
**REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
15 JUNE 2004**

NOTE: Copies of the reports mentioned below have been sent to all members of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee and other members who had requested them. Further copies are available from Nicola Hayden, Room 222, County Secretary's Department, County Hall, Hertford. (Telephone: 01992 555560) Email: nicola.hayden@hertscc.gov.uk

TOURISM ACTIVITY IN HERTFORDSHIRE

The Committee have considered a report detailing the County Council's input to tourism activity in Hertfordshire, the region and beyond.

Background

Tourism is a thriving sector that brings considerable revenue to the local economy. The County Council is making a valuable contribution to this by working in partnership with all stakeholders to promote, support and develop the tourism industry both internally and externally. The County Council lead officer for tourism is the County Cultural Officer Annie Hawkins, based in the Economic and Community Development Unit in the Environment Department. 20% of her time is allocated to tourism, working in partnership with the Hertfordshire Tourism Partnership, Herts Prosperity, the Districts and the visitor attractions in Hertfordshire. Tourism is a key strand of both the Cultural and Economic Development Strategies for Hertfordshire and clearly links to the County Council Promise: to make Hertfordshire a better place to live and work.

The Enjoy! branding developed for the Cultural Strategy for Hertfordshire, is now well established and is being recognised across the county and beyond. The District Tourism Officer Group have agreed to use the Enjoy! branding on all joint tourism marketing.

The Hertfordshire Tourism Partnership has also adopted Enjoy! for all Hertfordshire tourism branding and it is being used for exhibitions, events, literature, leaflet dispensers and branded goods such as stickers, carrier bags and crowns.

High quality tourism activities can enhance the quality of life to all our communities, by improving and adding value to the rural economy. Sustainable tourism clearly has a role to play in our rural communities. Initiatives such as the Market Towns Tourism

Project help promote the countryside and market towns as good places to visit. The Enjoy! themed leaflet encourages visits to our rural communities and promotes local produce.

The British Tourist Authority and the English Tourism Council joined forces in April 2003 to develop a lead body for inbound tourism to Britain and the marketing of England within Britain. The East of England Development Agency (EEDA) has been given the lead role for the strategic development of tourism in the region. The East of England Tourist Board (EETB) is now a sister organisation working alongside EEDA. Beds, Herts and Luton Tourism Ltd ceased trading in September 2002; however the three authorities of Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Luton have continued to work together on joint tourism projects. Each District in Hertfordshire has a nominated officer for tourism and the County Tourism Officer meets with them four times a year to explore a partnership approach to tourism projects across the county.

The County Council contributes approximately £67,000 annually to tourism activities including 20% of the time of the County Cultural Officer. It is estimated that tourism contributes £1.04 billion to the Hertfordshire economy.

Headline figures for tourism in Hertfordshire in 2002 are given below (all figures quoted are per annum):

How many visitors do we have?

- Staying visitors est. 2.4million
- UK visitors est:2.1 million
- Overseas visitors est.: 330 thousand

Staying visitors spend

- UK visitors spend est. at £209.6 million
- Overseas visitors spend est. at £124 million
- Total visitors spend est. at £333.6 million

Day Visitors

- Total number of day visits is estimated at 23.8 million
- Urban visits estimated at 21.4million
- Countryside visits estimated at 2.4 million

- Urban spend estimated at £674.7 million
- Countryside spend estimated at £40.5 million
- Total spend estimated at £715.2 million

How many jobs are supported through tourism?

- It is estimated that 27,306 jobs are directly supported by tourism
- This equals 5% of the total employment in Hertfordshire

The continuation of partnership working is essential to maintain the economic benefits brought to the County by tourism.

Comments of the Scrutiny Committee

- (a) The Committee welcomed the benefits received through the Enjoy! branding and congratulated the County Cultural Officer and our Hertfordshire Tourism and Leisure partners for their achievements in promoting Hertfordshire as a tourist location.
- (b) In particular the Committee welcomed the contribution of £1.04billion that tourism makes to the Hertfordshire economy and the substantial increase in this figure over recent years. It was noted that this had been achieved with limited resources and the Committee considered the return to be very good value.
- (c) The Committee recommended that the Director of Community Information and the County Cultural Officer prepare a business case for the Executive Member to take to Cabinet which would examine whether there is sufficient evidence to allow an adjustment in the balance of time spent by the County Cultural Officer between culture and tourism or whether the County Council should invest more resource in the tourism activity.

The Committee further requested that the business case be circulated to members for consideration at their next meeting.

- (d) It was noted that information on tourism on the Hertsdirect website was not very comprehensive and Officers have been asked to work on developing the site.

MICHAEL COLNE
CHAIRMAN
County Hall
Hertford

15 June 2004