

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE COMMITTEE – 30 SEPTEMBER 2014**

**INFORMATION REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 19 AUGUST 2014 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2014**

**TARTAN DAY 2014**

**REPORT BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**1. Background**

Tartan Day is a celebration of Scotland which commemorates the signing of the Declaration of Arbroath on 6 April 1320. A significant proportion of the Scottish Diaspora live in Canada and America and both countries recognise the 6 April as a national holiday. Many believe that the American Declaration of Independence was influenced by the Declaration of Arbroath. Since 2004 Angus Council has led the Scottish Tartan Day celebrations with the aim of raising awareness of Angus and Arbroath locally, nationally and internationally and attracting visitors to the area.

In recent years, the Tartan Day Scotland Festival has focused on a well established local events programme, with a number of key events such as the International Golf Challenge, Connections Dinner and Business Breakfast which aimed to attract national and international business leaders and decision makers to Angus.

However 2014, as the Year of Homecoming, gave us the opportunity to focus on an expanded events programme around Arbroath Abbey which had the potential to attract overnight visitors and their spend into the area.

As part of EventScotland's Homecoming campaign, Angus Council were awarded £10,000 additional funding to enhance the 2014 festival. This provided an opportunity for Angus Council to work with Historic Scotland, the Arbroath community and local businesses to organise a key event focusing on Arbroath and Arbroath Abbey and to raise the profile of Tartan Day Scotland locally, nationally and internationally. The 'Homecoming Weekend' took place in Arbroath on 5 and 6 April, as part of the local events programme which ran across Angus from 5 – 13 April.

A Welcome Reception was also held at Arbroath Abbey on 4 April for Consul Generals based in Edinburgh to try to encourage international support for Tartan Day Scotland and the 2020 vision. The feedback and evaluation from this year's Tartan Day Scotland Festival will help to inform future Tartan Day plans for the years up to 2020.

2020 is the 700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Arbroath. This presents an opportunity to develop Tartan Day into a national festival by 2020 with Arbroath and Angus at its heart

A new association, 'Arbroath 2020', has been established and is made up of representatives from Angus Council, VisitScotland, Historic Scotland, the Arbroath Abbey Action Group and various Arbroath community groups. The aim of the association is to raise awareness of the 700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Arbroath and Arbroath Abbey and to organise events relating to the anniversary. However, this group is currently in a state of flux as the Chairperson resigned his post in June 2014 and there has not yet been a meeting to appoint a new chair.

## 2. Outcomes

See below for an overview of performance against the agreed EventScotland Key Performance Indicators (KPIs);

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Performance against KPIs
1) Delivery of new Tartan Day event element at Arbroath Abbey	A weekend of activities took place throughout Arbroath, including at Arbroath Abbey during the Tartan Day Scotland Festival. Historic Scotland allowed free entry to the Abbey on 5 and 6 April.
2) Attract 5,000 new attendees to Tartan Day	The estimated number of attendees at the Tartan Day Homecoming Weekend in Arbroath on 5 and 6 April was <b>6,000 – 6,500</b> . (NB Historic Scotland recorded 4,952 visitors to Arbroath Abbey over the weekend – a significant increase in their normal visitor numbers for this period)
3) Evidence showing event was strong motivating factor for visitors attracted to Scotland staying at least 2 nights	Of the 200 visitors who completed Tartan Day Visitor Surveys; 51% indicated the event was 'Very Important' in their decision to visit the local area and/or Scotland; <b>34% were from outwith Angus, of which 47% stayed overnight in the area.</b>
4) Attract 5% from Rest of UK (213 visitors)	Based on the visitor survey results, 33% of visitors came from 'Rest of UK' (Scotland or England).
5) Attract 5% from Overseas (213 visitors)	Based on the visitor survey results 1% of visitors came from overseas.
6) Demonstrate attendee knowledge that event is part of Homecoming Scotland 2014	71% of attendees who completed the Visitor Surveys were aware that the event was part of Homecoming Scotland 2014.

## 3. Event Outline

The Tartan Day Scotland Festival 2014 ran from 5 – 13 April kicking off with the 'Homecoming Weekend' in Arbroath.

A 'Tartan Treasures' Poetry Competition also took place on the run up to the festival. Entries were invited from non-professional writers in three categories – adult, secondary school and primary school, with the theme 'What Scotland Means to Me.' Previous competitions have included; short stories, photography and art.

An event organiser was employed to manage the Homecoming Weekend element of the Tartan Day Scotland Festival. Activities during the weekend of 5 and 6 April included free entry to Arbroath Abbey, with a medieval camp at the Abbey, guided walks and tours, street performances and live music on the Saturday. There was also a producers' market, cookery demos, a tasting kitchen and craft demos at Arbroath Harbour as well as storytelling and re-enactments at the Signal Tower Museum. On the Sunday the programme included a massed pipe band parade from Kirk Square to Arbroath Abbey followed by the Declaration Commemoration in the grounds of the Abbey. There were also events at the Webster Memorial Theatre, including a family history event and an evening of archival film.

As part of the Homecoming Weekend celebrations a Best Dressed Shop Window Competition and a Best Dressed Boat Competition also ran in Arbroath, which added to the overall atmosphere during the event.

In addition to the Homecoming Weekend in Arbroath, the local events programme included a variety of community events including exhibitions, library events and activities, Farmers' Markets, Pipe Bands, outdoor events, talks, guided tours and dancing. During the festival, restaurants, cafes and hotels offered Tartan Day Menus featuring local produce, with 13 venues participating.

#### 4. Event Attendance

The profile of the target audience varied over the Homecoming Weekend. In the main, the activities on Saturday 5 April were aimed at families, whilst the events scheduled to take place on Sunday 6 April were expected to appeal more to people interested in the history and heritage of Arbroath Abbey and people interested in family history research.

There were 4,952 visitors to Arbroath Abbey throughout the weekend; 1,651 on the Saturday and 3,301 on the Sunday. It is assumed that many of the visitors to the Abbey would also have visited other events taking place in Arbroath during the weekend.

It is estimated that the total number of visitors during this year's Tartan Day Scotland Festival was approx. 9,000 – 10,000;

**TD Homecoming Weekend: 6,000 – 6,500**

**TD Local Events Programme: 3,000 – 3,500**

In total 16 Consul Generals were invited to attend the Welcome Reception at Arbroath Abbey on 4 April. However, due to other commitments only four were able to accept the invitation.

#### 5. Budget

The budget for this year's Tartan Day Scotland Festival was £31,000. The annual Angus Council budget for Tartan Day is £16,000; however this was increased to £21,000 for the 2014 event, in addition to the £10,000 Homecoming funding.

#### 6. Marketing Communications

A multi-channel communications plan was developed to promote the Tartan Day Scotland Festival 2014.

##### 6.1 Print

The following print items were produced;

- Tartan Day Scotland Festival Local Events Guide
- Tartan Day Homecoming Weekend Programme
- Tartan Day Scotland Festival Posters
- Tartan Treasures Leaflets and Posters
- Tayroots Family History Day Leaflets and Posters
- Visitor Surveys

##### 6.2 Advertising

Advertisements were placed in the following channels;

- Facebook (link Gill Smith providing)
- What's On Scotland – magazine and online
- Scottish Banner
- P&J
- Courier
- Angus County Press local papers
- Scotsman; including a Homecoming supplement; the Scotsman magazine and [scotsman.com](http://scotsman.com)
- Scotland on Sunday
- Tay FM (24 March – 6 April)
- Street Posters in Dundee and Perth for three weeks

##### 6.3 PR

A full PR campaign ran from January until April, resulting in significant press coverage before, during and after the event. **The approximate equivalent advertising value of the known media coverage achieved was £31,271.** In addition, there will almost certainly have been internet, magazine, newspaper, television and radio coverage that we are not aware of.

## 6.4 Online

There was a **20% increase in visits** to the Tartan Day website this year (1<sup>st</sup> Jan to 13<sup>th</sup> April) with a 36% increase in page views and a 161% increase in visits to the Tartan Day menus pages. There was also an increase of **35% in video views on YouTube** and a 46% increase in page likes on Facebook taking the total to 1,344.

## 6.5 Films

Two films were produced about the Declaration of Arbroath and are featured on YouTube. <http://www.youtube.com/user/TartanDay> - A short promotional film will also be produced, using footage of the Homecoming Weekend, to help promote future Tartan Day activities.

## 7. Feedback

A visitor survey was available at all Tartan Day events to try to capture feedback from people attending. 200 responses were received.

- Respondents were asked where they had heard about the event;
  - Print (30%)
  - Word of mouth (26%)
  - Press (13%)
  - Website (12%)
  - Enewsletter (11%)
  - Visitor Information Centre (7%)
  - Social Media (6%)
  - Radio (2%)
  
- 81% of respondents were 'very satisfied' with their overall experience at the event.
  
- 66% of respondents lived in Angus, with 28% visiting from elsewhere in Scotland, 6% from England and 1% from overseas. Of those visiting, **47% stayed overnight in the area.**

## 8. Summary and Recommendations

### 8.1 Tartan Treasures Poetry Competition

The annual Tartan Treasures competition is organised in partnership with Angus Council's schools and libraries staff, and is a good way of engaging the local community and raising awareness of Tartan Day Scotland locally and nationally. 110 entries were received this year, although Angus Primary Schools were invited to only submit their Top 5 poems to assist with the judging process.

### 8.2 Welcome Reception for Consuls Generals

The aim of the Welcome Reception at Arbroath Abbey was to promote the best of Angus, highlight the significance of the Declaration of Arbroath and Arbroath Abbey and try to encourage support for the 2020 Vision. The reception was hosted by the Provost of Angus and in addition to the Consuls Generals, guests included representatives from the new Arbroath 2020 Association, the Arbroath Abbey Action Group, VisitScotland, the Scottish Tartans Authority, Arbroath Abbey Timethemes and Arbroath Guildry. Students from Dundee & Angus College prepared tasters of local food, and the guests were taken to Hospitalfield House for a tour and lunch.

### 8.3 Tartan Day Homecoming Weekend Arbroath

The Homecoming Weekend in Arbroath was a pilot event, and will act as a benchmark for future activity. The EventScotland funding contributed to the event costs as well as additional promotion.

#### **Arbroath Abbey:**

Historic Scotland offered free entry all weekend to Arbroath Abbey, which was a great incentive and helped to attract almost 5,000 visitors over the two days. **Historic Scotland reported that more people visited Arbroath Abbey on the 5 and 6 April than Edinburgh Castle.**

Permission had to be sought from Historic Scotland for the various activities which took place in the Abbey on the 5 and 6 April and although permission was granted, amendments had to be made to the

original plans. Therefore, if a similar event is to take place in future, discussions must take place earlier to allow more flexibility with the event programme.

#### **Guided Walks:**

There was positive feedback about the various walks and it is recommended that this type of activity be built into the programme again for future events.

#### **Arbroath Harbour:**

There was good business involvement at the foodmarket, demos and tasters, although the number of visitors to the harbour area was lower than anticipated.

#### **Signal Tower Museum:**

There were a number of activities at the Signal Tower Museum, including storytelling and performances by the local H.A.A.R. (Heritage Arts Auchmithie Residents) group who performed a piece written for the occasion.

#### **Tayroots Family History Day:**

There was a programme of talks with experts available all day to answer any family history queries. Feedback from visitors was good.

#### **Massed Pipe Band Parade:**

There was an excellent turnout for the parade, which drew a large number of spectators to the Abbey for the Declaration Commemoration. There has also been positive feedback from the bands who participated. There is potential to build on the success of the parade, possibly lengthening the route and encouraging participation from other local community groups.

#### **Declaration Commemoration:**

The re-enactment of the Declaration of Arbroath on the Sunday was extremely well attended. This was the first year that the Arbroath Abbey Timethemes had performed the Declaration Commemoration within the grounds of the Abbey, for a number of years. More recently the performance has taken place in the courtyard in front of the visitor centre.

In summary, the rationale for organising events from the Abbey to the Harbour was to encourage traffic along Arbroath High Street, to benefit local businesses. However, in reality it may have diluted the number of visitors to the various activities and people may not have been able to experience all aspects of the programme. As such, it is proposed that any future activity takes place in and around Arbroath Abbey. There is space in the courtyard at the front, as well as in the Visitor Centre and in the grounds to organise a varied programme of events.

### **8.4 Tartan Day Local Events Programme**

The Tartan Day local events programme is a collection of community events, aimed mainly at a local audience, which do not impact significantly on visitor numbers. However, although Angus Council co-ordinates and promotes the festival, the key to its success is the involvement of local businesses, groups and organisations, without whom there would be no local events programme.

### **8.5 Arbroath 2020**

A new Chairperson will be elected at the next Arbroath 2020 meeting and plans for Tartan Day 2015 discussed. Local events are not only an exciting tourism product for visitors, but are also an important part of community life. As such, the involvement of local businesses and the community are vital to ensure the success of the Tartan Day Scotland Festival from 2015 – 2020. The Arbroath 2020 association must be a robust, committed group, willing to play a key role in engaging the support of the local community as well as key decision makers.

### **8.6 Tartan Day Scotland Festival 2015 – Recommendations**

Angus Council and Historic Scotland have had initial discussions about 2015; however, these plans require input from the Arbroath 2020 Association.

It is recommended that a one-day event be held at Arbroath Abbey on either the 4, 5 or 6 April 2015. It will not be possible to organise a full weekend event in 2015, unless additional funding becomes available. A close working partnership with Historic Scotland will help to ensure the success of future events.

It is also recommended that another Consuls Generals' reception be held at Arbroath Abbey to stimulate support for the proposed Tartan Day anniversary celebrations in 2020.

Finally, it is recommended that a strategy and action plan be developed as a guideline for working towards the 2020 Vision. It is also recommended that additional funding sources are secured in order to develop an event in 2020 which appeals to a national and international audience.