



WHAT HAPPENS NOW? **NEXT STEPS**

2025 - 2030

A guide on the BID, the renewal ballot and our priorities for the next five years.

VISIT
MORAY
SPEYSIDE

TABLE OF CONTENTS



03	WELCOME
04	WHO ARE WE?
05	YOUR PRIORITIES
06	THE FUTURE OF TOURISM
08	WHY DO WE NEED A BID?
10	BALLOT PROCESS
11	BALLOT TIMELINE

WELCOME

As we look ahead, the Board of Directors of Visit Moray Speyside is focused on the critical role our organisation will play in shaping the future of our region's tourism and hospitality industry. In an ever-evolving market, our commitment to driving effective marketing strategies and being the voice of the industry is more important than ever.

Our organisation serves as the central hub for promoting the region, advocating for the needs of the industry, and ensuring that our local businesses and attractions are visible on both the national and international stage. We are dedicated to amplifying the unique stories and experiences that make our destination stand out, fostering collaboration among stakeholders, and driving sustainable growth that benefits the entire community.

However, it is crucial to recognise what would be lost if our organisation were not here. Without Visit Moray Speyside, the region would face significant challenges in maintaining its competitive edge. The unified voice that coordinates marketing efforts that attract visitors, advocates for industry needs, and offers support during times of crisis would all be diminished. Local businesses would lose a key partner in navigating the complexities of the tourism landscape, and our region's ability to compete with other destinations would be severely impacted.

As we embark on the next steps for our future, we remain steadfast in our mission to promote our region with passion and purpose, champion the industry, and ensure that Visit Moray Speyside continues to be an indispensable resource for the community. Together, we will build a vibrant and resilient future for tourism in our region.

WHO ARE WE?

Visit Moray Speyside was launched on 1st April 2020. We are the Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO) and Business Improvement District (BID) committed to promoting the region as a visitor destination, while also supporting tourism and hospitality businesses across Moray.

Visit Moray Speyside's work is focused on three main areas of activity:

- **Marketing** - Destination marketing for Moray Speyside. Attracting consumers and engaging with the international travel trade to position Moray as a world-class destination.
- **Business Support** - Supporting tourism businesses in the region with training, opportunities, digital skills and more.
- **Visitor Experience** - Improving the experience for visitors from inspiration to arrival and beyond.

Visit Moray Speyside works in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders, tourism organisations, community groups and commercial businesses to drive forward tourism development in Moray Speyside.

THE TEAM

The Visit Moray Speyside (VMS) team is made up of two full-time members of staff.

VMS also have a Board of Directors which is made up of unpaid volunteers who give up their own time to contribute to the success of VMS and the region.

If you are interested in joining the Board of Directors, please contact Gemma Cruickshank on 01309 678150.





YOUR PRIORITIES

A survey was distributed to all members of Visit Moray Speyside to gather their feedback on the work carried out over the past five years. Members were also invited to share their preferences for what they would like to see delivered by Visit Moray Speyside in the next five-year term.

The survey was sent via email and newsletter on 10th April 2024. Members were also encouraged to participate in in-person renewal discussions in May 2024, with further discussions held in July 2024.

Overall, we engaged with and received feedback from over 90 members which equates to 25% of our membership.

The feedback has been summarised, with members highlighting two key areas for Visit Moray Speyside to focus on in the future:



WHAT YOU ASKED FOR...

MARKETING

1. Promote the region domestically and internationally
2. Press & media trips
3. Market specific sectors i.e. accommodation, golf, food & drink, attractions etc
4. Grow Taste of Moray Speyside and Moray Speyside Golf brands
5. Work with other Destination Marketing Organisations to grow our reach and share costs for promotion

BEING THE VOICE OF THE INDUSTRY

1. Be the voice of the industry when it comes to policies that affect the industry
2. Attend trade shows to represent Moray Speyside domestically and internationally
3. Continue consistent newsletters, networking and meeting opportunities
4. Strengthen the Board of Directors to ensure all sectors represented

THE FUTURE OF TOURISM

Looking ahead, Moray Speyside has a promising opportunity to become a standout destination in both the UK and international travel markets. Our goal is to showcase the region's unique charm and diverse attractions, making it a top choice for travellers seeking memorable experiences.

To achieve this, our organisation is committed to helping put Moray Speyside on the map and supporting the growth of the local tourism industry. By focusing on strategic marketing, engaging campaigns, and collaboration with local businesses, we aim to highlight the region's best features and attract visitors.

Our approach will be centred on promoting the unique aspects of Moray Speyside, driving sustainable growth, and building strong connections with travellers. We are excited about the possibilities and look forward to working together to see Moray Speyside thrive as a premier destination.

MARKETING

As we look to the future, our strategy will centre on promoting Moray Speyside as a premier destination, both within the UK and internationally. We will continue to keep the region on the map, attracting visitors by showcasing its unique charm and diverse attractions. A key part of this will be maintaining and enhancing the organisation of media visits, which are instrumental in highlighting what Moray Speyside has to offer, from its stunning landscapes to its rich cultural heritage.

Our marketing efforts will be strategically targeted at specific sectors, such as accommodation, food and drink, and outdoor activities, to fully showcase the region's variety. To further engage both locals and visitors, we will launch media campaigns that members can actively participate in, beginning with the new #MyMorayMoments initiative. This campaign will encourage people to share their personal experiences of the region, helping to build a stronger community connection and broader recognition of Moray Speyside's appeal.

Building on our existing strengths, we will continue to develop the Taste of Moray Speyside and Moray Speyside Golf brands, further enhancing the region's reputation as a top destination for food, drink, and golf enthusiasts. In addition, we will explore innovative ways to expand our digital marketing reach, leveraging social media, influencer partnerships, and targeted online advertising to attract a wider audience.

To ensure a cohesive and impactful approach, we will work closely with local businesses and community groups. This collaboration will help create a unified regional identity and ensure that our promotional efforts benefit the entire area.

Another key focus will be on sustainable tourism, ensuring that as we attract more visitors, we also protect and preserve the natural beauty and cultural heritage that make Moray Speyside so special. We will explore opportunities for eco-friendly initiatives, such as promoting green accommodations, partnering with Moray Council to further develop walking and cycling trails, and encourage responsible travel practices among visitors.



BEING THE VOICE OF THE INDUSTRY

In our business plan, we aim to strengthen our role as a key link between the tourism and hospitality industry and government authorities. We will actively advocate for supportive policies and initiatives that foster growth, such as funding for local projects, infrastructure improvements, and legislation like the Transient Visitor Levy.

We will continue to be a reliable resource during challenging times, such as economic downturns or public health crises. By providing valuable support and information, we can help the industry navigate these situations effectively.

Our representation will continue to extend to national and international tourism events, trade shows, and conferences. By participating in these platforms, we will ensure that Moray Speyside's unique qualities are showcased to a wider audience.

We're committed to maintaining open communication with local businesses, industry leaders, and stakeholders. This will involve regular newsletters and meetings to keep everyone informed and engaged.

Additionally, we will strengthen the Board of Directors to ensure diverse representation across all industry sectors. This will help us address various perspectives and needs effectively.

By implementing these strategies, we're excited to build on Moray Speyside's strengths and drive positive growth for the tourism and hospitality sector.

WHY DO WE NEED A BID?



The success of VMS is vital for tourism in Moray. There is no other organisation to fund and continue promoting Moray as a world-class destination or to ensure that the voices of the industry are heard.

Examples of what will cease from 31st March 2025 if the BID is unsuccessful:

NO REPRESENTATION

VMS is able to represent the views of our levy payers at the highest strategic level, working closely with organisations such as the Scottish Government, Highlands & Islands Enterprise, and VisitScotland. The CEO also sits on the Destination Forum with the Scottish Tourism Alliance, and we report directly to Scottish Government Ministers on various topics. This will be particularly crucial in the coming years with the potential introduction of a Transient Visitor Levy. Businesses have the opportunity to provide input through VMS and influence how the funds are allocated. Without VMS, there will be no say in how the money is spent.

NO VMS WEBSITE

The region could lose its dedicated visitor website. This would make it harder for visitors to find information about the area's attractions, events, and local businesses. Without this central online resource, visitors might miss out on discovering all that Moray Speyside has to offer, including the unique products and services of local businesses. The website provides crucial exposure for these businesses, helping them reach a wider audience. Without it, they could struggle to attract customers, which might lead to fewer visitors and impact the region's overall economic growth. Supporting the BID is important to keep the region and its businesses visible and accessible to potential visitors.

NO SOCIAL MEDIA

The region will lose the coordinated efforts that drive social media coverage and marketing campaigns. These initiatives are vital for promoting Moray Speyside to a broader audience, ensuring that the region's attractions, events, and local businesses reach potential visitors. Without the BID, there would be no organised strategy to create and share compelling marketing messages across social media platforms, leading to reduced visibility and engagement.



NO PR OR BLOGGER VISITS

The region will lose the coordinated efforts that currently support blogger and PR trips. These collaborative initiatives are crucial for showcasing Moray Speyside to a wider audience, as they bring in influencers and journalists who can highlight the region's attractions, businesses, and cultural sites to potential visitors. Without the BID, there would be no organised strategy to host these trips, resulting in missed opportunities for valuable exposure and media coverage. This lack of promotion could make it harder to attract new visitors, impacting the local tourism industry and the broader economy of the region.

NO TOURISM DATA

There will be a gap in collecting important tourism data that helps understand how the region is performing and where marketing efforts should be focused. Without this support, it will be harder to gather visitor statistics and insights into tourism trends. This could make it more challenging to assess the effectiveness of promotional efforts and to make informed decisions about how to enhance the region's appeal to visitors.



NO MARKETING ADVICE

Local businesses may lose access to important marketing advice that helps them attract visitors. Without this support, there would be fewer resources offering guidance on marketing strategies and understanding visitor trends, which could make it more challenging for businesses to reach their target audiences and grow.

NO COMMUNICATIONS

There will be a loss of the valuable weekly communications that have been a key resource for local businesses, especially during the pandemic. These updates provided essential information on topics like industry trends, support opportunities, and practical advice, helping businesses navigate challenging times. Without this regular communication, businesses may find it harder to stay informed and adapt to changing circumstances, losing a vital connection that has been crucial for their resilience and success.

BALLOT PROCESS



The BID Ballot process is a confidential postal ballot managed by Moray Council and funded by Visit Moray Speyside.

Voting papers will be issued to every eligible person (i.e. the person liable for paying the non-domestic rate, or otherwise nominated, for each business). The vote is simply a tick box decision - answering 'Yes' or 'No' to being in favour of the BID proposals.

You will have six weeks in which to cast your vote, when papers are issued on the 6th February 2025 and before voting closes on 20th March 2025. Full details will be provided in the Business Plan which you will receive a copy of this in January.

For the ballot to be valid, the following conditions must be met:

- At least 25% of businesses must vote (by headcount and total rateable value)
- Over 50% of vote cast must be in favour both in vote count and rateable value

26TH SEPTEMBER

Draft Business Plan issued out for feedback from levy payers. Levy payers will have three weeks to respond with feedback

17TH OCTOBER

Final submission of Business Plan, no changes can be made from this date

6TH FEBRUARY

Issue of Ballot papers, this will remain open for six weeks for businesses to cast their vote

20TH MARCH

Final date to return Ballot paper

21ST MARCH

Day of the count of votes which will determine the future of tourism in Moray



BALLOT TIMELINE

USE YOUR VOTE

**LEAD THE WAY.
ENGAGE AND VOTE
YES FOR A STRONGER,
BRIGHTER TOURISM
INDUSTRY**

**VISIT
MORAY
SPEYSIDE**

Unit 15, 2 Innovation Way, Horizon
Building, Enterprise Park, Forres, IV36
2AB

www.morayspeyside.com

info@morayspeyside.com

[@morayspeyside](https://www.instagram.com/morayspeyside)