

**OUTER HEBRIDES – AREA TOURISM PARTNERSHIP PLAN  
APRIL 2006 – MARCH 2009  
ACTION PLANS**

**1. KNOWING YOUR MARKET**

	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>COMPLETION DATE</b>	<b>LEAD ORGANISATION</b>
1.1.	Capture customer data for enquiries and bookings on CRM Marketing database for analysis and shaping of marketing activity. <b>Consumer CRM System has been setup, historical data has been transferred, new response and bookings customer data is being captured. Complete.</b>	03 2007 <b>09 2006</b>	VisitScotland
1.2.	Conduct VisitScotland Area Survey annually (Visitor Numbers, Bookings). <b>Data being captured. Ongoing. Analysis Report will be produced at financial year end.</b>	03 2007	VisitScotland
1.3.	Conduct TIC Visitor Profile & Customer Satisfaction Survey annually. <b>TIC questionnaires collected in all TIC's during 2006. TIC Analysis report now produced. Email of key statistics available.</b>	03 2007 <b>02 2007</b>	VisitScotland
1.4.	Conduct Accommodation Occupancy Survey annually. <b>Questionnaire forms for occupancy details sent out to businesses in November. Forms now returned and sent for analysis. Report awaited.</b>	03 2007	VisitScotland
1.5.	Report on Ferry and Air Travel statistics annually. <b>Liaising with Isla Macdonald on how best to present the information available.</b>	03 2007	CnES
1.6.	Encourage local businesses to collate data on their customers for analysis. <b>OHTIA will be looking at a draft form for collating data from members at their meeting on the 27 February 2007.</b>	03 2007	OHTIA
1.7.	Conduct research into customer satisfaction levels in tourism businesses via 'Who Cares Wins'. <b>This project is ongoing, the first Awards for Excellence will be made on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2007</b>	03 2007	WIE
1.8.	Promote <a href="http://www.visitscotland.org">www.visitscotland.org</a> as the primary source of tourism intelligence. <b>Ongoing via industry e-blasts, newsletters, VS magazines and roadshows.</b>	03 2008	VisitScotland
1.9.	Provide information to businesses on local and national marketing campaigns and their effectiveness	03 2008	VisitScotland
1.10.	Conduct Major Economic Volume and Value Survey of Tourism in the Outer Hebrides. <b>Update to Macpherson Report has been commissioned and the report is awaited by end March 2007.</b>	03 2009	VisitScotland
1.11.	Disseminate 'Tourism Research Network' research data to share with and inform businesses. <b>Tourism Research Network launched on 20 February 2007. Walk research to be circulated. Ongoing</b>	03 2009	VisitScotland

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**2. MARKETING & PROMOTION**

	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>COMPLETION DATE</b>	<b>LEAD ORGANISATION</b>
2.1.	Incorporate Outer Hebrides branding into all consumer promotional media and industry/visitor interfaces. <i>Included in all promotional print and web media. Complete.</i>	03 2007 09 2006	VisitScotland
2.2.	Incorporate Outer Hebrides brand quality requirements into all industry opportunities. <i>Quality award is a prerequisite condition of participation in VisitScotland promotional opportunities. Code of Conduct required for non-accommodation service businesses. Complete.</i>	03 2007 09 2006	VisitScotland
2.3.	Use CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system to best identify potential visitors for direct mail marketing campaigns. <i>Major direct mail project using 2007 brochure was completed early January 2007. (35,000 targets via CRM system identified).</i>	03 2007	VisitScotland
2.4.	Produce and promote the Outer Hebrides tourism main guide brochure annually. <i>2007 Hebrides brochure now complete and available. Also version for the blind developed on CD in 3 formats – text only WORD format, large format PDF, and Audio CD. Brochure also available to view/print online on VisitHebrides.com</i>	03 2007	VisitScotland
2.5.	Maintain, develop and promote the VisitHebrides.com niche websites as stand-alone sites. <i>Being regularly updated with changing and new information. Ongoing. Reviewing options and funding for website upgrade.</i>	03 2007	VisitScotland
2.6.	Deliver Spring marketing campaign. <i>WinterHebrides website developed with special offers from businesses available till end March 2007. Good PR generated. Niche and generic promotional activities for 2007 underway. National VS Spring direct mail campaigns now underway. Julie Fowlis UK concert tours Winter 2006 and Spring 2007 being supported with promotional material.</i>	03 2007	VisitScotland
2.7.	Participate in relevant national marketing and consumer PR activities. <i>Ongoing.</i>	03 2007	VisitScotland
2.8.	Develop a separate information presence on visitscotland.com for Outer Hebrides. <i>Link established to VisitHebrides.com on second page map. New Tiscover system allows for area information at different geographical levels.</i>	03 2008	VisitScotland
2.9.	Provide a central resource of island imagery and photography to businesses and agencies. <i>Photo web page being developed on VisitHebrides for media, businesses and agencies. Scottish Viewpoint provides low-cost access to a wide range of imagery.</i>	03 2008	VisitScotland
2.10.	Develop summary promotional brochure – essential guide. <i>Mini-brochure being produced for Spring insert</i>	03 2008	VisitScotland

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	into Scotland On Sunday.		
2.11.	Island flights and ferries to carry promotional material. Loganair backseat Events promotion 3 months 2006. To be repeated April to June 2007.	03 2008	VisitScotland
2.12.	Deliver marketing campaign at encouraging local inter-island tourism. WinterHebrides 2007 PR, email and letter to all tourism registered businesses used to encourage take-up locally of special offers.	03 2008	VisitScotland
2.13.	Research, develop and deliver marketing campaigns aimed at over 55 age group.	03 2008	VisitScotland
2.14.	Research, develop and deliver marketing campaigns aimed at families. Family activities leaflet produced and reprinted. Families now identified as a main national target.	03 2008	VisitScotland
2.15.	Develop niche market promotion for archaeology via ERDF Archaeology project. In progress. Completion on March 2008.	03 2008	CnES
2.16.	Research, develop and deliver marketing campaigns aimed at 'gourmets'. Successful VisitScotland Challenge Fund application by Food Producers Association in 2006. Eating Out guide produced.	03 2008	VisitScotland
2.17.	Research, develop and deliver marketing campaigns aimed at other islanders – ie 'people like ourselves'. Potential for using 'Friends Across Oceans' project being considered. Review potential for Homecoming 2009.	03 2009	VisitScotland
2.18.	Develop niche market web promotion for Romantic Hebrides. Wedding website launched by VS in February 2007.	03 2009	VisitScotland
2.19.	Develop niche market web promotion for sailing/yachting (Marine Tourism).	03 2009	VisitScotland
2.20.	Develop niche market web promotion for Christian Heritage.	03 2009	VisitScotland

**3. CUSTOMER SERVICES**

	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>COMPLETION DATE</b>	<b>LEAD ORGANISATION</b>
3.1.	Establish the Outer Hebrides Tourism Industry Association as the main communication channel with the agencies and within the tourism industry in the Outer Hebrides. In addition to the actions outlined in the Strategy Plan the OHTIA has, in light of what has come out of some of the area meetings, commissioned a website for members. This will explain what the OHTIA is about and hopefully encourage others to join. The website still requires some more input but is operational January 2007 <a href="http://www.hebridean-tourism.org">www.hebridean-tourism.org</a>	03 2007	OHTIA

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3.2.	Develop a scheme for aiming for excellence of customer service in all businesses interfacing with the visitor – retail, taxis, and accommodation etc. <b>The programmes are on going: Hospitality Assured, IIP, Who Cares Wins</b>	03 2007	WIE
3.3.	Encourage the roll-out of the Pride & Passion message and “Tourism is Everyone’s Business” to all businesses, schools and communities. <b>OHTIA has arranged with Pride and Passion, a Theatre workshop in the Uists similar to that held in Stornoway for training purposes. This took place on 28 November 2006 in the Borrodale Hotel. OHTIA is also proposing a “Familiarisation Trip” for Uist and Barra members to visit Harris and possibly Lewis 22 – 24 March 2007. This will be partly funded by Pride and Passion.</b>	03 2007	OHTIA
3.4.	Instil a high quality customer service ethos in school children to establish long-term Customer Care success. <b>Springboard Skills Challenge. More info at meeting.</b>	03 2008	CnES

**4. PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE**

	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>COMPLETION DATE</b>	<b>LEAD ORGANISATION</b>
4.1.	Establish the optimum network of Tourist Information Centres and information delivery methods as identified through the Information & Sales Review. <b>‘The Way Forward’ document circulated to Area Tourism Partnership by email on 11 May 2006. Outer Hebrides are involved in pilot projects for Personal Recommendations, Opening Hours, Roving Staff. Ongoing. Knowat hand-held customer survey unit now in use. Stornoway TIC being refurbished February / March 2007.</b>	03 2007	VisitScotland
4.2.	Develop a Children / Family activities leaflet. <b>Family Friendly guide printed. Reprinted January 2007. Complete.</b>	03 2007 09 2006	VisitScotland
4.3.	Develop a Good Food Route leaflet. <b>Eating Out guide printed. Complete.</b>	03 2007 09 2006	VisitScotland
4.4.	Deliver Outer Hebrides brochure & websites addresses to each home in the islands. <b>Leaflet insert in 10,000 copies of Gazette circulated throughout islands in 22 June 2006 edition. Complete. Car stickers campaign being rerun Spring 2007 to promote VisitHebrides.com</b>	03 2007 06 2006	VisitScotland
4.5.	Incorporate bus timetables at bus stops/shelters. <b>Had some feedback re where needed</b>	03 2007	CnES
4.6.	Provide information at all ferry and air ports – waiting rooms. <b>All information points being updated and reviewed for 2007. Brochure for Hebrides 2007 has been delivered to all islands in November 2006. New</b>	03 2007	VisitScotland

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	Failte Boards being produced for main ferry ports.		
4.7.	Deliver Outer Hebrides brochure & website addresses to every island business. Leaflet insert in 10,000 copies of Gazette circulated throughout islands in 22 June 2006 edition. Complete. Car stickers campaign being rerun Spring 2007 to promote VisitHebrides.com	03 2007 06 2006	VisitScotland
4.8.	Commission the development of a Gaelic Information Leaflet. Gaelic information leaflet has been produced by OHTIA member Maggie Smith. Possibly something in addition in the future.	03 2007 06 2006	OHTIA
4.9.	Develop new and updated Walks leaflets & website via the Outdoor Forum. WalkHebrides currently being updated by the Comhairle Access Officer. Work at an advanced stage and meeting with Reefnet soon. Countryside Access Programme runs until the end of 2007 and is at present upgrading paths throughout the islands. The signage for these paths incorporate the WalkHebrides symbol. Core Path network Plan for the Hebrides being undertaken as required by the Land Reform Act. Needs to be completed by February 2008. More appropriate that new leaflets and signage be left until the core path plan has been completed so that an integrated path network can be achieved. Talk of the SE making core path signage universal throughout Scotland.	03 2008	CnES
4.10.	Develop archaeological interpretation at sites of interest. Ongoing HISTP project. Due for completion in March 2008.	03 2008	CnES
4.11.	Develop Roadside signage to show mileages to villages. Technical Services looking to undertake this	03 2008	CnES
4.12.	Develop Roadside signage to all accessible beaches. Had some feedback on which areas should be signed.	03 2008	CnES
4.13.	Encourage owner operators and tourism employees at all levels to invest time in visiting local facilities and attractions.	03 2008	WIE
4.14.	Recommend that tourism businesses incorporate Product Knowledge into new staff induction sessions	03 2008	WIE
4.15.	Utilise Enterprise Programmes and Pride & Passion to improve Product Knowledge in Schools. Springboard Skills Challenge. More info at meeting.	03 2008	CnES
4.16.	Develop Familiarisation trips for 5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup> year pupils & Youth Clubs Springboard Skills Challenge. More info at meeting.	03 2009	CnES
4.17.	Create schools competition for best tourism presentation to their schools. Integration Manager at the Education department assessing how the aspirations of the strategy can be incorporated into education. Meeting arranged to address the action points.	03 2009	CnES

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**5. ACCOMMODATION**

	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>COMPLETION DATE</b>	<b>LEAD ORGANISATION</b>
5.1.	Research and report on areas where there are accommodation development requirements and opportunities in each category of accommodation type – Serviced and Self-Catering. <b>Research commissioned by HIE. Reports not yet available expected March 2007</b>	03 2007	WIE
5.2.	Design and deliver schemes whereby accommodation requirements can be developed and fulfilled. <b>Several schemes are in place to provide advice and support to ensure sector development</b>	03 2007	WIE
5.3.	Maintain incentive & assistance start-up schemes to encourage development of a long-term and sustainable tourism accommodation network in the islands. <b>Regular approval of support and funding packages to tourism businesses throughout the islands</b>	03 2007	WIE

**6. PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT**

	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>COMPLETION DATE</b>	<b>LEAD ORGANISATION</b>
6.1.	Enhance provision of basic facilities out-of-season – toilets, attractions etc. <b>Out of season facilities (toilets) incorporated in a number of attractions/tourism sites. Attractions?</b>	03 2007	CnES
6.2.	Develop an Islands/Gaelic Book Festival. <b>First Hebridean book festival (Faclan) held in An Lanntair in August. The Comhairle will help with funding for next year's event. Seo Seinn &amp; Feis nan Sgeulachd planned for 23 to 28 April 2007.</b>	03 2007	CnES
6.3.	Research and report on potential for staging the Island Games in the Outer Hebrides. <b>The host island for the Island Games has been set until 2011 (2009 Aland, 2011 Isle of Wight) It is likely that the Games will go to Bermuda in 2013. Currently all efforts are being focused on developing the ability of the Western Isles to participate in the Island Games. It would be an exciting challenge to host the games, and a feasibility study would be required well in advance of any bid being considered. 2009 would probably be the best time for such a study. The Outer Hebrides will have participated in two further games by that time.</b>	03 2007	CnES

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6.4.	Provide facilities for waste disposal for mobile homes and caravan/camp sites. <b>Waste disposal points installed at Eoligarry, Eriskay and Berneray. Private facilities at Shellbay. Private facilities available at three of the registered sites in Lewis and Harris. Leaflet printed for Uist and Barra. Number of enquiries for the leaflet from visitors before coming here.</b>	03 2008	CnES
6.5.	Develop and implement an Events Development and Co-ordination programme for the creation, delivery and cohesive promotion of events. <b>Proposed as an EC funded project under the new scheme.</b>	03 2008	CnES
6.6.	Develop upgrading proposals for all island gateways under the concept of “attractiveness of place”. <b>Ports of Entry assistance may be available from the Comhairle for gateway projects. The Comhairle has undertaken feasibility studies at Castlebay, Lochboisdale, Leverburgh, etc and propose to enhance where opportunities exists. Some work already undertaken by the Comhairle and local communities to enhance entry points.</b>	03 2008	CnES
6.7.	Develop and implement a Townscape Heritage Initiative for Stornoway. <b>Township Heritage Scheme approved and should start within the next two months. Scheme is worth £2.2m. It is a 5 year project and most of the funding has been sourced from outwith the Western Isles.</b>	03 2009	CnES
6.8.	Develop and implement the Stornoway Regeneration project. <b>Linked to ongoing Inner Harbour Study. All local bodies represented on the project. Co-ordinated approach to regeneration body . Been in operation over a year.</b>	03 2009	CnES
6.9.	Develop Lews Castle as a tourism resource. <b>A Feasibility Study completed in early 2006 identified a mixed-use development, comprising a new and enhanced Museum nan Eilean and a hotel/functions facility, as the most appropriate and viable use for Lews Castle. The estimated project cost is £7.5m. A public funding package is proposed for repairs to the historic fabric, alterations to allow joint use and for the operator who would be required to fund the hotel fit-out costs. Subject to securing the public funding package within the next 18 months, construction could begin in 2008 with completion by 2010/11.</b>	03 2009	CnES
6.10.	Develop a St. Kilda Visitor Centre and interpretation. <b>Proiseact nan Ealan are planning a multi media interpretation project as part of their Pan European St Kilda project for 2007. A visitor centre has been previously discussed and the National Trust looked at having a warden situated at Nunton Steading, Benbecula. No further progress at present.</b>	03 2009	CnES
6.11.	Develop integrated walk for ‘Western Isles Way’. <b>Attending the Access Forum on 26 September to kick start the Western Isles Way Project.</b>	03 2009	CnES
6.12.	Encourage the identification and development of new local tourism initiatives, information and events that will enhance the visitor holiday experience. <b>Two Challenge Fund projects: The Uist representatives of OHTIA are in discussion with regard to developing a website highlighting specific attractions in the Uists for</b>	03 2009	OHTIA

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	the Visitor. eg Wildlife, Flora and Fauna and other places off the beaten track that might be called “The Hidden Uists” or something similar. Neil Campbell will give an update of projects in view for Harris at the meeting on 28 February 2007.		
6.13.	Encourage the development of both air and ferry services both to and within the islands to improve and extend route flexibility, shorten travel times and reduce costs of travel. Comhairle support for the Lochboisdale-Mallaig Service and other improvements to services.	03 2009	CnES
6.14.	Strengthen the development and promotion of products that underpin the area’s status as a green destination eg. Wildlife, walking, cycling, sailing, outdoor sports, marine tourism. VisitHebrides niche websites and Hebrides brochure all promote these niche activities. £5k of Niche Promotional Advertising being done Spring 2007 in various magazines for Walking, Cycling and Wildlife.	03 2009	VisitScotland
6.15.	Provide waste recycling facilities for businesses to encourage environmental awareness. Hotels are soon to be encouraged to take glass out of their waste stream for recycling. Some businesses have expressed an interest in recycling their cans, glass and plastics. Commercial premises in Stornoway can opt to have their cans, glass and plastic collected for recycling.	03 2009	CnES

**7. QUALITY, SKILLS & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>COMPLETION DATE</b>	<b>LEAD ORGANISATION</b>
7.1.	Promote the VisitScotland Challenge Fund to encourage businesses to work cooperatively in new and complimentary partnerships. Actively promoted at Industry Roadshows in September 2006 with follow-up calls thereafter to potential participants. 2 Challenge Fund applications from Harris and Uists being worked up for February 2007 submission. Ongoing.	03 2007	VisitScotland
7.2.	Ensure all businesses receiving support and promotional opportunities are consistently Quality Assured. This is a prerequisite condition of engagement with VisitScotland opportunities. Complete.	03 2007 09 2006	VisitScotland
7.3.	Develop an enhanced Start-Up information pack for new tourism businesses. Business Development Pack revised developed 2006.	03 2007	WIE

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7.4.	Promote Customer Care Service Training in all tourism businesses	03 2008	WIE
7.5.	Develop a migrant workers scheme to include local and cultural product knowledge	03 2008	WIE
7.6.	Develop a local Quality Awards Scheme to recognise excellence. <i>Who Cares Wins annual awards event on 22 March to recognise excellence. Funding support of £5k from VS central funds.</i>	03 2008	VisitScotland
7.7.	Encourage and enable all tourism businesses to utilise IT for marketing and booking. <i>E-Commerce roadshow scheduled for Stornoway on 27 February 2007. New Tiscover system will have new products available to businesses ie Directory Listing, Self-editing software and Web-In-A-Box. Industry businesses need to be encouraged to provide and maintain room availability.</i>	03 2008	VisitScotland
7.8.	Encourage the development of a network of regular Local Markets throughout the islands and promote the use of local products in local businesses. Eg. Local Products Directory	03 2009	WIE
7.9.	Develop a skills programme from basic training through to management practices in the tourism industry.	03 2009	WIE
7.10.	Commission feasibility study on the potential opportunity to have a centralised retail shop for the promotion and sale of local crafts and goods made in the islands.	03 2009	OHTIA
7.11.	Develop and promote participation in benchmarking business performance to enable businesses to monitor strengths and weaknesses and identification of best practice	03 2009	WIE
7.12.	Encourage participation in the Green Tourism Business Scheme and enhance environmental awareness. <i>VisitScotland Area Office and Stornoway TIC aiming to gain GBTS to lead by example.</i>	03 2009	VisitScotland