

Tourism Strategy

2023-2025





South Ribble's Tourism Strategy

We are excited about the future of South Ribble as a popular tourism destination for all. With much work having gone into developing and establishing a new tourism brand for the borough, we must now build on this to increase both local and regional awareness of South Ribble's offer for events, days out and short trips.

Background

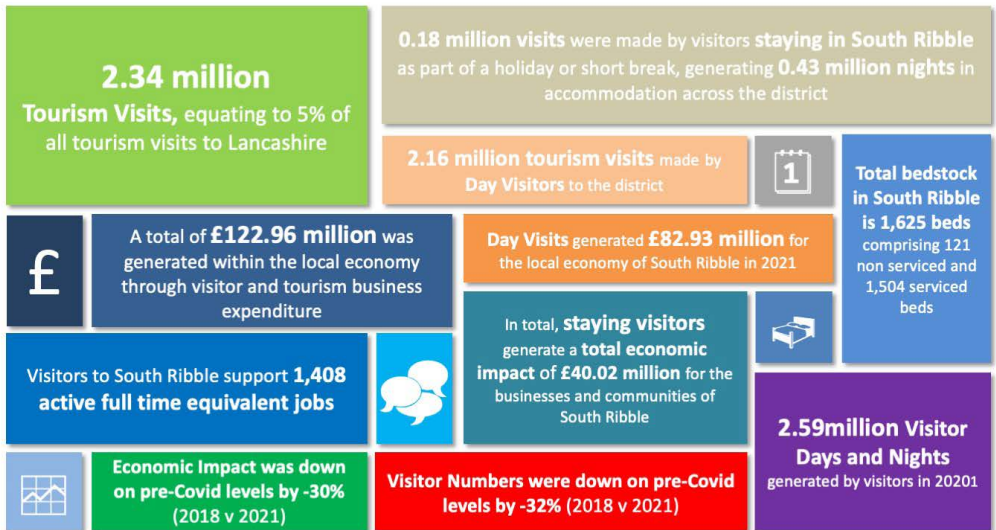
It is an ambition of the council to develop the visitor offer and attract more tourism to South Ribble as part of our plan to support the local economy.

The aims of this strategy include establishing the appeal of South Ribble as a safe and worthwhile visitor destination, securing the support of local tourist attractions and developing the current methods of both digital and physical promotion. By working with local businesses, tourist attractions and Marketing Lancashire, we can enhance the current marketing approaches to tourism and events, strengthen the tourism brand of the borough, boost local identity and pride and support the ongoing local economic recovery from the COVID 19 global pandemic.

Over the last year we have developed the 'Discover South Ribble' brand including the management of various tourism promotion assets such as a 'Discover South Ribble' website, Instagram page and Facebook page, and the creation of a Stakeholder Network.

This strategy will be reviewed yearly to identify both success stories and areas for improvement, which will inform how the strategy is shaped moving forward.

South Ribble's Visitor Economy 2021



Visit **Lancashire.com**

The results from the 2021 STEAM report reveal that tourism visits to the South Ribble area made up 5% of all visits to Lancashire during 2021, with a total of £122.96 million generated within the economy.

It's clear that tourism visits are still suffering from the after effects of COVID 19, as levels have not returned to those pre-pandemic.

South Ribble has modest numbers of accommodation bed-stock, which may support a focus on the day trip audience.

With a well directed and delivered strategy, we hope to meet and even surpass those levels in coming years.

	2018	2020	2021	Variance with pre-Covid levels 2018 v 2021
Total Visitor Numbers (millions)	3.43	1.04	2.34	-32%
Day Visitors (millions)	3.12	0.93	2.16	-31%
Staying Visitors (millions)	0.31	0.11	0.18	-42%
Total Visitors Days (millions)	3.85	1.19	2.59	-33%
Visitor Days – staying visitors (millions)	0.73	0.15	0.43	-41%
Total Economic Impact (£millions)	176.33	58.21	122.96	-30%
Economic Impact day visitors (£millions)	112.37	35.27	82.93	-26%
Economic Impact staying visitors (£millions)	64.58	22.94	40.02	-38%
FTE Jobs supported	2,161	726	1,408	-35%
Accommodation Stock (bedspaces)	1,701	1,625	1,625	-4.5%
Serviced Accommodation Stock	1,535	1,504	1,504	-2%
Non-serviced accommodation stock	166	121	121	-27%

Visit
[Lancashire.com](https://www.lancashire.com)

When looking at the comparison in figures between pre-COVID levels, in all areas South Ribble has not met or surpassed levels recorded before 2020. Some recovery is evident, with total visitor numbers more than doubling on 2020 figures, however there is still work to be done.

The drop in economic impact of day visits must be addressed in order to best support local businesses and attractions.

These and figures from future reports can be used to evaluate our tourism strategy year on year. Reviewing success measures to inform ongoing priorities will ensure that promotion and activity is directed to the best channels/to the most appropriate audiences.

Issues and opportunities

Local Identity

South Ribble has previously had a problem with what could be described as a lack of cohesive local identity.

Where is South Ribble? What is South Ribble? How do people who live in the borough identify themselves in relation to where they live, if at all?

Local and Regional Awareness

Local awareness of what there is to do right on your doorstep can be in need of boosting, often it can be those living in the area who would generally look further afield for a day out when there may be many opportunities for great days out within a couple of miles.

Cost of Living Crisis

With recent strains on many people's finances including the rising costs of electricity and gas bills, we must have some consideration for this.

Reduced disposable income may affect willingness to go out and spend at tourism attractions and events in the area. We will need to work with our tourism partners to deliver events that are accessible to the community.

Investment in the Borough

Significant programmes of planned investment will support the tourism offer for the borough. While these may take time to come to fruition we can start planning and informing people about what is to come. Included in this is the Leyland Town Deal, Penwortham Masterplan, Penwortham Holme, investment in the leisure facilities, re-opening of Worden Hall and the possibility of Lancashire County Cricket Club having a new home in the borough.

Tourism Strategy Principles

This strategy principles of this South Ribble Borough tourism strategy centre around:

Identity

Residents and Business owners in South Ribble feel connected to the area and have a stronger sense of identity in relation to the borough and its offer.

Pride

Both residents and businesses feel proud of where they live/are based and are actively engaged in the promotion of the area, via word of mouth and sharing experiences on social media.

Great Days Out

South Ribble is home to a great wealth of activities, experiences and attractions that draw local, regional and national tourism to the area.

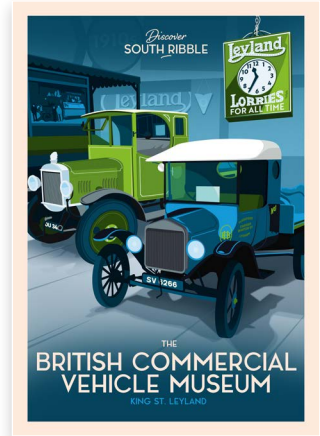
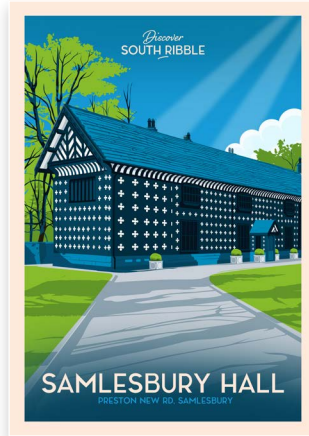
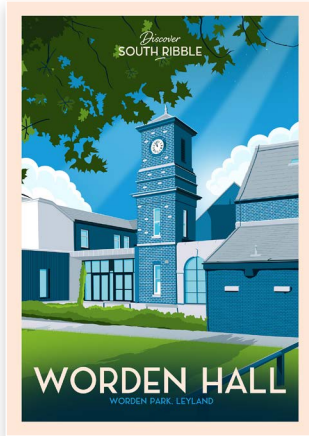
Events for Everyone

South Ribble offers a varied and successful yearly programme of events which are accessible to all and contribute to the reputation of the area as a great place to visit.



Vision

By 2028, South Ribble will thrive as a popular tourism destination, with highly rated visitor attractions and a recognized first-class events programme that collectively support the local economy.



Priorities/Objectives

- Creating a network of local businesses and tourism attractions and working with these key contacts to share information and take advantage of shared marketing opportunities (i.e. local tourist attractions, parish councils, communities team etc)
- Raising the profile of South Ribble as a visitor destination
- Promotion of greener tourism/environmentally conscious suppliers to events etc
- Development of a first-class events programme including 'Music In The Park' as a flagship event
- Maximise support of the local economy through attendance at these key events
- Develop methods of visitor information/data gathering i.e. contact collation, newsletter sign-up, surveys etc

Audience

Through various research, a core audience demographic for South Ribble tourism has been identified which can be collected into the four following groups:

- **The Local:** people who regularly commute in and out of South Ribble and know the area well – but perhaps overlook the gems right on their own doorstep.
- **Families:** With an average age of 41, a split between male and female, and a high number of married residents, there are a large number of families in the borough. These families will be looking for something fun to do to keep the kids occupied, somewhere special to go for special occasions, and free or inexpensive activities to occupy the weekends and school holidays.
- **The Explorers:** These are the people with a thirst for knowledge and culture seeking out new places of interest or a quest to learn something new. This could be museums and stately halls, to new cycle routes, village high streets or green spaces.
- **Amblers and Ramblers:** These people enjoy a breath of fresh air at a more relaxed pace. Whether it's a stroll in the park or a heritage walk followed by a cuppa at the local café, this group are looking for green spaces and nature.

Delivery

How we then reach and communicate with that audience effectively is of vital importance – the following channels are the tried and tested methods for targeting this demographic:

Channel	Description
Local and Regional press and media	The local and regional media will be an important channel to get the wider message out to potential visitors inside and outside the borough.
Promotional materials e.g. Flyers/ Leaflets/Guides	Considering the need to produce printed promotional materials to inform people of the attractions in the South Ribble area and signpost them to relevant websites for further information. These can be distributed through visitor attractions, local accommodation providers and at events throughout the year.
Social Media	The council's social media feeds will play a large part in driving messages out to current and new audiences. Social media will be used as a two-way channel to adapt messages and focus, and as an ongoing marketing channel to promote day out ideas
Web	The web, linked to social media, is a way in which we can provide information to visitors. We will look to regularly review the Discover South Ribble website, keeping information up to date so that both local tourists and those from other parts of the country can find out more about what South Ribble has to offer
Face-to-Face	The attractions across the borough will be key for collectively promoting South Ribble as a visitor destination. It is therefore important that we build relationships with attractions and provide them with the relevant information needed to create an excellent and informative experience for their visitors. This will also help to encourage repeat visits to the area and recommendations
Survey	By producing surveys with which to assess visitor expectations of South Ribble, we will be communicating to the public that South Ribble is committed to listening to their views and acting on them in order to provide a quality visitor experience.

Success Measures

- The visitor numbers for tourist attractions in the borough
- Continued engagement from visitor attractions in the borough and key stakeholders with tourism initiatives and information sharing.
- Monitoring the web and Google analytic statistics from council run tourism websites, visitlancashire.com and any other relevant digital media platforms
- Monitoring the attendance numbers at council-run events and externally organised events, where applicable
- Monitoring the ongoing interactions with South Ribble Council Social Media pages including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
- Visitor feedback at attractions and events and online reviews
- Analysis of visitor demographics and survey results – including the Marketing Lancashire STEAM report
- Assessing evidence of public making environmentally conscious decisions with regards to travel both around the borough and when visiting attractions

It is proposed these measures would be baselined for 2023 with the exception of the STEAM report that already has historic data.





Discover
PLACES



Discover
SHOPS



Discover
FOOD

Discover
SOUTH RIBBLE



discoversouthribble.co.uk



