

10 March 2011

Melton Mowbray and the Surrounding Area

BLUEPRINT FOR TOURISM

2011 - 2014

Leicester Shire Promotions
District Partnerships Development

Melton Mowbray and the surrounding area
BLUEPRINT FOR TOURISM 2011 – 2014

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HEADLINES

Together we will clearly and firmly establish the Melton and Vale of Belvoir area, with its distinctive mix of a thriving market town, rural tourism product and international associations with quality 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 aim to deliver:

- 1** Distinctive tourism story for the area, a part of Leicestershire’s destination story
- 10%** Growth in economic activity over 3 years through greater visitor spend
- 12%** Growth in visitor numbers over 3 years
- 75%** Sector inclusion in the district pages of goleicestershire.com
- 80%** Of tourism businesses using proactively online marketing
- 85%** Visitor satisfaction

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 group of local public, private and voluntary sector representatives, (Melton Promotions)

Influenced by an area-wide 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

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

The Business of Tourism in the area

We believe that the business of tourism in the Melton area comprises:

481 square kilometres (186 sq miles) of attractive English countryside located in the heart of rural Leicestershire, encompassing the picturesque Vale of Belvoir.

Over 69 rural villages many of which are classic farming communities.

Around 49 accommodation providers offering between them over 1,008 bed spaces, as well as over 100 pubs, restaurants and bars, tea and coffee shops and farm shops, and a wide range of supporting facilities and services.

Over 10 specified visitor attractions offering the authentic English heritage with a castle, historic buildings and museums.

A selection of fine food and drink producers and outlets and two protected foods - Stilton Cheese and Melton Mowbray Pork Pies.

Other rural attractions include its local market, garden centres, village trails/walks, cycle routes, corporate opportunities linked to PERA, and an extensive network of bridleways, all set against the country's finest rural backcloth.

A programme of events ranging from town centre fairs and an annual regional food and drink fair to farmers markets and guided walks, supported with a full programme of local and rural activities such as Christmas festivals.

A tourism workforce of over 1,159 jobs (full time equivalents), employed in over 300 businesses In excess of 1.6 million 'visitors' every year, amounting to well over 1.8 million 'visits' (including locals), spending £69 million between them, and approximately 90% visiting for the day.

New Tourism

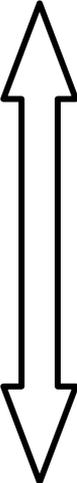
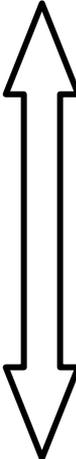
Tourism is ever changing.

The concept of tourism now embraces all manner of leisure pursuit, 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.

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.

Clarifying the tiers of tourism . . .

	National Tourism Level	Country	Visit England // Enjoy England campaigns	
	Regional Tourism Level	Region	There is no regional tier after April 1st 2011	
	Sub-regional Tourism Level	Destination	Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) For Leicestershire, we have an LEP based on the City and County geographical areas, the LEP's agreed delivery vehicle for tourism is Leicester Shire Promotions // Leicester Shire Tourism Strategy 2011-2016	
	Local Tourism Level	Area	Melton // Blueprint for Tourism 2011-2014 (one of up to 8 tourism area partnerships within Leicester Shire)	

Policy Framework

There is already an emerging economic vision for the sub-region through the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategy for Economic Growth. This proposes economic priorities on which to focus over the next 10 years. It is supported by a Multi Area Agreement signed with Government by Leicester and Leicestershire which provides a broad delivery framework for the proposals. These plans provide a common purpose, clearer sense of priorities and a framework within which the Tourism Strategy will fit.

This policy framework recognises that the sub-region enjoys a central location within the UK with excellent transport links. The county has a high quality natural environment, an exciting cosmopolitan major city, vibrant market towns and attractive villages which provide for a high quality life and a draw for tourism and recreation. Areas within the sub-region have their own local distinctiveness and offer opportunities on which to build and create a unique identity for the area.

This broad plan for economic growth is delivered through a partnership which brings together key delivery organisations with representatives of business and the voluntary and community sectors. It recognises that there needs to be clear arrangements to manage the respective roles, relationships and contributions which each of the partners can make to delivering the priorities. This approach applies equally in delivering the priorities outlined in this Blueprint.

The Leicestershire Tourism Strategy 2011-2016

The Tourism Strategy identifies four strategic priorities that express the local tourism industry's ambitions in a practical way. These cover –

- Expanding the quality of Leicestershire as a destination
- The positioning of Leicestershire to distinguish it from its competitors
- Improving customer service through training and improved skills
- Ensuring up to date intelligence and data

Finally it outlines a delivery framework and range of organisations and businesses which need to be involved and committed in delivering its priorities.

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:** 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:** 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.

Melton and the Vale of Belvoir Distinctiveness

We have agreed there are benefits arising from more cohesively and single-mindedly presenting the area's tourism product. We refer to this as creating the Melton Mowbray and surrounding area's '*distinctiveness*'. It requires that we focus on just a few aspects (which can be real or created), around which we can position all the other facets of tourism and deliver the cross-selling opportunities. It is the central story that all partners can translate to fit their own needs. Different aspects may have stronger appeal to different target audiences, but the range of 'stories' being told must be as small as possible.

The choice for single-mindedness remains relatively straightforward for Melton and this challenge identified a suitably versatile and yet cohesive way of expressing it. This challenge also highlighted the need for the sense of place to motivate people to visit. This latest Blueprint reinforces and renews Melton's single distinctive message. The message is still valid, appropriate, and relevant. In addition, significant achievements within this particular sphere of influence have resulted from implementing initiatives in line with this approach.

Our preferred approach therefore remains to reflect the area's true distinctiveness by identifying and 'owning' the core ground which links our diversity of products. The core ground is firmly based on food – with a rural twist.

This Blueprint reconfirms the original recommendation of a single-minded focus on Melton's food credentials within the rural context - and the consistent use of the phrase Rural Capital of Food is to be used as the platform for building area distinctiveness. In this way Melton will continue to build a stronger and more distinctive profile, and will succeed through offering a genuinely unique tourism story.

Painting a picture of 'the rural capital of food'

“Feast your senses and indulge your tastebuds during time spent in Melton, the country's Rural Capital of Food. The Melton area is a delightful and traditionally English place where quality produce, real heritage and country pursuits are not the exception, but the norm – come and enjoy the real taste of the countryside.”

“Leisure time in the Melton area will be time well-spent. Perfect for relaxation, to settle into the countryside life and to savour the finest traditional produce. Soak up the atmosphere of the bustling market town of Melton Mowbray – and snap up a few bargains too! Turn your hand to a new activity, re-acquaint yourself with the world of horses and hunting, and embrace the purest country air. Absorb the finest heritage, discover the hidden delights around every turn in the glorious Vale of Belvoir, and rediscover the value of spending your free time . . . on you.

And if you've ever wondered why the only truly authentic Melton Mowbray pork pie tastes so much better than everyone else's imitation, then come and find out for yourself - and follow it up with our other claim to fame . . . Stilton cheese! The area around Melton is a rare treat that really delivers on its promise of being the rural capital of food and drink.”

Supporting and reinforcing the 'rural capital of food' message will be two propositions focused on:

Delight the taste buds - positioning the area as the number one short break destination for people interested in good food and drink

Feed the mind - positioning the area as the number one short break destination for learning skills and crafts associated with food and drink

It must be appreciated that these concepts are not marketing slogans, brands or logos. These phrases may never appear in this form. They are the PROPOSITIONS behind the marketing and communications activity that will be developed and implemented. The core proposition of 'the place to come together' and related messages will be used as the platform for building area distinctiveness, and as the basis of the wider sales appeal. In this way Hinckley and Bosworth will build a more distinctive profile and will succeed through offering a genuinely unique tourism story within the Leicester Shire destination supported solidly by the strength of the links with associated tourism themes.

These themes are not exclusive, there are many others including the outdoors, walking etc that will be used where appropriate. However, these are the themes that are most distinctive to the borough and therefore offer the greatest opportunity to develop a competitive edge.

Blueprint for Action

This Blueprint is our operational plan for tourism.

It is also **your** plan.

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 oriented Blueprint for the whole tourism sector and as such embraces our collective ambitions. As well as stakeholder partners, the Blueprint also identifies our tourism neighbours and the basis of working with them.

It should also be regarded as the catalyst for identifying, developing and funding new tourism initiatives.

The Blueprint takes each of the three 'propositions' and describes action to develop each one in line with the strategic themes of the Leicester Shire Tourism Strategy.

Melton and the Vale of Belvoir

BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION 2011 - 2014

'Rural Capital of Food and Drink'

Leicester Shire Promotions marketing activity will concentrate on the key strategic themes and will provide a solid foundation for all subsequent activity throughout the destination. There are two key propositions for Melton which are appropriate for a number of targeted audiences:

Proposition 1: Delight the taste buds - positioning the area as the number one short break destination for people interested in fine food and drink.

This will focus on:

- **Festivals and Events**
- **Places to eat & drink**
- **Promoting food and drink retail outlets**

Proposition 2: Feed the mind - positioning the area as the number one short break destination for learning skills and crafts associated with food and drink.

This will focus on:

- **Food and drink experiences including 'seeing & doing' experiences available to visitors.**

We will ensure that the unique offer and key Melton propositions are well represented in all appropriate marketing activity. This marketing table clearly outlines the activity LPL will undertake and the proposed activity Melton partners should support to develop the food and drink propositions and generate significant additional business.

Strategic Themes	LPL Priorities	Deliverable with District support	Local Deliverables	Proposition
Destination		<p>Training for new welcomers and guides.</p> <p>Improve information and interpretation points around the town based on the f&d heritage.</p> <p>Continue to develop and plan towards a food and drink centre in the area.</p>	<p>Develop the f&d product & experience through support, grants and encouragement. Continue to develop the product through promotion of trails, blue badge guides, events.</p>	1& 2
Positioning	<p>To promote Melton as the rural food and drink capital and the unique offer and experiences available for leisure and group markets.</p> <p>This will include improving the web presence through goleics and developing and delivering the food and drink short break concentrating on the unique experiences the area has to offer including the Melton Cheeseboard, the EMF&D festival, the Pie Awards and the Artisan Cheese Fair</p>	<p>Specific activity will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and market testing new products around the pie awards and cheese festival • Update promotional literature particularly the town guide/rural food and drink trail • Inclusion in the Visit England f&d campaign • Promotion in one national press supplement, • Two VE newsletters, • Six targeted newsletters and • National pr coverage • Targeted group updates • Manage 		1& 2

		<p>database and overnight enquiries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Travel fam visits • Target trade pr • Support for attendance at trade shows 		
People			<p>Improve customer service, development within the food and drink industry through training and opportunities with JobCentre plus, Appreniships, Connexions and Brooksby College</p>	1& 2
Intelligence	<p>Evaluate and review all visitors currently visiting Melton to profile, segment and target more effectively to increase the opportunity for them to stay longer. LPL will invest in destination level intelligence including STEAM and Cameo.</p>		<p>Invest in STEAM or similar to obtain an accurate assessment of visitors to Melton. Work with local colleges for support on visitor satisfaction figures.</p>	1& 2