ABID Destination Marketing Tender Specification Brief

Liverpool Accommodation BID – Destination Marketing Programme 2026–2027

Purpose of the Brief

The Liverpool Accommodation Business Improvement District (ABID) is seeking to appoint a specialist destination marketing agency to support the delivery of its Destination Marketing Plan. The commission is focused on activating the plan to drive overnight occupancy, improve demand patterns and strengthen commercial performance across Liverpool's accommodation sector.

Delivery will be overseen by the ABID's newly established Destination Marketing Subgroup and shaped through a coordinated and partnership-led approach to delivery. This will be supported through collaboration with key city and regional partners including the Liverpool City Region Destination Partnership (LCRDP), Liverpool Visitor Economy Network (LVEN) and Liverpool City Region Culture Network.

The destination marketing plan is structured around three connected areas of activity:-

· Dedicated seasonal and thematic campaigns to generate direct staying visitor demand from priority domestic markets, particularly within the 90-minute and three-hour catchments.

· Capitalising on ABID-supported cultural, sporting and event activity to generate campaign hooks and market-ready content that can feed planned campaigns and ongoing content marketing.

· Establishing strategic marketing collaborations to extend marketing reach and access specialist growth markets through partnerships with intermediaries, industry partners, OTAs and specialist channels.

This commission relates primarily to the delivery of the first of these areas and will be delivered through the Liverpool BID Company (LBIDCo).

The contract will provide the strategic planning, creative development, content coordination and campaign delivery resource required to implement a high-profile and commercially driven programme of destination marketing activity for Liverpool. The appointed agency is also expected to work closely with core partners and other stakeholders to ensure campaigns align with wider city and city region activity. The intention being to build and inclusive and destination led approach to marketing that will maximise amplification opportunities and strengthen Liverpool's position as a leading UK short-break destination.

Strategic Context & Destination-Led Approach

Liverpool's accommodation market is in a strong growth phase, with the city surpassing 2 million hotel room nights sold in 2024 for the first time. However, with accommodation supply now exceeding 10,000 rooms, the challenge is no longer simply generating demand but improving how occupancy is distributed across the week and throughout the year.

Although annual occupancy averages around 75%, performance remains uneven. Saturdays are consistently strong and often close to sell-out, while mid-week and Sunday night demand remain structurally weaker. Seasonal volatility also continues outside key events and holiday periods, particularly during Q1 and shoulder seasons, placing pressure on pricing, yield and RevPAR. Addressing these gaps is a key commercial driver behind the approach being adopted through this commission.

The ABID also recognises that overnight demand is shaped by the combined strength of Liverpool's wider visitor proposition. Decisions to stay are influenced not only by the quality and range of accommodation, but by the city's broader leisure, maritime and food and drink offer, underpinned by its distinctive culture, heritage and visitor experience. As a result, Liverpool's accommodation base should be positioned as a core part of the destination proposition and a key driver of conversion. Supporting this, segmentation across the accommodation sector has highlighted the diversity of Liverpool's hotel and

wider accommodation offer, along with the distinct role different locations, product types and price points play in serving different visitor markets.

Priority Markets & Audience Approach

Domestic Leisure Short Breaks - Domestic short-break leisure markets remain Liverpool's largest and most responsive staying visitor audience and will form a core focus of campaign activity. Campaign activity should prioritise those audiences most likely to convert into overnight stays outside traditional peak trading periods, particularly those accessible through strong road and rail connectivity and motivated by Liverpool's recognised and emerging product strengths. This should include both direct consumer activity and targeted B2B engagement with domestic travel trade, intermediaries and short-break operators where there is potential to grow higher-value overnight leisure markets and extender stays.

Event & Experience Led Travel Markets - Liverpool's programme of major events, concerts, sporting fixtures, exhibitions and cultural activity represents one of the city's strongest drivers of overnight demand and should form a central part of campaign activity. Major visitor moments, including the Grand National, major stadium events and the city's wider cultural and exhibitions programme, provide significant opportunities to maximise occupancy during peak trading periods. They also create opportunities to develop tactical extender stay campaigns that encourage visitors to arrive earlier, stay longer and engage more widely with Liverpool's broader visitor offer.

Overseas Leisure Markets - Ireland, Europe and North America remain core priorities for driving longer stays and higher value visitor growth. These markets will primarily be targeted through international activity led by the LCRDP and VisitBritain. Where

appropriate, content generated through ABID domestic campaigns and partnerships should be adapted for use across international channels and promotional activity, helping to extend campaign reach and maximise the value of ABID funded marketing investment.

Specialist Markets - Essential for driving higher-value stays, supporting shoulder season demand and improving mid-week occupancy. As the main city within England's Golf Coast, Liverpool provides the accommodation offer, international connectivity and wider visitor infrastructure that underpins the region's golf proposition. The Open at Royal Birkdale in July 2026 provides a significant platform to strengthen relationships with intermediaries to grow domestic and international golf travel over the longer term. Film and screen activity also presents opportunities to support accommodation demand through cast and crew stays, while content led promotion can help drive year-round screen tourism and additional leisure bookings.

Scope of Services

Responses may come from a full-service agency or a collaborative agency partnership. Experience in destination marketing, visitor economy campaigns, content strategy, digital media, stakeholder coordination and partnership-led delivery is essential.

The main areas for delivery and support are as follows.

· Strategy and Campaign Planning - Development and delivery of approximately 3–4 targeted seasonal and thematic campaigns through to May 2027, potentially focussed on spring, summer shoulder periods and winter/Christmas demand.

Campaign activity should be designed to address specific accommodation sector demand objectives and complement wider regional domestic activity being delivered through the LCRDP. Planned activity must be market-facing to ensure the creative development and campaign positioning fully resonates with Liverpool's priority domestic visitor segments. It should also demonstrate an effective mix of paid channels, strong use of partner platforms and amplification through VisitLiverpool and wider destination channels to maximise reach, engagement and conversion into overnight stays.

· Creative Development - Develop the creative platform, campaign identity/brand and message hierarchy, reflecting Liverpool's position as a high-value short-break destination and ensuring the ABID accommodation offer is effectively integrated within the wider campaign narrative. Where appropriate, creative activity should also support B2B audiences, including the leisure and specialist travel trade - ensuring content and messaging can be adapted for intermediary engagement, itineraries and wider destination promotion.

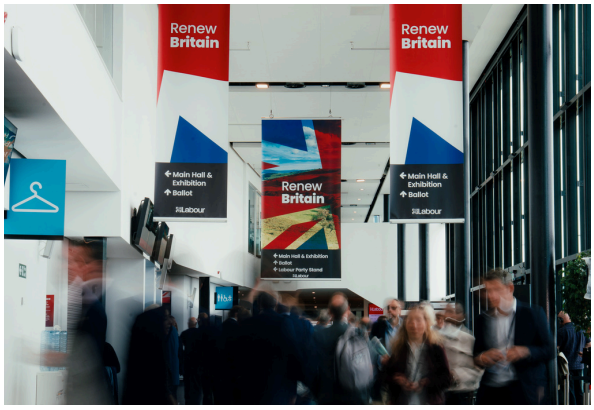
· Content Strategy and Content Marketing - Establish a content strategy and schedules including commissioned content for planned campaigns and content marketing programmes. The strategy should draw on Liverpool's core demand drivers and brands (culture, music, sport, food and drink, major events, waterfront, heritage etc), as well as collecting and shaping content from ABID members, LVEN partners, cultural organisations and the sporting/cultural events being financially supported by the ABID. Content must be suitable for use across all selected channels as well as LCRDP international channels, VisitBritain activity, travel trade packs and itinerary development.

· Media Planning and Campaign Delivery – Media/PR planning and commissioning aligned to campaign objectives, priority markets and seasonal opportunities. Campaigns should use an appropriate mix of digital, social, search, display, content partnerships, OOH and destination channels. Visit Liverpool and wider destination digital channels should be used as primary calls to action where appropriate. The agency should also identify where OTA platforms, partner channels and specialist media can support conversion.

· Partnership Coordination - Providing operational resource for LBIDCo/ABID to facilitate working with ABID members, city partners and wider destination stakeholders. The agency will be expected to work closely with LCRDP to ensure domestic initiatives complement wider city region activity, avoid duplication and target priority markets. It will also be expected to work with LVEN partners, the LCR Culture Network and district partners such as Sefton where joint destination promotions can strengthen the overall visitor proposition.

· B2B and Intermediary Support - Although the commission is primarily focused on

domestic campaign delivery, the agency will also need to support B2B activity where this aligns with ABID priorities. This may include developing itinerary ready content, trade facing destination materials, campaign assets for specialist partners and support for international market development led by LCRDP and VisitBritain.



Governance and Partnership Working

Delivery of the commission will be managed through LBIDCo. The successful agency will be responsible for supporting the implementation of the Destination Marketing Plan priorities and reporting into the ABID Destination Marketing Subgroup. The Destination Marketing Subgroup will provide strategic oversight and direction in relation to campaign planning, content development, partnership activity and overall programme delivery. The agency will also be expected to engage with wider destination partnership structures where appropriate, including LVEN and LCRDP planning and delivery meetings to ensure alignment with broader city and city region activity.

The successful agency will need to demonstrate strong project management, clear communication and the ability to operate across a complex partnership environment.

Indicative Budget

An indicative budget of £120,000 has been identified for agency fees and programme coordination through to May 2027. This is expected to cover strategic planning, campaign development, creative development and design services, content coordination, stakeholder liaison, project management, reporting and overall programme delivery.

In addition, an indicative campaign delivery budget of £280,000 has been identified to support media buying, campaign activation, digital marketing and wider promotional activity. Within this budget, an allocation should also be made for content production and adaptation, which will remain available to LBIDCo for wider destination marketing and partnership activity. Final allocations will be confirmed following agency appointment and agreement of the detailed campaign and delivery programme.

Indicative Timetable

Phase	Activity	Timing
Phase 1	Issue brief, procurement and appointment	May–June 2026
Phase 2	Appoint agency and confirm programme governance	June 2026
Phase 3	Develop campaign framework, creative platform and content strategy	June–July 2026
Phase 4	Launch first seasonal or thematic campaign	Summer 2026
Phase 5	Deliver shoulder season and specialist market activity	September–November 2026
Phase 6	Deliver winter and post-Christmas tactical campaigns	November 2026–February 2027
Phase 7	Final campaign delivery and optimisation	February–March 2027
Phase 8	Evaluation, ROI and next-term recommendations	April–May 2027

Tender Process and Evaluation Criteria

Stage 1: Expression of Interest (EOI)

To streamline the commissioning process and ensure only suitably experienced agencies are invited to submit full proposals, this commission will follow a two-stage approach. Agencies will be expected to demonstrate experience in destination marketing, campaign planning, content strategy, paid media, stakeholder coordination and commercially focused visitor economy activity. Experience of working with accommodation providers, cultural organisations, destination partnerships, event owners and multi-agency visitor economy programmes will be particularly relevant.

Interested agencies are invited to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI), which should demonstrate their suitability for this brief and provide evidence of relevant experience. This will be used to assess capability and shortlist agencies for the full tender stage. EOIs must include:

- Evidence of at least three years' experience of developing, planning and delivering integrated destination marketing campaigns for tourism, events or place-based programmes.

- Details of three relevant case studies, showcasing your work on comparable campaigns (e.g. major events, destination led campaigns involving multiple partners etc).

- A brief outline of your proposed team and areas of expertise.

EOI submissions should be no longer than 2 x A4 pages and submitted by Friday 19th June at 5pm to **tender@liverpoolbidcompany.com**

Stage 2: Invitation to Tender

Agencies shortlisted through the EOI process will be invited to submit a full proposal and provided with the full ABID Destination Marketing Plan. Shortlisted agencies will also be expected to present their proposal to the ABID Destination Marketing Sub-Group. Further information will be requested across the following areas:-

- A fixed fee for delivering the work.
- A statement of work, including:
    - A breakdown of costs and key areas of expenditure.
    - The estimated number of days committed to the project.
    - Overview of the project team, roles and relevant experience.
    - Your approach to project management and client liaison.
    - Demonstrated understanding of the brief, your methodology and proposed delivery model.

Evaluation & Assessment Criteria

Tenders will be evaluated against the following price/quality weighting:

Criteria	Weighting
Price	40%
Quality	60%

Quality submissions will be scored based on the following criteria:

Quality Category	% of Quality Score
1. Track record in delivering comparable campaigns for tourism, events or multi-agency partnerships	30%
2. Quality of the proposed approach and methodology to deliver the outcomes of this brief	40%
3. Project management, risk mitigation and stakeholder engagement plan	30%