

APPENDIX 1

FALKIRK COUNCIL

TOURISM ACTION PLAN 2014

The Tourism Action Plan consists of a range of activities being undertaken by the Council, VisitScotland and other partners.

The following plan highlights planned activities for 2014 – these activities are arranged under the following headings:

- Marketing & Communications
- Key Visitor Attractions
- Infrastructure and Environment

2014 will be an important year for tourism in Falkirk and in Scotland. A list of key events planned to date is also listed below.

2014 Planned Activities		
Action Area		Lead Organisation
Marketing & Communications	<p>VisitFalkirk Growth Fund</p> <p>An evaluation of the 2013 VisitScotland Growth Fund marketing campaign will be prepared for VisitScotland.</p> <p>We will be working with partners to assess the feasibility of applying for the VisitScotland Growth Fund in 2014. VisitScotland's early indication is that, depending on the evaluation of the 2013 programme, a 2014 application could be considered in April and would run for a further 12 months followed by 3 months monitoring. The funding bid would target new markets or use different marketing techniques.</p> <p>It will aim to maximise the economic impact that the opening of the Helix and John Muir Way has for the Falkirk area. Discussions to date on potential target markets/audiences for future campaigns include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group travel markets• Cruise Markets Opportunities and M9/M80-connectivity• Short break markets• Cycling and activities market, optimising on the John Muir Way• Business tourism market <p>It is important that the application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhances the VisitFalkirk web presence• Promotes the connectivity between tourist attractions within the Falkirk area, including the town centres	Falkirk Council and Falkirk Delivers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is additional to core Marketing Activity carried out by the Visit Falkirk partners • Has a focus on new ideas and fresh approaches • Is trackable in terms of evaluation. 	
	<p>VisitScotland - Spring into Summer Campaign</p> <p>Develop a campaign with VisitScotland for additional promotion to take in the run up to the Easter Holidays and the completion of the Helix. This will ensure that there is advance promotion of the key events and openings which will take place in Spring/Summer 2014. This will include a combination of press and radio activity</p> <p>VisitScotland – Tourist Information</p> <p>Falkirk Council will continue to support the provision of tourist information in the Falkirk area in conjunction with VisitScotland (subject to renewing the joint working agreement). We will also look to extend the availability of visitor information at other locations such as libraries utilising WIFI availability and digital options.</p> <p>Falkirk Council will distribute tourist leaflets to numerous attractions outwith the area in addition to all local attractions and accommodation providers.</p> <p>VisitScotland – Area Guides</p> <p>VisitScotland will publish a 2014 <i>Where to Stay</i> guide (including a VisitFalkirk advert promoting local accommodation) and a 2014 <i>What to See and Do</i> guide.</p>	VisitScotland
	<p>VisitScotland Expo</p> <p>VisitScotland Expo will take place 2nd & 3rd April at SECC, Glasgow. The Council and local partners have expanded their presence for 2014 to 6 stands. These will operate as an integrated Falkirk stand, with the Kelpie maquettes on display. VisitScotland Expo promotes Scotland to the travel trade and especially the group travel operators, which are significant contributors to tourism in the Falkirk area. It is intended to further develop the itineraries which have been produced for the group travel trade.</p>	Falkirk Council
	<p>Print</p> <p>Printed information for visitors will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VisitFalkirk area guide and map updated for 2014 • Bo'ness area guide in Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway Leaflet • Unlock Bo'ness – new area guide to Bo'ness 	Falkirk Council, FCT / Helix, SRPS, Falkirk Delivers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Callendar House leaflet • Falkirk Heritage Trail leaflet • Suite of paths leaflets for walking and cycling • Helix leaflet • Visit Falkirk Itineraries • Calendar of events leaflet <p>Leaflets will be distributed both locally and nationally as appropriate.</p> <p>It is intended to translate the Visit Falkirk area guide into Spanish, Italian and Chinese in 2014.</p>	
	<p>Website and Social Media</p> <p>The current Falkirk Council website is being revised. The VisitFalkirk content will be updated and enhanced for the new site.</p> <p>We will also work with VisitScotland to create VisitFalkirk pages within www.visitscotland.com to help visitors to the national site find local information.</p> <p>With the expansion of the Falkirk tourism experience in 2014 and with continuing collaborative activity among tourism operators, there is an expected need for a Falkirk tourism website and options are currently being considered. We hope to build on the success of The Helix website which has attracted 110,000 visitors since January 2013. The Helix facebook has 6,750 followers and a reach of 188,000. The Kelpies facebook has 12,485 followers and a reach of 208,000 people. Twitter has 2,203 followers plus several hundred followers on Google plus and You Tube.</p> <p>We will update pages on Wikipedia and Wikitravel and introduce new pages as new attractions develop in the Falkirk area.</p> <p>The VisitFalkirk Facebook page www.facebook.com/visitfalkirk was created late in 2013 and will be developed further to increase engagement and drive interest in attractions and events in the Falkirk area.</p> <p>We will continue to deliver key tourism messages via Twitter using the primary Falkirk Council Twitter feed and will investigate developing a Visitfalkirk twitter feed.</p> <p>Mi Falkirk app will continue to be supported with updates and special offers, increasing its reach further.</p>	Falkirk Council, Falkirk Delivers

	<p>Communications with Local Businesses</p> <p>We will continue to issue a regular ezine on tourism issues to local tourism businesses. We will continue the distribution of the Falkirk area leaflet to a wide range of tourism sites and businesses. A meeting with tourism businesses will take place in March 2014.</p> <p>Business Gateway Falkirk will continue to support businesses within the Tourism sector through on-going support, advice, free workshops and training.</p> <p>The Business Engagement Officer with The Helix will continue to meet with other tourism providers to establish ongoing linkages and work closely with the rest of the VisitFalkirk team to ensure effective collaboration and partnership working.</p> <p>A programme of customer service training such as World Host will be considered with a view to gaining recognition and promotion for Falkirk businesses and the area. This will be assessed for all staff and volunteers within these attractions.</p> <p>It is intended to organise familiarity trips between the key attractions within the Falkirk area to ensure effective cross promotion and familiarity.</p> <p>Working with our partners we will introduce Visit Falkirk pop up promotional points at key significant events throughout the area.</p>	Falkirk Council
Key Visitor Attractions	<p>The Helix</p> <p>Following last September's opening of the Helix Park, work is continuing on the wider site, including the Kelpies, the canals and the visitor centre.</p> <p>The Helix will be Scotland's newest major visitor attraction and an extensive programme of publicity, events is planned for next year, including participation in international events such as Scotland Week in New York where it is hoped the Kelpie maquettes will be on display.</p> <p>A major 'Home' 2014 event will take place in April to mark the formal launch of the Kelpies and the completion of the John Muir Way.</p> <p>The Visitor Centre and the Kelpies Visitor Experience will form the final part of the Helix site which is expected to attract up to 500,000 visitors per annum. A tour inside the Kelpies will be available following the Home event, tickets for which will be sold from a temporary building until August 14. With extensive new facilities for activities such as cycling, The Helix will bring new</p>	FCT/ The Helix

	<p>visitor audiences to the Falkirk area as well as strengthening the area's appeal to existing target markets such as families and group travel.</p> <p>Over two evenings, 17/18th April next year at Helix Park in Falkirk, the Kelpies will be the focus of a light and pyrotechnics show. Several thousand people are expected to attend the ticketed event which celebrates not only the creation of Scotland's largest outdoor sculpture and newest tourist attraction but also the wider Helix Park with its own lagoon, wetlands, woodland trails and outdoor events space. A number of one-off, specially-commissioned night-time artworks – on the theme of Scotland as <i>Home</i> - will illuminate the dark as the audience is guided through Helix Park, to gather round the iconic Kelpies for the extraordinary, recurring light show with pulsating soundtrack.</p> <p>A Falkirk Cycle steering group has been formed to ensure connectivity of communities, businesses and tourists. A cycle forum will be launched early next year.</p>	
	<p>The John Muir Way</p> <p>The coast-to-coast trail across Scotland will be officially opened from April 2014. The route will run through many parts of the Falkirk area which stand to benefit from new visitors.</p> <p>The Council's business support services, including Business Gateway, will support businesses which can develop services for this new market.</p> <p>Signage, interpretation and publicity material will be developed or amended to ensure ease of access from the trail to other visitor sites in the Falkirk area.</p>	<p>Scottish Natural Heritage, Falkirk Council</p>
	<p>The Antonine Wall</p> <p>Following its recent the approval, the Management Plan 2014 – 2019 will be implemented in a series of stages which will both conserve the monument and facilitate visitor access.</p> <p>Dedicated website being developed and to be complete in 2014/15.</p> <p>Economic benefits study to be completed and signage strategy to be prepared.</p> <p>Investigate opportunities for cross promotion between the Antonine and Hadrians Wall.</p>	<p>Historic Scotland, Falkirk Council, FCT</p> <p>Historic Scotland</p>

	<p>The Hippodrome</p> <p>The Hippodrome Festival of Silent Cinema will take place in March 2014. Additional funds have been made available for a number of activities relating to the development of the Silent Film Festival in 2014, in particular the appointment of 2 temporary positions to enhance PR and Marketing to day and overnight visitors. The key strategic aims include contributing to developing the Hippodrome, Bo'ness and Falkirk area as a destination for tourism, business and Cultural sectors and stimulating the numbers of visitors from outwith the area.</p>	FCT
	<p>International events including Homecoming Scotland 2014, the Commonwealth Games and the Ryder Cup</p> <p>International events of such stature bring significant numbers of visitors from around the world to Scotland. The new and expanding tourism facilities and events in the Falkirk area will be targeted at these audiences.</p> <p>The Helix / John Muir Way event from April is a Homecoming Partner Event and a wide range of other local events will be branded and promoted on the Homecoming website.</p> <p>We shall ensure that local organisations and event organisers use the branding opportunities and are represented on the Homecoming site. We will also encourage all businesses to promote special offers and to communicate these through VisitScotland, Homecoming and other channels.</p> <p>Falkirk Council will work closely with VisitScotland to ensure we maximise the opportunities for journalist visits to the area through the Destination Media Centre based in Glasgow for the Commonwealth Games and at events relating to the Ryder Cup.</p> <p>Falkirk Rocks will host a major concert in June 2014 (Rod Stewart) at Falkirk Stadium which is expected to bring in 16,000 visitors to the area. Visit Falkirk and partners will work with Falkirk Rocks to optimise the impact this event has within the area.</p>	Falkirk Council and others
	<p>Other Tourism Attractions</p> <p>Falkirk Distillery Company - Progress will continue in 2014.</p> <p>Bo'ness and Kinneil Railway will continue to attract a high percentage of tourists from outwith the area and will</p>	Falkirk Council and others

	<p>continue to develop the offering to visitors.</p> <p>Kinneil House and Museum will continue to be managed and improved to maximise visitor appeal. The museum exhibits are due to be refreshed later this year.</p> <p>Callendar House - is aiming to generate additional revenue from conferences and weddings, focussing on group travel trade promotion and maintaining and improving on the level of service offered within the facility. The WW1 commemorations will form a significant part of the exhibition programme in 2014. Furthermore a programme of activity in May will focus on the National Festivals of Museums with our focus being John Muir. This programme builds on the success of the autumn programme "Fruit & Nuts" developed in collaboration with Forth Environment Link.</p> <p>Falkirk Wheel – Scottish Canals have commissioned studies of potential development at the visitor centre and wider site. We will work with Scottish Canals to boost these opportunities and their connectivity with the Helix and other sites.</p> <p>Cycling – a Falkirk Cycle steering group is to be established and Callendar Estate / Bespoke cycle trails will be further developing their offering to cyclists. We will look to actively promote the area as a destination for cyclists and tourists interested in outdoor activities.</p> <p>Work is already taking place to encourage local accommodation providers to be cycle friendly and tie in to the "Give me Tap" initiative. Ongoing opportunities exist to promote the HArtT (Helix around town Tour) Cycle Route to encourage connectivity and activity between the key attractions.</p> <p>Town Centre – ongoing promotional events, festivals and street ambassadors to encourage increased footfall in to the Town Centre.</p>	
Infrastructure and Environment	<p>Falkirk Town Centre and the Townscape Heritage Initiative.</p> <p>Implementation of the THI will progress this major project consists of £2.0 million THI funding and £1.6 million from Historic Scotland Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme.</p> <p>Through this there will be a series of guided educational heritage walks highlighting the history of the town centre.</p>	Falkirk Council/THI
	<p>Tourism Signage</p> <p>A scheme to update and enhance brown/white tourism signs was designed last year. This is being implemented</p>	Falkirk Council

	in stages as budget allows. The next stage will see the principal signs installed for the Helix and this will also allow signage for other attractions on the Helix routes to be updated. This will also include some work to update signage on the western approach to Bo'ness.	
	Public Transport We will continue to work on the connectivity between attractions, town centre and railway stations within the Falkirk area and develop the appropriate promotional materials.	Falkirk Council
	Appearance and Cleanliness of the Environment The good progress referred to in 2013 achievements will be maintained / enhanced with ongoing community engagement.	Falkirk Council and Falkirk Delivers

Key Events in 2014 – Provisional

Dates	Event	Lead organisation
5 th January 2014	Dig in at the Dock (cyclocross)	
12 th – 16 th March 2014	Hippodrome Silent Festival of Film	FCT
12 th April 2014	Pirates Parade	Falkirk Delivers
17 th /18 th April 2014	‘Home’ Official launch of the Kelpies	FCT
21 st April 2014	John Muir Way	
May 2014	Naturefest	
16 th – 18 th May 2014	National Festival of Museums	
25 th May 2014	Victorian Street Fair Bo'ness	Falkirk Delivers
June 2014	Steeple 200, Falkirk	Falkirk Delivers/ THI
21 st June 2014 -	Falkirk Rocks – Rod Stewart, Falkirk Stadium	Falkirk Rocks
25 th June 2014	Queens Baton Relay	
TBC July 2014	Funny in Falkirk	Falkirk Delivers
23 rd July – 3 rd August 2014	Commonwealth Games	
26 th July 2014	Airth Highland Games	
September 2014	Charities Day,	Falkirk Delivers
September 2014	Denny Day	Falkirk Delivers
September 2014	Doors Open Day	FCT

September 2014	The Big Roman Week	
6 th & 7 th September 2014	Bo'ness Hill Climb	
23 rd – 28 th September 2014	Ryder Cup	
November/December 2014	Festive Celebrations	Falkirk Delivers