START YOUR REGENERATIVE TOURISM JOURNEY: A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR ORGANISATIONS

This guide is to encourage more businesses in the Brecks to consider their regenerative tourism journey. It can also be adapted to be used in other parts of the region.

Contents:

1. Start where you are
2. Decide what you want to regenerate
3. Choose one realistic next step
4. Find your route
5. Work with others
6. Think about where visitor value travels
7. Tell compelling stories
8. Learn as you go
9. Build your own regenerative action plan
10. Your regenerative journey starts here

Welcome:

This guide has been designed to support you in your journey to regenerative tourism. Regenerative tourism is not just focused on reducing negative impacts. It asks a more positive question:

How can what we do actively contribute to the health, resilience and future of the place in which we live and run our business?

For organisations, this means thinking about how tourism and visitor activity can support the distinctive natural environment, heritage, communities, local economy and cultural life of the area.

You do not need to become a completely different business, develop a major new product or have a large budget to begin. Regeneration is a journey. Every organisation starts from a different place and has different opportunities, resources and influence.

This guide is designed to help you:

- understand where you are now
- identify what matters most to your organisation and place
- decide what you would like to help regenerate
- identify realistic next steps
- connect with useful tools, ideas and collaborators
- move from individual action towards wider place-based collaboration.

Throughout the guide you will find links to Brecks-specific tools, resources and case studies which we hope you will find useful wherever you are on your regenerative tourism journey.

1. Start where you are:

There is no single starting point for a regenerative journey.

We know that some organisations have already taken significant environmental or community action. Others may be interested but unsure where to begin. Some may have limited time and resources, while others may be ready to develop new partnerships or experiences.

The important thing is not to compare yourself with others. The important thing is to understand your own starting point.

Ask yourself: Where are we now?

Consider the following questions.

Our place

- What makes our part of the Brecks distinctive?
- What natural, cultural, historical or community assets are important here?
- What do we value about this place?
- What pressures or challenges does the area face?

Our organisation

- What do we already do that creates positive value?
- Where might our activities create unintended pressures or impacts?
- What knowledge, skills, relationships or resources do we have?

- What could we realistically influence?

Our visitors

- What do our visitors come here to experience?
- What do they already value?
- What could help them understand and care more about the Brecks?
- How could they contribute more positively during their visit?

Our connections

- Who do we already work with?
- Where could we make better local referrals?
- What other organisations share our values or interests?
- Where could working together create more value than working alone?

A simple starting-point check:

Use the statements below to identify your current position.

We are beginning_____

You may be at this stage if:

We are interested in regenerative tourism but are still exploring what it means for us.

- We understand some of the sustainability challenges we face.
- We are already doing some positive things but have not connected them into a wider approach.
- We are unsure what our first priority should be.

Your next step: Build understanding of your place and identify one issue or opportunity that feels meaningful and manageable.

We are developing_____

You may be at this stage if:

- We have already identified some environmental, social or economic priorities.
- We are making changes to how we operate.

- We are beginning to work with local organisations or suppliers.
- We want to move beyond individual actions and create greater local value.

Your next step: Choose a clearer regenerative focus and develop partnerships or experiences that connect your organisation more closely with place.

We are connecting _____

You may be at this stage if:

- We actively collaborate with other organisations.
- We encourage visitors to engage with the wider area.
- We make local referrals and support local businesses or producers.
- We are beginning to think about how our organisation contributes to wider systems.

Your next step: Strengthen collaboration and look for opportunities to share knowledge, resources and visitor value.

We are regenerating_____

You may be at this stage if:

- Our organisation has a clear purpose connected to the wellbeing of place.
- We work collaboratively across sectors and communities.
- Visitors are invited to become positive participants rather than simply consumers.
- We can see evidence that our activities are contributing to positive environmental, social, cultural or economic outcomes.
- We are continually learning, adapting and sharing what works.

Your next step: Deepen your impact, support others and help build a wider regenerative network across the Brecks.

2. Decide what you want to regenerate:

Trying to change everything at once can be overwhelming.

A useful starting point is to ask:

What do we care about enough to take action?

The answer will be different for every organisation.

Five possible pathways

Pathway 1: Regenerating nature – You might want to focus on:
biodiversity and habitats
wildlife
water and soils
tree planting or landscape restoration
reducing pressure on sensitive environment s
helping visitors understand and care for nature
Possible first actions:
Learn more about the ecology of your immediate area
Identify one practical way to support nature
Include local wildlife and landscape stories in visitor information
Signpost visitors towards responsible ways to experience sensitive places.
Work with a conservation or environmental organisation
Explore opportunities for visitors to contribute time, skills or resources to local nature projects.

How could a tourism business help visitors leave the Brecks with a stronger understanding of, and connection to, its distinctive landscapes and habitats?

Pathway 2: Regenerating community You may want to focus on:
strengthening local relationships
supporting community activity
improving access to tourism benefits
sharing spaces, skills or resources
creating opportunities for local participation.
Possible first actions:
Map the organisations and groups already active in your community.
Ask where your organisation could offer practical support
Share underused space, equipment or expertise
Develop activities that bring visitors and local communities together appropriately
Create opportunities for local people to share stories, skills or knowledge

What could we offer our local community that does not depend on people becoming customers?

Pathway 3: Regenerating culture and heritage **You may want to focus on:**
local stories and traditions
heritage knowledge
cultural identity
crafts and skills
interpretation and storytelling
protecting and celebrating what makes the Brecks distinctive.
Possible first actions:
Identify stories connected to your building, business or location.
Work with local historians, artists, makers or heritage groups.
Use interpretation to help visitors understand the significance of place.
Promote lesser-known heritage sites and experiences.
Develop experiences that encourage visitors to spend more time learning rather than simply consuming.

Whose stories are currently being told about this place, and whose stories might be missing?

Pathway 4: Regenerating the local economy **You may want to focus on:**
local supply chains
keeping visitor spending circulating locally
supporting small and independent businesses
local employment and skills
creating linked experiences
Possible first actions:
Review where you currently spend money.
Identify one product or service that could be sourced more locally.
Create a local supplier or producer directory.
Make meaningful referrals to nearby businesses.
Develop linked itineraries or experiences with complementary
Encourage visitors to stay longer or explore more widely.

When a visitor spends £100 with us, how much of that value is likely to remain in the local area?

Pathway 5: Regenerating connection **You may want to focus on:**
deeper visitor relationships with place
wellbeing and connection
learning
slowing down
participation
encouraging visitors to become more thoughtful guests.
Possible first actions:
Review your visitor communications.
Replace generic information with stories that reveal the significance of place.
Encourage visitors to notice, learn and participate.
Create opportunities for meaningful encounters with people, nature or culture.
Design experiences around quality and connection rather than simply volume.

How could we help visitors move from "What can I get from this place?" to "How can I experience and contribute positively to this place?"

3. Choose one realistic next step:

Regenerative tourism does not require a perfect plan before you begin.

A good next step should be:

- **Meaningful -** It connects with something that matters to you, your organisation or your place.
- **Realistic -** It can be achieved with the time, money and skills currently available.
- **Connected** It builds relationships rather than being an isolated action.
- **Useful** It creates value for someone or something beyond the organisation itself.
- **Learnable** It gives you an opportunity to learn what works and what needs to change.

4. Find your route:

Once you have identified your next step, use the guide below.

If your focus is NATURE:

Explore	**Possible collaborators**
local ecology and biodiversity	conservation organisations
responsible visitor management	landowners and farmers
habitat and landscape restoration	wildlife groups
nature interpretation	environmental charities
	local authorities
	community volunteers.

If your focus is COMMUNITY:

Explore	**Possible collaborators**
local needs and aspirations	parish and town organisations
community assets	community groups
opportunities for shared use of resources	schools and colleges
local participation.	charities
	social enterprises
	local volunteers

If your focus is CULTURE AND HERITAGE:

Explore:	**Possible collaborators:**
local stories	museums and heritage organisations
heritage assets	historians
traditions and practices	archives
local creative activity.	artists and makers
	community groups
	storytellers and guides

If your focus is the LOCAL ECONOMY:

Explore:	**Possible collaborators:**
local suppliers	other tourism businesses
visitor spending patterns	food and drink producers
referrals	retailers
linked experiences	makers
skills and employment	guides
	local business networks.

If your focus is VISITOR CONNECTION:

Explore:	**Possible collaborators:**
storytelling	guides
interpretation	artists
participation	nature specialists
wellbeing	heritage organisations
learning	local communities
meaningful encounters	wellbeing practitioners.

5. Work with others:

Regeneration is difficult to achieve alone. Your organisation may have skills, knowledge or resources that others need. Equally, other organisations may have connections or expertise that could help you create something stronger.

Ask yourself:

- Who is already doing something we care about?
- What could we contribute?
- What could we do together that neither of us could do alone?

Remember that collaboration does not always need a formal project and small connections can create wider change when they become part of a network.

We have created a Brecks Regenerative Tourism Collaboration and Local Value Toolkit to help you think about who you might effectively work with.

6. Think about where visitor value travels:

Tourism creates value, but that value does not always remain in the place where it is generated.

Consider the visitor journey.

Before the visit

Where do visitors get their information?

During the visit

Where do they spend their money?

Beyond your organisation

Who else benefits from their visit?

After the visit

What stories do they take away?

A regenerative approach asks:

How can we help more of the value created by visitors circulate through the Brecks?

The Brecks Regenerative Tourism Collaboration and Local Value Toolkit also helps you to think about where visitor spend goes and to develop ways to increase local value.

7. Tell compelling stories:

Stories can help visitors understand that the Brecks is more than a collection of attractions or services. Good regenerative storytelling can help people understand:

- what makes a place distinctive
- why it matters
- what challenges it faces
- who cares for it
- how visitors can experience it responsibly
- how they can contribute positively.

We have developed a Regenerative Tourism Storytelling Toolkit for the Brecks to help you to develop your story telling within your visitor communications.

8. Learn as you go:

Regenerative practice is not about completing a checklist and declaring success. It's an ongoing process of:

Observe → Act → Learn → Adapt → Share

After trying something new, ask:

- What happened?
- Who benefited?
- What did not work as expected?

- What did we learn?
- What should we do differently next time?
- Who else could benefit from what we have learned?

Keep the process practical. You do not need complicated measurement systems to begin. You can start by collecting stories, observations, feedback and examples of change.

9. Build your own regenerative action plan:

Use this simple framework.

- **Our place:**

What do we value most?_____

- **Our focus**

What would we like to help regenerate?_____

- **Our opportunity**

Where could we make the greatest realistic contribution?_____

- **Our first action**

What will we do next?_____

- **Our collaborators**

Who could help us?_____

- **Our resources**

What can we contribute?_____

- **Our timescale**

When will we begin?_____

- **Our learning**

How will we know what we have learned?_____

10. Your regenerative journey starts here:

There is no single model for regenerative tourism in the Brecks. Every organisation has different opportunities. A small accommodation provider, visitor attraction, farm, food or drink producer, guide, museum, event organiser, outdoor activity provider or community organisation will each have a different role to play. What matters is beginning with your relationship to place.

1. Start by noticing.
2. Choose something that matters.
3. Take one realistic action.
4. Work with others.
5. Learn as you go.
6. Then take the next step.

Regeneration is not about doing everything. It is about understanding where you can make a meaningful contribution and becoming part of a wider journey towards a healthier, more resilient and more connected Brecks.

Quick-start checklist:

- We have discussed what regenerative tourism could mean for our organisation.
- We have identified what we value about our place.
- We have identified one environmental, social, cultural or economic opportunity.
- We have chosen one realistic next step.
- We have identified at least one potential collaborator.
- We have considered how visitor spending and value travel beyond our organisation.
- We have identified opportunities to tell stronger stories about place.
- We have agreed how we will learn from our actions.
- We have committed to reviewing our progress.
- We have identified our next step.