup!

Since the song appeared on the Scottish Quest website on the 5th of May, the site has received *2.5 million* page requests and 250,000 unique visitors from around the world. The single reached number 2 in the Scottish charts and number 30 in the UK charts which they are very pleased with!! www.scottishquest.com/howscottish/game.html .

STF New members

We are delighted to welcome the following new members. We would like to encourage all members to pass on details of the Forum to potential new members or give their contact details to the STF office.

Association of Dumfries & Galloway Accommodation Providers – not for profit, formally constituted, voluntary run organisation supporting accommodation providers in Dumfries and Galloway. <http://www.visitsouthwestscotland.com>.

Manuela Fraenkel, Blue Badge Tourist Guide, available for tailored tours, ManuelaFraenkel@aol.com

Explore Scotland – Scottish tourism websites with visitor guides specific to different areas of Scotland. <http://www.explorescotland.net>.

Forbes of Kingennie – has a visitor centre, fishery restaurant, bars and functions/wedding venue. <http://www.forbesofkingennie.com>.

Hotel & Catering International Management Association (HCIMA) is the professional body for managers and aspiring managers in the worldwide hospitality industry. <http://www.hcima.org>.

Retail Magic Ltd – Retail Magic's prime objective is to help retail organisations, large or small, maximize their sales & profits. "We turn products into profits!" <http://www.retail-magic.com>.

Source Tourism Solutions Ltd is a sales & marketing revenue development consultancy for tourism businesses. <http://www.sourcescotland.com>.

The West Lothian Tourism Forum – voluntary group working to raise the profile of tourism in West Lothian. <http://www.visitwestlothian.com>.

Xpress Recruitment – Hospitality and Retail Recruitment specialists operating in the Scottish marketplace. <http://www.xpressrecruitment.com>.

ON ATTACHED PAGES:

TKS provides industry focussed and relevant research for the members of the Scottish Tourism Forum.

Tourism Knowledge Scotland (TKS) is the network of 14 Universities in Scotland working in Tourism. This data page was edited by **Rory Mclellan and Philip Goulding** of The Scottish Hotel School (Strathclyde University) on behalf of the network. Please contact Craig Wight for further information regarding any of the above research on 0141 331 8400, or email cwi2@gcal.ac.uk for copies.

GOODBYE FROM FIONA

This is the last newsletter from me as I leave the Forum this month. Can I thank all STF members and individuals who have been a great support and who have taught me so much about tourism in Scotland! It has been a pleasure working with you, and it is with sadness that I leave the STF office, a veritable hive of activity!

I hope that you continue to work closely with the Forum to ensure that your business and the tourism sector continue to punch above their weight within the UK and globally!

Kind regards

Fiona

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STF is a membership organisation that unites tourism interests in order to make a meaningful contribution to the improvement of Scotland's international competitiveness and business performance. For more information see www.stforum.co.uk

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