HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

REPORT FOR HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

JUNE 2023

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1 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

VISION

Hartlepool has a new story to tell.

The £52M Waterfront Regeneration and Investment programme is a catalyst for the revival and development of Hartlepool as a visitor destination. It provides a platform to build a destination fit for the future bringing together all that Hartlepool has to offer – beaches and coast, history and heritage, activities. Each individual experience, when joined-up, create a stronger, more coherent, more appealing proposition - and a new Hartlepool emerges. A place to be enjoyed and appreciated by those who live there as well as visitors from further afield.

The wider business sector will bring business travellers, with more of these coming from investment in Northern Studios. Delivering for these higher spending visitors will provide a further boost for tourism in Hartlepool.

And as Hartlepool invests and develops it will earn its place as one of the region's premier destinations, benefiting from the investment and marketing of Tees Valley as a whole.

All of this means more visitors to Hartlepool, with more reasons to stay longer and of course spending more, supporting businesses and creating jobs. It will support a positive image and reputation for Hartlepool, enhancing its credentials as a place to live, to invest, to do business, to study. A place with a new story, a place with new confidence, a place inviting reconsideration.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives for this Destination Management Plan are to:

- Create a coherent, distinctive proposition to take to market which supports the visitor economy in Hartlepool and in Tees Valley
- Create a year-round, all-day destination offering high-quality (and active) experiences for local people and for leisure and business visitors
- Increase economic benefits through increased spend from more day visitors, staying longer – and, over time, more staying visitors.

TARGETS

To match the objectives there are four targets to aim for over the next ten years.

What?	Why?	How?	Baseline[1]	Target
1. Day visitor spend	The average day visitor spend in Hartlepool falls well short of the England's average of £35 (excluding London), suggesting scope to increase.	GB Day Visits Survey run by VisitEngland.	£28	£35
2. Visitor Numbers	While value is important, to establish Hartlepool as a destination then overall numbers need to increase.	STEAM economic model	3.72M	4.5M
3. Economic Impact	Economic impact derived from visitor spend will lead to increased prosperity, profitable businesses and jobs.	STEAM economic model	£235M	£300M
4. Visitor Sentiment	Understanding perceptions, attitudes and propensity to visit from actual and potential visitors will inform marketing planning and experience development as well as tracking progress in establishing Hartlepool as a destination	Omnibus Survey[2]	TBC	TBC

[1] All monetary values are 2023 prices. Baseline is 2019 STEAM data inflated to 2023 using Bank of England calculator

[2] Purchase space in nationally run commercial survey with questions to establish a baseline around visitor sentiment and to track progress over time

PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THE DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN (DMP)

There are always more potential actions than can realistically be delivered but it is better to do a few things well than spread resources and effort too thinly. Driving the approach set out in this Destination Management Plan is a focus on the market and the creation of a sustainable, unique visitor destination.

To guide the priorities within the DMP these questions were asked:

- Does this respond to the needs and desires of visitors? Will it meet their expectations in how it is designed and operated?
- Will it benefit local people and local businesses, supporting good quality jobs?
- Will it help animate the place across the day, week, year providing more reasons to visit and stay longer?
- Does it nurture a sense of place and local pride?
- Does it help connect Hartlepool's tourism assets and areas?
- Is it environmentally sustainable in design and management?

WATERFRONT DMP

This DMP for Hartlepool Borough is closely aligned with the DMP for Hartlepool Waterfront which was produced in Spring 2023. The Waterfront DMP addresses the specific requirements of the waterfront area in detail and are not replicated here. The success of this DMP is however highly dependent on the effective implementation of that for the Waterfront.

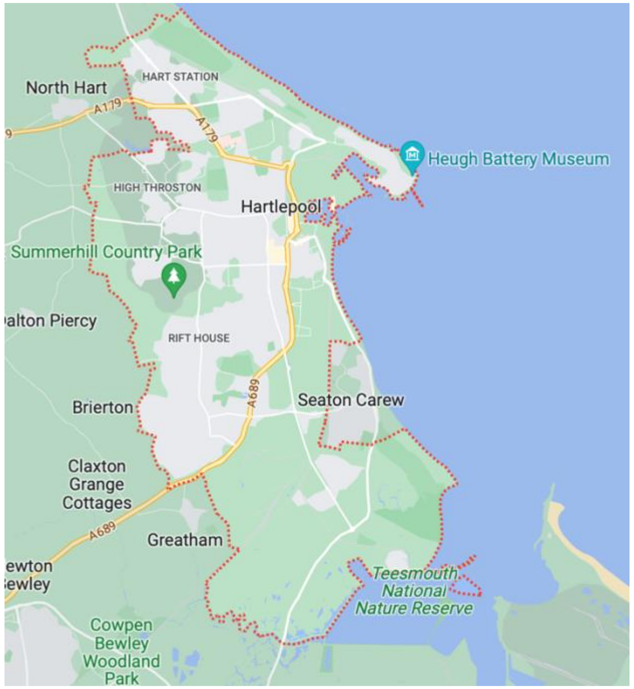
STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

To make Hartlepool a destination of regional significance will require actions around three elements - **development, management and marketing, with an approach that is creative, collaborative and market focused**.

2 CONTEXT

DESTINATION HARTLEPOOL

The Borough of Hartlepool has three main areas of tourism focus.



1. Hartlepool town itself has most of the attractions including The National Museum of the Royal Navy (NMRN), Museum of Hartlepool, Wingfield Castle, Hartlepool Art Gallery, the Town Hall Theatre, hotels, retail, Hartlepool United Football Club and the Suits Direct Stadium and of course the marina and Waterfront. It is also served by mainline train services and is a hub for local and regional bus services.

2. Seaton Carew to the south of Hartlepool is a traditional seaside resort with a long sandy beach, dunes and nearby the natural attractions of RSPB Saltholme and Teesmouth National Nature Reserve. The presence of heavy industry is never far away and adds contrast to these natural assets.

3. A short distance from Hartlepool town centre the Headland offers another experience with its Saxon heritage and St Hilda's church, array of historic buildings, military fortifications and maritime history.

Orientation and connectivity within and between these places is limited with a variety of old and poorly maintained signs, and routes which are not conducive to walking or cycling with the result that many visitors will rely on private cars.

Across each of the areas, public realm can feel tired and neglected and individually lack a broad offer that would keep visitors for more than a few hours.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

Hartlepool is starting from a modest base with 3.7m visits pre-pandemic. This brings £200m to the local economy, supporting around 2400 full-time equivalent jobs. Hartlepool has a market share of around a fifth of tourism in the Tees Valley.

Looking beyond the headlines reveals some interesting findings with implications for the DMP.

- Most visitors are day visitors from the Tees Valley region
- Staying visitors represent only 12% of all visits but account for 30% of spend
- Most expenditure is on food and drink (40%) or shopping (20%)
- Average length of stay by staying visitors is 3 days and is similar to the England average
- Average spend however is lower than the England average (excluding London) with day visits at £24 (compared to £35) and staying trips at £165 (compared to £188)
- Tourism grew by around 15% between 2014-2019 but the impact of the pandemic reduced the number of staying visitors by half between 2019 and 2021 and spend by a third
- The supply of accommodation is quite small with serviced accommodation further reduced from 24 to 15 units between 2019 and 2022. As of 2023 there are 8 non-serviced providers and 138 listings on different short term rental websites e.g. AirBnB
- Patterns of business across the year are less marked than in many other coastal destinations with 60% of visits between April-September and 40% between October-March. The most evident peak is from day visitors in July driven by holidays and events.

Encouraging staying visitors - business and leisure - will increase economic impact. There is a clear opportunity to boost dwell time and spend of existing visitors; planned investment and new pipeline projects will help achieve this as well as attracting new visitors. More accommodation of the right type across the borough would help further.

SWOT

A summary SWOT highlighting the main findings from the baseline analysis and review stages of this project is shown here. It provides a context and direction for the DMP.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
• Policy support locally, regionally and nationally • Breadth to the offer across Hartlepool: Waterfront, Marina, Headland, Seaton Carew and natural spaces. • 'National' status museum and maritime heritage • Political ambition • Investment funding streams and regeneration programmes • Locations for events • Available development land • Waterfront investment – bringing together and amplifying thematic strengths of water, active experiences, culture and heritage • Appetite for collaboration among local businesses • MDC and TVCA are important strategic partners	• Poor connectivity between the different experiences especially for sustainable and active travel • Lower value tourism (av. spend) weakens case for commercial investment • Heavy industry dominates visitor perceptions • Skills gaps within the workforce and challenges in recruitment and retention • Availability and quality of accommodation – especially for business travellers
OPPORTUNITIES	**THREATS**
• Increasing dwell times leading to longer visits (staying visits are 12% visits and 33% of spend) • Investment plans for attractions • Events and programming • Active experiences (land and water) • Growth in staycations • Investment in destination marketing by Enjoy Tees Valley • Investment in Northern Studios • Growth of skilled local jobs via extension of Hartlepool Power Station to 2026 and potential investment in new technology to operate a Hartlepool nuclear site into 2030s	• Cost of living crisis for visitor markets • Rising costs for businesses, which are still recovering from pandemic • Local community buy-in and support for tourism • Labour market shortages • Non strategy-led development

CONSULTATION & ENGAGEMENT

Consultation through workshops, individual interviews and an online survey of businesses helped to understand views, perspectives and aspirations, as well as refine emerging priorities for the DMP. The key messages from the consultation and survey are summarised here.

TEES VALLEY REGION

Tourism is a priority for Tees Valley Combined Authority giving Hartlepool the opportunity to collaborate on destination marketing, extending the offer and giving visitors more reasons to visit and stay longer.

The priorities of this DMP and Hartlepool's investment and regeneration plans align closely with the wider ambitions for the Tees Valley. The Tees Valley DMP sets out clear ambitions for the region with targets to grow the visitor economy from £1bn to £1.1bn and deliver an additional 1000 full-time equivalent jobs.

The vision is that ***"over the next 10 years the Tees Valley will become a place where the visitor economy makes a substantial contribution to economic growth, jobs and the quality of life for people who live here, as well as being an attractive destination for visitors"***.

The DMP has six strategic and two secondary priorities:

Strategic Priorities

- Developing activity hubs
- Investing in family experiences
- Building distinctive culture and events
- Improving the attractiveness of towns
- Strengthening existing experiences & attractions
- Focussing on sustainable tourism

Secondary priorities

- Growing business tourism
- Using food and drink to animate places and strengthen supply chains

3 MARKETS FOR GROWTH

WHAT WE KNOW

The data clearly indicates that Hartlepool's tourists are predominantly day visitors from the Tees Valley region.

Delving deeper, research undertaken for the Tees Valley Destination Management Plan gives some useful insights which are likely to apply equally to Hartlepool. The Tees Valley offer as a whole aligns well with what people want from a day trip or staycation i.e. coastal and rural experiences, and exploration of towns and villages, but in general suffers from a lack of knowledge of what's on offer alongside a vague sense of it being a traditional and historical place, albeit one which is friendly and welcoming.

The beach and the coastline of Tees Valley is the main draw for both visitors and residents - this is positive for Hartlepool. Less positively, research asking questions of Tees Valley residents suggested that Hartlepool performs the least well among the local authority areas when it comes to day visits. In response to how often they visited Hartlepool for a day trip they said:

- At least Monthly – 5%
- At least yearly – 36%
- Less than once a year – 28%
- Never – 30%

This suggests significant scope for reconsideration of Hartlepool and growth arising from new investment and new experience development. And it is worth noting that regardless of destination, visitor profile and trip type, food and drink and value for money are important elements.

Hartlepool marina, and The National Museum of the Royal Navy in particular, are the primary attractors for visitors to Hartlepool. Among residents, visitors and non-visitors these were the most heard of and the most visited of Hartlepool's tourism assets. Nevertheless, it was clear that levels of awareness are still low even among those who have visited. Only 47% of visitors had heard of the marina and 29% had visited; while 39% had heard of NMRN and 23% had visited. Teesmouth National Nature Reserve was also mentioned but to a lesser extent (although featured more highly among residents).

TARGET MARKETS

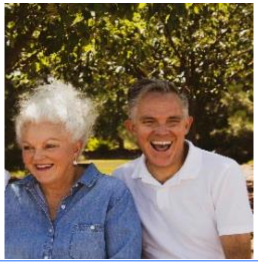
Five visitor types have potential for Hartlepool – four leisure and one business. These are:

- **Fun Families** – a good match for museum experiences at the Waterfront and the beach and activities at Seaton Carew
- **Engaged Sightseers** – the Waterfront and the Headland will appeal to this segment
- **Adventure Seekers** – attracted by all kinds of sporting and cultural activities, the opportunity for Hartlepool for this segment is as part of a wider Tees Valley offer
- **Business Travellers** – coming for business meetings and events driven by the existing corporate sector; developments around The Northern Studios, The Northern Art School and the regeneration of Church Street will generate new and different types of visitor with demands for interesting places to eat, drink and socialise
- **Visiting Friends & Relatives –** leisure visits arising from family or friendship connection present significant opportunities for attractions, eating, drinking and shopping; a positive image of the destination can drive additional or longer visits.

The table below gives more detail.

Key Market Trends for Hartlepool

- Cost of living crisis – appeal of close to home and free/low-cost activities
- Activity, health and well-being – in the outdoors
- Appeal of less visited/undiscovered places with distinctive local culture
- Authenticity – pursuit of 'real' experiences which give insight into local culture and history
- Travelling with, and visiting friends & family – VFR offers good value substitute for paid breaks, leading to increase in day visit activities

MARKETS Segment	 Who they are and what they want
Fun Families 	Families with younger children (under 15). Relatively local market within the Tees Valley and nearby. Strong affinity towards England breaks, particularly seaside/resort destinations during summer and other school holidays. Highly motivated by beaches, small towns, outdoor leisure, theme parks, family visitor attractions. Cheaper and good value accommodation especially caravans, holiday camps. Prepared to spend on ‘treats’ and entertainment for the children. Need detailed practical information to reassure and inspire.
Engaged Sightseers 	Typically older, working & retired, no/post children. Well-represented in North of England. Strong affinity for domestic breaks; frequent takers throughout UK. Down-to-earth, largely traditional in outlook but confident in trying new places and doing something different. Enjoy general sightseeing, touring, historical places, scenery and nature. Relish engaging with friendly locals and look for authentic experiences. Enjoy visiting castles, monuments, parks and gardens, museums and galleries. Will take short walks but not highly active. Some group travel and organised tours.
Adventure Seekers 	Frequent break-takers – both domestic and international. Well represented in North of England and London. Typically energetic, sociable, career minded individuals with an adventurous outlook and some will be real thrill seekers. Like to pack a lot into their holidays - including sports, outdoor activities, adventure sports, and cultural activities including visiting castles, monuments, museums, and TV and film locations.

Business Travellers 	Non-discretionary business tourism/business travellers related to local economic and industrial sectors – particular focus on visits associated with Northern Studios Good seasonal balance to leisure tourism – year-round, week day visits, Looking for suitable accommodation, quality eating and drinking and interesting places to socialise Access to wider leisure offer and activities
Visiting Friends & Relatives 	All types of people - visiting friends and family in Hartlepool or wider Tees Valley; some will know the area well, others less so Visit throughout the year Taking days out – paid for and free visits to attractions, activities and entertainment Eating and drinking Willing to spend as accommodation is free Local people are ambassadors and information providers

THE OPPORTUNITY

In the short to medium term the opportunity is with Fun Families, Engaged Sightseers and Visiting Friends and Relatives. While the regeneration of the Waterfront and the town centre is taking place, this will be primarily on attracting day visits, and extending length of stay, from those living or holidaying within the Tees Valley and surrounding counties. As new experiences develop – activities, events, the cultural and heritage offer, eating, drinking – the promotion of Hartlepool and what it has to offer can expand and credibly claim to offer enough to occupy a full day and ultimately a few days.

4 MARKETING & POSITIONING

Hartlepool has much to offer visitors, but it is the Waterfront that makes Hartlepool unique and is the primary reason to visit. The investment and regeneration of the Waterfront area which includes NMRN, the Museum of Hartlepool, Wingfield Castle, the new Highlight leisure centre and public realm works will significantly enhance and extend the offer. This is work in progress, and alongside the implementation of this Destination Management Plan will build Hartlepool's tourism offer over time.

In the meantime, marketing must be careful not to overpromise. It should present an accurate picture of what visitors can expect to ensure they are satisfied and content with their visit and word of mouth – directly and via social media channels – is positive. As new infrastructure, experiences and activities emerge, there will be opportunities to continually update the marketing and messaging for Hartlepool providing inspiration, giving new reasons to visit and inviting reappraisal.

The destination narrative developed for the Tees Valley DMP is shown in the box here. The content and sentiment are relevant to Hartlepool, and it makes sense to reflect this in the proposition and positioning for the destination.

PROPOSITION

Hartlepool is one of the Tees Valley's best visitor destinations. It's Waterfront and unique configuration of town, coast and countryside means it's an intriguing place worth spending time in and getting to know better.

Tees Valley Destination Narrative

The Tees Valley has a new and exciting story to tell its visitors – a story of the past and a story of the future. It's a place which is resilient, looking forward, investing in its towns, places and people, in particular its cultural attractions and events. It's a place which has a bit of edge to it, but has heart, depth, interest and surprise.
The Tees Valley is ready with a warm welcome.

POSITIONING

Steeped in maritime history and stepping confidently into the future, Hartlepool is a living, breathing place, reinventing itself for a new generation. Its Waterfront is benefiting from a £50m regeneration programme which will transform Hartlepool. Linking the revitalised Waterfront to the historic neighbourhood and coastline of the Headland, the seaside resort of Seaton Carew and the unexpected rural pleasures of nature reserves, country parks and walking and cycling routes give Hartlepool a unique flavour.

KEY MESSAGES

Here are the key messages for each of the target market segments.

Segment	What they currently think	What we want them to think	Key messages to focus on
Fun Families	*"I've heard it's quite nice but not sure it's worth the effort when we could go to Durham/York instead"*	*"Definitely worth a visit – there's loads to do even if it rains"*	Beach fun at Seaton Carew Range of attractions – paid and free Family friendly options Activities – inside and out Events Safe and attractive environment to explore Easy parking and access by train
Engaged Sightseers	*"The Museum of the Royal Navy is interesting – but what else is there?"*	*"They're making the Waterfront into a lovely space that's worth seeing – and it's easy to get to, get around and explore a bit further"*	Wider story of Waterfront Headland Museums and Art Gallery Safe and attractive environment to linger Easy parking and access by train – how to get around the town
Adventure Seekers	*"Why would I go? What is there to do?"*	*"There are some interesting activities to try and there's a good food and drink vibe. It's not hard core but it is fun, and*	'Try me' activities and experiences on the water Cycling, walking and other activities Events

		it's a cool place with things going on in and around"	Eating, drinking and socialising Easy parking and access by train
Business Travellers	*"I've got to go there for work"*	*"A great place to hang out after work – and the gym and running/cycling trails are bang on"*	Eating, drinking and socialising options Access from town centre/Church Street Activity options
Visiting Friends and Relatives	*"It's just about seeing people – nothing else much to do"*	*"Some really interesting new things happening, and stuff to do. And food & drink has really improved. Need to go back again soon"*	Waterfront Headland Seaton Carew Eating, drinking and socialising Paid for and free activities Events

ROUTES TO MARKET

The routes to market are:

- Promotion via the Explore Hartlepool website and social media channels, delivered by Hartlepool Borough Council.
- Collaboration with the Enjoy Tees Valley team to benefit from the destination marketing they undertake – website, social media, press & PR, advertising etc
- Marketing undertaken by tourism businesses and providers, ensuring the destination message is constantly communicated and amplified through their various channels.

DELIVERY

The ‘ownership’ of destination marketing of Hartlepool lies with Hartlepool Borough Council, and it should lead the promotional effort working closely with businesses/providers. This will require dedicated resources (in-house or contracted) to ensure activity is focussed on visitors. Alignment of positioning and messaging around a consistent ‘story’ for the destination will require active engagement with stakeholders and partners.

The Borough Council can build on the current destination website to reinforce the sense of Hartlepool as a coherent destination. This could include new itineraries which link the various parts of the destination, ideas, suggestions, top tips etc to encourage exploration and longer stays, practical information on getting between the various places within Hartlepool, including car free or car limited options, and accessibility. This content can also be made available to businesses within Hartlepool and outwards for distribution via Enjoy Tees Valley.

The Waterfront DMP recommended the development of a specific brand identity for the Waterfront and a toolkit for use by developers, businesses, event organisers and stakeholders with a direct interest in the Waterfront would provide a valuable resource and amplification of the brand. This toolkit should be extended to include resources for the promotion of Hartlepool as a whole destination. This would include copyright free images and video, illustrative copy, key words and phrases for businesses to use when they talk about Hartlepool in their marketing, hashtags for use in social media channels etc.

5 EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT

It is important to strengthen the visitor offer in Hartlepool if visitors are to be persuaded to come and spend longer here. The Waterfront plans, and associated DMP, set out the development focus for Hartlepool marina and surrounding area and these will the main driver for visits and Hartlepool's future success, and the hub from which the wider Hartlepool experience will extend.

The focus of tourism development for the wider borough will be on:

1. Active experiences on land and water
2. Heritage and Cultural experiences
3. Events & Animation (including Food & Drink)

PRIORITY 1: ACTIVE EXPERIENCES

Strengthening active experiences on land and water will appeal to Hartlepool's target markets, responds to the 'Wellbeing' trend, fits well as part of wider Tees Valley strategies and integrates with proposals for the Waterfront. It also enhances the range of experiences for residents as well as visitors. Activities – walking and cycling - can help overcome the challenges of poor connectivity by offering alternatives to car travel between different locations.

Action	Partners & Lead	Timeframe	Contribute to target..
Expand, improve and promote active travel networks which connect the main visitor locations (Headland, Waterfront, Seaton Carew and surrounding attractions). Ensure that as far as possible routes are car-free, well-maintained, family friendly and follow best practice design guidance from Sustrans and build on the success of National Route 14 and cycling infrastructure in Summerhill Park.	HBC & TVCA	2024 onwards	2, 3, 4
Use the emerging watersports facilities on the Waterfront as a hub for a borough-wide network of facilities that provide access for users with their own equipment, organised groups, taster and other		2025 onwards	1, 2, 3, 4

experiences e.g. Kayak Safari. For example this might be as simple as beach showers and toilets to slipways and accessible beach mats at Seaton Carew. Make the provision of facilities fully inclusive for visitors with different physical and sensory abilities.	HBC & Private Sector		
INSPIRATION			
The Great Western Greenway in County Mayo is one of the first of several Greenways developed in Ireland. This 42 km former railway line provides a traffic free route for locals and visitors to explore the countryside and coast. Since opening, it has created 200 jobs and attracts more the 250k visitors a year, generating €40m of annual economic impact. 			

PRIORITY 2: HERITAGE & CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

Heritage and associated stories are strong and evident in many parts of Hartlepool. From maritime heritage and military history to the early Saxons there is much to celebrate. The cluster of attractions at the Waterfront is the focus for this but extending visits to the rest of the Borough is one way to keep visitors here for longer exploring more widely.

Action	Partners & Lead	Timeframe	Contribute to target..
Develop a series of engaging and imaginatively produced self-guided heritage trails (Hartlepool Town, The Headland, Seaton Carew, Elwick, Greatham and Hart) using downloadable guides and audio for self-guided visits. Each tour could have a geographic focus the stories and themes would be different for each place.	HBC & NMRN	2024	1, 2, 3, 4
Support the continued growth and development of Hartlepool Art Gallery as an experience which not only helps to tell Hartlepool's story through its collection, but which inspires new visitors. Through capital investment and imaginative programming, spanning recognised and local artists, create an improved visitor offer with a stronger profile and identity.	HBC	2023-2027	1, 2, 3

INSPIRATION

The traditional resort of Minehead has developed a series of self-guided trails which are available to download and are suitable for most visitors. They explore the history, myths, people, language and culture of the town and help visitors explore places that they might not otherwise visit, spreading the benefits more widely and increasing the spend in local businesses. https://minehead.storywalks.info

PRIORITY 3: EVENTS & ANIMATION

Events motivate visits, raise the profile of the destination and animate it for visitors. Events take many different forms, vary greatly in scale, purpose and impact. While events feature prominently in the Waterfront DMP, there are other sites and locations across Hartlepool including Elephant Rock, Summerhill Park and Hartlepool FC stadium. Food and drink are important aspects of a visit and while there are many existing outlets, incorporating new food and drink experiences as part of events or other developments will add to visitor appeal – especially if it is locally sourced and prepared.

Action	Partners & Lead	Timeframe	Contribute to target..
Development of a borough-wide Events Strategy, which builds on existing events to create a strong annual calendar of events made up of 'signature' and local/community events. These should link wherever possible to thematic strengths such as maritime and should ensure essential infrastructure is incorporated (e.g. power, drainage, barriers etc). Audit and identify land and assets that can be used for events – agreeing with relevant landowners how permissions are sought and agreed (including costs).	HBC	2023 onwards	1, 2, 3, 4
Develop a toolkit for event organisers (commercial or community) which provides information on the sites, permissions process, costs, infrastructure and expectations. Publish this through an events portal on the HBC website and among partners e.g. TVCA to attract event proposals from organisers.	HBC	2024	3

Create opportunities for new food and drink outlets through temporary and 'meanwhile' or 'pop-up' catering outlets to improve animation across the Borough with all outlets encouraged to source locally.	HBC, Commercial Property Agents & Landlords	2023 onwards	1, 3, 4

INSPIRATION

Croydon Council has taken a strategic approach to the development of events in order to promote the destination as a place of business, culture and community. An Events Policy makes it clear to event organisers and local stakeholders what the council wants to get from events and makes it clear to members and officers the sorts of events to actively support or resist. Application guidance sets out how to work with partners on event planning and illustrates the important role of an event Safety Advisory Group.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ORGANISING SAFE AND SUCCESSFUL EVENTS IN CROYDON

Croydon Council is keen to promote its use of venues, parks and open spaces for events and cultural activities. The Borough is experiencing a widespread regeneration programme which will see new, exciting urban event spaces developing which in turn requires a creative programme for the Borough of Croydon.

Events are hugely important to the Borough as they boost the economy of the area, whilst bringing communities together. They promote the area as a place of business, culture and community and play a key part in Croydon's vision.

Whilst we encourage creative groups, individuals and companies to apply to hold events in Croydon, we also recognise the importance of not disturbing communities and urban spaces, and request that our event organisers recognise and manage the challenges that come hand in hand with the successes of hosting events.

To organise a safe and successful event, we ask that you read through these guidance notes, use the links provided for advice and then use our forms to apply to hold an event or activity. Croydon Council works closely with its key partners including The Metropolitan Police, Transport for London, British Transport Police and other key stakeholders. This document aims to make the process of applying to hold an event in Croydon consistent, transparent and as simple as possible whilst adhering to relevant legislation and policies.

Events needing permission will vary from a small charity sponsored walk, to a community fete, to a music festival or a food and drink festival;

An event is defined as any planned activity in a specific location and for a limited period of time that the public can attend. The activity can take place indoors or outdoors, on public land or in private property.

Each event application must be accompanied by a full event risk assessment and evidence of public liability insurance, and depending on the size/nature of the event, you may need to also provide a full event management plan. Croydon Council's Events Office will offer advice and guidance on this. Finally, it may be a requirement that your event proposal and its plans are presented to the local Safety Advisory Group who will advise on whether the event can go ahead or not. This group is made up of relevant council officers and representatives from the local fire service, hospitals and police.

PLANNING AND NOTICE PERIODS

For all event applications, there needs to be a name organiser(s) identified as soon as possible. This person will be responsible for the choice of venue, size and nature of event, dates and times, whether admission is free or ticketed, capacity of the event and the event management plans.

Frome is a traditional market town in Somerset. In the last decade it has invested in a series of imaginatively funded community, cultural and environmental projects that have injected vitality into the town centre. Working with English Heritage, county and district councils, and attracting entrepreneurs with its business-friendly welcome and relatively low start-up costs, the historic Catherine Hill has been transformed from a relatively rundown shopping street with 60% vacancy levels to what National Geographic describes as "Frome's beating heart ... where you can stock up on life's beautiful things". Some of the town's success in recent years is attributed to the growth of the Frome Independent – a monthly market and street entertainment event that transforms the centre of the town into a festival-like atmosphere on the first Sunday of every month from March to December. Describing itself as "a curated, destination street market with a difference", it has very clear criteria for its 200 traders, to ensure local and creative distinctiveness.

6 WORKING BETTER TOGETHER

Tourism and the visitor economy include a broad range of experiences supported by the public, private and third sector organisations and individuals. Places that perform well in tourism usually have a strong partnership between each of the key players, all working together to grow, develop, manage and market the destination. Partners also understand visitors and know what they are looking for and what they think of the destination, informed by research.

The fundamentals for working better together are:

4. Brilliant Basics
5. Environmental Sustainability
6. Tourism Forum
7. Data and Insights

PRIORITY 4: BRILLIANT BASICS

Brilliant Basics encapsulates all those things which are important to visitors and the visitor experience, but which in themselves don't inspire a visit. Poor facilities, poor place management, poor customer service and poor information can put visitors off coming or lead to low levels of referral and recommendation. This includes often overlooked yet essential services such as parking, toilets, access and signage, waste and cleansing.

Action	Partners & Lead	Timeframe	Contribute to target..
Actively monitor visitor feedback via review sites and feedback from local tourism businesses to identify problem areas and develop shared action plans with service providers to address.	HBC and Tourism Forum	2023 onwards	4
Support businesses in becoming more accessible and inclusive through identifying and promoting practical resources such as Visit England's accessibility guides, training and other resources provided by Tourism For All.	HBC and Tourism Forum	2023 onwards	1, 2, 3, 4

Identify suitable sites and develop a hotels prospectus – making the case for investment, outlining the reasons why investors should develop accommodation here, using the insights gleaned from the proposed accommodation study under Priority 7 'Data & Insights'.	HBC	2023-2024	2, 3
Improve orientation and wayfinding through co-ordinated signage and information using digital and physical tools. Explore how public art can be used to enhance routes and aid wayfinding.	HBC, N School of Art	2024-2028	1, 4
Work with colleges and other training providers to deliver appropriate training for local businesses and individuals to ensure that the local tourism workforce provides a world class welcome.	HBC, Hartlepool College	2024 onwards	4

INSPIRATION

Bristol was the first UK city to develop a comprehensive legible city concept. Designed to help improve people's understanding and experience of the city through a programme of identity, information and transportation projects which includes directional signs, information panels, area maps, printed walking maps, visitor information and art. During 2021 research among visitors, locals and businesses found that half of visitors still use the scheme to help them find their way around and 97% still found the scheme helpful. While visitors use tools such as google maps, they found that they tended to find it harder to navigate as digital systems tended to not recommend the most scenic routes or show how to avoid busy intersections.

VisitBlackpool and key attractions in the town have partnered with AccessAble to develop access guides to help visitors to plan and make the most of their visit. Local attractions are also encouraged to join the Access Card scheme from Nimbus Disability which provides a disabled person with a universal way of communicating their access requirements.

Visit County Durham alongside Durham City Council have developed an Investment Evaluation Process (IEP) to encourage industry investment in the local visitor economy – including increasing the development of visitor accommodation. Studies by Hotel Solutions summarise the need for visitor accommodation and Visit County Durham have actively engaged the market with Accommodation Development Workshops and by providing information around the planning process.

PRIORITY 5: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Addressing the climate crisis and reducing carbon impact of tourism is a major challenge and is increasingly of concern to visitors. Initial steps must be taken to engage the sector in planning and implementing changes. Resources, advice and information is widely available, so the approach is around taking leadership, signposting and encouraging businesses to make changes. It also requires creativity and imagination in the delivery of other actions in this DMP to look for opportunities to do things more sustainably.

Action	Partners & Lead	Timeframe	Contribute to target..
Promote and encourage business accreditation eg Green Tourism Business Scheme and involvement in initiatives such as Good Journey	HBC, Tourism Forum	2023-25	3, 4
Create an online portal to promote action and support businesses by pulling together available toolkits, resources, funding programmes etc - focus initially on 'easy wins' such as reducing waste and energy consumption, local purchasing. Over time develop the portal as a place to share good practice, ideas and inspiration.	HBC, Tourism Forum	2023-26	3
Identify ways to continually improve and encourage sustainability in the delivery of the DMP eg events, new construction etc.	HBC	2023 onwards	3
Via destination marketing provide visitors with information to make environmentally sound choices eg public transport, car free options, profiling businesses exercising good practices, EV charging points etc	HBC, TVCA	2023 onwards	1, 2, 4

INSPIRATION

Good Journey launched in 2018 – supported by a coalition of transport and conservation organisations – to address the need for more sustainable visitor travel in the UK. Their aim is for every visitor attraction in the UK to welcome people by train, bus, bike and foot. Their website features 200 attractions promoting and offering discounts for car-free access. In addition to promoting car free days out, Good Journey also provides itinerary and holiday ideas. Within Hartlepool borough only RSPB Salthome is currently participating.

Visit Scotland provide a range of practical resources to help businesses become more environmentally sustainable. These include fact sheets on improving energy efficiency and waste reduction, and how to create a climate action plan and ideas for encouraging visitors to make environmentally responsible decisions.

PRIORITY 6: TOURISM FORUM

Successful destinations have a strong partnership between the public and private sector. Hartlepool is not a large place and that should make it easier to forge stronger links. Partnerships can be formalised with paid membership supporting destination activity such as marketing or more informally through networks which facilitate collaborative working.

Action	Partners & Lead	Timeframe	Contribute to target..
Establish a Tourism Forum for Hartlepool that brings business and the Council together at informal events once or twice a year. Use these events to share updates on major projects and investments that are supporting growth of the visitor economy; get feedback from business on issues and areas of concern; share data and visitor insights; support training and skills in the sector etc.	HBC	2023	3

INSPIRATION

The English Riviera Destination Management Group (ERDMG) is comprised of members across the destination and includes representatives from industry, the local authority, BID, local education providers, arts and cultural organisations. The ERDMG works collaboratively with tourism businesses to develop the visitor economy and attract further investment to deliver the recently adopted Destination Management Plan with a target to achieve an additional £75m of tourism spend and 1,500 new jobs by 2030.

PRIORITY 7: DATA & INSIGHTS

Everyone should have a clear understanding of visitors – including their needs and motivations – alongside a robust assessment of the current performance of tourism across the borough. Data from economic impact surveys, visitor research and hotel studies will inform evidence-based decision-making among industry and public sector stakeholders and focus attention on those opportunities that are most likely to support the growth of the sector. Disseminating well-interpreted insights from a range of data sources will be useful for businesses and in communicating with residents demonstrating the benefits of tourism for Hartlepool.

Action	Partners & Lead	Timeframe	Contribute to target..
Commission research to understand the perceptions, attitudes and behaviours of visitors and potential visitors to Hartlepool. Establish a baseline and implement an ongoing programme of research to measure progress. Recommendations for metrics to monitor and suggested methods of data collection are outlined in section 7 of this report.	HBC/TVCA, Tourism Forum	2023 onwards	1, 2, 3, 4
Commission an accommodation study via a specialist provider to assess the availability and quality of Hartlepool's current accommodation stock and identify market-led opportunities for future development to inform the Prospectus under 'Brilliant Basics' (Priority 4)	HBC	2024	1, 2, 3, 4
Continue to undertake economic impact assessment (e.g. STEAM) Undertake a quarterly survey among local accommodation providers to assess key performance measures including occupancy and average revenue per room	HBC/TVCA	2023 onwards	1, 2, 3, 4
Develop and present an annual research and performance report to businesses and stakeholders in accessible, easy to understand formats which draws out insights and practical implications.	HBC/TVCA, Tourism Forum	2024 onwards	1, 2, 3, 4

INSPIRATION

Visit Kent keeps the county's visitor economy businesses up to date and informed by regularly publishing market intelligence. Its Insights and Resources page is a rich source of information for businesses of all sizes looking to develop and grow. It brings together economic impact reports, accommodation studies, consumer research and trends to highlight market opportunities and encourage investment in the local visitor economy.

In 2022 Lincolnshire's county DMO, in partnership with the local district and borough councils, commissioned a 12 month research programme among visitors, residents, students and local businesses owners to inform the county's plans for developing the visitor economy as part of its 'Levelling Up' agenda. Findings will be used to help businesses and the county's local authorities to identify shared priorities for developing the visitor economy and provide evidence to support future bids for Levelling Up and Shared Prosperity funding.

7 RESOURCING & MONITORING

RESOURCES

Many of the regeneration projects funded as part of Hartlepool's capital investment programme can support the actions outlined in this DMP.

There are however a number of things which this DMP has identified which will fall outside the current capital programme and which will require further capital and revenue funding – as shown here. Project management resource will also be required to support some of these areas of work and consideration should be given to a dedicated marketing and communications role (within HBC or contracted) to support work in this area.

PRIORITY AREA	ESTIMATED CAPITAL £ one-off		ESTIMATED REVENUE £ annual
Positioning & Marketing		-	50,000
1. Active Experiences:			
Active networks	*150,000*		
Watersports facilities	*50,000*		
Sub-Total		*200,000	-
2. Heritage Experiences			
Trails	*20,000*		
Art Gallery	*10,000*		
Sub-Total		30,000	-
3. Events & Animation:			
Toolkit and resources	*15,000*		
Food and drink pop-ups	*5,000*		
Sub-Total		20,000	-
4. Brilliant Basics			
Visitor feedback	-		-
Accessibility training	-		*2,000*

Hotels prospectus	*2,000*			
Orientation/ wayfinding	*8,000*		-	
Customer service training	-		*3,000*	
Sub-Total		10,000		5,000
5. Environmental Sustainability				
Accreditation	*5,000*			
Best-practice portal	*5,000*			
Visitor behaviour	-			
Sub-Total		10,000		10,000 or (0.2 FTE)
6. Tourism Forum		-		10,000 or (0.2 FTE)
7. Data & Insights				
Visitor perceptions	-		*5,000*	
Accommodation study	*10,000*		-	
EIAs & summary report	-		*5,000*	
Sub-Total		10,000		10,000
*subject to extent of costs covered by the regeneration projects or other funding streams e.g. Transport				

Note: the above are estimated costs for the various priorities and actions contained in this DMP. While activity can be scaled up or down to fit with available resources it is not realistic to think the DMP can be progressed without some investment. The Waterfront DMP also had resource implications and we have kept costs and actions separate to avoid double counting. Across both DMPs however there is a need for at least 1.4-1.5 FTE staff to take forward the work in these DMPs.

MONITORING

To support Hartlepool's growth ambitions for tourism we recommend monitoring performance in three key areas – Market Reach, Market Development and Product Development. This recommended programme of research and monitoring is intended to provide insight at a Hartlepool borough level, with appropriate benchmarking versus other Tees Valley destinations, as well as within Hartlepool to benchmark the Waterfront and other key attractions where appropriate.

1. Market Reach			
What to measure	**Where to measure it**	**How to measure it**	**Recommended approach**
Awareness/Familiarity	Omnibus survey	Scale from: 'I've never heard of it before' to 'It's a place I know very well'	Benchmark Hartlepool versus other Tees Valley destinations. Benchmark Waterfront versus other notable Tees Valley/Hartlepool attractions
Past visitation	Omnibus survey	Scale from 'I've never visited before' to 'I've visited within the last 2 years'	
Sentiment	Omnibus survey	Scale from 'disagree strongly to 'agree strongly' on 'It's an attractive destination for people like me'	
Intention to visit	Omnibus survey	Scale from 'I would never consider visiting' to 'It's a place I'd definitely consider visiting'	

Developing an omnibus survey in partnership with TVCA and partners would offer market insights at a regional and local level as well as both cost efficiencies and data sharing benefits.

2. Market Development			
What to measure	**Where to measure it**	**How to measure it**	**Recommended approach**
Number of visits (footfall)	VI data or similar	Footfall data via geo-location/GPS	Reporting at Hartlepool Borough level and specifically for key locations, including the Waterfront
Quality of visitor experiences	TripAdvisor ratings	Average score of Hartlepool businesses listed on TripAdvisor (including those based at the Waterfront)	Quarterly monitor

Visits to attractions	Attendance data	Count/ticketing data provided by attractions	Monthly reporting
Visitor profile & experience	Visitor survey	Visitor home location, demographics, reasons for visiting, locations and attractions visited, satisfaction, recommendation, likelihood to return	Surveys at key points of the year to give a representative view of peak and low seasons
Visitor numbers	STEAM economic model	Total and split by day and staying visits	At Hartlepool borough level. Benchmark vs other Tees Valley districts/regional comparators
Average length of stay	STEAM economic model	Average number of nights stayed	
Average spend per visit	STEAM economic model	Total average and split by day and staying visits	
Seasonal spread	STEAM economic model	Monthly spread of visits (Total and split by day and staying visits)	

Access to the STEAM economic model at both TVCA and Hartlepool borough level would enable Hartlepool and other Tees Valley destinations to benchmark themselves at regional and local level.

3. Product Development			
What to measure	**Where to measure it**	**How to measure it**	**Recommended approach**
Experience development	Number of new-to-market visitor experiences	Audit	Biannual audit of visitor economy businesses (Hartlepool & Waterfront)
Number of businesses offering an accessibility guide	Number of businesses offering an accessibility guide	Count	Quarterly count of visitor economy businesses (Hartlepool & Waterfront)
Number of staff having undertaken accessibility & inclusion training	Number of staff having undertaken accessibility & inclusion training	Count	Quarterly count of visitor economy businesses (Hartlepool & Waterfront establishments)

Travel trade engagement	Number of itineraries featuring the Waterfront/Waterfront attractions	Count	Quarterly among in-scope operators
Accommodation occupancy	Local accommodation provider study	Rate calculated on number of available units	Quarterly reporting (Hartlepool & Waterfront establishments)
Accommodation revenue per available room	Local accommodation provider study	Assess alongside occupancy levels	Quarterly reporting (Hartlepool & Waterfront establishments)