

# Edinburgh Tourism Bosses announce their plans



At the seventh annual Edinburgh Tourism Action Group (ETAG) conference today, the Minister for Enterprise, Energy and Tourism, Fergus Ewing MSP, announced details of the Edinburgh 2020 Edinburgh Tourism Strategy and outlined the key recommendations for ensuring the continued success and growth of Edinburgh's tourism sector.

He also met a piper, a chef and a waitress and of course what is now Edinburgh's best known tourist symbol, the pandas.

Ewing was very enthusiastic about all the major events which will bring tourists to the capital, not the least of which will be the new Pixar movie, Brave. Many Scottish actors have agreed to do the voices for the characters in the movie, and as the Minister explained it will be a case of:- "You've seen the movie, now come and see the country!"

The Reporter spoke to the Minister after he had officially launched the strategy:-

[Fergus Ewing speaking to The Reporter at the ETAG launch \(mp3\)](#)

The ambitious strategy, which is a result of extensive research and over 150 individual consultations with tourism related businesses, sets out a clear vision and targets for the industry to achieve by 2020.

Chair of ETAG, Robin Worsnop said: "The past 20 years have seen a remarkable transformation in the scale and nature of

Edinburgh's tourism industry and its impact on the economic, social and cultural life of the city. Once a highly seasonal destination, dominated by leisure tourism, Edinburgh now has a rich, diverse year-round industry, with a very strong, high yield conference and meetings sector. Tourism-related employment has gone up from 12,000 in 1989 to 32,000 now.

"Now, at the beginning of 2012, the UK and Europe economies are seeing a further downturn, the length, depth and impact of which is uncertain. In Scotland and the UK in general, continuing economic uncertainty and major cuts in public expenditure will have significant implications for consumer demand and on the scale and nature of investment in destination development, management and marketing activity.

"Edinburgh 2020 is about maintaining the momentum of growth for the next ten years and beyond. It will act as a catalyst for partnership and collaboration across the industry and build the case for, and prioritise investment in, the tourism product. The strategy will support the creation of 6500 new full-time jobs in Edinburgh by 2020."

The Edinburgh Tourism Strategy sets out three clear objectives to achieve by 2020, supported by specific and measurable growth targets:

– Objective 1: The target is to increase the number of visits by one third: from 3.27m visits to 4.39m visits, generating an additional 4.15 million visitor nights, an increase of 3% per annum.

– Objective 2: increase the value of every visitors' spend by

10%: The target is to increase spend from £310.40 to £341.44 per visitor trip. Combined with increasing the number of visitors by a third, this will generate an additional £485 million per annum by 2020, taking the total visitor spend from £1.015bn to £1.5bn in today's prices.

– Objective 3: reduce seasonality across the sector: The target is to achieve 50% of the additional growth during the months of October to March and reduce the current 40:60 split in visits to 43:57 between October to March and April to September.