

Denbighshire County Council **Tourism Strategy** 2019-2022





Tourism makes an important contribution to Denbighshire's economic well-being:

Tourism already injects much needed revenue into the local economy (£490m STEAM¹ 2017) and supports over 6,200 jobs in the County (STEAM 2017). In addition, tourism supports local services and infrastructure which benefit local people and helps promote a positive image of the county to the outside world.

Tourism can also affect the natural environment and general character of an area. It is important that tourism is developed and managed in a way that ensures long-term sustainable prosperity and success.

Tourism has many contributors to its success. For example, countryside and land management, heritage, infrastructure for events and leisure activities, support for businesses and planning regulations are important contributors to a thriving Tourism sector. In Denbighshire this complexity is reflected in the number of strategies and action plans that exist within service areas. This strategy is designed to ensure best outcomes are achieved in the area of tourism by streamlining and prioritising areas of focus for the Council.

¹STEAM: STEAM (The Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Model) is derived from a model developed in the process of creating a ten-year tourism policy for the province of Saskatchewan, Canada, in 1981. It is widely accepted in the UK as a useful model for indicating the impact of tourism in the local economy.



Corporate Plan Priorities

The ambition of Denbighshire's Corporate Plan is to ensure that Denbighshire is a place where residents and businesses are well connected and resilient; where young people have opportunities for affordable housing and acquire skills and jobs to lead successful and fulfilling lives and where we all enjoy an attractive and protected environment. The Plan contains specific actions that will be delivered over five years but, perhaps even more importantly, these actions are designed to have an impact beyond the next five years with future generations in mind. This tourism strategy is drafted in line with the Corporate Plan and shares the ambition of having an impact on tourism in the county for generations to come.

One of the priorities of Denbighshire County Council's Corporate Plan 2017-22 is to ensure the County's environment is 'Attractive and protected, supporting well-being and economic prosperity'. Part of this priority concerns itself with raising the profile of the County as a place to visit, in order to capitalise on Denbighshire's economic potential.

Economic and Community Ambition Strategy 2013-2023

Economic development continues to be a priority for our Council and the ECA Strategy identifies Tourism as a key sector in the County with opportunities for further growth.

Visit Wales

Welsh Government's Partnership for Growth 2013-2020 tourism strategy has the following vision:

Wales will provide the warmest of welcomes, outstanding quality, excellent value for money and memorable, authentic experiences to every visitor.

The goal is for tourism to grow in a sustainable way in Wales and to make an increasing contribution to the economic, social and environmental well-being of Wales. Our Tourism Strategy is closely aligned to Visit Wales' priorities for tourism across Wales, with a focus on deriving the greatest value to Denbighshire from the national priorities and regional marketing campaigns.

Our Principles

At the heart of our Tourism strategy is a particular focus on SUSTAINABILITY and COLLABORATION, as defined by the Well-being of Future Generations Act. Sustainable development is about improving the way that we can achieve our economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being; we are seeking to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. We have seen the blight of over-development in parts of the world and we are aware of our responsibility to ensure that by increasing tourism in the County we should not be jeopardising the assets that attract the visitors in the first place.

Our Priorities

Our three key outcomes that we want to achieve for Tourism in Denbighshire are:

- People visit Denbighshire throughout the year
- People stay in Denbighshire longer
- People spend more money in the County

In order to achieve these outcomes we will focus on the geographic CROWD-PULLERS to attract people to Denbighshire, and encourage visitors to discover Denbighshire through a number of DISCOVERY THEMES:

CROWD-PULLERS

- Rhyl and Prestatyn
- Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), including the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site
- Llangollen
- The Vale of Clwyd

DISCOVERY THEMES

- Active & Adventure Tourism
- Historic Towns & Heritage Tourism
- Food and Drink Tourism
- Picturesque Landscapes

How We Organise Ourselves and Work with Others

While activities sit across a number of services within the Council, we will deliver this Strategy by organising our work in the following way, focusing on making best use of available resources through collaboration and efficiency.

Asset Management

Sustainably managing and investing in our assets to make them accessible and attractive to visitors. Within this area we will also lead the Corporate Plan project to 'Improve Infrastructure to make it easier to stage events'.

Destination Management

Bringing to bear the Council's resources to making the visitor's experience of the County a pleasurable one.

Business Development

Working with and for existing businesses and supporting inward investment to help achieve our ambition for the County.

Destination Marketing

Developing and delivering marketing products to help us achieve our desired outcomes.



Key Challenges and Opportunities

Our natural resources are unparalleled, with the hills and rivers in the south and the wide open beaches to the north of the County accessible particularly from the North West of England and the Midlands.

Our heritage attractions are many and varied, and, like our natural resources, easily accessible.

In common with much of Wales, our tourism activity is currently focussed on the summer season.

Much of our county is not well served with mobile phone or broadband coverage, and our businesses can struggle to compete in the digital marketplace.

We have a limited number of places for tourists to stay overnight, so that the ambition for events and attractions is limited by the number of people who are able to stay locally.

With the seasonal nature of our existing tourism market, jobs in the tourism sector tend to be seasonal and low-paid

and local people are attracted by higher paid and more sustainable career opportunities away from the County.

The sub-regional and regional nature of the Tourism landscape will challenge our approach as we are in partnership with others whose priorities may differ from ours.

As a local authority with diminishing resources at our disposal, we are heavily reliant on external funding to help achieve our ambitions with regards to tourism.

We have challenges in attracting people with the right skills and abilities to serve the tourist trade throughout the year. We are actively involved in the development and delivery of the North Wales Economic Ambition Strategy which includes workstreams, such as the development of a Skills and Employment Hub, which will positively impact on this area.

We believe that by clarifying our ambition and our priorities we will address these challenges and help maximise the potential of our assets to deliver sustainable tourism development across the County.





How Will We Know if We Are Succeeding?

We will develop meaningful measures to tell us if we are succeeding in our ambitions of attracting people to Denbighshire throughout the year, staying longer and spending more. STEAM measures will help us to compare our performance with other areas of the UK, for example:

- Overall Economic Impact of Tourism
- Number of Staying Visitors
- Number of FTE Jobs Supported by Tourism Spend

We will also develop local measures, such as surveys, and qualitative measures such as questionnaires and use of economic impact assessment models.



How Will We Monitor the Delivery of the Strategy?

We will maintain a focus on the priorities in this Strategy by disbanding the established Destination Management Liaison Group, and creating a new Tourism Oversight Group which has representatives from all the relevant Services within the Council, the Lead Member for Tourism, and a representative from the Tourism Partnership, our key strategic partnership with Tourism Groups and Businesses in Denbighshire.

In future all our tourism initiatives will be considered through the lens of this strategy and the Tourism Oversight Group, so that we maintain a strict focus on our key priorities and ambitions and do not dilute our efforts by resourcing other potential areas of focus.

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