

New national visitor attraction for Scotland in 2021



Background

- A new, fully-accessible, visitor attraction housing the globally acclaimed national treasure, The Great Tapestry of Scotland will open in spring 2021 in Scotland's premier textile region, the Scottish Borders.
- The £6.7 million purpose built facility and interactive exhibition space, designed by award-winning architects Page\Park, will bring the best of Scotland's world renowned storytelling to life through the Tapestry's intricate textile artistry and a range of other internationally significant visiting exhibits and workshops.
- The Great Tapestry of Scotland:
 - Is the vision of one of the world's most best-loved authors Alexander McCall Smith, designed by historian Alistair Moffat and artist Andrew Crummy, and championed by a team of 1,000 women from across Scotland.
 - tells the inspirational true story of the country's history, heritage and culture (from 8500 BC to present day, a period of 420 million years).
 - is one of the largest tapestries in the world, made up of 160 hand stitched panels and 300 miles of wool (enough to lay the entire length of Scotland from the Border with England to the tip of the Shetland in the North Atlantic).
 - was handstitched by thousands of women, men and children (age four to 92) across Scotland and transported by land, sea and air to come together in the textile town of Galashiels, home to a range of world leading textile brands and Scotland's national textile college (part of Heriot Watt University).
- The new visitor centre will be a leading attraction in Scotland's portfolio, celebrating the creative talents of the stitchers, the story of Scotland as told by Scotland's people, and the wider story of Scotland's premier textile region.

Key points about the new attraction

- Interactive visitor experience.
- Gift shop.
- Café.
- Disabled access, parking and toilets.
- Audio guides in a range of languages.
- Workshop and events programme.
- Private textiles workshops can be arranged on request for tour operators (additional fee).
- Guided tours.
- Coach parking nearby. Free refreshments for coach drivers.
- Space for special events, temporary exhibitions and private dining available for hire.
- Education opportunities.
- Opportunities for tour operators and visitors to visit textile businesses and other attractions for hands on experiences (recommendations available on request).
- 50 minutes by train and 1 hour by road from Edinburgh.
- 5 minutes' walk from Galashiels train station.

Entrance fee

	2021	2022
Standard admission fee	TBC	TBC

Duration of visit

Those who viewed the Great Tapestry of Scotland when it toured the country have said they could have spent hours or even days viewing the detail and wonderful artistry in the tapestry. Many would like to return to view it again to explore it in more depth. However, an introductory tour of the Centre could be completed in **one to two hours**.

More information

- In addition to the new purpose build space, the Centre will repurpose the adjacent former Post Office, a B-listed building with exterior carvings by the once world-renowned 19th century sculptor George Paterson Sutherland, who hailed from the Galashiels and later emigrated to Toronto.
- The Tapestry story has been told by 1,000 women, creating a new history of Scotland, very different from the stories previously told by men.
- The operators of this major new attraction, Live Borders (a charity managing cultural and leisure attractions across the Scottish Borders), are working in partnership with Scottish Borders Council and the Tapestry Trustees on the Centre development.

Some interesting facts about Galashiels and the Scottish Borders

- Galashiels has been manufacturing wool and textiles since the late 16th century, driven largely by a female workforce.
- Several globally renowned textile brands are still located throughout the Scottish Borders and visitors can learn more about them at various attractions in the area.
- Scotland's national bard, Robert Burns, wrote two poems about Galashiels, including *Braw Lads O Gala Water*.
- Galashiels was originally built to accommodate pilgrims to Melrose Abbey, where Robert the Bruce's heart is buried.
- Galashiels is close to the home of the novelist Sir Walter Scott, Abbotsford House.
- Every June, the annual Braw Lads Day festival sees hundreds of horse riders parading through Galashiels as the Braw Lad, Braw Lass and attendants complete a range of ceremonies to celebrate the town's great history.
- Galashiels was home to the author of the famous Scottish song *Coulters Candy*.
- The town is also home to actor Grant O'Rourke, Rupert MacKenzie in *Outlander*.
- The Heriot Watt School of Textiles and Design, formerly known as the Scottish College of Textiles, is located in Galashiels. The campus facilities have been described by Dame Vivienne Westwood as "The best in the UK".

Cancellation and payment policy

- Cancellation and payment policy available on request.

For more information

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