

Coventry and Warwickshire Destination Partnership Formed

Two of the Midlands' leading tourism bodies are launching a major partnership to map out a long-term blueprint to grow Coventry and Warwickshire's national and international profile.

Destination Coventry, the destination management organisation (DMO) for Coventry, and Shakespeare's England, the DMO for south Warwickshire, are forming the Coventry & Warwickshire Destination Partnership.

The partnership is being created alongside local authority stakeholders Coventry City Council, Warwickshire County Council, Stratford District Council, Warwick District Council, Rugby Borough Council, North Warwickshire Borough Council, and Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council.

The new partnership has been formed under the new Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) framework, which was developed and administered by VisitEngland as a result of the government's response to the independent de Bois Review of Destination Management Organisations in England, with the overarching aim of supporting and growing the visitor economy.

The Coventry & Warwickshire Destination Partnership will see both organisations working together with local authority stakeholders to ensure that the region's tourism community has a powerful voice at national level, with both VisitEngland and the government, when it comes to shaping future policies and for all visitor economy priorities.

It will also see both DMOs laying the foundations for potential future investment to develop the region's offering, with LVEPs eligible for future grant funding, shared destination marketing opportunities, and access to data-rich research projects to help inform future decision making.

Alongside this work, both Destination Coventry and Shakespeare's England will remain as separate brands and will continue to promote and support the area's tourism businesses.

The Coventry & Warwickshire Destination Partnership was formed after both DMOs applied for LVEP status, which is supported by Coventry City Council, Warwickshire County Council, Warwick District Council, Stratford District Council, Rugby Borough Council, and Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council.

Destination Coventry, which launched in 2021, includes the brands Visit Coventry and Conference Coventry & Warwickshire. It is a collaboration between Coventry City Council and Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce.

Paul Michael, Chair of Destination Coventry, said: "We are laying the foundations for a thriving tourism economy in Coventry and Warwickshire with this partnership.

"Partnership has been the core value of Destination Coventry since it formed, and we know that through further collaboration even greater results can be achieved in the long term.

“Coventry and Warwickshire has an incredibly diverse tourism offer and by partnering with Shakespeare’s England and our local authorities as an LVEP, we will be able to further showcase why our region should be a key location for leisure and business tourism.”

Shakespeare’s England was formed in 2012 and is a not-for-profit public and private membership organisation, supported by Stratford and Warwick District Councils.

Tara Robinson, Chair of Shakespeare’s England, added: “This partnership has the potential to be a watershed moment for future-proofing Coventry and Warwickshire’s tourism scene.

“Our region has shown great resilience and continues to recover strongly from the pandemic, and mapping out a new long-term plan for growth, in conjunction with Destination Coventry and others, is the next logical step to capitalise on this.

“We are already working closely with Destination Coventry on boosting the region’s sustainability credentials, as well as attracting more business tourism, and we are looking forward to strengthening our relationship even further which will undoubtedly help us to collectively create a strong launchpad for further growth over the coming years.”

VisitEngland Director Andrew Stokes said: “Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs) are at the heart of transforming the visitor economy landscape in England and we are delighted to welcome the Coventry & Warwickshire Destination Partnership onto the programme.

“We look forward to continuing our close collaboration with the Coventry & Warwickshire Destination Partnership as the LVEP is established, providing ongoing support including a dedicated VisitEngland regional development lead.

“Having the right national and local infrastructure in place to grow our visitor economy, in an inclusive, accessible and sustainable way, will ensure England continues to be a compelling destination for both domestic and international visitors.”

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Photo caption: Left to right; Tara Robinson (Shakespeare’s England Chair) and Paul Michael (Destination Coventry Chair).