

Welcome to the

VENTURENORTH

Tourism Gathering 2025



NRS
Dounreay



Visit
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NORTH HIGHLAND
Developing the
Young Workforce



CAITHNESS
CHAMBER of
COMMERCE



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CHAMBER *of*
COMMERCE

Trudy Morris

***Chief Executive
Caithness Chamber of Commerce
Venture North***

Proposed Highland Visitor Levy



The four chambers of commerce in Highland (Caithness, Cairngorms, Inverness and West Highland) have come together to amplify the concerns and issues of the business community across the region. Recent activity has included:

- A joint statement issued by Highland chambers of commerce in December 2024 calling for a pause in the consultation process.
- Monthly meetings held with Highland Council representatives, including the Chief Executive.
- Issues and concerns raised at the Levy Forum meetings set up by the Highland Council.
- Caithness Chamber of Commerce facilitated an event in February 2025 for members to air their views and collate key feedback.
- Highland chambers of commerce wrote to Ivan McKee MSP, Public Finance Minister, in support of Cllr Lobban's letter requesting that the Scottish Government amend the legislation to allow local authorities to choose a flat rate.
- Caithness Chamber of Commerce facilitated a demonstration of the proposed payment portal with the Highland Council and Scottish Government's improvement service.
- Caithness Chamber of Commerce contacted local MP, Jamie Stone regarding the high VAT rate for the tourism industry compared to Europe, which he raised in the House of Commons in March 2025.

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VENTURENORTH

What's Next?



Strategic Merger

Boosting Economic and Tourism
Synergy to Unleash Potential



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Key Benefits of Merger



**Securing a
Sustainable
Future**



**Increasing
Capacity &
Expertise**



**Strengthening
our Influence
& Advocacy**

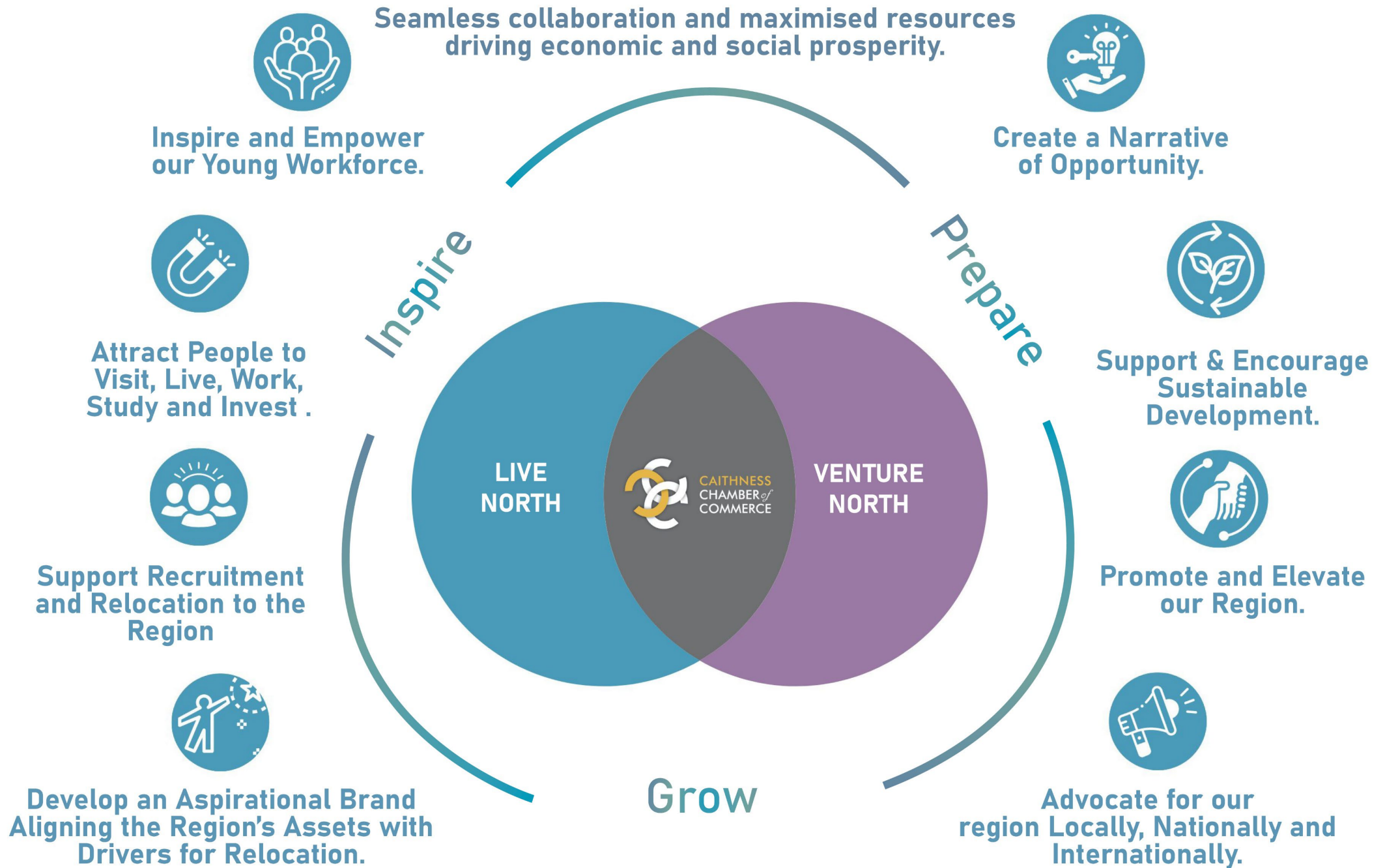


**Championing
a Holistic
Approach to
Destination**

**A Place to Visit,
Work, Live,
Study, & Invest**

Holistic Destination Strategy for the North Highlands 2025-2028





Reasons to Venture North

£256.95M

*Annual
Economic Impact*

**%GVA
by area**

*Caithness 11%
Sutherland 51%
Highland 27%*

986,160

*Visitors Each
Year*

3344

*People
Employed*

Based on 2023 STEAM data



Building a Destination of Choice

Collaborate with VisitScotland:

Partner with VisitScotland to showcase the North Highlands to a national and international audience, emphasising its rich and unique attributes

Utilise Digital Channels:

Leverage our website, social media, and various marketing assets to elevate the profile of the North Highlands. We will promote responsible tourism and effective visitor management to ensure a high-quality experience.

Expand Marketing Reach:

Collaborate with diverse marketing channels and seize opportunities to broaden our reach, maximising the visibility of the North Highlands, through a refreshed visual identity, brand and website.

Enhance Tourism Offerings & Increase Visitor Spend:

Explore opportunities to increase visitor spend and longer stays by developing opportunities to enrich the tourism experience by developing small-scale, impactful, and sustainable activities. Seek to develop immersive experiences through business collaborations which maximise opportunities, innovations and developing trends such as food and drink, adventure, wellness, cultural experiences and natural and environment (dark skies, flow country, geo-park).

Support Our Members:

Promote and support our members to amplify their voices and offerings, ensuring a diverse and compelling range of attractions and services for visitors.



Reasons to Live North

A unique blend of **natural beauty**, strong **community spirit**, and exciting **career opportunities**—ideal for those seeking a fresh start and a **balanced lifestyle**.

With a population of around **38,000**, the region faces challenges of **population decline** and an **ageing demographic**.

Attracting and **retaining talent** is essential for the **long-term prosperity** and vitality of the North Highlands.

Live North will promote the North Highlands as a place to **live, work, and thrive**.



38,000
*Resident
Population*

Building a Destination for Living

Promote and Elevate our Region:

Develop an aspirational and recognisable brand that resonates with our target audiences. This brand will highlight and promote the region's assets and opportunities, aligning them with the motivators for relocation. We will develop and execute a marketing strategy that will elevate the profile of the North Highland Region.

Collaborate:

Build strong partnerships with key stakeholders in the region. We will work collaboratively to celebrate and promote the North Highlands, encouraging sensitive, sustainable, and meaningful growth.

Support Business:

Support and advocate for businesses in the region, to cultivate and champion a thriving economy. We will help to promote and amplify our region's businesses and highlight the standards of excellence. We will work closely with businesses to understand skills shortages and barriers to growth.

Develop Services and Assets:

Create a comprehensive portfolio of services and toolkits to support both individuals and families considering relocation and businesses seeking to attract skills, talent, and labour force.

Engage with our Local Community:

Engage and empower local communities to contribute to and benefit from the region's growth and development. We will inform and educate our young people and their carers, ensuring they are aware of the opportunities available to them locally to build a future.

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