

VISIT
NORTHumberland

Business Plan 2022/23



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Executive summary

The visitor economy is important to Northumberland. In 2019, there were 10 million visitors to the county generating over £1 billion. This economic impact showed a growth of 57% over 10 years, demonstrating the increasing popularity of the county. Tourism is the second largest sector in Northumberland, employing just over 17,000 people (15% of workforce) with tourism and culture being identified as one of the County’s six industrial growth opportunities.

The management, marketing and development of the visitor economy is equally important.

The creation of one sustainable, standalone Destination Management Organisation (DMO) for Northumberland provides the leadership, influence and strategic drive essential to realise the vision of putting Northumberland firmly on the map as a premier visitor destination proactively leading the business community in the county.

Visit Northumberland brings together the expertise of Northumberland Tourism (the previous Destination Management Organisation for Northumberland) and the proactive tourism team based within Northumberland County Council. The executive team are led by a private sector board, each board member has distinct responsibilities linked to the priorities of the organisation and the destination management plan.

This business plan sets out the strategic, operational and corporate responsibilities of Visit Northumberland, its board and its executive team.



VISIT
NORCHUMBERLAND

Business Plan 2022/23

STRATEGIC



SECTION ONE: Tourism in Northumberland

Generating £106 billion a year. Employing over 2 million people. Supporting thousands of businesses. Making up over 80% of the UK's total visitor economy, England's tourism sector is vibrant and vital. Tourism works hand in hand with a wide range of sectors across England, including farming, transport, retail, sport, museums and the arts.

Tourism is recognised in the Northumberland Economic Strategy 2019-2024 as the County's second largest employment sector and as one of the key industrial growth opportunities.

Northumberland is now recognised as a leading UK destination that has experienced unrivalled growth in visitor numbers, the value of tourism and employment within the sector over the past 6 years.

Visitors to Northumberland spent over £1 billion in the county during 2019. The annual Northumberland STEAM report on the economic impact of tourism reveals that during 2019 the county welcomed 10.68 million visitors, a 2% increase on 2018. 82% of all these visits are day visits, accounting for 35% of expenditure and highlighting the importance of local tourism.

The number of days visitors spent in the destination also grew, totalling at 16.87 million days, spurred on by growth in the traditionally quieter autumn and winter seasons following a programme of targeted tactical marketing and promotional activity. The advent of COVID



had an adverse impact on the volume and value of tourism in 2020, halving the number of visitors with value dipping by over 60% to £430million.

Post covid, the challenge is now to continue to drive private sector investment to increase the quality of employment, whilst ensuring that the ecosystem and infrastructure that supports the sector, in terms of attractors and associated visitor experience across Northumberland is maintained and improved.

SECTION TWO: **About Visit Northumberland**

Our vision is to develop a destination organisation with an outstanding record of successful delivery which puts the county firmly on the map as a premier visitor destination and proactively leads the tourism business community in Northumberland.

Visit Northumberland brings together the expertise of Northumberland Tourism (the previous Destination Management Organisation for Northumberland) and the proactive tourism team based within Northumberland County Council.

These experts focus on the key priorities of sustainable development of the visitor economy, its businesses, people and place, and the effective and sensitive promotion of the destination to key customer groups and market sectors.

The creation of one sustainable, standalone Destination Management Organisation (DMO) for Northumberland provides the leadership, influence and strategic drive essential to realise the vision of putting Northumberland firmly on the map as a premier visitor destination proactively leading the business community in the county.

Visit Northumberland will focus on economic growth, by engaging with, and working in partnership with businesses and ensuring connectivity across the visitor economy. The organisation will focus on leadership and engagement,



better use of data and intelligence, increasing visitor spend rather than visitor numbers, sustainable destination and product development, focused and monitorable marketing and business and people development.

Visit Northumberland will work in partnership with key organisations active in the management of place across the county, including the Northumberland National Park Authority, two AONBs,

Forestry England and Natural England, and business groups to develop a focused Destination Management Plan (DMP), bringing partners together with a shared statement of intent to manage the destination over a stated period of time, articulating the roles of the different stakeholders and identifying clear actions that they will take and the apportionment of resources.

This planning will also connect with VisitBritain/VisitEngland in their national efforts to grow the value of tourism, and with partners in the wider North East Tourism Alliance and North of Tyne Combined Authority, ensuring a joined up and focused approach to the development of the visitor economy in the region. This partnership working at the local, regional and national level will be critical to the success of the destination and the new destination organisation.

Great destinations are great places to live, work and visit. Well managed destinations are more likely to generate 'wise growth' in the local visitor economy, which lead to growth in long term, additional income and jobs.

Working with partners to create a destination management plan will better place Northumberland to attract new investment, keep value-added jobs, bring in new talent and stimulate innovation/ maximising the benefits of that growth in long term, additional income and jobs.

In a leadership role, Visit Northumberland will act as a catalyst for a thriving

tourism sector, sustainably growing the value of the visitor economy, as well as encouraging new investment and increasing skills. The organisation will create a new narrative with clear and compelling messages, iconic imagery, and new products, to showcase the destination and attract new and repeat visitors. Visit Northumberland will build strong, meaningful and outcome driven partnerships across the destination, as well as regionally and nationally.

The wider industry will be important players in this activity, engaged through partner packages, and also through their roles and responsibilities in developing and implementing the Destination Management Plan for Northumberland.

Visit Northumberland will play a key role in the long-term development of Northumberland as a visitor destination, with a sector led board, an effective Destination Management Plan and a marketing/development strategy. This DMO approach is funded via public and private investment, providing a vehicle for business engagement, and a partnership and collegiate approach across the sectors involved. The DMO will play a key role in bringing together other public agencies, tourism producers and communities.

This step change brings economies of scale, opportunities for the organisation to be more fleet of foot and to realise the ambitions of Northumberland as a visitor destination building on the solid foundations already created by the existing two separate teams.

OUR PRIORITIES

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <p>Leadership and engagement</p> | <p>Increased visitors - quality over quantity</p> | <p>Sustainable product and destination development</p> | <p>Better use of data and intelligence</p> | <p>Focused monitorable marketing and promotion</p> | <p>Business and people development</p> |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|



KEY ACTION AREAS

| | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>STRATEGY</p> | <p>ENGAGEMENT</p> | <p>MARKETING</p> |
| <p>Leadership, co-ordination and strategy</p> <p>Visitor information and experience</p> <p>Destination development and Destination Management Plan</p> <p>Evidence and intelligence</p> | <p>Attract and retain partners</p> <p>Business engagement and development</p> <p>Product and experience development</p> <p>Careers development and skills</p> | <p>Marketing and promotion</p> <p>Digital strategy and content</p> <p>Communications and PR</p> |

REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

In 2021, UK Government commissioned an Independent Review of Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) with the aim of strengthening the tourism delivery infrastructure in England, leading to strengthened collaboration and investment.

Visit Northumberland is established as the official DMO for Northumberland and the voice for tourism for the destination following the merger of the operations of the Northumberland County Council tourism development team and Northumberland Tourism, augmenting Northumberland Tourism's previous role as a longstanding DMO.

Key findings of the review found that the Government should bring coherence to England's DMO landscape and a tiered approach of lead destinations and attributed tourist boards be adopted, funded centrally via Visit England.

If the review recommendations are accepted and implemented by Government in 2022, Visit Northumberland, alongside other north east DMOs NewcastleGateshead Initiative and Visit County Durham will become accredited Tourist Boards.

The north east also has the potential to be positioned as one of a group of top-tier areas working in partnership with Government to secure new investment into the region through the continuation of existing formalised North East Tourism Partnership (NETP) collaborative regional structures.

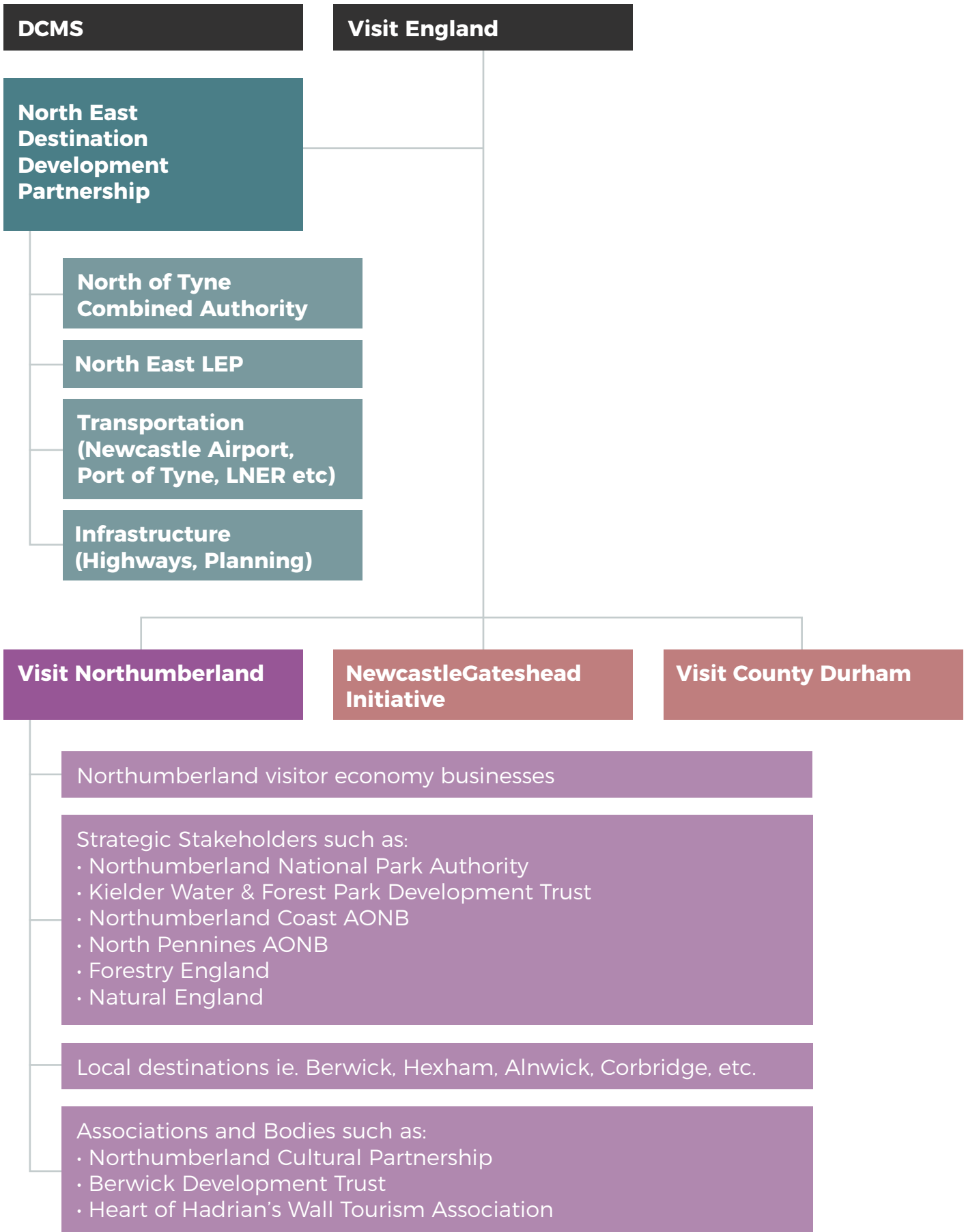
Having established a lead organisation partnership structure, the NETP could collectively apply to form a North East Destination Development Partnership with a wider network of partners such as the NELEP, NTCA etc.



There also remains the prospect of an expanded combined authority and access to funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The seven north east local authorities could agree a region-wide devolution deal that would see Northumberland, Newcastle City and North Tyneside councils joined by Gateshead, Sunderland, South Tyneside and Durham to create a combined authority for the north east. Both opportunities would herald a new regional ambition and unlock additional funding, powers and resources as part of the Government's wider levelling up agenda.

The Northumberland Destination Management Plan and its resulting priorities will remain a vital strategic tool for visitor management and will contribute to the identification and delivery of pan-regional priorities of skills development, inclusivity, innovation and sustainability within a future North East Destination Development Partnership or expanded combined authority.

This provides opportunity for Visit Northumberland to secure access to funding and strengthen its work with our partner businesses to further increase the profile of Northumberland.



SECTION THREE:

Partnership Agreement

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Visit Northumberland will attend meetings as requested, with representatives of Northumberland County Council to report on and to discuss matters linked to the visitor economy, including the achievement of objectives, return on investment, finance, staff, administrative matters and planned activities.
- Provide the strategic lead for tourism effectively and efficiently.
- Be the voice of tourism, with a clear role and influence, on all matters related to the visitor economy both on a local, regional and national basis. Build strong and capable partnerships with businesses and business leaders to strengthen the voice of the Northumberland Visitor Economy.
- Collect appropriate information relating to trends and interests and use this to inform marketing and promotional activity ensuring that where there are potential policy changes NCC is aware of such trends and interests.
- Grow and align strategic resources and delivery in partnership with public sector colleagues, town and parish councils, tourism businesses and key agencies to lever resources and capacity to address key issues.
- Join the dots across all strategic partners, to be on message, on side and proactive in all areas of delivery with all sectors. Work in partnership to secure funding and support for tourism marketing and development.
- Create the environment for a thriving visitor economy and industry, focusing on business improvement and development. Sustainably grow value and volume of visitor economy and maximise impact on the wider economy of Northumberland.
- Bring in new business investment, increase visitor spending, and drive up skills and opportunities.
- Provide development and training opportunities to meet the evolving needs of businesses within the visitor economy.
- Align and integrate marketing destination development strategies with businesses and agencies working within the visitor economy. Tell a new story through tailored marketing messages about Northumberland, its aspirations and the aspirations of its business community, which is supported by local businesses and the local community.
- Develop new products and manage marketing to (tactically and strategically) attract visitors, encourage repeat visitors and increase visitor spend.
- Implement a visitor information network which supports businesses and places visitor needs and expectations at the heart of the service.
- Promote and utilise tourism infrastructure and products as a means for positively engaging with residents leading to increased interaction with culture and activities which aid restorative health and well being
- Align with Northumberland County Council's commitment to carbon neutrality by 2030.

HEADLINE INDICATORS

Headline indicators will be measured annually via STEAM (a tourism economic impact modelling process) which enables us to measure tourism using local data, tourism performance and visitor survey data. A report is completed each year and the results allow Visit Northumberland and Northumberland County Council to monitor the impact of tourism across Northumberland.

In Northumberland, in 2019, there were 10 million visitors to the county generating over £1 billion. This economic impact showed a growth of 57% over 10 years, demonstrating the increasing popularity of the county. Tourism is the second largest sector in Northumberland, employing just over 17,000 people (15% of workforce) with tourism and culture being identified as one of the County's six industrial growth opportunities.

STEAM recognises in Northumberland there are 715 serviced accommodation businesses offering 8510 bedspaces, and 1932 non-serviced accommodation businesses with 34,040 bedspaces.

TARGETS

- Theme one: Partnership Agreement Indicators which Visit Northumberland will report against on a quarterly basis, coupled with the STEAM data annually.
- Theme two: Management indicators which will focus weekly reports to the board of Visit Northumberland and Northumberland County Council.
- Theme three: Destination Management Plan outcomes – those which Visit Northumberland lead and those which they influence.



10.68 million

People visited



£1.047 billion

Visitor expenditure



16.87 million

Visitor days



8.756 million

Day visitors spending **£371 million**. 82% of all visits are day visits. £31.39 average spend per day



1.928 million

Overnight visitors, staying **8.114 Million** nights in the county and spending **£676 million**. £260.51 average spend per person



13,076 people

Directly employed by tourism



Food and drink sector accounts for **36% of all expenditure** and **31% of all employment**

This data will be monitored annually and reported as part of this partnership agreement.

QUARTERLY REPORTING

| THEME ONE | Marketing and Information | Business Development | Destination Development |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Partnership Agreement indicators for quarterly reporting | <p>Campaigns</p> <p>ROI</p> <p>PR Reach and coverage</p> <p>Website</p> <p>TIC enquiries</p> | <p>Partnership – number of businesses</p> <p>Engagement – what we do, how they feel, satisfaction</p> <p>Best practice studies (businesses, VN and awards)</p> | <p>Strategy and intelligence</p> <p>Leadership</p> <p>Outcomes of DMP</p> <p>Facts and figures, customer satisfaction survey, VFR)</p> |
| Target | <p>Marketing spend</p> <p>ROI 15:1</p> <p>PR Reach (average monthly)</p> <p>PR Coverage (average no of articles monthly)</p> <p>Website (annual)</p> <p>1 million unique visitors</p> <p>175,000 annual enquiries</p> | <p>300 partners</p> <p>85% satisfaction</p> | <p>100% visitor satisfaction</p> <p>Annual review of DMP actions</p> <p>Quarterly business barometer</p> |
| Narrative | <p>Feedback on regional and national relationships</p> <p>Progress on delivery of funded projects</p> <p>Destination and organisation successes, achievements and accolades</p> | | |

MANAGEMENT REPORTING

Monthly board meetings and Head of Tourism performance discussions

| THEME TWO | Marketing | Business Development | Destination Development |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Management indicators, which will be feedback for the board of VN and for weekly updates | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campaigns Communication Social and digital strategy Press and PR Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of partners Renewals Business development (product) B2B communications Skills and training / welcome Feedback – partners, strategic partners, meetings Awards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Product Development - New Adventure, Star Trails, Alnwick Winter Festival, Cycling, Walking, Local Produce, Film and new experience development Satisfaction figures Visitor information network Signage strategy DMP delivery / monitoring /sector groups Annual research Plan |

| THEME TWO | Marketing | Business Development | Destination Development |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Target | <p>Marketing spend -ROI 15:1</p> <p>PR Reach (Annual) - 10 million</p> <p>PR Coverage - 4 (average no of articles monthly)</p> <p>Website (annual) - 1 million unique visitors</p> <p>Social media - monthly reach target 275,000</p> <p>B2C e-newsletter - 35% open rate</p> | <p>300 partners</p> <p>85% satisfaction rate</p> <p>£65,000 annual partnership income</p> <p>26 webinars delivered per year</p> <p>Skills and training / welcome plan</p> | <p>10 bookable New Adventure products</p> <p>25 bookable Star Trails products</p> <p>15 bookable Alnwick Festival products</p> <p>25 Cycling Friendly partners</p> <p>25 Walking friendly partners</p> <p>Quarterly DMP steering group meeting</p> <p>Quarterly sector group meetings</p> <p>Refresh of Visitor Information network</p> <p>Visitor information enquiry figures</p> |
| Narrative | <p>Qualitative actions – significant stakeholder, partner activity</p> <p>Prepare the weekly update</p> <p>Deliver annual conference with high profile national and regional speakers</p> <p>Monthly marketing themes bringing together all communications</p> <p>Monthly update on research projects being undertaken</p> <p>Monthly update on skills/training activity</p> <p>Feedback from activities, actions, etc.</p> <p>Identification and progress of any relevant funding</p> <p>Identification and progress of experience development opportunities</p> <p>Update progress of visitor information review</p> | | |

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN (DMP)

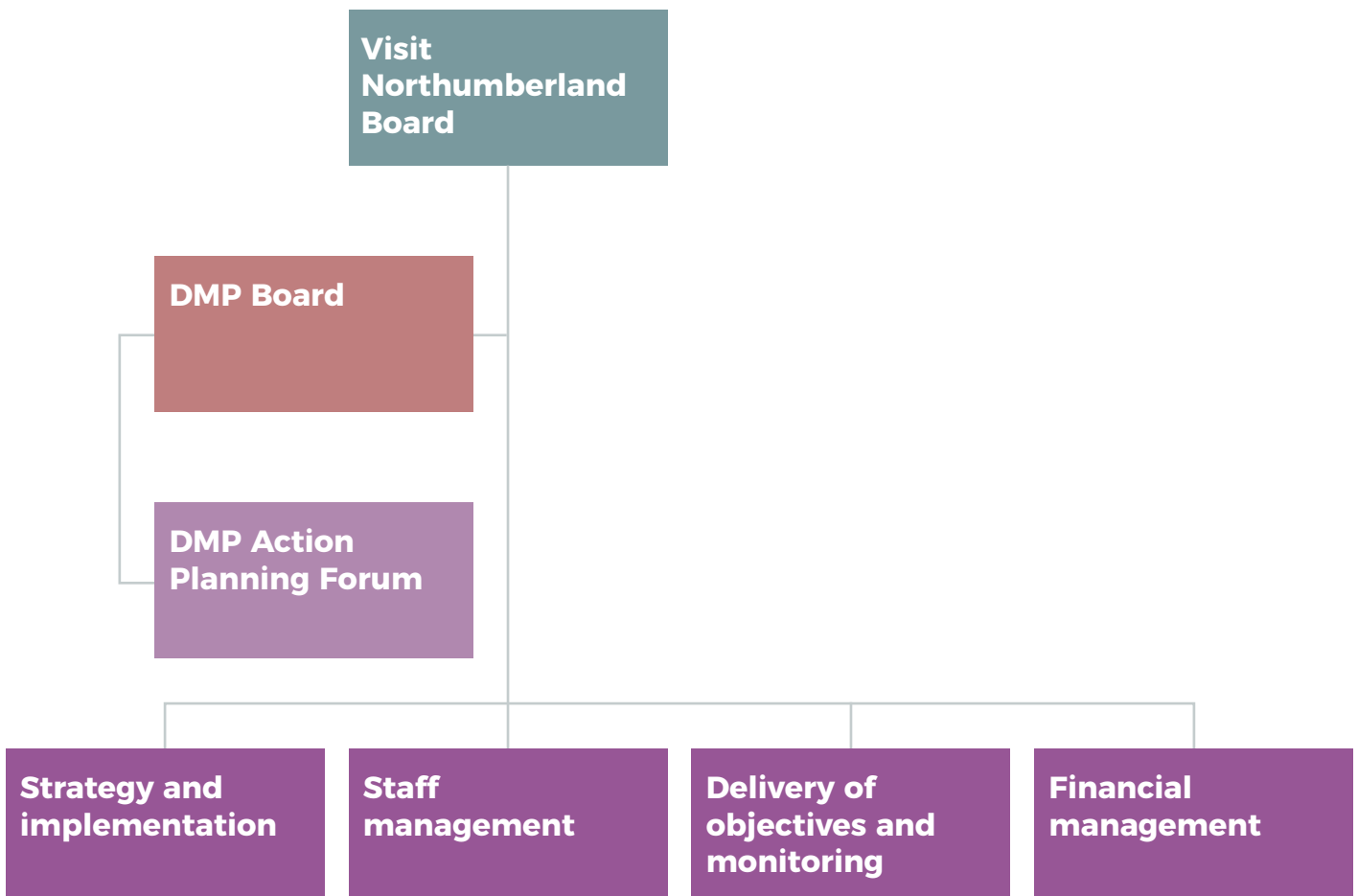
Quarterly DMP Board

| THEME THREE | Marketing | Business Development | Destination Development |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. VN lead | Brand | Welcome Skills Product development | Sector groups Steering group Evidence hub |
| 2. VN influence | Communication strategy across destination | Product development | Infrastructure Place Tactical visitor management |
| Measures | Reported to the DMP Action Forum | | |

SECTION FOUR: Governance

The Visit Northumberland board will be responsible for setting and leading **Objectives** (the vision and mission of the organisation, how the objectives are implemented); **Ethics** (morals, behaviours, values and standards governing the conduct of people within the organisation) and **Culture** (a culture of support, innovation, openness and transparency and sensible risk taking).

Naturally, the board will also be responsible for **Compliance** (with regulatory, statutory and legal obligations, as well as focusing management and staff on achieving the objectives) and the **Governance framework** (for the performance of the organisation, overall responsibility, ensuring compliance with the SLA and reporting to partners and stakeholders)



Chair and Deputy Chair

The Chair and Deputy Chair act as the figureheads of Visit Northumberland, providing the necessary leadership, representation and connectivity across the visit economy of Northumberland. They will chair meetings, attend the high level stakeholder meetings as and when requested and lead the Visit Northumberland board of directors to ensure all governance responsibilities are fulfilled.

They will promote and develop strong relationships between business, Northumberland County Council and the staff team, and ensure effective and transparent communication. The Chair will ensure that Visit Northumberland has an effective team approach, following the principles of the organisation, with the ability for all to support decision making, debate and problem solving. The Chair will monitor performance of the Visit Northumberland board, the team and the overall delivery, as well as the delivery and development of the Destination Management Plan and its associated action plan groups.

The Deputy Chair will support the Chair in all areas and represent the Chair should they be unavailable; they will also chair the Destination Management Plan – DMP Board. Under the guidance and steer of the Chair, the Visit Northumberland

board of directors will be responsible for the work of Visit Northumberland; its vision and strategy; its statutory responsibilities and values; its legal requirements and financial stability.

The Visit Northumberland board will be representative of the visitor economy of Northumberland and comprise of a maximum of 10 with the right balance of sector knowledge, skills and experiences. The board will be responsible for approving the relevant strategy and implementation plans and achievement therein, they will also steer the development of the Destination Management Plan and the relevant action planning groups. They will also set performance targets for the operational team.

Board roles and DMP action planning groups

The Visit Northumberland board will support Visit Northumberland's priorities and will consist of members that can contribute their expertise toward the strategic operation of the organisation.

This expertise and oversight will determine Visit Northumberland's policy in relation to any matter, and in turn ensure the proper and efficient performance of the organisation's partnership funding agreement.

SECTION FIVE:

Destination Management Plan

The Northumberland Destination Management Plan (DMP) is a shared statement of intent to manage the visitor economy of Northumberland.

As the masterplan with clear actions, the DMP guides the apportionment of resources which articulate the roles of the different stakeholders and sets a strategic direction for Northumberland, with prioritised actions within an annual rolling programme, identifying who is responsible for their delivery.

The DMP is owned by all partners active in the Visitor Economy. Through collaboration and partnership, the DMP maximises resources and co-ordinates stakeholders to deliver a range of activities to strengthen the quality of the visitor experience and improve the performance of businesses. Its processes manage and monitor the range of impacts tourism has on society and the environment and ensure that the visitor economy is integrated into activities and recognised as a core contributor to economic development.

The DMP identifies how partner and local authority policies and services (in planning, transport, environmental management, leisure and recreation,

culture and the arts) can support the visitor economy on the one hand and be supported by it on the other.

The strategic aims of the DMP are to ensure Northumberland:

- is a successful, integrated destination providing a high-quality and distinct visitor experience.
- is a tourism destination which is respectful of the needs of the economy and communities, local people, and the natural environment.
- creates an environment where the tourism industry can develop/ increase its contribution to the Northumberland economy.
- is regarded as an environmentally responsible destination.

A group of five runners is seen from behind, walking along a dirt path through tall grass. The path leads towards a dense forest of evergreen trees on the left and a hazy, sunlit valley on the right. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow. The runners are wearing athletic gear, including backpacks and hydration packs.

VISIT
NORCHUMBERLAND

Business Plan 2022/23

OPERATIONAL

SECTION SIX: The operating Visit Northumberland team

Location and staff arrangements

The Visit Northumberland team are located within the Northumberland County Council offices, using the new hub arrangements.

The team largely work from home or in small work teams, enabling an agile and cost-effective approach to delivery. Focusing resources on activity rather than office space.

The previous Northumberland Tourism team remain employees of Visit Northumberland Ltd, and the County Council team remain employees of Northumberland County Council, however, externally, they will work as a team 'Visit Northumberland' and be referred to as such.

The team report to the board of Visit Northumberland and be accountable for delivery of the actions set out in the Visit Northumberland business plan and action plan.

Visit Northumberland - the operational team



**Head of Tourism
Maureen McAllister**

Maureen leads the Visit Northumberland team, focusing on business planning, implementation plans and strategic partnerships.

**Head of Destination Strategy
Neil Carney**

Neil is responsible for cementing Visit Northumberland's position as the county's voice for tourism, working with stakeholders and partners to establish strategies and build the evidence base to lead destination, product and visitor experience development. Neil is also responsible for the strategic delivery of effective visitor information, welcome and skills.

**Head of Operations
Cris Brown**

Cris is responsible for the strategic marketing of Northumberland as a leading leisure travel destination, including the development of thematic marketing campaigns, comprehensive digital and communications strategies as well as the production of print advertising. Cris is also responsible for championing Northumberland's diverse business community, encouraging quality and promoting a strong and resilient visitor economy network.

| TEAM MEMBER NAME | OPERATIONAL PRIORITY | STRATEGIC PRIORITY |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Neil Carney | Destination, product and visitor experience development | Strategy and insight |
| Cris Brown | Strategic marketing and business engagement | Marketing and business engagement |
| Sarah Davidson | Knowledge and skills development | Business and people development |
| Ruth Tweedie | Outdoor activities and product development | Business and product development |
| Dawn Goodwill-Evans | Partnership programme | Business engagement |
| Sarah Ray | Visitor information service | Visitor experience |
| James Nightingale | Online marketing | Marketing |
| Jenni Meikle | Content, PR and social media | Marketing |
| Lyndsey Pennington | Finance and administration | Business engagement |
| Jenny Hindmarsh | Partnership programme | Business engagement |

SECTION SEVEN: Headline Action Plans

STRATEGY

Overall budget - £14,000

| ACTION | Detail |
|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Implementation of DMP | Deliver an annual DMP progress review through quarterly Steering Group monitoring meetings |
| Manage and develop the industry sector groups | Coordinate and deliver quarterly action planning forum and DMP Board |
| Voice of Tourism | Be an advocate for the visitor economy by representing Northumberland as a member of national, regional and local strategic groups |
| Insight, evidence and intelligence | <p>Create a virtual data hub for partners, and stakeholders to share and collect current data and intelligence.</p> <p>Develop an annual insight plan for visitor, business and organisation performance intelligence collection</p> <p>Evaluate national research to identify and define domestic and international market opportunities</p> <p>Maintain engagement with industry bodies for insight, intelligence and guidance</p> |
| Visitor Experience | <p>Deliver an effective county-wide tourist information provision at standalone and shared service locations</p> <p>Initiate service review and expansion of tourist information provision for implementation in 2023</p> |

| ACTION | Detail |
|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Product and Destination Development</p> | <p>Contribute to delivery of NoTCA New Adventures Project alongside NewcastleGateshead Initiative and North Tyneside Council by March 2023</p> <p>Deliver the £85,000 NoTCA Star Trails Project in partnership with the North East Dark Skies Steering Group by September 2023</p> <p>Deliver the £100,000 NoTCA Alnwick Winter Festival Project in partnership with the Alnwick Chamber of Trade by March 2024</p> <p>Identify and deliver a platform for business, product and skills development opportunities for walking and cycling tourism</p> <p>Identify and deliver a platform for business, product and skills development opportunities for working with the travel trade</p> <p>Understand current tourism provision for those with visible and hidden disabilities to identify and deliver a platform for business, product and skills development opportunities</p> <p>Develop new product experience toolkits for business development themes as identified in the Destination Management Plan</p> |
| <p>Local produce and supplier development</p> | <p>Undertake a product and development review to identify and deliver business, product and skills development opportunities for local produce.</p> <p>Create a platform for B2B opportunities and networks to develop business, product and skills of industry suppliers and services.</p> |

ENGAGEMENT

Overall budget - £16,500

| ACTION | Detail |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Partnerships | <p>Deliver Visit Northumberland partnership programme to provide access to a range of benefits designed to promote, connect and grow the partners business, as well as providing insight into the latest trends, best practice and development opportunities.</p> <p>Annual Tourism Conference held in November with national and regional keynote speakers.</p> |
| B2B communications | <p>Focused and targeted B2B communications strategy complementing the B2C marketing strategy. Communication methods will include social media, the corporate website, press releases, partner network events and the partner e-newsletter.</p> |
| Awards and accreditation | <p>Encourage partners to sign up for accreditation such as the Visit Northumberland Dark Sky Friendly awards.</p> <p>Encourage partners to enter the North East England Tourism Awards and provide application support.</p> |
| Film and TV | <p>Maintain relationship with 'North East Screen' and nurture new links with film/TV producers</p> |
| People Development & Skills | <p>Revisit Know your Northumberland and deliver as a digital option</p> <p>Engage with schools, colleges and higher education institutions to promote the tourism and hospitality sector as a career choice through the development of Learning Partnerships</p> <p>Develop and promote the Young Ambassador Programme to promote knowledge and understanding of the visitor economy in Northumberland and the roles available within the industry</p> <p>Create, promote and encourage shared recruitment opportunities for the sector to support industry recruitment</p> |

MARKETING

Overall budget - £86,500

| ACTION | Detail |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Marketing Delivery</p> | <p>Create 2022/23 marketing strategy with monthly themes</p> <p>Ensure press and influencer coverage via a pro-active media plan linked to the monthly themes. React promptly to all press/influencer enquiries.</p> <p>Utilise social media channels (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) to amplify our marketing messages</p> <p>Create one or two consumer e-newsletters per month, open rate over 35%</p> <p>Produce two blog posts per month supporting the monthly themes.</p> <p>5% increase in unique website visitors by Dec 2022. Measure satisfaction levels and conversions to a booking via a website survey</p> <p>Replace the current DMS by August 2022 to ensure longevity of the platform</p> <p>Implementation of TXGB or alternative online booking system on the website to allow bookability and future monetisation</p> <p>Produce a 2023 Days Out leaflet - cost of advertising covers all production and distribution. Achieve ROI of 20:1 - 2022 leaflet evaluated Jan 2023.</p> |
| <p>Marketing partnerships</p> | <p>Work with neighbouring DMOs to promote the North East region</p> <p>Develop and build on links with industry partners such as Tourism Alliance, B&B association.</p> |
| <p>Asset development</p> | <p>Create database of photo assets that can be utilised by Visit Northumberland and partners</p> |
| <p>Exhibitions and events</p> | <p>Identify consumer and trade exhibitions, both domestic and international.</p> |

An aerial photograph of a beach. The top half shows dark blue-green ocean water with white foam from waves crashing onto the shore. The bottom half shows golden-brown sand with several sets of tire tracks and footprints. The overall scene is captured from a high angle, looking down at the coastline.

VISIT
NORChumberland

Business Plan *2022/23*

FINANCIAL AND FUDICIARY

SECTION EIGHT: Financials

OPERATING BUDGET

Visit Northumberland is funded and operates as a public/private partnership.

Core income consists of an agreed two-year Service Level Agreement with Northumberland County Council and core staffing costs of NCC staff, partner contributions from tourism industry businesses and other public sector entities involved in destination management and promotion. This

funding in financial year 2022-23 also includes an element of support from the North of Tyne Combined Authority product development project funds and carry forward of surplus of £111,160. Other marketing incomes are generated through delivery of partner marketing campaign and product development initiatives when these are available, and small levels of income support from contribution to NI costs and bank interest.

| | Visit Northumberland Ltd | Northumberland County Council | Visit Northumberland |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| INCOME | | | |
| SLA | £130,000 | | |
| Marketing/Partnership | £65,000 | | |
| Marketing and other income | £26,500 | | |
| Core staff and admin | | £289,922 | |
| Projects - Star Trails | £6,000 | £63,500 | |
| Projects - Alnwick | £10,000 | £100,000 | |
| Carry forward/Surplus | £111,160 | | |
| TOTAL INCOME | £348,660 | £453,422 | £802,082 |
| EXPENDITURE | | | |
| Marketing | £86,500 | | |
| Engagement | £16,500 | | |
| Strategy | £14,000 | | |
| Projects - Star Trails | | £63,500 | |
| Projects - Alnwick | | £100,000 | |
| Core staff and admin | | £289,922 | |
| Overheads/Admin | £165,000 | | |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | £282,000 | £453,422 | £735,422 |
| SURPLUS/DEFICIT | | | £66,660 |



Expenditure is split between operation and activity/delivery costs, with activities only undertaken within the available budget generated through the partnership incomes received. Project delivery allows for contribution to core operational costs. Assumptions have been made that for future forecasting for 2022/23 and 2023/24 budgets that partnership revenues will increase to contribute to delivery costs.

Activity expenditure for marketing delivery, business engagement and strategy development is split approximately 75%/15%/10% respectively and reviewed annually, with the balance of costs against income relating to project delivery, operational and overhead/administrative costs.

A detailed monthly operating budget underpins this activity and is Board reviewed and approved by a Finance committee before being submitted to the Board each month.

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