



Chapter 2

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Weymouth's Once in a Lifetime Opportunity

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Introduction

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On the 6 July 2005 much changed for the towns of Weymouth and Portland, Dorset as they heard that in seven years time they would be hosting the sailing for the successful London 2012 Olympic Bid. Two years later on, and whilst the Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy (WPNSA) has swung into action with its preparations, the town of Weymouth itself in some respects appears to be unsure of its future direction. At the time of the bid the road issue was still uppermost in the minds of the residents; however that issue has potentially been resolved with the Government announcing the decision to build the relief road in time for the 2012 Games which will alter significantly the arrival of visitors into the town from Dorchester, until now a potential traffic nightmare for both visitors and residents alike with long delays and traffic bottlenecks. Yet, within the town itself, little has changed. Many plans are being suggested about developments including the new Pavilion Peninsula and also the redevelopment of the waterfront esplanade, but it would appear that the town is slightly indecisive as to where it wants to position itself with regard to attracting visitors and income to the town.

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Weymouth needs to decide on its strategy for the future, by adopting a concerted approach to attract certain segments of the market and invest sensibly in these areas, rather than trying to spread itself too thinly across all market sectors. The role of a good events portfolio could be a major contributor to a successful marketing strategy. From research undertaken in 2004 (Sadd, 2004), it is evident that the locals are keen for the 'season' to be all year around and they recognise the importance of events in the town and how, historically, they have been a great source of celebration, ranging from the military parades to the hosting of the tall ships for an unprecedented three times. This chapter will explain the historical underpinning of Weymouth's present situation and will make suggestions for possible events based strategies to maximise the potential benefits to be gained from being Olympic Hosts in 2012.

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Weymouth's Historical Background

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Weymouth is a medium sized resort on the south coast of England, 160 miles from London and with a population of about 60,000. Weymouth purports to be 'The First Resort' of the United Kingdom as over 200 years ago King George III and his family holidayed there. Weymouth Bay has long been called 'England's Bay of Naples' and is renowned for having the best sunshine record in England. In January 2003 it held the record for the sunniest January since records began. The winter climate is mild and Weymouth often beats its close neighbour Bournemouth in the temperature stakes. The history of the town is closely linked to the sea with ships setting sail to fight the Spanish Armada and to fight in WWII. Weymouth, Massachusetts is so named after the emigrants set sail from Weymouth, United Kingdom.

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It has sandy beaches and shallow offshore waters, with a sheltered harbour measuring over 2500 acres containing reputedly some of the best sailing waters in the world (Princess Royal, opening ceremony of new sailing centre, 2005) and a large area of flat land with waterside access. Traditionally Weymouth has celebrated its maritime heritage through its nationally and internationally renowned military parades, and more recently with the hosting of the Tall Ships races attracting over 125,000 people to the town on one day. These events have not only gained the town a good reputation for putting on such large-scale celebrations, but also the locals welcome the opportunity to celebrate the maritime heritage through using the natural facilities of the beach and harbour. They would welcome more opportunity to undertake more events of this type.

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Weymouth's Current Position

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Weymouth in relation to Butler's life cycle (Butler, 1980) would appear to be in the stagnation stage, as like many English resorts, it has suffered a decline in the number of tourists visiting (Figure 2.1). In

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Figure 2.1: Weymouth and Portland Borough Council.
Source: Picture courtesy of Weymouth and Portland Borough Council.



1992 it was awarded the last of the Tourism Development Action Programmes in order to use strategic thinking amongst key organisations to try to overcome the decline; however the process was not successful (Agarwal, 2002). It has been hit by many factors including the loss of the local naval base, the loss of a major distribution centre for the UK retailer New Look (although recent press announcements indicate this company may return to the area) and alternative cheaper holidays available both overseas and within the United Kingdom. The accommodation sector is in need of an overhaul and other than the sea life centre there are limited wet weather facilities. The main attraction for visitors is the beach and harbour, although the use of the water itself is somewhat limited.

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A closer examination of Butler's resort life cycle model highlights the need to ensure that the organisation of events should be directly linked to an overall resort development strategy, as many events are not wholly dependent on the tourist market alone (Sadd and Jackson, 2006). Indeed, many destinations are constantly evolving and events can be used to add differentiation to the product, lengthen stay and encourage repeat business (Ali-Knight and Robertson, 2004). Events can play a crucial role through their uniqueness, the types of experience they offer and also their ability to smooth out the extremes in seasonality seen in seaside resorts with the development of facilities such as conferences during what are known as the shoulder months, those that border the more traditional summer months. Getz (2000) questions the life cycle and saturation issues involved in hosting these events. He believes that with the rapid expansion seen within the events sector over the past few decades, it is perhaps opportune to debate whether this rate of expansion can continue, or whether they will enter a period of decline '*or a golden age of permanent maturity*' (Getz, 2000, p. 175). He believes that no single factor has been responsible for this rapid growth, rather a combination of the global growth in population, disposable incomes, increased leisure time and mobility. He also argues that there is a strategic emphasis associated with event portfolios through mandates to promote tourism destinations. Urban consumers particularly enjoy events held in rural communities and resorts, with events becoming more entertainment orientated, but the danger can be of too many events in some areas. Jones (1993, in Gartner and Lime, 2000) reported that whilst around 9000 festivals are held in the United Kingdom each year, at least half are running at a loss. In conclusion, Getz (2000) identified that should a destination's popularity decline, then so will some of its attractions and events. It is also true that if it is the other way around then the destination may well suffer as a consequence, as many events are not designed for the tourist market specifically, so the evolution of the destination may not follow the same path.

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Traditional British Seaside Resorts

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Many traditional seaside resorts are considering ways of restructuring (Agarwal, 2002), with regeneration featuring highly. Yet many resorts are using conferences, entertainment and the possibility of casino developments as their catalysts whilst there is huge scope to use sporting events as main attractions. For example, Eastbourne successfully hosts the Lawn Tennis Association's Women's International Championships, a warm up for Wimbledon and they also have the four-day International Seafront Air show. Weymouth and Portland have the opportunity to capitalise on the media attention the hosting of the sailing events for London 2012 will bring to the area, even though they will be some 160 miles from the main focus of attention. The 'place distinctiveness' of the resort is vitally important and should be recognised and appreciated (Agarwal, 2002) with the unique sailing water adjacent to the World Heritage Coastline and the world class developments



being undertaken in the area to complement the use of the water facilities. Urry (1997 in Shaw and Williams) believes that cultural change in seaside resorts, which is often attributed to external forces, is more due to cultural shifts and changes in beliefs, values and identities. No amount of money invested in accommodation or types of entertainments can overcome the shifts in values that people hold towards the facilities seaside resorts offer. Therefore, it is imperative to look at the cultural offerings and Weymouth has now invested, through the local college, in a Cultural Officer for the town. In addition, a Public Art Commissioning Plan for Weymouth and Portland 2012 Cultural Olympiad is underway already. Young (2007) agrees in that traditional 'attractors' such as cinemas and multiplexes are no longer sufficient and that new differentiated 'attractors' are required to bring in visitors and locals alike. These include visitor attractions, cultural and arts venues, arenas, conference centres and learning centres. The key reasons for developing this area are to raise profile and create brand awareness, to create footfall and increase dwell time, to improve quality of life and raise values (Young, 2000). Smith (2004) also argues for the opportunities for cultural regeneration through events, already seen in many European cities (e.g. Barcelona).

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Present Redevelopments

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There is a Royal Yachting Association (RYA) 'centre of excellence' in the WPNSA, redeveloped with a £6 million grant from the Sport England Fund, English Institute for Sport, the South West of England Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) and the RYA. This grant was given not only in preparation of the Olympic bid, but also to increase and improve the facilities to host more annual world class events irrespective of the bid outcome. The council that is jointly responsible for Weymouth and Portland has recognised the need to strengthen its staffing infrastructure and has recently appointed a new economic development officer who also has the responsibility for regeneration of the town, a role that was never recognised previously. As a result of this new appointment, and also in recognition of the need to upgrade facilities in preparation of the hosting of the games, a wholesale redevelopment of the seafront is taking place. Included in these plans are the restorations of the three major statues along the seafront promenade, the strengthening of the esplanade itself, the restoration of the Victorian shelters, along with new bars and cafes, new lifeguard and tourist offices. In order to carry out many of the proposed alterations and improvements to the buildings along the seafront, permission is necessary from various preservation trusts. However with this comes the opportunity to apply for grants and funding to carry out these works. These projects include the restoration of the Victorian curved facades to certain buildings, the restoration of balconies and windows and the general repair of many of the classic features. However, as previously mentioned, despite the intention to regenerate the seafront with this large restoration project, there is no strategy in relation to the type of tourist the town wishes to attract. It can be argued that the developments are as much for the local population as any visitors, however as the town relies on its tourist trade it must therefore decide the future of its tourism business. The resort has traditionally relied on being a family destination, but has suffered in the last 30 years from cheaper forms of holiday both domestically and internationally. Weymouth does not benefit from an all year around resort profile, therefore international recognition and a chance to revamp its image within the international media will greatly enhance the town and its surrounding areas both in prestige as well as economic benefits.

p0090 The Waterfront Revitalisation project, also known as the Pavilion Peninsula, relates to a new development taking place in urban space besides the harbour and will also include gentrification through economic reinvestment, residential rehabilitation and commercial redevelopments, yet possibly displacing relatively poorer social classes through the more affluent urban 'gentry' moving in.

s0060 **Growth in Events Business**

p0100 More and more towns and cities are using events as a means of delivering on a range of objectives, including increasing tourists visits and spend, regeneration strategies to increase community pride and regional economic initiatives (Ali-Knight and Robertson, 2004; Bowdin et al., 2001; Hall, 1992). Events have long played an important role in society and special events have a role in the development of the tourism industry, especially as they have the potential to attract visitors globally. Sadd (2004) amalgamating previous work from Hall (1992) and Getz (1997), believe there are eight reasons for the growth seen in the mega-event business:

- o0010 1. Positive imaging – putting the region, city and community on the map (Monclus, 2003), very important for a town such as Weymouth, but also seen in the example of Barcelona and the hosting of the 1992 Olympics (Auld and McArthur, 2003; Chalkley and Essex, 1999; Law, 1993; Stamakis et al., 2003).
- o0020 2. One city or destination seeking to emulate the success of another (Madden, 2002; Searle, 2002; AUQ4 Toohey and Veal, 2001; Waitt, 2001).
- o0030 3. Economic development potential as seen by government (Auld and McArthur, 2003; Crompton AUQ5 and McKay, 1997; Hall, 1992; Hughes, 1993; Jeong, 1999; Matheison and Wall, 1982).
- o0040 4. Segmentation and specialisation within the tourism market (Chalip, 2002; Crompton and McKay, AUQ6 1997; Morse, 2001; Shackley, 2000).
- o0050 5. Availability of government grants for sports, art and culture (Hall, 1992; Gunn, 1994; Persson, 2002).
- o0060 6. Attracting of investment by the use of profile and image (Burgan and Mules, 1992; Shone and Parry, 2001; WTO, 1997).
- o0070 7. Promotion of civic pride and the desire to overcome adverse circumstances (Chalkley and Essex, 1999; Law, 1993).
- o0080 8. The changing nature of leisure activity in western society (Boniface and Cooper, 1994; Cooper AUQ6 and Fletcher, 2000; Crompton and McKay, 1997; Faulkner et al., 2000; Pearce and Butler, 1999).

Source: Sadd and Jackson (2006).

p0190 According to Hall (1992), mega-events, otherwise referred to as special or hallmark events, are major fairs, festivals, expositions and cultural and sporting events which are held on either a regular or one-off basis. He further writes that these events have become a key tool in the tourism marketing strategies at international, national and regional levels through their primary function of providing tourism opportunities. These events are also extremely significant as *'they may leave behind legacies which will impact on the host community far more widely than the immediate period in which the event actually took place'* (Hall, 1992, p. 1). Gunn, (1988, p. 259 in Hall, 1992) argues, *'Probably the fastest growing form of visitor activity is festivals and events'*. Law (1993, p. 97) agrees that they are *'large events of world importance and high profile which have a major impact on the image of the host city'*. Examples of impacts include: large-scale public expenditure, improved infrastructure, the

redevelopment of urban areas and increased world profile. In contrast, Hall (1992, p. 1) argues that the study of mega-events '*is fraught with definitional, methodological and theoretical problems which reflect the many research directions that exist within the study of tourism*'. Moreover, Armstrong (1986, in Hall, 2000) recognises that the hosting of international events promotes esteem, allowing local people to display their skills, cultural attitudes and civic pride. Other writers (Ritchie, 1984; Hall and Selwood, 1987 all in Hall, 1992) believe that the primary function of the hallmark tourist event is to allow the host community the opportunity to have a prominent role in the tourism market for a short, well-defined period of time. The event is distinguished from other attractions as it is not continuous or a seasonal phenomenon.

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Current Major Events in Weymouth and Portland

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The Veterans Awareness Week incorporating the Annual Military and Veterans Festival (Figure 2.2) is held in June every year and is endorsed by the Ministry of Defence as one of the official UK Regional 'Veterans Day' Flagship events.

Veterans will be able to discover and receive the support available through the various agencies and charity organisations; and visitors to the events will be able to appreciate and support the important role played by the veterans and the service associations. With many uniquely nostalgic, social and commemorative experiences, Weymouth & Portland is the ideal destination for one of Britain's largest Veterans Festivals (Weymouth and Portland Borough Council).

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Sailing Academy

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This year the sailing club has already hosted some major sailing events very successfully including the following events: J24 Spring Cup, Dart 18 National Championships, European Championships,



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Figure 2.2: Pictures from the Veterans Day Celebrations.
Source: Courtesy of Weymouth and Portland Borough Council.

RYA Olympic Training Camp, European Championships, Laser National Championships, National Championships, RYA Youth and Masters Windsurfing Championships, Skandia Sail for Gold Regatta and RYA South Zone Championships. The intention of the sailing centre was to attract world class sailing events to the area, irrespective of whether the 2012 bid was successful, and this it has achieved because of the natural and man-made facilities on offer. The centre provides high-performance training both ashore and afloat including disabled access and inclusion, in addition to supporting the local community and economy by encouraging supporting facilities and businesses (estimated impact of academy resulting in £35.9 million increase in demand on local firms and 150 full-time equivalent jobs) (Tweed, 2004).

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In April 2007, a '500 for £5' event was held enabling local children to have access to sampling sailing. The normal cost should have been £25 per head but with funding from The Chesil Trust of £20 per head far more local children were able to take part. Further funding was also secured to allow a further 350 children to have the same experience, and more sessions are planned for the future. The children got the chance to learn about knots, rigging boats and how sails work, as well as getting to the water and meeting Olympic Sailors of the future who were at an Olympic Squad training Camp at the centre at the same time (Figure 2.3).

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The WPNESA are particularly proud of their 'green credentials' and include the environmental programme whereby at certain times of the year, notably in the winter, sailors have to abide by exclusion zones due to birds 'over wintering' on the outskirts of the sailing waters. All new dredging in relation to new developments at the centre are mindful of the shelter afforded to certain breeds of protected worm that populate the area as well as Portland Sea Lavender and scaly crickets. In addition to the precautions the WPNESA instigate themselves, they are monitored by bird watchers and environmentalists.



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Figure 2.3: Children enjoy sailing for a fiver.
Source: Courtesy of Sail Laser and The Chesil Trust – photo courtesy WPNESA, 2007.



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The Royal Yachting Association (2004), whilst originally formed to harmonise racing conditions and to represent the views of all water users and has now evolved into policy making that affects all boat users and includes the 'Boating for Life' publication. This document sets out the environmental strategy for sustainable boating until 2009, and figures strongly in the developments around the Weymouth and Portland Harbours. Amongst the recommendations are the allowing for boating interests and landscape planning to 'live in harmony'; have RYA representatives on management and advisory groups to support the sustainable use of the coast for recreational boating; protect important recreational anchorages; and recognise the importance of the local boating industry. The RYA's influence was crucial in persuading Powergen not to proceed with their plans to place wind turbines on the outer harbour wall, as the RYA was concerned about the effect the turbines would have on the high-performance racing as well as on boating in general (<http://www.rya.org.uk>).

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As sport tourism continues to grow in popularity with concerted efforts in the South West region of the United Kingdom to develop this segment of the market, the Weymouth and Portland area must pursue these opportunities using the natural features of the area. Sports tourism facilitates with the opportunity to utilise natural resources, often encouraging a longer tourism 'season'. South West tourism use the words 'adventure', 'lifestyle' and 'extreme' in their promotional material. Events associated with this market have the ability to be the catalyst for social and physical regeneration, a fact pertinent to Weymouth. Higham (2005) believes that sport plays an important and increasingly important role in the development of tourism destinations and also in the life cycles of older tourism destinations. Communities benefit from the hosting of water based events as they develop community cohesiveness as well as civic pride, and indeed the reason the Olympics are coming to the area of Weymouth and Portland is because of the sea.

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Economic Prosperity

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A report compiled by Dorset County Council in 2003 (Gray, 2003) recognised that the economy and labour market for the Weymouth and Portland area is service sector orientated, with a large proportion of small firms of lower than average productivity and low GDP per head. The area also has a slightly lower than average level of economic activity with a higher proportion of people having low or no qualifications pertinent to being service orientated, and whilst there is an above average unemployment figure, this is due to the seasonal nature of large sectors of the market. In February 2006 a further paper was published from the International Centre for Tourism and Hospitality Research, Bournemouth University (Fletcher, 2006) highlighting the Olympic effects in Weymouth and Portland, and the South West region as a whole of the consequences of the 2012 sailing event. The author concluded that there was a shortage of information relating to the economic impacts of the Olympics, despite the longevity of the event. Yet, from the data that is available there is a huge variety and complexity in terms of how the event was run (public versus private money), and also how the data itself was collected. The report compared the Weymouth anticipated economic effects to that of the Special Olympic World Winter Games held in 2001, in Anchorage, Alaska. These games had 4500 volunteers and 8500 residents attending the events. The Games brought \$22 million into the economy, spending generated of \$12 million and a total impact of \$32 million in sales. The annual average equivalent of 400 new jobs was created and 98% of residents said the Games improved their quality of life (Fletcher, 2006). In summary, the Bournemouth University report highlighted that to truly evaluate the economic impacts, a long-term study of at least 6–10 years is crucial and at this stage there are many unknown variables. However, looking at the experience from other mega-events,

the pre-games impacts result in an increased profile, increased levels of investment and participation rates. The anticipated cumulative impact of increased visitor spend could be as much as £9.6 million over 6 years with £19.2 million recorded over a 12-year period. Regionally, the tourism expenditure could rise by as much as £180 million with the equivalent of 4900 full-time equivalent jobs created. Increased demand for the sailing facilities, through the increased media coverage, could inject £24 million annually into the economy from an average 10% increase in demand for sailing. Whilst the officials and athletes will be housed in floating temporary hotels during the Games there will still be some visitors staying locally and day visitor spend to anticipate giving a projected total expenditure during the Olympic Games as between £5.8 and £9.5 million. Countering all these figures, there will be some displacement effects such as that of investment funds, business activity diverted elsewhere, visitor spending elsewhere and even locals, opting to spend there time elsewhere (Royal Wedding Effect), although research from Sydney showed that this effect was not as pronounced as predicted (DCC, 2005). There may also be the danger that tourists who would normally visit the sites in question, may stay away whilst the events are taking place, due to concerns overcrowding and price inflation. A phenomenon called the 'London' effect after the Royal Wedding in 1981 or the 'Los Angeles' effect after the 1984 Olympic Games (Zwolak, 1987 in Hall, 1992 and Getz, 1991). This was seen in Athens where accommodation prices fell in some cases by as much as 40%.

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To these figures must also be added the estimations for the Paralympics Games, with a total expenditure of between £480,000 and £850,000, with media coverage adding a further £150,000 to the level of local spending. Additional opportunities could arise from any run-up/test events held before the Games in addition to the possibility of any training camps.

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Organisers of events need analysis of economic impacts in order to evaluate the benefits for the local economy, assess projected levels of attendance and finally to provide information for the public domain (the local community), on the merits of the event, especially if it is considered a potentially contentious issue. Negative economic impacts include opportunity costs, over-dependence on tourism, higher inflation and fluctuating land values, seasonality and external costs. These impacts include high leakages from developing countries whereby tourism income is taken out of the country back to the tourism developers' home nation. Land speculation was seen in Australia during the America's Cup Defence (Hall, 1992). Low returns on investment because of seasonal fluctuations in demand and over-dependence have been lodged as major criticisms of the tourist industry in general (Standeven and DeKnop, 1999; Turco et al., 2002). Smaller events in smaller towns will have a larger impact per business, yet the visitors might not stay as long because there is less to see and do; this is described as the 'Zone of Influence' by Andersson (1999) and Hall (1992, 2000, 2002). The concentration of mega-event activities has several advantages but because of the type of some of the activities, especially in the variety of sporting events at the Olympics, it is not always possible. The advantages of concentrating the facilities include lower travel costs, more efficient use of transport and venues, better management of visitors and as a consequence fewer negative impacts on the environment and community (Hall, 2000). Conversely, the dispersal of events could prevent congestion. It is the nature of the event that determines how much dispersal is acceptable or geographically necessary, for example the location of suitable sailing facilities (www.athenshousing.com/olympicshistory/olympicssports/sailing.html).

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Other Impacts

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Whilst many different writers discuss the economic impacts of hosting Olympic mega-events (Andersson, 2001; Brown et al., 2002; Burgan and Mules, 2001; Fayos-Sola, 1998; Humphreys and



AUQ12 Plummer, 1995; Kang and Perdue, 1994; Kasimati, 2003; Madden, 2002; Morse, 2001; Ritchie, 1984), only a few study the non-economic impacts and include Hiller (1998, 2000), Lenskji (1992, 1994, 1996) and Shone and Parry (2001, p. 66) who state that the benefits of hosting mega-events include opportunities *‘to create better social interaction, help to develop community cohesion, increase cultural and social understanding and improve the communities identity and confidence in itself’*. Shaw and Williams (2000) write that changes brought about by ‘guest–host’ encounters run through both social and cultural dimensions and should be viewed separately, yet Mathieson and Wall (1989) argue that it is extremely difficult to do this as they interact. Few studies measure the social impacts of tourism, the most widely used framework for describing the effects of tourists on a host society being ‘Doxey’s Index of Irritation’ developed in 1976. This index represents the changing attitudes of the host population to tourists along a linear scale with increasing levels of irritation as the volume of tourists grows. The stages of progression begin with euphoria as tourism develops, to apathy, irritation and finally antagonism in the face of increasing development. The sequence is determined both by numbers and compatibility of each group, related to culture, economic status, race and nationality (Turner and Ash, 1975 in both Mathieson and Wall, 1982 and Shaw and Williams, 2000). Doxey’s scheme, useful in exploring the reactions of residents, is limited in that it does not allow for the inclusion of visitor management schemes, which may reduce visitor pressure, or cases where local communities become involved in tourism planning. Haywood (1988) encourages responsible and responsive planning of tourism in the community. Though his suggestion was written over 19 years ago, it is still relevant in today’s planning processes. He advocates citizen involvement through a more participatory approach, not the abandonment of centralised government tourism planning but more tourism planning at the community level. Many of his suggestions appear in the South West Tourism document ‘Towards 2015’ (the regional body responsible for the South West of England and their strategic plan for the future).

p0300 In addition, sports tourism developments can have negative impacts on local communities, especially the trend of building new facilities on the outskirts of towns. Sheldon and Abenoja (2001) argue that through evaluating the attitudes of residents towards tourism and involving them in developments is a vital step towards creating sustainability. Wahab and Pigram (2002) agree and comment that whilst tourism faces many challenges for both tourist and host communities, tourism must respond to changes in the global environment and in societies’ structures through acknowledging the need for sustainable development. Hovinen (2002) also argues that the potential for significant decline exists if the opportunity to promote sustainable tourism through strategic planning is missed. Agarwal (2002) believes that a ‘restructuring’ with a greater appreciation of place distinctiveness is the solution to overcoming resort decline. Smith (2004) argues that cultural regeneration has superseded the need for sustainability in seaside regeneration.

s0110 **Carrying Capacity**

p0310 The impact of tourism and mega-events should include the concept of carrying capacity. This relates to the point beyond which further levels of visitation or development would lead to unacceptable deterioration in the physical environment and of visitors’ enjoyment (Archer and Cooper; Williams and Gill both in Theobald, 1999; O’Reilly, 1986). Carrying capacity plays a pivotal role by intervening in the relationship between visitor and resources. The character of the resource, that is its natural



AUQ16 features, is equally important and the resort/area must decide its physical limits and robustness to continued tourism development (Mathieson and Wall, 1982; O'Reilly, 1986).

s0120 **Impacts on Coastlines**

p0320 In western countries and particularly in the United Kingdom, it is the fragile coastlines that have received maximum environmental damage (Mathieson and Wall, 1982; Shaw and Williams, 2000) from tourists and through the development of ports, refineries, marinas, sporting facilities and power generators. Much of the damage has been caused through inadequate planning with not enough consideration being given to complex ecostructures, whereby flora and fauna disappear due to drainage and excavation. The effects arising from sightseeing include disruption to zonations, destructions to habitats, erosion of dunes and interference with breeding habitats of wildlife (Mathieson and Wall, 1982), in addition to problems with litter, sewage disposal, fires and erosion. Other impacts include the architectural pollution of developments, for example the Costa del Sol in Spain (Pearce, 1978 in Mathieson and Wall, 1982); the overloading of infrastructure, the segregation of local residents and traffic congestion. Along some parts of the Mediterranean coastline, locals have been barred from enjoying natural facilities, as almost half the coastline has been acquired through development for the sole use of hotel guests (Archer and Cooper, 1999 in Theobald, 1999). Widner and Underwood (2004) have carried out research on the patterns of boating traffic in Sydney harbour before, during and after the 2000 Olympic Games to measure the environmental impacts (Widner and Underwood, 2004).

s0130 **Tourism Planning and Urban Regeneration**

p0330 Mega-events have become increasingly popular as tourist attractions, contributing to the opportunity for urban regeneration, for example in Manchester and Cardiff (Law, 1993). Law (1993, p. 93) focuses on the potential of sport and leisure to promote tourism and especially in regenerating city centres and inner areas. He writes '*sport and tourism may also increase civic pride, community spirit and collective self image*' and he continues, '*The role of sport and tourism in urban regeneration in Britain has only recently begun to be considered*'. Gunn (1994) believes that for successful tourism planning there needs to be three levels: continuous national tourism planning, regional strategic planning and local tourism planning. He believes that all three levels need to be integrated and a strategic vision adopted advocating an orderly and structured planning process, combining objectives' determination with research and synthesis. A feasibility study looks at the viability of accomplishing the event, identifying possible sources of income. It also gathers information regarding the community and special interest groups, and if used effectively, helps to develop good relations within the community and overcome any objections to the event taking place (Farmer et al. in Turco et al., 2002). Similarly Getz (1997) writes that whilst a feasibility study will assess the affordability and profitability of an event, it should also be used to evaluate the desirability and suitability. He believes that any event being staged should play a role in the destination's tourism plan and that sound planning should accompany the pursuit of events rather than the irrationality that is often seen. Table 2.1 shows strategies aimed at communities and destinations contemplating a bid for a mega-event or in the process of planning an event.

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Table 2.1: Strategies for optimising the tourism impacts of mega-events.

Plan for the long term	Specifically plan for pre- and post-event impacts as well as the event itself. Have a clear vision for the future and focus on the intended legacies of the event. Clear guidelines and responsibilities of organisers and reporting channels, by planning the organisational and marketing evolution necessary to ensure long-term benefits for all.
Optimise facility development and use of existing facilities	The development of new facilities represents one of the largest costs and entails great risks of oversupply with limited use after the event. The use of cruise ships to supply temporary accommodation where feasible is a popular option as is turning accommodation facilities into low cost affordable housing or university accommodation as seen in Atlanta (Toohey and Veal, 2000).
Plan for sustained awareness and image-making efforts	Combat negative publicity, as seen in the British Press and their criticisms of the London 2012 bid (Woodridge, I. (2004). <i>Daily Mail</i> , May 22nd). Involve the press from the planning and feasibility stages right through to the after event summaries and looking to the future. Smith (1989, in Getz, 1991, p.253) notes, 'it is the media, backed by word-of-mouth which generates and controls the hype'. Getz (1991) also writes that although travel and sports writers have their own specialised readership, it is news reporters who have the largest audiences and therefore the biggest influence. In return the television distribution rights for the coverage of the Olympics will cost US \$800 million for the 2006 winter games and US \$1700 million for the 2008 summer games (Persson, 2002).
Tourist facilitation	Making the stay of the visitors as comfortable as possible. The ease of purchasing tickets must be considered on a global scale with the utmost precision to combat 'black market' tickets being sold at inflated prices. Similarly, the ease of entry for all nationals across international borders must be considered and the provision of information in as many languages as possible. The host population must be willing and helpful to all visitors.
Target marketing	The possibility of attracting higher yield, quality visitors must be considered as opposed to the mass market, large volumes. Residents however, should not be excluded.
Combat displacement effects	In order to avoid visitors staying away through fear of overcrowding, price inflations, crime and terrorism, a concentrated programme of information and an image-making campaign must be initiated as soon as possible. Residents must be persuaded that the event is so unique that they should forego their other trips.
Dispersal of benefits	If possible spread the events over a large area to avoid congestion. However, depending on the event it may be more prudent to concentrate facilities to reduce costs and to make it a more pleasant experience for the visitor.
Maximising tourism benefits	Encourage visitors to stay longer by organising pre-and post-event celebrations. Use high-quality souvenirs to encourage visitors to buy more items and use local suppliers to increase the multiplier effect. Include in the event planning entertainment opportunities, yet do not over-supply permanent facilities.

Source: Andersson et al. (1999).

s0140 **Community Participation in Tourism Planning**

p0340 Tourism is of considerable economic significance for the borough through job opportunities, accommodation, catering and leisure, tourism expenditure including retail and transport sectors (www.weymouth.gov.uk). The awarding of the heritage site status to the Jurassic Coastline in 2002 upon which Weymouth is situated has positioned the area on the international tourist destination map and should be a huge opportunity to develop the area as a key tourism and education destination. Haywood (1988) believes all tourism planning should involve a 'broader, more participatory approach' involving the local community with local governments in particular, recognising the importance of consulting the local citizens affected by tourism through public consultation. Local residents become part of the tourist product and whilst benefits are often perceived only in economic terms, there are other opportunities:

- u0010 • Opportunity to improve management of the tourism life cycle.
- u0020 • Clear understanding of those community elements that impact upon the tourism.
- u0030 • Better anticipation of the internal and external challenges to tourism.
- u0040 • Chance to overcome or lessen negative impacts.
- u0050 • Opportunity to include everyone involved in the tourism product.

p0400 At present the community in Weymouth and Portland is marginally involved in a two-way exchange of information and ideas through the Citizen's Panel and other forms of consultation available through open meeting formats. The business community is felt by some residents to have a more influential voice within the Weymouth and Portland area. In 2004 when the research discussed in this chapter was carried out, none of the respondents was aware of the Community Plan 'Our Community, Our Future', which was at the time a new initiative for Weymouth. Some residents felt that the council places the wishes and needs of the tourists above those of the local residents. The Portland residents do not seem to enjoy being classified alongside Weymouth, which they regard as a 'bucket and spade' tourist destination. They believe the potential sailing event to be Portland based and seem to resent the press implications that it is Weymouth that is to host the events. Weymouth residents on the other hand recognise that new sailing facilities are being built at Osprey Quay, but would welcome the opportunity to play host to the event in 2012. The publication of 'Your Place, Our Future', the development of the Weymouth and Portland Community Plan 2007–2016, has been produced by the Weymouth and Portland Partnership with 'Themes of Action' identified to improve the quality of life for those who live in the boroughs being, health and well being, environment, housing, safer, stronger communities, learning culture and the arts and business success (Weymouth and Portland Partnership, 2007). At this stage the whole process is in the consultative stage with on-going community involvement, a clear improvement on past consultation. In addition, The Local Government Framework published in 2004, sets out the portfolio of documentation defining the proposed planning strategy for Weymouth and Portland Borough.

AUQ18

s0150 **Weymouth's Place Distinctiveness**

p0410 Local distinctiveness as identified in a 2003 report from the English Tourist Board and Tourism Management Institute includes the natural features, man-made features and heritage, culture and traditions of the area including events, festivals, history and arts. All of the above constitute a powerful tourism marketing tool by differentiating the resort from the competitors, affording product

development opportunities, awareness of the ecosystem and providing themes for promotional campaigns. However, the important fact here is to decide on the destination positioning it itself in relation to its marketing and in the use of imagery (Day, Skidmore and Koller, 2001). In 2005, the marketing and communications department of Weymouth and Portland Borough Council produced a range of publicity material catering across a whole spectrum of visitors from retired couple to singles, families to young persons, teenagers to young professional, therefore trying to cater to everyone.

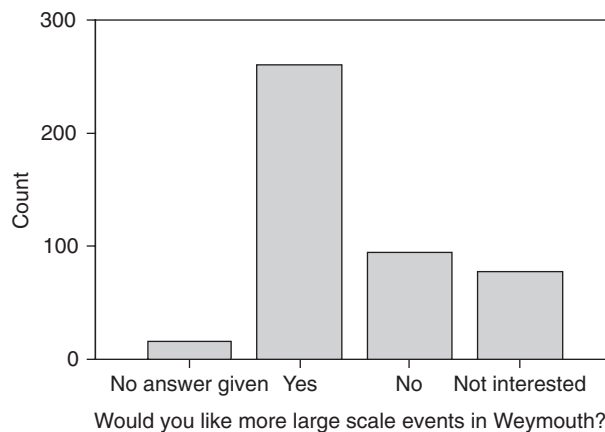
s0160 **Weymouth Population Research Results**

p0420 Research was carried out via a questionnaire distributed to 1000 members of the Citizen’s Panel with the full cooperation of the Council. A response rate of 43% was recorded within the initial timeframes and 63% when the deadline was extended. The data was analysed using SPSS(v11) and some of the key findings in relation to the questions asked were the following.

s0170 **What Types of Events Do You Wish to See?**

- u0060 ● Beach concerts
- p0430 ● Tall ships
- u0070 ● Conferences
- u0080 ● Water sport events
- u0090 ● Open air and classical music events
- u0100 ● More use of the pavilion
- u0110 ● Wet weather entertainment facilities
- u0120

p0510 By cross tabulating the response to more events with a break down of age groups, the results show that all age groups are open to all types of events, not just the young and middle aged. Interestingly, 65.4% of the 55+ age group welcomed more events (Figure 2.4).



f0040 **Figure 2.4: Public interest in large-scale events in the Weymouth and Portland areas.**

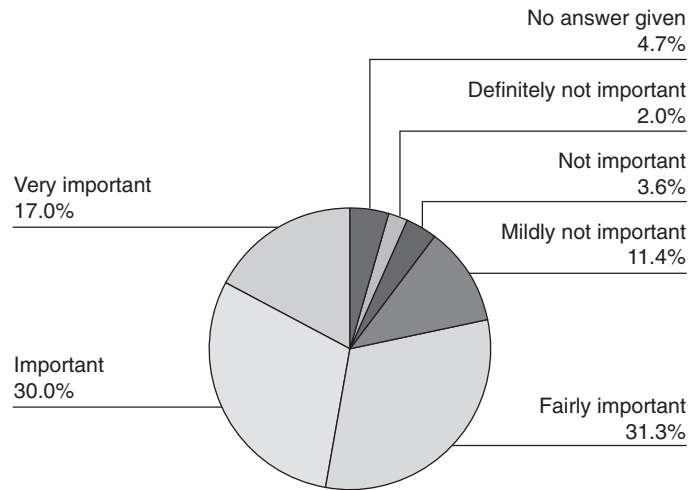
s0180 **How Important Are Festivals and Events to the Area?**

p0520 The importance of festivals and events is described in Figure 2.5.

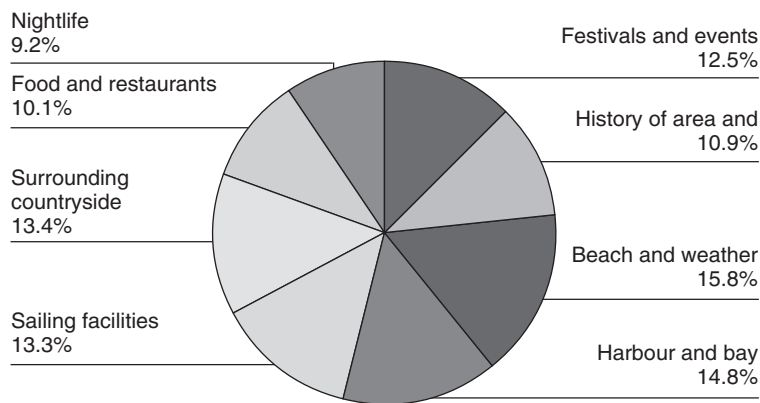
AUQ19

s0190 **Reasons Why Visitors Come to Weymouth**

p0540 The most popular reason is the beach and weather with 95.1% of respondents rating it at least important (3) and above (maximum 6). The harbour and bay was next with 90.6%, surrounding countryside was third followed by sailing facilities in fourth place. Festivals and events were considered at least important to 78.3% of respondents (Figure 2.6).



f0050 Figure 2.5: Importance of festivals and events.



f0060 Figure 2.6: Reasons why visitors come to Weymouth.

AUQ38



s0200 **What Would You Like to Change About Weymouth?**

p0550 This open ended question was posed to all members of the panel and below is a selection of responses:

- u0130 ● Weymouth sets its sights too low; a beautiful bay filled with popcorn sellers, an empty bandstand, Georgian buildings carved up or neglected, yesterdays' 'entertainers' in the pavilion, no special attractions for children apart from Punch & Judy show, no attempt to appeal to any but the lowest common denominator mass market. A refusal to feature Portland and capitalise on its 'difference'.
- u0140 ● *If we want tourists we much provide facilities for them as well as amusement, for example sensible road systems and open toilets.*
- u0150 ● We have no 4 star accommodation for competitors or top brass. Local societies are against any structural or environmental improvements to the town. A typical example of local planning is the underpass on the seafront.
- u0160 ● *We need to learn from the success of the 'Tall Ships', both locals and tourists enjoyed the event. Roads being shut with park and ride gave a real happy atmosphere. The festival events on the beach were excellent too.*
- u0170 ● If Weymouth had a real plan it could transform the town. I believe it could become a serious option for people to consider as a holiday first choice. It has to fix its appearance.
- u0180 ● *The infrastructure of the town really needs sorting out before any major sailing events come to town. The present situation will give the town a bad name.*
- u0190 ● I think the Tourism Department have done well over the past 5/10 years to develop new ideas, but to be successful as a resort more events and more out of season facilities are needed.
- u0200 ● *We have some of the best waters around for water sports and yet the powers that we just look for sailing, why not power boat racing as we had back in the 1990s and ski racing.*
- u0210 ● Weymouth in summer is tacky; I would like to see a classier image. More needs to be done to attract 'high class' visitors to Weymouth. The majority at the moment are 'inner city' grockels on beach holidays and hen/stag nights that just want to get drunk. The town needs more culture, music and theatre.
- u0220 ● *Water sports are all year events that should be encouraged, whilst keeping a high level of summer trade.*

s0210 **Weymouth's Future Direction**

p0660 Residents have expressed a wish to see the town move 'up market'. All the interview respondents from 2004 believe Weymouth to have great potential, yet the council must act quickly to encourage developments to help rejuvenate the town. The economic consequences for the town alone will justify rejuvenation. The development 'boutique' style accommodation, an innovation in accommodation standards, where the rooms are of 4 star quality but there are no restaurant or bar facilities, could encourage fewer, higher spending clientele, who in turn could encourage more upmarket restaurants and shops to the area. However, the majority of residents were keen to see more events held in the area and especially to use the natural facilities of the bay and harbour. Only two questionnaire responses and one interviewee mentioned the World Heritage Site of the Jurassic Coastline yet, the WPSA have placed great emphasis on this site's proximity to the sailing centre and used its potential

AUQ20

backdrop as one reason for holding the Olympic Sailing in the area. The residents do not feel that the impacts of hosting events in the area will place any greater infrastructure pressures than already seen in the town and the construction of the relief road will mitigate the congestion. The majority of residents welcome the positive opportunities, although many look forward to daytime events for families in preference to evening events.

p0670 In conclusion Weymouth could adopt the following strategies:

- u0230 ● Have a clear vision of the future and focus on the intended legacies of the Olympics event, through using events in the pre- and post-games periods as well as the Games itself.
- u0240 ● Use the media, whether local journalists, sports writer or TV producers to generate interest in the area and its outstanding natural features through publicity for proposed events and festivals celebrating the local cultural and landscape.
- u0250 ● Engage the local population as hosts during the Games by involving them early on through events specifically aimed at celebrating Weymouth and Portland's role in the 2012 Olympic Games.
- u0260 ● Encourage visitors to stay longer and explore more of the area through the strategic planning of the portfolio of events and festivals.

p0720 This chapter has explained the position within which Weymouth and Portland, Dorset, United Kingdom currently find themselves as host to the sailing competition of the 2012 Olympic Games. It highlights the fact that the area needs regeneration and rejuvenation and how the use of an events portfolio could play a major role within this strategy. The research carried out, a small section of which was used to highlight some of the suggestions, will be an on-going project as the Games approach and it will be interesting to see how successful any event initiative become.

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