

# DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR AIRBNB AND COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM IN WESTERN WESTMORELAND

**GARFIELD JAMES**



This plan represents a transformational opportunity for the people of Western Westmoreland to benefit directly from the tourism sector. By promoting Airbnb and community-based tourism through structured training, infrastructure support, and marketing campaigns, we can ensure that tourism dollars circulate within the communities, empower local entrepreneurs, and sustain the cultural and natural heritage of the region. Through this integrated approach, we redefine tourism not just as a product, but as a tool for inclusive community development.



# Executive Summary

This development plan outlines a comprehensive strategy to leverage Airbnb and community-based tourism as key economic drivers across Negril's West End and non-beach communities, as well as the rural divisions of Grange Hill, Little London, Sheffield, and Friendship in Western Westmoreland. The aim is to promote inclusive, sustainable growth by empowering local communities. Key initiatives include targeted training, infrastructure development, destination marketing, and partnerships aligned with the Countrystyle Tourism's "Villages as Businesses" (VAB) framework.



# Goals & Objectives

1. Diversify tourism in Negril beyond the beach, promoting West End and non-beach communities with Jamaican-owned properties and villas.



1. Promote tourism in rural communities such as Grange Hill, Little London, Sheffield, Friendship, and seaside communities like Little Bay and Brighton.
2. Develop market-ready tourism products through the Villages as Businesses (VAB) program.
3. Strengthen local entrepreneurship in hospitality and tourism-related services.
4. Launch a destination marketing campaign for Negril and its surrounding communities.
5. Boost tourism dollar retention within local communities.

# Needs Statement

While Negril is a globally recognized tourist destination, the economic benefits of tourism remain concentrated along the beach. The upland and rural areas within the constituency are rich in culture, natural beauty, and community hospitality but remain underdeveloped in tourism infrastructure and promotion. Similarly, the West End and non-beach zones of Negril, though near iconic landmarks such as Rick's Café and the lighthouse, have been relatively underserved. There is significant untapped potential for Airbnb and community-based tourism to economically empower these regions.

# Target Areas



## Negril West End

Jamaican-owned villas and homes within walking distance of Rick's Café.



## Little Bay, Brighton, and Big Bay

Seaside communities that are hidden gems, popular among European tourists.



## Rural Divisions

Grange Hill, Little London, Sheffield, and Friendship – farming communities with cultural tourism potential.

# Key Strategic Pillars

Our development plan is built on five strategic pillars that will drive the transformation of Western Westmoreland's tourism landscape.



# Community Training and Villages As Businesses Implementation



## Partnership with Countrystyle Tourism

Partner with Countrystyle Tourism to roll out the "Villages as Businesses" programme.



## Resident Training

Support the training of residents in hospitality, tourism operations, business management, and digital marketing (HEART NSTA Trust).



## Tour Cooperatives

Support communities in establishing tour cooperatives to promote local excursions.



# Infrastructure and Support



## Infrastructure Advocacy

Advocate for the upgrade of access roads, signage, and Wi-Fi connectivity in tourism-targeted communities.

## Financial Support

Advocate for the provision of start-up grants and microloans for home upgrades and tourism product development (TEF, TPDCo).



# Airbnb Host Development & Compliance

## Airbnb Workshops

Support the hosting of workshops on Airbnb setup, quality assurance, and guest engagement.

## Regulatory Compliance

Support coordination with JTB and local authorities to ensure STR compliance.



# Community-Based Tours & Experiences



## Immersive Community Tours

Support the promotion of immersive tours within communities.



## Interactive Cultural Experiences

Support the packaging and selling of interactive cultural experiences: farming, music, food, storytelling, ganja education.

# Destination Marketing Campaign



## Define Unique Selling Points

Work with the Negril Chamber and other NGOs, CBOs and MDAs to define unique selling points: cliffs, beaches, lighthouse, reggae, food, people, ganja, etc.



## Digital Marketing Strategy

Use social media, online platforms, and influencer marketing.



## Destination Branding

Develop destination branding that includes both the beach and off-the-beaten path locations.



## Local Partnerships

Partner with local artists, musicians, chefs, and farmers.



# Implementation Timeline

| Phase   | Activities  | Duration    |
|---------|---|-------------|
| Phase 1 | Stakeholder engagement, research, and branding                        | Month 1-2   |
| Phase 2 | VAB training, Airbnb host onboarding, infrastructure audit            | Month 3-6   |
| Phase 3 | Launch tours and experiences, content creation, and digital marketing | Month 7-9   |
| Phase 4 | Full destination marketing rollout and performance tracking           | Month 10-12 |

# SWOT Analysis: Strengths

## **Cultural Richness & Hospitality**

Western Westmoreland communities offer authentic Jamaican cultural experiences and renowned hospitality that create memorable visitor experiences.

## **Proximity to Orange Hill, Negril Beach, Peter Tosh Mausoleum & Rick's Café**

The target areas benefit from their strategic location near established tourism hotspots, making them accessible extensions to existing visitor itineraries.

## **Seaside Gems like Little Bay & Brighton**

These lesser-known coastal communities offer pristine beaches and authentic experiences already attracting European visitors seeking off-the-beaten-path destinations.

## **Strong Local Ownership**

The emphasis on Jamaican-owned properties ensures that tourism development benefits local residents directly and preserves authentic community character.

# SWOT Analysis: Weaknesses

## Limited Infrastructure in Rural Areas

Many target communities lack adequate roads, signage, and utilities necessary for tourism development.

## Lack of Tourism Training and Business Experience

Local residents may need significant capacity building to deliver tourism services at international standards.

## Inconsistent Digital Connectivity

Reliable internet access, essential for Airbnb operations and online marketing, remains a challenge in some areas.

## Limited Initial Access to Funding

Local entrepreneurs may struggle to secure capital for property improvements and business startup costs.



# SWOT Analysis: Opportunities



## **Rise in Experiential and Eco-Tourism**

Growing global demand for authentic, sustainable travel experiences aligns perfectly with what Western Westmoreland can offer.

## **European Interest in Rustic & Local Travel**

European tourists already showing interest in areas like Little Bay can be further targeted with expanded offerings.

## **VAB Model Creating Sustainable Jobs**

The Villages as Businesses framework provides a proven model for community-based tourism development.

## **Airbnb Growth in Non-Traditional Areas**

Airbnb's platform increasingly promotes unique, local accommodations beyond traditional tourist zones.

# SWOT Analysis: Threats

## Over-reliance on External Platforms like Airbnb

Dependence on third-party platforms could leave communities vulnerable to policy or algorithm changes.

## Market Saturation without Product Differentiation

Without clear unique selling points, new tourism offerings may struggle to stand out in a competitive market.

## Risk of Cultural Commodification without Safeguards

Without proper planning, tourism development could potentially dilute authentic cultural practices.

## STR Regulation Changes

Evolving short-term rental regulations could impact Airbnb operations and compliance requirements.



# Partnerships and Stakeholders

## Negril Chamber of Commerce

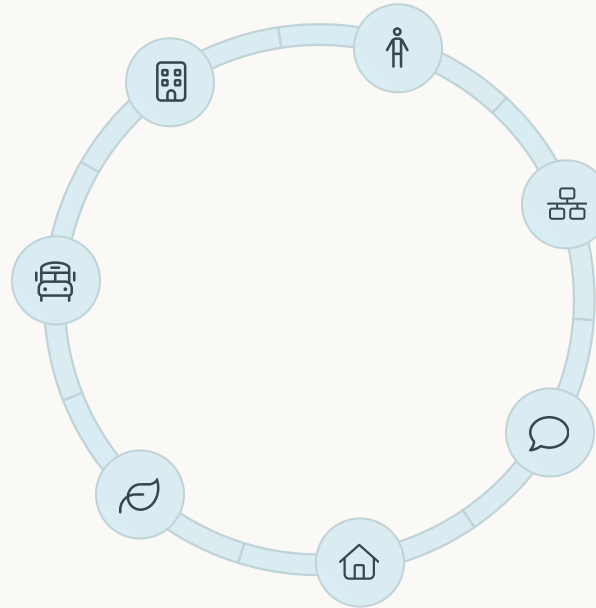
Providing business networking and promotional support

## Youth Training Agencies (HEART/NSTA Trust)

Delivering hospitality and tourism skills training

## Ganja Industry Associations

Supporting development of compliant cannabis tourism experiences



## Local Residents and Community Groups

The foundation of authentic community-based tourism experiences

## Villages As Businesses Network

Offering proven methodologies for community tourism development

## Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB)

Supporting with marketing, standards, and regulatory guidance

## Airbnb Jamaica

Providing platform expertise and potential co-marketing opportunities



# Monitoring & Evaluation



## Community Feedback

Regular community feedback meetings and host forums.

## Performance Tracking

Monthly tracking of Airbnb listings and occupancy rates.

## Product Evaluation

Quarterly evaluations of tour product performance and visitor feedback.

## Economic Impact Assessment

Annual economic impact assessments.

These monitoring and evaluation mechanisms will ensure the programme remains responsive to community needs and market trends, allowing for continuous improvement and sustainable growth.

# Expected Outcomes

**30%**

## Tourism Growth

Increase in visitors to non-beach areas

**50+**

## New Listings

New Airbnb properties in target communities

**200+**

## Jobs Created

Direct and indirect employment opportunities

**75%**

## Local Retention

Tourism dollars staying within communities

Through this comprehensive approach, we anticipate significant economic benefits for Western Westmoreland communities while preserving their unique cultural identity and natural environment.

# In Summary: Redefining Tourism for Community Development

This development plan represents more than just an economic strategy—it's a vision for transforming how tourism benefits the people of Western Westmoreland. By empowering local communities through the Villages as Businesses framework and Airbnb hosting opportunities, we create a sustainable model where tourism serves as a tool for inclusive development.

The plan's integrated approach ensures that visitors experience the authentic culture and natural beauty of the region while tourism dollars circulate within communities, creating jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities for residents. Through careful implementation of the strategic pillars outlined in this document, Western Westmoreland can become a model for community-based tourism development in Jamaica and beyond.

