

Covid-19 Recovery Marketing Plan - June 2020



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1. Background

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Cumbrian hospitality businesses were forced to close at what is normally the most lucrative part of the season. Whilst everyone understood the necessity, the impact on the sector has been catastrophic.

The initial phase was 'response' and whilst responding support and messaging continued, in tandem we all worked to 'reset', to look ahead and enable an effective 'restart' and 'recovery'. To support recovery a well-developed and coordinated cross sector and a cross county approach is required.

2. Principles and Assumptions of Resetting and Restarting in a COVID-19 Pandemic

An immediate return to business as usual is not possible. Public protection needs to run across all we do. Continued precautions and restrictions to support social distancing and public health will need to be addressed by businesses, authorities, and the public. This will require a joined-up approach with local authority partners, public health officials and businesses.

Key points:

- Restrictions are likely to be lifted gradually (with the potential of future localised lockdowns)
- Parts of the sector are being 'released' sooner than others
- Social distancing is a way of life for the foreseeable future
- Some residents are anxious about visitors returning
- Visitors will require safety reassurance
- Public protection is paramount, and we will follow guidelines set out by the government as they emerge and change
- Businesses implementing and 'demonstrating' hygiene and public safety measures to reassure will be a key recovery driver
- Government guidelines and UK Hospitality protocols are due out imminently and will be published as part of the support hub on Cumbriatourism.org where there are expert-led guidelines and practical help for businesses to plan and prepare to open and beyond
- National 'standard' has been developed by the AA 'Covid Confident' and the Visit England's 'We're good to go' is expected imminently
- We will use our extensive research, reach and trusted position with visitors, businesses, and partners locally, regionally, and nationally, to support national and local requirements and communication

3. A Phased and Extended Campaign

- Although there is likely to be an increase in domestic travel post-lockdown, all UK destinations will be competing for this business. Having an agreed ready to go and phased campaign that fully takes account of public health measures, will give us a first mover advantage
- Working closely with Visit England, Cumbria Tourism as DMO will coordinate and lead this organic and later, funded campaign on behalf of the county, working closely with partners and generating match funds/leverage extra coverage at different points as the situation progresses with a focus on reassuring residents, supporting businesses to 'get ready' and attracting and educating visitors to visit safely
- This will need to be a long-term campaign, delivered in a phased way over 2020 and 2021 running into the winter and quite possibly the start of 2022.
- It is developed to be flexible and fleet of foot to be able to adapt to any quickly changing circumstances.
- Our initial call to action was **plan** your visit and from June have moved to a call to action to **book direct** or through a trusted destination website

4. Campaign Objectives

- ▶ Working with businesses and partners to ensure the mechanisms in place to support the safe return of the visitor market
- ▶ As above – as well as generating visitor desire, creating visitor confidence that it is a safe destination and that they know how they can play their part
- ▶ Increase in direct bookings in line with social distancing and public health requirements
- ▶ Increase in winter bookings
- ▶ Increase in Friends and Family Market
- ▶ Increase in Millennials
- ▶ Increase in attract and disperse
- ▶ Increase in support local



5. Messaging

Principles:

- Play to our strengths and use our natural assets of spacious open landscape, mountains, coast and lakes, heritage, culture and the health and wellbeing benefits of a visit
- Cumbria as a unique place to step out of the “ordinary” and “day to day” and build great memories and experiences
- Attract and disperse will be a major opportunity
- Build on the momentum of caring for our communities and supporting businesses – through a **Book Direct** approach
- Build on momentum of local businesses and communities working together and encourage Cumbria residents to back their local businesses by Staycation in Cumbria and a **Buy Local** approach

Messages:

- ▶ The Lake District, Cumbria is a safe destination, our rural location and sparse population make social distancing easier and our businesses are geared up to offer a safe experience
- ▶ We have many areas much more off the beaten track to explore
- ▶ A place to reconnect with friends and family and enjoy the health and wellbeing benefits of the outdoors, both of which many people will have missed
- ▶ Cumbria welcomes you back. Residents understand the benefits of tourism and are confident that businesses will manage the end of lock down responsibly
- ▶ Cumbria has world class landscapes and scenery, attractions, experiences, activities and adventure, food and drink, heritage, arts, and culture and when appropriate, events.

Straplines for the overall campaign:

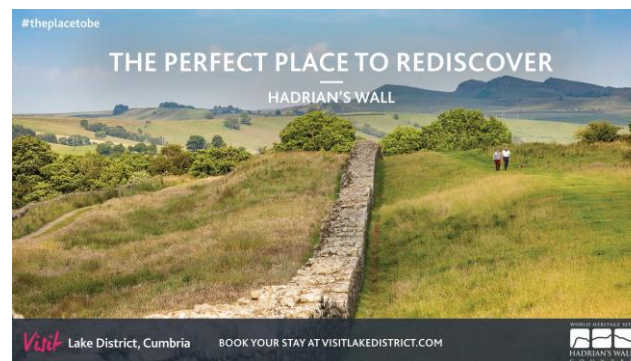
“The perfect place to reflect”

“The perfect place to reconnect”

“The perfect place to rediscover”

“The perfect place to recharge”

“The perfect place to reinvigorate”



6. Target Markets

Target Markets will be domestically focused this year (2020) & our international markets will be kept warm for when the time to return is right. The initial focus will be on Familiar Families (30-45), Wilderness Couples (45+) and Millennials (20-35):

- Local market, Friends and Family – this will also help with resident confidence when visitors return if they have already tried it for themselves. Friends and families – families getting back together post lockdown will be a good market and reassuring to residents by seeing faces who are clearly ‘friends and family’
- Day Visitors
- Millennials are more confident. We will take the opportunity to target new, younger audiences who will be grounded from international travel and seeking alternatives – as well as repeat visitors
- The older traditional retired visitors may be more cautious, and many may continue to be shielded. However, their strong love of the area means that they are likely to return once they feel reassured that others are doing so safely
- As confidence in the “new normal” progresses and more restrictions are lifted in the new year we will extend the campaign. Initially to target more overnight stays from a two-hour drive time and then to encompass London, Glasgow, Birmingham, Leeds/Bradford, and Newcastle. We would at this point look to work more closely with transport partners in match funded campaigns to make our spend go further and access cheaper marketing opportunities through them.



7. Timings



Phase 1	First phase of the campaign to run initially from when we get an indication of lockdown being lifted through to Christmas. Driving winter bookings and playing on the latent demand for people to travel again, having missed the key holiday period.
Phase 2	Widening the campaign to include a two-hour drivetime and the key focus being overnight stays. Looking to work with more local transport operators for match funding and or offers and more local partners who have a similar catchment area.
Phase 3	Working with other national partners such as transport providers and possibly Northern DMO's to target the wider hot-spot areas and the international markets.

8. Media, creative and collateral



8.1. B2B resources

A suite of B2B resources including:

- A series of webinars on issues around reopening, marketing, and general support
- Toolkits on how to comply with social distancing and give reassurance to visitors and the wider community
- Guidelines and checklists to help implement changes and how to access confidence/accreditations and how you are marketing to reassure visitors



8.2 Local Residents Resources

- Throughout the crisis businesses have adapted to support residents and this has been promoted through MyCumbria
- MyCumbria will promote the buy local message through a campaign of press engagement, competitions, and case studies of local businesses
- An increase offers to include and encourage local stays
- Thank you messaging for local support and protecting local jobs

8.3 Media Campaign

- Three phase campaign to run into 2021 and adapted through to 2022 depending on timings and events
- Digital media to allow flexibility to change messages quickly from plan to book
- A push on posted holiday guides to help drive planning and booking
- Maximise the use of Cumbria Tourisms huge reach initially
- The use of social media influencers and Instagram more to target the younger audiences but also to demonstrate social distancing to give visitors (and locals) confidence. This initially can be one trusted face/couple who do a series of area or itinerary-based vlog and blogs. During lockdown this has increased in popularity
- Out of home still in the mix but strategically placed and working with partners to access the best value for money
- Press and PR key, plus sponsored online content
- Consider ITV or similar on-demand platforms (funding permitting) as current consumption is high
- Larger budget for targeted online advertising when require and available
- Collaborate with partners to get the best destination reach possible – share messaging and goals
- Push by local and local tourism through MyCumbria and its partners
- Commission on new destination film to use across platforms and a series of shorter edits that are area based, some that will highlight social distancing to help with the first tranche of the campaign and to give confidence to visitor and locals

9. Hooks



These will vary throughout the campaign as and how the lockdown is lifted. As well as our traditional campaign themes – outdoors, food & drink, heritage, and culture we can capitalise on some or all of the following:

- Safe and space – public protection is paramount
- Support local
- Year of the Coast 2021
- Build on your recent exercise regime – keep up the habit even after lockdown. Suggest initially where you can walk for an hour relatively easy building up to bagging Wainwrights. This can include fell running and cycling. We can promote safely courses and small family groups
- Experiences – these were popular before lockdown and can easily be adapted with social distancing in mind – horse riding on the beach, walking with Alpacas or Fell Ponies, even gin making/tasting

- Wellness and mindfulness – this really is important and find your happy place is perfect
- Dark Skies – again, a planned campaign before lockdown and extremely important for extending the season
- Off the beaten track
- Weddings - postponed and future, vow renewal. Show social distanced weddings but then also plan for the future



Resources

All images, toolkits, campaign hints and tips can be found <https://www.cumbriatourism.org/who-we-are/resource-hub/recovery-hub/recovery-campaign/>

To get more involved or if you want campaign images made for your business or area contact campaigns@cumbriatourism.org