

## PORTSMOUTH CITY COUNCIL VISITOR MARKETING STRATEGY 2017 – 2020

### Introduction

#### What's in this document and why we've produced it

This document defines the visitor marketing strategy for the period February 2017 to January 2020. It supports Portsmouth City Council's aspiration to identify Portsmouth as the 'great waterfront city'; a vibrant modern city with a strong positive national and international reputation – a place where people want to live work, visit and study and where business and new enterprise choose to locate and invest.<sup>1</sup> It specifically drives the visitor element of this vision and builds on the great work that has been done through the previous marketing strategy developed in 2013.<sup>2</sup>

The strategy takes into consideration the wider strategic context for tourism in England, market trends and Portsmouth's culture-led regeneration strategy .It also considers advances in technology and the way in which consumer behaviour is changing in light of these changes. We have reviewed current marketing activity, spoken to key partners in the city's visitor economy and considered the best approach to take to deliver the marketing strategy within the current constraints of budget and personnel resources.

It looks to grow the visitor economy by identifying key target markets that best match Portsmouth's unique product offering, of maritime heritage and a vibrant seafront, and will provide the best economic return on investment. It considers the channels available to reach these audiences, when and how we will work with partners, the role internal communications can play, and how to monitor and evaluate what we do to ensure we achieve our long-term marketing objectives. In order to deliver the strategy we will develop a fully integrated, measurable marketing and communications plan that leverages the growth of digital and social media, is dynamic and can quickly adapt to market changes.

---

<sup>1</sup> Culture and City Development Business Plan 2016-19

<sup>2</sup> Visitor Marketing Strategy for Portsmouth - report for Portsmouth City Council, Blue Sail 2013

## Strategic Context

### The National Picture

£85 billion was spent on tourism in England in 2015; £46bn of which was spent on day trips, £20bn on domestic overnight trips and £22.1bn on inbound trips. That equates to 1.3bn day trips, 102.7m domestic overnight trips and 36.1m inbound trips. Tourism in England contributes £16.bn to the British economy when direct and indirect impacts are taken into account and supports 2.6m jobs.

International Tourism plays an increasingly important part in England's tourism economy; in August 2016 the Government launched a Tourism Action Plan to encourage more international visitors and rebalance the sector, boosting jobs and growth right across the country (currently 50% of international spend remains within the capital). The report sets out how the Government is working to do this through action on:

1. The tourism landscape: strengthening co-ordination and collaboration
2. Skills: boosting apprenticeships and attracting more people to careers in tourism
3. Common sense regulation: examining the scope for deregulation
4. Transport: making it easier for visitors to explore by rail, bus and coach
5. A GREAT Welcome: driving continuous improvements in our visa service

Visit England reported a record growth for tourism in its 2015-2016 annual review, with both an increase in number of visits and spend. Latest figures for July 2016 suggest an upward trend will continue for the rest of the year as post-Brexit the pound continues to weaken against the dollar and the euro, encouraging more international visits and a rise in domestic staycations.

### Regional Picture

Tourism in the South East in 2015 was worth £12 billion to the local economy, supporting 400,000 jobs; bigger than the tourism economy of Scotland and Wales put together and second only in the country to London.

This comprised of 216 million day visitors who spent £6.62bn; 5.4 million international visitors who spent a total of £2.24bn and 16.8 million domestic overnight trips<sup>3</sup> where £2.57bn was spent.

## Emerging Trends

### National and Regional

The volume and value of tourism comprises of three main sources of data, which are:

- Domestic overnight stays
- International Stays
- Domestic day visits

Regular surveys by VisitBritain/VisitEngland track tourists and their behaviour which enables destinations to understand who their visitors are, what they want, which are the emerging international markets and therefore how to forward plan to capitalise on developing trends.

In 2016, the top trends for domestic overnight trips were:

- Fewer main (4+nights) holidays in 2016
- Consideration of safety when planning a holiday (terrorism)
- An increase in UK short breaks
- Significant growth in the higher socio-economic groups (AB1's)
- 18-34 year olds and families are the most engaged with marketing

From an international perspective, year to date, there have been record levels of tourists, particularly from the Northern European countries (France, Germany, Netherlands and Belgium) in the South East of England.

There has also been uplift in day visits in 2016, but it is too early to tell what the reasons are for this; it could simply be the good weather the country has experienced this year, so some caution needs to apply when forecasting future visitor numbers.

---

<sup>3</sup> (A trip is counted as one, irrespective of the number of people in a family who travel together).

## Digital

The UK is increasingly becoming a digital society with 82% of adults using the Internet daily or 'almost daily' in 2016; 70% of adults are using a mobile phone or smartphone to access information online, and 33% of internet users view their smartphone as the most important device for getting online.<sup>4</sup> The growth of digital platforms and use of social media means that consumers have an increasing amount of choice as to how and when they access information. It is no longer acceptable for organisations to drive consumers to an 'official' channel; instead they need to respond by delivering communications across a variety of channels in variable formats that best suit the demands of their target audiences.

## Demographics

Changes in the composition of society will have a profound effect on the future of domestic leisure tourism. Socio-demographic trends cover a broad range of drivers from changes in the age distribution of society to developments in the nature and make-up of families. Understanding how demographic trends will develop – and how they interact with other trends – is crucial in widening our understanding of the future tourism market in England<sup>5</sup>.

For instance, there is an ageing population in the UK. By the year 2020 more than 50% of the UK will be over 50. This age group controls 89% of the country's disposable wealth so it is likely that collectively they will become an increasingly important target market for tourism<sup>6</sup>. Studies by the National Coastal Tourism Academy<sup>7</sup> has already identified this segment of the population as providing greatest opportunity for growth in off-peak seasons.

Consideration should also be given in future to marketing to the growing BME and immigrant population tourists, including the VFR market; celebrations and cultural holidays are good drivers for this sector and many have a high disposal income: 50% of new millionaires in the UK are Asian.<sup>8</sup>

There has also been a marked shift in consumer attitudes. Visit England reports that consumers increasingly desire curated, bespoke activities in their leisure time; but with greater choice and more access to information than before, consumers also desire simplicity.<sup>9</sup> Consideration therefore needs to be given to the way in which products are marketed, as well as to who, and how they are marketed.

---

<sup>4</sup> Ofcom – *Internet access households and Individuals 2016 statistical report*

<sup>5</sup> [Visitengland.com/demographics](http://visitengland.com/demographics)

<sup>6</sup> High50 (Jun14)

<sup>7</sup> NCTA *Tourism 2016 based on GBTS data 2008-15*

<sup>8</sup> [Visitengland.com/demographics](http://visitengland.com/demographics)

<sup>9</sup> [Visitenglandtrends.com](http://visitenglandtrends.com)

## The City

### Portsmouth's contribution to the Visitor Economy

In 2014 Tourism South East carried out a study of the economic impact of tourism in Portsmouth<sup>10</sup> and estimated the following statistics:

Overall figures (day visits plus staying visits)	9,316,000
Staying visitors:	726,000
Domestic staying visitors	617,000
Overseas staying visitors	109,000
Day trips	8,590,000
Spend for day trips	£309,154,000
Total expenditure (all trips)	£463,489,000
Direct and indirect expenditure:	£601,561,000
Jobs supported	12,574

This demonstrated a growth since 2008 of 16% in total visits, 24% in jobs supported and 28% in overall expenditure. The visitor economy in England is growing at a rate not seen since before the recession in 2007, and so there is now every opportunity for Portsmouth to capitalise on this and market itself as a great destination to visit.

---

<sup>10</sup> *The Economic Impact of Tourism Portsmouth 2014, Tourism South East.*

## Targeting Visitor Growth

The City and Culture Business Development Plan 2016-19 has identified two Key Performance Indicators and future targets for Visitor Services which are set against the baseline figures from the table above.

1. Increase overall visitor numbers by 5% (target 9.7 million visitors) by 2019<sup>11</sup>
2. Increasing the number of overnight stays by 8% by 2019<sup>12</sup>

To achieve these KPI's it is fundamental to have a clear vision of what Portsmouth could look like in the near future.

## Our Vision:

Portsmouth is a city aspiring to great things. It has a culture-led regeneration strategy<sup>13</sup> that encourages economic growth, innovation and enterprise and enhances the competitiveness of the city. The strategy sets out a vision for Portsmouth to be a great waterfront city, unique in its cultural identity, generating opportunities for economic prosperity and improving quality of life, developing an attractive sustainable destination for residents, visitors and investors.<sup>14</sup>

One of the strategy's primary objectives is for Portsmouth to become a city with a distinctive culture, established as a national and international destination.<sup>15</sup> Within this objective there are five service priorities which form the foundations of the marketing strategy.

## Service Priorities

- Support and grow the visitor economy
- Develop Portsmouth to become a European city break destination with world class attractions
- Improve the quality of the visitor experience
- Marketing and promotion of the city as a destination promoting its distinctive strengths and specialisms

---

<sup>11</sup> Culture and City Business Development Plan 2016-19 key performance measures

<sup>12</sup> Culture and City Business Development Plan 2016-19 key performance measures

<sup>13</sup> Portsmouth's Regeneration Strategy, Shaping the Future of Portsmouth

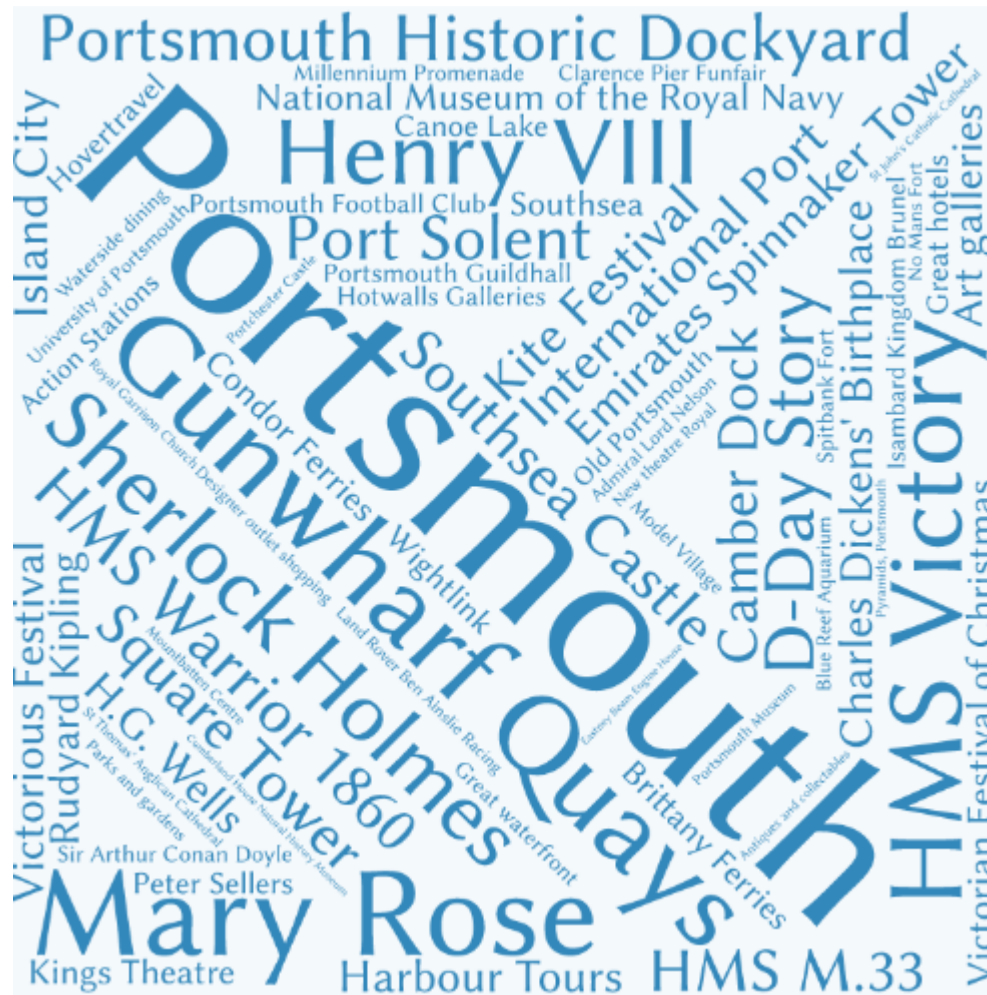
<sup>14</sup> Cultural and City Development Plan 2016-19

<sup>15</sup> Business Plan on a Page 2016-19, objective 4.

- Develop the Portsmouth 'great waterfront city' brand to facilitate a unified and strong marketing message as a national, European and global destination, improving the perception of the city.

### **What Portsmouth has to Offer**

Portsmouth has a wealth of maritime history, cultural and lifestyle attractions, with excellent transport routes within England and on to European destinations. Once here on a day visit, or a short break, there is so much to see and do:



In order to grow the visitor economy thought needs to be given as to how Portsmouth compares to its competitors. Not all that Portsmouth has to offer is unique in itself (e.g. Brighton and Blackpool both have landmark towers) but as a whole it has a unique product portfolio not found in



any other city in England. There are still gaps in the product offering and there will always be external factors that will influence the visitor economy, but as new opportunities present themselves so these should be incorporated into our marketing messages. The SWOT analysis table below describes these in more detail; from this it is possible to distil the core product offerings that will distinguish Portsmouth from other cities looking to gain market share in the same sectors.

## SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<p>Strong Brand – Great Waterfront City            Collaborative partnership working with the Destination Marketing Partnership            Unique offering of maritime heritage combined with a vibrant seafront and a designer shopping outlet            Landmark tower            Wide range of cultural assets            Good transport links into the city including international and cruise port            University most affordable for students in the country (VFR)            Council recognises the importance of the visitor economy and is proactively supportive</p>	<p>Lack of 4/5* Hotels            Negative perception of Portsmouth outside the city            Lack of conference and event facilities            Only a small area of the city is attractive to visitors            Lack of attractions on seafront            Lack of co-ordination/co-operation between some visitor businesses            Lack of consideration by international visitors whose awareness only stretches as far as London (national issue)</p>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p>Portsmouth City Deal            New hotels including Urban Village and Hilton            QE aircraft carriers arrive 2017 and 2020            Funding opportunities with Visit England            Events calendar is expanding and new strategy            Tour de France            America's Cup and other sailing events            Growing cultural offer            Sherlock/Conan Doyle development            D-Day Story and expanding seafront development            International visitors – global and European markets</p>	<p>Downturn in UK economy after Brexit, increase in inflation.            Dockyard – terrorist target (2017 on, after delivery of aircraft carrier)            Reduction in marketing budgets which are already squeezed.            Domestic competition from other cities (e.g. in the China market, which many cities are chasing).            Global uncertainty after the US election results            Competition from other seaside cities</p>

## Core Product Offers

- An unrivalled maritime heritage

- A vibrant waterfront with an ever-changing sea view
- Waterfront shopping and a diverse choice of restaurants overlooking the harbour and seafront
- A landmark tower that has magnificent views of Portsmouth Harbour, the Solent and the city
- A growing programme of high-quality events of national and international importance
- A wealth of cultural attractions and connections just waiting to be explored
- Vibrant evening economy including an eclectic range of eateries and accommodation

#### **Attract Brands**

- Gunwharf Quays
- Emirates Spinnaker Tower
- Portsmouth Historic Dockyard
- Southsea Seafront

## **Strategic Marketing Approach and Objectives**

### **Partnership Working**

Marketing the destination of Portsmouth is carried out through funded activity by Portsmouth City Council, working closely with the local Destination Marketing Partnership and also with other local regional and national partners including Hampshire County Council, Tourism South East, Visit England and Visit Britain.

Partnership working is essential between public and private sector organisations to promote Portsmouth as an attractive destination, as it strengthens the product portfolio, increases the reach of marketing budgets and maximises tourism benefits for the whole city.

The marketing strategy aims to deliver benefits for all partnerships and stakeholders with an interest in Portsmouth as a visitor destination and has been developed to enable close collaboration on future marketing initiatives, as outlined in this document. We will continue to work closely with the Destination Marketing Partnership (DMP) and major partners such as Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, Gunwharf Quays and Emirates Spinnaker Tower; encourage closer collaboration between everybody with a vested interest in tourism, including retailers, hoteliers, cultural attractions, event organisers, venues and transport providers including the International Port, and at a regional and national level, with Tourism South East and Visit England. For the specialists markets, such as the cruise market and the business and conference market we will partner with other DMP organisations to attend trade events to maximise exposure to these markets.

Within Portsmouth City Council, Visitor Services are responsible for delivering tourism marketing and have set strategic marketing objectives in order to achieve the KPI's and service priorities laid out in the Culture and City Business Plan 2016-19

## **Marketing Strategy Objectives**

### **Increase brand awareness of the city across domestic and international markets**

1. To promote the city to all potential domestic and international visitors as a must-see destination.
2. To drive a change in perception of consumers who have a negative and out-dated view of the city.

Having a strong brand and high brand awareness is crucial to any organisation; a brand is about having 'me' appeal. It sums up your attributes and allows prospects and customers to engage with you emotionally; to understand what you have to offer and to want to be a part of it. The stronger the brand, the stronger the engagement from prospects, in turn converting them into customers, engendering their loyalty and encouraging spend. Think Apple, think Nike.

### **Improve market intelligence to understand our customers' needs better**

1. We will take an evidence-based approach to marketing by studying national and regional trends to identify where and how best to grow market share year on year.
2. Invest in market research and data analysis to better understand our target markets, identify gaps in our product offers and potential new opportunities as investment in the city continues.
3. Develop our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) offering through use of digital engagement in order to increase customer retention and drive return visits.

This will enable us to build a stronger picture of the market, our competitors; create a deeper understanding of our target markets, their needs and triggers to respond, strengthen existing customer loyalty and attract new ones. The gathering and analysis of data needs to be ongoing to be meaningful and insightful, using internal and external data, and monitoring of social media.

### **Develop a digital marketing strategy to meet consumer demands**

1. Future-proof our marketing activity by investing in a clearly defined digital marketing strategy that is based on emerging technologies and platforms.

2. Increase online marketing spend in favour of offline to meet both market requirements and the changing behavioural requirements of consumers.

Whilst traditional marketing methods such as PR and print advertising still have a valid place in delivering the marketing activity plan, with continuing budgetary constraints, the strategy seeks to capitalise on the rise of digital and social media and engage with consumers in a timely, relevant and targeted manner, which will provide more measurable results and future-proof our marketing activity.

We will also look to Portsmouth University to leverage opportunities with students, particularly in the field of emerging technologies, such as virtual and ambient reality, as digital marketing will take an increasingly important role in the delivery of our marketing over the next four years

### **Strengthen partnership working to increase share of voice**

1. Define a yearly joint marketing plan with key activities mapped out to avoid duplication of effort and budget.
2. Identify mutually beneficial opportunities where joint marketing activities will deliver bigger returns than individual standalone activities.

This objective focuses on regional and local partnerships; there are also opportunities at a national level to influence the marketing of Portsmouth through collaboration with Visit Britain and Visit England.

### **Develop effective integrated marketing programmes to support visitor growth targets**

1. Take a thematic approach to marketing programmes which reflect the trends identified by Visit England.
2. Provide a consistent view of the city across all platforms increasing both brand awareness and consumer engagement.
3. Include greater measurement and analysis of return of investment to shape future campaigns.

With substantial targets to meet, there is a need to produce well-thought out programmes that are engaging and prompt a positive response.

Knowing who customers and potential customers are is essential if we are to grow the tourist economy. From previous work carried out by PCC Visitor Services, data profiles shared by our DMP partners and analysis of trends identified by Visit Britain/Visit England we can identify the target markets that are most likely to visit Portsmouth and concentrate on developing targeted campaigns that resonate with each audience, and placing Portsmouth firmly on their list of places to consider visiting.

## Target Markets

This strategy considers visitors in their widest context, as defined by Visit Britain/Visit England, which can be divided into two main market groupings:

1. Domestic Visitors: i.e.
  - a. Day visitors
  - b. Staying visitors (overnight or short break)
  - c. Visiting friends and relatives
  - d. Business and conference market
  - e. Group travel market
  
2. International Visitors i.e.
  - a. BRIC<sup>16</sup> market
  - b. European market
  - c. North America
  - d. Cruise market
  - e. Business and conference market
  - f. Group travel market

From these groupings we can then categorise them further into primary and secondary markets. By focusing efforts on the primary target markets we will see a better return on investment through increased visitor numbers and spend. That is not to say we shouldn't consider marketing to the wider audience if an occasion demands, but we must prioritise in order to maximise the best use of our limited resources.

## Primary Target Markets

### Two Hours from Portsmouth - Day Visitors including Domestic Group visits

Recent research and economic impact studies carried out by Portsmouth City Council and a number of local partners in 2015/16 clearly show that the majority of day visitors come from within a two hour drive time of the city. The majority of these visitors live in Hampshire and along the

---

<sup>16</sup> Brazil, Russia, India China

A3 corridor up as far as south-west London. Within this geographical location, and with the data we hold, we can segment our target markets more precisely, identifying them using Mosaic profiling as follows:

- Empty Nesters (50+)
- Aspiring Homemakers (31-35 single or couples with young families)
- Domestic Success (AB1s, single or couples with older families)

### **Overnight/Short-Break Market – Staying Visitors**

If we overlay the visitor profiles for the day visitor market against similar profiles for the rest of the UK we can identify a cohort of people who could also find Portsmouth an attractive city to visit but because of the distance they live, would be ideal to target for an overnight visit or a short break. Likely markets are the densely populated West Midlands and the Northern Home Counties, which have a high disposable income.

### **International - Europe, US, China**

The number of visitors to Portsmouth from Northern Europe has been gaining momentum over the last year, especially in recent months as the euro strengthens against the pound. With Visit Britain and Expedia launching a three-year multi-million pound investment programme to promote Britain to France and Germany and the United States it makes sense for us ride on the back of this programme and leverage opportunities to market to these, and other Northern European countries.

The China outbound market is still growing; 46% by volume last year, with an 18% increase in spend, and the potential to grow further (by up to 30%) by 2020. Whilst China presents opportunities, there is strong competition for their trade from other, better located destinations, but as it is growing at such a rapid rate it is still an important market to penetrate.

Also, the cruise market which is growing in size in both Portsmouth and Southampton and provides opportunities to work with the International Ports, cruise forums and tour operators in encouraging passengers to spend the day in the city rather than venturing further afield. Similarly we will work with Southampton Airport and specific airlines such as BMI, KLM and FlyBe to attract domestic and European travellers to visit Portsmouth.

## **Secondary Markets**

### **Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR)**

Visiting friends and relatives is a strong sector for Portsmouth, particularly as Portsmouth University grows in size and status; it falls both in the day visitor and overnight target market group, but requires separate consideration because of the drivers to visit the city. However VFR does

not increase visitor spend as much as other target markets, hence it falls into the secondary markets category. We would look to push our marketing through residents and the student community and out to friends and family.

### **Business and Conference Market**

The UK and Conference Meeting survey 2016<sup>17</sup> highlighted that whilst revenues were down in 2015, the number of actual events rose. Each event tended to be made up of fewer delegates and 67% of them lasted for a day or less. Previously Portsmouth has not had the venues with a large enough capacity, or the accommodation standard necessary to attract many business events, but as this sector changes, this provides an opportunity for us to target it more effectively.

### **International Markets - rest of world**

The UK is also proving to be an increasingly popular destination for Brazil, Russia and India, and these countries as well as Canada and Australia, plus some of the Middle Eastern states are an important secondary market for us. These will continue to be targeted through the international events we attend with our DMP partners, and as they grow in size, so we will develop deeper relationships with the media and tour operators from these countries.

## **Key Priorities**

1. Increase visitor numbers, and overnight stays to increase tourism revenue overall and broaden visitor spend across multiple attractions and venues, through targeted campaigns to specific audience groups as outlined in 'key target markets'.
2. To dispel the negative perceptions that otherwise potential visitors have of Portsmouth through behavioural change campaigns and activities and remove barriers for visiting the city.
3. To cultivate the younger visitor community and develop and engage with new audiences, through increased use of digital and social media, and emerging technologies, creating a greener footprint for Portsmouth City Council.
4. To proactively promote the city to the media, online travel websites and apps; seek out and share (positive) user generated content, in order to maximise cost-neutral marketing opportunities.
5. To further develop partnership working with local, regional and national tourism organisations, leveraging their resources and channels to optimise our marketing reach.
6. To develop marketing programmes which deliver a coherent and packaged view of Portsmouth, and encourage cross-promotions to enhance visitor experience and encourage return visits.

---

<sup>17</sup> [www.businessvisitsandeventspartnership.com](http://www.businessvisitsandeventspartnership.com)

7. To commission bi-annual qualitative and quantitative research to track visitor perceptions and any changes in visitor profiles so that marketing activities can be adapted accordingly.
8. To improve Customer Relationship Management (CRM) techniques in order to better understand customers' habits and preferences to develop more targeted personalised communications and build customer loyalty.

## Key Messages

The overarching message is 'Portsmouth - the great waterfront City', supported by a number of other key messages that highlight the breadth and diversity of what Portsmouth has to offer to its wide range of audiences. The key messages support one or more of the core product offers of Portsmouth reinforcing all that is good with the city and reasons to visit. In time this will also build brand recognition and brand equity, so that Portsmouth becomes synonymous with the words: 'great waterfront city'.

1. Stay longer, discover more
2. A modern city with tales to tell
3. Over 800 years of maritime heritage
4. Fabulous shopping, dining and culture on the water's edge
5. Ever-changing sea views
6. An emerging vibrant culture

As the landscape of Portsmouth changes, additional accommodation is built, the events strategy is developed and the cultural offering is re-enforced (particularly with the re-opening of the D-Day Museum in 2018) so the marketing messages will evolve to reflect these, creating an even stronger, richer offer that makes Portsmouth stand out from its competitors in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

## Communication Channels

We will use an integrated marketing approach when delivering the marketing activity plan, using both above and below the line channels and pull and push marketing to reach our target markets in the most cost-effective and efficient manner. We will use partners' communication channels to increase reach and strengthen the offer, but specifically for any marketing activity led by PCC we will use the following channels:



## 1. Digital

### a. Website

Visitportsmouth.co.uk currently attracts in excess of 917,000 visitors per year, viewing more than 2.2million pages. This is effectively the showcase for visitors to Portsmouth giving them all the information they are looking for about the city, its attractions, places to stay, where to eat, events etc. Visually stimulating and easy to navigate visitportsmouth.co.uk is a key communication channel for all marketing activity, and as the digital world continues to grow in importance so the website needs to evolve.

The primary ambition for the website is to break the 1 million visitor mark, which would make the site a more attractive proposition to both promoters and advertisers and help towards making it cost-neutral.

### Social Media

The official social media channels for Portsmouth City Council are @VisitPortsmouth on Twitter and @Portsmouththewaterfrontcity on Facebook. In addition to these there are other accounts for individual places in the city such as the D-Day Museum and Southsea Castle designed to increase their visitor numbers through online brand awareness and customer engagement. With our Facebook page already verified (as an authentic account) and Twitter well on the way with nearly 10,000 followers, we are in a strong position to reach a far wider audience and drive them back to the Visitportsmouth.co.uk where they can explore what is on offer in more detail.

### b. Mobile

The Visitportsmouth website is fully responsive, accessible on all devices. Visit Portsmouth also has iPhone and Android apps that pull listings through from the website'.

### c. Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

Currently engaging with over 20,000 consumers online, through the visitor information centre and offline guides, we are taking a holistic approach in building customer loyalty and encouraging retention as well as attracting new visitors. By putting the customer at the heart of what we do and helping them to make the decisions through clear, consistent communications we will create the best experience we can for them prior, during and after they visit Portsmouth.

## 2. Press and Public Relations

There is an old saying: "Advertising is what you pay for, publicity is what you pray for". Using the press and PR as a marketing tool is a cost-effective method of keeping Portsmouth in the public eye; the medium is also seen as more credible than advertising as it appears as editorial and builds trust rather than exposure. However it needs to be understood that there is no guarantee of placement so content needs to be rich, engaging and persuasive. Currently our PR is handled by Tourism South East, with content provided by ourselves. We will review our PR in 2017 and define specific targets to achieve an increase in the volume and reach of coverage over the next three years.

- i. Review press coverage and ave (advertising value equivalent)
- ii. Plan content-rich stories targeting various types of audiences that can be used for seasonal campaigns and have a strong hook.
- iii. Consider use of a PR agency to develop one major campaign a year that is quirky, relevant and will achieve publicity across the national press.
- iv. Put in place specific targets e.g.10% increase in media coverage; amount of coverage in national press titles and trade press.
- v. Host 10 journalist/blogger/vlogger familiarisation visits a year.

### **3. Print**

Print is still an important communication tool for attracting visitors to Portsmouth. We will continue to produce the Visitor Guides, in both A4 and DL format. The smaller guides are currently translated into 5 languages (French, Spanish, German, Dutch and Chinese) and we will consider whether other languages are needed as the Northern European visitor market grows. The distribution will continue as before through lead generation campaigns, a brochure distribution service and Visitor Information Services, but with an annual review, as it is acknowledged that the trend is rapidly moving towards the use only of digital media, especially amongst our younger target audiences.

### **4. Advertising**

We will engage with our major DMP partners (Gunwharf, Portsmouth Dockyard, Emirates Spinnaker Tower and Victorious) to develop future medium or heavyweight campaigns making best use of marketing budgets thereby extending reach and impact.

- a. Develop campaigns with DMP partners that build on the successful 2016 summer campaign (only 90 minutes from London). Total number of views for the underground and cross track poster campaign was 49 million; Target to exceed this by +10% year on year to support our objective of growth in visitor numbers and spend over the next 3 years.
- b. Develop a series of print adverts for trade and partner magazines promoting group, business and conference travel to support growth in these markets.

Offline advertising campaigns will be developed with accompanying creative for online use reinforcing imagery, messaging and any calls to action.

## **5. Events Programme**

Whilst Portsmouth has held a wide variety of events for many years, the 2015 and 2016 America's Cup World Series brought Portsmouth to the attention of visitors and the media from all over the globe, building a positive image of the city at a national and international level as a tourist destination. This has provided the catalyst to develop a formal events strategy that will boost both the visitor economy and the economy of the city as a whole.<sup>18</sup>

- a) We will work closely with the events team to co-ordinate any marketing activity that is live prior or during a major event, to ensure that messages are aligned, is visually complementary and fulfils the objectives of both parties without diminishing the effects of either.
- b) For events that are led, or run by our DMP partners, we will support these through links on Visit Portsmouth, in publications, and through social media.

## **6. Marketing Events and Exhibitions**

Trade events will remain the preferred marketing channel to promote Portsmouth to the domestic, international and group travel market. We will continue to work with local, regional and national partners such as TSE and DMP supplying content, funding and representation as appropriate.

---

<sup>18</sup> Portsmouth City Council Events Strategy

## 7. Visitor Experience

An enriched visitor experience, from first point of contact through to the actual visit significantly increases visitor satisfaction and spend. Whilst the above channels of communication deal largely with pre-arrival, we need to ensure that once visitors are in town they continue to feel valued, find their way around satisfactorily and can easily locate additional information to do so. As well as the digital channels we will continue to provide a Visitor Information Service (including an additional offer in the new Hard travel hub), and bookable Portsmouth greeters and tourist guides.

## 8. Partner Channels

Partnership working is a core part of the marketing strategy, and for some of our target groups it will be our main route to market.

- a. Group visits and the travel trade. We will continue to work with DMP partners that lead on this activity attending group trade shows across England.
- b. International markets. As before we will contribute to regional and national campaigns pushing our marketing through their channels which include, but are not limited to, websites, e-newsletters, trade events and advertorials, and one to one sales missions. We will also continue and develop work with city partners at the International Port.
- c. Business and conference market. Continue to foster relations with Destination Hampshire which provides venue information online and in print and organises familiarisation trips for professional conference organisers.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

With restricted budgets and personnel, it is vital that every piece of marketing activity or campaign must fulfil what it sets out to do. Therefore each piece of work will be developed so that it can be monitored during its conception and delivery, and evaluated post-completion. This will enable smarter working as knowing what works, or what has been less successful will enable future campaigns or activities to be refined, or trigger further work to improve market intelligence.

### Monitoring and evaluation techniques

- Web analytics
- Database contacts
- Visits to attractions
- Year on year event numbers
- Campaign response figures
- Perception tracking (through online questionnaires)

- PR coverage
- Advertising metrics (opportunities to view etc.)

## **Communication - positive impact**

Internal communication is an integral part of the marketing strategy. It ensures that colleagues, internal stakeholders, council leaders and the wider audience of the DMP are aware of any campaigns or activities, what the key messages are and what the desired outcomes are.

For PCC colleagues, seeing marketing campaigns before they launch can give them a greater sense of belonging, generate a better understanding of what motivating messages are used to promote the city, and help in the promotion of the campaign itself by talking about it with friends and family.

Proactive engagement with internal stakeholders and council leaders is important in order to keep them abreast of marketing activities, see how budgets are being spent and, where there are campaign deliverables, giving them the tools to promote further through their own channels (e.g. council meetings, external stakeholders, etc.)

Dissemination of marketing activities to partners will continue through the DMP monthly meetings; any data analysis or marketing metrics will also be shared to reflect on successes or shape future activity.

## **Marketing Activity Plan 2017/18**

The marketing activity plan for 2017/18 considers the logistical details of executing the strategy, including budgets, timescales, which audiences are being targeted and who is leading on individual campaigns or activities. As a living document this is subject to adaptation in response to business requirements or external forces such as changing market or economic conditions. See Appendix A.