

New whisky campaign is launched

A NEW influencer-led campaign aims to drive tourism spend into Scotland's rural communities while showcasing the country's world-class distilleries, hospitality and drinks experiences.

Scottish drinks tourism platform Sip Seekers has officially launched Sip Diaries – a new ongoing creator campaign designed to modernise and promote whisky, gin and wider drinks tourism experiences across Scotland.

The launch coincides with the consumer-facing launch of the newly updated Sip Seekers platform following a highly successful pilot phase with distilleries and drinks brands across Scotland.

The first experience, Sip Diaries: Perthshire Edition, brought together lifestyle creators and whisky influencers for a luxury countryside escape centred on showcasing how accessible, aspirational and fun Scottish drinks tourism can be for modern travellers.

Creators invited on the trip represented a combined social media reach of more than 200,000 followers across platforms.

Throughout the weekend guests visited both the iconic Glenturret Distillery and Dewar's Aberfeldy Distillery, enjoyed curated whisky tastings, luxury accommodation at Bolfracks House, countryside experiences and local Scottish hospitality while documenting the trip across social media.

Founder Victoria Miller says Sip Diaries has been created to help reshape perceptions around whisky and drinks tourism, moving it beyond traditional audiences.



Victoria Miller.



VIBRANT: 'Flutterfly' Verity Power added a dash of colour to the butterfly and moth garden opening ceremony in Rodney Gardens, Perth.

BY GORDON BANNERMAN

BEAUTIFUL Perth volunteers and supporters have unveiled a new Butterfly and Moth Garden in the Fair City.

It marks the culmination of a planting project which took place over the winter with support from the Scottish Butterfly and Conservation Trust's Wild Spaces programme and youngsters from Perth's Bertha Park School.

Provost Xander McDade joined Geoff Ballinger, chairman of the trust's East of Scotland committee, for the official opening ceremony within Rodney Gardens, with 'Flutterfly' Verity Power adding a dash of colour.

The project followed hard on the heels of a national 'Butterfly Emergency' declared two years ago due to historic low counts of butterflies and moths recorded over the summer.

Mr Ballinger said small-scale gardens held out hope for the future but he warned the emergency was far from over.

Beautiful Perth volunteers

Butterfly Garden opens in Fair City

welcomed the charity's sponsors, councillors and officers from Perth and Kinross Council, and supporters from the Fair City business community and various trusts who are generously funding the Beautiful Perth Greenspace and Wellbeing Training Programme.

Gordon Lindsay, chairman of Beautiful Perth, said: "The new Butterfly Garden provides yet another reason for locals and visitors to relax and enjoy the lovely riverside asset the city enjoys. Like any charity we rely greatly on securing funding, be it from sponsorship of the flower beds, grants for specific projects of in-kind donations of manpower or equipment.

"A heartfelt thank you goes out to all the organisations, individuals and companies who have supported us on making a difference across this Fair City.

"We are grateful to the local authority, the youngsters from Bertha Park and everyone who has supported the project, and we look forward to welcoming new seating being built by the Perth and Kinross Council Community Payback team."

Mr Ballinger said: "While we are talking about butterflies today because they act as a canary in this dark and gloomy coal mine, the same story applies across all the pollinating insects and other

less obvious invertebrates that we depend on for farming and food production.

"We must use our energy and ingenuity to create many more habitat islands in underused corners of our environment, in a pragmatic and sustainable way, and think in terms of nature recovery.

"This Beautiful Perth garden project is a great example of transforming a neglected and overgrown space by the careful choice of plants and lots of hard work, creating a perfect environment for many species of butterflies and other invertebrates to thrive – but we need many, many more."

Plan to restore and protect environment approved

AN AMBITIOUS 20-year plan to restore and protect the natural environment in Fife has been approved by councillors.

The cabinet committee agreed the Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan, which sets out a long-term vision to restore habitats, protect wildlife and improve access to nature – with a clear focus on

the benefits for people's health, wellbeing and local places.

Backed by five-year delivery plans, the strategy will turn ambition into action – from restoring rivers and planting trees to improving local greenspaces and connecting habitats.

The plan places importance on supporting

nature and improving everyday life in Fife, recognising the essential role green spaces play in physical and mental health.

Work is already happening across the county, with projects including river restoration on the Leven, Eden and Back Burn to improve water quality and wildlife

habitats and tree planting and wildlife expansion through the Fife Climate Forest programme.

Urban greenspace improvements are also under way which aim to make towns and neighbourhoods greener, healthier places to live.

Emphasis throughout the plan is on getting local people involved,

with future campaigns and projects to help communities play their part in protecting and enhancing nature.

The plan was developed in collaboration with the Fife Biodiversity Partnership, bringing together organisations including Fife Coast and Countryside Trust and the Fife Golf Trust.