



Responsible Tourism Strategy Year One Delivery Report April 2024 – March 2025

Introduction:

Following a year-long consultation, the all-agency South of Scotland's [Responsible Tourism Strategy](#) was launched on the 20th March 2024 at the SSDA's Annual Conference. Of the c200 businesses attending the launch: 97% said they supported the strategy (84% 'strongly' support). In other feedback at the end of the consultation process, 95% of business respondents said they saw themselves involved in the delivery of the strategy and 97% said they saw themselves benefiting from the strategy.

It is the collective responsibility of the South of Scotland Destination Alliance (SSDA), VisitScotland (VS), South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE), Scottish Borders Council (SBC), Dumfries and Galloway Council (DGC), and all in the South of Scotland, to deliver on this strategy: increasing our visitor economy by £1bn and supporting a further 6,000 jobs. To succeed, this strategy must be owned and delivered by every visitor economy business and community in the South of Scotland. It is our *collective* ambition. We therefore invite every businesses to get involved in the delivery: [joining the SSDA as members](#), being listed on the 'Scotland Starts Here' [website](#) and [app](#) (our consumer-facing brand), and actively being involved.

The SSDA, VS, SOSE, DGC and SBC can serve an enabling role, establishing the pre-conditions for success, but it is businesses themselves who will ultimately deliver the economic growth we collectively seek. And so we look to support, and get behind businesses, to really deliver on our ambition.

The Strategy has been endorsed by both the Regional Economic Partnership and the Convention of the South of Scotland, and hence it is also owned by, and will be supported by, a wider cast of public agencies including Historic Environment Scotland, Scotland Food & Drink, Forestry and Land Scotland, and the Scottish Government.

At the same time as the Strategy was launched, the first three-year [Action Plan](#) was published, with 122 actions across the four strands of the strategy; each with one or more lead agency responsible for delivery and a clear description of where we want to be by 2027.

Through 2024, three quarterly delivery reports were published, in June, September and December. This fourth report collates this information together, adding in the Q4 activity and results, to give a full delivery report for the first of the ten years. We are committed to transparency and accountability in delivering on the unprecedented ambition we have set for the South of Scotland's visitor economy.

This report gives a flavour of some of what we have done in the last 12 months to advance the strategy but it is not exhaustive as we aim to keep these quarterly reports to a readable length.

[CLICK HERE](#) for further live info and monthly 5-minute briefing videos on what is being done right now to support tourism in our destination.

What has changed over the last year:

While the Responsible Tourism Strategy sets a clear plan for the next ten years (2024-34); to remain relevant and impactful, it is important that it evolves annually in response to key events and the changing landscape.

Below are some of the most notable developments which have taken place in the first year (April 2024 – March 2025), which the delivery of the Strategy should be cognisant of and respond to.

- **Center Parcs:**

Center Parcs announced on the 5th November 2024 that it plans to build its first Scottish holiday village in the Scottish Borders, with a potential investment of £400m, creating 1,200 permanent, year-round jobs. This is a huge endorsement of the Scottish Borders' visitor economy and a fantastic opportunity which is roundly welcomed by all those involved in the delivery of the Responsible Tourism Strategy.

- **Galloway National Park:**

Galloway was named on the 17th July 2024 as the preferred location for Scotland's next National Park, beating off competition from across Scotland. A public consultation was conducted by NatureScot, concluding on 14th February 2025, and they will then issue a recommendation to the Scottish Government later in spring 2025.

- **Scottish Dark Skies Observatory:**

Following capital funding from SOSE and mediation support from the SSDA, the Clatteringshaws site in the Galloway Forest Park was purchased for the development of the new Scottish Dark Skies Observatory in autumn 2024. This presents the region the opportunity to better leverage the economic value of the Gold Tier Dark Skies status.

- **Forest Holidays, Glentress:**

The £18m Forest Holidays complex was formally opened in November 2024, with 56 nature-sensitive luxury cabins fully booked.

- **Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund:**

The Scottish Government restarted the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund, opening a 2025/26 application round. The fund aims to improve the visitor experience in rural parts of Scotland that are experiencing visitor management issues as a result of additional visitors. In particular, it aims to help address pressure on local infrastructure or any negative impacts on communities. It is likely that both Dumfries and Galloway Council and Scottish Borders Council will look to apply to this fund to support key components of the Responsible Tourism Strategy.

- **Quality Assurance:**
VisitScotland retired its Quality Assurance Scheme on 31 March 2025 moving to a new model of tourism business support. The Association of Scottish Visitor Attractions (ASVA) will launch a new Quality Scheme in Spring 2025 for Scottish visitor attractions.
- **VisitScotland iCentres:**
VisitScotland's digital-first approach to visitor information, in line with changing consumer behaviour, led to closure of all remaining iCentres in Scotland, including the two in the South of Scotland (in Dumfries and Jedburgh).
- **VisitScotland Business Support Hub:**
VisitScotland launched its new [Business Support Hub](#), a dedicated digital platform that provides tourism and events businesses access to free tailored advice, resources and opportunities to help them operate and grow their business in a sustainable way.
- **SSDA funding:**
Following the successful completion of the 2020-25 South of Scotland Destination Alliance funding from SOSE, a further two years of funding (2025-27) was agreed to support the co-delivery of the Responsible Tourism Strategy, albeit at a reduced level which will require all aspects of the SSDA's operations to be reduced, with resultant impact on the Responsible Tourism Strategy.
- **Go Tweed Valley:**
After months of consultation with local tourism businesses and partners, it was announced on 17 January 2025 that 88% of businesses voted for the Go Tweed Valley tourism BID to continue for a further five-year term.

In response to this evolving landscape, the action plan has been updated and refreshed to ensure it remains relevant.

Progress at the end of Year One:

The five partner agencies met in March 2024 to assess progress against the planned activity. The RAG results from this exercise are shared below.

55% of activities were seen as on track, with results being visible. 32% were seen as broadly on track but we're not yet seeing results.

Strand	Item	RAG in 2024/25
1) Inspire visitors to come to the South of Scotland	Developing the Destination Position and Profile	GREEN
	Develop the region as a year-round destination	YELLOW
	Inspire the travel trade to the potential of the region	YELLOW
	Leverage our credentials and designations	GREEN
	Have game-changing ambition to inspire international visitors	GREEN
2) Develop the visitor experience with a focus on quality	Quality	GREEN
	Growth and Development	GREEN
	Visitor Information	YELLOW
	Events	GREEN
	Accommodation	GREEN
	Infrastructure	YELLOW
	Inward Investment	GREEN
3) Support businesses to succeed	Support and collaboration	GREEN
	Representation	GREEN
	Workforce development	RED
	Data Insights Sharing	YELLOW
Act responsibly for long-term collective benefit	Nature/Natural Capital	GREEN
	Net Zero	AMBER
	Community-led Tourism	GREEN
	Accessible and Inclusive Tourism	YELLOW
	Visitor management	YELLOW
	Motorhome visitor experience	AMBER

Green (55%) =

Activities on track and we're seeing results

Yellow (32%) =

Activities broadly on track but we're not yet seeing results

Amber (9%) =

Some or all activities are not advancing as planned and no results yet seen

Red (5%) =

Serious concerns as planned activity is not happening

Strand	Item	RAG in 2024/25	Progress in 2024/25 (figures to Q1-3)	Actions not yet developed	Priorities in 2025/26
1) Inspire visitors to come to the South of Scotland	Developing the Destination Position and Profile	GREEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SSDA Seasonality marketing campaign, incl: - New/updated SSH webpages for autumn, winter, spring & summer - 2 x short-break competitions with over 9,800 entries - 68k additional web visits to campaign pages - 4.2m Impressions on social media ads - c400 businesses engaged/briefed in planning - SSDA secured 184 media pieces with aggregate reach of 3.4bn - 2 SSDA journalist/influencer trips - Marketing spend by individual businesses and business groups. - 14 destination area landing pages, each with promo video launched on SSH: Berwickshire Coast, Berwickshire and the Lammermuirs, Eildon and Leaderdale, The Cheviots, the Tweed Valley (with Go Tweed Valley), Selkirk & the valleys, Teviot, Eskdale and Liddesdale, Annandale, Nithsdale, Dumfries, Heart of Galloway, Solway Firth, The Machars, The Rhins of Galloway - 800+ businesses opted in and have received SSH marketing collateral to display - Initial SSDA digital discoverability audit - VS global marketing activity featuring South content across channels in consultation with SSDA - VS and SSDA marketing partnership investment with Trip Adviser and Reach Media - VS Expedia partnership VisitScotland Expedia partnership targeted UK & US market with content including 7Stanes, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1.ii – Online bookability support 1.1.v - Sustained long-term financial commitment to marketing the region 1.1.vi - track attitudes to holidaying in our region by our target markets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Continue Seasonality campaign - Begin campaign to target North American markets - Digital discoverability audit - Track attitudes to holidaying in SoS, in target markets

			<p>Seabirds at Mull of Galloway, Spring Fling, Dino Park, Galloway Forest Park and Abbotsford</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - VS UK Days Out Campaign activity focussed on Drumlanrig, Grey Mares' Tail, Samye Ling Tibetan Monastery in Langholm, Borders Book Festival, Abbotsford and Triumontium - VS marketing partnership with GSAB on Nat Geo 'Cool Destination' designation - VS facilitated journalist visits/coverage, incl. Mail on Sunday -VS 'Coos in Cardis' global PR campaign featuring Merrick Wool in collaboration with A'the Airts, Sanquhar and GSAB - VS activity, regional and national Thistle Awards, SOSE marketing, Go Rural and significant efforts from businesses and enterprises across region have continued to build the South's brand and amplify Scotland Starts Here - VS national 'Burns Night' marketing content included references to the Burns visitor product in Dumfries including Big Burns Supper, Globe Inn and Burns Museum and Mausoleum. - SBC has endorsed the Place Plans of Hawick, Jedburgh and Galashiels, , and have been presented to the Borderlands Programme Board. The Eyemouth Place Plan is being supported and is in its final stages. 		
	Develop the region as a year-round destination	YELLOW	<p>[- SSDA Seasonality marketing campaign – see above]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SSDA chaired contract mediation to secure Scottish Dark Skies Observatory, with £200k of SOSE capital funding invested for acquisition. - SSDA work with Go Rural on spring activities. - SSDA supporting developing new off-season products and partnerships (e.g. mobile Nordic spa) 	<p>1.2.i – Seasonality audit</p> <p>1.2.ii - local collaboration for standard year-round offering,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seasonality audit - Develop coordinated Dark Skies product

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SOSE investment in seasonality product, including Cairndale Spa, Forest Holidays, cycling infrastructure, Dark Sky Observatory and events and festivals such as return of Big Burns Supper is adding to off-season offer - Forest Holidays and (in the future) Center Parcs will increase off-season visitors 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop core seasonal offer/clusters - Explore idea of Winter Festival
	Inspire the travel trade to the potential of the region	YELLOW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SSDA travel trade training for 20 businesses with additional one-to-one support to over 30 businesses - SSDA represented South of Scotland at: VS Connect, BIM London, UKInbound networking events, Cruise Scotland, Arival Edinburgh, ETMNA - SSDA direct pitches/presentations to travel trade agencies with international reach. - SSDA and VS organised travel trade FAM visits - SSDA secured Scottish Destination Management Association annual conference in the South of Scotland, hosting networking event with SoS businesses - Eyemouth Harbour Trust, Schloss, Cairndale, Standhill and others working on their travel trade offer. Travel trade a strand our Scottish Agritourism Monitor Farms are working on supported by VS and SOSE - SSDA pitched to host UKInbound 2026 conference - SSDA Travel Trade directory and website - VS support for businesses to engage international business development missions including China, North America and luxury product - VS has worked with SSDA to create a pipeline of tourism businesses to participate at VisitScotland Connect in April 2025, incl.: SSDA, Annandale Distillery, Gretna Green, The Carindale Hotel & Spa, SCHLOSS 	1.3.v - Tracking % of international visitors and number of businesses that are part of the SSDA travel trade offering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explore additional support for businesses to attend VS Connect 2026

			Roxburghe, Lochcarron of Scotland, Abbotsford, Great Tapestry of Scotland and Scotland Shop. - VS travel trade newsletters to businesses		
	Leverage our credentials and designations	GREEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Galloway selected as leading destination for possible National Park, with all agencies supporting NatureScot led consultation. - SSDA and VS have been active in ensuring that tourism businesses and events were a part of the NatureScot consultation, including hosting a webinar with the Cairngorms National Park CEO. - South of Scotland named an exclusive UCI Bike Region. - South of Scotland a finalist for UCI global Cycling for All & Sustainability Award. - GSA Biosphere included in the National Geographic's Cool List 2024. - SSDA CEO won Scottish Land and Estates Scottish Tourism Award - Numerous 'Top 100 Women in Tourism' in SoS - Unique designation as only Natural Capital Innovation Zone is ready to be leveraged 	1.4.iii – use designations to pilot new ways of responsible business practice	- Support development of National Park if being taken forwards
	Have game-changing ambition to inspire international visitors	GREEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SSDA developed Scotland's Story emigration national visitor attraction proposal for Stranraer East Pier. SOSE-funded Pre-Feasibility study completed. Now developing working collaboration to fund Feasibility Study. - SSDA brokered possible relocation of National Tartan Centre from Dundee to the Scottish Borders, expanding to 'Tartan and Tweed', if funding and site available. - SSDA developing 'stepping stone' strategy – Burns, etc - SSDA developing network of U.S. supporters. - Significant work and investment being supported in private sector with investments at Cairndale, 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - East Pier Feasibility Study funded & underway. - Funding and location for Scottish Tartan and Tweed Centre. - Explore 'Scotland's History'

			Comlongdon, Dabton, Thirlestane, Schloss, Gretna which will have international appeal. - Jim Clark Trust 60 th event has international heft - C2C has international reach as do supported events such as Gralloch		attraction at Schloss - Develop stepping stone strategy - Build U.S. network of supporters
2) Develop the visitor experience with a focus on quality	Quality	GREEN	- SSDA delivered second year of South of Scotland Thistle Awards to drive quality and recognition - more SoS national Thistle winners than previous 22 years combined. - SSDA hosted roundtable agreeing food and drink strategy, from which SOSE secured £50k from SG for ten grants supporting local provenance - SSDA hosted June 2024 multi-stakeholder meeting looking at how to build quality - VS visitor insights data released giving quality insight for: Scottish Borders and D&G - VS launched new Food Tourism Industry Guide I VisitScotland.org - Lots of external awards being given to businesses to improve their product offer including dozens of grants from cycling infrastructure fund	2.1.i - Training and mentoring programmes focused on raising the quality 2.1.iii - Peer-sharing systems and case studies to share learning between businesses	- Training, mentoring and peer sharing programmes - Connect Thistles with other awards - Food and Drink local provenance capital grants
	Growth and Development	GREEN	- Kirkpatrick C2C developed by SOSE, DGC & SOSE, and promoted by SSDA (2.5m reach), with DGC and SBC installing start and end statues and SOSE cycle infrastructure grants for businesses to be cycle-ready. - SSDA delivered six-month Burns Tourism Action Plan (Nov 23-May 24) and now delivering 12-month (Sept '24 – Sept '25) plan , with signage and shopfronts in Dumfries and Event Scotland £25,000 funding for Big Burns Supper.	2.2.ii - Tourism 'incubator' programme to develop new quality visitor experiences	- Widen Burns work to literary tourism. - Develop Equestrian Tourism strategy - Develop incubator

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SOSE investment of c£300k and £580k Architectural Heritage for Ellisland - [Scottish Dark Skies Observatory secured for South of Scotland, supported by SOSE £200,000] - SSDA developing Equestrian Tourism Strategy - SSDA developed Roman and Iron-age landing page on SSH. Successful delivery of VR product at Trimontium. Trimontium developing proposal to expand museum onto actual fort site and Whithorn about to start a series of digs. - SOSE developed South of Scotland Film and Screen Strategy with DGC and SBC and significant filming opportunities for South secured in 2024 - SOSE's cumulative capital investment in visitor economy reaches £23m by end 2024 with significant investments in a range of projects – Whithorn, Wigtown, community assets - Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal progresses with progress on Destination Tweed and key towns. SBC secure Levelling Up Fund £20m for Borders with funding for range of tourism projects including Tweed Trail and Crook Inn - Eyemouth Harbour Masterplan underway with support from SBC and SOSE funding and resource - Both SBC and D&GC commit significant funds and resource to developing events sector with event strategies from them and national ES launched - Creative Scotland announces art funding for region of £3.2m - Both Tweeddale and Galshiels BIDs successful 		programme for new visitor experiences
	Visitor Information	YELLOW	- 960 businesses and 2,050 visitor points of interest represented on Scotland Starts Here website and app	2.3.i - Clear development plan agreed for	- SSH signs on all road entry points

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 941k website views to <i>Scotland Starts Here</i> website and 33.8k total app downloads (app usage increase of 8% on previous year) - SSDA largest destination management and marketing organisation in Scotland - SSDA review of independent visitor information centres - VisitScotland.com linked to SSH 14 area pages - SBC installed SSH road-signs on 8 entry points and DGC proposing £50k spend on entry signage with SSH as part of Gaelic language plan, [- 800 businesses opted in and have received SSH marketing collateral to display] - SSH branding on Caledonia Park empty shopfronts with footfall of 2.4m 	independent visitor information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using public buildings to raise visibility of SSH - Work with independent visitor info centres so they signpost to SSH
	Events	GREEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EventScotland funding for Tour of Britain (£50k), Monteviot Lights (£15k) and Big Burns Supper (£25k). - VisitScotland Events teams supporting regional events workshops on back of national strategy - SBC and DGC providing support and funding for events across the region. - SBC launched Community Cycling Fund and Community Festivals & Small Events Fund; these will continue into the 2025/26 financial year. - SBC continued to support strategic events with Strategic Events Fund - SBC Events Toolkit was launched at the Event Scotland Regional Workshop - SSDA hosted Events roundtable bringing together the D+G and SB Events Strategies - SBC secured and delivered Tour of Britain with an economic impact of £2.6m 	2.4.vi – Link events to create themed festivals 2.4. v - Encouraging the creation of further out of season events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SSH partnership with Top 50 events - SBC links with National & International organisations ongoing to secure more events which promote and create economic returns for the region – SBC continue to focus on SoS

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SSDA managed mediation process with businesses affected by Tour of Borders - SSDA working with top 50 SoS events to build reciprocal marketing partnership, to get people to stay longer - SSDA simplified and improved events listings on SSH - All-agency strategy for bidding for future major cycle events agreed - SSDA-led efforts to expand Spring Fling to be South of Scotland-wide - SBC Economic Impact study showed SB events brought in £15.6m - New national events strategy has been launched. - Significant funding from D&GC and SBC to support and grow significant and signature events bringing new events forward - Investments in making events more sustainable by SOSE include Wigtown Book Festival, Stranraer Development Trust and others - Some events and venues making their own significant investment in events e.g. The Haining, Paxton House, Jim Clark Rally 		Cycling Strategy & Velo region status to promote SB as a cycling destination
	Accommodation	GREEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SSDA supporting for 6 planning applications for new accommodation - SSDA partnership with Key Data [- SSDA travel trade training for accommodation providers] [- SOSE inward investment website] - SBC levelling up funding for hotel site - Forest Holidays has opened - Schloss investment plans - Scottish agritourism 	2.5.i - Better understanding what accommodation visitors 2.5.iii – Develop framework on temporary campsites for events	- Collective understanding of the evolving bed-stock and whether it satisfies the needs of higher-spending international visitors

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SOSE grant support for a range of individual accommodation businesses - Significant increase in the number of planned self-catering lodge developments - SBC LUF bid secures 1st stage development funding for Galashiels Hotel development 		
	Infrastructure	YELLOW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SSDA developed a 'Kids Go Free' rail discount promotion for Borders rail line businesses. - The SG and UK Gov have each committed £5m for the business case and feasibility work associated with the completion of the Borders Railway to Carlisle. - New partnership under development for SSDA with SBC, DGC, ScotRail, Borders Busses and other bus operators to build visitor info and product around public transport - DGC/Business Gateway delivering Tourism EV Charger grants, as part of UK Government's Levelling Up programme, with 50 chargers installed as a result. - SBC is working with other local authorities to engage the market to expand the public EV charging network, with formal procurement in May 2025 - SSDA- RAW Charging partnership offering free EV charges at eligible businesses. - SSDA hosted roundtable looking at issue of food and drink logistics and distribution systems - SSDA developed proposed pilot for innovative new approach to public toilets - SG RTIF restarted, which is managed by VS. - DGC are putting in two RTIF applications to create some designs and deliver infrastructure in 25/26. - SBC are applying for RTIF funding to develop a Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Plan - Levelling up - River Tweed Trail 	<p>2.6.i - Developing a Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan</p> <p>2.6.ii - Applying for RTIF</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RTIF applications from DGC and SBC - Development of Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan? - EV Care hire partnerships - Support Centre Parcs planning process

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Forest Parks at Glentress - £1m for Crook Inn bunkhouse - Infrastructure development work for Center Parcs and East Pier, Stranraer - SBC committed funding for Project Manager for extending the Border Railway - SSH & UCI Velo Gateway Signage - New 5km Eddleston multi-use path opened - SBC & SOSE funding and supporting Eyemouth Harbour Masterplan - Borderlands Inclusive Growth deal developing - Place plans being developed across region 		
	Inward Investment	GREEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - c400m proposed investment secured for Center Parcs in Scottish Borders, creating 1,200 year-round permanent jobs and potentially £100m spend onsite and c£27m offsite - SOSE have launched the Invest in South of Scotland Inward Investment website - £20m Levelling Up funding secured for Dumfries and Scottish Borders, which includes significant visitor economy capital investments - SSDA listened to businesses on planning issues and represented these in discussions with Council Leaders - Partnership approach to: River Tweed Trail, FLS 7Stanes Masterplans and Stranraer Harbour marine tourism plans. - SOSE working with wide range of inward investment opportunities - The Tourism Team relationships have enabled a flow of communication about planning outlooks 	2.7iii - Establish systems with two local authorities to ensure prospective investments are well supported through planning and licensing	
3) Support businesses to succeed	Support and collaboration	GREEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - D&G Council has issued 1,642 Short Term Lets licences and 42 are in process, with only 8 refused. SB Council has received 1,181 applications, with 1,148 issued and none refused to date. This means a South of Scotland total of 	3.1.i - SSDA supported through to 2030	

			<p>2,790 issued to date: this is 97.2% of applications received, with 2.6% pending and 0.2% refused.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - VS hosted events workshops and industry product updates - VS, SSDA, SBC, DGC and SOSE are all represented on the REP, championing tourism - VS has launched a new Business Support Hub website, a dedicated digital platform that provides tourism and events businesses access to tailored advice, resources and opportunities to help them operate and grow their business in a sustainable way. - SSDA & Businesses Gateway programme of business training and support - SOSE actively involved in Tourism and Hospitality Industry Leadership Group - SBC's Community Led Local Development (CLLD) Fund distributed a total of £50k to 13 businesses across the Borders to help encourage economic and community related projects. 	3.1.iii – Peer learning between organisations	
	Representation	GREEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SSDA hosted 28 meetings (2 each) across the 14 Locally Led Destination Development areas, with 500+ attending businesses. - SSDA lobbied UK Gov on Linked Travel Arrangements (LTA) - SSDA representing business concerns around A708 timber transport safety issues - SSDA bi-annual meetings with leaders of DGC, SBC, and also SOSE and VS to represent views of industry - Good collaborations with HES, SCOTO, Scottish Agritourism 		
	Workforce development	AMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SSDA hosted April 2024 workforce roundtable of partners & businesses identifying workforce challenges and agreeing initial approach 	3.3.iv - Practical solutions to the	Skills and Workforce Action Plan to

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SSDA undertaking wider survey of business and hosting 14 meetings for industry discussion, to generate baseline workforce and skills assessment, then working with SDS, the colleges, SOSE, DGC, SBC, DYW, SOSCH, Springboard, University of Glasgow and others to agree Skills and Workforce Action Plan. - SG require those funded by SOSE- to adhere to Fair Work - SOSE skills team working on the additional challenges/opportunities Center parcs will bring 	<p>specific shortage of trained chefs</p> <p>3.3.v - Development of relevant qualifications and pathways</p>	<p>be agreed and delivered</p> <p>- SDS</p>
	Data Insights Sharing	YELLOW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2023 STEAM data shows 20% growth (+£150m) in value of tourism and 14% increase in jobs. - SSDA consulted businesses to understand data needs - SSDA created Data Insights hub webpage publicly available for all. - SSDA has Key Data partnership to track self-catering insights - SSDA initiated Trip Advisor AI scraping interface - SOSE six-month business barometer has a significant visitor economy component - VS launched new research Consumer Trends For Scotland 2025 data. 	<p>3.4.ii - Regional tourism barometer</p> <p>3.4.iv - Actively supporting businesses to interpret, understand and use key data insights</p>	<p>- Access and interpretation to the data that's available: translating to insights</p>
4) Act responsibly for long-term collective benefit	Nature/Natural Capital	GREEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - River Tweed Trail under development by Tweed Forum and others, with SSDA providing business engagement and visitor product development. - DGC and SBC divided the Southern Upland Way into three (more accessible) marches. - DGC developed physical signs/artwork on Southern Upland Way. - Agencies fed into FLS master planning for 7Stanes - South of Scotland named Natural Capital Innovation Zone - SSDA developing new work to get paths and trails on to Scotland Starts Here 	<p>4.1.iii - Measuring customer perception of access</p> <p>4.1.iv - Investing in sustainable marine and coastal tourism</p> <p>4.1.v - Securing permanent funding to resource officers</p> <p>4.1.vi - Working with communities and</p>	<p>- Paths and Trails work</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - VS-Tourism Cares partnership, with SoS businesses to feature in Meaningful Travel Map - 5G Innovation project in Stranraer and Tweedsmuir - A new Active Travel Strategy for the SBC has been drafted and will be brought to Scottish Borders Council for review in the near future. 	partner agencies to actively monitor the environmental impact of visitors	
	Net Zero	AMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [- DGC/Business Gateway delivering Tourism EV Charger grants.] [- SSDA- RAW Charging partnership offering free EV charges at eligible businesses.] [- Public transport partnership with SSDA getting public transport routes on SSH] - SOSE investment into net zero businesses - D&G Business Gateway has invested in net zero grants - VS continues to promote it's Reduce Your Climate Impact Guide and develop it's Tourism Cares Meaningful Travel Map - SSDA with SOSE, Edinburgh Uni project to develop a strategic framework to support SMEs in the visitor and hospitality industries in the South of Scotland to transition to Net Zero 	<p>4.2.i - Signing up to the Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism.</p> <p>4.2.iii - Influencing Scottish Power to provide the necessary power for high-speed EV charging</p> <p>4.2.iv - Encouraging and supporting EV hire</p>	
	Community-led Tourism	GREEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [- SSDA hosted 28 Locally Led Destination Development meetings engaging local communities & businesses identifying local priorities & how to promote local area] - SCOTO 2024 conference in Dumfries - Go Tweed Valley canoe trail - DGC and SBC supporting Place Plans - SOSE funded two community pub buy-outs - SSDA community engagement in development of Stranraer East Pier - Newcastleton and Whithorn - Jedburgh and Hawick 	<p>4.3.ii - Supporting the role of the third sector and social enterprises within the visitor economy</p> <p>4.3.iv - Supporting community asset transfer initiatives which relate to a visitor proposition</p> <p>4.3.v - Establishing an initiative to look</p>	

			- SOSE support for range of community initiative including Langhold, Tweedsmuir, Newcastleton and supporting land purchases	into the creation and adoption of a circular economy	
	Accessible and Inclusive Tourism	YELLOW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SSDA hosted key speakers accessibility and inclusion at 2023 and 2025 Annual Conferences - SOSE KC2C visually impaired Velo - SBC funding for Invisible Cities in Galashiels - DGC funding for Changing Places toilets - UCI para event in Dumfries, - Strong focus within UCI World Championships on social impact and inclusivity - SBC work with adaptive riders - All active travel work has inclusivity as a requirement 	4.4.i - Undertaking an inclusivity and accessibility audit of the destination	-SBC to build on legacy of VIE Velo event with supporting adaptive riders
	Visitor management	YELLOW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SBC actively looking at mitigation work around St Mary's Loch dirty camping - SSDA managed mediation process with businesses affected by Tour of Borders - Updated information on SSH about responsible visitors 	4.5.iv - Using the 'Scotland Starts Here' app and other digital tools, to track visitor movements	
	Motorhome visitor experience	AMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Active participation in VS motorhome research - DGC design for Newton Stewart motorhome service point - Motorhome overnight parking pilots proposed for New England Bay and Moniaive - Visit to successful Fife Countryside and Coastal Trust motorhome parking scheme - DGC drafted donation scheme - DGC drafted Motorhomes strategy 	4.6.ii - Creating a network of free/low-cost black/grey waste disposal 4.6.iii - Creating a network of overnight parking options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Secure funding for Motorhome Service point - DGC decision on donation and/or car parking charging - Implementation

					of overnight parking pilots -SBC looking at a potential RTIF for Aires & Camping
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Contacts:

Key contacts for those responsible for delivering the Responsible Tourism Strategy:

- **SSDA:** David Hope-Jones, CEO [davidhj@ssdalliance.com]
- **VisitScotland:** Gordon Smith, Destination Development Director - South of Scotland, [gordon.smith@visitscotland.com]
- **Scottish Borders Council:** Jane Warcup, Economic Development Officer [jwarcup@scotborders.gov.uk]
- **Dumfries & Galloway Council:** John King, Economic Development Officer Food and Drink and Tourism [john.king@dumgal.gov.uk]
- **SOSE:** Mark Rowley, Strategy Manager – Tourism [mark.rowley@sose.scot]

We hope you enjoyed this update. We are, together, committed to increasing our visitor economy by £1bn. We will achieve this by being the most active, engaged, strategic and united destination in Scotland. If you haven't already, [join the SSDA](#) and get involved!