We promote Scotland with Scotland, working with local industry to grow the visitor economy.
The past year has proved to be a very successful year for Shetland tourism, with accommodation providers, attractions and tours reporting high visitor numbers, a record number of cruise ship passengers and a series of hugely popular events. From the Folk Festival in April through to the Craft Fair in November, these events and others such as Wool Week are helping extend the tourism season and attract more visitors.

A personal highlight this year was taking members of the Jarl Squad to Glasgow, where they wowed the locals and starred in a Facebook video which achieved a fantastic reach.

The “Shetland” drama series continues to inspire visitors with a new series set to air this year and the BBC production “Island Medics” has provided additional positive national exposure.

The Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology was celebrated with two weekends of “Follow the Vikings” events.

We are now in the Year of Young People (YOYP) 2018 and set to welcome the “Big Takeover” event in September as part of the Year as well as even more cruise ships into Shetland.

Steve Mathieson
Island Manager
VisitScotland
Key stats for Shetland

MORE THAN 66 MILLION
VIEWS OF #SCOTSPIRIT FILMS AND DOCUMENTARIES WHICH INCLUDE SHETLAND

MORE THAN 92 TIMES
ACROSS CONSUMER SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

MORE THAN 35%
INCREASE
OF VISITOR TRAFFIC DURING 16/17 FOR SHETLAND ON VISITSCOTLAND.COM

MORE THAN 23
BUSINESSES ARE PART OF OUR VISITSCOTLAND INFORMATION PARTNER (VIP) PROGRAMME

MORE THAN 20,750
REFERRALS TO SHETLAND BUSINESSES FROM VISITSCOTLAND.COM DURING 16/17

MORE THAN 120
BUSINESSES INVOLVED WITH OUR QUALITY ASSURANCE SCHEMES
STRATEGIC ACTIVITY
Shetland is an archipelago which has everything our visitors seek in abundance; stunning landscapes, fascinating archaeology and diverse geology combined with a rich cultural heritage and a warm welcome. We understand these strengths and promote the islands through trade exhibitions, PR and marketing campaigns.

By working closely with SIC Economic Development, the Shetland Tourism Association, Promote Shetland and agencies such Highland and Island Enterprise we help to grow the visitor economy and align with the national strategy, Tourism Scotland 2020, as well as the Scottish Government’s four pillars of investment, internationalisation, innovation and inclusive growth.

Investing in the digital capacity of Scotland’s tourism, our partnership with Digital Tourism Scotland will ensure that as Shetland’s visitors continue to explore new online platforms and opportunities when planning their journey, businesses are equipped to meet demand with highly developed digital knowledge, capabilities and infrastructures.

Our Industry Relationship Managers also provide a direct line of support for businesses, offering one-to-one surgeries on topics such as online book-ability and online reputation management.

DELIVERING FOR SHETLAND

Developing tourism across Shetland
We support businesses to harness new opportunities and improve the visitor experience, helping to make Shetland a must-visit, must-return destination.

INDUSTRY SUPPORT
One of our top priorities is to work alongside and support local businesses throughout Shetland’s tourism industry to embrace the opportunities we have to offer your business.

Our Quality Assurance (QA) scheme is a useful promotional tool for highlighting the quality of your business to help attract customers. QA goes beyond the stars on your door, as businesses benefit from expert advice and support on a range of aspects of quality, including sustainability, accessibility and food and drink.

There is also an opportunity to engage with the VisitScotland Information Partner (VIP) programme. Businesses who sign up to this scheme commit to becoming a provider of key local and regional information and enhance the visitor’s experience.

Across Shetland, there are more than 20 businesses – and growing - actively engaged and benefitting from their partnership with us.
Scotland VR
Our award-winning app, ScotlandVR, presents a new way for visitors to visualise and experience Scotland. The immersive nature of virtual reality has revolutionised tourism - allowing visitors a preview one of Shetland’s iconic sights from the comfort of their own home, using their smartphone.

In the first nine months, 43,000 users installed ScotlandVR. Our app won ‘App Design’ at the Scottish Design Awards and ‘Best Mobile Application’ at The Herald Scottish Digital Business Awards.

Shetland’s Museum and Archives was chosen to be part of the initial app launch, giving visitors a chance to virtually escape into the museum and inspire them to visit the attraction.

SCOTLAND IS NOW
A new global campaign – Scotland is Now (spring 2018 launch) - 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 deliver a new brand for Scotland, positioning Scotland as a bold and positive country, rich in history and heritage but forging forward in a more progressive and pioneering way. This will cover 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, challenging new thinking, creating new opportunities for study and jobs, supporting new industry and driving technology that embraces humanity across the world.
DELIVERING FOR SHETLAND

SHETLAND MEANS BUSINESS
Growing from the successes of our first global campaign, Spirit of Scotland, 2017 saw the launch of ‘Ideas Become Legend.’

Ideas Become Legend presents an opportunity to have a fully collaborative engagement campaign for business events in Scotland. Working with Scottish Government, we are building business relationships with international buyers, industry ambassadors and academics to showcase Scotland’s business events credentials. Businesses in Shetland can join in on social channels using #ideasbecomelegend.

VisitScotland Expo is a key date in the calendar for Shetland businesses, who for 2017 gathered in Glasgow SEC to interact with travel trade businesses. With 75 meetings across the two day event, 80% of meetings were held with a strong intent to sell Shetland as a destination to their consumer base. In addition, many others were familiarising with Shetland for the first time.

Shetland has also been firmly placed on the travel trade radar on a familiarisation trip immediately preceding Expo. Agents were invited to interact with local businesses and experience the unique culture, events and hospitality Shetland offers to visitors.

MARKETING THROUGH EVENTS
Through our events directorate, EventScotland, we supported two weekend “Follow the Vikings” events in both Lerwick and Unst as part of the Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology. We created marketing and press opportunities to promote Shetland’s Viking heritage to a world-wide audience.

As part of the Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology events programme, this included two weekends of promotional activity in Glasgow to create a Viking buzz as members of the Jarl Squad ventured throughout the city centre, attracting traditional and social media coverage with a potential reach of 968,795.

In celebration of the Year of Young People 2018, £38,000 of funding supports “The Big Takeover” weekend of events hosted in Lerwick during September 2018.