



Royal Pavilion Gardens, Brighton

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Tourism is one of the UK's most important industries, directly responsible for over 1.6m jobs throughout the UK.⁵⁶ It is worth £68bn to the UK's economy, representing approximately 4% of our total GVA in 2017.⁵⁷ In 2017, we received a record number of visitors who spent a record amount, over 39m inbound visitors who spent nearly £25bn.⁵⁸

You should consider how the unique attractions of your local area can drive increases in visitor numbers, thereby driving demand for dynamic businesses to cater to the needs of these visitors.

Developing a baseline

In order to conduct an objective assessment of local tourism sector, you should consider the following factors:

- Numbers of visitors to your LEP area. This can be found through data held through your Destination Management Organisation (DMO). [See Visit Britain for details](#). Your LEP area may or may not be the same as the boundaries covered by your local DMO.
- The amount of money and time these visitors spend in the area, including the number of overnight stays. The [Destination Specific Research](#) section of the VisitBritain site has this information.
- How many people the sector employs, both directly and indirectly (e.g. in pubs and restaurants). VisitBritain's '[Destination Specific Research](#)' site has this information.
- What the main tourist attractions are in your area and how they are performing.
- What your visitor profile is, e.g. international versus domestic markets.
- How well connected your area is with major transport hubs, including airports.

In terms of existing evidence available to consider the contribution of tourism to your local economy, the VisitBritain website provides useful statistics on visitor numbers, visitor spend and overnight stays, regional spread of inbound tourism to Britain and splits by domestic and international visitors. The [International Passenger Survey](#) can provide some indicative estimates of tourist visits, the amount of money they spend and the number of nights they stay at a regional and county level. A user friendly online tool showing inbound nation, region & county data can be found [here](#).

Visit Britain can provide you with significant amounts of evidence into various aspects of the tourism sector within Great Britain, here is a short list of some of the topics where they can provide you with evidence (this should not be considered to be an exhaustive list and we recommend visiting their [website](#)):

- [Activities undertaken by international visitors](#). This shows the variations between activities undertaken by visitors in different regions.
- [Film and TV locations as a driver for tourism](#).
- [Areas of Britain where international visitors would like to go](#). This presents evidence of what areas of Britain international visitors would likely visit during a trip, showing the strengths of different areas of the country.

You are encouraged to consider how the cultural and heritage landscape of their area helps to drive the growth and productivity of the tourism sector. National Lottery Heritage Fund and VisitBritain research notes that heritage driven tourism alone accounts for £4.3bn of GDP and creates employment for 113,000 people.⁵⁹

Other areas that will support the consideration of the impacts on your local tourism economy include:

56 [DCMS \(2017\) Economic Estimates: Employment](#)

57 [DCMS \(2017\) Economic Estimates: GVA](#)

58 ONS, [Travel Trends 2017](#)

59 NHLF and VisitBritain, [Investing in Success: heritage and the UK tourism economy](#), 2010, p.9

- Business Events. Business Events are worth £32.6bn into the UK economy annually and DCMS are working closely with VisitBritain to look at how the UK can attract major business events to the UK and internationalise ones that we already have.⁶⁰ The [Business Events Growth Programme](#) offers financial and advocacy support to destinations looking to host international events. Understanding your capacity in hosting business events is important, and we would suggest talking to your local DMO or Convention Bureau to discuss what's available.
- Accessibility. There is a compelling business case for making tourism venues and experiences more inclusive. People with health conditions and impairments and their travelling companions spend around £12bn on trips in England each year, but an additional £117m could be generated from additional trips if accessibility was improved.⁶¹ People from this market are more likely to take longer trips, spend more and are reported to be very loyal to places that meet their requirements.

Agreeing objectives

Government's [Tourism Action Plan](#) sets out its priority areas for growing the UK tourism sector:

- The Tourism Landscape: Strengthening coordination and collaboration.
- Skills: Boosting apprenticeships and attracting more people to careers in tourism
- Common Sense Regulation: Examining the scope of deregulation.
- Transport: Making it easier for visitors to explore by rail, bus and coach.
- A GREAT Welcome: Driving continuous improvements in our visa service.

Designing interventions

VisitBritain's [Destination Advice Hub](#) provides support to those looking to create a successful and sustainable visitor economy in your area. Additionally, there are a number of existing funds that you can bid into which can help support tourism. These include the [Cultural Development Fund](#), [Future High Streets Fund](#), [Business Events Growth Programme](#), and the [Coastal Communities Fund](#).

Working with your local DMO should help you understand what encourages visitors to your area, and what work they are doing to increase numbers. The priorities of the Tourism Action Plan can be used as a guide for the kind of interventions that might be required to increase Tourism. Often the effects on the tourism sector should be considered when developing wider interventions. Improvements in transport and communications infrastructure will have effects on tourism to the local area, so it is useful to think about what input you can have into the design of these wider interventions to maximize benefits for the tourism sector.

Evaluation and monitoring

It is important to measure the outcome of any intervention to deem whether it was successful in driving an increase in the number of visitors to the area, as well as the quality of the visitor experience. The [Annual Progress Reports](#) of the Coastal Communities Fund can provide help with understanding how multiple programmes can contribute to the sustainable growth of the Tourism Sector within a local area. Your local DMO will also be able to share evaluations of previous marketing campaigns and the impact of visitor numbers.

60 Business Visits and Events Partnership, [Opportunities for Global Growth in Britain's Events Sector](#)

61 VisitBritain [Business advice: make your business accessible](#)



Case Studies: Manchester and the Great West Way

The following projects from Visit England's £40m Discover England Fund are currently attempting this more collaborative approach:

Growing Manchester as an International Gateway to the North, led by Marketing Manchester: This project is increasing the volume and value of visitors coming through Manchester Airport by creating itineraries that showcase the city, and excursions that open up the North of England. Working with destinations, travel trade and the tourism industry and targeting the US market, Marketing Manchester will lead a partnership to maximise the potential of the North of England as an international destination and gateway to the North.

The Great West Way: The 'Great West Way' project, led by destination management organisation VisitWiltshire, will develop a new touring route and link a package of tailored visitor experiences, including destinations, accommodation, attractions and transport options, working with rail and bus companies along the route. The 'Great West Way' will make it easier for international visitors to book personalised trips that take in more of the region, boosting tourism along the way.

For more information visit [VisitEngland Discover England Fund page](#).



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Gallery visitor, Natasha Tedstill,
at Manchester Art Gallery, Mosley
Street, Manchester

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