BLUE SAIL

VISITORS PLACES DESTINATIONS

THE SOUTH EAST WALES TOURISM ACTION PLAN 2008 TO 2011

CAPITAL REGION TOURISM

AUGUST 2008

Strategic Framework Recommendation	Priority	Lead Organisation <u>(underlined)</u> and Partners	Start Date	Key Performance Indicators	Next Steps	Resource Implications and Indicative Cost Levels	Notes
FOCUSSED MARKETING							
<u>1. MARKET PLANNING</u> **1.1 Develop a regional tourism marketing plan** **For leisure tourism:** • **Select priority target segments using VisitWales segmentation approach** • **Target the 2 to 3 hour travel time with priority for the M4 corridor, Midlands, Hampshire and West Country** • **Focus regional marketing support around the strong product experiences of the region and tailor their promotion to target segments** • **Support VisitWales' international marketing with Cardiff in particular as a key destination** • **Focus on seasonal campaigns rather than annual guides** **For business tourism:** • **Target small to medium sized meetings, conferences exhibitions and business events** • **Identify market segments in the longer term for a potential conference / convention centre within the region**	High	<u>CRT</u> MAPs Southern Wales Group SEWEF	2008/09	Volume and value of tourism Enquiry levels Booking levels Conversion rates New business levels Return on marketing investment	Establish a task group of key partners to develop the plan Use the plan to input to and influence the outcome of Marketing Area Review Identify actions to take in 2009 onwards	Staff and time implications Potential high costs but scope for private sector leverage - and more effective use of existing budgets	Influenced by WAG review of marketing areas and marketing roles Dependent on brand planning (see 3.1) Dependent on VisitWales segmentation approach Dependent on VisitWales overseas marketing plan

2. ROUTES TO MARKET **2.1 Develop new routes to market (as part of the marketing plan):** ▸ **Create first class web sites for each of the experience propositions, linked into the Visit Wales web site, all South East Wales local authority sites, and other partners site** ▸ **Develop digital marketing - exploit web 2.0 approaches, encourage user-generated content and peer reviews and recommendations with e-newsletters and promotions** ▸ **Develop PR activity through press stories and press trips, focusing in particular on film and TV exposure (such as Torchwood, Dr Who and Gavin & Stacey) and the Ryder Cup**	High	<u>MAPs</u> CRT Southern Wales Group	2009 onwards	Web site and page traffic Customer data capture levels Number of businesses using e-marketing PR coverage and audience reach	Await the outcome of the Marketing Area Review Draw up briefs to outsource expert advice Create the specification for the regional websites Set up an internal communications system among partners to source PR stories Appoint an agency to deliver PR coverage	Revenue funding implications Potential to reallocate funds from traditional print to new e-media VisitWales will look at EU funding (for digital marketing and activity marketing) Relatively low cost compared to the scale of return on investment	Logically follows Market Planning (see 1.1) Influenced by WAG review of marketing areas and marketing roles Dependent on brand planning (see 3.1) Dependent on VisitWales web activity and PR plan Dependent on DMS (see 13.1) PR activity is a quicker win with less dependency on other recommendations

DISTINCTIVE BRANDING							
<u>3. BRAND PLANNING</u> **3.1 Adopt a branding strategy that uses the Wales brand guidelines to give a consistent tone of voice and distinctive personality in the promotion of product experiences and destinations** **3.2 Promote the brands as part of "'Wales" rather than Southern or South East Wales** **3.3 Focus regional marketing activity around five experiences and co-ordinate the five experience brands to pull the regional offer together:** 1. **City breaks** 2. **Countryside and scenery** 3. **Easy and accessible outdoor activities** 4. **Browsing (towns, villages and food)** 5. **Culture and heritage** **3.4 Co-ordinate destination marketing based on partnerships that reflect the new brand map post 2008**	High	<u>CRT</u> VisitWales Southern Wales Group SEWEF	2008/09	Brand recognition Brand perceptions	Bring the proposed marketing plan and branding strategy together Establish a task group of key partners to develop the strategy Use the strategy to input to and influence the outcome of Marketing Area Review Identify actions to take in 2009	Potentially significant implications if destination management roles and MAPs change Potential to reallocate existing marketing funds to fit the new brand map	Influenced by the outcome of the WAG marketing area review Brand planning outcomes influence the regional marketing plan (see 1.1) 3.2 is influenced by the scope for pan-regional brands Maintain the position as the regional market leader in golf - ongoing and quick win

4. BRAND BUILDING **4.1 For leisure tourism: build the destination brands through closer marketing relationships with other regions of Wales based around the Brecon Beacons and the coastal offer, and with English partners for the Wye Valley** **4.2 For business tourism: develop a unified regional offer led by Cardiff and Newport partners**	High	CRT (4.1) Cardiff & Co, Newport Council (4.2) MAPs SEWEF	Ongoing	Number of cross-border partnership initiatives Brand recognition Brand perceptions Conference enquiries, conversion and value of business	Influence the Marketing Area Review Ongoing dialogue through existing partnership channels	Potentially significant implications if destination management roles and MAPs change Staff resource within CRT	Logically follows 3.1 to 3.4 Influenced by the outcome of the WAG marketing area review Brand building influences the regional marketing plan (see 1.1) Connected to Collaboration (see 22)
5. BRAND COMMUNICATION **Develop a brand manual for the region, taking the Wales branding approach and applying it to the South East Wales propositions, to provide the visualisation and stakeholders guidance on how to use the branding appropriately and consistently**	Medium	CRT	2009	Uptake of brand manual by private sector Correct use of brands by private sector	Draw up a specification and commission the production of the manual	Funding implications (since it is a new initiative) but relatively low cost Potential support from VisitWales' brand department	Logically follows 3.1 to 3.4 - but is a quick win at that stage Dependent on the Wales branding approach

HIGHER QUALITY							
6. STRATEGIC PLANNING **6.1 Raise tourism within the profile of the South East Wales Spatial Plan and ensure the rural and coastal areas feature in a sustainable way to benefit from inward investment**	High	CRT	Imminent and ongoing	Outcomes within the revised spatial plan Inward investment levels	Present the Regional Tourism Strategy to the SE Region Spatial Planning Group Ongoing missionary work to boost awareness of the nature and value of tourism and the spatial dimensions	Staff resource within CRT Low cost	Potentially a quick win and important win - short window in which to influence the plan Dependent on flexibility within WAG to allow changes to be made
7. INVESTMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE **7.1 Stimulate transformational visitor projects and major infrastructure schemes which boost the tourism sector** **7.2 Secure investment in Cardiff to ensure the city meets its image of a capital city and regional gateway** **7.3 Expand the level of inbound short break, VFR and business traffic to Cardiff International Airport by developing new air routes, supported by local infrastructure to improve access and encourage visitor dispersal**	High	SEWEF (7.1) Cardiff & Co. (7.2) NMGC (7.2) Airport (7.3) CRT WAG - E&T	Ongoing More proactive in 2008 Long term aims		Prepare a product wish list matched to target markets (covering destination and boutique hotels, quality accommodation, rural retreats, purpose built conference / convention venue) Identify key sites / land packages Be aware of developers and investors needs and market trends and forecasts Secure investment in the National Museums to create a set of heritage and cultural beacons Provide appropriate market and product data to attract new inward investment from innovative products / investors / entrepreneurs Support new air route development Incorporate the Airport within international marketing	Low cost to advocacy work Potential high capital costs Staff capacity and research implications for CRT Influence Convergence Funding	Depend on the state of the national / global economy Influenced by availability of Convergence Funds

8. VISITOR EXPERIENCE **8.1 Pursue excellence within the public realm and customer service at hubs of visitor activity (such as destinations, attractions, town centres, rural hubs, waterfront areas, gateways)** **8.2 Encourage visitor dispersal from the hubs to create more regional spread** **8.3 Improve the quality of the visitor experience in emerging destinations such as Blaenavon World Heritage Site, Valleys Regional Park and coastal areas**	Medium	Local Authorities Cluster groups Site operators CRT	Ongoing	Visitor satisfaction levels Footfall at emerging destinations and dispersed sites	Encourage more destination / town centre / countryside / management units and businesses to sign-up to IQM Establish a regional destination health check process (by CRT) to identify best practice and weak spots Create a template to undertake visitor management plans in gateway locations to encourage regional spread (by CRT) Promote participation in the accommodation and attractions quality assurance schemes, and the Green Dragon Environmental Standard Create more awareness of the UK national accessibility scheme	Within local authority place-shaping remit - part of destination management roles Influence Convergence funding	Dependent on priorities attached to tourism, IQM and quality assurance schemes by local authorities Connected to Local Engagement (see 21.1)
9. BUSINESS CLUSTERS **9.1 Promote networking, good practice and collaboration by working with local clusters of tourism businesses**	High	CRT (as co-ordinator) with local groups and sector associations	Ongoing	Number of clusters Number of participating businesses Outcomes attached to specific projects / initiatives	Network the clusters to share best practice Encourage more businesses to participate in their clusters Provide pump-priming funds for local initiatives Package the easy and accessible outdoor activity offers	Low cost Staff resource within CRT but under pressure as clusters grow in number	Potential for ongoing quick wins

<u>10. BUSINESS INVESTMENT</u> **10.1 Stimulate appropriate business investment to improve the quality and increase the capacity in line with market demand**	High	<u>Local authorities</u> CRT Sector clusters	More pro-active from 2008 Ongoing	Business turnover Tourism employment levels	Provide information on market needs and forecasts to businesses and investors Provide a signposting service to connect site and property owners with investors and funders Step up the scale of targeted business support services Assess specific opportunities: * Walking, cycling and riding - to exploit the Coastal Path * Golfing - to bridge gaps between the golf resort hotels and the private member clubs * Mountain biking - to create more critical mass through partnerships and packages in and around the region * Water sports (at coastal and inland hubs) - to create more facilities for niche markets	Capital costs borne by private sector Staff capacity implications within CRT Influence Convergence funding	Ideally working in parallel with 8.1 to 8.3 and 9.1
<u>11. LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS</u> **11.1 Encourage hospitality providers to make more use of local food and drink producers and local supply chains**	Medium	<u>Cluster groups</u> CRT	Ongoing, build profile for visitor influx in 2010	Evidence of supply chains Increase turnover within suppliers Extent of coverage of food and drink within main campaigns	Provide a signpost service to connect suppliers, distributors and visitor outlets Highlight local and distinctive Welsh food and drink offers within marketing Use PR to spotlight examples of best practice Encourage businesses to participate in appropriate award schemes and publicise winners and finalists	Relatively low costs to establish networks and chains Part of ongoing marketing activity - minimal additional cost	Potential for quick and ongoing wins 2010 (Ryder Cup) creates a major showcase

<u>12. EVENTS</u> **12.1 Create a tier of tourist events, underpinning the cultural offer, and plugging the gap between community events and major commercial venue events**	Medium	<u>Local authorities</u> CRT SEWEF Cardiff Council	Build up a calendar to and post 2010	Number of events Footfall at events Economic impact of events Visitor satisfaction levels	Scope out the current event venues, operators, provision, target audiences, capacity and viability Achieve greater coordination in programming, information and marketing of events Create events to build on the legacy of the Ryder Cup	Scoping work can be done at minimal cost Delivery work may call for financial assistance scheme Need to build capacity within the voluntary sector	Starting the process is a quick win - but potentially leading to a significant and ongoing new area of activity Opportunity to pilot the approach - in the Valleys?

EASIER ACCESS							
13. e-TOURISM **13.1 Prepare an e-tourism strategy with a long-term investment plan to create a Destination Management System that underpins the information service activity and supports the marketing**	High	CRT VisitWales Cardiff & Co.	Urgent	Timeline required from audit to launch Number of participating businesses Accuracy of data input	Audit the current state of play within local authorities and cluster groups Prepare the strategy specification ensuring it: * Accounts for Visit Wales views on DMS development and reflects state aid issues * Addresses data ownership and management * Consults with stakeholders * Covers accommodation and conference booking services across the region * Identifies delivery options * Identifies training needs for SMEs	Revenue funding implications for the strategy Investment implications - Digital Marketing funding sources Implications at the local level for data collection and input	Starting the process is a quick win - but potentially leading to a significant and ongoing new area of activity Dependent on VisitWales position
14. TIC's **14.1 Assess the implications on the future structure and roles of Tourist Information Centres in the light of the e-tourism strategy**	Medium	Local Authorities VisitWales CRT	2009 onwards	Number of TICS Footfall and enquiry levels TIC annual turnover	Review the outputs of the Wales Charter Working Group and monitor the provision of national guidance Share information on new business models for TIC operations Identify visitor gateway locations and information delivery options Retain a regional TIC networking service	Potentially high investment costs to secure longer term efficiencies	Logically follows 13.1 Influenced by Wales Charter Working Group

15. TRANSPORT PLANNING **15.1 Develop closer strategic relationships between the tourism sector and transport operators and planners to ensure tourism is better understood and higher on their agendas**	High	CRT Highway agencies Public transport operators	More pro-active from 2008 onwards	Evidence of partnership projects / initiatives	Input to the national signage review Prepare a Regional Visitor Transport Strategy Identify key one-to-one links with people in the transport sector and build on them	Relatively low cost to relationship building Staff capacity implications within CRT Capital and revenue funding implications for the strategy	Starting the process is a quick win - but potentially leading to a significant and ongoing new area of activity

BETTER SKILLS							
<u>**16. SKILLS PLANNING**</u> **16.1 Develop closer strategic relationships between the tourism sector and the educational sector to ensure tourism is better understood and higher on their agendas**	High	<u>TTFW</u> CRT SEWEF Cluster groups	Ongoing	Evidence of partnership projects / initiatives	Input and provide regional coordination to the National Skills Strategy Participate in national initiatives: * Research into employment conditions * Innovative approaches to staff recruitment and training * Monitor skills shortages * Returners to work programmes * Contribute to appropriate qualifications structures * Promote the benefits of improving skills to the industry * Improve levels of entrepreneurship, leadership and management	Relatively low cost to relationship building Staff capacity implications within CRT	Starting the process is a quick win - but potentially leading to a significant and ongoing new area of activity
<u>**17. BUSINESS SUPPORT**</u> **17.1 Develop a new regional SPICE programme to cover on the ground operational support and training, business support websites and toolkits on business management and operations**	High	<u>TTFW</u> CRT	2008 onwards	Business uptake of support and training initiatives Number of staff accreditations	Develop the programme: * Management and leadership skills * Short, local, flexible and practical courses on the basic skills * Signpost service for cluster groups and businesses to know what is available * Special needs of the Licence Trade * Information about tourism marketing opportunities, branding and e-tourism for SMEs Identify key leaders in the sector who can provide quality mentoring Continue with regional and local tourism newsletters and trade web site material	Medium level revenue costs - but determined by the content of the programme	Dependent on SPICE funding

18. BEST PRACTICE **18.1 Introduce an annual Regional Tourism Award Scheme to showcase best practice and boost the overall profile and awareness of tourism to decision makers and local communities**	Low	CRT	2009 onwards	Number of awards and sponsors PR coverage	Identify the existing scope of national and local award schemes to assess the needs and benefits of a regional scheme Identify potential categories for the awards and seek appropriate sponsorship	Staff capacity implications for CRT	Dependent on securing sponsorship to help cover costs Potentially a quick win to launch the award scheme

PARTNERSHIPS							
<u>19. NATIONAL REVIEWS</u> **19.1 Provide regional input into national tourism reviews**	High	<u>CRT</u>	Current and ongoing	Number of formal responses Evidence that views and opinions have instigated change	Spatial plan consultation Destination management, STGA and MAP review Business tourism work Events tourism work	Staff resource within CRT (but not identified within Resource Plan)	Essential to Marketing Planning (see 1), Brand Planning (see 3) and Strategic Planning (see 6)
<u>20. ADVOCACY</u> **20.1 Provide the powerful voice for tourism in, and for, the region ensuring local authorities at high and political levels are engaged with tourism and strategic priorities are shared and understood**	High	<u>CRT</u> Local Authorities SEWEF VisitWales	Ongoing, step up from mid 2008	Regional share of national tourism - volume and value	Refocus and refine messages to make connections between tourism and regeneration, community development, social impacts, etc Identify key people to target and the most effective means of communication with them Work in tandem with VisitWales during the consultation of the Destination Management / STGA and MAP review results (mid 2008) A more pro-active role for CRT Trade Directors in their localities	Staff resource within CRT Need for more research into the local impact and benefits of tourism	Acknowledge it takes time to influence change

21. LOCAL ENGAGEMENT **21.1 Encourage local authorities to focus on things they uniquely can do - place-shaping and the public realm, support for culture and heritage, proper visitor management with provision for access and amenities, local information and TICs, and their planning framework to encourage investment in the visitor economy**	High	CRT Local Authorities	Ongoing, step up in 2008	Local authority tourism budget levels and staffing levels Presence of local tourism strategies and / or business groups	Tourism Officers / Units adopt a stronger internal advocacy role within their authorities Use Section 106 funds to support local tourism projects Create a consistent approach across the region and highlight best practice of joined-up internal thinking	Implications for CRT and Local Authority Tourism Officers	Connected to Visitor Experience (see 8)
22. COLLABORATION **22.1 Create the climate for more collaboration across external boundaries with South West Wales, Mid-Wales, Herefordshire and the Forest of Dean where it strengthens the visitor offer** **22.2 Support ongoing partnership development work with and between the Brecon Beacons and the Welsh Valleys**	High	Cluster groups CRT Local Authorities NPA	Ongoing and long term	Number of cross-border partnership initiatives Number of clusters Number of participating businesses Outcomes attached to specific projects / initiatives	Be led by market research that identifies cross-border brands, experiences and products, and by the trade where there is a clear will to work together, and by neighbouring destination management organisations who see the benefit of collaboration Provide pump priming funds to support specific cross-border initiatives Assess the implications of the MAP review, especially in relation to the Brecon Beacons Work through existing communication channels to support the Brecon Beacons and Valleys	Staff resource within CRT Implications on funding to pump prime local initiatives Heads of the Valley dedicated tourism resources for 2008/09	Connected to Brand Building (see 4.1) and Business Clusters Building (see 9.1)