

# Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology – History and tourism go hand in hand



Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop was on Edinburgh's Royal Mile today to hear how Scotland is capitalising on the booming demand from tourists to explore the country's history and genealogy.

The Minister met Edinburgh-based Mercat Tours who reported record turnover last year with a 35% increase in walking tours in the capital from the previous year. Their tours are all based around the rich history of the city.

With an estimated 50 million people worldwide who claim to be descended from Scots, attracting visitors to Scotland to get to know about our country's history is a growing and important market.

My Hyslop said: "Scotland inspires and captivates the imagination of international visitors through our history, heritage and archaeology.

"Evidence of our history is edged in our landscape, from surviving Neolithic tombs and homes, to carved stones, to medieval castles, renaissance palaces and some of the finest surviving Georgian urban-planning anywhere in the world.

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Managing Director of Mercat Tours Kathleen Brogan said: ‘We believe it is simple – with a warm welcome we keep the traditional art of storytelling alive whilst making memories that endure long after visitors return home.

“With world-famous heritage, and reputation as a safe, high quality destination, Edinburgh continues to appeal to international visitors.

“We are delighted to be securing jobs for our team through sustainable growth and investment in our first class, five star experience.”

Ms Hyslop then went down the hill to speak in a Parliamentary debate on the themed Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology.

*Photos courtesy of The Scottish Government.*