**Experience West Sussex Partnership**

**Strategic Priorities & Objectives**

**April 2022 to March 2024**

**The Experience West Sussex Partnership’s strategic priorities:**

* + 1. Support recovery of the sector – targeting 2019 headline economic impact levels, including visitor spend, jobs and value. Support sector in understanding post pandemic landscape for the visitor economy.
		2. Support growth in overnight staying visitors to the county from London, and within short break journey time (2 to 3 hours)
		3. Support growth in longer overnight staying visitors to Sussex by domestic and international visitors, including maximising Gatwick Airport opportunities
		4. Extend the tourist season to deliver an all year, all weather destination
		5. Increase awareness and delivery of a more responsible tourism, that includes the journey to net zero, and a nature positive offer
		6. Raise the awareness and desirability of West Sussex as an active, vibrant, and dynamic place, that helps to convert defined target markets to visitors and supports wider inward investment priorities.

**The key target markets for focused EWSP activity, based on EWS online engagement, partner research and Visit Britain categorisations:**

* **Country loving traditionalists** (empty nesters, good quality local food and drink, cultural experiences)

Rationale: represent the largest triangle segment in the UK the moderate spenders but take multiple trips per year, are already visiting Sussex and have the potential to shift from day visits to overnights

* **Free and easy mini breakers** (no children looking for ease of travel, cultural experiences and events, will take in a range of activities

Rationale: represent the second largest travel segment in the UK, have mid levels of affluence and enjoy spending on themselves

* **Explorers** (nature lovers, embrace local culture, relaxation and off the beaten track experiences, enjoy parks, gardens and outdoor leisure

Rationale: the second largest Visit Britain international segments (23%) and a Visit Britain priority segment in Sussex in existing markets of Germany, Netherlands, France and Australia.

**Principles driving EWSP activity**

* A holistic approach to development of the sector, recognising development and growth requires leadership, collaboration, strategic direction, product development, research and marketing.
* Collaboration and partnerships deliver value added results over and above individual efforts, whilst taking advantage of efficiencies around reach, shared resource and offering simplification for stakeholders, especially for those with national and regional level portfolios.
* EWS delivers an umbrella brand for West Sussex visitor economy, showcasing a market led and evidence-based approach. Featuring key drivers to build awareness and drive conversion, against our competitive set - including iconic and thematic West Sussex offerings that resonate with key target markets.
* Supports and showcases all the local place brands, including villages and towns, district and borough level and thematic groups.
* and encourages the benefits of cross border and partnership working, within West Sussex, Sussex, The South East and when relevant the England/the UK
* Providing sector support to all visitor economy businesses and organisations across West Sussex, with a focus on supporting SMEs, third sector, start-ups, scale ups and new entrants to the area.
* Provides members of the partnership with a focused, dedicated Visitor Economy resource that offers sector expertise, situational analysist and insight and technical knowledge.
* Supporting Visitor economy development strategically, providing support to individual partnership members, where connectivity and collaboration add value.

**Objectives, Key Results, and Initiatives (OKRs) April 2022 - March 2024**

The following five current objectives, (OKRs) aim to deliver against the overall EWSP strategic priorities, taking the principles and resource into consideration. Delivery is through a programme jointly funded by the West Sussex local authorities, and Coastal West Sussex Partnership, from April 2022 to March 24. Resource currently is hosted by West Sussex County Council, governed by the EWSP fund board members consisting of county, district and borough economic managers. The current objectives cover the two-year period where funding has been allocated by the Economic Recovery Fund, as approved at Leader and Chief Executive level. Delivery initiatives and key results will adapt according to rolling results and market situation.

**Objective 1:** Increase consumer demand for overnight staying visits through targeted promotion with priority target markets by March 2024, moving from 2020 figures of 1.1 million to 2019 levels of 2.7 million visitors

**Key Outcomes:** Overnight visitors increase, delivering increased value from 2020 levels of 234 million.

**Objective 2:**  Support the resilience, development, and innovation of visitor economy businesses in the county

**Key Outcomes:** New start-ups, less business failures, improved visitor offer quality and increased vibrancy of place.

**Objective 3:** Ensure market intelligence, data, and strategic lobbying are deployed to support the achievement of the strategic priorities

**Key Outcomes:** Better informed sector, with profile of West Sussex tourism situation raised with key stakeholders.

**Objective 4:** Support sector product development and local authority inward investment activities

**Key outcomes:** Partnership members better informed on key product development areas – realising funding, planning support and programme development