

MIDLOTHIAN AND BORDERS TOURISM ACTION GROUP MARKETING PROJECT

APPLICANT

Midlothian Council
www.scotlandstartshere.com

TOTAL PROJECT COST

£149,158

£74,579
(50%)*

Tyne Esk LEADER

£74,579
(50%)*

Scottish Borders LEADER

*Co-operation projects are funded 100%

PROJECT AIMS

- Employ a Digital Marketing and Social Media Co-ordinator to drive digital marketing activity across businesses on the Borders Railway corridor
- Develop a new website and brand which will increase visitor numbers to this area.
- Create new digital content which will be used to capture and showcase Midlothian and the Scottish Borders, in line with branding.

PROJECT DETAIL

Midlothian and Borders Tourism Action Group (MBTAG) was established in 2017 in response to the need for improved touristic visibility to Midlothian and the Scottish Borders, linked to the re-opened Borders Railway line. In its first phase it delivered business to business activity, strengthening the offering of businesses, physically and digitally. Phase 2 aimed to capitalise on this and drive up visitor numbers.

RESULTS

With this project, "Scotland Starts Here" was born – a brand, which aimed to put the Borders and Midlothian on the map as the first stop off point in Scotland. It was marketed thus but also heavily targeted the Edinburgh tourist market for an experience outside the city, in Scotland's countryside. The Scotland Starts here website was built and an app developed separately, both populated with engaging digital content. A captivating launch was delivered, but as this was just pre-Covid 19, a relaunch was required later in 2020 to plant the idea that the next break would be in the area. This was delivered by the Digital Marketing and Social Media Co-ordinator who, with a digital marketing agency, developed digital content including podcasts and blogs.

The results on people accessing the website/app/social media have been phenomenal, testament to the strength of the project. Unfortunately, because Covid 19 struck just after the launch of Scotland Starts Here and restrictions were not lifted significantly, this did not translate to the visitor numbers expected. Legacy work continues though, via the Midlothian and Scottish Borders Tourism Forums and the South Scotland Destination Alliance, so success is sure to follow.

