



Destination Plan for North Yorkshire for 2023 – 2028

1. The strength of North Yorkshire as a visitor destination

North Yorkshire is the primary demand area for the visitor economy in Yorkshire. It has so many natural assets including two National Parks, two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and an equally beautiful coastline. Tourism is a significant contributor to the economy.

A study* of visitors between 2013 and 2015 indicated that the Borough of Scarborough, including Filey, Whitby and parts of the North York Moors National Park, received 1.4m trips per year on average. A 2016 report by the National Park however, states the park area gets 7.93 million visitors annually, generating £647 million and supporting 10,900 full-time equivalent jobs.

The Yorkshire Dales have also attracted many visitors. In 2016, there were 3.8 million visits to the National Park including 0.48 million who stayed at least one night. The parks service estimates that this contributed £252 million to the economy and provided 3,583 full-time equivalent jobs. The wider Yorkshire Dales area received 9.7 million visitors who contributed £644 million to the economy. The North York Moors and Yorkshire Dales are among England's best-known destinations.

**Tourism North York Moors National Park*

Whilst the above statistics are pre-pandemic there is evidence from a 2021 study that the Yorkshire Dales National Park received a total of **5.2 million** visitor days, These visitors contributed £310 million to the local economy.

Recent statistics from Herriot Country Tourism Group and World of James Herriot show 600% increase in website traffic between 2020 and 2022 demonstrating that demand for visits to North Yorkshire are rising from overseas markets especially the USA, Canada, Netherlands, Germany and Australia. This is largely due to the highly successful return of the All Creatures Great and Small TV series that is being syndicated worldwide by the US production company. Other TV series including The Yorkshire Vet, Our Yorkshire Farm, Susan Callman's Grand Days out and other screen series are all contributing to the increasing demand.

The demand from domestic markets provides post covid opportunities. The latest VisitBritain sentiment tracker** outlines UK holiday trends set to continue, in fact, 36% of respondents indicated they are more likely to choose a trip in the UK than overseas, compared to pre-pandemic.

***[Domestic Sentiment Tracker | VisitBritain](#)*

Clearly North Yorkshire is a strong destination for visitors which has many iconic world class attractions and has the benefit of the location's beautiful countryside.



2. Situation Analysis

Since early 2022, Yorkshire has seen the demise of its tourism marketing organisation Welcome to Yorkshire leaving the situation in the area open to new arrangements to fulfil marketing and management of the visitor economy. There has been a waiting period during which time various possibilities have been discussed around the future for tourism destination marketing and management in North Yorkshire.

VisitEngland's 2021 De Bois review of destination management and marketing organisations is now being piloted in the North East of England and is to be rolled out on an accreditation basis in 2023. VisitEngland is creating a portfolio of nationally supported, strategic and high-performing Destination Development Partnerships (DDP's) and Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs). LVEPs will provide strong local leadership and governance in their destination.

In April 2023, North Yorkshire Council becomes the new local authority for North Yorkshire replacing the existing County Council and seven district councils. The existing teams in the district councils are working towards a plan to bring the new council into line with the VisitEngland DDP and LVEP system. A consultation exercise is underway to establish the current organisations in North Yorkshire that might be engaged to develop the LVEP.

3. What this plan aims to set out

This plan aims to set out how Herriot Country Tourism Group as THE private sector tourism organisation can develop its structure and activities to deliver the destination marketing for North Yorkshire in partnership with the local authority. This will support/meet VisitEngland's Destination Development Partnership (DDP) and Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEP) accreditation programme.

It aims to set out the details of:

- how the organisation will operate,
- how it will be funded
- what are the challenges,
- who are its partners
- what actions will be taken to deliver a marketing plan that attracts high value visitors
- supports individual businesses to help them reach new customers
- delivers benefits with job creation and contribute to social cohesion
- adds value to the North Yorkshire visitor economy

4. Herriot Country Tourism Group

Herriot Country Tourism Group (HCTG) has been attracting new members and developing its involvement with businesses across the whole of North Yorkshire. Collaborations have developed in Hambleton, Grassington, Richmondshire, Rydale and York. Membership is currently (March 2023) around 400 businesses and growing. The group is very well-placed to be the



representative body of the private sector in North Yorkshire as a strategic partner in the LVEP.

HCTG was originally formed after the World of James Herriot opened in 1999 to enable businesses based in the area to jointly market their services under the Herriot brand. HCTG is a collaborative membership organisation of businesses in the tourism sector with a joint motive to promote their individual businesses under the auspices of Herriot Country Tourism. The group was re-launched in 2019 and during the pandemic membership fees were suspended in order to support members.

The group is actively taking advantage of the Yorkshire Vet and All Creatures Great and Small TV series as it is syndicated across the world by the USA production company that has funded the series. HCTG is driven by a chairman, (John Gallery) who is also marketing director of the World of James Herriot (WoJH) and a small team of staff and volunteers at WoJH. The managing director of WoJH is vice-chairman. The group's constitution includes:

a. Local and Regional Partners

HCTG is actively involved with other local and regional organisations including Hambleton Tourism Forum/#discoverhambleton; York and North Yorkshire LEP; Vibrant Market Towns Initiative, Original Richmond Business and Tourism Association/Welcome to Richmond, Grassington Chamber of Trade, Ryedale, VisitHarrogate, VisitYork, and others in different parts of Herriot Country.

b. Commercial partners

Key Partners work with Herriot Country to jointly promote their products and services within Herriot Country and currently includes Grand Central Railway, Yorkshire's Great Houses Castles and Gardens and Classic Lodges Hotels.

c. Representation

Members are represented on the herriotcountry.co.uk website and receive a monthly newsletter, social media posts about individual member businesses, news releases, invitations to take part in b2b and b2c exhibitions and workshops plus invitations to be part of the annual Flavours of Herriot Food and Drink Awards.

d. Trade and Consumer Marketing

A consumer and travel trade newsletter is issued regularly to promote the group and individual members' businesses to the public and group tour operators. Social media campaigns are carried out to attract visitors to the destination and assist members generally to attract visitors to their individual businesses. Social Media is targeted at all age groups and promotes the destination along with a Herriot Trail that takes people to all parts of Herriot Country.



e. Status

Herriot Country Tourism Group is a non-profit organisation that uses its limited resources carefully, leverages activity through collaboration, and puts its focus to attract people to the area as a team effort with its members and partners. A **steering group** consisting of a broad cross section of businesses and local authority colleagues representing all parts of the sector was established in February 2023 in anticipation of the new local authority and VisitEngland structures.

5. Strategic Aims and Vision

- a. Establish the Herriot Country Tourism Group as THE marketing organisation within the Destination Development Partnership (DDP) and Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) for North Yorkshire delivering marketing, sales, digital media and pr for the destination.
- b. Work with the new local authority, North Yorkshire Council to develop a tourism management plan for the destination.
- c. Grow the group's internal business-to-business peer network activities to deliver/share advice on training and learning opportunities for businesses and employees in partnership with York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership.
- d. Be the 'go to' organisation in North Yorkshire for tourism-related accreditations, knowledge-based tourism information for the travel and tourism trade and for consumers.
- e. Work with VisitBritain/VisitEngland to dovetail with national programmes and be the link for private sector collaborations

6. Partnerships

- a. Private sector businesses in all sub-sectors in North Yorkshire
- b. North Yorkshire Council (and specific individual areas within it)
- c. Make It York/VisitYork
- d. VisitBritain/VisitEngland
- e. North York Moors National Park and Yorkshire Dales National Park
- f. York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership
- g. North Yorkshire Market Towns Initiative
- h. North Yorkshire Business Improvement Districts
- i. Chambers of Trade/Commerce
- j. Other local tourism-related organisations
- k. Corporate and other support organisations

7. Inward Investment, Funding and Growth Plans – 2023 -2028

- a. Grow membership of the group and income from membership fees by demonstrating its value to businesses in North Yorkshire through its collaborative leverage. A four-tier membership scheme is planned to allow businesses of all sizes to become involved. (See Appendix I.)
- b. Develop other funding streams through commercial sponsorship
- c. Create opportunities for skills development in the sector working with York & North Yorkshire Enterprise Partnership – this will underpin membership commitment and assist with delivery quality.



- d. Increase the programme of marketing initiatives and campaigns to reach our target markets (see 9 & 10 below) – in consultation with members and from research data (see f. below).
- e. Support new product developments in the destination that will create new market demand.
- f. Develop research and data-gathering to inform our marketing direction and to measure our performance – e.g. to measure the effectiveness of campaigns and to measure the quality of the destination’s performance in terms of volumes, value, service delivery and customer satisfaction.

8. Our visitor economy pillars

- a. Rural – distinct, beautiful and varied landscape
- b. Market towns – individual and local products
- c. Coast – James Herriot’s seaside, collaboration with coastal colleagues
- d. Heritage – National Trust/English Heritage/Yorkshire Great Houses Castles and Gardens
- e. Food and Drink – Flavours of Herriot Country
- f. Sustainable/responsible Tourism
- g. Leverage the City of York in collaboration with Make It York/VisitYork

9. Audiences

- a. Domestic - regional and national
- b. International Markets – with a key focus on **Screen Tourism**
- c. Group Travel/Coach Tourism

10. Segments*

- a. Aspirational Family Fun (12%)
- b. Country loving traditional (30%)
- c. Free and easy mini breakers (26%)

*[*England visitor segmentation | VisitBritain](#)*

11. Organisation Structure. The steering group will help to determine the future structure of the HCTG working with its strategic partners – e.g. the Local Authority Local Enterprise Partnership, VisitEngland, VisitYork and others at 6. above.

12. Herriot Country Tourism Group will operate as a not-for-profit company

John Gallery, chairman, 8th March 2023