

Community Led Approaches To Outdoor Tourism

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Exec Director, SCOTO CIC



Community Led Tourism & the Great Outdoors

- Who or what is SCOTO?
- What is Community Led Tourism?
- Introducing SCOTO Press Pause ®
- Exploring Community Led Tourism & the Great Outdoors



Introducing SCOTO CIC

A rapidly growing network
of individuals seeking to
grow, develop and promote
community led tourism
across Scotland.

Launched on 25 April 2022

8 Board Members

450 + Networkers

www.scoto.co.uk
www.belocal.scot



SCOTO's Vision

is for **every community in Scotland** to have the opportunity to develop community led **tourism as a force for good** which enables their community to be an **even better place to live, work and visit.**

SCOTO's Mission

is to build the **skills, connections and confidence** of everyone involved in community led tourism.

SCOTO's Ambition

Is to **recalibrate tourism** in Scotland to **deliver for our communities and environment first**

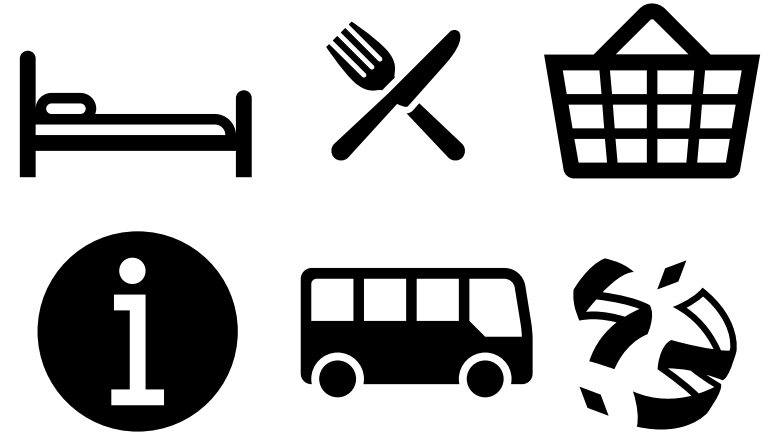


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What is Community Led Tourism ?

1. *Communities providing visitor services, facilities and experiences*

- *Stay, eat, buy, do, enjoy, go, give, find*



2. *Communities developing, managing and promoting their destination*

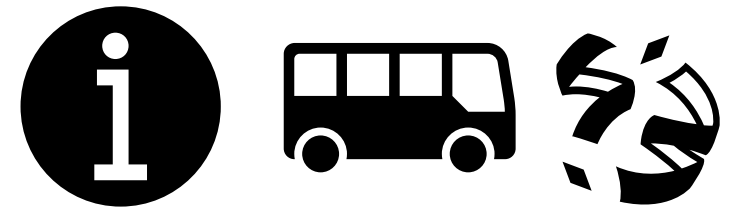
- *Community and Business interests collectively considering what is best for their destination and then pulling in the same direction*



What is Community Led Tourism?

1. *Communities providing visitor services, facilities and experiences*

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2. *Communities developing, managing and promoting their destination*

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What is Community Led Tourism?

1: COMMUNITY LED VISITOR SERVICES AND EXPERIENCES

“a visitor facing service, facility or experience which is delivered by the local community via a social or other enterprise model which is not for profit and delivers social, economic and/or environmental benefits back into the community.

The visitor facing activity may not be 100% of what is on offer and equally tourism may not be the primary driver of the facility, service and/or experience.

However, visitors are able to enjoy and/or use what is on offer and it enhances their visitor experience in the destination.

Visitor interaction supports the community endeavour”.

What is Community Led Tourism?

STROMNESS MUSEUM, ORKNEY



What is Community Led Tourism?



CRIEFF HIGHLAND GATHERING

What is Community Led Tourism?



What is Community Led Tourism?

CALLANDER HOSTEL, PODS AND EVENT VENUE



What is Community Led Tourism?



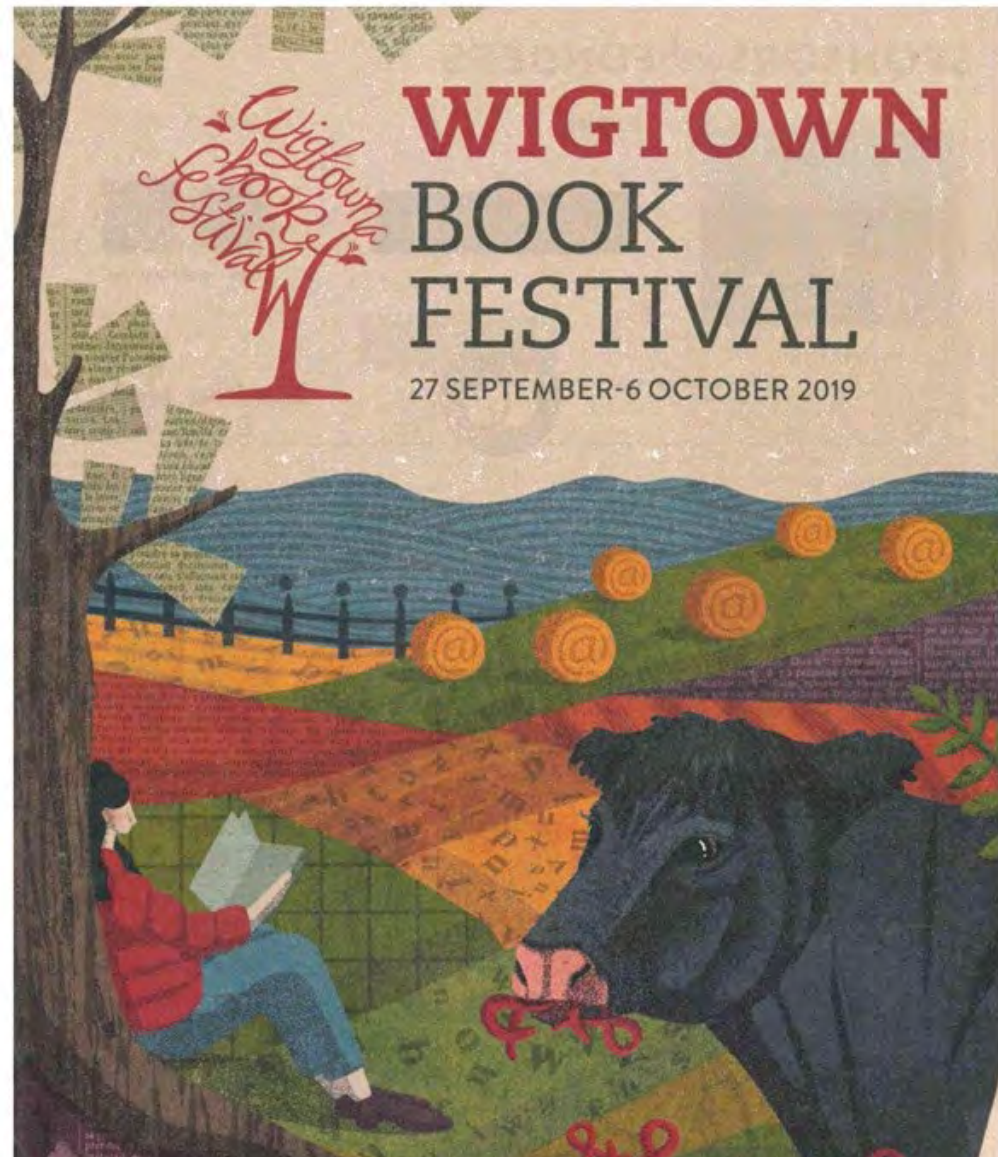
ALL ROADS LEAD TO WHITHORN



What is Community Led Tourism?



What is Community Led Tourism?





What is Community Led Tourism?



Identifying as Tourism?



Identifying as Tourism?



GURCA & LOCH NESS HUB COMMUNITY BENEFIT SOCIETY

Identifying as Tourism?



CALLANDER YOUTH PROJECT TRUST

Identifying as Tourism?



FINDHORN VILLAGE CONSERVATION COMPANY

Purpose and Motivations ?



WIGTOWN FESTIVAL COMPANY – A LIMITED COMPANY AND CHARITY

Purpose and Motivations ?



Tourism as a means to an end

WIGTON FESTIVAL COMPANY – A LIMITED COMPANY AND CHARITY

What is Community Led Tourism?

Local tourism activity which is

- *led by volunteers,*
- *delivered via a charity, social or other enterprise model, and*
- *where any profits are reinvested in the community delivering local social, economic and/or environmental benefits.*



The increasingly important role of Community Led Tourism



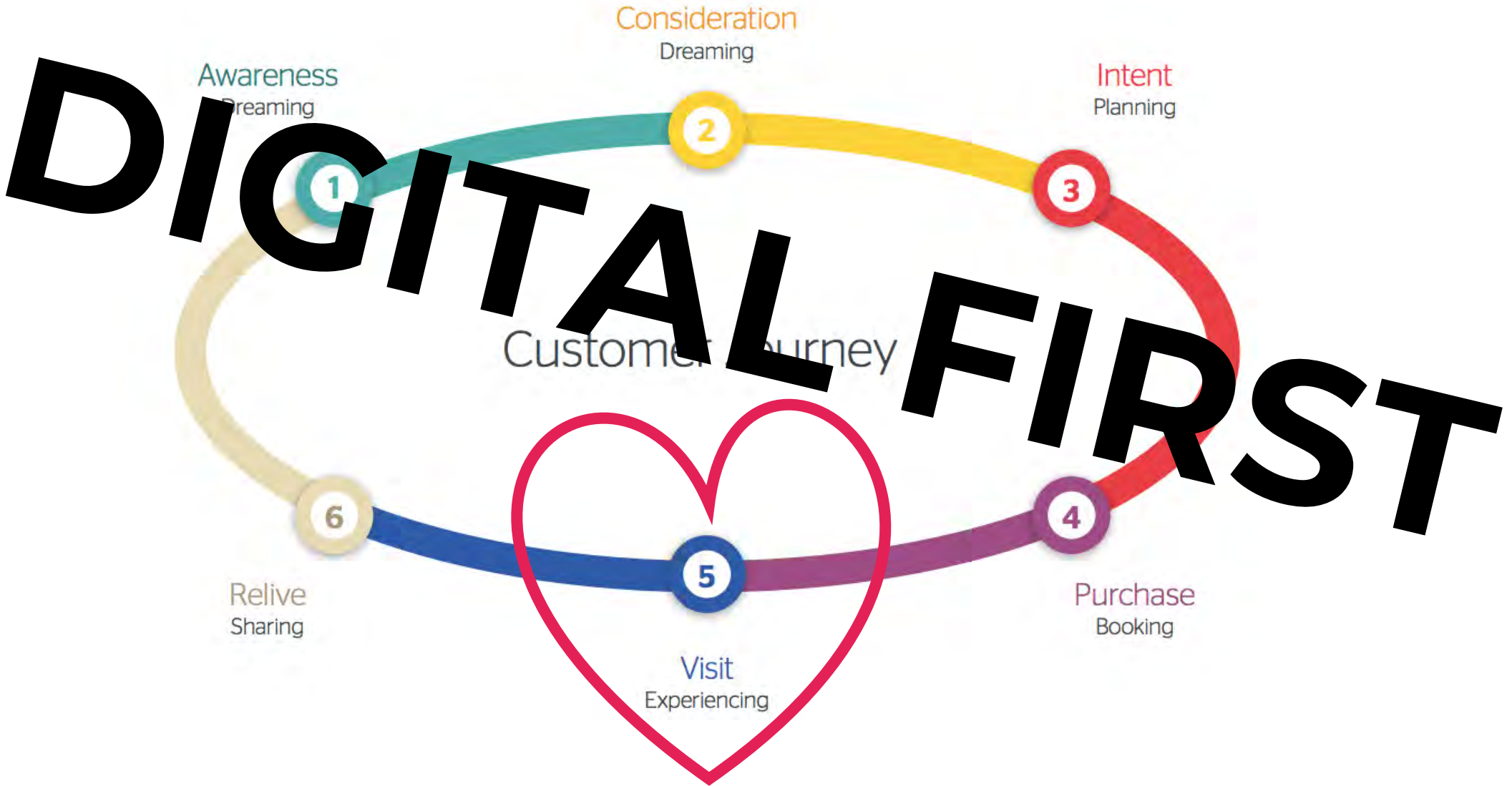
COMMUNITY RUN PUBLIC TOILETS ON ARRAN AND CUMBRAE

The increasingly important role of Community Led Tourism



VISIT SCOTLAND VIC, BALLOCH,
LOCH LOMOND & TROSSACHS NATIONAL PARK

VisitScotland's VICs to close by 2026





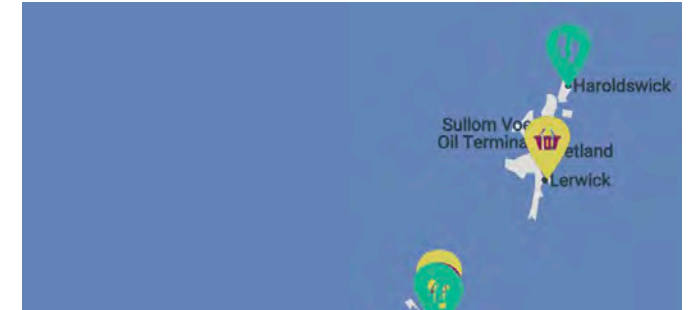


LOCH NESS HUB & TRAVEL COMMUNITY BENEFIT SOCIETY

CALLANDER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST CALLANDER VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE



What is Community Led Tourism?



BE LOCAL

[Be A Local](#) [Stories](#) [A Conscious Choice](#) [Map](#) [f](#) [i](#)



Stay

Hostels, self catering, motorhome stop-overs and camping

[Discover More](#)



Eat

Cafes, pop-ups, community pubs and distilleries

[Discover More](#)



Buy

Shops, crafts and provisions

[Discover More](#)



Do

Experiences, activities, heritage and arts centres

[Discover More](#)



Enjoy

Function spaces, events and festivals

[Discover More](#)



Give

Join local groups to offer your support and skills

[Discover More](#)



Go

Community transport, bike hire, e-charging, fuel and ferries

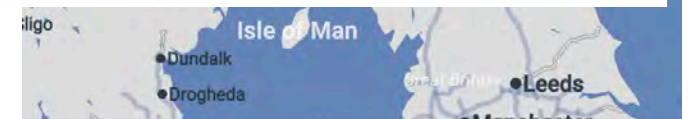
[Discover More](#)



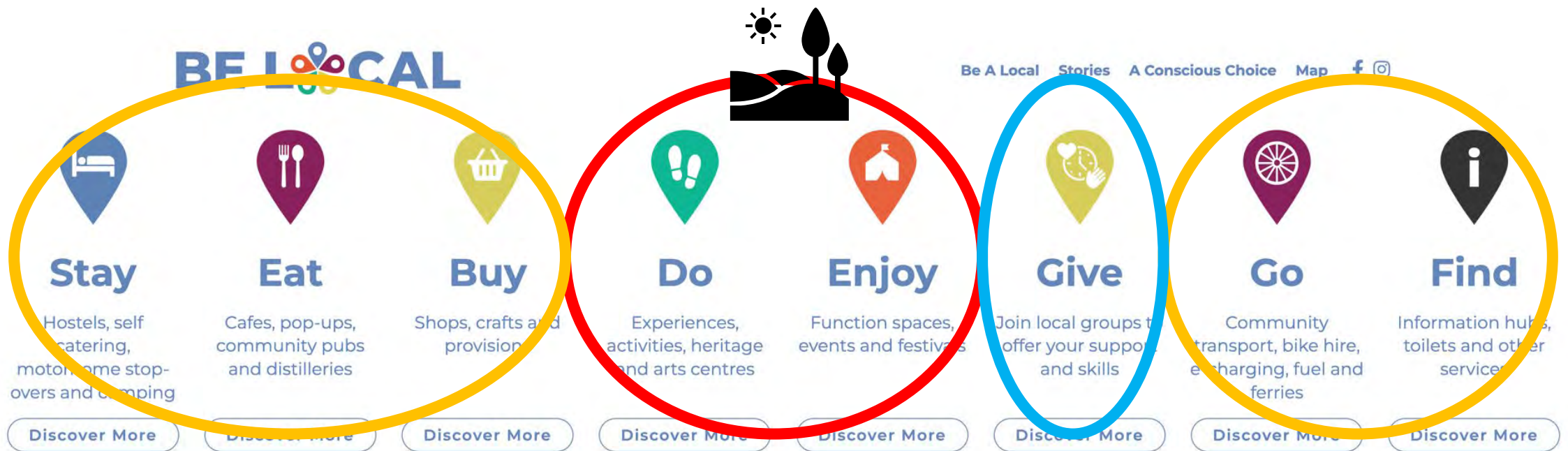
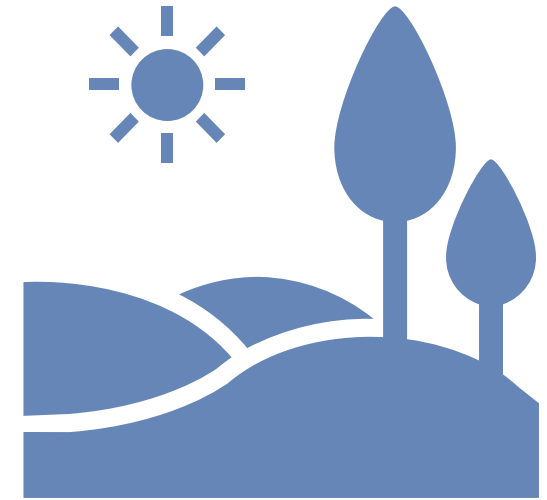
Find

Information hubs, toilets and other services

[Discover More](#)



Community Led Tourism & the Great Outdoors?



Community Led Tourism & the Great Outdoors?



What is Community Led Tourism?

More and more geographic communities are opting to be directly involved in delivering and managing tourism in their area and ensuring tourism derives added value for their people and places.

SCOTO has categorised two types of community led tourism in Scotland:

1. Community Led Visitor Services & Experiences
2. Community Led Destination Development, Management & Promotion

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PRESS PAUSE

SCOTO & Community Led Tourism

Scotland's North Coast 500



“PRESS PAUSE - A pilot initiative exploring how to better engage local communities in tourism delivery and management”

NH NORTH
HIGHLAND
INITIATIVE

NHI & SCOTO PRESS PAUSE

PRESS PAUSE Communities

PHASE 1 PILOTS

LOCHCARRON

- Large village on west coast

THURSO

- Major town on north coast

PHASE 2A

BRORA

- Former largely industrial village on east coast

WICK

- Former significant fishing port on east coast

PLOCKTON

- Crofting village and sailing destination on west coast



PHASE 2B

DURNESS & LOCH ERIBOLL

- Crofting village on the north west coast

TONGUE & MELNESS

- Two adjacent crofting villages on the northwest coast

PHASE 3

With Highland Council Community Regeneration Funding via Wester Ross Biosphere:

ULLAPOOL

- Major town and ferry port on west coast

KYLE OF LOCHALSH

- Coastal village next to the Skye Bridge

DORNIE

- Small former fishing village to Eilean Donan Castle

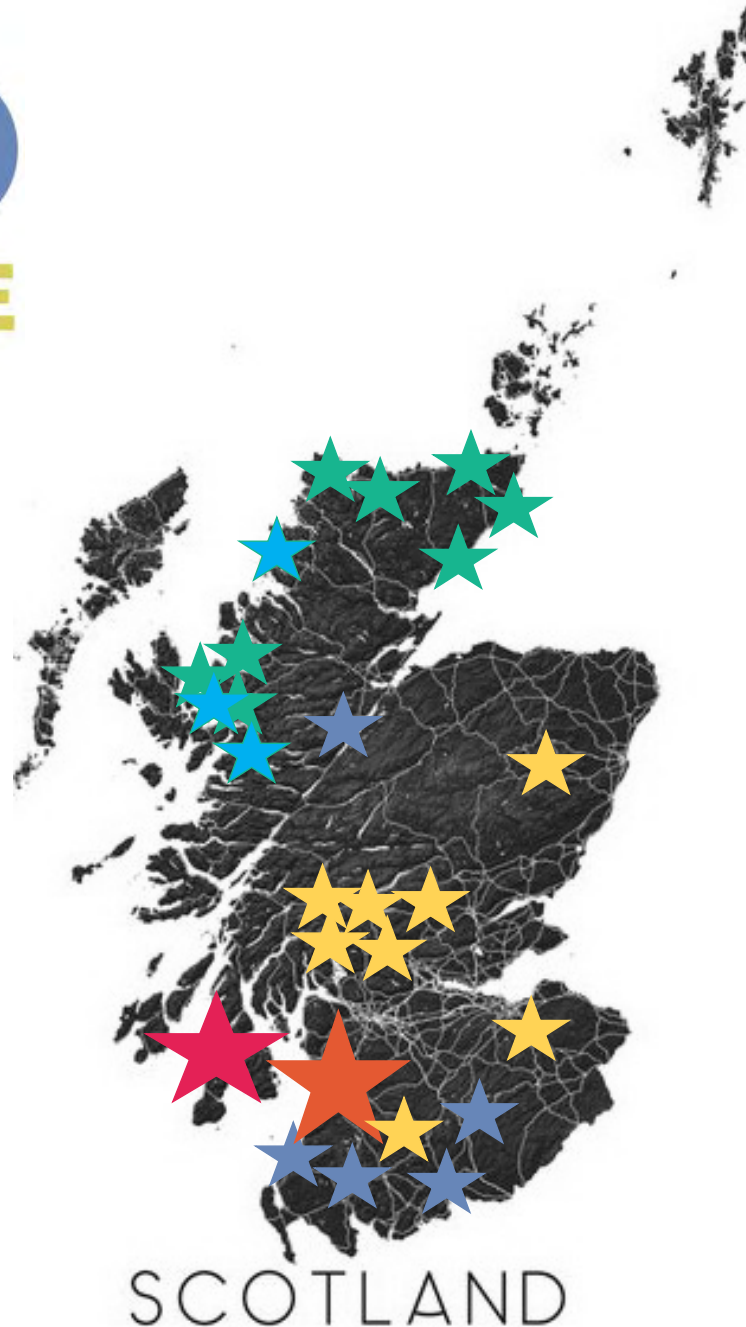


SCOTO

PRESS PAUSE

By the end of March 2025 SCOTO has delivered

- 44 Press Pause workshops
- supporting over 59 individual communities, and
- a population base exceeding 105,000



NHI COMMUNITIES

- Thurso
- Lochcarron
- Brora
- Plockton
- Wick
- Durness , Eriboll & Tongue

WESTER ROSS BIOSPHERE / NHI

- Ullapool
- Kyle of Lochalsh
- Dornie

SEA INFT COMMUNITIES

- Glen Urquhart
- Girvan
- Langholm
- Selkirk & The Valleys
- Colmonell

KINTYRE WAY SCIO

- 9 communities

ARIA VALLEYS

- SAC – Stinchar Valley x 3 communities
- EAC – Loudoun Valley x 3 communities
- NAC – Garnock Valley x 3 communities
- Muirkirk, Dalmellington, Cumbrae, Whiting Bay
- North Carrick x 5 communities

INDEPENDENT COMMUNITIES

- Upper Nithsdale (3 communities)
- Braemar
- Gorebridge
- Callander
- Strathard (Aberfoyle, Kinlochard,

Why Press Pause?

Global, National and Local Context



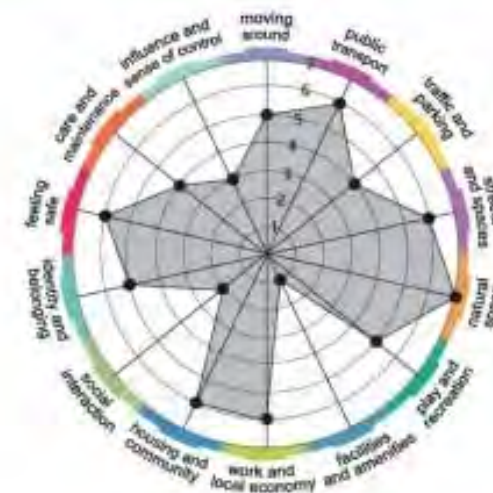
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



Place Standard –
How good is Our Place?



Vision	A Wellbeing Economy: Thriving across economic, social and environmental dimensions.			
Ambition	Fairer Ensuring that work pays for everyone through better wages and fair work, reducing poverty and improving life chances.	Wealthier Driving an increase in productivity by building an internationally competitive economy founded on entrepreneurship and innovation.	Greener Demonstrating global leadership in delivering a just transition to a net zero, nature-positive economy, and rebuilding natural capital.	
	Entrepreneurial People and Culture	New Market Opportunities	Productive Businesses and Regions	Skilled Workforce
Programmes of Action	A Fairer and More Equal Society			
	A Culture of Delivery			



Why Press Pause?

Local Context

In 2023, with funding from Inspiring Scotland, SCOTO conducted a **27 venue community tourism roadshow** visiting communities across the country and on the islands. The purpose was to raise awareness of SCOTO and better understand what help and support would be welcomed.

Various topics were explored and an overriding observation made at these events was the sense that **tourism happens to communities**

How can communities become more engaged and drive what happens?



Why Press Pause?

*The square was
so vibrant at the
weekend*

*They just
stopped for
a pee!*

*Second homes... Young
folk can't afford to live
here anymore*

*I wish we could
extend the season*

*Not in my
back yard!*

*Wish folk would
just park in the
car parks*

*They are just in
it for the money*

*Bloody
motorhomes*

*I would if I
could get staff*

*The place is dead
during the week*

*Did you
see that
idiot...*

*I can
remember
when*

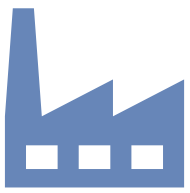
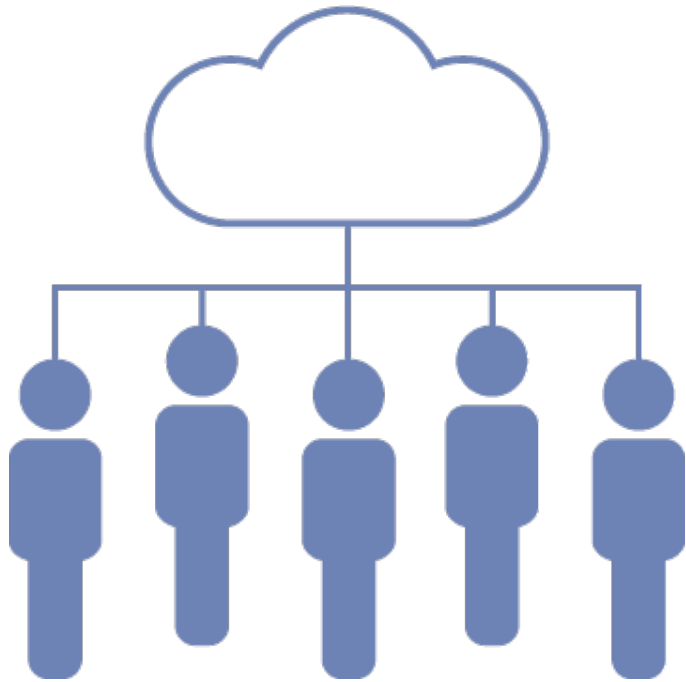


*I'm telling you
I've never seen it
like this*

*We can't do 7 days –
can't get staff*

*Tourism is
destroying this
community*

Why Press Pause?



SCOTO PRESS PAUSE

The Approach

Mystery shopper appraisal of the community as a visitor destination – **online and in person**

Face to Face facilitated workshop

- Facilitated conversations between **business and community interests**
- Consideration of **destination competence** and current **place branding**
- Collective conversations and critical appraisal of **what is and isn't working**
- Reflections on what could **make a difference**
- **Insights** on what is happening elsewhere

Feedback and **Recommendations** Report

Recalibrated community perspective on tourism
Impacts and **Benefits**



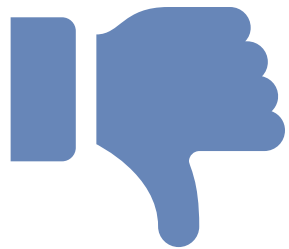


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GAUGING LOCAL SENTIMENT



What's working in tourism?



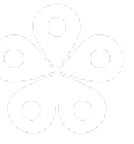
What's not working in tourism?



What could be done better or differently ?



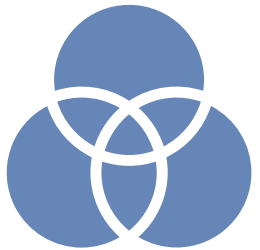
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CONTEXTUALISING



Defining the Destination from a local perspective



Competitors and Comparators

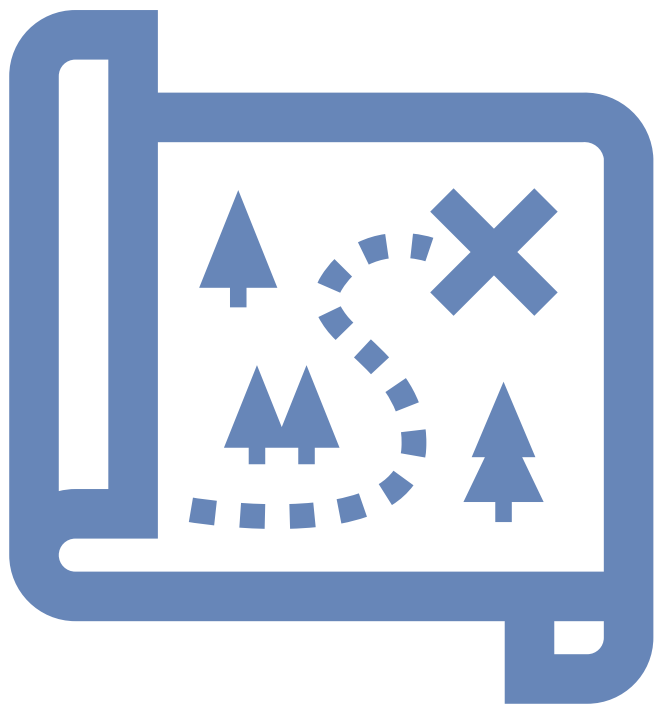


Visitor Profile - Past, Present & Future



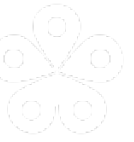
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APPRAISING DESTINATION COMPETENCE



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DEVELOPING LOCAL PLACE BRANDING



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MEASURING LOCAL BENEFITS

Footfall, bed nights and spend ?

Or

- **Living wage jobs supported**
- **Heritage assets protected**
- **Cultural events celebrated**
- **Local makers supported ...**

"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



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Destination Competence Appraisal

Being a successful destination is a function of many factors and how they interplay.

Through conversation and discussions between business and community interests the current offer is rated under 16 criteria

Red – things really aren't working/ don't exist

Amber – things do need improved

Green – things are functioning well.



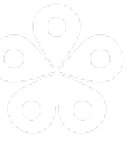
Destination Competence

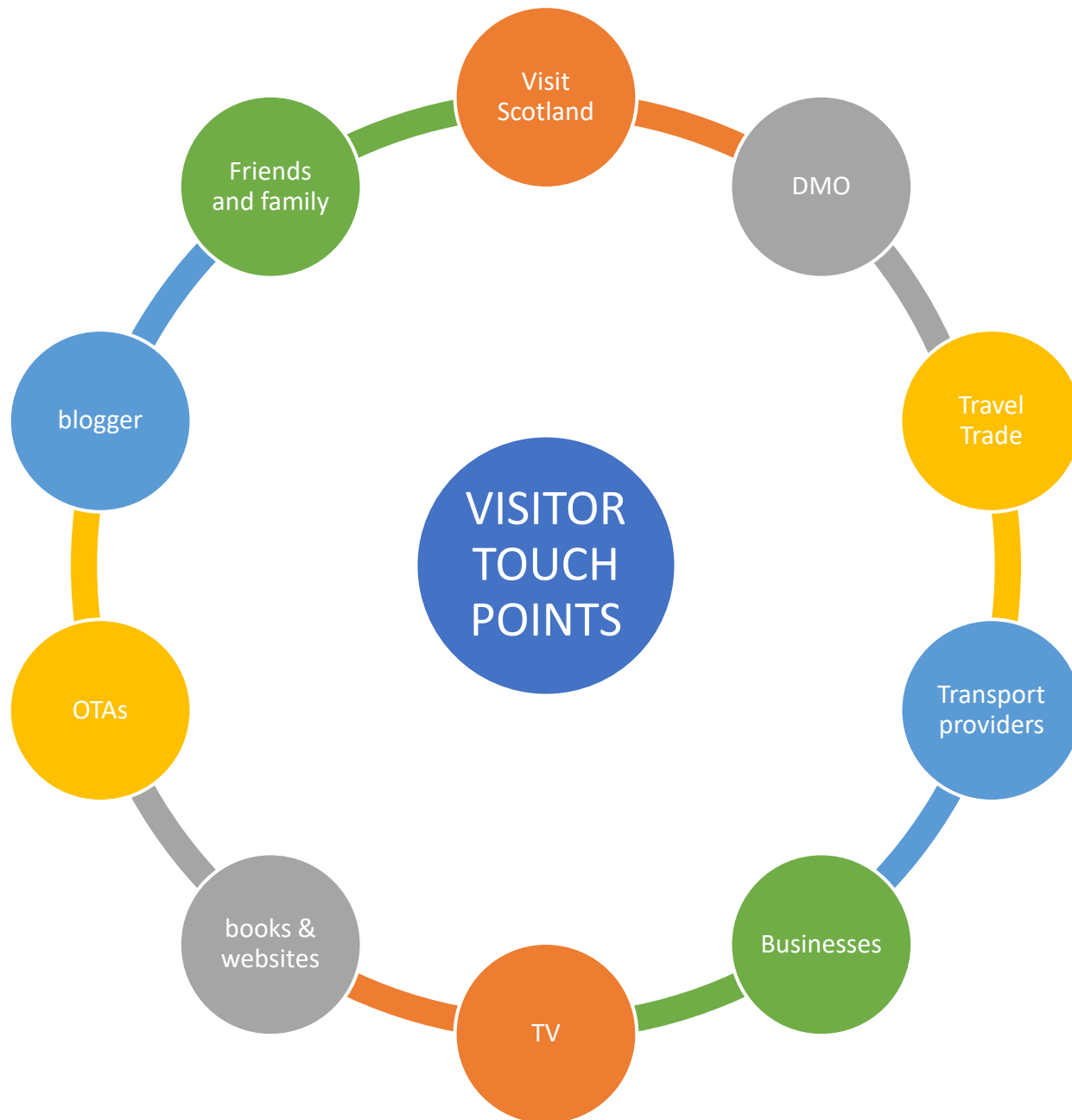
North Highland Communities



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DEVELOPING LOCAL PLACE BRANDING





LOCALS & THE
HOST
COMMUNITY

SCOTO PRESS PAUSE

Place Branding



USPS

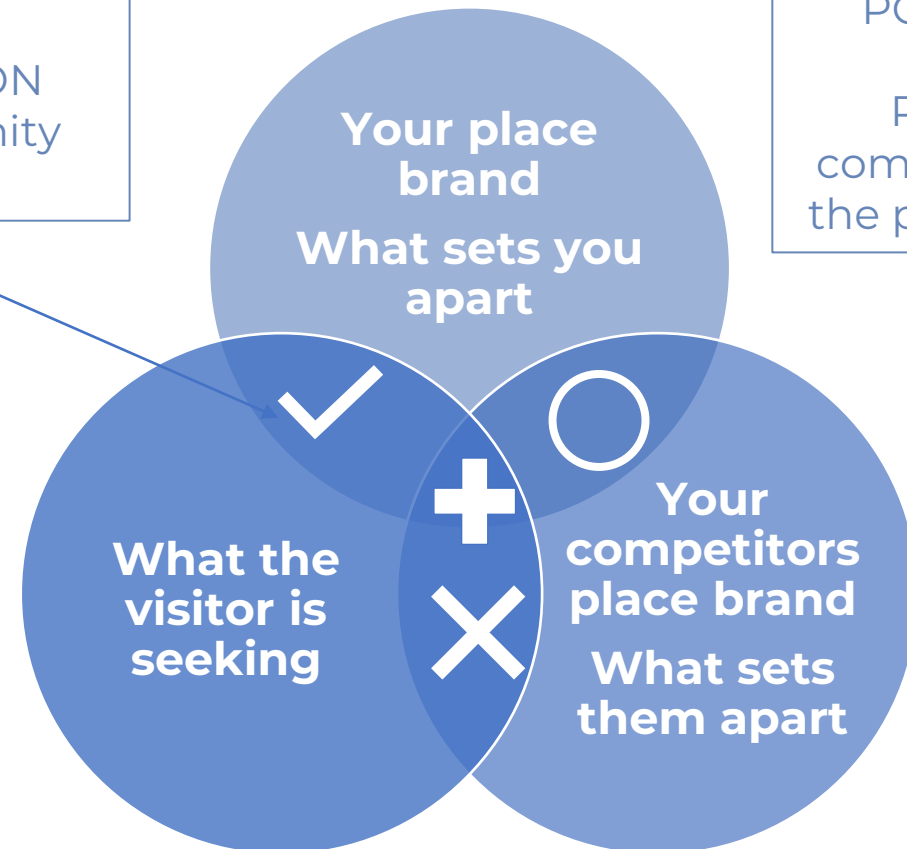
UNIQUE SELLING POINTS
What is unique about our
community that no other
destination can claim

PODS

POINTS OF
DIFFERENTIATION
Sets our community
apart

POPS

POINTS OF
PARITY
Puts our
community on
the playing field



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Place Branding

LOHCARRON
Towns & Villages



Lochcarron is a pretty village of white-washed cottages on the shore of Loch Carron in the Wester Ross region of Scotland.

Situated on the shore of Loch Carron, this gem of a town in the western Highlands offers peace and tranquillity. With an abundance of wildlife and scenery, Lochcarron is an ideal location from which to explore further the west coast of Scotland with easy access to the Isle of Skye, Applecross, Torridon and Gairloch.

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Place Branding

LOCHCARRON

- The longest village in Scotland
- The name of a global tartan brand

LOCHCARRON
of SCOTLAND

SCOTO PRESS PAUSE

Place Branding

LOHCARRON

- The longest village in Scotland
- The name of a global tartan brand

LOHCARRON
of SCOTLAND

LOHCARRON

- Tartan Week celebration 27 Sept to 7 October 2024



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Local Place Branding – Tartan Week Lochcarron

Tartan Week

Lochcarron



Tartan Week Lochcarron Craft Fair





Tartan Week Lochcarron
The Big Draw



**Tartan Week Lochcarron
Traditional Story Telling**



**Tartan Week Lochcarron
Grand Ceilidh**



Tartan Week Lochcarron Fashion Show





A nighttime photograph of Loch Carron. The sky is a deep greenish-blue, filled with numerous stars. A dark, silhouetted mountain range stretches across the middle ground. In the foreground, the calm water of the loch reflects the lights from a small town or village on the opposite shore. The lights are warm and yellow, with some blue and white lights visible. The text 'Tartan Week' is written in a large, white, serif font, and 'Loch Carron' is written below it in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

Tartan Week

Loch Carron

*LOCALS &
THE HOST
COMMUNITY*

Tartan Week

L o c h c a r r o n

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Emerging Themes

- **Managing motorhomes** – significant increases, desire to address wild camping, provide waste facilities, generate £
- **Gentrification of accommodation stock** – loss of B&Bs, increasing second home ownership, increasing hotel prices
- **Lack of budget accommodation** – an opportunity?
- **Parking** and **traffic management** are major concerns
- **Public toilet provision** is generally **poor** and needs investment with additional facilities
- **Transport** services are **poor/unreliable**
- **Cost of living crisis, staffing crisis** and **business viability challenges**
- The need for **accurate easily accessed information** on opening times, booking requirements
- The need to **manage visitor expectations** prior to arrival - eg on availability of evening meals and Uber



A community led approach to destination development, management and promotion which defines and responds to each individual community's needs and desires ...

... with business and community interests at the same table

BE  CAL

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Community Led Tourism & the Great Outdoors?



Doing the



Kintyre Way

the Kintyre way

Funded by Fern Community Funds - Cour Windfarm Fund



Kintyre Way

Starting from Tarbert, the Kintyre Way zigzags down the Kintyre peninsula, Scotland's 'mainland island'. Its outstanding feature is the stunning and varied coastal views. It is also home to the Kintyre Way Ultra.

After undergoing serious governance issues the original management organisation folded and it was re-established as a SCIO who were keen to explore a more community led approach to its management and promotion.

Welcome to the
Kintyre Way



PRESS PAUSE Community Workshops



- Tarbert
- Tayinloan
- Gigha
- Skipness
- Whitehouse
- Carradale
- Campbeltown
- Southend
- Machrihanish



Destination Competence

The Kintyre Way



NO	CRITERIA	TBT	TAY	WH	GIG	SK	CAR	CT	SE	MC
1	Tourism Traditions & Timelines									
2	Sense of Place & Visitor Proposition									
3	Features & Attractions									
4	Accommodation									
5	Activities and Experiences									
6	Food, Drink and Refreshments									
7	Events and Festivals									
8	Makers and Producers									
9	Travel and Connectivity									
10	Amenities and Infrastructure									
11	Visitor Management, Signage and Interpretation									
12	Digital Presence and Marketing									
13	Biodiversity and Net Zero									
14	Community Assets									
15	People and Players									
16	Destination Collaboration									

Destination Competence

The Kintyre Way



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Contact

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