

Appendix II

Visitor Economy Framework Action Plan (prioritisation of actions)

ONGOING ACTIVITY

Develop destination content bank

- 5.1. Continue to develop Visit Swale content authors group
- 5.2. Create quarterly content plan with seasonal, local and national themes
- 5.3. Set up streamlined process for businesses to submit content
- 5.4. Set up content bank with generic sample copy

Improve cycling infrastructure

- 1.1. Provide feedback to Sustrans on technical Town Audits (Sheerness and Faversham) and agree priorities for delivery
- 1.2. Await outcome of bid for funding to create Sittingbourne walking and cycling map with Explore Kent
- 1.3. More facilities at accommodation such as cycle storage, drying rooms and water refills
- 1.4. Through Interreg Experience, develop three enhanced "green routes" for walking and cycling 'Wildlife and Heritage Trails' linking Coast to Downs in Swale

Develop walking & cycling offer

- 6.1. Promote the three walking and cycling 'Wildlife and Heritage Trails' linking Coast to Downs in Swale, developed through the Interreg Experience project
- 6.2. Develop product around England's Coastal Path
- 6.3. Develop baggage transfer connections
- 6.4. Businesses to review the suitability of their offer/product for the walking and cycling market
- 6.5. Increase number of water bottle refill locations on refill.org
- 6.6. Secure a bike hire provider to deliver bike hire app

SHORT TERM ACTIONS

1. Review and embed destination identity for towns

- 1.1. Refresh destination stories based on new visitor insights
- 1.2. Disseminate visitor research town dashboards
- 1.3. Create pen portraits of product audit for each destination
- 1.4. Create pen portraits of key audience of each destination
- 1.5. Identify destination brand ambassador(s) for each town
- 1.6. Dedicated presence for each town on Visit Swale website with clear user journey and avoiding duplication

4. Improve engagement on social media channels

- 4.1. Create social media guidelines, including key messages, hashtags and tone of voice for each channel
- 4.2. Map audience and best team within Swale Borough Council to deliver each channel
- 4.3. Launch Visit Swale Instagram account for visitor focused messages
- 4.4. Launch Swale Borough Council LinkedIn business account for business engagement messages
- 4.5. Once in place, add Instagram feed to Visit Swale website
- 4.6. Create 3 or 4 locations for Instagram suitable photography within public realm
- 4.7. Work with local social media influencers, photographers and bloggers
- 4.8. Set up a working group with key partner businesses and organisations to support key social media content themes including shared hashtags e.g. gardens, food, history etc.
- 4.9. Incorporate user generated content onto channels

- 4.10. Create agreed plan for sharing content on Visit Swale channels from town-led organisation channels e.g. Visit Faversham
- 4.11. Create opportunities for user engagement such as voting/polls

6. Refresh on-brand visitor materials

- 6.1. Maintain regular updates to the Swale Visitor Map
- 6.2. Explore opportunities for commercial funding of the Swale Visitor Map
- 6.3. Map current distribution channels for the Swale Visitor Map

2. Develop business training programme

- 2.1. Digital Experience Platform Training i.e. Airbnb Experiences / TripAdvisor
- 2.2. Welcome Walkers Training
- 2.3. Content Curation for Social Media training
- 2.4. SEO & Google Maps Training
- 2.5. Accessibility training
- 2.6. Destination welcome training
- 2.7. Online Profile and Reviews training
- 2.8. Self-catering quality development training

SHORT-MEDIUM TERM ACTIONS

2. Improve destination video & photography

- 2.1. Refresh and build-upon existing image library and conduct gap analysis
- 2.2. Following gap analysis, commission new destination imagery and video content by audience and theme to build on existing image library

- 3. Develop destination branding and increase awareness**
- 3.1. Assess if a full destination branding exercise is required to support visitor economy as well as wider placemaking
- 3.2. Create destination brand guidelines document
- 3.3. Develop a destination PR strategy

Increase cross-promotion between businesses

- 3.1. Businesses to utilise Visit Swale fam trips
- 3.2. Annual networking and leaflet swap event
- 3.3. Update and raise awareness of the business toolkit to include imagery, copy, Swale Visitor Map pdf and links that businesses can use to promote other local businesses and events on their own channels
- 3.4. Raise awareness of business toolkit and wider Swale Borough Council B2B support tools
- 3.5. Encourage attractions to include links to nearby accommodation on their websites.

Showcase local food, drink and produce better

- 5.1. Hospitality businesses to develop local produce menus
- 5.2. Create field to fork narrative for each local producer with food miles information
- 5.3. Develop more food and drink experiences
- 5.4. Increase number of businesses involved in Gourmet Garden Trails and Kent Food Trails

Develop out of season campaigns

- 3.1. Build on "dog friendly" website feature content and develop campaign
- 3.2. Build on "Back to nature - nearest faraway place" website feature content and develop campaign
- 3.3. Build on "Hidden gems" website feature content and develop campaign
- 3.4. Build on "Food & Drink" website feature content and develop campaign

Local campaign

- 4.1. Deliver local campaign on suitable residents' channels using "people like me" content and recommendations e.g. residents' groups, newsletters
- 4.2. Encourage residents to participate in Kent Big Weekend and Heritage Open Days

MEDIUM TERM

Respond to changing visitor needs

- 1.1. Review of business opening times and recommendations based on visitor behaviour and footfall
- 1.2. Businesses to build partnerships with accommodation providers, with a focus on holiday park owners to encourage wider dispersal of visitors and increase spend
- 1.3. Improve visitor welcome from businesses with specific destination welcome training.

Increase cross-sector collaboration

- 4.1. Build relationships with local producers and create local supplier list for businesses
- 4.2. Develop links with local artist networks such as artists' open houses and connect with other businesses/projects
- 4.3. Encourage businesses to get involved with the 'Great for Art' Homes pilot as part of England's Creative Coast
- 4.4. Encourage businesses to get involved with England's Coastal Path project
- 4.5. Work with retail and market traders to engage with events, incorporate more local products and experiences
- 4.6. Create best practice case studies of cross-sector partnerships for each sector

Increase regional collaboration

- 5.1. Set up a collaboration network with neighbouring destinations
- 5.2. Develop regional and thematic itineraries with partners
- 5.3. Participate in partnership working groups to benefit from the Dickens 150 anniversary and highlight Dickens connections across Swale
- 5.4. Ensure that Visit Swale messaging aligns with the "Visitor First" regional approach
- 5.5. Build stronger relationships with transport providers to ensure Swale destinations are profiled on their channels
- 5.6. Support a county-wide bid in for tourism zone status to address barriers to growth

Grow experiential product

- 1.1. Businesses and organisations to identify opportunities for delivering visitor experiences, including fossil hunting, scorpion hunting, sea glass craft, archaeological dig experiences, beach and forest schools
- 1.2. Develop suitable booking processes for experiences
- 1.3. Case studies with businesses already delivering experiences through digital experiences platforms

Develop sustainable tourism offer

- 7.1. Curate content around eco-accommodation, low impact experiences and locally sourced produce
- 7.2. Create a sustainable tourism toolkit to support businesses to be more environmentally friendly and showcase their credentials better
- 7.3. Work with environmental and conservation organisations to develop new volunteering experiences
- 7.4. Encourage more electric vehicle charging points at tourism businesses and identify potential funding sources.

Improve visitor facilities and signage

- 3.1. Deliver audit of public toilet facilities (location, opening times, standard of facilities, accessibility, user costs etc) in key attraction/event areas including the seafront
- 3.2. Establish a Community Toilet Scheme and promote the Use Our Loos app to support additional provision
- 3.3. Deliver audit of retail in each town and map gaps in provision of outlets of visitor interest.
- 3.4. Wayfinding audit of signage and identify any gaps

Improve landscaping & green spaces

- 4.1. Increase tree planting in public areas
- 4.2. Create 3 or 4 locations for Instagram suitable photography within public realm
- 4.3. Conduct audit of picnic and seating areas in visitor locations including town centres and identify gaps in provision or quality
- 4.4. Encourage businesses/retailers to install/improve their own floral/garden displays where appropriate. Focus on key event themes e.g. Hop Festival, Hanami etc
- 4.5. Include "How to guides" on green space development on the Visit Swale business toolkit

Improve coach parking

- 6.1. Option review of potential coach parking sites across public car parks including capacity, facilities, cost and opening times
- 6.2. Review opportunity for businesses that could provide coach parking space and facilities
- 6.3. Once secured, ensure all suitable coach parks are updated on Visit Kent trade hub

Uncover and tell real stories

- 1.1. Develop "People Like Me" campaign featuring content from local residents
- 1.2. Encourage residents to share their favourite places/hidden gems via social media and groups

Develop overnight-stays campaign

- 5.1. Develop digital marketing campaign including competition in partnership with attractions and accommodation providers.
- 5.2. Feature good quality and "quirky" accommodation on social media channels
- 5.3. Include accommodation suggestions in all inspirational content featured on Visit Swale website
- 5.4. Incorporate into wider PR strategy

Partner with relevant influencers

- 6.1. Identify suitable influencers based on audience
- 6.2. Confirm partnerships to support out of season campaign themes
- 6.3. Continue to utilise TravMedia network
- 6.4. Incorporate into wider PR strategy

MEDIUM - LONG TERM ACTIONS

Develop out of season events

- 4.1. Create Swale event calendar as a planning resource for businesses
- 4.2. Identify gaps in the calendar for new out of season events
- 4.3. Identify themes and audiences for new events based on destination identity
- 4.4. Ensure that event seed funding to support organisations looking to set up a new event or expand an existing one is part of any future community grant scheme

Improve coastline, sea front and estuary

- 8.1. Work with local artists and community to continue development of the art offering on the sea wall

- 8.2. Encourage quality hospitality providers and concessions in sea front areas through planning policy
- 8.3. Review planning and licencing policies to ensure support for the development of quality hospitality providers with economic benefit for the local area
- 8.4. Install beach huts with online booking

Integrated transport & smart ticketing solutions

- 5.1. Map visitor transport routes including provider, length of time and cost.
- 5.2. Continue to raise awareness of the Kent Connected app to visitors
- 5.3. Promote plus bus ticket options where last mile is a challenge
- 5.4. Work with Arriva on review of Isle of Sheppey
- 5.5. Work with Arriva and Southeastern on joint ticketing
- 5.6. Explore opportunity for reopening the ferry link from Harty to Faversham
- 5.7. Continue work with boat provider to deliver water ferry/taxi service from Queenborough to Medway and Southend
- 5.8. Scope infrastructure requirements for continuing long-term ferry link with Southend
- 5.9. Set up network of businesses to develop packages and experiences around the Queenborough ferry service

LONG TERM

Develop water activities

- 2.1. Work with Yacht Club, Sailing Club, Barge Museum and Rowing Club to develop visitor offer
- 2.2. Identify a provider to hire SUPs, Sea Kayaks, Wind surfing and Kite boarding
- 2.3. Raise awareness of wild and outdoor swimming offer including blue flag beaches and Faversham lido with outdoor swimming groups and triathlons
- 2.4. Work with boat tour providers to further develop tours to Maunsell Sea Forts from Queenborough, seal watching as well as photography and art tours
- 2.5. Explore the possibility of reopening ferry link from mainland to the Isle of Harty
- 2.6. Install mooring posts at Milton Creek

Improve quality of accommodation

- 3.1. Work with landowners / tenants to support diversification into high quality visitor accommodation
- 3.2. Encourage more high-quality glamping and sustainable accommodation products
- 3.3. Actively encourage development of a high quality / boutique hotel through the local plan and identifying suitable sites
- 3.4. Work with Visit Kent and Locate in Kent to target suitable hotel developers working within the local plan
- 3.5. Deliver training to support all accommodation providers to improve the standard of quality with a focus on self-catering businesses

Improve disabled access

- 2.1. Develop accessible seafront walk
- 2.2. Have key venues, including historical attractions, audited by Access-able
- 2.3. Deliver audits of public seating and map gaps in provision
- 2.4. Deliver audits of accessible toilets and changing spaces and map gaps in provision
- 2.5. Improve public transport accessibility