

market
town
welcome

Market Town Welcome

Destination Plan for Seaham

30 March 2009



“Seaham – the lively harbour town on Durham’s Heritage Coast”.

Report to County Durham Tourism Partnership and Easington District Council

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1. Introduction

This Destination Plan for Seaham sets out agreed common priorities for developing and promoting Seaham as a destination. 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 Seaham 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. It provides a useful overview of the changing visitor markets, the distinctive strengths of each stretch of the North East coastline and how coastal destinations could work towards developing attractive products and packages.

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 Seaham in recent years. This includes:

- Seaham Regeneration Strategy 1994
- East Durham Programme for Action – the Road to Success 1997-2001
- Seaham North Dock Proposals including an Audience Development Plan
- Heritage Coast Management Plan
- Durham Heritage Coast Sustainable Tourism Strategy 2004
- Masterplan for St John's Square 2005

The Turning the Tide Project has transformed the coastline over the last decade and it now has a growing positive reputation as Durham Heritage Coast. Since the Regeneration Strategy was published in 1994 there have been substantial improvements made across the town and many of the original regeneration projects have been achieved. The imminent St John's Square Development is the next important phase of the regeneration strategy.

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 visitor segmentation studies undertaken for One North East and County Durham Tourism Partnership in 2007 and the recent 2008 County Durham Visitor Survey, unfortunately there is no recent visitor survey for Seaham itself.
- A review of all local strategies and plans which the Destination Plan needs to link into and complement (outlined under 1.2 above).

Three workshops were held in February-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 target markets, the vision for Seaham as a destination and identified the action points.

2. Vision and objectives

2.1 Vision statement for Seaham

By 2020 Seaham will be popular as the lively harbour town on Durham's heritage coast. It will have the popular appeal of sandy beaches, sea air and ice creams blended with a stylish and dynamic 21st century offer including excellent shopping, places to stay, culture and events. The town's hub will be Seaham Harbour itself which will include a colourful marina, absorbing heritage centre, an activity base and café/restaurants with far-reaching views along the beautiful coastline.

This could convert to a possible strapline as "Seaham – the lively harbour town on Durham's Heritage Coast".

2.2 Overall objectives of the destination plan

The objectives of this destination plan are:

1. To strengthen Seaham's identity and profile as a lively harbour town and to promote the special Heritage Coast environment.
2. To develop Seaham Harbour Marina as the central attraction for the town using it as a hub to promote water activities, interpret the town's heritage and link to walking and wildlife along the coast and the shops and businesses in town
3. To better promote and enable visitors to enjoy Seaham's heritage particularly its early Christian links, mining heritage, connections to the Londonderrys and Lord Byron and unique flora and fauna.
4. To invest in environmental and infrastructural improvements to enhance the town's streetscape, better manage traffic and parking and ease visitor flows between harbour, beach and town centre.
5. To encourage more visitors by hosting events, competitions and promoting local arts and crafts, attracting people who are visiting Durham City and developing a loyal visitor base from nearby towns and cities.
6. To widen the range and improve the quality of the accommodation, retail and food and drink offers in the town.
7. To build on local artistic talent to develop exhibitions, events and performances and continue to integrate artistic elements into heritage interpretation and infrastructure.
8. To develop a sustainable, year round visitor economy offering a warm welcome, excellent service and value for money; generating repeat visits.
9. To encourage existing businesses to continue to invest in their properties and services and to encourage new business investment.
10. To encourage and support collaboration between local organisations and businesses to enable joint delivery of the destination plan actions.

3. Visitors to Seaham

The visitor is central to the Market Town Welcome approach. 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

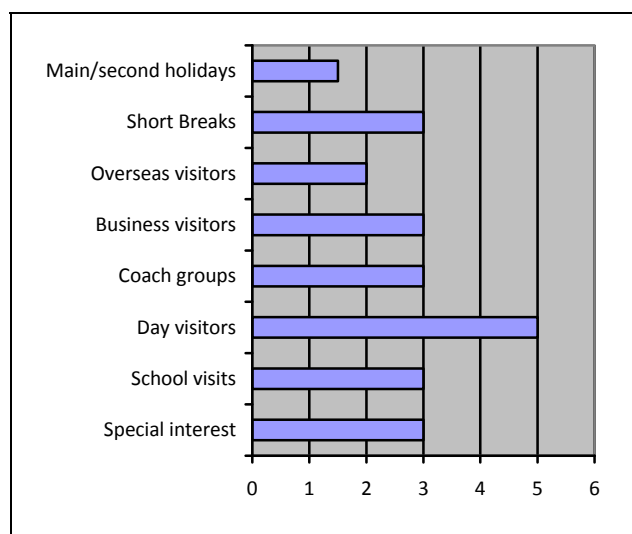
Recent visitor surveys can help answer these questions. The overall profile of visitors to County Durham from the 2007 North East visitor segmentation survey is as follows:

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

Businesses were asked what types of visitor were most important to their businesses. Day visitors were viewed as most significant – although some of the respondents ran accommodation businesses these were usually associated with a restaurant or bar and so they too found day visitors important customers.

Types of visitor



Importance 1= Low Importance 5 = Very Important

Businesses were asked what **activities** their visitors undertook and these included:

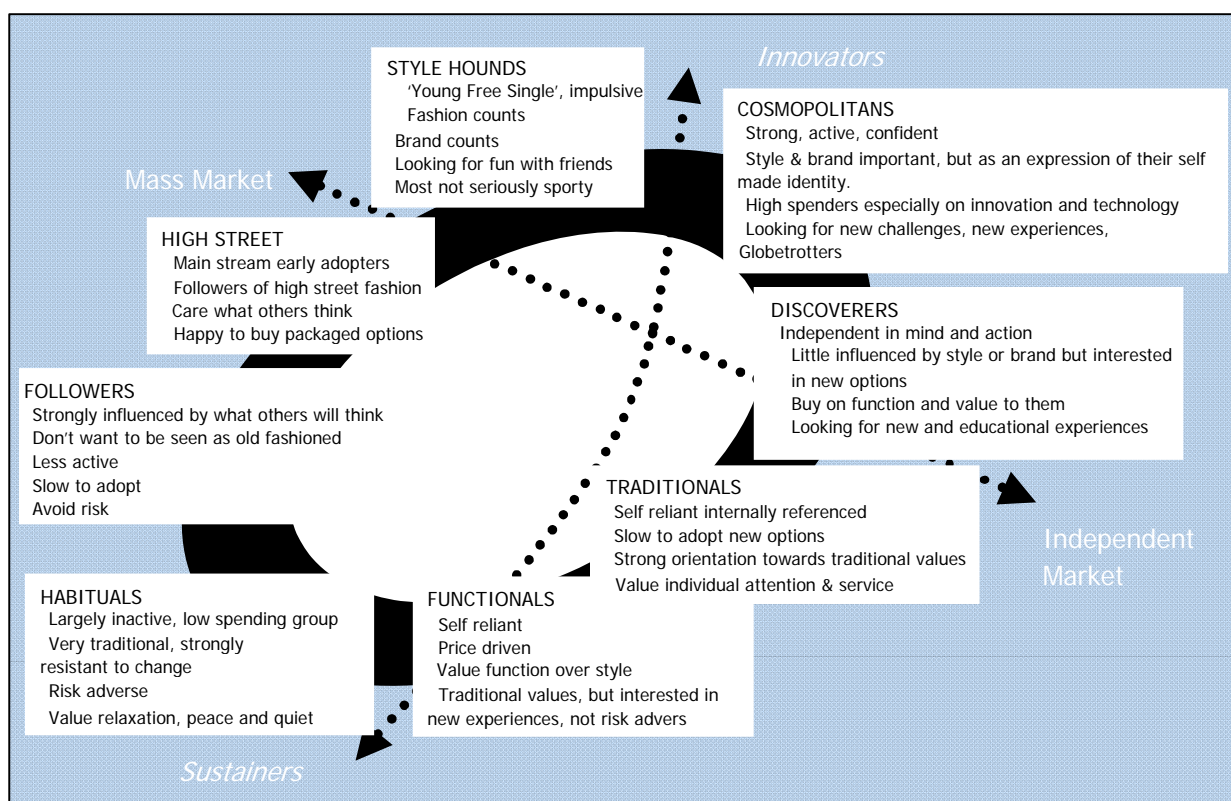
- visiting the beach
- visit friends and relatives
- business
- sightseeing
- walking
- history
- geology
- bird watching
- bikers
- shopping
- boating
- angling
- photography

Visitors with special interests included:

- walkers
- family history
- heritage
- marine activities

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.

Seaham is currently attracting visitors in the Functional and Traditional groups who will largely enjoy the town but be concerned about some of the derelict/unused buildings and poor shop fronts and be frustrated about poor tourist information, toilets and the relative lack of accommodation. Functionals are an important group as many of them are current visitors however they are one of the lower spending groups. In Seaham these may be the visitors who come to the beach but don't venture into town or use local businesses.

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 heritage, harbours and traditional shops, 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 Seaham to boost the number of visitors from this group. Discoverers can be more demanding, they like some occasional luxury and love exploring new areas. They will respond to new and educational experiences.

Seaham already attracts some Cosmopolitan visitors – to Seaham Hall Hotel in particular. However they currently will not be much attracted to the rest of the town. As more sea-based activities become available in the local area Seaham could entice more of these Cosmopolitans to the harbour area and nearby attractions. However they have high expectations of accommodation, food and facilities and may not return as they are always seeking new places.

This destination plan recommends a **strategy of targeting Traditional and Discoverer visitors** over the next five-ten years – developing the harbour, improving quality, creating interesting cultural and heritage offers, 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 towns and cities. Seaham will continue to have quite a strong appeal for two specific types – **family groups** (including grandparent/grandchildren groups) and people with **special interests in heritage, wildlife, sailing or walking**. These groups can also be added to Seaham's target markets.

As Seaham is relatively close to Durham City it should also be in a good position to attract visitors on holiday who are visiting Durham. It could link to Durham's World Heritage Site status and attract people to the Heritage Coast. It could cross-promote events. It could also promote itself as a complimentary seaside location close to the city – particular during the summer months. It is worth noting that 23% of visitors to the North East of England visit Durham City.

4. The Tourism Offer

4.1 What does our town offer visitors?

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

Visitors' Likes	Visitors' Dislikes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>access</i> • <i>views, beach</i> • <i>new shopping complex, coast, free parking</i> • <i>coastline, free parking</i> • <i>history, beach, walks, easy transport</i> • <i>positive attitudes of both visitors and locals</i> • <i>unspoilt coastline</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>lack of facilities/toilets/café</i> • <i>not many shops</i> • <i>not enough social activity features</i> • <i>blind entrance/exit to church</i> • <i>lack of parking in town and sea front</i> • <i>litter, cleanliness, dog mess</i> • <i>Church St – poor upkeep of buildings</i>

Seaham's USPs

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

- It's the only seaside and harbour town in County Durham
- The local mining heritage – mines extend under the sea and the port was built specifically for shipping the coal
- The town's Byron associations
- St Mary's Anglo Saxon church (1 of only 20 in UK)
- Seaham Hall Hotel and Spa – and its many awards
- The Heritage Coast and steep denes (and their transformation over recent years)
- Natural history – magnesium limestone flowers, meadows, butterflies etc
- Local stories such as lifeboat rescues, mining anecdotes and disasters, ghosts and a pirate's grave

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 contained in Annex 7.3. Some of the main gaps and issues identified include:

- Accommodation is limited with 2 hotels (54 bedspaces), 2 Guest Houses (20 bedspaces) plus about 4 self-catering units
- One hotel is 5 star luxury, the other is not inspected – only B&B in the mid range.
- No caravan/camping sites
- No hostels/group accommodation

- There is a limited range of visitor attractions such as museums, gardens, craft centres, historic houses etc
- St Mary's Church is only open 2 afternoons a week June-Sept, otherwise by appointment.
- There is quite a strong mainstream shopping offer with Dalton Park, Byron Place where there are lots of gift, outdoor/leisure and clothing shops
- But a more limited number of 'speciality' shops e.g. craft, antiques, books
- No regular market (French Market at Dalton Park several times a year)
- The weekly car boot sale on Sundays is popular but people don't then come into the rest of the town
- Quite a good range of eating options with 7 restaurants, 10 cafes/tea shops, plus 7 pubs serving food and 38 take-aways
- Most are open Sundays and there is some choice available in early evening 5-7pm as well as later on
- The main gap in terms of sport is the lack of a swimming pool
- There is no cycle hire available locally
- Relatively little for visitors to do in the evening
- The lack of a dedicated tourist information centre is felt to be a major gap
- There were some gaps in the provision of information points and visitor signposting
- There are few good locations where the views north and south along the coast can be enjoyed – there is no central viewing point giving views of the harbour and along the coastline.

The audit was used to develop the SWOT in the next section, supplemented with previous issues identified from other studies and strategies and from direct observation.

4.2 SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Seaside and clean beaches Promenade Free car parking Historic Georgian Harbour and docks (only port in County Durham) Heritage Coast and scenery Coastal Footpath Historic churches Daldon Tower Seaham Hall Hotel and Spa (5* and Michelin) Mining heritage National Trust links Some good restaurants Rail station Byron, Londonderry, Stephenson historic links Byron shopping centre and Dalton Park Fishing and sea angling Golf course Wildlife, natural history (e.g. denes) and geology Coastal activities e.g. sailing, diving Funshack Walks, trails and cycle routes New housing developments boosting economy Events e.g. Carnival Creative interpretation/artworks in several locations Major car boot sale on Sundays Several theatre groups Location close to large populations in towns and cities</p>	<p>Lack of visitor signage No main attraction - heritage centre/museum No TIC for information and to sell the area Few places open on Sundays Public toilets – difficult to find and some are poor quality Relatively little hotel/B&B accommodation (mid range and inspected) Attracting visitors into town from the coast Poor public transport Run down areas and buildings Inadequate parking in town centre Traffic management Old fashioned perceptions of the NE (black beaches, deprivation, Andy Capp) St Mary's not open Dilapidated buildings – some in prominent sites Lack of swimming pool, cinema Cleanliness levels, graffiti, litter Church street lacking quality shops</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p>Proposed development of the north dock for sailing marina/harbour Offer golf, karting, fishing as part of upmarket packages Provide more quality facilities in town to draw Seaham Hall type visitors into town Proposed film studios development Promote to special interest groups eg Christian and mining heritage, natural history Proposed new hotel and golf developments Plans to improve signage and visitor welcome facilities at key locations Customer service training Proposals for new rail stop on London-Sunderland routes Archaeological digs near Seaham Hall Interpret mining heritage, banners (whippets) Improve access to beaches Promote to visitors with disabilities Promote to National Trust members building on heritage coast Improved road linkages Proposed swimming pool Joint marketing with other NE coastal towns St John's Square development will draw more people through town – new civic space – better TI provision Attracting more school groups with an educational facility/heritage centre Move car boot sale into town or create better links with it Attracting more people who are visiting Durham City Attracting visitors arriving at nearby ferry ports</p>	<p>Increasing numbers of closed or run down shops Economic recession Worsening dilapidation of key buildings around town Key developments not going ahead Lack of coherence in the visitor offer Decreasing public sector and lottery funding</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.

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

- Improved town centre environment and atmosphere including shops with character
- Marina and harbour
- Heritage centre/museum inc facility to research family history, education role, a heritage trail
- Wider range of accommodation e.g. hotel and caravan park
- Better toilets
- Better links to Dalton Park e.g. shuttle bus
- More cafes and restaurants
- Wider range of activities easily accessible e.g. golf and fishing
- A town market and more local food and drink available

4.4 New developments currently planned

There are a range of new developments proposed for Seaham which need to be taken into account in this destination plan. The Harbour redevelopment is absolutely key to this plan and phase 2 is starting very soon. It is not known what stage most of the private sector proposals are at and they may be affected by the current economic downturn with implementation delayed. If they all go ahead there will be considerably more hotel accommodation and leisure facilities available which is very encouraging. Each project will help boost overall confidence and should help strengthen the case for further investment.

- **Seaham Harbour Marina**

Phase 2 of the redevelopment of the North Dock is due to start in May 2009 which will include installing a marina facility and new facilities such as a workshop building. Phase 3 of the redevelopment opening access to the north pier and connecting access between north and south docks is planned to follow.

- **St John's Square redevelopment**

Work on the redevelopment of this public space and derelict buildings is starting later this year. The development is a key project in the overall regeneration of Seaham and its economy. While it has limited direct implications for visitors it removes several derelict areas of the town centre, creates new civic space and will incorporate the town council offices which handle visitor information enquiries. There may be scope for some exhibition space and potential for displays of the town's heritage.

- **New golf centre and hotel development**

Plans include an 18 hole pay as you go course, a 16 bay driving range, club house and bar, plus a 26 bedroom hotel.

- **Film studios development which also includes proposals for a hotel**

There is planning consent for a Centre of Creative Excellence comprising film studios, education facilities, hotel and leisure facilities on land south of the A182 Dawdon link road

- **Seaham Hall car park and toilets upgrade**
- **Signage improvements**
- **More welcome information and signage at station**
- **Visitor welcome training**

The above four projects are being implemented by Durham Heritage Coast Partnership over the next 18 months and will address several key areas of weakness identified earlier in this section.

- **Seaton Lane Inn**

New extension with an additional 19 bedrooms opening 2009.

- **Seaham Hall Hotel**

Plans for a new accommodation block and additional conference facilities.

5. Destination Management and Promotion

5.1 The Strategy

Section 2 outlined the plan's vision and objectives; section 3 identified which visitor markets Seaham should focus on - Traditionals and Discoverers, plus family groups and special interest visitors; 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 Seaham 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 plan's objectives Seaham needs to invest in the Harbour redevelopment to make that the core attraction which everyone will want to visit. It has the potential in one development to deliver many aspects of the plan including more to see and do, activities, heritage, new catering and addressing some of the rundown areas of town. The Harbour provides the opportunity to make more of marine, nautical and activity themes all of which are appealing to visitors. To support this other areas of the town's tourism product need improving or extending such as the accommodation stock and other leisure facilities. Events will attract new visitors and celebrate the many arts, culture, music and drama groups in the town.

In order to make Seaham work better as a destination, visitors need to find parking easily, then find their way around, feeling safe and enjoying an attractive environment. In order to attract more visitors and ensure people stay longer and return the town needs to invest in its environment, shop frontages, signage and find a way of providing tourist information more effectively. There are already opportunities for walking, cycling and exploring the natural and built 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 'consume' is a priority.

5.2 The future visitor experience

The overall vision for Seaham 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 Seaham in future:

- The town's must-see attraction will be Seaham Harbour itself which will include a colourful marina, absorbing heritage centre, activity base and café/restaurants with far-reaching views along the beautiful coastline.
- Visitors will soak up the nautical atmosphere, enjoy the bustling market or entertainment and perhaps view a historic boat in the harbour, before wandering along the north pier, watching the anglers and the birdlife.
- At the harbour heritage centre they will enjoy learning about how the dock was built to ship coal serving the local mining industry established by the famous Londonderry family. Visitors will be inspired by the transformed harbour and coastline which are testament to a strong and forward looking community.
- From the harbour visitors will either head out to sea or along the seafront and coast. Waterbased activities will include not only sailing but canoeing and kite surfing for all abilities. Landlubbers will enjoy a stroll along the seafront, following the heritage trail,

browsing in interesting shops and eating in attractive cafes and restaurants. Those wanting to further stretch their legs will walk the beautiful coastal footpath to explore the unique coastal dunes, discover rare wildflower meadows and soak up the sea views.

- Seaham will offer a complete visitor experience – from an easy, well-signed arrival by car or train to convenient parking and a welcoming central piazza area linking the town and shopping areas with the harbour and seafront.
- Nippy shuttle buses link all the town's attractions and ferry visitors to Seaham Hall, St Marys Anglo Saxon Church, Noses Point, Dalton Park, the golf courses, theatre, swimming pool and the exciting new film studios.
- Visitors will have the choice of good hotels, traditional B&Bs, holiday apartments or a caravan park all at recognized quality standards.
- Seaham will be enlivened by a thriving local culture including arts and crafts exhibitions and demonstrations organized by the strong local artistic community and music and drama organized by several local groups.
- The town will stage occasional big events such as national and international angling competitions, brass bands parades, kite flying competitions and perhaps even a Byron festival.

5.3 Destination priorities

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

1. Harbour redevelopment
2. Product development
3. Develop marine and activity themes
4. Events
5. Marketing and promotions
6. Visitor management, information and signage
7. Environmental improvements
8. Leadership and business engagement

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

6.2 Seaham Destination Plan – Action Plan

Actions shaded in blue are key projects and are described in more detail in section 6.3 below.

	Destination Plan projects	Priority	Timescale	Lead	Partners	Funding
no.		VH/H/M/L	QW/S/M/L	1/2/3/4		
1. Harbour redevelopment						
1.1	install moorings, marina, slipway and develop sailing activity	VH	S underway soon	2		
1.2	develop land above harbour and across to town centre as attractive and useful public space	VH	S-M	2+3+4		
1.3	visitor/education/heritage centre	H	M	2+4	CDTP	
1.4	reopen north pier promenade and link coastal footpath	H	M	2+4		
1.5	develop sea-based activities	H	S-M	2+3		
1.6	develop the port as a venue for events, activities (link to Durham City of Culture)	H	S-M	1+2	CDTP	
1.7	maritime exhibit eg sailing cobble boat at the harbour	M	M	2+4		
1.8	coastal viewing tower and café/restaurant	M	M	3		
2. Product development						
2.1	new accommodation - hotel development	VH	S	3		
2.2	encourage all accommodation to be inspected and upgrade	VH	QW-S CDTP	1+3		
2.3	film studio development	VH	S-M	3		
2.4	golf development	H	S-M	3		
2.5	establish a new market (possibly specialised) in the town centre	H	S-M	2+3		
2.6	swimming pool	H	M	2		
2.7	new interpretation panel at St Mary's Church	H	QW	1		
2.8	low cost accommodation eg caravan/camping park (pos on land near	M	M-L	2+3		

	Destination Plan projects	Priority	Timescale	Lead	Partners	Funding
	Seaham Hall Hotel/cemetery)					
2.9	archaeological dig at Seaham Hall site – with public access to view	M	QW	4		
3. Develop marine and activity themes						
3.1	develop marine theme sea food, fishing, sailing – linked to 1 above.	H	S-M	1+3		
3.2	fresh fish for sale at the harbour as part of or in addition to the new market	H	S-M	1+3		
3.3	equipment rental eg bikes, kites, fishing, deck chairs	H	S	3		
3.4	international fishing competition	M	M	1+3		
3.5	encourage kite flying	M	S	1+3		
4. Events						
4.1	develop a calendar of events	VH	S	1+2	Town Council/CDTP	
4.2	develop an events venue in town with local groups	H	S	1		
4.3	music festival, brass bands	H	S	1		
5. Marketing and promotions						
5.1	new/revamped visitor website for Seaham	VH	QW	1 CDTP		
5.2	attract visitors from Durham City (cross promotion, fam trips, marketing links)	H	QW/ongoing	2 CDTP		
5.3	promote Seaham as base for nature and wildlife breaks	H	S	2	DHC/CDTP	
5.4	way mark heritage trail and promote further	H	S	1		
5.5	visitor survey to understand current visitors better, repeated every few years to monitor trends	H	QW	1 CDTP		
5.6	Develop links with the car boot sale and Dalton Park to promote Seaham to their visitors	H	QW-S	1		
5.7	attract visitors arriving from ferries (leaflets, website, offers)	M	S	2+3 ONE		

	Destination Plan projects	Priority	Timescale	Lead	Partners	Funding
6. Visitor management, information and signage						
6.1	Seaham Hall car park/toilets improvements	VH	QW-S	1		
6.2	signage improvements on arrival routes and to car parks, key facilities	VH	S	1		
6.3	more information and signs from rail station	VH	QW-S	1		
6.4	develop tourist information centre facility in good location	VH	S-M	2 CDTP	DCC, STC	
6.5	traffic management and parking strategy	H	S	2	DCC	
6.6	designate coach drop off and parking areas	H	S	2		
6.7	railway stop at Seaham on Kings Cross route	H	S-M	2+4	DCC, Network rail, arriva/ CDTP	
6.8	Shuttle bus linking Seaham Hall, Harbour, Noses Point, Dalton Park, car boot sale site	H	S	2+3	DCC	
6.9	maintain and publicise walking and cycling routes	H	ongoing	2		
6.10	open up Seaham incline as pedestrian route from Station into town centre	M	M	2		
7. Environmental improvements						
7.1	church street improvements of facades and shop fronts	VH	S	2+3		
7.2	improved maintenance - litter, graffiti etc	VH	ongoing	2	Pride, co council, resident assocs	
7.3	enhance open area between church street and Byron Place	H	S	2		
7.4	redevelop/demolish key derelict buildings	H	S-M	2+3		
7.5	flower displays, participate in Britain in Bloom, roundabout displays	H	QW-S	2+3	Vol sector, shops, schools	
7.6	improved access to beaches – esp south beaches	H	S-M	2		
7.7	St John's Square redevelopment	M	underway soon	2		

	Destination Plan projects	Priority	Timescale	Lead	Partners	Funding
7.8	enhance streetscapes, trees, open space etc eg Railway St	M	S-M	2		
8. Leadership and business engagement						
8.1	visitor welcome/customer care/local knowledge training	VH	QW	1	CDTP, DCC	
8.2	develop active leadership/business development group/development trust to co-ordinate plan implementation	VH	S	1+3	CDTP	

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:

1. Harbour Marina - install moorings, marina, slipway and develop sailing activity
2. Visitor/education/heritage centre
3. Develop land above harbour and across to town centre as attractive and useful public space
4. Accommodation
5. Signage improvements
6. Develop a calendar of events
7. New/revamped visitor website for Seaham
8. Develop tourist information centre facility in good location
9. Church street improvements of facades and shop fronts
10. Develop active leadership/business development group to co-ordinate plan implementation

Each is described in more detail below.

1.	Harbour Marina - install moorings, marina, slipway and develop sailing activity
Project no.	1.1
Priority action	Implement phase 2 of the North Dock redevelopment to establish an attractive harbour environment, working marina and enable sailing and other water based activities to take place.
Cost	
Lead Delivery Organisation	
Other Partners	Friends Of North Dock
Key Issues	Phase 2 may include the development of workshops including watersports equipment hire and a café facility. There may be scope for some element of integration with the next key project the heritage centre proposals. Phase 3 will need to be programmed to follow the completion of phase 2 in order to ensure the Harbour is used to its full potential and that full public access is ensured. The idea of having a historic boat such as a traditional fishing cobble moored is very attractive but may take up too much space. Failing this, periodic visits from such a boat to tie in with events would be good.
Timetable	Phase 2 starting May 2009
Next steps	

2.	Develop land above harbour and across to town centre as attractive and useful public space
Project no.	1.2
Priority action	Create attractive and useful public space as focal point linking the town's

	retail offer and harbour.
Cost	
Lead Delivery Organisation	
Other Partners	
Key Issues	<p>As the harbour is redeveloped it will become the main focus for visitors to Seaham. An important objective will then be to ensure good visual and pedestrian linkage with the town's shopping areas particularly Byron Place and Church Street. There are quite large areas of open ground currently above the harbour and also outside Byron Place. It is vital that these are designed and used to best effect to create an attractive focal point for the town. If they are compromised by poorly located or inappropriate development the opportunity is gone forever. Obviously the main seafront road runs through the space but there may be scope to slow vehicles down with speed humps and to reduce the number using the road through the shuttle proposals.</p> <p>Links between Church Street and Byron Place would be improved by removing many of the current barriers – this link road is now only used by buses and pedestrian safety should not be compromised by this. The space at the foot of Church Street and across to Byron Place might prove attractive for locating the proposed new market.</p> <p>Trade-offs may be possible – for example if a development is planned on the green triangle of grass outside Byron Place, this could be exchanged with the site of the now disused public toilets on the corner of Church Street. The corner location would consolidate the streetscape whereas the grass triangle site is in the middle of the open space.</p> <p>On the harbour side of the road the SureStart building has potential for visitor usage as does the old coastal centre. Some of the space might be useful for parking e.g. for disabled parking spaces or for a central coach drop off. However the priority across this area needs to be enhancing the environment of the area overlooking the harbour, making the most of views up and down the coastline, creating attractive and usable public space – perhaps that the market could use or that could be used for events. The area overlooking the Harbour should be as attractive and welcoming as the Harbour itself at the lower level. There is potential for public art and performance/events/market space.</p> <p>If some other developments such as housing are required to make the financial case viable then these should be located so as not to compromise the public space and should be limited in number.</p>
Timetable	
Next steps	Liaison with planning authorities, transport engineers, land owners.

3.	Visitor/education/heritage centre
Project no.	1.3
Priority action	To investigate potential for a new visitor/heritage centre at the Harbour to tell Seaham's stories.
Cost	
Lead Delivery	

Organisation	
Other Partners	CDTP
Key Issues	<p>There is no one place where the story of Seaham is told. The interpretation boards in several locations give visitors brief snippets and the heritage trail is followed by a small proportion of visitors. The aspiration voiced by partners is for a multi-purpose facility which would not only act as a visitor centre presenting the town's heritage but could also incorporate additional facilities such as a tourist information centre, space for educational groups, exhibitions, meetings or drama performances. Revenue funding for heritage centres is notoriously problematic so a model needs to be developed which would be self-sustaining. This could include a café, shop or other revenue raising elements.</p> <p>The best location would be at the Harbour or just above it (see key project 2 above). It might be possible to integrate it with the building for water sports/equipment hire (3.3) or with other shop/café type units. Existing buildings which might be redeveloped include the derelict buildings on the harbour side, the old coastal centre building (also derelict) or the Sure Start building. New build might be a preferable option. New build might enable the aspiration for a coastal viewing tower or platform (project 1.8 to be incorporated in the plans).</p>
Timetable	
Next steps	Discuss feasibility in relation to harbour marina development phase 2 and other existing buildings. Identify potential joint uses and funding streams. Commission feasibility study.

4.	Accommodation
Project no.	2.1 and 2.2
Priority action	Upgrade uninspected accommodation and develop new accommodation
Cost	Officer time.
Lead Delivery Organisation	CDTP
Other Partners	
Key Issues	<p>Accommodation in Seaham varies between some of the best in the region and non inspected accommodation with poor signage which detracts from the seafront environment. There is limited supply in the mid/high range which the majority of people desire. There is also little low value accommodation such as caravan/camping. There are plans for accommodation extensions at existing operations and also for two new hotels which may meet the immediate needs when they are built (and they are likely to be delayed due to the economic downturn). In the interim there may be potential for individual properties to consider offering bed and breakfast. Tourism bodies and local authorities could support people considering converting accommodation by helping them with the necessary regulations and inspections and signposting business advice.</p> <p>Just as important is to encourage existing operators to upgrade so that they will meet quality standards and to enter the inspection scheme.</p>
Timetable	
Next steps	Contact existing accommodation owners. Signpost new enquirers. Monitor

	demand for accommodation.
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5. Develop a calendar of events	
Project no.	4.1
Priority action	Build on the existing events to strengthen and extend key events and to identify opportunities for new events during gaps in the calendar.
Cost	Small amounts over several years
Lead Delivery Organisation	
Other Partners	Town Council, CDTP
Key Issues	A range of groups and organisations already run the current events. Their plans and aspirations could inform a discussion about opportunities for new or extended events and how these could be targeted for visitors. Capacity and support are very important for volunteers organising events – see common themes below.
Timetable	
Next steps	Discussion between events organisers – potentially establish an events forum to network and support across all events.

6. New/revamped visitor website for Seaham	
Project no.	5.1
Priority action	Improve Seaham's profile and information on the net.
Cost	
Lead Delivery Organisation	CDTP
Other Partners	
Key Issues	Seaham will attract more visitors if it has a fresh, modern and up to date presence on the net. There is scope for a Seaham visitor website sitting alongside but separate from the town website. It should have a modern and fresh appeal for visitors with good photography. It should incorporate the key themes and messages identified in this plan. It could be relatively simple with just six or eight pages linking to the visit Durham website, town website or Heritage Coast website for further information. It needs to be optimised so that people searching for Seaham will find it immediately.
Timetable	
Next steps	Identify funding/resources to implement, identify examples of good practice, draw up a brief and put work out to web designers for tender.

7. Signage improvements	
Project no.	6.2 and 6.3
Priority action	To review and address signage gaps and problems around the town and at entry points.

Cost	
Lead Delivery Organisation	
Other Partners	
Key Issues	Some signage issues are being addressed through the Heritage Coast team's WAVE project. The coverage of this should be clarified and any issues not being addressed identified separately. For example town welcome signs could be commissioned to create a greater sense of arrival and welcome. It is also important to check and maintain signage for all local footpaths and cycle routes.
Timetable	
Next steps	Liaise with Heritage Coast staff to identify what can be included in current plans. Consult over further proposals.

8.	Develop tourist information centre facility in good location
Project no.	6.4
Priority action	To establish a tourist information facility in a good location for visitors.
Cost	
Lead Delivery Organisation	CDTP
Other Partners	Durham County Council, CDTP, Town Council
Key Issues	<p>Visitor information is currently handled by the town council from their offices. These will be relocating into the new St John's Square site when it is completed in 2009/2010. Whilst this is a better location than the current one it is not good for visitors. They will be able to seek it out if they have a specific query. However the best location for a tourist information centre to maximise its usage and benefits is as a hub at the central visitor focus of a town.</p> <p>The options for other locations and resources should be considered – either within the existing plans for the harbour, or within the proposed visitor/heritage centre at its possible locations. Other options might include a modern kiosk type facility in the square in front of Byron Place, shared space in another business in a suitable location or some form of new technology solution such as a touch screen or interactive kiosk.</p>
Timetable	
Next steps	Discuss options and potential funding for tourist information. If the heritage/visitor centre is progressed that is likely to be the best option but if that does not progress other options should be considered.

9.	Church street improvements of facades and shop fronts
Project no.	7.1
Priority action	Target poor properties along Church Street.
Cost	
Lead Delivery	

Organisation	
Other Partners	
Key Issues	<p>Church Street contains examples of good and also of very poor shop frontages. In many cases it is not just the shop front but the whole building façade that needs maintenance and repair. The current overall impression is poor and the issue has been highlighted by all stakeholders. Many towns have implemented shop frontage grant schemes with incentives for businesses to upgrade and there has been one on offer in Seaham. Best practice in encouraging take-up could be sought from other towns. Powers to enforce repairs or maintenance could also be reviewed for those properties not occupied or where owners refuse to address serious problems. As much support as possible should be given not only with a financial grant but also in design guidelines, best practice and sourcing appropriate suppliers. It may be possible to find temporary uses for empty shops or at least set up an attractive window display with the owner's co-operation.</p> <p>The maintenance of the streetscape is also important – removing graffiti, street cleaning and maintenance of planting etc.</p>
Timetable	
Next steps	.

10.	Develop active leadership/business development group to co-ordinate plan implementation
Project no.	8.2
Priority action	Develop an effective group to lead the implementation of this destination plan
Cost	
Lead Delivery Organisation	
Other Partners	CDTP
Key Issues	<p>There is currently no business group, retailers or tourism association or network in Seaham. There has been little history of this sort of private sector collaboration. The public sector is currently being re-organised and there is some uncertainty as to how the new arrangements will work. There is therefore something of a vacuum in terms of having a strong leadership to drive forward the implementation of this destination plan.</p> <p>Establishing a business group or network would have many benefits in itself helping communication and providing a forum to discuss common issues. Such a group might help in the establishment of a town market and could help support key town events. Opportunities such as business advice, grants, training and support can be more easily targeted to businesses belonging to some collective body.</p> <p>A clear role for the group needed to implement this plan is required. It could operate just to oversee implementation by partners and to co-ordinate joint action. There could however also be an option whereby a new body is established such as a Development Trust which can employ staff and take a much more hands on role with new projects. One model could lead into another over time.</p>

Timetable	
Next steps	Identify examples of good practice and discuss options both for a business organisation and for a town partnership group or body.

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**

There is currently no good map or map based leaflet for Seaham. The town guide is rather dated in design and quite a large booklet. The walks leaflet is attractive but doesn't cover all aspects of the town. There is scope for producing a map based leaflet for Seaham 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 Seaham visitor website – see key project 6 above. It could sit alongside the town website but should have a modern and fresh appeal for visitors. It could be relatively simple with just six or eight pages linking to the visit Durham website, town website or Heritage Coast website for more information. It needs to be optimised so that people searching for Seaham 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 identity.

- **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.

- **Transport – linking things up**

Linking up attractions which are spread around different locations arose as an issue in some of the towns – especially Seaham and Barnard Castle. Options for addressing this could include better signage for cars and pedestrians and good visitor maps. However in some locations a visitor transport option such as a shuttle bus might be feasible. Towns could check what others have considered and look for successful models amongst other market towns in the region or further afield.

- **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 involves ensuring local tourism related businesses are able to participate in discussion and implementation of this plan. 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 survey**

Both Bishop Auckland and Seaham were not included in previous market town visitor surveys (last undertaken in 2004). They have much less data on their visitors – who is coming currently, where they stay and how much they spend. It would be very valuable to undertake a standard visitor survey – ideally in 2009 or, if not, in 2010 in order to collect data which can then be collected again a few years later to monitor trends. In fact the same survey could be undertaken in all four of Durham's market towns to enable benchmarking – it can be very valuable to be able to measure each town's performance against each other to identify specific issues and problems for future action.

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

How we work out the answers

Town role

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?)

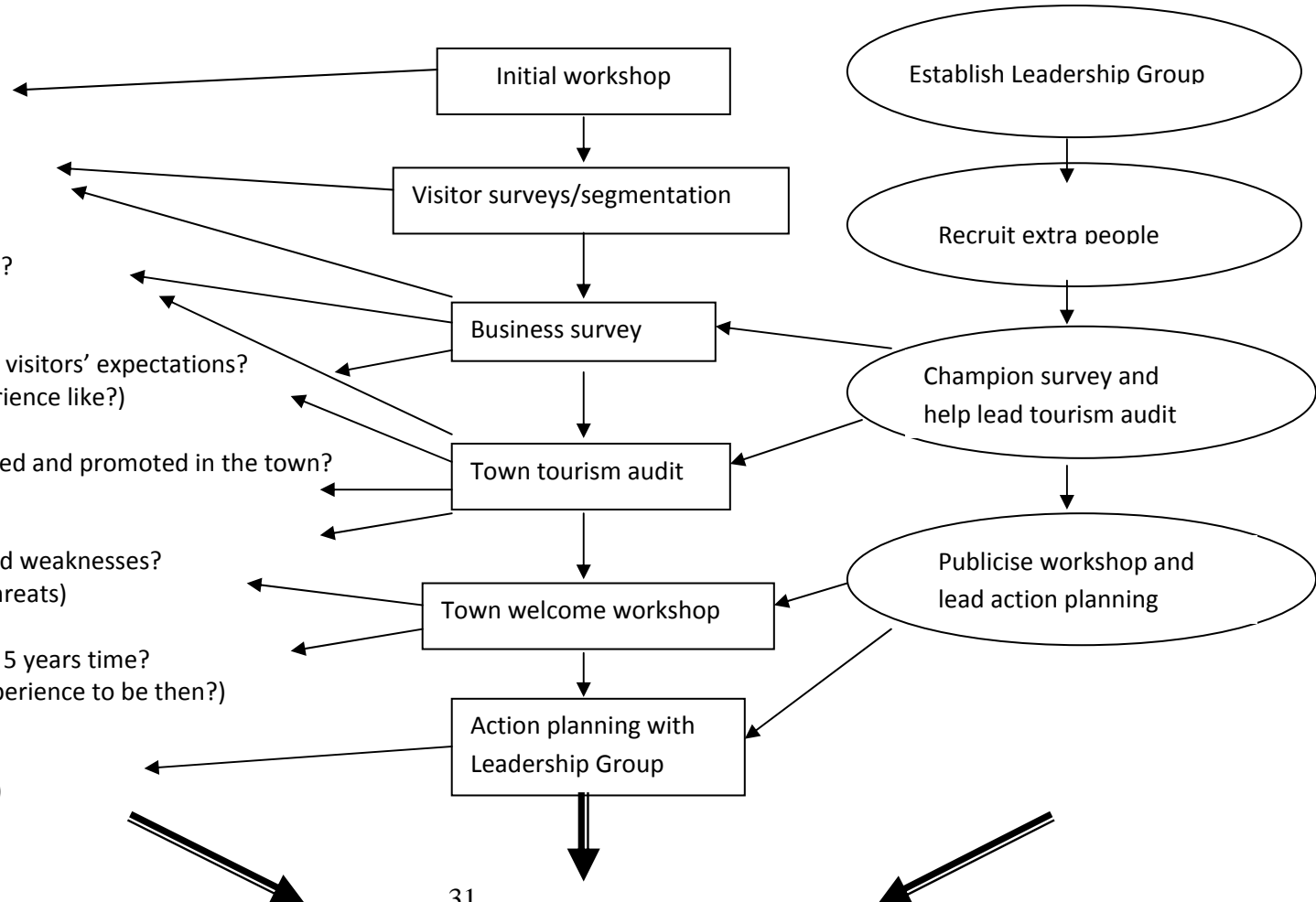
Step 4 How well does the offer meet the visitors' expectations?
(what is the current visitor experience like?)

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?)



Market Town Destination Plan for our town

7.2 Market Town Welcome in Seaham - Participants

Individuals who have contributed to the development of this plan:

John Brady	Byron Shopping Centre
Claire Fewster	County Durham Economic Partnership
Melanie Sensicle	County Durham Tourism Partnership
Louise Elliot	County Durham Tourism Partnership
Alex Mackee	County Durham Tourism Partnership
Robert Arthur	Durham County Council
Elaine Hogg	Durham County Council
Bill Harris	East Durham Artists Network
Graham Tinkler	East Durham Business Service
Tony Foster	Easington District Council
Lisa Jordan	Easington District Council
Melanie Lowes	Easington District Council
Andrew Wood	Easington District Council
Lynsey Garraghan	Easington District Council
Niall Benson	Heritage Coast Partnership
Gavin Leng	Martinos Seaham
Denis Rooney	National Trust
Barry Giles	North Pier Lodge Apartments
Yvonne Potter	Poppies
Cllr Ron Meir	SDVT Banner Fund
Robert Reynolds	Seaham Environmental Agency
John Foreman	Seaham Environmental Agency
Dick Glover	Seaham Environmental Agency
W R Place	Seaham Environmental Agency
Tonia Schofield	Seaham Hall carpark
Mike Beveridge	Seaham Hall Hotel
Norman Conn	Seaham Marina Development
Margaret Forster	Seaham Town Council
Cllr Eddie Mason	Seaham Town Council
Mike Preston	Seaham Town Council
Jean Young	Seaham Town Council
Cllr Charlie Walker	Seaham Town Council
Lisa Wilkinson	Seaham Town Council
Carol Weightman	Sharpley Springs
Ray & Alice Armbrister	St Mary the Virgin Church

7.3 Tourism Audit

Market town area is defined within an approximate radius of 3 miles from the town edge.

Which includes the hamlets/settlements of Seaham, Seaton, Dalton le Dale, (Dalton Park, Murton)

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

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

	Number		No. of bedspaces, units or pitches	Number officially quality inspected
Hotels	2	Seaham Hall Hotel	38 (all double or twin rooms)	5 star
		Harbour View Hotel	16 3 double, 2 twin, 2 single, 1 family	Not inspected
Guesthouses/B&Bs	1	North Pier Lodge	12 6 bedrooms	3 star
	2	Pan Din Thai	8 4 rooms	4 star
Inns or pubs with accommodation				
Self-Catering businesses		North Pier Lodge	3 apartments	3 star
		Slingley Farm Cottage	1 cottage sleeping 4	4 star
Caravan & Camping sites		none		
Youth or other hostels		none		
Other group accommodation		none		

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

Limited number of mid range accommodation, no caravan or camping sites. Few B&Bs or self-catering.

2. Attractions

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

	Names	Opening days/months	Your quality score*
Historic houses, castles	Daldon Tower	24 Hours	2
Museums, heritage centres			
Churches of interest to visitors	St. Marys	Wed and Sat 2-4pm June-Sept, otherwise by appointment	3
	St. Andrew's	Key holders locally	3
Animal/wildlife attractions inc. nature reserves	Rock House Dene	24 Hours	3
Farm attractions			
Gardens			
Railway, transport attractions			
Country parks, woodlands, special countryside sites	1 Community Woodlands at Hazel Dene, Crow wood	24 Hours	Hazel Dene – 2
	2 Heritage Coast via Seaham Hall and Noses Point	24 hours	Crow Wood – 1 Heritage Coast - 4
Craft centres			
Other	Seaham Hall Hotel	Paying Guests Only	5
	North Dock	Free	2
	Beach	Free	4
	Promenade	Free	4
	Terrace Green	Free	4
	Dalton Park	Free	5
	Byron Place	Free	4
Art Gallery	East Durham Artists Network Gallery and Information Centre	Thursday to Saturday 10 am to 4 pm or by prior arrangement	3

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

2b Festivals and Events

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

Date	Event	Details
24th April	Mayor's Civic Ball	Dinner, Dance, Band, Disco, Tombola
4 th May	May Festival	Free Family Fun Day in Deneside Park
July	Mayor at Home	Public invited to meet and have refreshments with Mayor.
July	Durham Big Meeting	Brass bands parade through Seaham en route to Durham.
26 th July	Seaham Carnival	Free Family Fun Day music/arena, Acts, stalls, fairground, parades of schools and mining banners
September	Heritage Open Days	North Dock/ St. Mary's Church/Coastal/Arts
6 th November	Fireworks Display	Free Family Events Seaham Promenade
November	Remembrance Parade	Parade through the town
26 th November	Xmas Light Switch On	Carol Singing, Father Christmas, Entertainment
November	Sea Angling Competition	Prizes

Are there any gaps, for example at particular times of the year	No
Does the range of events match the types of interests that visitors have?	Yes

3. Retail

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
Speciality Food	1	Julian Graves
Antiques	0	
Books	0	Books are sold in Asda supermarket
Arts / Crafts	2	Suzy's Miniatures Edan Workshop
Gift	14	Occasions Park Lane Cards & Gifts Chapelle Jewellery Claire's Accessories Crabtree & Evelyn Oneida Past Times Room Fancy That Boots the Chemist Eilbecks Lloyds Pharmacy Co-op Chemist Local Glass & Glazing
Outdoor/Leisure	12	Cotton Traders Mountain Warehouse Regatta Tog 24 Brand Fusion Adidas Fila Lillywhites Nike Factory Store Reebok Seaham Sea Angling Supplies Seaham Golf Club Pro-Shop
Clothing	29	Select Peacocks George Alin Bros. Mackays J.D. Fashion Ethel Austins Alexara Autonomy

		Baron Jon Camille Designer Room D.S.L. Gap Joseph Klass Kurt Muller Levis Mad House Marks & Spencer Next Oasis Petroleum Pilot Racing Green Rock Port Roman Originals Suits U Young's
Garden centres/ nurseries	4	Richardsons Shaw Trust Seaham Pet & Garden Centre Tikkas, Seaton
Other Speciality or 'destination' shops	3	Dickie Didos Drive2Data Viva Complementary Health
Supermarkets	4	Asda Co-op Somerfields Aldi

Markets

Market type	name	regularity	day(s) of week	Your quality score				
				5	4	3	2	1
Outdoor	-							
Indoor	-							
Speciality	French Market @ Dalton Park	A few times a year			√			
Other	Car Boot Sale	Weekly	Sunday		√			

Eating out

	No.	Names (omit if too many to list)	5	4	3	2	1
Restaurants	7	Martino's Mango Classico		5	2		

		Pan Din Thai Restaurant Seaham Hall Restaurants Carvery Plus Restaurant at East Shore Village					
Take-aways	38	Seaham Snack Bar & Takeaway Greggs (2) Dicksons Angus Delicatessen (2) Peter's Bakery Subway Tony's Pizza House Ambleside Chip Shop Mue's Chippy Sams Takeaway Panda Chinese Takeaway Mobile Wok Westlea Fish & Chip Shop Seaham Chippy Queens Chippy Pizza King Dynasty Seaham Tandoori The Standard Kevin's Take Away Meat Mart LiteBite Sandwiches Pizza Oven 2 Beetroot God Father Tonia's McDonalds Spud u Like Crispy Bite Fish & Chips Shiras Fish Bar Bangla Delight Harbour Pizza Parlour Murton Cantonese Takeaway The Murton Tandoori East Shore Fish & Chip Shop New Chinese along Dawdon		3	35		
Cafes/tea shops	10	Café Cream Arcadia Amusement & Prize Bingo Snack Bar Valentie's Leaf, Bark & Berries Café Featherbed Rock Café Poppies Coffee Shop Asda Cafe Beetroot Café Thorntons Starbucks Coffee Shop		4	6		

Pubs serving food	7	Harbour View Hotel Seaham Golf Club Mitchells Seaton Lane Inn The Times Inn Dalton Park Inn Crow's Nest		1	6		
Other	1	Fun Shack		√			

Vacant shops

How many vacant shops are there in the town currently? 5

Sunday opening

How many shops are open on Sundays? 35 approx

How many eating places are open on Sundays? 39 approx

Early evenings

How many shops are open in the early evening 5pm-7pm? 20 approx

How many eating places are open in the early evening? 14

Half day closing

How many shops observe a half day closing? 12 approx

Which day of the week? Wednesday

Are there any particular gaps in the retail and catering offer of your town for a town of its size?

Outdoor or Indoor Market

Book Shop, Shoe Shop in Central Seaham. Sports Shop in Central Seaham

4. Sports, outdoor activity and entertainment facilities

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
Leisure centre/ gym	Seaham Leisure Ctr	Football, tennis, basketball, badminton, gym			√		
	Marlborough Gym				√		
	Gym 2000				√		

Swimming pool	None Available for Visitors						
Golf	Seaham Golf Club			√			
Long distance footpaths	Durham Heritage Coast Footpath	Link to Sustrans Cycle Route		√			
Other named walks	Local Circular walks	Local circular Walks		√			
Bicycle hire	/						
Cycle routes	Sustrans Route and Links to Residential Area	Cycling in Easington booklet promotes several other local circuits		√			
Riding/pony trekking	/						
Special riding routes	/	/					
Fishing	Sea Shore Fishing Fishing Ponds	West of Seaton		√			
Sailing	/	Until marina developed					
Canoeing	/	Until marina developed					
Other outdoor activities, sports	Public Parks - Bowls Cricket Football Sub aqua club	Seaham Town Park and Dawdon Park for bowls Spectators only for Cricket and Football – various locations in the town		√			
Theatre	/						
Cinema*	/						
Other entertainment facilities	Children's Play Areas: Dawdon Park Deneside Park Ropery Walk School	Fencing			√		√

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

Sailing and canoeing will be provided in the new marina development

No Swimming Pool – Currently Under Consideration

No theatre or cinema

5. Support facilities and infrastructure

Car parking

	Free	Short stay	Long stay
No. of car parks	14		
No. of spaces in total	733 + 29 disabled Plus car parks at Seaham Hall Beach and Noses Point		
	Free	Metered	
On street parking places (approx)			

Coach Parking

	Location	capacity
Location(s) for dropping off passengers	Bus Station South Terrace	6
Location(s) for coach parking	Seaham Hall Car Park	2/3
	Vane Tempest Car Park	2/3
Estimated no. of coaches visiting the town each week?	Unknown	
Any related issues?	No specific area suggested for coach parking	

Other transport facilities

No.s and locations of bicycle racks/storage	4 racks in Church Street; 1 outside Library
Location of central bus station/shelter	South Terrace
Facilities available at bus station/shelter	Shelters Timetable information, Local shops, toilets
No. of daily buses linking to other towns	3 to Sunderland, 2 to Peterlee, 1 to Houghton le Spring, 1 to Durham.
Distance from town centre to nearest railway station	2/3rds of a mile

Public toilets

Toilet location	Seaham Hall Car Park	Vane Tempest Car Park	Byrons Place
Opening hours	9am-9pm	24 Hours	8am-7pm
free/paid	Free	Charge	Free
disabled access yes/no	Yes	Yes	Yes
baby changing yes/no	Yes	Yes	Yes

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

Caters for current needs except on Southern Entrance to Seaham. Toilets provided close to Noses Point may be required. Some toilets need upgrading.

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.

Does your town have a VIC/ TIC?	No – enquiries handled by town council	If not, where is your nearest centre?	Peterlee
Location	Seaham Town Council Civic Offices	Contact Name	Lisa Wilkinson
Telephone Number	0191 581 8034	Email Address	clerk@seaham.gov.uk

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

Enquiry type:	Total Number of Enquiries		
	2005	2006	2007
Counter			9,135
Postal			
Telephone			1,577
Email			
Accommodation bookings			

Please estimate proportions of enquiries from each of:

	%
Local residents	95%
UK visitors	3%
Overseas visitors	2%

Visitor Information Needs

What are the most frequent information requests that you receive from visitors and potential visitors?	
1	Maps
2	Variety of leaflets re local accommodation, theatre information, cycle routes and walks, bus timetables.

3	National Express enquiries and bookings
4	Civic gifts
5	

Are there gaps in the current information available to meet these requests? If so, what further types of information would be useful?

All queries relating to the area are answered. Leaflets have been set up for most enquiries.

But many visitors may not find or seek out the town council office to ask questions unless necessary. Town lacks more proactive TIC in good location to encourage people to stay longer and do more activities.

How well does the town meet the needs and expectations of visitors and what improvements are needed to better meet their requirements?

Most visitors' needs are met.

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: 2

Locations	Seaham Hall Car Park Noses Point		
Content of each e.g. maps, adverts, events	Maps Historical Information		
Is it well maintained?	Yes		
Who is responsible for maintenance?	District of Easington		
Is the content appropriate and up to date?	No		

Are there any additional locations where a TIP is needed?

Yes on Southern entrance to Seaham.

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.

Is there any interpretation around the town? Yes	Details				
Boards or panels at key sites or on key buildings of interest	See above				
Plaques on specific buildings	None Identified				
Signed tours or trails around the town	Trail through Church Street – theme the seaside				
Regular guided tours around the town	Durham County Council Education for school pupils				
Other interpretation materials	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="770 1128 794 1272">1</td> <td data-bbox="794 1128 1485 1272">Sculpture on promenade opposite East Shore Village interprets the Vane Tempest Colliery and its workings.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="770 1272 794 1373">2</td> <td data-bbox="794 1272 1485 1373">The Seaham Time Line mentioned at the start of the coastal footpath at Seaham Hall beach car park.</td> </tr> </table>	1	Sculpture on promenade opposite East Shore Village interprets the Vane Tempest Colliery and its workings.	2	The Seaham Time Line mentioned at the start of the coastal footpath at Seaham Hall beach car park.
1	Sculpture on promenade opposite East Shore Village interprets the Vane Tempest Colliery and its workings.				
2	The Seaham Time Line mentioned at the start of the coastal footpath at Seaham Hall beach car park.				

<p>Who is responsible for maintenance of panels, plaques and signs? District Council, Town Council and Durham Heritage Coast Partnership</p>
<p>Are there any gaps where further / new interpretative materials could be provided?</p> <p>Terrace Green</p> <p>North Dock..... signs to explain redevelopment plans for coming year</p> <p>St. John's Square....signs to explain redevelopment plans for coming year</p>

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 1	Location 2	Location 3	Location 4
Location or start point	Vane Tempest Car Park	Bus Station at Byron Place	Railway Station	Noses Point Car Park
Is there a TIP showing where you are in relation to the town centre?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Signs to the Tourist / Visitor Information Centre?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Signs to public toilets?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Signs to main visitor attraction(s)	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is there good continuity of signposts/fingerposts along the route?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Quality of Signing

Are routes clear?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Are fingerposts obscured or pointing the wrong way?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Are fingerposts well maintained?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

No signage until in Town Centre No signage until in Town Centre

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.**

	Route 1	Route 2	Route 3	Route 4
starting point	A19 North Sliproad	From Ryhope	Stockton Road from North	A19 South Blair Way
finishing point	Terrace Green	Low Road Terrace Green	Terrace Green	Terrace Green
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Are there any white on brown tourist signs?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>- Record any details / location</i>	A19 Slip – Beach Seaton Lane – Serenity Spa Seaham Hall Hotel Funshack Welcome to Seaham Sign Seaton Lane	North Road – Town boundary – Welcome sign North Road- Serenity spa Seaham Hall Hotel Beach, I point, Toilets	Stockton Road boundary - Welcome sign Funshack Seaton Lane Traffic Lights- Serenity Spa Seaham Hall Hotel	None

	Traffic Lights- Serenity Spa Seaham Hall Hotel Funshack North Road- Serenity spa Beach, I point, Toilets Seaham Hall Hotel		Funshack North Road- Beach, I point, Toilets Serenity spa Seaham Hall Hotel	None
Signposting to the Tourist Information Centre	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>- Record any details / location</i>	No details	No details	No details	
Signposting for main attractions?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>- Record any details / location</i>	Refer to white and brown signs	Refer to white and brown signs	Refer to white and brown signs	
Signposting for visitor car parks?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>- Record any details / location</i>	Seaham Hall Car Park Vane Tempest Car Park	Seaham Hall Car Park Vane Tempest Car Park	Seaham Hall Car Park Vane Tempest Car Park	
Signposting for public toilets?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>- Record any details / location</i>	North Road Seaham Hall Car Park	North Road Seaham Hall Car Park	North Road Seaham Hall Car Park	
Is there an out-of-town Tourist Information Point on the main road before entering/ turning off to the town?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>- Record any details / location</i>	Seaham Hall Car Park	Seaham Hall Car Park	Seaham Hall Car Park	
Continuity of signposting				
Where facilities are signposted, does this remain consistent along the routes?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

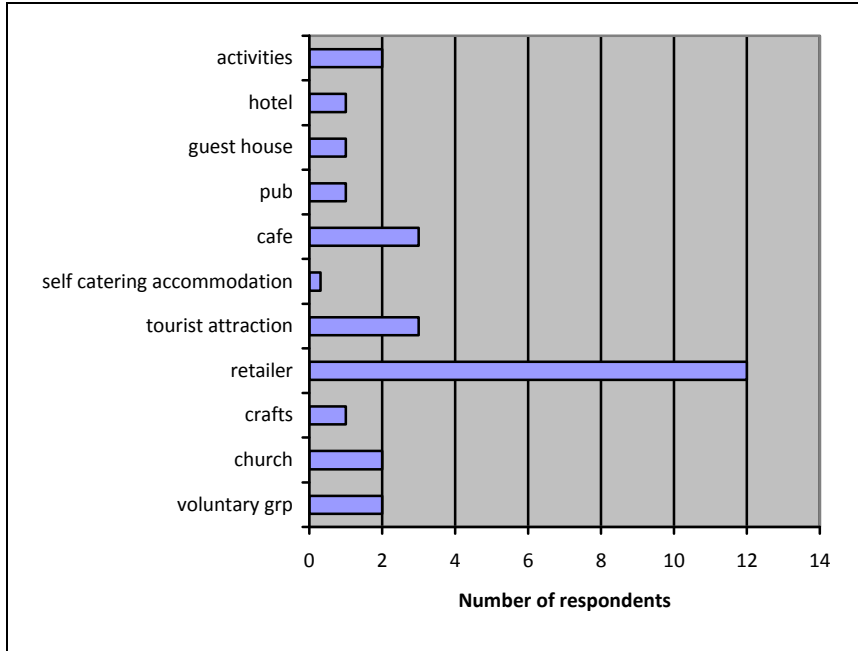
Quality of signing.

Are the signs appropriately maintained	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Visually- are they clear	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are there any out of date signs which need to be removed or rationalised	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Note details for reporting to Highway authority				

7.4 Business Survey

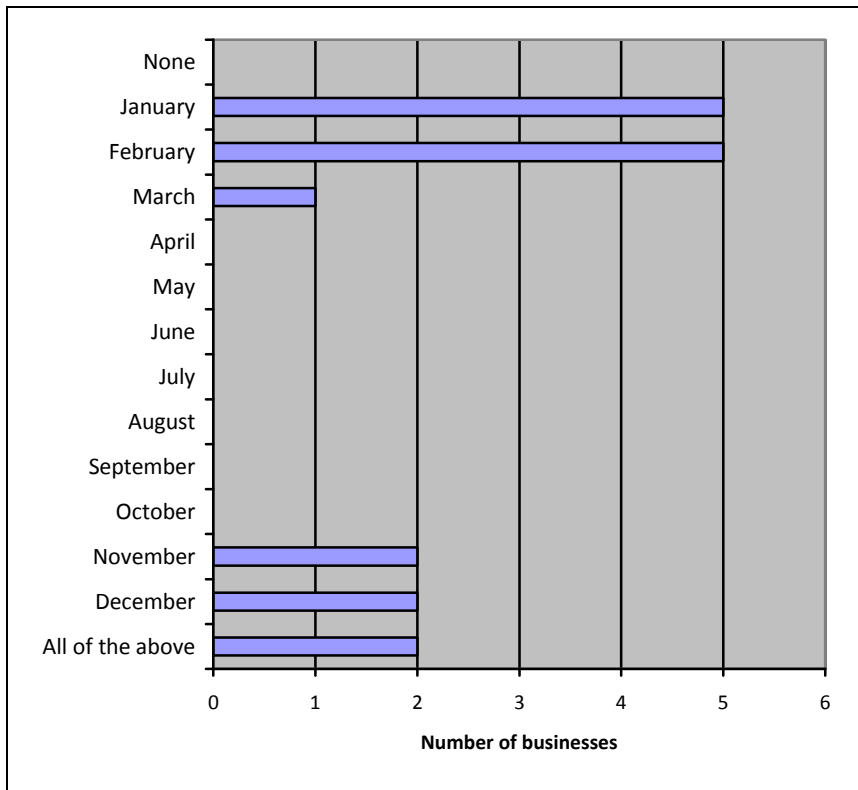
20 businesses responded to the survey in Seaham, although not all answered every question. This is only a small sample but the results are interesting and have informed the process. The following graphs and lists summarise some of the main results (others are shown in section 3 and 4 above).

1. Respondents – type of business



Of the 20 businesses responding, several ran businesses with more than one function, hence the total adding up to over 20.

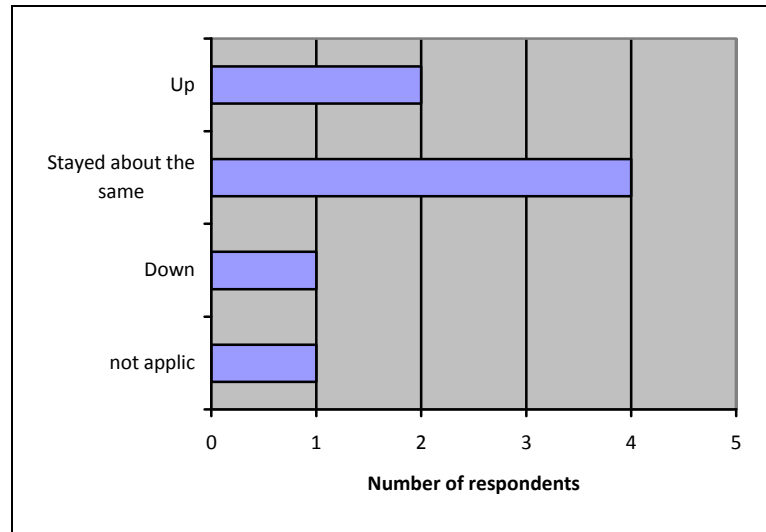
2. In which months would you like to see an increase in your business?



All the businesses are open year round. When asked which months they would like to see an increase in business there was a clear message from several that they would like to see more business during the winter.

All of those who responded (12) had plans to expand or develop their business. Business trends appear to have been relatively stable over the last three years.

3. What has been the trend in your profitability in the last three years?



Businesses listed a range of support from local authorities, tourism bodies or other organisations that would be of benefit to them in the development of their business:

- supplying literature which would be available when the Civic Office is not available
- toilet facilities
- more open access to grants/investments
- county and local tourism marketing
- help in paying a wage for a fixed period of time to allow setting up of 1 or more of these new business areas would be great.
- separate tourist information guides, publications and website & office
- promote north dock & Friends Of North Dock especially for minority groups
- they could have a point of contact who visits businesses
- advice/investment/marketing all essential - and support received has been invaluable

Training needs identified by the respondents included:

- Customer care
- Internet marketing
- Website development
- Environmental sustainability
- Merchandising

Suggested future improvements for Seaham included:

- *Wine bars to make area more like Jesmond/Tynemouth*
- *Good signage & good publicity of our area*

- *Tidy up Church Street and paint shops*
- *Indoor centre such as restaurant/café with panoramic view of the dock & coast*
- *Attractions for family, ie swimming pool, cinema, sports facilities*
- *Signposting at station*
- *New drive for Church*
- *Open plan coach park for visitors.*
- *Promote all aspects of history to attract people to area. Tour operators should be approached to come here*
- *Get the Marina built quickly.*
- *Make North Terrace one way, widen the pavement and have cafe/ restaurant tables outside.*
- *Clean up beach*
- *Pull down buildings not in use eg court and old pubs*
- *Byron Country*
- *Don't allow cars on the lower prom*
- *Open plan market stalls would be great to bring people to Seaham Seafront*
- *Seaham has the opportunity to become one of the best small town tourism destinations in the UK*

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.