

New plan for tourism boards will make it easier for holiday makers to plan trips in England

New accreditation scheme for tourism boards will make it easier for holiday makers and visitors to plan trips to must-see destinations across England

From:

[Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport](#), [VisitEngland](#), and [Nigel Huddleston MP](#)

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- Government to provide £4 million to support regions to bring in more visitors and investment to destinations all over the country, including those off the beaten track
- Tourism boards have successfully helped to deliver the Eden Project, UNESCO World Heritage Sites and contribute hundreds of millions of pounds to the economy every year

Tourism boards are to undergo a radical restructuring to make it easier for holiday makers and visitors to discover a wide range of English destinations, Tourism Minister Nigel Huddleston announced today.

The government wants a simpler structure where tourism boards, known as Destination Management Organisations (DMOs), are a one-stop shop for visitors to find all they need to know about a local area and will accredit the best tourist boards as the place to go for that information.

DMOs, such as Visit Cornwall, Marketing Manchester and Cumbria Tourism, have the power to drive investment for new attractions, bring in visitors from around the world and boost the local economy. DMOs are often used by tourists to plan trips, book accommodation and find local attractions.

However, last year's independent review into DMOs, carried out by Chair of VisitEngland's Advisory Board Nick de Bois, found that the landscape is overcrowded and fragmented. For example there are 46 DMOs of all shapes and sizes in the South-East alone, which makes it confusing for tourists planning breaks and businesses looking to invest.

To streamline DMOs, support the tourism sector and drive more local investment, DCMS will provide £4 million over the next three years to fund a new accreditation scheme, developed and administered by VisitEngland, for the highest performing DMOs.

This funding will also be used to create a pilot in one region of the country, giving one top-tier DMO or a group of local DMOs the opportunity and investment to restructure under a new model, to show the best their region has to offer.

This plan will make sure that tourists know where to go to find quality, trusted information, tailored to the local area. It will mean that a family holidaying in the Lake District, for example, will be able to easily find a high-quality campsite or hotel, good local food options, information on where the landscape is well-maintained and what range of local activities are on offer for their children from an expert DMO. With streamlined DMOs, it will be easier for tourists to know what is available when planning their breaks, and for local businesses to work together to provide an excellent tourism offer.

Tourism Minister Nigel Huddleston said:

Our brilliant tourism sector is vital to our levelling-up agenda. It creates jobs, helps drive local economies and promotes pride in place, making villages, towns and cities more attractive to visit, live and work in.

This new scheme will show people where to visit and help them plan the best possible trip, supporting our tourism industry to be bigger and better than before.

At their best, DMOs can make a real difference to their local areas. Visit Cornwall, for example, helped to secure over £40 million investment for the Eden Project, which has welcomed more than 18 million visitors and generated £2 billion for the South West.

Marketing Manchester has generated almost £400 million a year for its local economy in visitor spend as well as promoting new international air routes, and Cumbria Tourism was instrumental in winning the coveted UNESCO World Heritage Status for the Lake District National Park.

Under the new accreditation scheme, DMOs will be renamed Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs). The scheme will streamline the sector so holiday-makers and visitors can more easily understand what is on offer in a region and plan trips, and make sure local businesses can come together to successfully develop and market their local area as a must-see destination.

The scheme will also bring together local businesses with the local authority to successfully pitch for funding to develop the area's visitor economy, and efficiently and compellingly market the area to visitors.

The accreditation scheme will run alongside the pilot of a tiering model in a region of England. This pilot will run over the next couple of years and will give one top tier partnership or a collection of partnerships (known as a Destination Development Partnership) funding and the opportunity to focus on activities that ensure their destination remains sustainable, competitive and responsive to challenges such as boosting skills, accessibility and levelling up.

Tourism is vital to England's economy. It contributed £72 billion to the UK in 2019, employs people across the country, delivers local economic growth and makes people feel proud of where they live.

VisitEngland Director Andrew Stokes said:

VisitEngland welcomes the Government's response to the de Bois review of Destination Management Organisations in England and the opportunity to play our part in implementing the recommendations.

Destination Management Organisations are a vital part of England's tourism landscape, connecting with local businesses and Government agencies to attract investment and visitors across the regions, boosting the visitor economy. We look forward to implementing the accreditation scheme and the Destination Development Partnership pilot, ensuring we have the right national and local infrastructure to enable England to continue to be a compelling destination for domestic and international visitors. This will also strengthen the case for future funding.

Malcolm Bell, Chief Executive, VisitCornwall, said:

Visit Cornwall would like to thank Nick De Bois and the team that undertook the review and we welcome this announcement. There has been a growing, and more recently, urgent need to ensure that the tourist board structure in England is fit for purpose for the challenges facing the visitor economy in the coming decades. It recognises past successes, but more importantly creates a clear structure of the proposed Local Visitor Economy Partnerships

These partnerships between the private and public sectors, will ensure coordinated domestic and overseas marketing, delivering increased productivity and improving the quality of employment through tackling seasonality, capitalising on business tourism, whilst making significant progress on net zero and regenerative tourism developments that are key for the future success of the sector.

Sheona Southern, Managing Director, Marketing Manchester, said:

We have long recognised that there needs to be better connection between national policy and local delivery and we hope that this initiative will be the start of creating an

effective tourism structure required to make England competitive globally and put tourism at the centre of local policy making.

Gill Haigh, Managing Director, Cumbria Tourism, said:

DMOs are the glue that bring together the huge array of parties in an area that make up its visitor economy. There has been overwhelming support for the outcomes of the De Bois review which really captured the opportunities to sustainably grow our visitor economy, as well as some of the barriers, but importantly offered Government a clear route forward.

Cumbria Tourism therefore welcomes the announcement from Government today that it intends to simplify and strengthen the structure and looks forward to hearing the finer detail and to ensure we can maximise our potential and work with DCMS, Visit England and partners locally to support sustainable visitor growth, investment and business support.

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