

### **3. Our Themes:**

#### **i. Our Blue-green city**

***‘Our national marine park will be globally recognised for amazing experiences, by, on, in and under the ocean...’***

Plymouth is Britain’s Ocean City, home to the **UK’s first national marine park** uniquely offering the opportunity for visitors to explore the ocean in exciting ways and to enjoy a city with a breath-taking open green waterfront edge that stretches for miles. This reinforces the strength of our green spaces, our parks, which cover forty per cent of Plymouth; complemented by our two country parks and Dartmoor National Park.

**Plymouth Sound is one of the world’s most important and visually stunning natural harbours with multiple designations for protected habitats and species.** It is home to the largest naval base in Western Europe is an ocean waterfront, a port and a harbour. The city has very strong marine credentials and a proud naval heritage. Our substantial national fishing fleet, international fish market, marine research and leisure facilities are internationally recognised. That is a **unique suite of assets for a UK waterfront city.**

We need to do much more to deliver its visitor potential. That means delivering excellent water-based experiences and making further investments to create new vibrant quarters along the waterfront, presenting our blue and green environment as a single offer and increasing the opportunities for visitors to enjoy being by, on, in and under the water. At the same time, we need **to protect and preserve our authentic natural and historic environment** to ensure it remains accessible for our communities as well as visitors and future generations to enjoy. This means encouraging everyone to **reduce plastic use, reduce their carbon footprint and act now to protect and preserve our ocean and our green spaces so wee our ambition to be one of the Uk’s first carbon neutral destinations by 2030.**

Our strategic ambition is that ‘By 2030 Plymouth will be known as the premier marine park in Europe, attracting visitors from across the globe to award-winning experiences that celebrate Plymouth’s important marine work from research to its fishing industry.’

What does this mean for our visitors and our community?

- **For leisure visitors** it means that we need to provide access to experiences across the waterfront and our green spaces which are authentic to Plymouth and which provide a real distinctiveness to visitors when they are here.
- **For those visiting to study** we provide the best education, a safe and vibrant city location in which to live and access to globally cutting edge technology, opportunities and longer-term jobs
- **For those visiting on business** we provide high quality hotels, transport access, digital and meeting facilities. World class culture, food, arts and leisure facilities in which to relax or do business
- **For our community** it means providing access to the water and our green spaces
- **For everyone** it is a call to protect and preserve our blue and green spaces for the long term enjoyment of us all

**Blue- Green products**

Plymouth has a wealth of outdoor, marine and active experiences and products but more could be done to enable these to be accessible to a wider range of visitors as well as the local community. Developing access so that everyone has an opportunity to enjoy great experiences, bookability, a joint narrative and a cohesive way of interpreting our shared story will be a key focal point going forward.

We have mapped examples of our 'Blue-green' visitor products below although this is not exhaustive:

PLYMOUTH'S BLUE GREEN PRODUCTS		
BLUE (ON THE WATER)	GREEN (PARKS AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT)	ACTIVE
Lido	Plymouth Hoe	National cycle route
Mountbatten Centre	Smeatons Tower	South West Coast path
Plymouth Boat trips	Central Park	Stand up paddle boarding – Royal William Yard
National Marine Aquarium	Devil's point	Sea swimming
Sutton Harbour – fishing fleet	Saltram House and park	Sailing
Mountwise Lido	Newnham park	Kayaking
Bovisand beach	Mount Edgcombe	Climbing wall
Life Centre	Dartmoor Zoo	Ski slope
	Dartmoor	

## ii. Our brilliant culture and heritage

***‘We will be known internationally for jaw dropping art, authentic cultural and heritage experiences and our urban spirit..’***

Plymouth is Britain’s Ocean City – the sea defines the unique history of the city and has shaped its culture, its heritage and its people over generations. Currently the cultural offer of Plymouth is not widely known or understood, however, is beginning to receive recognition and attract new and increased audiences. Initiatives such as Plymouth Art Weekender, Fab City, iMayflower, British Art Show and Illuminate demonstrate the innovation and leadership of the creative and cultural organisations and individuals driving cultural development within the city. Further opportunities exist to showcase the city, attracting new visitors and securing its position as an international cultural destination. There exists a timely opportunity to realise the full benefit of these cultural assets and make a statement about Plymouths cultural offer now and into the future.

**Mayflower 400 and ‘The Box’ represent significant cultural development and investment in the city, which creates an opportunity to present a fresh perspective of Plymouth and to attract new visitors to explore supporting the blue-green theme as an exciting ‘après sea’ experience.**

Our aim is to be known as a brave city full of cultural surprises and prepared to take risks; a leading light nationally for creative visual contemporary arts and for performance; known for nurturing and celebrating creative people and their ideas. Plymouth will be known for its authentic heritage experiences from the Mayflower to its naval history. We will build on the success of Mayflower 400 to inspire meaningful contemporary creative and cultural interventions, create more experiences and saleable products that will continue to attract international and UK visitors to Plymouth.

By 2030, Plymouth will be recognised internationally as a cultural destination capable of curating world-class experiences, which can be enjoyed by all. Destination Plymouth will align its efforts with key stakeholders in the visitor, cultural and business community to ensure culture and heritage is a driving force for economic productivity and social prosperity. We will continue to use events, festivals, sport and significant celebration years to show case what is distinctive about our city, project strong positive images to our target markets, attract new visitors and leverage further benefits for our city. We have already secured the British Art Show for 2021.

***‘We will be recognised nationally as best in class for our digital, creative and cultural approach in everything we do.’***

What does this mean for our visitors and our community?

- **For leisure visitors** it means creating, curating and signposting authentic and compelling immersive cultural experiences that reflect the rich heritage and urban nature of the city and the edgy creative energy within
- **For those visiting to study** we provide a nurturing environment with access to world class art, artists and a thriving culture scene that will compel students to want to live and work in the city, and where they have the opportunity to do so
- **For those visiting on business** we provide high quality hospitality, excellent digital and transport connectivity and meeting facilities alongside a world class cultural programme, arts and leisure facilities in which to relax or do business
- **For our community** it means sustained, meaningful engagement and inclusion, where they not only participate in cultural and heritage based activities but help to co-create them leading to a positive impact on health, careers and aspirations
- **For everyone** we will be an inclusive city that works with its communities to co-create engaging art, culture, sport and heritage that is accessible to all

**Cultural and heritage product:**

Plymouth is known as a heritage city; however, not currently widely known for its cultural product, however, with the opening of 'The Box' in 2020 there is a huge opportunity to use this as a catalyst for change. Using this as 'lead' product for the city will provide an opportunity to then 'add on' and package additional cultural offerings giving critical mass for visitors and locals alike. Part of our cultural heritage is the food and drink that we produce locally and within the wider regional context. Pasties, cream teas, fish and chips are all part of our local food culture and we can celebrate this through highlighting the very best that the city has to offer. Plymouth has a long history of fishing and we will work with partners to encourage the development of a wider sustainable seafood offering across the city, which supports the national marine park concept.

We have mapped examples of our 'Cultural and heritage' visitor products below although this is not exhaustive:

PLYMOUTH'S CULTURAL AND HERITAGE PRODUCTS				
CULTURAL	HERITAGE	SPORTS	EVENTS	LEISURE
The Box	Smeaton's Tower	Plymouth Argyll	Pirates weekend	Shopping
Theatre Royal	Plymouth gin	Plymouth Albion	Flavourfest	Market and West End
Market Hall – Dome	Barbican	Plymouth Raiders	British fireworks	Drake Circus
Karst	Elizabethan House	Life Centre	Major sailing events	Everyman cinema
Plymouth Art College	Citadel	Marjon	British fireworks championships	Imax/Barcode
Barbican Theatre	Saltram House and park		Plymouth Art Weekender	Vue cinema
Royal William Yard – Ocean Studios	Mount Edgcombe		History month	Bowling
Athenaeum	Royal William yard		Illuminate	Genting casino
				Food and drink

### iii. Premier destination

#### ***‘Plymouth will be known nationally as a UK top ten city break’***

A successful visitor economy is reliant on delivering a range of enabling services facilities and infrastructure to support growth and improve productivity. Our main activities here fall into four key delivery areas:

- **Partnerships**
- **People**
- **Ocean city infrastructure**
- **Our distinctive brand**

#### **Partnership:**

Destination Plymouth has been key to the success of our first Visitor Plan by leading and co-ordinating the partnership that has delivered robust outcomes over the last eight years. This partnership unites public and private sector interests in its Board and through its approach to delivery, secures grants and commercial income to support destination marketing and operates a successful membership which brings together all of the businesses involved in tourism. We are committed to equalities and diversity in everything we do. It is at the core of our work with partners to make Plymouth a vibrant waterfront city.

#### **People:**

Our community - The visitor sector enables Plymouth’s residents to benefit supporting quality job retention and creation; whilst also seeking to enable Plymothians to take full advantage of the city’s rich history, heritage and unique environment, by promoting opportunities for education, health and wellbeing, and pride.

Our businesses - We will support our businesses to realise their potential, increase their sustainability and develop career paths for their staff. The skills of our workforce are vital to improve our visitor welcome, our productivity and our visitor experiences. Skills and training organisations will work with the Council, Destination Plymouth and local businesses to achieve that. We will work hard to be inclusive wherever is possible encouraging our businesses to work towards access for all, eliminate discrimination and tackle prejudice, advance equality of opportunity, foster good relations and promote understanding, meet the needs of people within protected characteristics, encourage participation in public life/activities

Our team - Our partnership is vital in helping us to succeed in our aims and importantly it is our people who will lead the way with a ‘team Plymouth’ approach. Encouraging joint working, sharing best practice and embracing the shared narrative of our city.

#### **Ocean city infrastructure:**

Transport - Plymouth will deliver an exciting sense of arrival and seamless connectivity for visitors arriving by car, train, coach, ferry, cruise liner or boat and make the water part of the city’s leisure transport system.

We will work with partners in the southwest to promote and secure radical improvements to the quality and resilience of Plymouth’s road, rail, air and sea connectivity while promoting opportunities to reduce the carbon footprint of our city in line with our strategic ambitions. City partners will work together to deliver innovative and sustainable transport solutions using the water to reinforce Plymouth Britain’s Ocean City, including park & float and improved ferry and small boat services that take visitors to different points along the city’s coast, walking, cycling and an internationally renowned cruise and ferry terminal.

#### ***‘We will be recognised nationally as best in class for our digital, creative and cultural approach in everything we do...’***

Digital - We will use innovative digital technology to showcase the experiences that we have in the city and to enable our visitors to book joined up travel and to communicate live travel information. We will ensure visitors can find their way around Plymouth with confidence, encouraging them to explore further. We will improve the signing and environment between the city centre and the waterfront to encourage a two-way

flow of visitors to support longer stays and visitor spend across the city. We will create exciting interpretation and trails along the waterfront and on the water that are integral to our visitor experiences and improve the legibility of our city.

Accommodation - We will create more hotels and a diversified range of accommodation and conferencing facilities to enable growth in overnight trips from leisure and business visitors.

That means prioritising new hotels and conferencing facilities that create world-class quality and a distinctive offer including independent hotels and accommodation of character that become part of the Ocean City experience, for example on the waterfront or on the water. We will diversify our offer to ensure we can provide for the varied needs of our visitors from business guests to walkers, cyclists and watersports enthusiasts.

Our most recent hotel demand study by Colliers International demonstrates continued growth in occupancy levels (which are at 79% all year round), one of the highest of any regional city outside of London. There is ongoing demand for more capacity in the serviced sector and a particular interest in accommodation development in the four and five-star categories to support business meetings, visits, conferencing and investment.

**Our distinctive brand:**

***'We will be renowned as the #1 must do destination in Devon & Cornwall....'***

Critical to a successful visitor economy is distinctive targeted marketing, promotion and PR. We will single-mindedly focus visitor marketing and promotion on the distinctive 'only here' aspects of the Plymouth experience, leading with our three themes of blue-green city, brilliant culture and heritage and premier destination. We will work together to communicate consistent shared messages using the latest digital marketing technology across a range of platforms. This will ensure Plymouth Britain's Ocean City mean's something distinctive and appealing to target visitor markets for leisure, study and business.

The messages from Plymouth should lead with the 'Britain's Ocean City' promise – it is unique to Plymouth – and the development of the National Marine Park needs to sit within this. Marketing should highlight experiences and show what visitors can do and how it makes them feel about the city. It should elevate products and experiences that are unique and that can't be found elsewhere. It should feature real people who are passionate about Plymouth, which highlight the hidden experiences, that only those 'in the know' can find.

A 'team Plymouth' approach is required where all stakeholders understand their role in destination marketing and embrace the shared narrative when they are communicating with their own audiences.

There needs to be a shift in media to reach our markets more effectively and we must develop the very best social media platforms and websites to inspire visitors. We must identify and develop a relationship with the main influencers for our target markets including social media bloggers, vloggers and instagrammers as well as mainstream media and journalists. We need to turn visitors into our City Ambassadors by encouraging them to share their experiences online.