

# CITY, COAST AND COUNTRYSIDE



**GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE & RUTLAND TOURISM ACTION PLAN 2021-2025**

**FINAL DRAFT - DECEMBER 2020**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Greater Lincolnshire & Rutland is a well-established seaside tourism destination, but has an opportunity to expand and diversify into new markets and new audiences to provide a much needed boost to the local visitor economy.

The Greater Lincolnshire & Rutland Tourism Action Plan 2020-2025 has been developed to outline a strategy for expanding tourism over the next five years. It was inspired by the government's Tourism Sector Deal and its four key themes of Investment, Skills, Product Development and Marketing. The Action Plan covers an area comprising the counties of Lincolnshire and Rutland, and the unitary authority areas of North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire. This coincides with the boundary of the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP).

The Plan sets out a vision for developing GLR as a nationally and internationally important tourism destination, linking very closely with the main objectives of the Tourism Sector Deal and the main priorities set out in the draft Local Industrial Strategy prepared by the GLLEP.

10 key priorities are set out as 5 Visitor Themes and 5 Delivery Tools –

Visitor Themes –

- Sustainable Tourism
- Extending the Tourism Season
- Enhancing the Product
- Increasing Productivity
- Improving Local Infrastructure

Delivery Tools –

- Investment in Skills
- Marketing
- Customer Insight

- Supporting Local Businesses
- Partnership Working

For each of the Tools and Themes, the report sets out a number of headline actions, with performance measures, and then more detailed actions are set out in Appendix 3. Across all the themes there is a need for re-imaging, re-purposing and re-targeting the visitor offer to bring about a step change in tourism provision. It is hoped that the co-ordinated approach set out will help to bring about significant commercial investment and enterprise in the sector, which will reflect positively on those living, working and investing in the area.

The Plan will also help to target the recovery from the economic consequences of the Coronavirus pandemic for local tourism businesses that have been badly affected and provide significant benefits to local residents. The key focus needs to be on supporting and developing local businesses and encouraging visitor spend across the area.

Consultations during the preparation of the Action Plan have indicated that there is a particular opportunity to expand the offer for outdoor and nature tourism to extend the tourism season beyond the summer months. Coupled with this is a growing awareness of sustainability issues and the need for businesses and visitors to be aware of their potential environmental impacts.

There is clearly a lot happening in GLR to promote tourism, but there is a need for this to be better co-ordinated and the area better marketed through a range of digital means.

The Tourism Sector Deal is an exciting opportunity for GLR and its visitor economy to show the world what it has to offer, both to external visitors and local residents to meet their social, events, entertainment and leisure needs.

## VISION STATEMENT

**When people think of Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland they will know it to be an area that embraces an exciting combination of city, coast and countryside that will deliver the best visitor experiences.**

**It will be a draw for visitors all year round with thriving and high quality local businesses. Sustainable tourism will be at the heart of everything we do and online bookability will make Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland an easy destination to choose. The City of Lincoln is a showcase for English history; the coast provides vast spaces for nature as well as traditional seaside resorts; and the countryside provides opportunities for walking, cycling, horse riding and nature study. These combine with historic market towns and a rich heritage that makes sure there is always plenty to see and do.**

## INTRODUCTION

Greater Lincolnshire & Rutland (GLR) is already a successful tourism destination for both day visitors and day visitors. In 2019, tourism contributed £2.49bn to the local economy in Greater Lincolnshire (4.5% higher than 2018) and £135.6m in Rutland. The visitor economy supported 23,670 jobs in Greater Lincolnshire and 1,754 in Rutland. There is now an opportunity to build on this success whilst also securing the area's recovery from Coronavirus.

This Action Plan has been prepared by Lincolnshire County Council on behalf of a consortium of local tourism organisations and businesses.

The Action Plan relates to the area covered by the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP) and includes the County of Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire and the County of Rutland. Throughout this report Greater Lincolnshire & Rutland is abbreviated to GLR.

The purpose of the Action Plan is to build on the wide experience in the area and the success of previous projects to identify and enhance those areas of the visitor economy that are not operating to maximum capacity or effectiveness.

The Action Plan seeks to align with the priorities of the Tourism Sector Deal and the Local Industrial strategy prepared by the GLLEP. This will also inform the area's response to overcoming the impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic.

## THE NEED FOR A TOURISM ACTION PLAN

The Tourism Sector Deal and the Local Industrial Strategy together create a unique opportunity for the GLR tourism industry to expand and develop over the next 5 years. There are many opportunities for organisations and businesses to work more closely and effectively together, to the advantage of both residents and visitors.

## SWOT ANALYSIS

As the country, hopefully, moves into the recovery phase from COVID-19, there will be a pressing need to boost tourism and to provide enhanced opportunities for holidays in UK locations. GLR, would be well placed to expand its tourism offer and create the new jobs that will be essential to sustaining the local visitor economy.

Whilst the GLR tourism industry is very active in developing partnerships and joint initiatives, there is still considerable scope to develop this further by identifying shared objectives and actions and developing a more collegiate approach to working. It is important to build on successes such as the Visitor Economy Board and Visit Lincoln, the Destination Management Organisation (DMO) that has been established for 9 years.

The Action Plan aims to simplify the partnership process, so that organisations can work together effectively to deliver a shared vision for GLR. This would strengthen existing, and develop new, partnerships whilst developing a major area -wide programme of actions to achieve significant growth and better co-ordination of the tourism market.

With the local tourism industry relying on many small and micro-businesses, there is an opportunity for additional funding to make a real difference and to boost a number of local enterprises and diversify the market within the area.

This Action Plan is designed to provide strategic direction for local businesses and public and voluntary bodies to ensure that opportunities are maximised and the benefits are shared across the area.

## IDENTIFYING THE KEY ISSUES

The SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) below has been undertaken using input from consultations and the Tourism Sector Deal workshops.



## Strengths

- Existing tourism worth £2.49bn per year (excluding Rutland)
- 39,000 people employed in tourism (excluding Rutland)
- Established tourist destinations eg Lincoln, Skegness
- The area offers something for everyone (beach holidays for families, culture and history, outdoors and nature, etc.).
- Good track record of delivering major tourism projects with associated benefits for the local population
- Visitor Economy Board established as part of the Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland (GLR) Local Enterprise Partnership
- The current Destination Management Organisation has been very successful with being involved in several Discover England Funded projects.
- GLR has many established international links and stories that have meaning to local communities, domestic visitors and international visitors.
- The University of Lincoln attracts 14,000 students and their friends and family to the City every year.
- Town Deals in place for Lincoln, Grimsby, Scunthorpe, Skegness, Mablethorpe and Boston
- Greater Lincolnshire already has a strong nature tourism offer with year round wildlife interest.
- The Wash is one of eastern England's last great wildernesses and one of the most important wetlands for wildlife in Europe.
- Heritage Action Zones have been established in Lincoln and Grantham
- Future High Street Fund projects in Holbeach and Grantham
- Existing cycleways, walking routes and waterways, including the National Cycle Network, Viking Way, England Coast Path and Marinas
- Renowned heritage attractions in Lincs e.g. Lincoln Cathedral, International Bomber Command Centre, Belton House
- Aviation Heritage Lincolnshire attracts over 250,000 visitors per year.
- Popular events e.g. Burghley Horse Trials, Lincoln Christmas Market
- GLR has excellent road connections with the rest of the country via the A1, M180 and A46
- Azuma Trains are now operating direct train services to Grantham and Lincoln on the East Coast Main Line.
- Quality local produce, particularly food and drink.

## Weaknesses

- Much of the tourism is seasonal
- General public perception of Lincolnshire is not always good
- Lack of a clear identity for Greater Lincolnshire
- Fragmentation in area promotion for tourism
- Lack of concentration of linked tourist attractions/offering – other than say in Lincoln, around Skegness etc
- Lack of financial support from public organisations to facilitate the coordination of tourism marketing
- Lack of bookable products and experiences.
- Rail links to the area need to be improved
- Lack of investment in skills
- Short term nature of hospitality jobs
- Shortage of customer insight data
- Poor broadband in some areas
- Productivity is low in some areas
- Major reliance on small businesses
- Shortage of accommodation eg hotels
- Many tourism experiences are currently quite localised and could be distributed further across Greater Lincolnshire eg hospitality facilities, countryside recreation opportunities
- Product knowledge of Greater Lincolnshire amongst visitors and local businesses
- Local tourism businesses and organisations don't speak with one voice
- Lack of understanding and pride within the area about The Wash and its benefits to Lincolnshire residents and businesses, and potential for tourism.
- Lack of equestrian routes

## Opportunities

- Promote and expand active outdoor tourism eg walking, cycling, horse riding, carriage driving, waterway-based activities, heritage and nature tourism.
- Enhance the Natural Coast, including Heritage Coast definition and the England Coast Path.
- Increase clarity of branding, focussing on countryside areas such as the Wolds, the Fens, the uplands of Kesteven and Rutland.
- Encourage heritage groups, which are community and volunteer-led and can often provide opportunities for interpretation for visitors.
- Making tourism in GLR more sustainable to broaden the area's appeal to environmentally conscious visitors.
- Climate change, and our response to its effect on the coastline, could provide opportunities for wildlife and tourism.
- Potential for an area -wide tourism partnership organisation working under the Visitor Economy Board.
- Develop working partnerships to improve the tourism offer and better co-ordinate marketing.
- Working with the University of Lincoln to develop training and boost the local economy.
- Improved training programmes to keep workers in the sector
- Opportunity to support 'place marketing'.
- Digital skills training and online bookability of products and services.
- Better 'packaging' of trips, including group travel and special interest.
- Increase opportunities for local people to make day trips
- Increase business tourism
- Develop packages to increase in length and frequency of 'staycations' and an extended holiday season following Covid-19
- Improve accessibility to attractions and accommodation
- Attracting family groups and extended generations on holiday
- An ageing population could also be an opportunity as the pool of potential volunteers for the sector as it grows.
- Opportunity to create a culture of local food and drink within the area, with a particular opportunity around The Wash and its seafood.
- Improvements in the movement of visitors around the county i.e. city, market towns, coast and countryside.

## Threats

- Disruption to EU visitor numbers due to Brexit
- Possible difficulty in recruiting in the Hospitality industry following our departure from the EU
- Potential difficulty in recruiting seasonal workers
- Recovery from the economic impacts of the Coronavirus
- Ageing population may alter visitor needs
- Climate change could lead to physical changes eg coastal erosion, flooding
- Impacts of visitors on nature if not managed sensitively
- Resilience of small businesses, voluntary run organisations and charities
- Reduction in local authority funding for internal tourism posts and participation in tourism activities
- General decline in popularity of larger coach groups for residential stays
- Lack of buy-in by local residents; not everyone wants more visitors to come to the area.
- Increase in road traffic may threaten other outdoor activities
- Covid-19 impact on coach industry generally with several significant operators going bust
- Lack of investment in roads, infrastructure and the public realm.

The SWOT Analysis shows that tourism in GLR has a lot of strengths, which have developed as a result of a well-established tourism offer. However, there are also a number of weaknesses, particularly around seasonality, job security, broadband availability and marketing. Many of these will be addressed through the Action Plan.

The analysis has also identified that there are a lot of opportunities to develop tourism in the area, whilst improving facilities for local residents, and these will also aid recovery from the impacts of COVID-19. The most commonly identified opportunities are for enhancing GLR as a destination for active outdoor tourism, such as cycling, walking and horse riding, and as a high quality nature and heritage tourism destination.

It is important to remember that the area already has a well-established tourism industry and visitor economy and that it is important to sustain this during the Covid-19 recovery and beyond, as well as identifying new opportunities to make major improvements in the long term.

There are also concerns about how tourism is organised and marketed, with opportunities for setting up a new Destination Management Organisation, building on the success of Visit Lincoln, with associated branding, customer insight programmes and a 'one stop shop' website.

Potential threats were also identified, particularly in relation to the recovery from COVID-19 and the impact of Brexit in relation to overseas tourism.

Consultations have been undertaken with a range of organisations and 3 workshops were held with tourism operators (one virtually). The main findings of the workshops have been incorporated into the SWOT analysis.

Questionnaire surveys were used rather than face-to face meetings to consult a range of local organisations due to the Coronavirus lockdown. Issues raised by consultees have been incorporated into the proposed Strategic Objectives,

Visitor Themes, Delivery Tools and Action Plans. A more detailed list of actions has been incorporated into Appendix 3.

Continuing consultation and collaboration will be essential with a wide range of organisations and user groups to address the issues that have been raised and to secure a thriving and dynamic visitor economy is developed across the Plan's area.

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**



- 1. To develop and promote GLR as an exemplar in sustainable tourism.**
- 2. To identify and implement opportunities to extend the tourism season beyond the summer peak period, particularly through increased outdoor and nature tourism.**
- 3. To encourage investment in the area to enhance the tourism product and cater for a wider range of audiences.**
- 4. To work with local businesses and attractions to increase their productivity and support them as they recover from the economic impacts of the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.**
- 5. To improve infrastructure and services for visitors to access the area's attractions and to facilitate movement between them.**
- 6. To develop and deliver a comprehensive programme of skills training for workers and volunteers in the tourism, hospitality and wildlife sectors.**
- 7. To build and expand existing marketing programmes to develop a co-ordinated networked offer which allows visitors to book in advance and use technology to upsell experiences, packages, targeting audiences and their specific interests, with the use of an intelligent digital platform.**
- 8. To co-ordinate survey information to develop an area-wide customer insight programme to provide high quality information for local businesses.**
- 9. To improve the support for local business by providing a co-ordinated service to maximise opportunities for business development advice and funding.**
- 10. To maximise partnership working by developing a strong governance and delivery structure, which will unleash the private and third sectors and enable them to work closely together.**

## **DIAGRAM SUMMARISING VISITOR THEMES AND DELIVERY TOOLS**



# VISITOR THEME 1 - SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

## WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED TO DATE?

- Nature tourism has been promoted in the area through the development of sites such as Far Ings, Donna Nook, Frampton Marsh and Freiston Shore, and a substantial area of accessible green space has been created at the Lincolnshire Coastal Country Park.
- Walking and cycling have been developed through new cycle paths and Walking Festivals eg Lincolnshire Wolds.
- Farm diversification schemes have been supported by LEADER and the Rural Development Programme for England.

## WHAT ARE WE PROPOSING TO DO?

- Establish GLR as an exemplar location for sustainable tourism by seeking to integrate the environment, the economy and benefits to the local community, including developing networking opportunities for sharing experiences.
- Identify opportunities to address the impacts of climate change and climate change adaptation, including managing the coast for flood protection, promoting eco-tourism and agri-tourism, and working alongside Lincolnshire County Council's emerging Green Masterplan.
- Work in partnership to implement substantial enhancements to the quality of the local environment, including Nature Recovery Networks, enriching the area's accessible green spaces and enhancing the use of farmland for environmental benefits, public access and heritage interpretation.

- Develop sustainable transport modes to reduce dependence on car travel, including improved rail and bus connections, promoting cycling, walking and horse riding across GLR to both visitors and residents, including the development of new off-road routes.
- Seek to reduce carbon emissions from the tourism industry by encouraging renewable energy use, particularly utilising solar power and existing wind turbines, reducing the use of single-use plastics and encouraging the use of electric cars and bikes.
- Work closely with local planning authorities to develop environmentally and economically sustainable businesses, such as eco-lodges or other sustainable accommodation, and the sustainable uses for historic buildings for accommodation or hospitality.
- Work with local businesses and communities to encourage local sourcing of products, and to ensure that new tourism developments bring long-lasting benefits to the local economy.

## HOW ARE WE GOING TO DO THAT?

- Encourage the accreditation of tourism businesses which demonstrate sustainable practices using a green accreditation scheme.

## HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

- Surveys of visitors using alternatives to the car to visit GLR or using their car less whilst here.
- Numbers of businesses awarded accreditation for being a sustainable business.

## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Sustainable tourism seeks to ensure that economic, social and environmental impacts are considered together and that a long-term view is taken to continuing business development going forward.

A key part of this is to consider the environmental impacts of tourism operations, whether it is the energy used during transport, physical impacts on environmental habitats or the use of resources such as energy, water or plastics. To expand tourism sustainably, it is not necessary to greatly increase the numbers of visitors, but we could encourage them to stay longer and spend more per head.

Tidal and coastal flooding, which could impact on tourist accommodation, must be addressed to manage an expected sea level rise of 1m over the next 100 years. Occupancy restrictions currently exist on more vulnerable types of accommodation eg caravans, log cabins, eco-lodges, restricting use to 15 March to 31 October. Changing sea levels could help to create new coastal wildlife habitats, which could become attractions in themselves. The Environment Agency has a new framework in place and there is a long term vision for the Connected Coast.

GLR is a large rural area that is largely reliant on cars to travel between towns and villages. Train services to and within the area are generally infrequent and of poor quality. A new direct train service from London to Lincoln has been introduced and will make it easier for tourists to get to Lincolnshire. This is coupled with a new Transport Hub in Lincoln, allowing links between train and bus services. There is considerable scope for improving east to west services, linking to resorts such as Skegness and Cleethorpes.

There is scope to encourage more sustainable methods of transport within GLR, such as cycling, walking, horse riding and carriage driving. Much of the area is quite flat or rolling and lends itself particularly well to encouraging these activities.

There is scope to improve long distance and local bus services, including expanding organised coach tours, and linking with regular steam excursions to places like Scarborough and Whitby. There will be investments in local train stations through the Towns Fund eg Boston, Skegness.

With Covid-19 and an increasing awareness of climate change and the environmental harm caused by air travel, it is more likely that visitors will look for 'staycations' and choose holidays which have less impact on the environment. This will require businesses and transport providers to consider their environmental impacts and carbon footprints.

Businesses will be encouraged to consider their energy use, maximising renewable energy where possible, and consider their use of non-renewable resources. Given the importance of the sea and areas such as the Humber and the Wash, to GLR, it is an excellent location in which to undertake a campaign to reduce the use of single-use plastics and other non-recyclable materials.

Specific facilities could be developed, such as eco-lodges to provide increased choice to cater for visitors wishing to reduce their carbon footprint.

Much of the industry in GLR revolves around food and drink, creating an essential link between the farming community and the tourism industry. This could be achieved by expanding the local sourcing of food and drink and making this part of the GLR brand.

Nature and countryside tourism is another growth area both locally and nationally. As long as it is carefully managed so as not to cause harm to the wildlife, it provides an environmentally friendly option for visitors which can also be promoted outside the main holiday periods. It is important to achieve a sustainable approach that the tourism sector recognises that itself as a stakeholder in the natural environment as well as vice versa. The management of the natural environment is everyone's responsibility and not solely that of the environment sector.

The re-use and renovation of heritage buildings for tourism uses also contributes to sustainability, providing opportunities for local construction businesses as well as new tourism enterprises, particularly as they are usually located in towns and villages, requiring less car travel. It is essential that supportive and consistent policies are included in all Local Plans. A number of local authorities are already working on combined plans.

## VISITOR THEME 2 - EXTENDING THE TOURIST SEASON

### WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED TO DATE?

- Existing festivals and events eg Lincoln Christmas Market, Lincolnshire Show, Frequency Festival, The Gathering Festival in Cleethorpes, Gravity Fields and Rutland Bird Fair.
- Butlins in Skegness has been successful in extending from a 32-weeks a year business to a year round business by being creative with its use of resources.
- 14,000 students at the University of Lincoln encourage around 100,000 visitors throughout the year and contribute £300m to the local economy.

### WHAT ARE WE PROPOSING TO DO?

- Carry out a major campaign to promote opportunities for nature, heritage and outdoor tourism throughout the year.
- Improve visitor facilities at nature tourism sites and develop new visitor attractions to 'fill gaps' between existing ones.
- Market GLR as a location for all-year outdoor activities, including cycling (building on the success of Cycle England), horse riding, walking, boating on the waterways, fishing in lakes and rivers, and offshore sailing, including The Wash.
- Develop a variety of accommodation choices throughout the year, including pet friendly options and extending the season for stays in caravans on the coast, taking into account risks from coastal flooding in the winter months.
- Encourage and support additional festivals, events and exhibitions, including working with heritage sites, museums and the local aviation heritage.

- Work with educational establishments to encourage more overnight visits by friends and family to resident students.
- Work with the organisers of sports and other large events to encourage visitors to extend their stays and utilise local accommodation and visitor attractions.
- Identify, with Visit Lincoln and the University, opportunities and promote Business Tourism, utilising conference facilities in hotels, educational institutions and public venues.

### HOW ARE WE GOING TO DO THAT?

- Expand the Coastal Communities team approach to include the natural coast from the Wash and Humber.
- Develop themed breaks eg outdoor activities, nature, heritage, aviation heritage, market towns to target markets out of season, such as retired people, 'empty nesters', pre-school, disabled people, nature enthusiasts and birdwatchers.
- Work with local accommodation providers and attractions to 'package' tourism activities and short family breaks by, for example, location or a particular theme.
- Run workshops for accommodation providers on the needs of residential cyclists to expand on the cycling package offer.

### HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

- Customer insight eg STEAM data to measure increases in overnight stays, especially during the shoulder/low seasons.
- Measure visitor numbers at key nature tourism, historic sites and heritage attractions.

## EXTENDING THE TOURIST SEASON

Greater Lincolnshire & Rutland has long been a popular location for summer holidays in the coastal resorts, including Skegness, Mablethorpe and Cleethorpes. However, the season has always been very short with many places closing down outside the holiday season. This contrasts with Lincoln where there is some tourism all year round.

To extend the season it is important to concentrate on the shoulder season, but also to provide opportunities all year round. Christmas, Twix-mas and New Year breaks are potential growth markets. This would help to support tourism businesses, providing more secure employment for staff and opening Lincolnshire up to a wider range of visitors. Students create an opportunity for additional visits from friends and family, and to support events.

Increasing out of season accommodation adjacent to the coast will need to concentrate on buildings rather than caravans, log cabins and eco-lodges because many areas are subject to coastal and tidal flooding, particularly in the winter months.

Outdoor and nature tourism are considered to be key areas for enhancing the area's offer. Cycling, walking, horse riding and carriage driving can be undertaken over much of the year and many of the nature reserves have more wildlife outside the summer season eg seals, wintering birds. Cycling has become increasingly popular during the Covid-19 lockdown and GLR provides an ideal location with existing cycle paths and areas of flat and rolling terrain.

There are opportunities to develop new sites into country parks or accessible nature reserves and countryside facilities. Around Market Rasen and Caistor, opportunities exist for developing the existing recreational opportunities, and for developing a new country park at Willingham. There is an opportunity to focus this provision on hubs in the market towns where high quality facilities, such as car parking, toilets and cafes can be provided.

Some nature reserve sites, such as Alkborough and Donna Nook were developed with limited visitor facilities due to concerns from local residents, but there may be scope to reconsider this, along with the local community, as part of this Plan. Rutland Water has been established by Anglian Water to a number of years and now receives 1.2 million visits per year.

A Coastal Communities Team, established by Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and Lincolnshire County Council has a common vision for the natural coast within Lincolnshire. This will be extended to form links with coastal reserves around the Wash and Humber. The National Trust has bought the old golf course at Sandilands and this will make an important natural link between the Coastal Country Park and Natural England's nature reserves further north. An application is to be submitted for Heritage Coast definition.

There are a number of sporting events each year that bring people to GLR and the immediately adjacent counties. There is an opportunity, through targeted marketing, to encourage visitors to stay for a few days to see the local area. Examples of sports events attracting visitors are football matches at the area's 3 football league clubs; cricket in Grantham and Trent Bridge, Nottingham; horse racing at Market Rasen and Southwell; motorsports at Cadwell Park and Skegness Beach; the Lincoln Festival of Cycling; and the Burghley Horse Trials. There is also the National Golf Centre Academy at Woodhall Spa and a number of events organised by Boston Rowing Club.

Business tourism can create an additional demand for visits out of season to attend conferences and meetings. These visitors could extend their stay and may return on a private visit at a later date. Covid 19 research is indicating that Business Tourism may be slow to recover, so the enhancement of facilities through, for example, improved broadband connectivity, is essential.

New festivals and events, including local food promotions and music festivals could be considered in order to extend the season. Out of season activities could be provided by historic sites and museums, with some additional programming. Examples include the Annual Churches Festival and the Open Heritage Weekend. There are opportunities to celebrate memorial events such as Mayflower 400 and 80th anniversaries of major World War 2 events eg Dambusters raid, D Day etc.

Heritage features such as ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens can be visited all year round and there is an opportunity to develop 'packages' of accommodation and visits or coach tours from elsewhere in the country. Market towns in Greater Lincolnshire & Rutland also have scope for more facilities to encourage increased visitor numbers and encourage stays in historic buildings.



## VISITOR THEME 3 - ENHANCING THE PRODUCT

### WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED TO DATE?

- Major projects have been undertaken to enhance the visitor experience at Lincoln Castle and Cathedral, the International Bomber Command Centre & North Sea Observatory
- Rutland Water is established as a popular outdoor location, receiving 1.2 million visits per year.
- CoastNEL received £3.8m in 2017 from the Government's Coastal Communities Fund for public realm, public arts, marketing and events in Cleethorpes.

### WHAT ARE WE PROPOSING TO DO?

- Work with Visit Lincoln and national and regional tourism organisations to secure the long term sustainability of key visitor attractions, develop new 'visitor experiences', and use digital networks to promote the visitor economy.
- Carry out a review of the accessibility of major attractions across the area and implement enhancement measures.
- Develop and promote GLR as a high quality location for outdoor, active pursuits, including the new England Coast Path; establishing the Viking Way as an internationally renowned all-year round walking route; improved equestrian facilities; accessible inland waterways; and cycle routes centred on the coast, the Wolds and the market towns;
- Work with Visit Lincoln, Lincoln BIG, Lincoln Heritage Action Zone and the University of Lincoln to promote the Lincoln as a key heritage attraction and as England's 'Best Small City'.
- Promote the market towns, such as Gainsborough, Sleaford, Horncastle, Stamford, and Oakham as local hubs to access local markets, visitor attractions and tourism businesses.

- Maximise opportunities for developing Public Art, public space/realm enhancements and interpretation to raise awareness of the natural and built heritage of Lincolnshire. Develop programmes of festivals, events and exhibitions to engage local people and visitors in the arts.
- Promote GLR's heritage and local distinctiveness, through an "Experience Historic Lincolnshire" programme to showcase and support individual attractions, touring exhibitions and accommodation providers.
- Bring together conservation organisations and other stakeholders involved in landscape-scale conservation to deliver green spaces, establish Nature Recovery Networks and encourage local uptake of the Government's Green Recovery Challenge Fund to address wildlife declines and provide benefits for people, to create new environmental jobs.
- Encourage the development and diversification of a range of visitor accommodation and hospitality venues, including hotel, pub and camping facilities.
- Promote the use of digital technology, virtual reality, augmented reality, mobile apps and live webcams to bring attractions to life and appeal to all ages.

### HOW ARE WE GOING TO DO THAT?

- Work closely with the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership on their new Nature Strategy for Greater Lincolnshire.
- Work closely with heritage organisations across the area.

### HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

- Increased visitor numbers at key sites - measured using surveys and pedestrian or vehicle counters.

## ENHANCING THE PRODUCT

GLR has invested heavily in developing its tourism offer in recent years. Significant works have been undertaken, including works to enhance Lincoln's Castle and Cathedral, IBCC, the Lincolnshire Waterways Partnership, the Boston Barrier and the creation of a number of coastal nature reserves.

Actions are urgently required to secure the futures of City of Lincoln tourism attractions, such as the Medieval Bishops' Palace, Museum of Lincolnshire Life and Usher Gallery, which are closed following the Covid-19 outbreak. Lincoln must continue to be a key focal point for tourism across GLR.

Whilst the area is established as one of the top seaside destinations in the summer season, there is considerable scope to enhance other facilities to create new visitor experiences, including encouraging visits for a longer period of the year, and developing outdoor, heritage and nature tourism.

The area has a number of waymarked and promoted cycle routes. On road routes include the North Sea Cycle Route, the coastal path and a number of cycle routes in the Lincolnshire Wolds, and off-road routes include the Water Rail Way, Spa Trail (Horncastle to Woodhall Spa) and Lincoln to Saxilby. There is a need for greater promotion of these routes.

The England Coast Path, when developed, will include a GLR Section from the Humber Bridge to the Wash. As of July 2020, the Humber Bridge to Mablethorpe section is in development and the Skegness to the Wash section is published but not yet approved. The Skegness to Mablethorpe section was the first section to open in February 2019. As the path is linear there will need to be stopping points and accommodation en route for walkers wanting to walk the whole length and packages that include luggage transfer.

The 147-mile long Viking Way long distance trail from the Humber Bridge to Oakham has been established for many years but there are still opportunities to develop better linkages with businesses along the route to provide hospitality and accommodation, web development and bookability.

A 12-mile carriage route in the Lincolnshire Wolds is part of the Paralympic Legacy Access Project (PLAP Route 1) and is promoted by the British Horse Society (BHS). This forms part of the 75 miles long Lindsey Trail.

There are 4000km of Public Rights of Way in Greater Lincolnshire (not including Rutland) but only 25% of these routes are accessible for horse riders and 5% for carriage drivers. The BHS are keen to extend the network of routes available for equestrian access and develop more well-maintained, circular and safe off-road routes, including quiet lanes. Better signage and maintenance of routes is required.

Nature tourism provides an opportunity to increase the tourism offer. A Nature Strategy is currently being developed by the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership. This will link closely with the Government's 25-year Environment Plan and the emerging Nature Recovery Network for England.

The Boston Barrier will protect the town from flooding and help to regenerate the town centre. A space is to be left for the addition of a lock in future, if required. There is scope to raise water levels in the town to regenerate the waterside, but this is not proposed at the present time. The improvement of visitor moorings is proposed as part of the Boston Town Deal.

Planning issues are crucial in terms of developing new products. It is essential that supportive policies on tourism development are included in the Local Plans across GLR to ensure that planning applications for new tourism developments can be approved.

A range of accommodation is required for all tastes and budgets. Recent studies have identified that there are opportunities to develop new hotels and to increase the use of public houses for accommodation and restaurant facilities. There are also opportunities to increase provision for camping and motor homes and for pet-friendly accommodation.

The National Centre for Art & Design (The Hub) in Sleaford is very active in working in partnerships, in developing events and activities to enhance the local economy and contributing to enhancing the product and extending the tourism season. This includes a number of Art and Heritage Trails and public art installations in Sleaford and across the villages of North Kesteven.

Improving accessibility for all forms an important part of the Tourism Sector Deal. It is particularly important to consider the needs of an increasingly ageing population, ensuring we get the basics right, including toilets, green spaces, car parks and refreshment facilities.

## VISITOR THEME 4 - INCREASING PRODUCTIVITY

### WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED TO DATE?

- STEAM data shows as gradual increase in stays in both Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland over recent years.
- The 'Cycle England' (DEF funded) project, in association with Yorkshire, has developed and promoted cycling holidays, particularly for the overseas market.
- The 'Explorers Road' (DEF funded) project developed a 500km touring route based on the A1, incorporating visits to Uppingham, Oakham, Grantham and Lincoln.

### WHAT ARE WE PROPOSING TO DO?

- Develop, through Visit Lincoln and the University of Lincoln, a more entrepreneurial approach to business development through improved skills development, networking and new delivery vehicles. Build on the experience of local businesses who have adapted their offer in the light of the Coronavirus pandemic, by sharing experiences.
- Encourage a step change on the use of technology within the sector to increase the efficiency and productivity of local businesses. Develop QR codes and apps to digitise systems for booking accommodation and events, and pre-ordering food.
- As part of the COVID-19 recovery, provide support to turn businesses around and become inbound travel trade ready, focussing on the demand for staycations, including in rural areas, then later widening marketing to overseas visitors.
- Increase productivity through major events eg Lincolnshire Show, Lincoln Christmas Market, the So Festival, Burghley Horse Trials, Rutland Bird Fair, and new events to celebrate the wildlife of the area.

- Develop and implement themed projects, 'organised' activity holidays and 'experiences' to bring together historic sites and accommodation providers to promote the local distinctiveness of different areas within GLR.
- Develop the productivity of the Wash and the Fens areas by developing new products eg wildlife tours.
- Review the criteria and the cost for the use of brown tourism signage to increase opportunities to promote local tourist attractions from major routes.

### HOW ARE WE GOING TO DO THAT?

- Work with travel providers, both locally and further afield, to identify opportunities to increase visits to GLR and encourage day trips by the residents of GLR and surrounding counties.
- Further develop the Lincs Pass Discount Card, developed by Heritage Lincolnshire, to better link attractions and hospitality businesses.
- Expand the sector support provided by the Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub to support the sector to develop, grow and increase sustainability.

### HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

- Increase in overnight stays
- Increase in visitor numbers at tourist attractions
- Trip Advisor scores – customer satisfaction
- Increased social media endorsements/retweets
- Increased attendance on business support workshops, conferences and upskilling support

## INCREASING PRODUCTIVITY

Covid-19 has had a significant impact on many of the local businesses and attractions that rely on tourism and day visits. As the virus recedes, there will be a need for businesses to gradually increase their productivity to reach former levels, and where possible, to increase the numbers of overnight stays and visitors to hospitality businesses and attractions.

Businesses will initially need to put in place contingency measures to comply with Government guidelines on social distancing, with a view to gradually increasing productivity over time. With many people having had to cancel holidays in the summer of 2020, there is a possibility of extending the season for staycations into the autumn and winter, and continuing this into 2021. Businesses will also need to ensure that additional visitors would not put local residents at increased risk of catching the virus.

In order to increase the productivity of the tourism industry it is necessary to create additional capacity, particularly to encourage more overnight stays by providing a range of all year round accommodation of a variety of different types. Once visitors have arrived in GLR they should be encouraged to stay longer and be able to visit a range of high quality attractions.

Productivity could also be increased by developing new services, whether it be transport to get to and around GLR, or hospitality and tourist attractions at the destinations.

GLR have sought to increase productivity in recent years by packaging accommodation and attractions. Two good examples of this are Cycle England, which targets the overseas cycling market for visits to Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, and the Explorers Road linking accommodation and attractions along the A1 corridor, including the history associated with the Roman road and military links. Similar packages could be considered for walking, horse riding, wildlife watching or aviation heritage, for example. Aviation heritage visits could celebrate the unique local history relating to World War II, including Cranwell, Scampton, Bomber Command, Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, Dambusters etc, and also the modern day, such as the Typhoon Jets at Coningsby.

GLR also hosts a number of annual events, which provide an opportunity, through targeted marketing, to increase visitor spend and overnight stays. One idea for a new event is the 'Viking Challenge', which would be a walking / charity race to raise awareness of the Viking Way and boost hospitality and accommodation businesses.

Increasing productivity requires potential visitors to have a higher awareness of what the area has to offer. Non-visitors to Lincolnshire were surveyed by Arkenford in 2017. Their findings were that the knowledge of Lincolnshire was fairly low, when asked about their holiday preferences people often wanted what GLR has but they were oblivious of what we had to offer.

There is clearly an opportunity to improve people's perceptions of the area and to provide packaged trips or themed trips for visitors with particular interests. These trips would increase footfall at visitor attractions and increase productivity for accommodation and hospitality businesses. The report identified the key draws as scenery, historic architecture, towns and culture.

There is a need to bring businesses and attractions together and that this would develop a better product knowledge so that additional visitor experiences could be upsold to visitors.

Working with the Town Deals, Future High Street Fund projects (Grantham and Holbeach and Heritage Action Zones (Grantham and Lincoln) and the proposed Destination Management Organisation, there is an opportunity to link in with place marketing for purposes other than tourism.

One way of encouraging more trips to GLR and multiple visits to attractions, accommodation and hospitality facilities would be to develop a GLR Visitor Pass or Discount Card. This could be developed from the current Lincs Pass. This approach has been taken in other locations, for example York (York Pass), Bath (Bath Reward Card), Cumbria (MyCumbria Card), and the Norfolk Passport. This could be linked to public transport, offering reductions to those arriving by rail, bus or bike.

# VISITOR THEME 5 - IMPROVING LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE

## WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED TO DATE?

- There is a network of established waymarked cycling and walking routes across GLR.
- A network of nature reserves has been developed stretching across the whole of GLR.
- The Lincolnshire Waterways Partnership has spent around £19m on enhancements to the visitor experience and leisure infrastructure on the waterways network.
- London to Lincoln direct train services have been established, arriving at a new Transport Hub, connecting to local bus services.

## WHAT ARE WE PROPOSING TO DO?

- Provide significant new tourism infrastructure to improve access to the coast eg Coastal Country Park, England Coast Path, off road cycle paths.
- Develop new public transport facilities across the area including direct train and bus services to GLR and improved linkages between local attractions, including the market towns.
- Link with place-making projects, including waterside regeneration projects at Grimsby Waterfront and Boston Waterspace Development, and the regeneration of seaside resorts eg Cleethorpes, Skegness, Mablethorpe, and the Vital and Viable East Lindsey Market Towns Project.
- Support the development of new multi-user routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders across GLR, working with user groups during the development phase.

- Support waterway restoration and enhancement projects across the area eg Grantham Canal, Sleaford Navigation, Louth Navigation, Horncastle Canal, and the Boston to Peterborough Wetland Corridor.
- Identify strategic improvements that can be made to digital infrastructure across the area, including broadband speeds, to support existing businesses and enable greater use of digital technology and a range of digital platforms.

## HOW ARE WE GOING TO DO THAT?

- Work with rail and bus operators to develop a more integrated public transport network and improved services for visitors to travel to the area and then move around between visitor attractions. Integrate information and ticketing systems.
- Undertake a programme of public realm enhancements and advertising programmes at arrival points to give a good first impression of GLR and aim to spread visitors across GLR by promoting smaller towns and villages and more local visitor facilities. Work with rail community partnerships to increase services at smaller stations in the rural areas.
- Ensure that tourism infrastructure and environmental enhancement policies are incorporated into future Local Transport Plans, Public Rights of Way Improvement Plans and Local Plans by working with local authorities.

## HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

- Positive planning application decisions in relation to significant tourism development projects.
- Increasing revenue from visitors across the Plan area.



## IMPROVING LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE

In order to increase the number of visits to GLR and encourage sustainable tourism, it is essential that transport modes other than the car are encouraged and promoted by the local authorities through their Local Plans and Local Transport Plans. There are opportunities to increase journeys by train, bus, bike, walking, boat along the waterways, on foot and on horseback. This could include additional leisure trips to the Wash and along the coast. A key to this is developing transport hubs such as the one at Lincoln and co-ordinating timetabling to facilitate connections between transport modes.

This infrastructure needs to link the key attractions in the area and accommodation locations. There are particular opportunities along the coast to provide a 'hopper' bus service between resorts and to link the coast with the Lincolnshire Wolds and the market towns. This has worked brilliantly in North Norfolk for the walking/birdwatching market and enables the message 'arrive by car, but then don't use it whilst on your visit'. Reductions in entry fees could be linked to sustainable transport use.

To encourage international visitors, there need to be regular transport links to the major airports, such as East Midlands, Birmingham, Doncaster Sheffield and Humberside. There could be simply transport links or organised tours of the area or following a particular theme. Some infrastructure enhancements such as coach parking may be required in the market towns to encourage more visits.

Cycle and car hire facilities should be encouraged at local railway and bus stations. These can include short term bike hire as in Lincoln or longer term hire to enable touring. There is scope to deliver local cycle routes, for example, to link transport hubs with key visitor attractions.

Consideration also needs to be given to providing high quality facilities at key locations for long distance coaches, organised coach tours, and short day visits by coach.

There would be a key role for the DMO for linking with the Town Deals for Greater Grimsby, Scunthorpe, Lincoln, Skegness, Mablethorpe and Boston, and the Future High Streets Fund in Grantham and Holbeach. These initiatives

seek to regenerate those locations and provide a stimulus for local businesses. Improved infrastructure is key, as well as catering for an increase in visitors.

The Lincolnshire Waterways Partnership has been active over a number of years to develop the waterways as a leisure resource for the area. This has included enhancing opportunities of the River Trent, Fosdyke and River Witham, and developing restoration opportunities on the Grantham Canal, Sleaford Navigation, Louth Canal and the Boston to Peterborough Wetland Corridor. There are several opportunities for further infrastructure enhancements.

There is a particular opportunity for regeneration in Boston, where the construction of the Boston Barrier and the development of the Boston to Peterborough Wetland Corridor will encourage the use of the waterspace by both waterways and sea-going boats. This could include additional leisure trips to the Wash and along the coast.

In considering the regeneration of the coastal towns there is an opportunity to assess the types of facilities currently provided and identify any gaps in provision. One gap identified during the consultations was that there is a lack of lido facilities along the coast.

Sustrans have identified areas of concern across GLR and where investment into traffic-free or quietways need to be improved. Sustrans work with all local authorities to invest in high quality traffic-free and quietway corridors that meet "Paths for Everyone" standards.

The British Horse Society has also identified a number of enhancement opportunities for riding and carriage driving.

The development in tourism across GLR requires a comprehensive broadband network to enable connectivity between businesses and services and to develop a comprehensive and easily accessible information network for customers. There are many areas of GLR where connectivity is poor, so digital infrastructure improvements are a priority for action.



# DELIVERY TOOL 1 – INVESTMENT IN SKILLS

## WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED TO DATE?

- Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce and Business Lincolnshire actively support local businesses with advice and training.
- GLR has received £370K from the Government's Coastal Communities Fund for the *"Coastal Sustainability through Careers and Business Skills in Greater Lincolnshire"* project to address skills needs and seasonal coastal tourism.
- Focused use of Adult Education Budget funding to address skills needs eg Food Safety in catering, IT Skills, World Host Customer Service, Professional Cookery, Hospitality Level 1.

## WHAT ARE WE PROPOSING TO DO?

- Identify and implement a programme of training to improve the customer welcome and improve the visitor experience across the whole of GLR.
- Establish a skills development partnership and Skills Portal for GLR, linking with Visit England's current skills strategy, and including Visit Lincoln, local business organisations, and academic institutions such as the Lincoln College Tourism School and the University of Lincoln. This will be a focus on hospitality as a professional discipline.
- Organise a programme of familiarisation visits for accommodation operators to local attractions. Consider a badge or ambassador scheme to recognise local knowledge.
- Expand apprenticeships and establish a structured programme of summer work placements in hospitality, tourism and heritage sites for school and university students. eg the Lincolnshire Heritage Forum's Student Forum.

- Co-ordinate a programme of business skills development for business owners and staff, and third sector organisations to ensure that talent/skills remain in GLR eg marketing, social media, digital marketing, funding, sustainability.
- Work with environmental organisations to provide farmland advisers to advise on wildlife friendly farming and provide training to council planners to deliver biodiversity net gain, resulting in a greener area with resulting eco-tourism benefits.
- Encourage providers to install stronger broadband connectivity and suitable IT equipment to access online courses.
- Address skills gaps amongst staff and volunteers in fundraising, countryside management, rights of way maintenance, and the maintenance and promotion of historic properties.

## HOW ARE WE GOING TO DO THAT?

- Co-ordinate a needs led application for funding, identifying specific skills gaps, working with apprenticeships, and working with schools and colleges on the curriculum content for T-levels in hospitality and tourism.
- Support and expand the Coastal Communities Fund project.

## HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

- No. of apprenticeships awarded
- No. of apprentices going on to work in the tourism sector
- No. of students taking T-levels in tourism and hospitality
- No. of adults taking skills provision in tourism and hospitality
- No. of adults gaining employment in tourism and hospitality as a result of the training undertaken

## INVESTMENT IN SKILLS

Having the right skills is clearly an important issue with many businesses and third sector organisations across GLR. Many businesses are keen to improve training of staff with a view to retaining them within the sector in the longer term.

Customer welcome is a key factor to consider in encouraging additional visits to and within GLR. Visitors need to feel welcomed, engaged, given correct information and information over and above what they are looking for - going that extra mile. It creates a fantastic memory of a visit, spreads the visitor journey, will lead to return visits and raise the destination's prestige. There needs to be a collaborative effort in raising the bar in this respect across the area.

- There has been a World Host customer service funded training available previously through training providers  
<https://people1st.co.uk/our-products/training-programmes/customer-service>
- Also previously there has been an online module for the county in terms of its product and offer that staff could work through to gain familiarisation. Each area could create its own pages and create a simple test at the end as a learning tool for anyone engaging within the tourism community.

It is important that young people are able gain training and experience in the sector, and this can be achieved by studying for T-levels and higher education courses and enrolling for apprenticeships or summer placements within the GLR Tourism Sector.

Additional skills training for staff is required to ensure they have a good knowledge of the local area and its attractions and that they have the necessary skills in marketing, social media and digital marketing. These skills will enable the upselling of accommodation and visitor attractions with a view to improving the visitor experience and increasing the length of stay. A badge or ambassador scheme could be considered to provide recognition of staff with a wider knowledge of the GLR Tourism offer.

Examples of existing training provision are the 'Instagram Bootcamp' developed by Business Lincolnshire, and targeted at businesses in the tourism sector, and the E Factor Group business advice company in North East Lincolnshire.

The provision of skills can be co-ordinated by an online Skills Portal with access to courses, on-the-job training opportunities and mentoring. This would build on work which is already being undertaken in Adult Education by Lincolnshire County Council, by education institutions, and organisations such as the Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce, Business Lincolnshire and the University of Lincoln.

One of the key objectives of this Plan is to make tourism more sustainable, and there will be a particular focus on increasing outdoor, heritage and nature tourism. Part of this aspiration is to create a greener area through areas such as wildlife-friendly farming, nature recovery networks and sustainable planning and development. Training in each of these areas will be crucial.

GLR has some experience of developing skills training through the Coastal Communities Fund. This sought to develop skills in the coastal communities, and included Hospitality, Mental Health Awareness, Customer Service, Food Hygiene, Social Media etc. Skills Support for the Workforce (SSW) provide a range of training relating to Business, Hospitality and Management.

The East Lindsey District Council Micro Grant had previously been able to be used to support companies smaller than 9 employees for training, but this did not cover the larger companies.

Training and funding allocations will need to be adapted for the specifics for each industry. Companies will need to put forward a needs led application for any funding that is available.

Additional training may also be needed by companies looking to add to their services by providing additional facilities to be able to cater for groups with special needs and disabilities.

## DELIVERY TOOL 2 - MARKETING

### WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED TO DATE?

- A joint website, Visit Lincolnshire, has been developed based on the themes City, Coast and Countryside.
- Visit Lincoln has been established for 9 years as a local Destination Management Organisation (DMO).
- A number of separate websites and local brands have been developed for different parts of GLR.
- Research has been undertaken as to why people don't visit Lincolnshire.

### WHAT ARE WE PROPOSING TO DO?

- Create an enhanced [www.visitlincolnshire.com](http://www.visitlincolnshire.com) website to act as a 'one stop shop' for booking travel, accommodation, excursions and events and integrating with the Tourism Exchange Great Britain (TXGB) booking system.
- Work with GLLEP on the delivery of the Business and Economic Recovery Plan, including the establishment of a Destination Management Organisation to undertake place marketing.
- Promote the GLR visitor offer in the UK and overseas, by developing branding, which is independent of the partnership organisations, whilst retaining the current branding hierarchy.
- Make use of technology to develop mobile apps to guide visitors, such as developing step by step walking and cycling apps and utilising 'augmented reality' across the area.
- Concentrate initially on the day visitor and UK holiday market and a potential shift to more remote outdoor locations following Coronavirus.

- Develop holiday packages celebrating links between GLR and overseas, including military and aviation connections, the celebration of Mayflower 400, pilgrim routes, links with Boston Massachusetts and the New World. Support arts programmes that involve local people and bring the heritage to life.
- Promote nature, heritage and outdoor tourism to broaden the offer and extend the season, including linking to relevant regional and national stakeholder media platforms, expanding Natural Coast branding to include Heritage Coast branding if it is defined by Natural England.

### HOW ARE WE GOING TO DO THAT?

- Work with Visit Lincoln, local businesses and attractions to promote the area as a whole by different media to a variety of demographics, to improve linkages between attractions, and use digital platforms and technology to encourage local people and tourists to visit several locations and attractions.
- Develop the DMO with its own distinctive branding and website to act as a delivery mechanism and improve business partnerships, networking, and training.

### HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

- Hits on the website, online bookings, increase in staying visitors
- Increased number of day and staying visitors from STEAM data.
- Co-ordinated and consistent processes for feedback from customers.

## MARKETING

One of the key recommendations of the workshops that were held in March 2020 on the Tourism Sector Deal was that there should be a single branding for GLR 'Lincolnshire PLC' in a similar way to Yorkshire and Jersey, for example. This branding should be separate to any of the organisations involved in the partnership, like, for example, in the Cairngorms National Park in Scotland.

There is currently a Visit Lincolnshire website, which includes North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire, and a Discover Rutland website. This links to a number of more localised sites, for individual districts, the Lincolnshire Wolds or the coast, for example. This will be expanded as part of the Recovery Plan from Covid-19.

The aim could be to create a single website and social media presence to promote GLR as a whole and provide a 'one stop shop', however Rutland has got a strong name and product and will probably want to stay as an independent website that has customer recognition. The website will also be able to provide opportunities for visitors to feedback comments in the form of a 'Visitor Voice' and for information from the customer insight programme to be shared more widely.

It is intended that the website will incorporate Tourism Exchange Great Britain (TXGB), which is a new booking system that has been developed by Visit England, connecting tourism suppliers to a diverse range of domestic and international distributors.

A key part of developing the website and the associated marketing initiatives will be to overcome the reasons why people don't visit Lincolnshire, as outlined in the Arkenford report in 2017. A programme of out of area marketing will be essential during the Coronavirus recovery to encourage staycations making full use of nature and outdoor tourism.

International promotion of tourism will need to be increased, focussing particularly on European connections, the American links to the Port of Boston, and Canadian, Australian and New Zealander links with the aviation heritage.

The 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Mayflower is to be celebrated in 2021 (instead of 2020 due to Covid-19) and will particularly celebrate links with Boston, Gainsborough and Immingham. Connections such as USA links, hanseatic ports and 'genealogy tourism' should continue to be promoted.

Marketing of the area will need to be undertaken alongside place marketing, which is proposed under the Business and Economic Recovery Plan (GLLEP). Place marketing will be undertaken by a new Destination Management Organisation for GLR, developed from Visit Lincoln. It will be essential for the Visitor Economy Board to work with the DMO to co-ordinate marketing messages in relation to tourism.

A key part of a co-ordinated marketing programme would be to encourage partnering between businesses to upsell multi-location visits and extend stays. This will require a sharing of knowledge about visitor attractions and accommodation and travel facilities. This familiarisation training will be included under the priorities for skills development. Joint programming of events and festivals could help to extend visits to take in more than one event. Touring exhibitions would provide a further opportunity draw in more day and overnight visits.

Packaging of tourist visits in the form of themed programmes or coach tours from outside the area would be important ways of increasing visitors and encouraging them to extend their stays.

In order to attract younger visitors to GLR, it is essential that marketing makes full use of mobile content. In particular, there is scope to use augmented reality or virtual reality to make best use of digital resources to create exciting and dynamic interpretation programmes.

Increased awareness could also be raised by seeking to work with 'social influencers' to promote GLR through the internet on platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, Facebook and Twitter.

## DELIVERY TOOL 3 - CUSTOMER INSIGHT

### WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED TO DATE?

- We have monitored visitor numbers in Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland since 2009 using the STEAM methodology, which is the national market leader for this type of analysis.
- The total value of tourism to the economy was £2.49bn in 2019; 4.5% higher than 2018. The direct expenditure into the sector was £1.8bn: Accommodation £247m, Food and Drink £500m, Recreation £193m, Shopping £632m, Transport £251m. The economic impact was particularly driven by a 4% increase in staying visitors in the non-serviced sector. There were 35m visits made to Greater Lincolnshire in 2019, a 1.5% increase on 2018. Total employment increased by 1% to 23,670.
- STEAM data has also been collected for Rutland since 2008. Visitor numbers in Rutland in 2018 were 1.893m (up 2.1% on 2017). This had an economic impact of £135.6m (up 9.5% on 2017) and supported 1,754 jobs (up 6% on 2017) (full time equivalents).

### WHAT ARE WE PROPOSING TO DO?

- Develop a shared customer insight programme through GLLEP to ensure that the information gathered is consistent and is easily available to relevant organisations.
- Seek feedback from visitors in a co-ordinated way through consistent and easy to use feedback mechanisms.
- Use the database to identify and develop new audiences for visitor attractions in GLR.

- Ensure that the new [www.visitlincolnshire.com](http://www.visitlincolnshire.com) website, which is currently being developed, provides much more available and searchable customer data.
- Undertake a repeat survey of non-visitors to Lincolnshire to assess whether knowledge of, and attitudes to, Lincolnshire have changed since 2017

### HOW ARE WE GOING TO DO THAT?

- Develop better working relationships between the business, tourism, and environmental and heritage sectors.
- Introduce common survey systems to monitor visitor trends.
- Work with the University of Lincoln and other educational establishments to develop monitoring programmes as part of academic courses.
- Work with private accommodation providers, such as AirBnB, to obtain feedback on visits to GLR.

### HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

- Co-ordinated and consistent processes will be in place for feedback from customers, including data gathering to assess customer sentiment and perceptions.
- More accurate information will be available on numbers of visitors to GLR, their length of stay, the purposes of their visits, and their perceptions of GLR.
- Measures will be in place of return on investment and key performance indicators.

## CUSTOMER INSIGHT

In order to co-ordinate the management of the visitor economy across GLR, it is essential for organisations to have access to shared knowledge and evidence. At present there is no single database containing statistics on visitors to GLR and co-ordinating visitor feedback.

Data on visitor numbers is currently collected using the STEAM method (Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor). This records data on the total number of visitors, day visitors and staying visitors. It also records the total economic impact of tourism and analyses the data by different types of accommodation.

Feedback from visitors is available through sites such as Trip Adviser and local databases held by accommodation providers or tourist attractions.

Some customer sentiment surveys have been undertaken by Visit Lincoln and the District Councils. Whilst these provide useful information, there is a need for them to be more co-ordinated in terms of the data collected and the reach of that data. If this can be brought together into a single database then it will assist in marketing and re-marketing, and with guiding investment in the product and infrastructure, such as highways and service improvements.

By knowing the key audiences and their specific requirements it is easier for local businesses and tourism organisations to target them better.

One of the key areas that will be addressed is the reasons given for not visiting Lincolnshire in a survey by Arkenford in 2017. This provides a baseline, which could be re-visited to assess any increase in awareness of what Lincolnshire has to offer.

It is also our intention to gather data from specific sites across GLR, either through questionnaire surveys or through on-site visitor counters. The latter would be particularly relevant to measuring the numbers of visitors at nature sites or on outdoor activity routes, such as the England Coast Path, the Viking Way and the area's cycle routes.



## DELIVERY TOOL 4 – SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESSES

### WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED TO DATE?

- The Coastal Communities Fund is providing advice and mentoring for tourism businesses in the Cleethorpes area.
- GLR has funding through the Coastal Communities Fund for a project entitled *“Coastal Sustainability Through Careers and Business Skills in Greater Lincolnshire”*.
- 6 Town Deals are in development across GLR, which cover major urban areas. The Greater Grimsby Town Deal is one of the first to be developed across the country.
- A Coastal Developers Forum has been established with the private sector, councils and statutory agencies to bring forward and discuss issues affecting the coast.
- InvestSK has successfully brought together tourism businesses with other types of business, to share knowledge and experience, in South Kesteven.

### WHAT ARE WE PROPOSING TO DO?

- Provide new opportunities for networking, knowledge sharing and collaborative working between businesses and other organisations, through the proposed visitor economy partnership organisation.
- Work with the existing Town Deals, Future High Street Funds and Heritage Action Zones in GLR to deliver enhancements to transport, broadband connectivity, skills, culture and the economic environment for local businesses.
- Work with the University of Lincoln to kick start regional and economic development going forward.

- Provide an advice and mentoring service to assist local businesses in Coronavirus recovery, building their confidence going forward, and encouraging new ideas and innovation. This will require a particular focus on ‘lifestyle businesses’, which are a large majority of the businesses in the area.
- Provide advice on access to funding sources to support local accommodation businesses, hospitality providers and visitor attractions.

### HOW ARE WE GOING TO DO THAT?

- Work with the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership, the Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce and Business Lincolnshire to develop a programme to support the recovery and growth of local tourism businesses.
- Encourage businesses to share experiences of COVID-19 management and recovery measures through a website and/or e-newsletter.
- Identify key areas of GLR where broadband services need to be upgraded and ensure that businesses are able to receive training in digital skills and online marketing.
- Encourage businesses to work more closely together to provide ‘packages’ to encourage visitors to stay longer in the area.

### HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

- We will be able to measure the numbers of local businesses that have been supported through advice and mentoring.

## SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESSES

The visitor economy in GLR is dominated by small and micro businesses and third sector organisations, which are particularly vulnerable to downturns in the market, and are likely to be particularly hard hit by the Coronavirus outbreak and the subsequent recovery period.

Networking opportunities are required in order to share experiences and to be able to work together better in order to co-ordinate marketing and hospitality for accommodation and visitor attractions.

Funding packages available for local businesses will need to be better co-ordinated and prioritised in order to support the most vulnerable businesses. Tailored interventions will be required to capitalise on strategic opportunities.

One of the key requirements to grow businesses in the area is to improve broadband connections in many areas. With many businesses being in rural areas they have difficulty operating digitally and make best use of shared information and booking services. Providing digital information and online bookability has become the norm with visitors and has seen further growth through lockdown, so this issue will need to be addressed.

With the current global downturn in the economy, possibly resulting in a reduced number of overseas visitors, local businesses will need to acquire digital skills and technology to better promote themselves to the UK visitor market.

There is a growing need for better 'packaging' of transport, accommodation and local attractions to encourage long and short breaks across a longer holiday season.

Coronavirus recovery may increase demand for staycations and there is likely to be a high demand for remote rural locations initially.

The 6 Town Deals covering 6 towns in GLR, comprising Lincoln, Grimsby, Scunthorpe, Skegness, Mablethorpe and Boston, are currently in development. The purpose of the Town Deals is to develop innovative regeneration plans in places with a proud industrial or economic heritage. The key targets will be to develop transport, broadband connectivity, skills and culture. The Deals will each respond to locally identified priorities, but will

seek to enhance the local economic climate to improve the prospects for local businesses, including tourism providers.

CoastNEL in North East Lincolnshire has been awarded £3.8 million under the Coastal Communities Fund. This employs a visitor economy specialist to provide business support in the form of coaching, mentoring, advice on customer service, business planning, diversification and marketing. The experience from running this project in Cleethorpes can be used across the rest of the area to support local businesses.

The GLLEP also gained £370K in Government funding from the Coastal Communities Fund to develop careers and business skills across Greater Lincolnshire.

There is a key role here for business organisations such as GLLEP, the Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce and Business Lincolnshire to co-ordinate advice, mentoring and training for local businesses to help them to network and to grow.

## DELIVERY TOOL 5 - PARTNERSHIP WORKING

### WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED TO DATE?

- Lincolnshire Waterways Partnership spent £19 million on improving facilities along GLR's waterways.
- Major enhancement projects have been completed through partnerships at Lincoln Castle and Cathedral, the International Bomber Command Centre and the North Sea Observatory.
- Aviation Heritage Lincolnshire have brought together 25 aviation linked sites and provided a central marketing point, run an award winning educational programme and monitored the success and growth of the sector.
- Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership co-ordinates the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity across the area and will co-ordinate the Nature Recovery Network project.

### WHAT ARE WE PROPOSING TO DO?

- Establish the governance of the GLLEP Visitor Economy Board (VEB) as the principal decision making body.
- Set up the Visitor Economy Board as a delivery mechanism for the Tourism Action Plan, probably hosted by one of the partner organisations. They would lead on the development of infrastructure, skills, product development and marketing.
- Establish a Destination Management Organisation covering the whole of Greater Lincolnshire, either by expanding the Visit Lincoln DMO, or as a separate body to undertake place marketing.
- Establish [www.visitlincolnshire.com](http://www.visitlincolnshire.com) as the principle source of consumer information. Work closely with Visit England on their rescue and recovery packages and ensure that any funding

through the Tourism Zone is co-ordinated with other existing investment.

- as TXGB, and also consider supplementing this with local mobile phone apps to link into information and booking systems and the Tourism Zone website.
- Work with Local authorities and tourism organisations, such as Visit Lincoln, to help to deliver local tourism strategies and established tourism enhancement projects.
- Strengthen links between businesses and academic institutions to develop programmes to boost the visitor economy.

### HOW ARE WE GOING TO DO THAT?

- Set up a small staff team to coordinate the implementation and co-ordination of the Tourism Action Plan.
- Organise an Annual GLR Conference for sharing experiences and ideas between tourism, heritage and environmental organisations. and to raise awareness of the initiatives that are in progress or proposed.

### HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

- The Visitor Economy Board will be recognised as a high profile, professional and successful partnership.

### PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Implementing this Action Plan and recovering from the Coronavirus outbreak will require all tourism organisations to work more closely together. Such a collegiate approach is entirely consistent with the approach required under the Tourism Sector Deal. The overall aim is to simplify the management of the visitor economy across GLR.

Working relationships could be improved by better networking between organisations and limited financial resources can be maximised by combining on marketing, training and customer insight. In the light of Covid-19, there is scope for more online training and networking, saving time and money on travel to meeting venues. It is hoped to provide a leap in performance that will maximise public investment and organise activities better.

One of the key proposals would be clarify the governance of the project and to use the Visitor Economy Board to co-ordinate implementation. The implementation role would be over and above the role normally taken by Destination Management Organisations. There is scope to combine the two roles. This could be supplemented by sub-groups on key topics, such as marketing, skills training, and customer insight.

Visit Lincoln is the current DMO working with multiple partners across the Visitor Economy. The public and private sector have invested 9 years in building up the current DMO structure and this should be further developed as part of, or alongside, the VEB/DMO. Visit Lincoln has achieved a lot with limited resources to address market failures and increase interventions when needed. Discover Rutland is the DMO for Rutland and the Lincolnshire Coastal Business Improvement Group is essentially the DMO for the coast.

Greater Lincolnshire & Rutland do not currently have a single Destination Management Organisation (DMO). The Visitor Economy Board could take on this co-ordinating role, working with more local tourism organisations, and particularly Visit England, the Visitor Economy Board, Visit Lincoln, and Discover Rutland. T

The DMO would have a key role in working with DCMS, Visit Britain and Visit England at a national level. It would also seek additional funding beyond the Tourism Sector Deal. The key local audiences for the DMO would be the public sector, the private sector, the third sector, and local citizens and residents. It would be likely to be a Community Interest Company along the lines of Visit Lincoln and would be a membership organisation.

The implementation of the Action Plan would need to be co-ordinated by a small team of employed staff working across the whole area to ensure that projects are co-ordinated and communication networks established.

The area has an excellent track record in partnership working, having undertaken large scale enhancements to tourism through projects such as the enhancements to Lincoln Castle and Cathedral; the Lincolnshire Waterways Partnership; the Boston to Peterborough Wetland Corridor and Boston Barrier; and the Coastal Communities Fund.

There is a strong record of Lincolnshire working in partnership with North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire in partnerships such as the Local Enterprise Partnership, the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership, Lincoln Cultural Arts Partnership, and the Lincolnshire Heritage Forum. There is a need to clarify accountabilities in the private sector, the GLLEP and local authorities.

Some of the local authority areas, including East Lindsey and Rutland, already have their own tourism strategies. These strategies contain more detailed local actions and should be read alongside this area-wide Action Plan. There would be a role for the VEB to work with the local authorities to help to deliver the actions where possible.

The development of an enhanced VEB would create an exciting and dynamic partnership between the public and private sector to deliver significant benefits to local businesses, visitors and local residents. The key to its success will be to develop a strong collegiate approach, with each organisation delivering key actions in their areas of work. It is intended that a wide range of sectors will be represented, including local Councils, academic institutions, attraction operators, accommodation providers, transport organisations, wildlife and heritage organisations, and user groups. Working together, there is a bright future for tourism in Greater Lincolnshire & Rutland.

## THE EXISTING SITUATION

Tourism is a well-established industry in GLR, particularly for visits to the traditional seaside resorts, the historic City of Lincoln and heritage-rich South Lincolnshire.

The GLLEP has assessed the visitor economy and reported the following headlines in its Local Industrial Strategy –

- The economic impact of tourism is worth £2.39bn per year and has increased by 13.4% since 2016
- Lincolnshire has 50 miles of coastline and Skegness is the UK's 4<sup>th</sup> most popular holiday resort.
- There are 110 hotels in the area with a capacity for 3.4m overnight stays.
- The Lincolnshire Wolds is the only Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in the East Midlands, which North Lincolnshire Council has aspirations to expand.
- The visitor economy employs around 30,000 FTEs.

Whilst the number of visitors is gradually increasing, the visits are very seasonal, particularly to the seaside resorts where many facilities close down outside the summer season.

Rutland also monitor visits using STEAM data. The economic impact of tourism in Rutland in 2018 was £135.6million (up 9.5% on 2017). Visitor numbers in Rutland in 2018 were 1.893million (up 2.1% on 2017). Employment supported by tourism in Rutland (full time equivalent) is 1,754 (up 6% on 2017).

The student population of GLR comprises over 14,000 'visitors' to the area each year, as well as encouraging many more visits all year round by friends and relative, and for events. Increases in student numbers over recent years have led to increased visitor facilities being developed, particularly in Lincoln.

The visitor economy relies on a number of small and micro-businesses, which are very vulnerable to changes in the market, such as the reduction in bookings due to the Coronavirus pandemic. It is critical that these businesses are able to recover and to gradually increase their productivity in years ahead.

There will need to be a focus on both UK and overseas visitors as the industry recovers from the impacts of Covid 19. The Tourism Sector Deal is keen to increase international visitors and GLR should be looking to encourage more

visitors to consider visiting the area. The Tourism Sector Deal has identified that there were 38million international visitors to the UK in 2018 and this is expected to grow by a quarter by 2025 adding £23bn to the economy.

The tourism industry is likely to recover at different speeds for different sectors of the market, with a likely boost in UK visitors initially, with overseas visitors returning as movement restrictions are lifted and confidence in overseas travel grows.

A number of lessons have been learnt from the Covid-19 pandemic and these can be summarised as follows –

- The vulnerability of businesses and third sector organisations in the hospitality sector to changes in the market.
- The importance of good IT to achieve good communication, and particularly the need to enhance broadband services.
- The provision of Government grants to hospitality businesses, administered by District Councils, has been well received by many businesses and council officers confirm that they have the best relationship with businesses that they've had for years.
- Communication between Visit Lincoln and businesses has been excellent.
- Visit Lincoln has undertaken a 'Rediscover Lincolnshire' campaign Lincolnshire County Council has extensively redeveloped [www.visitlincolnshire.com](http://www.visitlincolnshire.com) as part of its Recovery Plan.
- Dependence of Visit Lincoln and Discover Rutland on subscription income from businesses has left them in a vulnerable position. Both received grants from Visit England and Lincolnshire County Council seconded a member of staff one day a week.
- Tourism Officers have used video conferencing to hold weekly meetings for the exchange of information in what has been a daily fast changing world.
- Funding for delivering the recommendations of the Tourism Commission has been allocated by Lincolnshire County Council.

This Action Plan will help to identify priorities for the recovery of the tourism industry from the impacts of Covid-19, working alongside the Recovery Plan.

The Action Plan identifies actions over a 5-year period, concentrating on those areas where the visitor economy is working less well and where additional investment and partnership could make a step change to the sustainability of local businesses and tourism attractions, whilst also providing enhanced facilities for local residents.

## THE TOURISM SECTOR DEAL

The Tourism Sector Deal (TSD) is part of the Government's Modern Industrial Strategy and was launched in 2019. The purpose of the Deal is for the Government to provide a significant boost to the tourism sector across the UK.

The Deal has set ambitious targets to achieve by 2025 –

- More than DOUBLE the size of the industry to £268 billion.
- Grow those employed in the sector to 3.8 million.
- Deliver a 1% increase in productivity worth £12 billion.
- Become the most successful destination in Western Europe.

One of the key proposals in the Deal had been to boost tourism through the development of Tourism Zones. Subsequently the government produced in June 2021 a Recovery Plan which stated "Whilst the 2019 Sector Deal introduced the idea of piloting Tourism Zones across the country, it is the government's view that much of what Tourism Zones aimed to address – such as improving digital skills, place-making and seasonality – can now be accomplished with the significant levels of funding outlined in this Plan, such as the new Help to Grow: Digital scheme, the £220 million Community Renewal Fund, and the £4.8 billion Levelling-Up Fund. These investments in local communities will help level up the visitor economy and support UK destinations. Although creating a separate set of Tourism Zones is no longer the right solution post-pandemic, the government and the British Tourist

Authority will work together to support destinations to bid for these skills, innovation and place-based investment funds for tourism projects, and Destination Management Organisations will have an important role to play in this effort."

The four key themes of the Tourism Sector Deal remain and these form the basis of this Tourism Action Plan and the Tourism Commission recommendations. These are: Investment, Skills, Product Development and Marketing.

Two new T levels in Cultural Heritage and Visitor Attractions, and Catering, are proposed to help deliver the industry workers of the future, whilst industry will deliver 30,000 apprenticeships per year by 2025 and will lead a mentoring programme aimed at supporting 10,000 employees to enhance their careers and ensure they can progress within the sector.

Accessibility for all is a key part of the TSD, with the UK having the ambition to be the most accessible tourism destination in Europe by 2025.

The TSD has the ambition to create over 130,000 additional bedrooms by 2025.

The TSD includes an International Business Events Action Plan to attract business events to the UK. The two priority areas identified are skills and infrastructure.

Significant investment will also be made in attractions by the private, public and voluntary sectors, including investment in both our natural and built heritage, museums and arts.

Investment in infrastructure will include attractions, transport and accommodation.



The TSD will be supported by Tourism Exchange Great Britain (TXGB), which was launched in 2019 to provide a shared business to business platform to link tourism businesses of all sizes with multiple distribution and booking websites.

In terms of accessibility, the Government's aim is for the UK to be the most accessible destination in Europe by 2025. This includes ensuring accessible transport for everyone.

In terms of infrastructure, the Government proposes a major upgrade of the UK's infrastructure. This includes improvements to aviation and transport within the country.

There are specific proposals in relation to the cruise sector, rail enhancements, investment in accommodation and investment in attractions.

One of the key ideas is to *increase the sector's capacity to innovate by accelerating the development and commercialisation of digital technology and reducing barriers in the sector.*

An independent Tourism Data Hub will be set up as part of the Government's Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Data Grand Challenge.

GLR already has a well established tourism industry centred around the City of Lincoln and the coast, although they too are probably under-performing and have much potential. There is clear scope to build on the existing tourism offer and provide boosts to productivity, growth, skills and tourism locations, all in line with the ambitions of the Tourism Sector Deal. This will be a key part of enhancing international tourism as the country recovers from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

This Tourism Action Plan has been designed to co-ordinate the targets and priorities of the Tourism Sector Deal to maximise economic benefits to GLR whilst also considering impacts on local communities and the local environment.

## THE LOCAL INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

The draft Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) was published in November 2019 by the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP) in partnership with a number of local authorities and other organisations. Its purpose is to set out priorities and actions to sustain a productive and resilient economy across Greater Lincolnshire (Rutland was not included at the time). The visitor economy is a key element of the LIS.

The economy of Greater Lincolnshire has one of the highest proportions of employment in small enterprises across the whole country. The tourism sector is dominated by these small enterprises.

The strategy states that productivity and wages are low; 32% of employees are paid below the real living wage. There are signals that innovation is growing, but the area still underperforms national and regional averages. Skill levels are rising, but from a low base.

The Strategy, therefore, has 5 foundations for productivity as follows –

1. *Ideas - Broaden and deepen the base of innovating firms in Greater Lincolnshire, aligning innovation with strategic opportunities*
2. *People - Enable all residents to reach their potential in the local labour market and participate in a flourishing and inclusive economy*
3. *Infrastructure - Ensure Greater Lincolnshire has the infrastructure it needs to support businesses, connect people, and be prepared for future growth and challenges.*

4. *Business environment - Create a supportive business environment for entrepreneurs, micros and SMEs to grow and become more productive and resilient*
5. *Place - Capitalise on the dispersed economy to create a leading polycentric, productive economy*

These foundations are reflected in this Action Plan where they relate to the visitor economy.

The overall aim of the Strategy is to add an extra £3.2bn to the existing £20.7bn economy by 2030. It sets out issues and actions for local businesses to work towards achieving this.

The visitor economy of Greater Lincolnshire is very seasonal and typically has low productivity and low wages. The priority of the LIS is to develop Greater Lincolnshire as a year-round tourism destination, whilst providing higher quality and more reliable employment and increasing productivity.

Greater Lincolnshire experienced a 0.1% decline in productivity between 2007 and 2017, widening the productivity gap between the area and the rest of the UK to 22.8%.

The local economy is very dependent on links with the broader economy in surrounding districts and counties. It is important to develop better east-west linkages to other parts of the Midlands.

There are wider links through the port of Immingham and Grimsby and the airports at Humberside, Doncaster Sheffield and East Midlands.

The Local Industrial Strategy's ambition for the visitor economy is –

*“Greater Lincolnshire will grow the tourism sector yearly and promote GL as a leading tourist destination by building on recent investment, focusing on developing the UK's first LEP-wide tourism zone bid”*

Together, local partners will:

- Produce a refreshed visitor economy strategy that focuses on key assets and offers such as the Romans in Lincoln, active and sustainable tourism, and ensures that Greater Lincolnshire is one of the most accessible tourism areas in the country.
- Develop a strong bid for a tourism zone across Greater Lincolnshire.
- Develop and implement a sector skills plan and ensure that the needs of the Visitor Economy sector are reflected with the curricula.
- Up-skill frontline workers to provide a more high-end hospitality experience to visitors, and enable residents to access higher-skilled, higher-value jobs in the sector.
- Support SMEs to adopt digital technologies and platforms which will enable them to improve their productivity and attract greater numbers of visitors.
- Create a destination marketing offer linking coast, city, countryside: AONB; coast; Wolds; Viking Way; heritage city.
- Develop a strategy that packages and supports sustainable tourism across Greater Lincolnshire.
- Implement the Hotel Strategy for Greater Lincolnshire.
- Enhance and promote Greater Lincolnshire's place offering (e.g. through improving cultural offer) to draw in not only a greater number of visitors overall but also a greater number of high-spending visitors.

Working with HMG:

- Work with DCMS to maximise the opportunities from the Tourism Sector Deal, specifically utilising the new independent Tourism Data Hub and the SME community of Greater Lincolnshire;
- Work with DFE to pilot the 2 new T levels in Cultural Heritage and Visitor Attractions, and Catering, to help deliver the industry workers of the future;

- Work with government and local partners to deliver more apprenticeships per year by 2025 and develop a pilot mentoring programme aimed at supporting employees to enhance their careers and ensure they can progress within the sector;
- Support the Governments International Business Events Action Plan to support the business events industry in attracting, growing and creating international business events to bring even greater numbers of business travellers to UK shores, and Lincolnshire.

## THE GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE BUSINESS AND ECONOMY RECOVERY PLAN

As the GLR tourism sector recovers from the impacts of Covid-19, it will be essential for the Tourism Action Plan to be implemented alongside the Business and Economic Recovery Plan. The BERP sets out a 3 delivery measures and 2 enabling measures to address the following objectives –

- To repurpose existing business support schemes, and design new business support schemes, that meet the challenges of Covid-19.
- To take measures to meet the changing employment and training needs of the Greater Lincolnshire workforce in the context of Covid-19.
- To provide tailored support to Greater Lincolnshire's most important economic sectors so that they can respond to Covid-19.
- To ensure that accurate and current business intelligence is available and informs decision making in the Business and Economy recovery plan.
- To use regeneration funding in a strategic way to tackle the current challenges of Covid-19 and to support the Business and Economy recovery plan.

## THE ROLE OF PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

The development of this Action Plan and the Tourism Zone application are to be co-ordinated by the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership . The Action Plan's implementation would be co-ordinated by the Visitor Economy Board which is part of the GLLEP. This body could also act as a Destination Management Organisation (DMO), or a separate DMO could be created by expanding Visit Lincoln.

There will be crucial roles for a range of public sector organisations, including local councils and statutory agencies. They will take on a range of roles in relation to economic development, local tourism, regeneration and planning.

The involvement of local businesses is essential, along with business organisations such as Business Lincolnshire and the Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce, and education providers such as colleges and the University of Lincoln.

A number of voluntary sector organisations have a stake in developing tourism and will need to be fully involved in networking through the VEB and the DMO, and in the implementation of actions.

## TOURISM COMMISSION 2020/21

The pace of change within the visitor economy during lockdown was intense and the county council took a strategic leadership role to support and shape the future industry offer. It set up a Tourism Commission in September 2020 to make recommendations for the future of tourism in GLR, both short term and long term. Commissioners represented businesses from all areas of the visitor economy and met six times between September and February 2021. Aligning with the Tourism Sector Deal it produced a series of recommendations under the headings of Investment, Product Development, Marketing and Skills. The Tourism Commission Recommendations are attached as appendix 5, some are already in delivery, some at planning stage or awaiting potential funding.

The Tourism Commission Phase 2 will now meet three times a year, June, October and February to monitor progress on the delivery of its recommendations. The county council allocated £12m to tourism recovery, the majority was in the form of grants to businesses. However £500k of this recovery money was allocated to deliver the recommendations, although this doesn't preclude the gaining of additional funds from other sources to aid delivery.

The vision of the Tourism Commission is that by the end of 2025 the Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland visitor economy will be:

- A well-known, thriving and attractive destination
- Well on its way to flying the 'Green Tourism' flag
- Future focussed, adapting to a continually changing audience
- Developing a joined up 'New products' selection
- Showcasing the quality and sustainability of our region
- Taking online bookings for holidays and attractions, embracing digital opportunity
- Working hard to attract large scale Investments to continually improve the offer
- Creating highly qualified and highly motivated employees
- A warm welcome. A place to tell your friends about. A place to come back to

The recommendations are given in full at appendix 5, but in brief key areas are:

**Marketing short term:** By Easter 2021 the redeveloped [www.visitlincolnshire.com](http://www.visitlincolnshire.com) website will have been re-launched, providing a high quality digital presence for the area to rival those of other tourism hotspots. It is designed as a platform for growth and to showcase the quality, breadth and depth of our offer to both our residents and visitors. It is the platform that is needed to match the messaging, everything leads from it and to it.

**Investment short term:** By autumn 2021 businesses in Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland's tourism sector will have been provided with advice and development to enable them to contribute to our ambition of increasing green tourism in the county; a green tourism action plan will set out the steps that strategic bodies will take to support that ambition.

**Product Development short term:** A digital transformation programme will be delivered so that Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland's tourism sector rivals the most digitally advanced areas in the country by late 2022. Digital technology will be used both to increase business productivity and to package up our products to meet changing customer interests –we will establish a packaged approach to green tourism, cycling, walking and the great outdoors, niche retail, short breaks for millennials and aviation heritage.

**Skills short term:** A recruitment hub will be established by spring 2022, enabling employers in the visitor economy to recruit into hard to fill posts. Potential employees will understand the career opportunities that are available in greater Lincolnshire and Rutland's visitor economy because of the advice, guidance, and career path information that will be produced about the sector. Skills and employment will be a resourced priority in the area's tourism strategies.

## MONITORING AND REVIEW

Progress in implementing the Action Plan will be reviewed once a year and a brief report published. This would be best timed to link in with an annual Tourism Conference to share best practice. The review would be undertaken by the VEB.

Towards the end of the 5-year period a review of the Plan should be considered to identify further actions going forward.

A 5-year review will be carried out to measure the success of partners in implementing the Action Plan.



## APPENDIX 1 - POLICY CONTEXT

The following is a summary of the key policy documents that currently exist at national, regional and local level.

### **Review of tourism in Lincolnshire: Strategic relevance, future priorities and delivery arrangements (Melanie Sensicle Consulting Ltd 2016)**

This review was carried out in 2016, specifically to assess the impact of the Greater Lincolnshire Destination Management Plan and other economic and cultural plans across Greater Lincolnshire. It found that the Destination Management Plan has very little traction and that very few of the actions it contained had been implemented since 2012. The review then sought to identify some headline priorities for the future at a strategic level that could boost the visitor economy.

The visitor economy was identified as one of the top 3 priority sectors in Lincolnshire and as a consequence it was embedded in many of the strategic planning documents being developed across the area. Many of the key priorities identified related to better co-ordination, networking and supporting activity.

Future priorities identified were as follows –

1. Product development – including transport planning, investment in major attractions and better packaging of the existing product using technology.
2. Skills and training – to improve the link between a skilled workforce and good visitor experience.
3. Business support – including networking opportunities, ways to improve knowledge of the product, and practical support with promotion, including an online platform.

4. Market intelligence – There needs to be a broad and comprehensive knowledge of people visiting Lincolnshire, which is shared between businesses.
5. Leadership and co-ordination – This needs to be better developed at County level. There were 21 organised groups in the County. There is an increasing need for Greater Lincolnshire to be seen as one place.
6. Destination promotion and branding - There is wide agreement that the strongest destinations in Lincolnshire are Lincoln, Skegness and Cleethorpes, that the strongest mass-market themes are seaside, heritage and countryside and that the strongest niche themes are aviation and nature tourism. There is some confusion over branding of Lincolnshire and Greater Lincolnshire.

The 5 recommendations from the report were as follows –

1. Identify a destination hierarchy for Lincolnshire – this includes finding out which destination brands are relevant for specific audiences.
2. Produce a comprehensive body of information about visitors to Greater Lincolnshire – further intelligence will inform decision-making.
3. Produce a place marketing toolkit for visitor economy businesses.
4. Maximise the opportunities offered by Hull 2017 and Mayflower 400.
5. Create a new Visitor Economy Sector Forum – the Visitor Economy Board has subsequently been established.

### **Lincolnshire Non-Visitor Research (Arkenford 2017)**

Part of the work undertaken in the 2016 Review was to look at the existing research that had been done and bringing it all together, and then redoing the Arkenford segmentation work. This then led onto the commissioning non-visitor research.



Non-visitors to Lincolnshire were surveyed by Arkenford in 2017. Their findings from a sample of 1000 respondents were summarised as follows –

- The two key reasons that people have not visited Lincolnshire are
  - Not knowing enough about it
  - There are other places they would like to visit
- Amongst non-visitors, knowledge of the area is fairly low. When asked about their associations with Lincolnshire we found that only a small proportion of the sample had any strong associations or perceptions of the area
- Natural coastlines are what Lincolnshire is best known for amongst non-visitors.
- After seeing a list of the types of things that Lincolnshire offers, only 11% of the sample said that they would not consider visiting
- The key draws to the area are things to see, such as
  - Scenery
  - Historic architecture and towns
  - Culture

In relation to the natural coastlines bullet point above, focus groups were asked what sort of coastal offer they liked, and they described something very similar to the Lincolnshire Natural Coast without realising that Lincolnshire had such an offer.

The report also identified that the area scores well in relation to coastal breaks, but the rural offer is where Lincolnshire struggles to compete with other destinations in the North of England. Raising its profile as a rural destination will help to broaden its appeal and attract more first time visitors.

## **The Value of Heritage and the Historic Environment in Lincolnshire (Heritage Lincolnshire / Lincolnshire County Council 2019)**

This report undertook a review of heritage across Lincolnshire and was a call to action to showcase the County's heritage and encourage more shared working and investment to build on these successes.

The report states that –

*"Greater Lincolnshire's heritage assets are of international, regional and local significance, dating from evidence of man's earliest inhabitation of the area 250,000 years ago through the Stone Age, Iron Age, Roman, medieval, Georgian and Victorian Britain to the twentieth century. This heritage is evident in landscapes, coastlines, towns, fenlands and in individual buildings, monuments, canals, memorials, blue plaques and artefacts. Intangible heritage is captured in festivals, traditions and oral histories."*

£94 million pounds of National Lottery Heritage Fund grants have been made to almost 700 organisations in Greater Lincolnshire since 1996. The majority have been awarded to voluntary groups, associations and parish councils for projects exploring and sharing local heritage. 85% of grants have been for less than £100K and half for £10K or less.

The report includes a number of case studies outlining successful tourism initiatives that have taken place in Lincolnshire over recent years. It recognises the wider social benefits arising from local heritage initiatives.

The report concludes that the heritage could be better served by ongoing partnerships and more co-ordinated marketing, rather than relying on discrete projects.

North East Lincolnshire is one of 13 priority areas across the country under the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Previous successes across the area should help Lincolnshire to access additional funds to support local projects. The heritage sector should be working with a range of other organisations to access additional funding and share expertise.

## Business Plan for the Visit Lincoln Partnership 2017

This is the latest Business Plan for Visit Lincoln, which is now established as a Community Interest Company (CIC). A new Business Plan for 2021-23 is currently being prepared.

The Plan includes the following Vision Statement –

*“Our vision is for Lincoln to be a top UK leisure destination with international recognition as a cultural city with a rich and distinctive history.”*

Visit Lincoln is the Destination Management Organisation (DMO) for Central Lincolnshire comprising the City of Lincoln, North Kesteven and West Lindsey District Councils. Established in 2011, Visit Lincoln has developed as a membership organisation with 160 businesses contributing.

The Business Plan focusses on 3 areas –

- Tourism – marketing and benefitting the local community
- Talent – promoting learning services
- Trade – supporting businesses and encouraging people to live and work in the area

The following are the key aspects of the Greater Lincoln Experience –

**Visit** - the tourism offer – regional, national and international promotion of the visitor offer incorporating attractions, events (inc sport), the tourism infrastructure – hotels, restaurants – links to retail.

Proposed actions include thematic marketing campaigns; partnership growth incorporating more businesses; improving experience through skills development and Discover England projects; and encouraging advocates by establishing a Knowledge Hub and working with national partners.

**Live** - the promotion of the quality of life aspects of area – including: property prices, education, the physical environment, local amenities/connectivity, leisure (inc retail), community safety (crime levels).

**Work** - the nature of the business base and job opportunities.

Proposed actions include communicating the quality of life offer; developing a series of case studies which showcase key aspects of the things that make living in this area special; identifying profiled changes to physical, commercial and service developments; and identifying the role the quality of life offer can play in building the credentials of the area as a place to work.

**Invest** - the price of employment and residential land and property, links with key factors/facilities – such as local clusters/supply chains, the two universities, the quality and availability of the workforce, the availability of technical support – the B2B infrastructure.

Proposed actions include working with Lincoln City Council to manage the City’s investment offer; identifying areas for refinement to the offer to investors; developing a more holistic place marketing approach; and establishing a focused and real time dialogue with sectoral interests to enable VL to support and enhance their investment decisions.

**Learn** - the H/FE sector characteristics and facilities (i.e. Lincoln Science and Innovation Park), social and leisure opportunities, connectivity – to other places, cost and availability of places to rent.

Proposed actions include working with the University of Lincoln and Lincoln City Council in developing adult learning opportunities; brokering discussions with the learning community around a place based learning brand for the City; developing a collegiate campaign; and Identifying opportunities to strengthen closely related aspects of the “Lincoln offer”.

Visit Lincoln, as the DMO has a key role to play in developing tourism locally and is responsible for developing a Destination Management Plan for Lincoln and offering up to date information through a website, social media, marketing literature and campaigns which attract travellers (be it for leisure or business).

### **Lincoln High Street Heritage Action Zone.**

The purpose of the Heritage Action Zone is repair and reinstatement of historic buildings, adaptive re-use, community engagement, public realm works and cultural activities.

The High Street Heritage Action Zone funding will improve connections between the southern High Street and city centre by helping to mend the break in the High Street. Other proposals include restoration of The Barbican Hotel, St Marys Guildhall and improved landscaping around St Marys Le Wigford Church alongside a Sincil Street shop front restoration programme and Central Market improvements.

The £95 million government-funded High Streets Heritage Action Zone programme, which is being delivered by Historic England, will unlock the potential of high streets across England, fuelling economic, social and cultural recovery.

### **Destination Strategy for East Lindsey 2020-2025 (draft and awaiting adoption by East Lindsey District Council).**

This draft Strategy covers East Lindsey District and has the aim “to increase the value of tourism for the benefit of all who live and work in East Lindsey”.

The tourism industry in East Lindsey supports 9,000 jobs, welcomes 4.8 million visitors each year, resulting in spending of around £700 million. The target by 2025 is to increase spending to £770 million.

The proposed Strategic Approach is as follows –

*“Take the combination of Wolds and Natural Coast to higher-value growth market segments, broadening the existing market, developing tourism sustainably by increasing spend and extending the season.*

*Delivered through two new ‘Discover’ propositions, targeted marketing, and market-focused investment in new experiences, facilities and public realm. Continue to support the existing ‘Seaside Fun’ proposition through working with businesses and resorts to encourage investment and continual improvement”.*

There are a number of shared themes with the Tourism Action Plan, including environment, wildlife, walking, cycling, history, market towns and coastal resorts.

A growth market is identified, entitled ‘Discover and aims to target “country loving traditionalists” and “active families”’. This includes a particular emphasis on promoting the Wolds and the Natural Coast.

It is also proposed to maintain the market entitled “Seaside Fun”, which targets “fun in the sun families” and fuss free value seekers”.

Proposed interventions include –

- Excellent Experiences – improving the experience for our growth markets
- Great Places – investing in our towns and public realm
- Brilliant Basics – getting the basics right
- Targeted Marketing – focusing our marketing on the growth segments

Implementation would be co-ordinated by East Lindsey District Council.

### **Discover Rutland Tourism Strategy 2020 – 2025 (Discover Rutland / Rutland County Council 2020)**

This Strategy has similar aims and objectives to the GLR Tourism Action Plan. Key aims include extending the tourism season, building relationships with key partners and optimising the use of digital marketing platforms.

The Strategy has 3 primary objectives as follows –

1. Stimulate and support the Rutland offer
2. Recognise and attract Rutland's key audiences
3. Ensure a Sustainable Future for Tourism in Rutland

The Strategy sets out a number of key actions under each of these objectives to be undertaken by the Discover Rutland partners. Actions include –

- Events & Activities
- Products
- Assets
- Marketing
- Audience Focus
- Online Importance
- Financial
- Integrity of Product
- Partnership Working

The partners on the Discover Rutland Tourism Committee concentrate on the following 6 delivery areas –

- Events
- Finance
- Guides & Literature
- Membership
- PR & Marketing
- Website

Discover Rutland is the local Destination Management Organisation for Rutland, with its own brand and website. It is a membership organisation, working with the County Council, which was set up with the purpose “*to develop and grow a sustainable tourism economy in Rutland through brand awareness, income generation and partnership working*”. It promotes the county externally and organises events such as the Rutland Food & Drink Festival and the Rutland Walking Festival. An Annual Tourism Forum is held each November for local businesses.

Rutland has seen a steady increase in visitor numbers since 2009, and this has supported an increasing level of employment in tourism.

The Strategy also stresses the importance of enhancing accessibility for all and addressing environmental issues.

### **Lincoln Transport Strategy 2020-2036 (Lincolnshire County Council)**

The Strategy sets out a number of goals to provide a wide range of travel options for moving people in and around the City of Lincoln and the surrounding area. It sets out sustainable transport options to help to relieve congestion, improve air quality and make Lincoln a more attractive place for residents and visitors.

One of the key proposals in relation to tourism is the proposed building of the North Hykeham Relief Road, which would help to reduce congestion in the City Centre and improve connections with the Lincolnshire Coast.

Also, a number of mobility hubs are proposed to reduce journeys into the City Centre by car. This will help to protect the historic areas of the city and improve its environment and quality of life.

One of the Objectives of the Strategy is particularly important for tourism –  
*“To provide an efficient strategic road and rail network for long-distance connections to other major centres and international gateways”.*

The Strategy has a key focus on accessibility as follows –

*“Providing more accessibility choices will allow people to choose to travel by alternative and more sustainable means to the private car, helping to address the negative impacts of travel.”*

There is a focus in the Strategy on sustainability, including increasing walking and cycling as part of a strategic transport network, including new green infrastructure.

The Strategy aims to support the visitor economy by working with partners to promote sustainable travel options to and between attractions in the area.

### **Lincoln Waterways Corridors Opportunities Study (Richard Glen Associates / Hyder 2015)**

The purpose of this study was to identify opportunities for enhancing river corridors in and around the City of Lincoln for a variety of recreational users, including local residents and tourists.

The study set out 6 Waterway Themes as follows –

1. The City by the River - Lincoln's waterway corridors could be transformed into a thriving, dynamic destination through enhancement of land-based attractions, water-based services, and water based recreation.
2. Waterside Communities - Riverside destinations and communities should be developed both upstream and downstream of the Brayford Pool and city centre.
3. Access & Circulation - The waterway corridors should be supported as a multifunctional part of the Green Infrastructure Plan, improving land-based public access, particularly linear access along the waterway corridors.

4. Lincoln – ‘Welcome Ashore’ - The Brayford Pool and City Centre need to be made more accessible for visiting craft, with improved visitor, permanent and residential moorings along the Fossdyke Navigation.
5. Waterspace for Everyone - The development of a full waterspace study would look to create a successful waterway, bring together the broad knowledge and expertise of the Canal & River Trust, the Environment Agency and Lincoln City Council.
6. River restoration & Habitat Creation - Investigate the opportunities for reconnecting the River Witham with its flood plain, by creating washlands and the reinstatement of the old course of the river in its upper reaches, together with associated wetland habitats.

### **Lincolnshire County Council Strategy for Waterways Development (Lincolnshire County Council 2018)**

This document sets out the priorities for the development of the Lincolnshire Waterways in the period 2018 -2028. The County Councils aims to take a lead role in delivering 3 of the corporate commissioning / delivery strategies as follows –

1. Sustaining & Growing Business & the Economy
2. Protecting & Sustaining the Environment
3. Protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment

These are intended to align with the GLLEP Strategic Economic Plan, and particularly with agri-food, visitor economy and manufacturing & engineering.

The aims of the Strategy extend beyond enhancing navigation and includes priorities such as water supply, flood risk management and the development of major areas of wetland habitats through the Boston to Peterborough Wetland Corridor.

The proposals include the implementation of the Spalding Waterspace Strategy; the Boston Waterspace Strategy and the development of a new marina at Gainsborough.

## **Developing Nature Tourism in Greater Lincolnshire: A Report to the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership (Leeds Beckett University 2016)**

This report was prepared to provide an estimate of the current value of nature-based tourism across Greater Lincolnshire and to explore how the existing nature and wildlife tourism product could be enhanced in the future to stimulate an increase in its overall economic impact for the region.

Specific objectives for the study were to:

- Collate existing statistics on the volume and value of tourism across Greater Lincolnshire and on wildlife and nature tourism in the UK in general, and to use this information to prepare a baseline assessment of the current value of nature tourism to the economy of Greater Lincolnshire.
- Assess the potential for developing the area's nature tourism product as an integral component of the wider tourism economy.
- Identify barriers to achieving this potential (specific and particular).
- Provide guidance on the steps that need to be taken to overcome these barriers and achieve this potential.

The following were identified as key locations that provide a wide range of wildlife destinations –

- Chambers Farm Wood, Wragby – one of the main access points to the Bardney Limewoods National Nature Reserve
- Hartsholme Country Park/Swanholme Lakes Local Nature Reserve, City of Lincoln
- Crowle Moor Nature Reserve, near Scunthorpe
- Donna Nook National Nature Reserve, Donna Nook
- Far Ings National Nature Reserve, Barton on Humber
- Frampton Marshes, Boston

- Gibraltar Point National Nature Reserve, Skegness
- Snipe Dales Country Park & Nature Reserve, Horncastle
- Whisby Nature Park, City of Lincoln

A total of 5.69m holiday and day trips across Greater Lincolnshire include some element of engagement with nature. About 90% of this is day visitors, most from within the area.

The report assessed seasonality in terms of the Greater Lincolnshire Tourism Sector and concluded that the area experiences far more highs and lows across the year than the UK as a whole. There is an opportunity to use nature tourism to extend the season outside the main summer season.

The challenge, therefore, is to develop investment opportunities that will increase the overall economic benefit associated with nature-based tourism in Greater Lincolnshire by encouraging those with no interest in the area's natural heritage at present to start to engage with it, and by encouraging those with some interest to convert to more active engagement that includes additional spending – whether this is on entrance fees & guiding services; accommodation or associated food, drink and travel costs or other shopping.

The report recommended the following strategies and actions -

1. Developing general marketing campaigns in partnership with relevant organisations to raise overall awareness of Lincolnshire's natural heritage and its opportunities for tourism.
2. Encouraging tourists already staying locally to extend their length of stay in the destination by helping them understand the range of products on offer.
3. Converting day visitors into overnight stays, particularly in the shoulder months when many tourism businesses remain open but would benefit from additional guests.
4. Increasing the range of products offered for which people – tourists or day visitors – may be prepared to pay.



5. Attracting niche markets for whom viewing wildlife and engaging with nature is the primary purpose of their visit, and who because of their previous experience understand how to 'behave' in the countryside and thus will not create land management problems.
6. Developing initiatives aimed at existing residents, so that they can engage more with the nature on their doorstep and act as ambassadors to friends and relatives who may come to stay with them from time to time.

### **Boston's Multi-Functional Barrier – Water Level Management Economic Benefit Analysis (Richard Glen Associates / McKenzie Wilson 2015)**

This report assessed the economic benefits of maintaining a raised water level in the Haven at Boston following the construction of the Boston Barrier. The proposal would enable the development of an active waterfront at all times, rather than levels fluctuating with the tide.

This project was developed by the Lincolnshire Waterways Partnership and would increase the use of Boston by boats from both the sea and the inland waterways and would form part of the Boston to Peterborough Wetland Corridor (previously the Fens Waterways Link). The proposal would be to develop Boston as a 'waterway destination' and stimulate further economic regeneration to boost the visitor economy in the town. Opportunities would include improved moorings; trip boats and water taxis; themed promotions and events; potential for waterside businesses; and developing a waterside focus for existing quaysides and properties. A lock on the barrier would help to manage water levels and ease access to the Haven for boats. At present this is not included in the construction of the Boston Barrier.

There are two potential sites for new marinas on the River Witham and the Black Sluice Navigation, and a new marina site may be required downstream of the barrage once it is completed.

### **Boston's Multi-Functional Barrier – Opportunities Before Water Level Management Economic Benefit Analysis (Richard Glen Associates / McKenzie Wilson 2015)**

This report reviews the potential opportunities for developing Boston as a destination for marine craft and the associated economic benefits. It has been produced by independent expert consultants as a high level strategic document showing the potential for improvements in Boston. It recommends a 'Floating Haven' vision, where water is held permanently through Boston to create opportunities for boats from the waterways and the sea to be welcomed into the heart of the town.

### **Greater Lincolnshire Pub Accommodation Audit (Hotel Solutions 2019)**

An audit was carried out of pub accommodation across Greater Lincolnshire, including those with B&B or hotel guest rooms; caravan and camping sites; self-catering holiday cottages and lodges; cabins, pods and glamping units; and static caravans for hire.

The audit identified a total of 125 serviced pub accommodation businesses, with 1,126 letting bedrooms and an estimated 2,250 bed spaces, giving an annual capacity of just over 820,000 overnight stays. There were a further 7 pubs offering non-serviced accommodation.

From assessing customer ratings, the report concludes that serviced pub accommodation is delivering good, but not exceptional, quality. The majority of businesses are independently operated.

Over the last 5 years there has been an increase in the number of boutique inns being opened or upgraded, but there has also been a number of pub accommodation businesses that have closed.

The priorities for public sector intervention were identified as –

- Supporting the improvement and development of existing pub accommodation businesses
- PR and social media activity to support the promotion of the best that Greater Lincolnshire has to offer in terms of pub accommodation
- Encouraging and supporting the opening of further good quality pub accommodation businesses and boutique inns in and around Lincoln
- Encouraging and supporting the provision of non-serviced accommodation at pubs in the Lincolnshire Wolds, alongside some additional serviced pub rooms
- Focusing any activity to attract national pub accommodation operators on key towns

#### **Hotel Investment Fact File 2018/19 (Hotel Solutions for GLLEP 2019)**

The report summarised the current hotel position in Lincolnshire as follows -

- The most significant supply is in Lincoln
- Grantham has a sizeable hotel stock for a town of its size
- Other concentrations of hotels in Grimsby, Skegness, and Scunthorpe
- There is very limited hotel provision in Gainsborough and Sleaford
- The current hotel stock consists predominantly of 3-star hotels – of mixed quality
- Very few 4 star and boutique hotels
- However, the past few years has seen a growing stock of budget hotels.

Overall, there were 110 hotels, 4700 bedrooms and capacity for 3.4m overnight stays.

The report identifies Lincoln as the key location for new hotel provision, with priorities being for a branded boutique hotel, a branded aparthotel and a budget boutique hotel. Key locations were identified at the St Marks Development and the Cornhill Development.

A previous hotel feasibility study identified that other areas of Greater Lincolnshire, and particularly the market towns, would benefit from additional hotel accommodation. Potential opportunities were identified at the proposed Scunthorpe United football stadium, Grimsby and the Grantham Designer Outlet Village. Stamford presented other opportunities for boutique hotels.

#### **The Social, Cultural & Economic Contribution of the University of Lincoln (Regeneris Consulting 2017)**

Regeneris Consulting was commissioned by the University of Lincoln to measure the University's cultural and socio-economic contribution, and examine in detail its growth and development and the ways in which the institution has embedded itself culturally and socially into the city of Lincoln and the wider region.

The total economic contribution in 2015/16 was measured as £430 million. It supports more than 5% of the jobs in Lincoln. The University now has around 14,000 students.

Some of the key conclusions of the report in relation to the visitor economy were as follows -

*"The University aims to use culture as a placemaking tool, acting as a strong advocate and providing local capacity. This is especially important in the context of wider reductions in public spending on arts and culture and next to the LEP's aim to attract more people to the region, which the University hopes to aid by enhancing its cultural offering."*

*“The University has established a strong partnership with Arts Council England, facilitating projects and investments into the cultural and creative sector locally and beyond. The University has become a key part of the cultural infrastructure in Lincoln.”*

*“The University also owns and runs important cultural venues in the city:*

- Lincoln Performing Arts Centre (LPAC)*
- Lincolnshire One Venues (LOV)*
- The Engine Shed”*

*“Lincoln University provides a very notable boost to the local visitor economy, both through its cultural work and via the student-related visits it generates.”*

*“Students receive visits from friends and family throughout term time, and the University generates further visits to the city for graduations, open days and UCAS visits. Graduation week alone is a significant event in the context of the City of Lincoln. 12,000 guests arrive in Lincoln during the week.”*

*“Anecdotally, all hotels and restaurants get filled up to accommodate the guests, bringing a boost for the hospitality and retail sector in the city. In graduation week alone visitors are estimated to spend at least £0.6m in Lincoln.”*

*“Throughout the year, more than 43,600 student-related visitors are attracted to Lincoln as a result of the University. We estimate that in total these visits generate over £4 million in GVA and support around 120 jobs in Lincoln.”*

## **Key Planning Policies in Local Plans**

### **NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

**Plan: Core Strategy**

**Stage: Adopted**

**Date: June 2011**

**Relevant Policies -**

*CS15: Culture and Tourism*

**Plan: New North Lincolnshire Local Plan**

**Stage: Preferred Options**

**Date: Consultation Feb to March 2020**

**Relevant Policies -**

*Policy EC7p: A Sustainable Visitor Economy*

*Policy CSC15p: Tourism and Visitor Attractions*

*Policy CSC16p: Hotel and Guest House Accommodation*

*Policy CSC17p: Camping and Caravan Sites*

### **NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

**Plan: North East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2013-2032**

**Stage: Adopted**

**Date: March 2018**

**Relevant Policies -**

*Policy 12 Tourism and visitor economy*

**WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL, CITY OF LINCOLN, NORTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Plan: Central Lincolnshire Local Plan 2012 - 2036**

**Stage: Adopted**

**Date: April 2017**

**Relevant Policies -**

*Policy LP7: A Sustainable Visitor Economy*

*Policy LP8: Lincolnshire Showground*

**Plan: Central Lincolnshire Local Plan Review**

**Stage: Issues and Options Consultation**

**Date: June 2019**

**Relevant Policies -**

Proposal 17 – Tourism and the Visitor Economy

**SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Plan: South Kesteven Local Plan 2011-2036**

**Stage: Adopted**

**Date: January 2020**

**Relevant Policies -**

*E9: Visitor Economy*

**EAST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Plan: East Lindsey Local Plan – Core Strategy**

**Stage: Adopted**

**Date: 18<sup>th</sup> July 2018**

**Relevant Policies -**

*Strategic Policy 15 (SP15) – Widening the Inland Tourism and Leisure Economy*

*Strategic Policy 19 (SP19) - Holiday Accommodation*

*Strategic Policy 20 (SP20) – Visitor Economy*

**BOSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL & SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Plan: South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036**

**Stage: Adopted**

**Date: 8th March 2019**

**Relevant Policies -**

*Policy 9: Promoting a Stronger Visitor Economy*

*Springfields Shopping and Festival Gardens*

**RUTLAND COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Plan: Core Strategy Development Plan Document**

**Stage: Adopted**

**Date: July 2011**

**Relevant Policies –**

*Policy CS15: Tourism*

*Policy CS24: Rutland Water*

**Plan: Rutland Local Plan 2018-2036**

**Stage: Pre-submission**

**Date: March 2020**

**Relevant Policies –**

*Policy E5: Local Visitor Economy*

*Policy E6: Rutland Water*

*Policy E7: Eyebrook Reservoir Area*

*Policy E8: Caravans, camping, lodges, log cabins, chalets and similar forms of self-serviced holiday accommodation*

## APPENDIX 2 - LINKS TO FURTHER INFORMATION

The following are web links to key supporting documents and web pages. They are current at October 2020 -

### KEY REPORTS

Tourism Sector Deal [Follow link](#)

Local Industrial Strategy [Follow link](#)

### KEY ORGANISATIONS

Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership [Follow link](#)

Visitor Economy Committee [Follow link](#)

Lincolnshire County Council [Follow link](#)

North Lincolnshire Council [Follow link](#)

North East Lincolnshire Council [Follow link](#)

City of Lincoln Council [Follow link](#)

West Lindsey District Council [Follow link](#)

East Lindsey District Council [Follow link](#)

North Kesteven District Council [Follow link](#)

South Kesteven District Council [Follow link](#)

Boston Borough Council [Follow link](#)

South Holland District Council [Follow link](#)

Rutland County Council [Follow link](#)

Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce [Follow link](#)

Business Lincolnshire [Follow link](#)

University of Lincoln [Follow link](#)

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust [Follow link](#)

Heritage Lincolnshire [Follow link](#)

Lincolnshire Wolds AONB [Follow link](#)

Anglian Water - Rutland Water [Follow link](#)

Tourism Exchange Great Britain [Follow link](#)

Visit Britain [Follow link](#)

Visit England [Follow link](#)

Greater Grimsby Town Deal [Follow link](#)

Scunthorpe Town Deal [Follow link](#)

Lincoln Town Deal [Follow link](#)

Skegness/Mablethorpe Town Deal [Follow link](#)

Boston Town Deal [Follow link](#)

Visit Lincolnshire [Follow link](#)

Visit Lincs Coast [Follow link](#)

Love Lincolnshire Wolds [Follow link](#)

Visit North Lincolnshire [Follow link](#)

Discover North East Lincolnshire [Follow link](#)

Visit Lincoln [Follow link](#)

Visit Boston [Follow link](#)

Discover Rutland [Follow link](#)

Cycle England [Follow link](#)

The Explorer's Road [Follow link](#)

InvestSK [Follow link](#)

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds [Follow link](#)

## APPENDIX 3 - TABLE OF KEY ACTIONS 2021 – 2025

Code	Action	Lead organisation	Other partners	Timescale
<b>Sustainable tourism</b>				
ST1	Establish GLR as an exemplar location for sustainable tourism, by encouraging best practice on sustainability, developing networking opportunities for sharing experiences.	GLLEP, VEB/DMO		
ST2	Undertake a wide-ranging campaign to promote sustainability within the area's tourism sector.	VEB/DMO		
ST3	Identify opportunities to address the impacts of climate change and climate change adaptation. Measures to manage the coast for coastline and flood protection have the potential to incorporate significant habitat enhancements to boost the area's appeal to visitors.	VEB/DMO	LCC, EA	
ST4	Work alongside Lincolnshire County Council on the development and implementation of actions to tackle climate change in the emerging Green Masterplan.	LCC		
ST5	Give greater consideration to opportunities to support ongoing climate change reduction through eco-tourism and agri-tourism.	VEB/DMO		
ST6	Working in partnership, enrich the area's green spaces by protecting and enhancing existing sites and creating new areas for wildlife and people.	VEB/DMO	LCC, wildlife organisations	
ST7	Work with conservation organisations and land advisors to support farmers and landowners in the successful adoption of agri-environment schemes and resulting environmental benefits, including wildlife habitats, accessible greenspace, public access and heritage interpretation.	VEB/DMO	Natural England	
ST8	Work with service providers to develop sustainable transport modes, including improved rail connections, connections to airports, and local and long distance bus services, and cycle hire schemes.	VEB/DMO	Visit Lincoln, Transport providers	
ST9	Promote cycling across GLR to both visitors and residents, including the development of new off-road cycle paths and promoted cycle routes, including multi-user routes to cater for walkers and equestrian users.	LCC	DCs	



Code	Action	Lead organisation	Other partners	Timescale
ST10	Promote the Viking Way as a 'Viking Experience', which would link together many of the attractions GLR has to offer. Provide improved signage, marketing and artworks.	LCC		
ST11	Encourage tourism businesses (attractions and accommodation providers) to install and promote the availability of electric vehicle charging points.	VEB/DMO		
ST12	Seek to reduce carbon emissions from the tourism industry by encouraging renewable energy use, particularly utilising solar power air source heat pumps, ground source heat pumps, and existing wind turbines in the area where possible.	VEB/DMO		
ST13	Work with local businesses on a campaign to reduce their use of resources, particularly to reduce the reliance on single-use plastics.	VEB/DMO		
ST14	Encourage the development of eco-lodges or other sustainable accommodation, as proposed in Skegness, to cater specifically for environmentally conscious visitors. Work with local planning authorities to develop appropriate policies and the Environment Agency in relation to potential tidal and coastal flooding issues.	VEB/DMO	DCs, EA	
ST15	Encourage local sourcing by businesses eg food and drink products to support the local economy and reduce food miles, building on the success of Taste Lincolnshire.	DCs		
ST16	Encourage sustainable uses for historic buildings, such as for accommodation or hospitality.	Heritage Lincolnshire		
ST17	Explore how the GLLEP and LCC could support Building Preservation Trusts, such as Heritage Lincolnshire, in bringing derelict historic buildings back into sustainable use, for accommodation and amenities for visitors.	Heritage Lincolnshire	GLLEP, LCC	
ST18	Deliver a Low Carbon Lincoln Castle Project – a pilot project with designed to support the delivery of the Green Masterplan - to deliver culture in a way that responds effectively to the changing needs of our audiences in the post Covid-19 world and embraces the opportunities this presents.	LCC Cultural Services		
ST19	Work with the local planning authorities to ensure there are policies in all emerging Local Plans to encourage sustainable tourism.	VEB/DMO	LAs	
ST20	Work with local communities to identify the potential implications of increasing visitor numbers in their locality and seek to provide facilities which benefit local people as well as visitors to the area.	VEB/DMO		

Code	Action	Lead organisation	Other partners	Timescale
ST21	Work with local businesses to ensure that new tourism developments bring long-lasting benefits to the local economy.	VEB/DMO		
ST22	Encourage the accreditation of tourism businesses demonstrating environmental awareness and sustainable practices using a green accreditation scheme, such as Green Tourism, promoted by Visit England.	VEB/DMO		
<b>Extending the season</b>				
ES1	Carry out a major campaign to promote opportunities for nature, heritage and outdoor tourism throughout the year.	VEB/DMO, GLNP	RSPB, LWT	
ES2	Work with operators to enhance visitor facilities at existing nature tourism sites where this would not cause harm to habitats or species, and work with the environment sector to help fund the management of habitats in light of increased footfall.	Site operators	VEB/DMO, GLNP	
ES3	Scope out opportunities to develop new visitor attractions which 'fill gaps' between existing ones.	VEB/DMO		
ES4	Expand the Coastal Communities team approach to include sites on the Wash and Humber	LCC, LWT		
ES5	Market GLR cycling, building on the success of Cycle England, and as a location for equestrian and walking holidays by identifying and promoting new routes and organised holiday packages.	VEB/DMO		
ES6	Further develop the waterways of GLR for a range of informal leisure purposes, including encouraging visiting boats in the shoulder season as well as the summer months.	LCC, IWA		
ES7	Promote fishing holidays by linking significant fishing lakes and river locations with associated accommodation.	VEB/DMO	Angling Associations	
ES8	Work with the 'Sail the Wash' initiative to promote the use of Boston Gateway Marina and Fosdyke Yacht Haven by boats visiting the Wash.	VEB/DMO		
ES9	Develop a variety of accommodation choices, including pet friendly options	VEB/DMO	Site operators	
ES10	Identify opportunities for extending the season for stays in caravans on the coast, taking into account risks from coastal flooding in the winter months.	VEB/DMO	DCs	
ES11	Maximise opportunities for tourism related to the area's unique aviation heritage.	Aviation Heritage Lincolnshire		

Code	Action	Lead organisation	Other partners	Timescale
ES12	Encourage and support additional festivals, events and exhibitions, including working with heritage sites and museums.	LAs		
ES13	Identify opportunities to promote an increase in Business Tourism, utilising conference facilities in hotels, educational institutions and public venues.	VEB/DMO	GLLEP	
ES14	Work with organisers of sports and other events to encourage visitors to extend their stays and utilise local accommodation and visitor attractions.	VEB/DMO		
ES15	Target markets out of season eg retired people, 'empty nesters', pre-school, disabled people, nature enthusiasts and birdwatchers.	VEB/DMO		
ES16	Work with local accommodation providers and attractions to identify opportunities for 'packaging' of tourism activities by for example, location or a particular theme.	VEB/DMO, Visit Lincoln		
ES17	Organise training workshops for accommodation providers on the needs of residential cyclists to expand on the cycling package offer.	VEB/DMO		
ES18	Promoting weekend and short break tourism for families	VEB/DMO, Visit Lincoln		
ES19	Develop themed breaks eg Nature, heritage, aviation heritage, market towns.	VEB/DMO, LAs, tourism businesses	Specialist providers, experts	
ES20	Target the short breaks market for outdoor activities holidays	VEB/DMO		
<b>Enhancing the product</b>				
EP1	Establish a delivery mechanism and/or organisation for managing the implementation of enhancement projects through the Tourism Zone or other funding mechanisms.	An existing or new organisation - tbc		
EP2	Work with tourism organisations at a national level and in the surrounding counties to develop networks for information exchange and collaborative working to promote the visitor economy.	VEB/DMO, Visit Lincoln		
EP3	Focus on promoting 'experiences' for visitors across the area by bringing together attractions and accommodation and actively promoting them through digital channels.	VEB/DMO, Visit Lincoln		
EP4	Identify and implement key actions and interventions to secure the long term sustainability of key visitor attractions in the City of Lincoln eg Medieval Bishops' Palace (closed for restoration), Museum of Lincolnshire Life (closed due to Covid-19), and Usher Gallery (changes to its function).	City of Lincoln		

Code	Action	Lead organisation	Other partners	Timescale
EP5	Carry out a review of the accessibility of major attractions across the area and implement measures to ensure they are accessible to people with a range of disabilities.	VEB/DMO	People's Partnership	
EP6	Identify areas of GLR with less access to visitor facilities and seek to fill those gaps with new businesses or attractions.	VEB/DMO		
EP7	Complete the development of the new Coastal Country Park between Chapel St Leonards and Sutton on Sea.	LCC		
EP8	Support the development and promotion of the GLR section of the England Coast Path, including overnight accommodation and luggage carrying packages.	NE	VEB/DMO	
EP9	Develop the Viking Way into an internationally renowned all-year round walking route by greatly improving maintenance, carrying out route enhancements and investing in marketing, facilities, wayfinding and branding.	LCC		
EP10	Undertake maintenance and upgrading on the Viking Way, including - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crossing the A46 at Caistor – New location for crossing and potential new access ramps with more appropriate all access inclines.</li> <li>• Ludford – Review of the route which is overly reliant on a permissive section</li> <li>• Bardney to Lincoln – Seeking an alternative to the banks of the R. Witham where cattle are grazed.</li> <li>• The crossing of the A52 at Sedgebrook</li> <li>• The Drift at Sewstern - upgrading</li> </ul> Generally improvements along the whole route to access furniture	LCC		
EP11	Develop improved facilities for equestrians by connecting businesses, including parking / corralling / stabling combined with pubs, camp sites, cafes, farms, etc	British Horse Society	LCC	
EP12	Boston is poorly imaged nationally and locally. The opportunities to develop Boston waterfront for visitors and the benefits of water based recreation and environmental improvements should be increased.	IWA		
EP13	Spalding and Crowland communities can benefit from developing and promoting water based recreation on the River Welland.	IWA		

Code	Action	Lead organisation	Other partners	Timescale
EP14	Enhance the Boston to Peterborough Wetland corridor through major habitat improvements and developing navigation links from Lincolnshire to the Fens.	IWA	LCC, EA	
EP15	Develop a new reservoir in South Lincolnshire (near Spalding) to enhance the Boston to Peterborough Wetland Corridor.	Water Resources East	South Lincs Wetland Partnership, IWA, LCC, EA	
EP16	Develop wetland sites in the Fens to link with, and complement, the established sites at Willow Tree Fen and Deeping Lakes.	LWT		
EP17	Waterways Development for leisure users – increase the accessibility for people on and alongside Lincolnshire's waterways for visitors and residents. eg River Witham, Grantham Canal, Sleaford Navigation.	LCC, CRT	Sleaford Navigation Trust, EA	
EP18	Develop Cycling & Walking Network Plans for the area, including a plan for the Skegness and Mablethorpe areas which will highlight cycling and walking infrastructure for improvement.	LCC		
EP19	Promote the Lincolnshire coast as an ideal destination, year round, for the growing cycle tourism market. Easy access to the Wolds and the quiet lanes of East Lindsey combined with ample accommodation provides a good springboard for this sector of the market.	LCC		
EP20	Visit Lincoln have already worked on the Cycle England campaign for helping to develop cycle tourism in the area – this has already secured deals with German and Dutch firms, including TUI Nederland. We have an ambition to expand this locally with a 'Cycle Lincolnshire' brand to raise awareness of the area domestically and internationally.	Visit Lincoln, ELDC	LCC	
EP21	Develop new cycle routes in the Lincolnshire Wolds, centred on the market towns.	LWCS		
EP22	Identify and implement actions to meet the need for sustainable, sensitive and appropriate levels of tourism and recreation within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB as highlighted within the current statutory Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Management Plan (2018-23). This seeks to utilise the surrounding market towns as both physical and information hubs for the wider AONB.	LWCS		
EP23	Develop a 'wow' location in relation to tourism opportunities in the Lincolnshire Wolds eg country park, visitor centre.	LWCS		

Code	Action	Lead organisation	Other partners	Timescale
EP24	Develop broader links between the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB and the wider countryside, including enhanced connections with the coast. New and existing walks and cycle rides will be added into digital platforms.	LWCS		
EP25	Support the proposed expansion of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB to raise awareness of the area and provide high quality facilities for visitors.	LWCS		
EP26	Promote the market towns, such as Gainsborough, Sleaford, Horncastle, Stamford, and Oakham as local visitor hubs to access local facilities and surrounding local visitor attractions and tourism businesses. Promote local markets as visitor attractions.	DCs		
EP27	Maximise opportunities for developing Public Art, public space/realms enhancements and interpretation to raise awareness of the natural and built heritage of Lincolnshire.	LAs		
EP28	Work with arts organisations such as the National Centre for Craft and Design to develop programmes of festivals, events and exhibitions to engage local people and visitors in the arts.	NCCD		
EP29	Encourage the digitisation of local collections, including the enhancement of Broadband services where this is required. eg Doddington Hall Ceramic Collection and Duchy of Lancaster documents	VEB/DMO	LCC	
EP30	Seek to provide structural support for developing heritage visitor facilities, including match funding. There is scope to better co-ordinate the development of touring exhibitions.	Heritage Lincolnshire		
EP31	Promote appropriate energy-efficient retrofits in the conversion of heritage buildings to alternative uses.	Heritage Lincolnshire		
EP32	Promote local distinctiveness, such as an “Experience Historic Lincolnshire” programme to showcase individual attractions and accommodation providers.	Heritage Lincolnshire, LCC Historic Places		
EP33	Conversion of Greyfriars in Lincoln into a new attraction for the City	Heritage Lincolnshire		
EP34	Deliver a townscape heritage scheme in Boston and support others elsewhere to improve the visitor offer and attractiveness of historic urban areas.	Heritage Lincolnshire, LCC Historic Places		



Code	Action	Lead organisation	Other partners	Timescale	
EP35	Develop and implement a project to bring together historic sites and accommodation providers and coordinate better promotion and marketing of these sites, together with offering business support to provide the high quality “welcome”.	Heritage Lincolnshire, LCC Historic Places			
EP36	Develop a strategy for the historic environment and the visitor economy, which could include what we want to promote and how we want to promote it. As well as built heritage, this includes landscapes, archaeology and intangible heritage. This includes the coast, as well as the other character areas across the area.	LCC Historic Places Team			
EP37	Work with local environmental organisations on the delivery of the Nature Recovery Network (NRN) to address wildlife declines and provide benefits for people. Encourage local uptake of the Government’s Green Recovery Challenge Fund to create new environmental jobs.	GLNP	Natural England, LCC		
EP38	Support conservation organisations and other stakeholders involved in landscape-scale conservation to deliver green spaces for wildlife and people which are bigger, better and more joined up. This will help to realise the potential for increased wildlife tourism in areas such as the Wash and the Fens.	GLNP	LCC		
EP39	Develop partnerships between tourism and environmental organisations to ensure that all tourism beneficiaries should be seen as stakeholders and ultimately understand their responsibility. This may be through funding, providing support or even just ensuring that visitors are aware that the natural environment is to be respected.	Tourism operators, environment sector			
EP40	Development of new Nature Strategy and Biodiversity Action Plans, including the development of the Nature Recovery Network.	GLNP	Local authorities, statutory bodies, other stakeholders		
EP41	Enhance biodiversity and support green recovery by working on a landscape-scale with conservation organisations.	VEB/DMO	RSPB, LWT, GLNP, National Trust		
EP42	Seek to provide support for developing key nature reserve visitor facilities at sites such as Frampton Marsh to increase visitor capacity, including match funding.	RSPB			

Code	Action	Lead organisation	Other partners	Timescale
EP43	Promote the Wash as an AONB and designated European Marine Site & promote the Sail the Wash initiative, including the Sutton Bridge and Boston Gateway Marinas and Fosdyke Yacht Haven.	RSPB	LCC	
EP44	Support the RSPB to continue their landscape-scale conservation work around The Wash as a means of enhancing the area's ecological interest.	RSPB		
EP45	Boston College catering team and Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority to promote sustainable Wash shellfish/seafood – this has the potential to create regional identity for local seafood.	Boston College	RSPB	
EP46	Work with the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA), breweries and owners to identify opportunities to maximise the use of public houses to provide high quality accommodation and restaurant facilities.	Local Businesses		
EP47	Work in partnership with the 'Inns on the Edge' project, which seeks to record and enhance the heritage value of pubs on the Lincolnshire Coast.	Local Businesses		
EP48	Encourage the development of a range of visitor accommodation to meet a variety of needs, including hotel and camping facilities.	Local Businesses		
EP49	Encourage the development and diversification of a range of visitor accommodation to meet a variety of needs, including hotel and camping facilities, ranging from 'glamping' and 'champing' (church stays) to more informal small camping sites. Opportunities include – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Champing – working with the NCT &amp; other Churches within the UK.</li> <li>• Glamping in open spaces such as at Topholme and Bolingbroke.</li> <li>• Camping nights as part of an event or tour around Lincolnshire.</li> <li>• Sleep outdoor fundraising nights for charities</li> <li>• Themed nights eg sleep within Lincoln Castle walls, stay in your local museum overnight.</li> <li>• Camping overlooking the towns.</li> </ul>	VEB/DMO	LCC Historic Places	
EP50	Promote the use of virtual reality, augmented reality, mobile apps and live webcams to bring attractions to life and appeal to all ages.	VEB/DMO		

Code	Action	Lead organisation	Other partners	Timescale
EP51	Undertake Audience Development Work- intelligence gathering on audience insights in order to maximise our growth opportunities as a service - To deliver culture in a way that responds effectively to the changing needs of our audiences in the post Covid-19 world and embraces the opportunities this presents.	LCC Cultural Services		
<b>Increasing productivity</b>				
IP1	Encourage a more entrepreneurial approach to business development through improved skills development and networking. Build on the experience of local businesses who have adapted their offer in the light of the Coronavirus pandemic, by sharing experiences and encouraging others to be more enterprising.	VEB/DMO		
IP2	Encourage a step change on the use of technology within the sector to increase the efficiency of local businesses. This could include further use of QR codes and apps to digitise systems for booking accommodation and events, and pre-ordering food.	VEB/DMO		
IP3	As part of the COVID-19 recovery, plan for a likely increase in demand for staycations, including in rural areas. It will be necessary to build from a much lower base level.	VEB/DMO	Local businesses	
IP4	Cultural Services Public Programme – we will continue to work with partners on the development of our public programme - To address the financial impact of Covid-19 on both local authority budgets and the wider economy.	LCC Cultural Services		
IP5	The production of a recovery roadmap that best supports the long term sustainability of the service - To ensure that on-going service priorities continue to focus on a sustainable future model for culture.	LCC Cultural Services		
IP6	Support businesses to become inbound travel trade ready through improved skills training and networking.	VEB/DMO	Chamber of Commerce, Business, Lincolnshire	
IP7	Focus on local, regional and national customers initially, then widening marketing to include international visitors as COVID-19 recedes.	VEB/DMO	Local businesses	
IP8	Link in with Town Deals to develop the product and improve networking.	VEB/DMO		
IP9	Capitalise on major events eg Lincolnshire Show, Lincoln Christmas Market, the So Festival, Burghley Horse Trials. Rutland Bird Fair	VEB/DMO		

Code	Action	Lead organisation	Other partners	Timescale
IP10	Develop, and provide the infrastructure for, new events to celebrate the wildlife of the area.	GLNP		
IP11	Develop and implement themed projects and 'experiences' to bring together historic sites and accommodation providers to promote the local distinctiveness of different areas within GLR.	Heritage Lincolnshire, LCC Historic Places		
IP12	Identify opportunities to develop 'organised' cycling, walking, horse riding and carriage driving holidays to broaden the market and lengthen the season.	VEB/DMO	Local businesses	
IP13	Develop the productivity of the Wash and the Fens areas by developing new products eg wildlife tours, similar to Visit West Norfolk.	VEB/DMO	RSPB	
IP14	Identify opportunities for new major events to celebrate the wildlife of GLR.	VEB/DMO	Wildlife organisations	
IP15	Review the criteria and the cost for the use of brown tourism signage to increase opportunities to promote local tourist attractions from major routes.	LCC		
IP16	Work with travel providers, both locally and further afield, to identify opportunities to increase visits to the county and encourage day trips by the residents of GLR and surrounding counties.	VEB/DMO, Visit Lincoln		
IP17	Further develop the Lincs Pass Discount Card, developed by Heritage Lincolnshire, to better link attractions and hospitality businesses.	VEB/DMO		
IP18	Review the range and quality of accommodation available, with particular emphasis on enhancing hotel accommodation.	VEB/DMO		
IP19	Address the findings of the Arkenford survey in 2017 as to the reasons why people don't visit Lincolnshire.	LCC		
IP20	Expand the sector support provided by the Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub – business development support, business growth advice, grants	Business Lincolnshire		
IP21	Dedicated Visitor Economy advisory resource to support the sector to develop, grow and increase sustainability	Business Lincolnshire, Chamber of Commerce, University of Lincoln		
IP22	Improve product knowledge amongst local businesses.	VEB/DMO		
IP23	Heritage Lincolnshire and 'We'll Meet Again' museum to develop/promote the World War II archaeology at RSPB Freiston Shore.	Heritage Lincolnshire, LCC Historic Places	RSPB	

Code	Action	Lead organisation	Other partners	Timescale
IP24	Heritage Lincolnshire and The Old King's Head in Kirton to run events, promote accommodation, food etc.	Heritage Lincolnshire	RSPB	
IP25	Donna Nook - make the most of the visitors it already attracts whilst working to minimise detrimental impacts on local residents. Develop tourism services and opportunities in the area to increase spending and by signposting guests to other parts of GLR. This would drive up the economic value of Donna Nook without adversely affecting the seals.	LWT	NE, GLNP	
IP26	Raise the profile of the Boston to Peterborough Wetland Corridor in Local Plans. This could help to achieve its recognition as a wetland corridor, for navigation, wildlife, recreation, water supply and public access. It would also benefit a wide range of stakeholders and communities between Boston and Peterborough.	IWA	LCC, EA	
IP27	Encourage local residents to take part in activities that bring benefits for health and wellbeing through culture and nature. Currently the offer is quite fragmented, and it would be good to bring culture, nature, health, community and social care sectors together for more of this. This could include the Lincolnshire Wolds Historic Landscape Network, festivals, activities, workshops, and other kinds of participation in towns, villages and rural locations.	LCC Historic Places		
IP28	Continue and expand the programme of Heritage Open Days	Heritage Lincolnshire		
IP29	Encourage the development of 'champing', using Medieval churches as unique places to stay for visitors. This is something that Lincolnshire could specialise in, and at the same time would provide an income for churches.	Churches Conservation Trust	LCC, Heritage Lincolnshire	
<b>Improving infrastructure</b>				
II1	Provide significant new tourism infrastructure to improve access to the coast eg Coastal Country Park, England Coast Path, off road cycle paths.	LCC		
II2	Develop new public transport facilities across the area including direct train services (eg London to Skegness, improved cross country services) and bus routes (eg hopper services on the coast, linking the Coast to the Wolds and better linking the market towns).	VEB/DMO	Service operators	

Code	Action	Lead organisation	Other partners	Timescale
II3	Link with the Town Deals, Future High Street Fund projects and Heritage Action Zones, including regeneration projects such as the enhancement of the Grimsby Waterfront and Boston Waterspace Development, to enhance and better promote the heritage and provide enhancements for people, including both visitors and the local community.	Town Deals	VEB/DMO	
II4	Support place making initiatives across GLR, including the regeneration of seaside resorts eg Cleethorpes, Skegness, Mablethorpe, and the Vital and Viable East Lindsey Market Towns Project.	Town Deals, DCs	VEB/DMO	
II5	Support the development of new multi-user routes on the National Cycle Network in GLR, involving a range of user groups during the development phase.	Sustrans	LCC	
II6	<p>Work with Sustrans on the following key areas for improvement -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-aligning sections of NCN1 (Humber Bridge to Wisbech)</li> <li>• Re-route of NCN64 (Newark via Harby to Lincoln), needs connecting within the City of Lincoln.</li> <li>• Link NCN1 with NCN64 through Lincoln City Centre</li> <li>• Re-route NCN15 to connect with NCN64.</li> <li>• A section of route NCN15 in Grantham needs resurfacing</li> <li>• Create a new Stamford Green wheel</li> <li>• Investment need to deliver Saxilby Parish Council cycling strategy, linking up Lincolnshire with Nottinghamshire via Torksey</li> <li>• Invest in West Lindsey strategy to build the route from the Humber via Louth to connect via Bardney and Lincoln</li> <li>• Connect NCN169 with NCN1 via Scunthorpe into Gainsborough</li> <li>• Improve NCN12 and NCN151, to meet the needs Sleaford, Grantham, Spalding, Boston and Lincoln</li> </ul>	Sustrans	LCC, RCC, VEB/DMO	



Code	Action	Lead organisation	Other partners	Timescale
II7	<p>Set up a project with the British Horse Society to enhance access to the GLR Countryside for equestrian use. This could include the following –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extending the network of routes available for equestrian access, including circular off-road routes</li> <li>• Providing safe off-road parking for horse boxes and trailers</li> <li>• Establishing quiet lanes with maximum 20mph speed limits</li> <li>• Providing additional resources to authorities responsible for creating and maintaining equestrian routes</li> <li>• Promote historical interest on routes to add educational value</li> <li>• Named trails for bridleways and multi-user routes, with themes linked to historic sites or building eg old mills to extend across GLR.</li> <li>• Improve access in the Lincolnshire Wolds for example extending and promoting the Lindsey Trail for multi-user enjoyment</li> </ul> <p>Equestrian events, sports, competitions and holidays</p>	LCC, BHS		
II8	Support waterway restoration and enhancement projects across the area eg Grantham Canal, Sleaford Navigation, Louth Navigation, Horncastle Canal, and the Boston to Peterborough Wetland Corridor.	LCC	IWA	
II9	Identify strategic improvements that can be made to digital infrastructure across the area, including broadband speeds, to support existing businesses and enable greater use of digital technology and a range of digital platforms.	VEB/DMO		
II10	Work with rail and bus operators to develop a more integrated public transport network and improved services for visitors to travel to the area and then move around between visitor attractions. Integrate information and ticketing systems.	VEB/DMO	Service operators	
II11	Undertake a programme of public realm enhancements at key arrival points to give a good first impression of GLR.	VEB/DMO	DCs	
II12	Develop an advertising programme to raise awareness of visitor opportunities at key arrival points, such as railway stations, bus stations and transport hubs. This should include an aim to spread visitors across the county by promoting smaller towns and villages and more local visitor facilities.	VEB/DMO, Visit Lincoln		

Code	Action	Lead organisation	Other partners	Timescale
II13	Work with rail community partnerships to increase services at smaller stations in the rural areas.	VEB/DMO	Service operators	
II14	Ensure that tourism needs are incorporated into future Local Transport Plans, Public Rights of Way Improvement Plans and other strategic walking and cycling plans.	LCC, RCC, LAs		
II15	Work with planning officers and planning committees to develop planning policies for tourism to enable them to support planning applications in key strategic locations.	LAs	VEB/DMO	
II16	Ensure that key infrastructure developments identified in the Action Plan are supported by policies in Local Plans and Local Transport Plans across the area.	LCC, LAs		
II17	Where infrastructure development is planned, require biodiversity net gain to minimise impacts on, and provide net gains for, the natural environment.	LAs		
II18	Work with the 6 Town Deal Partnerships covering Grimsby, Scunthorpe, Lincoln, Skegness, Mablethorpe and Boston.	Town Deals	VEB/DMO	
II19	Work with local businesses to develop a strategy for enhancing digital infrastructure and business efficiency.	VEB/DMO	Service providers	
II20	Work with the Environment Agency to maximise the use of the Haven at Boston for boating and waterside regeneration following the completion of the Boston Barrier.	EA	BBC, Natural England, conservation organisations	
<b>Investment in Skills</b>				
IS1	Identify and implement a programme of training to improve the customer welcome and improve the visitor experience across the whole of GLR.	VEB/DMO		
IS2	Expand apprenticeships in the hospitality and tourism sector across GLR.	Local businesses		
IS3	Establish a skills training partnership and Skills Portal for the Tourism Zone, including local business organisations, local colleges and the University of Lincoln.	VEB/DMO		
IS4	Work with local colleges to establish a programme of training for Hospitality business owners, focussing on hospitality as a professional discipline.	VEB/DMO	Local colleges	

Code	Action	Lead organisation	Other partners	Timescale
IS5	Develop better connectivity to Visit England's current skills strategy. The current skills portal and Lincolnshire County Council's work in this area needs balancing out with the ambition of Lincoln College and the intelligence that the DMO has from businesses.	VEB/DMO, Visit Lincoln	Lincoln College	
IS6	Organise a programme of familiarisation visits for accommodation operators to local attractions. Consider a badge or ambassador scheme to recognise local knowledge.	VEB/DMO		
IS7	Establish a structured programme of summer work placements in hospitality, tourism and heritage sites for school and university students. eg the Lincolnshire Heritage Forum's Student Forum.	Local businesses		
IS8	Co-ordinate a programme of business skills training for tourism business owners and staff eg marketing, social media, digital marketing, knowledge of funding sources.	VEB/DMO	Chamber of Commerce, Business Lincolnshire, local colleges	
IS9	Develop a programme of training on making businesses sustainable eg reducing the use of plastic, reducing food miles, sourcing eco-friendly products and cycle storage.	VEB/DMO		
IS10	Support the development of an advisory network which provides support to farmers and landowners in agricultural environment schemes.	GLNP, LWT		
IS11	Work with conservation organisations to develop the skills and resources available to council planners to deliver biodiversity net gain resulting in a greener area with resulting eco-tourism benefits.	GLNP, LWT, NE	Conservation organisations, local planning authorities	
IS12	Encourage providers to install improved broadband connectivity and suitable IT equipment to access online courses.	LCC		
IS13	Address skills gaps amongst staff and volunteers in fundraising, countryside management, rights of way maintenance, and the maintenance and promotion of historic properties, including converting them to sustainable uses.	Heritage Lincolnshire, LCC Historic Places		
IS14	Work with local employers to better match skills provision to their needs	VEB/DMO		
IS15	Co-ordinate a needs led application for funding.	VEB/DMO		
IS16	Carry out a review of local businesses to identify specific skills gaps.	VEB/DMO		
IS17	Develop a programme of local hospitality, tourism and heritage apprenticeships	VEB/DMO		

Code	Action	Lead organisation	Other partners	Timescale
IS18	Work with schools and colleges on the curriculum content for T-levels in hospitality and tourism.	LCC		
IS19	Utilise the LCC Adult Education budget to run skills courses	LCC		
IS20	Support and expand the Coastal Communities Fund project.	ELDC		
<b>Marketing</b>				
MK1	Create a GLR Tourism Zone website to act as a 'one stop shop' for booking travel, accommodation, excursions and events and providing information and advice on what GLR has to offer.	VEB/DMO		
MK2	GLR will adopt the Tourism Exchange Great Britain (TXGB) booking system into the Tourism Zone website. A promotional campaign will be required to encourage businesses to sign up.	GLLEP, Visit Lincoln		
MK3	Work with GLLEP on the delivery of the Business and Economic Recovery Plan, including the establishment of a GLR-wide Destination Management Organisation to undertake place marketing.	GLLEP, Visit Lincoln		
MK4	Promote the Greater Lincolnshire & Rutland visitor offer in the UK and overseas, by developing new branding, which is independent of the partnership organisations, whilst retaining the current local branding hierarchy.	VEB/DMO		
MK5	Make use of technology to develop mobile apps to guide visitors, such as developing step by step walking and cycling apps and utilising 'augmented reality' across the area.	VEB/DMO		
MK6	Develop holiday packages for UK and overseas visitors eg Europe, USA	VEB/DMO	Local businesses	
MK7	Celebrate links between Lincolnshire and overseas, including military connections, the celebration of Mayflower 400, pilgrim routes, links with Boston Massachusetts and the New World. Support arts programmes such as 'Transported' in Boston and South Holland, and 'Illuminate Parades' in Gainsborough and Immingham.	DCs, Heritage Lincolnshire		
MK8	Concentrate initially on the UK holiday market and potential shift to more remote outdoor locations following Coronavirus.	VEB/DMO		
MK9	Communicate with local residents about the benefits of tourism and promote opportunities available for all.	VEB/DMO	DCs, LCC	

Code	Action	Lead organisation	Other partners	Timescale
MK10	Promote nature, heritage and outdoor tourism to broaden the offer and extend the season, including linking to relevant regional and national stakeholder media platforms.	VEB/DMO	GLNP, LWT, RSPB, National Trust etc.	
MK11	Increase Natural Coast branding to cover the nature reserves established on the Wash and the Humber and promote these areas as key assets for heritage and nature tourism. Incorporate Heritage Coast branding if it is defined by Natural England.	VEB/DMO	RSPB, LWT, GLNP	
MK12	Work with Liberation Route Europe to promote GLR's aviation heritage, including the International Bomber Command Centre, to the European market.	IBCC	VEB/DMO	
MK13	Work with local businesses and attractions to promote the area as a whole, improve linkages between attractions, and encourage local people and tourists to visit several locations and attractions.	VEB/DMO, Visit Lincoln		
MK14	Training on digital marketing, including augmented reality and virtual reality.	VEB/DMO		
MK15	Matching the marketing to the demographic. Eg young visitors will rely solely on social media and google for info, an older person may rely on print.	VEB/DMO		
MK16	Development of the GLR Tourism Zone Organisation with its own distinctive branding and website.	GLLEP		
MK17	Improving business partnerships and networking.	VEB/DMO		
MK18	Familiarisation training for businesses to better package and upsell tourism businesses and attractions.	VEB/DMO		
MK19	Promotional leaflets and presentational materials in relation to waterways to improve impact at local business development events.	IWA		
<b>Customer insight</b>				
CI1	Develop a shared customer insight programme through GLLEP and the Tourism Zone to ensure that the information gathered is consistent and is easily available to relevant organisations.	VEB/DMO	GLLEP	
CI2	Seek feedback from visitors in a co-ordinated way through consistent and easy to use feedback mechanisms.	VEB/DMO		

Code	Action	Lead organisation	Other partners	Timescale
CI3	Undertake a repeat survey of non-visitors to Lincolnshire to assess whether knowledge of, and attitudes to, Lincolnshire have changed since 2017.	LCC		
CI4	The database will be used to identify and develop new audiences for visitor attractions in GLR.	VEB/DMO		
CI5	The new visitlincolnshire.com website, which is currently being developed, should provide much more customer data.	Visit Lincoln, LCC		
CI6	Develop better working relationships between the business, tourism and environmental sectors.	VEB/DMO		
CI7	Introduce common survey systems to monitor visitor trends.	VEB/DMO		
CI8	Work with private accommodation providers, such as AirBnB, to obtain feedback on visits to GLR.	VEB/DMO		
<b>Local business environment</b>				
LB1	Establish a visitor economy partnership organisation to help with networking and knowledge sharing between businesses and other organisations.	VEB/DMO		
LB2	Work with the existing Town Deals, Future High Street Funds and Heritage Action Zones in GLR to deliver enhancements to transport, broadband connectivity, skills, culture and the economic environment for local businesses.	Town Deals, Future High Street Funds and Heritage Action Zones	VEB/DMO	
LB3	Provide an advice and mentoring service to assist local businesses in Coronavirus recovery, building their confidence going forward, and encouraging new ideas and innovation. This will require a particular focus on 'lifestyle businesses', which are a large majority of the businesses in the area.	VEB/DMO		
LB4	Provide advice on access to funding sources to support local accommodation businesses, hospitality providers and visitor attractions.	VEB/DMO	Chamber of Commerce, Business Lincolnshire	
LB5	Work with the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership, the Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce and Business Lincolnshire to develop a programme to support the recovery and growth of local tourism businesses.	VEB/DMO	GLLEP, Chamber of Commerce, Business Lincolnshire	



Code	Action	Lead organisation	Other partners	Timescale
LB6	Encourage businesses to share experiences of COVID-19 management and recovery measures through a website and/or e-newsletter.	VEB/DMO		
LB7	Identify key areas of GLR where broadband services need to be upgraded and ensure that businesses are able to receive training in digital skills and online marketing.	LCC		
LB8	Encourage businesses to work more closely together to provide 'packages' to encourage visitors to stay longer in the area.	Local businesses	VEB/DMO	
<b>Partnership working</b>				
PW1	Set up a Tourism Zone Forum as a new partnership organisation to share knowledge and experience between local tourism and hospitality businesses. The Forum would be established as the Destination Management Organisation covering the whole of GLR and would organise sub-groups to discuss certain specialist topics.	VEB/DMO		
PW2	Set up a Tourism Zone Organisation (VEB/DMO) as a new partnership to deliver the actions set out in the Tourism Action Plan.	GLLEP		
PW3	The Visitor Economy Board (VEB) would act as the decision making body for the Tourism Action Zone.	VEB/DMO, GLLEP		
PW4	The VEB/DMO would lead on the development of infrastructure, skills, product development and marketing, working closely with the VEB and its existing sub-groups.	VEB/DMO, GLLEP		
PW5	Establish a Destination Management Organisation covering the whole of GLR, either as part of the VEB/DMO or as a separate body to undertake place marketing.	GLLEP		
PW6	Establish a Tourism Zone website for GLR to share information and provide a co-ordinated booking system for transport, accommodation, attractions and events.	VEB/DMO		
PW7	Develop mobile phone apps to link into the same information and booking system and the Tourism Zone website.	VEB/DMO		
PW8	Work closely with Visit England or their rescue and recovery packages and ensure that any funding through the Tourism Zone is co-ordinated with other investment they have already made.	VEB/DMO, Visit Lincoln		

Code	Action	Lead organisation	Other partners	Timescale
PW9	Make use, where possible, of national mobile phone apps such as TXGB, and also consider supplementing this with local mobile phone apps to link into information and booking systems and the Tourism Zone website.	VEB/DMO		
PW10	Work with East Lindsey District Council to implement the key priorities identified in their Destination Strategy 2020-2025.	ELDC		
PW11	Work with North East Lincolnshire Council to grow tourism in Cleethorpes, Grimsby and Immingham.	NELC		
PW12	Work with Discover Rutland and Rutland County Council to deliver the actions in their Tourism Strategy 2020-2025.	RCC		
PW13	Joint funding and development of website/apps	VEB/DMO		
PW14	Set up a small staff team to co-ordinate the implementation and co-ordination of the Tourism Zone proposal.	VEB/DMO		
PW15	Organise an Annual Tourism Zone Conference to provide opportunities for businesses to share experiences and to raise awareness of the initiatives that are in progress or proposed.	VEB/DMO		
PW16	Facilitate the sharing of information and ideas between tourism, heritage and environmental organisations to foster a greater understanding of their respective sectors.	VEB/DMO, GLNP	LWT, RSPB	
PW17	Continue collaborations such as Water Resources East, the Boston to Peterborough Wetland Corridor (Fens Waterways Link) and the South Lincs Water Partnership	LCC		
PW18	Implement the Lincolnshire Waterways Development Strategy – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boston to Peterborough Wetlands Corridor</li> <li>• Spalding Waterspace Strategy</li> <li>• Boston Waterspace and Boston Barrier</li> <li>• Gainsborough Marina Business Plan and Waterspace Study</li> </ul>	LCC		

## APPENDIX 4 – TOURISM COMMISSION RECCOMENDATIONS

### TOURISM COMMISSION Final Recommendations

The Tourism Commission was established for the purpose of making recommendations for an ambitious and sustainable tourism sector in Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland which grows, increases in value, and provides jobs, investment, and quality.

By the end of 2025 the Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland visitor economy will be:

- A well-known, thriving and attractive destination
- Well on its way to flying the 'Green Tourism' flag
- Future focussed, adapting to a continually changing audience
- Developing a joined up 'New products' selection
- Showcasing the quality and sustainability of our region
- Taking online bookings for holidays and attractions, embracing digital opportunity
- Working hard to attract large scale Investments to continually improve the offer
- Creating highly qualified and highly motivated employees
- A warm welcome. A place to tell your friends about. A place to come back to.

**These recommendations are intended to help the tourism economy of Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland both step up following the end of lockdown and then with more ambitious long term actions.**

Tourism is Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland's third biggest industry and worth £2.49bn in 2019. Needless to say the sector has been decimated by the lockdowns and at March 2021 it is unclear on how many businesses will survive through the Government's four step plan to ease lockdown. The sector had already embraced the Government's thinking around the Tourism Sector Deal and a Tourism Action Plan has been produced after extensive consultation with the industry and based on its key themes of Investment, Product Development, Marketing and Skills. If the opportunity comes up to apply for Tourism Zone status then Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland has every intention of doing so and has been 'putting its house in order' in readiness.

Although there is great concern over business survival rates, the intention moving forward is to see the 'new normal' as a great opportunity. Of how we take the sector forward, creating a tourist industry that embraces quality, bookability and sustainability; that invests in its considerable but undeveloped 'outdoor' offer year round and invests in its staff, who will see tourism as a worthwhile career.

Recovery planning has been divided up into short and long term. Businesses need to recover and to earn money, so that short term (18 months) is all about ensuring that we regain profile and business. The long term is about an ambitious re-investment in every element of the sector to create the right platform for growth. As the economy re-opens, through research and data capture we will need to establish whether visitors aspirations for their holidays has changed temporarily or permanently. The largely private sector Tourism Commission has met virtually six times between September 2020 and February 2021. At each meeting it has taken a different theme, using the Tourism Sector Deal as its framework and covering marketing, investment, product development and skills.

The commission has not sought to create a new tourism strategy for the area, this exists in the form of the Tourism Action Plan. Instead it has remained focused on specific issues and ambitious in the response that it recommends. Chaired by Councillor Colin Davie, portfolio holder for Economy and Place (which includes the visitor economy) at Lincolnshire County Council, with Vice-chairman Chris Baron from Butlins. Other Commissioners represented all sectors and all sizes of businesses across Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland.

In essence a holiday in Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland will be easy and quick to book; we will present ourselves as an inspiring destination that offers great experiences. The welcome is warm and the customer service across the sector is consistent. There is quality in the places to stay, the places to visit and all the spaces in-between.

At the first Commission meeting a Key Line of Enquiry was established for each theme.

## 1. MARKETING

### Key Line of Enquiry:

#### **Who are Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland's visitors of 2025, and how do we make sure they know how great the area is?**

The commission felt that Lincolnshire is too little known. Research confirms this, no negative perceptions fortunately, but just 'no knowledge'. The Non-Visitor research confirms that Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland often has the products that potential visitors want, they are just oblivious that we have them. The Commission were keen to stress that customer perceptions will change in the coming years and it is important that both our promotional messages and our technology changes to meet customer interests.

[www.visitlincolnshire.com](http://www.visitlincolnshire.com) is undergoing a complete redevelopment with some £70k plus investment to date. The Tourism Commission felt that the new website (launch Easter 2021) is critical to marketing; everything will lead from and to it. Its aim is to both Inspire and Inform. It will use the latest technology being responsive on mobile and computer and quick to navigate. It will include online bookability and enable CRM more effectively.

#### **Immediate and Long term vision**

**Short term:** By Easter 2021 the redeveloped [www.visitlincolnshire.com](http://www.visitlincolnshire.com) website will have been re-launched, providing a high quality digital presence for the area to rival those of other tourism hotspots. It is designed as a platform for growth and to showcase the quality, breadth and depth of our offer to both our residents and visitors. It is the platform that is needed to match the messaging, everything leads from it and to it.

**Long term:** And by Easter 2025 [www.visitlincolnshire.com](http://www.visitlincolnshire.com)'s reach will go to all of its target markets across the UK and to those foreign markets that will be most interested in Lincolnshire's tourism product. Our marketing campaign and website will be self-financing because it achieves real benefit for operators in the visitor economy, and online bookability will be smooth, intuitive, and the means of booking of choice.

SHORT TERM COMMITMENT	LONG TERM COMMITMENT
During 2021 a major campaign will run nationally, targeted at our main market of over-45s and the family market encouraging them to visit Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland. During 2021 and 2022 further product and packaging will be developed and campaigns run that will attract new markets and strengthen existing ones.	Marketing campaigns should continue year on year with no return to the former stop/start, allowing the creation of a continual budget commitment from authorities and businesses alike.

<p>Raise the awareness of Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland. It is recommended that investment is made in a major social media and PR campaign (including ground handling service) to give a big push to the launch of <a href="http://www.visitlincolnshire.com">www.visitlincolnshire.com</a></p> <p>Knowledge of the Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland visitor offer by our residents could be much better. It is recommended that an On Your Doorstep campaign with a call to action to move the customer journey along is established. Quality of life feeds into this strategy; we would create a vision and tell the engaging stories. As Covid-19 restrictions become clearer, this campaign can be further developed for regional and national audiences.</p> <p>It is felt that we were behind the leaders in terms of our use of technology. Website and social media require a regular supply of video and it is recommended that a programme of video filming throughout the year to cover seasonality and product strengths is commissioned. This will give us a stock of video that we own and can be edited and re-edited according to need.</p> <p>The importance of the Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland cycling and walking offer amongst all our target markets was important but also under-developed. It is recommended that the website includes branded Cycling and Walking product that is easy to access, geared up businesses and packaged.</p>	<p>Using all available data to make sure that we understand what our visitors want, ensuring that we continue to cater to the changing markets of 2025 and beyond.</p> <p>Continue to invest in the website so that it continues to inspire, has new experiences and product being developed.</p> <p>Continually research the newest available technology for use within the industry, to help keep us on a level or ahead of the rest of the Country, and use this to create an advantage within any marketing campaigns.</p> <p>Improve and expand on the cycling offer, making Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland a prime cycling destination for national and international visitors.</p>
<b>WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?</b>	
<p>Change in perception, richness of proposition, and reciprocal work with other Lincolnshire providers to broaden the appeal and the richness of Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland.</p> <p>Moving to fully digital.</p>	



## 2. INVESTMENT

### Key Line of Enquiry:

**What new products will be most attractive to the visitors of 2025, and how will we attract the right finance to create them?**

**The commission felt that the quality of the Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland product wasn't always good enough and that it needed more packaging. The quality of the existing and new attractions and accommodation; and the quality of the surroundings – roads, paths, public space, beaches, parking, and broadband are all critical to positive experiences.**

The commission advised that Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland needed a major new attraction, although it is recognised that this can take 5-10 years. Bearing in mind that the visitor economy is Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland's third most important industry it was felt that the planning system needed to understand quality tourism and the demand for it. Investment in new products should look at working on what people know to be good about the area e.g. food, farming, environment, aviation heritage. The Commission underlined the importance of maintenance of the existing product and investment in Events and Festivals- particularly family friendly ones. They felt the need to differentiate between what is essentially Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland (sparsely populated and deeply rural) and what is unacceptable (poor quality).

The commission recognised The Great Outdoors as a strength of the area –but challenged whether we make enough of it, whether our environment and sustainability credentials are as good as we claim. Also recognised that boutique hotels should be encouraged, the need to upgrade and enhance existing hotels and whether we have product that appeals to teenagers and millennials.

### **Immediate and Long term vision**

**Short Term: By autumn 2021 businesses in Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland's tourism sector will have been provided with advice and development to enable them to contribute to our ambition of increasing green tourism in the county; a green tourism action plan will set out the steps that strategic bodies will take to support that ambition.**

**Long term: By 2025 the sector will be on its way to becoming a 'Green Tourism' destination. Plans will be well developed for a large scale investment, with public and private sector working together to make it happen.**

### **SHORT TERM COMMITMENT**

### **LONG TERM COMMITMENT**

<p>Recognition that consumers are increasingly interested in environmental measures. The commission recommended that we should produce a Green Tourism toolkit to help business leaders to make the most of their environmental credentials. A reward and recognition package would follow.</p> <p>The recommendation that economic development agencies make direct contact with new and/or improved visitor attractions, providing them with access to a range of business support products including through improved product knowledge and communication.</p> <p>There should be engagement with the planning authorities on the importance of tourism to Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland and its changing needs, particularly when current provision no longer meets the needs of 21st century visitors. It is recommended that there is a debate with local planning authorities about whether we allocate land in local plans for major tourism investment?</p> <p>The commission wanted to provide opportunities for new businesses to come forward.</p>	<p>Put together a compelling investor case for the sector, demonstrating what a fantastic location Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland is and the wider offer.</p> <p>Work with Team Lincolnshire to promote opportunities for investment in the sector. Our assets that could be exploited include former military bases, stately homes with plans for investment, and countryside and nature parks. We will prepare investment propositions for each of these and target potential investors about these propositions.</p> <p>Create a soft landing to help investors, including: support in finding suitable sites and premises, funding support and advice, access to sector specialists, planning support and advice on skills and recruitment.</p>
<b>WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?</b>	
<p>Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland has a year round offer of quality attractions and accommodation. Business start-ups are encouraged. Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland puts across a sense of being ready for and welcoming to visitors. Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland working towards carbon neutral.</p>	

### 3. PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

#### Key Line of Enquiry:

**What aspects of Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland's current visitor offer are the ones that visitors most enjoy, and how can we future proof them for 2025?**

**Does Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland have enough bookable product that is digitally available? Cycling England, Explorer's Road, US Connections and England Originals have all developed bookable product which works well, but this is just a small part of Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland's tourism offer. The commission recognised that the great outdoors and family coast were our strengths –weaknesses around the offer particularly for teenagers and millennial's.**

The commission felt there was not enough product knowledge within the sector. The commission recognised the speed of generational change and consumer requirements, hence the importance of bookability and sustainability. Importance of understanding the offer and what visitors of 2025 will expect – wellness/relaxation; multi-generational; design that works for all such as families or women only groups.

#### **Immediate and Long term vision**

**Short Term: A digital transformation programme will be delivered so that Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland's tourism sector rivals the most digitally advanced areas in the country by late 2022. Digital technology will be used both to increase business productivity and to package up our products to meet changing customer interests –we will establish a packaged approach to green tourism, cycling, walking and the great outdoors, niche retail, short breaks for millennials and aviation heritage.**

**Long Term: 2025 will see Greater Lincolnshire Rutland ahead of the game in terms of their digital culture within the sector, with offers for the changing visitor market. We will have great experiences for everyone, while constantly improving and moving with visitor needs and requirements.**

SHORT TERM COMMITMENT	LONG TERM COMMITMENT
Digital transformation is needed. Investment in digital training, including workshops stressing the importance of online bookability should be delivered. A benchmark should be set for what a good digital tourism business looks like and this should be promoted.	We continue to invest in the Great outdoors to ensure the quality of the offer to include off-road cycle paths, widely available cycle storage and businesses geared up with appropriate facilities

<p>The commission recognised The Great Outdoors as a strength of the area -but challenged about whether we make enough of it, whether our environment and sustainability credentials are as good as we claim. The commission recommended more packaging of products -slicker and bigger than has been done before. All ages, wellbeing, treats and experiences and rooted in Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland's strength of The Great Outdoors.</p> <p>It is recommended that greater effort should be put into ensuring that the areas businesses have got good product knowledge and that there is good communication across the sector.</p> <p>It is recommended that annual surveys are conducted so that policy makers and tourism operators understand through research what visitors want in a post-Covid-19 world.</p>	<p>Wilder Witham from Doddington Hall to Hill Holt Wood would be the largest Nature Recovery project in the East Midlands and an exemplar of nature based tourism including glamping, sustainable transport and cycle safaris.</p> <p>We should be both ambitious and imaginative in our thinking at both the small and large scale. From converting public loos to cycle storage, to establishing a major attraction which features its own nature reserve and is cycle friendly both on site and in terms of its accessibility.</p>
<p><b>WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?</b></p>	
<p>High proportion of businesses signed up to TXGB or other online booking platforms. Experiences packaged and readily available.</p>	

#### 4. SKILLS

##### Key Line of Enquiry:

How can we fill every vacancy in greater Lincolnshire and Rutland's visitor economy with a motivated individual who has the right skills for the job?

At every meeting the Commission discussed skills, competence, knowledge and employment. People are at the centre of every holiday experience, but tourism development doesn't have skills as a major priority and the tourism sector is perceived as a Cinderella industry and no positive aspirations as a career. Hiring people is a skill particularly if we want people who are motivated and at the top of their game. It is recommended that skills and employment are put at the heart of this commission's recommendations and indeed put at the heart of every tourism strategy.

##### **Immediate and Long term vision**

**Short Term:** A recruitment hub will be established by spring 2022, enabling employers in the visitor economy to recruit into hard to fill posts. Potential employees will understand the career opportunities that are available in greater Lincolnshire and Rutland's visitor economy because of the advice, guidance, and career path information that will be produced about the sector. Skills and employment will be a resourced priority in the area's tourism strategies.

**Long Term:** Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland will have a highly skilled, highly motivated workforce, providing opportunity to all those already within or looking to move into the sector. A range of opportunities to retrain, but with a strong message that it is important to be satisfied and happy with the role whatever the skills set is. Every role within the sector is important.

SHORT TERM COMMITMENT	LONG TERM COMMITMENT
<p>The commission identified two distinct issues -recruitment and training. The commission recommended that a clear plan is established to fill vacancies in the areas of staff shortage. This will include the establishment of an online recruitment hub and the suggestion that recruitment master-classes are run for the sector.</p> <p>There is concern about the negative perception of the sector amongst students and that teaching about tourism often did not use local examples. It is</p>	<p>Work with training providers to attract commercial and government money for new, high quality facilities for the visitor economy.</p> <p>Lead a campaign amongst schools, colleges and job centres to promote careers in the visitor economy, highlighting the variety of roles and opportunities available.</p> <p>Businesses are doing their part to promote what a vast sector Visitor Economy is and the opportunities it brings, to ensure that the negative perception of a Cinderella industry is a thing of the past.</p>

<p>recommended that there is substantially more engagement with schools and colleges about careers in tourism. Encourage those working in the sector to talk about their career paths.</p> <p>In order to drive up interest in tourism careers, the commission recommends that high quality education/training in tourism -potentially through a core new training facility which adds value to existing provision.</p> <p>It is recommended that leadership skills in businesses should not be forgotten and that we should aim to improve enterprise and skills at all levels. It was recommended that current business advice programmes for the sector are expanded to meet a wider cohort of businesses.</p>	<p>Both the public and private sector will be working closely with recruitment agencies</p>
<p><b>WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?</b></p>	
<p>Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland is noted for its friendly and professional service. Staff are appointed on full time contracts because business is now year round.</p>	



## APPENDIX 5 – ACRONYMS USED IN THE REPORT

AW	Anglian Water	LIS	Local Industrial Strategy
BBC	Boston Borough Council	LWCS	Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service
BHS	British Horse Society	LWT	Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust
CIC	Community Interest Company	NCCD	National Centre for Craft and Design
CLC	City of Lincoln Council	NE	Natural England
CRT	Canal and River Trust	NELC	North East Lincolnshire Council
DCs	District Councils	NKDC	North Kesteven District Council
DMO	Destination Management Organisation	NLC	North Lincolnshire Council
EA	Environment Agency	RCC	Rutland County Council
ELDC	East Lindsey District Council	RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
ELMS	Environmental Land Management Scheme	SHDC	South Holland District Council
GLLEP	Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership	SKDC	South Kesteven District Council
GLNP	Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership	STEAM	Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor
GLR	Greater Lincolnshire & Rutland	TSD	Tourism Sector Deal
HL	Heritage Lincolnshire	TXGB	Tourism Exchange Great Britain
IBCC	International Bomber Command Centre		
IWA	Inland Waterways Association	VEB	Visitor Economy Board
LAs	Local Authorities	VL	Visit Lincoln
LCC	Lincolnshire County Council	WLDC	West Lindsey District Council

