

# Sussex Wine Tourism

## A Plan for Growth



MODERN  
XESSNS



**Thanks to the exponential rise in Sussex viticulture over the last ten years fuelled by strong collaborative working across the region, the county now finds itself in an exciting and unparalleled position at the forefront of the UK wine industry.**

Substantial engagement, research and development work has created a solid evidence base for future investment, making it clear that the Sussex wine industry is primed and ready for significant growth in tourism.

**This new plan sets out that ambition, how it can be achieved, and what the continued growth in Sussex wine means to the wider region.**



**Sussex Modern** is an independent, business-led partnership made up of the region's leading cultural and viticultural businesses.

#### **14 cultural leaders**

**Attenborough Centre for the Creative Arts / Brighton Museum & Art Gallery / Charleston Chichester Festival Theatre / De La Warr Pavilion / Depot / Ditchling Museum of Art + Craft / Farleys House & Gallery / Glyndebourne / Hastings Contemporary / Newlands House Gallery / Pallant House Gallery / Towner Eastbourne / West Dean College of Arts and Conservation**

#### **20 wine leaders**

**Albourne Estate / Ambriel Sparkling / Artelium Wine Estate / Ashling Park Estate / Bluebell Vineyard Estates / Bolney Wine Estate / Digby Fine English / Hidden Spring Vineyard / Oastbrook Estate / Oxney Organic Estate / Rathfinny Wine Estate / Ridgeview Wine Estate / Roebuck Estates / Stopham Estate / Tillingham / Tinwood Estate / Wiston Estate**

#### **8 accommodation providers**

**THE PIG-in the South Downs / Woodfire Camping / Relais Cooden Beach Hotel / Tack Barn at Upper Lodge / Cabins and Castles / Port Hotel / The Star / Petworth Places**

**MODERN  
XASSNS**



**Since its foundation in 2016, Sussex Modern has had three clear objectives, informed by a wealth of data indicating that a high percentage of prospective visitors and investors had a negative or non-existent perception of what Sussex had to offer.**

**1.** Identify "hero" industries and promote a clear and consistent narrative of Sussex upheld by the three pillars of art, landscape and wine

**2.** Create a fresh, contemporary and youthful identity for the region

**3.** Increase the value of the visitor economy in Sussex by:

- Attracting international visitors
- Increasing overnight stays
- Attracting higher-spending visitors
- Becoming a leader in wine tourism in Sussex
- Changing perceptions of Sussex
- Joining up fragmented visitor messaging
- Encouraging cross promotion between businesses







**Funding secured by  
Sussex Modern  
post-covid**

# Gourmet Garden Trail


Investment secured:  
**£25,000**

On behalf of East Sussex County Council, a Discover England Fund funded project to launch a series of tourist itineraries showcasing England's beautiful gardens and unique food and drink and establishing GGT as a bookable product.




start planning your adventure.


- [Browse all attractions](#)
- [Browse all accommodation](#)




**CAFE**  
**Fork Lewes**  
Fork offers customers seasonal produce and distils, local wines and beers.  
MID RANGE  
EAST SUSSEX **FOODIE EXPERIENCES**



**GARDENS**  
**Charleston**  
Visit the rural home of artists Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant which was the gathering point for some of the 20th century's most radical artists, writers and thinkers.  
MID RANGE  
EAST SUSSEX **HISTORIC SITES**



**EXPERIENCE**  
**Rathfinny Estate**  
A family-owned Wine Estate, established in 2010 by Mark and Sarah Driver, dedicated to producing some of the world's finest sparkling wines from a single-site vineyard in Sussex, England.  
MID RANGE  
EAST SUSSEX **VINEYARDS**



**EXPERIENCE**  
**Cadence Cycle Club**  
The unique, guided cycling tours take in points of interest in the local area on high quality e-bikes designed for the terrain.  
MID RANGE  
EAST SUSSEX **HISTORIC SITES**

### About East Sussex

There seems to be a surprise around every corner in East Sussex. Drop a pin anywhere in the map and you're never far from something unexpected or experimental. Chances are there will be a boundary-pushing vineyard nearby with world-class wines ready

### Getting here and around

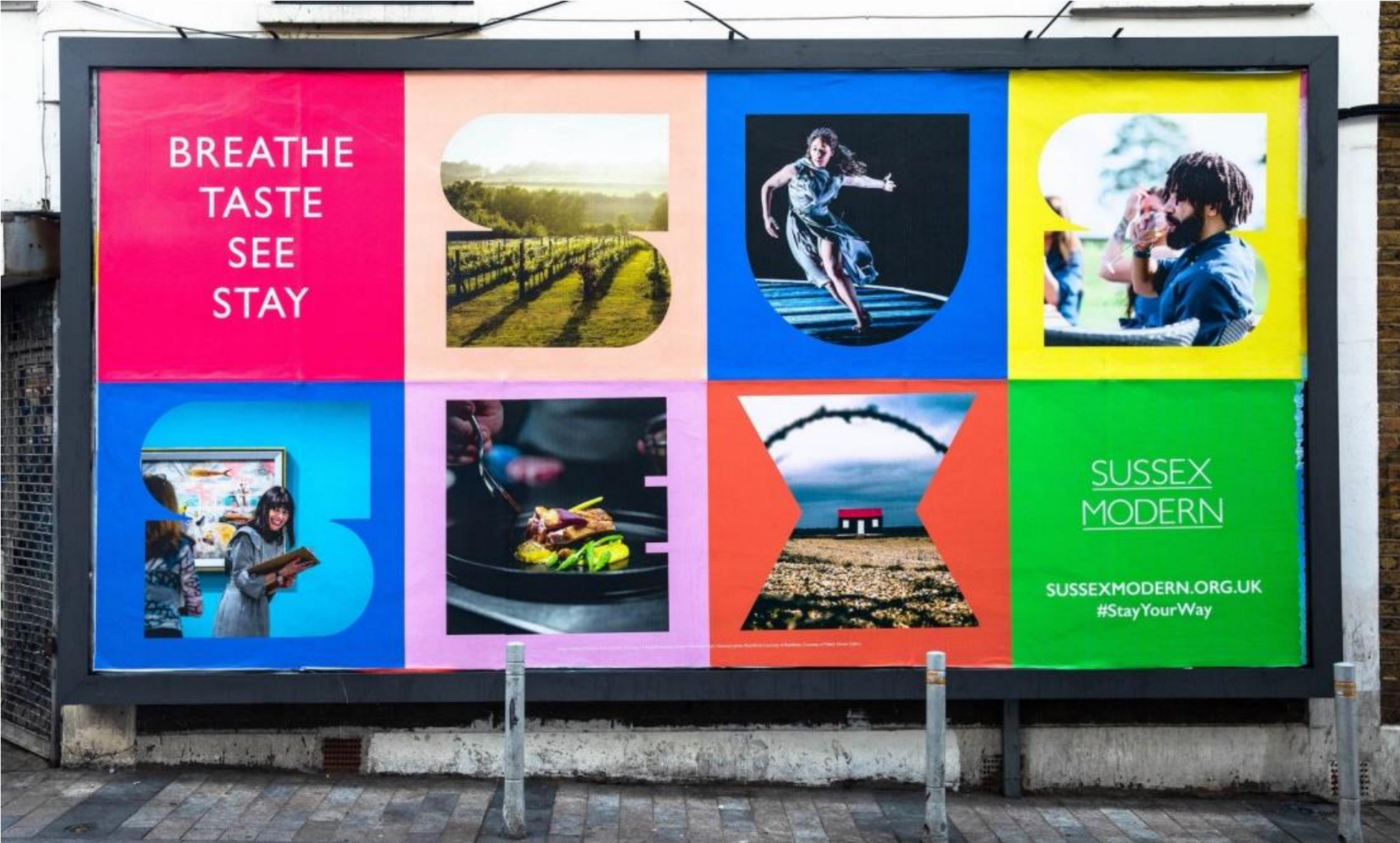
Gatwick Airport (West Sussex but direct trains to Lewes and Eastbourne)



# SELEP COVID-19 Recovery Funds Programme

**Investment secured:  
£ 163,000**

A vibrant campaign to support the post-pandemic recovery of the Sussex visitor economy.



SOUTH EAST  
LOCAL ENTERPRISE  
PARTNERSHIP  
COVID-19  
**RECOVERY**  
FUNDS



# UK Community Renewal Fund

**Investment secured:  
£ 719,100**

Centred around the core themes of sustainable transport, wine, and cultural tourism, this UK Government funded pilot was delivered in Lewes district with a focus on growing quality and sustainable tourism infrastructure around Newhaven and Gatwick as visitor gateways into Sussex and Global Britain.

**Delivery partners:**

Lewes District Council

Sussex Modern

South Downs National Park Authority

Plumpton College



**UK Government**





# Revi-VE – South East Visitor Economy Fund

Investment secured:  
**£80,087.51**

Positioning East Sussex as a place to live, work, invest and study as well as visit. A series of place marketing workshops facilitated by Toposophy helped shape the campaign approach.



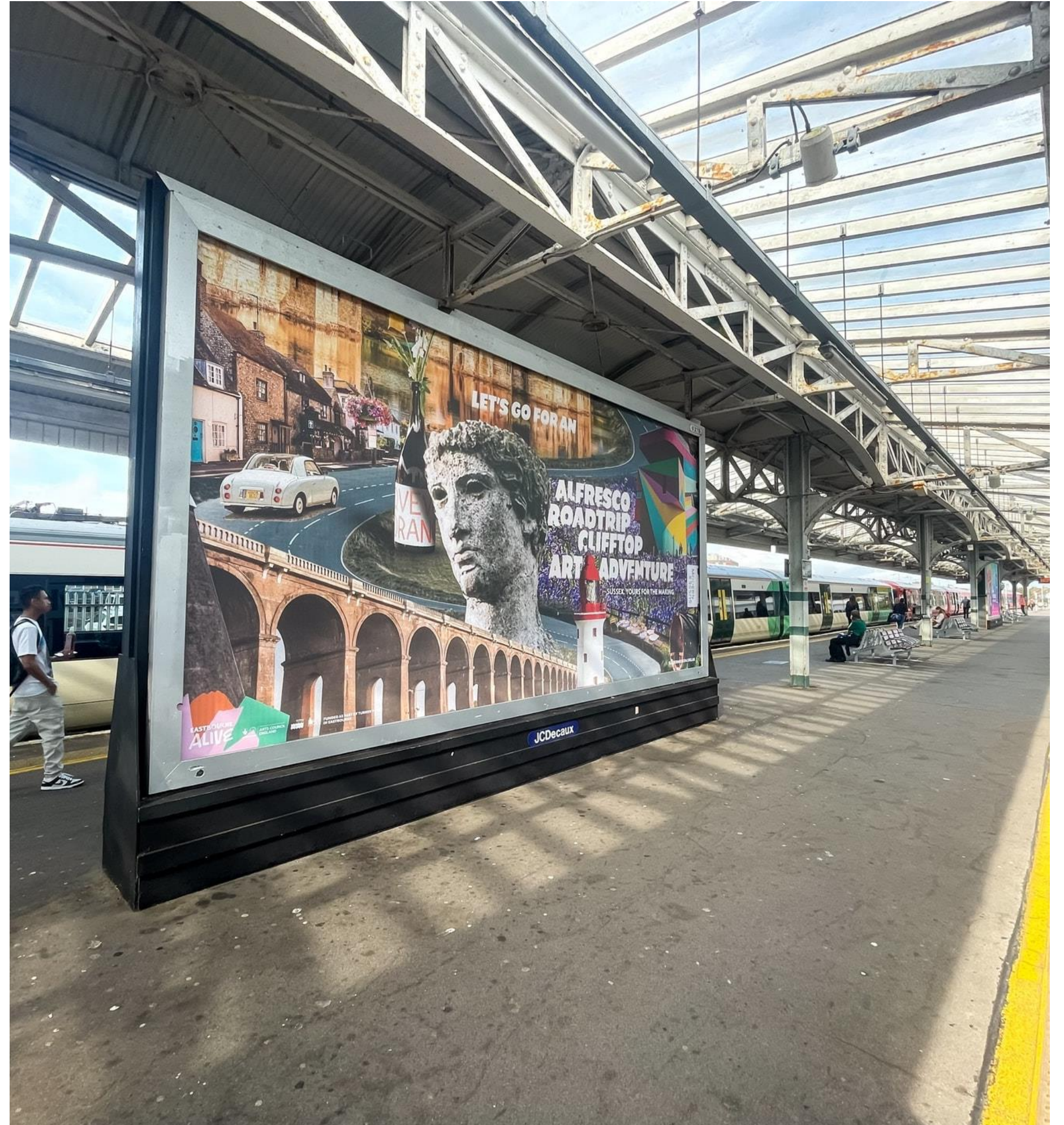
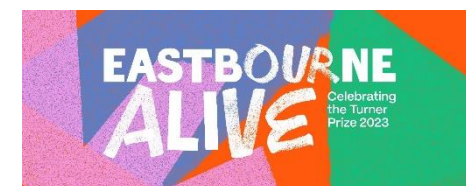


# Arts Council England

**Investment secured:  
£ 85,000**

This year, Sussex is making cultural history by hosting the prestigious Turner Prize at Towner Eastbourne.

Via Eastbourne Alive and Towner Eastbourne, Sussex Modern secured funding to deliver a Turner Prize wraparound campaign for the region, encouraging people to stay longer and experience more of Sussex.

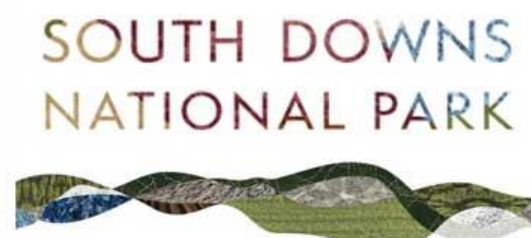




# Building an investment plan for the Sussex wine region

**The Sussex wine tourism growth plan is funded by the UK Government through the UK Community Renewal Fund.**

It has been led by a partnership which includes Sussex Modern, Plumpton College, the South Downs National Park Authority and the Sussex Visitor Economy Initiative coordinated by East Sussex County Council, West Sussex County Council and Brighton & Hove City Council, and has been administered by Lewes District Council.





# Reports commissioned and delivered by the UKCRF project

Author	Project	Title	Description
Matthews Associates	Wine Tourism	Wine Tourism Investment Implementation Plan	Sets out the investment priorities, actions and investment required to make Sussex the UK's foremost wine tourism region.
Matthews Associates	Wine Tourism	Wine Tourism Investment Implementation Plan - Technical Reports	Details the evidence and data required for bidding for government funds and supports the case for investment in wine tourism.
Blue Sail	Market Segmentation	International Segmentation for Sussex	Reviews the best prospect international segments for Sussex focusing on premium products and experiences, with a particular focus on wine tourism.
Urban Foresight	Sustainable Transport	Low Carbon Visitor Transport Investment Plan	Identifies the barriers to low carbon visitor transport and the potential for short and long-term interventions to address these barriers, focussing on Lewes district.
Urban Foresight	Sustainable Transport	EV Charging Points Guidance and Toolkit	A small business step-by-step guide to EV charging installation.
Deborah Brookes	Bookable Product	Bookable product for Wine & Culture Tourism	Identifies the barriers, challenges and opportunities to distribute bookable products, booking platform options, and domestic and international case studies.
Jackman McGovern	Wine Tourism	Tourism Lessons from New World Wine Regions	A deep dive into the key drivers of wine tourism across three successful New World wine regions.
	Wine Tourism	Sussex Wine Tourism Hub Feasibility Study	An exploration of international wine tourism hubs as case studies and potential options and feasibility of a wine tourism hub or hubs for Sussex.
Sussex Modern	Wine Tourism	Sussex Wine Tourism: A Prospectus for Sustainable Growth	Brings together all the reports produced to develop a vision and action plan for Sussex wine tourism sustainable growth.





**SUSSEX  
WINE  
TOURISM  
BY 2040**

**£283M  
IMPACT**

**3633  
NEW JOBS**



**Wine is an outstanding story for Sussex. It has emerged in the last few decades as a world-class wine-producing and wine tourism region pioneered by innovative visionaries.**

**The same chalky soil as found in Champagne, an average of 1400 hours of sunshine and a long, steady growing season has seen the Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier and Chardonnay varieties flourish. So much so that countless blind tastings and wine awards have seen Sussex Sparkling winning over Champagne.**



**888**  
**HECTARES**  
**UNDER VINE**

**25%**  
**UK TOTAL**

**138**  
**SUSSEX**  
**VINEYARDS**



**Wine tourism will make a significant contribution to the visitor economy and the prospects for further sustainable growth are excellent.**

**The objectives of this plan are:**

**1**

The volume and seasonal spread of wine tourism experiences across Sussex will be expanded

**2**

Sussex's reputation as a global wine destination will be enhanced to attract higher spending international and domestic visitors

**3**

Growth will be achieved in a sustainable and responsible way

**4**

The Sussex wine tourism businesses will work collaboratively and ambitiously in taking forward this vision



# These growth objectives are framed by the following principles:

### Expertly crafted



Our emphasis is on stimulating good growth in high-quality products and experiences that align with a quality Sussex wine brand

### Passionate about place



A responsible approach to wine tourism is at the forefront of the growth plan, maximising the positive benefits and supporting Sussex's transition to a low carbon economy

### Celebrating people



Ensuring that all our communities benefit from growth and supporting inclusive products, experiences and events



## Four Areas of Focus for Growing Sussex Wine Tourism

**Sussex will emerge as the UK's leading wine destination with a global reputation through a concerted and focused approach to development and marketing, which is creative, collaborative and market-focused.**

There is no one silver bullet that can help Sussex achieve success. Instead, there will be a comprehensive and coordinated approach that builds on the hard-won achievements, the destination strengths and an approach to quality and creativity that are the hallmarks of Sussex wine.

There are **four main areas of focus in developing Sussex wine tourism** illustrated here. These areas of focus are linked and success requires progress across each of them.

Specific actions within each of these four areas follow. Responsibilities and leadership for these actions will be determined by the Sussex wine tourism stakeholders. Some may be taken forward by local authority partners, destination organisations, by the Sussex Wine Industry Group or other private sector partners and some will require close collaboration between different stakeholders. Progress across these areas will require a coordinating organisation and resource to pull the different strands together.







# Next steps

Priority actions



## MARKETING AND POSITIONING

# Positioning and narrative

## Priority action

Develop an overarching positioning and narrative for Sussex wine tourism, under the agreed name 'Sussex Winelands'.

## How?

Develop a narrative and toolkit that provides content for use by vineyards and partners to promote the Sussex wine tourism offer. Ensure this content is driven by market perceptions and that it offers a compelling and distinctive story which will help the sector grow.



## EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT

# Orientation and signage

## Priority action

Signs on the highway remain an important tool to direct visitors to attractions. A coherent identity for the Sussex Winelands will ensure the scale of the visitor offer is understood.

## How?

Agree a coordinated approach across Sussex vineyards for physical signage, working with relevant highways authorities to explore options.



# Sussex Modern Zine

Issue #1: 2022

Issue #2: 2023

Issue #3: 2024





# Sussex Modern Board

**Ayesha Karim**

Head of Product at EQL

**Katharine Beer**

Regeneration Officer at Rother District Council

**Kirsty Goring**

Brand Director At Wiston Estate

**Mark Driver**

Owner Of Rathfinny Wine Estates, Sussex Wine PDO group member

**Nathaniel Hepburn**

CEO of Charleston & Chair of Sussex Modern

**Stewart Drew**

CEO Of De La Warr Pavilion & Chair Of 1066 Country, TES Board member

**Torvald De Coverly Veale**

Business & Brands Strategic Advisor at DCV Brand Essentials, former Global Brand Director at Unilever and Director of Britain International, VisitBritain



**thank you**