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Market Town Welcome

Destination Plan for Alnwick

Report To

**One NorthEast, Northumberland Strategic Partnership and
Northumberland Tourism**

June 2008

Report From



In Partnership With



and



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Executive Summary

This Destination Plan for Alnwick will drive action for the partnership of organisations that are involved in tourism, town development and the visitor economy within Alnwick and its immediate hinterland. It covers the period from March 2008 to 2018.

Alnwick will develop its tourism potential and strengthen its identity for visitors by working towards its future vision.

The Vision for Alnwick is:

Alnwick will be one of the UK's top heritage towns, using the high profiles of Alnwick Castle and the Alnwick Garden, supported by iconic attractions such as Barter Books and House of Hardy to sustain a thriving visitor economy.

The visitor experience will be enhanced through the development of a new, design-led town centre hotel, improved food, drink and evening time offer and greater accessibility through enhanced heritage interpretation, town trail and better signage.

The revitalised Northumberland Hall and Market Place will provide a focus for the town, complementing the much improved independent retail offer – together offering a stimulus for those visiting the Castle and Garden to extend their trip into Alnwick centre.

A full cultural programme of festivals, markets and shows will provide an additional draw to the town.

Visitors seeking an outdoor experience will take advantage of the unique countryside and coastline through newly developed cycling and walking routes to the coast and westwards towards the Cheviots.

The objectives of this destination plan are:

1. To strengthen and further develop Alnwick's identity and profile as an attractive visitor destination.
2. To focus on the higher spending visitor segments which Alnwick already attracts to strengthen and expand this market.
3. To establish Alnwick as a year round destination encouraging short breaks throughout the year.
4. To encourage visitors to spend more time in Alnwick Town Centre.
5. To better promote the attractions and activities available in and around Alnwick.
6. To increase visitor satisfaction levels which will encourage repeat visits and personal recommendations.
7. To encourage more visitors to walk, cycle and use public transport.
8. To develop a sustainable visitor economy offering excellent service, customer care and value for money.

9. To widen the range and improve the quality of the retail and food and drink offers in the town.
10. To encourage new business investment.
11. To encourage and support collaboration between local organisations and businesses to enable joint delivery of the actions.

The Strategy

The strategy which the town needs to adopt is to focus on its strengths and unique selling points and to develop and promote these to meet the expectations of the future visitor markets, whilst still catering for the time-tested current visitor markets. By focusing on the more outgoing visitor segments Alnwick will broaden its appeal, attract more higher-spending visitors and make its visitor economy much more sustainable for the future.

Most effort and actions need to be focused on areas where there will be most impact. This could include important town management issues, new developments or simply joining things up more effectively. Alnwick already has several iconic/specialist businesses and the town can continue to capitalise on these. Such businesses raise the profile of the whole town, generate PR coverage and lift the confidence and aspirations of many other businesses and organisations.

There is a need to continue to build confidence in the visitor economy in order for individuals and organisations to invest in their businesses and properties, to attract new business. All partners need to work together to make it happen - it will require effort and investment from private, public and voluntary sectors to make the step change over the next few years.

Alnwick Destination Priorities

<p>1. Developing Northumberland Hall and the Market Place</p>	<p>Northumberland Hall and the Market Place occupy a critical position in the centre of the town and it is widely believed that the potential of these assets is not currently being realised. At present Alnwick benefits from a collection of major attractions that brings visitors into the area, yet the town centre fails to capitalise on these opportunities. The key to increasing the number of visitors in the town centre may be in the re-development of the Hall and the Market Place. Potential developments must be sensitive to the need to extend the current tourism season in Alnwick into the winter months. It is also vital that plans are ambitious and far sighted in order for the town to compete with the growing number of tourism alternatives in the UK and throughout Europe. Developments to the Hall should be closely linked to improvements with the Market Place in order to maximise the potential tourism benefits.</p>
<p>2. Investing in a top quality / boutique hotel</p>	<p>In order to meet the needs of current and future visitors to Alnwick, a top quality hotel / boutique hotel is needed. At present there is a good range of B&B's and self catering</p>

	<p>accommodation but relatively few hotels. If Alnwick wishes to attract higher spending visitors, then a hotel of this type will ensure that spend per visitor is increased and more importantly for the town - kept within the local tourism industry. The findings of the Alnwick Garden Visitor Survey 2007 illustrate that the majority of their visitors are in the higher socio-economic grades which suggests there is demand for an up-market hotel to complement the current offer.</p>
<p>3. A local food campaign, including improving the quality of food retail and catering</p>	<p>To support the Alnwick Food Festival, a local food campaign that highlights the importance of local food in the region should be undertaken. Stimulating interest in local food in this way is intended to encourage local restaurants and other food outlets to procure and sell local foods.</p> <p>A similar proposal was put forward as an outcome of the retail distinctiveness research which specified undertaking quarterly food forums between potential buyers and sellers, among other initiatives. Such a scheme could include competitions, awards, master-classes and “speed dating” sessions to introduce buyers and sellers to each other’s products and requirements.</p>
<p>4. Developing heritage trails and cycle / walking routes</p>	<p>Alnwick’s historic townscape is already an attraction and creating a heritage trail around the town could increase the number of visitors further. There is an opportunity to create a heritage trail around historic local water features, which would provide an interesting and engaging walking route around the town. There are also opportunities to link Alnwick to the coast with both walking and cycling routes, which would enhance the number of activities in the area and should also increase visitor numbers.</p>
<p>5. Training and skills initiatives</p>	<p>In order to enhance the tourism offer as a whole, and bring together some of the proposed changes, there is potential in Alnwick to undertake training and skills initiatives. In particular, customer care within the food and drink sector and general tourism information services are areas that would benefit.</p>
<p>6. Co-ordination of local groups</p>	<p>It is essential that in a market town such as Alnwick, local groups do not operate in isolation. A structured system that leads to co-ordination of local groups would ensure plans and proposals are acted upon. A present there are several major tourist attractions and it is paramount that all organisations with a vested interest in tourism work together. Creating lasting relationships between tourism operators and other organisations in Alnwick will ensure the best interests of the town are realised.</p>

7. Undertaking an up-to-date visitor survey	Many of the destination priorities are based around anecdotal evidence of recent fluctuations in the tourism industry. In order to fully inform and direct the proposals listed in this plan, an up-to-date visitor survey is recommended. The last visitor survey undertaken in Alnwick was in 2003 and since then there have been significant changes to the tourism offer. Aside from the Alnwick Garden's own annual visitor survey, there is no documentation that takes account of changes in the local tourism economy in the past five years. An up-to-date survey that encompasses the wider impact of changes in tourism is essential for the successful implementation of the proposals in this plan.
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Common Market Town Welcome Themes

The Programme has also identified many ideas for joint working between market towns in Northumberland. The main areas for collaboration include:

- Outdoor activities - walking, cycling, water-sports and nature based tourism
- History and heritage
- Food and drink
- Art, culture and events
- Business support and training
- Planning, infrastructure and destination management
- Promotion of investment opportunities

County organisations such as Northumberland Tourism and Northumberland Strategic Partnership can play a key role in facilitating this joint working and leading on county wide initiatives.

1. Introduction

This Destination Plan for Alnwick is an action plan for the whole partnership of organisations that are involved in delivering the visitor experience within the town and its hinterlands. It covers the period from March 2008 to 2018, and is designed to be a working document that can be added to as the town and its partners identify new opportunities for development.

The Plan provides a framework and rationale for investment in the tourism sector within the town and helps to clarify how the key partners and agencies can work together to help develop the tourism potential of Alnwick.

The plan's purpose is to:

- help develop the tourism potential of Alnwick and strengthen its identity for visitors
- encourage the cross fertilisation of ideas and identify the top priorities for action
- provide a framework and rationale for investment and development planning in the tourism sector within the town, including harnessing private sector potential
- help to clarify how partners and agencies can work together to map out a way forward for the next few years

1.1. Background and Rationale

Miller Research, in partnership with Alison Caffyn Tourism Consultant and AMT-I, were commissioned by One NorthEast, Northumberland Tourism and Northumberland Strategic Partnership to develop a destination plan model which could be applied to market towns within the region. The project has been run in six market towns in Northumberland: Alnwick, Amble, Berwick, Haltwhistle, Seahouses and Wooler. In five of those towns (all except Berwick) work has recently been completed on developing retail distinctiveness and competitiveness¹. This work highlighted the growing importance of tourism to each town, and the destination plans now aim to complement this retail work and further explore the tourism potential of each town.

It is important to focus on tourism as the visitor economy has become, and will continue to be one of the most important economic sectors, employing a high proportion of local people and contributing directly or indirectly to a large part of the local economy. Recent research (STEAM 2006) demonstrates this:

- **Northumberland receives 1.8 million overnight tourists**, spending **6.6 million nights** in the area, plus **8 million day visits annually**
- Overnight visitors spent £248 million, day visitors spent a further £142 million, plus indirect revenue of £228 million giving a total annual contribution of tourism to the Northumberland economy of **£621 million**
- Approximately **11,400 jobs** (full time equivalents) were supported by direct tourist expenditure, a further **2,650 jobs** were supported by indirect revenue.

¹ Work carried out by Miller Research (UK) Ltd

Tourism not only supports businesses, jobs and suppliers but is particularly significant in rural areas and market towns where there are fewer employment alternatives. In addition:

- Visitors help support local heritage, culture and community services;
- Tourism is a reason to conserve special buildings, historic sites, beautiful landscapes and important wildlife sites; and
- Tourism is a vital element in regenerating an area.

1.2. Strategic Context

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 visitor numbers. It highlights the potential for making more of regional food, improved shopping and public art as well as basic infrastructure, 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.

At a County level the key tourism document is the Northumberland Area Tourism Management Plan. It presents the tourism vision for Northumberland as *'to establish the county as the premier rural destination in the UK, balancing the needs and expectations of the international and UK visitor, businesses and communities whilst protecting and further developing the County's exceptional environment and rich cultural heritage'*. It highlights as particular challenges the seasonality of tourism in the County, which impacts on the economy, jobs, cash flow and investment, and the relatively poor food and retail offer for visitors compared with other areas. The Plan identifies a series of objectives including: developing a higher profile for Northumberland, encouraging new sustainable tourism businesses and a more entrepreneurial culture which will help increase jobs, skills and investment and safeguard local services such as shops, pubs, museums etc.

In Alnwick this plan needs to link to other local planning frameworks as well as relevant local actions such as the current plans to market the Northumberland Hall.

1.3. Process and Partnership

There have been two main stages to the work. The first involved researching good practice from other UK market towns and producing a template for the development of a destination plan that could be applied to market towns in the region. The second stage involved piloting and testing the template in Berwick before rolling it out to the other five towns. The template went through the following stages

1. Understanding the rationale of why the town should welcome visitors
2. Identifying current and future visitors to the town

3. Identifying what the town can offer visitors
4. Considering how well the town is meeting the needs of its visitors
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 actions in order to reach that vision

The process has also incorporated 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

The Alnwick Destination Plan has been produced through a number of meetings that were held in the town involving key regional and local agencies and local businesses, organisations and residents as well as an open workshop to which local tourism related businesses were invited. Appendix 1 lists the people and organisations that have inputted into the content and shape of this Plan. In addition a Leadership Group was convened for Alnwick out of the names listed. The Leadership Group has been responsible for leading the Market Town Welcome project at a local level and will be responsible for implementing the actions listed in this plan.

A business survey was made available on-line, which businesses in Alnwick were invited to take part in and a town audit was undertaken by members of the Leadership Group to document what is currently available in the town and where there are gaps in the tourism offer. The survey and audit results were fed into the subsequent discussions and workshops. The results of these activities are documented in subsequent sections and the full results can be found in the appendix.

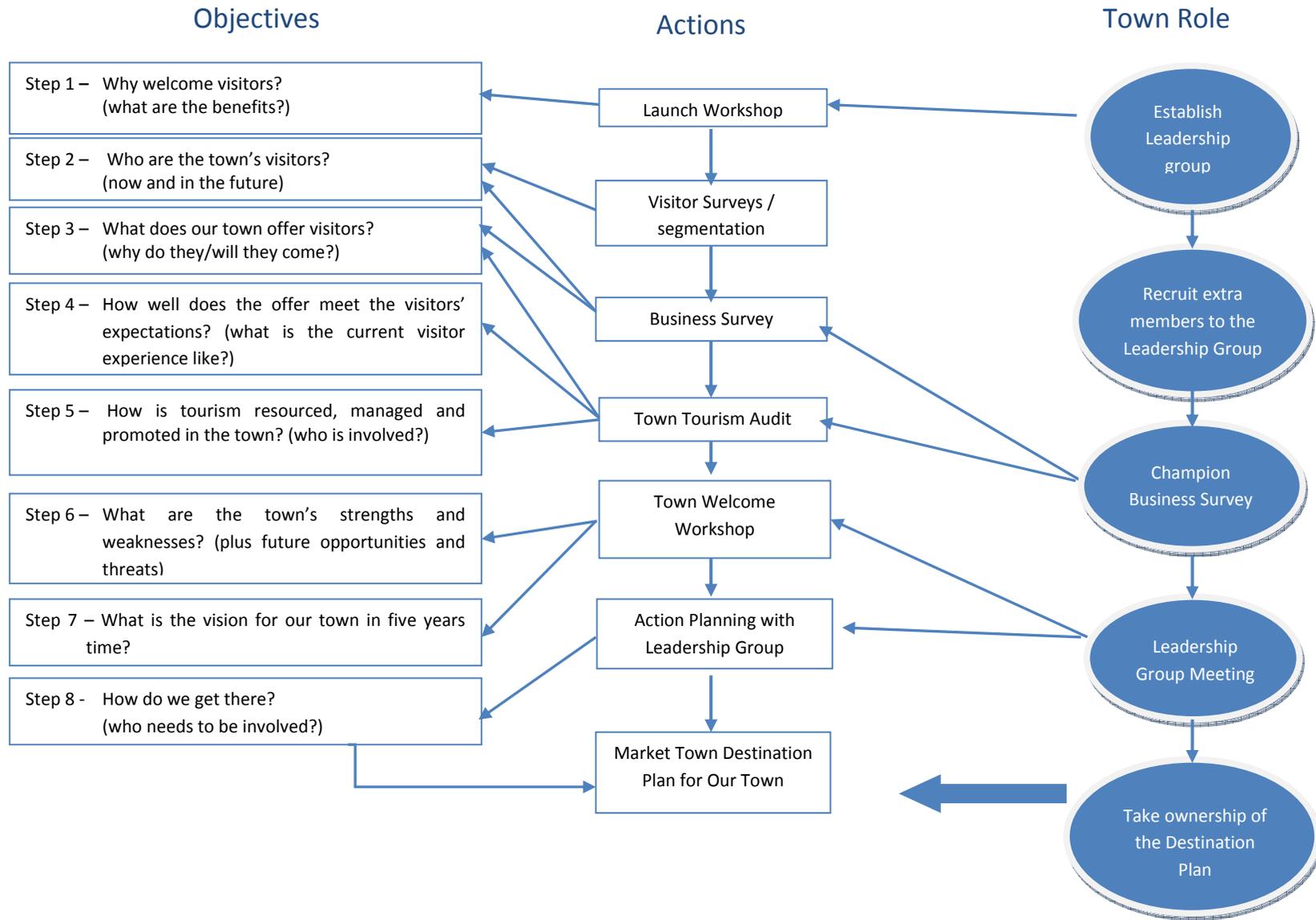
The following meetings were held in the town to help develop this Destination Plan:

1. Meeting of the Leadership Group – the group were presented with information and evidence about the town and its tourism offer. This information was obtained from the business survey and town audit that were carried out specifically for the Market Town Welcome project and previous research that had been conducted. The group used the information to develop a SWOT analysis of tourism provision in the town.
2. Town Workshop – a workshop was held in the town which was open to anyone with an interest in tourism development in Alnwick. The group was asked to add to and amend the SWOT produced by the Leadership Group, help to identify current and future visitors, develop a vision of the town from a tourism perspective and start to identify actions to move towards this vision.

3. Action Planning Session – the Leadership Group met to finalise the vision for the town and to prioritise the opportunities and actions that had emerged from the previous sessions.

The diagram overleaf illustrates the project process described above.

Figure 1 – Destination Plan Template



2. Vision and Objectives

2.1. Vision Statement

In 5-10 years time, Alnwick will offer visitors a better welcome because...

Alnwick will be one of the UK's top heritage towns, using the high profiles of Alnwick Castle and the Alnwick Garden, supported by iconic attractions such as Barter Books and House of Hardy to sustain a thriving visitor economy.

The visitor experience will be enhanced through the development of a new, design-led town centre hotel, improved food, drink and evening time offer and greater accessibility through enhanced heritage interpretation, town trail and better signage.

The revitalised Northumberland Hall and Market Place will provide a focus for the town, complementing the much improved independent retail offer – together offering a stimulus for those visiting the Castle and Garden to extend their trip into Alnwick centre.

A full cultural programme of festivals, markets and shows will provide an additional draw to the town.

Visitors seeking an outdoor experience will take advantage of the unique countryside and coastline through newly developed cycling and walking routes to the coast and westwards towards the Cheviots.

2.2. Objectives

The objectives for this destination plan are:

- To strengthen and further develop Alnwick's identity and profile as an attractive visitor destination.
- To focus on the higher spending visitor segments which Alnwick already attracts to strengthen and expand this market.
- To establish Alnwick as a year round destination encouraging short breaks throughout the year.
- To encourage visitors to spend more time in Alnwick Town Centre.
- To better promote the attractions and activities available in and around Alnwick.
- To increase visitor satisfaction levels which will encourage repeat visits and personal recommendations.
- To encourage more visitors to walk, cycle and use public transport.
- To develop a sustainable visitor economy offering excellent service, customer care and value for money.
- To widen the range and improve the quality of the retail and food and drink offers in the town.

- To encourage new business investment.
- To encourage and support collaboration between local organisations and businesses to enable joint delivery of the actions.

3. Visitors to Alnwick

3.1. Visitor Survey

In 2003, a Destination Benchmarking Survey 2003 was undertaken in Alnwick by Northumbria Tourist Board as part of the Northumberland Market Towns Benchmarking Project. This is the most recent detailed data available on visitors to the town and while it is now five years old provides a useful analysis of visitor characteristics and views. Having said that, an Evaluation Study on the impact of the Alnwick Garden has recently been undertaken, which provides insight into the Garden's effect on the tourism economy over the past five years, and the Garden carries out an annual visitor survey of its own. Findings of these studies are summarised below.

The Destination Benchmarking Survey 2003 was designed to provide an up to date information base on the profile of tourism in Alnwick, from which comparisons can be made in future years. The survey followed a standard methodology which has allowed comparisons to be made with other destinations, including Market Towns in Northumberland, Market Towns nationally and other destination types (towns/cities, historic cities and resorts).

A total of 246 face-to-face interviews were conducted with visitors in Alnwick during the summer of 2003. Interviews were carried out on a random basis in various locations throughout Alnwick including outside the Market Place, Bondgate Within, Greenwell Lane Car Park, outside Alnwick Garden and Bailiffgate.²

The following list highlights some useful data regarding visitors to Alnwick:

- More first time visitors than County Average (35%).
- 65% repeat visitors, but half of those visit less than once a year.
- Low proportion (13%) staying in Alnwick itself.
- 94% of staying visitors are groups of adults only.
- 61% of visitors were aged over 45. 3% were 16-24.
- Higher proportion of ABC1s than other towns.
- 93% visiting for leisure / holiday – especially to visit the garden and castle.
- Those staying use serviced accommodation (53%).
- Average day visit 3.3 hours – above average.
- Average stay (overnight) 5.5 nights – below average.
- Overall satisfaction levels very good.
- Parking viewed as quite difficult, but reasonable.
- Lower than average scores for:
 - toilets, and the market

² Taken from 'Alnwick Visitor Survey 2003', Marketing Intelligence Unit, Northumbria Tourist Board; 2004.

- Higher than average scores for:
 - TIC, shops, places to visit, general atmosphere and eating and drinking
 - 93% likely to recommend Alnwick to someone else

The Alnwick Garden Visitor Survey - June – September 2007 is based on 299 face-to-face questionnaires. The following points highlight key findings of the report:

Visitor Demographics

- There are 3 key age groups, 0-10, 35-55 and 65-75.
- Visitors are primarily adults and a quarter of them bring children (under 15 yrs).
- The mean age of visitors is 50.
- The average party size is 2.82.
- The majority of visitors are from the higher socio-economic grades.

Breakdown of where visitors stayed;

- 16% Alnwick
- 11% Newcastle
- 4% Seahouses
- 5% Morpeth
- 6% Bamburgh
- 4% Alnmouth
- 4% Berwick
- 7% Rothbury
- 4% Belford
- 3% Whitley Bay
- 3% Walkworth

Visitor origins

- 47% of visitors were from UK regions other than the North East.
- 3% of survey respondents were overseas visitors.
- 33% of visitors came from the North East Region (excluding Northumberland).

Visiting Alnwick

- The proportion of people visiting Alnwick or intending to visit Alnwick was significantly higher than in 2006.
- 49% of visitors had already visited Alnwick or were staying in Alnwick.
- 18% had not yet visited Alnwick but intend to during the trip.

- 28% had not visited Alnwick and did not intend to.

This data suggests that the benefits of visitor trips to the Alnwick Garden are continuing to extend into the town itself and visitors are coming from further afield to visit the town. However, a relatively small proportion are staying in the town at the moment and this could be further built upon. Clearly, the challenge for the tourism and retail sectors in Alnwick is to improve the offer for visitors, in order to increase the proportion of Garden visitors who extend their trip to include the town centre.

The most recent study relating to the local tourism industry is the *Impact of the Alnwick Garden Evaluation Study* that was completed by L&R Consulting in May 2008. The study was based around desk research of existing regional and sub-regional data and reports; stakeholder interviews; a business survey; consultation with visitor attractions and hotels; assessment of market segments of current visitors and a review of economic impact analyses undertaken by Caledonian Economics in 2002, 2003 & 2006. In particular, L&R Consulting focused on wider social, learning and business confidence; destination identity and links with inwards investment.

The study states that *“The Alnwick Garden has performed exceptionally well, outperforming forecasts of visitor numbers, providing impetus to sub-regional development and contributing to raising the image of Northumberland and the North East as a visitor destination.”* Particular reference is made to the Garden’s role as a major employer; its role in the development of good practice in the management and care of volunteers of all ages and its connection with the environmental specification of the site – most notably the water features and Pavilion building.

It is suggested that over a ten year period, (from 2001 construction) the Garden might contribute to over £150 million being generated into the region, supporting [approximately] 500 FTE jobs. Estimated through a partnership Local Multiplier Study, the direct financial impact of the Garden’s 2006/07 trading activities suggests that the local multiplier is 1.85 – meaning that every £1 spent at the Garden generates £1.85 within the local economy³. This would translate to approximately £11.5 million per annum spent in the region by visitors to the Garden. In addition, as a proportion of the £2.3 million spent by the Garden on supplies and services, £0.7 million was spent with Northumberland suppliers and £0.6 million with businesses across the rest of the North East.

Further to this, the study indicates that there were 610,000 visitors to the Garden/Pavilion of which 420,000 visited the Alnwick Garden. Of these visitors, the Garden has an ERDF output target to achieve 50% of visitors from outside the region. During 2005 & 2006 this target was exceeded, as 56-58% of visitors came from outside the region. Although this had fallen back to 50% in 2007, the ERDF benchmark is still being met, illustrating the strength of the Garden in generating economic benefit to the region.

The value of the Garden to the region is clearly illustrated in the study and it continues to document the effect this has on the economic health of the town centre.

³ It is stated that this model does not take into consideration the effects of additionality or duplication, which would incorporate the opportunity cost of visitors spending money in region, regardless of the presence of the Alnwick Garden.

Tourists and day visitors were estimated to contribute £5.8 million of turnover to shops in Alnwick District in 2001, accounting for 12% of all turn-over. The report states that *“The retail sector in Alnwick town centre is performing significantly better now than before the Garden was open to the public.”* and that *“Most businesses perceive the Alnwick Garden as having a major contributory effect on increasing business.”* This is mentioned in the study with a caveat that businesses are reporting a perceived reduction of town centre footfall, particularly since the completion of the enhanced retail and catering at the Pavilion. However, the study suggests that the Garden evidence⁴ counters this by stating that two thirds of visitors to the Garden have been, or intend to visit the town - an increase of 4% on the previous year. Although the perception of reduced footfall by local businesses seems to be unfounded it is clear that the Garden is making efforts to strengthen links with the local community. Alnwick District Council is in discussion with the Garden Designers to reinforce the linkages between town and garden and Ian August’s role as Garden Liaison Director is specified as providing an extremely important liaison as a bridge builder between the town and community.

The report offers recommended actions for the Alnwick Garden. A selection of which have been included below that reinforce the key messages from the study which are relevant to this destination plan.

- Continue the high level marketing activity to generate out-of-region visitors that represent greater economic benefit to the region.
- Undertake future discussions and surveys with local and regional businesses to identify how the Garden and other businesses can generate more economic activity and benefit to the region.
- Improve the profile and understanding of the Garden’s role in the town and encourage further joined up activity to encourage visitor flows between the town and the Garden/Castle.

3.2. Business Survey

As part of this study a business survey was made available on-line and in hard copy for local businesses who have dealings with the visitor market. The purpose of the business survey was to identify a business perspective on current visitor and tourism issues and also any opportunities to develop the appeal of the town. Respondents were also able to comment on visitors’ likes and dislikes and provide thoughts on what would encourage visitors to stay longer or spend more in the town.

There was a good sample of 42 responses from the business community in Alnwick and the large majority of those were bed & breakfast establishments. Other accommodation providers, retailers, pubs & restaurants and other tourist attractions completed the scope of respondents to the survey. Generally, providers were optimistic about current trading conditions - 62% of those surveyed indicated that they were planning expansion over the next year and when asked in what way, typical answers included redevelopment / renovation, acquiring new premises / property, increasing staff levels and expanding existing services. The majority of respondents indicated that turnover was increasing on average.

⁴ Alnwick Garden 2007 visitor Survey

Visitor Profile

When questioned about the importance of certain types of visitors on a scale of 1-5 (where 5 is the most important and 1 the least), visitors who were on their main / second holiday were deemed to be the most important with an average score just over 4. Visitors who were on short breaks were also considered a very important group with a score slightly lower than the top group. Notably, the third most important group of visitors to Alnwick was special interest visitors, which might be expected given the draw of the Alnwick Garden and Alnwick Castle. School visits were considered the least important type of visitors to the businesses that completed the survey, closely followed by coach groups, which possibly reflects the type of accommodation being offered by respondents to the survey.



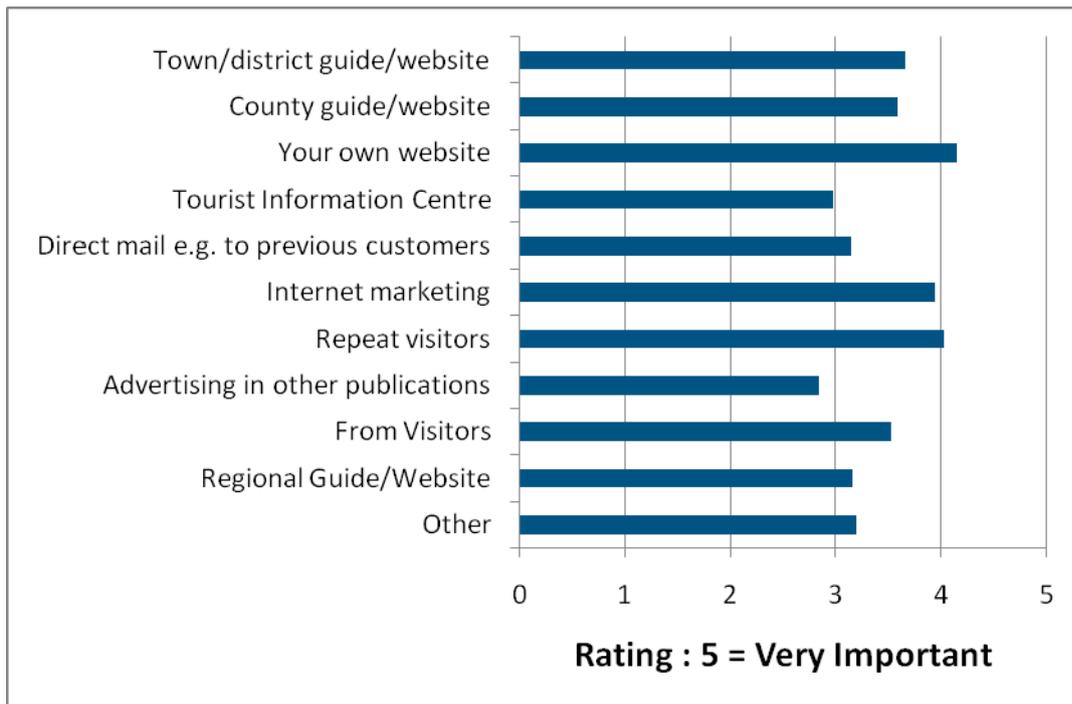
Miller Research (UK) Ltd, Market Town Welcome, Business Survey 2008

Promotion and Marketing

The graph below shows which methods are found to be most successful when advertising / securing bookings. Once again 1 is not very important and 5 the most important. The aggregated scores indicate that securing bookings / advertising through the business' own website is the most important method. The second and third most important methods of securing bookings or advertising were through internet marketing and through repeat visitors - which concurs with the 2003 visitor survey which indicated that 65% of visitors were on repeat visits. The lowest scoring methods were the Tourist Information Centre and advertising in other publications. This perhaps reflects that the TIC is used by those arriving in the town without accommodation, rather than those booking up ahead.

Two points stand out from these results:

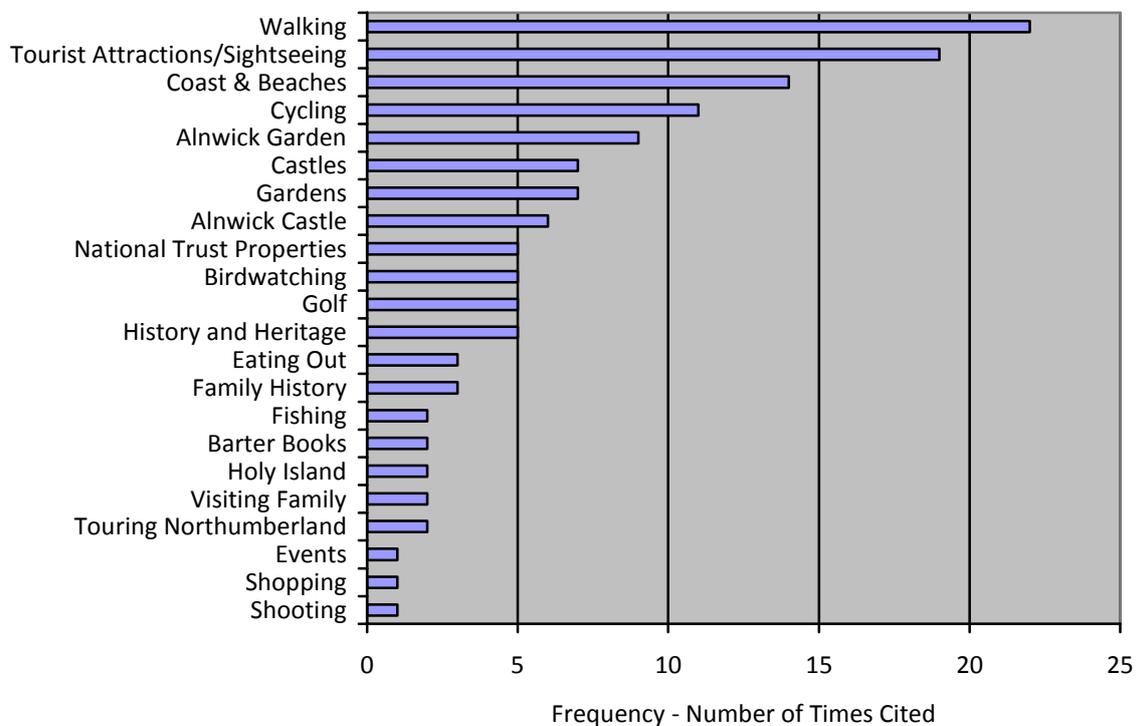
- The rapidly growing importance of web and internet marketing in recent years.
- The wide range of approaches adopted by accommodation providers in attracting guests.



Miller Research (UK) Ltd, Market Town Welcome, Business Survey 2008

Activities Undertaken

Businesses were asked what activities visitors to Alnwick undertake whilst they are in the area. The chart below indicates the number of times an activity was mentioned within the survey.



It is clear that the countryside around Alnwick is a big draw for visitors with many businesses reporting that their visitors come to Alnwick to go walking, cycling and visiting local beaches. Popular attractions include castles and gardens (including Alnwick Castle and Gardens) and other historic properties. The full responses to the business survey can be found in Appendix 4.

3.3. Current Visitors

In 2007 One NorthEast commissioned Arkenford to profile and segment visitors and non-visitors to the North East of England. The research used three segmentation models: the ArkLeisure Segmentation, a bespoke behavioural segmentation and a socio-demographic segmentation (CAMEO). The full report gives very detailed results for the North East and Northumberland and includes interesting information of the perceptions of actual and potential visitors to the area.

It was recognised that the regional research by Arkenford may not necessarily reflect the local trends and visitors that are currently coming to Alnwick. Therefore an exercise was carried out during the town workshop to identify which of the ArkLeisure segmentation profiles of visitor are currently visiting the town. There was a consensus that the *current* visitors to Alnwick were generally:

- **Functionals**– These people are choosing the North East of England because it is a familiar location to them. They explore the towns and countryside as well as visiting historical and heritage attractions but are looking to slow down and rejuvenate themselves. Other than Family Sightseers this is the lowest spending segment. Our functionals were called **Brian & Susan**.
- **Traditionals** – This group of people are geared towards heritage and investigation, live life at a relaxed pace and enjoy intellectual challenges, arts and culture. Generically they will be interested in National Trust attractions, churches, cathedrals and botanical gardens. So in Alnwick, this group would be interested in the Alnwick Garden, Alnwick Castle and the various museums on offer. Traditionals hold traditional values and value good service and are unlikely to justify spending on expensive alternatives. Our Traditionals were called **Robert & Hilary**.
- **Cosmopolitans** – are risk takers. They like challenges both physical and intellectual and have an appreciation of arts and culture. They are stylish people who value individuality and hope to escape and do their own thing during a short break. Unlike Robert & Hilary they are a high-spending market and find it easy to justify buying expensive alternatives. To attract them, a location must have a link to the ‘great outdoors’ as well offering some of the things they like such as cooking, shopping, arts & culture. Our Cosmopolitans were called **Jake & Tamsin**.

4. The Tourism Offer

It is important to develop a full understanding of what Alnwick has to offer visitors. This includes current visitors' likes and dislikes about the town and also what the town has that could attract new and different types of visitors. To get a fuller understanding about these issues a comprehensive tourism audit of the town was undertaken by the Alnwick Community Development Trust. This included a quantitative element – a physical count of what is available, and a qualitative element – quality scoring the provision. The full results of the town audit can be found in Appendix 3.

4.1. Town Audit

As discussed above a town audit of Alnwick was undertaken in February 2008 which covered a range of services and facilities that visitors look for and appreciate. The audit looked to help the town appreciate its current offer and interest to visitors and also identify any problems, gaps or potential areas for further development. A full breakdown of the audit is included in Appendix 3, whilst the following section highlights the strengths and gaps present in the town.

The audit highlighted there were around 60 accommodation providers in Alnwick. Most bed spaces are provided by B&B's and Guesthouses. There are two hotels which offer 73 bedspaces between them.

In terms of gaps in accommodation it was noted that there is no 'budget' accommodation – either a youth hostel or perhaps a large budget hotel to accommodate large groups. More pubs could also consider providing accommodation. It was also noted that there is no camping or caravan site within five miles of Alnwick and there was perhaps a need for a luxury hotel, such as Malmaison.

Alnwick has a number of attractions, these are mainly associated with history and heritage and castles and gardens. Two of the attractions have been given a quality score of 5 - very good, exceeds visitor's expectations, is a draw for visitors in itself – these are Alnwick Castle and Alnwick Garden. All of the other attractions have either been given a quality score of 3 (moderately good, meets most visitors' needs) or a 4 (good, meets visitors' expectation and an asset to the area).

Alnwick has a number of events that run from February to November; this includes sporting events, a music festival and a food festival. In addition the Alnwick Garden holds events throughout the year. Both the Alnwick Garden and the town recognise that one of the challenges for Alnwick is to encourage people to visit all year round. Therefore there may be scope for a winter festival. Other gaps were that none of the festivals/events were specifically aimed at children/the family market.

It should also be noted that a number of events have recently stopped running, some after a number of years. The Alnwick Tournament was cancelled in August 2007 after 25 years, the Alnwick Fair has also stopped. There remain doubts over whether the Alnwick Horse Driving Trails will go ahead this year.

There are a good range of retailers in Alnwick covering food, antiques, books, arts and crafts, outdoor and leisure and clothing. Barter Books has been given a quality score of 5. Not all of the shops have been allocated a quality score, although amongst those that have, the majority have been given a score of 2 (adequate but room for improvement).

There are a number of markets in the town which include the weekly Saturday market, a monthly farmers market and an additional market on a Thursday between April and October. The town also hold some less frequent markets each year which include the Easter and Christmas markets and continental markets.

In terms of gaps, there was a view that there is a lack of shops that cater specifically for tourists and there is a need for higher quality food and gift shops.

It is estimated that only 20% of the shops in the town are open on a Sunday – with this generally limited to national or chain shops and the Alnwick Garden shops. Most of the independent shops observe half day closing on Wednesdays.

There are around 37 eating establishments in Alnwick – ten restaurants, nine takeaways, eleven café's and teashops and six pubs serving food. Not all of the eating establishments have been quality scored but of those that have only the Treehouse has been given a quality score of 5. The remainder have mostly been scored 3 or 4; and only one establishment was given a quality score of 1.

Around 75% of the eating places are open on Sunday and 60% open in the early evening (5pm-7pm). The audit suggested there may be a need for better quality pub food and also a more 'family friendly' pub.

There are a few sports and cultural activities available in the town which include the Willowburn Leisure Centre, Alnwick Golf Club and the Alnwick Playhouse (Theatre and Cinema)

4.2. Business Survey

The business survey asked respondents what feedback they get about the town from visitors in terms of their like and dislikes. It is interesting to see that there are some themes that continue to come through from the 2003 survey.

Figure 2: What Visitors Like about Alnwick

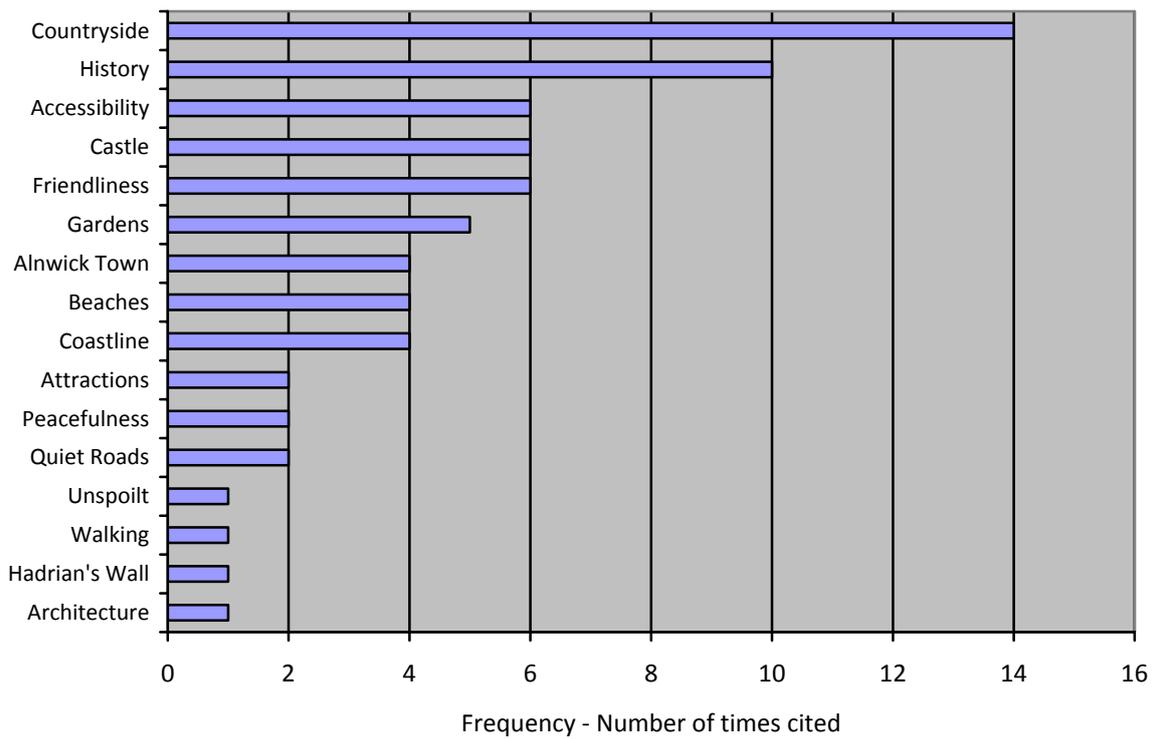
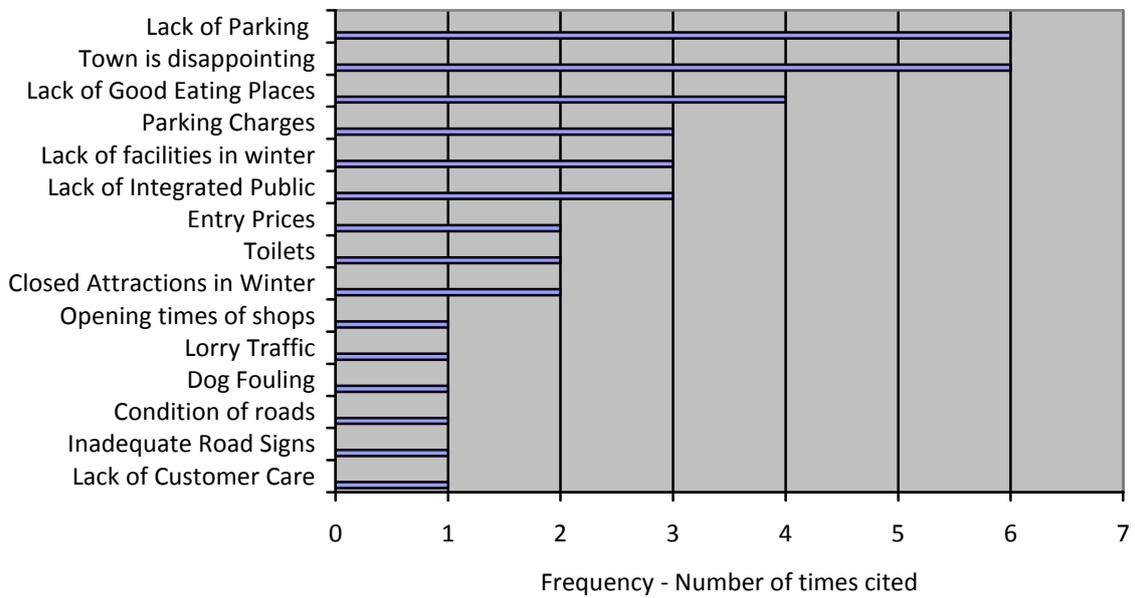


Figure 3 : What Visitors Dislike about Alnwick



Possible Improvements

The business survey asked respondents what kind of improvements or developments they would like to see in the town in order to attract more visitors or keep current visitors in the town for longer. The list below highlights the responses from the business survey.

- Integrated transport - linking local trains with tourist routes and targeted flexible guided bus service.
- Road signs and directions could be improved
- Cycle routes more clearly marked and promoted.
- Tidying up of derelict sites, attention to detail by the local authority, better maintenance of public buildings, bylaw for preventing the spitting of chewing gum into street. Bylaw for fining owners for allowing dogs to foul pavement.
- Working with Tourism Associations - better liaison. Reduce number of employees in Area Tourism Partnership who can only justify their existence by meddling in the running of private businesses.
- More funding to extend and improve the Tourist Information Centres.
- More small, individual shops like we used to have in Alnwick. Perhaps if rents and rates were lowered it would encourage more people to go into retail. Just look at Kelso and Melrose and great examples of successful small towns with great shops. Or visit the Cotswolds!
- More attractions such as stately homes and castles being available in winter months. Everything closes. Events in the winter to attract visitors at quieter times of year.
- Advertising the beauty of the region in all of the seasons whatever the weather. More things to do on a wet windy day.
- The Streetscape of Alnwick is in very poor condition. A recent report from the local Civic Society has shown how a mix of motor vehicle and pedestrian traffic can co-exist, as has been seen in Bury St Edmunds. Application of some principles of good practice to ground surfaces, road markings and signs, street lighting street furniture, shop fronts and advertisements would enhance the excellent buildings in the town.
- larger tourist office
- Cheaper, easier parking
- Reduced winter prices in the Alnwick garden
- There are rather a lot of empty shops in Alnwick which doesn't look very good to visitors.
- More farmers' markets and less e.g. 'French Markets' - very expensive and not what visitors come here for. They are looking for local produce and crafts.
- Improve the market itself in Alnwick, remove tatty summer carousel & slide. Try to bring more locals in as well. Entertainment always draws the crowds but not just the bouncy castle and burger van! Improving litter collection after busy days and tidying up shop fronts.

Encourage people to leave the cars behind by organising pick-ups from the station or taking people on walks and arranging a bus for the return trip.

- Better markets -more of the French and other continental type. Better quality and less old fashioned shops especially, gifts, food etc. Perhaps a massive Christmas fair at the castle (on the lines of Chatsworth). Generally, more to try and attract people to visit during the winter months.
- Mechanisms to attract tourists to the Heritage coast - which would include parking facilities, marking and promotion of the coastal path, co-ordination between adjacent areas.
- Better shops and cafes to give visitors a good, high quality experience. It is a great historical town but the services need to improve in terms of range and quality.
- Improved toilet facilities.
- Improved traffic flow through the centre of Alnwick at Hotspur Gate.
- A good strong 'network' of local providers and interested individuals who could act as a pressure group on the 'decision makers'.
- Continued improvement of the town appearance.
- Better liaison between town and garden.
- Improved car parking both infrastructure and attitude, cleaner, tidier, friendlier
- There seem to be a lot of charity shops in the area of Narrowgate which don't usually indicate a thriving town
- My accommodation is up a lane from the town centre, there are often people "hanging about" quite a threatening atmosphere at times. The pub culture means I don't feel I can recommend many places to drink, although there are some excellent eating out places. I would love to see the market place improved, there is potential for this to be a very pleasant, lively cafe style area but the shops and cafes there are drab and pretty poor quality in my experience.
- A change in residents attitudes. Tourism needs to be promoted as a real boost to jobs and wealth in the area and not just creating jobs in pubs and restaurants. We have spent considerable amounts with local plumbers, electricians, builders as well as the butcher and local farms. Multiply this by the number of tourism businesses and you can see how tourism puts wealth into the local area. So instead of moaning about parking, all the negative comments about the road train, and uninspired shopkeepers and traders, the whole community needs to push the area forward. Alnwick needs a park and ride scheme - that road train would have been ideal.

Promotion of Alnwick

Suggestions received from businesses regarding the marketing and promotion of the town included comments about current and future promotion of Alnwick.

- Alnwick Town and Coast is promoted via www.visitalnwick.org.uk very successfully the website is owned privately by our Tourism Association, it outguns all of the other websites for bringing in business to our members.
- I think it's very well promoted, in many areas with short breaks for specialist groups to try to increase the out of season market.
- I think that there is confusion with the Holiday Guides, a lot of tourists require only accommodation details.
- Too many guides. Too much conflict between towns trying to secure their own market share - Morpeth, Alnwick, Berwick. With all that Northumberland has to offer available monies should be directed on countywide promotional activities.
- I'm not sure we need two county guides - Visit Northumberland and Visit northeast England guide. Should we revert back to days of old ADC guide to market this specific area??
- ATA is excellent and Bruce Hewitson and committee do a wonderful job to promote Alnwick area and B & B. As does Northumbria Coast and Country Cottages
- Alnwick does not seem to need excessive promotion - its two main attractions bring in more tourists than the town can easily absorb. There is strong demand for another large hotel, but the town could then become paralysed by tourists.
- Too much overlap re County and Region. Region needs to support local business not try to run local business.
- Develop a town business web site
- Would like to see more visitor attractions open all year as many short break visitors still want things to do.
- Would like to see better promotion for the out of season period
- Make more of the beaches, the Cheviots.
- Promote excellence, Jules Holland, Food Festival, 5 star accommodation
- The town sells itself and has benefitted from much national media coverage over the last few years.
- We're new, but it feels as though a town centre manager briefed to maximise the tourist draw of multiple events through the year and manage the core Alnwick centre would help.
- The town to become a quality experience which can be easily promoted as a high quality experience.
- Need to engage local businesses and developers more in the importance of the tourists to the region and encourage them to smarten up their premises and cater for visitors
- Would welcome an integrated approach to tourism where providers work together for the benefit of each other and the region as a whole rather than the 'big players' sometimes appearing to only look after their own interests.

4.3. SWOT

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis was completed using the results of the business survey and town audit, and exercises conducted at the town meetings and workshops.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History and Heritage • No "party people or tacky gift shops" • Charm and Character - bones of a nice place • Public transport links - don't have to come by car • Strong community / voluntary involvement in tourism, through events, gardens etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking / cycling routes need attention – making more accessible and visible • Evening offer - nothing open • Engaging with business community, especially retailers and others in the town centre is very difficult. • Lots of poor shops • Appearance of the town centre • Lack of high quality hotel accommodation in town • Need for hospitality training – customer service is poor • Car parking • No hostel accommodation for walkers / backpackers • Close to the coast, but can't access it by walking / cycling
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wedding connection – “Romantic Alnwick” • Destination restaurants • Sessions to enable shopkeepers to see the town through the eyes of a visitor • Development Trust could buy key shops to guide improvements in appearance • Low cost flights from UK and Europe to Newcastle • Increased marketing to those living within a 2hr drive time: e.g. Edinburgh, Cumbria, York etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Festivals and events are very dependent on volunteers and may suffer when local council is restructured • Out of town retail • Traffic congestion • Fuel prices, reducing 2-day visitors to Alnwick • Wind Farms? • Image presented by having an industrial park at the Southern gateway to the town • Ageing population and consequent

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the Market Square • Linking into Sustrans cycle routes • Self-catering - opportunity to provide peripatetic chefs • “English Welcome” – low proportion of migrant workers in Northumberland at present • Improve festivals and events programme • Need to re-start a co-ordinated marketing group and a business forum • Recognise the wealth of volunteers involved in activities relevant to visitors • Open roads with stunning views in surrounding countryside • Streetscape – re-package as a visitor oriented project, e.g. Alnwick Welcome Space, or similar • Create an imaginative town trail using different media, leaflets / podcasts / mobile access, featuring points of interest, stories and buildings. • The “Alnwick 900” celebrations due for 2009, to mark the 900th anniversary of the town. 	<p>threat to future labour supply for the visitor economy</p>
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5. Destination Management and Promotion

5.1. The Strategy

Alnwick has an excellent location just off the A1, within reach of the Northumberland National Park and the beautiful North East of England Heritage coastline. It also has world renowned visitor destinations such as the Alnwick Garden and Alnwick Castle. With increased awareness of the importance of tourism within the region and the UK, and in the face of increased competition from overseas destinations, Alnwick has a stronger profile and recognition in the market place than most Northumberland towns. It is ahead in the shift towards attracting more up-market visitors. However it needs to continue to strengthen its wider visitor economy and ensure all elements of a visit reach and maintain excellent quality standards. The town could risk slipping behind when other towns raise their game. Visitors will leave disappointed if they have an excellent visit to the town's attractions but then stay at mediocre accommodation or have a poor evening meal or are unable to find good quality goods in shops. There is a risk that if the tourism sector does not address the changing markets, the visitor economy of Alnwick could gradually decline, particularly within the town centre, become increasingly less sustainable and more difficult to turn around as time goes on.

The strategy which the town needs to adopt is to focus on its strengths and unique selling points and to develop and promote these to meet the expectations of the future visitor markets, whilst still catering for the time-tested current visitor markets. By focusing on the more outgoing visitor segments Alnwick will broaden its appeal, attract more higher-spending visitors and make its visitor economy much more sustainable for the future.

Most effort and actions need to be focused on areas where there will be most impact. This could include important town management issues, new developments or simply joining things up more effectively. Alnwick already has several iconic/specialist businesses and Alnwick can continue to capitalise on these. Such businesses raise the profile of the whole town, generate PR coverage and lift confidence and aspirations of many other businesses and organisations.

There is a need to continue to build confidence in the visitor economy in order for individuals and organisations to invest in their businesses and properties and to attract new business. All partners need to work together to make it happen - it will require effort and investment from private, public and voluntary sectors to make the step change over the next few years.

The next section illustrates the future target markets that Alnwick wishes to focus on before identifying what the future visitor experience could be.

Future Target Markets

Demographic and social trends have led to all visitors having increasing expectations of quality and service. The more upmarket groups already form the major proportion of visitors as they take more holidays in the first place and some are now taking as many as four or five short breaks in the UK each year. These visitors have more money to spend, although it is often over a shorter period. In order for Alnwick to capitalise on such demographic changes an exercise was undertaken at the workshop session that aimed to identify the segments that Alnwick would like to attract in the future.

In line with regional and Northumberland tourism strategies the agreed strategy within Alnwick is to attract and cater for higher-spend visitor segments which have already started to visit the town. This does not mean ignoring the lower spending visitors, simply that the main focus for development and marketing should be to extend the Traditional and Cosmopolitan markets.

Alnwick has the potential to maximise visitor spend by making the best of important existing attractions as well as exploring the opportunities to develop new and exciting tourism initiatives.

The developments and actions that follow have reflected the needs, values and interests of these target markets in this destination plan. The next section examines the extent to which Alnwick's current tourism offer will relate to the expectations of future target visitors and identifies actions required to get there.

Meeting Future Visitor Expectations

Having established the current visitor segments as explained earlier, an exercise was undertaken that required the participants to adopt the identity of one of the segments and perform a virtual visit to the town – identifying the things they would do whilst on their trip, where they would stay, where they would dine and so on, in order to identify current gaps. These gaps could subsequently be addressed in the action planning session to produce proposals.

The results of this exercise are highlighted below and the full results can be found in Appendix .

Alnwick has chosen to better meet the needs of its existing visitors - Traditionals and Cosmopolitans – so that they may stay longer in the town and spend more money. They are also looking to continue to attract their lower spending markets, particularly Functionals.

Traditionals tend to be relatively self reliant and internally referenced. They value good service, and this is something that they will pay for, especially in terms of individual attention. They live life at a relaxed pace and enjoy intellectual challenges, arts and culture. In terms of holidays, Traditionals may like a self-catering cottage or a cosy B&B. They would like traditional pubs for eating out or just a quiet drink. Traditionals like heritage attractions which would include National Trust attractions, churches and cathedrals and botanical gardens. They tend to look for days out and attractions that are peaceful & relaxing, nostalgic and educational.

Cosmopolitans are independently minded and value individual and independent shops and eating places. They value excellent service and individual attention and are interested in new products, experiences, technology and modern style. They particularly enjoy shopping - upmarket clothes, gifts, antiques and specialist shops. They like art, culture and cooking, intellectual and physical challenges, theatre, films, wine bars, walks, the beach and countryside. They have a slight bias to towards heritage and arts or cultural attractions. They are also attracted towards days out in the 'great outdoors'. Cosmopolitans are looking for short breaks which involve time to themselves to escape and expand their knowledge and experiences.

Traditionals are likely to stay in good quality hotels and B&B's, with Cosmopolitans likely to stay in hotels rather than B&Bs. Traditionals will eat out in local pubs whilst Cosmopolitans may go to the Sanctuary or the Treehouse.

Both Cosmopolitans and Traditionals will enjoy visiting Alnwick Castle and the Alnwick Gardens in the town and will also venture further afield to visit historic properties and castles. Both would

enjoy walking along the coast. Cosmopolitans may try more adventurous activities such as horse riding and surfing during their visit to Alnwick and are also more likely to time their trip to take in an event or festival such as the Food Festival or Music Festival.

Cosmopolitans may not like the fact that Alnwick is quiet on Sundays. This group typically likes to pack as much as possible into their short break and the quiet Sunday would not appeal to them. Both groups may not like the choice of shopping in the town (although they do like Barter Books); a quality gift shop and art gallery would appeal to these visitors.

Both groups could be a little disappointed with the quality of the food in Alnwick. These groups value good service and may find the food offer in Alnwick too varied. Traditionals like the best of ‘traditional England’ so would like to see a traditional English pub serving local food. Cosmopolitans may be looking for higher quality bars and restaurants, a ‘café culture’ and longer opening hours.

Functionals are similar to Traditionals in that they like heritage attractions. They tend to seek nostalgic and somewhat educational experiences from their holidays. However, this segment is much more price sensitive than the Traditional segment. These visitors are more likely to stay in self catering cottages so they can cater for themselves. They may visit local pubs and tearooms and will also buy local produce to cook in the evenings. These visitors will also like Alnwick Castle and Garden, but are likely to spend more time out and about in the countryside and along the coast, as this is a low cost activity. In the town they may visit Barter Books and St Michaels Church.

Functionals would be frustrated at the difficulty in parking in the town and that the pavements are littered with ‘A’ boards and other clutter. Functionals would like to see more pubs with gardens or outside areas, less litter and more flowers and a walking route from Alnwick to the coast.

5.2. The Future Visitor Experience

The overall vision for Alnwick as a visitor destination is given in section 2.1. The tables below expand on the vision and give a more detailed description of what each visitor segment would like to see in Alnwick in the future.

Traditionals	
Vision Statement	‘Alnwick – The Garden Town’ or ‘Alnwick – England’s Garden Town’
How would you like to see Alnwick in 5-10 years time?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alnwick would be known internationally • The Garden continued into a landscaped town (the garden town) • Taking everything good from the garden and extending it into town and throughout the town with community involvement • The Market Place and Northumberland Hall upgraded to be more vibrant whilst remaining pedestrian friendly, with gourmet pubs and comprehensive information on www.visitalnwick.org • A traffic free town

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of great shops, tea shops, gastro pubs, cultural activities and community involvement • Issue: Alnwick needs a 'Champion Entrepreneur' to lead and get things going – someone to inspire and to realise Alnwick's potential • Issue: Need to overcome reluctance to change
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<h2>Cosmopolitans</h2>	
Vision Statement :	'Alnwick – A vibrant, Exciting, Lively Destination'
How would you like to see Alnwick in 5-10 years time?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There would be good quality bars and restaurants • A top quality hotel • Annual Jazz festival • More outdoor activities e.g. 4x4 driving, surfing, cookery schools, art galleries / schools • Less traffic in the town centre

While the Functional market will not be a main target for marketing, it is useful to review the expectations they hold - some of which will be common across other segments.

<h2>Functionals</h2>	
Vision Statement :	'The charming heart of Northumberland'
How would you like to see Alnwick in 5-10 years time?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A welcome sign – good signage and entry points • Park & ride and a shuttle bus • Pedestrian friendly - flagstones • The Market place would have outdoor seating – No plastic seats • There would be more local food and produce • Northumberland Hall as a 'hub' of activity • A traffic free centre with ample parking close by • A thriving market place with good quality products and interesting events/ activities all year

Summary

The visioning exercise enables gaps in the tourism offer to be identified and also allows for strengths that already exist to be promoted and marketed to potential visitors. In summary, Alnwick already has a host of activities that attract a wide variety of people and is also a town that people can use as a base to explore many other destinations in and around Northumberland. However, the town must improve the food and drink and accommodation offer to meet the ever more demanding needs of the visitor base which it expects to attract.

The following section sets out the destination plan priorities, before explaining in greater detail the programme of actions that came out of the action planning session.

5.3. Destination Priorities

The exercise in section 5.1 proved that the town and its surrounding area has a number of strengths to offer its target visitors, but also that there were a number of common themes or areas for improvement that would enable the town to become more attractive to its target markets. Alnwick needs to focus on four main priorities:

1. Developing Northumberland Hall and the Market place
2. Investing in a top quality / boutique hotel
3. A local food campaign, including improving the quality of food retail and catering
4. Developing heritage trails and cycle / walking routes

In addition three other areas have been identified which are required to help the town operate as an effective destination - to join things up, attract visitors, manage their impacts and enhance their visits. These are:

5. Training and skills initiatives
6. Co-ordination of Local Groups
7. Undertaking an up-to-date visitor survey

The following sections explain and develop the priorities in more detail

Developing Northumberland Hall and the Market Place

Northumberland Hall and the Market Place occupy a critical position in the centre of the town and it is widely believed that the potential of these assets is not currently being realised. At present Alnwick benefits from a collection of major attractions that brings visitors into the area, yet the town centre fails to capitalise on these opportunities. The key to increasing the number of visitors in the town centre may be in the re-development of the Hall and the Market Place. Potential developments must be sensitive of the need to extend the current tourism season in Alnwick into the winter months and it is also vital that plans are ambitious and far sighted in order for the town to compete with the growing number of tourism alternatives in the UK and throughout Europe. Developments to the Hall should be closely linked to improvements with the Market Place in order to maximise the potential tourism benefits.

Investing in a top quality / boutique hotel

In order to meet the needs of current and future visitors to Alnwick, a top quality hotel / boutique hotel is needed. At present there is a good range of B&B's and self catering accommodation but relatively few hotels. If Alnwick wishes to attract higher spending visitors, then a hotel of this type will ensure that spend per visitor is increased and more importantly for the town - kept within the local tourism industry. The findings of the Alnwick Garden Visitor Survey 2007 illustrate that the majority of their visitors are in the higher socio-economic grades which suggests there is demand for an up-market hotel to complement the current offer.

A local food campaign, including improving the quality of food retail and catering

To support the Alnwick Food Festival, a local food campaign that highlights the importance of local food in the region should be undertaken. Stimulating interest in local food in this way is intended to encourage local restaurants and other food outlets to procure and sell local foods.

A similar proposal was put forward as an outcome of the retail distinctiveness research which specified undertaking quarterly food forums between potential buyers and sellers among other initiatives. Such a scheme could include competitions, awards, master-classes and "speed dating" sessions to introduce buyers and sellers to each other's products and requirements.

Developing heritage trails and cycle / walking routes

Alnwick's historic townscape is already an attraction and creating a heritage trail around the town could increase the number of visitors further. There is an opportunity to create a heritage trail around historic local water features which would provide an interesting and engaging walking route around the town. There are also opportunities to link Alnwick to the coast with both walking and cycling routes, which would enhance the number of activities in the area and should also increase visitor numbers.

Training and skills initiatives

In order to enhance the tourism offer as a whole, and bring together some of the proposed changes, there is potential in Alnwick to undertake training and skills initiatives. In particular, customer care within the food and drink sector and general tourism information services are areas that would benefit.

Co-ordination of local groups

It is essential that in a market town such as Alnwick, local groups do not operate in isolation. A structured system that leads to co-ordination of local groups would ensure plans and proposals are acted upon. At present there are several major tourist attractions and it is paramount that all organisations with a vested interest in tourism work together. Creating lasting relationships between tourism operators and other organisations in Alnwick will ensure the best interests of the town are realised.

Undertaking an up-to-date visitor survey

Many of the destination priorities are based around anecdotal evidence of recent fluctuations in the tourism industry. In order to fully inform and direct the proposals listed in this plan, an up-to-date visitor survey is recommended. The last visitor survey undertaken in Alnwick was in 2003 and since then there have been significant changes to the tourism offer. Aside from the Alnwick Garden's own annual visitor survey, there is no documentation that takes account of changes in the local tourism economy in the past five years. An up-to-date survey that encompasses the wider impact of changes in tourism is essential for the successful implementation of this plan's proposals.

The following section explores potential projects and proposals that aim to achieve these objectives.

6. Programme of Actions

6.1. Action Plan

This section lists all the ideas and proposals suggested during the process or identified by the consultants, under the priority headings. The table summarises the full range of potential actions and begins to identify how we get there and who needs to be involved. With all the actions, the critical factor is to identify which organisation or partnership is willing to take the lead and drive things forward. The final sections include a range of potential business development and support actions, plus actions required to co-ordinate between organisations across activities within the plan. It is followed by more detailed descriptions of the top priority actions.

		Priority	Timescale	Delivery	Lead	Cost/ funding
1	Northumberland Hall and Market Place					
1.1	Invest in Northumberland Hall so it is a 'hub of activity'	Very High	Short Term	DL	ACDT, ADC & LG	High
1.2	Develop a thriving market place with good quality products	Very High	Short Term	DP	ACDT & ADC	High
1.3	Upgrade the Market Place so that it is more appealing to visitors	High	Short Term	DL	ACDT & ADC	High
1.4	Develop a café quarter in the Market Place	High	Short Term	DL / DP	ACDT & ADC	High
1.5	Improve the Market Place outdoor seating	Medium	Medium Term	DL / DP	ACDT & ADC	High
2	Top quality/Boutique Hotel					
2.1	Invest in a top quality / boutique hotel	Very High	Medium Term	BIO	ACDT, PSI & LG	High
3	Food and Drink					
3.1	Local Food Campaign Promotion and use of local food	Very High	Quick Win	DP	ACDT, NT & Local Living	Medium
3.2	Encourage a café culture	High	Short Term	BIO		
3.3	Support an improved food offer especially in town centre pubs	High	Short Term	BIO		
3.4	Promote investment opportunities for top quality bars and restaurants	High	Short Term	BIO		
3.5	Work with landlords to develop pub gardens/outside areas	High	Short Term	DP		

		Priority	Timescale	Delivery	Lead	Cost/ funding
4	Heritage Trails and Cycling & Walking Routes					
4.1	Walking and Cycle Routes	Very High	Short Term	DP	ACDT, Sustrans, Cycle Trax & LG	Medium
4.2	Walking route from Alnwick to the coast	High	Short Term	DP	ACDT, Sustrans, Cycle Trax & LG	Medium
4.3	A water feature trail – St Michaels Pants	Very High	Quick Win	DL	ACDT, LCG, LG	Low
5	Training and Skills					
5.1	Training for TIC staff and accommodation staff	Very High	Quick Win	DL / DP	ACDT & NT	Medium
5.2	Skills and training initiative for catering and tourism	High	Short Term	DL / DP		
5.3	Business mentoring scheme	High	Short Term	DL / DP		
6	Co-ordination and Community Schemes					
6.1	Recruit a local champion entrepreneur – to encourage investment	Very High	Quick Win	DL		
6.2	Co-ordination of local groups	Very High	Quick Win	DL / DP	ACDT	Low
6.3	Cultural activities and community involvement	Very High	Quick Win	DP		
6.4	Investigate opportunities for a book festival	High	Quick Win	DP /BIO	ACDT & Barter	

		Priority	Timescale	Delivery	Lead	Cost/ funding
					Books	
6.5	Links to National Park	High	Short Term	DP	ACDT	Low
6.6	Develop a wider range of annual festivals / alternative events	High	Short Term	DP / BIO	ACDT	
7	Visitor Survey					
7.1	Undertake an up-to-date visitor survey	Very High	Quick Win	OL	ACDT & IC	Medium
8	Business Developments					
8.1	Encourage live entertainment	Very High	Short Term	DP		
8.2	Improve the range of shops	High	Long Term	BIO		
8.3	Develop / encourage more specialist shops	High	Long Term	BIO		
8.4	Attract more outdoor activities	Medium	Medium Term	BIO / OL		
8.5	Co-ordinate and promote art/culture experience	Medium	Long Term	BIO		
8.6	Better promotion for spa/health/leisure attractions	Low	Medium Term	BIO / OL		
9	Environmental Schemes					
9.1	Support planting of flowers and reducing litter to improve environment	High	Short Term	DP	Alnwick in Bloom / ADC	
9.2	Shop frontage improvement schemes	High	Short Term	DL / DP	ADC	
9.3	Garden continued into a landscaped town	High	Medium Term	DP / BIO		
10	Marketing and Promotion					

		Priority	Timescale	Delivery	Lead	Cost/ funding
10.1	Invest in on-line marketing of the town	High	Quick Win	DL	ACDT & NT	
10.2	Invest in other Information services such as town maps / guides	High	Quick Win	DL	NT	
10.3	Promote trips	High	Quick Win	DL	NT	
10.4	Market and promote existing and new festivals and events	High	Short Term	DP		
10.5	Review and upgrade the town guide	High	Short Term	DL / DP	NT / ADC / ACDT	
10.6	Promote town as a green destination	Medium	Short Term	DP		
11	Transport & Signage					
11.1	Invest in gateways and signage	Very High	Short Term	DL / DP	Civic Society, ACDT, ADC	Medium
11.2	A traffic free / congestion free town centre with ample parking near	High	Short Term	DP	ACDT / Civic Society	
11.3	Pedestrian friendly walkways	High	Short Term	DL / DP		
11.4	Park & ride / shuttle bus	High	Short Term	BIO		
11.5	Promote arriving by public transport	Medium	Short Term	DP		

Timescale		Delivery		Lead	
Quick win	Less than 12 months	DL	We can deliver locally	ACDT	Alnwick Community Development Trust

Short Term	1 – 2 years
Medium Term	2 – 5 years
Long Term	Over 5 years

DP	We can deliver with partners
BIO	Business Investment Opportunity
OL	Needs outside lead

ADC	Alnwick District Council
LG	The Leadership Group
PSI	Private Sector Investor
IC	Independent Consultants
NT	Northumberland Tourism

	Denotes Key Project
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6.2. Key Projects

The key projects have been identified for various characteristics that ensure they are deliverable, they fit within a relevant timescale and that they meet the objectives of the project and the vision as set out in this document.

Northumberland Hall and Market Place

Action	Invest in Northumberland Hall
Project Number	1.1
Description	<p>Northumberland Hall occupies a vital location within the town centre and is often the subject of much debate. The retail distinctiveness study in 2006 recommended the requirement for a visioning study and options appraisal regarding the future use of the Hall.</p> <p>This study has also recognised the importance of the Hall to the tourism industry in Alnwick. We understand that support has been sought from the Advancing Assets for Communities: Demonstration Programme to investigate the possibility of asset transfer from Alnwick District Council to the Development Trust, which could in turn allow the site to be developed as a focus for tourism-related activity in the town.</p> <p>There is also the possibility that the Hall will be marketed by the local authority, in which case it is essential that potential buyers are aware of its pivotal role and the effect it will have on tourism. An investment in the Hall is necessary to drive forward plans and visions that will have a positive effect on the town and the tourism offer as a whole.</p> <p>Potential plans for the Hall should take account of the critical need to extend the current tourism season into the winter months and to contribute to the food offer in the town. It is vital that the current opportunity to obtain and manage this key asset is linked to an ambitious and far sighted plan. Support should therefore be given to the Development Trust in creating a local food centre / restaurant / retail development linked closely to improvement of the market place, to provide a focal point for the town for visitors and residents alike.</p> <p>The Leadership Group should work closely with the Trust in identifying tourism-centred activities which could be incorporated into plans for the building.</p>
Cost	High
Lead Delivery Organisation	Alnwick Community Development Trust, the Leadership Group & Alnwick District Council

Other Partners	One NorthEast, Northumberland Tourism & Private Sector
Key Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ownership of the Hall• Feasibility of proposals• Funding & support• Listed buildings consents• Project management• Community engagement• Long-term viability
Timetable	Short Term – 1-2 years

	Develop a thriving Market Place
Project Number	1.2, 1.3, 1.4 & 1.5
Action	Invest in the market place
Description	<p>The Market Place in Alnwick has great influence over the visitors to the town centre. It is essential that this potential is utilised. This study has identified the need to re-vitalise the market place. Suggestions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment in new stalls, canopies and associated furniture to ensure uniformity • Consideration of planting / soft landscaping to increase the attractiveness of the space • Purchase of a permanent/ semi permanent awning • Investigation into the potential for entertainment such as street theatre, cooking demonstrations, craft demonstrations etc. • Linkage into the Northumberland Hall to create an all-weather space for eating, drinking and networking • Scope to incorporate new public artworks
Cost	High
Lead Delivery Organisation	Alnwick Community Development Trust & Alnwick District Council
Other Partners	NSP, One Northeast
Key Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Planning Authority approval • Securing funding
Timetable	Short Term – 1-2 years

Top Quality Hotel

	Invest in a top quality / boutique hotel
Project Number	2.1
Action	Investigate the potential of securing a suitable site for, and investing in, a top quality / boutique hotel
Description	<p>This study highlighted a gap in the provision of accommodation for a top quality / boutique hotel to complement the current accommodation offer in the town. This proposal suggests identifying a suitable site, which presents a potential business investment opportunity, for the specific purpose of developing such a business that is essential in supporting the tourism community.</p> <p>A potential site where investment could be directed is 31-33 Narrowgate, which has space for parking at the rear of the building although there are issues with the building itself – perhaps most notably its listed status.</p> <p>There is significant potential for a local investor or collaboration between local community groups / town development trust and the private sector to secure ownership of this building and develop a top quality / boutique hotel that will go towards achieving Alnwick's tourism vision.</p> <p>The Leadership Group should therefore support the application for a boutique hotel in Alnwick, utilising a key building in an area designated by the local authority for tourism activity.</p>
Cost	High
Lead Delivery Organisation	Private Sector Investor, Alnwick Community Development Trust & the leadership group
Other Partners	Local Authority, One Northeast, NSP & Northumberland Tourism
Key Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing ownership • Listed buildings consent • Funding • Local Planning Authority permission • Parking provision • Creating / developing relationships with organisations
Timetable	Medium Term – 2-5 years

Food and Drink

	Local Food Campaign
Project Number	3.1
Action	Instigate a local food campaign to promote the use of local produce
Description	<p>To support the Alnwick Food Festival, a local food campaign that highlights the importance of local food in the region should be undertaken. Stimulating interest in local food in this way is intended to encourage local restaurants and other food outlets to procure and sell local foods.</p> <p>A similar proposal was put forward as an outcome of the retail distinctiveness research which specified undertaking quarterly food forums between potential buyers and sellers among other initiatives.</p> <p>Scheme could include competitions, awards, master classes etc.</p>
Cost	Medium
Lead Delivery Organisation	Alnwick Community Development Trust, Northumberland Tourism & Local Living
Other Partners	The Alnwick Food Festival, Local Authority, NSP, One Northeast, Regional Food Group, Made in Northumberland
Key Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding • Creating relationships between organisations and community groups
Timetable	Short Term – 1-2 years

Heritage Trails and Cycling and Walking

	Walking & Cycle Routes to the Coast
Project Number	4.1 & 4.2
Action	Develop walking & cycling routes
Description	<p>It was recognised that currently there are no designated cycle routes or walking routes from Alnwick to the coast. Given the excellent location of the town close to the coast and Northumberland National Park, well prepared, safe cycling and walking routes could significantly boost the visitor economy.</p> <p>To achieve this it is suggested that a partnership with Sustrans may be necessary and there are also opportunities to link this proposal in with other similar proposals in Northumberland such as the Network of Cycle Hubs that is being considered in Wooler and Haltwhistle, led by Cycle Trax.</p> <p>Early action could be to research and promote several circular cycle routes on quiet roads/bridleways including to the coast.</p>
Cost	Medium
Lead Delivery Organisation	Alnwick Community Development Trust, Sustrans, Cycle Trax, The leadership group
Other Partners	Local Authority, One Northeast, Northumberland AONB, National Trust & Northumberland Tourism
Key Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing a relationship with Sustrans led by an enthusiastic local team • Funding • Establishing necessary permissions from planning authorities and land owners such as the National Trust etc.
Timetable	Short Term – 1-2 years

	Heritage Trail
Project Number	4.3
Action	Develop a heritage trail of local water features (pants)
Description	<p>There is an opportunity to create a heritage trail throughout Alnwick town centre by joining up the local water features or 'Pants' (as they are known locally) to form a heritage trail. By renovating and redeveloping some of the existing pants and creating an information narrative to accompany them, a heritage trail could increase visitor numbers to the town. Visitors may find a 'pants trail' both intriguing and amusing.</p> <p>Potential to link this project to other successful tourist attractions would be recommended, such as the Alnwick Garden. Creating a link to water features in the Garden that continues into the town could be seen as a way of increasing visitor footfall.</p>
Cost	Low
Lead Delivery Organisation	Alnwick Community Development Trust, the leadership group & Local Community Groups
Other Partners	The Alnwick Garden
Key Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding • Partnerships with other organisations
Timetable	Quick Win – Less than 12 months

Training and Skills

	Skills and Training needs
Project Number	5.1
Action	Training initiatives for TIC staff and accommodation providers
Description	This study has highlighted the need for TIC staff and accommodation staff to receive training and support that aim to better inform them of the local tourism offer and how to meet increasingly sophisticated customer expectations.
Cost	Medium
Lead Delivery Organisation	Alnwick Community Development Trust & Northumberland Tourism
Other Partners	Local Authority
Key Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding
Timetable	Quick Win – Less than 12 months

Co-ordination and Community

	Co-ordination of local groups
Project Number	6.2 & 6.5
Action	Establish effective co-ordination of local groups
Description	<p>It is essential for the success of many of the proposals and initiatives in a small town such as Alnwick that good partnerships and alliances between local community groups are forged.</p> <p>A key link to make would be with the National Park which presents opportunities to increase visitor numbers from those choosing to spend a break in the park.</p>
Cost	Low
Lead Delivery Organisation	Alnwick Community Development Trust
Other Partners	Local community groups, the Alnwick Garden, the Alnwick Castle, Northumberland National Park
Key Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing lasting and effective relationships • Co-ordinating and creating opportunities for groups to forge relationships • Co-ordination and administration costs
Timetable	Quick Win – Less than 12 months

Visitor Survey

	Undertake an up-to-date visitor survey
Project Number	7.1
Action	Commission an up-to-date visitor survey
Description	<p>This study has identified the need for more recent tourism data to be collected. The previous visitor survey was carried out in 2003 and since then there have been major developments in the tourism industry in Alnwick. In particular, the Alnwick Garden has had a profound impact on visitor numbers to the region and these have yet to be picked up in a visitor survey apart from the Garden's own visitor survey.</p> <p>In order to assess the impact of changes to the tourism industry in the area as a whole, it is suggested that a new visitor survey be undertaken. This survey will provide many of the key projects identified in this plan with factual evidence on which to base future decisions.</p>
Cost	Medium
Lead Delivery Organisation	Alnwick Community Development Trust, independent consultancy
Other Partners	Local Authority, NSP, One Northeast & Northumberland Tourism
Key Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure funding • Contact an independent consultancy organisation
Timetable	Quick win – less than 12 months

Transport and Signage

	Improve signage and accessibility
Project Number	11.1
Action	Invest in Gateways and Signage
Description	<p>It was felt that the visitor experience could be significantly enhanced by improved signage across the town, in line with the recommendations in the Civic Society Streetscape Study report. This would include rationalisation and updating of signage, as well as improving access route signage, for example from Greenwell Lane car park to the town centre.</p> <p>Signs could also be enhanced to promote more of what is on offer in the town – restaurants, local shopping, markets etc.</p>
Cost	Medium
Lead Delivery Organisation	Civic Society, Alnwick Community Development Trust & Alnwick District Council
Other Partners	-
Key Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreeing a comprehensive signage strategy for the town • Funding
Timetable	Short Term – 1-2 years

6.3. Investment Opportunities

The Market Town Welcome process has identified possible opportunities for tourism development should an investor be interested in investing in the town. These are:

- Good quality hotel
- Opportunities for bars and restaurants
- Retail – to expand the range of the retail offer
- Outdoor activity businesses

6.4. Cross County Projects

As the Destination Plans developed it was clear that there were many common themes between the emerging priorities in each town. The same issues cropped up in many towns and opportunities for joint working to address many of these emerged. So for example while a particular town may want to improve a local walking route there will also be scope to link it into a wider network and to undertake a joint promotion to walkers.

The themes where there is potential for joined up action across the towns are:

- Outdoor activities - walking/cycling, watersports, nature based tourism

- History and heritage
- Food and drink
- Art, culture and events
- Business support and training
- Planning, infrastructure and destination management
- Promotion of investment opportunities

Alnwick has an opportunity to participate in many of the joint initiatives proposed which are detailed in the Market Town Welcome Over-arching report. In particular it is in a good position to be involved in collaborative projects regarding **Walking and Cycling** and **History and Heritage** as this is where its strengths lie.

The advent of a new unitary authority opens up opportunities to develop broader approaches to issues such as car parking, promoting investment opportunities and promoting public transport. There may be scope for county based initiative for developing volunteer capacity in events organisation. There is definitely demand for workshops and training for the tourism sector which could be organised across the county and help businesses network.

The partner organisations need to maintain close links with Northumberland Strategic Partnership, Northumberland Tourism and One North East to ensure they can take part in and capitalise upon any collaborative projects. They should also agitate for projects which help them better deliver this action plan.

Appendices

1. Appendix 1 –List of Individuals who have contributed to the development of this plan

Valerie	Apted	Alnwick Community Development Trust, trustee
John	Blackmore	Local hotel proprietor
Ian	Brown	Local Entrepreneur
Mark	Dawson	The Alnwick Garden
Malcolm	Downes	Local B&B owner
Kath	Downes	Local B&B owner
Andrew	Duff	Tourism Consultant
Bruce	Hewison	West Acre House
Rachel	Johnston	The Alnwick Garden
Paul	Larkin	Northeast Press
Jeff	McCloud	Alnwick District Council
Bill	Robinson	The Alnwick Civic Society
Anne	Shilton	Alnwick Community Development Trust
Carol & Mike	Smith	Local B&B owner
Rachael	Squires	Local Business woman
Kevin	Thompson	Local Entrepreneur

2. Appendix 2 – Segmentation

Below is a full description for each of the bespoke segmentation groups that were used for this study.

Functionals (Brian & Susan)

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.

Habituals (Frank & Brenda)

Outlook

- The Habitual segment is most likely to value a more relaxed pace of life.
- They are strongly traditional, and very resistant to any expenditure. Though this is possibly a reflection of their poor means.

- They are probably strongly resistant to change.
- They will make purchase decisions on function rather than style. Fashion has little value to this group.
- They are also very risk averse and show little interest in new options or opportunities.
- This group has and spends little money, not for brands or for service. They find it hard to justify expense of any sort.
- They have no interest in arts or culture.

Interests and Activities

- **Shopping** – Not really big on shopping. They are not interested in fashion or new technology. Being of lower income then they tend to shop in the perceived cheaper stores e.g. Costcutter, Budgens & Morrisons.
- **Days out and attractions** – Prefer to go to heritage based attractions that involve of bit of investigation. They are looking for a peaceful and relaxing experience from their days out. Transport museums appeal to this segment.
- **Eating and drinking** – Do not eat out very often but when they do they are drawn to traditional establishments like Harry Ramsden's, Beefeater or Toby Carvery.
- **Holidays** – This segment is least likely to take a holiday. If they do then they are likely to go to a familiar destination that they have been to before and it has to be cheap. It is more likely to be in the UK than abroad.
- **Media** – This segment is the one who watches TV the most and their favourite type of programme is the news. In terms of newspaper readership they favour paid for local papers ahead of the Daily Mail and the Sun.

Traditionals (Robert & Hilary)

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.

Cosmopolitans (Jake & Tamsin)

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.

Discoverers (Adrian & Chloe)

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.

3. Appendix 3 – Town Audit

3.1. Reasons for the audit

This audit is an important part of the Market Town Welcome Programme. It will help each market town to appreciate its current tourism offer and interest to visitors, as well as identifying problems, potential gaps and opportunities for future developments. By collecting the same information for each town we can give evidence of comparative strengths and weaknesses.

Many businesses contribute to the tourism appeal of a market town. So, the audit covers not only accommodation providers and attractions, but also specialist retailers, markets, sports, countryside and cultural facilities. It is also important to consider the visitor's experience from their arrival in the town for the first time and how they find their way around the town. Therefore we will consider infrastructure issues such as signposting, car parking, toilet provision and information availability in the town. Studies have shown that they can significantly affect the quality of the visit and influence whether the visitor returns.

The information collected was fed into workshops being held in each town in early March to inform discussions about the town's special character, its strengths and weaknesses and what needs to be improved.

3.2. Audit Results

3.3. Accommodation

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

<i>Accommodation listed is within 4 miles of Alnwick.</i>	Number	No. of bedspaces, units or pitches	Number officially quality inspected
Hotels	White Swan	55 rooms	?
	Blackmores	18 rooms	4
Guesthouses/B&Bs (who are members of ATA)	25	105 rooms, approx 230 beds	25/105
Inns or pubs with accommodation	Queens Head	3	3
	Oaks Hotel	11	11
Self-Catering businesses	29	150	29/150
Caravan & Camping sites	Nil		
Youth or other hostels	Nil		

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

As will be seen from above, there is not as yet a budget hotel.

For the accommodation of coach travel guests or conferences.

There is not a caravan site within 5 miles of Alnwick.

There is no hostel or group accommodation for back-packers or other groups.

It would be good to have a luxury hotel such as Malmaison in the town.

3.4. 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	Alnwick Castle	20 th March – 26 th October 2008	5
Museums, heritage centres	Bailiffgate Museum	Everyday except between 22 Dec 08 and 6 th Jan 09.	4
	Hardys Fishing Museum	All year.	3
	Fusiliers Museum	As castle	3.5
Churches of interest to visitors	St Michaels		
	St Pauls		
Animal/wildlife attractions inc. nature reserves	Ulgham Wildlife Centre		
	Whitehouse Farm		
	Low Newton Nature Reserve		

	Druridge Bay		
Farm attractions	Whitehouse Farm Lee Moor Farm		
Gardens	The Alnwick Garden Howick Hall Gardens & Arboretum Cragside (National Trust property)	364 days (every day except Christmas Day) Easter to end of Oct.	5 4
Railway, transport attractions	Dreadnought Coaches		3
Country parks, woodlands, special countryside sites	Hulne Parke, permissive right given to walk in the Deer Park Druridge Bay	Open all year	3
Craft centres	The Bakehouse Gallery		
Other	Barter Books	Everyday except Christmas Day	5

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

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
Shrove Tuesday	Shrove Tuesday Football Match	A very wet and competitive free-for-all starting from the Castle and ending in the River Aln.
July '08	Outdoor Summer Concert at Alnwick Castle	Jools Holland July 2008
August	Music Festival	International music and dance, for one

		week.
September	Food Festival	Encourage use and supply of fine produce from Northumberland. Main event over 1 weekend but some activities in previous week.
November	Fireworks display	Coincides with Guy Fawkes festivities.
November	Northumberland Gathering	Cross-Northumberland cultural event, this is Alnwick's contribution.
Last Friday in November	Christmas Lights Switch On	Locally designed, quirky and fun 'animated' Christmas lights (e.g. Santa on a Harry Potter broomstick throughout December)

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

The Alnwick Garden provides a range of events throughout the year. One of the challenges for The Garden and Alnwick is to encourage people to visit all year round, so perhaps some sort of winter festival would be good.

Nothing in town aimed at children/family market.

Alnwick Tournament cancelled after 25 years in August 2007! Unlikely to be resurrected.

Alnwick Horse Driving Trials – question over whether it will go ahead in August 2008!

Alnwick fair ceased in August 2008.

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

How do we know without asking the visitors!

3.5. 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 (omit if too many to list)
Speciality Food	8	Hannys Health Food Alnwick Deli Grannies R Turnbull butchers Trotters Family Bakers Broomhill Farm Premier Organic Lamb Market Place Butchery Gilchrist Confectionary Ltd
Antiques	3	Michael Atheys Tamblyn Antiques Bailiffgate Antique Pine
Books	2	Barter Books Alnwick Lions Bookshop
Arts / Crafts	5	Fenkle Street needle crafts Household Textiles The Gate Gallery Alnwick Picture Framing Specially for You
Gift	7	Gift Shop at The Alnwick Garden Frekles The Village Gift & coffee Shop Collectables The Gift Shop – china and ware A World of Difference Steeles Gift Shop

Outdoor/Leisure	6	NNE Ltd Sportsworld Chameleon LeisureLook Jobsons of Alnwick Scotts of Alnwick
Clothing	10	Bell & Sons Menswear Rays Menswear Greenwoods (mens) Twenty 8 Ladieswear No 24 (ladies) Raggy Dolls (ladies) Seasons Ltd (ladies) Country Casuals (ladies) Foresters (ladies & children) Kiddies Kabin (children)
Garden centres/ nurseries	2	Garden Shop at The Alnwick Garden Willows Garden Centre
Other Speciality or 'destination' shops	1	Barter Books

Markets

Market type	name	Regularity	day(s) of week	5	4	3	2	1
Outdoor	Saturday market	Weekly	Saturday					
	Thursday market	Weekly from April – Oct	Thursday					
	Farmers market	Last Fri of month	Friday		X			
	Easter market	Annually	Saturday					
	Christmas market	Annually	Saturday					

	Apple Day market	(Dec) Annually (Oct)	Friday					
Indoor								
Speciality	Visiting continental markets Spring/summer/ Christmas markets in The Alnwick Garden	Annual 3 x year	Sun/Mon/ Tues Sat/Sun		X		X	

Eating out

	No.	Names (omit if too many to list)
Restaurants	10	The Sanctuary The Treehouse The Art House Tower Resturant Piccolinos Dalchini Louis Steakhouse Lilburns Bar Restaurant Blackmores Cafe Tirreno (Italian)
Take-aways	10	Carlos (fish & chips) Pizza Royale Hot Bite Alnwick Tandoori Victoria House Fish & Chips Sun Ho Chop Suey House Dalchini (Indian)

		Hot Wok Robinsons Victoria House (fish & chips)
Cafes/tea shops	11	Rumours The Tea Cosy Louis Bistro / Stakehouse Melvins Coffee House Montagu's Tower Coffee Shop Lilburns Grannies The Eating Room Copperfields Courtyard Cafe at The Alnwick Garden
Pubs serving food	6	The Fleece Oddfellows Arms Hairy Lemon Queens Head Oaks Hotel White Swan – Hardy's Bistro
Other	1	Pavilion – Alnwick Garden
How many vacant shops are there in the town currently?		
How many shops are open on Sundays?		
How many eating places are open on Sundays?		
How many shops are open in the early evening (5pm-7pm)?		
How many eating places are open in the early evening (5pm-7pm)?		
How many shops observe a half day closing?		
Which day of the week?		

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

Shops to cater specifically for tourists. Higher quality food and gift shops.

Large electrical goods
White goods
Clothing (all ages)
Quality pub food?
Family pub

3.6. 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	Willowburn Leisure Centre				x		
Swimming pool	Willowburn Leisure Centre				X		
Golf	Alnwick Golf Club						
Long distance footpaths	St Oswalds Way						
Other named walks							
Bicycle hire	Roseworth Bike Hire	Will drop off!					
Cycle routes		Coastal Route		x			
Riding/pony trekking	Windy Edge Eglington						
Special riding routes							
Fishing							
Sailing		Nearest in Amble					

Canoeing		Nearest in Amble					
Other outdoor activities, sports	Alnwick Squash Club Rugby Club Cricket Club Football Club						
Theatre	Alnwick Playhouse			X			
Cinema*	Alnwick Playhouse			X			
Other entertainment facilities	Events during the year at The Alnwick Garden and at Alnwick Castle. Lionheart Radio, Music & Media project	Community radio broadcasting 24/7 with live programmes approx 07:00 – 22:00 weekdays.		X			

* include regular film showing arrangements if appropriate

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

3.7. Support facilities and infrastructure

Car parking

	Free	Short stay	Long stay
No. of car parks	2 small scenic lay-bys (Denwick Lane & north of Lion	3 off street car parks	The Garden provides parking for 900 cars,

	Bridge)		£2/day. 7 off street car parks (and a permit holders car park)
No. of spaces in total	31	131	313
	Free	Metered	
On street parking places (approx)		87	

Coach Parking

	Location	capacity
Location(s) for dropping off passengers	Greenwell Road	2 coaches
Location(s) for coach parking	The Garden for Garden visitors	30 coaches
	Greenwell Road	3 coaches
Estimated no. of coaches visiting the town each week?		
Any related issues?	No accommodation for overnight coach parties.	

Other transport facilities

No's and locations of bicycle racks/storage	None known.
Location of central bus station/shelter	Bus station at Clayport Street
Facilities available at bus station/shelter	Covered seating, otherwise none!
No. of daily buses linking to other towns	
Distance from town centre to nearest railway station	Alnmouth station – 4 miles to east of Alnwick.

Public toilets

Toilet location	Market Street / The Shambles	Greenwell Road	
Opening hours	Daylight	Daylight	
Free/paid	Free	Free	
disabled access yes/no	No (stepped)	Yes	
baby changing yes/no	Yes but you wouldn't want to – not clean.	Yes	

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

No toilets with disabled access in centre of town.

“Toilets in The Shambles are a disgrace and embarrassing to use.”

Poor baby changing facilities in the centre of town.

3.8. 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?	yes /no	If not, where is your nearest centre?	
Location	2 The Shambles Alnwick NE66 1TN	Contact Name	Jackie Griffiths
Telephone Number	01665 511333	Email Address	alnwicktic@alnwick.gov.uk

Location	Alnwick Garden Regional Information Centre	Contact name	
Telephone number	01665 511350	Email address	info@alnwickgarden.com

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

Enquiry type:	Total Number of Enquiries		
	2005	2006	2007
Counter	79,065	115,773	104,386
Postal	1,384	1,480	1,229
Telephone	1,392	9,085	8,762
Email	2,134	3,377	3,342
Accommodation bookings	1,295	1,211	1,137

Please estimate proportions of enquiries from each of:

	%
Local residents	20
UK visitors	77.6
Overseas visitors	2.4

Visitor Information Needs

What are the most frequent information requests that you receive from visitors and potential visitors?	
1	Accommodation
2	Places/attractions to visit in area
3	Bus/train timetables

4	Events taking place in area
5	Information relating to places outside region

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

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

Notes from TIC staff:

“I believe that the town meets most of the needs. However, with the Castles in the area closing during the winter period, it would be beneficial if there were more indoor facilities available. Also a few more popular shops within the town would be appreciated.

Better use of the Northumberland Hall would be beneficial, possibly on the lines of the Chantry at Morpeth and more use of the Market Place which at times can appear very depressing.

In the summer the public toilets are a source of complaints due to cleanliness and capacity.”

3.9. 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:

9

Locations	1 x Windsor Gardens, 1 x The Cobbles, 3 x on Greenwell Road, 1 x The Alnwick Garden	Pottergate & Fenkle Street	Northumberland Hall
Content of each e.g.	Map display & dispenser (£1 each)	Map display only	Events

maps, adverts, events	map)		
Is it well maintained?	Yes	Yes	Usually
Who is responsible for maintenance?	Alnwick Community Development Trust	Alnwick Community Development Trust	Town council?
Is the content appropriate and up to date?	Most new in 2006. Map being updated 2008. Alnwick Garden dispenser to be place in Spring 2008.	New in 2006. Map being updated 2008.	Usually
Are there any additional locations where a TIP is needed?			
Market Place (esp when TIC is closed).			
Denwick Lane.			

3.10. 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?	Details
Boards or panels at key sites or on key buildings of interest	Panel in Market Place. Panel on The Cobbles. Panel by main entrance to Alnwick Castle. Panel in Tenentry Column field.
Plaques on specific buildings	Some brass plaques on historic buildings
Signed tours or trails around the town	Finger posts

Regular guided tours around the town	Adrian Lons – private tours.
Other interpretation materials	

<p>Who is responsible for maintenance of panels, plaques and signs?</p> <p>Alnwick District Council?</p>
<p>Are there any gaps where further / new interpretative materials could be provided?</p> <p>There is a proposed new sign to go in Greenwell Lane entrance to The Garden, near The Garden admissions.</p> <p>Opportunity for town trails, following leaflet from TIC for example, around key sites?</p>

3.11. 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	Greenwell Lane	The Cobbles	Windsor Gardens long stay car park	Bus station
Is there a TIP showing where you are in relation to the town centre?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
Signs to the Tourist / Visitor Information Centre?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			

Signs to public toilets?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
Signs to main visitor attraction(s)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
Is there good continuity of signposts/fingerposts along the route?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			

Quality of Signing

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

3.12. 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 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
		B6346 going east	A1068/B6346 going west	B6341
starting point		3 miles east	2 miles east	2 miles west
finishing point		White Swan Hotel	Market Place	Market Place
Are there any signs on the route indicating that this is a market town of interest to visitors? <i>(this could include white on brown tourist signs, welcome signing etc)</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
Are there any white on brown tourist signs?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
- Record any details / location		B6346, 2 miles west of Alnwick at The Pastures	A1068 as it crossed the A1 on Alnmouth Road	West of Shepherds Rest pub
Signposting to the Tourist Information Centre	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>

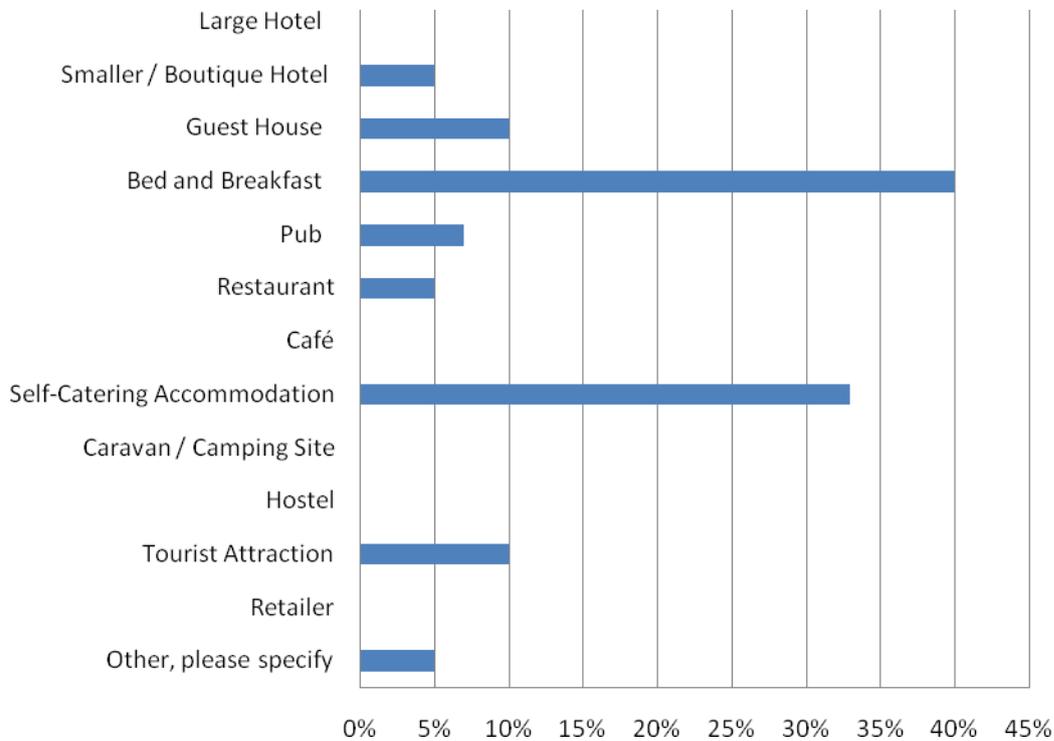
	No <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
- Record any details / location			On building	On building on roadside
Signposting for main attractions?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
- Record any details / location		Castle is in view but no indication for Garden	Very poor small sign outside Barter Books on B6346	
Signposting for visitor car parks?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
- Record any details / location			En-route	En-route
Signposting for public toilets?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
- Record any details / location		Town Centre not even signposted from junction on Bailiffgate.	On building	On building on roadside
Is there an out-of-town Tourist Information Point on the main road before entering/ turning off to the town?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
- Record any details / location				
Continuity of signposting				

Where facilities are signposted, does this remain consistent along the routes?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Quality of signing.				
Are the signs appropriately maintained	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Visually - are they clear/obscured	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are there any out of date signs which need to be removed or rationalised	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Note details for reporting to Highway authority		There is little information available for a driver following this route.	On B6346 travelling west into Alnwick the signs are not obvious.	

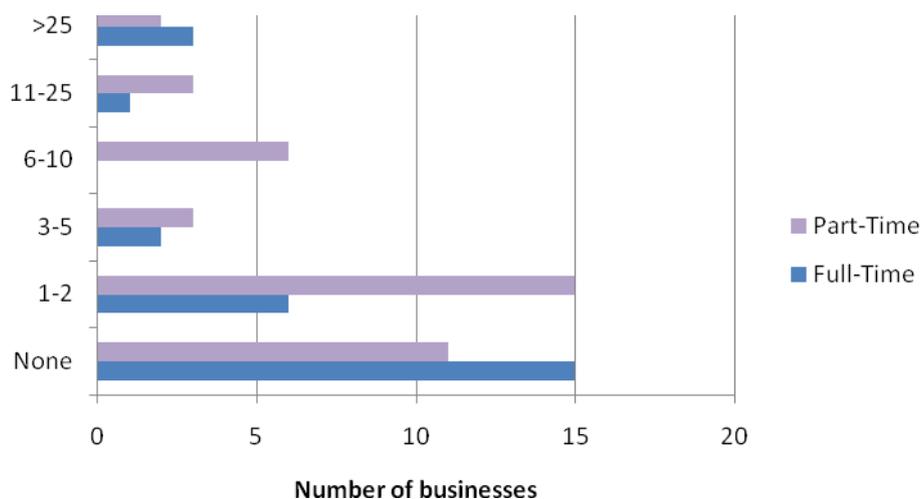
4. Appendix 4 – Business Survey Results

42 businesses responded to the survey in Alnwick. The following graphs detail the main results:

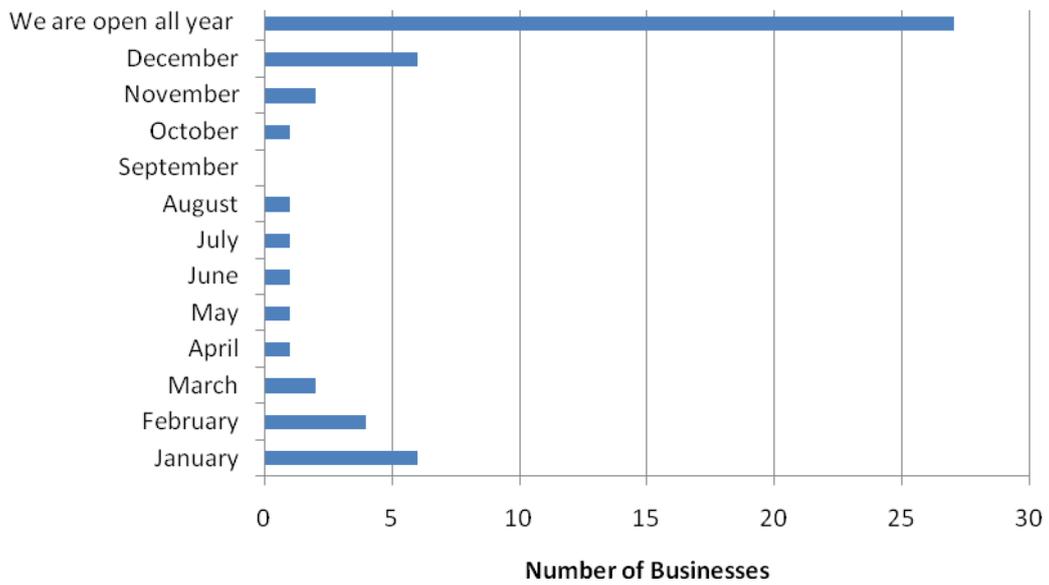
Type of Tourism Business – Respondents



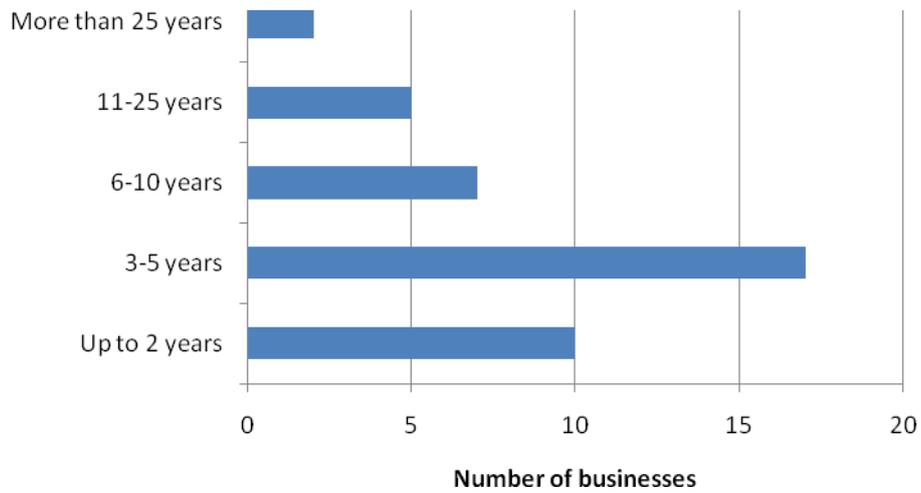
How many staff do you employ on average?



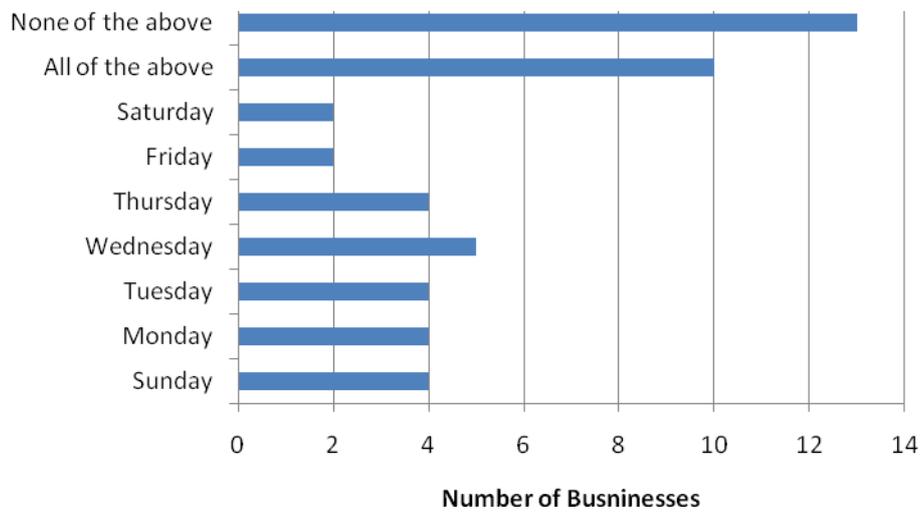
Which months of the year are you closed?



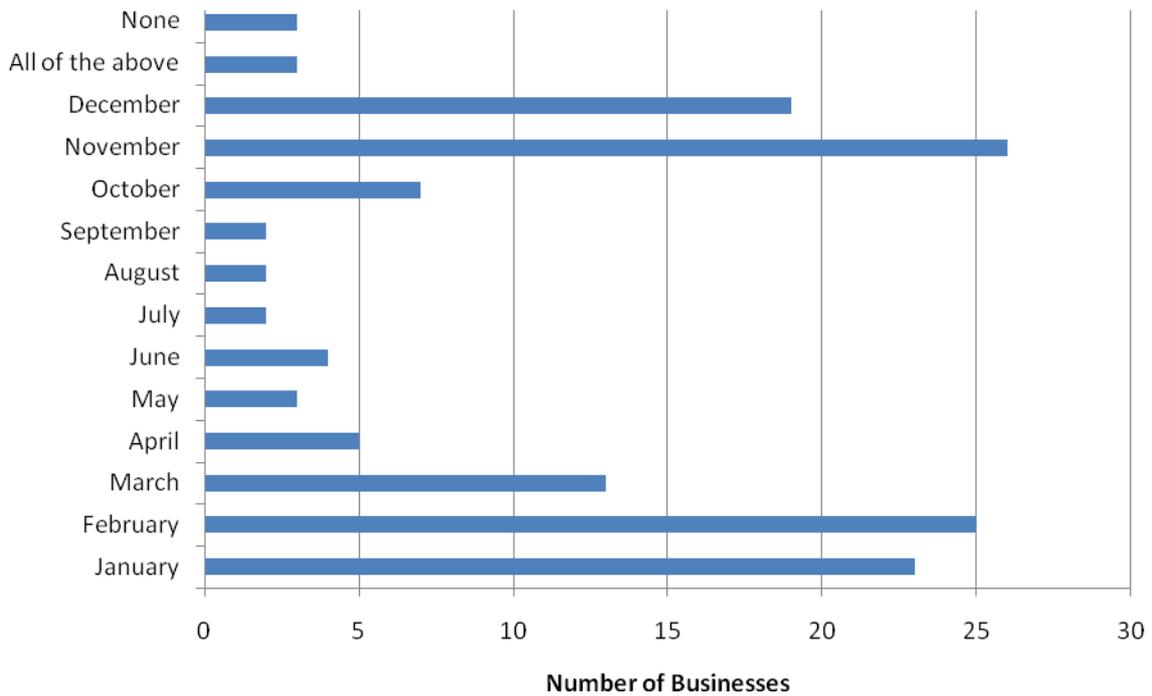
For how many years have you operated this business?



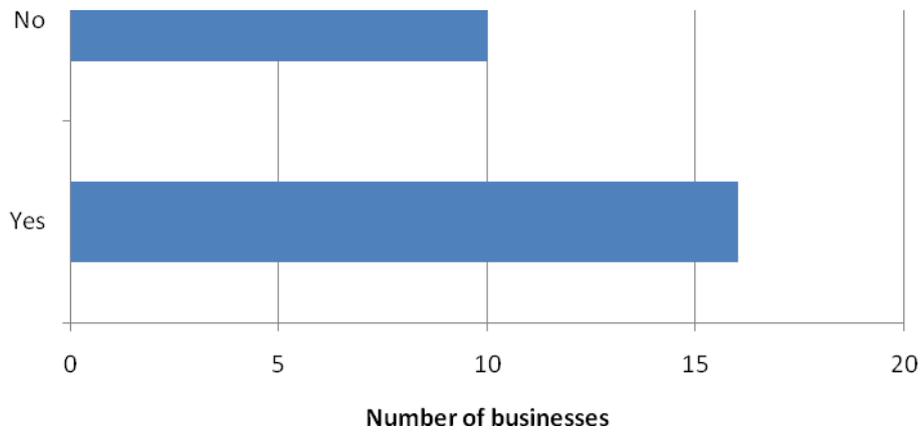
Are there any particular times of the week that you would like to see an increase in your business?



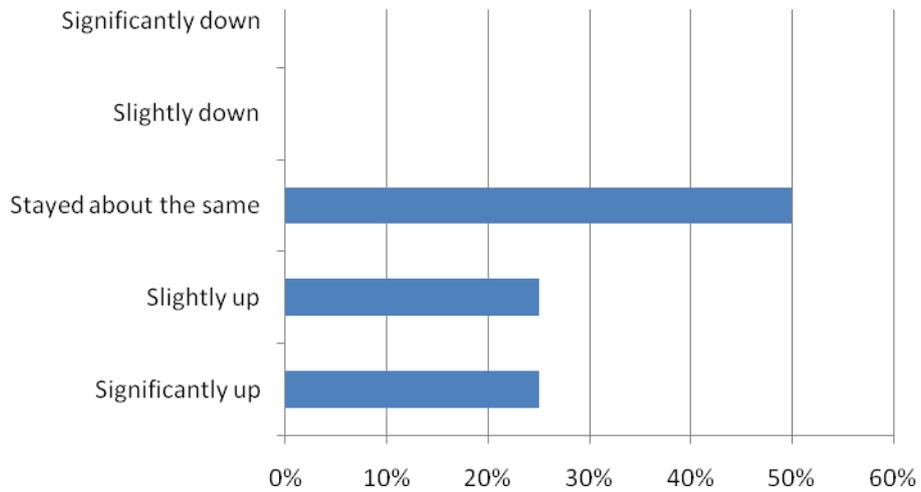
Which months would you like to see an increase in your business?



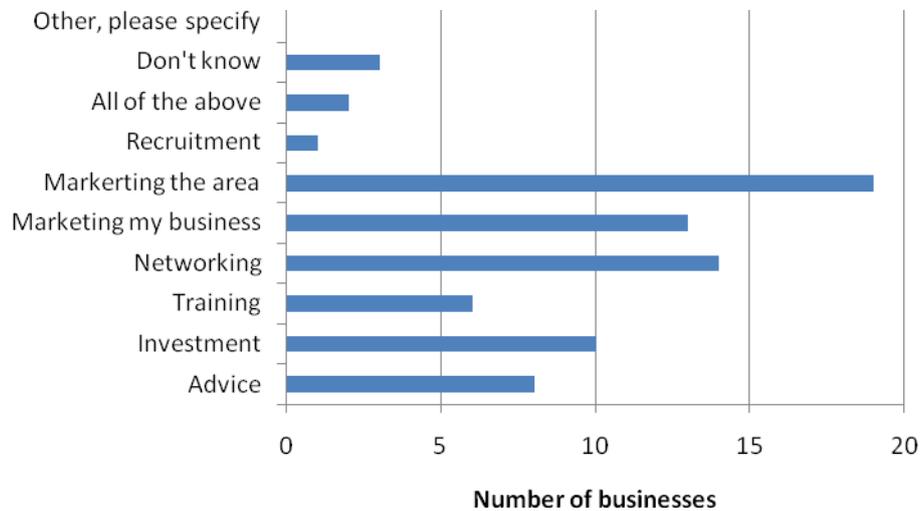
Do you have any expansion development plans for your business?



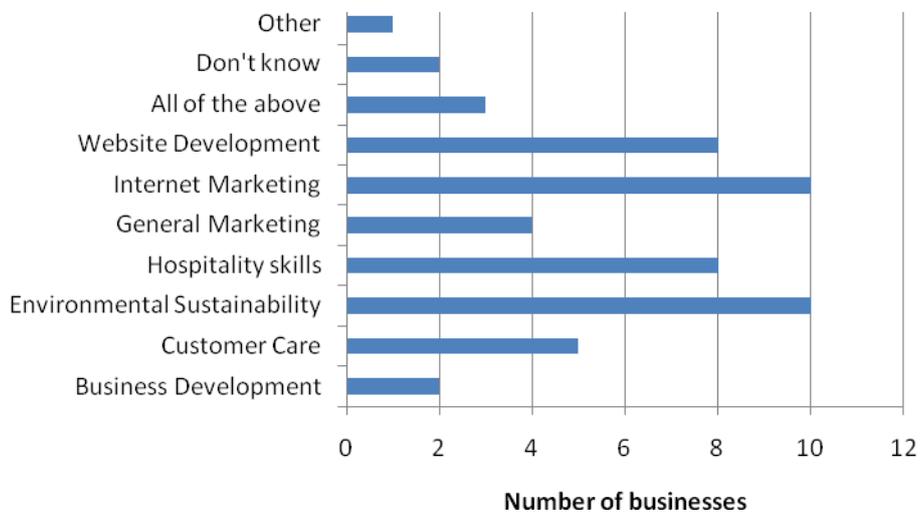
What has been the trend in your profitability in the past three years?



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



Are there any specific training needs that would benefit your business, your staff or other operators in the wider area?



5. Appendix 5 - Visitor Vision Exercise

	Robert & Hilary	Brian & Susan	Jake & Tamsin
What are you looking for from your short break?	<p>Good Quality Accommodation</p> <p>Quality B&Bs or Small Hotel</p> <p>Walking – Coast & Countryside</p> <p>Traditional/personal English touch</p> <p>History & Heritage</p> <p>Good English Food</p>	<p>Good visitor attractions, animal friendly,</p> <p>Alnwick garden,</p> <p>The beach & Alnmouth,</p> <p>Walking up the Ingram valley and;</p> <p>the hills.</p>	
Where in/around the town will you stay, eat and drink?	<p>Quality B&Bs or small hotel</p> <p>Gourmet Pubs with traditional English food</p>	<p>Cottage in Lesbury, shop in Morrisons for food, pub lunch (if dog friendly) e.g. Red Lion in Alnmouth, drink near the cottage in a local pub, might buy craster kippers or local sausages to cook in the evening</p>	<p>Quality Hotel (Blackmores/ White Swan)</p> <p>Eat in the Sanctuary or the Treehouse</p> <p>Drink out of town</p>
What will you enjoy doing in the town?	<p>The Garden</p> <p>The Castle</p> <p>Shopping (but we'd be disappointed generally although we'd love Barter Books)</p> <p>Churches / family history</p>	<p>Enjoy a couple of hours in Barter Books</p> <p>Visit St Michaels Church (especially if there's a bowl of water for the dog)</p>	<p>The Castle, the Art House, Bakehouse, Food Festival , Music festival, Barter Books</p>
What will you do nearby (visits, activities, etc)?	<p>National Trust properties / castles / Howick Hall</p> <p>Walking along the coast</p> <p>Tea rooms</p>	<p>A visit to Heighleygate Garden Centre (if wet weather)</p> <p>An afternoon on Hadrian's Wall</p> <p>Otterburn Mill & Jedburgh</p>	<p>Cragside, castles, Chillingham, Holy Island, Village Farm, Linden Hall</p>

What will you like most?	The scenery The castle, the gardens and Barter Books	Letting the dog loose on the beach and the Garden	The Town, Farmers Market The Coast / Warkworth Horse Riding Surfing (the beach on the north side of Dunstanburgh)
What will you not like about the town?	Shopping Food – the offer is too varied and you can have a bad experience	Finding somewhere to park The congested pavements that are littered with 'A' boards and other clutter	Quiet on Sundays
What do you wish there was but is not available?	Good curry house and a 'foodie' pub	More pubs with gardens / outside areas More flowers/less litter Walking route from Alnwick to the coast	Quality Bars / restaurants High Spec quality gifts Somewhere open after 9pm An Art Gallery A café culture Spa pamper days
How will you feel at the end of your visit?	Relaxed	Exhilarated	Chilled out and very happy