



CotswoldsPlus LVEP outline destination management plan

Aim

To create a more sustainable and valuable visitor economy for the CotswoldsPlus area that brings benefits to its economy, environment and local communities and protects the places, landscapes and way of life on which its long-term success depends.

Strategic objectives

1. **Generate longer stays and higher spend** by joining up and packaging the visitor offer more effectively.
2. **Give visitors reasons to dwell longer, explore further and engage more deeply** by increasing destination distinctiveness through storytelling and experience development.
3. **Encourage repeat visits and recommendation** by delivering a consistently high-quality and accessible visitor experience.
4. **Attract visitors with the greatest potential to benefit the area** by matching different parts of the CotswoldsPlus offer to select markets and audiences and tailoring marketing activity accordingly.
5. **Support sustainable growth, spreading benefits more widely and stretching the season** by managing where and when visitor activity takes place.

Underpinning principles

The following principles will guide how the plan is developed and delivered:

- using evidence (data and insight) to inform decisions
- working in partnership both across the area and with neighbouring destinations
- adopting a responsible, sustainable approach to managing the visitor economy
- ensuring the destination is inclusive and accessible to all
- adding value to the activities of organisations, businesses and communities
- delivering activity at the level where it will have most impact
- collaborating with other partners on agendas where the visitor economy cannot act alone e.g. business support, workforce development, transport, planning.

Markets and audiences

Market selection is driven by the outcomes sought: increased spend, longer stays, seasonal spread and geographic dispersal. They take account of the plan's underpinning principles

Domestic market:	national staying visitors and regional staying visitors
Overseas markets short haul:	Germany, The Netherlands
Overseas markets long haul:	US, Canada, Japan

Audiences have been chosen from segments identified through research by VisitEngland in the domestic market and by VisitBritain internationally. The choice takes account of the CotswoldsPlus's varied visitor offer and identifies those that are most likely to enjoy visiting the area.

Domestic audiences: Seasoned Discover Seekers, Tranquil Town Retreaters, Family Adventure Planners

Overseas audiences: independent adults/couples (pre and post family), groups (large and small, intermediaries (working with the travel trade to reach overseas markets)

As an umbrella for many destinations of differing size and a variety of needs, the CotswoldsPlus region prioritises visits that will deliver longer stays but acknowledges that for some businesses day visits are an essential element of the visitor market.

- Short breaks, both domestic and overseas
- Event attenders
- Touring holidays
- Main season holidays
- Day visits, both domestic and overseas visitor staying elsewhere

The CotswoldsPlus area will work reactively in other markets by engaging with intermediaries i.e. tour operators, DMCs and agencies and influencing them to achieve the aim of the DMP.

Delivering the plan

Adopting a flexible approach to delivering the destination management plan is a pragmatic response to the large geography of the CotswoldsPlus area, its variety of offer, and the presence of established and experienced people and organisations. Where it makes sense, the CotswoldsPlus area will act collectively. Where a more local solution is likely to have greater impact, destinations, organisations and businesses will work in clusters and partnerships within the DMP's overarching framework of strategic objectives, underpinning principles and target markets and audiences.

Delivering as a region

The LVEP partnership will provide regional coordination where delivery requires scale, consistency and reach. Activities include information provision, business support, travel trade engagement, workforce development and potentially active travel.

Delivering locally

Destinations, businesses and organisations will work together in local clusters and partnerships where they can benefit from shared opportunities and face common challenges. This approach will also provide flexibility to work with partners beyond borders of the CotswoldsPlus area including Bath and Bristol, Oxfordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire and the West Midlands urban conurbation.

Partnerships and local clusters will form around shared needs, product themes and target markets. Activities include product development, experience development, visitor management and marketing.

Examples of clusters and partnerships are provided below and will be finalised through the testing phase. They are likely to change through the lifetime of the plan according to issues or opportunity.

Theme-based collaboration

Theme	Potential partners/clusters
Festivals and events	Cheltenham and Gloucester
History-based built heritage	Cirencester, Tewkesbury, National Trust, Cheltenham, linking with Bath and Oxford
Industrial heritage	Gloucester, Stroud, Canals Trust, Forest of Dean, linking with Bristol
Outdoor activities	National Landscapes, Forest of Dean, outdoor attractions and activity providers

Market-led collaboration

Market	Potential partners
International marketing under the Cotswolds Brand	Leading attractions, international events and branded hotels, linking with Bath, Oxford and Stratford upon Avon
National domestic marketing of longer breaks and holidays	Family attractions, self-catering accommodation, camping and caravanning
Regional domestic short breaks off season	Boutique and smaller accommodation providers, Cheltenham, Gloucester, market towns

Needs based collaboration

Needs	Potential partners
Increased visibility and a more joined up offer	A westerly cluster of destinations with similar characteristics including varied landscapes, estuary/river locations, non-typical 'Cotswolds' heritage (industrial) and an outdoors active product offer.
A more experiential visitor offer and effective visitor dispersal	An easterly cluster of established 'Cotswolds' destinations with similar characteristics including, rolling countryside, picturesque villages and traditional heritage.
Innovative solutions to managing transport and visitor volume	Central and North Cotswolds
Influencing visitor behaviour and increasing understanding of sensitive landscapes	Cotswolds National Landscape and Wye Valley National Landscape

Peer support and opportunities to collaborate	Market Towns

The role of the LVEP

The LVEP will coordinate activity across the whole CotswoldsPlus area where there is a clear benefit from working consistently and at scale. It will also represent the visitor economy in wider agendas that affect the sector, including economic development, skills, education and careers, transport, and employer and business networks.

