Destination Fermanagh is a vision for tourism in Co.Fermanagh from 2006 to 2016. An economic development strategy driven primarily by Fermanagh District Council, Fermanagh Lakeland Tourism and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and associated tourism partners. The strategy is intended to guide the development of tourism in Fermanagh over a 10 year period, both in the towns and the wider rural areas. This will be achieved by investing in Fermanagh’s existing products and introducing new and enhanced tourism products to complement and enrich the Lakeland experience. It will also involve investing in the necessary physical infrastructure for access to and within Fermanagh and renew its urban fabric, in developing an events programme for Fermanagh and in new promotional and partnership arrangements for Fermanagh tourism.

Five priority areas have been identified:

Priority 1: Destination Management, Promotion and Visitor Servicing
Priority 2: Event’s Tourism
Priority 3: Enhancing the Tourism Product & New Product Development
Priority 4: Infrastructure and Planning
Priority 5: An Effective Delivery Structure

‘Imperative we all work collaboratively during these hard times....’

Interview with Martin Maguire
Fermanagh Economic Development Organisation

“Fermanagh Economic Development Organisation (FEDO) has been created to encourage economic development in the county. Tourism is currently one of the main economic drivers for Fermanagh and it is very appropriate for Fermanagh Economic Development Organisation to be involved at a strategic level in the development of tourism in the county. In a time of scarce resources there is an imperative for all stakeholders to work collaboratively and cohesively. Destination Fermanagh represents the ideal vehicle for the tourism and hospitality industry, in its widest interpretation, to create maximum added value and reinforce the Fermanagh brand. We want to encourage everyone to get involved in Destination Fermanagh”.
Examples of Achievements to Date

- **Cross border partnerships** have been established through the Lakelands and Inland Waterways Initiative.
- Development of a **new brand** and other marketing collateral for Fermanagh Lakelands.
- Fermanagh has now been identified as a specific region in the draft DETI Tourism 2020 Strategy.
- Accommodation providers across the county are emailed a list of **county wide activities** and events on a weekly basis.
- The **Castle Basin Study** has been completed. This study was funded through the NITB Innovation Fund and Fermanagh District Council, with additional assistance from Waterways Ireland.
- **Five major events** have been funded through the Lakelands and Inland Waterways initiative. Approximately **450 community based events** have been funded since Jan 2008.
- The **Erne Recreational, Tourism and Commercial Product Identification Study** has been commissioned and completed by Waterways Ireland in conjunction with the Fermanagh District Council, Fermanagh Lakeland Tourism and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board.
- **Bespoke training programmes** have been developed to support local businesses through the South West College and the Tourist Information Centre.
- **Partnerships** have been developed with key tourism training providers, including **South West College** and People 1st.
- **Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark development**. This is the **first cross border Geopark in the world**.
- Fermanagh District Council is working in partnership with Leitrim County Council to seek funding to develop the **eco tourism** product.
- The **Nick Faldo Championship Golf Course** opened at the new Lough Erne Resort in 2009 and the **first Faldo Academy in Europe in 2010**. Three major challenge events have been held, including, the Duel on the Lough, the Lough Erne Challenge and the Faldo Series Europe (Youth Competition).
- The **Enniskillen Traffic Management Plan**, commissioned by Fermanagh District Council, is now complete.
- Fermanagh District Council is supporting the development of **Enniskillen Airport** as a tourism access point. Consultants have also been appointed for the design of a new hangar and wing repair workshop.
- A number of food associated businesses from Fermanagh are now listed in the **Local Food Directory**, a comprehensive listing of local food producers in the West.
- A **village enhancement** application has been submitted to the Rural Development Programme. Twelve villages have been identified in Fermanagh.
- Destination Fermanagh has a **robust Stakeholder/Implementation group** in place. This group is made up of thirty three members.

**Destination Fermanagh Mission**

“We will maximise the potential of Fermanagh by leading the development of an **innovative yet authentic** world class visitor experience. Through **partnership** we will strive to inspire and secure the commitment of our **local providers and community**, in order to **exceed the expectations** of our visitors”.
Who is Destination Fermanagh?

Destination Fermanagh Implementation Group

- Fermanagh District Council
- Fermanagh Lakeland Tourism
- Waterways Ireland
- Northern Ireland Tourist Board
- Local Tourism Providers

Destination Fermanagh Steering Group Members

- Cllr Thomas O'Reilly, Fermanagh DC (Chairman)
- Robert Gibson, Fermanagh DC
- Eddie McGovern, Fermanagh DC
- Charlotte Wilson, Fermanagh DC
- Cllr Paul Robinson, Fermanagh DC
- Tanya Cathcart, Fermanagh Lakeland Tourism
- Robert Cully, NITB
- Martin Dennany, Waterways Ireland
- Martin Maguire FEDO

Rodney Watson, Killyhevlin Hotel
Arthur Goan, Belleek Pottery
John Cunningham, Erne Heritage Tours
Jonathan Stapleton, Lough Erne Resort
Anne Kelly, South West College
Charles Plunket, Belle Isle Estate
Jim Chestnutt, National Trust
Marshall Coalter, Horseshoe and Saddlers
Jonathan Styles, Mercers Jewellers

Training Developments

By Charlotte Wilson Manager Fermanagh TIC

‘Going the Extra Mile’
Taxi drivers are often the first point of contact for visitors when they arrive in Fermanagh. They can potentially act as ‘ambassadors’ for the area whilst providing good customer service and offering advice to their passengers on the tourism product. In March 2010, I delivered a training session in the Townhall to 20 local taxi drivers who were supplied with information and other handy hints about local landmarks which they can use to engage in conversation with clients and therefore make the trip more interesting—and memorable. Drivers were also issued with maps and specially designed information cards entitled ‘talking points’ which will act as useful reminders of some of the more interesting and unusual facts about Enniskillen and Fermanagh. Further taxi training is planned for this year.

‘Delivering an authentic N Ireland Experience’
People 1st has been leading a collaborative partnership with the six regional colleges, NITB and regional TICs to develop a training module that will boost destination product knowledge across hospitality and tourism businesses in N Ireland. The module which will provide an additional component to the existing level 2 and 3 customer service qualification for the Industry, will help learners and employees to provide information and advice on particular destinations across N Ireland. Siobhan Hallawell from the South West College and myself, delivered a pilot of the new module to 14 local Industry representatives in January 2011. Feedback received from participants will enable the steering group to refine the module which will complement existing customer service training by helping staff to offer a more authentic N Ireland experience and promote the unique tourism destinations in their region.
Destination Fermanagh is about ..
all.....of Co.Fermanagh

We want you to get involved....
Would you like to Participate in Destination Fermanagh?
If so, we would like to encourage you to come along and join one of our sub-groups. The sub-groups focus on the priority areas in the Destination Fermanagh Strategy.

Marketing/PR
Tourism Training
Product Development
Events

If you are interested in getting involved contact:
Tanya Cathcart - tanya@fermanaghlakelands.com
or call +44 (0) 28 66 346736
Progress Update
The next 6 months

Progress in Events
- Identified three themes for hosting key events - Land, Air and Water.
- Fed into the NITB Event Support Strategy consultation process.
- Consulted widely with organisers of existing and proposed new events.
- The Committee will continue to seek opportunities to attract major events and develop existing events under the three themes, as well as identifying funding sources.

Progress in Product Development
- The committee has fed into the Erne Recreational, Tourism and Commercial Product Identification Study.
- Consulted with local providers to identify priority product developments, including mountain bike trails, access to attractions via air and water, packaging of products etc.
- Provided input to major funding applications.
- The Committee will continue to investigate funding opportunities in order to deliver projects identified in the Destination Fermanagh Strategy.

Progress in Marketing/PR
- New brand for Fermanagh Lakelands.
- Implementation of Rural Development Funding Plan which will build on and supplement existing Destination Marketing activity undertaken by FLT.
- Continue partnerships with cross border organisations including implementation of Product Development and Marketing Programmes identified as result of Erne Recreational, Tourism and Commercial Product Identification Study.
- Significant investment in website development including improved product information and optimisation of site.
- PR activity for Destination Fermanagh strategy including newsletters, liaison with members, mentoring, press releases on successes.

Progress in Tourism Training
- All relevant partners, including People 1st and South West College, are fully engaged in the delivery of the Tourism Training elements of Destination Fermanagh.
- Local training and product knowledge initiatives have been delivered through the Tourist Information Centre, such as the 'Going the extra Mile' programme for Taxi Drivers.
- South West College has secured funding for a Tourism and Hospitality Upskilling Programme and recruitment is at an advanced stage with courses commencing in March 2011. Tourism and hospitality providers in the County are also availing of opportunities under the Apprentice NI Programme undertaking Management Level III programmes and Hospitality and Catering Level II. For further information on any of these training programmes, please contact Anne Kelly 028 8225 5223 or email: anne.kelly@swc.ac.uk
- The Tourism Training Sub Group will continue to pursue the development of a quality workforce, to meet the needs of the tourism industry in the future.
The Destination Fermanagh Information Day was held at the Lough Erne Resort and in excess of one hundred delegates were in attendance. The event provided participants with an update on the achievements delivered through this Tourism Strategy to date. The presentation emphasised that one of the most important features of this Strategy is that it is all inclusive and is working towards a better future for all. In attendance Minister Arlene Foster enthused about the good work which has been completed through the Destination Fermanagh process and how it was evident that the development of strategic partnerships is key to the delivery of the Strategy moving forward. The presentation took attendees on a journey from the present day to the year 2020, where they were invited to visualise how Fermanagh might look to tourists and residents in the future.

Howard Hastings, Chairman of the Northern Ireland Tourist Board commented ‘Other regions could learn much from what Destination Fermanagh has achieved, and for the very practical approach going forward. It was most pleasing to see such positive private sector engagement’. The event also gave delegates the opportunity to ask questions to a panel of Destination Fermanagh key personnel. We would also encourage the people of Fermanagh to pick up a free copy of the Destination Progress Report from the Tourist Information Centre or the Town Hall, or alternatively you can download the report from www.fermanaghlakelands.com or www.fermanagh.gov.uk