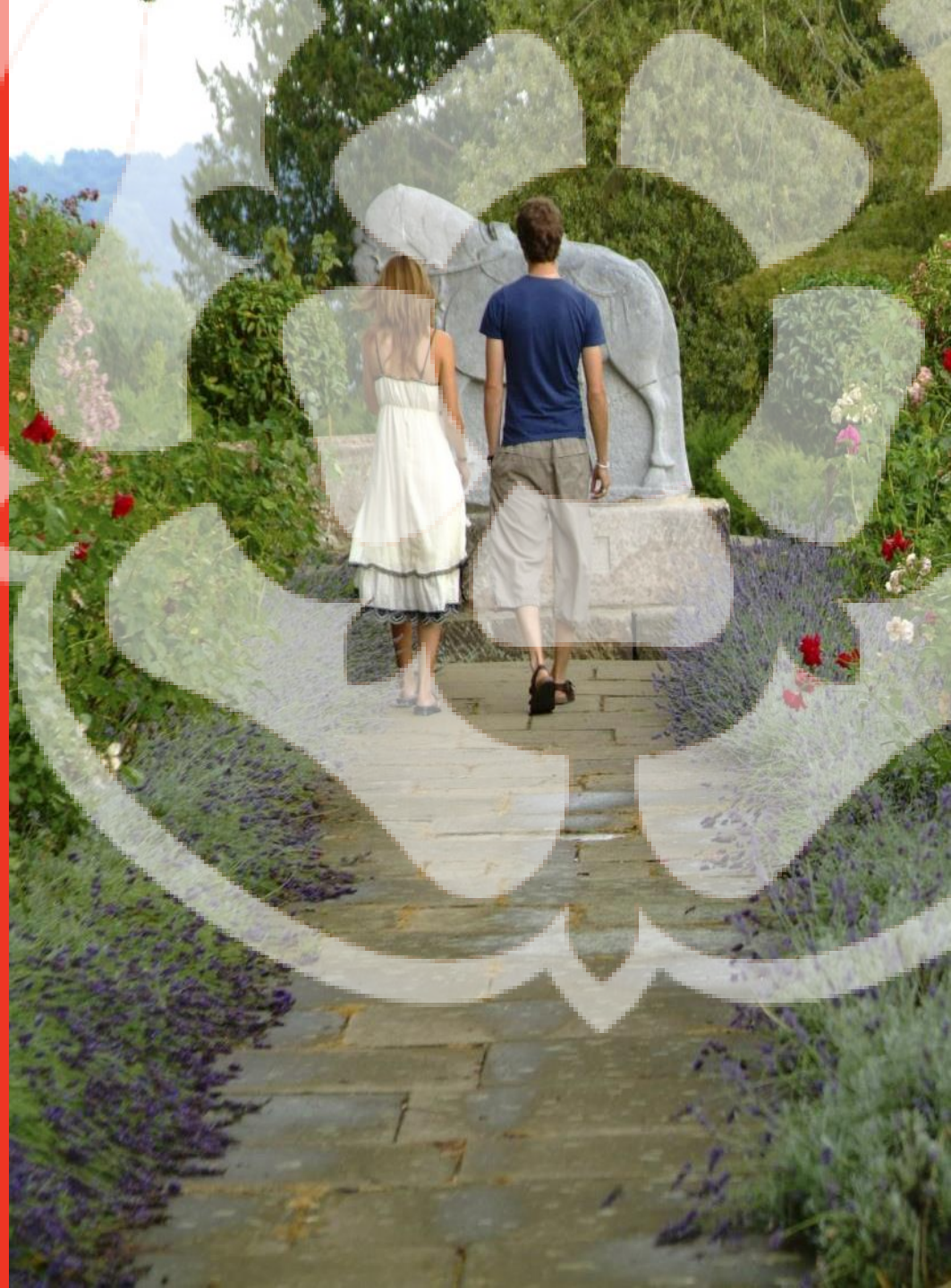


# Cultural Destinations – Culture at the heart of the visitor economy

Lyndsey Swift  
Head of Partnerships



“To lead and drive forward the  
quality, competitiveness and  
sustainable growth of England’s  
Visitor Economy”



## What VisitEngland does

- Champion the sector and drive forward the industry's shared Strategic Framework for Tourism
- Promote England's tourism offer
- Provide official intelligence on tourism and visitor economy in England
- Support local areas grow their economies through tourism
- Advise Government on English Tourism issues

## Visitor Economy: It's Big Business

- The sector is currently worth £106bn
- It provides 2.8m jobs
- Made up of 249,000 businesses
- It benefits every part of the country





## Visitor Economy?

- Visitors
  - Leisure/ Business/ VFR
  - Day/ overnight
- Supply chain
  - Core
    - Accommodation
    - Attractions
    - Bars/ restaurants
  - Related
    - Retail
    - Transport
    - “other” services – laundry, petrol stations, food suppliers





**Visitor spend adds local value**

**It helps protect and preserve our heritage**

**It can support localism**

# england

A Strategic Framework  
for Tourism 2010-2020

- 5% average growth, year on year, in the value of tourism since 2010
- 7% uplift in jobs since 2010 = 123,000



## Recent changes

- **Financial**
  - Less public money available
  - A difficult trading environment for businesses
  - Consumer spending harder to attract
- **Structural**
  - Loss of Regional co-ordination (RDAs & Regional Tourist Boards)
  - Policy of localism
  - Creation of Local Enterprise Partnerships
  - Increase in number and variety of destination management organisations





## **Reinforces the need for partnership working**

- Joining-up (strategies, priorities & objectives, national to local)
- Implementation of England's Strategic Framework
- Influence funding criteria & policy development
- Aligning public investment to achieve economies of scale & greater impact
- Sharing learning & experiences across the country
- Communication and advocacy (extending reach)

## Cultural Tourism?

- All tourism to a greater or lesser extent is cultural
- Customers don't make a distinction (facilities by cultural agencies and promotion by tourism delivery bodies)
- Need to work more closely with cultural delivery partners nationally and locally for mutual benefit



## **So why doesn't this work better already?**

- Some history – different funders, delivery structures and delivery partners
- Definitions and language (consumer/visitor v audience)
- Despite much funding coming from central government – different objectives set by funding streams with different targets/measures of success
- There hasn't always been a spirit of collaboration e.g. tourists want populist rather than creative content?
- Opportunity to make it work better and some clear imperatives to make this happen

## What are our shared aims?

- Stimulating growth:
  - Government (public investment targets growth)
  - Industry (e.g. Arts and Tourism Strategic Framework's)
- Visitor economy is a main plank of growth





## Shared objectives

- Attracting customers to our destinations and venues to spend money which supports those venues, their wider local economies and their residents
- Creating reasons for customers to visit in the first place and keep on visiting
- Creating an excellent experience for those customers
- Maximising the impact of the public money invested in our sectors

## Examples of where it works well

- **Iconic attraction led approach** - putting the destination on the map; stimulating wider business development and entrepreneurship e.g. Margate
- **Adding distinctiveness to the local product**
- **Creative content** provides reasons to visit outside of the main tourism seasons
- **Culture led regeneration** e.g. Liverpool, Newcastle (music, art)
- **An event led approach** e.g. Hay on Wye, Cheltenham Literature Festival, Brighton

## What do we need to do

- **Nationally**

- ✓ Govt support connectivity – objectives and targets
- ✓ ACE, VE and others – shared strategic planning
- ✓ Funding programmes aligned at the outset

- **Locally**

- ✓ Shared strategic planning – destination management plans
- ✓ Sharing of ideas and plans at an early stage
- ✓ Joined up delivery of the visitor experience – packaging with the tourism private sector

## Cultural Destinations Programme

- £3m arts lottery investment
- Joint VE/ACE programme
- Consortia led (one arts org & one destination org)
- Culture embedded in local destination management plans
- 49 applications received
- Successful projects announced Jan 2014





## Programme Aims

- Local visitor economy growth (i.e. increased income through more visitor spend) through developing the cultural offer
- More & different types of people experiencing the arts and culture
- Reposition culture as part of the local visitor offer and local growth plans
- Build partnership capacity between the two sectors

## Cultural Destinations – Successful Projects

Area	Location	Lead Applicant
Midlands	Nottingham & Derby	Nottingham Contemporary
Midlands	Lincoln	Lincoln Business Improvement Group
North	Liverpool	Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Society
North	South Lakeland	The Brewery, Kendal
North	Sheffield	Sheffield Theatres Trust Limited
North	Calderdale	Square Chapel Trust Limited
South West	Bristol & Bath	Bristol Old Vic Theatre Royal Trust Limited
South West	Cornwall	Cornwall Arts centre Trust Truro Ltd
South East	Thanet	Turner Contemporary
South East	Essex	Firstsite Limited

## Firstsite - Essex

- Repositioning Essex through visitor/cultural offer
- New cultural organisations that can benefit from partnership working – mapping of appropriate sites and organisations
- Using destination organisation as a gateway to visitor economy partners (rail, hotels, attractions)
- Maximising council investment e.g. summer of culture, network of artist studios
- Baseline research



## Sheffield Theatres Trust

- Develop Sheffield as a visitor destination
- Visitor research / evaluation
- Curated website (itineraries, packages, strengthen links with hospitality sector)
- Business development for festivals (income streams, sustainability, ways / models of working)
- Advertising for a festivals mentor





## National Focus

- Programme evaluation
- Share learning (nationally & locally)
- Communication (influencing communities of interest)
- Promotional opportunities



## Summary

- We have a shared agenda – growth!
- We must share targets
- Align funding streams nationally and locally
- Partnership dynamic is critical







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