

Culture, Heritage and Visitor Economy Strategy

Progress to date

April 2023 – February
2024





Strategy adopted in March 2023

THEME 1: BUILDING CULTURAL HABITS – IMPROVING THE EXPERIENCE FOR EVERYDAY RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

THEME 2.1: ACCELERATING PROGRESS – DEVELOPING THE SECTOR AND ITS RESILIENCE

THEME 2.2: ACCELERATING PROGRESS – DATA, INSIGHT AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

THEME 3: DRIVING COLLABORATION TO EVOLVE CULTURAL HERITAGE PLACES AND DESTINATIONS

Cross Party Member Working Group

A cross party member working group was set up and met throughout the development of the Strategy and Action Plan.

This group has been used to test early outcomes from the stakeholder consultation and the insights report and helped to shape the work of the consultants.

The group helped frame the action plan and broke it down into more manageable and achievable outputs with a clearer vision.

Members included:

Mid Suffolk

Cllr Tim Weller

Cllr Teresa Davis

Cllr Gilly Morgan

Cllr Keith Scraff

Babergh

Cllr Derek Davis

Cllr Laura Smith



ACTION PLAN

52 PROJECT AREAS WITH ACTIONS

- 19 under THEME 1
- 16 under THEME 2.1
- 7 under THEME 2.2
- 10 under THEME 3

22 areas delivered through internal budgets and resources

17 areas delivered through external funding already received

13 areas with funding still be found



PROGRESS TO DATE

THEME 1: BUILDING CULTURAL HABITS – IMPROVING THE EXPERIENCE FOR EVERYDAY RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

Reviewed the guidance for organising and planning events, linked with Suffolk Advisory Group and Licensing for joint working on future submissions. Creation of an event management plan template to simplify and guide future applications.

Levelling Up - Shared Prosperity Funding allocated towards Sudbury and Stowmarket Wayfinding schemes (£100K)

Development of specific Heart of Suffolk website, newsletters, blogs and social media including arts, culture and tourism information and signposting

Appointment of 2-year f/t Events and Festivals Coordinator Post, funded via levelling Up - Shared Prosperity Funding

Babergh & Mid Suffolk's Big Weekend being developed for Autumn 2024 including public ballot for free tickets across events and attractions

Work with partners such as Primadonna Festival and Orchestras Live to deliver social inclusion programmes to support access to culture for marginalised groups.



PROGRESS TO DATE

THEME 1: BUILDING CULTURAL HABITS – IMPROVING THE EXPERIENCE FOR EVERYDAY RESIDENTS AND VISITORS CONTINUED

Activities and Events organised and funded via the Welcome Back Fund including Incredible Moving Cinema, SPARK Festival, Primadonna Festival and Jubilant

Launch of BMSDC Rural Culture and Creativity Fund using Rural England Prosperity Funding for capital investment (£65k for 2023/24 and £140k for 2024/5)

Great Big Green Week planning (8-16 June) including Eco Markets, Sustainable Travel Events, Climate Cafes, Low Carbon Living Architects Tours

Business as usual - review and comment on planning applications that support development of the tourism, heritage and visitor economy sectors.



PROGRESS TO DATE

THEME 2.1: ACCELERATING PROGRESS – DEVELOPING THE SECTOR AND ITS RESILIENCE

Pop up ARTSPACE gallery and studio model delivered in Stowmarket and one to be delivered in Babergh.

Good Journey scheme launched to promote car free visitor travel through discounted fees at attractions, car free itinerary development and associated marketing with partners

Continue to work with our county film locations Office, Screen Suffolk, to bring Film and TV filming into BMS and create training and employment offer into film sector

Wingfield Barns audience insight work delivered via The Audience Agency (still in progress)

Worked alongside ACCESS ABLE to carry out audits and produce online detailed access guides across 50+ BMS attractions and venues (funded via Suffolk Growth)

Launched AccessAble Disability Essentials E-Learning programme that businesses can access for free

Provided first time funding advice for Creative Businesses via SUFFOLK GROWTH HUB – funded via Shared Prosperity Funding



PROGRESS TO DATE

THEME 2.2: ACCELERATING PROGRESS – DATA, INSIGHT AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Commission Destination Research to provide annual reports to examine the volume and value of tourism and the impact of visitor expenditure on the local economy each year and provide comparative data

Appoint Visitor Insights to gather new tourism and town centre data to better inform decision making and project planning

Draft data sharing agreements for attractions to share live trends to enable better planning and integration

Worked on Festivals and events review and strategy development for Suffolk (funded via Suffolk Growth)

Involved in the commissioning of Suffolk Visitor Economy Review analysing the area's Visitor Economy marketing and partnership activity and to provide recommendations for future strategic actions.



PROGRESS TO DATE

THEME 3: DRIVING COLLABORATION TO EVOLVE CULTURAL HERITAGE PLACES AND DESTINATIONS

Development and promotion of walking trails and games on the Love Exploring app (funded via Shared Prosperity Funding)

Working with Ipswich and Colchester Museums Service on Constable 250 Heritage Lottery Fund

Submitted bid to Bus Improvement Scheme at SCC for reintroduction and expansion of Dedham Vale Hopper Bus

Develop grants for 'Makers and Producers' markets and events to showcase products and skills of our local entrepreneurs, micro and small businesses (funded via Shared Prosperity Fund)

Shared Suffolk destination marketing campaigns led by Visit Suffolk, including Naturally, Masters of the Air and TV & Film tourism



Example KPI's for across 3 themes. Targets will be listed and recorded on the performance management system, Pentana.

25% increase no. of shooting days across BMS through Screen Suffolk

Up to at least 20 CHVE businesses accessing support through Growth Hub

80 members of staff across 25 CHVE organisations trained on Disability Essentials

20% increase in no of visitors accessing Heart of Suffolk content on the Visit Suffolk site

No of groups benefitting with delivery of small-medium events
25

Access Able site audits across 50 CHVE venues

Wayfinding schemes delivered across Stowmarket and Sudbury

Appointment of fixed term 2-year Culture and VE Projects Coordinator

Target of 10 attractions by the end of Year 1 signed up to Data Sharing Agreement

Quarterly content to targeted marketing accounts of 59,000

No. of venues registered in pilot Big Weekend Scheme – 20 and 25,000 sign ups

5 locations across BMS agreed for Visitor Insights footfall and demographic figs