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Killarney Resident Survey 2010

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KILLARNEY RESIDENT SURVEY 2010



Killarney National Park,
Department of the Environment,
Heritage and Local Government.



DIT-ACHIEV Project in Killarney

The *DIT-ACHIEV Model for the Sustainable Management of Tourism* has been developed by the School of Hospitality Management and Tourism, Dublin Institute of Technology and is endorsed by the Environmental Protection Agency and Fáilte Ireland. It explores six areas of interest - Administration, Community, Heritage, Infrastructure, Enterprise and Visitor.

The purpose of piloting this model in Killarney is to test its use in an Irish tourism destination, with the objective to refine and adjust its methodology, so that it can be applied in any Irish tourism destination.

Early indications are that the Model will provide the Irish Tourism Industry with a valuable tool for making its product and management far more sustainable.

In addition to data such as environmental measurements, information on water, waste, energy, transport, examination of local cultural,

landscape and employment statistics, the model requires the undertaking of three dedicated surveys:

- A Resident Survey
- A Business Survey
- A Visitor Survey

With the support of local volunteers, a Visitor Survey has been taking place throughout Killarney over the last 6 months, and results will be presented at the end of the season. A Business Survey will take place in the coming weeks, and this publication presents an overview of the findings from an on-line survey of 436 Killarney Town and Valley residents which took place in recent weeks.

This report presents Killarney people's attitudes and opinions regarding tourism and while some issues have emerged, the general response to the survey is that Killarney residents overwhelmingly support tourism.

DIT-ACHIEV
Killarney Residents
Overwhelmingly Support
Tourism

Project Highlights

In early 2010 a group of researchers from the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) began working with a team in Killarney to explore the sustainability of tourism in the area and plan for its future management.

Team Killarney is composed of five local partners:

- Killarney Chamber of Tourism and Commerce,
- Killarney National Park,
- Killarney Town Council,
- Muckross House Trustees
- Kerry County Council

During the past 12 months Team Killarney have met regularly with the DIT researchers and representatives of the two funding agencies - Fáilte Ireland and the Irish Environmental Protection Agency. The following are some of the key activities that have taken place:

In April and June, 2009 very well attended public consultation meetings took place to identify the key issues and challenges for tourism in Killarney.

In April 2009, October 2009 and April 2010 Frank Lewis has dedicated his Saturday Supplement programme on Radio Kerry to the project. National and international experts, project participants and the general public have all had the opportunity to discuss the research and find out about the overall project.

Regular articles have appeared in local papers such as the Killarney Advertiser and the Kerryman and the project (and Killarney) has also been profiled in national media such as the May 2009 edition of Hotel and Restaurant Times which dedicated a two page spread to the project.

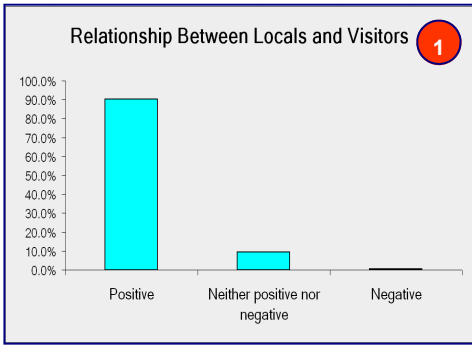
In October 2009 an international panel of experts visited Killarney with the project team, and added their expertise from around the world.

In late 2009 over 800 German DerTour travel consultants were told about the project during their time in Killarney

A number of presentations have been made by the project team at national and international conferences, raising the profile of the project and Killarney.

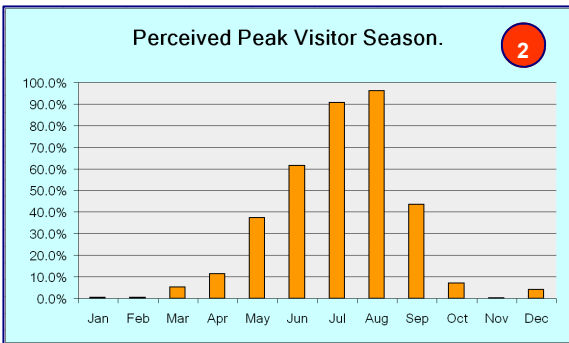


International Panel admire the view from Aghadoe Heights



Residents in Killarney have a very positive attitude towards visitors. **Chart 1** illustrates that 90% of residents state that locals and visitors have a positive relationship, while only 0.5% of all respondents see the relationship as negative.

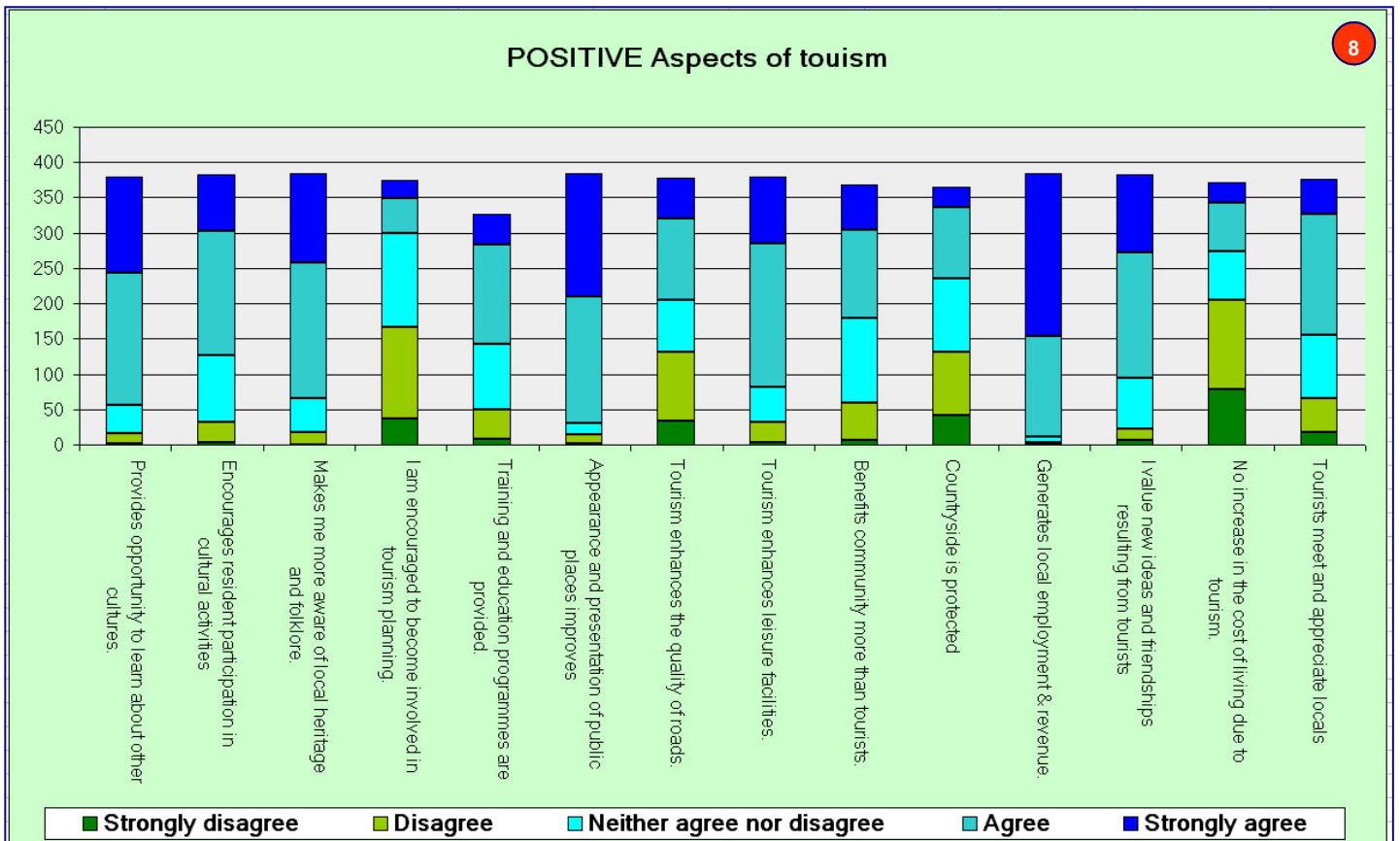
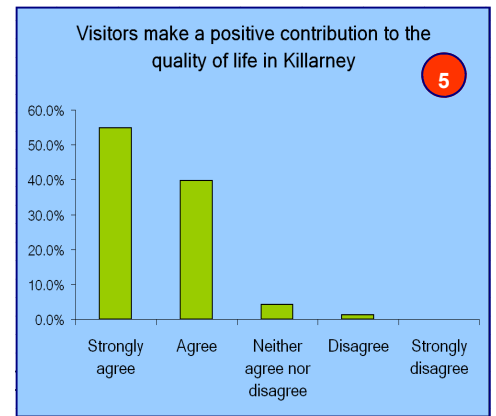
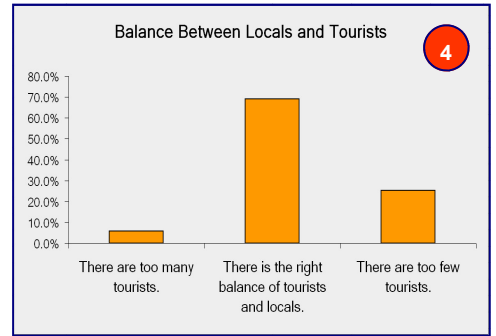
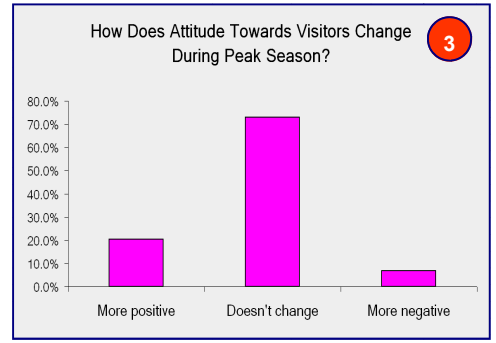
Chart 2 illustrates respondents view of the peak visitor season in Killarney. The correlation between this chart and the official data by organisations such as Fáilte Ireland demonstrates the mature view of Killarney residents regarding the industry.



In **Chart 7** The blue bars represent where tourism has Very Positive impacts. It is clear from this chart that the Local Economy and Job Creation are the most positive impacts with 82% and 61% of respondents respectively stating that tourism has a Very Positive impact in this regard. The red and pink bars represent Very Negative and Negative impacts respectively. The chart demonstrates that the impact of

Chart 3 outlines how the residents attitude toward visitors changes during the peak season. 73% state that their attitude does not change, 7% state that their attitude becomes more negative, however 20% state that their attitude becomes more positive.

Chart 4 shows that 69% of respondents feel that there is the correct balance between locals and tourists. 6% feel that there are too many tourists but 25% actually commented that there are too few tourists. In a destination such as Killarney where tourism is so important, such positive local support is essential. **Chart 5** further supports this view, with 95% either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement that tourists make a positive contribution to the quality of life in Killarney. 4% gave a neutral response to this question, while only 1% disagreed and none strongly disagreed with the statement. Finally **Chart 6** illustrates that 87% of respondents feel that Killarney is able to cope with the number of visitors it receives.



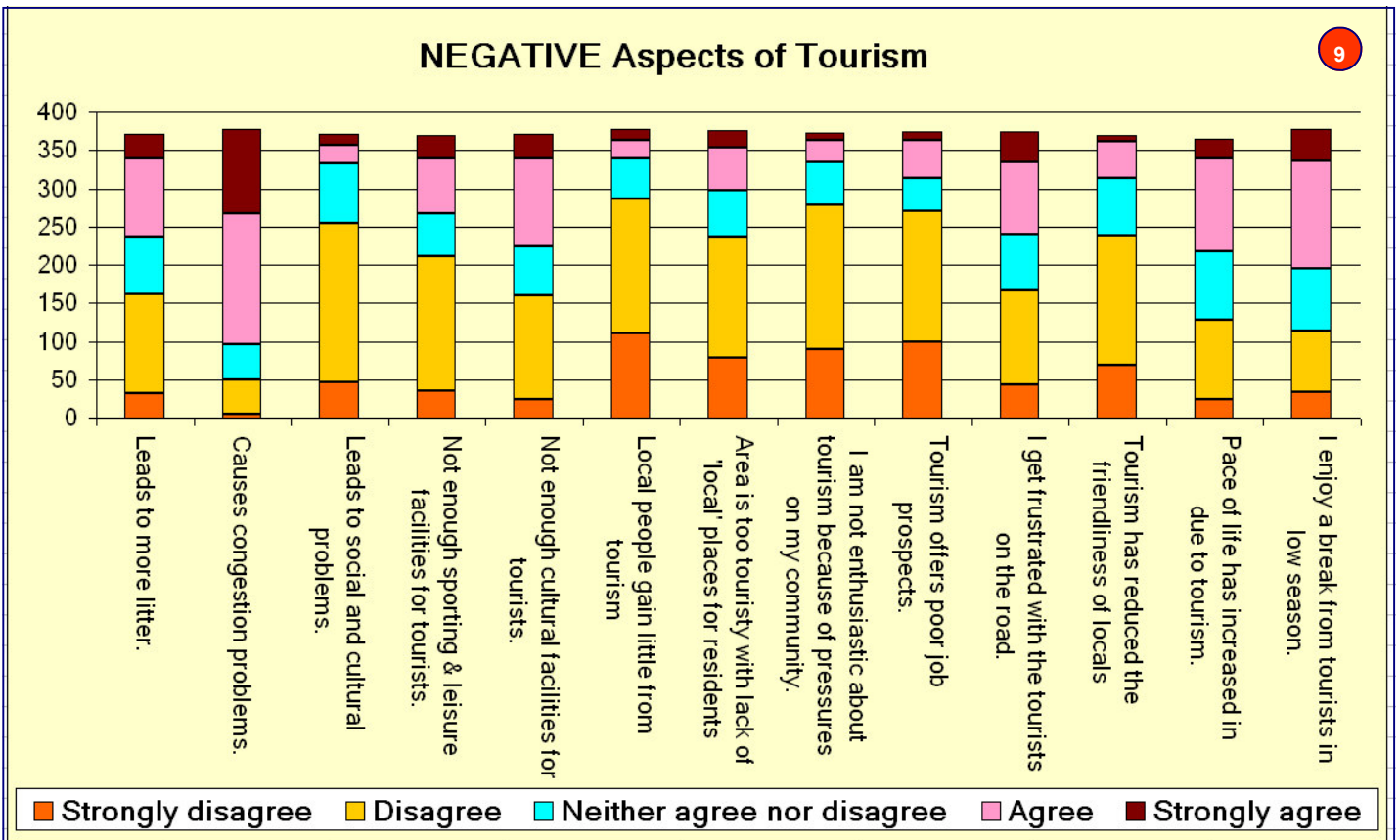
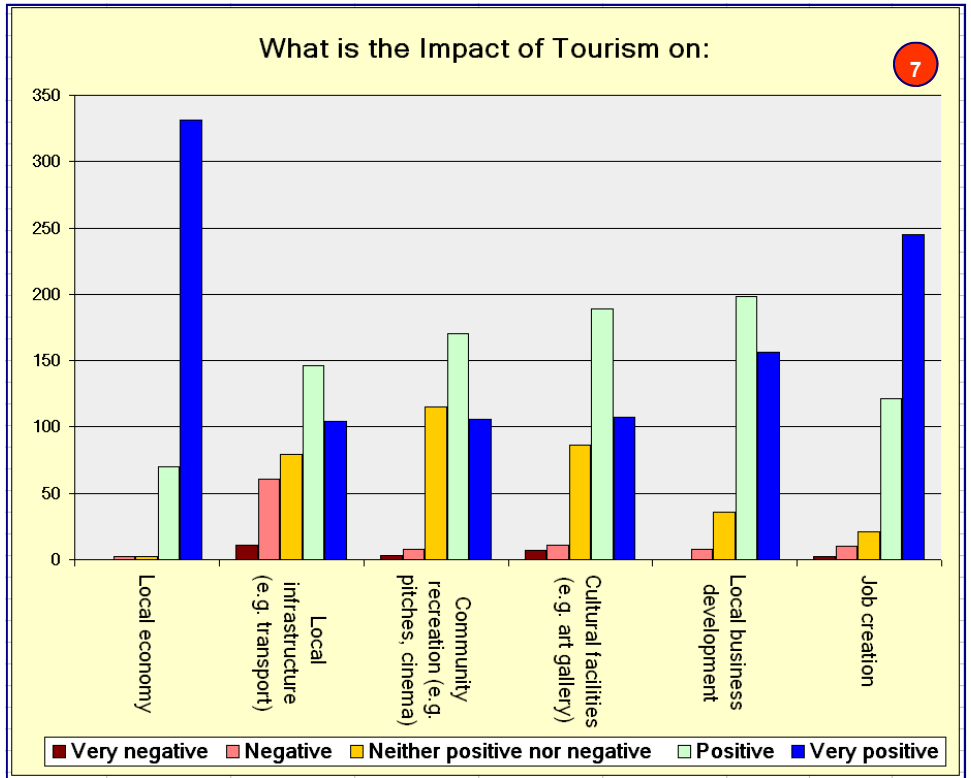
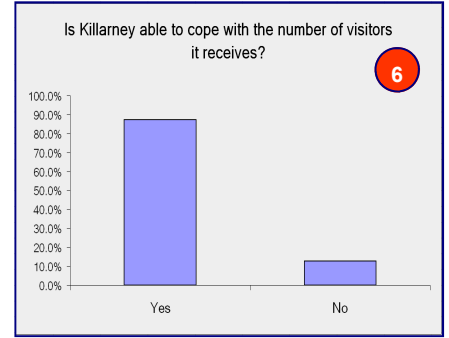
tourism on local infrastructure is the greatest negative, with 15% seeing this as Negative and a further 3% seeing the impact of tourism on infrastructure as being Very Negative.

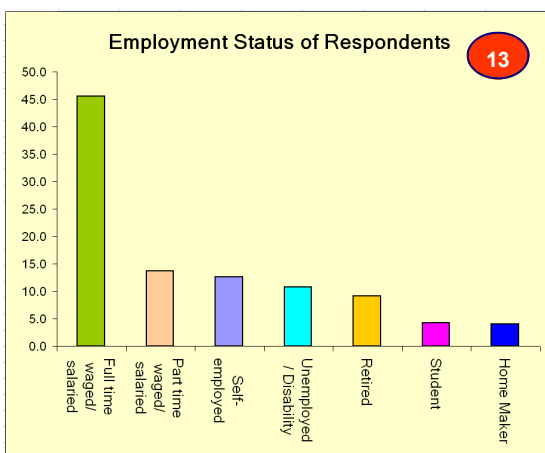
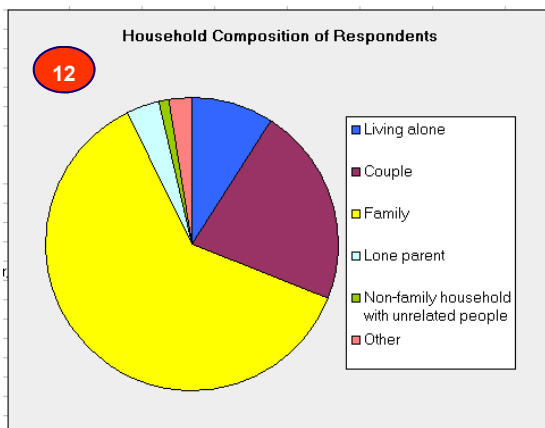
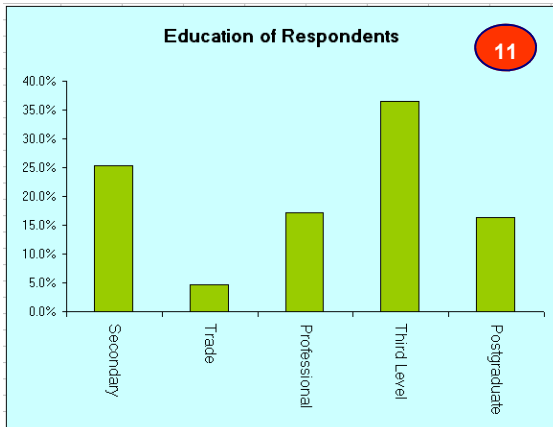
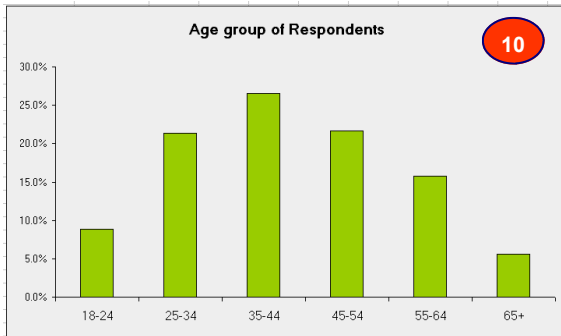
Chart 8 illustrates the results when respondents were asked to Agree or Disagree with positive statements about tourism in the area. In this instance, the dark blue and light blue segments on the bars identify a positive statement with which the respondents Strongly Agree or Agree respectively. The strongest positive responses are that tourism generates local employment and revenue (96%), it improves the appearance and presentation of public places (91%), provides opportunities to learn about other cultures (84%) and makes respondents more aware of local heritage and culture (82%).

The light and dark green bars represent Disagreement and Strong Disagreement with the positive statements. From this chart it would appear that residents believe tourism has led to increased cost of living (52% disagree with the positive statement) and residents are not encouraged to participate in planning (43%).

Chart 9 represents the findings when respondents were asked to Agree or Disagree with negative statements. By far the statement which most respondents Agreed or Strongly Agreed with (red and pink segments) was that tourism causes traffic congestion (74%). Other than that, the desire to get a break

from tourists in the low season (48%) was the only negative point which was overwhelmingly supported. Issues such as there not being enough cultural facilities for tourists received similar numbers supporting and disagreeing with it (39% agreeing 42% disagreeing. Likewise 36% get frustrated with tourists on the roads, while 44% disagree with the statement.





All those who completed the survey were asked to provide their name if they would like to be considered for a prize. Joseph R. Doran was randomly selected from the 210 respondents who provided their details. The Prize is a VIP family day in Killarney, which includes luxury overnight accommodation, dinner and a range of activities.

Profile of Respondents

A broad range of people responded to the survey, which was made available to all residents of Killarney Town and Valley. Most respondents completed it on-line, but a number provided their views, on the printed surveys which were made available in a number of locations.

Chart 10 demonstrates that residents of all ages completed the survey with just over a quarter in the 35-44 age bracket. 45% of respondents were male and the

respondents are highly educated, (see **Chart 11**). Over 53% have received third level education, and a quarter Secondary education.

Chart 12 illustrates that the majority (62%) of respondents are living with their family and a further 22% are living with a partner (couple). **Chart 13** presents the employment status of respondents. 46% are working full time while 14% and 13% are working part time or self employed respectively. 11% are unemployed and 9% are retired.

Working in Tourism

Not surprising in a town as tourism orientated as Killarney, 47% of respondents claim that they or someone in their household works in an occupation that provides products or services that are frequently used by visitors.

The range of industries which this encompasses is very broad including traditional areas of tourism employment such as

accommodation (hotel, B&B, guesthouse etc), restaurants, boat tours, National Park etc, but also included were engineers, butchers, health care workers, local authority employees etc. Notably absent from the list are professionals. No doctors, solicitors estate agents or accountants are listed, despite the amount of work each of these professions would undertake for and on behalf of the tourism industry.

Selection of Quotations

Throughout this report, statistics and summary data are presented. The following is a selection of direct quotes reflecting the range of opinions and comments expressed by respondents:

A proud tradition and long experience in hospitality combined with breathtaking scenery makes Killarney 'A truly great place to live'

Think of Killarney, you think of visitors, think of visitors you think of Killarney

Only problem is roads / parking.

During the winter the town is largely deserted. During the tourist season the town is vibrant . . . It gives the town a fantastic feel.

Tourism in Killarney makes Killarney a nicer place to live.

Litter can be a problem . . . but I see more locals littering than tourists.

No tourists no Killarney.

A lot of traffic congestion in peak season and car parking is a problem.

There would need to be a cap put on . . . accommodation . . . There is not enough to go around during quiet times.

Due to tourism, many normal activities become easier to do outside of town, such as daily shopping.

The price locals have to pay remain quite high.

Traffic congestion is the only down side to tourism.

Great buzz in the summer months, all positive except the extra traffic and queues are wearing but all in all its worth it!!!

I think Killarney provides an example to the rest of the country as to how to develop tourism as a viable industry

Final Comments

Many more comments were provided by the respondents ranging from the identification of particular problems to suggesting product gaps, outlining environmental issues, highlighting

signage, infrastructure, cost, peak season issues etc. All of these detailed comments will be collated and a comprehensive report will be presented to the relevant authorities.