SCOTO®

PRESS PAUSE



COMMUNITY LED DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT, MANAGEMENT AND PROMOTION

CERES, FIFE

2February 2026

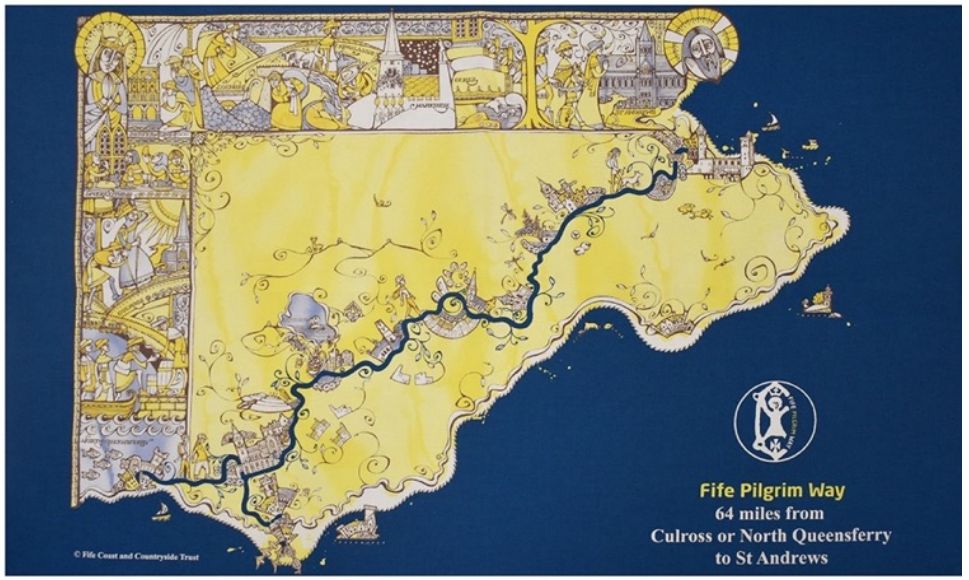
Fife Pilgrim Way

The Fife Pilgrim Way is a 102 km long distance walk from Culross to St Andrews. It is a key strategic tourism asset in Fife attracting domestic and international visitors to explore the history and culture of the people and the places along the route with locals and fellow walkers and spreading the social as well as economic impact of visitor activity across the region.

Environmental and economic factors are driving a need for change across communities. The Fife Coastal Path is suffering erosion, and many churches are at risk of closure and so needing to look at re-purposing buildings to create sustainability.

Fife Pilgrim Way Partnership Programme

The purpose of the Fife Pilgrim Way Partnership Programme is to support each of the churches and communities on the route to build a cohesive, sustainable, and immersive visitor experience through a community led approach to tourism and the visitor economy.



Partners

Organisations: FCCT, Fife Council, VS, SPRF
Communities: Culross, Dunfermline, Markinch, Ceres and St Andrews

PILLARS OF A SUCCESSFUL PILGRIM ROUTE

PILLAR	FPW Status				
Pilgrim information and signage	■	■	■	■	■
Pilgrim passport and stamping	■	■	■	■	
Accommodation Support	■				
Spiritual and cultural support	■	■	■	■	■
Event and community engagement	■	■			
Certification	■	■	■	■	
Transportation links	■	■	■	■	

TOP 5 REASONS FOR VISITING SCOTLAND

RANKING	REASON	%
1	Scenery and landscape	72
2	History and culture	48
3	Outdoor activities available	33
4	Visiting friends and family	29
5	Scotland's people	24
Source: VisitScotland		



Source: GoGlenrothes Facebook

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CERES, FIFE

This Press Pause ® initiative has been funded through Climate Action Fife with funding from
the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Fife Council, plus a lottery funded grant from the National Churches Trust.
SCOTO was commissioned by Fife Council to undertake five Press Pause® workshops for the Fife Pilgrim Way Partnership Programme
in Dunfermline, Markinch, Ceres and St Andrews, and also in Kirkcaldy.
This work was initiated by the Fife Pilgrim Way Partnership in Summer 2025.

COMMUNITY FUND

Fife Council

NATIONAL CHURCHES TRUST

A' Mhaoin-Dualchais Heritage Fund

CLIMATE ACTION FIFE

Funded by UK Government

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PRESS PAUSE® IN CERES, FIFE

The Ceres Workshop took place on 2 February in the Ceres Memorial Hall. SCOTO met with various local businesses community interests and the local Parish Church. Time was taken to experience the area and explore local sites and features of interest prior to and following the workshop.

This report provides context on community led tourism and the community of Ceres and then sets out the key workshop findings. It then offers several ideas and recommendations for the short and longer term to more directly involve the community in tourism and for tourism to provide meaningful benefits to the people of Ceres in general and linked to its relationship with the Fife Pilgrim Way.

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A: CERES PRESS PAUSE® AT A GLANCE

Overview

This report summarises findings from a SCOTO Press Pause® workshop held in Ceres on 2 February 2026 as part of the Fife Pilgrim Way Partnership Programme. The initiative aims to support communities along the Fife Pilgrim Way to develop community-led tourism that delivers meaningful local benefits while enhancing the visitor experience.

Ceres is a historic conservation village and a staging point on the Fife Pilgrim Way, a 102 km long-distance walking route from Culross to St Andrews that attracts domestic and international visitors.

The workshop brought together local businesses, community groups and stakeholders to assess tourism in the village, identify opportunities, and develop recommendations for sustainable destination development.

Key Findings

Current Situation

Participants expressed pride in Ceres' heritage, landscape and community spirit, but felt that tourism in the village has declined in recent years and lacks coordination and promotion.

Strengths:

- Picturesque historic village with a unique village green
- Strong heritage assets including the Fife Folk Museum, Ceres Highland Games and the only remAining church with boxed pews
- Wemyss Ware Pottery and local artists
- Scenic walking and cycling routes including the Fife Pilgrim Way
- Community organisations such as the Community Trust, Hall and Games Committees and Community Council
- Potential to attract visitors from nearby St Andrews and Cupar

Challenges:

- Lack of budget accommodation for pilgrim walkers
- Limited visitor information, signage and digital presence
- Reduced tourism services (e.g., closed businesses, limited evening food options)
- Poor collaboration between local stakeholders
- Under-promotion of local attractions, walking routes and events
- Infrastructure issues including public toilets and mobile connectivity

Strategic Opportunities:

1. Develop a Strong Place Brand

Ceres is currently not widely known outside Fife despite its heritage. A clear identity is recommended to position the village as a distinctive destination.

A proposed concept building on its history of artists and cultural heritage is: **"Ceres – Fife's Art Village"**,.

2. Improve Visitor Infrastructure

Key gaps identified include:

- Budget hostel accommodation for walkers
- Refurbished public toilets
- A visitor map and information hub
- More visible signage and wayfinding

3. Strengthen the Pilgrim and Walking Experience

As a staging point on the Fife Pilgrim Way, Ceres could benefit from:

- A Pilgrim/Walker Friendly plan
- Local services such as drying areas, refill points and passport stamping
- Heritage walks and cultural experiences for walkers

4. Enhance Events and Experiences

The report highlights opportunities to build on existing events such as the Ceres Highland Games by developing:

- An Arts and Walking Festival
- Heritage walks and talks
- Craft and artist events
- Community-led experiences for visitors

5. Improve Marketing and Digital Presence

Ceres currently lacks a coordinated digital identity. Recommendations include:

- Creating a village website and place brand
- Improving Google profiles and online listings
- Developing coordinated promotion across local businesses
- Producing a visitor map and guide available both online and in print

Cross-Cutting Themes:
Community-Led Tourism
Tourism should support community priorities, generate local income, strengthen cohesion and help preserve heritage assets.

Climate Action
Tourism development should align with sustainability and climate resilience, including low-carbon travel, nature conservation and community environmental initiatives.

Key Next Steps
The report recommends that Ceres:

1. Establish a local tourism working group for Ceres to feed in to the LTA for the wider area
2. Create a village map and digital presence
3. Explore budget accommodation for pilgrims
4. Develop a place brand and arts-based tourism offer
5. Strengthen collaboration with regional tourism bodies and neighbouring communities.

Conclusion
Ceres has strong heritage, cultural and natural assets but currently lacks coordination and visibility as a tourism destination. By adopting a community-led approach, improving visitor infrastructure, and developing a clear identity—potentially centred around arts and the Fife Pilgrim Way—the village could revitalise tourism while delivering lasting benefits for local residents.



B: BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

INTRODUCING COMMUNITY LED TOURISM

Community Led Tourism isn't new. For decades many communities across Scotland and elsewhere have set up charities and social enterprises that have a visitor facing element to what they do. Examples are Heritage Centres, Highland Gatherings and local festivals. The visitor aspect is not necessarily 100% of what is on offer and equally may not be the primary driver, but the presence of visitors helps generate revenue and to support the charity or social enterprises' core purpose. Community led tourism therefore is not new but is rapidly growing in Scotland with our community empowerment legislation enabling communities to own and manage assets and have a stronger voice. Community led tourism is now being recognised as a more sustainable and responsible way of providing much needed visitor services and experiences.

What is new is the idea of communities – geographic places – reviewing how tourism is playing out in their community and seeking to be more involved to ensure the visitor economy delivers meaningful benefits that help the community tackle known issues and priorities and be an even better place to live work and visit.

Of note, SCOTO CIC undertook a 27-venue roadshow across Scotland in 2023. A key sentiment shared at every workshop was that most communities feel that tourism happens to them - rather than with them. Tourism feels like it is being imposed and although not necessarily a bad thing in itself, communities would welcome being more involved in what happens.

And as more communities across Scotland form local development trusts, take ownership of assets, and are providing visitor facing services and experiences, there is a growing sense that tourism should have the community's interests to the fore.

If managed proactively tourism can deliver many positive and lasting benefits which can help address priority issues within a community providing fair work, tackling social isolation, retaining young people, promoting local supply chains, showcasing local producers and crafters and conserving local traditions, artefacts and assets.

Community led tourism can significantly improve community cohesion by bringing community and business interests together to develop collaborative products that celebrate their individual sense of place, give visitors a meaningful experience and enhance the sense of welcome.

DEFINITIONS

What do we mean by 'community'?

Place based communities. Where people live, work and visit.

What is community tourism?

Tourism that prioritises community involvement and meaningful local benefit. Tourism that focuses on people, places and purpose.

Why is community tourism important?

A happy place to visit must first be a happy place to live and work.

What types of community tourism are there in Scotland?

- **Community led destination development, management and promotion** - geographic communities lead the management and promotion of their home as a host community
- **Community led tourism enterprises** - community groups, charities and social enterprises provide visitor-facing services and experiences
- **Community centred tourism businesses** – purpose driven businesses embed community wealth building in their operations and support locally defined social, environmental and economic priorities
- **Community centred tourism policy and planning** – community voice and aspirations are involved in local and regional tourism leadership, decision making and promotion

WHAT IS SCOTO PRESS PAUSE®?

SCOTO's Press Pause® Initiative has been developed to support geographic communities in considering their community as a destination and how tourism is developed, managed and promoted. A workshop takes place which is designed to help business and community interests come together and take time to review their current situation in relation to tourism – to reflect on what is and isn't working and what could be done differently or better.

SCOTO first piloted Press Pause® with the North Highland Initiative in summer 2023 working with two communities on the North Coast 500 - Thurso and Lochcarron.

Press Pause® takes place in destination and facilitates several reflective conversations with key business and community representatives at the table.

Each workshop generates key findings which SCOTO collate and then provide recommendations on what the community can do to address identified problems and opportunities for community led tourism enterprises and initiatives that can build community cohesion. The report is then the basis for developing an activity plan and agreeing specific asks of agency and private sector partners.

WHY SCOTO PRESS PAUSE®?

An important consideration is that tourism has entered a new era. Tourism and travel choices were already changing – and this rapidly accelerated during and following the pandemic in 2020

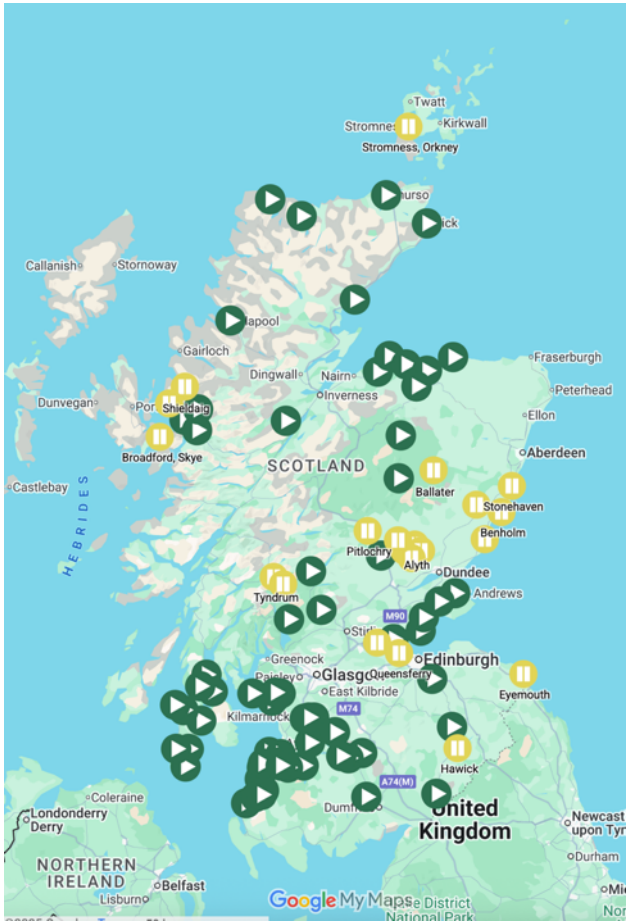
- Technology is revolutionising travel, tourism and everyday lives
- Digital content is an increasingly important source of travel inspiration
- Visitors are now seeking to slow down, meet local people, have authentic experiences
- Everyone is much more conscious of their wellbeing
- We are increasingly aware of the climate emergency and the need for individual action

Meanwhile …

- Scotland is seeking a 'wellbeing' economy and to support community wealth building
- Scottish Communities are being empowered to do more for themselves - to own assets and strengthen their voice
- Scotland is seeking 'responsible tourism for a sustainable future'

Communities are increasingly coming to the forefront of strategy and policy and are vitally important to the visitor economy. Communities are primarily where the visitor experience takes place and their role as host destinations needs nurtured. SCOTO Press Pause® seeks to help individual communities be outstanding hosts and consider what matters most to them and explore how tourism can support their wellbeing.

SCOTO PRESS PAUSE® COMMUNITIES



Map of Press Pause® Communities as of November 2025 – source www.scoto.co.uk

GLOBAL CONTEXT

In 2015 all United Nations Member States adopted the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.** This provided a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which are an urgent call for action by all countries – developed and developing – in a global partnership. They recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand in hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.

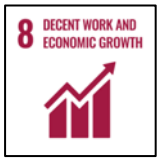
#SDG8 & #SDG11 are the most relevant to Community Led Tourism:

- **#SDG8 and Target 8.9** is very specific to community led tourism

Target 8.9: Promote Beneficial and Sustainable Tourism - By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.

- **#SDG11** focuses on making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable







NATIONAL CONTEXT

The National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET) has a vision:
*"**To create a wellbeing economy: a society that is thriving across economic, social and environmental dimensions, and that delivers prosperity for all Scotland's people and places. We aim to achieve this while respecting environmental limits, embodied by our climate and nature targets**."*

Scotland Outlook 2030 – the national tourism strategy – is seeking ***"responsible tourism for a sustainable future"***.

Responsible tourism considers four themes – reducing carbon, inclusion, biodiversity and communities.

The national strategy focuses on four priorities:

- Our passionate people
- Our thriving places
- Our diverse businesses
- Our memorable experiences

Scotland has provided the strategic context for a new way of doing tourism with communities to the fore. Press Pause ® seeks to support individual communities in considering how tourism can be a meaningful force for good locally.

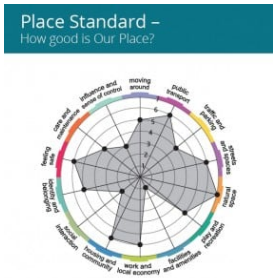


LOCAL CONTEXT

In Scotland communities have been undertaking **Community Action Planning** for many years. Community Action Planning seeks to identify the priorities that the community feel is important to them and set out how they wish to pursue their goals and aspirations. This process is ensuring that local people have a real voice and can influence the decisions which impact on their communities.

More recently **Local Place Planning** has been introduced by the **Planning (Scotland) Act 2019**, which contains a new right for communities to produce their own plans as part of the new Scottish planning system. Local Place Plans contain the community's proposals for the development and use of land and provide a new opportunity for communities to feed into the planning system with ideas and proposals.

Many communities across Scotland identify tourism and visitor management as key themes and priorities within their local community action plans and place plans. Even where tourism is not singled out as a theme or priority, tourism can often be the key to addressing some of the issues and opportunities that have been identified – tourism as a means to an end.



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CERES, FIFE















C: SETTING THE SCENE: CERES

CERES

- Ceres is a historic conservation village in Fife
- Ceres was established as a burgh of barony in 1620.
- Ceres is one of a few Scottish villages to have a village green
- Ceres has a population of approximately 930
- Ceres is 3 miles southeast of Cupar and 7 miles from St Andrews
- Ceres is a staging point on the Fife Pilgrim Way
- Ceres served as a traditional overnight stop for pilgrims travelling to St Andrews



THE FIFE PILGRIM WAY

The Fife Pilgrim Way was opened to the public in 2019 as a modern long-distance trail following historic pilgrimage routes to St Andrews. It re-establishes a medieval route and links religious and historical sites across Fife. It starts in Culross and North Queensferry before converging in Dunfermline and heading north to St Andrews via Ceres.

Since its launch several churches along its length have either been placed at risk of closure and sale due to diminishing congregations and a lack of ministers or are struggling to source sufficient funds to undertake essential maintenance works.

The National Lottery and other partners have recognised the scale of issues that are emerging and have launched funds to support churches – but are seeking a strategic impact from this investment – which the Fife Pilgrim Way provides.

"We want to help places of worship across the UK tackle heritage challenges systemically, become more sustainable and welcome people from all backgrounds, including those who rarely visit. We will invest a minimum of £15million in projects that have a strategic impact at a regional or national level for places of worship over the next three years."

The National Lottery Heritage Fund

Early in 2025, the Fife Pilgrim Way Partnership reached out to SCOTO to learn more about Community Led Tourism and its potential in helping communities along the route explore how tourism could better support their ambitions as a community and the future role and purpose of the churches at risk.

SCOTO provided insight into their pioneering Press Pause® initiative which helps individual communities consider how to embrace tourism as a force for good. Funding was successfully secured to progress Press Pause® initiatives in Dunfermline, Markinch, Ceres, St Andrews and, latterly, for Culross and Inverkeithing.

This Press Pause Report sets out the key findings and lists several quick win and longer-term recommendations for Ceres to consider as part of their journey in community led tourism, and linked to discussions that have been taking place relating to the future of the church in Ceres.

A template is provided for the individual communities on the Fife Pilgrim Way to develop a community-led, place-based Pilgrim / Walker Friendly Plan. See Appendix 2.

The individual community-by-community findings will also be aggregated into a Fife Pilgrim Way strategic review of community led tourism along the route.



SCOTLAND'S TOWNS PARTNERSHIP & UNDERSTANDING SCOTTISH PLACES - CERES

Ceres is regarded as a village and unlike Markinch, Dunfermline and St Andrews, is not listed as one of 509 towns in Scotland.



CERES: COMMUNITY STRUCTURES

The Ceres & District Community Council serves as a representative voice for the Ceres community, acting as a statutory consultee on planning applications and local issues. It meets regularly in the Memorial Hall and online.

Ceres & District Community Trust was set up in 2017 as a Scottish charitable organisation dedicated to managing local assets and community-led initiatives in the village of Ceres. In April 2025, the Trust secured a 25-year lease of the Ceres Glebe, aiming to develop the land for community use, and has previously focused on local improvements like managing the Ceres Memorial Hall.

At the time of writing there is neither a Community Action Plan nor a Local Place Plan for Ceres.

There are a number of active community groups and organisations in the village.

Ceres Highland Games date back to 1314 and are held each year in honour of the brave men of Ceres who fought at Bannockburn. The games take place in June and are believed to the oldest free games in Scotland.

Fife Folk Museum is based in Ceres and is operated by the locally based Fife Folk Museum Trust. It is largely operated by volunteers.

CERES: TOURISM STRUCTURES

Welcome to Fife is the Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO) and digital presence for the Fife area. Welcome to Fife is run by the Tourism Team within Fife Council and works with the tourism sector in Fife. It is responsible for:

- *Setting the tourism priorities for Fife*
- *Promoting and marketing Fife as a tourism destination*
- *Destination development*
- *Overseeing the delivery, monitoring and evaluation of the Fife Tourism Strategy*
- *Engaging and lobbying on behalf of the tourism sector in Fife within the national tourism context*
- *Driving the tourism economy through developing a quality product in Fife*
- *Supporting the Local Tourism Associations to help them develop new products*
- *Encouraging people working in the industry to develop their skills and to promote tourism as a positive career choice*

A new strategy for Welcome to Fife was launched in 2023 for the period up to 2030 aligning with the national strategy 'Scotland Outlook 2030'.

Fife

***OUR VISION**: By 2030 the Kingdom of Fife will be a world class visitor destination known for being a leader in sustainable tourism, and renowned for the warm welcome visitors receive. Fife will be a venue for major events, and a first-choice destination renowned for its variety of offering including stunning scenery, relaxing escapes, cultural attractions & experiences, outdoor activities, and excellent local food & drink.*



There is also a Fife Tourism Climate Action Plan, which is guided by the Glasgow Declaration which is explained later in this report.

At a more local level there is the Cupar and North Fife Local Tourism Association (LTA).

Cupar and North Fife Tourism Association (LTA) consists of hospitality, leisure and tourism businesses within Cupar, Falkland, Ceres, Newport on Tay, Newburgh, Tayport and wider North Fife. The benefits of becoming involved in the LTA are numerous. Members can network with other people and organisations in a relaxed and informal manner, discuss existing challenges and examine best practice. Ongoing LTA initiatives can help attract visitors and lead to new opportunities for sales and increased business. Through greater commercial interaction and collaboration, LTA membership can help businesses grow, increase their exposure and meet their key objectives.

Meetings are held throughout the year and are open to all hospitality leisure and tourism businesses.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To develop an active network of visitor businesses in Cupar and North Fife
2. To promote and encourage training for tourism businesses
3. To build effective linkages with other organisations and interest groups in Cupar and North Fife and whole Fife region
4. To establish effective linkages with the Welcome to Fife, VisitScotland and other national agencies
5. To promote the work of the Cupar and North Fife Local Tourism Association locally and nationally





Hill of Tarvit Mansion and Gardens



Hill of Tarvit Viewpoint

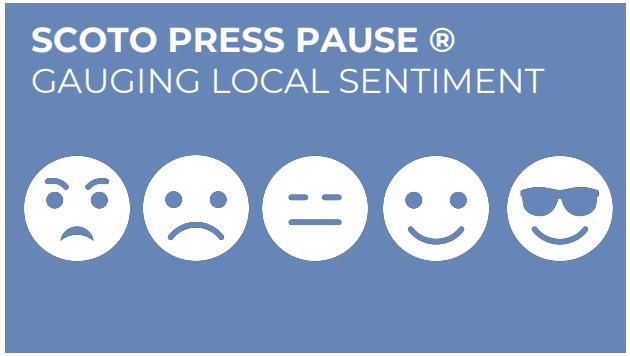
SCOTO PRESS PAUSE®

D: CERES PRESS PAUSE® FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

16 individuals attended the SCOTO Press Pause® workshop representing a mix of business and community interests and sectoral interests. The workshop took place in the Memorial Hall in the village.

TOPICS EXPLORED AT THE WORKSHOP

1. Local Sentiment
2. Defining the Ceres Destination from a Visitor and a Local Perspective
3. Current Thoughts on Tourism
4. Ceres's Competitors and Comparators
5. Fife and Ceres's Visitor Profile – Past, Present and Future
6. Ceres's Destination Competency Appraisal
7. Ceres's Place Branding – USPS, POPS AND PODS
8. Measuring Tourism Impact in Ceres



1. LOCAL SENTIMENT

When asked to share their current sentiment towards tourism in the local area using emojis, most were happy, some neutral and a couple suggested they were unhappy largely because Ceres feels left behind and not as well visited as it has been. There was also a concern that there is limited joined up thinking and assets like the village green are underutilised.



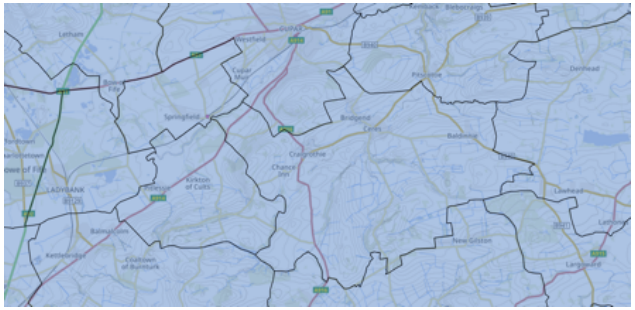


2. DEFINING THE DESTINATION

When considering the geographic area to define as the 'destination' it is important to consider what makes sense as a cohesive unit to visitors, but also and arguably more importantly, what makes sense to locals.

Community Council boundaries are a good starting point as these typically reflect old parish boundaries which responded to the local geography so made sense on the ground and reflected historic considerations.

All agreed this makes sense in Ceres where the community council boundary takes in the rural hinterland.



3. CURRENT THOUGHTS ON TOURISM

WHATS WORKING IN CERES?

Initial thoughts shared at the workshop:

- Very picturesque village
- Village green is a feature
- EV charge points
- Several artists in the community
- Fife Council tourism team support
- Games Day – a major draw – oldest free games
- New committee in place for the Games
- Ceres Walk Map and local paths
- There are lots of things to do around Ceres
- Wemyss Ware Pottery and shop
- The community have a long-term lease for the Glebe and have invested in a new bridge
- More walkers in the area especially with the Fife Pilgrim Way
- See a lot of cyclists in the area

WHATS NOT WORKING IN CERES?

Initial thoughts shared at the workshop:

- Need to make more of the Games – poor website and social media
- Ceres Walk Map is not promoted well
- Activities are offered in isolation – could better join up
- Hill of Tarvit (NTS) draws visitors to the local area but less aware of people then coming into the village
- Losing things that brought people – eg gallery, butcher
- Lack of single night accommodation and budget food offer (esp for Pilgrim Walkers)
- Café is volunteer run which restricts the opening times to daytime
- Don't have 7-night eating options
- Toilets need upgraded
- No stop over spaces for campervans and motorhomes
- No disposal for wastewater
- Data suggesting growth is not what is being experienced
- Less people based in St Andrews come to Ceres
- Connectivity – mobile phone issues
- Poor collaboration between businesses
- No café at Hill of Tarvit now

WHAT COULD BE DONE DIFFERENTLY OR BETTER IN CERES?

Initial thoughts shared at the workshop:

- New website for the Games – and the village
- Closer working with NTS and Hill of Tarvit
- Greater local involvement in the LTA
- Ceres 'the artists town' – like Kirkudbright
- More Motorhome 'Aire' type provision in or near the village
- Games programme – use it to signpost the wider offering in the village
- Ceres Welcome Packs for accommodation

4. CERES COMPETITORS AND COMPARATORS

A useful exercise is to consider communities/ areas that are either direct competitors and can be attracting the visitors you would like to see in your community, or comparators from elsewhere which have achieved success that you would like to see in your community.

By identifying these, time can be taken to understand what it is that is appealing to visitors that could be emulated locally. Learning exchanges to comparator communities can be very fruitful.

CERES COMPETITORS

ST ANDREWS – main draw for tourism in the local area – extremely well known and appeals to different markets
FALKLAND – strong draw for heritage, palace and Outlander. Accommodation available on the estate.
FIFE COASTAL VILLAGES – The East Neuk has a strong reputation and appeal. A strong sense that each of the villages work collaboratively.

CERES COMPARATORS:

WEST KILBRIDE – Craft Town
KIRKCUDBRIGHT – Artists Town
WIGTOWN – Book Town

There was a strong sense that Ceres needs a strong identity and proposition based on its USPs.

5. FIFE & CERES VISITOR PROFILE

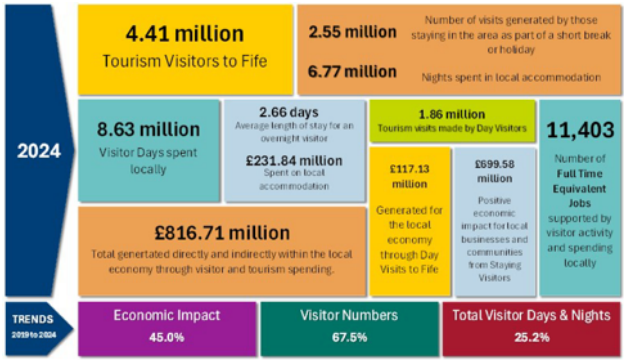
STEAM DATA

Fife Council collects STEAM data for tourism on an annual basis and at a regional level.

STEAM is a tourism economic impact modelling process which approaches the measurement of tourism from the bottom up, through its use of local supply side data and tourism performance and visitor survey data collection.

The data for 2024 states Fife

- enjoyed 4.41 million visitors in 2024 and 8.63m visitor days
- STEAM data suggests 58% of all tourism visits were overnight.
- In 2024 tourism generated a total of £816.7million in the local economy which is believed to be up 45% on 2019 when economic impact was £563.3million indicating tourism in Fife has more than recovered from pre-pandemic figures.



Summary of STEAM data for Fife in 2024

VISITSCOTLAND DATA

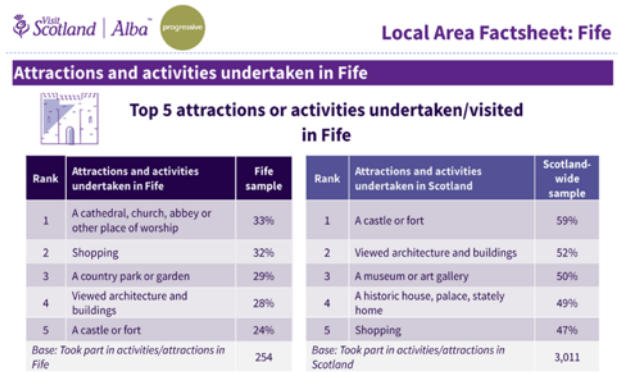
Using data from the International Passenger Survey 2024 and Great Britain Tourism Survey 2024, VisitScotland state that Fife experienced:

- 620k overnight visits
- 2.44m overnight stays
- £254m total spend
- £412 average overnight visitor spend

The VisitScotland Visitor Survey for 2023 provides data for Fife. It is not disaggregated within Fife.

2023 figures state:

- 65% of visitors are domestic (of which 19% are from Scotland) and 35% are from overseas (22% long-haul).
- 81% are repeat visits
- 84% are older independent or retirement age
- 1/3 use serviced accommodation and 2/3 are in self-catering


Visit Scotland | Alba

Local Area Factsheet: Fife

Attractions and activities undertaken in Fife

Top 5 attractions or activities undertaken/visited in Fife

Rank	Attractions and activities undertaken in Fife	Fife sample
1	A cathedral, church, abbey or other place of worship	33%
2	Shopping	32%
3	A country park or garden	29%
4	Viewed architecture and buildings	28%
5	A castle or fort	24%
	Base: Took part in activities/attractions in Fife	254

Rank	Attractions and activities undertaken in Scotland	Scotland-wide sample
1	A castle or fort	59%
2	Viewed architecture and buildings	52%
3	A museum or art gallery	50%
4	A historic house, palace, stately home	49%
5	Shopping	47%
	Base: Took part in activities/attractions in Scotland	3,011

Extract from VisitScotland Visitor Survey 2023 Local Area Fact Sheet for Fife.

CERES VISITOR PROFILE – PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

The tourism data provided by STEAM and VisitScotland is not broken down to a local level. An appraisal of what participants are seeing and would like to see in Ceres revealed:

PAST

- Popular for day trips
- B&Bs

PRESENT

- Short breaks and using the area as a base
- Much more self-catering

FUTURE – WHAT IS DESIRED

- Dwell and spend time and money in Ceres
- Arts, history and heritage to be the means to drive footfall and revenue
- More pilgrim walkers spending a night in Ceres



6. WHAT MATTERS LOCALLY

Ceres does not currently have a Community Action Plan or a Local Place Plan for the village itself but did participate in the Local Place Plan produced for Cupar Ward in 2024.

The Plan states the main challenges across the ward relate to: 'a changing community, poverty, community led action, lack of things for young people, green spaces, transport and connectivity, traffic and roads, accessing services, economy and employment, Cupar town centre, and sustainable development'.

The proposals are grouped under 7 themes

- Biodiversity, Environmental Sustainability, Flood Mitigation and Green Space
- Active Travel
- Business and Commerce
- Public Transport, Parking and EV Charging
- Housing
- Recreation Welfare and Community
- Accessibility

Investment in tourism and the visitor economy can help address many of the challenges identified and also provide support for community endeavours. These themes also provide an excellent basis for measuring the benefits tourism is providing in the local area.



7. DESTINATION COMPETENCE

Being a successful destination is a function of many factors and how they interplay. SCOTO has devised a competency appraisal for geographic communities to undertake as part of the Press Pause® conversations.

Through conversation and discussion at the workshop the participants described their current offer under 20 criteria and then jointly rate each in terms of

- **Red – things do not work/exist.**
- **Amber – things do need improved.**
- **Green – things are functioning well.**

This rating is debated and agreed by all present and helps facilitate collective thinking and trigger ideas for improvement. It helps contextualise project ideas by stepping back and thinking first about how well the community functions as a destination and how any weaknesses can be addressed either directly or indirectly. This can trigger new projects or refine ideas already under consideration. The results are presented and although comparisons can be made with other communities these are not league tables. They reflect local lived experience and sense of capacity and capability.

No.	DESTINATION COMPETENCY CRITERIA	CURRENT OFFER	JOINTLY AGREED RATING	IDEAS & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY TO CONSIDER
1	**Tourism Tradition**	Ceres had a good tourism tradition but feels it has lost its way over recent years People do come but not as many		Develop a compelling community led place brand that celebrates Ceres' heritage
2	**Sense of Place outwith the area**	Not well known out with the area Issue of other places called Ceres overseas		Develop a compelling place brand that celebrates the Ceres' heritage and consider simple merchandise that reinforces the sense of place for sale at the museum and other outlets
3	**Features & Attractions**	Hill of Tarvit The village – awarded most attractive village The Green only on of a few in Scotland - Bowbutts Fife Folk Museum Bowbutts – venue for the Games Craighall Den Woodland Bannockburn Monumenr 1914 Teasses Estate and Gardens		Develop a new Welcome to Ceres map showcasing the features, walks and amenities. Detail of the village on one side and the wider area on the reverse. Have available online and print in the museum, at the Pub and accommodation, and at the Pottery Have a poster printed and available at the hall, car park, toilets etc
4	**Culture & Heritage**	Folk Museum Highland Games – celebrated the return from Battle of Bannockburn Rich connection with art and artists Wemyss Ware Pottery B Listed Ceres Parish Church and the only remining box pews in Scotland		Consider new small-scale events and bookable experiences to offer which celebrate the town's heritage.
5	**Wildlife & Nature**	Craighall Den - Woodland walks The Glebe The Ceres Burn Walks to Cupar NB – an asset but not promoted		Review and add to the existing map of local walks and trails – supplement with walks that locals enjoy and produce a downloadable version with suggested parking/start points, refreshments and seasonal features. Better promote these walks to pilgrim walkers and people staying in local accommodation.
6	**Activities & Experiences**	The Fife Pilgrim Way – Ceres is a staging point NCN1 – national cycle route comes through Ceres No local bike hire Bowbridge Alpacas and lambing experiences Horse riding – not easy to access Lecture programme Spoon making at the Museum Tennis courts (seasonal) Pickelball at the village hall in off season		Develop a walking programme with the Pilgrim Pastor in Ceres Develop an online 'passing through' guide for cyclists and walkers that show cases things to do and the pub/cafes Provide a walk leader's training programme for local volunteers to offer Ceres Heritage Walks Develop an initial programme of Ceres Heritage Walks with a programme of local events over a set period which can steadily be developed as a branded heritage walking festival

7	**Visitor Accommodation**	12-14 self-catering units 1 B&B Campervan Aire for 3 units Camping fields Meldrums Hotel is now apartments No budget accommodation/hostel – major gap for Pilgrim Way walkers Overall concern about the range on offer and not future proofed		Consider options for budget accommodation for walkers St Andrews is described as too busy – scope to promote Ceres as an alternative and a hub for exploring Fife
8	**Food, Drink & Refreshments**	Has reduced in recent years but still a decent offer for the size of the village 2 cafes (daytime only) Ceres Community Café – set up in 2019 Pub		Consider potential pop-up options at the hall and other locations to provide evening meal options
9	**Events & Festivals**	Ceres Games – major local event – one of the oldest free games in Scotland Open Studios in September – Fife-wide – only 2 took part last year Hall Committee are developing ideas eg traditional music events Fife Blood Hounds event on New Years Day Hill of Tarvit has seasonal events Lectures at the museum Annual tractor run NB No pilgrim pastor walks in Ceres to date Overall, there are a few things happening but not joined up or promoted as an event calendar		Develop a What's On in Ceres events calendar and make available online and also as a printed programme at the museum and on notice boards Consider a simple annual arts and heritage event in Spring or Autumn to show case Ceres and encourage local artists and others to open their studios, offer walks and other activity
10	**Makers and Producers**	Notable number of artists and crafters but not many are visible to visitors and don't sell locally. No local food or drink artisan producers Butchers has closed Folk museum has a shop and does sell local art (but doesn't promote this)		Develop a showcase of local arts and crafts in the museum shop. Invite artists to do 'meet the artist' events at the museum and the Pub. Use the village hall as a craft fayre during the Open Studios weekend
11	**Travel & Connectivity**	Major issues with mobile connectivity and mixed broadband/fibre service Good train service at Cupar with park and ride but hourly bus doesn't connect. Hourly bus to St Andrews DRT Flexi Bus service - need to book a week ahead		Develop a Ceres Hub guide for walkers doing the FPW which highlights other local walks and trails to encourage extended stays Highlight Cupar Station and bus link on FPW material as an option for doing the walk in stages

12	**Retail**	Good for the size of the village 1 shop and PO Pottery with shop Antiques (not always open) Folk museum has a shop with some local crafts		Include the shop on the new village map and also provide guidance on the nearest option for key retail services (eg chemist)
13	**Amenities & Infrastructure**	Public toilets urgently need refurbished – nearest are in Cupar (5-minute drive) No fuel No medical facilities in the village Convenience shop		Consider possible use of the toilets available at the church and session house for walkers and with a tap and go donation system Consider potential for visitors to use improved toilets at the Bowling Club Include local amenities on the map and a simple guide to the nearest option for services in Glenrothes
14	**Visitor Information & Signage**	No visitor information point No signage for features or walks FPW signage marks the route through the village		Consider a simple visitor information display in the museum foyer using the proposed village map, the walking guide and other leaflets, plus posters displayed for the cafes and the pub with current menu and opening times, the local events calendar and other information. Consider displaying the village map at the car park, hall and other locations
15	**Digital Presence & Marketing**	No digital presence for the village The Trust doesn't have a website The Community Council has a Facebook page and a website but there are issues Games website and social channels urgently need upgraded Individual businesses have good web presence No coordination		Consider a web presence for the village which holds visitor facing information and downloadable versions of the map and village guide. Potential to develop a page on a new Ceres Games website when it is upgraded and which showcases the village and what to see and do
16	**Climate Action**	A few of the local accommodation businesses have achieved Green Tourism accreditation Good recycling bins in the village Not joined up at a village level		Consider developing a simple climate action plan for the village that showcases what businesses are doing and helps visitors see how they can support climate action in Ceres
17	**Inclusion & Accessibility**	Very poor provision The public toilet is not accessible Some local accommodation businesses have specific provision		Consider developing a simple accessibility statement for key buildings in the village – eg the museum, the pub, the hall
18	**Community Assets**	The village Hall Community Café The Glebe (recently 25-year lease by the community) Bowling Green and Clubhouse is held in trust Fife Folk Museum is owned and run by a charity		Consider revenue generating CLT uses in the hall – eg toilets, visitor information, self-serve snacks Consider CLT uses as part of the Glebe plans Review the recent feasibility work undertaken for the church and consider alternative locations for a bunkhouse/hostel for Pilgrim Walkers

		Ceres Parish Church (not owned by the community but available for community events)		
19	**People & Players**	Seeing some renewal with new chairs for the Games, the Hall and the Community Development Trust. Struggle to get volunteers and feels like it is getting harder Hill of Tarvit struggle to get volunteers Poor communications within the village letting people know what is happening and how they can volunteer		Consider a Volunteer Fayre in the village for the different organisations to have stands and inviting locals to get involved in different ways. Possibly tie in with the Games or another well attended event.
20	**Destination Collaboraration**	No collaboration at present at a village level with VS and Welcome to Fife, especially since the local contact moved to a new role. Local businesses are on the LTA and keen for more to get involved		Consider establishing an informal Ceres Tourism group Consider joining/attending the LTA meetings Begin with a Whats App group with the workshop attendees

SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS

There are several issues emerging from the Ceres Destination Competency Appraisal, primarily linked to Ceres having had more of a tourism role in the past but this having dropped away.

However, there are a few new players now involved in community organisations – notably the Trust, the Hall and the Games which provides a good basis for more collaborative working and ringing the changes. There was a positive sentiment and a sense the village has lost its way, but the potential remains.

Hill of Tarvit is a paid attraction close to the village which previously did feed visitors into the village but this seems to have dropped off, and this relationship could be rekindled. It is understood their café offer is limited so there could be merit in exploring joint working with the 2 cafes and the Inn in the village.

The Fife Pilgrim Way, since its launch in 2019, has been attracting walkers to the village and more could be done to welcome them and help them to experience the village and its history.

The digital presence needs a clear focus as there is no dedicated site for the village at present. The Games are aware of the need to renew their website, and this could be an opportunity to collaborate and provide an area of the site that showcases the village and what there is to see and do.

The lack of budget accommodation in general along the Fife Pilgrim Way is a concern as most walkers typically look for one-night stay budget accommodation which they can share with fellow walkers and have communal spaces to eat and chat. This appraisal has confirmed this type of accommodation isn't available in the Ceres area. There are thoughts around using the Session House and a feasibility study will help explore the viability and operation of this.

Developing a new village map with information on features of interest, local walks, services and facilities is recommended.

These are key developments to support the aspiration for the FPW route to be elevated and to meet the Scottish Pilgrim Route Forum's gold accreditation standard.

INSPIRATION FROM ELSEWHERE

There are several opportunities for community led tourism enterprises in and around Ceres. Case studies are available on www.scoto.co.uk and can be useful learning exchanges:

Findhorn Campervan Aire
https://www.scoto.co.uk/media/fsqnta50/scoto_findhorn-case-study.pdf

Callander Youth Project/Callander Hostel
https://www.scoto.co.uk/media/f3oerevm/scoto_callander-hostel-case-study.pdf

Loch Ness Hub, Drumnadrochit
https://www.scoto.co.uk/media/ylepaaos/scoto_loch-ness-hub_case-study.pdf

Wild Skies Shetland
https://www.scoto.co.uk/media/xgzchqln/scoto_wild-skies-case-study.pdf

Callander Visitor Information Centre
https://www.scoto.co.uk/media/ogmnlyxl/scoto_cvic-case-study.pdf

Tweedsmuir The Crook Inn Plus
https://www.scoto.co.uk/media/bznbggxg/scoto_tweedsmuir-case-study.pdf

Isle of Eigg Camping Pods
https://www.scoto.co.uk/media/zy4lzqkt/scoto_eigg-camping-pods_case-study.pdf

Lewis Point & Sandwick Trail
https://www.scoto.co.uk/media/31khsd2p/scoto_point-sandwick-case-study.pdf

Strontian Oakwood Tourism & Crafts
https://www.scoto.co.uk/media/yppgkurp/scoto_oakwood-case-study.pdf

Moray Walking and Outdoor Festival
https://www.scoto.co.uk/media/341kukao/scoto_moray-walking-festival-case-study.pdf

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE:
Climate Action and Nature

Looking to the future, a discrete area within community led tourism relates to climate action and nature, and how visitors can help and support local endeavours, as well as consider how they can reduce their own carbon footprint when visiting this community.

Climate action and tourism are inextricably linked and there are many ways to motivate and encourage visitors to support climate action when in your community. This relates to both the domestic and overseas markets. Overseas travellers could have a significant carbon footprint from air travel in particular. Helping them see how they can reduce their local carbon footprint when 'in destination' both helps their decision making but also demonstrates that Ceres as a host destination is taking climate action seriously and is inviting guests to do the same.

The domestic market can also have notable carbon footprints so encouraging travel by public transport has merit.

An impactful action will be to focus effort on encouraging locals in and around Fife to explore their own back door and not necessarily travel too far for day trips and for short and longer breaks. There is a lot on offer locally and across Fife and often this can be overlooked by locals in favour of travelling further afield.

Ceres has good connections by bus with an hourly service to and from St Andrews and Cupar, although the evening service is limited. Encouraging locals in St Andrews and Cupar to visit and, for example attend the Games by bus would reduce carbon footprints, although it is understood parking is one of the means whereby the Games Committee can raise revenue.

Cupar also has a train station although the bus does not currently connect with the train services so ensuring visitors have good information on timetables and connections is vital, as is highlighting options to pass time between connections.

Clever local marketing and promotion of public transport can have local impact as can a Fife-wide campaign approach.

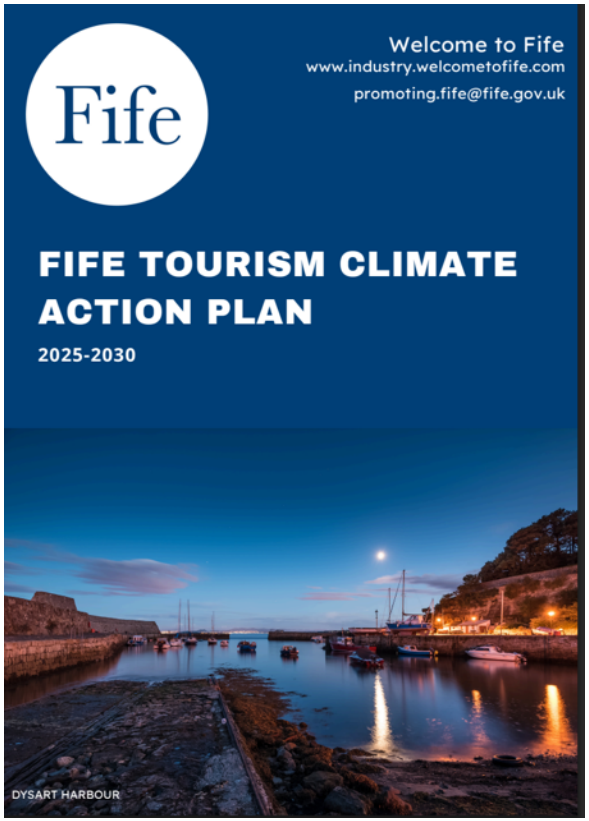
In terms of visitor facing providers, businesses and community groups with premises can reduce running costs, minimise food miles and differentiate themselves by adopting climate friendly practices. An increasing percentage of visitors are keen to ensure their visit has minimal climate impact and are actively seeking out operators who are clearly making an effort and also experiences where they can support local endeavours. This can be as simple as joining local litter picks and tree planting initiatives.

Of note some providers in and around Ceres have pursued Green Tourism accreditation and are clearly committed to sustainable and eco-practices.

Green Tourism

As part of the destination competence appraisal, climate action was rated as amber at the workshop and participants flagged that although there are individual actions being undertaken by community groups and businesses there isn't an overall understanding of this from a tourism perspective and very limited awareness of what more could be done collectively.

Fife Council recently worked with Green Tourism to offer fully funded one year membership of Green Tourism and has a resource library on the Welcome to Fife industry website with guides, templates and recorded webinars.



A five-year Fife Tourism Climate Action Plan was launched in 2025 setting out a clear pathway for the tourism sector to cut emissions, strengthen resilience and lead in sustainable tourism. The plan is guided by the Glasgow Declaration, Scotland's net zero ambitions and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The plan focuses on the 5 separate pathways to combat the impact of tourism on the planet set out in the Glasgow Declaration.

- Measure
- Decarbonise
- Regenerate
- Collaborate
- Finance

The key issues Fife, and Dunfermline will face are identified as

- Increasing annual rainfall totals (wetter winters and drier summers)
- Rising temperatures across all seasons, with a significant reduction in frost, ice and snow, and heat wave conditions becoming more common
- Extreme weather impacts disruption tourism assets, events and transportation
- Sea levels and coastal change with threats from sea level rise, erosion and extreme weather events, and loss of coastal heritage.

Travel and connectivity scored amber (red for mobile signal) recognising that Ceres has hourly bus services to Cupar and St Andrews and the train station is 5 minutes away with very reasonably priced park and ride options. The Park and Ride was considered from a local perspective but is also of value for visitors who may use this area as a base and use the train to explore further afield.

Of note, the rating for wildlife and nature was amber. This rating was less about what there is in and around the village and more about the fact wildlife and nature is not promoted as a reason to visit and explore. The village is characterised by green spaces, not last the Green which is unusual within Scottish villages. The Burn also meanders through the village providing an important wildlife corridor.

The recently announced community lease of The Glebe is significant in this regard, with the community now in control of this important greenspace and able to invest in greening initiatives and also engage visitors in this activity. Improvements to public greenspace and the regreening of key pedestrian routes, walkways and corridors in and around the village will help connect habitats, build resilience during periods of extreme weather and reduce surface water flooding risk



A visitor facing climate action audit and plan is recommended for Ceres, which will both consider what is already happening and spell out how the businesses and community organisations can reduce their own impact, and support visitors in making positive choices. Community Climate Action in Fife is led by the Climate Action Fife (CAF) partnership. CAF is a cross-sector partnership of 12 organisations that covers the width and breadth of Fife and

partners include community groups, third sector, Fife Council and Fife College.

Greener Kirkcaldy is the lead partner. Based in the heart of Kirkcaldy – with a community building, training kitchen, bike shop and garden – Greener Kirkcaldy carry out activities across Kirkcaldy and work with partners to deliver projects across Fife. Climate Action Fife has already been looking at some visitor facing climate action initiatives including a project that will encourage locals to stay much closer to home. This is a welcome play on the concept of staycations which gained prominence following lockdown where many people discovered things to see and do on their own doorsteps.

VisitScotland, Welcome to Fife and other partners provide advice and training on climate action and accreditation schemes for individual businesses and enterprises.

A key consideration that needs borne in mind is that the tourism and hospitality industry is characterised by a high percentage of small enterprises, and the current cost of living crisis is hitting this sector hard with increasing regulation and additional costs for national insurance, energy and supplies. This means climate action can slip down their priorities so profiling any support schemes and grants will help them engage, as will highlighting initiatives that reduce overall running costs.

Community cohesion and resilience is key to all of this and opportunities for visitors to engage and support the community should feature in a local climate action plan.

A further consideration is that climate change could be, if it isn't already, a threat to visitor attractions, paths and assets through flooding, storm damage and other impacts.



Ceres has already witnessed flooding events, so this is a very real threat to consider in detail. The Ceres Burn runs through the village and across the Bowbutts. Sections of it flow in straight sections of man-made channels which can increase flood risk here and downstream.



In addition, from a tourism perspective, much of Cere's tourism offer and opportunity relates to outdoor activity – the Games and other potential events, heritage trails plus outdoor activities including walking and cycling. These activities face risks from climate related disruption.

The Games are a particular consideration as event cancellation due to weather can result in significant lost income and also reputational damage for future events. The cancellation of Edinburgh's Hogmanay celebrations 2024/25 is a key example that lost the city £millions and generated significant negative press.

This equally applies to smaller community run events where not just financial losses can occur, but significant volunteer effort in the lead up can feel like it has been squandered.

Being aware of risks and having contingency plans in the event of an extreme weather incident will ensure mitigation measures are in place, loss and damage is minimised, visitors feel informed and also have alternatives to consider.

As well as a destination level audit and action plan, a strong recommendation is for individual businesses and organisations that are visitor facing to develop simple climate action and accessibility statements and to display these on their website and in their premises to help existing and potential guests and customers see what action is being taken and what this means for the business, the community and them as a visitor.



THE FIFE PILGRIM WAY:
Welcoming Pilgrim Walkers to Ceres

Walkers in general have specific needs which communities can cater for to ensure they feel particularly welcome. These are simple things like public toilets, a water refill station, cafes that allow people to come in with muddy boots and provide areas for drying wet clothing and bags.

With the Fife Pilgrim Way being a recognised long-distance trail there are additional needs as many FPW walkers will be doing the full route over a few days.

The route may also be used by day walkers, but the needs of longer distance walkers need specific consideration.

A Walkers Welcome plan and a community pledge is recommended that forms the basis to how the community goes about welcoming walkers:

"We welcome walkers and pilgrims. We will provide clear information, essential facilities, and a warm local welcome while ensuring tourism benefits our community."

The recently installed Fife Pilgrim Way Gateway sign in Ceres is a local asset. This signage helps orientate visitors, give a sense of welcome and also provides essential information on what is available locally.

Where a community is a staging point on the route, which Ceres is, there are additional needs relating to accommodation. Walkers typically but not exclusively are not necessarily looking for luxury accommodation and are more interested in budget options which allow



simple one-night stays, have communal space to meet other walkers, space to dry kit, and is located close to shops and cafes for supplies and an evening meal plus breakfast.

Many accommodation providers have moved to 2-night minimum stays due to increased costs and changeovers being one of the main cost headings. Where providers are willing to provide one-night stays for walkers it is helpful to ensure this is clearly displayed online and when providing information for listings on other websites.

Ceres does have some accommodation for visitors mainly as self-catering and one B&B. It currently does not have budget one-night accommodation.

This has been a consideration. Following a detailed appraisal of the church in Ceres which is being disposed of by the Church of Scotland the decision has been taken not to pursue a community acquisition at this point. However, consideration is currently being given to the potential for the Session House to provide budget accommodation. This is strongly recommended and a feasibility study would allow the size and operation of this to be fully scoped out to ensure any facility is viable and sustainable.

Key considerations for any bunkhouse or hostel are that the previous model of dormitories with beds to rent has lost traction since Covid and lock down. Many hostels opted to convert to smaller rooms with ensuite facilities and to let the room rather than individual beds.

An example is Callander Hostel which is operated by the Callander Youth Project Trust. The rooms were all reconfigured in light of social distancing requirements, and rooms that previously had 6 or 8 beds where individuals could book a single bed, were converted to be self-contained ensuite rooms that can only be booked as a room.



One distinct advantage of this approach has been the ability to use key locks and allow self-entry at any time, which was not possible when individuals were sharing a dorm and arriving at different times. Staff had to be available into the evening which is now no longer needed. The Callander Hostel have opted to continue this room only booking system, which has been cost effective and they have found it also has great appeal for families and groups.



A more recent example of a bunkhouse where people do pay per person rather than per room is the New Town Hall Bunkhouse in Whithorn. This has been purpose built and rather than have large dorms, it has a choice of 2, 4 and 6 bed ensuite rooms and payment is per person. They have staff on site at the adjacent Town Hall to welcome visitors, and they provide a communal kitchen area. They also have a fully accessible room with facilities on the ground floor.

Information is key to ensuring the walker has a good experience, both physically in destination and online to help with in advance and also while walking between towns and villages.

There are several other considerations for a community to ensure walkers and Pilgrim Walkers in particular feel welcome and able to easily find key information on local facilities, accurate opening times and events they might enjoy, as well as places that can stamp the FPW Pilgrim Passport

Appendix 2 sets out a template for Ceres to develop a community led place-based pilgrim walker's welcome plan. It also highlights other considerations, not least explaining how local businesses can be walker friendly.

MANAGING VISITOR EXPECTATIONS

An important consideration, having undertaken this appraisal is managing visitor expectations.

Visitors don't always do their research or may struggle to find current information and can arrive with preconceived ideas of what to expect whether staying overnight or passing through.

This can be anything from getting access to WIFI or 4G/5G to finding toilets at all times of day, being able to use credit cards and not need cash, get an Uber, find a room that night, order a takeaway for delivery or not needing to book a sit-down meal in the evening. These are particular issues in rural areas.

To avoid disappointment and frustration communities can do a lot to manage expectations in general but also if there is a specific and short-term issue affecting a service – eg restricted opening hours due to staffing issues.

Useful ideas to consider are

- Create a new Ceres map to highlight the key attractions with local services and facilities, parking and cycling/walking trails.
- Ideally provide QR code or other links to get accurate and up to date opening times.
- Highlight what services aren't available and where the nearest option is.
- Make the map available online and share with all local businesses/organisations to display on their websites and premises.
- Develop a new or repurpose an existing open Facebook page for local businesses and enterprises to post updates and offer for locals and visitors – and for visitors to ask questions.



8. PLACE BRANDING

Place branding is the idea that a place, a town, a city, or a region can be branded – given an identity with a value proposition for a target market and have branding techniques and marketing strategies applied to drive marketing campaigns, stimulate product development and build brand loyalty. Much in the same way a product, service or business can.

In essence, place branding is "a strategy for projecting images and managing perceptions – and expectations – about a place".

Place Branding seeks to strategically create a unique image and identity for a town, an island, a city, a region, or a country to attract visitors, investment, talent, and residents, essentially marketing a location like a product by highlighting its unique features, culture, and aspirations to build pride and economic growth. It goes beyond simple advertising, involving cohesive strategies in hardware (infrastructure), software (events), and storytelling to shape perceptions, boost local economies, and foster community identity. Authenticity is crucial and place branding should convey what has made the place what it is today

THE PLACE BRAND HIERARCHY

Place brands ideally nestle within each other from a country down to an individual business level and at each level have clear ownership of that place brand.

Within an individual community this may be the local business association or development trust and ideally has a singular web presence and social media channels to convey the place brand and develop content that reinforces it.

A common issue in communities is multiple websites and no clear ownership or differentiation as to which is the 'official' site for that community. The 'official' place brand is a key element of this. In addition, sites may have a mix of local and visitor facing content and it is important to be clear what is visitor facing to aid easy navigation and finding information easily.

Once a place brand has been established Individual businesses and organisations should then use this place brand in their own content and celebrate being part of the place through their own marketing and product development.

- **A** · **COUNTRY – SCOTLAND – VISIT SCOTLAND**
- **B** · **REGION – FIFE – WELCOME TO FIFE**
- **C** · **AREA - NORTH FIFE- NORTH FIFE LTA**
- **D** · **TOWN/VILLAGE - CERES - ???**
- **E** · ***individual businesses, organisations and enterprises***

VISITOR TOUCH POINTS AND THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

Traditionally visitors were significantly inspired by national and area tourist boards and made decisions using advice in travel books.

Today visitors are influenced by so many different 'touch points' – both print and often online.

Social media is a significant source of inspiration both through blogger and influencer content and TikTok videos from individuals and businesses. TV and film have hugely influenced travel with Outlander being a classic example.

Recent research by VisitScotland identifies the key sources of inspiration for different visitors.

3.4 Sources of Inspiration when deciding on Scotland: breakdown (Deep Dive)

Digital sources	All Visitors	UK	Europe	Long haul
Online travel feature providers	6%	4%	6%	12%
Online travel guides	7%	4%	8%	15%
Peer review websites	12%	11%	16%	14%
Information from travel bloggers and influencers	13%	9%	24%	23%
Online travel agent	6%	5%	6%	6%
Online information from tour operators	3%	2%	4%	11%
Travel or price comparison providers	2%	2%	3%	4%
Online information, imagery or itineraries from VisitScotland	18%	16%	20%	23%
Online information from transport providers	6%	5%	6%	10%
Online information from tourism businesses	7%	7%	7%	9%
Bargain deals on airfares, accommodation or tours	4%	4%	3%	4%

Interpretation note: Long haul refers to USA, Canada and Australasia

A significant point to note following the Press Pause Workshop is that early in 2026 VisitScotland have amended how their website operates. They no longer have their own VisitScotland business listings, and their new map is based on Google Maps. Their site now pulls profiles and content from Google. Google profiles and map entries for businesses and attractions are now key to being found on the VS website and in general.

CERES – "TO SEE OURSELVES AS OTHERS SEE US"

A key consideration when exploring local place branding is to understand how the place is being portrayed at present by others and consider if this is how the community wants to be seen by the outside world.

- Places across Scotland are promoted by many players – notably VisitScotland and DMOs (Destination Marketing Organisations) as well by the media, bloggers and influencers, the travel trade, film and TV, plus online review sites
- These players often have very good reach online and are targeted in how they share their content to interested audiences
- Community groups and individual businesses have limited reach
- There is therefore significant value in firstly seeing how others portray the community to their audiences - and how it fits with reality – and then seek to influence their content

This is a very good prompt for communities to develop and take ownership of their own place brand and to then develop new content that reinforces how the community sees itself and wants to be portrayed to the outside world.

VISITSCOTLAND

The former listing on VisitScotland for Ceres stated:

CERES
Towns & Villages

Ceres is a village in Fife, a couple of miles southeast of Cupar.
Located in a small glen, this picturesque and ancient village is one of the few towns in Scotland that has a village green.

Ceres is home to the Fife Folk Museum, which occupies several well-preserved buildings that date back to as early as the 17th century. The museum exhibits all manner of historical farming and agricultural paraphernalia.

The pillory that used to restrain miscreants on market days still stands at the entrance of the old burgh tolbooth, and at the village crossroads is an unusual 17th century stone carving of a man in a three-cornered hat with a toothy grin and a beer glass on his knee, said to be a depiction of a former provost.

Please note, in February 2026 VisitScotland made significant changes to their website. The site now pulls content from Google business listings and map entries and at this stage it no longer profiles individual places like Ceres. The listing provided above was prior to this and is no longer visible.

Google listings and map entries are therefore key to being visible on the VS website (and more generally). Please refer to the recommendations in this report.

WELCOME TO FIFE

The current listing on Welcome to Fife for Ceres states:

NORTH OF FIFE
It's very easy to step back in time in North Fife. From the atmospheric ruins of 13th century Balmerino Abbey to the majesty of medieval Falkland Palace to the Victorian architecture of New Port-On Tay.

To really get to know Cupar & North Fife, climb the Lomond Hills for breathtaking views that stretch across the Kingdom and beyond, explore Tentsmuir Forest or walk a stretch of the Fife Coastal Path.

Having worked up an appetite, why not enjoy a fabulous Fife foodie experience? Tuck in at the Michelin-starred Peat Inn, The Newport where MasterChef: The Professionals winner Jamie Scott's at the helm or the renowned Ostler's Close in Cupar.

CERES
Once named 'The Most Attractive Village in Scotland', Ceres has retained much of its olde-world charm.

Life revolves around the well-maintained village green, where the church steeple towers over weavers' cottages with pantile roofs and the humpbacked Bishop's Bridge is a picturesque reminder of the days when horse and cart was the only method of transport in Ceres.

FIFE PILGRIM WAY

The current listing on the Fife Coast and Countryside Trust website for the Fife Pilgrim Way and for Ceres states:

CERES – THE NIGHT AFORE
One of the most unspoilt sections of this historic route, the path to Ceres offers a treat for the senses. Enjoy breathtaking views and a spot of wildlife-watching while following in the footsteps of countless pilgrims over the Waterless Way.

The Waterless Way and the Coal Road have guided travellers to and from Ceres for centuries. For medieval pilgrims, Ceres was the last overnight stop before St Andrews. Having journeyed on foot across miles of boggy, uneven ground, on constant high alert for robbers – or worse – it is worth taking a moment to imagine how the weary travellers may have felt at this point.

The current parish church was built in the 1500s on the site of an earlier church. This is where the pilgrims may have offered prayers or received a blessing for their onward journey. As morning broke, the pilgrims would have regrouped and begun the final leg of their journey. As they walked, they would be straining their eyes for that first glimpse of the tall spires and towers of St Andrews.

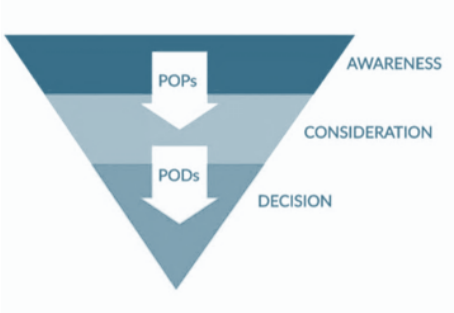


DEVELOPING THE CERES PLACE BRAND - USPs, POPs and PODs

Using marketing jargon, a valuable exercise in place branding is to first consider the community's unique selling points – USPs. These are the claims that the community can make which others can't.

The next consideration is Points of Parity – POPs – which are shared features the community may have with other communities and which confirm it is acceptable in calling itself a visitor destination and will meet the baseline needs of visitors.

PODs – Points of Differentiation then consider what attributes the community has which set it apart from others creating a unique advantage or benefit and in the case of a community, a compelling reason to visit. These relate to attractions and activities and help visitors decide where to



CERES POPs

The destination Competence Appraisal demonstrated that the village has several attributes that confirm it is more than acceptable in calling itself a visitor destination with important heritage features, the museum, the pottery, cafes and the pub, and the annual Ceres Games taking place.

CERES' USPs & PODs

Several points of differentiation and claims to fame were shared at the workshop and researched afterwards:

- Artist George Leslie Hunter spent his summers here
- Robert Horne's grave is at the church – lived Burnside Cottage
- Ceres Games are the oldest free games in Scotland and are said to have been held every year since 1314 when Robert the Burce granted the village permission to hold the games in commemoration of the village's soldiers who took part
- Ceres Green is one of only a few village greens in Scotland
- The green is known as the Bow Butts and is where archery was practiced in medieval times
- The old packhorse bridge, known as the Bishop's Bridge, has spanned the Ceres Burn since the 17th century
- Ceres has (arguably) the shortest high street in Scotland
- The Museum occupies the old weigh house which was also a tolbooth for locking up minor offenders – the village jougs are still attached
- The museum began in 1968
- The Bannockburn Memorial commemorates the men of Ceres who fought at Bannockburn and was erected in 1914 to mark the six hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314
- Lunardi Stone – is where the Vincenzo Lunardi's first balloon flight in Scotland landed in 1785
- Griselda Hill has revived the famed Wemyss Ware pottery in the village
- James Wilson – declaration of independence - was born here
- Peploe visited just after the war
- James Hope – advocate to the king in the 1800s
- Tarvit House – designed by Robert Lorimer - built by the Sharp Family - Jute Manufacturers – son was killed in the train disaster at Castlecary and destroyed every photo of him. The house then became the first Marie Curie hospice and was then left to NTS
- Sutherland House in Ceres was the hospital for the Cupar area before Adamson Hospital was built in Cupar – it was also a Children's Holiday Home (Edinburgh) and a RNIB Centre for blind people
- Obelisk Memorial on Hill of Tarvit dates back to 1500 and signing of the Treaty of Gairloch Bank
- Kingarrock Hickory Golf at Tarvit
- Archbishop of St Andrews - James Sharp – was ambushed and murdered at Magnus Muir
- Sir David Lindsay who lived locally designed the crown that the Queen wore when in state in St Giles
- Ceres church interior is largely unaltered from when it was built in 1806 and has the original gallery and box pews which can be converted into long communion tables – Ceres is the last remining church where these can be found
- There is a late medieval effigy of a knight in the vestibule which dates from the original 15th century church
- The provost sculpture in the village centre is thought to be a joke about a self-appointed leader
- An 18th century Lunar society came to Ceres every month on the full moon



PLACE BRANDING - INITIAL OBSERVATIONS

This extensive list of USPs and PODs demonstrate that Ceres has several points of interest which could spark reasons for visitors to be interested in the village. It also has several themes to consider for product development and experiences.

The village has retained its historic character and the museum buildings, the village green, the bridge and buildings like the church provide iconic views.

Some of the village's history is hidden but the historic townscape and hidden stories together offer scope for storytelling and offering heritage experiences.

There were several references to art and artists linked to the village and there also being several artists living and working locally today.

The Wemyss Ware pottery which has been revived by Griselda Hill in the village is an important asset.

The Ceres Highland Games are the oldest free Games in Scotland and the connection to the Battle of Bannockburn and the Games being 'authorised' in recognition of the men who fought and returned to Ceres is fascinating.



However, Ceres is not a well-known place name outwith Fife. It is also a place name shared with places overseas in South Africa and California, for example.

This sets an important challenge around how to raise wider awareness of the village and what is on offer, and in a way that locals feel proud and involved.

PLACE BRANDING – IDEAS

Ceres – Fife's Art Village

Taking a lead from Kirkcudbright which is known as Scotland's Artists Town, and West Kilbride, which is known as Craft Town Scotland, the artistic associations with Ceres offer notable potential to position the village as Fife's Art or Artist's Village.

It is an incredibly picturesque place, and quite unusual with the village green. It has and continues to inspire artists, and the presence of Wemyss Ware Pottery suggests a simple claim could be made by Ceres to be Fife's Art Village.

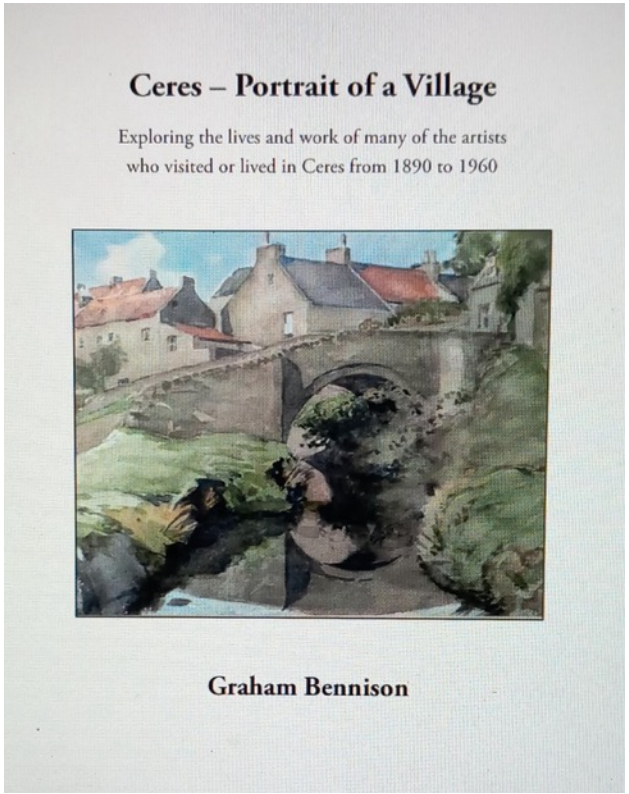


The 'Art Village' would require some product development to substantiate it on the ground and ensure there are art experiences on offer building on the presence of the Pottery.

Ideas include self-guided art walks that take in where George Leslie Hunter and other artists stayed and painted; painting workshops with local artists for visitors (and locals) to paint the landscapes that inspired these historic artists;

a programme of talks and lectures over the season.

Of note Graham Bennison who attended the Press Pause® workshop has shared that he will shortly be publishing a book called Ceres – Portrait of a Village. This illustrated book will be an excellent reference point to understand the many artists who visited or lived in Ceres from 1890-1960. Graham is also planning a themed week before the Games at the end of June.



These are wonderful building blocks for developing the proposition of Ceres as Fife's Art Village.

Art weekends could readily be developed with interested local accommodation providers, especially out of season, and an annual art festival could be considered, starting small and building on any previous activity.

Like the 10-day Wigtown Book Festival which is now 25 years old, a new Ceres Art Festival could start as one day and grow over time, providing various art activities presented by local and visiting artists, and linking with local food and drink offers.

A new art festival could either be directly linked with the annual North Fife Open Studios and provide a local focus or be at a different time of year.

For the annual Open Studios event there could be merit in a few artists working together and having a combined presence in the village hall, for example, to promote and embed the 'art village'. It is understood that only a very small number of local artists in Ceres took part in the latest Open Studios programme and it would be good to explore why engagement has dropped off and the appetite local artists have for this suggestion.

If the Art Village concept is welcomed there would be merit in local artists considering a range of online bookable experiences they can offer in general but also tailored for pilgrim walkers to enjoy as part of their journey.

The giant Wemyss Cat initiative being rolled out in 2026 in and around Kirkcaldy to mark 100 years of Kirkcaldy Galleries could have a permanent legacy in Ceres. Griselda has sponsored two of these giant sculptures and there may be scope to find a permanent home in Ceres as public art and to celebrate the presence of the Pottery. This will help casual visitors, walkers and cyclists make a direct connection between the Wemyss Cats, the Pottery and its home in Ceres.



Credit Wemyss Ware website

Equally there could be merit in exploring an ongoing outreach partnership between Ceres village and Kirkcaldy Galleries.

The Wemyss cats are very distinctive and with Griselda's agreement and potentially linked to the ongoing partnership with Kirkcaldy Galleries, the cats could be considered as the basis for a new logo for the 'Art Village' which could then be developed in a range of Ceres merchandise that could bring in much needed revenue for community initiatives.

Other options would be to develop merchandise featuring the distinctive built

heritage of the village that feature in so many paintings by George Leslie Hunter and others.



George Leslie Hunter

The opportunity to raise revenue is considerable, and merchandise can be sold through outlets like the museum shop but also online as part of a new village website. This has proven to be very worthwhile in places like Cullen.



Ceres 1925, Samuel Peploe

Discover Cullen is a community run seasonal information centre with a shop and when they are closed over winter they draw in a lot of revenue from online sales of their Cullen branded merchandise. They also act as a sales outlet for local artists. Discover Cullen Online Shop.

Discover Cullen also take stands at local events to provide information and to sell their merchandise. This could be a worthwhile consideration at the Ceres Highland Games.

These varied suggestions are offered as simple ideas to consider but hopefully help convey how this 'claim' could be developed and brought to life for the overall benefit of the village.

Famous Sons and Daughters of Ceres

A simple comment at the workshop summed up that several people who lived in Ceres or are associated with the village have, over time, done great things and made an impression. Many of these are arts related but not exclusively.

Doing further research and collating these is recommended and this can then form the basis for temporary exhibitions at the Games for example, online content for the village website and a programme of talks and lectures.

A blue plaque trail approach could be adopted with plaques highlighting the buildings associated with these Sons and Daughters.

The plaques could have QR codes linking to a new website which has more information about them and feature podcasts and other material to bring these rich stories to life.

Ceres – 'The Night Afore'

Ceres is at the penultimate staging point before reaching St Andrews on the Fife Pilgrim Way. The phraseology used on the Fife Coast & Countryside Trust website for the Fife Pilgrim Way is evocative and intriguing.

This positioning could allow several local products and experiences to be packaged for walkers to enjoy as they spend time at their last stop before arriving in St Andrews. Lectures and talks can be scheduled on topics relating to the village and the pilgrim way. If these are scheduled on particular dates this can help walkers plan their overall journey and when they would like to be in Ceres.

The Fife Pilgrim Pastor has not, to date, undertaken much activity in this particular stretch of the route and reaching out as a community to engage with him would allow various options to be scoped out and then scheduled into the pastor's diary for this coming season.

There is a strong sense that Ceres could play a more significant role in the FPW walker experience, but investment is needed in budget accommodation and a welcome area.

A significant feasibility study has been undertaken into the potential of the church in Ceres which is earmarked for disposal by the Church of Scotland. A temporary stay was granted to allow the local community time to explore alternative uses and ownership options. A local steering group came together and worked with Community Enterprise to undertake research and develop a business plan. This was completed in 2025, and the decision was taken not to proceed at this point with a community acquisition due to the scale

of any works required to restore the building prior to any change of use being considered.

Ilt is understood that the Church of Scotland will now look at disposal of the church.

However, as a staging point the village would benefit from budget one night stay accommodation for walkers and a modest pilgrim centre where walkers can find out more about the pilgrim route and historic pilgrimages in this particular location as well as local information.

A key recommendation is to consider alternative options for these in the knowledge the option of developing the church is not being pursued. These options include the Session House, plus options linked to other buildings in community ownership or control.



The Fife Pilgrim Way - How slow can you go?

The Markinch workshop highlighted that one way to get the route (and the communities) better known would be to host an endurance event (with an 'Ultra' event along the route planned for May 2026).



However, the Fife Pilgrim Way lends itself to a much slower pace and embodies the principles of 'slow tourism', encouraging people to slow down, take time to meet local people and learn about local culture and heritage.

Could there be a quirkier 'slow' paced challenge event which would raise its profile in the media and embody what the Fife Pilgrim Way is all about? This could be linked to the recently launched FPW passport, with more businesses encouraged to take part, and the challenge being focused on collecting as many stamps as possible over seven-day event.

For businesses in Ceres, the recently introduced FPW passport is a great way to get people to ensure they do visit local businesses and attractions to get their passport stamped and it in turn offers great opportunities for these businesses to 'upsell' and offer added value once the walker is there.



Encouraging different businesses in Ceres to be involved in the FPW walker experience is recommended and for each to consider a themed product(s) they can offer to increase dwell time and encourage local spend is recommended. This could be as simple as a Pilgrim's Soup and Sandwich special or other menu item, and Pilgrim packed lunches featuring some local produce.

In addition, a Pilgrim related event could be added to the programme for the Highland Games in Ceres.



MEASURING LOCAL IMPACT

"*What we measure affects what we do. If we measure the wrong thing, we will do the wrong thing. If we don't measure something, it becomes neglected, as if the problem didn't exist*". Carnegie UK

Tourism is typically measured by footfall, bed nights and spend at a regional level. Recalibrating how tourism is measured locally will demonstrate how tourism is delivering local benefits and helping the community be a better place to live, work and visit.

In the absence of a community action plan or local place plan, a key recommendation is to agree a basic list of measures that can demonstrate benefits from visitor activity – eg number of volunteer hours provided, number of local artists and makers supported, number of cultural assets retained, number of new products developed, number of cultural events provided, etc. By agreeing the measures, everyone can focus on what they can do to help deliver positive impacts.

An infographic template can be developed for the business interests in the area to record and demonstrate the community benefits they provide. This will hopefully encourage them each to do even more.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Initial recommendations relate to considering the appetite for and capacity to undertake community action planning and/or local place planning in Ceres. This has taken place in Cupar but doing something in the village itself would have merit. These processes are valuable when considering community led tourism as they establish what is important to the community and set out priority themes for action. These can then stimulate ideas to develop within community led tourism initiatives that will address these themes. For example, if retaining young people is important, establishing a hostel for the Fife Pilgrim Way where young people can train and get qualifications has merit.

DESTINATION RELATED

The Destination Competency table sets out several ideas and recommendations for the community to consider. The key ones relate to

- **Place Branding** – Ceres is not well known despite its heritage significance and associations with individuals. A place brand that clearly positions its current day offer is recommended with associated product development and propositions.
- **Map** – Ceres is a very picturesque village and has several features of interest dotted around the streets and surroundings. A map that profiles local features and attractions, visitor facilities and walks and trails is recommended which is available online and in print at the museum, the Inn and other key locations. Artist drawn and illustrated maps have strong appeal. Dunkeld has a great example of this.
- **Hostel** – the lack of budget one-night accommodation is a known issue along the length of the Fife Pilgrim Way and given the strategic location of Ceres as a staging point suggests this would be welcome. This formed part of the recent feasibility work undertaken for the Church and is being considered as a possible use in relation to the Session House.
- **Digital Presence** – This is a key weakness with their being no village website and the Games and other sites needing to be developed. A simple web presence is recommended and could be led by the Development Trust, and could be combined for the village, the Games and other interests. Specific work on Google Profiles is recommended (see below).
- **Visitor Services and Facilities** – The current public toilets are in poor condition and are seasonal, and there is no visitor information in Ceres. The museum foyer could be a good place to provide simple visitor information and orientation. Simple poster-based information in the toilets and at the main places people park is recommended with QR code links to more detailed online information. The church is currently a key place pilgrim walkers will visit and a welcome with local information could readily be provided in framed poster

format in the absence of a permanent sign like the one recently installed in Markinch.

- **Arts and Walking Festival** – Based on the place branding recommendations an Arts Festival is suggested which could readily tie in with or be the event being planned for the week running up to the Games in 2026. This can then be developed as an Arts and Walking Festival taking activities outdoors and encouraging participants to explore the village and surroundings, learn about the historic art connections and take part in art activities in the outdoors. Walk leadership training can be provided and advice sought from other communities on setting up a walking festival. This can then grow over time.
- **A Pilgrim Hub** – Given Ceres is a staging point Ceres would benefit from identifying a hub where any walkers will be welcome and can meet fellow walkers and locals. An interim option could be linked to the museum or possibly at the Inn. The key is to ensure the hub location is walker friendly with space to dry wet gear and charge a mobile phone, for example.
- **Collaboration** – there are a number of tourism/visitor related interests in and around the village which would benefit from closer working. NTS Hill of Tarvit should be included in this group. The group could be a working group within the Development Trust structure and oversee the development of a new website. The group can also consider how they link in with the North Fife LTA, and ensure Ceres' interests are represented. A small and informal group that meets monthly to share ideas and also review activity is recommended and could start through a Whats App group set up for interested people from the Workshop

PILGRIM FRIENDLY CERES

As the Fife Pilgrim Way is bringing walkers to the village, a key recommendation is to develop a Pilgrim and Walker Friendly plan for Ceres.

A framework for this is provided in the Appendix and at its core it is about taking time to understand the walking and pilgrim market in general and as currently experienced locally, what currently is on offer in the village and measures that will ensure this market feels welcome and is encouraged to spend more time and money in the local area. It has two dimensions with pilgrims on the one hand and more general walkers on the other.

Key to this is a local action plan but also taking time to engage with the other staging communities on the route to ensure consistency as well as peer to peer learning.

CLIMATE ACTION

As climate action is inextricably linked to tourism a key recommendation is to also work on developing a simple community led climate action and tourism action plan for Ceres, with the guidance provided in the Appendix.

GOOGLE PROFILES

Early in 2026 VisitScotland changed their visitor facing website to no longer provide their own business listings and it now draws on Google profiles.

At the core of this is the concept of having an online Google Profile that is kept up to date to improve visibility, and this content then being pulled on to various platforms, such as VisitScotland (and being used by AI). Previously any updates would need to be flagged separately to VisitScotland and added to your Google Profile, and this approach streamlines things.

In terms of marketing and promotion a key action for businesses and community groups and organisations in Ceres is to review current google profiles for any features, attractions and services they provide.

Is there a profile? Is it in the right category? How up to date is it? What extra information and imagery could be added? Are there reviews and are there responses?

It may be there isn't yet a Google Profile for some of the attractions and services provided so claiming this and adding content is increasingly important. Also, if anyone has two or more quite different tourism offers, it is worth considering having two or more Google profiles to ensure these are each readily found.

Having a Google profile improves online visibility for SEO and ensures the business, service or attraction can be readily found on Google maps. This will highlight what is on offer and ensure reviews are managed and visitors can make online bookings if offered. It is important to consider individual profiles on Google Maps for attractions such as monuments, trails or parks which aren't necessarily a business but will attract visitors.

VisitScotland provide guidance on their business hub with a good introduction here: VS Business Essentials Bitesize Webinars | The power of Google: claim and enhance your profile.

The new map function is currently in BETA/test format and as this is developing, increased

guidance and support will be added to their business hub.

A key recommendation at this stage is to check what Google profile exists if any. This is readily done by searching the business or attraction name online – eg on Google Chrome. If there is a profile it comes up on the righthand side on a desk top screen. If this area is blank there isn't currently a profile and this should be claimed using guidance available from Google.

In addition, checking on Google Maps what is already listed in the local area will highlight what else can be added. Clicking a spot on the map where something is missing and then right clicking allows a missing place or business to be added, and to give it a category. This is a valuable way of highlighting features of interest that aren't necessarily a business.

Once the profiles and map entries are in place it is important to regularly check and respond to any reviews and update opening hours every time they change.

SUGGESTED FIRST STEPS

- Review the report with the SCOTO facilitator to prioritise what the community would like to progress and develop an activity plan
- Set up a What's App group for all those interested in this initiative – starting with the workshop attendees
- Arrange an open day event in the village to share the Press Pause® findings and recommendations plus early actions to gather interest and involvement - potentially linked to a volunteer fayre staged with several local groups and charities
- Establish (or repurpose an existing) BeLocal Ceres Facebook page and encourage business engagement on the page with posts on features and offers, plus quick responses to any visitor queries
- Arrange a learning exchange to other communities who have developed their art offer for visitors (eg Kirkudbright and West Kilbride)
- Agree a quick win project for the next tourist season to galvanise everyone (eg the map)

An overview report will be generated collating the findings across the Fife Pilgrim Way Press Pause communities and setting out an activity plan that will help to build a cohesive, sustainable, and immersive visitor experience through a community led approach to tourism and the visitor economy.



11. REFLECTIONS

The Ceres Press Pause workshop revealed a community that is passionate and proud of its village, its history and heritage. It also revealed a community that feels like it has lost its way a little in relation to tourism.

A few businesses have closed over the years. There was a sense that Ceres is currently flying under the tourism radar and people aren't visiting in the way they did in the past. The car park can be busy, but it isn't always clear where the visitors are.

Visitor facing content that is available online is limited, and there isn't a singular web presence for the village. The Games website is dated and doesn't have a security certificate.

Ceres enjoyed a closer relationship with St Andrews in the past with many visitors coming for a day trip. This doesn't seem to happen to the same extent anymore.
The Fife Pilgrim Way has helped draw more visitors to the village and specifically to the church. The church is at risk as part of the Church of Scotland's disposal programme and feasibility work has been progressed exploring potential future community led uses and linked to the Fife Pilgrim Way. However, the scale of investment required has suggested that this is not viable for the community and it is likely to go on the open market.

Ceres has strong credentials in relation to the arts and has welcomed notable artists over many decades. This feels like a strong point of differentiation and one that should be developed through a new place brand for Ceres and a range of products and experiences, not least an Arts Festival of some description. Activity is already happening and through wider community engagement this could help build community cohesion and spark further ideas.

The Press Pause® initiative seeks to help individual geographic communities take time out to consider tourism and how it could be

much more of a force for good within their community. This involves business and community interests having constructive conversations – and being willing to take ideas forward.

Post pandemic there has been a focus on recovery and 2019 was treated as a benchmark. However, we are in a new era in tourism – post Covid, post Brexit, in the midst of a technological revolution and a climate and biodiversity emergency.

SCOTO believes this requires a new approach which has responsible tourism at its core. It also presents many exciting opportunities at a local level for individual communities to focus on what more visitors are seeking – to meet local people, have meaningful authentic experiences, discover new places, learn new skills and spend locally.

This report seeks to set out what was discussed together, highlight what could be done differently to help the community move embrace tourism as a force for good. It provides a range of ideas for consideration and sets out inspiration from elsewhere. The community is the driver and can establish which ideas to pursue or explore further.

Whatever action is taken the primary aim is community cohesion and for tourism to deliver meaningful benefits that address local issues at an individual community level. The presence of visitors should be making a positive difference and helping make the community an even better place to live, work and visit.

PRESS PAUSE®
CERES, FIFE - APPENDICES















APPENDIX 1:
Key Considerations for a Community-Led Tourism Climate Action Plan

Guiding Principles:

- *Tourism should strengthen the community's climate resilience while reducing its environmental footprint and improving local quality of life.*
- *Visitors should readily understand that climate action matters to the community and feel able to help and contribute.*
- *Businesses and organisations should proudly profile what climate action they are taking and what this means for their business, their community and their customers*

Recommended Format and Content:

1. Vision & Community Values

Define what climate-responsible tourism is and what it means for this community

- A shared vision for low-carbon, resilient tourism
- Explain the community priorities (eg. livelihoods, culture, ecosystems, equity)
- State the community's commitment to local leadership in climate action and inclusion (residents, community groups, small and micro businesses, young people)

2. Climate Risks & Tourism Impacts

Set out a clear understanding of what climate change threatens in relation to tourism and the visitor experience within this community

- Highlight the key climate hazards that have been experienced (floods, storms)
- Highlight vulnerable tourism assets (infrastructure, heritage assets, paths and trails, natural resources and habitats)
- Highlight outdoor events and activities that could be impacted by extreme weather
- Consider social vulnerability as a consequence (eg jobs at risk, informal and seasonal workers income, volunteering impacts)

3. Tourism Emissions Snapshot

Identify the major carbon sources relating to tourism in this community

- Visitor transport (how they arrive and local travel once in destination)
- Accommodation options and their energy use and waste management
- Food systems and supply chains at cafes and restaurants; use of local seasonal produce
- Waste management and accessibility for visitors
- Highlight the main sources and desire to tackle these

4. Climate Action Audit

Undertake a simple audit of what already exists and/or is available

- Collate which businesses and organisations already have green accreditations (eg Green Tourism gold, silver or bronze accreditation)
- Review who has participated in local climate action training programmes and advisory workshops
- Review current visitor facing information and guidance available online to promote for example public transport and active travel to visit the destination
- Develop simple case studies of good practice

5. Climate Mitigation Actions

Outline the actions that will help reduce tourism-related emissions and promote these to visitors

- Low-carbon mobility (public transport, EVs, active travel)
- Highlight energy efficiency and renewables in tourism attractions and facilities
- Showcase local, seasonal food and waste reduction
- Showcase local circular economy initiatives including plastic reduction

6. Adaptation & Resilience Actions

Explain what is being done locally to protect people, livelihoods, and ecosystems

- Climate-resilient infrastructure investments and land use decisions
- Nature-based solutions (forests and woodland planting projects, care and enhancement of meadows, rivers, wetlands and other habitats)
- Event planning and contingency measures for extreme weather incidents
- Disaster preparedness and early warning systems that have been developed by the community

7. Community Benefits & Equity

Provide details on what is being progressed locally to ensure tourism supports local well-being

- Local ownership of assets

- Green jobs
- Skills training and capacity building
- Cultural and built heritage protection
- Campaigns and incentives to extend the season and disperse visitors across the community

8. Education & Behaviour Change

Align visitors and locals

- Visitor awareness of climate impacts and what they can do reduce their personal impact in this community
- Voluntourism opportunities for visitors to support local endeavours – tree planting, litter picks
- Low-impact travel guidance for visitors provided at accommodation and at time of booking
- Training for tourism and hospitality workers and operators
- Annual award for climate action heroes – local individuals and enterprises plus visitors who have engaged in activity
- Transparent communication (avoid greenwashing)

9. Governance & Partnerships

Explain how the community is ensuring shared responsibility and accountability

- Clear roles for community, public agencies and private sector
- Participatory decision-making
- Integration of local knowledge
- Partnerships with charitable groups, universities and colleges, and climate experts

10. Financing & Incentives

Set out what support is available to support climate action in this community

- Grants
- Potential tourism levy (if approved and introduced by the Council)
- Incentives for small and local businesses
- Community benefit or reinvestment funds

11. Targets, Monitoring & Review

Track progress using available indicators or proxies and demonstrate adaptions being made in response

- Emissions reduction and resilience targets
- Simple indicators (energy use at premises, waste management and litter pick stats, jobs, biodiversity measures)
- Annual public reporting
- Regular plan updates

APPENDIX 2:

Key Considerations for a Place-based Community-Led Pilgrim / Walker Friendly Plan

City/Town/Village:
Date:
Lead Organisation / Steering Group:

SUGGESTED FIFE PILGRIM WAY COMMUNITY PLEDGE:
"We welcome walkers and pilgrims. We will provide clear information, essential facilities, and a warm local welcome while ensuring tourism benefits our community."

SECTION A – UNDERSTANDING YOUR WALKER MARKET

2. Walker Profile Assessment

What is lived experience telling us?
Percentage split and key characteristics.

Category	Current Situation	Desired Future
Day walkers		
Long-distance pilgrims		
Group walkers		
International visitors		
Families		

Key Questions:

- Where are walkers coming from?
- When do they visit (seasonality)?
- How long do they stay?
- What do they struggle with?

SECTION B – ESSENTIAL WALKER FRIENDLY INFRASTRUCTURE

3. Core Facilities Checklist

A. Toilets

☐ Public toilets available
☐ Opening hours displayed
☐ Donation/contactless option
☐ Accessible toilet

Action Plan:

- Improvements required:
- Responsible party:
- Timeline:

B. Water & Refreshment

☐ Drinking water refill point
☐ Café / takeaway option
☐ Early breakfast option
☐ Packed lunch provision

Improvements Required:

C. Accommodation (Critical for Pilgrim Routes)

Type	Available?	Gaps
B&B / Guesthouse		
Self-catering		
Budget bunkhouse / hostel		
Campsite		
Group accommodation		

Key Consideration:

Pilgrims often seek:

- 1-night stays
- Budget pricing
- Drying space
- Communal areas

Feasibility actions required:

D. Wayfinding & Signage

☐ Clear route signage through town/village
☐ Directional signs to facilities
☐ Brown tourist signage (if applicable)
☐ Route maps displayed centrally

Gaps:

SECTION C – WALKER EXPERIENCE

4. Arrival & First Impressions

- Is the welcome/entry point at both ends of the town/village obvious?
- Is there a "Welcome FPW Walkers" sign?
- Is there seating near key points?
- Are businesses visibly walker-friendly?

Enhancement Ideas:

5. Walker-Friendly Business Standards Suggested Local Charter

Businesses agree to:

☐ Allow water bottle refills
☐ Provide drying space (where possible)
☐ Accept card payments
☐ Offer early breakfast or takeaway options
☐ Display route map

Consider creating:
"Certified FPW Walker Friendly Business" window stickers

6. Digital Presence

☐ Dedicated "Walkers" page on website
☐ Downloadable town map
☐ Accommodation list
☐ Live opening hours information
☐ Transport links
☐ Emergency contact info

Recommended:
- Single official visitor-facing page
- WhatsApp / Facebook group for updates

SECTION D – EXTENDING STAY & SPEND
7. Encouraging Overnight Stays
Opportunities:
- Heritage evening walks
- Pilgrim meals
- Cultural storytelling evenings
- Group packages

What could encourage a walker to stay 2 nights instead of 1?

8. Added-Value Experiences
☐ Pilgrim passport stamping points
☐ Guided heritage walks
☐ Heritage themed talks/lectures
☐ Local food tasting
☐ Craft workshops
☐ Nature walks
Consider partnerships with:
- Churches
- Heritage groups
- Local producers
- Walking clubs
- Artists and crafters

SECTION E – TRANSPORT & CONNECTIVITY
9. Getting To & From the Route
☐ Bus links
☐ Rail links
☐ Taxi availability
☐ Luggage transfer services
☐ Bike hire
Is your town a:
- Through-stop?
- Staging point?
- Midpoint hub?
- Base for circular walks?

SECTION F – SAFETY, INCLUSION & ACCESSIBILITY
10. Accessibility
☐ Accessibility statement available
☐ Step-free access where possible
☐ Clear terrain grading on walks
☐ Seating at regular intervals
Recommendations:

11. Managing Expectations
Clearly communicate:
- Limited services?
- Seasonal closures?
- Rural connectivity issues?
- Cash vs card availability?

Transparency prevents negative reviews.
Recommendations:

SECTION G – CLIMATE & RESPONSIBLE WALKING
12. Climate Action
☐ Promote public transport
☐ Water refill promotion
☐ Waste reduction messaging
☐ Local sourcing in cafés
☐ Repair / reuse culture
Optional:
"Walk Lightly Here" campaign messaging

SECTION H – COMMUNITY BENEFIT
13. Measuring Local Impact
Agree 5–10 simple metrics:
- Number of walker overnight stays
- Volunteer hours delivered
- Revenue generated for community assets
- Number of local businesses engaged
- Events delivered

SECTION I – ACTION PLAN
14. Priority Actions (12–24 Month Plan)

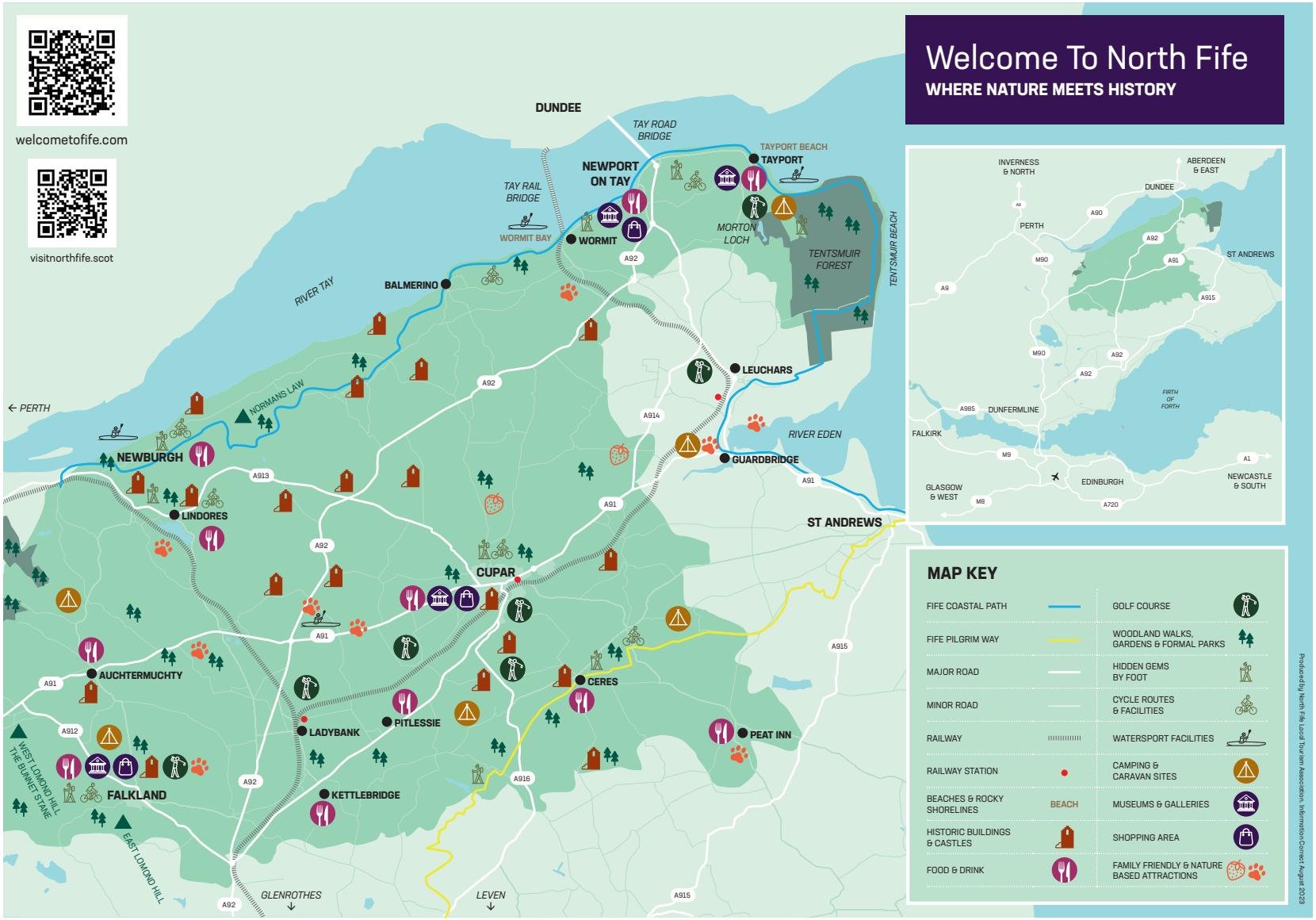
Priority	Action	Lead	Funding Required	Timescale
1				
2				

SECTION J – GOVERNANCE & DELIVERY
15. Who Owns This Plan?
- Community group?
- Church?
- Business association?
- Informal tourism network?

Establish:
- Named coordinator
- Quarterly review meeting
- Annual public update

SCOTO PRESS PAUSE® WALKER FRIENDLY ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT SCORECARD
Rate each 1–5 as 'Fife Pilgrim Way Walker Friendly' where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent
- Public Toilets
- Accommodation
- Signage
- Digital info
- Food & Water
- Communal Spaces
- Business engagement
- Events
- Transport
- Climate action

Total Score:
Target Score (Year 2):

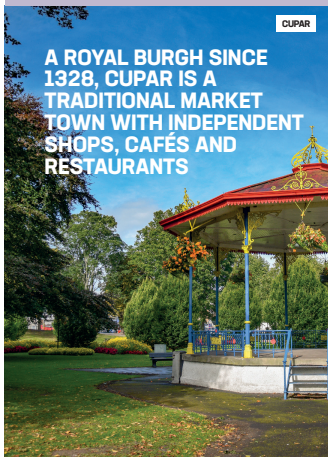


The Current Welcome to Fife Z-Map for North Fife, developed in partnership with the LTA



FIFE PILGRIM WAY

The 64-mile Fife Pilgrim Way starts at **Culross** and **North Queensferry**, and meets in **Dunfermline** before winding through the less well-known areas of the Heartlands and North Fife. The Markinch to Ceres route passes medieval landmarks, and picturesque villages en route to St Andrews. The route has easy sections which offer a few hours' walking or a long-distance challenge.



WHERE NATURE MEETS HISTORY

www.welcometofife.com/region/north-fife

NORTH FIFE IS AN AREA OF ROLLING HILLSIDES, FARMLAND AND COASTAL VIEWS. THE AREA STRETCHES FROM THE TAY ESTUARY IN THE NORTH AND LOMOND HILLS IN THE WEST TO THE UNSPOILT EXPANSE OF TENTSMUIR FOREST IN THE EAST, CENTRED ROUND THE CHARMING HISTORIC MARKET TOWN OF CUPAR.



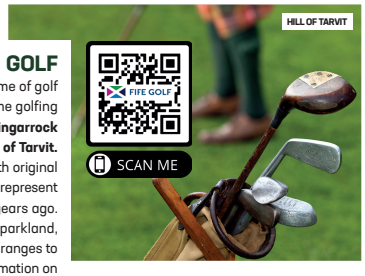
FAMILY FRIENDLY

Enjoy a great day out with all the family. Get close to the animals at **The Scottish Deer Centre and Wildlife Park**, **Fife Zoo**, or walk an alpaca at **Bowbridge Alpacas**. Visit the **Mega Maze** from July-October and funyard from March-November at **Cairnie Fruit Farm**.



A NATURAL PLAYGROUND

Discover North Fife's natural wonders: woodlands, mountain hikes, and coastal walks. The expansive **Lomond Hills** covers 25 square miles of moorland, lochs, and farmland. **Tentsmuir** offers enchanting forest trails, sandy dunes, and abundant wildlife. Enjoy outdoor activities like walking, cycling, horse riding and fishing.



GOLF

Fife is recognised as the home of golf and the North of Fife has some golfing gems. Experience the unique **Kingarrock Hickory Golf Course** at **Hill of Tarvit.** Where you can play 9 holes with original hickory golf clubs and balls that represent the feel and distance of 100 years ago. North Fife has a range of parkland, heathland, links and driving ranges to play. For comprehensive information on courses in the area visit Fife Golf's website.





FOOD & DRINK

Savour Fife's culinary delights with fresh fruits from **Cairnie Fruit Farm** and organic foods from **Pillars of Hercules**. Indulge in acclaimed restaurants, pubs and cafés, including **Kitschnbake**, **The Newport**, **The Peat Inn**, **The Boars Head**, and the **Inn at Pitlessie** offering **homemade dishes** made with **local produce**. Try a unique immersive food and drink experience in '**The Hide at Lindores**' overlooking the longest river in Scotland. Cupar is home to the world-renowned **Fisher & Donaldson fudge doughnut**, which you can enjoy in their flagship store. Experience North Fife's **distillery** scene. Historic **Lindores distillery**, dating back to 1494, offers **traditional whisky** crafted from locally grown barley. For something different, visit **Tayport Distillery**, a family-owned business producing **premium spirits** like vodka, gin, and Eau de Vie using produce from **local farms**.



GARDENS

Discover stunning estates and gardens around North Fife with **walled gardens**, **greenhouses**, award winning **artwork**, **garden café's** and **festivals**. The wonderful gardens of **Backhouse Rossie Estate**, **Teasses Estate**, **Falkland Estate**, and **Hill of Tarvit** have something for everyone. Backhouse Rossie host the **National Daffodil festival** in April, or why not join a garden workshop at Teasses Estate.



HISTORY & HERITAGE

Discover the rich heritage of North Fife. Visit conservation villages, **Falkland's majestic palace** and famous **Outlander locations**, Hill of Tarvit's **Edwardian mansion**, and the significant **abbeys of Balmerino** and **Lindores**. Explore Cupar's market town at the **Heritage Centre** and visit the **Fife Folk Museum** in **Ceres** to learn about the story of the people of Fife.



FIFE COASTAL PATH

Explore the Fife Coastal Path, 117 miles of quaint fishing harbours, atmospheric castles, historic villages and industrial heritage. The **St Andrews** to **Newburgh** section captures the essence of North Fife's beauty, from rich seabird habitats to playful seals and occasional dolphins. Discover coastal villages, harbours and **Tentsmuir beach** immersed in centuries of history and heritage.



TAYPORT HERITAGE TRAIL

Discover the history and heritage of Tayport by completing the Tayport Heritage Trail. The 4 mile route describes the area from 1770 through to 1966 when the **Tay Road Bridge** was introduced. The route links to the **Fife Coastal Path** and has local refreshment stops along the way at The **Larick Centre** and **Harbour Café**.