

marketing toolkit



01

Sense of place

“The components of a Sense of Place can be a thousand and one things. It’s the sensation you get when visiting somewhere for the first time – the first impression, the look, the feel, the atmosphere, the people. Sense of Place embraces the distinctive sights, sounds and experiences that are rooted in a country, those unique and memorable qualities that resonate with local people and visitors alike.”



VisitWales Sense of Place toolkit

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/dmwales/about-sense-of-place-2/worksheets-and-resources>

Respondents to the a recent Wales Visitor Survey interviewed in Ceredigion rated their trip very highly - overall trip satisfaction was rated 9.5 out of 10. ‘Quality of the natural environment’ and ‘friendliness of people’ both scored an average of 9.7 out of 10. All ratings of visitors’ trips were similar to, or higher, than the all Wales averages.

Visitors rely as much on word of mouth as they do on brochures or adverts – they are inclined to believe what other people think of places and experiences that they may like to try themselves, and check several websites before making a booking. Clear and consistent messages about Ceredigion will help potential

visitors to understand what Ceredigion has to offer to meet their needs and expectations, and to choose to visit Ceredigion. Our existing visitors can be our most powerful advocates and ambassadors, and are often happy to share their feelings, memories and images of their holiday. It is therefore important for businesses across Ceredigion to engage with customers - social media platforms are easy and cost effective way of doing so.

Visitor expectations

A recent brand awareness study for the Ceredigion area indicated that the following features were of key importance to people when planning a holiday in the UK:

- Good local food and drink
- Clean, varied scenery
- Tranquillity
- Good variety of outdoor activities

All four features rank highly in perceptions of Ceredigion. Respondents' expectations of Ceredigion included:

- "Fresh air, stunning scenery"
- "I would expect to find a beach and a relaxing holiday"
- "...Quiet, small towns, local pubs, scenery"
- "...outdoor activities and good local culture / atmosphere"

Whilst those who were familiar with Ceredigion commented:

- "It's a lovely drive through the hills. It's chilled out, green countryside"
- "It has a very laid-back and chilled-out way"
- "There is a colour blue in the sea that is unlike any other blue. It's a striking, sparking blue"
- "It's the beaches, they're very picturesque – small, covey, sandy beaches with glorious sunsets"

Priority marketing themes

The challenge is therefore to distinguish Ceredigion as a destination of choice for visitors planning to visit Wales, and that they understand and look forward to their experience, which may be their first experience of Wales. The priority themes for marketing Ceredigion Cardigan Bay & the Cambrian Mountains are:

Wildlife, and protected special landscapes

Coastal and inland – with a particular reference to the Cardigan Bay population of bottlenose dolphins; iconic bird species including the local success story of red kites and ospreys; the special qualities, including the tranquillity of sacred sites and special protected landscapes.

Tip Share images of wildlife relevant to your business or its location; if you are located within easy reach of the coast – remember to mention the bottlenose dolphins of Cardigan Bay, but remember that there are other species which people will be thrilled to see too.

Make sure you know, and share with your visitors special sites you can visit nearby, such as bluebell woods, beaches that are good for rockpooling or stretches of the coast path which are good for spotting seals and dolphins.

Cultural and linguistic heritage

Including poetry and literature, music and performance, discovering family and national heritage, and opportunities to learn Welsh and other skills in a friendly, relaxed environment.

Tip Introduce your visitors to local stories – some of which may already be familiar to them, but not the locations associated with them.

Make sure you know what events are taking place locally, and share this with your potential visitors – it might be just tip the balance in favour of visiting Ceredigion, rather than another area.

Recognise whether someone is a passionate about a topic, or just intrigued and engage them accordingly. Know who to contact if someone needs specialist help eg to trace ancestors.

Quality locally produced food and drink

Ceredigion produces food and drink of the highest quality - Welsh beef and lamb, fish and seafood, cheese, water, beer, wine and spirits. Ceredigion is home to internationally recognised brands, and has a growing number of acclaimed and award winning places to eat, as well as opportunities to visit farms and producers, and regular markets and a season of food festivals.

Tip Follow and share the success of businesses complimentary to your own, and make your own recommendations – it will show that you understand your customers' needs, and reassure them that they will be fulfilled in Ceredigion.

If you serve food, and go to the effort of sourcing your ingredients locally, make sure your customers know: make a reference on your menu, and enable your staff to confidently explain what the local ingredients are and how they are sourced.

Provide a list of places to shop locally when your guests book, and highlight those where they can buy or experience local produce.

A clean, healthy and relaxing environment, ideal for sport and outdoor activities

Ceredigion has attractive, award winning beaches, excellent and varied walking - from the Ceredigion Coast Path to woodland walks and rambling routes in the hills.

Tip Don't forget to mention award-winning beaches and the summer lifeguard service. Highlight your favourite local walks as well as the Wales/ Ceredigion Coast Path and check what the opportunities are to watch, participate in and take up new sports, including cycling, mountain biking, horse riding, water-sports, angling, golf etc. and tell your customers about them – on your website, social media, or simply by regularly refreshing your visitor welcome pack, noticeboard or leaflet display.

Quality and value for money attractions, events and seasonal highlights

Promote Ceredigion as an all year round destination focussing on events, quality attractions and accommodation, with plenty of things to do when the weather is not so great.

Tip Take the opportunity to visit attractions - many have open days for local tourism businesses. Follow them on social media so that you can talk confidently, with up to date information, about what is available to your visitors.