

GROWING TOURISM IN THE GARDEN OF ENGLAND

VISIT KENT BUSINESS PLAN 2010 – 2015 (SUMMARY)

GROWING TOURISM IN THE GARDEN OF ENGLAND

VISIT KENT BUSINESS PLAN 2010 – 2015

Kent's visitor economy is worth more than £2.5 billion and supports 50,000 jobs. However the tourism landscape is changing, driven by the recession and developing trends in domestic and international consumer demands.

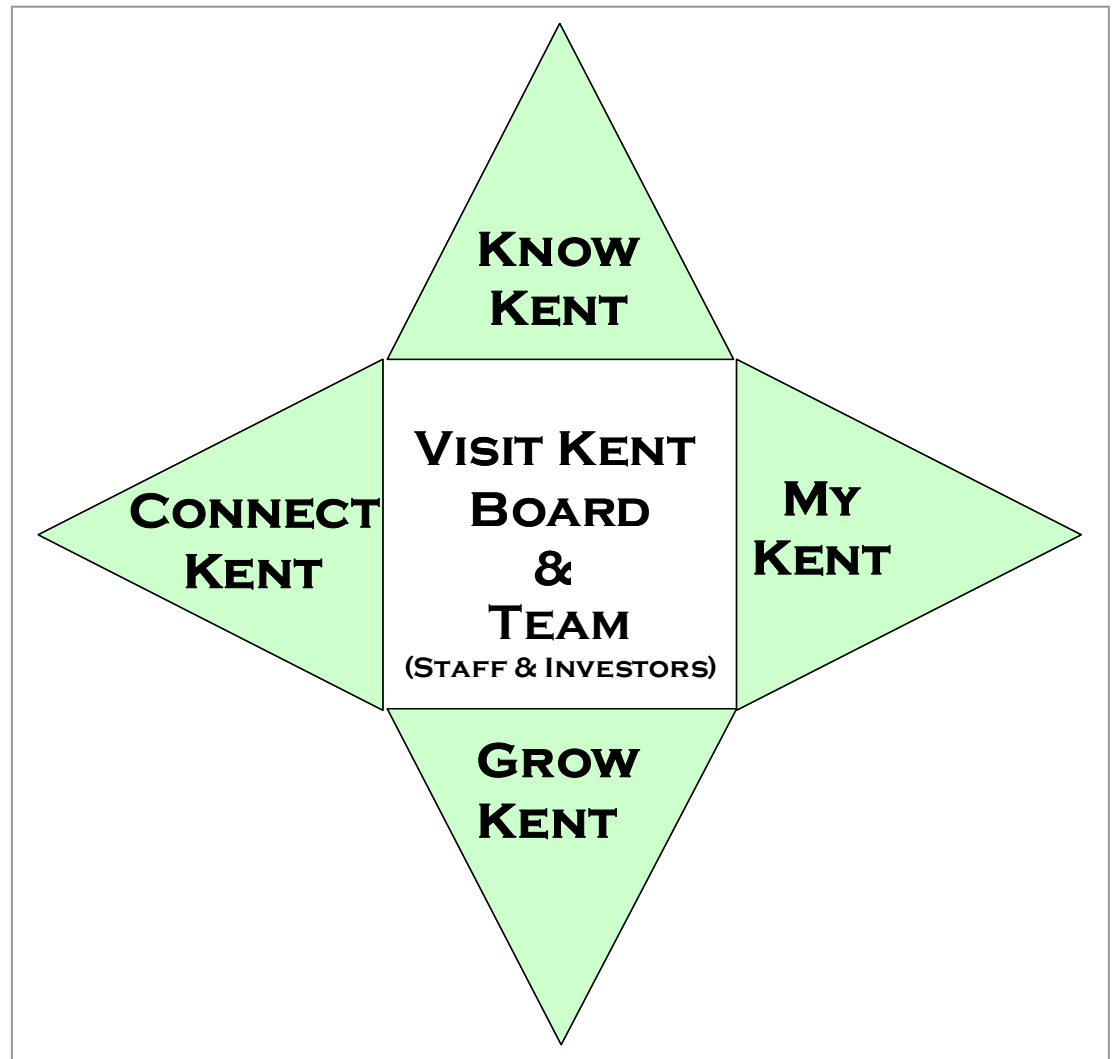
We are confident we can meet these challenges by working together and we have constructed a dynamic strategy to make our county stand out in the market place, to harness public/private investment and enhance our visitor offer.

ATTRACT, STAY, SPEND, RECOMMEND!

We will sustain and develop tourism in Kent by increasing overnight stays and visitor spend, and by supporting the industry. This document outlines some of the highlights from our Business Plan 2010–2015: full details of initiatives, continuing Interreg programme delivery, and our robust commitment to monitoring and measuring the success of our Plan may be found by visiting www.visitkentbusiness.co.uk.

Our strategies are – and will continue to be – underpinned by rigorous research so that we anticipate and meet trends and needs. We aim both to retain our traditional visitors to Kent and attract new segments: for example, by building on the Garden of England brand with Kent Contemporary and My Kent, and using new technologies and social media to extend our reach.

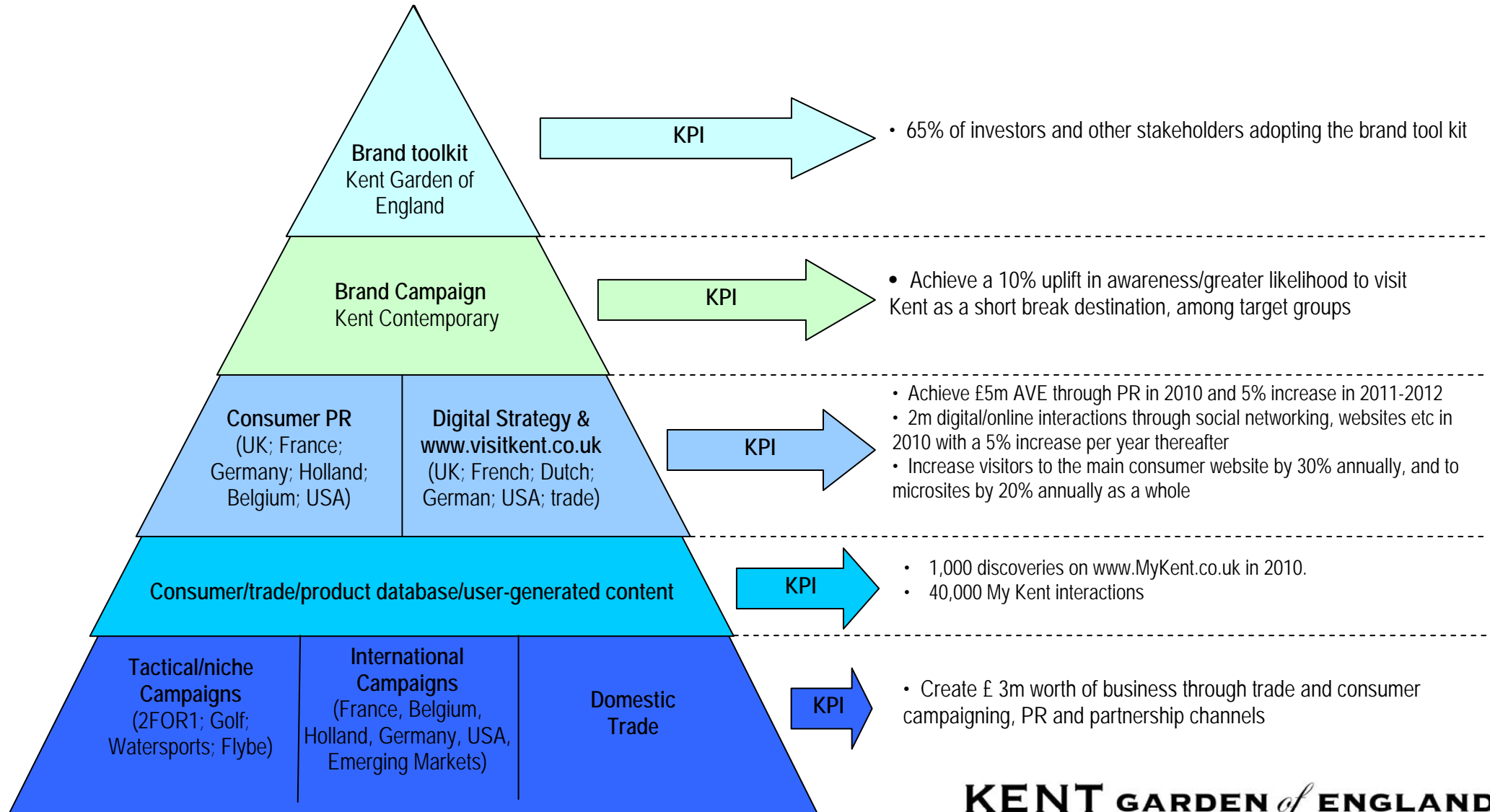
Our business plan addresses four main programme areas – changing perceptions and getting people to visit (Know Kent), improving skills (My Kent), developing partnerships (Connect Kent), and product and industry development (Grow Kent). Research and our Interreg programmes are cross cutting and are included in all four programme areas.



KNOW KENT

MARKETING THE GARDEN OF ENGLAND FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Kent is changing and has a fresh, contemporary story to tell. So we are extending the valuable 'Garden of England' brand and repositioning Kent as a destination through an exciting new £750,000 campaign called 'Kent Contemporary'. Strong image-led branding, powerful marketing and PR will bring to life the county, alter perceptions and inspire visitors to come and to stay.



KNOW KENT

MARKETING THE GARDEN OF ENGLAND FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Kent is changing and has a fresh, contemporary story to tell. So we are extending the valuable 'Garden of England' brand and repositioning Kent as a destination through an exciting new £750,000 campaign called 'Kent Contemporary'. Strong image-led branding, powerful marketing and PR will bring to life the county, alter perceptions and inspire visitors to come and to stay.

Our key campaigns and delivery targets 2010–13 include:

- A new image-led campaign to the London audience
- A new visual image and campaign for Coastal Kent and Rural Kent
- A 10% uplift in awareness/likelihood to visit Kent as a short break destination, among target groups such as young families and couples
- A new brand toolkit, encouraging partners to use Kent Contemporary in their marketing activity

How will this be achieved? VK will:

- Build strong alliances with carrier investors (cross channel, cruise, rail and air), encouraging them to incorporate the Kent brand into their marketing
- Work with low cost airlines to promote Kent in new areas
- Work with partners to build attractive packages to entice visitors to the county, targeting the off peak leisure and staycation markets
- Target new and enhance existing customer segments, such as younger couples, young families and overseas visitors
- Deliver the Greet the World Interreg programme in conjunction with French partners including a joint destination programme
- Produce a state of the art consumer website using new booking channels, content syndication and user interaction
- Enhance online marketing with segmented messaging and new technologies
- Develop a dedicated website aimed at overseas visitors to the 2012 London Olympics and Paralympics
- Communicate with consumers and the trade through domestic and European exhibitions and events
- Maintain our position as the leading destination marketing organisation among trade professionals, adding contacts and itineraries to our portfolio
- Maintain and develop events data and niche products such as golf, cruise and water sports

Full Marketing Opportunities and Digital Strategy can be downloaded from www.visitkentbusiness.co.uk

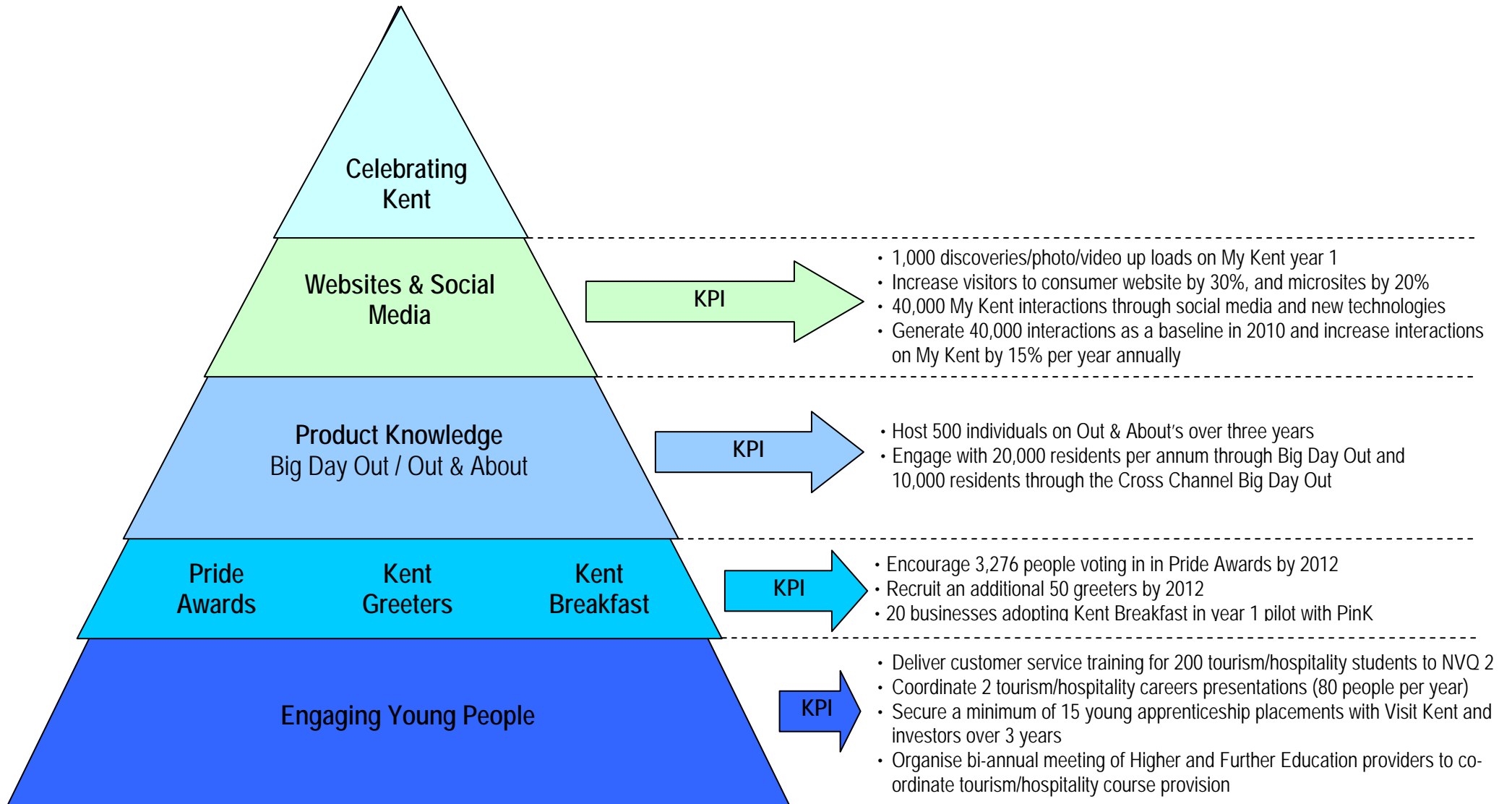


Destination Marketing
Organisation of the Year

MY KENT

PEOPLE POWER: UNLOCKING TALENT AND IMPROVING SKILLS

Every single person who lives or works in our county is a potential advocate of Kent and we aim to unlock this potential through the 'Celebrating Kent' campaign.



MY KENT

PEOPLE POWER: UNLOCKING TALENT AND IMPROVING SKILLS

CELEBRATING KENT

Every single person who lives or works in our county is a potential advocate of Kent and we aim to unlock this potential through the 'Celebrating Kent' campaign.

We will develop customer care skills and product knowledge within the tourism and hospitality workforce, and demonstrate the benefit of increasing pride in the county.

Our strategies 2010–13 to stimulate involvement and tap into local enthusiasm and creativity include:

- Promoting MyKent.co.uk – the lively Real Faces, New Places personal recommendation portal for Kent.
- Extend the Kent Big Day Out to a cross channel Big Day Out in 2012, engaging with 30,000 Kent residents
- Reward individuals who provide outstanding service to their customers through local Pride Awards
- Strengthen links between residents and visitors by expanding the Kent Greeters programme
- Provide 'out and about' familiarisation day trips to expand tourism knowledge for front line staff
- Develop the Kent Breakfast in conjunction with Produced in Kent

ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE

For the future vitality of tourism we need to engage with young people at an early stage in their education/career. We are bringing together schools, further education providers, businesses and young people to create opportunities for training, apprenticeship schemes and employer placements: promoting Kent as a centre of excellence for tourism and hospitality training.

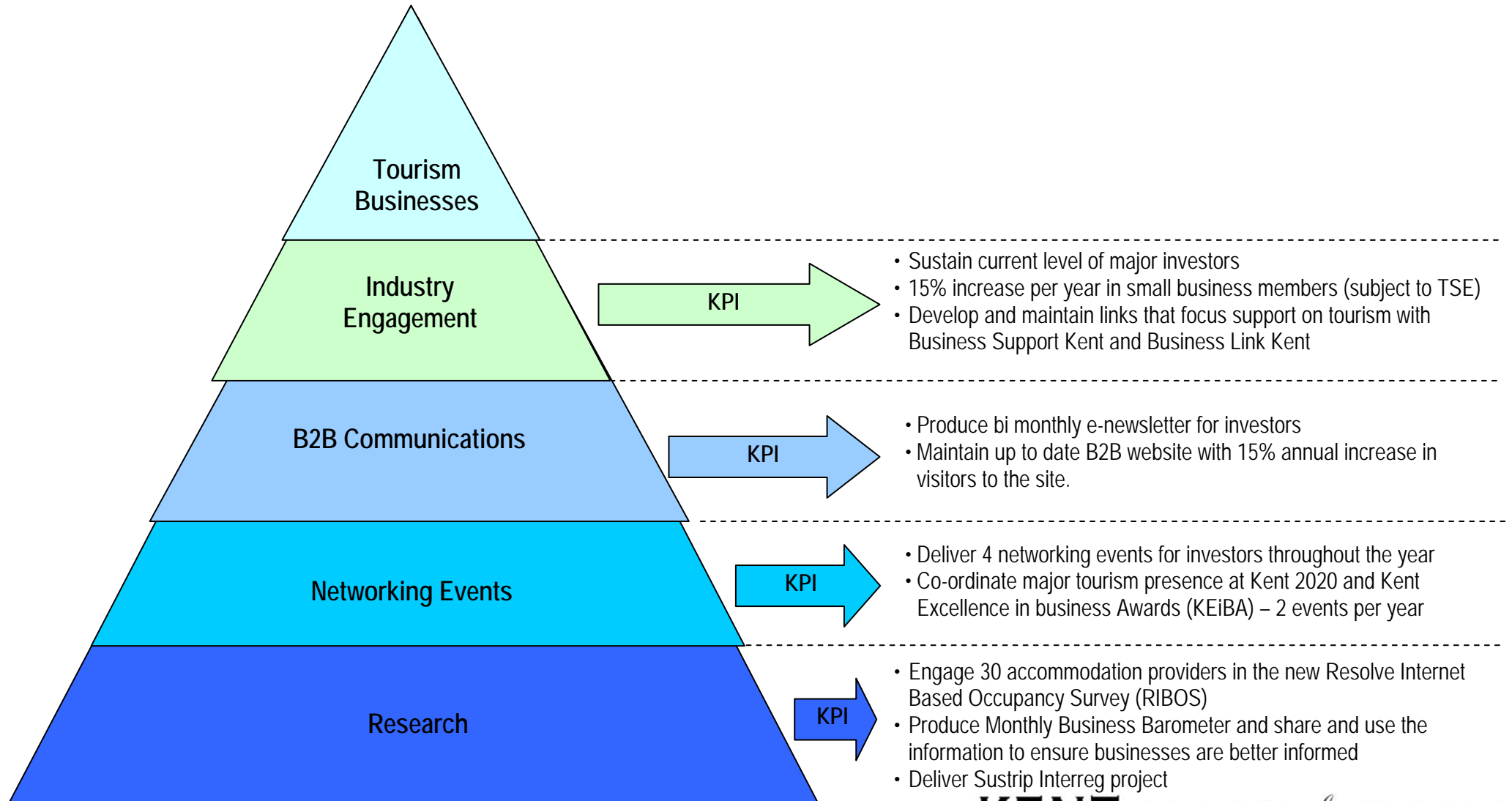
Among headline initiatives, we will:

- Deliver customer service training for tourism and hospitality students
- Secure young apprenticeship placements with Visit Kent and investors
- Organise meetings of Higher and Further Education providers to co-ordinate tourism and hospitality course provision
- Work with partners to develop a feasibility study and seek potential funding for a training hotel for tourism and hospitality education
- Engage young people in our marketing and development programmes through youth tourism committees.
- Create youth panels to consult on our work

CONNECT KENT

WORKING TOGETHER: DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS, IMPROVING QUALITY AND CREATING A COMMUNITY OF MUTUALLY SUPPORTIVE TOURISM BUSINESSES

By working and investing together, we can put, and keep, Kent on the tourism map! Throughout 2010–15 we will communicate development opportunities and industry intelligence through a range of networking events, one-to-one meetings, bi-monthly e-newsletters and its B2B website.



CONNECT KENT

WORKING TOGETHER: DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS, IMPROVING QUALITY AND CREATING A COMMUNITY OF MUTUALLY SUPPORTIVE TOURISM BUSINESSES

BUSINESS TO BUSINESS (B2B)

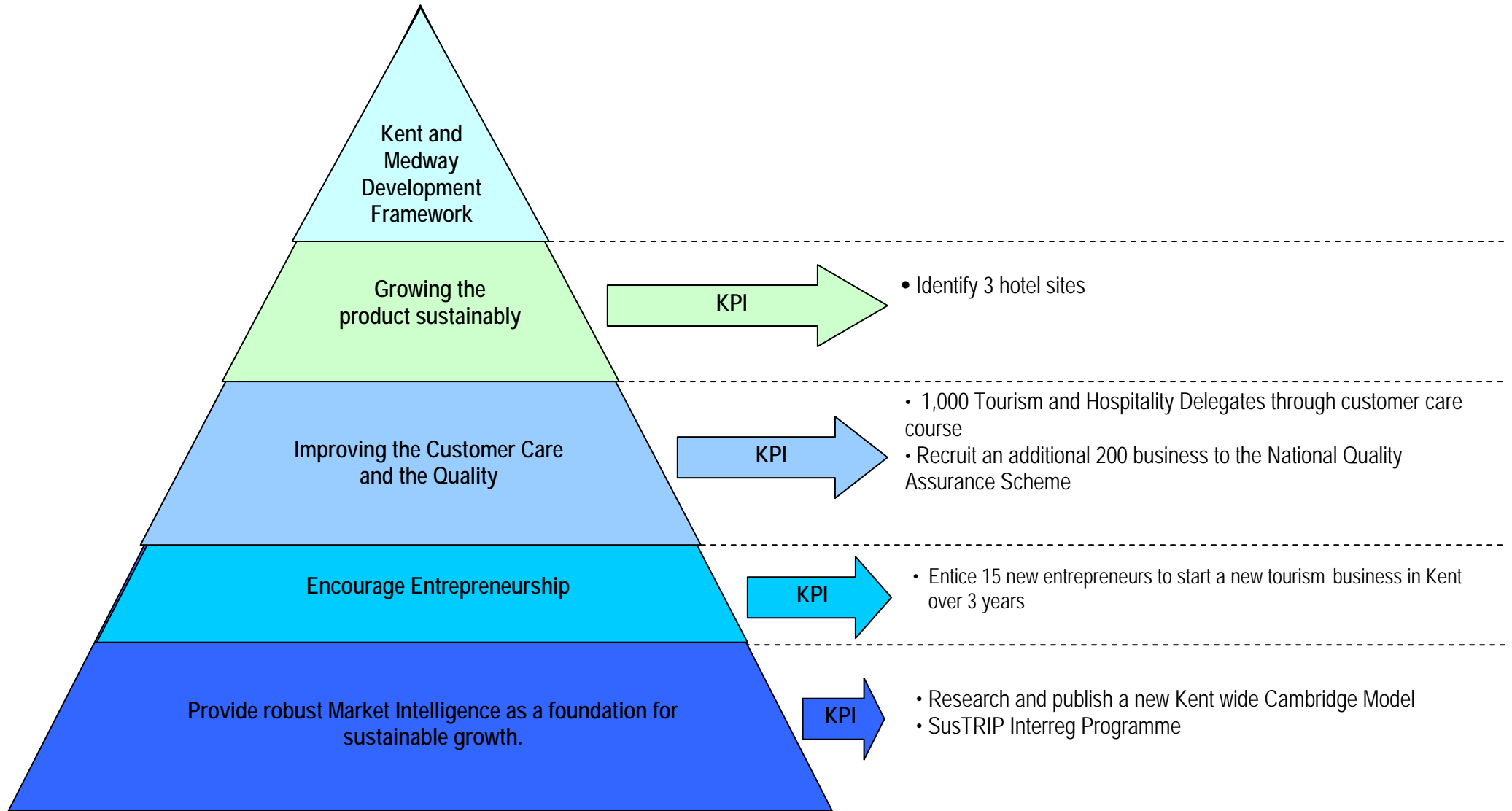
By working and investing together, we can put, and keep, Kent on the tourism map! Throughout 2010–15 we will communicate development opportunities and industry intelligence through a range of networking events, one-to-one meetings, bi-monthly e-newsletters and its B2B website.

We will:

- Sustain the current level of major investors and provide an interface between them and the public sector
- Work with Tourism South East to implement a new joint membership and investors scheme with improved member benefits
- Engage with small businesses through partnerships such as Visit Kent/TSE to improve their impact
- Continue to publish a monthly Business Barometer for Kent
- Engage accommodation providers in the new Resolve Internet Based Occupancy Survey (RIBOS): to share and use the information to ensure businesses are better informed
- Deliver networking events for investors throughout the year to enable new business connections
- Co-ordinate a major tourism presence at Kent 2020 and Kent Excellence in Business Awards (KEiBA)
- Develop and maintain links that focus support on tourism with Business Support Kent and Business Link Kent
- Maximise relationships with sister promotional agencies such as Pink and LIK

GROW KENT

IMPROVING AND DEVELOPING THE PRODUCT



GROW KENT

IMPROVING AND DEVELOPING THE PRODUCT

GROWING KENT

Sustainable, accessible development and investment in the county is essential to continue its growth as a destination and we will make the most of potential to maximise: our strategic location as an entry point to Britain, the 2012 Olympics legacy, and Interreg programmes. There are opportunities in tourism for all skill levels and also for creative entrepreneurs.

In 2010–13 we will:

- Promote training, including subsidised courses and up skill of adult learners.
- Continue the Coastal Kent Partnership Project, the Kent 2012 Tourism Strategy and the Cruise Connection partnership. Develop a Rural partnership
- Produce a hospitality guide for welcoming Olympic visitors
- Review strategic points and ports of entry to improve visitor welcome messages and information.
- Raise funding for a review of tourism signage in partnership with Kent Highways
- Support and develop products for key anniversaries and events, such as Dickens and Open Golf.
- Produce a Kent investors information pack
- Build on the results of the Hotel sector study, work with partners to identify three key hotel sites in the county, carry out market analysis and promote these sites to potential investors
- Inspire and educate local planners by providing information on tourism industry needs
- Influence and champion policy relating to tourism regeneration
- Research and publish results of a Kent-wide Cambridge Model
- Take part in and/or lead a number of research projects, including a study of visiting friends and relatives, an events impact model (plus online toolkit) and a self catering study
- Deliver the SusTRIP Interreg programme with overseas partners

QUALITY PROGRAMME

We already have one of the best programmes in the country to encourage and advise accommodation/attraction providers on the national quality grading schemes. However over the next three years we will facilitate new working relationships between the industry and other government support agencies to stimulate a more joined up advisory service.

We will also adopt new standards of support and start up assistance for Kent-based tourism and hospitality businesses.

Our key commitments are to:

- Recruit additional businesses to the national Quality Assurance scheme
- Create a new visitor accommodation and attractions database
- Promote accessibility by completing an audit of facilities and promoting the accessibility scheme
- Promote and expand take up of the Green Tourism Business Scheme
- Advise on setting up new small businesses
- Pilot removal of 'false' (misleading) signs with Trading Standards

VISIT KENT TEAM

