

Conwy's Destination Partnership

Destination Conwy Partnership is the body in which the tourism trade, works alongside Conwy County Borough Council and other key stakeholders, to look at tourism issues across the county and North Wales.

In 2019 the group developed the Destination Conwy Management Plan 2019-2029 and its Action Plan.

The Destination Management Plan is in effect the tourism strategy for the County. It was developed through consultation with the trade, our visitors and key stakeholders. Monitoring the progress against the actions and objectives developed in the plan, is a key role of Destination Conwy.

The Destination Conwy Partnership will carry out the following functions:

- i) Provide a local contribution to the successful implementation of the Destination Conwy Management Plan
- ii) Support, monitor and review the Destination Conwy Management Plan and Action Plan
- iii) Provide guidance and influence local, regional and national tourism planning
- iv) Provide the gateway for open communication between the trade and public bodies

The 3 year term of office for the existing Destination Conwy Partnership members, has now expired. We have reviewed the structure and have made some changes to the way in which the Destination Conwy Partnership operates. This new structure provides more opportunities for tourism businesses and individuals to get involved.

The new structure will be as follows:

The Destination Conwy Partnership will have a Chair and Vice Chair (nominees sought from the Conwy tourism sector).

There will be five **Destination Conwy sub groups** (nominees sought from the Conwy tourism sector for each sub group). A chair to be elected by each groups at its first meeting.

The five groups are:

1 Skills

Looking at the skills issues of the sector, and establishing links to the proposed North Wales Tourism Academy.

2 Destination Management

Coordinating all the aspects of a destination that contribute to a visitor's experience, taking account of the needs of visitors, local residents, businesses and the environment.

3 Marketing

Developing a collaborative approach to marketing Conwy County and North Wales.

4 Destination Conwy Management Plan/ Action Plan

Reviewing progress against the Action Plan, and monitoring the Strategy.

5 Tourist Information and Ambassador Programme

Developing a collaborative approach to Tourist information, and the development of the Conwy Ambassador programme.

Destination Conwy Management Board

The Board will consist of the Chair and Vice Chair of Destination Conwy, the five chairs from the sub groups, a Visit Wales representative, the Conwy County Borough Council Tourism Manager and the Cabinet Member for Tourism)

This group will meet 3 times a year, and as required.

Conwy Tourism Forums

Two Conwy Tourism Forums will be held per annum. The forums will be open to all sectors of the tourism trade within Conwy County. These events will be a mix of presentations to enable the sharing of information, and workshop activity to gauge and gather the views of tourism businesses.

How to nominate yourself for a position

The process and forms to apply for a position on one, or more of the working groups, or for the position of Chair/Vice Chair of the Destination Conwy Partnership can be downloaded <https://www.visitconwy.org.uk/business-portal/destination-conwy>

So what is Destination Management?

Destination Management is a process of coordinating all the aspects of a destination that contribute to a visitor's experience, taking account of the needs of visitors, local residents, businesses and the environment.

By managing the destination, not only do visitors receive the best possible experiences during their time with us, but residents and the local economy benefits through increased stays and thereby expenditure – which (when supported through the Plan and elsewhere) in turn moves around the local economy, generating more employment, business and economic activity

And what do we need to manage?

Conwy County has the huge benefit of having significant natural assets on its doorstep, alongside which are strong tourism-orientated locations and Wales' leading seaside resort. It is the role of the DMP to protect and enhance all these assets in order to deliver the best experience for visitors and for residents, and the maximum economic benefit for the local economy, as well as addressing and mitigating the impact of tourism where it risks negatively impacting communities. It is a core objective of this Plan that all sections of the Council, as well as the widest spread of businesses, recognise the importance that tourism plays in the local economy - and that the support of tourism and the visitor experience is woven into every aspect of work locally.

We also need to recognise that an effective DMP needs to extend its reach beyond the sometimes narrow definitions of tourism. Particularly in somewhere like Conwy County, the elements that make up and go to support the visitor offering are wide and diverse, ranging from the natural environment and cultural heritage through facilities in the community to wider infrastructure areas such as transport and housing.

It is recognised that the County's Planning Framework needs to act as a control to aspects that are deemed detrimental, yet should also be a support mechanism for aspects that are improvements or innovations. Destination Conwy commits to offering its Destination Management experience so that the needs of the destination are understood and become embedded in the planning system, and consequently managed as appropriate to support the tourism and hospitality sectors across the county. In particular, the Framework needs to be inherently agile enough to respond to changes across the tourism sector, so Conwy County can better manage threats and embrace opportunities.

The broad strategic thrust over the coming period is to make Conwy the leading destination area in Wales, and one that is known on the world stage of tourism destinations. This will be achieved through continuing to enhance the full range of infrastructure and facilities across the whole of the county, focussing in particular on developing and improving accessibility and facilities in key visitor locations and along the two "Wales Way Routes" (broadly covering the lines of the A55 and A470). Whilst it will continue to be a priority to address regeneration, the Plan also identifies that existing strong destinations should be positively maintained and either renewed or enhanced to retain their attraction to visitors.

It is worthy of note that several destinations in the county are highlighted by visitors as clean, tidy and well maintained, and the Plan aims to continue and develop issues of sustainability and responsible tourism. This will be through recognised accreditation schemes or through community and business engagement around specific sustainability issues. Additionally there is recognition that at occasional hotspots, pinch points or events, the impacts of large numbers of tourists need to be mitigated and managed. Alongside this will be a thrust to encourage people to explore the area using a range of transport options other than private vehicles, and a long term objective is the development of a better integrated public transport system across the area.

In addition, the Plan recognises that making sure visitors' expectations are addressed requires strategic engagement and collaboration with other partners around broader key issues, in particular skills and workforce and quality upgrading and maintenance of the accommodation offering within the area.

All this work will support extending the tourism market (both in terms of visitors and seasonality) to operating on a year round basis, thus growing value across the county for businesses, individuals and the public sector. In turn this will encourage more collaborative working between partners and improving experiences for visitors and residents alike. The Plan also allows for the opportunity to put in place localised strategies for different parts of the county (for example, east coast and west coast), as better data enables investigation and understanding of the tourism picture in these places. However, this does rely on engagement and support from all partners in ensuring appropriate data is provided for the benefit of all parties.

The Plan has determined a number of objectives that need to be attained across the period of the Plan. In order to achieve each objective a number of key priorities have been identified. These priorities will allow individual actions to be drawn up, with measurable and specific results to be achieved across a given period of time. The objectives and priorities are listed further on in this document.

Ultimately, the delivery of a great visitor experience lies with every single person who lives and works in Conwy County – because every single person influences what happens in the local area. The DMP sits under “Destination Conwy”, which is a partnership organisation aimed at supporting and promoting tourism in the local area.

The new Destination Conwy Partnership will have a Destination Management Board which will oversee the activities and actions in assisting Conwy's destination management in its ambitions and vision.

The Board will consist of the Chair and Vice Chair of Destination Conwy, the five chairs from the sub groups, a Visit Wales representative, the Conwy County Borough Council Tourism Manager and the Cabinet Member for Economic Development. This group will meet 3 times a year, and as required.