

Hertford Town Council

Hertford Sustainable Tourism Strategy

2025



HERTFORD TOWN COUNCIL



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A Sustainable Tourism Strategy for Hertford

A. Introduction

Hertford, the historic county town of Hertfordshire, presents a unique opportunity to develop a sustainable tourism model that balances economic growth with cultural preservation and environmental responsibility. The town's rich heritage, thriving arts and cultural scene, green spaces, and strong local economy make it an attractive visitor destination.

For the purpose of this strategy, sustainable tourism refers not only to the practices that ensure the longevity of tourism in Hertford, but also the those that benefit the environment. This strategy focuses on initiatives that reduce environmental impact, encourage eco-friendly travel, and promote responsible tourism while fostering long-term economic and cultural growth.

This strategy seeks to position Hertford as a leader in sustainable tourism, ensuring that the town's visitor economy grows in a way that benefits residents, businesses, and the environment. By leveraging its strategic location near London, recent infrastructure investments, and strong community networks, Hertford can become a model for low-impact, high-quality tourism.

This strategy aligns with Hertford Town Council's objectives:

- To safeguard and enhance the natural environment and increase net biodiversity.
- To build strong links with residents, business and other stakeholders and empower them to develop vibrant communities.
- To foster a spirit of Hertford – celebrating its rich historical, natural and cultural heritage through the arts, music, culture and sport.
- To support the continued environmental, spatial and economic development of Hertford with a focus on enhancing the vibrant town centre.
- To operate with sound financial management and good governance in all our activities.

These objectives are complemented by the following Mission Statement:

"We will work together with the people of Hertford to make our town even more vibrant, green and inclusive. A historic town that is ready for tomorrow."

This Sustainable Tourism Strategy sits alongside **the Communications, Engagement and Marketing Strategy** and the **Environmental Sustainability Strategy**, ensuring a coordinated approach to sustainable tourism growth.

B. Acknowledgements

We would like to express our sincere thanks to all the organisations and individuals who have supported the development of this strategy. In particular, we are grateful to BEAM, Hertford Museum, I Love Hertford, and others for their time and valuable contributions to the discussions. Their input has been instrumental in shaping a strategy that reflects the needs and aspirations of the community.

C. Purpose

Commissioned by Hertford Town Council, this 5-year Sustainable Tourism Strategy sets out a vision for enhancing Hertford's visitor economy while prioritising sustainability, inclusivity, and community wellbeing. The strategy establishes Hertford as a leading cultural and heritage destination that balances economic growth with environmental protection and social responsibility.

D. Key Findings

The Key Findings section presents insights from national and local tourism data, audience trends, and stakeholder feedback. These findings form the evidence base for Hertford's Sustainable Tourism Strategy, highlighting opportunities, challenges, and best practices. The findings also identify how Hertford can position itself as a model for sustainable tourism development, ensuring long-term benefits for the local community and economy.

1. Sustainability and Regenerative Tourism

- **75% of travellers** want to make sustainable choices, but barriers include **cost and lack of information**.
- **Regenerative tourism**, which delivers a **net-positive** impact, aligns with Hertford's goals.
- Initiatives such as **Good Journey partnerships** and **the Refill scheme** promote **sustainable travel**.

2. Hertford's Visitor Economy

- **630,800 visits in 2023** generated **£52.8 million in visitor spend**, reflecting strong **recovery of +3% in value compared to 2022** and back to **99% of 2019 levels**.
- Hertford's **overnight visitor spend (£322.78 per trip)** outperforms county and district averages.
- The **Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) segment (43%)** presents a **key growth opportunity**.

3. Consumer Sentiments and Trends

- Visitors increasingly seek **value-driven, unique, and experience-based travel**.
- Key tourism motivators include **culinary experiences, heritage attractions, and wellness-focused activities**.
- Domestic visitors prioritise destinations offering **cultural events, local food, and scenic outdoor activities**.
- Hertford's **event calendar and proximity to London** create an opportunity to **increase repeat visits**.

4. Challenges & Areas for Improvement

- **Traffic congestion and parking availability** need improvement to support visitor access.
- **Accessibility and inclusivity** must be prioritised **25% of travellers have accessibility needs**.

- Coordination between **transport providers and local businesses** is essential to **reduce car reliance**.

5. Strategic Strengths & Opportunities

- Hertford can attract **multi-generational travellers** and **promote short-break itineraries**.
- The **‘hidden gem’ appeal** of Hertford aligns with the rise of **off-the-beaten-path tourism**.
- Local businesses and **cultural attractions** can drive growth through **collaborative marketing initiatives**.

6. Best Practices & Comparative Case Studies

- **Copenhagen’s CopenPay scheme** and **Blenheim Palace’s Good Journey partnership** demonstrate the value of **reward-based incentives for sustainable travel**.
- Hertford can develop similar **business partnerships** to promote **eco-friendly travel and experiences**.
- Other successful towns have **leveraged local food and drink trails, heritage-led tourism, and digital wayfinding tools** to enhance visitor experiences.

*The full **Secondary Research Report** is available in **Appendix 1**.*

E. Stakeholder Involvement & Feedback

Stakeholder engagement has been central to shaping this strategy. A Councillor workshop identified key priorities, followed by semi-structured interviews with local businesses, cultural organisations, and environmental groups. Key themes included:

- **Economic and Community Benefits** – Tourism supports **local businesses, the arts scene, and community pride**.
- **Environmental Risks** – Concerns over **waste, congestion, and infrastructure pressure**.
- **Capitalising on Strengths** – Emphasis on **heritage, cultural venues, and sustainable river-based tourism**.
- **Sustainable Transport** – Need for **better connectivity and wayfinding**.
- **Local Partnerships** – Although already strong, further collaboration between **businesses and cultural organisations** is required.

*The full **Stakeholder Interview Summary** is available in **Appendix 2**.*

F. Digital Asset Review

A review of Hertford's **digital assets** (websites & social media) highlighted opportunities to enhance digital engagement:

- Improve **SEO and online discoverability**.
- Enhance **mobile-friendly content**.
- Strengthen **integration of sustainability messaging**.
- Develop **interactive digital itineraries** and **car-free travel guides**.

*The full **Digital Asset Review** is available in **Appendix 3**.*

G. Objectives

All the research, stakeholder engagement, and insights gathered throughout the development of this strategy have been instrumental in shaping the following objectives. These objectives outline the key priorities for Hertford's sustainable tourism development and provide a clear framework for the actions and deliverables outlined in the strategy. They are designed to address the current challenges, capitalise on opportunities, and ensure the long-term success of Hertford as a vibrant and sustainable destination.

1. **Enhance Hertford's Profile:** Promote the town as a **premier cultural and heritage destination**, capitalising on its proximity to London.
2. **Embed Sustainable Practices:** Align tourism development with **environmental, social, and economic sustainability** goals.
3. **Strengthen Local Collaboration:** Empower **businesses, residents, and community groups** to co-create a cohesive tourism offer.
4. **Drive Economic Benefits:** Increase **visitor numbers and overnight stays**, supporting local hospitality, retail, and cultural sectors.
5. **Mitigate Challenges:** Address **congestion, waste, and infrastructure strain** to ensure an enjoyable visitor experience.
6. **Measure Success:** Use **SMART monitoring criteria** to track **economic, environmental, and social impact**.

It is important to clarify that in the context of this strategy, sustainable tourism refers to two key aspects:

1. **Long-term Viability:** Ensuring that tourism in Hertford is economically resilient and able to thrive over time, supporting local businesses, enhancing the visitor experience, and creating lasting social and cultural benefits.
2. **Environmental Responsibility:** Fostering practices that benefit the environment by reducing Hertford's carbon footprint, encouraging sustainable transport, preserving natural resources, and promoting eco-friendly tourism options.

These dual principles of sustainability will guide all actions and deliverables, ensuring that Hertford's tourism sector remains both economically strong and environmentally responsible for years to come.

H. Recommended Actions

The Recommended Actions tables outline the key initiatives that will support the development of sustainable tourism in Hertford. These actions have been structured into three distinct categories to ensure a comprehensive and strategic approach:

1. **Product** – Actions aimed at enhancing the tourism offering by creating and improving visitor experiences, events, and attractions.
2. **Place** – Initiatives focused on the physical and infrastructural improvements that enhance the visitor experience, including wayfinding, public spaces, and accessibility.
3. **People & Promotion** – Strategies designed to engage businesses, residents, and visitors in promoting Hertford as a sustainable tourism destination while fostering collaboration and participation.

These actions are not all within the remit of Hertford Town Council; we will lobby District and County Councils as appropriate and work in collaboration and co-production with all opportunities. Unless otherwise specified, our lead drivers will be the Town and Tourist Information Centre and the Town Centre, Tourism & Projects function at Hertford Town Council.

Each action is detailed within the tables, including a clear description, delivery timescale, key stakeholders responsible for implementation, and a monitoring framework aligned with SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) principles.

Actions have been broken down into 3 distinct priority timescales:

Priority 1: 1-3 years

Priority 2: 2-4 years

Priority 3: 3-5 years

I. Recommended Actions

| Product | | | | | |
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| Objective | Deliverable | Description | Delivery timescale | Stakeholders working with Hertford Town Council and other delivery partners | Monitoring |
| Objective 1: Enhance Hertford's Profile Objective 2: Embed Sustainable Practices | Create Stargazing and Eco-tours | Expand the annual Dark Skies event into a year-round experience with guided night tours, storytelling, and telescope sessions. Develop an online booking platform. | Priority 1 1-3 years | HTC (Lead), astronomical groups, tourism providers | Measure number of tours held per year, online booking engagement, and visitor satisfaction rating of 80% or higher. |
| Objective 1: Enhance Hertford's Profile Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits | Promote Hertford as a Set-Jetting Destination | Collaborate with businesses and County Film office to ensure Hertford can capitalise on local film/tv locations. | Priority 1 1-3 years | HTC (Lead), Local Businesses, venues and filming locations, Hertfordshire Film Office, Visit Herts | Track the number of filming productions in Hertford. Measure digital engagement with set-jetting content. |
| Objective 1: Enhance Hertford's Profile Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits | Launch Literature Festival | Establish an annual literature festival featuring author talks, writing workshops, and pop-up bookshops. Partner with schools for educational elements. | Priority 1 1-3 years | HTC (Lead), authors, local businesses and community groups | Track attendance, engagement levels, and sales of relevant cultural materials. |
| Objective 3: Strengthen Local Collaboration Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits | Coordinate Event Organisers | Launch a quarterly Hertford Tourism Roundtable to streamline event planning, share best practices, and improve marketing alignment - lead coordination through the Town and Tourist Information Centre. | Priority 1 1-3 years | HTC (Lead), cultural groups, East Hertfordshire District Council | Track collaboration frequency, event cross-promotion, and joint funding opportunities. |

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| Objective 1: Enhance Hertford's Profile Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits | Enhance Heritage Engagement | Develop interactive digital and in-person experiences at Hertford Castle, including augmented reality (AR) tours and historic escape room challenges. | Priority 1 1-3 years | Cultural institutions (Lead), local authorities, tourism operators | Monitor visitor numbers, engagement with new activities, and revenue growth (+15% by Year 3). |
| Objective 3: Strengthen Local Collaboration Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits | Promote Local Food at Events | Prioritise diverse healthy choices of local food and drink vendors at all town events, reducing reliance on external caterers. Encourage pre-event registration for vendors. | Priority 1 1-3 years | Event organisers (Lead), local businesses | Monitor percentage of local food vendors, waste reduction, and vendor sales. |
| Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits Objective 5: Mitigate Challenges | Spread event impact | Ensure major events are centred around the town centre where possible, supporting local businesses and promoting sustainable visitor behaviour. Develop promotional materials highlighting local businesses during festivals. | Priority 1 1-3 years | Event organisers (Lead), local businesses | Measure footfall in key areas, business revenue during events. |
| Objective 1: Enhance Hertford's Profile Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits | Promote Local Food Heroes | Champion local organisations recognised by national/regional food industry/standards & awards and develop a multimedia campaign featuring interviews, behind-the-scenes footage, and feature stories on local food producers and sustainable businesses. | Priority 1 1-3 years | Local producers (Lead) | Monitor social media impressions, audience growth, and evaluate engagement against baseline metrics (+20% digital reach by Year 3). |

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| Objective 2: Embed Sustainable Practices Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits | Develop nature-based experiences | Partner with local reserves and green spaces to offer guided birdwatching, wildlife safaris, and conservation workshops. Aim to launch two new experiences annually. | Priority 2 2-4 years | Nature reserves (Lead), landowners, tourism providers | Measure participation levels (+20% by Year 2), gather visitor feedback, and track conservation impact. |
| Objective 2: Embed Sustainable Practices Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits | Support eco-friendly accommodation | Provide funding and training for businesses to develop low-carbon accommodations such as eco-lodges and sustainable B&Bs. Offer incentives for Green Tourism accreditation. | Priority 2 2-4 years | Local businesses (Lead), accommodation providers, local authorities | Track number of accredited accommodations (+10 by Year 5), occupancy rates, and sustainability improvements. |
| Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits Objective 5: Mitigate Challenges | Promote off-season cultural experiences | Introduce an autumn/winter events series to spread visitor numbers year-round, focusing on arts, theatre, and heritage. Offer special pricing and bundled packages. | Priority 2 2-4 years | Arts and culture organisations (Lead), BEAM Theatre, Hertford Museum local businesses and community groups. | Track off-season visitor growth (+15% by Year 3), ticket sales, and marketing reach. |
| Objective 3: Strengthen Local Collaboration Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits | Fund new events and experiences | Establish a seed fund to support local entrepreneurs in creating sustainable tourism events, such as heritage walks, themed pop-ups and/or volunteering opportunities. | Priority 2 2-4 years | Event organisers (Lead), local businesses, cultural institutions | Monitor number of events funded, attendance, and local business participation. |
| Objective 1: Enhance Hertford's Profile Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits | Create Food and Drink Trail | Develop a self-guided food and drink trail featuring local producers, restaurants, and artisan food outlets. Provide digital trail maps for easy navigation. | Priority 2 2-4 years | Food and drink providers (Lead), local businesses | Track campaign reach, social media engagement levels, and business participation in promotional efforts (+25% visibility increase). |

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| Objective 3: Strengthen Local Collaboration Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits | Support Food and Drink Experiences | Facilitate cooking classes, tasting sessions, and farm-to-table experiences showcasing local produce. Develop packages with local hotels. | Priority 2 2-4 years | Local food producers (Lead) | Measure collaboration impact, track increase in joint initiatives, and report engagement trends annually. |
| Objective 2: Embed Sustainable Practices Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits | Expand Water-based Tourism | Establish a new canal boat mooring site for overnight stays and promote canoe and paddleboard rentals with guided eco-tours. Identify strategic launch points along the River Lea. | Priority 3 3-5 years | Canal operators (Lead), water sports providers, local authorities | Measure rental uptake (+30% by Year 3), user satisfaction, and environmental best practices. |

| Place | | | | | |
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| Objective | Deliverable | Description | Delivery timescale | Stakeholders working with Hertford Town Council and other delivery partners | Monitoring |
| Objective 2: Embed Sustainable Practices Objective 3: Strengthen Local Collaboration | Continue and expand pollinator-friendly planting | Increase biodiversity in urban areas by integrating pollinator-friendly flowerbeds. Promote community involvement through planting days. | Priority 1 1-3 years | HTC (Lead), environmental groups | Track number of pollinator-friendly zones created, monitor biodiversity levels through species count (+10% increase by Year 3). |

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| Objective 2: Embed Sustainable Practices Objective 3: Strengthen Local Collaboration | Increase river stakeholder engagement | Strengthen ties with the Canal & River Trust and develop a 'Hertford River Pledge' scheme for local businesses to promote responsible river use. This work is alongside the Council's recent commitment to River Action's Charter for Rivers. | Priority 1 1-3 years | HTC and Canal & River Trust (Lead), local businesses, environmental groups | Monitor stakeholder engagement levels and adherence to sustainability commitments. |
| Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits Objective 5: Mitigate Challenges | Ensure visitor-friendly parking strategy | Improve signage to lesser-used car parks to limit unnecessary journeys. | Priority 1 1-3 years | HTC and East Herts District Council (Lead), local businesses, transport teams | Measure average visitor parking duration (+15% increase by Year 3), assess signage effectiveness for lesser-used car parks. |
| Objective 2: Embed Sustainable Practices Objective 5: Mitigate Challenges | Improve cycle storage | Where possible, install secure, weatherproof cycle parking facilities in the town centre and at key attractions. | Priority 1 1-3 years | HTC and other Local authorities (Lead), transport groups | Assess cycle storage utilisation and cyclist satisfaction via annual surveys (+20% satisfaction improvement). |
| Objective 1: Enhance Hertford's Profile Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits | Investment in visitor experience | Lobby for infrastructure improvements such as additional seating areas, improved lighting, and create interactive displays in key tourist areas like the Town and Tourist Information Centre. | Priority 1 1-3 years | HTC and other local authorities (Lead), tourism bodies | Monitor visitor satisfaction with infrastructure improvements, track increased use of public seating. |

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| Objective 3: Strengthen Local Collaboration | Develop community mural | Engage local artists and schools in creating a mural celebrating Hertford's history and culture. Secure funding through arts grants. | Priority 1 1-3 years | HTC and Community groups (Lead), artists, local authorities | Track community engagement levels, measure public participation in mural creation and funding support. |
| Objective 5: Mitigate Challenges | Improved public toilets | Continue advocacy and lobbying for improved public toilets within the town | Priority 1 1-3 years | HTC and other Local Authorities (Lead), Town centre businesses | Survey residents and visitors to assess satisfaction with availability and quality of public toilets. |
| Objective 1: Enhance Hertford's Profile Objective 3: Strengthen Local Collaboration | Build relationships with station community teams and New River Line Community Rail Partnership | Collaborate to improve visitor information at transport hubs, ensuring accurate wayfinding and tourism promotion materials are readily available. | Priority 1 1-3 years | Transport authorities (Lead), tourism bodies | Measure effectiveness of visitor wayfinding at transport hubs, track visitor usage of promotional transport materials. |
| Objective 1: Enhance Hertford's Profile Objective 5: Mitigate Challenges | Improve town wayfinding | Install new visitor-friendly signage at key points (e.g., Castle, High Street, riverside). Use digital QR codes for multilingual guidance. Town and Tourist Information Centre to lead on bud, train and active travel information distribution including safer cycling. | Priority 2 2-4 years | HTC and other local authorities (Lead), business groups | Conduct annual visitor surveys to measure navigation ease (+20% improvement), track digital QR code interactions. |
| Objective 2: Embed Sustainable Practices Objective 5: Mitigate Challenges | Expand bike hire options | Introduce a Beryl bike/e-bike scheme with multiple docking stations at transport hubs and key visitor locations. | Priority 2 2-4 years | Bike hire companies (Lead), local authorities | Track bike hire usage rates (+30% by Year 3), measure reduction in short car trips in town. |

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| Objective 1: Enhance Hertford's Profile Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits | Improve riverside access | Lobby for riverfront pathways and create a waymarked circular walking route incorporating historic and natural points of interest. | Priority 3 3-5 years | HTC (Lead), other local authorities, environmental groups | Measure pathway usage, conduct visitor satisfaction surveys (+10% increase in positive feedback by Year 3). |
| Objective 1: Enhance Hertford's Profile Objective 5: Mitigate Challenges | Improve inward wayfinding | Upgrade signage from transport hubs and major roads, including new brown signs and digital wayfinding screens. | Priority 3 3-5 years | Highways authorities (Lead), National Rail, local authorities | Assess sign effectiveness through visitor feedback surveys and count the number of new wayfinding installations. |
| Objective 2: Embed Sustainable Practices Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits | Commercialisation of the river | Develop guided boat tours and floating pop-up markets to enhance visitor engagement while maintaining sustainable practices. | Priority 3 3-5 years | Canal & River Trust (Lead), local businesses | Track visitor engagement levels with river activities, monitor revenue growth from commercialisation (+15% by Year 3). |
| Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits Objective 5: Mitigate Challenges | Work more closely with transport providers around key events | Establish seasonal transport partnerships offering discounted or free travel for major events to encourage sustainable visitor travel. | Priority 3 3-5 years | Transport providers (Lead), event organisers | Evaluate public transport usage during key events, track partnerships developed with transport providers. |

| People & Promotion | | | | | |
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| Objective | Deliverable | Description | Delivery timescale | Stakeholders working with Hertford Town Council and other delivery partners | Monitoring |
| Objective 1: Enhance Hertford's Profile | Improve public communications | Consolidate visitor information across 'Go Hertford' to provide a unified message. Develop an engaging digital platform with clear event listings. | Priority 1 1-3 years | HTC (Lead), tourism bodies | Track consistency and clarity in tourism messaging across platforms, measure public engagement with unified branding. |
| Objective 1: Enhance Hertford's Profile Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits | Expand Digital Marketing and community event e-newsletter sign-ups | Shift marketing investment towards digital platforms, focusing on video content, social media campaigns, and SEO-driven web content, including electronic messaging screen at the Town and Tourist Information Centre | Priority 1 1-3 years | HTC (Lead), digital agencies, local authorities | Assess digital marketing performance through website traffic (+30% by Year 3), ad click-through rates, and social media growth. |
| Objective 2: Embed Sustainable Practices | Develop Business Sustainability Awards | Work with the Mayor of Hertford's Community Awards to introduce a sustainability category recognising eco-friendly businesses. | Priority 1 1-3 years | HTC (Lead), business networks | Monitor business participation in sustainability awards, track number of recognitions achieved (+20% award entries by Year 3). |

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| Objective 1: Enhance Hertford's Profile | Develop a promotional video showcasing Hertford | Produce a high-quality promotional video capturing the town's history, local businesses, and key tourism experiences to be used in multi-platform marketing. | Priority 1 1-3 years | HTC and Digital agencies (Lead), local businesses, tourism bodies | Assess promotional video impact by tracking engagement metrics (views, shares, and inbound website traffic from video). |
| Objective 3: Strengthen Local Collaboration Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits | Build upon the Business Breakfast | Expand networking events to include tourism-focused discussions, fostering greater industry collaboration and knowledge-sharing. | Priority 1 1-3 years | Local businesses, HTC (Lead), tourism organisations, community and cultural groups | Track Business Breakfast attendance growth, measure increase in business partnerships and cross-sector collaboration opportunities. |
| Objective 1: Enhance Hertford's Profile Objective 3: Strengthen Local Collaboration | Support the development of a group for event organisers and cultural groups | Establish a collaborative forum for event organisers and community groups to coordinate and maximise promotional opportunities for Hertford's cultural programming. | Priority 1 1-3 years | HTC - Town and Tourist Information Centre, (Lead), Event organisers and cultural institutions | Evaluate effectiveness of event organiser networks by tracking number of joint initiatives and collaborative projects delivered. |
| Objective 1: Enhance Hertford's Profile Objective 2: Embed Sustainable Practices | Encourage Accessibility Improvements | Support and promote the accessibility of Hertford's key locations, such as the Changing Places facility at BEAM. Encourage local businesses to sign up to AccessAble Access Guides to ensure that visitors with additional needs can easily | Priority 1 1-3 years | HTC (Lead), Local Businesses and community venues, AccessAble | Track the number of businesses signed up to AccessAble. |

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| | | find accessible services and facilities. | | | |
| Objective 2: Embed Sustainable Practices | Build on the Refill scheme | Increase Refill station sign-ups. | Priority 1 1-2 years | HTC and environmental groups (Lead), Business associations | Monitor the number of businesses signed up to the Refill Scheme |
| Objective 1: Enhance Hertford's Profile | Leverage PR and Influencer Partnerships | Run targeted PR campaigns and influencer collaborations to boost Hertford's profile among niche travel audiences. | Priority 1 1-3 years | Visit Herts (Lead), digital media agencies, local businesses | Monitor media reach (impressions, shares), influencer campaign engagement, and brand mentions in travel publications. |
| Objective 3: Strengthen Local Collaboration Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits | Cross-pollination from businesses/organisations | Encourage flagship attractions such as BEAM Theatre, Hertford Museum and Hertford Library to promote nearby businesses by offering cross-promotions and joint ticketing/events. | Priority 1 1-3 years | Local businesses (Lead), HTC, cultural organisations | Measure cross-promotion effectiveness, track number of collaborative marketing initiatives launched between major attractions and businesses. |

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| Objective 1: Enhance Hertford's Profile | Image and asset library | Develop a high-quality visual content library for use in marketing, featuring professional images and videos of Hertford's tourism assets. | Priority 1 1-3 years | Marketing agencies (Lead), tourism boards | Track use of digital asset library, measure frequency of downloads and integration into promotional materials by stakeholders. |
| Objective 2: Embed Sustainable Practices | Encourage local businesses to sign up to Good Journey | Support businesses in joining the Good Journey initiative, promoting car-free travel options to visitors. | Priority 1 1-3 years | Local businesses (Lead), transport bodies | Monitor participation in Good Journey initiative, track uptake of car-free travel among visitors (+15% increase by Year 3). |
| Objective 1: Enhance Hertford's Profile Objective 3: Strengthen Local Collaboration | Develop a Hertford Place Brand | Create a compelling place brand for Hertford that highlights its heritage, culture, and sustainability commitments. Develop a visual identity and messaging toolkit. | Priority 2 2-4 years | HTC and Local authorities (Lead), business groups, branding specialists | Measure brand awareness through annual surveys, track social media engagement (+20% increase by Year 3), and monitor website traffic growth. |
| Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits | Develop Short Break Packages | Curate themed 2-3 day visitor itineraries incorporating local accommodation, dining, and attractions. Promote through digital marketing and tour operators. | Priority 2 2-4 years | Hotels (Lead), tourism operators, local businesses, community groups | Track short break package bookings (+15% by Year 3), visitor satisfaction ratings, and impact on overnight stay duration. |

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| Objective 2: Embed Sustainable Practices | Supporting a shared priority | Equip businesses and tourism/community leads with guidance on promoting sustainable transport, including digital toolkits and promotional incentives for visitors using eco-friendly travel options. | Priority 2 2-4 years | Local businesses (Lead), sustainability groups, community groups, Hertford Museum, Hertford Library and BEAM Theatre etc. | Track participation in sustainability training programs, measure adoption of best practices among |
| Objective 3: Strengthen Local Collaboration Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits | Consider Resident Reward Schemes | Increase participation in local loyalty schemes to encourage more resident engagement offering value. | Priority 2 2-4 years | Local businesses (Lead), HTC | Track increase in businesses and residents engaging Herts Big Weekend reward schemes (+25% by Year 3) and others. |
| Objective 3: Strengthen Local Collaboration Objective 4: Drive Economic Benefits | Consider Resident Reward Schemes | Increase participation in local loyalty schemes to encourage more resident engagement offering value. | Priority 2 2-4 years | Local businesses (Lead), HTC | Track increase in businesses and residents engaging Herts Big Weekend reward schemes (+25% by Year 3) and others. |
| Objective 2: Embed Sustainable Practices | Apply for Plastic-Free Town status | Encourage businesses to eliminate single-use plastics and apply for Plastic-Free Town status | Priority 3 3-5 years | HTC and environmental groups (Lead), Business associations | Monitor the number of businesses certified as plastic-free and track reduction in plastic waste where possible. Achieving Plastic-Free Town status. |

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| Objective 2: Embed Sustainable Practices | Provide businesses with tools and training to communicate local food miles | Develop a standardised framework for restaurants and cafés to highlight locally sourced menu items and sustainability practices. | Priority 3 3-5 years | Local businesses (Lead), sustainability consultants | Track number of restaurants displaying food miles data, measure consumer response via dining preference surveys |
| Objective 2: Embed Sustainable Practices | Signpost Business Support & Sustainability Resources | Work with Visit Herts to create a dedicated online hub linking businesses to Visit Herts B2B resources and sustainability tools. Provide regular updates and training opportunities. | Priority 3 3-5 years | Local business networks (Lead), Visit Herts, sustainability organisations | Monitor business engagement with Visit Herts B2B resources, track uptake of sustainability initiatives (+20% participation by Year 3). |

J. Conclusion & Next Steps

This strategy marks the beginning of Hertford's journey towards a more sustainable visitor economy. Hertford Town Council will work closely with businesses, community groups, and transport providers to implement the recommendations outlined.

Next Steps:

- **Immediate Actions:** Launch awareness campaigns, develop collaborative marketing initiatives, and improve digital engagement.
- **Ongoing Monitoring:** Establish annual progress reviews to track visitor numbers, sustainability improvements, and stakeholder engagement.
- **Stakeholder Involvement:** A formal review will take place at the end of Year 3 to assess impact and refine future priorities.

❖ **Get Involved!** Businesses, residents, and local organisations are invited to participate in making Hertford a leading example of sustainable tourism.



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