



Delivering for the **Scottish Borders**

How we're working to grow
the visitor economy

 Visit
Scotland | **Alba**™

Introduction

We've seen an incredible couple of years for the Scottish Borders; with the launch of the Borders Railway opening up the region to the global market. With more than one million passengers travelling on the railway during its first year of operation, it's clear to see the positive impact it's having on local businesses and events.

Our work with public sector and industry partners has ensured that the Scottish Borders has achieved fantastic exposure to millions of potential visitors –through Scotland's Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design 2016 and our global Spirit of Scotland campaign.

The Themed Years encourage collaborative working to attract new customers and generate benefits for the visitor economy in the region. We will be building on this with all partners in the Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology 2017 where the region can truly capitalise on its reputation for outstanding culture and heritage.

My colleagues and I look forward to strengthening our partnerships to promote the Scottish Borders as a must-visit must-return destination.

Paula Ward,
Regional Director,
VisitScotland



Key stats for the Scottish Borders

- **193 million** consumers have had the opportunity to see or hear messaging worldwide about the Scottish Borders through our global PR activity in 2015/2016
- **£128,992** invested in local events by VisitScotland between April 2015 and March 2016.
- **£855,000** worth of enquiries sent to venues in the Scottish Borders from our business events team in 2015/2016
- **More than 142,000** visits to 'Things to see and do in the Scottish Borders' pages on visitscotland.com
- **More than 1.8 million** viewers reached through NBC's Open House Abbotsford feature in February 2016
- **26 Gold Awards** in the region awarded to local restaurants in our Taste Our Best scheme
- **More than 230 businesses** in the Scottish Borders are part of a VisitScotland Quality Assurance scheme with 26 achieving 5 stars, demonstrating the commitment to providing a high quality visitor experience across the region
- The Scottish Borders tourism industry stands to benefit from investment of more than **£96 million** over the next three years; as identified by the Tourism Development Framework

Marketing the Scottish Borders

VisitScotland's campaign is harnessing the power of a nation behind tourism to bring the *Spirit of Scotland* to life.

GLOBAL CAMPAIGNS

VisitScotland launched its first ever global campaign *Spirit of Scotland* in February 2016. Using #ScotSpirit the campaign aims to raise the profile of Scotland and its regions by evoking emotions using imagery and mood. The Scottish Borders has featured across the campaign — in film, print and digital advertising, direct mail packs and more — across the UK, US, Germany and France.

With over 2,300 views worldwide, mountain biker Ruaridh Cunningham starred in an online film as part of the campaign.

With cycle tourism said to be worth £345 million annually* to the Scottish economy the film strengthens the Scottish Borders reputation as a cycling destination to a worldwide audience.

In July 2016 visitscotland.com was re-designed and now includes new features such as a trip planner and online community. These provide 'insider' information about Scotland and our region to thousands of consumers.



DELIVERING FOR THE SCOTTISH BORDERS

REGIONAL CAMPAIGNS

VisitScotland works with local partners to deliver a marketing programme targeting potential leisure and business visitors from domestic and international markets.

Autumn/winter 2016 direct mail pack landed on 25,000 consumer door steps who had previously expressed an interest in visiting the region. The pack featured details of a range of local events and attractions with stunning imagery to compliment, and with press activity and digital engagement the total reach was over 2.46 million.

THE BORDERS RAILWAY

VisitScotland invested £367,000 in a unique three-year international marketing campaign to put the Borders Railway on the map. The funding, provided by the Scottish Government, Scottish Borders Council and Midlothian Council, is used to promote the

Borders Railway to national and international audiences.

VisitScotland organised a dedicated media day in advance of the public opening of the railway. This was a runaway success, generating 273 pieces of coverage with a total reach of over 51 million. The #mybordersrailway was in the top 5 trending topics for UK on Twitter, mentioned 3,980 times reaching a potential audience of 29.2 million. Media coverage was tremendous, with 441 total pieces of global coverage and a reach of almost 200 million.

Since opening the railway tourism revenue has grown significantly, for example, Abbotsford House reported an 18.4% increase in visitor numbers and Tweedbank restaurant, Herges on the Loch reported a 50% increase in lunches.



From textiles to technology, architecture to fashion, the Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design 2016 shines the spotlight on Scotland's greatest assets, icons and hidden gems. We invite you to discover awe-inspiring design and breathtaking built heritage in Scotland during 2016! To find out more go to visitscotland.com/iad2016 and join the conversation using #IAD2016.



St Abbs Lighthouse, Scottish Borders

VISITSCOTLAND.COM

International visitors

Scotland is more connected than ever before through transport and digital channels — giving it a louder voice within key markets

Since June 2015, Etihad Airways, the national carrier of the United Arab Emirates, has been running daily flights from Abu Dhabi and beyond to Edinburgh, connecting more than one hundred global destinations with Scotland.

Edinburgh is Etihad Airways' first Scottish destination and to support this important transport link VisitScotland began a three year partnership with them.

We hosted a group of influential Chinese media in Glasgow, the Scottish Borders, Midlothian and Edinburgh. Amongst the five major journalists was an editor for Condé Nast Traveller China, which has a 650,000 circulation each month and also Lifestyle Director of The Bund, one of the mainstream weekly lifestyle newspapers in China's tier one cities with a weekly readership of 890,000.

The group experienced our stunning scenery and warm welcome during the trip which included a visit to Abbotsford House and lunch at Burts Hotel, Melrose to taste the regions produce.

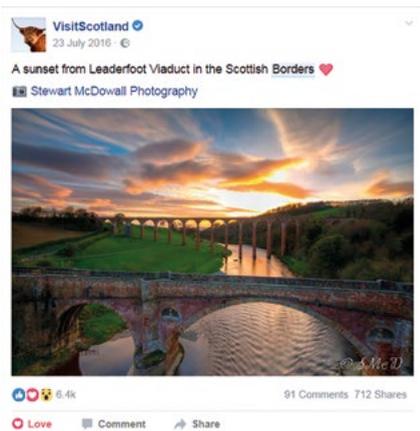


The Scottish Borders on social media

Posts about the Scottish Borders across our social media channels led to more than 168,630 likes, shares, retweets and comments from April – September 2016.

With more than 1 million Facebook, more than 310,000 Instagram and more than 248,000 Twitter followers, VisitScotland provides inspiration and information to thousands of potential visitors through our online social media platforms.

Highlighting the very best of what the region has to offer, we see visitors and locals alike uploading photographs from all over the Scottish Borders which are in turn being shared by a global audience. The ruins of Jedburgh Abbey and Leaderfoot Viaduct have topped the list of attractions in the Scottish Borders to receive the most engagement with almost 24,000 likes, shares, retweets and comments between them.



* social media stats as at March 2017.



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