

Appendix One: Sussex Visitor Economy Strategic Plan Framework

Engagement is taking place with partners and industry to develop a new Strategic Plan to help formalise the pan-Sussex approach and as a requirement of the Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP).

The starting point for the Plan is the **evidence baseline** and clarity on the **best prospect visitor segments** for Sussex:

- 2019: 62 million visits, £5 billion impact, 74,000 full-time equivalent jobs
- 2021: 1/3 reduction arising from the pandemic
- Staying visits = 11% of volume / 50% of spend
- UK staying visits = 9% of volume / 31% of spend
- Day visits = 89% of volume / 50% of spend
- Diverse offer: Beautiful Countryside; Beaches & Coast; Heritage & Culture; Exceptional Food & Drink; Sustainable Destination; Variety of Experiences
- Lacks distinctiveness: 65% of 'non-visitors' have previously visited Sussex, yet not aware they had
- Complex destination marketing and management arrangements
- Best prospects visitor segments (using VisitBritain/VisitEngland categories): country loving traditionalists, explorers, free and easy mini-breakers, and experience seekers.

The Plan will draw on the collaborative approach across Sussex that has been pursued since the pandemic, including checking if the **vision** set out two years ago needs to be refreshed: *By 2030 Sussex will have built a year-round sustainable visitor economy as big as Wales. A place that puts the wellbeing of people and the environment at the heart of everything it does, where locals nurture what makes it special and proudly share those qualities with visitors.*

It will attract more higher value discerning international and domestic visitors looking for a short break as well as organisers of business events, meetings and conferences.

The **headline ambition** is to increase impact by £2.5bn compared to 2019 levels, whilst recognising the focus is to increase value from visitors but not the volume of visitors.

The plan will set out **strategic priorities** for pan-Sussex destination development, marketing, and management to achieve the vision and growth ambition and reach the target markets. Priorities will be agreed through collaboration with partners and industry, who will consider themes including sustainable transport, workforce and skills, supporting businesses, growth opportunities including wine tourism and active experience, increasing value from international markets, and growing the MICE market (meetings, incentives and conferences).

Governance principles for the LVEP including oversight of the plan will be set out, including commitments to being inclusive (for all aspects of the visitor economy in Sussex); representative (all local authorities and industry); additional and ambitious (focussing on pan-Sussex opportunities and issues and being respectful of local priorities); and collaborative (with a partnership approach hardwired into ways of working).