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| **Argyll and Bute Visitor Levy consultation survey**  **Businesses (downloadable version)**  **Consultation Document - Draft Argyll and Bute Visitor Levy Scheme Foreword by the Council Leader, Jim Lynch** Argyll and Bute welcomes millions of visitors every year. Our visitor economy is vital to the area, and we have to be ambitious for its future. We also have to be realistic about funding its future.  Visitors expect and rely on public services that are used also by our communities. Waste, leisure, roads – these are just some of the services our visitors share with our residents.  With council budgets shrinking, funding for many of these shared services is at risk, especially as many are not the duty of a council to deliver.  The national Visitor Levy legislation is about local investment – raising funds to support a sustainable future for our visitor economy, and through that benefits for both visitors and residents locally.  Other areas in Scotland are considering a visitor levy to help them stay competitive as visitor attractions and to benefit their local communities.  We want people in Argyll and Bute to also have the chance to consider a levy for this area.  Could investment from a visitor levy be used to sustain and improve visitors’ experience, and so keep people coming to Argyll and Bute? With less money to spend on public services, if Argyll and Bute doesn’t have a levy, how else could services used by the visitor economy be funded long term?  If the area has a levy, what would local people and businesses want it to be spent on to benefit them, and what support would businesses like as part of making that happen?  The earliest a visitor levy could be introduced in Argyll and Bute is 2027.  We are running a 12 week consultation exercise to give people the chance to consider and give views on a visitor levy. And we would encourage as many people as possible to take part from businesses, communities, tourism organisations and visitors.  You can find more information about a levy on our website, including answers to questions you may have, impact assessments, and links to other sources of information. |

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| **Overview** Our visitor economy is a is a key industry for Argyll and Bute. Visitors expect and rely on services that are used also by our communities. The national Visitor Levy (Scotland) Act 2024 gives the opportunity to raise investment to sustain these shared services, support the future of the visitor economy and deliver benefit both visitors and residents.  Argyll and Bute Council has developed a draft Visitor Levy Scheme to support tourism as a sustainable beneficial part of Argyll and Bute community life and economy.   With growing tourism pressures and shrinking public sector budgets we need to investigate options that could help raise income locally, to sustain public services needed and affected by the tourism industry and make improvements to the future delivery of tourism across Argyll and Bute. Many other Scottish councils are also considering implementing a Visitor Levy.  If Argyll and Bute Council introduces such a levy, which at the earliest will be early 2027, the money raised must be used specifically for the benefit of the visitor economy, such as towards making local facilities and services better. Local culture, events and festivals could also benefit.  **What is a Visitor Levy and how much would it cost?**  A Visitor Levy is a payment based on the cost of most types of paid, overnight accommodation. Most people paying to stay for an overnight visit to Argyll and Bute would have to pay the levy (exemptions are noted in the Act).  There are questions in this consultation about how much a levy should be, if we had one; and what you would like to see the million pound investment spent on.  There is also the opportunity to tell us if you disagree with a levy, and if so, how would you rather see the future of the visitor economy funded.  For FAQs see: Visitor Levy Guidance,  [www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/advice/visitor-levy](https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/advice/visitor-levy) and Argyll and Bute Visitor Levy,  [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/my-community/recreation-and-leisure/argyll-and-bute-visitor-levy.](https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/my-community/recreation-and-leisure/argyll-and-bute-visitor-levy)  **What’s next?** Our focus is on developing a scheme that would benefit visitors, residents and the visitor economy. We would therefore welcome your views on key aspects of the scheme, by answering these consultation questions.  The results of this consultation will be drafted into the required consultation report that will be discussed by councillors in the spring of 2025 and will help to decide whether the proposed Argyll and Bute Council Visitor Levy Scheme is changed, accepted or rejected.   In addition, an ongoing programme of communication and engagement with businesses and communities will be arranged over the formal 12- week consultation period, January to March 2025. Further information will be provided in due course on the council’s Visitor Levy web page, see: Argyll and Bute Visitor Levy | Argyll and Bute Council.  **Visitor Levy - why and how to get involved**  People in areas across Scotland are considering a visitor levy and we want people in Argyll and Bute to have the same chance to consider one for here.  Investment from a visitor levy, if one was introduced, could benefit local communities as well as visitors - as many services used by visitors are shared with residents.  We are therefore running a 12-week consultation between January and April 2025.  The survey is anonymous but we do ask for your postcode to allow for geographic understanding of responses.  We appreciate you taking time to complete the survey and your responses are gratefully received. A copy of the Privacy Notice is included for your information at the end of this document.  This survey has up to 10 questions for you to complete. |

### Q1.  Your postcode.

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| --- | --- |
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### ****Q2.  Please advise on the size of your business****

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Employ 1 member of staff (including yourself) |
|  | Employ 2-9 staff |
|  | Employ 10-49 staff |
|  | Employ 50-250 staff |
|  | Employ more than 250 staff |

### ****Q3.  What sector does your business mainly operate in?****

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Hospitality |
|  | Retail |
|  | Self-catering accommodation |
|  | Tourism including visitor attractions |
|  | Food and drink |
|  | Leisure |
|  | Event management |
|  | Culture, heritage and creative industries |
|  | Trades / construction / engineering |
|  | Professional services |
|  | Agriculture and forestry |
|  | Vehicle and motor trade |
|  | Domestic services |
|  | Marine services |
|  | Beauty / personal services |
|  | Transport / distribution |
|  | Education |
|  | Manufacturing |
|  | Public sector |
|  | Charity |
|  | Third sector |
|  | Other (please specify):   |  | | --- | |  | |

### Q4.  What is your approximate turnover?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Up to £85,000 |
|  | £85,001 to £90,000 |
|  | £90,001 to £250,000 |
|  | £250,001 to £1 million |
|  | Over £1 million |

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| **Argyll and Bute Draft Visitor Levy Scheme Strategic Objectives** The aim of the draft Visitor Levy Scheme is to sustain Argyll and Bute's status as an area of outstanding natural beauty, culture and heritage and to ensure that the impacts of a successful visitor economy are managed effectively for the area.  The draft scheme is based on turning levy investment into benefit for visitors and residents, through the tourism priorities set out in the Argyll and the Isles Strategic Tourism Partnership’s Tourism Strategy 2022-2025 ([Argyll and Isles Strategic Tourism Partnership strategy](https://www.wildaboutargyll.co.uk/media/lqqkpsxm/aistp-strategy20224.pdf)):  Extending the season and spreading visitors across the destination.   * Reaching new audiences: marine, coastal, cultural and outdoor tourism. * Sustaining and improving the visitor offer. * The journey towards net zero. |

### ****Q5.  To what extent do you agree or disagree with the Visitor Levy Scheme objectives?****

|  | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree or Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Extending the season and spreading visitors across the destination** e.g. infrastructure, amenities, events and marketing |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Reaching new audiences: marine, coastal, cultural and outdoors tourism** e.g. visitor product development, inter-island connectivity, step ashore facilities, showcasing producers, culture & heritage. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Sustaining and improving the visitor offer** e.g. transport options, destination investment (inc. toilets), support for individual tourism businesses to help them improve their products and services (e.g. grants, training, advice, toolkits). |  |  |  |  |  |
| **The journey towards net zero** e.g. investment in sustainable tourism, business advice and support, low-carbon transport networks |  |  |  |  |  |

If there are other things you would like to see a Visitor Levy spent on please tell us here (1,000 characters):

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| To ensure the administration requirements of the Visitor Levy Scheme are kept to a minimum, and to maximise the revenues generated to sustain, support and develop the visitor economy, no local exemptions are proposed beyond those set out nationally as outlined in the Section 7, paragraph 7.2 of draft Visitor Levy Scheme or Sections 17 and 18 of the [Visitor Levy Guidance](https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/advice/visitor-levy). For example, those with a disability would be exempt, those accompanying them would not be. |

### Q6.  To what extent do you agree or disagree with this position on local exemptions?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Strongly agree |
|  | Agree |
|  | Neither agree nor disagree |
|  | Disagree |
|  | Strongly disagree |
|  | Don’t know |

### ****Please provide commentary to support your response****

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| --- | --- |
| |  | | --- | |  | |

### ****Q7.  To what extent do you agree with the Argyll and Bute Council proposal to set the levy rate at 5%?****

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Strongly agree - **go to Q10** |
|  | Agree - **go to  Q10** |
|  | Neither agree nor disagree - **go to Q10** |
|  | Disagree - **go to Q8** |
|  | Strongly disagree - **go to Q8** |
|  | Don’t know - **go to Q10** |
|  | I don’t support a levy being introduced across Argyll and Bute - **go to Q9** |

### ****Please provide commentary to support your response****

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| --- | --- |
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### ****Q8. If you do not agree with a levy being 5%, what rate would you consider is appropriate.****

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| --- | --- |
|  | The levy rate should be less than 5% |
|  | The levy rate should be greater than 5% |
|  | Don’t know |

### ****Please provide commentary to support your response****

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| --- | --- |
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### ****Q9. If you do not support a levy, how would you suggest that investment in our tourism infrastructure and services is paid for?**** Please provide commentary to support your response.

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### ****Q10. Do you think there should be a cap on the number of nights of accommodation that a visitor should pay a levy?**** (Please refer to section 11 of the Visitor Levy Guidance here for background information)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Yes |
|  | No |
|  | Don't Know |

### ****Please provide commentary to support your response****

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| --- | --- |
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### ****Q11. What set-up and/or operational support for your business would you welcome, if a Visitor Levy Scheme is agreed?**** Please provide commentary to support your response.

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On completion this survey should be scanned and emailed to [abvl@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:abvl@argyll-bute.gov.uk) or printed off and posted to Visitor Levy, Argyll and Bute Council, Kilmory, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8RT.

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.**

**Your thoughts and views are gratefully received.**

**Visitor Levy consultation - Privacy Notice**

A new data protection law was introduced on 25th May 2018. As a result, we've updated our Privacy Notices to make it easier for you to find out how we use, process and protect your information.

**Your Personal Data**

Argyll and Bute Council will act as the ‘Data Controller’ for the personal data you provide to us. The Data Protection Officer, who is responsible for ensuring personal data is managed in accordance with data protection legislation, can be contacted as follows:

Data Protection Officer, Argyll and Bute Council, Legal and Regulatory Support, Kilmory, Lochgilphead PA31 8RT. Email: [data.protection@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:data.protection@argyll-bute.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01546 605522

**Why do we need this information?**

You have chosen to engage with the Council about this consultation which will allow the assessment of feedback on the Council’s draft Visitor Levy Scheme to support the preparation of a report to be presented to Members on the Scheme.

The lawful basis for collecting your information in these circumstances is that:-

* the processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller

**What we will do with your information?**

We will share your consultation response and any personal information contained in it with a limited number of Council employees who are members of the Visitor Levy Officers’ Working Group.

Your data will be stored on servers located within the United Kingdom.

**How long will we keep your information?**

Your consultation response and any personal information contained in it will be kept until the requirement for the first review which is a period of 3 years.

**Automated Decision Making**

No automated decision making will take place.

**Your Rights**

When you provide information to the Council, you will have the following rights:

* to withdraw consent at any time, where the legal basis specified above is consent (not applicable)
* to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner’s Office – see below for details
* to request access to your personal data – please contact the Data Protection Officer if you wish to submit a request.
* to data portability, where the Legal basis specified above is i) consent or ii) performance of a contract (not applicable)
* to request rectification or erasure of your personal data, as far as the legislation permits – please contact the Data Protection Officer and provide details of what data you wish to be rectified or erased.

You can find out more about your rights in relation to data protection here: [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/data-protection](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/data-protection) or from the Data Protection Officer by telephone or in writing, as detailed above.

**Information Commissioner’s Office**

The ICO is the UK’s independent body set up to uphold information rights.

Information Commissioner’s Office

Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF  
Telephone: 0303 123 1113   
Email: [casework@ico.org.uk](mailto:casework@ico.org.uk)

The Information Commissioner’s Office – Scotland

45 Melville Street, Edinburgh, EH3 7HL  
Telephone: 0303 123 1115   
Email: [Scotland@ico.org.uk](mailto:Scotland@ico.org.uk)