

Major boost for North East tourism as region is chosen for initiative to increase visitor numbers

- Aim is to create one-stop shop to show off the best of region, attract investment and boost local economy
- Scheme will help attract more visitors through new initiatives and target major national and international events and markets

The North East has been selected as the location for a major tourism project which aims to attract more investment, welcome more sporting, business and cultural events, support business growth, create new jobs, and boost domestic and international tourist numbers.

Tourism boards, known as Destination Management Organisations (DMOs), help businesses and visitors find out about an area and often lead the development of the local tourism sector.

But last year's independent review into DMOs carried out by Nick de Bois, found the landscape is overcrowded and fragmented. For example, there are more than 150 DMOs of all shapes and sizes in England which makes it confusing for tourists planning breaks and businesses looking to invest.

To fix this problem and make sure the country is providing tourists with the best service, the government is streamlining DMOs by accrediting the top performing organisations so they can grow the visitor economy and attract major business, cultural and sporting events. The [plans](#) were set out earlier this year.

As part of plans to overhaul the current system, NewcastleGateshead Initiative in the North East has been selected to lead a pilot in partnership with Visit Northumberland and Visit County Durham working across seven local authority areas. The partnership will receive £2.25 million to help successfully develop and market the region as a must-visit destination while attracting further private investment and driving growth.

The aim of the partnership model is to extend the tourism season and attract more visitors from across the UK and abroad through initiatives such as the creation of Tour de Yorkshire, following the Tour de France stage in Yorkshire back in 2015, or the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham this summer.

By working in partnership, tourism boards will be able to attract new hotels, develop major attractions such as the Eden Project in Cornwall, build on local heritage and cultural assets through the likes of UNESCO World Heritage bids, grow the food and drink offer and maximise the potential of the region's natural assets, including its dark skies, beaches and national parks.

Working with the tourism industry and the growing digital cluster,

partnerships will also make sure that the tourism offering is fully accessible to all visitors including families and visitors with access needs. For example, NewcastleGateshead Initiative recently worked with tech company Kerckhoffs to capture an immersive experience of Newcastle's Quayside Market using Eyemmersive technology. The video means that visitors can explore the market virtually and prepare children with special educational needs and disabilities before they experience it in real life.

Tourism Minister Stuart Andrew said:

From Hadrian's Wall to Durham Cathedral and the bright lights of Newcastle, the North East has much to offer tourists from around the world, but we want to go further and attract even more visitors.

We are looking at what more we can do to streamline the way the region's tourism bodies work together, improve the region's offer and the way it markets itself.

With £2.25 million in funding, we hope the North East can be a pioneer for other areas in unlocking its potential and putting its best foot forward.

VisitEngland Director Andrew Stokes said:

Congratulations to the North East on being announced as the pilot region for the Destination Development Partnership (DDP).

The UK Government's decision to proceed with a pilot approach is a valuable opportunity to prove the DDP concept, demonstrating the benefits that these reforms will have if rolled out nationwide. We will also be able to really measure an element of funding at a regional level to develop tourism and what impact that will have, strengthening the case for future funding.

We look forward to working with NewcastleGateshead Initiative and Northumberland and Durham tourism boards to develop the DDP pilot, ensuring we have the right infrastructure in place to enable England to continue to be a compelling destination for domestic and international visitors.

Sarah Green, CEO, NewcastleGateshead Initiative:

This pilot is an incredible opportunity to unlock our growth potential in the North East, attracting more visitors, reaching new international markets, creating jobs, growing businesses, attracting investment, and reinforcing local pride in our place.

As the first Destination Development Partnership, we will work with our partners in Visit County Durham and Visit Northumberland to ensure the tourism sector is supported and grows across all seven local authorities in the region. Our region will act as a blueprint for the rest of England, and we could not be prouder to help shape the future landscape of destination management organisations, working in partnership to deliver local economic growth through the visitor economy.

From Auckland Castle to Alnwick Gardens, from dark skies to sparkly venues, from fish and chips to fine dining – the aim of this partnership is to provide an inclusive welcome for all, attracting more international and domestic visitors with a fantastic regional offer and visitor experience.

Partnerships should support businesses to create sustainable tourism offers, reduce their carbon footprint and offer consumers opportunities to enjoy themselves whilst minimising their impact on the environment.

Thanks to the new partnerships, tourists will know where to go to find quality, trusted information, tailored to their destination. Going forward, it will also mean that tourism boards can work more effectively with local authorities to explore new initiatives such as travel initiatives that make it seamless for tourists to get around the local area.

Evidence will be collected throughout the pilot to understand how effective the proposed model is and to support any future funding considerations.

If the pilot is successful, the government will look to roll the partnership model out to other regions across England.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

- See the full DMO review response on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)
 - DCMS is backing the country's powerhouse sectors to grow the economy and make a difference where people live.
 - DCMS sectors, like tech, telecoms and the creative industries, contributed £211 billion to the economy last year and support more than four million jobs across the UK. And they are creating new jobs, with 250,000 more jobs now than in 2019, before the pandemic.
 - Tourism is vital to England's economy. It contributed £74 billion to the UK in 2019, employs people across the country, delivers local economic growth and makes people feel proud of where they live.
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Operational Honours and Awards List

November 2022

The latest Operational Honours and Awards List has been announced recognising the bravery, commitment, and commendable service of Armed Forces personnel.

The recipients have all shown outstanding courage and dedication while on operations.

The full list is below:

Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE)

Commodore (now Rear Admiral) Stephen Mark Richard MOORHOUSE, OBE, Royal Navy

Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE)

Commander Claire Fiona THOMPSON, Royal Navy

Lieutenant Colonel William James MEDDINGS, The Royal Anglian Regiment

Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE)

Chief Petty Officer Logistician (Supply Chain) Laura PERRY, Royal Navy

Warrant Officer Class 1 Engineering Technician (Marine Engineering) Clint WHEELER, Royal Navy

Major Benjamin Sean Costello ATTRELL, Corps of Royal Engineers

Major Steven John HOWARD, Army Air Corps

Squadron Leader Jonathan Jack EDDISON, Royal Air Force

Flight Lieutenant Victoria Grace KELLAGHER, Royal Air Force

Mention in Despatches (MID)

Sergeant Adam James HUMPHREYS, 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards

Queen's Commendation for Bravery (QCB)

Lance Corporal (now Retired) Fraser Alan Duncan GEE, Royal Tank Regiment

Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS)

Petty Officer Warfare Specialist (Electronic Warfare) Timothy Stephen DODGE, Royal Navy

Lieutenant Commander Alexandra Katherine HARRIS, Royal Navy

Leading Warfare Specialist (Underwater Warfare) Jake Ryan HOBDAV, Royal Navy

Warrant Officer Class 1 Engineering Technician (Communications and Information Systems) Christopher ROBBINS, Royal Navy

Staff Sergeant (now Warrant Officer Class 2) Meghann Kylie BRADBURY, Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps

Captain Andrew Robert MACBETH, Royal Tank Regiment

Corporal (now Acting Sergeant) Toyah Louise PALMER, Intelligence Corps

Captain Helena Katheryn RICHARDSON, Royal Regiment of Artillery

Acting Warrant Officer Kevin Edward JONES, Royal Air Force

Flight Lieutenant Graeme John RITCHIE, Royal Air Force

Acting Corporal Stefan COLE, Royal Army Medical Corps

Boost for UK fishing industry with new infrastructure projects

Funding to boost the UK fishing industry through projects to upgrade infrastructure and revive local docks has been announced today, as the latest round of investment opens for bids from the UK-wide £100 million Seafood Fund to modernise the sector.

[Winning projects set to receive a share of £20 million](#) include the expansion of processing facilities for popular British fish like Scottish salmon and Cornish sardines, alongside money to bring an ageing dry dock back to life.

[The UK Seafood Fund](#) is a landmark government investment supporting the long-term future and sustainability of the UK fishing and seafood industry, with the infrastructure strand of the Fund helping to pay for upgrades to ports, processing and aquaculture facilities so they can meet future demand whilst also boosting jobs and economic growth.

As well as announcing the winners from the first round of this scheme, the government has today also confirmed a further £30 million will be made available for infrastructure projects as the latest round of funding opens for bidding.

The infrastructure scheme also supports businesses to become more environmentally sustainable, with successful bidders in Round 1 investing in greener technologies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to more reusable materials.

Fisheries Minister Mark Spencer said:

Fishing communities are an important part of the UK's heritage and they make a valuable contribution to our economy, so we are backing them with funds to boost growth and opportunities across the industry.

This funding will ensure seafood businesses throughout the supply chain are well-equipped to keep pace with increasing demand at home and abroad, boosting production and sustainability and building a resilient sector for the future.

Successful bidders from the first round of infrastructure funding will receive a share of £20 million from the government, matched with nearly £50 million of investment from private sources. They include:

- HSH Coldstores who are investing in a cold storage and logistics facility to further expand seafood processing in Grimsby and generate new jobs in the area;
- Scottish company Denholm Seafoods who will install equipment to increase production of mackerel and herring landed at Peterhead;
- Cornish based Falfish who will invest in new technology to grade, freeze and pack pelagic fish in support of building two purpose-built Sardine fishing vessels;
- Shoreham Port who are transforming a historic dry dock into a modern facility for local and visiting fleets.

Tom Willis, Chief Executive at Shoreham Port, said:

We are delighted our application to redevelop the Dry Dock at Shoreham Port has been successful. An essential facility for vessel owners, it is one of the few dry docks remaining in the south of England and is part of our proud history, serving users since the 1930s.

When engaging with the fishing community, investment in improving Dry Dock capability is consistently highlighted as a priority. The redeveloped Dock will offer excellent dry maintenance facilities for vessels up to 50m in length, with workshop access and quayside space. Commencing shortly, the project will be completed by early next summer".

Allan Stephen, Director at Denholm Seafoods, said:

We are delighted with the support we have received from DEFRA, which from the outset has been highly productive. Securing the DEFRA grant will enable Denholm Seafoods to invest in our new freezing and production facilities which will maintain our high

quality product.

The UK has a thriving seafood sector with exports of salmon – one of the UK's most important exports – worth around £600m annually and other abundant fish stocks such as Cornish sardines in demand on the continent for their quality.

For the second round of the UK Seafood Fund infrastructure scheme, which is worth £30 million and opens today, businesses will have until March 2025 to deliver their transformational projects meaning a wider range of organisations will be able to apply.

Defra will also shortly announce successful applicants from the [Fisheries Industry Science Partnerships \(FISP\)](#) scheme, part of the UK Seafood Fund, which funds data collection and research to support sustainable fisheries management. The final FISP round will launch in December 2022.

[New laws to better protect victims from abuse of intimate images](#)

- new offences to be created in crackdown on abusers who share intimate images without consent
- changes will strengthen law and deliver on Prime Minister's pledge to outlaw 'downblousing'
- comprehensive package of measures to modernise legislation following Law Commission review

Under a planned amendment to the Online Safety Bill, people who share so-called 'deepfakes' – explicit images or videos which have been manipulated to look like someone without their consent – will be among those to be specifically criminalised for the first time and face potential time behind bars.

The government will also bring forward a package of additional laws to tackle a range of abusive behaviour including the installation of equipment, such as hidden cameras, to take or record images of someone without their consent.

These will cover so-called 'downblousing' – where photos are taken down a woman's top without consent – allowing police and prosecutors to pursue such cases more effectively.

This will deliver on Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's pledge to criminalise the practice, in line with previous measures this government has taken to outlaw 'upskirting'.

Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Justice, Dominic Raab, said:

We must do more to protect women and girls, from people who take or manipulate intimate photos in order to hound or humiliate them.

Our changes will give police and prosecutors the powers they need to bring these cowards to justice and safeguard women and girls from such vile abuse.

Today's announcement builds on the campaign of Dame Maria Miller MP, as well as recommendations from the Law Commission, to introduce reforms to the laws covering the abuse of images.

The amendment to the Online Safety Bill will broaden the scope of current intimate image offences, so that more perpetrators will face prosecution and potentially time in jail.

The Domestic Abuse Commissioner, Nicole Jacobs, said:

I welcome these moves by the government which aim to make victims and survivors safer online, on the streets and in their own homes.

I am pleased to see this commitment in the Online Safety Bill, and hope to see it continue its progression through Parliament at the earliest opportunity.

Around 1 in 14 adults in England and Wales have experienced a threat to share intimate images, with more than 28,000 reports of disclosing private sexual images without consent recorded by police between April 2015 and December 2021.

The package of reforms follows growing global concerns around the abuse of new technology, including the increased prevalence of deepfakes. These typically involve the use of editing software to make and share fake images or videos of a person without their consent, which are often pornographic in nature. A website that virtually strips women naked received 38 million hits in the first 8 months of 2021.

The government will take forward several of the Law Commission's recommendations to ensure legislation keeps pace with technology and can effectively tackle emerging forms of abuse. This includes:

- Repealing and replacing current legislation with new offences to simplify the law and make it easier to prosecute cases. This includes a new base offence of sharing an intimate image without consent and 2 more serious offences based on intent to cause humiliation, alarm, or distress and for obtaining sexual gratification.
- Creation of 2 specific offences for threatening to share and installing equipment to enable images to be taken.
- Criminalising the non-consensual sharing of manufactured intimate images (more commonly known as deepfakes).

The move builds on government action in recent years to better protect victims and bring more offenders to justice, including making 'upskirting' and 'breastfeeding voyeurism' specific criminal offences, extending 'revenge porn' laws to capture threats to share such images, and using the Online Safety Bill to create an offence specifically targeting 'cyberflashing'.

Ruth Davison, CEO of Refuge, said:

Refuge welcomes these reforms and is pleased to see progress in tackling abuse perpetrated via technology. As the only frontline service with a specialist tech abuse team, Refuge is uniquely placed to support survivors who experience this form of abuse.

We campaigned successfully for threatening to share intimate images with intent to cause distress to be made a crime, via the Domestic Abuse Act, and these reforms will further ensure police and law enforcement agencies rightly investigate and prosecute these serious offences.

Tech abuse can take many forms, and Refuge hopes that these changes will signal the start of a much broader conversation on the need for strengthening the response to online abuse and harm.

DCMS Secretary of State Michelle Donelan said:

Through the Online Safety Bill, I am ensuring that tech firms will have to stop illegal content and protect children on their platforms, but we will also upgrade criminal law to prevent appalling offences like cyberflashing.

With these latest additions to the Bill, our laws will go even further to shield women and children, who are disproportionately affected, from this horrendous abuse once and for all.

The government will bring forward the wider package of changes as soon as parliamentary time allows and will announce further details in due course.

Notes to editors

- The law recognises that intimate image abuse is harmful and wrong and these reforms will build on government action to address the ever-evolving nature of these problems in the digital era. This Government has taken steps to update offences that tackle "revenge pornography" and voyeurism, which are used to deal with intimate image abuse alongside other offences such as harassment, malicious communications, blackmail, and "coercive or controlling behaviour".
- The Law Commission's detailed review included a three-month public consultation, which closed on 27 May 2021, receiving 354 written responses from members of the public, professionals and organisations

including legal professionals, the judiciary, parliamentarians, police, academics, medical professionals, and victim support groups. The final report can be found [here](#).

- We have already taken significant action to protect and support victims:
 - Increasing funding for victim support services to £460m over the next three years. We are using additional ringfenced funding to increase the number of Independent Sexual and Domestic Violence Advisors by 300 to over 1,000 by 2024/25 – a 43 percent increase over the next three years.
 - Working with Rape Crisis England & Wales to develop and deliver a 24/7 Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Line;
 - Publishing the all-crime and adult rape delivery data dashboard, to increase transparency on how the police and Crown Prosecution Service are tackling rape and sexual violence;
 - Extended the time limit for victims of domestic abuse to seek justice and taken action to protect women from harassment when they are breastfeeding in a public place.
 - Rolled out pre-recorded cross-examination and re-examination for vulnerable witnesses to every Crown Court in England and Wales. The measure makes the experience of giving evidence to the courts less daunting, helping witnesses and victims give their best evidence.
 - Introducing new pilots at three Crown Courts to give rape victims enhanced support to help to drive up prosecutions and convictions. This includes specialist trauma training for staff and new video technology to take advantage of the rapid rollout of pre-recorded cross-examination for victims of rape.
- Last month, we launched the 'ENOUGH' campaign to tackle violence against women and girls. The campaign gives bystanders safe ways to intervene if they witness violence against women and girls, including sexual harassment on the street, unwanted touching, sharing intimate images of someone without their consent and coercive control in a relationship.
- Through the government's Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, the Home Office increased its funding to the Revenge Porn Helpline in 2021/2 to £120,000 to support victims of non-consensual intimate image sharing. Under the Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan, the Home Office increased this further to £150,000 in 2022/3. Since 2015 when the Helpline was established it has supported nearly 16,000 people and removed over 270,000 individual pieces of content.

[Consequences of negligence and deceit](#)

Press release

In a recent public inquiry before Traffic Commissioner Kevin Rooney, there was a very clear case of an operator who thought that ignoring prohibitions

and trying to mislead the commissioner was an acceptable way to behave.



In November last year, Andrew John Southon presented a vehicle for MOT, only for it to fail on many counts. Whilst vehicles do fail these tests, the problems included a tyre with a deep cut and cords exposed, something any driver should have easily spotted on a daily walk around check. Unsurprisingly, DVSA followed this up with a maintenance investigation and found significant shortcomings.

Mr Southon claimed to the DVSA that he had not been the driver that morning. The commissioner found that it was highly likely he was and had tried to mislead. There was no brake testing and a cavalier attitude to emissions, Mr Southon telling the Vehicle Examiner that “failing on emissions is not a danger to a passenger or other road user”.

Mr Southon also declined to attend the Public Inquiry or provide financial evidence to support his licence.

The commissioner said “he has sought to mislead me in his written submission. Had he attended, he may have been able to provide an explanation, but he has chosen not to. Making a false statement to mislead a Traffic Commissioner is a serious matter. Operator licensing is based on trust. I find Mr Southon no longer to be fit to be the holder of a PSV operator’s licence.”

Mr Southon also had his vocational driving licence suspended for 12 months.

The decision can be found [here](#).

For any further details or enquiries, please contact pressoffice@otc.gov.uk

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