

RESPONSE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE, VISITSCOTLAND, 19 NOVEMBER 2012

Thank you for your letter of 24 October in which you ask for clarification on Stirling's clan event in 2014.

I know that VisitScotland's Chairman, Dr Mike Cantlay, addressed this issue with the Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee during the budget evidence session on 31 October and I am happy to reiterate the points made by Mike.

Contrary to media reports Stirling's planned clan event has not been cancelled. What has happened is that the lead organisation, Stirling Council, has decided the Bannockburn anniversary provides the best focus for a clan event in 2014.

The clans have always been keen to be involved in the anniversary and a strong clan element within the Bannockburn programme provides a major focus for the event programme for Homecoming Scotland 2014.

It is important to note that the clan societies and travel trade welcome this.

Discussions are also underway to stage a second clan convention in Scotland, building on the achievement of that held in 2009. This will provide an opportunity for clan leaders from around the world to work together to establish the strategic direction of the clan network into the future. The arrangements for this convention are being led by the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs and the Council of Scottish Clans and Associations.

Whilst the Bannockburn activity will undoubtedly be a key moment in the Homecoming programme, it is essential to note that Homecoming is about more than one event. As in 2009, Homecoming in 2014 will deliver a year round, country-wide series of events celebrating the very best of Scotland. It will provide many reasons for people with Scottish ancestry, as well as people who simply love our country, to visit and extend their stay in a year when Scotland plays host to two of the world's biggest sporting events - the Commonwealth Games and The Ryder Cup.

I will ensure that VisitScotland's Homecoming team keeps the Committee updated on the development of the Homecoming Scotland programme, as well as the plans for the clan activity at the National Trust for Scotland's Bannockburn site.

In the meantime if I can be of further assistance to the Committee please contact me.

