Bridgend County

Destination Management Plan 2018-2022

March 2018

Contents

1.   Tourism in Bridgend

Tourism can – and does - contribute to local prosperity and quality of life in Bridgend County Borough (BCB), both of which are key goals for the Welsh Government (WG) and Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC).

According to the Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Model (STEAM) data for 2016, tourism already injects much needed revenue into the local economy (£329.76m) and supports over 4,200 jobs. In addition, tourism:
- Supports cross-cutting services and infrastructure which benefit local people e.g. transport links, the range of shops and services, sports and cultural facilities; and
- Helps promote a positive image of the County to the outside world which, in turn, can attract investment and make people feel better about the place in which they live.

Tourism cannot however be left to develop unchecked. It has to be managed in a sustainable way, to maximise the benefits for long-term prosperity and reduce the negative impacts.

Further information relating to tourism in BCB, its economic impact and its strategic context can be found in the Destination Management Plan evidence base, 2018.

2.   What is Destination Management?

Destination Management is a process of working towards coordinating all aspects of a destination that contribute to a visitor's experience, taking account of the needs of visitors, local residents, businesses and the environment. It is a systematic and holistic approach to making BCB work as a visitor destination. It embraces the idea of sustainability, focusing on tourism which brings economic benefit, is sensitive to the environment, is welcomed by the community and results in satisfied visitors. Delivering a quality experience to the visitor is a priority.

A Destination Management Plan (DMP) is a statement of intent to manage a destination in the interests of tourism, over a stated period of time, setting out the ways in which different stakeholders may work together to achieve a positive impact.

This is therefore a plan that seeks to bring together all those with an interest in the future of tourism in BCB. This includes:
- The private sector, responsible for running their tourism related businesses and meeting the day-to-day needs of visitors
- Local Government departments, responsible for a range of services that impact on destination management
- The local community with an interest in tourism related opportunities and possible impacts upon their way of life

This DMP sets the framework for managing the tourism vision to 2022. It is supported by the Destination Action Plan (DAP) that details specific activities and the Evidence Base which provides the context for this Plan.

3.   Aim and priorities

We want to:

Develop a thriving visitor economy in Bridgend which celebrates the unique strengths of the place, supports jobs, generates business opportunities and improves the range of amenities available for visitors and local people.

This means developing a viable, innovative and sustainable visitor economy which is in tune with the area and brings net benefits to the local population for generations to come.

In addition, we want to benefit the wider economy of the County Borough through strengthening the image of BCB and developing linkages with other sectors of the economy.

To achieve this we will focus on the following priorities:

1.   Support the development of the tourism product
   Support better accommodation
   Support better attractions

2.   Support the development of tourism infrastructure
   Enhance the coastal resource
   Invest in the settlements
   Enhance the Countryside resource
   Improve transport and related infrastructure for tourism
   Develop tourism human resources

3.   Raise the profile and attract more visitors to Bridgend County Borough
   Promote Bridgend County Borough
   Develop a diverse portfolio of events

In doing so we will ensure the following:

- **Sustainabilit**y. Ensuring that tourism has a viable long term future and that the economic, environmental and social benefits outweigh the costs.

- **Qualit**y. Striving to do things well and improving the overall experience for the visitor as the route to success.

- **Local benefit**. Ensuring that local people and local businesses derive benefit from tourism and see it as a positive feature of life in Bridgend.

- **Partnership**. Working in collaboration to make the most efficient use of resources whether it is between authorities and agencies or public, private and voluntary sectors.

- **Distinctiveness**. Drawing on the natural and human resources of BCB to create something special which distinguishes the destination from other places and gives it an edge.

We know there will be many challenges, but along with our partner organisations we feel that:

- BCB has a diverse, interesting offer and a lot of potential in tourism terms but the offer is not quite there yet.
- Watersports, golf and other outdoor activities have potential for further development.
- There is enthusiasm about the potential of the County Borough and believe there is a future for tourism in BCB.
- There is an aspiration for more effective partnership working to offer an enhanced experience for visitors.

4.   What we want to achieve

The target is a 2% overall growth per annum over the next 5 years according to STEAM figures.

5.   How we'll move forward

There are opportunities for more effective co-ordination and collaboration in tourism. We want to see closer working and communication between the various stakeholders and effective implementation of the strategy. To do this we have developed a management framework with clear priorities. These are:

5.1   Support a fit for purpose destination management partnership arrangement

The Destination Management Partnership will include close working arrangements between BCBC, Bridgend Tourism Association (BTA) and Visit Wales (VW) and connectivity and communication with wider stakeholders. Those involved will play a key role in planning activity, setting priorities, tackling issues and co-ordinating action.

BCBC will provide secretariat functions for the arrangements and arrange all relevant meetings and events. Figure 1 shows the connectivity between partners.

Figure 1: Agency co-operation
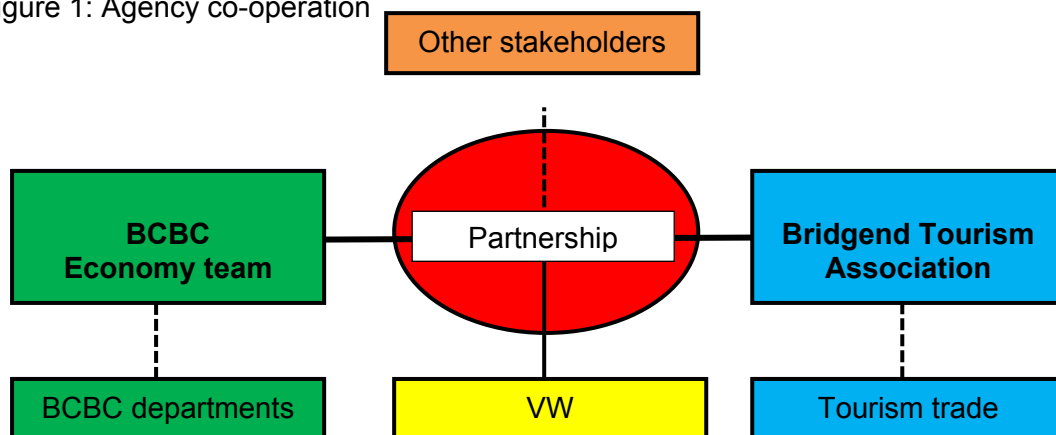
5.2   Support sub-destination partnership arrangements

We recognise a continued need to adopt a destination management approach at a sub-destination level. The management of activities on the water and beaches will continue to be of the highest priority, particularly as the number of users increases. We will therefore continue to support the Coastal Partnership. This partnership will be made up of service providers and be responsible for supporting and advising on the planning, development and management of the coastal zone.

Where partnership arrangements already exist, for example in town centres and rural areas, we will highlight tourism opportunities where relevant and provide advice and guidance to take tourism action forward rather than creating new arrangements.

5.3   Support the growth of a local Tourism Association

The BTA will continue to evolve. It is considered at this time that its priorities are to:
- Increase membership across all sectors and parts of the County Borough
- Provide a formal two-way conduit between the private sector, BCBC and other public sector stakeholders
- Provide a networking opportunity for members
- Deliver content to the BCBC team for destination marketing
- Evaluate its activities

The Economy and Natural Resources team within BCBC will encourage greater co-ordination of in-house Destination Management related work and raise awareness of Destination Management throughout BCBC.

6.   Performance Management

Destination management must be based on sound evidence and a thorough understanding of the local industry with success monitored against a set of performance indicators.

6.1   Measure volume and value of tourism

The current economic impact model used locally is STEAM. In support of this we will develop local indicators that will provide further evidence of the scale and growth of business, including:

- Accommodation occupancy figures by sector and month, based on a constant sample of providers who will be asked to share their figures in exchange for benchmarking their business against the rest of the sample
- Monthly attraction and activity visitor numbers, based on a constant sample of operators
- Users of the Coast Path and Celtic Trail based on visitor counts at key locations
- Beach and related car park surveys and harbour usage figures

6.2   Customer Satisfaction surveys

When opportunities present themselves to work in partnership, local surveys will be undertaken in relation to overall destination satisfaction as well as location of activity specific research.

Table 1 below highlights how the actions within the Destination Management Framework will be taken forward, those responsible and the resource and risk implications.

Table 1: Destination Management Framework

Action Points	Priority	Phasing (years)	Resource requirement	Risk level	Lead agency	Support agencies
Create effective Destination Management structures						
Support a fit for purpose Destination Management Partnership arrangement	1	1-5	L	L	BCBC	BTA, VW
Support the growth of the Tourism Association	1	1-5	L	L	BTA	BCBC, VW
Support sub-destination management partnership arrangements	1	1-5	L	L	BCBC	All BCBC depts.
Monitor Performance						
Measure volume and value of tourism	1	1-5	L	L	BCBC	VW, BTA, PS
Undertake Customer Satisfaction surveys	2	2-5	L	L	BCBC	BCBC, BTA, PS
Monitoring with key performance indicators	1	1-5	L	L	BCBC	BTA, PS, VW

L	Low resource/risk
BTA / PS	Bridgend Tourism Association / Private Sector
BCBC	Bridgend County Borough Council
VW	Visit Wales

6.3 Monitoring actions in the Destination Action Plan

In order to measure progress on activities within the DAP it is important to select specific performance indicators for each action which can be compared over time. These are detailed in the DAP.