

Dear colleagues,

I am delighted to send a VisitScotland update containing information that I hope will be of interest. In this update find out how we are shining a spotlight on the Scottish Borders this spring and read about our latest partnerships with Scottish Natural Heritage and National Geographic in the Year of Natural Scotland.



Scottish Borders in the spotlight this spring





VisitScotland has launched a second year of Explore Scotland - We'll point you in the right direction - the regional strand of the Surprise Yourself campaign - promoting key products and messages from the region and encouraging visitors to come and Explore the Scottish Borders.

As part of ongoing national 'Surprise Yourself' activity, targeting UK 'staycationers' and encouraging them to make the most of a holiday at home, the regional spring campaign continues the approach that kicked off in 2012 - Explore Scotland, we'll point you in the right direction. Activity includes:

Direct mail insert

A Scottish Borders direct mail insert featured in our national direct mailer which was sent to over **58,000** UK households in February. The pack includes surprising facts about the region with a focus on the natural beauty of the Scottish Borders in this, the Year of Natural Scotland.

Media

The Scottish Borders also featured in a range of major press titles including The Herald, Sunday Herald, the Scotsman and a range of other regional media such as North East Life, Yorkshire Life, Lancashire and Lake District Life and the Cheshire Life in February and March. This media activity highlighted the region to over **900,000** encouraging new and repeat visitors to come and enjoy all that's on offer in the Scottish Borders.

Radio adverts

Radio adverts promoting the theme of Natural Wonders in the Scottish Borders and using local voices to give a local flavour and authenticity, featured on Real Radio North East and Smooth Radio North East in February. The advert encouraged visitors to get active by highlighting walking on the Borders Abbey Way, the world's only silver staircase at Manderston House, scenic cycling routes, intriguing red squirrels and leaping spring salmon. It is estimated that the advert was heard by over **600,000**.

Sales promotion

On top of this, sales promotion partnerships with well known brands UKTV Food, Walks around Britain (website promoting walking) and Country First Direct (online retailer of outdoor clothing) allow VisitScotland to target an audience relevant to the Scottish Borders key products and messages. A range of online activity is highlighting the Scottish Borders through banner adverts, email promotion and social media over the coming months, emphasising the region to over **2.8 million**.

Scotland's Natural Trail

The Scottish Borders will be highlighted to almost **4.5 million** in a new national campaign around *Explore Scotland's Natural Trail* - a circuit which threads its way between key sites of natural interest and covers Scotland's areas by trunk and country roads, while also linking rail, ports, and VisitScotland Information Centres. Activity will include a mix of press, radio and digital as well as sales promotion partnerships.

Combined activity will generate over **9 million** opportunities to see or hear messaging about the Scottish Borders this spring.



Our natural environment stays in the spotlight

Earlier this year VisitScotland launched its biggest ever nature-focused tourism drive, highlighting the country's natural environment and designed to get the Scottish population out of their





armchairs and into the countryside for the Year of Natural Scotland 2013.

Read on to find out about exciting partnerships with Scottish National Heritage and National Geographic and our Naturally Great Days Out campaign as part of our ongoing activity for the Year of Natural Scotland.

VisitScotland joins forces with National Geographic

VisitScotland has linked-up with one of the world's oldest and best known nature publications, **National Geographic**, in the latest of a series of initiatives to celebrate the Year of Natural Scotland 2013.

The £400,000 campaign is allowing us to engage in a range of activities and opportunities utilising a number of the media giant's numerous platforms.

The Year of Natural Scotland television advertisement, which includes Floors Castle near Kelso, will be seen by millions of new viewers through National Geographic's channels in America and the United Kingdom, with a specially dubbed version going to air in France.

The iconic magazine will carry out a range of activity including double page spreads about the Year of Natural Scotland in their French and English magazines in April, full homepage takeovers and Year of Natural Scotland banner adverts on Nationalgeographic.com and their Adventure eNewsletter, which has a readership of nearly 5 million people, containing solely Scotland photos and inspiring destination content. Around 40,000 subscribers to the magazine in the United Kingdom will also receive special information through the post about Scotland as a destination for lovers of nature and adventure.

Scottish Borders residents encouraged to walk on the wildside

Residents in the Scottish Borders and visitors to the region are being encouraged to make the most of wildlife opportunities in the area and beyond, as part of a major UK marketing campaign launched by VisitScotland and **Scottish Natural Heritage** in March, to celebrate the Year of Natural Scotland 2013.

VisitScotland and Scottish Natural Heritage have selected five of Scotland's iconic indigenous species for the UK marketing campaign which focuses on Red Deer, Golden Eagle, Harbour Seal, Otter and Red Squirrels.

The campaign activity includes a national radio promotion, outdoor poster campaign in Scottish and Northern English cities, print media advertising and online activity over the coming months.

The joint-initiative aims to inspire people to get and out and about and visit a dedicated website which contains information about where to see the Big 5 in Scotland. Find out more [here](#).

Naturally Great Days Out 2013

The Year of Natural 2013 presents an ideal opportunity to encourage Scots to get out and about to enjoy and explore more of their own country. VisitScotland's Naturally Great Days Out



campaign is building on the success of the 2for1 Days Out campaign providing inspiration to

visitors and encouraging them to get out and explore in this Year of Natural Scotland.



The campaign runs from the end of March through to the end of October and is targeting all Scottish locals, particularly the family market, as well as all on-arrival visitors.

Paxton House, Gunsgreen House, Dawyck Botanic Garden and Traquair House are among the attractions featured in the 'Naturally Great Days Out 2013' promotion this spring.

The campaign launched with the Naturally Great Days Out 2for1 offers carried by major Scottish press title, the Daily Mail. The campaign is also linking with Rowan Glen, Real Radio and The List, providing excellent coverage and exposure. More activity is planned throughout the year to promote Naturally Great Days Out.

All campaign activity is driving traffic to the days out web page www.visitscotland.com/greatdaysout where inspiration on all aspects of a day out are featured and links provided to richer content within www.visitscotland.com.

Get involved in the Year of Natural Scotland 2013

For free marketing tools and further information on Year of Natural Scotland, [have a look at our toolkit](#).

Changes to Information Services in the Scottish Borders

Changes have been made to VisitScotland information services in Eyemouth and Jedburgh. Read on to find out more.

Jedburgh





VisitScotland Information Centre - Jedburgh VisitScotland Information Centre has undergone a major refurbishment during March.

The refurbishment of the Information Centre has included a complete internal redesign, creation of new visitor entrance zones and new staff areas.

The new layout provides more room for the racking of literature to help promote local businesses, large scale wall graphics to deliver an immediate sense of place for visitors and local and national wall maps to help visitors plan their journey. VisitScotland is also working with Historic Scotland to showcase Jedburgh Abbey within the new Centre.

New zones have also been introduced in the Information Centre to assist visitors with finding everything they need - whether they're looking for a local leaflet or a Scottish souvenir.

See images from the newly refurbished centre on the left.

Information services in Eyemouth - VisitScotland is now working with Eyemouth Museum Trust to operate an Information Point, in Partnership at Eyemouth Museum.

The new service commenced on 25 March and sees Eyemouth Museum staff trained by VisitScotland to help promote the surrounding area by offering their local expertise and information to visitors.

Eyemouth Museum Trust has recently been successful in gaining funding from the European Coastal Communities Fund. This has resulted in the Museum employing a Museum & Genealogy Coordinator and two Museum & Tourism Assistants who are providing the front of house Museum service and information service.

We will work closely with Eyemouth Museum Trust and provide ongoing training and support to their staff to ensure the delivery of a high quality information service.

A VisitScotland Information Point in Partnership is an official local information service for visitors delivered by local businesses, providing a range of local information designed to help promote local attractions, events and accommodation providers.



First events for the Scottish Borders announced as part of Homecoming Scotland 2014 programme

It has been announced that several events will take place in the Scottish Borders as part of the year-long Homecoming Scotland 2014 programme which was officially unveiled by First Minister Alex Salmond, alongside Chairman of VisitScotland, Mike Cantlay, on 27 March.

The announcement, which took place at Hopetoun House in South Queensferry, confirmed that Tweedlove Bike Festival, the Borders Book Festival, The Melrose Sevens and Return to the Ridings are included in the programme of hundreds of events for Homecoming Scotland 2014.

Homecoming Scotland 2014 is being delivered by VisitScotland and EventScotland in conjunction with the Scottish Government to provide an opportunity for communities all over the country to celebrate the very best of

Scottish culture.

Around 100 events were unveiled at the launch, with hundreds more expected to be confirmed over the coming months. This includes many new events, established events which will have a new Homecoming element for 2014 and those that have joined through the partner programme to benefit from in-kind marketing. The five themes of Homecoming 2014 - active, food and drink, creative, natural and ancestry - are all represented.

An events fund of £3million will support events which will create a stunning all-year-round programme of activity to complement the Ryder Cup and Commonwealth Games. This will be backed by a £1.75million marketing campaign by VisitScotland promoting Homecoming Scotland 2014 at home and abroad.

[Take a look at our Homecoming Scotland 2014 toolkit.](#)

Get involved

Your event, business or activity could benefit by joining the partner programme. If your activity takes place between 31 December 2013 and 31 December 2014 and falls under one or more of the **key themes** for the year, you can apply.

Benefits include use of the Homecoming Scotland branding on your marketing material, access to a Homecoming Scotland 2014 toolkit, including images, logos, press releases and banners and your event featured in digital events listings on VisitScotland's website and Homecoming web portal. In addition, your event could be supported through VisitScotland's marketing activities in the promotion of Homecoming Scotland 2014.

You can get involved or find out more here www.eventscotland.org/partner_programme. All partner proposals will be considered on their relevance to the themes of Homecoming Scotland 2014 and their fit with the overall programme.

News in brief

Press trip generates coverage for the Borders

VisitScotland's consumer PR team work closely with travel and lifestyle media to ensure consistent, positive media coverage for the Scottish Borders throughout the year. Our consumer PR team regularly support press trips and secure coverage in a number of different publications.

VisitScotland worked with two Belgian journalists from PLUS magazine last year on a trip to the Scottish Borders and The Trossachs. While in the region they travelled to the Lochcarron of Scotland visitor centre in

Selkirk and Traquair House near Innerleithen. The trip resulted in an article featuring in both the Dutch and French version of the magazine earlier this year, with a combined circulation of over **150,000**. In the article the Scottish Borders is described as beautiful part of Scotland and a surprising "hidden gem".

In the eNews

The Scottish Borders regularly features in our range of consumer e-zines (e-newsletter), which are sent to potential visitors on our database in the UK and abroad, on a monthly basis.



The Scottish Borders golf passport, Freedom of the Fairways, was promoted in a range of our UK & Ireland consumer e-zines in March as part of a feature on great value golf passes in Scotland. These newsletters are sent to approximately 360,000 UK & Ireland residents on our database.

Reputed to be the most popular sevens tournament in Scotland, Melrose Sevens was highlighted in our Scotland for the Scot's e-zine in March. These e-zines are regularly sent to over 100,000 Scottish residents on our database.

VisitScotland Expo

Expo will take place on 17-18 April 2013 in the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre, Glasgow. It is Scotland's premier business to business travel trade event and offers the perfect opportunity for all companies with a Scottish tourism product to showcase their products and services to potential buyers.

Our UK travel trade and international marketing teams will be bringing a number of UK and international buyers to the Scottish Borders during expo week. Find out more in the next stakeholder email.

To find out more about expo 2013 [click here](#).

Feel free to reply

I hope you find this update interesting. If you would like further information or if you would just like to offer your feedback, please feel free to get back to me.

Kind regards

Sam



Sam McGregor
Partnership Communications Executive
VisitScotland

Shepherds Mill, Whinfield Road, Selkirk, TD7 5DT.
Tel: 01750 723 804 / 07900 667 178
Fax: 01750 21886

Email: samantha.mcgregor@visitscotland.com

For visitor information – www.visitscotland.com

For information on VisitScotland - www.visitscotland.org

For business tourism information - www.conventionscotland.com

For information on the work of EventScotland, Scotland's national events agency - www.EventScotland.org

2013 is the Year of Natural Scotland, inspiring our people and our visitors to celebrate Scotland's outstanding natural beauty, landscapes and biodiversity as Scotland prepares to welcome the world in 2014 and beyond.

Find out how you can promote and capitalise on the opportunities offered by the Year of Natural Scotland at http://www.visitscotland.org/business_support/advicelink/year_of_natural_scotland.aspx

Find out more about Scotland's outstanding natural beauty at www.visitscotland.com/natural

Before you print think about the ENVIRONMENT

This email and any attachments are private and confidential. If you have received this email in error, please immediately notify the sender and permanently remove the email from your system. If you receive this email in error, you must not use, copy or disclose any of the information contained in this e-mail or any attachments.

Any views or opinions expressed in this email and any attachments are those of the sender and do not necessarily represent the views or opinions of VisitScotland. Please note that VisitScotland's email system (including the content of emails and attachments) is subject to monitoring by us for the purposes of security and training.

VisitScotland does not accept any liability for any harm that may be caused to the recipient's system or data by this email or any attachment.