



<b>Report To:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date:</b>	30 June 2026
<b>Subject:</b>	South & East Lincolnshire Destination Management Plan
<b>Purpose:</b>	To seek Cabinet approval of the South & East Lincolnshire Destination Management Plan and the Destination Management Action Plan for 2026–2030
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Cllr Elizabeth Sneath, Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing, Conservation and Heritage
<b>Report Of:</b>	Maria Cotton, Service Director for Culture & Regeneration
<b>Report Author:</b>	Jon Burgess, Group Manager Programme Management
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	All
<b>Exempt Report:</b>	No

### Summary

The visitor economy is a significant contributor to South and East Lincolnshire, supporting jobs, businesses, town centres, cultural organisations and the area's natural and heritage assets. The South & East Lincolnshire Destination Management Plan (DMP) provides the strategic direction for the visitor economy across the partnership area, while the Destination Management Action Plan sets out the delivery framework for 2026–2030.

The DMP sets out a shared vision for a confident, year-round visitor economy, together with four strategic priorities, five thematic pillars and district-level opportunities for Boston, East Lindsey and South Holland.

The Action Plan translates this framework into a clear programme to strengthen destination identity, improve the visitor experience, support business engagement and create the conditions for future investment.

For South Holland, the Action Plan reflects the district's distinct offer, including food and agritourism, waterways, heritage, market towns and rural communities. Proposed activity includes destination branding, heritage interpretation, active travel and cycling

opportunities, public realm improvements and initiatives to grow a more vibrant, confident and connected visitor economy.

Cabinet is therefore asked to approve the DMP and the Action Plan to provide a clear strategic and operational basis for delivery, partnership working and future investment.

### **Recommendations**

That Cabinet:

1. Approves the South & East Lincolnshire Destination Management Plan 2026–2030, attached at Appendix A.
2. Approves the South & East Lincolnshire Destination Management Action Plan 2026–2030, attached at Appendix B.
3. Delegates authority to the Service Director for Culture & Regeneration, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, to make minor amendments to the Action Plan and oversee delivery, monitoring and annual refreshes to ensure it remains aligned to local priorities, funding opportunities and partnership arrangements.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

Approval of the DMP and Action Plan will provide a clear strategic and delivery framework for the development of the visitor economy across South and East Lincolnshire between 2026 and 2030.

The plans provide a structured, evidence-based approach to strengthening place identity, improving quality, growing year-round visitation and aligning local delivery with the wider Partnership framework.

For South Holland, the Action Plan provides a structured and evidence-based programme focused on the district's key strengths, including food and agritourism, waterways, heritage and market town experiences.

The delegated authority will support responsive delivery and allow minor updates to reflect changing opportunities, partnership arrangements and funding requirements without returning to Cabinet for operational amendments.

### **Other Options Considered**

A do-nothing approach was considered and rejected, as this would result in fragmented activity, reduce the area's ability to compete effectively and limit opportunities to secure future investment.

A single generic Partnership-wide approach without district-specific action planning was also considered and rejected. While a shared strategic framework is important, delivery must reflect the distinct opportunities, assets and challenges of each area, including those specific to South Holland.

Alternative prioritisation of actions was considered through development of the plan. The proposed priorities are recommended because they are informed by the evidence base, stakeholder engagement and alignment with the wider strategic aims of the Partnership.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 The previous Destination Management Plan expired in 2021. Work had subsequently commenced on a revised plan through the former Local Visitor Economy Partnership.
- 1.2 Following closure of the former Local Visitor Economy Partnership, the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership used the evidence, engagement and preparatory work already undertaken to develop a fully revised and locally relevant Destination Management Plan for the Partnership area.
- 1.3 The proposed Destination Management Plan for 2026–2030 provides the strategic framework for the development of the visitor economy across Boston, East Lindsey and South Holland.
- 1.4 The associated Action Plan has been developed from the DMP evidence base, stakeholder engagement and local priorities, and aligns with the four strategic priorities and five thematic pillars set out within the plan.

## **2. Report**

- 2.1 South and East Lincolnshire benefits from a well-established visitor economy which makes an important contribution to local employment, business sustainability and place identity. The area attracts millions of visitors each year, supported by its coastline, nationally recognised landscapes, market towns and strong cultural and heritage offer.
- 2.2 Notwithstanding these strengths, the visitor economy continues to face a number of structural challenges, including limited national profile and brand recognition, fragmented digital presence and a continued reliance on seasonal coastal tourism. This contributes to uneven performance across the year and underuse of assets outside peak periods.
- 2.3 The wider tourism market is also changing. Visitor expectations increasingly focus on nature-based experiences, heritage, culture, wellbeing and authentic destinations. At the same time, competition between places has increased, and destinations with a clear identity, joined-up offer and strong digital presence are best placed to succeed.
- 2.4 In this context, a coordinated and strategic approach to destination management is required across Boston, East Lindsey and South Holland. The Destination Management Plan responds to that need by establishing a shared vision, priorities and delivery framework for the visitor economy across the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership.
- 2.5 The DMP provides a timely framework to move South and East Lincolnshire from a collection of strong but largely unconnected tourism assets towards a more coherent, competitive and year-round destination offer.

- 2.6 By aligning partners, improving place quality, strengthening the visitor offer and raising the profile of the area, the DMP will support sustainable economic growth, community pride and the wider ambitions of the Partnership.
- 2.7 The plan sets a clear ambition to grow a year-round visitor economy, reduce seasonality, increase dwell time and improve the overall quality and coherence of the offer across the area.
- 2.8 Delivery is structured around four interconnected priorities, ensuring that activity is balanced across place, product development, promotion and sector support.
- Great Places – improving the physical environment, infrastructure, accessibility and quality of public realm to enhance the visitor experience.
  - Quality Experiences – developing and enhancing tourism products and experiences that encourage longer stays and repeat visits.
  - Targeted Marketing and Brand Identity – creating a clear and compelling narrative for the area, supported by strong digital performance and coordinated campaigns.
  - A Confident, Connected Sector – strengthening business support, skills, collaboration and governance across the visitor economy.
- 2.9 The DMP identifies five key areas of strength and opportunity which will guide investment and product development and support the creation of a more distinctive, year-round visitor offer.
- Sport and active leisure
  - Heritage and culture
  - Nature and outdoor experiences
  - Seaside and family offer
  - Food, drink and local produce
- 2.10 While the DMP provides an overarching Partnership framework, it also recognises the distinct roles and opportunities within each council area. This enables delivery to be tailored to local strengths while supporting collaboration, shared marketing and joined-up visitor itineraries across the wider area.
- 2.11 The DMP establishes a delivery model led by the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership, supported by structured governance arrangements, including a Visitor Economy Board and partnership working with businesses and stakeholders. Delivery will be managed through annual action plans, defined roles and responsibilities and coordinated investment.
- 2.12 Progress will be monitored through a performance framework including visitor numbers, economic impact, seasonality, digital performance and business engagement. The plan will be reviewed annually to ensure that it remains responsive to changing conditions and opportunities.

## **Implications**

### **South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership**

Approval of the DMP and Action Plan will strengthen partnership identity, governance and joint delivery across South and East Lincolnshire. It will support shared branding, coordinated investment and a more consistent approach to visitor economy development.

### **Corporate Priorities**

The proposals align strongly with Partnership priorities, including:

- Cultural placemaking and destination development
- Community engagement and participation
- Regeneration of town centres and high streets
- Pride in Place and civic identity
- Economic diversification, including the visitor economy

The DMP also complements existing initiatives, including Boston 2030, Pride in Place programmes, town centre strategies and wider cultural development activity across the Partnership area.

### **Staffing**

Delivery will be led through the Place Directorate, with strategic oversight provided by the Service Director for Culture & Regeneration.

Following the recent Culture and Regeneration Service Review, a dedicated post for South Holland has been established and recruitment is underway to support delivery of the actions set out in the Destination Management Action Plan.

### **Workforce Capacity Implications**

Delivery will be coordinated through existing officer capacity.

Short-life project teams will be established as required.

No additional staffing is requested at this stage.

### **Constitutional and Legal Implications**

There are no direct legal implications arising from approval of the DMP and Action Plan.

The proposed governance arrangements support transparency, accountability and compliance with relevant funding requirements.

The DMP and Action Plan will support a consistent approach to decision-making across the Partnership area.

### **Data Protection**

None

### **Financial**

Approval of the DMP and Action Plan does not commit the Council to new expenditure at this stage.

Delivery will be supported through existing budgets, external funding opportunities and partner contributions where available.

A pipeline of projects will be maintained to support future investment and funding bids.

Major capital projects will be subject to separate business cases.

## **Risk Management**

Over-reliance on Council

Lack of measurable impact

Environmental aims not embedded

Stakeholder confusion

Cross-sector leadership and shared ownership

Defined KPIs and annual reporting

Annual sustainability review

Clear communication

Overall risk level: Low and manageable, subject to effective partnership working and delivery oversight.

## **Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales**

Engagement has been undertaken with businesses, cultural organisations, nature bodies, transport providers and community partners.

This feedback has informed the priorities, actions and proposed delivery arrangements set out in the plan.

Further engagement will continue at individual project level as proposals are developed and delivered.

## **Reputation**

Positive impact expected through stronger identity, improved visitor experience and coordinated marketing.

## **Contracts**

None at this stage

## **Crime and Disorder**

Supports improved perceptions of safety, particularly in town centres and evening economy.

## **Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding**

The Action Plan promotes inclusive access to visitor experiences.

## **Health and Wellbeing**

Supports civic pride, community participation and wellbeing.

Strong positive impact through nature, outdoors, active travel and cultural participation.

## **Climate Change and Environment Impact Assessment**

Strong alignment with sustainable tourism principles.

Nature access, active travel and responsible tourism messaging support environmental objectives.

Environmental assessments will be completed for relevant projects.

## **Acronyms**

DMP – Destination Management Plan

SELCP – South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

LCC – Lincolnshire County Council

EA – Environment Agency

NT – National Trust

RSPB – Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

## **Appendices**

Appendix A: Destination Management Plan (2026–2030)

Appendix B: Action Plan (2026–2030)

**Background Papers**

None

**Chronological History of this Report**

None

**Report Approval**

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Approved for publication: