

market  
town  
welcome

## Market Town Welcome

### Destination Plan for Stanhope

30 March 2009



*“Stanhope: the green and tranquil market town at the heart of the Durham Dales and hub for outdoor activities”*

**Report to County Durham Tourism Partnership and Wear Valley District Council**

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# 1. Introduction

This Destination Plan for Stanhope sets out agreed common priorities for developing and promoting Stanhope as a destination market town within Weardale, the Durham Dales and County Durham. It is designed to be a working document that can be added to as the town and its partners identify new opportunities for development and is intended to steer a way forward over the next 5-10 years.

The purpose of the plan is to:

- Develop the tourism potential of Stanhope and strengthen its identity for visitors
- Provide a framework and rationale for investment and development planning in the tourism sector within the town
- Identify priority actions
- Clarify how partners and agencies can work together to deliver the destination plan

## 1.1 Background and rationale

### Objectives of Market Town Welcome

The Market Town Welcome Programme involves developing destination plans for four market towns in County Durham in the period Jan-March 2009. The Programme aims to complement other local and regional regeneration strategies and initiatives and to take a tourism perspective to each of the market towns – viewing them through a visitor’s eyes as a destination. The four towns are: Barnard Castle, Bishop Auckland, Seaham and Stanhope.

The Objectives of the Programme are:

- Developing the tourism potential of each town
- Inputting to investment/development planning
- Harnessing private sector potential
- Using the destination plan to support funding bids
- Encouraging collaboration and cross fertilisation of ideas
- Strengthening the identity of each town for visitors
- Boosting the visitor economy in each town

### Background to Market Town Welcome

Market Town Welcome originated in 2008 when One North East commissioned Miller Research and Alison Caffyn to develop a methodology to generate destination plans, initially for six market towns in Northumberland: Berwick, Alnwick, Seahouses, Wooler, Haltwhistle and Amble. Since then Guisborough, Cleveland; Hexham and Morpeth, Northumberland; and now the four County Durham towns have been going through the same process.

The Market Town Welcome process was developed to incorporate the principles of the ‘VICE model’ for local destination management. This model was developed by the national tourism agencies and Tourism Management Institute to encourage the sustainable development of tourism. It aims to ensure positive outcomes for Visitors, the tourism Industry, local Communities and the built and natural Environment. So the destination plans aim to develop tourism which:

- Welcomes, involves and satisfies **Visitors**
- Achieves a prosperous and profitable **Industry**

- Engages and benefits host Communities
- Protects and enhances the local Environment

### **Why welcome visitors?**

The visitor economy is particularly significant in rural areas where there are few alternatives and traditional industries such as agriculture or mining have declined. Tourism has increasingly been seen as a vital element in the regeneration of an area. Not only does the visitor economy support businesses, jobs and the suppliers to those businesses, but visitors' spending also helps support local heritage, culture (eg festivals and events) and community services (buses, shops, pubs, post offices). Tourism is also a reason to conserve special buildings, historic buildings, beautiful landscapes and important wildlife sites.

Figures for County Durham in 2007 reveal that there were:

- 16.5 million day visitors spending nearly £350 million
- 1.5 million staying visitors staying 4.5 million nights and spending £307 million
- Total revenue generated £656 million
- Supporting 10,390 jobs directly in the visitor economy and another 2,700 jobs in other sectors indirectly

### **1.2 Strategic context - regional, county and town**

The strategic context for this work is the Regional Economic Strategy which aims to foster the renaissance of key rural settlements as drivers of regional growth. The North East England Tourism Strategy (2005-10) identifies regional objectives including increasing the number of UK and overseas visitors year round and increasing visitor spend. The strategy aims to deliver increased employment, productivity and investment in tourism whilst increasing visitor satisfaction and conserving the region's natural, heritage and cultural assets. It identifies market towns as key elements in the attraction of the North East for visitors and proposes that towns should develop plans to make improvements in facilities to meet the needs of increased visitors. It highlights the potential for making more of regional food, improved shopping and public art as well as basics such as visitor information and signing. Studies have also been recently completed into developing cruise tourism along the North East coastline and into the potential for making more of events and festivals.

Other key documents are studies on maximising the potential of heritage tourism in the North East, led by ONE, English Heritage and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council and the Framework for North East England's Coastal Visitor Economy produced in 2006.

At a County level the key document is the County Durham Area Tourism Management Plan (ATMaP). It identifies priorities for a successful visitor economy in County Durham as:

- Business Performance
- Information Services
- Marketing
- Product Development
- Visitor Experience
- Workforce Development

The development and implementation of Market Town Destination Plans is listed as a priority within the ATMaP, with CDTP's role being to take a strategic overview and ensure connectivity between the plans.

A range of work has been undertaken locally in Stanhope over the last few years. This includes:

- **Market Towns Health Check Stanhope 2002**

An initial health-check with a community and social focus carried out under the Market Towns Programme funded through the Countryside Commission.

- **Market Towns Review**

A study by JSA Regeneration, esra solutions, and Durham University Business School for One North East when they took on responsibility for Market Towns programme looking at the economic potential of each town in line with the new economic focus required by One North East.

- **Baseline Information for Major Centres Study: Stanhope Summary Report**

A study by EKOS for County Durham Economic Partnership.

- **Stanhope Retail Distinctiveness**

A study by Miller Research, May 2007, for County Durham Economic Partnership to help in the development of a capital programme for submission under the Single Programme to meet economic outcome requirements. The study had a dual focus – both the town as a visitor attraction, and as a rural service centre for local people within the upper Dale. This destination plan cross references the actions listed in the action plan section 6 with the relevant projects in the Retail Distinctiveness plan.

- **Stanhope Whole Town Vision**

A further study by Miller Research for Stanhope Market Town Steering Group, Wear Valley District Council and One North East. This aimed to set the purely economic focus of the Retail Distinctiveness action plan within a wider social, community and cultural context. This Destination Plan drew on the whole town vision in understanding the town's strengths, weaknesses and overall vision. However this current document has a visitor perspective and thus the vision and actions have a different, if hopefully complementary, focus.

- **Durham Dales Brand Research**

Recent focus group research into perceptions of the Durham Dales, Weardale and Teesdale led by Tourism UK. The Durham Dales brand generates some consumer interest and there is a reasonable match between people's expected rational benefits and the reality when they visit the area. The emotional benefits identified associated with the Durham Dales brand are – social, friendly, genuine, historic, relaxing and to a lesser extent refreshing and invigorating. These have been borne in mind in the thinking behind the whole plan – its target markets and vision.

- **Transport and Access Study**

Traffic and parking issues are key to any future development of the town, both for residents and increased visitor numbers. Integrated Transport Planning Ltd were commissioned by Wear Valley District Council March 2009 to investigate these issues in more detail and feed as appropriate into the destination plan.

The destination plan's focus is on Stanhope the town, not the wider Weardale or Durham Dales area although there are obviously many linkages to make throughout.

### **1.3 Process and partnership**

Each town in County Durham followed the Market Town Welcome template or process which has been developed to be as inclusive as possible, working with a local leadership group in each town which includes tourism businesses, local groups and organisations as well as the local authorities and County Durham Tourism Partnership. The template (see Annex 7.1 for the full model) works through the following stages, which also help structure this destination plan:

1. Understanding the rationale - why welcome visitors, what are the benefits for a town?
2. Identifying current and future visitors to the town
3. Identifying what the town can offer visitors
4. Considering how well the town meets the needs of its visitors now and in the future
5. Understanding how tourism is resourced, promoted and managed in the town
6. Understanding the town's strengths and weaknesses
7. Creating a vision of where the town wants to be in 5 – 10 years from a visitor perspective
8. Identifying priorities and actions in order to achieve that vision

Each town also undertook:

- An audit of the tourism resources in and around the town
- A survey of local tourism related businesses
- A review of other relevant research including the 2004 market town visitor survey, visitor segmentation studies undertaken for One North East and County Durham Tourism Partnership in 2007 and the recent 2008 County Durham Visitor Survey.
- A review of all local strategies and plans which the Destination Plan needs to link into and complement (outlined under 1.2 above).
- In Stanhope a group of students from New College, Durham also undertook a mystery shopper exercise in early 2009.

A workshop was held in early March 2009 attended by a wide range of local businesses and partners involved in tourism. The attendees discussed the key elements of this plan, the vision for Stanhope as a destination and identified most of the action points.

## 2. Vision and objectives

### 2.1 Vision statement for Stanhope

By 2020 Stanhope will be well known as an unspoilt, traditional market town; a friendly hub at the heart of the tranquil Durham Dales. People will come to recharge their batteries with healthy fresh air and exhilarating outdoor activities. The rare upland wildlife will attract many, as will the many quality businesses which pride themselves on their green credentials. Visitors will be able to explore Durham's rural stories: the rocks which make up the beautiful landscape; the agriculture and local produce; and the deer-parks where the Prince Bishops hunted.

This could convert to a possible strapline as "Stanhope: the green and tranquil market town at the heart of the Durham Dales and hub for outdoor activities".

### 2.2 Overall objectives of the destination plan

The objectives of this destination plan are:

1. To strengthen Stanhope's identity and profile as an attractive town to explore, encouraging visitors to stop to soak up the peace and tranquillity, unwind and enjoy the town's authenticity and take part in outdoor activities in the surrounding countryside.
2. To build on the role of the Durham Dales Visitor Centre as a key orientation hub for the wider area; signposting visitors to the local heritage, culture, walks, activities, accommodation and events.
3. To build up a reputation as a sustainable destination with many green businesses, outdoor activities – especially walking and cycling - and environmental interests.
4. To encourage existing businesses to invest in their properties and services and to encourage new business investment, particularly small scale sustainable accommodation and the provision of evening meals.
5. To capitalise on the investment in the Weardale Railway to increase visitor numbers, encourage longer stays in the town and explore the potential for non car based visits.
6. To invest in environmental and infrastructural improvements to enhance the town's streetscape and better manage traffic and parking.
7. To further promote and enable visitors to enjoy the agricultural, industrial and natural heritage of the local area.
8. To develop a sustainable, year round visitor economy offering excellent service, locally sourced food and drink and value for money; generating repeat visits.
9. To encourage more visitors to use the town as a base to explore the surrounding Durham Dales landscape.
10. To encourage and support collaboration between local organisations and businesses to enable joint delivery of the destination plan actions.



### 3. Visitors to Stanhope

The visitor is central to the Market Town Welcome approach and the development of destination plans. It is important to consider the town from the visitor's perspective not that of a local person.

Key questions to consider include:

- What types of people visit our town currently?
- Where from and for how long?
- Why? – what motivates them?
- What do they like and not like about our town?
- What will visitors be looking for in the future, are trends changing?
- Which visitors should we focus on attracting and catering for?
- How can we meet or exceed their expectations?

#### 3.1 Survey results

Recent visitor surveys can help answer these questions. The overall profile of visitors to County Durham from the 2007 North East visitor segmentation survey is as follows:

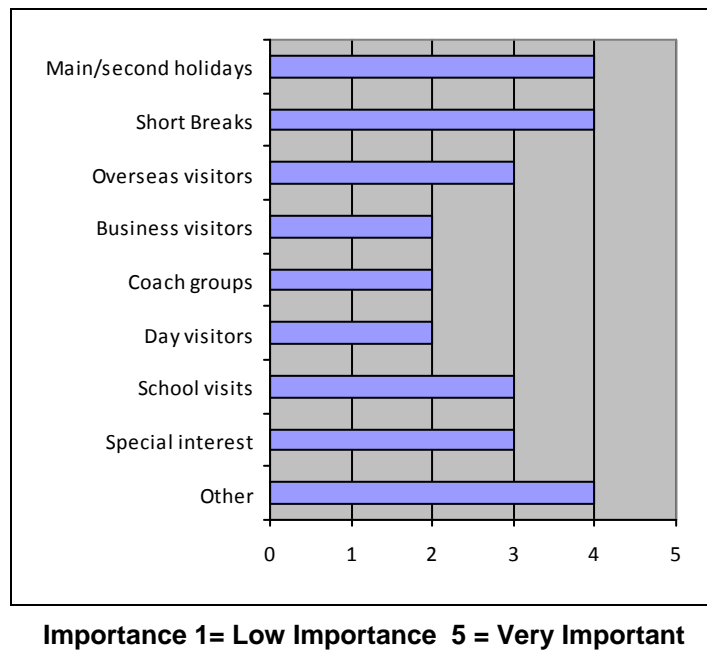
- Slightly higher proportion of holiday makers than people driven by events/ activities
- Oldest holiday makers of the 4 sub-regions - 30% over 55
- From NW and Yorkshire origins
- Mainly couples
- Staying 3 nights or less (shorter than average)
- Hotels are most popular - plus an even split of guest house/ self catering/ camping/ caravanning which combined account for just under half of accommodation used

The last visitor survey undertaken in Stanhope was in 2004, benchmarking the town's visitors against other market towns. Key findings included:

- 61% of visitors were on a day trip, 23% were staying elsewhere and 16% were staying locally
- Most visitors were couples, but 25% of groups included children
- The most common age group was over 65 and the most common socio-economic group was C1
- Stanhope has high levels of repeat visitors – only 17% were first time visitors
- 82% of visitors were from the NE region, with none from overseas.
- 95% of visitors were visiting Stanhope for holiday or leisure – 73% said their main or secondary motivation was sightseeing
- 38% of visitors staying locally used static caravans (either owned or rented) – these made up a high proportion of the repeat visitors
- The average length of stay for a day visit was relatively short at just under 2 hours
- 88% of visitors travelled by car

The business survey undertaken for Market Town Welcome (2009) also produced some useful results on current visitors:

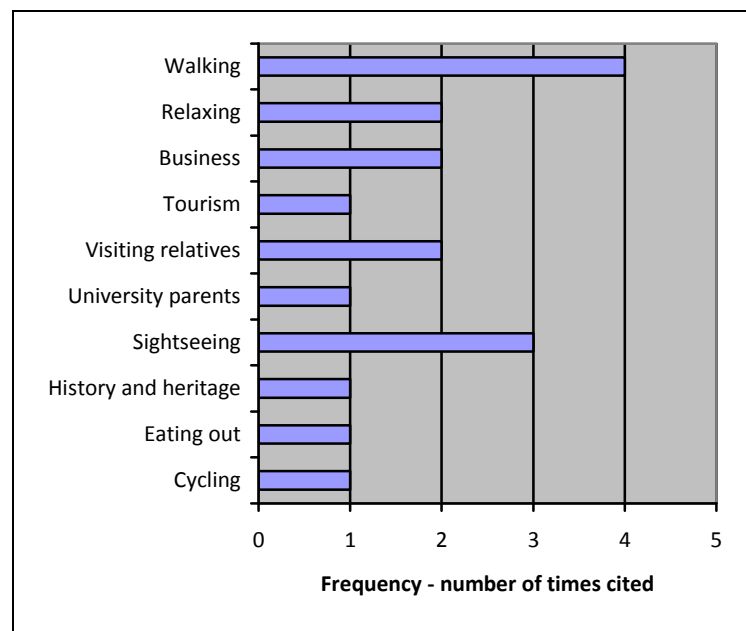
**Fig 1: Types of visitor**



Many of the businesses responding were accommodation which explains the lower importance of day visitors to them.

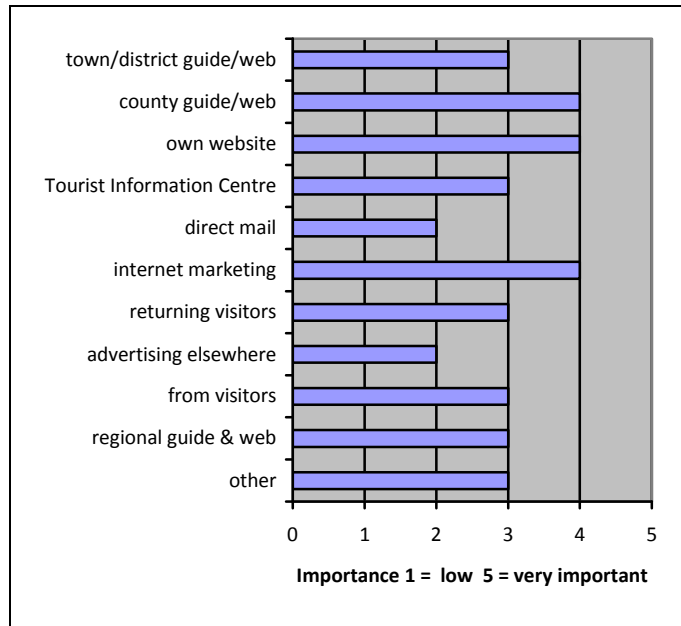
Businesses were asked what activities their visitors undertook.

**Fig. 2: Activities undertaken**



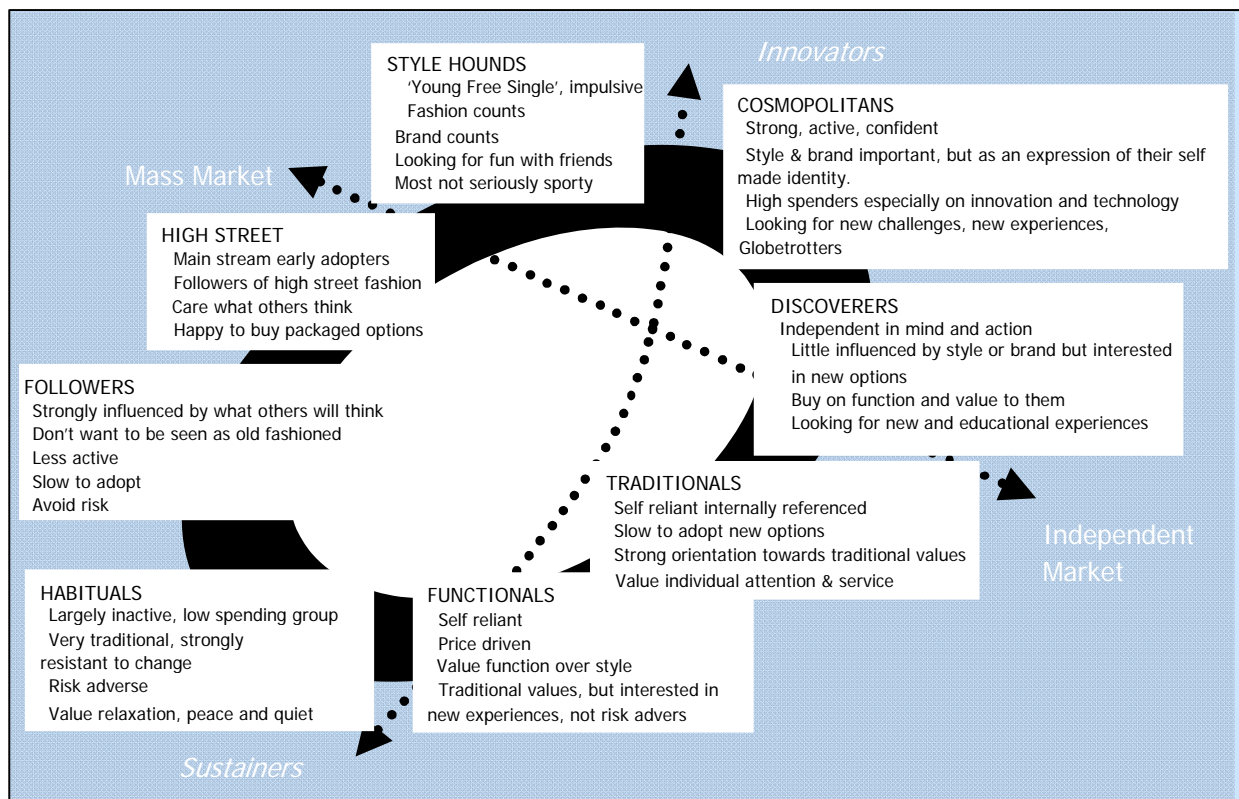
The graph below summarises the respondents' views on which methods were significant in attracting visitors and customers.

**Fig. 3 Promotion and marketing methods**



### 3.2 Current visitor profiles and segmentation

Tourism bodies across the region and much of the UK are using the ArkLeisure visitor segmentation model to help understand who current and potential visitors are and to assist in making decisions about which types of visitor to focus upon. The model divides the UK population up into eight segments based on people’s values and outlook on life.



The model can help predict people’s aspirations and how they spend their discretionary time and money. Those people at the top of the model are more likely to be influenced by innovation, fashion

and change. Those on the left hand side are more influenced by media, friends and peer groups, those on the right hand side are more independently minded and self-referenced.

Detailed research in County Durham during 2007/8 revealed that the four segments which currently visit the county are:

**Functionals** (40% of County Durham's visitors currently)

- Lower spending & thrifty value for money seekers. Like heritage, nostalgia, culture, gardening, rural holidays, enjoy attractions, self catering, traditional values.

**Traditionals** (12%)

- Mainstream, with traditional tastes. Enjoy attractions, scenery, heritage, culture, gardens, peace, Dining and service is important. Older on average. Likely to return for repeat visits.

**Discoverers** (12%)

- Independent. Like exploring and investigating new things and places, history and culture, educational or fun things to do, relaxation, good service, wide interests, not bothered about fashion/style. Look for value for money but also drawn to luxury breaks

**Cosmopolitans** (16%)

- Individual, active, confident, adventurous. Like city breaks, events, outdoor activities, heritage, culture, nature, new experiences, good food and service and challenges. High spenders take lots of trips. Younger on average.

Stanhope is currently attracting visitors in the Functional and Traditional groups who will enjoy the town but find the lack of accommodation and places to eat frustrating. Functionals are an important group as they make up many of the current visitors to Stanhope, however they are one of the lower spending groups.

### **3.3 Visitor of the Future**

The challenge for any destination is to keep Functionals coming but also find ways to encourage them to spend more money or stay longer to generate more benefits for the local economy. So having quality but good value food and drink options and perhaps offering special deals will appeal to this group.

In terms of new tourism product development and marketing however it is likely to be more beneficial to focus on Traditionals and potentially Discoverers in the longer term. Traditionals love market towns, they will spend if there's good value for money and quality and they are quite loyal – returning to favourite locations. There is scope for Stanhope to boost the number of visitors from this group. Discoverers can be more demanding, like some occasional luxury and love exploring new areas. They will respond to new and educational experiences. In fact as more outdoor activities become available in the local area Stanhope could also appeal to Cosmopolitans who are the most active group- however they have high expectations of accommodation, food and facilities and tend not to return – always seeking new places.

This destination plan recommends a **strategy of targeting Traditional and Discoverer visitors** over the next five-ten years – improving quality, creating interesting cultural and heritage offers, packaging walking opportunities, promoting nature and learning experiences and using marketing messages that will appeal to these groups.

Day visitors are also important and may fall into any of the segments. They will obviously usually be from County Durham or neighbouring counties. Stanhope will continue to have quite a strong appeal for two specific types – **family groups** (including grandparent/grandchildren groups) and **outdoor**

**activity enthusiasts** accessing the Durham Dales – particularly **walkers and cyclists**. These groups can also be added to Stanhope's target markets.

Stanhope is a little further from Durham City than some of the county's market towns. However given that that 23% of visitors to the North East of England visit Durham City it will be worthwhile identifying ways of targeting those visitors. This could be through heritage connections or events – seeing the rural counterparts to the city's stories. It could also promote itself as a complimentary rural location relatively close to the city – where visitors can escape to peace and tranquillity, stretch their legs with a good walk or get a buzz from outdoor activities.

## 4. The Tourism Offer

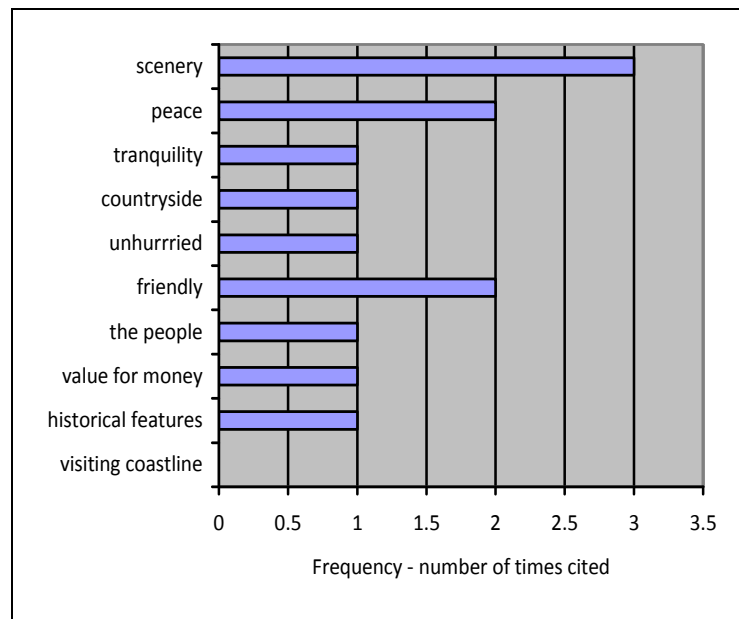
### 4.1 What does our town offer visitors?

The 2004 Visitor Survey contained some positive feedback from the visitors questioned:

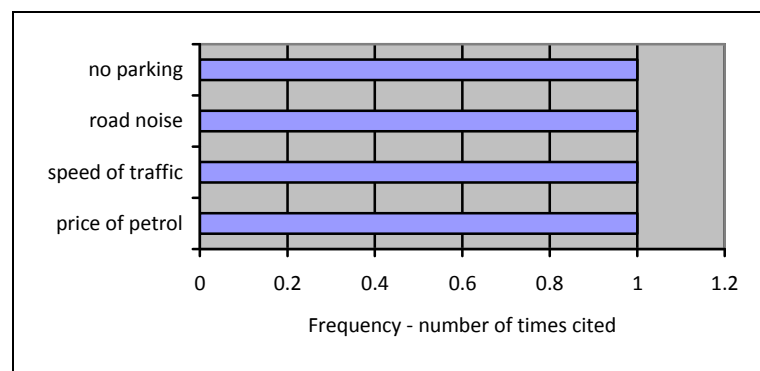
- Stanhope scored above average for all aspects including atmosphere, tourist information centre, signage, shops, toilets and market.
- The most popular features of Stanhope were its countryside location and the peaceful, quiet and relaxing atmosphere, plus the Dales Centre, shopping, friendly local people and local walks.
- Few complaints were made but there were some about the lack of eating places and poor parking

The recent business survey also asked respondents for the things their visitors liked and disliked about Stanhope

**Fig. 4: What visitors like about Stanhope**



**Fig 5: What visitors dislike about Stanhope**



Encouragingly the positives outweigh the negatives by some way, with only a few complaints cited.

## Stanhope's USPs

Stanhope's Unique Selling Points were identified as part of Market Town Welcome. These are:

- The Durham Dales Centre
- Weardale Railway
- The Fossil Tree
- Stepping Stones and the river Wear
- Geographically at the heart of the Durham Dales
- The Prince Bishop's hunting grounds
- The special geology of the area
- The outdoor swimming pool (although this has faced problems over financial viability)
- Arts, crafts reputation e.g. rug shop and craft outlets

The Durham Dales brand research identified the emotional benefits associated with the Durham Dales as – social, friendly, genuine, historic, relaxing and to a lesser extent refreshing and invigorating. These provide the backdrop to the more specific attractions of the town itself.

The **Town Tourism Audit** undertaken as part of Market Town Welcome identified many of the same points. The audit acts as an objective and thorough assessment of the town's strengths and weaknesses from a visitor perspective. It helps identify gaps in the offer, issues and opportunities. The full version of the audit is in Annex 7.3. Some of the main gaps and issues identified include:

- There is no inspected serviced accommodation in Stanhope – only one on the outskirts of the town. Most are further afield in Weardale.
- The lack of touring caravan and camp sites and of accessible accommodation
- There are no restaurants: the only food available after 6pm is from takeaways.
- There are a wide range of activities available including the open air swimming pool and even skiing when there's snow. A possible gap is local riding provision in such a rural area.
- There are few musical or arts related events – most are agricultural or outdoor activities etc.
- There are 130 parking spaces in the town and capacity is often reached on busy days.
- There is no official designated coach drop off point or coach parking
- There are hourly buses up and down Weardale but few buses in other directions
- The nearest mainline railway station is at Durham but this will be improved when the Weardale Railway is connected to the mainline later this year with connections to Bishop Auckland and Darlington.
- The TIC is a very valuable facility – the staff there feel there is a lack of walking information and the quality of the information is variable. They also lack information about the River Wear for children and feel there are few picnic areas to direct people to.
- Public toilets could be improved and kept open for longer hours.
- There are no interpretation boards in the town centre.
- The town welcome signs are standard and not very attractive, there are some brown and white signs, but some need replacing and there are still some gaps.

The audit was used to develop the SWOT in the next section, supplemented with previous assessments of the town from the surveys, the Retail Distinctiveness and Whole Town Vision studies and from direct observation.

## 4.2 SWOT Analysis

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<p>Surrounded by beautiful countryside (AONB)            At the heart of the Durham Dales            Quiet, peaceful and relaxing            The Durham Dales Centre – TIC, shops, café, displays            Weardale railway            A wide range of walking opportunities and routes            Good cycle routes and cycle hire            Attractive riverside and stepping stones            Swimming Pool            Fossil Tree and church            Attractive buildings            Distinctive independent shops inc art/craft outlets            Focal point for Weardale and main transport corridor (bus connections)            Good touring base            Mining and quarrying heritage –geology and minerals trail            Friendly welcome and customer care            Farmers market monthly            Festivals – Northern Rocks, Agricultural shows            Free parking            Brown and white signs            Active Retailers Group            Weardale Visitor Network            Stanhope Silver Band            Lots of nearby businesses in Green Tourism Business Scheme</p>	<p>Few eating places – especially evenings (only take-away)            Limited range of shops            Lack of visitor accommodation in town            Lack of touring caravan and camping sites            Lack of accessible accommodation            Car park capacity at busy times            Weak sense of arrival (esp. from south/east)            Limited offer during winter months            No designated coach parking            No access to Castle and park</p>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<p>Additional interpretation about town heritage            Promotion of local food and drink, provision of evening meals            Developing and promoting arts and crafts further            Extension of Weardale Railway (to Eastgate and Bishop Auckland)            Redevelopment of Eastgate site            More cultural events            Further promotion of wildlife, walking, outdoor activities, fishing            Enhance and promote riverside and better link it to the town            Better signage and information at key points            Encourage quality B&amp;B/self-catering in town            Local government re-organisation (?)            Farm diversification            Funding inc Rural Development Programme/ LEADER            Promotion of sustainable and green tourism            Develop new car park</p>	<p>Economic recession            Retail and pub closures            Increasing car park capacity problems            Competition from shops and supermarkets in larger towns            Competition from Eastgate development            Squeeze on public sector budgets</p>



### **4.3 Meeting future visitor expectations**

Linking back to the visitor segments identified in section 3 it is important to consider how the current town offer matches up to their expectations and how it will match up in five or ten years time as trends change and expectations continue to increase. In fact one of Stanhope's main appeals is that it is a traditional market town and visitors will not want to see major changes in all areas. However there are certain key areas where they will expect more.

We anticipate that Functionals, Traditionals and Discovers will be looking for more in future. This may include:

- An improved food and drink offer especially in the evening
- More car parking
- More events
- A choice of accommodation in the town
- Easy access to a range of activities
- Better signage and smarter streetscape
- Enhancements to the most attractive parts of the town (and fewer parked cars)
- More information about local heritage – more artefacts displayed

### **4.4 Eastgate Development a specific potential opportunity**

Finally, one of the major opportunities identified is the proposed Eastgate development, but it may also pose some threat of competition or disconnection if it is not well linked to Stanhope both physically and through marketing messages. The proposed Eastgate Renewable Energy Village (EREV) is a major regeneration project on the site of the old Lafarge Cement Works and quarries. The proposals have been developed over the last seven years since the site stopped operation and currently an outline planning application is being considered by the local planning authority. The plans are for an eco-friendly living, working and learning environment and visitor attraction, incorporating all five land based renewable energy sources - wind, solar, hydro, biomass and geothermal - on the one site. The visitor attraction elements include a geothermally heated hot spring spa and 60-bed hotel, a mountain biking centre with 39 km of cycling trails (including a downhill course), a dry toboggan run, cable car system, bird watching centre, rare breeds farm and a visitor centre with interpretation about the AONB and Durham Dales. In addition it is hoped that the Weardale Railway line from Stanhope could be re-opened to a new end-of-line station at Eastgate.

The themes of sustainability and outdoor activities are very complementary with the Stanhope offer already. The opportunities to link up with the railway, walks and cycle rides could be very valuable. However there is a need to ensure people don't just drive through Stanhope on their way to Eastgate. The EREV will raise the profile of Stanhope and widen its audience however some aspects could be duplicated or competitive such as interpretation and cycle hire and the role of the Durham Dales Centre may be affected. This will need careful liaison and planning of the detail should the proposals go ahead either in part or as a whole.

There are examples of market towns which suddenly have major new attractions open on their outskirts or nearby. These often have a mixed reception from existing businesses. It is probably in Stanhope's best interests to take a positive attitude, work with EREV and try to ensure that the facilities developed are complementary, that major efforts are made to create physical links with Stanhope, that EREV supports Stanhope's events, that there is maximum cross promotion and joint working through joint ticketing, discounts, offers and incentives. Not all visitors to EREV will stop in Stanhope but many will and collaboration will benefit both.

## 5. Destination Management and Promotion

### 5.1 The Strategy

Section 2 outlined the plan's vision and objectives; section 3 identified which visitor markets Stanhope should focus on - Traditionals and Discoverers, plus family groups and outdoor activity enthusiasts, particularly walkers and cyclists; and section 4 has identified the town's strengths and weaknesses and opportunities to address these to better meet visitor expectations. Here we pull these elements together to identify what sort of destination Stanhope will be in ten years time, what experiences it will offer visitors and what the priorities should therefore be for management and promotion of the town and surrounding area as a destination.

In order to deliver the objectives in section 2 Stanhope needs to improve its infrastructure to make the town work better as a destination. Visitors need to find parking easily, then find their way around town, feeling safe and enjoying an attractive streetscape. In order to attract more visitors, encourage those driving through to stop and ensure people stay longer the town needs to invest in its attractions, environment, shops, food and drink and events.

There are lots of opportunities to go walking, cycling and discover about local heritage but they need to be made easy for the visitor to find out about and access – so joining things up and making it easy to buy and consume is a priority. This will include strengthening the role of the Durham Dales Centre, improvements to walking, cycling and heritage trails and their promotion and collaboration between businesses and partners.

Developing a sustainable destination will involve focusing on the green aspects of the tourism product such as walking, cycling, Weardale Railway, promoting the range of green businesses, local food and drink and more green measures.

### 5.2 The future visitor experience

The overall vision for Stanhope as a visitor destination is given in section 2.1. The points below expand that vision and give a more detailed description of what visitors will experience when they come to Stanhope in future:

- Stanhope will be the ideal place to start a visit to the Durham Dales and discover its stories – the welcoming Durham Dales Visitor Centre is not only the best source of information on the Dales and home to a bustling café serving delicious local food but is the focus for the creative arts and crafts culture of the local area. Head off on foot or bicycle to explore the town and the Durham Dales. Book into one of the comfortable local B&Bs or holiday cottages to take time to explore the wider area.
- Stanhope will build up a reputation as a sustainable destination with many green businesses, outdoor activities and environmental interests. Businesses could promote slow holidays; encouraging visitors to chill out, unwind, soak up the peace and tranquillity and enjoy authentic activities, food and drink.
- Visitors will see the rural perspective of Durham's stories – Stanhope was where the Prince Bishops hunted deer, was the source of stone for their great buildings and produced fine food for their table. From Victorian times the Weardale Railway carried the minerals and agricultural produce to the towns and cities – today it carries visitors. Stanhope still celebrates this proud heritage with its geology trails and agricultural shows. The town's finest geological exhibit sits in the market square – an intriguing fossil tree stump.

- The square, overlooked by Stanhope Castle, will host regular lively farmers markets and the famous Stanhope Silver Band. The main street retains many distinctive traditional shops and cafes of the type no longer seen in larger towns. Several friendly pubs offer a cosy retreat for a delicious meal or pint of local beer. The town and many of its businesses have strong green credentials and visitors will find pride for the special local environment and wildlife reflected everywhere.
- Visitors will be able to enjoy the tranquil river Wear with riverside walks and the popular stepping stones. Everyone will feel the need to slow down and soak up the beautiful wild scenery, enjoying sights of the rare upland wildlife such as orchids and black grouse and recharging one's batteries with healthy fresh air and outdoor activities.
- Visitors in 2019 will find an increased range of quality, inspected accommodation, from friendly B&Bs, comfortable self catering and cosy pubs, all offering excellent food, customer care and value for money.
- The Durham Dales Visitor Centre will be fulfilling an enhanced role with a refreshed offer. It will be promoting local food and drink, arts and crafts and green activity options more strongly. Its role as information hub and interpretive centre – actual and web based - will be utilised to the full.
- Visitors will be attracted not only by the Durham Dales Visitor Centre and Weardale Railway but by the pretty streetscape and the small traditional independent shops, enlivened by regular markets and entertainment such as the Silver Band.
- Visitors arriving by car will find parking well signed, will find it easy to find their way around the town and most will walk at least part of the riverside walk. They will appreciate the well-maintained public realm and stay longer as they follow interesting trails or visit the range of heritage and wildlife sites.
- Children will enjoy the railway, riverside, stepping stones and special town trail. The swimming pool and play area will offer a safe, convenient and welcoming environment for families.
- Visitors will use Stanhope as a base to explore the rest of the Durham Dales and North Pennines, taking trips to Durham and Bishop Auckland (perhaps using bus and railway) but will not need to travel too far afield to occupy an enjoyable and memorable holiday based in Stanhope.

### **5.3 Destination priorities**

The priority themes which have emerged for Stanhope are: (in no particular order)

1. Invest in attractions
2. Parking and signage
3. Environmental improvements
4. Food and drink
5. Walking and cycling
6. Information and marketing
7. Business opportunities, support and co-ordination

A number of actions have been identified under these headings which are detailed in the next section.

## 6. Action Plan

### 6.1 Introduction

This section builds on previous sections by putting the strategy into practice and developing an action plan to achieve the vision and objectives. It lists all the ideas and proposals suggested during the process or identified by the consultant, under the priority headings. The table summarises a wide range of potential actions and begins to identify which are most important and which can be delivered sooner or need to be worked on for longer. The columns begin to identify who needs to be involved and where any funding required may come from. With all the actions the crucial factor is what organisation is willing to take the lead and drive things forward. There are also actions which the private sector can lead on either collectively or within their own business, plus some investment opportunities identified.

This plan will become a working document to guide the implementation and delivery of the destination plan. It will need to be added to and amended as more information and detail becomes available. It will need to be reviewed at least annually to tick off actions completed and review the progress towards others. New actions and ideas can be added as they arise.

The tabular plan is followed by more detailed descriptions of the top priority actions.

#### Key to Action Plan

Priority/ importance	Timescale	Lead/Delivery
Very High	Quick Win 6-12 months	1. We can deliver locally
High	Short Term 1-2 years	2. We can deliver with partners
Medium	Medium Term 2-5 years	3. Business investment opportunity
Low	Long Term over 5 years	4. Needs outside lead

Priorities need to be reviewed and amended by Stanhope local group initially and updated periodically.

## 6.2 Stanhope Destination Plan – Action Plan

Actions shaded in blue are high priority and are described in more detail in section 6.3 below.

Projects with codes in brackets (P22) were highlighted in the Retail Distinctiveness Report in 2007 and some are already being actively pursued.

	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Funding</b>
<b>No.</b>		<b>VH/H/M/L</b>	<b>QW/S/M/L</b>	<b>1/2/3/4</b>		
<b>1. Invest in attractions</b>						
1.1	Weardale Railway – continued investment in extending the railway line to connect to main line, capitalise on this by attracting new audiences and ensure railway timetable allows plenty of time to explore Stanhope	VH	S-M	Weardale Railway 3+1		
1.2	Capitalise on any new developments at Eastgate – develop physical linkages, cross promotion, joint ticketing and joint working	VH	M	2+3+4		
1.3	Enhanced arts and crafts offer – live demonstrations, hands on opportunities, courses, events, promotions, trails – at Durham Dales Centre and linking to other outlets (links to R4 and M1)	H	S-M	2+3 Dales Centre and Retail Group		
1.4	Review central planting at Durham Dales Centre to make it more colourful/more seasonal impact and refresh the Dales garden – possible community project to redesign/replant and re-interpret with new signage (environmental theme?)	H	S	2		
1.5	Review and enhance signage for Durham Dales Centre to make offer more visible	H	S	1		
1.6	Enhance external appearance of Swimming Pool – signage, landscaping, maintenance	H	QW	1		
1.7	Invest in sustainability of Pool exploring options to boost revenue, extend opening, catering etc.	H	S-M	2 +3?		

	Actions	Priority	Timescale	Lead	Partners	Funding
1.8	More information available at the Church to welcome visitors, give brief details of its interesting features and details of the key holder	H	QW	1		
1.9	Review and redesign children's animal treasures trail – print in colour and have downloadable from website.	H	QW	1	TIC	
1.10	A museum about Weardale life – or additional exhibition space in/around Durham Dales Centre, permanent or temporary displays, additional web-based information and interpretation, use of new technology?	M	M	2		
1.11	Artwork way markers (P4) or sculpture trail around town/environs – featuring local heritage/wildlife	M	S-M	2		
1.12	Develop more links with Harehope Quarry e.g. featuring some of their green/art themes in town, events etc	M	S	1+3		
<b>2. Parking and signing</b>						
2.1	Car parking strategy (P12) including creation of new car parking (possibly across railway line near station)	VH	S-M	2		
2.2	Outer gateways and welcome signs (P1)	H	S	2		
2.3	Directional signs (P3)	H	S	2		
2.4	Coach drop off and parking (P11)	H	S	2		
2.5	Disabled parking (P13)	H	S	2		
2.6	Information Points – maintain and/or upgrade blue information points around town	H	S	1		
2.7	New crossing point (P14) at/near market square	M	M	2		
2.8	New way finding signs for pedestrians around the town, riverside etc	M	S	1		
2.9	Additional cycle parking and signs	M	S	2		

	Actions	Priority	Timescale	Lead	Partners	Funding
<b>3. Environmental improvements</b>						
3.1	Bandstand/pavilion in market place, plus power supply etc for events (links to P6) and enhancements to key focal area of town	H	S-M	2		
3.2	Enhance riverside – environmental improvements, seating, sculpture, planting, access to water, picnic facilities (links to P7)	H	S	2		
3.3	Shop front improvement/conservation scheme and design guide (inc hanging signs, A boards) (links to P8) inc	H	S	2+3		
3.4	Hanging basket scheme (P10)	H	S	1+3		
3.5	Review and enhance riverside area by children’s play area, swimming pool and showground to boost safe enjoyment of stepping stones, paddling, picnicking, short walks, additional parking etc.	H	M	2		
3.6	Up-lighting buildings (P9)	M	S-M	2		
<b>4. Food and Drink</b>						
4.1	Local trails (FD2) review opportunities for trails and promotions linking producers, pubs, cafes, shops, farmers markets across Durham Dales	H	S	2+3		
4.2	Local produce awareness (FD3) inc meet the producers, featuring local recipes, training, competitions, awards, special offers	H	S	2+3	CDTP/Taste Durham	
4.3	Invest in and support public houses (FD4) inc exteriors, signing, seating, food and drink offer – especially evening meals, accommodation, suppliers, promotions	H	S-M	2+3		
<b>5. Walking and cycling</b>						
5.1	New footpath link from station along to Butts (links to P15), creating circular route and linking proposed new car park	H	S-M	2		

	Actions	Priority	Timescale	Lead	Partners	Funding
5.2	Review town map and produce new version with simple short walks and interpretation – on paper, website and information boards	H	QW	1 CDTP		
5.3	Maintain and enhance walking routes in and around town	H	Ongoing	1+2		
5.4	More cycle routes developed, signed, promoted (links to P16)	M	M	2		
<b>6. Information and Marketing</b>						
6.1	Retain and enhance Tourist Information Centre and service at Durham Dales Centre	VH	ongoing	2	TIC	
6.2	Ensure excellent information available for visitors to Stanhope on website – either through existing Dales Centre site or another linked town website.	VH	QW	1 CDTP		
<b>7. Business opportunities, support and co-ordination</b>						
7.1	Sustain Retail Group (R1) and Weardale Visitor Network	VH	ongoing	1+3		
7.2	Business support and training opportunities (links to C1) on regulations, marketing, website design and marketing, customer care, local produce and dishes.	VH	QW	2+3		
7.3	Establishment of town based B&BS, small hotel and self-catering accommodation	H	S-M	3	Private sector	
7.4	Encourage increased usage of internet by businesses to communicate, market and sell.	H	QW-S	1+3		
7.5	Hire of outdoor activity equipment – perhaps through outdoor centres or new outdoor shop	M	M	3	Private sector	



### 6.3 Key projects

The projects highlighted in blue above are those which will make most difference and which are top priority for this destination plan. They include (in no particular order):

1. Durham Dales Centre
2. Market square enhancements
3. Weardale Railway
4. Shop frontages and retail offer
5. Food and drink
6. Car parking management strategy
7. Directional and welcome signage
8. Walking
9. Capitalise on any development at Eastgate
10. Business networks and support

Each is described in more detail below.

1.	Durham Dales Centre
Project no.	1.3-1.5 and 1.10
Priority action	Enhance the offer of the Durham Dales Centre which could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• arts and crafts</li> <li>• the garden and landscaping</li> <li>• additional exhibition/interpretation space or role</li> <li>• incorporating more local produce and sustainable features</li> <li>• adding 'Visitor' into its name</li> </ul>
Cost	Various (also potential for funding applications)
Lead Delivery Organisation	Durham Dales Centre and tenants
Other Partners	Weardale Visitor Network, Durham County Council, CDTP
Key Issues	<p>The Durham Dales Visitor Centre is the central attraction in Stanhope and a hub for the wider Durham Dales. It is now nearly 20 years old and needs to ensure it remains fresh and offers a quality product particularly in the light of the future potential threats such as reduced funding for TICs and the Eastgate Development.</p> <p>In terms of arts and crafts there may be scope to organise live demonstrations, hands on opportunities, courses, events, promotions, trails – linking to other arts and crafts outlets in the local area, across the Dales and the whole county.</p> <p>A review of the shrub and flower planting at the Centre to make it more colourful/more seasonal impact and a project to refresh the Dales garden – possibly a community project to redesign/replant and re-interpret with new signage (environmental theme?)</p>

	<p>At the same time the signing for the Centre which is thought by some to be too subtle could be reviewed and enhanced.</p> <p>A museum about Weardale life has been suggested – an ambitious aspiration. However there may be scope to enhance the Dales Centre’s role in interpretation – expanding its current exhibition with permanent or temporary displays, indoors or outside. Alternatively there may be scope for additional web based interpretation accessible at the Centre and remotely. This could involve putting relevant archives, documents, photos etc online perhaps with funding from heritage agencies. It might link to new trails which could be developed using new technology in future years. The current children’s trail would also benefit from an upgrade in presentation.</p> <p>The Centre could also explore opportunities to lead the way with the food and drink projects 4.1 and 4.2 and to showcase sustainable principles to support the strong green and sustainable local themes.</p>
Timetable	Ongoing
Next steps	Decide on top priority and develop viable programme

2.	Market Square enhancements
Project no.	3.1
Priority action	<p>The market square is the focal point of Stanhope and very attractive, if rather obscured by parked cars much of the time. Three elements could be addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental improvements to enhance its appearance</li> <li>• A Bandstand or pavilion located to create more of a central point and be used during events</li> <li>• Infrastructure to help support events such as a power supply</li> </ul>
Cost	
Lead Delivery Organisation	Market Town Group and Local Authorities
Other Partners	
Key Issues	Needs to be linked into transport and parking strategy
Timetable	
Next steps	.

3.	Weardale Railway
Project no.	1.1
Priority action	<p>The company which owns the railway is investing in extending the railway line to connect to the main line at Bishop Auckland. If the Eastgate Development goes ahead the line could also be extended up the dale to Eastgate. Key actions for local partners should focus on capitalising on the improvements by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring the railway timetable allows plenty of time to explore</li> </ul>

	<p>Stanhope</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attracting new audiences in future e.g. local visitors from Bishop Auckland and from further afield arriving via train.</li> </ul>
Cost	small
Lead Delivery Organisation	Weardale Railway
Other Partners	Weardale Visitor Network, Market Town Group,
Key Issues	
Timetable	
Next steps	.

<b>4.</b>	<b>Shop frontages and retail offer</b>
Project no.	3.3
Priority action	The traditional shops and streetscape is one of the main attractions of Stanhope for visitors. A shop front improvement/conservation scheme supported with a design guide would encourage and support retailers. The guide should ideally cover shops frontages but also hanging signs, A boards etc.
Cost	
Lead Delivery Organisation	
Other Partners	
Key Issues	
Timetable	
Next steps	.

<b>5.</b>	<b>Food and drink</b>
Project no.	4.1-4.3
Priority action	<p>Review opportunities for food and drink trails and promotions linking producers, pubs, cafes, shops, farmers markets across Durham Dales</p> <p>Local produce awareness inc meet the producers, featuring local recipes, training, competitions, awards, special offers</p> <p>Invest in and support public houses inc exteriors, signing, seating, food and drink offer – especially evening meals, accommodation, suppliers, promotions</p>
Cost	
Lead Delivery Organisation	Taste Durham, CDTP
Other Partners	individual businesses
Key Issues	

Timetable	
Next steps	.

<b>6.</b>	<b>Car parking management strategy</b>
Project no.	2.1
Priority action	The transport and access strategy is currently being finalised. This will recommend preferred options for improving car parking provision in Stanhope, including creation of new car parking (possibly across the railway line near the station with a new footpath link into the town centre).
Cost	
Lead Delivery Organisation	
Other Partners	
Key Issues	Visitors won't stop in Stanhope if there is nowhere convenient to park. If it is to reduce the proportion of people driving through without stopping easy, well-located parking is essential. It may be necessary to reintroduce some charges for parking eg at the Dales Centre. If so these should be kept modest and timings set generously to encourage people to stay longer. Alternative longer stay car parking should also be signed eg for those who want to go walking.
Timetable	
Next steps	.

<b>7.</b>	<b>Directional and welcome signage</b>
Project no.	2.2 and 2.3
Priority action	Design and install attractive welcome signage, along with any additional landscaping or planting on the main gateways into Stanhope. A review of key directional signs in the town for visitors will highlight several gaps or signs which need replacing.
Cost	
Lead Delivery Organisation	
Other Partners	
Key Issues	Another way of combating the feel of Stanhope being a 'through town' is to create a greater sense of arrival and welcome. Signs should use a simple design and wording and be legible at 30-40mph. A short strapline might be appropriate such as 'Discover the stories of the Durham Dales' which may encourage more people to stop off.
Timetable	
Next steps	.

<b>8.</b>	<b>Walking</b>
Project no.	5.1-5.3
Priority action	<p>New footpath link from station along to Butts, creating circular route and linking proposed new car park</p> <p>Review town map and produce new version with simple short walks and interpretation – on paper, website and information boards</p> <p>Maintain and enhance walking routes in and around town</p>
Cost	
Lead Delivery Organisation	Map- CDTP
Other Partners	
Key Issues	<p>Many visitors will be walkers whether they enjoy gentle strolls or longer hill walks. The essential elements for Stanhope are to create an additional link in town from the railway station, check all town routes are easy to find and follow, and promote them using an attractive town map – available on paper, web and information panels around the town.</p> <p>TIC staff will know the best walking options to recommend to visitors from a Stanhope starting point. Being able to recommend walks from town ensures the visitors' spending remains in town if they can return here for a meal later in the day. If there is no one print item with a choice of routes from town (of varying lengths) it would be worth writing these up into pdf format so they can be downloaded or printed on demand.</p> <p>If footpath maintenance is an issue in the local area the town could consider forming a local footpath group or parish paths partnership which could help monitor footpath conditions, report to the rights of way team and help implement improvements.</p>
Timetable	
Next steps	.

<b>9.</b>	<b>Eastgate development</b>
Project no.	1.2
Priority action	<p>Stanhope needs to capitalise on any new developments at Eastgate, whether the full proposals go ahead or a smaller development. This should include: physical linkages such as well signed walking and cycling routes, cross promotion, joint ticketing and joint working on relevant fronts such as in organising events.</p>
Cost	
Lead Delivery Organisation	
Other Partners	
Key Issues	<p>If the railway is extended to Eastgate there is a danger that visitors will travel all the way to the end of the line at Eastgate and not get out at Stanhope at all. This is where the option of walking from Eastgate to Stanhope to catch the return train, or vice versa, needs to be promoted in the railway literature.</p>

Timetable	
Next steps	.

10.	Business networks and support
Project no.	7.1 +7.2
Priority action	Encourage and sustain the Stanhope Retail Group and Weardale Visitor Network.  Promote business support and training opportunities for example on regulations, marketing, website design and marketing, customer care, local produce and dishes, sustainability, local projects.
Cost	small
Lead Delivery Organisation	
Other Partners	CDTP
Key Issues	Most of the tourism related businesses in the Stanhope area are small, benefit greatly from being kept up to date via networks and welcome peer support. Stanhope is lucky in having two active groups which are a valuable resource and every effort should be made to keep them going and sustain their membership. The implementation of this destination plan will be more effective if it has the groups' backing and they are involved in its implementation, review and monitoring.
Timetable	
Next steps	.

#### 6.4 Common themes to develop with other towns

Several themes and actions have arisen in more than one of the four Market Town Welcome towns in Durham.

- **New town maps/leaflets**

Stanhope's main promotion is through the Durham Dales Centre – the Centre's website and leaflet. There is an attractive map of Stanhope downloadable from the Centre's website. A commercial tear-off map is available at the Centre itself. There is scope for producing a map based leaflet for Stanhope with an attractive, up to date map which showcases the main attractions and clearly indicates the walking routes around the town. This should also be made available to download from the website in advance of a visit.

There is scope for producing a family of leaflets for Durham's market towns which while promoting the special character of each presents them as a group. This could help spread design and print costs. They could be racked together in TICs as an attractive proposition for visitor segments that enjoy sightseeing in market towns.

- **Website development**

As with the leaflet above there is scope for a Stanhope visitor website – probably integrated with that of the Durham Dales Centre but with a Stanhope portal and with optimisation so that people searching for Stanhope will find it immediately.

Some of the same design and mapping used in the map leaflet above could be applied to the towns' websites to ensure each has a fresh and coherent image.

- **Events development and support**

Events have been identified as an important action in all the towns. The volunteer experience and capacity in each town can be stretched – sometimes just one or two people are the main organisers. There is scope for a cross county approach to provide support and encouragement to events organisers. This could include a network, shared resources and expertise, training, even a small events development grant scheme if additional funding could be secured.

- **Investment portfolio**

The destination plans have identified specific investment opportunities in each town. These could be collated and promoted collectively to potential private sector investors in the region as a printed or web-based portfolio.

- **Encouraging private sector buy-in**

Collaborative working is very important in the visitor economy which is by its nature very fragmented and made up of many small businesses. Key project 10 in this plan focuses on ensuring local tourism related businesses are able to participate in discussion and implementation of this plan, promote collective messages in their marketing and that they can access support and staff training.

Again this is a common issue and support could be provided across the towns in the form of facilitation, access to advice and training and networking events.

- **Ensuring leadership to co-ordinate and drive implementation of the plan**

Similarly each town will face the issue of how to drive forward the implementation of the priority projects in the plan. While the solution may be different in each town there will be benefits from sharing experience, networking between the towns and being able to source advice and support from county bodies.

- **Visitor Research**

The last visitor survey in Stanhope was in 2004. It would be useful to research visitor characteristics, needs and views to better inform future development and marketing and to monitor how actions in this plan impact on visitor enjoyment and behaviour. Co-ordinating a survey across all the market towns would enable comparisons and benchmarking and involve economies of scale.

County Durham Tourism Partnership will be able to take the lead as the delivery partner for many of these actions and they are identified as such in the Action Plan.

## **6.5 Taking the Plan forward**

In order to implement this plan it is essential that there is a local leadership group in place in each town. They will be able to champion the plan, ensure that the plan is understood amongst all partners and sectors and will be able to contribute to the plan themselves. Their role will be to co-ordinate implementation by partners and monitor progress. They may also be directly involved in implementing some of the actions not being taken forward by others. They should also co-ordinate communication about the Plan and celebrate the successes as actions are completed.

The role of the leadership group may be able to be taken on by an existing group in the town, or a specific sub-group. This may require the strengthening of existing groups for example by recruiting more representatives from tourism businesses or organisations and widening communications eg to

include owners of key attractions. Where a group does not currently exist, towns will need to establish one.

It is important to keep the focus on the town as a destination and the visitor throughout.



## 7. Annexes

## 7.1 Market Town Welcome Template

# market town welcome

### The questions we have to answer

Step 1 Why welcome visitors?  
(what are the benefits?)

Step 2 Who are our town's visitors?  
(now and in the future)

Step 3 What does our town offer visitors?  
(why do they/will they come?)

Step 4 How well does the offer meet the visitors' expectations?  
(what is the current visitor experience like?)

Step 5 How is tourism resourced, managed and promoted in the town?  
(who is involved?)

Step 6 What are our town's strengths and weaknesses?  
(plus future opportunities and threats)

Step 7 What is the vision for our town in 5 years time?  
(what do we want the visitor experience to be then?)

Step 8 How do we get there?  
(and who needs to be involved?)

### How we work out the answers

Initial workshop

Visitor surveys/segmentation

Business survey

Town tourism audit

Town welcome workshop

Action planning with Leadership Group

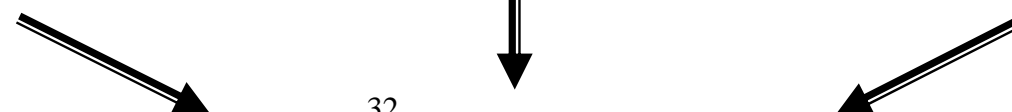
### Town role

Establish Leadership Group

Recruit extra people

Champion survey and help lead tourism audit

Publicise workshop and lead action planning



Market Town Destination Plan for our town

## **7.2 Market Town Welcome in Stanhope - Participants**

Individuals who have contributed to the development of this plan

Alan Coates	Stanhope Newsagents
Ross Cowling	Wear Valley District Council Regeneration
Judith Crow	Durham Dales Centre
Darren Divall	Integrated Transport Planning Ltd
Christine Dunsbury	Dales Floral Art
Harry Elliott	Low Cornriggs Farm
Janet Elliott	Low Cornriggs Farm
Louise Elliot	County Durham Tourism Partnership
Nigel Hintz	Stanhope Post Office, MTP Steering Group
David Heatherington	Weardale Museum
Graeme Leigh	Innkeepers Cottage
Michele Leigh	Innkeepers Cottage
Steve Martin	Market Towns Programme Officer
David McKnight	County Durham Tourism Partnership
Ian Mear	Phoenix Signs
Steve Raine	Weardale Railway
Carolyn Ramsbotham	Pasture Cottage
Tina Raynor	Killhope North of England Lead Mining Museum
Jill Richardson	Dowfold House
Mike Richardson	Wear Valley District Council, Tourism
Sandra Robertson	Wear Valley District Council, Conservation
Judith Sales	Moorland Rug Co Ltd
Melanie Sensicle	County Durham Tourism Partnership
George Skelton	Dale Gallery
Clive Smithers	Market Towns Programme team
Austin Stenhouse	The Enterprise Agency
Judith Stephenson	Bradley Burn
Shaun Stuart	The Enterprise Agency, MTP Steering Group
John Taylor	Beckleshele Cottage
Andrew Walker	County Durham Economic Partnership Secretariat

We would also like to thank David Girdwood of the Good Life Shop and Tom Johnston of the Glendale Gateway Trust for hosting our retailers' visit to Wooler.

### 7.3 Tourism Audit

For the purposes of the audit a wider Weardale boundary was used for some categories such as accommodation and attractions and data for just the town itself was collected for other elements such as retail and signage – see headings.

#### Quality assessment

For some of the information you collect we would like you to assess how well the facility meets the needs of visitors to the town - see boxes shaded grey. Some businesses or facilities (e.g. pubs) may not be targeting visitors, so it is useful to add a qualitative element to the factual data.

Using a scoring system of 1 to 5 give each of the elements a score where

5 = very good, exceeds visitors' expectations, is a draw for visitors in itself

4 = good, meets visitors' expectations and an asset to the area

3 = moderately good, meets most visitors' needs

2 = adequate but room for improvement

1 = not suitable for visitors - you would not advise visitors to use/visit.

This scoring should be done collectively, i.e. is not just one person's opinion. It is not intended as criticism of particular sites but an objective assessment to identify gaps.

#### 1. Accommodation in Weardale

Please collect numbers of each type of accommodation. For smaller towns you may want to list all accommodation businesses individually.

	Number	No. of bed spaces, units or pitches	Number officially quality inspected
Hotels	1	24	1
Guesthouses/B&Bs	15	89+	7
Inns or pubs with accommodation	7	18+	0
Self-Catering businesses	44	262	23
Caravan & Camping sites	18	?	2
Youth or other hostels	5	?	0
Other group accommodation	2	?	0

Are there any particular gaps in the type or quality of accommodation for a town of this size?

No inspected serviced accommodation in Stanhope – only one on outskirts

Lack of touring caravan and camp sites

Lack of accessible accommodation

#### 2. Attractions in Weardale

Please include all sites which would be of interest to visitors, adding additional rows as necessary.

	Names	Opening	Your quality

		<b>days/months</b>	<b>score*</b>
Museums, heritage centres	Killhope Lead Mining Museum	Daily (Easter till Oct)	4
	High House Chapel	May – Sept (Wed/Sun)	4
	Weardale Museum	Easter – Sept	4
Churches of interest to visitors	St Thomas - Stanhope	By arrangement	2
Farm attractions	Bradley Burn Farm	Daily all year	4
Gardens	Durham Dales Centre Gardens	Daily all year	3
Railway, transport attractions	Weardale Railway	Times/days vary; see timetable 2009	3
Country parks, woodlands, special countryside sites	Hamsterley Forest between Weardale/Teesdale	Open all year	4
Craft centres	Durham Dales Centre	Daily all year	4
Other	Stanhope Open Air pool	Whit hols – end of summer hols	2
	Harehope Quarry	Open by arrangement	3
	Weardale Off road	Open by arrangement	2

\*Also mark any which have an official quality grading from the Visitor Attraction Quality Scheme

## 2b Festivals and Events in Weardale

List regular or annual festivals and events which will be of interest to visitors, in calendar order, using extra lines if necessary.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Details</b>
February	Eastgate Hay Show	
April	IROC	Adventure racing weekend – running, MTB, orienteering - Eastgate
May	Eastgate Sheep Show	
June/ July	Northern Rocks	North Pennines Festival of Geology
August	Weardale Scarecrow Competition	
August	Weardale Agriculture Show	St Johns Chapel

August	Terrier Show	St Johns Chapel
September	Wolsingham Agricultural Show	
September	Stanhope Agricultural Show	
Various	Weardale Railway	events throughout year eg Santa Specials, War on the Line

**Are there any gaps, for example at particular times of the year?**

- Yes – school holidays in winter

**Does the range of events match the types of interests that visitors have?**

Yes – outdoor/geological events are ok but range could be wider including musical and cultural events

### 3. Retail – Stanhope

Those towns which took part in the Retail Distinctiveness Programme will be able to use that information to complete this sheet. Note only those shops which will be of particular interest to visitors. In smaller towns that is likely to include food shops, but in larger towns focus on speciality shopping rather than the whole retail sector.

#### Shops

Retail type	No. of shops	Names (omit if too many to list)	No. of which in each quality category				
			5	4	3	2	1
Speciality Food	1	Donaldson's				√	
Antiques	2	Weardale Antiques Betty Podkins			√	√	
Books							
Arts / Crafts	3	Dales Arts/Crafts – Dales Centre Dales Floral Art – Dales Centre			√ √		
Gift	2	Stanhope Post Office Dales Centre	√		√		
Outdoor/Leisure							
Clothing	1	CC Fashions				√	
Garden centres/ nurseries							
Other Speciality or 'destination' shops	3	Lime Tree Gallery Gemcraft Moorland Rugs Co Ltd	√	√ √			

#### Markets

Market type	name	occurrence	day(s) of week	5	4	3	2	1
Outdoor	Stanhope Farmers Market	Monthly	Every 4 <sup>th</sup> Saturday		√			



<b>Indoor</b>	None							
<b>Speciality</b>	Stanhope Christmas Event	Annually	1		√			

### Eating out

	No.	Names (omit if too many to list)	5	4	3	2	1
Restaurants							
Take-aways	2	Stanhope Tandoori Stanhope Chip Shop			√	√	
Cafes/tea shops	5	Weardale Tea rooms Wittens Café Dales Centre café Parkhead Station Weardale Railway	√	√	√		√
Pubs serving food	3	Lunchtime bar meals: standards vary  Bonny Moorhen only pub to serve evening meals ?			√		
Other							

#### Vacant shops

How many vacant shops are there in the town currently? 1 derelict shop currently being refurbished

#### Sunday opening

How many shops are open on Sundays? 15 (3 summer only)

How many eating places are open on Sundays? 6 (including 3 pubs)

#### Early evenings

How many shops are open in the early evening 5pm-7pm? 0

How many eating places are open in the early evening?  
Wittens Café till 6.00pm  
Bonny Moorhen – not Sundays

#### Half day closing

How many shops observe a half day closing?	8 (various days of the week – often more than 1 day per week)
Which day of the week?	Various
Are there any particular gaps in the retail and catering offer of your town for a town of its size?	
There are no restaurants: the only food available after 6pm is from takeaways	

#### 4. Sports, outdoor activity and entertainment facilities – Weardale

Please note all facilities which are available for visitors (i.e. not private clubs etc). Add extra rows as necessary.

Facility	Name	Brief details	Quality grading				
			5	4	3	2	1
<b>Leisure centre/ gym</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stanhope Town Hall Gym</li> <li>▪ Wolsingham Sports Hall</li> </ul>	Weekdays only Volunteer run Open all year			√		
<b>Swimming pool</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stanhope Open Air Pool</li> <li>▪ Wolsingham Pool</li> </ul>	May – Sept Community Pool – open all year		√			
<b>Golf</b>							
<b>Long distance footpaths</b>	Weardale Way						
<b>Other named walks</b>							
<b>Bicycle hire</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dales Bike Hire</li> <li>▪ Hamsterley Forest cycling</li> </ul>	By arrangement with Durham Dales Centre		√		√	
<b>Cycle routes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ C to C section</li> <li>▪ North Pennines circular</li> </ul>			√	√		
<b>Riding/pony trekking</b>							
<b>Special riding routes</b>							
<b>Fishing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tranquil Life Carp fishing pond</li> <li>▪ Tunstall reservoir</li> </ul>	By prior arrangement with owners					

<b>Sailing</b>							
<b>Canoeing</b>							

Facility	Name	Brief details	Quality grading				
			5	4	3	2	1
<b>Other outdoor activities, sports</b>	Weardale Ski club	Membership on the day				√	
<b>Theatre</b>	Various village/Town Halls	Performances by touring groups					
<b>Cinema*</b>	St Johns Chapel Town Hall	2 films shown fortnightly			√		
<b>Other entertainment facilities</b>	Concerts and exhibitions at various halls						

**Are there any particular gaps or weaknesses for a town this size?**  
 Activities during school holidays during winter months

## 5. Support facilities and infrastructure

### Car parking - Stanhope

Car Parks	Free	Short stay	Long stay
Dales Centre*	66 (46+ 20 overflow)	* has been metered in past, currently free	
Market Place	24		
Town Hall	6		
Railway Station	26		
No. of spaces in total	102		
	<b>Free</b>	<b>Metered</b>	
On street parking places (approx)	28		

## Coach Parking

	Location	capacity
Location(s) for dropping off passengers	Outside Fire Station/Dales Centre	1 Coach
Location(s) for coach parking	No formal parking	
Estimated no. of coaches visiting the town each week?	Never monitored – greater in summer months	
<b>Any related issues?</b> Coach operators have asked for designated drop off points and coach parking facilities and have said they will not return until facilities are in place		

## Other transport facilities

Number and locations of bicycle racks/storage	2 at Dales Centre 1 on South Side of Front Street
Location of central bus station/shelter	Market Place
Facilities available at bus station/shelter	Single shelter – fitted with bench seat
No. of daily buses linking to other towns	27
Distance from town centre to nearest railway station	Durham 21 miles

## Public toilets - Stanhope

Toilet location	Durham Dales Centre	Weardale Railway	Stanhope Pool – Park area
opening hours	8-5 winter 8-6 summer	½ hr before 1st train, ½ hr after last train	9 – 5 Easter till Sept
free/paid	Free	Free	Free
disabled access yes/no	Yes	Yes	Yes
baby changing yes/no	Yes	No	No

## Are there any particular weaknesses or gaps for a town of this size?

No toilets available in the evening after closing times of these facilities

## 6. Visitor Information Centre

Visitor / Tourist Information Centres (VICs/TICs) are the public face of tourism. They provide a vital role both in the planning of visits to the destination and influencing activity once the visitor has arrived, thus encouraging longer stays and increased spend. They also play an important role in providing an information service to residents and hence support the key Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) market.

<b>Does your town have a VIC/ TIC?</b>	Yes	<b>If not, where is your nearest centre?</b>	
<b>Location</b>	Stanhope	<b>Contact Name</b>	Judith Crow
<b>Telephone Number</b>	01388 527650	<b>Email Address</b>	durham.dales.centre@durham.gov.uk

For those towns with a VIC/TIC, please compile the most recent figures available

<b>Enquiry type:</b>	<b>Total Number of Enquiries</b>		
	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>Counter</b>	22,994	22,022	23,749
<b>Postal</b>	16	19	22
<b>Telephone</b>	3,743	3,462	2,727
<b>Email</b>	150	125	125
<b>Accommodation bookings</b>	38	46	28

Please estimate proportions of enquiries from each of:

	<b>%ge</b>
<b>Local residents</b>	40
<b>UK visitors</b>	50
<b>Overseas visitors</b>	10

## Visitor Information Needs

<b>What are the most frequent information requests that you receive from visitors and potential visitors?</b>	
1	Places to visit – locally & regionally
2	Where to eat – local
3	Places to stay – especially for Coast to coast route
4	Local walks
5	Industrial & family history
<b>Are there gaps in the current information available to meet these requests? If so, what further types of information would be useful?</b>	
There is a lack of walking information and the quality of what there is is variable Lack of information about River Wear for children	
<b>How well does the town meet the needs and expectations of visitors and what improvements are needed to better meet their requirements?</b>	
Improvements that could be made include more public toilets, coach parking, public transport out of Weardale area, quality places to eat, picnic areas, 24 hour fuel or clear signage about where and when fuel is available.	

## 7. Tourist Information Points (TIPs)

TIPs are the notice or information boards which provide useful information for visitors such as a map of where they are and things to see and do. They are often located in car parks, town centres or key sites. Please survey and include details of those in your town, using additional columns if necessary.

Number in town:

**3 in Stanhope, 3 more widely in Weardale**

Locations	Stanhope			Weardale
	Market Place	Durham Dales Centre	Weardale Railway	St Johns Chapel Wolsingham Park
<b>Content of each - maps, adverts, events</b>	Monthly activities in Wear Valley	Monthly activities in Wear Valley	Monthly activities in Wear Valley	Monthly activities in Wear Valley
<b>Is it well maintained?</b>	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Who is responsible for maintenance?</b>	Wear Valley District Council	Wear Valley District Council	Wear Valley District Council Updated by Railway staff	Wear Valley District Council

<b>Is the content appropriate and up to date?</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Are there any additional locations where a TIP is needed?</b>				
East end of Stanhope on arrival				

## 8. Interpretation

Interpretative materials play a key role in providing visitors with in depth information about a town or destination – beyond basic directions and information, they tell the story of a destination, informing visitors about its history and points of interest. Interpretative materials can vary tremendously - we suggest you focus on interpretative boards/panels, wall plaques, tours/signed trails, and guided tours.

<b>Is there any interpretation around the town?</b>	<b>Details</b>
<b>Boards or panels at key sites or on key buildings of interest</b>	Yes at Durham Dales Centre, Railway Station,
<b>Plaques on specific buildings</b>	No
<b>Signed tours or trails around the town</b>	Riverside walk signposted
<b>Regular guided tours around the town</b>	No
<b>Other interpretation materials</b>	Local information boards on Town Halls and Community buildings

<b>Who is responsible for maintenance of panels, plaques and signs?</b>
<b>Are there any gaps where further / new interpretative materials could be provided?</b>
There are no interpretation boards in Stanhope Town Centre

## 9. Visitor Pedestrian Signposting

Pedestrian signposting, usually in the form of finger posts, plays an important role in ensuring that visitors to a town centre are able to orientate themselves effectively and find their way about. Looking at every individual finger post in larger towns is potentially a complicated and time consuming task - for the audit in this case we suggest the following approach;

- Choose a maximum of four locations (and the subsequent walking route to the town centre) which are key entry points/points of arrival for visitors – i.e. the main visitor car parks, bus/railway station/ dropping off point - and assess the following points
- In smaller towns where there are fewer than four fingerposts simply assess each in turn.

Location or start point	Railway Station	Dales Centre	Market Place	Wolsingham Market Place
Is there a TIP showing where you are in relation to the town centre?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Signs to the Tourist / Visitor Information Centre?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Signs to public toilets?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Signs to main visitor attraction(s)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is there good continuity of signposts/fingerposts along the route?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

### Quality of Signing

Are routes clear?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are fingerposts obscured or pointing the wrong way?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are fingerposts well maintained?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are there any obvious gaps in terms of facilities which are not currently signed?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>



## 10. Road signposting for visitors

Feedback from visitors suggests that visitor signposting is consistently identified as something destinations could improve. More often than not, when a first time visitor travels to a destination, advance signposting will be their first experience of the destination – so it is important to make a good first impression. Visitors particularly value brown and white visitor signing which is easy to recognise and is designed specifically for their purposes.

Perhaps more so than the previous areas of the information audit, assessing road signposting to a destination is a complex area to consider – encompassing a range of logistical, technical and road safety and highway management issues. In practical terms, the most important areas to consider are the main road routes into the market towns

- Choose a maximum of four main road routes into the market towns (if there are fewer than 4 main routes, only assess those that are appropriate), starting from the nearest strategic road or junction.
- In larger towns these routes will be assessed by travelling along the route in a car, two people are required to carry out this aspect of the audit. Drive along the route from your chosen starting point, noting details on the issues set out in the template. **Safety warning - only carry out this survey at a quiet time and in good weather. Plan your route and stops in advance. Drive carefully and be aware of traffic behind you. If any routes are hazardous for this type of survey do not undertake it yourselves but discuss signage with your highways authority.**
- In smaller towns it may be possible to complete this survey on foot - **Safety warning - again consider safety issues carefully before surveying along busy roads on foot, particularly if there is no pavement. Be especially careful if taking photographs.**

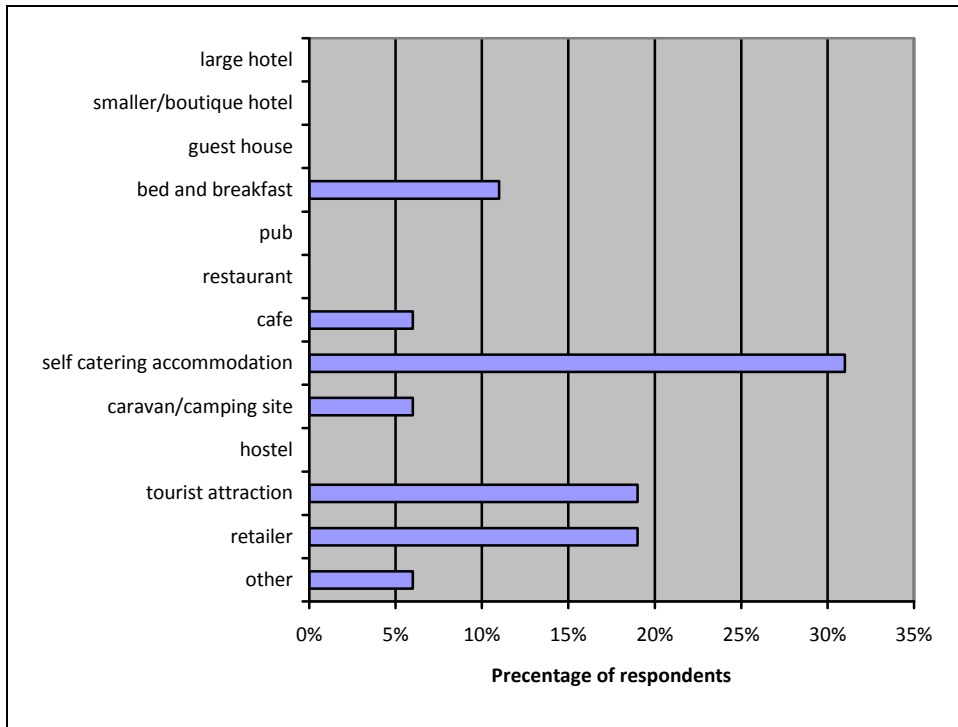
starting point	Eastern Approach	Western Approach	Crawley Side Junction	Middleton Approach
finishing point	Market Place	Market Place	Market Place	Market Place
Are there any signs on the route indicating that this is a market town of interest to visitors? <i>(this could include white on brown tourist signs, welcome signing etc)</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are there any white on brown tourist signs?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
- Record any details / location	Weardale Railway signposted	Only signage outside Dales Centre	Dales Centre & Killhope Mine signposted	Dales Centre & Killhope Mine signposted
Signposting to the Tourist Information Centre	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
- Record any details / location			At A698 junction	At A698 junction
Signposting for main attractions?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
- Record any details / location	Railway	Outside Dales	Outside Dales	Outside Dales

		Centre only	Centre only	Centre only
<b>Signposting for visitor car parks?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>- Record any details / location</i>		Only upon arrival at Dales Centre	Only upon arrival at Dales Centre	Only upon arrival at Dales Centre
<b>Signposting for public toilets?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>- Record any details / location</i>		Only upon arrival at Dales Centre	Only upon arrival at Dales Centre	Only upon arrival at Dales Centre
<b>Is there an out-of-town Tourist Information Point on the main road before entering/turning off to the town?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>- Record any details / location</i>				
<b>Continuity of signposting</b>				
<b>Where facilities are signposted, does this remain consistent along the routes?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Quality of signing.</b>				
<b>Are the signs appropriately maintained</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Visually- are they clear (not obscured)</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Are there any out of date signs which need to be removed or rationalised</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Note details for reporting to Highway authority</b>				

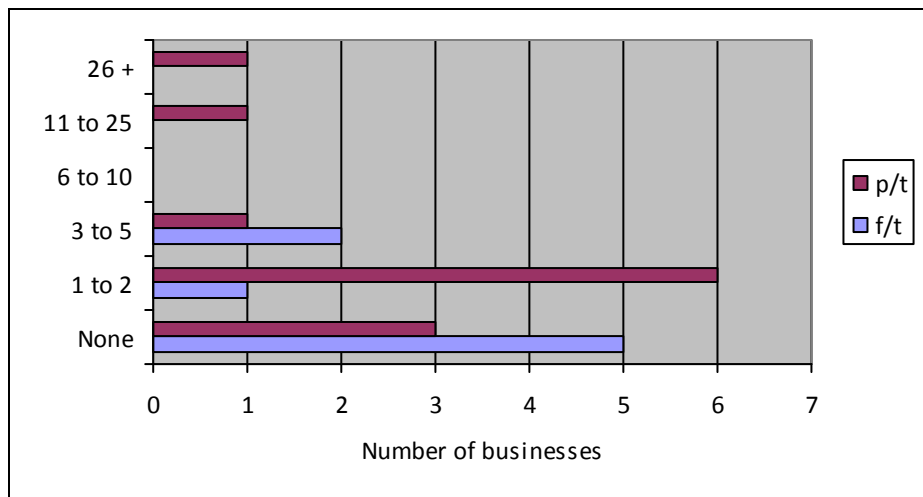
### 7.4 Business Survey

13 businesses responded to the survey in Stanhope. The following graphs summarise some of the main results (others are shown in section 3, visitors, above).

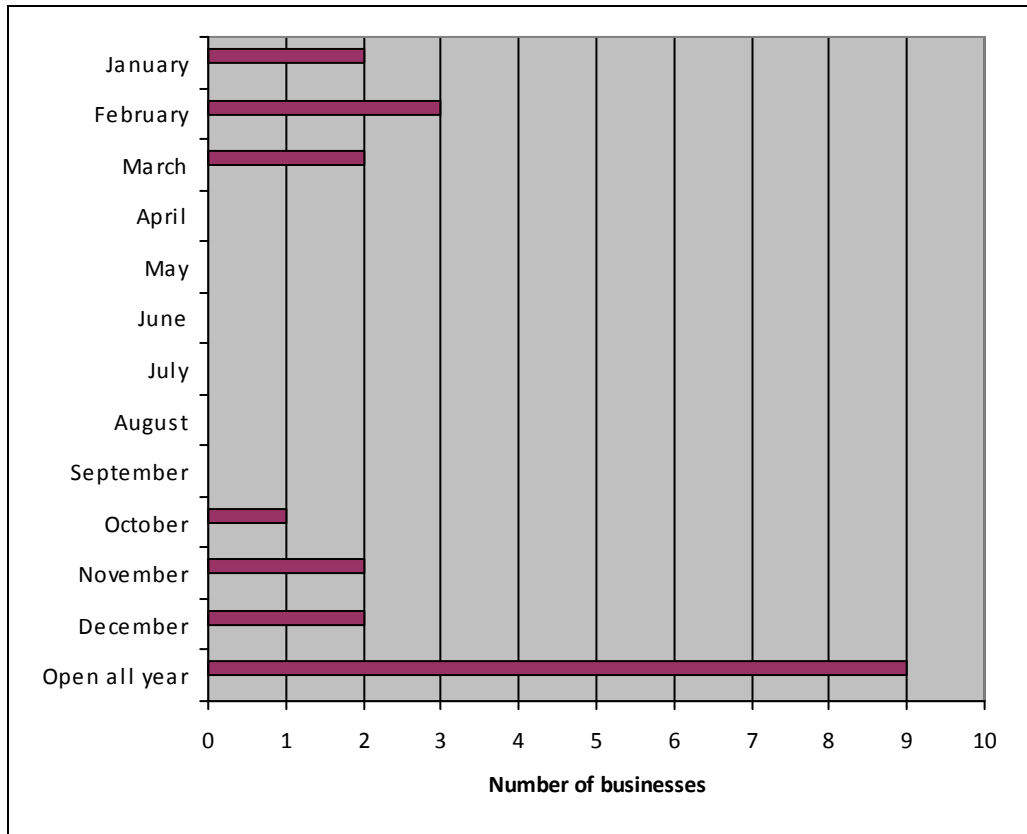
**Fig. 6: Respondents – type of business**



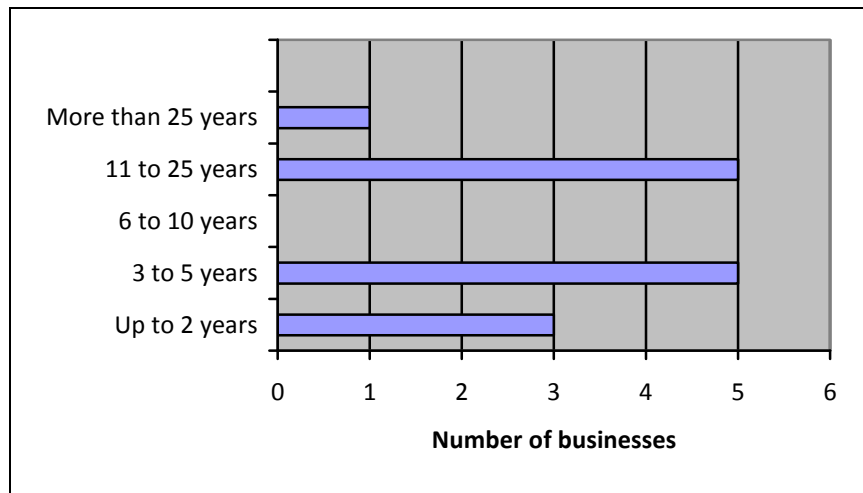
**Fig. 7: How many staff do you employ on average?**



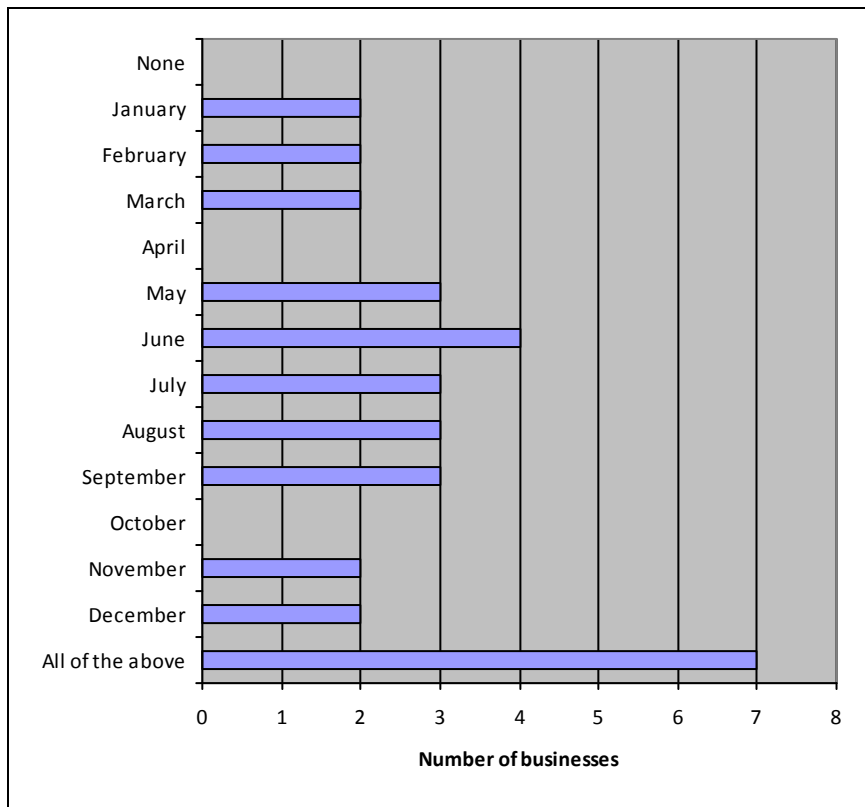
**Fig. 8: Which months of the year are you closed?**



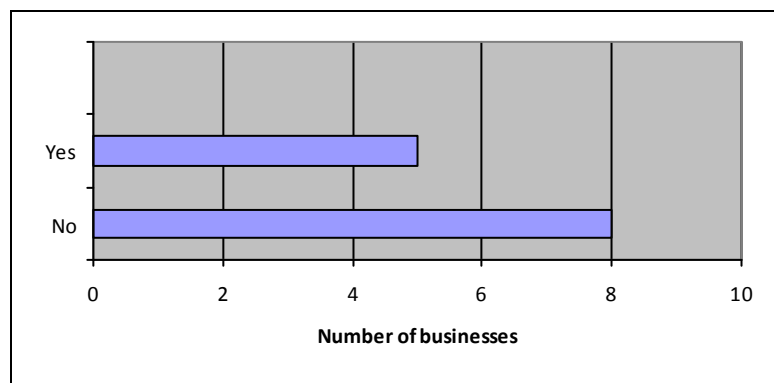
**Fig. 9: For how many years have you operated this business?**



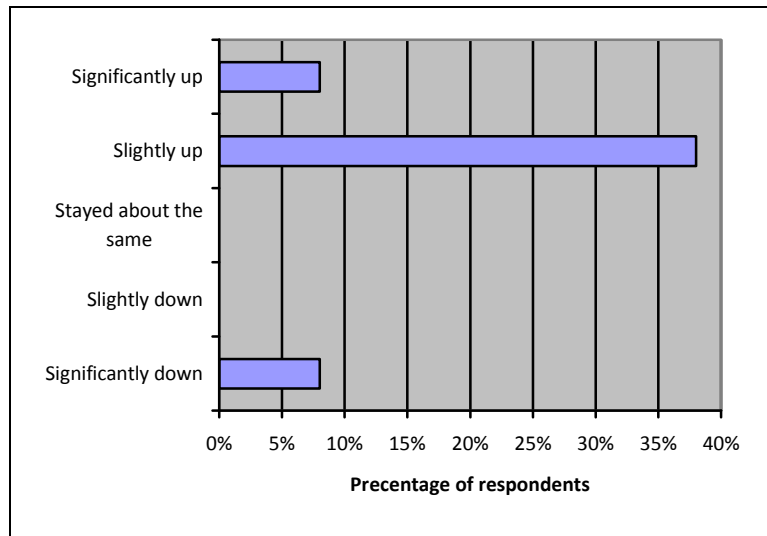
**Fig.10:In which months would you like to see an increase in your business?**



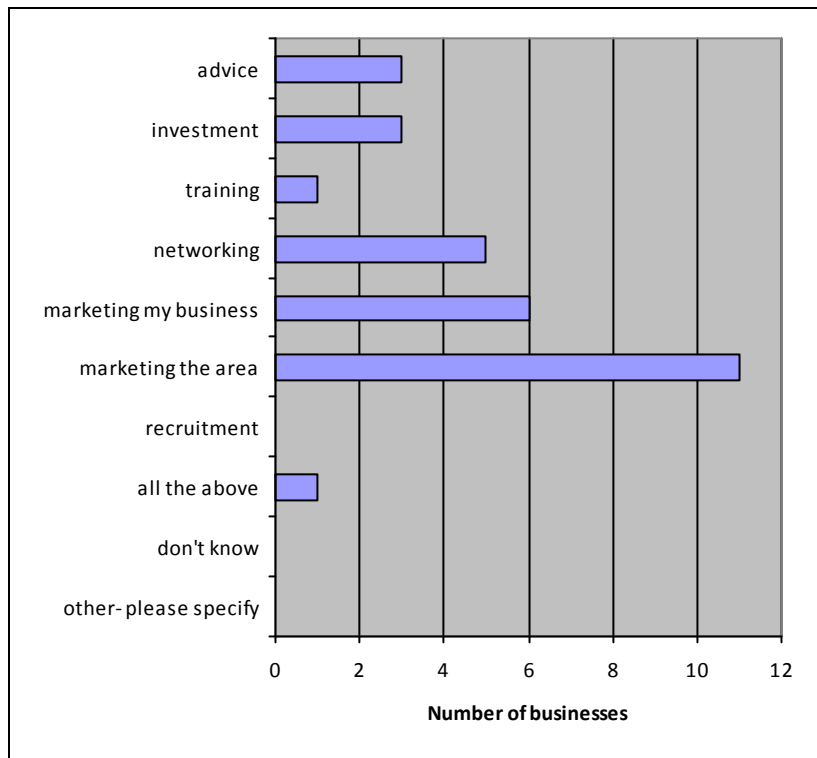
**Fig.11 : Do you have any expansion or development plans for your business?**



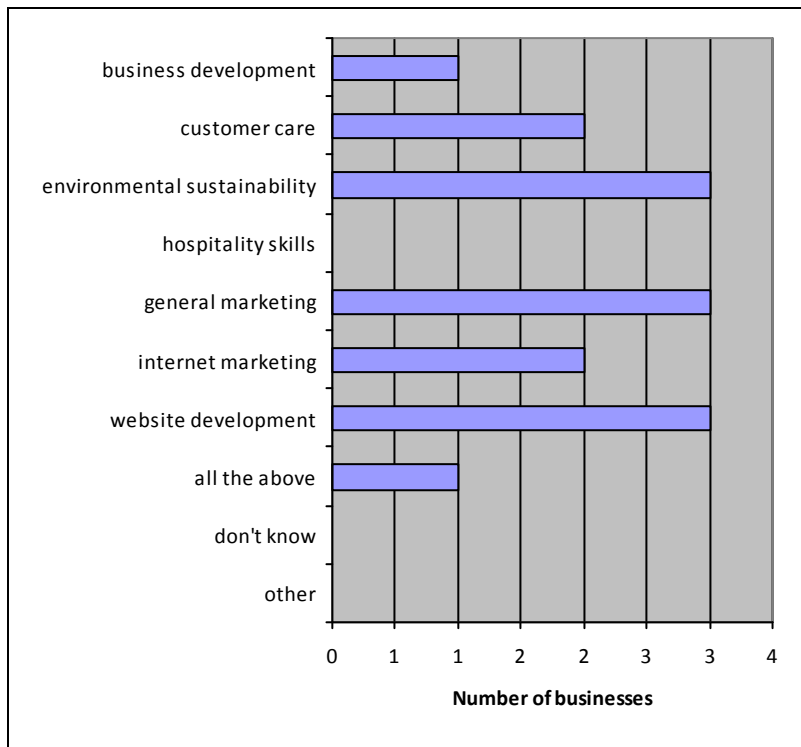
**Fig.12 : What has been the trend in your profitability in the last three years?**



**Fig.13 : What support from local authorities, tourism bodies or other organisations would be of greatest benefit to you in the development of your business?**



**Fig.14 : Are there any specific training needs to benefit you business, staff or other operators in the area?**



## 7.5 Visitor market segments

More detailed descriptions of the four ArkLeisure market segments used in County Durham.

### 1. Functionals

#### Outlook

- Functionals are very resistant to spending and appear pretty self reliant.
- They are very price driven and value functionality strongly over style.
- They are very traditional in their values, and are not prepared to pay for fashion, style or “individuality”.
- Service is something that they expect as opposed to something they will pay extra for.
- Whilst they are not early adopters they are interested in new experiences, and are happy to try new things.
- They also enjoy intellectual challenges, arts and culture.

#### Interests and Activities

- **Personal interests** – DIY, gardening, arts & culture.
- **Days out and attractions** – Interested in heritage attractions. Seeking a nostalgic and somewhat educational experience.
- **Shopping** – Higher propensity to use the lower cost supermarkets e.g. co-op. Budget clothes shops are used and a low amount spent on clothes purchases.
- **Eating & drinking** – Lower propensity to eat and drink out compared to other segments. Price & functionality is important. Social clubs or Weatherspoons pubs are favoured drinking establishments (price sensitive).
- **Nights out** – Most likely to be a trip to the cinema or a trip to the theatre.
- **Media** – Mail & Telegraph are the most popular newspapers. Lowest proportion of all segments owning satellite/ cable TV. Into news, films and comedy.
- **Holidays** – Most likely to choose a specialist operator or an independent holiday company. Unlikely to use a dedicated internet holiday company but quite likely to book accommodation online & arrange travel themselves. Low frequency of holiday taking and most likely to do a short break in the UK and a longer holiday overseas.

### 2. Traditionals.

#### Outlook

- Traditionals are a main stream market. Their members are relatively self reliant and internally referenced with possible tendencies towards being sustainers.
- Brand is not a key purchase driver for this segment but it does not mean that they are brand averse.
- They are more likely to hold traditional values.
- Functionality is far more important than style and they are not swayed by products with style and individuality, although they will still go for something out of the ordinary.
- They value good service, and this is something that they will pay for, especially in terms of individual attention.
- They are unlikely to justify spending on expensive alternatives.
- They live life at a relaxed pace and enjoy intellectual challenges, arts and culture.

#### Interests and Activities



- **Days out and attractions** - those that are geared towards heritage and investigation will appeal to the Traditionals. This includes National Trust attractions, churches and cathedrals and botanical gardens.
- They are looking for days out and attractions that are peaceful & relaxing, nostalgic and educational.
- **Personal interests** - include gardening and arts and culture.
- **Eating & Drinking** - For Traditionals, the traditional pub is the type of eating and drinking establishment that holds the greatest appeal.
- **A good night out** - for this segment would be going for a drink or a meal out.
- **Holidays** – Being an older segment, they are most likely to use Saga but also domestic niche operators (e.g. English Country Cottages). They are also most likely to use the telephone for booking.
- A good short break for Traditionals would give them the chance to escape, slow down and do their own thing.
- **Media** – Enjoy news, history and nature programmes on TV.

### 3. Discoverers

#### Outlook

- Discoverers as the name suggests are independent of Mind.
- They are the group least likely to be worried about what others might think.
- They are little influenced by style or brand unless it represents values they are seeking.
- Function far out rates style as a purchase driver.
- Quite high spenders, and value new products and services as well as new experiences.
- They will judge their value for themselves. If the product suits their needs and is right then they will spend their money.
- They value good service.
- They live a relatively relaxed pace of life.
- They enjoy intellectual challenges but arts and culture are not really an important part of who they are.

#### Interests and Activities

- **Personal interests** - Include attending sporting events, computer games and DIY.
- **Days out and attractions** - Discoverers are drawn towards attractions that are geared towards investigation and amusement. This could include attractions such as zoos, science museums or living history attractions. They want to be fascinated and absorbed by their days out and go for something out of the ordinary.
- **A good night out** - would involve live music.
- **Shopping** - a discoverer is looking for something that is different from the norm and is more likely to be attracted towards markets.
- **Eating and drinking** - the types of eating and drinking establishments that appeal to a Discoverer are modern, functional but service orientated (e.g. Ha Ha Bar & Canteen, Bar Med). This segment eats out frequently.
- **Media** – Have a wide variety of interests when it comes to TV viewing including films, sport, nature comedy and science programmes.
- **Holidays** – Independent travel companies (e.g. Trailfinders) appeal to this segment. They are a group likely to holiday off the beaten track or try to learn something new on their holiday. One of the least likely segments to book a package holiday.
- A good short break for a Discoverer allows them time to themselves, a chance to escape and the opportunity to expand their knowledge and experiences.

## 4. Cosmopolitans

### Outlook

- Strong, active and confident.
- Do what they want rather than follow any particular fashion.
- Stylish people but it is individuality rather than fashion that is important to them.
- Comfortable trying new things that are out of the ordinary.
- Happy to adopt traditional values when appropriate.
- Early adopters but this is generally based on their personal interest in new products and opportunities rather than on fashion trends. A result of this is that they are early to try out new products, especially in the field of new technology.
- Value and seek functionality in their purchases.
- High-spending market and find it easy to justify buying expensive alternatives.
- To be given individual attention is very important for Cosmopolitans and they are willing to pay for it.
- Are risk takers and this is reflected in their purchases and their desire for things that are new and different. They like new challenges, both physical and intellectual.
- Have an appreciation of art and culture.
- Life for this group is full and active, yet peace and relaxation is still valued in the right circumstances.

### Interests and Activities

- **Personal interests** - Cosmopolitans like shopping, cooking and arts and culture.
- **Days out and attractions** - Cosmopolitans have a slight bias towards heritage and arts or cultural attractions. Their active nature is also reflected in the fact that they have a strong appeal towards days out in the “great outdoors” – this could be visits to a National Park, a walk in the country side or a day at the beach. The atmosphere that they are looking for in a day out is something that is educational and something that is mentally challenging.
- **Shopping** - Cosmopolitans spend a lot of money on clothes and up market fashion chains (e.g. GAP) are where they are likely to be found. They also like places to shop that have a strong independent sector (e.g. antique shops or specialist shops).
- **Eating & drinking** - Cosmopolitans are the segment to eat out most often and are drawn to new, self found, or non-chain restaurants. Wine bars are popular for drinking.
- **Nights out** - Cosmopolitans have a range of nights out that appeal and these include comedy, cabaret, theatre and ballet.
- **Media** – Into films, news and comedy. Less time spent viewing TV than the majority of other segments.
- **Holidays** – Most likely segment to use the long haul and more independent operators (e.g. Kuoni, Expedia, Trailfinders or cruise operators).
- A good short break for a Cosmopolitan allows them to escape, do their own thing and expand their knowledge or experience.

There are four further segments in the ArkLeisure segmentation model which were not used in this study. Style Hounds, High Streets, Habituals and Followers were thought to be the least relevant segments for Durham market towns.