



# Destination Management Plan for recovery of the visitor economy in Cheshire and Warrington

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2021/2022

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# Introduction

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This Destination Management Plan is focused on 2021/22. Our priority is to help businesses in the visitor economy to recover from the impact of the pandemic, whilst also helping to realise the Cheshire and Warrington vision to create the "healthiest, most sustainable, inclusive and growing economy in the UK."

Our approach has been developed in line with the Government's Tourism Recovery Plan, Cheshire and Warrington LEP's recovery plan, and the recovery plans of our three local authority partners. This is a plan for our destination, and we want to continue to engage with our wide stakeholder networks.

We have deliberately kept this plan at a high-level and it will need to evolve against a changing backdrop. This work will be led by Marketing Cheshire working closely with our private, public and third sector partners.



## Cheshire and Warrington Visitor Economy

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- The visitor economy is a hugely important sector within Cheshire and Warrington, both in terms of economic impact of the sector itself but it's role in creating a quality of place.
- In 2019 the sector was worth £3.7billion and had been growing year on year for a decade. In the same year, we welcomed 65 million visitors and the industry employed 45,000 people.
- However, in line with the national picture and other regions we saw a significant drop in visitors and income during 2020. By way of example, key attraction visits such as Chester Zoo which fell from 2 million visits in 2019 to 1.2million in 2020. Occupancy at hotels in Cheshire and Warrington fell by 42% in 2020 when compared with 2019 figures and the revenue per available room (RevPAR) fell by 47% to £27. In Chester this was £58 in 2019
- On the upside, many businesses in the visitor economy have reported strong demand over the summer months due to local, regional and UK staycation markets.
- Business visits, events, weddings, and the night-time economy have been particularly hard hit. We are waiting to see the economic impact of the removal of restrictions in July 2021.the economic recovery remains fragile and considerable work is required over the months and years ahead to rebuild our visitor economy and build a better future together.

# Overview

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Marketing Cheshire will focus on the following ten priorities through our Destination Management Plan for Cheshire and Warrington.

1. Develop Destination Chester and Destination Cheshire into strengthened partnership networks.
2. Work with national and regional media, and through digital channels, to promote staycations in Chester, Cheshire and Warrington.
3. Support and promote the reopening of towns and high streets across Cheshire and Warrington.
4. Develop enhanced positioning for Cheshire and Warrington as a family-friendly and sustainable destination.
5. Support the tourism and hospitality sector with initiatives to drive the recruitment, retention and training of staff.
6. Work with the LEP and local authorities to articulate the role of culture and events in regeneration and place making.
7. Develop inbound tourism strategy building on iconic sites, packaging with travel trade, and working in partnership with our neighbouring destinations.
8. Develop enhanced destination data and intelligence to gather real-time information.
9. Develop a new business visits and events strategy and programme of activity aligned to our energy and life sciences strengths.
10. Deliver through the Local Enterprise Partnership on wider economic development and business growth agenda and ensure that all linkages between tourism, culture and hospitality and the wider economy are maximised.



# 01

Develop Destination Chester and Destination Cheshire networks into strengthened public private partnership networks.

The purpose of these networks is to support the ongoing development of Chester city and cluster and Cheshire and Warrington as major tourism destinations, by attracting more visitors, improving visitor experience, dwell time and spend.

## Chester: New economic powerhouse is created to increase tourism and bring new exciting events to the city

By Staff Reporter



Jamie Christon, chief operating officer at Chester Zoo.



**A NEW economic network led by Chester's top :  
bid to drive tourism in and around the city.**

## NORTH WEST LEADERS OPTIMISTIC AS RESTRICTIONS LIFTED

12 Apr 2021 North West Business



Gulliver's World

# 02

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Work with national and regional media, and through digital channels, to promote staycations in Chester, Cheshire and Warrington in 2021 and 2022.

Ensure visitor information, both online and in person is inspiring and targeted appropriately at different demographics.

This will allow us to engage with both residents and visitors to maximise the Cheshire and Warrington offer with the aim to increase demand and footfall.

## 20 reasons to holiday in Cheshire this year

Here's how to make the most of this beautiful yet underrated county

By David Atkinson, TRAVEL WRITER

11 June 2021 • 11:48am





## 03

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Support and promote the reopening of towns and high streets across Cheshire and Warrington. This will involve working with councils on specific Welcome Back Fund programmes.

We will also continue our close partnerships with the Destination Chester and Destination Cheshire networks, Business Improvement Districts, and town councils. We will deliver targeted marketing activity, and in some cases also commission activity to help animate places for both our communities and visitors.

# 04

Develop an enhanced positioning for Cheshire and Warrington as a family friendly and sustainable destination. This will be part of a medium-term positioning strategy that draws on the range of attractions and assets locally for place marketing over the coming years.

We will also continue to work through Cheshire and Warrington LEP to connect into a wider place marketing strategy, with a strong focus on promoting Cheshire and Warrington as a great place to live and work.

## How Cheshire became the ice cream capital of Britain

Who needs Italian gelato, when you have the delights of Cheshire ice cream?

By **Suzanne King**, TRAVEL WRITER  
12 June 2021 • 3:00pm



Snugburys is as famous for its ice cream as it is for its gigantic straw sculptures





## 05

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Support the tourism and hospitality sector with initiatives to drive the recruitment, retention and training of staff.

This will include close collaboration with the region's Workforce Recovery Group and Job Centre Plus to provide advice and guidance to businesses, and to promote vacancies through the Cheshire and Warrington opportunities website.



## 06

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Work with the LEP and local authorities to articulate the role of arts, culture, and events in regeneration, place making, and attracting people to the region.

This will include beginning work on a longer-term events strategy, identifying opportunities for Cheshire and Warrington to create or host regional, national and international events.



## 07

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Develop inbound tourism strategy building on iconic sites, packaging with travel trade, and working in partnership with our neighbouring destinations.

This will also include collaboration with regional gateways, including airports and ports, as well as partnership with other travel operators.



# 08

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Develop enhanced destination data and intelligence to gather real-time information about our major attractions.

This will allow us to provide businesses with improved information to inform marketing and promotion. We will also use the improved data to inform any future propositions we develop for the region, including working with Business Improvement Districts and town councils on footfall data.



# 09

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Develop a new business visits and events strategy and programme of activity aligned to our energy, life sciences, and advanced manufacturing strengths.

These priority sectors are clearly identified in the Local Enterprise Partnership recovery strategy as crucial to our aspirations for a sustainable and healthy economic recovery.



# 10

Deliver through the Local Enterprise Partnership on wider economic development and business growth agenda.

Ensure that all linkages between tourism, culture and hospitality and the wider economy are maximised, so that the role of the visitor economy in place shaping is recognised.

Engage with DCMS, BEIS and other government departments with opportunities to position the visitor economy of Cheshire and Warrington.



## Annex 1 - National tourism recovery plan aims;

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- Recover domestic overnight trip volume and spend to 2019 levels by the end of 2022, and inbound visitor numbers and spend by the end of 2023 – both at least a year faster than independent forecasts predict.
- Ensure that the sector's recovery benefits every nation and region, with visitors staying longer, growing accommodation occupancy rates in the off-season and high levels of investment in tourism products and transport infrastructure.
- Build back better with a more innovative and resilient industry, maximising the potential for technology and data to enhance the visitor experience and employing more UK nationals in year-round quality jobs.
- Ensure the tourism sector contributes to the enhancement and conservation of the country's cultural, natural and historic heritage, minimises damage to the environment and is inclusive and accessible to all.
- Return the UK swiftly to its pre-pandemic position as a leading European destination for hosting business events.

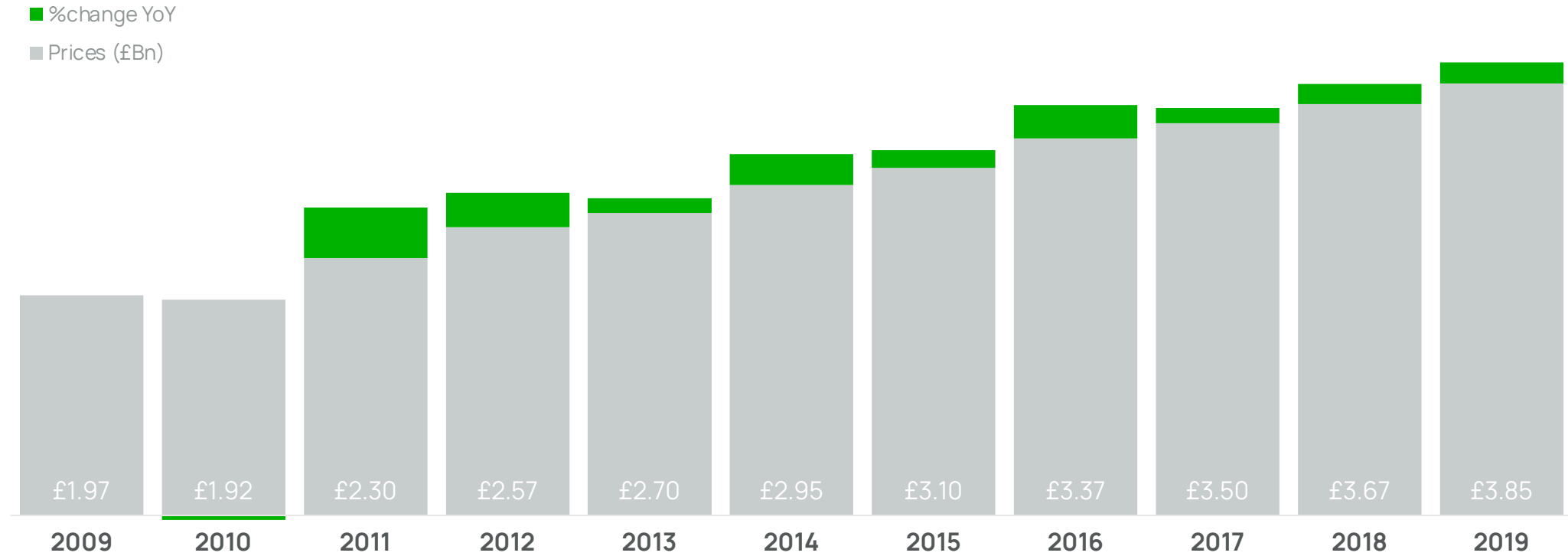
## Annex 2 - KPIs and measuring success

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- Increased footfall in town centres, city centre, and at major attractions
- Strong business feedback through survey work
- Increase in digital reach through website, facebook, and other social media channels
- Coverage in national and local media
- Report on data to measure visitor economy performance in comparison with 2019.
- New Marketing strategy for Cheshire and Warrington



# Economic Impact



Source: **STEAM 2019**/ Historic prices in £Billions

[cheshireandwarrington.com](http://cheshireandwarrington.com)

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