



Head of Tourism Development Recruitment Pack



Message from the Chief Executive



Chris Foy

Chief Executive
VisitAberdeenshire

Thank you for taking an interest in this vacancy. I hope you find the contents of this pack informative and that you will be sufficiently motivated to apply.

Firstly, let me set some context with some background on the role of VisitAberdeenshire. We are an award-winning destination organisation with a brief to develop and promote the tourism offer in North-east Scotland. The ambition is high. In August 2022 we published '[Destination Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, a Framework for Growth 2022-2030](#)' setting out the best prospects for tourism growth and priorities to underpin them.

We want the North-east to be Scotland's leading visitor destination, with more people staying longer and spending more.

Due to a pending retirement, we have a vacancy for a senior leadership role within the Tourism Development team.

The Head of Tourism Development is a critical role. The work of this team is very much the engine room of the VisitAberdeenshire – supporting local businesses and tourism initiatives that ensure that the regions' tourism offer remains compelling and competitive, helping to get new products and experiences to market, and substantiating the messages in our promotional activities.

In recent years, the pioneering programmes delivered by this team have made a positive difference to the visitor experience in the North-east, while receiving excellent reviews from local businesses who have benefited from the new skills and business practices that have been adopted as a result of participation. Building on the momentum already gathered by this programme will be a priority, as will be a refreshed approach to engagement with local tourism businesses.

Ideally you will have a background in a leadership role in the tourism sector, or in economic development. Crucially you will have great leadership skills that will get the very best out of your team, from the suppliers who you will contract with, and the capacity to build an effective relationship with a diverse range of local tourism businesses.

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The Tourism Industry

Tourism is one of the engine rooms of the Scottish economy. At its heart, this is a sector that inspires people to enrich their lives by exploring a world beyond their own backyard, and importantly, it enriches the livelihoods of those who serve them across a diverse range of businesses.

Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire offer fantastic tourism experiences to its visitors, including 263 castles forming part of the longest castle trail in Europe, some 50 golf courses, a host of museums, nine National Trust for Scotland properties, an emerging adventure tourism offer, many gardens and buildings of interest, unique preserved fishing villages, and one of the 10 best coastlines in the world as rated by National Geographic.

The stark impact of COVID-19 on the local visitor economy, and the current economic environment presents a significant challenge for businesses across the sector. The launch of a refreshed tourism strategy in summer 2022; '[Destination Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire, Framework for Growth 2022-2030](#)' provides basis to address these challenges, and to take advantage of market opportunities.

PRE-PANDEMIC, DIRECT TOURISM EXPENDITURE **IN THE NORTH-EAST** CONTRIBUTED OVER **£730 MILLION** TO THE LOCAL ECONOMY EVERY YEAR, SUPPORTING ALMOST **18,500 JOBS** ACROSS NEARLY **1,400 DIVERSE BUSINESSES**.



About Us

VisitAberdeenshire is the recognised destination organisation and lead body for tourism serving Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire.

VisitAberdeenshire is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee; transparent, accountable to its stakeholders and reinvesting any trading surplus in the destination tourism offer.

VisitAberdeenshire is open and inclusive in its approach, inviting all those with an interest in tourism to be part of their activities and communications network. It is engaged with all parts of the industry and across the region. Where it is of clear value, VisitAberdeenshire will work productively with neighbouring destinations and other industry sectors.

There is a corporate Board of Directors who provide counsel and governance to VisitAberdeenshire. Board Members include our three main funders Opportunity North East, Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeen City Council, alongside several senior professionals from the region.



Organisation Structure

The company and senior leadership team is structured into three core areas, working alongside the Business Services and Insights & Evaluation departments.

All activity undertaken by VisitAberdeenshire is informed by customer, market and industry insight. In support of these disciplines the organisation has established a flexible, knowledgeable and professional [team](#).

- **Business Development (our mid to long-term market focus)**

The Business Development team promotes the region to travel intermediaries and conference and event planners in the UK and overseas to ensure the region is a first-choice destination for both leisure visits and business events.

- **Marketing & Communications (our short-term market focus)**

The Marketing team helps grow the visitor economy through destination marketing, campaign and PR activities to continually raise awareness of – and drive visits to – Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire in targeted markets.

- **Tourism Development (our local business and destination focus)**

The Tourism Development team provides advice and support to help tourism businesses develop skills and products to meet demand from an ever-changing market.

- **Insights and Evaluation**

The Insights and Evaluation team curates and shares insights to inform business decision-making and strives to demonstrate the value and impact of our activity through tracking, measurement and reporting.

- **Business Services**

The Business Services team supports the employees, volunteers, Board of Directors and business with all aspects of human resources, finance, facilities, health & safety and maintains good corporate governance for the organisation.



Purpose, Vision & Values

Our purpose is to help drive demand to visit Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire, and support businesses to develop and meet that demand.

Our vision is to be the leading destination organisation in Scotland increasingly recognised for growing the visitor economy through bold and dynamic initiatives.

Our values are:

- **Collaborative.** *We work in partnership, internally and externally to work towards our company vision.*
 - *Cross team working.*
 - *Working with industry.*
 - *Value and listen to counsel from key stakeholders and Board of Directors.*
- **Ambitious.** *We are creative, forward-thinkers and passionate about what we do.*
 - *Be curious and question the status quo.*
 - *Feel empowered to bring ideas to the table.*
 - *Pursue bold and dynamic ways to inspire and engage with colleagues and industry.*
- **Responsible.** *We take an environmentally responsible and insights driven approach, operate inclusively and are respectful of others.*
 - *Understand insight and customers' needs in all decision making.*
 - *Strive to source and buy local to support wider sustainability and net zero ambitions of the region.*
 - *Celebrate and support colleagues to create a one team approach.*
- **Empathetic.** *We listen and respond to the needs of others.*
 - *Be friendly, approachable and open to listening to colleagues and industry partners.*
 - *Demonstrate flexibility to our colleagues and stakeholders.*
 - *Approach challenges with a positive perspective.*

Role Profile - Job Description

Role Purpose

To lead VisitAberdeenshire's activity to support the development of tourism businesses across the region. This will include:

- Leadership of an ambitious tourism business development programme.
- Leadership of industry engagement activity.

- Contributing towards destination development initiatives outside of the organisation.

Job title • Head of Tourism Development

Location • VisitAberdeenshire Office

Reporting to • Chief Executive

Salary • circa £45,000 per annum

Principal Duties and Responsibilities

The Head of Tourism Development will be expected to deliver:

Tourism Business Development Programme

- Design and lead on delivery of initiatives that will help the tourism sector across the region to become more competitive and sustainable.
- Manage contracts and procurement procedures for external suppliers who will facilitate aspects of the programme.
- Deliver tiered levels of support programmes ranging from in-depth 1-2-1 advice through to thematic workshops and initiatives covering a broad range of areas from digital technology, intermediary channels, market insights and sustainable tourism.
- Ensure effectiveness of VisitAberdeenshire's engagement in tourism development projects led by other partners including Opportunity North East (ONE), Scottish Enterprise, and VisitScotland.

Industry Engagement

- Determine the most effective platforms to build industry networks.
- Agree protocols for industry engagement approaches with external partners including VisitScotland and Business Gateway.
- Oversee delivery of any associated events (both local and area-wide) to provide a forum for partners' views and to develop product and marketing collaboration. Lead the industry tourism forum that will provide front line insight to help shape the organisation's delivery across all its priorities.
- Lead the industry forum that will provide front line insight to help shape the organisation's delivery across all of its priorities.

Line Management and Budget Responsibility

- Effectively lead and manage the Tourism Development team, ensuring that objectives are set, monitored, and delivered upon. (Including holding monthly support meetings and annual appraisals).
- Provide day-to-day management, support, and guidance to the Tourism Development team members.
- Develop and deliver a clear action plan and budget for the Tourism Development team with the CEO in line with agreed priority themes and operating environment.
- Work with Chief Executive to agree targets for outputs and outcomes from VisitAberdeenshire's work in this area.
- Evaluate and report on outcomes from VisitAberdeenshire's work, using internal and external resources to monitor and measure the impact of activity.
- Overall responsibility and accountability for the departmental budgets, ensuring that procurement policy and procedures are followed, including reporting.
- Oversee supplier contracts agreed by the Tourism Development team.

The post holder will also be expected to:

- Act in accordance with any and all company processes, including quality, health, safety and environmental.
- Take a proactive stance to achieving set objectives with a solutions-led approach to overcome the unexpected.
- Takes responsibility and ownership for own performance, development and behaviour, learns from successes and failures and setting high expectations.
- Play an active part in the development of the VisitAberdeenshire team, including coaching and mentoring team members appropriately to support their continued development.
- Maintain high levels of communication and dialogue with internal colleagues, external partners, and stakeholders.
- Manage time and resources effectively, prioritising efforts according to organisation goals.
- Undertake any other duties that may be required in order to ensure the smooth running of the organisation including deputising for the Chief Executive as required.
- Act upon defined areas of the business plan, as agreed with the Chief Executive
- Work with the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team to devise the organisation's annual activity plan
- Produce quarterly reports for the Board of Directors and Chief Executive, as well as ad-hoc performance reports as requested
- Deputise for the Chief Executive at meetings as required and agreed.

Key Competencies Include:

Leadership & Team Building • Communication • Collaboration & Partnerships • Critical Thinker

Role Profile - Person Specification

CATEGORY	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Skills, knowledge, and aptitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creative thinker with ability to confidently engage with businesses at high level of seniority.• Excellent demonstrable team leadership and management skills.• Excellent communication and interpersonal skills – including ability to confidently present in public.• Excellent organisational skills.• Excellent IT skills.• Ability to manage a broad portfolio of projects.• Ability to draft concise and informative reports in line with organisational requirements.• Excellent attention to detail in reporting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Knowledge of the Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire tourism product.• Good business and negotiation skills.• Good IT skills• Knowledge of the tourism supplier environment.
Qualifications and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minimum of 5 years’ experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Degree or equivalent relevant work experience.
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experience of working with a range of businesses in a specific sector.• Partnership working with both public and private sector.• Experience of stakeholder Management.• Experience of developing strategies.• Demonstrable experience of staff management.• Demonstrable experience of budget management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recent experience of hosting events and presenting in both person and virtual settings.• Experience of working with a range of businesses across the tourism and hospitality sector.
Disposition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ability to positively represent the organisation to lever the best possible agreements with partners.• Ability to work collaboratively and on own initiative.• Dynamism. Able to work under pressure and to tight timescales for delivery, prioritising as required.• Strongly motivated, reliable, and conscientious.• Confident. Ability to lead and develop a team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ability to encourage and develop teamwork across the workplace.
Special requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Able to work out-of-office hours and spend time away from home as required.• Ability to travel throughout the region and nationally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Driving license and access to own car.

Employment Package

Salary

- This role has a salary commensurate with its responsibilities and expectations.
- The salary for this role will be circa £45,000 per annum.

Additional Benefits

- **Generous annual leave** of 33 days per annum (full-time contract).
- **Company pension scheme** (4% employer contribution).
- **Hybrid working** opportunities.
- **Employee Assistance Programme.**
- **Independent financial and legal advice.**
- **Death in service insurance.**
- **Health and Wellbeing Programme.**
- **Discounted tourism attraction entry.**
- **Cycle to work scheme.**



Our office is based to the north of the city at Aberdeen's leading event complex, P&J Live.



Application Process

To apply for our vacancy please email a copy of your current CV with a covering letter (no more than 1 page of A4) to Fiona Douglas, HR & Business Services Manager at jobs@visitabdn.com.

You will be initially assessed on how you demonstrate your suitability for the role across the following areas:

- **Skills, Knowledge and Aptitude**
- **Qualifications and Training**
- **Experience**
- **Disposition**

The job description and person specification should be your guide during the application process and used to demonstrate how you fit the role and key competencies. Where relevant this should be evidence based and draw on experience in previous roles.

Shortlisting will be based on candidate’s ability to meet the majority of the post’s key requirements and competencies. This is summarised within the job description and person specification.

Informal enquiries about the role can be made to Fiona Douglas, HR & Business Services Manager by emailing jobs@visitabdn.com in the first instance.

Selection Process - Key Dates

Key Dates	Stages
29 January	Closing date for applications
1 February	Shortlisted candidates to be invited for interview
8 February	First interviews
21 February	Second interviews

Selection

We use a variety of different methods within our recruitment processes which allows a very broad range of elements to be assessed.

The exact structure will be confirmed once we have decided how many candidates, we will be taking forward but it will be based on some or all of the following elements.

- **Online profiling** – done prior to attending interview through application review
- **Panel interview**
- **Interview presentation** or similar competency-based task

It is not anticipated that all candidates will be invited to the panel interview stage. Full details will be provided as we go through the recruitment process.

Pre-employment Checks

Before any firm offer of employment can be made, you will be required to complete an employment health questionnaire.

In all cases, references will be checked, and evidence of qualifications will be required.

In addition, we are legally required to ensure that you are eligible to work in this country and you will be asked to provide appropriate evidence of this.



Working at VisitAberdeenshire

Employees are a business' greatest advocates and without a group of creative, inspiring, and dedicated employees VisitAberdeenshire could not deliver its remit.

VisitAberdeenshire values the importance of its employees and their views on the organisation. Regular engagement with employees is undertaken to help identify and build upon the strengths and talents in the team. VisitAberdeenshire asks employees to take part in an annual employee engagement survey to delve deeper than the drivers of pay and job security and seek feedback on professional development, personal accomplishment, work/life balance and the ability to influence the company's direction.

VisitAberdeenshire aims to be an employer of choice, through fostering a supportive and friendly environment where people feel valued. We strive to operate an 'open door' policy, offer support, guidance and opportunities for learning and development within the team.

<p>Health & Wellbeing</p> <p>We are committed to the health and wellbeing of all our employees. The organisation has a dedicated Health & Wellbeing Policy with numerous initiatives in place to support employees.</p>	<p>Learning & Development</p> <p>We are committed to continual learning and development for all team members. VisitAberdeenshire empowers employees to upskill and take ownership of their personal development.</p>	<p>Communication</p> <p>We are committed to open communication and employee feedback within the organisation.</p>
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What do our employees say are the best things about working for VisitAberdeenshire?

- "I love promoting our region and **feel proud** to do so."
- "The talented team around us are specialists in their field - **we are great at what we do.**"
- "The work we do is fast paced, **exciting and rewarding**. We're at the coal face of a dynamic industry and work to best serve the stakeholders we work with."
- "The **stimulating** and constructively challenging nature of the work."
- "Collaborative and friendly **culture** of the team."
- "**Flexible working** and organisational culture."

Thank you for considering VisitAberdeenshire for your next career move.

VisitAberdeenshire is funded by:



Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



Visit**Aberdeenshire**

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