SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENT PLAN

SIR WALTER SCOTT COURTHOUSE SELKIRK

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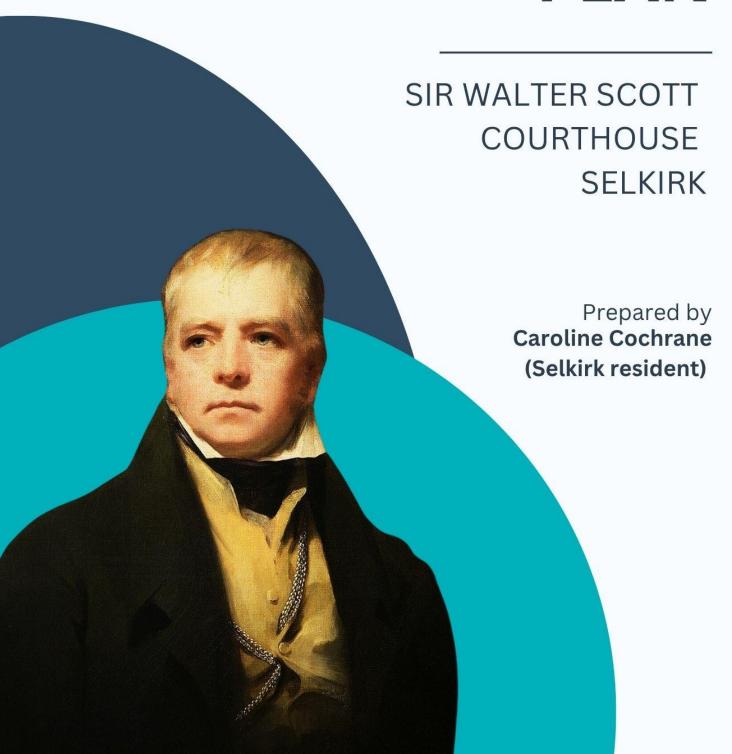
Suggestion: Improvements to the Walter Scott Courthouse Museum

Summary

The Walter Scott Courthouse Museum in Selkirk is a unique historical site where Sir Walter Scott served as Sheriff-Depute for nearly 30 years. This suggested plan proposes a series of strategic improvements to transform the museum into a vibrant, interactive heritage destination that attracts both local and international visitors, enhances educational value, and contributes to Selkirk's cultural and economic regeneration.

Vision: To become a leading heritage attraction in the Scottish Borders celebrating law, literature, and local history.

Mission: To preserve, interpret, and share the legacy of Sir Walter Scott and Selkirk's legal heritage through immersive storytelling, education, and com

munity engagement.

1. Objectives

- Modernise exhibits with interactive and digital interpretation
- Increase annual visitor numbers by 50% within three years
- Develop a sustainable income model via ticketing, retail, and events
- Enhance educational partnerships and programming
- Position the museum within Scotland's broader literary and heritage tourism offer

2. Site & Historical Context

- Location: Selkirk, Scottish Borders
- Heritage: 19th-century courthouse where Scott presided from 1804 to 1832
- Current Facilities: Courtroom exhibit, basic interpretation, limited accessibility

3. Proposed Improvements

Exhibitions & Interpretation

- Digital courtroom re-creation with audio-visual storytelling (Sir Walter Scott as narrator)
- Augmented reality (AR) features: witness a 19th-century trial
- Rotating mini-exhibitions on Borders law, Jacobite trials, literature, and criminal justice

Building & Accessibility

- Improved access and inclusive signage
- Upgraded lighting and climate control for artefact preservation
- Enhanced exterior signage and courtyard landscaping

Visitor Experience & Engagement

- Interactive touchscreens, timelines, and courtroom roleplay stations
- Children's trail with courtroom detective activity
- Audio guides in multiple languages

Events & Community Use

- "Scott on Trial" live performances
- Lecture series on law, literature, and Borders history
- Museum late openings and school partnership days

4. Market Analysis

Target Audiences

- Cultural tourists and literary enthusiasts
- School groups and universities (law, literature, history)
- Coach tour groups and cruise extensions
- Local families and heritage groups

Tourism Trends

- Literary tourism is a major growth sector (VisitScotland)
- Strong synergies with Abbotsford, the Borders Book Festival, and Scotland's UNESCO literary cities
- Post-COVID interest in immersive, meaningful heritage experiences

5. Marketing & Partnerships

Branding

- Positioning: "Where Justice and Genius Met"
- Emphasize Sir Walter Scott's legal legacy and Border storytelling

Promotion Channels

- Website & SEO improvement
- Partnership with VisitScotland, literary trails, Historic Environment Scotland
- Cross-promotion with local sites (Abbotsford, Bowhill, Halliwell's House)
- Outreach to schools, tour operators, and cultural publications

6. Revenue Streams

Source	Details
Admission fees	Modest charge for adults; children free
Gift shop	Books, local crafts, replica legal items
Events & rentals	Lectures, mock trials, weddings
Education packages	Paid curriculum-aligned workshops
Public funding/grants	HES, Museums Galleries Scotland, NLHF

7. Funding Strategy

- Public Grants: National Lottery Heritage Fund, Museums Galleries Scotland, Historic Environment Scotland

- Local Contributions: fundraising, "Friends of the Courthouse" group

- Partnerships: Shared ticketing or events with Abbotsford, Borders Heritage Festival, Scottish Borders Council

9. Risk Assessment

Risk	Mitigation Strategy
Low tourist footfall	Aggressive digital and coach tour marketing
Budget shortfall	Phased improvements, grant diversification
Heritage sensitivities	Close liaison with local historians
Volunteer/staff shortages	Build local volunteer network & part-time roles