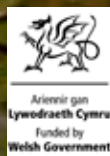


tourism partnership north wales **annual review** 2010-11 executive summary



what to do



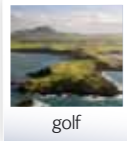
www.breaksnorthwales.co.uk

short breaks



www.walkingnorthwales.co.uk

adventure



www.golf-northwales.co.uk

golf



www.walkingnorthwales.co.uk

walking



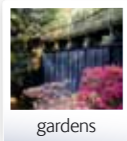
www.moviemapnorthwales.co.uk

moviemap



www.eventsnorthwales.co.uk

events



www.gardensnorthwales.co.uk

gardens



www.attractionsnorthwales.co.uk

attractions



www.walledtowns.co.uk

walled towns



www.giantsnorthwales.co.uk

giants



www.walkingnorthwales.co.uk

groups

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01745 589020
www.tpnw.org

foreword



Photograph: Eye Imagery

Our priority is to develop and underline our credentials as a world class destination for visitors.

The stakes are high because tourism is such a vital and increasingly important component of the North Wales economy.

It brings in £2.1 billion of income to the region each year, supports more than 38,000 jobs and provides the lifeblood for many small businesses.

We believe it can make an even greater contribution in future and is a sustainable sector which, properly managed, will continue to thrive for generations to come.

Thanks to the dedication of our staff and the support of our Board, North Wales is continuing to punch above its weight in attracting visitors to the region.

But we are operating in a very competitive environment so our

five year strategy, Tourism Strategy North Wales 2010-2015, has set some ambitious goals.

Foremost among them is our desire to be recognised as a Top Five destination in the UK, internationally known for our natural beauty, dramatic scenery, heritage and distinctive culture.

We want to be known as centre of excellence for adventure sports and the market leader for activity tourism of all sorts.

The continuing gloom of the economic backdrop is a double edged sword for North Wales.

More people are choosing to take their holidays in the UK. Right on our doorstep, we have 17 million people living in the conurbations of the North West and the Midlands which leaves us well placed to take advantage of the staycation phenomenon.

To succeed, we must ensure

the quality of our attractions, accommodation and the service we provide matches the magnificence of our incomparable scenic beauty and the richness of our heritage and culture.

Increasingly, new technology is being harnessed so that we can communicate more immediately and more effectively in our marketing campaigns to make our potential audience know about what we have to offer.

Quite rightly, when it comes to the quality of the product, people's expectations in terms of quality are becoming higher all the time and we must continue to rise to the challenge with a constant quest to improve what we do and how we do it.

We must, at all times, ensure that our efforts benefit the communities of North Wales in a balanced and sustainable way.

The key to ensuring future prosperity is working in partnership. The public and private sectors need to work even more closely in future to ensure that we make the most of reduced budgets.

It is imperative that the trade and public bodies are in complete concert to ensure mutual benefit for all concerned, working to a common agenda.

If we are clever and use joined up thinking, our synergy will create a North Wales offer that is greater than the sum of its individual parts. The future lies in capitalising on what makes this area special - North Wales is a lot less ordinary and we need to embrace our strong and enduring appeal so that we take our rightful place in the Top Five.



Neil Rowlands
Chairman

Dewi Davies
Regional Strategy Director

Front Page: Tree Top Adventure near Betws y Coed

Above: A views up the Ogwen Valley in Snowdonia.

executive summary

Times are still tough but tourism remains one of the bright spots on the economic horizon.

The visitor economy is playing an important role in regenerating the region and leading us out of the recession.

With that in mind, we invested £250,000 drive to promote tourism through our current network of five marketing areas.

We continued our move away from the traditional printed literature and moved more towards promoting the area through PR and targeting niche markets like group travel organisers.

Increasingly, we are doing more and more marketing via the Internet and social media which, appropriately in the current economic climate, means that you can reach many more people for less money.

Once we attract people here it is vitally important that we create the right impression because first impressions really do count.

We are therefore put a great deal of effort into Destination Management in conjunction with the six local authorities in North Wales.

Destination Conwy has already been successfully launched and we are working on similar scheme in the other counties.

We benefited from the worldwide interest in Ryder Cup Wales 2010 which is one of the biggest global events in the sporting calendar.

Golf clubs across North Wales are reaping the benefit from an online booking service that's attracting players from far and wide, mainly from the North West of England and the Midlands.

As a result, there has been a massive increase in online bookings which have generated nearly £500,000 in green fees over the past three years.

Central to the success of the campaign is the www.golf-northwales.co.uk website built and is operated by top online tee time company, BRS.

Customers can not only book online but also see images of the different golf courses as well as details about special

offers and nearby accommodation.

Television antiques expert Adam Partridge who stars in the hit series, *Flog it!*, is working with Tourism Partnership North Wales on a new campaign to attract groups, coach parties and cruise ships to the region.

He is giving after dinner speeches and taking visitors on tours of historic houses, casting an expert eye on the antiques on show.

We are already reaping the benefits of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal being given World Heritage status - another example of our glorious past creating future prosperity.

During the year we held two successful trade meetings, one in Mold and the other in Anglesey.

Professor John Lennon, the founding director of the Moffat Centre for Travel and Tourism Business Development, in Glasgow, was the guest speaker in Mold where he stressed it was essential for operators to embrace and exploit the internet revolution.

The potential was underlined by the raw statistics because Facebook, for example, has 500 million active members while 50 million tweets are posted every day.

Meanwhile, TV travel expert Simon Calder correctly predicted at the Anglesey meeting that that the Royal wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton would be beneficial to tourism on the island in particular and North Wales in general.

In common with many other organisations, we are working to a reduced budget which was down by 10 per cent on the previous year.

Even so, we continued to maximise the return on investment and our campaigns have generated a total of £12 million - which means that for every £1 we spend we made £15.

It is a record of which we can be proud.



Top: From left. Giles Greenwood, Golf Tourism Development Director, IAGTO, Roger Lewis, Golf Wales, Ginny James, Coastal Cluster, Carole Startin, Golf Wales, Claire Sanders, Golf Wales, Rob James, proprietor of Old Padeswood Golf Club, Bob King, BRS and Rob Holt, Ryder Cup Wales Chief Executive at the Golf North Wales Forum.

Left: From left, Fiona Gresty, Marketing Manager North Wales Tourism, Television antiques expert Adam Partridge and Carole Startin, Marketing Executive for TPNW.

Far left: Mountain biking at Coed Llandegla.

business plan

projecting our distinctive strengths

Our aim is to re-establish North Wales as a Top Five UK destination for visitors.

To achieve our ambition we need to project our distinctive strengths with more compelling and inspiring messages.

In doing so, we have focused our marketing activity on the primary market of UK family holidays, short breaks and activities as well as a number of niche markets which have a potential for growth.

As part of the new approach, there has been a strategic shift to Internet and PR-based activity which is a highly cost-effective way of creating a stronger impact.

We have been looking at reducing the number of different campaigns in North Wales in order that a more powerful message can be sent out to potential customers.

The same logic is driving our review of the number of marketing areas. There are currently five of them and the likelihood is that the re-evaluation will result in two or three marketing areas with greater clout and a more coordinated, focused set of priorities.

North Wales has strong natural assets, some distinctive selling points and can offer a great deal to see and do within a small geographic area.

Family holidays have been a traditional strength of the region and the gloomy economic climate has led to new opportunities for North Wales.

Although a relatively new phenomenon, the word staycation is now well established as a part of the tourism lexicon, with families and empty nesters alike reviewing their holiday taking patterns as a result of tighter budgets and higher fuel costs.

A quarter of the UK population lives within a two-hour travel time of the region's favourite holiday, short break or day trip destinations - so we are virtually on the doorstep for millions of people from the North West and the Midlands.

Among the niche markets being



TV travel expert Simon Calder

targeted is business tourism and we have been busy trying to attract more conferences, meetings and exhibitions to the region.

One of our unique selling points as a location for business tourism is the exceptional asset we have in our great outdoors, stretching from the Isle of Anglesey to Snowdonia, along our coastline to the Clwydian Range.

We have a very different offer to the many traditional conference centres in built up, urban areas in the UK – or overseas – and is in contrast to the greyness of urban life..

On top of that, we are very accessible and very affordable in North Wales for international and UK businesses that want to hold a conference.

investing in product excellence

Ensuring the quality of our product is

absolutely central to the health, well-being and future success of the visitor economy.

It is vital that we stimulate investment to meet the needs of a changing market place so that we exceed the expectations of our customers - and this must be done in such a way that it complements and enhances our natural strengths.

Our efforts have been concentrated in three main areas: quality accommodation, diverse attractions and excellent activities.

As part of this drive, Visit Wales announced the development of three tourism centres of excellence in the region with the aim of providing first class facilities.

The aim is to create hubs of sustainable tourism around cycling in Coed Llandegla, activity based tourism in Snowdonia and an

interpretive visitor centre in the Henfaes building in Aberdaron.

We are also working with our partners in Denbighshire and Flintshire to harness the tourism potential of the Clwydian Range sustainably and in a way that is sensitive to its importance as an internationally important Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The Flintshire Rural Development project as no fewer than 91 businesses engaged and are benefiting from mentoring or financial support through the Local Investment Fund to improve their tourism product.

The development of the cruise ship berthing facility at Holyhead remains a major objective and we have pumped the post of the cruise co-ordinator at the port.

Some of the larger ships carry up to 3,000 passengers who venture ashore

and, as well as visiting Anglesey, will often venture further afield to Snowdonia or go shopping in Llandudno.

It is therefore important that we maximise the income pound for pound per customer by giving them every reason to have a great experience and part with their money.

The need to improve product excellence is the reason we continued to support Anglesey Tourism Awards, the Gwynedd Business Awards and the Flintshire Business Awards.

We pumped £25,000 into the Walking North Wales campaign because we believe this is a market with vast potential.

Among the recent initiatives is the North Wales Pilgrim's Trail, a 110-mile foot trail across the region, from Bardsey Island to Basingwerk Abbey in Greenfield.

At the same time, we are tapping into mobile phone technology to provide virtual guidebooks for walkers following so-called eTrails.

North Wales has so much to offer walkers and it is important we engage with them and provide a sustainable business plan to develop walking as a leisure pursuit for the future.

providing an outstanding experience

Visiting North Wales must be memorable for all the right reasons.

We only get one chance to create a good first impression so we are making it a priority to ensure that the people who come here have an outstanding experience.

At the very heart of our efforts is Destination Management to give us the edge over our many and varied competitor destinations.

The concentration on Destination Management is made all the more important by instant ubiquity of social media communications means people can post a positive message or convey that they have had a bad experience very quickly to a large number of people.

Destination Conwy has now been established and we are working with partners in the private and public sectors, including the other five local authorities in North Wales and the Snowdonia National Park Authority.

The aim is to create an "Excellent Visitor Experience" so that people want to come back to North Wales – and they tell their friends and family to come here too.

Destination management is all about good practice which requires cooperation between the public and private sectors to deliver a quality experience for visitors when they're here in North Wales.

We are now working hard with all the relevant bodies to create a new network to include Destination Conwy, Destination Wrexham, Destination Flintshire, Destination Denbighshire, Destination Anglesey and Destination Gwynedd.

That includes everything from strengthening the transport infrastructure and highway signage, keeping our streets clean, providing a sense of place and a lot more besides.

We are developing a richer local experience through making more of events and festivals, exposing visitors to our arts, food and shopping and Welsh heritage and culture.

One of the ideas being explored is the concept of Visitor Payback championed in Cumbria.

Visitors are asked to donate a very small sum. Tourism-related businesses are encouraged to join the scheme. The success of the programme in Cumbria was outlined by the Director of the Cumbria Partnership Sue Savege at a seminar organised by Tourism Partnership.

An important aspect of the visitor experience is ensuring that they receive high quality service so we put a great deal of effort into appropriate training to improve the skills of those working in the tourism industry.

We also supported the recruitment of 16 year old school leavers at three locations across North Wales with a view to them becoming Hospitality Ambassadors.

People's expectations these days are much higher than they have ever been. The bar is constantly being raised and it is vital that North Wales is ahead of the game.

working together in partnership

Working together in partnership is a key objective so that we can harness the energies of the public, private and not-for-profit sectors.

Given the difficult economic context, it is more important than ever that we work together in the face of increased competition for business.

We have collaborated with our partners in the five marketing area partnerships, tourism associations, rural development programmes, the six local authorities along with the Snowdonia National Park Authority and our colleagues in the trade through North Wales Tourism.

Our stakeholder website www.tpnw.org now has a Policy, Strategy and Research section which identifies key documents online produced by TPNW and other key partners.

As part of the process of developing our shared vision, we went on a learning journey to Scotland accompanied by the internationally

renowned Destination Management expert, Dr Terry Stevens. Our ports of call included Fort William, Lochaber, Loch Ness and Speyside.

Securing better recognition of the value of visitor economy to the fabric and the economy of North Wales remains a priority.

We continued to communicate the importance of tourism to decision makers so that their opinions are based on accurate information so that reputation of the industry is enhanced and properly represented.



Director of the Cumbria Partnership Sue Savege

Trade Directors

Neil Rowlands
Darryl Shaw
Anwen Jones
James Hewett
Andrew Baker
Nia Rhys Jones

Chairperson
Vice Chairperson
General
Snowdonia Mountains & Coast
General
North Wales Coastal Region

Local Authority Directors

Cllr R H Wyn Williams
Cllr David Thomas
Cllr Bob Parry OBE
Cllr Goronwy Edwards
Cllr Matt Wright
Cllr Gail Hall
Karen Whitney-Lang

Gwynedd Council / Vice Chairperson
Denbighshire County Council
Isle of Anglesey County Council
Conwy County Borough Council
Flintshire County Council
Snowdonia National Park Authority
Wrexham County Borough Council

Trade Advisors to the Board

Sam Nayar
John Les Tomos

Destination Conwy
Flintshire Tourism Association

The full version of the Annual Review 2010-11 is available at www.tpnw.org