We promote Scotland with Scotland, working with local industry to grow the visitor economy.
In 2017 we had an exciting year for tourism in Argyll & The Isles, with the ‘Wild About Argyll’ brand fostering collaboration throughout the region and receiving international recognition.

Our partnerships in the region continue to strengthen and our work with Argyll & The Isles Tourism Cooperative (AITC), Argyll & Bute Council and other public sector and industry partners has taken advantage of the Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology and our global Spirit of Scotland campaign.

We aim to build on this in the Year of Young People 2018, which celebrates the talent and contribution of our young people, and we are exploring exciting opportunities looking forward to the Year of Coast and Waters 2020.

Tourism is the heartbeat of the Scottish economy, causing a ripple effect which touches every industry and community, creating employment and economic growth. I look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure Argyll & The Isles maintains its status as a must-visit, must-return destination.

David Adams McGilp
Regional Director
VisitScotland
Key stats for Argyll & The Isles

621% INCREASE
IN REFERRALS TO BUSINESSES FROM VISITSCOTLAND.COM IN 2016/17 COMPARED TO 2015/16

MORE THAN 44 MILLION
POTENTIAL CONSUMERS REACHED WORLDWIDE BY OUR CONSUMER PR ACTIVITY BETWEEN APRIL AND OCTOBER 2017

£40,000
AWARDED BY OUR GROWTH FUND IN 2017 TO DEVELOP THE ‘WILD ABOUT ARGYLL’ BRAND

116 BUSINESSES
ARE PART OF OUR TASTE OUR BEST SCHEME, WHICH RECOGNISES AND CELEBRATES BUSINESSES COMMITTED TO PROVIDING LOCALLY SOURCED, QUALITY FOOD AND DRINK

110 BUSINESSES
IN OUR VISITSCOTLAND INFORMATION PARTNER (VIP) PROGRAMME

435 BUSINESSES
PARTICIPATE IN ONE OF OUR QUALITY ASSURANCE SCHEMES – 257 OF THOSE HAVE ACHIEVED FOUR OR FIVE STARS REPRESENTING A COMMITMENT TO QUALITY IN THE REGION

WE INVESTED MORE THAN £82,000
IN EVENTS IN 2016/17, INCLUDING BWA TIREE WAVE CLASSIC, COWAL HIGHLAND GATHERING AND THE SCOTTISH SERIES

DURING 2017 ARGYLL & THE ISLES POSTS ACROSS OUR CONSUMER SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS LED TO OVER 2 MILLION LIKES, SHARES, RETWEETS AND COMMENTS

More than 44 million potential consumers reached worldwide by our consumer PR activity between April and October 2017.

621% increase in referrals to businesses from visitScotland.com in 2016/17 compared to 2015/16.

110 businesses in our VisitScotland Information Partner (VIP) programme.

435 businesses participate in one of our quality assurance schemes – 257 of those have achieved four or five stars representing a commitment to quality in the region.

We invested more than £82,000 in events in 2016/17, including BWA Tíre Wave Classic, Cowal Highland Gathering and the Scottish Series.

More than 44 million potential consumers reached worldwide by our consumer PR activity between April and October 2017.

116 businesses are part of our Taste Our Best scheme, which recognises and celebrates businesses committed to providing locally sourced, quality food and drink.

£40,000 awarded by our Growth Fund in 2017 to develop the ‘Wild About Argyll’ brand.

During 2017 Argyll & The Isles posts across our consumer social media channels led to over 2 million likes, shares, retweets and comments.

110 businesses in our VisitScotland Information Partner (VIP) programme.

435 businesses participate in one of our quality assurance schemes – 257 of those have achieved four or five stars representing a commitment to quality in the region.

We invested more than £82,000 in events in 2016/17, including BWA Tíre Wave Classic, Cowal Highland Gathering and the Scottish Series.

More than 44 million potential consumers reached worldwide by our consumer PR activity between April and October 2017.

116 businesses are part of our Taste Our Best scheme, which recognises and celebrates businesses committed to providing locally sourced, quality food and drink.

£40,000 awarded by our Growth Fund in 2017 to develop the ‘Wild About Argyll’ brand.

During 2017 Argyll & The Isles posts across our consumer social media channels led to over 2 million likes, shares, retweets and comments.
STRATEGIC ACTIVITY
We work with AITC to support *Tourism Argyll & The Isles 2020*, the local response to the national strategy *Tourism Scotland 2020*. Between 2017 and 2020 the strategy outlines three priorities for product development: adventure tourism, food and drink, and events and festivals.

Strategic activity aligns with Scotland’s Themed Years, with current activity linking to the Year of Young People. We liaise with Argyll College on employer requirements for hospitality and tourism, and work closely with Argyll & Bute Council on jobs, education and training to stem the loss of young people to other areas.

We are working with Argyll & Bute Council, AITC and Love Loch Lomond around opportunities for the Year of Coast and Waters 2020. This includes the upgrade and marketing of the Argyll Sea Kayak Trail, working with ports and harbours on development and the West Coast Marine Tourism Collaborative.

We provide strategic input to Scotland’s Cross-Party Group on Marine Tourism, Marine Tourism Development Group, Marine Strategy Forum and Clyde Marine Planning Partnership.

In 2017 we presented on Marine Tourism at the EU Atlantic Strategy Conference and the Arctic Circle Forum on Blue Growth strategies and opportunities.
INDUSTRY SUPPORT
We sell Scotland with Scotland, working together and supporting the tourism industry to showcase our country to the world.

Our Growth Fund supports collaborative tourism marketing projects, with £40,000 awarded to develop the ‘Wild About Argyll’ brand in 2017. The campaign has been hugely successful, with promotional films viewed by over 1.6 million people online.

In 2017 we supported the AITC Tourism Summit, and presented at AITC mini summits and Argyll Enterprise Week on the impact of digital on Scottish tourism.

The quality of the visitor journey is increasingly dependent on the availability of digital information. Alongside our partners, we launched a new Digital Tourism Scotland website in November 2017, a useful resource for those looking to use digital marketing and technology to grow their business. Find out more at digitaltourismscotland.com

Our Industry Relationship Manager, Donald Hoy donald.hoy@visitscotland.com, offers business surgeries providing tailored digital support to local tourism businesses. This includes free web listings on visitscotland.com and advice on online bookability and social media.

We continue to work closely with industry and stakeholders on our two-year information strategy. The strategy will see a significant increase in the number of channels providing content on places to visit and stay, encouraging visitors to stay longer, spend more and grow the visitor economy.

This mix of channels includes industry partners through the VIP programme, Coo Vans, digital products and 26 VisitScotland iCentres, with four continuing to operate in Argyll & The Isles. Across the region 110 tourism businesses (and growing) have joined the VIP programme, actively promoting things to see and do locally.
VisitScotland’s marketing provides a shop window for Scotland — stimulating investment, jobs, and millions of visitors.

GLOBAL CAMPAIGNS
Our global campaign – the Spirit of Scotland – has continued to showcase Scotland, encouraging the industry and visitors to share their #ScotSpirit to grow the visitor economy.

Building on this, now is the time for a collaborative approach, to accelerate international growth and build a strong Brand Scotland. Our new global campaign, launch spring 2018, represents a confident, consistent and bold approach to brand marketing.

Working in partnership with Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Development International and Universities Scotland we will position Scotland as a bold and positive country, rich in history and heritage but forging forward in a more progressive and pioneering way, across four pillars of activity – Visit, Live & Work, Study and Invest.

At the heart of this campaign is the message that Scotland is a country with the warmest of welcomes, which challenges new thinking, creates new opportunities for study and jobs, supports new industry and drives technology that embraces humanity across the world.

TRADITIONAL MUSIC CAMPAIGN
Argyll & The Isles featured in our trad music marketing campaign launched in January 2017 as part of the Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology. Key events from the campaign included Tiree Music Festival, ButeFest, Oban Live, Ceol Cholasa, Best of the West, BowFest and Jura Music Festival.

The campaign’s aim was to connect Scots millennials with the spirit of trad music events and festivals. The campaign used paid media on Facebook, Spotify and Unruly to target Scots aged 20 – 30, creating a legacy towards the Year of Young People 2018.
SOCIAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL CONTENT

We provide inspiration and information to millions of potential visitors across Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. Our #ScotSpirit campaign has encouraged visitors and locals to upload inspirational images of Argyll & The Isles that are shared globally.

During 2017 Argyll & The Isles posts across our social media channels led to over 2 million likes, shares, retweets and comments. This engagement created organic reach (people shown posts through unpaid distribution) on Facebook alone of 15.9 million.

In February 2017, we launched ground-breaking travel app ScotlandVR, developed through collaboration between the Scottish academic, technology and tourism sectors.

The app enables users to go on a virtual visit to 26 attractions including Cruachan – The Hollow Mountain, one of Scotland’s most fascinating engineering achievements. Visiting the attraction virtually inspires prospective visitors to enjoy a first-hand experience of Argyll & The Isles.

Between February and September 2017, 43,000 users installed ScotlandVR. The app won ‘App Design’ at the Scottish Design Awards and ‘Best Mobile Application’ at The Herald Scottish Digital Business Awards.

Virtual reality is revolutionising the way people choose where they visit and ScotlandVR allows users to discover Scotland in a unique and interactive way.
CONTACT US

David Adams McGilp
Regional Director

07818 873256
david.adamsmcgilp@visitscotland.com

Fiona Matrundola
Industry Communications Executive

0141 566 4020
fiona.matrundola@visitscotland.com

visitscotland.com visitscotland.org

Sign up to our monthly industry newsletter at visitscotland.org/eUpdate

Follow our corporate Twitter feed @VisitScotNews

Connect with us on LinkedIn at linkedin.com/company/visitscotland

All photographs ©VisitScotland unless otherwise stated. VisitScotland has published this report in good faith to update stakeholders on its activity. VisitScotland has taken all reasonable steps to confirm the information contained in the publication is correct. However, VisitScotland does not warrant or assume any legal liability for the accuracy of any information disclosed and accepts no responsibility for any errors or omissions.