

Visit Winchester



& the Heart of Hampshire

Destination Management Plan

2015 - 2020



Continuous engagement, measurable success



Working with the tourism team at Winchester City Council I have been impressed both by the level of business engagement.

Attending conferences, networking events and sector partnership meetings I regularly witness an energy in the room that comes from a group of people who know that they have something in common. The people in this industry want to make a difference and, based on the performance of the sector over the last five years, they know they can.

This is not achieved without significant public sector support. Winchester City Council invests over £350,000 in tourism every year, providing a team of committed and qualified marketing and business professionals working at the centre of the Partnership.

If you are either looking to set up a tourism business or are already working in the sector I urge you to engage with the Visit Winchester and Heart of Hampshire Destination Management Partnership. If you are already a member – thank you for being a part of the future.



Cllr James Byrnes
Portfolio Holder for Local Economy:
Economy and Arts; Tourism; Parking;
Community Grants



The South Downs National Park is Britain's newest National Park, recognised as a nationally important and diverse area with

outstanding natural beauty and rich cultural heritage. With 43 million individual visits every year, the South Downs is one of the South East's most popular tourist destinations.

The beautiful countryside stretches from Winchester to Beachy Head near Eastbourne. Historic houses, works of art and archaeological monuments plentiful, as are wildlife beauty spots.

We want to help people enjoy the South Downs while at the same time protecting and conserving the natural landscape. National Parks are known as 'Britain's Breathing Spaces'.

Underpinning this are the principles of sustainable tourism, responsible car use, observing the Countryside Code and supporting local businesses during your stay.

Together we can conserve and enhance the South Downs for future generations to enjoy.

Margaret Paren

SOUTH DOWNS
NATIONAL PARK

Margaret Paren, OBE
Chair of South Downs National
Park Authority

The Visit Winchester and the Heart of Hampshire Destination

Management Partnership was originally founded because local businesses and stakeholders in the tourism sector had strong opinions about what was needed to protect and further the interests of the industry in central Hampshire.

An eight month consultation period with 72 local tourism professionals helped us clarify the forward direction for tourism, namely:



- to join up more behind the scenes in order to make the local tourism infrastructure more coherent;
- to work on a broader destination footprint that made more of the links between rural and city product;
- to deal with recognisable destinations rather than creating new brands with little resonance for consumers.

In August 2011 Winchester City Council launched a Destination Management Partnership with Tourism South East, the South Downs National Park Authority and East Hampshire District Council. The income derived from the modest membership fee paid by our 58 members is reinvested directly into promoting Winchester and the Hampshire area of the South Downs National Park, nationally and internationally.

This way of working has seen the economic impact of tourism in Winchester grow from £292m at the outset of 2010 to £340m by the end of 2013. The number of visitors has also outstripped expectations, rising from 4.3m to 5.5m over the last 5 years. In East Hampshire tourism saw 7% growth in the first year of the partnership meaning that by 2012 tourism was contributing £198m to the area's economy. In addition to benefits associated with the increased exposure the destinations receive, membership of the Partnership offers businesses access to expert advice, discounted training and advertising and significant savings via a raft of high-value bonus packages.

Our challenge is to sustain the growth in tourism whilst ensuring that the infrastructure around the visitor experience is developed in keeping with consumer expectations and demands. We also need to protect the core appeal of the area – its landscape and historic environment - and factor in the needs of residents. This document looks to recognise this challenge and address it positively.

Facts and figures

South Downs National Park –
estimated no. of day trips in 2011:
43m

Visit Winchester -
economic impact
of tourism:
2010: £292m
2013: £342m

East Hampshire -
economic impact
of tourism:
2010: £184m
2012: £198m

Value of column
inches netted by
'double destination'
Jane Austen Pride &
Prejudice 200
campaign in first 6
months of 2012:
£613k

Visit Winchester -
number of day trips
pace of growth:
2008-10: 5% ↑
2010-12: 14% ↑

Value of column
inches netted in
national publications
by PR campaigns for
Winchester and East
Hampshire since
August 2011:
£4.5m

Number of
businesses winning
Beautiful South
Awards in Winchester
and East Hampshire
since the DMP was
established: 12

Visit Winchester -
number of day trips:
2010: 4.3m
2013: 5.5m

Number of visitors
to Winchester and
Petersfield Tourist
Information
Centres from
August 2011 –
June 2014:

370, 540

Number of
downloads of the
membership fee
funded Visit
Winchester App
since August 2011:
2,425

Number of
businesses in
Winchester, East
Hampshire and
the South Downs
National Park
Engaged in low
carbon schemes:

163



Strategic context

- VisitEngland encourages and supports the development of Destination Management Plans throughout England as an essential tool in the delivery of a successful visitor economy. National Government policy encourages destination organisations to become focussed and efficient bodies that are increasingly led by the private sector. Destination Management Plans are one mechanism to achieve this.
- A Destination Management Plan is a shared statement of intent to manage a destination over a stated period of time, articulating the roles of the different stakeholders and identifying clear actions that they will take and the apportionment of resources.
- In these definitions, 'manage' and 'management' are taken in their widest sense. Crucially, destination management includes the planning, development and marketing of a destination as well as how it is managed physically, financially, operationally and in other ways.
- Broadly, a Destination Management Plan is equivalent to a Strategy and Action Plan for Sustainable Tourism in a destination.

The following organisations formed the *Visit Winchester and the Heart of Hampshire* Destination Management Partnership to support tourism in Winchester and the Hampshire area of the South Downs ...



Winchester
City Council

TOURISM
SOUTH EAST

SOUTH DOWNS
NATIONAL PARK

East
Hampshire
DISTRICT COUNCIL

- This Destination Management Plan relates to the Economic Prosperity strand of Winchester City Council's Community Strategy 2010-20; and East Hampshire District Council and the South Downs National Park Authority's Partnership Management Plan.

Vision and outcomes

Our vision

To increase the contribution visitors make to the prosperity and social and environmental wellbeing of Winchester and the Hampshire area of the South Downs National Park.

Overall outcomes

- To articulate and realise a vision, goals and objectives for Winchester and the Hampshire Area of the South Downs National Park's visitor economy in partnership with stakeholders in the private and public sectors.
- To increase the economic impact of tourism in the Winchester and East Hampshire Districts by 10% over 5 years.
- To raise the national and international profiles of Winchester and the Hampshire area of the South Downs National Park as destinations e.g. via the work of two PR consortia.
- To increase duration of stay for visitors through meaningful product development in both destinations by:
 - targeting new markets with developed product itineraries for the Winchester District and the South Downs National Park;
 - encouraging staying visitors who will contribute to the local economy in Winchester and the Hampshire area of the South Downs National Park in line with Winchester City Council's Community Strategy and East Hampshire District Council and the South Downs National Park's Partnership Management Plan.
- To continue to sensitively develop and enhance the visitor experience, making both destinations more competitive and ensuring their sustainability.
- To continue to build on our partnerships with the private and public sector in order to maintain dynamism within the Destination Management Partnership.



Aim 1

We will further the interests of the tourism industry locally by developing the destination through a commitment to:

- Consult with and influence key tourism stakeholders in the public and private sectors to commit to a shared vision and implement an agreed action plan for tourism that delivers significant positive impacts locally;
- Raise the profile of Winchester and the Hampshire area of the South Downs National Park amongst potential tourism markets;
- Improve impacts on local businesses via improved referral rates and measurable campaign results;
- Attract more private sector partners to the growing DMP, thus increasing investment and long term sustainability of the destinations; and specifically...
 1. Work more closely with VisitEngland, VisitBritain, Tourism South East and other tourist destinations to attract new visitors from new market sectors;
 2. Link in with the EM3 and Solent LEPs and LEADER where possible, with particular regard to cultural and rural tourism;
 3. Reposition Winchester as a key area for conference activity and increase business tourism to the area in partnership with other local interests;
 4. Encourage partners to enter the Beautiful South Awards and thus potentially qualify for the Enjoy England Awards.

Did you know?

For the 27 months before the Destination Management Partnership (DMP) was established, the value of column inches netted by the Discover Winchester consortium in the national media averaged £59k per calendar month - this increased to £103 k per month for the same number of months after the establishment of the DMP. The consortium is jointly run by Winchester City Council and Flagship Consulting in London, who are commissioned by a group of businesses who are passionate about raising Winchester's profile.



In 2013 the East Hampshire Tourism & Marketing Partnership commissioned RM Communications to secure publicity for the Hampshire area of the South Downs National Park based on the 'Shared Story' that had been developed in consultation with various stakeholders in East Hampshire and across the South Downs.

From this point the two PR agencies for the destinations have worked in tandem, sometimes with VisitEngland and VisitBritain, to create linked stories and familiarisation trips. Campaign themes have included Jane Austen, Food & drink and cycling.

Aim 2

We will drive results from our marketing and PR activities and:

Continue to evolve and build:

- a) the Visit Winchester brand;
- b) the South Downs National Park visual identity

Work with private and public sector partners across Hampshire to promote Winchester and the surrounding area more effectively and efficiently to a broader audience using joined up campaigns for improved efficiency; and specifically...

1. Promote the offers of both destinations more dynamically and to new audiences using social media, online PR and an improved website presence via solus destination and shared footprint campaigns implemented by Winchester City Council, East Hampshire District Council and the South Downs National Park;
2. Raise the profile of the cultural/events scene across the Winchester district using online and customer-facing channels;
3. Measure the results of the DMP investments via a regular survey that reviews the economic impact of tourism.



Did you know?

The award-winning 'King Alf' social media presence tweets and Facebook posts about events, local news and tourism attractions to an audience of 4000 residents, visitors and journalists. King Alf was the first travel social media presence to be featured in the leading travel journal, Frommers Guide.



Aim 3

We are committed to enhancing quality, service and visitor experience so we will:

- Improve the range and quality of the product offer and visitor services to maintain and where possible increase high levels of visitor satisfaction;
- Maintain a consultative, adaptable approach to quality and accreditation schemes and continually review systems – balancing industry and visitor needs.
- Lobby for improvements to the visitor gateway and connectivity for visitors travelling to and around Winchester and East Hampshire including; air, road, rail and public transport;
- Serve and engage local communities, including them in tourism related consultations and informing them of new developments;
- Retain the nationally recognised expertise within Winchester and Petersfield's tourist information centres as key service providers in terms of dealing with residents, visitors, partners and businesses;
- Offer an informed opinion on tourism related pre-planning and full planning applications; and specifically...
 1. Ensure that the tourism potential in Winchester arising from both the Silver Hill and Station Approach developments are fully explored and realised; and in East Hampshire the 'gateway to the South Downs' initiatives in Petersfield Station and Lavant Street are also supported;
 2. Maintain our commitment to embracing, promoting and rewarding low carbon business practice;
 3. Continue to monitor and explore the realistic potential for hotel investment locally;
 4. Support and advise events organisers ensuring that visitors experience safe, memorable and well organised events;
 5. Encourage partners and members to commit to making the destination accessible for all.
 6. Showcase local food and support businesses who make efforts to source local ingredients for their menus; and also promote Winchester as a 'Fairtrade City', by engaging further businesses;



Partnership in practice

There are currently 39 businesses who are members of the DMP across the Winchester and East Hampshire districts. Members work together with the four founding partners attending: Tourism South East networking and training events; Attractions Partnership; Conference Winchester and Discover Winchester meetings in Winchester and Tourism Partnership meetings in East Hampshire.



VisitEngland



enterpriseM3

TOURISM
SOUTH EAST

SOUTH DOWNS
NATIONAL PARK

SOUTH DOWNS
NATIONAL PARK

East Hampshire Tourism
and Marketing
Partnership &
SDNP
Communications
team



Winchester District
Attractions Partnership

Discover
Winchester

Conference
Winchester

National
media

East
Hampshire
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Winchester
City Council

Non-members (advertisers, award winners, events organisers) engage via the advertising, quality and awards initiatives developed by the DMP. Income from advertising and accreditation schemes is directed back into the DMP.

Partners have their say

In February 2014 we canvassed the opinion of stakeholders and members regarding the content of this plan in relation to developing tourism in the area.

'More links between venues, local attractions and hotels.'

When asked about USPs for Winchester they ranked:

1. History and heritage;
2. Compact city centre;
3. Independent shops/restaurants.

'Ensure the views of East Hampshire businesses are fed into the Destination Management Plan.'

When asked how to improve the general visitor experience locally:

1. More hotel rooms;
2. More 'world class' attractions;
3. Improve signage and parking.

Our partners said the two most pressing priorities for the DMP were:

1. To work harder to encourage start up businesses in tourism;
2. To improve the online presence of destinations.

4 top opportunities/attractions that the Destination Management Partnership should exploit:

1. Jane Austen;
2. Silver Hill /Station Approach in Winchester & Petersfield Station/ Lavant Street in East Hampshire;
3. Christmas in Winchester;
4. South Downs countryside.

A reduction in support for the arts was voted as the greatest threat to tourism by 55% of businesses responding to one poll.

'Improve parking and access to Winchester city centre' ... 'Better signposting' ... 'More frequent public transport to rural areas and the South Downs National Park.'

To encourage more businesses to engage with the destination we should link up with big players across the county.

'You are dynamic and forward thinking. Having worked with similar bodies you are way ahead of the game.'



Visit Winchester
Winchester
 VIBRANT. ANCIENT. CULTURED
 www.visitwinchester.co.uk



'Jane lies in Winchester - blessed be her swade! Praise the Lord for making her, and her for all she made!' Rudyard Kipling

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Heart of Hampshire
 MARKET TOWNS & VILLAGES
 ALRESFORD BISHOP'S WALTHAM WICKHAM
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