

Breaking New Ground in Sustainable Tourism

2000 Workshop Proceedings
of the
Countryside Recreation Network

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CRN Network Manager

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Liaison:

to promote information exchange relating to countryside recreation, and to foster general debate about relevant trends and issues.

Good Practice:

to spread information to develop best practice through training and professional development in provision for and management of countryside recreation.

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BREAKING NEW GROUND IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Richard Dickinson

Head of Policy & Strategy, English Tourism Council

Context

In 1998 UK residents made some 12 million overnight visits to the English countryside and these visitors spent £1.6 billion. Day trips added £3.8 billion while overseas visitors staying in the countryside spent a further £700 million. This combined expenditure of over £6 billion supported 340,000 jobs across rural England and underpinned 25,000, usually small, tourism businesses including around 40% of England's total accommodation stock. This level of expenditure is fundamental for the rural economy and can especially help the more remote areas. Visitor spending, by directly injecting money into local communities, also helps to maintain other rural services – local shops, services and public transport – that would not otherwise be viable. The benefits of tourism however can be spread unevenly across the country and throughout different times of the year. Some industry sectors, such as self-catering, can show high year-round occupancy figures while other sectors, like attractions, may be more seasonal. In peak periods certain destinations suffer from too many visitors although these locations are fewer than is often perceived. Visitor management methods can do much to alleviate pressure on key sites but traffic, (85% of tourism trips to the countryside are made by car), remains a major management issue.

Consumer Trends

There is considerable opportunity for growth in tourism in the English countryside over the next decade. This potential is driven both by broad social trends and changes in the tourism market. People are taking more short breaks of less than 4 nights, they are seeking distinctive experiences rooted in local and regional culture, they are enjoying more specialist activities and are demanding higher quality accommodation and tourism services. There is a greater emphasis on value for time as well as value for money. Rural areas are well placed to take advantage of these trends particularly because well managed tourism can help protect the rural fabric while also ensuring a vital local economy.

Public Policy

Rural issues are high on the agenda with reports from the Performance Innovation Unit and others leading to the publication of a Rural White Paper expected in autumn 2000. Rural

services and planning remain key issues while broader regulatory frameworks are under scrutiny by the Better Regulation Task Force. “Tomorrow’s Tourism”, the Government’s first comprehensive Tourism Strategy set in place a framework for public and industry action and established the English Tourism Council (ETC) and the annual ministerial Tourism Summit. Co-operative and concerted action by ETC, government, other agencies and the private sector is without doubt a prerequisite for the successful delivery of “Tomorrow’s Tourism”.

The Role of the English Tourism Council

ETC’s central objectives are to improve the quality and competitiveness of English tourism and to ensure that this is done in a sustainable way. It has devolved the delivery of all tourism services to Regional Tourist Boards and is now a strategically focused organisation - creating the right framework for tourism to flourish, setting standards, providing consumer focused research, encouraging co-operation and advising on policy and practice. One priority is tourism in the countryside, via the production of a Rural Tourism strategy with the Countryside Agency, another is Sustainable Tourism where ETC has lead agency responsibility.

Improving the sustainability of tourism has become a recurring theme but well-worn principles have often not been translated into business practice or public action on the ground. It is important to examine why and what barriers exist and how these may be overcome. ETC will shortly publish a framework and action agenda, which will form a cornerstone to help drive forward this debate.

Some Key Issues

A Growing Risk of Duplication

There are a number of new organisations and initiatives, essentially at regional level, which mitigate for duplication of time, effort and expenditure. Too many organisations are trying to cover similar areas concerning business support, regional development and environmental sustainability. Tourism is diverse, highly fragmented and crosscutting, and does not flourish in a support system driven by individual initiatives or compartmentalised into industry sub-sectors.

The Risk of Oversupply

Despite the opportunities already highlighted there is also a risk of oversupply. The dangers have been seen in, for example, farm tourism in the West Country, or more recently in the attractions sector more generally. Statistics show that 84% of rural attractions have opened since 1980, with 42% opening since 1990. Recently there has been a levelling of visitor numbers at some attractions and there is a likelihood that smaller rural attractions will suffer – both from a greater supply and from a slowdown in visitor numbers.

A Lack of Appreciation of Tourism's Role

Tourism, if properly managed, has the potential to play a catalytic role in rural regeneration, can provide income for communities and help support the upkeep of built and natural assets. Yet this potential is often overlooked, as the economic impact is hard to define, the inter-linkages often misunderstood, the industry image poor and the support agencies, more often than not, starved of proper funding allocated to tourism. Recognition of tourism as a 'proper' job creator is a greater than ever challenge in regions targeting hi-tech and telecoms growth at any price. Well-planned tourism, at individual business level, in destinations and throughout regions can have a major impact economically, environmentally and socially – but this optimisation of tourism development is still not as widespread as should be in an advanced service sector-led economy.

INTEGRATED QUALITY MANAGEMENT OF RURAL TOURIST DESTINATIONS

Richard Denman

Director, The Tourism Company

This conference is looking at specific aspects of sustainable tourism in rural areas, as identified by the workshop sessions. As the first speaker, I see my job as helping to set the context for the day by taking a more comprehensive approach - looking at what makes up 'quality' in terms of destination management in rural areas.

My presentation is based on a study carried out in the last two years by my consultancy, The Tourism Company, together with colleagues in Germany, for the EU – what was DG23, now DG Enterprise. The study was on *Integrated Quality Management of Rural Tourist Destinations*. It was based on 15 case studies of rural areas across Europe which have been taking some measures at a local level towards improving the quality of tourism. A report in the form of an illustrated good practice guide was published earlier this year.

The main part of my presentation will involve looking at a few of these case studies and illustrating briefly some of the initiatives they have been taking. At the end I will pull out a few common issues emerging from our study which we should perhaps reflect upon in rural England.

But first it is worth considering briefly what we mean by Integrated Quality Management (IQM) in tourism destinations.

At the outset of the study we looked a little at business theory on quality management. This told us that Total Quality Management is: "*A process for achieving objectives by relating more closely to customers and staff.*" So it was pretty broad – but was a starting point.

Tourism destinations are far more complex than businesses. For 'staff' one should read a large number of small enterprises and other players. At a destination level I suggest that there are essentially two objectives for tourism, if we bare everything down to the bone:

- To increase local income and employment.

- To ensure that the environment and quality of life of local people are not damaged and if possible are enhanced by tourism.

Integrated Quality Management is about achieving these two objectives by:

- Focussing on the visitors – understanding them and delivering what they want, and
- Involving local people and tourism businesses in the management of the destination, as participants in and as customers of the management process.

In England the concept of sustainable tourism has focussed on achieving a balance between the needs of the Visitor, Industry, Community and Environment – sometimes called the VICE principle. For instance this has been taken as the basis for sustainable tourism by ETC's Sustainable Tourism Task Force, and has also been reflected in the ETC and Countryside Agency recent consultation paper on rural tourism.

This fits well with IQM for a destination, where visitors are seen as the driving force, converted through quality experiences into repeat visitors, leading, with active participation of industry and local people to: community benefits without conflict; increased enterprise performance, income and employment; and an intact or improved environment.

What We Should Be Concerned About in Practice?

To help us a little more in understanding the concept of quality management we looked at some theory:

- First, the widely used model of the European Foundation for Quality Management emphasises the importance of clear working structures and internal communication in delivering quality.
- Secondly, some of the literature on quality in tourism refers to the concept of the Tourism Value Chain. This suggests that the total visitor experience of a destination is about a series of influences spread over space and time, from initial messages before arrival, to the experience of a whole sequence of facilities and services in the destination, to departure, memories and ongoing contact.
- Thirdly, theories of quality management in the service industry talk of a cyclical process of monitoring and improvement. The most commonly accepted model talks about recognising and then closing 5 'gaps' – between customer expectations, a manager's understanding of these expectations, the subsequent setting of quality standards,

achieving these standards on the ground, the clients' actual experience, and how this relates back to their original expectations. In each case the gaps can be closed by better market feedback, better management and better internal and external communications.

What Does it Mean in Practice?

Put simply, a tourism destination pursuing quality management should be able to demonstrate three basic characteristics: It should:

- have mechanisms whereby all the key players are working together to a strategy;
- be concerned about delivering quality at all stages of the visitor experience; and
- be committed to monitoring and improvement, as an ongoing cyclical process.

Much of the IQM study is about presenting simple practical checklists of actions in these three areas of activity, which can become a tool for benchmarking. I have listed here 13 key elements that form the sections of the good practice guide.

Working Together to a Strategy

- 1 There should be strong leadership for tourism in the destination, preferably from a single organisation responsible for tourism management and co-ordination, but also mechanisms for working with and involving local businesses and other players.
- 2 A clear tourism strategy is a necessary tool, which is simple, visionary and well communicated. Enterprises and others in the area, when asked, should know what the local strategy is. Any strategy should be a living document, regularly updated.

Delivering Quality at all Stages of the Visitor Experience

- 3 Marketing should deliver persuasive but also accurate messages and images that don't lead to false expectations.
- 4 A really key aspect of destination quality is providing visitors with a friendly welcome, and ensuring that they have all the information they need when and where they want it. Visitors are becoming more information hungry.
- 5 There should be sufficient availability of accommodation within a broad price range. The experience from the case studies suggests that visitors are becoming more demanding in terms of standards of facilities and comfort but are also looking for characterful, traditional accommodation and hospitality.

- 6 It is appropriate for rural destinations to place an emphasis on local produce and gastronomy, not only to provide visitors with a special and locally distinctive experience, but also to support the local rural economy, traditions and landscapes.
- 7 There should be a sufficient range and variety of attractions to retain visitor interest.
- 8 Special attention should be paid to the quality of countryside recreation, following rapid growth in demand across Europe, especially for walking and cycling. Many people are taking activity holidays for the first time – and there is a particular need here to include safety as a component of quality.
- 9 Of equal importance to all the above, there should be careful attention to the quality of the environment and basic infrastructure and services, including transport, both from the point of view of meeting environmental and community objectives as well as being an essential component of the visitor experience, reflecting the main reason why visitors choose to visit rural destinations.

Installing Effective Quality Management and Monitoring Processes

- 10 An essential element of IQM is a process of regular surveys and feedback, leading to an understanding of visitors' expectations and checking whether they are being met. It should be a continual process, with feedback helping to drive quality improvements.
- 11 There should be a process of setting and checking standards for all the different tourism facilities and services, which is effective yet manageable.
- 12 There should be a close working relationship with everyone involved in tourism in the destination, to identify requirements for improvement, together with well constructed training and assistance programmes to meet these needs.
- 13 Finally, IQM needs a regular process of obtaining feedback from businesses and the wider local community and checking on environmental impact.

I am now going to look at a few Case study examples which serve to illustrate how some of these principles and areas of action are working out in practice.

The research we undertook for the EU was based on 15 local case studies in 13 countries. These were chosen to be representative of a range of types of destination. None could be considered to be the perfect destination. However, we were able to take different lessons could be taken from each of them and put this into some kind of whole. I am just going to look briefly now at five areas.

Ballyhoura, Ireland

Ballyhoura is a typical inland farming area in south west Ireland. Since 1986 the destination has been managed by a Community Tourism Co-operative as a public-private partnership. In the first ten years priority was given to establishing a tourism industry, mainly through stimulating farm based tourism. Having done this they have recently recognised that their emphasis must now be on quality to underpin enterprise performance in the face of vastly increased competition from other rural areas in Ireland and elsewhere in Europe.

One approach has been to link training on quality of service with detailed training and advice on business planning. This has been done by selecting a small number of leading enterprises, mainly small hotels and larger farm tourism establishments, who were considered most likely to follow through with investment and improvement, thereby raising the level of quality as well as performance for others to emulate. As part of a short training course, each enterprise was helped to create its own business plan and put forward a scheme for improvement which could be supported through financial assistance from EU and national schemes.

As a destination, rather than set up any kind of quality grading scheme themselves for mainstream facilities such as accommodation, they have used the national Bord Failte system. They have used this assiduously as a stimulant for quality improvement, linking marketing and development support to the acquisition of certain grades.

A strong emphasis has always been on warmth of welcome. This has been linked closely to a concept of training accommodation operators to act as hosts and facilitators to their visitors as far as the destination is concerned. Using role play, accommodation operators were trained in the skill of listening to their guests, and appreciating the very different needs of different kinds of visitor, so they could tailor the level as well as the type of information to suit them. As well as providing Ballyhoura packs for all visitors, enterprises were given a template for making up their own packs of information (starting with information about the property and the host family, then the local village, and then the wider destination) with an objective of encouraging more people to spend their time in the truly local vicinity, with environmental as well as economic benefits.

It was found that the area covered too many individual communities for easy co-ordination. Therefore they have tried to get local people and tourism enterprises to work together through community working groups at a very local level within individual villages. Local action has

covered environmental, economic and social objectives, such as creation of walking trails round each village and the surrounding countryside and holding local events. Each community group is represented on the Community Consultative Committee which feeds into the tourism co-operative and local Rural Development Agency, thereby having a say in overall marketing and development activity for the destination.

From the early days, the co-operative developed and ran its own tourist information centre in the main street of the main town, which also combines with a café and small craft retail outlet, a library and the local business advice centre, thereby creating a focal point not only for visitors but also for the community and small tourism operators. Visitor feedback suggested that staff did not have a sufficiently detailed local knowledge, and this was rectified by familiarisation and training schemes.

Again in response to feedback from surveys which pointed to the popularity of walking, they created their own medium distance walking route across the area, as well a shorter routes, colour coded to relate to levels of difficulty, as some went over the Galty mountains which are reasonably steep.

Ballyhoura is a member of a national brand for rural tourism destinations, Irish Country Holidays, which as group have to meet certain criteria in terms of customer services and welcome. This essentially confers its own quality label on the destination as a whole, as well as providing marketing clout, which proved extremely necessary in the early days.

Skaftárhreppur, Iceland

Skaftárhreppur is a small community of just 600 people located close to the lava flows and glaciers of south Iceland. Badly needing to find new forms of income, in 1992 they developed a tourism strategy based on separate surveys of visitors, local enterprises and the community. From this feedback, it was decided to develop and promote tourism based around the quality of the environment.

An interesting aspect of their approach is the way a number of different enterprises and individuals in the community, outside the mainstream tourism enterprises, have become involved in delivering a quality experience for visitors and in environmental management. People from the local bank, post office, supermarket etc., are involved in the tourism

association and strategy group, and have looked at how to improve the way they serve visitors to the area.

The supermarket is a vital facility for visitors as it is the only place to buy food in a very wide area. It has established its own quality service manual, has got involved in language training and has extended its opening hours to meet the needs of tour groups. They also helped the small accommodation operators be more environmentally friendly through a bulk purchasing scheme to cut down packaging.

Skaftárhreppur has been creative in the use of existing resources. For example, schools and community halls are used for tourism accommodation for youth groups in summer, managed and booked through the community.

The quality of a destination is partly related to the range of attractions. Getting feedback from visitors about this is very important in the quality management process. The visitor survey revealed that there was simply not enough for visitors to do, and that was why they were not stopping. With virtually no funds, the community established a range of facilities and activities based on the special environment including a small interpretation centre on volcanic eruptions and a range of guided walks and a series of talks by local environmentalists in the village church. These change weekly and are promoted through all accommodation establishments via a simple handbill which is given to all guests as part of the welcome service. This also serves to illustrate the point that quality in local information provision is often about place of delivery rather than appearance of the medium.

The majority of the accommodation is on farms, which are part of the Icelandic Farm Holidays marketing organisation which has direct responsibility for quality checking and labelling. As a sector group, close to the marketplace, this has worked quite well.

Improving environmental management has been central to the whole approach. A small group of farm accommodation operators are working together on improving energy and waste saving, mainly motivated by comments from their visitors who were looking for this. Visitors themselves can get involved in planting programmes to stabilise the volcanic ash soil. The local tourist association, including employees from the bank and post office, amongst others, help with footpath maintenance, as there are problems with erosion in key sites.

North Karelia, Finland

North Karelia is a region in eastern Finland, with moderate levels of tourism based on the enjoyment of forests and lakes in summer. Whereas in the past the vast bulk of visitors were content with just a simple lakeside cabin, surveys have shown that the market is now becoming more sophisticated and looking for a higher quality experience.

The Agricultural Advisory Service has taken a lead in quality management for rural tourism in Finland. They have combined aspects of the international ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 standards (i.e. business management and environmental standards) to make them meaningful to small food, handicraft and accommodation operators. Each enterprise has to write its own very detailed quality manual, based on a mixture of self-assessment and inspection. On top of this they have to demonstrate that the materials they use are sourced locally and project the local culture. As a result they qualify for the Uniquely Finnish national quality label; which has now achieved over 30% recognition by the general Finnish public.

Much of rural Finland is dominated by forestry. This environment is being used creatively in North Karelia where a project has been developing a quality forest experience for groups, including forest banquets and active participation in forestry. A range of independent local services such as nature guides, crafts people and caterers work together on the programmes. Quality and integrated rural development is assured through careful attention to detail including the use of local textiles and materials such as birch bark utensils, which are often subsequently purchased by visitors as souvenirs.

It should be accepted that in the interests of the visitor experience as well as the environment, a balance has to be struck between increasing accessibility to sites and restricting it. There are some good examples in North Karelia where a degree of inaccessibility increases the quality of the experience of those visitors who seek them out. The unique preserved farm buildings at Murtovaara, for example, require a long journey on tracks deep into the forest. They are managed by the local community and promoted as a special experience to groups and a small number of staying visitors, as a form of adding value to the stay.

Sitia, Greece

Sitia is a region in the far east of Crete. The primary objective of the Sitia Development Organisation, backed by LEADER funds, is to promote rural tourism in the inland

communities, based on developing touring routes linked to themes like agriculture, food and cultural heritage.

Central to this is the identification and promotion of authentic Cretan experiences. For example, assistance has been given to accommodation enterprises based on the old Cretan style architecture and materials.

Developing inland tourism and seeking to preserve the quality of the coastline has involved a carrot and stick approach. Planning restrictions have prevented development around some of the finest beaches.

Providing an integrated quality experience is seen as essential in getting inland rural tourism to build up. The destination has used a hands-on approach here, establishing and promoting a full ground handling service for groups and individuals based on themed itineraries. Visitors are given gifts of local produce on arrival. Although the programme is tailored to different requests, many groups meet the manager of the local wine co-operative who gives them a special introduction to the rural area and its history and aspirations.

Care is taken in getting feedback from all customers on the special rural programmes and discussing this with the providers, so any adjustments can be made.

Marketing of the programmes has been hard, but the destination has worked with a number of incoming tour operators, such as Simply Crete, for whom they provide their Hidden Crete programme, who also have their own quite stringent quality criteria and customer feedback mechanisms.

Pays Cathare, France

Finally to Pays Cathare in southern France, which is an interesting example of a destination which has taken a very comprehensive approach to the setting of standards. The approach has been led by the local *Departement*, in response to dwindling tourism and a need to increase competitiveness.

The approach centres round the establishment of a comprehensive destination brand label 'Pays Cathare' as the equivalent of a quality label, by granting its use only to enterprises which have met a set of locally determined criteria. 19 separate types of visitor facility (from

caravan sites to local guides) have been identified, and criteria and inspection schemes worked out for each of them.

Much of the accommodation criteria build on national schemes, such as the Gites de France grading, but with added dimensions such as provision of local information, special welcome requirements and little added extras in bedrooms. Local craft producers and their products are also set quality standards to achieve the label.

Enterprises seeking to be awarded the label have to agree to attend 5 days training each year and to participate with others in the scheme in joint promotions.

Results have shown considerably improved performance levels from enterprises in the scheme, relative to those outside.

Strong emphasis has been placed on food and gastronomy. For example there is a separate quality system for Pays Cathare labelled lamb, checking processes through from farming practices to presentation at the table in restaurants.

Visitor management comes into the equation as well. The area is characterised by a number of heritage sites each close to a village. Managers have been appointed for the sites but also with responsibility for visitor management, tourism promotion and community liaison in the village itself, including promoting local festivals as well as managing car parks. Visitor information, bearing the Pays Cathare label, is provided in advance of each village, leading to a car park and then a walking route to the heritage site, in a logical sequence of signing. The objective is to try to bring economic benefit to the village from the historic site, but without too much disturbance.

Summary of Issues and Success Factors

To conclude, I am just going to highlight a number of issues which relating to IQM of destinations which I would like to leave you with, and which we should reflect on here in England.

There is an overriding need to *find the right mechanisms for working together*. We found that key individuals in the localities, who were devoting a lot of time and energy to improving

quality were critical to success. However securing a wide sense of commitment in the destination is important for sustainable success in quality management in the longer term. A good approach in some of the case studies we looked at was to involve enterprises and the community widely, but break them down into community (e.g. village), subject (e.g. information provision), or sector (e.g. catering) working groups looking at different aspects of quality.

Fostering and promoting the intrinsic local qualities is extremely important in delivering quality in rural destinations. Use of local vernacular architecture, local produce and gastronomy are just some examples. Parallel with this is a need for sound planning control, preventing over development, being prepared not to make places too accessible (yet meeting the needs of disabled visitors), and making clever use of existing resources.

The importance of seeing *environmental action* as an integral part of Quality Management is apparent from, and accepted by, almost all our case studies. This is important not only for the environment's sake but as a way of demonstrating care to the customer, with many ways of taking positive action involving both businesses and visitors.

Training has proved important in increasing quality and bringing people together, but it has been hard to get small rural enterprises to participate. Some training programmes in the case study areas failed through lack of response. Enterprises must feel a sense of ownership of any training programme. An important issue is - should the approach be one of outreach to all, to increase minimum quality standards, or of working more intensively with a selected few, and then relying on a demonstration effect? The answer is probably both.

It is important to get the level of *labelling and inspection* schemes right, and not to duplicate resources in this work and end up with too many schemes. The approach perhaps should be to base quality labelling on national schemes but to be more active at promoting and using them at a local level as an incentive to improve quality. Some of the cases we looked at had built on national schemes at a local level, bringing an added dimension of checking for, and possibly labelling, aspects of local character, such as use of local produce. Bodies promoting different sectors of rural tourism, such as farm tourism or camping and caravanning have a very important role to play in delivering and communicating quality.

Marketing and information services can be the most important areas of action by a destination in delivering quality, involving direct contact with the consumer. Critically important are:

- The authenticity of the original message conveyed, and whether it will lead to customer expectations which match reality;
- The detail and accuracy of information supplied. It appears that visitors to rural areas in particular are looking more and more for detailed information on which to plan their visit.

Information Technology will help, but the critical role of face to face contact through the TIC and the accommodation host will remain of paramount importance.

Finally, *obtaining feedback* and reacting to it is vital to the IQM approach. It has been happening to some extent in all the areas we visited, but generally this is a weakness. Two types of process are needed:

- Regular visitor surveys providing profile information about all visitors, assisting with customer segmentation and monitoring change; and
- An opportunity for all visitors, not just those surveyed, to be able to give a reaction – for example through suggestion or comment forms and books.

Generally, more work needs to be done in this area, ensuring feedback is regular, objective and can be acted upon.

Bringing local enterprises and local people more centrally into the picture, talking to them more, finding out clearly from them what they and their visitors want – if this is what IQM is about we can't have too much of it.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AT CENTER PARCS

Peter M Moore OBE

Managing Director, Center Parcs UK Ltd.

On behalf of Center Parcs, I'm delighted to be with you today to address you on this critically important subject - sustainable tourism. The reasons are, firstly, the intrinsic importance of this issue of sustainability to all of us today - whether we are involved in tourism or not – and secondly, that while the Center Parcs' lifestyle is relatively well known, even by those who haven't been for a stay, the intensity and depth of our relationship with the environment is less well understood. So the opportunity to share with you our approach to environmental sustainability, as an operator, was too tempting to miss.

What I'd like to do is look with you at how we at Center Parcs tackle the issue of creating our particular lifestyle, in what is increasingly being recognised as an exemplar of a sustainable development, and to see whether the philosophy and practices we follow can be adopted here and there as general principles of sustainable tourism.

Before I do this I'd like to first touch on a few strands within the definition of sustainability which are certainly important to our interpretation, and second, to help put the environmental aspect into some context, I'd like to give you a quick sketch of our lifestyle as translated on the ground.

The Center Parcs' Lifestyle

I think a broad definition that will be agreeable to most parties is "*development, which meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs*". Well, I'm sure we all buy into that broad definition.

But what does this actually mean? Or what should it mean to those actually involved in creating and delivering the leisure or tourism experience? Indeed, any development - leisure or otherwise?

The considerations that we hold key are that:

- Any development or activity should have *sensitivity and empathy* with the host population, including clearly generating benefits for it

- Whether the natural or built environment, *sympathetic design and landscaping* must be fused into the final product
- *Carrying capacity* must be recognised including accommodating *existing environmental populations*
- The endeavour must be *profitable* as with any business, if not, *it will cease to exist*. Robust *feasibility analysis is critical*. Capital grants offered with no operational capability are by definition begging non-sustainability.
- Fundamental to achieving any of the above determinants of sustainability *is experienced, knowledgeable management who are willing to comply*.

Putting these all into the tourism perspective, it means that ensuring gratification now does not prevent enjoyment of that environment in the future.

Just before we look at how we try to achieve these I'd just like to briefly look at our lifestyle for those of you not familiar with it. The Center Pares concept was born in Holland more than 30 years ago and has evolved into the experience it is today - an all year round country club in the forest. The idea then was to provide "*a villa in the forest*" to allow the highly urbanised Dutch population a few days' escape from the hustle and bustle of everyday urban life.

A major innovation was the idea of creating an experience, which, because of its unique mix of facilities, would be enjoyable 365 days of the year, available in midweek and weekend stays. It was, in essence, the first custom-created short break.

The formula to provide the experience has evolved, sometimes subtly, sometimes dramatically, in the quest to constantly offer the outstanding short break and I think it would be useful for our discussion to give you a feel for the principal pillars which have remained constant throughout this evolution. Essentially, they are:

- cleverly designed, very comfortable accommodation
- a mix of restaurants and bars
- a few appropriate retail outlets
- a range of leisure and sporting facilities both outdoor and indoor with the aptly named "*subtropical swimming paradise*" giving a wonderful credence to the all-weather promise

- And critically - indeed, the essence of our concept - the natural backcloth of woodland and water, with its tranquil and restorative qualities into which we weave these facilities.

But it's not just about facilities. We're seeking to create a certain lifestyle, of which the physical elements form only a part. Undoubtedly, part of our appeal lies in our emphasis of quality. Quality of the facilities of the natural environment and, of course, our people, the catalyst that brings the experience alive.

Another critical facet is choice - the lack of regimentation. It is life at your own pace with no frenzied activity, where we, hopefully, provide the menu of facilities our profile of guests will enjoy, but which they choose to use or otherwise. The mix seeks to allow not only choice according to your mood, but to also allow family or friends to participate together or apart. We have, in essence, created an experience where there is "*time to be together*", "*space to be apart*" - and it works. Part of the enjoyment is not only this sense of freedom, but the peace of mind that comes from being in an environment where there are no cars racing around; where you are with like-minded people; and which is managed by staff who care for, and are interested in, your well-being.

Certainly, this emphasis on quality and freedom of choice seems to have struck a chord with many people, but pervading the whole experience and setting it apart from so many other leisure offers, is this sense of being at one with nature.

From the outset, it was clear we had introduced something quite special. As Richard Maybe, environmental correspondent for 'The Sunday Times' put it, when he saw Center Parcs in its early days, "*it is the best working compromise between leisure and conservation I have seen*".

How the concept works

So how do we in fact go about pulling this off? Well I can only give you the broadest overview of what is a complex and endless process.

To begin with I think we have a major advantage in that not only are we driven by the moral obligation which recognises that our natural resources in general should not be destroyed by the current activity, but we have an equally strong parallel motivation, namely the

commercial realisation of the definitive role nature plays in our appeal and thus on our ongoing success.

The key to the Center Parcs philosophy was allowing guests, essentially families, to be in close contact with nature, with all its restful and restorative qualities, whilst at the same time providing opportunities to mix with other guests seeking the same kind of experience. Nature, therefore, has always been central to the Center Parcs concept, with a natural setting - woodland and water being considered essential elements.

Piet Dierksen, the man whose vision created the Center Parcs concept, turned to a certain Professor Jaap Bakema - one of the most eminent Dutch architects of the era - to help turn his vision into reality. Bakema's great skill was his ability to integrate the two main components - man and nature. Bakema started with the premise that the man-made elements of the concept should *blend into and be subservient to the natural environment*. This premise remains as true today, as it did those 30 years ago.

His design theory was to “fit” the village into the existing landscape and further enhance the environment by extensive landscaping. Central to the Center Parcs design philosophy, therefore, was the retention of most of the existing coniferous woodland including using the future waterways as temporary construction roads in order to avoid the felling of trees purely for construction activity. He also introduced the notion of the “villa snake” whose flexibility in rising and falling with the topography allowed the villas to accommodate existing landscape values. Thus, conservation, enhancement and habitat creation pervaded the whole design philosophy in those early days, but is generally recognised that this sentiment towards protecting and enhancing the natural environment was taken to new and greater heights by the passion and practices of the UK.

Site Selection and Environmental Impact Assessment

To begin with, site selection is critical and not only dictated by environmental needs but importantly by practical, commercial needs. It is no use building a village where it will fail. From a commercial point of view the site must give relatively easy access and be supported by a sufficient catchment area of the right profile of people, in our case, essentially ABC1 families and peer groups.

Preferred sites typically consist of some 400 acres of medium aged conifer woodland, which have a relatively low ecological value and often have considerable potential for enhancement. Critically important, the mature trees provide excellent screening and therefore integration of the buildings within the landscape happens immediately. This conifer context is critical therefore in that we don't destroy high value eco-systems. We can on the contrary, by enhancing them raise the bio-diversity value and we can visually conceal the built elements within the lovely, natural evergreen cloak they provide. A sand base and gently undulating topography are also preferred for reasons of both operational convenience and site aesthetics.

When we are satisfied that our stringent site selection criteria are met we ourselves proceed with an in-depth Environmental Impact Study covering existing habitats, detailed tree survey and identification of ecologically sensitive areas. These ecological areas, once identified, are key determinants in influencing the layout of the village. Any sensitive or vulnerable habitats are protected in order to ensure that construction activities or the village operation in the future will not adversely affect them.

Alongside the ecological study runs a landscape appraisal concentrating both on the visual setting of the village and on ensuring maximum nature conservation benefits. The heights of existing trees are plotted and visual screens are identified, views through the forest and surrounding countryside including roads, paths and settlements are appraised. The total site investigation also includes topography, soil type, road access, traffic impact and an archaeological appraisal. As I mentioned, the reduction of visual impact to the outside world is also a critical part of our philosophy. On-site analysis, computer assisted visibility analysis and laser analysis from all surrounding high points, are used to determine the optimum locations of larger buildings. In a nutshell, the outside world doesn't want to see us, and our guests don't want to see the outside world.

This initial environmental assessment determines our decision to continue with the development, but if we proceed, it also forms the basis for our environmental statement and the design constraints of the village. This data is then used as an overlay in order to identify areas where physical elements can not be accommodated. Our own Center Parc standards are also implemented, for instance no more than 9 villas are built in a cluster, roads do not run straight for more than 50 metres and so on.

Protecting the Site Throughout Construction

Carrying capacity is one of the critical determinants of achieving sustainability and interestingly the built area within our 400 acres is less than 10% of the entire site. Within the remaining areas waterway features including streams and lake locations are identified. These water features are a deliberate policy to add to the aesthetics of the forest setting and also to diversify ecologically the natural habitats. Equally importantly in order to reduce the impact of tree removal the eventual waterway courses are used as access for plant and machinery during construction.

Before any project goes out to tender, any sensitive areas are clearly defined on the master plan. Drawings highlighting all protected areas, the environmental philosophy, working methods, means for protecting the sensitive areas and consequences of any ecological damage by contractors are finalised and form part of the final construction documents.

At our Longleat forest village, for example, before contractors set foot on the site, the entire road infrastructure, car park areas, sports lake and leisure building locations were all set out. Some 40 kilometres of protective fencing was erected to protect the vast areas of designated forest where building would not take place, whether ecologically sensitive or not. Extraordinary steps were taken to protect specimen trees originally singled out during the initial survey stage. For example, the creation of a boardwalk around the giant redwoods to reduce the risk of damaging the root system by interested guests, whilst very costly, was undertaken to conserve these wonderful trees. Throughout the site, not only primary, but secondary protective fencing was erected. The fencing around villa clusters was moveable and allowed flexibility to accommodate the environment rather than sacrifice it.

During the design and construction phase of any site our landscape management team focus on areas for ecological enhancement, including the introduction of water habitats, the possibility of heathland regeneration and the introduction of native deciduous tree species to give beauty and ecological diversity to the mainly coniferous forest. Quite literally, hundreds of thousands of trees and shrubs are planted on each village during and after construction, however, this is only the beginning. Operationally the same effort must be maintained and a very detailed forest management plan is tailored for each village, based on a 10-year programme.

As you can imagine, with 400 acres, the environmental work programme is varied, interesting and enormous. On each village, a team of very proud, highly professional and dedicated rangers and conservation specialists manage the woodlands, streams and lakes under the guidance from our landscape architect, ecology manager and ecological consultants. Their achievements are now both part of our culture and are very much being recognised, particularly by those concerned with the environment. They work closely together with local and national organisations such as English Nature, the Countryside Agency, the Wildlife Trusts, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), etc. to ensure that our management practices form part of the broader national picture.

The villages are managed with both creative conservation, and traditional countryside management as objectives to ensure positive effect on the natural flora and fauna. The coniferous forest is carefully thinned to break up the unnatural lines of trees and clearings created to enhance natural regeneration. The results already in the two older villages are impressive. The result of this continual environmental assessment, from the site selection through to the daily operation of our villages is quite outstanding. I think, by any criteria, the evidence of the ecological richness of the areas we have moved into is there for all to see and is endorsed by the many ecological experts who examine our operations.

Of the ecological impact we make and environmental enhancement we bring, I can only give you a few examples:

- Our landscape philosophy is to diversify the forest of our villages, and today they more resemble a traditional English woodland supporting significantly more butterflies, moths, hoverflies, birds, mammals and wildflowers than the original plantations. In Sherwood Forest, for example, there are now 35% more wild flower species than before the village was built.
- At Elveden, nationally scarce and rare wildflowers in the open Breckland areas include sickle and burr medicks and white horehound.
- Aquatic fauna are continuing to thrive and develop with both Sherwood Forest and Elveden Forest now reaching SSSI status for dragon and damselfly assemblages. To reduce disturbance to the aquatic invertebrates, the lakes and streams are managed culturally, with all aquatic vegetation sourced locally to maintain local distinctiveness, with some 25 different species planted. The variety of wildfowl that now freely inhabit is impressive.

- The provision of over 200 bird, bat and owl boxes together with extensive planting, thinning and scrub management carried out in rotation have created forests which have glades, woodland edge effect and a variety of regenerated and introduced deciduous trees. This varied structure supports equally varied wildlife. There are, once again, in three years enough woodland birds at Elveden Forest for it to meet the criteria set out by English Nature for selection as a Site of Special Scientific Interest for breeding species. Last year, in just four years, Longleat achieved the same status.
- Heathland insects, including a nationally scarce species, (the grass wave moth) are appearing now that their habitat has reappeared and the rare nightjar now use both heathland areas at Sherwood Forest and Elveden Forest.
- Three moths confined to Breckland at Elveden Forest, the grey carpet, tawny wave and marbled clover are all nationally scarce. There are also nearly 80 different kinds of harmless solitary bee and wasps at Elveden Forest including 8 nationally scarce species of these insects. Over 40 nationally scarce and rare insects are now known to be in Elveden Forest.

This enormous influx of rare species has occurred since the new landscape values were introduced and if one saw the original Elveden Forest we moved into, one could not fail to be impressed by the landscape transformation and ecological uplift.

Additionally, all three villages are designed with specific areas set aside for nature reservations and reserves to give deer safe havens so they can continue to use the whole area. At Sherwood Forest there are the black fallow deer of Rufford Park, at Elveden Forest the fallow, muntjac and red deer and at Longleat forest we have roe deer which even stayed throughout construction, despite being considered an especially sensitive animal to human disturbance.

This is only the most rapid sketch of what has been an enormous environmental achievement since we launched Sherwood Forest in 1987. The net result is that we are now regarded by many as a blueprint for environmental sustainable tourism. For instance, the Countryside Commission (now Countryside Agency) as early as 1989 stated: *“Take the example of Center Parcs, it is an industry leader in its attitude to the environment. Not only does it select sites with care, it employs a wide range of landscape and ecological skills to minimise environmental damage and maximise environmental benefits”*.

Not unimportantly, we have brought massive economic benefits to the areas we have gone into, and, indeed, have raised the whole quality of life of those areas within which our Center Parcs villages now exist. Each village creates more than a thousand permanent jobs across a spectrum of management and operative skills and injects some £18 million into the local community. It also raises dramatically the tourism profile of the area we move into, with more than a quarter of a million guests visiting each village and more than 60% returning as loyal guests.

As the Rural Development Commission stated in a major report into the economic impact of our first two villages: *“A Center Parcs holiday village provides an immediate significant contribution to local employment and incomes, and is thereby capable of raising immediately the quality of life and the image of the local area”*. Rural Development Commission - November 1991.

Professor Chris Gratton of Sheffield Hallam University, in a major analysis of tourism objectives identified to give visitors confidence by raising quality across the industry, concluded that *“Center Parcs has already systems in place to deliver those objectives and was doing 10 years ago what is now seen as the model in terms of philosophy, design and sustainability. It provides exactly the kind of tourism the UK has been crying out for, with powerful economic benefits without the dis-benefits of low quality seasonal jobs”*.

These evaluations are not meant as any self-satisfied praise. Indeed, as Dr David Sheppard of English Nature observed in their in depth study of our villages: *“Center Parcs’ overall record of environmental care is impressive. What is more impressive is the company’s positive response to any suggestions to improve the environmental quality of their village”*.

We do listen, we do respond - because we care. Such comments are only mentioned to demonstrate that other, well qualified critics have concluded that it is indeed possible, as shown from the case of Center Parcs, to create a leisure development that genuinely approaches environmental sustainability and manages to bring considerable other benefits in doing so. And certainly, Center Parcs will continue to strive as we have, for as David Attenborough rightly said, *“the time has come to cherish our green inheritance and to protect it, for without it we will surely perish”*. Well, that certainly applies to us.

So What Can We Learn From the Center Parcs Example?

Well in brief, to be sustainable, a development must be acceptable to its host population and by that I mean the human neighbours in the immediate hinterland, as well as the flora and fauna of the site itself. Significant economic benefits must fall to the former.

The presence of any development in terms of construction and design should be integrated sympathetically into the environment it moves into. And here I believe planners have a responsibility. The existing natural environment should not be sacrificed as a result of the economic activity of the incoming business and I believe it is not necessary to do so. In these latter respects, English Nature concluded *“Center Parcs has demonstrated that with the correct design, construction and operational philosophy, it is possible to create a facility which causes minimal disturbance to the neighbourhood and actually enhances the site in terms of wildlife conservation”*.

Any tourism project must have a strong chance of economic survival and a robust feasibility study is essential at the beginning of any process. There are currently dozens of projects - many supported by government funds - which have a high chance of failure.

Finally, there needs to be the willingness within the organisation not to sacrifice the environment for commercial ends, but as is certainly the driving case in Center Parcs, to be commercially successful through its very conservation and enhancement. I hope I have shown today that Center Parcs is tangible proof that with genuine passion for the environment, sensitive planning and professional practices, conservation and tourism can indeed live successfully and sustainably together. We bring pleasure to hundreds of thousands of guests. We create enormous economic and social benefits and we conserve and enhance the areas we move into. We're proud of our contribution - but never complacent!

Conclusion

I sum up with a quote from English Nature when they came back to once again run their eyes over our environmental achievements; *“Without doubt, Center Parcs is a flagship within the leisure industry, for its environmental philosophy, policy and practice. Their past contribution to wildlife conservation is impressive, their present commitment unparalleled and their future potential immeasurable”*. We'll try and live up to their words.

A COMMUNITY TOURISM ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Dave Sharpe

Professor of Community Development, Montana State University

The Western Rural Development Centre's Community Tourism Assessment Processes (CTAP) helps communities that believe they have tourism potential assess the true extent of that potential, weigh the costs and benefits of developing their potential, and then initiate projects that comply with local values.

The need for such a process was identified by a group of University Extension Economic Development Specialists in the Western United States. They reported that most communities they tried to assist select economic development strategies believed the community was a potential tourism destination. Certainly some communities held more tourism potential than others. The specialists felt a process was needed to help communities arrive at a realistic appraisal of their tourism potential. Some also felt that the process should help communities assess the negative, as well as positive, impacts of tourism development and identify the distribution of those costs and benefits. Further economic, social, and environment analysis techniques were required to help communities screen potential projects.

With the Western Rural Development Center and the U. S. Forest Service support, plus input from several state and federal agencies, a team of Extension Specialists from Alaska, Arizona, California, Guam, Montana and Wyoming, designed and tested CTAP. Twenty-three communities, including three Indian reservations, have since used the process. A process manual was prepared and is available on the WEB at www.montana.edu/~wwwcommd/tourism.html.

The Nine Step CTAP Process

The CTAP process consists of nine major steps.

1. Local Organisation
2. Current Community Tourism Snapshot
3. Resident Attitude Survey
4. Visioning and Goal Setting
5. Tourism Marketing Basic Training

6. Attraction and Facilities Inventory
7. Potential Project Identification
8. Initial Project Scoping
9. Impact Analysis: Social, Economic, Environmental

Most communities complete the nine steps in eight to nine months. Actual project implementation time of course varies greatly.

Step One - Organisation

The first step is to create a representative, dedicated local team to see the process through. The process is a major volunteer effort involving monthly committee meetings, with additional specific task force meetings in between. Since differing interests will be represented on the task force, skilful leadership and a truly committed group will be required. By the end of step one, a community tourism action committee will be recruited, oriented to the overall process, organised into roles to perform needed functions, and endorsed by local government and economic development groups.

The handbook provides guidance on selecting committee members, clarifying roles, and responsibilities, establishing organisational structure, conducting leadership training and obtaining official endorsement. Emphasis is placed on recruiting representation from all segments of the community that tourism development might impact. A sample list of representatives is provided.

Step Two - Community Snapshot

This step captures an image of current local tourism impacts. The “snapshot” indicates which sectors of the local economy and society are presently being impacted and to what extent. It provides the baseline upon which subsequent impacts are projected. Without knowing the numbers of current visitors, their interests, and expenditure patterns it is very difficult to predict future impacts of proposed projects. The snapshot illustrates the ages, income levels, origins, modes of travel, spending, and preferences of present visitors.

While critical for future planning, accurate local data may be difficult to acquire. Local visitor surveys can provide some of the information (see “Conducting Local Visitor Surveys”, Julie Riley, University of Arizona Extension). Wherever possible assistance should be

sought from university or government tourism research centres. The handbook provides suggestions on finding secondary data and developing visitor profiles. Economic input-output studies can identify the flow of tourism expenditures through local economic sectors and the number of jobs currently supported by tourism within each. Sample survey forms, graphs and charts from local snapshot presentations are included.

Step Three - Resident Attitude Survey

Next a resident attitude survey is conducted to determine existing local attitudes toward tourism development. The survey reveals the extent of support for increased tourism, types of tourism development that can anticipate community support and those that cannot. It identifies concerns residents already have about tourists, whether they perceive any personal benefits from tourism, local “sacred” places or events they do not wish to see promoted, and opinion differences between residents, based on occupation, income level, age and length of residence.

Survey results have acted as a first screening mechanism for proposed projects. For example, local attitudes toward gambling quickly eliminated suggestions for casino development in one community, while another selected riverboat gambling as one of its top priorities. Farmers’ attitudes toward tourists guided proposals away from agricultural areas in Lewistown, Montana, and local fishermen's concerns steered projects away from the Madison River in Three Forks, Montana.

The handbook provides guidelines on developing survey questions, drawing a sample, publicity, conduct, data compilation, evaluation and reporting. A model survey form is included.

Step Four - Visioning and Goal Setting

In the visioning step community members imagine what they would like their community to be in the future. The effort involves identifying what is really valued or desired, and moulding those ideas into a shared image of their community if it were “*as good as it could be*”. The image can help local leaders decide among alternatives that are likely to lead to the desired future. It helps the community decide how much of any type development will fit within its vision and what levels of change may be acceptable.

Precisely defining goals forces the community to decide what it really wants out of tourism: how many jobs, for whom, at what pay levels; what types of cultural or recreational activities or facilities, and when “enough is enough”. Precise goals help the committee to choose between potential projects. Without such goals the community cannot measure how well its efforts are succeeding: nor will it know when to stop further efforts.

Step Five - Tourism Marketing Basic Training

A solid understanding of tourism marketing basics helps the committee realistically rate their area's existing attractions and facilities. Communities often start their marketing considerations from the supply side; “What do we have and how can we promote it?” rather than considering the demand side: “What do tourists want and how can we provide it?” What do tourists want? Some of the most popular tourism motivators include:

- social interaction with family, friends and locals
- experiencing different cultures
- sightseeing
- shopping
- being pampered
- getting a break from routine
- achieving goals, learning something, trying something new

The tourism marketing basic training step is designed to help committee members appreciate the tourism exchange relationship - there has to be “value” for both sides: an experience for tourists that is worth their time and money, and benefits to the community commensurate with the costs of providing those experiences. The committee must understand that competition for tourists’ discretionary expenditure of time and money is intense, and that to be successful the area will need competitive advantage.

Step Six - Attraction and Facilities Inventory

This is the supply side of the tourism equation. It involves a thorough inventory of the community’s attractions and facilities and a realistic assessment of their quality. It addresses the questions: What does the community have to offer? What's there to do here? Which attractions have good potential to meet market demand? Is the community's public and private infrastructure ready to handle increased use?

A seven-page attractions inventory is employed identifying: cultural and heritage attractions, nature-based attractions, outdoor recreation opportunities, special events, and other unique area attractions ranging from windmills to the biggest, oldest, oddest etc. The committee is asked to realistically rate each attraction as either a local, weekend, or destination attraction. Also included are forms for rating: accessibility, public facilities and services, lodging facilities, and food service facilities.

The tourism marketing training and the attractions inventory should provide the committee with a clearer understanding of their community's tourism potential. These steps point out the community's strengths and weaknesses as a tourism destination. They suggest possible attractions to develop and identify any necessary service or infrastructure improvements. In Choteau the inventory of lodging facilities together with tourist number and income level figures from the snapshot revealed the opportunity for an upper scale hotel. Several local entrepreneurs built one. It's doing fine, providing the community with 20 new jobs.

Step Seven - Potential Project Identification

Armed with their knowledge of present tourism impacts, residents' attitudes, the community's vision and goals, marketing, and their ratings of attractions and facilities, committee members are better prepared to identify realistic potential projects. The potential project identification step takes them through a structured, criteria-based process to objectively select a few projects for further consideration.

The process starts with each individual listing potential projects. The projects are then recorded and numbered on flip chart paper. Each member uses a scoring form to rate projects as to their:

- Value to the tourist,
 - Will it satisfy a vacation motive?
 - Will it provide a reason to spend at least two more hours in the community?
 - Is access acceptable to visitors?

- Value to the community,
 - Will it bring in additional outside income?
 - Is it compatible with local lifestyles?
 - Will it maintain the natural beauty of the area?

- **Competitive advantage,**
 - Is the project unique to the area?
 - Is the price acceptable to both buyer and seller?
 - Is it a better value than similar offerings elsewhere?

Each project is rated on a scale of 0 to 2, (0 = no, 1 = maybe, and 2 = yes). The results are tabulated. The top four or five projects are retained for further scoping and analysis.

Step Eight - Initial Project Scoping

Once the top priority projects are selected they need to be “scoped out”. Scoping describes each proposed project as it would be in completed form, giving sufficient detail to assess its probable impacts. The size, location, construction, operation and maintenance costs, employee numbers and origins, and any revisions to existing plans and infrastructure are estimated. Scoping provides the committee and community with a draft project to review, modify, accept or reject.

The committee may need to enlist assistance from architects, planners, public works departments, contractors, engineers and operators of similar facilities to develop its estimates.

There are two main components of the scoping process: project description, and public service expenditure estimation. Project description requires detailing all the facilities that will be needed to complete the project. For example a dinosaur interpretation centre might consist of the main building, car parking, roads, utilities, sewer connections, water system, external displays, and perhaps separate maintenance facilities. Each would contribute to the total project cost. Employment for both construction and operation phases will also be needed in the project description to complete the project impact assessments in step nine. The public expenditure component identifies any additional costs incurred to raise the community's infrastructure and service carrying capacity to handle the project. Directions and worksheets for completing both components are included in the handbook.

Step Nine - Impact Analysis: Social, Economic, Environmental

The final step consists of analysing the probable social, economic and environmental impacts of each potential project.

The economic impact assessment uses cost and revenue estimates from the scoping step to conduct a cost / benefit analysis of each project. Only projects achieving a cost benefit ratio exceeding 1 are carried on to the social and environmental assessment phases. Worksheets and simple formulas for calculating the ratios are included in the handbook. A computer spread sheet program is also available that facilitates “what-if” considerations i.e. “What if we only attract half the visitors we expect?” or “What if we cut promotion costs by a third?” Further, the spreadsheet provides break-even analysis indicating how many visitors will be required for project revenues to just equal project costs. If that number of visitors can not reasonably be anticipated the project should not proceed.

The Social Assessment strives to identify the probable positive and negative impacts on quality of life. Impacts on local lifestyles, values, traditions, cultural heritage, and shifts in economic and political balances within the community are considered. It determines which individuals and / or groups are likely to be impacted and how. It attempts to specify who is likely to gain from a development and who is likely to lose, and by how much.

The Social Impact Assessment starts with development of a current demographic profile. Next, the Attitude Survey and Vision Statement are reviewed to predict probable community-wide acceptance of the proposal. Then the task force uses a matrix to determine which groups or individuals are likely to experience particular project impacts (i.e. changes in social relationships, recreational opportunities, or business survival). Representatives of potentially impacted sectors are asked what impacts they might expect from the proposed project and whether they consider those impacts acceptable. The results are compiled and the committee decides whether the proposal should proceed as planned, proceed with modifications or not proceed.

Finally, the proposed projects surviving the Economic and Social Assessment screenings are subjected to Environmental Assessment. A similar matrix is employed to identify potential impacts to: air quality, surface, and ground water quality, noise levels, solid waste disposal systems, archaeological and historical sites, visual amenities, natural landscapes, and wildlife. Again a “go, no-go, or go-with-modifications” decision is reached.

Results

Through the Community Tourism Assessment Process communities have developed a variety of tourism projects: wildlife viewing areas, a dinosaur-pit stop Information Centre, two

museums, a bridge walking mall, a convention centre, a swimming hole, snowmobile trail head facilities, four visitor Information Centres, a youth camp, a campground, a dinner train, a bird watching guide, a local information television station, rodeo ground facilities, a nature walk, an upper-scale hotel, improvements to a beneath-the-streets opium den and boot legging site, an historical smelter viewing stand, conversion of a depot to a theatre, and a lot of public toilets.

The project team:

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WORKSHOP PAPER
GREEN TOURISM BUSINESS SCHEME

Jon Procter

Consultant, Shetland Environmental Agency Ltd

The Shetland Environmental Agency Ltd (SEA Ltd) is an established Scottish company that has been operating since 1990. The company has considerable experience of environmental management, energy-related projects and, more recently, environmental design, including landscape architecture. SEA Ltd has been working with the Scottish Tourist Board since 1997 to establish the Green Tourism Business Scheme.

Green Tourism Business Scheme: Policy Statements

“Concern for the environment has reached an all time high and will continue throughout the rest of the decade.... This will put pressure on the industry to demonstrate new and existing tourism developments are environmentally sensitive and sustainable” Scottish Tourism Strategic Plan, 1994.

“Only a managed approach can protect the basic resource” Scottish Enterprise, Tourism Action Plan.

“Scotland’s image as a green destination formed the nucleus of our international marketing campaigns” Scottish Tourist Board Annual Report.

Why Go Green?

- 86% of overseas visitors score the environment as their main “like” in Scotland
- 1 in every 10 people in the UK are members of a conservation organisation
- Over 60% of travellers would prefer to deal with an environmentally responsible company
- 54% of meetings and incentive travel organisers now take green considerations into account when selecting a destination

Key Benefits of the Green Tourism Business Scheme

The GTBS Scheme benefits the business participating in the scheme, but also its customers, community and environment.

Benefits to businesses are; reduced costs leading to increased profits and market share, and also improved image. The community benefits from a high quality environment that has benefited from reduced energy and water consumption and reduced waste output from the business. Customers benefit from the enhanced quality of the experience.

Part of STB Quality Assurance Scheme

The scheme has three levels to allow for improvement; Bronze, Silver and Gold and allows flexibility for the businesses involved to take into account differences in geography, age, style, and local energy and waste options. The scheme involves stakeholders, customers, staff, the local community, insurers, shareholders and regulators and provides an opportunity for businesses and the potential to reach EMAS/ISO 14001 standard.

Auditing, Advice and Feedback

Audit

Audits are carried out by environmental specialist who score all nominated measures - Bronze level measures are either pass or fail, whilst Silver and Gold level measures are scored from 1 to 5. The organisation receives advice on improving its business (Going for Gold) along with general environmental information

Advice and Feedback

GTBS runs a telephone support line to help business undertake the measures and a newsletter is sent to members twice a year with information on new products, good practice, new members, interesting web sites, general green news etc.

The Three Levels of the GTBS

Bronze “Environmental Commitment” Basic Environmental Good Practice

Silver “Environmental Performance” Examples of Significant Good Practice and Performance Improvements

Gold “Excellence in Environmental Management” Significant Good Practice, Monitoring and Supplier Screening (ISO14001)

The Application Form

The form has 10 sections covering different “green” issues; waste, energy, water, transport, green products, training and monitoring, communication, wildlife and landscape, (Annex 1).

Self-Nominated Measures

A multiple choice for tourism business - it takes into account the regional environmental differences and encompasses the diversity of tourism business. The business chooses how to achieve environmental targets.

Summary of the Green Accreditation workshop session

The above outline was presented as an example of how a Green Accreditation Scheme may be established in order to promote effective practical and demonstrable environmental improvements, review existing business to establish industry specific baseline data and credit those businesses which had established practical environmental improvements.

Given the tourism industry’s micro-business nature a heavy emphasis on management systems and information control was not paramount in the GTBS, more emphasis being put on the practical outputs that management systems may deliver. These indicators were seen as one of the scheme’s main strengths and the reason it had achieved significant industry support as well as a positive local impact with small business advisors.

One of the threats highlighted during the workshop session was assessment of business impact. Smaller businesses may have lower impacts anyway, larger business may undertake more measures but may have higher costs per room etc.

Conflicts with quality were also highlighted. Overall it was agreed by the groups that quality and the environment need not clash and that many environmental features in buildings coincided with higher quality such as various heating controls etc.

The tendency for customers to demand more services was seen as a threat to the environment and that new leisure facilities in some hotels resulted in much larger environmental impact in comparison to other hotels. The GTBS does not tackle this issue in detail and the potential for a scheme, which assessed individual business impact and scored efforts to reduce it was considered as an alternative. It was highlighted that this might make a scheme much more complex, less transparent and more time consuming to accredit.

The costs of running the scheme were discussed and it was emphasised that a successful scheme should be reasonably priced with support to aid small businesses to save money and the environment.

Overall the example Green Tourism Business Scheme was seen as a useful first step in accreditation and its links with other European schemes and the European Ecolabel are a positive development for the future. The value of benchmarking and helping establish practical targets for small business was seen as vital in the successful development of green accreditation.

WORKSHOP PAPER
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM INDICATORS

Paul Allin

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Anne Petersen

Policy and Strategy Team, English Tourism Council

The aims of this workshop were the greater understanding of the role of sustainable tourism indicators and to gather further comments on the draft set of Wise Growth Indicators prepared by the English Tourism Council (ETC).

The Government's vision for sustainable development is that there is:

- Social progress
- Environmental protection
- Conservation of natural resources
- Economic growth

These are being monitored through a series of sustainable development indicators under the general heading of Quality of Life Counts (Department of the Environment, 1996, and DETR, 1999a and 1999b).

The Government's Wise Growth Strategy for tourism (DCMS, 1999) seeks to balance:

- Economic growth (with benefits spread throughout society)
- Social impacts and benefits
- Environmental impacts and benefits

As part of an effective policy framework for the wise growth of tourism, DCMS is committed to:

- Developing a series of national statistical indicators (DCMS, forthcoming)
- Supplemented by guidance on the development of compatible local indicators (being produced by a group led by the British Resorts Association).

All of this is taking place against a background of general improvements to the official statistical information used in policy and available for public debate:

- Greater emphasis on evidence-based policy making, calling for greater modelling and analysis, as part of the Modernising Government agenda
- Building Trust in Statistics (Economic Secretary, 1999) and the launch of National Statistics on 7th June 2000.

The work on sustainable tourism indicators passed to ETC after it was formed as the strategic body dealing with tourism in England, replacing the English Tourist Board. ETC presentation slides are included in Annex 2.

Conclusion

There was a wide-ranging discussion in the workshop sessions. The main points were:

- Need to be totally clear on the purpose and use of any indicators
- Still not entirely clear what sustainable tourism means, perhaps because the policy is being developed alongside the development of indicators
- Local needs for indicators may differ markedly from national needs. Also, the data available locally will often be different from national data
- In particular, local data should be closely connected with the monitoring of local agenda 21 (and this could also give national data if a constant sample of reference sites was used to collect data)
- The definition and compilation of sustainable development indicators call for a strong dose of pragmatism and innovative use of data that might be readily available
- We should follow the DETR approach and adopt a phased introduction of indicators as they become available
- Ideally there would be indicators covering waste management, recycling, energy efficiency etc within the tourism industry, although these were virtually impossible to measure
- The proposed indicators were a little light on the theme described by DETR as 'sending the right signals', though which any adaptation of tourism behaviour to contribute to sustainability should be monitored
- Similarly, it was proving difficult to measure the extent to which goods and services were sourced locally and tourism economic benefits remained within the locality.

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WORKSHOP PAPER
SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT: THE HAREWOOD HOUSE PROJECT

Alan James

Consultant, Ecologica, and

Jean Hunter

Director of Marketing, Harewood House Trust

Introduction

The sustainable transport workshop explored the development of strategies to promote car-free modes of travel in recreational and tourist trips, and at the same time to reduce the extent of car use for such trips. The distinction between the two sides of the coin is important, since in many cases the pressures of leisure activities are intense and not just confined to traffic impacts, and it is important that car-free tourism initiatives do not simply add to the pressures without compensatory benefits, if true sustainability is to be achieved.

The workshop presented and discussed the topic area with reference to the 'Easy Arrivals' project at Harewood House near Leeds, being undertaken by Eco-Logica and Transport for Leisure on behalf of Transport 2000, in partnership with the Harewood House Trust. The workshop was presented jointly by Alan James of Eco-Logica and Jean Hunter, Director of Marketing for the Trust.

Sustainable Transport Principles and Strategies

The central principle of sustainable transport is to reduce the consumption of non-renewable resources and the impact of transport on environmental systems, and to maximise access to transport for all people. There are three core components:-

- reducing the need to travel
- reducing distances travelled
- reducing reliance on and use of less sustainable transport modes

These principles underpin the current transport strategy of central government, to shift away from promoting and providing for road vehicle transport (the least sustainable land mode), towards managing demand for road transport and diverting a proportion of that demand, to

reduce traffic. The strategic policy shift dates from around 1994, and largely achieved its present form in the Transport White Paper of July 1998.

The first two strategic components may be difficult for many leisure operators to address. Their location is often fixed by the nature of the attraction - as at Harewood House - and there is little the operator could do, and no commercial incentive, to reduce travel demand by discouraging visitors, or to reduce distances travelled by restricting their catchment area. The third component, promoting a shift away from the least sustainable transport modes (high consumption and high impact) towards the more sustainable, is however both practicable and potentially beneficial.

In practical terms, for land-based transport of people, this means promoting walking, cycling, and public transport, and reducing private car use, as expressed in the sustainable transport hierarchy, which sets out the different modes of transport in order of sustainability:

- walking
- cycling
- public transport
- coach
- two wheeled motor vehicle
- multi-occupancy vehicle
- single occupancy vehicle

The important point about the hierarchy is that it is sequential; the modes should be looked at in order to ensure that opportunities for the most sustainable mode are maximised before going on to look at the next mode. The one exception is for people with mobility disadvantages whose needs should be given high priority even though they may often be car users.

Visitor Transport Plans

Visitor Transport Plans (VTP), as being developed and tested at Harewood, are the equivalent of Green Transport Plans (GTP) for journeys to work, and involve a similar approach through the following stages:

- a questionnaire to establish existing travel behaviour and the propensity of visitors to change their travel patterns, ideally backed up by some focus group discussions

- establishing contact with local authorities, public transport operators, tourist boards, local communities
- information gathering on transport networks, public transport provision, local authority policy context
- current modal split estimate and modal shift potential
- measures to achieve modal shift
- implementation programme and timescale

The Harewood project has explored the extent to which this approach is applicable to tourist and recreational travel, and the extent to which a shift in behaviour is achievable in leisure travel. It has found that, although there are obvious differences between paying customers and employees these do not significantly affect the underlying reasons for travel choices. Furthermore, although leisure operators seeking to attract the paying public will not want to do anything that might discourage visitors, this is paralleled by employers' concerns to recruit and retain staff. The mind set need not be different, and a VTP can demonstrate to operators the benefits that flow from a well conceived transport plan. These benefits can be summarised as:

- opening up new non-car visitor markets through better provision for alternative transport modes
- adjusting the balance of visitors, for example to increase spend from constant numbers, to spread visitor load away from peak periods, or to meet non-transport objectives
- combating the deterrent effects of traffic congestion on recreational car use, which is already thought to be contributing to declining visitor numbers in some pressurised tourist areas
- meeting conservation priorities by controlling car access, to maintain both the intrinsic conservation value of the asset and the quality of the recreational experience for visitors
- minimising the high and often under-estimated costs of providing for cars, in particular avoiding the capital costs and site planning problems of new provision
- realising the mutual benefits that transport plans can unlock through partnership working with local authorities, local communities, and public transport operators; or simply improving relationships to the benefit of all
- expediting planning permission; transport plans are becoming as essential for new leisure developments or expansions as are commuter plans for most types of commercial development

Probably the most significant new element of a VTP, compared with A GTP, is the potential not only to bring about modal shift away from car use in existing travel patterns, but also to generate new and different markets with different travel characteristics; for example providing new public transport links opens up a site to people without access to cars. This is an important tool for changing the overall modal share of each form of transport, but in isolation runs the risk of adding to recreational pressures without delivering benefits. A comprehensive sustainable transport strategy will use both modal shift measures and development of new non-car markets to achieve its overall objectives.

The Harewood Visitor Transport Plan

The Harewood House Trust had clear objectives at the outset, which were outlined in the workshops:

- **Audience development:** to target new visitors without access to a car, as a commercial imperative to maintain visitor numbers, and to promote social inclusion in pursuit of its educational objectives
- **Conservation:** to reduce the visual intrusion of cars and car parking around the House and in its listed parkland setting, which is being damaged by occasional but increasing use OF overflow parking
- **Profile:** to raise the profile of Harewood, providing a platform for media coverage to be used to 'position' Harewood with emphasis on its wide remit in education and conservation work
- **Green Issues:** to improve understanding of green transport policies and transport data analysis in the context of Harewood, and to set existing public transport initiatives in a policy framework
- **Partnership focus:** to use the impetus of the project to establish potential longer term partnerships
- **Public Access to Estate:** to manage public access on the estate's network of footpaths and bridleways in a way that minimises the impacts of traffic and parked cars on local communities and improves the safety of access to the estate for non-motorised users

The Trust was already active in promoting public transport, especially the existing Leeds-Harrogate bus service (no 36) which runs past the main gate, and this year have introduced a themed ticket to give admission discounts to bus users, and a shuttle buggy for the mile-long approach between the gate and the House, which was previously a considerable disincentive

to bus use. However, it recognised that these individual initiatives needed to be placed in a strategic framework.

A questionnaire was devised, based on commuter studies but modified for leisure travel purposes. A pilot survey obtained 249 responses, which yielded the following main conclusions:

- over 80% of visitors come by car
- no respondents walked or cycled, and only one came by motorcycle
- 90+% of car trips are multi-occupancy, and around 45% of all car trips are with children
- around 70% of visitor trips start from home, and over half of these are with children
- almost half of all respondents said they would be likely to change from car use some of the time, with measures to encourage alternatives in place
- visitors staying in the area were much less likely to change
- first time visits account for between 1/3 and 1/2 of all trips, but are much higher (70+%) amongst visitors staying in the area; many more people travelling from home are repeat visitors.
- there is little difference between first time and repeat visitors, or between people with or without children, in their likelihood of changing from car use
- 87% of reasons given for using cars concerned convenience, time flexibility, or perceived lack of alternatives
- public transport is the most likely alternative to car use for people open to change, and the vast majority of these would use it some rather than most of the time
- the most important encouragement to public transport use would be more direct routes from home areas, but the shuttle buggy from the main gate is also important, along with better interchange, better information, and cost incentives
- repeat visitors come to Harewood mostly because of experience of previous visits; first time visitors mostly find out about Harewood by word of mouth or through tourist information leaflets,

The most important finding is that around half of all car-borne visitors stated a likelihood of changing from car use some of the time if encouragements to use alternatives were in place. There was little difference in propensity to change between repeat visitors travelling from home, often with children, and first time visitors, contrary to conventional wisdom that it is easier to persuade first time visitors to change because they do not have established travel patterns. Whilst the survey numbers are relatively small, and there is many a slip between

people saying they will do something and doing it when the time comes, there is every reason to conclude that at Harewood a reduction in car trips of 10-15% could be achieved over three years.

Using these and other findings from the questionnaires, and revisiting the overall project objectives, the Harewood VTP has identified three groups of people on whom to focus efforts to promote greater use of non-car travel:

- new markets, in particular non-car owners in residential areas along the 36 bus route in Leeds; organised groups mostly travelling by coach; and inclusive public transport packages most probably with train operators
- home-based repeat visitors, with or without children, living in areas accessible by direct public transport (existing or proposed) or through improved interchange, and possibly in areas accessible by cycle, to be informed and encouraged by on-site promotion
- people staying in Harrogate, within direct reach of Harewood by public transport, to be informed and encouraged by tourist information channels

The main types of proposal are:

- additional public transport routes to increase the catchment area with direct public transport links or high quality interchange, especially to the West
- a multi-modal sustainable transport corridor to maximise walking and cycling accessibility, with public transport in a support role, from the Leeds urban area
- a management plan for safe and pleasant walking and cycling throughout the Harewood estate
- enhancing existing car-free visitor access and incentives, and ensuring that non-car access is to the highest standards of convenience, safety, and reliability
- identifying the new market of non-car users in the 36 bus corridor, in partnership with Leeds County Council tourism development section and using databases held by the Council and York Tourist Board
- maximising the message of the availability and advantages of non-car travel in all Harewood's promotional material
- establishing car-free tourism packages with public transport operators, local accommodation businesses, and other attractions in the area
- setting up special events which either focus on car-free travel, or lend themselves to packages with inclusive public transport

Conclusions and Wider Application

The Harewood House Easy Arrivals project has indicated that there is real potential to wean a proportion of recreational travel away from the private car to more sustainable modes, without detriment to the commercial priorities of leisure attractions and with tangible benefits to their operators and to sustainable transport in the area of their location.

It also illustrates the need to obtain detailed information about individual sites, rather than generalising from the apparent nature of recreational travel. Nowhere is typical, and it would be unwise to extrapolate the situation at Harewood to other 'stately homes', even those similarly located in relation to major conurbations, let alone to completely different types of attraction at different types of location.

The project has questioned some common assumptions about leisure travel, in particular that it is difficult to persuade people to forego the convenience of car use during recreational trips, and that it is easier to persuade first time visitors not to use cars than repeat visitors with entrenched behaviour patterns. It has highlighted the importance of repeat visitors, and their receptiveness to changing travel behaviour, at least at Harewood. It has also highlighted the positive potential for using transport plans pro-actively, to generate new visitor markets.

The value of Visitor Transport Plans to contribute to sustainable transport strategies, at national, regional, and local levels is clear. Equally clear are the real advantages for leisure operators who position themselves to meet changing demands in an increasingly competitive market. Patterns of travel behaviour are constantly in a state of flux, and it would be unwise to extrapolate the present state of car dependence for leisure travel into the future, since there is mounting evidence, especially in the regions of highest car ownership, that the car is no longer delivering an efficient or environmentally acceptable means of transport. Car access is increasingly identified with problem status, and those who are ahead in making alternative transport provision will reap rewards.

ANNEX 1. GREEN TOURISM BUSINESS SCHEME APPLICATION FORM

The Application Form

Section 1 – Compulsory Measures

- to ensure GTBS applicants meet with minimal standards
- legal compliance
- basic tidiness and cleanliness
- have a member of Staff with Environmental Responsibilities

Section 2 – Focus on Waste Minimisation

- reduction – bulk purchase, return schemes
- reuse – refill bottles, rechargeable batteries, paper
- recycling – Bottle Banks, soaps, cooking oil

Section 3 – Focus on Energy Efficiency

- appliances – 1000 Watt kettles, low energy appliances
- lighting – low energy lights, dimmer switches
- space heating – thermostatic radiator valves, time clocks
- domestic hot water and draught proofing – draught sealing main doors, instant hot water systems

Section 4 – Focus on Water Savings

- water re-use – re-circulation in modern/commercial dishwashers, grey water re-circulation units
- good Practice – avoiding leaks and dripping taps, use of economy cycle on washing machines
- water minimisation – flow regulators, water butts, urinal controllers, reduce flush toilets

Section 5 - Focus on public transport, cycling and walking

- public transport – information on public transport, walking/pedestrian routes
- bike/car – bike hire information, cycle racks, secure bike storage
- car travel – staff car share/electric/LPG vehicles

ANNEX 1. GREEN TOURISM BUSINESS SCHEME APPLICATION FORM

Section 6 – Focus on Purchasing Green Products and Supplier Screening

- supplier screening – green correspondence
- recycled products – office paper, toilet paper, recycled plastic containers or bags, printer cartridges
- food products – local food and drink, organic or “home grown” produce, membership of the Natural Cook
- eco-sensitive products – phosphate/chlorine free products, pump action sprays

Section 7 – Focus on Raising Staff Awareness and Monitoring

- Environmental Awareness – environmental issues in staff induction and training, feedback between staff on environmental issues, staff “green” notice board, staff suggestion box
- environmental monitoring – energy monitoring, waste monitoring, water consumption meter readings, transport monitoring, environmental feedback through visitor responses

Section 8 – Focus on Communication of Environmental Practices to Guests

- joint ventures - contacts or joint ventures with other GTBS members
- community – business involved in “green” community projects
- World Wide Web – business has e-mail and or website to take bookings

Section 9 – Focus on Measures to Support Local Wild Plants and Animals

- planting native species, establishing a wildlife area, putting up a bird or bat box, business helps support a Wildlife Initiative, information on local nature reserves or wildlife parks

Section 10 – Bonus

- any examples of innovation or particularly good practice not covered by other sections.

ANNEX 2. SUSTAINABLE TOURISM INDICATORS

National Wise Growth Indicators

- Why have national sustainable indicators?
- How were they developed?
- Which indicators have been chosen?
- How will these indicators measure sustainability?
- How do these relate to other performance indicators?
- How are they relevant to me?
- What are the next steps?

Origin and purpose

- DCMS's new tourism strategy – Tomorrow's Tourism
- Pursuit of wise growth in the tourism sector
- Commitment to achieve economic, social and environmental balance
- In response, ETC developed indicators to track progress of domestic tourism towards sustainability
- Take into account DCMS work and recommendations from ETC Board Members.

VICE Principle

- Indicators classified using this framework
- Sustainable tourism encompasses four broad themes:
 - Visitor satisfaction (V)
 - Industry profitability (I)
 - Community acceptance and benefit (C), and
 - Environmental protection and enhancement (E).
- Together they are known as the VICE principle
- Holistic approach to achieve harmony

Scope of the Indicators

- Not intended to give full picture – snapshot picture
- Indicative and indicators are 'headline'
- Local indicators needed for detailed picture
- However, no commonly agreed local indicators
- Ideal work bottom-up
- Provide a structure for bottom-up approach

ANNEX 2. SUSTAINABLE TOURISM INDICATORS

Approach / methodology

- Availability of data and cost
- National data vs local data
- Apply Standard Industrial Classification codes
- Relevance to the industry and wise growth
- Clarity in showing changes over time
- Need for a phased approach

Suggested Indicators

1. *Satisfaction of visitors*

- Range of staff qualifications
- Quality assured accommodation
- Accommodation accessible by disabled people

2. *Health of the Industry*

- Net domestic holiday spend
- VAT registrations
- Contribution to GDP
- Spend per employee
- Seasonality

3. *Benefits to the community*

- Workforce employed
- Hourly earnings
- Spend by region

4. *Protecting and Enhancing the Environment*

- Quality of beaches/ coastal zones
- Use of public transport
- Carbon dioxide savings

Seasonal load

- Measurement: low Season occupancy against High Season occupancy
- Rationale: even spread of visitor numbers throughout the year more sustainable

ANNEX 2. SUSTAINABLE TOURISM INDICATORS

- Availability: UK occupancy survey, annual results
- Issues: does not incorporate day visits, accommodation only; spend needed too.
- Target: reduce difference between High Season and Low Season
- Baseline data: average Bedspace Occupancy from 1997 to 1998 was 53% during the High Season and 38% during the Low Season.

Links to other indicators

- DETR Quality of Life Counts
- National Best Value Indicators for Tourism Services
- Local indicators – guidance
- Partnerships

What next?

- Progress the work in phased approach
- Continuous development: new data, new issues
- Regular reporting on progress
- Regular review

Your views

- Considering constraints
- Are the suggested indicators suitable for measuring sustainable tourism?
- Information of other data sources?

ANNEX 3. BACKGROUND TO HAREWOOD HOUSE TRUST AND ESTATE

Harewood; the Distinction between Trust and Estate

Harewood as a major visitor attraction was established mainly with the opening of Bird Garden in 1970 (although had been partially open to the public on a regular basis since 1950, and the whole House since 1965 and Princess Mary's death). Visitors built to the peak of 300,000+ in early-mid 1970s, then started to decline late 70s/early 80s. A major review of the structure, management and future of the House is planned to look at how to secure the future and integrity of the House / Collections.

Harewood House Trust established in 1986 as an independent, educational charitable Trust to conserve and maintain the House, grounds, and collections for the public benefit. The Trust has no regular financial support from local or central government, all its income is self-generated from admission ticket sales, catering and retail revenues, sponsorship and fundraising.

The Trust is entirely separate to the Harewood Estate which manages Harewood land and property, through farming, land management and, increasingly, through diversification. It also has serious concern for environmental and conservation issues around the countryside. Harewood Estate is a limited company.

Harewood House Trust - The Public Attraction

It was the first independent country house to be registered as a Museum (1994), and the only one to be awarded Museum Designation (1998) - acknowledging the outstanding nature and national importance of the collections. Core collections supplemented by changing programme of exhibitions (historic and contemporary), and extensive adult and school education programmes. Grounds and gardens include Lakeside Bird Garden (c100 species of birds) which is renowned for breeding endangered species, as well as hugely popular penguins, flamingos, owls etc. It has a diverse programme of outdoor special events. A proactive, innovative marketing strategy and highly effective P.R. campaigns bring in 260-300,000 visitors per year. Harewood was voted Visitor Attraction of the Year (1995), and runner up (1999).

The vast majority of visitors arrive by car (excluding coach parties and school groups - 4% and 3.5% respectively of overall visitors). There are over 7,000 Harewood Cardholders -

ANNEX 3. BACKGROUND TO HAREWOOD HOUSE TRUST AND ESTATE

loyal, repeat, and usually local visitors (who constitute around 1/3 of annual visitor figures).

Harewood Estate - Public Access and Education

Harewood Estate is committed to a conservation approach to land management and has an educational remit in terms of interpreting the land and its usage, especially wildlife management. Public footpaths and bridleways criss-cross the Estate (public access) which is increasing the problem of car parking in local village and approach roads by walkers causing a hazard.

ANNEX 4. BREAKING NEW GROUND IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PROGRAMME

9.00	Registration
9.30	Welcome and Introduction by Chairman Richard Dickinson , <i>English Tourism Council</i>
9.45	Richard Denman , <i>Tourism Company</i> . Author " <i>Towards Quality Tourism. Integrated Quality Management of Rural Tourist Destinations</i> ".
10.30	Coffee/ Tea
10.50	Peter Moore OBE , <i>Managing Director, Center Parcs UK</i>
11.35	David Sharpe , <i>Author of Community Tourism Assessment Handbook, USA</i>
12.20	Introduction to workshops
12.30	Lunch
1.30	Workshop session 1 - <i>Selecting one workshop from a choice of four</i>
2.45	Workshop session 2 - <i>Selecting one workshop from a choice of four</i>
4.00	Coffee/ Tea
4.15	Plenary Session
4.50	Summing up by Chairman
5.00	Close

Workshops

- a) Community Development of Tourism Strategies *led by David Sharpe*,
How can communities be engaged to create their own tourism strategies and how can these strategies be turned into reality?
- b) Sustainable Transport *led by Alan James, Ecologica Consultants and Jean Hunter, Harewood House Trust*
Planning, setting up and running a sustainable transport scheme. What methods can be used to attract the business partnerships necessary and how can the scheme be publicised to the public?
- c) Sustainable Tourism Indicators *led by Paul Allin, Department of Culture, Media and Sport and Anne Petersen, English Tourism Council*
How can Sustainable Tourism Indicators be used to measure the sustainability of tourism, and how can the results provide a basis for more sustainable working practices?
- d) Green Accreditation Scheme *led by Jon Procter, Shetland Environment Association*
What does Accreditation mean for businesses? How can accreditation schemes be promoted?

ANNEX 5 SPEAKER AND WORKSHOP LEADER BIOGRAPHIES**Paul Allin**

Chief Statistician (and Head of Social Policy) at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

Paul Allin is the Chief Statistician (and Head of Social Policy) at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), the UK government department leading on tourism policy. He has responsibility for statistics and social research across the department's policy areas and for the department's contribution to social inclusion. He also chairs the OECD tourism statistics working party.

After studying mathematics and statistics at Manchester University, Paul worked in the Central Statistical Office, the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Health & Safety Executive and the Employment Department.

He is Senior Hon Secretary of the Royal Statistical Society and secretary of the Statistics Users' Council. One of his current projects in DCMS is to work with the English Tourism Council to launch a first set of sustainable tourism indicators for England. He is also a member of a British Resorts Association working group, preparing guidelines on local indicators of sustainable tourism development.

Richard Denman MA PhD MTS

The Tourism Company author of "Towards Quality Tourism - Integrated Quality Management of Rural Tourist Destinations".

Dr Richard Denman graduated from the University of Cambridge with a degree in Economics, following a foundation in the Natural Sciences. He then undertook postgraduate research at the University of Edinburgh on tourism, recreation and economic development in rural Scotland, based on a commission by the Scottish Tourist Board and Highlands and Islands Development Board.

For ten years he worked for the Heart of England Tourist Board as both Development Director and Marketing Director. He became a tourism consultant in 1988 and went on to become a founding Director of The Tourism Company, a leading small, specialist tourism consultancy with offices in London and Herefordshire.

As a consultant, he has carried out commissions for national and local government, public sector bodies and commercial companies, including policy documents, tourism and recreation

ANNEX 5 SPEAKER AND WORKSHOP LEADER BIOGRAPHIES

strategies, marketing plans, feasibility studies and creative marketing assignments.

Richard has considerable experience of rural and sustainable tourism, and has been involved with many projects in this field for national agencies and local authorities. In the 1990s he undertook major studies for the ETB and Countryside Commission on farm tourism, tourism in national parks, and opportunities for local action in sustainable tourism. Most recently he prepared the current consultation paper *Rural Tourism: Working for the Countryside*, for the ETC and The Countryside Agency.

At a European level he has served on a panel preparing a charter for sustainable tourism in national parks and protected areas. He has recently completed a study for the European Commission of integrated quality management in rural tourist destinations, based on 15 case studies from across the whole of the European Economic Area. He also has wide experience in Eastern Europe and is currently working on a plan for developing sustainable tourism in a part of Belarus – a considerable challenge!

He has lectured widely on tourism across Europe and has been the external examiner in tourism for Oxford Brookes and Sheffield Hallam Universities.

Richard Dickinson

Head of Policy & Strategy, English Tourism Council

Richard Dickinson is Head of Policy & Strategy at the English Tourism Council (ETC) – the new strategic body for tourism in England. His role includes developing the Council's policies and programmes on sustainable tourism and working with others to help deliver the Government's 'Wise Growth' objectives set out in 'Tomorrow's Tourism'.

Prior to joining the ETC, Richard was Vice President of Policy & Communications at the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), a private sector association representing the world's leading tourism companies. At WTTC he worked at an international level advising governments on tourism policy and helping develop Agenda 21 type programmes relevant for both the public and private sectors.

He also spent 5 years as a civil servant at the European Commission developing tourism policy in an EU context and specialising in tourism and its linkage to the environment. Prior to joining the Commission he was responsible for rural tourism at the English Tourist Board. He is a Board member of the *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*.

ANNEX 5 SPEAKER AND WORKSHOP LEADER BIOGRAPHIES**Jean Hunter***Harewood House Trust*

Jean Hunter graduated from Warwick University 1977 – in French and Cultural Studies!

Jean has worked since then in arts and leisure marketing and PR for Nottingham Playhouse; East Midlands Arts; Midland Group Contemporary Art Centre, Nottingham 1985-93 Head of Marketing and PR for National Museum of Photography, Film & TV, Bradford.

1993 – present – freelance consultant – primary client Harewood House Trust, with other clients including NMPFT, York Museums, and other Museums and Arts Centres up and down the country. Working on marketing and communications strategies and campaigns, corporate development programmes, sponsorship and fundraising. Member of the Yorkshire Tourist Board Private Sector Members Group; founder member of the consortia 'Yorkshire's Great Houses, Castles and Gardens', and 'Yorkshire Attractions Group'.

Alan James*Ecologica Consultants*

Qualifications: Bsc (Geography), MA (Landscape Architecture), MLI (Member of the Landscape Institute)

Alan is a geographer and a landscape architect, with over 25 years professional experience in both environmental assessment and landscape design. His work as a landscape architect became increasingly involved with environmental issues associated with transport, and with streetscape design in conjunction with traffic calming, notably in Edinburgh from 1990-96. In 1996 he joined Eco-Logica and became more intensively engaged in strategic sustainable transport planning.

With Eco-Logica, Alan has taken part in some of the pioneering green commuter plans, including at Derriford Hospital, Plymouth (1996) and the Pfizer site at Sandwich (1997/ 98). Eco-Logica are now taking forward an initiative for Surrey County Council to implement the principles of Green Transport Plans integrally across several journey types in the town of Guildford.

In 1998, Alan produced a new methodology for appraising the impact of traffic on rural areas, for the then Countryside Commission (now Agency), now known as TAIMS (Traffic Appraisal and Impact Monitoring Systems) and about to be piloted in practice with a County Council.

ANNEX 5 SPEAKER AND WORKSHOP LEADER BIOGRAPHIES

Eco-Logica were a member of the winning consultancy consortium for the Allerton Bywater Millennium Village competition, and Alan was responsible for transport elements of the competition strategy and design.

He is a member of the DETR/ ETSU advisory panel providing assistance to organisations implementing green transport initiatives, and provided advice to DETR on parking standards at hospitals and educational establishments for incorporation into the revised draft of PPG 13.

Alan is the project leader of the Easy Arrivals project at Harewood House, and a team member of the parallel 'Tourism without Traffic' project in East Sussex with particular responsibility for traffic management and community participation. These projects are important in pioneering the application of travel demand management principles in new areas.

Peter Moore OBE

Managing Director, Center Parcs UK

Peter Moore joined Center Parcs in August 1986 as Director of Sales and Marketing with total responsibility for launching the concept in Britain, having previously held the position of Marketing Director at Alton Towers from 1982 to 1986.

He was appointed Managing Director of Center Parcs UK in July 1989, shortly before the opening of the second British holiday village in August 1989.

In 1990, Peter was appointed to the company's International Executive Board which is responsible for international strategic development within the Center Parcs organisation. In 1996 he was appointed Chairman of the Center Parcs International Strategic Marketing Group.

He is a Board Member of the English Tourism Council, a Member of the CBI Tourism Action Group, and a Member of the Strategic Planning Working Group set up by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. Additionally Peter is a member of the Prince's Trust Business in the Environment Target Team, a member of the Tidy Britain Group's Policy Advisory Committee and was also appointed a Board Member of the East Midlands Regional Development Agency.

ANNEX 5 SPEAKER AND WORKSHOP LEADER BIOGRAPHIES

Peter holds a Bachelor's Degree in Modern Languages from Queen's University, Belfast and a Master's Degree in Leisure Management from Loughborough University.

One of the most respected figures in British leisure, he received his OBE in 1996 for Services to Tourism and in 1998 received an "Outstanding Contribution Award" from the English Tourism Council.

A former Irish international badminton player, and an ex-scratch golfer, Peter says he still likes to dabble in both sports.

Anne Petersen

Policy and Strategy Team, English Tourism Council

Anne Petersen is part of the English Tourism Council's Policy and Strategy Team. She is currently working on a variety of sustainable tourism initiatives including the development of the National Sustainable Tourism Indicators.

Jon Proctor

Shetland Environment Association

Jon Proctor is the EARA Environmental Auditor for Shetland Environment Agency Ltd. SEA Ltd have been working with the Scottish Tourist Board since 1997 to establish the Green Tourism Business Scheme. He set up the Scottish Green Accreditation more than 3 years ago and is closely involved in the English Pilot scheme at South Hams.

David Sharpe

Professor of Community Development, Montana State University

Dave Sharpe has been a Professor of Community Development with the Montana State University and University of Wisconsin Extension Services for 25 years. In addition to community development work in the Western U. S. he has worked on projects in Wales, Guam, Ponape, Samoa, Poland, Bulgaria and Macedonia. He currently chairs the U.S. Extension Service Tourism Education Task Force. His Farm and Ranch Recreation Programme was recognised by the U.S. Travel Industry Association as the top tourism education programme in the country in 1996. Dave holds a Masters of Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Wisconsin.

ANNEX 6 'BREAKING NEW GROUND IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM' DELEGATE LIST

Title	Surname	Name	Position	Organisation
Mr	Anderson	Ross	Director	ASA Consulting Company
Miss	Addie	Jo	Assistant Countryside Officer	The Countryside Agency
Mr	Batley	Mike	Team Leader - Lanarkshire	Central Scotland Countryside Trust
Mrs	Bayly	Jaki		Countryside Agency
Mr	Bentley	John	Senior Lecturer	Harper Adams University College
Mr	Blackburn	David	Conservation Manager (NW)	British Waterways
	Bowles	Judith	Partner	The Bowles Green Partnership
Mr	Bramich	Mark	Cycleways Officer	Groundwork Macclesfield and Vale Royal
Mr	Breakell	Bill	Tourism and Transport Officer	North York Moors National Park Authority
Ms	Brindle	Carolyn	Development Officer	Denbighshire County Council
Mr	Bunney	Michael	Manager	Festival of the Countryside
Mr	Busk	Anthony	Co-ordinator - Employment Research Training Development	University College of Ripon & York St John
Ms	Butterfield	Cathy		Countryside Agency
Miss	Cassell	Sue	Countryside & Environment Manager	Youth Hostels Association (England & Wales)
Mr	Climpson	Anthony	Tourism and Publicity Officer	New Forest DC
Ms	Collier	Chris	Chief Executive	Cumbria Tourist Board
Ms	Crouch-Smith	Julia	Sustainability Project Officer	CVA South Lakeland
Mr	Dagnall	Phil		Cei Associates
Ms	Dales	Bridget	Recreation & Access Officer	Scottish Natural Heritage
Mr	Esrich	Paul	Recreation and Access Officer	Scottish Natural Heritage
Mrs	Edwards	Mary	Regional Campaigns Co-ordinator, East of England	Friends of the Earth
Mr	Featherstone	Neil	Assistant Project Officer	Norfolk Coast AONB Project
Mr	Gates	Tony	Trust Manager	Mourne Heritage Trust
Mr	Gray	Julian	Information Manager	Sussex Downs Conservation Board
Mr	Grayson	Colin	Woodland Officer	Forestry Commission
Mr	Green	Steve	Head of Interpretation, Education and Communications	Countryside Council for Wales
Mr	Gregory	Richard		Peak District National Park
Miss	Gunningham	Kim	Policy Officer	DETR
Mr	Hackett	Malcolm	Project Officer	Nidderdale AONB Project
Mr	Harper	Paul	Senior Consultant	ADAS
Miss	Hawley	Susan	Coastal Access Project Officer	Isle of Wight Council
Miss	Heaps	Clare	Countryside Officer	Countryside Agency
Mr	Higgins-Wood	Brian	Countryside Officer (Regional Lead Recreation & Tourism)	The Countryside Agency
Mr	Hills	Guy	Policy Officer	Countryside Alliance
Miss	Hobson	Kim	Project Officer	Northumberland National Park Authority
Mr	Holmes	John	Area Manager	Derbyshire County Council
Mrs	Hopwood	Eirwen	Senior Countryside Ranger	Oldham Countryside Service
Ms	Houghton	Jane	Countryside Officer	Countryside Agency
Mr	Keech	Robert	Countryside Officer	Countryside Agency
Mr	Keirle	Ian	Lecturer in Countryside	University of Wales -

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Title	Surname	Name	Position	Organisation
			Management	Aberystwyth
Mrs	James	Kathy	Sustainable Tourism Officer	Involve Partnerships for Sustainability
Mr	Jones	Arwel	Festival Consultant	Festival of the Countyside
Mr	Jones	Matthew	Project Manager - Countryside And Heritage Interpretation	Image Makers
Mr	Lawler	Gareth	Countryside Officer	Countryside Agency
Mr	Leslie	David	Reader in Tourism	Glasgow Caledonian University
Ms	Lewis	Alison	Senior Lecturer	Department of Tourism
Ms	Lewis	Jane		Action for Conservation through Tourism
Mrs	Lock	Diana	Assistant Director	High Weald Land Management Initiative
Mr	Markham	David	Transport and Recreation Adviser	English Nature
Mr	McDonald	Richard	Policy, Research & Development Officer	Cumbria Tourist Board
Mr	Metcalfe	Martin	Lecturer in Leisure & Tourism	Warrington Collegiate Institute (Faculty of Higher Education)
Ms	Ovens	Helen	Rural Development Adviser	Farming and Rural Conservation Agency
Mr	Richardson	Brian	Executive Secretary	The Caravan Club
Mr	Robinson	Terry	Chief Countryside Ranger	Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park
Mr	Robinson	Richard		Scottish Natural Heritage
Ms	Roots	Natalie	Information Officer	Exmoor National Park Authority
Mrs	Russell	Deborah	Rights of Way Officer	Isle of Wight Council
Mr	Schofield	Andrew	Development Officer, Wales	Environment Agency, Wales
Miss	Sillito	Amanda	Policy Analyst	British Tourist Authority
Mr	Smith	Barney	Countryside Officer	Countryside Agency
Mrs	Shore	Helen	Tourism Project Officer	London Borough of Enfield
Dr	Smyth	Karen	Lecturer	Scottish Agricultural College
Mr	Speakman	Colin	Managing Director	Transport for Leisure Ltd
Mr	Swabey	James	Recreation Development Manager	Forest Enterprise
Mr	Taylor	Chris	Development Officer	Tourism and Environment Forum
Mr	Vernon	John		Plymouth University
Mr	Warren	Neil	Planning Officer	East of England Tourist Board
Mr	West	David	Senior Countryside Officer	Countryside Agency
Mr	Wilsher	Robert	Principal Planning Officer (Tourism)	Lancashire County Council
Mr	Wilson	Lawrence	Business Adviser	Yorkshire Tourist Board
Mr	Wise	Duncanq	Exmoor Paths Partnership Project Officer	Exmoor National Park Authority
Mr	Youell	Ray	Lecturer in Tourism Management	University of Wales - Aberystwyth