

Local Visitor Economy Partnership Growth Plan

Congratulations on being awarded LVEP status, which has made you part of a new portfolio of nationally supported, strategic and high-performing Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs).

This new programme and national structure have been designed to enable and deliver closer collaboration between VisitEngland and destinations who are well integrated and delivering in partnership with all key public and private sector partners, and who clearly provide strong local leadership and governance in their destination.

This action plan is our first step and will help facilitate collaboration between you and VisitEngland, to provide you with targeted support, advice and guidance and to build a shared ambition for visitor economy growth in your destination.

**Building Collaboration,
Enabling Growth**



VisitEngland

Section A

Details and Overview

Growth Plan Details			
Name of LVEP	Birmingham, Solihull and the Black Country LVEP	Destination(s) covered	Birmingham, Solihull, Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton
Key Contact	becky.frall@wmgrowth.com	Regional Development lead	Nicola Said
Date Plan Agreed	June 2023	Date of Plan Review	May 2024

Overarching LVEP Priorities for 2023/2024

1. Destination management plan for each LA linked to overarching West Midlands growth strategy
 2. Working through the LVEP network on detailed data and intelligence to shape priorities
 3. Implementation of sustainability hub and business support programme
 4. Raising the standard of accessibility knowledge and encouraging implementation through accessibility hub
 5. Collective bids for tourism funding - Explore joint domestic activity linked to shared prosperity fund
 6. Maximise opportunities with the DDP to manage expectations of legacy from B2022 - business conferences and events, and major sporting events
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Section B

Growth Plan

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN			
Growth Area	LVEP Action	VB/VE Action	Timescale/Measures
<p>The West Midlands Regional Tourism Strategy is being delivered 2019-2029. Within this, the Recovery Plan picked up 2020-2023 in response to Covid-19.</p> <p>LVEP LA partner priorities, are aligned to these as set out in the Feb-May consultation period between the LAs and WMGC and will shape the Destination Management Plans for each destination.</p> <p>Please see delivery reporting document attached.</p>	<p>For some destinations, a new Destination Management Plan will feed down from the regional strategy. Others will simply work to the Regional Strategy priorities.</p> <p>Destination management plans will need to align with the sustainability benchmarking findings currently underway. DMP template will be based on best practice and Birmingham has shared their final version.</p> <p>Birmingham – complete and in delivery. One-page action plan update</p> <p>Solihull – underway and working with WMGC</p> <p>Dudley – in planning – business plan for 23/24 underway</p> <p>Sandwell – discussion with senior team members regarding timeline. Visitor economy dovetails into the Cultural plan.</p> <p>Walsall - limited capacity at present; Walsall will benefit from regional work and tourism dovetails into the Walsall Heritage Strategy.</p> <p>Wolverhampton – in planning with WMGC</p>	<p>Standardised one page summary for all DMPs across the country</p>	<p>Quarterly updates with RDL – confirmed dates to align with LA quarterly updates</p> <p>July 2023</p> <p>October 2023</p> <p>Jan 2024</p> <p>April 2024</p> <p>One page action plan to sit in front of each existing Destination Management Plan DMP for those that have an existing strategy.</p> <p>New Destination Management Plan aligned with the regional strategy for each destination by December 2023</p> <p>DMPs to be live documents updated with International Strategy and GDS Sustainability performance assessment in Q3/Q4.</p> <p>Activity to date:</p> <p>See attached delivery plans by LA partner</p>

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ACTIVITES

Growth Area	LVEP Action	VB/VE Action	Timescale/Measures
<p>The visitor economy is featured across wider work of each destination</p>	<p>Birmingham - Peaky Blinders attraction / experience feasibility study seeking investment and commercial operator</p> <p>Dudley - ensuring Metro development progress and highlighting opportunities for existing and new businesses</p> <p>Dudley - supporting CWG legacy events e.g. GP Cycling</p> <p>Birmingham - improve coach offer and credentials - traffic planning, TFWM, parking, improved facilities. On-going engagement and embed coach travel into DMP</p> <p>Solihull - Work with transport providers around cultural event timetables (links with regional DDP aspirations to ensure spectator and staff public transport options).</p> <p>Birmingham - Birmingham Festival 2023 (July) - building to a major annual cultural festival - this year is the launch year.</p> <p>Utilise ticketing database from B2022 to raise the profile of regional events. World Trampolining in November. IBSA Blind Games - August - raise the profile of inclusivity and accessibility for the region.</p>	<p>DCMS influence / other government departments recognition of LVEPs</p> <p>Work with DFT to influence transport providers' timetabling around cultural events.</p> <p>Raise the profile of West Midlands exemplar activity by identifying speaking opportunities or bringing national conferences to the region</p> <p>Regional Lead to attend Area Town Group Midlands and engage with ALBs – position the role of Birmingham, Solihull and the Black Country LVEP in decision making</p>	<p>Quarterly update on progress with RDL June, September, December and March</p>

ENGAGEMENT WITH DESTINATION STAKEHOLDERS

Growth Area	LVEP Action	VB/VE Action	Timescale/Measures
<p>WMGC has quarterly reporting meetings with Birmingham, Solihull, Walsall, Wolverhampton, Dudley and the WMCA.</p> <p>LVEP partners will meet quarterly to share progress, overcome challenges and bring updates.</p> <p>WMGC holds a regional relationship with ACE, CRT, NT, EH, HLF, Avanti, WMTrains, Chiltern, TfWM, BHX, carriers, sporting federations, conference organisers, hoteliers, universities, and PartnersWM visit and meet partners.</p> <p>A representative from each LA LVEP partner sits on the WMGC board.</p>	<p>Stakeholder mapping</p> <p>Identify areas of duplication which may need to remain, or may be streamlined</p> <p>Agree format for relevant cross-LVEP partner updates for stakeholder meetings</p> <p>Agree comms and engagement plan and annual priorities</p> <p>WMGC to have an MoU with each LA partner based on these highlights and their Destination Management Plan.</p>	<p>Set up national network of LVEPs</p> <p>VE/VB can support with specific engagement with key destination stakeholders where required, attend wider meetings with Destination Organisations or attend LVEP partners meetings</p> <p>VE/VB attending regional tourism and hospitality board and advocate for the LVEP</p> <p>Make introductions to Historic leveling leads and identify how they are working across the region</p> <p>Strategic group of LVEPs to engage in VisitEngland strategy and advisory on business planning</p> <p>Regional lead to establish West Midlands LVEP strategic leadership group with DCMS attendance.</p>	<p>Update on engagement and associated activity delivered and support given to RDL in quarterly updates.</p>

COMMERCIAL STRATEGY

Growth Area	LVEP Action	VB/VE Action	Timescale/Measures
<p>Work with VisitEngland/VisitBritain on developing and expanding your commercial income.</p> <p>This will be taken forward by WMGC – we are a Teckal Company, which means we can deliver work direct to our LA partners without having to go</p>	<p>Membership: PartnersWM engage with WMGC for networking opportunities and to play an ambassadorial role for the region to attract investment, jobs, conferences and events, and visitors. They attract a ‘partners-first’ priority for stand-space, trade</p>	<p>VE RDL funding signposting</p> <p>Regional Lead to engage with DCMS regarding government funding and status of LVEPs</p> <p>TXGB to engage with suppliers across the region to identify any blockages</p>	<p>Funding opportunities to be responded to on an ad hoc basis</p>

<p>out to tender, but we have a limit of no more than 20% commercial income so we have to be careful with our aims for this activity.</p> <p>Winning public grant funding does not count towards this threshold</p>	<p>missions, hosting fam and press trips, social media and content</p> <p>They receive a preferential commission rate for venue bookings</p> <p>All industry partners can advertise on visit / meet websites, attend trade shows and missions</p> <p>Action:</p> <p>Link more businesses into TXGB and other platforms through the business development programme so that they can receive direct bookings through the visit site</p> <p>Maximise potential funding available for the visitor economy by working pan-LVEP for regional bids</p>	<p>Provision of research & intelligence to add value to membership offer</p> <p>Ecommerce training module to be established as part of the new learning development system</p> <p>Regional lead to work on development of policy on TBID and engage DCMS</p>	
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LVEP TEAM DEVELOPMENT

Growth Area	LVEP Action	VB/VE Action	Timescale/Measures
	<p>External</p> <p>x2 team members attending the Simple View Conference in September 2023</p> <p>Objectives: cutting edge learning on digital marketing, destination management and maximising the value from the embedded costs of our SimpleView platform</p> <p>x1 team member attending TMI Annual Convention in October</p> <p>Objectives: on-going professional learning to shape and contribute to</p>	<p>Rollout of VE Academy in Autumn with first three modules for Travel Trade, E Commerce and Digital Marketing.</p> <p>Regional Lead to take note of MC identified priorities and potentially bring forward the Research & Insight module which is a key need for WMGC team.</p> <p>Bid-writing and funding tool kit to be available by the autumn.</p>	<p>Agree date for plan to be agreed followed by quarterly updates to RDL on who has taken part in what training and requests for further training subjects/resources and how is the proposed outcome being progressed.</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>External</p> <p>GDS sustainability workshops attended by all LVEP members</p> <p>Outcomes</p>

	<p>the visitor economy landscape in the WM region in the fields of digital innovation, marketing and tourism trends & data, sustainable tourism strategies.</p> <p>Internal / shared / peer-to-peer</p> <p>BCC - audience workshop and insights using PowerBI on next LVEP working group agenda</p> <p>Objectives: LA tourism officers gain deeper insight into the visitor economy sector LA officers can support more efficient planning and delivery for their industry members</p> <p>Currently underway:</p> <p>Accessibility & sustainability hub</p> <p>Birmingham LVEP team member has shared learning through the accessibility and sustainability hubs at tourism forums and networking events so that LVEP leads can support their industry members to improve their practice and offer a better experience to visitors.</p>		<p>Deeper understanding of destination sustainability and interlinkage of different facets Understanding how to measure sustainability and progress Commitment to sustainable and regenerative practice in tourism strategy, planning and management</p> <p>5 WMGC LVEP team members attended Leadership training through 'Little Bird'</p> <p>Outcomes improved skills for individuals and better support for team members through learning:</p> <p>a coherent approach to performance management preparedness and support for teams through change, and implementing and supporting self-directed learning and development.</p> <p>Internal / shared / peer-to-peer</p> <p>Data and insight – WMGC LVEP team member has delivered 2022 STEAM report findings to all LVEP team members</p> <p>Outcomes Benchmarking destination performance across the region Elucidated the impact of major events (Coventry UK City of Culture, Birmingham 2022CWG) Enabled an assessment of recovery Supporting Destination management Planning</p>
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DEVELOPING YOUR BUSINESS SUPPORT OFFER

Growth Area	LVEP Action	VB/VE Action	Timescale/Measures
	<p>Business support</p> <p>Accessibility development for businesses through the hub with 121 LA support If requested</p> <p>Sustainability development for businesses through the hub with 121 LA support If requested</p> <p>SEO and GoogleAnalytics4 training for cultural attractions and events</p>	<p>Regular comms on appropriate national initiatives for signposting to members</p>	<p>Quarterly updates to RDL on progress – KPI measurement on number of businesses engaged.</p> <p>Can you track outputs and outcomes of businesses engaged in activity in your area?</p> <p>In planning</p> <p>LSIP audit planned for Q3</p> <p>Completed:</p> <p>Tourism Awards support for great application writing - WMGC-led industry workshop and communications - 24 businesses attended online webinar</p> <p>Travel trade business support to recommence Q3 – up to 8 business / year developed to become bookable = total 16 between 2023-2025</p>

ALIGNMENT WITH GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES – ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVITY

Growth Area	LVEP Action	VB/VE Action	Timescale/Measures
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<p>Raising the standard of businesses' accessibility knowledge and encouraging improved practice through accessibility hub</p>	<p>Business support through the hub</p> <p>121 engagement through relevant tourism officer and support businesses with their Access Statement for website</p> <p>Signposting to training for staff</p> <p>Influencer blogs / vlogs to capture and showcase good experiences - linked to key events such as World Blind Games</p> <p>Support for major events with accessible and inclusive itineraries and offers</p> <p>Aligning with BIDs and WMCA for safety in the nighttime economy and in specific destination hubs, e.g. Gay Quarter in Southside BID</p> <p>Itineraries for half terms and summer hols of free activities available for families</p> <p>Encouraging diversity entries to accessible tourism award</p> <p>Improving representation through welcome and imagery</p> <p>Share Accessibility toolkit for businesses with businesses</p>	<p>Marketing material and tools that can be shared with venues. Look at content strategy that showcase best in practice (venues, itineraries etc.).</p> <p>VE to produce toolkit for businesses and LVEPS by September 2023</p>	<p>Nos of businesses supported through accessibility hubs</p> <p>No of businesses supported through accessibility 1 to many and 121s</p> <p>No of itinerary / blog views</p> <p>No of accessible / sustainable entries for tourism awards</p> <p>Proportion of VE businesses with an access statement on website</p> <p>Number of visitor websites with clear LGBTQIA+ and disabled visitor welcome</p> <p>Number of LVEP visitor websites featuring diverse imagery to represent different ethnicities, cultural offers and disabled visitors (metric tbc)</p>
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ALIGNMENT WITH GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES – SUSTAINABILITY

Growth Area	LVEP Action	VB/VE Action	Timescale/Measures
<p>Implementation of sustainability hub and business support</p>	<p>Business support through the hub</p> <p>121 / 1 to many engagement through relevant tourism officer /</p>	<p>VE to produce toolkit for businesses and LVEPS by March 2024</p>	<p>All top line details of joint working between the LVEP and VE/VB to captured here</p>

	<p>tourism forums etc</p> <p>GDS programme of work to achieve regional sustainability benchmarking.</p> <p>Encompasses all partners in capturing their policy, pledges and delivery for sustainable and regenerative tourism</p> <p>Sustainability hub role out and embed, then create blog content and itineraries that highlight exemplars</p>		<p>Not all actions/suggestions may be possible to deliver in year one, but they are captured here and agreed to delay to year 2.</p> <p>Nos of businesses supported through sustainability hub</p> <p>No of businesses supported through sustainability 1 to many and 121s</p> <p>No of itinerary / blog views</p> <p>No of sustainable entries for tourism awards</p> <p>GDS benchmarking ranking improvement year on year</p>
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ALIGNMENT WITH GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES – BUSINESS EVENTS

Growth Area	LVEP Action	VB/VE Action	Timescale/Measures
<p>Maximise opportunities to build legacy from B2022 - business conferences and events, and major sporting events.</p>	<p>Development and delivery of the Conference Ambassador network</p> <p>Attendance at national and international sales events</p> <p>Business tourism marketing campaigns, website and social</p> <p>LA access to subvention fund for smaller events</p> <p>Focus on corporate events for Wolverhampton and Solihull to complement the wider International / national activity</p> <p>Birmingham - priority to attract industry specific conferences to raise profile of hero themes (e.g. Music)</p>	<p>More detailed research and intelligence on business visits and events – Check with Steve Knight on VB engagement</p>	<p>12 conferences and MSE landed through LVEP work '23-25</p> <p>Bi-annual MICE Impact study</p> <p>New major sporting events study</p>

	and Euro City Culture conference		
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ALIGNMENT WITH GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES – **INNOVATION**

Growth Area	LVEP Action	VB/VE Action	Timescale/Measures
	<p>Culture and Tourism Connected: Innovative support for the cultural sector which links cultural attractions and events with the wider visitor market through a regional data pool for listings, publishing rights to all LVEP visitor sites, collaborative marketing campaigns and driving referrals between attractions and events.</p> <p>A Visitor Economy fringe event at Birmingham / TechWM week (Oct '23) to showcase latest tech and smart thinking to businesses</p>	Share innovative practice from other LVEPs as appropriate	<p>Birmingham / TechWM week fringe event for the visitor economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No of suppliers No of participants Satisfaction feedback <p>Culture and Tourism Connected</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No of inbound connections No of outbound connections Value of referrals Collaborative marketing campaigns

ALIGNMENT WITH GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES – **SKILLS**

Growth Area	LVEP Action	VB/VE Action	Timescale/Measures
Visitor economy skills audit and delivery plan	<p>Workshop/bootcamp to fast track accreditation in hospitality and security</p> <p>Work with TMI to assess options for visitor economy professionals CDP which can include collaborative work with higher education - local colleges and universities</p> <p>Collective push for volunteering at attractions. Utilise B022 volunteers database and investigate whether</p>	<p>VB/VE to connect with Hospitality UK to engage with national initiatives and ensure LVEPs are engaged with those initiatives</p> <p>Work with DCMS on changes made defunding tourism higher education qualifications</p> <p>VB to look into national volunteer recruitment - raise awareness of volunteer opportunities - More research and insights into worker</p>	Q3 Visitor Economy skills audit and report will set out next steps

	<p>data can be used for German Market; also working with universities</p> <p>Raise awareness of CSR benefits linked to apprenticeship levy</p>	and volunteer make up	
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GOVERNANCE/MAKE-UP OF BOARD

Growth Area	LVEP Action	VB/VE Action	Timescale/Measures
	<p>Raise awareness of THAB and communicate the make up of the THAB to LVEP partners to review and identify the linkages</p> <p>VE will gain a co-opted place to the THAB and WMGC board for LVEP and DDP reporting</p> <p>LAs all have a seat on the WMGC board.</p>	<p>VE Regional Lead to attend the THAB meeting once a year to update on LVEP</p>	<p>Board dates to be shared with RDL</p>

	<p>Quarterly meeting of the officers' group with formal progress update into the THAB</p> <p>Review how LVEP work is cascaded to teams and businesses.</p>		
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RESEARCH/DATA AND INSIGHTS TO TRACK VISITOR ECONOMY GROWTH AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Growth Area	LVEP Action	VB/VE Action	Timescale/Measures
<p>Annual STEAM reporting</p> <p>Quarterly dashboard</p>	<p>Regular WMGC: VBVE meetings on research</p> <p>Joint B ATP evaluation</p> <p>Funded research as follows:</p> <p>Quarterly</p> <p>VE dashboard (from July 2023)</p> <p>Quarterly Economic Digest</p> <p>Hotel Occupancy</p> <p>Short-term lettings occupancy</p> <p>Hotel development pipeline</p> <p>Conference and event pipeline</p> <p>Basket of attractions footfall</p> <p>Annual</p> <p>STEAM economic vol and val</p> <p>Biannual</p> <p>Visitor Survey</p>	<p>VisitEngland to establish a data and insights working group to shape LVEP priorities and potential research programmes, this will be supported by VB research team and group of LVEPs. Priorities will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Standardised approach to business and visitor surveys - - Audit of new data sources research being delivered currently by LVEPs to identify crossovers and quick wins - - Assessment of LVEP priorities for data and research to feed into national programme scoping 	<p>Quarterly update to RDL on progress</p>

	<p>Ad hoc</p> <p>Perceptions survey</p> <p>MICE economic impact</p> <p>Sporting events economic impact</p> <p>Cultural sector data</p> <p>Night-time Economy data</p> <p>SC to lead on sharing best practice e.g. case studies and present at workshops</p> <p>Social value and sustainability from procurement</p>		
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GENERIC VB/VE SUPPORT

Growth Area	LVEP Action	VB/VE Action	Timescale/Measures
Support for the DDP marketing activations	<p>Gain knowledge through LVEP best practice on:</p> <p>City Card</p> <p>Delegate card</p> <p>Integrating bike and train transport into HS2</p> <p>Fully accessible HS2 for disabled visitors</p> <p>Cycle route along HS2 and other new cycling routes</p> <p>Marketing teams to list priority markets and themes for this year:</p>	<p>Ensure LVEP input into new Visit England brand and strategy</p> <p>Regional development lead to act as an internal advocate for the LVEP area</p> <p>VB/VE to outline new process for content creation</p>	

<p>Marketing Strategy and campaign outline</p> <p>Background</p> <p>The West Midlands Growth Company plays a key role in supporting the delivery of the West Midlands Combined Authority's strategic plans. Our primary purpose is to attract investment, jobs, visitors and business to the West Midlands region. Aligning with local tourism partners, our focus is on growing numbers and revenues across both leisure and business segments, to develop and maximise the direct and indirect economic contribution of the tourism sector.</p>	<p>Domestic consumer: City Pass (UK's largest treasure hunt)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linked to the creation and delivery of a region-wide 'city pass', this campaign will launch and promote the initiative and its component tourist attractions. Large-scale and multichannel, the campaign will pitch the offer creatively, encouraging visitors to explore the breadth of the West Midlands and increase dwell-time. <p>Key audiences include domestic overnight, city-break and short-break leisure segments within a two to three hours drivetime catchment area.</p>		
<p>Strategic Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of UK visitors staying in the West Midlands • Encourage greater numbers of international visitors to stay in the West Midlands. <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise the visibility and awareness of the region to international markets • Improve the image and the perceptions of the Region to UK audiences • Ensure greater awareness of the business tourism product • Develop the leisure product using hero themes, attracting visitors across the region • Connect tourism activity with other regional programmes to maximise impact. 	<p>Students and Staff</p> <p>The West Midlands: My kind of region</p> <p>West Midlands universities educate 185,000 students and produce more than 60,000 graduates each year. This campaign will create a warm welcome to those students, and more broadly, drive national and international student interest by promoting the region's dynamic culture and Quality of Life, in such a way that influences perceptions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The campaign may take the form of an attention-grabbing, sharable social media focused video – for example, a reimagining of the infamous 'kitsch triumph' "Telly Savalas Looks At Birmingham". The campaign will build on the previous 'Live, Learn, Earn' narrative. 		

<p>West Midlands takeover</p>	<p>International</p> <p>This campaign will raise the visibility and awareness of the region's destinations to international markets through major, strategic partnerships with influential platforms, for example; the BBC, Expedia, Booking.com, Trip Advisor, Airbnb etc.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Based on BATP delivery and learnings, partnerships could include widespread broadcast and online media channels and would incorporate detailed customer feedback. 		
<p>Travel Trade: Development</p>	<p>This campaign will educate and inspire travel trade buyers across domestic and international markets, helping to maintain strategic relationships and encourage contracting with preferred suppliers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It will comprise destination workshops, training modules, travel guide development, and creative collateral development. 		
<p>Major event attraction: Home of Sport</p>	<p>The two-pronged campaign will position the West Midlands as the optimum location for hosting major sporting events by showcasing its portfolio of venues and wider macro-advantages, including connectivity and culture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B2B targets include Sporting Federations and Associations – including specific conventions and bids, building on the BATP pipeline. • consumer campaign will raise awareness surrounding the region's sporting events, 		

	<p>encouraging extended dwell-time and spend across the West Midlands.</p>		
<p>Major event attraction: <i>Where the World Meets</i></p>	<p>This two-pronged campaign will help to convert the regional pipeline of business tourism, highlighting the West Midlands Convention Bureau's core services of venue finding, accommodation booking, and commercial sponsorships.</p> <p>Additionally, a delegate campaign will link to the creation and delivery of a region-wide 'Delegate Card', which aims to encourage conference delegates to explore as much of the region as possible with a series of offers, discounts and privileges.</p>		