

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT – ÖSTRA VÄTTERN 2021

Pre-study Analysis and Recommendations for Sustainable Development
of the Eastern Coast of Lake Vättern



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November 2021



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research, analysis and report focuses on the potential for sustainable destination development of the eastern edge of lake Vättern encompassing Motala, Vadstena and Ödeshög municipalities.

Top-line recommendations for strategic planning and prioritisation are detailed below:

Print and digital media – less is more, consolidate and freshen the range, branding and product packages. Focus on more digital developments and consider an app if there is a collaborative force behind the whole lake as a destination in itself

Marketing – create a cohesive destination brand and identity, collaboration and partnerships are key especially if it is to encompass the whole lake and surrounding regions. Stay over and stay longer, visit outside the key summer months and leave no trace could be key messaging

Transport Infrastructure – opportunities to develop new sustainable ways to access all year round, and the basis for a discussion between regions to create a route which takes visitors along the whole east coast

Road directional signage and information – correlate with revised branding and information points

Mix of products in summer – great mix, potential for new and different products throughout the year in balance with those who live there

Mix of products outwith summer – many closed, opportunity to test longer opening times

Historical and cultural heritage – preserved heritage abounds, share the story and focus also on the geological

Key stakeholders – engaged and with the desire to work more collaboratively to reduce duplication and fragmentation of information, there is a goal for collaboration towards a common vision for greater impact. Engage the locals

Influencing future development – common vision, strategic and action orientated. Look to digitisation as a way to reach the guest, deliver and increase conscious sustainability throughout all activities

Sustainable development – green identity and brand essential, consider an accreditation, requires commitment and investment, measurement and monitoring...no green wash

Overtourism – already impacting in July, opportunities to distribute visitors around the lake and to visit and stay longer having been inspired by the diversity of the destination through marketing

Extending opening months – a chain effect, requires marketing and transport infrastructure to deliver and support this ambition

Future development – engage and include the local community, whilst bringing ideas to fruition. Embrace new projects which respect the environment, culture, heritage and geology of the landscape. Consider where no more new development is the solution and therefore a focus for heightened conservation only. Use the lake itself as a destination and transit facilitator to other areas as well as activities on it. Move visitors around the lake and create route ideas and new activities eg installing electric bike charging.

Partnerships – create a closer working relationship with VisitSweden and VisitÖstergötland and Runt Vättern. Make good use of digital platforms that exist and strengthen. Guests need better and easy to use information, not more. Could the whole lake become the destination?

2. PERSONAL REFLECTIONS ON A UNIQUE INLAND SEA

Lake Vättern and its surrounding coastline and islands are a stunning legacy left by nature!

For the visitor who lives close by, it is part of life's ritual to walk the cliffs, fish the waters, live the history and for a few, cycle the 300km around its perimeter each year.

It creates such a contrast to the surrounding farmed flatlands. **An inland sea** if you like, offering an horizon to gaze upon and a body of water which has its very own weather system. This impacts not just the weather but the movement of the water from a sea storm frenzy, to a flat mirrored calm, reflecting ever changing colours back from the sky.

It's a place to go, to be, to be in nature and to see the land which has endured and the season's colours change. It offers escape and beauty on the doorstep of such a culturally rich region, set magnificently between this body of lake, the Göta canal and the Baltic sea. A perfect water balance.

For the new visitor it's a treasure to discover, Östergötland and Vättern, living much as it has done for centuries past. Tourism can impact on the ticking of a clock and some places gear up for a June, July and August of visitors. So it's important to manage this for the life of the local so they too, don't lose what belongs to their **sense of place**.

And it is this which **must be preserved** for those who live there now and in the future. And so it is a **precarious balance** to contemplate the travel industry which can both support the lives of those who live there, and create a platform to preserve that heritage.

The future of that industry relies on two components, **Green** and **Digital**.

We are all custodians of this destination and the decisions we make now will impact immediately.

Some in this region rely heavily on the tourism industry which can be the life blood in many rural communities, and so should be developed with a strong focus on sustainability and inclusion for those who live, or come to live there.

The destination is well placed to play a part in the tourism of tomorrow, with sustainable advantage due to ongoing investment and new projects continuing to take effect through **regional partnerships**.

The destination is **well placed to meet current and future travel trends** now and looking ahead to 2030.

Digital will play a big part so connectivity is key, as is supporting tourism related businesses to be fully online and connecting with the visitor now and in the future.

Lake tourism is part of the renewed interest in outdoor tourism and so the **'blue economy'** will benefit with an increase in visitors looking for new experiences in new destinations in Sweden.

The destination meets perfectly the trends of 'localism' where the visitor and travel experience connect with businesses who deliver locally, and the revenues help contribute to **local economies**.

Wellness, adventure tourism, nature and wildlife, transformational experiences, short breaks at quieter times of the year, and eco-tourism, are trends which are ideally placed to put our destination in focus and a highlight for all seasons. Working with **seasonality** is key to economic and employment success.

The domestic and family markets are growing in Sweden, visitors are looking to travel with purpose and make conscious choices which **support local business and community** so it's a good time to rethink and set the path for a more sustainable destination going forward.

The development of Vättern and its stunning coastline and islands are an opportunity to **reset tourism in our own image and meet responsible tourism goals**. Protect the natural assets, create opportunities for inclusive community decisions and **invest in sustainable development or no development, just conservation and protection**, to ensure our visitor experiences provide the most sustainable memories possible!

Kim Ross

3. BACKGROUND

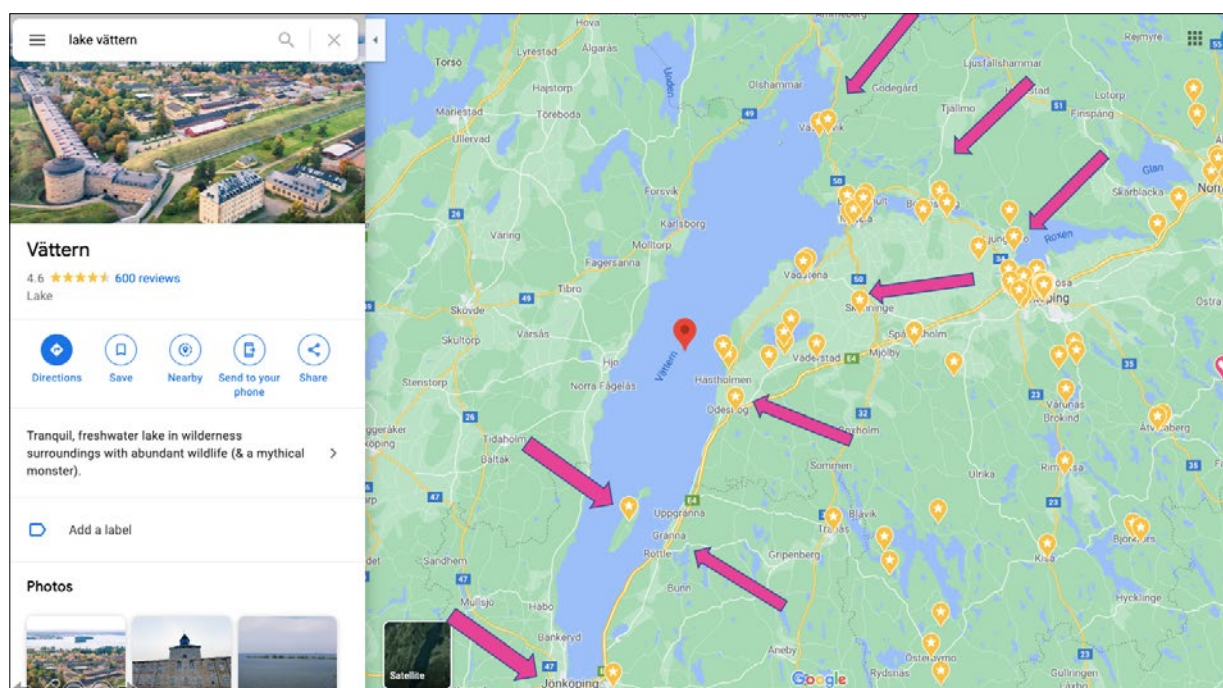
This report is part of a pre-study evaluation of the visitor experience around the eastern edge of Lake Vättern encompassing Motala, Vadstena and Ödeshög municipalities.

The aim is to provide a deeper understanding of the guest experience, strengths and opportunities for tourism development, and contribute to a longer-term action plan and strategic implementation for sustainable destination development.

The analysis is concerned with the potential for developing a sustainable and recognisable tourism micro-destination which can protect the natural and cultural assets of the area and equally important, create a balance for those living there. The opportunity to evaluate the potential for better economic and social benefits whilst minimising negative environmental or local impact on this varied lakeside.

3.1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to evaluate the current visitor experience and identify opportunities for future sustainable development in the destination.



The field study research parameters of east Lake Vättern destination audit from Medevi Brunn in the north to Gränna and Jönköping in the south.

This report focusing on the visitor experience and sustainable development of the lakeside complements previous analysis and reporting around area development and infrastructure.

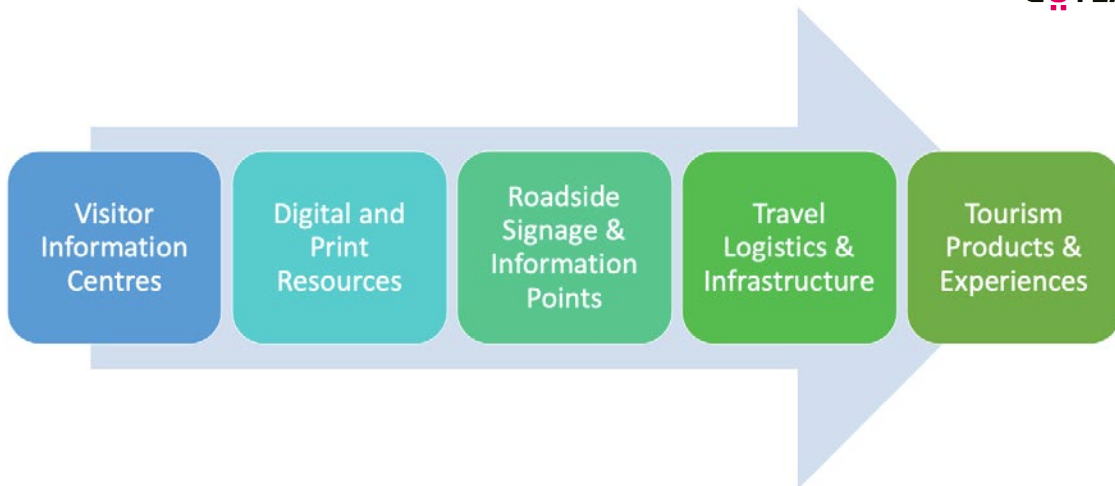
The work has been carried out by an experienced quality assurance and sustainability advisor.

Kim Ross has been involved in sustainable tourism development with Visit Scotland, Region Östergötland and several tourism regions and projects in Sweden and Norway. Kim is also certified in sustainable tourism through GSTC (Global Sustainable Tourism Council) and is an accredited advisor with Swedish Welcome and Nature's Best which aligns tourism development with the Sustainable Development Goals SDGs 2030. The field work was carried out in July and October 2021.

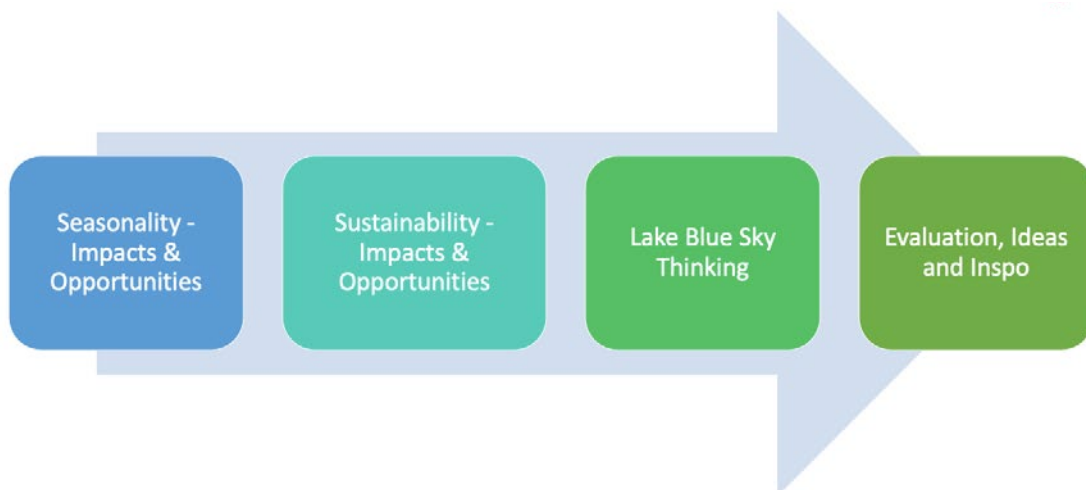
THE PROJECT IS BROKEN DOWN INTO TWO THREADS:

1. The Visitor Journey and the key touchpoints of their experience
2. The Visitor Journey and connection with destination management and development

VISITOR JOURNEY – KEY EXPERIENCE TOUCHPOINTS



VISITOR JOURNEY – DESTINATION MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT



3.2 APPROACH

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Destination audit – visitor experience key touchpoints.
- Destination management analysis – sustainability touchpoints.
- Blue-sky thinking – ideas for product and destination development.
- Project report & presentation with suggestions for next steps.

3.3 ANALYSIS

VISITOR JOURNEY – KEY EXPERIENCE TOUCHPOINTS:

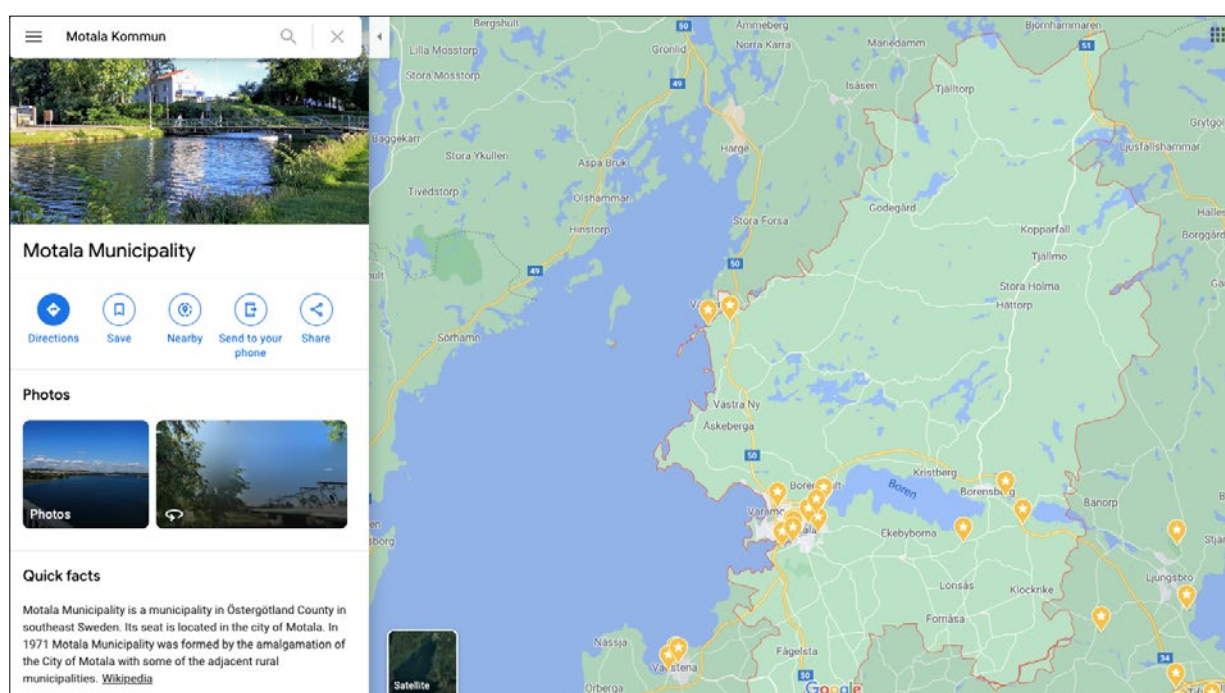
1. **Visitor information centres** – an evaluation of the service delivered by visitor information centres and information points and how this adds value to the visitor experience.
2. **Digital and print resources** – an audit of digital print and resources available online, in print, at visitor information centres and information points.
3. **Roadside signage and information points** – an audit of road signage and roadside information points along the main routes going to and along the lakeside.
4. **Travel logistics and infrastructure** – a practical evaluation of possible boat transportation and visitor infrastructure available around the lake.
5. **Tourism products and experiences** – overview of the tourism products and experiences along the coastline and adjacent areas in terms of quality, range, seasonality and packaging.

VISITOR JOURNEY – DESTINATION MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT:

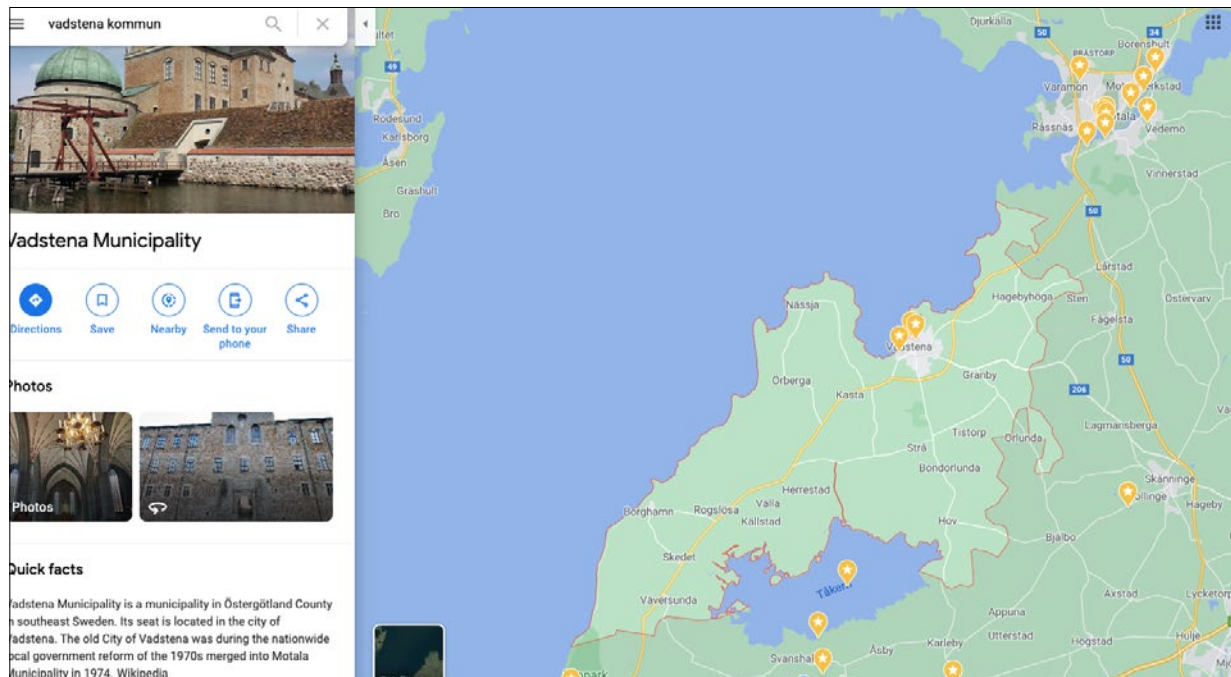
1. **Seasonality impacts and opportunities** – context of the visitor experience throughout the year to identify opportunities for growth and extending the short season.
2. **Sustainability impacts and opportunities** – overtourism, capacity management, recycling facilities, nature and wildlife conservation and the visitor journey.
3. **Lake blue-sky thinking** – inspiration on future developments to enhance the visitor journey, address seasonality and increase tourism in a sustainable way.
4. **Ideation** – thinking around possibilities which could fit with the destination development of Östra Vättern.

OUTPUT

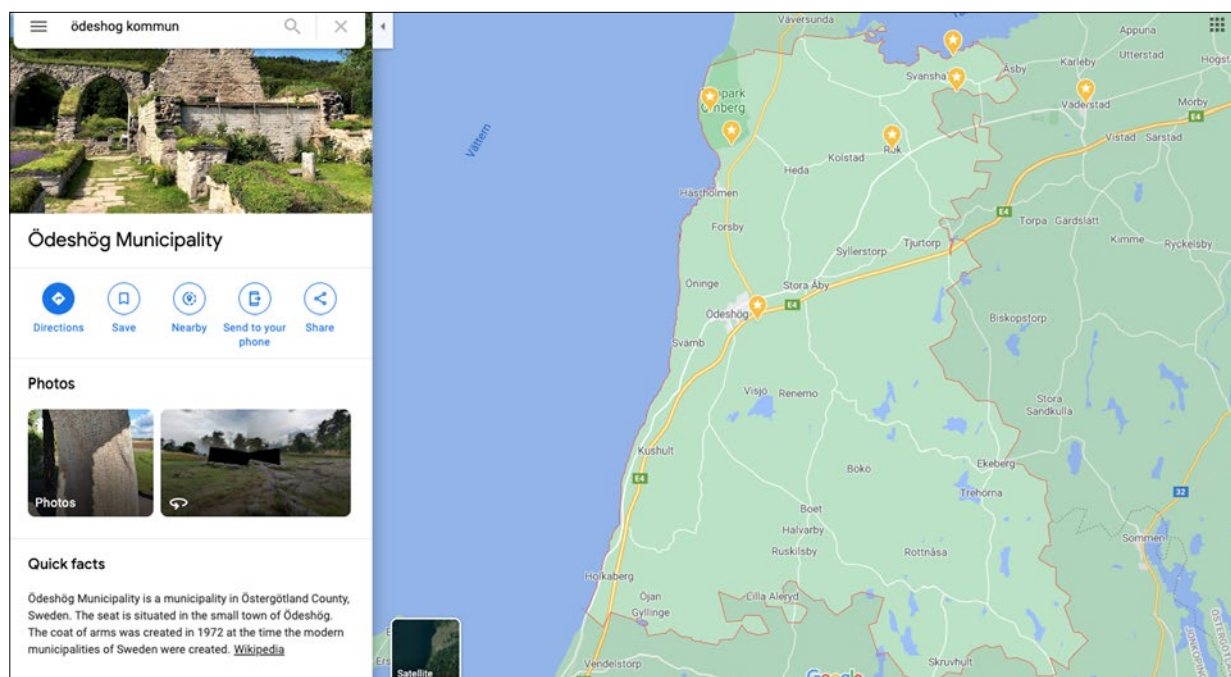
Pre-study overview incorporating strategic ideas which could be the platform for the next steps to develop a strategy and collaborative action plan for the short to mid-term sustainable destination development of Östra Vättern and with greater collaboration, Vättern as a whole.



A map of Motala municipality.



A map of Vadstena municipality.



A map of Ödeshög municipality.

4. INTRODUCTION

Östergötland's Lake Vättern (water lake), sitting quite centrally in southern Sweden has some amazing credentials to complement its beauty and vastness.

It is Sweden's second largest lake by surface area, and the sixth largest lake in Europe.

Historically, the purity and transparency of the lake is famous and it has been suggest to be the largest potable body of water in the world!

It exists due to a geological formation called tectonics where the earth's crust is depressed down along one ridge next to normal higher level fault lines. This dip then became an independent body of water left by the receding Scandinavian glacier.

An interesting fact is that the lake tilts from north to south as the land rise after this is faster in the north than the south.

The biodiversity is interesting with Vättern char, a unique fish species but very similar to that in Lake Sommen Sweden and also in Lake Ladoga in Russia! Both sport and commercial fishing is carried out on the lake.

The lake is drained to the Baltic Sea from Motala and Motala ström runs parallel with the Göta Canal all the way to Norrköping.

The lake's coastline perimeter covers 600km of diverse landscapes, and since man inhabited this area further development around agriculture, fishing, historical and societal influences abound.

This little-touched environment, both above and below water level, retains its authenticity and biodiversity. It is this unique identity which must be preserved to continue what has always been in this living lake in the heartland of southern Sweden.

It is already a popular destination for a variety of reasons and therefore really important that any future development or conservation focus, evolves organically, strategically and sustainably. This way it can meet the needs of both the local and visitor in the right way, and conserve biodiversity which is key.

4.1 WHY 'ÖSTRA VÄTTERN'

Östra Vättern is simply a working title chosen for this pre-study to encapsulate the area for which this report is to focus. The specific area observed is the coastline along the eastern side of Lake Vättern which is located within the municipalities of Motala, Vadstena and Ödeshög.

4.2 ÖSTRA VÄTTERN 2021 DESTINATION AUDIT

This is an analysis of the potential for developing and conserving a sustainable and recognisable micro-destination and perhaps brand identity for the lake as a whole, whilst protecting the natural and cultural assets of the region. The opportunity to open up the area for better economic and social benefits, whilst having no environmental impact other than conservation, on this sensitive lake area.

4.3 CONTEXT WITHIN SWEDEN AS A DESTINATION

Sweden's lakes are a key feature of the destination portfolio for Sweden both domestically and internationally.

Lake Vättern is often highlighted alongside Omberg ekopark, historic Vadstena and pilgrim routes such as Birgittaleden, accessing the Göta Canal at Motala and the 300km Swedish Classic cycle race Vätternrundan.

Visit Sweden's recent campaigns connect sustainable experiences, cycle routes, biking holiday packages, nature and culture tourism, foody and wellness experiences, all which fit perfectly with the offering around Lake Vättern.

So overall Vättern as a destination, offers a really good fit to build on current trends and sustainable marketing initiatives.

4.4 KEY MUNICIPALITY STAKEHOLDERS, FOCUS AND BACKGROUND RESEARCH

STAKEHOLDERS


The key tourism stakeholders and representatives in our destination audit are:

Helene Njord-Westerling	Näringslivs- och turistchef, Ödeshög Municipality
Pia Axelsson	Turism/Besöksnäringsutvecklare, Motala Municipality
Jessica Hallros	VD Vadstena Turism och Näringsliv AB, Vadstena Municipality

In the preparation leading up to the destination audit we clarified the key touchpoints which would define the visitor journey and the aspects to consider for destination development.

In addition, this question was posed:

WHAT ARE YOU CURIOUS ABOUT?



“

A feeling that you are in ONE destination, instead of three municipalities would be great. Perhaps welcoming signs. You don't have to lose your own identity. We can still market ourselves individually at the same time.

We have all felt the need of collaboration as each municipality on its own is not enough. Vadstena does not have enough beds in the summer, recommending guests to contact Motala. Omberg had too many visitors last summer, an issue that has to be dealt with by Ödeshög and Vadstena in collaboration. And in a few years we might have Lalandia in Motala, attracting new markets and younger visitors than today to the destination. **What effect might this have on existing business and the sustainability?**

I'm curious about how we can help the tourism companies so that they can help themselves. How we do that best. I also think that **it's important to see the whole way when we want to attract visitors, like where to park, do they come by bus, where can they all eat and how do they plan?**

”

Municipality stakeholder thoughts around the additional questions that this audit could consider.

BACKGROUND RESEARCH

So the scene was set on the parameters of the audit, but it's always good to reflect on the data and analysis of the past.

A range of research studies and analysis around the Lake Vättern destination are available. These include guest night statistics and visitor surveys which are comparative 2017–20, visitor surveys in various locations, Göta Canal and Birgittaleden visitor and development analysis, Telia data tracking visitor movement and duration of stays, and an overview which offers a strategic and analytical context and background to complement the focus of this report.

- Egen Gästnattsstatistik 2017, 2018, 2019 och 2020 Motala.
- Analys mobildata Vättern 20210826.
- Slutrapport-Underlag-turismsamarbete-Vättern-20191023.
- Sustainable Birgitta ways.
- Rapport Göta kanal Undersökning bland landbesökare 2020 – Motala.
- Redovisning Jämförelse över åren Temperaturmätning 2017, 2018, 2019 och 2020.
- Redovisning diagram Temperaturmätning 2020.pdf.
- Redovisning diagram besöksundersökning 2020.docx.
- Redovisning diagram besöksundersökning 2019.docx.
- Swedish Welcome reports and analysis – Vättern cluster 13 companies.

5. METHOD

5.1 ÖSTRA VÄTTERN 2021 DESTINATION AUDIT – VISITOR JOURNEY

The on-site audit took place during the busy, sunny days of July and the calmer, colourful autumn in October 2021 and covered the following aspects:

KEY VISITOR EXPERIENCE TOUCHPOINTS:

1. **Visitor information centres** – an evaluation of the service delivered by visitor information centres and information points and how this adds value to the visitor experience.
2. **Digital and print resources** – an audit of digital print and resources available online, in print, at visitor information centres and information points.
3. **Roadside signage and information points** – an audit of road signage and roadside information points along the main routes going to and along the lakeside.
4. **Travel logistics and infrastructure** – a practical evaluation of possible boat transportation and visitor infrastructure available along the eastern lakeside.
5. **Tourism products and experiences** – overview of the tourism products and experiences along the coastline and adjacent areas in terms of quality, range, seasonality and packaging.

5.2 ÖSTRA VÄTTERN 2021 DESTINATION AUDIT – DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

KEY DESTINATION MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT TOUCHPOINTS:

1. **Seasonality impacts and opportunities** – context of the visitor experience throughout the year to identify opportunities for growth and extending the short season.
2. **Sustainability impacts and opportunities** – over tourism, capacity management, recycling facilities, nature and wildlife conservation and the visitor journey.
3. **Lake blue-sky thinking** – ideas and inspiration on future developments to enhance the visitor journey, address seasonality and increase tourism in a sustainable way.
4. **Ideation** – thinking around possibilities which could fit with the destination development and conservation of Östra Vättern.

5.3 ÖSTRA VÄTTERN 2021 DESTINATION AUDIT – ANALYSIS OF TERMS

The analysis of the visitor experiences within this report will use descriptive language which equates to a quality scale based on the Swedish Welcome assessment method.

www.swedishwelcome.se

SWEDISH WELCOME SCORING SYSTEM

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
ENASTÅENDE OUTSTANDING	En enastående nivå som uppfyller och överträffar gästernas förväntningar och som starkt fokuserar på högsta nivån inom hållbar utveckling. An outstanding level which meets and exceeds guest expectations and focuses strongly on sustainable development to the highest level.
UTMÄRKT EXCELLENT	En utmärkt nivå som fokuserar på gästnöjdhet och en stark etisk grundsyn på hållbar utveckling av verksamheten. An excellent level which focuses on guest satisfaction and a strong ethos for sustainable development of the business.
MYCKET BRA VERY GOOD	En mycket bra nivå med tydligt fokus på både gästupplevelse och hållbarhet. A very good level with clear business focus for both guest experience and sustainability.
BRA GOOD	En bra nivå med gästupplevelse och hållbarhet i beaktning. A good level and considered approach to guest experience and effective progress with sustainability.
GOTAGBART ACCEPTABLE	En godtagbar nivå med anspråkslöst fokus på gästupplevelse och hållbarhet. An acceptable level with simple focus on guest experience and sustainability.
ÅTGÄRD KRÄVS ACTION REQUIRED	Ej godtagbar prestanda. Mer arbete eller investeringar krävs för att nå godtagbar prestanda. Verksamheten uppfyller eventuellt inte alla lagstadgade bestämmelser. Mycket begränsat fokus på uppföljning, underhåll och förbättring av prestanda. Improvement is required to achieve an acceptable level or higher.



Bättre upplevelser
och hållbar utveckling



The Swedish Welcome scoring system levels are action required, acceptable, good, very good, excellent and outstanding. They reflect the quality of the guest experience and level of work with sustainability.

6. WHAT CONSTITUTES A DESTINATION?

Lake Vättern is recognised as a destination both on a national and regional level. It is bordered by four county administrative boards and their relevant municipalities who can implement tourism policy and development strategy.

6.1 UNWTO DEFINITION

According to the UNWTO glossary of terms¹, the main destination of a tourism trip is defined as:

1. The place visited that is central to the decision to take the trip.
2. The place where the visitor spent most of their time during the trip.
3. The place that is farthest from the place of usual residence.

'It should be possible to measure aspects of the demand for and supply of tourism services within defined boundaries. Typically, such destinations have some form of public/private sector organisation in place; they are promoted as places to visit and have some form of management process in place for visitor related purposes. At the local level, destination boundaries are connected to the municipality.'

6.2 MICRO-DESTINATIONS

1. Motala and Göta Canal.
2. Vadstena.
3. Omberg ekopark.

These all could be considered micro-destinations, not just because their boundaries are clearly recognised by their respective municipalities of Motala, Vadstena and Ödeshög, but also from a logistical and marketing perspective.

This report will look deeper at the connection between this and guest experience in terms of visitor perception and planning when choosing Lake Vättern.

¹ www.unwto.org/glossary-tourism-terms

7. DESTINATION ANALYSIS

The purpose of this report is to objectively evaluate the current visitor experience and identify opportunities for future sustainable development in the destination.

THERE ARE TWO THREADS OF ANALYSIS:

1. The Visitor Journey and the key touchpoints of their experience.
2. The Visitor Journey and how it connects with destination management and development.



7.1 VISITOR JOURNEY – KEY TOUCHPOINTS OF THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

7.1.1 DESTINATION IDENTITY

STATUS

Östergötland region borders the east side of Lake Vättern and in addition to the lake itself, encompasses the three micro-destinations around Motala, Vadstena and Omberg.

So how do we take this simple concept to market, and provide a clear and consistent communication, mapping and logistical detail for both new and established visitors, both online and onsite, and to orientate and plan their experience in the best way.

GOOGLE

Here are the 'scrolling' results of a google search for 'Vättern' in the order they were listed:

Tip: Search for **English** results only. You can specify your search language in [Preferences](#)

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vättern>

Vättern - Wikipedia

Vättern is the second largest lake by surface area in Sweden, after Vänern, and the sixth largest lake in Europe. It is a long, finger-shaped body of fresh ...

Max. depth: 128 m (420 ft)	Catchment area: 4,503 km ² (1,739 sq mi)
Average depth: 41 m (135 ft)	Basin countries: Sweden

[Geography](#) · [Geology](#) · [Biology](#) · [Uses](#)

<https://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vätt...> [Translate this page](#)

Vättern -- Wikipedia

Vättern är en långsmal djup insjö vilken är belägen i södra Sverige och delar Götaland i Östergötland och Västergötland. I norr och söder gränsar den även ...

Bredd: 31 km Land: Sverige

Tillflöden: Forsviksån; Tabergsån; Huskvarna... Utflöde: Motala ström

[Geologi](#) · [Klimat](#) · [Geografi](#) · [Vättern och människan](#)

People also ask

Hur kom Vättern till? [▼](#)

Vättern

Lake in Sweden

4.6 ★★★★★ 627 Google reviews

Vättern is the second largest lake by surface area in Sweden, after Vänern, and the sixth largest lake in Europe. It is a long, finger-shaped body of fresh water in south central Sweden, to the southeast of Vänern, pointing at the tip of Scandinavia. [Wikipedia](#)

Area: 1,900 km²
Length: 135 km
Surface elevation: 88 m
Volume: 77 km³

[Plan a trip](#)

Google

Vättern


https://runtvattern.se › ...

Destination Around Lake Vättern - a trip worthwhile - Around ...

Tourist offices and partners: Welcome to lake Vättern 2021. Motala. Askersund. Habo. Karlsborg ...

Images for Vättern

lake jönköping huskvarna vrak vänern




Feedback

→ View all


Top sights in Vättern

Kid-friendly Art & Culture History Outdoors Museums




Top sights in Vättern


Kid-friendly Art & Culture History Outdoors Museums



Tiveden National Park
4.8 ★★★★★ (1,581)
Sizable forest with trails & recreation



Vadstena Castle
4.3 ★★★★★ (3,424)
Royal castle built as a fortress in 1545



Omberg
4.5 ★★★★★ (66)
Scenic views, forests & hiking trails

→ More things to do

<https://www.vattern.org> • Translate this page

Vättern.org

Samförvaltning i Vättern – nu ett globalt exempel på hur fisk kan förvaltas ... Nu beskriver en färsk SLU-ledd studie hur Vätterns fiskförvaltning förhåller ...

<https://vatternrundan.se> • Translate this page

Vätternrundan – Utmanande lopp för alla cyklister

315 km runt sjön Vättern ställer sina krav på de många deltagarna som årligen samlas för vad vi vill kalla för en cykelfest. Loppet som äger rum i september ...

<https://www.smhi.se> › de-stora-sjoarna • Translate this page

Fakta om Vättern | SMHI

29 Jul 2009 — Fakta om Vättern ... Vättern är Sveriges näst största sjö. Sjön ligger i en förkastningsänka i jordskorpan och är därför långsträckt med branta ...

<https://www.vastsverige.com> › things-to-do › lake-vattern •

Lake Vättern - Hjo

Vättern is not only Sweden's second largest lake, it is also the fifth largest lake in Europe. The lake is 135 kilometres long and 31 kilometres wide, and it ...

<https://www.ifske.se> › fiske-vattern • Translate this page

Fiske i Vättern - iFiske

vatten samt på enskilt vatten utanför så kallad öppen strand. Eftersom det norra skärgårdsområdet består av enskilt vatten krävs fiskekort för att bedriva ...

<https://viss.lansstyrelsen.se> › Waters • Translate this page

Vättern - Sjö - VISS - VattenInformationSystem för Sverige

God - Kemisk status Färgrepresentation av klassning Uppnår ej god - Tillkomst/härkomst

<https://www.dykarna.nu> › lexicon • Translate this page

Vättern | dykarna.nu

Vättern - Allmänt: Vättern är en förkastningssjö i södra Sverige som ligger 86½ m över havet och är Sveriges näst största insjö (till både yta och volym) och ...

<https://www.jonkoping.se> › download › 01. Vättern... • PDF

01. Vättern.pdf

Vättern var en gång i tiden en havsvik i Yoldiahavet. Landskapsbilden kring södra Vättern är mycket variationsrik: den långa sandstranden med möjligheter till ...
2 pages

<https://www.jonkoping.se> › vattensky... • Translate this page

Vattenskydd för Vättern - Jönköpings kommun

För att trygga dricksvattenförsörjningen idag och i framtiden är Vättern, dess stränder och tillrinnande vattendrag ett vattenskyddsområde. Vätterns ...

<https://www.visitostergotland.se> › start › along-vattern •

Along the eastern shore of Lake Vättern Östergötland

Along the eastern shore of Lake Vättern, you will not only find some of Sweden's most visited nature areas; Ömberg, Tåkern and Varamobaden, ...

<https://www.airbnb.se> › Sverige • Translate this page

Vättern Semesterbostäder och boenden - Sverige | Airbnb

24 aug. 2021 - Hyr från folk i Vättern, Sverige från 175 kr SEK/natt. Hitta unika ställen att bo med lokala värdar i 191 länder. Passa alltid in med Airbnb.

GOOGLE – TOP SEARCHES RETURNED WHEN SEARCHING 'VÄTTERN':

- No1 <https://runtvattern.se/>
- No2 <https://vatternrundan.se/>
- No3 <https://www.vastsverige.com/en/hjo/things-to-do/lake-vattern/>
- No4 <https://www.ifske.se/>
- No5 https://www.dykarna.nu/dykplatser/vattern_oringe-233.html
- No6 <https://www.jonkoping.se/download/18.74fef9ab-15548f0b8002173e/1465889786365/01.%20V%C3%A4ttern.pdf>
- No7 <https://www.visitostergotland.se/en/start/destinations/along-vattern/>
- No8 <https://www.airbnb.se/sweden/stays>

VISITSWEDEN – TOP SEARCHES RETURNED WHEN SEARCHING 'VÄTTERN':

Visit Sweden


✕
🔍

Categories


Culture, history and art
Eat & Drink
Nature & Outdoors
Roundtrips

SHOWING 12 RESULTS

Relevance




Wallby
Småland




Cycling holidays in Sweden
Cycling holidays in Sweden are suited to most everyone. Sweden is a big country with a vast, well developed, and well marked network of cycling paths that offer...

Nature & Outdoors / Biking




Renata Chlumska - Adventure athlete
Adventure athlete who became the first Swedish woman to climb Mount Everest and the only person in the world to circumnavigate the lower 48 States of the...

Culture, history and art / Culture / Local people




Five Swedish restaurants with fantastic locations
When you're craving a good meal but also want to experience some of the most exceptional places in Sweden, book a table at one of these restaurants.

Eat & Drink / Bars, Cafés and Restaurants




Swedish food safaris – a tasty, all-natural adventure
Foragers rejoice – everyone is free to roam Sweden's countryside on the hunt for Mother Nature's nutritious offerings. Set off on your own or let an expert guide you – food safar...

Nature & Outdoors / Other activities




Experience a Swedish crayfish party
Sweden has many unique traditions, the crayfish party being just one of them. Join in to absorb a slice of true Swedish cultural heritage.

Culture, history and art / Swedish traditions / More traditions



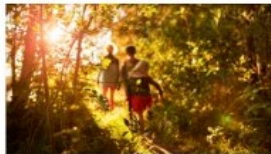
Hiking in southern Sweden – the top trails
Southern Sweden's best trails will have you immersed in magnificent nature, with a helping of culture completing the experience.

Nature & Outdoors / Hiking




The gardens of Sweden – a botanist's dream
Sweden is home to a multitude of inspiring gardens, each with its own unique identity and compelling history.

Nature & Outdoors / Nature / Garden & Parks




Top eco-tourism attractions in Sweden
Welcome to the top 10 eco-tourism attractions in Sweden. Well, there are actually 14 on this list, and it is growing, but who cares? They represent the best eco-...

Nature & Outdoors / Nature / Sustainable travel




Småland
'Sweden for real' is the official slogan of the region of Småland in the southeast of Sweden. With a rich culture, pristine nature and a proud culinary tradition – also the...



Land of the free
The Swedish right to roam freely on private land – "allemensrätten" – isn't as ancient as many believe. But it still has profound impact on our national psyche....

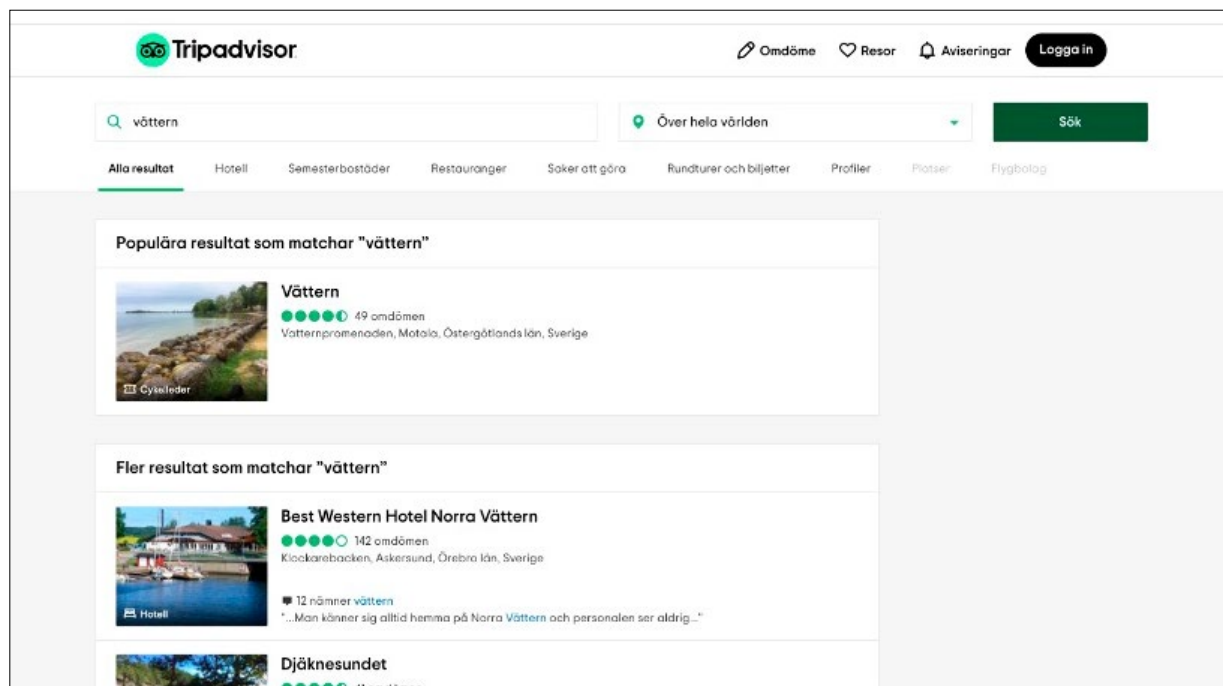
Nature & Outdoors / Nature / Sustainable travel



On the road between Gothenburg and Stockholm – a cultural adventure
Driving from Gothenburg to Stockholm is a Sweden holiday of dreams, particularly for the culturally inclined. This suggested five-day route is studded with tips – from...

Roundtrips

TRIP ADVISOR SWEDEN SEARCHING 'VÄTTERN':



OUTCOME

From the visitor perspective, the ability to search online using the destination keyword 'Vättern', returns some helpful results, with **Runtvättern** website coming first after Wikipedia alongside other key local and regional websites with tourism in focus.

The municipality websites for Motala, Vadstena and Ödeshög do not appear in this simple search for the word Vättern.

It takes quite a bit of time, planning and deep research for a visitor to grasp the overall possibilities of what they could see and do around Vättern.

Even when accessing all the websites mentioned previously, with various suggestions and ideas, the understanding of what is where, how to group or package the experience in a day visit, weekend trip or longer tour along the way, is not so clear or accessible.

It leaves the visitor feeling that they have to make up and research their own plan using the pieces of information.

More collaborative work could be done with **Visit Sweden and Visit Östergötland** to include content and highlight keywords which connect with relevant websites, experiences and content so they appear on searches.

Runt Vättern website has a strong presence in tourism searches online for the area and it already collaborates and packages the lake as a whole.

There is a '**Turistvägen**' road that is marked with brown tourist roadsigns with the white flower logo and has roadside signage at information points, however this doesn't seem to be used on websites to market the route between Gränna, Ödeshög, Omberg, Rök and Väderstad.

Overall information is fragmented and websites lack a visual map representation which can show the logistics of travel, suggestions of routes or overview of the key things to see and do along the way.

OPPORTUNITY

There are three possible angles to take in terms of marketing and information:

- Lake Vättern as one complete visitor destination, north south, 4 quadrants (for maps).
- East coast Vättern – Östergötland and Småland's coastal destination.
- Östergötland's Vättern and the micro-destinations of Motala, Vadstena and Omberg.

Whole of Lake Vättern – to establish a strong brand identity for the whole lake as a destination is one opportunity and would take much coordination, however the essence of this exists already through the website and booklet **Around Vättern, Runt Vättern**.

Why re-invent the wheel?

THE WHOLE OF LAKE VÄTTERN

Runt Vättern:

<https://runtvattnen.se/>

https://issuu.com/runtvattnen/docs/rv21_issuu_swe?fr=sYTgxYzEyOTgONDQ

This marketing tool has the opportunity to developed further and enhanced.

- It's a ready-made platform online, digital and in print covering tourism around the whole lake.
- Many products and companies are already invested, committed and participate yearly.
- It has an established distribution channel if choosing to continue to distribute a paper magazine or brochure.
- A new printed map/s could be created and added to this above distribution channel quite easily.
- Each län/municipality could have their own map but there is an agreed brand which runs through all online and print.
- With more partner investment the website could be improved in terms of content, look and feel, functionality and searchability. It could pull in the content from all municipality websites as well as Visit Östergötland and Visit Sweden. It could have improved Search Engine Optimisation in Swedish, English and eg German.
- And if this is considered a real opportunity, then it could be the facilitator to create a completely new and strong brand identity for the lake. It could bring consistency throughout all marketing of the destination. This umbrella (or parent) brand could then connect with separate unique sub-brands beneath this ie the municipality tourism regions.
- Each of these sub brands may have their own distinct brand promise, position and personality.
- An app could be a one stop shop for the whole of Vättern.

ÖSTRA VÄTTERN

A stronger collaboration and brand identity for the whole east coast along the lake.

The E4 connects the south of Sweden and Stockholm.

All routes in the south reach a meeting point at Jönköping then the E4 skirts along the lower east side of lake Vättern, then inland.

This is a fantastic opportunity for visitors to stop-off on transit and in an ideal world, convert a day visit to an overnight stay along the way.

Similarly, the east coast of Vättern with its key towns, activities, ecopark and transit point for Visingsö offers a contrasting and dynamic visitor experience.

Currently visitors have to jump from Östergötland to Småland information and bus systems, so further thinking around this would be needed for a more cohesive approach.

ÖSTERGÖTLAND'S VÄTTERN

Create a stronger brand and identity for Vättern within Östergötland's own marketing.

The region identifies Göta Canal, the archipelago coastline and Vättern as three micro-destinations, but beyond these themes there is the opportunity to develop user friendly information so visitors can be inspired to stay longer and experience more.

IDEAS AND INSPIRATION

An example of scenic routes in simple form with tips

<https://www.swedishlapland.com/toplist/scenic-routes/>

The Silver way route brings together maps, brochures and signage

<https://www.arjeplognytt.se/2020/01/07/silvervagen-arktisk-vag-fran-kust-till-kust/>

The North East 250 covers the east coast of Scotland and pulls all listings onto one webpage

<https://www.northeast250.com/>

The North Coast 500 also has an app to enable ease of use for planning while enroute

<https://www.northcoast500.com/>

Digital touring routes on google could be created

<https://www.swedishlaplandvisitorsboard.com/digitala-touring-routes/>

The important thing in any of the above marketing, is that the brand architecture features an overlying brand and theme which is connected to all. See the next example from Trentino in the Dolomites region and how they work with the colours and sub branding².



Example: Trentino Dolomites Region brand and sub-brand identity refresh.

7.1.2 DIGITAL AND PRINT RESOURCES

STATUS

Östergötland's coast along the east of Vättern is a stunning area of natural beauty, cultural significance, historic towns, ecopark, lake activities, waymarked walking routes, fishing and diverse visitor experiences.

It has much to offer in terms of storytelling, visual imagery and unique features to entice and inspire curiosity. These attributes are put to good use on many digital and print platforms which currently exist.

The question is: What do these searches return and is it easy for a visitor to understand how they can plan a great experience in the destination?

² www.minaletattersfield.com/en/post/1562/peak-performance

STORY

An audit of print and online resources was carried out during July 2021.

PRINT:

As part of the guest experience audit brochures, maps, magazines and newspapers connected to experiences along the Vättern coastline were collated from visitor centres and information points in:

- Berg
- Borensberg
- Motala
- Vadstena
- Hästholmen
- Visingsö
- Östgötaporten
- Ödeshög
- Supermarket, reception and information points

THE AUDIT IN JULY IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING PRINT CONNECTED TO EAST VÄTTERN:

- **14** map options, regional, area or activity specific.
- **38** tourism company brochures.
- **5** free newspapers.
- **2** free glossy magazines.
- **7** booklets.
- **5** municipality brochures or leaflets.
- **19** Naturreservat, Naturkartan, nature leaflets.
- **9** leaflets on Vättern, fish, nature, crayfish, birds.
- **2** transportation leaflets.



The results of the audit of printed marketing shows 101 different brochures available to visitors in July 2021.

DIGITAL:

The Motala Turistinformation brochure is available online on issuu as is Runt Vättern and Around Vättern magazine in Swedish and English.

https://issuu.com/tillvaxtmotala/docs/turistinformation_19_online

https://issuu.com/runtvattnet/docs/rv20_issuu_swe?fr=sMmMwMTEyOTg0NDQ

https://issuu.com/runtvattnet/docs/rv20_runt-vattnet_200519_eng_final_low?fr=sZTU4YjEyOTg0NDQ

These were the only brochures or maps which are printed in the region or municipalities, to come up on any of the various online Swedish and English keyword searches.

GOOGLE SEARCH:

Here is a summary of the various keyword searches and the results.

The focus was to test simple searches which incorporate a visitor theme and Vättern to see what might be returned.

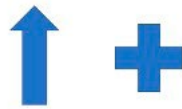
Search terms:

- Saker att göra i Vättern
- Saker att göra kring Vättern
- Bästa stopp vid Vättern
- Sevärdheter Vättern
- Aktiviteter Vättern
- Boende Vättern
- Topp 10 Vättern
- Things to do around Vättern
- Vättern

Search results:

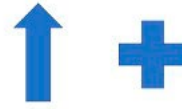
saker att göra i vättern	saker att göra kring vättern
https://www.tripadvisor.se/AttractionsNear-g676530-d2688828-Vattern-Motala_Ostergotland_County.html	
https://www.expressen.se/allt-om-resor/resmal/europa/sverige/guide-7-smultronstallen-runt-vattern/	
https://www.vastsverige.com/upplevgotakanal/se--gora/sevardheter/alla-sevardheter/	https://www.tripadvisor.se/AttractionsNear-g676530-d2688828-Vattern-Motala_Ostergotland_County.html
https://www.expedia.se/Vattern.dx3000651667	https://jkpg.com/sv/jonkoping-huskvarna/aktiviteter-och-saker-att-gora-i-jonkoping/
https://litemerarosa.com/2020/06/21/sevardheter-runt-vattern-osttra-sidan/	
https://fordonsgas.se/roadtrip-vattern/	
https://crownmountain.se/2020/08/20/vattern-runt/	

bästa stopp vid vättern



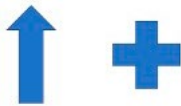
<https://trippa.se/tripp/vastra-vattern-fran-askersund-till-jonkoping>

sevärdheter vättern



<https://runtvattern.se/>

aktiviteter vättern



<https://www.expedia.se/aktiviteter>

boende vättern

<https://vatternrundan.se/sv/informationboende/>

<https://vatternrundan.se/en/service/accommodation/>

<https://www.vastsverige.com/upplevgotakanal/boende/allt-boende/>

https://www.airbnb.co.uk/vattern-sweden/stays?set=bev_on_new_domain=1637145220_YzQ4YjhjZ_WYwZTgx

https://www.booking.com/romantic/region/se/vattern.sv.html?auth_success=1

https://www.tripadvisor.se/ShowUserReviews-g670863-d2439487-r405907710-Borghamn_Strand-Vadstena_Ostergotland_County.html

<https://www.semesterboenden.com/vattern-sweden>

<https://www.klosterhotel.se/>

topp 10 vättern

<https://vatternrundan.se/en/shop/>

<https://cykla.se/artiklar/mangder-av-statistik-fran-arets-cykelvecka/>

https://www.tripadvisor.dk/AttractionsNear-g676530-d2688828-Vattern-Motala_Ostergotland_County.html

<https://world-camps.org/sv/top-10-summer-camps-in-water-in-2020/>

things to do around vättern

https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/AttractionsNear-g676530-d2688828-Vattern-Motala_Ostergotland_County.html

<https://www.komoot.com/guide/449712/attractions-around-vaettern>

<https://www.frommers.com/destinations/lake-vattern>

<https://www.vastsverige.com/en/hjo/things-to-do/lake-vattern/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iKtpg29kyvo>

Southern Sweden: Best things to do around Lake Vättern

<https://www.thingstodopost.org/10-things-to-do-in-motala-that-you-shouldn-t-miss-129871>

<https://www.swedentips.se/lake-vattern-circle-tour/>

<https://www.thecrazytourist.com/15-best-things-ionkoping-sweden/>

<https://uk.hotels.com/re11108089/hotels-in-vattern-sweden/>

vättern

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/V%C3%A4ttern>

<https://www.vastsverige.com/en/hjo/things-to-do/lake-vattern/>

<https://www.frommers.com/destinations/lake-vattern>

<https://vatternrundan.se/vatternrundan/en/>

<https://www.lakepedia.com/lake/vattern.html>

<https://www.swedentips.se/lake-vattern-circle-tour/>

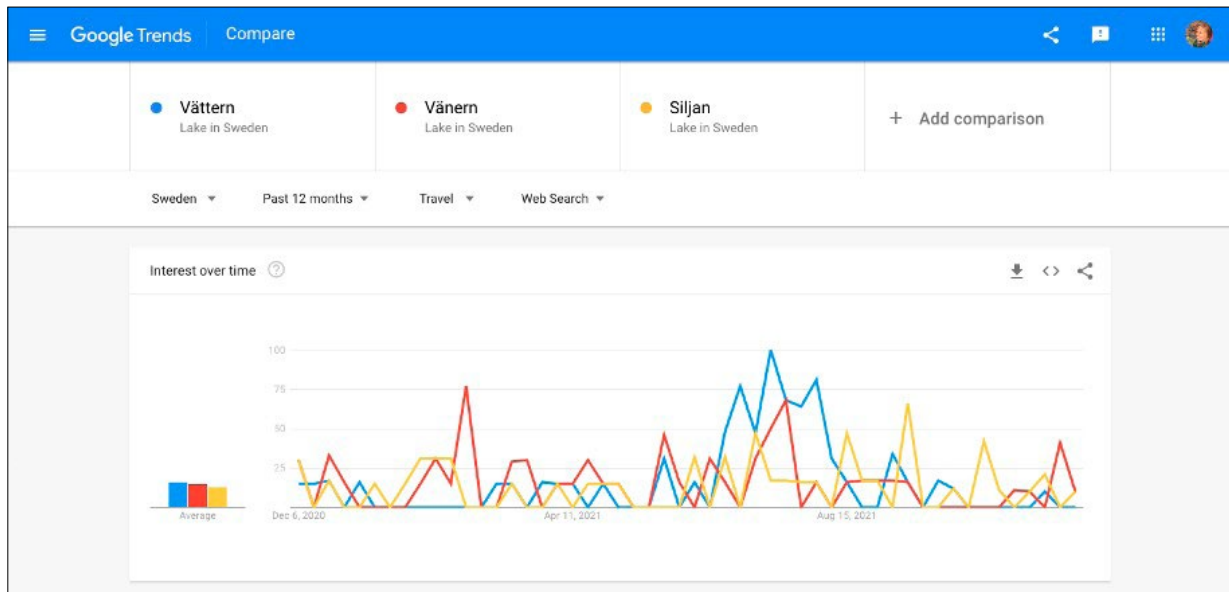
<https://www.swedishfreak.com/travel/lake-vattern/>

<https://www.evaneos.co.uk/sweden/holidays/places/2971-lac-vattern/>

GOOGLE TRENDS VÄTTERN, VÄNERN AND SILJAN:

I was curious to see how searches for Lake Vättern compared with other known lake destinations in Sweden...Vänern and Siljan. Here's how google compared the number of searches and when.

Overall Vättern was searched for slightly more than the others.



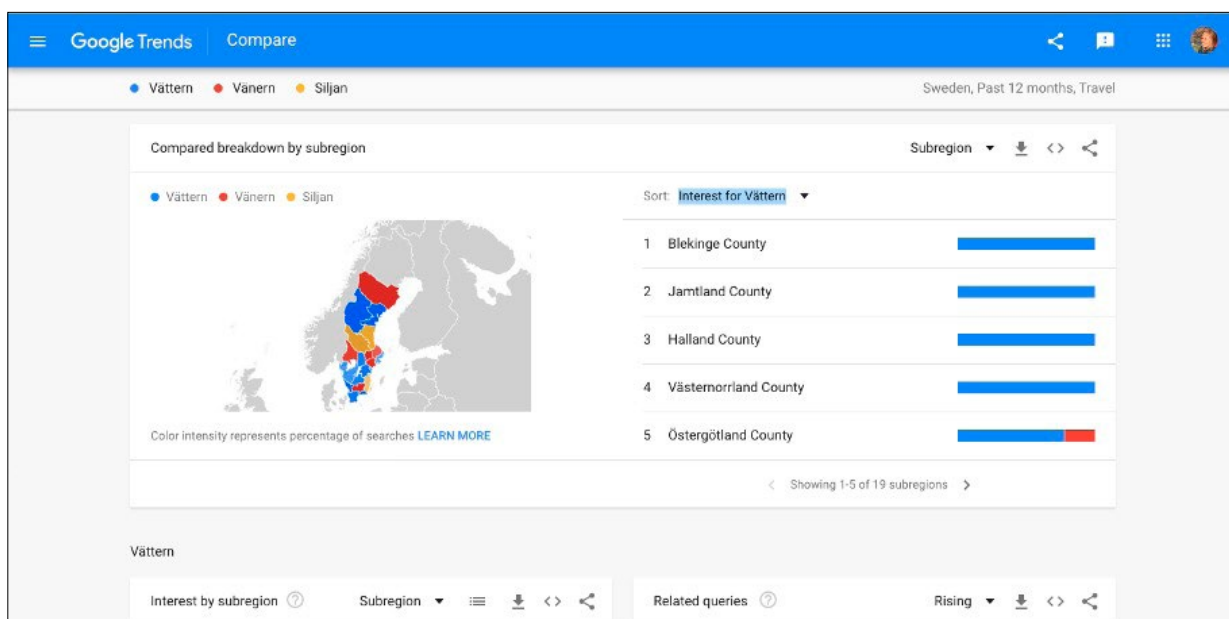
Google trends graph comparing keyword search for Vättern, Vänern and Siljan.

Next I wanted to see who was searching for which lake in Sweden.

Vättern is the blue dot and the blue bar.

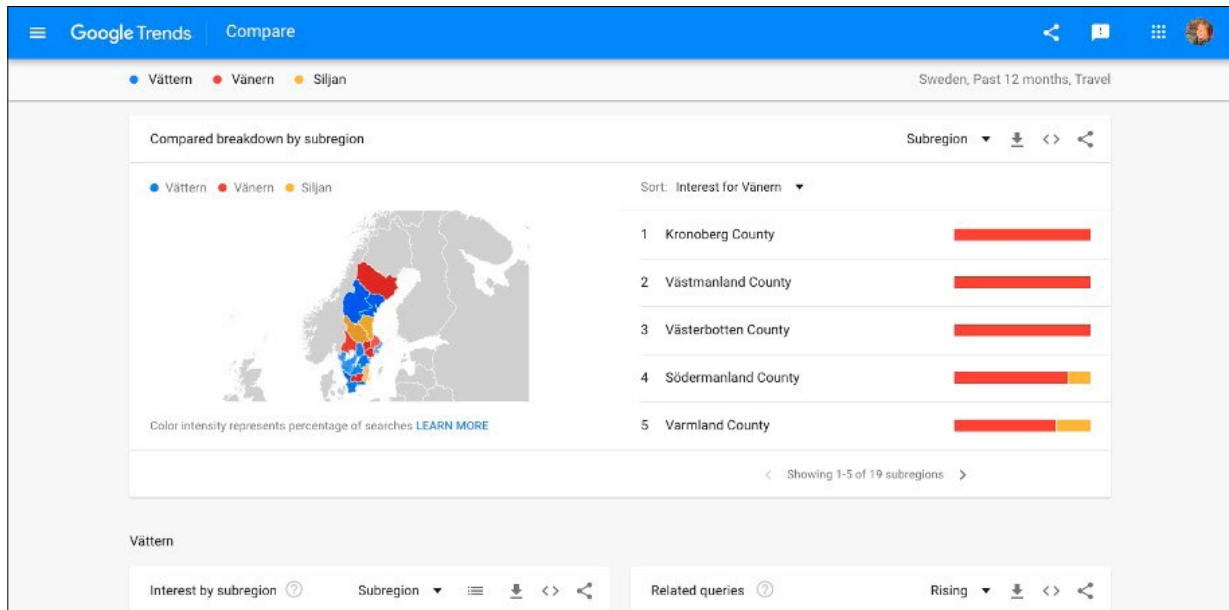
Here you can see the top 5 regions who searched for Vättern.

Interesting to see that these regions are spread around Sweden.



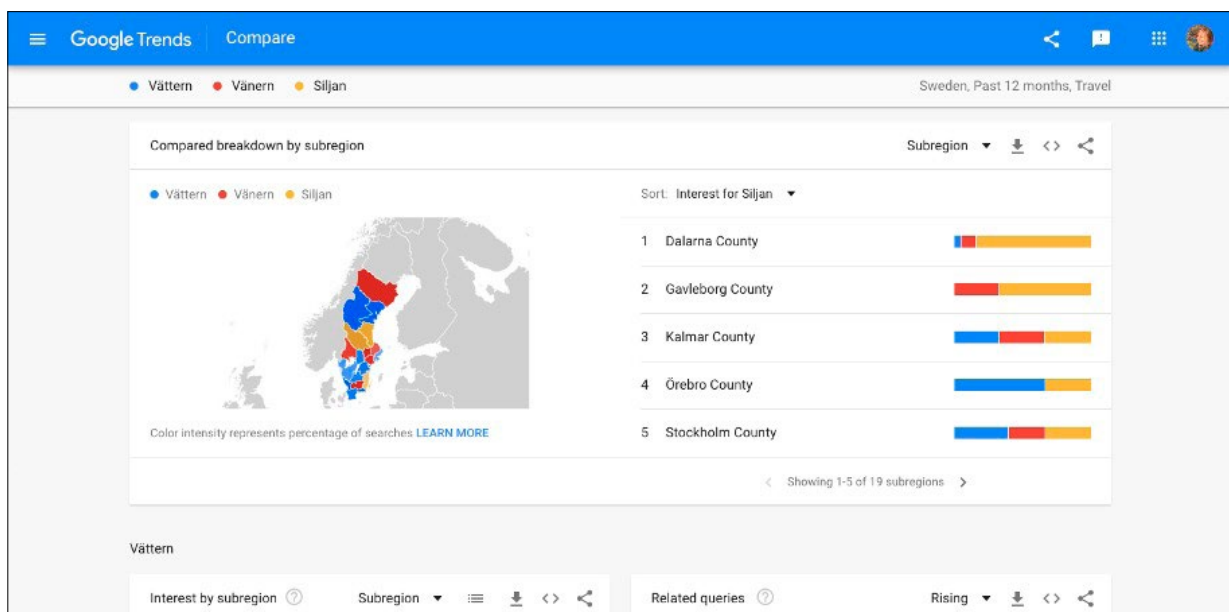
Google Trends keyword search to identify top 5 regions in Sweden who searched for the word 'Vättern'.

Here are the top 5 regions who searched for Vänern, the red dot and bar.
These are mostly near the lake in the south apart from Västerbotten.



Google trends top 5 regions who searched for Vänern.

Here are the top 5 regions who searched for Siljan, the yellow dot and bar.
Mostly Dalarna and Gavleborg county search for this.
Note that Kalmar and Stockholm share an equal interest in all 3 lakes.

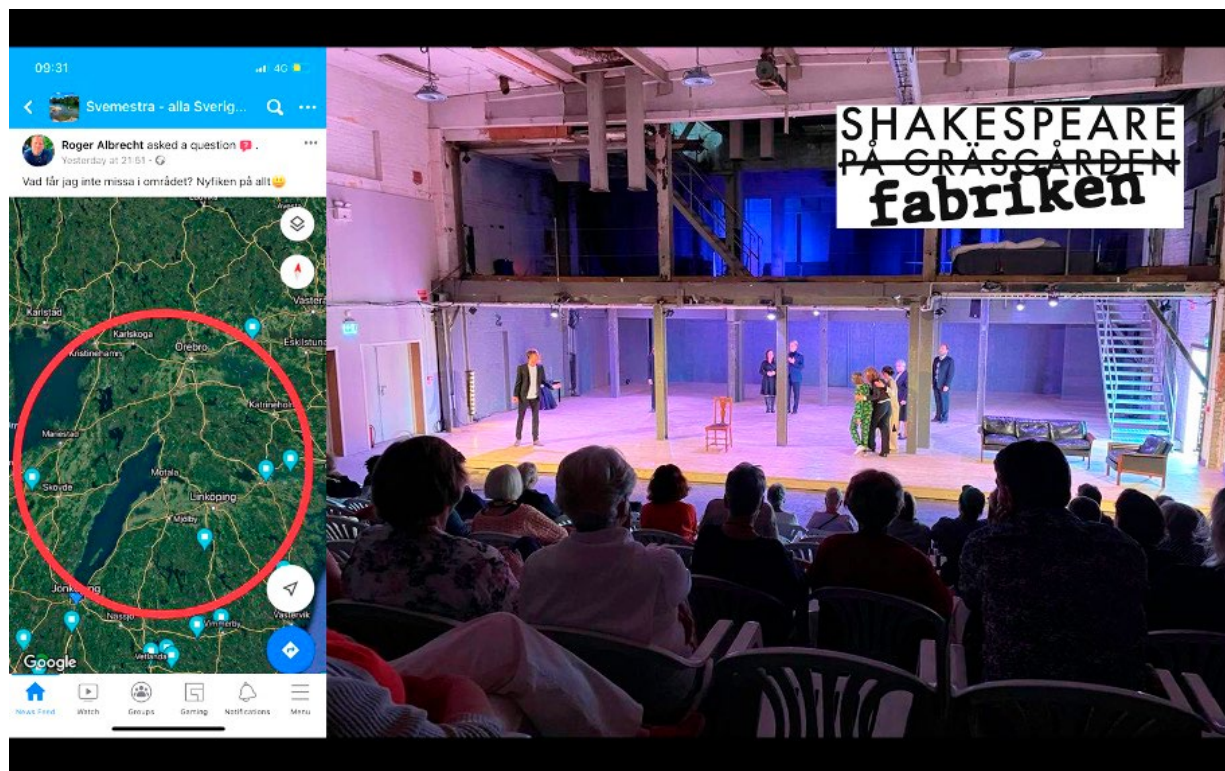


Google trends top 5 regions who searched for Siljan.

SOCIAL MEDIA:

Interesting to see the curious questions that arise on various Facebook groups for svemester and hemester.

I picked this one just to show an example, and on the right would have been my tip for something unusual, cultural and really well delivered. Shakespeare på Fabriken.



OUTCOME

A visitor looking to plan a trip or explore the eastern coastline of region of Vättern has to navigate through a selection of sites. In terms of tourism agency websites, the VästSverige tourism site comes up most frequently, and hence promotes the west side of the lake.

The others may not provide the most specific visitor information around the basics of 'see, eat, sleep'.

Sites with strong SEO behind them such as TripAdvisor, Booking, AirB&B and Expedia make an appearance.

'Sevärdheter Vättern' search is the only one to pull up 'RuntVättern' in the results.

OPPORTUNITY

If looking to create a destination approach to marketing Vättern then the following could be considered:

- The municipalities could improve keyword searching on their tourism sites.
- Visit Östergötland and Visit Sweden could establish stronger content around the destination and make it more searchable, and/or connect to the municipality website.
- Create a digital strategy for the future development of consolidated social and one website channel for the destination.
- Under a new/stronger destination brand, create one website for the whole lake or eastern part of the destination and coastline. Within this, the sub-brands could exist for the individual municipalities.
- Use web analytics and data to identify the effectiveness of the current range of websites. Strengthen the key websites which actually drive traffic for the destination.
- Information can be duplicated over many platforms, or very limited on some. Instead use one main platform and create links. This means the main site will only need to be updated, minimising out of date information.
- Create a culture of clear information on dates and opening times. Communicating 'open summer' or 'open week 28' is not clear enough for a guest to plan so give specific dates and opening times.
- Often there are no maps on website or brochure information so orientation and the logistics of where a place is or how to get there is difficult to understand.
- At the very least connect to Google where it shows the area in a good level of detail.
- At the very best create a map which shows all visitor information, walking routes, places of interest such as the Utonjut.se and Tiveden maps below. It's important to have the destination and it's attributes shown with enough detail to be useful on site.

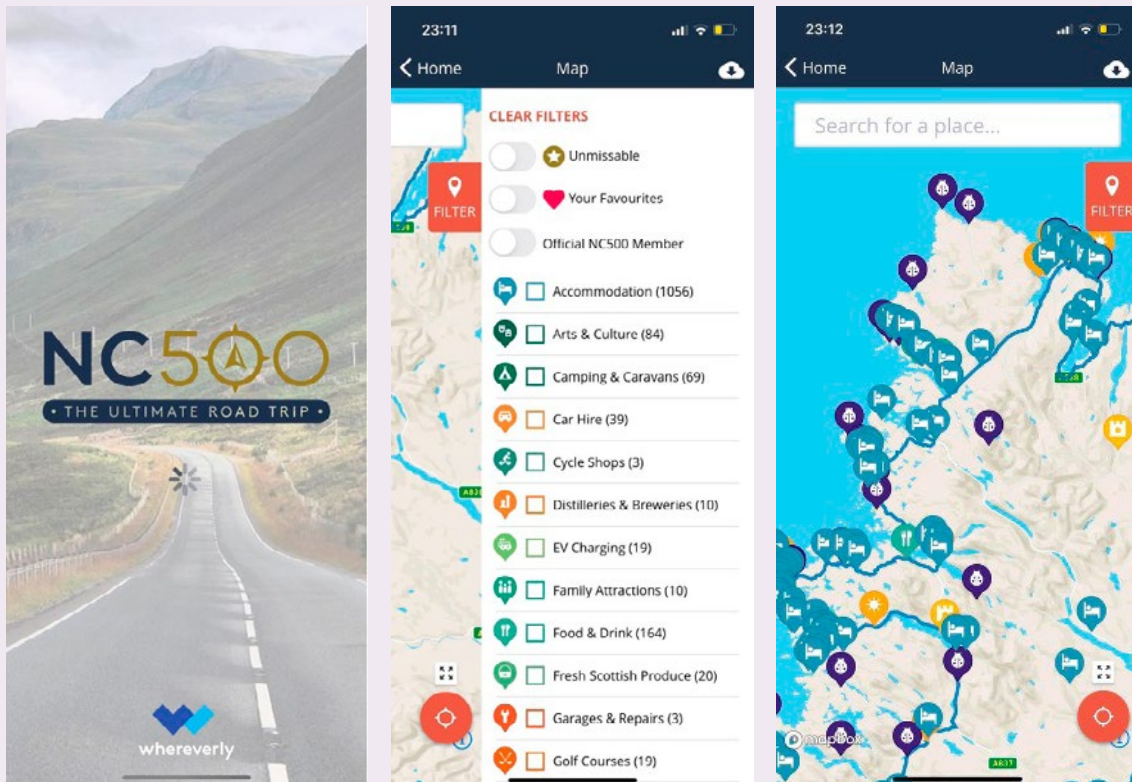


Tiveden and Utonjut maps are good examples of user friendly printed maps.

- If brochures are printed then consider creating a deadline for distribution to be before Easter or earlier to maximise the Easter holidays and start to generate more interest in the months between Easter and summer.
- Consider the use of English, Swedish and German if looking to inspire the main markets who visit Östergötland.
- An app could be a one stop shop to replace printed material and maps. It could pull the data already located on the RuntVättern website and add more functionality.

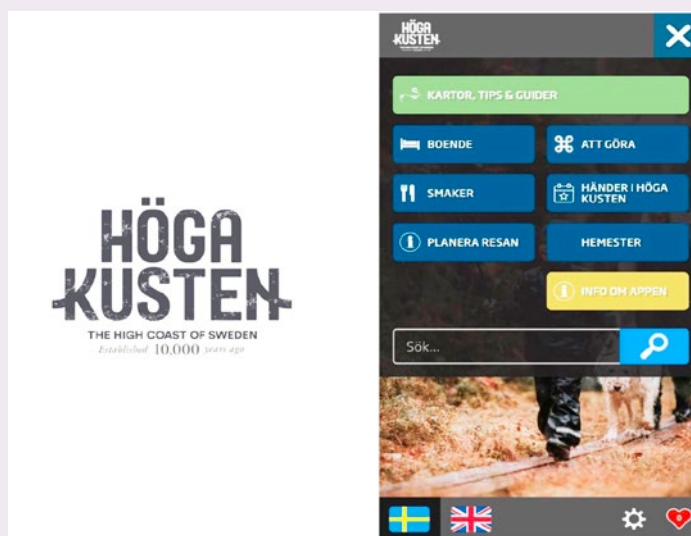
Apps: examples of a destination and route trail app

The NC500 app (**North Coast 500 – 500 mile route around the north of Scotland**) offers easy map searchable functionality to help visitors see experiences, attractions, accommodation, food and a whole lot more. Services, charging for electric vehicles, toilets and fresh produce are just some of 30 searchable icons to pin point and save along the way. It has the functionality to enable the user to 'create a travel journal', save favourites or unmissable points of interest. There's also access to themed tours around towns, beaches, wild places and viewpoints.



Images of the NC500 app showing map and menu options for searching.

Höga Kusten's app is in the form of an online brochure with text and images for inspiration when planning with ideas and tips. The map has some dynamic functionality and links to locations and experiences.



Höga Kusten's app is more like a brochure in an app format with ideas and inspiration and some map functionality.

7.1.3 VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRES

STATUS

The last twenty years has seen vast changes and adaptation to digitised information which has a huge impact on the way visitors now participate in travel planning and experiences. The research document *What's new in tourist search behaviour? A study on German tourists in Sweden* by Lund University (2018) covers all aspects of the visitor relationship with information³.

In connection to information centres, the following observation is made regarding the opportunity for personal contact:

'One argument is recurring in the literature about tourist information centres, which is the apparent paradox of wanting more digital devices on the one hand, and holding on to human interaction on the other.'

Here are reflections on digital versus analogue information sources:

'Internet with its homepages dominates as the information channel, but analogue sources are also important: guidebooks, tourist information centres, maps, road signs, to name a few.'

Personal service in the digital age can be considered a luxury:

'Tourist information centres are still important to many visitors, and so are other kinds of personal meetings at the destination. Tourists highly value the access to local knowledge and the possibility to get personal recommendations.

Personal service is regarded as a luxury.'

So overall it seems that during our global transition from analogue to digital, there is a mix of preferences from the German traveller of 2018 in the above research.

³ <https://lup.lub.lu.se/search/publication/613c2273-caaa-426e-bc44-4376567e21a9>

STORY

Incognito assessments of the guest experience and information delivery were made on site to various centres and information points. Open questions were asked in both English and Swedish in order to give the recipient the best opportunity to formulate a response on how a visitor could experience the journey along or on Vättern, north to south or south to north.

EXAMPLE QUESTIONS ASKED:

1. I'm heading to Östergötland for about a week with my campervan, do you have any suggestions of where to go and what to see?
2. I'm taking my campervan along the east coast of the lake, have you any tips or highlights?
3. Any suggestions on places to stay along the lakeside?
4. Do you have any favourite or secret spots in the area?
5. Is there a brochure or map available?

OUTCOME

The evaluations are using the *Swedish Welcome* scoring system:

- **outstanding**
- **excellent**
- **very good**
- **good**
- **acceptable**

INFORMATION CENTRES VISITED:

- Berg
- Borensberg Kaffeteriet
- Medevi ProSalus butik info point
- Motala VIC
- Motala Motor Museum & Hotel
- Vadstena Turistbyrå
- Pilgrim Centre
- Vadstena Slott
- Slottsgården info point
- Hästholmen
- Röks Lanthandel & Cafe
- Stocklycke Vandrarhem
- Ödeshögs kommun library
- Wisingsö Hotell & Konferens
- Tåkern Naturum
- Östgötaporten Omberg
- Gyllene Uttern

ON-SITE VISITS TO INFORMATION CENTRES

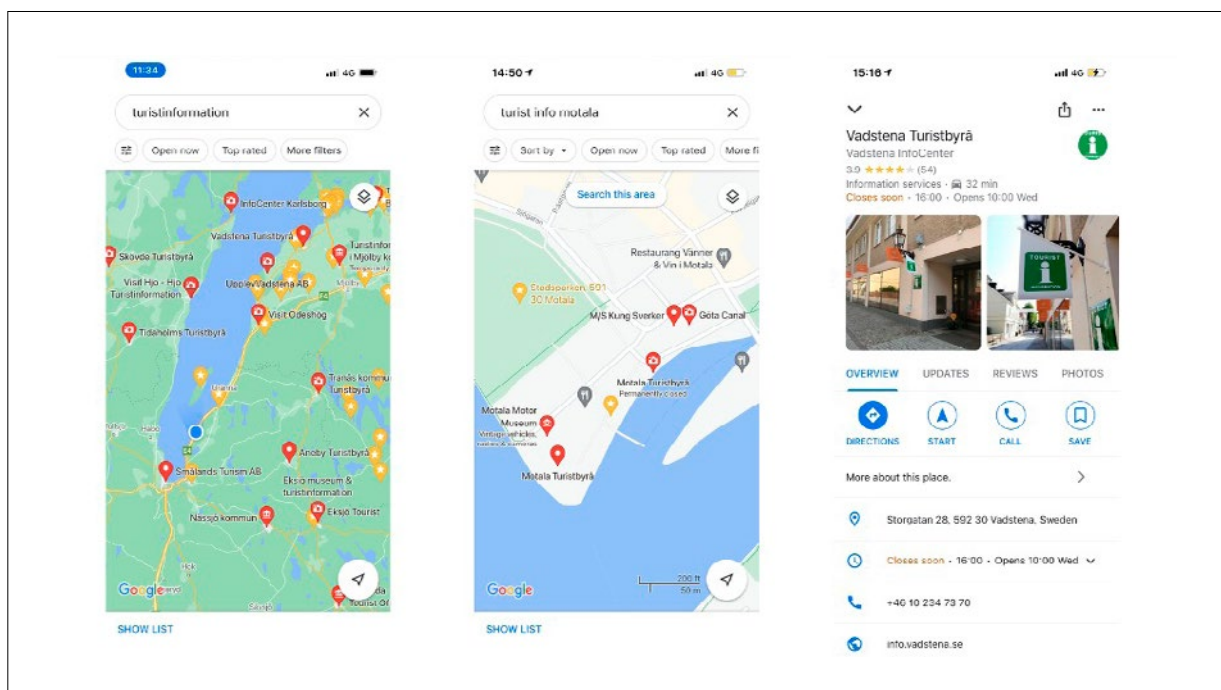
The customer experience and useful knowledge gain in the information centres where an employee was present, ranged from **good to excellent**.

STRENGTHS:

- In all instances, I was given brochures and additional information.
- All were friendly, engaged and had a desire to help.
- There is a very good range of information at majority of visitor information centres and many of the smaller summer-manned ones. All stock Runt Vättern brochure magazine.
- The team can suggest the key places to see in their own area.
- Special mention to the lady at **Berg information centre** who was full of energy and ideas. The centre there has Motala brochures which are the ones that connected to Vättern. She suggested I went to Motala information for ideas about Vättern. I also asked the new 'Robot' team member **Folke Filboten** but he could only tell me about the canal at Berg!
- Stefanie at **Vadstena VIC** was super proactive, took the Vätternkartan map and marked suggestions from icecream stop offs to walking routes in Omberg, to the vineyard and Väderstad and lastly looked up the ferry crossing times to Visingsö. Enastående!
- The girl at **Motala VIC** was also super helpful, as was her grandmother who popped in. She helped pick brochures that were going to be useful on my journey south.

CHALLENGES:

- Motala Turistbyrå has 2 locations marked on **google maps** at the harbour by the Motor Museum and neither were correct, one was labelled 'permanently closed'. Folkets Hus is marked on google maps but not as a visitor information centre, so this could be updated in that location.
- Visitor information points manned by personnel **could only share what was within their 'area boundary'** so eg at Berg, I was told to ask at Vadstena about what to do along Lake Vättern. At Motala I was advised to ask at Vadstena about the east coast of the lake and about Omberg.
- The **Pilgrim centre** seemed to struggle with any suggestions or ideas despite there being a couple of walking routes along Vättern.
- None mentioned the '**Turistväg**'.
- There isn't one **specific map** which is good for the route along Vättern. Visit Östergötland's map is too large in scale to provide the detail required. There is a free map 'Vätternkartan' produced by Inceptummedia which has a good road map showing walking, cycle and Vätternrundan routes as well as harbours, golf courses and nature reserves, however it lacks the detail of places to see, things to do areas of interest.
- **Östgötaporten Omberg** had a very small mix of untidy brochures on an almost empty shelf with adhoc leaflets. This was in July. Despite there being an 'I' for Info on the signage into the area, there was no visible 'I' on any doorway of any of the shops or restaurants.
- **Rästplats Brahehus** had an almost empty box hidden behind the main door with a mix of brochures in the bottom.



Searching for visitor information centres on google maps, important to keep this information current.



Map options for visitors travelling along Vättern, available from adjacent municipalities.



Displays of information at Visitor Information centres and information points along the way.



Displays of information at Visitor Information centres and information points along the way.

OPPORTUNITY

The purpose of any connection with a human interface offers the potential to **add value to the visitor experience**.

What does adding value mean in this context?

- **Find out who the visitor is.** Asking specifics about the visitor to then have the possibility of tailoring ideas which are more relevant and will be fun. Who are they? A family, a couple who like walking or a group of friends? How long are they travelling and how are they travelling? What kind of things do they like to do? Then tailor the ideas around this.
- **Sharing tips and ideas** to enhance the guest experience that could be missed or difficult to appreciate when hidden in a brochure or website. Off the beaten track places to go and things to see, do or locations to eat, shops, galleries, craft retail or smoked fish shops.
- **Suggesting tailored routes or itineraries** with stop off ideas travelling along the coastline, considering activities, food, café stops, art and crafts, boat trip and nature experiences and walks.

Suggestions for visitor information teams dealing directly with enquiries:

- All Östergötland visitor information team members should have the knowledge and confidence be able to talk about the **whole of Östergötland** and help guide a visitor to plan a trip around the area. To just know information about their own small patch and expect the visitor to pop into a visitor information centre at every stop during their trip seems unhelpful and inconvenient for the visitor.
- **Carry out a visioning exercise** on how people can explore if they have 1 day, a long weekend, a week, 2 weeks. Are they with car, bike, campervan or boat? Do they want to stay in one place or travel around? Create a list of Itineraries of possible excursion ideas and what to see and do on the way. This is key to encouraging visitors to stay longer.
- **Tailor ideas to various target groups** e.g. over 50's empty nesters, walkers, cyclists, camper-vanners, active families, generation z.
- **Have tools and resources**, apps, maps and brochures to support these routes, destinations, walks, highlights and experiences. Practical information and cultural inspiration.
- **Create an emailable template** with ideas and tips already listed, links to the companies, links to online brochures and have ready to send for phone/email enquiries and also used in the office to email to customers who ask for information on site. Translating into English and German could be useful.
- **A good visitor friendly map/app of the lake** is essential to orientate and give a clear understanding of what there is to see and do and how to get there.
- **A list of long weekend trip ideas** of places to stay and things to do along the coastline which promotes all the local businesses.
- **Know your product**, where can you stay on the way, what's new, what's special, what's not to be missed, what's your secret place to go...
- **Promote months other than June, July and August**, and support the desire to minimise growth in numbers of visitors at already busy times and take some initiative to focus on spreading this through the other months.

Suggestions for destination development:

- **Östgötaporten** could be the gateway for inspiration and information. This could be through digital screens and platforms and using strong imagery. There could be some interpretation to inspire and enhance knowledge of Östergötland and around Vättern. It could be the Vättern hub and gateway to Östergötland.
- **Measure and monitor** the use of current information centres, information centre websites and social media. Who is using them and how to reach a wider spectrum of visitors? Collate insights to make strategic decisions on future developments and how to go more digital from now.
- Focus on **greater digitisation and streamlined resources** on all levels of the visitor information gathering journey.
- Focus on **greater digitisation of information** for the information centre teams so they can access useful information in real time.
- Create a **destination app** which promotes where to stay, eat, experience and shop during your visit. It would share real time opening hours and location creating a useful tool year-round.
- Consider a **'Know your Vättern' training platform** for everyone working in hospitality and visitor services in the region.
- **Consolidate** brochures, websites and social media channels.
- **Identify the unique sub brands** of the lake and why visiting them all is a must-do experience due to their different attributes and mix of experiences.
- Create **user-friendly online and printed (if relevant) maps** which are to a scale that enables the sharing of good information, identify experiences, walking routes, transportation hubs and where it is possible to map out a journey and fully understand how to maximise the benefit of the experience in that area.
- Improve the **quality of brochure displays** in the smaller centres and especially at Östgötaporten Omberg.
- Use **Turistvägen** Gränna–Ödeshög as a tool.
- Create marketing campaigns specifically for the **quieter months**.

7.1.4 ROAD SIGNAGE AND ROADSIDE INFORMATION POINTS**STATUS**

This evaluation takes into account a range of directional signage, promotional banners and information points along the access routes of Vättern's coastline.

In addition, visits were made to the highway information hubs at Östgötaporten Omberg, and roadside stop off locations such as the parking and information point at Gyllene Uttern on the Turistväg.

From a visitor journey perspective, these elements play an important role in terms of ease of access, directional information, distances and in some way, promotion also, where the destinations are highlighted through brown tourism signposting such as Omberg Ekopark.

THE QUESTIONS ASKED WITHIN THIS AREA OF RESEARCH WERE:

- **Destination access** – Does the location, quality, clarity and directional information provided on signage enhance the ability of the visitor to reach their destination?
- **Destination identity** – Is there consistency of directional signage in terms of destination name, identity and branding?
- **Presentation** – What is the quality and condition of roadside signage?
- **Visitor experience** – What value does the roadside information points offer the visitor?

STORY

ROAD SIGNAGE

In essence, the journey to get to the end destination during an excursion has an impact on the quality of the visitor experience and in addition, is often reflective of the first impression of the destination itself.

Major routes travelled during the course of this fieldwork, most in both directions, were:

- E4 Jönköping to Linköping.
- Omberg to Vadstena to Motala main road.
- Coastal road through Omberg Ekopark to Borghamnstrand.
- E50 north of Motala.
- Various routes around Tåkern, Rök and Väderstrand.

Roadside Information points were mainly located by the roadside but sometimes as a part of parking area or harbour area.

Östgötaporten Omberg offers a break in travel with additional facilities such as toilets, food, fuel and waste disposal.

OUTCOME

ROAD SIGNAGE

A visitor looking to travel through Östergötland, north or south along the E4 has access to an **excellent level of directional road signage** which clearly identifies major townships, villages and visitor experiences using brown tourism signposting.

Parallel to this road network between Gränna and Ödeshög is the **'Turistväg'** with brown signposting at regular intervals and the white and brown flower logo signs to signify this attractive and interesting route.

The key hubs of Motala, Vadstena and Ödeshög have very good directional signage. On the major route there are a couple of 'billboard' style signs to welcome travellers into Vadstena and Motala.

Local road signage within the destination is generally very good and often this signage is accompanied with distances and symbols to show information points, historical attractions, camping, food, accommodation, bathing and picnic spots.

Omberg has regular road signage with symbols, and I may have seen one sign which actually named the location as 'Ekopark' on one of the main routes.



Welcome banners, main, secondary and Turistvåg routes through Östra Vättern.

ROADSIDE INFORMATION POINTS

Motala visitor information boards are well branded and complement all the other visitor services, website and brochure with colour, information and logos.

Ödeshög kommun have visitor information point signage which is branded alongside other municipality messages.

There are often a cluster of noticeboards in the same area. One usually contains details about walking routes with laminated signs, the other can be a general notice board for advertising and information about events.

The range, quality, condition, branding and purpose of these varied.

Content usually included a map of the whole municipality, sometimes accompanied by a separate walking trail and the information provided included lists of places, accommodation and experiences. Other features were interesting interpretation of the area focussing on culture, history and nature.

Overall the quality of these ranged from good to excellent.



Östgötaporten, Turistväg and Tidernas Landskap roadside information points.

Östgötaporten is a typical major road-stop with a range of facilities to re-fuel, eat and relax. The road signage displayed an 'i' for information, however once at the carpark, it was difficult to know where this was located. Only the 'Dinners' main building was signed. Within the entrance hallway there were ripped paper maps sellotaped to the wall and a fairly empty racking system for brochures and leaflets.

A couple of shelves in the restaurant area had some brochures places on them.

Turistväg roadside point at Alvestra lay by parking area, was a miniature version of the larger stopping area at Brahehus showing the same information in more detail and greater scale. It's a very good map which identifies and highlights all the excellent stop off places on this route.

Tidernas Landskap offers a focussed natural, cultural and historical information panel under a different brand. When I googled the name I found this.

<http://www.tidernaslandskap.se/>

Some signage might have a small section in English and German however the majority of the text was aimed at the Swedish visitor.



Roadside visitor information points, local information and cycle route signage.

OPPORTUNITY

CREATE A BRANDED VISUAL GATEWAY

If a new brand for the overall lake destination is realised, and then there are sub-brands for each micro-destination, then a suggestion would be to have a branded banner or a prominent digital sign which welcomes the visitor to the area and sets the scene and acts as the 'gateway' arrival point for their journey along the lake coastline.

REPLACING OR UPDATING ROADSIDE INFORMATION BOARDS

What is their main purpose: is it for inspiration, practical information, map orientation, and are they still used?

Most visitors will have pre-planned to some degree, or use mobile phones and devices during their journey to research and book. It seems there is little need for vast amounts of practical detail on information boards especially when it goes out of date quickly.

Maps may still be useful but again a digitised version could be more accessible and sustainable.

The distribution of brochures and maps to these roadside locations may be unnecessary, especially if there is an information point at the destination.

Avoid printing dates or images of brochures with dates on signage as it is no longer relevant the following year and onwards.

CONSIDER DIGITAL ALTERNATIVES

Digitised information in the form of a destination app could be considered.

Online brochures and maps could replace print and save costs on printing and distribution.

It is also more timely to gather information digitally and have it ready for the early part of the year to welcome visitors from March onwards.

We are going through a period of digital transition where all communication mediums are possible. In terms of keeping information up to date, costs low and sustainability in mind, moving to digital is a good solution, with maps and a brochure as print options available at information points in the destination.

BROWN TOURISM SIGNPOSTING – A LAKE ROUTE

Create a new identity for a route which already exists.

It exists essentially because of Vätternrundan with some variations in places.

Collaboration could lead to Vättern having a 360 degree circular route which passes happily through all regions which border it.

Östergötland's own east coast has Turistväg, a route which could be given a particular name if looking to market it more purposefully. It diverts inland at Omberg so there is still the possibility to create a new continuation up to Vadstena and then Motala upwards.

It's a little confusing with Tidernas Landkap, is this an older route along the same roadway?

Consider identifying more clearly Omberg as an Ekopark on signage along these routes.

FLAGSHIP INFORMATION HUBS

Identify if Östgötaporten Omberg has the potential to be the main and only roadside information hub for those in transit to the destination. If this works, then focus on strong branding, professionally presented visuals and a limited but very useful range of printed information which is professionally displayed in a branded racking system. It's important to ensure visitors feel they have arrived and understand the essence of the destination, and that this is carried through all aspects of web, print, signage and the look at feel of the places that house them.

7.1.5 VISITOR ORIENTATION AND SERVICE FACILITIES WITHIN THE DESTINATION

STATUS

This part of the visitor journey looks at the visitor experience in terms of orientation around the destination and in relation to parking, toilets, waste disposal, local notice boards, and directional signage.

Areas which were analysed include Medevi, Varamobadet, Motala, Vadstena, Borghamn, Tåkern, Omberg and Hästholmen.

STORY

Who are the visitors and what are their needs?

Each lakeside coastal destination and inland visitor destination or experience, whether major or minor, has made considerations and adapted facilities in order to accommodate visitors and their needs. This could be during a longer stay, a day visit or whilst in transit thus the visitor can have varying needs.

An example of this connects to parking, where the need for short and midterm parking exists, or overnight in the case of campervans. There has already been some major investments made to this at Omberg.

Another angle connects to who is visiting. Day visitors might look for a visitor experience including food, retail and activities, whilst those in transit might prioritise ease of parking and the chance to grab some food at various times during the day.

Those staying longer have time to see and do more over a wider area.

How do we cope with increasing numbers of visitors?

Another consideration is the steady increase of visitor numbers which has taken place every July in recent years. In the last couple of years due to Covid, there has been an increased interest in walking routes used by locals and this had a challenging impact on parking in various Omberg locations.

In terms of who visits these areas, the usual pattern for Östergötland is around 80% Swedish and 20% international so depending on the type of visitor experience, information may need to be accessible in other languages.

Vadstena often runs out of accommodation in the summer season and so visitors are more widely spread over the area at this time.

Lastly, there is a continued increase in campervan travel and so the demand for this especially in the summer months is intense.

These locations have evolved from their original small town, lake harbours and adapted to meet the demands of both Swedish and International travellers, largely by road and mainly in June, July and August.

So how do we plan for the future when the trend is that visitor numbers will continue to increase and how do we minimise the impact on local communities whilst welcoming the benefits tourism brings to these more rural places?

Balance is key and we need to take control of how or IF we promote the area, who to and with what type of inspiration and ideas.

OUTCOME

ORIENTATION

This aspect considers what provision in the area has been made to allow a logical and natural progression through the destination.

Aspects to consider are:

- Prior information provided on regional tourism or company websites.
- Flow of the travel route.
- Clear and easily understood signage at the earliest point.
- Well signed parking locations.
- Orientation maps of the central and outlying areas.
- Directional signage within the area to locate visitor services.

Orientation within the overall destination ranged from very good to excellent.

PARKING

All locations have parking available and in a configuration of some or all of the following – accessible, day visitor, overnight and ställplats in some locations.

An observation is that it is difficult to find information about this in advance, partly due to the number of websites, but also onsite where there are limited orientation plans to identify parking in areas other than in the centre.

Parking can require payment via an app or payment machine normally with credit card.

The availability of parking will very much depend on the time of year.

In July, parking is a challenge in many locations and can reach beyond capacity creating traffic flow issues, campervan parking in car parking spaces and impacting negatively on the visitor experience.

Alvastra story:

Whilst in Omberg I headed for my first visit to Alvastra driving in my campervan. On the right side of the road was an information point and small layby. A couple of cars were already parked here. To the left a sign for Alvastra along a narrower road. Never having been here before I parked up to the right in the layby as there was a no other directional parking signs, read the information boards then walked down the smaller road to the ruin. As I left a few more cars and another campervan parked in the same space. A few hundred metres down this smaller road I came across a 'P' sign. On walking further to Alvastra I realised there was a big parking area adjacent to the ruin which was almost empty apart from a few cars. On returning to the layby after my visit, there were at least 10 cars squeezed into the layby and a couple spilling out onto the road. I had to reverse my campervan out of the layby onto the main road as I was unable to squeeze by the parked cars to exit the layby.

All this could have been prevented if there was a clear parking sign at the main road junction instead of half way down the smaller access road, not visible from the main road.



Unnecessary layby parking at Alverstra on main road while there was empty parking by the ruin.

Capacity would have to be measured in a more accurate way to know with certainty how fit for purpose the current parking is with the number of visitors who come in the summer months.

Parking within the overall destination ranged from good to excellent in terms of layout, quality and signage.

PUBLIC TOILETS

Public toilets were located in stop off areas enroute, as part of the services in a guest harbour or at main parking areas for walking routes, and were normally free to use. All were to a very good standard in terms of internal maintenance, benchmarking with public toilets in general. Accessible toilets were also available. I found them to be well stocked with soap and paper and cleanliness was to a **very good overall standard**.

WASTE DISPOSAL

The waste disposal and recycling facilities were often used by the use of the whole community including visitors. Some locations had collection for hazardous waste also such as batteries.

Overall these facilities were very good and well located.

INFORMATION NOTICE BOARDS

Local information boards: these are the ones with private notices placed by individuals, companies or organisations. They can be the local hub, a platform to promote, buy or sell. Whilst useful on a local and visitor context, there is often a lot of notices which are not categorised, so it is difficult to know what to pay attention to from the visitor perspective. Often the information is out of date, or the quality of the information is lost due to damage or the impact of the weather.

These noticeboards are often located next to the higher quality visitor information and interpretation boards or orientation plans and distract a little in terms of presentation and content.

INFORMATION AND INTERPRETATION PANELS, DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE WITHIN TOWNS OR EXPERIENCES

The focus here was to consider the quality and condition of signage, the accuracy of information and ease and effectiveness of use. The positioning of directional signage is very relevant, especially for the visitor who may start from a bus stop or carpark. In an ideal situation, they would also be located near an orientation site map giving onward context to the logistics displayed on the map.

Another consideration could be any form of branding or attempt to provide consistency of appearance of the actual signposts. This professional branded appearance gives a cohesive impression as well as assisting with direction and orientation to key service areas.

Multi-direction signposts, white and black metal road signposts and wooden homemade signposts were all part of the mix. Some homemade or laminated signs could be upgraded.

Overall Motala, Vadstena and Omberg had very good signage to assist visitor orientation.



Information, interpretation panels and directional signage throughout the destination.

OPPORTUNITY

ORIENTATION

Orientation panels: As part of a future branding for the whole lake or lakeside, there could be an exercise to create branded orientation panels for each hub area, so they have the same design. These could include a useful map of the area, links to walking routes, visitor experiences and services, parking areas, bus departure points. Some inspirational content about the area could also be shared, links to an app or digital content for more details.

Orientation maps: These could be located centrally in the town, harbour, short and long term carpark areas. Good to consider their construction to be weather and vandalism-proof.

App: An app could complement destination information and provide more localised orientation. It's an easy way to implement all of the above in an updatable, user friendly and digital format.

PARKING

Signage: Parking was normally well signed within the town areas and at key coastal points. The same could be said for locations which offered ställplats.

New parking areas: Additional parking is one option, but relies on land availability and management options.

Bicycle parking: With a focus on sustainable travel, there could be more places for the secure parking of bicycles for example at Stocklycke bikes were left in various locations.

Charges: In order to support the development of areas for tourism it is only fair for those who use it to contribute through a charge for parking. This was an objective evaluation and did not take into account whether there was a charge or not for parking.

Parking information: A clear and concise consumer facing webpage should exist which gives details about parking at all the key hubs to help visitors plan their trip and arrival in advance and make decisions about logistics and costs.

Development strategy: A longer-term visitor management strategy is required, especially for areas which are already challenged by the number of summer visitors. Capacity management and predicted visitor number calculations will assist with forward planning and relate to parking capacity also.

WASTE DISPOSAL

Waste disposal areas were clearly signed in terms of directional signage within the destination.

The labelling on the recycle bins clearly indicated what is recycled and where. It is likely that these will be used by international visitors as well as Swedish, so good to have pictorial images and text (in English and Swedish if possible) to explain how the waste separation works and what goes in each bin. Areas surrounding bins could have some form of hard standing or gravel and be screened off in a way that complements the surroundings.



Examples of waste bins and recycling found in Vadstena and Motala.

INFORMATION NOTICE BOARDS

In addition to the many websites, brochures, maps, there are also very many information boards and notice boards. Suggest minimising the number of these, many are not even used with just a torn document hanging in the wind. Create section headers so the content can be themed, and protective Perspex to keep them dry. This would improve presentation, streamline the content to create a more user-friendly service.

7.1.6 GETTING THERE AND GETTING AROUND

STATUS

As with all aspects analysed within this whole report, the context is from the visitor journey perspective. The visitor comes from a starting point of no, or limited knowledge, about the region or the logistics, so what does the visitor need to know?

- How easy is it to find information on how to travel to, around or on the lake?
- Are there ways to do this more sustainably?
- How is this information communicated?
- Can you travel all year round?
- How do you book and is it user friendly?
- How easy is it to plan a day trip, overnight stay, weekend, journey along or do a complete runtvättern trip?
- Can I take a children's pushchair, bicycle and how accessible is it for wheelchair access?
- Do tourism agencies, accommodation, experience and tourism partner information sites host links to this information in a 'how to get here' section?

Transit and travel possibilities include:

- SJ
- Östgötatrafiken
- School bus
- Cycle path

STORY

While doing this audit I travelled around the destination in my campervan, however to fully understand all the possibilities of reaching Östra Vättern, I researched routes using public transportation.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION:

This was the result of my call to Östgötatrafiken helpline asking:

How can I get to Motala, Vadstena, Omberg and south along lake Vättern by public transport?

- Stockholm to Linköping to Motala.....by SJ train.
- Motala to Vadstena.....by bus 612/613 directly.
- Vadstena to Ödeshög.....bus to Skänninge, then train to Mjölby, then bus to Ödeshög.
- To travel into Omberg requires booking Närtraffik at least 2 hours ahead or using the school bus.
- Travel along the coast to Gränna.....not possible to cross county, maybe there a bus coming north from Småland, she didn't know any contact numbers to try for Småland.

Observations:

Motala and Vadstena are easy to access on public transport all year round.

Omberg and Ödeshög are much more challenging to reach using public transport and it's likely most visitors, especially those with no Swedish, would not be able to plan to do this.

There is no streamlined route to take the visitor along the east coast of Lake Vättern through two different regions, either north to south, or south to north, as each region's transport networks seem to stop at the boundary according to Östgötatrafiken's helpline.

CYCLE ROUTES:

- Runt Vätternleden –
<https://www.upplevvadstena.se/en/biketrails.htm#Runt%20V%C3%A4ttern-leden>
- Vättern Sommenleden –
<https://www.upplevvadstena.se/en/biketrails.htm#V%C3%A4ttern-Sommenleden>
- Sverigeleden –
<https://swedenbybike.com/en/bicycle-routes/sweden-ranks/>
- Längs Gota Kanal –
<https://www.vastsverige.com/mariestad/produkter/gota-kanal---cykelleden/>
- 12Km Slinga upplevomberg.se – no record online
- Pilgrimsrundan –
<https://pilgrimscentrum.se/pilgrimsvandring/Pilgrimsleder/pilgrimsrundan-p-cykel-t-kern-runt>

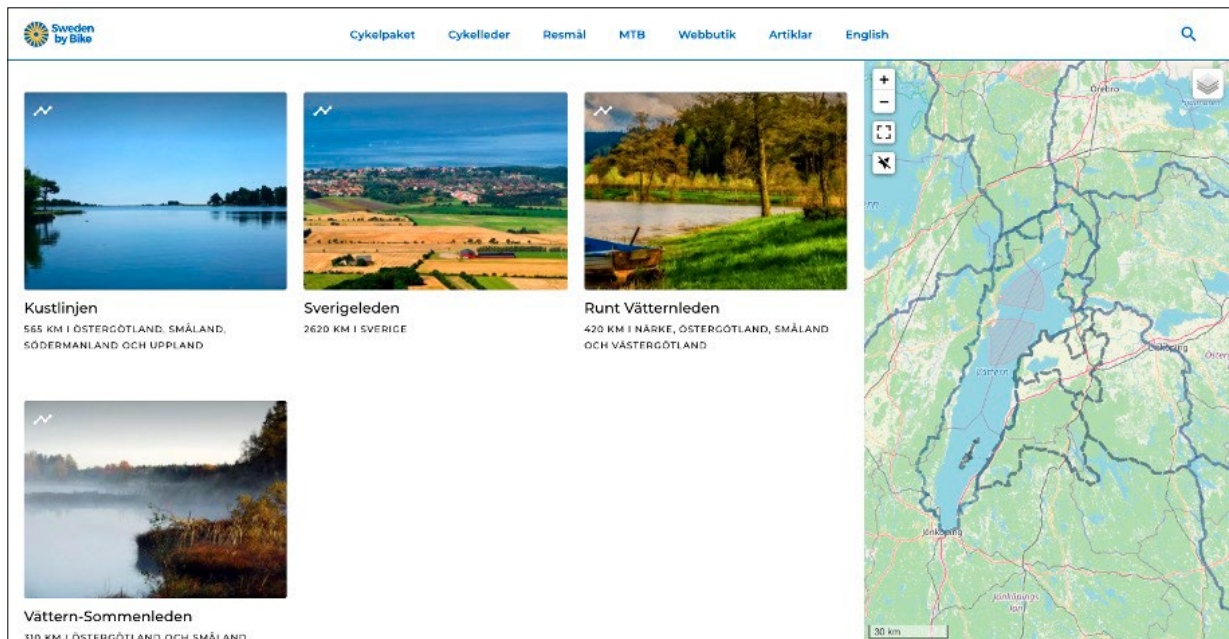
Observations:

Signage for all of the above routes were seen in various locations throughout my trips.

They seem like a credible structured route with clear and well maintained signage.

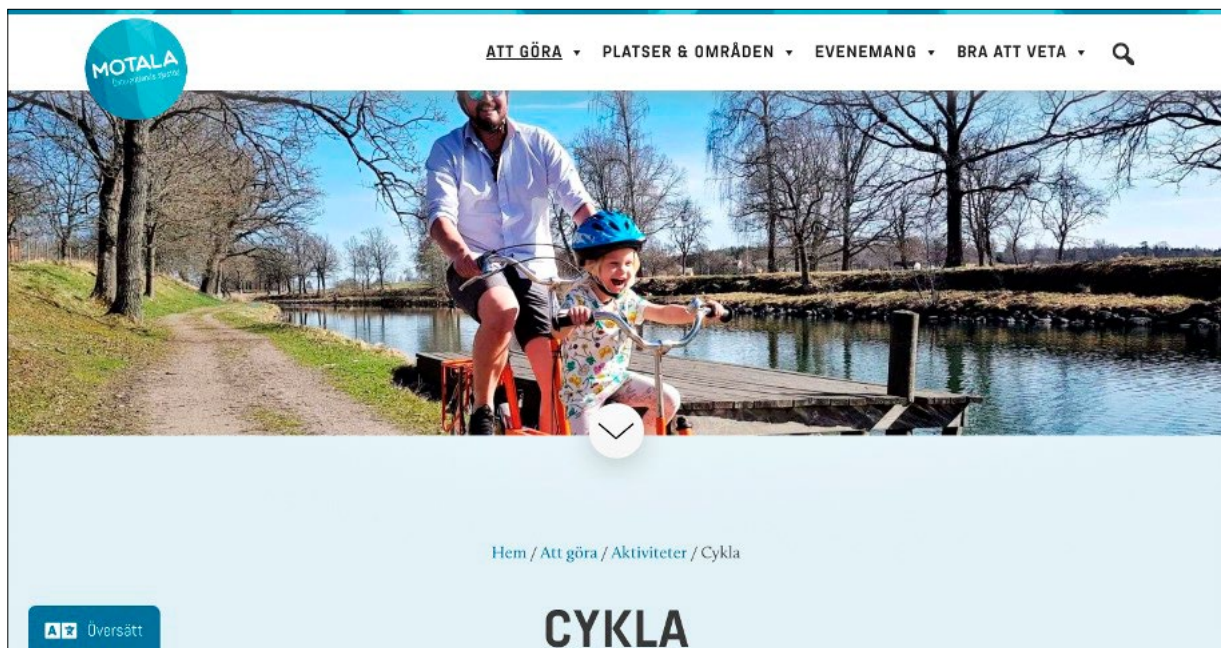
There appeared to be no other onsite orientation boards or maps to connect to these routes along the way or in any of the visitor information centres.

When I google these routes you can see the results returned above.




Sweden By Bike do a good job at packaging and this gives the visitor a ready made experience and less work than having to do all the research and planning themselves.

https://swedenbybike.com/cykelleder/?sf_s=%C3%B6sterg%C3%B6tland&post_types=cycleroute



Motala municipality website have a cycling section which is accessed a few clicks through the menu 'naturupplevelser'. <https://motalasjostad.se/att-gora/aktiviteter/cykla/> is detailed a few clicks through the section 'naturupplevelser'.



Cykla Vadstena, Omberg och Tåkern runt

Regionala cykelleder: Vättern-Sommenleden · Runt Vättern-leden
 Tävlingsrunder: Vätternrundan · HalvVättern · Tjeļvättern
 Lokala cykelleder: Pilgrimsrundan · Australien runt
 Cykelrunder med Vadstena som utgångspunkt: Nässjarunda · Granbyrunda · Strårunda · Hagebyhögarna
 Övriga runder: Borghamnruna · Omberg runt · Tåkern runt
 Cyklar att hyra

Karta över cykelleder Vadstena, Omberg och Tåkern runt

Regionala cykelleder

Vättern-Sommenleden

■ 374 km (Huvudsträckning inom Småland/Östergötland)

Anlagd 1984/1987

Alternativ: Gränna-Visingsö 25 km

Mycket tydlig skyltning med röda skyltar, även genom tätorter.

90 % belagda vägar.

Delsträcka Bärstad-Häckenäs-Örberga inom Vadstena kommun grusbelagd.

Sträckningen Vadstena-Gränna gemensam med Runt Vättern-leden.

Anslutningar i N och SO till Sverigeleden

[OpenCycleMap](#)

Öbs! OSM cykelkartan visar Vättern-Sommenleden endast mellan Väderstad, Vadstena, Skänninge och Mjölby.

Runt Vättern-leden

■ 410 km (Huvudsträckning: Runt sjön Vättern, Askersund-Motala-Vadstena-Ödeshög-Gränna-Jönköping-Habo-Hjo-Forsvik)

Anlagd 2000

Alternativ: Anslutningsleder från ett antal startpunkter – Hargebåden, Medevi, Tidaholm, Karlsborg, Olshammar och Multsjö/Ryfors 80 km.

Mycket tydlig skyltning (blå skyltar)

75 % belagda vägar.

Delsträcka Bärstad-Häckenäs-Örberga inom Vadstena kommun grusbelagd.

Runt Vättern-leden tangerar tre andra ledssystem: Västgötaleden i väster, Vättern-Sommenleden i sydost och Sverigeleden i norr.

[OpenCycleMap](#)

Upplēvadstena website offers good detail with click through cycle maps.

<https://upplēvadstena.se/>



Upptäck Ödeshög på cykel

Startsida · Inspiration · Upptäck Ödeshög på cykel

Ett av de bästa sätten att uppleva Ödeshög och dess natursköna omgivningar är med cykel. Här finns flera spännande & vackra cykelleder att välja mellan. Är du en äventyrare – kanske mountainbike och downhill på Omberg är något för dig? Kanske är du i full gång på att ladda inför Vättern Rundan och vill testa på några av etapperna? Eller varför inte ta med vännen, familjen eller partnern på en avslappande cykeltur längs med Östgötslättens vackra vyer? Oavsett vad du föredrar så finns här något för alla. Ta gärna del av våra

VisitÖdeshög also support cycle adventures with an interactive map of the area and packaging ideas.

<https://www.visitodeshog.se/visitodeshog/inspiration/upptackodeshogpacykel.4.7cdd-477517684219be053d3e.html>

WALKING TRAILS:

- Omberg/Östgöta trail – marked on the Omberg Ekopark brochure
<https://www.upplevvadstena.se/omberg.htm>
- Östgötaleden – marked on Upptäck Ödeshög map
<https://maps.ostgotaleden.se/sv/ostgotaleden/211164/Information>
- St Birgitta Ways – A4 flyer from Pilgrim Centre
<https://stbirgittaways.se/>
- Pilgrim i Alvastrabygd –
<https://www.svenskakyrkan.se/folkungabygden/pilgrim-i-alvastrabygd>
- Kulturstig at Alvastra
http://hembygdsbok.odeshog.se/uploads/entry_documents/258/kulturstigen.pdf?1486316361
- Skogsslingan – unsure what this is in Östergötland
<https://www.alltrails.com/trail/sweden/stockholm/skogsslingan>
- Naturkartan is a really useful tool and provides good detail about many of the routes described above.
<https://naturkartan.se/>
- Signaturleden Omberg is promoted on STF map literature and websites and marketed as one of their 12 signature routes. In addition Tiveden at the north of lake Vättern is also lifted in this feature.
<https://www.svenskaturistforeningen.se/aktiviteter/vandring/signaturleder/>

**SVERIGES BÄSTA VANDRINGSLEDER**

De 12 signaturlederna visar upp svenska smultronställen från norr till söder. Längs alla dessa leder väntar oförglömliga naturupplevelser.

Ta med familjen och följ kusten längs **Signaturlad Österlen**, så kan du upptäcka allt Skåne har att erbjuda. Här döljer sig djupa bokskogar, kustklippor och raviner. Om du längtar till fjällen gör du rätt i att besöka vandringsområden så som **Jämtlandstriangeln** och **Kungsleden Hemavan**. Givetvis är området omkring

KAYAKING TRAVEL:

There are possibilities to both hire kayaks or participate in guided kayak experiences on Vättern.

- Vättern kajak
<https://vatternkajak.checkfront.site/categories>
- Woods and Water – kayaking plus many other activity experiences
<http://www.woodsandwater.se/welcome-to-woods-water/>

BOAT TRAVEL:

Private boat – I searched the key websites in the region of the destination for information about how someone with a private or hired boat could enjoy an adventure around the lake.

There is some information connected to fishing and fishing permits, however very limited details about how to navigate an experience from a leisure perspective.

Göta Canal obviously offers details across the lake to continue on the canal route, however this was the main source of information, less was available about the local harbours, mooring and facilities. On the Göta Canal website I found a trip across Vättern.

<https://www.gotakanal.se/sv/189253/Battur-over-Vattern-med-MY-Modig/>

This website became the key resource currently:

<https://www.svenskagasthamnar.se/vattern/>

Ferry to Visingsö – This ferry runs regularly throughout the year and very frequently in summer.

Visingsö is a definitive key destination in the route along Östra Vättern and a wonderful complement to the other locations. From the guest perspective it's a 'must do' highlight.

The transit information is found on the following website. It would be helpful if a timetable were offered in addition to the online booking functionality.

<https://jkpg.com/en/granna-visingso/the-ferry-between-granna-and-visingso/>

Boat tours – eastern Vättern. The only boat tour experience I came across has already been mentioned earlier as part of a nature tour which goes out for 4 Sundays to visit islands on a nature tour, M/S Kungsverker also offers return tours out of Motala.

<https://www.kungsverker.se/kryssnin-vattern>

OPPORTUNITY**LAKE CYCLING:**

Östra Vättern has an opportunity to focus on the cycle storytelling and potential around of one part of its tourism portfolio.

'Vättern home of Swedish Lake Cycling'

The world's largest recreational bike ride and major world-class national event in the Swedish sports calendar, **Vätternrundan** happens over 2 weekends in June every year.

It is one of the 5 Svensk Klassiker on a national level, and brings over 40,000 competitors world-wide (not including supporters and viewers).

With such a high profile in the cycling world, this could be a theme to pull through all other cycle tourism as a top level focus then apply the 'home of' to promote other forms of cycling around the lake.

Small cycle trails, mountain biking, round Vättern trails or ebike trails of the future.

Why not strengthen this aspect of the Östergötland identity and brand and build on it?

Vätternrundan also has a strong socially sustainable focus with profits distributed back into the local sports associations and chosen charity.

They have achieved an ISO standard for sustainable events, and I did the Swedish Welcome assessment for guest experience and sustainable development where they were 'utmärkt'.

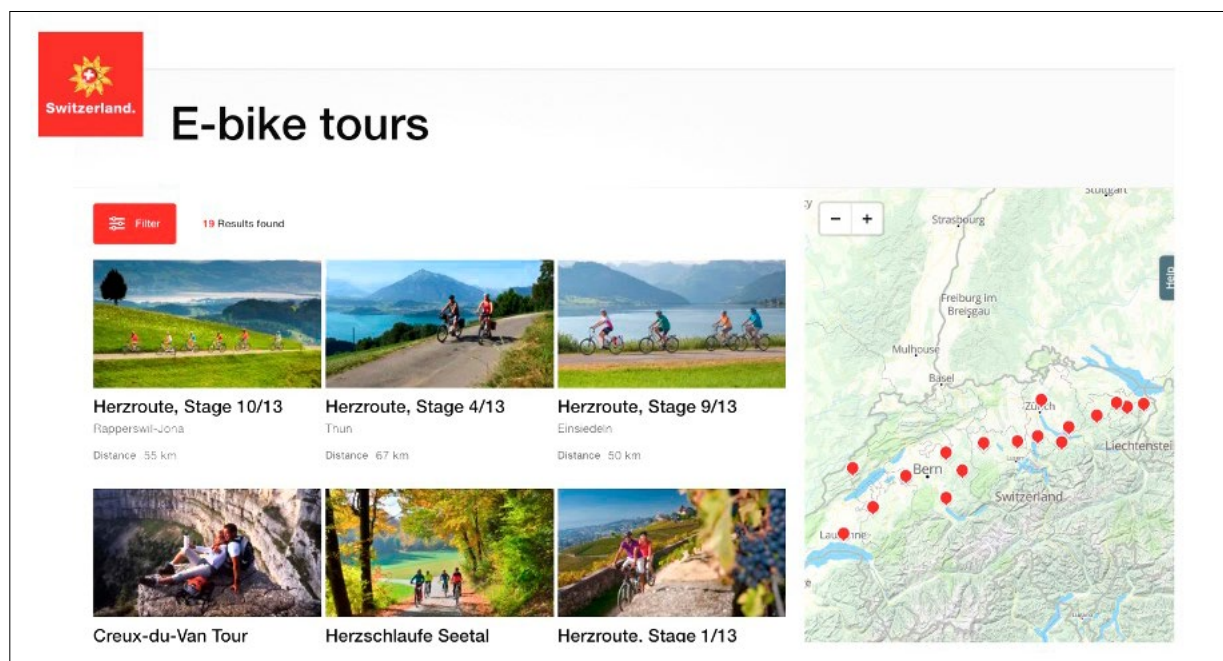
A survey in 2013 quoted that they contributed 65M SEK back in the local economy so positive connection and contribution for the area.

So overall, a national and global cycling success and locally a positive contributor to social and economic sustainability with a strong focus on sustainable development.

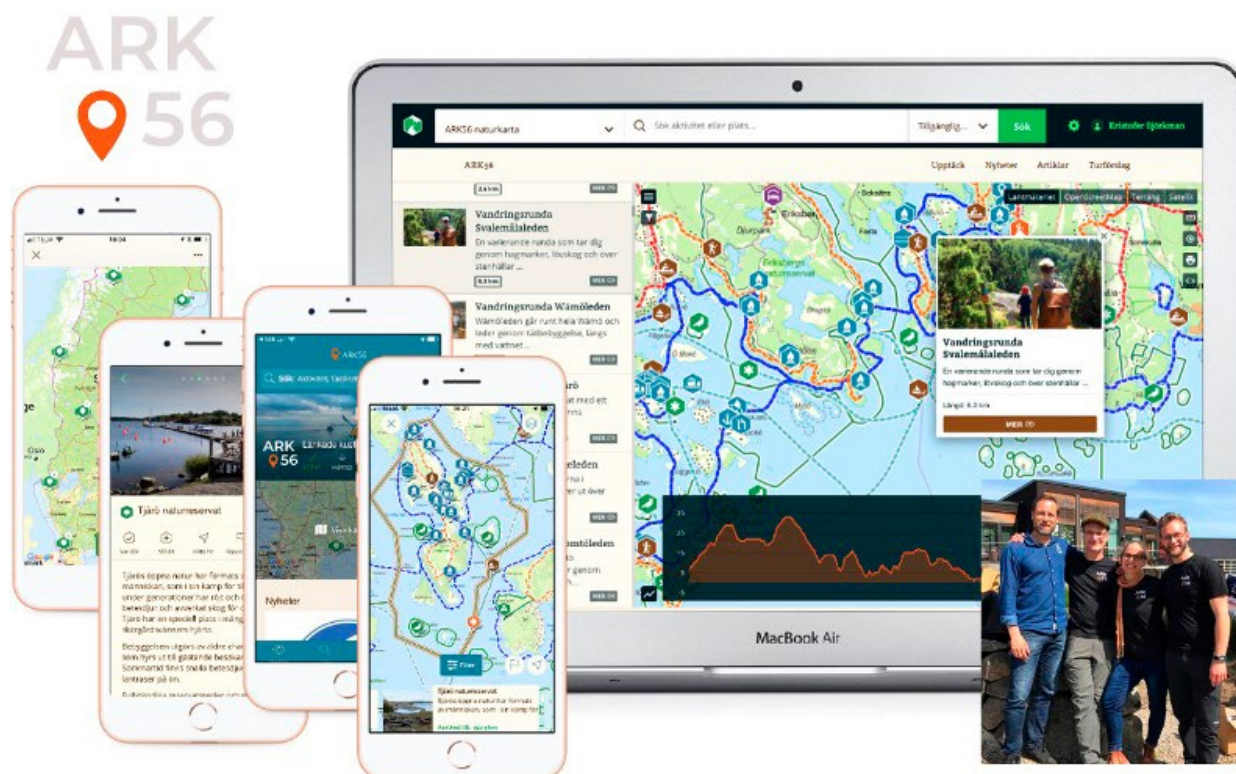


IDEAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- Evaluate how a more **focussed development for LAKE cycling** on the back of the famous Vätternrundan could be created.
- Could **e-bike stations** and routes be developed?
- Can visitors take **bikes on trains** in order to begin the route in Östergötland?
- In relation to walking visitors, who would normally arrive by car, do we have statistics or an analysis to identify if the creation of **walking festivals or guided experiences** NOT in June, July or August could be a sustainable development?
- Accommodation, food and other tourism businesses in the locality would benefit greatly from support to help **digitise services** such as online booking and to keep information up to date on platforms such as Google Maps.
- There could be a stronger focus on **accessibility and inclusivity**. Omberg has some panoramic viewpoints and routes which are level and well surfaced for buggy and wheelchair access. How could this aspect be deepened and communicated to visitors. It would be good to know more about this and include photographs of access and departure routes as well as where accessible toilet facilities are located.
- There is a great potential for any boat or kayak travel company to package their trip with other experiences and walking routes around the lake and create 2+ day itineraries. This could include island, lake or **coast hopping** by foot, bike, kayak or a combination of all.
- **ARK56** is a really good example of sustainable destination development, lifting and improving the facilities that are already there, digitising information and ensuring sustainability is key through all developments.



E-bike tour route in Switzerland with charging and facilities enroute.



ARK56 a walking, cycling and hiking route in Blekinge Biosphere.



The Great Glen Way, Highlands of Scotland, walking, kayaking, cycling route from Loch Ness.



Boat and lake hop-on hop-off cycle/walk lake experiences on Loch Katrine, Scotland.

8.0 NATURE AND WILDLIFE

OMBERG ECOPARK

A fascinating lake side environment through wonderous beauty overlooking what can feels like an inland sea.

Owned and managed by Sveaskog, there's no doubt that Omberg holds a special place in the heart of those who visit. With the changing of the year, the colours, the weather and the diverse biodiversity, it's an enriching experience throughout every season.

Paths are well marked and the brochure which is available in English offers an excellent interpretation source and orientation for those planning and onsite.

The brochure refers to the website

<http://www.upplevomberg.se/>

In addition, information is also available on

<https://www.visitodeshog.se/visitodeshog/inspiration/upptackomb-erg.4.268ab487176843231e83d86b.html>

And through Sveaskog

<https://www.sveaskog.se/upplev-naturen/besoksomraden/ekopark-omberg/>

And here

<https://www.upplevvadstena.se/en/omberg.htm>

And here

<http://www.omberg.info/>

Excellent high quality orientation and interpretation panels on site and throughout the trails.

Extensive parking is now available for a range of vehicles including campervans.

Facilities are well signed, including accessible toilets and routes which have easy access from the road, firm underfoot and allow access to viewpoints and firm walkways.

- Some older and newer walking route start signage at Stocklycke can be confusing.
- What is the 'Ecopark Centre'? The map says 'an excellent orientation map can be purchased at Ecopark Centre' there, do they mean the café at the vandrarhem?
- There are signs which say Naturum, does this exists now?
- Wooden 'gateway' signage by Stocklycke for the start of walks do not lead to marked walkways initially. See image below.
- Where is there parking for cycles around the Stocklycke area?
- It's not obvious on the map where one should park if accessing the accessible view point at Västra väggar.
- There are pilgrim walking routes within the ecopark which are waymarked, could they be included in the orientation map?
- The parking location at Alvastra is not marked on the map.
- Campervan parking is marked on site but not on the map.
- The one way system arrows could be added to the key on the map.
- Much visitor information about the site is duplicated and in depth in many visitor information webpages for the area. Suggest having one key site which contains the full detailed information which is kept current then other websites can link to this.
- Whilst there are a couple of outdoor activity operators in the area, it's not so obvious how I could take a guided walking tour which focuses on nature and wildlife.

Currently there is a measurement and monitoring exercise to track numbers of visitors to the site so an evaluation of site usage and capacity management can be made. Finding ways to manage this site for the sake of conservation and the local community is important as there have been times during the last two years of covid when it has been extremely busy.



Gateway sign at Stocklycke.

NATURRESERVAT I ÖSTERGÖTLAND

In terms of nature and the visitor experience, an excellent level of interpretation is provided by the '**Naturreservat i Östergötland**' website, brochures, maps, interpretation panels and site boards. The production of these and the management of the landscape is facilitated by Länsstyrelsen Östergötland.

These really open the door to a greater understanding and appreciation of the geology, flora, fauna above and below the water and land conservation of today.

A fantastic resource which is well produced, presented in durable outdoor formats and located throughout the whole of the lake and coastline.

The collaborative booklet '**Östergötlands natur- och kulturguidningar**' listing all sites of interest throughout the region and an extensive programme of guiding from March to November.

It is an added attribute that many of the Naturreservat information boards and leaflets are produced in German and English in addition to Swedish. A great resource!



Guided wildlife experiences.

TÅKERN

Many guided wildlife experiences take place around Tåkern. Open all months except Nov, Dec and Jan, it offers guided tours with a family focus and has a excellent indoor visitor centre.

The quality and presentation of the interpretation at the Naturum is outstanding.

I participated in a family guided tour which was really fun and interactive for children. Sweeping the grasslands for insects and exploring what was found in nets and taking a walk along Princess Estelles Sagostigen, then up to the viewing tower with binoculars. It's great to engage children and adults on the same tour.



Sagostigen at Tåkern Naturum.

Viewing platforms are accessible and there are designated walking routes leading from the centre and one which circumnavigates the whole lake. Part of the pathway has been boarded to enable access for all.

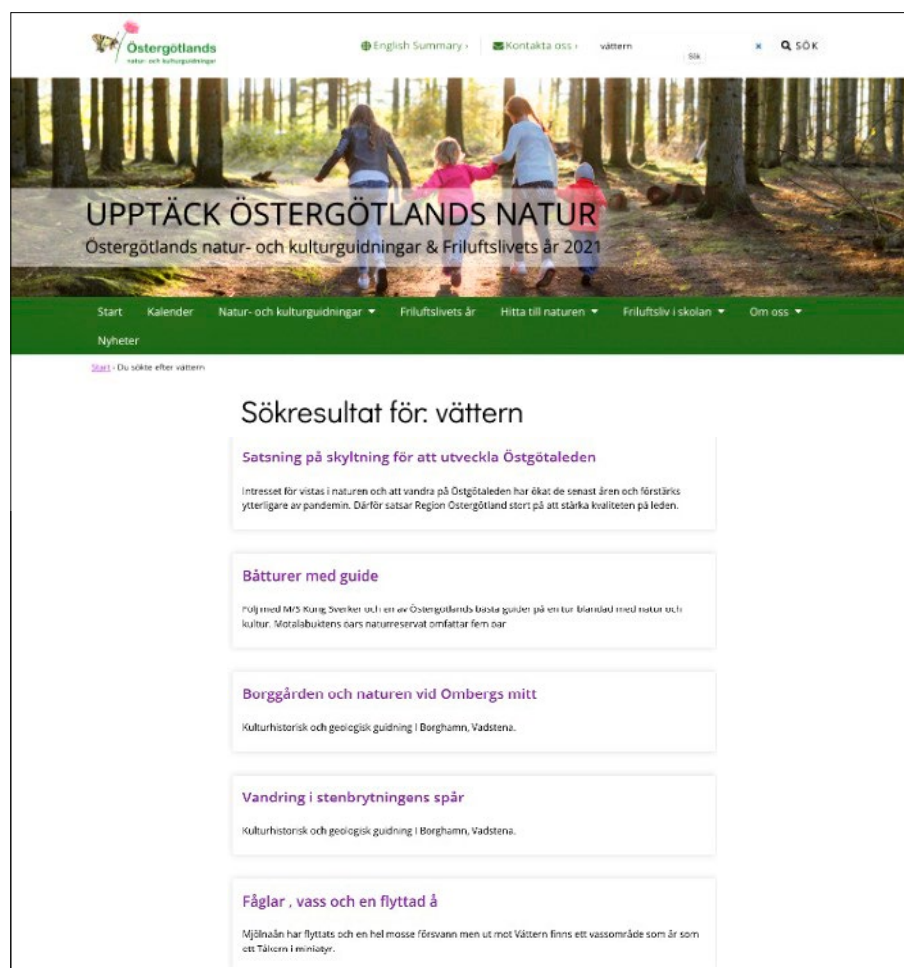
There is an opportunity to develop tours pitched for adults or niche tours for birders.

Sundays in July M/S Kung Sverker in Motala offer a guided nature crossing.

These were the only two nature guiding focussed experiences I could see in brochures or advertising during my time in the region.



Sundays in July M/S Kung Sverker in Motala offer a guided nature crossing.



Search results on naturguidning.se for 'vättern'.

In summary, the area along Vättern has a strong story around biodiversity and nature to share, but how to access this? Meanwhile iconic Tåkern is a birdwatching hub which could expand and develop it's offer through innovative guiding and interactive experiences.

9.0 CULTURE

An inspiring range of small, quirky, local museums located throughout the region which deliver a delightful surprise and are a complement and often expansion of the other visitor experiences.

I remember reading somewhere that Vadstena has one of the highest concentration of museums per head of population, (around 17 museums?) so this could be something to promote more avidly as a focus for the destination.

The working history of the area is also of interest, from fishing ports of the past to stone masons of the present.

Historically Vadstena puts pilgrim tourism and the history of Sweden's journey through time, on a global scale in terms of importance.

Röksten with the worlds longest runic inscription and the oldest preserved literary work from the 9th century, Alvastra Abbey and the quarrying of limestone at Borghamn from the 1100's, Saint Birgitta of Vadstena, to the modernity of Göta Canal in the 1830's, this corner of Vättern is full of contrasting historic and cultural twists which provide an enthralling visitor experience through time.

Excellent interpretation centres and signage exist along Göta canal and at Rök, Vadstena offers various routes to learning and experiencing the pilgrimage story and Borghamnstrand have invested a lot in excellent new interpretation panels which will create a new hub along the east coast of Vättern.

<https://www.borghamn.com/>

The storytelling around this whole area is encapsulated in the guided experiences offered by Wettersaga.
<https://wetersaga.se/>

Overall Östra Vättern offers an excellent and diverse range of experiences which help to tell the history and culture of the region.

OPPORTUNITY

NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

There are many opportunities for new products to be created or new collaborations to evolve. Trying to extend the season by introducing and adapting products which focus on the quieter shoulder months could be of great benefit to both the local community and visitor.

Ideas of areas for development are listed below.

1. Wildlife trips and tours. There is a great opportunity to educate new guides and create family focussed experiences around Vättern and Tåkern. Birdwatching isn't just for birders, a great guide can combine all aspects of the environment while on a nature guided experience and pitch the level for adults and children. Think also about evening tours, there are many options during the day but less in the evening.
<https://www.visitscotland.com/see-do/wildlife/birds-birdwatching/>
2. Glamping both budget and high quality could add variety of choice and increase the number of destinations visited along the lake and coastline either for those looking for exclusivity and solitude, or activities and a café nearby.
<https://www.coolstays.com/property/loch-tay-glamping-domes/19472>
<http://zut.hr/glamping/gallery/>
3. Collaboration between quality food offers, local food experiences and quality accommodation would enhance. Also experiences which include the geology and focus on the unique landscape.
<https://www.nwhgeopark.com/plan-your-visit/>

4. Maritime history, military history, ship wrecks and social history is very difficult to grasp as a casual visitor, more could be shared to inspire and education through all types of tourism experiences or new ones.
5. Island visits and coastal kayak hopping with overnight wild camping...how to make this possible and a product? Here's an example of a kayaking and wildlife experience.
<https://www.wildernessscotland.com/adventure-holidays/wildlife/the-scottish-highlands/>
6. Create packages including transport and experiences with overnight stays in some unusual places which already have accommodation and promoted these together so it's a one stop shop for the visitor and does all the planning work for them.
7. Across the lake promotion, keeping visitors in the destination for longer. Make visitors curious to explore the whole of the lake and share what there is to see and do along the coast.
8. Coastal development which links walking, cycling and kayaking along the route, similar to ARK 56 in Blekinge.
<https://ark56.se/>
9. The meeting of Göta Canal and the gateway to Motala could be more of a feature and connection to the lake.
10. Trail guides could bring together touring routes by car or bike around themes such as food farm hopping or runic stones and graves from old times.
<https://www.visitabdn.com/assets/Uploads/Stone-Circle-Trail.pdf>
11. Agricultural tourism is really increasing, but it needs a profile and marketable brand. A group in Scotland called 'Go Rural' have launched their own agri-tourism website to show how diverse a farm experience can be.
<https://www.goruralscotland.com/>

NEW EVENTS

12. Expand on the current range of kayaking and swimming events. A coastal alternative to Vättern-rundan could incorporate swimming or running, beginner to triathlon levels. Here is Höga Kusten's swim run event and their annual hike.
<http://www.hogakustenswimrun.se/oldsite/2019/about.php>
<https://hogakustenhike.se/>
13. Food festival, festival of the lake, harbour festival... These have more benefit if spread over a weekend instead of one day, and take place at the early or later part of the year eg May/June or Sept. It could incorporate food, music, activities, boat trips, guided experiences and planned strategically so it does not conflict with other activities in the location.
<https://www.visitscotland.com/blog/islands/island-festivals/>
14. Businesses with smokeries, brewing or other artisan produce to do evening tours, food tours, cooking classes or immersive experiences so visitors learn more about the connection of the product, suppliers, producers, flavour or tradition which it connects to.
<https://uniquelylocal.co.uk/experiences/artisan-food-tour-of-kelham-island-sheffield/>

WORK WITH PRODUCTS THAT ALREADY EXIST

15. Many signed cycle routes follow the east coast of the lake and has an infrastructure of signage in excellent condition. Currently 'Sweden by Bike' bike tourism company use these as self-guided products.
 16. These are here and ready to go, any type of tourism business can promote them, and if there is funding and time, then a new simple website, map or app could be created.
 17. The location of Göta Canal leading into the waters of the Motala is a great opportunity to combine and cross-promote experiences, not just for the boat traveller but for every other curious visitor to the region.
 18. Riksantikvarieämbetet the Swedish National Heritage Board, manage an extensive range of ancient monument, graves, stone circles, runic stones and places of historical cultural significance. Often there are interpretation panels at these sites to explain their significance, sometimes there are seating or fire pit areas. Consider using these as additional points of interest in any tours or descriptions of the area.
<https://www.raa.se/om-riksantikvarieambetet/>
-

PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENTS

19. Businesses, say when you are open, keep your website and social media platforms up to date with opening times, contact details and be nice to new customers who look hungry. To develop and extend the tourism product in any region, businesses need to be physically open and communicate this in a clear way. I have a long story covering 3 days of travel around Östergötland in May in 2018. The short story is that for various reasons such as incorrect information on websites, businesses simply not being open in remote areas, or being refused food twice in a restaurant environment that was already serving food to a small conference, I was unable to eat in a public restaurant or hostel for 60 hours!
20. Make maps useful. Some brochures and maps are not to scale or don't show a scale or key to the icons on the map. Show visitor information centres, toilets, location and route of ferry journeys, walking routes, these are basics but often are missing. Links to other websites such as the walking route website is good also.
21. We should move away from the terms 'high' and 'low' season. Going anywhere in 'low' season feels like the experience is only 'half open' or there could be an impression of missing out compared to the experience of 'high' season. Suggest simply being open or closed and listing opening times and months clearly.
22. Showing when you are open using Swedish week numbers may work for Swedes but not for anyone else. If possible use both the week number and the opening dates and times.
23. Measure and monitor as much as you can. Use tools such as Google Analytics to measure web traffic. Ask visitors who enquire and book, how they heard about you. On a regional level it's key to look at website statistics also, as well as visitor numbers, visitor surveys, overnight statistics, duration of stay, parking capacity and identify areas of potential overtourism so strategies can be created for better visitor management.

SHARE THE STORY

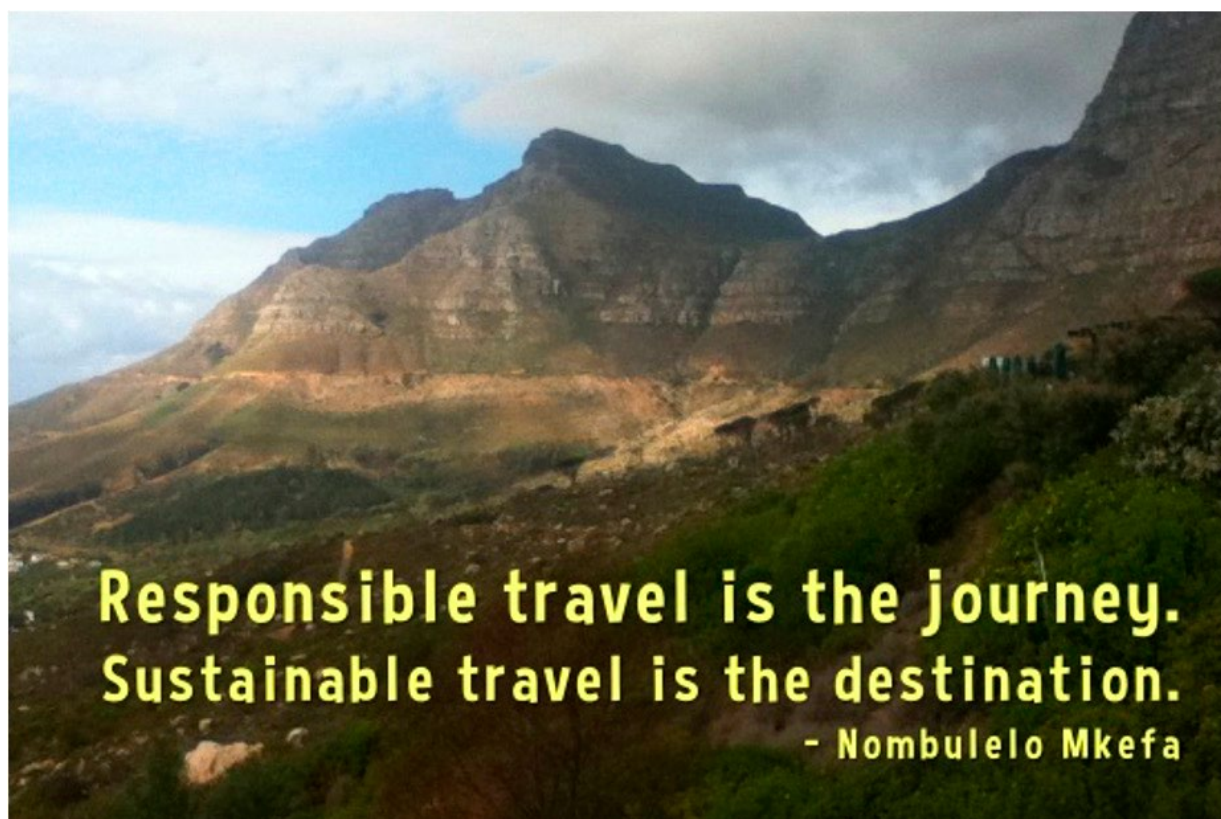
24. Adapting or creating new tourism products in a stunning landscape can be worthy of consumer and trade press coverage. Be ready to share the story and see opportunities for coverage on social media and online as well as print or local newspapers. Here is a feature National Geographic did to cover the launch of ARK56, the archipelago sea trails of Blekinge.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/travel/2020/02/discover-sea-trails-of-baltic-region-of-blekinge-sweden>



A snapshot of all the great experiences offered along Östra Vättern coastline.

10. SUSTAINABILITY – IMPACTS, IDEAS AND OPPORTUNITIES



Courtesy of @ronmader.

This section is about sustainability in practice and sustainability in action.

It details all aspects of destination development and ideas and solutions which could be implemented to make a positive difference to the visitor experience, the destination and most importantly, reduce or negate impact on climate change.

All the ideas are in line with:

Sustainable Development Goals 2030
(SDG's 2030)

<https://www.unwto.org/tourism4sdgs>



They also fit with the aspects assessed in the:

Global Sustainable Tourism Council
Destination Criteria.

(GSTC Destination)

<https://www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/gstc-destination-criteria/>



These are excellent frameworks to support destination development of the coastline and surrounding landscapes along Vättern in Östergötland in a meaningful way for those who live there, and for those who visit.

The examples below provide inspiration in addition to exemplifying how sustainable strategies and actions can work at all levels within a destination, especially if there is a shared aspiration and desire for sustainable action and collaborative and inclusive working with all stakeholders.

10.1 SUSTAINABLE DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT IN PRACTICE

Two examples of destination development in action:

The Sustainable Destination Development Initiative – Sweden ⁴

Based in Sweden and involving collaborative work with Tillväxtverket, Visit Sweden and 5 destination/regions in contrasting locations from 2012–2015. The objective was to improve organisational structures and engage the private sector in quality and sustainability improvements for sustainable destination development by:

- Prolonging the season.
- Improving the quality of the guest experience.
- Developing new and more sustainable tourism products.
- Enhancing accessibility.
- Improving the destination's quality and competitiveness.

The Burren EcoTourism Network – Ireland ⁵

The second example is located on the west coast of Ireland in a coastal cliff location of outstanding beauty and special geological significance. The group consists of around 70 local enterprises who established the network in 2011 to manage tourism in the area through responsible and sustainable tourism and to deliver:

- Marketing campaigns connecting to slow tourism.
- Local engagement from all stakeholders.
- Environmental protection to preserve and care for the landscape.
- Collaboration of resources and best practise between businesses.
- Measurement of waste, water and energy and to reduce yearly.
- Enhance biodiversity through different farming and grazing techniques.
- Create a code of practise for all members.

Insight: With a clear vision, collaboration, monitoring and measurement a destination can take control of its own destiny, sustainably.

10.2 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

PROTECT BIODIVERSITY

Strategies and tactics for supporting the conservation of natural areas, habitats and wildlife within nature reserves are managed by Länsstyrelsen Östergötland. From the guest experience perspective, an excellent range of interpretation which is displayed at many locations around the destination, really enhances the visitor understanding of this landscape. And with understanding comes respect.

⁴ <https://www.oneplanetnetwork.org/initiative/sustainable-destination-development>

⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vyT84ScPdtw>

LEAVE NO TRACE

In order to meet this standard it is good to have practical details showing the location of composting toilets and waste points.

ALLEMANSRÄTTEN

Information about the Swedish right to roam is produced by Naturvårdsverket and covers a range of outdoor experiences including, kayaking, horse riding and berry picking. Destinations and businesses can link to this material and have some available for visitors to read.



<https://www.naturvardsverket.se/Var-natur/Allemansratten/informationsmaterial/>

And a fun video in English too...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NT66AXcusFM&t=74s>

Publications on allemansrätten, and a video in which Visit Sweden inform about allemansrätten.

PROTECTION FOR NESTING BIRDS

Where protection is necessary, there are signs informing visitors about access rights and dates when it is not possible to access specific nesting areas.

FISHING RULES

A leaflet in English and Swedish is available which gives guidance on closed locations, minimum catch size and protected species. There's a Vättern notice board detailing fishing requirements located in most port areas.

ROUTES AND TRACK MANAGEMENT

Keeping all walking areas, boardwalks and coastal paths in good order, enables accessibility and good visitor management whilst supporting conservation of the landscape.

RESTORATION

Ongoing programmes to monitor disturbance and action to preserve or restore natural ecosystems which require investment or conservation due to external risks or changes in climate.

CULTURAL AND BUILT HERITAGE

This takes into account the preservation of cultural and historical heritage, protection, preservation and enhancement of local properties, sites and traditions should be met without restriction of access for locals.

MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

An ongoing commitment through financing and conservation to preserve the destination in collaboration with other landowners and stakeholders.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR TOURISM OPERATORS AND GUIDES

There could be a code of conduct created for all tourism operators in the destination. This could include education about the environment so they can share this with visitors, and a commitment of how they will manage their business with preservation and respect to the environment.

LAKE SUSTAINABILITY

Tourism must find a way to contribute to the reduction of negative impacts on lake Vättern and the surrounding coastline.

This should be the 'green' thread which runs through all developments.

Next you see the range of leaflets which exists to advise, inform and regulate the uses of the lake, it's water, wildlife, birdlife, fishing rights and visitor behaviour in general.

Is this enough? Is this the only issue?

Then of course there are all sides to the story showing Vättern's fragility.

<https://www.gcint.org/lake-vaettern-below-the-surface>



Visitor information leaflets detailing conservation and protection of Vättern and the species who thrive there.

ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS

The destination should prepare a sustainability risk assessment and identify actions based on the risks identified and manage risk areas that require immediate action whilst monitoring ongoing impacts of tourism.

OPPORTUNITIES

Tourism has a role in supporting the preservation of landscapes and heritage and with good balance can do so whilst minimising any negative impacts and enhancing the visitor experience. Conservation projects could be made public and visitors invited to participate, such as the experience in the Faroe Islands for the last few years when they were closed for a weekend and invited volunteers to come and help carry out land maintenance. It's a lottery and every year 100's more apply than get accepted to come and work on the land and live with the locals.

<https://www.visitfaroeislands.com/closed/why-were-closing-again/>

10.3 VISITOR MANAGEMENT**UNDERSTAND THE VISITOR NEEDS**

Gather and analyse data on visitor flow and pressures from tourism activities throughout the year. This will help evaluate the destination's ability to accommodate visitors in different locations and also the resources available such as parking and water.

VISITOR PLEDGE

Visit Iceland have 'The Icelandic Pledge' which invites the visitor to 'Pledge to be a responsible tourist' and their fun and interactive 'Iceland Academy' which guides the visitor through practical aspects such as driving as well as how to act and respect the nature.

<https://visiticeland.com/pledge>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F89-VpCCHkU>

VISITOR CHARTER

Visit Scotland have developed a visitor charter which is promoted through their website and also via tourism companies and media campaigns.

<https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/advice/coronavirus/responsible-tourism/responsible-visitor-guide>

And how to be an eco visitor.

<https://www.visitscotland.com/about/eco-tourism/>

RESPONSIBLE DESTINATION GUIDE

When there is a common voice inviting the visitor to think sustainably, this has a big impact. Finnish Lapland have invited visitors to enjoy their experience in a safe and responsible way, with guidelines and ideas in their guide for travellers.

<https://www.lapland.fi/visit/sustainable-tourism/responsible-traveling/>



Courtesy of www.lapland.fi

SETTING EXPECTATIONS THROUGH STORYTELLING

Visitors will be more engaged, respectful and understanding of what is expected from them if businesses, destinations and marketing platforms communicate more about what their ethos is in connection to sustainability. It can be interesting, enlightening or inspiring, but it gains trust and respect from the visitor from the outset.

<https://hallbarhetsklivet.se/initiativ/hemma-pa-klev/>

LOCAL ACCESS

Planning is key here to control access and limit numbers or alternatively adapt the environment in a way that controls where and how the area is accessed such as walkways or one-way routes and traffic flows.

VISITOR SAFETY

A guide to safe travel in Scotland for visitors and those who provide experiences.

<https://youtu.be/JT5oZFu53aw>

IDENTIFY AND MANAGE CARRYING CAPACITY

The formula for this is based solely on measurement and monitoring to establish the number of visitors a site within the destination can accommodate. Out of this, strategies to improve management of tourism facilities and locations can be implemented where needed or where a future bottleneck or overtourism is likely to arise. This is key and important to measure and monitor year on year, especially before it happens. Easier to implement strategies beforehand rather than change behaviours and strategies afterwards.

PARKING

In my experience, Alvastra and Medevi have some challenges in July. Apart from the obvious improvements needed for visible parking signage in the right place, the next step would be to create suitable parking areas. Unless there is to be a ban on using campervans in Sweden, then there will be more looking to explore the highlights of the Vättern coastline. It's not so welcome to be met with signs which simply say 'don't park here' without showing where you can park.

VISITOR FLOW

Find ways to spread visitors across a wider area of the destination during the most crowded times of day or holidays or months, and offer incentives for off-peak visits or adjusted admission times or boat departures.

RESPECT THE LOCALS

Good visitor management will maximise economic benefits to the host community whilst minimising negative impacts on their lives and local environment. Set up information meetings early in processes to bring the local stakeholders together with project teams and strategists so their input can be fed back into the process at an early point, and views and opinions and ideas collated.

It's important to understand that the right tourism development can sometimes be no tourism development and 100% focus on conservation of what is already there.

VISITOR FEEDBACK

Really important to find ways to engage and understand the visitor more. Surveys online and research on site are key to understanding more about how the visitor experiences the environment, their plans, how aware they are of sustainability factors and what they aspire to in the future. Obtain feedback and develop and measure on the back of it.

10.4 ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Tourism generates a very real positive economic impact especially for more remote and rural regions. If this is to be maintained and become sustainable over time, then there needs to be investments made on several levels. It is important when identifying opportunities to maximise the economic benefits to the host community while minimising negative impacts.

EMPLOYMENT

Often job opportunities in tourism in the more remote or rural environments, rely on students and summer workers. This has a clear impact on tourism businesses who stop trading when they no longer have a team in place as they have all returned to school or college. If more focus and training support were given to employing some people from the local area, then there is the possibility to extend the opening times and thus aim for a longer opening season. Without this investment it is very difficult to address the seasonality of tourism in a positive way. Decent work, decent conditions and a decent wage is fair.

TRAINING

In relation to the above solution, in employing more local people, it may be that more investment is required to up-skill or retrain in some aspects e.g. use of digital within tourism.

It could also work another way where there are opportunities for different tourism products such as nature and culture guiding and for there to be some training delivered which connects to this side of up-skilling.

A course for eco-tourism in Sweden:

<https://www.osterlen.fhsk.se/kurser/entreprenor-ekoturism/>

A course for nature guide certifying in Sweden run by Naturturismföretagen:

<https://naturturismforetagen.se/certifierad-naturguide/>

DIGITAL

Next to sustainability, digital is the next important focus for development in any sector but especially tourism and especially rural tourism. The destination needs to have access to 4G with 5G around the corner. Similarly those working in the tourism sector need to be adapting to online booking, social media, booking platforms and agencies and to reply to emails in a timely manner. Without any of this, the sector will be very quickly left behind. So it is important that tailored training, courses and online support can be given and that the tools are fit for purpose.

NEW TRENDS AND NEW SECTORS

In terms of tourism, there are some opportunities to introduce new products and experiences to the destination when it works with the local communities.

Glamping is a growing trend and can be effective in extending seasonality. High quality glamping also. Creating more and regular wildlife and island culture tours for families would be an excellent addition. Similarly niche tours for birders and wildlife enthusiasts could be packaged and sold via a tour operator platform.

COMMUNITY INCLUSION AND SUPPORT

Key to all new developments is buy-in from the community with an acknowledgement that with the age of the population rising, there's a risk of diminishing livelihoods in these remoter areas unless new investments and new ideas are implemented.

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

It is important that any new enterprise contributes to both economic and sustainable benefit. Getting visitors involved with community and conservation initiatives, supporting new infrastructure projects, planting trees, beach cleans, fencing and path maintenance and donating to conservation programmes is all on the agenda.

LOCAL PURCHASING

Raising awareness of local producers and suppliers, of which there are many in the region, and generating campaigns and awareness on the desire to keep it local as much as possible for everyone.

10.5 ACCESSIBILITY

DESTINATION AUDIT

In order to understand the status of the destination regarding accessibility, it would be helpful to map out current facilities, services and experiences which support accessibility in relation to the visitor journey in the destination.

There are probably more of these than you first think! Then find a platform to share this information.

ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL

Where practical, sites, facilities and services including natural and cultural, are accessible to all.

Where there are limitations to this, then design solutions can be implemented, or digital and remote alternatives offered.

COMMUNICATE ACCESSIBILITY

This is key for the visitor so they understand what is on site and how it works. Many companies and destinations think they have to install new facilities or services, which of course is useful but in the first instance, it is simply about describing what exists currently and showing images of how it looks. That way the visitor can make up their own minds about how suitable it is to visit.

Tillgänglighets Databasen show good examples for buildings, camping sites, theatres, shops, cafes and toilets. Here is an example of how it works for a nature reserve.

<https://www.t-d.se/sv/TD2/Avtal/Harryda-kommun/Radasjons-naturreservat/>

FEEDBACK FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

If looking to invest in new facilities or services, connect with various local groups and associations and bring them into the design process. This is the story about how a museum in Gothenburg went about researching and implementing new initiatives to deliver on inclusivity.

<https://goteborgsstadsmuseum.se/om-museet/projekt-och-samarbeten/funktek/>

TECKENSPRÅK ENGLISH

Sök ...

FunkTek

FÖR ALLA SOM VILL GÅ PÅ MUSEUM

HEM OM FUNKTEK ORDLISTA FUNKTEKPILOT VÅR METOD BLOGG

DETTA VILLE VI

SKA INTE KULTUREN VARA TILL FÖR ALLA?

Museer ska vara till för alla. Därför ska de vara tillgängliga för alla. Alla har lika stor rätt att delta i och skapa kulturen! Men många museer dras med otillgängligheter av olika slag. För vissa människor innebär det att det blir svårare att ta del av det som finns på museer. För andra blir det rent av omöjligt. Detta ville Funktek ändra på.

Funktek var ett treårigt projekt finansierat av Arvsfonden, och handlade om att alla ska kunna gå på och uppleva museum. För att det skulle bli möjligt behövde vi veta vad olika människor med olika funktionsvariationer tyckte, tänkte och ville ha!

Därför anställde Funktek personer med olika funktionsvariationer för att utvärdera tillgängligheten på Göteborgs stadsmuseum. Vi kallade det att jobba som Funktek pilot. Genom att göra olika workshops tillsammans fick vi nya kunskaper. Vi ville att dessa kunskaper skulle förändra sättet Göteborgs stadsmuseum planerar och bygger utställningar på. Så att framtidens museer blir mer tillgängliga för fler människor. Vi ville inte skapa fler särbehandlingar, vi ville skapa lösningar. Även om projektet har nått sitt slut finns hemsidan kvar för att inspirera andra till att börja tillgängliggöra sina verksamheter. Välkommen att kika runt!

GÖTEBORGS STADSMUSEUM change reklam. making the change happen! URBAN FUTURES SWEDISH ICT INTERACTIVE Riksställningar Swedish Exhibition Agency UTOPIA

FunkTek was about how new technologies and interaction design can make museum experiences more democratic. www.funktek.se

AWARENESS AND TRAINING INITIATIVES

How visitors are met and welcomed both in person and through signage and interpretation is very relevant. Think about how the destination welcomes a visitor from pre-information on websites and brochures, to telephone calls, arrival signage, parking and the experience itself.

- Does the website have good colour contrast and larger print options?
- How clear is the signage for accessible parking and toilets?
- Are automatic door openings within reach?
- Are hearing loops installed at reception or conference areas?

Many more aspects could be considered and there are a lot of resources to assist on the Visit Scotland accessible inclusive tourism website.

<https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/marketing-toolkits/accessible-inclusive-tourism>

ACCESSIBILITY IN PRACTICE

Listen to an accommodation provide, a visitor attraction and a hotel manager on how they work with and communicate their business, in relation to accessibility.

<https://youtu.be/e7Vcp57gnXA>

10.6 FOOD

LOCAL SOURCING

The Vättern coastline in Östergötland has a diverse range of food producers. The use of local and seasonal ingredients as well as unique local products, recipes and cooking methods in menus is a real attribute in relation to the destination. A campaign could be created within the destination to promote the use of foods locally.

Here is an example of how Swedish Lapland promote their produce.

<https://www.swedishlapland.com/things-to-do/get-a-taste-of-swedish-lapland/>

Med smak av naturen

I Swedish Lapland har vi en förkärlek för ärligt lagad mat. Vilket är naturligt med ren natur och med råvaror som fått gro och växa på egna villkor, och i sin egen takt, alldeles runt knuten.

Det goda i livet

- Siken i Kukkolä**
Tid lyser med samma namn på var sin sida om den måltige Tjörnshöven. Kukkolä är enligt staven det viltgoda och på måltigen.
- Roadtrip för hungriga**
En roadtrip är något annat än ett sätt att upptäcka det vi inte tidigare sett. Och gör du dig själv chansen kan det också innebära
- Den stora matresan**
Att ta hem de du det är värt att. Ju, egentligen kan det vara själva grunden till hela resan. En matresa helt enkelt.
- Hantverkstostar**
I slutningen av mest gjut betar 37 kor. Några dricker vatten i stannkatten. Griset är grint och står på på glödsbåsen i stannkatten.

Courtesy of www.swedishlapland.com

LOCAL TREND

This is going to continue and grow partly due to the localisation of tourism in 2020/1 due to COVID-19, but since it has been a growing culinary trend in the last 10 years. Visitors have local food as a highlight of their experience and connection to the place they visit.

<https://www.besoksliv.se/nyheter/forskaren-det-lokala-har-blivit-viktigare-i-krisen/>

ORGANIC

Ethical and eco-labelled products ensure that sustainability and animal welfare creates good social conditions in the cultivation, processing, production and trade both for globally and locally made produce. Sweden's KRAV label is one way to communicate organic work.

<https://www.krav.se/foretag/bli-krav-certifierad/certifieringsorgan/>

ÖSTGÖTAMAT

Many food companies are already listed on this website and are working in collaboration with activities and events in the region. It is a great resource to be able to identify and source new products for companies looking to extend their range of local produce and has a useful map for those planning to visit on site.

<http://www.ostgotamat.se/>

FOOD TRENDS AND MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES

The interest in local produce as part of an immersive visitor experience is increasing rapidly.

The storytelling around production, the tradition or simply to meet the producer and hear their own story is all part of the experience in addition to the tasting itself. Find out more from some support materials from Visit Sweden on how to identify these opportunities and communicate what there is to offer.

<https://corporate.visitsweden.com/kunskap/maltid/trendrapport-maltidstrender-2020/>

In Oregon they have the Wild Rivers Coast Food trail with over 40 suggested stops, along with maps and highlights for each month when there is a product focus.

<https://traveloregon.com/things-to-do/eat-drink/oregon-food-trails/wild-rivers-coast-food-trail/>

10.7 ENERGY**RENEWABLES**

A strong focus on the use of renewable electricity, bio-fuels, solar panels, ground source heat systems and other sustainable energy sources. This could be part of the destination strategy in terms of making these more accessible and a regional strategy on implementation or financial support.

ELECTRIC CAR AND BIKE CHARGING

Look at ways to install these stations at major hubs around the coastline and in overnight parking locations.

COMMUNICATION

Ways of sharing with visitors to be mindful of their use of energy and tips on how to reduce.

10.8 WATER USE AND CONSERVATION

BRING YOUR OWN BOTTLE

Run a sustainability campaign to introduce a new aspiration in Östergötland to bring your own refillable water bottle.

Iceland ran a 'Drink Tap Water' campaign.

<https://kranavatn.inspiredbyiceland.com/>

MEASURE AND MONITOR

Introduce a system of log keeping so that usage, savings or leakages can be identified. Also all the toilet facilities have information on minimising water use throughout the island.

COMMUNICATE

Make sure visitors are aware of the need to conserve water in locations where this is relevant. Also, if there are no shower facilities in the property, or there is wild camping around the lake and islands, then good to communicate in advance and explain how to take a bath in nature. If it is in the lake then good to promote the use of washing gels which are not harmful to the environment.

<https://sjohav.se/>

TIPS

Good to provide some tips for the industry on how they can save water through the installation and renewal of aerator systems in taps and shower heads. Also the control of the shower where it is a push button system instead of full flow. The same goes for visitors, explain what is expected of them, how to conserve water and why.

<https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/responsible-tourism/sustainability/climate-change/sustainable-factsheets/taps-shower>

10.9 WASTE

CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Create and share ideas around the circular-economy possibilities in a destination.

<http://cirtoinno.eu/ce-handbook/>

SINGLE USE PLASTIC

Be rash and have a ban on single use plastic items throughout the destination. It's through momentum like this that habits change and people look for alternatives in their purchasing process. See what Gothenburg did.

<https://goteborgco.se/en/2020/03/gothenburg-aims-to-become-swedens-first-single-use-free-city-centre/>

RE-USE

Bring your own water bottle and lunch box to refill and reduce food packaging at the destination. Share examples of companies who have re-used or up-cycled products.

ENGAGE VISITORS IN THE CLEAN-UP

Amsterdam has fishing trips to collect waste plastic in the canals, meanwhile there are a lot of fun possibilities to mingle with the locals at plogging events and beach cleans. Green kayak is also a fun idea where you can use a kayak for free if you collect waste.

<https://plasticwhale.com/>

<https://kayakrepublic.dk/en/diverse/greenkayak/>

NEW ISLAND WASTE SORTING INITIATIVES

An exciting new initiative for the archipelago is the floating waste station. This can be used from land or sea and enables the waste to be sorted into all fractions. Is there a need for this on Vättern?



Courtesy of www.valdemarsvik.se

HAZARDOUS WASTE

More information could be given at waste stations regarding the location of hazardous waste depositories for batteries, light bulb, paint etc.

FOOD WASTE

The sustainable conversion of food waste to biogas and alternative fertilisers in Östergötland is excellent, good to support this and make visitors more aware of this option.

<https://smartcitysweden.com/companies/844/svensk-biogas-i-linkoping-ab/>

10.10 TRANSPORTATION

ADDITIONAL PARKING AND STÄLLPLATS OUTSIDE THE HARBOUR/COASTAL HUBS/KEY TOWNS

Short term, overnight and longer term parking could be created out of town for when capacity is challenged currently. Well signed and well communicated, especially by those who take bookings for visitors.

ELECTRIC SHUTTLE BUS

It could be that in summer, a shuttle vehicle operates to connect key inaccessible places?

This could be an electric vehicle powered by renewable fuel...and even driverless!

<https://sverigesradio.se/artikel/6869391>

<https://www.teliacompany.com/en/news/news-articles/2020/5g-powered-self-driving-electric-bus-propels-stockholm-into-the-future/>

PEDESTRIAN ZONES

Like some other city centres who have pedestrianised their locations, it may be of benefit to only allow accessible, local and bike traffic into harbour destinations or summer busy towns like Västana, while all other vehicles are left in the longer stay parking further out of town. Also fun to include electric buggy and clean energy vehicles only.

<https://www.ljubljana.si/en/ljubljana-for-you/transport-in-ljubljana/transport-around-the-pedestrian-zone-of-the-old-town/>



Courtesy of www.ljubljana.si showing the pedestrianisation of the town centre.



ELECTRIC CAR AND BIKE CHARGING POINTS

These could be installed and available in more parking areas.

Consider creating a tour route around the lake which uses these and promotes sites on the way.



OUTDOORS

5 DAYS IN SCOTLAND WITH AN ELECTRIC CAR

Are you an eco-conscious traveller who loves the freedom of the open road? Have an adventure on a self-drive holiday in an electric car/vehicle (EV). With an ever-increasing range of EVs to choose from, there's never been a better time to hit the road and head for Scotland.

From the city streets of Edinburgh and Glasgow to winding country roads through the wild Highlands and spectacular National Parks, Scotland is blessed with a widely dispersed and accessible network of electric charge points, allowing you to relax behind the wheel while taking in Scotland's natural splendour.

<p>TRANSPORT</p> 	<p>DAYS</p> <p>5</p>	<p>MILES</p> <p>310</p>
<p>ROUTE</p> <p>Starting in Edinburgh, this spectacular route heads north, winding through the dramatic Cairngorms National Park before continuing onwards to the Highland resort town of Aviemore. From here it takes in some of north Scotland's most iconic landscapes including the banks of Loch Ness and Glencoe. The final stage of the journey culminates in the sprawling Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park before terminating in the cosmopolitan city of Glasgow.</p>	<p>HIGHLIGHTS</p> <p>The Old and New towns of Edinburgh, The Cairngorms National Park, Aviemore, Ben Nevis, Loch Ness, Glencoe, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park, Loch Katrine, Glasgow</p>	<p>AREAS COVERED</p> <p>Edinburgh, Fife, The Highlands, Loch Lomond, The Trossachs, Glasgow</p> <p>Hi! Welcome to the VisitScotland website, how can we help you?</p> 

BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE

Cycling paths and secure bike parking racks to be well maintained and signed, there could also be bike cleaning and air-pump facilities if the market is expanded with the infrastructure and route signage for the many cycle routes in the area.

E-bikes and routes are definitely something to think about.

BIO-FUEL

The possibility to purchase bio-fuel in harbour hubs and around the lake.

<https://www.biofuel-express.com/hvo/>

<https://www.ecopar.se/ecopar-marin/>

BOAT CLEANING

The use of sustainable chemicals and have processes for minimising impact.

PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

Tourism companies to share links to timetables for the train and bus networks for visitors looking to take public transport to the destination. Also promote walking, cycling and kayaking routes in the region as a mode of transport or experience.

10.11 MARKETING

OPEN ALL YEAR

Promote the benefits of non-peak season, and shoulder seasons.

Pivot marketing to promote experiences all year round, with the aim of extending the peak period, and to enticing visitors to experience the destination, at the very least from April to October and with some cosy themed incentives over winter. Collaborate with tourism companies to achieve this together through planning, packaging and marketing. Example of autumnal marketing.

<https://www.visitscotland.com/holidays-breaks/autumn/>

MARKETING COLLABORATIONS

Good to do this with other already established platforms such as STF hostel association. They often feature walking routes, kayaking, family holidays and unusual accommodation. All of those are present in our destination, and there are a great range of STF hostels too in interesting locations and at the entrance to the Göta Canal around Motala.

<https://www.svenskaturistforeningen.se/aktiviteter/vandring/signaturleder/>

STAY OVER, STAY LONGER AND TRAVEL SLOW

Packaging experiences in a way that ensures the visitor wants to stay longer and participate in a slower type of travel is key. This can also be done through promotional incentives such as 3 nights for the price of 2 during quieter times, and minimum stays during busy periods.

SUSTAINABILITY CAN COST MORE

We have learned that mass tourism has negative impacts so it's important to conserve this fragile region. Consider marketing and inspiring target groups who are higher spend, higher quality, unique or exclusive experiences or with a niche focus such as wildlife and who will be curious from September to May. More and more unique or popular locations worldwide are setting a higher financial commitment in order for people to experience untouched areas of the world, and it could be argued that Vättern is just that.

SELLING AN ISLAND STORM IN THE WINTER MONTHS

Pia and Mike can tell you their own story in the video below, so a quick overview follows. They wanted to develop new business from October to March as they were open all year anyway. They are located on the most western outpost in Sweden, Väderöarna, the Weather Islands, one hour north of GBG then a 20-minute boat journey from Fjällbacka. Asian guests who loved the wildness of the place in the winter and the cosiness of the fires in the darkness spread the word about the place to some friends. Then that grew, and they started to welcome more guests. Then they tried to tap into the local market by building a stone sauna with a view of the crashing sea, dinner and wine and this became AW sauna on a Friday for folks in Gothenburg. Next they tried to sell the nights that didn't normally sell, so Sunday, Monday and Tuesday nights. So they created a package 3 nights for the price of 2. It sold out super-fast, so much so, people would call to book, the weekend they needed but if it wasn't available they would take the weekends that was free. From the business perspective, it costs a similar amount if a person stays 1, 2 or 3 nights to clean the room and do breakfast but the gain for the business is the revenue from 2 lunches, and 3 dinners plus beverages. A very successful campaign which extended their season despite the remote location.

<https://youtu.be/LRxRyYqSK7U>



Väderöarna's Vårdshus, a story on how to work with seasonality and succeed [a video by West Sweden/Västsverige].

SHARE YOUR SUSTAINABLE STORY AS PART OF YOUR MARKETING STRATEGY

Sustainability communication is a way to engage with the conscious traveller. Gather good stories about how the destination is working with this and find ways to share and communicate with the current audience and potential visitors. Here's how Lapland are working with this.

<https://www.lapland.fi/visit/sustainable-tourism/>

KEEP IT LOCAL

Come up with new ways of promoting the strengths of the local product, people and place.

The 'untouristguide' website taps into places in the destination which are hidden gems, off the beaten track and may take only local knowledge to know about.

<https://www.untouristguide.com/>

'Meet the locals' a Västsverige Turistrådet initiative created a website so visitors could book an experience with a local guide, anything from going jogging to baking Swedish fika.

<https://meetthelocals.se/en/>

THEMED YEARS MARKETING

Visit Scotland have run a series of 'themed years' and this year has been the year of coasts and waters. Taking a regional initiative on this idea, Östergötland could have a years of pilgrim, archipelago, food, architecture etc. and work with social media and a brand toolkit for each theme and businesses could market on the back of these ideas.

<https://www.visitscotland.org/about-us/what-we-do/themed-years/year-coasts-waters>

10.12 DESTINATION MANAGEMENT**SET A COMMON SUSTAINABILITY VISION AND PLAN**

Collaboration among residents first and foremost, all stakeholders, decision makers and tourism professionals.

Initiate sustainable awareness throughout the plan and initiate new ideas and change through regional policy, responsible groups, networks, round table discussions, tourism businesses and data collected from visitor activity.

What are the environmental, economic and social benefits of tourism development in our region?

MEASURE AND MONITOR

Collate all current measurables which connect with the vision and set-in motion the measurement of new data so progress can be monitored, and goals set.

Environmental impact studies are also relevant here.

Connect to conservation and protection.

EMPLOYMENT

Employment is sustained through support, education and training, new initiatives and generating new marketing strategies to prolong opening months.

LOCAL ECONOMY

Support this with initiatives for supplier collaborations.

SHARING ECONOMY

Invest in the delivery of new regional ideas which inspire behavioural change through digital platforms.

Here is a project from Gothenburg which connects with the sharing economy.

<https://goteborg.se/wps/portal/start/miljo/det-har-kan-du-gora/smarta-kartan>

SMART TOURISM AS A TOOL FOR DEVELOPMENT

Digital investment is key for all but especially more remote communities in the region. This and support to up-skill the tourism industry to enable effective marketing and bookings in order to generate business all year round, improve mobility and connectivity.

SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE CHOICES

Helsinki created an app and web-based platform to share how visitors and those living in the city can choose sustainable alternatives through cycling, shopping, accommodation and experiences.

<https://www.myhelsinki.fi/en/think-sustainably>

SUSTAINABLE VOLUNTEERING

The Faroe Islands who luckily have no overtourism problems but were feeling the impact on increased tourism. They decided to close for a weekend and create a weekend of Voluntourism. Visitors would come, stay with a family and participate in restoration and maintenance of the island infrastructure.

<https://www.visitfaroeislands.com/closed/why-were-closing-again/>

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AWARDS

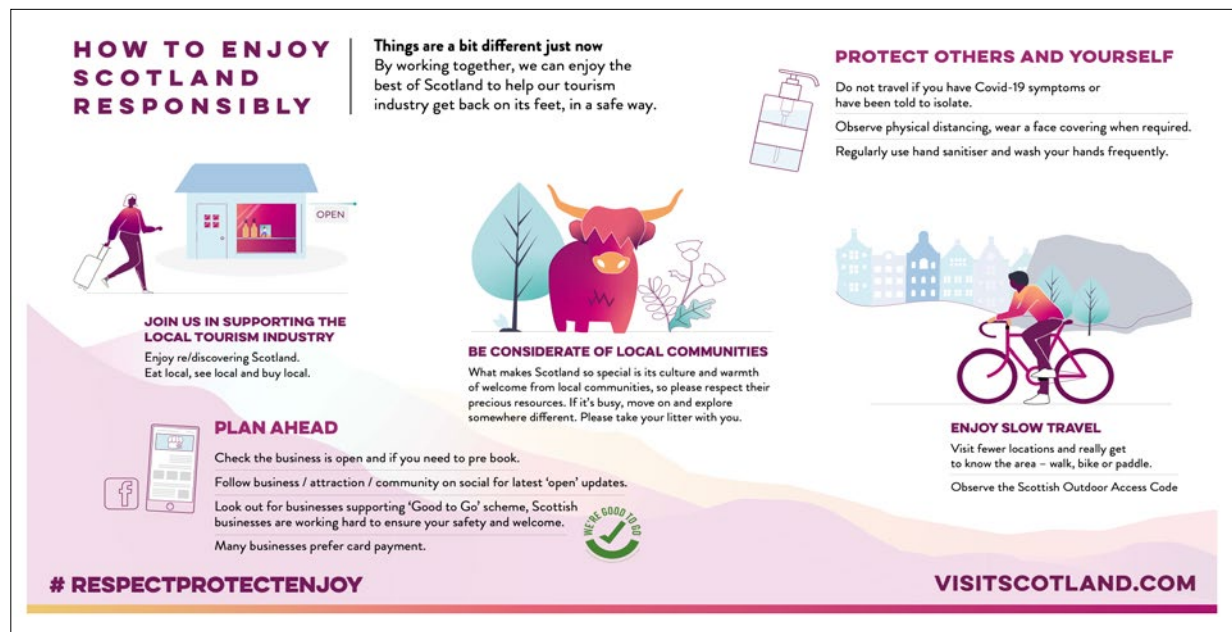
Create an event with a range of categories to recognise and reward sustainable tourism development. This also engages the industry, promotes opportunities for local and national PR and generates some awareness and momentum towards real change, new ideas and best practise.

CREATE A VISITOR CHARTER

This should be communicated by all tourism companies and agencies and tell of how a visitor to Östergötland, its coast and archipelago is welcomed and what is acceptable in terms of enjoying the area in a responsible way.

The example below is one from Visit Scotland, recently drawn up to encompass aspects which connect to COVID-19 also. [#respectprotectenjoy](https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/advice/coronavirus/responsible-tourism/responsible-visitor-guide)

<https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/advice/coronavirus/responsible-tourism/responsible-visitor-guide>



Courtesy of www.visitscotland.org

11. SEASONALITY



Courtesy of Slush.

THE SEASONALITY OF TOURISM IS CHANGING

Whilst it can vary throughout Sweden due to the logistical spread of the country, here in Östergötland there is scope to extend tourism experiences beyond the main summer months. More can be done to increase the uptake of travel for the rest of the year, especially since the COVID-19 situation in 2020/21 has stirred the curiosity of Swedes to holiday more in Sweden.

This should now become part of any mainstream marketing strategy for regional tourism, tourism operators, booking agents and tourism companies.

More people are taking additional holiday or short break experiences, and this fits well with the opportunity to offer experiences which extend the traditional operating months and embrace everything that the destination and seasons can offer.

Question: What comes first, the businesses to open longer, or the marketing to promote all year round?

Both, just do it! Test the ground by first opening the business a couple of weeks either side of the normal closing dates and see how that works. Complement this with effective marketing on social media, special offers and reaching those who have stayed before.

On a regional tourism level, the marketing of themes which fit well with this focus can be implemented throughout the year ongoing and tourism businesses can market themselves on the back of this.

THE OPPORTUNITY OF EXTENDED EMPLOYMENT

Extending what can be a short visitor season, does not only have the benefit of increasing revenue, profitability and visitor service, but in more remote areas, it offers opportunities for employment and up-skilling of the local workforce.

Tourism companies often rely on summer and seasonal employees who return to study or another part of Sweden. This often creates an artificial and abrupt ending to the opening of activities and experiences in the region. Having travelled a lot in Sweden, mainland and islands, from April to June and late August to October, I can confirm that visitors are still around, many are Swedish, and German visitors definitely prefer to visit at quieter times of the year.

Question: How does a tourism business ensure they can deliver a visitor experience beyond the summer months?

By aspiring where possible to employ some local employees and top up with seasonal team support in the summer. It is challenging especially in more remote locations, however to rely totally on seasonal workers restricts a business to seasonal limitations and the opening months will be difficult to change.

MARKETING AS A CATALYST OF CHANGE

It is key that both nationally and regionally, marketing campaigns reflect new trends and year-round inspiring content to provide the marketing platform on which the industry can hang their own marketing angle.

In an ideal world we would no longer talk about high or low season, but simply be either open and delivering the best possible experience, or closed. It requires a change of mind-set and a desire to change with small incremental steps year on year, but it is achievable and has vast potential, especially at this moment in time.

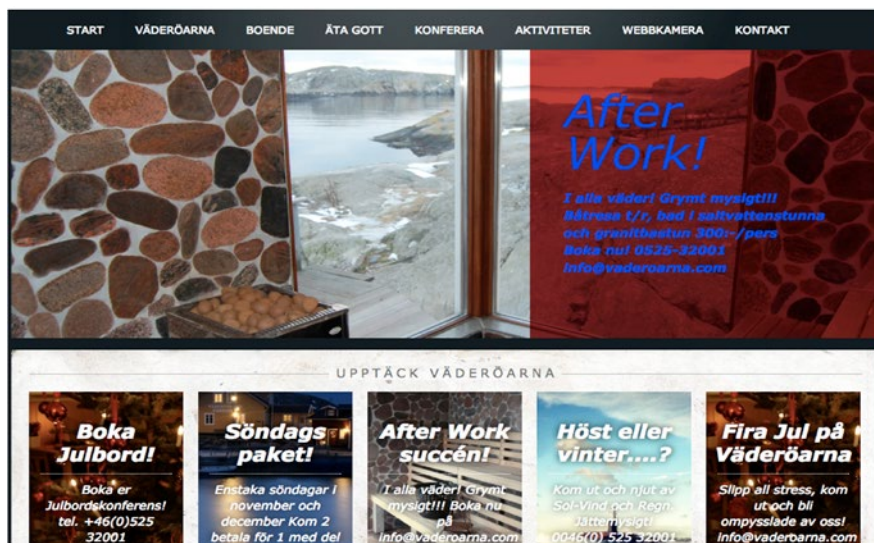
10.1 IDEAS AND INSPIRATION

REGIONAL, LOCAL AND HYPER LOCAL ON VÄDERÖARNA

Another example from the remote west coast and Väderöarna Vårdshus. Despite being an hour north of Gothenburg and then a boat journey to reach, they decided to try and reach their local market to extend the season. Focussing on 'AW' after work style activity, they built a new sauna overlooking the ocean and packaged this with a dinner tasting menu, fine wines and transport included.

Bookings came from groups, couples and often what was marketed as an evening experience became a weekend stay. Next they tried to sell the nights that didn't normally sell, so Sunday, Monday and Tuesday nights. So they created a package deal of 2 nights for the price of 1, or 3 nights for the price of 2. It sold out so fast that people would call to book, and if the weekend they needed wasn't available, they would stay whenever there was availability. From the business perspective, it costs a similar amount if a person stays 1, 2 or 3 nights, the cleaning is the same, just the breakfast to cost in. However the gain for the business is the revenue from 2 lunches, and 3 dinners plus beverages. The guest feels they have had an excellent value for money experience and the business benefits from a sustainable longer stay, whilst maximising revenue per head.

So for something perceived as different and good value, guests will be curious and visit from October to April, despite the distance!



Courtesy of www.vaderoarna.com

WILDLIFE AS A MAINSTREAM ACTIVITY FOR ALL

Wildlife watching and guided eco-tourism experiences have great potential to extend the months that visitors come to an area. With a choice of products which can be segmented in a way that is entertaining and educational for families or more niche for birders. Any tourism business in the destination can share a calendar of wildlife activity to complement their own marketing, and it is often in the quieter months when wildlife are more present in coastal and archipelago areas.

Here is an example of a wildlife calendar from Visit Scotland:

Wildlife Watching Calendar

Throughout the year, Scotland is a great place to watch wildlife. Below are some of the most popular species and the best times to see them.

Mammals | Birds of Prey | Inland Birds | Seabirds | Wading & Ground-Nesting Birds | Fish | Plants & Habitats

MAMMALS	Winter	Spring	Summer	Autumn
Bottlenose dolphin		✓	✓	
Common dolphin			✓	
Common seal	✓	✓	✓	✓
Grey seal	✓	✓	✓	✓
Harbour porpoise	✓	✓	✓	✓
Minke whale			✓	
Otter	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pine marten		✓	✓	✓
Red deer	✓	✓	✓	✓
Red deer rut				✓
Red squirrel	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wildcat				

SEPTEMBER OCTOBER NOVEMBER DECEMBER

<https://www.visitScotland.co.uk/product/visitScotland/>

<https://ebooks.visitscotland.com/wildlife-calendar/>

SCOTTISH

Wildlife Calendar

SPRING

SUMMER

AUTUMN

WINTER

Illustrations: Jenny Davidson

Courtesy of www.visitscotland.com

With a simple hide in the forest, Speyside Wildlife created an evening wildlife watching product which is really popular all year round. It fills a gap where there are not usually many evening experiences offered, especially for families. Even if there isn't so much wildlife activity there is always something, the guide can share stories and experiences using artefacts and interpretive tools to add to the education and learning experience.

<https://www.speysidewildlife.co.uk/Holidays.aspx?location=evening>

INSPIRATION TO CHANGE THE MIND-SET

Here is a really great example from the hostel association Svenska Turistföreningen, on keeping the curiosity and momentum around vacation, weekend breaks and getting out and about in all weathers and all seasons.


The idea around extending the summer holiday feeling, cosy, fires, sauna, nature's colours, trying something new, wildlife, fishing, hiking, yoga, forest-bathing and other types of wellness experiences are all incorporated into their online marketing.

<https://www.svenskaturistforeningen.se/guider-tips/forlang-svemesterkanslan/>

Visit Scotland also focus on things to see and do in September, October and November.

<https://www.visitscotland.com/holidays-breaks/autumn/>


Aktiviteter
Guider och tips
Engagera dig
Medlemskapet
Om STF
Hitta och boka boenden



Förläng svemesterkänslan i höst

Sommaren börjar gå mot sitt slut, men det betyder inte att du behöver släppa taget om den där sköna svemesterkänslan. Populära resmål blir oftast ännu lite härligare senare på säsongen, när tempot slår av på takten och lugnet infinner sig. Och vill du inte resa så långt finns massor av pärlor runt om i landet som passar perfekt att upptäcka över en helg. Här kommer våra tio bästa tips på hur du förlänger svemesterkänslan i höst!

Egentid vid Söderåsens Nationalpark



Courtesy of www.svenskaturistforeningen.se

RESEARCH, OPEN AND SEE

This year, a castle in central Scotland which normally closes the doors in October, will be trying guided tours until the middle of December. With self-catering accommodation and a caravan park nearby, it's looking to offer staycation visitors who are now booking home-based family holidays for those looking to get away and spend some time together before Christmas.

<https://www.visitscotland.org/news/2020/blair-castle-extends-the-season>

EMBRACE THE DARK AND THE LIGHT

Each year during December, Norrköping Light Festival turns a walk around the town into a magical experience. The stunning regenerated Industrial Landscape on the water's edge complements the whole visual experience.

<https://visit.norrkoping.se/se-och-gora/storre-evenemang/norrkoping-light-festival>

Norrköping Light Festival

Fredag den 27 november 2020 är det premiär för den sjätte upplagan av Norrköping Light Festival! Varje dag till och med söndag den 31 januari 2021 har ni möjlighet att njuta av spektakulära ljusinstallationer och konstverk.

Årets installationer skapas i regi av Norrköpings kommun tillsammans med det lokala näringslivet och lokala kreatörer. Samtliga ljusinstallationer är placerade i Norrköpings unika stadsmiljö och kommer att väcka liv i denna mörka årstid.

Temat för Norrköping Light Festival är tillsammans, vilket återspeglas i budskapen hos de olika ljusinstallationerna som kommer att pryda staden. I år mer än någonsin behöver vi sprida kärlek, omtanke och skapa gemenskap trots social distansering.

Mer information om evenemanget kommer.

Förändringar med anledning av coronapandemin

Norrköping Light Festival kommer att genomföras som planerat med vissa justeringar. Exempelvis ser vi över hur premiären, guidningar och Ljusruset kan genomföras på annorlunda vis än tidigare för att undvika folksamlingar.

Informationen på sidan och information om de olika delarna uppdateras löpande.



Om Norrköping Light Festival



Courtesy of visit.norrkoping.se

THE ENCHANTED FOREST

This is a yearly event in October in central Scotland where a forest area is created into walking light event with different themes each year. Have a look on the link below to see how this sustainable event, gives back to the local community and creates income for local businesses having grown each year since 2012.

<https://www.enchantedforest.org.uk/>

MÖRKA ÖSTERGÖTLAND

This is a book full of stories around the theme of dark side of Östergötland. Think about how you could promote this angle and apply it to businesses or activities nearby and incorporate into marketing for the darker months of the year.

<https://www.visitostergotland.se/inspireras/morka-och-mystiska-ostergotland/>

12. BLUE-SKY THINKING – VISIONING FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Inspiration can be found in many places, here are some development ideas from Sweden and beyond.



DESIGN AS A DESTINATION

Even when a toilet is concerned, consider designing something iconic, photogenic and fitting for the landscape, which could also generate some interesting media coverage for the destination.

<https://bit.ly/3nPVVhM>



BUILD IT AND THEY WILL COME

An inspiring vision rising out the landscape, creating a destination within the forest.

https://youtu.be/dCG1_6lnhPA



INSTALLING ART AS AN ART INSTALLATION

The two sea horses 'kelpies' are part of a regeneration of the canal between Edinburgh and Glasgow in Scotland and located next to the visitor centre. They have become a destination during the day and night. Instead of installing standard park seating, link to an inspiring theme creating a fun look.

<https://www.thehelix.co.uk/>



CREATE MARKETING THEME YEARS

Celebrate features or the region, in this case the spectacular coasts and water. Build a toolkit to support the companies in the region so there is consistent messaging around the campaign and engage the industry as well as visitors.

<https://www.visitscotland.org/about-us/what-we-do/themed-years>

In Kivijärvi, modern pole barns are being built for tourist accommodation

Construction will begin this spring

| Helsinki Village | 11/10/2020 at 10:47:00



WHEN TRADITION IS REINVENTED

50 barns based on the traditional warehouse and fence building of Finnish design are part of a trial in a village format in the forest. Visitors are looking for new and exclusive experiences.

<https://yle.fi/uutiset/3-11151116>



ISLAND GLAMPING AND QUALITY FOOD

On an island off the coast of Croatia, there is a focus on high quality glamping, high quality food and sustainable development.

<http://zut.hr/glamping/>



CREATING OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES FROM NATURAL RESOURCES

ARK 56 is a network of walking, kayaking and cycling trails along the Blekinge Archipelago launched in 2019. So far they have 10,000 downloads of the app in 18 months since it's launch and it has lifted the profile of the region as an outdoor destination.

<https://ark56.se/>



CREATING A QUALITY EXPERIENCE MAKES FOR A GREAT MEDIA STORY

The stunning Blekinge archipelago has always been there, but now it has been made easy to travel through the creation of ARK 56, the media have become curious. Great to have a feature in National Geographic.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/travel/2020/02/discover-sea-trails-of-baltic-region-of-blekinge-sweden>



BE INVENTIVE

Mirrored buildings that reflect their surroundings are an intriguing feature in the landscape.

<https://www.dezeen.com/tag/mirrored-buildings/>



SHARE A PERSONAL STORY

Caledonian MacBrayne are the transportation ferry boat company who services the islands in Scotland. They decided to do various themed feature called 'Island Diaries' inviting residents to share stories about their lives and work.

<https://www.calmac.co.uk/article/7626/Island-Diaries-Episode-7---A-Window-on-Scotland>



SEASONAL MARKETING TO INSPIRE VISITS ALL YEAR ROUND

The ferry company who service the islands in Scotland are working in partnership to promote reasons to travel all year round. Day adventures with other tourism companies and 30 island hopping routes to inspire a journey and give ideas already packaged up and good to book.

<https://www.calmac.co.uk/blog/take-a-rest-in-the-west-this-spring>



SUPPORTING TRAVEL AROUND THE DESTINATION

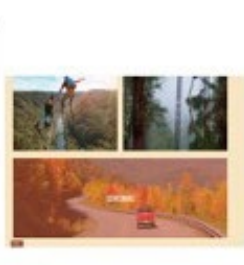
Varborg clearly promote the cycle routes going through their region both in towns and along the coastal routes. In addition, they have a hop on-off bus service from May to September connecting with visitor experiences and nature trails outside the town. This in turn takes some pressure off parking facilities.



MEANINGFUL MARKETING

Find inspiring ways to tell the story of your tourism product, connect to the target market through more sensory and emotional ways. Here's an evocative way to promote cabin-semester all year round.

<https://www.frameandwork.com/>



MARKETING IN ALL SEASONS

West Virginia have some fun interactive features on the website which enables visitors to see where the trees are turning lovely colours on a map, so you can choose where to take a drive or walk in the destination.

<https://wvtourism.com/seasons/fall/>



FOCUS ON WILDLIFE AS WELL AS NATURE

Consider what Östergötlands big 5 could be and work with this in marketing. It would be great if there were more nature guided tours and trips to share about the social, geological, nature and wildlife story about the area.

<https://www.visitscotland.com/see-do/wildlife/>



OFF SEASON EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Höga Kusten Trail is focusing on two events in Spring and Autumn. Great to create a buzz, extend the main summer season and keep accommodation and local businesses busy.

<https://highcoasthike.com/>



AGRI-TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN SCOTLAND

A one stop shop website to promote Scotland's farms, farm-shops, farm experiences and farm accommodation.

Would be amazing to have something like this in Östergötland to complement Östgötadagarna.

<https://www.goruralscotland.com/>



FOOD TRAILS

Another way of tempting visitors to journey through the destination taking in food, experiences and accommodation on the way.

<https://www.visitouterhebrides.co.uk/food-and-drink/eat-drink-hebrides-trail>



BIKE ON BOAT TRAVELLING

Loch Katrine cruises take visitors on board and drop them off at the other end of the coast, leaving them with an enjoyable return trip by bike.

<https://www.lochkatrine.com/>



INFLATABLE WATER PARK

Can be relocated to a different location each year and create a micro-destination which benefits the surrounding businesses who can provide support facilities, food and services nearby.

<https://www.wibitsports.com/>



INSTA SUCCESS

A super simple idea to frame a stunning view or iconic location, but the impact can be great, especially through social media.

<https://africantraveldesk.com/cape-town/yellow-frames-discover-table-mountain-cape-town/>



SHARE YOUR SAFETY STORY

Share how you are working to keep your visitors safe. Create a sense of transparency, responsibility and information so visitors feel secure. If you have a certification then promote this, if not then simply detail what you do and how you do it, perhaps create a video, involve your team and show how proactive the business's approach is.

<https://www.visitscotland.com/about/practical-information/good-to-go-scheme/>

<https://visita.se/safe-to-visit/>



LAKE CELEBRATION FESTIVAL

Could include themes around activities, nature, culture, food, local food and more. Example here from a provenance festival in Aberdeenshire.

<https://www.visitabdn.com/cp/provenance-festival/>



This destination audit was undertaken by Kim Ross in her campervan during 2021. All experiences and ideas are her own unless otherwise referenced.

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All weblinks correct at time of publishing January 2022.



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