DIGITOURISM

SURREY ACTION PLAN

Name of the policy instrument(s): Surrey Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Introduction

The Digitourism project is an Interreg Europe Programme examining good practices in augmented and virtual reality to help inform policies to foster innovation in delivering digital solutions. The project is sharing good practice and learning, developing Action Plans and using this to inform policies across partner regions. The project started in June 2018 and concludes in May 2023.

This Action Plan for the Digitourism Interreg Europe project is for the project partner Surrey. The issues identified in this Action Plan have been developed by the Surrey Stakeholder Group. This group and its members have been invaluable in drawing together expertise to analyse the issues, identify priorities and propose actions that now form part of this action plan. Members of the Surrey Stakeholder Group have taken part in the project workshops with other partner regions to learn from and share good practice.

1.1   The Surrey Stakeholder Group

The Surrey Stakeholder Group includes representatives from across a range of roles and sectors with different interests, ambitions and experience in delivering digital solutions. We were keen that the stakeholder group brought a range of expertise together, many of whom had not worked together previously. This was to help to bring new perspectives, understanding and solutions to help analyse the issues, shape priorities and learn from experiences. The Surrey Stakeholder Group hosted the projects first Workshop at the Surrey History Centre in March 2019.

The stakeholder group includes:

- Senior Lecturer, Royal Holloway University
- Exploring Surrey's Past Officer, Surrey County Council
- Chairman, Visit Surrey
- Countryside Marketing Officer, Surrey County Council
- Public Health Development Officer, Surrey County Council
- Volunteering and Community Benefits Manager, Surrey County Council
- Town Centre and Events Manager
- Technology SME
- Senior Manager Digital Services, Surrey Libraries

1.2   Stakeholder Group Expertise

The Stakeholder Group bring a range of expertise that is listed below. The Group were formed to enable more sharing of ideas, approaches and innovation across traditional sectors. This has been helpful in providing different perspectives for the issues, experiences and potential solutions.

- Developing AR/VR solutions
- Policy development
- Tourism
- Countryside and heritage
- Public engagement and marketing
- Technology development
- Economic development
- Public Health
- Funding
- Heritage
- Recreation
- Partnerships
- Academic research

1.3   Challenges and Opportunities

Our stakeholder group and Digitourism workshops have highlighted a number of challenges and opportunities for developing augmented and virtual reality that have shaped our Action Plan.

- What is the 'customer journey' in planning and experiencing tourism and outdoor visits – and what does this tell us about AR/VR solutions?
- In what ways can AR and VR be used to enhance visits (eg to countryside, heritage, museums)?
- In what ways can AR and VR be used to provide access to 'hard to reach' access (eg people who cannot access due to health conditions or to access places that may not be accessible to the public)
- What content works best and how can that be developed?

- How can all the organisations and businesses in the 'supply chain' to develop AR and VR solutions be connected and share knowledge and learning in a rapidly changing sector?
- How can AR and VR be funded in future?
- What are the policy implications?
- How can the good practice and learning from the project be generalised and made durable for the future?

Through the shared learning through the project we have identified opportunities to use immersive technology to enhance people's experience of the outdoors and provide physical and mental health benefits. We've been working with colleagues in the Surrey Health and Wellbeing Strategy team to secure funding to deliver a small AR and VR pilot project to help test how immersive technology can be used to provide an experience of the outdoors for those unable to physically access it. The project will support the delivery of priorities of the Surrey Health and Wellbeing Strategy and identify learning to help shape future approaches.

1.4 The Policy Instrument – The Surrey Health and Wellbeing Strategy

The Strategy has been developed using data from the Surrey Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) which is an assessment of the current and future health and social care needs of the local communities in Surrey, alongside the COVID Community Impact Assessment and Rapid Needs Assessments (Impact of Covid-19 on our Communities – Surrey-i (surreyi.gov.uk))
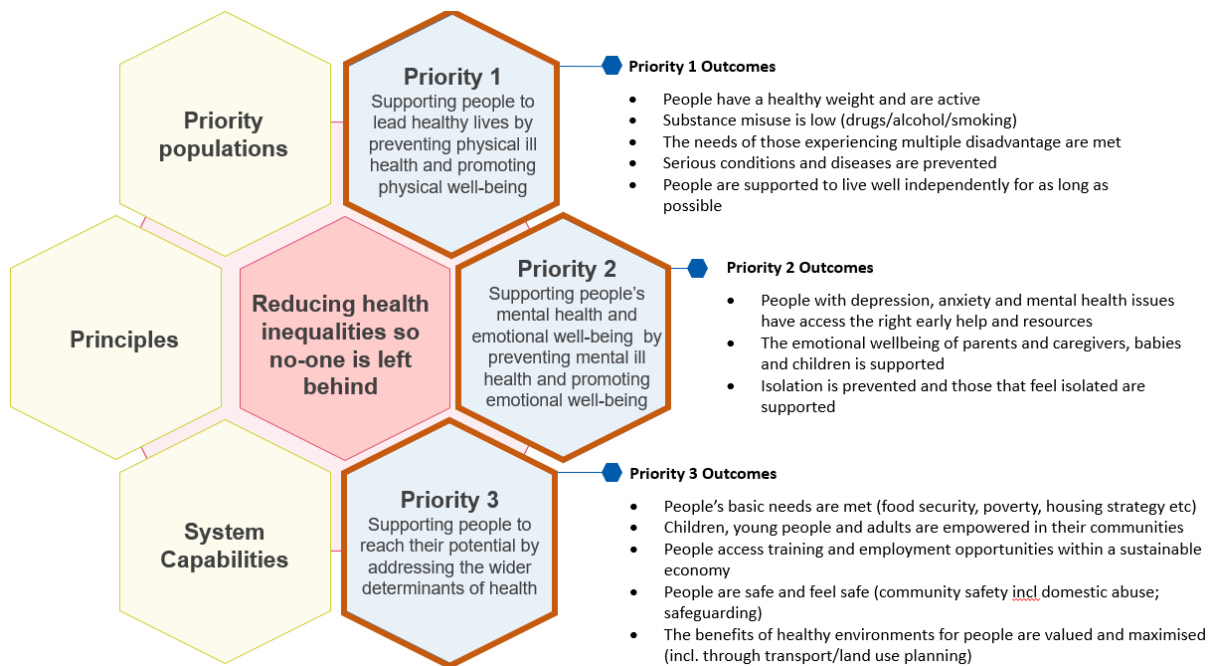
1.4.1   How improvements of the policy instrument are delivered

The priorities of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy were developed through an engagement process with partners, including consultations, workshops and data analysis to identify the needs and priorities. The development of the strategy also included an analysis of good practice to identify initiatives or programmes of work that had the potential for adoption and/or scaling up across Surrey. The Strategy also considers the future system capabilities that will be required to deliver the priorities and meet the needs of Surrey residents. One of the capabilities identified includes ensuring digital and technology opportunities for those who may be excluded. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment is constantly renewed, taking account of both quantitaive and qualitative data, to inform the Strategy. The Health and Wellbeing Board considers the Strategy to be a continually evolving plan and will meet monthly from 2022.

1.4.2   Context for this policy instrument.

The 10 year Surrey Health and Wellbeing Strategy was produced in 2019 and has very recently been refreshed to take account of the health inequalities exacerbated by COVID-19 and sets out how different partners across Surrey can work together with local communities to tackle the physical/mental health and the wider determinants of health, and improve wellbeing. The Surrey Health and Well-being Board engages and facilitates collaboration between partners from the NHS, public health, social care, local councillors and user representatives to work together to improve the health and wellbeing of the people of Surrey. The Leader of Surrey County Council is the chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy has 3 main priorities; under each prioirity there are several outcomes, targeting priority populations:

Priority 1
Supporting people to lead healthy lives by preventing physical ill health and promoting physical well-being

Priority 1 Outcomes

- People have a healthy weight and are active
- Substance misuse is low (drugs/alcohol/smoking)
- The needs of those experiencing multiple disadvantage are met
- Serious conditions and diseases are prevented
- People are supported to live well independently for as long as possible

Priority 2
Supporting people's mental health and emotional well-being by preventing mental ill health and promoting emotional well-being

Priority 2 Outcomes

- People with depression, anxiety and mental health issues have access the right early help and resources
- The emotional wellbeing of parents and caregivers, babies and children is supported
- Isolation is prevented and those that feel isolated are supported

Priority 3
Supporting people to reach their potential by addressing the wider determinants of health

Priority 3 Outcomes

- People's basic needs are met (food security, poverty, housing strategy etc)
- Children, young people and adults are empowered in their communities
- People access training and employment opportunities within a sustainable economy
- People are safe and feel safe (community safety incl domestic abuse; safeguarding)
- The benefits of healthy environments for people are valued and maximised (incl. through transport/land use planning)

Priority populations

Principles

System Capabilities

Reducing health inequalities so no-one is left behind

People across Surrey who experience the poorest health outcomes

- Carers and young carers
- Children in care and care leavers
- Children with Special Educational Needs and disabilities
- Adults with learning disabilities and/or autism
- People with long term health conditions, disabilities or sensory impairment
- Older people 80+ & those in care homes
- Black and Minority Ethnic groups
- Gypsy Roma Traveller community
- Young people out of work
- People experiencing domestic abuse
- People with serious mental illness
- People with drug and alcohol problems
- People experiencing homelessness

-People living in geographic areas which experience the poorest health outcomes in Surrey (lowest 10%)
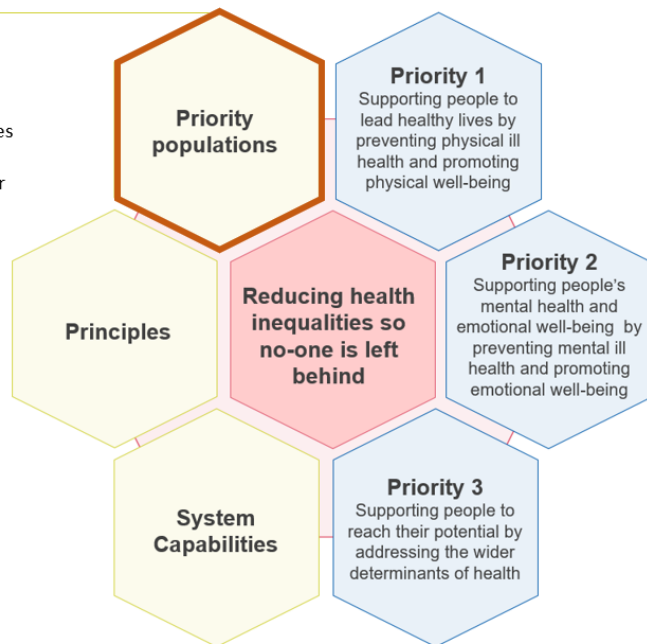
ACTION 1:

Name of the action: **Using Immersive AR/VR to enable virtual visits to the outdoors for people with mental health conditions, carers, people with learning disabilities and autism and people with dementia (pilot action application)**

Visits to the outdoors enable people to connect with somewhere new, somewhere with memories, somewhere that brings enjoyment, pleasure and new experiences. But for some residents it may not possible to enjoy the outdoors or visit greenspaces due to their health condition or caring responsibility. This pilot action will enable these residents to experience visiting again.

This action will develop a 360 degree immersive experience for 4 target groups - people with mental health conditions, carers, people with learning disabilities and autism and people with dementia. This enables us to pilot the approach across different users, learn from feedback and experience,

identify where it has most potential and use this to inform future policies and mainstream where it is successful.

Developing the pilot action will help to expand the benefits of outdoor visits and the use of AR and VR to a new audience. It will help expand the multiplier benefits of AR and VR for outdoor visits into public health.

Relevance to the project

The Pilot Action is strongly linked to our interregional exchange of experience in the Interreg Europe Digitourism Project. This pilot action is proposed following study visits and the exchange of experience in the Interreg Europe Digitourism project. Through the interregional exchange of experience we have learnt about how tourism visits can be enhanced using AR and VR

- Isere Outdoor 360 involved the creation of 360 degree immersive videos to enable people to experience outdoor sports including kayaking, caving and mountain biking. It offers immersive experiences in schools and at sporting events. Although the audience is different, we are able to transfer learning from the approach of making place and activities accessible to people who could not otherwise do this to help develop our pilot action. https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/3382/isere-outdoor-360/
- On our virtual study visit to the Kujawsko-Pomorskie region we experienced a virtual walk through the Nicolaus Copernicus House (part of the District Museum in Toruń). We could experience walking through the building seeing and learning about the historic items.
- The St James Way Creative Loci Lacobi project has also informed our ideas for the pilot action. Its main objective was to promote and increase the visibility of the St James Route. Through 360 degree filming and 3D digitalization of cultural heritage sites we can experience the virtual reality of being there.

These good practices have enabled a transfer of knowledge and experience that we are using to shape ideas and the development of this pilot actions. This includes:

- the different options and considerations for the technology and equipment used
- the importance of the content and tailoring that to the audience
- the user experience to ensure that it is popular and sustainable
- the potential for AR and VR to open up opportunities for new visitors
- insights into the barriers, challenges and opportunities

We've used the learning from seeing these projects to shape our plans for Action 1.

Nature of the action

This Pilot Action will develop a 360 degree immersive VR solution that can be developed in partnership with staff working in the 4 target groups (people with serious mental illness, carers, people with learning disabilities and autism, and people with dementia). This enables us to pilot the approach across different users, learn from feedback and experience, identify where it has most potential and use this to inform future policies and mainstream where it is successful.

The Pilot Action would test and identify:

- The technology and equipment would work best to provide the function of providing 360 degree videos
- The content would work best for the 4 different target groups

- The user experience across the 4 target groups
- The benefit it provides for the patient/resident in the 4 target groups
- The support/training required for the user and for the staff in the 4 groups
- The key learning that would inform strategies including the Surrey Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Stakeholders involved	Surrey County Council Surrey Heartlands Health and Care Partnership
Timeframe	2021-23
Indicative costs	We estimate the costs will be c£45,000
Indicative funding sources	The project has secured funding from a successful Interreg Europe Pilot Action application
Potential Policy Learning and Improvements	The activity will seek to influence policy learning and improvements by: • Delivering new projects including the AR/VR pilot action • Informing the priorities in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy to reflect the role of AR and VR in delivering solutions to priority populations • Securing additional funding for future AR and VR initiatives. • Developing the role of technology within the system capabilities of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

ACTION 2:

Name of the action: **Development of AR/VR for Countryside and Heritage Visits**

During our Digitourism Surrey Workshop in March 2019 staff, partners and stakeholders highlighted a range of opportunities to use AR/VR to open up access to heritage and museum archives to enable greater public access and understanding. There are also opportunities to use AR/VR to enhance visits to the Surrey countryside to provide health benefits

This action will seek to develop an AR/VR solution to enhance countryside visits and understanding of heritage and provide health benefits.

Relevance to the project

During Phase 1 of Digitourism we have a seen several projects which have enhanced visitors to museums, heritage sites and the outdoors.

- Culture in Range 2.0 was a project in Poland that is digitising, making available and reusing regional heritage resources. This is enabling local residents to see archive materials in digital formats including a virtual museum. The Nicolaus Copernicus House combines traditional exhibition elements with modern technologies and virtual and augmented reality, including a virtual walk through the museum.
- In Auvergne- Rhone Alpes MuseoPic App can recognise any artwork in a museum, and instantly present visitors with customised content. You can simply detect the artwork through your smartphone camera to explore a world of possibilities.
- Creative Loci Jacobi in Poland aims to promote and increase the visibility of the St James Route. The tools used in the project such as: geolocation maps, 3D digitalization of cultural heritage sites, multilingual audio guides, tourist advisor application or 360º films to develop virtual tours were also presented.
- The Visit Gran Paradiso app, provides visitors with information, maps, and 360 degree videos.

We've used the learning from seeing these projects to shape our plans for Action 2. Across study visits we have gained insights including:

- The importance of customer journey mapping - who your audience is or who you would like to attract and how to do so
- How can digital support family social interaction
- The developing technology in the sector
- The importance of training for staff and volunteers in supporting visitors to use the technology
- Issues such as battery life of mobile phones and signal strength outdoors in potentially remote places

Nature of the action

The action will look to develop opportunities to enhance visitor experience to museums, heritage sites and the outdoors in Surrey and provide health benefits for residents.

Our ambition is for the Surrey Countryside Estate is to be a place all residents can visit to connect with their countryside. By continuing to build on our understanding of the needs of people in groups we want to attract to visit our countryside, we will develop our approach to promoting our countryside and develop the opportunities as a venue for events and attractions in a financially and environmentally sustainable way. The project will aim to build on current work to promote the countryside to develop opportunities to develop AR and VR opportunities.

There's potential for an AR/VR project to:

- increase the awareness of countryside and heritage in Surrey and provide health benefits.

- Increase the number, breadth and quality of educational opportunities in our countryside

• Develop an existing App and use AR to augment the experience for the user.

• Provide information and ideas for accessing our countryside easily and make it appealing for all visitors using a variety of promotional methods, including digital.

Stakeholders involved	Surrey County Council
Timeframe	2022-23
Indicative costs	£TBC
Indicative funding sources	TBC
Potential Policy Learning and Improvements	The activity will seek to influence policy learning and improvements by: • Delivering new projects (subject to funding) that provide opportunities to use AR and VR to enhance visits and provide health benefits • Informing the priorities in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy to reflect the role of AR and VR in delivering solutions to priority populations • Securing additional funding for future AR and VR initiatives • Developing the role of technology within the system capabilities of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Project Officer: David Greenwood, Volunteering and Community Benefits Manager, Surrey County Council

Surrey Health and Wellbeing Strategy Responsible Officer: Ruth Hutchinson, Director of Public Health, Surrey County Council.

Signature

Date 14.01.2022