

November 2014

## **Melton and Area**

BLUEPRINT FOR TOURISM

# 2015-2018

## HEADLINES

**Together we will clearly and firmly establish the Melton area, together with its distinctive rural tourism product and strong associations with rural food and drink, within the broader context of the Leicestershire tourism 'destination' attracting staying leisure and business visitors from across the UK and beyond**

### **We will aim to deliver:**

- 1 Distinctive tourism story, a part of Leicestershire's destination story
- 8% Growth in economic activity over 3 years through greater visitor spend
- 75% Of partner businesses promoting activity through [goleicestershire.com](http://goleicestershire.com)

### **Profile**

This Blueprint will be delivered by a partnership of like-minded people and organisations with a shared ambition to improve the business of tourism in our area.

Building on the considerable success achieved since the first Blueprint was agreed in 2004, the characteristics for success describe an active and engaged partnership between public, private and voluntary sector that is:

Directed by a steering group of local public, private and voluntary sector representatives, which meets 2-monthly

Influenced by an area-wide Leicestershire Tourism Partnership and the annual Tourism Forum that is open to all in tourism

Facilitated by Leicester Shire Promotions (LPL)

Guided by a 3-year Tourism Marketing Action Plan or 'Blueprint for Action'

Relevant to attractions, accommodation providers, key businesses, town centre management, night time economy and heritage providers

Focused on wealth creation through the growth of high value, low impact tourism activity and fully supportive of the Economic Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan.

Sensitive to the potential environmental and other costs associated with volume driven tourism

## **The Business of Tourism in the Melton Area**

A tourism workforce of over xxx jobs (full time equivalents), employed in over 500 businesses

In excess of xxx million 'visitors' every year, amounting to well over xxx million 'visits' spending £1xxx million between them.

### **New Tourism**

Tourism is ever changing.

The concept of tourism now embraces all manner of leisure pursuits, from undertaking activities to visiting attractions, attending events and staying overnight. It includes the economic activity of local residents and their visiting friends and relations, as well as the traditional visitor from outside of the area. There is currently a significant trend towards attracting domestic tourism and towards attracting greater 'consumption' of tourism by ever more focused consumer segments. Underlying all this is a continuing growth in leisure and in the wider aspects of improving one's quality of life. Whilst economic conditions remain challenging, there are sizeable sectors of the population with high disposable incomes and time to enjoy increased leisure activity, commonly known as the 'grey pound.'

Recent economic, social and environmental issues have all had a significant impact on the nature of tourism in England. As taking leisure breaks in the UK as a real alternative to overseas travels continues to be fashionable, the 'stay-cation' phenomenon is here to stay.

The national and regional tourism sector is changing dramatically in response to structural and financial policies at national and local levels. We need to create a more focused and streamlined mechanism for enabling the tourism industry to flourish.

## **Policy Framework**

### **Local Strategic Economic Plan**

The Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) provides the framework for achieving our vision by investing in our Place, our Businesses and in our People.

There is a commitment to delivering flagship programmes for each theme. The City Deal will deliver programmes for Businesses (Leicester & Leicestershire Business Growth Hub) and People (Leicester & Leicestershire Employment and Skills Hub).

The Growth Deal will provide the resources to deliver the Place programme – Infrastructure to support our Growth Areas and Transformational Priorities.

Tourism is recognised within the SEP as a growth sector.

### **The Case For Tourism**

- One of the fastest growing sectors in the UK , responsible for one-third of the net increase in UK jobs between 2010 and 2012. representing 9.6 per cent of UK employment

- Set to grow 3.8% per annum to 2025 – significantly faster than manufacturing, construction and retail
- Currently worth £127bn and growing to £257bn by 2025 - 10% of UK GDP and 11% of total UK employment
- For every £1000 generated in direct tourism GVA there is a further £1200 that is secured elsewhere in the economy through the supply chain.
- Recent employment growth has been ‘stellar’ – more than four times the rate of manufacturing
- One third of all new jobs created in Britain between 2010 and 2012 were in the sector

Deloitte, November 2013

## Strategic Themes

There are four key themes which address our ambitions in a practical way. They establish also the rationale in linking with the wider ambitions and longer-term direction being set by the Leicestershire Strategy for Economic Growth through to 2020. The themes are:

1. Destination (place): offering people a wide range of quality attractions, accommodation and experiences with growing local distinctiveness and a warm and genuine welcome
2. Positioning: developing and promoting the county's assets while differentiating between the business and leisure markets in a way which offers a unique and quality product
3. People: ensuring visitors enjoy a world class experience and have their expectations surpassed, promoting tourism as a 'first choice' career by investing in skills and training and creating a workforce capable of delivering high standards of customer service
4. Intelligence and support (businesses): providing a robust evidence base enabling tourism businesses and the public sector to make informed and more coordinated investment decisions

Leicester Shire Promotions has been actively involved in all the tourism changes at regional and sub-regional level. They have also been working at the local level across the public and private sectors to establish appropriate as well as effective area partnerships.

## Opportunities and challenges

Melton was the first area to adopt a tourism Blueprint and the original concept of the **Rural Capital of Food and Drink** brand was a result of that. The enthusiasm and vigor with which partners have embraced and gathered behind that brand is to be commended and the area arguably now enjoys the most distinctive tourism identity of all of the Leicestershire component areas.

There remains much to be done to continue to support and develop this brand proposition and therefore it will remain the over-arching proposition for at least the duration of this Blueprint.

The key issues to be addressed in this Blueprint are:

Strengthening the brand promise – Melton needs more quality, distinctive restaurants and perhaps most importantly it must present its unique food associations to visitors in a more accessible, dynamic and engaging way.

Widening the story – with the food associations now firmly established and remaining as the ‘attack brand’ for the area to draw visitors in, there is an opportunity to celebrate more the wider rich heritage of the town and area and its associations with rural leisure pursuits and in particular connections with horses, hunting, riding and animal welfare.

Future proofing – the very thing that makes Melton special, the dedication of a number of key individuals to make significant events and activity happen, can also be seen as one of the biggest risks. There is a need to improve the sustainability of key strategically important events and ensure effective continuation strategies. However this needs to be done without in any way harming the ‘can do’ attitude that is the very essence of why the areas punches way above its weight in its event calendar.

Rationalisation – there is a need to rationalise the support for tourism of agencies such as the Borough Council, Business Improvement District etc.

Threats to the brand – locally these include the proposed food development as part of the new Everard’s Brewery site near Leicester. Nationally these include the growing awareness of the benefits of securing and promoting protected indigenous foods. However the greatest threat is on the doorstep – not delivering the brand promise and meeting the every demanding expectations of visitors.

## Blueprint for Action

This Blueprint is our operational plan for tourism.

It is shared by all of us who have any type of role in tourism within the area. The main aims of the Blueprint are to bring about more cohesion, consistency and focus.

The Blueprint identifies and prioritises the actions that will make most difference to the business of tourism.

It is intended to be a practical and action-orientated Blueprint for the whole tourism sector and as such embraces our collective ambitions. It should also be regarded as the catalyst for identifying, developing and funding new tourism initiatives.

The Blueprint is based around three strategic themes:

- 1 Developing the brand promise
- 2 Widening the offer through ‘attract and disperse’ activity
- 3 Better planning and coordination of events

|                    |   | WHO |
|--------------------|---|-----|
| <b>Destination</b> | <p>Continue to develop and improve the appearance, cleanliness and attractiveness of the town centre.</p> <p>Use planning and other powers to preserve and develop further the 'Rural Capital of Food and Drink' brand.</p> <p>Look for innovative and creative solutions to increase and improve the options for quality dining, especially in Melton itself. This could, for example, include using retail voids to encourage pop up restaurants and encouraging high end street food etc.</p> <p>Work with partners in the public and private sector to improve the engagement of visitors with the unique food products of the area. A particular priority would be better facilities for demonstrating and allowing hand-on participation in the making of Melton Mowbray Pork Pies and the production of Stilton Cheese.</p> <p>Review and take action as necessary on access, parking, signage, toilets and visitor orientation.</p> <p>Review and take action as necessary on facilities for groups and visiting coaches.</p> |     |
| <b>Positioning</b> | <p>Continue to lead on the food and drink themes as the main promotional tool.</p> <p>Widen the messages gradually to introduce broader elements of heritage, rural sports, leisure etc. in order to offer more reasons to visit and encourage longer and repeat visits.</p> <p>Position accommodation partners in targeted value-driven short break packages.</p> <p>Increase online bookable product range.</p> <p>Improve representation on 'goleicestershire.com'.</p>  |     |

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|--------------|---|--|
| People       | <p>Consider 'welcome' activity to promote highest standards of customer service and care.</p> <p>Look to reward excellence in customer service.</p> <p>Review and improve visitor literature and online resources to support the proposition.</p> <p>Improve representation on 'goleicestershire.com'.</p> <p>Encourage active participation in training and development opportunities designed to improve the customer experience.</p> <p>Listen to and act upon feedback.</p> |  |
| Intelligence | <p>Measure footfall in order to evaluate progress</p> <p>Encourage active take up of the new county-wide visitor survey facility and consider bespoke surveys through the same medium for key events.</p> <p>Work with other partners to fund STEAM volume and value research every three years.</p>  |  |

5 **Strategic Theme 2:** Widening the offer through 'attract and disperse' activity

|                    |  | WHO |
|--------------------|--|-----|
| <b>Destination</b> | <p>Review and audit the key stories that are most likely to engage visitors' interest.</p> <p>Consider how well those stories are told across the town and look at possible improvements, for example through 'blue plaques' or new technologies such as QR codes</p> <p>Ensure the Melton Heritage smartphone app is maintained, developed and promoted</p> |     |
| <b>Positioning</b> | Start to introduce sub-brands of 'active rural leisure' and 'the horse'  |     |

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| <p>People</p>       | <p>Consider 'welcome' activity to promote highest standards of customer service and care.</p> <p>Look to reward excellence in customer service.</p> <p>Review and improve visitor literature and online resources to support the proposition.</p> <p>Encourage active participation in training and development opportunities designed to improve the customer experience.</p> <p>Listen to and act upon feedback.</p> |  |
| <p>Intelligence</p> | <p>Encourage active take up of the new county-wide visitor survey facility and consider bespoke surveys through the same medium for key events.</p>  |  |

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**Strategic Theme 3:** Better planning and coordination of events

This issue is addressed through the separate 'Events Strategy.'