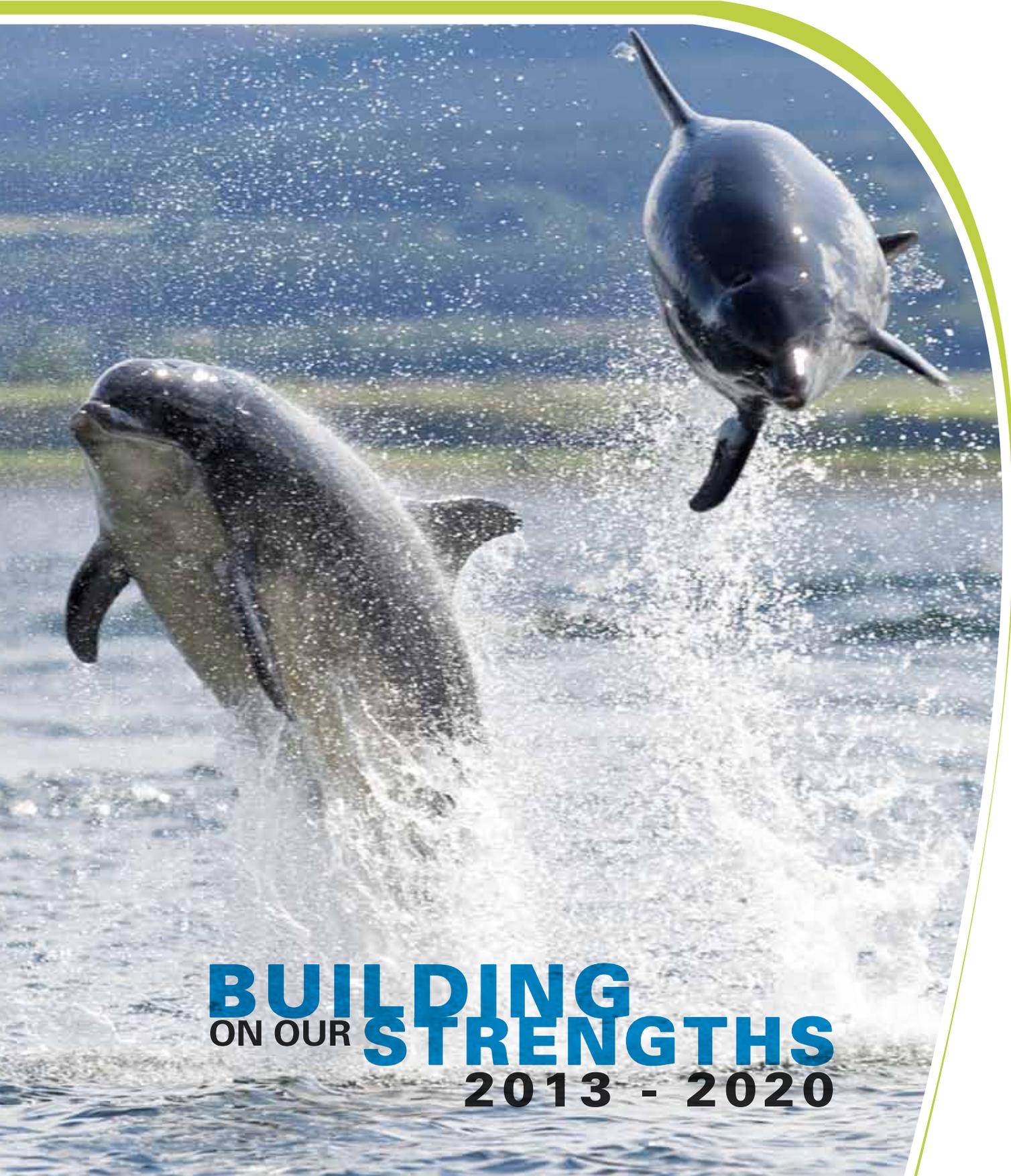


Aberdeen City and Shire Tourism Partnership
OUR STRATEGY FOR GROWTH



BUILDING
ON OUR **STRENGTHS**
2013 - 2020

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3 Foreword

Tourism is one of Scotland's most important sectors and is a priority for Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Future.

This regional strategy is about driving growth and maximising the contribution which Aberdeen City and Shire can make to delivering the new national strategy 'Tourism Scotland 2020'.

Tourism to Aberdeen City and Shire is worth an estimated £340 million every year. In addition to this, the day trip market is estimated at over £300 million annually.

This strategy has been developed by the reinvigorated Area Tourism Partnership. This partnership is made up of all sectors in the tourism industry – individual businesses, Destination Management Organisations and associations, along with the public sector

– all of whom were greatly involved in the development of this strategy.

The enthusiasm, commitment and engagement from everyone has been welcomed. We are all responsible for playing our part in helping to improve the customer journey and encouraging repeat business by working together to support this strategy and realise its vision.



To support the work of the partnership, a vision has been created to summarise our key aims.



Our Vision for 2020 and Beyond

is to make Aberdeen City and Shire a sustainable destination of choice, with skilled and passionate people delivering value for money and memorable customer experiences, by enhancing our region's outstanding assets.



Aberdeen City and Shire Tourism Partnership Our Strategy for Growth



WHO'S RESPONSIBLE

THE AREA TOURISM PARTNERSHIP - MADE UP OF ALL OUR SECTORS IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY ALONG WITH THE PUBLIC SECTOR



BUILDING ON OUR STRENGTHS 2013 - 2020

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In Aberdeen City and Shire we will achieve the following outcomes

Key outcome

We are a prosperous and ambitious region and aim to grow our overnight visitor spend to at least £440m - £510m by 2020; generating an additional £100m - £170m for the area.

We will target the markets that offer us the greatest potential to grow. Working in partnership with tourism groups and individual businesses we will respond to the requirements of these consumers and develop the authentic experiences around the following opportunities.



GOLF

Identified as having high growth potential, we are well placed to capitalise on this market with the Scottish Open, the opening of Trump International Golf Links Scotland near Balmedie and the wide range of championship links and parkland courses in our area.

NATURE, HERITAGE & ACTIVITIES

With an abundance of outstanding wildlife, ranging from Scotland's Dolphin Coast through to The Cairngorms National Park, we will take advantage of the all year round activities that this developing market offers.



BUSINESS TOURISM

Maximising the conference economy presented by a strong energy sector and building on our world leading university research teams, we will develop the unique opportunities these present and grow our business tourism base.

EVENTS, FESTIVALS, CULTURE & ARTS

Celebrated as one of the most creative regions in Europe, we have a wealth of quality events and festivals that honour our unique culture, arts and heritage. The diversity of the arts, culture and built heritage offering is outstanding and provides the basis for opportunities that we will capitalise on.



For all these opportunities we need to:

Improve and expand accommodation provision

- The area has capacity for large, high quality hotels. There is evidence of significant investment in the city and some rural hotels in the last few years but more targeted investment is required
- Expand other growing accommodation sectors, including small boutique style and hostel/bunkhouses

Improve access to IT infrastructure

- Limited IT infrastructure presents significant business constraints
- Increasing customer expectations for free and accessible WiFi and roaming connectivity

Develop leadership and management skills

- Encourage engagement to deliver the vision and meet the needs of our key markets
- Staff recruitment and retention
- Develop leaders to inspire staff to deliver excellent customer service

Improve the quality of the customer journey

- Improve the quality of experience throughout the customer journey
- Making the most of local knowledge
- Actively use and promote local food and drink in our businesses
- Capitalise on the niche whisky distilleries in our region as well as promoting that we are the 'Gateway to the Malt Whisky Trail'

Reduce seasonality

- Increase weekend city occupancy
- Ensure the region benefits from weekday city overspill
- Increase occupancy throughout the quieter months of the year, particularly in the rural areas and ensure services are open to support this development

Ensure the area is easily accessible

- Improve road infrastructure, including Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (estimated completion 2018), signage and facilities for tourists
- Access to growing markets from high value new and increasing airport routes
- Increased promotion of trains north of Aberdeen



Why do we need a strategy?

- June 2012 saw the launch of the refreshed National Tourism Strategy
The Future of our industry in our hands -TOURISM SCOTLAND 2020
- There have been major changes in the economy since the last strategy was written
- New tourism bodies exist in the City and Shire, with Destination Management Organisations emerging in Royal Deeside and the Cairngorms, Banffshire Coast and Aberdeen City
- A reinvigorated Area Tourism Partnership has been formed
- Our product, customer expectations and the customer base to the region has evolved and developed



Who is responsible for this Strategy and how will we measure success?

The Area Tourism Partnership – made up of all sectors in the tourism industry along with the public sector – is responsible for the strategy.

The strategy can only be achieved by working in partnership and involving all of the tourism community; tourism groups, the DMOs, individual businesses and the public sector. It is vital that we all play our part in developing the visitor economy by promoting the region and improving the customer experience of Aberdeen City and Shire.

We will develop a robust set of key performance indicators. These will include:

- Scottish Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM)
- Great Britain Tourism Survey (GBTS)
- International Passenger Survey (IPS)
- Average spend (per night and visitor)
- Length of stay

... and by developing a set of local measurements that will cover our key opportunities.



In order to turn the opportunities into reality we need to build on our local and national networks ensuring we work with partners and businesses that have the same aspirations around customer excellence and quality as we have.

- Knowing our Markets
- Managing the customer journey
- Building Sustainable Tourism (economic, environmental and social)
- Leadership and Collaboration
- Place

- Knowing our markets, understanding who our customers are and what we can do to enhance their experience
- Greater use of market intelligence
- Deliver a regional customer service initiative that will include workshops, seminars and masterclasses
- Improve general product knowledge among businesses
- Develop specific product knowledge relating to key themes
- Celebrating industry success by establishing regional tourism awards
- Encourage young people to choose the industry as a career by promoting a higher and more positive profile of the tourism and hospitality industry to schools, colleges and universities
- Gather and act upon visitor feedback
- Promoting sustainable tourism and ensuring that our effort to grow regional tourism also protects and enhances the environment, our natural heritage and supports and includes local communities
- Develop the existing network of destination and local partnerships working with tourism organisations, local authorities and others to share best practice and improve the quality and consistency of the visitor experience
- Ensuring an authentic experience is delivered by encouraging businesses to work in partnership to develop new products and services
- Use existing organisations to bring key people together by product theme
- Encourage the development of a 4*+ destination hotel within the City Centre and a niche resort and boutique style hotels in Aberdeenshire
- Support the accommodation base throughout the area, encouraging and supporting owners to develop their product in line with visitor expectations
- Improve the digital connectivity throughout the area
- Encourage the development of new products that enable the area to grow
- Ensure the area is easily accessible internationally
- Improve access within the area working with transport operators to achieve fully integrated transport options

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If you would like further information about the
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Visit the ACSEF website - www.acsef.co.uk

