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Dynamic Dunure

The Helm Centre

Business Plan, September 2024

Executive Summary

The planned Helm Centre in Dunure has been thought about, planned and will be owned by the community, through the recently established Dynamic Dunure, a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Planned to be sited at Kennedy Park, South Ayrshire Council will lease the site at a peppercorn rent.

Considerable background work has gone into:

1. Defining and identifying how to address the deficit in the presentation and promotion of the village's rich history and heritage;
2. Identifying what and how to package the quality of the tourism and visitor experience;
3. Planning for the development of community facilities to substitute for the existing Kennedy Hall, now considered no longer fit for purpose;
4. Designing, costing and planning the putative Helm Centre, to integrate these ambitions and aspirations into the physical entity of the building.

The business plan, the subject of this report, is the articulation of the activities that the Helm and its surrounding landscape area will accommodate (e.g. car parking), while validating the activities and projected revenues, to generate a community asset that is viable in its own right and will not be dependent on continuous public investment for its viability or survival.

We know that Dynamic Dunure and the member organisations and people are adept at identifying public resources to help fund local activities. This business plan posits a conservative view of potential revenue without recourse to grant applications, to prove the Helm Centre's viability. If, once established, other funding that is available in 2027 onwards is successfully bid for – e.g. Coastal Communities, Destination South Ayrshire events, Community Empowerment, Community Wealthbuilding etc. - then Dynamic Dunure has the opportunity to extend activities into other dimensions e.g. archaeological, educational, events or enhancements of the food offer. But the core proposition is addressed in this business plan without operational funds from the public sector. In addition we assume that planning approval will be forthcoming for the Helm Centre and the activities identified in this plan.

Main income sources are:

- Car parking, coach parking, overnight campervans and EV charging stations
- Weddings and Special Occasion Events, establishing the Helm Centre as a competitive, compelling venue in what is a buoyant South Ayrshire market
- An annual events calendar, alongside private and community events (with differential pricing advantaging community and residents' activities)
- Establishment of a Friends organisation to engage further with the community, giving price advantages and services in return for an annual membership fee

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- A food and drinks offer, with the business plan identifying 3 different options of how to organise and manage this. Recommendations for a self-service option are proposed as the most beneficial for the Helm and the community

The food and drinks offer at the Helm has the potential, subject to which of the options are agreed, to require significant fixed and variable staffing and overhead costs to deliver a consistent quality service. Our recommendation is that a basic food and drink service is delivered through self-service. The quality of the food service offer could be enhanced if the kitchen were leased to a private operator, and while this will produce revenue for the Helm Centre and reduce the day to day responsibilities of running the cafe, it would also reduce daily control of the Helm management over the food proposition. In addition, it is unlikely that a café operator/or self-service proposition would have the skills and experience to deliver a premier catering service for weddings and events, so positive relationships must be established with selected event catering suppliers to deliver weddings and events.

Projected year 1 income is just over £200,000 and costs are estimated at just under £189,000, giving a surplus in year 1 of just under £12,000, rising in year 5 to about £45,000. Also conditional to the Helm Centre's success are two other factors:

1. The establishment of a management and marketing plan with the skills required to tie into existing web, social and media to promote Dunure and the Helm, attract weddings, special occasion events and create a compelling and profitable events programme, diary manage the events in the Helm itself and be commercially attuned to making the Helm a success.
2. Motivate and encourage volunteers from the community to participate in and aid the Helm fulfil its role. While the relationship of volunteers with (say) a leased catering operation, will need definition and management, there are roles that will relate to welcoming visitors, explaining the heritage components of the Helm, guiding visitors through the village to promote Dunure's heritage and history, and managing (as an alternative to commercial suppliers) the bar and catering for events. If the self-service café option is selected (see section 6) then there are specific opportunities for volunteers to expand the quality of the service if they have the passion and skills to deliver a consistent customer service.

While we have no doubt that volunteers will be recruited, the plan for the Helm Centre does not assume that they will be, nor that they will be an alternative to the real financial costs of operating the venue (by saving on staff costs).

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Dynamic Dunure

The Helm Centre

Business Plan, September 2024

1. Introduction

This is the business plan for the planned Helm Centre in Dunure, South Ayrshire.

It has been prepared for Dynamic Dunure, the Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO)¹ formed by the village community, supported by South Ayrshire Council who formally commissioned the plan's preparation.

Dynamic Dunure has ambitions and has had plans drawn up to create a community based heritage centre, to serve residents and visitors alike. The project aims to capitalise and demonstrate the strong and compelling history and heritage of Dunure and surrounds while providing facilities for the community. The community component of the Helm Centre will replace the existing Kennedy Hall in the village, owned by South Ayrshire Council and now considered to no longer be fit for purpose.

The business plan has been developed following consultation with Dynamic Dunure members – who represent local organisations and societies across the village (see Appendix 1). The approach has been to identify potential income streams and operational costs for the project, review the market and test and validate these to evaluate the financial sustainability of the Helm Centre.

Development costs have been estimated by the design team and are summarized further below in section 6.

2. Background

Dunure is a picturesque fishing village on the scenic Carrick coast of South Ayrshire, c45 miles southwest of Glasgow and less than 8 miles from Ayr. The village looks out over the Firth of Clyde. The village, along with the adjoining village of Fisherton, has a population of around 1,160 people.

The village has a strong history and heritage which was catalogued in the Dynamic Dunure Interpretation Strategy, August 2023². The interpretation strategy was commissioned by Dynamic Dunure to support and develop proposals for enhancing Dunure for visitors and local people and engaging people more actively with its stories.

¹ SC051144

² Dynamic Dunure: Interpretation Strategy, August 2023, Jo Scott, Heritage Planning and Interpretation with Marcus Byron Design and Illustration

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The strategy draws together the key heritage assets and stories into a clear interpretive vision for the visitor experience, from the central story and message that will cohere Dunure interpretively and physically - across the village and including within the planned Helm Centre.

The strategy interrogates and catalogues the quality and depth of the history and heritage of Dunure

The foundation of Dunure's interpretative past lie in the medieval castle, characterful 19th century harbour and light tower, picturesque fishing cottages, doocot, lime kilns and Kennedy Park on the grassy clifftop. The village is also associated with The Kennedys of Carrick, Mary Queen of Scots, architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh, author Robert Louis Stephenson and Captain Peter Maersk Moller of the wrecked vessel Valkyrien³. There is also a rich heritage associated with the fishing families who worked their boats from the harbour and made use of the castle ruins as a workspace for baiting their nets. (See Appendix 2 for extracts of the Interpretation Strategy.)

The Interpretation Strategy was one village component emanating from the focus of the Dunure Development Programme: 2019-2024, which identified and reinforced the need to better interpret Dunure's stories⁴. Developed by the village, many of the Development Programme's ambitions have been or are being implemented at the time of writing. The importance of these components to the Helm Centre lies in setting the context for its development, demonstrating that it is not proposed in isolation from what else has been invested in in the village and particularly how action is being taken to implement interpretation and tell the stories of the village's heritage.

Substantive elements of the Development Programme: 2019-2024 include:

Immediate Projects	Short-Term Projects
• Install 10 park benches ✓ • Buy Marquee for outdoor events ✓ • Harbour-side clean-up ✓ • Build a Store in Kennedy Park ✓ • Resurface Multi Use Games Area ** • Improve Access to and Interpretation of Light Tower X • Improve Kennedy Hall interior ✓ • Produce a Dunure Harbour Conservation and Development Plan ✓ • Report back to the wider community ✓	• Improve the playpark and the skate park and install a crazy golf course ✓ • Install decorative Lighting at Castle ** • Install temporary Food Kiosk X • Run Aquatic Adventure programme ✓
	Medium-Term Projects
	• Dunure Harbour regeneration projects X • Dunure Community Heritage Centre X

✓ = completed at time of writing; ** = in progress; X = not started

There is a long tradition of self-help in Dunure, with villagers organising and managing activities in the area themselves. The long standing Kenndy Parks and Hall Committee has managed the Kennedy Hall and the park within which the Helm Centre will be established. Further internal organisational progress was made with the establishment of Dynamic Dunure, to take the lead in regeneration and

³ The captain was the father of Arnold Peter Moller, who went on to found of The Maersk Corporation, the largest shipping container company in the world

⁴ The Development Programme was supported by the Foundations for Recovery Programme, developed by the North Carrick Community Benefit Company (NCCBC) to support small businesses and community initiatives post COVID

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recovery, in delivering the vision to safeguard Dunure's heritage and to develop and manage the Helm Centre (Appendix 1).

3. Visitation, Tourism and Visitor Numbers

The tourism context for the Helm Centre is important, since the implementation of the business plan and financial sustainability of the Centre is interdependent on visitors and their spend.

At the same time, Dynamic Dunure has ambitions for the Helm Centre to spearhead the promotion of the village, offering car parking, toilets, café facilities, events, and being the hub to display the village's heritage to help orientate and encourage visitors to enjoy the rest of the village.

The character of the village and its tourism appeal coincide with the village's heritage assets and stories – the harbour and light tower, castle, cottages, doocot, lime kilns and views to sea from Kennedy Park on the clifftop. Its many associations (see Background above and Appendix 2) are also reinforced by more recent use of the village and harbour as a location for film and TV, including Outlander, Taggart, Annika, The Last Bus, Bollywood videos and filming and Jeremy Levif's music video, helping to alert new audiences to Dunure.

The scale and concentration of these cultural tourism attributes contribute to Dunure's compelling appeal in an Ayrshire and South Ayrshire setting. Within striking distance of Dunure are other visitor assets, making it easier to place Dunure on visitor itineraries (subject to marketing and promotion addressed below). These assets are catalogued in Appendix 3.

The objectives and activities of the Helm Centre and of Dunure in promoting to and attracting visitors are well founded in strategic policy:

- Scotland Outlook 2030 - supported by Scottish Government, VisitScotland and by the tourism industry⁵. Key to the forward look is positioning Scotland for tourism, focusing and encouraging visitors through our people, culture, heritage, natural environment, food and drink and events.
- Ayrshire Tourism - Ayrshire and our Islands Visitor Economy Strategy⁶: Priorities include Regenerative Tourism - a community wealth building approach (to integrate tourism development into communities, including their ownership) and "harnessing our natural and place-based assets to enhance our environment for the benefit of visitors and our communities."
- South Ayrshire Council's Tourism and Events Strategy⁷ focuses on building on existing tourism attributes to encourage visitation, including promoting events and festivals, capitalising on the area's culture and heritage, open spaces and natural environment, food and drink and weddings⁸.

⁵ [Scotland-Outlook-2030.pdf \(scottishtourismalliance.co.uk\)](#)

⁶ Published March 2023 - [Ayrshire & Arran tourism forging ahead - News | VisitScotland.org](#)

⁷ Approved March 2022

⁸ Not an exhaustive list

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The best visitor profiling and statistics that can be drawn upon for Dunure have been gathered Ayrshire wide in 2023⁹:

- 81% of visitors are domestic (19% from Scotland 63% from rest of the UK)
- 18% of visitors are classified as family based; 44% older independents; 33% retirement age
- 26% of visitors stayed in one coastal location
- 89% are repeat visitors, 11% first time visitors
- Of the top ten reasons for visiting Ayrshire and Arran, the following figured prominently (aligned with Dunure): scenery and landscape, 77%; history and culture, 46%
- 69% stayed in non-serviced accommodation: self-catering, camping or friends & relatives

Also Ayrshire wide¹⁰, it was estimated in 2023 that tourism generated 742,000 overnight visits and 2.98m nights. For South Ayrshire, VisitScotland has reported 5.9m day visits, £248m spend, with average spend per person on a day trip being £48pp (2019 data).

Statistics are available for visitor numbers to the following South Ayrshire attractions:

- Culzean Castle and Country Park, 291,674 (2023)
- Robert Burns Birthplace Museum, Alloway, 266,000+ (2019)
- Heads of Ayr Farm Park, 185,000 (2022)
- Dundonald Castle, 25,000 (2019)

Resident populations within certain drive times have been estimated as follows¹¹:

- 90 minutes, c.2.8m resident pop.
- 60 minutes, c.2.0m resident pop.
- 45 minutes, c.400,000 resident pop.
- 30 minutes, c.120,000 resident pop.

Specifically for Dunure, we can draw on the number of cars using and paying for parking at Kennedy Park (7 months March to September)¹²: if we conservatively assume 2 people per vehicle, catalogued visitor numbers at Dunure are as follows:

Year	Number of cars parked	Assume 2 people/ vehicle
2020	5,309	10,618
2021	7,744	15,488
2022	5,343	10,686
2023	4,951	9,902

Assumptions underpinning the calculations of visitor numbers to the Helm Centre envisage the following elements as part of the experience - the centre is open all year (variable opening depending on season and wedding/ private use (see section 5 below)); there is a food and drink offer and toilets for visitors; the Helm is used to orientate visitors to the heritage and history of the whole

⁹ Scotland Visitor Survey 2023; Ayrshire and Arran Factsheet, VisitScotland

¹⁰ Ayrshire and our Islands Visitor Economy Strategy

¹¹ Developing and Managing Tourism in Coastal North Carrick Report, Wardrop Consulting and Carey Tourism, 2021

¹² Dunure Kennedy Hall and Park Committee

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village; additional EV charging and campervan visitation is promoted and accommodated in the car park design.

The public transport network makes train and public bus access to Dunure difficult, with dependence of visitors on the car for access. Equally, visitor accommodation in and around the village is sparse¹³, suggesting visitors will be predominantly day visitors. One option for the future of the Kennedy Hall is conversion to housing, potentially being accommodation for visitors.

In the first full year of operation the car parking is expected to accommodate 10,405 cars (weekdays, weekends and special event parking), which if averaging two people per car would equate to 20,810 visitors, excluding those arriving by coach, on bike or on foot including residents¹⁴. Not all of these would of course visit the Helm. As a comparison, Dundonald Castle (and not the visitor centre and ticket office which has a café) attracts an estimated 25,000 people.

Hall Aitken in 2021 estimated the likely number of visitors and their spend at the (then) planned heritage/community centre, now the planned Helm Centre. They projected

- Between 23,732 and 57,021 visitors across 3 scenarios, from cars parking at Kennedy Park, coach borne visitors, campervans, “non-paying cars” and from “other transport”
- Non-catering spend per head of £2.75 based on the Moffat Centre’s Visitor Attractions Monitor 2019 adjusted for inflation; and
- Catering spend per head £2.40 based on the Visitor Attractions Monitor 2019 adjusted for inflation

Plans for the Helm do not now include a non-catering retail area. The Association of Independent Museums¹⁵ estimate visitor expenditure of between £1.80 and 3.00 per head. For the Helm, the food and drink offer envisages the following markets in year 1 of opening:

- Residents use of the Helm food facilities (say) 300 people per week for casual visits and formal community meetings = 15,600 p.a. visits
- Visitors
 - Those using the car park (say) 66% of those parking at Kennedy Park¹⁶ = 6,867 X 2 people per car = 13,735 p.a. visits. Those arriving by other means, campervan, coach, bicycle or on foot coaches = 150 coaches in year 1 X 30 people = 4,500 p.a. visits; campervans = 855 in year 1 X 2 people = 1,710 p.a. visits; walkers (non-village) assume 500 p.a., cyclists assume 250 p.a.
- Weddings (wedding guests are assumed to pay separately for wedding catering)
- Curated event guests and visitors (counted in those using car park above)

If conservatively and as the basis for this business plan, we estimate 36,295 visitors to the Helm in year 1, spending (say) £2.00 each, then catering revenue would be £72,590, plus commission income from e.g. weddings (see section 5.2 below). If on average, costs of sales are made up of 30% for the

¹³ Tripadvisor shows only one self-catering property in Dunure another in nearby Fisherton; Airbnb shows 5 in Dunure and 2 more at Dunure Mains, with Mount Freedom cabins at Dunure Mains having 3 additional properties

¹⁴ This is on a comparable scale to Hall Aitken’s estimates for their scenario 1, prepared in 2021

¹⁵ [Catering Guide 2020 \(aim-museums.co.uk\)](https://aim-museums.co.uk/Catering-Guide-2020)

¹⁶ Estimated 10,405 cars in year one, including parking for events

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cost of food and drink, plus 35% on staff costs and 10% for other direct costs. On these figures staff costs cannot be more than £25,406 for the year (35%), making service delivery hard to achieve with anything other than part-time and occasional or volunteer staff. See section 5.5 regarding weddings, and a more detailed discussion of the food and drink offer options and costs at section 6.

See section 9 below for the discussion on management, organisation and marketing.

4. The Planned Helm Centre

Following community workshop discussion, the Helm Centre's attributes and objectives should support the following objectives:

1. Celebration of Dunure past and present (heritage)
2. Events calendar (always something on)
3. Accessibility/ inclusiveness (those with physical or mental impairment, people from the community and visitors - all welcome)
4. Value (of visitor experience and for value for money)
5. Food and drink proposition – local, seasonal food, with great and memorable service

The need for the project emanates from community consultation, historic fabric assessments, skills gap analysis and extensive project research highlights:

- Heritage loss at tipping point, losing fishing stories as people die or move away
- Poor infrastructure; Kennedy Hall is unfit for purpose, no village shop and the Park path network is not accessible
- Poor visitor management and poor access between heritage assets and lack of interpretation
- Poor local training and employment; documented lack of jobs and training gaps, particularly in soft skills
- Dunure is in decline, with closing businesses, an inability to retain young people and increasing social isolation amongst elderly residents
- The project plays a crucial role in underpinning the tourism offer for North Carrick and will make a significant to South Ayrshire as a visitor destination

The Helm Centre is proposed to be sited on the eastern edge of Kennedy (Recreation) Park, accessed by Castle Road. The Park sits above the cliffs overlooking Kennedy Castle and the Firth of Clyde. The Park currently includes a play area, sports pitches, seats, barbecues, viewpoints, toilets and a store used by the village.

Plans have been drawn up for the Helm Centre and its setting by local architects Stairhill¹⁷. Currently plans include

- A café – with views overlooking the sea (73m²)
- External terrace area overlooking the sea
- Kitchen (37m²) and servery (11m²)
- Heritage area showing the history and heritage of Dunure (41m²)

¹⁷ [Stairhill Architecture & Developments - Ayrshire & South West Scotland](#)

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- A meeting room (14m²)
- A hall (97m²)
- Storeroom and storage, office, toilets and ancillary plant facilities

Integral to the development of the Helm Centre is proposed landscaping of the surrounding area for amenity, access and car parking; a terrace to look over the Park, Castle and sea and an integral heritage area to attract and retain visitors to the village's heritage and history.

The heritage element of the Helm Centre is envisaged¹⁸ as passive interpretation (e.g. display boards; table-top graphics) and digital/ virtual (e.g. AR/VR available through phones) to provide a rich experience. Stories and displays should be changed regularly and these marketed to bring visitors back. Crucially, Dynamic Dunure adhere to the philosophy and the interpretation strategy envisages that there are organised activities and events to complement the interpretation in the centre.

The development costs of the Centre and surrounding landscape area are addressed in section 6 below.

The timescale for the development is anticipated with an opening in Spring 2027.

5. Market Review

The business plan for the Helm Centre is predicated on developing and accommodating activities that meet local (community) need, offer a positive experience to visitors – by introducing them and orientating them to the village's history and heritage, by offering space for events, food and drink and toilet facilities – and that generate revenues to sustain the Helm Centre financially.

This market review examines the rationale and assumptions in the business plan for activities that are income generating. These activities revolve around:

- Carparking, including campervans, coaches and electric vehicle (EV) charging
- Weddings
- Events
- Community membership
- Café and food and drink offer

5.1 Kennedy Park Car Park

The car park at Kennedy Park is a major asset for the village and specifically for the Helm Centre. Currently owned by South Ayrshire Council, as is the site for the Helm itself, the Park is leased at a peppercorn rent to the Kennedy Hall and Park Committee, with Dynamic Dunure taking over the lease (with South Ayrshire Council's agreement).

Kennedy Park accommodates car parking at present and charges for this, so we have a record of numbers and revenue over successive years. Car parking is restricted elsewhere in the village so the natural place for car parking for visitors is Kennedy Park. A footpath from the car parking area gives

¹⁸ Interpretation Strategy Final Report, Jo Scott & Marcus Byron, August 2023

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access to the village, past Kennedy Castle. This footpath will be enhanced with works committed by South Ayrshire Council, including lighting of the Castle, interpretative boards and a bridge over the burn at one steep part of the path.

The carparking can be expanded to accommodate visitors to events (as at present, cf. the August Festival of the Sea), which will also generate additional revenue.

As well as car parking, other ticketing charges are planned for overnight campervans, EV charging, coach parking and electric bicycle charging (for which no charge is envisaged).

5.1.1 Car Parking

32 car parking spaces are currently planned in the design for the Centre and accompanying landscaping. While 5,343 cars were charged for car parking in the 7 months of March to September 2022, generating £13,359.80, the business plan envisages increasing the appeal of the village, promoting more events in the village and the Centre and increasing car parking charges from the current £3.50 to £4.00 for a 3 hour stay and £6.00 for a full day stay in 2027, rising in year 3. The assumption is made that 50% of car parking will be for shorter periods and 50% for a longer period.

Currently a permanent part time parking attendant collects charges and the future plans recommend the installation of ticket machines to remove this cost and make it more convenient for those parking. (There are reports of delays accessing the car park when major events are on in the village.) The business plan envisages a growth in the number of cars parking in the first year of opening (to March 2028) to rise to 10,405, raising revenue from car parking, coach parking, overnight campervans and EV charging of £92,019.

5.1.2 Campervans

These are increasingly popular for visitors, with COVID helping to enhance their appeal. Aires (short for “Aires de Service”) are stopping places specifically designed for campervans, with variously facilities for disposal of grey and black water waste¹⁹ and access to toilets and showers. In Scotland many are run by communities. Research for the Caravan and Motorhome Club by the Centre for Economics and Business Research (Cebr) in 2022 showed an increase in number of people predicted to buy leisure vehicles in the next five years, with 8% of UK adults likely to buy a campervan.

22% of all overnight trips to Scotland in 2022 (2.94 million overnight trips) were by campervan (Great Britain Tourism Survey, 2022). Scotland is described as having the best infrastructure in the UK for motorcaravan tourism (CAMpRA’s Strategy for Sustainable Motorcaravan Tourism, 2021). VisitScotland research showed that respondents to their surveys were mostly domestic visitors, older and with no children²⁰. 94% of campervans were less than 8m long.

¹⁹ Black waste is chemical toilet waste

²⁰ VisitScotland: Motorhome and Camping Trips in Scotland (2023)- an insight into visitor motivation, behaviour and need

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The season for taking campervan trips is relatively long, with VisitScotland research indicating summer peaks but owners still journeying and staying during the winter months²¹.

To determine the facilities to be designed in at Dunure, facilities used by the proportion of campervan users surveyed, comprised:

- 84% Waste disposal: black waste from the toilet
- 81% Fresh water tap
- 76% Waste disposal: recyclable rubbish
- 77% Waste disposal: grey waste
- 73% Waste disposal: non-recyclable rubbish

8 campervan stances are envisaged with an estimated 855 campervan nights in year 1 (averaging 2.3 per day/night throughout the year, with seasonal variations). Charges would start in year 1 at £30 for an overnigher. These figures are predicated on Dunure being promoted on the circuit of social media and promotional websites for campervan users.

The Ayrshire Roads Alliance has design guidelines for campervan stances. A minimum of 6m is required between campervans, taking up about 2.5 carpark spaces per campervan stance. If 8 stances are situated near the existing toilet block, the cost would be c£4,000 per stance (£32,000), without reducing the number of car parking spaces on site.

Other forms of camping are not envisaged and will be actively discouraged.

5.1.3 Coach Parking

A small number of coaches visit Dunure at the moment and are charged £12.00 to park at Kennedy Park. Dunure is on a number of local itineraries:

- Bruce's web (in development by the North Carrick Community Benefit Company)
- Outlander tour to film locations used
- Culzean Castle, Robert Burns & the Ayrshire Coast (Alba Experiences, Hopscotch Travel, Rabbie's Tours)

The objective is to consolidate these tours in the future and encourage more tours to come to Dunure, encouraging up to 30 people per coach and generating revenue for the Helm.

150 coaches are envisaged in the first year (with seasonal variations) at a charge of £15.00. This is more than the current £12.00 charge but is in line with competition in the rest of Scotland.

5.1.4 EV Charging

Dunure currently has no EV chargers, the nearest being 6 miles away at Alloway or 7m away at Maybole²². Electric car sales are expected to continue to rise at 21% annually to 2027. 80% of new cars and 70% of new vans sold in Great Britain will be zero emission by 2030, increasing to 100% by

²¹ ibid

²² [Charge Place Scotland](#)

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2035. The UK now has the most ambitious regulatory framework for the switch to electric vehicles of any country in the world, thanks to new laws which commenced at the beginning of 2024²³.

The market for EV charging is therefore certain. Installing chargers has benefits of²⁴:

- Attracting customers and visitors to Dunure with a strong sustainability message
- Generating longer stays
- Demonstrating green credentials
- Sustainable customers - making it easier for customers to go green.
- Futureproofing businesses and Scottish tourism.

Chargers can be “slow”, “fast” or “rapid”. Different capital/ revenue models exist for installation, operation and maintenance. Advice from a local installer²⁵ suggests that four mixed speed chargers installed at Kennedy Park will generate (conservatively) revenue of c£10,000 p.a., with costs of purchasing electricity being c£5,000. This is on the basis of 4 EV charger points being installed (already designed and estimated for through the capital costs). It also includes a maintenance and operation contract, including managing the application for charging, at no further cost to the Helm.

5.1.5 Bike Charging

Dunure is already an attractive destination or stopping off point for cyclists (Alloway/Burton Cycle Path and many “loops” including Alloway, Culzean and Girvan). 2 electric bicycle charging points are recommended but with no charge to users. They would be used as a key marketing message for the cycling community for their convenience and these cyclists will use the facilities of The Helm and support revenue forecast for food and drink consumption

5.2 Weddings

It is anticipated that hosting weddings will be an important revenue source for the Helm Centre.

The average cost of a wedding in 2024 in the UK was estimated at £20,700, up from £18,400 in 2022²⁶. 65% of couples are estimated to be spending more than £15,000 on their wedding. The average wedding venue cost is now £8,800 - up from £8,400 in 2022, whilst average catering costs are £80 per head.

Bridebook reinforces these estimates, while £9,877 was thought to be the average cost of a venue with catering, or £6,084 without catering. Photography, hair and make-up, florist, music and entertainment, wedding dress etc. make up the rest of the costs, before honeymoons. The business plan for the Helm includes commissions from suppliers to weddings, a standard practice in the sector.

²³ [Pathway for zero emission vehicle transition by 2035 becomes law - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pathway-for-zero-emission-vehicle-transition-by-2035-becomes-law)

²⁴ [Installing electric vehicle charging points - FAQs | VisitScotland.org](https://www.visitScotland.org.uk/visiting-scotland/transport/charging-points)

²⁵ www.connektcharging.com

²⁶ Source [The Average Cost of a Wedding 2024: How Much Does a Wedding Cost? - hitched.co.uk](https://www.hitched.co.uk/news/the-average-cost-of-a-wedding-2024-how-much-does-a-wedding-cost/)

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The weddings market for Dunure might be taken from the number of marriages and civil ceremonies in East, North and South Ayrshire and the closest wards in Dumfries and Galloway in 2023, being 2,844. Those for South Ayrshire alone were 878 (for a detailed breakdown see Appendix 4)²⁷. In Scotland 18% of ceremonies are tourism weddings, where neither bride nor groom are resident in Scotland.

The pricing practice of venues varies with couples either being charged a venue hire and then a catering/ drinks package price or a combined package price. Appendix 4 details the venues in South Ayrshire and looks at package prices across the Ayrshires to provide a foundation for planned pricing at the Helm Centre, to differentiate the Helm from other venues and ensure that weddings are a financially sustainable activity²⁸.

Competitor venues across South Ayrshire vary from civic facilities at Troon, Maybole and Ayr (which are charged out per hour with caterers tendering direct to couples for catering and drink), through to Dundonald Castle which only charges a venue fee (of £1,350 ex VAT) and cannot accommodate catering (other than a celebratory glass of fizz) through to rustic barns, castles, historic houses, modern and older hotels, all of varying star quality. At the opposite end from the civic facilities is Glen App Castle, with a venue charge of up to £18,500 and a catering/ drinks package of up to £295 per person. (Appendix 4 catalogues the venues and charges.)

It is quite normal for those venues that don't have combined venue and catering packages, to charge £3,500 - £8,000 for the venue for a variable number of people. Combined venue and catering costs range from £39.00 (Royal Hotel, Cumnock) to £95.00 per person (Enterkine Country House Resort). Substantially higher are The Trump Turnberry Hotel (£60 -£175pp), The Gailes Hotel and Spa, Irvine (£96 - £135pp) and Glen App Castle (£165 - £295pp).

Dunure has many advantages as a wedding destination – the sea, views and setting, the castle, its uniqueness and the beauty of the location, all of which can be immortalised in the wedding photography. There are 2m people within an hour's driving time (see section 3 above) and Dunure is accessible from airports for the wedding tourism market.

The Helm Centre will be regarded as a new wedding venue with the characteristic of accommodating DIY weddings (where couples and their friends and families will instal their own décor, personalising the venue to them; they can of course appoint a wedding organiser to do this, or the caterer may have this designing and planning capability and offer it as an additional service .) The Helm's characteristics, taken together with the competing costs of sometimes sterile hotels or contrasting grandeur and cost of castles and large houses, will create a unique and competitive edge for Dunure.

To access this market, it is all about having the infrastructure to deliver seamlessly, with good accredited and trustworthy partners for catering, flowers, photography, cakes, cars, entertainment – and by selecting a few from each category, commission deals/ joint marketing/ sharing on social channels can be integrated to build audiences for Dunure. These suppliers should be selected where possible from South Ayrshire (or from Dunure itself) – collaborating for mutual gain and The Helm being the glue to drive the significant economic benefits for all wedding suppliers in the area. Negotiating and building commissions from suppliers is normal practice and is reflected in the

²⁷ National Records of Scotland -[mcp-time-series-23-mt.2.xlsx](https://live.com/mcp-time-series-23-mt.2.xlsx) (live.com)

²⁸ Some venues don't publish pricing information online and therefore some information is still waited on. There is sufficient data however to validate the pricing analysis for Dunure

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business plan. This applies to catering and bar support in the venue too²⁹, where again trustworthy favoured suppliers should be selected for couples to choose from.

The delivery of weddings is dependent on a number of decisions (and assumptions in the financials of the business plan) about:

- Storage space for round tables and seating; around 600 sq ft of storage will be needed for tables and chairs/ linen /crockery/ cutlery would be brought in by caterer;
- Access times and probable need to allow access on (say) a Friday and dismantling/ demounting wedding decorations on the Sunday, for weekend weddings;
- Exclusive access for weddings, and managing residents' and visitors' access for refreshments and toilets;
- The Helm hall in its current layout, could accommodate 100 people, with 9 circular tables of 10 people and one top table of 10 people (whether circular or rectangular) for the wedding breakfast;
- The wedding ceremony could be held in the hall, but the room will in all likelihood have to be turned around after (i.e. tables and settings added) or the ceremony could be held elsewhere, i.e. we could offer outdoor ceremonies in summer, if we can create a flat garden environment;
- In order to turn the room around for evening entertainment/ dancing, we would need to move guests from the main hall into the rest of the Helm while the majority of the tables in the main hall are dismantled and stored, bringing in softer seating for the elderly and e.g. poseur type tables for resting drinks – this turnaround would be the responsibility of the caterer, who would bring porters to move furniture;
- Terms and Conditions for sales of dry hire/ use of tables would include deposits paid at time of booking (normally 35%) and balance paid 6 weeks out from the event;
- Standard Operating Procedure Systems (SOPS) will be prepared and include guidance for caterers and bar suppliers, insurance details, dietaries, waivers (e.g. high risk in allowing food to be brought in from a home environment - impacting insurance liabilities) etc.

A fee of £2,500 for the dry hire of the venue is recommended and is included in the business plan. This is competitive against other venues and can be reviewed as demand grows pre and post 2027 opening.

Choosing one or a small selection of external caterers and their drinks and food packages will be an early first step in marketing the venue for weddings. (**Note** the discussion below about the food and drink offer for the Helm and the options for catering.) It is possible with good marketing to have pre-sold 2027 in advance, selling from plans and pre-determined packages.

Appendix 5 addresses a range of potential wedding types and the other necessary elements for inclusion in the marketing plan together with elements that should be included in the Standard Operating Procedures Systems. Appendix 6 comprises Draft Terms and Conditions for Weddings at the Helm.

²⁹ Advice has been sought from wedding event caterer Hickory – [HICKORY – Catering & Event Management \(hickoryfood.co.uk\)](https://hickoryfood.co.uk)

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5.3 Events

A number of the issues related to weddings about the use of the Helm hall - storage, access to kitchens etc. - will apply to events at the Helm too. We categorise events here in three groups:

- Events Calendar
- Special Occasion Parties
- Children's Parties
- Community Use

5.3.1 Events Calendar

Dunure is successful with the Festival of the Sea and we propose a year-round, curated events programme, the aim of which is to promote the heritage and history of the area, and encourage visitation, both to use the car park and the Helm itself. Some of these will be community events, aimed at local audiences, but all designed to build the Helm brand and Dunure as a destination. What's On @ The Helm will build on the philosophy that there is always something going on for families, friends and visitors. It will also help build a sponsorship platform and help drive car parking fees.

The table below provides an indicative programme. The business plan does not draw out the potential income and costs from each possible event in the calendar but provides an indicative net revenue sum for each year, based on assumptions about the number of events.

Dunure/ the Helm Indicative Year-round Events Programme
• Community Christmas Dinner for the elderly in the wider community within and outwith Dunure. Whilst free of charge to attend the event, staged on 'Giving Tuesday' in November, this would engender good will and would function as a catalyst for awareness of The Helm/ Dunure facilities. We recommend seeking a 5-year sponsorship agreement with a brand which would either benefit from this demographic or has community funds to give, suppliers would be asked to contribute, caterer – this would be part of the deal for getting wedding market – supplying food and staff as part of their contract. Seek £1,000 per annum for 5 years • Halloween – spooky tour around the Castle and Food Stalls outside the Helm – consider partnering with an events company • Guy Fawkes – as above • Castle Kennedy lit up for Christmas – destination for families (think light trail around the harbour) partnering with an events company, who have the experience and share the risk while we establish the proposition • Santa @ The Helm for 3 weekends - £15.00 per child, including small eco gift/ hot chocolate and café open for parents • Christmas Party for Families (Sunday brunch) for 4, 6, 8 or 10 people – bring your party to our party, £35.00 per head, minimum 70 people • Hogmanay Hoolie – sell tickets for £30.00/ or a family ticket for 4 for £100.00 – children up to 12 go free – welcome drink, 2 course supper, drink at the Bells, bacon roll – minimum number would be 70 to make it profitable/ sponsorship for drink could be sought • New Years Day Dook – Fun, fund raising charity event with hot food/ drinks on offer at the Helm

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Dunure/ the Helm Indicative Year-round Events Programme

- **Burns Night** – The Helm as a new venue in Ayrshire
- **Valentines Night** – Romance is in the Air
- **Mothering Sunday** – Generation of Girls in town – beautiful afternoon tea, served in style, £30.00 for full afternoon tea
- **Easter Sunday** – egg hunt around the castle/ promoted on social as a destination for something to do for families with café/ or food stalls open to take revenue
- **Summer Solstice** (ticketed event) see the summer come in @ Castle Kennedy and build an experience for younger people
- **Food Fair** – showcasing Ayrshire produce, could be linked to a regular Farmers Market event schedule
- **Schools Out** – programme of summer school @ The Helm (partner with a company to hire the facilities)
- **Sunday Wild Swimming** at The Helm, park, change, get warm
- Enhance the proposition of Festival of the Sea – Fish Platters @ The Helm, all pre booked with your car parking space included
- Develop another event with the Harbour, using existing Marquee

5.3.2 Special Occasion Parties

This is to allow the hire of the Helm for events that might be parties or special celebrations. These might be marketed and sold for (say) Saturday evenings, charged at £1,500 for up to 70 people – supply tables, chairs and all else brought in by accredited caterer, using Helm's furniture. We suggest number are capped to allow for tables and dancing to be set up and stay in position.

Similar terms and conditions as will apply for weddings proposed, and include:

- 35% booking fee paid on booking; balance paid 6 weeks out from the event
- Preferred caterer and bar supplier
- Insurance waivers if manage food and drink themselves
- Disclaimer on responsibility from hall operators for food allergies, food poisoning and other illness, brought about by supply of own food and/ or drink
- Certificates from source on health and safety precautions (and this includes supply of wedding cake/other edible consumption)

5.3.3 Children's Parties

A local community rate of £150.00 for 3 hours is proposed; if not local, then £300 for 3 hours is proposed and could be linked to exclusive use of the play area for the period of the party. Again, the Helm could partner experienced and recognised children's party planners and benefit from their marketing reach and delivery

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5.3.4 Community Use

A standard £30 fee is proposed for the use of the hall by community groups. One of the objectives of developing the Helm is to replace the Kennedy Hall, now no longer fit for purpose, and provide facilities for local groups to meet. Access to the kitchens will be needed, and this will have to be managed vis a vis opening times etc. of the self-service café operation and the offer to visitors (see section 6 below).

5.4 Community Membership

The Helm is being developed by the community for the community. Dynamic Dunure is a SCIO, a charitable company whose objectives are to better the community (see Appendix 1). Differential pricing will give easier access to the Helm for local events, by community groups, organisations and indeed for residents.

The concept of community empowerment is enshrined in the 2017 Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act³⁰. There are examples throughout Scotland of community memberships. It is proposed that such membership be established in Dunure and neighbouring Fisherton at a flat rate of £30 per adult, and potentially free to young people in the village, to introduce them to the concept of community ownership. With a combined population of around 1,160 people, we have assumed that 32% or 375, will join, with indicative membership benefits of:

- priority booking for all events
- prior notification of opportunities (e.g. volunteering, events calendar)
- quarterly community newsletter (via email)
- an exclusive members' monthly newsletter (via email)
- an annual member's social event
- reduced or free parking

5.5 Café and Food and Drink Offer

5.5.1 Café

Dunure currently has one pub and one café, located in the harbour area. Dynamic Dunure is conscious of the need to manage the Helm Centre's food and drink offer so as not to be unduly competitive with existing operators. At the same time the Helm Centre, with additional marketing and event resources, will expand the number of visitors to Dunure and customers for existing operators. The opportunities at the Helm Centre, detailed below, could also be offered to existing operators in the village.

Running a café or food and drink facility is risky. The Association of Independent Museums³¹ has a salutary comment about cafes (in museums in this case):

³⁰ [Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Act: summary - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/community-empowerment-act-2017/summary/pages/10/)

³¹ [Catering Guide 2020 \(aim-museums.co.uk\)](https://aim-museums.co.uk/catering-guide-2020/)

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In simple terms, expect a cafe to take £1.50 to £3 per museum visitor and if a coffee shop is not taking six figures, you don't have much of a catering business. The mathematics are simple – at least 30% of the sales will be needed for the cost of food and drinks, another 35% on staff costs and 10% for other direct costs. More generous labour rates, overtime payments and pension benefits can make staff costs spiral. Catering is rarely the path to riches unless occupancies are good and control rigorous.

Other than the existing food and drink facilities at the harbour, the nearest bars, restaurants and cafes are located at Maybole, Crosshill, Turnberry, Culzean Castle, Maidens, Kirkoswald, Alloway and in Ayr. The nearest facilities are therefore at least 6 miles away. Neighbouring Croyburnfoot, Culzean Bay Holiday Homes, Redgates, Maidens Beach and Heads of Ayr Caravan Parks have facilities, but the custom is usually that these cater to residents/ visitors on site rather than passing public. The Helm Centre will therefore have a strong locational competitive advantage for food and drink.

What is envisaged for the Helm is a food and drink offer that is cost effective and of a quality to build reputation. The preparation of the business plan has considered three options vis a vis the food operation. Added to the mix is the requirement to offer the following, which will require to be managed and negotiated with any catering suppliers appointed:

- Access to the kitchen facilities for community organisations
- A basic food and drink offer for residents and community meetings during the day
- Food and drink for campervan staying visitors (e.g. full breakfasts or range of filled rolls)
- A welcome for other visitors to the village (parking in Kennedy Park, cyclists, walkers)
- A welcome and facilities for coach borne visitors
- Catering and bar facilities for weddings and other parties/ events in the Helm

Highlighted in the section above on the wedding market and the Helm offer, caterers and/or bar suppliers will be appointed to meet the needs of wedding and other event guests at the Helm. We have indicated that a small group of favoured suppliers should be identified and appointed and that they agree to the 20% commission on overall sales revenue and contribute to the proposition by preparing and jointly marketing their packages for customers.

The option will exist for volunteers within the community to offer or contribute to the food and drink service, but we haven't predicated the business plan making savings on this basis. An early first step might be for the community to manage the food and drink offer and the bar for community and local events, offering a higher revenue for the Helm than the purely 20% commission on overall sales.

Within the context above, there are three options for the management and operation of the food and drink facilities at the Helm, illustrated as follows:

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Illustration of Café Operation Model Costs/ revenue				
		Self Service	Fully Staffed	Operator Leased
Projected Revenue ³²		£72,590	£100,000	£8,000
Direct Costs ³³		£18,000	£25,000	£0
Gross Profit		£54,590	£75,000	£8,000
Margins		75%	75%	100%
Support Costs	Days	365	365	365
	Hours per day	4	36 ³⁴	N.A.
	Hourly rate ³⁵	£14.02	£14.46	N.A.
Staff costs p.a.		£20,469	£190,000	N.A.
Running costs	Days	365	365	365
	Cost per day	£10.00	£27.40	N.A.
	Support costs	£3,650	£10,000	N.A.
Total support costs		£24,119	£200,000	£0
Net Profit/ (Loss)		£30,477	(£125,000)	£8,000

Figures rounded up/down

The choice for business model to operate the café lies between a self-service or a leased service option. Our recommendation is that the fully staffed service option should not be countenanced because of the likely scale of financial losses.

The self-service operation would require:

- Someone to open and close the café
- Servicing self-service tea and coffee dispensers, for which there will be a leasing and maintenance charge
- Receiving and laying out cold foods
- A remote point-of-sale system to take credit/ debit card payments (linked to stock management and reordering)

The leased option would involve recruiting and appointing an independent operator to run the café to agreed opening hours, standards etc.

5.5.2 Pop Up Food Service

Dunure's Festival of the Sea, taking place annually at the harbour is a one-day celebration of music and seafood, with, in August 2024, 5 pop up food stations catering to visitors in addition to the permanent businesses of the Harbourside Café and the Anchorage Restaurant and bar.

³² See section 3

³³ E.g. consumables

³⁴ 36 hours per day would equate to c5 people per day – cook, assistant cook or baker, two servers and café supervisor

³⁵ 2024 Living Wage of £12.00 plus 13.8% for NI and 3% for pension contribution

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Street food and festival food delivered through pop up stations is increasingly popular and on-trend. While evidenced in urban areas, it is quite normal for festivals and events to have mobile pop-up food and drink stations. Integrating street food stations at attractions is also increasing in popularity, as are food festivals. Integrating the two can add to the offering, adding to the experience and encouraging spend and dwell time.

Dunure has objectives of becoming known for its food offer, which with the Helm will be difficult to deliver through a self-service catering option, which will offer limited choices. Weddings and events can be well catered for though the appointed caterers, adding to a positive reputation. The other way to extend the reputation of Dunure and the Helm for food, and achieve the objectives outlined above, is to encourage mobile pop up stations at Kennedy Park.

Pop up operators need to be selected for their quality and for their representation of Ayrshire food and drink³⁶.

The raw materials available within the whole area are exceptional - beef, lamb, bacon, pork and game in season, fish and shellfish, vegetables, potatoes, Dunlop PGI cheeses, award winning free range eggs, a wide range of smoked delicacies, vegetarian savoury produce, exciting street food, cakes, chilli preserves, farmhouse ice creams and handmade chocolates. The result is you really are in an authentic artisan food and drink haven which includes hand roasted coffees, craft beers and distinctive individual whiskies.

With the proviso that pop up vendors should be of a quality and represent Ayrshire quality produce; we have estimated in the business plan for a modest number of days in the first year that pop up food operators will be present to extend the range of available foods and showcase Ayrshire's finest food and drink to visitors and residents.

³⁶ [Ayrshire Food Network — Ayrshire Food an' a' That](#)

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6. Capital Costs

Estimated capital costs for the development of the Helm and associated landscaping are as follows:

Activities	Costs
Development phase	
Design development work to RIBA 3 (40% total fees)	£148,006 ³⁷
Wider project development (business, interpretation, evaluation, funding plans)	£60,000*
Project manager (15months)	£50,000*
Activity and volunteering plan and activity testing	£40,000*
Contingency (10%)	£29,801
Sub Total	£327,807
Delivery phase	
The Helm Centre (costed to RIBA 2)	£1,670,000
Car park and access (costed to RIBA 2)	£490,000
Campervan stances (£32,000), coach parking (£13,500), showers X2 (£10,000) bicycle charging X 2 (£2,500) and 3 ticket machines (£10,500) ³⁸	£68,500
Park landscaping and nature recovery (costed to RIBA 2)	£350,000
Fees for the above (60% of total)	£222,009 ³⁹
Interpretation (as per interpretation strategy)	£290,000*
Community and public engagement activities and events (as per activity plan)	£290,000*
Branding and signage	£50,000*
Funded jobs and training	£225,000*
Contingency15%	£548,326
Inflation at 5%	£210,192
Sub Total	£4,414,026
Grand Total	£4,741,833

Source: Rob Robinson, Heritage Consultant

* as per EOI, August 2024; these items could be reexamined and activities and costs refined

Projected funding sources as at the time of writing are⁴⁰:

Development stage

- SAC: £235,000
- NLHF: £92,807
- Total: £327,807

Delivery stage

- SAC: £2,250,000

³⁷ Source: Architects, pro rata fees for Helm, car parking and access and landscaping works, with additional works re coach parking, showers etc.

³⁸ Estimates as per QS, Quantum Solutions, Kilmarnock

³⁹ Source: Architects, pro rata fees for Helm, car parking and access and landscaping works, with additional works re coach parking, showers etc.

⁴⁰ Source EOI

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- NLHF: £1,500,000
- Others: £664,026 (tbc in funding development plan – e.g. Regeneration Capital Grant Fund)
- Total £4,414,026

All costs exclude VAT which will be reclaimable through SAC as lead organisation.

7. Operational and Revenue Costs

A summary of the business plan suggests that from year one (April 2027 to March 2028), the Helm Centre will be financially sustainable.

The health check is that we are estimating in 2024 revenue and costs that will be applicable in 2027 onwards. We're also predicating an organisational capability to attract weddings and set up events, together with the assumption that planning permission will be forthcoming for the Helm Centre and the activities proposed.

The detailed business plan is under separate cover as an Excel Sheet , with the detailed income and revenue and assumptions underpinning them catalogued. The table below provides a summary.

The Helm Centre, Dunure, Summary Business Plan					
	Year 1 to Mar-28	Year 2 to Mar-29	Year 3 to Mar-30	Year 4 to Mar-31	Year 5 to Mar-32
Income	£	£	£	£	£
Parking (section 5.1)	92,019	80,264	94,527	94,527	96,312
Café – net income (s5.5.1)	30,477	31,391	32,333	33,303	34,302
Food commissions & sponsorship (s5.5.2)	13,200	13,700	15,200	15,800	17,200
Village membership (s5.4)	11,250	11,250	11,250	11,250	11,250
Weddings (s5.2)	35,176	61,558	70,352	79,146	79,146
Community use (s5.3.2 - 4)	18,680	19,530	20,805	23,920	24,770
Total income	200,802	217,693	244,466	257,945	262,979
Overheads & running costs⁴¹					
People costs	98,112	106,690	109,750	112,903	116,150
Premises costs	31,001	31,931	32,889	33,876	34,892
Marketing & promotional costs	30,000	30,900	31,827	32,782	33,765
Other overheads	29,740	30,632	31,551	32,498	33,473
Total Overheads & running costs	188,853	200,153	206,017	212,058	218,279
Net operating surplus / (deficit)	11,949	17,540	38,449	45,888	44,700

* see table below for detail

Inflation of 3% p.a. is applied to 2027/28 (first year) income and costs.

⁴¹ See table below for detail

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8. Annual Costs/ Estimates

We catalogue here the first year's annual costs of operation (replicated in the table above).

Overheads & Running Cost Estimates		Costs
People⁴²		
Employment		
• Venue Manager for marketing and sales (e.g. weddings and events)	£32,000	
• Centre Supervisor (+ manage volunteers)	£24,000	
• Cleaner(s) X 2 X 8 hours a week @ £12/ hr	£9,600	
• Casual (e.g. for café) X 2 X 12 hours/week @ £12/hr X 50	£14,400	
• Bookkeeper 4 hours/ week @ £20/hr	£4,000	
Sub total	£84,000	
Employers National Insurance (all staff) 13.8%	£11,592	
Employers Pensions (all staff) 3%	£2,520	
People Costs		£98,112
Premises		
Rent to South Ayrshire Council (if asked for)	£1	
Rates - charity relief	£0	
Utilities - Electricity, Gas, Water	£15,000	
Premises insurance	£4,000	
Repairs & maintenance	£5,000	
Kennedy Park maintenance (uplift on Kennedy Hall and Park Committee)	£5,000	
CCTV (as per existing Kennedy Hall and Park Committee)	£2,000	
Premises Costs		£31,001
Marketing and Promotion	£30,000	£30,000
Other Overhead Estimates		
Equipment purchases - cleaning	£1,000	
Equipment purchases - café	£2,000	
Telephone & internet	£5,000	
Printing, postage, subscriptions	£2,000	
Office, IT, stationery etc	£1,000	
Audit & accounting	£8,000	
Licences	£3,000	
Waste collection ⁴³	£1,740	
EV charging cost ⁴⁴	£5,000	
Parking ticket machines maintenance contract	£1,000	
Other Overheads Total		£29,740
Estimated Overheads and Running Costs		£188,853

⁴² People costs here are separate from café operation which is accounted for elsewhere

⁴³ Quote from wastemanaged.co.uk

⁴⁴ Advice from Connekt EV Charging, Ayr

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Not included above - bank charges, interest paid

9. Financial Assumptions Underpinning Business Plan

Note all estimates are VAT neutral.

9.1 Visitor Numbers to the Helm

36,295 visitors in Year 1, based on:

- Residents visiting the Helm – 300 people per week = 15,600 p.a. visits
- Visitors using the car park - total number of paying cars estimated as 10,405 cars in year one, including parking for events. 66% are assumed to visit the Helm = 6,867 X 2 people per car = 13,735 p.a. visits
- Visitors arriving by other means:
 - Coaches = 150 coaches in year 1 X 30 people = 4,500 p.a. visits;
 - Campervans = 855 in year 1 X 2 people = 1,710 p.a. visits;
 - Walkers (non-village) assume 500 p.a.,
 - Cyclists assume 250 p.a.

Weddings guests – 8 weddings in year 1, average 70 guests for each wedding = 560 (wedding guests are assumed to pay separately for wedding catering)

Visitors' spend at the Helm – assumed at £2.00/ head - 36,295 visitors X £2.00 = £72,590 in year 1

9.2 Car Park Assumptions

Ticketed carparking (March to September inclusive); Source Kennedy Hall and Park Committee

- 2022 - 5,343 vehicles – revenue 13,359.80
- 2023 - 4,951 vehicles - revenue £12,377.73
- 2024 charge = £3.50 (unlimited daily stay)

Projected charge in 2027 = £4.00 for up to 3 hours; £6.00 for up to full day

- Assumption in 2027 that 50% of projected numbers will pay £4.00 and 50% will pay £6.00

32 car parking spaces currently planned in the designs; 8 overnight campervan stances are recommended; locating these near existing toilet block will not take up any of planned 32 car parking spaces. Cost of £4,000 per stance (£32,000 total); Source: Quantum Solutions, Kilmarnock

Assume growth in the number of vehicles and revenue in year 1 and thereafter, as follows:

- Cars - 10,405 cars (including event car parking). 50% (5,202) @ £4.00 = £20,808; 50% (5,203) @ £6.00 = £31,218. Total = £52,026
- Campervans - 855 campervan nights (average 2.3 per day/night) @ £30 night = £25,650
- Coaches – planned charge £15.00 (now £12.00); 150 coaches in year with 30 people in each = 4,500 people. 150 @ £15 each = £2,250

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- EV charging – 4 chargers included in capital estimates. Revenue of £10,000, electricity costs of £5,000. Assumption that 300 cars charged at each charger in year1. Source: Connekt Charging, Ayr. Assume 1,041 charges in year 1 @£9.82 = £10,221
- Bike charging, capital cost of £2,500 for two Source: QS, Quantum Solutions, Kilmarnock. Assume charging will be free = £0
- Valeting cars on site: operators invited; assume 312 cars valeted in year 1 @ £40 each; revenue of £2,486. Helm commission @ 15% = £1,873

Total revenue from Kennedy car park = £92,019

9.3 Weddings

Number of weddings in South Ayrshire, and adjoining districts and nearest Dumfries and Galloway wards (Appendix 4). Source: National Records of Scotland.

Pricing of venues, Source: various venue web sites and published materials.

Helm venue charge for dry hire of £2,500 selected to be competitive. Number of weddings in year 1 (and projected thereafter) based on slow start and creating reputation. Year 1 = 8 weddings

Average number of guests = 70 guests (dining capacity of Helm hall = 100)

9.4 Events

Helm venue charge for parties or special celebrations of £1,500 selected to be competitive. Number of parties in year 1 (and projected thereafter) based on slow start and creating reputation. Year 1 = 8 weddings

Average number of guests = 70 guests

Events, assume

- 3 regional (bigger) events in year 1; net profit to the Helm £1,000 each
- 8 local (smaller) events; net profit to the Helm £200 each
- 6 business to business events (meetings, conferences, workshops); net profit to the Helm £100 each

Event sponsorship of £5,000 p.a. (e.g. bar)

Community events - £100 dry hire charge, assume average of 30 guests, spending £20 each on catering; £8.00 on bar; catering supplier charged 40% commission on profit = £120 commission to the Helm for each event and bar pays 15% on profit for each event, assume 30 events through year

Other commissions on community events – bar, DJ/band (other suppliers) = £10%

Community meetings - charge of £30, assume 75 meeting in year

Children's parties - community rate of £150.00 for 3 hours

Hybrid working = use of Helm for workspace. Assume 2 people per day for 4 days of the week, over 46 weeks of year, charged at £10.00/ day = £3,680

9.5 Friends of...Community Membership

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Population of Dunure and Fisherton, 1,350 people, 32% join Friends p.a. @ £30 membership fee. Or assume population of Dunure 750 of which 50% join

9.6 Café

3 options explored:

- Lease, assume annual lease of £8,000
- Fully staffed option (payroll modelling in Excel Sheets) – turnover of £100,000, overheads of £25,000; staffing 36 hours per day = c5 people (cook, assistant cook or baker, two servers and café supervisor); running costs per day assumed at £27.40/day; projected loss £125,000 in year 1
- Self-service option (**recommended option**)– turnover £72,590 (visitors' numbers in section 1 above @£2.00/head); direct costs (consumables) @ £18,000 in year 1; staffing 4 hours per day; running cost per day £10.00; profitability = £30,477

9.7 Pop Up Food Service

Assume 2 pop up food vendors operating 30 days of the year (year 1); plus 1 pop up food vendor working 60 days of year 1 commission; £25 commission to Helm

9.8 Capital Costs

Costs from Architect and Heritage consultant. Additional cost from QS (Campervan stances (£32,000), coach parking (£13,500), showers X2 (£10,000) bicycle charging X 2 (£2,500) and 3 ticket machines (£10,500)

Fees, contingencies and inflation estimated on pro rata basis (elimination of Harbour and addons of QS's estimates)

Sources of capital funding as Heritage consultants' estimates, adjusted to account for changes above.

All costs exclude VAT which will be reclaimable through SAC as lead organisation

9.9 Operational Income

Parking (section 5.1)	£92,019
Café – net income (s5.5.1)	£30,477
Food commissions & sponsorship (s5.5.2)	£13,200
Village membership (s5.4)	£11,250
Weddings (s5.2)	£35,176
Community use (s5.3.2 - 4)	£18,680
Income	200,802

Inflation of 3% p.a. is applied to 2027/28 (first year) income and costs.

9.10 Revenue Costs/ Overheads (year 1)

See table above at section 8.

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10. Management and Organisation

The success of the Helm Centre is dependent on a commercial operation able to manage costs and generate revenue from the activities described. Marketing and planning for weddings, managing suppliers, including food and drink, engaging with couples etc. requires experience and creativity. Monitoring car park use and revenue and taking corrective action to e.g. market and promote Dunure and the Helm for events, to attract campervans, to promote the EV chargers etc. as well as ensure ticket machines and charger maintenance contracts are operational, necessitates recruiting and appointing a venue manager with experience and requisite skills.

The café operation and encouraging visitors to view the heritage story at the Helm requires someone with customer management and hospitality skills and able to pay real attention to detail, while monitoring costs and revenue. The separation of roles of the Venue Manager and the Centre Supervisor can be defined by:

- The Venue Manager having a broadly external facing role – marketing and management for weddings and the events programme, operational accountability i.e. creating infrastructure, contracting and management of suppliers, revenue including sponsorship
- The Centre Supervisor largely has an internal role, managing budgets and rotas for variable part time staff and cleaning staff, volunteers etc. and overseeing self-service/or catering contractor

The heritage component in the Helm is important for telling Dunure's stories and orientating visitors to the rest of the village. To achieve the interpretative vision⁴⁵, there are a number of management tasks, including working to generate regular repeat and local visits, working closely with the community, initiating appropriate events and a calendar of activities aligned to the history and heritage, keeping the displays and the stories up to date and changing them to generate new experiences when visiting, ensuring the digital technology works and is updated etc. These are further obligations for the Venue Manager

For marketing and promotion, there is also a requirement to ensure Dunure and the Helm's presence on appropriate tourist and heritage web sites and where the web sites themselves don't represent the quality of the experience on offer in Dunure, make sure that they can be influenced and changed. Examples include [Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere \(gsabiosphere.org.uk\)](https://gsabiosphere.org.uk/), [VisitScotland - Scotland's National Tourist Organisation | VisitScotland](https://www.visitScotland.co.uk/); [Tripadvisor: Over a billion reviews & contributions for Hotels, Attractions, Restaurants, and more \(tripadvisor.co.uk\)](https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/); https://destinationsouthayrshire.co.uk; www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk; [Explore your Scottish heritage | Scotland's People \(scotlandspeople.gov.uk\)](https://www.explore-scotland.co.uk/); [The Official Gateway to Scotland | Scotland.org](https://www.scotland.org/), etc.

11. Risk Analysis

⁴⁵ Dynamic Dunure Interpretation Strategy, Final report, August 2023

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There are a number of risks which need to be catalogued and the corrective or ameliorative actions that will help obviate them. These are catalogued below:

Risk Analysis		
Risks	Consequences	Corrective Actions
Planning permission not approved for the Helm	Scheme cannot go ahead	Redesign, reposition, review activities
Full capital funding not agreed	Scheme cannot go ahead as is	Redesign to reduce costs
Failure to reach car parking revenues	Reduced revenue jeopardising viability	Stronger marketing and promotion
Failure to attract campervans, coaches or electric vehicles to use EV chargers	Reduced revenue jeopardising viability	Stronger marketing and promotion, especially through specialist web sites and social media
Weddings prove unpopular with residents	Risk of alienating community	Re calculate income, impose stronger e.g. noise and timing restrictions
Weddings not attracted in numbers predicted	Reduced revenue	Recost and remarket packages, potentially with professional wedding organiser(s)
Failure to redesign kitchen to weddings specification, or install wedding specified equipment	Difficulty of hosting weddings and offering a positive experience, and/or costs of delivery are higher because of inadequate facilities	Re specify and re brief
Self-service food offer not attractive enough to attract number of customers	Reduced revenue and poor reputation	Opt for catering contractor to lease kitchen and cafe
Failure to attract pop up food providers	Reduced food and catering offer	Repackage and market to operators, with long lead times
Management fails to address specific issues	Potential reduced activities and revenue	Consider repackaging jobs and recruiting again
Volunteers not motivated to support activities to the Helm	Limited local engagement	Recruitment drive
Village membership doesn't work	Limited local engagement	Enhance benefits and reduce costs of membership
Opposition from existing (Harbourside) businesses	Limits local engagement and support	Offer supplier contracts for café, events and weddings (subject to T & Cs)

12. Conclusion: Scale of Success

Success at the Helm will be judged on a number of criteria:

- The building and associated carparking and interpretative facilities are funded by the Council, National Heritage Lottery Fund and others
- That planning approval is generated
- That the Helm design is appropriate to the activities planned
- That the Helm works well to orientate visitors to the history and heritage of the area
- Revenues are generated by carparking, EV charging, campervan overnights and coach visitation



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- The weddings market is successfully attracted, with consequent income targets achieved
- The Helm meets local needs as a venue for the community, for the formal meetings of groups and local organisations and to meet social need
- That the community is engaged, including through the Friends of scheme and volunteers
- That positive relationships are established with suppliers to the weddings and social gatherings
- The year long events programme works to enhance the reputation of Dunure and generate visitors
- The organisation and management of the Helm successfully addresses marketing and commercial objectives
- That income targets are met and the Helm operates viably

The aim of this business plan is to articulate and validate opportunities that will ensure the viability and success of the Helm Centre, giving the community a valuable asset which also appeals to visitors.

Business Pointer

September 2024

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Appendix 1

Dynamic Dunure, Objects, Members and Organisations Represented

Registered charity from 22 July 2021

Charitable Objects:

1. The advancement of citizenship and community development through efforts to foster civic pride and develop the capacity of Dunure residents via volunteering, learning and community-based activities.
2. The advancement of Dunure's heritage and culture by preserving the built environment and providing new opportunities to promote and learn about the area's unique history.
3. The provision of recreational facilities and the organisation of recreational activities offering residents and visitors new opportunities to participate in social, recreational and cultural activities.
4. The advancement of environmental protection particularly through the organisation of activities to preserve our beautiful coastline, lower carbon emissions and make prudent use of resources.

Members:

- Janey McCreath, chair, Dynamic Dunure
- C'Ilr Iain Campbell, Provost, South Ayrshire Council
- Angus Craig, vice chair Dynamic Dunure, chair Dunure Community Council
- Tracy Craig, Dynamic Dunure, member Dunure Coastal Rowing & Water Sports Club and Secretary of Dunure Community Council
- Mhairi Eaglesham, Treasurer Dynamic Dunure and Leader Dunure Youth Club
- Cameron Kerr, member Dynamic Dunure and Harbour Master of Dunure Harbour Association
- Marc McCrindle, Member Dynamic Dunure and Dunure Harbour Association
- Catherine McKinley, Member Dynamic Dunure and Fisherton Church
- Bonnie McLean, Member Dynamic Dunure, Chair Fisherton Primary School Parent Council
- Greg Patterson, Secretary and Member Dunure Community Council
- Daisy Seymour, Member Dynamic Dunure and Fisherton Primary School Parent Council

Advisors and Observers to Dynamic Dunure comprise:

- Stuart Lindsay, North Carrick Community Benefit Company Development Manager
- Rob Robinson, Heritage Consultant
- Fiona Ross, South Ayrshire Council
- Kevin Braidwood, South Ayrshire Council
- Abigail Coila, Destination South Ayrshire, South Ayrshire Council
- Trent Kim, University of the West of Scotland

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Appendix 2

Extracts from the Dunure Interpretation Strategy, August 2023

The village is notable for the dramatic ruins of medieval Dunure Castle and adjacent beehive doocot; the popular Kennedy Park on the grassy clifftop, site of the castle and which also features an award-winning labyrinth, play area, sports pitches, seats, barbecues, viewpoints and toilets; the characterful 19th century harbour and light tower in the lower village, along with lime kilns and an historic well; picturesque rocky cliffs and pebbly beaches (renowned for its colourful agates), all with spectacular views across the Firth of Clyde to Arran, Ailsa Craig and the Kintyre Peninsula. Dunure has a pub, café and gift shop, and the Ayr Coastal Path runs through the village.

Dunure also has associations with a number of notable individuals and families, including:

- The Kennedys of Carrick, who once ruled over much of southwest Scotland and were granted the lands around Dunure in the 14th century; the family are direct descendants of Robert the Bruce
- Mary Queen of Scots, who spend three nights at the castle in 1563
- Famous architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh, who brought his artistic friends to Dunure for weekends and summer holidays in the 1890s
- Author Robert Louis Stephenson, who wrote about his visit to Dunure in 1876
- Captain Peter Maersk Moller², rescued by Dunure fishermen when his ship the Valkyrien was wrecked in a terrible storm in 1883

There is also a rich heritage associated with the fishing families who worked their boats from the harbour and made use of the castle ruins as a workspace for baiting their nets. More recently, the village and harbour have been used as a location for film and TV, including Outlander and Annika, bringing an enthusiastic new audience to Dunure.

Aims and objectives for the interpretation at Dunure (section 3.4)

Based upon these wider aims and objectives for North Carrick and Dunure, and the community's aspirations, we propose that the **key aims** for the interpretation associated with the Dunure Hub building, park, harbour and village are to:

1. Enhance local people's sense of place and their pride in Dunure and Fisherton through its rich and distinctive cultural and natural heritage, and by linking into the remarkable stories, people and places being celebrated and shared across North Carrick
2. Help people of all ages, abilities and interests to explore and discover more about the highlights and stories of the village, community and coast, and to enjoy the remarkable views, historic castle, harbour, dramatic shoreline and coastal wildlife
3. Encourage local people and visitors to get out and explore the long and living history and heritage of this coastal community, and to begin their journey of discovery at the welcoming and accessible Dunure Hub in Kennedy Park
4. Celebrate and share the stories of the remarkable people associated with Dunure, from the Kennedy family, royalty, brave fisherfolk and renowned artists to today's creative community
5. Inspire and enable visitors and local people to discover more of North Carrick's stories, people and places, giving them the tools to explore, find other local hubs and highlights and make



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connections between places and people across the area (with a particular focus on Robert the Bruce and Maybole)

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Appendix 3

Tourism Assets in Proximity to Dunure

- Ayrshire Coastal Path
- Heads of Ayr Farm Park - three miles north of Dunure, open March to October. A family-friendly day out with animals and activities inside and out
- Electric Brae – a public road two miles south of the village, known for the optical illusion that makes it appear to be an uphill slope while actually running downhill
- Robert Burns Birthplace Museum, also NTS, six miles east of Dunure (includes museum, themed play area, Poet's Path, Burns Cottage and nearby Alloway Church, gardens, monument and Brig o' Doon)
- Culzean Castle & Country Park, seven miles south of Dunure, managed by National Trust for Scotland (former home of descendants of the Kennedys who owned the lands and castle at Dunure)
- Croy Beach, between Culzean and Dunure, a mixture of sand and rocky outcrops with views to Culzean Castle; popular for surfing and boating
- Maybole Castle, seven miles south-east of Dunure. 16th century Scottish tower house owned by the Kennedy family; Maybole Collegiate Church; Crossraguel Abbey
- Turnberry: which includes Turnberry Castle, fragmentary ruins of the coastal castle where Robert the Bruce spent his childhood; the Lighthouse, built by the Stevensons in 1873 (now holiday accommodation); and the Trump Turnberry golfing resort
- There are also two large holiday parks close to Dunure: Craig Tara and Heads of Ayr, which attract large numbers of staying visitors to the coast

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Appendix 4

Market Review of Weddings

In 2023 Scotland hosted 26,753 marriages and 719 civil ceremonies⁴⁶. The table below demonstrates 2023 statistics for such ceremonies held locally.

2023	Weddings	Civil ceremonies	Total
East Ayrshire	569	4	573
North Ayrshire	581	10	591
South Ayrshire	792	10	802
Dumfries and Galloway wards ⁴⁷	869	9	878
Total	2,811	33	2,844

Wedding Venues in South Ayrshire⁴⁸ (Gaps indicate information not on web sites and information awaited.) For some venues, venue hire and catering are combined in a cost per person. All figures ex VAT.

Name	Style	Residential?	Dining/reception capacity	Venue hire (2024 prices)	Catering/head (2024 prices)
Ayr Racecourse Ayr, South Ayrshire	Racecourse	N.A.	800		
Blairquhan Castle Maybole, South Ayrshire	Historic building		Dining 100, reception 180		
Brig O'Doon House Hotel, Alloway, South Ayrshire	Country house hotel	6 bedrooms	180		
Carlton Hotel, Prestwick Prestwick, South Ayrshire	Contemporary, modern style with gardens	39 bedrooms	40, up to 230	Combined package from £90 pp (with catering)	
Craigie, South Ayrshire	Country house, intimate	11 bedrooms	25	£6,500 - £8,000 combined package	
Dalduff Barn, Crosshill, South Ayrshire	Rural, barn style	6 bedrooms	120	£3,500 - £5,000	£50 - £75pp
Dundonald Castle	Castle (restricted)	N.A.	60	Up to £1,350	Not provided on site

⁴⁶ mcp-time-series-23-mt.2.xlsx (live.com)

⁴⁷ Estimated at 18.3% of ceremonies in Dumfries and Galloway, equitable to the proportion of population in these wards = Mid Galloway and Wigtown West, 13,122; Stranrear and Rhins, 14,098; D&G population 148,790 - 2018 estimate. D& G weddings 4,751; civil ceremonies 49 = 4,800 (2023)

⁴⁸ Source www.bridebook.com

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Name	Style	Residential?	Dining/reception capacity	Venue hire (2024 prices)	Catering/ head (2024 prices)
Kilmarnock, South Ayrshire	times, 10.00am – 4.00pm)				
Ellisland House Hotel					
Enterkine Country House Resort, Ayr, South Ayrshire	Country estate/ Manor House	25 Bedrooms	50 - 300 guests	£4,000 - £6,000	£36 - £95
Fairfield House Hotel, Ayr, South Ayrshire	Small hotel	44 bedrooms	Dining 80, reception 140		
Glenapp Castle Girvan, South Ayrshire	Victorian Castle and grounds	21 bedrooms	80	£12,950 to max £18,500	£165 to max £295
Horizon Hotel Ayr, South Ayrshire	Modern hotel, (sea views)	??	Dining 120, reception 150	Combined package, from £73 pp	
Lochgreen House Hotel Troon, South Ayrshire	Country/ Manor house	38 bedrooms	180		From £42.50
Marine Troon, Troon, South Ayrshire	Sea/ links located, Victorian	89 bedrooms	100 dining, 130 reception		
Parkstone Hotel Prestwick, South Ayrshire			150		
Piersland House, Troon, South Ayrshire	Country house	37 bedrooms	94		
Robert Burns Birthplace Museum Ayr, South Ayrshire	“Historic and contemporary settings”	N.A.	Dining 100, reception 150		
Roodlea Barn, Ayr, South Ayrshire	Rustic, converted barn	5 Bedrooms	Dining 120, reception 150	£3,750 - £6,000	
The South Beach Troon, South Ayrshire	Seafront hotel	32 Bedrooms	Dining 110, reception 150	From £31.90	

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Name	Style	Residential?	Dining/reception capacity	Venue hire (2024 prices)	Catering/head (2024 prices)
Trump Turnberry, Girvan, South Ayrshire	Coastal 5 star resort	204 Bedrooms	500	£60 -£175 (combined package for hire and catering)	

In addition 3 civic venues are marketed for weddings – Ayr Town Hall, Troon Concert Hall and Maybole Town Hall⁴⁹. Hire prices vary from £22/hour to £35/hour subject to which space/ venue. The kitchen costs are £12/hour for each venue. Capacities vary too: 130 dining/ 160 reception at Ayr Town Hall; 200 dining/ 160 reception and dancing at Troon Concert Hall; 120 dining/ 104 reception and dancing at Maybole Town Hall.

Depending on expected numbers, there may be additional staffing charges (confirmed on booking). In terms of catering, clients are free to bring in any catering supplier they wish, subject to an occasional licence from the Council for the sale of alcohol.

Costs of venues and catering packages were also looked at for venues in North Ayrshire and East Ayrshire⁵⁰:

- Riverside Lodge Irvine, package from £78pp
- Blackshaws Barn, West Kilbride, £4,032 - £6,800 (100 people)
- Brisbane House, Largs, £2,024 - £7,850 (130 people)
- Roaebank Hotel and Wedding Venue, Beith, £4,495 (50 people)
- Waterside Hotel, Wet Kilbride, from £80pp
- The Gailes Hotel and Spa, Irvine, £2,250 - £4,000 for venue; £96 - £135 complete package pp (up to 240 people)
- Rowallan Castle Estate, Kilmarnock, hire only £5,500 - £8,015; catering £82 - £110pp
- Royal Hotel, Cumnock, venue from £350; catering from £39pp
- The Park Hotel Ayrshire, Kilmarnock, venue hire £1,500 - £2,400; catering from £40pp

⁴⁹ Lets | Sport & Leisure | Communities & Transformation, South Ayrshire Council

⁵⁰ Venues own websites

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Appendix 5

Indicative Wedding Marketing Plan and Standard Operating Procedure Systems Components

The Helm might market a range of selective wedding experiences for weekends:

- Normal Weddings (up to 100 people/minimum 50);
- Intimate Weddings at Dunure (all on site, from groom's reception to finale) – up to 50 guests, all in one location, with good local accommodation being available and follows normal wedding timelines – start at 2pm /finish at 12 midnight – and generally, budget is higher for fewer people, very common in second or same sex weddings;
- Twilight Wedding (all on site) - generally in autumn or winter – to allow for the drama of lights and romance (perfect with the sea and Castle Kennedy as the significant backdrop to a wedding) – and starts at 4pm and finishes late – this is all about the party and not just the ceremony;
- “Elopement” Wedding– could be contained to the Heritage area – with humanist celebrant and small table for dining set up.

Collaborate with selected caterers to find price points suitable for all markets and develop propositions/ packages – caterer would lift sale and be responsible for all event planning and client management.

The Marketing Plan for weddings should include the following (or variations):

- All-inclusive /and Dry Hire propositions ready to take to market as soon as planning permission is given to allow sales to be confirmed for completion and beyond (average lead time for a wedding in Scotland is 16 months/ going up to 3 years;
- Select the dates we want to sell and combine for Weddings and Special Occasion Parties – suggest choosing 20 key weekend dates between April (pre-Easter) and October (post school week, as this is popular with teachers) to sell in total for first year (2027) and years 2 and 3 post opening –a Christmas/or New Year Wedding could be promoted if the hall is not being used;
- Select up to 6 X Wednesday or Thursday dates for mid-week for sales in years 2 and 3 post opening in mid -summer – price would drop to £1,900 per event for a dry hire;
- Consider appointing a freelance specialist sales wedding and event freelancer;
- Website, consider micro site of e.g. Weddings@TheHelm, which has data gathering, online price guide/ appointment for viewing functionality;
- SEO and Social Media plan.

Standard Operating Procedure Systems (SOPS) will be prepared and include guidance for caterers and bar suppliers on the following contents:

SOP Index

1. Key Venue Information

- Delivery and Collection Access

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- Venue Background
- Bar Licensing Information

2. Layout and Floor Plans

- Site Layout
- Internal Venue Floor Plans

3. Venue Amenities

- Wi-Fi Access and Restrictions
- Guest and Staff Toilets
- Staff Areas and Break Rooms
- Disability Accessibility (e.g., Loop Hearing Systems, Visual Fire Alarms)

4. Local Amenities

- Onsite Parking Provisions
- Public Transport Links
- Nearby Shops and Services
- Local Petrol Stations

5. Operational FAQs

- Venue Access and Timings
- Equipment Movement and Set-Up Procedures
- Waste Disposal Guidelines
- First Aid Locations and Protocols
- Venue and Event Space Capacities
- Fire Evacuation Procedures
- Opening and Closing Procedures
- Standard Venue Furniture Setup
- Restricted Items (e.g., Confetti, Red Wine)
- Kitchen Facilities and Available Equipment
- Door Dimensions (Entry/Exit and Internal Doors)
- Security Requirements and Protocols
- Cleaning and Maintenance Responsibilities

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Appendix 6

Draft Terms and Conditions for Weddings at the Helm

Introduction

These terms and conditions form part of the contractual agreement between you and us. Please read them carefully. THE HELM reserves the right to change these terms and conditions at any time subject to the Customer being notified of such changes as soon as reasonably possible.

1. Definitions

1.1 In this Agreement the following words and expressions shall have the respective meanings as specified hereunder, except where the context otherwise requires:

"Agreement" means these Terms and Conditions, together with the Event Order and Confirmation;

"Authorised Person" means the person nominated by the Customer prior to or at the commencement of the Event who has the Customer's authority to approve expenditure or otherwise provide instructions to us and/or third parties;

"Balancing Payment" means the amount to be paid by the Customer after an Event, being the amount by which the Final Charge exceeds the sums paid by the Customer up to the date of the Final Invoice;

"Booking" means a reservation, instruction or other form of commitment by the Customer for Services to be provided by us pursuant to this Agreement;

"Charges" means the charges for the Services as set out or confirmed in the Event Confirmation and Order, or where no charge is quoted, the charge listed in THE HELM's published price list at the date of the Event Confirmation;

"Customer" means any person, firm, company or organisation who contracts with us for the provision of Services;

"Confirmed Booking" means a Booking for which we have provided an Event Confirmation to the Customer;

"Consumables" means the food and drink, including wines and spirits, supplied by us at the Event;

"Event" means the wedding, banquet, function, conference or other specified occasion, for which we are engaged to provide the Services;

"Event Confirmation" means the event confirmation of the details of the Customer's Event, available on the Hub;

"Final Event Confirmation" means the last version of the Event Confirmation updated on the Hub prior to the Event;

"Final Invoice" means the invoice for the Balancing Payment issued by us after the Event;

"Final Charge" means the total charge for the Services provided for the Event, including On the Day Charges, Consumables, any Good Housekeeping Charge and any extra goods or services provided which are additional to the initial Booking.

"Food and Beverage Waiver Agreement" means the waiver the Customer is required to sign should they wish to provide food or beverages at the Event that are not prepared or provided by THE HELM;

"Force Majeure Event" means any event occurring after the date a Booking has been confirmed which is beyond the reasonable control of a party and which affects the performance by that party of its obligations,

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including without limitation: acts of God, inclement weather, criminal acts or omissions, epidemics or pandemics, any form of Government intervention, war, hostilities, rebellion, terrorist activity, local or national emergency, sabotage or riots, and floods, fires, explosions or other catastrophes.

“Good Housekeeping Charge” means charges in relation to breakages, damage or other costs caused by the Customer or Guests at the Event;

“Good Housekeeping Deposit” means the deposit which may be required by a Venue to cover any Good Housekeeping Charge;

“Good Housekeeping Report” means a report provided to the Customer by THE HELM in accordance with clause 6.3 detailing any breakages, damage or other costs caused by the Customer or Guests at the Event;

“Guaranteed Minimum Number” means the minimum number of Guests attending the Event;

“Guest” means a person who attends an Event;

“THE HELM” and **“we”** or **“us”** means THE HELM (Scotland) Limited, a company incorporated under Companies Acts (company number SC430051) having its registered office at Stuart House, Station Road, Musselburgh, EH21 7PQ and trading as ‘THE HELM’;

“Hub” means the Customer-accessible Portal made available by THE HELM which confirms the details of the Event;

“Initial Event Confirmation” means the Event Confirmation provided to you by us after receipt of the Initial Payment which confirms our acceptance of your Booking;

“Initial Payment” means the sum payable by the Customer as further described at Clause 3.1 below;

“Interim Payments” means further payments made by the Customer after the Initial Payment has been paid but prior to the Final Invoice;

“On the Day Charges” means any additional Services or Consumables provided by us at the Event which were not paid for prior to the Event;

“Projected Price” means the price quoted by us and set out in the Event Confirmation based on the information provided in the Customer’s Booking or as otherwise agreed, including the Guaranteed Minimum Number of Guests;

“Services” means the provision of catering Services, function and venue Services and supply of Consumables as set out in the Event Confirmation;

“Third Party Supplier” means any third parties who supply any services to the Customer.

“Venue” means the facilities, premises or location where the Event is taking place.

1.2 In the event of any conflict or inconsistency between these Terms and Conditions and the Event Confirmation, the Event Confirmation contained within the Hub will take precedence.

2. Booking an Event

THE HELM wish to ensure that your requirements and the process from the time of your Booking onwards are clear to both parties. At the time we provide you with our Quotation, we will provide you with a copy of these Terms and Conditions. Once we receive your Booking, we will upload an Initial Event Confirmation to the Hub, which will confirm the details of your Booking, together with any required clarifications, amendments or further information we feel is important. Please check the Initial Event Confirmation carefully because it, together with these Terms and Conditions will form the basis of the contractual agreement between you and

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us. If changes are made prior to the Event, or further information becomes available, further Event Confirmation changes will be updated in the Hub, with a Final Event Confirmation version uploaded once all details are finalised. When you have 'clicked' your acceptance of the Initial Event Confirmation and these Terms and Conditions, and paid the Initial Payment, the Agreement between us will be established.

3. Charges and Payment

3.1 Unless agreed otherwise and confirmed in the Event Confirmation, the Initial Payment will be one of;

- 35% of the Projected Price if booked beyond 12 months of your event date
- 50% of the Projected Price if booked within 12 months of your event date
- 100% of the Final Price if booked within 5 weeks of your event date

Your initial payment secures your date and allows your dedicated event designer to start planning your bespoke event. Initial Payments are non-refundable and non-transferable.

3.2 Interim Payments will be due as follows, unless agreed otherwise and confirmed in the Event Confirmation:

Event booked beyond 12 months

- 35% of the Projected Price payable 9 months prior to the Event
- The balance of the Projected Price value payable 5 weeks prior to the Event

Event booked within 12 months

- The balance of the Projected Price value payable 5 weeks prior to the Event

3.3 The Initial Payments, must be paid within 5 days of the Event Confirmation and Invoice raised with the Hub, unless otherwise agreed in writing. If the Initial Payment is not paid in this time the Booking will not be effective and no Agreement will exist between us. If the Initial Payment is paid late, we may agree to nonetheless reinstate the Booking at our sole discretion.

3.4 The cost of any agreed extras subsequent to the initial Booking will be added to the Projected Price and will be payable prior to the Event either with the above Interim Payments or as invoiced separately with payment due immediately.

3.5 THE HELM may request a Good Housekeeping Deposit which should be pre-authorised 3-days prior to your event. The Good Housekeeping Deposit will be refunded in line with sections 6.3 and 6.4 of these conditions provided there is no breach of the Conditions of Hire, there is no damage to the facility or equipment, and/or there is no extra cleaning required at the conclusion of the booking.

3.6 Payment of the Final Invoice will be due within 5 days of the date of issue, failing which the total sum outstanding will be taken from your credit or debit card.

3.7 The start and finish times of your Event will be set out in the Event Confirmation. THE HELM reserves the right to make additional charges for Events which subsequently commence before or run on beyond these times.

3.8 All invoices are payable within 5 days of the invoice date. Failure to pay Payments when due will entitle THE HELM without prejudice to any other rights or remedy available to cancel the provision of the Services and terminate the Agreement.

3.9 All queries relating to amounts invoiced must be notified in writing to THE HELM within 5 days of the date of the invoice.

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3.10 THE HELM reserves the right to charge a one-off late payment fee of £50.00 for any late payments. This amount will be added to the final invoice. THE HELM also reserves the right to charge interest on overdue accounts at a rate of 5% per month.

3.11 Payments that remain outstanding after 5 days of the payment date will be passed to a solicitor or debt collection agency to recover all monies owed and costs involved.

3.12 All charges are subject to Value Added Tax unless otherwise stated. Payments are required in pounds Sterling only.

3.13 THE HELM accepts payment by the following methods:

- Debit card
- Bank Transfer
- Visa/MasterCard
- American Express

3.14 THE HELM does not accept payment by cheque or cash.

3.15 THE HELM may request a pre-authorised limit 3-days prior to your event to cover any on the day charges. We will provide you with a summary of all On the Day Charges with the Final Invoice.

3.16 We reserve the right to alter prices quoted if THE HELM's costs are increased due to circumstances beyond our control, such as significantly increased commodity or labour costs, a rise in liquor duties or the event running on beyond the agreed timings. Any such price alterations will be kept to a minimum and will be notified to the client in writing.

4. Consumables

4.1 THE HELM has the sole right to the provision of the Services in its designated areas at the Event and no Consumables may be bought into these areas. Whereby prior agreement between us, for Customers who consume their own beverage, a corkage charge shall be applied unless the Venue operates the bar facilities direct.

4.2 It is the Customers responsibility to notify THE HELM of its Authorised Person for the Event and to ensure that all orders of Consumables are signed for by the authorised representative of the Customer. Where the Customer fails to notify THE HELM of its Authorised Person or orders are placed by persons other than a Customer's Authorised Person, the figures recorded by THE HELM shall be conclusive and the Customer shall be bound to pay the charges for the Services. THE HELM will not accept any adjustments to the price unless this procedure is followed.

4.3 All Consumables offered are subject to availability. Where Consumables are not available, all reasonable endeavours will be made to offer the closest available substitute.

4.4 Notwithstanding clause 4.1-4.3, THE HELM will allow certain types of specialist Consumables to be supplied by the Customer at the Event – an example being a wedding cake etc. Written permission must be received from THE HELM prior to any food or beverages being brought to an event that are not prepared or provided by THE HELM.

4.5 In respect to any Consumables permitted at the event under clause 4.4, the Customer must sign a Food and Beverage Waiver Agreement. THE HELM will send an electronic version of the waiver to the Customer which must be completed, signed and returned no less than 2 working days prior to the Event. The Customer is

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responsible for ensuring a copy of the Food and Beverage Waiver Agreement is displayed in a visible location throughout the duration of the Event.

4.6 Our team of professionals are committed to taking the utmost care in the provision of your requested special dietary requirements. This is achieved through allergen awareness training and abiding by strict controls, to reduce or eliminate the risk of cross contamination, which could lead to an allergic reaction. Whilst every precaution is taken to reduce the likelihood of special dietary products containing allergens or food intolerances, we are unable to guarantee that these products can be completely free of allergen traces.

4.7 We have robust food hygiene and safety procedures in place and use the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) framework. As part of our HACCP compliance any hot or cooked food cannot be left out for longer than 2 hours. Food will be disposed of unless a disclaimer/waiver is signed, and special request are briefed and noted in the event order.

5. Numbers Attending and Event Final Details

5.1 At the time of booking the Customer shall provide details of the Guaranteed Minimum Number for the Event. The Customer shall confirm the final expected number attending not less than 6 weeks prior to the event allowing the balance of the Projected Price to be paid in line with the interim payment charges. Charges for the Services will be based on Guaranteed Minimum Number or the number attending, if greater.

5.2 Final details of menus including any special dietary requirements need to be confirmed by the Customer by the date specified in the Event Confirmation and where no date has been specified at 6 weeks prior to the Event.

6. Venue Hire

6.1 If the Event is at a Venue managed by THE HELM, the Venue hire cost will be included in the Event Charges. If the Venue hire is arranged by THE HELM on behalf of the Customer, a hire fee will be included in the Projected Price and shown separately on the Event Confirmation. Where the Customer has arranged the Venue, the Customer will be contracting directly with the Venue for the hire and will be responsible for payment of associated charges. The Customer undertakes to provide THE HELM with all necessary information to allow THE HELM to fully deliver the Services.

6.2 It is your responsibility to ensure that your Event Guests or third-party supplier behave in a way that does not cause damage to facilities or equipment provided by THE HELM, the Venue or other service providers, or that creates a nuisance or unreasonable disruption to our staff or to anyone else present during the Event. Should any of your Event Guests or third-party suppliers refuse to or appear unwilling to alter any aspect of such behaviour that is unacceptable to us, we reserve the right to terminate the stay of the person(s) involved or all your Event Guests.

6.3 The cost of repairing any damage to the property, contents or grounds caused by Guests or third-party suppliers arranged by you must be paid to THE HELM who will issue a Good Housekeeping Report within 7 days of the Event. Any queries regarding the Good Housekeeping Report must be provided to THE HELM within 7 days of the Good Housekeeping Report date, failing which the Good Housekeeping Report will be deemed to be accepted and THE HELM will issue the Final Invoice. Where a Good Housekeeping Deposit has been provided, the Good Housekeeping Charges will be debited, and the balance returned to the Customer. Where the Good Housekeeping Charges exceed the value of the Good Housekeeping Deposit or if no Good Housekeeping Deposit has been provided, Good Housekeeping Charges will be included in the Final Charge.

6.4 Where a Good Housekeeping Report is queried by the Customer, THE HELM will endeavour to carry out whatever investigation or provide such clarification as is merited. If after THE HELM have responded to the Customer's query the matter is resolved, or after a reasonable period of time if not, THE HELM will issue the

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Final Invoice. The Final Invoice is payable within 7 days. Where no damage has occurred the Good Housekeeping Deposit will be returned in full within 7 days of the event.

6.5 The Customer will be responsible for booking, payment and other arrangements with regard to third party suppliers whom the Customer engages directly and for ensuring that they liaise, co-operate and comply with all policies, procedures and instructions of THE HELM and the Venue.

7. Licencing

7.1 Challenge 25

We operate a Challenge 25 policy. Our staff members will require proof of age prior to alcoholic goods being handed over. If you or the person receiving your delivery are lucky enough to appear to be under 25, you will need to produce valid ID to accept your order. The only acceptable proof of identity shall be a photographic driver's licence, a passport or an Identity Card containing the PASS Hologram.

7.2 Under 18

It is illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to purchase, attempt to purchase or consume alcohol at the event. We would suggest that anyone who looks or could be thought to be under the age of 25 brings photographic ID/proof of age with them or we will not be able to serve them. We will refuse to serve anyone at the event who is or appears to be excessively drunk or uses threatening or abusive behaviour towards staff, customers or other guests. We will also refuse to serve anyone who purchases or attempts to purchase alcohol for someone under the age of 18 or someone who has previously been refused alcohol by the bar staff. The decision on such matters will be taken by the bar staff and will be final.

7.3 If THE HELM are operating a bar for the event, at no time are children allowed to sit or stand at the bar unless the accompanying adult is waiting to be served.

8. Changes by the Customer

8.1 THE HELM will endeavour to accommodate all reasonable changes to the Booking requested by the Customer prior to the Event. Change requests must be confirmed in writing by the Customer. THE HELM will advise the Customer of any applicable changes to the Event Charges as a consequence of the Customer's change request.

9. Cancellations by THE HELM

9.1 THE HELM may cancel the provision of the Services to an Event and forthwith terminate this Agreement and the rights granted to the Customer if:

- The Venue has to be closed for reasons beyond THE HELM's or the Venue's control; or
- The Customer is already in arrears with any payment due to THE HELM or Venue owner; or
- The Customer is in breach of any of these terms and conditions and any Venue terms and conditions of hire and fails to rectify such breach within 7 days of written request as to do by THE HELM; or
- A petition is presented or a resolution is passed for the winding up of the Customer (except for the purpose of a reconstruction, amalgamation or members voluntary liquidation); or the Customer stops or threatens to stop payment of its debts or ceases or threatens to cease to carry on its business; or
- An encumbrance takes possession, or a Receiver is appointed over the whole or part of the assets or under-taking of the Customer; or
- The Customer is unable to pay its debts within the meaning of Section 123 of the Insolvency Act 1986 or any statutory modification or re-enactment thereof; or

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- An application is made to the Court under Section 9 of the Insolvency Act 1986 for an Administration Order in relation to the Customer or if the Customer passes a resolution for the making of any such application to the Court; or
- A proposal is made under Section 1 of the Insolvency Act 1986 for a voluntary arrangement in relation to the debts or affairs of the Customer; or
- The Customer shall convene a meeting of or propose to enter into any arrangement with its creditors generally; or
- The Customer (being an individual) is adjudicated bankrupt or dies.

10. Cancellations by the Customer

10.1 A Confirmed Booking shall only be deemed to be cancelled when THE HELM receives written notification of the cancellation.

10.2 Where a Customer cancels this Agreement or the provision of Services thereunder, the following charges shall apply:

- Over 6 months' notice of cancellation – 35% of the Projected Price.
- Between 3- and 6-months' notice of cancellation – 70% of the Projected Price.
- Less than 3 months' notice of cancellation – 100% of the Projected Price.

11. Force Majeure

11.1 If a Force Majeure Event prevents an Event from taking place on the Confirmed Booking date, THE HELM will inform the Customer at the earliest opportunity and will work with the Customer to explore all possible options, including rescheduling the Event to a later date. If rescheduling the Event is not possible, THE HELM will refund payments already made by the Customer except for any costs incurred by THE HELM up to the cancellation date. Details of costs incurred for the cancelled Event will be provided to the Customer.

12. Liability

12.1 THE HELM shall not be liable to the Customer by reason of any delay in performing or any failure to perform any of THE HELM's obligations in relation to the Services if such delay or failure is due to a Force Majeure Event.

12.2 THE HELM shall have no liability to the Customer for any consequential loss to the Customer arising out of or in connection with the provision of Services pursuant to the terms and conditions (except in respect of death or personal injury resulting from negligence) and the total liability of THE HELM for any other loss of the Customer shall not exceed the Projected Price.

12.3 The Customer agrees to pay any loss or liability of any kind to us or any other person caused by the Customer or any of the Guests and to indemnify THE HELM in full against all injury (including death) to any persons or loss of or damage to any of our or of the Venue's facilities or any other property which may arise out of any negligence, act of omission by the Customer or Guests.

12.4 The Customer is required to have relevant event insurance that includes public liability insurance to the value of at least £2 million pounds. THE HELM require to see a copy of the insurance certificate within 12 weeks of the event confirmation date.

12.5 Any loss of or damage to property of the Customer or Guests should be reported to THE HELM at the earliest possible Any lost property discovered by THE HELM will be kept securely for up to 30 days (depending

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on the nature of the item) until claimed by the owner, failing which it will be either destroyed or donated to charity. Where possible, THE HELM will endeavour to contact the owner of any lost property. Full details of how lost property is dealt with are contained in the accompanying THE HELM Lost Property Policy.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, THE HELM accepts no liability for the loss or damage to any property or personal belongings brought onto the Venue by the Customer or Guests.

12.6 THE HELM will take all reasonable care of property or equipment provided at the Event by the Customer and/or third-party suppliers arranged by the Customer. Should loss or damage be sustained to any such property or equipment, this should be reported to THE HELM at the earliest possible opportunity. THE HELM will report to the Customer or third-party supplier any loss or damage which it discovers, or which is brought to our attention and shall keep records of the circumstances and nature of the loss or damage.

13. General

13.1 No variation to these terms and conditions shall be effective unless agreed in writing and signed on behalf of THE HELM and the Customer.

13.2 These terms and conditions shall prevail over any conditions offered by the Customer.

13.3 If the Customer comprises more than one person those persons shall be jointly and severally liable under this Agreement.

13.4 The Customer shall not assign, transfer, sub-contract, or in any other manner make over to any third party the benefit and/or burden of this Agreement in whole or in part without the prior written consent of THE HELM, which consent shall not be unreasonably withheld or delayed. THE HELM may subcontract, assign or transfer our obligations or rights to a competent third party whether in whole or in part.

13.5 This Agreement shall be governed and construed in accordance with Scots Law and each party agrees to submit to the non-exclusive jurisdiction of the Scottish Courts as regards any claim or matter arising.

13.6 THE HELM reserves the right to update these terms and conditions. THE HELM will give written notice of any changes will require the consent of the Customer, not to be unreasonably withheld or delayed.

14. Social Media

14.1 THE HELM, as part of our marketing, collect photographic images relating to some events for use via the following channels:

- Social media
- Marketing campaigns
- E-marketing

If you would like to opt out of any photographic campaigns, please email info@THEHELMfood.co.uk.

THE HELM LOST PROPERTY POLICY

In line with THE HELM's Terms and Conditions, any loss of or damage to property of the Customer or Delegates should be reported to THE HELM at the earliest possible opportunity. Any lost property discovered by THE HELM will be kept securely for up to 30 days (depending on the nature of the item) until claimed by the owner, failing which it will be either destroyed or donated to charity. Where possible, THE HELM will endeavour to contact the owner of any lost property. Full details of how lost property is dealt with are noted in the below THE HELM Lost Property Policy.

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THE HELM will take all reasonable care to identify, verify, protect and safeguard property or equipment provided at the Event by the Customer and/or third-party suppliers arranged by the Customer. Should loss or damage be sustained to any such property or equipment, this should be reported to THE HELM at the earliest possible opportunity. THE HELM will report to the Customer or third-party supplier any loss or damage which it discovers, or which is brought to our attention and shall keep records of the circumstances and nature of the loss or damage.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, THE HELM accepts no liability for the loss or damage to any property or personal belongings brought onto the Venue by the Customer or Delegates.

Policy

While THE HELM is not responsible for personal items left at a venue, a reasonable attempt will be made to return the lost item to its rightful owner and to hold the particular item for the time period specified below prior to disposal. These guidelines are used by the HELM in its approach to address the issue of lost & found property.

All reasonable efforts will be made to determine and notify the owner (including phone calls, email, or a letter to the person's last known address, if possible).

Depending on the type of item, the property may be held up to 30 days before disposal. The retention period and manner of disposal will depend on the item, with the following guidelines being applicable:

- "High-Value" identity items such as passports, international/ overseas ID cards, drivers' licences, etc. will be held for 7 days and then handed over to Police Scotland.
- Other "High-Value" items such as mobile phones, USB flash drives, wallets, purses, handbags, cameras, portable music players, electronics, watches, keys and medications etc. will be held for 7 days and then handed over to Police Scotland, with the exception of medications which will be returned to the NHS.
- Clothing, footwear, spectacles, bags, backpacks, books and umbrellas etc. will be held for 30 days and then donated to a nominated local charity. If the item is of no use to them, it will be disposed of.
- Large items, such as bicycles, may be sent for recycling after being held for 30 days.
- Hazardous and perishable items will be disposed of immediately in the appropriate manor.
- All unclaimed money will be provided to a nominated local charity after 30 days.