Fermanagh Tourism Providers celebrated wins in a number of categories at this year’s Northern Ireland Tourism Awards, held in the Ramada Hotel in Belfast on the 26th May.

Tanya Cathcart of Fermanagh Lakeland tourism said “I would like to congratulate all the winners, this has been a great year for tourism in Fermanagh. The awards are a result of how much work all our providers are undertaking and highlights that Fermanagh is leading the way in terms of attracting visitors & ensuring that Fermanagh is not forgotten about. We have an amazing tourism product here in the County & we were delighted to gain so much recognition at the awards.”
**Events Update**

**New Events Brochure**
A new events brochure has been produced by the Fermanagh Tourist Information Centre detailing all the forthcoming events from April to October 2011. “This brochure will give both the trade and visitors alike advance notification of all the available events in the area, making it easier to plan a visit around a particular event and giving the provider an opportunity to see what is coming up in advance” says Charlotte Wilson, Manager of the Tourist Information Centre.

This brochure was produced after suggestions made by members of the sub-group in an effort to capitalise on the array of events Fermanagh has to offer. The brochure is being distributed to the local trade and Tourist Information Centres across the province.

**TOURISM AREA PLANS**
The Destination Fermanagh Steering Group held a meeting with Noel Cornick, DETI and Gillian Magee, NITB with regard to new tourism plans for the region. All of the key tourism areas identified within the new NI Tourism Strategy will be required to produce tourism plans for their area. The strategy, however, does recognise that each area will have different product strengths, weaknesses and are all at different stages in the product portfolio development life cycle. To successfully develop and promote product within each area will require coordination of all the activities and services which impact upon the visitor and the enjoyment of the area. Although the strategy sets out key criteria for local delivery arrangements, it is the responsibility of the local authorities to decide on the most suitable structure for their area.

**Training Developments**

**Looking for product knowledge training?**
Staff in the Tourist Information Centre are available to deliver Product Knowledge training to any hotels/larger accommodation premises or attractions. Anywhere who wishes to keep their staff updated with information on new tourism developments can avail of this service by contacting Charlotte at Fermanagh Tourist Information Centre. Tel 028 6632 3110 or email charlotte.wilson@fermanagh.gov.uk.

**Welcome Host Training**
Housekeeping staff at the Belmore Court and Motel undertook Welcome Host Training recently. The training involved an introduction to tourism and its value to the local economy as well as a focus on the importance of understanding the needs of customers and the benefits of delivering excellent customer service. Charlotte Wilson, Manager of Fermanagh Tourist Information Centre undertook the training and said, “The feedback from the training was very positive, the staff went away with a greater understanding of the importance of tourism and the vital role they play in the organisation; they also learned a lot about the local area.”
South West College are hosting a **FREE seminar on Facebook**: for the benefit of your business and how to promote your business successfully through use of Facebook. More and more nowadays businesses are turning to different sources of social media to promote and sell the services of their business for free. But are you fully aware of all the possibilities and everything you can do on Facebook to benefit your business? If not, why not come along to the Seminar being hosted in South West College, Fairview Campus, on **Tuesday 14th June 2011 at 2.30pm**! Everyone is very welcome and to register your interest please call Anne Kelly on 028 8225 5223 or email anne.kelly@swc.ac.uk **by Friday 10th June @4pm**. Refreshments will be served at the event.

**Up Skilling Programme**

A total of 23 participants across the County of Fermanagh have recently completed a Level 2 qualification in Customer Service Delivery through the Tourism and Hospitality Training Up Skilling Programme organised by South West College and funded by Department of Employment and Learning Northern Ireland (DEL). Participants on the course, from a range of backgrounds throughout the Tourism & Hospitality Sector, undertook three weeks training on improving their Customer Service Delivery Skills, delivered by tutor Tess O'Loughlin, and all really valued the training saying "it definitely made me think about what I was doing everyday and how I receive customers, and I definitely have room for improvement". The training was delivered in time for the Tourist High Season commencing and was a great and welcomed boost to all of the participants. For those employees hoping to participate in the up skilling training programme who were over-qualified (had qualifications above a Level 2), they will have the opportunity to participate in training coming up very soon through South West College. Anne Kelly - Tourism & Hospitality Representative from InnoTech will be in touch with all interested parties.

If you would like to express an interest please call Anne on 028 8225 5223 or email: anne.kelly@swc.ac.uk

Training Needs Analysis throughout Fermanagh Through the Destination Fermanagh Strategic Development Group it was identified that a training needs analysis must be carried out with all private sector businesses throughout the County of Fermanagh. Within the next few weeks, Anne Kelly - South West College Representative for Tourism & Hospitality will be in touch with all businesses to make an appointment to carry out a training needs analysis for staff which will be addressed through the expertise of staff from within South West College.
Enniskillen Airport will be welcoming a new arrival as Fermanagh’s premier coach hire company and tour operator, Lakeland Tours will be moving their operations to St. Angelo.

Lakeland Tours executive coaches and recently launched Chauffeur Car service are already regular visitors to the Airport collecting flight crews, VIPs, and corporate clients on behalf of local hotels and businesses.

Proprietor Ian McCutcheon said “This move will provide us with a secure site with all the specialist facilities we need and provides the Airport with a new range of services all on site. We currently offer coach & minibus hire, taxis and chauffeur cars and we hope to introduce a car hire service in time for the summer season. This is something which has been identified by both the N.I. Tourist Board and Destination Fermanagh Tourism Strategy as an important service which is currently not available in the area. I will be working closely with the Airport to develop the facilities on offer and as a licensed tour operator I would be keen to see holiday flights resume.”

Manager of Enniskillen Airport, Noel Baskin said “As we welcome the latest addition to our portfolio of specialised companies based at Enniskillen Airport, we are very excited about the arrival of Lakeland Tours as the expertise and services they offer will perfectly compliment the facilities we currently offer.

Tel contact: 028 6632 9900

One of the first tasks undertaken by the Marketing and PR subgroup was the implementation of the new Fermanagh Lakelands brand. Destination Fermanagh recognised the need to take a fresh approach to the marketing of the region. The Fermanagh Lakelands had been designated as one of the nine newly identified Tourism Areas in the NI Tourism Strategy and therefore it seemed an appropriate time to review the existing Find Fermanagh brand and come up with something new and fresh which would appeal to the visitor.

AV Browne was commissioned to create a new brand for the Fermanagh Lakelands and had previously been involved in the development of a new NI brand for NITB. It was felt that any new Fermanagh brand should be distinctive and unique but at the same time complement the new NI brand elements.

In creating the new Fermanagh Lakelands brand, a number of different elements had to be considered – this included the name, logo, web address, typeface, colour use of imagery, type of photography and even the style of writing used. There is a lot going on in the Fermanagh Lakelands and to communicate all it has to offer, a family of logos based around the name “Fermanagh Lakelands” was created. The main “hero” logo is the one most commonly used but a series of six other family logos have also been developed to allow flexibility. These main product areas include Business Tourism, Shopping, Outdoors/Activities, Great Days Out, Events and Short Breaks. All this will allow for improved recognition of the brand by potential visitors. A core colour palette has also been developed to create consistency. So far a range of collateral has been developed to illustrate the new brand and to attract the attention of the visitor. The 2011 Visitor Guide has been produced using a new style, content and format. This style is replicated on the cover of the Visitor Map and on the new display stands which are used at exhibitions and promotions. New advertisements and literature folders also reflect the new brand. Significant time and investment was given to the re-branding of the website which has seen a 40% increase in page views during January 2011 compared to the same month the previous year.

The brand has been designed to add new impact and recognition for our potential customers and we are endeavouring to incorporate the new brand into as much promotional material as possible. We recently invested in a range of new outdoor signage for the Fermanagh Lakelands and which can be used during events to reinforce the new brand. Plans are also underway to review the existing welcome signs and information signs across the county with a view to incorporating the new brand and reinforcing our brand identity.
A response to the Draft Planning Policy Statement 16, issued by the Department of the Environment, has been submitted on behalf of the Destination Fermanagh Steering Group. In formulating a response, Fermanagh District Council employed the services of Planning Consultant, John Casey, in order to prepare a detailed response to this document. The context of this document will have an important impact on future tourism development in Fermanagh as it will set out the Department’s planning policy for tourism development and also for the safeguarding of tourism assets.

It had been anticipated that the eagerly awaited PPS 16 would act as a champion for tourism and as a balance to the previous PPSs which tended to make tourism development difficult in Fermanagh. However, the Council has a number of concerns regarding draft PPS 16. The “one size fits all” policy may be appropriate for the east of Northern Ireland but is not appropriate for Fermanagh. There is a worry that, except in exceptional circumstances, new developments will only be permitted in areas designated as settlements. However, many of those visiting Fermanagh will want to stay in the countryside, enjoy rural pursuits and visit rural amenities. The Sustainable Transport Policy within the strategy ‘encourages development to be sited where there is a choice of transport and the location is not dependent predominantly on access by car’ – this will make development in rural Fermanagh next to impossible as the area does not have the transport network afforded to Belfast or the east of the province.

The principle objection to draft PPS 16 is its lack of vision or positivity and its unsuitability for the development of tourism in rural Fermanagh. The Regional Development Strategy is the overarching planning policy for NI. It clearly envisages different policies for the Belfast commuter area and the more rural parts of Northern Ireland like Fermanagh. More flexibility is required for the consideration of tourism development in a rural area of Fermanagh, especially as it is a region which depends heavily on tourism. The new NI Tourism Strategy identifies tourism as a key economic sector with ambitious targets for visitor revenue and numbers. These targets will only be met if we are able to build new developments and enhance existing provision where it is most appropriate.

Council representatives met with Minister Poots to raise concerns regarding draft PPS 16.

On 22 March 2011, a cross political grouping party representing Fermanagh District Council travelled to meet the Minister for the Environment, Mr Poots, to raise concerns with the draft PPS 16.

Councillors Cox, Johnston, Kerr, McCaffrey and O’Kane along with the Director of Environmental Health, Robert Forde and the Director of Leisure, Tourism and Arts, Robert Gibson verbally presented the Council’s response in detail and presented a written copy of their response for the Minister’s consideration.

We want you to get involved....

If so we would like to encourage you to come along & join one of our Subgroups. The subgroups focus on the priority areas in the Destination Fermanagh Strategy
Marketing/PR
Product Development
Tourism Training
Events
If you are interested in getting involved contact: Tanya Cathcart -tanya@fermanaghlakelands.com
or call +44 (0) 28 66 346736