

A scenic landscape of rolling green hills, a blue body of water, and a paved road leading towards a farmstead under a clear blue sky. The foreground is dominated by a paved road that curves through lush green fields. In the middle ground, there is a farmstead with several buildings. The background features a large green hill with a lighthouse on top, overlooking a blue body of water. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

**Scottish Tourism Emergency Response Group
COVID-19 National Action Plan - 2 February 2021**

Rebuilding Scotland's tourism industry together

Scottish tourism is facing up to its biggest challenge ever with Coronavirus impacting the entire industry. It is expected that the recovery will take some time and many businesses will require significant support to restart their operations.

The recovery of this crucial £11 billion industry requires a multi-agency approach, working with the tourism industry to help those affected today, tomorrow and in the future.

The Scottish Tourism Emergency Response Group (STERG) is working hard to help tourism businesses to recover from this unprecedented situation, working collaboratively to make the best use of budgets and their own employee's time. They have one goal – to help the tourism industry return to being the economic and social powerhouse it once was.

The group, which consists of the Scottish Tourism Alliance (STA); VisitScotland (VS); COSLA; the three Enterprise Agencies - Scottish Enterprise (SE), South of Scotland Enterprise (SoSE), Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE); Skills Development Scotland (SDS)

and the Scottish Government (SG), has developed one single, joined-up, national action plan to not just combat the current issues but also look at how the industry could effectively restart and recover as restrictions imposed to suppress the virus are eased. This has been a real team effort, giving the agencies an opportunity to refocus plans and redirect budget, as well as working alongside the tourism industry to work through daily issues.

The STERG National Action Plan is aligned to the priorities outlined in Scotland Outlook 2030, the national tourism strategy and remains a living document which is updated on an ongoing basis and will continue to evolve in line with scientific evidence and government advice. Responsible tourism will be core to this - working with local communities and destination organisations is crucial as we look to rebuild a successful tourism industry which allows locals and visitors to coexist and ensure the Scottish welcome is at the heart of the visitor experience.

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1	NATIONAL RESPONSE			
	Action	Anticipated Outcome	Action Owner	Status
1.1	Provide a national, coordinated response to the impact of COVID-19 on the Scottish Tourism industry.	<p>Support businesses by providing information and reassurance; safeguarding employment; and helping them access financial assistance to maintain cash flow and secure a viable future.</p> <p>A joined-up, phased Action Plan is developed to combat the current issues but also looks at how the industry could effectively recover and build resilience for the future.</p>	VS / Enterprise Agencies / SDS / BG / STA / SGov	<p>Scottish Tourism Emergency Response Group (STERG) re-convened in March 2020.</p> <p>Weekly meetings continue. Notes & Actions from the meetings published on VS.org. https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/advice/coronavirus/sterg/updates</p> <p>STERG Action Plan regularly updated and published on VS.org. Last updated 2nd February. https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/advice/coronavirus/sterg/national-action-plan</p>
1.2	Public agency budgets subject to ongoing review to maximise budget allocations to COVID-19 support.	Additional targeted interventions are created to reflect the latest industry insights.	Enterprise Agencies / SDS / VS / BG / LA's	Public agency budgets were reprioritised to immediately respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Budget commitments continue to be reviewed on an ongoing basis to support the Restart and Recovery of the sector.
1.3	Scenario Planning work to be undertaken to ensure that a flexible range of recovery plans can be developed.	To have in place a sound evidence base to inform recovery in the immediate term.	SG and VS with STERG partners	<p>STERG COVID-19 Scenario Plans complete.</p> <p>COVID-19 Scenario Planning Toolkit for industry developed with input from sector group leaders to ensure that the toolkit is accessible and in a usable format for the wider industry audience. Toolkit published on visitscotland.org and promoted via VS industry e.comms and social channels on 25. November and by partner organisations thereafter.</p> <p>To date the toolkit has had over 1,700 views.</p> <p>The toolkit is designed for use on an individual basis but also as a group – group sessions underway with the ASSC and ASVA w/c 25th January and with BHHPA w/c 1st February will inform a presentation on the topic for wider one-to-many communication.</p> <p>Local Authorities are actively encouraging businesses to use the toolkit.</p>

<p>1.4</p>	<p>A Recovery Task Force will be established to advise the Scottish Government on Tourism Recovery plans. The Task Force will be chaired by Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Tourism, Fergus Ewing and Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills, Jamie Hepburn.</p>	<p>Through an appointed group of more than 30 businesses, with experience from across the industry and agency representatives, the task force will provide strategic advice on recovering from the impacts of COVID-19. The taskforce will publish a report on recovery by the end of September.</p> <p>Notes: STRT is not responsible for delivery of the agreed recovery plans – these will be actioned through the Scottish Tourism Emergency Response Group (STERG) and its member organisations.</p>	<p>Scottish Government</p>	<p>The Scottish Tourism Recovery Task Force (STRT) was in place from 25th June to 23rd September.</p> <p>The STRT recommendations were endorsed by Mr Ewing and Mr Hepburn and published on 23rd October. https://scottishtourismalliance.co.uk/tourism-recovery/</p> <p>The STRT recommendations were discussed at the Scottish Cabinet on the 1st December and a formal response was issued by the Scottish Government on 21st December. https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-tourism-taskforce-recommendations-scottish-government-response/</p> <p>Further details of the STRT can be found here: https://www.gov.scot/groups/scottish-tourism-recovery-taskforce/</p> <p>STERG will convene a meeting with the Task Force on 11th February to update on progress.</p>
<p>1.5</p>	<p>Industry, public agencies and Scottish Government to collaboratively develop a 5 Yr Scottish Tourism Recovery Plan based on the Task Force Recommendations.</p>	<p>A 5 Yr recovery plan for Scottish Tourism outlining the short, medium and long term needs of the sector and identifying the investment model required to support it.</p>	<p>STERG partners and industry representatives</p>	<p>STERG will coordinate the recovery plan ensuring that there will continue to be an inclusive and collaborative approach between industry, the public agencies and the Scottish Government to shaping and delivering tourism across Scotland.</p> <p>Project scoping is currently in progress.</p>

2	REBUILDING OUR DIVERSE BUSINESSES			
	Action	Anticipated Outcome	Action Owner	Status
2.1	All relevant delivery partners to facilitate rapid and effective access to Covid-19 financial support packages.	Fair and timely delivery of financial support packages.	Enterprise Agencies, BG, VS, LAs	<p>Status of live support for the Tourism sector is outlined below.</p> <p>Details of all financial support packages can be found at https://findbusinesssupport.gov.scot/</p>
2.1.1	£14 million Hotel Support Programme to help secure up to 3,000 jobs at Scotland's larger hotels until the start of the summer 2021 tourism season.	Eligible businesses can apply for individual grants of up to £250,000 in addition to a suite of wrap-around business support and advice.	Enterprise Agencies	<p>HSP funds are now being utilised by the hotels who were successful in their application to the fund. Many of the projects supported are focusing on change of facilities and increased adoption of technology to improve customer flow or minimise touchpoints. However, lack of travel between "Tiers" means hotels are looking at the ways they can attract the local market thus focus on marketing activities for the immediate situation but also longer term once restrictions start to lift. Early stage feedback following the latest lockdown is that, for infrastructure projects, this may result in project slippage and deferral rather than cancellation.</p> <p>A Skills Webinar was delivered by SDS for over 40 delegates from businesses on the programme on 25th January providing information on skills support available for businesses from SDS, Apprenticeships, colleges, universities and the Springboard Charity.</p>
2.1.2	£6m Events Industry Support Fund to support business in the supply chain to the events sector.	Successful businesses will be eligible for £10k grant, processed on first come first served basis.	VisitScotland	£6m fund launched on 31 Aug, closed on 14 Sep. 836 applications received. The fund is almost complete, there is just 1 application with information outstanding that needs to be resolved.

<p>2.1.3</p>	<p>Additional £7m Events Industry Support Fund announced 28 January 2021.</p>	<p>The funding will be delivered in two parts. Top-up payments will be made to existing recipients of EISF awards while a second fund, Events Industry Support Fund 2, will be set to receive new applications.</p>	<p>VisitScotland</p>	<p>Events businesses who have previously received support through the Events Industry Support Fund (EISF) will be automatically contacted from 29 January regarding top-up financial support. Businesses which have not previously been awarded financial support from the scheme will be able to submit applications w/c 15 February. Guidance on how to apply will be available w/c 8 February.</p>
<p>2.1.4</p>	<p>£2.75m Scottish Events Recovery Fund to support the restart of events. (Includes core budget from VS).</p>	<p>Fund to support Scotland's events sector plan and deliver events through to the end of 2021, and to provide support as the industry responds and adapts to the effects of COVID-19. Grant of £1k -£5k available for community events Grants of £5k - £35k available for events supporting the visitor economy.</p>	<p>Event Scotland</p>	<p>Fund launched on 26 October and as of the end of January the team have received 442 enquiries and 129 applications. This is an open rolling programme.</p>
<p>2.1.5</p>	<p>£6m Pivotal Event Business Fund to provide financial support to event businesses critical to Scotland's events sector and without whom our capacity to deliver major events would be significantly reduced.</p>	<p>Grant funding from £25,000 up to a maximum £150,000, to ensure the viability of critical event businesses through to the end of financial year 2020 / 2021.</p>	<p>VS Events</p>	<p>Fund launched in December 2020, there was an initial Expression of Interest form with 208 EOI received. Of those, 62 were rejected, 9 withdrew and 9 did not submit an application, the team has 128 applications to assess. A panel to agree funding recommendations is planned for w/c 8 or w/c 15 Feb.</p>
<p>2.1.6</p>	<p>Strategic Framework Business Fund (Ongoing)</p> <p>Business Temporary Closure Fund A grant of £2,000 or £3,000 (depending on rateable value) for businesses required to close by law.</p> <p>Business Restrictions Fund A grant of £1,400 or £2,100 (depending on rateable value) for businesses that remain open but are specifically required to modify their operations.</p>	<p>Financial support for businesses who find themselves continuing to be affected by the operating restrictions imposed by the Strategic Framework.</p> <p>Grant support is provided by the Scottish Government and channelled through Local Government.</p> <p>Go live - Friday 13th November.</p>	<p>Local Authorities</p>	<p>Grant funding is being introduced at pace and Local Authorities are administering the new funding streams.</p> <p>Additional top-up grant support available for hospitality, retail and leisure businesses across Scotland closed by level four restrictions.</p> <p>In addition to the grants that businesses receive through the Strategic Business Framework Fund, eligible businesses will also get a one-off grant of:</p> <p>Eligible hospitality business cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Restaurants - Cafes - Food and wet-led pubs and bars - Licensed social and sports clubs - Hotels

				https://findbusinesssupport.gov.scot/service/funding/strategic-framework-business-fund
2.1.7	£60m Local Authority Discretionary grants	Funding has been provided to local authorities to provide additional support for businesses where they consider that necessary or justified.	Local Authorities	Information will be published on individual local authority websites. https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-local-authority-discretionary-fund---information/
2.1.8	£25m Wedding and Civil Partnership Industry Fund.	This fund is targeted at businesses operating within the wedding sector and its supply chain, including photographers. Application is via a one-stage process with grants available up to £25k.	Enterprise Agencies	Live from 28th January. Fund being administered by the three enterprise agencies. Applications will be appraised in the order they're received until the full fund has been allocated. There's no fixed closing date for this fund – it will close when the full fund has been allocated. https://findbusinesssupport.gov.scot/
2.1.9	£1.5m Sector and Destination Operational and Market Readiness Fund.	Provides support for established multi-regional or pan-Scotland tourism sector groups and destination organisations who represent the interests of a substantive number of tourism businesses and stakeholders within their destination and sector and whose role is critical to the ongoing success of the tourism industry in Scotland to prepare for a post-COVID-19 environment.	VisitScotland	Live from midday Monday 18 January until 5pm on Tuesday 26 January. Applications now being appraised and assessed. https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/funding/operational-market-readiness-fund
2.1.10	£17m Scotland Inbound Tour Operators - COVID-19 Business Support and Continuity Fund.	Open to businesses who operate in Scotland as inbound tour operators and destination management companies, promoting and selling packaged products (Scotland holidays) to international markets.	VisitScotland	Fund now closed to Expressions of Interest. Businesses which meet or exceed the eligibility criteria will be invited to submit a full application via email. https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/funding/inbound-tour-operators-fund
2.1.11	£5m Marine & Outdoor Tourism Restart Fund.	Established to support the marine, boating and outdoor adventure sectors who have been significantly affected by COVID-19 and are faced with seasonal re-commissioning and re-start costs ahead of the 2021 season.	VisitScotland	Applications for the fund are now open until 5pm on Tuesday 9 February https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/funding/marine-outdoor-restart-fund

2.1.12	£10m Coach Operators Fund.	The Fund has been established to provide financial support for Scottish based businesses in the coach operators sector critical to Scotland's tourism economy.	VisitScotland	Guidance is available now. The fund will be open for applications from 12pm on Tuesday 16 February 2021 until 5pm on Tuesday 23 February 2021. https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/funding/coach-operator-fund
2.1.13	£10m Visitor Attractions Fund.	To provide financial support to Scottish businesses in the attractions sector that have been severely affected by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, to help keep them in business while restrictions on opening and travel are still in place, and to support them to prepare for reopening in 2021 when restrictions are lifted.	VisitScotland	Guidance available now. Applications open from 12pm on Thursday 11 February 2021 until 5pm on Thursday 18 February 2021. https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/funding/visitor-attraction-support-fund
2.1.14	Hostels Fund.	Details TBC	VisitScotland	Live date w/c 15th February https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/advice/coronavirus/financial-support
2.1.15	£7 million Large Self-Catering Grant and the Exclusive Use Grant.	Eligible self-catering businesses will be able to apply for one off grant support of £2,000. Eligible exclusive use premises will be able to apply for £10,000 in grant support.	Details TBC	Details TBC https://findbusinesssupport.gov.scot/
2.2	Communities Recovery Fund (CRF) - Grant funding to deliver support and services in communities across Scotland.	To support charities, community groups, social enterprises and voluntary organisations in supporting people and communities through the shift from lockdown to recovery and tackle the challenges presented by COVID-19.	HIE and partner organisations	HIE has approved £655,882 to 45 organisations to date under the COVID-19 Communities Recovery Fund and in addition, 26 organisations across the Highlands and Islands have had Adapt and Thrive programme applications approved to the sum of £475,102 The programme and funds available are open until the 12th February, 2021. Organisations interested in accessing support the Communities Recovery Fund can visit the SCVO website for further information and apply.

<p>2.3</p>	<p>Grant funding to support community led tourism capital infrastructure developments in advance of April 2021.</p>	<p>To support communities and places to prepare for visitors and build back better.</p>	<p>HIE</p>	<p>54 projects, totalling £1.575m have been approved.</p>
<p>2.4</p>	<p>Facilitate and support business to business networks, enabling best practice and intelligence to be shared.</p>	<p>Creation of sustainable support network, shared solutions and coordinated approach. To ensure information is flowing, consistent guidance and insights gathered and fed back.</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>Ongoing activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destination Leadership Programme Assemble • Agritourism Group and other sector and association groups e.g. ASVA, ASSC, Sail Scotland, Wild Scotland • Women in Tourism • GlobalScot Webinar – Re-imagining Hospitality and Tourism post COVID • Generic business webinars – including innovation • Tourism Skills Group • Chef’s Group • Tourism partnerships/DMO’s
<p>2.5</p>	<p>Provide tailored business advice to help industry adapt to new Covid regulations, market conditions, visitor mix and expectations.</p>	<p>Businesses understand the implications of COVID and are responding by adapting and innovating to survive and thrive in this new environment.</p>	<p>VS / Local Authorities</p>	<p>VisitScotland IRMs provided 1 to 1 advice in some 5,500 conversations with Scottish tourism businesses through respond and reset, proactive and reactive support continuing through the restart phase. Programme now underway further reaching out to quality assured businesses, providing Covid regulation advice as well as product/ quality development advice in online sessions ahead of eventual restart of the VS QA visit programme.</p> <p>Programme of new advice and development content to be published on visitscotland.org as well as webinars in development informed by learnings from the most recent programme of calls with businesses – focus includes: digital skills, managing seasonality, responsible tourism development, changes in distribution channels, targeting new and returning segments.</p> <p>Supporting a number of regional specific webinars delivered by DMOs and related groups and partner organisations.</p> <p>Local Authorities supporting businesses directly through Economic Development Unit and Environmental Health Officers.</p>

<p>2.6</p>	<p>Provide digital Marketing support to sector groups and DMOs.</p>	<p>Sector groups and DMOs are able to maximise their online presence.</p>	<p>VS / Business Gateway</p>	<p>Marketing resource being used to provide support to sector groups including website audits and other digital marketing support. 1 team member allocated to Go Rural to support the running of the Facebook farm tours.</p> <p>VS supporting ETAG with Social/Content support for Forever Edinburgh platform development and campaign execution.</p> <p>VS working in partnership with BG to further promote and deliver digital support services to industry (see 2.7).</p>
<p>2.7</p>	<p>Improve Digital capability and capacity. Further £1.5m committed to Business Gateway Digital Boost programme in this financial year.</p>	<p>Businesses are able to take advantage of technology to help improve their productivity, increase their resilience and create new market opportunities.</p>	<p>Business Gateway / VS</p>	<p>Additional Digital Boost programme is live.</p> <p>Working in partnership, VS and BG are continuing to develop a programme to promote and support the use of digital channels by tourism businesses, with a suite of 10 new webinars to be rolled out January through April 2021. Excellent attendance at the first two webinars in the series, with circa 250 attendees at each.</p>
<p>2.8</p>	<p>Provide insights and resources to support businesses to innovate and rebuild tourism based on a more responsible future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signpost existing business support for Innovation / NPD. • Continue to support existing programmes. • Identify gaps in provision and create a new, market ready programmes if required. • Celebrate and share case studies and best practice which demonstrates how business, workforce or product innovation has helped tourism recovery. 	<p>Businesses are inspired to rethink business models and create responsible tourism products which will enable businesses to take advantage of emerging opportunities as consumer behaviours changes as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. N.B. similarities to the Destination Leadership Programme or the Tourism NI Cluster Project which could build on the benefits of lockdown.</p> <p>Responsible Tourism is embedded in our planning for future activity. Scotland is positioned as a responsible tourism destination for the 21st Century.</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>Insights and good news case studies from the tourism sector provided by Interface.</p> <p>VS working ongoing to identify a strong portfolio of responsible tourism businesses as best practice examples, and sharing this as part of a new suite of responsible tourism content and advice on visitscotland.org, and working with live examples as part of responsible tourism seminars on the back of our activity to mark one year to COP26. On November 19, co-ordinating with Wild Scotland and Sail Scotland (and Wilderness Scotland who have already done so), VisitScotland declared its commitment to working to address climate change, in support of the Tourism Declares movement.</p> <p>On a weekly basis identifying wider stories of good news and innovation as part of ongoing IRM and QTA discussions with businesses.</p>

3	PROTECTING & SUPPORTING OUR PASSIONATE PEOPLE			
	Action	Anticipated Outcome	Action Owner	Status
3.1	<p>Signposting workforce to wellbeing support, redundancy support and careers information, advice and guidance.</p> <p>Work with partners, local authorities and stakeholders to ensure employees are supported by industry employers to access support package including employee retention, self-employment, universal credit, and redundancy and well-being support.</p>	<p>Ensuring employees are given the best possible support from the various funding sources and information and guidance support open to them</p> <p>Redundancy support service for individuals focusing on financial support, wellbeing support and careers and employability provision. Expanded Careers information Advice and Guidance service launched by SDS along with and expanded PACE redundancy service for individuals. TV Adverts commenced to promote these services.</p> <p>On-line free learning portal established by SDS on the MWOW website to support furloughed workers and others to up-skill.</p>	SDS Lead	<p>SDS Careers Information Advice and Guidance services are aimed at adults and young people whose education, job or future choices have been affected by COVID and directs them to the My WORLD of Work Helpline or free helpline for support. The MWOW website has had over 1,191,753 users since lockdown began. https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/</p> <p>The new SDS On-line Free learning Portal helps individuals who have been furloughed or made redundant to find free on-line courses from a wide range of training providers. The portal has been viewed over 211,599 times since its launch in late April.</p> <p>HIT Scotland launched the HIT@Home app which gives those furloughed or made redundant an opportunity to continue to be engaged with the industry. The App has a number of sections including Learning at Home, Wellness, Inspiration and Work at home as well as a support section.</p> <p>Springboard Digital Hospitality Academy launched offering tailored support to help people find a job now and in the future. Springboard Future Chef Digital Academy developed and provided free to all schools in Scotland. Link below: https://www.springboard.com/</p> <p>Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) re-opened by SDS. These provide individuals with up to £200 towards the cost of a training course. Applicants need to be unemployed or earning less than £22K per year.</p>
3.2	Provide support to tourism and hospitality sector workers who have found themselves displaced as a result of the COVID-19.	Free-to-use jobs portal providing access to alternative employment opportunities in other sectors of the economy targeted at tourism and hospitality employees who have been made redundant / who are looking for work.	STA /SDS	The HospitalityUnite website, initially set up to help hospitality workers find alternative employment during lockdown, has now switched focus to support the Government’s Kickstart initiative for young people. It will provide a free online service to make it easy for both

			<p>The HospitalityUnite website, initially set up to help hospitality workers find alternative employment during lockdown, has now switched focus to support the Government’s Kickstart initiative for young people. It will provide a free online service to make it easy for both hospitality businesses and those 16-24 year-olds wanting to start a career in the restaurant, pub, hotel, bar and wider leisure sector to take advantage of the new Government funded scheme. https://harri.com/kickstart-hospitality-unite/</p> <p>Up-scaled PACE services promoted to employers through a range of channels using the PACE toolkit. https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/what-we-do/employability-skills/partnership-action-for-continuing-employment-pace/ In April - October, PACE assisted 5789 hospitality sector workers made redundant and worked with 170 hospitality employers.</p> <p>People 1st International are operating a redeployment service to link redundant people from industry into health, social care and logistics. A new bespoke website has been launched https://redeployment.people1st.co.uk/</p> <p>Springboard have launched the Careerscope Website to support individuals who have lost their jobs find alternative employment and support people into work within the sector. https://careerscope.uk.net/</p> <p>Local Authorities continuing to provide a range of services to local businesses and individuals to help safeguard jobs and enable people to gain continuous employment. Services are customised to individual needs and those facing redundancy and/or newly unemployed who require additional support who can access a range of support services and will be appointed a named advisor to help navigate through the range of practical assistance available. Employers can also access a wide range of assistance examples include help with recruitment, job matching, employment incentives etc.</p>
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<p>3.3</p>	<p>Support the implementation of actions following from the report by the Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board sub-group on measures to mitigate the Labour Market impacts by COVID-19. This sub-group has worked closely with the Advisory Group on Economic Recovery and has put forward a range of ideas for how best to accelerate the recovery. A key part will be to ensure the enterprise and skills system works together with business in delivering a truly integrated package of support considering the challenges the Scottish economy faces.</p>	<p>Recommendations from the report include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expansion of apprentice provision, including more off-the-job training, • maximising the flexibility of colleges and universities with a focus on critical skills required in growth areas of the economy, • development of PACE redundancy support with more front-line advisers and tailored support for businesses of all sizes, • short placement schemes to give work experience to under-25s who have been out of work for six months • assistance to upskill or reskill staff and more integrated support for businesses 	<p>SDS, SE, HIE, SG</p>	<p>Report published on 3rd July. https://www.gov.scot/publications/report-enterprise-skills-strategic-board-sub-group-measures-mitigate-labour-market-impacts-covid-19/</p> <p>SG response to the Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board sub-group on measures to mitigate the labour market impacts was published on 5th August. https://www.gov.scot/publications/addressing-labour-market-emergency-scottish-governments-response-report-enterprise-skills-strategic-board-sub-group-measures-mitigate-labour-market-impacts-covid-19/</p> <p>SDS working with Scottish government to develop programmes of support based on the recommendations of the Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board report and the recommendations of the Advisory Group on Economic Recovery.</p> <p>Youth Guarantee programme being developed including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £30 million through local authorities to help local partnerships to deliver employability support for young people • £10 million to create additional opportunities in colleges • £10 million additional funding for Developing the Young Workforce, the Scottish Government’s internationally recognised Youth Employment Strategy • £10 million to develop Pathway Apprenticeships to support young people leaving school but unable to secure an employed apprenticeship programme <p>Info available at https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/youngpersonsguarantee</p> <p>National Transition Training Fund launched to provide funding support for training targeted at individuals aged 25+ who have been made redundant or are facing redundancy. https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/national-transition-training-fund</p>
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The Flexible Workforce Development Fund has been extended in the following areas:

- The fund is now available to both Apprenticeship Levy paying companies and SMEs
- £5mill fund will be available to support SMEs through a college or Open University
- A new option is available for levy paying businesses who require specialist training to use private training providers (application through SDS).

Information on how to apply available at <https://www.ourskillsforce.co.uk/develop-your-workforce/flexible-workforce-development-fund/>

SDS developing an Apprentice Transition Plan programme to enable displaced apprentices to complete their training. Includes a focus on hospitality apprentices. [Apprenticeships](#) | [Apprentice Transition Plan](#)

SDS Adopt an Apprentice programme expanded to increase incentive for employers to take in an apprentice who has been made redundant. Employers will now receive an incentive of £5,000. Info available at <https://www.apprenticeships.scot/for-employers/adopt-an-apprentice/>

Apprenticeship Employment Grant announced to support employers when taking on a Modern Apprentice or Graduate Apprentice. £5,000 available for employers taking on a 16-24 year old and for those aged up to 29 years who are either disabled, care leavers or Black and Minority Ethnic. £3,500 available for employers taking on an apprentice aged 25 or over. Information available at the following link: [Apprenticeship Employer Grant](#)

UK Govt Kickstart programme launched, being led by DWP in Scotland. Programme aims to provide a 6-month job placement for young people on Universal Credit. Seeking to identify employers, or clusters of employers, who can provide a minimum of 30 job placements. Info available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-government-launches-kickstart-scheme-for-youth-in-scotland>

<p>3.4</p>	<p>Implement a Leadership & Management programme supported by industry that is designed to retain and develop top talent.</p>	<p>Protect the tourism & hospitality workforce so that we can recover from the significant impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had across the Tourism sector. Training will be closely aligned to the aims and objectives outlined within Outlook Scotland-2030.</p>	<p>SDS, STA, HIT Scotland</p>	<p>Acting upon the Tourism Recovery Taskforce recommendations Scottish Government funding has been secured for a Tourism and Hospitality Talent Development Programme to be delivered from the end of January through to April 2021. The programme will deliver on-line management and supervisory training for 975 tourism employees facilitated by HIT Scotland with support from agencies across the sector. Applications close 5th February. As of 29.01.21 over 1,000 applications have been received for the programme with a broad representation of staff working across the tourism sector. The first on-line course (supervisory) is scheduled to commence on 16.02.21.</p> <p>For more information visit the following link: https://hitscotland.co.uk/talent-development-programme</p>
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4	RESTORING OUR THRIVING PLACES			
	Action	Anticipated Outcome	Action Owner	Status
4.1	Community & destination consultation & inclusion.	Enhanced awareness of community concerns around reopening and recovery to ensure plans take account of potential local pressure points.	VS	<p>Community & destination engagement is taking pace via Area Partnerships, Community Councils, LA's, DMO's and other local associations with processes in place for tracking/recording community sentiment and local input to marketing activity.</p> <p>VisitScotland.org Covid Community section established with community case studies and key messages.</p> <p>Engagement sessions delivered across the country from the beginning of July and ongoing. Key issues being captured and shared with appropriate partners e.g. public toilets, car parking, public transport and litter.</p> <p>Briefing session to MSPs delivered.</p> <p>Round three of Rural Tourism Infrastructure is complete. Successful projects were advised w/b 11th January. https://www.visitscotland.org/news/2021/rural-tourism-infrastructure-fund-round-three</p> <p>Projects from Rounds one and two continue to reach completion.</p> <p>VisitScotland will develop a new community engagement plan to be implemented later in 2021. The plan will reflect appropriate outputs from the National Visitor Management Forum.</p> <p>Confirmation in Scottish Government budget for 2021/22 of £6.2m for Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund.</p>

<p>4.2</p>	<p>Establish a Visitor Management Strategy Group to develop a co-ordinated response to key issues and opportunities.</p>	<p>A dynamic, forward looking and inclusive blueprint for Visitor Management.</p>	<p>VS CEO Chair</p>	<p>Roundtable hosted by Cab Sec on 14/9 - “National Visitor Management Forum”. 3 workstreams established to review – Visitor Management Comms; Visitor Management Infrastructure & Investment; Visitor Management Policy.</p> <p>All workstreams will report progress on short, medium and long term plans to the Cabinet Secretary by December.</p> <p>Strategy Framework with key activities, outputs of each group and impacts nearing completion</p>
<p>4.2.1</p>	<p>Establish a workstream to address information & education needs and reach new audiences of “novice campers and “party campers”.</p>	<p>A coordinated and inclusive response is developed to information and education.</p>	<p>VS & Partners VS Director of Marketing (Chair)</p>	<p>Key outputs agreed by the group as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deliver an integrated inspirational & informative marketing campaign to promote responsible countryside enjoyment (priority - UK/EU audiences). Campaign development underway to be live in Scotland for early March 2. Refresh SOAC promotion, with targeted campaigns (priority – dogs fires, dirty camping) and the development of new education resources for distribution via Schools, Colleges/Universities, Youth organisations 3. Development of a Countryside toolkit/media library for partners & industry to use including shareable resources promoting responsible countryside enjoyment 4. Deliver a programme of stakeholder & industry networking events to develop and share key messages and resources <p>Group are now actively developing new messaging, content and distribution plans across a range of key topics – motor-homing, camping, fires, litter, dogs to ensure new activity is ready for the post lockdown period.</p>

4.2.2	Establish a workstream to address visitor management infrastructure and investment needs.	A coordinated and inclusive response is developed to investment with a review of recreational infrastructure. Move RTIP to a more permanent footing.	Chair, CEO of CNP	<p>Key outputs of the group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop short and long-term investment priorities through a refreshed RTIF and other relevant funding streams 2. Develop and implement proposals for improved provision for camping and motor homing across Scotland 3. Review, pilot and innovative technological solutions for providing real time visitor management information at key locations 4. Trial low-cost, low carbon and integrated transport solutions at key locations to help reduce traffic management and parking issues 5. Review and enhance current provision and funding for rangers workforce to support visitor management <p>Round three of Rural Tourism Infrastructure is complete. Successful projects were advised w/b 11th January. https://www.visitscotland.org/news/2021/rural-tourism-infrastructure-fund-round-three</p> <p>Projects in rounds one and two continue with a number completing in the last month.</p>
4.2.3	Establish a workstream to review visitor management policy.	A coordinated and inclusive response is developed to the implementation of policies and activities.	Chair, CEO of LLTNP	<p>Key outputs of the group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Put in place effective governance arrangements to provide national leadership and co-ordinated action for visitor planning and management 2. Invest in visitor management partnerships in key areas to improve local visitor planning arrangements and address anti-social behaviour 3. Support communities to develop the skills and capacity to develop local approaches to visitor management 4. Develop a communication plan with a key messaging framework to ensure stakeholders, partners and industry are kept up to date and engaged with the work of the Visitor Management Strategy. <p>Project scope underway but will include a review of the countryside code, licensing, waste disposal, parking etc.</p>

<p>4.3</p>	<p>On arrival support to visitors by reopened iCentres to give out information and safety advice as appropriate.</p>	<p>Giving visitors and communities a sense of security while maximising local benefit. Timing aligned to Government advice & visitor demand.</p>	<p>VS</p>	<p>All iCentres are now closed in line with Lockdown regulations. This includes island iCentres as well, due to a lack of visitor movement. Maintenance visits to continue and improvements to a number centres is being considered. Continued support for phone, email and Messenger enquiries. Team members working on a number of projects as well as the various funding streams.</p>
<p>4.4</p>	<p>Work closely with city partners and industry to help deliver a local response to COVID-19 including support for tourism businesses to re-open safely.</p>	<p>Implementation of local business response plans and associated activities to maximise business re-opening.</p>	<p>SE, VS and City Partners</p>	<p>Work is ongoing across a number of Scottish Cities to respond to the challenges faced as a result of COVID-19.</p> <p>In Edinburgh, The Edinburgh COVID-19 Resilience, Reboot and Recovery Plan has established and is progressing, co-funded and supported by CEC, ETAG & Industry partners.</p> <p>In Glasgow, Experience Glasgow – which aims to create a strong tourism community across the city – has established the Glasgow Business Action Group as a direct response to COVID with over 130 businesses supported directly. The Glasgow Tourism Events Response Group has also been set up to address the challenges faced by those within the MICE sector.</p> <p>In Dundee and Perth, the Tay Cities Regional Tourism Group is implementing actions which are supporting re-opening of the industry. (Note: Progression of Tay Cities Tourism & Culture City Deals projects is ongoing).</p> <p>VS working with each city in relation to recovery marketing activity B2C and B2B; business tourism; event development and aligned industry support.</p> <p>VisitAberdeenshire’s Tourism Business Recovery Programme has been live since summer 2020. Programme ranges from in-depth one-to-one advice; to one-to-many workshops and is based on priority themes identified by local industry.</p>

4.5	HIE to invest £3m over the next three years in tourism destination management organisations (DMOs) as part of their support for the sector's recovery.	To ensure strategically important DMOs are sufficiently resourced to play a vital role in the recovery of tourism across the Highlands and Islands.	HIE	The fund will be administered by HIE's area offices and targeted at strategically important DMOs in the Highlands and Islands that already have established relationships with the HIE's area teams and other public sector organisations. This is not an open call for applications and normal funding conditions will apply.
4.6	SOSE will invest up to £1.6m in years 1-3 to cover both core funding and strategic marketing support in the South of Scotland Destination Alliance and a further £1m in years 4-5 (subject to review) to fully implement their business plan.	Implementation of full business plan including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reset and recovery strategy • Leadership and capacity building • Industry engagement • Business readiness • Marketing Campaigns "Scotland Starts Here" 	SoSE	The fund is being administered by SOSE's project monitoring team and future years funding will be determined on an annual basis with regard to a review of SSDA's performance and circumstances.
4.7	Local Authority Economic Recovery Plans to support business recovery at a local level.	Highlights work required to assist recovery at the local level – including work on infrastructure, support for businesses and marketing recovery initiatives.	Local Authorities	All local authorities working with their local communities and business to implement recovery plans.

5	REIMAGINING OUR MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES			
	Action	Anticipated Outcome	Action Owner	Status
5.1	Provide support and resource to Scotland's Events & Festivals.	Scotland's Event's & Festivals are able to re-start as and when it is safe to do so, providing visitors once again with unique and memorable experiences of Scotland.	VS-Events	An update on actions being undertaken are outlined below.
5.1.1	Establish Events Industry Advisory Group to provide ongoing representation of the events sector.	Provide clear communication leadership and communication across the events industry.	VS-Events	Group meeting every 3 weeks. In addition to the six priority Workstreams, a joint Working Group is being established with Gov't to develop a strategy for the return of events. The Group is providing input into development of an additional hardship fund for key event businesses that will help sustain them through to spring 2021.
5.1.2	Review of existing events funding programmes in line with emerging priorities, focussing on smaller domestic and regional events which will likely restart first.	Provide tailored and scale-able events support, consistently through to the end of 2021.	VS-Events	EventScotland developed an interim recovery events funding programme. Launched on 26 October – see also point 2.1.5.
5.1.3	Contact all funded and supported events to provide advice and guidance on implications of COVID-19, including continuation of funding for all contracted and planned events.	Reassurance to events sector, and continuity of contracted financial support.	VS-Events	160 events directly contacted and provided with relevant support. Discussions ongoing.
5.1.4	Themed Year opportunities reviewed and reshaped to support recovery and maximise engagement potential.	Ensure the strong partnership work and investment is not lost and plays its part in recovery. Facilitation of effective platform for collaboration across events and tourism sectors.	VS/ES/ SG	<p>SG and partner support is in place to roll YCW2020 into 2021. Feasibility and reshaped planning now underway. Workshop with events partners took place in Oct. Revised 20/21 assets now due to roll out in December.</p> <p>Year of Scotland's Stories is to progress with the planned 2022 delivery date. SG has confirmed budget. Planning to restart in November.</p>

<p>5.2</p>	<p>Scottish Enterprise Travel Tech for Scotland initiative encourages and supports Scottish tech companies to innovate and diversify, developing new products, services and processes of benefit to tourism companies and connects tourism businesses with Scotland’s tech expertise in order to address business challenges.</p>	<p>Increased tourism sector resilience, competitiveness and performance through the adoption of TravelTech. The development of one of Europe’s strongest Travel Tech clusters which enables the Scottish sustainable tourism industry to recover post Covid and achieve the ambitions of Outlook 2030. Increased Travel Tech growth – jobs and investment and increased digital and data driven innovation within Scotland’s tourism industry.</p>	<p>SE Lead with Travel Tech for Scotland & ALL partners</p>	<p>Regional industry engagement and collaboration ongoing.</p> <p>Several significant UK and international R&D / innovation projects underway in partnership with University of Edinburgh, University of Strathclyde, Interface and industry.</p> <p>Interactive Scottish Traveltech Directory launched on 4th December (link here https://airtable.com/universe/expXy3xyXBa8RsOl2/traveltech-directory)</p> <p>Further information on support available can be found at TravelTech for Scotland</p>
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6	INDUSTRY INTELLIGENCE			
	Action	Anticipated Outcome	Action Owner	Status
6.1	Data gathering from industry and trade bodies to capture real time impacts and identify support required.	<p>Provides a timely understanding of the challenges and concerns being faced by industry which enables a rapid and coordinated response to be delivered.</p> <p>Builds an evidence base to inform the Scottish Government and UK Government on the wider impact on industry.</p>	STA	STA issue log updated regularly. Issues continue to be shared with Scottish Government officials.
6.2	Skills impact assessment by sector and occupations.	Identification of at-risk sectors and regions to generate a simple forecast, and a picture of emerging sectoral job opportunities.	SDS	<p>Keep Scotland Working Labour Market Insights document produced by SDS. Presentation delivered to partners and industry stakeholders.</p> <p>Labour Market Insights to be published on-line monthly https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/what-we-do/skills-planning/covid-19-labour-market-insights/</p> <p>Labour Market Insights published on the SDS website. January Report now available.</p>
6.3	STERG COVID-19 industry impact survey.	Coordinated and joined up intelligence to inform strategic planning.	VS	<p>The STERG COVID-19 Industry impact survey launched on 19th November and closed on 6th December.</p> <p>The research aimed to track the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on the Scottish tourism industry and provide STERG with insightful information about current and future industry support needs.</p> <p>Findings were published on 18th December https://www.visitscotland.org/news/2020/sterg-survey-results</p> <p>An industry webinar was held on the 27th January to share the findings. https://www.visitscotland.org/news/2021/sterg-webinar-survey-results</p>

7	INDUSTRY COMMUNICATIONS			
	Action	Anticipated Outcome	Action Owner	Status
7.1	STERG partners to provide appropriate signposting, information and intelligence on emerging issues and priorities based on data and ongoing assessment of need.	<p>Informing the tourism industry with up to date information and signposting to other resources available.</p> <p>Signposting to Findbusinesssupport.gov.uk as the key consistent and up-to-date source of business support information for COVID-19.</p>	All	<p>VS weekly enewsletter and website support. https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/advice/coronavirus</p> <p>Regular STA COVID-19 Updates providing reliable information to industry. https://scottishtourismalliance.co.uk/coronavirus/</p> <p>Local Authority weekly & monthly comm's to business sector through business facing services, economic development, environmental health, licencing etc.</p> <p>Business Gateway communications to businesses is ongoing. Website continues to signpost Coronavirus support. https://www.bgateway.com/coronavirus-business-support-across-scotland</p>
7.2	Develop and implement a STERG communication plan.	Establish regular communication ensuring Industry is informed of the STERG priorities and specifically the actions being undertaken and progress being made.	VS/STA	<p>Plan launched on 26 May. Weekly STERG update in VS Thursday industry enewsletter and weekly minutes published on visitscotland.org with noted actions.</p> <p>STERG Action Plan regularly updated on VS.org.</p> <p>Following recent industry feedback, a revised STERG communication plan has been created to improve communication with industry moving forward. https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/advice/coronavirus/sterg/updates</p>

8	STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION			
	Action	Anticipated Outcome	Action Owner	Status
8.1	Frequent engagement and communication with key stakeholders: Industry, UK Government, Scottish Government; Cabinet Secretary; Ministers and Officials.	Ensure that industry needs are represented and understood, enabling a rapid response to be delivered.	All STERG Partners	<p>Weekly STERG meetings continue.</p> <p>STERG partners have established frequent, open communications with UK Government, Scottish Government, Cabinet Secretary; Ministers and Officials.</p> <p>Fortnightly STERG update sessions are being held with sector organisations (started 13th January 2021).</p>
8.2	Regular STA Council meetings, STA Forums and sector specific meetings to inform government on key industry issues and highlight changing priorities.	One consolidated source of industry issues from the STA where progress is tracked. Ensures common representation of issues which the Scottish Government and UK Government can respond to in a timely and effective way.	STA	<p>Regular STA Council meetings and Forums have taken place with Scottish Government officials and the Cabinet Secretary since the end of March.</p> <p>The STA Council and STA Forums will continue this dialogue going forward.</p>
8.3	Bring together industry representatives and Scottish Government officials to address sector specific issues not addressed in other forums.	Meetings with specific industry bodies which allow for in-depth and detailed discussions about specific issues and challenges that are being faced, to ensure that the right actions are being undertaken.	STA	Specific industry meetings with Scottish Government Officials are scheduled when requested. This is ongoing.

9	RESEARCH & GLOBAL TRAVEL MARKET INTELLIGENCE			
	Action	Anticipated Outcome	Action Owner	Status
9.1	Collating market intelligence from the marketplace. Gathered from global intermediaries, OTAs, market specialists, media specialists, social listening data and other NTOs/international tourism bodies.	Awareness of the wider context; what's happening in tourism globally. Sharing of best practice examples.	VS	Intel updates published on vs.org, with supporting e-update issued fortnightly. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 recovery marketing activity • Latest COVID-19 insights • Impact of COVID-19 on UK and Ireland tourism • Impact of COVID-19 on international tourism • Owned channels monthly insights New Tourisms Future paper published.
9.2	Establish UK market sentiment & propensity holiday tracker.	Will track sentiment & propensity over time to provide audience targeting information.	VS	Weekly tracking data for period to 6 Dec https://www.visitscotland.org/research-insights/coronavirus-insights/uk-market#update UK tracker extended and findings will be on a monthly basis.
9.3	Establish International sentiment & propensity holiday tracker.	As above.	VS	New International Market tracker procured to start in November 2020, will provide sentiment and propensity for 13 key markets. First findings have been published, next wave will be undertaken in March. International sentiment tracking results – 1st wave https://www.visitbritain.org/inbound-covid-19-sentiment-tracker?utm_source=vbve_enews_03_02_2021&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=vbve_03_02_2021 https://www.visitbritain.org/sites/default/files/vb-corporate/Documents-Library/documents/international_covid-19_sentiment_research_-_wave_1_2021.pdf

<p>9.4</p>	<p>Collaboration with OTAs and similar to spot points of traction on destination search and booking activity – to identify return phase.</p>	<p>Provide guidance for timing and nature of activity.</p>	<p>VS</p>	<p>Regular insights being received from TA, BC, Expedia, Google</p> <p>Shared via visitscotland.org and industry webinars.</p> <p>Content partnerships in place with a number of OTA's/Travel websites plus media buys included as part of recovery efforts</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Current data is showing very short lead times to booking.</p> <p>January insights show that search intent has increased domestically in the last couple of weeks for the summer 2021.</p>
<p>9.5</p>	<p>Ongoing economic analysis to understand the impact of the COVID-19 crisis across the geography of Scotland and across the sub sectors of the tourism industry.</p>	<p>Identify types of support required and the prioritisation of support, resources and funding to support recovery.</p>	<p>Local Authorities</p>	<p>From mid Oct onwards 23 Local Authorities started to receive the STEAM interim reports covering the period Jan to June 2020 – this has provided a view of the impact of COVID on tourism by LA area and has fed into local Economic Recovery Plans.</p> <p>Full year data is expected March / April 2021.</p>
<p>9.6</p>	<p>Tourism Data Hub.</p>	<p>Coordination of essential data analytics to inform future direction.</p>	<p>All STERG Partners</p>	<p>A Tourism Data Hub for Scotland is one of the first named deliverables within the Tourism Taskforce recommendations. A Team Scotland partnership are developing the business case for this initiative, working closely with Scottish Government and building on experience from academic, research and industry partners. The tourism digital data hub will provide the essential data analytics the industry needs to understand how to respond in an agile way to uncertain market conditions, drive innovation and R&D through use of data, provide actionable insight to support investment decisions and enable effective monitoring of Scotland's tourism objectives.</p>

10	MARKETING RECOVERY			
	Action	Anticipated Outcome	Action Owner	Status
10.1	Strategic response – develop an overarching phased recovery strategy taking into account market data, visitor insight, legal & regulatory factors including travel.	<p>Maintain brand profile - keep Scotland top of mind in all key markets</p> <p>Readiness to execute response driven activity where market conditions support a travel/book now message.</p>	VS	<p>Strategy developed and budgets allocated to end March 2021.</p> <p>Individual market plans developed and being reviewed on an ongoing basis aligned to new insight and market conditions.</p>
10.1.1	Domestic market plan.	<p>Increased awareness & propensity to visit Scotland from 15 July driving summer, autumn, winter bookings.</p> <p>Opportunities for sectors, destinations, local and national partners to integrate and input to the campaign.</p>		<p>Multi-channel campaign went live on 15 July and ran until end October when additional restrictions came in. Initial results positive and highlight strong demand from key UK segments for Scotland. Campaign will resume in the new year subjective to travel advice/tier restrictions.</p> <p>Media strategy here: https://www.visitscotland.org/binaries/content/assets/dot-org/pdf/marketing-materials/wheel-uk-recovery-strategy-min.pdf</p> <p>Winter campaign launched on 1st December and will help to amplify the Scotland Loves Local message for a Scots audience, promoting local businesses and encouraging Xmas gifting around food & drink; visitor passes/vouchers, local accommodation and things to see & do. Content will support different regions and sectors and guidance to businesses on how to get involved can be found https://www.visitscotland.org/news/2020/lovelocalindustrysupport/content. Activity complete.</p> <p>Quarter 4 plans developed and will include media activity in Scotland/Rest of UK from end – Feb to build intent for Easter/summer period – messaging will flex to adapt to the circumstances nearer the time.</p>

<p>10.1.2</p>	<p>International market plans</p>	<p>Keep Scotland top of mind and increase consideration for 2021</p>		<p>Individual market plans developed Intermediary and PR activity ongoing Media strategy and campaign plans being developed for European markets as a priority.</p> <p>New phase of Brand Scotland activity will launch in January to coincide with Brexit, extending Scotland's welcome promoting all pillars of live, work, study, visit and invest in Scotland.</p> <p>Business case for additional funding for brand building activity submitted to SG.</p> <p>Winter activity will also ensure that global audiences continue to be inspired by Scotland through storytelling and virtual content.</p> <p>Activity in Europe/NA in development for mid-Feb launch. On going discussions with SG re additional budget to support this.</p>
<p>10.2</p>	<p>Renewed digital offering to provide enhanced user experience, real time visitor information and enhanced shop window for Scotland.</p>	<p>Enhanced digital experience Launch of new vs.com website in 2021</p>	<p>VS</p>	<p>Real-time messenger information service launched and promoted on visitscotland.com.</p> <p>Good to go and Open status searchable filters added.</p> <p>Virtual events filter added.</p> <p>New vs.com to launch open Beta phase in March 2021 with opportunity for industry and stakeholder feedback. Likely delay as digital development team are prioritising work to support online grant application processes.</p>

<p>10.3</p>	<p>Develop a digital marketplace platform to connect tourism businesses with International Tour Operators & Travel agencies</p> <p>Provide Industry with Trade Ready programmes & connect with relevant buyers.</p>	<p>Drive 2021 international bookings</p>	<p>VS</p>	<p>A brand new virtual travel trade workshop event -Scotland Reconnect 2020 – was developed to address the need for a Covid-safe platform for suppliers and buyers to meet, contract and keep developing product for 2021, '22 and beyond. The event took place on 23-25 November and was a great success, delivering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 257 buyers (tour operators) from 23 markets • 236 Scottish exhibitors • Over 5,000 qualified, pre-scheduled appointments • Online seminars – market and product development • Live seminar events and themed entertainments including music sessions, whisky tastings and storytelling events <p>Evaluation of the platform underway, but meantime very positive feedback from participants via email and on social channels. VS is now working to deliver a second digital Scotland Reconnect 2021 event to take place April 27-29. Save the date messages have been issued and recruitment will commence February for both buyers and suppliers. This digital travel trade workshop event will be shaped in line with anticipated Covid restrictions and to address the product and programme development needs of Scottish tourism businesses and global intermediaries.</p>
<p>10.4</p>	<p>As part of wider a Business Events Stimulus programme, a dedicated Business Events marketing and media campaign to UK and short-haul markets, inclusive of main business events influencer and decision-maker platforms /networks, and selected mainstream media.</p> <p>Focus on key UK business events markets of London, M4 Corridor, Midlands, and North.</p> <p>Focus on 2022 onwards</p>	<p>Recognise the pipeline is now entering 2022 onwards, as confidence for 2021 ebbs. 18 months or longer leadtime for Long Haul business events, has not been changed by the pandemic.</p> <p>Continue to demonstrate the controlled, planned and 100% traceable nature of business events in fixed, permanent venues.</p>	<p>VS – Business Events</p>	<p>Discussions underway between Brand Scotland and VS Business Events since April, with view to early 2021 launch or at most appropriate moment per prevailing conditions, restrictions and sentiment in ROUK, Europe and international markets.</p>

<p>10.5</p>	<p>Business Event Recovery Fund (BERF) aka Business Events Policy Driven Model Bid Fund request of £2m p/a for next 5 years.</p>	<p>To secure international business events for 2022 onwards aligned to Scotland’s National Performance Framework, Programme for Government & UN Sustainable Development Goals</p> <p>A formal initiative to drive Scotland’s recovery using business event as policy platforms</p>	<p>VS – Business Events</p>	<p>Submitted to SG in July.</p>
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