

- **FACTSHEET 4**

- **Stirling Castle**

- Stirling Castle, with its splendid decorative stonework and well preserved buildings is one of Scotland's finest castles.
- Stirling Castle is in one of 345 properties in the care of Historic Scotland, a government agency which maintains the properties on behalf of Scottish Ministers.
- In 2007-08 close to 398,000 visited the castle, meaning it was the second most visited Historic Scotland attraction after Edinburgh Castle.
- The castle sits above two of the country's most famous battlefields – Stirling Bridge and Bannockburn.
- Mary, Queen of Scots spent her childhood at Stirling Castle, was crowned in its Chapel Royal in 1543, and narrowly escaped death by fire at the castle in 1561. It was at Stirling Castle that her son, the future James VI was baptised.
- In 1991 the Stirling Castle Project Plan was conceived to enhance the castle as a visitor attraction, while continuing to conserve it as a monument of international importance.
- Part of the project plan was the restoration of the Great Hall, returning it to the medieval design of 1503. The restoration was completed in 1999. It was officially opened by Her Majesty The Queen, at a ceremony held on November 30 – St Andrew's Day.
- The current phase of Historic Scotland's capital project programme at Stirling Castle includes presenting the Renaissance interiors of Royal Lodgings in the Palace as they might have appeared in the mid-sixteenth century.
- The palace is one of the best examples of Renaissance architecture in Europe and the royal residence which best represents the Stewart dynasty in Scotland.
- The early Renaissance splendour of the palace is believed to be the work of French masons brought to Scotland by King James V who was keen to provide a residence for his second French wife, Mary of Guise. Their daughter was Mary, Queen of Scots.
- The many attractions for visitors include an exhibition on the castle's history and life within its walls, the reconstructed medieval kitchen display and the Regimental Museum of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. A specialist bookshop, a giftshop and a café are also available.
- High on a rocky crag above the city of Stirling, the castle was once a favourite royal residence and was the focus of many great events in Scottish history. It one of the most spectacular sights in Scotland and a great place to explore. The castle is packed with historic buildings and surrounded by impressive defences which date from many different periods.
- **Stirling Castle (01786 450000) is at the top of Castle Wynd at the head of Stirling's historic old town off the M9.**