



National board established to unlock Scotland's £1bn food tourism potential

A national board has been brought together to oversee the delivery of an ambitious plan to boost food tourism in Scotland by £1bn.

Made up by leaders from organisations including Scotland Food & Drink and Scottish Tourism Alliance, the board will aim to significantly increase visitor spend on food and drink.

Launched by the First Minister on the Isle of Arran in August 2018, the first ever [Food Tourism Action Plan](#) sets out a bold ambition to increase visitor spend on food and drink and outlines a vision to become a globally-recognised food tourism destination.

The joint initiative between the Scottish Government and industry represents a significant commitment from the country's leading sectors – food and drink and tourism – to capitalise on their respective strengths and the global demand for destinations to offer quality food and drink, with clear provenance, and real, memorable experiences.

Chaired by Marc Crothall of the Scottish Tourism Alliance (STA), the board will oversee the development and implementation of the plan, with a clear responsibility for ensuring that the actions are delivered, and the ambition realised.

Selected for their extensive skills, expertise and commitment, leading figures from worlds such as hospitality, tourism, agritourism, wholesale and catering, have been appointed to join the board:

- **Marc Crothall**; Chief Executive, Scottish Tourism Alliance (chair)
- **Lucy Husband**; UK Market Development Director, Scotland Food & Drink
- **Fiona Richmond**; Head of Regional Food, Scotland Food & Drink (project manager)
- **Brenda Anderson**; Managing Director, Tasting Scotland
- **Fiona Cook**; Head of Tourism Strategy & Delivery, Scottish Government (observer)
- **Alastair Dobson**; Managing Director, Taste of Arran
- **Fraser Dryburgh**; Food & Drink team, Scottish Government (observer)
- **John Forteith**; John Forteith consulting
- **Alan Hill**; Hospitality & catering consultant
- **Denise Hill**; Head of Engagement, VisitScotland
- **Willie McCurrach OBE**; Curriculum Head of Food, City of Glasgow College (retired)
- **Caroline Millar**; Founder, Go Rural
- **Sandra Reid**; Director, Fare Consulting
- **Alison Simpson**; Managing Director, The Red Bus Bistro
- **Colin Smith**; Chief Executive, Scottish Wholesale Association
- **Ian Smith**; Head of Corporate Relations, Diageo
- **Graham Suttle**; Managing Director, Kained Holdings
- **David Trotter**; Divisional Director, Sodexo

- **Stephanie Wade**; CEO, Hub International (Hi!)
- **Lorna Young**; Project Manager, Dumfries & Galloway Food & Drink
- **Fergus Younger**; Project Manager, SAOS

Marc Crothall, Chair of the board, said:

“The formation of such a strong, diverse board with representation across all of Scotland’s food and tourism sectors marks a hugely important step forward in realising the bold ambition set out in the food tourism action plan. Passion for people, produce and place is round our table in abundance, with strong reach into destinations, individual sectors, education, production and supply. I look forward to working with the board in the coming months and years to deliver our actions and grow Scotland into a number one global destination for food and drink.”

Rural Economy Secretary, Fergus Ewing, said:

“I’m confident that the experience and expertise of the board will be invaluable in driving forward the joint Scottish Government and industry Food Tourism Action Plan, which aims to deliver an extra £1 billion of visitor spend on food and drink by 2030.

“Products like Scotch Whisky, Scotch Beef and Scottish Salmon are already renowned throughout the world, and our historic cities, rugged islands, and scenic countryside makes us a top destination for tourists. So, it’s about bringing those two sectors together, and ensuring that the potential of our amazing natural larder is used to enhance the visitor experience even further.”

Alastair Dobson, Managing Director, Taste of Arran, added:

“Scotland has fantastic tourism and food and drink products and a growing global reputation. We need to ensure visitors get the best possible eating and drinking experience when they are here.

“It’s not just about fine dining, but rather quality across the board, from the best bacon roll or cheese scone in the morning to venison, fish, Scotch Beef or Lamb with local veg, followed of course by ice cream or cheese, washed down with a beer and a dram. One thing is for sure - visitors need to eat and drink so let’s make Scotland a 365-day food and drink showcase.

“This new national board will bring focus and drive, and work hard with primary producers, national and regional wholesalers, hospitality operators and other interested parties to simplify the landscape, become more commercially-sound and develop and deliver actions that will really make Scotland a global food tourism destination.”

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