

## VHEY backing Hull and East Yorkshire’s visitor economy to thrive

**Press release**  
**29<sup>th</sup> January, 2025**

The region’s tourism partnership has set out a new master plan to support businesses in the sector, attract more visitors and drive economic growth.

Visit Hull and East Yorkshire (VHEY) is aiming to help build a thriving, prosperous visitor economy through the delivery of its dedicated action plan.

VHEY is funded by Hull City Council and East Riding of Yorkshire Council, and supported by businesses with a shared ambition for the region to fulfil its potential.

It supports 1,700 businesses and over 21,000 jobs across the region and was nationally accredited by Visit England, the national tourist board, as a Local Visitor Economic Partnership (LVEP) in 2023.

Chris Blacksell, Chair of VHEY, said: “Hull and East Yorkshire is a fabulous tourist destination. It has a wonderful city for leisure breaks and hosting conferences, amazing market towns, stunning coastline and countryside, and it’s an incredible producer of fresh food – it has everything you could want in one area.

“However, the biggest benefit it has is the people – it has such friendly people. I think it’s the most welcoming place in the country, and we need to capitalise on that.

“The economic climate at the moment is challenging, so it’s crucial we support businesses in the area to be as effective and successful as possible, whilst also drawing in more tourists. This new action plan will provide the platform for us to be able to do that.”

Joining up the local visitor economy growth priorities and activities with those at a national level has enabled VHEY to set a clear ambition to generate better outcomes for tourists, the environment, local communities and tourism businesses.

VHEY’s action plan has the following four strategic priorities:

- **Grow value: Build a £1bn+ visitor economy across Hull and East Yorkshire by 2029.**

Working in partnership and funded by:



- Quality destinations: Present and develop a destination of distinctiveness through animation, pride of place and sustainability.
- Support productivity: Through a new and connected business support package.
- Embrace a new landscape: In partnership with regional private and public sector stakeholders, create an LVEP which supports national visitor performance indicators.

The partnership's plan to build a £1bn+ visitor economy includes stepping up its national and international marketing of the region, to encourage more leisure and business visitors, and increase activity focused on sustainability, accessibility and inclusivity.

It aims to establish the region as a tourism destination of choice by attracting, hosting and delivering new events, supporting private and public sector investment projects and working with partners to achieve carbon net zero.

VHEY will provide tangible support for businesses operating in the tourism sector, helping them overcome current economic challenges and stimulate growth. This will include innovative training packages and bringing businesses together through networking and collaboration opportunities.

The partnership also plans to strengthen its strategic relationship with Visit England and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport by supporting national visitor growth plan targets, including through increased private and public sector engagement.

It is currently a difficult economic climate for the visitor economy, which is typically characterised by staff-intensive businesses.

Recent budget changes including an increase in the minimum wage, National Insurance adjustments and evolving rules on casual contracts present challenges for businesses in the sector.

Many are also still suffering from the unprecedented long-term impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

VHEY's new action plan aims to support the region's visitor economy to overcome these challenges and lead it towards a bright future.

Councillor Rob Pritchard, portfolio holder for culture and leisure at Hull City Council and Vice-Chair of VHEY, said: "We fully appreciate our responsibility to support businesses operating in

Working in partnership and funded by:



the visitor economy during difficult times, and this new action plan clearly sets out how we aim to do this on the path to fulfilling our region's vast potential.

“We need greater promotion, and we need to develop skills in the sector. This new plan addresses these issues, and VHEY is here to help and support businesses in any way it can.”

Councillor Nick Coultish, portfolio holder for culture, leisure and tourism at East Riding of Yorkshire Council and also Vice-Chair of VHEY, added: “We’re confident our wonderful region will be able to overcome the current economic challenges and establish itself as a destination of choice by working in partnership towards this shared goal.

“It’s important to have a framework to attract more visitors to this part of the world, and this action plan is an important step in helping us champion the region and creating the best possible environment for businesses to thrive.”

The new action plan was approved at a recent meeting of the VHEY Board. The Board includes representatives from prominent businesses and networks in the regional visitor economy, including The Deep, William’s Den, Hull Trains, Cave Castle Hotel, Mercure Grange Park Hotel, Bridlington Ambassadors and the DoubleTree by Hilton Hull.

- To view the action plan in full, and find out more about how VHEY can support organisations operating in the Hull and East Yorkshire visitor economy, visit [www.visithullandeastyorkshire.co.uk](http://www.visithullandeastyorkshire.co.uk).

## ENDS

For further information please contact:

Rick Lyon, Lyon PR  
07429318703  
[rick@lyon-pr.com](mailto:rick@lyon-pr.com)

## Notes to Editors

### Visit Hull and East Yorkshire (VHEY)

- Visit Hull and East Yorkshire (VHEY) is the Local Visitor Economy Partnership for the region, recognised by Visit England and funded by Hull City Council and East Riding of Yorkshire Council.

Working in partnership and funded by:

- VHEY's role is to strategically connect, support and promote the visitor economy across Hull and East Yorkshire through collaboration and partnership with key stakeholders and businesses.
- As the region's business to business destination management partnership, VHEY is dedicated to driving economic growth, place development and sustainability to ensure a vibrant future for all its communities.
- To find out more about VHEY, including the practical support it offers Hull and East Yorkshire business operating in the visitor economy, visit [www.visithullandeastyorkshire.co.uk](http://www.visithullandeastyorkshire.co.uk).

Working in partnership and funded by: