

MORAY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

NEWS RELEASE

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Launch event for Moray Tourism Development

A development group which is aiming to put Moray firmly on the international tourism map is seeking local support next month.

Moray Tourism Development will host an event, sponsored by VisitScotland, at the Robbie Dhu Centre, Glenfiddich Distillery on Wednesday 24 February. Local businesses, communities and organisations will be invited to explore how everyone can work together to develop and promote Moray as an internationally renowned, successful tourist destination.

Moray Tourism Development is currently working with over 25 private sector businesses and would like to expand this. HIE (Moray), The Moray Council and VisitScotland are also partners in the project. It was created to implement innovative proposals for the area as a result of the Moray Tourism Vision and Audit report carried out in 2006.

Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) and The Moray Council has provided two years of funding for the creation the new limited company, which is taking the lead in driving and delivering change.

The theme for the event is “Making the Connections Work” and the newly formed company will announce their initial plans for growing the importance and value of tourism in the area. These plans will rely on the development of partnerships and one of the main purposes of the event is to hear from those attending about what they would like the new organisation to focus on.

The day will also provide a valuable opportunity to network with other related businesses and to identify opportunities for collaboration. There will also be an opportunity to exchange literature with others working in the tourism industry.

Moray Tourism Development Interim Chair, Jim Royan, who has been instrumental in setting up the new organisation for Moray said: “I am delighted that we have reached a stage where we now have a vision and structure in place to support Moray’s economic growth through

tourism. The next stage will be listening to businesses and identifying their business development needs. This event is going to be a vital stage in that process.”

An Action Plan for the development of tourism in Moray has been produced. Marion Walker, Moray Tourism Development executive director said “We have identified areas we believe we need to concentrate on that will make a real difference, but we need to ensure we are fully informed and clear about our priorities. The mechanisms are in place to raise the bar, but we cannot do it alone – success is entirely dependent on the development of a true partnership approach.”

Event sponsors, VisitScotland are fully behind the establishment of the Destination Development Organisation. VisitScotland’s Regional Director, Scott Armstrong, said “Tourism is one our most sustainable industries, inextricably linked to Scotland’s future economic development and growth. Working in partnership with the industry is key to making tourism a success for everyone. With a backdrop of funding pressures on local authorities and public agencies, VisitScotland is committed to working to ensure that every penny spent on tourism brings sustainable economic growth to local communities.

HIE’s Moray Area Manager Calum Macpherson said: “It has long been recognised that the economy of Moray is heavily dependant on a number of large employers. Tourism has a lot to offer in Moray and the establishment of Moray Tourism Development is a major step to realising its potential.”

Tourism is worth £106m to the local economy, helping to sustain over 3,735 jobs and the aim is to grow these figures to £130m by 2012.

For more information on Moray Tourism Development’s launch event and how to register to attend, log on to www.moray-tourism.info. Early registration is recommended as places are limited.

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For further information, please contact:

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