

## TOURISM & BUSINESSES RECOVERY PLAN 2021

In 2019, the tourism economy was worth almost £650 million to the Great Yarmouth area, it supported almost 13,000 jobs, which accounted for over 37% of local employment. Covid has had a catastrophic impact on the tourism economy, the size of the tourism economy was reduced by between 40 - 60% in 2020. With the country in lockdown for the first 3 months of 2021, then facing a slow and managed reopening, 2021 is going to also be a difficult trading year, with social distancing guidelines likely to be in place for the duration of the year.

Tourism businesses have already received significant support from Government through a number of schemes, including several different direct grants, reductions in VAT, furloughing of staff, additional promotions (know before you go and enjoy summer safely) accreditation schemes (We're good to go) and Incentive Schemes (Eat Out to Help Out). This support has mostly been created and funded nationally, but delivered locally, and the sector is fully appreciative of the support provided by Government and local councils.

Encouraging responsible visitors to return post lockdown, will help to support businesses and jobs across all businesses. Retail spend by Tourists in great Yarmouth has significant impact and the high levels of tourism employment, supports a wide variety of businesses, that are indirectly linked to the tourism economy.

It is important to note that this plan is directly linked to the actual income of the BID and may need to be adjusted to reflecting actual income in due course.

Visit Great Yarmouth (VGY) has four key objectives, which are as relevant now as they were before the arrival of covid.

Visit Great Yarmouth Objectives: -

- To increase the number of people visiting and staying in Greater Yarmouth.
- To improve the visitor experience and increase repeat visits.
- To encourage people to stay longer and visit more attractions.
- To provide incentives and opportunities to spend more in local businesses.

Recovering from the impact of Covid is a challenge for everyone, there are several key activities Visit Great Yarmouth can undertake to support that recovery.

### 1 - BUSINESS TO BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS (B2B)

At the start of the pandemic VGY began to increase its communications with its members and stakeholders. In order to share information and understand the needs of businesses, this has evolved and developed. To support the recovery VGY will undertake the following actions:

#### B2B Actions

- 1.1** To continue to send email updates/information to members as required.
- 1.2** To be available to members by phone/email, to listen to concerns and signpost to appropriate support.
- 1.3** To continue to hold key stakeholder meetings to develop and evolve projects and plans.
- 1.4** To proactively contact members to ensure they are getting the support they need.
- 1.5** To make funding available to members, to apply to undertake projects, that support the wider tourism economy which meet VGY corporate objectives.

## 2 - DESTINATION MARKETING

As we emerge from lockdown, Great Yarmouth needs responsible visitors to return. Destination Marketing during a pandemic and on a pathway to recovery is not straightforward. To be able to be responsive to national policy changes and adaptations on covid, VGY has chosen to focus on PR and online activities as its primary marketing tool. This creates the most flexibility, allowing us to adapt and, if required, pause our activities. From consumer feedback it is clear that the 2021 visitors are seeking space and freedom, beaches and countryside. Our activities need to reflect this, and the destination message is very much about promoting our spacious seafront and large sandy beaches, for the summer and building additional interest in visiting the destination all year round.

An interesting dynamic is present, the vast majority of international travel is heavily restricted, which should mean that a significant number of displaced outward-bound travellers will be seeking a domestic holiday/break in 2021. The major challenge for Great Yarmouth is perhaps in 2022, when it is likely these international restrictions will not be in place.

A contingency fund has been established to utilise media buying should this be required during 2021.

### Destination Marketing Actions

- 2.1** To rebrand as Visit Great Yarmouth.
- 2.2** To undertake national, regional and local PR.
- 2.3** To undertake national, regional and local competitions.
- 2.4** To host staying press trips from national journalists.
- 2.5** To undertake a blogger/influencer outreach scheme, focused on day visits.
- 2.6** To commission online articles with bloggers/influencers.
- 2.7** To work with external partners on marketing campaigns.
- 2.8** To continue to build up media assists, to assist in all year destination marketing.
- 2.9** To have a contingency fund in place for media buying if required.

## 3 - DESTINATION RESEARCH

In early 2020, VGY had planned a very different research programme, this programme was quickly redesigned in March, to understand more about how covid was impacting businesses.

For 2021, VGY will continue to invest in research to understand the impact to businesses and the economy, but will also commission research into the visitors.

### Research Actions

- 3.1** Undertake monthly business impact monitoring.
- 3.2** Undertake volume and value assessment, including a breakdown of sub areas.
- 3.3** Undertake a comprehensive summer visitor survey.
- 3.4** Work with partners on consumer sentiment surveys.
- 3.5** Share this information with partners to support the recovery of tourism and business.
- 3.6** Use this information to lobby organisations who can support tourism and business in Great Yarmouth.
- 3.7** To use the data to improve the work and activities of VGY.



## 4 - EVENTS

2020 was a near impossible year for events, and 2021 is also fraught with pitfalls. It would seem that social distancing is going to remain in place, at least as guidance for much of 2021. As a result, while this does not make events impossible, it may make them difficult and potentially more costly with extra requirements needed to meet the demands of social distancing guidelines. In addition, Great Yarmouth clearly wants to avoid a situation where the resort is put into lock down, during key summer months, as Leicester was last August.

VGY will still consider supporting events financially, if third parties have a suitable concepts and plans, and VGY will consider event applications in May, following guidance from Government. It is perhaps important to note that our destination, with all its attractions, activities and experiences, is an event everyday to our visitors, and perhaps we should celebrate and promote this. Recent consumer surveys have highlighted the desire for space, beaches and countryside, with minimal reference to crowded activities such as events. It is reasonable to suggest that our focus should be much more about experiences rather than mass gatherings.

VGY will also be asking all event applications to provide evidence of insurance and to ensure that the event has been reviewed by the local Events Safety and Advisory Group.

### Event Actions

- 4.1** To monitor the government's new policy on events.
- 4.2** We will invite applications from event organisers.
- 4.3** The event group will review 3rd party events and prioritise event applications in June.
- 4.4** The event applications will be considered by board in mid-June.

## 5 - FACILITIES, MAINTENANCE AND ACCESS (FMA)

In previous years, FMA has perhaps not been given priority. However, with the advent of covid, several FMA projects have come to the forefront. Looking after and enhancing our offer is a central part of our overall offer and this should be continued.

### FMA Actions

- 5.1** To support suitable FMA projects.
- 5.2** To identify future FMA projects and support them to develop.

## 6 - LOBBYING

It is essential that the tourism businesses voice for Great Yarmouth is heard and it is considered at a local, regional, and national level.

VGY must continue to raise and address issues with external organisations who have the power to support tourism in Great Yarmouth, enabling it to recover from covid as soon as responsibly possible.

### Lobbying Actions

- 6.1** To continue to lobby to appropriate organisations that have the power to support and enable tourism and businesses in Great Yarmouth to recover from the impact of Covid.

## 7 - PARTNERS

VGY has several key partners on a local, regional and national basis, it is essential that VGY continues to work closely with these partners to the benefit of tourism in Great Yarmouth.

### Partner Actions

- 7.1** To continue to work closely with local, regional, and national partners on projects and activities which are of benefit to tourism in Great Yarmouth
- 7.2** To share information and knowledge with key partners.

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## CONCLUSION

It is highly likely that recovery will not be straight forward, and that we may have to review and re-plan.

When we do, it is with the full understanding that all stakeholders must play a part in building our recovery, building and all year round offer for the destination.

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If you have any questions or comments about this document please email [info@gyta.com](mailto:info@gyta.com)



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