

NEWS RELEASE

THE GREAT ESKAPE LAUNCH



The Great Eskape is a collaborative venture between Angus businesses with support from Angus Council. From concept through to launch, Business Advisor Lesley Walker has worked with local organisations to bring this idea to life.

Setting out for scenic Glen Esk on a luxurious vintage coach with an expert guide, the tour offers visitors a fantastic opportunity to experience the sights, tastes and culture of Angus.

The tour was officially launched earlier this year with guests including Visit Scotland, Scottish Enterprise, Forbes of Kingennie, Brucefield Boutique B&B and Go Golf's David Whyte joining Angus Provost Ruth Leslie Melville, on the inaugural journey.

Provost Leslie Melville said: "The imagination and hard work of all those involved in creating this new tour is to be commended. It offers visitors to the county a very special day promoting the natural beauty and history of Angus, while boosting the economy, particularly in rural areas.

"The tour encompasses some of the key themes of Angus Council's Tourism Strategy, namely food and drink, cultural and ancestral tourism and activity tourism, and I am delighted that the council has been able to offer the support and expertise to local businesses to get this project off the ground."

The Great Eskape takes in the historic burghs of Carnoustie, Forfar and Brechin, before arriving in scenic Glen Esk.

There's a chance to soak up the glen's natural beauty, before arriving at The Retreat folk museum and restaurant for some traditional Scottish cuisine.

Also included are a demonstration of traditional crafts and a tour round the folk museum bringing the area's rich heritage to life.

The 1930s Limousine Asquith is provided by Chauffers of Carnoustie, whose Pauline Martin said: "We feel really enthusiastic about The Great Eskape and our part in it. There are so many good aspects about this new tour and we think that tourists will really enjoy this all day trip. It's not the usual coach tour – for a start there are only seven seats so it means that groups are treated to a very elite day out. Glasses of bubbly are available during the tour and guests are treated to a pampered drive through Angus to Glen Esk.

There is something for everyone – beautiful scenery for photographers, a walk to Loch Lee for those who like the outdoors, Scottish cuisine for the gourmet, a tour round the Glen Esk folk museum for the historian and even a craft demonstration for those who like the arts. Guests can even try their hand at spinning wool!

As far as I know this kind of tour hasn't been tried anywhere else in Scotland so we're really pleased to be in at the start. It combines the best of Angus all-in-one and we can't wait to have our first group on board!"

The Retreat dates back to the 1840s and opened as a folk museum in 1955.

As well as a repository for Glen history, the Retreat was set up to give employment to local people, and provide an outlet for local produce, and craftwork.

Anne Taylor, Chairman of The Retreat Trust said: "The Glenesk Retreat are delighted to welcome visitors on the Great Eskape Tour to our beautiful glen, full of history and wonderful scenery. This will be a unique opportunity for visitors to hear some of the stories connected with the surrounding countryside. Visitors can find out from local people just what glen life was like in the past – as well as how life is like here today.

During the trip there will be a stop at the Retreat for a light lunch and a guided tour of the Folk Museum. This fascinating museum has artefacts pertaining to the area and tells the story of Glenesk and its inhabitants through the things people have left behind. These range from children's toys to working tools and many of the domestic items which country people had in their homes – an intriguing insight into life in the past.

A visit further up the Glen to the old churchyard, passing the ruined Invermark Castle, will whet the appetite for dinner which is prepared in our kitchens. Our speciality, venison haggis will be on the menu - a true taste of Scotland!

Guests also receive a quality souvenir bag with mementos of their day and we have included fact sheets and other literature relating to Angus. We have also included a quiz, with prize, on the return journey to help people remember all they have experienced. A bit of fun on the road back down the glen. And with glasses of bubbly on board, guests are truly pampered.

Working with Angus Council and the other businesses involved in The Great Eskape has been enjoyable and we have all worked hard to make this a reality. We are

excited to be a major part of this new venture as we believe that visitors can experience something very different and take home some special memories – as well as a gift from our well stocked shop.”