

HCC TOURISM STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT WORK
Working Paper 5: Summary of Hampshire's Tourism Strategy 2000-2005

Hampshire's Tourism Strategy 2000-05 states that:

"The County Council believes that tourism has a significant contribution to make to Hampshire's future prosperity, making it a better place in which to live and work"

The Strategy recognises that tourism can:

- √ **Boost the economy** - working like an export industry attracting additional money into the local economy, and helping to diversify rural economies and regenerate urban areas
- √ **Generate employment** - supporting some 36,000 full-time equivalent jobs throughout the economy
- √ **Create a positive image** - encouraging inward investment and civic pride
- √ **Sustain local facilities** - visitor spend helps support local facilities, improving the quality of local life
- √ **Support a better environment** - providing an impetus for protecting attractive environments, and the catalyst for regeneration of derelict areas.

The Strategy summarises Hampshire's strengths and weaknesses as a visitor destination - and these are in Appendix 1 of this paper.

It recognises the Challenges ahead for the sector, as competition grows and customer expectations increase. These include the need for sustainability, the prediction that funding sources were drying up, labour shortages and issues around skills levels.

The Strategy identifies the main ways in which patterns of tourism are changing as follows - and these continue to be the significant factors today:

- Rising expectations and a demand for higher quality
- Fewer families, more singles and active older age groups
- A more informal and spontaneous attitude to holidaymaking
- An increasingly volatile, fragmented and difficult-to-reach market
- Increasing importance of environmental quality and distinctiveness
- IT having a major impact on how people access information and book holidays - leading to greater consumer choice and competition.

It sets the 'strategic context' - recognising tourism as part of a coordinated approach which also encompasses planning and structure plans, cultural strategies, Local Agenda 21 plans, local tourism strategies, and local authority performance regimes

The Strategy proposes a **Vision for tourism in Hampshire** as an activity which:

- √ **Generates jobs and creates business opportunities**
- √ **Diversifies and supports the local economy**
- √ **Adds to the variety of local life and widens opportunities for culture and recreation**
- √ **Offers a rewarding experience for the visitor and creates a positive image of Hampshire**
- √ **Draws on the environmental quality of Hampshire and celebrates its distinctive character.**

The Strategy says this Vision is only achievable if tourism is properly managed and channelled, and with the active co-operation of all the agencies and organisations involved in tourism. It proposes five themes or principles which should form the basis for County Council initiatives and policies on tourism. These five key themes are:

- Safeguard Hampshire's environment and community interests
- Increase economic benefit
- Provide a quality product and experience
- Work together to create marketing impact
- Develop a better understanding of tourism.

The Strategy then sets out priorities for the whole county (not just the County Council) under each theme heading. These are set out in a table in Appendix 2 to this paper.

Finally, the Strategy describes the County Council's leadership and coordinating role.

An Action Programme for the County Council was then developed, setting out initiatives by the Tourism Section and by other departments of the County Council. This Action Programme was updated in 2002-03, showing that a significant number of the initiatives had been achieved.

You can read the Strategy in full at: <http://www.hants.gov.uk/rh/tourism/strategy/index.html>

APPENDIX 1: EXTRACT FROM HAMPSHIRE'S TOURISM STRATEGY 00-05 - SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Strengths

- Good rail and road network. Very accessible to major centres of population
- A major point of entry and gateway to the continent with direct ferry connections to France and Spain and local connections to the Isle of Wight. Easy access to Heathrow and Gatwick. Direct flights to some European cities
- Prosperous, well cared for county with sophisticated facilities
- Distinctive countryside with high landscape value and well maintained Rights of Way network
- The coastal waters and harbours of the Solent. Major focus of yachting and watersports and Calshot Activities Centre
- The Test and Itchen rivers, internationally renowned for fishing
- The New Forest
- The historic city of Winchester and attractive market towns such as Romsey and Petersfield
- Southampton and Portsmouth, major centres of business, culture, heritage, entertainment and shopping with urban waterfront areas
- Rich maritime, military and defence heritage accessible to the public
- Major visitor attractions of national standing such as HMS Victory, Beaulieu and Winchester Cathedral
- Literary associations such as Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, Gilbert White
- High profile international events - Southampton International Boat Show, Farnborough Air Show, International Festival of the Sea
- Good range of cultural and entertainment facilities
- Good quality food and drink
- Wide range of quality accommodation
- Year round tourism destination

Weaknesses

- Traffic congestion and overcrowding, especially in the New Forest and along the coast
- No particular county-wide identity
- Pleasant countryside but not remarkable
- Transit traffic passes through rather than stops in Hampshire
- Fragmented nature of the tourism industry makes co-ordination difficult
- Lack of seamless tourism information across the county
- Lack of accommodation in the rural areas
- Relative prosperity means that tourism is not always welcomed by locals
- Low hotel occupancy at weekends in some areas
- Lack of public transport to visitor attractions in the rural areas

APPENDIX 2 - EXTRACT FROM HAMPSHIRE'S TOURISM STRATEGY 00-05 - PRIORITIES

THEME A: Safeguard Hampshire's environment and community interests	THEME B: Increase economic benefit	THEME C: Provide a quality product and experience	THEME D: Working together to create marketing impact	THEME E: Develop a better understanding of tourism
PRIORITIES	PRIORITIES	PRIORITIES	PRIORITIES	PRIORITIES
Establishing effective planning policies to protect the character of Hampshire	Increasing high value tourism activity	Improving the standard of customer care and welcome	Establishing a stronger Hampshire branding where it makes good marketing sense to do so	Assessing economic impact on a regular basis through the use of the Cambridge model - a nationally recognised system for assessing economic impact in a local area
Working with environmental agencies and conservation groups to plan for visitor activity. Forging links with Agenda 21	Promoting a positive, quality image of Hampshire to the outside world	Highlighting what makes Hampshire special and distinctive through schemes such as Hampshire Fare	Marketing meaningful destinations not local authority boundaries	Carrying out an ongoing occupancy survey to establish performance
Consulting with local communities on tourism issues	Attracting higher value market segments such as overseas visitors, staying visitors and business tourism	Capitalising on new ways to deliver information to visitors through projects such as TourISt	Maintaining existing marketing groups to create product strength. Examples include Defence of the Realm, Test Valley Tourism, E. Hampshire Tourism Partnership, Portsmouth Harbour	Undertaking visitor surveys in destinations and at attractions to learn more about visitors
Establishing visitor management plans for areas under pressure	Encouraging day visitors to stay longer, spend more and return as staying visitors to participate in more activities	Maintaining the network of Tourist Information Centres	Developing Hampshire-wide themes and products to expand the appeal of the county	Better dissemination of market intelligence from STB downwards + also bet. organisations + operators in Hampshire
Making the tourism industry more environmentally aware	Promoting and supporting Hampshire's market towns and villages	Increasing participation in the harmonised quality standards scheme for accommodation	Undertaking a regular marketing audit to identify areas of duplication and gaps	More stringent monitoring of marketing campaigns including using online systems to measure bookings
Developing counter attractions to relieve the pressure on over-visited sites	Improving the performance of existing tourism businesses and stimulating new ones where appropriate	Promoting 'inspected only' accommodation	Developing better use of the Internet and other online media and new technologies for marketing purposes.	Turning the Strategy into Action
Increasing visitor use of public transport, walking and cycling	Training and equipping local people to take jobs in the industry	Promoting the use of benchmarking and health checks for destinations and		

		attractions		
Improving public transport in rural areas, linking in to local visitor attractions	Encouraging the industry to become better employers through schemes such as 'Partners in Success'	Identifying sites and priorities for new tourism development		
Promoting sustainable tourism initiatives	Improving skill levels within the tourist industry.			
Providing counter attractions to the New Forest through the Forests of Bere and Eversley				