SCOTO®
PRESS PAUSE




## COMMUNITY LED DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT, MANAGEMENT AND PROMOTION

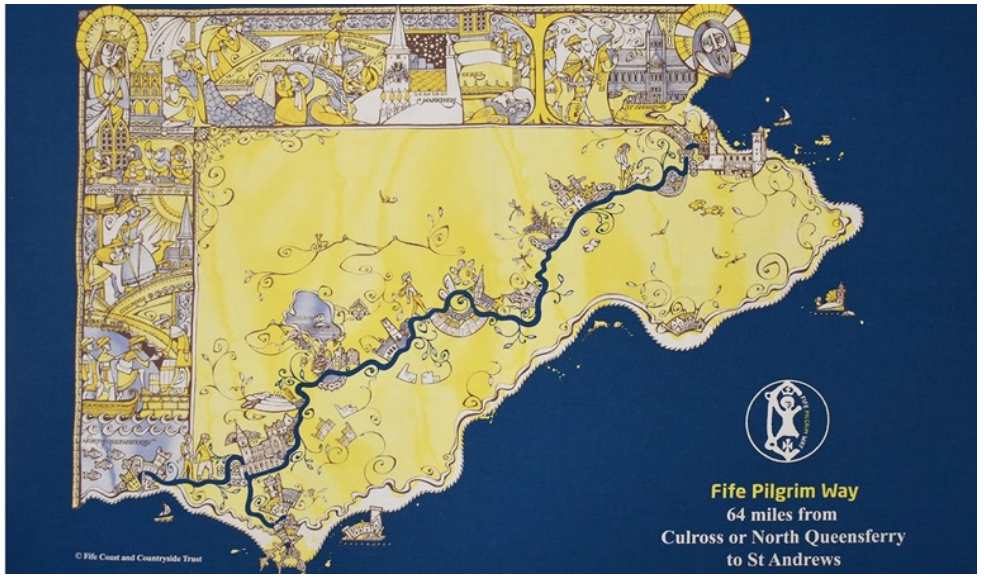
# CITY OF DUNFERMLINE, FIFE

30 September 2025

# 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: Fife Council



# PRESS PAUSE®

# CITY OF DUNFERMLINE, FIFE

This Press Pause ® initiative has been funded through Climate Action Fife with funding from
the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Fife Council.
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

CLIMATE ACTION FIFE

Funded by UK Government

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## PRESS PAUSE® IN DUNFERMLINE, FIFE

The Dunfermline Workshop took place on 30 September 2025 in the Abbey Church Hall. SCOTO met with various local business and community interests. 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 Dunfermline 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 Dunfermline in general and linked to its relationship with the Fife Pilgrim Way.

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# A: CITY OF DUNFERMLINE: PRESS PAUSE® AT A GLANCE

The SCOTO Press Pause® workshop for the City of Dunfermline took place on 30 September 2025 and brought together over 20 local business, community and tourism stakeholders to reflect on how tourism is currently playing out in the city and how it could better serve local priorities in the future.

Overall, sentiment towards tourism in Dunfermline is positive. Participants expressed strong pride in the city, confidence in its potential, and a shared ambition to do more with what Dunfermline already has. There is a clear belief that the city is under-achieving relative to the quality of its heritage, location and assets, and a strong willingness to work collaboratively with partners to address this.

**Key Strengths**

- Exceptional heritage offer spanning over 1,000 years, including Dunfermline Abbey and the heritage quarter, the Robert the Bruce and St Margaret connections, the Carnegie legacy and Pittencrief Park
- Compact historic core with free, high-quality attractions, independent shops and cafes and strong collaboration between heritage organisations
- Growing visitor numbers, including cruise visitors, pilgrims on the Fife Pilgrim Way, and day-trippers
- Strong local pride, partnership working and community capacity, with an above-average number of charities and active community groups
- Good transport connections to Edinburgh and the wider Central Belt, positioning Dunfermline as a potential hub destination
- Dunfermline's longstanding twinning with Trondheim and the pilgrim centre at Nidaros Cathedral where nine long distance St Olav pilgrim ways converge

**Key Challenges**

- Lack of visitor accommodation, notably luxury and budget one-night stays, limiting dwell time and spend
- Limited bookable experiences, tours and trails to encourage visitors to explore more deeply, and the travel trade to spend more time in the city
- Fragmented visitor information, signage and digital presence, making the city difficult to navigate for first-time visitors
- Gaps in city-level tourism infrastructure, including public toilets, coach and motorhome provision
- Dunfermline's national significance not widely understood
- Climate action and nature assets are present but not visible or packaged for visitors

**Strategic Opportunities**

- Position Dunfermline as a key staging point and hub on the Fife Pilgrim Way, including consideration of a pilgrim centre and budget hostel
- Position Dunfermline as a hub for exploring the immediate area and other Scottish cities – notably Edinburgh, Perth, Striling and Dundee.
- Develop a community-led place brand that reflects Dunfermline's distinctive heritage, creativity and spirit of generosity
- Create joined-up walking routes, trails, guided experiences and events to increase dwell time and dispersal across the city
- Strengthen visitor information and wayfinding, supported by a clear city map and improved digital coordination
- Use community-led tourism to help deliver local priorities around inclusive growth, skills, youth opportunity, wellbeing and climate action

**Overall Conclusion**

Dunfermline has strong community led foundations on which it can build to become a leading exemplar of a community-led, sustainable city destination, and especially linked to its heritage significance and position on the Fife Pilgrim Way.

By improving coordination, strengthening its place brand, addressing accommodation gaps, for walkers in particular, and making better use of its existing assets, tourism can ensure that the social, environmental and economic benefits of heritage can be more effectively realised for the local community whilst offering visitors a richer and more meaningful experience.

There is a particular opportunity to develop a pilgrim centre with accommodation that will position Dunfermline as an important hub for the Fife Pilgrim Way and be a catalyst for building its relationship with Trondheim and the St Olaf's pilgrim routes and connections.

# B: BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

## INTRODUCING COMMUNITY TOURISM

Community 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

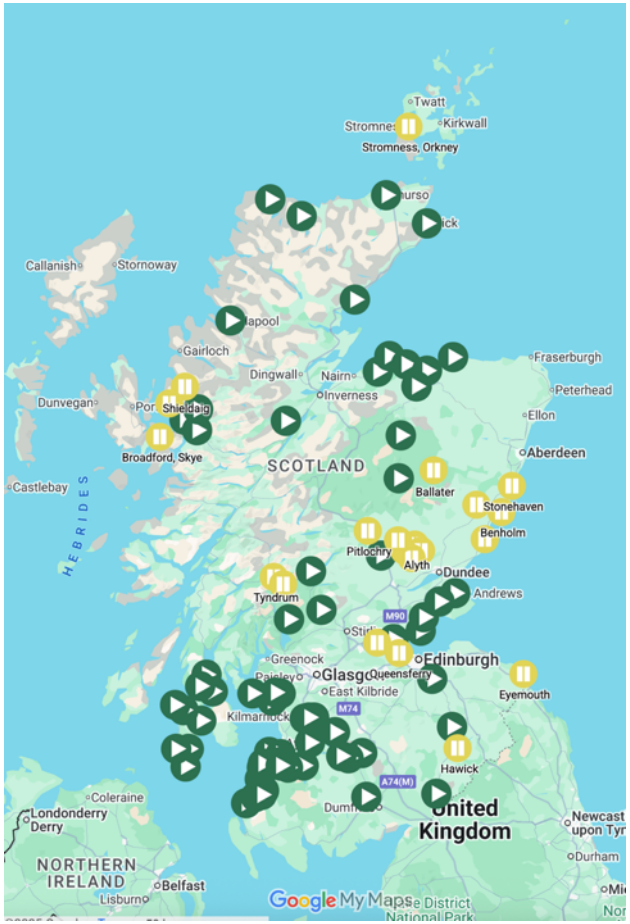
- Technology is revolutionising travel, tourism and everyday lives
- Digital content is an increasingly important source of travel inspiration
- Visitors are now seeking to slow down, meet local people, have authentic experiences
- Everyone is much more conscious of their wellbeing
- We are increasingly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

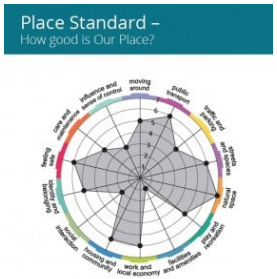



## LOCAL CONTEXT

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.



# PRESS PAUSE®
# CITY OF DUNFERMLINE, FIFE – MAIN REPORT


















# C: SETTING THE SCENE: CITY OF DUNFERMLINE

## CITY OF DUNFERMLINE

- Dunfermline is located close to the northern shore of the Firth of Forth
- Dunfermline has a population of just under 60,000
- Dunfermline was first recorded in the 11th century
- Dunfermline became Scotland's newest city in 2022
- Dunfermline is 18 miles travel distance from Edinburgh and 40 miles from Glasgow
- Dunfermline has a direct rail link to the City of Edinburgh




## 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 Markinch.

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.

This Press Pause Report sets out the key findings and lists several quick win and longer-term recommendations for Dunfermline to consider as part of their journey in community led tourism and linked to plans that are already being hatched for St Drosdan's Church by their new SCIO.

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 – CITY OF DUNFERMLINE

Dunfermline is listed as one of 509 towns in Scotland with the full listing here. This provides very useful socio-economic data about the city, trends and the ability to compare with other Scottish towns.

Dunfermline is described as: *a major service centre for southwestern Fife. It is an historic town which became the de facto capital of Scotland in the 12th century. The abbey dates from this period and reflects the close connection between church and state which would last until the Union of Crowns and the Reformation. Early industries were in the textile sector with a specialisation in linen and damask. Today key employers are BSKYB, Amazon, Best Western, CR Smith, Lloyds, Nationwide and FMC Technologies. In the last 20 years the town has expanded considerably on the eastern side towards the M90. The Carnegie Trust is also based in the town, the birthplace of Andrew Carnegie.*




*The Dunfermline Inter-relationship diagram on the USP website.*

This socio-economic data provides an excellent understanding of local strengths that could lend themselves to community led tourism or issues that purpose driven community led tourism could address. Of note Dunfermline has an above average number of charities per head and there could be scope to explore community led tourism initiatives they could focus on or support.



## CITY OF DUNFERMLINE: COMMUNITY STRUCTURES

There are 13 **Community Council** areas within Dunfermline with four currently disbanded or inactive:

**Active Community Councils:**

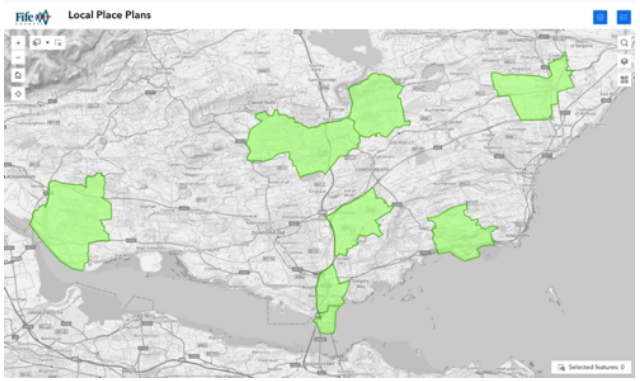
- Abbeyview
- Central Dunfermline
- Halbeath and Duloch
- Headwell
- South Dunfermline
- Touch and Garvock
- Townhill
- Bellyeoman
- Crossford

**Disbanded/Inactive Community Councils**

- Wellwood
- Izatt Avenue and Netherton
- Milesmark and Baldridgeburn
- Kingseat

**Local Place Plans**

At present there are no Local Place Plans registered for the Dunfermline area.



**Community Development Trust**
There isn't a Community Development Trust covering the City of Dunfermline.

However, there is an active Dunfermline Regeneration Trust which has a similar remit. Dunfermline Regeneration Trust began in 2016 as the Friends of Pilmuir Works. It later expanded to cover the city and is a SCIO.

The focus of DRT is on *"delivering urban regeneration and the advancement of the arts, heritage and culture in particular, restoring and preserving the historical, cultural, architectural and built heritage of the city of Dunfermline to improve the lives of the people of Dunfermline."*

Key projects include:

- **Dunfermline Media City** – creating a vision of Dunfermline as a centre of excellence for filmmaking and the creative digital arts, with pathways into education and employment.
- **Dunfermline Skate Park** – fundraising and design to refurbish the skate park
- **The Tower Burn Trail** – Developing a new arts, cultural, heritage and active travel trail through the hidden heart of Dunfermline, linking to St Margaret's Cave, the Wee Glen, Wooers Alley, Buffies Brae and the old railway line at Golfdrum

These projects, especially the Tower Burn Trail, are relevant to tourism and each offer potential to support community led tourism enterprises.

From a climate action and nature perspective the **Dunfermline Greenspace SCIO** was set up in 2023 and is owned and run by the community. It was set up to support local groups and projects linked to the delivery of the Dunfermline Greenspace 2030 strategy. It is a membership organisation and is dedicated to improving the public spaces of Dunfermline for the benefit of the health and wellbeing of the residents of the community, which clearly also benefits visitors who opt to explores these greenspaces.

Of note, the **Dunfermline Heritage Partnership** played an active role in supporting Dunfermline Abbey who led this SCOTO initiative.

**Other Community Led Groups in Dunfermline**
There are several community led groups operating in the City of Dunfermline some being city-wide and others operating at a more local level. These cover various sector interests and charitable purposes

Not all, but some of these will have potential to develop community led visitor experiences directly or support initiatives being progressed by others. It is important to stress that tourism may not be their primary driver, but community led tourism can bring in much needed revenue to support long term sustainability.

# CITY OF DUNFERMLINE: 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'.

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

***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.*




**West Fife Local Tourism Association (LTA).**
The group's objective is to increase visitor numbers within the area, work in collaboration to develop local tourism projects and to highlight opportunities to businesses. They are one of six groups that feeds in to Welcome to Fife. Their Membership is open to all hospitality, leisure, and tourism businesses in Dunfermline, Culross, North Queensferry, and the wider West Fife area.
DWFLTA operate a closed Facebook page for members




**Dunfermline Tourism Action Plan 2023**
A Tourism Action Plan is in place for the city setting out a series of actions to support the sector with a focus on place building, investment in marketing, product and experience development. The Council leads on this and has various actions being progressed. There are three catalyst projects – Pittencrieff Development Plan, High Street Gap Site and St Margaret's House Development. The actions are set out under four themes;

- Pride of Place
- Dunfermline Experience
- City Competitiveness
- Industry Innovators

Under City Competitiveness there is a specific action for a sustainable tourism programme with the aim of Dunfermline being recognised as a "Sustainable Destination".

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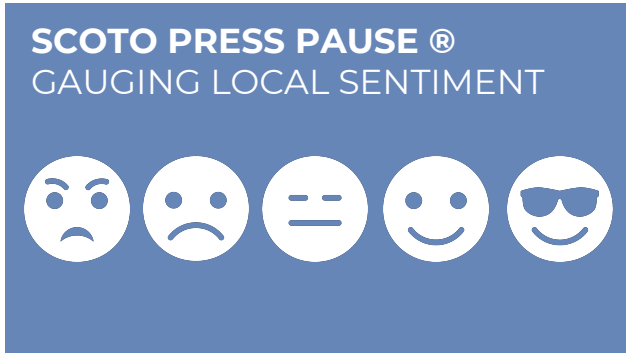
# D: CITY OF DUNFERMLINE PRESS PAUSE® FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Over 20 individuals attended the Press Pause Workshop from the Dunfermline area and representing a wide range of sectors and including community and business interests.

- Cafe owners 3
- Accommodation providers 1
- Pilgrim Way support services 3
- Retailer 3
- Creative sector 2
- Attraction operators 2
- Community representative 1
- Business Association 1
- Digital services 2
- Tourism Association 1

## TOPICS EXPLORED AT THE WORKSHOP

The workshop covered several inter-related conversations exploring local sentiment towards tourism; the geographic destination in the eyes of locals; competitors and comparators; the changing visitor profile; destination competence; place branding and measuring the impact of tourism on the city.




## 1. LOCAL SENTIMENT

When asked to share their current personal sentiment towards tourism in the city using emojis, most participants were happy with one extremely happy, a few feeling neutral and only one unhappy. The overall sentiment is positive and there is a clear sense of ambition for the city and belief in its potential. There is a shared sense of current under achievement and a will to address this together, and to work with strategic partners.

- *"Dunfermline, on the face of it, has it all but really needs to do more with what it has – and market it to the right audiences"*
- *"Since 1990 the town centre has deteriorated and many ideas that were floated didn't happen"*
- *"There are pockets of great things but need everyone to speak the same language"*
- *"Looking back, you can see the trajectory mapping out – how do we 'reboot?'"*
- *"Dunfermline being designated as a city in 2022 has been a real positive – we need to make it work for the city and beyond"*
- *The Fife Coastal Path is facing major issues with coastal erosion, and the Fife Pilgrim Way provides a real alternative"*




## 2. DEFINING THE DESTINATION

When considering the 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 and historic considerations. However, this is less relevant in the case of Dunfermline with a population of nearly 60,000 and the city split into 13 community council areas.

The historic core is of direct relevance to visitors and an important consideration but as a small city key considerations are how easy it is to get out and about in the parks and local walks. The hills and coast are both accessible from the city.

A key consideration is the desire to get people to dwell longer and enjoy more. All agreed the wider city was the right basis to define the destination of Dunfermline.

# 3. CURRENT THOUGHTS ON TOURISM

## WHATS WORKING IN DUNFERMLINE?

Initial thoughts shared at the workshop:

- Tourists do exist, they are coming and feels like higher numbers since pre covid
- Cruise ships on the Forth are coming to the city – Cruise Forth do bring people
- Cruise ships do create a 'buzz'
- Tours are increasing
- Businesses are open 7 days during summer and busy
- Good nighttime economy
- Good city ambassadors in non-tourism businesses
- City status is resonating with the US market (an example)
- A city tourism strategy is in place
- There are better boards and maps for visitors
- Getting more promotion from VS and Welcome to Fife than previous
- Seeing more articles on Dunfermline as a place to visit
- When visitors are here, they are blown away
- Strong pride of place (in 2018 the place standard measure was very high)
- Breadth of heritage offer spans over 1000 years
- The heritage quarter is compact with a lot to see
- Everything is free
  Heritage attractions are very collaborative and not competitive
- Coach friendly status (additional work being done as only 4 parking bays)
- See a lot of day-trippers
- FPW walkers are evident – attracts overseas visitors
- Leaflets on food etc are used in accommodation
- Dunfermline is close to other attractions – could be used as a hub/base
- Free shuttle bus to Kingsgate – but not promoted to visitors

## WHATS NOT WORKING IN DUNFERMLINE?

Initial thoughts shared at the workshop:

- The city isn't as joined up as it could be
- People do come but don't know about Dunfermline and its significance in Scottish history
- People tend to wander around – no idea what is in this compact city
- No leaflets promoting Dunfermline in Edinburgh Waverley (as an example)
- Cruise ship tours are tricky as the tour and food is paid for in advance and then don't spend locally
- Poor bus and coach parking
- Rosyth free service bus to city not well used or promoted to visitors
- Are free services and attractions underselling the offer?
- Very limited accommodation for FPW in the city
- National cycling route by passes the city centre – easy to miss the detour
- No motorhome or campervan parking – see 'wild camping' in school grounds and car parks
- Camping for independent walkers in the city isn't easy/possible
- Guidebooks don't take visitors through the shopping streets – missed opportunity
- Lack of accommodation for visitors is a key issue
- Self-catering is mainly limited to 2-night minimum stays – not good for walkers
- No leaflets about the city
- Majority of cruise ships have tours into Edinburgh – Dunfermline isn't on their radar

## WHAT COULD BE DONE DIFFERENTLY/BETTER

Initial thoughts shared at the workshop:

- Headset tours – self guided and a business opportunity
- Develop organised tours and hop on bus trips for independent travellers on cruises
- Reconsider 'free' offer and package bookable experiences
- Channel pride into action
- Develop 'buy local' with Scotland's Towns Partnership
- Publish new leaflets and maps (they are welcomed by visitors)
- Develop the Rosyth bus link as 'an offer'
- Resurrect the heritage bus
- Develop cycle friendly infrastructure
- Develop provision for motorhome and camping especially in business car parks
- Develop online material into a Dunfermline Leaflet of attractions and experiences for displays in Edinburgh Waverley and Cruise ship packs
- Develop a map with key attractions, walks, cycle routes and facilities (NB LTA is looking at Z-card maps)
- Intown signage and information boards at key locations
- Develop a trail for visitors to follow
- City to city offers – linking with Edinburgh and Stirling Perth and Dundee
- New conference centre at the Campus – scope for more events but overnight accommodation is an issue for multi-day events

# 4. CITY OF DUNFERMLINE COMPETITORS AND COMPARATORS

A useful exercise is to consider communities/ areas that are either direct competitors or comparators from elsewhere Learning exchanges to comparator communities can be very fruitful.

## DUNFERMLINE COMPETITORS

**ST ANDREWS** – strong draw and appeal for heritage, golf, independent shops – strong short break offer
**EAST NEUK OF FIFE** – main draw for short breaks in Fife
**EDINBURGH** – cruise ships to the Forth focus on the capital city
**DUNDEE** – strong day trip appeal with the V&A and waterfront development
**PERTH –** Concert hall and redevelopment of museum is helping attract short breaks – decent accommodation offers
**STIRLING** – the castle is a prime draw and seems to connect well with the city centre
.

## DUNFERMLINE COMPARATORS:

**FALKLAND** – presents their history, green spaces and independent shops as a package - Falkland Estate provides accommodation
**DUNKELD** – major parking issues. Hotels offer 2–3-night packages and have developed the towns reputation as more than a stopover on the A9 with activities (eg fishing)
**DUNDEE** – ambitious city that has transformed its appeal and footfall with major investment in V&A as a catalyst for further cultural initiatives.
**INVERNESS** – significant accommodation offer and acts as a hub for a much larger area – Inverness Castle project as a hub for the wider area

# 5. FIFE & DUNFERMLINE VISITOR PROFILE

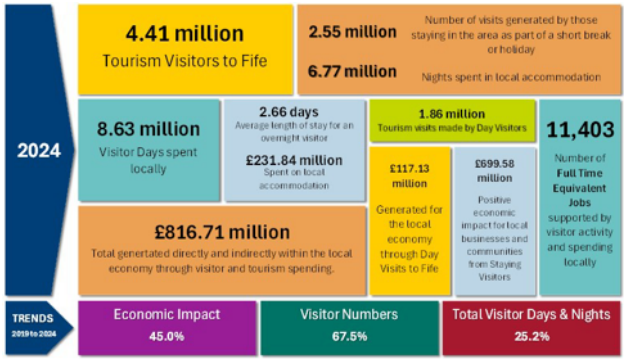
## STEAM DATA

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
- The 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

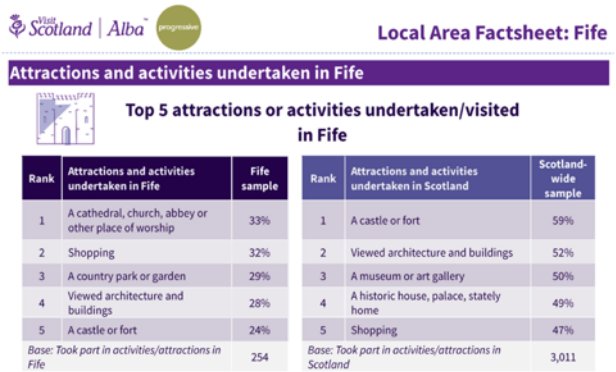
Using data from the International Passenger Survey 2024 and Great Britain Tourism Survey 2024, VisitScotland state that Fife experienced:

- 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 |

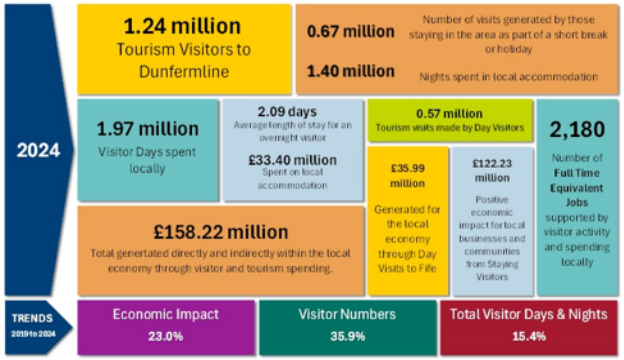
*Extract from VisitScotland Visitor Survey 2023 Local Area Fact Sheet for Fife.*

## DUNFERMLINE STEAM DATA

VisitScotland data is not broken down to a more local level, but Fife Council do receive STEAM data for Dunfermline and West Fife.

The STEAM data for 2024 states that Dunfermline and West Fife

- Welcomed 1.237m visitors and 1.965m visitor days
- 54% of all visitors stayed overnight
- Tourism generated £158.22million in economic impact which is an increase of 23% from 2019 when economic impact was £128.61m




*Summary of STEAM data for Dunfermline and West Fife in 2024*

This data suggests that Dunfermline plays a notable role in Fife with approximately a third of all tourism visitors to Fife coming to this area. However, the economic impact is a fifth of the total for Fife which suggests spend per head is lower. Exploring ways of enhancing the opportunities to spend is an important consideration.

## DUNFERMLINE VISITOR PROFILE – PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

An appraisal of what participants are seeing and would like to see in Dunfermline revealed:

### PAST

- Mainly day trips to specific attractions and an older demographic
- Part-day visits as part of a bigger tour
- VFR - visiting friends and family

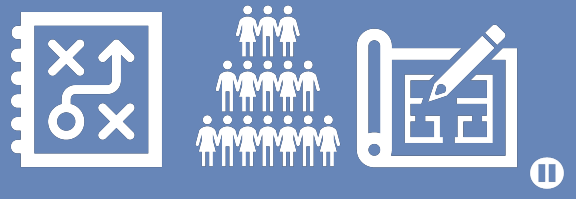
### PRESENT

- Similar - Day trippers and VFR
- More cruise ship tours
- Pilgrim walkers
- Edinburgh event stays (cheaper accommodation and travel into Edinburgh)

### FUTURE – WHAT IS DESIRED

- 2+ night stays exploring the city
- Outdoor and active market – golf, walking, cycling
- Dunfermline being used as a hub location to explore the city and wider area and enjoy the local night-time economy
- Pilgrim way stop over – budget 1-night accommodation

**SCOTO PRESS PAUSE ®**
APPRAISING WHAT MATTERS IN THIS COMMUNITY



## 6. WHAT MATTERS LOCALLY

The '**Our City of Dunfermline Area CLD Action Plan**' sets out five priorities for the community:

**Improving Life Chances:** Providing learning and personal development opportunities for all ages, especially disadvantaged communities and families, to help overcome barriers to participation and improve job prospects.
**Stronger Communities:** Building resilient and inclusive communities by supporting local groups, promoting community leadership, and enhancing community voice structures to influence local decisions.
**Youth Development:** Focusing on young people (ages 11-21), particularly those who leave school without a positive destination, by providing youth work approaches, social development experiences, and tracking achievements to ensure positive transitions.
**Learner Pathways:** Collaborating with Fife College and other training providers to establish clear pathways from community-based learning into formal education, training, or employment.
**Addressing Inequality:** Utilising data to identify needs and gaps in current delivery, focusing resources on areas of high

deprivation, and actively working to address poverty in Dunfermline.

Four priority actions are identified which are each relevant to tourism delivery and benefit:

- **Opportunities for all** – tackling poverty levels, educational attainment, health and mortality
- **Thriving Places** – tackling access to affordable housing, town centre attractiveness, crime and anti-social behaviour reduction, and access to outdoor, cultural and leisure opportunities
- **Inclusive Growth and Jobs** – tackling level of economic activity and employment, increase in visitor numbers and tourism spend
- **Community Led Services** – tacking joined up public services, involvement in local decision making, planning and delivering services.

This plan clearly identifies tourism growth as a priority and advocates community led involvement. Community led tourism provides several opportunities to support the delivery of this plan.

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## 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 each of 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 and ratify project 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** | Dunfermline Abbey, the Abbot House and Pittencrief Park have had a long tradition of attracting visitors and welcoming the travel trade. | | Some of the attractions are operated by third sector partners and are free to enjoy. Making visitors more aware of the role of the third sector could attract more donations. This tradition is strongly linked to the heritage offer – scope to refresh this through a new place brand? |
| 2 | **Sence of Place outwith the area** | A concern that today many people outwith Dunfermline no longer appreciate its place in history as the ancient capital and more importantly the wealth of things to see and do. Dunfermline is no longer part of the curriculum – keen to address this. | | A community led refresh of the Place brand to create something more contemporary and relevant |
| 3 | **Features & Attractions** | Significant assets - including<br>• Dunfermline Abbey & Palace<br>• The Abbot House<br>• Dunfermline Carnegie Library and Galleries<br>• Andrew Carnegie Birthplace<br>• St Margarets Cave (currently closed)<br>• Pittencrief Park<br>• Alhambra Theatre<br>• Carnegie Hall<br>'The Heritage Quarter' and medieval townscape | | This is a strength with scope for joined up itineraries and local walking tours that include the attractions and share stories from the past. The Alhambra Hall has a strong events programme and could be more of a catalyst for overnight and extended stays linked to local experiences, food and drink |
| 4 | **Culture & Heritage** | 'On the right trajectory' but need much greater awareness of what is on offer and to develop more experiences | | Development of more experiences including local guided walks and use of heritage attractions or events and performances |
| 5 | **Wildlife & Nature** | A hidden quality of the city – much better known for its built environment but also have great opportunities for walking eg St Ninians Walkway, cycling linked to the national cycle route, swimming, sail boarding at Loch Fittie | | Develop a map of local outdoor features and attractions and self-guided trails (check what is happening with Love Fife and their Z-maps in other LTA areas)<br>Better promote the outdoor assets including links from the national cycle route into the city |
| 6 | **Activities & Experiences** | A notable gap and major opportunity | | Scope out opportunities to offer guided walks and tours using local guides, plus opportunities for bike hire linked to the rail station<br>Consider an annual week-long heritage festival with each attraction offering unique experiences with local groups (eg performance, guiding, exhibitions) |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **7** | **Visitor Accommodation** | Arguably one of Dunfermline's major shortcomings:<br>Insufficient quantity or quality<br>Very limited 1-night stay options for pilgrim way walkers, theatre goers (limits dwell time)<br>Hotels are on the outskirts of the city – lacking in the centre | | Consider options for a pilgrim's hostel offering budget one-night stays and attracting touring groups and individuals.<br>Potentially link this with youth training in hospitality |
| **8** | **Food, Drink & Refreshments** | Good offer both day and night-time and sense that this is growing with new high quality independent businesses | | Consider potential pop-up options at the heritage attractions to extend dwell time, allow new businesses to trial ideas and profile what is in the town |
| **9** | **Events & Festivals** | There are a few things happening but not collated as a calendar<br>Examples include Bruce Fest, Afro-Caribbean event, Artisan market, Alhambra programme, sport events, weekly Park Run at Pittencrief Park<br>Of note 'whats on' and 'events' are key searches on Dunfermline.com | | Develop a Dunfermline events calendar and establish Dunfermline.com as the host with easy access for any local organisation to add events<br>Use the calendar as a clash diary to manage overlapping events and spot gaps for new events |
| **10** | **Makers and Producers** | Seen as a strength with Fire Station Creative gallery and studios and artisan makers | | Create a maker's trail with all makers and producers who are open to the public – create a map and downloadable leaflet on Dunfermline.com and consider print<br>Encourage existing attractions to showcase local crafts and produce |
| **11** | **Travel & Connectivity** | Intercity connections by bus and rail exist<br>Train station is not in the city centre<br>Halbeath station should ideally be renamed<br>Motorway and trunk road signage for the city and attractions is poor<br>Car parking is ok | | As part of a Dunfermline map ensure all public transport and parking options are displayed<br>Encourage attractions to provide good advice on public transport options and best parking options plus alternatives |
| **12** | **Retail** | City centre is doing okay especially compared to other towns and cities<br>Would welcome more independent shops<br>Sense that the offer is improving | | Ensure the proposed Dunfermline maps gives an indication of where the main shopping streets are<br>Consider buy local initiatives that incentivise locals and visitors to use the shops and cross sell each other |
| **13** | **Amenities & Infrastructure** | For a city there is a sense a few things are currently lacking especially public toilets and coach parking<br>Parking is provided in pockets and can be hard to orientate where best to park<br>Parking price is reasonable<br>Not obvious where larger vehicles like motorhomes should park<br>EV charging at different locations | | Provide a parking guide that differentiates between different types of users and needs (type of vehicle, length of stay) and EV options<br>Ensure readily available information on Dunfermline.com for medical needs – eg out of hours pharmacy, A&E |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **14** | **Visitor Information & Signage** | Lost the High Street VS VIC several years ago – was very well run and staff welcoming and knowledgeable<br>DCLG has a basic information hub – could be improved and better signposted<br>Do have some signs and interpretation boards – need cleaned | | Liaise with Welcome to Fife on their plans for the Love Fife info points and maps<br>Audit what existing signs and interpretation exists and identify gaps<br>Devise a simple signage and interpretation strategy.<br>Add QR codes to the blue plaques linking to more detailed information<br>Establish 'i' information boards with maps of key features and facilities to display at key locations – possible window displays as an interim measure<br>Approach DCLG to become a formal VIC and source volunteer ambassadors to assist |
| **15** | **Digital Presence & Marketing** | Decent presence but challenge of too many sites and not all businesses are on the platforms<br>Fife council and Welcome to Fife have done a lot but not well used<br>Websites and social media are project based and very disjointed | | Digital Dunfermline initiative to audit what does exist and who engages<br>Establish a singular umbrella presence and seek to integrate project related content as pages/links |
| **16** | **Climate Action** | There are a few groups doing different activity (eg food recycling) but no umbrella group at present (eg Greener Kirkcaldy)<br>No visitor facing activity | | Scope out a singular plan approach that brings all activity under one banner and helps visitors engage where possible |
| **17** | **Inclusion & Accessibility** | Challenge of the city centre being on a hill<br>Good disabled parking provision at key locations<br>Changing places toilet<br>Key attractions have provision for less able bodied and sight impaired but limited outwith these | | Audit the shops, café and attractions that are accessible and create mini itineraries/days out<br>Promote VisitScotland 'Detailed Access Guide' advice for businesses |
| **18** | **Community Assets** | Significant challenge as very little is community owned and mainly council or privately owned<br>A few facilities are run by the third sector (issue of not telling visitors and the public) – eg Abbot House, Fire Station Collective, Dunfermline Carnegie Library and Galleries | | Several needs could be addressed through community led tourism if land/building options can be explored with the council and others. Eg. Motorhome aire provision, pilgrim centre, budget hostel accommodation for pilgrim walkers and events.<br>Undertake a simple audit of possible land and buildings and optional uses based on the destination competency appraisal and known gaps<br>St Margarets Cave is currently closed – could be taken over by the community? |
| **19** | **People & Players** | A major strength with limited evidence of apathy and good partnership working on different projects and building and maintaining good relationships with the council | | Consider a Dunfermline Volunteers Fayre event to raise awareness of volunteering opportunities and allow different organisations to showcase what they do, provide sign up opportunities |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Example of Dunfermline Heritage Partnership which plans ahead and has the city's interests to the fore<br>Wider awareness of what is happening and how to get involved is possibly low | | |
| **20** | **Destination Collaboration** | Good relationships with VS – Caroline Warburton – and the Welcome to Fife team | | Share the findings of Press Pause and highlight where further collaboration could be developed – eg the place brand and proposition once developed |

## SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS

**There are several notable strengths and weaknesses emerging from the Destination Competency Appraisal, primarily linked to Dunfermline being a city and the perception of what should be available.**

The heritage offer is outstanding but could be more joined up and experiential. There are wildlife and nature offers but Dunfermline is not at all well-known for this and there are very few bookable activities and experiences although the potential is considerable.

The accommodation offer is a major constraint in terms of tourism given the notable lack of serviced and self-catering accommodation in and around the city, and also the limited range in quality. The city is well located to be a hub for multi-night stays offering both a wealth of things to see and do in the city plus further afield by train, bus or car, as well as walking the Fife Pilgrim Way to Culross, Inverkeithing/North Queensferry and Lochore Meadows. A very specific need is for one night budget accommodation to support walkers on the Fife Pilgrim Way which could also support overnights linked to events, touring and performances at the Alhambra.

A notable concern is that despite Dunfermline being a city, tourism infrastructure and amenities are lacking – notably toilets and coach parking/drop off. Instinct suggests a city should provide all amenities and infrastructure, but the workshop suggested several things are lacking. For several of the criteria having a city-wide audit and gap analysis is a key action that would ensure what does exist is joined up and there is evidence to support business and social enterprise investment in addressing the gaps.

The strength of people and players in Dunfermline is notable as is the contrasting lack of community owned assets which could be revenue earners and address some of the destination competency shortcomings. Overall, there feels like space for a tourism leadership group structure to harness and drive improvement in defining the Dunfermline Place Brand and joining up and developing how visitors experience and enjoy the city. The current local tourism association is an appropriate point for these discussions.

**Fife Pilgrim Way**

The destination competency appraisal flags several challenges and opportunities for Dunfermline as a staging point on the Fife Pilgrim Way. St Andrews was the ultimate destination for medieval pilgrims but today Dunfermline offers a significant number of related experiences which visitors need time to contemplate and enjoy. These include St Margaret's Cave and Dunfermline Abbey and the grounds.
The current lack of budget one-night accommodation could be limiting dwell time in the city.

At present there are no pilgrim centres on the Fife Pilgrim Way. There should be one at St Andrews as the 'end point'. However, given Dunfermline's current twinning with and growing relationship with Trondheim, which is where nine St Olavs ways converge, coupled with the aspiration for the Fife Pilgrim Way to be positioned as Scotland's premiere pilgrim route, there is considerable scope in creating a pilgrim centre in Dunfermline. There are key developments needed to support this aspiration and to ensure the route meets the Scottish Pilgrim Route Forums gold accreditation.

## 8. NOTABLE COMMUNITY LED TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES IN DUNFERMLINE

**Sense of Place** - Re-establish Dunfermline's sense of place linked to its exceptional role in Scotland's history and spirit of generosity (see Place Branding). Dunfermline is very well known for the Abbey and the place where Robert the Bruce is buried. There are, however, several other points of differentiation and scope to widen the appeal of the city.

**Features & Attractions** – Consider a dedicated space at the Abbey for a Pilgrim Centre with access to interpretation, services and facilities, and a programme of times/events to meet and walk with the Pilgrim Pastor. Consider collaborative/joint experiences and products that encourage visitors to enjoy more than one attraction and dwell longer in the city.

**Accommodation** - Consider opportunities for a community run hostel which provides budget one-night stays and could link with youth development and a dedicated pilgrim centre at the Abbey

**Events and Festivals** - Collate and present a Dunfermline Event Calendar on Dunfermline.com. Identify gaps in the calendar and consider small local events linked to heritage and other themes. Develop a new Dunfermline week-long event in the shoulder season building on the place brand. Liaise with the council on their plans to grow event activity in Dunfermline, Kirkcaldy and Levenmouth

**Travel & Connectivity** - Consider active travel itineraries bringing people by public transport to then explore by foot using existing trails and connecting local features of interest.

**Visitor Information** – Liaise with Welcome to Fife and the LTA on their plans for information point at the Dunfermline Carnegie Library and Galleries and the area Z-map and consider additional locations for info hubs. Create a poster based welcome and information map that can be displayed at key attractions and in windows/in a sealed frame at car parks and public transport points. QR code link for more information on Dunfermline.com

**Digital Presence** - Audit all digital presence and social media channels then develop a Digital Dunfermline initiative seeking to establish Dunfermline.com as the umbrella with pages and links to other sites and content

**Community Assets** - Review all existing third sector operations and develop a communication strategy to reinforce the charitable/purpose driven approach to their operation. Enter discussions with the council on possible asset transfers or partnership initiatives– eg information hub, toilets and changing, bunkhouse/hostel, permanent and short-term motorhome aires.



## INSPIRATION FROM ELSEWHERE

There are several opportunities for community led tourism enterprises in and around Dunfermline. 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

**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

## MANAGING VISITOR EXPECTATIONS

A key consideration for any destination is understanding and managing visitor expectations.

Visitors don't always do their research or may struggle to find current and up to date 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 free WIFI or 4G/5G to finding toilets, being able to use credit cards and exchange currency, 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 much less significant in urban areas but do need consideration and signposting.

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, reduced service provision, temporary diversions.

Recommendations include

- Ensure the new Love Fife information points are well signposted
- Develop/repurpose the Dunfermline visitor map to highlight key features and attractions, the Love Fife information points, and local services and facilities like ATMs, EV charge points, pharmacy, plus rail and bus interchanges, parking and cycling/walking trails.
- Integrate a simple version of the map in an information poster to display at the station and car parks and as a tear off map to be available at reception points
- Provide a downloadable version of the map on Dunfermline.com
- Develop a 'Be Local Dunfermline' open Facebook page for visitor enquiries and for local businesses and enterprises to post updates and features for locals and visitors - encourage all local businesses and organisations to link to this and promptly respond to visitor enquiries and queries [check what already exists and repurpose]

## 9. 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 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 Dunfermline 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 is an obvious action. And an even more impactful action will be to focus effort on encouraging locals in and around Dunfermline 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. Clever local marketing and promotion can have impact as can a Fife-wide campaign approach.

A significant contribution visitors can make is eating and buying local produce which has low food miles. Encouraging cafes, restaurants and shops to use and sell local produce is important as is ensuring this information is clear on menus and promotional material.

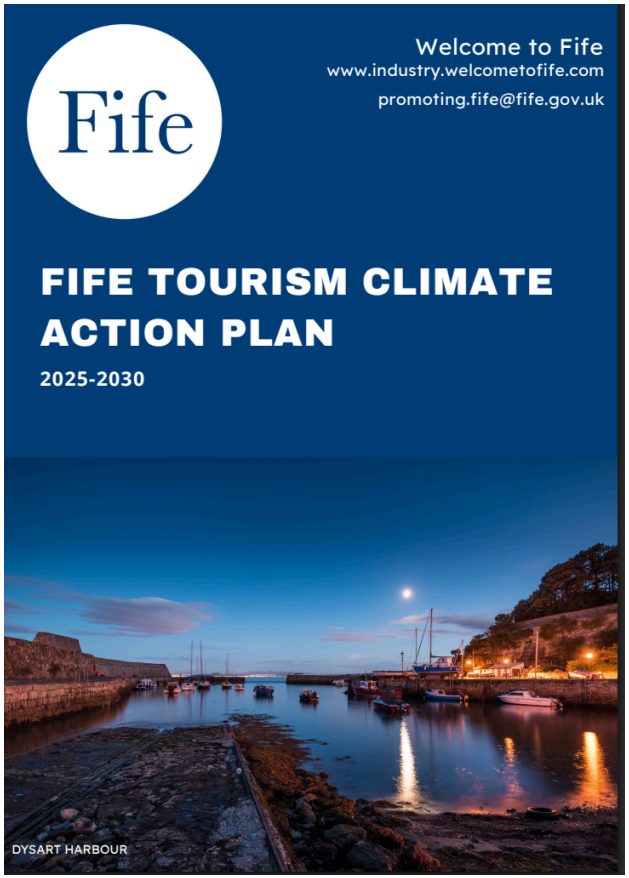
In terms of visitor facing providers, businesses and community groups with premises can reduce running costs, minimise food miles and differentiate themselves by adopting climate friendly practices. An increasing percentage of visitors are keen to ensure their visit has minimal climate impact and are 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 supporting local tree planting or litter pick initiatives - sometimes referred to voluntourism.

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

Green Tourism

Of note Fife Council has 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 recognising that there is a mainline train station, a network of local buses and active travel options but recognising that as a city things could be better connected and promoted, especially for visitors.

The city could readily be better promoted as a viable option by public transport either as a day trip or for overnights/short stays. The heritage quarter is compact so can readily be explored on foot by able-bodied visitors and active travel provision allows the wider area to be accessed. Furthermore, with the transport connections, the city could be promoted as a base for walking the southern sections of the Pilgrim Way. Dunfermline could readily be promoted as a pilgrim hub with options for exploring the links to Culross, North Queensferry and then north into the heart of Fife.

A further consideration which ties in with the Fife Local Transport Strategy 2023-2033 is the commitment to not growing traffic and instead looking to reduce how much people travel, switch to active travel and public transport and transition to zero emissions vehicles.

Encouraging locals to spend days out locally exploring the outstanding natural and cultural heritage features of Dunfermline will support climate action, as will developing and promoting new trails and ways to explore the city by active travel and public transport. Installing EV charge points for vehicles and bikes when upgrading infrastructure is another action.



A simple visitor facing climate action audit is recommended for Dunfermline, which will help everyone understand what is already happening in the city and then a plan can be developed to spell out how businesses and organisations can reduce their own impact and specifically 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 – with the local partner being Dunfermline Greenspace.

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, Business Gateway and other partners provide advice and training on climate action initiatives 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 businesses and enterprises, and the current cost of living crisis is hitting this sector hard. There has been increasing regulation with associated costs, plus additional costs for national insurance, energy and supplies. This means climate action can slip down their priorities so targeting any support schemes and grants will help and highlighting where initiatives can help save money.

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



Much of Dunfermline's tourism offer and opportunity relates to outdoor activity – events and festivals, heritage trails, outdoor activities including walking and cycling, and much more could be done with wildlife and nature. These activities face risks from climate related disruption. Dunfermline's topography makes it particularly prone to flooding and disruption, and this is only expected to worsen.

Outdoor events are a particular concern 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 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.

Climate action is therefore central to any community led planning and management of tourism in the city.

Appendix 1 sets out key considerations and pointers for auditing and then creating a community led tourism climate action plan for Dunfermline.

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





A key observation from the workshops was the rating of wildlife and nature as amber. This wasn't because there isn't much of a resource and more that this is an aspect of Dunfermline that is not, yet, packaged and promoted to visitors as a key part of the city-experience.



Dunfermline Greenspace, a community owned SCIO has several projects underway which are enhancing the city's green credentials and holds many events and hosts gardening clubs which could also appeal to visitors if they were aware of what is on offer.



Public parks, not least Pittencrief Park in the city and Townhill Country Park and Loch on the outskirts, are important green spaces and natural resources, as is the Lyne Burn which has had notable restoration works undertaken creating a 2.2km Green Corridor.



There are several bike trails and walking routes visitors can follow to explore and experience nature in the city, and of course, the Fife Pilgrim Way.

Together these provide varied opportunities for different abilities to explore Dunfermline on foot or with wheels, to enjoy the great outdoors, the city's heritage and culture, and stimulate mental and physical health and wellbeing.

Improvements to public greenspace and the regreening of key pedestrian routes, walkways and corridors will help connect habitats, build resilience during periods of extreme weather and reduce surface water flooding risk.

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 tourism climate action plan.




## 10. 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 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.




## 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 are now key to being found on the VS website and more generally.

## CITY OF DUNFERMLINE – "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 listing at the time of the workshop on VisitScotland for Dunfermline states:

**Dunfermline**

Dunfermline is Scotland's newest city – just a short trip north of Edinburgh across the iconic Forth Bridge. Once a royal capital, its ancient stones whisper tales of monarchs, monks, and times gone by. Today, Dunfermline is a place of culture and creativity.

**Top 7 things to do**:

1. Andrew Carnegie Birthplace Museum
2. Dunfermline Abbey and Palace
3. Jack O'Bryans
4. Pittencrief Park
5. Abbot House
6. Clan Mackenzie Routes
7. Alhambra Theatre




## WELCOME TO FIFE

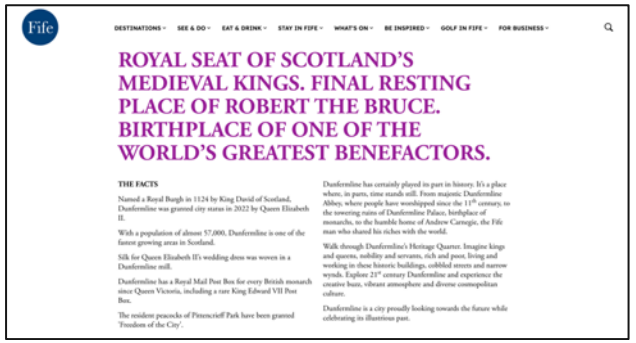
The current listing on Welcome to Fife for Dunfermline states:

**Dunfermline**

Dunfermline has certainly played its part in history. It's a place where, in parts, time stands still. From majestic Dunfermline Abbey, where people have worshipped since the 11th century, to the towering ruins of Dunfermline Palace, birthplace of monarchs, to the humble home of Andrew Carnegie, the Fife man who shared his riches with the world.

Walk through Dunfermline's Heritage Quarter. Imagine kings and queens, nobility and servants, rich and poor, living and working in these historic buildings, cobbled streets and narrow wynds. Explore 21st century Dunfermline and experience the creative buzz, vibrant atmosphere and diverse cosmopolitan culture.

Dunfermline is a city proudly looking towards the future while celebrating its illustrious past.



## FIFE PILGRIM WAY

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

**Dunfermline – A Miraculous Monarch**

'*There was a poor little woman, English by birth and race … who was afflicted for a long time with a very serious ailment … she fell headlong to the ground before the holy altar like a lifeless stone … But soon sadness was turned to joy, the health of her limbs restored to her.*' (Excerpt from the Miracula S. Margarite Scotorum regine [Miracles of St Margaret] 1245-63)

For hundreds of years Dunfermline has provided countless pilgrims with an inspiring destination. Magnificent Dunfermline Abbey is the burial place of many of Scotland's kings and queens, including King Robert the Bruce and Queen Margaret, who was later made a saint.

Many miracles are recorded as having taken place close to St Margaret's shrine, and a few Scottish queens wore her shirt for protection during childbirth. Medieval pilgrims who visited the abbey on her feast day of 16 November were promised a smoother journey to heaven. This made the arduous journey of pilgrimage worthwhile.

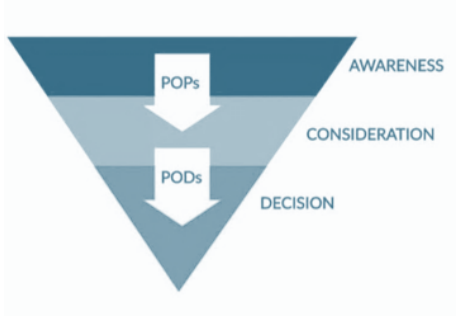
Several other local sites associated with pilgrimage and Saint Margaret may still be visited today, including the Head Well, Saint Margaret's Stone and St Margaret's Cave, where the Queen is said to have rested and prayed respectively.

## DEVELOPING THE DUNFERMLINE 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




## CITY OF DUNFERMLINE POPs

The destination Competence Appraisal demonstrated that the city has several attributes that confirm it is acceptable in calling itself a visitor destination with outstanding heritage features and attractions, parks, walks and trails, events, pubs and restaurants.

## CITY OF DUNFERMLINE'S USPs & PODs

Several points of differentiation and claims to fame were shared at the workshop and could readily be supplemented through further engagement:

- Scotland's ancient capital
- Where Robert the Bruce and other kings are buried
- Where Saint Margaret is buried
- Birthplace of King Charles I and David II
- Birthplace of Andrew Carnegie
- John Reid and Robert Lockhart from Dunfermline introduced golf to America
- The first Carnegie library in the world
- Home of Damask Linen
- Dunfermline Building Society was the first independent building society in Scotland
- Sky's largest call centre was developed in Dunfermline
- Mowi the biggest producer of farmed Salmon is based in Dunfermline
- Dunfermline hosts the national centre for wakeboarding and waterskiing – Town Loch
- Scotland's National Motorsport Centre is at Knockhill
- Home to Barbara Dickson

- The peacocks of Pittencrief have been granted 'Freedom of the City'
- Scotland's newest city (2022)
- Dunfermline Athletic FC twice won the Scottish Cup in the 1960s
- Dunfermline is on the spiritual Belinus Line/Spine of Albion
- Dunfermline was never a place of battle
- The concentration of notable built heritage of note – the heritage quarter
- Well connected to other cities




## PLACE BRANDING - INITIAL OBSERVATIONS

This list of USPs and PODs generated at the workshop demonstrate that Dunfermline has several points of interest which could spark reasons for visitors to be interested in the city. There will be many more which should be captured as part of next steps.

Dunfermline also has several themes to consider for product development and bespoke bookable experiences which could appeal to the travel trade as well as independent travellers.

**Dunfermline is a well-known place name in Scotland but there is a question mark over what it is known for and what to expect if visiting. It has strong heritage associations but is their significance well understood and sufficient basis to prompt a visit. Is there much more to Dunfermline?**

The destination competency appraisal flagged a concern that its sense of place as the ancient capital of Scotland has diminished in prominence for a variety of reasons.

This begs two inter-related questions.

1. Is this positioning the best hook for Dunfermline in current times? Although it was the ancient capital for a notable period, this is also claimed by other cities and possibly doesn't sufficiently differentiate Dunfermline and/or has less appeal today.
2. How else could Dunfermline be differentiated to attract more interest and benefit from tourism? What other characteristics differentiate Dunfermline and could trigger exciting product developments that would appeal to new markets?

## PLACE BRANDING – IDEAS

### City of Dunfermline – Creative and Generous

**Four of Scotland's cities have achieved UNESCO Creative Cities status being part of 350 cities designated worldwide. These designations bring to light how creativity has played a major role in their growth.**

**Glasgow – Creative City of Music**
**Edinburgh – Creative City of Literature**
**Dundee – Creative City of Design**
**Perth – Creative City of Craft & Folk Art**

Dunfermline has also enjoyed centuries of being creative and has reinvented itself several times. However possibly a truly differentiating form of creativity evident in Dunfermline is its association with generosity.

Generosity is inherently creative because if involves finding new, thoughtful and unconventional ways to give value, time or energy and embeds philanthropy and moving beyond transactional thinking. It fosters innovation and community as well as personal fulfillment. Of note these are embedded in the current national tourism strategy – Scotland Outlook 2030 – and the principles of regenerative tourism and wellbeing.

**St Margaret and Andrew Carnegie both have strong associations with the city and generosity was at the core of their actions.**

**St Margaret** among many charitable works established the Royal Mausoleum at Dunfermline Abbey and the ferry across the River Forth to carry pilgrims travelling to St Andrews which gave the towns of North and South Queensferry their names. She was buried in Dunfermline Abbey alongside her husband, Scottish King Malcolm III and her remains were then moved to a special shrine in the Abbey after her canonisation.





**Andrew Carnegie** was born in Dunfermline and became one of the richest Americans in history - and of note also became a leading philanthropist in the United States, in Great Britain and the British Empire. His story is told at the Andrew Carnegie Birthplace Museum in Dunfermline, and the Dunfermline Carnegie Library is the first of over 2,500 built across the world. He gifted Pittencrief Park to the people of Dunfermline.

## Dunfermline – the City that Gives

**Dunfermline was designated as Scotland's newest city in 2022 which has raised its profile, and more visitors are evident. The city itself now has an aspiration to use its city status not just to benefit the city but to also spread the benefits to the Kingdom of Fife and along the Fife Pilgrim Way. Dunfermline Heritage Partnership wants its incredible heritage associations to inspire the city's future.**

Dunfermline has an inherent spirit of generosity that differentiates it and through innovative product development could develop its place brand around this very special and unique characteristic.

Product development ideas could stem from celebrating relevant dates such as Carnegies birthday on 25 November and the annual St Margarets Pilgrimage event on 16 June in the city and St Margarets Feast on November 16. A week-long annual Dunfermline Festival of Giving in November could be developed which features walks and talks at the Abbey, Library and Birthplace Museum and collaborative events such as baton relays that connect people together in the act of giving and generosity and link key sites in the city - and also could work with the Fife Pilgrim Way connecting Dunfermline to North Queensferry and St Andrews.

The Scotland's Towns Partnership 'Understanding Scotland's Places listing reveals that Dunfermline has a higher-than-average number of charities per head of population. The workshop revealed that many of the heritage attractions are currently free to visit – a characteristic shared by Glasgow city. This enables locals and visitors to enjoy these attractions and focuses on inclusion. This suggested place brand and positioning enables the city of Dunfermline and its attractions to better explain this aspect of providing free entry and access and to encourage donations to enable sustainability, innovation and added value.

This place brand positioning also gives individual businesses and organisations scope to consider themed products linked to generosity which don't compromise their business viability (especially given current cost of living challenges) and focus more on added value and interesting collaborations.

Engaging in and promoting buy local with local city and Fife residents would work well.
All charities in the city can engage in different ways by doing something during the suggested festival week that works for them and their purpose and raises their profile.

The suggested volunteer fayre can be developed as part of this – an annual opportunity for charities and local organisations to share what they do and for people to sign up as volunteers. Voluntourism could be embedded with a lively programme of activities through the year for visitors.

These are simply ideas to spark the city and its citizen's imaginations with the creativity to develop actual products lying within the city – and the young people

**Dunfermline:**
**Scotland's ancient capital and newest city – immerse yourself in our city that keeps on giving**

This positioning based on 'kindness, generosity and philanthropy' could elevate Dunfermline's identity as the ancient capital of Scotland which embodied the very traditional acts of travel and transformation through pilgrimage to also become a leading destination in 21st century regenerative and transformative tourism. A very exciting and dynamic contrast.

Regenerative tourism is a holistic approach that seeks to leave a place better than it was found, focusing on restoring and enhancing local communities, environments and economies. There is much discussion about tourism needing to move from transactional to transformative and what that means in a destination.

Simple principles relating to local supply chains and retaining visitor spend in the local economy are key, as are visitors supporting purpose driven ventures within the destination and transforming the lives of locals.

With the suggested focus on generosity within Dunfermline this can also go beyond restoring and enhancing the place and ensure the experience is transformative for the host, the guest, the community and the place. It can be about physical and spiritual well-being of the individuals and




## 11. 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 use the recent survey 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.




## 12. RECOMMENDATIONS

There are several opportunities for the community to embrace community led tourism in the city. However, the community is not currently in direct control of suitable land or building assets to allow this to come to life so partnerships with the council and other players should be explored.

**SERVICES AND FACILITIES**

- A first and obvious consideration is **toilets** and potentially looking at better signposting and making toilets available to the public at some of the attractions and seeking donations for their use.
- **Visitor information** is also a key consideration where one of the venues – or more than one – could enhance the provision of information in a dedicated space and work with local volunteers on a rota system to welcome and advise visitors, again seeking donations and potentially a complimentary retail offer. Other communities have volunteer 'ambassadors' who, during busy periods, are out on the streets welcoming visitors and providing information. Welcome to Fife are introducing Love Fife information points with the Dunfermline one ion the Dunfermline Carnegie Library and

Galleries. Understand more about what is planned and how this could be enhanced/replicated at other attractions needs considered.

- Motorhomes are in the area and **'aire' provision** could be considered where no facilities are provided and users know they are welcome - and for a small fee can readily stop overnight. This could be at a site owned by the council and through an agreement helps the community offer this welcome and earn revenue.
- A further opportunity would be for interested locals to come together and do **walk leader training** to then have a series of regular walks available for visitors and locals to join taking walkers to key sites around the city with a local voice sharing insights. These can be built into health and well-being walks, and key is to have an online donation or payment system that visitors can readily find to know the times, book and make an online payment. SCOTO can readily help with this. It will be important these don't directly compete with local tour guides.

**DUNFERMLINE PLACE BRANDING**

Two key recommendations are to focus energy on a) the place brand for Dunfermline, and b) to package a range of new products to bring the place brand to life

a) **PLACE BRANDING** – Reference was made to previous attempts to brand the city and that this had not really moved beyond the Ancient Capital of Scotland. This is a point of differentiation as for several centuries it did play this role but other places in Scotland also claim this title so its credibility is not so much questioned but is diluted.

Suggestions are provided in this report which focus on a very clear point of differentiation, Dunfermline's association with generosity and philanthropy, and acts of charity. This offers tremendous scope to develop a new place brand that delivers on the promise, but which also immediately elevates Dunfermline as a forward-thinking destination focused on regenerative tourism and transformation for the visitor and the community.

b) **PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT** - there are already several ways for visitors to experience Dunfermline's associations with St Margaret and Andrew Carnegie at the Abbey, St Margarets' Cave, The Dunfermline Carnegie Library and Carnegie's Birthplace Museum. These could be linked by a themed trail or guided tour and a specific experience at each which better immerses the visitor (local or tourist) in the act of giving and philanthropy.

There is ready scope for new products to be developed with a key recommendation to start an annual festival, potentially in November linked to the Feast of St Margaret and Carnegie's birthday which allows all the charities in the area to come together and the larger attractions and businesses to develop collaborative products and experiences which will appeal to locals and much as visitors. This can start small and build at its own pace to ensure it is sustainable.

**CLIMATE ACTION**

As climate action is inextricably linked to tourism a key recommendation is to work with the LTA and Welcome to Fife on developing a simple climate action and tourism action plan for the city, 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 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 also 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 the city 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 also 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.

## A Dunfermline Festival of Giving / Philanthropy

The title isn't right, but the principle has been set out as part of the suggested place branding. This is an effective way of cementing and owning the place brand and ensuring the community are at the core of it first and foremost.
Many towns and cities in Scotland and beyond put energy into a collaborative week of celebration around a theme.

- Wigtown has its annual book festival which started as a daylong event following it being declared as Scotland's Book Town and it is now 10 days long after 25 years and attracts several thousand people to this remote village in Dumfries and Galloway.
- Following Press Pause, Lochcarron has now celebrated Tartan Week Lochcarron in September/October 2024 and 2025. They are taking the concept from New York's week-long festival and celebrating their exceptional tartan heritage linked to the highland clearances and a global brand using their name. This week-long celebration was a community event in 2024 and had a 'big tartan draw' in the village for the children, art exhibitions and workshops, themed menus, a grand ceilidh, heritage quiz and tartan fashion show. In year two there has been more of a focus on welcoming visitors.
- Callander, following Press Pause, have instigated their first Advent Callander with different businesses doing something special each day of the advent for customers – locals and visitors – crossing their threshold.

In all cases community cohesion has been a key outcome.

## Dunfermline's Role on the Fife Pilgrim Way

The Fife Pilgrim Way follows the traditional route of pilgrims travelling to St Andrews from the Forth and was launched in 2019. The FCCT and community partners on the route are keen to elevate this route to be a gold standard as defined by the Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum accreditation scheme and are also seeking to relaunch it in 2026.

St Andrews is the final destination but the importance of Dunfermline on this pilgrimage route could be much better acknowledged and profiled especially with the city being twinned with Trondheim 80 years ago.

Trondheim is where nine St Olav pilgrimage routes converge and lead to Nidaros Cathedral built on the burial site of Norway's patron saint King Olav II. It is often referred to Europe's pilgrimage centre.

Work is already underway to develop the relationship between Dunfermline and Trondheim and with direct reference to pilgrimage and the pilgrim routes.

Dunfermline with the Abbey and its associations with St Margaret could readily become a significant pilgrimage destination in its own right. However, to encapsulate the full experience it ideally needs to have a pilgrim centre where pilgrims and other walkers can meet and share their experiences and learn about the Scottish saints, not least St Margaret.

Dunfermline Abbey is an obvious location for this, and ideas are already being considered as to where this could be and what it would consist of. This Press Pause report reinforces

this as a key recommendation to enhance the experience for pilgrim walkers and reinforce the suggested place brand.

## BUILDING MOMENTUM IN THE CITY OF DUNFERMLINE

Based on the workshop discussions and findings, there are several opportunities Dunfermline could consider which would help tourism become much more embedded in the community with meaningful benefits - and not something that simply happens to the city.

The following are suggestions that would help build momentum and be a catalyst for wider engagement and local collaboration:

- Reach out to and work with the LTA to establish a Dunfermline Tourism Leadership Group with representation from key sectors and including businesses and community organisations
- Develop the Dunfermline place brand and descriptor and scope out new products and experiences with partners
- Consider a simple and distinctive logo for Dunfermline which conveys the Place Brand with confidence and intrigue
- Consider community led branded merchandise as a source of revenue
- Review the soon to be published Z-map to ensure key features and attractions, services and facilities, walks and trails, public transport and best parking spots are included, and it also links to more detailed information on Dunfermline.com
- Audit and map all the features of interest and which do and don't have existing interpretive panels at the location, develop a simple QR code-based poster/panel where nothing exists that links back to Dunfermline.com for more information
- Develop self-guided themed trails linking key sites and with simple plaques with QR codes linked to Dunfermline.com with basic (but growing) information for each location. Provide information at key parking locations about the trail and suggested times to complete the trail(s).
- Consider locations for simple visitor information panels which have a simplified version of the Dunfermline map as a panel with key information and a QR code link to Dunfermline.com for more in depth and up to date information
- Invite locals to create and share new photography, video and other content to reflect the place branding and visitor proposition and develop a Dunfermline Content Toolkit for all local partners to use
- Seek a meeting with Cruise Forth to better understand the cruise opportunities

This report collates the feedback from the various Press Pause conversations that took place during the workshop and then sets out various ideas and recommendations on possible ways to tackle the issues or grasp the opportunities.

The report provides a lot of food for thought based on what other communities in Scotland are doing in similar and not so similar circumstances and will trigger yet more ideas from local interests.

Every community is different and each has its own priorities, so a key next step is to bring representatives back together to consider the findings and recommendations and debate what action to take. This would allow an activity plan to be developed with some early actions and quick wins that don't necessarily need much resource and establish how to socialise what comes next to get further buy-in and resource.

Community cohesion is at the heart of community led tourism and Press Pause®. Developing a shared sense of belonging and strong positive connections will bolster the community and taking time to explore which ideas can best achieve this is an important next step.

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.

## 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 city to share the Press Pause findings and proposed activity plan to gather interest
- Establish (or repurpose an existing) BeLocal Dunfermline 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 Dundee to learn about their regeneration and tourism activity
- Agree a quick win project for the next tourist season to galvanise everyone (eg the map)




## 13. REFLECTIONS

**The Dunfermline Press Pause® workshop had an incredibly positive sense of partnership working and belief in the city and the possibilities. There was a notable belief in the role of young people and in presenting a city that is forward thinking. It is a city with several core strengths as a destination, but it also has some weaknesses not least its limited accommodation offers in terms of both quantity and quality.**

Its current positioning as the ancient capital of Scotland places perhaps too strong a focus on its heritage without immediately differentiating it from others making similar claims (Perth and Edinburgh) nor managing to bring to life its other assets and reasons for visiting.

Of note Dunfermline is a city that has reinvented itself several times from its days of pilgrimage, then mining and weaving through to being the world's leading manufacturer of Damask Linen and now hosting several business headquarters.

In addition to its many attributes as the ancient capital of Scotland it is also Scotland's newest city. It is a city that gave birth to or was home to several significant people characterised by generosity and philanthropy, not least St Margaret and Andrew Carnegie

Dunfermline is a city of depth and discovery. It is a city characterised by generosity and philanthropy - and which keeps on giving. It is a city that believes in itself and how it can help others.

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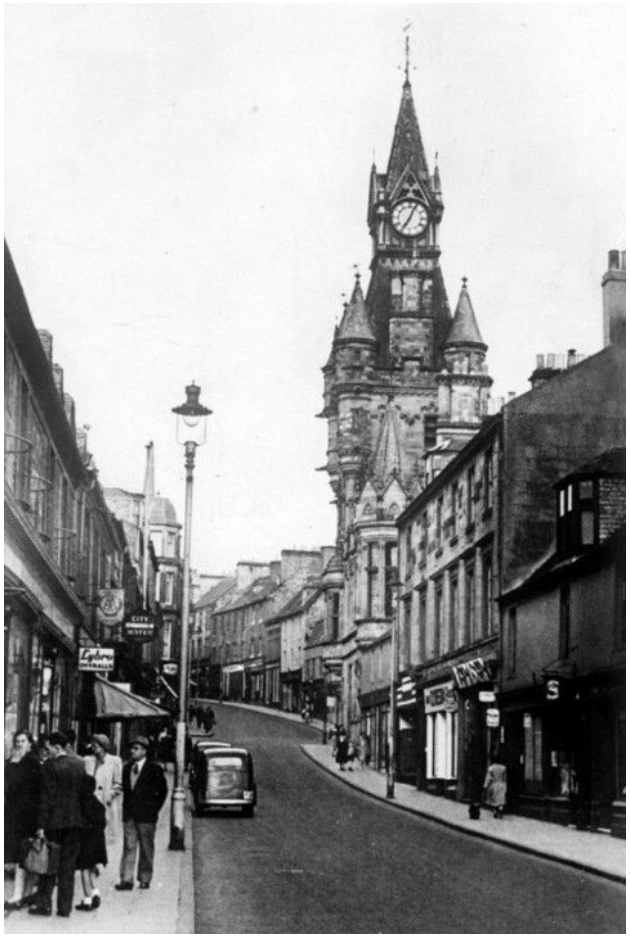
The Press Pause® initiative seeks to help individual geographic communities take time out to consider tourism and how it could be much more of a force for good within their community. This involves business and community interests having constructive conversations – and being willing to take ideas forward.

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 embrace tourism as a force for good and also support climate action. 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®
# CITY OF DUNFERMLINE, 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