

Visit Essex update

23 July 2020

National update

- 28% of people confident about taking a short break June – August
- 58% of people confident about taking a short break in Sept – Dec
- Biggest concern is not being able to eat in restaurant
- Preferred location, countryside/village
- Preferred accommodation type, camping/caravan
- Preferred thing to do, outdoor attractions
- As each week goes on the confidence about going back to normality by Sept decreases
- 41% less likely to take a UK short break that usual

- VisitEngland are running a weekly sentiment tracker

National update

- Government guidelines and announcements
- Good to go marque
- Other accreditation schemes – AA, QIT, destination own
- Know before you go campaign
- VisitEngland domestic content
- VisitEngland advice hub
- Furlough

Advice for tourism and event businesses affected by COVID-19

6 April 2020

We are closely monitoring the COVID-19 outbreak and are working hard to provide you with the very latest information to support your business at this very challenging time. We are leading in industry concerns to Government via the Tourism Industry Emergency Response Group and will be sharing practical advice as soon as it becomes available publishing the latest announcements and industry information on our dedicated COVID-19 page. Below you will find the latest information and advice to support your businesses. All of our information is kept under continuous review and is updated often.

Government guidance on business closures



Offer support from your business



Latest information

VisitBritain/ VisitEngland latest

Our dedicated COVID-19 page contains the latest updates for the industry.

Government latest

Keep up to date with the latest information on the Government's response to COVID-19.

Communicating with your customers



Communicating with customers during COVID-19

A communications guide with the elements you need to consider and address in the first phase of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Results of latest survey

- Vast majority are planning for re-opening
- 81% would sign up to Good to Go scheme
- 51% advanced online bookings
- 75% concerned about fall in demand
- Majority keeping rates the same, not discounting, 16% asking for donations
- Over half reducing staffing levels



General approach to marketing

- Locals first
- Visitor management
- Reactive
- Needs two way communication
- Focus on extending the season
- Getting the balance between visitors and locals

- Responding to requests for information
- Photography
- New website



Great Adventures, close to home

Explore, Experience, Enjoy #stay local



Don't follow the crowd create your own adventure



Aims

- To support you, our members, given the new normal we find ourselves in
 - Ensure we provide up-to-date and relevant information on Essex attractions for potential visitors
e.g. Manage expectations, disperse crowds, what's open, how to visit safely and responsibly
 - Help visitors discover new/ hidden gems by providing them with information and inspiration
 - Take local residents on a journey with us, supporting local business
 - Build consumer confidence
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In a nutshell

- Encourage locals to get out and discover what's on their doorstep this summer, discover hidden gems (don't just visit the obvious places) help disperse crowds
- Support our local tourism businesses/attractions (members)
- Help residents to understand the value of local tourism

Audiences

Essex residents

We need to attract those with an emotional/need to fill

And those who have some disposable income to spend on this need

- 1) Middle income **Families** with children aged 14 and under
- 2) **Empty nesters** (disposable income)
- 3) By interest

Please feed any information you have about your audiences and how they are feeling right now

So, what are we planning?

A phased campaign

Phase 1) Summer 2020 with a focus on Essex residents

Tie-in with Visit Essex's 10th Birthday

A celebration of the reopening and discovery of our attractions

10 weeks of themed information and inspiration celebrating the gems of Essex e.g. Picturesque Villages, Gardens & Green Spaces, Animal Attractions, wildlife, heritage

Messaging

Great Adventures, Close to Home

Get off the beaten track this summer, don't follow the crowd

Discover miles of coastline, award-winning gardens,
animal attractions, heritage sites, picturesque villages and plenty of retail therapy.

#VisitEssex #StaycationSummer #StayLocal

Visit Essex: Why go anywhere else?

How: Media Tactics

- Create a landing page on the Visit Essex website to host up to date information, updated regularly
- Branded campaign visual to tie everything together
- Use campaign # e.g. #EssexGems #StayLocal #StaycationSummer
- Run 10 weeks of themed content providing inspiration and information
- Social Media: Series of organic and paid-for posts
- Enewsletter
- Press & Radio: Launch release, themed releases, pitch to radio
- ECC: staff (8K) and routes to residents
- Members: we'll create a pack of assets for you to share on your owned channels
- Ambassadors: aim to involve a mix of our ambassadors talking about what they've missed and their favourite places, for placement on socials and pitch to press

What we need from you

- This needs to be a two-way campaign
- It's free to you, just needs a bit of your time
- We want to hear from you on a regular basis to ensure our information is up to date
- We want to help drive visitors to discover places that might need a push
- And disperse them from overcrowded places
- Feedback from your visitors will also help to inform the campaign
- Stories about 10 years, big celebrations, achievements, as personal as possible (copy and images) send to Tourism mailbox
- Images

- Phase 2 – about extending the season, diverse audiences, discover the unexpected

Coastal campaign

The Essex coast: experience the unexpected

Explore, Experience, Enjoy

- Explore the endless landscapes
- Experience the wild side of Essex (experiences in natural environments)
- Enjoy the flavours of the sea

Activity

- Hoppa buses
- Thematic trails
- Website
- Film
- Photography
- Press and PR inc. press trips
- Social media



2021 – 2022 campaigns

- Year of the coast – NCTA
- England's Creative Coast
- This is Essex
- Discover the great outdoors (linking to Gardens and gourmet)
- Walk in the footsteps of a local – domestic/short breaks



What we need from you

- Let us know when you are opening, and what you are opening
- Keep us informed let us know days you are busy, days you are quiet, anything new or you want us to promote.
- Update your website entry
- Complete the recent survey

Content

- Stories of people/tourism businesses that are adapting and/or innovating in readiness for re-opening
- Day trip content ideas an hour or less from a major city, town or location (e.g. walks, trails, stately homes, gardens. Instagrammable villages, lesser known locations etc.)
- News and major up-coming events (where applicable, including virtual)
- Images
- Social media Content



Business Support

- Visit Essex website, newsletter members facebook page or email lisa.bone@Essex.gov.uk
- ECC COVID Business support COVID19BusinessSupport@essex.gov.uk , www.essex.gov.uk/topic/coronavirus
- ECC let's do business, extended free support www.backtobusinessessex.co.uk/ 0800 970 8981.
 - Finance and risk
 - Customer interaction, target markets and marketing
 - Supply chain management
 - Staffing and recruitment
 - Workplace Operations
- Trading standards trading.standards@Essex.gov.uk



Business Support

Larking Gowen webinar “Hope or Fear”

- What’s the latest in the road to recovery?
- What are the staffing practicalities around returning to work?
- How do you manage customer expectations?
- What are the risks and rewards of opening?

VisitEngland business hub - <https://www.visitbritain.org/business-advice/get-ready-reopen>

VisitEngland webinars <https://www.visitbritain.org/visitengland-business-recovery-webinar-programme>

Spotlight on inbound and domestic insights, 30 June

Business adaptation and reopening, 2 July

Speaking to customers in a post-Covid world, 9 July

Using travel technology to maximise your business, 16 July

VisitEngland industry Newsletters https://www.visitbritain.org/newsletter_signup

Visit Essex update

23 July 2020

Excerpts from presentation from Mary Tebje (Visit Essex Board member)

OUR CUSTOMERS HAVE CHANGED

- Practically & pre-arrival planning:
 - Limiting capacity, pre-booking, timed tickets etc. Where can the booking be made? How?
 - loos, showers, shared spaces and exhibits - what will be open? What will be clean? What will other visitors be doing in those spaces?
 - Parking and access - will customers understand and trust your approach to opening safely before booking?
 - Can they consume any BYO?
 - Should they bring face coverings?
 - Contactless only
 - Potential bottlenecks and one-way systems
- On the day - what precautions have been put in place:
 - Areas of concern include: toilets, social distancing of others, confidence in infection control measures, staff training and onsite information
 - How will you enforce policies?
- How much of this should be 'common sense'?

OUR INDUSTRY HAS CHANGED

- How to retain the new-found discovery and loyalty towards local shops?
- Domestic customers are the focus. How are we communicating what is special and different about our region?
- Mindful of locals' attitudes towards visitors
- Pent-up demand and excitement levels will be high, so will levels of disappointment and frustration
- Your customers may be stressed - worried about other visitors
- You will be stressed
- Reassurance vs hygiene factors
- What will the experience be exactly?
- It's all in the language
- Attitudes and honesty

YOU ARE A CHANGED BUSINESS

- Loyalty and discovery - #ShopLocal #SupportLocal #StayLocal #ValueForMoney #FewerFoodMiles #LocalProduce #LocalLinks #LocalPeople
- Domestic customers are the focus. How are we communicating what is special and different about our region?
- Local/residents' attitudes - be mindful of local sensitivities. This could also be the opportunity to forge new relationships with your resident community. Invite them in to see what you are doing
- Pent-up demand - excitement levels will be high. So will levels of disappointment and frustration as spaces are snapped up, infrastructure takes strain - including booking platforms - and waiting lists.
- Your customers may be stressed - worried about other visitors - worried if the toilets will be clean or worried about who isn't washing their hands. You will be stressed. Your staff will be stressed. But they will understand if you are
 - Honest
 - Flexile
 - Patient
- What will the experience be exactly?
 - The experience starts outside your premises
 - Tell your customers that the experience may not be as they remember it
 - Remind them about the local area and any restrictions that are in place that could impact their visit
 - Balance hygiene vs the fun - with descriptions and videos of the experience, beautiful images of the local area and people using the spaces. Collaborate to create interesting and safe itineraries.
- Sanitise the site, but not the experience!