

# A Handbook for Tourism Development

A report prepared by *emda*

2011

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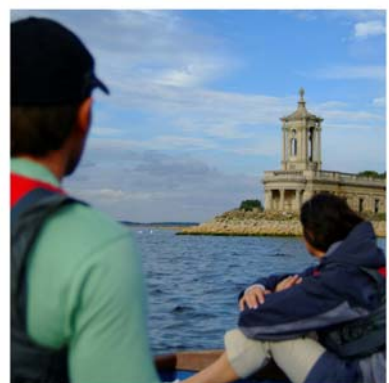
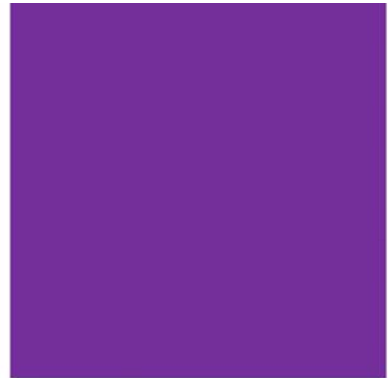
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# A Handbook for Tourism Development



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## Foreword

The *Destination East Midlands* tourism strategy was launched in 2003 to drive the growth of the industry and support the businesses and organisations that welcome visitors to the six counties of the region. Visitor numbers have grown whilst the ways in which people purchase, judge and share information about their experiences have continued to change. The tourism sector contributes over £6bn to the regional economy and employs 100,000 people. Evidence suggests ongoing growth.

The Coalition Government has stated the importance of tourism to the UK economy and introduced changes that will influence the manner in which the sector will be supported. The replacement of the Regional Development Agencies with Local Enterprise Partnerships in 2012 withdraws the relevance of a regional plan and invites plans to be devised on a county, cross-county or destination basis. The purpose of this document is to summarise the trends and lessons learned over the past seven years for the benefit of those that follow.

The East Midlands won more Gold Awards than any other region at the 2010 National Excellence in England Awards. Its marketing campaigns have delivered an average return of £21 for each £1 invested since 2005. Its component tourism parts, however they are supported, have an exciting future.

It has been a privilege to have chaired the East Midlands Tourism Council. My thanks go to fellow council members who have given their time freely and willingly. Good luck to everybody who strives to offer outstanding service in all that they do.



Chas Bishop  
**Chair, East Midlands Tourism Council**  
Chief Executive, The National Space Centre



## Executive Summary

This handbook has been developed as a guide for the next generation of organisations leading on the Visitor Economy to help in smoothing the transition from the existing regional framework to local structures. It looks beyond the traditional concept of tourism, attractions and accommodation, to a wider definition for the Visitor Economy that more fully reflects the breadth and reach of the sector and the wealth it creates for the local economy.

Evaluation of previous tourism activity and consultation with local tourism partners, from the private and public sectors, has informed this handbook. This includes an independent assessment of the economic impact of *emda's* intervention through the establishment and funding of a dedicated internal team, East Midlands Tourism (EMT). The main findings from this evaluation show that there is a strong economic rationale for investment in tourism and that it remains a significant sector in the East Midlands (economy and employment):

- Visitors contribute £6 billion to the regional economy, a real terms increase of £394 million since 2003.
- Around 14,000 businesses provide tourism related goods and services, employing 144,000 people (approximately 6% of people in employment in the region).
- Tourism in the region has contributed around 7.5% to the regional economy in terms of Gross Value Added (GVA).
- Annual visitor expenditure continues to increase, by 2.8% p.a. at the end of 2009.
- *emda's* investment of just over £11m in marketing activity since 2003 has generated £114m additional revenue in visitor expenditure.

EMT also sought industry and funders' views on achievements to date and their priorities for the future via an online questionnaire. This was subsequently backed up by EMT-led workshops in each county with wide-ranging representatives from a range of groups including attractions, accommodation, galleries, Business Improvement Districts, education, Chambers of Commerce and Local Authorities.

The main aspirations for the industry over the next 10 years are to:

- Generate a strong sense of place – greater national and international recognition for the region's destinations and better understanding of the geography and related opportunities for visitors
- Develop sustainable tourism – a strategic commitment to grow the sector but at a lower environmental cost with a possible focus on eco-tourism.
- Achieve great and consistent customer service backed up by continued investment in an holistic approach to quality.

- Have tourism recognised as a main pillar of the region's service economy.
- Encourage further investment in existing assets so that they achieve their full potential with further capital investment to support the local tourism infrastructure including transport, facilities, signage and visitor information provision.
- Provide leadership to bring a fragmented industry together, joining up activity to create a greater impact and cut costs and duplication across counties in the region and across regional boundaries.
- Offer business and financial support to attract and promote the growth of exceptional private sector businesses.
- Increase local pride in the facilities and opportunities on their doorstep.

A selection of case studies under the main strategic priorities of Marketing, Quality Improvement and Investment are included to demonstrate some of the success achieved and the lessons that have been learnt collectively. This is a dynamic piece of work and further case studies will be developed as projects are completed during this financial year.

Finally, using the views of participants in the evaluation, questionnaire and workshops, a number of recommendations have been made for the future, grouped under three headings: Structures & Priorities for Investment, Partnership Working, Research & Intelligence.

The main recommendations are:

- Review Destination Management Partnership (DMP) Structures due to their dependence on *emda* funding.
- Prioritise activity following the reduction in public sector funding and private sector investment – based on future wealth creation, jobs growth and recognition that tourism is part of the wider Visitor Economy.
- Make connections – work across county boundaries, across Local Authority departments and across the Visitor Economy to include Culture, Sport and Heritage.
- Set up tourism forums that allow delivery bodies and stakeholders to meet regularly to debate strategic challenges and priorities.



# Introduction

This Handbook has been developed as a guide for the future leaders of tourism strategy across the six counties of the East Midlands. The origin of this work was the need to refresh Destination East Midlands 2010, the tourism strategy for the region launched in 2003. When it became apparent that a new regional strategy was no longer required, with the move towards more locally driven activity, it was decided to evolve the work into a legacy document that would help guide and inform future strategic development of the sector.

Since 2003, there have been a number of changes in the regional tourism landscape because of the work stemming from Destination East Midlands:

## Tourism Structure and Funding

- A new structure for tourism was developed in the region with the establishment of East Midlands Tourism within *emda* in 2004 and five DMPs put in place by 2005.
- Significant increased investment in funding for the visitor economy has been made by *emda* (over £22m since 2004) from the previous £250,000 p.a. allocation to the East Midlands from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

## Research and Intelligence

- Improved intelligence for businesses has been provided through region-wide annual data, individual marketing campaign evaluation and seasonal tourism business barometers.

## Private Sector Engagement

- Greater engagement with the private sector has been achieved through the East Midlands Tourism Council, DMP Boards and joint marketing initiatives.

## Marketing

- Return on marketing investment from campaigns, running 2005-2009, has averaged 21:1.
- The region now has improved data on target markets, better customer segmentation, the translation of information for key overseas markets and more opportunities for the customer to book online.

## Quality Improvement

- An holistic approach has been adopted for Quality Improvement to encompass all aspects of the visitor journey.
- Dedicated Quality Managers are in place in each DMP and the period has seen a significant increase in the number of quality-assured businesses.

### Skills

- EMT has been working with People 1st on the National Skills Strategy, Raising the Bar.
- The East Midlands was a pilot region for the new customer care training programme, Customer Gold, for the 2009 Special Olympics in Leicester.
- EMT and the DMPs work closely with Business Link to improve alignment of business support to tourism businesses.

### Investment

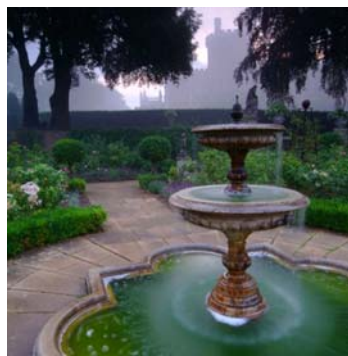
- A strategy for tourism investment opportunities across the region was developed in 2008 with Scott Wilson to provide more focus on the priorities for investment.
- An invitation to apply for tourism investment grant funding was subsequently launched which is supporting development of the National Forest, Twycross Zoo, Hardwick Hall, Historic Lincoln, Foxtan Locks and Adrenalin Alley in Northamptonshire.

### Visitor Services

- Visitor services have been supported by the development of new types of visitor information with kiosks in prominent attractions, a mobile TIC for Northamptonshire, the creation of a Visitor Services Action Plan and a welcome point at East Midlands Airport.

### National Engagement

- Partners for England (P4E), a public/private sector stakeholder forum was set up to inform and influence England's tourism strategy. EMT participates in P4E and works with VisitEngland through the regional marketing, research and quality assurance groups to ensure the region's views are represented.
- The English Tourism Intelligence Partnership (ETIP) was formed as an initiative of P4E to improve tourism intelligence and statistics, providing better evidence to support future investment and strategy development. EMT is a member of the operational group.



## Chapter 1

# The Context

### Why Produce Now

The current tourism strategy for the six counties of the East Midlands, Destination East Midlands 2010, comes to an end this year. It was developed in 2003 when the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) were first asked to take on the strategic lead for tourism in their regions.

Since then there have been many changes to the tourism market and the original aim of this work was to produce a new regional strategy to 2020, building on the results achieved to date and grasping the opportunities from this changing market.

A 'Handbook for Tourism Development' that would help smooth the transition from the existing regional framework

When the new Government announced a move away from regional-led activity towards more local plans, a region-wide strategy was no longer required. Seeking the views of tourism representatives on how best to use the work since January on refreshing the strategy, it was decided to evolve the structure of the work into a 'Handbook for Tourism Development' that would help smooth the transition from the existing regional framework.

The aims of this document are to:

- Capture the collective thoughts of everyone who participated through county workshops, meetings and the questionnaire.
- Demonstrate the value of activity over the last seven years and outline lessons learnt through case studies.
- Set out a definition for the Visitor Economy that clearly reflects the industry, the contribution it makes to, and the impact it has, on the local economy and how investment in the sector affects the total sense of a place.





## A Changing Environment: The Coalition Government

The Coalition Government has been explicit in its support for the tourism industry:

“We will take steps to improve the competitiveness of the UK tourism industry, recognising the important part it plays in our national economy” (Coalition Programme for Government May 2010).

The recognition that “tourism...is an important economic driver” for some areas was noted by Vince Cable and Eric Pickles in their joint letter to local authority and business leaders on the creation of Local Enterprise Partnerships, June 2010.

Since then, the Prime Minister has also spoken about the significance of a thriving tourism sector to the UK economy:

“Tourism is a fiercely competitive market, requiring skills, talent, enterprise and a government that backs Britain. It’s fundamental to the rebuilding and rebalancing of our economy. It’s one of the best and fastest ways of generating the jobs we need so badly in this country. And it’s absolutely crucial to us making the most of the Olympics and indeed a whole decade of great international sport across Britain. I want us to have the strongest possible tourism strategy.

I think there are four parts. First – what government does nationally? Second – the role of local government and the support of the local area. Third – how we stimulate the private sector in tourism? And fourth – how we make policy in other areas that will impact the tourism industry”.

In addition, John Penrose, the Minister for Tourism and Heritage, intends to focus on the opportunities for increasing domestic tourism with the aim of addressing the balance between spend in the UK and overseas so that domestic visitors spend 50% of their total holiday budget in the UK. He is also looking at the legacy around 2012 and has confirmed the Government’s intention to create a new fund, amount to be confirmed, that will be used to generate £1 billion worth of PR and marketing investment in priority markets in the years around 2012.

**Tourism is a fiercely competitive market, requiring skills, talent, enterprise and a government that backs Britain. It’s fundamental to the rebuilding and rebalancing of our economy. It’s one of the best and fastest ways of generating the jobs we need so badly in this country**

## A Changing Environment: National Tourism

In April 2009, VisitEngland was set up as the national tourism body for England following six years without a dedicated organisation for tourism in England. As it stands, VisitEngland sells England to the UK domestic, mature European and North American markets plus Australia and New Zealand. VisitBritain markets Britain, including England, to the rest of the world.

Earlier this year, VisitEngland launched A Strategic Framework for Tourism 2010-2020 that sets out how the industry can work together to grow the value of the sector to England's economy.

Within this framework, there are a number of action plans for delivery 2010-2013 that cover:

- marketing - in particular the creation of an English National Marketing Strategy for domestic and international markets
- business tourism
- best practice destination management and organisation
- a reviewed approach to quality assessment
- a national research and intelligence programme
- seaside resorts
- rural tourism
- sustainable tourism
- the Skills Strategy set up by People 1st
- the modernisation of visitor information and e-tourism
- tourism transport
- a review of tourism infrastructure
- implementation of the Welcome to England Programme and the development of a programme to improve accessibility

Given that the Government has identified that leadership for specific sectors will be at national level, there is an opportunity to feed into and inform VisitEngland plans to benefit local needs and to ensure representation of destinations in their wide-ranging activities to support businesses.

**There is an opportunity to feed into and inform VisitEngland plans to benefit local needs**

The England Marketing Strategy will be launched early 2011 followed by the Business Tourism Action Plan. Detailed information on these action plans can be found at [www.EnglandTourismFramework.co.uk](http://www.EnglandTourismFramework.co.uk)

Further information on VisitEngland's role, remit, key contacts and research can be found at [www.visitEngland.com](http://www.visitEngland.com)

## A Changing Environment: General Trends, Market Challenges and Opportunities

### ■ Consumer Booking Patterns

Since 2003 when Destination East Midlands was launched, there have been significant changes in how people choose and book their holidays, mostly related to the increase in internet usage and the availability of faster broadband speeds on home computers. Online flight, hotel and car hire booking and airport check-in are commonplace. Added to this, the development of price comparison sites for tourism products and the ability to compare notes on accommodation, restaurants, attractions and experiences with similar customers via social networking and user generated content sites, such as TripAdvisor, has meant that customers are more savvy about the relative cost and quality of what they spend their money on.

Increasing use of Wi-Fi, phone apps including the new free TripAdvisor app, and Twitter and Facebook accounts to share experiences has made this ability to research even more immediate, allowing customers to check out the most up-to-date advice while they're in the destination. A recent social travel report by Total Media says that customer reviews on sites like TripAdvisor or recommendations by friends and family are more trusted than journalist reviews, brochures or travel agents.

East Midlands Tourism's (EMT) regular tourism business barometers show that there is an increasing trend towards last minute booking and shorter breaks, which has an impact on self-catering and coastal destinations, traditionally one or two week break holidays. This has meant businesses adapting to offer more flexible booking to meet customer demand.

**The last EMT business barometer showed that businesses are optimistic about the immediate future and are investing in marketing and a strong online presence**

In spite of this and the unprecedented number of factors recently affecting the holiday market, the last EMT business barometer showed that businesses are optimistic about the immediate future and are investing in marketing and a strong online presence.

### ■ Sustainable Tourism

Travel editorial in recent years has focussed on the growth in eco tourism and the provenance of local food. Early 2010, VisitEngland carried out some consumer research into sustainable tourism. They found that there was relatively low interest in overtly sustainable breaks and only one in ten surveyed had stayed in accommodation with green awards or environmentally friendly policies, although a

third had enjoyed walking or cycling within their holidays. Younger customers and those people most influenced by editorial had most interest in sustainable tourism, while older 50+ visitors showed most preference for locally sourced food.

**“The Heritage Minister has identified that the profile of food to the tourism industry has increased significantly over recent decades and there is a growing recognition that food can create a unique sense of place. This is because food can represent local cultures, culinary tourism and agri-tourism...elements of a destination’s Visitor Economy offer.”**

(The Economic Case for the Visitor Economy, Deloitte and Oxford Economics).

VisitEngland’s simultaneous survey of attractions and accommodation in 2010 showed that there had been a strong uplift in businesses adopting sustainable practices, notably recycling and using low energy light bulbs. Three quarters of the businesses used local food suppliers and over 50% invested in fair trade. This is a trend that is likely to continue particularly given the economic downturn.

**The profile of food to the tourism industry has increased significantly over recent decades and there is a growing recognition that food can create a unique sense of place**

#### ■ Quality Improvement

The overall quality of the experience continues to be essential across all destinations in the UK as it is not perceived to be a cheap destination for domestic or overseas visitors. Value for money through interesting experiences, engaging interpretation and outstanding customer service will be critical given that destinations in the UK cannot compete as low price destinations.

#### ■ Future Growth

An Office of National Statistics (ONS) report, 2008 Living Costs and Food, found that across all economic groups, more household income is allocated to the pursuit of recreational and cultural activities than to buying basic essentials such as food, clothing and footwear. This bears out previous customer surveys where a holiday of some type is perceived to be an essential part of life rather than a luxury.

In June 2010, Deloitte and Oxford Economics, commissioned by VisitBritain, published a report into ‘The Economic Contribution of the Visitor Economy’. The headline prediction was for growth in the Visitor Economy over the next ten years to become one of the UK’s best performing sectors, outperforming sectors such as manufacturing.

Some of the opportunities for growth are likely to come from an ageing population and the impact of the grey pound, food tourism, wellbeing tourism and the green agenda.

Tourism spending is expected to rise slowly in the short term as the global economy moves out of recession. As this happens, some domestic visitors are likely to substitute foreign holidays for domestic trips as their disposable income rises again and they can afford overseas breaks.

VisitEngland's research, however, into the Future of the Staycation has revealed that most people taking a staycation in 2009 enjoyed their holiday in England finding a new sense of pride in what England has to offer. Indications are that domestic breaks, if not always the main summer holiday choice, are likely to be a future component of holiday repertoires particularly if they can appeal to people's sense of rediscovery and enjoyment.

**Some of the opportunities for growth are likely to come from an ageing population and the impact of the grey pound, food tourism, wellbeing tourism and the green agenda**

#### ■ Access and Transport

Access from Europe has improved since 2003 with the introduction of no frills flights into East Midlands Airport and other local airports, including Robin Hood Airport in Doncaster, which opened in spring 2005. This has also had an adverse impact as a greater number of East Midlands residents holiday out of the region compared with the number of visitors coming in.

The impact of the transfer of the Eurostar hub to St Pancras International, gateway to Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire has not fully been seen. There is potential for the future once the new hub is fully established and online through ticketing for European passengers is in place.





## Chapter 2

# A Definition of the Visitor Economy

### Why a Definition is Important

Agreeing a clear definition of the Visitor Economy is important in recognising the impact of tourism on the overall economy. This is not generally something that is considered in times of success although can clearly be seen in tougher times such as the knock-on effect for wider businesses during the Foot and Mouth crisis. Ancillary businesses, for example, painting and decorating that benefit from the more rapid turnover of accommodation businesses for annual re-decoration jobs noticed the impact on their bottom line.

The concept of the Visitor Economy is generally used to distinguish primarily between people living and/or working in a place and those who are visiting. Tourism can be seen as too narrow a definition. It does not always allow for business visitors, conference delegates or people enjoying cultural or sporting events and festivals to be counted or considered in planning, transport, investment or other critical decision making. Its impact on ancillary businesses is not often taken into account.

### What is the Visitor Economy?

During the consultation for the refresh of the East Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy, people responding to the questionnaire and in the workshops were asked their views on the Visitor Economy and what it meant to them. These were wide-ranging:

- Economic impact in terms of spend and job creation.
- The proportionally greater impact of the industry in rural and coastal areas.
- The knock-on effects of a thriving sector on other ancillary services and local businesses.
- Local appreciation of the value a successful Visitor Economy brings to a total place in terms of public realm, successful sustainable bars, restaurants and a wide range of things to do.

**The public sector is seen to play a vital role in the success of a thriving Visitor Economy**

### The Significance of the Local Authority Contribution

The significance of the Local Authority role, not just directly through tourism information and management of local-authority owned attractions but through regeneration, highways, public realm, planning, transport, food hygiene, town centre management and inward investment was seen to be critical in the development and management of a strong, sustainable Visitor Economy.

The public sector is seen to play a vital role in the success of a thriving Visitor Economy:

- Enabler, co-coordinator and leader – the public sector is in a unique position to provide strategic leadership and direction particularly on the place shaping agenda although it is important that this is done in partnership with others and focuses on areas where its efforts are most useful.
- Co-ordination within the public sector so that tourism features in planning and discussions in relation to land use, development, investment and economic regeneration.
- Investment in the public realm – cycling and walking routes, car parking, toilets, signage, streetscapes and investment in local authority-run attractions, museums and country parks.
- A provider of funding – pump-priming, seeking out and promoting match funding, signposting to funding opportunities, kick-starting projects, investing in marketing and branding, skills development and training.
- Access to information and provision of research intelligence – a source of impartial information, tourism statistics and trends.
- Promotion of quality – accommodation grading.

### A Definition

In the absence of a single definition for the Visitor Economy being available, this is a suggested definition for the future:

**“The Visitor Economy is wider than the traditional tourism businesses of accommodation and attractions. It encompasses retail, cafes, restaurants and bars and people enjoying sport, culture and the Arts, and supports ancillary businesses such as food supply and decorators. A thriving Visitor Economy benefits residents and visitors alike. It is a major factor in the creation of a sense of place, where people want to live, work, study, enjoy and visit, and where businesses want to invest.”**



## Chapter 3

# Evaluation of Activity Since 2004

Evaluation of *emda's* investment in tourism since 2004 through the funding that flows through East Midlands Tourism, *emda's* tourism arm, has been carried out by independent management and economic consultancy, GHK.

Their brief was to:

- Assess **the impact** of activity by analysing existing marketing campaign data, independently evaluated by the University of Nottingham and latterly Strategic Marketing, and the volume and value data collected from annual STEAM reports
- Review the **added value** that *emda's* intervention has had on the sector
- Look at the **existing delivery structure** and the structure in other regions, making recommendations for improvement
- Provide a **baseline** to judge the economic impact of future activity

A summary of GHK's findings is below:

### ■ The Impact

The original goals set out in Destination East Midlands were to:

- raise visitor expenditure to 4.5% of GDP in 2010 – **currently exceeded.**
- increase visitor value rather than volume by increasing overnight stays, bringing an increase in spend of 1.6% p.a. by 2005 and by 2% p.a. by 2010 – **currently exceeded.**

Recent data by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) estimates that the direct contribution of tourism related businesses (GVA) in the East Midlands is £2.1 billion (figures available up to 2006). This compares with manufacturing with a GVA of £14.2 billion, financial services (£3.3 billion), agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing (£836m).

**The contribution of tourism to the regional economy (GDP) has increased by 6% in real terms**

GHK estimates that the contribution of tourism to the regional economy (GDP) has increased by 6% in real terms and tourism represents around 7.5% GDP for the region.

The target in relation to an increase in visitor value is currently being met with an average annual increase in value of 2.8% to the end of 2009.

### ■ The Value of Intervening

GHK concludes that there have been a number of benefits to intervention, not least the financial contribution to the local economy through successful marketing campaigns delivering strong returns on the original investment.

The development of the Destination Management Partnership (DMP) structure, with bodies on the ground to respond to local conditions and needs, has meant improved partnership working across the public and private sector resulting in less duplication and a more consistent approach based on monitoring to understand what works and what doesn't.

The role of tourism in promoting sustainable economic development is more clearly understood, particularly by funders, with a bank of independent performance data including Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM) and individual marketing campaign analysis.

An eighteen-month study by Scott Wilson into the opportunities for capital investment at county level gave greater understanding of future investment priorities and provided a framework for the public and private sector in assessing potential development. This work is currently being refreshed.

### ■ Delivery Structure

As part of this work, GHK considered three other English regions, the North East, East of England and the West Midlands. While each of these has a different tourism structure, GHK did not find that these were necessarily more effective. Instead, the structure in the East Midlands was commended for the early devolution of funding and delivery responsibility to DMPs, with over two thirds of revenue funding devolved to DMPs.

There was no desire for a radical overhaul of the current delivery structure, although GHK has recommended a review of DMP structures given their dependence on *emda* funding (ranges from 20% to 41%). A possible solution might be their incorporation within new LEP structures.

**There was no desire for a radical overhaul of the current delivery structure**

GHK has recommended that future tourism organisations set up a forum where stakeholders and delivery partners debate future challenges and priorities for investment based on evidence and information from local, national and international sources. These forums were found to be successful in other regions and particularly valued by the private sector.

Public sector bodies are encouraged to work closely together to determine where investment is needed to improve the environment for tourism, including aligning or pooling internal budgets and joint working with the private sector.

### ■ A Baseline to Judge Future Performance

Destination East Midlands identified the need to have consistent data to support the industry and inform future activity. The independent evaluation of all marketing campaigns and the annual STEAM report into the volume and value of the sector has helped create better intelligence and also ensured greater external understanding of the sector's contribution to the local economy.

**Public sector bodies are encouraged to work closely together to determine where investment is needed to improve the environment for tourism**

GHK has suggested a number of indicators that can be used to provide a baseline for future activity and these are included in section 5 of this report under future recommendations.

The full evaluation report by GHK is available from East Midlands Tourism.





## Chapter 4

# Industry Consultation

Consultation on a revised Regional Strategy for the Visitor Economy began in March 2010 with an online questionnaire to private and public sector stakeholders. This was followed by more in-depth workshops in each county in partnership with the five DMPs and Rutland County Council.

The questionnaire looked at topics ranging from achievements since 2003 to future priorities for investment and the role of the public sector. 81 questionnaires were returned and independently assessed. While this is a small sample, respondents who came from across the sector, including B&Bs, universities, attractions, TICs and local authorities, provided detailed views later backed up by discussion in workshops. A full copy of the assessment is available from East Midlands Tourism.

19 workshops were held in total across the six counties involving around 170 stakeholders.

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Generic topics affecting the Visitor Economy across the six counties are below. These are issues and aspirations raised in part through the questionnaire and in part at the workshops, although they may not all be practical or achievable in the short term.

### ■ Biggest Success Stories for Tourism in the Region Since 2003

- The development of tourism partnership structures i.e. DMPs
- Better marketing, branding and recognition of the region's assets
- The restoration and development of local heritage assets and visitor attractions
- The improvement of quality standards
- Improved transport links
- More festivals and events
- Film tourism

### ■ Ambitions for 2020

- Generate a strong sense of place – greater national and international recognition for the region's destinations and better understanding of the geography and related opportunities for visitors
- Sustainable tourism – strategic commitment to grow the sector but at a lower environmental cost with a possible focus on eco-tourism

- Great and consistent customer service backed up by continued investment in an holistic approach to quality. This includes investment in both skills and product development to ensure that the total quality of the visitor's experience is high.
- Tourism recognised as a main pillar of the region's service economy.
- Investment in existing assets so that they achieve their full potential.
- Successful joint working including better resourced public and private sector collaborations across counties in the region and across regional boundaries.
- The provision of leadership to bring a fragmented industry together, joining up activity to create a greater impact and cut costs and duplication.
- Business and financial support to attract and promote the growth of exceptional private sector businesses.
- Greater local pride in the facilities and opportunities on their doorstep.

#### ■ Principles for Investment

- Promote brands that make sense to customers.
- Give support and training to businesses and have more efficient data collection.
- Reduce the sector's environmental footprint.
- Lobbying to improve the visibility of the sector.
- Attract national events.
- Increase local tourism among residents.
- Support Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) to access funding and provide networking opportunities.

#### ■ Investment to Support the Local Tourism Infrastructure

- Transport - improved co-ordination between rail and bus providers, joint ticketing systems, 'hop on and hop off' buses in high visit areas, walking and cycling routes, improved road links and better signage.
- Visitor facilities – create a sustainable model for tourist information provision, develop a programme of tourist wardens or ambassadors, enable grants to the private sector to improve facilities, set up encouragement incentives for 5 star providers and support the development of mid-sized conference venues.
- Visitor attractions – audit existing assets, support existing and develop new attractions where gaps are found and invest in landmark assets that define a place e.g. Buxton Crescent.
- Destinations – co-ordinate tourism investment with other investment e.g. regeneration, inward investment.
- Attract visitors – improved signage and a better on-line presence and more opportunities to book online.

## County Themes Emerging from the Workshops

Participants in each workshop discussed a vision for the future, what they would prioritise and what they wouldn't consider doing.

The themes that emerged for each county based on the discussions at the workshops follow at annex 1. These are listed in order of their significance for each county depending on the emphasis placed on them in each workshop as there are differing themes of importance for each county.



Pictured: Peveril Castle, Castleton, Peak District.

## Chapter 5

# Lessons Learnt

A series of case studies under the main priorities of Destination East Midlands – marketing, quality improvement, investment and research – are attached at annex 2. These briefly outline activity, results and, most importantly, lessons learnt.

The case studies have been included to highlight some of the activity that has gone before. They demonstrate the range of activity and investment that has gone into tourism at local level and the impact that this has had. The lessons learnt from each project vary and they are intended to be read as an illustration of some of the pitfalls and challenges that have been encountered previously, how they were overcome and how activity can be adapted to improve the overall impact.

### Marketing

- Pride & Prejudice – Derbyshire and Lincolnshire
- Inbound France with East Midlands Airport and bmibaby - regional
- Nottingham Business Tourism - Nottingham
- Discover Rutland brand – Rutland
- Event Bidding - Leicestershire
- Group Travel - Leicestershire
- Stay, Play, Explore - Leicestershire
- Robin Hood - Nottingham
- Time to Escape - Peak District & Derbyshire
- US Travel Trade in Partnership with the West Midlands - regional
- Product Development: Rutland Walking and Food and Drink Festivals - Rutland
- Product Development: Trails around TICs - Peak District & Derbyshire
- Overseas PR – regional
- Overseas Marketing – regional

### Quality Improvement

- Q-Books - regional
- Rosebud - Lincolnshire
- STARS Awards - Nottinghamshire
- Rutland Quality Improvement Programme - Rutland
- Taxi Driver Training – Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire

### Investment

- Stamford Gateway – Lincolnshire
- Nottingham Tourist Information Centre – Nottinghamshire

- Business Support: Leicester Marriott – Leicestershire
- Foxton Locks – Leicestershire
- Visitor Services: Silverstone Franchised Tourist Information Centre - Northamptonshire
- The National Forest – regional
- Public Realm and Invitation to Apply for Grant Funding – regional





## Chapter 6

# Recommendations for the Future

Recommendations for the future fall into three main headings:

- Structures and Future Priorities for Investment
- Partnership Working
- Research and Intelligence

## Structures and Future Priorities for Investment

### ■ Review DMP structures

GHK's evaluation of tourism revealed that there was no desire for radical change in the existing structures. A review of DMP structures, however, is needed given their dependence on *emda* funding which ranges from 20% to 41%. Actual reliance is much higher as *emda*'s funding is also used to leverage other funding. It is vital that new sources of core funding are found to maintain a local structure to support the successful growth of the Visitor Economy and to build on the significant achievements made to date.

### ■ Prioritise

With the reduction in public sector budgets and private sector investment, there is an urgent need to prioritise activity. Stakeholders suggested the following criteria via the questionnaire and the workshops:

- Decide who the main customer is – leisure, business, day visitors.
- Audit existing assets, mapping longer-term opportunities for growth.
- Agree a strategic approach and objectives that fit in with the destination's overall plans for economic growth and for creating a sense of 'total place'.

**A review of DMP structures, however, is needed given their dependence on *emda* funding**

### ■ Marketing

There is still a strong need to generate greater national awareness of the individual destinations and generate a better understanding of where they are in the country to help attract target visitors. Although investment to date has been made to promote the individual destination brands, rather than a regional brand, it is significant that none of the six destinations in the East Midlands feature, as yet, in the popular and influential Time Out Guide to Short Breaks.

This also links to 'total place' marketing and the opportunities in the current economic climate to co-ordinate activity and individual marketing funding pots.

The importance of developing distinctive brands that make sense to consumers was discussed in most workshops.

It is critical that a consistent approach is taken to place marketing including the co-ordination of an online presence for the destination brand and participation in social media.

A common theme of many of the workshops was the local market. Marketing to residents was seen as a part of the marketing strategy, to remind them of what is so great about where they live and ensure that they have a strong sense of pride that translates to visitors.

**Marketing to residents was seen as a part of the marketing strategy, to remind them what is so great about where they live and ensure that they have a strong sense of pride that translates to visitors**

There was also discussion about the balance between attracting day and overnight staying visitors. EMT's investment in marketing through the DMPs has focussed exclusively on the attraction of staying visitors leaving individual businesses to promote directly to the day visitor market. Future funders of destination marketing will have to decide where the greatest economic impact can be gained from their intervention. Overnight visitors tend to be higher value although some destinations currently derive most of their income from the day market. With the increase in the quality and range of accommodation and future investment in cultural, sporting and tourist attractions, there is an opportunity to shift the balance to have more higher-spending, staying visitors.

Under current arrangements, EMT is responsible for delivering marketing of the region's destinations in overseas markets. This has had varying degrees of success, the more successful campaigns being in short-haul European markets where the traditional English product across the region appeals strongly to Anglophile audiences. Longer duration touring campaigns have proved more successful than short break marketing campaigns. Strong hooks, such as the promotion of locations seen in high profile movies work particularly well.

Given the current economic climate and the reduction in budgets, however, the priority for the future has to be on domestic marketing and the opportunities that are still available to make UK audiences more aware of what the destinations offer. Unless there is significant budget available and a strategic requirement to target specific overseas markets, the overall visitor market for individual destinations is more likely to be grown by attracting more visitors from within the UK.

### ■ Quality Improvement

Great customer service and a quality visitor experience was mentioned as a given by everyone. This means continued support for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) to improve the quality of their product and the skills of their staff. This can be through signposting businesses to relevant sources of training or leading on activity such as taxi driver training and Excellence Awards to recognise high quality staff and businesses.

Promoting the sector as a good career option has an impact on the quality and pride of the people working in the industry. There is currently limited recognition of the wide range of full and part-time employment options, different entry levels and opportunities for career growth that a career in tourism affords.

During the transition period, there is a danger that reduced investment in training and skills improvement and lack of leadership on an holistic quality programme will have a negative impact on current standards and the future visitors experience.

### ■ Sustainability

A strong theme emerging from the questionnaire and many workshops was sustainability. This relates to the effective management of future growth so that the inherent value of the asset is not compromised by an influx of visitors. Ways that this can be offset are to create value through higher spending visitors and to spread visit times across the year through the creation of new events and product packaging.

## Partnership Working

### ■ Make Connections

Partnership working, both across the private and public sector and within local authority departments was seen as critical. Tourism businesses in particular felt it would be useful if tourism was a consideration for local authority planning, transport and inward investment, car parks and skills teams. The future strategic development of the tourism product could be strengthened by inclusion of all the relevant partners in early discussions.

Partnerships could also be strengthened by the inclusion of wider aspects of the Visitor Economy including Culture, Sport and Heritage. Participants in the workshop were also happy to work across county boundaries where it makes sense from a customer perspective.

There are a number of cross-county networks across the DMPs that have worked well in the past and could be continued as forums to share best practice and discuss ideas. These include the Quality Managers Quarterly Meetings and the

Destination Management System (DMS) Meetings. Finding a way to continue these would be beneficial in the future to share best practice.

Other instances of joint working across DMPs that have worked well in the past include marketing campaigns for films shot in more than one county, such as *Pride and Prejudice*, and pooling of resource to attend exhibitions such as The Outdoors Show. Joint working to promote assets that cover more than one county e.g. The National Forest also makes sense.

There are potential opportunities for joint working in the future to cut costs through the procurement of services such as print buying, Destination Management Systems (DMS), customer segmentation.

#### ■ Agree Roles and Responsibilities

Decide who is doing what so that activity isn't duplicated, extra costs incurred and the overall branding of a place compromised:

- This could be as simple as not producing the same information in more than one brochure.
- It could be stopping doing something because the private sector is already investing to make it happen e.g. online booking systems.
- Not putting money into activity at local level when it is already being delivered effectively at national level, and vice versa.

#### ■ Work Closely with VisitEngland and VisitBritain

Working with VisitEngland and VisitBritain has many benefits. They offer a cost-effective route to market through their websites and publications. Given the pressure on budgets, they also provide good research and analysis of markets at home and abroad. There is also the opportunity to feed into their activity to promote awareness of the non-London offer around the Olympics and Paralympics.

#### ■ Set up a Tourism Forum

GHK found from their analysis of other destinations that a tourism forum where stakeholders and delivery bodies regularly debate strategic challenges and priorities for investment based on evidence and information from local, national and international sources works well.

## Research and Intelligence

#### ■ Agree Indicators of Success to Judge Future Performance

Linked to the need to prioritise, is the need to agree in advance how future success will be measured. This has to reflect the destination's starting point and resources and the potential for future wealth and job creation. Some indicators suggested from respondents to the questionnaire were:

- **Increased spend** – by head, from outside the region.
- **Increased numbers** – day, overnight, outside the region, out of season, repeat, time spent in the region, occupancy, performance against other regions.
- **Impact on the local economy** – employment and economic impact at local level.
- **Business development and growth** – green standards, more SMEs, higher value tourism businesses, increase in business and conference visitors.
- **Customer satisfaction** – recommendations, ratings of local businesses, perceptions.
- **Quality improvements** – higher grades to be achieved in quality assessments, growth in hotel developments, more investment for the private sector, higher quality accommodation available for the customer.
- **Attracting talent** – more people choose tourism and hospitality as a career.
- **Visibility and recognition** – greater prominence in consumer guides and customer websites, positive media coverage
- **Increased Gross Value Added (GVA)**

#### ■ Market Intelligence and Measuring Impact and Performance

There was a sense from some workshops that future decision making could be strengthened with an improved evidence base, particularly in relation to knowledge of customer trends, their booking patterns and reasons for visiting.

Continued evidence of the contribution of the Visitor Economy to local economic growth is essential. There are a number of ways that this could be measured:

**Future decision making could be strengthened with an improved evidence base**

- Evaluation of the direct impact of marketing campaigns.
- Consideration of indirect indicators such as business start-up rates through the Annual Business Inquiry.
- Continue to monitor volume and value data through STEAM.
- Record business improvement through quality initiatives and skills training.

GHK raised the issue of the differences between the methodology used to measure tourism's economic impact and those used for other forms of economic activity. In their evaluation report, they have used a new model to evaluate EMT's contribution. ECOTEC has also developed a new methodology in relation to marketing campaign evaluation. Visit London is currently trialling this.



## Conclusion

This handbook has been written as a legacy document highlighting some of the activity that has taken place since 2003 to grow the Visitor Economy in the East Midlands. It notes the work that has been funded through EMT and delivered by the DMPs and a range of other partners. During this period, there has also been significant investment in the tourism infrastructure by Local Authorities, the private sector, the Arts Council, the Heritage Lottery Fund and *emda*, amongst others. While this activity has not been included in the handbook, it is an important factor in the growth of the value of the sector over the last seven years.

The contents of the handbook are intended to provide some background and context for the development of the sector. In particular, a number of recommendations have been made in relation to future structures and priorities for investment. These are based on the findings from the external evaluation of EMT work since 2004 and on the contributions made by private and public sector stakeholders during the consultation phase. Hopefully, many of these recommendations can be implemented.



Pictured: Salcey Forest Tree Top Walk, Northamptonshire.

## Annex 1: County Workshops

### Workshop Themes: Derbyshire

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#### ■ Marketing

Marketing is still a priority driven by clear branding and visibility for the 'Peak District' as the attract brand for the county. This strong brand would be used to continue the 'attract and disperse' strategy the destination has been using successfully since 2005. The focus would be on domestic marketing unless significant funding was available to promote the brand overseas.

Better product packaging is critical to keep the destination fresh and re-packaging existing assets under popular customer themes is a way of doing this. This would include more single themed promotions with consistent branding e.g. one destination-wide walking festival.

Keeping at the forefront of new technology to reach existing and new customers while driving down costs are central to a future marketing strategy.

#### ■ Product Development

This means a focus on existing product specifically the Derwent Valley Mills Heritage Site, as retention of world heritage status is not guaranteed, and Buxton Crescent Spa, building on the natural spa asset and the growing popularity of health and wellbeing breaks.

The regeneration of both these assets would bring benefits to visitors and locals from infrastructure improvements and increased employment opportunities, not just immediately for the attractions but also for the ancillary businesses that benefit from increased visitors. The vision for both these attractions is to be world class through a high quality visitor experience offering glamour, excitement and enjoyment.

It does not mean creating product such as a new theme park. With Alton Towers and Drayton Manor nearby, combined with the natural 'theme park' of the Peak District National Park, the destination was considered to be well served already by this type of product.

#### ■ Quality

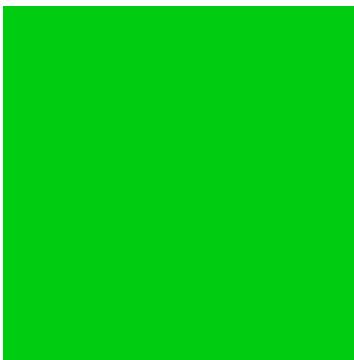
While the destination has strong attractions, they face tough competition and there was a recognition that the accommodation offer has to continue to improve as customer expectations grow. Improving the skills of the people working in the sector was considered important and to be achieved by lobbying organisations that have the capability to address these skill issues.

### ■ Sustainability

Sustainability, in relation to the continuation of the DMP, greater industry engagement and protecting the natural environment, is a priority. Reinventing another tourism structure was not considered to be an option although DMP sustainability has to be addressed. Suggestions ranged from the creation of more strategic alliances with the private and public sector backed up by a SMART action plan that allows people to determine where they can buy into a robust, self-sustaining membership scheme.

There is a need to continue to provide evidence that tourism is a significant part of the local economy through measurable outcomes, a stronger evidence base and lobbying. Sharing venue experiences and product knowledge across the accommodation and attractions groups would give more flavour to the statistics that are currently collected.

The maintenance of a first class natural environment while growing the value of tourism to the local economy is essential, making improvements to public transport, infrastructure, waste management, signage and local sourcing where needed. Consultees felt that there is an opportunity for the County Council to lead on some of this work particularly by looking at the work that has been done in countries such as Sweden and Germany in relation to creating and maintaining better streetscapes.



## Workshop Themes: Leicestershire

### ■ Partnership Working and Structures

Although tourism is the second fastest growing industry in the county, it was considered that new wins could still be delivered by bringing in more partners to reduce duplication and spread the benefits across the county of successful campaigns such as Stay, Play, Explore and Event Bidding.

There was a desire to tap more into the Multi Area Agreement (MAA) structure and to build on the existing structure rather than creating a new one. It was felt that the DMP is in a position to provide leadership and set up partnerships based on an understanding of partner needs and supply evidence of what has worked and what hasn't from previous experience.

### ■ Product Development

Leicestershire wants to retain its strong cultural diversity and make more of its industrial heritage, continuing the cultural regeneration of its city as Glasgow, Lille and Liverpool have done. There was also a desire to create a strong iconic attractor by facilitating further development of the National Forest, with Leicester being positioned as the main city for the Forest.

The long-term vision is to grow the Forest's status to that of a National Park by cutting across county boundaries and working with businesses. Work to be done to grow the offering for customers includes, attracting investment to develop for example a new wood hotel built with local, sustainable wood, a craft centre, a visitor centre, tree top walks and new cycling and walking trails.

### ■ Marketing

The further development and promotion of the National Forest could be as an attract brand, using it to disperse visitors throughout the county. It was suggested that Leicestershire could create a brand or strapline that everyone could adopt e.g. 'Launched in Leicestershire' reflecting the county's strengths in technology, sport and food.

Business tourism is an important driver given Leicester's position in the centre of the country, easy access and bedstock. There was a desire to improve the service further to agents placing business and to secure subvention (financial support) from the private sector for the fledgling event bidding unit with the aim of attracting national and international conferences.

Local footfall from the day visitor market is also important with a recognition that finding ways to innovate through product packaging and event development will encourage continued repeat local visits. A future aim was for Leicester to make a bid for European Capital of Culture.



### ■ Infrastructure

The importance of gateways into the city and county was discussed in the workshops and in particular the impact on residents and visitors. The area around Leicester's Cultural Quarter was mentioned in the context of future development as a honeypot for residents and visitors.





## Workshop themes: Lincolnshire

### ■ Marketing

There was discussion on the need to re-assess the brand used to promote tourism across Lincolnshire and whether using 'Lincolnshire' as the brand fully represents the range of diverse product and different types of landscape e.g. coast, uphill Lincoln, the Wolds and the Fens. It was felt that there were many different 'Lincolnshire's' and that using one descriptor doesn't do the individual landscapes justice.

Look at brands that make most sense to and are most relevant for customers, with the criteria being high quality product, current capacity (occupancy rates/visitor numbers) and potential for growth. Within this, there was a willingness to work across county boundaries to strengthen the message to customers.

While there is a wealth of existing assets particularly in Lincoln with the Cathedral and the Magna Carta, other less-well known product has to be promoted to give critical mass encouraging visitors to stay longer.

Emphasis on product packaging could make more of the significant investment in the county's waterways and capitalise on the growing trend for boat tourism, not just the visitors in boats but the visitors who congregate around stopping-off points. The ongoing investment in 'short rings', canal routes that can be navigated in a shorter time, also has appeal for weekend visitors and in turn can be linked to the slow food movement and Lincolnshire's latent strengths in food tourism.

Marketing to locals was considered critical as it helps generate a sense of pride in where they live while also driving growth in the day visitor market, as local residents are given a greater sense of what's on offer for their leisure time or for sharing with friends and family when they visit. In terms of marketing tools, online and PR were highlighted. There needs to be a cultural shift across all businesses in the visitor economy so that customers can book accommodation and events online, led by further investment in broadband availability for rural operators.

High profile PR, in the media, guide books, on blogs, were seen as critical in promoting awareness of the less well-known gems in Lincolnshire including the wild coast, the eco offer and the fact that the county provides outstanding food.

### ■ Quality Improvement

There has been emphasis on an holistic approach to improving the quality of all aspects of the visitor journey in Lincolnshire. This remains important to maintain the quality of the total visitor experience and there is a need to attract private

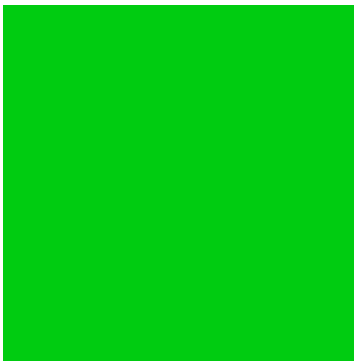
sector investment to set up high quality new restaurants and gastro pubs. Continued investment in skills training and education underpins the quality of the workforce, particularly in the coastal area, and there was a desire to see greater recognition that hospitality and tourism can be a great career.

### ■ Structures

Consideration of where the visitor management role sits could be made in the context of management of the total visitor experience. There was a need to secure longer term funding for the DMP and to increase membership potentially from within the wider visitor economy, with a suggestion of setting up a trade association for the visitor economy similar to ABTA for travel agents.

### ■ The Local Authority Contribution

The role the local authorities have in the total visitor experience is significant. This is within a number of departments including economic development, planning, transport, culture, communities and car parks. It was suggested that a clear advocacy document using evaluation and data from the local observatory would help articulate the critical impact local authority intervention has in the county.



## Workshop Themes: Nottinghamshire

### ■ Strategy and Structure

The first priority for Nottinghamshire is the development of a clear destination promotion strategy for the future based on better market intelligence and understanding of who the county's current and potential visitors are, and what they want. This needs to be a shared vision of success across all partners with better understanding and agreement on what has to be delivered and by whom. Within this, the roles and responsibilities around total place marketing need to be considered.

DMP funding has to be stabilised to create an infrastructure that supports the organisation in bringing all businesses together for joint marketing opportunities and to support small businesses in improving the quality of their offer. The overall aim is to deliver strong returns for the local economy.

### ■ Marketing

There is an abundance of internationally known brands in the county e.g. Robin Hood, Trent Bridge, Sherwood Forest and Nottingham Forest, that can be used to disperse customers throughout the county. There are other positive opportunities for the county around the promotion of its heritage, history, sport and culture. Included in any future marketing strategy has to be greater understanding of the product that is currently undersold e.g. Rufford Park, Clumber Park and Creswell Crags. The continuation of work to understand the needs of current and potential customers will determine the range of product to be used in individual campaigns.

Because of the range of product in the county, sports, visual arts, classical music and heritage, there is an opportunity for more pragmatic packaging and cross-selling driven by PR and customer relationship management through the new Destination Management System (DMS).

The day visitor market is very important to the county and it is essential to keep reminding residents of what there is to see and do driven by consistent, local PR and marketing. There are opportunities to deliver better value and a customer centric marketing plan by co-ordinating marketing funding pots and by reducing competing activity.

Businesses need to be included in the process and there is an opportunity to provide training for SMEs via marketing workshops on relevant areas such as new media and product packaging.

### ■ Infrastructure

The background to a thriving visitor economy for the county is high quality product, a safe, clean environment, a cosmopolitan offer and easy access.

Continued improvement of the management of the day time and the night time demographic can contribute to the overall sense of what Nottingham has to offer.

Investment in quality improvement through training for the people in the sector and investment in improving the physical product are critical. One opportunity area for capital investment could be the creation of a Robin Hood facility although this could only be developed where there is a compelling business case.

Sustainable transport will become increasingly more important and changes that could impact positively on Nottinghamshire's visitor, resident and investment appeal are widening the A453 and better rail links from London and, via St Pancras, from Europe.

### ■ Product Development

The main areas identified for product development were accommodation in the county and attractions in the city. Discussion took place around the need to upgrade the city-based attractions to complement the accommodation offer in the city. While in the county, there is an opportunity to create more accommodation to meet people's aspirations for staying in a natural forest environment. Visitors should be able to experience the feeling of staying in a forest as they do currently in destinations like the Forest of Dean and the New Forest.



## Workshop Themes: Northamptonshire

### ■ Product Development

There is potential for product development across Northamptonshire to complement the existing offer of stone villages, quaint pubs, walking country and adrenalin pursuits. Some of the suggestions for future development include, new heritage trails, boutique accommodation, further waterways development around the River Nene Regional Park, the regeneration of Northampton as a cultural centre and the attraction of high quality gastro pubs and restaurants to service visitors and locals.

Villages and market towns could also benefit from investment in their infrastructure, creating an environment that encourages entrepreneurs to invest in them as the new locations for gastro pubs and delis.

The longer-term aspirations for the county coming from workshops included a 6 star spa, the UK's first indoor wake boarding centre and a new luxury pleasure arena as a flexible space for music, entertainment, conventions and conferences. Northamptonshire's local, national and international access is a strong asset, although to enable these developments, it is critical that tourism, inward investment, transport and planning are working together so that private investment is facilitated.

**It is critical that tourism, inward investment, transport and planning are working together so that private investment is facilitated**

### ■ Marketing

Future marketing activity is to be based on increased understanding of what current and future customers want. This might mean working beyond county boundaries to create brands that make sense to the customer e.g. The Cotswolds and in this instance, parts of Northamptonshire working with Rutland and Stamford. The brand messages have to be clear with supporting product packages to stimulate the visitor and make it easier for businesses to sell the destination.

Using businesses to sell the wider destination is an effective route to market as making potential customers more aware of what's on offer helps them to sell their individual product. One way to do this is to train staff in what the total destination has to offer e.g. provide training on Northamptonshire to Billing Aquadrome call centre staff based in the Lake District and the Isle of Man.

Other cost-effective routes to market include Customer Relationship Management (CRM), PR and complementary channels such as VisitEngland and VisitBritain



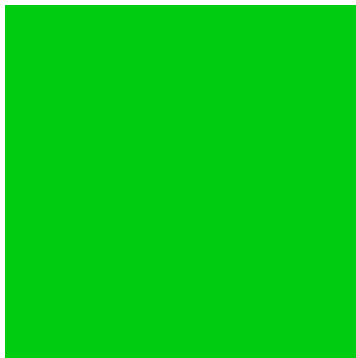
websites and publications. Business tourism based on the strong motorsport heritage and the new Silverstone Technology Park is an opportunity as is the day visitor market given Northamptonshire's large catchment area.

### ■ Quality Improvement

Giving visitors the best welcome will be based on providing a quality experience. This means continued investment in training, mentoring and best practice workshops for smaller businesses. It also includes work to turn the county into a year round destination with more visitor attractions open throughout the year.

### ■ Sustainability

The green agenda is going to be increasingly important in the future. There is an opportunity to strengthen existing work that has been done on green audits and to build on the university's strengths in this area. Businesses could be encouraged to reduce their cost base through investment in sustainable technology, local sourcing and promoting awareness of public transport. Support to unlock funding that enables them to go green would also be welcome.



## Workshop Themes: Rutland

### ■ Marketing

Rutland has the opportunity to be known as the UK Centre for Recreational Activity. There is a wealth of product to support this ambition – sailing, walking, cycling, countryside, horse-riding and bird-watching. Combined with this is a diverse high quality accommodation and food and drink offer, vibrant villages and market towns with distinctive shopping and unique village activities.

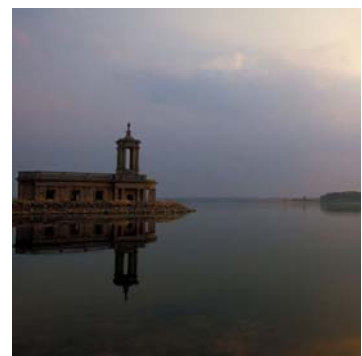
Its size and proximity to other attractions in Lincolnshire, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire means that there is also an opportunity to create and sell a 'Greater Rutland' brand working across boundaries as The Cotswolds has done. The challenge for the future is to raise Rutland's national profile. This could be done by working with commercial partners such as Anglian Water and Lands' End, which has US distribution and is launching in France and Sweden.

Awareness-raising can be achieved through further investment in PR, marketing and the creation of more events like the Walking Festival and Food & Drink Festival to extend the season. While there is significant rural product, there is also a potential product development opportunity to target the younger market and provide a year round offer.

### ■ Sustainability

Sustainability in terms of protection of the local environment and continuation of the work that has been done to date are critical. Rutland's strengths lie in its individuality, rural charm and attractiveness and development has to be managed to retain this appeal for both residents and villagers, grow the value of the sector to the local economy yet not sacrifice quality for the sake of a short term deal.

The Rutland County Council team, provided that future funding is secured, can continue to build links between the public and private sector and work with the established Tourism Forum to increase membership across the wider visitor economy.



## Annex 2: Case Studies

### Marketing

#### Pride and Prejudice

**Cross DMP Working to capitalise on the 'Set Jetting' phenomenon - the filming of Pride and Prejudice, starring Keira Knightley and Dame Judi Dench, across the East Midlands**



Pictured: Pride and Prejudice. Image Copyright © Universal Studios.

Set Jetting is an excellent way of marketing a tourism product and has been used widely with other films in the UK, e.g. James Bond, Harry Potter and Braveheart. This was a bespoke marketing campaign to take advantage of the high-profile release of the Pride and Prejudice film, starring Keira Knightley, Matthew MacFadyen and Dame Judi Dench. Much of the filming was done in the East Midlands at locations such as Chatsworth House, Stamford, Burghley House, Haddon Hall, Boughton House estate, St Peter Brooke, the Inn at Lambton and Stanage Edge.

The objective of the campaign was to encourage overnight and out of season visits. The film locations appealed to a huge audience, both domestic and overseas. VisitLincolnshire led on the project working closely with the fledgling Visit Peak District and Derbyshire DMP, which had just been set up.

The project involved marketing, PR and travel trade activity, building on the existing Universal Studios marketing activity. A website was set up, **[www.visitprideandprejudice.com](http://www.visitprideandprejudice.com)** with information about the areas used for filming, downloadable itineraries and a movie map. This was a film themed map highlighting locations used around the region, as well as Pride and Prejudice package ideas and offers. E-mails were sent to partner databases, including VisitBritain and Thomson Fly, of over 300,000 people directing them to the website.

There was a proactive PR programme culminating in private media screenings for the media and travel trade at Chatsworth, New York, Los Angeles and Brussels. In partnership with VisitBritain's overseas offices, familiarisation trips were organised for 80 overseas journalists from France, Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Sweden, Norway, Italy, Spain, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Australia and the USA.

The travel trade campaign focussed on historic attractions, gardens, shopping and off-peak visits. Direct marketing and travel trade advertisements were used to target some 2000 coach operators.

### Results

- 45 travel trade groups took part in familiarisation trips of the East Midlands.
- Evaluation showed that travel trade information had 'definitely' persuaded operators to sell trips to 'Pride and Prejudice country'.
- Evaluation subsequently carried out had a return on investment of 10:1.
- Burghley House reported a 40% increase in visitors on weekends immediately after the film's release.

"Our weekend visitor numbers rose significantly in the months after the filming and remained high following the release of the film itself. It was a great to be able to use the film to tap into an international campaign alongside other excellent houses and destinations in the East Midlands. Exposure from films is a great opportunity for historic houses and if we are lucky enough to be chosen for any other major feature films we will use it as the basis of further campaigns and joint marketing in the region."

Jo Tinker, Assistant House Manager, Burghley House

### Lessons learnt

- Evaluation showed that the movie map was seen as helpful by the majority of people as it linked visually to both the film and the places people could actually visit.
- Having its own campaign website meant a focused look at the product and the message, without it being distinguished by county. This is useful for the consumer as they are not aware of geographical or funding boundaries.
- This was a good opportunity for counties to work together – joint funding, strong product partners, shared expertise and resources meant a better product for the consumer.
- TV and film links can be a great opportunity, set jetting has been proven to be very popular with consumers. In this case, the product was already good, but it can be used as a lever for increased product development. It gave regional businesses the opportunity to work together in new ways to develop packages resulting in longer term working.



- Being able to book your holiday online has become more important in the short break market and the project allowed East Midlands product to be sold on distribution channels such as lastminute.com and tour operators in UK, USA, Japan, and Belgium.
- However, very few breaks were actually booked on the visitprideandprejudice website. The lack of real time bookable East Midlands accommodation on the campaign site as well as 3<sup>rd</sup> party websites such as laterooms.com and lastminute.com has also been a key issue in the lack of bookings.
- After this project, many more businesses were targeted to use online booking systems.
- Working with film studios can be challenging as they are huge organisations and you have to work to their timescales, but their creativity and expertise is invaluable.
- The project gave an opportunity to open up discussions and relationships with partners such as Universal Pictures, P&O Ferries, bmi, Thomson Fly, Alamo car rental and GNER.
- Pride and Prejudice was a strong message to sell in to the travel trade, and they responded well. Themed trips are popular with consumers and the country houses/literature theme struck a chord with the target age range (40+).



Pictured: Chatsworth House, Derbyshire.



## Marketing

### Inbound French Pilot

#### A marketing campaign in partnership with bmibaby and East Midlands Airport (EMA)



Pictured: bmibaby logo

inbound short-haul markets in France, Germany and the Netherlands. This was based on VisitBritain research and matching the type of product the East Midlands has with the requirements of overseas visitors

The 2003-10 tourism strategy 'Destination East Midlands' talks about the economic value of overseas visitors, who stay overnight and spend more than domestic visitors while they are here. East Midlands Tourism's overseas marketing plans were developed around

The key messages in this marketing pilot were the new low cost (€34.99) route from Paris to EMA with bmibaby, car hire at EMA, the 24 hour Skylink bus service and opportunities to explore the city of Nottingham and the Peak District. The campaign was aimed particularly at anglophiles living in Paris and within the catchment area of Charles de Gaulle Airport. France is also a VisitBritain target market and they supported the campaign by allocating resource in their French office to work with advertising agencies and media buyers and generate PR in France.

Campaign activity included an online interactive viral competition, electronic and traditional direct mail, banner advertising on French lifestyle and news sites and PR. Traffic was driven to a new bespoke French language website. The target market was DINKs (dual income, no kids) aged 30-60 with an AB socio-economic profile. They were wealthy and educated, most of whom had been to the UK before, and the East Midlands offered them a 'new' part of England to visit. They were interested in short breaks and enjoying gardens, heritage, culture, events, film tourism and staying in B&B's or small hotels.

#### Results

- A Return on Investment (ROI) of £13 for each £1 spent on the marketing campaign.

"This is just one example of a joint initiative in which we've worked with East Midlands Tourism and our airline partners over the past four years. Such campaigns are a great way of combining resources and expertise to achieve our common goals - collectively raising awareness and driving more visitors to the region on flight services into East Midlands Airport. Targeted overseas marketing activity has opened up new markets for us and has increased our inbound passenger share."

Caroline Plant, Marketing Director at EMA

### Lessons Learnt

- Travel partners work well for overseas campaigns. As the East Midlands is a relatively unknown destination it is important to identify easy, cost effective routes in so potential visitors realise how easy it is to get to the region.
- Messages must be 'value', not 'cheap' to maintain the reputation of the region and partners. Working with national tourism partners like VisitBritain or VisitEngland has real value. By using their database it was possible to reach thousands of people, many of whom are already anglophiles looking for somewhere new to discover in the UK. It was also valuable to have their on-territory language resources and expertise.
- Competitions are a great way of highlighting the product, encouraging people to click through to the website. It is important to remember that this data may not always be good quality data for future CRM as some people tend to enter a range of competitions rather than being genuinely interested in the product being sold.
- Competition and data protection laws differ in each country and it is important to be clear on these before you start to collect data.
- All partners must be clear on their targets and objectives, and the campaign must meet all of these needs. They also need to be sure about what they need to do to support the campaign, for example the bmibaby website was not translated into French which had an impact on the sales achieved through this campaign. The French like to read the terms and conditions in their language before booking online.
- Details like using everybody's logos and making sure everybody is available to sign off designs when they are required must be timetabled in.
- The French normally book just before they take the holiday, especially for short breaks. It is vital to time campaigns to fit in with booking patterns, so your destination and value offer is in the visitor's consciousness while they are making a decision about their trip.
- It is important to maintain contact with people who sign up for more information – by creating a long term relationship with them they may become return visitors to the region. This is especially true if you can give them value offers.

## Marketing

### Meet in Notts

#### Five Year Investment to Grow the Value of Business Tourism to the Nottinghamshire Economy Produces Results

##### Nottingham in Top 10 List of UK Conference Destinations



Pictured: Nottingham Contemporary, one of the UK's largest gallery spaces.

Destination East Midlands 2010, the regional tourism strategy, highlighted the need to invest in business tourism by maximising the region's natural advantage as a location in the centre of the country. Nottingham was recognised as the region's most high profile city with renown for its heritage, international icons like Robin Hood and Sherwood Forest and vibrant modern contemporary image with a large student population.

In spite of this, in 2005 Nottingham was not in the 100 top destinations for international meetings and did not make the top 20 list of UK conference destinations for the association market unlike mid-sized cities and towns like Sheffield, St Andrews and Coventry.

In 2005, Experience Nottinghamshire successfully bid for marketing funding from EMT to begin the transformation of Nottinghamshire into a first choice destination for meetings, conferences and events. Nottinghamshire Convention Bureau, a team of two in Experience Nottinghamshire is responsible for generating new customers. The bureau's venue location service offers a free search and booking service with nearly 50 participating conference venues and suppliers.

Typical activity delivered to support this campaign includes: direct marketing and PR; the establishment and maintenance of a conference ambassador scheme drawn from the local business, academic and medical communities; hosted buyer events and familiarisation trips; attendance at exhibitions in the UK and abroad (National Venue Show, IMEX, EIBTM, Confex), the production of a venue directory and commissioning a business tourism DVD.

### Results:

- Over 6,000 direct bednights over two years.
- 5-10 major conferences secured for the city each year.
- 48% year on year increase in enquiries through the venue location service.
- Nottinghamshire entering the ICCA and MIA league tables. The MIA UKCMS 2007 survey showed Nottingham entering the top 10 UK conference destinations for the first time - ranked 6<sup>th</sup> in the Associations market and 10<sup>th</sup> in the Corporate market.
- During the 2009/10 downturn, Nottinghamshire bucked the trend with more confirmed business in the first half of financial year 2009/10 than the whole of 2008/9.
- In 2009/10, working in partnership with Nottingham Conferences, the Nottingham Arena and Nottingham Hoteliers Association, one hosted fam visit and a 'destination' themed stand was taken at Event UK and Confex securing £137,000 worth of business.

"From start to finish, it was an absolute pleasure to work with you and the service we received was outstanding and far outstrips any experience we have had with any accommodation agency in the past."

Stephen Barlow, Competitions Manager, England Hockey

### Lessons Learnt

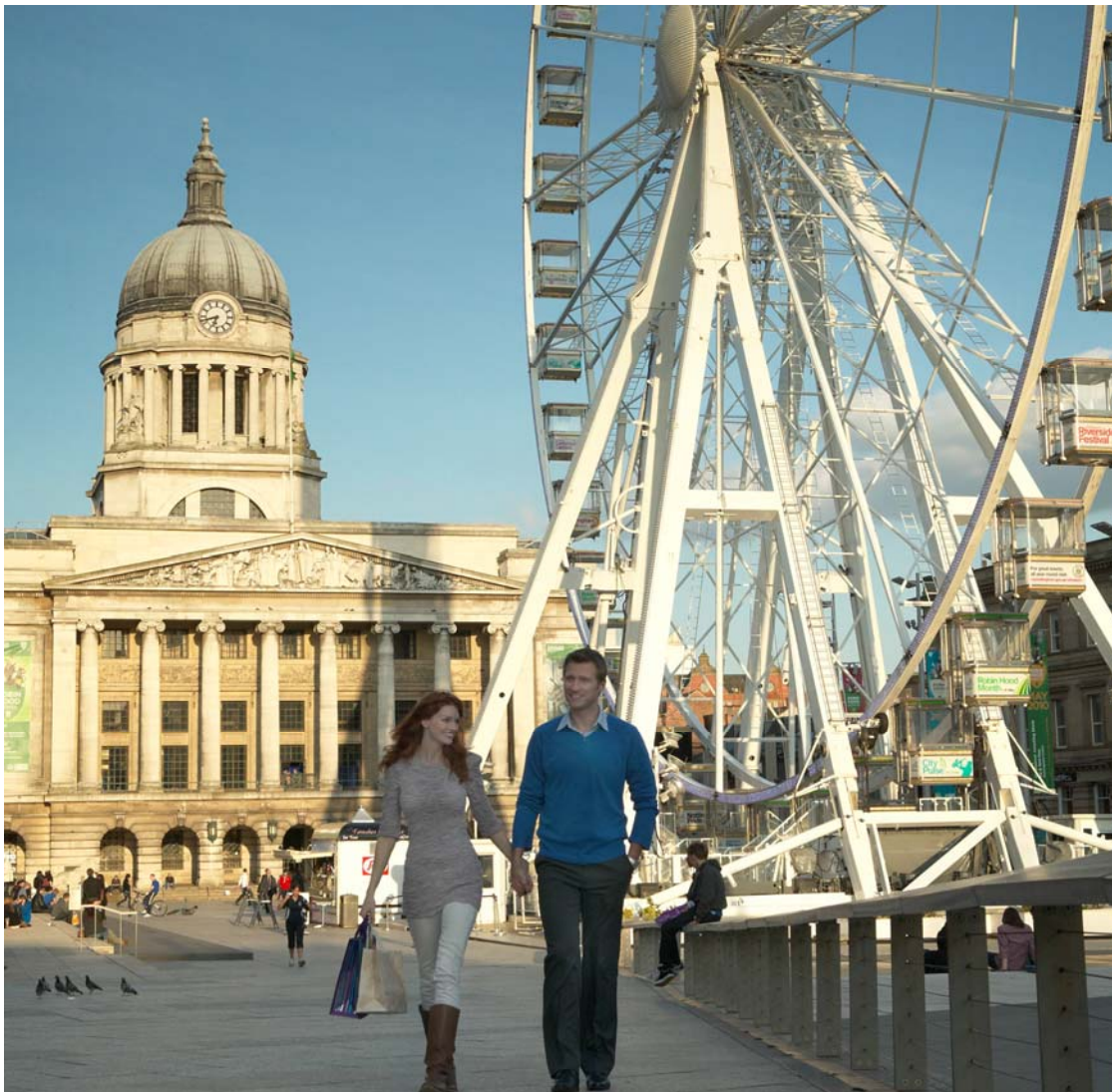
- Roadshows have been identified as an unsuitable route to market for business tourism. In 2006, a Meet in Notts UK Roadshow, similar to those run by Newcastle and Manchester, was introduced to promote the destination and its venues to event bookers in national associations in large UK cities. Nottingham did not have sufficient market share or reputation as a business destination to secure the attention of these associations and the work proved labour and cost intensive for the return. A Destination Showcase to take Nottinghamshire directly to large London based companies also proved unsuccessful and the decision was taken to focus time and money on targeted marketing to secretaries, PA's and event organisers and on the recruitment of conference ambassadors from the academic and medical professions.
- The purchase of an Event Registration system in 2008 allowed the small team to offer an extra service to their clients as well as generate more income e.g. used by three conferences in three months generating additional income of £2,000.
- The new Chaser system installed in January 2008 meant the team could monitor enquiries more effectively and give member venues a better reporting service by pinpointing enquiries by area and sector and tailoring subsequent marketing spend to reach potential targets in the Midlands and London.



- The acquisition of a 'Conference Bookings' system, an on line accommodation booking system for delegates, in 2009 has made managing accommodation for delegates more streamlined as hotels can manage their allocation and rates. Delegates have the opportunity to register and book accommodation at the same time giving clients an extra service while increasing the Bureau's income.

### Future Plans

By 2015, Experience Nottinghamshire aims to take Nottinghamshire to the top five in the UK Associations and Conference markets. This is against a background of tough trading in the business tourism market.



Pictured: Old Market Square, Nottingham.



## Marketing

### Discover Rutland

#### Development of a brand identity to position Rutland as an emerging short break destination



Pictured: Rutland Water.

Developing powerful destination brands is one of the key priorities outlined in Destination East Midlands 2010. In addition the strategy also makes reference to the importance of capitalising on the region's assets, including Rutland Water and using new technologies to promote destinations.

In 2007 Rutland County Council working closely with Anglian Water, which owns Rutland Water the county's largest attraction, and other major tourism partners, embarked on plans to develop a stand alone brand for promoting tourism in Rutland.

Funding for a dedicated tourism unit located at Rutland County Council was secured from Anglian Water for a period of five years under a section 106 agreement. This ensured a commitment to the development of tourism in Rutland from 2007 to 2012 and saw the council employ two Tourism Officers who began work on a tourism strategy.

The Rutland Tourism Committee was subsequently formed including representatives from all sectors of the tourism industry. With this in place, the first annual Rutland Tourism Forum took place in November 2007 to which all businesses in the county with an interest in the Visitor Economy were invited. It was important that industry had the opportunity to be fully involved in plans from the outset and great importance was placed on the relationship between the Tourism Committee and the wider industry.

Having only been granted unitary authority status in 1997, the County Council's work to build Rutland as an emerging short break destination was still in its infancy. Prior to the council regaining responsibility for tourism Rutland was marketed as part of the wider Leicestershire area by Leicester Shire Promotions then in 2008 Rutland County Council began working with VisitLincolnshire, seeing a synergy between the work it had been doing to promote Stamford and its own

offer. This partnership has been successful in identifying key markets, promoting Rutland as a desirable short break destination and increasing visitor numbers.

The idea to build and consolidate a brand that would help to market Rutland more effectively to visitors was one of the key aims outlined in the County Council's five year tourism strategy, launched in 2007. Existing data from a number of sources, including STEAM and VisitBritain was used to inform the County Council's plans, identify Rutland's product strengths and where future opportunities might lie for developing the county's tourism offer. A local designer was engaged to develop an identity that would capture the county's green landscapes and water. And the Rutland Tourism Committee was involved in making the final decision about which logo to proceed with, helping to give businesses a greater sense of ownership and involvement in plans from the outset.

### Results

- The new identity for Rutland – Discover Rutland, was launched in early 2008 and now features across all of the county's tourism marketing materials, ensuring consistency of message.
- A website introduced in April 2008 has seen visits increase by 25% year on year, and attracts around 10,500 visitors each month and is one of the most popular sources for visitors looking for information on Rutland.
- The website continues to evolve to reflect changing consumer demands, and now features a twitter account, online booking and more offers and promotions.
- The Discover Rutland visitor guide, produced in partnership with Visit Lincolnshire, is now self-financing as a result of wide support from the industry.
- Since 2007 the economic impact of tourism in the county has increased from £79.55 million to £85.79 million and there is greater awareness of what Rutland has to offer as a short break destination as a result of having a dedicated suite of marketing materials in place.
- The introduction of the Rutland Tourism Committee has also given the local industry a platform to ensure everyone is working towards the same goals of promoting and developing a high quality tourism offer for Rutland.

"In the early days, the council worked very closely with the industry (and local artist Alan Oliver) to come up with a brand that had widespread support and reflected the key message and image that we wanted. The logo is fresh and the green and blue theme shouts Rutland, famous for the magnificent Rutland Water and rolling countryside. A consistent 'local' branding across all of our publicity has built up awareness of the county and our leisure market has grown by nearly £5 million in the last few years".

Councillor Peter Jones, Rutland County Council

### Lessons learnt

- It was important to consult and involve the industry from the outset because their support was critical to moving activity forward, such as the development of the visitor guide.
- It was important to be focussed on what the key offer is rather than trying to offer something for everyone, as this will help to generate the best results.

### Future plans

- Continue to work with the tourism industry and key partners to promote Rutland as a short break destination in the UK, in order to increase the number of visitors.
- Work to attract the groups sector.
- Look at extending marketing activity to also target overseas markets in the long-term.
- Be aware of new technologies and changing trends to see how marketing activity can be adapted to respond to these e.g. SMS and text.



Pictured: Seaton Viaduct, Rutland.



## Marketing

### Rutland Walking Festival and Rutland Food and Drink Festival

Developing events to enable Rutland to showcase its product strengths and increase its visitor appeal



Pictured: Rutland Food and Drink

Destination 2010 talks about the importance of developing events and festivals in order to attract more visitors. After successfully launching the Discover Rutland brand in 2008, the tourism team at Rutland County Council decided to introduce two new events to capitalise on the county's main product strengths.

Using questionnaire feedback from the visitor guide, local data from the industry and other tourism research it became apparent that there was considerable interest in Rutland's walking and food and drink offer.

With more people choosing to holiday in the UK, walking and food and drink breaks have grown in popularity as people look for more experiential holidays where they can immerse themselves in local traditions and discover hidden gems.

The tourism team at Discover Rutland researched how popular similar festivals were in other parts of the UK, and decided to trial a walking festival working in partnership with local walking groups and colleagues in the Active Recreation Team at the County Council.

The idea to host the county's first food and drink festival came from the success of a guide produced by Discover Rutland, 'Eat Drink Rutland'. Featuring an introduction from TV celebrity Julia Bradbury, who grew up in Rutland and who has appeared on a number of programmes including Countryfile, the guide encouraged people to support local producers when buying food or eating out. Taking people on a food journey through the county around 21 businesses were

profiled, from Michelin starred restaurants through to pubs carrying the Cask Marque alongside local producers, farmers and farm shop.

### Results

- The county's first walking festival was launched in October 2009 and attracted around 125 people. However, following feedback from walk leaders and after looking at the timings of similar events in other destinations the decision was made to move the event to May, which proved a popular decision with over 284 people taking part in 2010.
- Feedback from the Food and Drink Guide was so positive that it provided the stimulus to introduce a stand alone event. The Rutland Food Festival takes place on the 18 September at Rutland Water and some of the county's food and drink providers have already signed up to take part including Hambleton Bakery and Grainstore Brewery.

"I am in no doubt that the work led by the Discover Rutland Tourism Team has given the tourism sector a real boost and raised the profile of Rutland nationally. We are seeing a real growth in our leisure market with many people discovering Rutland for the first time. In my view this is a result of the excellent partnership between Rutland County Council, Anglian Water and the tourism sector."

Ed Burrows

Chairman of Discover Rutland & Managing Director, Barnsdale Lodge

### Lessons Learnt

- The timing of the event was important to its success. October was considered too late in the year whilst May proved more popular.
- Having people with the appropriate knowledge on board was critical as the local walk leaders were able to help design an event that would appeal to walkers of all levels.
- Pooling resources and knowledge from the different organisations brought different sets of skills to the table, helping to make the event more of a success.
- Capitalise on the destination's strengths rather than trying to start new trends.

### Future plans

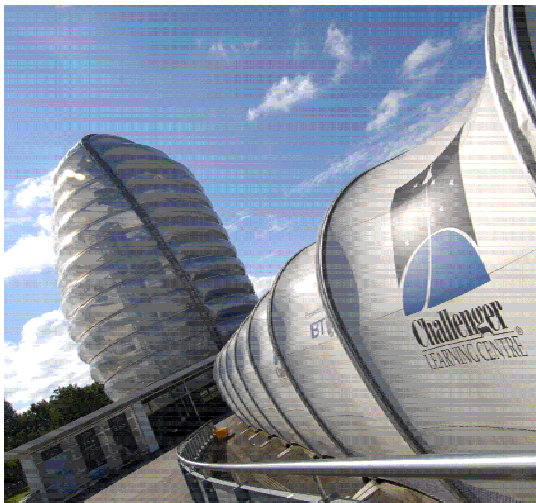
- Increase the number of people attending the walking festival in 2011 to 500.
- Develop the food and drink festival to attract more exhibitors.



## Marketing

### Stay Play Explore

#### Development of a Family Marketing Campaign to Encourage Overnight Stays in Leicester and Leicestershire



Pictured: National Space Centre

EMT launched a Marketing Challenge Fund in 2005 which was intended to pump - prime new high impact marketing initiatives which would raise the profile of the region, attract leisure visitors from new markets and increase overnight stays in the East Midlands. This fund was open to bidding by all partners as EMT was looking for innovative proposals which could demonstrate partnership support and provide additionality.

Leicester Shire Promotion's (LPL) Stay Play and Explore campaign was a project supported by the fund which was based on the development and promotion of a joint ticketing offer which hadn't been

done in the region before. The campaign was also focused on achieving success in promoting the county's attractions nationally. By working together the attractions, linking in with accommodation providers, would be able to create a stronger offer and a more powerful reason to visit and stay overnight in Leicestershire

The specific aims of Stay Play Explore were to increase the number of overnight visitors to Leicestershire and increase visitor numbers at the participating attractions. The focus of the campaign, which launched in 2006, was on the family market and the key message was based on a 'value-for-money' and high quality offer: a visit to three Leicestershire attractions of world-class standing and an overnight stay in a four star hotel (for a family of four) for just £99.

The target demographic for the campaign was, and continues to be, socially conscious ABC1 families who are attracted to short breaks that offer learning experiences for children. A secondary market was families in general linking into the 'value-for-money' element of the campaign with a more price-led focus.

Building on comprehensive market research, the Stay Play Explore campaign focuses specifically on the M1 corridor; in the South around the North London M25/M40 area and in the North around Sheffield, Leeds and South Manchester.

The campaign objectives were achieved through a range of highly targeted marketing activity including online promotions with enjoyengland.com and lastminute.com, competitions, leaflet production and distribution, niche national advertising, electronic direct mail and a pro-active public relations campaign. Activity has largely moved away from print advertising to targeted online promotions, which has seen a significant upturn in bookings, database growth and web hits.

As the campaign has grown, LPL works with a range of partners, including - National Space Centre, Conkers, Twycross Zoo, Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre and Country Park, Snibston, Twinlakes, Marriott Hotel, Leicester, Holiday Inn, Leicester and Barceló Hinckley Island Hotel

## Results

- Stay Play Explore has seen a tenfold increase in ticket sales since it was launched in 2006. In 2009-2010, 2,388 tickets were sold and there were 5,646 overnight hotel stays – a 184 per cent increase from the previous year.
- Significant media coverage has been generated in target national press - a two page destination feature in the Daily Telegraph, recommended as a Top Ten Children's activity in the Sunday Express and inclusion in The Independent on Sunday's British Breaks feature. Online editorial includes coverage in the Guardian online's UK Days Out recommendations and ParentDishAOL featuring the campaign as *'Probably the BEST family package deal in the UK'* featured as Partners are sharing in the success of the campaign.
- The campaign has started to achieve its key objective of changing perceptions to the destination. Five years ago, Leicestershire would never have been considered as a short break family destination, now with Stay Play Explore, Leicestershire has seen people making bookings not only for a long weekend (3+ nights) but for a week long holiday, which demonstrates that the county is now firmly on the map for leisure visitors.

*"We have had great results from the Stay Play Explore package in 2009. Leicester Shire Promotions has done a great job in pulling together a real value offer that is easy to buy and market, bringing together great hotels and superb entertainment in Leicestershire for the family market. We are also now seeing a large amount of repeat custom which is the true test of the quality of the short break."*

Wayne Topley, General Manager, Barceló Hinckley Island Hotel

### Lessons Learnt

- The initiative took around two years to start showing any return on investment and although partners were anxious for some quick wins, it wasn't until both the offer and target market were clearly defined that partners started to see successes.
- The target market initially identified was too broad and included North London, the far West Midlands, Bath/Bristol and the M1 corridor. LPL had underestimated how hard it is to reach the North London market and how easy it is for people to travel to Leicestershire in a day, particularly from the far West Midlands. As the campaign has progressed the marketing activity became far more sophisticated and specific.
- During the 08/09 campaign the partners were actively promoting the ticket only to day visitors. This resulted in a significant increase in Stay Play Explore ticket sales, but not overnight stays or annual passes for each of the attractions. When this was reviewed it was agreed that as the main objective was to promote short breaks, the ticket should only be sold at its discounted price when bought as a short break package. This helped partners to stay focused on the core objective of the campaign while also encouraging hotels to upsell and not detract from visitors buying annual passes/gift aid.
- The success of the campaign lies in a combination of factors - the high quality participating attractions and hotels, an extremely competitive price and highly targeted and strategic marketing activity.
- A vital consideration is the ongoing role LPL has played in delivering and developing this campaign. With a limited budget, highly targeted activity has been undertaken and all opportunities maximised to ensure that the campaign grows. Although this can be labour intensive at times, the continuing success of the campaign and the number of bednights it continues to generate is worthwhile.

### Future plans

- Building on the lessons learnt and success of Stay Play Explore, a new family campaign has been developed for the older family market. This campaign uses the same fundamental principles of a quality and value offer that includes a range of activities more suited to the older family market and appropriate accommodation for a fixed price point. LPL is working with a number of new partners but using many of the profiling tools and routes to market that have made Stay Play Explore such a success including work with Visit England, the Guardian and online media. The campaign has just launched and will be included in LPL's Autumn activity.

## Marketing

### Responding to the Challenge of the Business Tourism Market

#### Early Activity Shows Positive Results – 2013 Conference to Bring 1,000 delegates and Add £1/2m to Local Economy



Pictured: Hotel Maiyango

The conferencing, events and business tourism market remains vitally important to the national, regional and local visitor economies. Destination East Midlands 2010, the regional tourism strategy, emphasised the need for the region's destinations to capitalise on their natural advantages as locations in the centre of the country with easy road, rail and air access.

The annual British Conference Venues Survey for 2006-08, however, showed that the UK events market experienced a downturn in direct revenue sales to

venues from £8 billion to £7.2 billion. This was due mainly to a fall in the average number of events per venue and fewer residential events. The latter had a significant economic impact as residential events and conferences account for almost 60 per cent of overall venue income from events. To address this new challenge, Leicester Shire Promotions (LPL) has refocused its business tourism strategy to focus on event bidding.

The dramatic change in the market and predictions that the market will take some time to recover has led LPL to adopt a new strategic approach to business tourism. By clearly identifying and targeting events and conferences that have a strategic fit with the destination as well as using key contacts, the destination has a much stronger chance of attracting specific events than more general activity would have had.

LPL researches potential events and with the support of key partners such as the universities, businesses and local authorities, ensures that resources are more focused. The response from destination partners has been very encouraging and



potential conference organisers are already keen to work with LPL as they can see the impact that successful event bidding can have on the destination's business tourism economy.

### Results

- A 'City Conference Hub' has been created to pitch proactively for associations looking for city-based venues - the hub encompasses Leicester's regenerated Cultural Quarter: Curve, Phoenix Square and Athena as well as city centre accommodation partners including the Belmont, Ramada Jarvis and Maiyango.
- Attracting the prestigious and world-renowned Society for Historical Archaeology Conference, taking place in Leicester in 2013. Traditionally held in North America, the conference is expected to bring over 1,000 delegates from around the world and to contribute half a million pounds to the local visitor economy. The bid was secured by a partnership from the School of Archaeology at the University of Leicester, Leicester Conferences and Leicester Shire Promotions.

*"There has been a fundamental shift in the nature of business tourism and Leicester Shire Promotions' process of bidding for targeted events and conferences will be key to the future of securing business for Leicester and Leicestershire."*

*Kay England, Chief Executive of imago*

### Lessons Learnt

- The days of the more traditional conference desk are over. Conference Organisers have their favourites and venues are in the position of being able to negotiate the best possible deal. The economic downturn has hit the business tourism market hard and conferences now have shorter lead-in times demanding increasingly greater value for money. Although this market is making a slow recovery, two to three day public sector conferences are a thing of the past.
- LPL decided some time ago that although it would continue to support conference venues, a conference desk was not the most effective way of doing this. An on-line resource is supplied for conference organisers with LPL's focus being on working with key partners to research and develop bids to bring new business into the destination.
- One of the key lessons learnt is the importance of explaining to partners exactly how this relationship can work. Once they understand it's not about poaching business or stealing the glory and that working together in a cohesive way brings benefits, it works incredibly well.



### Future Plans

- To work more closely with existing and new partners to identify events and conferences to target actively.
- Continue to pursue funding opportunities to support this activity.
- Explore new possibilities for events and conferences to target.
- Continue to develop and improve the conferencing offer in the destination.



Pictured: Curve Theatre. Leicester

## Marketing

### An Inspiring Group Travel Destination

#### Tapping into the Growing Group Travel Market to Attract More Visitors to Leicestershire



Pictured: Ye Olde Pork Pie Shoppe.  
Melton Mowbray

The Coach Tourism Council estimates that nearly seven million people took a coach tour in the UK in 2009 as more people looked for an affordable holiday at home. Further indicators show that with more people retiring and the over 65 population continuing to increase, there will be many more potential coach touring and group travel customers.

To capitalise on this growing sector, Leicester Shire Promotions (LPL) has been working with local partners to promote Leicester and Leicestershire as an inspiring group travel destination to group travel organisers and coach tour

operators from across the country.

An early objective for LPL was to identify key market segments. The travel trade market is huge and after considerable research LPL decided to target coach tour operators as opposed to either wholesalers, who were being targeted by the regional travel trade consultant, or group travel organisers who were restricted in how often they would visit the destination. Coach tour operators are a very specific market and are the key decision makers for thousands of day and overnight coach visits.

One of the key areas of focus for LPL's group travel strategy was to raise the profile of Leicester and Leicestershire directly with coach tour operators throughout the UK. Early research into this market indicated that there was a considerable disconnect between perceptions of the destination and the reality of what it has to offer.

To change this, one of the key activities in LPL's strategy has been to work with partners to co-ordinate and deliver familiarisation tours for some of the country's leading coach tour operators. Working with tourism partners, including accommodation partners and venues, the company has been successful in attracting some of the more prominent coach tour operators to visit and experience first hand Leicester and Leicestershire's dynamic offer for groups and tours.

In addition to these familiarisation visits, other activity has included highly targeted advertising in annual directories, engagement with bodies such as Hidden England and the Coach Tourism Council, online promotions targeting the groups market, and a proactive public relations campaign. A comprehensive database has also been developed to ensure regular contact with the major tour operators.

### Results

- In April 2009 35 coach tour operators visited The National Forest. The two-day 'Great Outdoors' themed itinerary included visits to Conkers, Snibston, Donington Park, Moira Furnace and an overnight stay at the Best Western Yew Lodge Hotel. Feedback was extremely positive with more than half of the delegates planning a leisure visit in 2010.
- In October 2009, 15 of the country's leading coach tour operators were invited to Melton Mowbray for a 'Taste of Melton Mowbray' familiarisation visit. The trip included guided tours of Belvoir Brewery, Melton Mowbray town centre, Ye Olde Pork Pie Shoppe and a visit to the East Midlands Food and Drink Festival at Brooksby Hall. The trip resulted in four major group bookings in Melton Mowbray for 2010 including 35 rooms for two nights at Scaford Hall during December 2010.
- A 'History and Heritage' familiarisation visit in March 2010 included guided tours of some of the county's leading historic attractions such as Bosworth Battlefield, Snibston and The Great Central Railway with accommodation at Barceló Hinckley Island Hotel. The trip resulted in positive feedback with many tour operators considering similar trips for their groups in the forthcoming year
- Working in partnership with the East Midlands Tourism Regional Travel Trade Co-ordinator, fam visits were set up for Simply Groups and Norman Allen Tours. As a result of this, Leicestershire now features in the Norman Allen Tours brochure.

"We've run a couple of successful tours based on our experiences on previous familiarisation trips, elsewhere in the UK. This trip, the 'Taste of Melton Mowbray', enabled us to see at first-hand parts of the country we were yet to visit including highlights such as the East Midlands Food Festival, Melton Mowbray and Ye Olde Pork Pie Shoppe. We will now be including these in the tours we offer to customers."

Ross Young, Spot Hire Travel, based in Kent



### Lessons Learnt

- Feedback from familiarisation visits over the past year has demonstrated that they are the most effective way of promoting the destination to the travel trade. The key to the success of these visits is the support of local partners which has enabled LPL to go to the group travel market with a strong, consolidated offer.
- While the supporting promotional activity is important to LPL's aim of highlighting Leicester and Leicestershire as inspiring group travel destinations, it is the fam visits that give the best opportunity to showcase the city and county directly to many of the country's leading coach tour operators. The bookings resulting from these trips have shown an immediate and ongoing return.

### Future Plans

- LPL will continue to work with partners to develop the group offer in the destination. Partners include NW Leicestershire Promotions, Melton Promotions, Charnwood Promotions as well as The National Forest, The Marriott and Barcelo Hinckley Island. All of these partners will contribute financially to the campaign to ensure its success.
- A National Forest familiarisation visit is planned for March 2011 and LPL is in discussion with the Group Travel Organisers Association and Barcelo Hinckley Island to host a visit for members in 2011.



Pictured: Great Central Railway. Leicester

## Marketing

### Overseas Marketing Intelligence

#### Country-specific lessons learnt from marketing campaigns in France, Germany and The Netherlands



Pictured: Attenborough Nature Reserve. Nottinghamshire

The Regional Tourism Strategy, Destination East Midlands 2010, identified the importance of growing the value of visitors to the region, placing emphasis on domestic and international overnight visitors, who spend on average five times more during their stay than a day visitor. In response to the opportunity offered by attracting more, higher value overseas visitors, EMT has carried out overseas marketing campaigns since 2005, using a range of mediums. Below are the lessons learnt from these experiences:

#### Lessons Learnt

##### Generic

- EMT consulted VisitBritain for existing research, market and customer intelligence before embarking on any overseas marketing. Best prospects were chosen based on the popularity of England as a place to visit, the match between what customers do and what the region already offers and access routes. VisitBritain creates market profiles which are invaluable for identifying and learning about overseas markets, and are available for free on the [VisitBritain website](#)
- How potential tourists get into the region should be considered. As well as East Midlands Airport, the wider region is well served by airports on its borders, Manchester, Doncaster, Luton, Stansted and Birmingham, which offer good access for weekend short breaks. Ferry ports in Harwich and Hull and the Eurotunnel offer access for 'tourers' who bring their own car and potentially caravans into the country for longer holidays. The re-



location of the Eurostar terminal to St Pancras offers longer term potential for breaks from Europe into the region. This will be further improved when Eurostar introduces 'through tickets' from towns and cities in Europe to the cities of the East Midlands.

- The internet has become an invaluable research tool in many countries. Well translated native language websites are helpful in most countries as it cannot be assumed that most people will understand English. They may feel comfortable using English language websites for information, but may be reluctant to book in English when it is essential to understand detailed terms and conditions.
- Capturing customer data and maintaining a positive relationship with customers after their initial interest is important. Online contact e.g. newsletters is the most cost effective way of keeping in touch with consumers. This information should be regular but not too often, giving brief information with clear links to where they can find out more.
- Some countries may be less likely than others to book online so it's important to recognise this when designing websites, choosing travel partners and planning campaigns.
- It is vital to time campaigns to fit in with booking patterns, so that the destination and any offers or hooks are uppermost in visitors' minds when they are making decisions about their trip. The French for example tend to be last minute bookers – one to three months before their trip.
- Many Europeans don't have a positive view of British food. By highlighting regional specialities, cooking schools and top restaurants, both in marketing and during familiarisation trips for press, it is possible to turn these views around.
- There is a view that England has an industrial landscape in some countries, for example Germany. By using strong rural imagery and key outdoor activity messages it is possible to emphasise the outdoor element of the region.
- Feeding information into online blogs and social networking communities can be helpful in building the profile of your destination. This works best in the native language, not English. 'Travel communities' or online discussion rooms have a special role as they tend to have older target groups than expected in traditional social media.
- Travel companies such as P&O are good campaign partners. They can offer competition prizes to encourage data capture, access to customer databases and intelligence about your target market.

### France

- The French are normally last minute bookers, especially for short breaks. The internet is an important tool for French travellers, with fifty percent booking their trips online.
- The product in the East Midlands matched best with older visitors, most of whom are educated and wealthy.

- They were interested in gardens, heritage, country houses and castles, culture, shopping, events and film tourism and generally prefer to stay in B&B's or small hotels.
- Short breaks are very popular with the French market particularly European city breaks of up to four days. They tend to take two week holidays in France or near-European countries such as Spain.

### Germany

- The majority of trips (47%) are still organised by travel agents and tour operators. To make the most of this opportunity a travel trade project was funded, feeding in imagery and itinerary ideas to travel trade companies as well as organising familiarisation trips so they could see the best of the region themselves.
- Short breaks are very popular with the German market particularly European city breaks of up to four days.
- The target market was mainly adults, aged 35+ with above average income, particularly empty nester couples aged 50+ with higher disposable income and the ability to visit in the shoulder seasons.
- They have a general interest in touring, hiking, cycling & walking - 73% of Germans choose their holidays based on natural scenic beauty (Nation Brands Index 2009). It is especially important with the German market therefore to address any preconceptions about the UK being industrial.
- The German market doesn't generally respond well to online marketing as they are reluctant to give out their personal details. There is typically a low return rate for competition entries and requests for more information so German language leaflets were distributed in key areas within a certain drive time of airports or ferry terminals.
- Germans are traditionally uncomfortable with buying online or on credit card, although this is changing. The internet is important as a research tool for German travellers, if not for bookings. They are increasingly using the internet to look for bargains and deals as they don't see holidays as a luxury, more as a necessity, but they believe strongly in value for money rather than 'cheap' holidays.
- Activity was geographically targeted in areas which had the best routes into the Midlands - North-Rhine-Westphalia, cities of Frankfurt, Hamburg, Hannover, Munich and Stuttgart and their surrounding area.

### Netherlands

- The target market was 'Touring Seniors' who enjoy several short holidays per year and who are more likely to tour around Britain with their car and caravan for two weeks or more.
- The decision to book is usually made one to three months before the trip with longer holidays typically being taken July–September.

- Many Dutch people do speak English but some native language information is preferable.
- Evaluation showed that of those who stayed in the East Midlands, the Peak District & Derbyshire was the most popular destination. Its outdoor product matched the interests of Dutch 'tourers'.
- 40% of the population live in the Randstad area which includes the cities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht.
- The Dutch have a decreasing confidence in online purchasing, although the vast majority have internet access and half of all bookings are made via the internet
- The Dutch like lots of detail and to plan their trips before they come. It is, therefore, important to have as much information as possible online or clear links to where it can be found. They like to know travel routes, what their accommodation is like, what attractions are nearby, opening times, where they can eat, etc.



Pictured: Grimsthorpe Castle. Lincolnshire.

## Marketing

### North American Travel Trade Project

#### Combining Resources to Promote the Tourism Product of the Midlands to North America



Pictured: Sulgrave Manor.  
Northamptonshire

East Midlands Tourism (EMT) identified North America as a key English speaking and high value market with a strong interest in English culture and history, with a number of routes into the UK. Most first time visitors to the UK will go to London, and take a tour to well-known British destinations such as Bath, York, the Cotswolds and Edinburgh. The East Midlands offered an unexplored and new experience for frequent North American visitors to the UK, with the historic product that US visitors traditionally enjoy.

The objective was to increase the volume and value of US visitors booking via the travel trade. Consequently, relationships were developed with travel trade operators in North America as well as UK based ground handlers who also sell tour packages to the North American travel trade.

Given the type of product in the region, the geographic proximity and the need to consolidate budgets, it was decided to run this as a jointly-funded project between East Midlands Tourism and Advantage West Midlands (AWM). Both AWM and EMT had already done some work in the US market and this project was able to build on this existing activity.

The project funding ran from August 2008 until March 2011, with £120,000 investment over the three years. In the first year of the project, some private sector income was levered in from attractions across the Midlands. Businesses also supported the project by offering complementary rooms and entrances for familiarisation trips throughout the lifetime of the project.



An independent consultant was employed by EMT to manage the campaign on behalf of the wider Midlands region. It was decided to use the “Heart of England”, rather than England’s Midlands, as a descriptor for the area in North American markets as it already had some resonance with the travel trade, as well as a geographical and emotional connection for consumer audiences.

New itineraries were developed specifically for the US market, for example Roots of America, Gardens and Grandeur, Hidden Treasures and Robin Hood. These were available on the website and promoted to the trade via regular newsletters. A dedicated web site was created <http://www.visittheheart.co.uk/ustraveltrade/> which included details of information relevant to the North American travel trade including suggested itineraries, contact details of UK based ground handlers, partner information and full contact details.

Much of the budget was dedicated to attending events, for example Britain Marketplace, the National Tour Association Convention and the USTOA convention. Concise profile sheets of the region with imagery were prepared and in all cases appointments pre-booked with contacts. Quarterly newsletters with details of events, anniversaries and new hotels were distributed to the database of contacts.

Familiarisation trips were organised, usually tailored individually to the requirements of the ground handler or travel trade operator. In addition to the travel trade activity a number of press articles were written regarding the attractions in the East and West Midlands.

## Results

- 20 Midlands itineraries were featured in travel trade brochures, giving potential visitors the opportunity to see what there is on offer in the region.
- 260 new travel trade contacts were made.
- 25 Tour Operators were hosted on familiarisation trips some personal and other within groups. *(Final year three figures were unavailable at the time of writing)*
- An independent benchmarking evaluation of the campaign was undertaken in August 2009. The evaluation helped inform activity for year three of the campaign and advise on future improvements. The results were very positive and indicated that the consultant was providing all the information, regularity of contact and personal service that the operators needed to be able to increase sales to the Heart of England.



### Lessons Learnt

- Information and familiarisation trips should be tailored to the individual travel trade company requirements to make it easy for them to see what the area has to offer to their customers.
- A web resource is useful, though personal contact is also valued by the market.
- Regular communications should be maintained with trade contacts, with new information being shared whenever possible e.g. events and new hotel developments.
- Trade events e.g. Britain Marketplace and the National Tour Association Convention, World Travel Market, USTOA Convention, UK Inbound, Educational Travel Conference and Best of Britain and Ireland are good places to meet contacts and cultivate relationships. Attendance at overseas events and face to face contact can be a good investment of time and money.
- Protocol at some of the trade events is to give out concise information profiles rather than handing out huge brochures. These detail the highlights of the region, the range of product and itineraries and contact information and website details.
- The East Midlands was the less well known partner, but benefited from the hook of the West Midlands' Shakespeare and Cotswolds connections.
- The Midlands' strengths were seen as history, Shakespeare, its central and compact location, and the strength of the 'England' brand
- The Olympics has created another point of interest for the travel trade. While the East Midlands doesn't have any events, it is an excellent location with good product match to catch visiting groups as they travel from London through the UK.
- Education and faith tours provide a real opportunity and are a huge market in the US. Lack of funding has stopped greater involvement in these markets so far.
- Travel trade often doesn't show a real return on investment until year three of a project. It takes time to sell-in itineraries to the travel trade, then allow visitors to book the trips and take them the subsequent year.
- It is important to make good contacts with hotels and attractions to secure reduced costs for familiarisation trips. This may benefit them in the long term with potentially hundreds of regular room bookings.
- Partner funding e.g. businesses supporting the project with cash rather than reduced room rates can be difficult to secure. It may be easier with more mature projects with proven successes.

### Future Plans

- Due to regional budget cuts, the current travel trade work will cease at the end of March 2011.
- The database of organisations, meeting notes and familiarisation trip itineraries will be provided for use to local tourism organisations so that work can be continued and contacts followed up.



Pictured: Easton Walled Gardens. Lincolnshire

## Marketing

### Robin Hood the Movie

A local, national and international marketing campaign

The successful promotion of Nottingham and Sherwood Forest as 'The home of Robin Hood' on the back of the Ridley Scott directed blockbuster starring Russell Crowe and Cate Blanchett



Pictured: Robin Hood. Nottingham

Destination East Midlands 2010 highlighted the need to invest in strong tourism icons such as Robin Hood and Sherwood Forest. The 2010 release of summer blockbuster 'Robin Hood', directed by Ridley Scott, presented a unique opportunity to promote the city and the forest to potential visitors at home and abroad.

Experience Nottinghamshire in partnership with VisitBritain led the delivery of an international, national and local marketing campaign to invite visitors to experience 'the home of Robin Hood'.

With an initial budget of £125,000, Experience Nottinghamshire was instrumental in building a total campaign fund of £750,000. In part, this stemmed

from a contra arrangement with Universal Pictures and Ridley Scott's production company resulting in exclusive access to imagery and trailers from the film. This in turn enabled a one-off costumes and props exhibition at Nottingham Castle and Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre – the first time Universal Pictures has agreed to such an exhibition.



The contra arrangement also resulted in a gala screening of the film on 13 May at Cineworld, Nottingham, timed to coincide with the World Premiere at the Cannes Film Festival.

Partnerships were set up by Experience Nottinghamshire with local authorities, VisitEngland, East Midlands Trains, Intercontinental Hotel Group and tourism operators in Nottinghamshire. Each of these organisations had their own objectives from the campaign and by working together the partnership ensured these were successfully realised while also pooling resources to create a greater impact.

A range of activity and materials were produced to promote the home of Robin Hood to both domestic and overseas visitors:

- 'Dressing' the city and town centres throughout the county promoting the Universal Studio Exhibitions at Nottingham Castle and Sherwood Forest National Nature Reserve as well as 'Robin Hood month' – May 2010.
- Special events to celebrate the release of the film focusing on 'Robin Hood month'.
- A national marketing campaign, encouraging higher value overnight staying visitors.
- A partnership campaign with Intercontinental Hotel Group promoting 'Robin Hood Breaks', bookable via their website.
- An international campaign in 32 markets, delivered in partnership with VisitBritain.

### Results

- Unique visits to the Robin Hood Breaks website – 54,642.
- From an initial investment by East Midlands Tourism of £125,000 into the campaign, Experience Nottinghamshire increased the total partnership budget to approximately £750,000.
- 425,014 visitors to the props and costumes exhibition at Nottingham Castle and Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre.
- 60,000 visitors to the Robin Hood Festival in Sherwood Forest, with 64% from outside of the county.
- The global PR campaign reached 118 million people in 32 countries, generating 590 articles and 39 press visits. The value of the coverage was £5m.
- 1,200 accommodation referrals in Nottinghamshire from visitbritain.com with a total referral value of around £151,000
- The total value of the partnership with Universal Pictures was over £9.3 million.

"Over the last year we have worked hard to make the most of this opportunity. Partnering with organisations such as Visit Britain and Experience Nottinghamshire has demonstrated the value of partnership working and how local heritage can give a huge boost to tourism and in turn to the local economy."

John Cottee, Nottinghamshire County Councillor

### Lessons Learnt

- The cinema release activity worked well because all organisations communicated on a strategic level during the development of the project and when activity started they all understood and carried out their roles around the common objective.
- The overall campaign was the largest ever film tourism campaign developed by VisitBritain and Experience Nottinghamshire was instrumental in making it happen. It helped raise and improve the profile of the organisation and the Robin Hood tourism product amongst local, national and international partners.
- Working with organisations such as film companies can be challenging, mainly due to the cultural differences between private enterprises and the predominantly public sector organisations delivering tourism marketing. Internationally fragmented markets also led to difficulties in co-ordinating activity.
- The majority of funding for the campaign, other than activity delivered independently by companies such as the Intercontinental Hotel Group, was in-kind as opposed to cash support. Expectations of cash funding from many private sector organisations were not realised. Although businesses were committed to working with Experience Nottinghamshire on the campaign, they would only provide in-kind support to broader campaign investment.
- The Robin Hood discount card as a pilot project has been useful in the potential development of a card covering further visitor attractions and also understanding the nature of the product offer. The fact that many Robin Hood attractions are in public sector ownership can be a disadvantage for negotiating discounted entry deals.
- Nottinghamshire was shortlisted as a venue for the official press interviews (an international press event featuring stars from the film and the world's media to promote the film). A delegation from Universal Studios, Los Angeles was hosted to view interview locations and accommodation for actors and support staff, including those further afield such as Hambleton Hall and Stapleford Park. The lack of local 5 star accommodation was an issue as was the authenticity of the Castle as an interview location.



### Future Plans

- The cinema release campaign is being followed up by a second round of marketing activity to coincide with the release of the film DVD in autumn 2010. Again this campaign is in partnership with VisitBritain, VisitEngland, Universal Picture's Home Entertainment division and tourism businesses in the city and county.



Pictured: Wollaton Park. Nottingham  
Courtesy of Gerry Molumby

## Marketing

### Product Development

#### Trails around Tourist Information Centres



Pictured: Matlock Bath. Derbyshire

In its 2005-2008 corporate plan period, East Midlands Tourism (EMT) recognised that there was a demand for product development funding to support the development of facilities and activity across the region in order to improve the competitiveness of the sector. A fund was created and Destination Management Partnerships (DMPs) were invited to produce proposals for product development activity.

Visit Peak District and Derbyshire (VPDD) DMP submitted an application for funding for a number of activities which included

activity based around Tourist Information Centres (TICs). While many local authorities were funding a range of tourist information centres, an independent report suggested that information provision would benefit from broader activity, particularly in areas with high visitor numbers. As the local authorities were not in a position to finance this, VPDD proposed that the EMT product development fund be used to bridge this gap.

A Visitor Services Action Plan had previously been developed for the county that identified the need for a more comprehensive range of 'on the ground' publications and sources of information. This was the basis for the VPDD bid which aimed to provide a suite of interpretative publications to raise the profile of less well known parts of the Peak District's tourism product, help create new interest in specific locations, bring to life areas where the tourism product was not physically visible and provide visitors with new reasons to visit or extend their stay. This would support the overall objective of increasing visitor spend in the Peak District.

The project focused around the 11 networked Tourist Information Centres (TICs) in Derbyshire – Ashbourne, Bakewell, Buxton, Castleton, Chesterfield, Derby,

Glossop, Matlock, Matlock Bath, Swadlincote and Ripley. It consisted of the generation of a set of four full or half day trails for each TIC, with the centre being the starting point for each route. Each trail used a different mode of transport, car, public transport, cycle or walking, and was either circular or point-to-point. Some of the trails included a high profile tourist attraction but the main focus was on developing 'off the beaten track' routes and include lesser known attractions, quality tea shops, picnic sites, beauty spots, craft outlet shops selling local produce and branded factory outlets. Consultants were engaged to research the project and develop the trails with input provided both by the TICs and the private sector.

### Results

- 44 trails, four for each TIC, were created and could be downloaded from the [visitpeakdistrict.com](http://visitpeakdistrict.com) website. This format reduced the need to provide quantities of printed material and meant that both the TICs and visitors could download the information on demand.

### Lessons Learnt

- The trails are still downloadable from either the [visitpeakdistrict.com](http://visitpeakdistrict.com) website or by walking into any of the TICs, although since the completion of the project Matlock Bath, Glossop and Ripley TICs no longer exist which has affected the opportunities to distribute the product.
- The ability to track usage of the trails was not considered at the start of the project therefore it is difficult to assess how well they are used. Downloads directly from the [visitpeakdistrict.com](http://visitpeakdistrict.com) website are trackable but requests are low suggesting that the visitors are not looking for information of this kind via the web. It is important to set targets at the start of the project but also to determine clearly how performance against these targets is going to be measured.
- The project was developed as a means of trying to encourage wider exploration of specific locations but there was insufficient consumer research to determine whether the concept was something that visitors really wanted or whether basing routes around TIC's was a realistic option. It may have been more appropriate to have based the routes on recognised visitor attractions or existing trails.
- The online resource has meant that costs were kept low (no large scale print costs) and the format provides longevity for the project. The main market for the Peak District, however, particularly at the time the project was initiated, was traditional in nature and more comfortable with printed material rather than web-based information.
- Developing activity to fit in with new funding opportunities, particularly when timescales are short, may not always be the best use of available resource. This gives rise to developing what appear to be reasonable ideas without having sufficient time or funding to test or research the



proposals with consumers, or develop a thorough business case to support the project.

### Future Plans

- Product development is an important part of the visitor economy in the Peak District and it does require continual investment to ensure product meets and exceeds visitor expectations.
- VPDD has recently created a post within the organisation which is dedicated to product development.
- The DMP does not intend to fund product development activity but instead focuses on engaging with the industry to gather ideas and test these on consumers. Much of the initial work has been around developing new marketing based products eg the development of a new short breaks package called 48 hours where customers spend 24 hours in a city (Derby or Sheffield) and 24 hours in the Peak District. Other activity being developed relates to food and drink, outdoor activity and attractions.



Pictured: Chesterfield Tourist Information Centre. Derbyshire

## Marketing

### Spreading the Word

#### Increasing overseas visitors' knowledge of the tourism product in the destinations of the East Midlands using PR



Pictured: Advertisement for the movie The Duchess.

The regional tourism strategy, Destination East Midlands, highlighted the need to increase visitor value by growing the number of overnight staying visitors. Overseas visitors from near European countries, France, Germany and The Netherlands, were seen as particularly strong prospects because of the ease of access to the region and because the consumers there were already confirmed 'anglophiles' who had an affinity with the types of experiences on offer in the region, and enjoyed discovering new places in England.

In 2006, East Midlands Tourism decided to capitalise on the overseas marketing campaigns that had been run previously by tendering for a dedicated resource to promote the region's destinations. The brief was for an agency to focus exclusively on marketing the region's product as previous marketing activity had been part of wider England or Britain-wide campaigns. The aim was to deliver a regular drip feed of marketing activity, breaking at key holiday periods over the course of the year, with a view to attracting more overnight visitors to the region.

When the tender process got underway, however, it became clear that there was a very low level of awareness of the East Midlands product overseas. The companies tendering for the work, many of whom were based in Europe, recommended that because the region's tourism attractions were not well known enough by consumers or by opinion formers, such as the media or the travel trade, it would be more beneficial to undertake PR activity. This would generate a buzz around the opportunities for short breaks or touring holidays in the East Midlands. It was decided, therefore, to shift the emphasis of activity from



marketing to PR and appoint specialist consumer PR agencies in France, Germany and The Netherlands.

The main themes of landscapes, history & heritage, outdoor activities and arts and sports were used in the PR activity, to reflect the information categories on the existing East Midlands foreign language websites ([www.discovereastmidlands.de](http://www.discovereastmidlands.de) and .fr and .nl). The agencies were set targets for generating media visits and coverage, which included national newspapers, broadcast, consumer magazines and online media. They also attended high profile events and exhibitions to meet with influential opinion formers from the travel trade.

## Results

<b>Overseas PR Agencies</b>	<b>2008</b>		<b>2009</b>		<b>2010</b>	
	<i>Annual target</i>	<i>Total achieved</i>	<i>Annual Target</i>	<i>Total achieved</i>	<i>Annual target</i>	<i>Total achieved</i>
<b>Germany</b>						
<i>Press trips</i>	5	3	3	2	4	4
<i>Pieces of coverage</i>	39	53	31	154	28	413
<b>France</b>						
<i>Press trips</i>	5	7	6	6	5	5
<i>Pieces of coverage</i>	45	24	27	13	27	38
<b>The Netherlands</b>						
<i>Press trips</i>	5	10	7	3	5	6
<i>Pieces of coverage</i>	32	84	47	104	29	82

## Lessons Learnt

- Having dedicated agencies in the countries, who spoke the language and had good relationships with their media worked well, as they were better placed to 'sell in' story ideas. Familiarisation trips were run for the agencies to ensure that they had first-hand experience of the product.
- Joint working across the three agencies and the Nottingham-based agency, which handled UK PR, was promoted to ensure that the agencies shared knowledge, ideas and experience.

- In the first year a similar approach was taken across the three European markets. Over time, however, this evolved as more information was gleaned about how each market worked. For example, press releases detailing events happening at important times of the year, such as Easter and Christmas, were well received in Germany but had less of an impact in France and The Netherlands. There was also less interest amongst the German media to take part in press trips.
- In France and The Netherlands, the media wanted more tailored information around new product development such as the opening of Nottingham Contemporary and the launch of The Duchess movie, shot at Chatsworth and other East Midlands locations. The media in these countries were also more inclined to take part in press trips to research individual stories.
- Film tourism in general proved very popular with the media as did quirky stories such as Spookyshire, a campaign run by Visit Peak District and Derbyshire to promote Hallowe'en themed events happening in the area.
- An electronic newsletter introduced to provide regular updates for media was discontinued following feedback that it was too generic and didn't meet the journalists' need for individually tailored stories.
- Trying to get information to keep ideas fresh was quite difficult as the region has comparatively little new product development.
- Sometimes there was a mismatch between what was sold in and the experience on the ground when journalists came on press trips, which led to some disappointment. This tended to happen when the quality of the product did not live up to journalist expectations.
- There was a limited budget available for press trips and the more media relations activity, the greater the demand for press trips became. By working closely with the Destination Management Partnerships, in-kind business support, in terms of complementary or reduced accommodation and food, was generated to fund trips.
- Over the four years that the agencies were in post, the media landscape changed, which meant activity had to be adapted. A lot of publications reduced their travel pages or re-focussed their efforts to concentrate on domestic tourism. Many media outlets have become more commercially driven and want offers or competitions that they can run in conjunction with editorial. There has also been more of a shift to online channels, as there is less restriction on space. This works well for travel features which benefit from significant editorial information.
- Monitoring coverage was quite difficult, even with cuttings agencies in place, because of the volume of product that could be mentioned in articles, so the agencies had to do a lot of manual searches to identify coverage.

## Marketing

### Time to Escape

An effective, three-year marketing campaign re-positioning the Peak District and Derbyshire to high value UK visitors



Destination East Midlands, the region's tourism strategy clearly recognised the power of investing in key regional assets such as The Peak District, which is seen both as a world-class and an iconic green brand. Within this, the importance of maintaining the balance between attracting more visitors and preserving the quality of the rural environment was seen to be critical.

Pictured: Derwent Valley, Peak District

In 2008, Visit the Peak District and Derbyshire DMP (VPDD) launched a new marketing campaign, "Time to Escape", to encourage existing and new markets to escape the stresses & strains of everyday life. Using the Peak District as an 'attract brand', visitor dispersal throughout the rest of Derbyshire was to be increased by making visitors to the National Park aware of the wider visitor offer around this iconic area. Presented as a year round destination, offering the chance to get back to nature and to indulge without being expensive, the Peak District and Derbyshire was promoted as accessible and close to home, yet different from home.

The campaign was developed with private and public sector partners including the Peak District and Derbyshire Marketing and Research Advisory Panel and the Tourism Officers Group representing the National Park, South Derbyshire, Derbyshire Dales, Historic Borders, High Peak and Derbyshire County Council. Private sector partners included The National Trust, Chatsworth, the Heights of Abraham and accommodation providers.

"Time to Escape" was tested with customer focus groups before being launched with 89% finding the concept appealing. Two main target markets were selected following in-depth research, customer segmentation and workshops with private

sector partners. These markets were mid to higher end in value, displaying a higher than average propensity to respond to the Visit Peak District and Derbyshire proposition.

The first customer segment was mid-market, empty nesters, who take breaks year round and prefer to travel outside main holiday booking periods. Their choice of accommodation, country pubs, high quality traditional B&B's and self-catering, matched the existing Peak District and Derbyshire product. As did their holiday interests, which revolved around stately homes and gardens, industrial history, attractive countryside, towns and villages. Visitors in the South East, the North West, Yorkshire and the East and West Midlands were targeted.

The second target market were affluent families looking for relaxing and inspiring short breaks without their children where they can enjoy culture, homes and gardens and gentle outdoor pursuits. The bulk of this market comes from The Midlands and London followed by the East of England and Yorkshire.

This campaign was a mix of traditional marketing such as the highly successful Peak District & Derbyshire Visitor Guide and the destination's official website, [www.visitpeakdistrict.com](http://www.visitpeakdistrict.com). The visitor guide was intended to encourage the reader to book directly with the advertisers featured in the guide or through the VPDD website. The guide was distributed through the Tourist Information Centre network, the BBC Summer Fair exhibition in Birmingham and directly to customers who responded to advertising and to on-line promotions. An e-brochure version of the Visitor Guide was available on-line with all advertisers having hyperlink click-throughs for booking.

The website, [www.visitpeakdistrict.com](http://www.visitpeakdistrict.com), was re-launched late 2008 featuring more value added offers and themed experiences to stimulate customers to book short breaks. Themed itineraries ranged from gentle outdoor activities to houses and gardens, history & heritage, Bess of Hardwick, Derby city breaks and film tourism around new releases such as The Duchess.

Competitions and promotions were run with affinity marketing partners including The AA, Buxton Water, East Midlands Trains and The YHA, to generate new customers. A Welcome Card was introduced in 2009 for local residents with incentives and discounts to encourage card holders to explore more of their local area and to show friends and relatives what the destination offers.

In 2010, the "Time to Escape" campaign was updated with a new "boomerang" style promotion to target visitors once they have arrived in the area. This promotes the idea of a return visit for a short break later in the season and also targeted the day visitor market. The campaign was print based and distributed in areas of high footfall such as honey pot villages and main attractions.



A campaign extension, “Kids2” was also explored. Initially VPDD focussed on creating a group of children’s characters to promote the destination directly to children. After conducting market research, this approach was dropped in favour of showcasing family friendly attractions and events to the key decision makers in the party, mum and dad, and by including videos made by children sharing their holiday experiences in the Peak District. This was later developed into “Off Peak TV” a children’s channel on the website.

## Results

- The initial attract and disperse strategy proved successful as demonstrated by annual independent evaluation. Visitors, day and overnight, were asked to indicate which areas they visited. As anticipated, the majority of visitors went to the Peak District, although they also visited the Border Country, the Amber Valley, the National Forest and Derby City.
- In year two of the campaign, 2009-2010, the new affinity marketing schemes delivered a high volume of visits to [www.visitpeakdistrict.com](http://www.visitpeakdistrict.com) and industry providers, accommodation and attractions, reported a better than expected start to the season. Web visits grew by 300% over two years.
- The DMP successfully worked with other DMPs beyond their county boundaries, Staffordshire DMP and Yorkshire South DMP, to increase the destination’s profile on the borders of the area and to attract visitors from Staffordshire and Yorkshire.
- A major element of the “Time to Escape” campaign was film tourism. 200,000 movie maps promoting the destinations featured in ‘The Duchess’ were distributed nationwide including all Midland Mainline main stations and St Pancras. New web pages, [visitpeakdistrict.com/film](http://visitpeakdistrict.com/film), were launched. This led to an increase of 22% in overnight bookings during the campaign period.

## Lessons Learnt

- Visitpeakdistrict.com was re-launched in early December 2009 to address areas for improvement highlighted by customers e.g. the inclusion of a key word search for the whole site, comprehensive mapping and clearer presentation of tourism businesses.
- Ongoing product development workshops with the private and public sector were essential in keeping up to speed with a fast paced and changing market place, as well as ensuring that the private and public sector remained engaged with the DMP and shared ownership of the campaign.
- A new-look brochure was launched for the 2011 season. This has proved extremely popular with over 50,000 brochure requests and 20,000 downloads from the website – a 40% increase on the previous year.
- Annual marketing plans were adjusted and expenditure brought forward to maximise opportunities presented by the “staycation” trend in the Summer

of 2010. This proved to be very effective in delivering strong results particularly in relation to database growth and requests for information.

- The initial “Kids2” approach, to base the campaign extension around a group of characters proved to be a barrier to getting the message across. In focus groups, parents felt that by introducing characters the DMP were obscuring the main message, which led to doubt in the minds of the potential consumers.
- The “Kids2” campaign extension of “Time to Escape” was re-developed, with two new elements added to the campaign, and re-launched during quarter two. An Affinity Welcome Card aimed at families in urban locations up to three hours drive from the destination was launched. “Spookyshire” was created as an October half term promotion to attract overnight visitors into the region during this shoulder period. Both the Welcome Card recruitment and the Spookyshire promotion performed well and Spookyshire is now an integral part of VPDD’s marketing campaigns.
- Other new themed short break campaigns were tested on [www.visitpeakdistrict.com](http://www.visitpeakdistrict.com) e.g. “Romantic Breaks” and Mad March”. These proved to be a major driver in maintaining and building PR, as seasonally timed news stories broke throughout the year and kept the destination in the press. In the three years of the campaign, over £5million of known press coverage has been recorded.
- Growing the number of affinity marketing partnerships has proven to be cost-effective as they allow VPDD to piggy-back onto larger campaigns that target similar markets.
- Analysis of postcodes from the accommodation and attractions sectors in the destination revealed that not all brochure requests converted into bookings. By profiling the advertising campaign to concentrate on the segments of the market that converted into actual bookings the DMP was able to improve the Return On Investment (RoI).

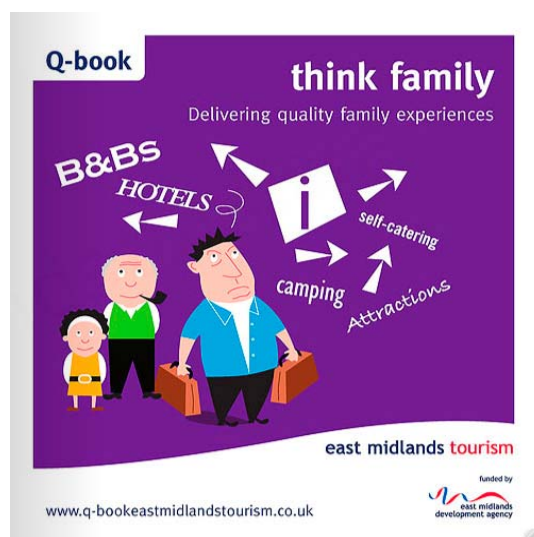


Pictured: Edale. Peak District.

## Quality improvement

### The creation of Q-books, or 'quality books', designed to help tourism businesses develop and improve, whatever their size or facilities

Packed with practical tips, market insights and case studies, they illustrate how making small changes can have a big impact on the visitor experience and the profitability of the business



Pictured: One of the Q-books available from the EMT website.

Destination East Midlands set out a goal to raise the value of visitor expenditure by 2010 and identified that this would only be possible by having a commitment to improving the quality of businesses in the region and staying ahead of the competition. The Q-books were a way of supporting businesses to achieve these improvements.

In 2005 EMT commissioned tourism quality experts, LiveTourism, to evaluate the family market in the East Midlands where they found families were a key market for the region, with children often being the motivator behind many trips.

The first Q-book, 'Think Family', was developed in 2007. Its aims were to guide businesses in the region on how to become more family friendly, create better engagement with schools and tourism businesses, support the Government's agenda on work/life balance and grow the short breaks market through families.

As the first Q-book proved a simple and relevant way to get messages to tourism businesses, 'Think Access' and 'Think Smile' books were later developed. A champion of tourism was asked to write the foreword for each book: Peter White BBC disability correspondent, for the Think Access book; Dea Birkett travel writer, for the Think Family book and Simon Calder tourism writer, for the Think Smile book. All the Q-books are available free of charge on [www.eastmidlandstourism.com](http://www.eastmidlandstourism.com)

With the changes in the Disability Discrimination Act since 2004, it is essential to make businesses welcoming and accessible to everybody. The spending power of disabled people in the UK is thought to be £80billion [www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk). The UK is an ageing population with visitors in the 50-65 age group spending around £300billion a year (Mintel). The 'Think Access' book was developed in 2008 to support these changes. It highlights that by making small and relatively inexpensive changes it can drastically improve the visitor experience for someone with an access need.

Overseas visitors often stay for longer than domestic visitors, and spend more money while they are here. Knowing more about what international visitors require makes them feel more welcome and can turn them into repeat visitors.

The 'Think Smile' Q-book highlights the importance of offering a personal welcome, using international icons in leaflets and brochures, native language booking and information, giving clear directions and going the extra mile to make guests feel welcome.

With events such as Twenty20 cricket in Nottingham, the Special Olympics in Leicester and the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games on the horizon, 'Think Smile' also emphasised the importance of a warm welcome for international visitors. The Q-book also supported the overseas marketing carried out by East Midlands Tourism in the short-haul markets of France, Germany and The Netherlands.

All resources were based round the 'Visitor Journey'. This is a process, trademarked by LiveTourism, visitors go through when they plan, undertake and reflect on a holiday.

## Results

- 28% of respondents who have heard of the Q-books have made changes to their businesses.
- 69% would like to see a Q-book on marketing. Other potential Q-books suggested were - legislation, liability and networking.
- 73% of people found the individual case studies useful.

"The Q-book is packed full of easily implemented tips like having colouring books in the cafe to entertain younger children. It also advises businesses on engaging with their customers before they arrive, building anticipation for their visit and making the journey more exciting for kids. These small steps have improved relationships with our customers and increased repeat visits."

Rebecca Clay, Learning Officer, Creswell Crags



### Lessons Learnt

- Although the Q-books have become a recognised name, they don't have a consistent brand design to show that they are in the same family of publications. This is something that should be considered for future publications so businesses can see a recognised brand they are likely to read and find useful.
- An online resource is cheaper to produce, update and distribute. Some people, however, prefer paper copies and are more likely to refer to them than an online resource.
- The books were written not to date too quickly so can be used for a number of years. It is important to be aware of this when basing information and advice around legislation.
- The books have been nationally recognised, with VisitEngland and other UK regions looking into using them in the future.
- The books are a good way to engage SMEs – they are easy to read, have case studies and are available free. They aren't intimidating or full of legislation, but practical guides to show businesses what they can do to improve their businesses.
- To evaluate the family focus within East Midlands businesses, scrap books were given to attractions for kids to fill in so they could get feedback on how children saw their businesses. These were invaluable tools for businesses to get a 'kids-eye' view and develop their product as necessary.
- The Think Family Q-book was supported by training delivered through the Destination Management Partnerships (DMPs) in each county. The sessions worked through the 'visitor journey' in relation to the family.
- At the beginning of any project formal evaluation should be considered, building in budgets, data collection techniques and timescales.



Pictured: Twenty20 Cricket at Trent Bridge, Nottingham. Image Copyright © Bowles Associates.

## Quality improvement

### Rosebud

#### A bespoke scheme to encourage businesses on the Lincolnshire Coast to become quality assured



Pictured: The Lincolnshire coast.

The regional tourism strategy 'Destination East Midlands' identified the Lincolnshire coast as a significant area for tourism, however the coast is seen as a vulnerable area with the quality of the product needing enhancement and development. VisitEngland research, moreover, shows that quality assured accommodation achieves higher occupancy rates, creating greater value for the local economy.

The scheme was created as an entry level standard into the National Quality Assurance Scheme (NQAS) to encourage businesses to gain national quality accreditation. The objective of the

project was to increase the number of businesses specifically in the East Lindsey District Council (ELDC) area, which includes Skegness and Mablethorpe, participating in NQAS. This was part of a wider VisitEngland initiative, START.

The project ran from January 2006 until March 2010 and was led by East Lindsey District Council in partnership with VisitLincolnshire. A steering group was set up to engage the industry and ensure the people best placed to make the project succeed were involved – members included East Midlands Tourism, East Lindsey District Council, VisitEngland, Skegness Hoteliers Association and tourism consultants LiveTourism.

The project identified reasons for the low number of NQAS membership and attempted to overcome these issues. The reasons ranged from mistrust towards national assessors, disagreeing with the criteria for assessment and therefore the value of being assessed, the cost of assessments, reluctance to open their businesses to criticism and concern, they may not reach the required standards. The project involved an ELDC employed assessor offering assessments for free, at a pre-arranged time. They developed relationships with the businesses,

encouraged them to attend training courses, showed them easy and inexpensive ways to improve their businesses and explained the value and benefits of becoming assessed.

The project was promoted to the industry by VisitLincolnshire and ELDC via newsletters, workshops and leaflets. The work was supported by the VisitLincolnshire quality manager who organised quality events and workshops. 'Quality Street' days were also arranged, with a VisitEngland assessor meeting with businesses to explain the quality system and its value. A leaflet was also created for visitors, explaining the Rosebud scheme and how it improved their stay.

### Results

- The objective of the project was to increase the number of businesses in NQAS, and the Rosebud project did just this. Very few businesses actually became Rosebud accredited with most going straight into the NQAS scheme, leapfrogging the Rosebud accreditation. Without the free assessments, workshops and relationship with the local assessor very few of these businesses would have considered entering NQAS.

	Rosebud assessment visits	Businesses into NQAS
06/07	25	8
07/08	73	36
08/09	44	35
09/10	14	8

"The Rosebud assessor gave us support and confidence throughout the process of becoming accredited, advising us how to improve our business. We now have three stars and with our ongoing programme of improvements hope to gain a fourth. Our business has benefited financially from more repeat visitors, due to the improved experience we can now offer them".

Wendy Cresswell, owner of Caxton House, Skegness.

### Lessons Learnt

- The cost of an assessment can deter many businesses; if they were full of repeat visitors they saw no need to change. Funded visits by an assessor encouraged businesses to 'give it a go' and see the value of the advice they were given during an assessment.
- Opening their business up to criticism was also a barrier to assessment. A friendly face (ELDC assessor) rather than a VisitBritain assessor was less intimidating to people who had never been in the scheme before.

- Free or good value quality workshops are a good way of engaging the industry generally. Simple changes can make a big difference to businesses, and offering advice to SMEs on how to do this was an important part of the project.
- It is important to respect people's hard work in lifestyle businesses, and give them advice and confidence rather than criticism. Suggesting that making simple alterations over time can change their customer base, and allow them to charge more for their rooms can perhaps help them see the future in a different way.
- Local hotelier associations and industry representatives need to be on board with the scheme. They have regular access to the businesses, and their opinion is important to the local business owners.
- A steering group of experienced and committed professionals from relevant sections of the industry can move the project forward.
- Follow up procedures on all calls and visits should be agreed at the start of the project, as should clear project targets.
- Businesses need to be informed and empowered rather than a scheme being imposed upon them.



Pictured: The Lincolnshire Coastline.



## Quality improvement

### Strengthening the Visitor Experience

#### Working with businesses to raise quality standards



Pictured: Rutland Water. Rutland.

The tourism strategy, Destination East Midlands, prioritised the need to improve the quality of the tourism offer across the region so that visitors could be assured of a great experience whether visiting the region's attractions, staying in accommodation, attending events or sampling the local food and drink.

In response to this, East Midlands Tourism launched a dedicated Quality Improvement Programme in 2004, with the aim of raising the quality of tourism services and products to encourage repeat customer visits and referrals.

In 2008 the tourism team at Rutland County Council used this programme to establish specific quality initiatives that not only support tourism businesses in Rutland but also help to boost tourism. With a budget of only £10k per annum, much of the activity focuses on working with businesses to increase membership of national accommodation quality schemes run by the AA and Quality in Tourism and the visitor attraction accreditation scheme, VAQAS.

Mock assessment days are organised to help those businesses whose membership has lapsed or that have not been through an inspection in the past to give them an insight into what assessors will be looking for. The tourism team also uses its website, Discover Rutland, its industry newsletter and e-blasts to communicate the benefits of being quality inspected both in terms of what it means for a business and the positive message it sends out to potential visitors about a commitment to quality.

As part of the Quality Improvement Programme the tourism team also focuses on championing Rutland's food and drink offer. It has developed a local food guide to promote the county's best producers, Eat Drink Rutland, and more recently it has introduced a stand alone food festival which provides local businesses with another platform to reach potential customers.

Training is another key priority and courses are offered to businesses in a number of areas including marketing, sustainability, green tourism and Welcome Host, which helps businesses to become more customer focussed. The tourism team also works closely with Business Link to support enquiries from businesses either considering entering the tourism sector or those looking for ideas to grow their business.

The Q books, which have been produced as part of the region-wide Quality Improvement Programme, are also used in conjunction with workshops to encourage tourism providers to think about how they can broaden their customer appeal by making their businesses more family friendly or accessible.

And the tourism team has also worked closely with the industry to increase entries to the East Midlands Tourism Enjoy England Excellence Awards, which celebrate the best of the region's tourism industry.

### Results

- In 2010 a record number of entries were attracted to the East Midlands Tourism Enjoy England Excellence Awards, with one business going on to win gold, five picking up silver awards and one winning bronze, the highest achievement for the county to date.
- Around 50 businesses have participated in the training workshops over the last three years.
- The tourism team has successfully combined the delivery of marketing and quality activity, by having one person who liaises closely with the industry on both.

### Lessons Learnt

- With a relatively small budget it is possible to deliver some good initiatives but it is important to be clear about objectives from the outset and to ensure that what is being delivered also has clear benefits for the industry
- Develop strong relationships with the businesses so that they have a clear understanding of why participation in the quality schemes will be of benefit to them and their customers
- Listen to what businesses want. With quality accreditation many businesses were reluctant to enter the quality schemes because they weren't sure what was required of them. By introducing the 'mock days,' businesses were able to gain an insight into the assessment process before going for full accreditation
- Having access to existing resources, such as the Q-books, which have been specifically produced with the quality agenda in mind, made it easier to pull together information that was relevant for businesses in Rutland
- Finding ambassadors or businesses that are prepared to share their experiences is useful for other businesses

- Having a consistent message across all communications, such as the internet, e-newsletter and any publications is important

### Future Plans

- Continue to focus on developing key areas of the quality programme such as the food and drink, which not only helps to demonstrate the quality of the offer available in Rutland but also helps to increase tourism
- Be aware of national policy and how this is changing in relation to some of the quality schemes, in order to keep businesses informed about how the quality agenda is changing and the implications for them



Pictured: Barnsdale Gardens. Rutland.



## Quality improvement

### Nottinghamshire STARS (Skills, Training, Attitude, Retention & Service)

A training and development programme for businesses and individuals in the tourism, leisure, culture and hospitality industries, culminating in an annual competition and awards ceremony recognising their work



Pictured: The Walk. Nottingham.

The quality of the visitor experience has been a central plank of the regional tourism strategy and East Midlands Tourism's funding. The Nottinghamshire STARS project is a great example of an initiative delivered in the region focusing on improving skills, training, attitude and retention within the tourism, leisure, culture and hospitality industries.

Originally set up by a group of training providers and employers in the county, Nottinghamshire STARS focuses on six areas:

- encouraging business and employers to become ambassadors for the industry
- targeting new recruits to the sector in Nottinghamshire
- up-skilling the workforce in Nottinghamshire - quality matters
- celebrating achievements of employees and businesses in Nottinghamshire
- addressing skills shortages by co-ordinating training for the industry
- improving the image of the industry in Nottinghamshire

Since 2005, the project has been managed by Experience Nottinghamshire as part of its quality remit funded by East Midlands Tourism and has included the following elements:



- the organisation of networking opportunities for employers and training providers
- presentations to prospective employees at Job Centre Plus offices and Connexions targeting school leavers
- an annual competition and awards ceremony, celebrating the work of individuals in the tourism, culture, leisure and hospitality industries
- training course for industry staff

Latterly the networking opportunities have included careers fairs and workshops delivered by independent training providers such as Charnwood Training. In addition, an employer engagement event, attended by 23 businesses, was held in March 2010 at New College Nottingham to explain more about available apprenticeships and diplomas and to encourage businesses to offer work placements.

The STARS Awards are different from other schemes in that they celebrate individual achievements rather than those of businesses. They do not just target managers, but all members of staff including cleaners, receptionists, waiters, chefs, porters and trainees.

Nominations for the 11 categories in the STARS Awards are usually made by employers or work colleagues. Typically these are from all kinds of businesses including retail, accommodation providers, visitor attractions, tour guides, restaurants, theatres, training providers, colleges, pubs, entertainment venues, local authorities/TICs and more.

The awards are judged by members of the Nottinghamshire STARS Group and other industry representatives, overseen by Experience Nottinghamshire's Quality and Skills Manager and the Chairman of Nottinghamshire STARS.

### Lessons Learnt

- The key thing is to not use the activity delivered by STARS as a stand-alone piece of work, but tap into existing projects, events, exhibitions etc. The Nottinghamshire STARS Group had originally tried to organise separate employer events but found that attendance was low as employers already have too many commitments. Consequently they now attend meetings and/or exhibitions already planned and take information along about STARS industry employment and training opportunities.

### Future Plans

- Continue to run the project as a networking organisation for employers and training providers to share information and develop training in future.
- Experience Nottinghamshire would like the STARS Awards to continue, although as these are self funding and dependent on sponsorship from local businesses it may be hard to sustain in its current format in the current economic climate.

## Quality improvement

### A Quality Welcome

#### Taxi Driver Training Project Improves Customer Service and Awards Nationally Recognised Qualifications



Pictured: Taxi drivers receiving their awards. Nottingham.

Destination East Midlands prioritised the need for continuous improvement in the skills of the tourism workforce through an increased investment in training. In particular, using pilot schemes in one destination was advocated as an effective way to trial new initiatives and subsequently apply any lessons learnt across the other destinations of the East Midlands.

Following the de-merger of the East Midlands from the Heart of England

Tourist Board in April 2004, there was no quality-related activity taking place in the region for the benefit of tourism businesses. In June 2004, East Midlands Tourism (EMT) commissioned quality consultants, Live Tourism, to develop innovative approaches to quality improvement to support tourism businesses in delivering outstanding experiences to their visitors. This work was supported by a Quality Improvement Project Steering Group with members from the EMT Council, Visit Lincolnshire and Leicester Shire Promotions.

The overall objective of the EMT Quality Improvement Programme was to raise the quality of tourism services, products and experience, encouraging repeat customer visits and referrals. Within the quality programme, each Destination Management Partnership (DMP) had an assigned quality project. Experience Nottinghamshire was the lead DMP for delivering a pilot taxi driver training project, launched in 2006, to train at least 40% of the region's 15,000 taxi drivers.

The aim of this project was to work with taxi drivers to ensure that a good first impression was created for visitors during their taxi journeys in the county. Taxi

drivers are often the first encounter for visitors arriving in a new destination by rail or air and as such the taxi experience is an important element in the visitor journey. Ensuring well presented, knowledgeable drivers creates a good first and last impression of a destination. 90% of taxi drivers are self-employed and half of these have no qualifications. This scheme enabled drivers to have access to training to improve their skills and at the same time improve the overall experience for their customers.

Some similar projects had taken place in other parts of the country and lessons learnt from these, for example the Portsmouth and Tourism South East initiative were used to identify the elements that would complement the Nottinghamshire scheme. Experience Nottinghamshire worked with a range of partners, including GoSkills (the sector skills council for passenger transport), Castle College, Association of Nottinghamshire Private Hire Operators and Nottingham City Licensing.

The taxi driver training scheme was geared to improving local tourism knowledge and the customer care skills of taxi drivers throughout Nottinghamshire. The content of the training programme included information on the history of Nottinghamshire, visitor attractions, entertainment and accommodation as well as covering the Disability Discrimination Act, personal safety and customer services. The training comprised 80 hours of classroom and on the job training and the opportunity to acquire a level two BTEC qualification, latterly a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ), in Transporting Passengers by Taxi and Private Hire. The qualification was equivalent to five GCSEs at grades A\*-C with minimal classroom study and no examinations. The latter NVQ programme was funded through the national Train to Gain scheme.

In 2007, Leicester Shire Promotions (LPL) took the taxi scheme a step further when it joined forces with partner organisations to launch a new work-based pilot scheme for taxi drivers in Leicester. The resulting National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 2 in Road Passenger Transport was aimed at helping city-based taxi drivers to develop their skills and knowledge and gain a nationally-recognised qualification.

The scheme was initiated by LPL, provided by Leicester College and funded by the Learning and Skills Council. Other partner organisations involved in the development of the pilot project include *GoSkills*, *Profound Services*, Rail, Maritime and Transport Union, Rail Union Learning, Trades Union Congress and Leicester City Council.

A similar scheme was then set up in Derbyshire led by the Visit Peak District & Derbyshire DMP, in December 2008.

## Results

- 252 drivers in Nottinghamshire and 684 in Leicestershire have undertaken an Edexcel Level 2 Btec or NVQ course – Transporting Passengers by Taxi and Private Hire.
- ABA Training won an award at the National Training Awards in September for their NVQ training programme.
- Taxi companies have forged close links with Experience Nottinghamshire, Leicester Shire Promotions and Visit Peak District & Derbyshire and are promoted through guides and on the tourism websites.
- The initial pilot in Nottinghamshire is being used as a model for discussion with other English regions.
- In June 2008, the partnership group behind the Leicester-based taxi driver project won a major local award, the Leicester College ‘Awards to Industry’.

“When I first heard about the new training opportunity I was very keen to get involved. I think it is great for taxi drivers that there is now a qualification which recognises the skills we have and the job we do. Having had the training I believe that I am now in a better position to offer great customer satisfaction. The training has made me aware of the different ways I can help customers and improve the service I offer. I would definitely recommend that every taxi driver does this qualification. It shows that there is more to our job than driving a taxi, customer relations is vital.”

Vijay Patel, Swift Taxis, Leicester.

## Lessons Learnt

- Ensure all partners involved in the project are aware of the programme and its progression, including taxi licensing and trade unions, where relevant.
- Keep a record of the number of drivers who have signed up and successfully completed the full NVQ.
- Course delivery time needs careful consideration.
- Small companies find it difficult to release drivers for one day.
- There is still a gap in training for language and other skills fundamental to the NVQ. Following feedback from drivers and tutors, the enrolment process was extended from two to three hours. This gives an opportunity to conduct a full 75 minute assessment for literacy and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages). All drivers complete this assessment to ensure they all have the necessary skills to complete the NVQ programme. Drivers identified with development needs in this area are first put onto language programmes before full enrolment onto the NVQ.
- Multiple colleges/training venues are required.



- Lobby so that the training course is built into licensing requirements.
- Set up a steering group at the beginning of the project to ensure it runs to timescales.
- Support the training provider in the local tourism knowledge element of the course. Facilitate a graduation pack for all drivers on completion of their training to include an ID badge, a visitor guide and other useful tourism leaflets relating to the local tourism knowledge from their course.
- Companies that have signed up to training should be promoted to visitors through as many promotional channels as possible eg, visitor guides, websites etc. Accommodation and attraction providers should be made aware of the taxi companies committed to raising the bar and training their drivers.



Pictured: High Cross. Leicester.

## Investment

### Stamford Gateway Wayfinding

Building on the historic past and vibrant present of one of England's finest Georgian market towns to give visitors a memorable experience

**Winner of Client of the Year Award from the East Midlands Centre for Constructing the Built Environment** *“chosen because of the outstanding design of the project, creating valuable open space and reflecting the natural beauty of the town.”*



Pictured: The beautiful market town of Stamford.

Protecting and improving the region's tourism assets, natural or high quality built environment, was identified as a priority in Destination East Midlands 2010, the Tourism Strategy for the region. Investment in upgrading the quality of the built environment was prioritised not only to attract visitors and create a better impression of the places in the region but also to make them more desirable places to live.

Stamford Vision, a new Community Interest Company, used funding (£238,895) from EMT's 2005 Public Realm Challenge Fund to attract further funding of over £1m to transform the experience for visitors and locals in two historic and largely neglected public spaces in Stamford - Red Lion Square and Sheep Market.

While Stamford has a reputation as an attractive historic market town with fine stone buildings, it was not capitalising fully on its tourism and business potential. Working with partners from Lincolnshire County Council, South Kesteven District Council, Welland SSP, CABE, English Heritage and local businesses, Stamford Vision gave a critical makeover to historic areas of the town, more recently used for car parking. This was done by improving the public realm, making much-needed links between the town and the railway and bus stations and by creating new interpretation for the visitor to inform them about the town and its unique historical environment.

The town has a distinctive past, in particular its links to the story of the Great North Road and Queen Eleanor and is the home of the only surviving fragment of the Stamford Eleanor Cross, seen in the Stamford Museum. To emphasise this link, a new focal point was created in Sheep Market of an Eleanor Cross inspired sculpture constructed using local Ketton freestone.

This theme was carried through in the creation of 'Milestone' a piece in local Clipsham stone with bronze crosses denoting where Queen Eleanor's body lay on the way to Charing Cross and Clipsham stone benches with Eleanor-inspired poetry. New interpretation boards were developed in Red Lion Square, Sheep Market and Horseshoe Lane to highlight the historical and artistic attributes of the site and artworks, with new feature lighting to illuminate the information boards at night.

Residents and shoppers, who were fully involved at all stages of the process through formal consultation and public display of the plans, benefited from the re-development plans as the scheme widened the pedestrian areas re-paving them in hard-wearing and elegant York flagstones and created a significant new public amenity in Sheep Market providing areas for community events, markets and the mid Lent fair.

## Results

- Since the work, five businesses made external improvements to their premises including redecoration.
- The Chamber of Trade set aside £20,000 to make events happen in the squares and they are now being used for a variety of events, including concerts by a national youth band, local vocal groups and bands, demonstrations of local skills e.g. tai kwan do and hip hop and trade promotions.
- The Stamford Chamber of Trade has invested in a number of outdoor stands that are used for the weekly Friday market so that local artists can market their works.
- South Kesteven District Council invested in new red and white coverings for the market stalls used on the Saturday market and consequently attracted new quality traders offering unusual merchandise.
- Footfall was monitored at the start of the project and afterwards. Stamford has always outperformed the national average, however, this piece of work helped the town to continue this trend and increase footfall particularly during the economic downturn.
- There have been no vacant shops in Red Lion Square or Sheep Market.
- The project incorporates better links between the railway and bus station to the town centre.
- Local schoolchildren and students from the Further Education Colleges were involved in writing the poetry featured in the artwork.



- Local private sector businesses made significant donations to this project in terms of time and materials.

“The spaces in Red Lion Square and Sheep Market were not up to the standard of the rest of the town but now they’re public spaces that we can all be proud of. They make Stamford more attractive to visitors and make our town stand out from other market towns. As great spaces for events, they’ve increased the number of activities that residents and visitors can enjoy.”

Catherine Hammant, leader of the project for Stamford Vision

### Lessons Learnt

- The investment by the public sector led to private sector businesses investing in improving the appearance of their businesses.
- Running large scale public realm takes longer than anticipated in securing all funding and contracting suppliers and during this process, it is critical to communicate progress with local residents.
- Thinking of the town as a product that can be improved led to a better use of these shared public spaces with a transformation of the destination that benefits locals and visitors.

### Future Plans

Work closely with Stamford Town Council to hold more and bigger events that appeal to locals and visitors such as the Winter Wonderland and the Festival of History.



Pictured: Stamford.



## Investment

### Nottingham Tourist Information Centre Refurbishment

A revamped state of the art, user friendly tourism centre, maximising income streams and showcasing the Nottinghamshire tourism offer

Gold Winner at the 2010 National Excellence in England Awards



Pictured: State-of-the-art technology in the refurbished Nottingham Tourist Information Centre.

Destination East Midlands 2010 highlighted the importance of investment in visitor services, specifically information delivery via the network of Tourism Information Centres (TICs). Experience Nottinghamshire identified the refurbishment of the Nottingham city centre TIC as critical to the future development of tourism in Nottinghamshire.

Partners including, EMT, the Greater Nottingham Partnership (GNP) and Nottingham City Council invested in the project to bring the centre up to the level to meet future aspirations for tourism in the city, and to ensure that it became a hub for other TICs in the county.

The refurbishment programme took place between January and July 2006, with a complete refresh of the external fascia and internal fittings and decoration which also incorporated the new Nottingham 'big N' branding. The development also included internet access for visitors and the creation of a back office call centre service to handle enquiries from marketing campaigns and brochure requests as well as general requests. In addition shelving was installed to stock literature from tourism destinations and attractions around the county as well as modern display units for the sale of locally produced food, drink and crafts products as well as souvenirs and merchandise relating to the county.

In 2010, Nottingham TIC achieved the ultimate accolade, winning the Gold Award for Tourism Information Service at the Enjoy England Awards for Excellence, having won Silver in 2008. The judges were particularly impressed with the meet and greet facility offered to people entering the TIC, identifying this service as something that should be adopted across the TIC portfolio. The number of foreign visitors using the TIC also stood out. The introduction of a TWITTER site was also regarded as an impressive addition to the way the centre approached communication.

### Results

- The TIC successfully achieved VisitEngland 'Official Partner' (one of 15 in the East Midlands) status - a nationwide partnership aimed at providing excellence and world class customer service. Subsequently it has been identified as a flagship TIC and has hosted TIC managers from around the UK (Manchester, Newcastle, Peterborough, Hull and East Yorkshire) and overseas (US, Netherlands and Germany) who wish to model their TIC on Nottingham.
- The internet facility for visitors as a revenue generator was used as a best practice case study by VisitEngland.
- 270,000 visitors per annum.
- Additional floor space, increased by 35%, was used to maximise income potential from retail opportunities.

“Beating off stiff competition, Nottingham TIC should be congratulated on winning the Enjoy England award for Tourist Information Centre for 2010. A key element was the visitor welcome where staff greet visitors upon entry to ascertain their needs and ensure their enquiry is dealt with in a targeted and timely way. They have also embraced social networks such as Twitter enabling them to provide an effective and low cost way of reaching out to potential visitors, the benefits of which should be recognised more widely.”

Tracey Taylor, Visitor Information Manager, VisitEngland

### Lessons Learnt

- The external fascia and internal design changes, particularly lighting and the use of colour, made the TIC more appealing to local residents, as a place to use themselves and also to bring visiting friends and relatives.
- The visitors' book identifies a very positive view on the level of service offered by the staff at the TIC. This supports the level of training provided via the project, which concentrated on retail and customer care skills.
- A dedicated marketing budget, as part of the refurbishment programme, to promote the TIC more effectively would have been useful, to build upon the capital investment in the facility.

### Future Plans

- Increase footfall through marketing initiatives, discounts for university students and their families, plus overseas students on summer courses at FE colleges.
- Installation of new IT equipment and software linking to the new Destination Management System. This will also enable better linkage to the TICs throughout the county.
- Introduce new income streams.



Pictured: Galleries of Justice, Nottingham.



## Investment

### Foxton Locks – Restoration Programme

**A £5m award winning restoration programme for Foxton Locks has seen visitor numbers increase by 100,000 to just under 300,000 visits in 2009**



Pictured: Artistic gymnast Becky Downie at Foxton Locks, Leicestershire.

Foxton Locks is a “staircase” of ten locks on the Leicester Line of the Grand Union Canal. Located near Market Harborough, it is one of the most popular visitor destinations in the region

In addition to accommodating boat users, the 30 acre country park is a popular visitor attraction with a museum, cafe, two pubs and trip boat operation plus a range of other facilities including a shop and moorings. It also includes the remains of a Victorian inclined plane boat lift which is designated as a Scheduled Monument. Opened in 1900, it was designed to speed the passage of boats through the site so they could compete with the emerging rail network. A

partnership, the Foxton Locks Partnership (FLP), was formed in 1988 to actively pursue its restoration to full working order.

Although a popular day out for visitors, a British Waterways’ survey in 2004 revealed that visitors considered the quality of the attraction and associated facilities to be poor, which impacted on the quality of the visitor experience and hampered the ability to grow visitor numbers. Over a five-year period to March 2008, a programme of restoration, interpretation and access improvement works was undertaken, to realise its vision of doubling visitor numbers by 2012 and make Foxton Locks a premier heritage attraction in the East Midlands.

The programme consisted of a number of projects, each with separate funding streams, which linked into a site masterplan and contributed to the overall vision for the site. Funders included the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), British Waterways and *emda*, with additional funding and support provided by local authorities, LeicesterShire Promotions, trusts and volunteer groups. Activity included



waterways work (re-watering and restoring the Upper Arm and Bottom Basin), access (road, car parking, cycle facilities, footpath improvements and enhanced disabled access), visitor facilities (refurbishment of the pub and cottage, toilets, seating and the installation of a viewing platform) and interpretation to bring the historic nature of the site to life.

Funding for one of the projects was provided by East Midlands Tourism as part of its Public Realm Challenge Fund (PRCF), which was a competitive fund aimed at supporting physical improvements to the public realm recognising that well designed public spaces and facilities are an integral part of the visitor experience. This element of the restoration programme prioritised the need to raise the quality of the visitor experience by making improvements to car parking, conveniences, the viewing platform and site interpretation helping to orient visitors and telling the 'Foxton story'.

### Results

- Award-winning restoration of 30 acre site – the site has museum (MLAC) and visitor attraction (VAQAS) accreditations and has won a variety of awards around heritage, tourism and access including the Waterways Renaissance 'Outstanding Award' in 2009.
- Visitor numbers have increased by 50% and it is now one of the most visited sites in the East Midlands.
- Increased commercial opportunities - turnover at the Foxton Locks Inn has increased significantly to more than £1m pa, employs over 50 staff and the tenants have converted the adjoining building to increase their trading area: the Top Lock Cottage is a new business providing year round employment for two people and seasonal staff, and the owner is looking to expand his operation.
- British Waterways now employs a full time site manager and seasonal car park attendant.
- Accessibility has dramatically improved with around 80% of the site accessible by wheelchair.
- Foxton Locks provides a range of volunteering opportunities, for example the BTCV works on site twice a month, which allows participants the chance to develop rural skills.
- The attraction adds value to the local economy and promotes the surrounding area and other parts of Leicestershire with information displays in both the museum and Top Lock Cottage.

### Lessons Learnt

- Ensure consultants are suitable, enthusiastic and of the right capacity. Experience of actually operating facilities (as opposed to just consulting) is also an added bonus.

- Make sure you allow enough time – and plan properly. Submitting applications and their processing, always take much longer than first thought.
- Have bids of various sizes and activity worked-up – ready to take advantage of any new funding opportunities that might occur
- Make sure that all stakeholders, particularly funders, are kept up to date with progress. They are always happy to celebrate successes and can often help overcome setbacks or delays
- Include resources for events/marketing activity within funding bids. Realising and celebrating the benefits of a project can be harder to achieve if there is no money for promotional and marketing activity.
- Always consider opportunities to submit projects for awards – the project then has third party endorsement – it isn't just you that thinks it is a great project. This can also bring opportunities to network with other winners.
- Ensure that policy documents prepared by others contain supportive references to your project. This could help in accessing grant aid, for example planning s.106 monies. It also makes it easier to justify a project to a funder if there is wider documented support.
- Create the right political climate - ensure local and regional politicians are aware of your project. They network with others and may be on a decision-making panel or asked for their views – make sure they are positive.
- Cultivate local & regional media – having a positive relationship has helped in forestalling any potential negative publicity around the project and resulted in securing additional funding from a Trust following news coverage on the TV.
- Remember that other stakeholders and partners may have different reasons for supporting the project. Ensure they are aware of how these are achieved and be prepared to modify or compromise plans to include them, without compromising your vision.
- Have a vision – ideally represented graphically. This shows everyone the bigger picture and how their contribution can fit into it.

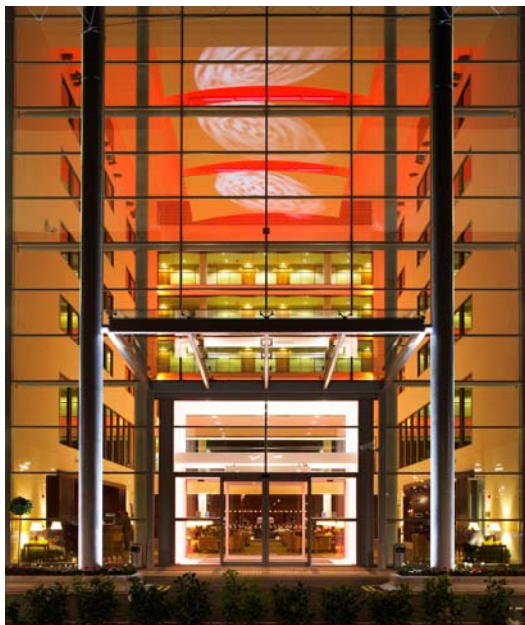
### Future Plans

- The HLF-funded works were always considered by the FLP as a first phase towards total reconstruction of the boatlift to full working condition. Funding was secured for a masterplan in 2009, 50% from EMT and the remainder from within the FLP. This considered the feasibility and costs of the boatlift restoration and development of supporting facilities. It also looked at how the site might be developed, should the boatlift restoration be considered unrealistic.
- Discussions have taken place with the Camping & Caravanning Club about a joint venture campsite; a local operator has also expressed interest in developing an eco-lodge on site.

## Investment

### Support for Major New Hotel Development

#### Help, Guidance and Facilitation to Ensure a Successful and Smooth Opening for Leicester's New Marriott Hotel



Pictured: Marriott Hotel. Leicester

The 227 room, five-storey Marriott was the first hotel to open in Leicester in 14 years bringing in an estimated investment of over £22 million to the city. Plans to develop a hotel on the site of Grove Park were in development as far back as 1997, initially with Swallow Hotels. When the hotel chain was taken over by the Marriott Group, the plans continued until the footings were in place in 2001. The events of 9/11 stalled work on the hotel until early 2005 when the work was reinstated for opening in May 2006.

Leicester Shire Promotions (LPL) started its engagement with the Marriott in March 2005. Key members of staff from LPL's tourism team worked closely with the hotel's senior management and

marketing teams offering help and guidance to ensure the successful and smooth introduction of the new hotel into the destination.

It was important for the Leicester Marriott to engage with key industry organisations in Leicestershire to earn political support and backing for its arrival. LPL provided the guidance and facilitation to make this happen.

#### Results

- The Marriott Leicester hotel employs over 100 full-time and around 30 part-time staff, many of whom are located in the Leicester and Leicestershire area.
- Since opening, the hotel has enjoyed a mid-week 86 per cent occupancy rate and an 80-90 per cent Saturday night occupancy rate.
- LPL actively encourages tourism businesses to use local food producers and suppliers and introduced the Marriott to many local food and drink companies. As a result the Leicester Marriott has kept much of its food

and beverage procurement local. The bar, restaurant and catering for conferences are serviced by local suppliers and stockists, where possible. These include Dickinson & Morris of Ye Olde Pork Pie Shoppe fame in Melton.

- The hotel has been a partner in many of LPL's consumer marketing campaigns such as Must See 3, Taste of Asia and Gourmet Trail short breaks. Investment in these successful short break campaigns has enabled the hotel to become aligned with the top tourist attractions of Leicestershire and to take advantage of the high level of business opportunities available through LPL.
- Close working relationships have been developed with local attractions, including Mallory Park, Donington Park and Bruntingthorpe Aerodrome, all of which, in some way or another, were facilitated or initiated by LPL.

“Leicester Shire Promotions was extremely helpful in putting us in contact with the real movers and shakers of the tourism industry in Leicester. We were given information about forthcoming networking events and presentations; we were fully briefed on the political dimensions of the tourism industry in the city, and were introduced to many influential industry and political individuals. The organisation's help with networking during this initial stage of development was a huge relief, not least because many of us had never worked in the area and so did not have comprehensive list of contacts. Our engagement with Leicester Shire Promotions has proven invaluable, right from the embryonic period of our hotel, through to the present day. We look forward to continuing this excellent relationship to help drive more visitors into the hotel, as well as the wider city and county.”

Shaun Dalton, Sales and Marketing Director, Leicester Marriott

### Lessons Learnt

- Introductions and forming a network of key local influencers were important to the success of the new hotel and LPL was able to play a pivotal role in making this happen.
- The location of the hotel, near to the M1 junction, means that visitors have easy access to attractions and places of interest across Leicester and Leicestershire. It has been vital, therefore to make staff at the Marriott aware of all the opportunities available for leisure or business visitors to the hotel.

### Future Plans

- The initial partnership with LPL continues and the hotel is a partner in three marketing campaigns – Stay, Play, Explore family fun campaign, group travel and event bidding.



## Investment

### Silverstone Visitor Centre

**The First and Only Privately Operated Attraction to be Awarded Official Tourist Information Partner Status by Visit Britain**



Pictured: Touring Cars at Silverstone.  
Northamptonshire

Silverstone is the home of the British Grand Prix and attracts in the region of 1 million visitors to a variety of events and corporate activities throughout the year. A partnership between Silverstone Circuits, Northamptonshire Enterprise Ltd, South Northamptonshire Council and EMT, delivered a £225,000 project to create a 'franchise' tourist information centre on the site. The aim of the initiative was to establish tourist information provision at one of the county's leading visitor attractions, providing details on how visitors to Silverstone could visit other local attractions and extend their stay.

Completed in late 2007 and open seven days a week, the centre is operated by staff from the circuit who are not only able to talk knowledgeably about Silverstone but who have also received training in tourist information and are able to advise centre users about what's on offer in the area. The facility includes a coffee shop so that visitors can leisurely browse information and, in comfortable surroundings, book tickets, accommodation and check out travel arrangements.

The creation of the information centre formed part of a wider regional Visitor Services initiative aimed at supplementing the region's existing Tourist Information Centre (TIC) network. Providing information in locations with high footfall enhances the experience for visitors while also driving up the value of their visits through staying longer and visiting more attractions.

Other visitor information provision activity in Northamptonshire included a mobile information centre which exhibits at events across the County, the installation of visitor information outlets at the Northampton Marriott, Whittlebury Hall and

Kettering Park Hotel, and touchscreen kiosks at the Royal and Derngate Theatre and the Canal Museum at Stoke Bruerne.

### Results

- The Silverstone Visitor Centre was completed on time and in budget. It has been a great example of partnership working between the public and private sector.
- The centre is the first and only privately operated attraction to achieve the official VisitBritain Tourist Information Official Partner status for its tourist information service. This is a national partnership programme aimed at promoting excellence and world class service. Centres awarded this status are required to demonstrate commitment to sustainable tourism through their support of local businesses and additionally staff are required to have a sound knowledge of the wider region and the England tourism offer.
- Consumer feedback from other projects undertaken as part of the Visitor Services programme in Northamptonshire suggests that they are adding value to the county's visitor economy. A survey undertaken at the Northampton Marriott indicated that as a consequence of the information available in the hotel 53% of visitors would be more likely to visit the county again.

“The Silverstone Visitor Centre provides a great way to add an additional service to visitors to the circuit and is open seven days a week for friendly help and advice. The centre has been a great way to ensure that our visitors are able to find out more about the tourist attractions and hotels in the local area, which in turn encourages them to come back and visit again.”

Silverstone Spokesperson

### Lessons Learnt

- Critical to the success of the project was the need to get senior management buy-in very early in the process and that it was part of a long term strategy for the circuit in order to ensure the sustainability of the centre on an ongoing basis.
- Understand the close connections with other tourist information providers in the area and how they can help support the development and management of the Silverstone Visitor centre. A strong working relationship was established with Brackley TIC who acted as mentors advising on local, regional and national tourist information practices and methods, and assist in developing a high quality operation.
- It was important that support for the centre continued after the capital funding element of the project had been completed in order to ensure that the visitors receive a high standard of service. Ensuring the staff running the centre are enthusiastic, well trained and committed is key to achieving

this, and the support of the South Northants Tourism team has really helped the visitor centre improve its performance, knowledge and skills.

### Future Plans

- The Silverstone Visitor Centre will continue to be a vital source of tourist information to the visitors of Silverstone Circuit. Ongoing training and development will be undertaken to ensure staff are familiar with the tourism offer in the County.



Pictured: Silverstone Classic. Northamptonshire.

## Investment

### The National Forest

#### Supporting the Growth of a Major New Rural Destination By the Improvement of Visitor Information and Consistent Branding



Pictured: Early morning at Calke. The National Forest.

In Destination East Midlands 2010, the region's tourism strategy, the National Forest is highlighted as a major new resource with the long term potential to be a unique recreational facility and destination in its own right. The National Forest is a large-scale government-funded environmental initiative, involving the regeneration of former coalfield areas through extensive tree planting and the transformation of some 200 square miles in the centre of England.

As a forest in the making, it will take decades for this new destination to realise its full potential and work is ongoing to create a strong sense of place and brand for this emerging destination. East Midlands Tourism (EMT) has supported the development of this rural attraction through two separate investment funds.

Launched in 2005, EMT's Public Realm Challenge Fund was geared towards projects that make physical improvements to the public realm to enhance the quality of the visitor experience. The National Forest Company successfully applied to the fund to develop the visitor interpretation and branding of the National Forest with the aim of implementing a consistent brand across the 200 square miles of the forest. Early research by The National Forest Company had highlighted that the fragmentation of the visitor experience was a barrier to the development of a consistent brand for the destination which spans three counties, Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire, and two regions.

This capital project created a series of visitor 'gateways' at major locations throughout the parts of the National Forest that are within Leicestershire and



Derbyshire. The project was designed specifically to address one of the key components identified as being necessary for a strong visitor destination, and considered to be lacking in the National Forest – a good visitor services infrastructure. Consistent interpretation material, including signage and branding was implemented, particularly at visitor gateways to the forest. The gateway approach was chosen as it encourages visitors to stay longer, enhances their experience and creates a stronger sense of place by giving them more information on the wider destination.

The gateways model was made up of three components: primary gateways, transit gateways and other (signage) gateways. The purpose of 'primary gateways' is to engage existing visitors, making them more aware of what the destination has to offer. Primary gateways were installed at Beacon Hill Country Park, Conkers Discovery Centre, National Forest Youth Hostel, Snibston Discovery Park, Twycross Zoo, Ashby de la Zouch Tourist Information Centre, Foremark Reservoir, Ferrers Centre, Melbourne Woodlands, Rosliston Forestry Centre,, Staunton Harold Reservoir, Sence Valley Forest Park and Thornton Reservoir.

Transit Gateways are used to capture new visitors to the National Forest. These gateways were developed at major entry points into or within the National Forest including, M1 Leicester Forest East Services, Donington Park Services and lay-bys on the A511 and A447. Other gateways took the form of coffee table browsers distributed to inspected accommodation providers in the Forest and surrounding areas.

Primary and transit gateways have included a range of components. As well as consistent National Forest branding, gateways have included:

- Generic standalone signs at all sites, providing a large map of the forest with information on places to visit, and things to see and do.
- 40 site-specific interpretation panels containing a site map and messages on how the site fits within in the context of the wider forest.
- Three touch screen kiosks with information on things to see and do around the forest and places to stay. A fourth already-established kiosk was upgraded to provide consistency with the three new units. All kiosks are fed with live data from the destination management systems of the three counties.
- Interpretation and leaflet dispenser units, tailored to each site.
- Wooden shelters with bench seating, generic information panels and site-specific graphics.
- Listening Posts, with built-in facilities to provide pre-recorded details about the sites and the forest.
- Indoor catering tables incorporating forest and wildlife imagery and outdoor picnic tables branded with messages.

- The creation of an iconic entrance to the forest at Rosliston Forestry Centre.
- Counters to record visitor numbers at three gateway sites.

In 2008, the National Forest Company secured further capital funding from EMT's Invitation to Apply for Grant Funding. In the original project, the focus was on established attractions, whereas phase II was aimed at introducing a number of new and developing attractions to broaden the offer for the visitor. These new and developing sites included, Hidden Gems trail, Castle Gresley, Hartshorne, Waterside, Feanedock covert, Pick Triangle, Moria/Shoreheath and Donisthorpe/LCC. The National Forest Company also applied for and secured additional capital funding from Advantage West Midlands to extend this project into Staffordshire.

### Results

- As a 'forest in the making', the creation of interpretation panels and information boards across the entire forest help convey a strong message to visitors and local residents about the destination through strong and consistent branding. It has helped to create a stronger sense of being in a unique destination, and has raised awareness and improved levels of understanding about the National Forest and about the role of the National Forest Company.
- £967,346 private and public sector funding leveraged from initial *emda* contribution of £771,920.
- The project has enhanced the overall visitor experience by providing much wider access to information about the National Forest. It has also led to more effective visitor management across the forest by an integrated approach to visitor information.
- It has directly improved the visitor experience by providing good quality facilities for visitors at a great number of sites eg. picnic areas, catering tables, shelters, information kiosks, etc.
- It has helped to raise the profile of some of the individual organisations and sites, especially the lesser-known ones within the area, and helped them to position themselves more strongly within the context of the National Forest.
- It has had a positive effect on staff at some gateways, by reinforcing the role and position of their organisation, sometimes giving it greater security and credibility, and by giving them a stronger sense of belonging to a destination and feeling a part of something bigger.
- It has helped to strengthen key messages associated with the environment and conservation.
- A very high level of satisfaction has been expressed about the quality of materials used and the workmanship involved in the gateway installations. The high quality of design has also been noted, both written and visual elements achieving equal praise. The project was recently short-listed for the Design Business Awards.

- The touch-screen kiosks have achieved usage levels comparable with other well-established destinations.
- It has encouraged wider sharing of local knowledge amongst attractions and accommodation providers.
- Footfall through the gateways has been in excess of 100,000. Overall visitor footfall and expenditure to the destination has increased since the installation of the gateways. STEAM statistics for 2009 show a 7% increase in visitor numbers from 7.3m in 2005 to 7.8m in 2009 and expenditure has increased by 15% from £248.7m to £286.42m.

“The Visitor Infrastructure ‘Gateway’ project enabled the National Forest Company to create a ‘sense of place’ and link venues within it with consistently branded infrastructure. It also promoted the wealth of attractions across the area encouraging visitors to stay longer and explore further. It was, and continues to be, a great success story. The Destination Management Partnerships (DMPs), in particular Leicester Shire Promotions supported the National Forest Company in this project. One of the key benefits was the closer working relationships fostered both with and between participating venues, The National Forest Company and the DMPs.”

Penny Wilkinson, Tourism and Promotions Officer, The National Forest Company

### Lessons Learnt

- The original report, *The National Forest Visitor Infrastructure*, which prompted and set out a vision for the development and implementation of the Gateway Model, did not provide a detailed specification with full cost estimates of the features to be installed at the proposed gateway sites. All three stages of the overall project, however, ran to schedule due to the production of an independent project specification which provided detailed cost and time estimates before the project was approved for funding. EMT made a small grant award to enable The National Forest Company to commission this report.
- Evaluation was built into the project. A year after the completion of Stage 1, an evaluation report was produced measuring the early impact of the gateways. This evaluation involved one-to-one post-installation interviews with the host organisations where gateways were installed, independent visitor experience and awareness research, data capture of visitor numbers and a STEAM report for the area of the National Forest. The findings from this were used in planning the next stage of development.
- Work is ongoing on planning so that projects are worked up and ready to go so that funding can be accessed at short notice and work can begin quickly to deliver results.
- Following a number of requests for information and advice, the National Forest Company has produced a printed guide to ‘Information and

Interpretation Panels' to help other destinations that are undertaking similar, large-scale branding and visitor services projects. This 'toolkit' was designed to extend the legacy of the Gateway project. It encourages attractions, councils, parishes and woodland owners to adopt the 'destination style' for interpretation that reinforces the branding, imagery and 'sense of place' and encourages a high quality in future infrastructure.

- It was agreed at the beginning of the project, that while the National Forest Company would install the new branding, their ongoing maintenance is the responsibility of the site owners and there is no further cost to the forest.
- The project was targeted primarily at visitors but the project also raised understanding, awareness and pride among local residents too.

### Future Plans

- There are no current plans to install further gateways although the National Forest Company will continue to service existing gateways ensuring quality is retained.
- The National Forest Company intends to encourage venues that are installing interpretation to adopt the National Forest style to ensure continuity.



Pictured: Horse riding. The National Forest



## Investment

### Best Practice Tips

#### Winning applications and successful management of tourism capital projects



Pictured: Foxton Locks.  
Leicestershire.

Improving and protecting the region's tourism assets, both the natural and the high-quality built environment, was identified as a priority in the Regional Tourism Strategy, Destination East Midlands 2010. Investment consequently has been a priority strand in East Midlands Tourism's successive three-year strategic plans, with emphasis on the need for capital investment to enhance and stimulate growth within the region's visitor economy.

East Midlands Tourism (EMT) has held two separate invitations to apply for grant funding, the Public Realm Challenge Fund 2005-08 and the Tourism Investment Fund 2008-11. These were competitive processes to identify and facilitate projects that could develop new, or improve existing, elements of the physical built environment to support tourism. Projects were to be innovative and sustainable, of regional and possibly national significance, with the potential to drive overnight stays and deliver a broad range of economic benefits for the region.

The purpose of this case study is to look at the lessons learnt from these tourism project applications.

#### Lessons Learnt

##### First Steps in Developing a Funding Application

- It is important to build the business case for a project based on visitor demand demonstrating, with evidence, why the proposed development will attract increased visitor numbers and be a potential source of local employment.

- Where possible, carry out market research with existing visitors to test what they think about the proposals.
- Source case studies of similar types of projects elsewhere in the UK getting information on the economic impact they had.
- Involve the local destination management organisation and/or local authority as they will be able to provide local tourism research to support the application.
- Involve the host community, such as the parish council and civic groups local to the project, to gain their commitment, support and involvement in fund-raising activities.
- Note that costs associated with developing outline proposals into a full application cannot be charged retrospectively to the project.
- Be clear about how the project meets the requirements of the relevant fund – do not change the original project objectives to chase funding.

### **Writing a Winning Application**

- Answer all the questions in plain English, articulating the project concisely and clearly, using evidence to show the difference it will bring to both the visitor and the host community, and the benefits it will bring in terms of socio-economic and environmental factors. A short, simple summary of the project is essential for people who don't know the project and are reviewing the funding application.
- The project is being sold to people who don't necessarily have in-depth knowledge so it's best to avoid jargon.
- Explore all sources of potential funding, from public bodies and private sector organisations, to find out likely launch dates for new calls for applications. For example, one EMT-funded project was eligible to apply for, and subsequently secured, a grant from a waste management company.
- Don't exaggerate the potential outcomes of the project as these will be used at a later date to judge the ultimate success of the project.
- Attend any relevant workshops given by the funding agency to gain more information and have the opportunity to network and ask informal questions.
- Show cost estimates from potential suppliers for major elements of the construction works to demonstrate that the project application is based upon robust and reliable projected costs. Where possible, build in future inflation costs if the construction materials are being bought over a long period.
- Enclose relevant award letters where funding from other sources is confirmed. Where a parallel funding application has been made, give details of the amount sought and the anticipated dates of funding decisions.

- Include relevant correspondence from the local authority about any planning permission considerations. If planning permission is not in place, give a date when the decision is likely to be made.
- Attach letters of support from local stakeholders who have a long-standing involvement in the project although there is no need to collect letters of support for the sake of it to bolster the application.
- In the project schedule, where possible, allow for unpredicted delays and natural events, i.e. environmental issues, planning permission, procurement and abnormal weather conditions, which could impact upon the works schedule and when funds will be spent.
- Where a number of applications are being made to different grant-awarding organisations for different components of the overall project, it is important to compartmentalise the various elements. The application for each funding body should relate specifically to the element of the project that is to be funded by that body.

#### **Delivering an Effective Project and Securing its Legacy**

- Ensure that contractors are appointed in line with the guidelines set by the grant-awarding organisation to ensure that the process is open, competitive and represents best value.
- Keep in regular contact with the relevant manager within the grant-awarding organisation so that they are immediately aware of any significant developments that may affect the project. For example, the start of construction work on a project was delayed when the town council was petitioned to hold a local referendum on the merits of the proposed scheme. Although the supporters of the scheme lost the public vote and the referendum results were non-binding, the scheme was delayed for some time. The development eventually proceeded after the local district council and the scheme supporters had clearly communicated the focus of their plans.
- Submit grant claim and project monitoring claims on time to ensure prompt reimbursement of actual costs incurred.
- Notify the manager within the grant-awarding organisation of any significant variances to the works and expenditure schedule, where costs fall as well as rise. For example, on a recent project, build costs fell as a consequence of increased competition between builders for new contracts, enabling the work to be completed with less resource.
- Regularly review expenditure to ensure that the development is proceeding to schedule in terms of expenditure and deliverables. In instances where the construction stage will take place over several financial years and not all the materials are being procured at the start then it is important to allow for the impact of inflation on your overall budget.
- Be aware that it is usually a contractual requirement of all grant-awarding organisations that recipients make clear reference to the fact that the

project was grant-funded by them and that their logo is used on all promotional materials, visitor interpretation boards, etc.

- Consider how the project adheres to equal opportunities, accessibility and sustainability.
- Where a capital asset is being created or enhanced, it is important ongoing costs associated with repairs and maintenance can be covered in the future.
- Evaluate the performance of the project from the outset with mini-evaluations at the end of each key development stage to ensure that the original objectives are being met.



Pictured: Lincoln Castle. Lincoln



## Annex 3: Useful Statistics by County

### Summary of Tourism Data and Statistics:

#### Derbyshire

##### ■ Key findings

Tourism in terms of both business and leisure visitors makes an important contribution to the economy of Derbyshire generating approximately £1.47 billion in annual revenue and supporting some 25,000 jobs (full-time equivalents). Nine out of ten visitors to Derbyshire go to enjoy the outdoor activities on offer in the Peak District as well as visit its stately homes, such as Chatsworth House and Calke Abbey, along with modern attractions like Derby QUAD.

Since 2006, figures show that Derby has welcomed on average some 115,000 overseas visitors a year. These overseas visitors come for a range of reasons, including business, leisure and study. Its ranking amongst the most visited UK cities and towns has fluctuated from 37<sup>th</sup> place in 2007 to 27<sup>th</sup> place in 2008. In addition, separate figures from the International Passenger Survey also show that a further 77,000 overseas visitors on a yearly average visit the rest of Derbyshire, including the Peak District.

Recent years have witnessed a modernisation in the accommodation offer with many new national chain hotels opening in Derby. Casa Hotels (Casa Chesterfield), Finesse Hotels (Cathedral Quarter Hotel) and Jury's Inn (Cathedral Quarter) have all opened new establishments in recent years. There has also been a strong commitment from small, independent operators to quality improvement as shown by the large numbers of accommodation providers gaining a star-rating in the National Quality Assurance Standards for the first time. Several providers have recently been national finalists in the Enjoy England Awards for Excellence, such as Underleigh House, Hope Valley (Bed & Breakfast / Guest Accommodation, 2010) and East Lodge Hotel and Restaurant, near Bakewell (Small Hotel, 2009).

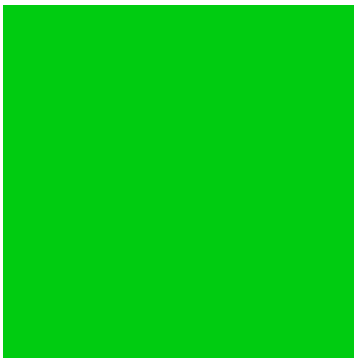
Since 2005, Derbyshire has seen a net increase in the number of hotels, guesthouses and B&Bs from 738 to 802 establishments (+8.7%) resulting in an additional 1,558 bed-spaces (+11.3%) to 15,344. As far as the non-serviced sector is concerned i.e. self-catering, camping and caravanning, growth has also been strong with an additional 1,219 bed-spaces (+10.2%) taking the total number of bed-spaces to 15,344.

Whilst the hotel bed-stock has been modernised and the offer improved, a significant challenge ahead is to bring more overnight visitors to the destination

post-recession. There is an imminent need to drive up levels of productivity and profitability in terms of higher occupancy, average achieved room rates and room yields.

Some 32 million tourist days are spent in Derbyshire by visitors on day trips. Given the lack of available data for footfall in cities, towns and villages, the day visitor marketing research is primarily defined by the 2009 England Visitor Attractions Survey. The latest results demonstrate the very strong performance that many attractions, both paid and free-entry, enjoyed with double-digit percentage increase in visitor numbers in 2009 compared to 2008, such as Chatsworth House (+18.0%: 650,000 visitors), Calke Abbey (+96.7%: 242,000 visitors) and Kedleston Hall (+5.8%: 135,000 visitors).

See [www.eastmidlandstourism.co.uk](http://www.eastmidlandstourism.co.uk) for more information



## Summary of Tourism Data and Statistics:

### Leicestershire

#### ■ Key findings

Tourism in terms of both business and leisure visitors makes an important contribution to the economy of Leicestershire generating approximately £1.3 billion in annual revenue and supporting some 20,000 jobs (full-time equivalents). Nine out of ten visitors to Leicestershire come for the day to see attractions, events and festivals, as diverse as Bosworth Battlefield, Leicester Comedy Festival and The Curve.

Leicester is one of the top 25 UK cities for overseas visitors and has attracted on average 146,000 visits a year since 2005. In addition, a further estimated 84,000 visitors a year spend time in the rest of Leicestershire. These overseas visitors come for a range of reasons, including business, leisure and study. The challenge ahead is to grow the number of overseas visitors capitalising on the forthcoming 'Decade of Sport', ranging from the important role that Loughborough University has to play as an official training camp venue for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games to Leicester as a host city for the 2015 Rugby World Cup.

Recent years have seen a modernisation in the accommodation offer with many new national chain hotels opening in Leicester and the wider county. Chains such as ETAP (Accor Group), Marriott and Ramada Group have started operating in the city. East Midlands Airport has also acted as a catalyst for new hotel construction, such as the uniquely designed 4-star Radisson Blu Hotel scheduled to open mid-2011.

Since 2006, Leicestershire has seen a net decrease in the number of hotels, guesthouses and B&Bs from 315 to 284 (-9.8%) but this contraction in the loss of independent establishments has been offset by the arrival of national chain hotels with the result that the net size of the bed-stock has increased from 12,685 to 14,076 (+11.0%).

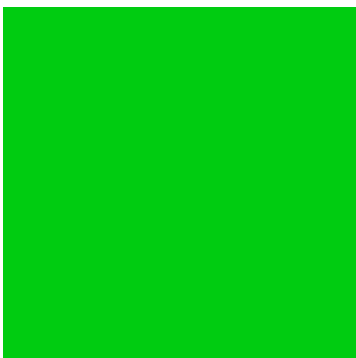
As far as the non-serviced sector is concerned (i.e. self-catering, camping and caravanning), Leicestershire has also enjoyed strong growth with an additional net 1,112 bed-spaces (+12.3%) taking the total number to 10,086. Recently built to high eco-friendly standards, YHA National Forest has some 80 bed-spaces and caters for families, groups and independent travellers.

Whilst the hotel bed-stock has been modernised and the offer improved, a significant challenge ahead is to bring more overnight visitors to the destination post-recession. There is an imminent need to drive up levels of productivity and

profitability in terms of higher occupancy, average achieved room rates and room yields.

Given the lack of available data for footfall in cities, towns and villages, the day visitor market research is primarily defined by the 2009 England Visitor Attraction Survey. Whilst not all venues voluntarily supplied data to this national survey, the results demonstrate the very strong performance that many entry-fee attractions enjoyed with a double-digit percentage increase in visitor numbers compared to 2008, such as Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre (+37.9%) and Abbey Pumping Station, Leicester (+31.6%).

See [www.eastmidlandstourism.co.uk](http://www.eastmidlandstourism.co.uk) for more information





## Summary of Tourism Data and Statistics:

### Lincolnshire

#### ■ Key findings

Tourism in terms of both business and leisure visitors makes a vital contribution to the economy of Lincolnshire generating almost £1.0 billion in annual revenue and supporting some 17,000 jobs (full-time equivalents). 46% of all tourist days in Lincolnshire are spent by people staying in either serviced accommodation (i.e. hotels, guesthouses or B&Bs) or self-catering accommodation, demonstrating the appeal of the county's traditional product.

Since 2006, figures show that Lincoln has welcomed on average around 52,000 overseas visitors a year putting the destination within the 60-70 band of the most visited UK cities and towns. In addition, IPS figures also show that a further 100,000 overseas visitors visited the rest of Lincolnshire.

Recent years have seen a modernisation in the tourist accommodation offer with national hotel chains opening new properties in Lincolnshire. In December 2008, Holiday Inn Express opened a new 118-bedroom property in Lincoln and Travelodge is known to be looking to open a number of new properties with 50 – 70 bedrooms in county towns such as Boston and Stamford. There has also been a strong commitment from small, independent operators to quality improvement as shown by the large numbers of accommodation providers gaining a star-rating in the National Quality Assurance Standards for the first time. Several accommodation providers in Lincolnshire have recently been national finalists in the Enjoy England Awards for Excellence such as Elms Farm Cottages, Boston (Access for All, 2009) and Poachers Hideaway, Horncastle (Sustainable Tourism, 2010).

Since 2005, Lincolnshire has seen a net increase in the number of hotels, guesthouses and B&Bs from 409 to 457 establishments (+11.7%) resulting in an additional 283 bed-spaces (+2.8%) to 15,951. As far as the non-serviced sector is concerned (i.e. self-catering, camping and caravanning), growth has also been positive with an additional net 839 bed-spaces (+1.4%) taking the size of the total stock to 61,103 in Lincolnshire.

Some 14 million tourist days are spent in Lincolnshire by people on day trips. The day visitor market research is primarily defined by the 2009 England Visitor Attractions Survey. The results demonstrate the very strong performance that many entry-fee attractions enjoyed in 2009 with a double-digit percentage increase in visitor numbers compared to 2008, such as Belton House (+24.9%) with around 249,000 visitors a year and RAF Waddington, home to the annual international air show (+30.8%) with around 170,000 visitors a year.

See [www.eastmidlandstourism.co.uk](http://www.eastmidlandstourism.co.uk) for more information

## Summary of Tourism Data and Statistics:

### Nottinghamshire

#### ■ Key findings

Tourism in terms of both business and leisure visitors makes an important contribution to the economy of Nottinghamshire generating approximately £1.4 billion in annual revenue and supporting some 21,500 jobs (full-time equivalents). Nine out of ten visitors to Nottinghamshire come for the day to see attractions, events and festivals, as diverse as Clumber Park and Nottingham Contemporary.

Nottingham is one of the top 15 UK cities for overseas visitors and has attracted on average 262,000 visits a year since 2005. Nottingham has improved its relative position in the last two years and is now placed 13<sup>th</sup> above cities such as Leeds and Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Among the eight Core Cities, which are the most economically important areas in England outside London, Nottingham is ranked 6<sup>th</sup> for overseas visitors. The challenge ahead is to grow the number of overseas visitors capitalising on the forthcoming 'Decade of Sport' starting with the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Recent years have seen a modernisation in the accommodation offer with many new national chain hotels opening in Nottingham, such as Ibis, Jury's Inn and QHotels (The Belfry). There has also been over the period a strong commitment from small independent operators towards quality improvement countywide, as demonstrated by the number of accommodation providers gaining a rating under the National Quality Assurance Standards for the first time.

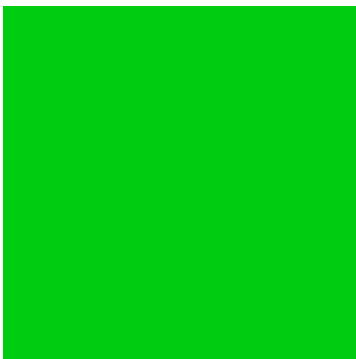
Since 2006, Nottinghamshire has seen a net increase in the number of hotels, guesthouses and B&Bs from 352 to 375 establishments (+6.5%), resulting in an additional net 405 bed-spaces (+2.9%). As far as the non-serviced sector is concerned (i.e. self-catering, camping and caravanning), Nottinghamshire has also enjoyed positive growth with an additional net 716 bed-spaces (+3.8%) taking the total number of bed-spaces to 14,100.

Whilst the hotel bed-stock has been modernised and the offer improved, a significant challenge ahead is to bring more overnight visitors to the destination post-recession. There is an imminent need to drive up levels of productivity and profitability in terms of higher occupancy, average achieved room rates and room yields. Relative to its bed-stock capacity, Nottingham performs below its Core City peers.

The day visitor market research is primarily defined by the 2009 England Visitor Attraction Survey given the lack of available data for footfall in cities, towns and villages. Whilst not all venues voluntarily supplied data to this national survey, the

latest results suggest that Nottinghamshire is reliant on attractions owned and managed by local authorities where there is low value or free-entry. The results indicate that attractions in Nottingham enjoyed a higher percentage increase in footfall in 2009 than many in the rest of the county.

See [www.eastmidlandstourism.co.uk](http://www.eastmidlandstourism.co.uk) for more information



## Summary of Tourism Data and Statistics:

### Northamptonshire

#### ■ Key findings

Tourism in terms of both business and leisure visitors makes a key contribution to the local economy of Northamptonshire, generating approximately £840 million in annual revenue and supporting some 13,000 jobs (full-time equivalents). Nine out of ten visitors to Northamptonshire come for the day to see attractions, events and festivals held at places as diverse as Salcey Forest, Rockingham Castle or Silverstone Circuit.

Since 2006, figures show that Northampton has welcomed on average some 112,000 overseas visitors a year. Its ranking amongst the most visited cities and towns in the UK has fluctuated from 28<sup>th</sup> place in 2006 to 38<sup>th</sup> place in 2008. In addition, separate figures also show that a further 91,000 overseas visitors spent time in the rest of rural Northamptonshire. Many overseas leisure visitors are drawn to the county because of its rich heritage and history with renowned country houses that have connections to key historical figures such as Diana, Princess of Wales and George Washington. Motorsport is another key strength for the county as Silverstone is the home of British F1 Grand Prix.

The location of Northamptonshire in the central England means that it is home to many internationally-trading businesses, not least in the sectors of food and drink and high performance automotive engineering. This vitality in the local economy has influenced new hotel development in the county. Campanile, Hampton by Hilton, Holiday Inn and Premier Inn are examples of national chain hotels, all of whom have started operating in Northamptonshire.

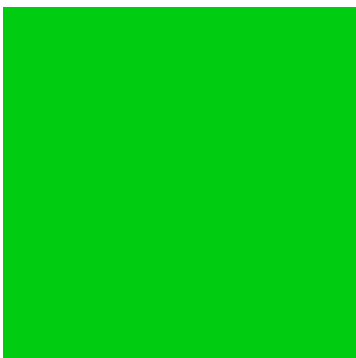
Since 2006, Northamptonshire has seen a net decrease in the number of hotels, guesthouses and B&Bs from 320 to 236 establishments (-26.3%) resulting in a marginal decrease of 68 bed-spaces (-1.0%) to 10,577. As far as the non-serviced sector is concerned (i.e. self-catering, camping and caravanning), Northamptonshire has a strong product offer in relation to canal-boat holidays and this markedly contributes to the bed-stock. Since 2006, the number of non-serviced beds has risen marginally by 227 (+1.1%) to stand at 20,620 with the effect that Northamptonshire has the third highest level of bed-stock amongst counties in the East Midlands.

Given the lack of available data for footfall in cities, towns and villages, the day visitor market research is primarily defined by the 2009 England Visitor Attraction Survey. Whilst not all venues supplied data, the latest results show that Northamptonshire attracts many visitors to its numerous country houses and museums, many of which recorded double-digit percentage growth in 2009.



Noteworthy is the fact that Wicksteed Park Family Theme Park enjoyed a 10% year on year increase in the number of visitors from 500,000 to 550,000 making it the second most visited attraction in the East Midlands.

See [www.eastmidlandstourism.co.uk](http://www.eastmidlandstourism.co.uk) for more information



## Summary of Tourism Data and Statistics:

### Rutland

#### ■ Key findings

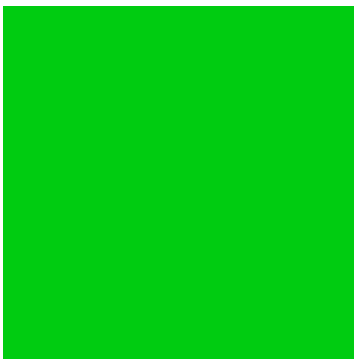
Tourism makes a significant contribution to the rural economy of Rutland generating approximately £86 million a year in revenue and supporting some 1,500 jobs (full-time equivalents). Eight out of ten visitors to Rutland go there for the day to enjoy outdoor activities, such as walking and cycling around and sailing on Rutland Water, along with visiting the many quintessentially English villages.

Since 2006, there has been a net decrease in the number of hotels, guesthouses and B&Bs in Rutland from 108 to 86 establishments (-20.4%), whilst the number of bed-spaces has fallen by 143 bed-spaces to 1,342 (-9.6%). This has been reversed by the health of the non-serviced sector i.e. cottages, camping and caravanning which has seen more people staying overnight. The total number of non-serviced bed-spaces has increased by 559 over the four-year period to 3,065 (+22.3%).

As far as overseas visitors to Rutland are concerned, it is not possible to provide any estimates for their number at the local level. This is because the International Passenger Survey is a UK wide survey and the sample size at destination level can sometimes be insufficient to yield any robust estimates. Some figures do, however, suggest that Oakham receives around 7,000 overseas visitors a year.

The day visitor market research is primarily defined by the 2009 England Visitor Attraction Survey, given the lack of available data for footfall in cities, towns and villages. Barnsdale Gardens has provided data to this national survey for the past two calendar years and received 43,000 visitors in 2009, an increase of 5,500 (+14.7%) compared to 2008.

See [www.eastmidlandstourism.co.uk](http://www.eastmidlandstourism.co.uk) for more information



## Annex 4: Useful Sources of Information

**www.visitbritain.org** for:

- UK Visitor Trends – from the International Passenger Survey (IPS), the UK Tourism Survey (UKTS) and the UK Occupancy Survey.
- UK Tourism Trends Update.
- Economic and Demographic Information.
- Forecast Predictions on Future Volume and Value of Overseas Visitors.
- Historical Trend Data.
- Business Visits.
- Overseas Market Profiles.
- Quarterly Market and Trade Insights by Overseas Country.

**www.visitengland.org** for:

- England Product and Segment Profile – who VisitEngland markets to and why.
- Topic Summaries – major topics affecting tourism in England.
- Domestic Industry Panel – key tourism organisation panel to measure performance and identify the key issues affecting the industry.
- Quarterly England Attractions Survey.
- Annual Visitor Attractions Survey – published August.
- Tourism Day Visits.
- Short Term Domestic Tourism Tracker - survey of intentions to travel at key points throughout the year.

Supporting documentation for this handbook:

- **GHK Evaluation of Tourism**  
Commissioned by East Midlands Tourism.
- **GHK Analysis of East Midlands Tourism Questionnaire**  
Commissioned by East Midlands Tourism.
- **Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Report Model (STEAM) 2009 Report**

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