

Bridgend County

Destination Management Plan 2013-2017



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1. Tourism in Bridgend County Borough

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), tourism already injects much needed revenue into the local economy (£268m) and supports over 4,100 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 Bridgend Tourism Strategy and the Evidence Base that accompanies this Plan.

2. What is Destination Management?

Destination Management is a process of 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 shared statement of intent to manage a destination in the interests of tourism, over a stated period of time, articulating the agreed roles of the different stakeholders and identifying clear actions that they will take.

This is therefore a plan for 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 2017. 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 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:

- **Sustainability.** Ensuring that tourism has a viable long term future and that the economic, environmental and social benefits outweigh the costs.
- **Quality.** 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.
- The trade is generally enthusiastic about the potential of the County and believe there is a future for tourism in BCB.
- Events are key to generating visits and awareness and more emphasis should be placed on this.
- There is an aspiration amongst businesses to work together to offer more dynamic packages.
- There is an aspiration amongst BCBC departments to work together more effectively.

4. What we want to achieve

The target is a 2% overall growth per annum over the next 10 years according to STEAM figures.

5. How we'll move forward

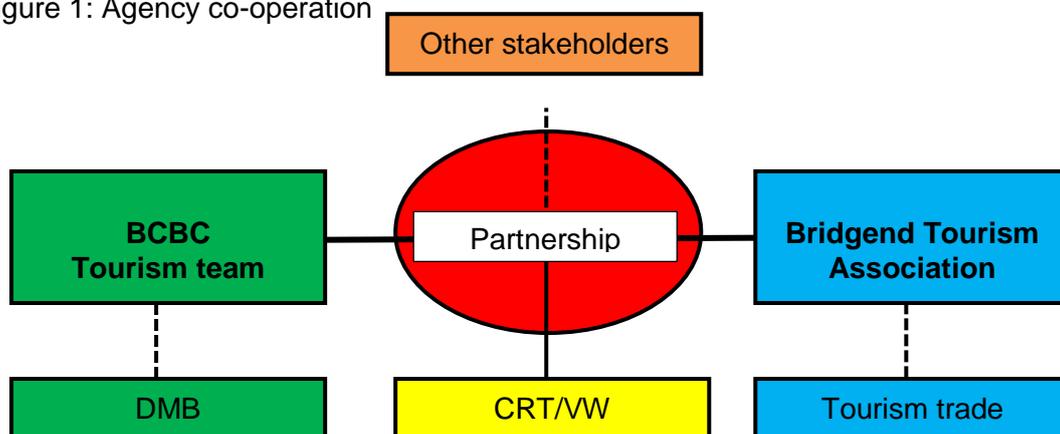
There are opportunities for more effective co-ordination and collaboration in tourism. We want to see closer working and communication between the various stakeholders and effective implementation of the strategy. To do this we have developed a management framework with clear priorities. These are:

5.1 Create a fit for purpose destination management partnership arrangement

We will establish a new Tourism Partnership working arrangement. This will include closer working arrangements between BCBC, Bridgend Tourism Association (BTA), Capital Region Tourism (CRT) and Visit Wales (VW) and better connectivity and communication with wider stakeholders. Those involved will play a key role in planning activity, setting priorities, tackling issues and co-ordinating action.

These arrangements will be set in place through a memorandum of understanding between all involved. 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 Establish and support sub-destination partnership arrangements

We recognise the 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 establish a Coastal Partnership. This partnership will be made up of service providers and be responsible for 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. The priorities are to:

- Increase membership across all sectors and parts of the County through business to business marketing and demonstration of the benefits of membership
- Provide a formal two-way conduit between the private sector, BCBC and other public sector stakeholders
- Provide a networking opportunity for members through meetings and e-newsletters, and the opportunity to collaborate on shared opportunities and best practice
- Deliver content to the BCBC team for destination marketing
- Evaluate its activities

The BTA will employ a facilitator to:

- Provide a secretariat and contact point
- Promote membership and a database of all operators in the County
- Develop an e-newsletter
- Organise an annual conference for all members plus business to business events

5.4 Establish a BCBC Destination Management Board

BCBC will create an internal Destination Management Board, comprising senior representatives from the key departments, notably:

- Chief Executive's
- Regeneration and development
- Street scene
- Healthy living
- Learning

This group will encourage greater co-ordination of in-house tourism related work and raise awareness of tourism throughout BCBC.

The Tourism Manager will be responsible for co-ordinating the Destination Management Board as well as driving the overall DMP forward, monitoring its progress and effectiveness and consulting on any proposed changes in direction through the tourism partnership arrangements.

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 *Undertake a Customer Satisfaction survey*

A local base level study will be undertaken on customer satisfaction levels and repeated on a regular basis. This will involve a short survey that would be electronically based and capable of being completed on a smart phone or other device.

6.3 *Undertake a regular 'How's business?' survey*

The accommodation occupancy and attraction/activity visitor number surveys will be included in a wider, regular on-line 'How's Business?' survey. This will include operators' views on the DMP process and performance and the extent to which they feel involved or informed of the process.

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						
Create a new tourism partnership working arrangement in the County	1	1	L	L	TOUR	BTA, CRT, VW
Support the growth of the Tourism Association	1	1-5	L	L	BTA	TOUR, CRT
Establish a new Coastal Partnership	1	1	L	L	TOUR	All BCBC depts.
Establish a BCBC Destination Management Board (DMB)	1	1	L	L	TOUR	All BCBC depts.
Monitor Performance						
Measure volume and value of tourism	1	1-5	L	L	TOUR	CRT, VW, BTA, PS
Undertake a Customer Satisfaction survey	2	2-5	L	L	TOUR	CRT, BTA, PS
Undertake a regular 'How's business?' survey	2	2-5	L	L	TOUR	BTA, PS
Monitoring with key performance indicators	1	1-5	L	L	TOUR	BTA, PS, CRT, VW

L Low resource/risk
 BTA / PS Bridgend Tourism Association / Private Sector
 TOUR Tourism/Regeneration (Communities)
 CRT Capital Region Tourism
 VW Visit Wales

6.4 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.