



Argyll & the Isles Tourism Cooperative Ltd

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**BUTE & COWAL COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP
MAY 2016
VisitScotland Argyll & The Isles Tourism Activity Report
Supplementary Report from AITC**

Headlines

- **Tourism Argyll & The Isles 2020 rocket launched in October 2015 (developed by AITC in partnership with VS, A&BC, HIE, Calmac, FCS and SNH)**
- **AITC attended Explore GB 2016 in Liverpool (and VS EXPO 2016 in Edinburgh – over 160 appointments with international and national travel trade – notable increase in**
- **AITC fifth annual Argyll & The Isles Tourism Summit took place in The Tower, Helensburgh in March 2016**
- **The Lane Agency appointed to develop Argyll & The Isles Digital Tourism Strategy and 12 month delivery schedule -**
- **Exploreargyll on line presence consolidated (Web, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)**
- **Exploreargyll twice weekly blog launched in January 2016 – initial pilot for each area of Argyll supplemented by a programme of Nature’s Paradise area by area blogs - 38 blogs posted to date (8 specifically about Bute & Cowal)**
- **Phase 2 of ‘Nature’s Paradise’ Get Wild about Argyll mentoring programme rolled out in Cowal with 16 businesses – AITC’s pilot programme was a finalist in the RSPB Nature in Tourism awards in 2015**
- **National Food & Drink Tourism industry summit jointly delivered with Food from Argyll on 4 Nov 2015 in Oban – key event in national Year of Food & Drink programme – extensive partner support and attendance from across Scotland - follow up activity being scoped out**
- **Contract awarded to AITC by HIE to coordinate Digital Tourism Scotland activity across Argyll & The Isles and Arran and Cumbrae**
- **Region-wide World Host customer care training programme developed with Business Gateway - World Host Destination accreditation being explored with People First**
- **AITC Rural Tourism Management Executive Certificate being developed with University of West of Scotland and in partnership with Portavadie**
- **AITC hosted the first Digital Tourism Scotland webinar in Oban on 26 April 2016**
- **AITC hosting a 10 day Rough Guide travel writer itinerary across Argyll & The Isles (3 days in Bute and Cowal – specific request for Cowal area following visit in 2013)**
- **Joint content sharing workshop with VisitScotland in March 2016 – action plan being developed**

AITC Ltd c/o Ainsley Smith Co Ltd, Argyll Square, Oban, PA34 4AT
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Bute & Cowal Development Agent Activity

- Get Wild About Argyll – Cowal Workshops (2nd Feb) promoted to local businesses and supported follow up mentoring visits – 16 business in Cowal took part
- Coordinated Get Wild About Argyll – Cowal Networking Group (first meeting held Mon 25th April)
- Sourced content to support local exploreargyll blogs
- Presented on behalf of AITC at Cowal Way Business Briefings x 4 in early March
- Cowal Map – support to Cowal Marketing Group (engaged with advertisers and encouraged additional sign up)
- Business Gateway World Host training (first one held 31st March in Dunoon – 14 attendees
- Support to Cowalfest – linking walking festivals across Argyll & The Isles
- Collaboration of Bute and Cowal DMOs – 7th March & 26th April – representation from each DMO (VisitCowal, Argyll's Secret Coast, VisitBute/Mount Stuart) – FAM trips coming up (16th May will be Bute first, Cowal and ASC areas will follow – ensuring each area knows what other has to offer and can promote to their guests – invitation open to all members
- Online business survey prepared and issued for Cowal Marketing Group (43 responses so far).
- Awareness of Events/Courses/Workshops to DMO members , eg, Business Gateway Craft Tourism Workshop, World Host Training, National Ferries Fortnight, Digital Tourism Scotland Webinars, Business Gateway social media training, etc.
- The Collective – initial discussions and contacts made – looking at membership of AITC
- Membership Benefits statement produced for DMOs
- Coordinating Rough Guide travel writer itinerary for Bute and Cowal
- Food for Thought programme – support to Kirn Primary School – local businesses and transport involvement
- Benmore Botanic Gardens Fam Trip April 2016 – AITC presence and presentation

2 May 2016

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