

BLUE SAIL ▶

VISITORS PLACES DESTINATIONS

# MARKETING STRATEGY FOR 1066 COUNTRY 2016-2025

REPORT FOR 1066 COUNTRY

NOVEMBER 2016

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# 1. STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Between September and October 2016 Blue Sail undertook a review to prepare a new 10-year Marketing Strategy for 1066 Country. The outputs of this work are a clear and focussed strategy which brings together the latest visitor research, the input and ideas of local business and stakeholders and lessons from our experience of other destinations.

It will guide the development of the 1066 Country Marketing Plan.

This Strategy recognises the need to be focussed and targeted. The range of market and marketing opportunities is huge but the dangers in spreading marketing spend too thinly is that it has little impact and the Board should avoid the temptation to do too much at the expense of performance.

Often the driver for spreading spend too thinly is the wide and varied interests of multiple stakeholders and the visibility they seek in marketing activity. The Strategy argues for an approach which aims to 'grow the size of the tourism pie' from which all those stakeholders will benefit.

It also argues for the need to transition investment to tools and channels which can increase reach and impact at lower cost. The digital tourism environment has changed rapidly and 1066 Country needs to be at the cutting edge of delivery in order to compete effectively.

**The over-riding objective for this marketing strategy is to grow the value of the visitor economy in 1066 Country over the next 10 years and to create a compelling desire to visit among target markets. This marketing approach will also contribute to spreading the profile of visitor spend across the year and raising area's profile as a place to do business, a place to study and a place to live.**

*The opportunities which this strategy proposes are:*

- ▶ *A clear market focus on Families, Cultural Explorers and the iGeneration.*
- ▶ *A narrative which can be used by all involved in selling the destination.*
- ▶ *A focus on 'Inspiration' and 'Awareness' and leave the bookings to business.*
- ▶ *A focus on digital as a medium and amplification through 3<sup>rd</sup> parties*
- ▶ *A focus on off-peak and events spreading the benefits and value across the year*
- ▶ *The selling of inspiration, experiences, themes and itineraries rather than a list of products.*

## 2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The visitor economy operates in an ever-changing landscape and destinations should find a way of managing and responding to these changes while meeting the strategic needs for an area, often in terms of job creation and economic impact. In the case of 1066 Country not only have the markets changed, but so has the destination in terms of the experience available to visitors and so too has the competitive environment with investment in competing destinations both near and farther afield.

### 1066 THE DESTINATION

It is clear that over the last decade much has changed and improved in what is on offer to visitors in 1066 Country. The Jerwood and De La Warr are symbolic of a resurgent cultural offer that has fundamentally shifted perceptions about what these destinations are about. A Coastal Cultural Trail linking them up with The Towner in Eastbourne adds even greater depth and strength to that offer.

There has been continuing investment in the heritage offer including at Battle Abbey and the celebration of the 950<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Hastings is a significant part of the story of this country and has relevance throughout the UK and Normandy. When fire ravaged the pier in Hastings, the community fought back quickly to ensure that the Pier was rebuilt and today it is another beacon of progress.

Public realm, in particular in the coastal towns, has breathed new life into the spaces and places which welcome visitors to the seafront and which provide the settings for events and festivals. The architectural richness of these places has been preserved and is also reflected in the quality of new buildings such as at the Stade and outside the De La Warr.

New uses for old structures such as at the old White Rock Baths with the opening of the Source BMX Park are creating experiences that are reaching audiences from further afield and which reflect the changing patterns of visitors coming to the area.

While journeys along the south coast and access to the coast from major markets is often a source of frustration for locals, there have in fact been continuing improvements to the road and rail infrastructure which allows visitors to reach and then to move around 1066 Country and plans for further improvements can only reduce journey times making this destination more accessible in the future.

Food and drink is rich and varied and often reflects the quality of local produce from land and sea. With breweries and vineyards and a multitude of food and drink events, the area should be a 'foodie heaven'. Yet the truth is that it does not appear to have the reputation for food which it probably deserves.

Many of the established attractions have continued to invest and whether that is the White Rock Theatre, Batemans, Bodiam Castle, Pashley Manor or the Kent and East Sussex Railway or the wider experience available in the towns of Rye, Hastings, Bexhill, Battle, Pevensey and Herstmonceux, they provide a richness and variety that makes the offer for visitors very compelling.

While there are a good number of high quality accommodation providers across 1066 Country there was some criticism within the consultations of the collective quality of accommodation that is available to visitors. Dated decoration and service; a lack of suitable accommodation; and poor value for money were some of the criticisms levelled in particular at the coastal destinations within 1066 Country.

The visitor markets are changing some of the towns and there are changes to the resident populations too. Younger in-migration from London and Brighton are bringing new residents and attracting investment and business to the area.

## MARKET TRENDS

Perhaps one of the most significant trends affecting destinations is the ageing population. As the Boomers mature, reach retirement and have paid off their mortgages they are likely to remain one of the most significant travel markets for both domestic and international travel. Their interests are well documented and they want to keep their body and mind stimulated and meet like-minded people. There is much within 1066 Country that has appeal to these markets.

Staycations are perhaps less prevalent now than in the period 2008-2014 but they nonetheless are a significant driver of holidays to coastal areas. And with Brexit and the weakening pound, combined with domestic security and international insecurity, it is likely that the next few years will see a resurgence of the 'Staycation' effect.

The National Coastal Tourism Academy has identified a number of trends which are relevant to 1066 Country. The opportunities provided by the desire for certain markets to seek out Nostalgia and return to places and experiences parents enjoyed during their childhood means that the seaside is well-

placed to benefit. This chimes well with a contemporary take on the traditional – a ‘Cath Kidstonesque’, ‘Great British Bake Off’ take on the values of years gone by.

Similarly, they highlight the potential from Health & Wellbeing. With many of the coastal destinations around England first emerging in Georgian and Victorian periods as ‘resort’ and ‘spa’ destinations, coastal areas have this in their DNA. But most of these destinations have lost that connection to health and well-being and lack the facilities that would meet these needs. It would require further product development, but should that happen then this might be an area of opportunity.

International travel to the UK has continued to grow. Though it is too soon to say what effect Brexit will have, the current exchange rate differential is undeniably making Britain a more attractive destination where dollars, Yen and Euros are going much further and there is every indication that this will lead to growth in international arrivals in 2017. While the exchange rate is helping grow international visitors, the importance of the English Language Study market to 1066 Country, in common with other destinations, is affected by visa and immigration policy and the perceived ease and cost of securing permission to study. In a post-Brexit Britain, this market may be susceptible to change but it is not possible to yet know in what ways.

The way in which visitors receive tourism information, inspiration and make their travel arrangements has continued to change and adapt. The power of a handful of intermediaries in travel booking and the introduction of disruptor channels such as Airbnb highlights the significant role of digital in tourism. The way in which different markets use technology also needs to be understood with older generations making extensive use of the internet for activities such as online banking and travel booking and the younger generations using social media for ideas and inspiration rather than traditional websites.

The implications for destinations are the need to find ways to work with and alongside these intermediaries and see them as partners rather than competitors; the need to re-focus on the space that only a Destination Marketing Partnership (DMP) can own – that of delivering ‘inspiration and awareness’ and promoting the reasons why a visitor should visit; and lifting the quality of both digital content and digital promotion to ensure that destinations are reaching target markets cost-effectively and are actually inspiring them to visit.

But the need for DMPs to change and adapt is happening at the same time as most are seeing reduced budgets because of diminishing public sector investment. Meanwhile the private sector partners are looking for activity which delivers immediate returns which is sometimes at odds with the ‘Inspiration and Awareness’ function that most DMPs need to fulfil.

### 3. WHAT THE RESEARCH AND CONSULTATION TOLD US

We held two workshops and interviewed a wide range of local stakeholders during this study. We also reviewed a number of relevant research studies and reports including those commissioned at the same time as this project from Tourism South East which interviewed over 1500 visitors in 5 locations (Battle, Bexhill, Hastings, Rye, Pevensey/Herstmonceux) between May and September 2016. A full list of research sources and background documents that we have drawn on, are at Appendix A.



## DESK RESEARCH

The findings from the desk research tell us the following about existing visitors:

- ▶ The main markets for 1066 Country are **Empty Nesters** (couples - both day and stay) and **Families**, who visit in school holidays and make up between 1/5 to 1/3 of all visitors. These visitors are mainly here on holiday (91%). 7% are visiting friends and relatives (VFR) and only 1% are on business. Around 40% are first time visitors.
- ▶ Almost a third of visitors are from the 'AB' socio-economic group while 38% are from C1 and 25% from C2 and there is some variation between the different destinations with a slightly higher proportion of AB in Rye and more C2, DE in Hastings.
- ▶ A high proportion of **staying visitors** (45%) come for around 5 nights and are travelling by car. 1066 Country is attracting holiday trips in far greater numbers than you would find in comparator destinations in the South East, and bucking a national short break trend.
- ▶ Visitors are **mainly domestic** (85%) but there are good numbers of **international visitors** (15%) who usually spend more and many are on a day trip from another holiday base.
- ▶ The 2015 Economic Impact study estimates UK overnight visitors spend £56 per head and international visitors £59.
- ▶ A third of **day trips** are visitors on holiday and staying in accommodation outside 1066 Country, in particular Eastbourne (reflecting the size and range of accommodation stock). Other day trips are relatively local and frequent repeats – coming from Kent, East Sussex and London. On average day visitors spend £22 per head.
- ▶ Around half of visitors surveyed suggested that **history and heritage** was either 'very' or 'extremely' influential in their decision to visit. However, this ranged from a high of approximately 70% in Battle to a low of 5% in Rye which reflects significant differences between the importance of heritage for individual destinations. The survey also indicated a variation between peak and off-peak periods with higher levels of 'history and heritage' appeal off-peak in the same destinations, suggesting heritage appeals more to couples than families. Battle Abbey, the De La Warr Pavilion, Pevensey Castle and Hastings Pier were the named attractions which were most frequently mentioned by visitors.



- ▶ Types of accommodation used was evenly spread across serviced accommodation, the homes of friends and relatives and a mix of self-catering, caravans, static caravans and camping. The low volume of people staying in serviced accommodation relative to other destinations reflects either a shortage of serviced accommodation or/and serviced accommodation of a suitable quality/value in 1066 Country.
- ▶ Three quarters of all visitors say they used no information prior to their visit but of those who did 16% used websites, 4% used brochures and guides and 3% relied on word of mouth. This sample would include regular repeat day visitors who would be less likely to use

Research<sup>1</sup> about people who have not visited provides some valuable insight that is important in marketing terms because it demonstrates the potential to convert non-visitors and gives some indication of the awareness of the 1066 brand.

Awareness of 1066 among non-visitors is mixed. The majority had heard of Hastings (86%), Rye (60%) and Bexhill (57%) but even for visitors from within the South East, awareness is not as high as one might expect with over 30% completely unaware of either Bexhill, Battle or Rye.

However when shown images of the destination, non-visitors found the variety and offer appealing with a third being 'definitely interested' in visiting and most referenced the appeal of history, beautiful countryside and coastline and the variety of things to see and do as being the main drivers. With 95% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement '1066 Country looks like a great place to immerse yourself in the areas rich culture and heritage', this reinforces the strengths of this offer to prospective visitors. Just under 40% of non-visitors highlighted 'history and heritage' as being the main reason for a potential visit followed by 35% who highlighted the aesthetic appeal of attractive towns and villages. Countryside registered 6% of reasons to visit by non-visitors. These respondent also confirm that 1066 Country was considered ideal for both day trips and overnight stays by non-visitors

But many non-visitors (43%) cannot even place 1066 Country in the South East of England and this may be one reason why many thought the destination was too far to travel – one of the key reasons behind non-visits – as 15% thought it was in the South West of England.

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<sup>1</sup> 1066 Country Non Visitor Survey 2016. Tourism South East.

### Workshops & Consultations

During the consultation and workshops there was a wealth of helpful and encouraging feedback from stakeholders comprising local businesses and the authorities.

They expressed great confidence in the capabilities of the team delivering 1066 Country Marketing despite a recognition of limited resources to compete against other well-funded destinations. However, they were also ambitious and supportive of marketing approaches, especially digital, which they felt needed to feature more strongly in future work.

There was also a view that the '1066 Country' identity, despite most commonly being associated with the historic and heritage aspects of the destination, is still the identity which has widest recognition (and appeal) and can be made to include the wider destination offer. While there were some views that it was perhaps a bit narrow, there were no better alternatives identified.

What follows are a couple of Figures highlighting the feedback – positive and critical – and which we have taken on board in shaping the recommendations.

Figure 1. Consultation Feedback highlighting positive comments



Figure 2. Consultation feedback highlighting critical comment:



### Lessons and Learning

The research and consultation feedback provides some clear pointers for the way forward:

- ▶ There was significant agreement on the need to build **off-peak** business and **grow the value** of tourism – not just visitor numbers. A number of consultees suggested that the ‘summer will take care of itself’.
- ▶ Most saw the 1066 role as about ‘**awareness** raising’ and providing ‘**inspiration**’ for visitors. They saw the focus being reaching new visitors rather than activity focussed on repeat – and they felt it is for others to convert the interest and bookings and keep visitors returning
- ▶ There was agreement that activity should **focus** on markets with the greatest potential to grow the value of tourism and should not try to reach all markets
- ▶ There was recognition that 1066 Country has a **diverse** and complementary offer and that activity should use **thematic trails** and **itineraries** to connect up that varied offer and celebrate the diversity
- ▶ The **1066 identity** has value as it is recognised by prospective visitors. But it needs to stand for more than ‘heritage’ and the quality of copy, narrative and content has to connect with visitors and inspire visits.
- ▶ The combination of coast and countryside, heritage and culture has depth and quality and these themes need to play out more strongly within the 1066 narrative
- ▶ Tools and marketing channels should focus increasingly on **digital** including online advertising and social media and if necessary at the expense of printed materials
- ▶ There was a clear recognition that **events** have been effective at generating visits and in generating off-peak demand. There was support for further encouraging the growth of events and using 1066 Country marketing to capitalise on them with **tactical campaigns** converting non-visitors who find the destination appealing into visitors.

## 4. TARGET MARKETS

So which markets will provide the best opportunities for 1066 Country and why? There are a number of factors to consider when selecting target markets:

Which will produce the best impact to the visitor economy in money and jobs?

Which will be loyal and return again and again?

Which will love what we have to offer, will rate it highly and will advocate it to others?

Which are most likely to stay rather than just visit for the day?

Which will come year round and visit when we are not busy?

Which will help us grow in the future as well as bring business now?

Which fit best with the product and experiences we have available?

Which might bring other benefits in terms of the potential to introduce new businesses or buy a home?

Which will spread across the different towns and experiences of 1066 Country?

It is quite obvious that much of the potential lies in those markets already visiting. The Families and Empty Nester 'Cultural Explorers' provide the bedrock for day and staying visitors to the area and they will continue to be core markets. The Cultural Explorers in particular are high value, year round visitors who love the heritage, natural and cultural experiences available in 1066 Country.

However, it is clear that among these markets awareness is not always as high as we might expect and there is an opportunity for the destination to attract greater numbers from these well-established market segments.

It is also noticeable that the destination has appeal to International markets and the proximity to the Channel crossings make it a natural stop-over for international visitors touring England/London.

While these international visitors mirror domestic segments ('Cultural Explorers' and 'Families') they also include significant numbers of EFL/international students who are coming to the coastal towns to study and who provide a long-stay international visitor whose economic tentacles reach deep into local communities as many are accommodated in 'homestay'.

A continued focus on France, Germany, Netherlands and Belgium are the most obvious geographic markets for international leisure visitors with Language School Agents providing the routes to market for International Study/EFL students.

In terms of future growth however it is important to identify markets that are already starting to emerge in the destination but who have the propensity to grow. During the consultation and workshops we heard a lot about the types of visitors starting to come to the coastal towns in particular in places like St Leonards. Younger, creative types from London who in the past may have been drawn to Brighton but who are now seeking out places with great food and drink, music, a vibe and which are the sort of places they might be inspired to move to and start a business.

Once the 'Millennials' the next segment bridging this group are the iGeneration, 20 somethings who are younger pre-family couples and groups seeking relaxation, great food and drink, music, activity and arts and who represent visitor opportunities for the future.

'Discoverers' such as the iGeneration have long been drawn to the coast, finding inspiration in its mix of light and big horizons. And there is most definitely a 'Shoreditchification' of certain parts of Hastings which shows signs of spreading to Bexhill.

But this younger market are unlike generations before them and there is a need to find new and inspiring ways of reaching them. We think there are three main reasons why they should be a target market for 1066 Country:

- ▶ They are the first generation of truly social travellers and the influence they have over their peers is immense. Get a handful of the iGeneration to experience 1066 Country and love what it has to offer and they will do your marketing for you.
- ▶ They use social media and value quality content above all else. They will drive any destination targeting them to deliver the very best content and digital marketing which will not only attract the iGeneration but will be the type of content other segments value.
- ▶ They care less about parties and more about culture and cuisine and they fit with the developing 1066 offer.

With all of these segments there is a need to drive out increasing lengths of stay and to try to convert day visitors to short break takers. The focus therefore should be about those segments that grow the value of the local visitor economy and not necessarily just day visitor numbers.



It is also quite obvious that the target geography for each of these markets are Kent, Sussex, Surrey and South/SE London and that even markets who can easily return home from 1066 Country are attracted to visit and stay.

Product development needs to continue to support the needs of these target markets and visitor accommodation in particular is a potential mismatch between these ambitions and what is currently available. Disruptors such as Airbnb with high quality private homes and rooms however are fulfilling demand from some of these markets.

In choosing these segments we considered a range of potential markets and selected those which are easiest to reach, have greatest propensity to visit and will contribute most spend. The need to prioritise has meant we have had to discount a number of possible markets – for example older retired and urban explorers and business tourism. This does not mean to say that there will not be niche opportunities to promote to these markets or that 1066 Country will not attract additional segments as it develops as a destination. It simply means that we will focus our effort on those segments offering the best short and medium term prospects.

Here is more about our target markets and why they are a priority for 1066 Country.

	Who they are	What they are looking for	Why they are a priority for 1066 Country
<b>DAY VISITORS</b>			
Family Day Trippers	Families, day visitors from within 60 min travel time staying in holiday camps/caravans outside of 1066 Country or travelling from home. Children up to 14. Mid-market, family groups with mainstream expectations and values. Like things made easy and accessible. Want fun and enjoyment. Most likely to drive. Some more discerning with higher expectations seeking quality experiences to create memories.  'If the kids are happy, we're happy'.	Day at the beach We weather activities City centre shopping Entertainment for kids Events History and soft education	Relatively easy to reach Come year round but most prevalent in summer and holidays More focus on Hastings, Battle, Pevensey & Herstmonceux



	<p>Mosaic segments                  Group G – Domestic Success                  Group H – Aspiring homemakers                  Group B – Prestige Positions</p>		
Cultural Explorers	<p>Cultural couples who are in the main empty nesters or with grown up children. Journey from within 60 min travel time of home or may be staying in neighbouring areas on holiday. They aren't easily impressed but think the quality of the cultural offer, heritage and food and drink available in 1066 is spot-on.</p> <p>Mosaic segments                  Group B – Prestige Positions                  Group C – Country Living</p>	<p>Unique cultural experiences that add to their cultural capital                  Interesting places and good shopping                  Quality accommodation providing value for money</p>	<p>Already here in high numbers                  They come year round                  More focus on Rye, Bexhill, Battle &amp; Pevensey</p>
<b>STAYING TRIPS</b>			
Family Holidays	<p>Families from within 60-120 min travel time staying in holiday camps/caravans, self-catering with friends and relatives and budget serviced accommodation. Children up to 14. Mid-market, family groups with mainstream expectations and values. Like things made easy and accessible. Want fun and enjoyment. Most likely to drive. Some more discerning with higher expectations seeking quality experiences to create memories. They are seeking nostalgia – a chance to re-live their own childhood experiences</p> <p>'If the kids are happy, we're happy'.</p> <p>Mosaic segments                  Group G – Domestic Success</p>	<p>Sea and Hastings Old Town                  Fish &amp; Chips and Amusements                  Camber Sands                  Castles and Heritage</p>	<p>Familiarity with the destination and lots to see and do and keep the kids happy.                  Focussed in Hastings</p>

	<p>Group H – Aspiring homemakers Group B – Prestige Positions</p>		
Cultural Explorers	<p>Cultural couples who are in the main empty nesters or with grown up children. Journey from within 90-120 min travel time of home or may be staying in neighbouring areas on holiday. They aren't easily impressed but think the quality of the cultural offer, heritage and food and drink available in 1066 is spot-on. They struggle to find the right accommodation except in Rye and they will spend on quality. This segment also includes Cultural Explorers from target international markets (France, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium)</p> <p>Mosaic segments Group B – Prestige Positions Group C – Country Living</p>	<p>Gardens and Historic sites/Castles Galleries, Museums and Cultural experiences including Theatre Vineyards and farmer's markets Shops and local restaurants</p>	<p>High spend Travel year round Large part of existing market Focussed in Rye and Battle</p>
English @ Foreign Language Students	<p>A combination of school age students from long and short haul markets who attend English Language Schools in the coastal towns. Most attend from between 1-3 weeks. This segment also includes professionals coming to learn English for professional/career reasons such as Government, Military, Aviation. This segment tends to be older and stays longer (up to 6 months)</p>	<p>Places of historic interest Historic attractions Attractions and Entertainment</p>	<p>Long Stay Spread benefits into local communities Focussed in Hastings, Bexhill &amp; Herstmonceux</p>
iGeneration	<p>Living a 60-90 minute journey away and as likely to use public transport as private car. Often visit with a partner or a group of friends and usually take short breaks/weekend break. Appeal of food, drink, music and casual nightlife are important but without family responsibilities they have disposable income. They won't use 'official tourist information' but make significant use of social media and recommendations from friends. They want to find places that</p>	<p>Quirky and unusual accommodation including glamping, boutique accommodating, hostels and budget serviced hotels Cycling and walking routes Pub Lunches</p>	<p>Market leaders – if they start coming others follow They are the business owners and house buyers of tomorrow Other destinations don't yet understand them and aren't by and large targeting them. Focussed in Hastings and Bexhill</p>

	<p>are off the beaten track. They will visit cultural and heritage attractions and will enjoy being active walking, cycling or boating.</p> <p>Mosaic Segments:                  Group O – Rental Hubs                  Group H – Aspiring Homeowners</p>	<p>Great restaurants, pubs, music and nightlife                  Easy pleasures of beach and countryside                  Activity including watersports</p>	
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Note: Brief descriptions of the Mosaic segments referenced can be found in Appendix C

## 5. POSITIONING & NARRATIVE

1066 Country has an established identity and logo which has recently been refreshed and which runs through all of the marketing activity in print, web, advertising and information.

The narrative however is about much more than a logo and tagline and is made up of all the things that visitors think, see, feel, and imagine when they consider 1066 Country.

In the highly competitive global market of tourism, it's important to stand out and be distinctive. Yet tourism destinations are so complex, and have so many stakeholders, it can be difficult to agree and project a strong, clear positioning. The challenge is to find propositions that are clearly different from those of competitors, are positive and appealing to priority target markets, and are also authentic and true to the reality of the offer. It helps if as many as possible of the people who develop, market and promote the offer talk about it in the same way and style.

Words, stories, images and videos all add to this rich story. While 1066 Country will have a pretty good idea about what works, its outputs are just a fraction of what gets spoken about or shown of 1066 Country. Local businesses, the media, 3<sup>rd</sup> party websites, online travel agents, and user-review sites all add to this narrative. But in most cases they will be making their own judgements about what to say and share which may be at odds with the narrative the destination would want to portray.

At the same time the competition among destinations is huge and finding a way to stand apart from all of those other places that often use a similar language to describe themselves can be extremely hard. All too often phrases such as 'lots to see and do', 'diverse', 'cosmopolitan', 'warm welcome', 'wide range of accommodation', something for everyone', 'a unique mix' are so over-used and clichéd that they become meaningless and do not help create a real picture in visitors minds.

We considered whether 1066 Country was an identity which worked given the different towns and destinations in the area and the challenges in attracting visitors. Consultees had some concerns that it did not adequately reflect the variety and range of the offer, especially that which was more contemporary, but they also recognised that it helped prospective visitors recognise the destination and most would have heard of 1066. Respondents felt that 1066 as an identity held less relevance for Rye and Camber.

However in reaching new visitors from the UK and overseas it is clear that '1066 Country' is the best tool for opening up the dialogue about why visitors should come.

There is however a clear role to build the calibre of 1066 Brand and Narrative through the development of a robust toolkit or brand narrative for the destination which ensures the 1066 'badge' is able to adequately reflect the contemporary cultural and other aspects of the experience which form the compelling and emotional reasons to visit.

Functional copy describing where it is and what is available is helpful to someone who has decided to visit, but it won't inspire them to visit in the first place.

Destination marketing will be firmly placed within the overall 1066 Country identity but there must also be specific propositions and messages which will appeal to potential visitors to the city.

Visitor marketing will lead with '**1066 Country**' to establish a clear recognition for the area

The rest of the narrative structure should be built around the distinctive themes and experiences which have appeal. While some may mirror the themes currently portrayed through 1066 Country marketing, there is a need to develop these ideas into stories and experiences which are compelling and inspirational. They need to be able to answer the question 'why should I come' rather than 'what is it':

The Norman Conquest - A place in English History

Creative Coast & Countryside – Culture and Art to stimulate and inspire

Events you won't find anywhere else

Maritime History and the Cinque Ports

Gardens & Countryside – rolling hills, steam railways and fairy-tale castles

1066 Country Flavours – Fish, Lamb, Wine and Beer flavoured by the Weald, rolling hills, crisp coastal waters, salty air and minerals

Simple Seaside Pleasures – Family Fun & Adventure

Nature, Wildlife and Natural Beauty – a feeling of being at the edge of the world

Health and Wellbeing – a place to breathe and re-charge tired batteries - to be as active (kite-surf, Stand Up Paddleboarding, Kayak) or lazy as you want

And the individual destinations:

Rye – Quirky and enchanting

Battle – More than a history lesson, this is part of who we are and what defines us and has to be experienced

Bexhill – Tranquillity, big skies, broad horizons and home to the renowned De La Warr

Hastings – Salty aired seaside with a preserved old town, fun for the kids and grown-ups, serious culture at the Jerwood and divine food and drink

Camber – Golden sands and natural beauty

Pevensey and Herstmonceux – Castles and Stars

These outline thematic and geographic ideas are the foundations which are already well known within the activity of 1066 Country. But each now needs a clear story and identity behind each one and to be developed in a way which can be adopted by others including business.

## 6. ROUTES TO MARKET

We recommend a tight focus on both markets and communications channels to make a real impact rather than a scattergun effect across numerous communications channels. We recommend prioritising the following channels: adapting the main tool, the website, building digital marketing capabilities and providing the content and narrative to increase the reach and amplify the marketing by all partners within 1066 Country.

**Press and PR** – 1066 Country has a very successful press machine and has shown that it can generate fantastic coverage in domestic and international media. Continued press trips, releases, news generation will be the most cost-effective way to achieve this, building on the profile achieved through the 950<sup>th</sup> anniversary and cultural projects.

**Website** – 1066 Country needs a website that moves from ‘information and booking’ to ‘inspiration and awareness’. There is functionality e.g. accommodation booking that is costly to provide which has been entirely superseded by 3<sup>rd</sup> party booking engines. And while the website has visual appeal it needs to lift the quality of content, imagery, itineraries and inspiration. It needs to make better use of first-person stories to bring the experience to life.

**Digital marketing** – online advertising, pay-per-click, natural search and social media will be the most effective and efficient route to market for all target segments.

**Advertising** – Poster advertising on rail has also been used effectively by 1066 Country and can be used to lever events and drive tactical bookings to coincide with events

**Print** – If resources are tight then serious consideration should be given to allowing brochures to cease. They are valuable to visitors in the destination and helpful for distributing at trade shows but increasingly do not deliver inspiration prior to booking in the same way that press articles and websites can. There is however a need for printed maps but these can be delivered every two or three years rather than annually.

**Trade Activity** – This type of activity typically involved attending trade shows to meet and inform intermediaries such as English Language Agents, Tour Operators and Travel Agents. While these types of events have merit there are far more important intermediaries and 3<sup>rd</sup> party booking agents online and the focus of future work should be to provide them with tools, images, copy and content which help them to sell 1066 Country effectively. With a billion reviews every year on TripAdvisor continuing to develop content alongside these types of intermediaries will increase the reach of 1066 Country significantly.

Channel	Key elements:
Press & PR	<p>Focus stories on events and the seasons – providing inspirational ideas for journalists to coincide with seasonal copy requirements.</p> <p>Continue to develop the bank of high quality images available to media</p> <p>Provide press visits to journalists and freelance writers, bloggers and vloggers and work with Tourism South East, VisitEngland/VisitBritain and others to support these visits</p> <p>Capabilities in 1066 Country in this area of activity are better than in most other destination. If there are changes to personnel, the approach may require 1066 Country to consider working with a specialist travel PR agency</p>
Website	<p>Scope out the requirements of a website to deliver ‘Inspiration and awareness’ and use the prospective new visitor as the arbiter of what should be in there.</p> <p>Adapt the website so that it provides high quality inspirational copy to create an emotional response among prospective visitors. It should be clean and crisp, with high quality images and video and developed for mobile 1st. The copy should create a desire to visit. It should avoid listing everything that is available and should be built around the specific target markets.</p> <p>Thematic itineraries and ideas should come to the fore offering a flavour of what can be experienced by different types of visitors, across the region in 24, 48, 72 hours and 7 days. The content should be developed to make use of first-person stories.</p> <p>Functionality which is difficult and costly to provide such as accommodation booking should be discontinued and replaced with affiliate booking.</p>
Digital marketing	<p>Consideration should be given to appointing a specialist digital marketing agency to deliver a comprehensive programme of digital marketing activity</p>



	<p>SEO (search engine optimisation) to attract new visitors, to include: optimising key words that reflect the narrative and themes &amp; experiences potential visitors are likely to be searching on; pay per click advertising. Initial key words work would be part of new website development</p> <p>Online advertising, pay per click, affiliate advertising through Facebook and Twitter and other social media platforms</p> <p>Social media – a priority for getting 1066 Country talked about using major platforms including those used by the younger iGeneration markets</p>
Advertising	<p>Buy-in to specific advertising opportunities where they deliver additional value – this could be in partnership with others locally or nationally (VisitEngland or VisitBritain).</p> <p>Largely used to deliver tactical responses at key periods and making continued effective use of the partnership with Rail advertising that has been used to good effect previously</p>
Print	<p>Maintain and produce high volumes of maps (flat and folded) for visitors on-territory. Reduce the frequency and increase print run to make more cost-effective.</p> <p>Either cease production of all guides and leaflets in order to focus limited resources on high quality digital tools or... Scale back production to focus on less frequent guides (at least every two years) and with reduced distribution and circulation.</p>
Brand Narrative and Trade	<p>Prepare a clear narrative and identity for 1066 Country that moves beyond the logo and name. It should involve stakeholders in its creation and be a narrative that makes it clear what sets the destination apart. It should be something which provides place and thematic stories which can be used as a framework by all of the partners within and beyond 1066 Country who want to promote the area.</p> <p>Identify key online intermediaries and work with them using the brand narrative and toolkit (including images) to consistently and harmoniously promote 1066 Country.</p>

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## 7. DELIVERY, PARTNERSHIP & BUDGET

1066 Country will oversee and manage the delivery of destination marketing. It will bring together the resources of Hastings Borough Council, Rother District Council and the support of business. 1066 Country will use this Marketing Strategy to devise and deliver a Marketing Plan which will underpin delivery in 2017 and beyond.

### PARTNERSHIP

It is evident that visitors do not recognise authority boundaries and that there are already many visitors to 1066 who are either staying just outside the area covered by 1066 Country and are coming to visit for the day. Recent research by East Sussex County Council confirms that many of the challenges and opportunities facing 1066 Country in attracting visitors are common to other destinations in East Sussex. So while it makes complete sense to maintain the practical focus for delivery on 1066 Country, opportunities for collaborative work with neighbouring areas should not be overlooked if they can lead to more cost-effective marketing that produce benefits for all destinations.

Partnership within 1066 is strong and long-standing. Leadership by the private sector and the hard work and committed support from public sector partners means 1066 Country is well placed to make the changes needed to elevate performance and make the most of limited resources.

While the research clearly evidenced the real and perceived challenges of adequately representing the different destinations within an umbrella identity (1066 Country), it is our opinion that this challenge can be adequately met through the type of activity, content and narrative employed by 1066 Country in its marketing. The identity '1066 Country' is not the problem. The way in which it is employed can and must be used to adequately present the varied and contemporary offer alongside the historic and heritage appeal.

### BUDGET

With an approximate budget of £120,000 and with approximately 1.5 FTE staff working on delivering 1066 Country Marketing, it is clear that ambitions have to be tempered by the available resource.

Spreading this money and staff too thinly will inhibit success and 1066 Country will struggle to have any meaningful impact in growing the value of tourism to the area.

There is a need for the Board to keep activity focussed to achieve the greatest impact and if this means having to make decisions which some consider difficult it will be essential that the decisions link back to this Strategy and that the Board are united in their approach.

**PROGRAMME**

In order to provide some focus to the priority actions, here we set out some key objectives across the short (1-2 years), Medium (3-5 years) and Long (5+ years) term.

<b>SHORT TERM (1-2 YEARS)</b>
2017/18 Marketing Plan. Identify short term target markets (Cultural Explorers & Families) and costed tools and tactics. Review website requirements and determine options for future delivery including adaption of existing platform or the need for a new platform Develop a marketing toolkit for business and intermediaries with a clear narrative, images, video to ensure that consistent messages Develop itineraries and content for target markets with a focus on thematic strengths highlighted out of the marketing toolkit Develop a digital marketing plan (Year 2, with the iGeneration at its heart) and either identify capabilities within 1066 Country or commission delivery
<b>MEDIUM TERM (3-5 YEARS)</b>
Build itineraries and expand thematic approach for all content outlets Engage with all 3 <sup>rd</sup> party providers of content and promote the toolkit to them, adding other tools and content as needed Expand digital performance with a particular focus on the iGeneration (Mosaic Group O 'Rental Hubs')
<b>LONG TERM (5+ YEARS)</b>
Product development to align to market opportunities (health & wellbeing, water based activities, walking & cycling, quality accommodation) Continued event development to continue to address weaker periods of demand. Continued improvements to the road and rail infrastructure, public realm and key gateways to support growth. Monitor and review market performance through visitor surveys.

These suggested timeframes recognise the interconnected sequence between different actions however they are illustrative and can be accelerated if sufficient capacity exists.

## 8.APPENDIX A

### BACKGROUND DATA AND SECONDARY RESEARCH SOURCES

1066 Country Peak and Off-Peak Visitor Survey 2016. Tourism South East
1066 Country Non Visitor Survey 2016. Tourism South East
East Sussex Research Project (Background Paper). Tourism South East
Economic Impact of Tourism 1066 (2002, 06, 08, 10, 12-2015). Tourism South East
1066 Country Destination Marketing Strategy 2006. Locum Consulting
Hastings & 1066 Country Segmentation Study 2007. Arkenford.
England's Seaside – What Are the Opportunities 2012. VisitEngland/BDRC
2016 Coastal Tourism. National Coastal Tourism Academy

## 9.APPENDIX B

The following organisations all took part in face to face or telephone consultations or were represented at one of the two workshops. In some cases organisations had more than one representative participate:

### CONSULTEES AND WORKSHOP ATTENDEES

Hastings Borough Council	Rother District Council
Wealden District Council	De La Warr Pavilion
Root 1066 Festival	English Heritage
Italian Way Group	Observatory Science Centre, Herstmonceux
Blue Reef Aquarium	The Source BMX
George Inn Rye	Rye Museum
Bexhill Roaring 20s	Rutland Guest House
White Rock Theatre	The Old Rectory B&B
Royal Victoria Hotel	Hastings Pier
Jerwood Gallery	Bexhill Chamber
Hare Farm Hideaways	Ashburnham Place
Carr Taylor Vineyards	Michelham Priory
Southeastern Railway	Smugglers Adventure/ Hastings Castle
Shirley Leaf & Petal Company	Bodiam Boating Company

## 10. APPENDIX C

### MOSAIC SEGMENT PROFILES

<p>Group B – Prestige Positions</p>	<p>Prestige Positions are affluent married couples whose successful careers have afforded them financial security and a spacious home in a prestigious and established residential area. While some are mature empty-nesters or elderly retired couples, others are still supporting their teenage or older children.</p>
<p>Group C – Country Living</p>	<p>Country Living are well-off homeowners who live in the countryside often beyond easy commuting reach of major towns and cities. Some people are landowners or farmers, others run small businesses from home, some are retired and others commute distances to professional jobs.</p>
<p>Group G – Domestic Success</p>	<p>Domestic Success are high-earning families who live affluent lifestyles in upmarket homes situated in sought after residential neighbourhoods. Their busy lives revolve around their children and successful careers in higher managerial and professional roles.</p>
<p>Group H – Aspiring Homemakers</p>	<p>Aspiring Homemakers are younger households who have, often, only recently set up home. They usually own their homes in private suburbs, which they have chosen to fit their budget.</p>

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Group O – Rental Hubs	Rental Hubs contains predominantly young, single people in their 20s and 30s who live in urban locations and rent their homes from private landlords while in the early stages of their careers, or pursuing studies.
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More detail about the various mosaic segment profiles illustrated here and in the main body of the document can be found at the Experian website: <http://www.experian.co.uk/marketing-services/products/mosaic-uk.html> and videos illustrating each of the segments can be found here: <http://www.experian.co.uk/marketing-services/knowledge/videos/mosaic-videos.html>

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