

NSDC Visitor Economy Strategy 2020-23

1.0 Preface: COVID-19

The current COVID-19 pandemic is having a major impact on the tourism and hospitality sector at international, national and district levels. Information presented in this strategy and the annual targets are from early 2020, before the pandemic's widespread impact on the UK's public health and economy. Latest growth forecasts indicate a significant negative impact of -62% on the value of the economic impact of the district's visitor economy in 2020.

A brief uplift was experienced in July 2020 after some national lockdown measures had been relaxed and people booked 'staycations', but this was followed by local COVID-19 spikes in Newark and other parts of Nottinghamshire, and then the introduction of further national restrictions in September and tiered regional restrictions in October. The extent to which the -62% growth forecast will improve or worsen in 2020, and indeed extend into 2021, will depend upon potential visitors' confidence in being able to visit the district safely and in there being enough for them to see and do to make visits worthwhile in terms of perceived value and risk.

Different visitors will be affected differently by the pandemic. Generally, visitors aged 56+ years (our main age category) may be more wary of travelling and exposing themselves to increased risk of viral infection. Group travel operators, who largely cater for this demographic, are finding it increasingly difficult to operate in a climate of lower customer volumes due to reduced demand and the necessary distancing measures. Younger audiences, however, may be more affected by their employment and financial circumstances, and changing COVID-19 restrictions such as those limiting contact between different households and measures affecting leisure and hospitality venues.

On a positive note, there is likely to be more customer demand for domestic 'staycations' at the expense of outbound foreign holidays. Smaller, less crowded and 'safer' destinations such as market towns and rural locations could also experience a competitive advantage over larger and traditionally more popular destinations. We will seek to maximise this opportunity and reflect it in our brand positioning and campaign messaging, starting with our current Autumn 'Staycation' campaign.

The following strategy is for the medium-long term and it can still be considered relevant for when the UK emerges from the current COVID-19 pandemic and is in a position to reboot its valuable tourism industry. We will continue to follow government advice and work closely with partner organisations such as Visit England in order to be best-placed to support the sector in meeting the challenges it will undoubtedly face going forward.

2.0 Introduction

The visitor economy is growing and contributing positively to economic growth nationally, regionally and locally as demonstrated by the following impact figures:

England (2018) ^{1*}

Overall visitor spend:	£92.15 billion
Comprising	
Domestic day visitors:	£53 billion (+4% on 2017)
Domestic overnight visitors:	£19.35 billion (+2% on 2017)
Inbound visitors:	£19.79 billion (-7% on 2017)

East Midlands (2018) *

Overall visitor spend:	£4.59 billion (5% of England)
Comprising	
Domestic day visitors:	£2.87 billion (5.4% of England)
Domestic overnight visitors:	£1.19 billion (6.2% of England)
Inbound visitors:	£0.53 billion (2.7% of England)

Newark & Sherwood District (2019)

Overall visitor spend:	£298.32 million (+6.0% on 2018)
Comprising	
Domestic day visitors:	£153.50 million (+4.7% on 2018)
Overnight visitors:	£144.83 million (+7.4% on 2018)

Locally, this represents a significant and increasing stream of inward investment. The tourism and hospitality sector provides communities with a wide range of employment and training opportunities. Raising and enhancing the profile of a place also leads to a greater sense of civic pride and often acts as a catalyst for civic development and regeneration.

Given the range and quality of visitor attractions and businesses across Newark and Sherwood and the opportunities for their future development, there is strong potential for increased growth.

Consequently, the visitor economy and its potential prospects are of economic and reputational importance to NSDC.

NSDC's [Community Plan](#) recognises this importance including: ***"...encouraging more visitors to enjoy all that Newark and Sherwood has to offer"*** in 'Our Vision' at the front of the plan.

¹ * Visit England data
#STEAM data

3.0 Background

With NSDC's above commitment to increase awareness, visits and use of attractions, it is necessary to have reliable metrics by which we can measure progress over the course of this strategy and the Community Plan.

To this end, we have commissioned annual impact data based on the Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM) which is widely acknowledged as the industry standard with high levels of accuracy down to district level. STEAM is the source used for the Newark & Sherwood District economic value (£) figures above. It also provides us with a wide range of other data sets including visitor numbers, visitor days, visitor types, employment and sectoral distribution of economic impact at district and also town (Newark only) level. At town (Newark) level, the data should be treated cautiously with a view to identifying trends rather than focussing on specific figures given the relatively small data set and limited accuracy. The data sets are too small to be reliable for other places in the district such as Southwell or Ollerton.

To complement the quantitative STEAM data, we have also commissioned our own biennial qualitative visitor market research, including data from both visitors to the district and non-visitors.

Insight gained from STEAM and from our visitor market research has enabled us to agree ambitious but realistic annual performance measures against the strategic objective above. We can achieve these targets by making Newark, Southwell and Sherwood Forest destinations of choice for potential visitors and increasing the volume of visitors, dwell time and visitor expenditure.

²	2017 Target Actual	2018 Target Actual	2019 Target Actual	2020 Target Actual	2021 Target Actual	2022 Target Actual	2023 Target Actual
1. Value of economic impact of visitor economy – Newark & Sherwood District	N/A £271.46m	N/A £281.56m (+3.7% on 2017)	£290.00m £298.32 (+6.0% on 2018)	£300.00m	£311.00m	£323.00m	£336.00m
2. Value of economic impact of visitor economy – Newark	N/A £25.80m	N/A £27.25m (+5.6% on 2017)	£28.25m £28.32m (+3.9% on 2018)	£29.50m	£30.75m	£32.25m	£33.75m
3. Total annual visitor numbers to Newark & Sherwood District	N/A 4,414,000	N/A 4,366,000 (-1.1% on 2017)	4,417,000 4,461,000 (+2.2% on 2018)	4,520,000	4,630,000	4,750,000	4,880,000
4. Total annual visitor numbers to Newark	N/A 455,060	N/A 456,480 (+0.3% on 2017)	458,000 465,040 (+1.9% on 2018)	459,500	461,500	463,750	466,250
5. Total annual visitor days to Newark & Sherwood District	N/A 5,762,000	N/A 5,740,000 (-0.4% on 2017)	5,800,000 5,934,000 (+3.4% on 2018)	5,900,000	6,000,000	6,150,000	6,300,000
6. Total annual visitor days to Newark	N/A 549,610	N/A 553,260 (+0.7%)	554,180 562,730 (+1.7%)	555,300	556,600	558,000	559,500

- ² Annual data for measures 1-6 will be available at the end of June in the subsequent year (STEAM)
- Biennial data for measure 7 will be available in November of the year the market research is conducted (NSDC)
- Targets were set for 2019-2023 in late 2018 when the NSDC Business Manager – Tourism post was established and filled

<p>7. Percentage of visitors to the district who rated their experience as 8/10 or above (Biennial)</p>	<p>*</p>	<p>N/A 86%</p>	<p>*</p>	<p>87% N/A (research not conducted in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions)</p>	<p>*</p>	<p>88%</p>	<p>*</p>
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4.0 Strategic Approach

In order to make Newark, Southwell and Sherwood Forest destinations of choice for potential visitors and achieve this growth, we will align our plans to five strategic principles:

- Destination Management Plans (DMPs)
- Nottinghamshire County Council's Visitor Economy Strategy
- Insight and knowledge
- Destination development
- Destination marketing

4.1 Destination Management Plans (DMPs)

DMPs for Newark, Southwell and Sherwood Forest were produced for NSDC by a destination management consultant in 2018/19. The methodology included extensive engagement with key landowners/managers, partners and stakeholders, and the DMPs provide us with SWOT analysis; an audit of visitor attractions, events and businesses; place narratives / thematics; and recommendations for action across each of the three destinations.

The three DMPs are distinct from each other, reflecting the notable differences between the destinations, their narratives and their respective potentials for contributing to growth in the visitor economy.

One of the key recommendations for action was the establishment of strategic management groups comprising partners and stakeholders for Newark and Sherwood Forest (Southwell already had a Tourism Partnership Group led by Southwell Town Council). The previous Newark Management Group has been superseded by a Town Centre Culture, Heritage and Tourism working group of the new Newark Town Board. A new Sherwood Forest Strategic Management Group has been established. These groups will provide a vehicle for strategic working in partnership. The DMPs will inform the work of the groups and, notwithstanding their important differences and emphases, cohesion and joined-up thinking will be achieved across them through the Chair of Economic Development Committee and the Tourism Business Manager.

Other key recommendations for action that will be adopted include:

4.1.1 Newark DMP

- Develop a broader visitor product offer including the overnight offer
- Improve infrastructure including visitor welcome and signage
- Improve knowledge and understanding of visitors and their experience
- Develop the destination brand and profile
- Seek accommodation providers to invest in the town

4.1.2 Southwell DMP

- Improve knowledge and understanding of visitors and their experience
- Develop the destination brand and profile
- Rationalise the town's online presence for visitors
- Seek accommodation providers to invest in the town

4.1.3 Sherwood Forest DMP

- Develop the destination brand and profile
- Develop the area’s narrative in the legend of Robin Hood and its setting
- Effect a Forest Corner masterplanning project to produce a range of options for the development of the visitor product offer, including NSDC-controlled assets and linkages with Edwinstowe
- Seek accommodation providers to invest in the area
- Disperse Sherwood Forest visitors to other visitor destinations in the area

4.2 Nottinghamshire County Council’s Visitor Economy Strategy

In 2019, NCC published its new [Visitor Economy Strategy 2019-29](#), setting out a long-term, County-wide vision for developing and championing tourism in Nottinghamshire. We will align our plans to this strategy and continually seek opportunities to work in partnership with NCC and attract investment. Specific areas of synergy include:

- Develop Edwinstowe / Forest Corner as a major visitor hub for Robin Hood and Sherwood Forest
- Commit to providing a green and active countryside experience
- Role of festivals and events in the visitor offer
- Seek accommodation providers to invest in opportunities where sites and demand align
- Effective promotion of themes and experiences to identified priority market segments

4.3 Insight and Knowledge

To complement the quantitative insight gained from annual STEAM data, in 2018 we commenced biennial qualitative visitor market research, including data from both visitors to the district and non-visitors.

The aim is to improve knowledge of the visitor experience, develop an understanding of who visitors are and what they feel about their experiences, in order to inform strategic decisions around our destination development and destination marketing and maximise the benefit to the local economy. In 2018, the methodology comprised 470 face-to-face interviews with visitors across the district. These interviews were conducted at 14 different locations including three key events: Pikes and Plunder; Robin Hood Festival; Gate to Southwell. This provided a balance of views between those who were visiting to attend specific events and those visiting more generally.

In addition, we conducted a smaller online survey of visitors and non-visitors which also provided some useful insight from online respondents in the East Midlands, West Midlands, Yorkshire and Humberside.

The research provided information about the geo-demographics of our visitors. The majority (54%) of visitors were from the East Midlands, followed by Yorkshire and Humberside and the West Midlands. 77% were day visitors and almost a third of visitors were on their first visit to the district. The main age categories of visitors were 56+ years (43%) and 36 – 55 years (39%). 53% of visiting parties comprised two adults only. The majority of day visitors planned their visit “in the last week”, whilst most overnight visitors planned their visit between one and three months prior. 80% of visitors

travelling to Newark and Sherwood did so by car and visitor dispersal was largely not dependant on public transport provision.

The main reasons for visiting the district were attending arts events/festivals (21%); visiting attractions (17%); and general sightseeing (15%). Visitors rated their experiences very highly. 97% would recommend Newark & Sherwood to a friend, with 30% giving their overall visitor experience 10/10 and 40% rating it “better than expected”.

Sherwood Forest was the attraction with the highest levels of both spontaneous (48%) and prompted (50%) awareness in the district. This underlines the importance of the Sherwood Forest Destination Management Plan, the role of the Sherwood Forest Strategic Management Group and the production of a masterplan for the development of Forest Corner. Such awareness clearly provides opportunities to drive increased footfall to attractions and businesses in the Sherwood Forest area and also to disperse visitors from there to Southwell and Newark.

The strongest positive visitor perceptions of the district were:

- There are lots of cultural and heritage attractions in Newark and Sherwood
- People are friendly and welcoming
- Newark and Sherwood is an easy place to get to

It is also worth noting that ‘Cleanliness of the Area’ and ‘Safe’ received high visitor ratings which shows the value of the district’s Cleaner, Safer and Greener Strategy with regard to visitors as well as residents.

Whilst visitor satisfaction is high, the non-visitors’ main prompted reasons for not visiting the district were:

- Not sure what’s there
- Not sure there’s enough to do

Given that these non-visitor respondents were from the East Midlands, West Midlands, Yorkshire and Humberside (i.e. within 1-2 hours’ drivetime), this indicates that the main barrier to increased visitor footfall is a lack of profile and awareness of the destination and its attractions, and the strong need for effective destination marketing.

‘Choice of accommodation’ is an important factor when it comes to influencing visitors’ choice of destination (64%). However, in terms of visitors’ perceptions of facilities, the district only scored 26% for accommodation and 24% for evening economy. The specific statement, ‘There is enough to do in Newark and Sherwood in the evenings (after 5pm)’ had an agreement score of only 31%. Of the 23% of visitors staying overnight, the most common type of accommodation was ‘Staying at friends or relatives’ (37%). The most popular accommodation location was Newark.

The research also provided a deeper level of insight to the contribution to the local economy. The average amount of time that day visitors spent in the district was 5 hours and their average spend was £23.68. In comparison, the average spend per overnight visitor was £197.32 if staying in paid-for accommodation or £50.83 if staying at friends or relatives. Day visitor spend was slightly higher in Southwell than Newark or Sherwood Forest and overnight visitor spend was highest in Sherwood Forest.

The most widely used source for information about the destination prior to visit was the internet. It was also the most widely used source by overnight visitors to find out about and book their accommodation. 71% of regional respondents said they used websites and 58% specifically said they used Google to access information about places to visit. Significantly, 25% of visitors also picked up information about Newark and Sherwood during their trip, mainly from the attraction(s) visited, followed by their accommodation provider(s). This is important in terms of dispersing visitors, particularly overnight visitors, to places and attractions they may not have chosen or been aware of prior to making their visit. Stocks of many of the leaflets and printed materials have been shared between different tourism attractions and businesses in the district via NSDC's Tourism Action Group.

4.4 Destination Development

The above knowledge of visitors, their perceptions and experiences can be used alongside the DMPs to inform decisions around destination development. Customer-informed development is essential to ensure that the visitor experience is continually enhanced, taking account of the notable differences between the destinations, their narratives and their respective potentials for contributing to growth in the visitor economy.

4.4.1 Newark

Of the three destinations, the town of Newark probably has the most potential for development. Its volume of visitors and visitor days, and the economic impact of its visitor economy, are already growing year on year.

Through partnership working via the Newark Town Board and the Town Centre Culture, Heritage and Tourism working group, there is the potential to develop an improved visitor product with a broader culture, leisure, food and drink offer. The town rates highly for 'the quality of visitor attractions' (82%) and has become a focal point for a number of relatively large events such as Newark Festival and Newark Book Festival, as well as a wide range of events and activities at Newark Showground.

However, this is not a sufficient offer to attract visitors all year round and significantly increase the economic impact. Proposals for collaborative working towards Newark's destination development include:

- Clear visitor gateway to the town with consistency across visitor welcome, signposting and wayfinding, including 5G virtual/augmented reality trails
- Taking forward the existing Castle Gatehouse proposals and closing the gap in required funding
- Wider and more innovative use of key assets including the Market Place, Castle Gardens, Riverside Park and towpath, and Town Hall Ballroom. To include pop-up retail and more outdoor events and festivals including during the evening and on Sundays
- Wider choice of restaurants and bars in the evening to complement the historic pubs and daytime cafes
- Greater choice of visitor accommodation including hotels, particularly those suitable for group travel operators

4.4.2 Southwell

With the highest level of spend by day visitors out of the three destinations, Southwell is well-placed to take advantage of visitors' high levels of prompted awareness of Southwell Minster and The Workhouse as well as its nationally renowned festivals at the Minster and the Racecourse. In order to maximise its potential, proposals for collaborative working towards Southwell's destination development include:

- Clear and consistent visitor welcome and signage
- Increased links with NTU Brackenhurst campus, its staff and students
- An all year round attraction focussed on the history of the Bramley Apple
- Wider choice of restaurants and bars in the evening to complement the historic pubs and daytime cafes
- Greater choice of visitor accommodation including hotels, particularly those suitable for group travel operators, which could be particularly beneficial for the Southwell Music Festival and other events associated with it in the town

4.4.3 Sherwood Forest

With global awareness of the legend of Robin Hood and its place in Sherwood Forest, and a wide range of visitor attractions, events and activities on offer, Sherwood Forest enjoys the highest level of spend by overnight visitors out of the three destinations. It has become a popular destination for visitors wanting to discover the home of Robin Hood, explore the ancient woodlands and enjoy active pursuits including walking, cycling, archery, high ropes, Segways and boating.

NSDC ownership and management of a number of assets in the area means it can lead and facilitate development in collaboration with key landowners, partners and stakeholders. Nottinghamshire County Council has also identified Sherwood Forest as a priority for delivering "an engaging and distinctive green and active countryside experience."

However, notwithstanding its strong offer and appeal, Sherwood Forest is not maximising its potential as a leading UK visitor destination in terms of visitor numbers, visitor days or visitor spend. The number of different landowners and stakeholders involved in the destination has been something of a barrier to coherent development and delivery of the visitor offer due to different priorities, timescales and processes. NSDC commissioned the Sherwood Forest Trust to undertake a piece of stakeholder research in 2019. This included face-to-face interviews and questionnaire responses from a wide range of tourism partners, attractions and businesses across the area. Alongside the recommendations of the DMP for Sherwood Forest and the district-wide qualitative visitor market research, this tourism and hospitality provider point of view has helped to determine key areas for the development and marketing of the Sherwood Forest visitor offer. Through collaborative working with key landowners/managers and members of the new Sherwood Forest Strategic Management Group, these proposals for development include:

- Masterplan for the development of Forest Corner as a major visitor hub including

Aims

- To improve the visitor offer and experience at Forest Corner
- To protect, manage and enhance national and international habitat and landscape designations
- To provide for better linkages, wayfinding and dispersal to Edwinstowe village and multiple tourism offers beyond.

Specific Proposals

- Provision of a family-oriented 'Robin of Sherwood' visitor experience(s) at Forest Corner / the area around Forest Corner
 - Increasing the provision of serviced and non-serviced accommodation at Forest Corner / the area around Forest Corner
 - Movements, access and linkages including vehicular, public transport, cycling, walking, bridleway routes and visitor orientation
 - Pedestrianizing all, or parts, of Forest Corner and providing appropriate alternative vehicular access(es)
 - Rationalising visitor/shopper/staff car parking facilities, restrictions and charges at Forest Corner
 - Provision of visitor information, wayfinding and orientation services for Sherwood Forest at Forest Corner
 - Designing in the need to minimise impacts of visitors on the nature conservation designations immediately adjacent to Forest Corner including the necessary screening, discouragement of movements, and/or management of visitors.
- Delivery of the 'Connected Forest' with 5G-enabled content for tourism and education. Use of innovative technologies to engage visitors through virtual and augmented realities in programmes such as the stories of Robin Hood, the history of the forest through the ages, wildlife habitats and personalised trails. Hubs to be located at the Gateway Lodge, Thoresby Vale Workshop and Rufford
 - Lobbying for improved public transport provision throughout the area including a Robin Hood railway line extension and increased Sherwood Arrow bus services
 - Review of brown tourism signage across the area

4.5 Destination Marketing

Our aim is to help Newark, Southwell and Sherwood Forest become 'must see' day or short break destinations of choice. We know from the visitor market research that the main barrier to increased visitor footfall is a lack of awareness of the destinations and attractions, pointing to a strong need for coherent, innovative and sustained destination marketing in order to raise and enhance their profile.

With three distinct DMPs and strategic management groups reflecting the notable differences between the destinations, their narratives and their respective potentials for contributing to growth in the visitor economy, it is also necessary to treat Newark, Southwell and Sherwood Forest as three distinct but complementary destination brands. Consequently, we have developed visual branding and associated websites for:

[Visit Newark](#)

[Visit Southwell](#)

[Visit Sherwood Forest](#)

These have largely replaced the previous, more generic brand of Visit Newark & Sherwood. However, there are circumstances in which it is appropriate to use a refreshed Visit Newark & Sherwood identity including the district-wide online [Events Calendar](#) and our social media channels:

Facebook: [@visitnewarksherwood](#)

Twitter: [@NewarkSherwood](#)

Instagram: [visit.newark.sherwood](#)

This is to avoid duplication of content across three different brand sites and to provide one comprehensive calendar for all events across the district. There are also numerous links between the websites to facilitate visitor dispersal across the three destinations.

By providing visitors and potential visitors with a more engaging and user-friendly internet and social media presence, we are better-placed to influence their online choice of destination. Stronger digital marketing across search engine optimisation (SEO), pay-per-click (PPC), social media, online advertising and email marketing will help to improve our websites' rankings in search engine results. We will monitor and review performance through the following measures:

- Unique visits to the three tourism websites
- Social media impressions
- Social media engagements
- Video views
- Social media followers

Longer-term, we will explore the potential to link events listed in our online Events Calendar to stakeholders' online ticket sales where appropriate.

Geographically, in order to maximise the return on investment, our marketing activity will be concentrated largely on East Midlands, West Midlands, South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, Lancashire and parts of East Anglia. We will closely monitor geographic response, including area-specific uptake of our printed leaflets as well as online traffic, and adjust our plans accordingly. Some activity will also be at national level such as advertising aimed at group travel operators. We will also identify opportunities to work with partner organisations such as Visit England to promote our offer to visitors inbound to the UK. Newark and Southwell are included as destinations in [The Explorer's Road](#) project which is being relaunched by Visit England for 2021 and aimed primarily at the European and North American self-guided touring markets.

We also know from our market research that visitors' main reasons for visiting the district are attending arts events/festivals, visiting attractions and general sightseeing. Consequently, our marketing activity will focus largely on promoting the wide range of events, festivals and activities taking place and encourage visitors to extend their stay in order to enjoy other events or attractions on offer around the same time across the destinations. The events are therefore an opportunity to attract potential visitors to a specific place and time but also as a 'hook' to get people to find out more and cross-promote the other destinations, events and attractions. We will also conduct more generic 'brand' campaigns to raise wider awareness of the three destinations' brand propositions. The target audiences and messaging will vary across specific campaigns, according to the particular

seasons, themes and anticipated responses, for example “find out about all the exciting places for families to visit in Newark and Southwell during this year’s Heritage Open Days”. Destination-specific promotion will be guided by the following points:

4.5.1 Newark

Brand proposition:

- The quintessential English market town (market, antiques, independent shops)
- An experience of English history through the ages (historic assets)

Audiences:

- ‘Country Loving Traditionalists’^{3*} – empty nesters (typically aged 56+ years) with traditional values, who are likely to have recently taken a countryside break in England. They travel as a couple, looking for unspoilt countryside and want to feel “connected to the country’s history and heritage” with opportunities to eat local food and produce.
- Younger audiences will be also be targeted through specific campaigns or activities, for example promotion of music festivals in Newark.
- Longer-term, young professionals will be targeted once the leisure, food and drink and evening offer is developed.

4.5.2 Southwell

Brand proposition:

- The jewel in Nottinghamshire’s crown (historic assets, independent shops, tearooms)

Audiences:

- ‘Country Loving Traditionalists’* – empty nesters (typically aged 56+ years) with traditional values, who are likely to have recently taken a countryside break in England. They travel as a couple, looking for unspoilt countryside and want to feel “connected to the country’s history and heritage” with opportunities to eat local food and produce.
- Younger audiences will be also be targeted through specific campaigns or activities, for example promotion of music festivals in Southwell.
- Students, staff and visiting friends and relatives from NTU Brackenhurst campus
- Racegoers attending Southwell Racecourse

4.5.3 Sherwood Forest

Brand proposition:

- The home of Robin Hood (ancient woodlands)
- A green and active family experience (outdoor activities, connect with natural environment)

Audiences:

- ‘Aspirational Family Fun’* – information-hungry, living in cities with children at home. They regularly take breaks where they can indulge in active, family-friendly pursuits, sporting events and festivals. They are active on social media.

³ *Visit England – extracts from market segmentation information based on a combination of what matters to visitors, their leisure trip behaviour and demographics.

5.0 Working in Partnership

A collaborative approach that engages effectively our partners and stakeholders, including businesses from the tourism and hospitality sector, in the development and marketing of our destinations is essential to sustained progress. Whilst NSDC can operate with its own assets and resources to achieve some growth, it can effect far greater change by also using its position and influence as a facilitator.

The strategic management groups comprising partners and stakeholders will agree the priorities for each destination, guided by this strategy and the DMPs, and consider the optimum ways for them to be progressed. The more operational district-wide Tourism Action Group, led and facilitated by NSDC Tourism Business Unit, brings together attractions and businesses from the tourism and hospitality sector to share news, ideas, good practice, campaigns and offers. It is hosted by attractions in different locations around the district in order to provide welcome familiarisation opportunities for the attendees. The sharing of leaflets and printed materials between members of the group also plays a valuable role in cross-promotion initiatives, visitor dispersal and maintaining up to date shared knowledge.

We will link in with a number of other groups that contribute strongly to developing and promoting the visitor offer such as Newark Heritage Forum, Newark Business Club and Shop Southwell. Wider partners and stakeholders will also be engaged to develop the visitor offer. For example, education and training providers could play a key role in raising standards around customer service skills, and the railway franchises LNER and EMR could promote increased visitor travel to the area by train.

At national and international level, we will work with organisations such as Visit England, Visit Britain, the Tourism Management Institute and the Tourism Alliance to align our activities where appropriate and draw on best practice. For example, our current [Autumn 'Staycation' campaign](#) aligns to Visit England's £5million 'Escape the Everyday' campaign, particularly their 'Discovery' and 'Freedom to Explore' themes.

At district level, we will work collaboratively with the following visitor attractions in particular to make Newark, Southwell and Sherwood Forest destinations of choice for potential visitors and increase the volume of visitors, dwell time and visitor expenditure:

5.1 Newark

Newark Castle & Gardens
 National Civil War Centre
 Palace Theatre
 Newark Air Museum
 St Mary Magdalene Church
 Newark Town Hall Museum & Art Gallery
 River Cruises
 Sconce & Devon Park
 Stoke Field Battlefield
 Robin Hood Theatre
 Kelham Hall & Country Park

5.2 Southwell

Southwell Minster

Archbishop's Palace
The Workhouse (National Trust)
Museum of Timekeeping
Southwell Racecourse & Golf Course
The HopBarn

5.3 Sherwood Forest

Sherwood Forest Country Park & RSPB Visitor Centre
Sherwood Forest Arts & Craft Centre
St Mary's Church
Rufford Abbey Country Park
Thoresby Park
The Queen's Royal Lancers & Nottinghamshire Yeomanry Museum
Sherwood Pines & Go Ape!
National Holocaust Centre & Museum
Bilsthorpe Heritage Museum
Laxton Open Fields Visitor Centre
Vicar Water Country Park

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