



SCOTTISH
TOURISM
ALLIANCE

Your voice in tourism matters



SCOTLAND
CHAMPION – CONNECT – INVEST
THE SCOTTISH TOURISM ALLIANCE
FIRST 100 DAYS, YEAR AND FULL PARLIAMENTARY TERM

BUILDING ON SCOTLAND'S GREATEST ASSET

Scotland's tourism and hospitality sector is the heartbeat of our local communities, making them better, safer and more prosperous places to live, work, study, invest and visit.

Tourism-related industries are now the single biggest source of employment in Scotland, surpassing business and financial services. The sector delivered £11.4bn total visitor spend for the Scottish economy in 2024.

The tourism and hospitality sector is one of the country's greatest assets and safest returns on investment. Yet there remains the misconception that tourism just happens and doesn't require the same level of futureproofing as new, emerging industries.

As a result, our destinations and businesses are lacking the funding and support they need to invest in their people, product and place to effectively compete on a global stage.

To protect the sector, the many communities and wider supply chains it supports, strengthening its potential as a catalyst for economic growth and as a world leader in 21st century tourism, we ask the next Scottish Government and MSPs to deliver the following priority actions within their first 100 days, first year, and full parliamentary term.

FIRST 100 DAYS

Create a dedicated, named Cabinet Secretary or Minister role, with equivalent shadow positions

When appointing the next Scottish Government Cabinet and party shadow positions, The STA asks for the reintroduction of a named 'tourism' role to champion the tourism and hospitality sector and support better cross-portfolio working, promoting the importance of the sector as a major economic driver and being at the heart of communities across Scotland.



Prioritise accelerating business rates reform

Due to the property-intensive nature of tourism and hospitality businesses, urgent action is needed to deliver a fairer non-domestic rates system – with a permanently lower poundage rate for sector businesses of all sizes. Scotland must keep pace with the rest of the UK and give sector businesses the certainty needed to protect and invest in their product, offer and people.

Nurture the tourism and hospitality sector rather than stifle growth

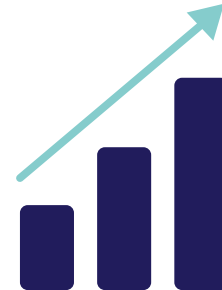
Given new pressures on the tourism and hospitality sector due to international events, The STA asks that the next Scottish Government gives the sector time to breathe by committing to not place any more regulatory and tax burdens on businesses or any policies that negatively impact on Scotland's competitiveness. Instead, we ask the Scottish Government and MSPs to proactively partner with the sector to identify, shape and deliver a new set of ambitious policies to support the industry to grow in a sustainable and responsible way.



FIRST YEAR

Develop a Scottish Tourism and Hospitality Growth Plan

The sector is ready to work in partnership with the next Scottish Government and political parties to begin developing a Scottish Tourism and Hospitality Growth Plan, building on its strengths and positioning the sector as a key export and future industry for Scotland, which will in turn help to inform the next five-year Scottish National Tourism Strategy from 2031 onwards.



Empower, protect and invest long-term in the tourism and hospitality sector

To optimise economic growth opportunities and protect the future of the tourism and hospitality sector, the next Scottish Government must identify a multi-year funding package for VisitScotland, EventScotland and Destination Management Organisations. This should include a ring-fenced budget to deliver on the vision and strategic missions identified and recommended by the Tourism and Hospitality Industry Leadership Group to be a world leader in 21st century tourism.

Urgently invest in our people

As net migration continues to decline and tourism and hospitality businesses struggle to recruit and retain workers, the sector urgently needs support as a key growth industry to safeguard and foster the next generation of tourism and hospitality workers. This must include more targeted skills development, apprenticeship places at all levels, clear career pathways, and more multi-lingual learning opportunities to help address sector staffing shortages, skills gaps and ensure we deliver a world-leading visitor experience.



FULL TERM

Position and invest in the sector as a future industry

In partnership with Interface, create a dedicated Tourism and Hospitality Future Innovation Fund that enables innovation in the sector, including becoming more environmentally sustainable and supporting sector businesses to keep pace with emerging developments in AI and other technologies.



Hold a national debate on economic policy

As recommended by The Hunter Foundation, The STA supports calls for a national debate to be held between industry, the Scottish and UK Governments and opposition parties to shape ambitious policies for transformational economic growth that will raise GDP per head in Scotland.

Deliver transport and digital connectivity that sets Scotland out as a world leader in 21st century tourism

To be a world leader in 21st century tourism, investment in modernising and improving connectivity across the country's transport and digital infrastructure, along with improving affordability and sustainability, are central to creating memorable experiences for visitors to Scotland. New transport and digital infrastructure projects and funding opportunities should be aligned with national and regional growth priorities for the tourism and hospitality industry – encouraging visitors to visit more parts of the country and at different times of the year.



A SAFE RETURN ON INVESTMENT FOR SCOTLAND

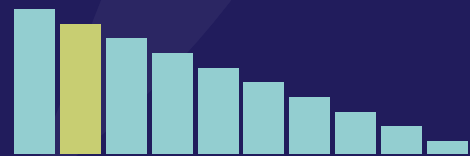


**£11.4
BILLION**

Total tourism visitor
spend in 2024

**£9
BILLION**

Contributed by Scottish
hospitality industry annually



2nd LARGEST
GROWTH
SECTOR

Accounting for 32% of total
growth sector employment



1 in 11

JOBS & BUSINESSES

Tourism-related industries are now the single biggest
source of employment in Scotland –
recently surpassing business and financial services

A SAFE RETURN ON INVESTMENT FOR SCOTLAND

**£4
BILLION**

Total international visitor
spend in 2024



**4.4
MILLION**

International yearly visitors

**10.6
MILLION**

Overnight domestic
trips in 2024



**76.8
MILLION**

Total day visits to
Scotland by GB
residents in 2024



EDINBURGH

2nd

Most visited
city in the UK

**GLASGOW
ABERDEEN
INVERNESS**

In the
UK Top 20
for overnight
visits by
inbound
visitors

**Scotland continues to outperform the rest of
the UK for inbound visits and spend per person**



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