

england

Strategic Framework
for Tourism 2010 – 2020

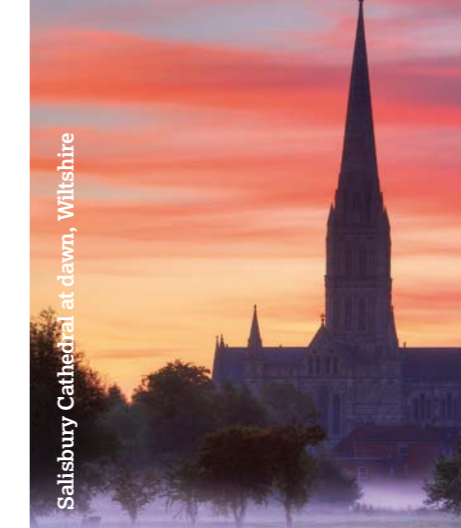
Yearly Review 2011

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Wastwater in the Wasdale Valley, Lake District



Salisbury Cathedral at dawn, Wiltshire

The Strategic Framework for Tourism in England was launched in March 2010, providing a platform for England's diverse tourism industry to work in partnership to achieve a headline ambition of 5% growth, year on year, over the next decade.

This was always an ambitious target in light of global competition and continuing financial constraints, but achievable given the strengths and range of England's tourism offer and unique opportunities such as the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The Framework was the product of extensive consultation across the industry and this is an ongoing process. Over the last year, VisitEngland has worked with colleagues across the public and private sectors to develop a series of Action Plans required to deliver the 5% growth target.

It was always clearly stated that the Strategic Framework and associated Action Plans would need to adapt to changing circumstances and a number of changes over the last year have had a significant impact on our work.

Since launching the Framework, there has been a change of government and a substantial reduction in public funding for VisitEngland as well as VisitBritain, plus many public bodies that are important to tourism. The Regional Development Agencies have also been abolished and a number of new Local Enterprise Partnerships have been established.

These changes do present new challenges but have also provided many new opportunities. With a clearer and more coordinated vision for tourism in England we were able to communicate more effectively as the new government developed its Tourism Policy, which was launched in March this year. The Policy and the Framework are mutually supportive which can only have a positive impact on delivery of the Action Plans.

There is now greater onus on VisitEngland to engage more extensively at the sub-national and destination level. This is challenging given a small team and reduced budgets but highlights to all of us the need for better communication and coordination in order to streamline delivery of the Action Plans.

I am delighted that a new collaborative marketing strategy for England is now in place, which has resulted from comprehensive engagement with the industry at national and destination level. Work has now begun on

development of a new campaign, 'The time to be in England', which will reinforce the England brand and provide destinations with a toolkit to use in their own marketing strategies.

From 2012, British Tourism Week will be replaced by English Tourism Week. This is an exciting annual opportunity for the public and private sectors to work together to raise awareness of the substantial benefits that tourism brings the national economy and local communities.

The Strategic Framework for Tourism 2010-20 aims to achieve four interdependent objectives. The Action Plans required to deliver these objectives will constantly evolve and adapt and we will report annually on progress, achievements and changes. This document provides a review of work in 2010-2011 and a current 'state of play' on the Action Plans.

We have had a great, but challenging, start to delivery of the Framework and VisitEngland is looking forward to consolidating and enhancing the strong partnerships that have been forged with the industry and government in order to achieve growth and deliver a world-class, competitive visitor experience.

Penelope, Viscountess Cobham
Chairman, VisitEngland

All England Marketing Strategy

Objective 01 To increase England's share of the global visitor market

The Strategic Framework identified the need for a re-prioritised marketing strategy in order to attract a greater share of higher value domestic and international visitors and maximise capacity year-round. The All England marketing strategy will deliver a cohesive, coordinated approach to the marketing of England as a destination.

The development of the Strategy has been led by the England Marketing Strategy Steering Group which included: The National Trust, Cotswolds, Eurostar, Marketing Birmingham, Merlin Entertainment, Millennium & Copthorne Hotels, the Northwest Development Agency, Tourism South East, VisitEngland and Welcome to Yorkshire. The group has engaged and consulted with English destinations to shape and direct the development of the new strategy with a key objective of reducing duplication of promotional effort.

Seven core deliverables were the focus of this engagement process:

- Growing market share, with a focus on multi-day and overnight trips
- Target audience, with improved demographic, conversion and lifestyle segmentation
- Concentrating on "Attract Brands" - the best-known and best-loved destinations in England
- Focus on inspiration as opposed to just information
- Consumer to consumer marketing, generating consumer advocacy of England as a place to visit
- Marketing partnerships with industry to extend budgets and reach
- Sharing tools and resources to reduce duplication and embed smarter working

Over a six-week period in 2010/11, 54 meetings were held, 20 destinations were visited and 124 people contributed. Feedback from these sessions was consolidated and presented back to the Marketing Steering Group and the All England Marketing Strategy was produced.

Following broad agreement on the seven deliverables, work has now begun on the development of campaign "The time to be in England", which will be a manifestation of the England brand and will provide English destinations at all levels with a suite of toolkits to use at their own discretion.

The campaign will take advantage of the range of events, activities and initiatives taking place in England from 2012 onwards. It will provide a platform on which organisations and operators can work together to optimise the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, Cultural Olympiad and Torch Relay events as well as the Diamond Jubilee.

Scarborough Bay, North Yorkshire



The Business Tourism Action Plan

The Business Tourism Action Plan aims to return England's business tourism to pre-recession volume and value levels and subsequently increase England's market share by 5% over the next decade.

VisitEngland continues to engage with destinations, venues and professional event services across the country in providing a portfolio of international and domestic sales and marketing opportunities under an England umbrella brand. These include exhibitions such as IMEX, EIBTM and IMEX America, workshops, sales missions, familiarisation trips and customer relationship management (CRM) activity.

The approach to the branding of England as well as how destinations work together, and with VisitEngland, more strategically in future, will be developed through an All England Business Tourism Group, which will be set up in 2011 and led by VisitEngland.

VisitEngland also plans to engage a number of English destination management companies (DMCs) in a working group to gain greater understanding of client perceptions of England, develop new products and packages, and facilitate stronger relationships between the DMCs and England's leading meeting and incentive destinations.

Destinations across the country are already working together to share best practice and develop ambassador programmes through an informal group created in 2010. A key activity within this group, working with UK Trade and Industry, will be to leverage England's expertise in medicine, science, academia and industry to gain competitive advantage.

The Meetings Industry Association (MIA) destinations group, a key delivery partner of several actions within the plan, will create a toolkit and hold a conference which will help destinations and supplier partners to coordinate better with destination management organisations (DMOs), local authorities, venues and professional services. The toolkit will also include examples of best practice in relation to product issues such as creating better transport connections, using new technology more effectively, integrating 'wise growth' principles

and increasing uptake of accredited quality schemes. The MIA will also carry out a review of the 2012 UK Events Industry Fair Pricing and Practice Charter for hotels, venues and hospitality suppliers to assess the scope for future pricing charters around major events.

The Business Visits and Events Partnership (BVEP), a partnership of the UK's national tourist boards and leading industry associations, continues to promote the value and importance of business tourism to national government. The Partnership has already facilitated the setting up of an All Party Parliamentary Events Group and carried out its own event in the House of Commons in 2010.

The setting up of the All Party group, which consists of 27 MP's and Peers, was one of the BVEP manifesto pledges, and has a number of objectives including:

- Support for marketing and bidding for more international events to be held in the UK
- Highlighting the value of export earnings created by the industry
- Engaging with national and local politicians in greater support for the industry
- Support for a new all-embracing Event Industry Safety Guide to include operational guidelines
- Ensuring that the events sector achieves a lasting legacy from the 2012 Olympics

The BVEP is a key delivery partner of the Business Tourism Action Plan and is committed to ensuring that business tourism remains high profile in national and local political arenas as well as campaigning on numerous regulatory issues such as visas, taxation and fiscal measures and developing sector quality, skills and qualifications.



LG Arena, Birmingham

Regional Growth Fund

In 2011, VisitEngland will resubmit its application to round 2 of the Regional Growth Fund - the central government fund available to regenerate local areas that are most affected by the current economic climate and have high levels of public sector employment dependency.

The project 'Growing Tourism Locally' aims to grow the value of domestic tourism in England by stimulating a change back to the tradition of domestic holiday taking.

The project proposes a consumer campaign to grow local economies within a national framework of activity to ensure maximum impact and efficiency of spend. It will be delivered in partnership with destinations and the private sector and matched with funding at national and local levels. The campaign will be delivered under the branding framework 'the time to be in England' using the opportunity of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, Cultural Olympiad, and Torch Relay as catalysts for people to explore more of England.

The project allows for participation by partners in the public, private and third sector (not-for-profit organisations and charities), either through full engagement in the project or through aligning their own activities.

VisitEngland's application aims to create jobs in key destinations and to stimulate and support business growth.

Thorpe Park, Surrey



Destination Management Action Plan

Objective 02
To offer visitors compelling destinations of distinction

The aim of the Destination Management Action Plan is to deliver authentic and distinctive destination experiences with a clear focus on the needs of residents, visitors and the environment.

The Action Plan has evolved over the last year with guidance from practitioners in destination management and organisations who provide support to destinations. These include: Local Government Improvement and Development, Local Government Association, British Destinations, Tourism Management Institute, Association of Town Centre Management, the Responsible Tourism Partnership and the Historic Towns Forum. The steering group was chaired by the North West Development Agency.

Work on a 'pathfinder' project has been developing in 2011, with Visit Peak District, Bath Tourism Plus, Visit Manchester and Broads Tourism actively participating. Destinations are tracking how they are adapting to the changed funding and policy environment at local level to become more self-funding whilst improving the destination experience. Reports and progress can be accessed at www.visitengland.org

To deliver the Destination Management Action Plan and to ensure that information is shared between destinations and VisitEngland, a Destinations Forum is being launched. The inaugural Forum will take place on 14 July 2011 and will meet biannually.

Meeting the objectives of the Plan will require a high level of cooperation across a complex range of stakeholders. A number of organisations have committed support, including British Destinations, the Tourism Management Institute and the Tourism Alliance. The Association of Town Centre Management is also working with VisitEngland to prepare the first destination management growth briefing on the 'night time' economy.



Hadrian's Wall, Northumberland



The Swan Hotel, Lavenham, Suffolk

Quality Assessment Review

VisitEngland is committed to ensuring visitors experience the best quality on offer in this country.

Customer expectations and industry practices do change and VisitEngland is currently looking at modernising the current quality accreditation schemes to address this. Greater emphasis will be placed on hospitality, welcome and overall quality.

In line with the Tourism Minister's aspirations, it will review current quality accreditation schemes ensuring they are not reliant on Government funding.

VisitEngland believes that a star rated scheme is significant as it offers consumers the endorsement of the national tourist board. This is as valuable a benchmark as reviews from consumers online and can be used in tandem to make a decision that is right for the consumer.

A Quality Action Plan will be completed by the end of 2011 which reflects these developments and looks at quality issues across the visitor journey. It will set out the industry actions required to ensure quality is contributing to growth in the visitor economy.

Visitor Satisfaction

Since October 2009, a visitor satisfaction module has been piloted as part of the VisitEngland Brand and Communications tracking study. Respondents are asked to rate the English destination they most recently visited, overall and across a range of specific attributes. This has built a substantial database of results about domestic trips at both national and destination level, and to verify that the approach used so far can form the basis of a national satisfaction survey.

The questionnaire will be relaunched in July 2011. The current satisfaction module will be extended to include a broader range of attributes and to provide more information about drivers of satisfaction. Results from the pilot survey can be viewed at www.visitengland.org

Initial results from the new survey will be released in early 2012 and will be an important impact measure for the Strategic Framework, as well as a key deliverable in the Research and Intelligence Action Plan.



Sunset at Stonehenge, Wiltshire

Government Tourism Policy

Objective 03 To champion a successful, thriving tourism industry

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport published the Government's Tourism Policy in March 2011. It aligns to the Strategic Framework for Tourism and associated Action Plans across a number of areas and priorities include:

- Increasing the proportion of UK residents who holiday in the UK to match those who holiday abroad each year
- Modifying the long-established Tourist Boards to become smaller, highly focused, industry-led partnerships between tourism firms and government
- Creating an industry task force, led by senior industry figures from across the UK, to cut red tape and, ensuring the tourism industry achieves a sustained step-change and higher level of performance following the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games

Regarding the future of VisitEngland, the Strategy asserts that: '...it will refocus and reform VisitEngland to become an industry-led sector body charged with driving up productivity in our visitor economy. This will ensure we remain a competitive, value for

money and attractive destination for a large and growing proportion of international visitors in future. This means becoming one of the top 5 most competitive visitor economies in the world, and staying there consistently in future.

VisitEngland will:

- Act as the national body for English tourism organisations and destinations
- Act as a source of best practice
- Have the same kind of industry-led partnership and governance arrangements as local tourism bodies
- Act as the 'Tourism Body of last resort' for tourism businesses in areas without a representative local body
- Offer advice to local tourism bodies which are developing new projects to promote their destination

Research and Intelligence Action Plan

The Research and Intelligence Action Plan aims to maximise the use of tourism market intelligence and performance data in order to inform the investment and planning decisions of businesses and public sector partners.

The Action Plan has been developed primarily through the English Tourism Intelligence Partnership (ETIP) which, since it was established in 2008, has achieved the following:

- Set up the Tourism Intelligence Unit (TIU) within the Office for National Statistics (ONS), leading to the production of some key statistical outputs (tourism satellite account, supply side measurement, guidance for measuring tourism locally and many more)
- Introduced a refreshed occupancy survey and launched a new survey measuring the volume and value of tourism day visits
- Improved communication of tourism intelligence by both VisitEngland and the TIU

ETIP was a three-year project, funded by the Regional Development Agencies which have now been abolished. A new national stakeholder body, the English Tourism Research and Intelligence Partnership (ETIP) will be launched in 2011, with a revised structure, to oversee the implementation of the Action Plan and to continue the work of ETIP.

A new 'user needs' survey has been commissioned to understand what the tourism industry needs from research and intelligence. This will identify priorities for action over the next three years as well as new means of funding, including possible funding models for the TIU. The results from this survey will be available in August 2011.

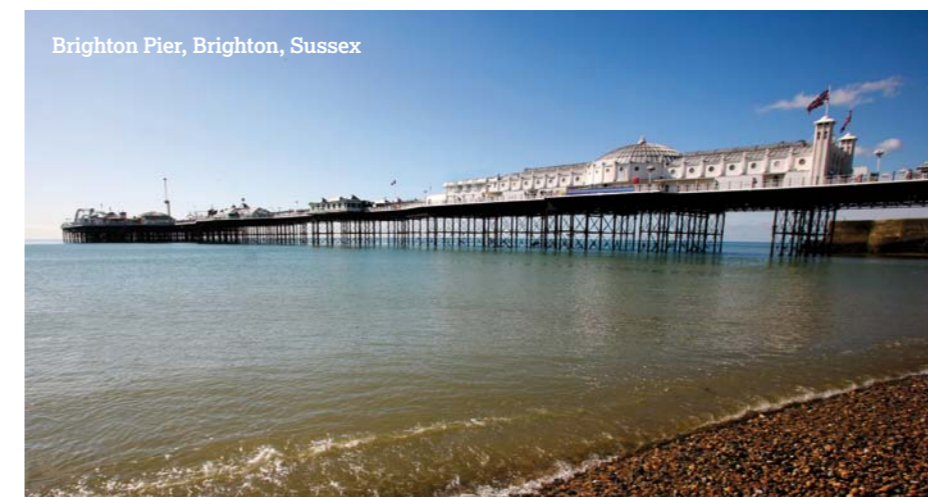
Seaside Resorts Action Plan

The Seaside Resorts Action Plan aims to maximise the potential of seaside resorts, which could make a significant contribution to the 5% growth target for the English tourism market.

The Action Plan has been developed by a Seaside Resorts Action Group, chaired by British Destinations and including Coastal Communities Alliance, CABE / Development Trust Association, Seaside, Destination Alliances, Brand Vista, Tourism South East; Westminster University; Sheffield Hallam University, and a number of local authorities: Blackpool; Bournemouth; Sefton (Southport); Torbay (English Riviera); Waveney; Isle of Wight; Lincolnshire; Thanet; and, Purbeck.

Work to date on the Action Plan includes:

- The collation of research to support benchmarking in groups managing seaside resorts
- The collection of case studies of effective destination management in major seaside towns for distribution, among other channels, at the British Destinations Annual Conference
- Using research on coastal towns (conducted by Sheffield Hallam University and originally commissioned by British Destinations, North West Development Agency and South East of England Development Agency) to inform Government Departments and to aid policy setting
- Developing a proposal for a Seaside Towns Enterprise Partnership, led by Seaside
- Developing research and intelligence outputs to promote the importance and development of seaside resorts
- A proposed conference for seaside destinations in 2011 to raise awareness of the Action Plan and drive it forward



Brighton Pier, Brighton, Sussex

Rural Tourism Action Plan

The Rural Tourism Action Plan aims to grow the value of tourism in rural areas to support the economy and local communities and contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment.

The Rural Tourism Action Plan has been developed by a cross-industry Action Group, chaired by Visit Cornwall. The group includes: National Park Authorities, local authorities and destinations (Cornwall, Cumbria, West Oxfordshire and Lewes), trade associations and membership bodies (British Holiday & Home Parks Association, Farm Stay UK, Country Land and Business Association, Action for Market Towns, British Destinations, Caravan Club, Historic Houses Association), regional representation (East of England and South West), Government and national agencies (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Natural England, Forestry Commission, National Trust, VisitEngland).

There is a range of innovative work currently being delivered in rural communities, which supports the objectives of the Action Plan:

- Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) and the Rural Development Programme for England are looking at a joint fund to support rural communities by improving access to broadband for those located in the 10% hard to reach areas of each County. BDUK are already looking at delivering superfast broadband where possible to 90% of each County
- The 'Pub is the Hub' programme is encouraging local authorities, communities, licensees, pub owners and breweries to work together to support, retain and locate services within rural pubs. It is partly funded by the British Beer and Pub Association and individual member companies

- The Peak Connections partnership project is aiming to increase the use of public transport within the Peak District region and encouraging the integration of public transport with visiting local attractions
- Nurture Lakeland in Cumbria, which recently won the International Responsible Tourism Award, has provided an excellent case study on how tourism financially supports the environment
- Hidden Britain is working with businesses and volunteers to look beyond their individual needs and work collaboratively for the good of their community as a destination, and importantly to sustain the momentum and interest to continue that work. A project in the South East has so far assisted 25 destinations to develop and manage tourism on a locally sustainable scale



Shakespeare's birthplace, Stratford-upon-Avon

Rural Tourism Action Plan (continued)

A number of partners are committed to the delivery of the Action Plan:

- Hidden Britain will work as a key delivery partner on planning and championing community led tourism development in rural areas through developing advice and case studies
- The British Beer and Pub Association will work with its brewing membership to look at promotions on beer packaging to encourage tourism in rural areas
- The National Farmers Union will provide advice on areas where tourism, farming, the food sector and land management converge
- Leicester and Leicestershire Local Enterprise Partnership are commissioning a planning toolkit to assist in its planning education programme to enable growth of rural tourism opportunities. This will be shared nationally with the potential to act as a national case study or pilot



Peak District, Derbyshire

Wise Growth Action Plan

The Wise Growth Action Plan aims to balance the growth aspirations of the Strategic Framework with the principles of sustainability, in terms of protecting the environment and cultural heritage, natural and manmade, that makes England so attractive and ensuring long-term economic success.

The Plan has been developed in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders both in tourism and third/ public sector agencies in broader areas such as business support and sustainability. The development process was led by a steering group chaired by New Forest District Council and including Welcome to Yorkshire, the Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA), Futerra, North West Development Agency, and small business operators who are trailblazers in sustainability.

Commitments to support the action plan have been received by a range of organisations include British Hospitality Association, Tourism Management Institute, British Destinations and ABTA as well as a number of DMOs.

A number of organisations will lead on the delivery of specific actions:

- CoaST (Cornwall Action on Sustainable Tourism) has offered to lead on developing an evaluation of the effectiveness of ambassador and business mentor programmes for small businesses, which will lead to a model that could be rolled out by other destinations who want to change businesses' behavior and attitude towards sustainability
- The Tourism Intelligence Unit is developing indicators to measure the impact of Wise Growth
- The national tourist boards, along with the International Centre for Responsible Tourism, have launched a validation programme to provide clarity on sustainable tourism certification schemes
- Visit Manchester will be the first destination case study on Wise Growth

Communications and Engagement

Industry engagement and communication are crucial to successful delivery of the Strategic Framework and VisitEngland has been working with the Partners for England Steering Group to develop new structures which will provide better coordination and greater innovation.

The new structures will build on the important role of the Partners for England Forum in engaging stakeholders across the industry in an interactive and transparent way; recognise VisitEngland's role to lead, champion and coordinate industry partners to drive forward implementation of the Strategic Framework; reflect the changes in tourism delivery at a sub-national level and VisitEngland's role to support and engage with destinations as recognised by the Government's new Tourism Policy.

The new industry and stakeholder engagement structures are as follows:

- England Destinations Forum to manage the exchange of information and best practice on national and local issues between destinations and between destinations and VisitEngland

- Visitor Economy Forum to encourage collaboration and communication between industry partners
- Strategic Industry Advisory Group to provide strategic oversight of VisitEngland's role in implementing the Strategic Framework

More detailed information on the timetable for introduction, terms of reference and membership of these new structures can be found at www.visitengland.org

In addition, VisitEngland has developed its corporate communication tools to ensure clear and consistent communication with the industry. This has included the development and launch of the new VisitEngland corporate website in December 2010, alongside monthly industry e-newsletters.

Skills Action Plan

The Skills Action Plan is currently under development and will be published by the end of the year.

The Action Plan will aim to increase the productivity and performance of tourism businesses through ensuring staff can access the right skills solutions at a national and local level. Key partners engaging in the development of this plan will include People 1st and other relevant sector skills councils, recognised training and learning providers such as Welcome To Excellence, and industry associations.

Progress over the last year includes:

- Development and roll out, across England, of WorldHost, a training programme with four distinct modules, successfully used at the Vancouver Winter Olympics to train volunteers and tourism staff. The programme, brought to the UK by People 1st, will help to train 200,000 people

- Tourism South East's 'Welcome Host Gold' programme, launched to improve the levels of customer services across the South East. All front-line staff at Gatwick Airport are completing the programme.
- Relaunch of UKSP, the one-stop shop providing career guidance, training information and connecting good employers with motivated individuals
- Development of an apprenticeship strategy for the hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism sector by People 1st. By 2020, the strategy aims to increase the number of sector apprenticeships to 30,000 and increase completion rates to 80 per cent. New apprenticeships in hospitality and catering and travel services have recently been launched

Modernising Visitor Information Action Plan

Objective 04 To facilitate greater engagement between the visitor and the experience

The Modernising Visitor Information Action Plan has been developed to ensure the availability of world-class, tailored information at every stage of the visitor journey.

In February 2010 a brainstorming session was conducted with partners including DMOs, the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, the Local Government Association, and representatives from the private sector. The outcomes of this session have been incorporated into the Action Plan and a National Visitor Information Implementation Group will be formed in June 2011.

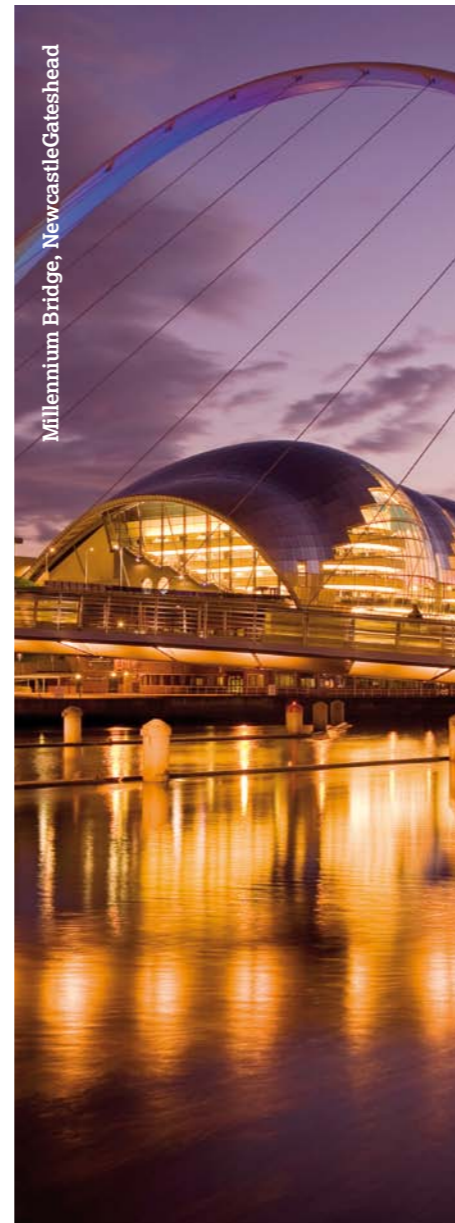
Work undertaken by VisitEngland and partners over the last year includes:

- The collation of case studies on visitor information provision, which support the objectives of the Action Plan and will be made available on visitengland.org
- The launch in May 2011 of VisitEngland's iPhone app with an Android version due to be launched in August 2011
- The introduction of 2D bar code technology (QR Codes) via 5 destination pilots to address the issue of delivering rich information where there is no viable source or alternative
- The ongoing relationship with Waterstone's bookstores

Delivery of the Modernising Visitor Information Action Plan is being supported by a number of partners including: Marketing Cheshire, Visit Kent, Take One Media, Leicester Shire Promotions, the British Beer and Pub Association, Northumberland Tourism and the NewcastleGateshead Initiative.



Beach Huts in Whitstable, Kent



Millennium Bridge, NewcastleGateshead

Tourism and Transport Action Plan

The Tourism and Transport Action Plan is currently under development and will be published by the end of 2011.

It will aim to improve the visitor experience through better coordination of transport and tourism needs to influence strategic transport planning at a national and local level to give greater consideration to the needs of the leisure traveller and to overcome transport issues that act as a barrier to tourism growth.

Key partners will be engaged in the development of this Action Plan through a Tourism and Transport Action Group which includes: Tourism Alliance, key operators (First Group, Stagecoach, Arriva, Go-Ahead, East Coast Mainline, ATOC, TfL, BAA, Manchester Airports Group, National Express, Shearings, City Cruises), Government Departments and Agencies (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Department for Transport, Highways Agency, Network Rail), User Groups (Passenger Focus, Road Users Alliance, Motoring organisations, AA, RAC) Coach organisations (Confederation of Passenger Transport), Airport organisations (Airport Operators Association), and Local Authorities (Brighton and Hove, Torbay, Bournemouth and, Blackpool).

A VisitEngland stakeholder event in 2010 identified the priorities which will form the foundations of the Action Plan. Meetings with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) will be held through 2011 to ensure Government priorities set by Ministers regarding tourism and transport issues tie into the priorities of the Action Plan.

VisitEngland has attended a Local Transport Planning Consultation in order to understand the way local tourism planning is formulated and to determine ways that leisure travel needs are catered for.

Accessibility Action Plan

The Accessibility Action Plan will allow England to harness the growing, high value accessible tourism market to become internationally recognised as a leading destination for people with access needs.

The plan aims to motivate tourism businesses to improve accessibility for those with impairments and others with physical and sensory access needs.

VisitEngland, Tourism for All and South West Regional Development Agency have led on the development of the Action Plan working closely with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport Accessible Tourism Stakeholder Forum, which brings together a wide cross section of accessible tourism stakeholders and make up the majority of delivery partners. It is proposed that this group will play a key role in coordinating stakeholder activity to ensure the objectives of the Accessibility Action Plan are achieved.

Progress over the last year includes:

- Wide circulation of VisitEngland's 'At Your Service' booklet
- BT and Tourism for All developing an Open Source Platform for accessibility data
- Network Rail and the Association of Train Operating Companies installing accessible routes at 52 key Olympic stations

A number of partners have committed to delivering specific areas of the Accessibility Action Plan. For example, the BHA will lead on the development of a restaurant template for the VisitEngland Online Access Statement Tool and Leicester Shire Promotions will be a pilot destination for an Accessible Itinerary.



Big Ben, London

Brown Signs Update

Brown Signs (destination and attraction signage on roads and motorways) will be addressed outside of the Tourism and Transport Action Plan and a cross-departmental team has been tasked with conducting a review. The key partners involved in the review are DCMS, the Highways Agency, the Department for Transport (DfT) and VisitEngland.

Brown signs have been referenced as a priority issue within the Government's Tourism Policy with the aim of providing consistency across England and to consider whether a review of the DfT guidelines is required.

There is broad agreement that the current system is confusing for operators and visitors alike but the needs for tourism signing needs to be balanced against road safety and proliferation of signage 'clutter'.

One approach will look at strategic policy and major destinations and will involve national partners. Another approach will be agreed at a local level and will be steered by DMOs, providing more detailed visitor information.

Further meetings to review the operating system of Brown Signs will be held in 2011, prior to a proposed meeting between Jeremy Hunt, the Secretary of State for Culture and the Secretary of State for Transport, Philip Hammond to discuss a range of tourism and transport related issues.

Welcome to England

Over the last year a draft Welcome Action Plan was circulated to a range of partners. This plan contained a diverse set of ideas on how to inspire a consistently warm welcome to England before, during and after the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The consultation feedback on the Action Plan highlighted the cross-cutting nature of the Welcome agenda and, as a result, it will be integrated into other action plan areas. Welcome has particular synergy with the Destination Management, Skills, Visitor Information and Transport plans.

A cross-cutting Action Plan on Welcome has been developed to ensure its profile and its importance is recognised as well as highlighting where actions can be found across the Strategic Framework.

A group of senior national and local, public and private partners, chaired by VisitKent, has developed the action points. Progress includes engaging airports in Welcome audits and improvement plans.



Waiter with cream tea and cakes, Flackley Ash Hotel, East Sussex

Monitoring the Implementation of the Strategic Framework for Tourism 2010-2020

Monitoring the implementation of the Strategic Framework is important to highlight progress, showcase successful delivery by partners and demonstrate impact.

A clear, consistent, and transparent monitoring process has been developed by VisitEngland that focuses on three key elements:

01 Demonstrating the impact of the actions being implemented through the Framework.

This includes a series of impact measures in each of the Action Plan areas, plus how delivery of these actions is contributing towards the 5% growth target and impacting on the volume and value of tourism in England.

02 Showcasing successful delivery by partners.

This includes tracking the specific commitments made by partners to deliver actions and gathering general information from partners about how they are implementing the Framework. This information will be gathered through a 6 monthly industry wide survey.

03 Monitoring VisitEngland's delivery of the actions assigned to it in the Action Plans.

This will be achieved through working closely with VisitEngland Action Plan Leads and monitoring delivery against VisitEngland's corporate plan which reflects VisitEngland's commitment to delivery against the Strategic Framework and which will be driven forward by the VisitEngland Board.

Monitoring the implementation will be reported on and communicated with the industry as part of the annual review of the Framework. The Visitor Economy Forum will receive reports at the biannual meetings and the Strategic Industry Advisory Group, linking closely with the VisitEngland Board, will consider progress and help to unblock challenges to delivery through utilising their expertise and networks.

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