

The Malverns

Visitor Economy Action Plan



Our Vision For 2025

Be a recognised 'Green Destination'

Be a recognised UK destination for health and well-being

Be a recognised UK family destination with a low environmental impact

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Summary

This Visitor Economy Action Plan is for all tourism-related businesses within the Malvern Hills district, and has been developed with local tourism industry stakeholder consultation. The Action Plan will provide a clear direction to collectively work together to increase visitor spend and the number of jobs available within the tourism and hospitality sector. All achieved via a responsible approach to benefit the natural environment, the local community and local tourism businesses.



2020 has been a destructive year for the local tourism industry; first with the January floods, followed by the Covid-19 pandemic. We are hopeful the tourism industry will soon be in the recovery phase, but it may be a long road ahead for many tourism businesses to fully recover.

This Plan endeavours to steer the local tourism industry to ensure the long-term stability of the sector within the Malvern Hills district in the aftermath of Covid-19.



Why Prioritise Tourism?

Tourism is a key sector for improving residents' health and well-being, as well as key driver for economic growth across the district; with income generated via tourism, supporting independent businesses; employment, landscape conservation and heritage preservation.

In 2018, tourism added over £137 million into the local economy whilst also providing 8.4% of total employment, and in 2019, it added £145 million providing 8.3% of total employment. The statistics show a 5.8% increase in tourism value between 2018 and 2019.

Impact of Covid-19

2020 will portray a very different picture regarding the growth of the visitor economy, but looking forward, more people will be holidaying at home in the UK. We need to be resilient, and adapt well to change, in order to maximise the benefits from the 'Staycation' effect, which we are hopeful will revitalise the local tourism economy in the aftermath of the Covid-19. The Visit The Malverns website www.visitthemalverns.org, received a huge increase in website traffic following the Covid-19 lockdown, with a 44% increase in July, 60% in August and 80% in September when compared to 2019.

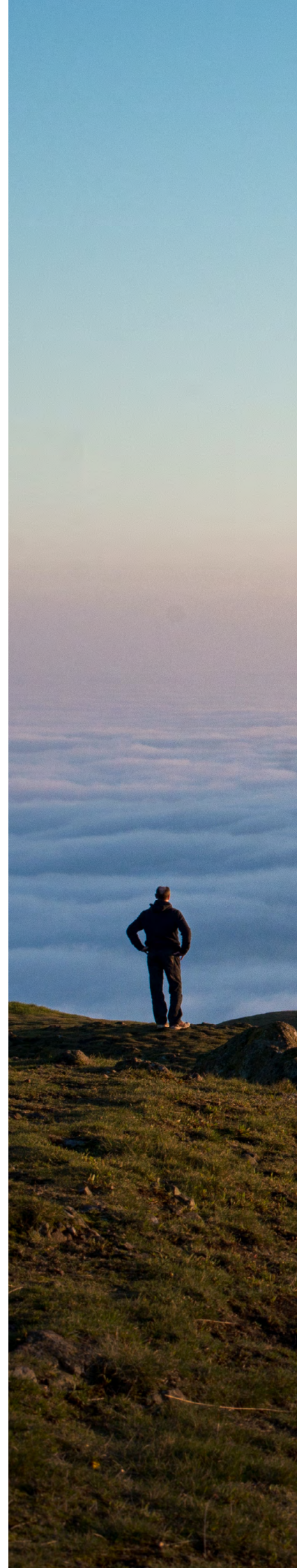
Looking Forward

We believe there's scope to develop tourism sustainably to benefit the lives of Malvern Hills district residents, the local environment, and the local economy.

The overall aim for this new tourism strategy is to help the Malvern Hills district thrive by The Malverns becoming a recognised UK health and well-being destination which has a low environmental impact.

By working together, we will endeavour to achieve the following:

- We will create an exceptional experience that is safe for visitors.
- We will adopt 'greener' tourism business and destination practices.
- We will provide support to tourism businesses and events.
- We will raise the profile of The Malverns as a visitor destination.



Introduction

The Malverns is a popular visitor destination in Worcestershire, which is located in an easily accessible position in the heart of England; with the great outdoors and heritage being some of the main tourism assets for attracting visitors from the cosmopolitan cities of London, Birmingham, Bristol, and beyond.

The previous Visitor Economy Action Plan 2016-2020 helped form a stronger coalition between tourism industry stakeholders; set out to raise the profile of The Malverns and enhance the tourism product; whilst supporting successful businesses, along with ensuring there is enough finance to help support the tourism industry.

2016-2020 Key Achievements

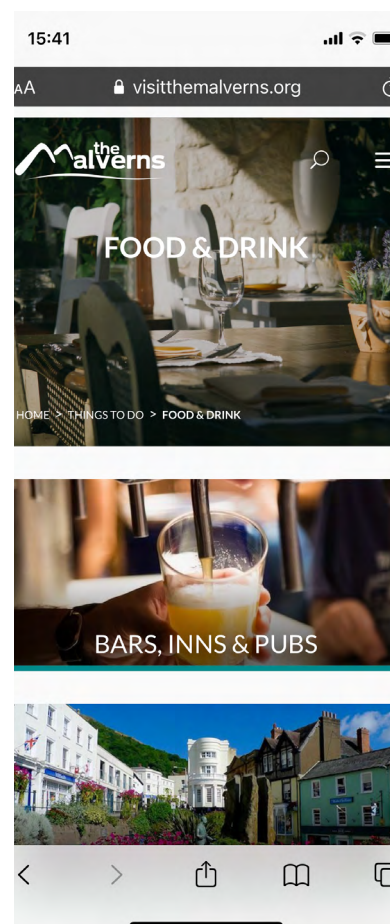
In summary, there have been a number of key achievements developed from the direction of the 2016-2020 Action Plan including, Malvern Hills District Council creating a new dedicated role for tourism; taking the lead on the strategic direction for local tourism, marketing the destination effectively, managing tourist information provision and providing tourism business support.

There are several key activities to report on which will help shape the direction for the new Action Plan over the next five years.

Marketing

- A new brand for Visit The Malverns.
- A new dedicated website for The Malverns www.visitthemaalverns.org, with a new blog introduced in October 2018 ensuring tourism business and event news can be easily shared via the Visit The Malverns online channels.
- Website Statistics - 2019 statistics report 297,441 sessions/visits with 1,03,799 page views. 2020 statistics report 305,228 sessions/visits with 1,010,572 page views. A 2.62% increase comparing 2019 and 2020 website sessions, compared to 21.36% comparing 2019 to 2018 website sessions.

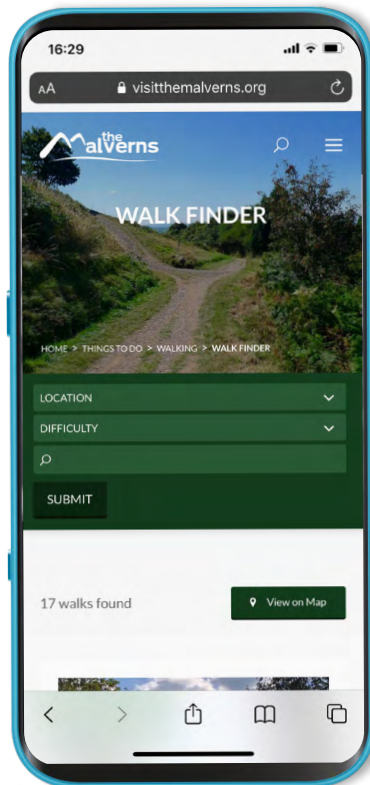
- A new inspirational guide for The Malverns distributed locally and regionally.
- New social media accounts across various platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and YouTube. For example, Facebook posts have been seen by 882,724 people with over 50,000 people engaging in the content via 'Likes', Comments and Shares in 2020.
- Increased the number of features in the national newspapers by responding to national newspaper requests and organising journalist visits.





Visitor Experience

- Three Tourist Information Centre's provide a warm welcome to visitors in Great Malvern, Tenbury Wells and Upton upon Severn.
- New Tourist Information Boards – Great Malvern and Tenbury Wells.
- New Malvern Walking App
- New Route To The Hills Trail – Highly Commended in the 2019 Heritage Awards.
- Relunched the Elgar Route in partnership with the Elgar Society and the National Trust at The Firs: Elgar's Birthplace.
- New walking and cycling trails, including the Teme Valley Trail.
- New Hidden Tenbury QR heritage trail.



Festival and Event Development

- Malvern Well Dressing & Water Festival
- Great Malvern Food Festival
- Great Malvern Farmers' Market
- Tenbury Wells Foodie Thursday Night Market
- Grants for festival and event development
- Marketing support for venues e.g. Three Counties

Showground, Malvern Theatres, The Regal etc. as well as festivals and events – TIC's, website, social media, print and distribution.



Tourism Business Support

- Two Tourism Forums a year.
- Tourism business e-newsletters sent out regularly.
- Administration of grants for Covid-19.
- Administration of flood recovery grants.
- Support for funding and planning applications.

2019 Economic Impact Assessment

(The Research Solution Company)

2019 Key Findings

Total tourism value in 2019 was nearly £145 million, with £123,086,100 visitor spend and £21,884,000 indirect spend.

- 3.9 million trips were taken to the district – 3,772,000 million day trips and 205,000 overnight stays.
- During their visit to The Malverns, visitors spent approximately £123 million of which £32 million was from overnight visits.
- The overnight trips account for a total of nearly 0.64 million nights in the area (an average of 3 nights per trip).
- Overnight visits accounted for £32 million compared to £92 million from day trippers.

- The spending supported 2,917 jobs, with approximately 2,029 direct tourism-related jobs and 751 via the tourism industry supply chain. This equates to 8% employed in tourism and hospitality across the Malvern Hills district.





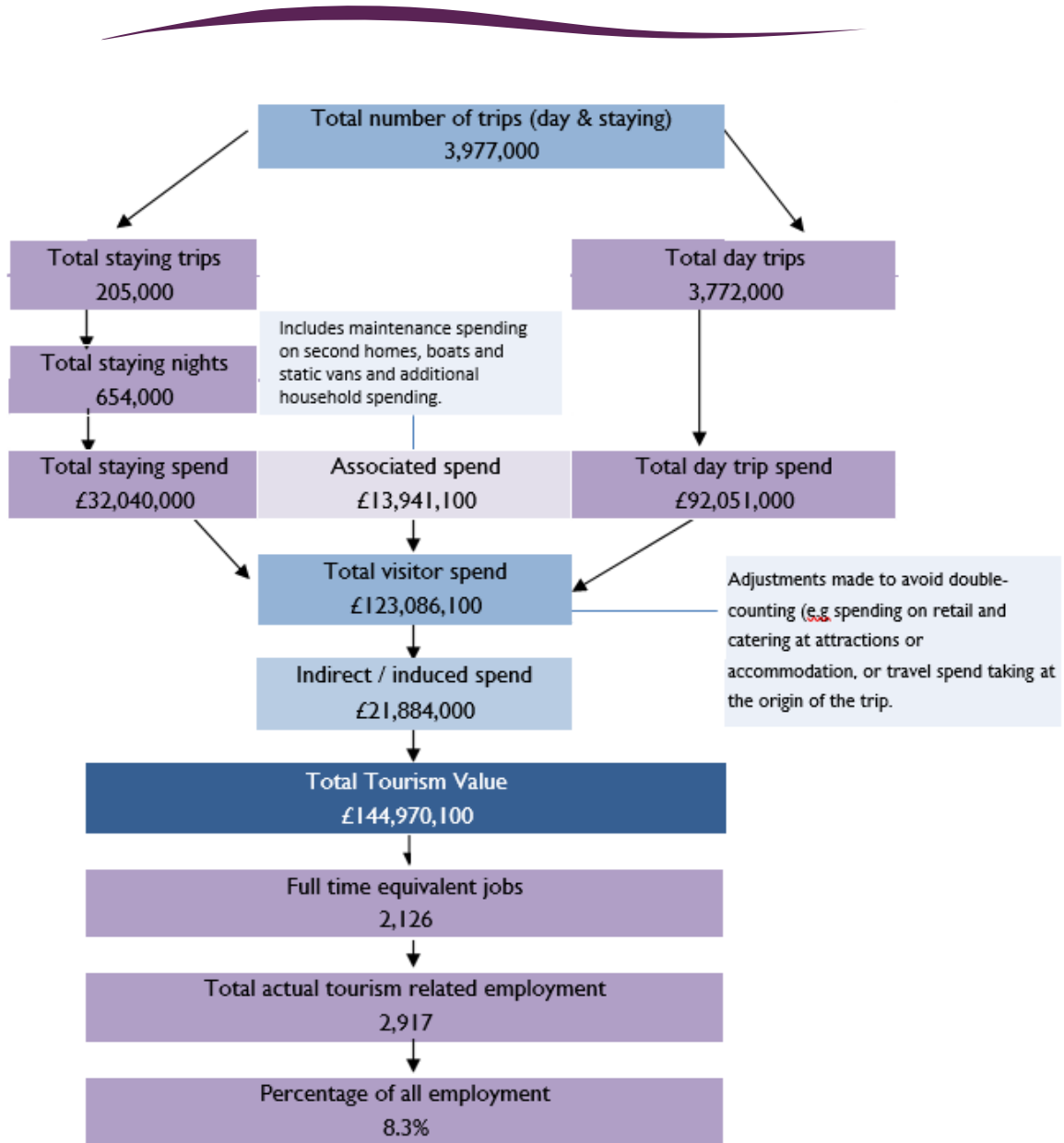
Economic Impact of Tourism – Year on Year Comparisons

Day Trips	2018	2019	Annual variation
Day Trips Volume	3,492,000	3,772,000	8.0%
Day Trips Value	£85,229,000	£92,051,000	8.0%
Overnight Trips			
Number of Trips	211,000	205,000	-2.8%
Number of Nights	677,000	654,000	-3.4%
Trip Value	£31,918,000	32,040,000	0.4%
Total Value	£137,902,000	£144,970,000	5.1%
Actual Jobs	2,780	2,917	4.9%

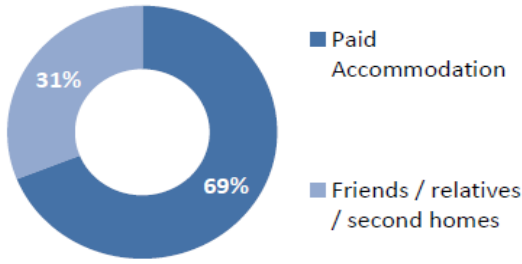
	2018	2019	Variation
Average length stay (nights x trip)	3.21	£3.19	-.06%
Spend x overnight trip	£151.27	£156.29	3.3%
Spend x night	£47.15	£48.99	3.9%
Spend x day trip	£24.41	£24.40	0.0%

2019 Economic Impact Assessment Headline Figures

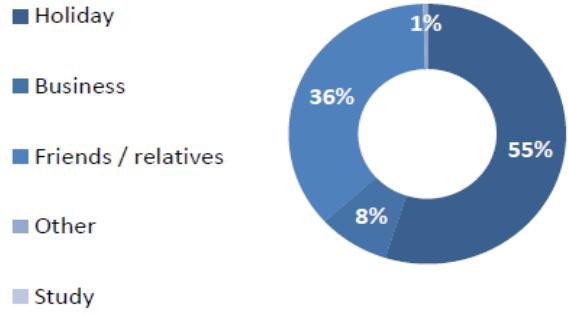
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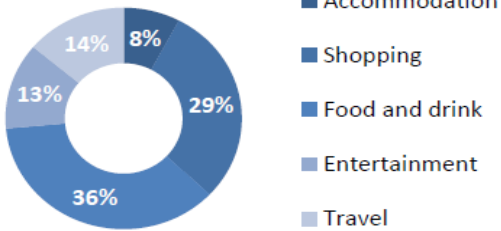
Type of Accommodation



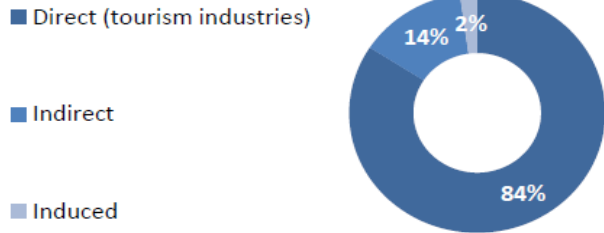
Trips by Purpose



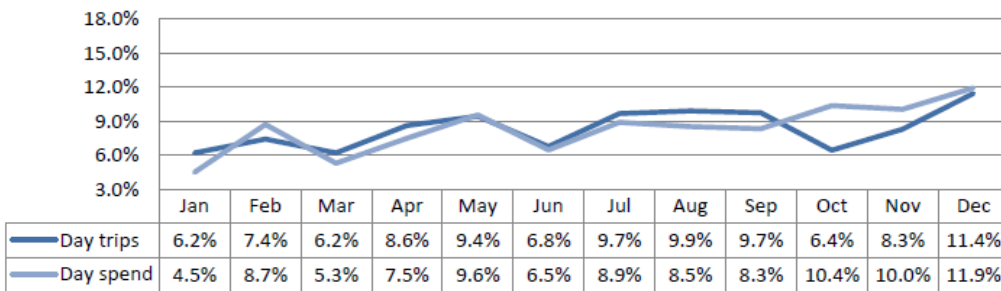
Breakdown of expenditure



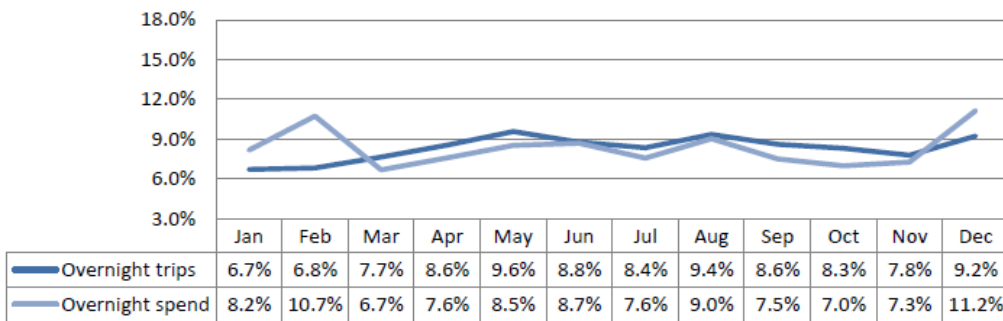
Type of employment



Seasonality - Day visitors



Seasonality - Overnight visitors



Emerging Trends



It's important to identify the emerging tourism trends taking place nationally and internationally to ensure this Action Plan takes into consideration the current changes in consumer behaviour and to predict longer term trends. These trends have been forecasted via online research, and will be reviewed throughout the four-year Action Plan to ensure the viability of our strategic aims and objectives.

Staycation Effect

- The Covid-19 pandemic will determine consumer behaviour for choosing a holiday destination for an undeterminable amount of time.
- The impact of Brexit may also put more emphasis on staycation breaks.
- Overseas travel will occur less frequently, and consumers will seek out less crowded destinations; avoiding cities and tourism hotspots.
- Consumers will want to explore lesser known destinations, with a shift from international holidays to a more local experience; with unique activities and heritage,

whilst being able to enjoy the great outdoors.

- As more people rediscover the UK, there may be the revival of UK seaside and spa towns as the combination of warmer weather from climate change and a desire for a more environmentally friendly holiday encourages more people to holiday at home.



Safety and Health

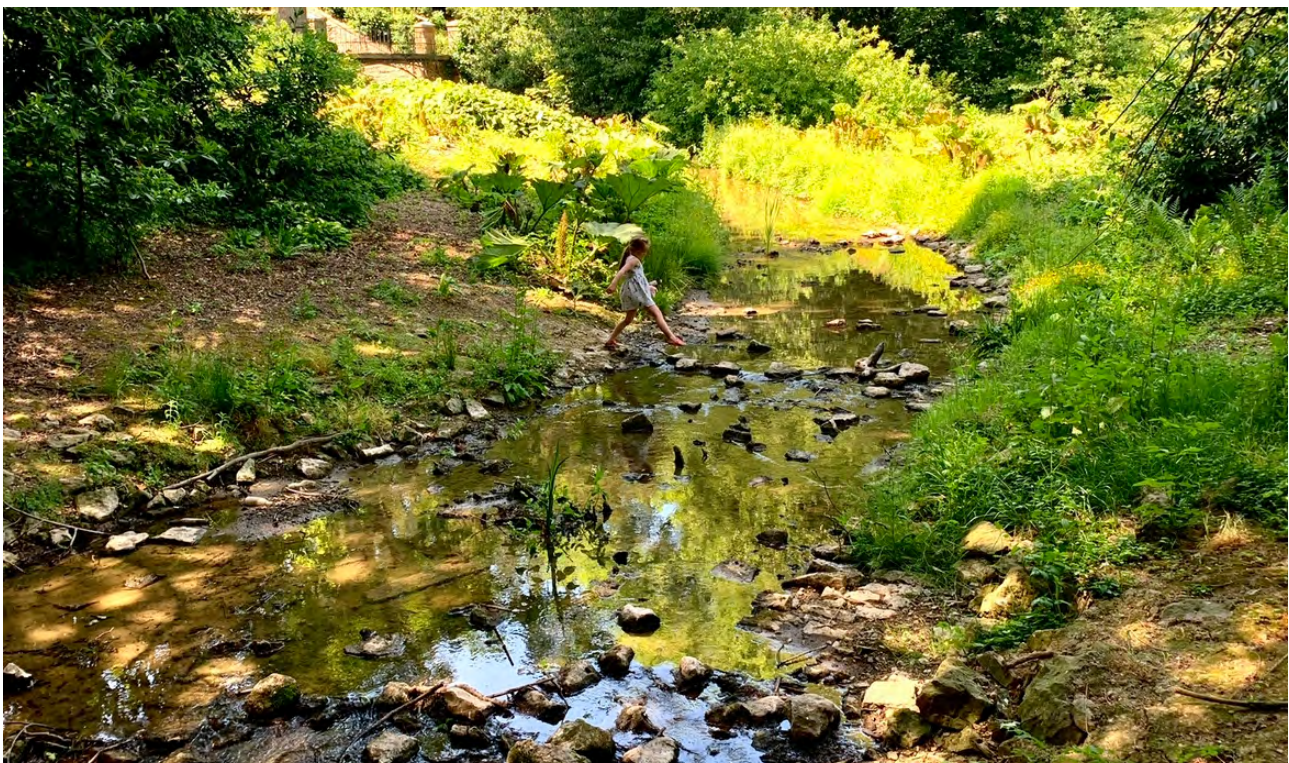
- Consumers will seek out destinations which are at the forefront for minimising the spread of the virus, with safety and cleanliness measures in place across towns, parks, and businesses to keep visitors, residents, and staff in a safe environment.
- Visitors will be looking for accommodation options which allow for social distancing, so boutique hotels and B&B's promoting Covid-19 safety measures may be a safer alternative to larger 100-bedroom hotels. There will be an increase caravan and motorhome sales as people look to reduce contact with others. Camping holidays will also increase as people want to spend more time in the countryside.
- Food wise, buffet style breakfasts will need to be replaced with a table service

and alternative lunch options, like picnics, will need to be provided to give the customer more choice of where they would like to eat. There will also be an increase in alfresco dining, with many restaurants introducing outdoor pods and new seating areas to help with social distancing. Menus need to be disposable which could help to increase the use of local seasonal produce in new menu creations as it allows new menus to be created at anytime.

- Visitors will want to go to outdoor festivals and events with reduced capacity and a reputation for excellent healthy and safety measures. Indoor attractions and events are likely to feel the affect with fewer visitors, staying for a shorter amount of time.
- Consumers will be researching a lot more before they travel, and they will want to be reassured that

businesses are adhering to Covid-19 guidance and regulations.

- There will be an increase in the number of people researching on Trip Advisor for up to date reviews and sharing experiences via social media channels.
- An increase in small, organised groups will be a better alternative to independent travel using public transport, due to a standardised approach to safety when it comes to social distancing and taking active health measures on board vehicles.
- People will want to travel less on public transport, and coach travel will be severely impacted as people travel in smaller groups.





Green Tourism

- Mass awareness of climate change is changing peoples' desires to seek out holidays that have a lower impact on the environment.
- Destinations with a good reputation for tackling climate change who have a clear plan for the local community, local businesses, and visitors to adopt 'greener' practices will be sought out by consumers.
- Destinations and businesses

that adopt a green code of practice, attract a more responsible tourist.

- Consumers will seek out locally sourced food and drink produce and will be drawn to regions with a reputation for producing healthy and organic food.
- Visitors will be looking to give something back to help the local community and natural environment.



Digital Detox

- With the recent increase of home-working consumers will be looking for ways to escape technology.
- Visitors will want to explore off-the-beaten track and rediscover the great outdoors, with visitors after a more active holiday – walking, cycling, canoeing and adventure.

- Increase in visitors choosing camping and glamping accommodation.
- Health and well-being destinations like spa resorts will be popular, as people focus on improving physical and mental health, and seeking out destinations with the cleanest air and water.
- People will be more interested in new hobbies and pastimes and learning a new skill whilst on holiday.



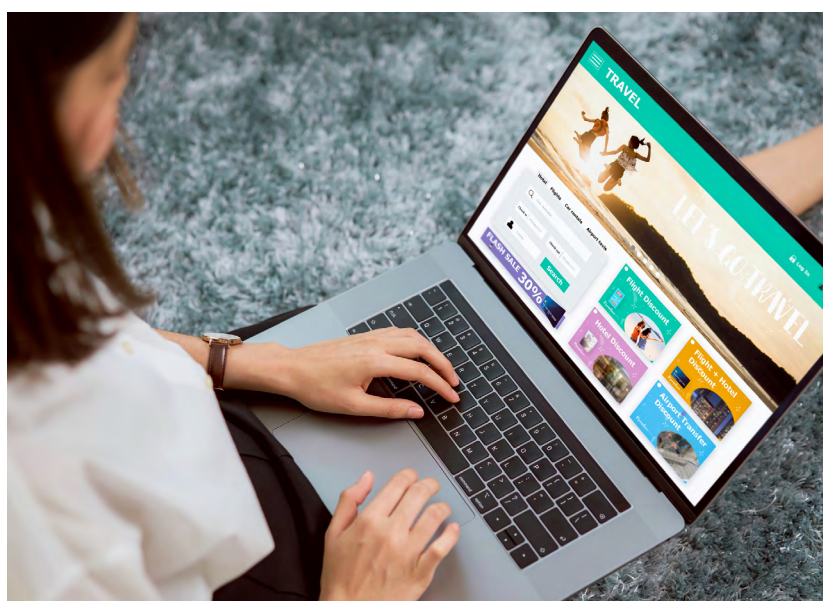
Accessibility

- Before the Covid-19 pandemic, tourism trends were showing an increase in accessible experiences and accommodation options to allow for people with disabilities and mobility needs to have a wider choice of where to go on holiday.



Personalisation

- Tailored advice and access to personalised activities will become increasingly important to visitors to enable them to have their own unique experience.
- Increase in bookings via Travel Agents, as customers strive for reassurance their holiday destination has Covid-19 safety measures.



Technology

- New technology is transforming the tourism industry, with new experiences available via Smartphones, Apps, Artificial Intelligence, Augmented Reality and Virtual Tours.
- Websites will need to adhere to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and websites will be downgraded in search engine results if they fail to do so.



SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape – Malvern Hills AONB, Malvern Hills and Abberley Geopark, Teme Valley, Malvern Chase, SSSI's, open spaces, greenery, nature, trees, rivers, meadows, views, geology etc. • Historic towns with unique stories – Malvern, Tenbury Wells and Upton upon Severn • Location – access, landmark on M5, central, transport links. • Walking and cycling trails. • Cultural heritage – Sir Edward Elgar; Benedictine Orders; English Civil War, famous fiction writers J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis and William Langland; The Malvern Water Cure and the wells, springs and spouts, agriculture, apple and hop picking; folk traditions, arts and music etc. • Heritage - iron-age hill forts, stately homes, places of worship, Morgan Motor Factory, architecture, local museums and visitor centres etc. • The Arts - Malvern Theatres, Coach House Theatre, The Regal in Tenbury, The Firs: Elgar's Birthplace Museum, art galleries, art studios and art exhibitions etc. • Three Counties Showground (shows and large events). • Festival and event calendar – Elgar Festival, Autumn in Malvern Festival, Midsummer Malvern, Malvern Walking Festival, Malvern Well Dressing & Water Festival, Upton Folk Festival, Upton Jazz Festival, Upton Blues Festival, Tenbury Applefest, Tenbury Mistletoe Festival, Tenbury Countryside Show etc. • People – intelligent, creative, technological, friendly and welcoming. • Local food and drink – agriculture, farm shops, vineyards, orchards, hops, cheese, meats, and fruit & veg etc. • Education – Independent boarding schools with pupils attending from around the world. • Unique town centres with a plethora of independent shops. • Family fun activities at Eastnor Castle and Boundless Outdoors. • New attractions, shops and restaurants opening during the pandemic, including the Morgan Experience Centre, The Water Cure, Hamper Fayre and The Fish Wife. • Recognition from Malvern Hills District Council that tourism is a key sector for economic growth and health and well-being. • Connections to technology and radar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under-selling its-self as a tourism destination. • Unique Selling Point – lack of identity • Poor public transport once in the area to move around. • Signage – particularly entry points and motorway – J7 M5. • Reduced public sector funding for tourism. • Seasonality and limited number of wet weather attractions. • Limited number of family fun attractions. • Number tourism businesses sharing Visit The Malverns and each other's content on social media. • Risk of flooding and building on flood plains. • Large area to cover to disperse visitors around. • Tiredness of the town centres – public realm, footpaths etc. • Public footpaths in the countryside need maintenance. • Wellness opportunities/ marketing. • Spa offering could be improved. • Limited number of high-quality restaurants. • Lack of bicycle storage facilities. • Lack of car charging points.

Opportunities

National

- Staycation effect from Covid-19 and Brexit.
- Possible dissolution of EU Package Holiday Regulations to create new tourism experiences i.e. hotels can sell attraction tickets.



Experience

- Increase the number of responsible travellers by becoming a recognised environmentally friendly destination, with a green destination accreditation and a new Green Tourism Award for tourism businesses around The Malverns.
- Develop our visitor experiences in-line with our Unique Selling Points to attract more national marketing coverage, including health and well-being (Mind, Body and Soul), literary connections' trails, myths and legends trails, heritage trails, church trails, new tours, and new experiences etc.
- Development of outdoor activities – walking and cycling trails, water-sports, adventure, children's fun etc.

- Increase footfall with regular entertainment and events in town centres working with local community groups, schools, local artists, and musicians etc. (With Covid-19 safety measures in place.)
- Develop Malvern Well Dressing and Water Festival to become an internationally recognised 'health and well-being' festival with cultural significance to promote the heritage of Malvern spring water.
- Improve children's recreational facilities and encourage more family fun events and activities to attract families with younger children.
- Develop the festival and event calendar with Covid-19 safety measures, as well as adding new event features

to attract new and repeat visitors throughout the year.

- Encourage tourism businesses to help improve biodiversity with dedicated nature areas.
- Improve access to electric vehicles available to hire.
- New radar technology heritage centre.
- Improve accessibility for visitors with disabilities and special needs.
- Work with partners to develop new walking and cycling trails.



Marketing

External

- Increase experience-led content on the VisitEngland website and engage in national campaigns.
- Engage with journalists from national newspapers and specialist travel press to increase national marketing coverage.
- Work with partners on local, regional, and national

marketing campaigns.

- Cross-marketing with other destinations like Cumbria, the Peak District, and the Cotswolds.
- New Worcestershire Parkway – access to new visitors from Nottingham and Cardiff.
- Benefit from low cost targeted marketing via online marketing advertising.
- Increased scope to attract

overnight stays from residents living within a shorter 'drive-time'.



Internal

- Use photography which shows off our 'WOW' factor to promote The Malverns more effectively.
- Rename 'Malvern Walking' App to 'The Malverns' Walking App and add more cycling routes and walking trails to it and the website to disperse visitors around the district to Tenbury Wells in the Teme Valley and Upton upon Severn.
- Promote outdoor recreational activities – walking, cycling, garden visits, flying a kite, boating, bird spotting, quad-biking, hot air-ballooning etc.
- Promote the unique heritage of the area – cultural heritage, historic houses, museums, visitor centres, visitor-friendly churches, festivals, anniversaries, etc.

- Promote creative industries – local arts and crafts, theatre, live music, exhibitions, arts markets etc.
- Promote rural experiences – stay on a farm, horse-riding accommodation, and equestrian centres, farm parks, agricultural shows, learn a new skill etc.
- Promote the unique retail offer in each of the town centres.
- Promote food and drink tourism, including brewery and winery tours, farm shops, PYO, local food shops, food festivals, farmers' markets, cookery schools and classes, eateries serving local food and drink etc.



Networks

- Share VisitBritain/ VisitEngland tourism updates, tourism news, information on training courses, how to access grants etc. via the Tourism Business e-newsletter.
- Encourage sharing best practice between tourism businesses.
- Sponsorship of festivals by

local businesses.

- Stronger links with major attractions – Three Counties Showground, Malvern Theatres, Morgan Experience Centre, National Trust, English Heritage.
- Tourism businesses to share more content from Visit The Malverns social media.
- All tourism business and destination marketing to

target the same areas to ensure marketing budgets are maximised.

- Work with rail transport partners to increase arrivals by train and encourage the use of sustainable transport once in the area e.g. electric bikes.

Threats

- Continued pandemic and potential lockdown restrictions.
- Tourism business and town centre recovery from Covid-19.
- Brexit – potentially affecting the food and drink supply chain and access to staff with language skills. Instability with visitors not wanting to go on holiday but save instead.
- Increase in unemployment and lack of disposal income for recreational activities.
- Climate change resulting in unpredictable weather causing more flooding.
- Day visitors causing traffic and damaging reputation.

- Local environmental impact – litter, erosion, traffic and overcrowding.
- Competition. Not keeping up with competing destinations/ complacency.
- Reduction in EU funding for tourism and local food projects.
- Not keeping up with new tourism experience technology.
- Not embracing new trends, new visitor markets or changing market tastes.
- Fragile nature of voluntary sector tourism provision and volunteer fatigue.
- Terrorist Threat.
- Other viruses and diseases.



Strategic Direction

United Nations World Tourism Organisation

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (WTO) have published a Covid-19 Response One Planet Vision For The Responsible Recovery Of The Tourism Sector.

The vision describes 'A #ResponsibleRecovery is needed to #BuildBackBetter tourism' and recommends six actions to guide a responsible tourism recovery for people, planet and prosperity. Namely public health; social inclusion; biodiversity conservation; climate action; circular economy and governance and finance.

The WTO promotes 'the need to transition to a more sustainable tourism model based on social inclusion and the restoration and protection of the environment. Our health and well-being depend on it.'

VisitBritain

The national tourism strategy for Britain is dated 2013-2020 and was developed as a legacy to the 2012 London Olympic Games. The new tourism strategy is expected to formulate a strategic response to the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In 2020, VisitBritain has published a Proposal for Government: Helping the tourism industry to recover from Covid-19 which outlines the importance of the acceleration and expansion of the new 'Tourism Zones' proposed in the Sector Deal, the new Tourism Data Hub which will support the recovery especially for SME's, encourage UK residents to holiday at home and to reset consumer behaviour forced by lockdown to consider wider questions like sustainability.

'Destination Zero' – Creating a greener, more sustainable Malvern Hills district

In July 2019, the 'Destination Zero' action plan was developed by Malvern Hills District Council in response to declaring a climate emergency. The plan represents the important first stage in Malvern Hills District Council's commitment to reducing carbon emissions within the district to net zero. Priorities within the plan, include reducing waste; eliminating single-use plastic; increasing the number of electric-vehicle charging points; energy efficiency; developing our green tourism offer; encouraging sustainable transport and favouring sustainable development planning applications.



Strategic Objectives for 2021-2025

Safety First

The Corona Virus pandemic will shape the tourism experience for visitors for the foreseeable future. Hopefully the impact on the tourism industry will be short-term, but we need to ensure local tourism businesses adopt practices which abide by new public health measures and social distancing laws to ensure the welfare of residents, visitors and the people working in the hospitality and tourism industry. New social distancing activities and approaches will need to be developed, and the development of new safe experiences will be encouraged.

To Be Recognised As A 'Green' Tourism Destination
We want The Malverns to be leaders in sustainable tourism development with the Malvern Hills District Council 'Destination Zero' Plan being adopted by tourism industry stakeholders; leading to an increase in the number of tourism businesses and events offering a green tourism experience, and signing up to be a recognised green tourism business via an accreditation scheme, including the new Green Mark for the Malverns.

Develop Our Experience

A world-renowned health and well-being destination from the days of the Water Cure in the Victorian Times, with excellent spas; walking and cycling routes; creative landscapes; amazing local food and drink produce; outdoor activities, and with stories about famous fiction writers' and Sir Edward Elgar being inspired by the picturesque scenery – makes The Malverns the perfect destination to relax, escape, feel energised and be inspired. We aim to develop our experience to be positioned as a top health and well-being destination in the UK.

We will encourage new product development around our key themes – green tourism, health and well-being, countryside, heritage, culture, local food and drink and creativity.

We also need to ensure visitors can access tourist information before and during their visit to enhance the visitor experience, from online resources, to receiving a warm welcome from a face-to-face tourist information service across the area.

Put The Malverns On The Map

To support the tourism industry, we will continue to promote The Malverns brand via various media, online and PR opportunities, as well as working with key partners like, VisitBritain, VisitEngland and Visit Worcestershire to ensure The Malverns is a recognised UK visitor destination for families, couples and small groups.

Be A Leader In Tourism Business Support

The tourism industry will be a thriving economy across The Malverns once again, and we will support tourism businesses to ensure they recover and achieve their individual business goals.



Visit The Malverns Visitor Economy Action Plan



Safety First						
Actions	Outcome	Lead	Priority	Timescale	Partners	Resources
Respond to government guidance regarding Covid-19.	* All tourism businesses will be working in line with guidance to try and keep residents, visitors, and staff safe.	Worcestershire Regulatory Services	High	Ongoing	Tourism businesses and event organisers.	Visitor Economy Officer (communication to tourism businesses)
Ensure tourism businesses have new risk assessments which contains Covid-19 information.	* Addresses the risks of COVID-19 and provides guidance to inform decisions and control measures for the safety of visitors, residents, and staff.	Worcestershire Regulatory Services	High	Before reopening or the event taking place. Ensure risk assessments are consistently reviewed.	Tourism businesses and event organisers.	Visitor Economy Officer (communication to tourism businesses)
Promote the 'Good To Go' self-certification scheme.	Reassures visitors tourism businesses and events have safety measures in place for Covid-19.	VisitBritain	High	Ongoing		Visitor Economy Officer
Monitor Covid-19 guidance to identify when it is safe to promote The Malverns.	To ensure The Malverns are only promoted when it is safe to do so.	MHDC	High	Ongoing		Visitor Economy Officer
Develop proactive marketing campaigns to help support the economy.	* Increase footfall into town centres e.g. Christmas Shopping, new Shopping section for Town Centres x 3 and thematic shop listings for independent shops etc.	MHDC	High	Ongoing		Visitor Economy Officer, Town Centres Officer

Become a recognised green tourism destination

Actions	Outcome	Lead	Priority	Timescale	Partners	Resources
Form a sustainable tourism stakeholder group.	* Engagement with key stakeholders.	MHDC	High	March 2022	Malvern Hills AONB, Malvern Hills Trust, Malvern Hills and Abberley Geopark, Herefordshire & Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust, Worcestershire County Council, tourism businesses	Visitor Economy Officer, Project Assistant, Carbon Reduction Officer
Develop a green tourism indicator system - launch with a pilot scheme of 10-20 businesses across different business types - Attractions, Hotels, B&B's, Self-Catering, Eateries, Event etc.	* To monitor and measure sustainable tourism performance.	MHDC	High	Sept 2022	Malvern Hills AONB, Malvern Hills Trust, Malvern Hills and Abberley Geopark, Herefordshire & Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust, Worcestershire County Council, tourism businesses	Visitor Economy Officer (communication to tourism businesses)
Create a Green Mark for tourism businesses, achieving a criterion set out in the Green Tourism Toolkit (see below).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Become a recognised green destination. * Build pride amongst the community. * Use as a promotional tool for attracting visitors to The Malverns. * Attractions, accommodation providers, eateries, shops and events can also use as a promotion tool within their own marketing materials. 	MHDC	High	Sept 2022	Tourism Businesses and Events	Visitor Economy Officer, Project Assistant, Carbon Reduction Officer
Develop a Green Tourism Toolkit to encourage tourism businesses to become greener.	*To provide guidance for tourism businesses and events to operate with a 'greener' approach - reducing electricity and water usage, encourage renewable energy, LED light bulbs, alternatives to single-use plastic, electric car charging points, recycling, composting, improve natural habitats, sustainable transport methods, increase local food and drink consumption, water re-fill points etc.	MHDC	High	Sept 2022	Worcestershire County Council - sustainability team	Visitor Economy Officer, Project Assistant, Graphic Designer, Carbon Reduction Officer

Become a recognised green tourism destination

Actions	Outcome	Lead	Priority	Timescale	Partners	Resources
Create a 'Take the Pledge' marketing campaign for visitors.	* To ensure visitors adopt green tourism principles and practices - turn lights off when not in use, buy locally sourced produce, do not leave a trace, use sustainable transport methods - walking and cycling etc.	MHDC	High	Jan 2023		Visitor Economy Officer, Carbon Reduction Officer
Development of a Carbon Offset Scheme.	* To encourage tourism businesses, events and visitors to pay a contribution towards conservation and preservation. * Linked to the Destination Zero Plan	MHDC	High	June 2022	MHDC, tourism businesses, events, visitors	Visitor Economy Officer, Carbon Reduction Officer
Development of a Green Tourism Business training programme.	* To improve tourism businesses knowledge of green tourism practices	MHDC	High	Annual programme of training	External training providers	Visitor Economy Officer, Carbon Reduction Officer
Encourage tourism businesses to measure their own carbon footprint using a Carbon Calculator i.e. Green Key.	* To help businesses understand their own carbon footprint, and to use as a benchmarking tool for measuring their reduction in carbon emissions - before and after efficiency activities.	MHDC	High	Ongoing	Green Key	Visitor Economy Officer, Carbon Reduction Officer
Develop a green tourism marketing campaign.	* To attract new visitors to The Malverns.	MHDC	High	2022 - ongoing	GWR, West Midland Trains (railway poster sites) etc.	Visitor Economy Officer
Significantly reduce the use of single-use plastic across the district.	* Reduce waste to help the environment * The district (Inc. tourism businesses and events) is recognised as a leader in reducing wastes.	MHDC	High	2025		Visitor Economy Officer (Communication), Carbon Reduction Officer

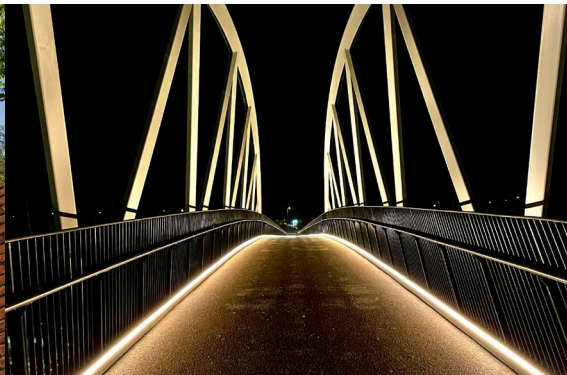
Become a recognised green tourism destination

Actions	Outcome	Lead	Priority	Timescale	Partners	Resources
Provide letters of support for sustainable tourism funding applications.	* To encourage businesses to adopt green practices in business developments.	MHDC	High	Ad hoc		Visitor Economy Officer
Provide support for sustainable tourism planning applications.	* To encourage businesses to adopt green practices in business developments.	MHDC	High	Ad hoc		Visitor Economy Officer
Signpost tourism businesses to relevant funding and grants available.	* To help businesses have access to the relevant funding.	MHDC	High	Ongoing		Visitor Economy Officer
Provide festival support grants to support cultural festival development.	* To provide funding towards festival development.	MHDC	High	Ongoing		Visitor Economy Officer
Promote local food and drink produce and local arts and crafts to tourism businesses.	* To improve the local supply chain between producers and tourism businesses. To create an authentic experience.	MHDC	High	Ongoing	Worcestershire Food and Drink Association	Visitor Economy Officer
Encourage the use of sustainable transport.	* To reduce carbon emissions	MHDC	High	Ongoing	Worcestershire County Council, West Midland Trains, GWR, Worcestershire Community Rail Partnership, First Buses.	Visitor Economy Officer



Develop our unique experience

Actions	Outcome	Lead	Priority	Timescale	Partners	Resources
Strategic						
MHDC Investment in leisure and recreation (physical) product development.	* To help improve the tourism offer e.g. Priory Park, Malvern Splash, wildlife and nature initiatives.	MHDC	High	Ongoing	Freedom Leisure	Property Services Community Services Depot Finance
Represent The Malverns in funding bids, improvement schemes, research and other strategic tourism related projects.	* To improve tourism facilities, infrastructure, heritage and countryside sites.	MHDC	High	Ad hoc		Visitor Economy Officer, Head of Economic Development
Champion new private sector investment and product development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Develop an authentic tourism experience. * Work with key partners to develop new experiences and promote the tourism offer. * Encourage tourism businesses to develop their offer in-line with key themes - 'green' tourism, health and well-being, family fun, outdoor recreation, heritage, culture, creativity and local food and drink. * Attract families with young children. * Attract older couples. 	MHDC	Medium	Ongoing	Malvern Theatres Three Counties Showground, Eastnor Castle, National Trust, English Heritage.	Visitor Economy Officer
Develop and enhance the walking and cycling infrastructure across the district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * New Powick walking/cycling bridge route. * Malvern to Upton Cycle Way. 	WCC	High	Ongoing	MHDC	



Develop our unique experience

Actions	Outcome	Lead	Priority	Timescale	Partners	Resources
Product Development						
Develop the green tourism offer - see Strategic Objective 'Become A Recognised Green Tourism Destination'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Attract responsible tourists and put The Malverns on the map as a green tourism destination. * Nature and wildlife conservation. 	MHDC	High	Ongoing	Tourism Businesses	Visitor Economy Officer
Promote tourism, retail, hospitality and leisure opportunities to encourage private sector investment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Use Economic Development Twitter with # & @ to share information on what businesses are up for sale and success stories from those that have recently opened. * Actively help fill empty shops and closed tourism businesses which are up for sale. 	MHDC	High	Ongoing		Visitor Economy Officer
Develop new (and improve) tourist trails, including a new myths, tales and legends trails, Elgar cycling trails, a food and drink trail, an arts trail, heritage trail, Benedictine monk/pilgrimage trail, Teme Valley trail etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Attract new and repeat visitors. * Disperse visitors around the area. * Reduce seasonality. * Increase visitor spend. * Provide new tourism experiences for visitors. 	MHDC	High	Ongoing		Visitor Economy Officer, Health and Well-being Officer
Develop new tourism experiences using technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Engage with a younger audience. * Tell the story of the local area through technology. * Disperse visitors around the area with new walks on the Malvern Walking App, website and View Ranger. * Keep up with national tourism trends. 	MHDC	Medium	Ongoing		Visitor Economy Officer
Provide tourist information (face-to-face, on the telephone and digitally e.g. website, App and digital information kiosks).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ensure visitors receive a warm welcome and receive targeted tourist information to suit their needs during their visit. * Promote an authentic experience to visitors to encourage repeat visitors. * Sell locally sourced food and drink and arts and crafts. * Provide access to information available 24/7. 	MHDC	High	Ongoing	Tenbury Tourism Partnership	Tourist Information Officers
Provide an accessible experience for all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Provide information to businesses to ensure accommodation providers, attractions, eateries and retailers have measures in place to welcome visitors with accessibility requirements. * Promote tourism businesses who are accessible to visitors. 	MHDC	High	Ongoing		Visitor Economy Officer

Develop our unique experience

Actions	Outcome	Lead	Priority	Timescale	Partners	Resources
Festivals and Events						
Work with partners to host our monthly Farmers' Markets and regular arts and food markets and Vintage Fairs in Great Malvern and explore new locations and new market themes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Create an authentic visitor experience. * Increase footfall into town centres. 	MHDC	High	Ongoing		Visitor Economy Officer, Town Centre Recovery Officer
Work with town centre partners to research, develop and implement new initiatives to attract new and repeat visitors into the town centres e.g. regular street entertainment and new town centre events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Attract new and repeat visitors into the town centres throughout the year * Engage with local community groups, schools, artists, performers and musicians to create an authentic visitor experience with local community engagement. 	MHDC	High	Ongoing	Malvern Town Council, Tenbury Town Council and Upton Town Council.	Town Centre Recovery Officer
Undertake a feasibility study and work with partners to introduce new cultural events into the annual calendar.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Increase the number of cultural festivals. * Preserve our cultural heritage. 	MHDC	High	March 2021		Visitor Economy Officer
Develop the Malvern Well Dressing & Water Festival to become an internationally recognised festival.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Preserve our cultural heritage. * Attract new and repeat visitors. 	Malvern Spa Association	Medium	2025	Malvern Hills District Council, Malvern Town Council	Visitor Economy Officer
Develop the Great Malvern Food Festival.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Strive to become the leading food festival in the region. 	MHDC	Medium	2025	Boffy Markets	Visitor Economy Officer
Provide grants to festival and event organisers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Increase visitor numbers to events. * Help develop the event programme to attract new and repeat visitors. * Develop events around culturally significant themes. * To assist with new safety measures. 	MHDC	High	Ongoing		Visitor Economy Officer

Raise the profile of The Malverns

Actions	Outcome	Lead	Priority	Timescale	Partners	Resources
Multi-Channel Marketing Campaigns						
Develop a new marketing campaign for The Malverns using J.R.R Tolkien, C.S Lewis connections, myths, and legends (linked to new walking trails' product development).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Attract visitors to explore The Malverns by using photography that captures the imagination and by developing new walking trails - App, web and leaflets. * Work with our new official photographer Digitlight Photography. 	MHDC	High	Launch 2021	Malvern Hills AONB	Visitor Economy Officer
Develop a health and well-being campaign, which promotes walking and cycling, spas, learning, activities, outdoor, recreation, heritage and culture, gardens, shopping, local food and drink, pilgrimage etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Raise the profile of The Malverns as a health and well-being destination for Mind, Body and Soul. 	MHDC	High	2021		Visitor Economy Officer
Actions from sustainable tourism development will position The Malverns as a green destination and allow for a new marketing proposition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Promote The Malverns as a green destination. * Attract a more responsible tourist. * Increase the number of tourism businesses providing an eco-friendly experience. * Reduce carbon emissions. 	MHDC	High	2022		Visitor Economy Officer
Develop marketing campaigns for each of the three towns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Increase footfall into the five town centres - Upton upon Severn, Tenbury Wells, Great Malvern, Barnards Green and Malvern Link. 	MHDC	High	Ongoing		Visitor Economy Officer Town Centres Officer
Develop new itineraries (location-based and thematic) for independent and group visits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Disperse visitors around the area to visit rural towns and businesses. * Disperse visitors away from tourist hotspots * Encourage stops at shops, pubs, restaurants and cafes along the way. 	MHDC	Medium	Ongoing	Small group organisers and coach operators	Tourist Information Officer Visitor Economy Officer Website Social Media
Promote festivals and events, including markets, music festivals, arts festivals etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Raise the profile of culturally significant festivals and events. * Increase footfall into town centres. 	MHDC	High	Ongoing	Festival and event organisers	Visitor Economy Officer, Tourist Information Centre Officer's.

Raise the profile of The Malverns

Actions	Outcome	Lead	Priority	Timescale	Partners	Resources
Multi-Channel Marketing Campaigns						
Promote walking, cycling and driving routes, including the Elgar Route, Route To The Hills, Teme Valley Trail.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Attract new and repeat visitors. * Disperse visitors around the district. 					Visitor Economy Officer
Promote anniversaries significant to The Malverns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Preserve cultural heritage. * Raise the profile of The Malverns as a cultural destination. 	MHDC	High	Ad hoc		Visitor Economy Officer
Develop reactive marketing campaigns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Increase footfall into the town centres e.g. Reassuringly Local: Shop Locally. * Respond to natural events e.g. flooding, clouds, snow, Aurora Borealis etc. 	MHDC	High	Ad hoc		Visitor Economy officer Town Centres Officer



Raise the profile of The Malverns

Actions	Outcome	Lead	Priority	Timescale	Partners	Resources
Marketing Channels						
Work with key partners to raise the profile of The Malverns with cross promotions.	* Ensure The Malverns benefits from opportunities working with partners across the region and nationally.	MHDC	High		VisitBritain VisitEngland West Midlands Growth Company Three Counties Tourism Group Visit Worcestershire Wychavon DC, Worcester City Council, North Worcestershire	Visitor Economy Officer
Visit The Malverns website refresh.	* Increase web traffic and dwell time on www.visitthemaalverns.org. * Enhance the design and improve functionality. * Introduce new sections and improve ways to navigate the website. * Ensure the website competes for relevant keywords in search engines. * Ensure the content is relevant, up-to-date and inspiring. * Ensure the website is WCAGAA compliant.	MHDC	High			Economic Development Officer Visitor Economy Officer Tourist Information Centre Officers
Update the guide for The Malverns.	* Ensure The Malverns are publicised at key entry points and beyond, including train stations, service stations & Tourist information Centres.	MHDC	High			Visitor Economy Officer
Develop The Malverns online presence to increase online engagement.	* Increase VTM social media community. * Improve VTM social media engagement rates. * Encourage businesses to refresh websites to adhere to new accessibility standards. * Encourage businesses to share content from VTM, other tourism businesses and events. * Increase VTM web traffic via improved Search Engine Optimisation. * Benefit from cost effective targeted sponsored advertising (Google Display and Facebook Sponsored Advertising).	MHDC	High	Ongoing		Visitor Economy Officer Project Assistant

Raise the profile of The Malverns

Actions	Outcome	Lead	Priority	Timescale	Partners	Resources
Marketing Channels						
Provide support and feed marketing content into Visit Worcestershire (Destination Marketing Organisation) at Worcestershire County Council.	* To maximise marketing budgets and ensure The Malverns is included in various countywide marketing activities.	VW	High	Ongoing	Worcestershire County Council, Malvern Hills District Council, Wychavon District Council, Worcestershire City Council and North Worcestershire districts	Visitor Economy Officer
Work with key transport partners for promotion on the railway network.	* Benefit from railway poster sites on the GWR network.	MHDC			GWR, West Midland Trains	Visitor Economy Officer
Attend shows and exhibitions with partners.	To promote The Malverns to group travel organisers and tour operator.	VW	Medium			Visitor Economy Officer
Promote direct to the independent schools - Malvern College, St James, Abberley, The Downs, The Elms etc.	* Provide literature to schools to distribute to parents to encourage them to explore the area when visiting.					Tourist Information Officer Visitor Economy Officer

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Raise the profile of The Malverns

Actions	Outcome	Lead	Priority	Timescale	Partners	Resources
Press & PR						
Develop stories for PR throughout the year.	* Benefit from editorial in local, regional and national newspapers and specialist press.	MHDC	High	Ongoing		Visitor Economy Officer Town Centres Officer MHDC Marketing & Communications Officer
TravMedia Journalist Portal Subscription.	* Continue to subscribe to access journalist requests and promote press releases to national newspapers and specialist press. * Engage with journalists.	MHDC	High	Ongoing		Visitor Economy Officer
Organise press visits.	* Benefit from editorial in local, regional and national newspapers and specialist press. * Engage with journalists	MHDC	High	Ad hoc		Visitor Economy Officer
Engage with influencers (bloggers/vloggers).	* Increase the number of influencers talking about The Malverns as a visitor destination online.	MHDC	High	Ad hoc		Visitor Economy Officer

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The Malverns Visitor Economy Action Plan



Raise the profile of The Malverns

Actions	Outcome	Lead	Priority	Timescale	Partners	Resources
Marketing Support						
Produce an annual festival and events guide with local and regional distribution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Increase overnight stays * Increase event attendance * Support accommodation providers, attractions, eateries, shops etc. * Increase footfall into town centres. 	MHDC	High	February - 1st edition		Tourist Information Centre Officer's
Continue to provide tourism business/event website listings and blog stories on the Visit The Malverns website.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Actively promote accommodation, attractions, food and drink, festivals and events, shops etc. * To showcase The Malverns as a tourism destination effectively. * Engage with tourism businesses and events. * Improve tourism businesses and events own search engine ranking by a good quality inbound link. 	MHDC	High	Ongoing		Tourist Information Centre Officer's
Continue to share blog stories via the Visit The Malverns social media channels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Actively promote news-stories from accommodation providers, attractions, food and drink, festivals and events, shops etc. * To showcase The Malverns as a tourism destination effectively. * Engage with tourism businesses and events. 	MHDC	High	Ongoing		Visitor Economy Officer
Promote businesses direct through journalist requests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Raise the profile of tourism businesses and events. 	MHDC	High	Ongoing		Visitor Economy Officer
Promote tourism businesses and events via the three Tourist Information Centres - online, telephone and face-to-face.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Provide tailor-made personalised information about accommodation, attractions, events, places to eat etc. direct to the visitor. 	MHDC	High	Ongoing		Tourist Information Centre Officer's

Tourism business and event support

Actions	Outcome	Lead	Priority	Timescale	Partners	Resources
Host two Tourism Forums per annum for local tourism industry stakeholders.	* To ensure local tourism providers feel like they are working towards a common goal with industry updates, training and networking.	MHDC	High	Twice a year	Tourism Forum hosts	Visitor Economy Officer
Visitor Economy Officer to attend important local, regional, and national tourism events.	* To notify the industry of important tourism industry news and opportunities.	MHDC	High	Ad hoc	VisitBritain, VisitEngland, West Midlands Growth Company, Three Counties Tourism Group, Visit Worcestershire Board etc.	Visitor Economy Officer
Identify opportunities for stakeholder and partner collaboration.	* Providing support to help businesses grow. * Promote The Malverns brand with key partners	MHDC	High	Ad hoc	Tourism businesses	Visitor Economy Officer
Promote employment in the hospitality and tourism industry.	* Promote the benefits of employment in the hospitality industry e.g. new skills in communication, money handling, food hygiene, stock control etc. * Promote case studies.	MHDC	Medium	Ongoing	Worcestershire Apprenticeships, Training providers, DWP	Economic Development Officer Visitor Economy Officer
Continue to build links between hospitality courses/ colleges and universities with tourism businesses.	* Provide employment opportunities, work placements and apprenticeships to college leavers.	MHDC	High	Ongoing	Heart of Worcestershire College, University of Worcester, training providers and Tourism Businesses	Economic Development Officer Visitor Economy Officer
Assess business training needs.	* Signpost businesses to training e.g. First Aid, Covid-19 and food hygiene etc. * Host training courses when applicable e.g. green tourism practices and social media.	MHDC	High	Ongoing	External training providers	Visitor Economy Officer
Provide support to tourism businesses, shops, pubs and restaurants etc. operating across the district.	* To ensure Town Centre recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. * To help develop a unique offer to encourage more visitors.	MHDC	High	Ongoing	Malvern Town Council, Upton Town Council and Tenbury Town Council	Town Centre Officer

Tourism business and event support

Actions	Outcome	Lead	Priority	Timescale	Partners	Resources
Send out regular How's Business Surveys.	* To ensure tourism is developed with the tourism business needs as a priority. Generating feedback from local tourism businesses.	MHDC	High			Visitor Economy Officer Joint Research and Intelligence Officer
Ensure the local tourism industry has access to data to help measure the economic value and tourism trends.	* Undertake an annual Economic Impact Assessment	MHDC	High	Annual	External research provider	Visitor Economy Officer
Host an Industry Support page on the Visit The Malverns website.	* Signposts businesses where to go for advice and information relevant to their business. * Promote tourism news and marketing opportunities	MHDC	High	Ongoing		Visitor Economy Officer
Send out regular tourism business e-bulletins and increase the number of subscribers.	To provide regular tourism business news, opportunities etc.	MHDC	High	Ongoing		Visitor Economy Officer

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The Malverns

Visitor Economy Action Plan

